

The Importance of Branding

A brand is a unique and distinct identity that a business adopts for purposes of easy recognition by its customers. Think of the Michelin man, of a Coke bottle, of the McDonalds golden arches; they are all brands - very successful, instantly recognized, brands. You don't have to read the trade name to know the company behind the image - that bit has become "branded" on your memory, which is the whole idea in the first place.

Strictly speaking, the brand image is not the actual brand itself. The McDonalds arches are a logo, a symbol of what you can expect inside: you know the kind of fast food they serve; you know the kind of service to expect; and, you also know the typical layout of the place, as they are all broadly similar. Those are all features of the brand. The logo simply reminds you of the things that you already know.

So, why is branding considered important? Successful branding evokes a specific reaction from people about the goods being sold, the type of service to expect, the uniforms worn by staff, and a thousand other subconscious emotions that all contribute to make up the overall brand. Boiled down to its simplest definition, it is a marketing tool that elicits a particular expected response in people that can serve to increase sales and therefore profits.

The above examples are businesses that have created a logo to brand their company. Others use a name as a brand, which can often be the name of the founder or owner (e.g. Rolls Royce – created by Charles Rolls and Henry Royce), or it can simply be a created name (e.g. Kodak – created by George Eastman). Kodak is just a completely made up name but one that remains uniquely distinctive. Say Kodak and everyone will think of cameras.

Another good example of a brand based on the founder's name is Armani, which everyone associates with classy, quality, suits. In 1970, Giorgio Armani started on a branding road to fame, marketing designer suits that everyone has now heard of. Very few people would recognize his face, but his name is his brand, one of the better known in the western world.

Creating a good brand is simply a matter of careful planning. A good brand will instantly conjure up associations of positive values. There will be trust involved, as well as memories of satisfaction, excitement, and a mind at ease, feeling that they have found the right company to do business with.



The importance of branding can be seen in the way we refer to certain items. A vacuum cleaner has become a Hoover in many places, photocopying a document has become producing a Xerox, and there are plenty more examples. When a brand reaches the point where the product it produces becomes synonymous with its brand name, you instinctively know the importance of branding, for it becomes obvious.

Any business that decides to create a brand needs to think carefully first. Changing a brand is not easy, nor is it wise in most cases. A good brand name can increase sales and profits by 10 to 20 percent, or more, so it's not just an ego trip - it's a very good marketing ploy that works. That's the importance of branding and standing out from the crowd.

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