

# TIPS ON HOW TO IMPROVE BRANDING



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Branding is an art. The most successful brands have been sculpted and shaped by professionals until they represent something meaningful in the market and to their audience.

Imagine a lump of clay, it can be shaped into your company's logo, it's identifiable but rather meaningless when it's still fresh and new. That's where branding steps in and tells the viewer what that logo means, it's the artist adding context, color, and nuance.

Now, after the branding artist has had a go at it, that lump of clay turned into a logo isn't sitting alone on a pedestal in an empty room. There is a video in the background

dancing with meaningful imagery, mood music echoes through the space, a spotlight hits the logo and draws your eye, and all around you are people representing the brand's aspirational customer base.

This is what great branding can do for a company, it illustrates and illuminates what the company is at its core. Customers grab onto, create affiliations with, and become loyal ambassadors for great brands because they feel an emotional connection. It's an art, and these tips can help you elevate your brand and solidify the heart of your messaging.

## Define Your Brand

Even if you've done this before, it never hurts to revisit your brand definition. What does your company stand for? Who are your loyal customers? Do you reflect them

in your branding and marketing? Then compare what you're putting out there today in ads, messaging, and promotional marketing, etc. to your brand. Are you hitting those targets?

**\*Tip** – Listen to your brand ambassadors, those very loyal customers who come back again and again, their insights are valuable. These are the people who understand the way your message and brand are being received. When it comes down to it, this is where your brand's meaning lives.

## Consistency

The best brands stay true to who they are at the core. A great brand can shift over time, but it's a slow shift and it's a meaningful shift. When an emotional connection is established and the company has a brand that resonates with the audience, abrupt changes can feel like betrayal. Consistency is best displayed through thoughtful messaging that is solid and confident in meaning.

**\*Tip** – Consider what you're saying to your audience and how you're demonstrating it. If your brand says something and then does the exact opposite, the messaging is confusing and creates mistrust. As an example, if your company is concerned about the environment and this is part of your brand and messaging, your promotional items should be recycled/ recyclable, green, reusable, or something else along those lines. A simple misstep here can be a big problem.

## Impressions

In successful branding, you want to know what impression the audience has of your brand, how they perceive you. This tells you if you're hitting your brand definition successfully. If you're on track, then it's all about making more and more impressions in the sense that you're getting eyes on your logo, company name, and messaging as often as possible.



**\*Tip** - When it comes to promotional marketing, always consider the impressions your marketing investment will earn. A branded candy bar is delicious and appreciated but once it's gone then the moment is over. A branded sweatshirt or uniform gets worn over and over, not just reminding the wearer of your company, but that garment is earning impressions with every set of eyes that lands on it.

## Quality

There are definitely some shortcuts in marketing and ways to get more "bang for your buck." But quality is something that should always remain a priority. When poor quality shows up, it often says more about the brand than the messaging behind it. This reaches across all aspects of marketing from promotional materials that flake and fade to cheesy television commercials that feature bad acting. Quality shows up in everything you do and is a reflection of your brand.

**\*Tip** – It's all about the substrate when ordering promotional items. Substrate printing supersedes other methods in terms of durability and quality. Logos are more vivid and hold their color and shape longer, creating great impressions that resonate with quality and identification.

## Less is Better

The visual elements that make your brand's logo recognizable should stand out from your competition and have "at a glance" identification. Your brand's message can be a bit more involved and fluid, but your logo is the hallmark of who you are. Tying these two marketing elements together unites your company and cements your position. Having an identifiable brand logo paired with marketing messages is an incredibly successful approach that has lasting impact.

**\*Tip** - Simple and straightforward is a good approach to logo and design while effort and time goes into maintaining

## About Clayton Kendall

Clayton Kendall provides customized websites with robust reporting features, which set the standard for technological excellence. Founded in 1999, Clayton Kendall has grown from a small startup with 6 employees, to an award winning company with over 140 employees.

Clayton Kendall also provides comprehensive branded merchandise programs for franchise communities nationwide. We help clients manage their graphic design, merchandising, print production, signage/POP, marketing collateral and warehousing/fulfillment.

Our technology-based programs can lead to greater brand exposure, enhanced local marketing, cost savings, streamlined operations and brand compliance.

values and the customer experience. Consider the giants in successful branding – Nike, Coca-Cola, Dominos, McDonald's, etc. These companies are easily identified by their logo and you have a built-in internal feeling about their values and brand.

At Clayton Kendall, our customers are companies who are working to marry their brand and logo in a successful way to build customer loyalty and attract new customers. This is true for large corporations, small businesses, and franchises.

When it comes to franchises, tying into public perception of an established brand requires work and artful branding. The good news is that you've got a head start because the framework has been created for you. The messaging and values for the corporate brand are established, guidelines and logo elements are set, now it's time to find a way to stand out as the local connection for your community. Carry on the message successfully and use the tips above to sail into the hearts of the local community and reap the benefits of the corporation that supports your franchise venture.