

# ***Developing a Corporate Identity***

Your corporate identity is what makes your company unique. It communicates your approach to everything that your business does from the quality of the products or services that you provide to your customer service. It includes your marketing, advertising and communication efforts. The purpose of your corporate identity is to tie all of these elements together. By doing this, you will be able to build both recognition and loyalty among your customers which should in turn, increase dollars and your bottom line. It is important to realize that your company and its products or services will have an image, whether you plan it or not. So it is better that you develop your identity rather than having your customers or competitors determine it.

## **Following are some steps to help you get started on creating your corporate identity:**

1. ***Determine your business identity*** - ask yourself this question: What do I want my customers to say and think about my product and company? Answering this question will help you determine what kind of identity you want to establish. When determining your identity you should consider three further areas:
  - What type of business are you in? If you provide a clown service for birthday parties, you would want to portray a fun image; however, if you have a funeral home you would want to portray a conservative image.
  - What is your target market? If your market is teenagers you would want an image that appeals to them and likewise if your market is seniors.
  - What image are your competitors portraying? Now try to think of an image that will give you a competitive advantage.
2. ***Create your identity***-You do this by establishing a consistent look and feel to all your communications. The most important element of doing this is the logo, which should appear on all your company communications. The purpose of the logo is to instantly convey the message of your business. At this point, you will probably want to call on a graphic

designer. They will work with you to develop a “look” for your company. In addition, they will show you how to implement the logo in your communications. Here are some guidelines for when you are working with the designer:

- Make a point to notice other company’s logos.
- Avoid very complicated logos. Simple is easier for the customer to remember.
- Remember color. Different colors convey different images. Red, yellow and orange convey that the company is hot or trendy, while blue and gray convey that the company is conservative.
- Different letter fonts can produce different results. Bold fonts convey strong and large while italics conveys an upscale image.
- If possible, try to have a catchy tagline to go with the logo. A good slogan added to an attractive logo can be a very powerful combination.

3. ***Use your corporate identity consistently***- Apply it to everything you do from your customer service, to using your corporate logo. As your business changes you may need to look at refining or changing your identity. Following is a checklist to help you through the process:

#### **Determining Your Business Identity**

- \_\_\_ Type of business and product
- \_\_\_ Type of customer
- \_\_\_ Competition

#### **Create Your Identity**

- \_\_\_ Design your logo
- \_\_\_ Choose a tagline
- \_\_\_ Choose a typestyle

#### **Project Your Identity**

- \_\_\_ Integrate your logo
- \_\_\_ Communication tools
- \_\_\_ Sales brochure
- \_\_\_ Media kit
- \_\_\_ Sales letters
- \_\_\_ Business location
- \_\_\_ Office furniture

#### **For More Information:**

**Internet:** <http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/SSG?mi04431e.html>