



BRAND IDENTITY

A COMPLETE **OVERVIEW**
OF WHAT IT TAKES TO STAND
OUT IN A **DIGITAL ERA**

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INTRODUCTION

Many factors go into creating a successful business these days, from having good products and services people want to pay for, to having good customer service, having a sizeable following in social media, and so on. But all of that stands on the one thing that makes a business recognizable to people—the brand.

Creating a brand in the digital era is now easier than ever, but also harder than ever. A brand must make your business stand out from the crowd, and that's no easy task in this day and age due to how big that crowd is nowadays. Building a strong brand and successful business are not mutually exclusive, but one and the same thing.

Every brand is different, with its own strengths, and the key is finding what your business' strength is to build the best brand you can and figure out how your business can best connect with its customers. You find that one strength you can bank on and run home with it.

In this ebook, you will learn more about what a brand is, what kind of brand is best for your business, and how to build brand awareness to take your business to the next level.

A. What is a Brand?

The brand is the identity of your business, and although there are many ways to define it these days... In my experience, a brand is simply how your customers **FEEL** when they interact or think about your business. Like how the name is a person's identifier, and it can then be linked to your personality as other people know more about you, the same can be said about a brand that is built up over time. The brand can be made to represent what the business is all about, from its products and services to its philosophy and style of customer service.

It's more than just a name, logo, or tagline. When a brand is built right, everything your customers see, hear, and sense from your business can reflect the brand. A strong brand is built and defined when customers are reminded of your business from even the smallest details, and it can then be associated with a solid reputation that was cultivated over time.

Brands express the qualities and personalities of the businesses they're associated with. When built right with a good strategy behind it, a brand can inspire customer loyalty that can then be the backbone of a business, which then lends to longevity and continued effectiveness.

A strong brand is a cornerstone of business success, and it can only be obtained through hard work and determination over time. There are plenty of flash-in-the-pan brands out there that people raved about once but never spoke of again, but there are no shortcuts when it comes to a reputable and long-lasting brand that will stand the test of time.



The concept of having a well-known brand that can generate revenue simply from the strength of its own reputation is called brand equity, and it's a powerful thing indeed. Many big businesses have reached their grand level of success due to building up their brand equity, starting from small beginnings to the giants they are now. Nowadays, while they do spend plenty of their resources on continuing to market their businesses, those efforts are more about maintaining brand awareness as their continued success is generated mostly through brand equity alone.

B. Defining Your Brand

You must recognize what your business is all about. From your target customer base to the message you're trying to convey, all of that goes into defining your brand. The brand and what you're aiming to achieve with it must be clearly defined in order to know from the start which direction you must take it.

Having an explicit mission and vision for your business helps greatly in defining the brand. The process of branding is all about establishing your overall business philosophy as that guides everything you do, from how you sell products and services to how you treat customers. The image and reputation you garner from that then defines your brand in the eyes of the people.

If you haven't thought about it that far yet, then at least know who exactly you're selling to. You'll have to do your homework to get it down to the exact details, from what demographic you're trying to appeal to the price range of your products and services. If you already have that covered, then what's left is homing in on what kind of customer you want to patronize your business the most.

All of that sounds like vague business and marketing advice, and that's because all of those elements go into how you should define your brand. If you're still trying to develop a brand identity, then you must find a way to take all of that and put it into your brand so people can see right away what your business is about. The brand is the face of your business and its primary marketing tool, so getting it right is a critically important step. A clearly defined brand can attract target customers more effectively. Only fools can ever see branding as a useless exercise in the process of growing a business. Big companies spend millions of dollars in developing their brands, and a big part of that process is defining them and what they're supposed to represent.

All of that is done through understanding brand values. What are the qualities that your brand

C. What Goes Into Creating a Strong Brand

As discussed, to define your brand beforehand helps build a strong brand later. A strong brand is a brand with substance. The following guidelines can help you better define that brand and build it into something your business can reliably stand on.

First of all, the brand must be visually unique and eye-catching. The brand name must also be unique, as well as catchy. Those qualities lend the brand to being easy to recognize, which is crucial to the goal of brand awareness. The logo must be identifiable at a glance and the name must be easy to say and read while still adequate for representing the business.

