

How to Create a More Cohesive Brand

10 STEPS TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR YOUR ENTIRE TEAM



What's Your Plan for a Cohesive Brand and Unique Guest Experience?

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 final 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? Once you settle on a few, research and make sure a good URL is available for your website. Also Google every variation to make sure nobody else has it or something too similar. You will want to trademark to do a more in-depth search as well secure it as your own. A preliminary search can be done at USPTO.gov
- 4. The Product** - What are you selling? Are there any signature items or processes nobody else has? Think about what you want to be known for and people tell others about you.
- 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? Perhaps even grab a photo that represents who they are.
- 6. Your Team** - Who is helping create your concept, make sure they have experience in building your dream project. Get your entire team is on the same page both visually as well as your goals. Once you are open prepare your staff to be your brand ambassadors to represent your business along with a structure to execute the best guest experience.
- 7. The Space, Mood & Vibe** – What's the look, feel of the space and experience for your guests? Consider the difference between a loud, energetic party place or a peaceful, romantic escape. Think of your business 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 a great tool to provide for your design team. For creative types the words are helpful but photos are even better. Start a Pinterest board for inspiration. Do a Google search and pull images you like to create a mood board of all things that you like for the space, colors, fonts, logos, uniforms for your staff, items you will sell etc...

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. Apple – perhaps you want to explore new technology in your business so you appear on the cutting edge. 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 in order to create the correct elements you will need. Web elements are rather different from a billboard.

Once your branding is developed it's helpful to create a style-guide which includes your brand voice (tone of your messaging) as well as colors, fonts, textures, photos etc... If you are using different companies to do social media, PR, in-house and external marketing, make sure everyone has this guide to develop a cohesive marketing plan.

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

A fill in the blank form adapted from the Restaurant Brand Start-Up Plan

Do you want to create a plan for a more cohesive brand and unique guest experience?

For additional guidance you can also download the Full Restaurant Brand Start-Up Plan FREE E-book that includes additional examples and exercises at InspiroBrands.com or purchase a printed book for 19.99 at Amazon.com.

This guide was created for restaurants but it's also helpful for any B2C start up concept needing to clarify their ideas in order to create a new brand with a unique guest experience.

ABOUT



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?

After completing your BRAND PLAN feel free to schedule a free 30 minute strategy session by calling 949-433-0728 or email GinaM@InspiroBrands.com

Gina Mims

Brand Image Consultant