

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid



by

Laurie Pillings Rinker

**BRANDS**  
**THAT DELIVER**<sup>TM</sup>

[Lrinker@BrandsThatDeliver.com](mailto:Lrinker@BrandsThatDeliver.com)

[BrandsThatDeliver.com](http://BrandsThatDeliver.com)



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## Introduction

*I believe the brand is the foundation of any business. Without that firm foundation and a brand strategy, companies can easily lose their way.*

“The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid” concentrates on typical mistakes companies make that get in the ways of having a successful and profitable brand. The top 10 Branding Mistakes by page include:

|  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| # 1. Not understanding a Brand and the power it holds over your revenues | <a href="#"><u>3</u></a>  |
| # 2. Making Target Audience assumptions                                  | <a href="#"><u>5</u></a>  |
| # 3. Not defining your Point-of-Difference (Positioning)                 | <a href="#"><u>7</u></a>  |
| # 4. Overcomplicating your Brand Communications                          | <a href="#"><u>9</u></a>  |
| # 5. Inconsistent Brand Usage  | <a href="#"><u>10</u></a> |
| # 6. Not creating Brand Guidelines and then not using them               | <a href="#"><u>13</u></a> |
| # 7 Ignoring your Brand Promise and customer service issues              | <a href="#"><u>15</u></a> |
| # 8. Overreacting to Market or Design Trends that are not on-brand       | <a href="#"><u>18</u></a> |
| # 9. Failure to Legally Protect your brand                               | <a href="#"><u>20</u></a> |
| # 10. Not developing a Brand Strategy                                    | <a href="#"><u>22</u></a> |

Enjoy, Laurie

Laurie Pillings Rinker. Brand and Marketing Strategist

To learn more about [Brands That Deliver™](#)

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## **# 1. Not understanding a brand and the power it holds over your revenues**



There have been many articles and books written on the topic of branding. However, many still don't understand the depth or the breadth of a brand and the power it holds. A brand goes well beyond a name and a logo, although they are important, a brand is so much more than that. It not what you say. Marketers can say and do what they want, however, a brand exists in the hearts and minds of your customers, and it's what they say.

Your brand is the accumulation of what and how your customers think and feel as they choose to engage with your brand and make purchases. Your brand is also a combination of all of its attributes, including the name, tagline, logo, as well as style, symbols, colors, associations, experiences, the look, the feel, sounds, and in some cases, smells. These attributes will trigger an association- good, bad, or indifferent, which can significantly help or hinder a sale.

***Branding is what people say about you when you are not in the room. ~ Jeff Bezos***

Brands can engage, inspire, captivate, capturing new customers, and turning loyal customers into brand advocates spreading the word and making referrals. These stronger brands also make more money as you can charge a premium price for products, and with brand zealots sharing the word, less money is spent on advertising. Ensuring your brand becomes and stays powerful has a direct and positive impact on your bottom line.

***77% of B2B marketing leaders say branding is critical to growth. ~Circle Research***

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

**94% of respondents said they would be highly likely to recommend a brand they were emotionally engaged. – Gensler Brand Engagement Study**

## **Tips on strengthening your brand:**

- Be true to your DNA and values. Stand for something, and those like-minded will follow.
- Ensure the power of your branding is understood throughout your company, your products by the entire team to include executives, receptionists, finance, and customer service.
- Leverage a strong brand with the sales team as it can be one of your best door openers
- Don't think because you are small, your brand doesn't matter as much.
- Develop a brand strategy

## **Example: Patagonia the respected brand that pays off**

*Before you even consider buying one of their jackets, the name Patagonia conjures up thoughts, emotions and attachments that impact your decision to buy.*

*These attachments may include thoughts about how Patagonia is “one of the good guys”, a B Corporation, offer serious outdoor wear, and is “green” using reclaimed wool, cotton and down, and great products that don’t wear out, and all at a premium price... Their market leadership and revenues say people pay more for a brand that inspires and delivers. They do just that.*



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## # 2. **Making target audience assumptions and not doing the research necessary**

The worse mistake a marketer can make is assuming they know what a customer wants and needs. If you have assumptions, validate them. Do your research-upfront so you can better understand your past, present, and potential customers.

