

Brand Identity: The Right Start

Take a moment to note the ten factors for the design element of an organizational identity below. These are the critical success factors that have been proven by design consultants and business leaders in the last two decades.

A Brand:

- 1) Must evolve from, and reflect, the strategic direction of the organization.
- 2) Must have context. Organizational identity is never viewed in a vacuum. All communications avenues must be considered to create a multifaceted, hard-working program.
- 3) Must be flexible. Consistency is important, but cannot be restrictive. A well-executed program allows for growth and creativity, yet maintains a unified corporate face.
- 4) Is not simply a mark or logo. It is a carefully constructed vehicle that creates a framework from which all visual communications flow.
- 5) Cannot depend on color.
- 6) Must work at multiple sizes.
- 7) Can be adopted by all divisions, departments, and groups within the organization, yet allows these sub-groups to express their own individuality.
- 8) Must work across international borders for global organizations.
- 9) Should have a planned life span of no less than 10 years.
- 10) Creates pride within the organization.

A Successful Brand Is Made Up of Several Interrelated Components:

- The name of the organization, product or service
- The look or identity (visual design, colors, typography and graphic format)
- Quality products or services that deliver both functional and emotional satisfaction
- Customer service that meets/exceeds expectations
- The value of the product or service
- Delineation of organizational values (what the company or organization stands for), and
- Perception of organizational strength and staying power

Brand names have become increasingly valuable assets as a source of differentiation in today's globalized business environment. In an age where attention is gained or lost with a click of the mouse, branding has taken on an entirely new dimension: brand identities today not only serve to generate immediate identification and to distinguish a product or service from the competition, but to supply meaning and communicate competence. In effect, it carries the weight of a corporate reputation.



TWENTY YEARS OF APPLAUSE



The Link between Branding and Success

In the private sector, brand equity is built by successfully communicating the company brand in the marketplace and fulfilling a need with a quality product or service at the right price (product value). Product value generates customer loyalty. Customer loyalty improves market position. Better market positioning creates greater sales. Greater sales lead to growth opportunities. Growth yields increased returns to shareholders; and higher returns lead to greater brand equity.

For public sector organizations, too, brand equity is built by providing the right service on the right terms and communicating the organizational brand identity effectively to stakeholders or the general public. The value of that reputation can be measured by increased political support, funding, and the facilitated success of the organization.

What Is a Great Brand Worth?

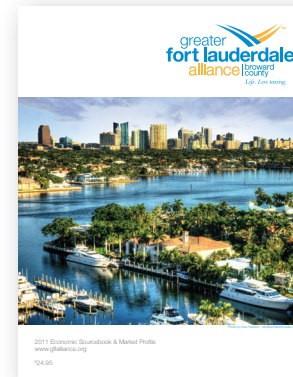
For some companies today, their brand is their single most valuable asset. Zappos, Google and Overstock don't make anything or provide any proprietary service, really. Instead they are "RE" companies...REorganizing information, REselling other companies' products, REDucing costs.

But people like the concept of who they are and how they do it...they like the brand. Yes, it is funny how Google changes the look of its landmark for every special occasion they can think of, but change is a big part of their brand and changing up their graphics works for them. Why? Because they have the eyeballs of the world on their landmark every single day.

For most of our brands, it just isn't so. We need to work hard to get people to see our name, our look and understand us instantly. We invest a great deal of money and time in our personal, traditional and online marketing to let people know about the goods we have to sell. And that is a true investment that only recently have larger companies tried to quantify and put on their balance sheets.

The opportunity for companies today to look world-class whether they are large or small is huge. There is no need to struggle along with a brand that doesn't represent you as one of the best in your category of business, whether its banking, retail, professional services, government or not-for-profit. Whether you are a billion dollar organization or yet to turn a million, you can have a world-class brand.

So your brand is something you are today and you aspire to be five years from now. It's worth spending some time and money to create that vision.



Local Brands That Compete On a World-Class Stage

Our local brands compete nationally and international for tourists, for business relocations, for a place in the world of art.

Greater Fort Lauderdale Sunny.org

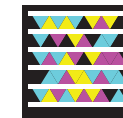
A 7-year campaign gets a new twist in 2010: "Find Your Sunny"

Broward Center for the Performing Arts 20 Years of Applause

Together with Romero Britto, a twenty-year season for the 4th Largest Performing Arts Center in the Country comes to life.

Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance Life. Less Taxing.

Our County embraces our Fort Lauderdale brand recognition to attract business for our tremendous lifestyle and tax benefits for business.



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