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# Brand Management

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Unleash your brand's  
business potential

Frontify  
Special Edition

Stephanie Diamond





# Brand Management

Frontify Special Edition

**by Stephanie Diamond**

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand

# Brand Management For Dummies®, Frontify Special Edition

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# Introduction

Welcome to *Brand Management For Dummies, Frontify Special Edition*. In this book, you'll discover why maintaining a strong brand is essential to the success of your company.

## About This Book

This book covers several topics, including the following:

- » Defining the term "brand" and how a brand is created
- » Identifying the elements of brand management
- » Looking at best practices
- » Focusing on the operational side of brand management
- » Looking at the future of brand management
- » Understanding the ten steps to building a powerful brand

## Icons Used in This Book

Throughout this book, icons highlight important information. Here's what they mean:



TIP

The Tip icon highlights information that can make doing things easier or faster.



REMEMBER

The Remember icon points out things you need to remember when searching your memory bank.



WARNING

The Warning icon alerts you to things that can be harmful to you or your company.



Sometimes this book gives you a few tidbits of research or facts beyond the basics. If you like to know technical details, watch for this icon.

## Beyond the Book

This book will help business leaders like you discover more about the elements that go into creating a strong brand. If you want resources beyond what this short book offers, visit Frontify (<https://www.frontify.com/>) to discover more about brand management.



- » Defining values
- » Recognizing the importance of authenticity
- » Pursuing brand equity

# Chapter **1**

## Understanding the Meaning of Brand

**O**ne simple fact about branding is always true: Your customers ultimately define your brand. It isn't defined by your logo, corporate identity, or product. Your brand is the collective impression of your company that lives in the minds of your customers. It is constantly evolving, and everyone who works for your company has a hand in shaping it.

This lack of control can be frustrating for managers. Being able to dictate what your customers feel and how they perceive your value would be great, but reality doesn't work that way. Everyone has an opportunity to weigh in on what they think about your company based on their own impressions.

In this chapter, you look at the definition of brand, the way it resides in the minds of your customers, and what you need to know about its effect on the value of your company.

### Defining What Brand Is

In the 2020s, branding will be recognized as one of the most powerful tools in your business toolkit. Your brand is your company's main differentiator and value driver.

One of the reasons branding is at the forefront is that technology has made it easy for people to scrutinize every part of a brand and publicly comment on it. Think about it. The public has so many ways to evaluate a brand, including:

- » **Corporate website:** You can look at a website to see how a brand wants to be perceived, and make a judgment. You can read the company's mission statement to see if it matches your opinion of the brand.
- » **Competitors' websites:** Customers make this comparison all the time. Looking at competitors' sites tells you a lot about how they handle the same product or service and how they treat their customers.
- » **Marketing content:** Does the company provide the information you need, on all relevant channels, so you can make a real determination about the product?
- » **Support:** Support is a clear differentiator. People evaluate the type of support companies provide as well as their responsiveness. They can view it directly on social media and read about it on review sites.
- » **Company reviews by employees:** Glassdoor.com and other employee review websites let people know how companies treat their employees and what they stand for.
- » **Social media channels:** The popularity of social media channels ensures that users will look there to find you. They're specifically interested in the information you provide and the way you treat your audience. Many expect you to provide support right from the platform.
- » **Retail stores:** When customers walk into your retail store, they immediately form an impression. Are there high-quality products?
- » **Events:** Customers attending your events are interested in your company. By being present at an event, they interact with your employees and decide how much you care about your customers and their opinions.



REMEMBER

An interesting aspect of transparency on the web is that both large and small companies can easily be researched. Don't assume that if you are a small company, you are not being carefully evaluated. Customers want to think they are spending their money wisely, and a little due diligence makes them more comfortable.

## Establishing culture and values

In today's global marketplace, culture and values play a vital role in all aspects of a brand's success. Your values let people know that you will act morally and ethically. Your culture reflects how you treat your employees, your customers, and the wider audience.

Consider how culture and values affect anyone who decides to do business with your brand. Everyone who interacts with you wants to know that you will treat them with respect if they have a problem. Following are some of the questions that different groups, including prospects, will ask before they do business with you:

- » **Customers:** Can I trust you to provide a valuable product that does what you say it does? Will you protect my data privacy and security?
- » **Employees:** Will I be proud to tell people I work for your company? If I work for you, will you help me develop a career path that fulfills my purpose?
- » **Investors:** Can I invest in your company with confidence that you will act with integrity? Will you make every effort to enhance my investment by using efficiencies, automation, and other appropriate technologies?
- » **Vendors:** If we work with you, will you pay us as agreed? Will you protect our relationship against inappropriate competitor attacks?

## Recognizing purpose

One of the big drivers of employment is that people want to work with purpose. *Working with purpose* means people want to believe that they are making a contribution to their colleagues, their company, and society at large. They want to believe that their career path is the right one for their skills and needs. This is particularly true of Millennials, who reportedly base their purchasing decisions on whether a brand lives its purpose. Employees' need to feel that they are working with purpose transcends salaries and titles. It reflects a person's strongly held values.

How do people translate working with purpose into action? Your company's performance reflects how employees feel about the meaning of their work. Here's how this works:

- » Employees who don't feel the company values them do not treat customers well.
- » Staff who are not connected in a meaningful way do not work together as a team for the good of the company.
- » Employees who don't find purpose in their work do not commit to making the brand as good as it can be.

Your ability to attract the best talent as well as finding interested investors, vendors, and customers is dependent on the strength of your company's purpose. Millennials, who are now the largest generation in the job market, greatly value purpose. In a study by the Gallup Organization of millennials, 33 percent of the respondents said the company's purpose gives their job importance.

## Branding as an Evolving Concept

Technology — particularly social media — has changed the way people do business. Brands are subject to scrutiny that wasn't possible before the web. Now you can look online to learn everything about a brand, including what its employees have to say, what customers say about support, and whether the company is a force for good.

In the early days, a brand used to mean a mark of ownership, a symbol of quality, or a personal identifier. Iconic companies like Coca-Cola have built their brands over many decades and hold a place in the collective consciousness. Their ability to remain iconic brands lies in their adherence to cultural values and their ability to connect with customers around the world.

### Understanding the impact of authenticity

In today's global environment, people are looking for authenticity. They want to know if you are trustworthy and if what you are telling them is true.

Here are some ways to communicate your authenticity:

- » **Tell real brand stories.** To evaluate your brand, people are interested in your company stories. They want to learn about your founder's reason for starting the company and what problems she set out to solve.
- » **Identify some of the people behind the brand.** Typically, with large companies, an executive becomes the face of the brand — for example, Mark Zuckerberg and Facebook. Even in small companies, you can highlight staff by showing photos of them giving a speech or working with customers.
- » **Emphasize values by giving back.** Volunteer in the community or donate to your favorite charity.



