# 4 Branding Mistakes to Avoid



Creating and maintaining a brand is a lot of work. The last thing you want to do is sabotage all of that work by making a costly mistake. Here are some common mistakes that could hurt your brand.

## Failure to understand what branding is

The word branding is being thrown around a lot lately. But what does it really mean?
Your brand is more than just your logo or the colors you use. It's the way you interact with your target audience at every touchpoint. Yes, your brand includes your visuals, but it also encompasses your marketing copy, your social media posts, your website copy, even the language you use in a simple email. It's your company's voice; its personality. All of these things together help you make a connection with your audience. It helps differentiate you from your competitors and builds loyalty and trust with your customers.

## Inconsistency across all channels

Using a consistent voice will build familiarity and, eventually, credibility. If your voice changes every time you interact with your audience, you will confuse them and they won't trust you.
A good way to stay consistent is to choose some brand words that describe your company (i.e., honest, playful, educational, etc.). Every time you create anything, look at these words and make sure you're living up to your brand.
Another way to be consistent is to put together a basic brand guide to direct your visuals. This would include your logo, chosen brand colors, and specific fonts. It will help you to keep your visuals on brand.
Everything you do should look and sound like it comes from the same company.

## Creating a brand without any strategy

Brand decisions should be made based on a strategy. An aesthetically pleasing logo that doesn't connect with your audience is just a waste of time and money.
Ask yourself these questions:
- Who is your ideal customer?
- What problems do they have that you can solve?
- What about your competition?
- What do they offer?
- How are you different?

## Clarifying your mission statement and USP

- What is your mission statement?
- What's your USP (unique selling proposition)?

Once you work through these questions, your brand will come together so much more easily.

## Confusing your ideal audience's aesthetic with your own

The main goal of branding—and marketing in general—is to appeal to your ideal client. You are not your ideal client. Remember it is not about you, it's about them. That doesn't mean that you can't build your personality into your brand while still connecting with your audience. I have an extreme example that I use all the time. Say you are a female accountant who loves unicorns and glitter. Your ideal client is a 60-year-old male business owner. Should your branding include unicorns and glitter? Of course not! Your client needs to be able to trust you to handle his money, so you need to use your branding to show how trustworthy you are.

## About the Author:

Melanie Watson, owner of Melanie Watson Design, is at heart a problem solver, working closely with you to become clear on the message you want to convey and the audience you want to reach. She collaborates with you to bring your visual brand identity from concept to reality while helping you to achieve a consistent look-and-feel across all your channels of communication. She can be reached at melanie@melaniewatsondesign.com.