



THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO

BRAND-BASED MARKETING FOR B2B EXECUTIVES

By: Ed Delia, President | www.delianet.com

Where B2B Brands Go To Grow.



**CHALLENGES ARE THE
BREEDING GROUND OF
OPPORTUNITY FOR
B2B BRANDS.**



ABOUT THE **AUTHOR**



Ed Delia, PCM, President

Ed Delia is the second-generation leader of Delia Associates, a business branding and marketing firm founded in 1964 by his father, Michael A. Delia (who passed in 2012).

Across more than 55 years, the company has helped hundreds of b2b brands successfully grow through a variety of turbulent times, including six recessions, numerous weather events, the 9/11 attacks and this latest pandemic.

To date, Delia Associates has built or revitalized over 300 b2b brands. Our proven and proprietary Brand Leadership Solution® is our core platform for rapid brand development and deployment.

If you want to find out more or simply “talk brand,” contact me at:

📞 908-534-9044 | ✉ edelia@delianet.com | 🌐 www.delianet.com

Looking across my 25+ years in this business, I can honestly say:

“**Challenges are the breeding ground of opportunity for b2b brands.**”

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WHY 'BRAND' HAS INCREASED IN IMPORTANCE FOR B2B ORGANIZATIONS

If you are a leader in an organization that provides goods, services or technologies to other organizations (a business-to-business company), you may very well be thinking:

"We're not a brand! We sell to brands!"

In part, true. *Products and services are developed in a company or facility. Brands, on the other hand, are built out of trust and relationships.* And for as long as humans still make purchasing decisions, the power of brand heavily influences buying decisions, whether they are made in a living room or conference room. The line between home and business life has been forever blurred. It no longer matters where and when purchasing decisions occur. They just do, and regardless of the nature of the purchase - business or personal - they are always driven by emotion first and then rationalized second.

When a B2B organization positions itself as a brand, it establishes the ability to more readily form strong, lasting and emotional relationships with its audiences. This sets the stage for higher margins, longer-term clients, sustainable growth (in all business cycles), happier employees and stakeholders, and an overall great reputation as an industry leader. Your organization, by virtue of its existence, is a brand.

The big question is: Are you using brand power to drive top and bottom line growth?

The reason that branding has become increasingly crucial to b2b organizations, is that the variety and type of touchpoints has become increasingly fragmented.

When I started 25 years ago (and the Internet was in its infancy), communicating b2b brands to their respective audiences was relatively straight forward:

- ▶ Pick the top 3 trade journals and advertise with as much frequency as possible
- ▶ Send regular press coverage to a targeted list of editors covering your industry
- ▶ Appear in all industry directories
- ▶ Attend the top 3 tradeshows in your industry
- ▶ Deploy regular direct mail or a newsletter
- ▶ Arm the sales team with a great presentation deck and/or brochure

Success was largely dependent on managing the above marketing activities really well. However, the array of methods for reaching audiences is much more complex. By our count, there are at least 45 ways that b2b brands can interact with audiences, when you factor in social media, digital media, webinars, live stream and other marketing tactics. Without a strong branding foundation, b2b brands run the risk of messaging that is fragmented, misunderstood or watered down by an array of diverse, sometimes mixed messages and visual expressions.

THE B2B CEO AND THE BRAND

B2B BRANDING. SIMPLIFIED.

If this describes you, this e-book is for you.

After spending the last 25+ years working alongside b2b marketing executives and CEOs ranging from startups to heads of global billion-dollar enterprises, I've met many amazing and talented people. They are passionate, wise, charismatic and have so many other talents that enable them to be amazing leaders.

And while they often possess strong marketing instincts and insights about their industry, they are comparatively puzzled by the subject of brand. If this describes you, this e-book can help you. In it, I will break down the concept of b2b brand and brand building to give you the foundation you need to successfully introduce the power of brand to your organization.

Effective brand building is a process, not unlike the many processes already at work in your company right now. To fully benefit from the power of brand as a b2b organization takes time, discipline and reinforcement.

Why should b2b CEOs "care" about brand?

For one, it has been proven many times that real, measurable outcomes can be achieved from consistently delivering the b2b brand in an emotion-based manner.

"People do not buy goods and services. They buy relations, stories and magic."

– SETH GODIN

The beauty of brand building for the b2b company is that, when it's done well, it moves your organization in one direction: Up.

And it does so rapidly, with well-branded b2b organizations routinely outpacing their competitors by two times or more in terms of growth, margin and client retention. This happens in up markets, down markets and sideways ones as well.



Here are a few noteworthy findings from a study conducted by the Corporate Executive Board (CEB) in conjunction with Google. More than 3,000 b2b buyers were surveyed.

B2B brands that connect with their buyers on an emotional level earn twice the impact over marketers who are still trying to sell business or functional value.

Potential b2b buyers who feel a "high-brand connection" are 60% more likely to consider, purchase and even pay a premium than "low-brand connection" competitors.

Buyers feel a much closer personal connection to their b2b brands than to consumer brands.

EXAMPLE: T.H.E.M.

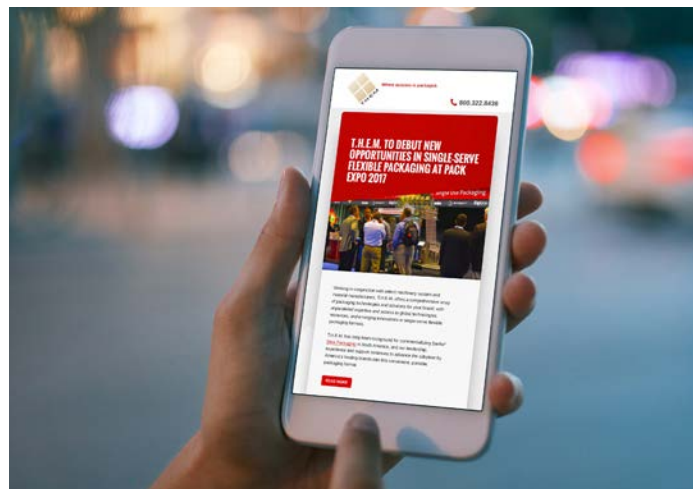


If you really take a functional look at T.H.E.M., they are like many other companies in the packaging industry. They provide packaging machines and contract packaging services. But the brand was positioned as anything but “common.”

When we caught up with T.H.E.M. roughly 15 years ago, they had demonstrated a knack for sourcing overseas packaging innovation, and successfully transferring it to North America, for brands and supply chain partners.

We established the position “Gateway to Global Packaging” to highlight the company’s uncommon ability to serve as the world’s packaging innovation antenna, thereby giving its customers a true and distinctive competitive advantage in the North American marketplace.

The messaging, reinforced through content, trade advertising and outbound marketing, resonated well with audiences. And the T.H.E.M. brand realized substantial growth as a result, from approximately \$7 million in annual sales to more than \$40 million. We’ve since evolved the brand message to now align with “success.”



BEYOND MARKETING: THE B2B BRAND SERVICES MANY

When crafted correctly, a strong b2b brand serves all critical stakeholders that support the organization's success, and in ways that extend far beyond external marketing:

▶ FOR OWNERSHIP/INVESTORS:

CLARITY through consistent demonstration that you know who you are as an organization, who you serve, and how you do so with absolute distinction and excellence.

▶ FOR PERSONNEL:

PRIDE in belonging to a specific tribe with distinct and noteworthy value.

▶ FOR CUSTOMERS:

APPRECIATION that they are working with a company that recognizes and values the importance of its image.

▶ FOR PROSPECTS:

SIMPLICITY to understand what you are all about as an organization and how you deliver uncommon value.

▶ FOR SUPPLIERS:

ENTHUSIASM that comes from working with an organization that clearly understands who they are and where they are going.

▶ FOR YOUR INDUSTRY:

A **STRONG** visible presence that reflects well on the industry overall.

▶ FOR COMMUNITIES:

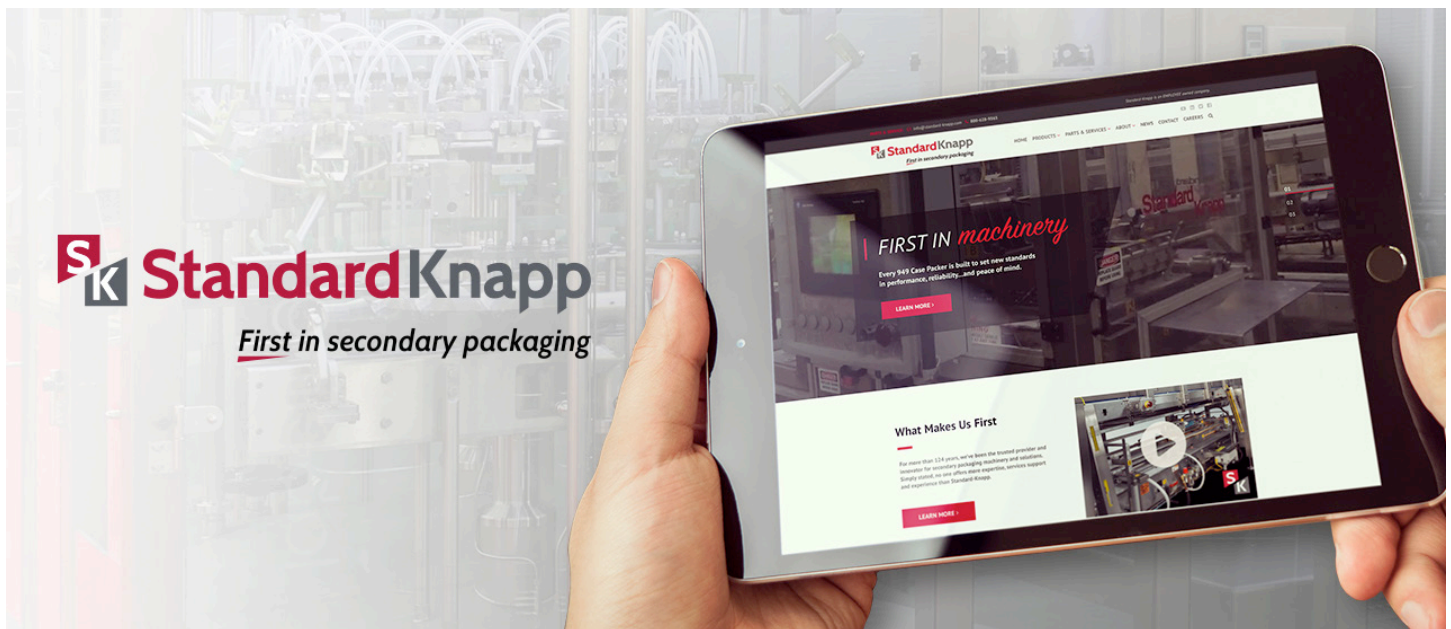
A **RECOGNIZABLE** regional organization that values people and creates opportunity.

