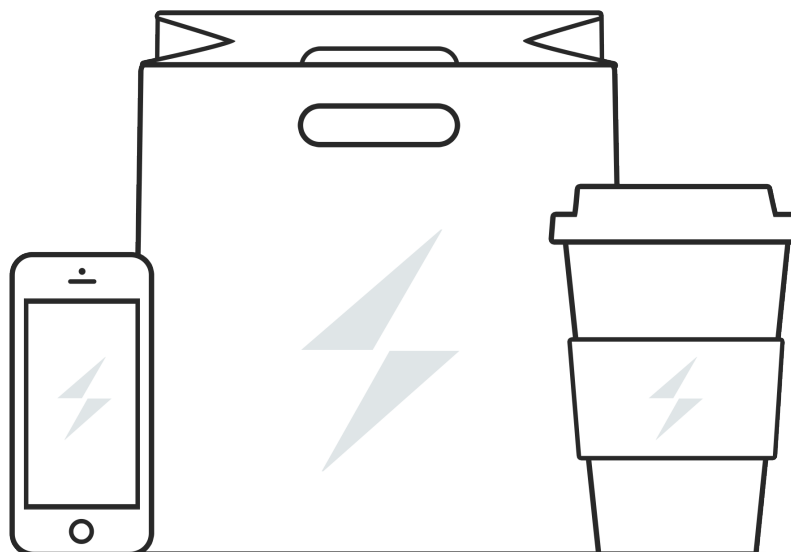




The Ultimate Guide to Building Your Brand

A WORKBOOK WITH TEMPLATES, TIPS & MORE



Your brand is defined by a customer's overall perception of your business.

Branding is the activity of crafting that perception.

How well you do this is critical to the success of your brand standing out and creating raving fans.

(Hello, Nike and Starbucks!)

You want the ongoing efforts of brand building to develop long-term relationships with your customers and clients.

This results in a steady increase of leads and sales, word-of-mouth referrals, and advocacy for your products or services.

Get this: according to a Nielson survey, 59% of consumers prefer to buy new products from brands already familiar to them!

This means that your audience needs a deeper level of trust for your business, so they are more likely to purchase what you are selling.

Use the tips and templates in this workbook to help you on your journey of building a successful brand.

Are you ready to start? Here we go!

IN THIS WORKBOOK

STEP 1 - Purpose.....	3
STEP 2 - Competitor Research....	4
STEP 3 - Target Audience.....	6
STEP 4 - Mission Statement.....	8
STEP 5 - Qualities & Benefits.....	9
STEP 6 - Voice.....	10
STEP 7 - Personality.....	11
STEP 8 - Story & Message.....	12
STEP 9 - Logo & Tagline.....	13
STEP 10 - Integration.....	14
STEP 11 - Consistency.....	15
STEP 12 - Be Your Brand.....	15
RESOURCES & TOOLS	16
NEXT STEPS	19



Psst...want to really dive in?

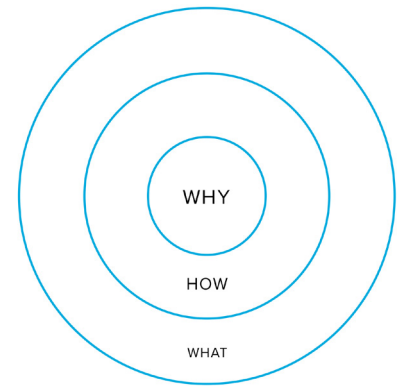
Take the next step and enroll in my online masterclass today!

STEP 1

Discover the purpose behind your brand.

Your purpose is what you wake up every day loving to do for other people (and the world) through your product, service, or cause.

Use **The Golden Circle** methodology to help identify this, by answering these questions clearly.



Why do you exist? Why should people care?

How are you different?

What problem do you solve?

Remember: dig deep and find those nuggets of truth which can distinguish your brand from others!

“People don’t buy what you do; they buy why you do it.

