



Dear ,

Welcome to the Marketing Minute, our email newsletter.

WHO WE ARE: LevinsonBlock LLC is marketing and design firm that has specialized in healthcare, businesses and non profits for over 20 years. Our approach is pragmatic: we help our clients connect with their audiences and make money. Visit us [here](#).

WHAT WE DO: brand strategy and branding; persuasive content; print (such as annual reports, event promotion, periodicals); and usability-focused websites.

If you have marketing questions or a topic you would like us to address in a future issue, [email us here!](#)

DIY Branding: Research

I recently participated in Consulting Day at Baruch College. It was great fun to meet and advise some very interesting organizations. The five groups I talked with all needed to work on their branding -- and all had very small or no budgets. This got me thinking about simple things any organization can do to build a brand. You can do quite a bit on your own -- so this is the first of several articles.

Of course, if you need outside help, give us a call!



What is branding?

Branding is your audience's gut feeling about your organization. Effective branding uses strong visual tools, such as a logo and color palette, and strong verbal tools, such as key messages and an elevator speech to connect with your target audience. But first, you need to find out how your audience sees your brand.

Interview your audience

In the branding process, you look for the answers not only from within your organization, but also from your audience. Here are some simple steps to help you get a handle on your brand.

Interview 6-10 people from among the following groups: board members, donors, clients, non-managerial staff, volunteers, and organization leadership. We think outsiders such as donors are usually the most important group to talk with. And there are other benefits -- they really appreciate being heard! Ask them how they want to be interviewed -- by phone or in person. Figure on 30 minutes each. Or you can have a group conversation.

The goal of the interviews is to find out:

- How your organization is perceived
- Whether your audience's perception aligns with staff perception
- What motivates your donors, staff and volunteers
- Whether your communications are getting through
- What are the perceived strengths and weakness of your organization
- What makes your organization different

Study your environment

- Identify 3-5 organizations that are similar to yours. For example, they can have similar missions or funding sources.
- Visit their websites. We suggest you print out their home pages so they are easy to compare.
- Examine their visuals. What do these orgs feel like? Are they empathetic? Professional?
- What are the key differences between each of these organizations -- and yours?
- If you were a donor, which organization would appeal to you the most? Why?
- If any do a particularly good job of communicating, look for ideas you can borrow.

Research often produces some surprising conclusions. You may find your organization's brand looks different from the outside!

Next month, we'll discuss verbal branding.

FACT OF THE MONTH

The plastic things on the end of shoelaces are called aglets.

Yes, we do branding! For more information about branding and logo design, website usability, special event marketing, SEO or print design, call or email me:

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Fact of the Month courtesy Paul Michael Neuman; www.froggypumpkin.com

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