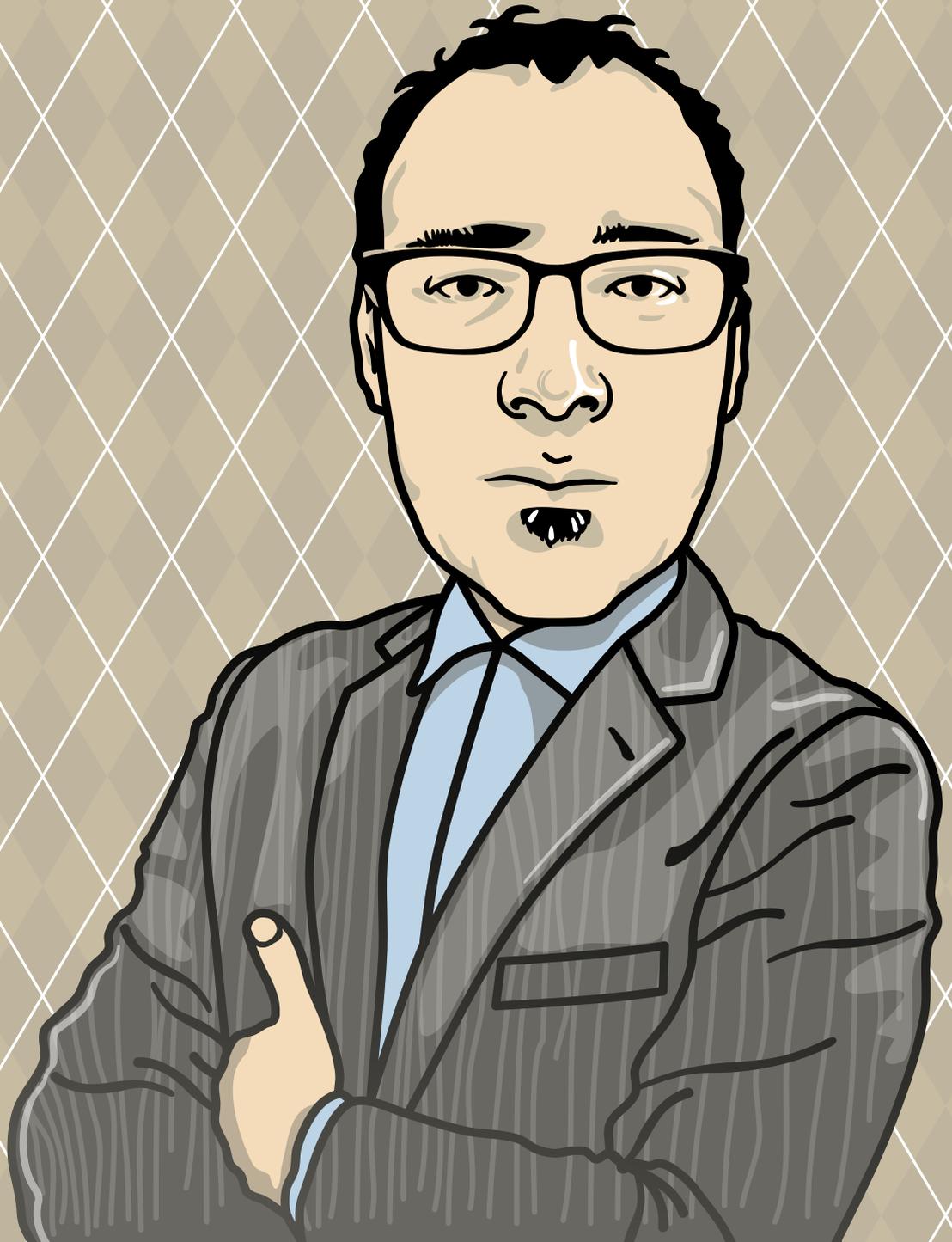


**FIND YOUR  
BRAND DNA**



# Find your brand DNA

Learn to know your business its brand DNA through and through. Because, if you like it or not, a successful business starts by building a brand. First essential step in this process, is to understand the personality of the company, its history, its function, its ethos and so on. This will define who you are and how you act as a business.

Only with an honest presentation of yourself and your business, you can reach your target market. You and your business will fail, if you pretend to be somebody you are not.

Or as Richard Branson once said ... “Too many business want their brands to reflect some idealized, perfected image of themselves. As a consequence, their brands acquire no texture, no character”.

Beside that, knowing your business through and through is essential to make the right marketing actions later on.

