
The Building of a Brand:

An architecture to develop and integrate the 4 components to help an organization meet its brand objective.

Valerie Lee Schutte
The Design Depot

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What is Branding?

It is the hottest concept in marketing today, but if you ask 50 different brand managers you will get 50 different answers. What's more perplexing is that in some companies you can ask 50 different employees what their current organization's brand is and get 50 different answers.

The most common answer to the question usually revolves around the company's products and services. A brand manager might typically state that it is a "cluster of impressions about an entity and its products and services that exist in the customer's mind."

Branding is psychological. At the most elementary level — people buy with emotion and justify with logic.

Companies go to great length and expense to build brands because they believe that it will increase positive impressions by clarifying both the organization's **promise** and the **delivery**. The idea is to get customers to choose to purchase more of your products and services and/or to purchase them at greater premiums.

Beyond the Basics

Branding your business should not be expensive or hard to do. Branding is essentially the heart and soul of any organization. It stands for something beyond the products and services that an organization offers. A successful brand stands for **TRUST**. **When you build trust — you create a powerful brand.**

Brand Assets		Brand Features	Brand Benefits
Creates Emotional Bond		Compels Action	Lays Foundation for Value
Logos	Advertising	Identifies what makes you unique.	Drives strategical and tactical decisions.
Images	Invoices		Provides guidance blocks for developing a Brand Communication Plan
Slogans	Domain Names	What makes you compelling to your target audience.	Repetition is the key to increasing sales.
Packaging	Promotions	Simplifys choice.	Makes selling propositions and product positioning easier.
Mission/Vision	Customer Service	Reduces purchasing anxiety.	Enhances customer relationships (intimacy).
Websites	Spokes People	Focuses on single core strengths.	Assists in product development and market leadership.
Letterhead	Public Relations	Enhances credibility.	Directs operational systems and processes.
Outgoing E-mails	Sports People		Establishes a culture for the organization.

