

# MAP&FIRE



## Communication Series: **Brand**



**1. Brand**



**2. Marketing**

## Brand Worksheet Overview

Welcome to step 1 of 2 in the Communication Series!

The Brand step is a crystallization of your entire business strategy translated into something that will communicate and connect with your target audience.

If you haven't completed our Big Picture and Product / Market Fit Worksheets, you can still continue on, but note that your work here will be even stronger once it's backed up with the foundation established in those areas.

Your brand is synonymous with your reputation, and gives customers a mental shortcut for how they should think of you and your offerings. Your customers will see what you do and listen to what you say, and then ultimately decide how they want to think about you.

Finding alignment between how you think about **yourself** and how **others** think about you is the key to an authentic brand strategy that resonates with customers and can stand the test of time.

## Brand Worksheet Outcomes

Here are some of the key points we'll cover in the Brand worksheet:

- **What** Mission your brand is working toward,
- **How** you want your brand to be positioned in your Customer's mind
- **How** your brand connects emotionally with your Target Customer, and how it sounds when communicating with them
- **Which** colors and fonts best represent what your brand and what it stands for

## Need Help?

For additional information on the components of this worksheet visit our website:

<http://mapandfire.com/field-guide/brand>

## A Note on Brand Identity vs. Brand

One quick note before we dive into the Brand definition process. When many people think of “branding”, they’re thinking primarily about things like Logos, Colors, Fonts, Names, etc.

While these things are an important part of your brand to be sure, they are really only the “face”, or the surface level of the brand. For this reason we call the collection of these elements your “Brand Identity”, and it really is like the tip of an iceberg (see image below)

All of the strategic thinking and hard decisions you’ve made about your business that came before this point are what enable you to create a Brand Identity that is authentic, makes sense, and will stand the test of time.

So when we talk about your “Brand” as a whole, we’re talking about both the visual “Brand Identity” pieces *as well as* the strategic decisions that support that Brand Identity.



## Brand Strategy

Brand Strategy integrates the core components of your Big Picture, Customers, Competition, and Offering into a cohesive starting point for your Brand. As you go through this worksheet, if you feel you're missing any key information in those areas, you can always go back and complete our Big Picture and Product / Market Fit worksheets to define them.

Understanding how those four components fit together will give you the information you need to position your offering effectively in the minds of your target customers. The key brand strategy tools we'll use to crystallize this information are the **Mission Statement** and **Positioning Statement**.

## Mission Statement

Your Mission Statement describes exactly what you are working toward, along with who benefits from your work.

A good Mission Statement should describe the actions you're taking in simple, clear language. It should also be specific enough that someone would recognize it as uniquely yours.

### Mission Statement Examples:

#### American Red Cross:

Prevent and alleviate suffering for those facing emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors.

#### Nike:

Inspiration and innovation for every athlete in the world.

#### Google:

Organize the world's information for everyone so that it's universally accessible and useful.

## Exercise: Mission Statement Structure

Try filling in the blanks a few different ways to test out different word combinations.

\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ so that \_\_\_\_\_  
(Offering - optional) (Audience category) (Benefits - optional)

\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ through / by  
(Purpose expressed through action) (Audience category)

\_\_\_\_\_ so that \_\_\_\_\_  
(Offering - optional) (Benefits - optional)

\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ through / by  
(Purpose expressed through action) (Audience category) (Geographic location - optional)

\_\_\_\_\_ so that \_\_\_\_\_  
(Offering - optional) (Benefits - optional)

## Positioning Statement

Your Positioning Statement describes how we wish to be perceived by our Target Customer.

Your statement should be unique to your company and describe something that you're actually able to deliver on. It helps to focus and guide your internal team around what you **do** and what you **don't do**.

### Positioning Statement Examples:

#### Chipotle:

**For** hungry consumers with limited time and budget (target customer)

**Who** want a healthier, socially responsible food option (job to be done)

**Chipotle**

**Is the** Mexican fast food restaurant (competitive set)

**That** delivers delicious, humanely sourced food (key benefit).

**Unlike** Taco Bell or Del Taco (primary competitors)

**Chipotle**

**Delivers** an eating experience that satisfies your hunger and delivers peace of mind  
(points of difference)

#### Uber:

**For** those needing convenient transportation (target customer)

**Who** can't or don't want to drive themselves (job to be done)

**Uber**

**Is the** car service (competitive set)

**That** provides fast, affordable, on demand access to rides (key benefit)

**Unlike** traditional cab services (primary competitor)

**Uber**

**Delivers** a seamless experience that you control all through a simple phone app (points of difference)

## Exercise: Positioning Statement Structure

Now fill in the blanks for your company.

