



**Business Performance  
Improvement Specialists**

# **3 Reasons Why Most B2B Branding Fails and Scares Prospects Away**



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## Does branding help salespeople sell more?

In the B2B market, CEOs and marketing managers struggle with the answer to this question which helps them allocate budgets, create company messaging and develop tactical programs to generate inbound leads for the sales team members.

It is estimated that many Global 1000 companies spend up to 15% of their total marketing budget on brand communication and positioning. But does branding have an identifiable return on investment that can be tracked and monitored?

### **Most branding messages are just wasted thought.**

Often, branding slogans end up being too generic or too feathery to drive business performance or create inbound qualified leads for the sales team regardless of whether they are made up by marketing agencies or well intentioned corporate managers.

### **Why do CEOs invest in marketing?**

Often CEOs invest in marketing because they think they have to as a necessary requirement to grow revenue. But often marketing investments made by the CEO are not held to the same standard of ROI metric management as other staff and line positions are held to. Marketing must drive revenues and reduce sales capture costs regardless of whether the CEO or the marketing department makes the investment. Marketing as a silo approach is a wasted investment, however, marketing as an integrated approach tied to sales metrics and corporate strategy is a prerequisite for year-over-year revenue growth.

### **Why do marketing agencies create slogans that sound nice but don't create revenue?**

Often brand development is based on the company, management team or creator's personal bias or the perception of what the brand should say. When was the last time a contracted marketing agency or a marketing manager went against a CEO's perception of what they thought their brand should say even when the CEO was wrong? It does not happen often. Have you ever seen a bad TV commercial and thought "who developed that message?" Yet, the TV commercial you watched was created by a professional ad agency and was approved by senior management.

## ➡ 3 Ways Most B2B Branding Is Developed

### 1. Branding That Is Driven By Ego

Often, brand messages are ego-driven slogans created by management teams who are more focused on their needs, instead of the needs of their buyers. This occurs when a group of senior executives gather together and create marketing messages that talk about how great they are and why the prospect should buy from them. When they are finished, they all congratulate each other on a job well done and paste their silky slogan on every ball cap, Website and brochure they have hoping their brand (the slogan) induces prospects to take action steps to buy.

### 2. Branding That Uses Generic Product or Service Descriptions

When trying to build a brand message that communicates company value, frequently businesses use their offerings' product or service category as a prime foundation of the brand description. When this path is followed, companies become pigeonholed as a specialist in one industry, thereby limiting their ability to cross-market and sell into other industries.

### 3. Branding That Uses Competitor Messaging

With the Internet providing easy access to view any company's marketing and sales approach, brand effectiveness has decreased because so many companies just build their brand positions as an adaptation of their competitor's messaging. By copying or massaging corporate branding based on your competitors, it is not you – it is just their message painted a different color.

## Value First, Brand Second

In all of these examples, the corporate branding approach fails, because it does not communicate correctly to targeted prospects why they should buy you over your competitors. There are three primary reasons that make B2B prospects buy: 1) Prospects want to know how your product or service increases their business income; 2) Prospects want to know how your offering decreases their business expenses; or 3) Prospects want to know how your product or service manages their business risks or consequences. If your brand message does not succinctly communicate one or all of these three values – then you are wasting your messaging and confusing the targeted prospect.

## ➡ Deploy Sales Value Propositions – Not Brand Messaging

To increase your marketing return on investment and to maximize your value messaging, you need to deploy sales value propositions instead of branding messages. Branding messages focus on describing what you sell or how you see yourself. Sales value propositions are precise, premeditated phraseology that focus on describing the business results your product or service delivers. **Branding costs money. Sales value propositions make you money.** In a world full of changing multi-media sources, to quickly capture a buyer's attention, you most focus on their needs, not yours. Examples of sales value propositions that help buyers understand how your offering increases their business' success include: *Manufacturing Business Asset Protection Specialists, Hospitality Profitability Improvement Specialists* and *Banking Customer Retention Management Specialists*. In each of these examples, the sales value proposition positions the company's business value up front to the prospect to visualize in three dimensions how your offering helps their business.

## Conclusion

Brand messaging is packaged communication that pulls a company's business value behind it forcing the company into a commodity position. You have a choice: A) You can sound like everyone else and be treated as such, or B) Put your value in front by describing how your offering increases your buyer's performance and why you are different.

## About Value Forward Network

Founded in 2001 by Paul DiModica, author of *Value Forward Selling, Sales Management Power Strategies, Value Forward Marketing*, and *CEO Power Strategies*, the Value Forward Network is the largest CEO Consulting Group in the United States for small to medium sized (SMB) businesses with annual revenues from \$1 Million to \$200 Million. We work with start-ups, privately held companies, and Fortune 1000 companies in both the public and private sector. With offices in five countries, our management consultants coach CEOs and their team members to increase corporate performance by integrating finance, marketing methodologies, sales processes and corporate strategies into one outbound revenue capture program. Our management consultants consist of seasoned executives, including former CEOs, VPs of Sales, VPs of Marketing, and senior management executives who bring strategic and tactical business success to their clients.

## About Advantage Business Solutions

Advantage Business Solutions has been assisting forward-thinking executives with integrated management planning, strategic business consulting, and dynamic financial analysis for over thirty years.

We work with CEOs, principles, and executives to create and institute the best possible business strategies and practices in order to streamline their operations and integrate the complexities of their organization into one harmonious system. Utilizing the Value Forward methodologies and our years of experience, our goal is to help improve revenue, reduce risks and unnecessary expenditures, and build more effective leadership teams.

We take a team approach to advising you on the best strategic and tactical action steps needed to hit your targeted objective. Our dedicated professionals are proud to provide top-tier quality executive coaching, hands-on business management guidance, analytical financial planning, and systems integration instruction.

Advantage Business Solutions is a certified partner of the Value Forward Network.

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