



Unit 2

Positioning your Brand

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Write a mission, vision, and style statement for a brand
- ✓ Describe the basics of positioning a brand
- ✓ Understand the basics of creating a visual identity, including a brand name, slogan, and logo

Unit 2

Positioning Your Brand

Identifying Your Ideal Position

Now that we have an idea of what our product is and does, and what we want it to do, it's time to think about how we want it to be seen in the minds of our customers. Do we want to be a premium brand or a discount brand? Beautiful or efficient? Expensive or cheap?

Here are some other words that you can use:

Anonymous	Expensive	Premium
Beautiful	Fair trade	Professional
Cheap	Fast	Resourceful
Conscientious	Green	Slow
Comprehensive	Innovative	Specialist
Discount	Luxury	Sustainable
Ecologically aware	Modern	Trustworthy
Efficient	Personal	Unique
Ethical	Pioneer	

Ideally, you want a few short words and phrases that describe what you want your customers (internal and external) to think and feel. It's all about relative space and time – avoid absolutes like best, world-class, global, etc. (These belong in the mission statement.)

Positioning Workout

Develop some positioning statements for a well-known brand.

Developing Your Style

Writing a Style Statement

The final building block is style: what attitude will your brand have? You want to capture a few words or short phrases that describe the character and style of your brand.

Here are some words that you can use.

Academic
Antique
Captivating
Charismatic
Charming
Chic

Cool
Delightful
Friendly
Fun
Helpful
Independent

Inviting
Professional
Quirky
Reliable
Trendy
Welcoming

Other Ideas

Style Exercise

Brainstorm some style ideas for a brand of your choice.

Developing a Brand Name and Slogan

The Forward-Facing Elements

Let's recap the elements of your brand's story that we have created so far.

- Your product or service's benefits and features
- Your product's values
- A mission statement (the big picture)
- A vision statement (the short-term picture)
- Your brand's position (where it will sit in the minds of customers)
- Your brand's unique style (what attitude it will project)

These are all the internal things about your product that will support your brand. Now it's time to create the things that will either bring customers in or turn them away: your brand name and slogan.

A good brand name and slogan have the **following characteristics**:

- True to the product
- Recognizable, different, and unique – they set you apart from the competition
- Sustainable and durable (did you know that John Deere's logo has been almost the same since 1878?)
- Flexible, so that you don't have to re-design it every time something changes
- Something that your company can commit to
- Something that generates value for the company (how much do you think the golden arches are worth?)

Developing Your Brand Name

You may be working with a product that already has a brand name, but if you have the opportunity to develop a name for a new product, take advantage of it! A great name has huge value by itself.

Brainstorm some strong examples of brand names.

Here is what you don't want in a name:

- Something that is boring and not distinctive
- Something that is hard to pronounce or remember
- Something that might have negative connotations for a particular segment of your population
- Acronyms and inside jokes

You do want a name that is:

- Memorable and noticeable
- Speaks about your product or service
- Engages customers
- Unique
- Appropriate and inoffensive

So where do you start? We suggest brainstorming words and short phrases that describe your product's purpose. You can use a brainstorming tool like the one we used in Session Three and fill it with different ideas.

Developing a Slogan

We like the word "slogan" because of its origins: it comes from the Gaelic word *sluagh-ghairm*, which means "battle cry." You might also know a slogan as a motto, tagline, mantra, or strapline. Whatever you call it, it had best be good.

Now, not all products have a slogan, but a good one can significantly add to your brand's value and give your brand bigger exposure.

Remember, a good slogan is short, punchy, appropriate, and true to the product. To create it, we suggest the same approach that we used for the brand name. To start, use a brainstorming tool like the one we used in Session Four and fill it with the different ideas that we generated as building blocks. Focus on words and short phrases that describe your product's purpose.

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Creating a Visual Identity

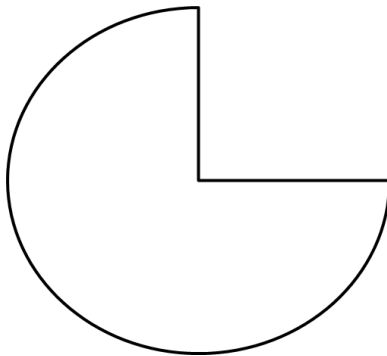
Graphic Design 101

Once you have your brand name and slogan, you need to determine how it will be presented to the world. We recommend that you always use a graphic design service to create your visual identity, and preferably one that specializes in graphic design, rather than just offering general marketing consulting services. However, it doesn't hurt to understand the basic elements of graphic design before you get started.

