

The Essentials For Successful City Branding & Tourism Success

Nebraska Governor's Tourism Conference



Our Customers Have a Surplus of Web Sites and Brochures Full of ...

- Similar recreational opportunities and attractions
- Similar downtowns and suburbs
- Similar franchise hotels, stores and restaurants
- Similar conference centers
- Similar industrial estates and relocation incentives

How can a small city stand out
..... and stand for something meaningful and valued?

Differentiate or Fade Into the Background!

- Our minds are highly selective
- In a crowded world you need a dramatic difference to cut through
- Focus on one powerful differentiating idea and drive it
- In most cases we have less than 3 seconds to capture a prospect's attention - first impressions count
- **Solution = Adopt a branded approach to tell your story**

Branding



....is much more than a logo, tagline or advertising campaign.

... it's more about the impressions on the customer's mind.

... a true brand must make and keep a clear, single-minded promise and then deliver on it.

A Brand is The Difference Between



- A fizzy brown liquid & Pepsi (or Coke)
- A coffee and Starbucks
- A city and Santa Fe or Omaha or Beirut



A brand is an aura, an invisible layer of meaning (and value) that surrounds an entity
The anticipation is your brand.


What is Branding?



Branding is about ensuring that the valued and distinctive experience you promised is realized.

The challenge for you is:

To orchestrate the positive thoughts and feelings that you want to be known for - then consistently deliver them!



Your Brand Strategy Should Define:

1. What you want to be known for
2. How you stand out from the crowd
3. The thoughts and feelings that you want to come to mind when people are exposed to your name

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Why Bother With Branding?

- The term “Branding” can be a barrier
- It's your image - your reputation - it's your “good name” - your competitive identity - but it needs to be managed!
- Improve effectiveness and efficiency i.e. better ROI on marketing investments
- Make management easier - you know who you are and want to become - no more reinventing the wheel

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It's Time for a Brand Strategy When

1. You need to overcome a dated, confusing, or inaccurate image
2. The place doesn't stand out from competitors
3. Redevelopment or cultural revitalization programs are being launched
4. You need to unify partners and their messages, i.e. get everyone on the same page
5. Need to become more competitive and better leverage your assets

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Your Brand Strategy Influences Everything



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Your Brand Blueprint is Your Toolkit



The roadmap to focus, organize, communicate and on deliver your Destination Promise™.

- Brand Platform
- Destination Promise
- Visual and Verbal Identity Guidelines
- Stakeholder Adoption Strategy
- Brand Stories
- Experience Delivery Checklists
- Brand Management Checklists

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Pitfall 1. Our Tagline (and Logo) is Our Brand

- Logos and taglines (and name) are reminders or cues to prompt our memory to recall (positive) associations
- They're the key to a filing cabinet!!
- But what have you placed in the filing cabinet?




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Pitfall 2. Not Wanting to Consult Anyone

- The “we don’t need to consult anyone” attitude has repeatedly been proven to not work
- Harness local opinions, ideas and knowledge
- Engagement and consultation = a more sustainable brand


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Pitfall 3. Too Much Focus on the Short-term

- Establishing your brand identity won’t happen overnight - no magic wand!
- It takes time, it’s long term and cumulative
- Difficult to change perceptions and views in the short term. It may have taken years to acquire your current image.

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Pitfall 4. Weak and Unrealistic Positioning

- The trickiest part of place branding
- Avoid politics, self interest and too much internal focus
- Positioning designed particularly to keep locals happy = usually recipe for failure outside in key markets!

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Pitfall 5. Engaging the Wrong Type of Agency

- Don’t hire a painter if you need an architect
- Set the strategy first, then engage the best advertising, graphic design and web agencies

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7A vs. A Brainstorming Session

- Must be objective and customer-focused
- 7A is a proven, consultative and strategic process
- Place customers before politics, self interest and expediency
- Invest in research, but don’t over-invest
- It should come from the heart, not a tattoo!



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Transparency and Buy-in


- Some brands designed behind closed doors, often with just the advertising agency - but frequently don’t gain traction or support
- Opportunity to look for “potholes” in the road ahead
- Engagement and consultation = a more sustainable brand
- Doesn’t mean that the community should define the brand - don’t forget your target audience
- Avoid the warm and fuzzy solutions

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Dare to be Different


The secret to positioning is to find the intersection of:

- Your city's distinctive strengths
- Where competitors are most vulnerable; and
- What customers need and want
- It must align with community values and vision



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Always Build a Valued Promise and Deliver It!



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Innovate Through Outstanding Experience Delivery

- They underpin the delivery of your Destination Promise™
- Introduce new businesses, products, events and services to support your competitive advantages
- Rallying points for organizing, investing, marketing and product development
- Develop new partnerships
- Knock down the silos
- Signage, wayfinding, and gateways
- Shopping and streetscapes

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1. A brand is a promise to be delivered
2. It's about effectiveness and efficiency - focus and organization!
3. It sets you apart in a meaningful way
4. Engage stakeholders from the start
5. Use a proven research-based approach
6. Dare to be different
7. Use your Promise as your beacon
8. Focus on experiences and benefits
9. Play as a team & live brand everywhere - build new partnerships
10. Optimize your tourism identity
11. Change the old way of doing things!

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How TDM Can Help You

- Brand Discovery Workshop**
A half day presentation and key stakeholder workshop to fast track or start a brand planning process.
- Brand Strategy for Cities and Regions**
Comprehensive six month process incorporating thorough stakeholder engagement, consumer research, designs and brand manual.
- Visitor Readiness Report**
An action checklist for small cities developed through the objective eyes of visitors.



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