

Creative Industry guides

Steps to a successful company rebrand



What's in a brand?

Brand loyalty is a key element of any company's success. By the age of 10, children can apparently recognise **up to 400** different brands and our purchasing decisions are often swayed by brand over price. The most effective rebrands show that a company has evolved, without losing the core values that made it successful.



WHY EMBARK ON A REBRAND?

While rebranding shouldn't be carried out simply for the sake of it, even the most successful and recognisable brands need to refresh their image from time to time, so that they don't get stale or look dated. Perhaps the company has outgrown its branding or the customer profile or marketplace has changed.

Building up to a rebrand

A rebrand can comprise many elements, from redesigning your logo and changing your tagline to new product packaging, workwear or livery. But before you jump in, take some time to consider the following.

First, imagine you are starting your company today.

Would your current brand be a good representation of what you do? Does it speak to your customer profile and convey the right story about your company?

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Put a team in place to manage the rebrand. Make sure they have clear responsibilities and deadlines, and give them a stake in the outcome. Carry out some market research: **find out how customers, suppliers and staff view your current branding.**



Take time to assess the results – they may not be what you expect. Work out the strengths of your current brand and make sure they aren't lost in the rebrand.

Launching your new brand

Once your new branding ideas have been researched, tried and tested, plan the launch. Work to a realistic timescale so that all of the elements of the rebrand are in place by launch date.

Choose a time and place that will get you noticed

– for example, at a trade show – and consider tying the rebrand in with a new product launch or a company anniversary.



Make a fanfare of the launch. Plan a marketing campaign using digital and print, from brochures and giveaway branded products, to a segmented email marketing campaign to targeted lists. Blogging and social media are powerful tools for engaging with customers; use them in partnership for maximum impact.

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A rebrand is also a great opportunity for securing media coverage. **Work up some PR stories about the rebrand:** look at the history of the company for interesting anecdotes or historical facts that you can capitalise on.

Extending the rebrand

An effective rebrand should breathe new life into a company and stimulate growth, setting it up for the future. As well as attracting new customers and helping to retain existing ones, it can also have a positive effect on staff motivation and engagement.

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Once you have launched your rebrand, remember to revisit and review it on a regular basis. Ensure that your new branding is being used consistently as a replacement for the old one and that brand values are being maintained across the board.

However fresh the rebrand, it too will have a shelf life. Even if you spent time in the planning stages to develop a fresh image that would be capable of taking your brand through the next five or 10 years, outside influences such as a changes to your industry from innovation or legislation might force a rethink of your branding earlier than expected.

Examples of successful rebrands

1. A bite of the Apple - Apple Computers

It's hard to imagine Apple as an outmoded, struggling brand, but when Steve Jobs returned to the company in 1997, it was at risk of collapse.

As well as anticipating a new wave of innovative products, the company redesigned its current machines and reinvented its brand. Key decisions included dropping the word 'Computer' from the company name and replacing the stripy colourful logo with a plain black then sleek metallic apple design.

Today, it is one of the most powerful and recognised brands around.



2. A taste of success - Cadbury's Dairy Milk

Launched in 1905, Cadbury's Dairy Milk has unsurprisingly gone through a few rebrands, although looking at today's design, it's interesting to note how much *hasn't* changed.

Familiar features include the regal purple wrapper over gold foil, the 'handwritten' typeface of the brand name and the glass-and-a-half of poured milk.

New features include the Fairtrade logo, but the skill of the various rebrands has been to tweak rather than replace what's familiar, allowing the chocolate bar to remain a top UK brand while staying true to its heritage.



In conclusion

A rebrand shouldn't be undertaken simply for the sake of it and the core values that have made a company successful should not be discarded in a bid to show a fresh new face.

Careful research, planning and execution are essential with any rebrand: customers can be wary of change and brands can and should elicit an emotional response.

The last thing you want is to fail to get a rebrand accepted and find yourself forced to return to the old branding – an expensive mistake.

Nonetheless, a rebrand can be a highly effective way of rejuvenating your company, stimulating growth and re-establishing your brand in the marketplace.

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