For all of that to be possible, there must be simplicity in the brand design. A logo or name that's overly complicated can be difficult to remember and comprehend. If a person viewing them has to spend more than a second to digest what they're looking at, then the brand has failed.

All of these visual elements should efficiently convey and communicate your company message to your audience, so you are not only telling your audience what your business is about... but you're communicating the emotions behind WHY you do what you do.

A strong brand exudes authenticity. Whatever message it's trying to convey, it must be accurate in its representation. The brand should not look like it's trying to be whatever it's not. For example, a budget brand can't have a logo that looks like it's for a luxury product. Even if there's intent for irony, that may be lost on your audience.

Authenticity takes much from simplicity since it's easier and more reliable to convey your message directly rather than in a roundabout way. Building a strong brand is all about storytelling. The better and more relatable your story is, the more authentic your brand is and the stronger it becomes. A story need not be complicated; the best stories tend to be the simplest.

Finally, above all else, there must be consistency in that branding. As long as it has anything to do with your business, it must have the branding. From your physical and online stores, your website and social media accounts, to your employees, marketing materials, and everything else, they must show the brand.

That consistency also goes into how you do business. It's not enough that you do a good job, but you have to do that every single time. Customers will associate that quality to your brand. That then builds a good reputation, which is the substance that makes for a strong brand.

We can say that a good business model is a sturdy skeleton, good customer service is having strong muscles, and a solid reputation is showing a nice and healthy skin. That's what a strong brand needs, giving a good picture of health for your business.

DISCOVERING YOUR BRAND

Before you start getting into the nitty-gritty of developing a brand, you may first want to learn about the different types of brands. As stated beforehand, brands are not all the same. Each successful brand conveys a different kind of message that suits the business it's representing.

Deeply understanding what kind of business you're running and understanding who your ideal target customer is can help you figure out what type of brand you should build. There may be a concept or idea behind your brand that you wish to come across, but that won't happen unless you understand the people you're trying to convey that message to.

A. Different Types of Brands

There is no official list of brand types, but you can see how different one brand is from another by just looking at them and being able to remember what kind of companies they are. It's about what kind of message they're trying to convey and how they make customers feel when they look at the brand.



ATTITUDE BRANDS



SYMBOLIC BRANDS



FUNCTIONAL BRANDS



INDIVIDUAL BRANDS



OWN BRANDS



DISRUPTIVE OR INNOVATIVE BRANDS



CONSCIOUS BRANDS



SERVICE BRANDS



VALUE BRANDS



PERFORMANCE BRANDS



STYLE BRANDS



LUXURY BRANDS

Attitude Brands

Businesses with products and services marketed to make customers feel more of something usually have attitude brands. They tend to come off as either energetic and powerful or calming and serene, conveying how the products can make customers feel.

Symbolic Brands

These are a bit similar to attitude brands, but they're more for services and utilities like banks, phone companies, and so on. They're meant to exude a sense of security and reliability. Because of this, they're designed to not just attract customers, but retain them as well.

Functional Brands

For businesses selling products that are primarily sought after for their function, functional branding is what's needed. Functional brands are meant to promote the physical characteristics and features of the product, as well as give reasons why customers should spend money on a product or service. They're meant to not only show that the brand is not only of good quality, but also good value.

Individual Brands

Some businesses decide to get a brand that's primarily meant to be unique and stand out. It can also be meant to compete against another brand sold by the same business, pitting against each other. Functionally, individual brands are meant to differentiate between different parts of a business, especially if there are different product lines and types involved. You tend to see individual brands from larger companies that sell multiple products and services under one banner.

Own Brands

They're sometimes referred to as private labels or store brands. Own brands carry the retailer's name as the main brand label, meant to promote the business itself rather than just the individual products. These tend to be used by businesses that sell different types of their own products under one banner, like beauty products, food products, and other in-house consumer goods.

