

# Unique Branding

by Sophia



## WHAT'S COVERED

What is unique about you? Is your height? Your hair color? What is it that sets you apart from everybody else? This tutorial will cover the topic of unique branding, introducing the concept of brand awareness.

Our discussion breaks down as follows:

1. [Setting Your Brand Apart](#)
2. [Marketing Techniques](#)
3. [Public Relations and Brand Identity](#)

## 1. Setting Your Brand Apart

So, what is it about the brand that should be unique to that particular company? Well, first of all, brand awareness is incredibly important for a company. People have to be able to recognize your brand. If they don't recognize your brand, they may not go out and look for it. This is very important to the health of the company as it relates to its financial aspects and its profitability in the future.

Now, there are generic products in the market, but those are mainly concerned with price as their primary focus. Store brands focus on trying to beat competitors on price; they are less concerned about promoting the brand.

Product placement can also impact brand awareness, referring to a product's literal placement versus staged placement.

- Literal placements refer to places on the shelf where you put your product or a particular store where you're going to sell it—even a particular part of town. You could also place the product in a commercial and it is clear that this product is used to advertise the product.
- Staged placements are placing a product in a television show or movie. The characters are not going to specifically say the product name, but you will see them using it.

⇒ **EXAMPLE** You might see American Idol judges drinking Coke, or a "mini-mercial" for a Toyota Prius during a TV show.

## 2. Marketing Techniques

There are two basic marketing techniques we're going to discuss today.

**Buzz marketing** is a marketing process that generates a rapid and explosive word-of-mouth response via social media or traditional media outlets. It involves leveraging influential individuals or groups to create excitement around a product or service, leading to positive conversations and heightened awareness of it. Buzz marketing uses social media to create a buzz--almost like gossip, if you will, as in "Did you hear about what company A did (or didn't do)?" This is the type of buzz marketing that brings attention to your brand.

**Viral marketing** is another marketing program that uses social media and the internet. It focuses on using everyday people's existing social networks to promote a product. It tends to build momentum more slowly than buzz marketing, but much in the same way that a virus spreads from one person to another, consumers spread information about a product with other people. Buzz marketing is more about creating a hype or excitement around a product or service, while viral marketing is about creating a message that spreads organically because people choose to share it.

⇒ **EXAMPLE** Viral marketing might include viral videos, emails, or other online engagement tools to get people to spread the word for a particular product. In contrast, an example of buzz marketing might be the Dove Real Beauty Sketches, which use sketches to illustrate the beauty and benefits of Dove soap. Both of these are techniques that can be used for the marketing of a brand.



### TERMS TO KNOW

#### **Buzz Marketing**

Marketing processes that generate a strong word of mouth response via social media outlets.

#### **Viral Marketing**

A marketing program that focuses on unpaid people utilizing social media outlets to generate sales, awareness or general positive regard for the brand.

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## 3. Public Relations and Brand Identity

Public relations, or PR, also plays a significant role in supporting brand identity. You see, PR can develop a favorable brand ID and help make that brand memorable. It can generate an association with positive news so that people continue to associate your brand or your product with positive ideas or emotions.

⇒ **EXAMPLE** Milk has a PR campaign currently running called "Got Milk?" Its goal is to get milk into the schools as a brand, helping to spread the word about the health benefits of milk and how it's a healthy part of school lunches, and also dispelling some of the myths that might exist.

However, PR can also be negative. There can be a negative association based on uncontrolled or unexpected occurrences.

⇒ **EXAMPLE** Tylenol suffered some seriously negative PR in the 1980s when their products were poisoned. Now obviously, Tylenol didn't poison the product, but the simple fact that some of the bottles had poison in them had a devastating PR impact on Tylenol as a brand. However, Tylenol was ultimately able to ramp up their PR and turn that negative into a strong and thriving brand that it is today. It was only through PR that they were able to accomplish this huge turnaround, which goes to show the importance of PR.



## SUMMARY

Today we learned about **setting your brand apart**, or determining what it is that makes your brand different than everyone else's. We also learned about a couple of **marketing techniques**: buzz marketing and viral marketing. Lastly, we learned about **public relations (PR) and brand identity**, and the important way in which PR can support brand identity. PR can have a positive effect on brand identity, or--through unexpected or uncontrolled means--a negative effect. Therefore, it is important to make sure your public relations is as positive as it can be.

Good luck!

Source: adapted from sophia instructor james howard



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