When the b2b brand is working for the good of all stakeholders, and consistently projecting and reaffirming its unique value, it's almost hard to do anything but succeed. Why? Because all stakeholders will have a personal "stake" in making it so.

“**NOBODY CARES HOW MUCH YOU KNOW
UNTIL THEY KNOW HOW MUCH YOU CARE.**”
– THEODORE ROOSEVELT

EXAMPLE: STANDARD-KNAPP

Brand Rejuvenation for a 125-Year-Old Industrial Leader.



Packaging equipment manufacturer Standard-Knapp is an employee-owned company that continues to lead in innovation and service after 125 years. What it had was an outstanding industrial reputation and a long list of blue-chip brand clients in industries like

beverage, food, spirits and household products. What it lacked was the look, style and powerful messaging architecture needed to attract the next great customer, as well as future talent. That's exactly what our Brand Leadership Solution® delivered.

THE TOP 10 REASONS WHY B2Bs EVALUATE (OR RE-EVALUATE) THEIR BRANDS

- 1** **No Emotion:** Marketing messaging is not connecting with audiences on an emotional level.
- 2** **Change:** Shifts in offerings, or expansion in resources or size, require a rethinking of brand image.
- 3** **Commoditization:** Organization is routinely competing on price alone to win businesses.
- 4** **Competition:** Intense competition has elevated the need to differentiate.
- 5** **New leadership:** New leadership with a new vision and direction for the organization.
- 6** **Merger or Acquisition:** New structure and offerings require a new image and positioning.
- 7** **Key Milestone:** Company has just celebrated a key anniversary (10, 25, 30 or 50 years).
- 8** **No Awareness:** Despite being a stable company, leadership feels it is still a relative unknown to many viable prospects; or the brand is expanding to new markets or audiences.
- 9** **Misunderstood:** Customers don't recognize or respect all that the brand can do, or the full value it provides.
- 10** **Dated:** Brand and marketing materials look old or "last-decade" and are not in line with contemporary best practices.

EXAMPLE: SILAFRICA

We Make Packaging Roar.



While the company had grown significantly over the last several years, Silafrica was still somewhat of an unknown entity among the global packaging industry, as well as with many global consumer packaged brands.

We introduced a new brand identity befitting a regional leader, and a company fully capable of supporting top global brands.

This included a new message, “We Make Packaging Roar.” This was a tribute to the region, the legacy brand mark, and the company’s commitment to elevate the brand experience through packaging for consumers throughout Africa.



WHAT IS A B2B BRAND?

WHAT IS A B2B BRAND?

I've seen so many answers to that question:

"Your brand announces your claim of distinction."

"Your brand signifies a distinctive choice in the marketplace."

"Your brand exemplifies your corporate purpose, values and culture."

"Your brand symbolizes your company's reputation."



These are all true and certainly on the right track. However, none of these are definitions that can be easily and consistently applied.

A B2B BRAND IS UNIQUE X3

Here's my definition in the simplest terms: A unique entity with a unique offering for a unique audience.



THE UNIQUE ENTITY

is your business, which is seen as distinct through a name, logo mark and visual identity all your own.



THE UNIQUE OFFERING

is what you deliver, and it doesn't have to specifically represent your products and services. It can demonstrate how you offer those in an uncommon and differentiated manner.



THE UNIQUE AUDIENCE

is your ideal customer and the emotional bonds formed between them and your organization, as represented by your people (brand ambassadors).

APPLYING UNIQUE X3

In application, you must always be asking these questions; especially when the introduction of a new product, service or market segment is involved:

1. Have we "clearly" identified a unique audience?
2. Do they have an unmet or poorly met need that we're providing them?
3. How will we differentiate our offerings from other providers?

Like any other process, quality input sets the stage for quality output. The better you answer these questions at the onset, the better your results will be.

EXAMPLE: FORTA CORPORATION

Meaning Beyond the Product Line.

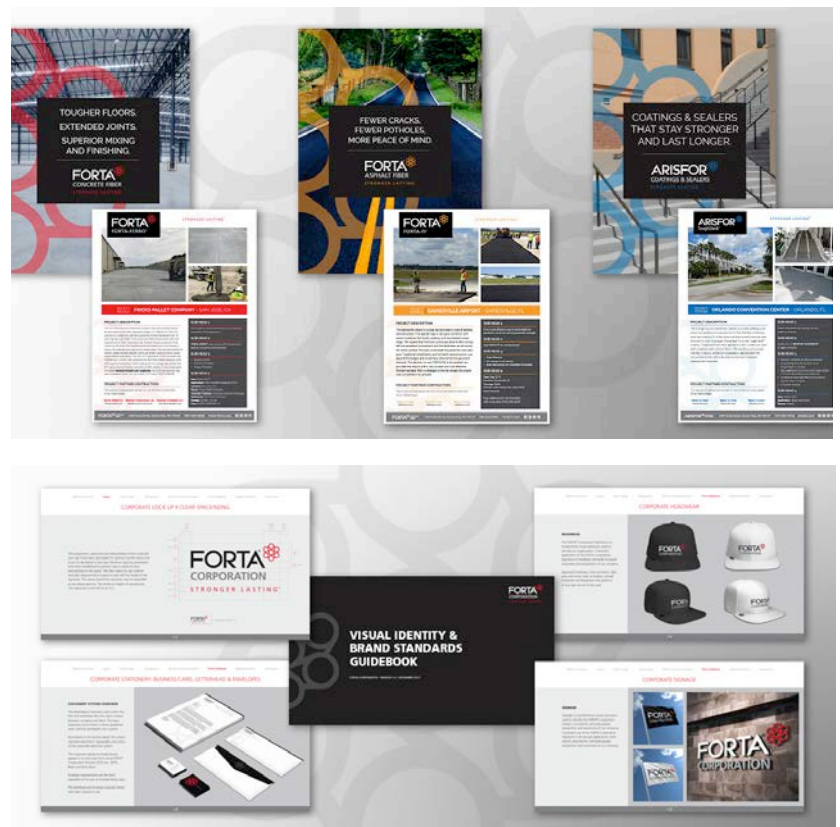


Before the rebranding process, FORTA Corporation’s brand was represented as a disparate array of products and product attributes. The brand meaning and structure became even more confusing following a series of acquisitions.

We helped FORTA reset the brand foundation with a new logo mark and visual identity used across all divisions of the company that signified the common unique properties of its reinforcing fiber and product solutions.

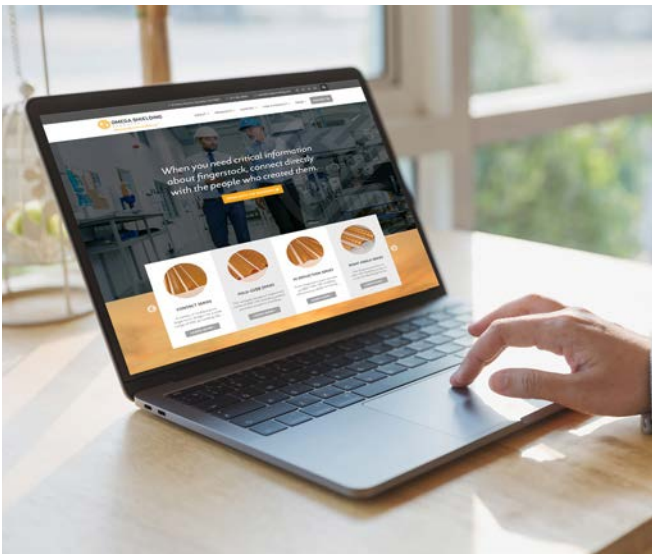
We recommended the brand message “Stronger Lasting” to emphasize the distinct attributes of its products, as well as the bonds formed with customers in the construction industry.

To demonstrate how central this brand message was to the company, we reminded FORTA’s leadership that the root of the word “Forta” in German translates to “strong.”



EXAMPLE: OMEGA SHIELDING

A Promise Based on Confidence.



Omega Shielding recognized an opportunity to stand out and engage the marketplace with impact, emotion and relevance. As Brand Discovery progressed, many opportunities to visually differentiate emerged through the creation of a new, dynamic logo mark and use of an industry-unique color scheme (that also happened to align with the copper color of the product line). The new Omega Shielding symbol creatively combines the “O” and “S” while replicating the pattern of the shielding products they produce.

From a messaging standpoint, the goal was to recognize and elevate the true reasons why customers place their trust in Omega Shielding. When a customer’s shielding requirements are critical to the success of a product, Omega Shielding is the best possible solution. The message is less about the product, and all about the confidence a customer can have knowing they are working with the highest quality supplier in the industry.

