

Basic Branding - Some things to remember

Building a brand doesn't need to be complicated but there are many challenges, pressures, and distractions to take into consideration. It is not as simple as choosing a name, a slogan or designing yourself a logo. A strong brand is built with the intention of making it recognisable and familiar to consumers, showing off a personality and providing an expectation.

If you're in pursuit of brand excellence there are critical components that shouldn't be overlooked.

Focus:

In order to achieve any kind of success with your brand, there needs to be focus. What is the aim of your brand, who is it targeted at and what do you want to achieve? There are questions that need to be asked regularly and answered in order to establish the focus of your brand. Write down a list of objectives and from here, you should start to establish a focus.



Differentiation:

Look at your competitors and assess what is similar between your brand and theirs? It's also important to look at what is different. Establish what sets you apart and distinguish the identity of your brand. Be sure to highlight what makes your product or service unique and more enticing to customers. You want them to choose your brand over that of your competitors.

Relevance:

Once you've established what makes you different, you need to ask yourself if your customers actually care. It pays to have a sound understanding of your target audience so you can tailor your brand to their wants and needs. Do your research, ask the questions and then adapt your brand to be relevant. Having a brand is one thing, but delivering it in a meaningful way is another.

Values:

What do you stand for? What does your brand stand for? In order to be strong, it needs to hold values and these need to be apparent in your brand. Customers will identify and become familiar with your brand based on clearly defined values.

Consistency:

Now that you know what your target audience wants to see, it's time to maintain it. It can be hard in the current, super saturated media environment, trying to stay atop of every facet of your business, but if you promise a level of service, you need to uphold that promise. Always check in with your focus, relevance and values to ensure you're staying consistent with your promises to the market and to your brand.

We have some great tools on marketing and branding that could benefit your business. If you are interested in learning more, give us a call today.

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Welcoming new staff on board... the importance of a good induction

The recruitment process is often one that takes its toll on your time and your wallet, making it a fairly daunting task. So once you have found the right one and hired that desirable employee who fits the mould, you need to ensure they're not left flailing and sent unknowingly into your workplace vortex.

It is important to have a sound induction procedure in place so that new employees are made to feel at ease in your environment. By positively welcoming recruits into your business and sharing basic but essential information, you are helping newbies become effective sooner.

The Basics:

Whether you are aware of it or not, your workplace is filled with industry jargon. This may be the names of suppliers, procedures or simply day to day tasks that have been abbreviated or nicknamed over time. Have a breakdown of these available for new employees including a brief overview of what they stand for and how each fits into the company.

Be sure too, to advise newcomers of meeting times and meeting areas so they know where to go. Ensure that introductions are made to the rest of the team. A good way to do this is to put on a welcome morning tea.

Handover Period:

This is one of the most important elements in an induction plan. Each role within the business is different so it is best to ensure this is done from previous employee to new recruit. If the role is a new one, look at outsourcing human resource groups to establish what the role entails and how best to ensure adequate training is done.

Company Rules:

It can be embarrassing for a new employee to come on board and do something they've done previously in another workplace, only to be told down the track that this behaviour is not acceptable. Lay down the ground rules. This can include such things as mobile phone usage, accepting personal calls and use of the kitchen area or staffroom.



An induction pack is a good idea for new employees. This can be put together by someone in your team, but remember to review it regularly as policies often change. By ensuring you have an adequate plan in place, you and new recruits will establish confidence from the get go.

So, where do you start? How to put together an induction programme



Putting together an induction programme doesn't need to be tricky. There may be specific elements that relate to your company that you'll need to outline, but here are some basic things you should include to get you started:

- Any legal requirements (for example, some Health and Safety training is obligatory)
- Any regulatory requirements such as payroll and bank account details, IRD forms and KiwiSaver applications
- An introduction to terms and conditions such as holiday entitlement or how to make expense claims
- A basic introduction to the company, and how each particular department fits in
- A guided tour of the building and introductions to key members of staff
- Specific job-role training
- The company's vision and mission statements

We have some great resources that can help you put together an induction plan. Contact us to find out more.

Breaking free from idle mode - top tips for business growth

It's easy to sit back and enjoy the fruits of your labour and become comfortable with your current business position. But don't become too comfortable. Isn't that why you got into business in the first place? To step away from that zone and challenge your way of thinking?

Always be aware of and listen to your market. It's easier to swim with the current than against it so make sure you are offering a product or service that people are actually buying. Do your research and find out about your target market, their needs and their wants then provide something that delivers on these.

Business growth will come by changing your mindset. If the market is not doing well, don't look at this and use it as an excuse for your business not to grow. A positive attitude is the first step towards growth. If you surrender to your current situation, you're not going to grow.

When you think of growing your business, don't let it stress you out. Try to do just a little bit every day, not everything. Make concise lists about what's important and what steps you need to take to ensure these tasks are completed, before moving on to the next. If you don't complete them on time, don't worry too much but try to set realistic timeframes where possible. Try to be as motivated as possible. Be aware of productivity killers such as procrastination and distraction.