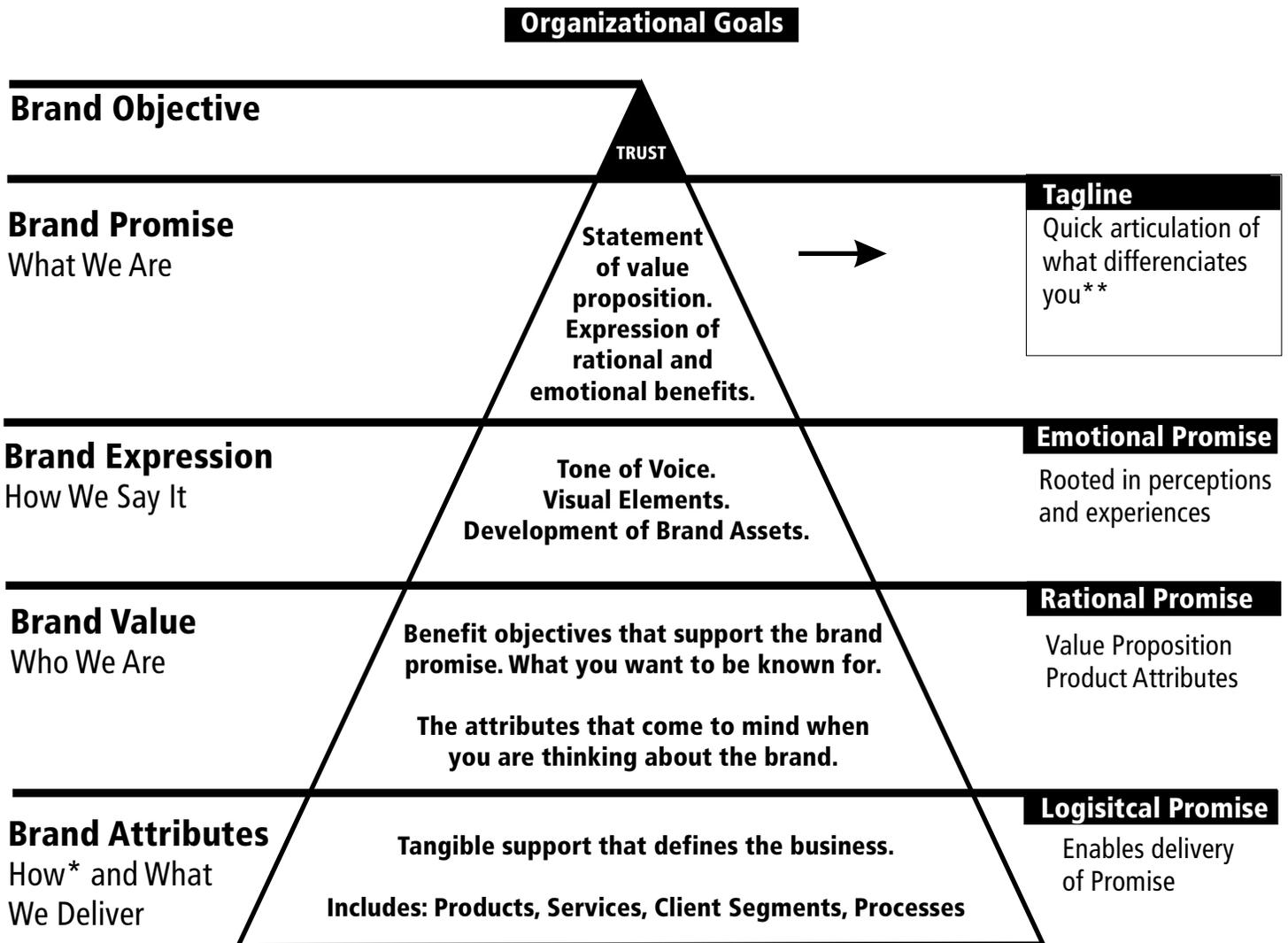
Common Misconceptions

1. Your image is not your brand. It reflects your brand. Your logo and your tagline are valuable property*
2. Your products and services will set you apart. How many competitors do you have selling essentially the same thing?
3. Your tagline is not identical to a unique selling proposition (UPS). A tagline is like a verbal logo. A "UPS" is an offer.

*You may want to consider trademarking them. You can do a preliminary check at www.upsto.gov.

The Brand Platform:

An architecture to develop and integrate the 4 components that form the foundation of the organizations promise.



*How is usually more important than what.

** Try for 7 words or less.

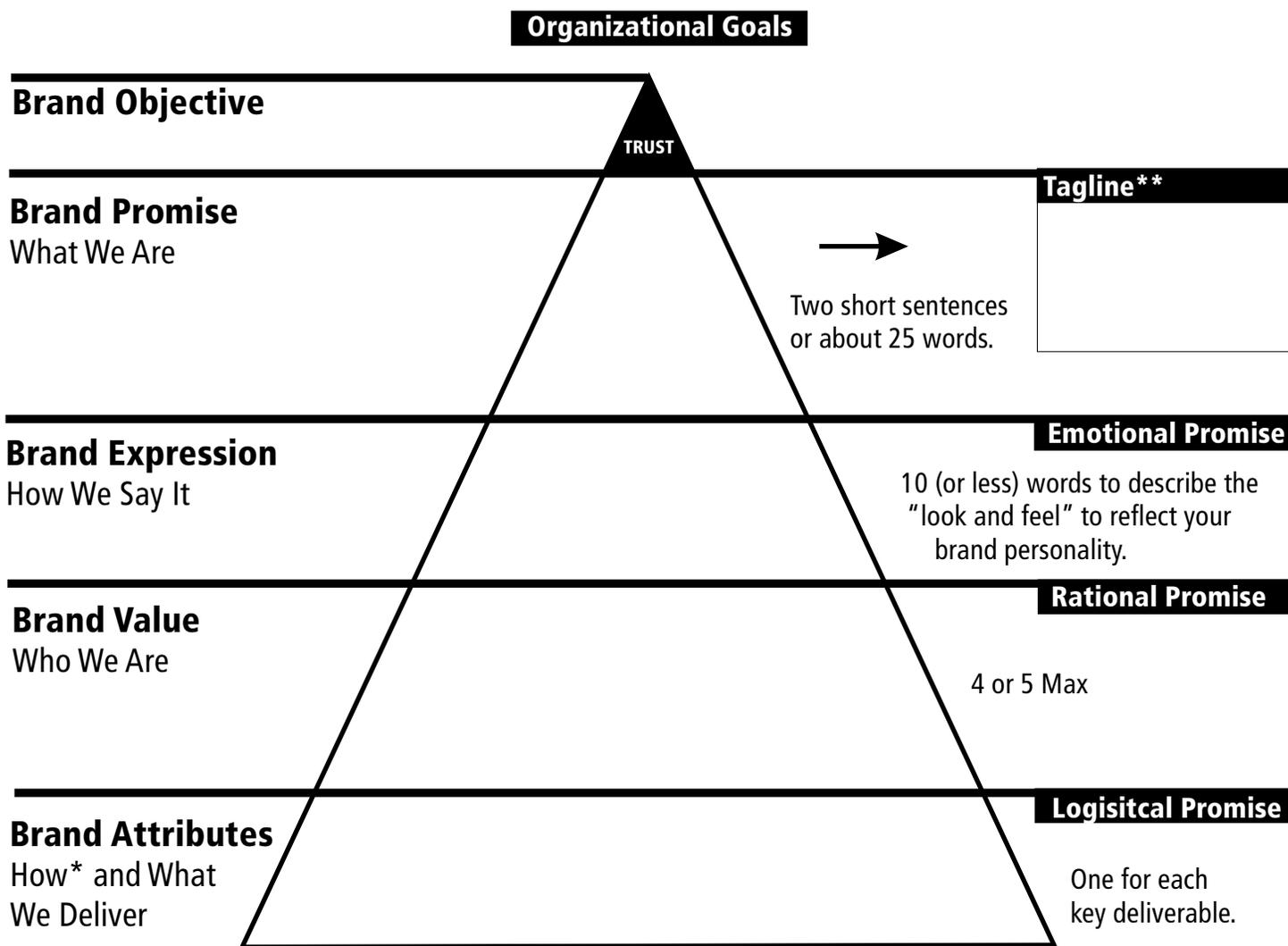
Make it: Relevant * Distinct * Memorable * Consistent * Single-Minded

