

BRAND CANVAS

**Distill
your brand**

COMMUNICATE CLEARLY

Understand Your Strategic Opportunities

This is the BRAND CANVAS

BRANDING 101

WHAT IS A BRAND?



Brand is not a logo. It is not a set of colors or catchy phrase (we'll talk trademarks later). Brand is the **relationship** between an organization and stakeholder (i.e. Company and Client).

Wait what?

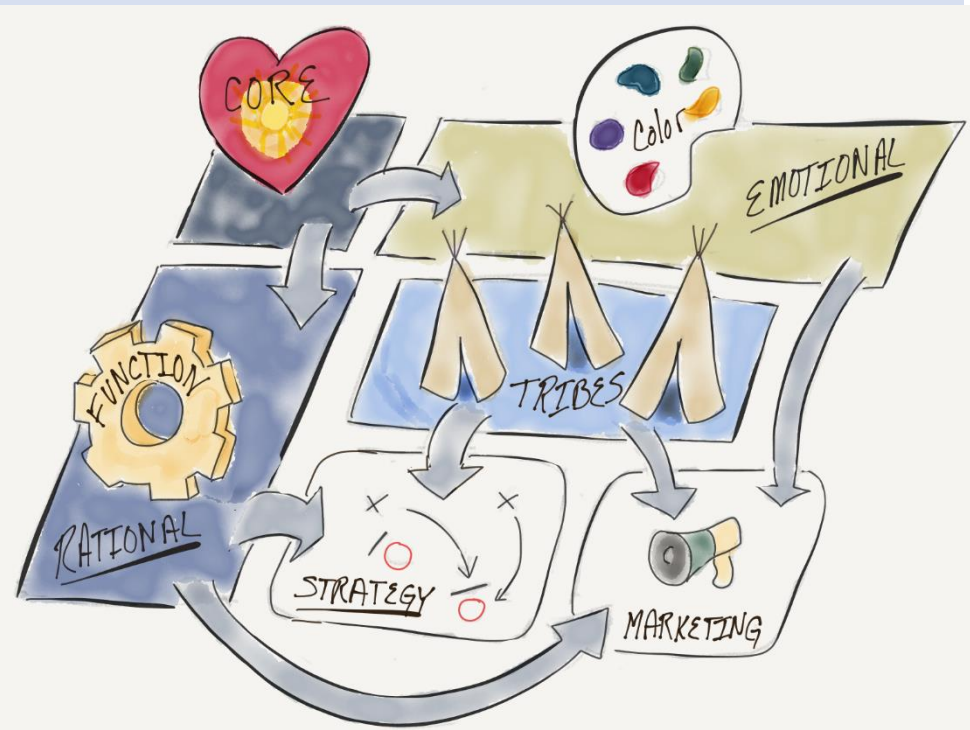
According to that definition, brand will be different to each person. Yes.... but each relationship you have is unique yet you are only one person, a brand coalesces into one personified entity. When we think of *branding*, we are talking about creating or shaping this personification.

Who needs a brand?

That's the wrong question. If you're operating with people, you have a brand. It encompasses the experiences, feelings, reputation, and emotions tied to the organization. Question is how well do you understand it and how can you affect it?

What is a Canvas?

Canvas is a distillation of the most important ideas, on one page, for easy reference. The Brand Canvas is your guide to consistent branding in everything from product development to marketing campaigns. It ensures you know *what* and *how* to communicate with which customers. Here is how it works: Start at the core; Layer on rational and emotional appeal; Understand your communities; Use these to drive your strategy and marketing.



How to use this book:

Work through each section to complete the Brand Canvas. Each section has exercises to help think through aspects of your brand. At the end you'll consolidate those ideas onto a simple canvas on page 10.

If you get stuck, move on and come back to that area later. If you need help, bounce ideas off someone you trust.

The exercises have suggested time limits. Time limits help push ideas when brainstorming. The distillation of these ideas may take more time. Feel free to return to sections to refine your answers.