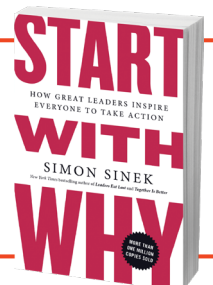
The goal is not to do business with everybody that needs what you have.

The goal is to do business with people who believe what you believe.”

— SIMON SINEK

TIP

Click here to buy Simon’s book, it’s a must-read!



STEP 2

Research brands within your industry.

A main goal when branding your business is to **differentiate from the competition**. It can convince a customer to purchase from you over them.

Create a visual table to view similarities and differences of the competition, side-by-side. You can use a spreadsheet (Google Sheets, Excel), a notepad, or the template on the next page.

These are a few questions you want to answer and plug into your table:

Is the competitor consistent with their message and visual identity across channels?

What is the quality of the competitor's products or services?

Does the competitor have customer reviews you can read, or social mentions about them?

In what ways does the competitor market their business, both online and offline?

Aside from this branding-related research, you can also **deep dive into other areas of competitive research** such as social media engagement, content publishing, SEO, lead generation.

TIP

Start by choosing a few competitors, two to four (2-4) is a good number for your comparison chart. You might want to take a look at other local businesses, or even aim to benchmark against name brands.

COMPETITOR 01**COMPETITOR 02****COMPETITOR 03****COMPETITOR 04**

COMPETITOR	MESSAGE & VISUALS	QUALITY OF PRODUCTS OR SERVICES	REVIEW & MENTIONS	MARKETING EFFORTS
01				
02				
03				
04				

STEP 3

Define your brand's target audience.

When determining your target audience, focus on who exactly you are trying to reach. You'll tailor your mission and message to meet their exact needs.

The key is to get specific, by figuring out detailed behaviors and lifestyle of your consumers.

A competitive advantage when branding your business may be to **narrow down your audience to a niche**. This can help your brand message comes across crystal clear.

First things first...

Do you have a current customer/client base?

If yes:

Why do your customers buy from you?

Which customers purchase the most?

What product or service is your best seller?

TIP

It's possible that you have more than one type of consumer in your target audience. This is common, and you can perform the same exercise to determine each one. Repeat the process of asking the questions about each persona.

Just don't fall into the trap of saying:
"I'll target anyone who will buy my products or services!"



Determine the following factors about your customer:

AGE	LOCATION	GENDER	INCOME LEVEL
EDUCATION LEVEL	MARITAL OR FAMILY STATUS	OCCUPATION	ETHNIC BACKGROUND
PERSONALITY, ATTITUDES, VALUES		INTERESTS/HOBBIES	

How does your product or service fit into your target customer's lifestyle?

How and when will your target customer use the product or service?

What features are most appealing to your target customer?

What media does your customer turn to for info? (Example: newspaper, blogs or online, events)

STEP 4

Define your brand mission statement.

Before you can build a brand that your audience trusts, you need to know what value your business provides.

Craft a clear and concise expression of what your company is most passionate about. The mission statement should **define a purpose for existing**.

Use your what, how, and why to put together your purpose into concise statement.

Brainstorm words and ideas for your brand mission statement here:

Write your formalized brand mission statement here:

EXAMPLES

NIKE

"To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world."

WARBY PARKER

"To offer designer eyewear at a revolutionary price, while leading the way for socially-conscious businesses."

AMERICAN RED CROSS

"To prevent and alleviate human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors."

STARBUCKS

"To inspire and nurture the human spirit – one person, one cup and one neighborhood at a time."



STEP 5

Outline qualities & benefits of your brand.

What are you offering, that no one else is offering?

Focus on the **key qualities and benefits** that make your company branding unique.

It's important to note that this is not just a laundry list of the features your product or services offer to the customer or client. Think about **how you provide value** that improves consumers' lives (outcomes or results that are *experienced by them*).

You CAN **use your set of features** to then identify qualities and benefits derived from each feature.

Use this matrix to map out features with the qualities and benefits which result from them:

EXAMPLES

- Authentic and transparent customer service.
- A better way to support productivity.
- Reducing costs with a more affordable option.
- Saving time on daily tasks.



