

What Is Your Brand?

SUBMITTED BY: Leya Matthew

SUBJECT(S): Marketing

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

This lesson introduces the concept of “brand” as a distinctive identity that evokes certain thoughts and feelings. While this concept is particularly useful for marketing, brand or branding is not unique to marketing. Tiger Woods is a brand, as was President Obama and current President Trump, as is the United States of America. Each of these names signifies distinct feelings, ideas and associations all over the world. For marketing, the importance of branding lies in the ability to streamline efforts to reach the customer and to increase profits. In this lesson, students begin by presenting a personal brand. Students then analyze their perception of the brand, and how that perception was created.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Marketing, I. Foundations of Marketing

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“The Business Behind the Swagger: A Look at the ‘3 Kings’ of Hip-Hop”](#)
- [“Roadtrip! A Year of Brand Building and Self Discovery Inside the Wienermobile”](#)
- [“Following Trends at the Intersection of Fashion and Business”](#)
- [“Educator Toolkit: Your Personal Statement”](#)
- [“Educator Toolkit: Building Your Brand”](#)
- [“Corn Flake Innovation and the Battling Brothers Behind the Kellogg’s Brand”](#)
- [“Cheesy Garlic Bread Chips: Lay’s Lesson in Marketing and Brand Awareness”](#)

- “Building a ‘Work Brand’ that People Will Brag About”
- “Americus Reed on Marketing, Brands and the Cadence of Business and Creativity”

Common Core Standard(s):

1. CCR Standard for Reading: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and make logical inferences from it.
2. CCR Standards for Listening: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on each other’s ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning and use of evidence and rhetoric.
3. CCR Standards for Speaking: Present information, findings and supporting evidence in such a way that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and the organization, development and style are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience.

Objectives/Purposes: Students will understand the importance of branding, and will analyze their perception of various brands.

Knowledge@Wharton Article: *“When a Black Tee Shirt Is More than a Black Tee Shirt: Why Brands Aren’t Losing Their Luster “*

Other Resources/Material:

Internet access

Activity:

1. Present your brand (12 mins)

The teacher explains the initial activity and asks a few students to volunteer for it. In the activity, students are asked to choose and present one distinct identity in a real-life situation. For example, the student could be a contestant auditioning for the *American Idol* show facing the panel of judges, or an applicant for graduate studies before a panel of professors. The student has to present a personal brand that attempts to influence the choice of the selectors in his/her

favor. The teacher explains that they have to differentiate themselves from the crowd (brand themselves).

The students now present their brand. They will first have to inform the class about their supposed physical description — what clothes, accessories, attitude, posture, etc. they will be presenting. Depending on the situation they present themselves, and are interviewed by the class or a select panel of students.

2. Class Discussion (10 mins)

The teacher leads the class in analyzing the meanings of each brand that was presented, and the branding strategies used by the volunteers. The teacher pulls up the glossary explanation of “brand”: *The dictionary definition of a brand is a mark, a name or a logo indicating who made a product. However, brand means more than that. Brand is better-defined as a reputation, the meaning including all of the thoughts and feelings associated with that name or logo.*

3. Work with Knowledge@Wharton article (8 mins)

The teacher now distributes copies of the article: “When a Black Tee Shirt Is More than a Black Tee Shirt: Why Brands Aren’t Losing Their Luster.” The sixth paragraph under the section **Revitalize Rather than Replace gives a historical perspective of branding and how branding began to be used. This is followed by how branding is relevant today. After reading this section students are asked to read the earlier section titled, The Thin White Cord.**

4. Class Discussion (10 mins)

The teacher leads a class discussion linking all the ideas to the marketing concept of branding. Even for a student applying for graduate studies, it is important to be able to differentiate himself or herself from the crowd. From a marketing perspective, with the range of products available, it is important to build a brand for your product — and to design your branding strategy in conjunction with market segmentation and customer value. It is important to give your product a name, associate it with quality, and build up a brand to make customers want to buy your product and keep buying. Brands may compete against each other, but to be unbranded is a huge risk — then nothing differentiates your product, nobody knows your product for itself.

Wrap-up

Tying It All Together: Branding is a central concept in marketing, but it is also a concept that is found across disciplines and regions. The marketing concept of branding, in this lesson, is

arrived at from a more general concept that every individual having a distinct personality is essentially a brand. Thus branding is a strategy used to differentiate oneself. This concept is then examined from the marketing perspective. The Knowledge@Wharton article also provides a historical perspective that explains the importance of branding and its relevance to marketing in today's world.

Practice Outside of the Classroom: The next time you purchase a branded product/service, list the attributes you associate with the brand.

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently: Branding is a concept that is not limited to marketing. Individuals branding themselves, countries branding themselves, concepts and ideas that become branded, can all be incorporated depending on student interest and cultural relevance. For example, if the school itself has a brand image, that too can be discussed. Or, if the country itself is going through a brand makeover, like India during the Shining India campaign, this lesson can be integrated with a social science or economics lesson.

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