



STUDENT ATTRACTION INTENSIVE

Week Seven
BUILDING A KNOCKOUT BRAND





WELCOME TO

BUILDING A KNOCKOUT BRAND

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Your brand is so much more than your logo or your signage. Your brand as a dance studio needs to sum up all of the experiences your dancers, their families, and your potential dance families have or WILL have with your studio. A strong brand communicates what your studio does, how it does it, and at the same time it establishes trust and credibility.

Your brand lives in everyday interactions with your dancers; the images you share, the messages you post on your website, and in your posts on social networks. Here are some of the things you need to keep in mind when establishing or revamping your brand.

BE UNIQUE

One of the most iconic brands of our time – Apple – was reborn after it launched, in 1997 through an innovative campaign inviting people to “Think Different.” Today, Apple products are perceived to be better designed, more fun, and more reliable than products from Apple’s competitors. What makes your dance studio unique? What’s your story? What do you do that other studios do not do?

GROW YOUR COMMUNITY

Many of the world’s best brands, including Google, Amazon, Facebook, Virgin, and Skype spend a lot less on advertising than you would think. Instead, they focus on building and improving their communities. Those companies understand that if people trust a brand’s community, they will extend trust to the brand.

As a dance studio you have so many

opportunities to build online and offline communities. For example, you can build online communities in your Facebook group and page, your Instagram page, and physically in the community. As always, you need to remember that you can’t be in all places at once. Pick one or two places where you can focus building your community and allocate your time and resources there.



HAVE A GOOD NAME AND LOGO

A strong brand is easily recognizable...and recognition starts with the name of your dance studio. The name will appear on your business cards, letterhead, website, social networks, promotional materials, products, and pretty much everywhere in print and online to identify your studio and your offerings.

However - it's not enough to have a

recognizable name. A great logo can really pack a punch. As you think about your logo, keep your audience and values in mind because you want your logo to reflect your studio. Think about the logos of some of the world's most admired brands (Apple, Google, Amazon). How do you feel (emotionally) when you see their logos?

FIND YOUR VOICE

What you say is important, but don't overlook how you say it. The "voice" of your studio is the language and personality you and your team will use to deliver your branding message and your campaign offers which is what will reach your customers. Great brands speak with a unique voice. Think about the brands you admire. How do they communicate with you and other customers? What do you like about their voice?

BE CONSISTENT

Many dance studios I have seen will change their messaging depending on their audience. For example, a dance studio might take a very serious tone on their website, but a very lighthearted tone on their Facebook fan page. To build and maintain a strong brand, every aspect of your brand should be as good as

your studio offerings (your classes and your customer experience) and you really need to be consistent in presenting your brand. This includes your studio name, logo, overall aesthetic design, products and services, but also includes your marketing materials, website, appearances at live events, etc.

KEEP YOUR PROMISES

Although this is common sense, you'd be surprised how many studios tarnish relationships with their dance families by failing to keep their promises. Happy families who feel good about your studio are your best source of referrals, so you

don't want to mess that up by failing to keep your promises. For example, you might build great trust and credibility with customers by promising a 24hr response to all emails, and then go even further and ensure they are replied to within 12 hours.

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BE VOCAL ABOUT YOUR VALUES

Think about the brands you love. Those brands commonly stand for something (or against something) and connect with their customers emotionally. What does your studio stand for (or against)? What are your values and how do you communicate these to your potential customers.

EMPOWER YOUR CUSTOMERS

You are not in control of your brand. Sure, you can set your brand's direction, but how your brand is perceived is determined by your dance families as well as your potential customers. People can, and SHOULD, become your brand's ambassadors – spreading your ideas and brand to their own networks. Spend time nurturing relationships with such people. Ultimately, successful brands recognize that if they help their customers succeed, the customers will in turn help the brand succeed and this can work wonders for your dance studio

DELIVER VALUE

Now don't get me wrong - value doesn't always mean lowest price. You can focus on curriculum (having the best classes in town), operational excellence (a simple, automated experience from enquiry through to enrollment), or great customer service. You can also focus on a combination of those things.