FEATURE	QUALITY	BENEFIT 01	BENEFIT 02
FEATURE	QUALITY	BENEFIT 01	BENEFIT 02
FEATURE	QUALITY	BENEFIT 01	BENEFIT 02

STEP 6

Form your brand voice.

Your voice is dependent on your company mission, audience, and industry.

It's **how you communicate with your customers**, and how they respond to you.

Ultimately, you want to choose a brand voice that makes sense and resonates with your target audience.

If you are using the correct voice, you have the strongest chance of **CONNECTING with consumers**.

Fill in these blanks and then notice the tone you have used. Is it funny? Scholarly? Sarcastic? Use this tone to determine how to **tell stories using your brand's voice** consistently. *(exercise borrowed from The Muse)*

EXAMPLES

There are endless adjectives and possibilities that can build a brand voice behind your messaging:

- Professional
- Friendly
- Service-oriented
- Authoritative
- Technical
- Promotional
- Conversational
- Informative

...and the list goes on.



I want my brand to make people feel _____.

_____ makes me feel this same way.

I want people to _____ when they come into contact with my brand.

Three words that describe my brand are _____, _____, _____.

I want to mimic the brand voice of _____.

I dislike brands that sound _____.

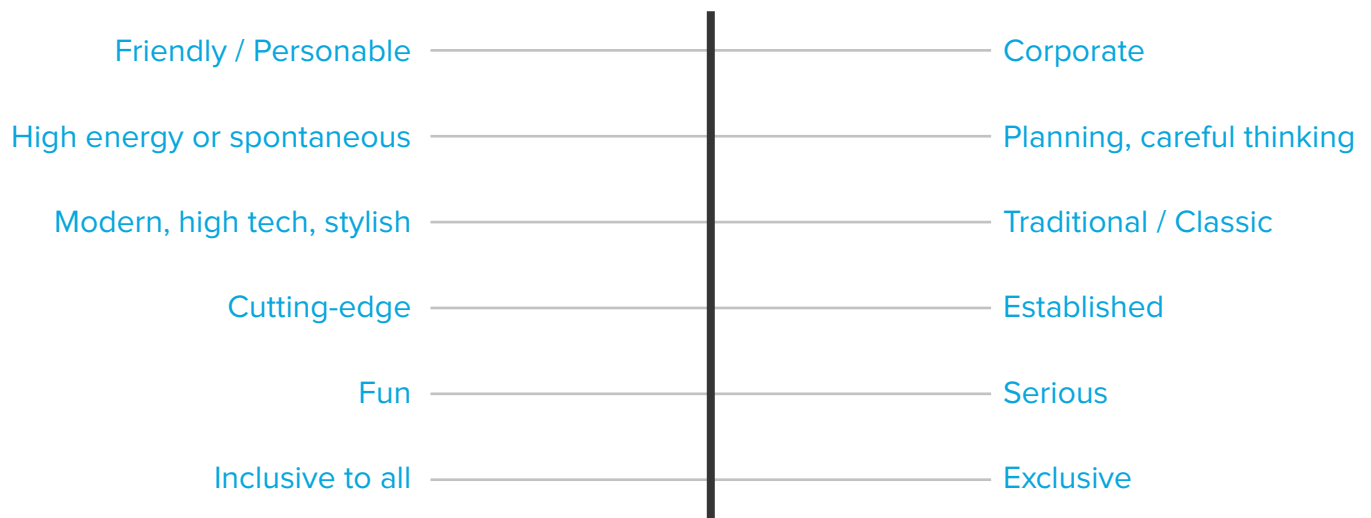
Interacting with my customers/clients makes me feel _____.

STEP 7

Let your brand personality shine.

Your clients and customers are looking for an **experience tailored to their needs**, backed by **genuine personal interaction**.

Without over-thinking, use the chart below and place a dot closest to where you think your brand personality fits on either side of the axis for each line.



Results mostly on the left side?

