



Why your company needs to rebrand (or doesn't).

Four good reasons to update your B2B brand...
and four good reasons to leave it alone.

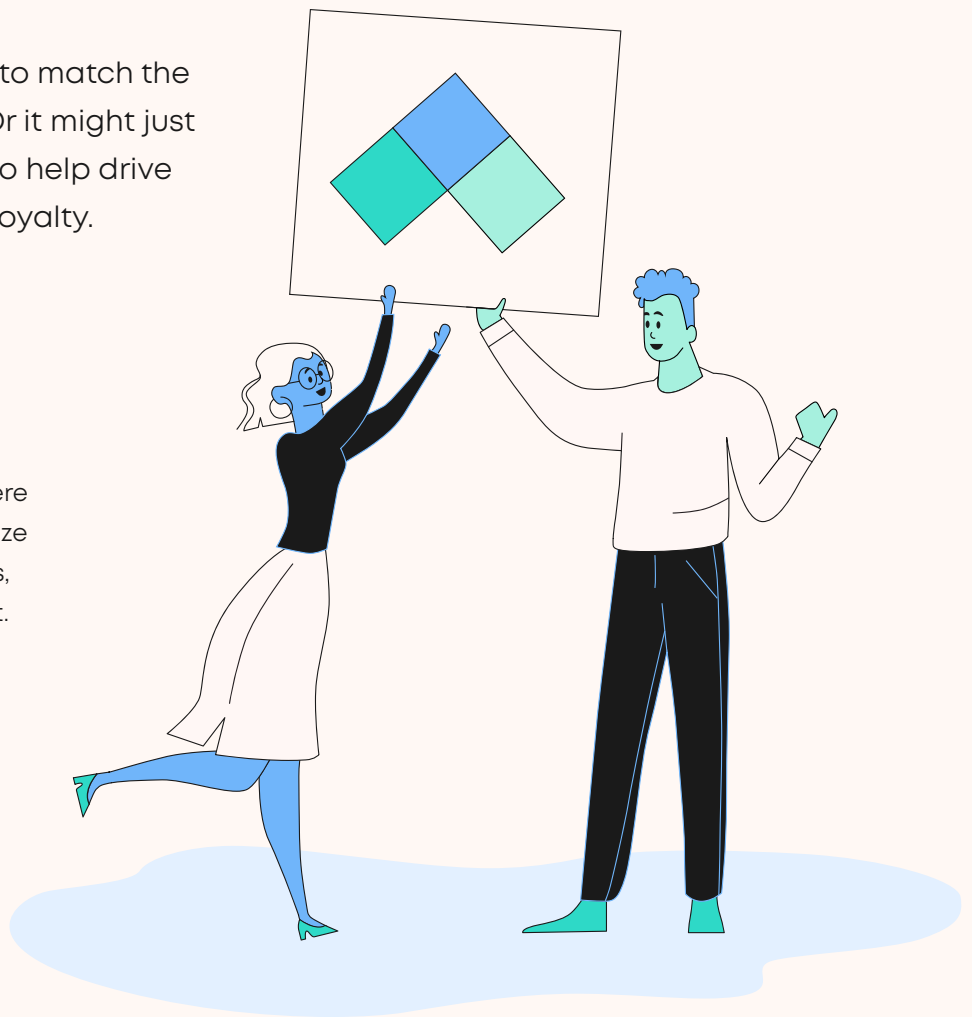
So your brand needs a boost.

If you've downloaded this guide, it means your B2B brand needs... something.

It might require a total overhaul to match the evolution of your marketplace. Or it might just need an infusion of fresh ideas to help drive engagement, conversions, and loyalty.

How do you know what to do?

This guide will help you decide if you need to rebrand your business—or if there are other creative ways you can revitalize your story, connect with your customers, and give your marketing efforts a boost.



Good reasons to rebrand.

While the details differ from organization to organization, these are some common (and smart!) reasons B2B marketers determine that it's time to reimagine their brand.

1

You've outgrown your current brand.