This can be an individual activity or group activity. Both have unique benefits.

Print: Tabloid Paper, Double Sided – Short Edge, Actual Fit

Materials List:

- Pen(s) – the more colors the better to be creative. Markers work well too.
- Sticky Notes
- Timer – your phone should have one

Exercises:



Brainstorm



Organize/Rank



Write/Develop



Time



Turn it up to 11 on pg 11. A clean write-in version to expand your Brand Canvas beyond our exercises.

Find us at:

<http://selfcompo.se>



Created by Winston Chang

SECTION

01

VISION MISSION VALUES

Vision, Mission, and Values are the core of your organization.

This doesn't change for your brand. In fact, your brand epitomizes these three ideas. They are the foundation and purpose behind your organization and therefore drive your brand.

What is a Vision?

It is the grand idea of a changed world. Think "ending world hunger." What is the purpose behind your org? If the change is accomplished in 5-10 years – you're not thinking big enough. Basically, your vision should be so big you will always be in pursuit.

Think Big!!

Values? Who needs those?

People have values. The deepest relationships between people revolve around values. To establish longevity in your brand, you need the depth and complexity of a relationship grounded in values. It is good to think about now, both for brand and your organization.

What is a Mission?

Once you have a grand vision, you need to target where the real work gets done. The mission is your focused objectives. If we're combating hunger, our mission could be "ending child hunger in Chicago." The next step down are goals but those are too granular for our branding exercise.

My [organization] is working to create a world where [change] exists for [who] .

Describe this new existence.

What is the purpose of your organization?

Why is the world better?

Try Writing the above in a concise Vision Statement:

STEP 1



Brainstorm above. Distill into a single sentence.

Based on Your Vision Statement. Brainstorm your Mission.

What does your business model look to achieve?

What measurable outcomes would you consider success?

What winning idea brings you closer to your vision?

Try Writing the above in a concise Mission Statement:

STEP 2



Brainstorm above. Distill into a single sentence.

List Your Values Here

i.e. Sustainability

STEP 3

Place Your Vision and Mission Statement on a Sticky Here

SECTION

02 TRIBES

Customers are becoming increasingly tribal.

And we don't mean deer skin leotards and spears. As the internet allows for people to find others with similar interests, we are self organizing into collectives around ideas and passions. Tribes. People don't belong to one tribe, they typically belong to many. And Tribes have sub-tribes of sub-tribes.

Want an example? Why is this important?

One tribe are people who enjoy gaming. Specifically role playing games. Let's dig down.

Role Playing Games



Live Action (LARP)



Zombie Apocalypse

Because relationships. There is a saying "you can't be everything to everyone." Your brand needs to build a reputation from the ground up. That means targeting Zombie Apocalypse fans until your brand reaches a critical mass or recognition. Then moving up to the LARPing folks.

What about TV advertising?

That worked when 90% of the population watched the same 5 channels. Majority of people got their information from the same place. Things change. Today your organization needs to be a member of the tribe. Connect and build relationships. Add value. If you can't find a tribe, start your own.

What Tribes do your customers belong?

Zombie
Apocalypse

STEP 1



Write one tribe per sticky and put it in the box.



You have 3 minutes – try for one idea every 20 sec

Three tribes with the most customers

Mark each Tribe with a different color dot

Tribe 1
Place Your Sticky Here

STEP 2

Rank your ideas; pull top 3

Tribe 2
Place Your Sticky Here

STEP 3

Fill out the table

Tribe 3
Place Your Sticky Here

STEP 4

Summarize in one sentence on each sticky: Why do people belong to this tribe?

What Drives the Tribe?	How do members telegraph the tribe?	Walk the tribe up to a larger market	Identify products or services
<div>What motivates members? What is the purpose of the tribe?</div>		<div>Zombie → LARP → RPGs Think- what is the bigger tribe?</div>	
	<div>Think - how do they recognize each other? Star Wars T-shirts?</div>		<div>How do you help members do their tribal thing?</div>

7 minutes each tribe

SECTION

03

TOUCH POINTS

Relationships are built on ~~Trust~~ Interactions.