THE B2B BRAND COMPONENTS

	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	SUM	AVE
47,856	47,580	45,786	45,021	14,586	460,150	38,346	
21,452	25,547	25,647	25,471	34,751	269,554	22,464	
10,214	12,358	14,752	32,568	38,541	156,933	13,078	
14,758	15,784	12,659	26,541	69,521	229,746	19,146	
6,541	14,758	14,752	78,410	11,002	283,591	23,633	
1,452	2,254	2,569	2,654	5,478	200,303	16,692	
11,447	32,140	32,147	23,369	65,381	377,029	31,419	
65,249	52,147	52,140	50,350	21,456	294,448	24,537	
14,758	14,560	14,365	4,589	10,256	204,247	17,021	
65,892	65,891	62,587	23,658	14,785	421,084	35,091	
26,544	47,581	14,659	14,759	15,785	405,739	33,812	
26,547	11,485	11,564	36,521	32,568	910,000	18,896	
1,658	6,524	5,000	3,000	3,000	3,731	3,731	
						16,667	
						37,246	
						607	
						9,200	
						1,439	
						825	
						959	
						39	
						78	
						7	
						3	

THE B2B BRAND: WHAT DOES IT CONSIST OF?

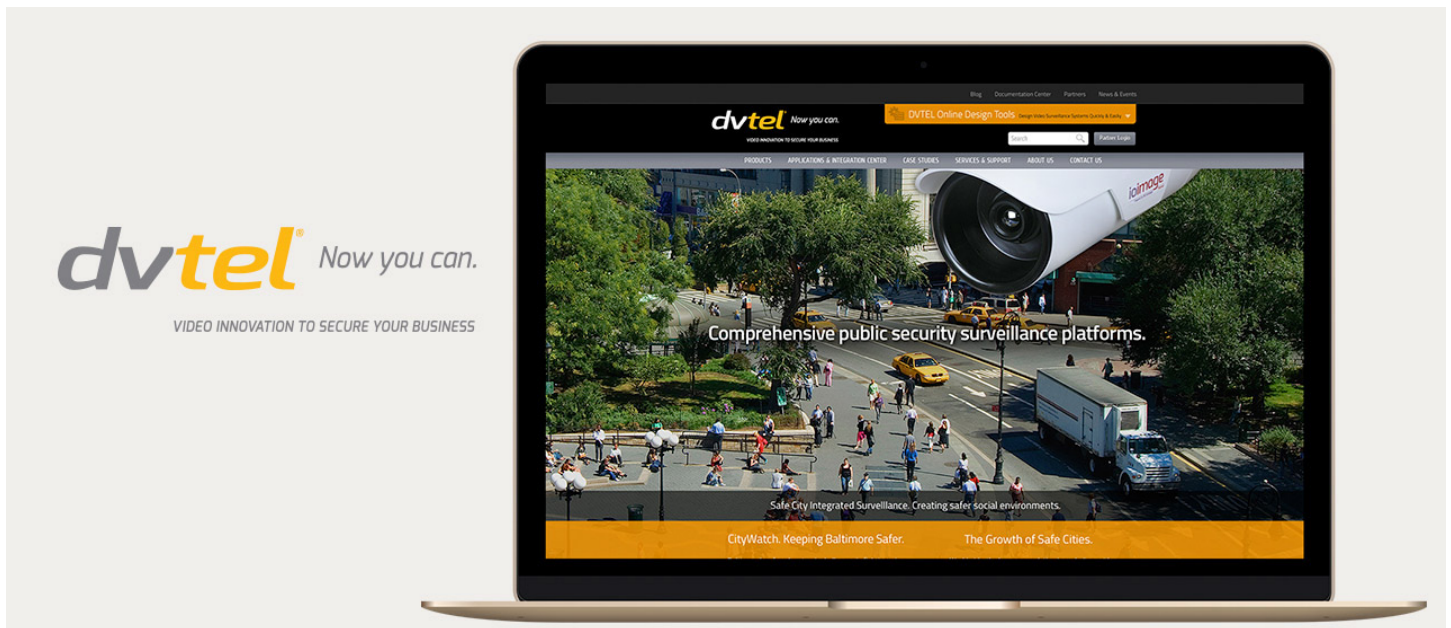
Most people think “logo” when asked to contemplate the components of a b2b brand, however, it’s more than that. All of the elements that create emotional meaning and distinction work together to define and position the b2b brand entity, whether it’s a product, service, organization, technology or movement.



THESE ARE THE CORE COMPONENTS THAT GIVE THE B2B BRAND SUBSTANCE:

- ▶ The logo mark
- ▶ The brand statement
- ▶ Visual elements, colors, icons and symbols
- ▶ Key brand messages
- ▶ Product and/or service naming and representation
- ▶ Physical branded assets (buildings, vehicles, signage, etc.)
- ▶ Key Personnel (Brand Ambassadors)

EXAMPLE: DVTEL

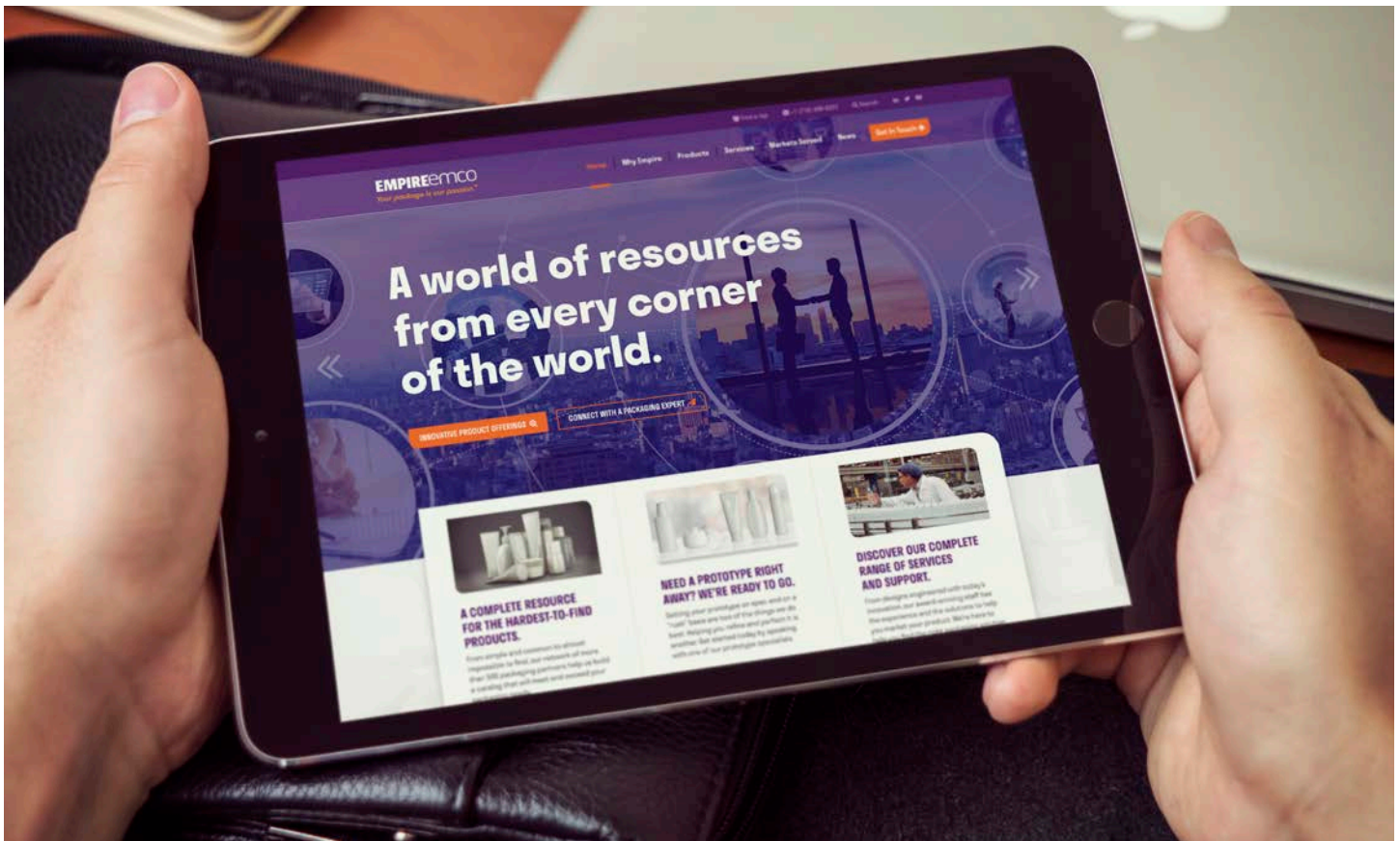


DVTEL, a global provider of video surveillance equipment and technology, had completed several key acquisitions. Following this activity, the organization needed to redefine itself to properly express its newly expanded range of services and resources. This resulted in creating a new logo mark, using a bright yellow-orange that was distinct to the competitive landscape at the time.

The band statement "Now You Can" was used as both an internal and external call-to-action and a nod to the complete scope of DVTEL's resources and customized solutions.

The yellow-orange was emphasized with a convex curve, suggestive of the lens of a surveillance camera, DVTEL's core business. It also was suggestive of a broad "horizon" of solutions. Not surprisingly, when it was time to name its latest turnkey solution for mid-market companies, the name "Horizon" proved a perfect fit.

EXAMPLE: EmpireEMCO



As part of the brand revitalization effort for consumer packaging distributor EmpireEMCO, we quickly realized an opportunity to differentiate from all competitors, through color; the color purple, that is.

With the competitive landscape consisting of browns, reds, blues and greens, nobody in the category was using purple meaningfully. Enter a new visual identity for EmpireEMCO with bold representation of the color purple.

