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HOW TO PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS WITH A COMPETITION-KILLING BRAND

"BEING INVISIBLE IS AN AWESOME POWER IF YOU'RE A SUPER HERO
- BUT IT'S ABSOLUTELY DEADLY IF YOU'RE A BUSINESS OWNER..."



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MODULE 1

Introduction to Branding: It's Not Rocket Science

Branding: The Catalyst for Success Business Growth

Think about the last time you went shopping. Let's suppose you needed to buy coffee. You walked into the coffee aisle, scanned shelf after shelf of different types of coffee, grabbed one and walked away.

I bet there were at least half a dozen different brands of coffee represented on those shelves. So, let me ask you, how did you choose that particular brand of coffee?

Was there salesman standing in the aisle trying to persuade you to purchase one brand over the other? Was there someone barking at you like a carnival worker, trying to get your attention?

Of course not.

Chances are, you chose a particular kind of coffee because you trusted the brand. Maybe it was Folgers or Starbucks or Eight O'clock coffee or Maxwell House... or whatever your favorite brand is. But the point is, no one sold you on buying a particular product right there in the coffee aisle. Instead, you were presold before you ever arrived at the grocery store, because the company had done a fine job of building their brand.

Buying coffee is just one example. Take a look around at your life, and you'll quickly discover that branding plays an important role in many of your buying decisions. And it's not just you – your friends, your colleagues, your family and yes... even your prospects and customers -- all factor in branding when making their buying decisions.

People buy from those they know, like and trust. And the only way to build up this sort of trust is by building up your brand.

Now here's the crazy thing...

The brand that people are buying may not even be the best solution. But people like to buy brands with which they're familiar. They trust them. They know what kind of experience they'll get when they use a trusted brand.

Imagine for a moment that you're traveling on the highway, and you get hungry. You see "Bob's Fast Food Hamburger Shack" sitting right next to the golden arches.

Do I even need to tell you what restaurant sports the golden arches? If you said McDonalds, you're right. And that's just further proof that branding words. Even small children can spot the golden arches on the highway and start screaming for cheeseburgers.

Now... with all else being equal, and assuming you're looking for fast food and not gourmet dining, there's a good chance you're going to go to McDonalds rather than Bob's Hamburger shack. That's because you know what to expect, since McDonalds has

built up their brand recognition and a reputation for food that is fast and cheap.

How about another example...

Think about an online auction site – which one comes to mind first?

Probably eBay. They've built their branding so well that most people don't even think of other auction sites.

How about a search engine?

I bet you thought of Google, or maybe Bing or Yahoo. Again, that's the power of branding.

Point is branding is an incredibly powerful way to increase your sales over the long term...

When you build a strong brand, you build trust.

When you build a strong brand, you develop "top of mind" awareness.

When you build a strong brand, people buy from you simply because they recognize your brand... and because they've associated good feelings with your brand.

A lot of struggling entrepreneurs don't even think about branding, which is probably one of the reasons why they're struggling so much. Still others spend time thinking about branding, but they

think branding is about picking out a slogan and a logo with pretty colors.

That's a mistake. Branding is much bigger than that. And branding is such an important part of a company's success that serious business owners invest a lot of time and/or a lot money into developing a solid brand. What's more, companies that have been around for any amount of time often freshen their brand simply because they know how important it is to change with the times.

Let me give you a few examples of how companies have branded themselves or freshened their brand...

- Avis used to be the second car rental company in the world, right behind Hertz. As part of their branding, they developed the slogan "We Try Harder." This new branding slogan was considered a triumphant success and was used for 50 years.
- Apple, Inc used to officially be called Apple Computers.
 However, this name didn't reflect their business strategy,
 as Apple was moving into tablets, smart phones and other
 gadgets. Thus, Apple changed their name in order to
 capture a bigger market share. Did it work? You bet it did
 -- just think about the popularity of iPhones and iPads.

Point is branding is really a pretty big deal. And if you want to dominate your industry, solidify your long-term growth, and cement customer loyalty, then you need to pay attention to branding. The good news is that this course will teach you everything you need to know about developing and refining a bullet-proof brand that can crush the competition.

So, let's get started by taking a look at the DNA of branding.

I'll see you in a moment in the next module...