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# 01

## Why branding your business?

Branding is the process of creating a unique name and an emotional connection for a product, a company, ... in the customers mind. Branding is critical to your success? As it is about how people think about your business and product, and the impression they get when they meet your marketing efforts, visit your website, and so on.

Branding focuses on two values :

**Emotional value** > Building a long lasting business is about creating an emotional value. It is the process of creating a unique name and an emotional connection for your product in the customer's mind. The goal is to build a strong authentic and genuine relationship with your customers, around your brand. In such a way, that the customer take on your brand identity as its own.

**Practical value** > Most of all, the brand needs to focus on fulfilling the customer's expectations. As well it needs to create a consistent satisfaction. You only can reach that by offering an exceptional product and by knowing how your target market value your product.

*"If you're your authentic self, you have no competition."*

*... Scott Stratten*

### Do you connect with your target market?

As you see branding is not about providing your business with a logo and some corporate colors. Most business owners believe that, but it is not. These elements are just part of the marketing of a business. Buying is and always will be driven by emotions. As a business you need to connect with your potential client's emotions.

## What are the benefits?

- Product recognition ... Your business will become more recognizable whenever a client comes in contact with your logo, packaging, advertisement, ...
- Product positioning ... Your brand will trigger a reputation in the customers mind, and the customer will recall you when they need your product.
- Differentiator ... If you have a lot of competitors, you as a brand will make the difference when you make an effort in appearances and marketing.
- Client loyalty ... Clients are more likely to buy a product again after several positive experiences.
- Price premium ... Customers will pay more for your products than for those of your competitors where they do not associate themselves with.
- Product introduction ... If your company has become an established brand you will likely get more support from other businesses, if not for free then for a better price.
- Brand equity ... The rights on your name and business become a monetary value, many likes to pay when you want to sell your business.

# 02

## Why to know your brand DNA?

Knowing your brand DNA is not only the first step in building a brand. It also help you to get the essential information you need for your marketing actions. First we perform a few analyses about ourselves, our company, our products or services, our customers, our competitors and the market.

This information will learn us who we are and how we should act as a business. Information you will need in the next “**brand identity**” step. With this information we make also a SWOT analysis which learn you to find out the strengths and weakness within your business. It also give you the possibility to find out the external opportunities and threats your business is coping with. This is essential information for you to make the right marketing strategies.

If you go online you will find an overdose of information concerning researching your market, competition, and so on. I keep it simple and give you the essential tactics to get started. It is wiser once you get started to keep researching through surveys, in-depth interviews, and so on your market and customers, and keep an eye on your competitors at all time.

At certain point you will seek advice and information with others, be aware not to contact to much people. Keep it with a few people you can trust and from who you know they will provide you with clear and honest feedback. Receive with an open mind what your focus group will tell you, even you do not like what you hear. Analyze and learn from it, it will only improve your business. Do not seek advice with your parents, family and very close friends, they all love you and they will only tell you what you like to hear. They even may speak from fear that you will fail, as such their opinions may become contra-productive. Learn what the intention is behind any other feedback you get.

## Analysis 1 : Who are you?

It is your personality which influence how your business will act and perform on the market. As such, building a business is not only about your company but about your personality as well.

Everything what you do as a business owner and your buying customers do is based on emotions. That is why building a brand and focusing on you as a person is so important. It is no wonder that successful businesses are run by big personalities. Read "**Cultivate business attitude**" to become a big personality as well.

As such, be honest about yourself, and answer the following questions how you really are, not how you like to see yourself.

1 \_ What are your strenghts? What is special about you? List some positive points about yourself.

2 \_ What are your weaknesses? List some negative points about yourself.

3 \_ What are the external factors which bring opportunities in your personality?

4 \_ What are the potential external problems which may cause a threat to your personality?

5 \_ Why are you in business?

We are all in business to gain money to provide a source of livelihood. But don't let this be the reason why you are in business and being your dream. This will end up in failure and disappointment. Don't chase the money, but focus on making a difference in people's live. Money will come once your customers see you are there for them.

6 \_ What is your personal dream? Where do you want to go to?

## Analysis 2 : What is the company's history?

If you step into a new company or you plan to do a rebrand, start with a research of the company. Understand the personality of the company, its history, its function and the ethos behind it. Focus in your answers as well on the political, economic, social and technological factors which influence the company.

