Crafting a Multi-Dimensional Brand

Tiffany L. Britt, MBA

Hi There, I'm Tiffany! Your UX and Tech Mentor.

As a UX & Technology leader specializing in website and app development within large organizations, I've created this resource from the valuable lessons I've learned. Dive in and make the most of it!

As someone who has developed content and assets at scale for large organizations, I understand the daunting task of creating a strong brand that not only resonates with your audience but also ensures that multiple teams within your organization are delivering communications in accordance with your brand.

It's not easy.

In my experience, I have observed two challenges:

- **Challenge 1: Flat Brand:** A brand that is too flat, focused only on images and visuals, and using fancy words. The brand does not recognize that customer perception drives the brand.

- **Challenge 2: Brand Activation:** Even when brands are established, it is difficult for employees to activate them, use them across multiple materials, and create brand clarity with customers.

With these challenges in mind, this resource aims to help you achieve two objectives:

- **Transform your brand from being flat and lacking resonance with customers to a well-rounded, multi-dimensional brand that connects with them on multiple levels.** I will introduce a framework called the "multi-dimensional brand" that helps develop a brand story considering all aspects of the brand. This framework goes beyond traditional company-centered branding efforts and focuses on understanding what others are saying about your brand. After all, your brand is not just what you say it is; it is the story that your audience tells themselves about your company.

- **Ensure consistency in brand messaging across all employees and marketing materials, avoiding confusion or creating multiple impressions of what the brand represents.** I will share how to create a Brand Bible based on the multi-dimensional brand, that ensures your branding and messaging are integrated into all assets. All team members will understand what your brand is and how to use it within their day-to-day work.

Whether you're creating a new brand or reimagining an existing one, this resource is for you. Get ready to dive into the world of strategic branding and create a brand that truly resonates with your audience.

Warm regards,

Tiffany Britt, MBA
www.MsTiffanyBritt.com

What's Inside?

Part 1: Use the Multi-Dimensional Brand Framework to Craft Your Brand

Explore how to elevate your branding beyond mere visuals and empty phrases with the Multi-Dimensional Brand Framework. This part of the resource introduces a strategic approach that shifts from traditional, company-centric branding to a customer-driven perspective. Learn why customer perception is crucial in brand building and discover how to implement this framework to create a brand that resonates deeply across various customer levels. This section provides both the fundamental concepts and practical steps for applying the framework effectively.

Part 2: Build a Brand Bible to Activate Your Brand

Tackle the common challenges of brand inconsistency and employee engagement with a comprehensive Brand Bible. This section details how to compile a Brand Bible that encapsulates your brand's essence using the Multi-Dimensional Brand Framework, ensuring that every piece of communication aligns with your core brand message. Understand the significance of maintaining consistent branding across all platforms and learn how to empower employees to uphold this consistency. The guide includes basic principles and actionable advice for creating and utilizing a Brand Bible to foster a unified brand perception.

Part 1:
Use the Multi-Dimensional Brand Framework to Craft Your Brand

I'm excited to share with you the "Multi-dimensional Brand," a framework that I've developed for strategic branding. This framework challenges the traditional view of branding, which emphasizes the company's message, by recognizing that a brand is not a single story controlled by your organization. Instead, your brand is a blend of stories from different perspectives, including your own and those of your customers, former customers, employees, and suppliers.

Specifically, there are four stories that make up your brand. The first two are your verbal and visual stories, which represent what your brand says about itself. It's the only part of the brand that it can completely control. The other two stories are the campfire and experiential brand story, which represents what others say about the brand: their experiences and perceptions. The brand can influence these stories, but only so much. Each story serves a unique purpose but also reinforces the others.

By tapping into the power of multiple stories, you can create a brand that resonates with your audience on a deeper level. In this document, we will explore each of these stories and provide examples of how familiar brands have leveraged them to their advantage.

The Verbal Story

Definition
The verbal story is what the company says about itself. It is the language that a company uses to describe its brand promise. The words and text that come together to shape the brands message.

Importance
Language tells customers how to perceive your company and your offerings. They are strong cues to which customers add their thoughts

Contents
- Brand promise
- UVP
- messaging points

Case Studies
"Think Different" by Apple

Brand Bible Artifacts
- Messaging Framework
- Content Guidelines

The Visual Story

Definition
The visual story is the company's brand promise brought to life with images, colors, and other visual elements.

Importance
Imagery, when combined with words, can capture more emotion and depth. ****

Contents
- Logos
- Colors
- Typography
- Creative treatments

Case Studies
Simple, minimalistic, clean advertising, packaging, and interfaces

Brand Bible Artifacts
- Style Guide
- Brand Identity
- Package

The Campfire Story

Definition
The campfire story is the collection of stories (positive or negative) that other people are sharing about their experience with your brand around the virtual campfire.