Find out your customers' current problems, what they want, care about, what motivates them, and their wants and needs. Ask them what do they think about your brands? Are they happy or unhappy? Where do they want to hear your messages?

***Customers will want to talk to you if they believe you will solve their problems.***

***~ Jeffery Gitomer***

### ***Tips on market research***

- After learning about your target audience, segment them into groups, and understand how best to appeal to their specific segment motivations and needs.
- Use email surveys, hire a research company, use an online survey service (such as Survey Monkey, Qualtrics, or Polleverywhere), send emails, or make phone calls— whatever is best for you.
- Tap into customer service metrics and feedback.
- Don't forget to get that valuable sales input upfront or somewhere along the way. Many brands have gone astray by working in marketing or branding silos.
- Find their keywords. Use on one of the keyword search tools (such as SEMrush, HubSpot's Keyword Grader, or Google's Keyword Tool). Apply the results to our SEO and Keyword strategies and content.
- Develop a customer journey map. This map will help you to understand better how your customers move through your sales, service, and repurchase cycle and where the opportunities and problems lie.



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

- Put the results in your written strategy documents for later reflection

***Customers buy for their reason, not yours—so you better know what those reasons are.***

***- Orval Ray Wilson***

***Example: Swiss company, Schweppes makes a language gaffe***

*There is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to global branding. Schweppes made a classic foreign language mistake. They launched a promotional campaign in Italy for its Indian tonic they decided to go for the name "il water".*

*Without checking their new name "il water" against the cultural translation and not paying attention to this segment, they "stepped into it." In Italian "il water" means "the toilet". Naturally, the company did not want to sell toilet water and so it changed the name to Schweppes Tonica. Luckily for Schweppes, the Italian market gave them a second chance.*

*Digging in an ensuring the understood their target and a simple Google Translate check could have saved them a lot of challenges.*



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## # 3. **Not defining your point-of-difference (positioning) and then not expressing it**

Positioning is the process of identifying and defending a valuable competitive position in the market for your products and service. Positioning considers all your branding, marketing research and includes a definition of your target, your market, your competition, your unique offering, and the target-relevant features and emotional benefits.

The premise for this type of positioning is based on the classic, best-selling book "Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind" by author Jack Trout. It focuses on attempting to "own" a marketing niche for a brand while using various strategies.



We are bombarded with around 5,000 ads/branding messages per day, or one every 11.52 seconds. Thoughtful positioning creates a foundation and direction for targeted communications that deliver unique and emotional benefits, which makes it easier for your customers to buy from you. If they don't see the difference, why would they choose you?

***"The most difficult part of positioning is selecting that one specific concept to hang your hat on. Yet you must, if you want to cut through the prospect's wall of indifference."***

***— Al Ries, Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind***

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## *Tips on positioning*

- Define a position so unique in the mind of the consumer that he will come to associate your brand with something specific and desirable in that product or service area.
- Define the positioning for the company first, and then develop one for each of the critical customer segments.
- You can base your positioning on customer needs, perceptions, brand recognition, innovation, price, quality, convenience, or customer service services
- Once you develop your competitive market position, it's critical to include that positioning in all of your messages marketing and advertising.

## *Example: Dollar Shave Club Uses humor to differentiate*

*Gillette was one of the most recognized brands in the masculine razors category. The Dollar Shave Club entered the market attacking Gillette on price. The name alone shows that they are pushing consumers towards the low cost.*

*However, the Dollar Shave Club also competes on quality and further differentiates by creating messages that are far more friendly and accessible than Gillette's more professional ads.*

*The Dollar Shave Club used humor along with a lower price to differentiate which made them a major player in the grooming industry.*



**DOLLAR SHAVE CLUB**

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## # 4. Overcomplicating your brand communications

The golden rule is to keep things simple. People get turned off by brands that have complex or confusing messages. Along with words, brands communicate via visual imagery. Ensure your images are on-brand and have a similar theme, look and feel, and if appropriate, sounds and smells.

In the clutter of today's communication highway, customers like relatability, clarity, and simplicity.

