

Developing Brand Authenticity: Survival Training for Mavericks in Ministry Innovation³ Conference, Dallas, TX Jan 27-28, 2009

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What is branding?

A brand is a promise that your church makes about what to expect when you attend—and the emotional aftertaste that follows the experience.

- It's a concern with how we're delivering on that promise: Was your experience consistent with what we promised?
- It's *not* a logo, name or web site; rather it is your DNA as an organization.

*It's not about slick packaging; it's about making sure that who you **are** is reflected in everything that you **do**.*

Why are we doing it?

Our message really matters. Lots of times there are barriers to the message of the church. The voice of your church can take on multiple personalities, inaccurate reflections of the overall ministry.

Our message is an experience, not a product.

Who are you serving?

- More importantly, who are you NOT serving? Trying to be all things to all people means you mean nothing to everyone.
- Understand how you are positioned in the minds of the people you are serving.
- How do you want to be defined? What space can you uniquely own?
- What are other people saying about your church? What are you known for?
- Ask if what they're saying is true. What do we want them to say about us?

If we are not intentional about defining who we are, others will do it for us.

What is the most important thing that people are looking for?

- In the past it's been a mass-marketing approach. But you can't assume you can push a message on them and they will accept it.
- Lots of times we focus on their first impression and forget about their last impression: what are we leaving them with? How are we following up?

We may remember 10% of what we read, but we remember 100% of what we feel.

Building a brand is like building a house: you need the blueprint in place first.

A Framework for Strategic Branding:

1. What is the unique vision that God has for your church?
2. Who is it that you want to serve? The more focused you are, the more effective you'll be.
3. What are our unique strengths as an organization? Not just things that we do well. What need are we filling that no one else is?

How do we define our audience? It isn't everybody. We need to go deeper and discover what their needs are. Why should they come here? What keeps them up at night? What is important to them? What do they need, and how are we equipped to meet that need?

Key: Find out what things we do well as a church, what needs we want to reach, and where those things intersect-- so that we can be authentically connecting with them in a way that makes sense for our specific church.

There's a difference between reaching *more people* and reaching *people more effectively*.

Be intentional about who we are communicating with and the messages we are sending.