



1 WHY BRANDING MATTERS



Your brand is not your corporate logo. Your brand is your reputation. It is who —and what — your customers say you are.



DID YOU KNOW?

In blind taste tests, more people prefer the taste of Pepsi over Coke. And yet Coca-Cola continues to outsell Pepsi by **35%**. **WHY?**

Coca-Cola has incredibly strong brand recognition, with **85%** of its customers saying they are likely to buy it again and again.

7 REASONS A STRONG BRAND IDENTITY MATTERS

Your brand (who you are as an organization) is everything your customers experience when they contact you. This includes your logo, website and social media presence. It also includes the way you answer the phone and the way your staff interacts with your customers, clients or audience. **In short, your brand is the way your customer perceives you.** That's why it is critical to be aware of your brand perception and have a plan to create the experience you want your customers to have. **A good brand doesn't just happen, it is a well-thought, strategic plan.**

Many small organizations neglect spending the necessary time thinking about their brand in this broad sense and the impact it has on their business. **Here are seven reasons why a strong brand identity is important:**



Whether you need a logo, a branding guideline book rebranded materials or all of the above, **we're here to help.**

#1 Branding promotes recognition and referrals. ("Oh, I know that brand!")

People do business with companies they're familiar with. If your branding is consistent and easy to recognize, it can help people feel more at ease contacting you about your services. People also tend to tell others about the brands they like. They wear brands, eat brands, listen to brands, and they're constantly telling others about the brands they love. On the flip side, you can't tell someone about a brand you can't remember. **A strong brand is critical to generating referrals or viral traffic.**

#2 Your brand values can build and improve customer loyalty.

If part of your brand promise is that you're committed to biodegradable packaging, sustainability, ethically-sourced materials, cruelty-free products or other areas that appeal to your audience's core values, you can build an intensely loyal customer base. Loyal customers are repeat customers, and they are willing to spend more money with brands they trust.

#3 Your brand provides motivation and direction for your staff.

A clear brand strategy provides the clarity your staff needs to be successful. It tells them how to act and how to meet the organization's goals. It can even help to shape your business culture and foster a positive work environment.



#4 A strong brand helps your customers know what to expect.

A brand that is consistent and clear helps to put your customers at ease, because they know exactly what to expect each and every time they experience the brand.

#5 Your brand helps you create clarity and stay focused.

Without branding, it's easy to wander from idea to idea with nothing to guide you, and you can soon end up a long way from your original goals or plans. A clear brand strategy helps you stay focused on your mission and vision as an organization. **Your brand can help you be strategic and will guide your marketing efforts, saving time and money.**

#6 Your advertising campaigns will be more effective.

If you have a strong brand, new products will excite your customers and they'll be more likely to buy/try it because they have confidence in your ability to deliver what you promise.

#7 A strong brand builds value.

A strong brand provides value beyond physical assets. Think about brands you purchase (Coca-Cola, Wrangler, Apple, Ford, A&W, etc.) These companies are worth much more than their physical assets, because their brand has created a value that far exceeds their physical value.



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These are the details you need to lock down before you ever consider a logo, fonts or colors.

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WHAT'S YOUR BRAND STORY?

Your **brand story** is the foundation of your brand experience and will inform the rest of the style elements associated with it. Clearly define how the brand started, why it exists, where the name came from and your brand's values and personality. These all help to form your brand's visual identity.

Your **brand purpose** is your mission statement and connects your company to your customers' beliefs and values so it's important to get this right. Google's mission statement is "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful."

Your **brand promise** is what customers expect in terms of value and experience when they interact with your company. Starbucks' brand promise is "to uplift the everyday, providing a superior coffee and customer experience every time they visit us." What is your brand promise?

Your **brand personality** is the key character traits your brand embodies that makes it easier for your marketing team to create clear, consistent messaging across all channels. Are you bold? Curious? Practical? By deciding on specific brand personality traits, you develop a presence that your customers can relate to.



Strong brands have clearly identifiable **colors, logos and typefaces.**

THE FACE OF YOUR BRAND

Your **logo** is a visual shortcut for identifying your brand. It can be a symbol, shape, stylized text or a combination of any of these, and it should directly evoke your brand story. A strong logo can become so well-known that it can be used even without the brand name (think Nike or Adidas.) It's important to develop a logo that works in a variety of sizes and formats for print and online. Typically, most brands have a main logo and a variant (perhaps a stacked logo for small spaces), a favicon for website URLs and occasionally one that uses only artwork without the brand name.

Next, define primary **brand colors** for your logo, along with an extended color palette that blends with your logo for marketing materials. Be sure to define them in both CMYK (for print) and RGB, HEX or Pantone (for web) and be aware that some RGB colors will not replicate in print. Consider accessibility (adequate contrast) to ensure your customers have no troubles understanding your brand.

Choose **typography** to distinguish your brand from its competitors. Ensure the typeface is easy to read and has enough fonts in the family (bold, black, italic, etc) to work for your messages. Consider accessibility (minimum point size, letter spacing, serif use, etc) to ensure readability.



