



The Importance of Branding

- What is a brand?
- How do I get a brand?
- How do I build and maintain a brand?
- Isn't branding just lots of advertising?



Branding is the art of making a product or service, and the organization behind it, well known – especially to its target audience.

Some people think branding is done merely by using fresh, new creative images. Others confuse brand building with brand maintenance, while many others think advertising is the key.

It is true - the birth of a brand begins with an easily-identified visual image like a logo-mark, colour scheme or distinctive packaging. The key is to create a **consistent association** to the visual image. This could be an image of quality, desirability, value, affordability and so on.

It is also true that advertising draws attention to the brand and consistent use of the visual image will bring awareness to the audience.

The essential ingredient to a credible brand is publicity, not advertising. “Publicity creates the credentials that provide the credibility for the advertising. Publicity is the nail, advertising is the hammer” (from The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding).

If one examines some of the well-known brands, you will discover a large number of them were born with almost no advertising. An excellent example of this is the Body Shop, a company that started with no advertising at all, just tons of publicity. Founder Anita Roddick continuously received publicity from newspapers, magazines, radio and TV by pushing her views about the environment. And, when it comes to technology and software, some great examples of publicity-only branding are: Linux, Yahoo! and Amazon.

Publicity equals credibility. Without it, advertising is just another company making a claim.

Timing and taking time are equally important. The timing of publicity when launching something new is the key to making change and getting noticed. And, it takes time to build a brand and gain the trust of the target audience.

It is important to being with your core group and then let the story unfold. A strategically placed story in a newsletter or trade publication may lead to a consumer publication or newspaper and ultimately television or radio.