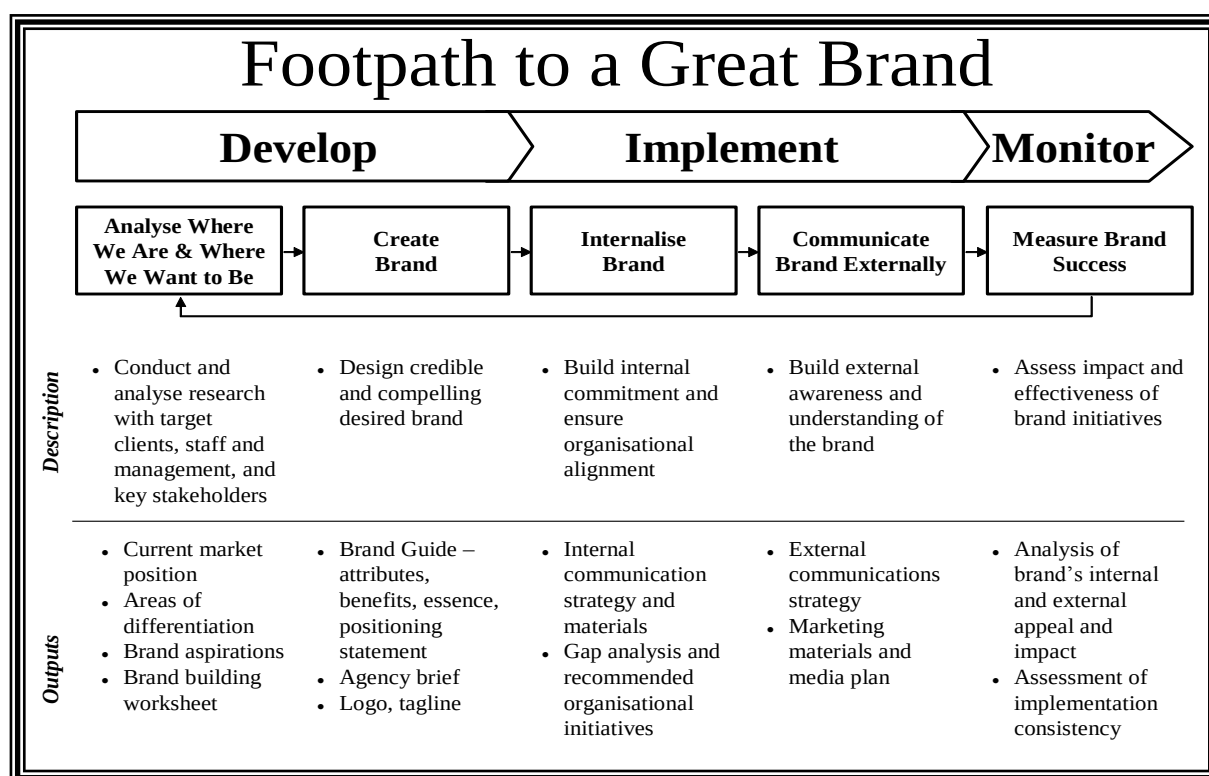


Corporate Brand and Identity Toolkit



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Last Updated December 2004



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Introduction¹

Getting ourselves oriented

All businesses orient themselves toward the marketplace using one of four concepts or approaches:



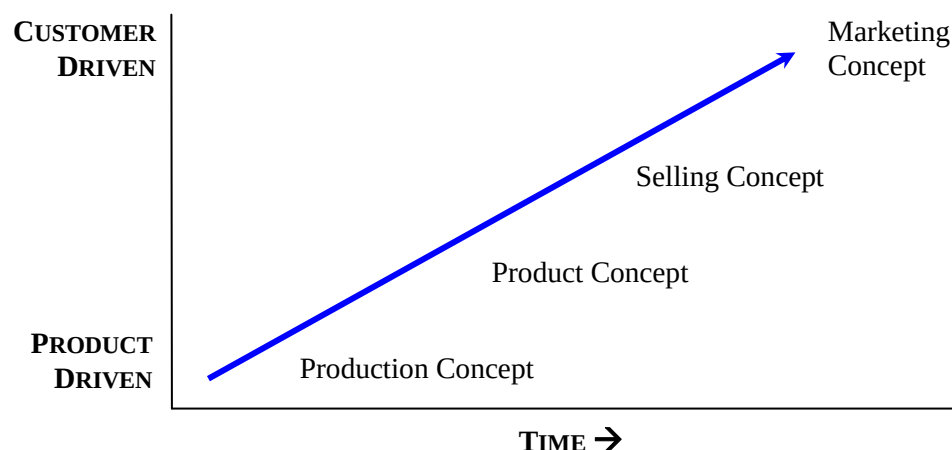
1. **The production concept:** *“Make it and it will sell.”* Production-oriented businesses focus on producing as much of their product or service as cheaply as they possibly can because they assume that consumers are primarily interested in product availability and low prices. The production concept is common and relatively effective in new industries where a product is in high demand and there is very little supply.
2. **The product concept:** *“Make it well and it will sell.”* Product-oriented businesses focus on producing the highest quality goods and services as possible and improving them over time. They assume that if they design a well-performing product, consumers will buy it.
3. **The selling concept:** *“Promote it well and it will sell.”* Sales-oriented businesses focus on persuading customers to buy whatever goods or services they are producing. They believe that consumers are naturally hesitant to make purchases and are often ill-informed or confused about their purchase options. Thus, they must be coaxed into buying through aggressive selling and promotion.
4. **The marketing concept:** *“Make something the market values and it will sell.”* Market-oriented businesses focus on understanding target market needs and responding to them in all aspects of their operations. They believe that by trying to understand the consumers’ perspective, they will be in the best position to develop products that are valuable to the market and, therefore, easily sold at a profit.

These four concepts have been used by businesses in most industries over time. Movement from one to the next has typically (but not always) been linear, with the industry passing through each phase before moving to the next. The microfinance industry is similar to other industries in this respect, as it has moved over time from a production concept (in which MFIs aimed to produce as many affordable group loans as possible by replicating a blueprint of what had been successful elsewhere) to a product concept (in which institutions sought to improve the quality of the product they were offering) to a selling concept (in which institutions focused on selling their “new and improved” but still rather narrow range of products to an essentially homogenous market). Slowly but surely, however, an increasing number of institutions are adopting the marketing concept and orienting themselves not towards production or products or sales, but rather, towards particular target markets. They are adopting a more demand-driven, client-oriented approach.

Why adopt a market orientation?

Businesses across a wide range of industries adopt a market orientation because they realise that it is the most sustainable path to success. When an industry is young, demand for a new product or service can be overwhelming and supply scarce. In such a situation, companies can simply produce the product as quickly as possible and they are likely to sell vast quantities of it at a profit. However, as the industry grows, more companies will enter the market and begin producing similar products. Supply will increase and demand will slowly but surely be met. Soon, suppliers will have to compete with each other not only for new customers but also to keep existing customers. At that point, the production concept will fail as a profitable business strategy because consumers will look for ways to distinguish one supplier from the next and will begin to demand more than just product availability and low cost.

¹ The authors are indebted to the staff and management of Credit Indemnity, Equity Building Society, FINCA Tanzania, Kenya Post Office Savings Bank, Tanzania Postal Bank, Teba Bank and Uganda Microfinance Union at which institutions this methodology was extensively discussed and applied to their strategic marketing process.

Figure 1: Development of Business Philosophy

Businesses that want to stay in business will have to choose a different concept, but if they choose either the product or the selling concept, they will still be setting themselves up for only short-term success. While both of these concepts allow businesses to differentiate themselves from the competition, their continued focus on developing and selling products that they think the market might want (an inside-out approach) rather than finding out what the market wants and developing a product that delivers it (an outside-in approach) dooms them to failure. Product and selling-oriented businesses will succeed only until someone else comes along and offers something better. And once market-oriented companies start asking consumers what they want, making a concerted effort to understand the components, complexity and characteristics of the market in order to develop responsive products, it is only a matter of time before they put more attractive options on the table. Businesses that want to survive will also need to adopt a more market-oriented perspective. In the microfinance industry, we see this happening already in highly competitive markets such as Bolivia and Uganda.

A market orientation is useful even in a non-competitive environment, however. In addition to preparing companies for competition whenever it may come, a market orientation can help businesses increase both their profits and their outreach. In microfinance, a market orientation can help an MFI understand why it is not reaching the clients it most wants to reach, why so many clients “drop-out” or choose not to repeatedly purchase a service, why default rates are high, what could be done to more effectively support local economic development, what other communities it might be able to serve effectively, etc. The rewards of making the transition to a market-led approach are significant and manifest themselves in a variety of ways including staff satisfaction, customer loyalty, developmental impact and higher profitability.



I’m an operations person. Why should I care about marketing?

As alluded to above, institutions that focus their operations on their products are doomed to failure or, at best, mediocrity. Institutions that want to thrive in the future must focus their operations on their customers – on their markets. In a market-oriented business, operations people **are** marketing people.

Isn’t marketing the same as selling?

Although marketing is often confused with selling, the two concepts are actually quite distinct. In the words of marketing guru, Philip Kotler, “Marketing cannot be equivalent to selling because it starts long before the company has a product. It is the homework that managers undertake to assess needs, measure

their extent and intensity and determine whether a profitable opportunity exists. Selling occurs only after a product is manufactured. Marketing continues throughout the product's life, trying to find new customers, improve product appeal and performance, learn from product sales results, and manage repeat sales.”² The management expert Peter Drucker once noted, “The aim of marketing is to make selling superfluous. The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him [her] and sells itself.”³

So what exactly is marketing?

“Marketing attempts to understand the needs of the client and to adapt operations in order to meet those needs and achieve greater sustainability. It addresses the issues of new product development, pricing, the location of operations and the promotion of the institution and its products. Marketing is a comprehensive field aimed at strengthening the institution by maintaining focus on the client. In doing so, it creates exchanges that satisfy individual and organisational goals.”⁴

“Marketing management is the art and science of choosing target markets and getting, keeping, and growing customers through creating, delivering, and communicating superior customer value.”⁵

“Marketing is meeting needs profitably.”⁶

What would it take for my institution to adopt a market orientation?

To adopt a market orientation, an institution must first and foremost decide that it wants to put its customers at the centre of all that it does. Once it has made this commitment, it can develop a marketing strategy.⁷ *MicroSave* and TMS Financial (a South African marketing company with extensive experience in marketing financial services) have developed a framework to assist institutions in thinking about strategic marketing and how it relates to their core business of providing financial services to poor people. The framework is based on three 1st tier strategies, each of which incorporates several 2nd tier sub-components. Together, they provide a comprehensive overview of how a market-led approach necessarily affects and changes almost every aspect of an MFI's business – from operations to human resource management, from IT to sales.

As shown in Figure 2, the three 1st tier strategies focus on:

1. **Corporate Brand and Identity**, which is the design and presentation intended to differentiate the MFI from its competition.
2. **Product Strategy**, which encompasses product development and differentiation, as well as the costing/pricing and sales/promotion strategies used by institutions.
3. **Product Delivery and Customer Service Strategy**, which focuses on how and where the MFI's products are delivered and the customer experience.

Each one of these first tier strategies is defined and explored in a separate *MicroSave* toolkit. This manual is part of the toolkit that focuses on the first column – Corporate Brand Strategy.

² Philip Kotler, *Kotler on Marketing* (London: Free Press, 1999) 19.

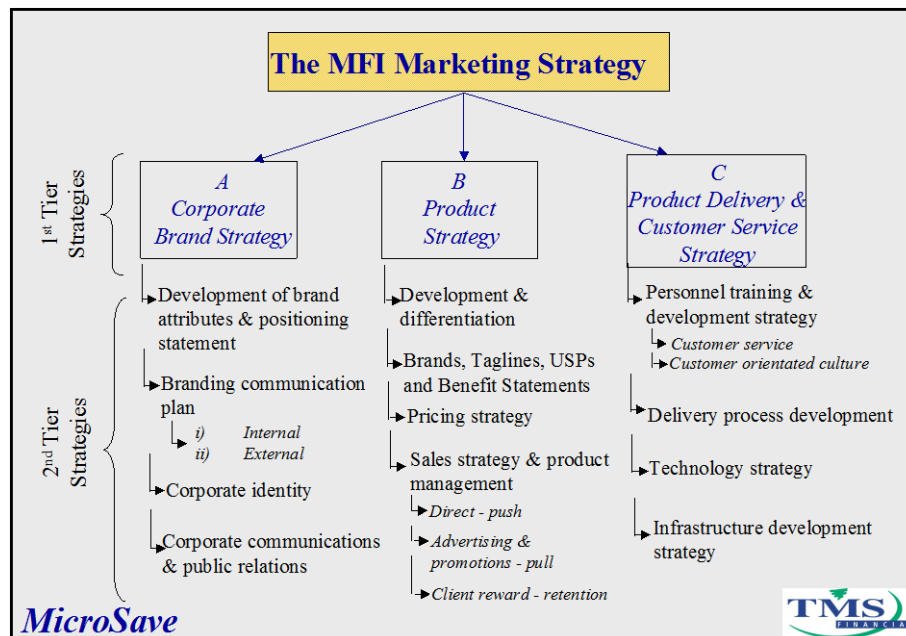
³ Peter Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973) 64-5.

⁴ Kotler 36.

⁵ Philip Kotler, Peggy H. Cunningham and Ronald E. Turner, *Marketing Management*, 10th ed. (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001) 8.

⁶ Kotler, et al, 2

⁷ There are many other things an MFI can do to put the customer at the center of its operations. See David Cracknell, “Signposts to the Provision of Market-Led Micro-Financial Services,” *MicroSave* Briefing Note #18.

Figure 2: The MicroSave/TMS Financial Strategic Marketing Framework

What is a corporate branding and how does it fit into the overall strategy?

Corporate branding is a strategic approach to:

1. Assessing the institution's current position in the market;
2. Assessing where the institution should position itself in the market; and
3. Developing internal and external strategies to implement and monitor the brand.

Corporate branding is a process of determining where your institution is positioned in the market as perceived by your clients, potential customers, staff and other stakeholders, and then making strategic choices to influence that position. When an institution engages in a full process of “branding” or “re-branding,” it conducts market research to understand where it is currently positioned, determines where it wants to be (its aspirations) and how it will get there by creating a brand that communicates the essence of what the institution stands for. However, a brand cannot stand alone: the institution must deliver on the brand promise over time at each contact-point with the customer.

