

The Six Elements of Branding

1. The Product

Whatever it is that you are providing to others that they feel has value is your Product. Your product may be a tangible item, such as a watch or a pet rock; it could be an intangible item, such as an online course or a coaching program; or it could be a service, such as video editing or plumbing. Whatever it is that you want to sell, regardless of its nature, is your Product.

In your case, your Product is Book Trailers. You have a unique ability to create book trailers in a way that nobody else brings to the marketplace. Your book trailers are not the same as anyone else's book trailers, and we will be focusing on those unique elements of your Product (your book trailers) to cement in the minds of your target audience exactly what they will be getting from you if they give you money.

Remember, there can be no doubt in the mind of your prospective customers exactly what they know they will be receiving. And what they will be receiving is your Product.

2. The Promise

We have expectations of everything and everyone we encounter. In fact when we don't have expectations it's because the thing is unknown to us and that is frightening. This fear is experienced on an instinctual level. We don't have a choice, but to feel it. It's just how we are hardwired.

Your business is the same way. And so is your product. Those expectations are hardwired into us. If you call an ambulance, you expect the EMTs to show up and to have basic medical training and be able to quickly diagnose a case of indigestion... Or a heart attack. That makes the normal EMTs. They'd have to work hard to screw that up. Your product also has expectations surrounding it. A new car is expected to be clean and reliable. We used car is expected to be a risk of breakdown, and a little worn out. That risk is paid for by lower price. So what is the industry expectation for your product? Even if the product has never existed before it will automatically be granted the "new thing" expectation list: unproven, unreliable, probably a scam, could make me cool if I own it first, or make me a fool for getting scammed.

*Sidenote: do you see how a new product is now a very difficult sale to a person who is buying a product for others?

But everybody has a set of expectations about a product. What makes you stand out is how you will reinforce the positive expectations, while eliminating at least one of the negative expectations. That extra bit of information is your Brand promise.

Selecting your brand promise is something you have to do carefully because you must be certain you can deliver on it 100% of the time. Don't promise eight hours of individual attention to each new customer and then book for new customers on Tuesday. It's impossible and by doing so you will destroy your brand reputation. Yes your entire reputation is based on how well you keep your brand promise.

The aforementioned used car business can use its brand promise to acknowledge the fears people have of getting an unreliable car by offering a 100 point inspection, a 90 day/9000 mile warranty, and a free loaner car if anything happens during the first 90 days. Think you could get an extra 10% on the sale price, just by making that promise? You bet you could. Even if you put a \$50 deductible on the repairs, that's still a great deal (but just be sure it is prominently displayed in your marketing material!)

Now let's look at your product, your product expectations, and your individual Brand promise.

Your area of specialization is in science fiction and fantasy. It is crucial that your customers understand that you are promising to deliver a book trailer that absolutely reflects their book's genre. Science fiction is not fantasy, and fantasy is not science fiction. The two are not interchangeable, and the looks of the trailers must reflect this distinction. These two genres are also not (necessarily) epic dramas that require a scope and a feel that is majestic and cinematic. A cozy fantasy novel needs no such visual extravagance, and your background allows you to promise your customers that your trailer will precisely match the genre and feel of their science fiction or fantasy novel... because that's all you do.

3. The Perception

Your product and promise are important, but if nobody knows about the unique combination you bring to the marketplace, they are quite literally worthless. It is important that you have a firm grasp on how your product is perceived in the marketplace, and to do that you must first understand How you perceive it yourself.

How do you perceive your business will become the way others see it, assuming your actions do not contradict that perception you can't claim to be honest Joe, but then steal and lie whenever the opportunity arises. You would have a lousy reputation, and it's because you didn't see your business as a place where people are treated honestly and safely, but rather because you truly perceived your business as a place where you could take advantage of people who should have known better.

So let's look at the best way for you to perceive your own business, so that you can then project that perception outward to the people who need to hear it the most: your prospects.