B2B BRAND ARCHITECTURE FOR LARGER ORGANIZATIONS

THE B2B BRAND ARCHITECTURE

B2B companies often require a structured brand architecture when the organization consists of multiple components.



For example, the corporation will represent itself as a brand. Its specific divisions, product or service categories sometimes function as sub-brands to the corporate brand. Additionally, unique product properties, attributes or processes can also be branded. Laddering down further, much like the way consumer brands use mascots, select individuals in the organization can also be positioned as brand ambassadors.

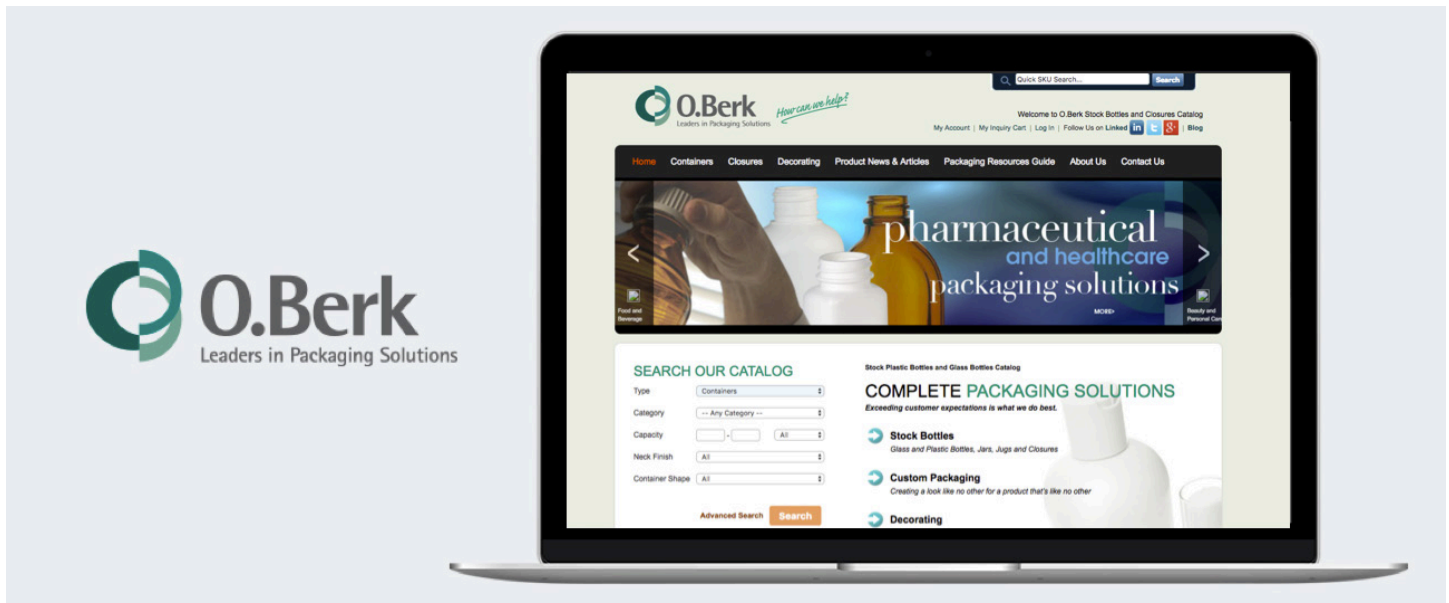
As the term implies, an inherent objective of the b2b “organization” is to be “organized.” A consistent brand architecture, from the corporate level down to the individual, with uniform messaging and visual application, increases customer trust, while delivering a more favorable impression of the company as a whole. It’s an opportunity to show the world that you have your “s#!t together” from a brand standpoint.

A B2B BRAND ARCHITECTURE MAY CONSIST OF:

- ▶ The Corporate Brand
- ▶ Division Brands
- ▶ Product or Service Brands
- ▶ Product Properties or Service Processes
- ▶ Individuals (Brand Ambassadors)



EXAMPLE: O.BERK COMPANY



When we started working with O.Berk, this 100-year old packaging distributor had grown considerably through smart acquisitions.

However, brand continuity had not been applied to the organization, making it appear as a random collection of entities vs. the strategic thoughtful whole that those sum total of entities represented.

We used visual continuity and meaning to bring the components together in a unified whole so that they could be represented together, and apart, as marketing circumstances dictated. Further, we established a common process that all O.Berk divisions and companies followed called "OptiMatch" their own branded process for helping customers achieve the perfect package solution.



A hand is shown from the top right, placing a puzzle piece into a larger assembly of puzzle pieces. The background is a solid red color. The puzzle pieces are white with black outlines. The text is in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

B2B BRAND MESSAGING HIERARCHY EXPLAINED

BRAND MESSAGING HIERARCHY

Here's a simple breakdown to understand how content can be arranged, aligned and prioritized with the core brand message and intent.

Just like there is a foundational architecture to how b2b brands are physically structured, there is a similar hierarchy to how they properly apply messaging. And when messaging is properly aligned and structured, the brand's value proposition becomes more easily understood. The advantage? Brands that are easier to understand are easier to buy.

BRAND MESSAGING ALIGNMENT OVERVIEW

01 **Descriptor:** Functional, clear description of what the brand does in as few words as possible.

02 **Brand Statement:** Customer-centric call-to-action that distinctly positions the brand.

03 **Supporting Messages:** Supportive Points that further validate each key message.

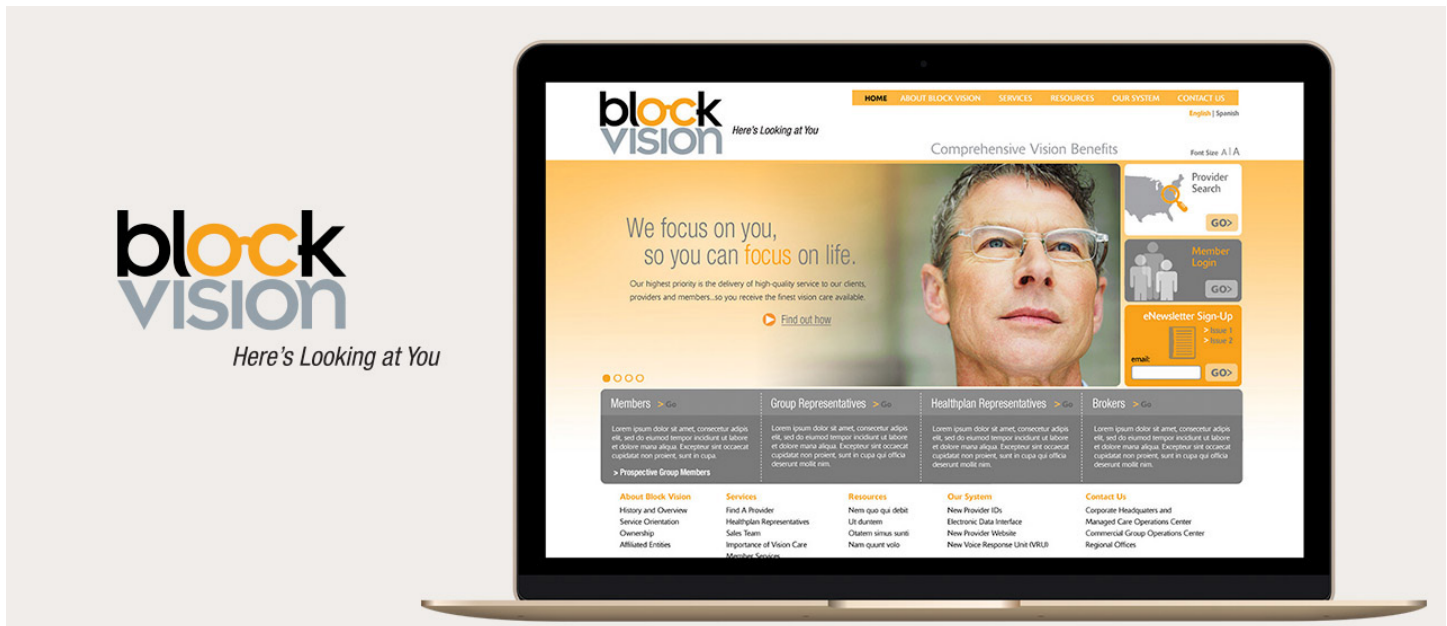
04 **Key Messages:** Top 3 messages that support and expand on the brand statement.

05 **Supporting Content:** Proof, or reasons to believe (RTB) in Supporting Messages.

06 **Content Topics:** Potential story lines that make Supporting Content real.

EXAMPLE: BLOCK VISION

Brand Messaging Alignment for Block Vision.



**block
VISION**
Here's Looking at You

01

Descriptor: Comprehensive Vision Benefits.

02

Brand Statement: Here's Looking at You.

03

Key Messages: We focus on you, so you can focus on life. Serving millions of people nationwide. High-quality, cost-effective programs.

04

Supporting Messages: Fast, easy, always-available access to the information you need.

05

Supporting Content: Highly Experienced Reps. Advanced Provider Search. 24/7 Assistance. Member Portal. Multilingual Support. Hearing Impaired.

06

Content Topics: Meet your Block Vision Account Representative. Introducing Advanced Provider Search. The new Block Vision Member Portal. Vision Benefits. Simplified.