**For** \_\_\_\_\_ (target customer)

**Who** \_\_\_\_\_ (job to be done)

**[Our Brand]**

**Is the** \_\_\_\_\_ (competitive set)

**That** \_\_\_\_\_ (key benefit)

**Unlike** \_\_\_\_\_ (primary competitor)

**[Our Brand]**

**Delivers** \_\_\_\_\_ (points of difference)

## Brand Character: Archetypes

There are many ways to define a Brand's "attributes" — the qualities and characteristics that make a brand distinct. We believe the most effective approach is to align a brand with an "Archetype".

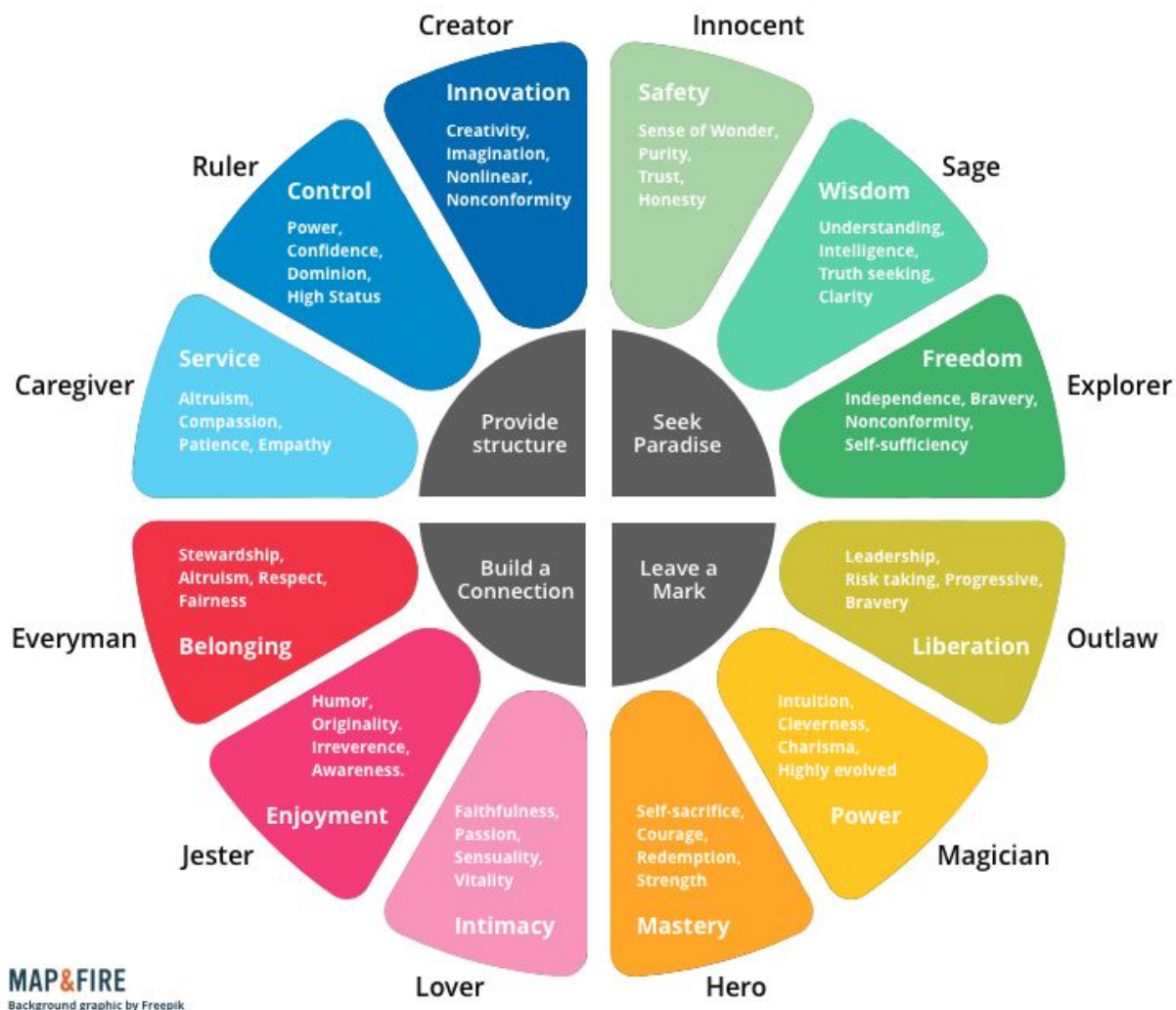
For our purposes, Archetypes encompass the Brand's overall personality and works as a mental shortcut for you and your team when thinking about that collection of attributes.