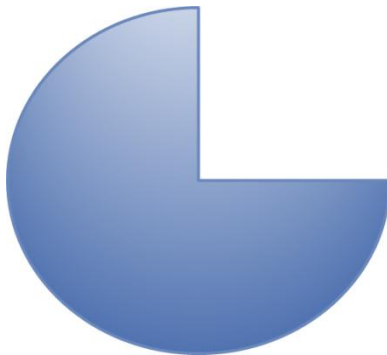
How People Will See Your Images

Although you probably don't realize it, your brain breaks down symbols into different parts and then puts them together.

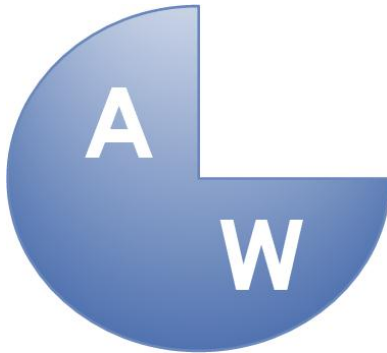
First, your eye sees the general shape:



Then it sees the color:



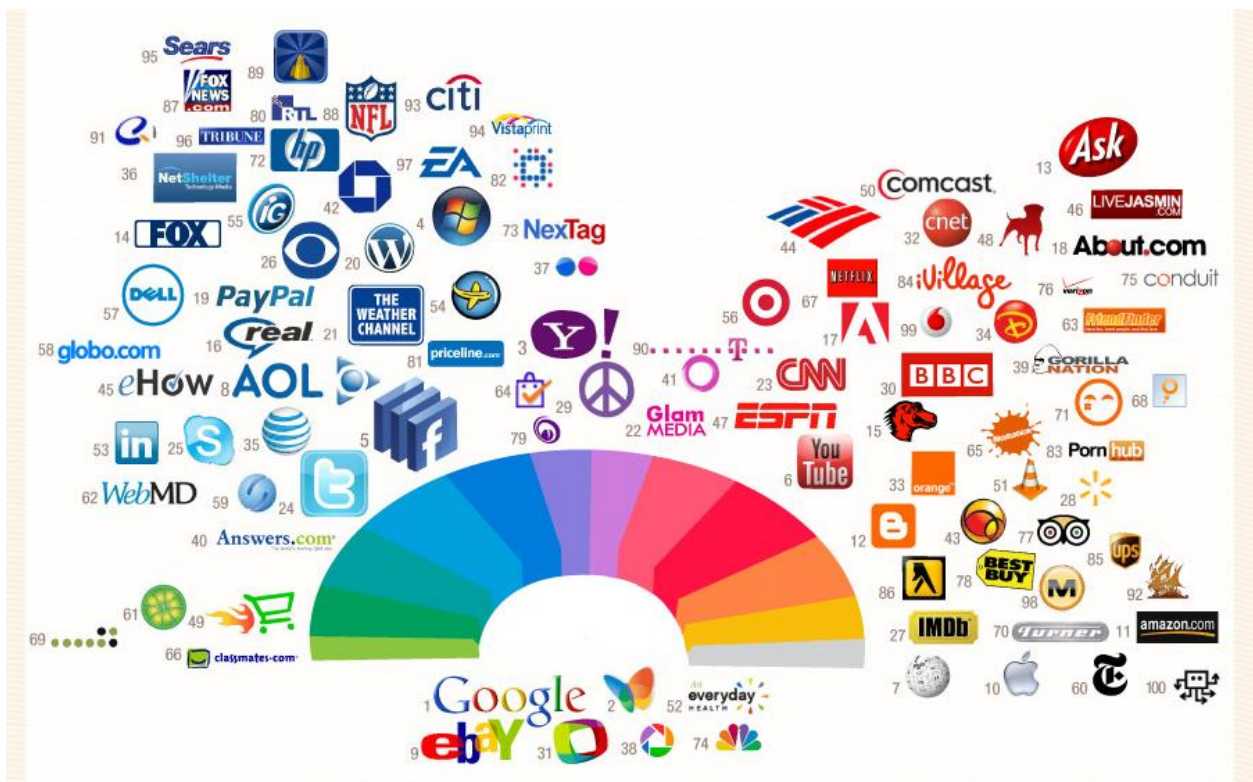
Finally it adds the content:



