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What's the Big Deal About BRANDING?



**By Gary Seibert, CEO,
Small Business Resource Association**

I have heard many say “if you don’t have a website, you don’t have a business”. In today’s world however, I believe it goes way beyond having a website to determine whether or not you have a “really successful business”. I will be so

bold to say that without “top of mind branding” you don’t have a business regardless of whether you having a website or not. In reality, your website is only part of your branding strategy as websites have only been around for less than 50 years. Branding has been used for over 7,000 years.

The concept dates back more than 7,000 years. Brands were symbols and engravings used by artisans in China, India, Greece, and Rome to differentiate their work. A few centuries later in the Indus Valley, they adopted the term Brandr (“to burn”) referring to the practice of branding livestock.

This evolved into watermarks during the Medieval period and personal branding with artist signatures throughout the renaissance. However, the most significant change occurred during the Industrial Revolution when the new category emerged: mass-branding. Customers traditionally bought local products from local merchants – generic goods didn’t have the same quality or appeal. So, factories borrowed a tactic from winemakers by branding logos onto the barrels used to transport their goods.

Soon after, they also began marketing individual products, paving the way for iconic brands like Coca-Cola, Kellogg’s cereal, Campbell’s soup and many more. By the end of the late nineteenth century, companies needed a

way to protect those brand investments from competitors. Finally, in 1875, the Trade Marks Registration Act was introduced. Now branding wasn’t just a strategy, it was something a company could own. Thus, branding evolved into a way for companies to market themselves and establish trust with potential customers. This creating a distinctive name or image for a product in order to differentiate it in the market left a lasting impression on customers and attracted new ones.

In the twentieth century, as the economy thrived, the rise of mass media further fueled the demand for branding products. Graphic design, advertising, and marketing played a significant role in promoting a consumer driven economy. Brands began creating professional and cohesive images, targeting specific audiences by infusing products with a particular look, style, and personality.

In the modern era, companies face an overcrowded market and demanding consumers with short attention spans. The internet age has brought about a culture of instant gratification, leading to the need for interactive, viral marketing, and search engine optimization in branding. Corporate branding now extends to political parties, charity organizations, and personal brands for celebrities. The internet has become integral to advertising and marketing with social media platforms relying on user-generated content to establish their value. Google, as the leading search engine, has become the biggest advertising agency in the world.

At the end of the day, BRANDING has evolved throughout history, from simple ownership marks to sophisticated marketing strategies, adapting to societal changes, technological advancements and consumer preferences.

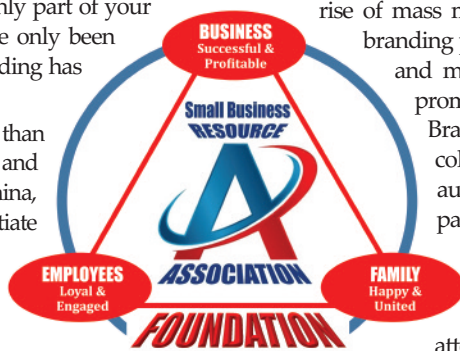
Five reasons why branding is important for your business—

1. Branding builds TRUST with consumers, vendors and overall public opinion.
2. Branding helps consumers better know what your business is and increases RECOGNITION
3. Branding will boost your BUSINESS VALUE
4. Branding will DRIVE NEW products and services
5. Branding will INSPIRE and ATTRACT employees and new customers

What is the big deal about BRANDING? Without it you are just another small fish in a big pond. You will spend far more money and time on marketing and sales and you will probably turn to lowering your prices to compete with your competition. Branding builds value, credibility and consumer “top of mind” awareness. Branding will bring consumers to you because they KNOW, LIKE and TRUST you. Branding sets you apart from the crowd and makes you visible in a crowded market.

In my humble opinion BRANDING is EVERYTHING. You need to understand your business, who you are, what you do and what your value proposition is. You cannot develop a true brand without knowing this about yourself. You need to study and learn about your customers as well as your competition. You need to determine what your mission, vision and values are and make them a living part of your business. Finally, you need to track your business growth as you create and promote your brand. Be open to change if you are not seeing a change in your consumer acceptance.

If I say fast food restaurant, soft drink, expensive car, hotel, female singer etc. — who would you fill in the blank with? The business or person who knew the value of branding. Now go and do the same.