Aligning your brand with an easily identifiable archetype will help everyone -- your customers and your team included -- quickly understand what you offer and how to interact with you.

### 12 Fundamental Archetypes

In *The Hero and the Outlaw*, Mark and Pearson defined 12 "fundamental" archetypes for use in Branding. Each of these 12 fundamental archetypes align with fundamental human psychological needs. The graphic below provides an overview of the archetypes and their psychological roots, but you can find more information about each archetype on the Map & Fire Branding Field Guide (see link in footer).





## Exercise: Brand Archetype

In this exercise, you'll pick the archetype(s) that could serve as the basis for your brand.

Remember that your choices here aren't just about what sound good to you. Instead, your choices should be about choosing an Archetype that will help your brand efficiently communicate to your Target Customer that your offering satisfies their Job to Be Done in a way that aligns with their Elements of Value.

That's a mouthful, so to say it another way: Your Brand Archetype should cater to your Target Customer, not your personal preferences.

In the table below, choose a Primary, Secondary and Tertiary archetype for your brand. Also note which archetypes you are explicitly *not* aligned with, and those you are neutral toward:

Archetype Alignment					
	Not Aligned	Neutral	Tertiary (Max: 1)	Secondary (Max: 1)	Primary (Max: 1)
Innocent					
Everyperson					
Hero					
Caregiver					
Explorer					
Rebel					
Lover					
Creator					
Jester					
Sage					
Magician					
Ruler					

## Exercise: Understanding your Brand / Archetype Alignment

Now fill in the table below with the Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Archetypes chosen above:

Brand / Archetype Alignment	
Primary Archetype	
Secondary Archetype	Tertiary Archetype

Your brand may align very strongly with a single archetype, or it may be better understood as a blend of two or three. In the case of multiple archetypes, it's best to think of one as the “dominant” archetype and any additional archetype(s) as “supporting”.

## Brand Character: Tone

Now that you have an idea of your Brand Archetype, it's time to get more specific about the Tone you'll use when you communicate with your customers. Tone describes the emotional quality of your communication. As such, Tone is *loosely* linked to Archetype, but there is plenty of room to define your own unique communication style.

The Tone exercises below are based on research conducted by well-respected User Research consultancy the [Nielsen Norman Group](#). We believe they cover all of the ground needed to define a clear, distinct tone for a brand. See the footnotes for details.

### Exercise: Tone Dimensions

The first part of the Tone exercise involves choosing a position on four sets of opposite words.

**For each of the four word pairings below, place an “X” in the box that best corresponds to the Tone you desire for your business.**

Tone Dimensions <sup>1</sup>								
	+3	+2	+1	0	+1	+2	+3	
Funny								Serious
Formal								Casual
Respectful								Irreverent
Enthusiastic								Matter of Fact

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<sup>1</sup> Tone Voice Dimensions: <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/tone-of-voice-dimensions/>

## Exercise: Tone Keywords

Highlight 4 - 6 words that **describe** your desired tone well.

Strikethrough up to 6 words that **do not describe** your desired tone.

Tone Key Words <sup>2</sup> — Describe the voice to be used for written brand content.			
Authoritative	Caring	Cheerful	Casual
Coarse	Conservative	Conversational	Dry
Edgy	Enthusiastic	Formal	Frank
Friendly	Fun	Funny	Humorous
Informative	Irreverent	Matter-of-fact	Nostalgic
Passionate	Playful	Professional	Provocative
Quirky	Respectful	Romantic	Sarcastic
Serious	Smart	Snarky	Sympathetic
Trendy	Trustworthy	Unapologetic	Upbeat
Witty			

**Check your work:** The communication tone of your brand should match or complement the emotional state of your Customer when they interact with your brand.

- What [Elements of Value](#) are most relevant to them?
- How do they want to feel when they use your offering to help them complete their Job?
- Would speaking to your Target Customer in the Tone outlined above help your customer feel that way?

