

# THE POWER OF BRANDING



# **The Power of Branding**

# Table Of Contents

<b>Chapter 1</b> .....	4
<b>What is a Brand and Why Does it Matter?</b> .....	4
<b>Chapter 2</b> .....	5
<b>Choosing Your Mission Statement and Name</b> .....	5
<b>Creating Your Mission Statement</b> .....	5
<b>Choosing Your Company Name</b> .....	7
<b>Chapter 3</b> .....	8
<b>Creating Your Look – Logos and Much More</b> .....	8
<b>How to Create Your Logo</b> .....	8
<b>Other Materials</b> .....	10
<b>Chapter 4</b> .....	11
<b>Promoting Your Brand – How to ‘Be Everywhere’</b> .....	11
<b>Chapter 5</b> .....	12
<b>Delivering On Your Promise – How to Stick to Your Company’s Core Values and Achieve Your Mission</b> .....	12
<b>The Importance of Packaging and Delivery</b> .....	13
<b>Chapter 6</b> .....	13
<b>Reputation Management Basics</b> .....	13
<b>How to Handle a Rebranding</b> .....	14
<b>Chapter 7</b> .....	15
<b>How to Create and Use Multiple Brands</b> .....	15
<b>Chapter 8</b> .....	16
<b>Fantastic Examples of Branding You Can Learn From</b> .....	16
<b>Chapter 9</b> .....	17
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	17

# Chapter 1

## What is a Brand and Why Does it Matter?

When you think of any big company, the brand is probably the first thing to come to mind. In fact, there are very few successful businesses that *don't* have a prominent brand and it's hard to imagine how a company could get big without investing in its image and creating an identity for itself.

Despite this, many small businesses and internet businesses don't take the necessary time to create a strong brand and a strong identity that they can use to drive their organization forward. Why? Often it comes down a lack of understanding. Not only do many businesses and entrepreneurs not understand how branding works; many also don't understand just how important branding is.

### Companies With No Identity

It's not hard to find companies that lack brands when you look online – or that haven't invested the right time or effort into their branding. These are the websites that look horribly bland and generic: probably with dark blue and black writing on a white background. Their company name is something like 'Johnson and Smith Co' and their logo is probably some dull blue writing spelling out that company name. Oh and it's probably a low res JPEG image too.

It doesn't exactly scream excitement and it calls to mind an image of a couple of burly blokes who put together an uninspired business with no aims of growing. They provide their service, no bells attached and then they move onto the next client.

It's actually kind of depressing...

### Companies With LOTS of Identity

Now think about the companies that have become international house-hold names. These companies have exciting names like 'Apple', 'Adidas', 'Coca-Cola', 'Nike', 'Microsoft', 'Disney', 'Nintendo', 'Red Bull', 'Starbucks' and they have interesting and unique logos. Many of these logos have gone on to become almost cultural symbols and are now emblazoned on t-shirts and scrawled onto homework diaries around the world.

The websites are in-keeping with this, so are the adverts and even the products conform to an identity. People look for these brands now as a sign of quality and because they

know what to expect. Some people even consider themselves ‘fans’ of these brands and get behind them 100%. People just don’t feel that way about companies like ‘Johnson and Smith Co’.

Brands make you recognizable, they make it far easier to monetize and they give your business a cohesive vision that will drive you forward and that will win you fans. This is the power of branding and this is what we’re going to learn how to do for your own business.

## **Chapter 2**

# **Choosing Your Mission Statement and Name**

### **What is a brand though?**

For many of us, the word brand calls to mind two things: a name and a logo.

In fact though, these are not what is most important about your brand and neither is what you need to consider first when you set out to create your brand.

So what is most important?

That would be your ‘mission statement’. This is the single most important part of your branding and once you’ve worked this out, everything else should follow out from there simply.

Let’s start there then!

### **Creating Your Mission Statement**

A mission statement is simply a short sentence or two that clearly defines what you do and why you do it.

