

## BRANDING STEPS

There is much, much more to building your business brand than simply coming up with a catchy slogan and an eye-catching logo. Your brand is your business. It has to be built into something that you are 100% happy with. The entire future of your business will evolve around the decisions you make in regards to your branding image.

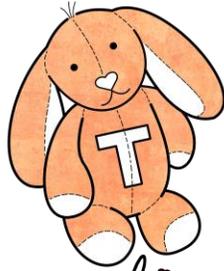
Branding is not just a logo, business cards and some decals on your vehicle. It is an entire plan. Something that can take months or even years to fully build.

You want to generate awareness of your business, whether it be through advertising, campaigning or fundraising. There are three key items you need to build a brand.

- You will need a **Branding Idea**. This will set forth why you are the business of choice, why you are different and that you are someone that your clients can trust.
- **Branding Identity** is the way that you share your branding to the public.
- **Branding Marketing** is the way that you share you brand through channels and the way that it is seen by others. There are many different ways to market your brand now in this modern age. Social media and online advertising are good examples. There are so many social media platforms out there, so you need to decide which you will be using the help spread word of your business. Other examples of marketing are email campaigns or newsletters.

The below list of steps will help give you an idea of what steps to take.

1. **LEARN MORE ABOUT THE COMPETITION** – Research the competition, not to be the same as them, but to learn what they are doing. The more research the better. This helps you to gather up information on how to make your business stand out; to make your business the desirable choice for possible clients. Conducting effective market research will take you and your business a long way.
2. **ESTABLISH WHAT YOU WANT YOUR BRAND TO COMMUNICATE** – This can be a challenging task for many business owners – establishing what you want the public to take away from your branding image. For example, for my business, I want my clients to feel instantly like they are comfortable with the idea of hiring me.

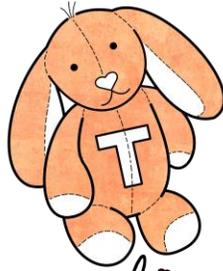


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So in my case, I have a bio on my website, I address people directly in my marketing and I use my portrait on business cards and social media. I want people to feel friendly with me, right off the bat. I want people to feel warm, so I use warm colours like soft corals and dusty rose. I use sharp, crisp, black fonts and icons to communicate to my clients and to the public that I am professional.

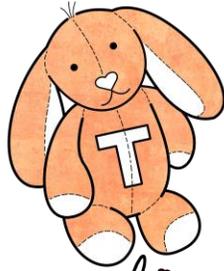
- 3. CHOOSE YOUR BUSINESS PERSONALITY AND TARGET AUDIENCE** – You simply cannot appeal to everyone, and this is especially the case at the beginning of your launch. An article that I read some time ago really hit the nail on the head for me for this step. Picture your brand like an individual, with their own personality. People also generally get along better with certain types of people better than others, right? So what kind of person would your brand like being around the most? Let's use my brand once again, as an example. My brand is warm and welcoming, encouraging my clients to express their opinions on our design work as much as possible. My brand enjoys working with business owning mothers especially, and also really enjoys the relationship that grows over time with all clients. I found this advice very helpful when planning my new brand. Your brand is now a person.
- 4. CHOOSE YOUR BUSINESS NAME** – Again, there are so many options. Some people like to go with a clever plays on words. Some like clean and simple and to the point. In my case, I named my business after my daughter... which also... later would lead to the stuffed rabbit in my logo, as well as the coral colours I use (not only is this colour warm and welcoming as I mentioned before, it is also the colour of my favourite outfits of Tallis'). This, to me, holds so much meaning. The fact that my brand can communicate exactly what I want, but also speak to the public, that is a good feeling. But back to the business name. When building a small business, the name is probably the first thing most of us would start thinking about. But this is why we covered the tips above first. Establishing your brand will assist you in finding a name.

There are so many options when choosing a business name. You can be literal, and describe exactly what you are selling. You can combine words like the Hollywood couples do. You can completely make up a word. Look at so many of the soda drinks out there.... made up names right?



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5. **COME UP WITH A SLOGAN** – Slogans are important. In some ways, probably as important as a logo. When you hear “I’m Lovin’ It”, you not only instantly think of McDonald’s but you also probably picture that logo in your mind. That is because McDonald’s marketing experts have worked very hard on repetition, repetition, in commercials and billboards, so that your mind instantly associates those two as holding hands, whether it’s the logo you see first or the slogan. A slogan can be witty. It can be blunt. It can be a metaphor. Know that you can change your slogan as many times as you want. I am sure over the years you have suddenly noticed a huge company using a brand-new slogan to replace an old one.
  
6. **COME UP WITH YOUR COLOURS AND FONTS** – Consistency in fonts and colours is also very important for your brand. As I like to communicate as much as possible to my own clients.... repetition, repetition. Use those same fonts and colours over and over again until the public starts just knowing, that those colours and fonts mean, your business. If you are going to have complex fonts, make sure that they are readable. Unless, you want to take an approach of wishing people to have to look for awhile to make out your business name, etc. In my case, as my logo is slightly childish, I wanted there to be a slightly longer time period where people will be looking at my logo reading my name... so I made the words close together. I wanted people to look at my branding image and know that there is a story there. Every font, and every colour in my branding image was chosen with care and for a reason. Some types of fonts include:
  - Serif;
  - Sans Serif;
  - Script; and
  - Decorative.
  
7. **DESIGN YOUR LOGO** – Probably the most exciting step in the brand building process. Many people would never guess this would be the seventh step in the process! This may be one of the first things one would think of when hearing the word “brand”, which is fair. The logo is the main face of your business. As such, it is very important. But how to design a logo? Remember you want something that will get the point across and that people will recognize – and it also should blow up nicely. I am not just talking, vector file, that is a given. What I mean is something



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that is great to work in all sizes. There are also so many types of logos. Do you want simple, just words? Do you want a mascot for your business? What will your mascot's name be and how will he/she look in your logo? Do you want an abstract logo? Can your logo be simplified into a small icon for website browsers, and other places?

- 8. CREATE A PLAN TO SPREAD YOUR BRAND** – This is my favourite part. Use all you have put into your new brand, and spread it throughout your community. Brochures, business cards, websites and advertising.

Do not forget that your brand is completely up to you.

Do not forget not to rush building your brand. Branding takes time.

I hope that this article will be helpful for many.

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