A book trailer is nothing more than a commercial for selling a book to consumers (or publishers, if things go well). You have a thirty year history of creating award winning commercials that do exactly that: sell things. Your commercials generated response across many industries, but your own passion is in science fiction and fantasy. You have a magnificently broad background in science fiction and fantasy fandom, so you not only know the references, you understand them in their deeper context. Naturally, the fact that you have also authored four books of your own in these genres, and your wife is a published author in these genres, gives you a special insight into the needs and desires of authors.

By bringing your unique skills and genre knowledge to the table, you have the ability to make book trailers that aren't just pretty... they WORK.

4. The Presentation

Your Presentation is entirely founded upon your message. This message must be as clear and crisp as glass of ice cold water. Except for one thing... you need to make an impact.

Many of your competitors will be using their industry momentum to keep you from getting a foot in the door. This is true of any small business, but especially true of those who are just starting out. You don't have the advertising budget of a Walmart or an Amazon, but you are expected to compete against organizations that have that sort of firepower in their arsenal. They can just fire off messages all day to every market, knowing that eventually something is going to hit and they're going to get a customer. They've invested millions into their brands, and have become household names.

You not only can't do that, you don't need to.

In a word of shotgun blasts and machine gun messaging, you need to be a sniper. You can only afford one shot, so you have to make it count.

Matching your product name with your brand promise is a massive first step in creating that kind of Presentation congruity. When these things are working in harmony, they self-reinforce your impact in your marketplace. You will work to target your best potential prospects, while simultaneously delivering them a message that only they will understand to its fullest. It doesn't matter if 90% of people who see a message don't get it. What matters is that the 10% who DO get it are YOUR best prospects. But through the power of target marketing, you will not be wasting money or time even talking to those 90% anyway.

In the case of Other Worlds Video (glad you like the name), you will be delivering your message directly to the people who are capable of making the buying decision. I suggest you offer the following packages as part of your Presentation:

1. **Book Covers Only.** You are already delivering these, so converting people over to a bigger package shouldn't be too difficult. *Suggested Price: \$79*
2. **Book Cover & Preview Trailer:** Upselling from the cover only to a trailer and cover is a quick process for you, but it is the perfect tripwire product for building your future clientele. Remember... authors rarely write just one book. Getting a customer for one book could create a customer for ten years or more. This is why it is important to have a valuable, high quality tripwire product like this. *Suggested Price: \$169*
3. **Jupiter Class Package:** Only you know what you are capable of delivering for a premium price. This is going to be one long trailer, or possibly a package of short trailers. It can offer live actors and extensive filming and editing. *Suggested Price: \$3,000+*

5. The Permeation

In any successful business, a well-defined and compelling **Brand Promise Presentation** is more than just a statement; it serves as the cornerstone of the company's identity and strategy. This promise represents the

values, aspirations, and commitments your business makes to its customers and stakeholders. However, its true power lies in its ability to permeate and influence the corporate culture, turning lofty ideals into actionable, everyday practices. When the Brand Promise Presentation aligns seamlessly with the corporate culture, it creates a unified organization that delivers on its commitments and thrives in a competitive marketplace.

Alignment Builds Trust and Credibility

A Brand Promise Presentation must not be confined to a plaque on the wall or an internal memo; it must resonate throughout the business's operations and interactions. Employees, from entry-level staff to senior executives, should embody this promise in their attitudes, decisions, and customer engagements. When the workforce genuinely reflects the Brand Promise, customers experience consistency and authenticity, fostering trust and long-term loyalty. Conversely, a disconnect between the stated promise and the corporate culture can lead to reputational damage and eroded trust.

Motivating and Engaging Partners

Embedding the Brand Promise into the corporate culture inspires partners by giving their work a sense of purpose and direction. It provides a clear understanding of how their roles contribute to a greater mission. When partners, or employees even, see the Brand Promise actively shaping the company's decisions, policies, and practices, they feel more engaged and connected to the business's goals. This alignment boosts morale, productivity, and a shared sense of pride in delivering on the company's commitments.

