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# BRANDING SECRETS



HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY MARKET  
YOUR BRAND ONLINE USING CONTENT  
MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

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# Introduction

We Marketers have it really hard these days. We are all targeting the same group of people, with the same basic product offerings and sometimes even at the same time. This is especially true for the world of Online Marketing. Some may find our efforts informative or even amusing. Others are downright annoyed and seek out every possible way to silence the noisy atmosphere we have created as we compete with each other. To make matters worse, many of the promotions online are fictitious and have left our target market overly skeptical about everything they see online. Many of them have actually suffered serious financial loss as a result of the tactics of unscrupulous marketers. In fact, less than 25% of all consumers actually trust advertisements they see online. Just think about how negatively this will affect your sales!

But, do not despair, building a recognizable brand is within your reach if you are willing to learn how to play your cards right. Marketing a business or brand online has become one of the most popular ways for Entrepreneurs to reach their target audience. Gone are the days when a good billboard and couple of well-designed posters would be enough to get you on the map. If you do not take the time to establish your brand's online presence, it can easily become forgotten or overshadowed by its competitors. Keeping ahead of the game now means carefully

integrating online marketing into your overall marketing strategy and thus building a brand that needs no introduction.

The truth is, marketing your brand online is not an overly complicated task. But like any other skill, you must take the time to learn as much as you can about the task at hand and the best way to achieve the desired results. Thankfully, you have purchased this book, which means you are well on your way to building a successful brand.

# Chapter 1 – Carefully Define Your Brand And All That It Represents

Your brand represents a unique promise that you make to every single one of your customers and potential customers. It is the consistency of this promise and the overall quality of the delivery of this promise that will encourage your customers to be loyal to your brand. Getting your customers to become loyal to your brand is the only real way to make your brand successful. But in order for your promise to be effective, it must be distinct and clearly distinguishable from the many other promises your potential clients will encounter.

What kind of promise is your brand making?

Who is your brand making this promise to?

Why is your brand's promise different from everyone else's?

Why should anyone believe your promise?

At a glance, the task of defining your brand may appear quite simple but please do not be fooled. The golden arches of McDonald's and the Nike swoosh did not become what they are in a day. These and other successful brands are the product of careful research, distinctly defined boundaries and a

comprehensive Marketing strategy. The result of all this hard work is that each customer and potential customer knows exactly what these brands represent. Have you ever walked into McDonald's to order to purchase a Pepperoni pizza? Will anyone in their right minds drive to Nike to pick up a pair of ruby red stilettos? Of course not! That is as a result of these brands being so carefully defined that we know exactly what to expect and what these brands can deliver. Customers are far more likely to be loyal to a brand that sends a clear message or has a distinct voice.

The first step to defining your brand is thinking carefully about and documenting what your business is good at. You can make use of S.W.A.T analysis to outline the major strengths and weakness of your business. It goes without saying that your brand should represent the strengths or core functions of your business. This will require some amount of honest self-evaluation. Some Entrepreneurs fall into the trap of aiming to be good at everything or doing too many things at the same time. Even worse is trying to make a 'universal' product or service that has no specific target audience. The result of this kind of strategy would be a brand that is not well defined and will not encourage brand loyalty.

Trying to target everybody and doing everything will force you to spread your resources too thin. The easiest way to get nothing done is to try and do everything at the same time. Once you have a clearly defined message in mind, the next step is to choose the right tools. The Marketing tools that you choose to make use of

should then emphasize the core focus of your business. In doing so, your Marketing strategy should also emphasize what your business is not and thus make your clients see that your focus is not on ripping them off. This is an easy way to highlight the difference between you and the competition. A memorable brand is not worth the effort if you are not earning any money and the easiest way to make money is to take out the competition.

After assessing the strength of your business, find three simple words that represent what your business does well. Think of it this way, which three words would you want your clients to use to describe your brand if your brand was a person? This will require that you and your executive team carefully define the mission and vision statement of your business as well. Your next move should be figuring out how to communicate these attributes to your target audience with the utmost simplicity. A complicated commercial or website is a major turn off to potential clients and will not be very effective at generating sales. Keep your message simple if your aim is to make your brand memorable and profitable.