Look at how FedEx kept its brand simple:



### *Tips on simplified communications*

- Use simple, honest language that creates interest. Write for your consumers and not your philosophy dissertation. Think of writing to a 12- 13-year-old and aim for a Flesch reading ease score of 70-80. (See <https://datayze.com/readability-analyzer.php>.)
- Avoid jargon and focus on clear benefits.
- Prioritize your messages—three should be enough for an ad, the main website page, or a communication piece summary. Don't try to say everything at once. As part of your marketing, advertising, and content planning, you will know how and when to parse your messages.

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

Color improves brand recognition by up to 80 %.

- The consistent use of brand colors further increases brand recognition.
- See mistakes [# 5 Inconsistent Messaging](#) and [#6 Brand Guidelines](#).

Example: Ads with too many messages

The image displays three examples of advertisements that suffer from clutter and inconsistent messaging:

- Mortgage Ad:** Features the headline "This is a mortgage ad." followed by "How to Play Dominoes" and a list of four numbered steps explaining the game. It includes the FirstBank logo and the slogan "Worry less about your mortgage and more about your free time. Mortgages made easy."
- Hair Salon Ad:** Promotes "Cocoa Berry Beauty" with multiple overlapping offers: "Specializing in multi-cultural NO LUMP, NO BUMP FLAWLESS WEAVES", "NEW ORIENT Specials No Lumps, No Bumps FLAWLESS Weaves", and "EYEGASM". It includes contact information for Salon Republic in Austin, TX.
- Casino Ad:** Promotes "SEVEN CLANS CASINOS" with the headline "ACCEPTING ALL OFFERS" and the message "Bring in your valid offer from any casino\* and we'll match your offer. All month long. Everyday." It features a photo of a couple taking a selfie and the casino's logo.

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## # 5. **Inconsistent brand usage and off-target messaging**

Inconsistent branding with both words and visuals only serves to create miscommunication, brand confusion. The result is an erosion of trust and a poor customer experience, which turns off customers and prospective buyers.

Consistent customer experiences and marketing messages drive positive feelings. Maintaining consistency in your look, feel, voice, tone, and style fosters a sense of trust, which plays a critical role in influencing your customers' purchasing decisions for present and potential customers.

***Brand consistency across all platforms increases revenue by up to 23 %.***  
***Forbes 8/2018- Lucidpress, in partnership with Demand.***



### ***Tips on consistency***

- Maintain consistency with your key company messages, (Mission, Vision, Values, About Us, and Brand Statements) and use these basic communications pieces as core messages in all your copy and throughout all channels. Use consistent company descriptions (About Us-short versions) across all directories, listing, guides, and profiles.
- If you need to customize your other messages such as campaigns, slogans, benefits, and feature messages. However, do maintain the core brand message
- It is easy to be inconsistent on your website. The best way is to have a clear strategy and a creative brief. And if you don't, periodically conduct a website audit.

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

- Sales is an area where messages can go awry without a strong brand strategy. Along with the recommend Brand Guidelines ([see Brand Mistake # 6](#)), create email messages templates, sales scripts, and PPT templates for your sales team to help them stay on message. And, as mentioned earlier, always keep them in the loop and get their feedback.

***Brands that are presented consistently are 3-4 x more likely to experience brand visibility.***

- According to LinkedIn, the average customer journey to purchase now involves 12-16 touchpoints. Therefore, maintaining a strong brand across channels has significant benefits in that it may reduce the number of touchpoints needed to close a sale. Your positioning work for each target segment will help you stay on target.
- Ensure you maintain a consistent writing style. If you use different writers, provide tight guidelines and examples of messaging in the creative brief. (Of course, write a tight creative brief for each project.) See [## 4. Overcomplicating your brand communications](#)
- Ensure your company stays true to its values and acts accordingly.

## ***Example: Chevrolet and inconsistent brand name usage***

*Back when GM was struggling to remain solvent, marketing VP, Jim Campbell sent out a memo to GM employees demanding they stop using the term "Chevy"--used with affection by the brand's customers--and internally.*

*Instead, he asked them to use the official brand name "Chevrolet" in order to promote consistency in branding. While it was the right thing to do, by then "the water was over the dam" and they should have made strategic decisions about the use of brand name Chevy or Chevrolet earlier*



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## # 6. Not creating Brand Guidelines and then not using them

As suggested earlier, inconsistent brands appear unprofessional, aid in the loss of identity, and value confusion, making your brand feel less trustworthy. Employees, customer service, and partners easily and inadvertently misuse your brand by changing the shape of your logo, colors, and making up messages.