TIP

Do customers reward you when you translate your values into action? They do. According to a Salesforce report called “Shopper-First Retailing” (2018), 45 percent of shoppers count a charitable donation along with their purchase as a reason to buy.

- » **Be accountable.** Being authentic means being real. If your company makes a mistake, be truthful about what happened and how you're going to fix it.
- » **Share valuable information.** One of the principles of content marketing is to make sure your content has value. Hoarding your most valuable information doesn't help you establish that important connection to customers.
- » **Use social proof.** Demonstrate that your customers trust you and enjoy your products. Capture their testimonials and comments on social media and let others see them on your website.
- » **Maintain product transparency.** Don't mislead customers about your road map or features and benefits. You need to deliver on your promises.

## Recognizing the role of psychology

Psychology plays a significant role in the resonance and love of a brand. People have associations and make assumptions based solely on their backgrounds. Make no mistake about it — people buy based on feelings but convince themselves that they are buying for logical reasons. They do so without even realizing it.

First, consider the emotional factors that affect choosing a brand. It can evoke feelings of:

- » **Nostalgia:** The brand calls forth fond memories from your childhood.
- » **Pride:** You get a special sense of satisfaction when you have a connection with a brand that you feel can speak for you.
- » **Belonging:** You feel included when you are part of a brand community.



TIP

According to the Brandwatch.com report “The Best Brands and Industries for Customer Experience 2020,” the brands that heavily focused on community garnered the most positive responses and developed deep ties. See Chapter 5 for more about brand communities.

- » **Giving back:** You get a good feeling when you believe that the company is doing good and you are supporting it.
- » **Being smarter than average:** You feel your ability to choose is better than other people’s.

Then there are the logical reasons you use to justify your intention to purchase:

- » It’s excellent value for the money.
- » The company is well-respected in the industry.
- » The product has lots of high-level features.
- » The shipping and return policies are convenient.

Acknowledge the impact of psychology. Make sure to give people plenty of emotional and logical reasons to pick your brand so their decision to buy is easier.



TIP

Brands serve as a form of shorthand for consumers. If they trust a brand, they are less likely to hesitate when buying a new product or service.

## Choosing Names and Images

The naming of companies has evolved. In the last century, a name like International Business Machines (IBM) seemed like a good choice. It was straightforward and sounded businesslike. That’s

what was required and of course, it is iconic. In today's world, naming has additional criteria to consider. For example, you want to:

- » Choose a name that is available as a domain.
- » Make sure the name is simple to type and remember.
- » Choose a name that can be used as an acronym or invent something that grabs attention.

Corporate images have also evolved. Previously, brands had to create something that looked good on paper and packaging. Now they also need to deal with the customer experience and the look of logos and other brand assets, online and offline, no matter the billboard size or device type.

## Learning Brand Concepts

In your quest to learn about brand concepts, here are three that are important to know: brand identity, brand image, and brand equity. The next three sections introduce them.

### Understanding brand identity versus brand image

Brand identity and brand image are closely linked but are not the same. *Brand identity* is who you as a company think you are (your internal perception) and *brand image* is who others think you are (their external perception):

- » **Brand identity:** Your brand identity is expressed through elements such as your logo, the font you use, the tone, the voice, and the colors you employ. The company decides what these will be and what values it wants to portray.
- » **Brand image:** Your customers determine your brand image. They get a collective impression of all the tangible things you've chosen, such as colors and logo, text, sound, touch, and feel, along with the intangible, such as brand behavior, to decide what you mean to them.



TIP

For more about the management of brand design assets and communication, check out Chapter 2 on leveraging technology.

## Benefitting from brand equity

*Brand equity* is the commercial value derived from the consumer's perception of the brand rather than the product or service itself. It is made up of tangible as well as intangible things. The tangible ones are the kind you can measure — for example, increases in revenue and customer growth. The intangible elements include good will and brand loyalty.

Why should you care about building brand equity? Positive brand equity brings you several competitive advantages:

- » **High brand awareness:** More customers will be familiar with your brand, and you won't have to work as hard to attract new customers.
- » **Higher prices for perceived value:** The perception that your product or service is of high quality will help you charge premium prices for your goods and services.
- » **Customer loyalty:** A large group of loyal fans will act as brand ambassadors and tell friends and family about you.
- » **Credibility in the marketplace:** A good reputation in the industry will help you do business with your preferred vendors and get better margins for your purchases.
- » **A waiting audience for product launches:** A cadre of happy customers will be excited about the latest product.



REMEMBER

It's essential to continually monitor your brand equity so that you focus on potential business opportunities and perceived weaknesses. Attention to vulnerabilities as they arise prevents you from losing too much ground before you realize it.



TIP

The quickest way to devalue your company's brand equity is to act in ways that are counter to your values. Brand equity is built over a long time but can be destroyed in an instant.



## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Looking at brand management basics
- » Understanding internal brand management
- » Utilizing brand management software

# Chapter 2

# Delving into Brand Management

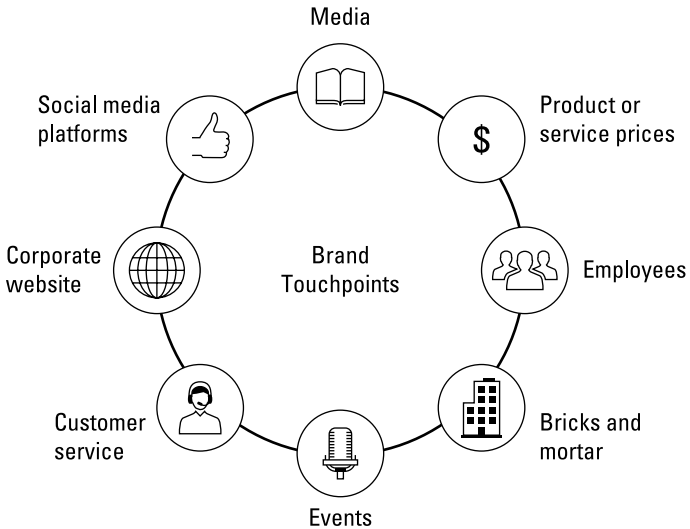
Your brand is the collective impression people hold about your company. *Brand management* is the maintenance of all things that go into defining that brand. A strong brand helps your company be perceived as delivering value. It enables you to stand out among your competitors. To maintain a valued brand, much internal and external work goes into shaping what customers perceive.

In this chapter, you look at the complexities of brand management and how it helps your organization be successful.

## Understanding Brand Management

The ultimate business goal for brand management is the creation of a business that gets more people to buy more products over a long period for progressively more money. But brand management is so much more than that. It feeds into the goal of shaping the image, personality, and attitude of the brand so that people have a positive emotional response to it.

To understand the scope of the brand management effort, consider the eight brand touchpoints shown in Figure 2-1.



