

DELIVERING SUCCESSFUL
HEALTHCARE BRANDS

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What is a brand?

A brand is more than a logo or a name. It is an identity, embodying the values of the organisation, its culture, its people, its services, its capabilities, its expertise, its reputation, and its network. We treat brands as if they are people; personalities with distinct preferences, image, decision-making, and priorities. Everything from the environment in which your consumers experience your brand, the service they receive from the people representing your brand, to the way your brand communicates is a reflection of your company's identity and will ultimately affect the positioning of your brand in the mind of your target market.



2 What are brands supposed to do?

Plain and simple: brands drive business. A traditional pitfall is to think of a brand as an expense; it is absolutely not. Your brand is an investment in your organisation's future, and will help sustain the survival and growth of your company. We consider brands to be "intangible assets"- a simple look at a company's balance sheet will reveal that an entire section is devoted to the value of the goodwill associated with your brand, as well as the financial value your brand has. Think about it, strong brands such as McDonald's are able to sell their franchises for significantly more cost to interested parties than a smaller brand with little or no brand awareness. Brands are not an expense, they are an investment, and given the right tools, your organisation can quantify the return on investment you are getting from your brand.

For a healthcare brand, the onus on the brand is not only to drive the bottom line, but also to achieve four key things while realizing ultimate organisational profit and success:

- Patient recruitment
- Patient retention
- Patient loyalty
- Patient ambassadorship



3 What is unique about healthcare brands?

Healthcare issues are highly personal and often emotional, making it more challenging for consumer healthcare companies to establish a credible and trustworthy healthcare brand. It's not enough to just provide good products or services - that's expected. Whether you're a hospital, a pharmaceutical company, a medical supply company, or just an independently practicing doctor - your brand needs to connect with consumers, stay competitive, and be profitable.

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How do we build successful healthcare brands?

Crafting a healthcare brand that delivers the most impact and achieves your organisational objective depends on 7 key drivers.

1. Humanity

Your customers and patients are human beings. Your brand must connect with them on an emotional and personal level. Instead of using highly technical medical or marketing jargon, use common language, so everyone can understand and feel comfortable with what your company provides.

2. Compassion

Be compassionate in the way your company provides information to potential customers and their families. Your key brand messages must show that your company understands and can meet your customers' physical, emotional and mental needs. Your customers need to be able to relate to you, and you must be able to make them feel like they're receiving care on a one-on-one level.

3. Education

Knowledge is power. Consumers are tech-savvy and do extensive research online before making healthcare decisions. Educating your potential customers about your products or services shows that your company has the experience and quality customers are looking for.

4. Expertise

When it comes to healthcare, people seek the best, the brightest, the most recommended, the most awarded practitioners. Why? When you have the expertise, you bond a relationship of trust and credibility with your customers. Promote your staff, their knowledge, skills, and achievements, as well as your institution's capabilities, offerings, and innovations.

5. Transparency

To help build brand trustworthiness, be transparent by posting true and uncensored reviews, providing information in a non-exaggerated way, and accurately representing your offerings online and offline. Be honest about what you can and cannot do, and help your customers make educated decisions. Act as a partner, not as a preacher.

6. Commitment

Express your company's commitment to your customers' well-being and your brand strategy by consistently providing great customer experiences and adhering to brand guidelines.

7. Engagement

Bill Gates famously once said, "Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning." Ask your customers about their experiences and interactions with your brand, your services, and your products. Hear what they're saying, address their concerns, and use their feedback as a mechanism for continuous improvement. Customers will be empowered and engaged and appreciate your efforts to meet their needs.



What's next?

The healthcare industry is one of the most stable and consistently high-performing industries globally; people will always get sick, get hurt, need medical attention, and require specialist care.

The industry however is one of the most highly regulated globally, as well as one of the most competitive. It is imperative for your brand's survival that you remain differentiated from your competitors and build a loyal customer base that values, trusts, and respects your expertise, your capabilities, and believes in your brand promise. A brand's survival, especially in an industry delivering such sensitive and personal service, rests wholly on consistent delivery of quality care and maintenance of a brand that inspire hope, faith, and confidence.

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