“There is no greatness where there is *not simplicity*.” — Leo Tolstoy

“*Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication*.” — Clare Boothe Luce

“*To be simple is to be great*.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

Defining your brand and the identity of your brand will require much more than a fancy logo. It must instantly bring to mind what your business does and what your brand represents. One core principle that never fails is to focus on quality and convenience. The identity of your brand should be carefully tied to adding value. Make your clients think of your product or service as being of the best quality, the easiest to use, the most affordable or even the most durable. Selling hype will not get you very far.

Always remember that your aim is to give your brand a pleasant voice and a distinct identity. The ultimate aim is to get the voice of your brand off the printed page or website into the mind of your target audience. Your message should make such a deep impression on your target audience that purchasing your product or service should seem like the only sensible choice. You should not have to clutter your website or commercials to get potential clients to remember what your brand represents. This will prove to be a waste of time since your brand may become easily confused with another. The next chapter will provide further details on building a unique identity for your brand.

# Chapter 2 – Create Your Own Identity

Some Entrepreneurs try to build the identity of their brand by imitating other well-established players in the industry. This strategy will prove futile. As stated in Chapter 1, customer loyalty is a product of building a unique identity for your brand. Chapter 4 of this book will however provide some guidelines on how to leverage the strengths of existing market players without becoming a copycat.

If you are already the mastermind calling the shots for a brand that is struggling, my first suggestion is to turn to your existing customers. You would be surprised how much you can benefit from some good old-fashioned research by means of a brand audit. Carefully assess what customers currently think about your brand and what they think it represents. You may be quite horrified to realize that your clients have completely misunderstood the voice of your brand. In the same breath, take the time to find out how they think your brand fares against the competition. Your business and your brand might be too close to your heart for you to critique it objectively. This can be achieved by means of online surveys or even in-house questionnaires. The key to getting the right information is to ask the right questions. Ask clear, simple questions that get straight to the point.

*“The art and science of asking questions is the source of all knowledge.”* - Thomas Berger

"There are no right answers to wrong questions." - Ursula K. Le Guin

Now that you have asked the right people, the right questions and have gotten into the minds of your customers, it is time for action. But don't pick a fight with every naysayer you encounter. Choose your battles carefully and always remember that you will not be able to please everyone. Try to identify any common themes in the responses of your clients. Please bear in mind that some of these responses may be aimed at improving the quality of your product or service. Leaving a bad taste in the mouth of your clients will do very little to help you build a successful brand. Build on the complaints or lack of enthusiasm for your brand. Use that information to guide your brand identity strategy. All of your creative resources should be aimed at removing common road blocks from the minds of existing customers and thus potential clients as well. Be sure to also reinforce the positive aspects of your brand that your customers identified.

Now that you know what to do, it is time to learn how to do it! Building the identity of your brand might take some amount of time, but aimlessly spending money is never the solution. Now that you are armed with all the right information, it is time to skillfully aim your blows by means of a carefully thought out brand identity strategy. Designing a good strategy means you have

almost won the battle. Your strategy should be centered on objectives, but only a few. Please remember how Chapter 1 stressed the need for simplicity. Also, ensure that you link each phase of your strategy to a specific objective. Your strategic objectives should be as SMART as they come. By SMART, I mean Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely. Don't be too quick to implement a new strategy. Consider all the 'what ifs' before you jump and take the time plan the kind of attack your competitors will never see coming.

*"The essence of strategy is choosing what not to do."* — Michael E. Porter

*"Let your plans be dark and impenetrable as night, and when you move, fall like a thunderbolt."* — Sun Tzu

Here are 3 Simple Strategies to Establishing the Identity of your brand:

### **1. Develop a Logo and Other Creative Elements that Compliment the Objectives of Your Brand**

Developing a logo is the first aspect of developing your brand's visual vocabulary. In addition to the logo, you will need to create a specific look and feel for your brand that will be consistent throughout the various platforms you will use to promote your brand. All successful brands are associated with a specific blend of colors, fonts and slogans. In order for your creative elements to resonate with your target

audience, you must be consistent. Every aspect of business, your website, your social media pages and even your business cards, should feature the same creative elements.