EXAMPLE: BLOCK VISION *(continued)*

We're raising vision plans to new heights.

block vision
Here's Looking at You

Total satisfaction from start to finish
blockvision.com
Member Services: 866.265.0517

Ask about your vision benefits:

- Eye exams, frames, and contact lenses
- Freedom of choice
- Large, diverse Provider Network
- Customer Service Representatives to help with answers to enrollment, benefits and claim inquiries
- 24/7/365 web access and automated benefit and enrollment information

The collage illustrates the multi-device accessibility of the Block Vision website. The monitor displays the main landing page with the headline 'Here's Looking at You.' and a sub-headline 'Comprehensive Vision Benefits'. The laptop shows a detailed page about 'Comprehensive Vision Benefits' with a child wearing glasses. The tablet shows a 'Welcome to Block Vision' page. The smartphone shows a navigation menu with options like 'Home', 'About Us', 'Contact Us', and 'Member Services'.

B2B BRANDING

WHAT IS B2B BRANDING?

Brand is the entity.

People often get the concept of brand and branding confused. Branding is all the ways that the entity expresses itself, across all relevant touchpoints.



EXAMPLE: D+E CONSULTING



PREVIOUS LOGO



NEW LOGO & BRAND LINE



This provider of human capital management technology consulting services worked with some of the largest organizations in the United States on complex software implementations. The company started from humble beginnings as a two-person team, and while they

experienced exponential growth over the first 10 years, their brand did not evolve with the organization. As part of the brand development and branding effort, we established a new mark and a new corporate identity system to deploy the brand consistently in all marketing and communications circumstances.

BRAND IDENTITY SYSTEM



CREATING YOUR B2B BRAND IDENTITY SYSTEM

Foundational to all b2b brands is the identity system. While some identity systems are more complex and broader reaching than others, there are 10 core elements that virtually all b2b brands require:

- Business Card
- Letterhead
- Envelope
- Email Signature
- Interior/Exterior Signage
- Vehicle Signage
- Apparel
- Note Cards
- Presentation Template
- Info-Sheet Template



Each one, from a visual design standpoint, must be aligned to demonstrate a level of organization and professionalism (that's why we call organizations, "organizations." Because they are "organized"). Going beyond the core identity system, all other marketing and visual assets must also align with the brand standards in terms of color, typography, visual or graphical elements and tonality.

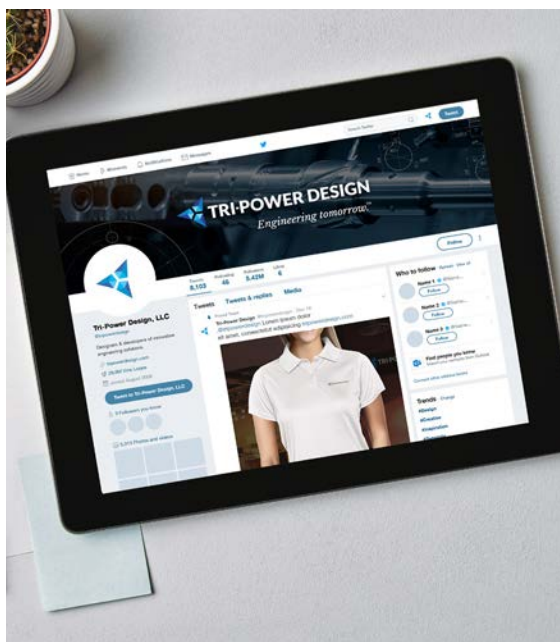
These often include:

- Website and Microsites
- Tradeshow Exhibit
- Brochures
- Multimedia
- Video
- Apps
- Social Media Pages
- Media Kit

EXAMPLE: TRI-POWER



Tri-Power Design, a leading provider of engineering services to national and global organizations, realized that its brand was under-recognized for the services it provided. A new message "Engineering Tomorrow," preceded a new brand mark and corporate identity system.



EXAMPLE: AUTODRILL



Leading up to its 20th year in business, AutoDrill charted a course for higher growth, implementing a series of improvements company wide. This included a re-imagining of the AutoDrill brand.

Early in the Brand Discovery process, an opportunity emerged to give the name and logo mark higher emotional meaning.

We instituted a new, more contemporary logo mark, using the legacy brand colors to acknowledge a proud past while looking forward to a brighter future.

The brand statement “Absolutely Dependable” was both authentic to the culture of the company, and a strong tie-in to the refined “AD” signature mark in the logo. Messaging, corporate identity and visual brand assets were elevated in recognition of AutoDrill’s global expansion.

The goal was to deliver a brand that was authentic to its roots and could also effectively compete on a global stage.

The result: Numerous customers commented favorably on the new identity and messaging immediately.

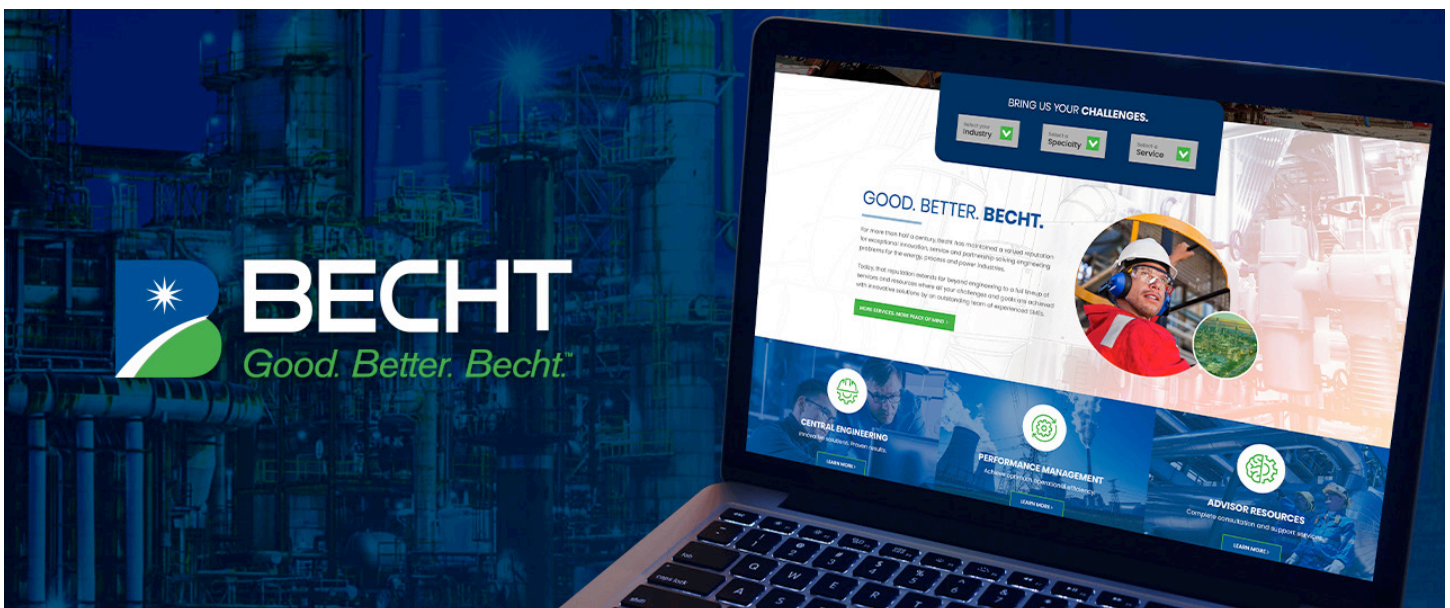
BRAND STANDARDS GUIDE

As brands get bigger and expand their geographic footprint, managing all branding touchpoints increases in complexity and opens the door to variations of interpretation. This creates the need for a Brand Standards Guide, essentially the standard operating procedures for using and representing the brand consistently in all forms of communication and across all touchpoints.

As one CEO stated – which was the basis for creating their brand standards guide – “I just came from a meeting with eight of my people, and each one of their business cards looked different.”

EXAMPLE: BECHT

Brand Standards Guide



After more than 55 years of delivering excellent engineering performance, rapid expansion – in terms of geographic reach and services, spurred Becht to rethink its brand identity and positioning.

The new Becht logo, formed in the shape of the letter 'B,' maintains the company's legacy blue and green colors, which represent the green earth and blue sky, while symbolizing Becht's global reach. The white, arching "road" bisecting

the logo's two main elements exemplifies Becht's progressive approach to the future and signifies the possibilities that can be achieved through partnerships with valued client partners.

A complete brand standards guide was developed to help this expanding organization with global reach maintain brand continuity in all aspects of its marketing, and in all regions served worldwide.

PREVIOUS LOGO



NEW LOGO & BRAND LINE



B2B MARKETING EXPLAINED

WHAT IS B2B MARKETING?

Marketing is the actions a company takes to establish or extend a customer relationship.

It may seem like a silly question, however, there are as many disparate definitions for marketing as there are for brand.

Again, here's mine and I'm going for simple: Marketing is the actions a company takes to establish or extend a customer relationship.

When your top marketing official comes forward with a request for additional funds for a new marketing activity that hasn't been previously discussed or budgeted, ask them this question:

"How will this initiative extend or create a customer relationship?"

If they have a good answer, then it's worth looking into and possibly doing. If they can't answer the question, I'll use the opposite of a familiar brand statement: "Just **DON'T** do it."



THE CUSTOMER VALUE JOURNEY

Helps remind us that new customers or great relationships don't just drop out of the sky.

If marketing is the actions taken to create or further a customer relationship, the Customer Value Journey is "how" that is done.

While there are many visuals and expressions as to what this looks like, ours is a simpler version, derived from elements of digital marketer with elements of several other influencers factored in over the years. The Customer Value Journey helps remind us that

new customers or great relationships don't just drop out of the sky or happen. When there is a definitive and repeatable path, we can guide prospects (and customers) to help them and help our business.

