

## **BUILD A BRAND**

### **I. WHAT IS BRANDING, BRAND RECOGNITION, & WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT**

Branding is a name used to identify and distinguish a specific product, service, business, or organization. The American Marketing Association (AMA), defines a brand as a “name, term, sign, symbol, or design or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers to differentiate them from other sellers.”

Branding is about getting your prospects to see you as the *only* one that provides a solution to their problem, not about getting your target market to choose you over the competition.

Brand development is the dynamic foundation of your marketing communications (see Anatomy of a Marketing System in Transition). On-going brand revision and research to determine your target audience and how you want to be seen by that audience is a critical element to continuously perfecting the image and the message of your brand.

Your brand resides with the hearts and the minds of customers, clients, and prospects. To succeed in branding you must understand the needs and wants of your customers and prospects. You do this by integrating your brand strategy throughout your company and through every point of public contact.

Exploring brand marketing concepts compels you to fine-tune your business model and business practices.

### **II. BRAND DEVELOPMENT:**

#### **a. PURPOSE**

- 1) Create short-term growth and sustain long-term growth by acquiring new customers, building brand awareness, and creating customer loyalty. Your brand is the source of a promise to your customers and prospects.
- 2) An organization’s brand represents the ‘umbilical cord’ between marketing and sales. Marketing and sales are both complex and frequently the lines of separation are blurred. From a strategic standpoint, we define four potential growth strategies – Telemarketing, New Media, Physical Presence, and Traditional Media (please see the chart for a visual description). In larger organization’s where sales and marketing are separate departments, Telemarketing and Physical Presence are typically the responsibility of sales. Media Management is typically the responsibility of marketing.

**b. BRAND ELEMENT #1 – “Brand Promise”**

A “Brand Promise” is based upon methodical research and rational choices, it describes the quantitative unique, compelling, and believable characteristics of a business, product, or service that encourages interest and improves recognition of the business. The “Brand Promise” or unique value proposition briefly describes what the business “pretends” to be as seen through the eyes of the customer or prospect.

**c. BRAND ELEMENT #2 – “Resonance Factor”**

The qualitative emotional appeal of the perception of the delivery of the “brand promise” based upon personal positive experiences, reputation or the word of mouth that creates brand loyalty repeatable sales, and trust in the brand.

**d. BRAND ELEMENT #3 – “Finished Value”**

The quantitative methods or processes utilized to measure the money invested in marketing efforts and the growth associated with the investment.

**III. BRANDING TYPES**

**a. Corporate branding** – There are many components of branding basics development:

- Brand Positioning and Messaging;
- Unique Brand Identity, Personality, and Image;
- Effective Resource Allocation;
- Marketing System;
- Master Growth Strategies implementation plan

**b. Personal branding** – Singles an individual out as a professional in an industry and an expert in a field. ... YOU ARE THE BRAND! By branding yourself, effectively, you will:

- Establish yourself as an expert in your chosen field;
- Build a solid reputation within your industry; and
- Increase your notoriety and improve your perceived value in the marketplace;

**c. The steps to successfully branding yourself are as follows:**

**Step 1** Establish a personal brand identity;

**Step 2** Focus the message on who you are and what you stand for within your chosen field;

**Step 3** Get the word out through a variety of media channels that are viewed by the people most likely to be interested in your message;

**There is Always A Better Way**

**Step 4** Develop a repeatable process by which you can recreate successes and learn from your mistakes. There are many moving parts to marketing and selling and a utilizing a repeatable process puts you in a position to manage by exception;

**Step 5** Develop a personal reputation. Preparation is not the important thing it is the only thing. We are measured by the experience we create, the quality of our work compared to our competition, and the results we obtain;

**Step 6** Develop a trusted advisor. We fall in love with our own “stuff”, so having someone that can honestly evaluate fact from fiction and edit what we say, how we say it, and what we invest our time in is critically important.

#### **IV. CLARIFYING THE CHANGING ROLE OF BRANDING IN GROWING BUSINESS**

Until recently, sales people used features and benefits to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Today, the value proposition and the brand promise are critical to the success of your sales. Without strong brand recognition and a compelling and competitive value proposition or brand promise, people involved in sales have to work extraordinarily hard just to keep up with more formidable well positioned competitors. Branding is dynamic and we must constantly be raising the bar, at a minimum every 12 months, just to keep up with changes in the marketplace.

Marketing starts from the inside out. If you have people that work for or with you, get them behind your brand as well. Continuously communicate internally to reinforce the values and behaviors that reflect your brand promise until they become second nature.

#### **V. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT YOUR BRAND STRATEGY**

Developing and implementing your brand STRATEGY is as easy as 1-2-3:

1. Focus on defining your business/practice. ...think, explore, ask questions and develop a mental picture.
2. Develop a clear and concise value proposition that describes why someone should buy from you.
3. Consolidate all of your ideas in the development of your Brand Strategy Worksheet. Prioritize the work to be done, assign responsibility, and set timetables for completion of each task