



PRINCIPALS OF IDENTITY



Identity is...

brand incite

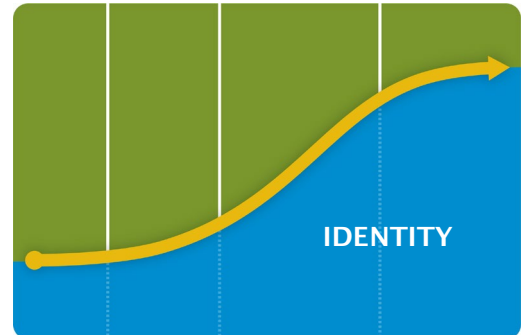
FIVE PRINCIPLES OF IDENTITY

Your corporate identity defines what makes your organization distinctive in the market. It is the delivery of value to your customers and employees that creates long-term relationships. It is the driving force of the company.

In the early stages of a company's growth, attributes are built into the product or service that meet an unmet need or disrupts the status quo. Marketing simply needs to communicate the brand in a compelling way through the right channels to be successful.

Then the organization grows, the portfolio of products expands, competition ramps up, and pricing pressures increase. Suddenly, the buyer needs a different relationship with the company that extends beyond product features.

This is the point where a well-defined corporate identity must take over to ensure the brand promise gets fulfilled. It requires the C-suite to adopt the five principles outlined here.

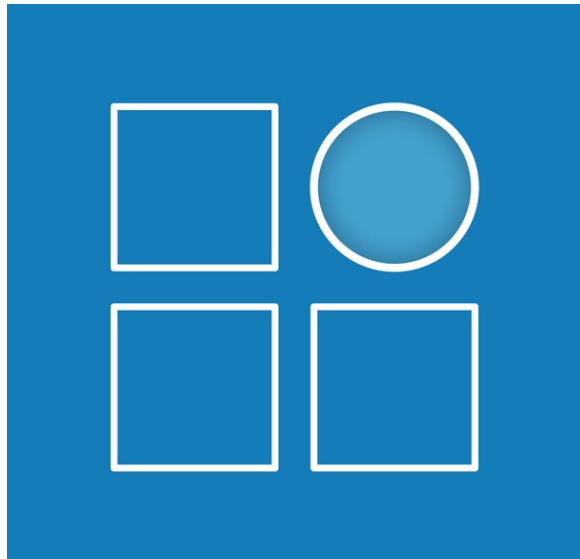


As a company matures, the role of corporate identity must grow to ensure consistent delivery of value to customers.

IDENTITY IS...

EVIDENCE OF YOUR DISTINCTION

Your corporate identity is more than a brand image. It is the evidence of your distinction. It creates the experience a person has every time they touch your organization, no matter where it occurs.



“Differentiation is one of the most important strategic and tactical activities in which companies must constantly engage.”

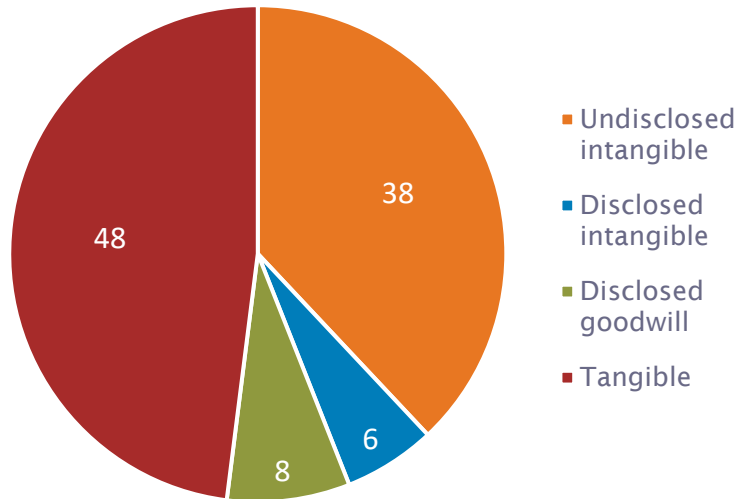
- Theodore Levitt, Harvard Business School

IDENTITY IS...

AN INTANGIBLE ASSET

As much as 30 to 35 percent of a business-to-business company's value can lie in the intangible assets including trademarks, patents, proprietary processes, specialized knowledge and the brand. Collectively, these assets represent what is special and unique about the company. And they have a huge upside when you seek to increase value.

Enterprise Value
(% of Assets)



Breakdown of total assets based on 58,000 companies - GIFT Study 2017 (Brand Finance)

IDENTITY IS...

A CORPORATE STRATEGY

Your strategic identity clearly defines your value in the market providing a clear focus for the business strategy. Each business function is responsible for ensuring these strategies align to deliver a consistent and profitable customer experience.



“...companies with a strong identity – the kind that is backed up by the ability to deliver their promise – tend to win.”

- Harvard Business Review

IDENTITY IS...

OWNED AT THE TOP

The CEO owns the corporate identity because it impacts company value, touches a wide range of strategic issues, and impacts the entire organization. The identity must be a priority for the executive team which has the people, budgets and authority to ensure it is delivered to the customer by each business function.



Identity development requires key leaders to be involved in defining and delivering it to customers

IDENTITY IS...

DELIVERED BY EVERYONE

Each business function has responsibility for the delivering a consistent customer experience that backs up the brand promise across all touchpoints. The average mid-sized company has more than 1,000 touchpoints.



“Cross-functional teams cannot stop at aligning on what the brand is; they need to clearly articulate how the brand comes to life across touchpoints”

- McKinsey & Company

CASE STUDY: RUBY

When Ruby Receptionists outgrew its nostalgic name and brand, I led the process of renovating the identity, brand positioning and messaging for the modern age. Here is how Ruby has intuitively used the five principles for consistent growth over the last 15 years.

Evidence of distinction

Ruby employees make a personal connection with people on every call, every chat, every time. As a result, the company delivers on its brand promise and stands out in the market.

An asset with value

When Updata Partners invested \$38.8 million in Ruby, the private equity firm cited the “high-touch, personal solution” as an important differentiator and reason for investing.

Corporate strategy

Every business function at Ruby understands the importance of delivering the desired experience. The brand is front and center in strategic planning and execution.



Owned at the top

Founder and CEO, Jill Nelson, was the personal inspiration and leader of the company for 15 years before retiring. She defined who Ruby is and made it a priority for the executive team and all employees.

Delivered by everyone

A cross-functional team is responsible for ensuring the culture reflects the corporate identity and that everyone is empowered to deliver a personal experience in everything they do.

ABOUT GRANT KIMBALL

I'm here to help you build a better business. I'm the only business consultant in the Northwest focused on growing small to mid-sized organizations through identity strategy. I provide business strategy and management leadership to companies including:

- Leading efforts to define both strategic and visual identities.
- Facilitating cross-functional teams of company leaders to ensure organizational-wide alignment.
- One-on-one consulting with corporate leaders to integrate identity and business strategies.
- Speaking to companies, member organizations, and community non-profits about identity strategy.

For more information, call 503-703-7417 or email me at grant.kimball@brandincite.com.



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[Let's talk >](#)