SBRA BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



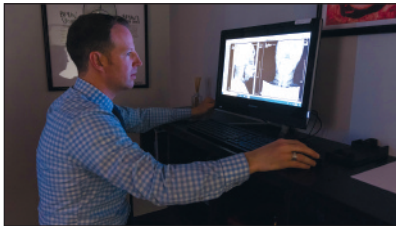
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Website: www.keystonespecific.com

Keystone Specific Chiropractic Center is a state-of-the-art Upper Cervical Chiropractic facility run by Dr. Bill Moss. We use advanced testing to get to the root cause of people's health problems. We specialize in working with people who suffer with chronic conditions such as migraine headaches, fibromyalgia, and nerve related issues.



Dr. Bill Moss



EMPOWERING YOUR WEBSITE TO DRIVE REVENUE



By **Limarys Rodriguez**,
LMG Marketing Solutions

In today's competitive digital landscape, your website should be more than just an online presence—it's a powerful tool for driving sales and generating leads. Whether you're a small business owner, an entrepreneur, or fortune 500 company optimizing your website to convert visitors into customers is crucial for success! Here are some actionable strategies that anyone can implement to enhance their website and boost sales:

1. Know Your Audience: Understanding your target audience is key to tailoring your website content and offerings to meet their needs and preferences. Conduct market research, analyze customer data, and create buyer personas to gain insights into your audience's demographics, behaviors, and pain points. Use this information to tailor your website content, products, and messaging to resonate with your target audience and drive conversions.

2. Showcase Your Value Proposition: Clearly communicate the unique value proposition of your products or services on your website. Highlight the benefits, features, and advantages of choosing your offerings over competitors. Use compelling language, visuals, and testimonials to demonstrate the value that you provide to customers and differentiate your brand from the competition.

3. Optimize Your Website for Conversion: Streamline the user experience on your website to make it easy for visitors to find what they're looking for and take action. Simplify navigation, minimize distractions, and create clear calls-to-action (CTAs) that guide visitors towards desired actions, such as making a purchase, signing up for a newsletter, or con-

tacting you. Use persuasive copywriting and compelling visuals to engage visitors and encourage them to convert.

4. Leverage Social Proof: Build trust and credibility with potential customers by showcasing social proof on your website. Display customer testimonials, reviews, case studies, and success stories to demonstrate the positive experiences of past clients. Highlight any awards, certifications, or affiliations that lend credibility to your brand and offerings. Social proof helps reassure visitors that they're making the right choice by choosing your products or services.

5. Implement Lead Generation Strategies: Capture leads and build your email list by offering valuable incentives and resources in exchange for contact information. Create lead magnets such as eBooks, guides, checklists, or webinars that address common pain points or provide helpful information related to your industry. Use opt-in forms, pop-ups, or landing pages to promote your lead magnets and encourage visitors to subscribe to your email list.

6. Analyze and Optimize Performance: Regularly monitor and analyze website metrics to track performance and identify areas for improvement. Use tools like Google Analytics to measure key performance indicators (KPIs) such as website traffic, conversion rates, bounce rates, and average session duration. Use this data to identify strengths and weaknesses in your website's performance and make data-driven decisions to optimize for better results.

Your website should be more than just a digital brochure – it should actively engage visitors and drive sales. By putting these strategies into action, you can turn your website into a robust sales and lead generation tool, primed for business growth.

SBRA Monthly Member Shout Out

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SBRA EVENTS - BE BETTER. GROW FASTER.

Events: Register at <https://www.sbrassociation.com/#EVENTS>

Members Referral Breakfast –
Friday, May 3rd, 7:30-9:00 am
at B2 Bistro in West Reading

Tune-Up Tuesday Workshop -
Tuesday, May 7th, 9:30-10:30 am
by Tina McCoy of
Riverfront Federal Credit Union

Members Referral Breakfast –
Friday, May 17th, 7:30-9:00 am
at B2 Bistro in West Reading

Tune-Up Tuesday Workshop -
Tuesday, May 21st, 9:30-10:30 am
Seven Steps to Life Transformation by
Breanna Angstadt of Just B Whole Body
Wellness Coaching

New Member Orientation –
Wednesday, May 29th,
9:00-9:30 am via Zoom

Member Networking Mingle –
Wednesday May 29th,
5:30-7:00 pm

WELCOME NEW SBRA MEMBERS

Finders Keepers Thrift Boutique

Bachman Roofing, Building
and Remodeling

Café Folino

Diamond Credit Union

Just B Whole Body and
Wellness Coaching

J4 Travel, LLC

LMG Marketing Solutions

Service 360 Group

Precision Real Estate

Mangia Italian Restaurant

WindowHero Northeast Reading

Revitalized Massage and Wellness LLC

Angela Adler

Spartan Capital

Snapping Turtle Leather Co.