Your Logo is Your Brand Cornerstone

Recently, I asked a small business CEO this question. How important is your logo for your small business? This caused a silence in the conversation because, like many CEOs, they usually do not really think about that question. I was reminded of this marketing fact by Ashley Kimlinger, Director of Enterprise Brand Management, Deluxe Corp. She wrote, “Some may think they’re ‘too small’ to warrant a professional logo. Others may think it’s an expense they can spare — that it isn’t important. But in thinking this way, you are doing your business a disservice from the outset. A logo is one of the most important elements you can have in marketing your business.”

So, I suggest in this topic of marketing that your logo is your brand’s cornerstone. When you assess your brand, your logo is one of the first things to consider. For new businesses, this may mean creating a logo from scratch. For businesses looking to rebrand or freshen up their image, a new logo may be in order.

Logos are a vital element of brand identity for businesses of all types and sizes. Whether it’s for a very small business with just a handful of employees, or one that’s growing to 100 employees or more, a professionally designed logo evokes a sense of reliability and competence that potential customers appreciate.

Logos are important for several reasons. Here are a few starters:

1. A strong logo helps you make a good first impression (more on this below).
2. Your logo helps convey your business’s values and personality.
3. A logo provides credibility and helps build trust with customers.
4. When used consistently, a logo reinforces your brand in customers’ minds and creates familiarity over time so they’ll remember you when they need you.

A strong logo alone doesn’t secure new customers. In the end, your products or services will play the biggest role in a customer’s decision to choose you. That said, an eye-catching, professional logo sparks the necessary interest for a customer to check out what you’re offering in the first place.

When I read and listen to professional marketers that create logos, here are some points that they make to ensure your logo is true to your brand:

➢ Be authentic. Your logo should reflect your business’s values and personality.
Stand out. Make sure your logo differentiates you from others in your industry and market.

Keep it simple and scalable. Create a logo that is legible in even the smallest sizes, and in black and white or full color. Focus on a simple design, using no more than two colors and typography styles.

Once your business has a logo that’s true to your brand, include it in all your marketing materials.

Here are some suggestions to keep in mind when considering logo designs for your business:

1. Keep it simple. A logo that contains many fine details may look good at full size, but a simpler design will ensure that it doesn’t look too cluttered when that size is scaled down.
2. With fonts, less is more. A unique font can be a great feature of memorable logos, but be careful not to go overboard. Utilizing more than two or three fonts in a single logo can make it seem like you’re trying too hard.
3. Limit your colors: Logos that include more than one or two colors are expensive to print on marketing materials, promotional products, signs and banners and other media. Keep this in mind as you consider how many colors to include in your design.
4. Make it something you love. In the end, your logo is the first thing many potential customers will see when it comes to your business. No matter what kind of design you choose, be sure that it’s something you are truly fond of that is also true to your brand values.

Put your logo where people will see it. Once your business has a logo that’s true to your brand and makes a strong first impression, it’s time to get it seen! Here’s how to get potential customers to think about the positive aspects of your business each and every time they see your logo:

- Digital media: Your logo should appear on your business website, as well as in any digital advertising your business uses. This includes display, pay-per-click and social media advertising.
- Social media: Your logo should also be very visible on your social media accounts, in most cases serving as your main profile image or icon.
- Mail: If your business sends products or correspondence to customers by mail, consider custom envelopes, letterhead, postcards and boxes that include your logo.
✓ Product packaging: If the core of your business is selling products to consumers, including your logo on product packaging and shipping materials is a no-brainer.
✓ Promotional products: Many businesses use promotional products to spread awareness of their brand even further. You can place your logo on just about any promotional item, from T-shirts and hats to pens and umbrellas.
✓ Vehicles: Consider branding the vehicles you use to transport products, make service calls or visit events. Every fellow commuter is another opportunity for a brand impression.
✓ Custom apparel: Does your business have raving fans who would purchase a shirt, hat or other wearable emblazoned with your logo? Consider investing in high-quality custom apparel that you can sell for another source of revenue.
✓ Business listing websites: Don’t forget to upload your logo to business listing websites like Yelp, TripAdvisor and Google My Business.
✓ TV: If your business has the budget for TV advertising, including your logo is a must. After all, TV is first and foremost a visual medium, so consider a large logo for a few seconds at the end of your ad, or a constant watermark version in the corner of the screen throughout the commercial.

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