

Tammy's Office Solutions eBook:

Practical Branding For Your Small Business

BRANDING

A man in a dark suit and tie is holding up a white sign with the word 'BRANDING' written in large, bold, black letters. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a plain, light color.

By: Tammy S. Durden

**Small Business Branding Basics
Understanding the Concepts &
Basics in Creating Your Brand**



www.tammysoffices.com

804-723-5491

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Written By: Tammy S. Durden

CHAPTER 1

SECTION 1.1	WHY IS COMPANY BRANDING IMPORTANT	3
-------------	-----------------------------------	---

CHAPTER 2

SECTION 2.1	HOW CAN SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOP THEIR BRAND	10
-------------	--	----

CHAPTER 3

SECTION 3.1	COMPONENTS & STRATEGY	19
-------------	-----------------------	----

CHAPTER 3

SECTION 4.1	RULES & MISCONCEPTIONS	24
-------------	------------------------	----



Personalized Virtual Services
"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS



Part 1: Why is Company Branding Important?

A major factor (for new businesses especially, but it's important for all businesses) is Branding. People are serious about their brand, yet sadly many do not have enough knowledge to get it right. Entrepreneurs often think that marketing goes hand in hand with it; however, the truth is that the brand is more important, and marketing is a subdivision or secondary to it. Building your brand is one of the most important components of putting any business together. It encompasses your company's identity and sets the image. It contains marketing, logo, your company voice and much more.

"When you are creating a brand for your business you are telling your company's story, through colors, graphics, content, and yes, your logo." *Tammy's Office Solutions*

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

When you are designing your brand you must keep the basics in mind:

- 1. Colors** – what do you want your brand to represent? Color play an important role in this. Most experts believe emotions are invoked by color. Whether you believe this or not, they still play an important role. People expect certain colors for certain types of businesses. For example, green often reminds people of money, so financial services and insurance companies use this frequently (not always, but many times). Never limit your brand to two colors. Black and white are a given; you should never exceed five in total - three beyond black and white. Most have two colors prominently featured, with at least one to three others showing.



- 2. Logos** – this should be the HEART and SOUL of your brand. It can never be as simple as wording done in an artistic way. You want to stand out. The picture you use should, in time, be something people recognize when they think of your brand. Apple’s® use of an apple is a good example, as well as, Coca-Cola®. We recognize these even without the words usually.

In fact, I recently revised our logo because we wanted to remove the headset, but as you can see, we did a little more than simply replace the headset. We needed to remove it for

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

certain, but we actually wanted to freshen it up a bit and tell a little more about what we do. So, as you can see it is very different, yet we tried to maintain the ‘feel’ of the first (at least with name) we attempted to keep the feel of the name with similar (not exactly the same) but similar text. Here is the example of the before and after.

Old Logo:



Revised Logo:



Because we no longer provide answering services, we needed to be rid of the headset. We offer all virtual/online services, so wanted to represent that as well, not to mention the need to represent our increased tech side, thus the computer. I had wanted to find a way to include our other passion if possible as well (empowering disabled professionals to work). I actually created a wheelchair icon to go at the end, thus telling more of our business story. Yet, remember in creating your brand, who are you creating it for? It is not for you, so although I wanted the wheelchair design in, I was overruled by some trusted advisors. They suggested that it confused the message and did not really say what we do. They perceived it to be more like a retail product, and that if they did not know me, they thought I might be selling adaptive office equipment for disabled, rather than provide amazing, custom services for my clients. It is sometimes heart wrenching work, when you own a business. For you, the owner, it is much more than a business, and that is exactly when, as an owner, you need to step back and get objective opinions from your peers, colleagues and professionals to help you. Even having an accountability team is not a bad idea. In revising your logo, you must be very careful to keep some recognizable parts of the old logo, as you do not want to lose your current followers, but there is obviously a reason you are revising it. Therefore, sticking close to the same rules for overall branding should



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

help you, in the end. Just remember, the brand, the logo and all are not for you, the owner, they are should speak to the ideal customer!