Do not just choose a color just because you think it is pretty. Remember that specific colors tend to evoke very specific emotions. Yellow for example is often associated with happiness, while red is often associated with anger or romance. Always keep your target market in mind while selecting your creative elements. The occupation, age and even social status of the group you aim to target will influence how they view your logo, colors et cetera. Be sure to also test your logo by means of a focus group before you launch it. Some logos, as creative as they may be, can be misinterpreted or even confused with the logo of a similar brand. Whatever you decide, ensure that your creative elements are so memorable that even if a client sees only half of the picture, they can still imagine exactly what is coming next.

## **2. Amp Up Your Social Media Presence**

What good will it do if you build a distinct brand that no one has ever heard of? Social media allows you to reach the right people, with the right message all the time. Additionally, social media is one of the most affordable options to reach your target audience. So why not make full use of it? There

are so many social media platforms just waiting to help build your brand. In fact, all the successful brands of our generation have invested heavily in creating a robust social media presence and so should you. All you need to do is post the kind of content that will lure in potential customers. Chapters 3 and 5 of this book will delve into further details about producing relevant content and designing a suitable social media strategy.

### **3. Optimize Your Company Website**

Chapter 6 of this book will explain in greater detail how to accomplish this task. But, in short, your website should be loaded with useful content, easy to navigate and aesthetically pleasing. There is no bigger turn off than a website that takes decades to load or isn't mobile friendly. A website is one of the few points of contact that you have full control over and it is best you use this to your advantage.

# Chapter 3 – Use Relevant Content to Emphasize One Key Message

Posting relevant content is one of the hardest aspects of building a successful brand. Who really defines what is relevant or isn't relevant? How will you know which aspect of your content will go viral or will be considered shareable? Relevance is not something your content team is born with or can learn. Posting relevant content is as a result of keeping up with market trends and producing content that your target audience will either find amusing or useful. But of course, this is much easier to achieve in words than in reality. So, what can you do?

## **Develop a Buyer Persona**

Buyer personas are overly generalized examples of who your ideal customer would be. This forces us Entrepreneurs to remember that our products and services affect the lives of real people. And in so doing, we begin to focus more on how we can make the lives of these people better by means of our business. But the million dollar question is, how does one create a useful buyer persona? You start by simply asking the right questions. The insights I encouraged you to gather from your clients in Chapter 1 of this book will prove very useful. All you need to do is figure out the type of people who have believed your brand's

promise in the past and are very likely to continue doing so in the future.

Every sensible survey begins with simple demographic questions such as age, gender and occupation. Make good use of this information! In fact, you do not even have to re-create the wheel by creating your own survey, market research on existing buyer personas are published daily. Why not use this kind of research to your advantage? If you have front line members of staff or a designated sales team, their interactions with your customers can provide very useful information about your customers. Be sure to solicit information from both good and bad customers. It is always advantageous to learn more about your own strengths and weaknesses.

## **Don't Be Too Forward**

Once you know exactly the kind of people you are trying to reach, it will make it much easier to reach them with relevant content. But as I have mentioned before, you want your target audience to welcome you into their lives and not feel like you are barging into their homes through the front door. Being subtle is as excellent way to be bold. Instead of posting content about business and product offerings all the time, get your audience excited or intrigued. You need to get them talking about you without even realizing it. Here are my suggestions:

- Post a thought provoking question about topics such as current events and world affairs
- Post useful how to videos about hobbies that would suit someone represented in your buyer person
- Have exciting giveaways that feature your clients sharing pictures of themselves, perhaps even pictures of them using your products
- Post Memes your target audience will likely find hilarious
- Post content from other companies that your target audience will find useful
- Participate in trending challenges

## **Understand User Intent**

If you intend to post SEO content to attract new business, you need to also take some time to understand the concept of user intent. Creating a list of keywords is important, but this should not be the focus of your SEO strategy. It is better to understand what your audience actually intends to do with the information they are trying to find. Generally a user will search for content online with three main intentions, to find a location, understand a topic or learn how to do something. With this in mind, you will be better able to create a keyword list that will be more ideal for one or a combination of these intentions. Additionally, content created with

the intention of the target audience in mind will be of the utmost relevance to these individuals and they will be more likely to share this content with their contacts. It is a win / win situation. Your audience will benefit because they have learned something useful and you will benefit as these individuals unintentionally draw attention to your brand.

