

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

UNBEATABLE BRANDING

Work Book & Checklist



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Introduction

It doesn't matter what you're selling. It doesn't matter where you're selling it. Chances are, your customers have a lot of options. Problem is, all this competition makes your products, services and your business as a whole virtually invisible in the marketplace.

That's not a good thing.

Imagine for this for a moment... You're standing on a crowded street in a big city like New York. You're looking for a friend. He tells you he'll be wearing a dark suit.

Guess what?

It's the middle of the work week, and all the men on the street are wearing dark suits down there in the business district. Your eyes scan over thousands of suit-clad men.

Your friend is invisible in this crowd.

That's what your product is like in the busy marketplace.

Even people who're looking specific solutions can't find you, because your products just blend in with the rest of the products. You're like a guy in a suit standing on a busy street full of other guys in suits.

So how do you make yourself stand out?

Well, if you're a guy in a dark suit, you put on a bright yellow suit and go stand on a platform with a bullhorn. That ought to attract the attention you need.

If you're a business owner, however, then the key is to develop a powerful branding strategy which:

- Sets you apart from your competitors.
- Gives your prospects a strong reason to buy your products and services.
- Cements loyalty to turn one-time customers into lifelong repeat buyers.
- Boosts sales and revenue over the long-term.

And that's exactly what you'll discover how to do inside this course,

Let's get started...



Since we're just getting started, Module 1 doesn't have any planning sheets or checklists for you to complete.

But that doesn't mean you don't have an assignment. Your assignment is to grab your favorite beverage, sit back and continue on with the course... because things are about to get really interesting!



You just discovered that branding is really about conveying a feeling to your prospects and customers. However, until you actually start examining brands for yourself, this concept may not seem all that clear to you.

As such, for this module we'd like you to go through and really look at some of the most popular brands in the world. Below you'll find a few suggestions to get you started. However, you can do this exercise with any brand – so if you're living in a place where the following brands aren't familiar, then choose your own brands and complete the worksheet.

What you'll do is deconstruct three brands.

Here are our suggestions:

- Mountain Dew (<http://mountaindew.com>)
- Aunt Jemima (<http://www.auntjemima.com>)
- Porsche (<http://porsche.com>)

Then answer the following questions about the brand:

1. What is the logo?
2. What colors are used in the logo?
3. What colors are used on the website?
4. What is the slogan?
5. What kinds of photos are used on the site?
6. What "flavor" is the text? (E.G., Is it professional? Conversational and friendly? Educational? Full of slang? How would you describe it?)
7. Based on what you know of the brand (including just based on what you see on the website), who is their target market? What are their ages? Gender? Where do they live? What do they like to do? What is their income bracket?
8. Based on the logo, slogan, colors and everything else you see on the site, describe the overall "feeling" you get. In other words, what feeling is the overall brand trying to convey?

9. Do you think the brand is conveying the right message? If not, what feeling do you think it should be conveying?

10. If you were hired to rebrand this product, what would you do? How would you change the look and feel of the logo, slogan and overall branding?



Note: Since we introduced the concepts in this module, we've inserted the related planning sheets here. However, you'll want to wait until you watch the next module before you actually complete the following planning sheets.

Once you have a good understanding of developing your brand, then be sure to return to complete these planning sheets.

Overall Branding Planning Sheet

1. What kinds of feelings would you like your customers to feel when they're using your product?

List as many as you can think of below:

2. Check out your top 10 competitors.

Now list what their brands are conveying:

Brand

Feelings Conveyed

3. Now list your top three choices as to what feeling you'd like YOUR brand to convey.

4. Finally, draft a few ideas regarding how to convey this feeling throughout our business. This includes:

What kind of logo would convey this feeling?

What colors convey this feeling?

What sorts of illustrations convey this feeling?

What font face best convey this feeling?

What style of content conveys this feeling (e.g., conversational, warm, friendly, educational, plain-spoken, etc)?

