

The Importance of Authenticity in Branding: One Firm's Transformation

Overview

Branding your business is important and most business owners understand this.

Unfortunately, many small and midsize businesses are not thinking about or executing brand building in the right way. And this is preventing them from growing faster.

What do we mean by approaching brand building in the right way? Well it might be helpful if we start by pointing out the wrong way to think about your brand identity.

Most often we see an owner of a closely-held business define their brand in very simplistic terms. They have a checklist that reads: Logo ✓, Fonts ✓, Colors ✓, Mission ✓, Values ✓.

From this perspective, a brand is simply your style. Or "how you dress" if I might use an analogy. And while the way you dress does create a perception and says a lot about you, it's only your appearance. And that's why it's the wrong way to think about your brand.

The problem with a focus only on appearance is that it fails to consider the most important aspects of a personality – behavior. Often how people look and how they behave are quite different things altogether.

When what a brand appears to promise isn't consistent with the experience people have interacting with the company, its products, and services this creates a disconnect. Marketing and Branding that is disconnected from the actual customer experience is not good branding. It is just a nice appearance that fails to connect with customers on a more emotional and real level.

Research shows that 90% of consumers expect a consistent brand experience across all your marketing channels. Yet 10% of B2B organizations say their brand experience is consistent. Personally, using your logo, fonts, colors, and other tactical branding elements consistently isn't the issue. The core issue is the lack of authenticity.



Making a Brand More Authentic

Rich Taylor, Fractional CMO at yorCMO, has a client who runs a boutique tax and accounting firm. The owner had spent a considerable amount of time and money working with vendors to create a website for the brand and update their brand identity elements – Logo, Fonts, Colors, Images, etc.

People in professional services, like many industries, want to portray themselves and their company in a way that reflects the quality of their work – smart, detail-oriented, and service-focused.

When Rich began working with the client as their Fractional CMO, he quickly realized that most of the firm's business comes from referrals.

And despite having invested a lot of time, money, and resources to build a website, it simply didn't convey the proper feeling, personality, and emotion that aligns with their culture and differentiation.

Rather than develop an all-new website, and incur a lot more costs and resources, Rich chose to help the company strip away all the unnecessary tactics and elements that were interfering with their ability to tell their story in a truly authentic manner.

Here's a summary of what was done:

- Removed cliché images and visuals.
- Edited and revised all copy to remove jargon and be more plainspoken.
- Deleted content (case studies, blog posts, social) that wasn't essential.
- Added visuals that more properly conveyed brand personality and emotion.
- Adjusted the visitor and user experience to be consistent with how they treat clients.
- I.e. thoughtful, helpful and responsive.

Transformative Results

Working with a trusted web development partner, Rich was able to get these updates and website revisions done at a fraction of the costs involved in building an entirely new site. Work was also completed quickly (2 months).

Removing and ditching the elements of the firm's marketing and website advertising that were not aligned with how the company behaves when serving clients made a big difference. Their brand presence and appearance were transformed – from cliché and "me too" to warm, thoughtful and attentive.



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As a result, referral partners whom they rely on for client introductions, felt inspired by the experience of visiting the updated website.

Now that it properly conveyed how clients feel about working with the firm there was an increase in referrals and contact us form submissions.

Process Matters

There is no shortage of ideas and tactics that a business owner can get from agencies, vendors and staff to tell their story and develop their brand.

But there are very few people who understand why it's critical to incorporate authenticity into brand building and how to do it.

As co-author of "[Authenticity: Building a Brand in an Insincere Age.](#)" Rich has a well-defined, unique, and proven process that helps clients align brand messaging with brand behavior.

If improving your marketing results is important to your business, let Rich show you the power of Fractional CMO leadership. His expertise developing authentic brand experiences combined with our proven yorCMO marketing leadership system are a winning combination.

Click [here](#) to get connected with Rich to harness the true power of authenticity for your brand.



Rich Taylor CMO

Rich is a marketing & advertising executive with a passion for brand building. He has delivered multi-million dollar growth for leading national, regional and local brands.

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