

8 steps to a successful brand strategy

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# **About The Author**



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"Your brand is the single most important investment that you can make in your business"

- Steve Forbes

You can undoubtedly create some of the best products in the world in a factory, but if not branded properly they will be of no importance. Perhaps that's why Walter Landor said, 'Products are made in the factory, but brands are created in the mind.' and truly that stands for both the brand creators and the audience that is being entertained by the brand.

A brand that's recognizable and well-known among its customers is easily the most important asset of any company. If you think branding is merely placing a cool logo on a well-placed website, you're mistaken. Truly, a brand is a perception set in one's mind that triggers a conversion.

Whose perception? A customer's perception of the brand. A successful brand easily places a perception in a customer's mind by being consistent in communication and experience, across many applications. If you think building a brand is simple, think again. A successful brand isn't built overnight.

Building brands that are approved by the audience are perhaps one of the most important steps that you need to focus on right after the business takes off. Providing the company with the benefit is just what you're looking for and the benefit can be provided as the brand matures. Right now your mind is searching for ways to create a brand faster than anyone can imagine. Let me be the first one to tell you that it isn't possible.

Developing a brand takes years of hard work and proper implementation, however, a proper step by step guideline can actually help. In this eBook, I'll be telling you all about how you can build a brand of your choice. Each step consists of small steps that you need to follow in order to create an amazing brand tailored to impress your audience all over the world.



#### **Step 1 – Know Your Audience**

Here's a question for you: Would a lingerie brand benefit if it's marketing and advertising is targeted for men? The answer is a straight and simple NO. The secret to a successful brand is being educated specially in terms of its targeted audience. The first rule about learning your targeted consumer profiles is knowing that you can't be the everything to everyone. At best, your brand can be the number one preference out of many choices that the customers have. Keep in mind that preference is also subjective. One small setback or mishap and your brand can even be set as the customer's least favorite preference.

When building a brand, understand exactly who your audience is. Customer profiling seems very easy but isn't. You have to be very specific when choosing the right resources to research your market. The easiest way out is properly examining your competition. You can additionally survey your market to find the closest matches.

Keep in mind, you need to be specific about your customers if you aim to market and advertise your product successfully. Instead of narrowing down your targeted audience in terms of just demographics, try narrowing down in terms of behaviors and interests such as:

- Single moms under the age of 30
- Self-employed individuals

Remember: The more your narrow down on your targeted audience, the better you can market to your customer. This is one of the foundations that you need to focus on if you're looking for a brand that'll stay evergreen in terms of marketing. McDonalds is a great example of an evergreen brand.







### Step 2 – Think about what your brand stands for

Now that you're done with finding out exactly who your audience is, it's about time you start showing them exactly what they want to see. The most successful brands in the world have a powerful mission statement or an aim that they stand by in providing throughout their lifetime.

Think about Nike. 1 in every 4 people knows about Nike's signature tagline which is 'Just Do it' but have you ever heard about Nike's mission statement? Well, you're in luck because I'm about to tell you. If you roam over to Nike's website you'll see their mission statement crafted as clear as day.

#### "BRING INSPIRATION AND INNOVATION TO EVERY ATHLETE\* IN THE WORLD"

Now if you're one of the targeted consumers for Nike, reading this probably gave you chills. But hey, you already are one of the targeted consumers for Nike. Freaked out yet? I bet you are. See that \* right next to Athlete? It states right below the mission statement what it stands for i.e. "If you have a body, you're an athlete" now imagine having a targeted market that big. One of the many reasons why Nike is easily one of the most successful brands in the world.



# Step 3 - Keep an eye on your competitors

Here's another question, name the two sets of keys that almost everyone with a computer remembers? Well of course, they are CTRL+C and CTRL+V. These are also the sets of keys that you're not allowed to use in most brand strategy meetings.

If you try to be like them, you're probably fantasizing over them. Sure, there must be brands currently in the market that are crowd favorites and are succeeding in every department. But hey, is it wise to imitate what they're doing? Not really. However, that doesn't mean in any way that you can't keep an eye on your competition. You can always see what they're doing. Here's a tip: Instead of focusing on what's working for your competition, try focusing on what isn't working for your competition. Go the distance when it comes to scanning the strategy. Look over who your closest competition targeted, if it worked for the brand and if it didn't work for the brand. Let me illustrate what I mean when I say judging brand strategy is important:

Pepsi and Coca Cola are two of the biggest brands in the world who are always in competition in taking over the same targeted market. Both the brands have very different mission statements but keep a keen eye on each other's marketing strategies. Recently Pepsi released a TV ad that starred famous Kardashian sister and model Kendal Jenner. The ad was supposed to be a new approach to what Pepsi naturally does, connecting with people. Unfortunately, it backfired and Pepsi eventually had to take the ad down. For Coca Cola, not only was this a jackpot in terms of marketing competition; the company progressed in terms of strategy education. The first thing that the strategists probably noted down were:

- What went wrong with the ad?
- What could have been done to make it a success?
- ❷ How can an ad relevant to this succeed in the same market?
- Would the ad work with the audience targeted by Coca Cola?
- Possible audience reactions if the Coke targets Pepsi in the same ad?







