

Branding & Marketing for Nonprofits

It's not just for businesses!

If you operate a nonprofit organization, you've already got your hands full! Adding branding and marketing into the mix might sound overwhelming, but no worries — this fun and colorful guide will help break it down and make the journey a little bit easier.

Let's get started!



First of all, **what is branding?**

A **brand** is the personality of a company or organization. You can also think of it as the way an organization is felt about or perceived.

Branding is a tool we use to create that impression in our audience's mind. It's the way we communicate information about ourselves.

Okay, **what about marketing?**

Another word for **marketing** is advertizing. Any platform you might use to tell people about your organization — radio ads, social media, informational brochures, etc. — is marketing.

Marketing isn't just ads on TV or in magazines though. Every method you might use to convey information about your organization is part of your marketing strategy.



So why do they matter to me?

Let's address the elephant in the room: For a nonprofit, the mission is the most important thing. If your mission is to provide food and shelter, then providing food and shelter is your #1 priority and the focus of most of your time, energy, and resources. That's exactly how it should be.

But consider this, too: If you're throwing a party, sending out invitations is as vital as putting up streamers and booking a clown. You can think about marketing and branding as the way you invite people to take part in the work your organization is doing.

Practical Uses for Branding & Marketing:

- Encourage people to **support** the organization by giving, volunteering, or raising awareness.
- **Engage** stakeholders in the community.
- **Inform** potential clients or beneficiaries about the services your organization offers.



Seems useful. **But where do I start?**

As promised, here are the basic steps to using branding & marketing to benefit your organization:

Branding:

The primary objective of branding is to make your organization recognizable. Once your organization has a name, the next step is to give it some personality.

- **Logo** – The logo is the heavy lifter of branding. Even a simple logo, like your organization's name in a specific font and color, will make your organization distinct.
- **Look & Feel** – Choose colors, fonts, and imagery that represent your organization and use them consistently to reinforce brand recognizability and credibility.

With these two elements, you're well on your way to having a fully developed brand. Next we'll get into marketing, but if you want a more in-depth look at brand development, check out our **free PDF resource on branding (link)**.



Marketing:

Like we talked about earlier, marketing is anything that gives people information about your organization. That's a broad category, so to get the best results for your efforts, it's best to develop a **marketing strategy**.

A **Marketing Strategy** is your organization's plan for communications. Creating a marketing strategy might sound like a big undertaking, but it starts with answering a few basic questions:

- **Who is your audience?** Knowing what group(s) of people you are trying to reach will help you decide where to focus your communication efforts.
- **What action do you want your audience to take?** Once you know who you are talking to, you can decide what you want to say. Consider what you want someone to do after they've encountered your communications.

The answers to these questions will be the foundation of your marketing strategy. Think about what platforms and what messages will resonate with your audience(s), and build your daily, weekly, and yearly communications around that.



Awesome! **So what's next?**

Congrats! You've got the basics of marketing & branding.

With these new pieces of knowledge, you're on your way to enhancing your organization's brand and developing an effective marketing strategy.

..Wait, is that really it?

Well, yes and no.

These are the basics – the building blocks of branding & marketing. But of course there's always more to learn and do, like creating a language guide and tailoring content to different platforms.

If you're excited and want to go deeper, we'd love to dive in with you. Just send us a message to set up a free exploration meeting – let's get started!

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