

BRAND POSITIONING

FOR NON-PROFITS



BRAND POSITIONING

Branding, by definition, is a marketing practice in which a company or group creates a name, symbol or design that is easily identifiable as belonging to that organization. This helps to identify and distinguish it from other organizations.

Branding is important because not only is it what makes a memorable impression on consumers, but it allows customers and clients to know what to expect from an organization. It is a way of distinguishing yourself from the competitors and clarifying what it is you offer that makes you the better choice. Your brand is built to be a true representation of who you are as an organization, and how you wish to be perceived.

An important aspect to any brand strategy is how you position your brand online. In today's world, consumers are demanding brands to be transparent in many facets of their operations and the digital platform is one of the first places consumers will investigate.

Consumers today perform a great amount of research before making any purchase decision. This also applies to non-profits. Consumers want to understand the mission, vision and values of a non-profit brand to know if they want to support the cause (i.e. purchase decision). Digital brand leader and expert, Hubspot states that “the best brands strive to combine physical, emotional, and logical elements into one exceptional consumer experience that you value as much as they do.”

IN THIS DECK:

1. Quick definitions of Mission, Vision, Values
2. Examples – Some Non-profit Brands Who Do It Well
3. Public Relations – A Cornerstone of Branding
4. Brand Positioning Exercise
5. Resources



BRAND



MISSION

A **mission statement** is, in some ways, an action-oriented vision statement, declaring the purpose an organization serves to its audience. It often includes a general description of the organization, its function, and its objectives.

VISION

A **vision statement** describes where the company aspires to be upon achieving its mission. This statement reveals the “where” of a business. Below are some vision statements from well-known companies to give you a sense of how a vision represents a brand.

VALUES

Having **core company values** can help you ensure each of your employees, from top leadership to entry-level, are working towards the same common goal, and share a bigger purpose.



BRANDS WHO DO IT WELL

Cradles to Crayons

Cradles to Crayons is a non-profit organization in Massachusetts that provides children from birth through age 12, living in homeless or low-income situations, with the essential items they need to thrive – at home, at school and at play. They supply these items free of charge by engaging and connecting communities.

What makes this a great example: On their website, they have a page dedicated to explaining their business model that clearly states their Mission and Vision. They also provide statistic and unique visuals to articulate their mission further. Their site is easy to navigate with appropriate calls to action displayed throughout.

Vibrant colors and photography compliment their mission to add visuals to their work. Their brand picture is painted clearly on their website to inform, educate, and welcome supporters.

Website: <https://www.cradlestocrayons.org/what-we-do/our-mission-and-model/>



BRANDS WHO DO IT WELL

WHAT POVERTY LOOKS AND FEELS LIKE FOR KIDS

The kids we help don't have shoes that fit. Or a coat warm enough to fend off winter winds. Or a backpack to carry their schoolbooks and supplies. Without these basics, they suffer. They don't want to go to school. They have a hard time learning in school. They don't go outside to play. They don't feel valued .

Our Mission: Cradles to Crayons provides children from birth through age 12, living in homeless or low-income situations, with the essential items they need to thrive - at home, at school and at play. We supply these items free of charge by engaging and connecting communities .

Our Vision: One day every child will have the essentials they need to feel safe, warm, ready to learn, and valued .

Cradles to Crayons



BRANDS WHO DO IT WELL



Girls Write Now (GWN) is a non-profit organization in New York City that mentors underserved young women and gender non-conforming youth to find their voices through the power of writing and community. Girls Write Now pairs underserved young women and gender non-conforming youth with professional writers as their lifelong mentors and role models. They welcome teens into a diverse community working closely with them to navigate their professional and personal goals.

What makes this a great example: On their website, Girls Write Now has 2 pages dedicated to explain who they are and what they do; an Intro page and Mission page. On the Intro page, GWN discusses who they are and what they hope to achieve. On their Mission page, GWN clearly states their mission, statistics about why they do what they do, and their operational model. By having this information, consumers and potential partners can clearly understand their brand and decide if they would like to support this cause. They curate a variety of content that entices partnerships and encourages their target audiences to get active within the organization.

Website: <https://www.girlswritenow.org/introduction/mission/>



BRANDS WHO DO IT WELL

OUR MISSION

Girls Write Now mentors underserved young women and gender non-conforming youth to find their voices through the power of writing and community.



MODEL

A television writer and a high school student unpack laptops at a coffee shop and debate narrative structure. A Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist breaks down her technique to an audience of eager young women and gender non-conforming youth. A writer finally gets the cadence of her poem just right and her heart beats a little faster with pride. This is Girls Write Now.



BRANDS WHO DO IT WELL

The logo for ImagineMKE is presented within a dark blue rectangular border. The text "IMAGINEMKE" is written in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font, with all letters in uppercase. The letters are spaced out, with "IMAGINE" in a regular weight and "MKE" in a bolder weight.