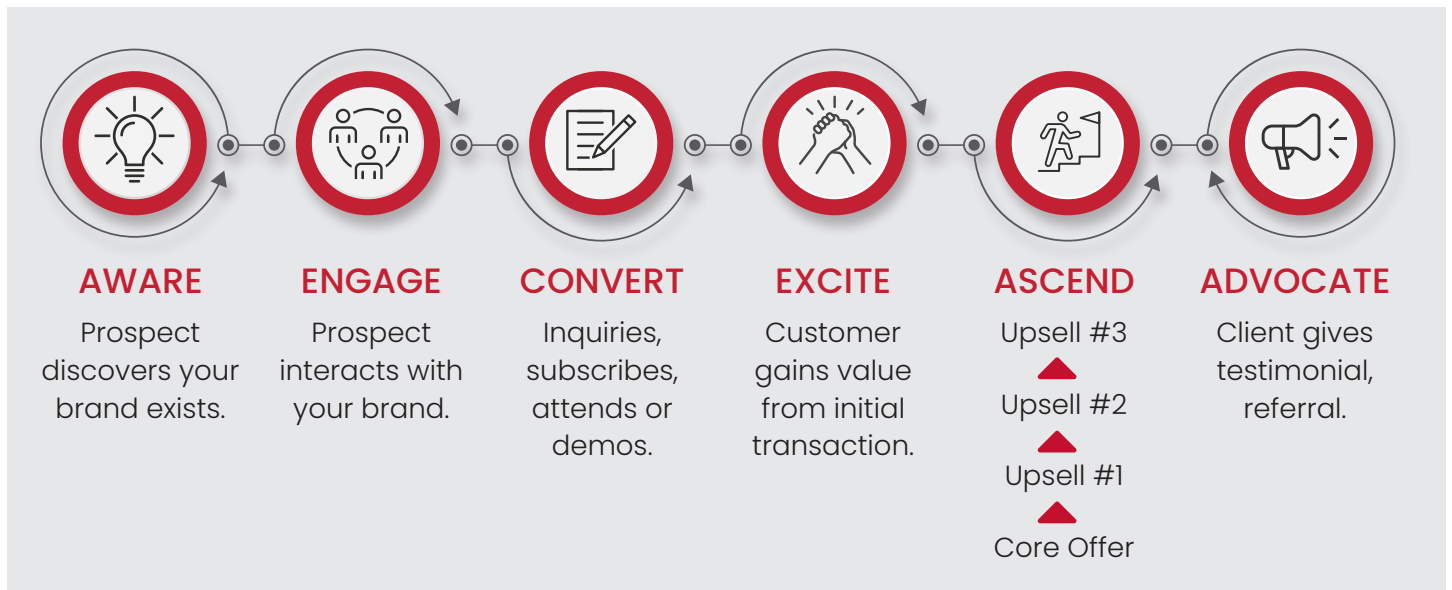
The thinking behind the model is that you can't really get anywhere in a customer relationship until that future customer knows you exist. And that's not enough. *(continued)*

The Customer Value Journey (continued)

The customer has to be given some opportunities to engage with your brand and have some initial experience to begin to formulate an impression.

From there, if there is interest and you have done a good job so far with making your brand engaging, they will convert, through either an inquiry, a demo, a download, sign up, email or phone call. When it comes time to take the first step together, that initial purchase – it can be small at first – must excite them. And to excite means delivering some transformative value.

Then – and only then – will they be open to taking the next steps toward a core offer, and being open-minded to other products and services (upsells) that you may have to offer.



If you and your team manage to consistently give that customer a transformative brand experience, eventually they become an advocate and are willing to spread the good word about you.

That's when referrals begin to happen regularly. The better you work the different phases of the journey, the more customers you acquire, the more advocates you assemble and the more your company grows.

EXAMPLE: BIHLERMED

Together, healthier happens.



BIHLERMED *Together, healthier happens.*



BihlerMED, a provider of innovative surgical lighting solutions, debuted in a space with entrenched and larger competition. To differentiate, we highlighted the brand's collaborative willingness to work with medical practitioners to enhance existing solutions and develop new ones all in the name of patient well-being.

The message: "Together, healthier happens" resonated. Visibility in industry trade journals and industry conferences was key to successfully introducing the new brand. The marketing effort included conference marketing and participation, trade advertising and press coverage, as well as easy-to-follow sales and information tools that made ordering BihlerMED products simple.

The media and industry welcomed BihlerMED as a breath of fresh air, "The new kid on the block," garnering substantial press coverage and attention. Year-over-year, sales have grown steadily.

BRAND VS. MARKETING

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND AND MARKETING?

Brand and Marketing

The two words are clearly connected and codependent, however, they are not meant to be used interchangeably.

Both must be strong for your organization to perform well. For instance, you could have the most innovative marketing strategy in the world, however, if it's directing people to a brand that is either poorly defined or misunderstood, the effort will fail.

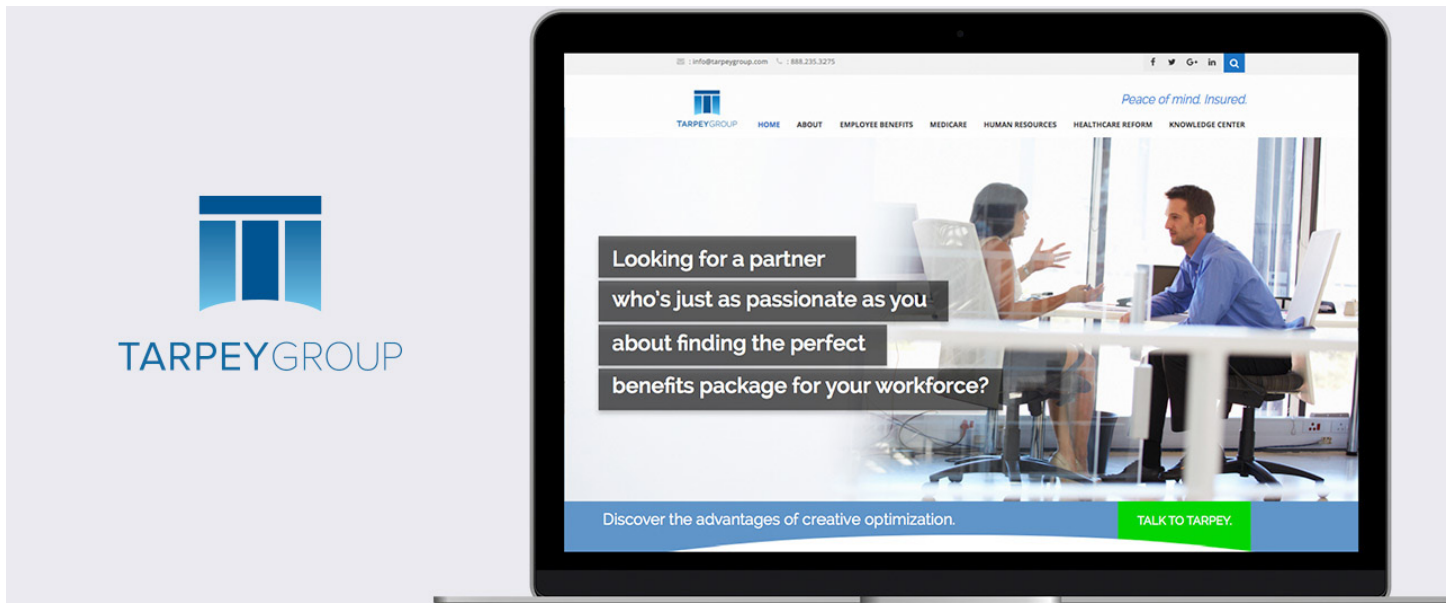
Conversely, you could have an amazing, well-defined brand, but with little or no marketing to support it.

Your brand is all that you do to establish your uniqueness as an entity with a unique offering to an audience.

Marketing are all the activities you do with and for that brand to create or extend customer relationships.



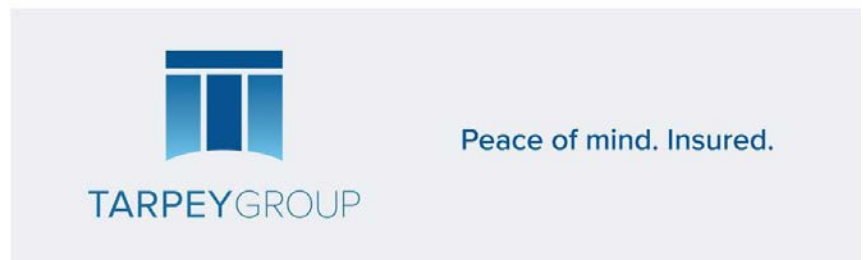
EXAMPLE: TARPEY GROUP



Tarpey Group, an established provider of employee benefits and insurance, was struggling to connect with target audiences on an emotional level. Like many in their field, they felt the pinch of commoditization in a crowded, competitive landscape.

Brand

We established the brand message: *Peace of Mind. Insured.* highlighting what Tarpey Group truly aimed to deliver above and beyond its products and services. All supporting messages and visuals further emphasized the end-benefit and feeling among customers that came with having a partner that truly understood their needs and gave them absolute peace of mind.



Marketing

The marketing strategy involved focusing on three select niche audiences, one being special needs education institutions. Over the years, Tarpey had amassed a significant clientele in that sector, and we recognized that with additional awareness and engagement, we could win even more market share from an audience group that was often underserved by the industry.

So the marketing involved participation and marketing around a series of key conferences throughout the year. By having existing knowledge of the sector, and by speaking

directly to target audiences and leveraging the critical brand promise, Tarpey Group was highly successful in expanding its footprint in the education market.

The greatest praise came from CEO, Brian Tarpey:

“I WISH I HIRED YOU YEARS AGO!”



A group of business professionals in a meeting, with a red overlay and large white text. The text reads:

OBJECTIVES. STRATEGIES. TACTICS. EXPLAINED.

WHAT ARE MARKETING OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND TACTICS?

