

# BUILDING & BRANDING

YOUR BUSINESS ONLINE

A GUIDE FOR  
SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS  
OWNERS



# Building & Branding Your Business Online

*A Guide for Small and Medium Business Owners*

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Published by



Indus Net Technologies is an innovative IT Service, managed Outsourcing & Internet strategy company, with unique combination of Creativity and Technology.

With deep industry experience of 17+ years and technological expertise across all major business functions, Indus Net Technologies helps corporations and Governments across the globe embrace the “Nexus of Forces” – Cloud/Web based custom application development, Mobility and Digital Marketing Services.

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## Preface

Branding is an important aspect of the marketing world. It determines a company's or its products' reputation and popularity. It is intended to identify products or services as the only ones that are desirable.

Branding is a process that uses a word or an image to identify a company or its products. It is used as a separation key to dodge competitors and helps consumers remember a product. It also serves the purpose of increasing sales by making the product or service popular and liked by the consumer. Branding has transformed itself from just a logo or a name to the brand's reputation.

The present fast paced world demands an identity that can stay in the minds of people for a long time and branding helps us with this. If you want your product or service to be remembered and want people coming back for it, branding is the key. If customers recognise a product or service, and are satisfied with the same, chances of them coming back are higher.

Some of the branding strategies are company name, logo, or slogan, company letterhead, company forms, marketing materials, websites, uniforms, promotional items such as pens and pencils, key chains, ball caps or tote bags.

In this eBook, we help you to understand what branding is and how you can brand yourself online successfully, whether you are running a small or a medium sized business.

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## An Introduction to Online Branding

Online branding refers to branding your product and services using social media or the web to market it. The virtual world has almost engulfed our real world. Anything that is published on the internet reaches millions of people within a fraction of a second, which ensures the 'identity' factor and helps in marketing.

Unlike big shot companies, small and medium businesses don't have the luxury to relax on the branding front. Your branding techniques and its success are directly proportional to your company's reputation and profit. There are mediums that you can use for branding.

## Three important mediums of branding



**E-commerce  
Storefront**

Online visitors remember stores by their shopping experience. To stay in their memory, try to enhance their shopping experience by using innovative web site template. Give special emphasis on navigation, product display and product description, it can act your unique factor. Since an image is worth a million words, self-explanatory images can become your major differentiation factor in online branding.



**Domain  
Name**

Your domain name will be the name of your ecommerce store and is a crucial part of online branding. Therefore, choose it very carefully. It must be unique and easy to remember. If it highlights the type of products sold in your ecommerce store, there is nothing like it.



**Logo**

No matter which product or a service we take as an example, the first thing that comes to our mind is its logo. A logo that is appealing creates a customer enticing strategy globally and it can prove to be a great asset in branding.

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# 15 STRATEGIES TO BOOST YOUR BRAND'S PRESENCE ONLINE

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## Define Your Product



It is not enough if you put your product or service on the display. The amount of importance given to promote your product or service must be same while reviewing them. Once you put your product on the shelf and it starts selling, pay attention to the response from your customers.

Observe keenly, establish your position in the market and maintain it. If there are any complaints, listen and solve them soon. Show that you care about your customers and are passionate about what you do, this build your character. Your constant efforts to maintain the quality of what you do or sell and your relationship with the buyers defines your success in the long run.

# Identify the Trigger to Your Business



Why this product or service? What made you start this in the first place? Is it really worth it? These are some of the questions you should constantly revisit, not only to satisfy yourself by knowing you are on the right path, but it can prove to be a trigger to your success.

Identify your product's purpose and what it believes in. It can help in positioning your brand and inform the identity and character for brand communications. And to know it exactly helps you sell better and brings out an emotional response from the customers.



# Build Long-term Relationships with Your Customers



You may be tempted to paint your product in rosy words, refrain from it. Don't try to sugar coat your offering, as it raises expectations, and you are obliged to maintain them. If you say something just to increase its market value and fail to deliver it, it not only just breaks promises but ruins your relationship with customers.

This could do some irreparable damage to your brand name and could even push you off the market. Remember it is not a onetime thing, so create trust with honest branding. So be true to your product and what drives it each day.

# Consistent Conversations with Customers



Don't exaggerate or undertone what you offer. Don't look at conversations with customers as something that you can't get out of. In fact this is what will help you to maintain and expand your business. It will help in reinforcing the business's character and offers clarification so customers are aware exactly what to expect from the product or service.

And remember, this is not something that you do according to your convenience, or something that you can afford to avoid. There is no other turn off as big as negligence towards customers. Consistent conversation leads to consistent success.

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## Avoid Repetition



There is no use in blowing the same trumpet over and over again. Don't repeat yourself in terms of goals, objectives, special characteristics or anything else. Repetition can prove to be a vice that can harm your marketing like nothing else. No one likes to listen to or read the same thing again and again.

There are already many companies which may have something similar to offer as you, why add to it by repeating yourself? Alternatively, aim to make your key messages work together to build a coherent identity. Use innovative ways to express and choose interesting content to attract audience.

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## Don't Be a Copycat



Don't give the audience something they already have. Create your own distinctive identity. The consumer trend has a huge attention towards independent establishments. So much so that, several chains are trying to mimic an independent feel to capture the market. Independent organizations can easily raise their chances to attract customers who are looking for something more original and authentic.

This can be seen as an alignment factor with the customers with how they feel about themselves. Provide a fresh perspective and express in your primitive way rather than trying to imitate someone or something in the hope of increasing viewership. Authenticity is the easiest way to leave an impression.