You make it more efficient and easier for everyone by putting controls in place when there are standards in place. The easiest way to control a brand across all channels and platforms is to create Brand Guidelines. They may also be called a Brand Book, or a Brand Standards. Ensure your Brand Guidelines are easily accessible shared both in a printed version and online.

***"System-wide identity and design standards are a longstanding part of our heritage and essential to building strong global brands. They empower markets to build from universal rules and conventions so that the brand identity is experienced consistently worldwide on a daily basis and protected across every touchpoint.***

***– Coca-Cola Zero Brand Identity and Design Standard***

Here are some elements included in the Brand Guidelines:

- The critical company guiding messages: mission/purpose, vision, values, principles, etc.
- Brand statements/messages: about us, history, elevator, your story, mantras, etc.
- All brand marks ®, ™, ©, etc.
- The name
- Logo and tagline
- Brand essence, voice, tone, and personality
- Color and typography
- Iconography, visuals, and imagery



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

Example: The Boy Scouts of America Brand Guidelines

The Boy Scouts of America has developed a 95-page Brand Guidelines published online.

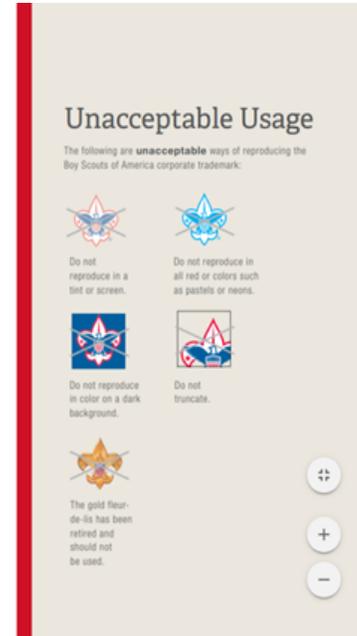
<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/310-0231.pdf>

## Corporate Trademark

Consisting of a fleur-de-lis with eagle, shield with 13 stars and stripes, and two five-pointed stars, the Boy Scouts of America corporate trademark should be used to establish the organization's identity in a product's use or immediate area of distribution. The ® registration mark should appear at the lower right corner of the trademark.



| One Color                            | Two Color                                   | Four Color (CMYK)  | Screen Usage                                | Reversed            |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|---------------------|
|                                      |   |  |   |                     |
| Black or any dark color may be used. | <b>Red:</b> PMS 186<br><b>Blue:</b> PMS 294 | <b>Red:</b> 0, 100, 81, 4<br><b>Blue:</b> 100, 54, 0, 21 | <b>Red:</b> #CE1126<br><b>Blue:</b> #003F87 | White must be used. |



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## # 7 Ignoring your brand promise and customer service issues

Your brand is your word. A brand promise is a value or experience a company's customers can expect to receive every single time they interact with that company. The more a company can deliver on that promise, the stronger the brand value is in the mind of customers.

Ensure you deliver on the products and services as promised and as expected. Many consumers are skeptical of what brands say; instead, they pay attention to what they do. And, they are looking for brands to do more. In fact, Microsoft found globally:

***54% of all consumers say that they have higher customer service expectations than they did just one year ago.***

Customer Service has a significant impact on delivering that brand promise, how people view your company, and brand loyalty. A report based on data from a survey of 2,000 consumers and 1,000 employees of brands in the United States found:

***Almost 74% of consumers say negative interactions with staff are a cause of bad brand experiences.***

***42% of consumers say they already distrust brands***

Companies often underestimate the impact of bad brand experiences. These experiences may include a lack of understanding of an individual's needs, no staff available to help when needed, and the products/services that are not what is expected.

Managing the consumer brand experience is not only about your offering and customer experience. It's also about how you communicate and share your brand through all its online and offline touchpoints. Manage wherever your customers come in contact with your brand, which may include; packaging, advertising, social media, website experience, signage, on-hold messages, music, etc..