Choosing a Color

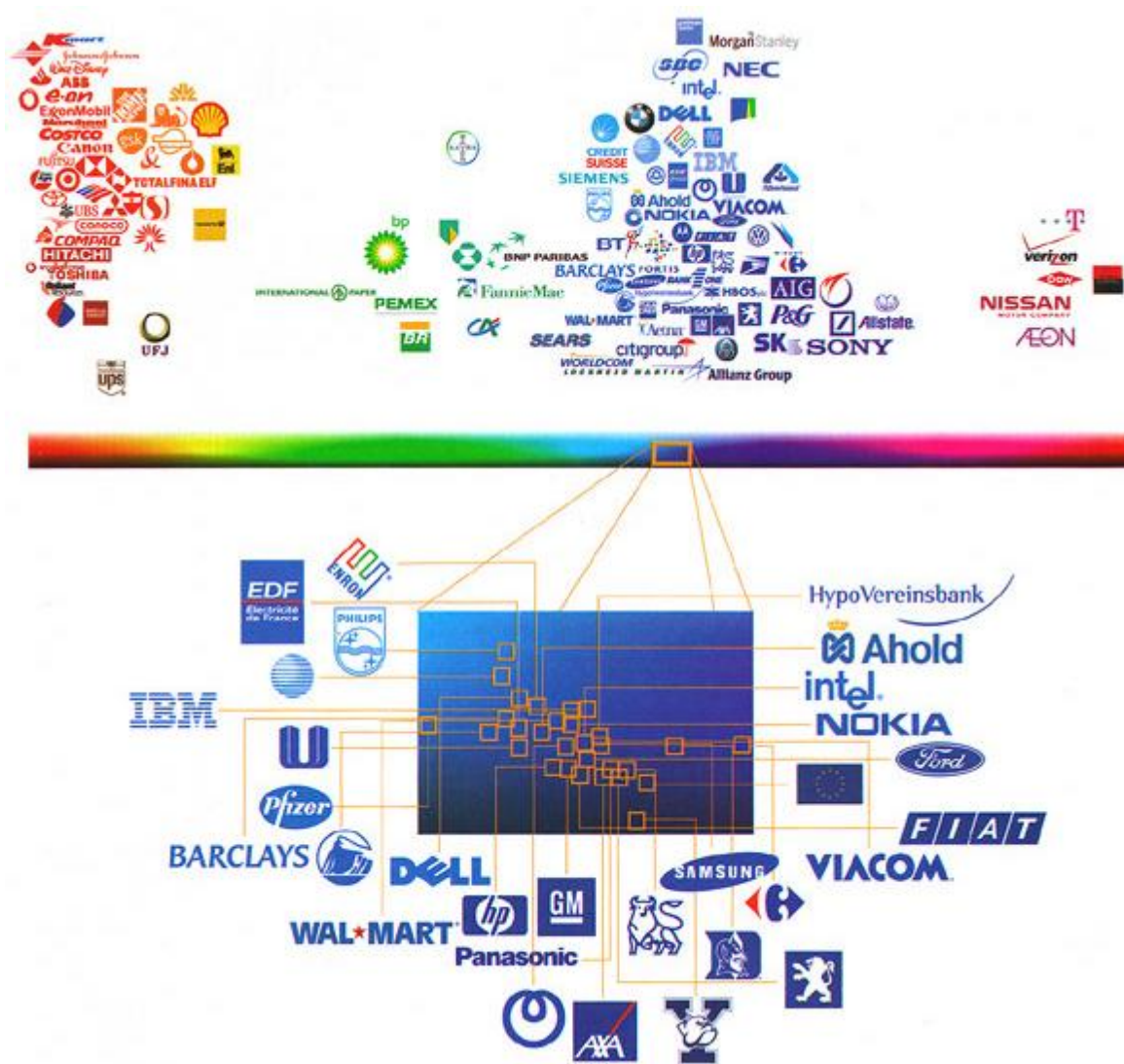
With today's technology, you can choose almost any color that you like for your brand.