The relationship between brand and customer is the sum of the interactions or Touchpoints. Good relationships *are* built on trust so let's not ignore that. This means every interaction is important. How are your customers interacting with your brand? Are you seeing every touchpoint? Are there better touchpoints?

Social Media

Virtual touch points are easy – join Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Right?!? Understanding how your customer uses social media is critical to providing the right kinds of interactions.

Focus on quality. I'm not talking about production but that might be important. Quality of the interaction. Are you holding a one-sided conversation? Are you leveraging the platform strengths?

Physical Retail

Retail is dying. Good riddance. We have Amazon. Wait...Amazon just opened a brick and mortar bookstore? WTF?

Physical touchpoints are by and far the best. Would you rather text your lover or talk over dinner? Is Facetime the same as hugging your kids? That's why digital native companies are going physical.

You don't have to have a store to have physical touchpoints. Girl Scouts sell a lot of cookies without a store...

Brainstorm Digital Touch Points?

LARP Zombie
sub-redit

Brainstorm Physical Touch Points?

STEP 1



Write one touch point per sticky. Place them in the boxes above.



You have 2 minutes a side

STEP 2



Using the colors for each tribe, mark which tribe uses the specific touch point.

STEP 3



Write down the top two (most used) Digital and Physical touchpoints on a sticky.

Place sticky here with top two Digital and Physical Touchpoints.

Tribe 1
Place Your Sticky
Here (from pg 5)

[Top Digital Touchpoint for tribe]

[Top Physical Touchpoint for tribe]

How do people interact here?
What do they say? What unique
words/phrases do they use?

Why do they come here? What do
they get here they cannot get
online?

Zombie Apocalypse

People love living and
interacting in the story.

STEP 5

They organize around big
events and socialize there.

[Top Digital Touchpoint for tribe]

[Top Physical Touchpoint for tribe]

How does the tribe communicate?
Why do people communicate?

What does Authentic look like
here?

Tribe 3
Place Your Sticky
Here (from pg 5)

[Top Digital Touchpoint for tribe]

[Top Physical Touchpoint for tribe]

Technology helps them do more of
what?

Where does the value become
real? Physically tangible?

Back to Tribes

Why do we focus on Tribes? Well, we're really focused on customers. Today, people self select into various tribes. In some ways we, human beings, always have. Except today these tribes are less local or familial and more ideological and interest driven.

So we meet the customers where they are. More than that, we demonstrate to the customer that we align with their ideologies and interests. And we add value in a way that makes sense to the customer. Our brand should become part of life's experience, not just aid it.

So Tribes are where it's at.

Own the Relationship

The most important asset a company can own today is the relationship with the customer.

Why do you think Facebook and Google are valued so high? They own the relationship with the customers. Everyone is willing to pay them for a chance to insert a pitch (i.e. ad) in their conversations.

So how does Facebook and Google own that relationship?

1. They interact an incredible amount with their customers.
2. They add value to their customer's lives.
3. They know their customers – sometimes better than the customers know themselves.

STEP 4



2 minutes a
touchpoint



Write down observations about each of the touchpoints. Know your customers. Prompting questions are provided.

STEP 5



Write a one sentence answer on each sticky – How do members interact within the tribe?

SECTION

04

DIFFERENTIATION

Stand Out in the Crowd.

Brand is key to differentiation. In some cases, it is literally the only difference. Let’s talk economics. As a market becomes saturated, the number of companies reach an equilibrium. As companies expand their offerings they become less niche. If the customer need doesn’t change, eventually competing products will start converging. Services are equally at risk for this in a mature market. Prime example: IT went from specialized service to fully commoditized.

So what makes your organization different from the rest? Think ,Think, Think.

