



THE BRONZE *Finch*

business development pack

Branding is a funny subject—particularly for small companies. Although it’s commonly discussed, it’s still so vague that most are confused by what exactly it means. I’ll even go a step further: I think that most branding efforts are flawed from the outset because people are simply not asking the most important question.

On the lowest level, branding is confused with the creation of a logo. This is a perverse – yet surprisingly resilient – falsehood. An icon, monogram, or wordmark is in no way a brand—thinking so is akin to believing that a hood-ornament is a car. Yet, this is where a great number of brand projects start: “Yay! We’ve started our company! Let’s brand it with a logo!”

Before any brand design firm can craft a functional strategy and identity for your organization, they need to know what your individual long-term plans are. Where do you see yourself personally in ten or twenty years? Do you mostly want to take on projects of your own interest? Are you more excited about working with really nice people? Would you like to build something big, so that you can sell quickly and lie on a beach? Or, do you think you need to address a social issue of some sort? These are all fine aspirations but each will likely result in quite different strategies for your brand.

BRAND IS: WHAT YOU COMMUNICATE

to others whether it is intentional or unintentional.

*it's only worth it if
you do it right*

IT'S ABOUT
THE
EXPERIENCE

WHAT PROBLEM DO I SOLVE? (WHAT SOLUTION AM I PRODUCING?)

WHAT IS MY PRODUCT/SERVICE & WHAT DOES IT DO FOR MY CLIENT?

WHAT IS THE ADVANTAGE OF MY PRODUCT/SERVICE?

I WANT MY COMPANY TO:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Give off a great first impression | <input type="checkbox"/> Look expensive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have excellent customer service | <input type="checkbox"/> Target a specific group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Create a return on investment | <input type="checkbox"/> Target a broad audience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My products/services reflect the client's lifestyle | <input type="checkbox"/> Serve customers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Look affordable | <input type="checkbox"/> Serve businesses |

assess your business

CURRENT BUSINESS NAME:

WEBSITE ADDRESS:

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO?

CHECKLIST

YES NO

- IS MY WEBSITE ONLINE
- AM I USING MY WEBSITE'S EMAIL ADDRESS?
- DO ALL MY PAGES TALK ABOUT MY BUSINESS?
- DOES MY WEBSITE HAVE GOOGLE ANALYTICS?
- DOES EACH PART OF MY BUSINESS HAVE ITS OWN PAGE?
- IS MY WEBSITE MOBILE FRIENDLY?
- HAVE I CLAIMED MY GOOGLE BUSINESS PAGE?

YES NO

- DOES MY WEBSITE USE THE RIGHT KEYWORDS?
- DOES MY WEBSITE LIST A CITY/STATE?
- DOES EACH PAGE HAVE AT LEAST 300 WORDS OF TEXT
- DOES MY WEBSITE LINK TO SOCIAL MEDIA?
- DOES MY WEBSITE LINK TO 'PARTNERS'?
- WHERE IS MY WEBSITE LISTED?

IS YOUR BUSINESS ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

TWITTER: _____

PASSWORD: _____

FACEBOOK: _____

PASSWORD: _____

YOUTUBE: _____

PASSWORD: _____

PINTEREST: _____

PASSWORD: _____

INSTAGRAM: _____

PASSWORD: _____

OTHER: _____

PASSWORD: _____

knowing your business target market

WHO ARE MY IDEAL CUSTOMERS? WHAT AGE? WHAT GENDER? SPECIFIC BUYING GROUP? CERTAIN NICHE? B2B OR B2C?

WHAT ELSE DO MY IDEAL CUSTOMERS BUY?

WHERE DO MY IDEAL CUSTOMERS LIVE? DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY SHOP?

WHO ARE MY COMPETITORS?

WHAT ARE MY COMPETITORS LIKE? FRIENDLY? INTIMIDATING? EXPENSIVE? BIG? SMALL?

WHAT IS MY CUSTOMER'S NOISE?

KNOW YOUR TARGET MARKET

Narrow down who you are talking to. For example, every business wants 'everyone' but it's nearly impossible. Not everyone is meant to be your customer, and you should be thinking about who is your current customer and who you WANT to be your customer.

The last thing you want for your business is to 'sell' someone who doesn't click or doesn't appreciate your service or product. They may damage your reputation by not being happy with your business.

Strive for the right person...not just every person.

If you are the sender...and your customers (or the customers you want) are the receivers, where are they hanging out?

Why would you try to Twitter your customers if they are older and not computer savvy? Why are you trying to call a millennial when they prefer videos or text messages?

Think about a restaurant: fast food does not try to go for 'dinner and a date' crowds and they don't advertise in honeymoon destination magazines because that's not the buyer.

knowing your business your story

KNOW YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Your brand is EVERY SINGLE THING YOUR BUSINESS COMMUNICATES to the world: whether it is intentional or unintentional.

If your target market is receiving the message and YOU are sending the message...what message are you sending?

Are you worth listening to? Are you the EXPERT in your field, service, or product? WHY should anyone listen to you or buy from you?