Your business is more contemporary, and likely fast-moving embracing the latest technologies. Show personality in your branding with energy and approachability. Be fun and trendy, but with a style that relates to your audience for the long term.

Results mostly on the right side?

Your business relies on process and planning, possibly for higher end clients. Exhibit personality by communicating in a professional and authoritative manner. Share knowledge with a corporate voice, without being too unapproachable.

A mix of results?

Not every business or personal brand will fall neatly to one side or the other. And that's okay! Sometimes, contrasting attributes can compliment each other in unexpected ways. Embrace this, and create the personality that best fits your vision and style.

STEP 8

Build a brand story & messaging.

When brand building, tell customers succinctly who you are. Use the business voice you have chosen.

Your message should be intricately associated with your brand, and conveyed in a few sentences.

This part of the brand development process goes **beyond your business logo or tagline** to define key aspects of who you are, what you offer, and why people should care.

A brand message is an opportunity to communicate on a human level, **making a direct emotional connection** with your consumers.

Here's where you take everything you have done in the previous six steps and synthesize it all together.

Draft your own brand message and elevator pitch in the space below. You may need another sheet.

SPOTLIGHT

TOMS Shoes has built a huge social following and overwhelming positive brand perception.

They clearly define their message on all their website:

"Improving lives. With every product you purchase, TOMS will help a person in need. One for One."

The language used is understood immediately while striking an emotional chord.



STEP 9

Create a brand logo and tagline.

When you think about building a brand, visuals probably come to mind first. This step may be the one where you probably need help with execution.

Be willing to invest the time and money by having **something exceptional created** to reinforce the visual identity of your brand.

Your logo will appear on everything that relates to your business. It will become your identity, calling card, and the **visual recognition of your promise**.

Share the following insights with your designer (along with all the other ideas from this workbook).

TIP

Hire a professional designer or creative agency with branding and identity design experience (like us!).

A designer will ensure that you get a unique and timeless mark for your business. They can also develop brand guidelines for consistency in future application of the logo.



What colors do you want to align with your brand? Any colors to avoid?

What emotion and symbolism should your logo portray?

Which five words should describe your logo?

01	02	03	04	05
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Are there any existing brand logos that you like, and why?

Integrate your brand everywhere.

10

Your brand should be visible and reflected in everything that your customer can see, read, and hear. Check this list to ensure that visuals and messaging are consistent everywhere.

Office / Retail Environment

If a client walks into your office, or a customer walks into your store—your brand should be apparent in the following areas:

- ☐ **Signage & displays**
- ☐ **Product & packaging**
- ☐ **Interior design**
- ☐ **Business cards**
- ☐ **Promotional material**
- ☐ **Personal interactions**

Social Platforms

Use your brand style guide to create consistency color and logo use, fonts, images, icons and patterns on the visual graphics for any of the following social channels:

- ☐ **Facebook**
- ☐ **Google Business**
- ☐ **Twitter**
- ☐ **LinkedIn**
- ☐ **Instagram**
- ☐ **Pinterest**
- ☐ **Snapchat**
- ☐ **YouTube**
- ☐ **TikTok**

Website

Your website is one of the biggest assets in a branding toolbox—it's the hub for all online marketing efforts. Core elements to include:

- ☐ **Strong, prominent call-to-action**
- ☐ **Installation of Google analytics**
- ☐ **Optimized content for search engines**
- ☐ **Easy to find contact information**
- ☐ **Mobile-friendly design and functionality**
- ☐ **A simple navigation and user experience**

Resources

To brush up on your branding and marketing efforts...check out this additional content:

- ☐ [11 Simple Steps for a Successful Brand Building Process](#) ➡
- ☐ [5 Most Common Website Design Mistakes to Avoid Right Now](#) ➡
- ☐ [How to Set Realistic Social Media Goals for Business Growth](#) ➡
- ☐ [How to Build a Successful Blog with the Right Goals](#) ➡
- ☐ [40 Blogging Tips and Tricks for Beginners to Grow a Blog](#) ➡

Ongoing brand building.

