



myplace
support team

Branding

Introduction

Almost every business has a trading name, from the corner shop to the largest multi-national corporation. But only a minority of these businesses have what could be classed as a 'brand' or a 'brand name'. Think Apple, Coca Cola, Nike, Armani - they're all recognised brands conjuring up an overall image that's greater than the sum of their parts. This briefing outlines some of the main issues to consider on branding issues within your **myplace** centre.

How to brand your centre

You've got a great product. You know it and the young people who use the centre know it too. It provides them with a wide range of positive activities to take part in, a safe and fun place to go to and hang out and trusted people they can talk to about issues affecting their lives. In a nutshell you've got a strong brand. When young people think about your **myplace** centre they automatically associate it with all of these things. In simple terms your organisation has a 'personality'.

A brand is the collection of messages designed to tell your audience why you are different to other youth provision and why they should spend their leisure time with you. When someone sees your **myplace** logo it should speak to them about your project's core values. It should convey what matters to you and how you are going about achieving it.

The marketing profession will offer many different definitions of a brand. One effective description is that a brand is a name or symbol that is commonly known to identify a company or its products and separate them from the competition. A well-known brand is generally regarded as one that people will recognise, even if they do not know about the organisation or its services. So, one aim has to be to get people in the wider community who don't directly use your services feeling and thinking some of the same thoughts when they hear the centre's name and the name **myplace**. This is what other people say and think about you, what you do and how you do it; not the way you choose to describe it to them directly.

Your brand is, therefore, much more than your name and your logo. These are important of course, but they are simply the means to remind young people what your project is about and why it's valuable to them. When someone sees your logo it should 'trigger' thoughts about your core values - that's the place where I can go climbing, where I can practise my dj'ing; where I can get some good advice; that's helping me get somewhere with my life and achieve my potential.

Your overall 'branding' will incorporate a logo or symbol, and even design features, such as regularly used colours, typefaces and layouts for advertisements. These should be used across your centre and its mailings – on letterheads, press releases and other stationery items, for internal and external signage, on any marketing materials you produce (flyers, brochures, leaflets etc), on promotional goods (T-shirts, bags etc), on your website and on any vehicles funded by your grant. This ties together everything you do and stand for. Another main benefit is that customers – young people in your case – are much more likely to remember you, what you do and become advocates for it. Use of the strong **myplace** brand name and logo helps to keep your offer in their minds. This group of young people will be the best advocates and promoters of the services you're offering with their peer group.

Other assets of a strong brand are that it projects an image that it is successful, large and well established. This in turn sends our reassuring messages that you will still be around for them in the future. A strong brand also projects an image of quality. If you were to show a person two identical products, only one of which is branded, they will almost always believe the branded item is higher quality.

“I suppose we could just call it **myplace**.”

The objectives that a good brand will achieve therefore include:

- › it delivers your message clearly;
- › it confirms your credibility;
- › it connects your target prospects emotionally;
- › it motivates young people to use the services on offer; and
- › it establishes loyalty.

There are centrally produced guidelines available to ensure that the **myplace** identity is kept coherent and to publicly acknowledge your award. It is important to know about these and follow them. Not only does it provide wider credibility for what you are doing but it demonstrates to the wider local community that you have received funding from government via the Big Lottery Fund, and that here is an example of where public money is being spent within their community to support its growth, development and cohesion. Go to the Big Lottery Fund website for further guidance .

Case Study

Myplace Havering

A £5 million **myplace** grant will help to create a new world class centre, “The Fuse” which was designed with the help of local 11 to 19-year-olds. The centre will feature a 400-seat theatre/ cinema with retractable seating, a projection room with music recording and film editing facilities, a sports area with a virtual floor for hockey, gymnastics and other sports, a gallery/ exhibition centre with studios, conference facilities, an ICT room, catering and refreshment areas as well as youth services.

The Sorrell Foundation, working with Ellis Williams architects, Love Creative Media and William Warren Design, worked with a Client Team of young people to develop concepts for the design of the building and brand for the centre. The Client Team presented the design concepts to an audience including local councillors, stakeholders, members of the police, and members of the press.

Will Sorrell, Project Leader for Joinedupdesign for **myplace**, was delighted at how the presentation was received. He said: “The Client Team did an excellent job of presenting. We had positive feedback on both the building design and branding.”



Young People

Explore the subject of branding and what it means to you. Start listing some of the things to consider in your own brand statement. Try coming up with a range of straplines that describe your **myplace** offer. See if there's a local marketing company prepared to come in to the centre and help you with this.

Making a Difference

How would you like people to talk about your project when you're not there? Write this down and use it to describe the project. All projects funded through **myplace** have actively involved young people in their design and development, and will continue to involve them in their future running and opening times, which will include evenings and weekends. This is a powerful part of the **myplace** brand.

Vision and Values

Many people believe a brand only consists of a few elements – some colours, some fonts, a logo, a slogan and maybe some music. In reality, it is much more complicated than that. The fundamental idea and core concept is that everything you do, everything you own and produce should reflect the values and aims of the business as a whole. It is the consistency of this core idea that matters, not just some colours, typefaces, a logo and a slogan.

Practicality

Don't get carried away with your own enthusiasm in devising alternative logos, straplines and guidance notes for your centre without first checking to see what is available centrally. A timely conversation with the branding team can save frustration and wasted effort later. There's lots of help out there to guide you so take advantage of it.

“There's lots of help out there to guide you so take advantage of it.”

Links to other *myplace* briefings and resources:

With a group of young people organise sessions to work through the branding exercises in the *myplace* marketing toolkit: Practical tools for engaging children and young people in marketing planning. This resource will help to give young people and centre colleagues an insight into the concept of branding and an appreciation of its importance

To see hundreds of examples of buildings, some of which have very effective branding, see CABEs case study library of projects across the country www.cabe.org.uk/case-studies

There are lots of books available on branding – some you could look at include those listed below. But they can be rather commercial and international in tone, so treat with some caution.

Never mind the sizzle ... where's the sausage? Branding based on substance, not spin by David Taylor

Branding for dummies, by Bill Chiaravalle and Barbara Findlay Schenck

What is Branding? (Essential Design Handbooks), by Matthew Healey

The Brand Handbook, by Wally Olins

If you want to explore branding or wider marketing see the Chartered Institute of Marketing website at www.cim.co.uk. Increasingly recognised by the UK government as the voice of marketing, it sets standards within the industry and is the first port of call for marketing information, knowledge and insight.

Marketing Teacher has a free Lesson Store. Popular marketing topics are available, many supported with their own exercises and answers. See www.marketingteacher.com