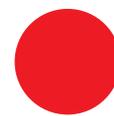


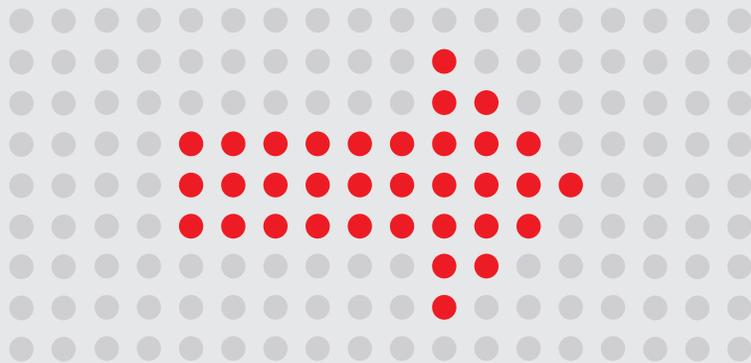
9-Step Checklist for Creating Your Brand Identity



Published by Neos Marketing



Too many professionals believe a brand identity is just a logo. A company's logo, also called a brand icon or brand mark, is part of the brand identity but it is only a single piece of the collection of images, words, statements, fonts and descriptors that make up the unifying but distinguishable characteristics of a company's brand identity.



This 9-step checklist, provides an excellent guide to follow when planning and implementing a new brand identity or refreshing an old one. In the world of business, it is necessary to define and manage the face and personality of an enterprise. Success is dependent upon building a distinctive narrative and communicating your business' unique story. A robust brand identity positions your business for adaptability, recognition and achievement. It is a survival tool no enterprise can afford to ignore.

ANALYZE (STEPS 1-3)

The first three steps are important for documenting and understanding your history, benefits and weaknesses in relation to your competition and your customers. These activities will provide reference for decisions going forward, as well as fuel for improving the process of creating a brand identity strategy.

1

SELF ANALYSIS

Confirm the value proposition and the mission statement. Consider heritage– if it applies to a re-brand – going forward.

- A. What is your existing image?**
- B. What is your brand heritage?** (applies to a re brand)
- C. What is your value proposition?**
 - Document functional benefits
 - Understand emotional benefits
 - Outline self-expressive benefits
 - Record weaknesses
- D. What will be your Values/Mission?**

2

COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

Discover competitors' strengths and understand potential influencers inside and outside your market space.

- A. What brands are in your marketplace?**
- B. What are the strengths of your competitors?**
- C. What are their strategies?**
- D. What are their weaknesses?**

3

CUSTOMER ANALYSIS

Explore and understand customer needs in order to define personas for aligning your brand with trends and segmentation.

- A. What customer trends must you deal with?**
- B. What motivates customers?**
- C. What are their needs?**
- D. How are customers segmented?**

DEFINE (STEPS 4-7)

These four steps build your brand identity strategy. Taking into consideration the results of your analysis, a distinctive brand experience should emerge and give you the opportunity to build a story and imagery that is rooted in the truths of your research.

4

BRAND AS PRODUCT/SERVICE

Outline the basic “plot points” of your brand story. This process forms the differentiation and relevance needed to express your brand experience through narrative.

- A. What is your origin and potential?**
- B. What is your scope? Are you niche oriented?**
- C. What are your attributes?**
- D. What is your value?**
- E. What are your physical uses?**
- F. What are your user profiles/personas?**

5

BRAND AS PERSON

Define the relationship that will best communicate the brand story in dialog with customers.

- A. How do you describe your personality?** (amiable, supportive, empathetic?)
- B. What is your role in the relationship?** (friend, partner, authority?)

6

BRAND AS ORGANIZATION

Define and understand the brand as an organization so all channels of communication and influence, including internal, are considered in the development of the brand story and experience.

- A. What are attributes of your organization?**
- B. How does geographic orientation affect your market?**

7

BRAND AS SYMBOL

Develop a graphic identity with a logo and application standards of visual language across the touch points of your brand experience.

- A. How important is visual impact?**
- B. What metaphors work across all media?**
- C. How does your identity communicate as a visual narrative?**

IMPLEMENT (STEPS 8 & 9)

Your brand is a living, evolving entity that needs nurturing and discipline. It requires a well-managed plan for positioning and leveraging advantages, launching channels of communication, and monitoring and refining.

8

BRAND POSITION

Position with scalability and precision in mind. The greatest challenge in positioning is maintaining a consistent story with opportunities to appeal to multiple audiences.

- A. Who are the audiences you need to reach?**
- B. What content is required?**
- C. What advantages should be prioritized?**
- D. Who are your endorsers, partners and/or affiliates for alignment?**

9

BRAND EXECUTION

Activate a flexible communication strategy that considers rapidly changing technology and customer loyalty.

- A. Which communication channels are important?**
- B. What symbols, imagery and narrative will be activated?**
- C. How will you measure and monitor reaction?**
- D. How can you refine and modify?**

This 9-step guide is great to either lead your team through the brand identity process or serve as a checklist to hold an agency or outside creative team accountable. It is not necessary to answer every single question listed beneath each step. These are prompts to consider so that every angle and element of your brand identity gets incorporated. Once you finalize this process, your responses in each step provides the perfect blueprint to refresh or create your company's new brand identity.