

# THE MONDAY MINUTE

marketing for the soul - coaching the life saving community



Monday Minute  
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## *Branding in an Economic Downturn*

Long before any current recession, many sources were writing about the critical need for branding your business during a depression or recession. One such article, like this article from [Business Week](#), focused on the significance of branding during downturns, long before the crash of Wall Street and the crumbling of our nation's big businesses and banks. One can learn important marketing lessons from this report.

As the story goes, some of the largest brands of the past century solidified their brands and still others moved way ahead of their competition during the recessions. The article reviews the top global brand winners for this past year. Winners included Coke, IBM, and Apple Iphone and Nokia.

**History supports this fact:** When bad times falls, there are still winners and losers. Winners seem to move ahead of their competition during the downtime while others fall victim to the insurmountable problems. No matter what market this theory exists. It doesn't depend upon a product or service. It all depends on two key things.

## *Desire and Perceived Value*

**DESIRE:** A good brand starts by creating desire. Desire is fundamental to human beings. Look at trailer parks. Typically, residents are people not making a lot of money. Yet, in those parks, how many Dish satellites are there? How many new cars are parked by their trailers? People find money to buy the things they have a desire for. A good brand offers your client a desire that only that brand can fulfill. Think about the success of the Iphone. When it was released people stayed up all weekend in New York City to be one of the few to be able to pay hundreds of dollars for the new phone. Desire drives people to your website, to your center to your ministry only when you help them have the desire.

**PERCEIVED VALUE:** Have you flown in a commercial airline recently. I had the occasion to travel across county. Looking for the best deal on the tickets, I was pleased to find some inexpensive coach seats. During the flight, a thought struck me: *“how many people are flying coach on this airplane?”* As I was thinking about that, I noticed the people sitting in First Class. They were only 23 feet from where I was sitting, but the difference was amazing. I got peanuts and a Coke while they got grilled chicken and peas with their choice of wine. I got a napkin. They got a hot moist towel. You see, I was paying \$199 per seat, but, those 28 people in First Class were paying on an average \$2000 a seat. Think about that for a moment. The airlines struggle to sell the 200 seats in coach for \$199 and never fill every seat. In fact, according to my quick calculation, the 178 people in coach gave that airline a little over \$35,000. Yet, those 28 people in First Class gave them \$56,000! Amazing! Why do people pay 200% more?

First Class exists because it has been branded by the airlines to have a perceived value. The result: First Class was sold out on this and most flight during this recession! Another example is in the tissue you use. Why did you purchase the tissue you used to wipe your nose this morning? Why did you stop at Starbucks for coffee instead of a little donut shop that has a fresh cup of coffee for 1/10<sup>th</sup> the cost of a Starbucks?

WHY? Because of successful branding.

It is everywhere, in everything we use, buy, watch or eat. Right now, in the middle of a recession and people are still spending money for the things they want. Cars are still being sold. Houses are still being sold. We still eat the brand of cookies we eat. We still wear the brand of clothes we perceive is the best value. Businesses that have a good brand improve market share by focusing on keeping their brand in front of their customers. They create a buzz. Thus, the lesson we must take away from this is that to build a brand for our own web presence, we must first learn from those who have succeeded in the past.

How did they build a brand? They created the concept, then produced a marketing buzz about the product. The name stuck. Names like Coke who was last year's number one brand and the others.

### ***WHAT DOES BRANDING MEAN TO MY WEB SITE?***

Your website should reflect your ministry as much as possible. Think of it as a window into your ministry. When someone walks down the information super highway window shopping for an organization to meet their needs and they “stumble” upon your website “window” and look in are they seeing the and what you do? When people come to your ministry to participate in what you do, they have an experience. This is part of your ministry brand. Your website needs to be an extension of what they would receive or experience when actually physically present. Users need to feel personally connected to you. It allows you to reach and connect with them on a personal and emotional level.

Consistency and conveyance throughout every touch point are the necessary building blocks that help to create and maintain your ministry's brand. It means you must creatively establish a brand and then market your brand. As you market your brand, the only way to know if your campaign is successful is to measure your results. Start by building a buzz by getting people to talk about your brand. Build a presence within the social media community to help boost the brand. Use a series of videos that pitch your brand, explain your brand's value, that uses your brand in the opening and closing.

Is there an efficient and measurable way to build and track your brand?  
Yes there is: it is called "Search."

Sure, its not as splashy as a big PR stunt in the middle of Times Square or running a costly ad during the Superbowl, but where you are found on the Internet as the result of Search maximizes your brand. **SEARCH** is a efficient way to build and maintain your brand. In fact, a 2008 study by *Enquiro* illustrates that ***brand association increases by 16% when a brand is in the top organic and paid search results.***

There are four stages of branding necessary to achieve the desired action of your internet consumer:

- **awareness stage**
- **recognition stage**
- **preference stage**
- **action stage**

Each stage can and should be accessible with search of your center's web site or blog on Google or Yahoo!

By boosting your Internet results using keywords that relate to a target consumers' interests and lifestyles, internet advertisers can connect with consumers at the top of this funnel. By using generic product keywords, the connection is made at the initial recognition phase. By using branded keywords, the connection is made at the preference and action stage. While there is no guarantee where a consumer will be in the purchase cycle when they visit your site, it remains important to build your brand, at each stage of relevancy.

Here at Monday Minute, we are testing our own branded keywords and testing them with branded landed pages supported by blogs and social media buzz. I will be sharing our findings from one of our very own studies in the near future...stay tuned!

What does this means to you and your center? Your center's web site needs to embrace your unique branding to make your site more relevant to your consumers.

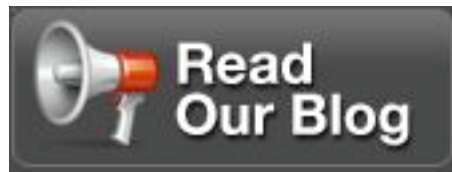
A good solid brand begins with a custom web site that presents your center as a unique community service. A center's brand is more than just a slogan or phrase. It is also more than a creative logo or look. It is the image your web site presents to your consumer.

In today's post-modern, post-Christian world, your center's web site can no longer expect to succeed if you simply look like every other center that shows up in the search. You need a custom look, easy to navigate website. You need to embrace video. You need a blog. You need the power of viral marketing through the social media. But, the bottom line is you need a brand. A brand that sets you apart and builds a desire and acceptance within the mind and heart of your consumer. A brand is what they tell their friends about.

**Need help building your brand?** Need creative support? Let the professionals of AWS Creative Solutions brand your web presence with result-oriented targeting and testing. Let us help you stand above the crowd in this recession! Call 214-703-0505 to speak with a web branding professional.



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Ken Freeman

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