Disruptive or Innovative Brands

These are meant to challenge the status quo of a market or industry, conveying how invention and innovation makes it stand out from the rest. You can see this often from big technology companies, who are trying to one-up each other with their latest products.

Conscious Brands

A business that projects an image of doing things for a good cause would have a conscious brand. Whether it's for a social or environmental cause, a conscious brand conveys a message of having a mission to help and do their part.

Service Brands

Service-oriented businesses are all about making customers happy, which calls for a service brand. Like the symbolic brand, it's about conveying a sense of security in the brand. However, a service brand must also portray the business' focus on interacting with customers, promising to listen to them and give them the best possible quality of service on a consistent basis.

Value Brands

Products marketed for their affordability and value for money would usually have a value brand. Such products are offered at low prices for basic quality that customers may find satisfactory for their needs. The purpose of the value brand is to convey that affordability while also ensuring the customer that they're not missing out on much by choosing that brand over more expensive ones.

Performance Brands

When your product is marketed around its superior performance and reliability, then you should have a performance brand. It's like a mix between an attitude brand and a functional brand wherein you're trying to convey how the functionality of that product can make customers feel good and even superior to those who have lesser products. Sports cars are a good example of products that tend to have performance branding.

Style Brands

Much like an attitude brand, the style brand is all about what its products and services make a customer look and feel. But in this case, it's a lot more about the visual aspect, marketing to customers a desired aesthetic. Fashion and lifestyle brands are typically style brands by default.

Luxury Brands

Products offered at a higher price and with higher quality are luxury brands that exude prestige and extravagance in some way. Whether they're in gold and encrusted with jewels or simply look more ostentatious compared to other brands, luxury brands are all about putting forward the message of it being accessible to those who have the money right from the start.

As you can see, each of these types of brands are different, but the one thing that they all have in common is that they communicate **EMOTIONS**.

B. Business Mission and Values as Basis

Determining your business goals and philosophy is a big part of defining your brand. When a person looks at your brand, they should get a sense of what it's about and what you can do for them. There has to be a strong long-term reason why you're selling your products and services to them other than just making a profit in order to not just have an idea on what to do with your brand, but also be able to sustain your business.

A business mission need not be too elaborate or overcomplicated. For example, if you're running a restaurant with your own original dishes, your mission could just be as simple as wanting to see your customers satisfied and be inspired by your own dishes. That in itself can be your purpose as a restaurateur, and it can also guide how you do your branding.

Perhaps you're a retail store selling mobile devices. You can have a mission of providing the best smartphones and tablets for the money. Not only do you get more customers who are on a budget, but you can also be motivated in not selling substandard devices to your customers. Having principle is a business value and can be a mission in itself.

You can then put that into your branding. Your tagline can communicate to your customers about what you stand for as an entrepreneur, and that can then be reflected on your logo as well. Having that foundation is a great way to have a mission as a basis for branding.

As you keep with your mission as a business, your growing customer base will then associate that conviction with your brand, and the benefits of that can compound to a reputable attained with hard work and discipline.

C. Finding Your Ideal Target Customer

This is not just for branding, but also for starting and running a business as a whole. Being able to choose what kind of brand you want to have for your business has a lot to do with knowing your target customer.

Is your target customer male or female? How old are they? Where do they live? What kind of lifestyle do they have? What's their income range? What makes them buy things? All these questions are important considerations in choosing which direction you want to take your brand.

Of course, if you're already running a business, then you should have an idea on what kind of customers you tend to attract. The kind of products and services you sell, as well as the industry or niche you fill, determine who your target customers are. If that's the case, you can home in on that ideal customer through your branding, implementing a style and voice that attracts more of a certain crowd you wish to market to.

If you're only just starting your business, then determining your target customer is an inherent and mandatory part of the process. You could either be planning to sell to a big market with an in-demand product or filling that white space with something no one has seen before or a niche not a lot of people are selling to.

Each one of those cases makes for a different way of branding. Remember that the branding is for other people to see your business, so you want to shine not only in the crowd, but also in people's minds. A niche brand will wear its uniqueness on its sleeve, while a brand in a more mainstream market will have the markers for what's common in that industry while still having some characteristics that are unique to it.

