

Create a Killer Brand

Five Steps to Creating a Winning Brand Experience

In the old days, companies built brands by setting a strategy, then pumping a gazillion dollars into traditional advertising until we, the unsuspecting public, became loyal fans.

Boy how times have changed. These days, your brand is built more by the ongoing conversations and interactions your customers have about you through their social networks, than any one ad you might place.

“Your brand is what other people say about you when you’re not in the room.”

--Jeff Bezos, CEO & Founder. Amazon

Given this new reality, it may seem as though the quest to build a great brand is hopeless; it most certainly is not. It just means that we need to take care to ensure that our brand is delivered consistently and effectively through everything we do, especially the customer experience we create.

Here are five simple steps to creating a memorable customer experience.

1. Start by understanding the journey customers take with you

It can be enormously eye-opening to physically map a day, week or month in the life of your customer. How and when do they first encounter you? What is their online experience and what happens when they walk through your doors or receive an invoice? Understanding the different ways in which they experience your brand is the first step in ensuring a stellar experience.

2. Address the gaps

Once you’ve taken the time to map your customer’s journey, you’re likely to unearth a few gaps in their experience. Are there times when the branding is inconsistent, or worse, confusing? Does your brand promise one thing but your experience deliver another? Are there times when your service is less than you desire? Identify these times and address them.

3. Focus your efforts

It’s tempting to develop a highly sophisticated experience with lots of layers. Don’t do it. The margin of error is too great, and customers will only really remember a couple of key things. Instead, focus on creating a few really sweet, memorable moments, and do those really, really well. Keep them simple and easy to consume and to remember.

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4. Let your brand's personality shine through

Professionalism is great. But professionalism with a bit of self-deprecating humor is awesome. Don't be afraid to let your brand develop a human personality. This is the hallmark of some of our most beloved brands, and an approach worth copying.

5. Engage and empower your employees

Employee actions make or break brands. You may be on your game every single day, but if your employees aren't, all your efforts could be wasted. Bring them into the fold. Make sure they understand the brand and how it translates into on-brand behaviors, then give them the tools and training to make it happen!