**FIGURE 2-1:** Eight manageable brand touchpoints.

Here's a look at the touchpoints that you need to manage:

- » **Corporate website:** Your website is one of the most valuable elements of your branding. You control your site and can represent yourself precisely the way you want. Unlike on social media platforms, you can take as much space as you need to describe your products and your company.
- » **Social media platforms:** You can control the message you send out on social media platforms, but you can't control the way it is presented. For example, tweets look a certain way, as does your feed on Facebook. Your brand must be recognizable and consistent with the overall brand.
- » **Media:** Branding on ads and banners is a critical part of brand management. You must conform to the specifications of the platform and still maintain your brand identity. You must also be consistent across platforms.

- » **Product or service prices:** Obviously, pricing has a significant effect on branding. Your price signals to customers either an indication of quality or the lack of it.
- » **Employees:** Encouraging your employees to be brand ambassadors is key. They need to be able to articulate what the brand stands for and how it helps customers.
- » **Bricks and mortar:** Any physical representation of the brand must communicate the same brand message as any digital components. If a bricks-and-mortar store is out of brand alignment, the result is confusing to customers and can discourage them from visiting.
- » **Events:** If a customer or prospect makes the effort to come to an event, they are signaling that they are interested in your brand. If you don't put great effort into creating a first-class event, you may damage their opinion of you and perhaps lose a customer.
- » **Customer service:** Customer service affects the brand by telling customers how much the company does or doesn't support them. The brand is always judged on the quality of call centers, digital platforms, and the responsiveness of salespeople.

So, your brand is affected by all the different components that are part of your everyday business. In the next section, you look at how the disciplines of design and message communication affect brand management.

## Dipping into Brand Management Essentials

Three factors are key to brand management. They are design, communication, and brand behavior.

### Recognizing the importance of brand design

Brand design includes everything that your customer sees throughout the customer journey. (See more on the customer journey in the next section.) You need to make your design simple,

yet memorable enough that customers make positive associations with it.

The impact of brand design cannot be overestimated. It is one of the main ways brands create a mood and evoke feelings in their audience. Some brand design elements have been around for more than a century, while others come and go.



REMEMBER

Every designer's role is to translate values and other brand attributes into visual designs. The design must tie into the strategy for the brand, or the message may be confusing.

## Focusing on communication

Messaging is central to creating a brand that tells your customers who you are and what you stand for. If your message isn't emotional and memorable, you won't capture the imagination of your audience. Picking a name and developing design elements are primary drivers of your branding. Three additional message components that need your attention are:

- » **Taglines:** Taglines are quick, memorable phrases that encapsulate a brand's message or personality. They are made to last and will only change in light of a new brand direction. One tagline that has become iconic is "Nike — Just Do It." It demonstrates the no-excuses philosophy of the brand and resonates with its customers.
- » **Key messages:** Some brand messages do not change over time. They position the brand and speak to customers in a way that evokes emotions and creates a bond between the company and the customer.
- » **Jargon used by insiders:** Communicating using the jargon utilized by insiders is a fundamental way that companies signal to customers that they understand them. For example, a tweet that uses insider jargon makes those "in-the-know" feel part of a select group.

## Recognizing internal brand management and behavior

Though this chapter is mainly about external brand management, internal brand management is also important. When you focus

on internal brand management, you are looking at the way your company educates its employees — its internal stakeholders — about what your brand stands for and how it should be perceived in the wider world.



REMEMBER

You want your employees to make a “brand commitment.” That means you want them to promote the brand because they believe in it and want others to know about it. Customers look at the brand behavior of its employees and determine whether they are authentically living up to its values. Management may set direction, but employees interact with customers daily.

The success of internal branding is the responsibility of management. Company managers must be able to effectively communicate the vision and mission of the company. They can achieve this through the following techniques:

- » **Employee meetings and events:** Corporate meetings and events that support the culture of the company reinforce how employees view their importance to the company, which affects their communication about the brand.
- » **Access to PR and campaign information:** Employees often feel left out when it comes to specific campaigns and press events. Keeping them informed about this type of information contributes to their satisfaction. Being left in the dark makes employees feel less connected to the brand and their fellow employees.
- » **One-to-one conversations:** Managers must embody the brand’s values and communicate them to the employees who report to them. Employees need to see that no false promises are being made to them or the customer. Trust is key to making employees want to stay with the brand.
- » **Cloud-based platforms:** Cloud-based software allows interdisciplinary teams to stay informed and collaborate across functions and geographical distances.
- » **Rewards:** Recognition of employees who exemplify what the brand stands for helps to encourage brand commitment.

# Learning Brand Management Basics

Every discipline develops concepts that are central to understanding how things work. Following are two that are crucial to the understanding of brand management. They are touchpoints and the customer journey.

## Recognizing touchpoints

Touchpoints are the point of contact or interaction between a company and its customers. Organizations can no longer count on the idea that a potential customer will start at their website home page to get information about them. Customers don't necessarily follow a linear search pattern. They can find you anywhere — online on a social media platform or offline at a bricks-and-mortar store. They can start anywhere, on any device, and they can search via digital or voice, either on the web or in your store.

Chapter 1 introduces the myriad ways customers can find information about you. These are called *touchpoints*. To ensure that you are educating your customers, you need to evaluate each conceivable touchpoint to see what the customer will encounter.

Your branding plays a large part in determining if the customer recognizes you. If they receive your newsletter or watch a video, you want them to make a mental note of your brand. If your branding gives them only a vague notion of who you are, your touchpoint encounter is wasted.

The next section looks at the stages of the customer journey. These steps provide a way to evaluate and enhance the touchpoints your customers have with your company.

## Taking the customer journey

People don't follow a single, linear path to search for your company. So how can you give them the information and experiences they need to buy your product? You can analyze touchpoints on a timeline, based on their stage in the buying process. These stages are called the *customer journey*.

Mapping out your customer journey involves looking at the information customers need on the road to becoming a loyal customer who promotes your brand. Once you identify the necessary content, you can make it available at all the right customer touchpoints.

Here's a look at the stages, as well as the types of information you can create for each one:

» **Awareness:** At this stage, customers decide they have a problem and begin to look at solutions. They are typically looking for high-level content that gives them a good overview of the problem. They conduct a broad search and may or may not be aware of your brand. They are likely to deploy search engines, look at ads, and explore social media platforms.

*Content types to create:* Articles, videos, ads, landing pages, and tweets.

» **Consideration:** During this stage, customers want to narrow the field to those products that meet their initial criteria, including price. They may look at branded websites, product pages, and customer reviews.

*Content types to create:* Webinars, articles that present content from a variety of different perspectives, case studies, demos, and samples.

» **Decision:** At this stage, prospects decide among their options and choose your product. They look at review sites and customer ratings.

*Content types to create:* Comparison charts, content that proves effectiveness, datasheets, and information about shipping and returns.

» **Satisfaction:** During this stage, you want your customers to feel satisfied. You send emails, and provide webinars and customer support to assure them that they made the right decision.

*Content types to create:* Forums, training sessions, and technical support, as well as information on new products, features, benefits, and events.

