

How to Get Your Company Recognized and Remembered



by David Gilman



One of the best ways to get your company recognized and remembered is to take advantage of a unified and consistent brand identity.

What is a brand identity? Simply put, it is the way you express your company visually, through the use of fonts, images, and color. A brand identity applies not only to your logo, but to all your marketing materials, including signage, business cards, brochures, and every page of your website.

When your identity is consistent and unchanging, it insures your company is not only recognized but remembered.

As you may have guessed, my company is built on the sense of sight, but – guess what – so is yours. Sight is the sense that we rely on most. In fact the nerves that lead from the eye to the brain are twenty-five times as large as those leading from the ear to the brain. Our mind thinks in pictures – or as the saying goes, “a picture is worth a thousand words”.

So if you picture your brand identity in your mind’s eye, you can see why consistency and repetition are so important. Think of Coca Cola, and you – quite literally – see red. If Coke had decided to change its identity and packaging based on the seasons and introduced green for Spring, its brand identity would have been diluted instead of reinforced, and the shareholders would have been those seeing red.

As you brainstorm, you may want to try this exercise. If your company were represented by an animal, what would it be? A feisty chihuahua ... a graceful gazelle ... or maybe a wise old owl. Try that for just a moment.

What just happened? Your mind’s eye created a visual representation – you saw a picture, not words, and that is exactly what happens when you create a brand identity. You develop an identity using fonts, images, and color to best express attributes like aggressive, graceful, and wise.

But what happens when a brand identity becomes fragmented? The company starts to look like two or more companies because the logo is not used consistently, the colors used in marketing materials seem to have been chosen arbitrarily, and the website bears little resemblance to the trade show booth – or anything else, for that matter.

The problem can usually be traced to a lack of guidelines, and all companies – not just the IBM’s and the Coca Colas – need to adopt their own guidelines. Large corporations – and even sole proprietors – often use what is called a brand identity usage guide to save time, avoid redundant decision-making, and make sure the brand remains clean and strong.

A brand identity usage guide gives clear direction how to use the company logo, which primary font to use, specifies primary and secondary colors, the type of photography which can be used, and more. Some companies usage guide will even specify exact point sizes for headlines and for body copy.

For example, for at least 18 years Apple has always used two specific fonts, ITC Garamond and Myriad, which is why you can often recognize the ad even if someone hid the logo.

To summarize, in order to increase recognition and be remembered help your target audience by developing a brand identity usage guide. A well developed, unified, consistent brand identity will awaken the visual senses and convey a look and feel that opens your target audience’s eyes. Your website, user interface, collateral, promotions, and advertising will all come to life – and your corporate mission and spirit will come to light.

David Gilman is the founder and President of Cognito. He is dedicated to helping companies achieve the utmost recognition through eye-opening visual communications. In his 25 years in graphic design he has been published worldwide in numerous publications on brand identity and logo design. For more information, please visit www.cognitocreative.com.

