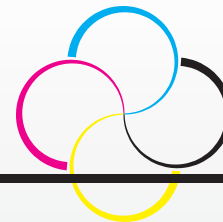


HOW IDENTITY IS FOUND: FOCUSING YOUR BRAND MESSAGE

AND 4 PRODUCTS THAT HELP YOU DO JUST THAT

— AUSTIN CORDS



CONVEYING YOUR IDENTITY

The lifeblood of a business lies in its ability to maintain its identity to a customer. Being able to ensure the customers have a consistent and great experience with a company therefore becomes a crucial part of marketing. If marketing's only goal was to relentlessly shout good deals at the customer base rather than connect with customers, then the business would not last very long. A good deal, while able to get people through the door must be followed up with a true coherent connection to the company. (How many Black Friday shoppers have not become loyal customers even after getting a free TV?) The customers that remain are only those that are able to connect to some aspect of the business. So, do you want your business to be thought of as the "cheap deal place only when there's a coupon" or do you want something more?

In order to establish connections, a brand identity must be created and maintained. This is implemented in a plethora of ways but having a logo is the first visual step in getting someone to connect to a company. Here are 4 easy connecting points utilizing a logo that should be keyed in on when developing marketing pieces throughout a customers' buying cycle.

KNOWING YOUR COMPANY'S IDENTITY

A COMPANY'S IDENTITY MUST BE AUTHENTIC.

It is too frequently manipulated in a way that crafts counterfeit portrayals and inevitably becomes shallow and unappealing. Though company identity is defined by what the public eye sees, the distinctiveness must extend from inner qualities. And indeed, a company's inner identity ought to be evaluated periodically. The talents, strengths, passions, and those within a company change over the course of time. With a continued showcasing of these positive traits and overall growth the efficiency and the customer's evaluation of a company will be enhanced.

Contemplate how your company is currently identified in your mind. Is your business meant to be considered quirky? Professional? Classy? Corporate? Innovative? Intelligent? Creative? - Old-Fashioned? Whatever you want the company to be regarded as, each process within the company should reflect that tone. From the secretary to the printed postcard ad there must be that same presentation. Analyze what currently does not fit the feel of your business, and adjust.

A sophisticated coffee shop would not do well to hire teenagers looking for summer jobs. Though they can use a coffee machine, cash register and write and call out names, the lack of understanding of coffee, young voices, and lack of permanency on their job would likely bring sales down because the sophistication and classic feel would be contradicted.

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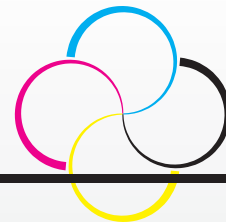
Quirky	Old Fashioned
Professional	<i>Classy</i>
<i>Creative</i>	Innovative
Corporate	INTELLIGENT
RANDOM	RETRO

Finding items that are inconsistent with your message and correcting them, as well as strategizing ways to make other aspects even better increases a company's clarity of communication.

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THE 4 PRODUCTS

1. Letterhead: When a customer receives a letter or invoice they should undoubtedly know it is from you. It is a fantastic medium putting your logo, name, and company established and centered for the client. Due to the nature of letters, even though your logo and information is evident the customer does not feel spammed at. This solidifies a professional profile and gives a consistent identity for your customer to latch onto.

2. Envelope: Don't skimp and get sticker return labels. Custom printed black ink envelopes will save you time and money, while further extending your brand reach. Envelopes are a great way to create a distinguished touch at the end of a sale, or when following up with a thank you note.

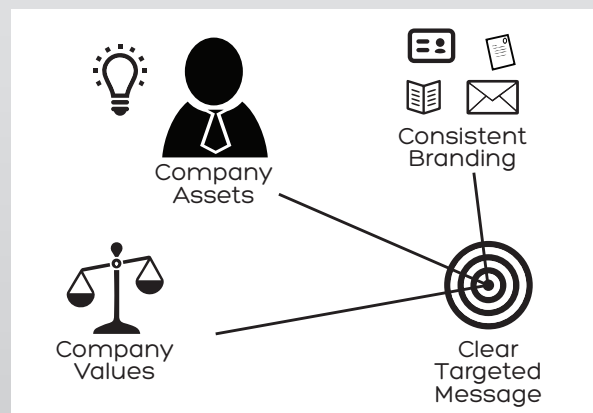
3. Brochure: Brochures are tools that act as a detailed informational depiction of the company or as an accommodating answer to certain frequently asked questions. They allow a customer to feel more comfortable with the full scope of your business and product exploration.

Contents every brochure should include:

- *A short bulleted list of services*
- *Company mission and history*
- *Detailed description regarding products*
- *Contact Information*

A brochure gives customers a way to interact with your company regardless of location and a great chance to bolster yourself by preparedly addressing an issue the customer may be confused about. Think of a brochure as a mobile website that doesn't have the limited content, slow loading times, or zoom and scrolling issues.

4. Business Card: The quality of people's business cards represents the detail and importance that they put into their work for the customer. The ability to have them on hand shows the customer you are ready to do business thereby situating a sale or a referral. According to CNN, company sales increase 2.5% for every 2000 cards passed out proving that business cards are a useful tool in truly connecting with a customer.



As you may have noticed with these emphasized products the focus is not on advertizing in the way of specials but instead presenting your company's identity in simple cost effective ways over the course of a customer's buying cycle. By the end of the cycle they will understand how your company wants to be distinguished and convey that to their social sphere.

While all four of these elements are part of building a consistent profile, to understand the overall scope of marketing feel free to review the article *3 Categories that All Marketing Falls Under* by visiting our website resources. With consideration of both the business environment and optimal use of printed tools at your disposal, you will be well equipped to share your product and idea to the marketplace.