The easiest way to understand this foundational terminology is to think about a time when you took a long trip by car.

The objective (Where to?) was to reach the end destination by tomorrow at noon.

The strategy (How so?) was to plan a route that on paper represented a longer overall distance, but avoided roads tending to be high-traffic areas.

The tactic (What?) was to leave at a specific time, and carefully follow the less-trafficked route, to reach the destination on time (tomorrow at noon).

Is the scenario I just described measurable? Of course. And that's the goal of every marketing tactic. If the objective, strategy and tactic are clearly defined, measuring the resulting tactic becomes easy.

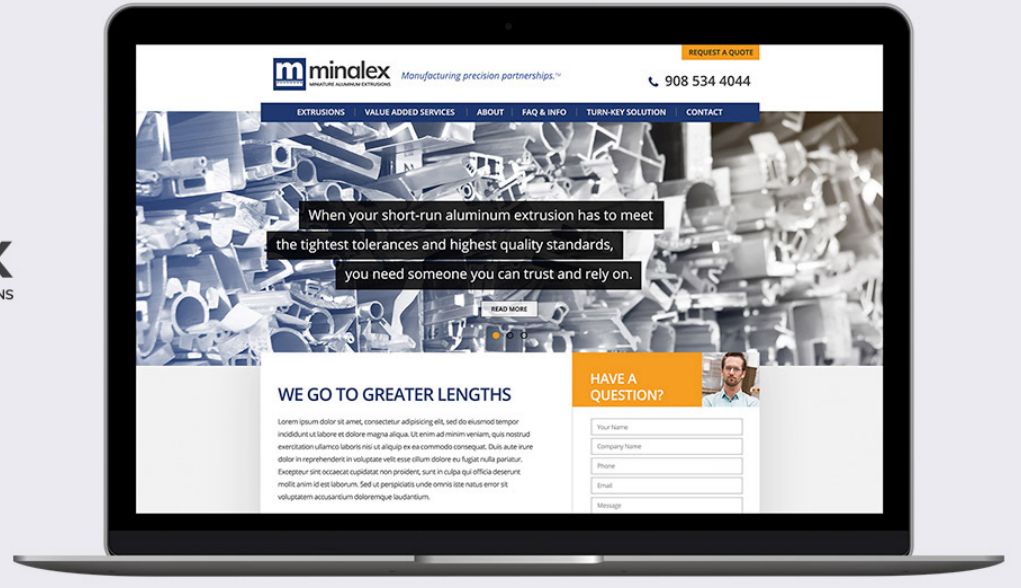
Going back to our scenario, let's say you ended up arriving at your destination at 12:15 pm.

You can debate whether this outcome was an overall success or failure, but the measurable result is indisputable: you arrived 15 minutes later than your stated objective.



EXAMPLE: MINALEX CORPORATION

A manufacturer of miniature aluminum extrusions servicing a global clientele.



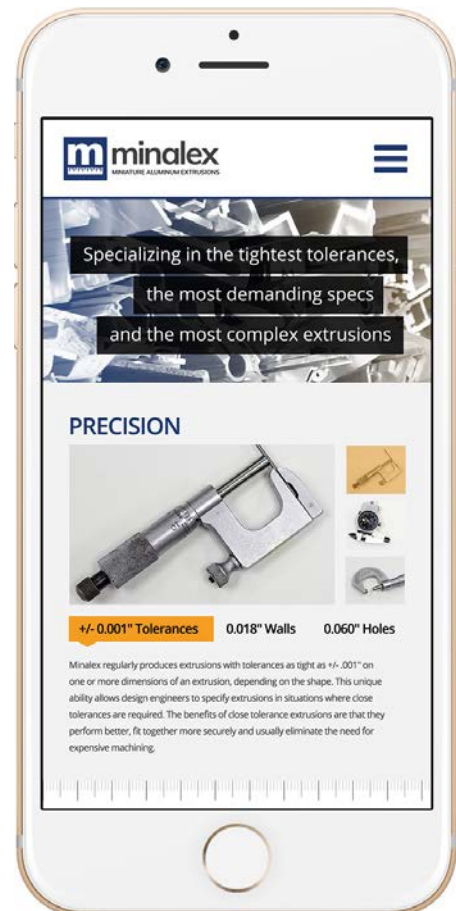
Manufacturing precision partnerships.™

Objective

Increase “measurable” lead flow to the sales team by 20%.

Strategy

- ▶ Maintain ongoing visibility among design engineers in three target vertical market segments
- ▶ Extend touchpoint engagement across the three verticals
- ▶ Elevate sales team toolkit



The Tactics

- ▶ Targeted Trade Advertising – maintain consistent visibility in top publication reaching design engineers
- ▶ Organic Search Marketing – achieve page one positioning in the top 20 keyword set
- ▶ Content Marketing – to email database of customers and prospects, and trade media
- ▶ Lead Magnet Development – creation of compelling downloadable content for target personas
- ▶ Marketing Automation – to create follow-up opportunities from lead magnet download
- ▶ Sales Team Support Tools Development – to establish consistent, professional presentations of the Minalex brand



**THE RESULTS: 728 LEADS
WERE GENERATED
ACROSS THE YEAR, A
38% YEAR-OVER-YEAR
INCREASE**



B2B TACTICS. THE COMPLETE LIST.

WHAT ARE THE TACTICAL COMPONENTS IN A B2B MARKETING PROGRAM?

There are only three ways that growth happens in a b2b organization:

▶ *Get more new customers* ▶ *Create growth among existing customer base* ▶ *Increase customer buying frequency*

A well-thought-out, balanced b2b marketing campaign considers all three channels of growth. We have mapped out 45 potential marketing tactics that b2b organizations can successfully implement to drive toward 2x growth, and aligned them with these three channels:

Get more new customers:

- ▶ Lead Magnet
- ▶ Samples/Trials
- ▶ Interaction (Quiz/Survey)
- ▶ Assessment/Consult
- ▶ Podcast/Webinar
- ▶ Live Events/Live Stream
- ▶ Blog
- ▶ Public Relations
- ▶ Content Syndication
- ▶ Tradeshows/Conferences
- ▶ Social Messaging
- ▶ Catalog
- ▶ 3D Gift
- ▶ Social Advertising
- ▶ Paid Search (Display, Text)
- ▶ Direct Mail/Email
- ▶ Trade Advertising
- ▶ Review Sites
- ▶ Organic SEO
- ▶ Social Post

Create growth among existing customer base:

- ▶ Upsells
- ▶ Cross Sells
- ▶ Slack Adjusters (Super Upsell)
- ▶ Downsell
- ▶ Bundles, Kits, Value Buckets
- ▶ Line Extensions
- ▶ Subscription, Continuity
- ▶ Membership, Group, Association
- ▶ Consulting, Training
- ▶ Customer Appreciation Events
- ▶ Done-For-You Service
- ▶ Client Exclusives
- ▶ Warranties, Insurance

Increase customer buying frequency:

- ▶ Email Newsletter
- ▶ Automated Email Follow-up
- ▶ Exit Offers
- ▶ Bounce Back Offers
- ▶ Product Includes
- ▶ Retargeting
- ▶ Loyalty Program
- ▶ Direct Mail
- ▶ Outbound Phone Follow-up
- ▶ Coupon, Gift Cards
- ▶ Newsletter, Magazine (Physical)
- ▶ Client Appreciation Offers

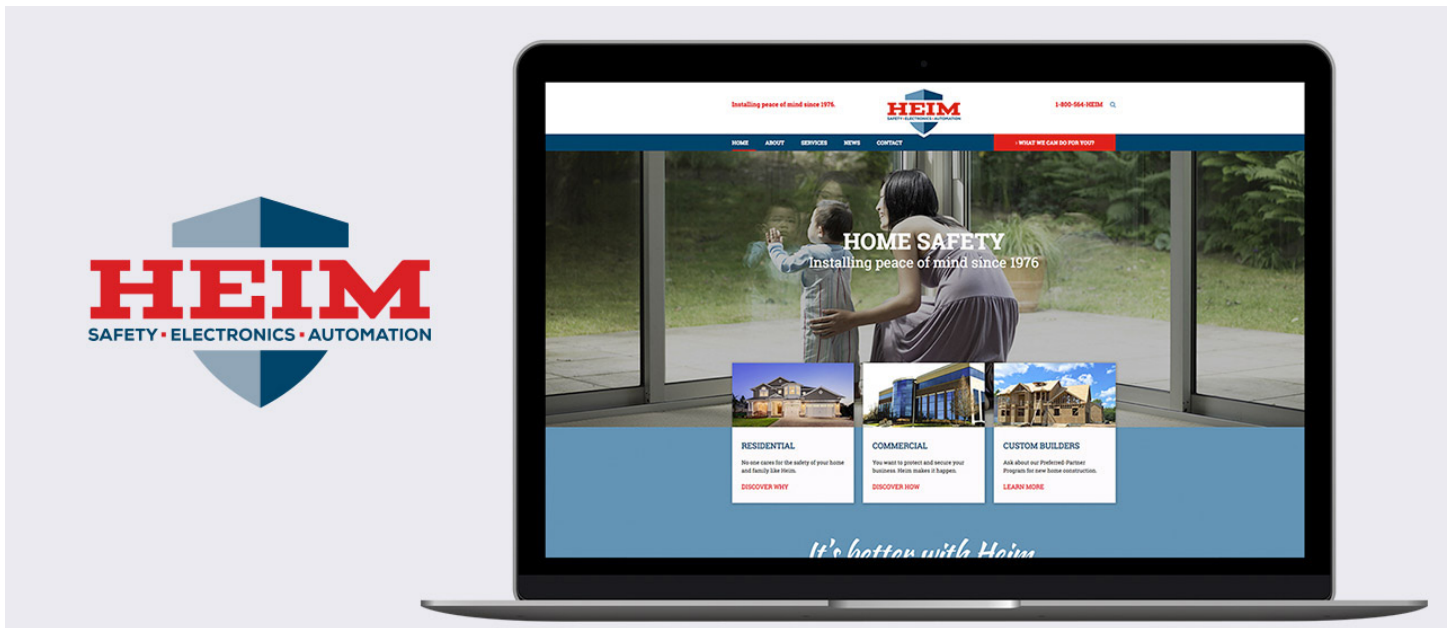
EXAMPLE: CIMQUEST



For Cimquest, a pioneer in 3D printing services, the right mix of tactics was needed to support an upbeat brand message: “Let’s Make it Happen.” These included: trade media, event participation, web, digital, video and social.



