

## Glossary of Terms Related to Branding\*

### Brand

The unique sum of impressions associated with a particular company, product or service. If the impressions are overwhelmingly good, if individuals desire a steady affiliation with the brand, the brand will endure and become an important - perhaps the most important - asset to practice: the greatest asset you'll never see.

### Branding

Branding is the process by which a cohesive and enduring impression of an organization, product, or service is formed in the minds of audience members.

### Brand Attributes

These are functional or emotional associations assigned to a brand by its customers and prospects. Brand attributes can be either negative or positive and can have varying degrees of relevance and importance to different customer segments.

### Brand Audit

The brand audit is a comprehensive and systematic examination of collateral (both tangible and intangible) that relates to a brand.

### Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is the ability of the target audience to recall your brand. It begins with awareness by your audience of the existence and availability of a particular aspect of your Offering.

### Brand Community

A brand community is created when members of one or more of your communities share values and impressions of your brand. Note that the term community is far more broadly defined than it once was. It is still a group of individuals having one or more things in common but, whereas historically, a community was characterized by its locality e.g., street corner, synagogue, push carts, etc., today, the successful community must be mobile, exist in real time, and be available. Often, we "put things in the way" of our community, e.g., a Web site home page that is difficult to navigate.

### Brand Equity

Brand equity is the value your brand adds to your Offering.

### Brand Essence

This is the sum of the core characteristics defining your brand.

### Brand Expansion

This is the exposure of a brand to a broader target customer market, geographic market, or distribution channel. For example, “Orange juice: it isn't just for breakfast anymore,” and Michelob Beer’s ill-fated, “Introducing the seven day weekend.”

### Brand Extension

This is the application of a brand beyond its initial range of products, or outside its category. This is possible when the brand image and attributes have contributed to a perception with the consumer/user where the brand, not the current Offering, is the decision driver, e.g., Starbucks now sells food and music, not just coffee, or Our Dental Practice now offers Integrative Dentistry.

### Brand Identity

Brand identity is a unique set of associations aspired for by the holder of the brand, and represent what the brand should stand for. It implies a promise made to your audience member. Brand identity differs from brand image refers in that the former represents the goal for a brand, while the latter the current status of your brand.

### Brand Image

A set of associations within the minds of target customers that represent what the brand currently stands for and implies the current promise to customers. (Note that brand image is what is currently in the minds of consumers, whereas brand identity is what the brand aspires to be.)

### Brand Personality

This is comprised of the human qualities and/or the persona that best reflects the character of the business. In determining how best to articulate what sets it apart from its competitors, a business may find it helpful to imagine how it might be personified.

### Brand Promise

What the prospective (and current) dental patient is assured of receiving, and the emotional and practical value they may expect as a result. This can be illustrated by a cause-and-effect sequence that begins with a business's key messages and ending with the unique benefits its audience will enjoy as a result.

### Competitive differentiation

These are the unique benefits that set your dental practice apart. Although each component of a business' identity is integral to what Joan-Noel Kapferer terms "creating a difference," it is often useful to delineate exactly how your dental practice differs from the competition. In this context, competitors and their offerings are cited by name so that direct comparisons can be made. A simplified statement of competitive differentiation might look like this: "Unlike dental practice X (a competitor), which does such and such, dental practice A (yours) offers you these advantages." Clearly, this form of explicit differentiation is not an appropriate strategy for the dental professional.

### Core Message or Core Benefit

Distillation of the various components of a business' identity into one or two essential distinguishing characteristics, which can then be used by the various foundational elements - logo, name, slogan/tagline, and other outward expressions of its identity.

### De-positioning

This involves attempting to change the identity of competing products relative to the identity of your own product in the collective minds of the target audience. For example, a practice may stress the relative superiority of professional tooth whitening over a store-bought "do it yourself" alternative.

### Identity Program

Clearly establishing what an organization knows about itself. This begins with a candid assessment of how the organization sees itself in its environment. This gives the dental practice perspective, allowing it to ascertain where it is in terms of organizational values and philosophy, dental patient/prospect profile, competitive landscape, etc., as well as where it wants to go. After establishing exactly what it knows about itself, the dental practice can concentrate on articulating what makes it different.

Articulating a differentiating message is perhaps the most critical step in a practice identity program because it establishes what makes the organization distinctive.

The message that results from this process should unambiguously answer the questions, "Who are you, what do you do, and why should I care?"

### Key Messages

These are the few facts and support points essential to audience understanding of your practice. Because audiences cannot remember everything a company tells them, businesses must decide the two or three points which best convey their individuality.

### Logo

A logo is a unique and identifiable symbol, association, name or trademark that serves to differentiate competing products or services. It is both a physical and emotional trigger that creates a relationship between consumers and the product/service.

### Off-Core Benefit

A positive experience or expectation that is intuitively important to the consumer, but not (yet, today's off-core can be tomorrow's core benefit) generally associated with the service or organization in question.

### Positioning

The process by which a marketer creates an image or identity for a product, brand or organization, for a target market. It is the "relative competitive comparison" the product occupies in a given market as perceived by the target market.

### Position Concept

The one essential idea you own or want to own in the minds of your audience. A measure of the extent to which one succeeds is called mindshare.

### Professional Identity

Your professional identity is the total of symbols and verbiage comprising the outward expression of a brand, e.g., name, logo, tagline(s), color(s), vanity telephone number, website address, paper texture, look and feel of web site, etc.

### Repositioning

This process involves changing the identity of a practice's Offering relative to the identity of competing practices, in the collective minds of the target market.

\*Some definitions courtesy of [www.allaboutbranding.com](http://www.allaboutbranding.com)