D. Finding Your Brand Voice and Personality

Knowing what your business should be about can help you find your brand voice and personality. It depends on what kind of business you run and how you run it. It can be based on the entrepreneurs themselves, the employees that help run the business, and even the kind of customers it attracts. Everyone involved in the business can be the basis for that brand voice and personality.

For instance, younger audience demands a more casual and light-hearted brand voice, while a more mature audience will respond better to a more formal and authoritative brand voice. This is certainly where knowing your market and who your target customer is really comes in handy, not only in business but in branding as well. That then leads to the brand gaining its own personality, like a set of human characteristics that make it more relatable to other people. Even when not deliberately creating a personality for the brand, it can emerge organically over time as more customers engage with a brand.

It has a lot to do with how a business, its products and services, the way it treats its customers, and many other things that can make a personality emerge. If you're trying to do it deliberately, then the best way to go about it is to fine-tune your brand voice to make it sound natural and not forced.

You can control where the brand voice goes, but personality can form both directly and indirectly. It can also be created deliberately or otherwise, with factors depending on how much effort you put into it and whether you're gaining a large enough loyal customer base or not.

DEVELOPING YOUR BRAND

Once you've figured out what type of brand you're going for and have defined what you want it to show, it's time to give it form and develop it for your business. After all, a brand is only good if people can actually see it. To do that, you must make everything you've learned and thought of in the planning and defining phase concrete and turn that into something visual and tangible.

Alongside that, you must come up with a strategy on how to present that brand in the best possible light and how it should represent your business. You wouldn't want it to misrepresent what you do, making customers expect one thing only to get something different.

Plenty of businesses out there get that wrong, and those brands are unable to adequately fulfill their purpose. That's why brand development is such an important step in the process.

A. The Different Phases of Brand Development

Brand development is a process that goes through different phases, each bringing more shape and structure to the brand. It starts from an idea that becomes clearer with research and study, then it is given form, and it is then given a strategy to implement it into the business.

If you're reading this from the very beginning, you've already seen what goes into the phase of brand discovery. This is when you're trying to define what your brand should be about and how it should convey your message. That is the planning and self-realization phase that lets a business find its voice and personality.

Up next is brand design, which is putting everything you've come up with in the brand discovery phase into something you can see and take hold of. There's the name and logo, and then the tagline and copy to go with it. That's the face and cover of the business, letting people know what it is and remind them what it provides.

Then there's forming the brand strategy, which will decide how the brand will be implemented in your business and its marketing. It elaborates on its platform, how it will eventually shape its identity, and how it will present itself to its audience. Without a definite strategy, the brand won't be able to benefit the business as much as it possibly can.

You may have to go back and forth between steps during the process. This is normal as there's no clean-cut way to proceed with the creative process. The important thing here is being able to get a clearer picture of what your brand should be as you go along.

B. Brand Design: Developing the Visuals and Copy

Anything associated with your business that has a visual component, whether it's a physical store, website, social media pages, promotional materials, and so on, it must have your branding for it to be easily identified as yours.

That's where brand design comes in, wherein you define the overall image of your brand that people will see first. It's important to come up with a good design so you consistently make a good first impression on potential customers.

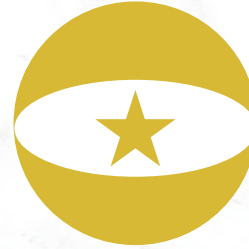
That goes a long way to engaging and converting them, making the brand visuals a valuable part of your marketing.

Branding, Identity & logos Explained



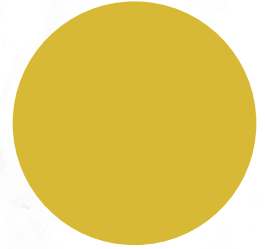
BRAND

Perceived emotional corporate image as a whole



IDENTITY

Visual aspects that form part of the overall brand



LOGO

Identifies a business in its simplest form via the use of a mark or icon

Visual Design

The visual design of a brand is about defining the face of the brand and its overall image. For the majority of the time, the logo is the very first thing people see when they initially encounter your brand. That logo can be a stylized depiction of your brand name, an emblem or image that represents your brand, or even both.

