



Why Branding and Marketing Should Be Approached Differently

📌 marketing

Summary: Branding and marketing overlap, but approaching them as one and the same is likely to prove ineffective and fall short with customers. Successful marketing requires first establishing a brand that resonates with customers' experiences and values.

There are few people who haven't heard the phrase "playing possum," regarding the idea of laying low to try to avoid detection. While many people use the words possum and opossum interchangeably, they are actually two distinctly different marsupials. Possums are native to Australia, China, and New Zealand, are smaller, have furry tails, and have multiple subspecies. Opossums are found in North America, have bare tails, and tend to be larger — these are the animals who actually enter a comatose state in the face of danger, not possums.

Confusion between two similar things is not limited to the animal world. Take, for instance, branding and marketing. While many organizations lump branding and marketing under one umbrella, it is important to differentiate the two and approach them differently, particularly in the world of banking — so much so that brand specialist Allison Netzer and marketing expert Liz High recently penned "Think Like a Brand, Not a Bank," a book outlining the differences between the two.

Similar, But Not the Same

While there is some definite overlap between branding and marketing, organizations need to be aware of their differences. Ultimately, the way that your institution is viewed by the world is your brand, encompassing your core values and business purpose — it is the long-term direction your organization is seeking to head. Whereas marketing has a short-term focus and is essentially the approach you use to educate consumers about your products and services. Before an organization can market itself effectively, it must first identify the heart of its brand, including its culture and what it is that customers both value and dislike.

Success Stories

There are a few financial institutions Netzer and High cite as having successfully built brands that resonate with consumers. A Portland-based financial institution has linked its brand to best-in-class customer service by blending digital convenience with human accessibility. Their platform not only provides customers the option of real-time chat with customer service representatives, but it lets people choose the specific personal banker they would like to interact with for banking assistance and financial counsel — an approach that proved extremely popular during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

One Ft. Lauderdale-based bank has a strong brand focus on providing the best possible service to small businesses within its region, as well as knowing that market inside and out.

USAA is touted for its long-term success in pegging everything related to its brand to its in-depth knowledge of the specific needs of people in the military and their families.

Building Your Brand

Although many of the components of branding cannot be measured, its importance should not be underestimated when it comes to building your CFI's brand. According to social media management platform Sprout Social, [76% of consumers cite brand as the one thing that would make them choose one business over a competitor](#), while global public relations consulting firm Edelman finds that [88% of consumers say that trust is one of the top factors that determines which brand they select](#).

The following are a few things to keep in mind when thinking about your brand, and how to approach marketing it to consumers:

- **Brand is an experience.** Your CFI's brand is more than just your logo — it extends to every aspect of the experience that customers have when interacting with your business.
- **Take a stand.** People gravitate to brands that resonate with their values and their individual lifestyle, so it is crucial to determine what your customers and target audience are looking for. One of the best ways to do this is to utilize data and market research to identify things about your brand that people value most.
- **Consistency is key.** Your messaging should be constant and any interactions with customers, as well as any marketing initiatives, should highlight the core of your brand across all mediums and communication methods.
- **Know your target.** Knowing your audience is crucial to building a strong brand and effectively marketing it, and that means not communicating with customers as if they are all the same. Given the major differences in what each generation values, their needs at their particular junction in life, and even the communication channels they are most likely to respond to, the way you market your brand should match the generation being targeted.

Though there are multiple areas where branding and marketing overlap, CFIs need to take the time to make sure they are clear about what the core of their brand is before thinking about how they will communicate it to customers through marketing initiatives. Absent a clearly defined brand, marketing efforts are unlikely to resonate with customers or stand up to the competition.

SHARE THE BID WITH A COLLEAGUE

Would someone at your financial institution want to receive our complimentary BID publication? [Share the BID](#).

ECONOMY & RATES

Rates As Of: 11/14/2022 06:40AM (GMT-0700)

Treasury	Yields	MTD Chg	YTD Chg
3M	4.28	0.06	4.22
6M	4.52	-0.05	4.33
1Y	4.61	-0.01	4.23
2Y	4.40	-0.09	3.66
5Y	4.01	-0.22	2.75
10Y	3.89	-0.17	2.37
30Y	4.07	-0.10	2.17
FF Market	FF Disc	IORR	
3.83	4.00	3.90	

SOFR	Prime	OBFR
3.78	7.00	3.82

Copyright 2021 PCBB. Information contained herein is based on sources we believe to be reliable, but its accuracy is not guaranteed. Customers should rely on their own outside counsel or accounting firm to address specific circumstances. This document cannot be reproduced or redistributed outside of your institution without the written consent of PCBB.