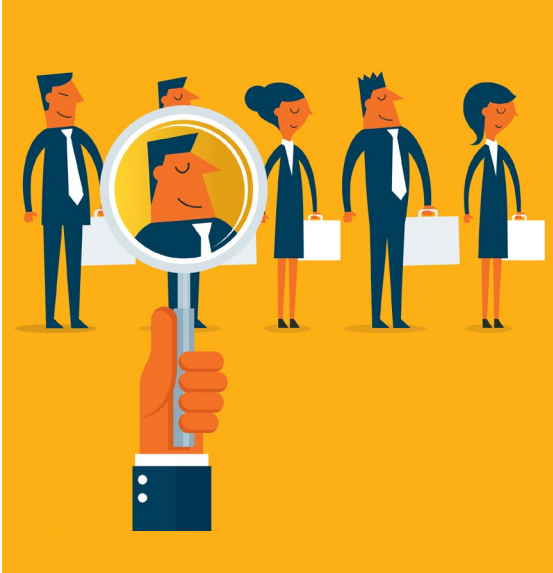


# Define Your Brand Using These 5 Questions



# Define Your Brand Using These 5 Questions



Growing your small or medium-sized business does not mean you need to spend millions or even hundreds of thousands of dollars to build a powerful and long-lasting brand. Often, small businesses we work with ask, “Why do I need a brand? Isn’t branding for big national companies?” Spoiler alert: No, it’s not! Every business, no matter the size, should have a clear, well-defined brand. As a small or medium-sized business, you are more than just some flashy business cards and a logo.

Let’s start by defining what a brand is. A brand is the aggregate of the words, images, thoughts, and feelings that come to mind when someone thinks about you or interacts with you and your business.

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

– Jeff Bezos

Among the dozens of reasons it’s important to define your brand, the one that should be top-of-mind in today’s climate is surviving economic downturns. Having a clear and strong brand will elevate your business beyond simply a commodity to be purchased based solely on price. A robust brand will help you capture and retain customer loyalty. And for many smaller businesses with a minimal marketing budget, a brand’s visual identity must serve as its primary method of communicating its (and your) personality to patients.

## Consider Your Brand Touchpoints

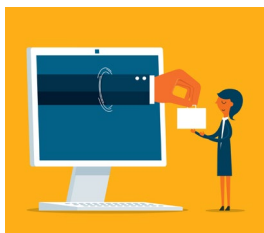
How do you influence the way consumers view your brand? Consider your brand touchpoints: Anything and everything that the patient comes in contact with that affects their experience and helps to formulate their opinion.

- Name, logo, colors, tag line
- Social media channels
- Signature methods
- Voice and tone
- Uniforms for you and staff
- Photography
- Front desk and operations
- Interior design
- Videography
- Website, brochures, stationery
- Advertising campaigns
- Blogs, articles, and books

Branding is what you do to your brand touchpoints to influence people's opinion of you.

Think of it this way: Great branding is when patients visit your office and say, "I feel like I already know you." You can help patients understand you before they even come in your doors by creating a brand that humanizes you and your practice, connects and builds relationships with your patients, and communicates in a thoughtful and real way. That is the recipe for a strong brand that can survive anything.

Hopefully, you already have a starting place to help you define your brand, but if you need some extra guidance, begin by asking yourself these 5 questions.



## Why did you start your business?

Clarifying your brand's purpose will help you more effectively communicate not only what you do, but more importantly, why you do it. Consumers are looking for authenticity and passion and want to understand what it is you love to do.

"People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it."

– Simon Sinek

Start by writing out the story of your business—why you started it, why you are passionate about it, what excites you about the work you do, and so on. Be authentic and honest, and you will find the beginnings of your brand.

## Which 3 adjectives best describe you?

If you only had 3 words to describe your brand, what would they be? Limiting yourself to only 3 adjectives allows you to truly prioritize the essence of your brand. Think of these as your brand's personality attributes. Is your brand modern, hip, and luxurious? Or maybe it's classic, relaxed, and

laid-back? Or is your brand conservative, clinical, and educational? There are no wrong answers when it comes to describing your brand's personality. Again, your brand should be authentic, so don't feel any pressure to be something you or your brand are not.

**Here are some examples from the hotel industry:**

**Four Seasons:**

"We create properties of enduring value and support them with a deeply instilled ethic of personal service."

**W Hotels:**

"We're all about breaking boundaries and living out loud."

## What are your core brand values?

Consumers are looking for authentic brands, but they are also looking for brands that share common values and beliefs. This concept, known as brand affinity, is a valuable level of customer relationship that moves consumers from one-time buyers to loyal-for-life.

### **If you're struggling to define your core brand values, try this exercise:**

Think about another industry unrelated to yours, such as hotels or automotive brands. In that industry, which brand best aligns with your brand (or what you imagine your brand to be)? Now examine that brand's core values and brand attributes and determine if your brand will have similar values, styles, or tone.

You can't achieve any level of brand affinity with your consumers if you haven't defined your core brand values. Take a few minutes to determine 2 to 5 of your core brand values and think about how you will communicate them to your customers.

## Who is your ideal customer?

It may seem obvious but think about what problem your business is trying to solve. Understanding this will help you home in on who your ideal customer is. This is a key part of determining the visual identity and tone of voice for your brand. Of course, you want to be authentic to yourself, but you also want to connect with your ideal customer in a way that helps them understand you.

Use your core brand values to help you find the ideal customer who will align with your values as well. If one of your core values is misaligned with the customers you are targeting, then you likely won't achieve brand affinity with those customers. Find those ideal customers that you feel will be part of your "tribe" and who will feel the same about you.

## Do all your brand touchpoints clearly communicate your brand?

Here's your final exercise: Collect and print out all the printable assets from your brand touchpoints. Lay out all the assets in front of you but cover up your logo on everything. What do you see? Can you still tell that these assets belong to your brand? If you can confidently answer yes, then congratulations! You have done a great job of clearly communicating your brand via your visual brand touchpoints.

If you think your brand touchpoints could use some further refinement, that's OK too! Armed with this knowledge, you can begin working on improvement. Think about the colors, typography, spacing, photographs, tone of voice, etc. and how each of these aspects works together to represent your brand identity visually.



With all these tools under your belt, you can now take the necessary steps to define and communicate your brand to your consumers clearly. If you want more resources, head to Etna Interactive's blog to find [7 Steps to Building a Powerful Brand](#) and other helpful information. And remember this...

“People won’t remember what you said, but they will remember how you made them feel.”

– Maya Angelou

#### Do You Have More Questions?

As always, Etna's team of marketing experts is here to answer any questions you might have about branding or any of your online marketing needs.

Learn more about Etna Interactive by visiting [www.etnainteractive.com](http://www.etnainteractive.com)

Subscribe to our newsletter at [www.etnainteractive.com/newsletter](http://www.etnainteractive.com/newsletter)

Become a fan of Etna Interactive on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/EtnaInteractive>