



Creating a Corporate Brand



**Make your small business a
big—and consistent—name**



Learning Objectives

- At the end of this module, you will be able to:
 - Identify what corporate branding is.
 - Identify if your business needs corporate branding.
 - Design a corporate branding strategy.

The logo of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) is visible in the top left corner. It features a circular emblem with the text "FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION" around the perimeter and the year "1933" in the center. The emblem also includes a scale of justice and a shield.

About FDIC Small Business Resource Effort

- The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) recognizes the important contributions made by small, veteran, and minority and women-owned businesses to our economy. For that reason, we strive to provide small businesses with opportunities to contract with the FDIC. In furtherance of this goal, the FDIC has initiated the FDIC Small Business Resource Effort to assist the small vendors that provide products, services, and solutions to the FDIC.
- The objective of the Small Business Resource Effort is to provide information and the tools small vendors need to become better positioned to compete for contracts and subcontracts at the FDIC. To achieve this objective, the Small Business Resource Effort references outside resources critical for qualified vendors, leverages technology to provide education according to perceived needs, and offers connectivity through resourcing, accessibility, counseling, coaching, and guidance where applicable.
- This product was developed by the FDIC Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI). OMWI has responsibility for oversight of the Small Business Resource Effort.



Executive Summary

- Corporate branding is the process of establishing a consistent name and image for your business.
- Defining and communicating a corporate brand is a powerful way to enhance the competitive positioning of a small business.
- Your brand and image should be reflected in all of your business materials.
- You have many avenues to promote your brand.



Positioning Your Business

(Slide 1 of 2)

- Answer these questions to lay your foundation:
 - What is your industry?
 - Are you selling a product, service, or both?
 - Why should consumers buy your product or use your service?
 - Is your product traditional, steadied, progressive, or high tech?
 - Is your product or service sustainable and able to evolve?
 - Where do you want to be in five years? How can you position your company/brand now to make sure your brand is still different, relevant, and evolutionary in the future?
 - Does your product or service evoke a need to act or buy immediately?



Positioning Your Business

(Slide 2 of 2)

- Identify your target audience:
 - Who or what is your ideal customer – age range, gender, location, industry, etc.?
 - What need(s) do your products and services fulfill?
- Identify your competition:
 - Who are your competitors?
 - What are their strengths and weaknesses? Understand what they do well and what they do poorly.
 - What are their prices?
 - How can you be different, better, more cost effective?
- Define your vision and mission:
 - Develop a customer-focused mission statement.
 - Deliver quality products or services.
 - Avoid trying to position your mission as being everything to everyone.
 - Develop your product or service and stick to it.



Brand and Identity

- Your brand and identity should be on everything:
 - Business name.
 - Business image.
 - Logo development and design.
 - Color scheme and font selection.
 - Materials (business cards, letterhead, envelopes, post cards, invoices, e-mail signature, signage, product packaging, promotional materials, sales materials , etc.).
 - Web site domain name and web site design, blog, Facebook page.
 - Industry-specific media.
 - Style/Usage guide.



Misconceptions of Small Businesses and Branding *(Slide 1 of 2)*

- I don't need a brand because I've been in business for "X" amount of years.
 - Competition is everywhere and allowing your brand to become stagnate will result in less business.
 - Keep your brand alive by consistently and continuously assessing your market and tweaking your brand to retain existing customers and attract new ones.
- I don't have a "marketing" budget so I can't do any branding.
 - Brand strategy and brand initiatives should not be dependent on marketing; a marketing strategy should be tailored to your brand.
 - Branding does not have to be communicated by television commercials or billboards.
 - There are numerous free or low-cost avenues for promoting your brand. Identify which methods best fit your business and develop a marketing strategy accordingly.



Misconceptions of Small Businesses and Branding *(Slide 2 of 2)*

- I have a logo, isn't that all I need?
 - Logos are visual images or icons that represent a company's brand. They are a significant part of your brand identity, and can reflect your company's character and product or services, but you cannot encompass all aspects of your brand in your logo.
 - Utilize various branding elements to constantly and consistently interact with your target audience.
- Times are tight, so we're cutting back on our branding initiatives.
 - Your brand drives your business; branding initiatives should remain a priority even in challenging times.
- I have a unique product that's different from anything else on the market. That's all I need.
 - Branding takes a unique product or service and translates it into something meaningful to the customer.



Avenues for Promoting Your Brand *(Slide 1 of 2)*

- Conduct demonstrations, classes, and workshops.
- Speak at conferences and professional associations.
- Hold contests.
- Write articles for newspapers, periodicals, and professional journals.
- List employees as experts.
- Be a guest on, or host a local radio or television show in your area of expertise.
- Network online and offline (in professional associations, conferences, trade shows, benchmarking groups, chambers of commerce, focus groups, chats, blogs, social media, online forums, etc.).
- Publish newsletters (online or offline).
- Create a webcast or webinar.
- Hire a publicist.



Avenues for Promoting Your Brand *(Slide 2 of 2)*

- Issue press releases.
- Send direct mail.
- Participate in trade shows.
- Maintain relationships with the press.
- Get involved in civic organizations.
- Donate money to local charities, especially complementary causes.
- Volunteer to judge competitions.
- Wear branded shirts and other clothing.
- Install magnetic or vinyl vehicle signage.
- Cross-promote with complementary or nearby businesses.
- Give away insignia merchandise (featuring your business' name, logo, tag line, and contact information).
- Write letters to new residents introducing them to your business (perhaps offering them a free or reduced-price trial).
- Produce signage.



Key Takeaways from This Module

- Branding and identity are important for positioning your business.
- Branding and identity are about who you are as a business as much as about your logo and look.
- With a brand and identity in place, you can promote your business in many different ways.



Sources and Citations

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