



How to Create an Effective Brand Identity for Your Business

Description

There was a time when one customer recommended a business to another, and by sheer name recognition, that business would gain commercial success by word of mouth. Of course, in those days, the customers were probably swapping information at the local general store or speaking over a landline telephone with a cone-shaped earpiece and a crank on the side.

Times have changed.

There was not a call for immediate identity back in those ancient days. There was not a glut of goods and services crying for consumers' attention over multiple platforms, from print media to digital downloads. More than ever, brand identity is a crucial element to any marketing plan. An effective one is critical.

Recipe for today's world

What is the recipe for effectiveness in the flash-bang storm of marketing ploys descending on the general public? The first ingredient is a comprehensive understanding of your customers and what they find essential or desirable or engaging. A brand image representing the promise made to this group assured connection with the customer. For example, meaningful logos, taglines and visuals can often take the edge off daunting services or establishments (think insurance companies, investment banks, even car repair workshops). What can your brand identity promise your customers that will keep them coming back?

In that same vein, you need to watch out for the other guy on the branding freeway. Are they doing something with their brand that pulls you in? Or is there something about their plan that makes you scratch your head with puzzlement over what in the world they were thinking? Take a cue from other branding plans, especially those of your competitors. You'll find easy lessons on what to do and what not to do.

Start with your logo

A logo is your ambassador. Make sure you use yours to its fullest potential, or you're sure to get swallowed by the image overload whirlpool. Take a hard look at the logo you currently use, and if it doesn't say everything about your brand that you want it to say, maybe it's time to sit down with a graphic designer. You want customers to recognize your range of products, mission, and reputation the split second they see your logo. It's called brand memory, and it's priceless.

Like any other phase of your business, keeping your branding identity alive and kicking requires rules and processes in place. Don't just say your customers should be greeted with your tagline upon entering the store; make it a policy and a requirement of your employees. The care and feeding of a brand identity take insight, creativity and discipline. It is the foundation on which your business is built.

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