Many people start a business for a reason. Somewhere along the way there was a service or product that let you down and you felt you could do it better. Your goal was to 'fill the gap'. This makes you an EXPERT in this area. Do your customers know this? Are you CLEAR in your message? People don't want to listen to your message if they don't understand what you're saying and you don't sound like a professional. It's very important that you define what you do: very specifically.

WAYS WE COMMUNICATE

EMAIL
MAIL
PHONE
PHOTOGRAPHS
CLOTHING

WEBSITE
PHYSICAL ADDRESS
WEBSITE ADDRESS
KEYWORDS
LIGHTING

tone of voice
FREQUENCY
SOCIAL MEDIA

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

You may or may not use your story to your advantage, but what IS your story? Why did you start your business? What are the reasons that drove you to want to be an entrepreneur?

How can you start to define WHAT your business is and WHO to talk to if you don't even know WHY you exist?



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knowing your business your look

be visible!



YOUR BRAND IS NOT A LOGO. IT IS NOT
A TAGLINE. IT IS NOT A COLOR SCHEME.

and at the same time it is

There's no point in having a business and a fantastic 'brand' if your appearance isn't worthy of the marketplace. We all have experience in shopping, observation, and split second first impressions: and we know what a bad logo looks like. Our mouth turns sideways at the wrong tagline. We also inwardly are drawn toward color schemes that make sense or are visually and aesthetically pleasing.

In 1980, wood paneling was 'all the rage' in home building. Now, home owners run so fast away from this look you couldn't pay someone to put that up in their homes.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

How you look matters, your look will most likely shift and change over time (all brands do), and your 'look' should make sense and be authentic.

Don't bother spending any money on marketing until you know your brand and have your 'look'.

knowing your business

BE AUTHENTIC.

This means A LOT of different things to different people! For example, don't start something that you totally can't get into. Hate writing? Avoid blogging and maybe do video webinars instead. Enjoy photography? Maybe Instagram is more for you.

The goal with your brand and the way to keep it alive and visible is to be communicating AT ALL TIMES. If you hate talking on the phone, go out of your way to offer online opportunities like online chat, facebook chat, facebook live, and online booking and payments.

That doesn't mean you don't walk through the door of new opportunities and push your comfort zones. If you hate video webinars, perhaps you do shorter video 'how to' collections that are pre-recorded and edited. You should be doing what is true to you – but also diversifying your communication methods.

HOW BIG IS THE MARKET THAT I AM ENTERING?

WHAT WORKS...AND DOES NOT WORK IN THIS PARTICULAR MARKET?



knowing your business the cost

BE READY TO INVEST.

If you were opening a restaurant, you would sit down and make a list of things you need: sink, counters, stove, hood range, dish soap, etc. It would be silly to consider opening a restaurant and not have the proper tools to get started.

There is a HUGE misconception that you don't need to invest in good quality marketing and branding for your business. There is the assumption that if it's free, it's not worth much. There is also the assumption that if it's free, it's easy and you can do it yourself.

Don't assume that you can operate a business without investing in quality marketing and branding and the things that HELP your marketing and branding.

Things like quality photography, videos, a website that works right, and a great logo are a part of your business expenses just like all the other investments you are putting in.

WHAT DO I NEED TO PRODUCE MY PRODUCTS/SERVICES?

HOW DOES MY BUSINESS MAKE MONEY?

WHAT ARE MY REVENUE STREAMS?

WHAT ARE MY EXPENSES?

Why would you open a coffee shop and not buy a coffee maker? Why would you assume that you don't need to buy things like a website, logo, and professional content marketer to at least show you how to correctly run your business?

GREAT PHOTOS
\$200 - \$1500

VIDEOS
\$60 - \$6000

WEBSITE
\$3000 - \$5000

MARKETING
\$75 - \$400 per month

ADVERTISING
\$50 - \$3000 per month

ACCOUNTING
\$200 - \$1500

Investment also goes beyond the dollars. Be ready to invest your time as well. Unless you have unlimited funding to pay someone to manage, market, and do all the thinking for you, you'll have to learn to wear many hats.

knowing your business review and listen

LISTEN AND BE FLEXIBLE

And by that, you should be welcoming reviews. In fact, not only are reviews of your business some of the most critical drivers behind SEO (more on that during a module), but reviews are your personal chance to identify the gaps between the perception of your brand and business versus what you thought it was.

- What does your company do?
- Why did you start your company?
- What does your company do differently?
- What do you offer that no one else does?
- What does your target market have interests in?
- What are the needs of your target market?
- What is the personality of your target market?
- Describe your product/service...
- What are the 'best' features of your product/service?
- How is your customer 'fulfilled' by your product/service?
- What is the personality of YOUR business?
- What do you want to be remembered for?

words for thought...

ARE YOU THE MOST EXPERIENCED OR THE MOST RELIABLE?

ARE YOU HIGH COST BUT BEST QUALITY, OR ARE YOU LOW COST BUT QUICK WITH HIGH VALUE?