Institutions must clearly and convincingly communicate their brand to their staff so that it is internalised and becomes the personality of the institution while at the same time reflecting the business aspirations. The corporate brand must also be communicated externally through the marketing, media and public relations functions. Although a financial institution may go through a branding process, monitoring and managing the brand is a continuous process. The institution must develop strategies to measure the success of the brand and determine when it may need to adjust its branding strategy to ensure the corporate identity remains positively positioned.

Why do microfinance institutions need a corporate brand and identity strategy?

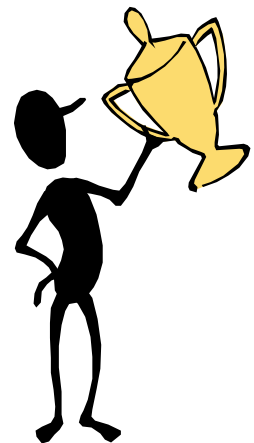
Microfinance institutions often look at the strategic marketing framework and focus narrowly on a product strategy, neglecting the development and nurturing of their corporate brand. There are several compelling reasons why a strong corporate brand will not only help an MFI become established, known and loved by its target market, but also help it grow and become more profitable.

- Institutions in markets with intense competition need strong brands to help them stand out from the competition.
- Institutions in markets with very little competition need a brand to maintain their distinction in the marketplace. If they are doing a good job with services, they won't be alone in the market for long and they will want to ensure they stand out distinctively from the eventual competition that tries to enter. And even if they don't consciously develop their brand, their market will determine what they stand for (or fail to stand for and deliver on), and that will become their position in the marketplace.
- Institutions that want to mobilise savings should build a brand that communicates the safety, security and/or accessibility of deposits to their clients, and then deliver on it!
- Strong brands help unify institutional stakeholders (especially staff) around what the institution believes in and what they stand for. People want to work for institutions that have positive profiles and deliver on what they promise. A strong brand helps employees to stay focused, and it attracts committed talent that will align with the institution's values.
- It's important for an institution to have a clear brand for marketing purposes. It's easier to sell something that has a distinctive personality and clear benefits. If you give your staff and clients something positive to talk about, they will be your word-of-mouth marketers.
- Clients will often pay for a quality brand. Building a brand that people want to be affiliated with can increase your profitability and give clients a sense of pride as users of your services.
- Institutions with established, trusted brands build credibility in the marketplace, allowing them to weather negative publicity and downturns.

What makes a corporate brand strategy successful?

A corporate branding strategy is successful when it follows a planned process to define the brand essence, benefits and attributes. The brand becomes successful when these are internalised and communicated externally. The corporate brand strategy must:

- Determine the position the institution currently has in the market.
- Solicit business aspirations from staff and other stakeholders to focus on where the institution would like to go. Build on the vision, mission and values to understand what you want your market to say about you.
- Develop a brand that sums up the desired positioning and communicates clearly to the staff and clients what the institution promises.
- Inspire staff and other stakeholders to live the brand and ensure that every point of contact reflects the brand values.
- Leverage marketing opportunities and public relations opportunities to consistently reinforce the brand in the market.
- Monitor and manage the brand, learning from the feedback gathered to improve the positioning in the market and determine how to better deliver and showcase the brand essence.



Is there anything special about marketing the brand of microfinance institutions?

Yes, in fact, there is. Because microfinance institutions sell financial services, the marketing strategy that reflects the brand will be greatly influenced by four characteristics common to all services: intangibility, inseparability, variability, and perishability. In addition, because the products being sold are **financial**

services, there are two other distinguishing characteristics that should be taken into account: high involvement and loyalty. Each of these characteristics and their implications are briefly described below.⁸

- ❖ **Intangibility.** Financial services are intangible. Unlike physical products, they cannot be seen, tasted, felt, heard, or smelled before they are bought. This makes it difficult for customers to assess what exactly they are buying. To reduce uncertainty about their purchase, they look for signs or evidence of service quality in what they can see: the physical environment where the service is provided, the people who provide it, the communication materials, symbols and price. MFI marketing strategy must recognise this and carefully manage all opportunities to make its products tangible. A passbook, bank statements, preferred customer cards and insurance policies are all examples of the ways in which financial services are presented to customers in a tangible way. This has particular implications for product branding, which will be discussed in more detail in step six of this manual.
- ❖ **Inseparability.** Microfinance services are typically produced and consumed simultaneously. Because the client is present as the service is produced, both the service provider and the client affect the outcome. This provider-client interaction is a special feature of services marketing and it is at the heart of most microfinance products. A few institutions now offer some services via automated teller machines (ATMs) which, if they are linked to a broader technology system, allow microfinance products to be produced in one location and consumed at another. This radically alters the marketing of the product.
- ❖ **Variability.** Because financial services depend on who provides them and when and where they are provided, they are highly variable. By standardising processes and procedures, institutions can significantly increase the efficiency, convenience and reliability of the services they deliver. However, not all clients value standardisation. Some customers may want transactions as speedily and efficiently as possible while others may prefer a caring approach and a friendly chat. The challenge for institutions is to balance the need for standardisation with the desire for customer care that tailors the product and marketing approach to the needs of individual customers.
- ❖ **Perishability.** Financial services are not as perishable as many other services. Production and consumption is frequently not simultaneous and services can, to some degree, be stored for later use without them “spoiling.” For example, while a customer ordering a meal in a restaurant does so with the understanding that she will be able to eat that meal the same evening, a customer signing up for a savings plan may expect benefits in one, two or five years. There may be no immediate benefit – on the contrary, having to make regular payments may be seen as a disadvantage or a cause of worry. A key task in financial services marketing is to create awareness of long-term benefits and to help customers recognise the need for financial services which they may not see themselves requiring for many years to come, or which they may not want to consider at all, such as life insurance.

Financial services can be perishable, however, whenever demand and supply are mismatched. If customers want to access their accounts at the end of the month, but the lines are too long to provide efficient service, they may stop using your service. If a customer needs a loan by a certain date to take advantage of a business opportunity and the MFI does not deliver it by that date, the benefits to the customer are lost. In this respect, the service could be said to be perishable. Thus, institutions must design a marketing strategy that can effectively balance supply and demand flows pressures.

- ❖ **High Involvement.** Many financial services are high involvement purchases and the purchase decision is frequently made by more than one person. Customers will shop around for the best advice or the best offer and may take a long time to make their decision. They will seek out

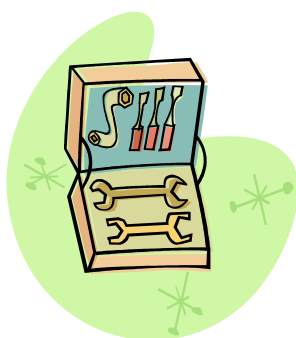
⁸ The general definition of each of the characteristics described in this section is excerpted from Kotler, et al, 419-22, but the microfinance application of the definition is that of the authors.

information about competing brands and products, usually from a variety of sources including advertising, the press, informal advice from colleagues or family, and formal advice from the bank manager or other staff. The process is similar to that of any major purchase, except that customers often perceive greater risk since the service being offered may be complex or unfamiliar or they may have had negative experiences with financial service providers in the past due to inflation, mismanagement or bankruptcy.

- ❖ **High Loyalty.** Once customers find a financial service provider that they trust, they tend to stay with that institution and use it to satisfy their various needs at different stages of their life. Many people use the same financial institution as their parents because the parents opened an account for them there when they were children. Traditional banks recognise this and are usually keen to provide special services to children and teenagers. Insurance companies emphasise in their advertising that they offer services to meet a whole lifetime of needs from a first-time mortgage, life insurance and household insurance, savings and pensions for old age, and even funeral insurance.

Customer retention is the aim for financial service providers, but MFIs, in general, are only beginning to catch on. Many are still providing short-term credit-only services that give customers a regular opportunity to discontinue service at the end of each loan cycle. The lack of product differentiation means that customers in competitive markets leave one institution to go to another even if they were more or less satisfied with the service delivered, simply because another MFI offers a similar service at a lower price. MFIs that have expanded their product offering, tailored it more closely to their customers' needs, and deliberately made an effort to build relationships with their clients are reaping the benefits in terms of strong customer loyalty.⁹

How do we use this Manual?



Like all *MicroSave* Toolkits, this manual is one component in a set of tools that form part of the market-led approach to microfinance. It can be used on its own as a resource guide, or in conjunction with the *MicroSave* PowerPoint training slides, handouts and exercises.

The aim of the manual is to elaborate the steps necessary to complete a branding process for your institution. The summary of this process is a document called the Brand Plan (described in the final section of this Manual) – background information and strategic plans that will guide the entire branding effort from logos and internal communications to marketing and public relations strategies. The Brand Plan summarises your overall branding strategy and guides you in its implementation.

The manual begins with a brief introduction to branding, defining what a brand is and demonstrating the benefits of branding for your institution. It then outlines key principles to consider when embarking on a branding process.

Corporate branding involves three broad processes: developing the brand, implementing the brand and monitoring the brand. These processes have been divided into five key steps that form the Footpath to a Great Brand:

- Step 1: Analyse Where We Are and Where We Want to Be**
- Step 2: Create the Brand**
- Step 3: Internalise the Brand**
- Step 4: Communicate the Brand Externally**
- Step 5: Measure the Success of the Brand**

⁹ For more information on customer loyalty and how to build it, see *MicroSave's* Customer Service Strategy Toolkit.

The first step in the branding process is to identify your current market position and areas of differentiation. An institution compares these with their brand aspirations (how they want to be perceived). The current image and desired image form the basis for brand building in which a credible, compelling brand is designed (Step 2). As part of implementing the brand, the institution builds internal commitment and ensures organisational alignment (Step 3). The brand is then communicated externally through a well-designed communications and marketing strategy. Finally, Step 5 is designed to help institutions assess the impact and effectiveness of their brand initiatives so they can decide how to adjust their branding strategy.

The following sections will describe each step in detail, offering analytical tools, practical examples and tips to help you work your way through the process. Use the checklists that are provided at the end of each section to make sure you've covered the important points and have gathered the information you'll need for subsequent steps.

The steps in this toolkit are not meant to be considered as a strictly linear progression, with each one being completed before the next one begins. Rather, we have presented the ideas in the order that it makes most sense to think about them, and in the general order in which they need to be implemented to craft an effective corporate brand strategy. There will be loops throughout the entire process, however, when new information or client feedback causes you to revisit your strategy in a previous step. At times, this may feel like you are taking a step back, but in reality, you are refining and improving your brand. It is the way the process is supposed to work – a continuous monitoring cycle that keeps you ever responsive to your market.

Who should use the manual?

The manual should be read by anyone involved in the branding process at a financial institution. It is specifically designed to guide the Brand Management Team: those involved in evaluating and crafting the brand as well as monitoring it. The Brand Management Team is typically made up of the CEO, Marketing Manager and Head of Operations, with other staff members who provide feedback on branding and client responses to the brand. Institutions who succeed in managing their brand appoint someone on staff to be the official “Brand Manager.” While everyone on staff is part of living the brand and delivering on its promises, the Brand Manager signals when it is time to evaluate, refresh, change or respond to the brand. Most smaller institutions rely on the CEO or Managing Director to be the Brand Manager. Larger institutions may appoint someone for this function, but that staff member must always communicate regularly brand issues with the CEO.

Senior managers should definitely read the Introduction to Branding, Overview of Key Principles and steps 3 and 5 on how to internalise and monitor the brand. Those in the operations and finance departments should also read the first two sections, then focus on step 3 regarding internalising the brand to ensure their departments deliver on brand promises. The marketing department, well, it should probably sleep with the entire manual under its pillow, but pay particular attention to step 4 and how they will communicate the brand externally. As mentioned previously, this toolkit is designed for a broad audience, and can hopefully guide the work of numerous actors in different departments and functions within the institution.

We hope that this manual will help you make your organisation more market-led, and will enable you to develop, implement and monitor your brand more successfully.

START NOW:
Check your image, build your brand!

Introduction to Branding

What is a brand?

Brands are often thought of as logos or taglines, but brands are much more than that. A brand is the **essence of what the institution stands for in the market**: the Organisation's Personality. It is a reflection of who the organisation is, what products it offers and how it serves its clients. It also differentiates you from the competition.

Branding terminology can be complex and confusing. Often two terms mean the same thing and it feels as though you must describe your brand from every angle. At its core, the "brand" is whatever the consumer thinks of when he or she hears your company's name, or sees evidence of your company. It's the perceptions, emotions and attitudes others have towards you.

Why is a brand important for financial service providers?

Brands are very important for financial service providers. It is useful for the Brand Management team to develop a thorough understanding of the reasons why this is the case, as they will need to share these reasons with other members of staff and management to build internal excitement and commitment to the brand-building process.

A strong brand can...

- Differentiate the institution

By defining what it stands for and delivering on its promises, the institution can define – and hold onto – a clear position in the marketplace.

This can help institutions operating in competitive markets stand out from the competition. For those with little or no competition, a strong brand can help to stake out a position which can then serve them well when competition does enter. If they are doing a good job with services, they won't be alone in the market for long, so they will want to ensure they stand out distinctively from the eventual competition that tries to enter.

A strong brand can also facilitate strategic alliances, as potential partners will be eager to leverage the benefits for their own brands of linking themselves with a strong brand. In addition, making clear what the institution is about can help to attract those institutions with similar values and approaches.

A strong brand can also help to build credibility for the institution, and to establish a positive reputation with investors, regulators, and policy makers.

- Unify the organisation and guide internal initiatives

A strong brand helps unify the organisation behind a common sense of purpose and direction. People want to work for institutions that have positive profiles and deliver on what they promise, so a strong

Why do I need a brand?

- I'm the only MFI in my market
- I have a small client base
- I don't have a marketing department
- I'm an NGO and my international partner designed our logo
- I don't have money for branding

Many MFIs think they don't need to worry about their brand. They forget the power of branding for mobilising savings and establishing a competitive position (before competition moves in). There are many cost-efficient ways you can strategically align your MFI internally with your desired image.

Whether you focus on branding or not, your clients and staff will develop an image of your institution. Without adequate attention, this might not be the image you want.

brand can help the organisation to attract qualified and committed talent. Potential employees will know what the institution stands for, what its values are, and what benefits it aims to deliver to clients – so those who are a “good fit” for the institution will be drawn to apply. In addition, it is easier for a strong brand to attract very qualified candidates, as they will likely be more interested in working for an institution that is well-known and has a positive reputation in the marketplace.