Your business has evolved and your current brand no longer communicates your value in the right ways. [Page 4](#)

2

You need to reboot your image.

You've made improvements, but your brand has lingering baggage from past problems. [Page 5](#)

3

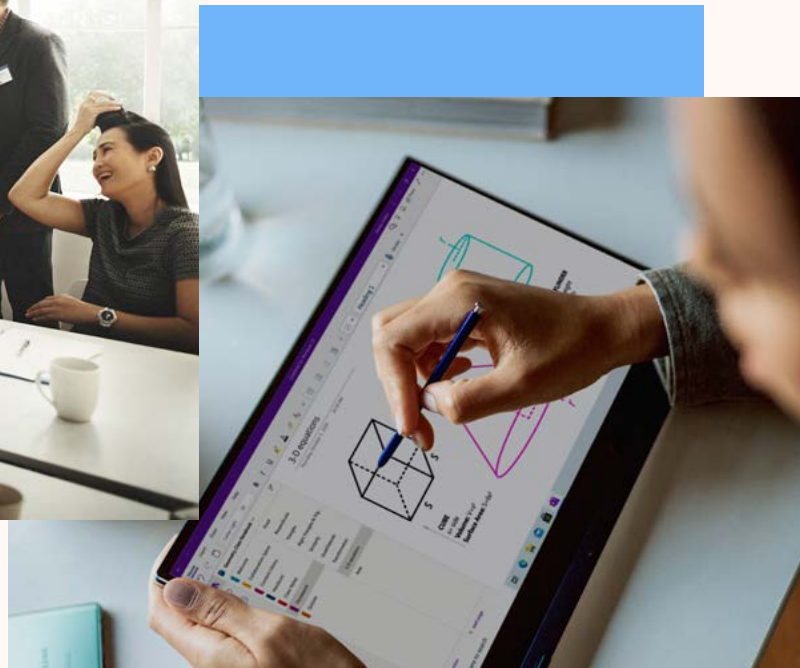
You're reaching for new opportunities.

You've identified a promising new future and you don't think your current brand will get you there. [Page 6](#)

4

You need to defend your turf.

New challengers have changed your competitive landscape—so you need to retool your brand to take them on. [Page 7](#)



You've outgrown your current brand.

This is perhaps the best reason to rebrand. Maybe you've just been through a merger and need to redefine your brand identity, or your organization has grown in size, stature, and capability and your current brand no longer reflects your abilities as a business and the value you deliver. Whatever the reason, outgrowing your brand is a good problem to have—and an opportunity to rework your brand story to encourage engagement and growth.

Ask yourself...

Does our brand accurately convey the value we deliver?

Does your name, tagline, and visual identity quickly communicate why people should consider doing business with your organization? If it doesn't, you should consider what a revitalized brand can do for you.

Is our value proposition clear, concise, and meaningful to our key audiences?

Can you quickly and convincingly state what makes your brand the right choice? Is your elevator pitch authentic, relevant to your customers, and easy to understand? If your messaging isn't direct and compelling, you may need to find a whole new way to tell your story.

Does our brand look and sound like we belong in our competitive landscape?

When you look at your competition, does your brand identity stack up? Even better, do you stand out in a good way? If your brand looks dated or less sophisticated than the businesses you've grown to compete with, a full rebrand makes sense.

If your answers indicate that it's time to rejuvenate your identity, rebranding can be a worthwhile investment for many years to come. One way to make your brand more evergreen and positioned for continued growth is to focus on the broad concepts or beliefs that make your business special, rather than the finer details about your current goods and services. Because your specific offerings may evolve, but the core values that drive your business will endure.

You need to reboot your image.

There are times when a business needs its customers to let go of past perceptions and see it in a new light. Maybe you've changed or expanded your offerings or need to shed some negative baggage. Whatever the case, a rebrand can help you hit the reset button.

Consider...

A bold new story.

Changing perceptions often requires a clear and compelling new message that captures your audiences' attention. Creating a new point of view for your business brings you a step closer to changing the conversation in your favor.

A visual departure.

