

The Branding Process: How to Create a Relevant Brand Image

The (re)branding process involves establishing a simple, differentiated and relevant meaning for your brand. One that has the power to inspire. Think about who you are as a company and what you stand for.



Only after you've established that can you begin to think about making changes to your company and product logos, names, images, marketing strategies, and advertising campaigns.

If you suspect the time has come to enter into your own (re)branding you're probably right, but it can pay dividends to look before you leap. Reach out to your company stakeholders first to see what they think.

Below is my 7-step process for (re)branding your company and/or its products.

Step 1: Identify your unique value. This is your brand promise, the one thing that separates you from your market and makes your organization what it is. Speak to your customers to determine what they like and dislike about your business. Empower your employees to provide their honest assessment of what they feel your strengths and weaknesses are. If there are industry heads or organiza

tions you can tap in to, consider reaching out to them as well.

Step 2: Assess untapped avenues: After you've identified your uniqueness with your core audience, consider whether or not there are untapped markets you can pursue. With your company's new direction, this could be an ideal time to target a whole new group of people.

Step 3: Craft a simple brand message: Keeping your audience in mind, create a simple bra

nd message that identifies your audience, your company name and service, and your unique value proposition. You might find that it helps to adopt the format, "For [YOUR MARKET], [YOUR COMPANY NAME] is the [SERVICE YOU PROVIDE] that [PROBLEM YOU SOLVE]". Here's mine:

For emerging and changing organizations, Joe Franklin is the brand strategist that makes them relevant to consumers by establishing simple, differentiated brand meaning.

Warning, this is not an easy exercise. Play around with your simple brand message. Revise it as necessary, and once you've got it memorize it and say it to everyone you talk to about your organization.

Step 4: Develop a communication strategy: How you speak to your customers says a lot about your identity as a company and reinforces your brand promise. Make

sure you adopt the right voice to reach your target audience. This can be a challenging process but also extremely rewarding and fun.

Step 5: Create internal and external plans: If your employees aren't able to connect with your brand, your customers won't be able to either. On the flip side, employees who understand and are inspired by your brand idea will look for ways to bring it to life. Allow your employees to see how customers interact with your brand and the role they play in the interaction.

External plans include developing marketing and advertising campaigns, communication strategies, and more. Think creatively and practically. Ask yourself: "What will best communicate our message and make people remember it?"

Step 6: Execute: Take the information you've gathered and the plans you've developed and go create a logo and tagline. Extend it further and design or redesign you

r website if need be. Keep in mind though that these visual looks are only part of the big picture (albeit an important one). Your new brand image also includes how you present yourself at speaking events, in public, and even how you dress!

Step 7: Measure: Correctly following Steps 1-6 should ensure that you arrive at a relevant, simple and clear brand promise that resonates with your target audience. You can make sure by measuring its effectiveness with your core audience. Measurement ideas can include posting a poll on your website, and simply asking your customers what they think of when they think of you and your new brand image. Your customers are your most important brand ambassadors because they're the ones that will provide positive or negative word of mouth marketing for your business. Make sure you have your finger on the pulse of what they think of you and fine tune as necessary.

The (re)branding process is a normal part of every organization's lifecycle. Doing it well will keep you relevant with your audience and help ensure your organization's continued success.

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