Before you come up with your logo and other visuals, it's best to first determine the color scheme, visual style, and typography your brand will use based off of your company message, because when done correctly all of these elements will accurately communicate the essence behind your company and help create consistency throughout your brand. They form the foundation of what your branding will look like, which are all major factors to how your brand will be represented.

With colors, you want to figure out whether you'll stick with mostly light or dark colors, warm or cool colors, and then which shade you'll end up with. You may already have an idea of which color you want, whether it's red, blue, green, yellow, purple, pink, or so on. However, the other colors and shades that accompany them are just as important, as well as the color for the backgrounds they'll sit on.

Choosing colors has a lot to do with psychology as they can affect how people may feel about your brand at first glance. For example, restaurants and fast food chains tend to use red and other warm colors as they're more associated with food and can make people feel hungry. Technology companies tend to use bolder colors, along with silver and other metallic colors to reflect how their products look and feel.

The overall visual design is also about how the logo makes people feel when they see it. Logos with sharp edges may look more dynamic and exciting, while rounder logos may be more calming and reassuring. That also goes for visual effects, like making your logo look shiny, adding shadows to give it more depth, or so on.

You may also have a visual theme and imagery or iconography you want to use, whether it's an animal, human representation, object, symbol, letter, shape, or so on. That imagery is what will make the logo more recognizable, thus adding much to the brand identity.

You must then figure out the typography, which are the font faces and styles you'll be using for the text on your logo and copy. Serif fonts tend to look more bookish and classy, while sans serif fonts are more contemporary and casual. Bolder font weight gives more emphasis, while thinner font weights may seem calmer and more inviting.

Having a logo is not enough. You must also have the brand name to go on top, bottom, or beside the logo so people know what the business your logo is identified with. The typography of the brand name should match how the logo appears so they work together in harmony.

They must also be designed in a way that will let each of them stand alone without the other, depending on how they will be used on your products, packaging, promotional materials, online pages, and so on.

Writing Brand Copy

The brand copy is the text that goes with the logo and other brand visuals, further elaborating what the brand represents. It also communicates the values and qualities of the business to prospects and customers, as well as adding a voice into brand's personality. Brand copy includes your main tagline, product copy, and all other text meant to describe your business.

At this point, you may have mapped out your business mission and values, as mentioned in the previous chapter. That forms the source of inspiration for your brand copy, including the tone and voice of your brand. Having a consistent tone throughout all your copy makes communicating your brand message much more effective.

The first step is to make a brand promise. It's the unique value proposition you present to your audience to convert them into customers. Recall what your business mission is and come up with one or two sentences that summarize it, making sure that it's said in a way that appeals to the customer. You can then come up with a tagline from that brand promise.

From that, you must then write down your brand messages. Have a standard format for all your product and service descriptions to create consistency and reinforce your brand promise in each of them. Boil down your products to their most vital and attractive values, from being good at its function, to being innovative, reliable, easy to use, and so on.

Focus on the features that consistently stand out and will bring customers the most satisfaction. As you do this, you'll be able to better figure out your brand voice, whether it's confident, excited, reassuring, or so on. That voice is meant to express how they will approach and interact with customers, as well as how they feel about their products and services.

For instance, a financial company may have an authoritative voice to show that they know what they're doing. An insurance company may have a more friendly and approachable voice, making them sound like they're always ready to help. A technology company may have a confident voice that's sure about the quality of their products and shows pride in their innovative approach.

Once you have your brand message and voice, you can then come up with a style guide for your brand copy going forward. That style guide will help with writing future copy more easily and maintain consistency with the brand voice across the board.

C. Brand Strategy: Building a Human Brand

Once you have your brand design figured out, it's time to plan how you're going to implement it. That goes a long way to building brand awareness, which will be discussed in the next chapter. Right now, you're creating a plan and putting down the foundation for making that brand awareness possible.