Perhaps the best way to illustrate this is to look at some of the more famous examples...

Coca Cola:

*Our mission is: To refresh the world in mind, body and spirit. To inspire moments of optimism and happiness through our brands and actions.*

Starbucks:

*To inspire and nurture the human spirit – one person, one cup and one neighborhood at a time.*

Amazon:

*It's our goal to be Earth's most customer-centric company, where customers can find and discover anything online.*

Google:

*Google's mission is to organise the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful.*

What do these statements all have in common? All of them are rather grand, all of them are rather vague and all of them are inspiring. They tend to focus on the 'why' and then the 'how' instead of the 'what'.

So let's say that you have a company that makes socks. Sure, you could call yourself 'Socks Ltd' and be done with it, but if you wanted to create something a bit more inspiring, then you would begin with your mission statement.

Your mission statement is *not* to make socks.

Your mission statement is to warm people's feet.

And in doing so? Maybe it's to help them feel cosy and happy in their own bodies.

So maybe you change your company name to 'WarmSocks' and your mission statement would be as follows:

*To warm people's feet and help them feel comfortable in their bodies throughout the day.*

Now you have a real *promise* that people can get behind, you have something much more exciting and you have something *far* more marketable. This can motivate your staff and it can help you to envision ideas for future products and marketing campaigns. You see the difference?

So spend some time reflecting on your own brand and your own business. What was it that drew you to this industry in the first place? What is it that you find so exciting about it? How can you inspire others to feel the same way you do?

Use this to create your one or two sentence mission statement and from there you'll be able to start coming up with the other aspects of your brand.

And if you struggle to identify what the drive behind your business is, then you can always try using some exercises like OKR. This stands for ‘Objectives and Key Results’ and is a technique used by companies like Google, LinkedIn and Intel. Here you simply identify what your broader objectives are and then break these down into smaller ‘key results’. There’s a tool to help you do this over at [Weekdone.com](https://weekdone.com/resources/objectives-key-results) (<https://weekdone.com/resources/objectives-key-results>).

## **Choosing Your Company Name**

Now you have your mission statement, you can start thinking about your company name. This should be something that describes what your business does but also evokes something more interesting and more exciting.

If you’re struggling to come up with anything, then you could try creating a mind map and adding related words and things you like the sounds of. From there you can try combining them in interesting ways, or using synonyms/portmanteaus etc. For instance, ‘Intel’ is related to the fact that the chips the company creates give computers ‘intelligence’.

But then you have ‘Apple’ which is completely unrelated – in this case the assumption is that this would evoke the image of something fresh and clean. Steve Jobs said it was inspired by the fact that he was on a fruitarian diet and thought the word sounded ‘fun, spirited and not intimidating’.

So don’t just think about the mechanical parts of your business, but also the mission statement and the emotions you want to evoke.

It’s a good idea to then come up with a few names and to try surveying your friends and relatives to see which they think is best. Remember, you name your business for your customers – not for yourself!

Also important is to make sure your business name isn’t trademarked which you can do at the US Patent and Trademark Office (<http://www.uspto.gov/trademark>). You might also want to apply for a trademark yourself in future, which ensures that no one can use your company name (you can also trademark your logo).

Another good tip is to check for whether the domain name is available for your chosen business name and think a little about things like SEO – how easy would it be for someone to search and find your business online? Calling yourself ‘Pear’ just wouldn’t work these days – Pear.com would be taken and you’d have an incredibly hard time showing up in searches.

Unfortunately, you need to be a little practical about your business name as well as thinking about what evokes the best feelings!

# Chapter 3

## Creating Your Look – Logos and Much More

Now it's time for the fun stuff: creating a logo and finding other materials.

The purpose of your logo is basically to give your business a visual identity. If you choose your logo well, then it should be instantly identifiable and people should know to associate anything with that image on it with your brand and your business.

Once again, you also need to be a bit creative *and* somewhat pragmatic with your logo creation.

### How to Create Your Logo

Consider the following criteria for your logo creation. Your logo should be...

