

# 10 Maddening Truths About Branding That You're Probably Avoiding

The single most important thing you can do to expand your business is to create a solid brand. More than ever people make their decisions of what to buy long before they enter a store. They already know what brand they want. Like it or not, your identity, who people think you are will either facilitate or render useless any of your marketing efforts. Below are ten hard to swallow but irrevocable laws of branding.

- 1) **The Truth About Branding:** It happens whether he wanted to or not. It happens whether you want it to or not. You *already* have a reputation, people *already* hold an identity for you, you have already been branded. The question is not "Will you have a brand?" The real question is, "Will you craft your brand consciously to truly expressed to you are?" Or "Will other people unconsciously decide who they think you are?" This is maddening because we can "intellectually" understand but it goes against our instincts and desires.
- 1) **The Truth About Control:** Your brand is out of your hands. Ultimately, you have no control over how other people see you. People will make their own decisions regardless how savvy you are. If you think you can control your reputation your life will be full of pain and fear. If your sense of self-worth is based on how others see you your life will be an emotional roller coaster. You have no control over your brand you have massive influence -- much more than you can imagine. But...
- 2) **The Truth About Focus:** the power of a brand is inversely proportional to its scope, -narrower is stronger. Strive to own one word in the customer's mind. The easiest way to destroy a brand is to put its name on everything. What branding builds, sub-branding can destroy. A brand is not build overnight. Success is measured in decades- not years. Consistency. The most important aspect of a brand is its single mindedness.
- 3) **The Truth About Categories:** A leading brand should promote the *category*, not the brand. In order to build the category, a brand should welcome other brands.
- 4) **The Truth About Names:** in the long run, a brand is nothing more than a name. One of the fastest routes to failure is giving a brand a generic name.
- 5) **The Truth About Companies:** Brands are brands. Companies are companies. There is a difference.
- 6) **The Truth About Colours:** A brand should use a colour that is the opposite of its major competitors.
- 7) **The Truth About Publicity:** the birth of a brand is achieved with publicity not advertising

- 8) **The Truth About Credentials:** the crucial ingredient in the success of any brand is its "authenticity" - you need to be "the leader" - if you aren't then you need to create a new category in which you are the leader. Never assume people know which brand is the leader. People would rather eat at the restaurant that is full.
- 9) **The Truth About Trust:** you must become a trusted advisor. The way to maintain leadership of your brand is to become seen as the prime resource for them to turn to when having problems in your category. (e.g. Ron Pearson in the category of entertainment vs. being a magician).