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Brand Strategy Plan Template

**A Brand and Content Guru Tool
Developed by Jackie Deutsch**

**Delivering messaging with a point >
on-point copywriting and content marketing
that increases sales and brand awareness**



brandandcontentguru.com

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How to Work with the Brand Strategy Plan Template

This Brand Strategy Plan Template from the Brand and Content Guru provides you with a framework to develop a Brand Strategy Plan and Marketing Communications Program. In a clear and concise manner, this template will help you:

- Scope out the project
- Define your brand
- Assess your corporate identity
- Formulate concepts for brand messaging and copywriting points
- Determine go-to-market strategy
- Frame tactical content marketing tools
- Identify marketing communications campaigns and channels
- Build brand equity

Information that you need to update with your company branding and client-specific information appears in Arial Narrow typeface. Look for this typeface to identify the areas that need customization. Make sure to select one easy-to-read typeface for your final presentation.

Copy blocks supporting the subhead sections provide a general description of the type of information to include, which should be added or replaced. Add other sections that further describe your company and branding goals, as appropriate.

Additionally, the template includes fully developed sections that communicate the importance of branding in building business and increasing sales. These copy blocks can easily be dropped into your customized Brand Strategy Plan and Marketing Communications Program as turnkey, on-trend language providing industry thought leadership, which reinforces your branding and marketing expertise. The Branding Methodology section lists the elements to be considered for inclusion in the Marketing Communications Program and should be selected and customized to meet your business goals and budget.

This Brand Strategy Plan Template is designed for use by a corporate marketing department, business owner or a branding/marketing communications firm or consultant.



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TEMPLATE TITLE PAGE – CUSTOMIZE

**BRAND STRATEGY PLAN AND
MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM**

Delivered to
CLIENT NAME

Presented by
COMPANY OR EMPLOYEE NAME

DATE



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Insert your logo

Situation

Define why the branding project is being initiated, who it is for, what the project requires, why it is being launched, and the business goals. Add client-specific information.

Background

Describe the status of the project, the brand history, market positioning, what has been done to date, who the stakeholders are and their expectations. Add client-specific information.

Approach

The Brand Strategy Plan for Client Name requires a full and detailed assessment of the current state of the company and the goals for the future state. This process begins by answering 20 mission-critical, brand-defining questions. It continues with talking to your customers and employees and finding out what your brand means to them. The answers and feedback form the company's value proposition and brand identity.

A holistic brand strategy—one that relates to both your employees and customers—is more than just a new website and updated marketing communications materials. A successful Brand Strategy Plan develops a brand identity and positions the brand in the marketplace with the goal of building a positive perception in the minds of Client Name's customer base to influence purchase decision. It's all about making the sale.

The answers to these all-important questions require your undivided attention and a dedicated period of time to dig deep and do some company soul searching. The end result will deliver the information and the emotion that will drive the development of an effective brand messaging platform. The platform will define the brand through the vision, mission, value proposition, attributes, personality, and voice.

The brand positioning statement will set Client Name apart from its category competitors. From there, the brand identity will emerge to form the brand image, communicate the brand promise, increase brand awareness and build brand loyalty. This process sets the stage for the evolution of branding Client Name as a leader in the insert industry through a solid brand strategy, targeted copywriting, comprehensive content marketing, integrated marketing communications and website optimization.



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Answer 20 Mission-Critical Questions to Define Your Brand

1. Describe your operations and lines of business.
2. Explain your brand in a short phrase you can deliver in 60 seconds.
3. What is your company tagline?
4. What are your website keywords?
5. Do you want to stick with your present logo and corporate identity?
6. What industry problems/customer pain points does your company solve?
7. What type of brand program have you had in place to date?
8. What emerging and/or popular trend(s) does your company address?
9. What is your current market position and ideal future market share?
10. Describe your target customer(s).
11. How do your current customers and employees view your brand?
12. What do your customers value most about what your company offers?
13. Identify three to five unique differentiators/strengths of your company.
14. Who are your competitors?
15. If your company were a person, how would you describe it?
16. What do you want your company to be known for in the industry?
17. What are your company's business goals?
18. What benefits do your company products/solutions bring to the market?
19. Describe your current go-to-market strategy.
20. Describe your marketing communications/content marketing program.



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Strategy

Branding influences virtually every activity in the enterprise with each point of customer contact. Branding goes beyond the selection of a company name and logo design. A well-defined, well-positioned, strong brand influences employees and customers to think of a company in terms of positive brand attributes: quality, dependability, trust, reliability. It is the reason why employees and customers evangelize a company. Brand building is a process that establishes and solidifies a relationship between a company, its employees, and its customers.

When done right, branding drives sales, lowers the cost of acquiring new customers, increases customer retention and loyalty, and attracts talented employees who remain with the company over the long term. On a balance sheet, brand equity is reflected in customer goodwill and financial value (the Coca-Cola brand is worth \$74 billion). The core strategy of a branding plan is to clearly identify the brand message and communicate it consistently through persuasive copywriting. To reach this point, a brand assessment is required.

Branding Methodology



To position Client Name as a leader in the insert marketplace, both employees and customers must be part of the **Define & Assess** phase. Collecting this research is a basic step in the development of a successful brand. Like any sound business plan, the objective in building a sound brand strategy is to determine where the company is today and identify growth objectives.