It's not enough to just put up your branding everywhere in hopes of having people see it. It's all about how you make those people see that branding and how you'll associate your business values to it. The key is to make your branding be relatable to people, and the way to do is to give it personality and make it human.

Making Your Brand Human

A brand with no personality can never be able to create brand recognition and awareness as it wouldn't be able to connect with its audience. The business is its own entity, with its management and employees being like the bones and organs that make up an organism.

The brand is what makes that more apparent to people, and letting them be able to relate to it like they would with another person can go a long way to making it more relatable. There are plenty of brands out there that forego that human connection, and it can be said that they suffer because of it. While those business may continue to operate, they don't fulfill their true potential.

That goes back to how branding is basically storytelling. The best way to make people relate to something is to tell its story. From the name and logo to its tagline and brand copy, they must tell the story of the business succinctly. Having them show elements of your business' history can help make the brand more relatable, making it seem like a tribute to your roots. Combining a human brand with a good unique value proposition is a great way to market your business. A unique value proposition is basically knowing what benefit you offer customers, who your customers are, how you solve their problems, and what makes you different compared to all other businesses in your niche.

Learning from Successful Brands

You can also learn from successful brands, especially those in your particular niche. If there are successful brands there to begin with, then you know it can definitely work. You may then think that since they're already there, then you'll have to compete. That's not that big of a problem since it's not about being first, but being good at what you do. Promoting a brand is about standing out in your own way, after all.

Learn from those successful brands and take elements that you know can work for your brand as well. You can then eventually come up with your own way of doing things that work best for your brand, which then leads to developing your brand voice and personality. But never forget about the authenticity

D. Implementing Your Brand

Now that you have your brand strategy, it's time to put it to work. You must now develop your brand positioning, which is where your brand stands in the market. That brand positioning determines what kind of customers are attracted to your brand, how your customers find you, and why they would ever engage with your brand.

Authenticity and the Importance of Social Listening

If you followed the steps in this guide, you already figured out who your customers are. All that's left is figuring out how to best put across the benefits of your brand to others. That goes into your overall marketing strategy, which should always factor in your brand strategy. But all of that must be grounded by the one thing that can make your brand look at feel human above all else, which is authenticity.

Authenticity is reinforced through the storytelling in your brand marketing and development. Talk about what led you to building your brand. Talk about the people behind your brand. Talk about the struggles that go into building your brand. Talk about how your business benefits from that brand development.

People appreciate authenticity through storytelling, and they appreciate you listening to them even more. You may even get feedback that can help with your brand development, which is certainly a plus. That's social listening, which is acting on feedback that you find useful to your brand strategy.

The most authentic thing you can do is to listen and acknowledge whatever you find beneficial. When your audience can see that you listen to them and take their feedback into consideration, they pay even more attention to your brand. That then leads to creating brand awareness.

CREATING BRAND AWARENESS

Now that your business has a brand to call its own, it's time to put it out to the world and have people see it. But all that work you've put into developing it won't amount to anything if the market is not made aware of it. You must create reach and have people engage with your brand to have it take full effect.

Brand awareness is simple in concept, but it then becomes a rabbit hole that goes deeper and deeper as you pursue it further. Its importance can never be understated, and it can be the one factor that can take your business to previously unthinkable heights.

A. Importance of Brand Awareness

The most obvious thing of importance is being able to reach more prospective customers as more people become aware of your brand. When people see a brand, it should remind them of what they've experienced from it, whether it's from an advertisement or actual experience of purchasing something from that business.

They then start to remember your brand and recognize it whenever they see it. However, brand awareness takes it further by being more than just remembering what a brand looks like. It's also what it's about and how it makes them feel. Brand recognition is merely a part of brand awareness, albeit an important one.

There's a fundamental difference between brand recognition and brand awareness. Brand recognition is people being able to identify your brand based on its appearance. Of course, that in itself is a reward for doing a good job in brand design and development, but that alone is just the tip of the brand marketing iceberg.

Brand awareness is about more than just recognizing the brand. It's also about remembering what that brand stands for and the value that business provides. Much of what makes brand awareness powerful is the experience your customers get and retain when they make use of your products and services.