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<sup>2</sup> Tone Words: <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/tone-voice-words/>

## Brand Identity Overview

The elements of your Brand Strategy you've defined so far (Mission, Positioning, Archetype and Tone), are mostly for internal use. While you might communicate them directly sometimes, they are really meant to be used as internal tools to make sure your company stays focused on goals that make sense, and approaches those goals in a consistent way.

What we need now is a "public face" for your brand strategy. Something easy to understand that lets the rest of the world -- and especially your Target Customer -- know what you're about at a glance.

This public face is your **Brand Identity** and it include the following key components:

- Brand Name
- Brand Colors
- Brand Typeface
- Brand Symbol / Logo

**NOTE:** The exercises that follow aren't generally intended to provide final selections for your brand identity components, but rather give you a foundation from which to make strong thoughtful selections. By thinking through these components you'll be better equipped to work with a designer to finalize decisions.

## Brand Name

Creating a meaningful brand name can be an incredibly challenging exercise. Beyond any best practices criteria that help define a good name, there's always a high level of personal preference that's impossible to escape.

Even the most famous brand names in the world can be teased apart to show varying degrees of strengths and weaknesses.

For these reasons, we're not attempting to create an exercise to help you come up with a new name for your company. However, if you are in the process of developing a name for a new company or for a full rebrand, here are 10 criteria to consider to **evaluate the strength** of any names you're considering.

As usual, our goal is not to provide an prescriptive answer, but rather to give you a structure around which to have more objective, more productive conversations with your business partners, team, family, etc.

### Exercise: Name Evaluation

Brand Name Evaluation Scorecard					
	Poor (1)	Fair (2)	OK (3)	Good (4)	Great (5)
Appearance					
Depth of meaning					
Sound					
Bold and memorable					
Inspires action					
Evergreen, not too trendy					
Communicates purpose, vision, offering					
Legally protectable					
Domain / URL available					
Tagline friendly					

## Choosing Brand Colors

Now it's time to choose a color (or two) to represent your brand.

Just as with other aspects of your company's Brand Identity, it's important to look beyond personal preferences when choosing your brand colors.

When selecting appropriate colors for your brand, here are two import factors to consider:

1. **Color Competition:** It's important to also consider which colors are being used by your competitors to ensure you're not blending in with the crowd.
2. **Color Psychology:** While there is no 100% accurate, universal guide to the influence of specific colors on emotions, plenty of strong correlations have been drawn over many years of research. We've compiled a list of the most common and well-established psychological associations with each color in our Brand Field Guide (see footer for link).

**Exploring the competitive space is what we'll cover next.**



## Color Competition & Differentiation







If a specific color does in fact resonate with your target audience, there's a good chance some of your competitors - either direct or indirect - have figured this out already.

Since we want your branding to differentiate you from your competition, it may be more effective for you to choose a color that is different from your competition, even if it doesn't align perfectly with typical psychological color associations.

To help inform that decision, you can fill out a competitive landscape for color.

### Example:

Here's how the Brand Color Landscape for the online wealth management industry looks:

Example Brand Color Spectrum for Wealth Management				
	1	2	3	4
	 FUNDRISE			
	 wealthfront	 mint	 Fidelity INVESTMENTS	 acorns Invest the Change
	 Betterment			

## Wealth Management Brand Color Landscape Analysis:

While a vast majority of wealth management companies have crowded around green-centric branding (money, growth), at least two have opted for less popular colors and as a result can more easily stake a unique place in the industry's visual space. By selecting lesser used colors, those brands may improve their chance of being remembered by potential customers.

Now let's see how you fit into your industry and where opportunities may exist.

## Exercise: Establish Your Brand Color Landscape

Collect the logos for your main competitors (you listed them in the Competition step) and write their names (or paste their logos) in the boxes that correspond to their primary brand color(s) on the spectrum below. Feel free to include additional competitors, either direct or indirect, as well.

Brand Color Spectrum for Your Industry				
	1	2	3	4

To determine the best brand color for your company, consider the following questions:

**Are there any areas of the spectrum that are especially crowded? Why might this be?**

**Do your direct competitors cluster in any particular area? Why might this be?**

**Do any areas of the spectrum that are empty or less crowded represent opportunities?**

## Exercise: Choose Your Brand Color Direction

Now that you've mapped out your brand color landscape and answered some key questions, you're equipped to decide where you'd like your own brand to live on that landscape.

