



BRAND CONSISTENCY MATTERS

Achieving Cohesive, Strategic Marketing

A MOTIVATED MARKETING WHITE PAPER



UNDERSTANDING **BRAND CONSISTENCY**

Branding is used to define the essence of a company, encompassing the overall style, tone and messaging that sets it apart. Not simply limited to logos and taglines, the best branding involves strategy. It demands creativity. It requires consistency.

In today's ever-changing marketplace, the term "consistency" often sets alarm bells a-chiming in business owners' minds. It is sometimes thought that the brand who shouts the loudest will be heard above the clamor, but in fact, this notion couldn't be more misguided.

While it's true that a constant barrage of irrelevant messages becomes white noise, it only takes one compelling piece of content to grab a consumer's attention. This content must speak to who the brand truly is, defining it in a way that sets it apart from the competition and stakes its claim in the marketplace. After all, name recognition and the loyalty that follows are the goal of branding - and the results that only a consistent approach can achieve.

Brand consistency begins with setting brand guidelines, developing a consistent message and maintaining cohesion across various mediums. While this strategy won't get results overnight, like most things, the outcome is worth the wait.

FINDING YOUR VOICE

While consistency is undeniably important, you must first establish the brand and carefully craft its message. Strong messaging lays the foundation for success, and crafting it should be done with care. Auto dealers, for example, must first determine their target audience before pinning down a message that'll resonate best with them. Are they trying to sell trucks? Create a more aggressive, gritty message. Family-friendly SUVs? Use a softer touch. Today's technology makes precise targeting possible, but without the right branding message, wasted money is the campaign's only result.

Aside from messaging, this phase also encourages the brand to define visual guidelines. Logos, color schemes and overall aesthetic style should be agreed upon to ensure that consumers recognize your brand's marketing at a glance. The advertising world's top dogs have risen to the top of the heap because they've mastered this, adhering to their brand's guidelines like paper to glue. Consumers need only to get a quick peek of a logo or hear a jingle to immediately identify a brand, and setting brand guidelines during the initial stages is the way to achieve this.



BUILDING A REPUTATION

Let's get one thing straight: Brand consistency results in campaigns that are strategic, not stale. It promises consumers a certain experience, whether that's a straightforward car purchase or a comfortable waiting room at the doctor's office. Then the real work starts: delivering on that promise. Keep in mind that a strategic marketing plan not only builds consistency, but trust as well.

Once you've established your brand and begun communicating its philosophy to consumers, it's important to take their feedback into account. If a certain campaign isn't performing well with your target audience over a reasonable period of time, it's a wise idea to make tweaks. Stick to the branding guidelines and start small, avoiding huge overhauls that will take the campaign off brand. Remember, consumers want to know what to expect, and suddenly veering away from that will likely have disastrous effects.

As far as ad placement is concerned, some brands don't have the funds to saturate their market, and merely dip their toe in the advertising pool. Others opt to market across all channels, reaching consumers while they're at home, in the car and on the job. No matter the budget, be sure to maintain cohesive marketing over time and across platforms. Your brand's consistency depends on it.



GROWING YOUR BRAND

Once you've established your brand and proven to consumers that you can deliver on your promises, evolution is necessary to keep ahead of the competition. Staying current means staying top of mind, which can be especially difficult in today's crowded marketplace.

This is the point at which many brands stray from their guidelines, and essentially, the philosophy that defines who they are and what they stand for. This is confusing to consumers who have come to expect a certain style, tone and overall experience - and regaining trust is more easily said than done.

But maintaining a consistent message over time doesn't mean churning out the same copy, posting uninspired graphics or airing generic commercials month after month. Instead, it means making tweaks over time to determine what resonates best with your audience.

When refreshing your message, always ask, "Does this content authentically represent the brand? Does it speak in the same voice that's music to consumers' ears?" If a brand can answer affirmatively, then the idea is likely a good one, one that will engage consumers who have already pledged their brand allegiance - and those who haven't yet.



PARTNERING WITH **MOTIVATED MARKETING**

Motivated Marketing partners with brands every step of the way, providing the strategy, creative content and support needed to get results that exceed expectation. Our team works hard to provide the most compelling creative, always keeping budget in mind. With experience that spans multiple industries, we know that brand consistency matters – and we'll help you achieve it.

If you'd like to learn more about setting your brand apart from the competition and partnering with Motivated Marketing to do so, give us a call at (843) 856-7322 or email info@motivatedmarketing.com.

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