A clearly-defined, credible and inspiring brand can also help employees to focus and make decisions, as well as to feel motivated and keep morale high. These internal benefits of the brand are often forgotten in discussions of the brand – but they are at least as important as the external ones. Where employees are clear about what the organisation is driving towards, what it stands for, and what it promises to employees, they can much more easily do their jobs. In addition, the feeling of joint purpose that comes along with a clear brand position can help them to feel inspired – and there is also pride in being part of an institution that is known and respected in the marketplace. Of course, this all takes work: employees must be involved throughout the brand building and management process, as their commitment and understanding is crucial to the brand’s success.

➤ Build client value

Clients will ultimately reap the benefits of a brand which helps staff and management to deliver a consistent experience that is in line with client’s needs and desires. The process of building the brand can help institutions to think about what their clients want and to align all organisational initiatives behind serving their target clients better and more consistently. Clients are the reason the institution exists – and a strong brand can help ensure that the institution is fully aligned both internally and externally to meet their expectations.

A strong brand can also help the institution to attract the right clients – that is, ones who will benefit the most from its products and services. In addition, it can help to instil a sense of pride in clients for being affiliated with the institution.

➤ Enhance marketing effectiveness

By clearly defining its brand, the institution can simplify the process of developing its marketing messages – as these will all need to be linked to the overall corporate brand message. It is easier to encourage clients to choose an institution that has a distinctive personality and clear benefits. Once the brand has high recognition and understanding in the marketplace, marketing materials will have higher recall – and materials can be simpler, as even a simple logo can then trigger the desired audience to think about the institution. And if you give your staff and clients something positive to talk about, they will be your word-of-mouth marketers.

➤ Strengthen against bad times

A brand is an important asset when institutions are hit by bad times. Negative PR or market downturns can impact even the most effective institutions, but those which have solidified their reputation in their market are much better equipped to recover. Institutions with a strong brand can call on the value of their brand (and its positive associations) to remind clients, staff and other stakeholders of better times.

➤ Increase institutional profitability

It is important to remember that the brand is also a financial asset. Brand valuation is an entire field of study on how to quantify the value of brands for institutions: every year, Interbrand, one of the most respected organisations in this field, publishes an annual list of the top 100 brands, and the value of

“The brand is a special intangible that in many businesses is the most important asset. This is because of the economic impact that brands have.”

- Interbrand

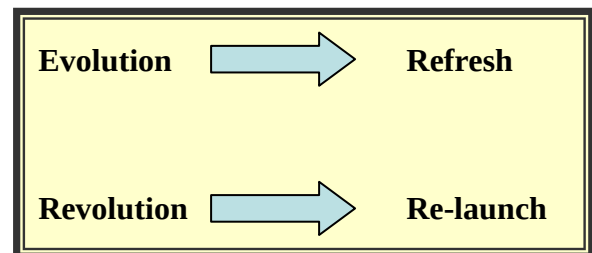
some of the top brands is certainly striking! For example, the most recent stock market value for CocaCola was \$164 billion, whereas the actual value of the company is \$7 billion – \$157 billion is brand value.

A strong, positive reputation in the industry can significantly increase the number of donors and / or investors interested in the institution. In addition, clients are willing to pay for a quality brand, and it can also help increase client loyalty and retention rates – thereby also increasing profitability for the institution.

When is it time to change the brand?

Brands must evolve with the times – and the challenge is to remain up-to-date while also retaining all of the goodwill built throughout the organisation's history.

The level of change necessary will depend on the institutional and market situation. While one institution might simply need to refresh its brand to keep it current, another might need to undergo a substantial re-launch of the brand.



Sometimes brands lose their capacity to be inspiring to employees, clients, or other stakeholders. This may occur for a number of reasons – perhaps the organisation has outgrown the brand, client needs have changed, or competitors are seen to offer superior products or services. Or perhaps the brand was never clearly defined and implemented, so it has become confused and undifferentiated.

The steps in this manual should help you determine the amount of change that is right for *your* institution. Some reasons why you might want to consider a more substantial change to the brand include:

- Brand is not fully understood by key stakeholders

This is likely to occur if the institution never clearly defined its brand – or if it did not consistently deliver on its brand promises. Some brands may have high awareness, and yet no one can agree on what they stand for – then it is time to clarify what the brand is about, and to implement the necessary internal and external initiatives to make the brand a reality.

- Client expectations have changed

Clients needs do change, and a brand can only be strong if it meets – or, better, exceeds – clients' expectations. This may occur because clients have become more knowledgeable of the options available to them, so they are more demanding of their financial service provider. Or perhaps the macroeconomic situation has changed, so their concerns and requirements have changed accordingly. The amount of change required will depend on the degree to which the brand's promised benefits continue to be aligned with what clients want.

- The competition has increased / become stronger

Fierce competition in the marketplace often requires organisations to differentiate themselves more clearly and to improve their overall positioning. The brand will need to be clearly defined – and delivered – so that clients, potential staff and other stakeholders will want to choose the organisation over others in the market. It doesn't make sense (for either the financial or social bottom lines) to compete on the same platform and for the same clients as other organisations, so the brand can help to ensure that organisations attract those who are the best fit for them.

- Your strategic goals, mission or vision have changed

The brand must be aligned with the strategy, mission, and vision – so where there are changes in any of these, the brand should be changed accordingly. For example, if an institution decides to shift its target client base to include male as well as female clients, its brand can be a significant help in ensuring that this choice is understood and well received in the marketplace. The links between the brand, strategy, and mission/vision should continually be examined and maintained, as each of these should reinforce and strengthen the others.

➤ You have gone through organisational changes

One of the most important reasons for changing the brand is that the organisation has undergone changes that have not yet been reflected in the brand. This may occur because of a change in ownership or management, or because of a new strategic partnership, acquisition or merger. Organisations that undergo formalisation will also want to consider the impact of this change for their brand.

How much will the brand need to change over time?

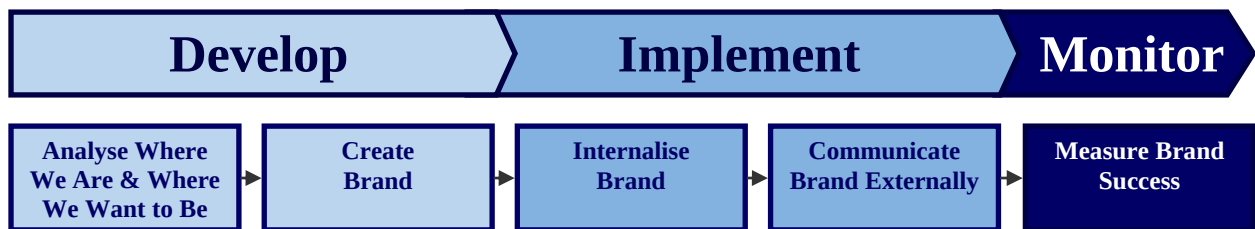
Branding is a continual process – and institutions with strong brands make brand management a core part of their business. However, once an institution has gone through a comprehensive brand development process, its efforts should shift away from changing the core of the brand itself towards making sure that the brand is delivered consistently throughout each and every part of the business. The brand management team will need to monitor the brand to ensure that it remains compelling, and changes may be necessary – but these should mostly be only minor refinements.

Making too frequent changes to the brand can harm its credibility, so it is important for the brand management team to consider how the new or modified brand will stand up to time when they are going through the design process. Of course, some market or institutional changes may be difficult to predict and will necessitate more substantial changes to the brand. However, as much as possible, the goal of the brand design process should be to develop a brand that will remain compelling and inspiring over time, as then the brand management team will be able to spend its time, energy and resources in ensuring that the brand is delivered consistently to all of its stakeholders.

The Branding Process: Overview and Key Principles

What are the key steps of the branding process?

Figure 3: Footpath to a Great Brand



Corporate branding involves three broad processes: developing the brand, implementing the brand and monitoring the brand. These processes have been divided into five key steps that form the Footpath to a Great Brand:

Step 1: Analyse Where We Are and Where We Want to Be

Step 2: Create the Brand

Step 3: Internalise the Brand

Step 4: Communicate the Brand Externally

Step 5: Measure the Success of the Brand

Step 1 in the branding process is to identify the institution's current market position and potential areas of differentiation. Through research with target clients, staff and management, and other key stakeholders (such as members of the Board, policy makers and regulators, strategic partners, etc), the Brand Management team should develop an in-depth understanding of what the brand stands for today – and what these key groups would want the brand to stand for in the future.

The analysis of the current and desired image from Step 1 forms the basis for the next step, in which a credible, compelling brand is designed (**Step 2**). Here the Brand Management team will develop the new Brand Guide, including brand attributes, benefits, essence and positioning statement. The Brand Guide will need to be clearly based on the research findings and linked to the organisational strategy, mission and vision. Organisational capabilities and resources will also need to be considered in order to ensure that the new brand can be delivered consistently. Once the Brand Guide is developed, the Brand Identity (logo, tagline, signage, etc.) will need to be considered and appropriate changes made to reflect the new brand. The institution may choose to involve an agency at this stage of this process, in which case a comprehensive agency brief will need to be created to guide them in their work on the brand.

Once the brand is created, it is time to make it a reality! The first step of implementing the new brand is for the institution to build internal commitment and ensure organisational alignment (**Step 3**). Here the Brand Management team will need to develop and implement an internal communication strategy to ensure that all members of staff fully understand the new brand. Staff should already be aware of the brand building process by this stage, and their opinions should have been solicited – as it is crucial that they feel part of the brand building process. (For larger organisations, it may not be possible to involve everyone from the beginning, in which case the internal communications strategy must be considered all the more carefully.) Step 3 also involves ensuring organisational alignment – that is, assessing what needs to be done or changed to ensure that the staff have everything they need to deliver on the brand. For example, if the institution promises fast service, loan application processes may need to be changed, staff may need training in ways to serve clients more quickly, or more staff members may need to be hired to reduce client waiting time. It is important that this step occur *before* the brand is communicated externally, as the brand will only succeed if employees have the resources – and desire – to “live the brand.”

The brand is then communicated externally through a well-designed communications and marketing strategy (**Step 4**), using the various components of the marketing mix (eg, advertising, direct marketing, public relations, personal selling, and events and sales promotion). This may be done with the assistance of an external agency, which can help the institution to develop its marketing materials and to choose which media to use. The Brand Management team (and any marketing staff members not explicitly on this team, if relevant) will regardless need to be heavily involved to ensure that the marketing messages are consistent and aligned with the new brand.

Finally, **Step 5** is designed to help institutions assess the impact and effectiveness of their brand initiatives so they can decide how to adjust their branding strategy. This step should help institutions both understand how compelling their new brand is to their various stakeholders and determine how consistently it is being implemented in the marketplace. The findings from this step should then feed back into other parts of the brand development process: monitoring the brand and making the necessary changes can ensure that the institution will continue to feel all of the benefits of a great brand.



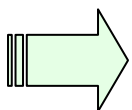
These steps are designed to guide you through the process, but they should not be seen as part of a strictly linear progression. It is fully expected that new findings, staff feedback, or perhaps a change in the institution or marketplace will cause you to revisit earlier steps in the process. This is the way the process is supposed to work – a continuous monitoring cycle that allows you to refine and improve your brand to keep you ever responsive to your market.

How long does this whole process take?

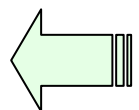
To go through each of the steps described in this manual could take anywhere from 2-6 months – but to truly establish a strong brand that is believed by the organisation and its clients can take years. The brand development process should be mostly completed by the end of this process (recognising, of course, that the brand will need to be evolved and modified over time to keep it up-to-date) – but brand implementation and monitoring must remain a priority for the organisation over time.

The amount of time and effort that will need to be invested upfront will depend on a number of factors, including:

- *The amount of research already conducted:* the amount of additional research that should be conducted will depend on how well the organisation already understands the beliefs and needs of its key stakeholders;
- *The degree of agreement amongst key stakeholders:* the Brand Management team will have to allot more time for brand design if they need to resolve conflicting views on what the brand should stand for;
- *The degree of alignment between the desired brand and current organisational initiatives:* the amount of time necessary for the brand implementation stage will depend on how many organisational changes will be required in order to deliver on the brand's promises; and
- *The organisation's brand development and management history:* the process will be expedited if the Brand Management team can leverage past work or build on earlier branding initiatives.



It is important to remember that the process of building a brand is valuable in itself as a tool to bring the organisation together and gain focus for the future – so many of its benefits should be felt almost immediately.



How much will it cost?

Strong brands are invaluable, but building them does require an investment of both time and money. But it's definitely worth it!

The precise amount of money you will need to spend on brand building will depend on how much research you conduct, how many members of your staff are involved (and how much time they each spend on the brand), and how many additional resources you need in order to deliver on the brand. You will also need to consider the costs of revising your Brand Identity – eg, your logo, letterhead, branch signage etc. In addition, the costs will depend in part on the extent of change required: the new brand must be financially realistic, and designed with the current organisational resources and capabilities in mind.

There are ways to decrease the costs of brand building by leveraging already existing initiatives (eg, monitoring the corporate brand through research being used to test new products or new marketing materials or timing the brand development to coincide with a strategy review process). The long-term benefits should also be considered, as ultimately the brand will deliver financial benefits to the organisation – by improving efficiency through better aligned organisational initiatives, increasing both the number of clients and client retention rates, and enhancing marketing effectiveness.

Who should lead the process?

To create the brand, there should be a Brand Management team to develop, implement and monitor the brand. This team usually consists of the CEO, head of operations and the marketing manager, as well as any other senior managers who have expressed explicit interest or expertise in branding. The team should be kept relatively small in order to facilitate both the logistics of meeting and the speed of decision making – but it is important that other staff stay involved to provide feedback and review key decisions. Staff commitment and buy-in is crucial to the process, so the Brand Management team must make soliciting the opinions of other staff members and listening to their concerns a top priority.

In addition to the Brand Management team, it is important that one Brand Manager be appointed to be responsible for monitoring the brand and signalling when it is time to make changes to either the brand design or to how it is being implemented. This person should also take a leading role in meetings of the Brand Management team, and should ensure that there is clear follow-up from these discussions. The choice of Brand Manager will depend on the organisation, but it should be someone who is senior enough to command the attention of the rest of the team, has a good understanding of market research and of client needs and desires, and has the time and energy to devote to the brand.