» **Loyalty:** At this stage, the customer continues to use the product and communicates with you regularly about its value.

*Content types to create:* Discounts, special perks.

» **Advocacy:** During this stage, the customer begins recommending your product and becomes a brand advocate.

*Content types to create:* Conferences, one-to-one training sessions, perks, and discounts.



TIP

For more about content creation and operations, check out Chapter 4.

## Leveraging Technology for Brand Management

The proliferation of digital assets and the complexities involved with managing them have created the need for all-in-one software that brings the functions of brand management together on one platform. To administer a complex set of digital assets, you need a “single source of truth” where everyone (all internal coworkers, agencies, and other stakeholders) can go to access the most up-to-date content, guidelines, projects, and templates to stay on-brand.

Following are the components of brand management software that you should look for when making your choice:

» **Brand guidelines:** Online brand guidelines are web-based tools for instructing and enabling teams and external agencies to use your brand the right way. These guidelines are an always-up-to-date guide including anything from logos and colors to tone of voice and mission statements. Brand guidelines provide everything you need to stay brand consistent for every person in contact with, or executing on, your brand.

» **Digital asset management:** Digital asset management (DAM) software lets you centralize, organize, and find the right assets. The modern DAM solution not only helps you expand collections of imagery and videos, but also design systems of icons, logos, documents, text, audio, and user interface (UI) patterns. It helps you utilize everything you need for every brand touchpoint.



- » **Brand collaboration platforms:** Interdisciplinary brand and design platforms help you collaborate across functions to set up, manage, discuss, and iterate on brand projects and designs with internal and external teams. It is integrated with custom workflows, feedback features, and approvals. It helps your entire team create campaigns and rollouts in a more efficient way.
- » **Integrations:** Brand management software works well when it's seamlessly integrated with all the tools you use every day. Make sure to automate your daily operations to make branding easy and intuitive.

## Understanding How Brand Management Helps Your Organization

Effective brand management is not only an essential part of your business — it also helps you enhance brand equity. Growing a brand that is trusted by consumers makes everything easier. It helps you:

- » **Achieve long term business goals:** One of the most important purposes of brand management is to reach long-term business goals. It's easy to lose sight of the big picture when you are focusing on specific campaigns and related metrics.
- » **Improve brand recognition:** Repetition reinforces recognition. Getting your message out on a consistent basis is an essential tactic for brand managers.
- » **Engage new customers:** When your brand is well-known, it's easier to convince new customers that you are trustworthy. Social proof from around the web in the form of reviews and testimonials does the work for you.
- » **Boost revenue:** A well-loved brand can count on the loyalty of customers to continue to buy your goods and spend money with your company.

- » **Increase company value:** Increased company value helps you get bigger and better deals in the industry at large. It also increases the likelihood that some potential competitors will be reluctant to compete with you, which reinforces a high barrier to entry. (For more about company value, see Chapter 1 on brand equity.)

## Future-Proofing Your Business

Future-proofing your business is key to building a brand that can stand the test of time. It should have roots that help the brand grow and thrive.

Following are some of the ways you can future-proof your business with customers. You will:

- » Stand out from competitors
- » Attract influencers who spread the word for your company
- » Develop a bond with consumers that is hard to break
- » Shortcut the need for consumers to spend time researching you and your product
- » Recruit top talent that enhances the work of your company
- » Create customer brand ambassadors

- » Positioning your company to stand out
- » Maintaining your company's focus
- » Including everyone in branding efforts

# Chapter 3

## Presenting Best Practices for Brand Management

In today's online environment, brand messages come at consumers at a relentless pace. There are simply too many choices. That's why customers look for ways to find what's relevant to them and ignore the rest. To be one of the brands that capture their attention, you need to make your company easily recognizable. Make your brand a magnet that attracts the right customer.

In this chapter, you look at some of the best practices you can deploy to make sure your brand creates loyal customers who care about your brand. These practices include such things as:

- » Differentiating your company
- » Focusing on what matters
- » Maintaining consistency
- » Enhancing the customer experience
- » Developing key performance indicators (KPIs)
- » Involving your entire audience in maintaining your brand

The following sections explore each of these practices.

# Looking at Differentiation

*Differentiation* means communicating what makes you stand out from your competitors. You've likely heard it referred to among marketers as your unique selling proposition (USP). It's the thing that makes your brand . . . well . . . *unique*. It's a sentence that succinctly states why a customer should buy from you instead of your competitor. How do you find your USP? Here are several actions to consider:

» **Look at all the possible ways your product or service solves problems for customers.** Engage internal stakeholders from a variety of departments and seniority levels to gather their knowledge. These groups should include customer-facing departments like customer service, marketing, and sales. They have a wealth of knowledge about how customers see you and what they want.

Tools you need to take action:

- **Surveys:** Survey your customers to determine what they care about and why they use your product. Create another survey that targets potential customers to see what they are looking for in a product or service like yours.
- **Customer personas:** Develop a list of your customer personas that make up your target audience. If you don't know specific details about how your customers think, you won't be able to figure out why they prefer you to your competitors.

» **Carefully analyze your competitors.** Your customers will be consuming your competitors' information and comparing your products. Make sure you do a thorough evaluation so you know what your customers are seeing and hearing. Make sure you understand how they make their buying decisions.

Tools you need to take action:

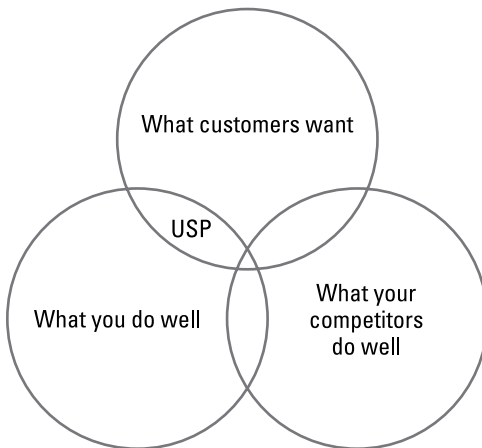
- **Competitive analysis:** You can conduct a competitive analysis in many different ways. The key is to look at your competitors' content, demos, product pages, and pricing. For additional suggestions on ways to collect knowledge about a company, see Chapter 1 on evaluating a brand.

- **Knowledge of industry trends:** In addition to looking at your competitors, study industry trends to determine what future opportunities or risks to consider.
- **List of benefits:** Make sure the benefits you single out are genuinely ones that solve your customer's problems. The benefits must be tangible and unique.

» **Evaluate content that offers proof of your claims.** To test your USP, look at what customers are already saying about your product and see if their comments match your expectations. Consider these sources:

- **Testimonials:** You likely have testimonials from satisfied customers. Does your USP fit with the great things your customers say about you?
- **Social media:** Look at what your customers are saying on social media and see if it agrees with your USP.

At the end of this process, you should be able to fill out the classic Venn diagram of a USP, shown in Figure 3-1, and be prepared to state a one-sentence differentiator.



