

Building your **BRAND**/House



**A Checklist for Determining
the Strength of Your Brand**

Have you ever tried to build something?

**Not something small, like a sand castle,
but something more like... a house.**

Most probably wouldn't be able to answer that in the affirmative. An undertaking like building a house is a serious commitment of time, money, know-how, and patience. And rightfully so, since our homes are typically one of our most prized possessions.

A home can represent a place of rest, of laughter, of stress, of togetherness, of separateness, of support, of peace, of anxiety, of... you fill in the blank, whether it be good or bad. The interesting truth is that you can visit one home, and then go right next door to the neighbors house and have two completely different experiences.

A home is as unique as the people living in it.

But, there are certain things about virtually every house that are the same.

The bones - the foundation, the walls, the roof, and some form of interior decor. There are very few houses that don't have a variation of each of these four elements. Now, one home might be a shack on the beach, and the other a multi-million dollar 20,000 sq ft. mansion, but these four elements still remain.



So how does the structure get built?

If you've ever built, or thought about building, a lasting house, you know it takes a well-thought-out plan. This includes the correct combination of specific tools, resources, order, and calculated timing, infused with the ability to be flexible with unforeseen circumstances, like weather. Otherwise, you end up with an absolute nightmare on your hands.

If you don't have significant carpentry experience, I doubt you'd ever tackle the job of building something as monumental as a home yourself. And you certainly wouldn't undertake it haphazardly. Sure, you could Google the heck out of it and eventually cobble something together, but inevitably massive problems will raise their ugly heads. Plumbing, electrical, drywall, painting, trim, flooring... all these jobs require different skills.

Many business owners often approach building their brand in this same fashion. Haphazard. Piecemeal. With little to no plan.

In today's world, being on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and/or Pinterest are table stakes - everyone knows these are important. So you choose your top three. You get your accounts set up, and start posting, tagging, blogging, and tweeting, and wait for business to start pouring in.

And... you wait... and wait... and wait....

Maybe you've read about the fact that SEO is important. You've Googled it, along with PPC (pay per click) advertising, and dabbled in it as much as you can understand. But your frustration only intensifies because it just doesn't seem to be affording any results. Plus, the more you read, the more confusing it gets. And you don't have time to focus on learning this any more.

After a couple of weeks, you discouragingly decide, "Social media must not work for me. It just feels like a waste of time with not much return on my investment. Or maybe marketing just doesn't work. I guess I just have to work harder in other areas to bring in qualified leads."

If this sounds familiar, you're not alone.

**So... what do you do?
Where do you turn?**

First things first, you have to build a strong foundation.

There are three elements of a brand building strategy that, when woven together, provide your solid foundation that will last for the long term.

1

Your Purpose Statement and Values.

If you don't have these spelled out, our recommendation is that you stop now and draft these. These are the very paper that your blueprint is drawn on. There is nothing more foundational to a company than why they exist and what they value.

[Check here if you have clearly defined purpose statement and values](#)

2

Your Unique Selling Proposition (or USP).

What does your company stand for? What is that one thing that sets your business apart from others? Don't try to be known for everything, but be really known for one thing. You're swimming in a sea of competition. What makes you different and/or better than the competition?

[Check here if you can clearly articulate your USP](#)

3

Your Target Market.

This is your ideal customer/s. Think about 2-5 people you currently serve, who don't feel like "work" to provide your services to them. In creating "Member Personas", carefully define their descriptors - where they live, work, play, and buy; their lifestyle, decision makers, habits; and what frustrates, saddens, and gives them cause to celebrate. Once defined, these are the people you direct all your marketing efforts towards.

[Check here if you know exactly who your target market is](#)

Now that you can express why you exist and what you value, you can understand what makes you different. In addition, you know who your ideal customer is and can begin adding walls and a roof to your foundation.

The structure of your brand building house - your walls and roof - include two important components:



A Strong Brand.

Does your brand represent you well? Does it speak to the type of people you want to attract? Best way to determine this is to ask a “stranger” what your logo represents. What are the words that come to their mind when they see it? For example, does your target market largely consist of women, but your brand is geared more to strong “dudes”? Or, do you want to be known for offering a variety of services but your brand is specific? You have to know the story your brand is telling. And, be willing to adjust if it’s not in line with your purpose or target market.

Check here if your brand (messaging, logo, colors, etc) are on point to attract your targeted audience



A Lead-Generating, Optimized, and Professional Website

This is so key. Your website is one of the most important investments you can make since it’s your “front door” to the online searchers, aka potential members. That’s why it’s so important to have a professional, eye-catching, and effective one. There is a massive difference between a website that simply “looks cool” and one that is a high performing, professional, fully optimized website. The competition is fierce. Often your website is your main business tool to help you win the day.

