

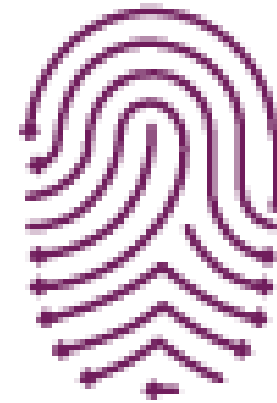
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Corporate Brand Leadership

A Guide for Communication Leaders

May 2023

- 3 Overview
- 6 Stage 1: Professional – Company Identifier
- 18 Stage 2: Pathfinder – Competitive Differentiator
- 28 Stage 3: Pacesetter – Business Driver
- 40 Summary
- 44 Special Thanks



Page's CCO as Pacesetter report described four key dimensions of leadership required of the CCO in an era of enterprise transformation: Corporate Brand, Corporate Culture, Societal Value, and CommTech. This guide offers a deeper dive into corporate brand stewardship, how it is different when led by the chief communication officer (CCO), and practical steps to follow along the journey.

The relevance of Corporate Brand largely depends on the brand portfolio strategy the company follows, allowing the company to manage a portfolio of brands in a coordinated way, such that they maximize returns and build equity in chosen markets and categories.

In a monolithic or branded house strategy, the company uses a single brand. In a house of brands strategy, the company uses multiple brands for marketing-communications towards its target groups. Many organizations use a combination of these strategies.

Monolithic brand strategy

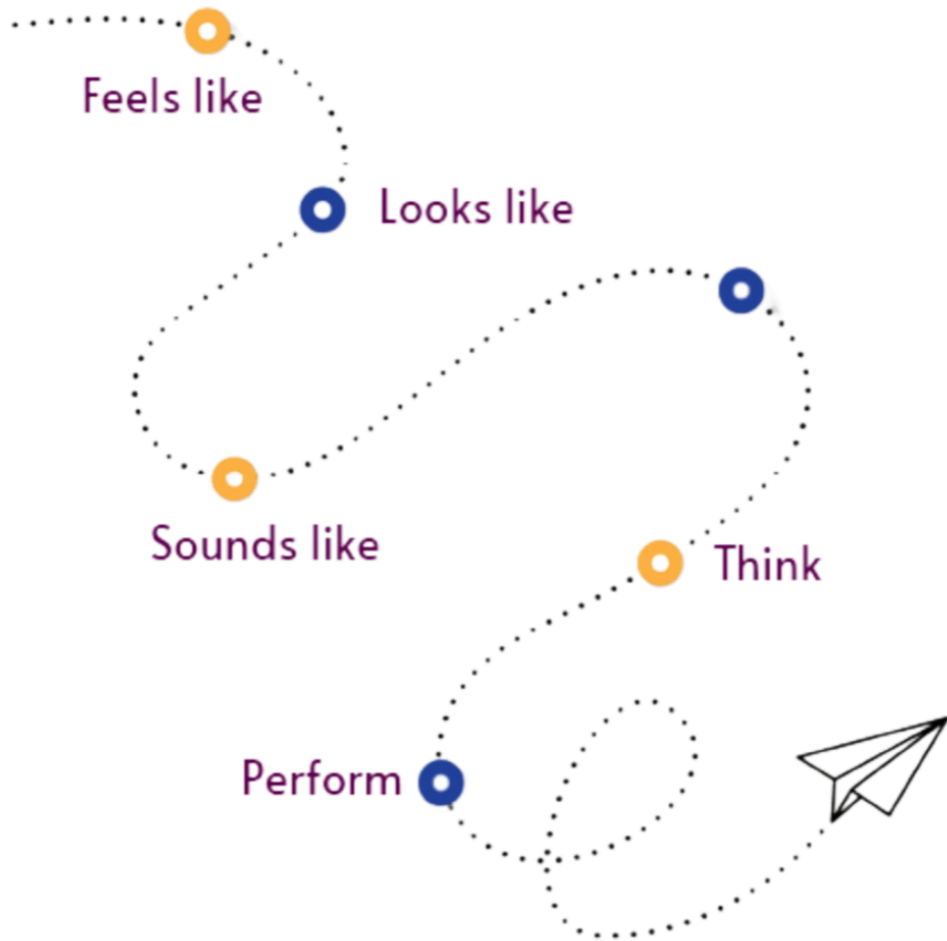


House of brands strategy





The Brand Journey



Effective brand management requires a rigorous enterprise brand system to ensure that every touchpoint and experience with your company authentically manifests its unique character. This spans the entire experience spectrum, from what it means to “look and sound like” for your distinctive enterprise or institution, to how people in the organization “think and perform.”