What are the principles for creating a strong brand?

There are five key principles to remember when starting off on the Footpath to a Great Brand:

1. Stand for something

Standing for something clear and compelling will help clients, potential employees, and other stakeholders to differentiate you from other institutions in the market. If you try to stand for everything, you will ultimately stand for nothing. You will need to make some hard choices about which clients you most want to target and what you most want to promise them, as even the strongest institutions cannot provide everything to everyone. Making these choices, which should be based on how you can best meet clients' needs and desires while also building on your institutional history and core strengths, will help you to target and focus your activities and set you well on the path towards a great brand.

2. Keep your brand promise

If you don't deliver the benefits your brand promises, clients will lose faith in your organisation and will become frustrated or angry. It is better not to make the promise than to make it and not keep it – so you should ensure that you can deliver on your brand promise before communicating it externally to clients. If your brand is about honesty, your product has to be trustworthy – and if it is about value,

your product has to be competitively priced. Clients' level of satisfaction will depend on having their expectations met – thereby also impacting staff morale and the organisation's reputation in the community.

“Brand names are not built by advertising and promotion. They're built by living up to your promises, by repeat daily performance against a standard of excellence. Think of how the client is using your product and position yourself as a trusted advisor and provider...Make the experience of doing business with you more favourable.”

- Edward E. Furash

3. Deliver your brand consistently

It is important that each and every part of the organisation be aligned to deliver on the brand. The brand should guide each and every interaction with staff, clients and other stakeholders – as each of these will impact how your organisation is perceived. It is not enough to make the logo and external marketing materials communicate your brand: all internal and external initiatives should be geared towards delivering your brand.

The clients' experience of each of the eight “Ps” (people, product, pricing, place, promotion, positioning, physical evidence and process) must be aligned with the brand. If these are not aligned, brand credibility will be damaged.

“Once you define a brand as the relationship with the consumer, then everything that touches the consumer, everything that affects the relationship, everything that communicates the brand at every point of contact becomes important.”

- Shelley Lazarus

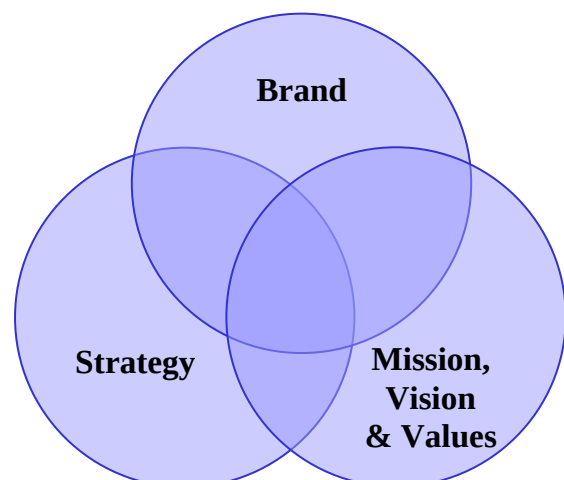
4. Cherish your brand

A brand is like a child, full of potential, loved by those who know it, mistrusted by those who don't, easy to guide with love and care, ready to bounce back when attacked...but love your brand and it will repay you over and over again...A brand does require the commitment of time, energy and resources...but its benefits will make the investment worth it!

Once you have invested time and money into developing a brand, it must be treasured and preserved. The Brand Management team will need to ensure that it is understood and owned by all employees, so that the brand guides every aspect of how they do their work and how they interact with clients.

5. Keep your mission and strategy in mind

Brands are sometimes used by institutions to cover up their failings – but, as organisations that provide financial services to low income people, the responsibility to use the brand for good is particularly pressing. The brand should not be seen as a tool to manipulate people into believing compelling marketing messages, but rather as a tool to help the organisation stand for something that truly appeals to clients – and to provide clients with the corresponding products and services. The brand must also be consistent with the organisation's strategic goals and initiatives, as the organisation's strategy; mission, vision and values; and brand



should all reinforce each other and guide the organisation towards being the best it can be at providing financial services to its target clients.

What are the most common branding mistakes?



Just as it is important to think about what to do to create a great brand, it is also important to think about what to do to avoid killing your brand!

Many of the most common branding mistakes have to do with ***not delivering on your brand promises*** – make sure that you are fully ready to deliver on your brand *before* launching it externally! Your brand message should reflect what you are actually equipped to offer to clients – not what you would like to offer them. Do *not*:

- Launch a brand you can't support

Sometimes organisations become overly confident, thinking that they can launch the brand before the systems and staff are ready: the organisation must be fully ready to deliver on the brand before it is launched externally.

- Set up unrealistic expectations which the organisation cannot deliver either now or in the foreseeable future

The brand must be credible and consistent with the organisational capabilities and resources. Sometimes organisations try to stand for something that they can't provide (eg, a mono-product MCO promising to provide products tailored to clients' needs – without the resources or regulatory environment to expand its product offerings), thereby setting themselves up to disappoint their clients.

- Create astonishing demand and then don't deliver

Sometimes organisations do have the resources to deliver on the brand, but they just aren't ready to deal with the increase in demand associated with the new brand. It is important to ensure that the organisation is prepared to deliver the brand promise not only to existing clients but also to new clients attracted by an effective external communications strategy.

- Diversify beyond your competency or area of strength into unrelated product categories

The brand must be founded on what the organisation already does well, and plans to diversify must be carefully considered to ensure that they make sense given organisational capabilities and strategic goals. It is important to think about how the different parts of the organisation fit together, and how they all link to the corporate brand, strategy, and mission / vision / values.

Organisations also sometimes suffer from ***marketing mistakes or oversights***...do *not*:

- Continually change the launch date

When organisations decide to launch a new brand, they should decide on a launch date and stick to it. Changing the date can generate confusion both inside the organisation and externally.

- Say the wrong thing about your brand at the wrong time in the wrong place

A clear marketing and communications strategy should be developed in order to ensure that each piece of external marketing is coordinated and helps to reinforce the core messages of the corporate brand. It is easy for marketing materials to provide conflicting messages or to make false promises (eg, "X loan is coming" – when it isn't!): this will damage the brand's credibility in the marketplace.

- Link your brand with someone rather worrying or politicians of dubious repute

Brand spokespeople should be considered carefully. It is not enough for them to be well-known: they should reflect the values and feel of the organisation, as their image will become linked in people's minds with the reputation of the organisation.

- Ignore negative publicity or rumours...

Sometimes organisations suffer from negative PR, and it is important to respond to these messages quickly and carefully so that they do not spiral out of control.

Weak brand monitoring and management can also lead to problems for the brand...do not:

- Remain static in changing times...

Organisations that don't change in changing times, sticking to their original brand and ignoring market trends and changing client needs, will find that their brands become static and lose their original appeal. Brand management is a continual process, and it is important to evolve the brand and keep it ever responsive to the market.

Checklist: Before moving on...

...make sure you can answer yes to each of the following questions:

- ✓ Is your organisation ready to commit the time and resources necessary to begin the branding process?
- ✓ Have a Brand Management team and a Brand Manager been appointed to lead the process?
- ✓ Can you explain why branding is important for your organisation?
- ✓ Do you understand the key steps involved in developing a great brand?
- ✓ Do you understand the core principles behind developing a great brand, and the key mistakes to avoid?



Step 1: Analyse Where We Are and Where We Want to Be

Why is this step important?

A major part of brand building is understanding where the institution is and where key stakeholders (clients, staff, partners, investors, etc.) want it to be. This knowledge is important in terms of setting the foundation for the brand building process. This step involves an analysis of the market to understand clients' needs and expectations and identify potential areas of differentiation, as well as an analysis of institutional goals and desires to determine internal brand aspirations. The results of this analysis will then form the basis upon which to build a brand that is relevant to the target market and appropriately aligned to the Vision and Mission of the institution.

The research and tools described here are not only useful at the beginning of a brand building process – but are also relevant as part of ongoing brand tracking which can then help institutions make the refinements necessary to sustain a strong brand.

Who should do the research?

Some institutions may choose to conduct and analyse the research themselves, while others may choose to outsource the research to an external facilitator or agency. In making this choice, it is important to recognise the trade-offs between cost savings and the potential to increase staff understanding and commitment on one hand, and impartiality and the potential for a fuller picture on the other.

Keeping the research function within the organisation can help to reduce costs, and it can also build the understanding of those involved in conducting and analysing the research – making them particularly valuable members of the team developing the brand. Building research skills internally can also be helpful for the future, and *MicroSave's* Market Research for Microfinance Toolkit can provide tips and guidelines to guide those interested through the research process.

However, there are also benefits to hiring an outside facilitator or partnering with an agency for the research. In particular, they will bring skills and experience that can help improve the quality of the results – a benefit that will become particularly relevant where there is little institutional experience in conducting and analysing research. Additionally, they will be better able to bring out sensitive information, which participants may not be willing to share with someone affiliated with the organisation. This is particularly important for smaller organisations where participants may feel especially reluctant to share concerns for fear that their comments will have an impact on how they are treated subsequently.

One option to consider with outsourcing research is to have an outside facilitator conduct all or part of the research, but to have a few key members of the brand management team listen in – while this option does introduce issues of confidentiality regarding sensitive information, it can help build understanding and buy-in amongst those listening in.

An outside facilitator may be particularly helpful for discussions with staff – although again this will depend on the degree to which the information solicited is likely to be sensitive. Sometimes the primary goal of the brand development process is to improve negative internal perceptions of the brand and boost low staff morale – if this is the case, an outside facilitator will be better equipped to capture the information necessary to achieve this goal.

How involved should we be in the analysis of data?

Regardless of whether the research function is kept internal or outsourced, the Brand Management team should be heavily involved in data analysis. Again, this can be facilitated if they are present for at least most – preferably all – of the research. The Brand Management team's involvement is important because the research must form the foundation of the brand, and yet experience has shown that it is easy to ignore research if one has not been intimately involved with the analysis!

Meetings should be held with all senior management and select staff to present and discuss the research findings, as this is an important part of ensuring their buy-in and soliciting ideas for brand development. The research findings should also be shared more broadly, and links between the research and subsequent choices made about the brand should be made explicit – such that staff can see how the beliefs and desires of key stakeholders (especially of target clients) are reflected in the new brand. Staff understanding and buy-in will ultimately determine the success of the new brand – so their involvement throughout the brand development process is crucial.

Which groups should we talk to?

Before beginning the market research, it is important for the institution to identify which groups it wants to understand:

- *Clients:* Who is the target?
- *Staff:* Which members of staff / management?
- *Other stakeholders:* Are there any stakeholders who are crucial to the success of the brand? If so, which ones? These might include: board members, donors, investors, strategic partners, etc.

The different groups being researched may provide conflicting suggestions or ideas. For example, policy makers, the Board of Directors, and staff may not all have the same vision for the brand – and these may not all align with the desires of the target client. Raising and, hopefully, resolving these tensions is an important result of the brand building process, and is valuable in itself. The brand management team should look out for these tensions early on and bring them to the attention of senior management (that is, including members who are not on the brand management team) for discussion.

Which clients should we talk to?

The corporate brand should be designed to meet the needs and desires of clients identified as the core target for the institution, as a brand cannot be for everyone. There should be clear agreement amongst senior management regarding who this core target is – before beginning the brand building process – as the brand will need to be created with this target in mind. This decision should be informed by the organisational strategy, mission and vision, as well as by earlier research and market segmentation work. Different clients will have different needs and desires, so the *specific* needs and desires of those considered the highest priority for the institution should guide the design of the new brand.

Depending on institutional goals (regarding growth, attempts to shift the client base, etc.), it may be helpful to talk to both current and potential clients, screening for those who are the highest priority for the institution. Discussions with potential clients will likely need to be kept at a more general level as they will not be as familiar with the institution, but these discussions can help particularly in defining the institutional landscape and finding potential areas of differentiation.

Which staff members should we talk to?

Although the brand will need to be communicated across the organisation as a whole before it is shared externally, it is important to involve key members of staff in the earlier stages of the process.

The choice of which staff to talk to will depend on the institution, but it should at least include the heads of each division, as well as any other senior staff not included in the brand management team. Members of the frontline staff should also be talked to as they usually have rich information on the market since they interact with clients on a daily basis. They are well placed in analysing institutional capacities relative to market opportunities or challenges. Meanwhile, talking to management allows for the exploration of strategic issues by looking at what has been done and what is being planned.

Talking to staff and management in this process helps:

- Raise ideas that will help build a more credible and inspiring brand;
- Increase brand awareness and understanding within the institution;
- Ensure buy-in across the institution.

Which other stakeholders should we talk to?

This decision will depend on the institution, as it should be determined based on which groups will have different and important perspectives on how to make the brand successful, as well as on which groups can exert influence on the brand. In other words, the institution should ask itself whose beliefs and suggestions will be most valuable, and whose buy-in is most critical to the brand's ultimate success.

The groups to consider include the Board of Directors, donors and investors, policy makers and regulators, strategic partners, etc. Given time and financial constraints, it may not be possible to reach everyone the institution might like to talk to – but it is important not to forget these groups, as they will often exert significant influence over how the brand is received in the marketplace.

Can we use data we have already collected?

Yes – definitely! As much as possible, the institution should review information it already has on trends in the marketplace, perceptions of the institution and its products and services, segmentation of clients, etc. and use this information to inform the additional research to conduct.

What potential tools can we use?

There are a number of possible tools that can be used to build understanding of the brand beliefs, needs, desires and aspirations of clients, staff, and other key stakeholders. The suggestions in the manual are just that – they are intended to form part of a toolkit of market research options, and the mix of tools used should be tailored to the specific institution – how much information it already has, what questions are remaining, and what is the situation in the marketplace.

The potential tools to understand each target group include:

- **Target Clients** – Image Analysis, Mind Mapping, Other FGD/PRA tools (including Financial Landscape Analysis, Relative Preference Ranking, Perceptual Mapping), Individual surveys
- **Staff / Management** – Image Analysis, Mind Mapping, Perceptual Mapping
- **Other Key Stakeholders** – Internal brainstorming, one-on-one discussions



Remember to tailor these tools to your specific institutional context! Start by thinking about the questions you are trying to answer, and then choose the tools accordingly. Note also that some of the tools can be combined within one FGD or one-on-one interview.