## **Don't Be Afraid to Share**

Despite your intentions of becoming a distinguished brand, there is much to be gained by sharing the content of other brands. I am not recommending plagiarism but it would not hurt to share relevant content from other businesses. Are there any breaking news reports, inspirational quotes or instructional videos your audience might find useful? Sharing this kind of content will give your audience the impression that you genuinely want what is best for them. If you intent to make use of this bit of advice, please be cautious. Do not share content from competing brands in your niche. Your good intentions may be misinterpreted as an all out attack or attempts to surrender.

Now that you know how to post useful content, let us now focus on ensuring this content emphasizes one key message. Posting the same images, videos and information on a number of different platforms, may not be the best way to send a consistent message. Your brand will come across as being either too lazy or too pushy. A better option would be to focus on particular themes

that are closely tied with the objectives of your company. For example, if your product or service aims to make your customers healthier you can take the direct approach and try to sell your product by any means necessary. But, you can also subtly encourage sales by encouraging your audience to focus on a more holistic approach to their health. You could then post content from other sources featuring easy work out videos and healthy meal preparation guides. You can then use this kind of content to draw attention to the benefits of your product. Remember the aim is not to be pushy but to be effective.

When you employ the subtle approach and make use of content from other relevant sources, you will be emphasizing the strengths of your brand without becoming too repetitive. There is only so much and no more that you can say about your limited array of products or services. The next chapter will focus more on how to use the strengths of existing players in the market to strengthen your own brand.

# Chapter 4 – Leverage The Voice of Existing Industry Leaders

Giving your brand a distinct voice will do you very little good if no one takes the time to listen to it. The truth is that more than 80% of all new brands will fail and of the 20% that do survive, only a few can really be called successful. If your aim is to be among the successes, you need to tap into the strengths of existing industry leaders who are already quite vocal. Because these players have been in the industry for quite some time, they have become household names and can easily influence the actions of your target audience. That kind of influence can easily be leveraged to increase your credibility, get your message out to your target audience and most importantly, lead to sales.

The big question left to be answered now is, who are these industry leaders? An industry leader is anyone who is regarded as an authority figure within a specific industry. Do not make the mistake of thinking only of other well-established brands. An industry leader can be a blogger, consultant, an up and coming Photo-Journalist or even a traditional author. Whatever the case may be, carefully selecting your allies will certainly be to your advantage. These individuals are already influencing the minds of the very people you are trying to reach.

But how does one identify an industry leader? This too will require some research but thankfully, social media makes this task a little less tedious. Take a look at the number of followers or likes on the social media account of a potential ally. But as we both know, it is quite easy to 'purchase' followers or likes and not really benefit as a result. Some of these individuals may not even exist or may not be sure what the page is about. Your aim is to identify an individual or group who has a 'profitable following.' You can confirm the popularity or profitability of the page by simply examining the activity on the page instead of relying on the numbers. Examine how often the posts on that page get liked and whether the comments posted by followers are mostly positive or negative. Positive feedback on a social media page is very likely to indicate that these individuals will respond to your call to action.

Once you have identified a suitable candidate, you also need to examine what their brand represents. Once you form an alliance with this brand, people will assume that you both stand for or represent the same things. If your aim is to promote a wholesome, family atmosphere, forming an alliance with a tattoo parlor or a gothic clothing store would certainly not be to your advantage. You need to find industry leaders who are working towards similar goals and ideals. It may not be wise however to select an individual or brand that aims to sell the same kinds of products you promote as well. A more practical option would be to choose a company or blog that promote products that will compliment your own line of products. For example, a Photo-

Journalist would be an excellent ally if your products or services focus on weddings and other special events. Your aim is to make your target audience trust you and this will not happen if you are sending a conflicting message.

