

How to Use Your Mission Statement to Build a Powerful Brand

Your mission statement is this:

What Your Company Does + How Your Company Does It + Why Your Company Does It

This statement then becomes a guiding force for you, your employees (if any) and your customers. If your business is a ship, then the mission statement is the rudder.

But that's not all. Once you've become clear about your mission statement, you can then use it to help you build a powerful brand (including your slogan).

One really good example of a company whose slogan flows directly from their mission statement is Walmart.

Walmart's mission statement: Saving people money so they can live better.

Walmart's slogan: Save Money. Live Better.

Now you can do the same thing by using your mission as a starting point when creating your branding. The big advantage of doing this is continuity between all pieces of your business. In other words, there's no confusion for you, your associates (such as employees or even affiliates), and your customers, as you're sharing the same core message.

Let's take a look at how to do this...

Step 1: Exam Your Mission Statement

Your first step is to take a good look at your mission statement to be sure that it accurately reflects what your business does, why it does it, and how it does it. If it's not accurate, now is the time to tweak it.

As you're examining your statement, think in particular about what makes your company unique with regards to the "What, How, and Why."

Specifically:

- Does your company do something that no other company does?
- Does your company accomplish this task in a unique way?
- Is there a unique reason why your company does what it does?

Keep any differences in mind as you move through the following steps, as they'll come in handy again shortly.

Next step...

Step 2: Understand the Difference Between Your Mission and Your Branding

Before you start working on your branding, you need to understand the difference between your mission statement and your branding.

Your mission statement is just that: a statement. It's a description of what your company does, how it does it, and why. You can think of this as the logical "what, how, why" of your business.

Your branding is different because it's all about conveying a feeling. It's the positive feeling your customers experience when they're using your products. And it's the positive feeling you want your prospects (and customers) to associate with your company.

So, you can think of it this way: your mission describes what you do, and your branding associates a specific emotion with what your business does.

Now the next step...

Step 3: Determine the Emotion You Want to Convey

Now what you need to do is determine what your customers are already feeling when they use your products (or services), or how you'd LIKE them to feel. What emotion would you like associated with your company?

This is actually a three-step process. The first step is to brainstorm "feelings" that would work well with your business. The second is to determine if this feeling is something your customers value. And the third step is to check your competition's branding so that you can avoid obvious overlap.

For the first part, you want to brainstorm positive feelings. For example:

Happiness	Joy	Power
Courageous	Trusting	Resolved
Optimistic	Adventurous	Successful
Triumphant	Amusing	Captivated
Sophistication	Love	Decadence
Pride	Amusement	Safe/secure
Caring	Empowering	Noble
Awe	Inspiration	Hope
Excitement	Delighted	Curious
Luxurious	Magical	Uplifting
Faithful	Tough	Capable
Powerful	Resilient	Serene
Adventurous	Ecstatic	Peaceful

... And so on.

This is by no means an exhaustive list, as there are hundreds of ways to describe various emotions. So, go ahead and brainstorm to figure out which feelings are a potentially good fit for your business.

The second step is to figure out what your audience values. Some of this you can figure out just based on common sense. For example, if you're helping people to de-stress through meditation, then your audience probably isn't looking to feel powerful or sophisticated during this particular activity. Instead, they're looking to feel serene, peaceful, loved and so on.

You can also eavesdrop on conversations within your niche (such as on blogs, forums and in groups) to get a sense of what your audience is feeling or how they want to feel. You might even read product reviews for competing products to get a sense of how users feel.

Finally, the last sub-step for this process is to do your market research to find out what sort of emotions your competitors are conveying with their branding and how they're doing it. While your branding may convey similar emotions, you don't want to overlap too much with others in your niche, as then you won't really stand out.

Once you've walked through these various sub-steps, then it will become clear which feelings are the best fit, based on what your competition is doing and what your audience values. Pick the one that you think fits best, and move onto the next step...

Step 4: Develop Your Brand

Now that you know the feeling you want associated with your brand, the next step is to develop the parts of your branding that will help convey this feeling. Specifically, we're going to look at these two parts:

- Your logo and overall color scheme.
- Your slogan.

Let's look at these two separately...

Your Logo/Color Scheme

I lumped these two pieces together since your logo generally will include the same colors you'll use on your website, ecovers, ads and other graphics.

What you'll want to do is brainstorm a logo image and colors that are good fits for the feeling you're trying to convey. What I'd suggest you do is first take a close look at a variety of well-known brands to see how they use color and imaging. For example, look at:

- Baby product brands (such as Pampers).
- Luxury brands, such as Ferrari and Rolex.
- Family-friendly brands such as Toys R Us or Disney.
- Financial brands such as Mastercard.