Logo Creation for Rstepp by tammysoffices.com

Key things to remember: (1) Stick to same colors as much as possible (if not possible, try to keep at least a couple of the same colors). I was able to keep the dark navy, teals & black/white with slight light blue thrown in. (2) Font – keep same or similar (in mine it did require a change (only due to the fact that I did not know which font was originally used) yet I tried to keep same ‘feel’ so that people would recognize us. (3) Name – keep same name (unless you are totally re-branding everything and that is a very different thing altogether & would take up another eBook).

Although, most logos are fairly simple, containing words and colors, you should also be sure it tells a little about what I do, so that prospective clients will be inquisitive and hopefully want to know more about what you do AND how you can help them.

Remember your **logo helps to tell part of the story** – not all, but it is most certainly a large part of all brands. The goal with branding really is about:

“Your story + what you do = speaking/attracting to your ideal client”

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”



If you are able to tell a piece of your story with your colors & logo, then the next piece should certainly tie it altogether for any potential clients. That component being your **tag line**.

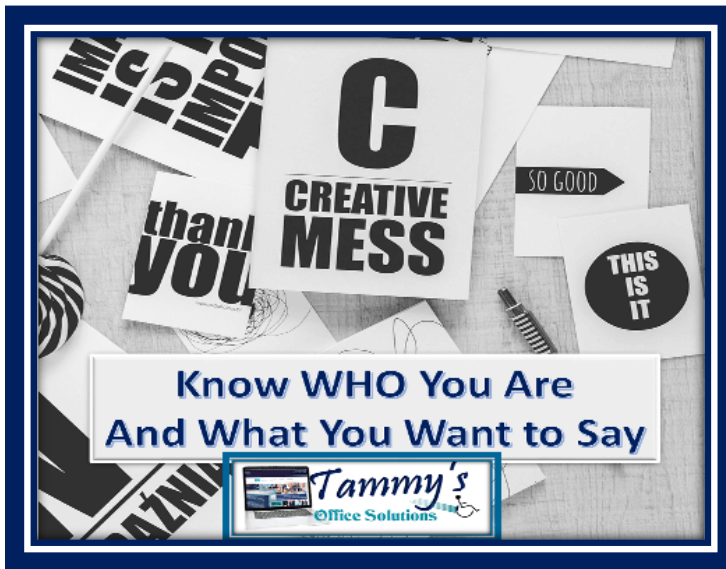
- 3. Tag Lines** – can be tricky and even change, at times. Mine, for instance, also changed. I did not think my story was represented correctly with my old tag line: ‘Virtual Services with Purpose’. It did infer my passion to help disabled professionals in the word ‘Purpose’ because it is part of our purpose, however, many did not understand or worse, did not seem to associate themselves with it. Remember, **all branding** (and yes marketing) **is for the potential client, not for ourselves**. So, my new tag line: **‘Personalized Virtual Services’**, hopefully says that I provide personal, even custom, service for our clients. In doing this, I am appealing more to the consumer/client, rather than trying to push our passion. Of course, those who click on the site and want to know more, will see our passion for disabled. If you are able to do both, even better, as it can also incorporate *part* of your story. social media biographies, estc...). At times,



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

sharing more of your story can be appropriate to share more and reveal more of your story along with what you can do for your ideal client. Keep the focus of the tag line and the client, showing value in their eyes, then when you appeal to them or draw your ideal client in, they will want to learn more. This is where a good website is important. If telling part of your story also reveals how you can help your potential clients, then



absolutely include it as part of the tag line. In determining if it is appropriate to include it, let's look at an example.

Let's, for example of this book, say you own a brick and mortar fishing supply store, that also sells online. And let's say that part of the reason you opened this store was because you have

a passion for fishing. The reason you have this passion is that it was instilled in you from the days when you and your Father frequently fished and this created amazing memories for you. In this instance it can be powerful to include part of your story in your tag line and even in your logo. Perhaps you may even have a small image of a Father/son on the logo and tag line that says something like 'helping you to create memories with loved ones through a great fishing experience' or 'Fishing Experiences to Give You Generations of Memories.'. Once you have gotten their attention and they look further at the brand, they will also find out more about your business. For our company, that means that they will discover, that we have a passion for helping disabled professionals work. What will that mean for your business and will you be able



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

to share part of your story? As you can see, all of these elements are *pieces* of your **whole brand** development for your company.

