

Why Your Web Site Needs Consistent Branding

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Be consistent with your branding as it is the key to company recognition. You have a position in the marketplace and your web site should reinforce your position.

Branding and your positioning statement

Your web site must deliver your brand's positioning statement, starting with your headline, the most important element on your site. Your logo and your tagline should "be the brand". The web site images, copy and graphics must support your position.

"Positioning should be expressed through a short simple statement. It should not be confused with a slogan, though if the positioning and the slogan can be the same, wonderful." – Drayton Bird

Specifically, the following elements of your web site need to be consistent with your brand's position.

- 1) Brand logo
- 2) Brand name
- 3) Key messaging
 - a. positioning statement
 - b. tagline
 - c. body copy
- 4) Graphics – the look and feel
 - a. colors
 - b. proportions
 - c. motion
 - d. fonts



Your web site visitor needs to know immediately where they are. If they don't know you, this is your opportunity to introduce your brand in a manner consistent with the rest of your marketing.

Customer focused branding on your web site

Your messaging and overall branding, as reinforced by your web site, needs to focus on your paying customers. This is true even if your audience includes customers, media, investors, employees and competitors. Every single member of your audience *wants* you focused on your customers, particularly your smart investors and employees! It is easy to spot a self-absorbed company that has lost its way from the 30 second Flash intro that features the amenities of their new building. If you want to increase sales make sure your branding message is customer benefit focused and consistent across all of your marketing.



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Web branding and the search engines

Top positioning on the search engines has been shown to deliver qualified traffic and increase revenue. It also helps determine your brand position in the mind of new customers based on the search engine result set they view for their key search terms.

For example, a search on “interior paint” shows a URL for Sherwin-Williams Paint. And the folks at Sherwin-Williams were marketing savvy enough to use their brand name in the title tag so it shows up “Sherwin-Williams | Interior | Paint ...” Clicking the link shows a page that is completely branded with the Sherwin-Williams look and full of great details on interior paint, as one would expect.

If Sherwin-Williams tried to reposition themselves as the leading provider of “interior liquid wall coverings,” they would disappear from the search engines for the search term “interior paint”. Therefore, be careful trying to reposition your brand on the Internet as you may adversely affect your sales. Optimize your site and brand to use the key search terms that identify your current position in the mind of the consumer.

Web branding and the media

If you are fortunate enough, or creative enough, to be the focus of media attention you will quickly find your web site an invaluable resource. The media will rely on your web site to confirm the information they receive on your company.

Many articles appear in the media with sections that are clearly based on text from a web site even if the article was written from a first person interview. This makes sense because journalists really do *want* to be as accurate as possible.

It is reasonable for them to assume you have honed your consistent brand message on your web site. Have you?

Web Marketing Branding Summary

Branding and positioning are not rocket science, but they do require a superhuman level of consistency communicating your message. Your web site is visible 24 x 7. It is therefore working tirelessly to deliver more qualified search engine traffic and reinforcing your brand message for direct visitors. Or it is not. Be consistent with your branding at all times, and particularly with your web site.

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Schipul – The Web Marketing Company developed and builds on the Tendenci™ relationship marketing application software. Schipul is based in Houston, and provides marketing services on the Internet to a variety of service industries in local, national and international markets. Schipul's clients include Clear Channel Exhibits, National Pharmacy Technician Association, The Children's Fund, Wolff Companies and DPK Public Relations. Additional information about Schipul is available at www.schipul.com.