How can we use Image Analysis to develop our brand?

Market-led institutions realise that their corporate image, the market perception of their institution is the most significant factor driving sales. Institutions attempt to influence market perceptions by building a strong corporate brand. Before this can be done an institution should understand its corporate image in detail. An institution can do this by performing Image Analysis, which employs a set of tools such as Image Cards, Image Trend Analysis and Image Attribute Ranking to get a comprehensive understanding of the institutional image in the market. This allows the institution to:

- *Know the target market:* Understanding the unique characteristics of the market enables the institution to tailor its brand accordingly.
- *Understand perceived institutional strengths:* Image analysis allows the institution to determine perceptions of its competitive strengths and to understand factors driving this image. Resources can then be targeted efficiently on these image drivers.
- *Understand perceived institutional weaknesses:* Conversely, understanding perceived weaknesses enables the institution to undertake corrective action.
- *Identify appropriate messages* which can maintain or improve on the image.

Image Analysis enables the organisation to decide whether the current position gives the brand the greatest advantage in the market and also determine ways to improve or change the brand to better meet client's needs and desires.

Image Analysis can be used with target clients (both current and potential), and it can also be used with staff and management to provide information on internal perceptions of the brand.

See *MicroSave's PRA: A Toolkit Handbook* for more information

How can we use Mind Mapping to develop our brand?

Mind Mapping is a useful tool for representing the complexity of how participants think about a particular idea – in this case, your brand. Using a marker pen and flip chart, the facilitator leads the group in a discussion of how different ideas about the brand link together in participants' minds. The process is useful in mapping out the current perceptions of an institution, as well as in identifying ideas for improvement. This tool is best used with current clients, potential clients, key staff and management.

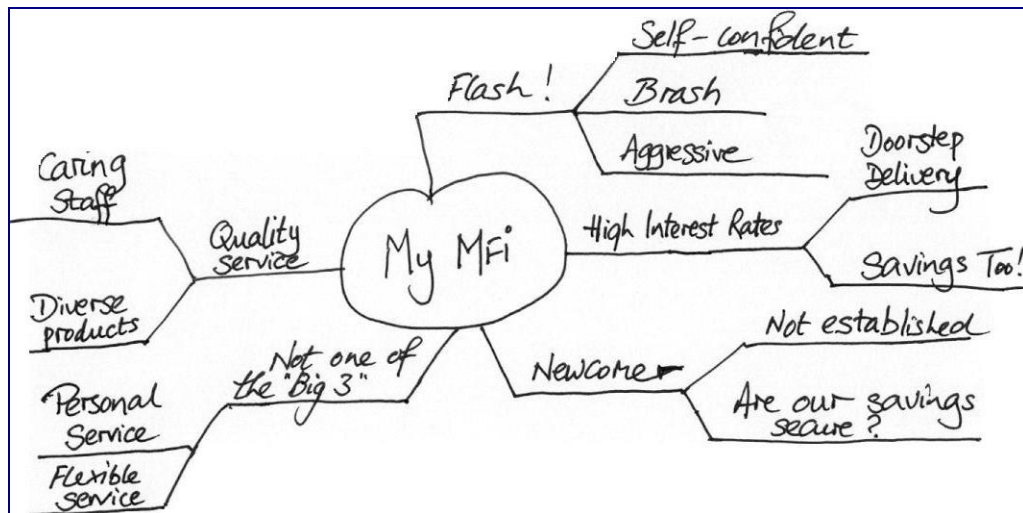
The process involves starting with the major idea (the brand in this case) in the centre of the page and working outwards in all directions – using roots and branches to show how ideas are linked. Participants should be encouraged to make connections between different ideas, and to think about how different parts of the map fit together. The map need not look ordered or structured – the goal is to create a visual representation of how the brand is positioned in participants' minds.

Consider using colours and images to further illustrate the meaning of particular ideas. For example, if the map starts to get too difficult to read with all of the different roots and branches, use colours to show how ideas group together. Likewise, if participants use images to describe any of the ideas included, include those images on the map as well.



Be creative with how the Mind Map is used. A discussion of your current brand can help illustrate perceptions of the brand today, and is particularly useful with those very familiar with your brand (eg, staff and management or current clients). A map of perceptions of “the ideal financial institution” could then be compared with the map of current brand to highlight areas of opportunity, and is probably the more relevant discussion for potential clients who may not have much to add on a map of your current brand. With staff and management, it may be helpful to ask them to create a Mind Map initially of the current brand, and then to create one of how they would like the brand to be positioned in the future – either in a different colour on the same map, or where there are significant differences, as a separate map that can be used for comparison.

Figure 4: Example of Mind Map



How can we use Financial Landscape Analysis to develop our brand?

This tool is useful in determining clients’ perceptions of the competition operating in the market, thereby helping the institution build an understanding of how clients compare its brand with those of other relevant organisations. It can help to highlight areas of opportunity and areas which are already covered by other institutions so that the institution can identify potential brand differentiators. It also provides important insights into how people’s perceptions of what institutions offer sometimes vary substantially from the reality: for example, sometimes they might think that a particular provider offers lower interest rates, when this is not the case. The Financial Landscape Analysis tool is also useful in understanding how these perceptions influence the choice of financial service provider.

The process should start with a determination of the key competitors to include. This should be done by the researcher, but with substantial input from the Brand Management team. The list of competitors should be defined broadly – for example, for some institutions, it may make sense to include commercial banks and not just other MFIs. Institutions with particularly strong brand awareness should certainly be included, as should those who are direct competitors. This list of competitors may then be expanded based on discussions with clients, as clients should be asked who they think of as the key players in the market – and those institutions missing from the original matrix should be added.

Once the competitors have been defined, the researcher should determine which categories to analyse. These should be tailored to the specific institutional context: the categories in the example below can be used as a guide, but it is important to consider whether other categories might also be helpful to understand. Again, the Brand Management team should be involved in this decision.

Before talking to clients, the researcher should fill out as much of the Financial Landscape Analysis matrix as possible. This may be done through discussions with staff, “mystery shopping” trips, analysis of advertising and marketing materials, observance of branch signage, etc. Then focus groups should be conducted with target clients (current and potential) to fill in the matrix in as much detail as possible.

Figure 5: Example of Financial Landscape Analysis

	Our MFI	Competitor 1 MicroBank Ltd.	Competitor 2 Freedom from Debt	Competitor 3 Community Co-operative
Marketing/ Information Dissemination	At group meetings <i>Clients: Long, boring lectures – rarely do the COs have anything interesting or useful to say</i>	Staff incentives linked to pushing loans as well as timely recovery <i>Clients: Tape recording in the branch saying how great MicroBank is</i>	Limited <i>Clients: None</i>	At AGM
Advertising	None	Radio/newspapers	None	Notices in branch
Slogan/vision	“Flexible financial services for you”	“The solid bank”	“Compassionate and caring community service”	“Co-operation for progress”
Corporate Image	The newcomer Fast, client-responsive services. <i>Clients: They do not know why Our MFI is so responsive – “there must be a catch”!</i>	Professional bank – but the poor are not welcome	Nice words but hard actions ... confusing for clients-this used to be an NGO that gave grants	Slow but very cheap service – get it when you can! <i>Clients: Slow, cheap service that favours the Board and their friends and relatives</i>
Product Image	Fast responsive loans that require disciplined repayment	Large (expensive) loans for rich people	Gentle loans – nice grace period and do not collect until the client can pay	Cheap and slow loans – usually taken by friends of the Board



Include as much data as possible – the more you can understand your competitive landscape, the better you can position your brand to be differentiated! Other institutions may also be using new and innovative techniques to build their brands, so it makes sense to try to learn as much as possible from them. This will be important not only in the brand design stage, but also when it comes to communicating the brand. If the matrix starts to contain too much information to be understood easily, it may be helpful to summarise the information to describe the competitive landscape – grouping similar institutions and highlighting potential areas of differentiation and brand attributes and benefits that are not yet offered.

Remember to include your institution in the matrix for comparison purposes.

See *MicroSave’s PRA: A Toolkit Handbook* for more information

How can we use Relative Preference Ranking to develop our brand?

Relative Preference Ranking is a method for finding out how clients view selected financial service providers and their services, what aspects of each of these institutions matters most to them, and why

they have these preferences. It is particularly informative in a competitive environment, as it can help the institution understand how it compares to other similar institutions.

The facilitator should begin by asking participants to list the financial service providers they are familiar with, probing for ones that they may not have mentioned but that have high brand awareness or are direct competitors. Participants should then be asked to list the criteria they consider most important in each of these institutions, probing for criteria that are particularly important to the brand (eg, consistent customer service, delivers on marketing messages, etc). They should then be asked to rank each institution along each criterion, with the facilitator probing for reasons *why*.

This tool should result in a matrix that ranks each financial service provider along the relevant criteria. In addition, the reasons behind these rankings should be captured qualitatively, as the rationale behind the rankings and the accompanying discussions are at least as valuable for the brand building process as the rankings themselves.

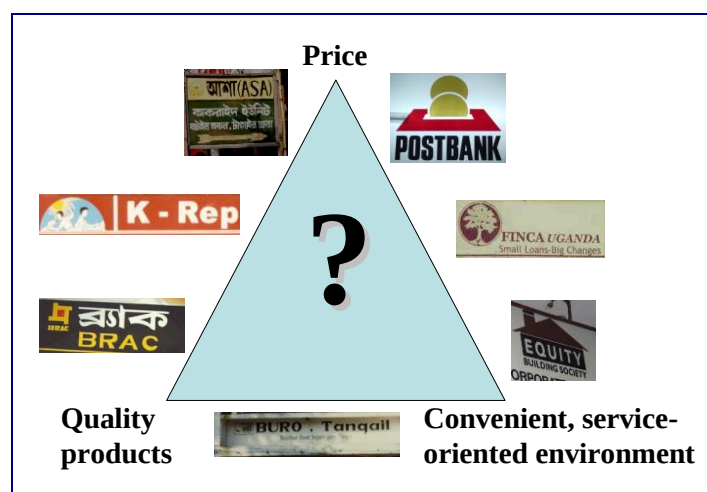
See *MicroSave's PRA: A Toolkit Handbook* for more information

How can we use Perceptual Mapping to develop our brand?

Determining how the brand can be differentiated in the marketplace is a crucial part of effective brand design. The Perceptual Mapping tool helps the institution to accomplish this goal, as it illustrates where each of the existing brands sits along key dimensions that define the brand – highlighting areas where there are many competitors and areas where there is “white space” in the market.

There are two approaches to developing a Perceptual Map. The first can be called the “rigorous approach,” as it involves defining key attributes for the market and then creating maps using statistical regression analysis (from quantitative research). The second – or “simple” – approach involves placing the organisation and its competitors on a pre-developed Simple Perceptual Map:

Figure 6: Example of Simple Perceptual Map



The Simple Perceptual Map tool can be used in focus groups with clients, as well as in discussions with staff and management. As with most of the other tools, the discussions are at least as valuable as the output of the Perceptual Mapping exercise – so the key points from these discussions should be captured and summarised for those who are not present for the research.

It may be helpful for the facilitator to unpack the simple perceptual map as follows, encouraging participants to discuss institutions along these more specific brand differentiators:

Price

Quality Products

- Speed
- Features
- Design
- Technology
- Reliability

Convenient, Service-Oriented Environment

- Service
- Relationships
- Reliability
- Personality

See *Nine Brand Differentiators* for more information



The Perceptual Mapping tool can also be a helpful tool for the Brand Management team when they try to decide on the *aspirations for the brand* – as it illustrates the importance of making choices. As tempting as it may be to pursue a strategy that aims to provide benefits in all three areas – price, quality and customer service, institutions should avoid positioning themselves in the middle of the value triangle. Experience in other industries has shown that companies can succeed by concentrating on being the best in one particular area, or at times, by being very good in two out of the three areas, but they fail when they end up in the middle, trying to deliver a little bit of everything to everybody and delivering nothing all that special to anyone.

An institution that positions itself in the middle of the triangle will have a very difficult time differentiating itself from its competitors. If it is in the middle, it will be competing with all of the other players in the market—those who focus on offering the best price, those who focus on offering the highest quality and those who focus on offering the best service. What benefits can an institution in the middle offer by comparison? Simply an average product at an average price with average customer service, which is not a very attractive offering. Institutions should not fool themselves into thinking they can be the best in all three areas at once. There is a cost, after all, to higher quality and better service. Customers who want a more convenient product or a more personalised product will be willing to pay more for those benefits. Clients who are most concerned about price will look for the lowest cost service provider. By figuring out what matters most to your target client, you can aim to have your institution positioned as providing the greatest benefit in that area.

How can we use individual surveys to develop our brand?

Individual surveys can help provide the institution with a quantitative understanding of clients' perceptions of the brand. Whereas qualitative tools can provide the institution with more in-depth information, surveys can help them test how widely the ideas and perceptions are shared within their target market. The results of the individual surveys can be used to test and validate information from other tools, as they can reach a wider group and, given logistical and time constraints, they can often reach people who might not otherwise be reached through more participatory forms of research.

Use the results of other research to inform the questions you include in the survey – eg, the attributes and benefits tested, the competitors included, etc. Although open-ended questions and leaving respondents to answer “other – specify” can help to identify issues that you do not ask directly, these tend to result in much less useful information than in more exploratory and participatory research. In other words, use quantitative research to quantify responses – not to gain an in-depth understanding of issues or to raise ideas or suggestions.

Potential topics for the survey include:

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- **Brand awareness**
 - How aware are respondents of your brand and (pre-determined) competitors' brands?
- **Relative brand preference**
 - How would respondents rate your brand as compared with competitors' brands?
- **Importance of particular attributes and benefits**
 - How important are each of a set of (pre-defined) potential brand attributes and benefits?
- **Perceptions of current brand and competitors' brands**
 - *Perceptions of Current Brand Offering:* To what degree is each of the set of brand attributes and benefits currently offered by your brand? By competitors' brands?
 - *Brand Differentiation:* How different is each brand from others in the category?
 - *Client Satisfaction:* (For current clients only) How satisfied are respondents with your brand overall? How likely would they be to recommend you to their friends and relatives?
- **Awareness of Brand Identity**
 - How aware are respondents of particular external representations of your brand and competitors' brands – eg, logo, tagline, colours, specific marketing messages, etc.