11&12

So you've laid out the foundation and established core elements of your business or personal brand building. *What now?*

Brand building never stops.

Here are the next long-term steps to support your ongoing efforts:

STEP 11 Stay true to your brand.

Consistency is key, unless you decide to change your brand into something that is more effective based on measured consumer response.

Use your chosen brand voice and for every piece of content you create —both copy and graphics. ✓

Document all the brand guidelines you have created here, and distribute internally for reference. ✓

Don't constantly change your branding. The inconsistency will confuse your customers. ✗

STEP 12 Be your brand's biggest advocate.

It's up to you to spread the word. No one knows your brand better than you.

Once you build a brand that works for your small business, you, your employee and your customers are the best advocates to market your brand.

Ensure that new hires are a culture fit—aligning with the mission, vision, and values of your brand. ✓

Encourage employees to establish a personal brand that aligns with your company branding. ✓

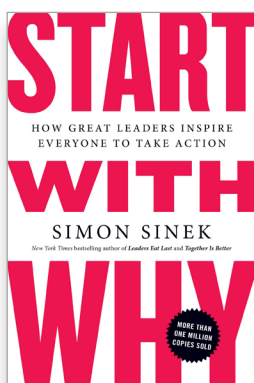
Give your loyal customers a voice. Encourage them to post reviews, or share your content. ✓

Building an extraordinary business brand requires organization, planning, and process.

You've learned the process. Here are a few of my favorite tools, resources, and services that can elevate the growth of your business as a brand.

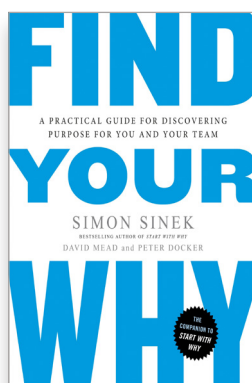
(Some of these recommendations are affiliate links, for which we receive a small commission at no cost to you.)

Books



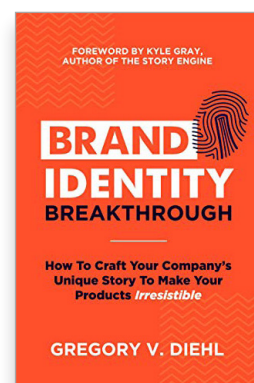
Start With Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action
BY SIMON SINEK

[**BUY NOW**](#)



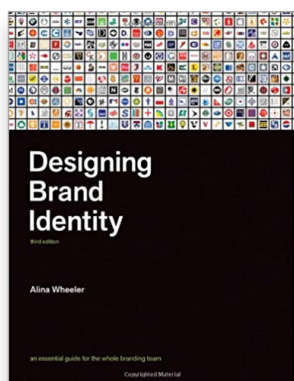
Find Your Why: A Practical Guide For Discovering Purpose For You And Your Team
BY SIMON SINEK

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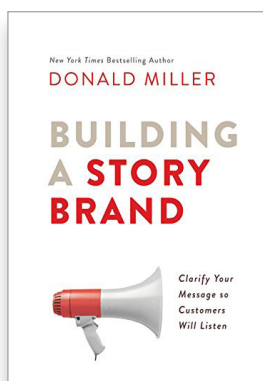
Brand Identity Breakthrough: How to Craft Your Company's Unique Story to Make Your Products Irresistible
BY GREGORY V. DIEHL

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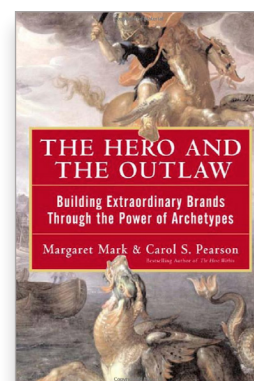
Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide for the Whole Branding Team
BY ALINA WHEELER

[**BUY NOW**](#)



Building a Story Brand: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen
BY DONALD MILLER

[**BUY NOW**](#)