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

In today's digital world, many companies and products only exist online. Often a brand's digital presence may be more important than the physical manifestation.

Our digital landscape allows people to have a voice 24/7 and use it.

***46% of people have called out brands on social media, and daily***

## ***Tips on delivering the brand promise***

Whether it's poor customer service, a faulty product, or not delivering on expectations, ways to prevent or head off customer service issues include:

- Ensure your customers see your business as helpful by always providing superior customer service.
- Have a customer feedback loop to stay on top of any issues
- Have a specific person responsible for monitoring and reporting those issues and e
- Respond digitally on social media, forums, or digital reviews sites like Yelp. Consumers use social media to ask questions about products and even call out brands for bad service.

***There are 2.1 million negative social media mentions about brands in the US alone. ~ 2017 Sprout Social survey***

- Consider a live chat or a bot option on your website that will provide users with easy access to customer service 24/7. Use a name and photo in your chatbots. Customers may feel like they're talking to a real person and not a robot.
- No matter how good you are, things do happen, so always plan for a problem. How a company manages a crisis is a massive factor in how a brand is perceived and can have a long-term impact on a brand.
- Train for kindness.
- People will see your brand the way you want them to if you're true to your DNA, honest, and consistent

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

- No matter your industry, whether you're a small or large business, having a branding strategy that addresses your product, customer service, and brand communication touchpoints is essential.

*Example: Southwest Airlines planned ahead and did their best.*

*Southwest did a good job in the immediate aftermath of the tragic incident recently when a passenger died after a damaged engine blew out an airplane window. The airline had a digital response plan prepared for just this kind of emergency.*

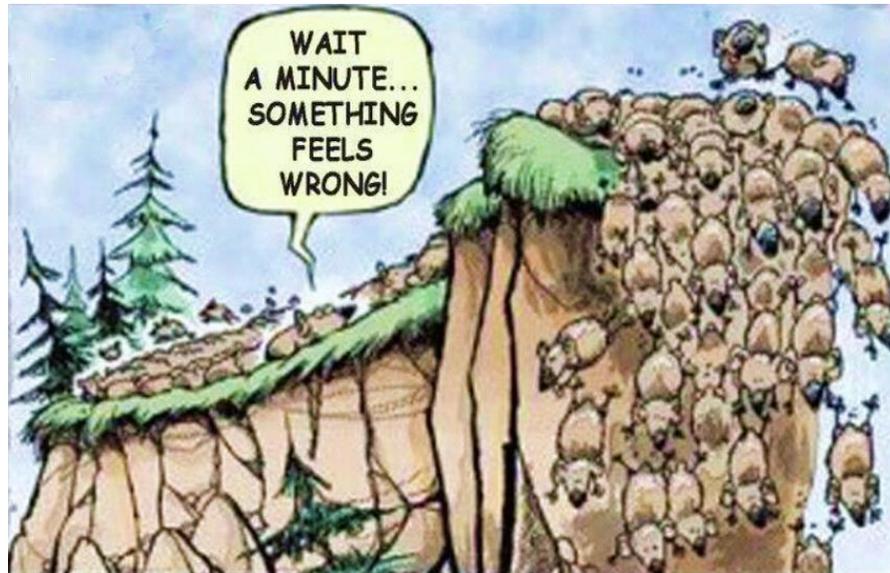
*Southwest was quick in its response, posting a video with an apology from CEO Gary Kelly. But the big lesson was that the crisis team was empowered with digital tools & resources. The Southwest team shared photos, videos, and tweets from passengers with the airline's executive team, helping keep them informed about what was really happening and how best to quickly respond. One passenger used the plane's Wi-Fi to broadcast live on Facebook.*

**Southwest**<sup>®</sup>

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## # 8. *Overreacting to Market or Design Trends that are not on-brand*

We're living in an era of constant consumption where news, fashion, and social media updates come at us non-stop, and something is always trending. It could be social media, a new story, hashtags, clothing, or a new design. It is important to remember these trends come and go.