Check here if your website has been built in the last 2 years (or less) by someone who really knows what they are doing

There are no two homes alike when it comes to the interior decorations. The decor is a direct reflection of the owner's unique style. The same is true for the details and elements of a brand building strategy.

We will lay out just a handful of the plethora of choices that abound in the world of marketing in order for you to identify the ones that best fit your style. Many of these are vital to the strength of your business.



Reputation Building

More easily understood as positive reviews. When people are in research mode, they hunt for and read reviews. The business who has twenty-five 4-5 star reviews will immediately have more credibility than the one with 3 reviews, even if they're all 5 stars. Getting your people to submit reviews is one of strongest (and easiest) ways to increase your traffic.

Check here if you've got 20+ posted reviews (check twice if they're all positive!)



Social Media Marketing

More than likely in today's world, no matter who your target audience is, they are on some form of social media. Do you know where they hang out? If it's Facebook, you need to be there - posting, interacting, liking. If it's Instagram, are you active posting pictures or videos? The customer now has a voice (a sometimes really loud voice) and it can be really positive or quickly turn "dirty". Staying on top of this allows you to engage in a two-way conversation.

Check here if you know where your audience hangs out on social and if you interact with them at least a few times a week



Local SEO

When people search for your type of business in your community, do you show up? Where do you show up - on page one, right up at the top? It is a fact that the majority of Googlers will decide on a business that shows up on the first page of their search. Not showing up until page 2 or beyond, is a pretty sure way to guarantee not being found.

- Check here if you show up high on the Google list when and where people are looking**



Email Marketing

Your email list is still probably one of your most effective tools. With a good Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, you can setup automated campaigns that work even while you're sleeping. When email marketing provides info the prospect is looking for and isn't spammy, they are high value to the recipient.

- Check here if you have an email list and are using it to stay in regular communication with your clients and prospects**



Events

We can engage in the digital world all day, but the power of a face to face event should never be underestimated. Plan consistent events that you know your prospects and clients would be interested in (ask them!), and then market the heck out of it to get people to attend. Make sure to have cameras on hand for pictures and videos!

- Check here if you plan regular events (at least one/month) and feel like you market them well**



Press Releases

When you host an event (grand opening, anniversary, charity, community, etc.), let the local press know about it! Your business "in lights" automatically creates exposure and credibility.

- Check here if you've reached out to your local press about anything related to your business**



Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Ads

This brand building tool can be super targeted, and can be a great way to capture new prospects and clients. If there's any advice you listen to, hear this - don't boost your FB posts! Instead, specifically target the type of people you want in your doors, and set up a PPC campaign. This can be a minimal cost that only requires little effort.

[Check here if you've used PPC campaigns](#)



Video (on YouTube, Vimeo, your website, in emails)

This tool is a no brainer. The majority of us, given our busy schedules, would rather watch a quick video than read an article or post. And the great thing about videos is that you can get really creative with them - teach a quick lesson, capture a testimonial, show the inside of your space. The power of video has only begun to really show itself.

[Check here if you've shot and published at least 10 videos over the last 3 months.](#)



Blog Posts

These are an incredible way to establish your expertise. Writing articles about things your audience wants to learn about is a sure way to "train" them to come to you when they need answers. Don't paralyze yourself by thinking they have to be long. Key to this - you have to study and understand what they care about!

[Check here if you publish at least 2-3 blog posts a month](#)

Just like the options for decorations of a house are virtually limitless, so are the ways that you can customize your brand building strategy. This list is simply a start to get your creative juices flowing.

We've spent years building "brand" houses.

We eat, sleep, and breath this stuff. And we love it.

They are most certainly not a waste of time, unless you try to do it yourself without the right knowledge. We know the bones well. We know what order things have to be done in to create a strong foundation. We know when to add the walls, then how to begin adding on the roof.

In the world of technology, websites, and social media, the stakes are ever-changing. What's new? What works? What's best? Can you do it by yourself? Of course, but it will inevitably take you longer, and cost you significantly more (maybe not in the short-term, but definitely in the long-term) - both in hard costs and in opportunity costs.

Building compelling brands is our specialty. It's our niche. And we'd love to lay out for you, in simple terms, what you need to build your lasting brand.

We're here to help, hammer in hand.

A great start in finding out how well your marketing house is built is to check the foundation. At no charge to you and within less than a minute of your time, you can see the strengths and weaknesses of your website.

THE DIY WEBSITE AUDIT INCLUDES:

1. A website report
2. Competitive site analysis option
3. Opportunity for one-on-one feedback on reports



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