

Nuts & Bolts of Marketing

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The Importance of a Logo and Marketing Materials

Erin Ferree, <http://www.allbusiness.com/marketing/branding-logos/3580-1.html>

The initial lack of customers and cash flow often causes new small business owners to put off designing a logo and marketing materials professionally "until they get a few clients" or "until they get started." Unfortunately, designing their own marketing materials when they launch their businesses instead of having them professionally created will make getting those initial clients more difficult and may result in a business that will not succeed.

Many entrepreneurs choose to design their own marketing materials when they launch their businesses, especially by creating their first business card. Or sometimes they will have an amateur designer, friend, or relative create the design. There are several reasons why this is not the best idea. How Much Does a Brand Cost? An amateur logo design and business card can make your business more likely to fail for a number of reasons.

Your business will not look stable. It will appear to be more likely to fold or to fail. Clients will not have confidence in doing business with you. Would you do business with someone who seems to be on unstable footing and who might not be in business by the end of your project or after you have purchased an item?

You will look like a very small business. Large, successful businesses would never consider doing business without professional, originally designed marketing materials. Using materials that are not professionally designed (i.e., Microsoft or Vistaprint templates) makes your business appear even smaller and can possibly indicate that you cannot perform to or meet the standards required.

You will look unpolished and rough. Not having a professional "look and feel" can make it appear as though your business does not matter to you. Customers may get the impression that you do not care about the way your business presents itself, which might indicate that you would not care about the quality of your work or the way that your work reflects upon their business.

You will look unfocused. unprofessional, uncoordinated marketing materials can make your business look "jumbled" or confused. If you have a business card with one look and feel and a Web site with another, this creates a confused -- and confusing -- look and feel for your business. This can also cause an identity crisis for a small business. When looking at your differently designed materials, potential clients may be fooled into thinking that they are looking at materials that represent different companies.

About half of all businesses fail within their first few years. One source of failure that is commonly cited by experts is sloppy or ineffective marketing. If your marketing materials do not stand out from those of your competitors, your sales will suffer.

When you start a business, you need to create the quickest possible route to business success. A logo helps to create this by contributing to your business's visibility, credibility, and memorability -- three factors that will help your business to grow and achieve success. So, while putting off your logo development may seem like a prudent idea from a cash-flow point of view, it could result in your business never getting off the ground. It can also lead to your business folding when it would otherwise succeed.

If you think that you can't afford to design a logo when starting your business, consider the outcomes -- how can you afford not to?

giving companies choices that effectively market your product or service while offering you price-points that fit your budget

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