

Growing your small business: The impact of effective branding on entrepreneurship from the Marketing educator's perspective.

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Abstract

Branding is an integral component to the success and longevity of a business. Consumers typically gravitate toward brands that have good brand awareness and recognition which leads to the development of brand loyalty. However while branding is a necessary factor in marketing a business, establishing a brand is a difficult process and can require time and effort. Brand development is not simply creating a logo or slogan and associating your business with this. It also includes aspects such as having an excellent product that customers associate a value with as well as proper advertising using media that is current such as social media. This also includes the association that customers have regarding the business owner. A brand can be well recognized and liked however if the business owner is unethical the customers begin to have a negative brand association despite the fact that the product may be good.

As a marketing educator, inclusion of entrepreneurship and business concepts including how to be successful is vital to achieving the goal of educating students on this topic. However like many other topics in academia, branding can become mundane since there is quite a variety of terminology and theory. Students often are not able to translate the theory from the classroom to the real world. Despite this, since it is such a core area in a successful business, students need to be able to grasp an understanding that branding is an exciting and dynamic area as a business grows with the developed brand. Branding is also a difficult concept to instruct since it can involve ones' creativity and often in the classroom, students and educators level of creativity can vary significantly.

Target audience/ List of participants

This is a topic that can be widely marketed to a variety of people. The concepts are applicable in various situations such as individuals who already own their business, or students seeking to establish a business and of course educators instructing in this topic. The target audience would be small business owners, entrepreneurs, new business owners, marketing educators teaching courses in marketing, general business and entrepreneurship, students interested in entrepreneurship opportunities.

Modality

The modality for this special session would be either a workshop or tutorial. I would like for the session to be interactive as we review case studies and get input from industry and educators.

Rationale for this topic

After having taught marketing for over 10 years, and also authored a textbook, I have seen students who have successfully endeavored into their own business and also students who admirably have attempted this but failed. It is important as a marketing educator that students be provided with the tools to be successful and understand how to apply the concepts learned in class to the real world where they can then see progress. Often students enroll in marketing and other business courses but are not very engaged during class. This can be due to the actual lecture materials, course work and also a lack of an ability to show how the material is applicable to the real world. Branding is one concept that is taught in a traditional marketing course that can be lackluster since there is a variety of terminology. Moreover, students do not seem to understand how critical this is to the success of the business unless real world examples are incorporated into the materials.

This special session will be focused on the importance of branding to the success of business from an education standpoint and some of the tools that can be used to engage students on this topic. Case study materials will be provided to illustrate the impact of branding on business that can be used in the classroom. Case study materials showing where businesses have failed due to a branding issue will also be provided so that educators can illustrate to students the impact of negative branding. We will also examine branding from an international perspective and discuss what works here in the U.S. as opposed to other countries. I can provide a unique perspective on this being from another country. The session would be interactive as these case studies are reviewed and participation and input from other educators will be encouraged.