



Unexpurgated Raw first draft: "The Author's Cut"

Implementing E-Learning

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Brand

A brand is a “name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of these intended to identify the products or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors. A brand is a seller’s promise to deliver consistently a specific set of features, benefits, and services to buyers.”ⁱ Brands convey benefits, values, and personality.

Here are some of the world’s best-known brands:

Coca-Cola
Sony
Kodak

McDonald’s
Porsche
Seiko

Suntory
Black & Decker
Mercedes-Benz

Say the name of each brand in your mind. What associations to you make? Do you like some of these brands a lot? Do you trust them to deliver a good product? Would you pay more for something carrying one of these brand names than a similar generic product? If one of these companies brought out a new product, would you consider buying it? (I know, I can’t afford the Porsche right now either.)

We’re not suggesting that you invest billions of dollars, as these companies do, promoting your brand. You’re not fighting it out with competitors on the showroom floor or supermarket shelf. Nonetheless, creating an in-house brand for your eLearning can help you create more loyal customers.

Your brand is your reputation. You establish a brand by selecting a name, a consistent image, messaging, packaging,

Your brand differentiates your eLearning from the general marketplace. Just having a brand is a sign of quality, for it shows that some thought has gone into creating it rather than simply buying generic training off the shelf. If training in

general has a bad reputation among your people, your brand can help differentiate what you have to offer from the run-of-the-mill.

An in-house eLearning brand makes it easier to create brand extensions, i.e. to put other learning opportunities and interventions into the existing program.

Brand. When the jobs of some marketing experts were downsized out of existence, NCR University signed them up to help build its "brand." They created a logo and brand identity. They helped set a marketing strategy and vision in place and push it out in print and video.

Marketing is building a brandⁱⁱ

In the early eighties, Al Ries and Jack Trout wrote a brilliant pamphlet to publicize their advertising agency. They mailed out thousands of free copies of *Positioning, the Battle for Your Mind*. I passed my copy around for all to see. These guys realized that people buy products based on where we pigeonhole them in our heads.

Al Ries later told me that he and Jack had made a fundamental error. They should have been charging for the pamphlet. These guys are not dummies. The pamphlet grew into a best selling book and placed product positioning in the marketing toolbox for good. They went on to write *Marketing Warfare*, *The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing*, and *Bottom-Up Marketing*.

In *The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding: How to Build a Product or Service into a World-Class Brand*. Al and his wife Laura simplify things by observing, "In the consumer's mind, there is no difference between a company or product name and a brand name."

Al and Laura say that "Marketing has become too complicated, too confusing, and too full of jargon. In most companies, marketing work is done by many different functional groups. Advertising, product development, product design, consumer research, sales promotion, and public relations, to name a few. Coordinating and integrating these functional groups has become a major activity of its own. If marketing is to fulfill its promise as the driving force in an organization, the marketing process itself has to be simplified. In other words, focused."

What is the single most important objective of the marketing process?
What is the glue that holds the broad range of marketing functions together?

We believe it's the process of branding.

Marketing is building a brand in the mind of the prospect. If you can build a powerful brand, you will have a powerful marketing program. If

you can't, then all the advertising, fancy packaging, sales promotion, and public relations in the world won't help you achieve your objective.

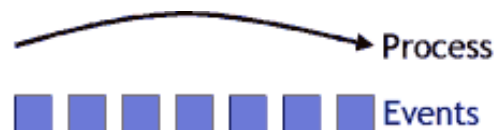
Marketing is branding. The two concepts are so inextricably linked that it is impossible to separate them. Furthermore, since everything a company does can contribute to the brand-building process, marketing is not a function that can be considered in isolation.

The Learning Center at Aspect Communications has all the attributes of an in-house brand. Graphic treatment is consistent across posters, catalogs, fliers, and signage.

Your brand identity

You may be wondering why you'd want a brand identity. After all, you have probably done just fine up until now without one.

In the old days, most training organizations focused on individual courses or events. Now their attention is shifting to long-term relationships. We care about brand because we want those people to come back.



You may have noticed us slip in a new term, *brand identity*. When we were conducting market research, we were assessing brand image. Image is what you've got; identity is what you want to aspire to before.ⁱⁱⁱ

Your brand identity specifies your promise to your customers. It creates a value proposition involving functional, emotional, or self-expressive benefits. It is the soul of what you seek to achieve.

Brand Image	Brand Identity
What you got	Where you want to be
Looking back	Looking ahead
Appearance	Reality
Superficial	Enduring
Other's view	Your desire
Passive	Active

Focus on shaping your Brand Identity. Brand Image will follow.

Novice marketers often create brands that reflect product characteristics. Astute marketers look more to lasting emotional and self-expressive benefits. Basing a brand on function can fail to differentiate, reduce flexibility, and cut off future options. Any engineers in the room? Skip over the next sentence.

Brands that reflect product characteristics assume that buyers are rational decision-makers, and experience teaches they are anything but.

David Aakers, a professor at the Haas School of Business at Berkeley and reigning guru of branding, identifies these sources of brand value:

Value to customers

- Easier to process information
- Confidence in selecting the product
- Satisfaction in use
- Provides status, reinforcement of image

Value to firm

- Effective marketing programs
- Loyalty, repeat business
- Easier to make sales
- Competitive advantage

Defining your brand identity

What do you want your organization and services to be known for? What do you promise your customers?

What is your functional value proposition to your consumers?

What is your emotional value proposition to your consumers?

How will your brand identity give meaning to the lives of your customers?

Expressing your brand identity

You will express your brand through word and deed, signs and messages, symbols and metaphors. Let's use the best slogans, images, and jingles ever created as catalysts to creating *your* eLearning brand.

