

PERSONAL BRANDING

PERSONAL BRANDING CONSULTANT, DAWN WINDER, SORTS THE GOBBLEDY FROM THE GOOK AND ASKS WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS



We are surrounded with marketing messages daily. We look to brands in a search for familiarity and credibility. We need to believe and trust: brands and names offer a quick route through the huge marketing noise to who and what is authentic. We look for a shortcut to make quick buying decisions. If you are a business owner you can guarantee people will be googling you and if you are being googled you have the potential to be a strong, dynamic personal brand.

WHAT IS A PERSONAL BRAND?

A personal brand is a clear idea and expectation that comes to mind when others think of you. It is the powerful way that you communicate and demonstrate what you stand for: your vision, values, skills, passions and attributes. It is what people see of you; what you project to others; and it is their perception of you. It is not the whole of you. It is not about creating or moulding yourself into someone you think you should be. It is not about being arrogant or egotistical. It is authentic and true to who you are.

It can be easy to get branding confused with selling, marketing, PR and even image. Personal Branding is not selling or marketing and it is not about just the clothes you wear or the design of your logo. Your Personal Brand is like the foundation of your business. Like a building you have to get the foundation right before you build on top. It is really not worth skipping this step in the process – imagine if you did that with a building!

Personal Branding is pre-sales, pre-marketing: it is what the prospective customer or client sees first. By using the powerful tool of personal branding, you will be able to communicate your unique

HAVE YOU NOTICED RECENTLY, WHEN YOU are looking for a particular product, service or person, that people will ask you “Have you googled them?” People are talking about “googling” and “being googled”, as if Google cannot find them, then the product, service or person does not exist.

Seven years ago you couldn’t be “googled” and yet today “to google” has mutated into a verification of identity. In other words, we assume we’re performing a web search with the Google search engine for a person, brand or corporation; but what we are actually doing by googling people is searching for someone’s personal brand.

We are living in a world where we increasingly see the value of time because it is now a commodity that is in short supply.

RICHARD BRANSON

the Virgin brand reflects his entrepreneurial drive

Look and style: young, casual, innovative

Tone of voice: straight talking, humorous

Behaviour: driven, bold, daring, fun

Values: innovation, fun and a sense of adventure



message and crucial information about you and your company. This includes your values, attributes and marketplace. By communicating your values to people you want to work with, you can develop your brand like larger corporations, so that you are their first choice for the job in hand, and they can identify and relate to you on a professional and personal level.

Too many talented and creative people are held back from being successful in their marketing and PR because they have not communicated their unique message in a way that makes them memorable. They do not understand that to be successful you need to communicate to your target audience in a clear, concise and compelling way.

By developing your Personal Brand so that it stands out and is seen as strong and dynamic you will not only create a reputation in your marketplace, you will also be perceived as credible, remaining visible. You will achieve more success by sending a clear, consistent and targeted message over time.

Some of the most successful brands in the world have been built from the inside out. We now hear the founder or owner of the company’s name and it sums up an image and identity

ANITA RODDICK

the name we associate with The Body Shop

Look and Style: practical, understated and simple

Tone of voice: independent, political, authentic

Behaviour: campaigner, dedicated, passionate

Values: environmental, responsible, ethical and honest



DAVID BECKHAM

The “Brand Beckham” a global brand estimated to be worth in excess of £200m worldwide

Look and style: immaculate, cutting edge and ‘designer’

Tone of voice: simple, quiet, understated

Behaviour: ambitious, outgoing, professional

Values: family, fitness image, style

and values that run throughout their business. If you think about the names David, Richard, Anita, what do they mean to you? Maybe you know people with those names, but what about if I added the names; Beckham, Branson and Roddick? What images or words come to mind? Let’s just take a look at our general perceptions of these people -- people who started their business brands based on their personal brands. You can look at their brands as the look and style, the image you see of them, the ‘tone of voice’, how they sound when you hear them or read about them: their behaviour, and finally the values – what they stand for and their guiding principles.

Image courtesy of www.virginmoney.com

Below: © Adidas 2005; Top right: © Joel Anderson

TO START DEVELOPMENT ON YOUR OWN PERSONAL BRAND, FOLLOW THE FIVE STEPS BELOW:

1

DISCOVER YOUR ATTRIBUTES

Your Brand is based on you, so start understanding the things you are naturally gifted at. Start Personal Branding by discovering key aspects about yourself, think of your skills, attributes, vision, purpose and passions, and develop your awareness of how you are communicating these to those around you.

2

STAND FOR SOMETHING

Make sure your Personal Brand stands for something that is true to you and has relevance in your target market. Have a strong vision and base it on something you believe in and that is in line with the values you hold.

3

BE UNIQUE

Create a Personal Brand that is unique to your market. By doing this you will gain the leading edge over your competitors. To do this start identifying what makes you different, start identifying key aspects about your background, abilities and attributes and build your Brand around it.

4

BE SEEN

If you were to offer the best product, service, experience or price to your target market but no-one knew you existed, you would not have a business. Your Personal Brand has to be seen to be successful, so don't be scared to let it out.

5

MAKE A CONNECTION

Your Personal Brand's strength lies in the ability to make a connection with your target audience. In order to achieve this you need to evoke an emotion that allows your target audience to experience their needs being met. **E**

LEILA WILCOX

Once you have developed your personal brand from the inside out you need to be able to communicate it. Leila Wilcox, founder and director of 'Halos n Horns' recently launched a range of shampoos, body washes and oral care for kids. She had built a unique brand based on her personal experience, but found it difficult to talk about herself. She worked with i-define to craft her unique message. Leila says "I knew how to speak about my business and what was unique about it but I found that very hard to articulate and to 'open up'. Since defining who I am and what makes me unique I can express and articulate what I want, engaging whoever I am speaking to and giving people the information they want and need."

The key to understanding your brand is that it isn't just the products or service you offer that people are interested in: people are curious to know who is behind the brand and how it relates to them. Leila had personal experience of having a son who had eczema, and she wanted to produce a product that was free of chemicals, but also fun to use. Mothers can relate to her and the brand of 'Halos n Horns:' their USP includes, 'By a mum - for mums who care.'

Leila has developed her personal brand so that she conveys a clear idea and expectation when others think of her. She has learnt to communicate and demonstrate what she stands for; her vision, values, skills, passions and attributes come through loud and clear—and she is seen as a credible and successful business woman, an expert in her field.