**FIGURE 3-1:** A Venn diagram of a unique selling proposition.



**REMEMBER**

Being different is not enough. To stay competitive, you need to review your position continuously. Technology can instantly change the way business gets done and you need to be prepared.

## WHAT'S YOUR POSITION?

If you think finding a way to differentiate yourself is a problem that was created by the relentless onslaught of online messages, think again. Have you heard the term “positioning”? It was popularized many years ago in a book by Al Ries and Jack Trout called *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind*.

Ries and Trout talked about the problem of communicating with customers amid the advertising din of television, radio, and billboards. They wrote their book well before the advent of the web, but the question was the same: how to break through the noise and stand out among your competitors?

Their solution was to use *positioning*, which refers to the need for brands to take up a “position” in the customer’s mind. Therefore, positioning was aimed at “positioning the brand in the mind of the prospect.” Sound familiar? Nothing has really changed.



TIP

You may want to avoid getting into a long-term pricing war. It’s a race to the bottom that devalues your product.

## Maintaining Focus

Historically, brands that get into trouble are usually the ones that lose focus. A focused brand knows exactly what it is, why it’s different, and why people want it. Once the brand veers away from those fundamentals, it has problems. A loss of focus can be evaluated in different ways.

From a business perspective, consider the following:

- » **Are your margins decreasing?** Does your brand lack the cache it once had? If so, focus on why you aren’t selling as much as you used to.
- » **Are you creating a new brand or product just to generate more revenue?** Is your new brand an excuse to generate income instead of a legitimate response to a customer need?

## TAKING NOTE

A classic example of the loss of brand focus is the company Evernote. Much has been written about this. Evernote is a productivity app that allows you to store your most important information and quickly retrieve it. It was and is very popular and has a subscriber base of more than 225 million (free and paid).

Unfortunately, along the way, Evernote started selling branded leather backpacks, notebooks, and pens. The company began to lose focus. Most importantly, according to users, it failed to create a compelling product road map for the future. The company did not keep pace with expected earnings, and many top executives left in 2018.

In 2019 Evernote installed a new CEO to attack the problem, and he pledged to get things back on track. The company developed a massive and successful rebranding campaign. One helpful tactic he is deploying is to communicate with customers on YouTube to let them know how things are progressing.

Losing focus can be a hazard to business health. To correct lost focus, you need to catch the problem in time.

- » **Does your branding make the same connections with your customer that it once did?** Are you finding that your users don't show the same emotional response? Perhaps you are not keeping up with their changing needs or the trends affecting them.

From a branding perspective, ask yourself:

- » **Has your branding lost its freshness?** If your branding is outdated, prospects may reject your company as being tired. This characterization may be untrue, but the visual impact will affect their buying behavior.
- » **Are you lacking established brand guidelines?** Brand guidelines ensure that anyone who creates brand assets knows what's required. If you haven't established them, it's easy to lose focus or use the wrong assets.

- » **Do you look too much like your competition?** Over time, have you unconsciously (or consciously) started to mimic your competitor's style? You defeat your uniqueness if you let yourself be influenced by the branding of a competitor.
- » **Will trying to be *more* lead to being *less*?** Are you adding branding extensions that actually take away from your brand value?

## Providing a Consistent Message



Consistency involves presenting the brand with the same voice, values, and key messages so that consumers can easily recognize it. This consistency must exist across all channels and touchpoints. (For more on touchpoints, see Chapter 2.)



TIP

According to *Forbes*, brands see an increase of revenue of 23 percent if they present consistent branding across all their channels. Simply put, consistent branding leads to recognition and credibility. Consistency also signals predictability. Customers believe that when they buy a certain brand, it will perform as they expect it to. Pay careful attention to brand consistency, and you will be rewarded.

In previous years, consistent branding required a *multichannel marketing* approach to content distribution. This type of marketing meant that all the content you put on social media and other platforms was the same. The branding and format were the same, and the message was the same. This tactic worked for a while, but the proliferation of different types of channels created the need for omnichannel marketing.

*Omnichannel marketing* requires seamless communication across channels. It means that you use branding to tell a consistent story, but you vary the format to adapt to the unique requirements of each channel. You also need to account for a variety of devices.



REMEMBER

A customer might start their search for a product on their laptop, switch to a mobile, and enter your store looking for a coupon. The customer expects you to deliver a cohesive, seamless experience to facilitate the buying process.



From a branding perspective, you need to accommodate the look and feel of the channel. For example, think about the experience a customer expects on Instagram as compared to Twitter. On Instagram, you need to highlight the visual aspects of your product and make it “Instagram worthy.” Perhaps you display a video that shows your product being used in a home. You need to create an “in the moment experience” that requires a different set of assets than you would use for Twitter. On Twitter, you can show a video, but make it part of a message with a link to your website.

## Enhancing the Customer Experience

Now that customers can find almost anything online, at a price they want to pay, goods have become commoditized. For this reason, buying products online has lost some of its *novelty* (not its popularity).

People are looking for online customer experiences that delight them. According to PwC’s “Global Consumer Insights Survey 2019”, shoppers are looking for “magic moments.” Customers expect to be able to get whatever they want at the moment they need it. You can satisfy this need by surprising a customer with a gift or anticipating their questions and sending them answers before they ask.



TIP

For more ways to capitalize on trends in customer experience, check out Chapter 5 to learn what’s next.

Magic moments are also crucial for bricks-and-mortar stores. For example, the study found that three simple things would enhance the customer experience at a physical store:

- » **Navigating:** The ability to quickly navigate the store to find what the customer needs
- » **Assisting:** The presence of sales associates who know their products well so shoppers can make comparisons
- » **Buying:** Quick and secure payment methods that get shoppers out of the store fast

These are not unreasonable requests. You would expect that most companies would work to deliver that experience. However, in today’s environment, excellent customer service is a clear differentiator.

# Developing Key Performance Indicators

In the everyday hustle to put out fires, brands often lose sight of their business goals. That's why teams need to identify key performance indicators (KPIs) that signal business success. Without KPIs, you can lose sight of what's important.

From a brand perspective, you should focus on:

- » **Brand awareness:** Social media shares, positive comments, and referrals.
- » **Brand prestige:** The number of positive press mentions and a reduction in complaints.
- » **Brand loyalty:** Customers continue to buy the product on a repeat basis.
- » **Brand advocacy:** The number and types of testimonials and positive product reviews.
- » **Sales growth:** Did your sales teams meet their goals?



TIP

Chapter 4 looks at the importance of brand measurement.

## Involving Everyone

To have a meaningful brand, you need everyone related to the brand to be involved in creating, maintaining, and revising it. To understand how this plays out, look at the four C's:

- » **Collaboration:** Collaboration is about aligning the pieces of your digital ecosystem. Everyone in your organization should have an impact on its values and messages.
- » **Community:** A community built with customers brings the brand closer to its users and increases reputation control.
- » **Co-branding:** Co-branding can be a powerful technique. If your brand is seen with a similar brand in another category, you can build on the strength of both audiences.
- » **Competition:** Don't be afraid of the competition. Competitors who do business within the same category help to promote your brand space.

