



ALL ABOUT THAT *brand*

this thing | these people | this way

WHAT IS *branding?*



What is branding? Let's start with what it is NOT. Branding is not:

- Your Logo
- Your Colors
- Your Tagline
- Your Business Name
- Your Marketing
- Your Website
- Your Social Media Posts

It is a promise. It is YOUR promise to your customers.

Before you can create all of the elements of your brand - business name, colors, logo, website, marketing, etc - you first must establish your Brand Promise. This is not as hard or as daunting as it seems. Forget the words like "mission statement", "vision", "brand proposition statement" and any others that fill you with OMG-I-Don't-Know-What-I-Am-Doing kind of fear.

Simply write this statement and plug in your specific details:

I do {this thing} for {these people} in {this way}.

Et Voila - you have your Brand Promise! And don't worry, you don't have to be the BEST or most UNIQUE at all three of these - only one. There may be a million of your {things} in the marketplace all trying to sell to {your same people} but guess what? No one can do it {the way} that you can! And you know why? Because no one is you! How brilliant is that!

This is your differentiator.

Now you may be one of the lucky ones to have a very unique {thing} or selling your {thing} to a very underserved group of people. Hooray for that. But be sure to ALWAYS bring your special YOU-ness to {the way} you are serving these people with your unique thing. Because (and I hate to be the bearer of bad news) one day, your special, unique {thing} may take the market by storm and your competition will come out of the woodwork. Do NOT let this freak you out. Just remember that no one can steal {your way}.



Now let's get into some specifics of your Brand Promise.

Your {thing}:

How do you determine if your {thing} is unique? Start by asking yourself these questions:

- Is my {thing} bigger, better, faster, stronger, better made, more colorful than anything else out there?
- Is there not another thing out there that is like my {thing}?
- Is my {thing} brand new to the world or making a comeback (read: VINTAGE)?

Once you start thinking about your {thing} this way, you will start to have a good idea about how unique (or not) your {thing} is. Be honest about it. It's okay if you find out that your {thing} really isn't that unique or that there are millions of other things very similar to yours. I promise - it REALLY IS OKAY. And here is why...

These {people}:

Who are the people that your {thing} is going to serve? This is the time to get specific. Find your perfect person and define him/her. Create a persona and list out all of their likes/dislikes. Research where they shop, what they buy, who they hang out with and where. How old are they? What do they do in their spare time?

All of these questions will help you stay focused to the people that will be your tribe, your target market. These are the people that you want to message and market to - always.

This {way}:

This is where you will own it. Adding your personal style to your business will be what sets you apart from all the rest. No one can do it like you can. No one can treat your customers the way you do. No one can provide the same service, products, personalization, relationships like you do. So even if there are a million other products like yours targeting the same people that you are, no ONE can do it like you can. Don't forget that!

THE BASICS OF *branding*

by [Entrepreneur.com](https://www.entrepreneur.com)



[Branding](#) is one of the most important aspects of any business, large or small, retail or B2B. An effective brand strategy gives you a major edge in increasingly competitive markets. But what exactly does “branding” mean? How does it affect a small business like yours?

Simply put, your brand is your promise to your customer. It tells them what they can expect from your products and services, and it differentiates your offering from your competitors'. Your brand is derived from who you are, who you want to be and who people perceive you to be.

Are you the innovative maverick in your industry? Or the experienced, reliable one? Is your product the high-cost, high-quality option, or the low-cost, high-value option? You can't be both, and you can't be all things to all people. Who you are should be based to some extent on who your target customers want and need you to be.

The foundation of your brand is your logo. Your website, packaging and promotional materials--all of which should integrate your logo--communicate your brand.

Brand Strategy & Equity

Your brand strategy is how, what, where, when and to whom you plan on communicating and delivering on your brand messages. Where you advertise is part of your brand strategy. Your distribution channels are also part of your brand strategy. And what you communicate visually and verbally are part of your brand strategy, too.

