**SOCIAL JUSTICE 104 SO MANY CHOICES**

**FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN**

**DEFINING YOUR CHOICES**

**TOPIC 3**

When you’re considering all of the factors that go into building a non-profit, creating a logo might not seem like a top priority.

“Maybe I don’t even need a logo at all,” a little voice is whispering in the back of your mind.

Don’t listen to that voice; he couldn’t be more wrong. Having a logo is an integral part of making your brand a successful one – right up there with having high-quality products and positive referrals.

***So, why is a logo important? Because it grabs attention, makes a strong first impression, is the foundation of your brand identity, is memorable, separates you from competition, fosters brand loyalty, and is expected by your audience.***

Let’s take a deeper look at all of these points below.

**It Grabs Attention**

Attention spans are short these days – especially the public with the distressful issues going on around all of us.

As things stand, companies or non-profits have about 2 seconds to convince potential customers or allies that their products or mission are worth any consideration.

A logo can quickly grab viewers’ attention and communicate a non-profits core values in an interesting way. That short attention span – you know, the one that causes consumers or potential participants to judge your non-profit by its appearance – can work to your advantage, if you have a solid logo to speak for your non-profit.

**It Makes a Strong First Impression**

You have one chance to get this right.

A logo is a non-profits first introduction to consumers or potential participants. If designed well, it can pique the interest of the public and invite them to learn more about the non-profit; if not, you’ve just alienated a potential participant and basically tanked your efforts.

(I am kidding – sort of.)

This first impression is your way to immediately communicate ownership or your seriousness to your mission.

**It's the Foundation of Your Brand Identity**

Successful branding is about telling a story that will influence customers or potential participants emotions – plain and simple.

And, while it’s true that logo design is only a part of a non-profits brand, it serves as the foundation for the entire narrative on which the brand is built.

Colors, tones, fonts – all of this is determined by the **story you’re trying to tell,** and your logo sets the stage for this story.

These elements will later translate from your logo onto all of your branding materials – letterheads, business cards, landing pages, you name it – creating a concrete, marketable brand identity.

**It's Memorable**

Your logo leads the horse (your audience) to water (your non-profit).

Logos are a point of identification; they’re the symbol that customers use to recognize your brand. Ideally, you’ll want people to instantly connect the sight of your logo with the memory of what your non-profit does – and, more importantly, how it makes them feel.

Because a good logo is a visual, aesthetically pleasing element, it triggers positive recall about your brand that the name of your non-profit alone might not.

And, if we’re all being honest, some of your audience will likely forget the name of your non-profit (don’t take it personally – it’s human nature), but they’ll immediately associate your logo with their memories of your brand.

**It Separates You From Competition**

Dare to be different with your logo, because your non-profit logo tells potential participants why your non-profit is unique. Sure, maybe there are 50 other non-profits in your city, but *yours* is the only one that’s committed to XXX, and your green, earthy logo drives that message home.

A well-designed non-profits logo can communicate everything from the non-profit’s background (professional, relaxed, fun) to their mission (entertainment, efficiency, and innovation) through the right icon or proper font.

In other words, your logo is the forum to both convey your values and show potential participants why you’re not like your competitors – you’re better.

**It Fosters Brand Loyalty**

Say it with me: Potential participants crave consistency.

As your brand grows, your logo is going to become more familiar to a wide range of potential participants, and this familiarity creates the perception that you’re trustworthy and accessible.

Think about it: When you’re out shopping for workout gear and suddenly spot track pants with the Nike swoosh, you’re instantly ready to buy. Why? Because with Nike apparel, you know you’re in safe hands; Nike is a brand you *trust*. Trust is built on a well-designed logo, and brand loyalty is quick to follow.

Once they like you, your potential participants are going to seek you out again and again – and your logo is the thing they’ll look for first.

**Your Audience Expects it**

And, last but not least:

Your logo is the first thing that your potential participants will look for when they see any communications from your brand. It should be front and center of all your marketing materials such as business cards, flyers, advertisements, etc.

If you don’t have a logo (and one that stands out), then you are missing an opportunity to make your business stick in the minds of your audience.

**Over to You**

So, there you go! As you can see, you need a logo; it’s a vital part of building a successful business and brand.

Ready to make a logo and start building brand recognition?