

ESTABLISHING YOUR BRAND

Your brand is more than just a logo, it incorporates how your clients feel about you, the experiences they have with your business, and their perceptions of you. Creating a brand identity for your business involves an exploration of your current situation as well as your hopes for the future.

Whenever your business and your public come into contact with each other, you have an opportunity to affect the brand perception of your business. Some points of contact include:

- Logo on items
- Business card and stationary
- Web site
- Message on your answering machine
- Email address
- Personal Appearance
- Retail or mobile business appearance

In order to make the most of these points of contact, it is important to clearly identify your brand to your target audience.

This means more than spreading your logo and name around. It means identifying what you do best, how you can solve your client's problem(s), and figuring out the best way to get that message across so that you stand out in a crowd.

Write out your answers to the following questions to help you establish your brand profile:

- What services or products do you offer?
- What are the core values of your service/company?
- What do you specialize in?
- Who is your target market?
- Do you have a logo/colors you want associated with your brand?
- What is the tagline for your business (short descriptive phrase, can be catchy)?
- What message should your tagline send?
- What is the personality of your business?
- What do you want your target market to know and say about you?
- What are your brand objectives (what do you want as a result of your marketing efforts)?
- What are the initial objectives you want to achieve?

WHAT MAKES A GOOD BRAND

A good brand delivers the following at all points of contact:

- a clear message about why your business is unique
- makes you look/sound credible
- brings out a (positive!) emotional reaction
- motivates the person to buy your product or service
- makes them feel loyal to your business

Considering these issues will help create more effective advertising and marketing programs, contributing to the future success of your business.