The final survey should be reviewed and finalised with the input of the entire Brand Management team. They should pay particular attention to the attributes and benefits being tested, as these should be those that are being considered for the new brand. These should be clearly described – and the language should be as simple as possible.

Before the survey is launched, it should be tested with a few target clients to ensure that all of the questions are clear and are being interpreted as intended.



Surveys developed at this stage can also be useful in tracking the success of the brand over time, and the results from the initial research can serve as a benchmark. Therefore, when developing the survey, consider the variables you would like to track over time. For effective tracking, you will need to add questions to understand the impact of specific brand initiatives, but it will likely be possible to include most – if not all – of the initial questions in a survey designed for monitoring the success of the brand.

What can we do to research other stakeholders?

The members of the Brand Management team should begin by discussing what they think are the views of key stakeholders – including their beliefs about the current brand and desires for change or evolution. These discussions should help highlight areas where additional research is necessary, so this should inform which individuals to talk to – along with a consideration of whose buy-in is most crucial to the brand's ultimate success.

In most cases, there will not be many other stakeholders to talk to – so the most effective research tool is likely to be one-on-one discussions. These can help provide more detailed and in-depth information on these individuals' brand beliefs and desires, and are more effective at building buy-in and commitment than focus groups or quantitative surveys.



Think carefully about who should conduct the one-on-one interviews: for example, if you have a few particularly influential Board Members, it may make sense for the Executive Director to talk to them, or – if you think that they might be reluctant to share their views openly in this situation – the ED should at the very least provide the introduction for an external facilitator. The same is true for anyone you think is particularly important to the success of the brand: always remember to provide a detailed, thought-through introduction, and to follow-up later with a description of how you have listened to their comments or suggestions. And – as with all groups – be sure to set realistic expectations up-front, explaining that you are soliciting their

ideas because you value their thoughts and suggestions but that you may not be able to accomplish everything they desire in the short-term.

How should we begin to analyse our brand aspirations?

After looking at the brand's current market position, analysing the brand's differentiators, and building an understanding of what is needed in the market, the Brand Management team can begin to "dream" about a new or modified brand.

Although it is important to "dream" about how the ideal brand would look and feel, it is also important to remember to ground the discussions of brand aspirations in the research, as well as in the organisation's capabilities, resources and existing business plan. Of course, the brand discussions may highlight areas for change, and they may lead the institutional leadership to decide to build capabilities, add resources or adapt the business plan. However, it is crucial that the discussions about the brand always be grounded in what is realistic and credible – to potential clients, to staff, to management and to other key stakeholders.

The brand should be designed through a series of workshops with the Brand Management team – leaving time to solicit input from management team members who are not explicitly on the team. The first brand building workshop should be spent discussing the findings from the research, and then the team should attempt to fill out the Brand Building Worksheet.

The Brand Building Worksheet is designed to help start the process of developing the brand. It should help the team analyse and condense the information from the research conducted with clients, staff, senior management and key stakeholders. It is not intended as a template or as a tool for external communication, but the responses generated should inform the Brand Guide that is developed in Step 2.

Figure 7: Brand Building Worksheet

Brand Analysis	Where Are We?	Where Do We Want to Be?	Data Source
What is your mission & vision?			
What does the organisation believe above everything else?			
What are your values?			
Who do you serve? <i>(Be as specific as possible)</i>			
What do you provide your clients? <i>(Think about not only the products you offer, but also the way you serve your clients. These will become your brand attributes)</i>			
What benefits do your clients receive from your organisation? <i>(Think about what benefits your clients get from you and what they want from you.)</i>			
What is your image in the market? What do people say about you? <i>(Think about all your key stakeholders – staff, management, clients, partners, etc.)</i>			

Checklist: Before moving on...

...make sure you have filled in the Brand Building worksheet and can answer the following questions. You'll want to carry the answers with you to the next step of the branding process.

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- ✓ What are your organisation's values? Its mission and vision?
- ✓ What are your organisation's strategic goals?
- ✓ Who is your target client? What are their beliefs about your brand, their needs and their aspirations?
- ✓ What do your staff think about your brand? What do they want your brand to stand for?
- ✓ Who are your other key stakeholders? What do they think about your brand? What do they want your brand to stand for?
- ✓ What are your primary areas of differentiation?

Step 2: Create the Brand

What guidelines should we follow in creating the brand?

First, the brand must be both inspiring and credible. It should reflect the needs and desires of clients and the aspirations of employees and other stakeholders, but the organisation must be able to deliver on any promises made. Some internal changes are likely to be necessary in order to build the brand effectively, but it is crucial that these be realistic. Each component of the new brand should go through a “credibility test”: the organisation may decide to invest in building certain capabilities, but it will need to have the necessary resources to do so – and such choices must be made explicitly.

Second, the new brand must be consistent with the organisational strategy, mission and vision. The brand process will sometimes lead the organisation to make modifications in these areas – but these choices must be made consciously.

Third, the brand must be grounded in the findings of the market research with all key groups – as collected in Step 1. It should specifically be designed to appeal to the target client, while also considering the findings from discussions with staff and other stakeholders.

Fourth, it should represent the composite identity of the organisation – and not be specifically focused towards individual products.

Finally, the benefits promised should satisfy a number of criteria:

- Important: Highly valued to a sufficiently large market
- Distinctive: Distinctly superior to other available offerings
- Easily Communicated: Can be communicated simply and effectively
- Superior: Not easily copied by competitors
- Affordable: Perceived as sufficiently valuable to compensate for any additional cost
- Profitable: Will lead to financial benefits for the institution

Who should be involved?

The brand should be developed in brainstorming sessions with key staff and management. The Executive Director or CEO should be very involved in the process and should be present for most or all of the brainstorming sessions, as should the marketing manager and operations manager. Other participants will depend on the organisation: regardless, the process should be iterative – with room to solicit inputs from any leadership team members not present in the brainstorming sessions.

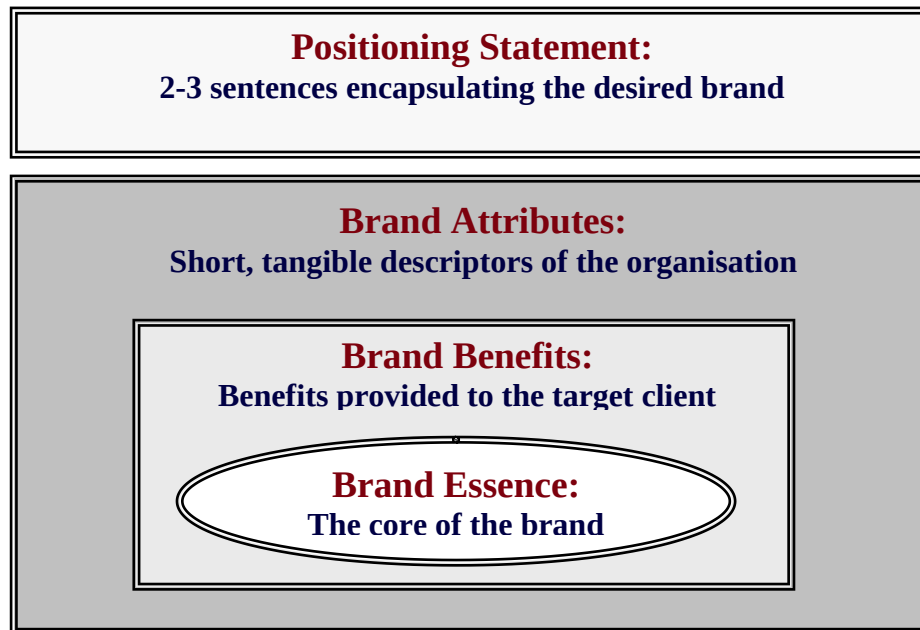
The organisation should consider hiring an agency for the external communication stage of the process (as discussed later). It may be helpful to include members of the agency in the brainstorming sessions – although the brand must be primarily developed internally.

What is the Brand Guide?

The Brand Guide is a framework to describe the organisation’s desired brand. It includes four key components:

- Brand Attributes: Short, tangible descriptors of the organisation
- Brand Benefits: Benefits provided to the target client
- Brand Essence: The core of the brand
- Positioning Statement: 2-3 sentences encapsulating the desired brand

Figure 8: Brand Guide



What are the benefits of the Brand Guide?

The Brand Guide provides a comprehensive framework that illustrates the organisation's brand as a total, recognisable entity. It covers the key components of the brand, thereby ensuring that these are arrived at through the brand creation process. In addition, it is a useful tool for communicating the brand internally and with strategic partners.

What are some tips for developing the different components of the Brand Guide?

General Tips:

- Use the Brand Building Worksheet (as described in Step 1) to help with this process and to brainstorm and distil the key ideas.
- Be sure to ground the discussions in the research findings, as well as in the organisation's existing mission, vision, values and strategy.
- Be creative in choosing the language, but keep the wording simple and easy to understand. Don't use "yets or buts" (e.g., traditional, yet curiously modern), and don't use clichés or tired language.
- Ensure that the Attributes and Benefits reinforce one another and are clearly linked to the Brand Essence and Positioning Statement. Don't offer conflicting messages.

Attributes should be short, tangible descriptors of the organisation – including products, services, etc. Some examples might include: fast service, short waiting times, well-trained staff, etc. In the Brand Guide, they should represent the features that need to be offered in order to deliver on the brand. Although they need not all be offered by the organisation when the Brand Guide is developed, it is important to ensure that they are consistent with the organisation's assets and capabilities – as a key part of implementing the brand is building these features into the business strategy.

Benefits should represent the benefits the organisation wants to provide to the target client through the corporate brand. They should reflect the way the organisation wants clients to feel as a result of the attributes offered – so they should be from the client's perspective. They should link with the attributes agreed on – so they too should be credible given the organisation's assets and capabilities.

The *Brand Essence* should encapsulate everything you want the brand to be – in one short phrase. It should reflect the values of the organisation and be aligned with the mission, vision and strategy. It should be both credible and aspirational, and be designed to inspire staff and management. It is not a tagline and should only be used to communicate the brand internally or with organisational partners.

The *Positioning Statement* should summarise the other components of the Brand Guide and provide a more complete statement of what you want the brand to stand for. It should answer the following questions – for the desired brand:

- **Who:** Who are you?
- **What:** What business are you in?
- **For whom:** What people do you serve?
- **What need:** What are the special needs of the people you serve?
- **Against whom:** With whom are you competing?
- **What's different:** What makes you different from those competitors?
- **What's the benefit:** What unique benefit does your target client derive from your service?

What is the Brand Identity?

The Brand Identity is all of the audio and visual signals of the brand, such as the logo, tagline, colours, branch look, pamphlets and advertisements.

What is the role of the agency in developing the Brand Identity?

A good marketing or advertising agency can greatly assist in the development of the Brand Identity. It can help you translate your market research into a cohesive communications strategy (both internal and external), and it can help you develop your marketing materials and plan which media to use. You will want to retain a high degree of involvement throughout the process, but a good agency will be an invaluable partner.

What should we look for in an agency?

While a good agency can be an invaluable partner, one that does not understand your goals and values can waste valuable time and resources. It is important to invest the time up-front to ensure that you will get the most from the agency you choose.

In comparing agencies, look to see if they share and can relate to your organisational values. The agency you choose should understand your target market, and be open to listening to your goals and aspirations for building your brand. You should feel comfortable with the people at the agency, and feel as though you would be inspired to bounce ideas around with them.

What questions should we ask the agency?

The following are some key questions to ask in selecting a marketing or communications agency for branding or re-branding:

- How will you create a cohesive brand strategy across multiple media and markets?
- What personnel will be working on our brand and what is their experience?
- Who will manage our portfolio? How often will we be able to meet with him / her?
- What media do you have experience working with?
- What examples of other branding projects can you show us?

Focus on getting as much information about the agency as you can in this upfront stage: in particular, try to gain an understanding of their level of experience and preferred ways of working, as well as how much involvement they will want from you and how open they will be to working collaboratively.

How should we set up the relationship with the agency?

Clearly outline your expectations from the agency *before you sign the contract*. Stay involved throughout the process, providing them with any necessary information, monitoring the work, and looking for ways to learn from them. Ask questions and challenge recommendations, recognising that – while they are experts at marketing – you are the expert on your organisation. Ensure that the work is based on the research findings and that the agency clearly shows you that this is being done: agencies that don't pay

attention to the research develop the wrong Brand Identity! Finally, recognise that while you may not always agree with the agency, it is important to consider their perspective – as sometimes outsiders can see more clearly.

What is a brief?

A brief is a document which is used to build understanding amongst those working on the Brand Identity. At the beginning of the engagement with the agency, the financial institution should provide the agency with a comprehensive agency brief, which should then assist them in preparing a brief (the “creative brief”) to guide the development of the Brand Identity.

Why write a brief?

A brief is useful because it brings focus to marketing efforts and ensures tactics align with the brand. By laying everything explicitly out on paper, it leads to better, more effective, and measurable work. It also saves time and money and makes fees and remuneration fairer.

Is it enough to write the brief and circulate it?

No. It is best to follow up the written brief with a discussion – and then, if necessary, to make any relevant changes based on this discussion. This process is valuable because it can raise important issues and also help to build understanding. It also contributes to a feeling of “buy-in” as everyone will feel more involved in the process.

What are some principles behind a good brief?

- **Make it brief!** Briefs are called “briefs” because they are meant to be concise – attach all relevant supporting information as appendices.
- **Clearly define the objectives:** Start by making sure that your objectives are crystal clear. Use concrete objectives rather than vague terms such as “to improve brand image”
- **Set measurable targets:** Define the project’s “success criteria” – what will success look like and how will it be measured?

What should go into the agency brief?

The agency brief is the document the financial institution provides in order to prepare the agency. The exact contents will depend on the scope of the agency’s assignment, but the goal should be to include all of the most critical information that you think the agency would need to be as an effective partner as possible. The following are some sections to include:

- Background on the organisation, its history and heritage
- Where the brand is today
- Where the brand is going
- What has already been done to launch the brand internally and externally
- What will need to be done to launch the brand internally and externally
 - *This should outline exactly what you expect from the agency, and should be as specific as possible*
- Measures of success
- Budget
- Timeline
- Practicalities, including project management and administration details and approval processes

What should we expect from the creative brief?

The creative brief should be prepared by the agency, and they should be able to develop it after receiving and discussing the agency brief. It should be designed to guide all external marketing, media planning, and Brand Identity development.