The Hero and The Outlaw: Building Extraordinary Brands Through the Power of Archetypes
BY MARGARET MARK & CAROL S. PEARSON

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Tools

**Trademark – [LegalZoom](#)**

Trying to figure out all the legal paperwork needed to start and setup a business takes all the wind out of your sails for the fun brand building. Luckily, using a service like LegalZoom will save you time and frustration, not to mention protect your brand assets, like the name and logo. (U.S. only)

**Branded Email, Calendar, Documents – [G Suite \(Google\)](#)**

You need a properly branded email address, for more recognition when you land in people's inbox. GSuite allows you to create a customized Gmail email address with your domain name. In addition, you get the Google Calendar, storage on Google Drive with access to Docs, Sheets, Presentations and Forms.

**Writing Assistant – [Grammarly](#)**

The impression of your brand through copy and messaging is ultra-important for a strong identity. And you will have to be pumping out content consistently for your brand. Grammarly not only checks spelling as you write, but also major grammar issues. Don't compromise your reputation with bad writing!

**Website Hosting – [Bluehost](#)**

We build the majority of all client brand websites on WordPress. When you have a content management system with databases and plugins, it's best to have web hosting that specifically caters to the platform. Bluehost WordPress hosting plans start at \$3.95 a month, with amazing customer support.

**Ecommerce Websites – [Shopify](#)**

For brands that sell products, the easiest and fastest way to get set up is by trying Shopify. This is a subscription-based software service that offers a website with built-in shopping cart solution. Start your free 14-day trial today.

**Search Engine Optimization (SEO) – [SEMRush](#)**

This is one of the best SEM and SEO tools out there. If you are looking to ramp up your brand awareness through carefully crafted content on your website (specifically your blog), use SEMRush for research on competitors, trending content, and keywords. Try the free 7-day trial.

**Social Media Scheduling (Instagram & Pinterest) – [Tailwind](#)**

For those brands with lots of visual content, Tailwind is the best scheduling tool we've used for posting photos to Instagram and pinning content on Pinterest. Not only does it help with executing your content editorial calendar, but you're able to measure progress with actionable insights. Take a test drive!

**Email Marketing – [Constant Contact](#)**

One of the most important things to start doing for your brand marketing from the get-go, is to build an email list. Email campaigns are the best way to connect with your audience. Constant Contact has mobile-optimized email templates and a drag-and-drop editor making it easy to create and send professional emails to engage your customers.

Tool Spotlight



Design anything, even if you're not a designer (for real).

This is a tool that we use for many of our own brand identity graphics, as well as our clients! It's honestly one of the best inventions I've experienced in place of the expensive Adobe design suite.

With [Canva](#), anyone can create professional-quality designs. It's easy, and it's free to try. Even the Pro paid subscription at 10 bucks a month is an amazing value for the benefits.

They just added a HUGE new offer into their subscription.

You can now access to 60 million images for any of your content design!

Here's a sample of what you get with this tool:

- **Unlimited library of stock photos** I mentioned above (all royalty-free)
- **Thousands of free design templates**, logos, fonts, photos and graphics
- **Ability to create a Brand Kit** (to keep your identity consistent everywhere)
- **Magic Resize** to create multiple versions of any graphic (for all platforms)
- **All the templates for social media** (no more weird cropping or blurriness)

It's super easy to use, and if you ever get stumped they have a whole bunch of resource articles to guide you through anything.

It will literally cut your effort in half and make your brand graphics stand out.

I'm excited about the whole image library being included now, because they used to charge for premium images! It takes the headache away from sourcing and paying for stock images, or reading all the disclaimers about copyright.

Have fun creating content and pushing it out there, this is the best time to do it to keep your brand in front of people! [Try it free for 30 days as a trial.](#)



These images were all created in Canva!



Brand building can transform your business from a small player into a successful competitor.

You'll discover that your customers will gain a deeper level of trust for your brand, and be **more likely to purchase what you are selling...** over and over again.

But the first real phase to focus on is developing a strong **Brand Strategy**. (Before design or marketing!)