Importance
Customers trust others unbiased opinions more than they trust your motivated ones

Contents
- Testimonials
- Reviews
- Comments

Case Studies
"I've had my Apple for 5 years. Still like new."

Brand Bible Artifacts
- Social Guidelines
- Social Listeneng Plan
- Referral Plan

The Experiential Story

Definition

The experiential story is all about how the prospect feels based on the combination of touch points with the brand that happen before, during, and after the sale. What they are telling themselves. Done correctly, it is where the customer starts to identify with the brand.

Importance

Without it: leave brand interpretations up to customers alone. Unexpected interpretations. Miss the meaning. ****

Contents

- Inner dialogue

Case Studies

Apple = I am a renegade, I think different. I am one of 'the crazies'

Brand Bible Artifacts

- Personas
- User Scenarios
- Experience Maps

Part 2:
Build a Brand Bible to Activate Your Brand

By understanding and defining the four key stories that make up a the multi-dimensional brand, organizations can unlock the true power of strategic branding. However, it takes extra work to bring these stories to life and make the brand a reality.

In this section, we will explore how to create a brand bible that can help activate each of these stories and strengthen the brand's impact. Essentially, a brand bible is a collection of artifacts for each of the brand stories. Its purpose is to breathe life into your brand by providing a means for you to clearly and deliberately articulate it, so that the brand intent cannot be misunderstood or misinterpreted by both employees and customers.

Once complete, the brand bible serves as a touchstone to:
1. Share these stories internally amongst employees to create alignment and give them key themes to rally around.
2. Guide marketing communications to ensure a consistent look, feel, and messaging across all touchpoints.

Now, with this in mind, let's explore these artifacts.

Visual Story Artifacts

The visual story is the company's brand promise brought to life with images, colors, and other visual elements. (Ex: Logo, Color, Fonts, creative images).

Style Guide

A guide which provides a guide for how the brand should represented visually. Includes collection of visual elements that can be repurposed. Helps ensure that marketing assets and communications are consistent. Ex: logo, color, typography

The style guide may include the following items:

- Logo- image files, variations, placement, usage rules
- Color palette- colors, values, usage rules
- Fonts- styles, sizes, weights, usage rules
- Iconography – pre-defined library, style description, usage rules
- Photography- styles, creative treatments, specifications, usage rules
- Illustrative elements- vectors, specialty graphics, patterns, usage rules

Brand Identity Package

A collection of pre-defined, reusable marketing assets and templates which reflect visual guidance from the Style Guide. Ex: website templates, email templates, stationary.

The brand identity package may include physical assets such as:

- Brochures/ Sales Sheets
- Flyers/ Posters
- Business Cards
- Letterhead and envelopes
- Invoices
- Folders
- Packaging
- Signage

The brand identity package may include digital assets such as:

- Website templates, components, and elements
- Email templates
- eBooks templates
- Infographic templates
- Presentation templates
- Document templates
- Video templates
- Social assets- avatars, covers, backgrounds, post images
- Ads- display, video

Verbal Story Artifacts

The **verbal story** is what the company says about itself. It is the language that a company uses to describe its brand promise. The words and text that come together to shape the brands message. (Ex: Brand promise, UVP, messaging points).

Messaging Framework

A tool used to capture the verbal story (at varying levels of fidelity), make it more tangible and real, and make it usable throughout the organization. Ensures that teams are all weaving the companies strongest value propositions throughout all communications. Ex: brand theme, messaging points, proof points

The messaging framework answers strategic questions such as:

- What is the company's unique value proposition?
- What is the company's brand promise?
- Describe the brand's personality?
- What attributes – both functional and emotional- should become synonymous with the brand?
- What are the brand's core messaging points?
- What social proof exists that supports these messaging points?
- How might these messaging points and social proof be adjusted for specific products/services or audiences?

Content Guidelines

A set of specific rules that guide writers and content developers. Ensures that the brand's voice, tone, personality is consistent across communications.

The content guidelines answers strategic questions such as:

- What goals is the brand seeking to reach with content? Consider goals from the business and marketing perspective. Consider reader goals.
- Describe the brand's voice, tone, and personality.
- Describe the brand's writing style.
- For each content type, list any rules or guidelines to follow.
- For each channel, list any rules or guidelines to follow.
- Are there writing frameworks that you would like writers to use
- Describe workflow from content creation to publishing to ongoing maintenance.
- List any other considerations, not covered previously, that writers should keep in mind.