Our goal is to choose just one or two candidates for your Brand Color Direction. Note that we're not trying to nail down your exact, official brand color, but rather to help you choose a **general color direction** for your brand, and to feel confident about that decision.

With that in mind, choose up to two candidates for your Primary Brand Color, and write a sentence or two about why you chose each one:

Brand Color Direction Choices	
First Choice	
Why?	
Second Choice	
Why?	

## Color Schemes & Color Combinations

While you should have just one primary Brand Color, your company will also need a Brand Palette, or color scheme, that consists of several colors that fit together harmoniously. There are several well-established methods of choosing color schemes.

**For more information and help on this, check out the Brand Field Guide page (see footer for link).**

## Brand Typeface

Most of your brand's communications will be in text.

In addition to the meaning of your written content itself, the typefaces and font styles you choose will communicate on your brand's behalf, so it's best to be intentional about your typographic choices.

The world of fonts is vast, and can quickly become overwhelming. Our intent here is to provide a handful of styles from which you can branch out into more specific choices if you wish.

Remember, your choice of brand typeface should fit with the choices you've made thus far. It should align with your brand archetype and your chosen tone. It should appeal to your Target Customer, and communicate to that Customer that you provide the Elements of Value they care about.

## Typeface Categories and Examples

The typeface examples shown below represent some of the most popular options available on Google Fonts (<https://fonts.google.com>).

Google Fonts is a completely free and extremely popular source for fonts that can be used in all mediums (online, print, etc). By searching on their site, you'll have access to hundreds of possible fonts. There are of course other sources for paid fonts, but Google Fonts can cover the needs of many companies for no cost — especially if you're just starting your company, or are in the early stages of a rebrand.

Just as Archetypes and Colors have certain psychological associations, typefaces do as well. While there are endless typeface options, they can be broadly categorized into the following:

Category: <b>Serif</b>	Psychology: <b>Tradition, Respectable, Reliable, Comfort, Pedigree</b>		
<b>Slabo</b> (1 style)	<b>Roboto Slab</b> (4 styles)	<b>Merriweather</b> (8 styles)	<b>Lora</b> (4 styles)
A shining crescent far beneath the flying vessel.	All their equipment and instruments are alive.	I watched the storm, so beautiful yet terrific.	It was going to be a lonely trip back.

Category: <b>Sans-Serif</b>	Psychology: <b>Simple, Clean, Modern, Universal, Sensible</b>		
<b>Roboto</b> (12 styles)	<b>Open Sans</b> (10 styles)	<b>Lato</b> (10 styles)	<b>Roboto Condensed</b> (6 styles)
All their equipment and instruments are alive.	Almost before we knew it, we had left the ground.	It was going to be a lonely trip back.	My two natures had memory in common.

Category: <b>Slab Serif</b>	Psychology: <b>Bold, Strong, Modern, Solid, Funky</b>		
<b>Vollkorn</b> (4 styles)	<b>Alegreya</b> (6 styles)	<b>Conzel</b> (3 styles)	<b>Neuton</b> (6 styles)
<b>All their equipment and instruments are alive.</b>	<b>A red flair silhouetted the jagged edge of a wing.</b>	<b>MY TWO NATURES HAD MEMORY IN COMMON.</b>	<b>A red flair silhouetted the jagged edge of a wing.</b>

Category: <b>Display</b>	Psychology: Friendly, Unique, Expressive, Amusing, Bold		
Lobster (1 style)	Abril Fatface (1 style)	Patua One (1 style)	Comfortaa (3 styles)
<i><b>All their equipment and instruments are alive.</b></i>	<b>The recorded voice scratched in the speaker.</b>	<b>Mist enveloped the ship three hours out from port.</b>	A shining crescent far beneath the flying vessel.

Category: <b>Handwriting</b>	Psychology: Inviting, Human, Warm, Creative, Stylish		
Indie Flower (1 style)	Gloria Hallelujah (1 style)	Pacifico (1 style)	Shadows Into Light (1 style)
Mist enveloped the ship three hours out from port.	She stared through the window at the stars.	<i>A shining crescent far beneath the flying vessel.</i>	A shining crescent far beneath the flying vessel.

Category: <b>Monospace</b>	Psychology: Friendly, Unique, Expressive, Amusing, Bold		
Inconsolata (2 styles)	Roboto Mono (10 styles)	Source Code Pro (7 styles)	Droid Sans Mono (1 style)
I watched the storm, so beautiful yet terrific.	Mist enveloped the ship three hours out from port.	Waves flung themselves at the blue evening.	She stared through the window at the stars.