You should review this brief closely to ensure the agency has understood the research, the organisational values and the new or modified brand. It is important to discuss any and all areas you don't feel entirely comfortable with, as this document will guide all future work by the agency.

What is a logo?

A logo is the visual representation of everything you want your brand to stand for. Through the choice of images and colours, it should instantly communicate the tone of the brand.

Why is the logo important?

The logo can instantly communicate who you are – “a picture is worth a thousand words”! A good logo will make you stand out, and it can then build awareness wherever it is seen. This becomes particularly important in semi-illiterate markets, where a good logo can be a particularly effective way of communicating with potential clients.

What should we consider in designing the logo?

The agency should come up with sample logos, but the financial institution should also provide input. It is important to think about what your logo says about who you are. For example, ask yourselves if you want to communicate a modern image or a more traditional one: your corporate logo should reflect this choice. The choice of colours can also be very important: consider what different colours mean in your specific context.

Although it is important that employees be inspired by the logo, remember that it is primarily a marketing tool – so be sure to test different options with your target clients.

What is the corporate tagline?

The tagline is a short phrase that communicates your brand essence in a creative and motivating way.

Some examples include:

- “Faster, simpler, better” – Standard Bank
- “Growing together with trust” – TEBA Bank
- “At your service countrywide” – KPOSB
- “Cash loans to help you” – Credit Indemnity

What should we consider in designing the corporate tagline?

Again, the agency should come up with sample taglines, with input from the financial institution.

There are three main points to consider when designing the corporate tagline:

First, it must be **credible**: the tagline is the direct promise you are making to your clients, so you must be able to deliver on it. For example, Standard Bank's tagline is “faster, simpler, better” – a compelling promise, but one that has also caused them problems where they have not been able to provide “faster, simpler, better” customer service.

Second, it must **fully represent the brand**: this is your chance to communicate the essence of the brand. The Brand Guide (with attributes, benefits, essence and positioning statement) will only be shared internally, whereas the tagline is a catchy way of putting all of this together.

Third, it must be **differentiated from the competitors**: your tagline should make you stand out from other institutions in your market. It is important, therefore, to consider competitors' taglines and to design yours to reflect the differentiated position you have chosen for your brand.

What should we do to test our logo and tagline?

It is crucial to validate all components of the Brand Identity with your target clients. Use basic focus group discussions to test for resonance and also to ensure that each part of the Brand Identity communicates the desired messages, ideas and feelings. Ask participants not only whether they like the logo or tagline, but also what it makes them think of, how it makes them feel, and whether it would make them more likely to choose your institution.

Test especially for problems of translation! When General Motors introduced the Chevy Nova in Spanish-speaking markets, it was apparently unaware that "no va" means "it won't go"! Likewise, the name Coca-Cola in China was first rendered as Ke-kou-ke-la – but the company apparently didn't discover until thousands of signs had been printed that the phrase means "bite the wax tadpole" or "female horse stuffed with wax" depending on the dialect.

What are some other components of Brand Identity to consider?

In addition to the logo and tagline, your new brand should inform the look and feel of your branches, including the colours, signage, branch uniforms, etc. It should also influence the design of documentation – including pamphlets, letterhead and loan application forms – as well as the marketing messages and media that you choose.

It is important to decide on a corporate logo and tagline early on the process (as part of creating the brand), but other components of the Brand Identity will be developed as part of the external marketing and communications strategy. These are discussed in more detail in **Step 4**.

Checklist: Before moving on...

...make sure you have created, reviewed and finalised (based on tests with the appropriate stakeholders) each of the following:

- ✓ Brand attributes
- ✓ Brand benefits
- ✓ Brand essence
- ✓ Positioning statement
- ✓ Corporate logo
- ✓ Corporate tagline



...also make sure that, if you choose to work with an external agency, you can answer "yes" the following questions:

- ✓ Do you feel comfortable sharing your concerns, thoughts and suggestions with the agency?
- ✓ Does the agency fully understand what the brand stands for?
- ✓ Have you clearly defined the role you want the agency to play in the brand building process, and are they in agreement?
- ✓ Have you clearly defined the agency's outputs and required timeline, and are they in agreement?

Step 3: Internalise the Brand

Why is internalising the brand important?

Unless you build the brand internally, it won't get delivered externally. The internal component of brand building is often forgotten – and yet it is crucial to success.

A strong internal brand unites the organisation behind a common purpose and vision, and ensures that everything the organisation says and does is aligned. It motivates staff and builds morale, helping the organisation to attract and keep the most qualified and committed talent. It also helps overcome differences within the organisation, such as between head office and field staff. A strong internal brand can also be very useful in guiding decision making, helping staff to focus and prioritise.

What is involved in internalising the brand?

Building the brand inside the organisation is a continual process that is critical to strong brands. It involves two key pieces:

- **Communication:** Ensuring that all employees – in every division and throughout the organisation – understand and believe in the brand
- **Building Organisational Alignment:** Ensuring that the organisation can deliver on the brand promises

Why communicate the brand internally?

Employees won't deliver the brand promise if they don't both understand it and believe in it. The front line staff are an organisation's "Brand Ambassadors," and every interaction they have with clients affects how the brand is perceived externally.

"Until everyone from your CEO to your receptionist can accurately and consistently articulate your brand's promise, how do you expect your customers to?"

- David A Aaker

How can we communicate the brand internally?

Once the new brand has been created, it should be introduced throughout the organisation – through organisation-wide presentations, site visits, etc. Senior management should be actively involved in presenting the brand vision and explaining the rationale behind it – in person for smaller organisations or by video or PowerPoint presentation for larger organisations. Supporting materials and handouts should be provided, and a kick-off party can be a fun way to build excitement about the brand.

It is important to ensure that the brand is not only introduced but continues to remain top-of-mind. Regular communications reinforce the brand message and encourage active employee involvement. This greater understanding will lead to staff taking greater responsibility for delivering the brand promise and also lead to greater pride in the brand. Staff must also be given the means of asking questions, seeking advice and generally voicing their concerns and views through e-mail, discussions, workshops, telephone, web/intranet, etc.

Some creative ways to keep the brand top-of-mind for staff and management include:

- Mousepads
- Screensavers
- Posters
- Yearly planners or calendars
- Bags
- Competitions to highlight staff who are "living the brand"

What does it mean to build organisational alignment?

This means making the changes necessary to ensure that everything that the organisation does reinforces the brand. It means tracing the entire client experience and making sure that the client has a consistent experience of the brand at each and every point of contact. And it means making sure that the staff and employees have the resources and knowledge they need to make this a reality.

For example, an organisation may need to change the look and feel of its branches, improve loan application procedures, or add products or services. If it promises knowledgeable, well-trained staff, it may need to improve its staff training programmes; if it promises fast service, it may need to hire additional staff members or improve operational processes.

Why build organisational alignment?

Even the most compelling brand will only succeed if it is actually delivered in the marketplace. Clients will become confused or even angry if the expectations set up through marketing materials or other external communications are not in line with their actual experience. Therefore, before communicating the brand externally, the organisation *must* implement strategies to make the attributes and benefits promised a reality.

And these changes are what make the brand such a powerful tool. If the brand itself is effectively designed to meet clients' needs, and the organisation is then aligned to deliver on this brand, clients will notice the benefits. And clients are the reason why the organisation exists! Brands are sometimes seen as purely a marketing and communications tool – but they are much more than that. They bring focus and direction to the organisation – ensuring that everything the organisation does and says works to provide important, differentiated benefits to the target client.

How can we build organisational alignment?

Begin by determining where there are gaps between what you offer today and the benefits you are promising with the new or modified brand. Then develop strategies to bridge the gap, considering how these fit with the business plan. This may involve making revisions to the products or services offered, the human resources and recruitment strategy, physical improvements, etc.

It is particularly important to ensure that senior management leads by example, as they need to model the brand values in everything they do and say. In addition, staff should receive positive feedback for effective branding: for example, if a branch does a particularly good job of “living the brand,” this should be acknowledged. Staff should be engaged in and informed of all important developments, campaigns or modifications to the brand. Remember that involving staff from the beginning of the branding process is a crucial part of making the brand a reality!

The brand should also influence recruitment, as recruiting people who feel inspired by the brand will lead to more internal alignment. The human resources department should profile potential candidates against the brand's core values to ensure the best match. Meanwhile, projecting a strong, cohesive brand image should also help attract committed talent. Once new employees are hired, they should be introduced to the brand – its history, values, positioning and purpose.

Checklist: Before moving on...

...make sure you can answer yes to each of the following questions:

- ✓ Do all members of staff and management understand and believe in the new brand?
- ✓ Do they have the resources and knowledge they need to “live the brand”?
- ✓ Have you put in place an ongoing strategy to keep brand “top-of-mind” for employees?



- ✓ Have any gaps between the current brand and desired brand been recognised and the appropriate changes made?
- ✓ Have all organisational initiatives been aligned to deliver on the brand?

Step 4: Communicate the Brand Externally

Why is it important to communicate the brand consistently?

One of the most useful outputs of the branding process is the identification of key messages that the institution wants to communicate – messages that should then be reinforced in each and every contact point the client has with the institution. Inconsistencies in the messages communicated will weaken the brand's credibility, whereas consistent repetition of the same core ideas will clarify and solidify the organisation's image in people's minds.

Remember that a brand influences every interaction a client has...



...and every interaction builds your brand!



Step 3 described the importance of making sure that every part of the organisation is aligned to deliver a client experience that is entirely consistent with the brand promise. **Step 4** is about ensuring that the external messages given by the brand are also consistent with what the brand is about – that the Brand Identity (the audio and visual signals of the brand) reinforces the core brand messages. The brand should be clearly communicated so that potential customers (and potential staff members and others in the community) can fully comprehend what the brand stands for.

What are the key steps in planning the marketing and communications strategy?

There are five key steps to follow in planning each component of the marketing and communications strategy:

1. Identify objective: What are you hoping to accomplish?
2. Identify audience: Whom are you hoping to reach?
3. Decide on message and select media channels: What will you say (and how), and where will you say it?
4. Communicate!
5. Monitor against objective: Have your goals been met?

What are some tips to consider in planning the marketing and communications strategy?

Identifying and monitoring the objectives...

- Be sure to include *measurable* objectives for each component of the strategy – and then track these accordingly. This information should then inform future revisions and modifications to the strategy.

Identifying the audience...

- Identify and focus on one target for each piece you develop. Most communications do have multiple targets, but you must prioritise one and then consider the links to other secondary targets. This prioritisation will lead to more effective and tailored materials, and it will also guide the choice of media – as well as determine the success metrics to use.

Deciding on and communicating the message...

- Say one thing and say it well. Don't try to include too much in any one piece of communication, or the message will get lost.
- Don't try too hard to be clever – be simple and literal! Often advertising agencies prepare overly sophisticated concepts, and the message can get lost – make sure that yours is coming across loud and clear.
- Focus on the emotional benefits of the brand to build long-lasting connections with your target.
- Communicate your message in the appropriate tone for your brand.
- Test each and every piece of marketing or communications materials *before* it is shared externally! Test for: identification with the brand, comprehension, and ease of recall (how easily can they remember both the brand and what it promises)

What mix of different communication vehicles should we use?

Using the right balance of different media is key to developing a strong brand communication strategy. The mix can include:

- Public relations
- Advertising
- Events
- Personal sales
- Direct marketing

Figure 9: Marketing Communications Mix

Every communication vehicle has its strengths and weaknesses – but look for a medium that will be cost effective, will reach your target audience, and will convey the desired message. Think about how different media can be used in parallel or sequence in order to maximise the results of your overall brand communication strategy. And think creatively – within the categories listed above, there are many possible tools and techniques, and these will depend on your market, your objectives, and your brand’s position in the market. Talk to loan officers and other staff members to get ideas on creative marketing techniques.

What is the role of the Public Relations function in building the brand?

The public relations (PR) function should ensure that there is a steady flow of positive, brand-strengthening stories circulated around the media to build strong links between the financial institution and the public. Most institutions will get some form of publicity – even without trying ... effective PR can ensure that this is good publicity.

How should we use PR to build our brand?

PR can have a strong effect on the public’s knowledge and perception of the institution, its products, people and position...at a much lower cost than with advertising. The key is finding a twist on the story that will capture the attention of local newspapers or radio stations– and writing the press release or complete article / radio broadcast in such a way that it can be included or broadcast with little or no revisions. Recognise that what you write might just be included as is – so make sure it is in a format you would be happy sharing directly with the public.

Consider using “social marketing” to holistically deliver on the brand and create good will. For example, cleaning up the neighbourhood around the branch can show that you really care about clients – and will likely result in positive PR.

What is the role of advertising in building the brand?

Advertising gives the organisation the opportunity to clearly define the brand – its essence, attributes and benefits. It is the communication vehicle that the organisation has the most control over, as it gets distributed exactly as the organisation designs it. When placed in popular media channels (for example, a radio station with a large audience or a newspaper with high readership), it can quickly reach many people. However, it can be costly to get the message out.

How should we use advertising to build our brand?

Look for creative ways to minimise costs in advertising. For example, rather than buying radio ads, some financial institutions use a truck with a loud speaker to drive around a neighbourhood. Of course, this method won't work for all institutions, but think about what will work in your context.

Think about your target client when choosing the advertising medium: for example, if you are trying to reach a semi-literate target group, radio ads are likely to be more effective than billboards or newspapers. Consider also the amount of detail you want to include, as some channels are more useful for building general awareness of the brand, while others are better at providing specific information. Use the tactic that will most efficiently reach your target market when they are in the right mindset.

What is the role of personal selling in building the brand?

Front line staff are an organisation's "Brand Ambassadors" – every interaction they have with the clients affects the brand. They are, therefore, one of the most important assets for financial institutions to deliver on the brand. For many current and potential clients, interactions with front line staff will be the most important determinant of their perceptions of the organisation – so front line staff must learn to "live the brand" in each and every interaction they have with clients.

How should we use personal selling to build our brand?

Make sure that your front line staff understand and believe in the brand, by soliciting their input in the branding process from the beginning and investing the time to get them excited about and inspired by the brand. What they say, the tone they use, and the way they present themselves all must align with the brand – so hold workshops or training sessions to brainstorm ideas on how to make this a reality. Arm your front line staff with brand building materials – such as brochures to generate word of mouth – and ensure that they can answer clients' questions about key attributes and benefits of the organisation.

What is the role of Events in building the brand?