Campfire Story Artifacts

The campfire story is the collection of stories (positive or negative) that other people are sharing about their experience with your brand around the campfire. They attach snow the the snowball

Social Guide

A guide that explains how the brand should be represented on social media and provides rules of engagement for employees. Ex: How employees should behave and how to engage customers

The social guide answers strategic questions such as:

- What is the company's stance on social media and how does it fit into the overall business and marketing strategy?
- What are the company's social media goals and what channels will it maintain a presence?
- What audiences are targeted on social media?
- Describe social publishing guidelines including: content calendar, workflow, cross-channel publishing,etc.
- How do you expect employees to behave on social media?
- What type of brand voice, personality, and style will the company convey on social media?
- Describe guidelines for images published on social media
- Are there platform-specific guidelines that need to be followed?
- Are there legal considerations that need to be addressed?
- How will customer service issues on social media be addressed? [1]
- How will the company use paid social tactics to advertise?[1]
- How will the company use influencers?[1]

[1] Note: Within the social guide, these questions are answered at a high-level, with a call-out to more detailed plans or teams that manage these areas.

Social Listening Plan

Comprehensive set of best practices that help employees understand how to protect and promote the company brand, while behaving in a manner consistent with company valuesThis plan establishes set of tactics and tools that the brand can use to monitor it's reputation, keep in touch with customer trends, and watch the competition. Example: establishes what the brand is listening for (specific keywords) and where (specific channels), how often it's listening, and what tools it's using.

The social listening plan answers strategic questions such as:

- Why is the company listening on social channels?
- What is the company listening for?
- What channels is the company listening on?
- Describe the company's listening methods, tools, and frequency

- How will the company address items that need immediate action?
- How will the company develop insights from social media?
- How will the company distribute insights from social media?

Referral Plan

A referral plan is a set of tactics to find or create brand advocates willing to share positive stories abut your brand to influence others.

The referral plan answers strategic questions such as:

- What stories should the company collect?
- Who can the company collect these stories from?
- How can these stories be integrated into social and content strategy?
- How can brand ambassadors be used to disseminate stories?
- How can the company leverage reviews?
- How can the company create a referral program?
- How can the company leverage influencers?

Experiential Story Artifacts

The experiential story is all about how the prospect feels based on the combination of touch points with the brand that happen before, during, and after the sale. Individuals attach their own snow to the snowball. What they are telling themselves.

Personas

A model of a real world customer. It humanizes the customers that mean the most to your organization, revealing their functional and emotional needs along with other information that can be used to craft marketing communications.

The persona may include the following:
- Persona name, photograph, description
- Demographic and/or firmographic description
- Psychographic description
- Lifestyle/ Business-style description
- Key pains
- Key gains
- Key goals/ Jobs-to-be-done
- Brand affinities
- Technology profile
- Channel usage
- Content preferences
- Buying sensitivities
- Purchasing patterns

User Scenarios

Narratives that detail the motives and methods of a customer as they perform a specific task. Answers questions like: who is the user, what are his/her goals, what does the user need from the experience, and how they will accomplish their goal.

User Scenarios answer strategic questions such as:

- Who is the user and what is important to them?
- What are the users goals?
- What are the users expectations from their experience?
- Why does the user engage with the experience?

Journey Maps

Visual map that illustrates process a user goes through in order to accomplish goals and details what the user is thinking, feeling, and doing along the way. Tends to expand across the entirety of the experience (before, during, and after normal touchpoints).

Journey Maps answer strategic questions such as:
- Who is the persona or user and what is their scenario?

- What steps does the user take to accomplish their goal(s)?
- What is the user thinking and feeling along the way?
- Where are the users high and low points?
- What gaps or opportunities exist?
- What actions can be taken to address these gaps or opportunities?

NOTE

If you want more details about how to craft any of these, check out my resource called "Creating Strategy Artifacts".

Final Thoughts

As you set out to build a brand or reinvision an existing one, I'd like to leave you with two final thoughts:

Firstly, a powerful brand – one that engenders loyalty, deepens connections, and transcends the transaction – is not just a collection of words and images. A brand is a living, breathing entity, shaped by the stories that customers and others attach to it. By embracing the concept of a multi-dimensional brand and understanding the four key stories that make up a brand, your organization can tap into the true power of strategic branding.

Secondly, defining the multi-dimensional brand is only the first step. The real challenge lies in bringing it to life. This is where a comprehensive brand bible with tangible artifacts comes into play. With a well-crafted brand bible, your team will be able to activate each of the brand stories and amplify its impact.

As you embark on your brand-building journey, keep these ideas in mind, and always remember that a strong brand is not just about selling a product or service but creating a lasting emotional connection with your audience. Best of luck!

[Insert Picture]

Appendix

Multi-Dimensional Brand Chart

It is sometimes helpful to see all of these concepts together. I've prepared the following chart to do just that.

Multi-Dimensional Brand Analogy: Snowball on a Hill