

*Need Brand Partners on*  
**potential**

*No. 01 in a series on*  
*How to Effectively Grow Your Brand*



*Quercus Robur*  
Designed by Dr. Woodruff, 1877 & 1908

# *Behold* the acorn.



*How to Effectively Grow Your Brand*

This humble seed contains the genetic material for a ninety foot oak that can live for more than a century. In its lifetime, the oak will drop millions of acorns with the same potential. Yet, for every 10,000 acorns, only one will become a tree.

**Growing a great brand is surprisingly simple. Not easy, but simple. Great brands are built over time with patience and vision. And like the mighty oak, a great brand can forever change the landscape.**

Brands thrive in companies with integrity, vision, and an almost obsessive attention to detail. A strong brand strategy can make good companies better, and great companies bulletproof.

## **BRANDS AND BRANDING — WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?**

A brand lives in your mind. It's your associations and feelings toward a specific company, organization, product or service. The brand can even be your beliefs and attitudes toward an individual (think Oprah Winfrey, Jack Welch, or Hugh Hefner).

The process of branding is the act of expertly building and reinforcing these associations and feelings. This is not manipulation or voodoo. It's a long-term strategy to honestly, deliberately and consistently provide value and communication to your audiences in all the ways that matter to them.

**Remember: Your brand isn't what you say it is. It's what your customers and prospects say about your company once you've left the room.**



## HOW CAN A STRONG BRAND CREATE MORE SALES FOR YOUR COMPANY?

### Your brand can make it easier for your clients to do business with you.

A focused brand guides the perception of your company by making it crystal clear to your customers who you are, what you do, and why it matters to them. Customers who understand your value and who enjoy a positive experience working with your company (even when there are problems), will buy from you again and again.

### Your brand clears a path for your sales people.

A distinctive brand position puts your company's flag firmly in the ground. A strong brand also comes with the tools to communicate your company's promise and value proposition to many audiences. If your brand can get your sales staff marching to the same beat, then stronger sales margins are sure to follow.

### Your brand is worth more in the marketplace.

Your company's reputation, burnished by strong market recognition and customer preference, will make a significant impact on your growth. Earn a client's trust by continually finding new ways to prove your value. We're all creatures of habit and we gravitate toward brands that make our lives easier. Build deep relationships by providing ongoing value and customers will stick with you and gladly pay more for your product or service. And they'll recommend your company to their friends.

### Your brand tells your story.

Nothing is more powerful than a customer telling your story and recommending your service to others. At its heart, your brand is a collection of these stories because they have an honesty, integrity and credibility that is unmatched. Make sure your brand's image and promise reflects the essence of these stories. It's what people remember and repeat. Strong stories, told often, are the stuff of legend.



## 10 STEPS TO BUILDING YOUR BRAND:

- 1 Understand that your brand is a reflection of what the market values.**

It's up to you to find, communicate and deliver on that value, every day.

- 2 Create a different meaning for your brand that customers find relevant and can care about.**

Differentiation and relevance, much more than mere awareness, keep your brand strong.

- 3 Know exactly who you want to talk to.**

Then, know your competition. Make the distinction between your company and your competitors crystal clear to your audience.

- 4 To discover a different and relevant brand idea, look for the obvious.**

The best answers typically come from talking to your customers and spending time in the field. The goal is to uncover a meaningful feature, service or other value that no one has noticed before.

**5 Make sure your brand idea is in sync with your business strategy.**

What exactly are you selling? Does what your brand promises match up with your core product or service? Does it support and leverage your business development action plan? The brand represents your unflinching promise to the customer, so it's got to be right.

**6 Capture your brand's essence in a simple statement.**

It doesn't have to be clever, but it does have to be easy to understand and repeat.

**7 Build your brand ambassadors.**

Share the meaning and goals of your brand openly with all employees. Help them understand their role, at all points of contact with the customer, in delivering on your brand promise.



**8 Spend your money wisely.**

Once you've determined which points of contact with customers have the most potential to drive perception and grow your business, invest only in these areas. These interactions are where your brand can really shine. They represent your best opportunities to build new business and go deeper with existing customers.

**9 Remember that your customers rule.**

Evaluate your position with clients twice a year, at least. Make sure that your valued difference is still different in their minds and be sure to listen to your core customers first. They're your foundation.

**10 Keep in mind that branding is for the long haul.**

Strong brands last because they work hard to communicate their difference. The people behind the brand are committed to doing whatever it takes to deliver on the brand promise, day in and day out. Building and maintaining an unbreakable brand is a lot of work, but the support earned from your loyal, growing customer base makes it all worth it.



We're Nead Brand Partners, a strategic brand, communications and design consultancy. We're expert translators of our clients' stories. Our passion is for helping businesses identify their distinctive culture and values, connect with their audiences, and create powerful customer experiences.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Mark Nead**, Growth Partner  
mnead@neadbrandpartners.com  
216.431.9301 x12

**Mark Zust**, Growth Partner  
mzust@neadbrandpartners.com  
216.431.9301 x13

3635 Perkins Avenue, Suite 6a  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

[www.neadbrandpartners.com](http://www.neadbrandpartners.com)



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GROW WISELY.