

# BRAND matters

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MANAGING PRINCIPAL

**Building a successful brand** – through the use of a unique logo, images and memorable tagline is a crucial element of separating your company from the competition.

In this era, large and small business owners are realizing that the implementation of effective marketing strategies will play an integral role in helping them experience continued growth and expansion.

In the past, many small business owners have not placed primacy upon business-building strategies such as emphasizing logos, images, and company mission out of belief that this type of marketing technique was only advisable for large businesses. In recent years, however, many of these small business owners and association leaders have begun recognizing the importance and value of doing so. By learning more about how emphasizing unique aspects of your business can play an integral role in making your company successful – emphasizing its specialties – you can gain the information necessary to start building a successful marketing campaign.

## Branding – A Brief Overview

Although there are a variety of definitions for the term branding, the American Marketing Association (AMA) defines a brand as a “name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers.” While this form of marketing does involve the use of a logo, it entails much more than mere images. In fact, brand-building exercises such as the creation and implementation of logos, signs, and symbols constitute a business approach that greatly affects how a company or organization is viewed by the general public.

The brand-building process starts with the implementation of things like names, logos, and an identity. As the process continues, it makes use of designs and distinct messages disseminated through all print and electronic media. The entire brand-building enterprise works to cultivate a consistent distinctive “voice” of the company it represents. This helps the business or association appeal to prospective clients or members who will subsequently use the services offered or begin playing a more active role in the organization.



Your logo is the graphic mark commonly used to create your company's identity and foster recognition.



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Color is a key element in logo design and plays an important role in brand differentiation.

## Why Logos, Images, and Taglines Matter

Placing primacy upon things such as organization logos, images, and taglines is important for several reasons. A major reason is that it builds credibility in the mind of the public. This credibility is built when the target audience is given an opportunity to learn more about the services and affiliations organizations offer their members and thus comes to a better understanding of the company or association's quality, purpose, specialties, and value. In consistently using an organization logo and identity,, businesses build a strong brand and market presence that enables the target audience to recognize how the worth and merit of the organization's products and services can personally benefit them.

Yet another reason that branding is important is because it differentiates an organization's services and products from those offered by a competitor. Through the use of a logo and identity building mechanisms such as distinct wording, organizations and associations afford the public an opportunity to note the unique attributes their

services have. Building this distinction in the mind of the public is important because people have a plethora of different options to choose from when they begin to make decisions regarding which services to purchase or which organization to seek membership from. In order to ensure that the goods and/or services you offer stand out in the mind of your prospective members and clients, they need to be aware of why what you offer greatly exceeds any and everything that your competitors are offering.

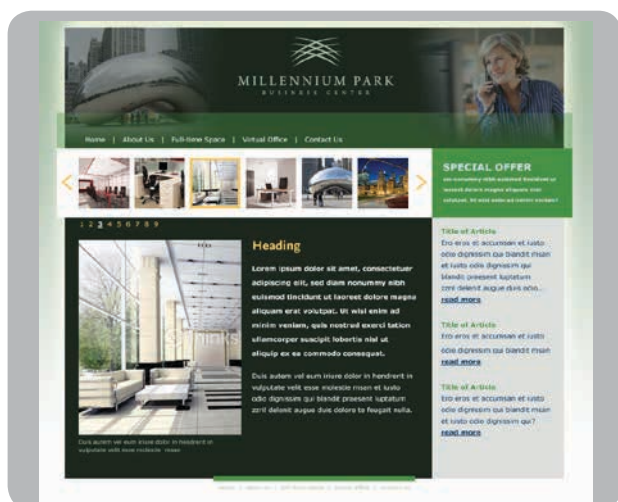
Yet another reason that building your brand is important is because it helps create a memorable personality for your organization.

A logo should encapsulate the purpose of a company.

This can play an integral role in helping your organization's efforts prove successful given that connecting with your prospective members through relationship-building techniques can help you build a loyal membership base. Developing your organization's personality through emphasis on brand-building activities including social media – especially when marketing to millennials – helps to accomplish this goal because it gives your customers a clear understanding of your association's ideas, values, goals, and purpose.



Branding is the “voice” of the company it represents.



This location-themed logo is the cornerstone of the brand, evoking an upscale office center, and anchors the business stationery and website.



## Getting Help From Professionals

In order to ensure that your marketing campaign functions as efficiently as possible, it is oftentimes advantageous to seek the assistance of a marketing and branding firm. Generally, a branding firm will employ individuals who possess the experience and education necessary to ensure that your marketing efforts result in increased conversion rates and a continually growing membership base. The marketing experts employed by these firms understand that the features and services of your organization need to be advertised in a consistent, proper way. If they are not, the public is not going to perceive the organization as a unified, meaningful entity with a clear and formidable purpose.

Good branding will help your company attract more customers.

To help organizations ensure that their marketing efforts are successful, a planning schedule showing distinct communication methods should be produced. One such method is working with organization owners to define and emphasize its mission. This mission can include anything from outperforming competitors to offering prospective members high quality services. In some cases, an organization's mission may be to create and distribute the most durable products. In other cases, an organization's mission might be to become and remain the most innovative company in the market through the consistent production of new products.

### Logos, Images and Taglines are important because they:

- build credibility in the mind of public
- differentiate a company from its competitors
- create a memorable personality for the organization

In addition to helping organizations perfect their marketing efforts through establishing their mission, marketing companies also help them emphasize their unique characteristics. These unique characteristics can include anything from a specific service to a product attribute that is unparalleled by competitors. Marketing experts will devise strategic marketing and advertising campaigns that involve emphasizing



Branding is created here by consistent design that sets the tone for a series of mailers to surgeons and facilities.



the organization's logo, name, and imagery in a way that continually highlights these unique characteristics so prospective members are subtly or overtly influenced to "invest" in the organization's products and services.

