

The perils and opportunities of relaunching your brand

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Rebranding is a pivotal process that all businesses eventually go through as styles, attitudes and culture changes.

Make big mistakes during a **rebrand** and you risk everything you have built but if you get it right you can expand faster and be more relevant to your customer base. Here are a few pointers.

Know why you are rebranding

Rebranding for **rebranding**'s sake is not wise. Know what you want to achieve. Why you are going about the enormous risk and challenge of reinventing the business you have built?

Ask yourself if **rebranding** may risk alienating any existing customers and if so, understand the pros and cons of your **brand**-changing decisions. Are you looking for faster growth and new customer communities, for instance?

Align rebranding with new offers

It stands to reason that if you are going to **rebrand** then you ought to offer something new so it's not all 'face value' changes. Why not add a service or promotional offer and kick start a new wave of sales. If you are updating your website it might give you a temporary boost in the SERPs too, so why not take advantage of that with some great offers or new services?

Are your customers' attitudes changing?

Make sure you are in tune with the changes and opinions in your industry. Be warned though, if you flip your image too sharply, too slickly, too soon without explanation, it may look like your **marketing** team has advised you, not that you genuinely care about your new message.

Consider the way banks are trying to re-engage with disillusioned customers – there have been a few **social** media backlashes on the way. Another recent example of changing attitudes affecting products is the food and drink companies that promote unhealthy levels of salt and sugar in their products.

They are now under the watchful eyes of industry, media and customers. We see **brands** responding with healthy messaging on adapted products. 'Adapt or survive' is a rule when you see that attitudes are changing but always ensure you explain why you are changing.

Show your colours

Associating **brands** with colour is incredibly important. Red means **Virgin**, blue means **Facebook** – colours and their associated meanings can really give your **brand** an identity. There is a subtle science with colours and every industry has its own colour rules. Research and learn the colour scheme of your sector.

Rebranding should involve complete self-analysis

Your true **brand** translates to everything about your company, not what you wish people to perceive. If your promises to customers aren't met, if your customer interaction is shoddy, if the office is run badly or your services fail, no amount of glitter will help you in the end.

When **rebranding** – make it an opportunity to research and evaluate your business processes, office and the way you do things, from top to bottom.

Test on customer focus groups

However great you think your new **brand** is, however wonderful everyone in your team thinks it is, test it on some customers before your official launch. They often see things you miss. It's hard to backpedal on your new look shortly after launch if you quickly decide it's not right – or more importantly – if your customers decide it's not right.

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