

# BRANDiNG



**Perhaps it's time to consider a new look for your brand. Creative Company, Inc.'s Jennifer Larsen Morrow explores the concept of branding and its value to the success of your products.**

## Is It Time To Rebrand?

THE ECONOMY IS MOVING AGAIN. Marketing continues to transform, and we're hearing more and more companies proclaiming: "I need to update my marketing" or "I want to rebrand." Retailers and consumers want what's new, fresh and up to date. And you want a brand and packs that work, right?

You want shoppers to recognize what you offer at a glance, quickly understand how your product is different, identify the flavor profile and choose your tasty treat instead of someone else's, right?

That's the power of a brand. At a glance consumers respond with "That looks good!" and "I want it!"

### WHAT IS YOUR BRAND, REALLY?

A brand is more than a logo or a name. In this industry, your pack is the foundation of your brand — the color, shape, style, story and name. It's also built through impressions received through advertising, PR and other marketing tactics, as well as the experience of those who

have bought, tasted, savored, shared and, most importantly, bought again.

It starts with the logo or wordmark, but a brand is also a complete visual and verbal system — online and offline.

According to 3M Corp., 90

percent of information transmitted to the brain is visual. Therefore, how you present your company and your product must start with what people see.

Most people have visual memories. We remember if we've seen a pack form, shape or color before. Have you noticed how toddlers recognize shapes and colors long before they learn to read? A well-branded pack generates at-a-glance recognition.

And, in the long term, a brand is built on perceptions of your organization and products. It starts with a visual system, but is refined through experiences and interaction.

### SO HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S TIME TO REBRAND?

Many companies consider a rebrand when one or more of the following occurs:

- There are changes in the category.
- New competition arrives.
- A company or product line has new ownership.
- There are new markets and audiences to pursue.
- Consumer tastes and perceptions change.
- New packaging formats or structures become available.
- A product is reformulated or reintroduced.

How can your company or product benefit from rebranding? Remember, a rebrand doesn't usually focus on the wants and needs of the company; its purpose is to focus first on the wants, needs and expectations of both current and prospective customers — retailers and

## MARKETING STRATEGY



consumers alike.

A rebrand can involve small updates or an extensive transformation. Think makeover and new outfit versus plastic surgery. Sometimes a complete change is appropriate. Many times an update or refresh is what's needed to maintain brand equity and consumer recognition, while keeping up with style and market changes.

To determine how extensive your rebrand should be, first explore why you want to make a change. That should help guide you to a big transformation or a small refresh.

Here are four great reasons to rebrand:

## 1. TO STAY COMPETITIVE IN YOUR MARKET

As the economy and market change, your brand and pack must stay current — they are the public face of your business and product line.

Update your visual system to stay ahead of the rest and stand out on the shelf. Consumers also look for what's new and different.

Just as fashions change, so do design styles. Your product, in its old pack with old colors, fonts and style, might look retro now — that could be cool — or it could just look tired and out of date — not cool. If sales have gone down, take a look at your brand and packaging against the competition. How do you measure up?

## 2. TO STIMULATE GROWTH, REACH NEW AUDIENCES

Rebranding will streamline marketing around a central idea and look. Choosing how and where you connect with your audiences — beyond your packaging — will impact your brand system. How strong is your website? What about your social presence? How and where do you connect with those who love your products? A strong brand will help you reach the right people more efficiently.

If you're repositioning your product to reach new audiences — organic, healthy, low fat, natural, handmade, new flavors — a rebrand is a path to determine how best to stand out in the new category.

## 3. TO TRANSITION FROM AN EMERGING COMPANY TO A GROWING BUSINESS

When a small business prospers and expands, a rebrand is often needed to reflect the change in audiences, geographic reach and scope. The packaging system and design that were fine when you started out are likely not a good fit when production ramps up.

You might also have learned more about who is buying your products and why when you have wider distribution. Go beyond the visual and consider your message and story; they can

add life to your brand and packaging. Update perceptions, focus on what people like most about your product, and prepare for further growth when you rebrand.

## 4. TO MATCH CURRENT TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNICATIONS

Just as a company's brand must reflect changes in size and market position, it must also reflect changes in expectations. Technology has shifted how your audiences find and choose you. How your brand is presented in new channels makes a big difference in their response.

For a candy or snack product, think about how people buy. Today they want more information about where their food comes from, how it's made, who produced it, how it's packaged, etc. They want authenticity and transparency. If you have a story about the founder, about the flavors, about how the product was developed, they want to know it.

Look at how you can build an online community with people who share the story, love your products and can offer fresh ideas for new flavors and different packaging.

Use technology to establish a stronger presence and greater recognition, both online and offline. Today's marketing is two-way.

A rebrand can be just what you need to bring fresh attention to what you offer. It's also an opportunity to re-evaluate where you fit in your market and update for today's younger audiences. Is it your time? **CST**

SOCIAL  
BUSINESS  
NETWORK  
MEDIA  
SEARCH  
INNOVATION  
WEBSITE  
MARKETING

IDENTITY



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JENNIFER LARSEN MORROW  
Creative Company, Inc.

## CONTRIBUTOR INFO



Jennifer Larsen Morrow is president and co-founder of Creative Company, Inc., a Salem, OR-based firm with work ranging from brand messaging to identity and packaging design. Morrow

regularly speaks on branding, social media and online marketing. She can be reached at [jlmmorrow@creativeco.com](mailto:jlmmorrow@creativeco.com).