

Step Two

Module Two

Mini Lesson Guide

the
marketing
Democracy™

Welcome!



Any business large or small can build their brand if they have the right tools. Brand architecture is a blend of heart, soul, and structure. At The Marketing Democracy, we've seen it all. And we are sharing a unique approach to brand-building the blends the best of the best. This module will provide you with the lessons and the tools to build your very own brand. We will break this down into manageable steps to help you create a brand that is distinctively "you" and expresses your promise to your customers.

- Judy

Module Overview

In this module, we are going to focus on four key ideas:

- In [Lesson One](#), you will be introduced to The Marketing Democracy's proprietary Brand Architecture Framework.
- In [Lesson Two](#), you will focus on the intersection of customer values and business equities.
- In [Lesson Three](#), you will learn how to define, refine and express your brand promise.
- In [Lesson Four](#), you will learn how to express and reinforce your brand promise at every point of interaction with your customers.

To help you map each component of your brand, you can purchase a "TMD Brand Architecture Framework." This downloadable PDF is fully functional if you open it in Adobe Acrobat Reader. Be sure to click on the "listen" icon in the lower right-hand corner to learn more about this helpful tool. And, for additional inspiration, you can watch the real-world example video to see this lesson in practice.

Congratulations on taking this important step in your journey to developing world-class marketing for your business.



Lesson One

Introduction to Building Your Brand Using the TMD Brand Architecture Framework

Why This Matters

A strong brand is built from a solid foundation. Without this foundation, brands weaken and ultimately collapse under the weight of all the competition in the marketplace. You wouldn't build a house without a blueprint, and the same holds true for brand-building. This lesson is designed to introduce you to a simple, yet comprehensive blueprint for building your brand. The Marketing Democracy's Brand Architecture Framework has been developed and refined based upon decades of experience with a broad range of frameworks. And now, we're offering our framework to you. With the right plan and the right tools, you can become your own brand architect.

5 Key Takeaways

-  If a brand is not built upon a solid foundation, it will likely collapse. A brand architecture framework provides the strategic scaffolding to support and reinforce a strong brand.
-  The brand architecture has five core ingredients: 1) the business category, 2) the brand's vision, 3a) the wants and needs of customers balanced by 3b) solutions offered by the business 4) the brand's behavior and 5) the brand promise.
-  The brand architecture is built for balance. Each external marketplace element of the framework is meant to be balanced with an internal business equity to harmonize the brand's structure.
-  Brand architecture frameworks help to organize what you already know about your business and your role in your customers' lives. It's not about invention (or reinvention) as much as it is about declaring your truths and organizing for action.
-  The brand architecture framework should be printed, laminated and shared with every stakeholder in the organization. Everyone is responsible for promoting the brand promise.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Two, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

Compare what you already know about your business to each section of the brand architecture. How much do you know already? What do you need to figure out?

Can you create a perfect balance between what your customers value and what you can deliver better than most? Are there any elements that are out of balance? What can you do to address this?

Does every employee understand your brand? Are they responsible for delivering brand values? Or, is your brand stuck in the marketing department?

Lesson Two

Find the Intersection of Your Customers' Values and What You do Best

Why This Matters

One of the secrets to brand-building is making hard decisions. Most businesses do many things well, and only a few things exceptionally well. It's important to take a step back and reflect upon what makes you special that attracts (and retains) your customers. It may be a nuanced aspect of your business, and that's okay. If you can focus on what your customers truly care about and what you do best, you can use this as the foundation for building your brand. This lesson will introduce you to the matching process between your customer values and your business equities--what you do better than the rest.

Key Takeaways

- Brand building is all about making tough choices. You may do many things well, but focus only on those few things that you do best.
- By focusing on the few things that you do best (your core equities) you can then match them to the specific wants, needs and values of certain customers.
- This matching process will help you to position your brand in the marketplace. You can't be all things to all people. Instead, by focusing on what you do best, you can claim a position within the category where you can thrive.
- This matching process will help you to create a problem/solution messaging strategy to communicate your brand value in the marketplace. It helps to keep the proper balance between you and your customers in your marketing communication.
- You cannot begin the matching process without a deep understanding of your customers-- their unmet wants and needs and what they value from brands. Do your homework. Know your customers before you attempt to build your brand.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Three, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

Are you able to make tough choices? A great brand should leave some things off the table. What did you leave behind to focus on your core strengths?

After making tough choices, are you able to see your position in the category more clearly? What is your position and how can you use your position to grow your business?

Are you able to come up with at least three problem/solution sets from this exercise that you can use to guide your marketing communications strategy?








Lesson Three

Build Your Brand Promise

Why This Matters

All the brand-building work that you have done to-date will lead you to this moment. You are now ready to develop your brand promise. This promise serves as the glue that holds everything together. It's a summation of all the brand architecture work that you have done to represent the true connection between you and your customers. This lesson will define and describe the brand promise and guide you toward expressing your brand promise as the soul of your brand. Whether you choose to share your promise in outbound marketing communication, or whether it serves as an internal guide, your brand promise serves as a compass for all that you say and do.

Key Takeaways

-  Your brand promise summarizes your role in your customers lives in one simple statement.
-  Your brand promise reflects the outcome of the matching process between customer values and business equities.
-  Your promise can be expressed in outbound marketing communication or it can be for internal purposes only. The choice is yours.
-  Your promise is far more than a tagline. It guides everything you say and do.
-  Every word of your brand promise should be intentional and help to express your unique brand value proposition.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Four, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of this lesson?

What is your promise to your customers? If you don't have a simple promise statement from this exercise, keep working at it.

Does every word of your brand promise mean something? Think like an editor and make sure that every word holds its weight.

Do you think you will want to use your brand promise in your marketing communication? Or, are you going to keep it on the inside and use it for setting your strategy?

Lesson Four

Let Your Brand Guide Your Behavior

Why This Matters

Brands are simply empty words on paper if they don't guide everything that you say and do. Brands must live their promise at every point of interaction with customers. This final lesson in the module focuses on brand behavior, what it is, and how developing principles of brand behavior can guide your actions in the marketplace. This lesson will help you to establish what you must always do and what you would never do in order to live up to your brand promise across all facets of your business operations, well beyond the boundaries of your marketing plan.

Key Takeaways

- Brand behavior extends far beyond your marketing communication. Every aspect of your business operations can serve to reinforce your brand promise.
- Actions speak louder than words. Your marketing communication cannot mask your actions in the marketplace. Customers will respond negatively if what you say and what you do aren't aligned.
- Establish the top three behaviors that your business must always do in order to reinforce your brand promise in the marketplace.
- Establish the top three behaviors that your business would never do in order to preserve your brand promise in the marketplace.
- Your principles of Brand Behavior provide a great evaluation tool for all types of activities to determine whether they fit your brand promise.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to the action plan, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

What are the top three things that you must always do in order to live up to your brand promise?

What are the top three things that you would never do because they would break your brand promise?

If you conducted an audit of your business activities, what grade would you give yourself? Do your activities reinforce your brand promise, or do you have some work to do?