



CUSTOMER DISCOVERY: Module 3, Episode 3 – Branding

TITLE:

Branding Identity

DESCRIPTION:

With your brand strategy in place, you can now begin to think about and design your brand's identity

[LEARN@LIFT Episode Intro]

Welcome back everyone to the third and final episode of the Branding module for LEARN@LIFT! My name is Patrick Riley, and I am very excited to share this bootcamp journey with you.

Over the course of the last two episodes, we've discussed what branding is, why it is important, what a branding strategy is and how to build one. In this final episode, we're going to apply these learnings to design your brand identity.

From your initial organizational strategic planning and your brand strategy, you should now have a good sense of who your target audience is and what their needs are, as well as a great sense of what it is your product can offer them - practically and emotionally.

You should also be firmly aware of what differentiates you from your competitors, how you want to position yourself in the market compared to other offerings, and what your values are as a business.

You are now ready to begin building your brand identity.

Brand identity refers to the collection of elements that a company creates to portray the right image to its consumer. Included in brand identity are logos, color palettes, taglines, tone of voice, look-and-feel decisions, customer service interactions, iconography, graphics, imagery, etc.

Brand strategist Stephen Houraghan provides another helpful checklist to accomplish this correctly.

First, identify your tone of voice.

Much like your brand's personality, your brand's tone of voice is going to be unique to you. It should also reflect or align with how your target audience likes being spoken to and what your values are as a business.

Tone of voice is important because when we hear one that displays characteristics we're more attracted to, we're far more likely to trust it and listen to what it has to say to us.

Second, develop your messaging strategy.

Your messaging strategy refers to creating cohesion throughout every bit of text related to your business. This does not mean that one piece of text should be used for many purposes, but rather that each piece of text feels like it's coming from the same place, the same author, the same person.

In each message moment to your customer, it's critical that you quickly satisfy the burning subconscious question we all have when we're confronted with something new: "What's in it for me?"

For each message moment you create, ask yourself the following:

- If I was this customer, would I know that this was targeted at me?
- If I was this customer, would I know what this product or service can do for me, or am I intrigued enough that I am compelled to seek more information?

- If I was this customer, would I know what I am supposed to do after engaging with this message?
- As the branding entity, have I created the message in the right tone, representing my organization's values correctly?

Third, craft your brand story.

During the Storytelling Module, we discussed how story is an effective form of communication for humans as it taps into our brain's survival instincts.

As such, if you can wrap your messaging up in a story to help your audience understand why your brand is valuable to them, they'll instinctively be more attentive to what you have to say.

Fourth, develop your name and tagline.

While this step might seem out of place so far along in the brand development process, both the name and the tagline are simply forms of brand communication. At this stage you're clear on what your audience wants, why you're different, the value you offer, the characteristics you want to display and the message you want to deliver.

The best names and taglines capture who you are and what you do, what your customer's practical and emotional needs are, and your business' personality. Apple did this with their tagline, "Think Different." The tagline embodied the idea that Apple is unique and so are their customers. Apple has successfully branded itself as the computer for creative professionals, and it's this slightly elite image that allows them to charge higher prices than their competitors to this day.

Fifth, design your visual identity.

This includes your color palette, typography, imagery style, iconography, graphics, and logo. Much like with your tone of voice, name and tagline, your visual identity should align with what resonates with your customer, what represents who you are as a business and your business' values, and what personality you want to quickly display.

Human psychology plays an interesting role in visual identity. Subconsciously, our brains make associations between certain visuals and their meaning to us. For example, color stimulates certain subconscious emotional responses that are almost impossible to change. This is called Color Psychology.

For example, orange represents creativity, adventure, enthusiasm, success, and balance, whereas blue's color ties to stability, harmony, peace, calm and trust.

You can subtly use color to elicit the emotional responses that you determined were important to connote for your customers in your brand strategy.

With these elements, you are equipped to execute your brand identity and create even more branded collateral, such as your website, social media pages and presence,

For every new piece of branded content, always come back to your strategy and ask yourself:

- Is this clearly directed at my target audience?
- Is it clear and to-the-point? Does my customer know what they're supposed to do from here?
- Does it sound and look like who we are?

For each piece of branded content that you make, as best as possible, use tools to track your customer's sentiment after engaging with you and your branded content. The more you are able to keep a finger on the pulse of their feelings and reactions to your brand, the better able you will be to respond and adjust as necessary.

Overall, branding is a delicate yet vastly important subject for each new business to master in order to grow into a successful new company. Spending the time and resources to get it right from the get-go is an investment you won't regret.

[Insert episode closing]