EXAMPLE: HEIM ELECTRONICS



For Heim Electronics, a leading regional provider of home and business automation solutions, the right tactical approach was a highly targeted one, focusing exclusively on local custom builders. This style, a one-to-many approach, involved targeting a small audience, realizing that each one represented a gateway to a multitude of potential Heim customers.



A group of business professionals in a meeting, with a red overlay and the text "WHAT CAN I DO RIGHT NOW AS CEO?". The image shows three people: a woman on the left holding a notebook, a woman in the center with glasses looking at a laptop, and a man on the right pointing at a document. The background is a blurred office setting with a whiteboard.

WHAT CAN I DO RIGHT NOW AS CEO?

WHAT ARE FIVE ACTIONS I CAN TAKE RIGHT NOW TO IMPROVE BRAND IMAGE?

Seemingly little things can add up, and if you are in a competitive industry sector, you rarely (if ever) get a second chance to make a great first impression.

HERE ARE FIVE ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE RIGHT NOW TO HELP YOUR COMPANY IMPROVE ITS BRAND IMAGE:

1 Walk into your environment using brand vision. Go outside your facility, clear your mind and walk back in again. What do you see? Is the entryway presentable? Is it attractive? Is there any clutter? Does the environment look appealing? Remember, people coming into your organization – it could be a prospect, a future employee, your commercial loan officer – will be making snap judgments about you and your organization based on what they see. What will they see when they walk into your company? If something is out of sync, you have the power to change it. Immediately.

2 Anonymously call into your organization. Believe it or not, people do still use the telephone from time to time. When was the last time you called into your company? Call in from an outside line and see what happens. Are you cast into voicemail hell? Is it hard to navigate the options? If a live voice answers, do they do so in a professional and positive manner? A person calling in could be having their very first brand impression with your organization. Make sure it's a good one and that your phone system and communication get them to where they want to go.

3 Look at 3-5 direct competitor websites or tradeshow exhibits. How do you stack up? Take a look at 3-5 competitor websites or walk the next tradeshow and see how they are positioning and exhibiting. Are their presentations – online or offline – superior to yours? If so, it may be time for a refresh. Always take stock of the competition from a brand standpoint. See what they are doing and what they are not doing. This will help you maintain your competitive brand edge.

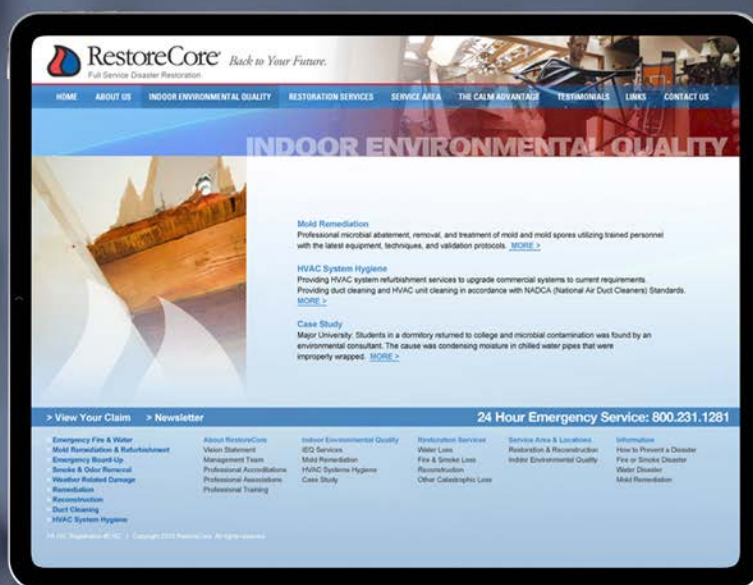
4 Look at 3-5 of your company's marketing pieces. Bring together multiple pieces of your company's marketing mix. It could be a brochure, a mailer, an email, website facing or presentation. Are the brand elements visually aligned? Do they support your overall brand position? Are they professional in appearance and quality?

5 Ask your team: What is our company's most remarkable attribute? See if you and your team are on the same page. Go out to several of your personnel and ask them, "What's most remarkable about us as an organization?" See what they have to say. We invited one CEO to do this, and his personnel came back with over 40 different answers! To that he remarked, "Clearly, we are not in alignment!"

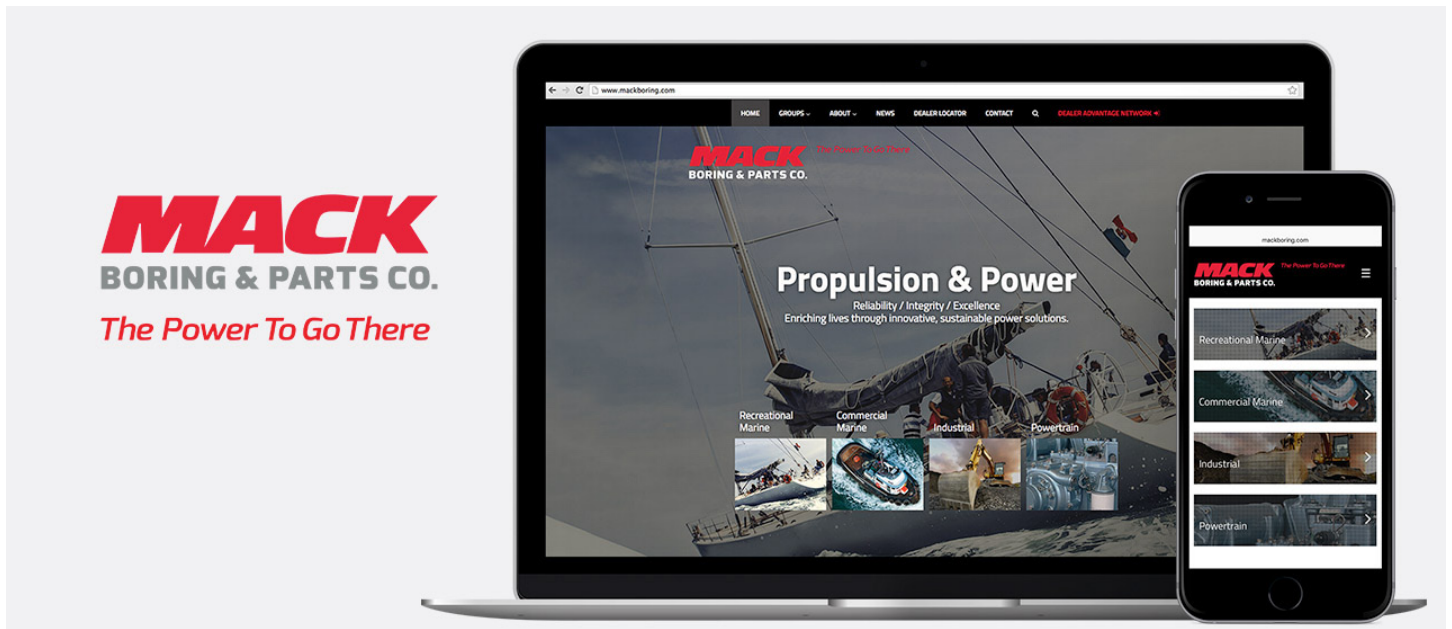
EXAMPLE: RESTORECORE

Shortly after walking into this commercial disaster recovery provider's HQ, the CEO took me into the main conference room. Written on the whiteboard were more than 20 statements. The CEO explained, "I asked my team to write down what's most remarkable about us, and this is what they came up with, and they're all different." He added with a smile, "Clearly, we need some help aligning; that's why you're here."

Working through our process, we established the unifying brand message "Restoring Tomorrows," a tribute to the firm's ability to quickly and safely bring businesses back to operations and move them toward a brighter future. We also helped them brand their unique methodology for doing so: "The RestoreCore Response." The new messaging and positioning assisted in the company's expansion and growth. RestoreCore now operates across two states, with capabilities to also provide nationwide coverage.



EXAMPLE: MACK BORING



Following a series of acquisitions, coupled with organic expansion and growth, Mack Boring, a leading provider of marine power products, had outpaced its brand identity. As a result, the company was deploying so many mixed and disparate messages that the CEO and

leadership team made brand repositioning their #1 corporate priority. The repositioning was realized through new messaging, website and complete corporate identity system. Their new message was both aspirational and motivational: "The Power to Go There."



SUMMING IT UP ...

IN CONCLUSION

As a b2b organization, a well-defined, well-organized and consistently deployed brand is your most valuable asset.



It will propel your organization forward and help you realize your goals and dreams. It will attract top talent, accelerate sales, invite the best clients and suppliers, and allow you and your team to go out into the marketplace with absolute confidence. In closing, your brand is the growth engine for your business.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

If you want to find out more or simply “talk brand,” contact me at:

📞 908-534-9044 | ✉️ edelia@delianet.com | 🌐 www.delianet.com



Where B2B Brands Go To Grow.

📞 908-534-9044

✉️ edelia@delianet.com

🌐 www.delianet.com