## Defining the Target Audience

Another strategy marketing specialists will employ to help an organization succeed includes establishing and catering to its target audience. This activity is very important given that advertising goods and products to a public that doesn't want or need them is a waste of time, energy, and money. There are several methods they will implement to determine which prospects are most likely to want your products or seek affiliation with your organization.

In addition to conducting research, the marketing firm might create a "member" profile highlighting the attributes of your typical member/customer. For consumer products, the member profile generally includes demographic information such as gender, age, ethnic background, location, income, and marital status. Additionally, the member profile will likely include psychographic information such as interests, values, hobbies, lifestyle, attitudes, behaviors, and psychology. After creating the member profile, the marketing expert will figure out how to reach these type of potential new members. This could involve examining which websites the members visit

as well as what type of social networks they are most likely to check consistently. In some cases, members may make extensive use of their e-mail or various applications. Once the market researcher identifies where prospective members can be found, the marketing campaign can be used to specifically target prospective organization members.

Beyond ensuring that the right people are targeted through continual exposure to the goods and services of their clients, a good marketing specialist will ensure that his or her

### Factors to take into account for creating the "typical customer" profile:

- gender, age, marital status
- ethnic background
- location
- lifestyle, values
- income
- social media and internet usage
- interests, hobbies

Corporate B2B collateral material like this quickly conveys the product line and industry, consistently building the brand within the target market.



client has targeted registered domain names. A mobile-friendly organizational or association website is important for many reasons, including the fact that a substantive portion of the populace purchases goods online or makes decisions regarding which organizations to join through internet research. Consistent online branding with your domain names and graphics is also important because it helps organizations establish the type of online presence that will enable them to network with prospective customers or members and thereby increase conversion rates.

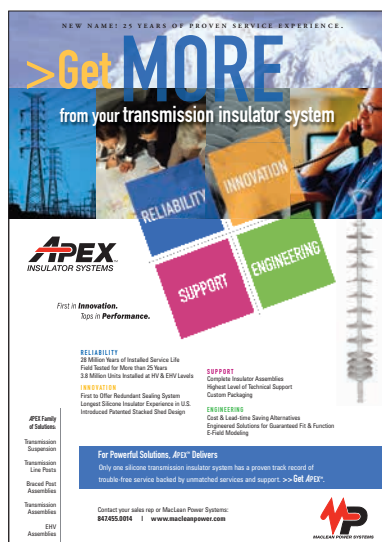
## Employing Social Media for Branding

Yet another way that advertising specialists can help an organization become more successful is through the implementation of a marketing campaign that involves the use of social media forums like Twitter and Facebook. As many marketing experts know, these channels are an effective way to help an organization's goods and services go "viral" without investing a great deal of time and money. There are a



A marketing and graphic design firm can help update old logos or images that were once useful but become outdated and irrelevant.

plethora of strategies a marketing expert can employ to establish a unifying, consistent image and theme that comes to be associated with an organization or association and sharable content. One such strategy would be the careful cultivation of business pages and/or profiles that include specific key wording and images. Additionally, a marketing specialist might opt to host free contests with promotional prizes containing images of the organizational logo on them. These promotional prizes could include things like t-shirts, pencils, and/or hats. A good marketing firm can do an exceptional job in creating aesthetically appealing promotional prizes that prospective members will come to use repeatedly and share with their friends and families.



Branding for this program included several identities, infographics, brand imagery and design for event promotion, banners, print ads, microsite, eblasts and brochures.

## Other Organization-Enhancing Strategies

While the aforementioned marketing strategies can prove highly effective, they are not enough. In addition to focusing on things such as logos, images, and ideas, key organization and company staff should place primacy on becoming thought leaders in their field. Accomplishing this goal necessitates doing extensive and continual research while also consistently communicating one's knowledge to prospective members. This is a great way to build your brand.

## Conclusion

As made plain by the information presented here, building your organization's image, logo, and identity is an important aspect of the branding and marketing process. In recognizing the integral role that these factors can play in helping your organization become successful, you may want to consider partnering with a marketing firm such that your marketing campaign helps you accomplish any and all goals you set for your organization.



Branding by design and format here distinguishes two areas of the company so that equipment brochures and parts division brochures have a distinctive look.



Strong branding will result in higher sales of not only one product, but other products or services associated with that brand.



Exceptional branding will help you succeed.



Mark Swimmer, founder and Managing Principal of Swimmer Integrated Marketing by Design, Inc., is a marketing and branding specialist who works with corporate and association clients to address obstacles, strengthen their brand image and market product or service offerings effectively. Mark's ability to quickly assess the business need beyond the client's perceived scope adds value and strength to the program and its success.

He provides branding, strategy, creative direction and project management for his firm, which has grown and evolved from a graphic design firm when it began 30 years ago, to the integrated marketing communications firm it is today.

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Swimmer Integrated Marketing by Design, Inc. is dedicated to understanding your business needs and creating award-winning marketing and design for any type of company or organization. We blend strategy with creativity, and have worked within a vast array of industries to give us the insight and experience you need to reach your target audience. As a full service Chicago marketing and design firm, we work with you from strategy and branding to planning and delivery – always focused on meeting your goals and providing creative insight and guidance.

Swimmer pledges to go the extra mile and deliver your company's message in compelling ways. We strive to create brands that matter every time and increase the visibility of your brand. We are always ready for a consultation, and our office in Prospect Heights is available to meet and discuss your program needs.



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