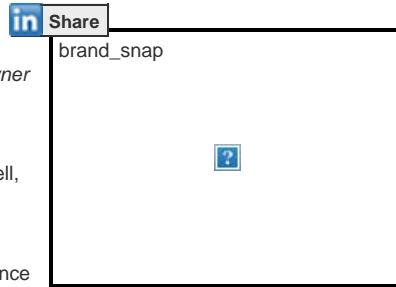


Optimizing the Power of Your Brand

By jasonvistaprint | September 21, 2009 | Micro Business Issues, Micro Business Perspectives | No comments



This guest post is part of our ongoing [Small Business Perspective](#) series, and is written by Caprice de Lorm, owner of [de Lorm Designs](#) in Orange County, CA.



Branding. We've all heard about it. We all want to do it well, brand our companies in a way that resonates within our company, evokes recognition and positive thoughts from current and potential clients, and attracts the "right" audience for our services and products.

While there are technical aspects to creating and implementing a brand, there are also some important strategic considerations for branding. Below are a few thoughts that I have compiled about branding from working with clients, first while at a large corporation and then while leading my own company.

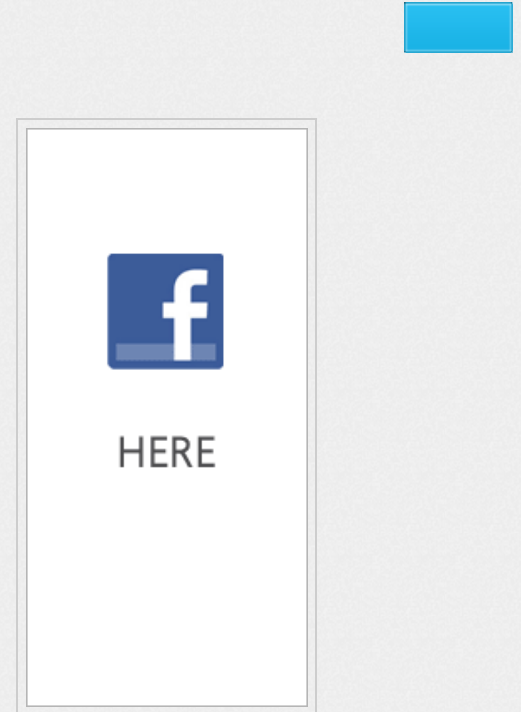
Establish clear themes and messaging: It is vital that your company establishes themes relating to its brand. This includes color themes, font themes, logos, and customized layouts for collateral. Themes also relate to concepts, ideas, messages, and ways in which the company communicates itself to others. Themes can present themselves in vision statements, tag lines, and in the company name itself. Make sure that what you say, and how you promote your company brand is clear both in verbiage and in presentation.

Be consistent with your branding: The way in which a company represents itself needs to be consistent so that it is easily recognizable to your clients and target markets. There needs to be consistency in style and in format. Using different fonts, paper styles, language styles, and color schemes can result in a fragmentation of identity. Being consistent with the tone, style, look, and feel of your branding and its expression creates recognition across campaigns, markets, and opportunities.

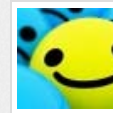
Create a brand that fits with and reflects the culture of your company: Branding needs to reflect the heart and soul of the organization as much as it reflects the strategy and intent. Clients can sense when the branding is not authentic, when it does not resonate with the company culture. A trust in the authenticity of the brand helps build the foundation of trust in interactions and relationships. Create your branding to reflect your company. If you don't like what you see, work on the culture and then modify the branding as needed. Things will flow better within your company and the congruency will create a space for more loyal customers.

Develop branding that resonates with current clients and target markets: Messages and brands need to evoke a connection that attracts customers. Make sure you understand your client base and target audience and create a brand that resonates with those you want to serve. This includes not only the messaging in support of the brand, but also the colors and other design aspects of the logo and collateral. A brand and supporting materials not based on understanding the demographics and psychographics of your target markets can result in ineffective, or even potentially offensive or off-

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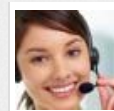
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putting, results. A brand and materials that reflect an awareness of the needs and styles of desired clients results in memorable messages that elicit the partnering from which great relationships are built.

When you build a brand and supporting materials based on an understanding of your company and target markets, you produce something that is meaningful internally and externally. You develop something you can stand behind and can communicate effectively across your business. You create a resource for connecting to and attracting those "right" customers. When you put in place mechanisms and processes for perpetuating the brand consistently and thematically, you make it easy for employees and clients to recognize and relate to your business and what it offers. You establish value for those you want to serve. You enable others to view your business as a partner in their success.

What have you done/do you do to make sure that your branding resonates with your target market? Have you gone through your company collateral to make sure that you are branding consistently across media?

[Caprice de Lorm](#) is the owner of [de Lorm Designs](#), a company specializing in creating out of the box marketing solutions in Orange County, CA. *To learn more about Caprice and all of our Small Business Perspective Authors, click [here](#).*



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About the author

The lead contributor to the blog is Jason Keith, senior communications manager at Vistaprint. Jason and his team are deeply involved with Vistaprint's micro business customers on a daily basis and lead the efforts in mining micro business trends, behaviors, and attitudes. A former journalist with more than a decade of experience in the communications field, he and his team conduct surveys, analysis and create micro business case studies to get a better understanding of the issues facing this unique group of entrepreneurs. To reach him directly email microbusiness@vistaprint.com

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