TAGLINES VS. SLOGANS

A **tagline** is a short phrase designed to raise public awareness of your brand. They are timeless and serve as the spoken equivalent of your brand logo.

A **slogan** is a description of a specific product or service and is usually advertising-focused. Slogans change frequently depending on campaign needs.

TAG, YOU'RE IT.

Once you've written your brand story and developed a logo, it's time to add a tagline. **An effective tagline should include these four qualities:**

- 1. It's meaningful** and shows what you believe in so you can build an emotional connection with your customers. Nike's tagline is Just Do It, a message that appeals to people who value determination and action.
- 2. It's magnetic**, inspiring your audience to dive into your world and experience what it is you do. Let them be excited about the products and services you offer through your brand stories and associated visual material.
- 3. It's memorable.** Use simple messaging so when people make instant associations with your brand (when I see [tagline], I think [company].) What do you think of when you hear "it's finger-licking good?"
- 4. It includes a key benefit.** It makes the benefits of your company or products clear to your customers. I'm betting you remember Bounty paper towel's tagline — and how their products will help you. ('The Quicker Picker Upper')



Decide how you want to display your brand. Create **rules** for use in all the channels your brand will appear. Then **enforce the rules** in a brand book to ensure brand recognition and continuity.

THE RULES OF YOUR BRAND

Once you've got a brand story, logo, colors and typography established, it's time to decide how, where and when these elements will be used:

- Your **logo/secondary logo** in all variants (acceptable alternates, sizes, clear space requirements, minimum size, etc);
- **Co-branding requirements** (if your logo appears alongside a logo of another company, how should it be positioned?)
- Your **primary brand colors** and supplementary colors (for all color spaces), along with rules about what colors to use in certain conditions;
- Your **typography** that you use for your communications (headlines, body copy, minimum sizes, web alternatives, color, etc);



- The **photographic style** you want for advertising and marketing materials (use the key words from your branding story to ensure consistent imaging);
- The kind of **b-roll or video stock** to be used in your advertising and marketing messages online, as well as how your logo or watermarks should appear at the end of the frame;
- The style of **graphics/illustrations/icons** you want to use with your marketing and advertising material (again, use the key words to help you define this);
- **Mood boards** that may include images, textures, patterns that reflect your brand story, key words and brand promise to help guide designers and marketing departments when they're creating messaging campaigns for your brand.

When you've got these brand rules set, I can develop a **Brand Guide Book** that you can give to anyone who needs to work on messaging for your brand.



Whether you need branding guidelines, a logo refresh or redesign, or a complete set of branded materials for print and web, we've got you covered.

A GOOD BRANDING KIT INCLUDES:



Your brand story

A statement that explains your values, personality, purpose and promise to clearly define what customers should expect from your company.



Descriptions of all the visual elements that reflect your brand

A strong logo is recognizable at a distance and has elements that tell the world who you are. Your logo will appear in different formats depending on use, space and context. You'll have brand colors and an extended color palette, typography that helps distinguish your brand from its competitors and guidelines for photography, video and illustrations. And you'll have an effective, memorable tagline that helps create associations between your brand and the services or products you offer.

All of these elements need to be integrated into one document to help you stay focussed and on brand whenever your business interacts with the public. And there's an easy way to do it.



We can work with you to develop a comprehensive brand guide so you know you've got your details locked down in an easy-to-use format.

You'll get brand guide that looks something like this:



Brand Guide Book

A brand guide book is your style bible, capturing the rules for your brand story and all visual elements that will enable designers to produce any product for you that you might need for marketing and advertising. It ensures uniformity so everything that faces your customer looks like it came from the same place and has your messaging and look.



A complete logo set for web and print

Along with a Brand Guide Book, you should have a complete set of all the logos you use in your marketing and sales materials in all the formats you need so they're ready to use. A good set includes your full logo (with tagline), a reverse logo for dark backgrounds, a single-color logo if it will be added to wearables and formats for horizontal and

vertical use — in both vector formats (PDF, AI, EPS) and digital formats (JPEG, PNG).





Once you've got your branding dialed in, we can talk about how to create your:

- Social media, print & web ads
- Trade show materials
- Brochures, fliers and product catalogs
- Website design and content creation
- Strategic plan design & workshop facilitation
- Annual report design/redesign
- ...**And more.**

WHAT'S NEXT?

All clients start with a **Brand Roundup**, my no-fuss way to identify and overcome your biggest business hurdles — with just a 90-minute time commitment.

This is a paid strategy session where we will uncover what's working and what's not in your brand, your messaging and your marketing materials — and after our session, you get a Trail Map, a customized written report that provides recommendations to help you tackle some of your business problems, whether it's with smarter branding, clearer messaging or marketing materials that do more than look good.

The Roundup is a mandatory starting point for all branding work with clients. It makes building your brand easier, better and faster. Your Roundup fee can be fully applied to any of my client packages you select. It might be the best investment you make this year.

Want to learn more? **Email me** to book a **FREE** 15-minute fit call to see if we can partner up to help you build your brand.