- Recognisable
- Simple
- Versatile
- Iconic
- Relevant
- Original

So straight away you want to avoid anything that is going to be clichéd or derivative. Forget anything that includes a globe, a lightbulb or a tick – they've been done to death.

Simple is better because you need to come up with something that people can copy (remember what we said about kids drawing Nike ticks onto their homework diaries?). This also makes your logo more versatile which means that you'll be able to use it in more places.

Think about it this way: your logo isn't *just* going to be used on your website or on your own products. Sometimes, it's going to need to be on a banner on someone else's website. Sometimes it might be on packaging. In this case, it's going to need to be a different size or it might even have to be black and white. You might need to use a 'silhouette' of your logo.

So ask yourself: does the logo look just as good when you use it as a silhouette? Much smaller? In black and white?

Finally, make sure that your logo expresses everything you want to say about your business. That means not only communicating the niche, the industry and the kinds of



products and services you'll be selling – but also the mission statement and the emotion. This is why you need to come up with your mission statement *before* your logo.

## The Process

So what process can you use to get here?

Once again, a great option is to create a kind of mind map. This time it will be using images though, so it will be a 'mood board'. This is basically a collection of images, words and ideas that all relate to your brand and you can create them nicely using Pinterest ([www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)).

From here, you can now try combining the individual elements of your image and this will allow you to create something unique from those constituent parts. Try playing with the word too and using different fonts. Once again, it's worth making multiple different logos and then showing them to friends or even customers to get an idea of which is the most popular.

## Tools and Resources

You can also use a number of tools in this process.

One particularly good one is Brandr (<http://scgm.biz/brandrr/>) which makes the process of creating a logo incredibly simple. Simply put, this allows you to input your company name and to select an industry, and from here you can then generate a large number of different, unique concepts for logos. From there, you'll also be able to edit and customize your logo to make it look exactly how you want it – and then you just download the file. You can edit anything from the colors to the fonts to the precise positions and this can not only be a great way to get some initial inspiration but also an excellent tool to create a professional looking file.

If you opt against this tool, then your other options are to make a logo yourself from scratch – in which case you'll probably use something like Adobe Illustrator (<http://www.adobe.com/uk/products/illustrator.html>) – or you'll have to outsource it.

When creating a logo, it's very important not to create a JPG or a PNG. These are what as known as 'raster files' and the result will be something that looks grainy when zoomed in and that's very difficult to edit. Instead, you need to create a 'vector file' such as an AI file. This will ensure that your image never loses definition and that it is highly versatile and customizable.

If you choose to outsource this process, you can try a website like Fiverr ([www.fiverr.com](http://www.fiverr.com)), UpWork ([www.upwork.com](http://www.upwork.com)), Elance ([www.elance.com](http://www.elance.com)) or a forum like Warrior Forum ([www.warriorforum.com](http://www.warriorforum.com)). Perhaps a simpler and more efficient method though would be to 'crowdsource' your design on 99Designs

([www.99designs.com](http://www.99designs.com)). This way, you invite as many designers as are interested to submit ideas for your design – you then just select the one that you’re happiest with.

## Other Materials

The visual element of your brand doesn’t stop at your logo though!

Once you have your logo, you should have a colorscheme and you should have a ‘feel’ for what things are going to look like. You now need to ensure that this is consistent and cohesive across everything you do.

That will start with your website, which should subtly borrow colors and elements from your logo. For instance, you might want to use the color-picker tool in your image editor to get the *precise* color code of your logo. You can then utilize this throughout the color palette on your website. Even if this isn’t your ‘base color’, it might serve as your accent color. Take a look at the websites for Virgin Media or Virgin Active and what do you see: *lots* of red!

You may also want to create your own font or typeface, or choose one from a site like Font Squirrel ([www.fontsquirrel.com](http://www.fontsquirrel.com)) and then just use it throughout all of your materials and creations.