It is also important to remember we are all personal brands. We represent our brand(s) everywhere we go we take our brand with us. Everyone has a brand, and everyone is a brand. The way you talk, the way you respond to emails, the way you introduce yourself, the way you write is your brand.¹

¹ <http://observer.com/2016/10/ten-digital-skills-you-need-to-master-to-become-an-entrepreneur/>

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

BRANDING: Part II



How Can Small Businesses Develop Their Brand?

Brand Development often begins before we create a logo, pick colors or think of a tag line. When we dream of that business, often the 'why' we want to go into business is answered. Whether we are creating a solution to a problem, or developing a new way to work, or even improving on an idea, we have more than likely thought about how we want to represent that idea or product to the world. That is all part of developing the company brand.

We have discussed the overall basics of branding and 'WHY it is important to a Company' in Part I. Now, you may be saying, 'that is all well and good, but how can I put that into practice with my small company'. Or 'how can I do Brand Development with my micro-business?' As discussed, you have, more than likely, already begun the process before you even opened your business, so think back and remember *what* it was that pushed you to step out and create your company. As we think about that, another practical step you can take is to observe larger businesses. For instance, when we look at Google and their new transition with Alphabet, you can see a few common

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

elements about branding that you can apply to your company. Some pointers we can see, according to Allen Adamson in an article in Forbes:*

"The three main components are:

1. **"It must be a simple name** – break through all of the 'noise' of other brands." (Google did this with Alphabet – a very simple name that can be used in different ways, yet still relates to their original brand).
2. **"It must tell a story** – you can easily tell the story behind the brand (Google's leaders were able to effectively tell the story of how Alphabet was created & why)."
3. **"Be authentic** – your brand must be believable" (it has to be real and genuine for others to relate to it, even vulnerable at times), "when you tell your story, it must be believable."²

Remember, aside from these factors, you also have to ***create something of value in the eyes of the consumer or prospective client***. This value will, more than likely, come either from interaction directly with you (or your company), and/or interaction with your product or services. Some interaction will inevitably be through social media, and other areas will be direct contact (even networking) and/or referrals. Those with a tangible product will find that interaction can also come through these sources, and in some instances, depending on your product, you will find that true trust will only come after trying the product.

² <http://www.forbes.com/sites/allenadamson/2015/08/11/google-again-makes-a-brilliant-branding-move/>



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

"The real value in Branding comes when it helps you stand out in the crowd."

-Tammy S Durden

For every business, a brand strategy is what it takes to build the momentum necessary for survival. One strategy, if genuine, that can help is to partner or stand for a non-profit organization.

According to Patrick Hanlon:

"We no longer differentiate products or services solely by their product attributes, but by the values and beliefs they hold true. By what they mean."



ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

Today, "Brand" is meaning. When that meaning aligns with our own values and beliefs, we buy them."

-Patrick Hanlon

In other words, if we believe in the brand behind the product or service, that is when we purchase - even if it costs more. As an example, if I like purchasing 'Green', I am willing to pay a little more for a brand that has taken time to show me they are 'Green' also. We all tend to group together in communities of like-mindedness. Like-minded individuals usually find one another in person and online. If you realize this prior to putting yourself or your brand out there, you could benefit substantially. You can use this to your advantage and work it into your strategy as you roll out your company and your product or services.

"Aligning your brand with a cause or charity is another way to not only develop your brand, but also to boost your brand, especially with Millennial buyers." *-Tammy's Office Solutions*

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

Today, when a company develops their brand, it is also important to see and understand trends in the marketplace. One of those big trends today is people, especially Millennials, *purchasing from brands that also support a cause or charity.* If you can tie your product(s) or service(s) to a charity *that you believe in* is another way you can help your *brand awareness.* This can *create buzz,* as well as, attract more *brand ambassadors.* I am **not**



advocating to grab a charity and attach it to your name to just have a cause associated with your brand! That would actually defeat the purpose altogether. It must be a real cause that you are passionate about and believe in. In our virtual world where everyone seems to have no privacy, especially online, you better believe that others will see right through an effort to do something like that to gain brand notoriety only.

