

Resolution: Increase Revenues with a Communications Audit

Now is a great time to steer the course of your business. Make the resolution to increase your revenues by doing a communications audit.

Complete Overview - A communications audit is a complete overview and evaluation of your company's marketing materials. It provides focus and insight that nearly always results in better strategic planning, stronger materials and increased revenues. The goal is to ensure the continuity and effectiveness of your communications by protecting the integrity of your valuable brand. A visual communications audit is recommended for all companies. It can be simple or more extensive as the budgets and needs determine.

Companies generate many communication pieces: websites, brochures, data sheets, trade show booths, signage, advertisements, and stationery, just to name a few. As a company grows so does its need for visual communications. Without a watchful eye, things can quickly get out of control sending mixed and confusing messages to your customers.



Your Unique Identity - Your communications is what makes your company special, unique, and highly recognizable. It defines the personality of your company. The consistency of your company's communications makes it easier for consumers to become familiar with your company and recognize its products. Neglect this part of your business and you could unknowingly be sabotaging your company.

In the effort to keep up with the rapidly evolving business environment, communications often get a 'band-aid approach'. When this happens the continuity of visual communications often falls victim. After a communications audit, many businesses discover major inconsistencies in what they are saying to their customers.

Quiet Problem - It's easy to understand how companies drift from their brand identity. It often quietly goes unnoticed until it's out of control. It can creep up on any organization.

"How could this happen?" asks the president. Among the varied responses you might hear "We needed that brochure in a hurry so we had the local printer do it, or we didn't have the budget for the website so we had the IT guy do it, or each department likes to do their own communications ... it's fun."

Before you know it your strategic plan has eroded, the integrity of your website has been compromised, the key messages are no longer top level, the look of your collateral varies widely, and you have multiple versions of your letterhead ... your brand positioning is blown apart.

When companies don't police their marketing materials it gives the impression of an unstable company, one that's in flux. The unfortunate result is customers get nervous, your market position is compromised, and mindshare is at risk.

A Communications Audit Brings All Inconsistencies to Light - Companies tend to view things from their perspective rather than objectively as an outsider would see it. You can see from the responses above how easy it was to justify drifting away from the communications standards. Leave it to a professional who can objectively review it for you.

Bring in an Expert - Realizing that visual communications carry much of the responsibility of marketing a company to its customers, it is clearly a job for professionals. Bring in an expert who knows design communications, strategic business development and website solutions. Get your house in order; strengthen it, redirect it and focus it.

Some of the questions that should be addressed in a communications audit are:

- Is there consistency in messaging, style and quality?
- Are the business strategies focused and on-target?
- Do all the pieces look like they're from the same organization?
- Is your website up-to-date, maintained or neglected?
- Have your marketing messages adapted to the current market?
- Does your brand identity reflect the personality of your firm?
- Are you adhering to the graphic standards of your brand identity?
- How do your communications compare with your competition?

Remember the goal is reinforce your branding efforts with consistent strategic messaging and quality creative presentations to increase your revenues. Visual materials influence how your company is perceived by its customers.

Sharpen your competitive edge and project one unified voice, your strategic brand. A well-developed communications audit is an investment in your company's future. It helps to lend credibility and professionalism positioning you for increased revenues.

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About The Author - John Bergdoll is a creative business development consultant with over 20 years experience in developing design communications and website strategies serving businesses throughout North America and Europe. [Creative Solutions, Inc.](#) specializes in providing critical problem solving and creative strategies bridging the gap between clients and their customers. Creative Solutions has received numerous awards for excellence in design communications.

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