One way to have clients and customers see you in a different way is to change up your look. Refresh your color palette. Use textures in new ways. Revise your fonts. Reimagine your photography. A new image can be an effective way to distance your brand from the past.

A whole new name.

To leave negative brand equity in the past, you may need to leave your name there, too. Renaming your business is a radical step—but it can be the best way to make a fresh start.

Remember: A new brand won't solve your business's performance issues. If you're going to invest in rebranding, make sure you've addressed the root causes that created negative associations with your brand in the first place. That way, the new perceptions you create will stick—and you'll be on your way to writing a new chapter for your company.

You're reaching for new opportunities.

Do you have plans to enter new markets, attract new types of customers, grow in new ways? If you've seen the future and have a plan to capitalize on it—but your current brand won't get you there—an evolved story and visual identity can help you compete and succeed.

You need to...

Analyze your current brand.

Take inventory of your brand: the story you're telling, your brand assets, your product and brand architecture, and the equity you've built across all brand touchpoints.

Keep what works, add what's needed.

Pursuing new opportunities doesn't mean abandoning the ones at hand. Identify the parts of your story that are essential to your current success and the areas you need to update or re-create in order to convincingly offer new products or reach new audiences.

Lead the target wisely.

Rebranding often requires you to build a story around things you're still working on as a business: new capabilities, a fresh portfolio of products, an emerging service model. When crafting your new brand story, try to strike a thoughtful balance between highlighting what you can do for your customers right now and promoting what you'll be able to offer in the near future.

To successfully seize opportunity, you typically need to evolve—rather than reimagine—your brand. A brand refresh can help you build a strong bridge to the future without completely shedding your past.

You need to defend your turf.

“Disruption” is an exciting business term—except when it’s your business that’s being disrupted. Whether a startup is shaking up your category or a competitor has found a new way to dominate your market, if you respond by changing your strategy you’ll need to change your brand story, too.

Make sure you...

Do your homework.

Gaining a clear picture of your current situation is vital to making smart choices about what to do next. Do your research to learn as much as you can about how customers currently see your brand and your competition (both good and bad). And make sure you fully understand the changes that are happening—and are predicted to happen—in your category.

Take care of business.

Before you rebrand, you should have your new business plans and processes in place (or nearing completion). This will help ensure that your new brand accurately reflects your evolved value proposition and you can fulfill the new promises you’re making to your customers.

Leverage your most meaningful differentiators.

Use the insights generated from your research to identify the key differentiators that help your brand stand out from the competition. Highlight those that are most meaningful to your customers and that offer the best competitive advantage. For instance, if you’re dealing with a new startup in your space, highlight your stability and experience—and update your story by conveying how you can deliver better than the new guys.

Disruption is happening everywhere, so look for similar interlopers in other verticals to see how companies in that category responded. For example, if you’re in insurance, see how disruptors in healthcare or banking came into the market and how the incumbent brands responded. It’s a great way to gain perspective and set your strategy.

Not-so-good reasons to rebrand.

Rebranding isn't always the answer. Here are a few examples of times you should find other ways to move your business forward.

You should NOT rebrand...

1

To fix a business issue.

If your customers are unhappy and your NPS is spiraling, you need to fix your business before you even consider updating your brand. A new brand can do a lot for your company, but it can't cure performance problems or process gaps—and until those are addressed, rebranding is a poor use of your resources.

2

Because you need “something.”

If you can't articulate a clear reason for rebranding, then you probably don't need to do it. If you sense that something's missing and your brand could use a boost, consider opting for one of the alternatives to branding on [page 9](#) of this guide.

3

Because “it's time.”

While it's important to keep your brand relevant, you shouldn't throw away your hard-earned equity just because you've grown bored with your logo or your story. If your brand is working—if it's engaging your customers and doing a good job of conveying your value—then it's usually wise to leave it alone, or consider doing a light visual refresh, developing a targeted campaign, or updating specific marketing materials.

4

If you're not ready.

