



LEGACY BRANDING INC.
Branding Exercise

This branding exercise will create the foundation of your brand, so that the logo, brand voice, brand platform, and all ensuing marketing and collateral will reflect your overall brand in a consistent and clear way that hits your target market. Please take a week or two to complete this exercise and contact Vivian to review and move forward with your brand strategy.

1. Articulate the Vision

CORE IDEOLOGY	ENVISIONED FUTURE
Core Purpose •	25-Year Big Audacious Goal •
Core Values • • • •	Vivid Description • • • •

2. Crystalize the Service Offering

First, answer each question below in a paragraph or less. Then, distill each answer to one sentence. Lastly, tell a few people outside your circle to explain your company to them to get feedback. Go back to the drawing board and simplify further.

- What is this product / service?
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- What does it do / what do we provide?
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- Who should care?
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- Why should they care?
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3. Research the Competition

Visit their websites, social media properties, and their greater web footprint (and even visit physical stores if they have them). In particular, look at the following things:

- **How do they talk about their products and offerings?** Are there particular words that stand out or that several different competitors also use?
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- **How do they look?** Are there any tired visual metaphors that multiple competitors are using that you should try to avoid? Any colors or visual elements that appear often? Any open visual space your brand might be able to claim?
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- **How do customers and employees talk about them?** Any reviews on sites like Google, Yelp, Glassdoor that can give you insight into how customers and employees see these competitors?
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If you don't know the competitors in your space very well, the best way to find them is to do a few Google searches for terms you'd expect people would use to find *your* company. Visit the websites of the companies that pop up in those searches.

4. Create Client Profiles and Ensuring Personas that Engage Them

Now that you understand your competition, the next step is to ensure you have a clear picture of your potential customers and other key people you'd like to introduce to your company. Personas help you get into the heads of the people you want your brand to resonate with so you can really understand more about who they are and what they care about most.

For each Client Profile, research by gathering names to answer the following questions:

Client Profile 1: _____

- **About them** – After several phone calls, you can start building a realistic profile of your target segment
- **Pain Points** – What are their problems that your company is equipped to help with?
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- **Previous Solutions** – What did they do in the past to address their pain points?
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- **Buying Trigger** – What would cause them to go to your company for help?
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- **Buying Process** – What steps do they need to take in order to go to your company for help?
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- **Choice Factors** – What are the specific qualities that they would see in your company to make the jump? Is it having effective solutions? Ongoing customer service?
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Client Profile 2: _____

- **About them** – After several phone calls, you can start building a realistic profile of your target segment
- **Pain Points** – What are their problems that your company is equipped to help with?
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- **Previous Solutions** – What did they do in the past to address their pain points?
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- **Buying Trigger** – What would cause them to go to your company for help?
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- **Buying Process** – What steps do they need to take in order to go to your company for help?
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- **Choice Factors** – What are the specific qualities that they would see in your company to make the jump? Is it effective solutions? Ongoing customer service?
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Any other clients? List on separate paper.

5. Formalize Your Brand Positioning Platform

Brand positioning is the art of creating meaning for your brand in the minds of your target personas. Using the data above, you'll want to develop a brand positioning platform that includes the following elements:

- Competitive Frame of Reference: the definition of the category or categories in which your brand will be competing
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- **Points of Difference:** the key characteristics of your brand that make it stand out from competing brands
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- **Points of Parity:** places where your competitors are strongest and your brand is weakest that you will need to counteract
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- **The Brand Promise:** a short phrase that captures the entire positioning platform in one simple thought internal to the company (this is different than the outward facing tagline)
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6. Name Your Company

Choose a name that becomes a valuable asset in bringing that vision and positioning to life. The more specific and nuanced your positioning is, the more effective the name will be. All great names work in concert with the positioning of the business or product they speak for. The best positioning finds a way to reinvigorate or change the conversation that an industry has been having with its consumers. Don't confuse brand positioning with name positioning. Sometimes the brand and the name carry an identical message and tone, while some companies choose to have the name positioned to carry a very different message and tone than the rest of the brand touch points.

Take into consideration:

- **Personality** - Warm? Fun? Futuristic? Confident?
- **Communication Skills** - What part of the conversation in your industry should the name address, define, redefine, express, demonstrate or dominate?
- **Personal Appearance** - The way a name looks and sounds can communicate volumes, independent of the meaning of the word.

Responsibilities of your company name:

- Redefine and own your category.
- Go viral, propelling itself through the world on its own, becoming a no-cost, self-sustaining PR vehicle.
- Demonstrate to the world that you're different, creating clear & wide separation from your competitors.
- Create a positive and lasting engagement with your audience.
- Provide a deep well of marketing and advertising images.
- Be the genesis of a brand that rises above the goods and services you provide, so that you're not selling a commodity and/or competing on price.
- Be unforgettable.

Verify your company name is not already registered in the US Patent & Trademark Office [database](#).

7. Choose a Web Domain



Use [GoDaddy](#) to check if the name you choose is not already taken. Make sure the domain name is the most accessible, intuitive name you can get and one that is not easily confused with other brands.

- Option 1:
- Option 2:
- Option 3:

8. Write Your Brand Story

A consistent story and set of supporting messages will help guide all strategic business, brand, and marketing and communications decisions. It brings the positioning platform to life. It poetically articulates the deepest truths about the brand, answering questions like:

- Who are we?
- Why are we here?
- What do we care about?
- What do we do?
- Why does it matter?

A great brand story becomes a touchstone for the brand, something you can share with every new employee to help them understand what the brand stands for. Or that you can share with customers and partners to fully explain your place in the world.

Here are three exercises to explain your brand story.

- 25-word messaging statement:

- 50-word messaging statement:

- 100-word messaging statement:

9. Design Your Visual Identity and Logo



Many companies jump quickly to designing a logo early on in the startup process, but in actuality, the most powerful visual identities are developed once the vision, positioning, and brand story are all fully realized.

Great visual identities are more than a logo, they are a complete visual system made up of a logo and additional visual brand elements, including colors, typefaces, icon and photography styles, and so forth. Legacy Branding is here to help each step of the way.

10. Articulate Your Brand Voice

Lastly, decide how you want your brand to sound. As a good starting point, ask the following questions:

- If you could choose anyone to represent your brand (real person or fictional character, historical or current), and money was no object, whom would you pick?
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- Brainstorm as many potential spokespeople as you can think of and the characteristics that made you choose them. Then work with your team to narrow the list to a few favorites that you really feel capture the voice you'd like the brand to have. By identifying and clearly articulating these characteristics, you'll have the starting elements for your brand voice.
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- You may even want to formalize one or more of these faux "spokespeople" as the voice of your brand. Especially if you've chosen real people who are alive today, you can research how they speak, write, tweet, etc., and use those examples as inspiration for your brand voice.
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- While many brands pick one person to be their behind-the-scenes voice inspiration, you might consider picking multiple spokespeople from your list of ideas. The benefit is that you'll have a wider range to work from when creating content.
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You probably talk differently when you are talking to your relatives than when you are talking to your friends. Brands also have more *flexibility* when they can channel different voices in different circumstances.

Once you have completed this exercise, Legacy Branding, Inc. will go over the answers by video conference. Please email the PDF of your answers to vivian@legacybrandingsf.com for next steps.