A study in the mid-nineties tested more than a thousand people's opinions of sixty top brands, matching them to 114 personality traits.^{iv} Five brand personality traits emerged that account for an astonishing 93% of the observed differences between brands.

Sincerity (Campbell's, Hallmark, Kodak)

Down-To-Earth: family-oriented, small-town, conventional, blue-collar, all-American

Honest: sincere, real, ethical, thoughtful, caring

Wholesome: original, genuine, ageless, classic, old-fashioned

Cheerful: sentimental, friendly, warm, happy

Excitement (Porsche, Absolut, Benetton)

Daring: trendy, exciting, off-beat, flashy, provocative

Spirited; cool, young, lively, outgoing, adventurous,

Imaginative: unique, humorous, surprising, artistic, fun

Up-To-Date: independent, contemporary, innovative, aggressive

Competence (Amex, CNN, IBM)

Reliable: hardworking, secure, efficient, trustworthy, careful

Intelligent: technical, corporate, serious

Successful: leader, confident, influential

Sophistication (Lexus, Mercedes, Revlon)

Upper Class: glamorous, good-looking, pretentious, sophisticated

Charming: feminine, smooth, sexy, gentle

Ruggedness (Levi's, Marlboro, Nike)

Outdoorsy: masculine, Western, active, athletic

Tough: rugged, strong, no-nonsense

What personality type should your brand aspire to? What will have the most appeal to your consumers? You may cross some categories (Levi's scores in both ruggedness and excitement) but be careful not to create a confusing, schizophrenic brand. Feel free to borrow from the adjectives above, but do write down your answer.

Personality of Your Brand Identity

Just as a brand identity may reflect a person (personality), it may reflect an organization and its culture. What attributes of your organization might you incorporate into your brand identity? Check off any that seem particularly appropriate.

Organizational Aspects of Your Brand Identity

Innovation	Concern for customers	Successful
High-tech	Substantial	Credible
Trustworthy	Profit-driven	In the know

In the previous chapter, we asked you to map your existing brand reputation to some well-known consumer products. Now do the same for your brand identity, that is, the way you want to be known.

Concerning your brand identity going forward:

If your eLearning were a beer, which one would it be?	
If your eLearning were a car, which...	
If your eLearning were a college...	
If your eLearning were a book...	
If your eLearning were a game....	
If your eLearning were a beverage...	

According to Advertising Age,^y these are the top ten advertising slogans of the century:

1. Diamonds are forever (DeBeers)
2. Just do it (Nike)
3. The pause that refreshes (Coca-Cola)
4. Tastes great, less filling (Miller Lite)
5. We try harder (Avis)
6. Good to the last drop (Maxwell House)
7. Breakfast of champions (Wheaties)
8. Does she ... or doesn't she? (Clairol)
9. When it rains it pours (Morton Salt)
10. Where's the beef? (Wendy's)

Write a few slogans that capture the value of your brand.

Don't feel too bad if some drop-dead gorgeous slogans didn't pop into your head. The advertising agencies who came up with those top slogans received millions of dollars in business from the companies that commissioned them.

I once met the guy who wrote the Budweiser jingle (you can still hear it around Christmastime.) He was making six figures writing jingles in 1983! Here are the best of the best:

1. You deserve a break today (McDonalds)
2. Be all that you can be (U.S. Army)
3. Pepsi Cola Hits the Spot (Pepsi Cola)
4. M'm, M'm good (Campbell's)
5. See the USA in your Chevrolet (GM)
6. I wish I was an Oscar Meyer Wiener (Oscar Meyer)
7. Double your pleasure, double your fun (Wrigley's Doublemint gum)
8. Winston tastes good like a cigarette should (Winston)
9. It's the Real Thing (Coca Cola)
10. Brylcreem-- A little dab'll do ya

Write a few jingles that capture the value of your brand.

Advertising Age's list of the Top 10 ad icons of the 20th century^{vi} recognizes those images that have had the most powerful resonance in the marketplace. The criteria include effectiveness, longevity, recognition, and cultural impact.

1. [The Marlboro Man](#) - Marlboro cigarettes
2. [Ronald McDonald](#) - McDonald's restaurants

3. [The Green Giant](#) - Green Giant vegetables
4. [Betty Crocker](#) - Betty Crocker food products
5. [The Energizer Bunny](#) - Eveready Energizer batteries
6. [The Pillsbury Doughboy](#) - Assorted Pillsbury foods
7. [Aunt Jemima](#) - Aunt Jemima pancake mixes and syrup
8. [The Michelin Man](#) - Michelin tires
9. [Tony the Tiger](#) - Kellogg's Sugar Frosted Flakes
10. [Elsie](#) - Borden dairy products

What character or symbol could represent the value of your brand?

You probably don't need a slogan or jingle, but we encourage you to develop a graphic image, perhaps with a character. Develop standards for display of your look. Apply the image consistently. Make it look professional.

The next topics in this chapter may change your mind, but for now, please pick a name and symbol for your emerging brand identity. Jot down a few ideas on what you want to be famous for.

Our eLearning Brand Identity

Brand Name:

Brand Symbol or Logo:

A few core values:

ⁱ Kotler, op. cit., p 283

ⁱⁱ Al Ries and Laura Ries. (1998). *The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding*. HarperBusiness.

ⁱⁱⁱ David A. Aaker. (1996). *Building Strong Brands*, The Free Press.

^{iv} Jennifer Aaker, “Conceptualizing and Measuring Brand Personality: A Brand Personality Scale,” Stanford University, December 1995. Cited in David Aaker, op cit.

^v www.adage.com

^{vi} http://www.adage.com/century/ad_icons.html