Driving Consistency Across Operations

Corporate culture acts as the vehicle through which the Brand Promise becomes reality. It ensures that every department, from marketing to customer service to operations, interprets and implements the promise in a consistent manner. For example, a Brand Promise centered on innovation requires a culture that encourages creative thinking, risk-taking, and continuous improvement. A disjointed culture, on the other hand, can result in inconsistent customer experiences, diminishing the value of the Brand Promise.

Navigating Challenges and Change

In times of crisis or change, a corporate culture grounded in the Brand Promise acts as a stabilizing force. It provides a clear framework for decision-making, guiding the organization toward actions that uphold its commitments and values. Employees and stakeholders can find reassurance in knowing that the company remains steadfast in its promise, even in uncertain times. This steadfastness reinforces loyalty and positions the business as a resilient and reliable entity.

Practical Steps for Integration

To ensure the Brand Promise permeates the corporate culture, leadership must take deliberate actions:

- **Communicate Clearly:** Share the Brand Promise through regular internal communications, training sessions, and town halls.
- **Lead by Example:** Executives and managers should model behaviors and decisions that reflect the Brand Promise.
- **Align Policies and Processes:** Ensure hiring, performance evaluations, and customer engagement practices reinforce the promise.
- **Celebrate Successes:** Recognize and reward employees who exemplify the Brand Promise in their work.

6. The Packaging

In the digital age, a small business's online presence plays a pivotal role in shaping its brand identity and driving growth. At the center of this presence is the **Brand Site**, a dynamic, interactive website that serves as the hub of all brand-related activity. Unlike a static website, a Brand Site is designed to engage, inform, and build lasting connections with its audience. For small businesses aiming to carve out a distinct identity in a crowded marketplace, a strongly interactive Brand Site is an indispensable tool for amplifying their brand strategy.

Establishing a Unique Brand Identity

A Brand Site is the most direct way for a small business to showcase its identity, values, and promise to customers. Through thoughtful design, content, and functionality, it communicates the essence of the brand. Interactive features, such as quizzes, user-generated content, or tailored product recommendations, allow customers to experience the brand in a personal and memorable way. This differentiation helps small businesses stand out and establish a unique voice in the market.

Building Trust and Credibility

For small businesses, trust is a critical factor in attracting and retaining customers. An interactive Brand Site builds credibility by offering valuable content, transparent information, and responsive customer support. Features like live chat, detailed FAQ sections, and user reviews foster a sense of reliability and customer care. When visitors feel that the Brand Site meets their needs efficiently and authentically, they are more likely to trust and engage with the brand.

Enhancing Customer Engagement

Interactive elements encourage visitors to actively engage with the brand rather than passively browse. Whether it's through commenting on blog posts, participating in polls, or sharing experiences on social media through integrated widgets, these interactions deepen the connection between the customer and the brand. Engagement

not only keeps visitors on the site longer but also increases the likelihood of conversions, as customers feel more connected to a brand that invites their input and participation.

Driving Conversion and Retention

A well-designed Brand Site integrates interactive features that guide visitors through the customer journey seamlessly. From product demonstrations to personalized shopping experiences, interactive tools simplify decision-making and build confidence in purchases. Post-sale, elements like loyalty programs, personalized thank-you pages, and exclusive content portals encourage repeat visits and foster long-term customer relationships, which are vital for small business growth.

Data Collection and Insights

Interactivity provides businesses with invaluable data on customer preferences, behaviors, and pain points. Features such as surveys, feedback forms, and analytics tools allow small businesses to refine their offerings and marketing strategies based on real customer input. These insights help small businesses stay agile and responsive to market demands, ensuring their brand strategy remains relevant and effective.

Strengthening Multi-Channel Integration

A Brand Site serves as the central hub for a small business's digital ecosystem, connecting social media, email marketing, and other online platforms. By embedding interactive elements like social sharing buttons, newsletters, and call-to-action prompts, the Brand Site ensures a seamless transition between channels. This integration maximizes brand visibility and keeps the business top of mind across various customer touchpoints.