

Designing Your Brand Identity

The Basics

Now that you've taken some time and considered the 4 areas for the designing of your Brand Identity: Color Palette, Typography, Imagery and Message, it is time to contact your graphic designer and put these pieces to work! Creating your Brand Identity can encompass a number of elements depending upon the branding stage.

Logo

Your logo design is the foundation of your brand identity. It is incredibly difficult, if not impossible, to move forward with any other marketing piece until your logo is set up. I will caution you to choose a qualified, professional graphic designer, as this logo is going to have a lot of work to do. During logo creation, a professional graphic artist is going to work on the following:

- Clearly communicates who you are and what you value as a brand;
- Visually appealing: simple, clean and concise;
- Works in both color and black & white;
- Classic, not trendy: you don't want your logo to go out of style in 6 months;
- Plays along with your industry's standards—and if you veer off, do so deliberately;
- Makes a lasting impression on your audience and is memorable

A professional graphic designer should deliver your logo in multiple file formats to encompass varying sizes, print quality and web optimization, as well as color and black & white variations.

Brand Book

A brand book is a wonderful reference to preserve your brand identity. Once you have gone

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to the trouble of choosing just the right shade of green, waded through dozens of fonts and worked with your graphic designer to create the perfect graphics, you need to record all that information to guarantee that all your design assets are used correctly. A brand book outlines your design assets, clarifies when and how to use them ensuring that future design is in line with your identity, generating cohesive branding. Remember, consistency is the key to creating a strong brand identity so maintaining brand guidelines is going to enable you to build brand recognition and brand loyalty.

Business Cards

Business cards are still a must and not just to put in the raffle bowl at Chili's for the free lunch drawing. If you're doing any sort of business development (and you better be), you'll want to stock up on business cards. A well-designed card offers the chance to reinforce a positive opinion of yourself in the eyes of potential clients or customers. When it comes to business card design, keep it simple: your company logo on one side of the card and your key personal details on the other side should suffice. It is worth a couple extra bucks to swing for the heavier card stock, everyone notices heavier cards and it lends the perception of permanence and stability to you and your business.

Website

Your website is one of the most representative aspects of your brand identity. Not only does a website lend credibility to your enterprise, it is a great option to offer up a depth of information about your brand that you cannot provide elsewhere. Let's face it, if you want to know about a place you look it up online. You should be using your website to wow that potential customer with their first experience of your business long before they ever walk through the door. Tell your story & tell it well. Your website is where your brand identity should come through in full force.

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Social Media

Six guidelines to using social media as a branding tool:

- (1) **Choose the right networks** – know your target audience, find out where they hang out on social media and post there.

- (2) **Utilize visual branding** – keep it cohesive across platforms.

- (3) **Be authentic** – whatever the voice you develop on social media, make sure it is authentic to your brand and business.

- (4) **Post regularly** – If you post irregularly or barely at all it is unlikely that you will build up a following online.

- (5) **Remember to be social** – if the only time you go on social media is to post, you are essentially having a conversation with yourself.

- (6) **This isn't your mom's branding** – not everyone is obsessed with social media, if you rely on it as the sole means of branding your business you will likely miss out on a portion of your target market.

Email Marketing

Email is a great way to engage your customers and drive business. But most people are at inbox overload, so if you want to grow your business via email, you need the right design strategy to set yourself apart from the clutter. Think about the purpose of the email. Are you trying to make a personal connection? Then keep it short, sweet, and simple. Are you trying to educate? Then format it well so it's easily readable and add a few images to make

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it pop. Are you trying to tell about your latest beer launch? Make a few stunning product images the focus.

Product Packaging

Product packaging is key to attracting the right customers. Whether you're thinking about the bottle of a cold-brew or the mail you'll send to your customers to announce your latest collaboration, don't underestimate the value of good design in improving the experience. Memorable packaging can drive both loyalty and repeat purchases. Packaging is an awesome opportunity for your design to shine.

Your brand identity is what sets you apart from the endless sea of competitors. It is your opportunity to highlight why you are unique. Consider it a stage and everyone is watching. Now go wow 'em!



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Since 2010, Misty Gordon Creative has been creating strong, visually stimulating designs and providing cohesive marketing pieces across multiple platforms, from logo creation and branding, web design and advertising campaigns to product packaging and merchandise.