Events can be an effective way of building awareness of the brand, and they are a particularly good way of building community excitement about the launch of a new name or logo, a new product line, a new branch, etc. Events should be designed to align with the brand: the kind of event chosen, as well as its feel and tone, should reflect what you want the organisation to stand for.

How should we use Events to build our brand?

Events should be based on centrally developed guidelines and be approved by the Head Office. They should be based on the cultural values and norms of the region where the financial institution is operating, and they should reflect and be aligned with the institution's brand. Consider targeting community leadership and key businesses, and contact the media beforehand to get media coverage.

Some examples of events might include:

- Launch of new name or logo
- Product launches or celebrating anniversaries (branch open for 5 years)
- Presenting awards to selected clients
- Awarding scholarships for children to go to school
- Sponsoring graduation ceremonies
- Sponsoring stalls at festivals / village fairs (e.g., selling food – where all proceeds go to school)
 - Marketing at the stall
 - Media attention as you hand over the cheque
 - Presence in the community

Figure 10: Equity Building Society's 20th Anniversary

Details of Event ➤ Organised with marketing house ➤ 2,000 people in the Inter Continental Hotel addressed by Minister of Finance, IFC Representative, British High Commissioner, etc. ➤ 12-page newspaper supplement ➤ 1-hour documentary on two leading TV channels ➤ Extensive (free) press coverage ➤ 150,000 letters distributed to clients Results ➤ Public image of Equity significantly enhanced ➤ 500-1,000 new accounts being opened every day ➤ Word-of-Mouth continuing the effect....
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Be creative! In 2000, Teba Bank was looking for art work for their calendar, so they opened a competition to the public, offering 5 prizes. There was an overwhelming response, and thousands of pieces of art work were sent in. Teba didn't just want to send all the art back, so they set up an exhibition in Johannesburg – with some of the artwork offered for sale if the artist wanted. The exhibition was a success, and Teba Bank's creativity resulted in extensive TV, radio and press coverage for the organisation.

What is the role of Word-of-Mouth in building the brand?

Word-of-mouth is a very strong tool for financial service providers, and it is one of the most effective communication vehicles in low-income communities. Positive recommendations by friends and family are likely to be significantly more effective at building trust in the organisation than even the most compelling marketing message. Positive word-of-mouth will build the brand, attracting new clients and strengthening the organisation's image in the market.

How should we use Word-of-Mouth to build our brand?

Unlike with other communication vehicles, the organisation can have very little direct control over Word-of-Mouth as a marketing tool. However, the key is to provide existing clients with great service that is consistently aligned with the brand, as high client satisfaction should lead to a high number of referrals. This is where the internal alignment with the brand is particularly important, as it is crucial that existing clients feel – and benefit from – everything the organisation stands for – as this is what they will then communicate to others.

Remember also that rumours spread quickly – here PR and other communication vehicles are important to clearly communicate your brand and avoid negative word-of-mouth. Likewise, it is important to build in ways to recover from negative customer service experiences and to turn these into opportunities to impress and delight. Clients who have been disappointed and then receive a response that exceeds their expectations often turn into the organisation's most loyal advocates, so consider ways to make customer service recovery systems align with the brand.

How can we work with an agency to build the external communications strategy?

As discussed in Step 2, there are benefits to working with an agency to help you design the audio and visual representations of your brand and to develop an external communications strategy. In particular,

you may want to consult this agency – or one specialising in media planning – to determine where and when to place your advertisements.

If you do use an agency for media planning, be sure to review their plans carefully, ensuring that they back up their choices with up-to-date statistics on demographics and audited audience figures. Several media agencies publish statistics (for example, the Optimal Media Directions Africa book lists readership and audience numbers for all major newspapers and radio stations), so look for these. The agency may be able to negotiate good deals through its contacts, but supervise all media choices carefully to ensure that they are not being made based on rates of commission.

How can we ensure that our brand is communicated consistently?

Make sure that all of the audio and visual representations of your brand (your Brand Identity) are consistent. In **Step 2**, you should have developed a logo and tagline to reflect your new brand: at this stage it is important to change all external communications to include the new look and feel of the brand. This includes branch signage, letterhead, brochures, staff uniforms, company vehicles, etc. Marketing materials (client birthday cards, advertisements, in-branch brochures, direct mailings, etc) should also be made to reflect the new brand – in “look and feel” as well as in the messages included.

Develop a Brand Identity Folder – a template that provides the technical specifications for all external communications and marketing materials. This template should specify how all parts of the Brand Identity should be represented – including the look and placement of the corporate logo, colours and format for all signage, key messages to include in advertisements, etc. It should guide the creation of all key “visibles” that the institution shows to the public, and ensure that these are consistent and aligned with the brand. The more specific you can be with your Brand Identity Folder, the better.

Checklist: Before moving on...

...make sure you can answer yes to each of the following questions.

- ✓ Have you clearly defined the core messages you want to communicate?
- ✓ Have you clearly defined how each component of your marketing and communications strategy will help to build and strengthen your brand?
- ✓ Do you have a strategy for each of the following:
 - ✓ Public relations?
 - ✓ Advertising?
 - ✓ Events?
 - ✓ Personal sales?
 - ✓ Direct marketing?
- ✓ Have you made sure that all of the visual representations of your brand (branch signage, advertisements, employee uniforms, company vehicles, etc.) communicate the messages you intend?
- ✓ (If relevant) Have you been actively involved in the decisions made by the external agency, and do you feel confident that your partnership will continue to be a productive one?



Step 5: Monitor the Success of the Brand

Why is it important to monitor success?

Brand building is a time-consuming and costly process – but the upsides of a strong, well-maintained brand are significant. Too many organisations invest the time up-front, but then forget to track the success of their initiatives – so they don’t know what is working and what isn’t, and they don’t make changes that could significantly improve the success of their brand. Monitoring success is crucial to ensuring that the brand continues to provide the maximum amount of value for the organisation.

What should we monitor?

Tracking and monitoring success should help the organisation answer four main questions:

1. Is the organisation delivering on the brand?

Checking for any remaining gaps between what is being promised and what is being offered can help the organisation identify products or services which need to be changed or added in order to build a client experience that consistently aligns with and builds the brand.

2. Do the employees continue to understand and believe in the brand?

Testing internal perceptions of the brand can help the organisation identify how much still needs to be done to help staff and employees learn to “live the brand.”

3. Does the target client understand what the brand stands for?

Tracking whether the external communications strategy is actually building understanding of the brand can help the organisation refine its marketing messages and Brand Identity materials.

4. Is the brand still right for the organisation?

Brands evolve over time, and it is important to continue to monitor perceptions of the organisation’s brand both internally and externally to ensure that it remains compelling and inspiring. Changes in the industry environment (for example, the entry of a new competitor or a regulatory change) may mean that the brand needs to be updated or modified: regular monitoring of the brand’s appeal can help keep it up-to-date and ensure that it continues to bring the desired benefits to the organisation.

When should we monitor success?

The appropriate timing will depend on the pace of the market and the organisation’s current branding efforts, but a complete “brand check-up” should occur at least once a year – and the results should then inform the strategic planning process. Monitoring should occur more frequently after major changes in the brand or after new initiatives have been launched.

Efforts to monitor the brand can also be combined with existing research initiatives – eg, by including questions on brand perceptions in focus groups designed to test a new product or a new marketing initiative. Likewise, monitoring the brand internally can occur as part of initiatives to gauge employee satisfaction or as a separate discussion on a staff retreat.

The exact timing is less important – what matters is that internal and external monitoring of the brand does occur regularly, and that the findings are actively used to make the necessary changes.

What tools can we use to measure success?

Some of the same tools used to develop the brand can be used to monitor the brand – such as focus groups, client surveys, in-depth interviews, discussions with staff, etc. Remember to think about ways to leverage work that is already going on (eg, client research, staff discussions, etc), as this is a good way of lowering the administrative and financial costs of monitoring the brand.

Consider having a group of staff and/or clients who meet regularly (for example, every six months) to take the temperature of the brand. Although this group cannot replace more extensive research, it can be useful in raising issues and questions – and it can have the added benefit of keeping the people in the group engaged and excited about the brand. This group should be facilitated by the Brand Manager, as comments and suggestions should then feed directly into the brand management plan.

What tools can we use to measure success internally?

Maintain an open dialogue with the staff to get feedback on the brand. Test whether they continue to feel inspired by the brand and whether there are still gaps in understanding, commitment or buy-in. Front-line staff will be especially well equipped to provide information on whether the brand is still right for the organisation – and whether there are changes in the market or with clients that require a brand evolution or revolution. Likewise, they will be able to highlight ways in which they feel it is difficult to “live the brand” – perhaps because the organisation does not possess the capabilities or resources necessary to deliver on the brand promises.

In addition to periodically discussing the brand in staff meetings and discussions, develop systematic “brand check-ins” – meetings run by the Brand Manager or division head to monitor perceptions of the brand. The goal of these meetings should be to answer the following questions:

- How do the staff currently perceive the brand?
- Do the staff believe in the brand?
- Do the staff feel as though they have the resources necessary to “live the brand”?
- What needs to be done to better align the brand promises with what is actually delivered?
- What are the ways staff use the brand to guide the way they work? For example, how does the brand impact the way loan officers interact with their clients? The way senior managers interact with loan officers?

Keep these “check-ins” fun and motivating: they should be designed as much to excite and inspire staff about the brand as to collect information.

What tools can we use to measure success externally?

Again, some of the same tools used to develop the brand can be used for monitoring – and existing client research should be leveraged. Ideally, research with target clients (new and existing) and other key stakeholders should be conducted annually to monitor how the organisation’s brand is perceived. A complete review may be too costly for smaller organisations, but some effort to track how the brand is being perceived in the marketplace *must* occur at least once annually – and must certainly occur as part of new marketing initiatives and to accompany any changes in the Brand Identity (eg, logo, tagline, branch signage, etc.)

Quantitative research is a particularly effective way to monitor how the brand is perceived by target clients. Quantitative research can help quantify changes after a re-branding effort, showing how effectively the new brand has been understood and accepted externally. It can help the organisation determine whether the new brand has been clearly communicated, and whether the target can clearly

identify the new brand essence, attributes and benefits. It can also quantify the degree to which the target clients recognise the new Brand Identity: for example, do they know what the new logo and tagline are?

Focus groups can provide more in-depth information how the brand is perceived by target clients – and can also be used to solicit ideas for ways to improve clients' experience of the brand. They can help the organisation understand whether the target clients believe that the brand is credible, and whether they feel that the organisation is delivering on its brand promises and living its brand values.

It is also important to remember to monitor the brand with key stakeholders such as Board Members, policy makers, strategic partners, etc. – for example, making the brand a topic of discussion in pre-arranged meetings (eg, Board meetings). Consider holding follow-up discussions with individuals interviewed as part of the process of creating the brand in order to determine whether the new brand is meeting (or, better, exceeding) their expectations. This is a good way of soliciting suggestions for improvement, as well as of maintaining the commitment of individuals whose buy-in is particularly important to the success of the brand.

Checklist: Have you...

... developed a plan to monitor the brand that will help you answer the following questions:

- ✓ Are you still differentiated from the competition? (Have people started copying you? Is the tagline unique? Are your colours distinctive?)
- ✓ Has your macro environment changed? Have you responded to these changes?
- ✓ Has the staff internalised the brand?
- ✓ Do clients relate to and understand your brand?
- ✓ What do other key stakeholders think of your brand?
- ✓ Are you offering the necessary products and services to deliver on your brand?
- ✓ How effectively are you delivering on your brand overall?
- ✓ Is your brand being clearly communicated? How well have your marketing messages been understood?
- ✓ Are the people you are using to promote your brand still appropriate?
- ✓ Have you benefited from the new brand?
- ✓ What are the successful points that you can leverage for the future implementation of your brand? What needs to be changed?



Bringing it All Together: The Brand Plan

What is the Brand Plan?

Keeping track of everything learned, discussed and decided during the branding process can be a daunting task. The Brand Plan is a tool you can use to capture all the most important components of the process in one concise, simple-to-understand document. This is a document that should be for internal use only – to help guide the Brand Management team in keeping the organisation on course along the Footpath to a Great Brand. It should be updated as changes are made or as additional research is conducted.

What should go into the Brand Plan?

The Brand Plan should include the following key components:

➤ **Background of the Brand**

This is a description of the brand's history – what has been done to build the brand, who has been involved, and what the objectives of brand building are for the organisation

➤ **Analysis of the Brand Today**

Summary of research findings on what the brand stands for today in the eyes of target clients, staff and other key stakeholders

➤ **Brand Aspirations**

Summary of research findings on desires and wishes for the brand in the eyes of target clients, staff and other key stakeholders

➤ **Finalised Brand Guide**

Statement of the finalised brand attributes, benefits, essence and positioning statement, as well as clarifying descriptions / rationale for these choices where relevant

➤ **Key Organisational Initiatives**

Description of what the organisation will need to do to make the brand a reality – both strategically and operationally

➤ **Brand Identity Folder**

Guidelines for the audio and visual representations of the brand

➤ **Launch Plan and Timeline**

Detailed plan for how to launch the brand both internally (with staff and management) and externally (with clients and other key stakeholders) – including activities, timing and responsibilities

➤ **Monitoring / Management Plan**

Detailed plan for how to monitor and manage the brand over time

The exact components should be tailored to the institution, as it may be helpful to include additional sections such as the external communications strategy, guidelines for working with the agency, etc.

What else should we keep a record of from the branding process?

In addition to the Brand Plan, you should save *all* of the documents (formal and informal – including detailed research findings, notes from Brand Management team discussions, agency memos, etc.) from the brand building process. Create a CD-rom or hard-copy folder with all of these materials. They are an important part of the institution's history, and will become a crucial asset if there is a change in the Brand Manager or in the organisational leadership.

For example, be sure to keep a copy of each of the following, including any supporting documents or notes:

- Research objectives and facilitator guides
- Detailed research findings and summaries
- Notes from discussions about development of Brand Guide
- Finalised Brand Guide
- Agency brief
- Creative brief (from the agency)
- Brand Identity Folder, with any notes from discussions re: why new Brand Identity was developed
- Plan for changes necessary to build organisational alignment with the new brand
- Internal communications plan
- Marketing and communications plan
- Proposed marketing materials
- Etc.

Don't throw anything away – make sure to keep as complete a record of the brand as possible!



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