

Stand Out From The Crowd

The Complete Branding Checklist

Setting Up Your Business And Brand

- 👉 **Your Mission:** Determine why you do what you do.
- 👉 **Genre/Niche:** Identify your strengths and determine your field of business.
- 👉 **Audience Demographics:** Determine who your audience is, who your likely clients will be, what their needs are, and how to connect with them.
- 👉 **Values and Ethics:** Identify your core values around business relationships and stay with those, unwaveringly!
- 👉 **Brand Boundaries:** Remember your values, be strong and say no to that which doesn't match your values and/or brand image, no matter what.
- 👉 **Brand Message:** What is it and are you communicating your brand message consistently across all platforms and media?
- 👉 **Custom Domain Name:** Purchase a custom website domain name for your business. Consider the SEO value of your domain name relative to your niche.
- 👉 **Custom Email Address:** Get you business email address at your domain name, be sure to host your website and email on different servers for optimum security.

-  **Brand Logo:** Design your business logo or have professionals do it for you. You need a quality logo, that is relatively simple but relevant to your business. A logo that “speaks of your brand” and retains its quality at any size.
-  **Logo Variations:** Develop some small variations to your logo for different platform applications.
-  **Small Logo:** Develop a text free version of your logo to use as a favicon and profile thumbnail.
-  **Website:** Design a responsive (to mobile devices) website that is GDPR compliant and effective in achieving your main business goals and presenting your professional reputation.
-  **Business Cards:** Are less important these days and one should consider minimising the use of paper based products. When ordering high-quality business cards consider using recycled materials for extra kudos and be sure to have a very clear Call To Action.
-  **Social Media:** Set up profiles for your business on all platforms you identified will put you where your audience is. Ensure your brand identity is consistent across all platforms.
-  **Your Workspace:** As well as your business space or premise, it’s a good idea to have an inspiring space where you can create your online content that reminds you of your brand, helping you stay consistent with your content.
-  **Imagery Style:** Determine what style of imagery you are going to use on your website and also your social platforms. Try to remain consistent across all and maintain a similar style over time.

-  **Your Professional Shots:** Put a face to your brand and include some professional shots of yourself, also brilliant if showing you doing your thing. Try to show something of your personality too, people prefer human faces.
-  **Typography Styles:** Choose two or three fonts to use consistently across your brand and stick with those.
-  **Brand Personality:** Choose characteristics for your brand that your audience will relate to across all platforms.
-  **Colour Palette:** Choose a colour palette that invokes the emotions you want your audience to feel that inspires them to use your services. It's best to limit your palette to about three to five colours.

Your Business Activities Online

-  **Blog Post Template:** Create a template for your blog posts to ensure consistency in presentation that incorporates your brand image.
-  **Email Template:** Use a branded email template for direct communication with your email lists and clients.
-  **Community:** Engage with your audience online and build relationships.
-  **Competitors:** Identify the competitors in your niche and differentiate yourself.
-  **Blog Publishing Strategy:** Determine the topics you will cover and how often you will publish posts.
-  **Content Strategy:** Set longer term business goals and plan all of your content publishing to achieve those goals.

- 👉 **Brand Voice:** Find your brand voice and communicate with your audience with this voice. Try to sound as much like you the real person and be authentic, so that your audience can relate to you.
- 👉 **Brand Story:** Share your journey with your audience.
- 👉 **Brand Balance:** Find the balance ratio between personal and professional within your business publishing content.
- 👉 **Writing Style:** Determine your style of writing blog posts, web copy, newsletters, etc and try to be totally consistent.
- 👉 **Email Signature:** Create an email signature or footer that includes your brand logo, contact info, and links. Please note not all email platforms will render logo images.
- 👉 **Brand Key Words:** Sum up your brand using three key words.
- 👉 **Search Engine Optimisation:** The big daddy of them all, get your SEO right otherwise all your time and efforts creating your brand, website, social profiles and content will be wasted.
- 👉 **REMEMBER:** Aside from a professional service and good online content, the most important aspects of your business are **website security** and **search engine optimisation**.



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