



10 Step Guide to

BOOST YOUR BRANDING

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Introduction

Whether you work for a young start-up or a well-established corporation, one of the most critical pieces of your marketing strategy is branding. In fact, building a strong brand is absolutely vital in industries where competition is intense and diversified.

A brand is much more than a name, sign, symbols or other design elements. It is about what your prospective customers recognize as the key features and benefits of your product and helps them to see that your product offerings are the best fit for their needs or the best solution to their problem. Just as important, your brand also differentiates you from your competition so your customers think only of you and your company when they see your logo or read your tagline.

Good branding conveys information about your positioning, company culture, values and objectives. Consumers should intuitively understand who you are, what you do and how you do it. Your brand must deliver a clear message using consistent terminology and symbols to create an emotional connection with your target customers. Through consistency, repetition and “walking the walk,” potential customers will begin to acknowledge the uniqueness of your brand and develop specific feelings for your products and services.

Even though a brand may be globally identifiable, refreshing your company brand can help mark a new company direction or denote the entrance to a new era. A brand is never fixed or permanent; it is as varied as its company’s long and winding path to success.

Conduct a **brand audit**

A brand audit focuses on evaluating your company's presence in the market place in comparison to its top competitors (perceived or real), an analysis of product features, and market share assessment by industry segment, promotional mix and current level of brand awareness.



Survey

all key stakeholders of your company including management, employees, key customers, pertinent industry contacts and select suppliers.

Focus

on defining your company's key branding messaging and investigate their expectations in terms of features, presentation and language of your branding and marketing materials.

Decide what your brand is and what it **represents**



Once you know what your stakeholders feel are the key components of your brand, it is time to formalize them.

Go ahead and write up a short document defining:

What your brand **is**

What it **stands for**

What it is striving to **achieve**

What it should **convey**

Adjust your logo, colors, taglines, etc. to fit your updated brand

After defining your brand, it is time to find a top notch creative talent to take that brand definition and turn it into visual (and sometimes audio) form.



If it just a brand update, alter your logo or colors, but don't stray too far from what existing customers are familiar with. Ideally, your creative team will build a complete brand style guide providing instruction on how to represent your brand in any place it might show up: websites, blogs, email signatures, social media, printed materials, advertisements and more.

STEP 4

Apply your brand to your content

Here's where the style guide pays off. When you are updating all of your varied content across the business, it helps to have a consistent guide detailing size, positioning, fonts, taglines, colors (with official color numbers such as Pantone, RGB or HTML hex triplets) and everything else that goes into effectively applying your brand to your content.

Be thorough, we bet you have more branded materials than you realize!



Renovate your website

The next step to boosting your brand is updating your website. Whether you need a complete revamping, a color palette shift or just an adjusted header bar to fit a new logo, get it done. Your website is the first place most customers go today to learn about your company and its offerings – and it should be the first place they see your newest branding iteration.



STEP 6

Set your social media strategy

Social media networks are another very public faced of your brand. Obviously profile and background images will need to be changed, but the tone of your posts and shares also convey your brand.

Look back to the results of your brand audit and determine how you want your online interactions to sound. Smart and professional? Warm and friendly? Authoritative? These feelings are part of your brand and an integral part of a



Share your refreshed brand with the world

Once all your content, both physical and digital, has been updated, it's time to let the world see the new you. Reach out to select media outlets important to your industry, have employees share the news on their personal social media accounts, send out press releases.

You've done a lot of work, it's time to brag a little.



Take your brand on the road

Now that your brand is freshly reinvigorated, make sure everyone you meet in person knows it too. Bring newly branded leave-behinds to your sales prospect meetings. Send your best clients something to show your appreciation and let them know that even though your logo is different, they'll still receive the same great products and service. Have your executives mention it when giving speeches at professional events or trade shows. Get your brand out there where it can be noticed.



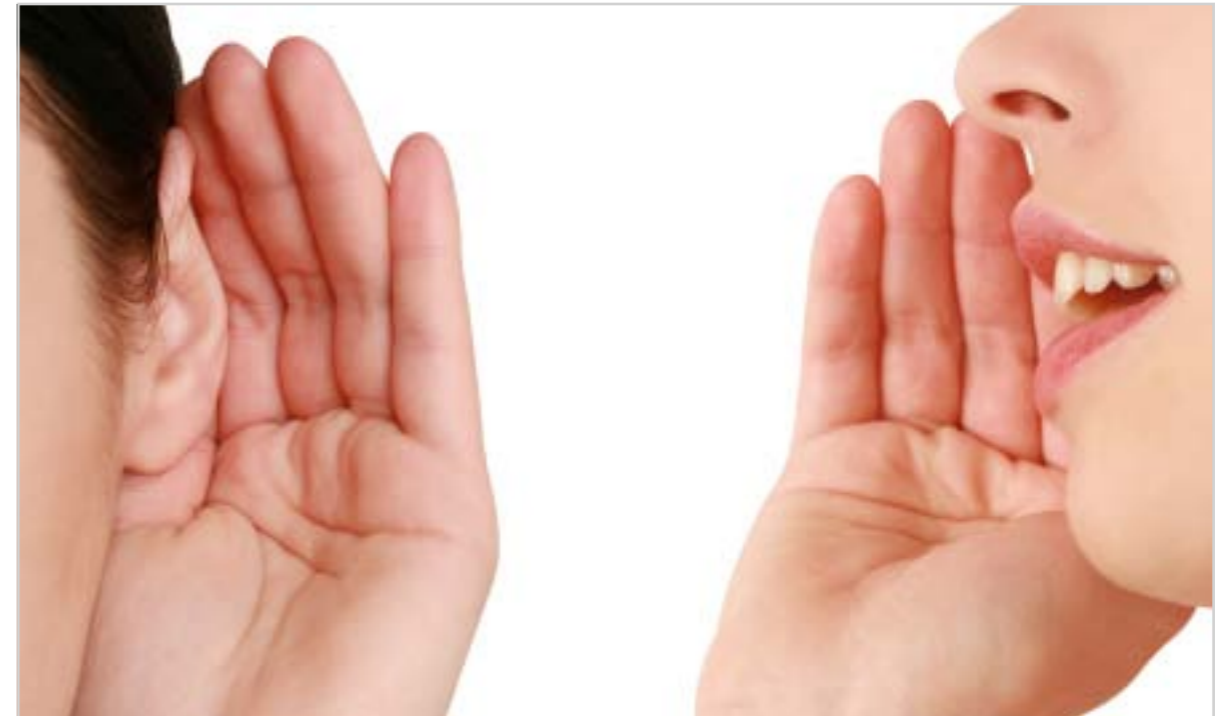
Listen to feedback

With your new brand all over the place, you're sure to hear feedback from many sources including consumers, industry associations, competitors, media outlets and maybe even government agencies.

Take all the opinions, both positive and negative, and use them to evaluate the change in public perception your update has created.

Try to emphasize the things that make your brand stronger and more unique. Maybe think about moving away from more poorly received areas.

Stay true to your core values, but mold what you can to maximize the effectiveness of your branding efforts.



Continue to **evolve** your brand

Things move fast these days, so even though you've just spent a good chunk of time updating your brand, don't let it stagnate. Pay attention to changes in your target audiences and customer-base. Make sure your brand speaks to multiple generations by keeping it current, yet rooted in the history and tradition that give it so much weight. The key to longevity for any business is the ability to grow and adapt, make



Need help with any of these steps?

Let us know! We here at ARTÉMIA Communications are experts in branding. Whether its research, business development, graphics, web design, messaging, marketing or event management – we have the know-how to boost your brand to new heights!



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