

TEST YOUR BRANDING BRAVADO

Are you managing your brand? If you don't tell your audience what your brand stands for, they'll decide for you. And you may not like what they decide!

For each A answer, score 2 points, B answer, score 1 point, and C answer 0 points.

TELLING YOUR BRAND'S STORY

1: If someone asks you what your brand stands for, can you explain it in 20 seconds or less?

Yes

Yes, but can you give me 60 seconds?

No, not even if you gave me 20 minutes

2: Can you give 5 adjectives that describe the personality of your brand?

Yes

No, but I can give you 2 adjectives and an interjection!

No, I didn't know brands had personalities

3: Can you name 3 brands you admire and explain why?

Yes

I think I'm good for 1 or 2

No

4: Iconic brands have their stories. Dr Pepper was invented at Morrison's Old Corner Drug Store in Waco, Texas. Post-it® notes were invented when 3M scientists accidentally developed a low-tack reusable adhesive. For many years Coors beer was distributed only in the western states, thus making it a scarce treasure in other parts of the country. Can you tell a story about your brand?

Yes

No, but I know what the "JC" stands for in JCPenney

No, but all this talk of soda and beer is making me thirsty

5: Before you make a sales call, do you worry that people haven't heard of your brand?

Yes

I figure there's a 50/50 chance they've heard of us

No, I have to do a lot of explaining

6: Can you name two things your brand is known to be "good at" and one thing your brand is "not good at"?

Yes

No, but I can name one thing we're almost good at

No, never thought about it that way

7: Have you considered how your brand's meaning and personality affect your approach to recruiting and screening candidates for employment?

Yes

No, but the people in HR use our logo correctly in their recruitment ads

No, I didn't know "branding" and "hiring" could be used in the same sentence

SIZING UP THE COMPETITION

8: Can you name your 3 top competitors and give 3 unique descriptions of their brands?

Yes

I can name 'em but I can't describe 'em

You mean I have competitors?

- 9: Do you know the market shares of your brand and your competitors' brands in your top 5 geographic markets?
Yes
No, but I know we're not in first place in any of those markets
No
- 10: Do you measure your brand's perception among your customers and prospects at least twice a year?
Yes
No, but we did a focus group about a year ago
No, we better get started
- 11: Do you measure customer loyalty, net promoter scores, or brand advocacy?
Yes
No, but we gave out referral coupons once
No, we aren't very loyal to loyalty
- 12: Have you ever thought about how all your products and services fit under one brand, and if you need to separate your business into multiple brands?
Yes
I thought about it once, but then the phone rang
We can have more than one brand?
- 13: Have you defined your target audience in terms of their attitudes, beliefs, hopes, expectations and needs?
Yes
No, but I can tell you we buy the Adults 18-49 demo
I never think about what my audience thinks
- 14: If you have problem-child markets where your brand suffers, do you know why?
Yes
No, but I could take a good guess
No
- 15: Designer brands of water sell two or three times the price of store-brand bottled water. Does your product command a premium price just because of your brand's reputation?
Yes
Maybe we charge 2 or 3 percent more
No, but you're making me thirsty again
- 16: Do you know your USA, your Unique Sustainable Advantage?
Yes
Not sure, but I have a few ideas what it might be
USA! USA! USA! Could you repeat the question?
- 17: Have you ever considered the natural advantages of your brand -- the unique, positive distinctions your brand has because of your location, story of origin, or distribution channel?
Yes
No, but I can think of a story I'd like to tell people about our brand
No, I don't feel like we have any advantages
- 18: Do you know why your brand exists? Can you envision a world without your brand and what people would be missing without it?
Yes. It's as sad a story as the world without George Bailey in "It's a Wonderful Life"
I have a fuzzy vision. Maybe I need to clean my glasses
No, but I always cry when I see that movie

19: Sometimes brands establish a unique position through the way they're distributed or the audience they sell to. For example, a certain brand of cookie that's only available at mall kiosks, or a sneaker that you can only buy at skateboard shops. Have you sought out any niche opportunities for your brand, such as distribution through an unusual retail channel or affinity with a certain group of fans or practitioners?

Yes

No, sponsor a Little League team

No, we haven't endeared our brand to anybody

TACTICAL ADVANTAGES

20: Do you have a style guide or uniform set of standards that includes the treatment of your logo, typefaces for your brochures and print ads, and standard Pantone® colors?

Yes

No, but I can tell you the name of the typeface we used in our last ad

No, it's a free-for-all

21: How old is your logo? Have you considered updating it?

We have updated or considered updating our logo in the past 5 years

Our logo was designed after 1995

I think our logo was on a billboard at Ebbetts Field

Total your points _____

How bully is your Branding Bravado? Use this key:

0 – 10 points... Get your brand out of the sand!

11 – 20 points... There's light at the end of your brand tunnel. Just hope it's not an uncoming train.

21 – 30 points... Not too shabby. The land of a better brand is close at hand.

31 – 41 points... You're a tough competitor. A Braveheart of Brand!

44 points... You are the cat's pajamas, the best brander in the land!