'A brand is the set of expectations, memories, stories and relationships that, taken together, account for a consumer's decision to choose one product or service over another' - Seth Godin

What do you think of when I say "brand?" Do you automatically think of Apple or Coca Cola? Or maybe you get a bit confused and ask yourself 'What actually is a brand?' or 'what's the difference between branding and marketing?'

I like to think of branding as the "pull" and marketing as the "push." Your studio brand is your truth and what you stand for which communicates your values, attributes, and characteristics. Quite simply, it's your promise to your customer - in your case, the customer being the student and parent.

Don't get me wrong - branding and

marketing are certainly buddies! Your brand can encourage someone to enroll in your classes, but it doesn't say 'enroll today' like your marketing material would. Instead, it says "this is who we are. If you get a good feeling about us then explore a little more..." That's when the marketing kicks in.

What I love most about building a solid brand is that even once your marketing has come and gone, your brand still remains. Now for some, that's a good thing and others it's not, which is why you always need to be aware of the reputation you're building for the studio.

So how does your brand become a brand and how do your ideal students and parents connect with it? Well, they would first come across your brand through your logo and/or tagline. This could be on a piece of marketing as they drive past your studio and see the signs or visit your website.

So what is your brand currently saying about your studio? Is it saying what you want it to say? More importantly, do you know what your studio stands for? Do you know the values and attributes your studio stands by lesson after lesson?

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TO START BUILDING YOUR BRAND, YOU NEED TO ASK YOURSELF FOUR QUESTIONS

WHAT IS YOUR STUDIO'S MISSION?

It could provide tailored ballet programs for two to five-year-olds that enhances their creativity, social skills and happiness.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS AND FEATURES OF YOUR SERVICES?

Do this for all the services you offer at the studio with classes being your main one.

WHAT DO YOUR STUDENTS AND PARENTS ALREADY THINK OF YOUR STUDIO?

Ask around or send out a survey asking them what three words come to mind when they think of your studio.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU WANT THEM TO ASSOCIATE WITH YOUR COMPANY? Think about the values and attributes you want your studio to be known for and make a list of them.

Once you have dug deep to come up with your answers, you need to follow these four steps:

CREATE A TAGLINE - You have heard

hundreds of taglines over the years. Some examples you would know include:

American Express - Don't leave home without it

BMW - Sheer driving pleasure

Nike - Just Do It

Energizer Batteries - It keeps going, and going, and going

CREATE A LOGO - Don't spend too much time on this or ask too many people what they think. Jump onto either Fiverr, Upwork or 99 designs and you can outsource.

CREATE YOUR CORE BRAND MESSAGES

- These need to include a mix of your core values and attributes. You want to start each of your five core brand messages with 'A commitment to....'. So, one might be 'A commitment to high quality dance training.'

INTEGRATE YOUR BRAND - Your brand needs to filter from you answering the phone, responding to emails, presentations at competitions through to your concert or recital experience.





MAKE A SPLASH WITH BRANDED CLASSES

Once you have built your brand foundation, it's time to start exploring how you can build mini-brands around your classes. It's getting harder and harder to stand out from all the other jazz or ballet classes out there, so creating a brand around your classes is a great idea to excite your ideal students and parents quickly and really shine!

To give you an example, you may currently offer a jazz class for 6-8 year olds and you call it Jazz Level 1 or Junior Jazz. The problem here is that every studio in your area has jazz classes for this age group, so what makes your classes different?

This is the exciting part because you can create a sub-brand for your dance studio that specifically targets this age group and makes you stand out from the crowd. Most studios I work with have already created a

mini-syllabus of sorts for each age group they teach, so why not give your own program an awesome name? For example, Groovy Groovers (that's what we had!). Create something unique so you can really zoom in on these parents and deliver a targeted message with your marketing.

This strategy doesn't just apply to your younger classes. You may have a musical theatre class that you run weekly for teenagers. Instead of calling it Teenage Musical Theatre you might call it Showbiz Stars or Musical Madness. Simply creating a few branded classes for age groups outside of your different levels can generate more interest and buzz in your offering. It also can set you up as the 'go to' studio who doesn't just run your average dance class, but offers tailored and structured programs.