You should pick a cause you understand or that has a real meaning to you for some reason. Perhaps a charity/cause that affects you personally and your company. For instance, you know that I am disabled, due mostly to the effects of Multiple Sclerosis. So, my family and our Company has chosen to do the MS Walk most years in support of Multiple Sclerosis Society. Each year when it rolls around, our company promotes the walk all of our social media channels, word of mouth and with brand ambassadors for three reasons:

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

- 1. To Bring Awareness to the Disease & Teach Others about MS.**
- 2. In Hope of Raising Money & have others donate** (via a link provided that goes directly to the MS Society).
- 3. To Raise Brand Awareness for our Brand** (as the owner, I have MS, so the cause is close to my heart and we employ and empower disabled professionals to work, so I want to raise awareness of this part of our brand)

I think this would apply to most every cause/charity your company supports, aside from the specifics. You can even use that as a template* for your Brand Goals in supporting your charity. Not only will others see the genuine desire you have to help that organization, but they will desire to promote you all the more, because it will also promote the organization you are supporting. This should also, eventually, give your employees another reason to be one of your brand ambassadors.

"Brand Ambassadors are those who follow you, like your product(s) and/or service(s), and are sharing your company and brand with others." T.Durden

As I said earlier, I am not suggesting that you attach your company to charities without a reason or knowledge of what they do. It truly is important, if you want to showcase a cause with your company, that it be part of your story or at the very least be an important cause close to your heart. Make sure you have *reason* to join with the cause, that will become a part of who you are or what you love. If you are not genuine and only do this to develop your brand, it will have the opposite effect for your company. Genuineness is one of the most important ways to keep followers involved in your brand. People can tell when you are not being 'real' with them.

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

Recognizing who your product(s) or service(s) are meant to help (or your buyer persona), as well as, helping a charity you may be passionate about, are two ways that you can bump your brand awareness up and get your company name out in front of more prospective clients. Keep the following in mind - a couple of things that are most important when developing your brand and brand message (and these may be repeated as they are important):

Be Consistent – this means everywhere you go, in person or online; you are carrying your company brand with you. Many think you can separate your personal and your business brands, but that could not be farther from the truth. You represent your brand, and even become your brand in some cases, everywhere you go! This is also true of any employee(s) you hire (whether online or in house). So be sure to vet them properly and check their social media profiles, as you do not want the wrong image to be associated with your brand. Be aware that what you put on social media, what you say to prospective clients, and even your tone (whether in person or online), can and will affect your brand. It is up to you whether it is a positive or negative effect. Do not confuse your community by putting out differing ideas, logos and even colors, as they will not begin to recognize your brand if you are constantly changing directions and sending out mixed content messages!

Tools – In considering tools, it is wise to choose those that will allow you to also represent your brand. In other words, when preparing a post, pictures and even quotes, do you add your logo to it? When you send out items to clients, is your logo on the letters, emails & invoices. Remember, even when invoicing, or using other software & programs, we want to be sure that the program will allow you to brand individually (white label items) and not simply show their brand off. Our current clients still need to see our Logos & Colors & other brand items we may send out to them (whether digitally or a physical item). It is important to continue to put our brand in front of them. A

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

good example of using a tool that allows you to showcase your brand message in the forefront is Freshbooks.com. I use Freshbooks³ for my invoicing and basic accounting (receipts, etc...).



[Of course this is a picture with my old logo & I have changed it since the taking of this digital shot, but you understand the point.]

The Freshbooks program is an easy accounting and invoicing system for ‘Service’ provider companies. It was simple to set up my company account and even download my logo, so that when I invoice clients, my brand is visible on the invoice. Another possible good example would be Canva. This tool allows you to create poster, flyers, and even social media posts from their pictures and templates (some free & some not). You can upload your logo and add it to the picture you will be posting. When clients or prospective clients continue to see and hear your brand and brand voice, it becomes more and more recognizable. They are watching you and when you are doing all of these things, they begin to not only recognize your brand but your brand voice and your

³ <http://www.freshbooks.com/>



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

expertise. You are establishing yourself as an authority if you can consistently do these things, others will see you as that as well. Therefore, be sure that even the tools you use to make your work easier, or flow better, are still going to represent you and your brand properly and without much work (or a simple upload).

