

# Building Your Brand in Rural Business

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# A Brand is:

- a connection between you and your customers
- what consumers know and believe and think and feel about your business, its products, services, and the experiences you provide
- what you stand for and your reputation
- your company's face in the marketplace
- the emotional impact your company makes on your customers or potential customers
- your way of differentiating yourself within the marketplace
- your promise



# Building Your Brand

Start with an understanding of your business, ask what you want the world to know about it, then polish your vision and make it crystal clear:

- **Who are you?**
  - List your company values.
  - Do people know about your business values?
  - Have you created a relationship you can foster?
  - Have you made a connection or bond with your customer?



# Building Your Brand

- **What are your strengths?**
  - What value or benefit does your product or service bring to the customer?
  - Do you have specialty products or services that put you ahead of the market?
  - What makes your product unique?
  - How does your price point fit the market – service and quality only go so far?
  - Can you show through pictures or description the emotional factor of why you are better?



# Building Your Brand

- **What have you done?**
  - This is a chance to tell your story
  - Talk about less visible activities such as stewardship, community involvement, and charitable contributions
  - These can help you make a connection to the value system of your customers



# Building Your Brand

- **Translate.**
  - Develop ways to convey your brand values
  - How can you add a personal touch to gain customer's loyalty?
  - Do you have a guarantee?

# Communicating Your Brand

- Create brand unity and pride of brand
  - Top to Bottom: Think, Say, Do
  - Elevator speech
  - Practice, practice, practice
  - Include all levels in this brand unity
- Share your story
  - Create advocates from customer



# Brand Development & Design

- Brands are a means of nonverbal communication
- Consider what colors, designs, and images best express your business:
  - attitude and/or philosophy
  - emotion
  - presence
- Employ those colors, designs, and images throughout your business to consistently convey your brand
- Create a logo and/or image(s) to associate with your company
  - Use it everywhere
  - Use it consistently



# Tips for Using Your Brand

Your media presence should reflect the same colors, design elements, and images you have chosen to convey your brand

- Keep your profile names and custom URLs the same for all platforms to unify your brand:
  - Website: [www.yourbusinessname.com](http://www.yourbusinessname.com)
  - Email: [email@yourbusinessname.com](mailto:email@yourbusinessname.com)
  - Facebook: [www.Facebook.com/yourbusinessname](http://www.Facebook.com/yourbusinessname)
  - YouTube: [www.YouTube.com/yourbusinessname](http://www.YouTube.com/yourbusinessname)
  - LinkedIn: [www.Linkedin.com/in/yourbusinessname](http://www.Linkedin.com/in/yourbusinessname)
  - Twitter: [www.Twitter.com/yourbusinessname](http://www.Twitter.com/yourbusinessname)

# Tips for Using Your Brand

- Even traditional media should reflect your brand
  - Business cards
  - Newspaper ads
  - Radio spots
  - T-shirts and other memorabilia
  - Signs on buildings or vehicles or on farm/ranch entrance



# Tips for Using Your Brand

- Convey your brand when communicating with customers:
  - Greet customers the same way, whether they are face-to-face, on the phone, or online
  - Personalize the customer experience
  - Provide great customer service when asked for information or contacted about an issue
  - Provide confirmation of sales
  - Follow up with current customers



# Tips for Using Your Brand

- Use your “elevator pitch” — a 30-second speech that sums up your business — when meeting potential customers.
- Incorporate the power of your customers’ voices
  - Reflect the positive comments from customers on your marketing materials
  - create a reward for brand advocates



# Brand = Reputation + Customer Experience

- Customer experience includes:
  - The experience your customers had the first time you had contact with them
  - Your customer's experience during their last interaction with your company
  - All of their experiences in-between
- Have you asked your customers about their experience or how they liked your product?
- Customers who have good experiences are more likely to be
  - Repeat customers
  - A spokesperson for your company, both online and off



# Consumer Choice

- Customers discuss their experiences with others.
  - (12 million viewers watched the “United Breaks Guitars” video on YouTube)
- Potential customers use these conversations and opinions to make buying decisions
  - Jupiter Research has found that people are:
    - 3 times more likely to trust peer opinions over advertising when making purchasing decisions
    - Going to the Internet to find these opinions
- Have you solicited reviews or testimonials?



# What Are People Saying?

- Check out your reputation by doing a search on your business name
  - Search different search engines and mapping sites like Google, Yahoo, and Bing
  - Did you know people were talking about you?
  - What did you find your online reputation to be?
  - Do you like what you are reading?
  - What can you do about it?
- Give Google correct/current information
  - Claim your [Google Place for Business](#)

# What Are People Saying?

- Check on review sites such as YELP! and TripAdvisor
  - Monitor the sites where customers are talking about you
  - Join in the conversation, not as a method of selling yourself but to show you care about your customers after the sale
  - Find ways to encourage satisfied customers to share their experiences online
  - If there are negative comments, make sure you address legitimate problems and let folks know that you have worked to correct the situation
- Set up alerts to help monitor online traffic about your brand, your business and your product/s



Brands, just like reputations take time to create or change.

Be consistent in what your business stands for in all that you do.

- <http://go.unl.edu/agritourism>
- <http://go.unl.edu/directmarketingfood>