Brainstorm all the other ways you can convey this feeling throughout your site:

Product Naming Planning Sheet

You've learned about the three approaches to branding:

- Overall branding (like the "Chicken Soup" series of books).
- Product branding (like PepsiCo Inc's individual branding of its beverages).
- Hybrid branding (such as Ford Mustang)

1. Based on what you learned about the advantages and disadvantages of these three approaches, which one are you going to use for your business?

2. What feeling do you want to convey with your brand?

3. Brainstorm at least two dozen possible brand names for your product:

Product Packaging Planning Sheet

1. What kind of packaging do you need for you product? In other words, is this a physical product where you need actual packaging? Is it a book? Or is it a digital product, where you just need to create a representational graphic of the packaging (such as an ecover graphic)?

2. Brainstorm – based on your branding, what colors would work best on your packaging?

3. Brainstorm – what type of text do you need to including on your packaging?

Product Positioning

Please note that you'll find a planning sheet in the next module that will help you develop your unique selling position.

Pricing Planning Sheet

1. List at least the top 6 of your closest competitors below, what they charge for a similar product or service, and how your product or service differs from theirs. The point is to get an idea of what others are charging, especially in relation to whether your product or service offers more or less value for the money...

<u>Competitor</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>How does their product differ from yours?</u>
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2. If you're creating something brand new in your niche, then you won't be able to directly compare other similar products or services. In that case, ask yourself these questions:

A. Is this a high-end or low-end product and market? In other words, what kind of pricing do customers expect?

B. How are similar products or services in other niches priced?

C. How much value does your product or service provide? Describe how it benefits people, and how much that's "worth" to customers.

3. Based on the above, what is your estimated price range for this product or service?

Penetration Planning Sheet

1. How does your branding affect your handling of customer service inquiries? If you hire customer service representatives, how will you train them to accurately reflect your brand in their communications with prospects and customers?

2. How will you reflect your brand on your blog? What kind of content best conveys your brand?

3. How will you reflect your branding in your advertisements?

4. What kind of advertisements will specifically help you build brand recognition and trust?



Module 4: Evolving And Refining Your Branding Blueprint

USP Planning Sheet

1. Before you can position your product, you need to understand how your competitors are positioning their products. Write down your top 10 competitors below, along with a note about how they're positioning themselves:

Competing Brand

What is their USP?

2. List as many factors as you can think of that are important to your customers and prospects. This includes price, guarantee, how the product was made, customer service, etc.

3. Compare the list of what your customers and prospects want with what your competitors are already doing. Now list as many as USP possibilities as you can think of that wouldn't overlap with what your competitors are already doing. That is, how are you different and better than your competitors?

4. Write down your top 3-5 USP concepts here:

5. Now take each of the above concepts and turn them into a succinct slogan of just a few words.

For example, Domino's Pizza knew they wanted to position themselves as the pizza delivery company that could get the pizza to the customers quickly. If they said, "We're the pizza delivery company that can get the pizza to you quickly so that's always hot and fresh" ... well, that would have been too clunky.

So what they originally did was first strengthen the USP by turning it into a guarantee. And then they boiled it down to just a few words: "**30 Minutes or It's Free.**"

Now you try – see how few words you can use to convey your slogan.



It's time to pull together everything that you've learned in this course. Below you'll find an overall checklist that you can use as you walk through the process of developing and refining your branding strategy.

Branding Checklist

Branding Research

- ☒ Have you researched your competitors via Google? Have you researched your competitors on Amazon?

- ☒ Where applicable, have you checked your competitors' products on local store

shelves? Have you compared the feelings that your competitors' brands are conveying?

- ☒ Have you compared the USPs of your top competitors? Have you compared logos among top competitors?
- ☒ Have you researched your market to see how they feel or how they want to feel when they're using your products?
- ☒ Have you spent time talking to and observing your market (such as by reading product reviews and forum posts) to better understand your market and what is important to them?

Overall Branding Strategy

- ☒ Have you brainstormed a list of what factors are important to your prospects and customers?
- ☒ Have you brainstormed a list of what kinds of feelings you'd like your branding to convey?