Genuine - Be yourself, and do not try imitating others or other brands. We talked a little about this earlier, but please take this to heart. People want to hear from you and hear your heart, to hear your brand's voice. They want to learn your story to follow your brand. If you are putting your brand out, especially through social media and blogs, your followers will soon learn your heart, which is the voice of your brand. If you are genuine, you do not have to be concerned every time you sit down to post, because if you are real and genuine, it will simply be you, the extension of your brand. It never pays to try to put on airs and pretend to be something you are not, as people will pick up on it quickly. This is not to say to 'air your dirty laundry' about every little thing, just be you and who you are. No extreme emotions either good or bad, just present the best 'you', you have in posting, in interactions and in talking with others online, in person or on the phone.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

Branding Part III



Components & Strategy:

Changes in brand development & how we adjust our reach.

Brand development has seen many changes over the years and we are seeing many more online influencers, especially in the last three years. As, I have mentioned, I am very fortunate to have a friend and mentor in Dennis Thorgesen of Lisech eMarketing. He has been doing branding in some form or another for over 35 years. Dennis, as well as, the many courses I have taken and the reading I have done, has taught me much and through this instruction and mentoring, they have equipped me to be able to brand our own company. This does not mean I think I am an expert, as it is always changing. When Dennis and I talk, often it is about different companies in the News or 'Trending' and what their Brand is really presenting online. We discuss what we believe they are doing right, and yes, of course sometimes we talk about ways they may be able to

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

Part IV: Rules & Misconceptions

improve their online brand. You may ask, ‘How can you tell if a company is doing their branding correctly?’

There are a few branding rules, most we have discussed in some way, but still good to review quickly.

Online branding rules to consider:

1. **Consistency** – Be Consistent – above all else, be the same today as you were Yesterday, and as you will be tomorrow!
2. **Look the Part** – Be certain that ANY and ALL content, especially images and videos that your Company posts online, ‘looks the part’. Does every post/quote/picture/video have your logo, and show the same brand colors, convey the same message & carry the voice of the company?
3. **Be genuine** and allow your Brand to tell your story – people want to hear the voice and heart behind the brand, and for micro and small businesses – that is YOU, the Owner!
4. **Brand Employees** - Be sure that all employees also follow and know the branding rules and your Personal Brand – they represent your brand/your company and often you, as well. This, believe it or not, can play a part in your brand’s success or failure.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"



"Every brand begins with you. It is important to show the value of YOU, apart from the brand. You don't have to be perfect. The world, though, does need to see the value you personally bring"

–Dennis Thorgesen of Lisech eMarketing

According to Dennis, "Branding has many components; however, in discussing online branding, there are very specific needs, Dennis says". *

Dennis explains further: "As a brand owner you have to know it takes all four - it does not mean you have to be proficient in all four. In my experience there is not a single person I have met who works at a professional level in all four disciplines.' This is yet *another reason to surround yourself with people much more knowledgeable than yourself to help you build your brand.*

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services
"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

"There are four basic disciplines required for an online brand"



These four disciplines are:

- 1. Internet technology (IT)**
- 2. Graphics**
- 3. Content**
- 4. Marketing**

Perhaps hiring a couple of professionals is best. Pick the areas in which you excel most. It could be that you are more proficient in IT and graphics, but certainly you need quality content and marketing. It is important to **know** what you are capable of doing and what your staff may be able to do. In saying this, I am also reminded that we should

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

not limit ourselves either and if we want to learn to be better in area then learn it – do not be afraid to step out of your comfort zone! Most of the time, the best ideas, in fact, the best work often come from stepping outside of our comfort zone. So Draw on all of your available strengths and then decide when/if you should hire a professional who works in the industry. Much of this book is to help Small Businesses to do it on your own because, let’s face it, small businesses usually do not have much income to put into Branding & Marketing, as important as it is. I think we can admit, however, that there are just times when you need to “call in the Pro’s”! So take an inventory of where your best skills lie and then be willing to hire someone where need. Remember, many other small businesses and start-ups are usually willing to barter for services and products. Think of new ways to provide for those items that need the ‘Pro’. You have already begun the hard work of building your business and that takes courage, so do not be afraid to simply ask a provider if they are willing to barter, or some other ingenious way to pay for what you need to begin to grow and thrive as a business. This is your story



and you are the one writing it, even now. How do you want the ending to read? You have a choice. Take those out of the box steps, within legal limits of course, to obtain the services and products you think your business needs. Do not let your

business story end too soon.