When seeking to form this alliance, your aim should also be to find someone your audience will trust. Focus on sending a clear message that will not appear overly forceful or fake. This means you will need to avoid any individual or brand that is always doing some sort of promotion. Your audience will think your call to action is just another gimmick and you would have accomplished nothing by means of the alliance. Focus on those brands that are centered on providing useful information and improving the lives of their audience by means of their product or service. Now that you know what to look for, we need to focus on how to leverage the voice of the industry leaders you have identified.

## **Simple Meet and Greet**

The good old-fashioned way of doing business is always best so why not start with a simple introduction. You can send the individual or group of interest an email. This email should be to the point but not too pushy. Your aim is to present the alliance as win / win situation for both brands. But bear in mind that this individual has probably never heard of you or your brand before. And if they are as popular as you think, they may have been propositioned about a similar alliance before. Don't be

discouraged if you encounter some amount of resistance or skepticism. You may even have to prove to them that you are worth such an alliance. Their primary focus will be on what you bring to the table. Offering to share their content on your websites or social media pages is always an excellent way to get allies.

## **Form a Syndicate**

Another option to leverage the voice of an industry leader is to form a syndicate. This is often seen in the world of online marketing. It involves a group of marketers agreeing to promote each other's product on the various platforms within their purview. That means you basically have full access to the network of every member of the group. An introduction of sorts will be required and the group should agree on the rules or guidelines regarding how they will carry out their promotions. This will require some amount of trust and very careful planning. Appearing 'spammy' or pushy will simply drive potential clients away. Each member of the syndicate will have to choose a launch date for their promotions that will not conflict with the promotions of other members of the team. Also, it would have to be agreed that each member will not promote items that are too similar to other members of the syndicate.

If each member carefully adheres to the guidelines of the team, a syndicate can drastically boost sales for each participant. But there is a benefit to forming a syndicate that extends beyond

simply promoting each other's work. Surrounding yourself with likeminded people will push you to be better at your game. Learning how they overcame potential obstacles and keep themselves motivated will certainly prove to your advantage. This will help you create the right atmosphere to achieve success.

*“Surround yourself with only people who are going to lift you higher.” - Oprah Winfrey*

## **Sponsored Ad Programs**

Sponsored Ad Programs are another option to leverage the voice of industry leaders. As the name suggests, this option will require that you pay for this service. But you will make far more than you invested if you play your cards right. This option involves making use of Sponsored Tweets and other similar promotions. You basically are paying someone with a strong, loyal following to promote your product. It sounds simple enough, but it will only work to your advantage if you follow the guidelines I provided earlier. Always ensure that you carefully vet the social media pages of the individuals who are interested in promoting your brand before you make any payments. I cannot emphasize enough how important this is, because one bad decision could scar your brand permanently.

Leveraging the voice of industry leaders will do you very little good if you are not guiding potential clients to a social media page of your own. The next chapter will focus on how to design a

suitable social media strategy that will help make your brand a success and of course, generate sales.

## Chapter 5 – Design A Suitable Social Media Strategy

Social Media is one of the most useful and affordable tools to build any successful brand. Social media is not specific to a group or product and making wise use of it will prove advantageous to any brand. But your objective should not be to publish photos of your brand representatives at a random array of local events or donating to various charities. This kind of display will prove beneficial, but only if you keep everything tied to the objectives of your brand. Aim to educate your customers. Highlight all the good attributes they already see and emphasize the ones they do not see. But don't be too aggressive. There is no need to post long rants about your brand or your competitors all over social media. Use simple Memes and creative videos to emphasize and reemphasize all that your brand represents. This will however require that you keep up to date with the latest trends.

