



# **BRAND STRATEGY PROCESS**

Presented by Rudy Vaughn, Graphic Zen

# INTRODUCTION

# BRAND STRATEGY

We believe that every company should look their best. We believe that brands are living - behaving more like organisms than organizations.

Business is a process, not an entity. Successful businesses are those that continually adapt to changes in the marketplace, the industry, the economy and the culture.

Our mission is simple: To provide our clients with value-added services and quality design. We accomplish this by working with our clients to define their target audience and goals, and then work to create solutions to business bottlenecks using design as a problem-solving tool.

This document serves to help you understand how I look at a brand process/strategy. You can use this to help you consider the most important aspects of your brand: your brand vision, brand values, the identity of your audience, your brand promise, and your brand story.

*A brand is a person's gut feeling about a product, service, or company. It's not what you say it is. It's what THEY say it is.*

# BRAND VISION

Your brand vision is the ultimate goal of your company.  
What does your finish line look like?  
When we're done, you'll be able to ask yourself  
"What decision will get me closer to that finish line?"

So, what are the milestones for your company?

## Milestone One

To rock the universe.

*In a non-threatening, good rock concert kind of way.*

## Milestone Two

Inspire people.

*Because that's what good design should do.*

## Milestone Three

Capture the client we thought was out of reach.

*When stretched out of a "comfort zone", barriers are broken, goals are achieved and creativity explodes.*

To begin building your brand, ask yourself three questions:

1. Who are you?
2. What do you do?
3. Why does it matter?

# CORE VALUES

Your core values are the non-negotiable core beliefs you hold. It doesn't matter how small or big your organization is, these values will influence everything from who you hire to how you respond to client inquiries.

I believe everyone has a story.  
*Create a good story and people will want to know more about you and care what you do.*

I believe that change can create opportunity.  
*Instead of fearing change, I will look for the good in the situation and see if opportunity lies there.*

I believe you should never stop learning.  
*The best way to help myself and others is to be open to new ideas and new ways of doing things.*

I believe in giving back.  
At various times, I have needed help in my life. Using my knowledge and showing compassion by helping others in need is my way of paying it back, and forward.

*The foundation of a brand is trust. Customers trust your brand when their expectations consistently meet or beat their expectations.*

# TARGET AUDIENCE

Your target audience profile.

This is based on research (i.e. who are your current customers, likely clients, info from polls or other data). Who are you trying to reach? What problem can you help them solve? What's their story?

When doing this research, it could turn out that you have two or three personas that represent your audience.

Ask yourself "Do they understand our mission?" and "Would they be willing to engage with us?"

You should keep these people in mind when making decisions about design, typography, logo direction, headline messaging and copywriting. Always ask yourself how this person would react to your decisions and choose accordingly.

When all data is collected a good way to present it is in visual graphics like bar charts or pie charts, because they are accessible and easier to understand.

*Feedback, i.e. audience research, can inspire and validate innovation.*

# BRAND PROMISE

Your brand promise is telling your customers what you promise you'll do for them. You probably know this part as a "tagline". The big picture idea behind your product, service or idea is articulated here.

It's not about what you do, or how you do it, but about why you do what you do, and why a potential customer should care. The goal is to articulate your why. Keep it short, sweet, and easy to remember.

*You need to clarify what business you're in - your core purpose. Core purpose is the reason your company exists beyond making money.*

# BRAND STORY

Your brand story is the sum of all of these parts:

**Brand Vision:** *Know where you're going.*

**Core Values:** *Tell your story and let people know who you are.*

**Target Audience Research:** *Define who is interested in your story and how you can help them.*

**Brand Promise:** *The common theme that runs throughout your company.*

Once you've defined these elements, you'll know who you are, who your audience is, and how to move forward and tell that story to your audience.

*In a world of extreme clutter you need more than differentiation. You need radical differentiation. The new rule: When everyone zigs, you zag.*

*When you find your zag, ask your people how they'll help execute it. You'll be surprised by the amount of energy you release.*



I'd love to continue this discussion with you.

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[www.graphiczen.com](http://www.graphiczen.com)

[hi@graphiczen.com](mailto:hi@graphiczen.com)