Building the Brand Promise: **Don't Promise What You Can't Deliver**

1. Start at the bottom and work your way up. Laying the foundation is critical to the process.
2. Consider each of the main logistical elements that go into defining a brand for an organization: Performance, Core Philosophy & Process, People; Product and Service.
3. Address the gaps between your vision, internal opinion, present realities and the marketplace perception.
4. **Think Strategically:** Vision & Mission, Core Competencies, Competitive Position
5. **Think Tactically:** Client Segments, Product Strategy, Services Offered, Execution of Technology, Delivery of Product.

Building The Brand:

Starting from the bottom work your way to the top. It is important to get as much buy-in from the key aspects of the organization. This includes external audiences such as clients and vendors if possible.



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Make it: Relevant * Distinct * Memorable * Consistent * Single-Minded

Direct **Indirect**

Tangibles: Products, Services, Client Segments, Process

Intangibles: Environment, Service, Experience

While input from different aspects of the organization is critical, try to avoid "branding by committee". It may be beneficial to get input from each separately.

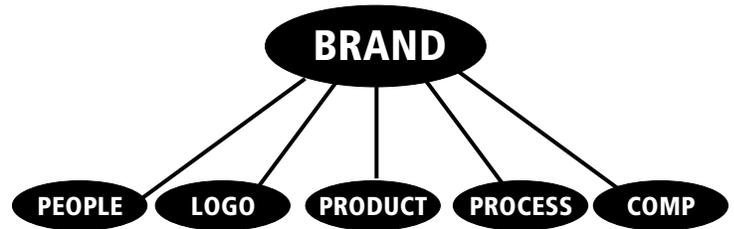
Why Branding is Beneficial:

The biggest rationale for branding is that if you do not define yourself, then the marketplace will do it for you. In today's competitive environment you have a brand, even if you have not given branding a second thought. The reputation your organization has — for better or for worse — is a result of how others perceive you. The internal branding process gives you more control and creates a strong foundation for future decisions and priorities regarding your organization.

External Branding



Internal Branding



Making it Work: Keep it Simple

Brands are not built overnight. Trust takes time to build. The length of time that it takes depends on the customer receiving a consistent experience that adds value. Every organization faces different challenges based on the types of products, services and delivery they offer.

To be successful, branding must be authentic and delivered with integrity. **Make it uniquely yours.**

All organizations do have the following in common:

1. A buying cycle for their products and services:
Before ----- **During** ----- **After**



Keep the experience consistent

2. Key Players: **Management & Employees** — Brand Champions
Marketing & Media — Brand Cheerleaders
Market Place — Brand Enthusiasts



Make sure they all are working toward a single consistent thought

Personal Branding

One of the latest trends in branding is building a personal brand. A **personal brand** is the public perception of certain aspects of a person's personality, skills or values. It involves taking control of the processes that effect how others perceive you and strategically managing them to achieve your objectives. It can be done as an entrepreneur seeking to grow an organization or as a professional looking to take your career to the next level. It is not the same as personal image, just as identity is not the same as your organization's brand.

Additional Resources:

Websites www.marketingprofs.com
www.petermontoya.com
www.allaboutbranding.com