

How to Create a More Cohesive Brand

10 STEPS TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR YOUR ENTIRE TEAM

Everyone knows when starting a new concept they need a business plan. Sure it has your mission, what you want to offer and hopefully financials, but what about your brand? What do you want it to look like, what is the experience you want your guests to have? Your business plan can help get you money and real estate but all of that information doesn't really lend itself to explaining to your design team what you want visually. If you have an idea for your concept and are hiring others to execute it, you will want to have a plan to help others bring YOUR ideas to life.

As a brand strategist and designer who has created over 100 restaurant brands, I can't emphasize enough the importance of clarifying your vision for the entire team before you begin. Many new businesses find it frustrating working with graphic designers, interior designers and architects because they are unable to communicate their ideas. Even worse everyone ends up doing their own thing with the end result being an inconsistent mess.

Things to include in your Brand Plan:

- 1. WHY?** – What's your vision, purpose and reason for this business? What excites you and keeps you motivated? Perhaps it will make a difference in your community by bringing something new no one has ever experienced before. Maybe you want to do it for your family to leave something they can take over in the future.
- 2. Concept Overview & Brand Strategy** - What is the big picture for your concept? Describe other brands for your team that make it clear and concise. How will yours be better? We like to choose 3 words that best describe a concept and use those as a brand matrix. This insures that all items stay within brand.
- 3. Your Name** – Is it memorable, does it tell a story? If so, share that and have your team incorporate that into your brand and space.
- 4. The Product** - Do you have any signature dishes or processes you want to be known for? Make sure your team knows them as well as your price point. A "gourmet burger" or "gastropub" can mean a lot of different things to people. Make sure your vision is clear to others.
- 5. Target Audience** - Who are your customers? Be specific about the not only where they live, age and income but what do they want and need from you? What hobbies do they like to do, are they coming with their friends, out on a date or bringing the kids? Grab a photo that represents who they are.
- 6. Your Team** - Your development team as well as your operating staff are your brand ambassadors and represent your business. Make sure every member involved knows what your vision is and what you stand for. They will need guidance in order to execute the best guest experience.
- 7. The Space, Mood & Vibe** – What's the look, feel of the space and experience of your guests? Consider the difference between a loud, energetic party place or a peaceful, romantic escape. A restaurant is like a play, what stage will you set for the production?
- 8. Brand Inspiration & Vision Boards** - Is your brand clear and concise? Can you easily explain and share it with others? What do you want your logo to look like – if you have an idea in mind, be sure to share that with your designer. If there are things you know you don't like, let them know that as well. Vision boards are an extremely important element for your design team. Creatives are visual people, as much as the words are helpful, the photos you can show them are key. Start a Pinterest board for inspiration. Do a Google search and pull images that you like. Use photos of other restaurants or even other brands that you like.

- 9. The Brand Experience** - What makes you unique and sets you apart from your competition? List the top 3-5 brands that you like and write why you like them as well as what you can use as inspiration. It can be other brands as well. i.e. Starbucks – you may like the service and casual demeanor of the staff. Chipotle – you may like the use of independent raised proteins and the story they incorporate into their branding. Now that you know who you want to be like, describe how you are different.
- 10. Marketing & Sales Strategies** - How will you sell your concept most effectively? It's helpful for your design team to know if you plan on marketing all online or if it's a grass roots or even national approach from the beginning. You should think about if need various logo formats for signage vs. a mobile phone. If your colors will translate on marketing pieces in various place.

CREATE YOUR BRAND PLAN

In large ad agencies the design team is provided with a “creative brief” to produce the full ad campaign. This process is similar with the end result being a simplified written and visual “Brand Plan” outlining your complete vision for the entire team. It is also extremely helpful for getting your internal team on the same page before you start. The purpose of this process is to have a visual document to provide to everyone involved in order to inspire them to take YOUR DREAM and make it a reality.

DOWNLOAD THE BRAND PLAN GUIDE

Adapted from the Restaurant Brand Start-Up Plan

To download The Restaurant Brand Start-Up Plan **free E-book** that includes additional insights, examples and exercises go to InspiroBrands.com or purchase a printed book for 19.99 at Amazon.com.

For more guidance on how to strategically design the next steps for your brand, complete your plan and schedule a free 30 minute strategy session by calling 949-433-0728 or email GinaM@InspiroBrands.com



Brand strategy and design guiding new restaurants to create, develop and provide a memorable guest experience

Gina Mims is a brand strategist, graphic designer and owner of Inspiro Brands. She specializes in the restaurant industry and has developed brand identities for over 100 dining destinations.

Bringing almost two decade's worth of design experience to the table, the tools she's refined with her clients are now available in a book titled the [Restaurant Brand Start-Up Plan](#).

Inspiro Brands works as part of your creative team to develop cohesive memorable brands. How can we help build your brand?

InspiroBrands.com • Gina@InspiroBrands.com • 949.433-0728