

# The importance of being branded...



So what do Burberry, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, and Jimmy Choo all have in common? Ok, aside from a treasured place

in my wardrobe, and leaving a massive dent in my credit card?

We know who they are... We know what they represent, and we know the type of customer they're targeting. All 4 companies have spent millions of dollars on branding to ensure that when we see their names we automatically associate them with class and quality.

Coke on the other hand took the mass appeal approach by branding their product as "the real thing". BUT, do you know what happened to Coke when they stopped advertising for a very short time, or when they tried to introduce "New Coke" in the 1980s?

Branding is the consistent execution of your business's unique personality. It's the way your name and logo are extended throughout all of your communications, and what people think about when they see or hear it.

## What is your "brand"?

- It's your face to the world.
- It's the consistent execution of your business's unique personality.
- It's how your name is visually expressed through a logo, how that name and logo are extended throughout all of your communications, and what people think about when they see or hear it.
- It's one thing that you can own that nobody can copy or take away from you.

## Brand Equity

The Coca Cola brand is worth about 100 times more than the actual tangible assets of the company who owns it. So your brand can actually be worth something. This is called "brand equity" and the better known your brand, and the more successful the product or service that bears that brand in the marketplace, the more it's worth to you.

But whilst there can be value attached to brand, you need to be careful not to get too "caught up" in branding yourself that you lose focus on the revenue generating activities. It takes years and millions of dollars to be Coke! Working on your brand feels good

and it feels productive, but in and out of itself is not directly income earning.

## Name Of Your Brand

If your name is well known already, it is an asset and you can transfer its existing value to that of your brand.

However, what you really should be thinking about is what your name means to your potential clients or customers. A business name that actually addresses the customers WIIFM (remember "what's in it for me") is by far your smartest bet.

Whatever you do, don't use a name that is meaningless to your customers or clients. If someone has to Google what it means, you're being too clever.

Be careful with names based on location - town, city, regional or even national names, because it can become inadvertently limiting.

Think about QANTAS, an airline originally founded to fly outback bush routes and aptly named "Queensland and Northern Territory Air Services". BUT it eventually grew to become Australia's international airline and its brand name **had** to be changed to the fairly awkward acronym Qantas because the founders simply never imagined the limitation they were placing on the brand.

Limiting a brand name by product sounds reasonable but may again be short sighted. For example, the Diner's Club name has become more and more restrictive as credit cards have increasingly replaced cash for the widest imaginable spectrum of purchases beyond entertaining.

It's also important to avoid brand names that have negative connotations in other cultures and languages. *Chevy Nova* was not the success it might have been in Latin markets because "no va" in Spanish means "doesn't go"!!!!

## The Right Logo

Having decided on your name, it's time to look at a logo -- the typeface, colour and any other graphic attributes that will communicate your brand name with maximum visual impact and memorability.

Maybe your logo will include a picture or a symbol. A very great many brands do use symbols and it only takes a moment to realise how indelibly they've been impressed in our consciousness and how powerfully they evoke the values of the brands they represent -- KFC's Colonel Sanders, the Jaguar leaping cat, the Shell seashell, the Mercedes-Benz star, the Nike swoosh....

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## Designing Your Logo

You can design your own logo, of course, just as you can service your own car or renovate your own house. But unless you have particular graphic-arts flair or training, we wouldn't recommend it.

Here are 3 different ideas:

- Engage an experienced Graphic Designer to do it for you. This is probably the most assured way to get the exact outcome you're looking for. This won't be an inexpensive option, so ask to see samples of their previous work and either provide them with a set budget for the job or ask them for quotes in advance of each stage of the project. Also be sure to request references whom you can call and verify the quality, timeliness and success of their work.
- Ask a young designer to design something. The rate will be a lot less expensive, and they will probably be keen to get some experience and build their portfolio. Be prepared to work with them a little more closely and a little longer to get your desired result, but might be worth the chance for a unique logo.
- You could use crowd sourcing, which is an increasingly popular online option. Essentially, you find the site that appeals to you, give them your brief and budget, and designers will compete to have you choose their logo design. So you get to determine from the start how much you're prepared to spend (bear in mind of course that the more money you offer, the more designers that will compete), and you get to choose from a selection of logos.

No matter which option you choose, remember design is subjective so you need to be prepared to put in some work yourself to make sure the vision is realised.

## Exposing Your Brand

Equipped with its name and logo, your brand will be ready to be launched to the marketplace, including both current and potential customers.

Today's consumer is faced with such an overwhelming, unrelenting barrage of brands and other messages that most simply disappear in the crush.

To get the absolute utmost out of your brand you should expose it consistently at every opportunity -- everywhere you can think of, from every item of stationery you use throughout your literature, on your

packaging, vehicles, premises, and of course in your advertising, web and other communications.

## Maximum Impact Of Your Brand

For maximum impact your branding should be completely consistent.

The image, qualities and promises projected by your brand should also be reflected in every aspect of your business performance, from the satisfaction your products or services deliver to the manner in which your phones are answered and the way you deal with queries or problems.

## Changing Your Brand

While consistency is the key to branding, that's not to say it can never change at all.

Some brands find it necessary or desirable to reinvent themselves in response to changing times and markets. Think Telecom – Telstra, National Mutual - AXA , John J Hendrie & Associates - The Hendrie Group.

After decades of being referred to by consumers as Coke, the Coca-Cola Company got the message and incorporated the word into its branding.

These examples of change notwithstanding though, the general rule remains: consistency is one of the keystones of successful branding, and change is something you should never undertake lightly, or without careful consideration of the costs and benefits involved.

## So what about your brand?

Your brand *is* important, so you want to make sure it's appropriate, recognisable, and representative of the way you do business. Remember, your brand is so much more than your logo, it's your entire business face to the world.

For information on our branding workshops, please don't hesitate to click here or contact us on 9725 2533 or [support@hendrie.com.au](mailto:support@hendrie.com.au)

Remember every great brand started small...

Cheers,  
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