IMAGINEMKE

ImagineMKE is a non-profit organization in Milwaukee, Wisconsin whose mission is united to advance both a thriving arts and culture sector and the sector's contributions to the cultural, social, and economic vitality of Milwaukee.

What makes this a great example: ImagineMKE clearly displays their mission, vision, and values on their website articulating exactly who they are as an organization. The pages are easy to navigate and easy to understand how their foundation model operates. While the Mission page is a bit text heavy visually, they are clear in defining who they are. They also have a unique page called 'Our Journey' which discussed the history behind the organization's foundation. On their home page, they also use a unique design to highlight an area that rotates through what the top priorities are of the organization. The home page also clearly states the mission as you scroll through the page.

Website: <https://www.imagemke.org/who-we-are/our-mission/>



BRANDS WHO DO IT WELL

OUR VISION

An inclusive, engaged, and inspired Milwaukee that is recognized as a world-class city for creating and experiencing arts and culture.

OUR MISSION

Imagine MKE is a diverse coalition united to advance both a thriving arts and culture sector and the sector's contributions to the cultural, social, and economic vitality of Milwaukee.

OUR VALUES

Creativity and Artistic Expression

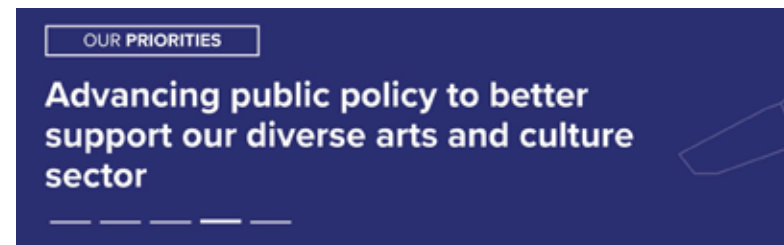
To lead a network of stakeholders from the arts and culture community, we must embrace creativity and artistic expression in how we lead and operate.

Collective Impact

No one organization can produce our results. We are committed to working as a collective to generate shared ownership and leadership to move our common agenda.

Result-based

Imagine MKE will be a performance-based organization where we are accountable for clear, measurable results in all strategies, activities, and meetings.



PUBLIC RELATIONS: A Cornerstone of Brand Positioning

An important cornerstone to brand positioning is the utilization of public relations. As stated by marketing guru Al Ries, **“What others say about your brand is so much more powerful than advertising.”** While non-profits seek to spread awareness, educate, inspire, and support, communicating a clear message to and with the public is extremely important. Monitoring what the public is saying about your brand as well as what you say to the public is what shapes your brand position.

As stated by the Public Relations Society of America, **“Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.”** Today’s consumer will often do extensive research about a brand before they make any purchase and that often includes learning about a brand’s values. Consumers want to align themselves (and their wallets) with brands that share their same values. Public relations allows brands to amplify their message to the public to resonate with their target audience and build brand loyalty.



BRAND POSITIONING EXERCISE

We've developed this exercise to get you thinking about your own brand positioning. Are you able to provide answers to all the questions? Are those answers clearly articulated to your audience?

Vision Statement

- What is your most important service?
- What is unique about engaging with your brand?
- Where do you want your organization to be in five years?

Mission Statement

- What are the specific market needs your organization exists to address?
- What does your organization do to address those needs?
- What are the guiding principles that define your organization's approach?
- Why do customers engage and donate to you?

Essence

- When your audience experiences your service, what emotions are at play?
- If your brand was a person, how would you describe their personality?

Personality

- Are you lighthearted and fun?
- Are you serious and all-business?
- Are you down-to-earth?
- Are you playful?
- Or are you something else?

Value Proposition

- Who are you speaking to?
- Which market segment do you serve?
- What is your brand promise?
- Why is your service different from those in your industry?
- Why should someone care?



RESOURCES

NINE ASPECTS TO CONSIDER WHEN BRANDING A NONPROFIT

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesnonprofitcouncil/2018/08/30/nine-aspects-to-consider-when-branding-a-nonprofit/#7f163d6776c0>

18 CORE COMPANY VALUES THAT WILL SHAPE YOUR CULTURE

<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/company-values>

THE IMPORTANCE OF VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-vision-mission-statements-norja-vanderelst/>

4 CHALLENGES FACING NONPROFIT MARKETERS IN 2016 (AND HOW TO BEAT THEM)

<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/challenges-facing-nonprofit-marketers-in-2016>

PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF AMERICA

<https://www.prsa.org/about/all-about-pr>

THE 22 IMMUTABLE LAWS OF BRANDING: HOW TO BUILD A PRODUCT OR SERVICE INTO A WORLD-CLASS BRAND

by Al Ries and Laura Ries. Harper Business; 1st Edition. Sept. 2002