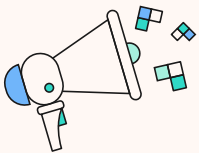
This one is a bit of a catchall. But if your business is in the midst of a transition, working through some fundamental issues, or simply lacking the resources to rebrand the right way, it's best to wait until things are back on track and your organization is in (or nearing) a position of stability.

Branding alternatives.

So what should you do if your brand needs a boost, but you're not ready for a rebrand?

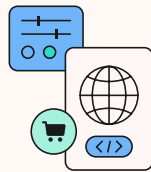
These are some effective ways to get people to engage with your brand and see the value your business provides.

Not ready to rebrand? You should try...



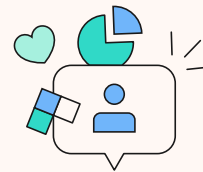
Meaningful messaging.

Tell a more compelling story by updating your messaging. This can really boost engagement with your customers—whether it's in person, on your website, or through your marketing materials, even if your visual identity and tagline stay the same. You can then tailor your new messaging to specific key audiences to ensure that it resonates and helps you connect with them more meaningfully.



A new digital strategy.

Develop a coordinated set of online engagement campaigns designed to deliver the right message to the right people at the right moment in their decision-making journey. A new campaign with its own theme and style can serve as a new way to tell the story of your business's value without going through a full rebrand. Bonus: What works well in these campaigns can become the foundation of your rebrand when the time is right.



Focusing on your people.

Your people are the lifeblood of your brand—they create the experiences that make your customers happy, build loyalty, and drive preference. If a rebranding isn't in the cards, take a closer look at your talent strategy—and consider building an employer brand that motivates your people, attracts top candidates, and fuels your success from the inside out.

What should you do **right now**?

Trying to figure out what's right for your business? We're happy to talk about it!

1

Define your goals.

Take some time to determine what you're trying to achieve as an organization. These can be sales goals, strategic priorities, the desired outcome of a multiyear plan, your vision, or likely a combination of all of these and more. The point is to figure out where you want your business to be in the mid- to long-term—so you can determine if your current brand can get you there.

2

Assess your brand.

The next step is to take inventory of your brand. Do some research with your customers and your employees to see what they value and what needs to improve. Reach out into the marketplace to see how people who don't know your brand react to it upon first contact. The goal is to understand how your brand is regarded and the equity it has built, so you can make informed decisions about when (and if) to rebrand.

3

Check your budget.

Rebranding can cost anywhere from \$150K and up, depending on factors like the scale of your organization, how much research is required, focus testing and brand iteration, and more. And that's before considering the cost of redoing your website, updating your collateral, renovating your infrastructure, etc. Rebranding is a large financial investment—and it's worth every penny if it's what your business needs, as long as your organization can afford to do it right.

4

Decide how much you can afford to change.

If your budget won't allow for a full rebrand or you've determined you don't need to redo everything, focus on other ways you can tell a more compelling story and better engage with prospects: new sales enablement materials, new messaging, or targeted campaigns. Set a budget and explore the possibilities!

5

Do... something.

You downloaded this guide because you sense the need to tell a better, more effective story to your customers. Every step forward brings you one step closer to your brand becoming its most compelling, engaging, and powerful. Whether it's a messaging session with internal stakeholders or working with a partner to create a whole new brand, now's the time to learn, assess, decide, and act.

About JK.

JK is a creative marketing agency and women-owned business with deep experience in branding, employee engagement, and digital marketing.

What makes all of these truly powerful is a compelling story: a reason for people to take notice, to engage, to believe. And that's our specialty—we're expert storytellers.

Whether it's a tweet, a talent campaign, or a total rebranding, we infuse everything we create with just the right blend of information and emotion to create meaningful narratives that drive valuable connections.

We're ready to help you build a B2B brand that builds your business, backed by over 35 years of B2B branding experience and a proven, insight-driven brand development process.

And our size is just right—we're small enough to be responsive and always give you the A-team, and we're large enough to service your business from end to end, from strategy to execution and everything in between.

We're here to be your partner and your guide, ready to help you to find your voice, inspire your people, and connect with the customers who matter most.