- » Reviewing content operations
- » Utilizing social media channels
- » Evaluating analytics data

# Chapter 4

## Focusing on the Operational Side

**A**fter the hard work of fleshing out the meaning, purpose, and values of your brand is completed, you need to focus on the operational side of things. Your brand message isn't compelling unless the right people hear it. You want to ensure that your targeted audiences will have the chance to evaluate your product and buy it.

Chapter 2 looks at the customer journey as a way to determine what you need to create to meet customer needs at each touchpoint. In contrast, from an operational point of view you need to think about the brand activities that will carry your message. Your ability to efficiently disseminate and scale this content will ensure that you can be successful. In this chapter, you look at the operational areas that will help you translate your brand values into tangible assets.

### Reviewing the Operational Side

Chapter 1 looks at things like brand image and brand identity. However, the intangibles things that evoke emotions and help people make buying decisions are harder to nail down. One question you need to ask is, "How are you going to present your brand

content so that it reflects your values?” To help answer that question, focus on the following categories:

- » **Creating:** Concentrate on developing the necessary brand assets you need. This category involves determining content topics and looking at operations.
- » **Distributing:** This area involves disseminating your assets to communicate your unique brand message. It includes your corporate website and social media platforms as well as advertising and events.
- » **Measuring:** How can you tell how well your assets are performing? You need to measure customer satisfaction and business performance.
- » **Improving:** After measuring, you need to identify and work on anything that can be adjusted, as well as look for new opportunities.

The next sections look at each of these areas in turn.

## Creating Branded Content

Content is the bedrock of your outreach to customers. If prospects need to search around endlessly for your product information, they’ll go to a competitor. This section looks at how to decide what content is needed and how to prepare it.

### Focusing on content needs

To create the necessary content, you need to define three key areas. They are:

- » **Business goals:** Determine what content you should create to reach your business goals. Defining the key performance indicators (KPIs) you use to reach those goals will help you focus on what’s important.

KPIs measures tell you if you are meeting your goals. They include things like brand awareness, increased engagement, and revenue growth.

- » **Personas:** Understand your target audience. If you don’t know who your customer is, your content can’t be personalized enough



TIP



REMEMBER

to matter. *Personas* are representations of people who use your products. You want to understand their motives, their demographics, and where and how they consume information. You need to know what channels they frequent to understand where your content should be placed.

You also want to understand how people talk about your products to better comprehend the terminology they use. Understanding the terminology helps you improve your search engine optimization (SEO). It also gives you the opportunity to write content that people relate to.

- » **Data collection:** Determine the data you need to identify and analyze for each step in the customer journey.

## Looking at content operations

From an operational perspective, the content you need to create requires developing several guidelines, rules, and roles. They include:

- » **Brand style guides:** These guides define all the brand elements and how to use them with the content you are creating. It includes typography, colors, texts, audio, and anything else related to the brand.
- » **Governance:** Along with the brand elements, you need to create rules that govern how the material should be used and who has access to it. These guidelines ensure that your staff is not using outdated assets. It also protects your branding from being used by people who should not have access to it.



TIP

With modern, cloud-based guidelines, you can also define “targets” within your organization. These targets make information flow better, allowing some people (in particular markets or teams) to see only the things they need to see. This technique helps reduce confusion and information overload.

- » **Roles:** You need a documented process that details which writers, editors, and others can change documents and under what circumstances. This practice ensures that content that hasn't been approved doesn't get published.
- » **Publishing:** These guidelines document your formats and specifications. Approved templates ensure that designers don't reinvent the wheel every time they create content.



TIP

You need a complete way to manage your brand assets with technology designed specially to do that. For more information, see Chapter 2 on leveraging technology.

## Distributing your messages

Choosing your channels is as important as the message itself. You can have a powerful brand message, but if potential customers don't see it, it has no effect. In addition, messaging requires repetition. You want your prospects to see your messaging as often as possible.

So, where should you share your messages? This section looks at websites, social media platforms, and promotions.

## Maintaining a website

The most valuable real estate you own on the web is your corporate website. It's under your control, and you can add or subtract information as needed. Unlike a social media platform that can change its rules at a moment's notice, your site remains yours to revise. On your site, you want to entertain as well as provide information, so pay attention to the customer experience as well as the format.



REMEMBER

Analyzing your website touchpoints is the key to making sure you have the right information. (For more about touchpoints, check out Chapter 2.)

In addition to your website, you'll likely distribute your messages on other company-owned media. These include:

- » **Landing pages:** Your campaigns and events are made stronger when you create pages designed for a specific purpose. One important caveat when you create these pages is to remember to take them down when the campaign is over, or you risk irritating customers.
- » **Emails and newsletters:** Perhaps surprisingly, these vehicles for company messages are still going strong. Maintaining a personal connection in an email is a good way to keep your brand top-of-mind. You can offer discounts and free content that enhances trust.
- » **Blogs:** Although blogs have been around a long time, they're still a significant way to communicate your message. When customers find information on your blog, they have a greater awareness of what you offer.

## Utilizing social media channels

Brands need to take a “big picture” look at the universe of social media platforms on which they participate. It is essential to be a consistent presence everywhere your customer is. A strong social media presence helps shorten the sales cycle and build trust. But you also need to determine where you don’t have a connected audience.

Don’t feel that you need to be on every social media platform. Pick the ones that are meaningful to your company and go “all in” to make them unique. Doing this requires that you have a clear idea about who your target audience is and where they consume their information.

It’s likely that you already have several social media accounts, so what are some things you can do to evaluate your current situation and make your brand stand out? Try these:

- » **Audit your current accounts.** Conduct a social media audit to determine which existing assets you are using. Consult brand style guides.
- » **Develop a different social media strategy for each channel.** For example, Instagram and Pinterest require a more visual approach. Evaluate if you are making the most of each channel’s best features.
- » **Track industry trends.** Post your findings about industry trends to demonstrate your brand’s expertise. Make visitors want to follow you for the latest news.
- » **Communicate with followers.** Respond to followers to build relationships. You want to confirm that you have human beings behind the brand who care about them.
- » **Utilize social listening.** A crisis on social media is always possible. Make sure you have people monitoring what is being said about your brand across the web. Act quickly and transparently to address the situation.



REMEMBER

Establish guidelines about how your employees use social media under your brand name. Often employees have personal social media accounts. Ask them to label their opinions so they don’t seem to be speaking for the brand.

## Promoting with media

Whether you have a big advertising budget or a tiny one, you need to create ads and promotions to capture attention. In previous years, the typical ad banners and boxes were so ubiquitous that people became “ad blind” — they didn’t see the ads when they looked at a web page.

