

Elementary Branding Tactics For Small Biz

Your company's slogan, jingle, print collateral, packaging and other electronic and graphic representations are vital to the success of your brand. But here are some things to keep in mind:

- **Make sure your brand is positioned well.** What are the differentiating factors you need to highlight in your marketing message? To be a strong brand, you must *exploit* these differences and position your brand over and above your competitors' brands.
- **Be consistent with your brand.** Don't muddle your marketing messages. Unless you have deep pockets to market multiple messages on multiple fronts, stay close to one succinct message that is relevant to your specific target market.
- **Times change and so do consumer tastes.** Stay abreast of the cultural changes that may affect your brand and its messages. Graphics, musical styles and other elements in your branding materials should reflect the tastes of your target market. Periodically, conduct a consumer survey and incorporate any variations or add any new information in the marketing messages for your brand. Your brand must remain relevant in today's market.
- **Extended your product or service lines to grow.** The mainstay corporate brand should be the brand under which all sub-brands or brand extensions should fall without confusion. Think of the original Oreo brand and all its many extended product versions: doublestuff, iced, two-toned, peanut butter versions, etc. The original Oreo brand is the sacred cow that is at the top of the hierarchical chart of this impressive brand.
- **Is the brand supported to the max?** – Clients sometimes say: “Business is down, so we're cutting back on advertising & marketing.” This is a BIG mistake! When your brand deteriorates, it takes more time and more money and energy to build it back to its former top-of-mind status. Don't lose market share by cutting your message.

Protect and preserve your company's brand at all costs and it will serve you well for years to come.

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