Positioning and Logo

- ☒ Have you determined the best way to position yourself in the market?
- ☒ Have you boiled down your positioning statement to a succinct few words (for a slogan)?
- ☒ Have you developed at least three logo concepts to reflect this branding?
- ☒ Have you determined colors best reflect your overall brand feeling?
- ☒ Have you determined what sorts of graphics, photos and other illustrations best convey your overall brand?
- ☒ Have you tested these concepts through focus groups or surveys? Have you split-tested these concepts with real customers?

Product Name

- ☒ Have you chosen a branding strategy with regards to naming product? E.G., Using overall business-name branding ("Chicken Soup"), branding the product names individually (Pepsi's beverages), using a hybrid branding strategy (Ford Mustang).

- ☒ Have you brainstormed at least 24 possible product names?

- ☒ Have you shortened your list according to which names most closely reflect the feeling you're trying to convey?

Product Packaging

- ☒ Have you chosen the colors for your product packaging? Have you chosen the font-face for your product packaging?
- ☒ Have you chosen the graphics to appear on your product packaging? Have you chosen the text to appear on your product packaging?
- ☒ Have you picked a font-face that reflects your branding?
- ☒ Have you picked illustrations for your packaging that reflects your overall branding?
- ☒ If you're selling a physical product, have you picked the type of packaging? (E.G., Packaged in a cardboard box, or packaged in cellophane, or...?)
- ☒ If you're shipping a physical product, have you considered how your shipping materials (such as boxes and labels) will reflect your brand?

Pricing

- ☒ Have you researched similar products or services in your market to determine the overall price range as well as the most common pricing structure?
- ☒ Have you determined if your product or service offers more or less value than competing products or services?
- ☒ Have you determined if your market is a high-end market or lower-end market?
- ☒ Have you determined if your product or service is a high-end or low-end offer as compared to other products and services in your market?
- ☒ If you're pricing on the high end of your market, does your product or service meet expectations?

If you're pricing on the low end of the market, is it in line with your overall branding strategy? (Recall the example from the course of how it would ruin the Rolex brand if they started selling cheap watches.)

Have you tested price points to see which ones your market responds to the best? (Take note that sometimes conversion rates go up when the price goes up, because people equate quality with price. For example, people often shop for wines based on price, where they firmly believe that a more expensive brand of wine tastes better or is otherwise of higher quality. Sometime that's true and sometime it's not.)

Penetration

☒ Have you created a logo that reflects your brand? Have you created a slogan that reflects your brand?

☒ Have you inserted your logo into the appropriate places, including:

- All (or most) pages of your website.
- Your emails (including both newsletters and direct person-to-person correspondence).
- Your product packaging.
- Your graphical advertising.
- Your business cards.
- Your business stationary.
- Your signage.
- Your physical store front or office.
- Third party online storefronts.

☒ Have you inserted your slogan into the appropriate places, including:

- All (or most) pages of your website.
- Your emails (including both newsletters and direct person-to-person correspondence).
- Your product packaging.
- Your advertising pieces.
- Your business cards.
- Your business stationary.
- Your signage.
- Your physical store front or office.
- Third party online storefronts.

☒ Does your website design reflect your overall branding?

- ☒ Does your customer service procedures reflect your overall branding?
- ☒ Have you instructed/trained your customer service representatives to reflect your branding?
- ☒ Does your blog and newsletter content reflect your branding? Do your sales letter reflect your branding?
- ☒ Have you instructed/trained ghostwriters and copywriters to reflect your branding?
- ☒ Do your employees and other staff accurately reflect your overall branding? (This includes everything from their attire, where applicable, to the way they perform their jobs.)
- ☒ Does your overall mission statement/purpose reflect your branding?
- ☒ Do your overall business and marketing plans reflect your branding?
- ☒ Do your charitable and community efforts reflect your overall branding? (For example, if part of your positioning is that you deliver "greener" cleaning supplies, then your business-based charitable contributions and sponsorships might also go towards causes that promote greener living.)