YOU CANNOT BE EVERYTHING.

Small business owners do not realize how pivotal a strong brand presence can be. Branding is far more than a logo design and website.

If you compare two brands, for example a hotel and a restaurant in a resort town, the message the branding portrays should reflect the consumer's lifestyle choices. A restaurant brand should suggest healthy living and clean, light food. A hotel's main demographic in a resort town wants luxury and relaxation. Your brand however, needs to be flexible enough to change over time.

Less than 1 percent of Facebook users actually engage with brands they like on the social networking site. It is suggested that what consumers want from a brand on a networking site

— such as exclusive deals and contact with other customers — is in opposition to what marketing professionals believed — that consumers want information about new products. Your social media position should enforce and connect what your brand is and what your customers say.

It isn't all about the company brand: it is about you. How can you make sure, especially if you are a young professional, that your 'personal branding' over digital networks is up to scratch?

If you're an established business, how can you recreate the experience and re-emerge in the market to your customers?

knowing your business set goals



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where is there

FIGURE OUT THERE IF YOU WANT TO SEE RESULTS

There are many entrepreneurs that don't understand why they aren't getting results. The reason a business doesn't see results is because they don't set goals.

There are a lot of 'we'll know when we get there' comments. Where exactly is 'there'?

DANGER STATEMENTS

I'll invest more when I make more.
I'll hire a pro when I have more time
I'll rebrand when I see more customers
...the list goes on.

The fact is, if you're seeking a 'destination' before your 'start something', you'll never start anything.

Your 'there' needs to be specific. It's the only reason why large corporate companies actually succeed in their branding efforts...and why a lot of small businesses don't.

Would you like to see more results from your social media? What is a good goal? One hundred followers per month? Set that goal and see what it takes to get there. Map out a strategy on HOW you're going to get there. Only then is it a measurable thing. For example: if your goal is 100 followers, how do you plan on getting 'there'? Facebook ads? Hiring a pro? Set a strategy on specific THERE's. Every month...set new places to go.

HOW MUCH DO YOU THINK YOUR COMPETITOR PAYS FOR THEIR BRANDING? (INCLUDE WEBSITE, LOGO, TV, BILLBOARD, DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY, SEO, GRAPHIC DESIGN, PRINT MATERIALS, ETC.)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trade | <input type="checkbox"/> \$700 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1250 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$3000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$800 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1500 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$4000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$900 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1750 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$600 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$10000 |

DO I HAVE A LOGO? A WEBSITE? ANY OTHER MARKETING MATERIALS?

DO I HAVE A COLOR SCHEME? WHAT IS IT? DOES IT MATCH MY PRODUCT COLORS?

PICK THREE WORDS TO DESCRIBE YOUR BUSINESS CURRENTLY.

WHAT THREE WORDS DO YOU WANT TO DESCRIBE YOUR BUSINESS?

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE EMOTIONAL STATE OF YOUR BUSINESS? (BUSY, LOUD, CHAOTIC, BRIGHT, DULL, BORED, FAST-PACED, LAIDBACK, ETC.)

THE POINT OF MY WEBSITE IS TO:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gain a favorable impression of my company | <input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen my company's BRAND |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is a way to contact me | <input type="checkbox"/> I just have a website because everyone else does |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Show potential clients what my business is about | <input type="checkbox"/> Is a common ground for my employees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Develop potential clients and convert them | <input type="checkbox"/> Reinforce customer service for my clients |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sell products directly and take payment over the internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Forward clients to another website that I own |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make my products/services and their prices available | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Is your website missing any of these things? (We can help you determine if you NEED any of these)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copyright | <input type="checkbox"/> About Us Photos | <input type="checkbox"/> Blog |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trademark | <input type="checkbox"/> Employee Photos | <input type="checkbox"/> Directions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Email | <input type="checkbox"/> Project Gallery | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media Links |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Videos | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> A Demand to Take Action |

Do you need frequent updates to your site? New products? New services? New employees? Other?



Web Development Consultation

The Bronze Finch is trying to make things easier on your business. Being organized and keeping everyone, literally, on the same page helps us create cutting edge designs and keep up a quick response time. The more information you can give us up front about your business, the better. The more you invest into thinking about your business will help differentiate between what your business needs and organize the things you want.

This form is to help you look at your competitors and to compare your business to theirs: better or worse, more profitable, better quality clients, etc.

Make a copy of this for yourself...come back to it every now and again. Business needs change and evolve! your website and digital marketing strategy needs to change as your business needs change.

The point of my website is to:

- Gain a favorable impression of my company
- Is a way to contact me
- Show potential clients what my business is about
- Develop potential clients and convert them
- Sell products directly and take payment over the internet
- Make my products/services and their prices available
- Strengthen my company's BRAND
- I just have a website because everyone else does
- Is a common ground for my employees
- Reinforce customer service for my clients
- Forward clients to another website that I own
- Other

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



What do I like about my competitors site? Dislike?

How is my website CURRENTLY laid out?



Pick a competitors website you admire. How is THEIR site laid out?