Here is an overview of the top brands on the Internet and where they fall on the color spectrum:



(Source: <http://www.colourlovers.com/business/blog/2010/09/15/the-most-powerful-colors-in-the-world>; September 15, 2010)

You can see that blue and red dominate the spectrum. *Wired* magazine did a similar survey in 2003, focusing on corporate America. The picture was fairly similar, although slightly more conventional:



(Source: *Wired Magazine*, June 2003)

Keep this in mind when choosing a color: do you want to stand out or blend in with the pack? Pay particularly close attention to the colors that your competitors use.

Fonts

As a final note, let's talk about fonts. Fonts can be divided into two major categories. **Serif fonts**, with hooks on the ends of letters, are considered easier to read. (They are also known as Roman fonts.) Here are some examples:

Bookman
Courier
Garamond
Georgia
New York
Palatino
Times New Roman

Sans serif fonts (AKA Gothic fonts), however, tend to produce a cleaner look:

Arial
Calibri
Corbel
Gill Sans
Lucida Sans
Tahoma
Verdana

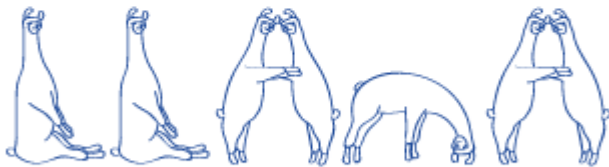
There are also plenty of **specialty and custom fonts** out there:

Chiller

Comic Sans MS

Edwardian Script

Katy Berry



Snap

Valerie Hand

The trick is in finding a font that is easy to read, yet is distinct, and matches your brand's look. It is important to choose a font that you can use consistently for all of your branding efforts. You also may need to get licensing permissions for some fonts. A graphic designer can help you with this!




Types of Visual Identities

Although you do need a graphic designer to create your visual identity, you should be aware of the different types of visual identities that are out there. Let's have a look at the four most common categories.

Simple Pictorial Mark

This is often what people think of when they think of a logo. It's a simple image or symbol that is chosen to represent the brand.




Examples

Apple	Greyhound	Target
		

Letterform

This approach takes one or more letters from the company name and turns it into art, essentially combining the brand name and the logo.

Examples

Dell	Sun Microsystems	Atari
		

Wordmark

Similar to the Letterform design, this approach makes art out of the entire company name.

Examples

Ikea	Sobeys	Levi's Jeans



Emblems

The final major category is emblems, which combines a wordmark and symbol to create a unique visual identity.

Examples

Thomas Cook Travel	Visa	TiVo
		

Pop Culture Test

Logo One

Logo Two

Logo Three

Logo Four

Logo Five

Logo Six

Logo Seven

Logo Eight

Logo Nine

Living Your Brand

Transforming Your Employees into Ambassadors

Your employees have a unique perspective on your brand. They are the people who bring your brand to life, yet they still need to be sold on it just as your external customers do.

Branding guru Simon Middleton says, “Getting your staff to believe in your brand [...] is about **authentic engagement coupled with genuine empowerment.**”

That’s a tall order! So how do you get your employees to really understand what the brand is all about, and to communicate that in every customer interaction?

Here are some ideas:

- Keep employees involved at every stage of the branding process. Ask them what they think of the current or proposed logo, brand name, etc.

- Focus groups and team meetings with senior executives are an excellent way to help employees feel engaged and listened to.
- Share as much information as possible. Let them know why things are happening the way they are and how their jobs will be affected.
- Give employees some freedom in living the brand. Perhaps they can have a direct line so that customers can get in touch with them more easily. Perhaps they can have a small stockpile of company merchandise to send to customers as a thank you. Most importantly, ask your employees what you can do to make them better ambassadors for the company.
- Immerse the employees in the brand. Paint offices the brand color, put samples everywhere, and get employees to use the product or service when possible.