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

Branding Part IV: Rules & Misconceptions



Branding Rules & Misconceptions

One of the biggest misconceptions many small businesses make is to think that ‘branding’ is the same as ‘marketing’, yet they are very different. We discussed this in [Part I](#), but just to refresh a little, *your brand is who and what your business is and represents to others. Your business story.*

What do you do, how do you do it, and how do you represent that to your audience? “Brand” incorporates colors, logo, tag lines and even your voice. When you step back and look from an Outsider’s view, what would someone, who knows nothing about your company, see?

Does it represent you/your company the way you want? When others look at your company, do they see that your colors, logo and story match what you are really saying to your audience? It does not hurt to even have someone who does not really know you or your company take a look (an average person) and ask them what they think your company is and what it does (share your logo, tag line & maybe one post/ad you put out recently) and see if it is a match with what you are. It is an interesting experiment, isn’t it?

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"



I would love to hear if you try this, and if so, what kind of feedback you received. Remember, it is ok if it does not match exactly. It is a good indicator though if you should change or tweak something. You want others to know who you are and what your company does if you want them to reach out to you when they need your products and/or services. Consider doing this with up to 3 people and get their feedback. If most come back with something that is Not Your Company, then you need to consider how you can begin to change your branding and your brand's message as soon as possible.



ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

Marketing, on the other hand, is more about HOW you get your message and brand out to your audience. The technique, tone and way you deliver your brand to others is also important, or you will never reach the people who are to become your clients/customers. When you 'market' your brand stays very clear who you are and what you do. In *marketing* your business, you do not want to 'shove it' down your audience's throat. Instead you want to present it in a way that solves a problem for them. This is the golden key, finding your ideal clients and figuring out their pain and showing them how you can help them.

If you think of the brand as you standing still, all dressed up and ready to go out to a nice place, then the marketing would be the vehicle in which you arrive to that place (the place, of course, being your audience). So, thinking of it with this analogy, do you take a limo, horse and buggy or a beat up old car? I know, I know, we cannot all afford the limo, right? That is ok, because even if you use the horse and buggy, you are arriving in style! So, it is not necessarily how fast you get there, but how did you dress your brand, and then how did you move your brand, in order to get there? In our analogy,



the limo may be considered radio and television ads, the horse and buggy, perhaps blogs & social media posts, and the beat up old car would be sitting in the driveway or even a social media post or two to friends and family only (but it is not moving your brand forward)!

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

What if we put all of this into practice? How about if we dress up our brand, by getting professional advice if needed, making sure that our colors, logo and tag lines match what we want our company to say? Then if we take our brand and begin the journey to deliver our story, whether it is by limo (high powered ads) or by horse and buggy (posting social media and blogs) to the desired party (audience), we WILL begin to grow in a very positive and strong way.



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

Part V: How to Make Your Brand Known

THE POWER OF BRANDING



We have finally reached our last section of our ebook, thank you for hanging in there with me. So, let's do a quick review. We have discussed four other branding topics:

1. Why is Branding Important
2. Brand Development
3. Components & Strategies
4. Misconceptions in Branding

After all of this, you may be asking yourself, 'how do I put this into practice'? Or even, 'how can I use these in practical ways to help my business?' That is exactly what we will address now, as well as, try to tie up any loose ends. We want to help you - from a practical stand point - with making your brand known.

After we know the basics, have picked logos, colors, tag lines, fonts, and more, it does us no good if we cannot get our brand seen. For some, this could mean that you need help from a Brand Development Specialist or Strategist. If you are confident, however, or want to try it yourself, let's walk through some of the steps to make your brand known. It does not mean it will be an instant hit, nor that you will be viral overnight.

I think this is one of biggest lies about online marketing and branding.

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

To have true, genuine and organic followers added to your social media accounts, it takes time. Most people are not patient enough or consistent enough to continue to walk through this process. You have to be willing to be both consistent & patient, while slowly building followers. It can sometimes take 12 to 18 months or more to build a true following of significance. If fortunate and end up with someone of influence in your tribe, you may only need 6 months to build the following. Can it be done faster? Of course, if you are going to spend most of your day doing it, rather than attending to the work of your business. Even then there are no guarantees that your followers are loyal, or will become clients/customers, especially if you are not consistent with content they are looking for at the time. So be sure to know your target audience as well as their needs.