## Exercise: Choose a Brand Typeface Direction

Using the information from the typeface categories and examples, as well as your own searching on Google Fonts (or any other available font resources you have), select 3 options that best align with your overall brand and company.

Remember, there are too many possible typeface and font combinations to consider them all in a single exercise (or lifetime!), so the goal here isn't to do an exhaustive search of typefaces, but to zero in on a relatively narrow range of options with a high degree of confidence.

Once you've narrowed down some possible options, you can work with a designer to make final selections and experiment with more robust visual mock-ups.

Best Aligned Typefaces			
	Typeface Option #1	Typeface Option #2	Typeface Option #3
Typeface Category:			
Typeface Name:			
Reason for Selection:			

## Symbol / Logo

Here we are at last — the Logo!

By now we hope you can see how much thinking and strategy precedes logo design. And that when you take the time to do this work, you stand a much better chance of coming up with a logo concept that is unique and communicates a strategic positioning specific to your business.

Like the Name section, we're not attempting to create an exercise that will prescriptively generate a symbol or logo for your company. But we are again providing 10 criteria to consider when evaluating a symbol or logo so you can make stronger decisions about any logo you are considering, and do so more quickly.

You may notice that the criteria are very similar to those for your company Name. This is no accident, as your logo plays a similar role in crystallizing your overall Brand Identity.

### Exercise: Logo Evaluation

Brand Symbol / Logo Evaluation Scorecard					
	Poor (1)	Fair (2)	OK (3)	Good (4)	Great (5)
Appearance					
Depth of meaning					
Bold and memorable					
Inspires action					
Evergreen, not too trendy					
Communicates purpose, vision, offering					
Legally protectable					
Works in large and small sizes					
Works for print, web, video					
Works in color and black & white					



## Assumptions and Experiments

As you're working on defining and *refining* the areas of your business, you'll need to make assumptions about what you're doing in order to make progress. Assumptions are a necessary part of working on a business, so there's nothing inherently wrong with making them — as long as you track them and work to prove them out.

We include this section on each worksheet so that you can get in the habit of tracking assumptions as you go. If an assumption poses a low level of risk for the success of your business, you may want to simply note it with plans to address it as you go. But if your business truly hinges on a particular assumption it may be necessary to pause the process and validate your assumption with an experiment before continuing on.

There's no perfect formula to assess risk severity, so you'll have to use your best judgement based on the data you have available. But if you start to see an accumulation of assumptions that depend on one another, that's probably a good sign to pause to make sure you don't create a house of cards.

### Business Assumptions Template:

Use the template below to gather and prioritize assumptions you've made along the way.

Business Assumptions			
Assumption Description	Assumption relates to (The Problem / Your Solution)	Danger if assumption is false (High / Med / Low)	Confidence that assumption is true (High / Med / Low)

### Running Experiments

Once you have an assumption that you feel needs to be validated, you can work on testing it using our experiment template in the Practice worksheet ([click here to access](#)).

This template will give you a clear outline for how to set up and execute a well defined business experiment. It will also make sure you're gathering clear data to validate your assumption.

## Congratulations, You've Completed the Brand Worksheet!

Congratulations on completing Step 1 of 2 of the Communication Series!

You should now have a good foundation established for both the strategy and visual appearance of your brand. You should also have a deeper understanding of how your brand can create meaningful connections with your audience.

Remember, the important thing isn't to pick the perfect color or nail the perfect tone out of the gate, but to be aware of the job each of those things is supposed to do, and to have some good reasons for why you picked the things you picked.

The more alignment you can achieve between the different components of your business, the simpler, clearer, and more focused your business as a whole will be. And that in turn should translate into more customers, more profits, and a unique position in your market.

## What Next?

Now that you've established these key components of your Brand, the next step is to think about your Marketing.

Brand and Marketing go hand in hand: Brand is about capturing and crystallizing your strategic position in a way that will appeal to your target customer, and Marketing is about actually communicating with those target customers so they can learn about what you have to offer. Branding is about nailing down who you are, and Marketing is about getting out there and sharing that with the world.

## A Sneak Peek at the Marketing Step

Here's a sneak preview of what we'll cover in the Marketing Step:

- Which Keywords to focus on to attract your target audience
- What messages you should use to best address the needs of your customers
- How to communicate with your audience via the web and social channels

## Don't Wait - Get Started Now on Marketing!