SO WHAT ARE THE STEPS YOU NEED TO TAKE TO CREATE A BRANDED CLASS?

1. IDENTIFY THE AGE GROUP.

Go through the classes you offer and identify age groups and styles that either a) were strong in the past but dropped off recently or b) have increased recently and still have loads of potential.

2. CREATE NAMES. Get your whole team involved and come up with names for the classes. Some studio owners run a

competition where the parents and students put in their ideas and the person who comes up with the name you select wins a prize.

3. GET A LOGO. Jump online and have a logo made for the new class.

That's it! Three easy steps to creating a branded class at your studio which has only cost you the price of the logos.



MAKE YOUR BRAND COME ALIVE THROUGH YOUR WEBSITE

Once you have a solid brand in place, it's time to ensure your website is doing the best job it can - and that's bringing you more new students.

I speak with studio owners every day, so you can imagine how many dance studio websites I see. It pains me to say it, but there are so many poor websites out there. In fact, it blows my mind that some dance studios don't even have websites. There's really no excuse for that. We're part of a global marketplace, meaning you don't need to spend thousands of dollars on a website. You can outsource the job and get great results for a fraction of what it used to cost back when I had an agency and built my

first website for \$25,000! Crazy, right?!

The biggest mistake I see studio owners make with their website is they create it for their existing dance families when your website should be aimed at new potential students. The objective is to bring in and collect the contact details of these potential new students, but instead their websites are cluttered with recital or concert information, student announcements, overdue fee notices and information that a new parent or student doesn't need to read. This is nothing but a distraction for your prospects which leaves them overwhelmed and unlikely to reach out and enquire.

3 COMMON WEBSITE MISTAKES

1. THEY DO IT THEMSELVES - It makes no sense to me why a studio owner would build their own website. By the time you watch the tutorials, do all the design, development and uploading, you would have spent at least 50 hours (and a few tears, I'm sure!). No matter how much time you spend, you simply won't get the same sleek looking and efficiently functioning site as you would with someone who makes websites for a living. We're extremely lucky that websites don't need to cost us an arm and a leg. You certainly pay for what you get, but I've had one client recently who had their website designed and developed for \$350USD. Sure, there are no bells or whistles, but it definitely does the job. I've had other clients who spent around \$2,000 for awesome websites. It all depends on your requirements and who you select, but the odds are high that no matter how much

time you spend, an expert will get it done right the first time.

2. THERE IS NO IFG! - Not sure what an IFG is? If not...that's a big mistake you're making (or getting ready to make). An IFG is your "irresistible free gift," and it's your number one lead generating magnet. This is a tool or offer you're going to give away on your website. For example, a free unlimited one-week class pass where they give you their contact details in return for the class pass.

3. TOO MUCH INFORMATION - It's a sad fact, but people don't read every page of your website. The content on your website needs to be clear and to the point with strong calls to action. A call to action is simply a line such as "Call us today on 123 456 789 to register for your free one-week unlimited class pass."



DESIGN

As a creative, I'm sure you have a bunch of ideas for how you want your website to look. But for a moment, I want you to take a step back and put yourself in the shoes of a parent or student who will be coming to your website and start thinking about what THEY want to see.

Spend a few hours on the internet and start looking for eye-catching and simple, yet effective, designs. Surf the net and come up with a list of five websites that you love the design of that you think will capture your ideal students and parents. By the way, these can be from any industry, not just dance. In fact, I'd prefer that you look outside of the industry at other services-based business

sites. You then want to continue your search and seek out five websites that have excellent, easy-to-use navigation that have created a really intuitive user experience. What we want to look for here is a site that has FLOW. There's no clutter - it gives you straight to the point, useful information and you feel like it leads you through a journey on the site.

Once you have these 10 sites listed (some may cross over) you'll start to form a picture in your mind of what your website should look like and how your audience will experience it. These are crucial elements to finalize before you move forward.