Blue Ocean

So you got yourself a Blue Ocean? Good for you. It won’t last long unless you’re not making any money or attracting any attention. This is the prime opportunity to build and own those relationships.

Remember – your brand is your relationship with your customer. Earn their trust. Never fail them.

	[Close Competitor 1]	Your Organization	[Close Competitor 2]
Value Proposition:			
Products and Services:			
Personality:			
Target Tribes:			
Differentiation:			

STEP 1



1. Fill out the top of the table for your competitors
2. Fill out your organization’s boxes but focus on what makes it different
3. Write your organizations differentiation summary

Place sticky with **Key Differentiators** here.

STEP 2

Place sticky with **Value Proposition** here.

SECTION 05 PRODUCTS & SERVICES

The Last is First and the First is Last.

We're talking about products and services last. Likely you started here, then thought about branding and marketing. Brand is intricately tied to your value add – which means organizations do best applying their brand at the product/service development phase.

This isn't always possible. If you're a start-up you likely are guessing at your product fit. Unknowns about who you are as a company are common but make it difficult to understand your brand. Still, doesn't hurt to consider at least elements of branding when developing products and services.

Two Way Street

Each decision during product and service development affects your brand. Why? Because your customers will experience your brand every time they use your product or service.

Your brand also affects the experience with your product. Power ties make the wearer feel powerful and confident. If a brand associates confidence, customers will experience that emotion when they wear the product. Brand and Product dynamically affect each other.

Hero's Duty

Every company has a hero product (or service). It's what you're known for. Google is search. Burberry is the trench coat.

If there is one product where the brand is near inseparable, it is the Hero Product. Funny enough, the Hero Product might not be the best selling item or most profitable. But it is the closest product to the brand. No wonder re-branding efforts many times switch the Hero Product.

We look at three senses (vision, touch, hearing) but you can look at more. If you're developing a restaurant you'd certainly want to consider taste. Smell is wonderful and subtle in a brand. The more senses you can reach with your customer, the more complex and deep the experience. Just don't over do it (*cough* Abercrombie & Fitch *cough*)

[Hero Product or Service]

Value Proposition:

[What value does your Hero Product or Service provide to the customer?]

Differentiation:

[How is your Hero Product or Service different than others? What makes it unique?]

Personality:

[What would your Hero Product or Service be if it were a person? What's its personality like?]

Look	Feel	Sound	Associations
How does that value prop look?	How does the value prop feel?	What does the value prop sound like?	List associated words.
How does the differentiation look?	How does the differentiation feel?	What does the differentiation sound like?	List associated words.
How does that personality look or dress?	How does the personality feel?	What does the personality sound like?	List associated words.

STEP 1



Fill out the table for your Hero Product. The last column, "Associations", is a summary of the words you use to describe the Look/Feel/Sound.

Place sticky with a **Personality** summary here.

STEP 2

Place sticky with **Top 5 Word Associations** here.

Mission / Vision

Place sticky from page 2 here.

Personality

Place sticky from page 9 here.

Associations

Place sticky from page 9 here.

Communications

Place sticky from page 6 here.

Value Proposition

Place sticky from page 8 here.

Customers

TRIBE 1

Place sticky from page 7 here.

TRIBE 2

Place sticky from page 7 here.

TRIBE 3

Place sticky from page 7 here.

Differentiation

Place sticky from page 8 here.

GROWTH STRATEGY:

Your Growth Strategy requires more than understanding your brand. But knowing how to ratchet up tribe levels and message your value is critical. Besides your **BRAND**, you'll need a solid understanding of your **BUSINESS** model and **TECHNOLOGY**. Making lateral decisions across these three are difficult. We can help there too! Visit <http://selfcompo.se> and look for the "Three Body Problem."

MARKETING STRATEGY:

Storytelling is the best way to convey a message or idea, like why your organization is so great, to people. When developing a marketing strategy, think about the story you're trying to tell. You have all the critical pieces here!