You can take this even further if you want to and create your own ‘design language’ that will ensure everything you create is consistent. Google does this with their own ‘Material Design’ (<https://www.google.com/design/spec/material-design/introduction.html>) concept, which ensures all their software and apps have a consistent look and feel. Apple has a less explicit design language but if you look at all their products, you’ll likely find that they have a similar feel that uses a lot of white and lots of clean lines and curved edges. The Apple headphones somewhat exemplify these principles.

At the very least, you’ll need some more materials and images for your marketing efforts. These will include at least:

- Wallpapers
- Images that you can use on Facebook/in fliers etc.
- A video opener
- Possibly a jingle

Depending on the nature of your business, you might even want to create your own mascot! Mascots are a good choice for commercial businesses and can help to make a product seem friendlier, warmer and more familiar. Animals are a particularly good choice (like the Andrex pup) and something along these lines would be a brilliant fit for our ‘WarmSocks’ business!

# Chapter 4

## Promoting Your Brand – How to ‘Be Everywhere’

Why do you need to go to the trouble of creating or acquiring all of these different elements for your brand?

Simple: because you’re now going to try and make sure that your brand is ‘everywhere’ and you’re going to try and take every opportunity to increase your brand awareness and brand recognition. A large part of this will take place on social media, where for instance you will need to have a similar look and feel on every single site.

This is important because it ensures a seamless and consistent experience for your customers and it looks *much* more professional and impressive.

Your website is going to be the main place where you show off your brand, but when someone visits your Facebook page or your Twitter page, you need to make sure they are greeted with the exact same logo, the same username, the same cover image and the same type of content. All of this will further reinforce their impressions of your brand and will make them much more impressed and much more likely to click ‘Like’.

### Marketing Techniques

Now you could write an entire ebook just on marketing, so we won’t do that here. We will however touch briefly on how you’re going to enhance your brand through a few internet marketing strategies.

To begin with then, you’re going to create all those social media sites and ensure that you have prominent branding on each of them. At the same time though, you also need to ensure that your social media pages are providing value that’s relevant to your industry. This will reflect on your business and it will encourage more people to follow and share your content.

Think about your ‘value proposition’ and your mission statement and try to evoke this through your social media. Show images and posts that will inspire and move people and get them to really get behind your brand. In the case of WarmSocks, you might use Instagram to show pictures of people cuddled up by the fire, or reading a great book in the evening. This way you are using social media to promote the lifestyle that you’re selling.

And why not show a little bit of behind-the-scenes stuff too? This works particularly well if you have a ‘personal brand’ (meaning that you use your own name and likeness) but

even for start-ups this is a good way to show the energy and enthusiasm behind what you do.

Another important tool for your marketing will be creating a mailing list and a blog. These both allow you to use ‘content marketing’, which is what will bring people to your site and get people to read your content regularly. Here you need to think about what will bring people to your business in searches but also how you can further sell people on your vision and get them behind what you do.

Video also creates lots of great opportunities and especially if you choose to create a campaign or an event that will translate well to this medium.

And why not use a site like Spreadshirt ([www.spreadshirt.com](http://www.spreadshirt.com)) to print out some branded corporate gifts?

## Chapter 5

# Delivering On Your Promise – How to Stick to Your Company’s Core Values and Achieve Your Mission

Your branding isn’t really about what you say though, it’s about what you *do*.

As we mentioned earlier, a brand is also a stamp of quality and in the ideal scenario, you want people to seek out your business because they feel that everything you do is better quality than the competition. When I’m out in a new town I look for a Starbucks café because I *know* they make good coffee and have WiFi and power sockets for my laptop. Back in the day, Nintendo had a ‘Seal of Quality’ on certain games which told consumers that the game they were buying had Nintendo’s approval.

This means that you need to take your reputation and your brand very seriously. *Anything* that has your name and your logo on it deserves the very best of your work and your attention and should be something you’re proud to produce. Once you’ve created a brand, it becomes incredibly important not to drop the ball.

