

The 22 immutable laws of branding

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Summary

There are many basic laws in the brand-building process.

Law of Expansion: the power of a brand is inversely proportional to its scope. When you put your brand name on several products, indeed, the line extension allows an increase in sales in the short term, but it undermines brand name in the mind of the consumer in the long term.

Law of Contraction: a brand becomes stronger when you narrow its focus. When you offer too many things the quality of your product or service will be mediocre.

Law of Publicity: the birth of a brand is usually accomplished with publicity, not advertising. A new brand must be capable of generating favorable publicity in the media or it will not have a chance in the marketplace.

Law of Advertising: once born, a brand will die unless kept alive with advertising.

Law of the Word: a brand should strive to own a word in the mind of the consumer. Once a word is precisely associated with a brand, it is almost impossible for a competitor to create some stronger associations.

Law of Credentials: the crucial ingredient to the success of any brand is its claim to authenticity. Credentials are the collateral that you put up to guarantee the performance of your brand and that makes every other claim about your brand much more believable.

Law of Quality: quality is important to have, but brands are not built by quality alone.

Law of the Category: a leading brand should promote the category not the brand. The most important branding decision you will ever make is what to name your product or service. (*Law of the Name*).

Most new brands are line extensions, but according to the *Law of Extensions* the easiest way to destroy a brand is to put its name on everything.

Law of the Fellowship: in order to build a category of product, a brand should accept the presence of other brands.

Law of the Generic: one of the fastest routes to failure is giving a brand a generic name.

Law of the Company: brands are brands; companies are companies. Consumers buy brands, they do not buy companies.

Law of Subbrands: what branding builds, subbranding can destroy.

The *Law of Sibling* states that there is a time and place to launch a second brand.

Law of Shape: a brand's logotype should be designed to fit the eyes.

Law of Color: a brand should use a color that is the opposite of its major competitor.

Law of Borders: there are no barriers to global branding. A brand should know no borders.

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