Now, before we move on and look at your website layout, I wanted to share some invaluable advice I received from one of my mentors, Book Yourself Solid author Michael Port. Michael says that when it comes to your website, there are three questions you need to ask yourself for each page:

1. WHO IS COMING HERE? - Generally, this will be your ideal student or parent avatar. See if the page you've created was created for THEM in its design, imagery and content.

2. WHAT DO I WANT THEM TO DO? - Every single page should have an objective. When they click on a specific page on your

website, what is your objective for that page? Is it for them to call you to book in for a class? Is it for them to register for a trial? Whatever the objective, ensure you have one for each.

3. HOW AM I GOING TO GET THEM TO DO IT? - This is about things like page layout and use of colours. There is a great website called whichtestwon.com and it shows you results from split testing; which page layouts and calls to action out performed another. I'm a bit of a tech nerd when it comes to these things, so I love this site. This will help you when deciding placement of your calls to action and opt in offers.



LAYOUT

Okay, so let's have a look at your website layout. I want to go through a format that I use with our program members that has them generating more leads while giving their audience relevant information to take the appropriate action.

Your top navigation is where all the page headlines sit for your website. Let's have a look at an effective top navigation formula for your studio's website.

GET YOUR WEBSITE HOMEPAGE TEMPLATE HERE

ABOUT

Our Journey - Include your values and mission in this page. When you're writing this, ensure that you're speaking to your ideal student and telling a story.

Our Teachers - Make it personal and professional. Tell us who their favorite artist is or their coffee order, etc. Your teachers are the roles models of your studio. It would also be greatly beneficial to have a short 30 sec. to 1 min. video of each of your teachers introducing themselves and saying hello.

Love Letters (testimonials) - Have a whole page of testimonials with photos and phone numbers. Reach out to your parents, senior students and graduates for their personal thoughts on the studio.

We Answer Your Questions (videos or written) - Pick 5-10 questions that are regularly asked by new enquiries that come through and either film a quick 1-2 minute video or have a written answer.

CLASSES

Our Classes - There are a few ways you can explain classes, but whichever way you choose, you don't just want to give a description of jazz or tap. You want to let them know what that style means to you and your teachers, along with how you teach it at your studio. You can convey this through an image with text or you can have a short 20-30 sec video where you explain the style while cutting in to video clips of that style (maybe from class, competitions or your concert or recital).

How To Join Us - This should be a simple step-by-step process of how a new student can join your studio. No crazy long rules and policies here - just a straightforward process that can be done by anyone.

You will see that I don't have the timetable/class schedule mentioned on here. Over the years, I've been experimenting with my private clients having and not having the timetable on the website. What we've found is by having a timetable a parent or student will look at what they think is their correct class and then say 'Oh no, can't make that'... and they will choose not to learn more. You want to give them every opportunity to reach out to you to gain more information so that they can either speak with someone on the phone or through email.

It's important that you get the opportunity to speak with them before they self eliminate and you don't get the enquiry. There is a page that has your timetable on it in your website, but it's a hidden page and you give the link to students and their parents once they join.

NEWS

This is your blog with the latest news that should be updated weekly. You can write an article, provide competition results, ways to prepare for exams, guest teachers, workshops, summer camps...the list goes on. Have some written pieces plus images and video if you can. Update this at the same time each week for consistency.

CONTACT

Simply have a regular contact form that will get sent straight through to your studio's email address. You may also include phone numbers on this contact page also.

Once you have these elements in place, it's time for you to create a homepage that is engaging, informative (not too much information), and caters to your different ideal students and parents. Use the elements we have mentioned above - include photos and videos, and you'll be on your way to a stand-out website that's engaging, informative and will lead to more and more enquiries every day!



Congratulations on completing week seven inside of Student Attraction Intensive. Let's continue the conversation in the **Facebook Group** where you can post your questions as well as watch all video recordings from the training and coaching calls.

See you next week!

MY BEST,
Clint



STUDENT ATTRACTION
INTENSIVE