B. Building Brand Awareness

This is the most important part of developing a brand. You create a brand so people can see it, so building brand awareness is the meat of the whole thing. First, you make your audience be able to recognize your brand, and then you create awareness by associating that brand with the strengths of your business. After that, you make them remember your brand.

What's likely the most powerful thing you can do for your brand awareness, which is your online marketing. It's perhaps your most important brand development tool. Your website is where your audience go to learn what you do, how you do it, and who your customers and clients are. Your social media is where they can reach and interact with you, as well as where you can engage them as well with posts and responses.



Providing Fundamental Value Through Your Business

Brand awareness can then be made even better by doing one of two things. You can make that barrier of entry lower so you can provide value to more people, or you can further improve your products and services to have your customers rave about them and make your brand more enticing.

You need not choose between these two if you can actually manage doing both at the same time, and doing them successfully can surely create more brand awareness. If you run your business well, you'll know what your capacity is and what your limits are.

This is the most fundamental part of your brand awareness strategy. It may sound boring as it's just about doing business well, but all your other brand awareness efforts will fall flat without this crucial step. Remember that building brand awareness is a long-term effort, so doing good business ensures your brand isn't just a flash in the pan.

Content Marketing

If you want to take your brand to the next level, online marketing is definitely the way to go. A big part of that is content marketing, having your own original content to deliver to your audience. Online content is crucial to any modern brand awareness strategy, so get into content marketing if you wish to make the most of your website and social media presence.

This is how you can best associate your brand with what you do best in your business. There are two ways you can take your business in regards to having a niche, either you do something no one has done before, or you do something everyone else does, but do it way better than they can. But customers may not recognize right away what you're doing at first, and the best way to clear that up is with a good content and social media marketing strategy.

With this, you can bring everything you've been working on in defining your brand, knowing your target customer, and developing your initial brand into practice. As you engage more with your audience over time, your brand can evolve, along with developing your brand voice and personality further. This works to improve brand awareness as more people become aware and even involved with your brand through your online presence.

Having your own website is what can really make content marketing take off as it provides a base for your original content. It's possible to create content for your social media pages, but having your own website lets you do even more things. It also enables you to integrate your branding to your content.

Search Engine Optimization and Other Online Marketing Tactics

Much of what you may find out in researching online marketing mentions things like search engine optimization and other online marketing tactics. These are also valuable tools as they can boost your content marketing even more. Your website is not as effective as it can be if it doesn't have good SEO, and having that cover lets you gain more online visibility that helps with improving brand awareness.

Technical, on-page, and off-page SEO can be integrated into everything else in your online marketing and brand strategy, but they're not the be-all-end-all solution to all your problems. They are merely supplements and parts of the greater whole, alongside social media marketing and content marketing.

What matters most is that your overall brand strategy is sound, as well as your business. Everything must work together in order to yield successful results.

High-Effort Content

You can then do many other things (within your capacity, of course) like making videos or producing a podcast that people can tune in to learn more about you and how you do things, as well as know more about your brand. Of course, you'll have to establish your brand first and gain a considerable following before getting into these high-effort ventures to create even more brand awareness.

They can be powerful tools, but only if you already have the audience or are willing to put in the time and energy into building them as the platform for your brand awareness strategy. Such high-effort content are what you can call force multipliers, which multiply the effectiveness of your brand marketing campaign exponentially, but only if done right and implemented in the right circumstances.

However, if things don't live up to your high expectations, that high-effort content can become time and resource sinks that may only take you away from brand marketing efforts that may be more effective and less stressful at the moment. You can take a break from them and pick them back up later on when you do build up that interested audience later on, but it's still a setback.

Many get enthusiastic in making such high-effort content as they see plenty of successful examples on the Internet. But when you're running a business, managing that business must be the priority. The key here is to not have the mindset of doing high-effort content despite running the business. Instead, it should be about doing it as an integral part of running the business.

Your brand awareness strategy shouldn't be something you do just for the benefits, but because you're able to make it a part of running the business. The business and the brand, in essence, are one and the same. If the content marketing you're doing isn't seamlessly integrated with everything else you're doing in your business, like selling your products and services, engaging your customers, and so on, then you're most likely doing things wrong.

