

## **Transcript: Branding: More than a logo**

Welcome to another episode in the Digital Masterclass Series: the importance of going digital in a post-COVID world. Brought to you by the Glen Eira City Council.

Today's topic: branding – more than just a logo. The agenda for today: what is a brand; why branding is important; elements of a brand (and where they are used); examples of strong local brands; and a question you might be pondering: do you need to revitalise your brand? We will end with a branding checklist. The focus of this session is branding: the what why and how.

So what is a brand? A brand is more than just a logo. It's all the elements that the public is exposed to, which lets them form an opinion about your business. Your brand reflects the image and values you would like the public to associate with your business. It can be anything along the lines of the four Ps in marketing: product, which comprises what products or services your company sells or delivers; price, where you are on the price spectrum between low and high price; place, where you are selling your products or services; and promotion, how you promote your products or all your company (and that is the types of words or emoji that you might use to promote it). The fifth P is people, which relates to your staff and customer service.

So why is your brand so important? Your brand distinguishes you from your competitors. Just think about it: you probably have a number of competitors and what distinguishes your business from their business is the way your customers might perceive your brand, or their customers might perceive theirs. Your brand can build trust, it can provide direction in all your activities, and the way that your staff behave or communicate. It adds value to your business. It can be placed as goodwill on your balance sheet, as an asset.

These are some of the world's most recognised brands. You will probably have some sort of emotional thought when you see some of these logos, which is exactly what branding has done to it. Every brand has the potential to add value to the balance sheet and, among the 10 most valuable brands of 2020, these are the values that they place on their brand. In these large companies they have a process that they follow (although you don't need to be quite this technical). This is the way they value their brands on the stock market. You might need to think about a more simplistic formula so that, when it comes to perhaps selling your business (or part of your business) in the future, you can help your accountant identify a value that they might want to put as an asset on your balance sheet.

These are branding elements: a brand is made up of a logo and possibly a tagline; the values of the of your business; a style guide, which identifies the colours, the fonts, the tone of voice in your communications, and the people and customer service. If you're a small business owner, it's likely that you will have just started with the logo. You may have gone to a designer, rather than to an agency, and said "I want a logo" and they will come up with something visual. They may have interviewed you about it (if they were thorough, they will have done that), and they will have asked you about what do you want your logo to feel or look like. If that's the case, and all you have is a logo and you're looking at expanding your business, you can always go back a few steps and start formulating your style guide.

Your designer should be able to help you identify the colours and the fonts that you would like to continue using, but you can help identify the tonal voice that you would like in your communications. That is in written communications and perhaps even in verbal communications, how you would like the phone answered, or how you would like your staff to greet your customers where brand elements are used. It's anywhere that a customer might be able to experience it: it may

be in signage, in social media, in any of your written materials, in electronic signatures, staff uniforms (if you have them), and as mentioned before, in customer service.

Here are two examples of Australian brands. Hopefully this will make a little bit more sense to you. This is Vegemite. Everybody knows Vegemite. Vegemite was actually popularised during the Second World War. There was a product that the British called Marmite and we in Australia couldn't get access to it. A local food manufacturer had previously asked a chemist to formulate this thing called Vegemite. The Vegemite brand is so strong that even with that top image of Australia and the jar, most people would recognise that as a jar of Vegemite. The word Vegemite is written, very small, on the bottom there, but it's that iconic yellow and the red; the way they used the border around the image; and the font, that you would know to be Vegemite.

Vegemite is used in other products as well, so the brand is so strong that we can still associate that there would be Vegemite in the other two products, on the bottom and on the right, even though historically we know Vegemite as a savoury spread. What do you think about when people say the word "Vegemite"? It's very Australian, even though the brand itself has been sold several times. We still know the brand Vegemite, so there's a value to that particular brand name.