### *Tip on avoiding unnecessary changes*

While a particular strategy may be popular because it's effective at that time for those others, however, it doesn't mean that it's right for your brand. Before you make any brand changes in reaction to those trends consider:

- The response and loyalty of your customers. What do they think?
- Are you staying true to your brand ID, voice and personality
- If you're an executive, try to avoid changing the brand because you want to make your mark. Make a change that is best for the customer, the company, and the long-term value of the brand.
- Pay attention to when your customer demographics change. An update on your brand strategy or marketing plan, listening posts, and paying attention to your metrics will help you stay on top of these changes.

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

- Don't ignore the brand aging signs by not staying relevant and updating your messages, look and feel to keep up with the times'.

***Avoid the crowd. Do your own thinking independently. Be the chess player, not the chess piece."***

***~ Ralph Charell***

***Example: Tropicana destroyed a much-loved brand packaging then it changed back***

*Pictures speak louder than words. Tropicana is made from 100% Orange Juice – pure and natural. It says so on the package with a real orange on it with a straw sticking out of it. It's an iconic piece of design as relevant today as the day it was created.*

*However, a poor strategy and short-lived redesign in 2008 removed the orange and the straw and the familiar characterful logo in favor of a “hipper” bland stripped back geometric sans serif makeover to keep “up with the times.” Overnight it had lost its identity and PepsiCo lost in excess of \$100 million dollars as sales fell by 20%. The original branding was immediately reinstated.*



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## # 9. Failure to Legally protect your brand

Consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by the appeared stature of "brand marks." Building a business and a successful brand is hard work, and like any valuable asset your work hard for, they should be protected. The various "brand marks" include:



- Trademark- A trademark (™) is typically a word, phrase, symbol, design, or combination of those, that identifies and distinguishes the source of goods or services in the market. The trademark may or may not include a logo (a graphic). Just placing a symbol on your product or service is a start, but it does not guarantee protection. To have full legal protection for your trademark, you must complete the registration process. With the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).
- Service Mark- A service mark (SM) is similar to a trademark, but service marks distinguish the services of one company from those of another provider.
- Copyright- A copyright (©) is a bit trickier. A law dictionary defines copyright as "a person's exclusive right to reproduce, publish, or sell his or her original work of authorship which can include a writing, song, dance, work of art, to projects, software, buildings, etc. owns."
- Registration- the Registration (®) symbol designates a trademark or service mark that's registered with the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).
- Patents-A patent is a government-awarded license that grants the inventor of a product or process exclusive rights to its manufacture, use, or sale for a specified time.

### *Tips on protection*

Considerations when protecting your brand include:

- Do your due diligence: do a name and a logo search early on in your exploration process.  
<http://tmsearch.uspto.gov/bin/gate.exe?f=tess&state=4803:20jrq4.1.1>

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

- Consider hiring a professional up-front to ascertain your legal protection needs and complexities. This support will help avoid the very high costs and time involved in a dispute or litigation down the road.
- Avoid copying a similar brand look as lawsuits may come later. (See Starbucks example below.) Determine if the name and visuals/logo can be protected with a trademark, service mark, or if the offering can be patented).
- Think globally, not just locally. Be aware of international trademark laws and limitations.
- Trademark or service mark, or copyright your brand, and patents using the formal registration process and use your ™, SM, ©, and ® regularly, and more than once on a page to help establish ownership.
- Act quickly to secure your brandmark to avoid any conflicts or rival claims.
- To fully protect the brand, create clearly defined contracts, protect your secrets, and have a constant watch over all legal filings. Set up a Google Alert to monitor your brand name activity.
- Do your research; however, as stressed earlier, it is best to get professional advice

**Example: Starbucks Corporation protected their "Freddoccino".**

*"In January 2016, Starbucks sued the parent company of New York's Coffee Culture Cafe for launching a drink called the "Freddoccino." The documents of the lawsuit allege that not only does the drink appear similar to the Frappuccino, but the structure of the name was also similar enough to cause "confusion in the marketplace" and diminish Starbucks' "brand equity."*

*"Starbucks owns the trademark for the term Frappuccino and alleged that Coffee Culture had created deceptive packaging to make the term "Freddoccino" appear to be trademarked when it is not. Though Coffee Culture Cafe has renamed the drink as a "Freddo," Starbucks is proceeding with the lawsuit. Coffee Culture could have avoided the issue by preventing infringement on a closely-guarded trademark, with an annual value of approximately \$1.5 billion."*



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## # 10. Not developing a Brand Strategy

*A lack of planning is one of the top 5 reasons 50% of small businesses fail in the first five years.*

*~ US Small Business Association*

*And the absence of a written brand strategy is part of that reason.*

Branding is the discipline and art of giving meaning to specific products by creating and shaping a brand that impacts a consumer's heart and mind.