Brand Strategy Phase 1—Define & Assess

- Research/Audit
 - Conduct data gathering (interviews, emails, or workshops)
 - Distribute questionnaires
 - Define target audience
 - Identify revenue and market share goals
 - Obtain competitive intelligence
 - Review existing materials
 - Explore industry and associations
 - Identify company touch points

After the data gathering is completed, the **Strategic Planning** phase begins. The information collected will serve as a roadmap for building the brand and positioning it successfully in the marketplace. In this phase, the facts and vision are creatively merged to establish the foundation of the brand messaging platform.

Brand Strategy Phase 2—Strategic Planning

- Holistic Branding Strategy
 - Internal (build pride and involvement for employees)



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- External (build buzz and credibility for customers and prospects)
- Messaging Development
 - Vision/Mission/Values
 - Value Proposition
 - Go-to-Market Strategy
 - Brand Personality/Positioning/Identity/Architecture
 - Tagline
 - Deliver Brand Messaging Platform
- Creative Direction
 - Graphic Design and Image Look-and-Feel
 - Color Palette
 - Layout
 - Establish Company Voice, Tone
 - Review Proposed Website (design, functionality, strategy)
 - Review Logo Design
 - Liaise with Graphics, Website, Product, and Print Vendors
- Deliver Brand Brief

The **Creative Approach** phase translates the strategy into tactical communications tools. The marketing items listed in Phase 3 comprise a comprehensive Marketing Communications Program. A concurrent, integrated Marketing Communications Program channeled across all media drives the delivery of an effective brand message that reaches your targeted customer base and employees. Your defined brand identity and business goals will dictate which of these items to use in your go-to-market strategy.

Brand Strategy Phase 3—Creative Approach

- Corporate Identity System (e.g., logo design, signage, stationery, business cards, proposal template, email auto signature, screen saver, cross-departmental branding such as checks for Finance and forms for HR, etc.)
 - Brand and Style Guidelines for all media
- Website with optimized SEO
 - Content Development and Management
 - Copywriting
 - Videos
 - Webinars
 - Lead Generation
- Content Marketing
 - Corporate Brochure
 - Product Fact Sheets
 - Thought Leadership (Case Studies, White Papers, Perspectives)
 - Timeline/Company History Fact Sheet
 - Customer Newsletter (digital or print)
 - Social Media
 - Blog
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - LinkedIn



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- Pinterest
- Advertising (online and offline)
- Branded Promotional Products
- Sales Toolkit
 - Proposal Language
 - Elevator Pitch
 - Corporate Deck
- Mobile Marketing
- Direct Mail and Email Campaigns
- Public Relations
 - Press Kit Elements (digital and print)
 - Brand Announcement Card
 - Boilerplate Company Statement
 - Press Release(s)
 - Executive Backgrounder
 - FAQs
 - Media Contacts
 - Client List
 - Corporate Folder
 - Telling the Brand Story
 - Social Media
 - Customer Voice, Dialogue and Experience
 - Bylined Articles
- Internal Communications
 - Brand Email Announcements
 - Brand Book (tool that explains the brand)
- Event Marketing
 - Exhibit Booth Graphics, Brand Messaging

The **Execution & Implementation** phase will launch the brand internally and externally. One of the key performance indicators of a successful branding is gaining consensus with employees and building the brand through involvement and an emotional attachment. The external side of the campaign will include a concurrent, integrated campaign including marketing communications, advertising, content marketing, email marketing, direct marketing, internal communications and social media.

Brand Strategy Phase 4—Execution & Implementation

- Content Development and Copywriting
- Production (digital, print, product)
- Media Plan
 - Press Conference Brand Launch (if applicable)
 - Newspaper/Magazine Placements
 - Radio/TV Media Tours (if applicable)
 - Speaking Engagements
- Direct Marketing
 - Conferences
 - Trade Shows



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The **Measurement & Analysis** of ROBI (return on brand investment) will begin at the launch of the new brand initiative. The data collected will be measured against previous year's data, such as leads generated, sales, touch points made, channels used, etc. The first metrics report will be delivered three months into the branding campaign and every three months following with an annual report delivered at the end of the project year.

Brand Strategy Phase 5—Measurement & Analysis

- Brand Asset Management
 - Develop measurement tool/dashboard to assess brand awareness and ROBI from current state to rebranded state

Project Scope

Define the scope of the project as it relates to the Branding Methodology. All or only some of the items can be included in the Brand Strategy Plan and Marketing Communications Program that you deliver, depending on goals and budget.

The project scope maps to the five phases of the Branding Methodology.

Project Schedule

Consultation will begin once Client Name signs a Statement of Work (SOW) agreeing on the project scope and associated fee. Add client-specific information.

It is not possible to estimate a timeframe for the Client Name branding project until the elements to be included in the Brand Strategy Plan and Marketing Communications Program have been decided upon. Once the project begins, a detailed project plan with due dates and milestones will be delivered.

Project Fee and Payment Schedule

If being created by an outside vendor, insert your standard pricing language and contract terms.

If being created by a company employee, this section should be replaced with a section on the vendor that has been selected or deleted.

Next Steps

Implementing this comprehensive Brand Strategy Plan and Marketing Communications Program will position Client Name as a brand leader.

Add client-specific information. Add call to action.

About Jackie Deutsch, Brand and Content Guru

Jackie Deutsch is a Senior Copywriter and Content Marketing Writer at MarCom Point.Solutions specializing in writing copy that sells for branded websites, brochures, email and direct-mail campaigns, ads and social media targeted to B2B, B2C and B2E audiences in the information technology, healthcare, workers' compensation, workforce management and learning industries. Skill set powered by the creative urge to write-to-sell and a passion for creating unique, results-driven, on-point copywriting and content marketing writing that increases sales and brand awareness. Visit brandandcontentguru.com and thejackiedeutsch.com.



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