And so on. Just think of your favorite brands, and examine how they convey certain feelings with the visual aspects of their branding.

Secondly, look at brands within your niche. You want to get a sense of how they convey certain feelings, but you also want to make sure that your brand looks nothing like your competitors' branding.

If brainstorming branding imaging is something within your skillset, then you may have some idea of what you want your brand to look like. In this case, you can talk to a logo designer to help you bring your vision to a reality.

If you can't quite visualize what your logo and colors may look like, then go to a logo designer with experience in brainstorming and developing brands. Let them know the feeling you want to convey, give them starting points for colors and imaging, and provide links to your competitors.

Next...

Your Slogan

The second big component of your branding is your slogan. Usually, this slogan reflects your USP (unique selling point), which is the one thing that makes your company different and better than the competitors. When people are wondering why they should buy from you instead of your competitors, the USP is what answers that question.

Take note, however: your USP/slogan doesn't need to be based on something that you're doing that absolutely no one else in your niche is doing. It just needs to be something that your competitors haven't capitalized on.

The classic example here is Folger's coffee, with the USP that says "mountain grown." Nearly all coffee is grown in the mountains – it's just that Folger's was the first company to stake this out as a USP.

If you can think of some characteristic of your business that's different from what others are doing, that's terrific. Here are some questions you can answer to help you brainstorm:

- Is your guarantee unique?
- Do you offer exceptional customer service?
- Do you offer customer service in a unique way (such as phone service while your competitors offer online-only service)?
- Do you have unique qualifications to create your products?
- Are your products created in a unique way?
- Are your products delivered in a unique way?
- Are you the "first" in some category or some location to offer something?
- Are you the only business to offer some specific product or service?
- Do you offer a product or service to a unique segment of the population?
- How is your actual product or the results it produces different from similar products? (E.G., it's faster, easier, etc.)
- Do you have a unique price (either low or high) in your market?
- Do you offer any sort of unique payment plans?
- What else is unique about you and your business? (Brainstorm as many factors as possible.)

Let me give you an example...

Domino's Pizza used to advertise a unique guarantee: "You get fresh, hot pizza delivered to your door in 30 minutes or less or it's free."

Papa John's Pizza competed by focusing on good-tasting pizza: "Better ingredients, better pizza."

Here's another example...

Saddleback Leather Co. focuses on quality with this USP: "They'll fight over it when you're dead."

Their competitor, North Star Leather, focuses on where the products are made: "Made in the USA since 1969" (and various reiterations of that throughout the website).

SIDEBAR: If you go to these various websites, you can get a sense of the emotion the brand is trying to convey. For example, "made in the USA" is a point of patriotic pride for North Star.

Now it's your turn. While your slogan isn't your USP, your slogan should convey your USP in as few words as possible. Write out the USP you've chosen, and then keep tweaking it until you have one short, powerful statement.

Now the last step...

Step 5: Integrate Your Branding

Once you've developed your branding, then it's time to integrate it all through your business. This includes:

- Integrate the visuals through your website. This includes a website design/layout that reflects your colors and includes your logo on each page.
- Include the USP on sales pages. This should be in a prominent position so that prospects see it right away. (E.G., in the headline if possible or otherwise near the top.)
- Develop product packaging that reflects your branding. Your ecovers and other graphics should include your colors and logo. This should be recognizable enough that your customers can recognize your products based on their ecovers, even before they see your name or business name.

- Create ads that reflect your branding. Both the graphics and the copy should reflect your branding.
- Be sure your products fit your branding. Whenever you sit down to create a new product, first check that it's a good fit with your brand. You'll also want to make sure that any affiliate products you promote reflect your brand. For example, if you sell "premium PLR," then don't promote a pack of ten PLR articles for \$10 just to help out a friend, because doing so dilutes your brand.
- Ensure your customer service reflects your branding. For example, if your branding is based on helping busy people, then don't make people wait around for customer service answers. Be prompt and professional.
- Check that your pricing reflects your branding. For example, if you're positioning your business as offering "affordable" products or services, then be sure your pricing is indeed affordable. Also, be sure to justify the price within your sales letters to demonstrate how affordable it is (especially compared to competing offers).
- Create content that reflects your branding. Before you write a blog post, newsletter article or social media post, take a moment to consider if the content matches your branding.

Now it's your turn...

Your Assignment

Your assignment for this lesson is to start planning your branding strategy. Answer these questions:

- What feeling would be a good fit with your products/business?
- What feeling does your audience value?
- What type of branding are your competitors using?

Once you've answered these questions, then go ahead and plan how to develop your brand (preferably with the help of a professional who can help you create fitting visuals such as your logo). Once you're all done, be sure to integrate your brand into your business thoroughly as discussed above.



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