In fact, you want to aim to do the opposite and create fantastic experiences for your customers that they’ll remember. One way you can do this is by ‘under promising and over delivering’. What this means, is that instead of claiming your product is the best

thing in the world and boasting about all the freebies you're going to include – you instead hold something back.

For instance, if you buy a phone case on Amazon, then very often the vendor will include a free stylus. This is 'over delivering' and the hope is that you'll be so pleased that you got a freebie, that you'll want to shop again. Another very simple example is to say that your delivery takes 3-4 days when in reality it takes 2-3 days. This way some customers will be incredibly pleased to get their item early.

## **The Importance of Packaging and Delivery**

This is an example of 'delivery' but really the term delivery can be much broader.

Delivery can also be the way that you 'deliver' a service. That means paying attention to the small details, like your friendliness in emails and the way you present yourself in what you wear. The same goes for packaging – this can mean wrapping a gift well so that it arrives in one piece through the mail but it can *also* mean packaging an experience in terms of the environment and the way it is presented.

Make sure to pay attention to the little details and don't just think about the 'end result'. Think about the experience and how you got there and how this will make your customer feel.

# **Chapter 6**

## **Reputation Management Basics**

If you get all this right, then you should develop a reputation for your business so that whenever someone sees your logo, they'll be moved to place an order.

Of course this doesn't always all go to plan though and *sometimes* you'll find that your customers make life difficult for you, or that you have a bad day and you drop the ball. When this happens, you can find yourself accruing bad reviews and developing a bad reputation. This is the downside of a brand and pretty much the opposite of what we're aiming for.

When this happens, you can use a technique called 'reputation management' to try and fix your rep and get things back on track.

Reputation management is something that you can do in person through interviews and statements but these days it often refers to a form of 'SEO' – Search Engine

Optimization. The simple question is: when someone searches for your brand, what do they find? And is it good?

There are three outcomes here:

- Your business doesn't show up at all (bad)
- Your business shows up but mainly with bad reviews (worse)
- Your business shows up and looks great (good!)

SEO is a technique that involves getting any given web page or website to the top of the search rankings. This then means that when someone looks for your brand online, you can define what comes up first.

Of course the ideal scenario here is that it's your website that comes up first. This way, you can completely control the first impression that people get about your business and determine exactly what they first read about you. You'll do this by filling your site with lots of relevant content, by finding keywords and inserting them into your content and by building lots of links. You should also be certain to list your business with the online directories such as Google My Business and Foursquare (if relevant).

At the same time though, you also want to ensure that positive reviews show above negative ones. To do this, you might have to perform some SEO for the positive reviews – but at the same time you also need to try and ensure that you have more positive reviews than negative.

How do you do that? There are a number of strategies. One is to provide the best service or business possible so that the experience people have with your business will be positive. On top of that though, it's also a good idea to request that they leave a positive review. Simply asking “if you enjoyed our service, please leave a positive review on TripAdvisor” is a great way to nudge someone to write about you if they otherwise wouldn't. And this is particularly important when you consider that people are generally much more likely to write about negative experiences than positive ones when left to their own devices!

Another important tip is to respond to reviews on these sites. Most sites give the option for you to do this and that way you can apologise for their experience and perhaps offer compensation/say how you will improve in future. Don't be defensive or protective – just apologise and show you've listened. This can undermine the damaging effect of a bad review and if you're really lucky, the reviewer might even change their score!

## **How to Handle a Rebranding**

If things get really bad, then you might decide to have a rebrand. This should be considered a last resort as it can render a lot of the work you've put in so far pointless. However, if you want to protect your business from a bad reputation or if your

audience/industry is changing, then it can be a good decision. A rebrand can also be useful if your brand has become muddled or lost in any way.

When rebranding, you need to maintain a connection to your old brand and try to avoid the idea that you have a bad reputation. Instead, focus on the change and how you are changing yourself as a business in terms of your mission statement, your products or your services. Create a narrative that your business is changing and so is your name and demonstrate how you're going to be bigger, better and more efficient than ever before.