**All Parts Coming Together
To Create Your BRAND**



ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services

"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

Practical Steps to Help Make Your Brand known:

1. **Start a Blog** - dealing with your industry, something you know. This helps to establish you as an expert, eventually (remember patience) one that others will look to for answers. Again, this is not overnight, but can sometimes take as long as a year to eighteen months.
2. **Set Up Business Social Media Accounts** - It is fine that you have a personal Facebook page, but have you considered making a business FB page? Be sure you open these social media accounts as soon as you have all of your other brand items in place (logo, colors, etc...). Put your logo on it with your business name. If you do not know how to do this, or do not know how to do a banner for it, hire someone to do this so it turns out right; it will be money well spent, believe me.
3. **Join some key groups** - after you have opened your social media accounts. Groups that do not have thousands of members, but perhaps hundreds in your target audiences. It is OK to join several, as long as you can keep up with them. If you can answer questions quickly and reply to any who may begin a conversation, then you can manage it. However, if you cannot do this and run your business, then by all means, please hire a social media manager. [As you know www.tammysoffices.com can help you with all of these things by the way]
4. **Be CONSISTENT** - in all that you do. The final step, in getting known, is to simply be consistent. Post Blogs regularly, whether it is monthly, weekly or daily, be sure to do it when your readers are expecting it, or they will lose interest. Post to your social media accounts DAILY - two to three times a day! You can even use a scheduler if you are



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

simply sharing curated content. Schedulers such as Buffer⁴ or Hootsuite⁵ will help you to be consistent.

"The true key in branding, although it has many facets, and many ways to do it, is that you do it consistently and stay in front of your targeted audience!" - T.S.D.

Remember, also, that all you do is a representation of your brand. Be sure that whatever you post, comment, etc... is worthy of your brand, and is what you want it to represent. Before any action, ask yourself, 'Do I want my brand associated with this?'

BRAND LOYALTY

Is Brand Loyalty Important?

NO

YES



If you are inconsistent in sharing content, whether created or curated, your audience will not know what to expect - and will begin to 'unfollow' you.

⁴ <https://buffer.com>

⁵ <https://hootsuite.com>



Personalized Virtual Services

“PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS”

When your audience sees you regularly, and KNOWS what you are about, a few things happen:

1. They understand your message (all discussed in part 1 through 4)
2. They begin to associate your logo and colors without the wording
3. They become loyal to you & your brand
4. They will share your content with their audience
5. Your Audience will grow

Now you are on your way to becoming a Brand!

I hope you have been able to learn from this eBook. I have enjoyed bringing it to you and hope you will continue to look for additional information that will help you with your business. Remember, if you are in doubt about your brand message, logo, marketing techniques, or more, please just reach out to [Tammy's Office Solutions](http://www.tammysoffices.com) and we will be glad to help. We love to help start-ups and small to mid-size businesses with this and more, so that you can focus on your business and let us take care of the other items taking up your time.

We also would love to hear from you, so please let us know how this may have helped you, your brand and/or your business. If we can assist you in anything, including, branding, bookkeeping, digital marketing, virtual assistant services, writing services and more, please call us at: 804-723-5491 and do not forget to check out our budget friendly packages online: www.tammysoffices.com.

I cannot thank you enough for reading and staying with me through the journey. I look forward to seeing you back here again soon.

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.



Personalized Virtual Services
"PRACTICAL BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS"

I want to say a special thank you to my friend and colleague, Dennis Thorgesen



of [Lisech eMarketing Services](#), for his editing, as well as, important input for our Branding Series. Dennis has been Branding companies for over 30 years. Despite his vast experience, he does not consider himself an expert in the field. As Search engine optimization (SEO) is part of branding, he says "SEO sometimes changes faster than I can change my shirt, there can be no expert, only professionals." I truly appreciate his expertise and help with this project.

ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK/EBOOK ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR, TAMMY S. DURDEN AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR COPIED OR USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION PRIOR TO USE. YOU MAY USE SINGLE QUOTES IN ARTICLES, BLOGS & OTHER WRITTEN WORK IF YOU NOTIFY AUTHOR AT: INFO@TAMMYSOFFICES.COM. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL TAMMYSOFFICES.COM OR EMAIL ABOVE ADDRESS. THANK YOU.