Companies all around the world have participated in various challenges to get potential clients curious about their brand. But no one can predict which trend will be cluttering up your news

feed three months from now. Social media is not about forcing your message into the lives of your customers. If you make use of this tool to your advantage, potential clients will be sharing your message all around the world without ever asking you for a dime. Social media allows you to waltz right into the homes of the very group of people you wish to target. But in order for you to reach them, you have to make them welcome you into their homes. You will only be able to achieve that if you present your brand in a way that excites or intrigues the masses. In short, keep up to date, keep it fun and as you learned in Chapter 3, keep it relevant.

Be warned however, there is a hidden danger in this strategy. Social media makes it very easy for your clients to ‘call you out’ on whatever issues they may have with your product or service. Be sure to carefully monitor the comments being posted and prepare yourself to have to do damage control at just about any time. Anything offensive that is posted on your account can reach the very ends of the earth in just a few seconds. And even if you eventually delete it, this harmful content will do permanent damage before you are even aware of the harm that was done. That is why I strongly discourage delegating the task of posting on and monitoring your social media accounts unless you have hired a proven, trusted professional to do so.

If you want to make use of social media effectively, you will need to devise a plan that emphasizes the goals and message of your brand. Your social media account should simply be an extension

of your brand strategy. But once again, this is far easier said than done. It is so easy to become swept up in the millions of Tweets, posts, Snapchats and comments that can lose sight of their goals altogether. Remember that your brand was designed to send one central message and to reach a very specific group of people. That means every image or post you make should be tied to a specific objective. Your aim should not be merely to entertain your audience. While it is true that comedic content will help attract new followers, you may very well end up attracting the wrong kind of people. It is best to focus on educating your followers, especially when your brand is relatively new. If you are able to combine being entertaining and informative, you have already won the battle.

Always remember that managing your social media accounts will be almost like a full time job. So while it is good to use various social media platforms to build your brand, try not to stretch your resources too thin. Your time is always your most precious resource. It is better to carefully select a few platforms that are known to be favorites of your buyer personas, than to waste time managing too many accounts. The beauty of a social media account is that it is one touch point where you are encouraged to make contact with your clients as often as possible. This will not be possible if you have too many accounts and your brand will not build loyalty by posting the same content on every one of its social media pages.

As mentioned before, the frequency of your posts are of utmost importance. Frequency is the only real way to get the attention of your audience. The world of social media can be quite forgetful. People today want to be engaged constantly and are generally always glued to their mobile devices. If their focus is not on your brand or your product, your competition may have captured their attention. And do not be misled to think that it is just posting informative content that will get your brand recognized. You need to engage your followers as well. That means posting comments that will solicit their feedback and responding to their comments. If your communication via social media is one sided, it will not prove to be a very useful tool. Followers become very disgruntled when they feel their opinions are being ignored and you simply want to push your message on them. Communication was always meant to go both ways.

*“Two Monologues Do Not Make A Dialogue.”* – Jeff Daly

*“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”* — George Bernard Shaw

*“Constantly talking isn't necessarily communicating.”* — Charlie Kaufman

As I have emphasized time again, successful brands are those that earn the trust and respect of their target audience. Social media can assist you in that regard because it allows you to become an expert in your niche. If you are always posting informative content, your audience will constantly look to you to learn something new. It is this kind of anticipation for what you

have to say that will gradually gain their trust and soon, lead to increased sales. Always remember that social media is regarded as the most useful platform to reach an audience because the world is your audience once you make that final click. Even if your brand is currently 'local,' try to break out of the mindset of thinking only people within a specific region will benefit from your content. Gradually move away from location specific content and become more of a general expert in this specific field.

Another important aspect of your social media strategy is the quality of your content. Proof read everything more than once! Bearing in mind how quickly your mistakes can spread around the world will help you to remember this point. Worded content on social media should always be short and sweet. Save wordier messages for your website or your blog. The quality of the images you post is also a matter of serious concern. Social media is one of those platforms that encourage people to forget the dangers of copyright infringement. Always check who owns the images you intent to use and the usage rights for these images. Please also ensure you select crisp, clear images at all times. Try to avoid images with watermarks or the logos of other companies.