One way brands are approaching advertising is to focus on how the brand makes you feel. Brands want to make an emotional connection with you even more than they want to tell you about features and benefits. They connect through video, live streaming, chatbots, and artificial intelligence. (Chapter 5 looks at the use of these new trends.)

## Measuring Your Brand’s Success

The abundance of online data available from every channel is a blessing and a curse. If you’re set up to capture the right data, you can uncover valuable insights. If not, you’re wasting time and effort.

This section looks at measuring brand performance to determine the extent to which you are succeeding. This includes evaluating internal brand behavior, external perception, and whether you are succeeding in reaching business goals. Following are some standard measures:

- » **Internal brand behavior:** Measures include employee satisfaction, positive brand engagement, and increased talent retention.
- » **External perception of the brand:** Look for social mentions, positive press coverage, and increases in sales.
- » **Overall business performance toward goals:** This is where the KPIs discussed in Chapter 3 come in. Look at the measures you chose to see how well you are doing.



REMEMBER

Measuring your brand performance should lead to targeting areas where you can improve. The use of real-time data can make it easier to create experiments that give you insights into what is working.



- » Using real-time data
- » Recognizing the value of communities
- » Building a brand tech stack

# Chapter 5

## Discovering What Comes Next

**N**ew trends and exciting technologies are always available online. If you chase every shiny object, you can waste a lot of time without much to show for it. Brand management requires you to focus on all the moving parts that go into maintaining a strong brand.

This chapter looks at the trends and technology that can enhance your branding efforts. Consider the ones that will make a difference for you and check them out.

### Personalizing Experiences

The competition for customers in today's online environment is fierce. The best way to differentiate yourself is to make the customer the centerpiece of everything you do. You need to use every tool at your disposal to set yourself apart.

You might consider adding senses to your brand experience — touch, taste, sound, smell, and sight. For example, an airline might play calming music in the background during takeoff, giving the passenger a better experience. The traveler may not be

aware of the music, but its effects might encourage the traveler to consider booking this airline again.



TIP

Recalling sense memories is a powerful tool. According to brand specialist Martin Lindstrom, you progressively strengthen your bond with your customer by invoking many sense memories at one time.



REMEMBER

When you personalize your content, customers see that you are interested in giving them something that has value to them. The next section looks at how to deliver on that promise with content personalization.

## Personalizing Content

Using a customer's name in an email or online account doesn't impress anyone. It's the bare minimum. Today, customers want custom information that extends far beyond simply knowing their names. They want to know that you are aware of the purchases they have made, the problems they had, and any other pertinent information. Segmenting data to fit customer profiles is just the start. You need to collect analytics that go far deeper into customer behavior and preferences. You need to know such things as:

- » **How often they open your emails:** Is the account still active? Determine how often they read what you send them. Perhaps they have lost interest in your content.
- » **How long since their last purchase (or if they have ever purchased):** Customers expect you to know if they are users of your product. Nothing is more disconcerting than getting a message asking them to try your product when they already own and like it.
- » **Whether customer service has solved a problem for them:** If they have an ongoing issue or have been helped by customer service, you need to be aware of it. You need to start where they are in the relationship, or you won't seem authentic.

As it relates to brand messages, you can personalize content to fit your brand voice and values. For example:

- » **Personalized emails:** At certain times of the year (like holidays), have your account reps send a personalized email to their customers. Depending on the size of the list, the reps can add specific details about the company and use customer names. Customers appreciate the extra effort.
- » **Product-based communications:** Send customers to a landing page that is personalized for people who bought a product. Offer them a discount at your bricks-and-mortar store.
- » **Responses to people on social media platforms:** Respond to individuals who mention your product. For example, tweet a personal thank-you to a prospect who is talking about your product.

## Making Branding More Human

The human ability to communicate across national borders and other boundaries has accelerated the need to make branding more human. People want to know that they are not buying from a faceless corporate entity. For this reason, developing communities of like-minded people who get to know their business leaders are gaining in popularity. Also well-established is the practice of using influencers and staffers as the face of the brand. Consider these possibilities that bring people together:

- » **Building communities that thrive:** If a brand's product or service resonates with customers, they can build communities that have a life of their own. For example, the LEGO Ideas community is a thriving place where LEGO enthusiasts share ideas and join contests. The benefit of having an active community is that you build solid relationships with customers, get valuable feedback, and help customers meet and form friendships around your product.
- » **Focusing on personal branding:** Now that everyone can write a blog, share opinions on review sites, and make their presence known, personal branding has exploded. This phenomenon also extends to companies.

Depending on the type of company you work for, you may function as a thought leader. Companies believe that giving a human face to a brand is a compelling way to let people know the brand has a heart.



REMEMBER

Using celebrities as the face of the brand is a tried and true way to garner attention. However, Millennials have said that although they love seeing celebrities and following influencers, they still prefer the opinions of friends, family, and colleagues.

## Building Your Brand Tech Stack

Lots of technologies are available to help companies improve their service to customers and build brand equity. Three things that will serve today's impatient customers are: delivering faster answers, using automation, and providing live streaming content. The next sections look at each of these.

### Delivering faster answers

The key to increasing your engagement with customers is to provide solutions quickly. Customers won't wait for a customer service representative to get back to them in a few days. They want answers now! This attitude affects their purchasing decisions, so you can't afford to miss an opportunity to sell.

Technology that is making it easier to serve up answers to customers the moment they need them are chatbots and messenger applications. A *chatbot* is automated software that uses artificial intelligence to text a conversational response to a customer request. Prepared content is set up to respond to questions and supply information. Delivering frequently asked questions (FAQs) via chatbots is an excellent use of the technology.

A messenger app is used to deliver instant messages, video, photos, and so on. The most popular messenger application is Facebook Messenger, owned by Facebook, with integration to Instagram and Whatsapp (a texting app).



TIP

One way to use a messenger app to get fast answers is to use it for *in-app messaging*. In-app messaging allows people working in an app to communicate with the customer support or admins without leaving the app.

Are you using chatbots? Brands should be thinking about using this technology right now because the benefits are substantial. Chatbots let you:

- » **Provide self-service:** A chatbot obviates the need for a person to be available 24/7. Resources can be freed up for other purposes.
- » **Respond conversationally:** Thanks to artificial intelligence, the bots deliver answers in a conversational way so that users are comfortable interacting with them.
- » **Generate leads:** Chatbots can ask if users want to get more information about a product or sign them up for a newsletter. These new leads can be quickly followed up by sales.
- » **Serve up high-quality content:** Your company prepares the answers in advance, so the content is positioned exactly the way you want it. You don't have to worry that a representative is misstating something.
- » **Encourage engagement and retention:** Chatbots are still novel enough to engage users and keep them coming back again when they have questions.

## Increasing automation with artificial intelligence

Automating as many tasks as possible is a common way for companies to scale their growth. The more efficient you are, the fewer incremental dollars you need to spend during growth phases. Artificial intelligence (AI) is software that does a great many innovative things. For example, it allows a computer to respond with human-like responses. Machine learning (ML) is an offshoot of AI that lets computers analyze and become “smarter” without human supervision.