- 1 \_ What is the history of the company?
- 2 \_ What is its personality?
- 3 \_ What is the function of the company?
- 4 \_ And what is its ethos?
- 5 \_ What are the strenghts of the company?
- 6 \_ What are the weaknesses of the company?
- 7 \_ Which external factors bring opportunities to the company?
- 8 \_ And which external factors bring threats to the company?

### **Analysis 3 : What is your product or service?**

Spend some time on analyzing your product or services as well.

- 1 \_ What are the strengths of your product or service?
- 2 \_ What are the weaknesses of your product or service?
- 3 \_ What are the external factors which bring opportunities in your product or service?
- 4 \_ What are the potential external problems which may cause a threat to your product or service?
- 5 \_ What is is the quality & pricing of your product & service?

### **Analysis 4 : Who are your customers?**

Do you agree when I say that customers are important to your business? In fact it is a critical point for each business. Customers are the only ones who are responsible for profit to your business. As such knowing your customers is the easiest way to increase profits.

If you haven't customers yet, try to find out who your customers might be.

- 1 \_ What are the strengths of your customers?
- 2 \_ What are the weaknesses of your customers?
- 3 \_ What are the external factors which bring opportunities to you concerning your customers?
- 4 \_ What are the potential external problems which may cause a threat to you concerning your customers?
- 5 \_ Make a behavioral profile and find out why customers go for your

product or service.

- Why do they buy your product or service?
- Which steps did they take in their decision-making process?
- Who makes the decision and how long did it take to make the buying decision?
- Where did they search for information concerning your product or service?
- Do they hear first from others or go to competitors before they come to you?
- How many times do they buy and for what occasion?
- Where and how do they buy?
- What do new or regular customers seek in your business?
- Do they have easy access to your product or service?

6 \_ Make a demographic profile and find out the background of your customer.

- What is the age range, gender, family status, geographic location, education degree, income level, ... of your customer?

7 \_ Ask your customer about price, quality, convenience and prestige of your product or service. It are these four factors why a customer choose to buy.

8 \_ What is their perception of your business?

Keep your customer profile up to date, with focus groups, personal surveys, feedback through social media and in-depth interviews. When you better understand your potential and regular clients, and why they buy or don't, you can keep sales increasing and grow your business.

## **Analysis 5 : Who are your competitors?**

What kind of difference do you bring to your clients in comparison with your competitors? You know that customers are critical for your business. As such, find out the weaknesses and strengths of your competitors, this will make your business survive and grow. A weakness from your competition is an opportunity for you. Take advantage and apply your results in your marketing strategies.

Do not let the success of your competition discourage you. A competitive analysis is not to get worried, but to find a way to stand out from your competitors. But do not get too cocky as well, small businesses are vulnerable when new players enter the market. As such, keep an eye at all times to your competitors and potential competitors. Keep an eye on their activities online, evaluate their marketing campaigns, visit their locations and search online for feedback to their business.

- 1 \_ Who are your competitors?
- 2 \_ Who might become your potential competitors in the near future?
- 3 \_ What are the products and services they sell?
- 4 \_ What is their position in the market, strong or weak?
- 5 \_ What do they try to achieve in your target market?
- 6 \_ What are their marketing strategies (offline and online)?
- 7 \_ What are the strengths of your competitors?
- 8 \_ What are the weaknesses of your competitors?
- 9 \_ Which external factors bring you opportunities concerning your competitors?
- 10 \_ Which potential external problems may cause a threat to you concerning your competitors?

Divide your competitors in various groups according to organization, size, size of sales, marketing strategy, product or service, direct or indirect competition, ... What are the weak points of each group? Search for the opportunities thanks to your strengths, you have in response of these weaknesses for each group.

## **Analysis 6 : What is your marketplace?**

What does the world need? What is there to know about the market your company operate in or wish to operate in. A marketplace is where you need to demonstrate your expertise, but as well become attractive to get your products or services sold. Off course, many questions concerning your marketplace you have already answered in the analysis of your competition, customers, product or services, ... But let us here focus on the market as a whole. Because, in your marketing strategies you will not reach out to each individual potential customer. But, you will need to create a consistent satisfaction within your target market as a whole.

- 1 \_ Describe your marketplace?
- 2 \_ What is the demographic situation of your target market? Is it local, national or international?
- 3 \_ What is the size of your target market both in volume and in profitability value concerning potential customers, competitors, ...
- 4 \_ How can you describe the various groups of customers in your target market?
- 5 \_ What are the buying patterns of those group of customers?
- 6 \_ How does your target market value your products or services?
- 7 \_ How can you operate in the market in terms of barriers to entry and regulations.
- 8 \_ What are the strengths of your marketplace?
- 9 \_ What are the weaknesses of your marketplace?
- 10 \_ Which external factors bring opportunities to your marketplace?
- 11 \_ Which potential external problems may cause a threat to your marketplace?