Consistent, strategic branding leads to a strong brand equity, which means the added value brought to your company's products or services that allows you to charge more for your brand than what identical, unbranded products command. The most obvious example of this is Coke vs. a generic soda. Because Coca-Cola has built a powerful brand equity, it can charge more for its product--and customers will pay that higher price.

The added value intrinsic to brand equity frequently comes in the form of perceived quality or emotional attachment. For example, Nike associates its products with star athletes, hoping customers will transfer their emotional attachment from the athlete to the product. For Nike, it's not just the shoe's features that sell the shoe.



Defining Your Brand

Defining your brand is like a journey of business self-discovery. It can be difficult, time-consuming and uncomfortable. It requires, at the very least, that you answer the questions below:

- What is your company's mission?
- What are the benefits and features of your products or services?
- What do your customers and prospects already think of your company?
- What qualities do you want them to associate with your company?

Do your research. Learn the needs, habits and desires of your current and prospective customers. And don't rely on what you think they think. Know what they think.

Because defining your brand and developing a brand strategy can be complex, consider leveraging the expertise of a nonprofit small-business advisory group or a Small Business Development Center .

Once you've defined your brand, how do you get the word out? Here are a few simple, time-tested tips:

- **Get a great logo.** Place it everywhere.
- **Write down your brand messaging.** What are the key messages you want to communicate about your brand? Every employee should be aware of your brand attributes.
- **Integrate your brand.** Branding extends to every aspect of your business--how you answer your phones, what you or your salespeople wear on sales calls, your e-mail signature, everything.
- **Create a "voice" for your company that reflects your brand.** This voice should be applied to all written communication and incorporated in the visual imagery of all materials, online and off. Is your brand friendly? Be conversational. Is it ritzy? Be more formal. You get the gist.
- **Develop a tagline.** Write a memorable, meaningful and concise statement that captures the essence of your brand.
- **Design templates and create brand standards for your marketing materials.** Use the same color scheme, logo placement, look and feel throughout. You don't need to be fancy, just consistent.
- **Be true to your brand.** Customers won't return to you--or refer you to someone else--if you don't deliver on your brand promise.
- **Be consistent.** I placed this point last only because it involves all of the above and is the most important tip I can give you. If you can't do this, your attempts at establishing a brand will fail.

John Williams
Entrepreneur.com



BRANDING *crush:* drybar®



A couple of years ago I read an article about Ali Webb - founder of Drybar and was completely fascinated by her. She saw a need in the marketplace for women with curly hair who needed a place for a quick, easy and inexpensive blow-out. And since I was one of those curly haired girls, I found her to be utterly brilliant!. Instant girl crush!

As I read her story and learned about her approach to branding, I was immediately impressed, inspired and really wanted to meet her. Instant brand crush!

A recent article in Vanity Fair highlights the details of Drybar's beginning and personality...

"The salon's decor, brightly lit with yellow and white accents and a chic gray backdrop—a design-aesthetic formula that Webb has adhered to throughout the rest of her 72 shops (and counting)—speaks volumes about Webb as a person (and not just of her hair). The petite blonde tour de force is known for her sunny disposition. She recognized a void in the beauty industry and ignored tales of failed start-ups in order to create an entirely new category of single-service establishments."

Read her full story [here](#).

Reading, Resources & Recommendations

for *female* entrepreneurs



1. [Branding Inspiration on Behance.net](#)
2. [Branding Crush: Drybar - Ali Webb](#)
3. [Branding Inspiration](#)
4. [Seven Twitter Accounts to Follow for Branding Inspiration](#)
5. [Be Inspired: 5 Websites for Branding Inspiration](#)
6. [More Branding Inspiration](#)
7. [8 Tips for Building your Personal Brand Image in 2017](#)
8. [5 Steps to Building a Personal Brand](#)
9. [10 Personal Branding Secrets to use for Social Media](#)
10. [On the Flip Side - Sheryl Sandberg says you don't need a
____personal brand.](#)