Always think about the customer and what this means for them. Don't rebrand to try and 'be cool' or to shrug off bad press. Those might be motivations too, but keep the focus on your value proposition and what you're going to do differently to be better.

A recent example of a rebrand was ODesk which became UpWork. ODesk was a freelancer site that had developed something of a reputation for a "lowest-price-rules" mentality which didn't really benefit the freelancers or the clients. The name change was designed to help the company move away from this idea and thus with the new name and new logo, came a push to encourage high quality workers to charge for their premium services.

## Chapter 7

# How to Create and Use Multiple Brands

Another aspect of branding to consider is when a company chooses to use *multiple* brands. You might well decide that you need more than one brand if you have lots of very separate services, or if you have products that you want to give their own branding.

A good example of this is Microsoft. Microsoft has a company brand, but it also has brands for many of its products and divisions. Windows for instance is its own brand and so is Xbox.

Not only does this make it easier to promote those different aspects of the business, but it also means that one part of the company can have an entirely different mission status and reputation than the other.

This becomes obvious when you compare the purpose and reputation of Windows with that of Xbox. At one point Windows and Microsoft had reputations for being somewhat old-hat and out-of-touch and yet the Xbox brand remained very strong – particularly in youth markets.

Consider making brands for your divisions and products if you want to branch out into lots of areas or if you want to create a whole *movement* behind what you're doing.

On LinkedIn there is even an option to create both a 'Company Page' and a 'Showcase Page'. The Showcase page is where you would put your smaller brands and this way you could promote your website entirely separately to your main business (<https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/company-pages/showcase-pages>).

## Chapter 8

# Fantastic Examples of Branding You Can Learn From

Before we go, let's take a look at some brilliant examples of branding that you can learn from. Let these serve as a lesson to you that you can use as a source of inspiration as you build your own company identity.

### **Amazon**

Amazon does an awful lot right. Not only does Amazon have a great logo that cleverly evokes the image of a smile *and* of delivery, but it also knows how to feature that logo prominently on its excellent packaging. Many of us now have an almost Pavlovian reaction to seeing an Amazon package land on our doorstep!

Amazon also knows how to keep things fresh and exciting. They have pushed the boundaries of their industry with Kindle and now they're taking even bigger leaps with their drone service. This is an exciting brand with a vision!

### **Coca Cola**

Coca Cola really knows branding. While Coca Cola is 'just a softdrink' on the face of it, its marketing campaign elevates it far beyond that. Coca Cola is very prominent on nearly every form of social media and is constantly running fantastic campaigns. Their greatest feat? Changing the colorscheme of Santa's outfit across the world!

### **Red Bull**

Red Bull isn't just a drink, it's an energy drink. This is a concept that the company has taken to heart with an advertising campaign that includes sponsorship for extreme sports and athletes, as well as social media filled with some truly awesome stunts and feats.



## **Starbucks**

Starbucks has had some branding slip-ups but in general manages to maintain a good reputation for its sustainable coffee. It has a strong and recognizable logo and does several things to improve the experience from the customers – from letting them preorder via the app, to calling customers by name when their coffee is ready!

Honorable mentions go to: Apple, Google, Pixar, Facebook, Pepsi Max, Nike and Adidas. Take a look at their campaigns and ask yourself what makes them work so well.

# **Chapter 9**

## **Conclusion**

Hopefully this book has given you a good primer on what brands are and what they can *be* with the right strategy. A good brand is about much more than just a logo – it's about seeing your company as a movement rather than a service and creating something that people can get excited about.

It all starts with that mission statement, so ask yourself: what is it you really want to achieve? What does your business stand for?

Once you know that, your company will have the core of its identity and from there it's a matter of communicating that identity in everything you do. That means creating beautiful products, having a strong logo and company name and expressing yourself through social media.

If you keep doing this well, then you won't just have customers any more – you'll have fans. Suddenly, the possibilities will be greater than ever before for where your company can go and what it can achieve!