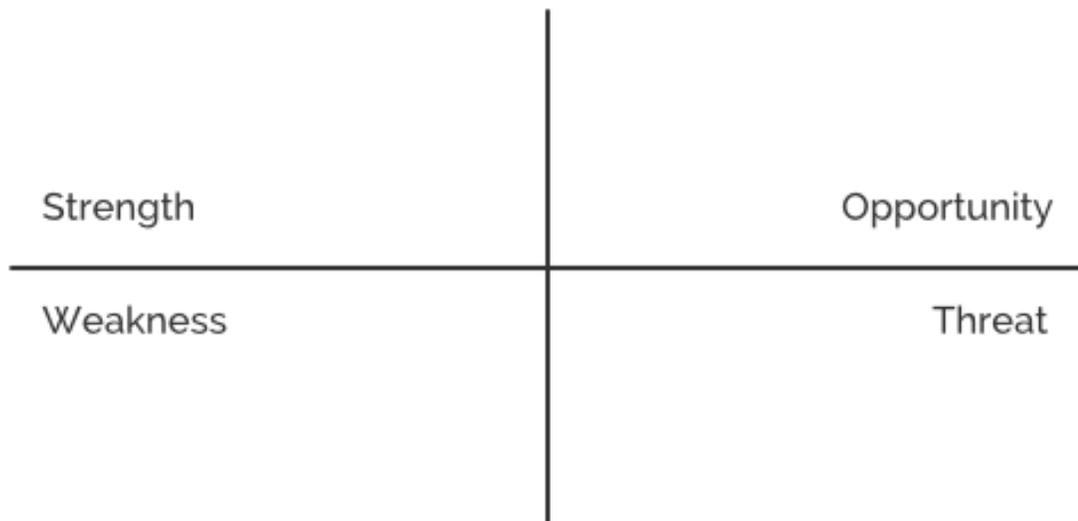
# 03

## Perform a SWOT analysis

Now we have an idea of our brand DNA. Information which is essential for branding your business in the next “**brand identity**” step.

But first we take time to get some conclusions you need to develop strong marketing strategies. We gather all our information and perform a SWOT analysis. SWOT is an acronym that stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The strengths and weaknesses are internal factors. Factors you can change when you work on it. The opportunities and threats are external factors which you can't change.

In your 6 analyses you already have named the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of yourself, company, products or services, customers, ... Take a piece of paper and draw the following table.



By comparing internal strengths with external opportunities you highlight the condition and potential of your business. On the other hand by pairing internal weakness with external threats you have an idea which may influence your business in a negative way. Now you need to evaluate all information and ask yourself the following questions :

- 1 \_ How can you reinforce and amplify the strengths?
- 2 \_ How can you work on the weaknesses to eliminate them?
- 3 \_ How can you make use of the opportunities?
- 4 \_ And how can you overcome threats?
  
- 5 \_ How to use strengths to maximize the opportunities?
- 6 \_ How to use strengths to minimize the harm of the threats?
- 7 \_ How can the opportunities minimize the weaknesses?
- 8 \_ And how can the opportunities avoid the threats?

Your SWOT analysis is the base of your decision making and your marketing strategies. You can't make accurate decisions about your business' future if you do not have properly evaluate all what is essential for your business. As such, it is also recommended to do once a year a new SWOT-analysis to keep your business on the right track.

All what you have learned now is essential for your business. As such, remember you need to know your brand DNA for two reasons. Later in this guide you will need this essential information to decide which marketing actions you need to take.

But first we will use this information concerning who you are and how you act as a business, to bring some identity to your business. With other words we will turn your business into a brand. Only with an honest presentation of yourself and your business where customers can connect with, you will reach your target market. If you pretend to be somebody you are not,, or you do not have any identity, you will fail as a business.

So, quickly move on to the next step "**Identify the brand identity**" to get started.



## About the author

My name is Geert De Decker, a well-documented professional, active world wide since 1986.

**“You Do Not Have To Be Big To Be Great”**

... is my vision. And it is my mission to provide starters, freelancers and entrepreneurs an easy to use step-by-step guide. A guide with results-driven actions to obtain a long-term succesful business.

Tell me! What are your marketing pain-points?

Share your problem at [info@GeertDeDecker.be](mailto:info@GeertDeDecker.be) and I share you a solution!

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