

Logo Development - Creating The Face of Your Company

Perhaps the most important – and powerful – step in the brand building process is your company logo. It is often the first interaction clients come in contact with as it is seen on every marketing and promotional piece. Logos come in all shapes, sizes and colors. Some include tag lines while others rely on a mere symbol. Whichever combination you choose, the logo is a powerful marketing tool that can communicate a lot in a little amount of space.

Think about the next time you go to the store to make a purchase. Look at how many products are on the shelf offering the same service. Do you choose simply because of the brand? And how is that brand communicated? Do you recognize the product based on a symbol?

There are many key factors to take into consideration when designing your logo.

- Is it consistent with the nature of your company and business?
- Is it unique? Will clients immediately recognize your company?
- Is it easily replicated? Your logo should be easily recognized whether it is on a billboard, a business card or an envelope. It should convey the same meaning in color and black and white.
- Do you have a catchy tagline to accompany your image?

A logo and tagline combo is like the one, two punch of your brand. A simple image and message can be memorable, lasting and valuable – a powerful combination you want to hold over your clients.

From the designer perspective, below are some sample questions that I use to help develop a winning logo.

1. What are you selling? - I know that you are a physical therapist but how do you sell your service? Packaging a session or hourly, etc.
2. Who is your target audience? (gender, age, location, etc.)
3. What makes your service different from others?
4. What knowledge do you have that provides extra value to your customers?
5. How are your services better than your competition?
6. Why would someone choose your service over competition?
7. What is the largest customer problem, need or desire your service address?
8. How would you like to see your business 3 years from now, 5 years from now, and 10 years from now?

It is amazing to see how much thought and effort is put into what appears to be a simple image or symbol. But really, the logo is a reflection of your company's vision. Once you can implement your logo with a strategic marketing plan, you are on your way to building a successful brand.

Brand Management

The second part of brand management: knowing your competition is vital to remain profitable and grow your business.

- Do consumers recognize your logo or trademark even without your words?
- Do your advertisements jump out above the rest?
- How do rate against your competition?
- Are you the high-price leader or known for your fast and friendly customer service?

Your brand needs to be differentiated from your competition – easily sought after and located – with a clear, consistent and evocative message in 60 seconds. Here’s a quick exercise for your next staff meeting: open the phone book and compare yourself to your competitors. Have each employee make a list of the first ads they see and their immediate reaction to the ads. Are you visually represented the way you want to be?

Now we come to part three of brand management: your consumers. Your consumers are the reason you exist -- you solve a problem for them. It’s up to your consumers how well you brand yourself. After all, your consumers judge your company’s representation: eye-catching logo with simple and concise wording; a quality product at a good price; reliable and pleasant customer service. Your consumers tell you how well you’ve done “branding” yourself.

So let’s think about those words, “brand management” again. Brand management is how you represent your company to yourself (selves), against your competitors and to your consumers. By writing your 60 second message, you can reinforce this message through your graphics and advertising, through your sales and to your employees and investors.