

Branding

Steven R. Van Hook, PhD

SLIDE 1: Intro

Some say a primary purpose of marketing – even all communications – is to create a brand – whether it's a company brand, a program theme or slogan, or a personal brand of you ... meaning the value of you to others.

SLIDE 2: What Branding Does

So let's take a look at branding, and the gravitational center it provides to much of our work as business communicators.

> Much of what we write in our communication campaigns has to do with increasing brand awareness, and hopefully boosting our brand value and competitiveness in the marketplace.

> Branding is typically achieved through our efforts in marketing, advertising, public relations, direct contact – through just about any means you can get your image and your associated message out to the general public, a targeted audience, or a single person.

SLIDE 3: A brand is ...

> Here's a standard textbook definition: "A brand is any name, term, sign, symbol, or design intended to differentiate the goods or services of one seller from those of another."

In other words, what's so special about you?

SLIDE 4: Brand Names

Here's a quote I've always enjoyed from a mutual fund manager in Chicago:

> He says: "Harley [Davidson] is maybe the best brand name in the United States. Coca-Cola is a pretty good brand name, but people don't tattoo it on their bodies."

Which gets to the heart of what effective branding is all about.

SLIDE 5: Why Brands

Sergio Zyman, the former chief marketing officer for the Coca-Cola corporation says,
> “The whole reason for creating a brand is to get consumers to identify a number of desirable qualities and traits with your specific product.”

> In simpler terms, what you are striving for is to create a relationship with your customers ... your audience --- so their life feels more complete just because you are in it.

SLIDE 6: Brand Values

Now, we should note the difference between brand value, and company value. The brand value is how much the brand alone is worth – not counting production lines, distribution routes, any empty bottles that may be lying about. This value is measured by customer familiarity and affection for your product or service ... the width-depth-length of your brand recognition ... how much more you can expect in returns just based on the value of your brand.

Or, simply put, it measures how much people love you.

SLIDE 7: Antenna Balls

Here’s an example of that. A Mickey Mouse antenna ball sells for almost \$4 ... or four times as much as you might spend for a Jack in the Box antenna ball – even though the more complex Jack ball likely has higher production costs. What does us tell us about their relative brand values? We can assume and measure that people love the Disney brand four times as much, gauged by the higher premium they are willing to pay to be associated with it.

SLIDE 8: Social Brands

You of course can brand companies, products and services. You might also create a brand for > organizations, > for social programs and their associated messages, such as Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires, Just Say No, or Please Don’t Litter.

> Government parties around the world are a brand of sorts identifying their association with the left or the right, or liberal or conservative, or environmental positions.

> And let’s consider that you – yourself – are a brand. Your name becomes associated with all that you are. Your stock value can rise and fall to an employer or within an organization ... people can know and love you more or less, according to how well you maintain your brand value.

SLIDE 9: In conclusion ...

So that’s quick look at the concept of branding – I hope it does you some good. Here are some links to pages with free materials you might find useful – those that I share with my students at universities in California. And we’ll see you next time.