TIP

*Automated tagging* uses AI to evaluate things that would take a lot of time and be tedious for people. In branding, you might use it to evaluate content to see if you are using the right colors or staying “on-brand” based on a set of criteria.



TIP

Many people fear that AI will take jobs away from people, but it appears that the opposite is happening. AI is freeing up workers to do more important job functions while AI handles the complex and tedious ones.

When it comes to brand management, AI is already helping brands deliver better customer experiences. For example, you can use AI for:

- » **Recommendations:** Amazon can recommend personalized items based on what customers have already bought. Humans would take months to create that list for each customer, but AI can do it in almost real time.
- » **Reputation defense:** Brand managers can create automatic alerts that tell them when something is being said about their company. This knowledge aids in protecting the company's reputation.

## Deploying voice search

Voice search is exploding thanks to tech gadgets like Amazon's Alexa and Google Home. People are getting used to conducting hands-free searches, and you need to be ready. You can use voice search with apps, websites, and mobile devices. Typical commands that people are using include asking questions, streaming music, and checking the weather.

To stay competitive, you need to begin optimizing your content to work with voice commands. You can't just hope that your existing content will work. For example, you can prepare the questions you know your customers will ask and put them in a conversational format. In addition, be careful how you use pop-ups because they can interfere with the flow.

## Utilizing live streaming

Live streaming is mainstream. Brands have taken to Facebook Live, YouTube, Twitch, and other channels to interact with their customers and prospects. They are taking the risk of going without a script and being rewarded for it. If you want to appear more human, what could be more human than working "without a net" and capturing everything as it happens?

Live streaming offers several benefits, including increased brand awareness and brand loyalty. Another great benefit is that it's an easy way to create content. You can take live stream training and turn it into an e-book or website content.

Here are several ways to use live streaming to step up engagement with your audience:

- » **Conduct office hours.** What better way to meet your customers and provide valuable information than to hold online office hours via a live chat? You can answer pressing questions and build relationships. Customers will come to rely on your information, which makes it difficult for them to switch to a competitor.
- » **Run training sessions.** Demonstrate that your company has the expertise customers are searching for. Webinars are popular, and free training is always welcome.
- » **Host new product launches.** Do you have a group of interested users who like to know what's next? Send them an exclusive invitation and help them become brand advocates. In addition, live demos help convert customers.

## Utilizing real-time data

If you're tired of passively looking at the data that details past successes (and failures) or guessing what will happen in the future, real-time data is the answer. It allows you to modify your current brand environment to make swift changes. It can be your competitive edge if you apply resources to maintaining and monitoring it.

Aside from common use cases like inventory management, you can do things like:

- » **Experiment with content.** Put up two landing pages and test which page contains the stronger messaging, thereby optimizing your current campaign results.
- » **Compare data.** Compare historical data with real-time data to help you recognize patterns and make useful changes to business objectives.
- » **Create mobile promotions.** You can trigger the delivery of a coupon or discount when a customer walks into your bricks-and-mortar store or clicks a link on your site.



REMEMBER

Another important use of real-time data is security. Constant monitoring for data breaches is a critical function.

# Practicing a Branding Mindset Before Getting Started

A brand resides in the hearts and minds of its customers. It also lives in the mind of the company through its employees and leaders. Branding is a mindset that requires a holistic approach that can't be owned by any one department.

Growing and maintaining a brand is the foundation of a business. It requires a significant financial and resource investment. You aren't only investing in design — you're also investing in maintaining a culture and working with other stakeholders, such as vendors and investors, to display and live your values.

Defining your mission, values, and culture takes hard work that must be shared by everyone involved. Chapter 1 looks at how a lack of employee purpose translates into poor brand behavior. The lack of a branding mindset can significantly diminish the value of your company.



- » Defining your brand
- » Enabling employees with the right tools
- » Creating memorable touchpoints

## Chapter 6

# Ten Steps to a Stronger Brand

Creating and maintaining a strong brand requires lots of hard work. Here are ten steps that will help you develop a successful brand:

- » **Identify what your brand stands for.** Before you can expect customers to love your brand, you need to figure out your mission, vision, values, and beliefs. As a citizen of the world, you need to make your brand stand for something more important than simply generating revenue.
- » **Develop your structure.** Build a structure that supports all your touchpoints (interactions with your customer). Start by mapping out likely or key customer journeys and selecting the touchpoints that have the most impact. After you've done this, list the guidelines and assets needed to shape these touchpoints and translate them in relation to the brand identity.
- » **Plan your work.** A great brand doesn't happen by accident. To manage your brand, you need to define people's roles and outline the processes for getting things done. You also need to create rules for governance so that the right brand assets are used, and the right people have access to the right content.

- » **Empower your employees with the best software.** A successful brand provides its teams with the tools to create and access materials they need. To ensure consistency and compliance, you need to create and manage brand guidelines, create templates, and define visual, audio, text, and audiovisual design styles.
- » **Communicate with everyone.** Everyone who has a stake in helping your brand be successful (spoiler alert: that's everyone) should have the opportunity to co-create the brand's mission and message. Sharing ideas helps create a cohesive team that will work together for the good of the company. You also want to ensure that everyone in the company can communicate the brand in the right way.
- » **Create your touchpoints.** To ensure that no one is re-creating the wheel, you need to provide templates and build your customer experience moments in accordance with your brand guidelines. Using brand guidelines is key to ensuring that your brand always provides a consistent message that is true to your values.
- » **Distribute your message.** You need to distribute your message in the places that your audience frequents. Don't just assume you should be on Facebook and Twitter. Learn about your target audience and pick the places online and off where you can engage them.
- » **Measure your data.** With current technology, you have an abundance of data available to you. Decide what you need to measure and focus on hitting all pertinent business goals. Make sure to use real-time data to spot problems.
- » **Improve your results.** Look at constantly improving everything. Improving as you go is easier than waiting to iterate annually.
- » **Enjoy your success.** The culture of your company should include celebrating your successes and having fun evolving your brand!

# Brand Management for Anyone

**Build Powerful  
Brand Experiences**

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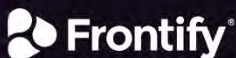


## Build success with a strong brand

Your brand is the collective impression people hold about your company, and *brand management* is the maintenance of all things that go into defining that brand. A strong brand helps your company be perceived as delivering value. It enables you to stand out among your competitors. This book helps business leaders like you learn about the elements that go into creating and maintaining a strong brand.

### Inside...

- Define your organization's values
- Emphasize authenticity and equity
- Cultivate internal brand behavior
- Apply brand management technology
- Enhance the customer experience
- Create branded content
- Measure your brand's success



**Stephanie Diamond** founded Digital Media Works, Inc., an online marketing company. She is the author of *Digital Marketing All-In-One For Dummies* and many other For Dummies books.

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