

Your Personal Trademark

By Marcia Yudkin

Your Personal Trademark

Marcia Yudkin
marcia@yudkin.com

Creative Ways <http://www.yudkin.com/marketing.htm>

For novelist Tom Wolfe, it's a dazzling white suit, regardless of the weather or season.

For comedian George Burns, it was a cigar.

For basketball bad-boy Dennis Rodman, it's crazy hair.

For software developer Jackie Grubb, it's the color purple.

"It": a personal trademark that anchors your identity in the minds of your market.

"One day after I started my business a client introduced me by name and 'She is our computer consultant and her color is purple,'" says Grubb. "Soon afterwards, at business meetings, people began to chide me if I wasn't wearing purple.

"Since people were already associating me with the color, I renamed my business Plum Suite Solutions and commissioned a logo with a plum shape and color. Items in my wardrobe that were other colors had a session with purple dye so that my personal appearance and all my paper materials tie together."

Becoming memorable cuts the number of times people need to meet you before you become ensconced in their mental filing cabinet, and it increases the vividness of their recall.

Your trademark needn't be visual. It can be a particular combination of words that functions as a slogan. Reporter Tim Russert has trained his NBC compatriots -- and undoubtedly his TV audience -- to complete the trademark

sentence for his show, "Remember, if it's Sunday... it's 'Meet the Press.'"

Other auditory trademarks might involve a particular kind of word, a tone of voice or a manner of speaking. During the last World Cup soccer championship, I loved hearing the way the Spanish sportscasters announced a goal, even though my Spanish comprehension is pretty terrible.

A motivational speaker I once ran across called himself "Tom Terrific" and told audiences that if anyone asked how he was and he didn't say, "Terrific!" he'd hand over \$100. For someone who spoke on having a positive attitude, this verbal trademark made perfect sense. (He claimed that he'd had to pay up only a few times in many years.)

A kinesthetic personal trademark would stamp your identity in memory through a behavior or a gesture. I'm told that business guru Tom Peters is known for never standing still while on a speaking platform. Conductor Leonard Bernstein worked his way into the American consciousness through the vigor of his conducting and having to keep tossing his mane of hair out of his eyes. I understand he also carried a sharpened baton with him that he used to spear food instead of using a fork when eating in restaurants.

Don't take this identity-building tool to such an extreme that it undermines your credibility or sets you off as bizarre. For instance, in the business world and in politics, people take handshaking seriously. Developing an idiosyncratic physical greeting or abstaining from handshakes, as real estate mogul turned Presidential candidate Donald Trump did for supposed hygienic reasons, can mark you as eccentric in a bad sense. Otherwise, creating a personal trademark is smart, cost-effective marketing!

Marcia Yudkin marcia@yudkin.com is the author of the classic guide to comprehensive PR, "6 Steps to Free Publicity," now for sale in an updated edition at Amazon.com and in bookstores everywhere. She also spills the secrets on advanced tactics for today's publicity seekers in "Powerful, Painless Online Publicity," available from www.yudkin.com/powerpr.htm .

[Get-Articles.com : 1000's of reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.](#)

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)