But perhaps you're passionate about making those types of content. It can help with the cost in time, money, and energy required in consistently making them, but that passion must be coupled with a good plan. That's something you should already have considered during your initial brand development phase.

Providing More Value Through Your Products and Services

Content is the best way to provide value to your audience as you're able to deliver it for free. As you give more value to them, they become more willing to give you value in return. This is a fundamental part of converting an audience into customers. However, there are also other ways to provide more value as well.

For instance, you can give them what's called freemium. If you're a service-oriented business, you can make use of the freemium business model, which is basically having a product wherein you can provide a basic version for free, then offer more premium features behind a paywall. Those who wish to make use of those premium features can then pay for them, either with a one-time payment or with a periodic subscription (either monthly or within a limited number of uses).

The freemium business model is often used in mobile and web apps, and it has proven successful for many brands. Having a basic version of your service that offers useful features most people can use is a great way to build and retain an audience as it's free value they can find very useful, and a good number of them may want to use the premium features.

Even if most of them will keep using the free version, there's always the opportunity of converting some of them to pay for the premium features. Many of them, both basic and premium users, may then share your brand to other people, thus creating even more brand awareness.

Sponsoring Events and Influencers

As your brand grows bigger, you gain more clout and authority. You can take advantage of this growth by becoming a sponsor. Events are a great way to create more brand awareness, sponsoring them and having your brand be mentioned to potentially hundreds and even thousands of attendees.

You can have your brand be put on their materials as well. If you did your brand design well, your brand will look good on them, and that can help spread it and create more brand recognition, and then engaging with your brand later on can create more brand awareness.

Sponsoring influencers can also create more brand awareness. They can create content that mentions your brand, either as a sponsor alone or creating a content that features your brand and your products and services. The key to this is letting them have a good degree of freedom in talking about your brand, letting them give honest feedback while also making sure they give your brand the respect and recognition you feel it deserves.

Both of these methods are also force multipliers, especially if those events and influencers you sponsor have significant audiences. Those people can be made aware of your brand, and some of them may try out your products and services. They can then spread the word about it to their friends and audiences, thus creating even more brand awareness.

C. Measuring and Maintaining Brand Awareness

It's important to measure the performance of your branding efforts so you'll know if the methods and strategic decisions you've chosen to execute are actually doing anything and if they're indeed effective. One of the great things with online marketing is that you can easily track your performance through analytics, which is yet another reason why you should do it.

It's one thing to achieve the level of brand awareness you're aiming for, but maintaining it is a different game altogether. In order to do this, you must see what methods work. But it's not just about whatever gives results, but also seeing what can be improved to make them more efficient in delivering those results.

If something takes too much time and resources in order to give just a little bit of a positive result, then that's going to be hard to maintain. You'll have to decide on whether you just tweak it to make it work better or put it aside altogether. With the latter, you must then see if you can pick it back up later on when your situation is better or never get back to it anymore.

Maintaining brand awareness is about putting together everything that's optimal. That optimization process can only be done through vigilant measuring of your performance. The good thing about this online age of business and marketing is that it's easier than ever to track results with metrics and analytics.

CONCLUSION

The business and the brand should be seen as not separate, but the same thing. The business serves to grow the brand, and the brand serves to grow the business. One can't be without the other, so the process of developing a brand is pretty much developing the business as well.

When built right, a brand can greatly elevate a business and give it more reach. It can bring in new customers that would have otherwise skipped past it if it didn't have eye-catching branding to make it stand out. While some may find this to be superficial, the effect that good branding can do to a business can never be understated.

What you have just read in this ebook is just a summary of what it takes to develop a brand for a business. There is much more to be learned, most of which may be more applicable specifically to your business. That is best learned through experience, but what you may have learned here can help you get started in understanding what it takes to build a good brand.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or need help with branding your business, feel free to send an email to contact@lioneyecreative.com. We'd be happy to help you with all your branding concerns. Thank you very much for reading our guide to branding for business.

