

An Insider's Secrets to Successful Rebranding

The current economic rollercoaster has forced unwanted changes on businesses everywhere. Those changes may be wreaking havoc with your brand and affecting your success. Here's a quick test of your brand effectiveness.

- Does your brand reflect your unique value, especially if you have been forced to change course?
- Do your customers still want what your image promotes?
- Are you leading – or at least keeping up with - your competition?

Brands require maintenance. Rebranding is not a sign of failure – it's an investment that will pay off if you do it right. If it's time to rebrand, here is some insider knowledge to make your rebranding a success.

1.) Rebranding is 90% brainstorming and research, 10% design and implementation. Branding isn't just the quick gratification of designing new graphics and replacing the old on all your collateral. First you have to become absolutely, painfully clear on what your business does and wants to be.

2.) Your unique selling proposition is the foundation of your brand. Explore and identify your core competencies. Define what makes you different.

3.) Your customers hold the key. Survey them. You might be surprised at what they say about your image. You are clear about what brand identity you want to promote. Their perspective, however, is your brand image. Their input will show you the gaps between your intended image and market reality.

4.) Deliver or die. Is there a gap between what your brand promotes and what you deliver? Your brand is a promise to your customers. Credibility and trust come from delivering on what your image embodies.

5.) Your brand might not need a total overhaul. It might just need a tune-up. You won't know though until you've revisited your assumptions from your original brand, questioned their validity and finished your research.

6.) Projecting a "cool" image isn't essential, but credibility, trust and relevancy is critical.

7.) You have three seconds to make a viewer believe you are reliable and competent. Unfair? Perhaps. True? Definitely. So your brand has to be crystal clear and convincing.

It takes time and resources to rebrand. If you start the rebranding process with a new logo, research proves that you're likely to fail. There are no shortcuts. Experts know that successful rebranding is the result of a thoughtful approach.

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