

Brand Development and Positioning

By Peter Andersen

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Brand Development

Brand development is essential if a company is to differentiate itself from the competition. There's an old saying that summarizes the principles of branding: "Good brands are like good people, over time you trust that they will deliver on a stated promise." Everything that exists within the context of the company, both pros and cons, are part of the equation when determining the value of a brand. For example, a company's logo, its partners, the tone and frequency of its press releases all shape how the brand is perceived. To optimize a brand's equity, it is critical that brand managers recognize that the brand exists in the mind of the consumer. Therefore, ensuring all communications from an organization are deliberate, consistent and most importantly, positive, are the goals of creating a strong brand. From telephone etiquette, logo design to storefront cleanliness, all messages must communicate and reinforce your promise... your brand is your promise.

Positioning

In an over-communicated marketplace it is vital that a company establish its own unique identity, also known as a unique selling proposition. This moderately used marketing technique known as positioning and can be used to create competitive advantages where none previously existed. For example, think of the top brands for jeans or luxury cars. The first brand to enter your thoughts has achieved a top of mind awareness and has carved out a strong position for itself. In most cases this was accomplished by using positioning, in other cases, it was accomplished through many years of advertising. If done properly a company can position itself as a market leader simply by announcing itself as the first entrant of a new category or niche. Careful analysis must be conducted because being a pioneer in a new field by definition also means navigating through unknown obstacles which can present tremendous risks and challenges.

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