

# Why your brand is the most valuable asset your company has.

Reading time 10-15 minutes



## What is a brand

Your brand is the most valuable asset your company has. It isn't what your company does, it isn't what you sell, it isn't how you advertise yourself: it's the way that people **perceive** you. Great brands inspire because people don't buy what you do: they buy **why** you do it.

While brand perception is intangible, there are many elements that go together to form the fabric of a brand: The company name and tagline, company culture, brand identity, brand personality, brand architecture, tone of voice and messaging - to name a few.

### BRANDING

(verb)

The art and science of influencing perception about a product, service, or organisation.

### Company Name and Tagline

Fundamentally a company's name serves to act as a unique identifier to your business. As a business asset they are so strong that we've witnessed common words take on legally protected statuses: "Windows", "Apple". We've even seen companies like Specsavers having their applications approved for a trademark on the contraction "should've" (as

in "Should've gone to Specsavers). The media and telecommunications conglomerate Sky plc have been well known to start legal proceedings with many attempting to use the word "Sky" in any part of their business; the 2016 release of 'No Man's Sky' by Hello Games settled out of court for their blunder of attempting to use this common word!

A company's tagline is a short slogan that tells people who you are and what you stand for. In fewer words, it's your business' mantra. Think now of a few of your favourite brands - do their taglines immediately pop into your head?

The Nike logo, a white swoosh, is positioned above the tagline "JUST DO IT." in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The entire graphic is set against a solid black rectangular background.The Apple logo, a white silhouette of an apple with a bite taken out of it, is positioned above the tagline "Think different." in a white, serif font. The entire graphic is set against a solid black rectangular background.

With a simple, catchy tagline a brand can create a positive and memorable phrase that sticks in the heads of consumers - ultimately strengthening your brand proposition.

This all goes to show how taglines, as well as brand messaging, play such a vital role in the overall value of a brand.

## Brand identity

A brand identity can be defined as the collection of elements that come together to form the uniform of your brand. The core elements are:

- Logo
- Colours
- Typography
- Mission statement
- Values
- Tone of voice and messaging
- Brand design assets

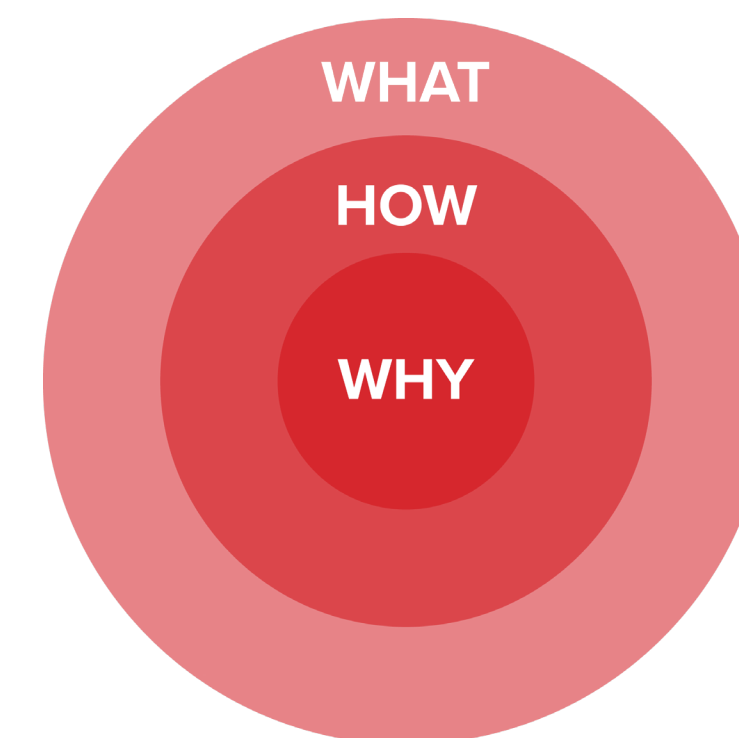
The particular way in which a brand utilises all of these elements goes towards creating the perception of a brand that we spoke about at the beginning. A great designer will have carefully considered each of the specifics of these elements in order to curate the influence they have.

## How do you create a great brand?

Think about how a great brand operates, what feelings does it evoke? Now think of how most people might describe their company if they were to give a classic elevator pitch. They would tend to begin with what they do, the products they sell and their services. They might talk about how they deliver these, maybe it's their unique design, maybe it's their advanced technology. Very few may mention **why** they do what they do. Beyond financial gain, why they get out of bed in the morning and go to work to do what they do.

It's only human nature that we tend to talk like this, we're very subject - object oriented creatures when bound by the restraints of language. The thing is, when talking about 'what' you do, you're speaking to an active part of the recipient's brain: their neocortex. The neocortex deals with rational, analytical thought and language. People don't tend to buy into the idea of a brand when functioning on this level. But if you talk to someone about **why** you do what you do; the greater purpose, the source of your inspiration: you're now speaking to the limbic system. The limbic system deals with feelings (trust, loyalty), behaviour and decision making, and it has no capacity for language.