A brand strategy is a written plan for the development and management of a successful brand to achieve specific company goals and objectives. It is the distillation of the truth or value of an organization, product, or service. It is the confirmation of characteristics, values, and attributes that clarify what this particular brand is and is not. The brand strategy work both includes both an internal company and external market analysis.

Preferably and based on where a company is in its branding or marketing and lifecycle, a written branding strategy should be foundational in the development of a company. It preferably should both precede and underlie any marketing efforts. Consider that brand is the magnet, and marketing is the strategic effort of actively promoting that brand.

People often confuse branding with marketing and what should come first. Executing a marketing strategy before branding strategy runs the risk of mixed messages and a confused company/product image. You can't build a sustainable marketing plan without first implementing your brand image across all channels. The world's most recognizable companies put brand strategy first, including Apple, Google, Nike, and LEGO.



*I believe branding is a spiritual journey and not a destination.*

# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

*It is about belief, courage, tenacity, and conviction. Laurie P. Rinker*

The benefits of a Brand strategy include:

- .Crystallizes your company's purpose, distills your brand truth, and provides clarity and focus.
- Supports consistent delivery on your brand promise, which drives credibility and customer trust.
- Ensures you emotionally connect with customers, and helps to keep the company target-centric.
- Communicates your competitive edge in the market, point of difference, DNA, and relevance to your customers.
- Controls your brand so others don't.
- Develops internal marketing confidence and aligned across company disciplines.
- It confirms or challenges the strategy that is in your head.
- Drives higher results and value.



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## Tips on Brand Strategy

- Be honest, and get objective input ( from internal and external stakeholders and of course customers  
Include multiple disciplines and viewpoints
- Be intentional with the goals, objectives, and timeline for the brand strategy project.
- For any naming consider any long-term brand growth and brand extensions for brand architecture
- "Successful brand strategies are the ones where there's a gift – a value set – and it connects. It's not about having consumers adopt your values: it's about them relating to them and making connections."  
~ Gaston Legorburu, [SapientNitro](#)
- If you are a start-up and are in the midst of marketing, *stop*, and get your brand strategy underway immediately!
- Review your brand strategy at least annually

*Example: The essential elements of a Brand Strategy include*



# The Top 10 Branding Mistakes to Avoid

## Conclusion

These top 10 Branding Mistakes are only a few of the errors along the branding road. However, these are critical mistakes to avoid. I trust you have found these highlights helpful as you move forward in your branding journey.

Look forward to more branding and marketing insights and tips at [BrandsThatDeliver.com/blog](https://BrandsThatDeliver.com/blog).

Let me know if you have any questions, input, or comments. [Lrinker@BrandsThatDeliver.com](mailto:Lrinker@BrandsThatDeliver.com).

We are here to help!

## About Brands That Deliver™

Laurie Pillings Rinker is an independent consultant and Principal of Brands that Deliver™ specializing in branding and marketing guidance, development, and management.



Brands That Deliver transforms brands whose revenues are flat are in transition have merged, have a new product launch, have a change of leadership, are starting-up, under competitive duress, have customers that are not loyal, are unfocused, or have inconsistent messaging. You can email Laurie at [Lrinker@BrandsThatDeliver.com](mailto:Lrinker@BrandsThatDeliver.com), call in the SF Bay Area, CA [1-415-209-8659](tel:1-415-209-8659) or visit [brandsthatdeliver.com](https://brandsthatdeliver.com)

## Are you a Brand That Delivers?

*Note: These materials are a ©of Brands That Deliver™, a dba of Brand Marketing Services, Inc. All rights reserved. Except as permitted under the US Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher. [Lrinker@brandsthatdeliver.com](mailto:Lrinker@brandsthatdeliver.com)*