#### Step 4 - Offer Everything That's Missing

Somehow this step is connected to step 3 and every individual who has already worked on that step probably will understand how. Ask yourself this, there are 300 brands in the market providing the same product or service as you, how does that make you any different? Furthermore, what makes you think the audience that you're targeting will be looking forward to a product that already has several competitors in the market? I can bet you're a bit confused right now. Let me elaborate with a practical example.

Smartphones have been around for quite some time and everyone has noticed the similarities and the price surge with every new flagship release. One Plus, a small smartphone company based in China tried to challenge this similarity in the market. The first signature phone One Plus made was the One Plus 1. It was labeled as the 'Flagship Killer' and was named one of the best phones that year. Then came the One Plus 2, the One Plus 3, The One Plus 3T and The One Plus 5. All of these phones released with an year's difference and all of them made the list of top 5 smartphones of the year.

So, what made a small company like One Plus able enough to compete with the big players in the game like Apple, Samsung, LG and HTC? The price tag. The sole reason One Plus made a name for itself was because each smartphone competed with a staggering set of features that competed with the best smartphones in the market that too at just \$249 for its initial model. Now THAT is thinking different. Serving a market that suffers is the right way to succeed.



# **Step 5 – Creating the Brand's Identity**

The brand's identity is inarguably the most essential part of the whole brand building process. This is the area that sets a footprint inside the mind of the customer. Of all the thing that are part of the brand identity development process, the logo and the tagline takes the cake. Both of these things instantly catch the attention of the customer.

Keep in mind that the logo isn't just another graphic that you don't need to pay attention to. The logo just might be the only graphic that you need to pay attention to. Feel free to take your time when coming up with the logo. A logo is evergreen and you need to make sure proper design enthusiasts are working on it. From the half-bitten apple to the yellow enlarged M, all are examples of logos that made it big. If you're looking for a logo that makes an immediate impact on the customer, Design Proficient is an excellent place to start. The team of creative thinkers at Design Proficient pull together an excellent design strategy to create a logo that stays as the part of your existence till the very end.







# Step 6 - Create a Business Voice for your brand

It's now for something that I consider as the most interesting part of the entire process i.e. the brand's business voice. Before moving forward with your brand's business voice, first pay attention to what it is and what it does. The business voice of your brand is the tone of communication that you use on social and digital platforms all over.

There are several different tones that you can choose from. Some fine examples of an effective business voice are:

- **⊘** Corporate
- Professional
- **⊘** Service-centric

There are several other tones that you can choose from OR you can build a new tone for yourself. Brand communication can turn out to be a very successful strategy for your brand. A great example for your brand's tone is Wendy's the restaurant. Wendy's recently chose to start a sarcastic tone of voice by roasting people on twitter. To their surprise, it was a big hit! Wendy's ROI shot through the roof just with the change of business tone on social mediums. It made news on some of the biggest media networks in the world and is currently one of the best media units of the country.



# **Step 7 – Market What You Stand For**

Your brand message is what people notice and talk about regarding your brand.

Marketing is the key to success when the world is feeding off digital marketing. As a brand, your audience isn't looking forward to knowing more about what you're serving – however, they are looking forward to market what they stand for.

This step isn't very conceptual or constructive. Its perhaps one of the easiest steps that you'll follow on this complete guide. Keep it simple and tell people what your brand stands for. Whatever you believe in, your company focuses on as well. That's all you have to tell you audience. Coca-Cola does a great job in marketing what they stand for and it can be observed throughout their campaigns. Sharing and caring is what coke stands for and you can see that throughout their campaigns







#### **Step 8 - Curate, Create and Continue**

This is the last step for brand developers and this is where they need to start learning to walk on their own. If you have followed all of the steps provided in the document religiously, you're on your way to build a beautiful brand. However, you always need to keep the cycle going. Here are three steps that you need to follow in order to keep your brand on the very top of its game so pay attention:

- Curate everything that think needs curation. Find errors, be your own quality assurance executive. Or better, if you have the investment, you can always hire a QA team that keeps your brand always on top. Constructive criticism is very important to build a brand personality that sticks.
- Continue maintaining your existence at all times. The more you maintain your audience all over the digital world, the easier your ROI shoots with assistance from proper branding solutions by apt creative thinkers such as our team at Design Proficient.

If you've clearly read and understood every step in this small guide – then you're now ready to build your own brand. Here's wishing you best of luck in creating an outstanding brand that skyrocket's your business' success.