That's why when people find something they really love, they are often not able to give their reasons in a rational description. *"I just felt it was right", "They just got me", "I just had a good feeling about it"* are common descriptors of this limbic response.





Consider the following:

**What?** We make great computers

**How?** They're beautifully designed, simple to use and user friendly.

**Why?** Want to buy one?

How inspired do you think a consumer would be by this sort of message? Not very, it's likely. Now consider this:

**Why?** Everything we do, we believe in challenging the status quo, we believe in thinking differently.

**How?** The way we do this is by making beautiful designed products that are simple to use and user friendly

**What?** We just happen to make great computers, want to buy one?

It's powerful, isn't it. You'll have picked up on the source of our examples here: Apple. You see, great brands will talk about why they do what they do first and foremost. Because that's what people really buy into. Not what you do, but why you do it. The ultimate goal is to do business with people who believe what you believe, and creating your brand with this framework in mind is what will enable you to inspire; and those that inspire, lead.

### Why you need a great brand, and not 'just a logo'

We understand, you've started a business and everyone tells you: you need a logo! You need a website! You need to be on social media! But after learning about how great brands are created, take a step back to appreciate how important your brand is to your business.

It's true: *anyone* can design you a logo, and *anyone* will try. These days there are a plethora of cheap design services around, from cookie-cutter logos on sites like fiverr, to freelancers on etsy or peopleperhour; or even websites that offer free logos: you can go out now and grab yours.

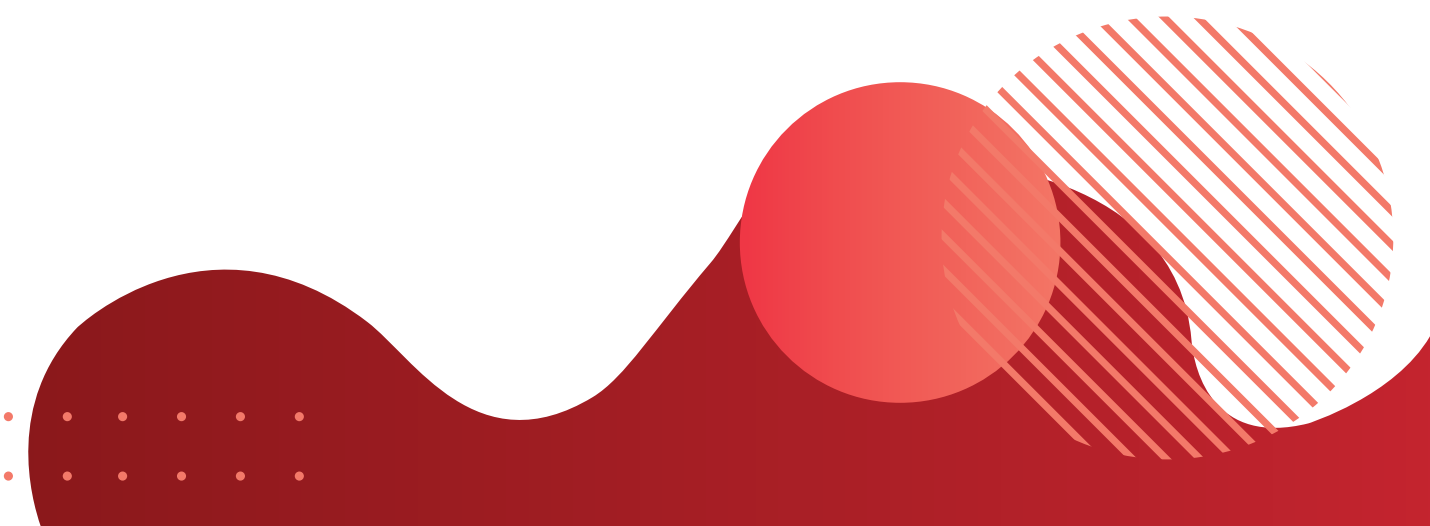
But as we've discussed, that's only one piece of the puzzle. When you needed a brand, what you've ended up with is one element. We work with a lot of business owners in this situation, and it's why we understand when they come to us and talk about the problems they've had trying to: establish themselves in their industry, attracting and retaining customers, and creating a strong proposition. The problem is: without a great brand, it's really hard to differentiate yourself from your competitors, and it's really hard to connect with potential customers.

### Why invest in branding?

When your brand is the most valuable asset your company has, investing in creating a strong one should be top priority: because you can't put a price on the value of your brand. With an understanding of how integral branding is to influencing consumer behavior, you can see that it's more than just another expense. It's a long term strategy that yields measurable results.

We know that every business at its core has something that makes it great: an ethos, a philosophy, a Red Sentence. Why not get in touch with us and see how our expertise can deliver on creating a great brand for you, so you can begin to inspire and lead those around you.

Red Sentence.



# Creating your brand: three questions you can ask to get started

1. Beyond financial gain, why do we do what we do?
2. How do we want people to feel about us?
3. What inspires us?