Understanding Touchpoints

Possible Touchpoints

Creating a Unique Experience at Each Touchpoint

Media (Internet and Traditional)

Employee Interactions

Physical Space

The Brand Itself

Sales and Follow-Up Process

Connecting with Customers

Your brand’s success really depends on one thing: connecting with your customers in order to share your brand’s meaning. Creating a connection with customers increases the likelihood that they will buy, their loyalty, and the possibility of them recommending you to others. If you stand out in a positive way, they will remember you and keep returning to you.

Here are ten easy ways to connect with customers.

1. Make their customer experience unique by branding it, too.
2. Tell your customers how this purchase will benefit them, not why you think they should buy.
3. Find unique ways of staying in touch. Send customers a birthday card for them and then for their product!
4. Publish well-written articles in specialty magazines. Become a trusted partner in their lives; someone who people can turn to for advice and help.
5. Encourage company members to become experts and to help the industry and the community. Just remember to choose your friends wisely.

6. Use social media wisely; Facebook, Twitter, foursquare, and blogs are all great communication tools when used well.
7. Create contests, polls, and surveys to generate excitement and buzz.
8. Become certified and qualified in industry-relevant areas. Let people know about these achievements.
9. Use a variety of sensory language to connect with everyone. People often prefer visual, auditory, or kinesthetic connections. (Read up on neuro-linguistic programming for more information.)
10. Stay in tune with current trends and changes. Keep in touch with the reality of the marketplace and adjust your approach accordingly.

Launching Your Brand

The hard work is all done and now it's time to share it with the world! This is an exciting opportunity, but you must launch your brand the right way – otherwise, you risk all of your hard work being undone.

It is often wise to plan an internal launch and then an external launch. This will help give employees a sense of control. It will also give customers a positive feeling that they are dealing with knowledgeable experts who can help them solve a problem.

Internal Launch

You can have a lot of fun and excitement with internal launches. There is nothing like a big party to get everyone energized and excited about the new brand.

First, set some goals for the internal launch. **Information**, **communication**, and **motivation** should be at the top of the list. You may also want to prepare employees for hiccups that you know are going to occur along the way (for example, customers being confused about the old vs. new logo).

Some questions to consider:

- Who needs to know about the internal launch?
- How and when will they find out?
- How will you communicate the “why?”
- What questions will customers have?
- How will employees be expected to answer them?
- How will customer, employee, and shareholder experiences change?
- How will updates be communicated?
- How can you create positive energy and excitement throughout the launch process?
- How will you empower employees to deliver this new brand experience?

Remember, you want to get this right. Your employees will be the ambassadors for the brand. Make sure that they are sending the right message.

Brainstorm some communication methods for an internal launch.

External Launch

Of course, your external launch is equally important. You want the launch to reflect the exact message of the brand in words and in actions. Regardless of your product, you want a polished, professional delivery that people will remember for years to come.

Here are some questions to consider when you are planning the external launch.

- Who needs to know about it?
- How and when they will find out?
- How will you communicate the “why?”
- What questions will customers have?
- Can we answer them during the launch to be pro-active?
- How will employees be expected to answer them?
- How will customer experiences change?
- How can you create positive energy and excitement throughout the launch process?

Brainstorm some communication methods for an external launch.

Taking Your Brand’s Pulse

Once your brand is launched and alive, that doesn’t mean you’re done with it. You should consider your brand a living, breathing entity that must evolve with the company, your customers, and the marketplace.

There are many ways to check the vital signs of your brand. As with most everything these days, there are software packages that you can purchase to monitor your brand’s activities, social presence, market share, and customer response. You can also hire a company to manage your brand for you.

There are, however, also some low-cost or no-cost methods that you can use. You may, in fact, have access to a lot of information that you're not aware of. You can set up notifications electronically (e.g., through Google Analytics) that will help you find people who talk about your company or products on their web or blogging sites. You can track people who have clicked on links in your e-mails or e-newsletters, or simply those who visit your Web site.

You can also use internal and external focus groups to check in with the people connecting with your brand. Some key questions to ask include:

- How are we meeting our brand promise?
- What is working for you?
- What is not working?
- What new trends are you seeing?
- How do you feel about the brand?
- How does this compare with how you felt about it last month? Six months ago?

Other Questions That I Could Use

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Halligan, Brian, and David Meerman Scott. Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead. Wiley, 2010.*
- ✓ *Middleton, Simon. Build a Brand in 30 Days. Capstone , 2010.*