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# Take Risks and Stand by What You Believe In



One of the greatest advantages small or medium organizations have is the freedom to take risks. Use it, be creative, innovative and bold, and always stand by your beliefs. Big brands are tied up in large layers of bureaucracy.

They have a lot of people to answer to or to seek approval from which prevents them from being flexible or reacting to the ever-changing needs of their customers. Even if you take risks you have very less to lose, but what you could gain can be huge. So don't hesitate to take that step, no matter how strange it might seem, if you think it will help you gain success.

# Consider Your Brand When Negotiating with Customers



Be considerate about your reputation and branding while negotiating with customers. Don't underplay or lose your pride or dilute your brand positioning with random impulsive discounting. Instead of slashing prices and offering humongous discounts, try providing more in the same amount. Treat Promotions as an opportunity to reinforce your brand mission.

You don't want to portray yourself as just another brand which hypes the price and pretends to offer a discount. Make your business ethics to showcase your brand as the one with a strong and genuine character. Make each of your promotion count, and try to negotiate in a way which guarantees profit for you and at the same time satisfies the customers.

# Don't Stamp Your Logo on Everything



The present trend of branding is all about following the policy 'less is more'. Don't disrespect your customers' intelligence by giving everything away at once and too soon. It makes your product to seem boring and can lead to lack of interest.

Try to generate some intrigue and allow them to dig more about your brand for themselves. For example if you are launching a new product, don't be over enthusiastic to give out all its features. Instead try to introduce each feature slowly and keep it crisp. Lay the bait and wait for the next move. Don't lose audience due to your impatience.

# Make Sure Your Team Knows Your Product Well



It may seem a little too much to expect everyone to know about your product and service in a way that you do, but it is actually quite important and can boost your company's reputation and popularity indirectly. As each of your employees becomes a part of your company, your company must become a part of them.

You or the top management are not the only ones communicating with an audience, the people who generate content, who solve technicalities or the ones who try to market the product online. All of them need to know and understand what you offer so they can market your company better.



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# Research Your Audience



It is not enough to be able to communicate about your company effectively; the kind of audience you are trying to reach out becomes very important. To build your brand online, you must understand your audience clearly, especially before you begin creating content strategies and communication plans. Audience form a big part of your branding venture, so spend some quality time in assessing the needs and opinions of your audience and build strategies accordingly. Even though this seems difficult, there are means available on the internet to help you.

For example, certain products from ComScore, Nielsen and Google can help you to learn more about your audience, including gender, age, marital status, household income, and locale.

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# Balance Your Online Media Mix



Online marketing is all about grabbing attention from audience and imprinting your name and image in their minds, which will turn them into your customers. Use multiple channels, display and content networks to build your brand effectively. Get your ads out in front of your target audience using behavioural targeting, site specific targeting and re-messaging. Choose sites and domains relatable to your company's offering and register.

The repetition of your name on different sites makes an impact on the audience of those sites making them your potential customers. Make sure that you maintain consistency in promoting your brand name and messaging in your title tags.

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# Plan Your Social Media Integration



Well when we are talking about online branding, social media is the most important aspect. It is a medium that helps you to represent your brand. Treat social media as a careful tool, if not it could be disastrous for you. There are many portals available to you for branding, to name a few, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn etc. Choose them wisely to help your branding experience. And while using social media, always remember to talk to your audience and not at them.

Make sure what you want your brand to say or do online happens. It may be difficult in the beginning, but start by monitoring who is talking about your brand. If no one is, then start the conversation. But ensure that the conversation leads to an interaction and not something which is forced on the audience.

# Differentiate Yourself from the Rest



In a world of similarities on the internet, try to find a specific factor or way to differentiate you from the rest in the same category. There will be numerous other products or services in the same category as yours but make sure you don't create the thought of being 'yet another similar product.'

You can differentiate yourself by being industry innovator, offering unique services, different marketing techniques and using your creativity at its best. The more you seem different from the rest, the more demand for you.

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## Build a Community



Try to get ambassadors for your brand, customers who are highly satisfied and are your brand enthusiasts to communicate and inform about your products through blogposts or videos. Encourage your audience to not only communicate with you but amongst them. Generate posts that are informative and entertaining. It is not the quantity that matters but the quality.

As the chances of gaining more customers are higher when old customers talk about you rather than you talking about yourself. A healthy circle of audience can, not only increase profits but also build a loyal community towards your brand.

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## Final Thoughts

As we can understand, Twitter is a powerful tool to reach your target audience without spending a lot of money. If you choose to use their advertisements, you will have to spend a small fraction of what you would spend on conventional ad campaigns.

The best features of Twitter marketing are its ability to target the right audience with precision, learning about who could possibly be your target audience on Twitter, what they like and understanding all this data with the help of powerful analytics. By integrating your marketing efforts with Twitter, you will be able to scale your efforts and maximize marketing impact. Twitter community also provides knowledge about promotional strategies and helpful tactics.

If you find it difficult to understand Twitter and how it can help your business, do not hesitate to contact a reliable digital marketing agency. We have helped scores of businesses with Twitter marketing and we have witnessed their success along the way. Certainly, Twitter is not only a broadcast medium and a social networking site, but it is also a powerful marketing tool.

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Indus Net Technologies' comprehensive web solution offerings that really boosts your business

- Design and develop aesthetically appealing W3C validated websites that gives a firm digital foothold to attract customers.
- Promote business through Internet Marketing, increase visibility among customers and encourage customer engagement.
- Convert leads to customers and customers to evangelists.
- Broaden business reach with smart applications for Mobile and tablet platform.

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