Video content is always a great option for promoting specific products or services. Use videos to highlight how to use your product and always aim to make it look easy. No one wants to complicate their lives unnecessarily. You can also engage your clients by encouraging them to showcase themselves making use

of your product or service. Everyone wants to be a star and you can easily leverage this innate desire to your advantage. Despite the various benefits of social media, this alone cannot help make your brand a success. You need to make use of an assortment of platforms to build your brand. The next chapter will highlight another step to building a successful brand.

# Chapter 6 – Optimize Your Way To Success

Despite the popularity of social media, this alone will not guarantee the success of your brand. As previously highlighted, social media is not the avenue for posting robust content and your brand cannot become successful by making use only of a few short catchy sentences. A carefully thought and well designed website is crucial if your brand is to make any progress in the marketing battlefield. Your website needs to however be optimized to make your brand successful. This means that you need to arrange your website in such a way that it will produce the best results. Here are my suggestions:

## **Brand Your Website**

Your website should boldly highlight the look and feel of your brand's image. Remember, consistency across all platforms is one of the primary keys of a successful brand. This means that you need to feature your logo and the other creative elements of your brand. By so doing, your clients will already have a clear mental image of the kind of content they will find on your website. You need to however be very careful about how you make use of these colors. Some colors and fonts will make it hard for visitors to read your content. As you can imagine, this will be very bad for

business. It is always best to err on the side of caution and not to be too fussy. A modern or minimalistic look is sure to please any crowd.

## **Easy Navigation**

Complicated websites are a thing of the past. Gone are the days when people had the time to search for what they really want to know. If the information they want is not readily available, your clients are going to simply find this information elsewhere. Ensure that you make use of navigation titles that are accurate. Visitors should be able to get a clear mental picture of what to expect on a specific page before they click on it. It would also be quite helpful to include a search feature which makes it easy for clients to locate the exact content they need. Sitemaps are also a very good idea.

## **Mobile Friendly**

Always remember that everyone is busy these days and always on the move. That means your target audience is probably going to use their phones to visit your website a few times. This has far greater consequences on your brand than you think. Over 50% of consumers, myself included, refuse to revisit any website that is not mobile friendly. Thankfully, there are various conversion platforms that will do all the work for you. But if you are up for the challenge of doing this yourself, please remember that simply

making images and text smaller will not be very helpful to your end-users. You will need to adjust the maximum width of all your images, make preferred widths for individual web pages mobile friendly and even adjust any sidebar or header with a fixed CSS property position. You might not get it right on the first try, so always ensure you test these options before launching.

## **Regularly Update Content**

Your website will reflect poorly on your brand if it features content that is no longer relevant. This includes promotions past the expiration date and products or services that you no longer offer. Irrelevant content is one of the biggest nuisances of online marketing. Your clients will get the impression that you do not really care about how your actions will affect them and this of course will be very bad for business. As was highlighted in Chapter 3, the content you post should always be relevant and consistent.

## **Solicit Feedback**

Communication should always be two-way. You need to find creative ways to solicit the feedback of your clients. This is an invaluable way to identify and isolate any key areas of concern that need to be addressed right away. It is always best to make your clients feel that their opinions can influence your product offerings and their overall customer experience. This will also

require that you make it easy for your clients to contact you or request information. Always remember to thank your clients for their opinions. A brand that cares will be a brand that sells.

## **Subscriptions**

It is not enough to assume that visitors will return to your page often. You need to encourage visitors to subscribe so that you can reach out to them when you post new promotions or new content. Being able to send your message directly to their inbox is an opportunity I would not encourage you to miss. Please however be careful not to do so too often since your visitors may consider this to be quite irritating.

# Conclusion

As you should have realized by now, building a successful brand is going to be hard work. It is a combination of careful research, diligently identifying your objectives, craftily devising effective strategies and skillfully executing your plans. You may need to revisit the drawing board a few times but success is something that needs to be maintained. You may be at the top of your game today, but one wrong move and the reputation of your brand can be permanently damaged. No matter how much you think you have achieved, you always have to keep on pushing yourself to do more. There is no real way to measure success. What your brand has achieved today may only be a fraction of its true potential.

I will conclude by saying, always remember the words of the great footballer, Pele, *“Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do.”*