

Brand Overview

A brand is more than the sum of it's parts, but let's start with that.

Here are all the things that make up a brand, and then we'll dive into how a brand is more than that, and what a brand does, and what a brand means, and most importantly, what a brand is worth. That's called "Brand Equity".

- Logo
- Colors
- Fonts
- Imagery
- Style
- Design
- Tone
- Theme
- Culture
- Delivery
- Process
- Budget
- Products
- Services

Are you getting the idea?

Everything you do is your brand. Everything your company does is your brand. Everything everyone in your company does, is a stamp that is cosigned by your brand, and all these actions, over time, create a giant footprint that is your brand's footprint.

Let me segue into another paradigm. Your brand is a person. It is! Let's give that person a name. Brandy.

Brandy can't shake your hand, Brandy can't talk to you, but you shake hands with Brandy every time you shake hands with someone on your team. You talk to Brandy, and Brandy talks to you, every time you have a conversation with someone on your team.

If you think of that analogy, and play it out, and listen back to the recording in your mind, with say 5 people on your team, is it coherent? If ONE person said all those things in ONE conversation, would you feel like you were talking to the same person? Or at least similar people? People all from the same tight knit family or group?

Does Brandy have a financial profile? As in, does Brandy spend money or pay out money in a patterned fashion? People have financial profiles, habits, commonalities. 1 person might spend \$300/month eating out, another might spend \$300/week on groceries and enjoy cooking at home. A saver will save all their extra, a spender will spend it. Some people believe you get what you pay for, and buy nice things, others believe a penny saved is a penny earned, and hoard up cash. These are financial profiles. Your company has a financial profile. Brandy has a financial profile. Is it consistent across the board? Are you thrifty in one department, and a spender in another?

How about culture? Here in the south we say Yes Sir, and Yes Ma'am, and we say Bless Your Heart (which is an insult), and we're generally kind on the outside, and we spend time in passing conversations, and we value heritage (not all heritage obviously) and we value faith, etc. In other parts of the country time might be a stronger value. Time saved by being short and to the point. They might value the present more than the past. They might value the latest trends, or technology more. These values make up culture, and define how people engage with each other. Brandy has a culture, based on certain values. What are the values of your company? Are they strong enough, communicated, honored, rewarded enough to identify? Do you hire based on these values? Do you fire based on a lack of these values? What kind of culture are you cultivating?

Let's assume you get it at this point, and you don't need any more rambings on, now let's cut to the point, the essence of it.

Your brand is 1 thing, 1 simple thing. It's WHAT YOU SAY IT IS. You decide. You make it. So be DEFINITIVE. Figure out your values, decide your values, be intentional with your budget, and everything else! That's step 1, of 3.

Once you've done that, you're on your way to creating your brand. Just the thoughts and ideas in your head, or even on a paper you haven't shared yet, are still just an idea. Now you have to share them with your team.

You have run your company "on brand". You have to hire on brand, fire on brand, spend on brand, save on brand, exist, as a company, according to your brand. Dress code, communication, project management, systems, processes, everything. Not only be on brand, but then brand it. In other words, put your visual mark of your brand, on everything.

Ok, next thought, your people are the carriers of the brand. The majority of your brand efforts revolve around humans. Brand your people, from the top down. Put systems in place to hire on brand, train on brand, and let the people carry on the branding without you.

Alright, here's step 2. Communicate your brand to your team. Implement your brand internally, 100%. Once you've done that, you've done step 2. Now you have created a brand, and you've given that brand to your team to identify with, and cultivate. The next step is sequential, and will

happen organically. Step 3 is getting others outside of your business to see your brand, and AGREE that it IS YOUR BRAND.

Let's say Brandy has red hair. Fiery red. It's her trademark, she's known for it, and she always has her hair done, so it's always very good looking, always. You never see Brandy without her fiery red hair, always done up nice. Just always forever. Ok, so Brandy goes and meets a group of people for lunch. Some of the people she's meeting are friends of hers, but others are not, they're total strangers. Brandy's hair is done up nice, as usual, and she's not talked about her hair, as that would be weird, but now she has to step out for a minute, take a phone call. While she's away, someone who doesn't know Brandy comments on her hair, and Brandy's friends reply "Oh yes, she's ALWAYS GOT SUCH LOVELY HAIR, FIERY RED, ALWAYS LOOKS SO GOOD!"

Now you've done it! Now you've got people OUTSIDE the company that know and understand your trademark, your best feature, your TRUE VALUE.

Toyota- longevity

Nike- fashionable

ROLEX - fancy

McDonalds - inexpensive

WalMart- inexpensive

APPLE - intuitive

Buffalo Wild Wings - Beer, Wings, Sports on TV

All these brands have CONSISTENCY, Always delivering their trademark, every time, consistently. So we know what to say when people ask about them, which is the indicator that we HAVE FORMED AN OPINION OF THEM OURSELVES.

A Brand is 3 things;

1. What the owners says it is
2. What the company says it is
3. What the public says it is

Brandy is a person you create. Be smart about it, talk about it, live it, make it consistent at scale, and deliver on the promise of who Brandy is and what she does well.