



daake

Your truth is
showing.

Why authenticity in branding matters more now than ever.

All signs point to a rising need for brands to say and act as they truly, really are. Consumers' demand for transparency and genuine connection continues to rise, even as artificial intelligence (AI) and virtual reality (VR) are becoming part of daily life. A brand whose strategy does not include authenticity and the checks and balances needed to stay honest risks losing trust and gaining skepticism. The following pages take a closer look at how brands can identify who they are and build a brand identity and strategy that upholds these truths.

Our philosophy on successful brands is centered around achieving trust through reliability and delight. This means that only when brands can be real and are consistent in that behavior (reliability), and they combine that with an intentional effort to engage and insight emotion (delight) in customers... Only then can they build lasting trust.

Trust = Reliability + Delight

What is authenticity in branding?

Authenticity in branding involves a genuine alignment between a brand's identity, values, and actions.

Any CEO or internal brand manager is likely to say their brand is authentic. Ask an employee or (former) customer and there's a decent chance you'll be told something quite different. It may not be anyone's fault; as companies evolve and leaders change or products change, who the organization is at its core and what it stands for can easily get lost in the shuffle. This can lead to inconsistent customer experiences and messaging, or worse—brand silence.

Authenticity in branding involves a genuine alignment between a brand's identity, values, and actions. Establishing a clear understanding of authenticity lays the foundation of the brand, which needs to be built using a top-down approach. From the CEO to the cashier, the digital ad to the retail store, every person and touch point needs to believe in and live the brand identity. Anything less creates doubt.

Why consumers crave more authenticity.

Consumers are more likely to trust brands that demonstrate transparency, consistency, and a genuine commitment to their values.

There are several reasons why the concept of authenticity in branding is trending in the industry. The most obvious being that the expectations of consumers have evolved significantly. This is largely driven by increased access to products and information thanks to technology. At the same time, technology has led consumers to having a deeper desire to build more meaningful connections with the brands they buy from. In many ways making this connection is especially hard given the number of choices consumers have—at their fingertips. Furthermore, the influence of social media, the rise of the conscious consumer, and the demand for highly personalized experiences leaves buyers craving a relationship with brands who know them and share their values.

We're just going to say it: gaining the trust of your audience is still the ultimate goal. Earning it is much harder than keeping it, and as companies evolve (including changes in leadership) maintaining the behaviors and values that built that trust can be difficult to maintain. Consumers are more likely to trust brands that demonstrate transparency, consistency, and a genuine commitment to their values. It's not as much what they say, rather, a brand's behaviors across every touch point and inside the company itself are what matter most. Brand storytelling, ethical practices, and meaningful customer engagement contribute to building and reinforcing trust.

Authenticity in branding begins on the inside, and at the top.

When leaders can articulate—and act on—their vision, and it's shared by management and frontline employees, brands have a much higher chance of building a foundation of authenticity.

Authenticity is not only external-facing; it begins within the organization. Much of the rebranding process focuses on clarifying who a company is and what they truly stand for. Gone are the days of sticking your values on a break room or lobby wall and calling it a day. Both employees and consumers expect companies to have a set of values that actually influence decisions and culture. Both want to align with companies that have a strong sense of purpose, and a growing number of both employees and consumers want to be associated with brands that have a strong plan for sustainability.

When leaders can articulate—and act on—their vision, and it's shared by management and frontline employees, brands have a much higher chance of building a foundation of authenticity. Only when this is in place can the realness of the company be felt by employees. In turn, they'll believe in and embody these values and share them in real ways with consumers.

Every touch point matters.

To effectively build trust, brands must consider every interaction with the consumer as a touch point. During our rebranding process, Daake strategists create a touch point map with companies to help them identify whether or not their brand is being authentic or even showing up in each touch point. From online engagements to in-person customer service, each experience presents an opportunity to either strengthen or weaken the perception of authenticity. By having an honest conversation about these customer engagements, brands can begin to create strategies to improve and create a more seamless and genuine experience.

Rebranding, as a smaller evolution or a more significant revolution, is an incredibly powerful tool for helping companies clarify who they are and the behaviors that support it. This process guides organizations through each element of their brand and results in a robust strategy, identity and plan for the future. Methods for keeping brands honest and on track include everything from crafting compelling brand narratives and ensuring consistency in communication to delivering exceptional customer experiences. Ultimately, your brand strategy should be designed in a way that embeds authenticity into your brand's DNA.

How can technology support authenticity in branding?

When done right, technology can be utilized as a tool for building stronger connections with both employees and consumers. It allows teams of people to communicate freely, especially in an era of remote work environments. It can also help companies improve the consistency of their internal communications. Additionally, as technology continues to shape consumer behavior and brand interactions, it's imperative to consider how to utilize it for building trust with buyers.

From leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) for personalized experiences to inviting two-way dialogue between your company and the public, brands have an opportunity to harness technology as a way to reinforce authenticity and build trust in new ways.

Embrace your brand's truth to secure your future.

As consumers become increasingly discerning, brands that prioritize authenticity will not only meet current expectations but also future-proof themselves in an ever-evolving market landscape. Whether through comprehensive rebranding, refining communication strategies, investing in employee training, and leveraging technology, brands can take meaningful steps to be more authentic and build lasting trust with consumers.



 We're a pivotal-moment brand agency

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