You need this blueprint to transform your business, organization, or idea into a brand.

It defines your purpose, promises, and problem-solving so that you're positioned in front of the exact "people who believe what you believe" (to quote Simon Sinek!).

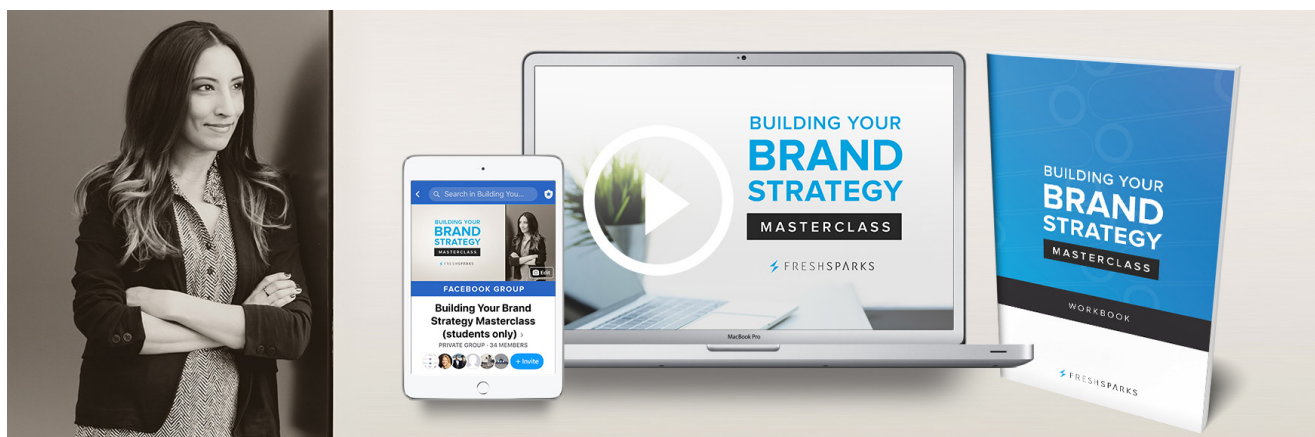
Brand strategy is not talked about enough. So, I decided to create an in-depth workshop to cover this exact topic. If you want to **get motivated and take real action** on the foundation of your brand building efforts, then [click here to enroll](#) in this masterclass with me.

YOU'LL LEARN...

- 1- Why branding can position you for growth in 2020
- 2- Major mistakes people make when trying to build a brand
- 3- My step-by-step process for creating a strong Brand Strategy
- 4- How to clearly identify the heart and value of your brand
- 5- Defining a target audience and specific buyer persona
- 6- Finding your brand voice to communicate effectively

“ This masterclass has everything you need to know about brand building, stuff you never knew that mattered, and the things you must have to really do your brand justice. For anyone looking to build or improve their brand, this is a no-brainer masterclass to jump on and I doubt (I have looked) you will find one better. ”

Manjit B., Entrepreneur



ENROLL NOW

Hi, I'm Sonia Gregory.

I believe every successful, big-time brand has a powerful spark.

And so do you.

It's what differentiates you from the competition to attract the exact people who connect with your story and become RAVING fans.

I've worked with hundreds of brands over the last 15 years, in many areas of their brand building experience. My branding agency, **FreshSparks**, helps businesses grow through effective brand strategy, brand identity, and brand marketing services and education.

Google "how to build a brand" and you'll see our website come up first (organic search, no ads)!

My goal is to empower you to dig deep and identify the why, how, and what of your brand. To uncover the power that is evident in your purpose, promises, and problems you solve.

Are you ready to make a real impact on the world with your extraordinary spark?

I can't wait to help you create a brand that people love.

Thank you for taking this challenging but highly rewarding journey with me.



Ready to hire a branding agency to help with your brand strategy, identity or marketing?

Let's chat! Contact me today:

Email creative@freshsparks.com | Call **310-922-9730**

 **FRESHSPARKS**

MAKE YOUR BRAND COUNT.