

How to Develop a Strong B2B Branding Strategy

If your business operates under the premise that business-to-business (B2B) marketing should be dry and emotionless, then they may as well be running their business with rotary phones and typewriters.

B2B marketing was once defined by the rationality of business decision-makers and branding focused on visual identity and the idea that there is no room for emotions in business. However, these ideas are now as outdated as mainframe computers.

With the business world changing, there's no better time to reassess your business's approach to creating a brand.

Read on for ways to build your company's branding strategy.

Essential Traits for an Effective Branding Strategy

The landscape of B2B has changed drastically in the last decade. Now, with minimal boundaries to entry, competition at every level is tougher than ever. The key to standing out is separating your brand from the herd. So how can you build a more meaningful connection with your audience?

Keep It Simple

Even if your product or service is complicated, companies that are successful at building a brand know how to simplify their message.

When planning your company's message, it needs to be clear, memorable and highlights a benefit of your service.

From the understated elegance of Microsoft's "Smarter Planet" to the clunkier, albeit clever "When it absolutely positively has to be there overnight" from FedEx, the reason these companies find success is clear. Simplicity.

Sure, the steps to deliver your service may be complicated but if you want it to sell well, your message needs to be easy to understand.

Have a Message That Stands Out

People have terrifically [short attention spans](#) so you need a message that grabs your reader.

Furthermore, when you're creating a brand, you need to make sure that your message doesn't sound like a robot wrote it.

If you're looking at options for Excel Spreadsheet services, a Google search will return numerous companies. As you begin to research them, you'll quickly notice a trend across their messages.

- Data Analysis That Fits Your Business
- Simple, Powerful, Accurate Data Analysis
- All-in-One Data Analysis
- Total Data Analysis

None of these messages is exciting. And certainly, none of them stands apart from the others. In industries with a high level of competition, sounding the exact same as your contemporaries mean that there is no reason for a prospective buyer to choose you over the others.

Not only do these slogans fail to inspire a user to click on them, their lack of originality makes you question their ability to deliver useful insights!

Focus on Customer Service

It's essential to make your customer the focus of your brand. This means understanding your customer and being able to use that understanding to create buying personas.

It's only through establishing feedback loops and learning from your customers that you will be able to understand the thought process that goes into their purchase decision. In order to attract customers, you need to make customers care about your brand.

By showing a commitment to customer service, you're separating your customers from the [71% of B2B buyers](#) who feel disengaged from their vendors. And when customers feel indifferent towards the companies they work with, they don't feel any loyalty to stay with that company.

Furthermore, B2B companies with high client engagement enjoy significantly higher revenues than their competitors.

Use Data Analytics to Understand Your Customers

Another element of being customer-centric is using data analytics when building their brand.

Use your company's search, website and social data to build your buyer persona. By looking at your website analytics, you can collect information including how long they're staying on the page, what they're clicking on and more.

Additionally, successful B2B companies continually test their content as part of their brand strategy. Conduct A/B testing on your Facebook and Google ads to gain a deeper understanding of your customers and the calls-to-action that successfully engage with them.

[Excel spreadsheet services](#) are a great tool for outsourcing your data collection and analysis needs and then use this data when crafting your brand's identity.

Build an Emotional Connection

Finally, you need to create an emotional connection between your business and your customers.

Think of your own purchase decisions. What inspires someone to purchase a Jaguar rather than a Corolla? While the sports car may carry more prestige and have a more powerful engine, the fundamental functionality of both products is the same.

The difference comes down to emotions. When we make purchase decisions, the emotional decision comes first. In this case, the desire for a fast and flashy car. This is followed by rationalizing that decision; I work hard and I earn enough money to purchase it, my friends will be impressed, etc.

While the motivations to purchase may be different in B2C sales, the underlying motives of B2B sales are the same. If you want customers to choose your product or service over your competitors, you need to make an emotional connection with them.

It's important to remember that just because you're dealing with other businesses, that doesn't mean that you aren't dealing with people as well. Not only are B2B buyers [50% more likely](#) to purchase from companies that they are emotionally engaged with, but they are 8X more likely to pay a premium on that product or service as well.

Clearly, it benefits your brand to build connections with your branding strategy.

Your Customers Are King

The main thing to keep in mind when developing your brand strategy is that your customers are your lifeblood.

Through clear messaging and building an emotional connection with them, you are creating an atmosphere where the people who make purchase decisions will want to work with you.

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