Another example is Bunnings. Bunnings is a typical hardware store but probably not so typical in the way that they market their brand. Their tagline for 25 years was "lowest prices are just the beginning" so that sends a very clear message that we're expecting low prices when we go to Bunnings. Bunnings is also recognising that, when you come in, it's not just coming in for low prices. It's just the beginning. Somewhere in their branding style guide there would have been mention about the customer being central to all the communications. This is why, when you look at the catalogues on the bottom of the screen, the word "you" or "your" is used in every single heading there. There's the iconic red and green on every Bunnings store. The style guide even goes down as far as the format of the store. No matter which Bunnings store you walk into, anywhere in Australia, the aisles are usually set up in a very similar fashion. It wouldn't be surprising if the aisles are in exactly the same order. Every Bunnings store usually has a welcome entrance that is very visible from the road. It's very clear where it is and it's always under cover.

Then there's the iconic Bunnings sausage sizzle. If you go into a Bunnings store, it's not unusual to see staff wandering up and down the aisles. There'll be a staff member that will greet you, and the staff members who are working in this store. If you ask for help, they will more than likely try and either take you there, be willing to take you there, or know exactly which aisle and where in the aisle the product is that you're looking for. That is the strength of the Bunnings brand, and their style guide dictated that. So you can see that, with the Bunnings brand, it even goes as far as who they recruit, and the way that they recruit. They are only looking for people who demonstrate very strong customer service values. It is very unlikely that you will go into a Bunnings store and get fobbed off. If you ask for help, Bunnings is a very welcoming store, which is why it's likely Bunnings did so well when they were competing head-on with a competitor like Masters (who, by the way, have fallen by the wayside and no longer exist here in Australia). This shows you the value of branding, and why branding is so important.

A question you might be asking yourself is: should you revitalise your brand? Even successful brand names, that you might think would not need revitalisation, have done so over the years. The example here is McDonald's. Most of us may have grown up with McDonald's between that 1983 through to the early 2000s era, but even though the logo has changed slightly over the years, we recognise that it is still McDonald's. So when might you consider rebranding?

Scenario number one is: you might have been around for quite a number of years, and you've seen

that your target audience has changed, or that the values of your company have changed. You might consider a brand refresh. You may be entering new markets, you may be a brand that was only ever operating in the City of Glen Eira and you might be thinking, “well, I’d really like to expand my brand nationally, or maybe even globally” if you’re in professional services. During that time you might be thinking “well, my brand needs a bit of a refresh, it’s too localised” or you may be thinking about extending your product line. You may want to consider rebranding there. So, in the case of, let’s say Vegemite, it might be that at one stage their jars may have said “savoury spread” and they may have removed the word “spread”. So they considered rebranding there. Your competitors might be eating into your market share, and now you need a stronger point of difference. So, you might consider rebranding in that case.

What might not be so uncommon during the COVID era is overcoming a PR crisis. Your industry, or the category that you’re operating in, may have been hit particularly hard by COVID, by a bit of negative press, in which case you might consider rebranding. Or, you yourself or your business may have been involved in perhaps even being in a COVID hotspot. So, maybe consider a rebranding exercise.

So, here’s a branding checklist. Do you know your brand values? Are they consistently communicated across your business, or are you in a situation where you need to revitalise your brand?

Some actionable steps: brainstorm with your staff and your key customers. If you know your brand values, ask them “is this what you think about when you see my company brand and logo?” You can order all of your brand touchpoints, from your logo to your signage, your printed materials, your staff and customer service. Finally, decide whether your brand needs to be revitalised or just articulated and reinforced a little bit better.

In summary, a brand is more than a logo. It includes everything your customers can see and experience. Your brand should communicate your business values. Your brand can build trust and is an asset to the business. Revitalise your brand only if you have a good reason to, and this is because it’s often a fairly expensive exercise. Consider doing an audit with your staff and customers, that is a really good place to start. Thank you, and if you want more information please email us at [cityfutures@glenaira.vic.gov.au](mailto:cityfutures@glenaira.vic.gov.au).

We would love to hear your feedback and if you’d like to know more, we also encourage you to visit us at Glen city Council’s Business support pages, on our council website. Thank you.