Productivity Killers

One of the most important elements to business growth comes from managing productivity. This can be done by being aware of your habits and making basic changes to the way you work.

The wrong mindset - We all know that attitude has a lot to do with our productivity. By having a more positive outlook on the day or week ahead, your motivation will accelerate and lead to better productivity.

Distractions - Some people go so far as to remove distractions such as social media from the workplace. However it wouldn't actually matter what you removed, there is always something to distract us from our work. Whether it is the view out the window, personal emails, a fly in the room or idle chatter with a colleague, these are all productivity killers. What we need to do is be aware of these distractions and learn to work through them.

Lack of routine - Without structure, it's easy to become lazy. Set a regular pattern and stick to it each day, and not just in your work environment.

Awareness and little changes over time to some of these productivity killers will subconsciously improve your work ethic over time and help steer your business toward positive growth.



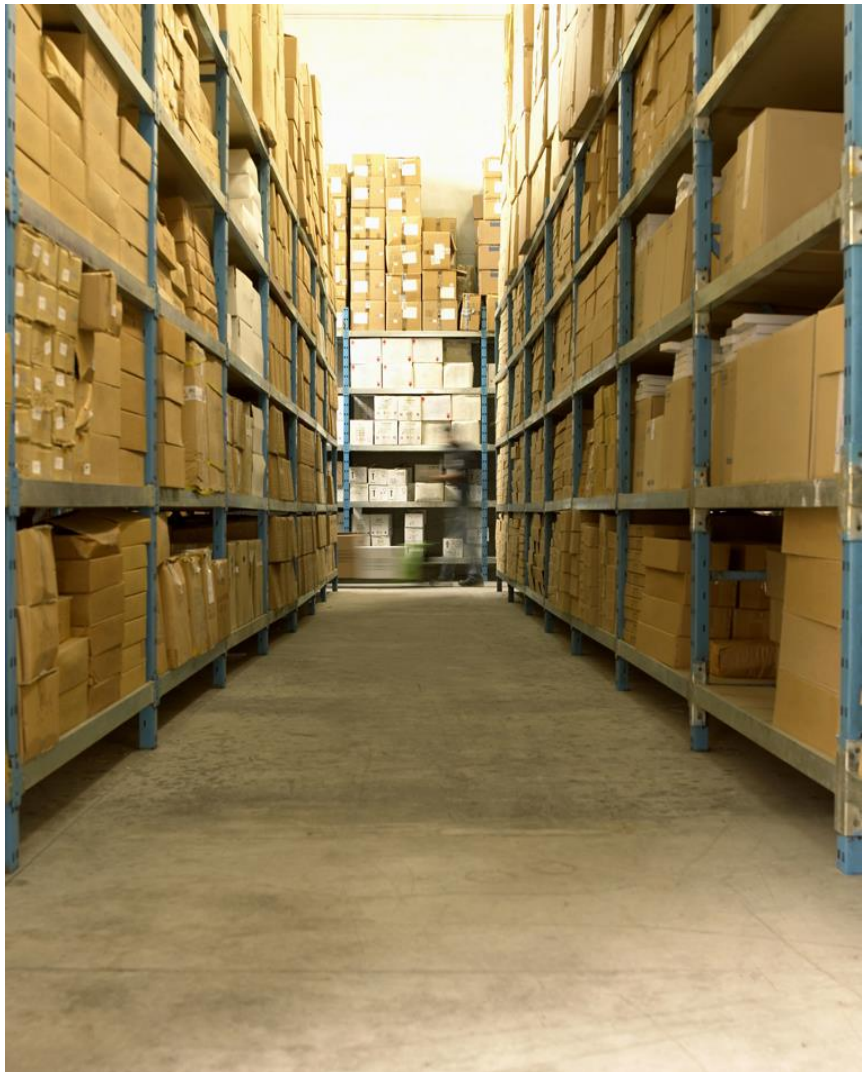
Netiquette – a focus on e-newsletters

Used correctly, e-newsletters are a wonderful marketing tool for your business, but there are a few things to keep in mind to ensure you do it right.

Length - keep the main body text short. If it's a lengthy article, look at linking to landing pages so that those who are interested can follow the link to read more.

Regularity - try and keep newsletters to a regular schedule. Whether that be monthly or bi-monthly, unless you have something specific or important to send an update about, don't bombard your clients with too many emails. This will only lead them to feel pressured and potentially unsubscribe.

Be aware of legal requirements - Although you don't want your readers to unsubscribe, by law you need to provide them with the option. Research your obligations first.



An Important Message

While every effort has been made to provide valuable, useful information in this publication, this firm and any related suppliers or associated companies accept no responsibility or any form of liability from reliance upon or use of its contents. Any suggestions should be considered carefully within your own particular circumstances, as they are intended as general information only. Please call Lianne, Andrea or Andrew to discuss everything business!



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