

Callosum Creative Ltd. participated as a panel member in a Workshop titled, **Myths and Magic of Branding** hosted by the **Women's Business Development Center [www.wbdc.org]** in Chicago in Fall 2007. Below are Callosum's President, Clare J. Hefferren, personal perspective on the panel questions We felt notes might be valuable for you.

How do you define brand?

A physical and emotional customer experience which triggers creating a relationship between consumer and product/service. Giving product an 'identity' serves to differentiate product/service from competitors and add value to company. Identity is developed through a collection of images and ideas (may include: name, logo, term, symbol, slogan, and design scheme)

Which do you believe should be developed first- company strategy or logo/branding and why or where do I start?

- Company strategy. In order to create a brand identity, designer should be provided:
- Business model – revenue stream
- Product differentiation
- Market research – Who is end-user?
- Marketing/Advertising budget (in order to determine scale of brand)

As a business owner, should my brand reflect my personality or the service/product?

Joint. Brand must appeal to end-user, but brand should also reflect an energy/culture of the company. Personality may be reflected in verbage, icon...

As a start-up with a limited budget, what do you feel are required marketing materials?

At a minimum: logo and tagline, business card, digital letterlead, address stamp, professional email and url.

What are the most important things to remember?

- You get what you pay for. Invest in your brand creation. Compare to the 'naming of a child'
- Shelf longevity of printed pieces
- Digital era – utilize online avenues
- Ownership of artwork (digital)

Do employees impact the company brand?

Absolutely. Staff image should align with the brand for maximum revenue impact. Materials get them in the door, but staff image keeps them coming back.

How can I apply my brand across projects and media or how do I start building my visuals?

- Style Guide – CD of logos and branding guidelines
- Stock imagery – purchase cds outright. Per use can be expensive

When do I need a designer and how much can be done internally by staff?

- Internal: strategy, market research. Utilize internal digital forms: ie. Letterhead, memo, fax, rubber stamp
- External: vector-based artwork, imagery

The most beneficial thing an entrepreneur can do is to invest in professional brand development with a long-term commitment to monitoring results and revitalizing when needed.

How can I save money when working with designers?

- Provide designer budget & what you'd like. Ask if they can make it work.
- Ask for estimates and invoices in project phases.
- Barter services
- Ask for any specials or adjustable rate options

How can a business owner most effectively use their marketing/advertising dollars? (marketing collateral, e-marketing, web advertisement, direct mail programs, advertising in publications, etc.)

In order of importance:

- Corp identity
- E-marketing
- Web site creation
- Marketing collateral
- Promotions: donations with end-user viewing ex. Silent auction donation

Shy aware from:

- Direct mail: 2-3% is average return
- Print advertising: costly rates – limited shelf life
- Web advertising – use when business grows to to gap-size or above.

Where do most people make mistakes?

- Too small marketing/advertising budget. It's imperative to invest in branding
- Lack of web presence
- Pinching on designer fees. Use quality designer and ask for references