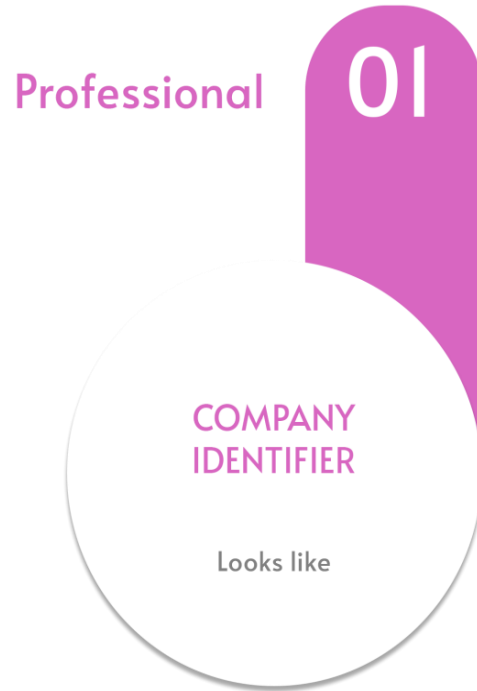
Regardless of the sector, companies that invest more in intangibles grow more.

McKinsey

The full potential of a corporate brand can be maximized when the brand is applied beyond simply a company identifier. In the most ambitious scenario, the Pacesetter phase, the brand is an important driver of business transformation, long-term success and behavior of the entire organization. This requires strong support from business leaders.



Stage I: Professional – Company Identifier



36% of CCOs are at the Professional stage of corporate brand*

* Page survey of CCOs conducted in 2018



Understand where the company is in its brand journey and how it relates to long-term company ambitions.

Often when coming into a new organization or taking on new brand responsibilities, there is a need to:

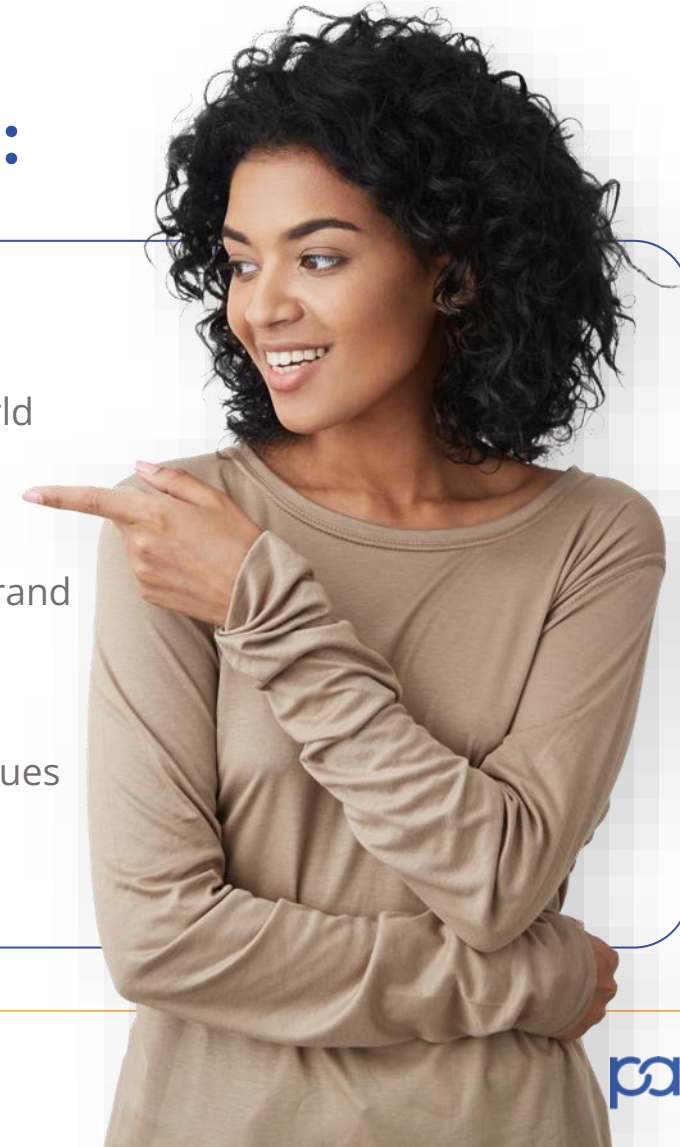
- Conduct an assessment to understand what brand assets exist, how the brand is understood across the organization, and to determine where the company is in its brand journey
- This can be done by reviewing messaging and brand standards and conducting research, formally or informally, by talking to internal and external stakeholders

Key materials to review

- Relevant research reports
- Key business and strategy documents
- Internal and external comms and marketing materials
- Current brand portfolio
- Current brand standards
- Competitive brand review
- Stakeholder interviews (internal and external)

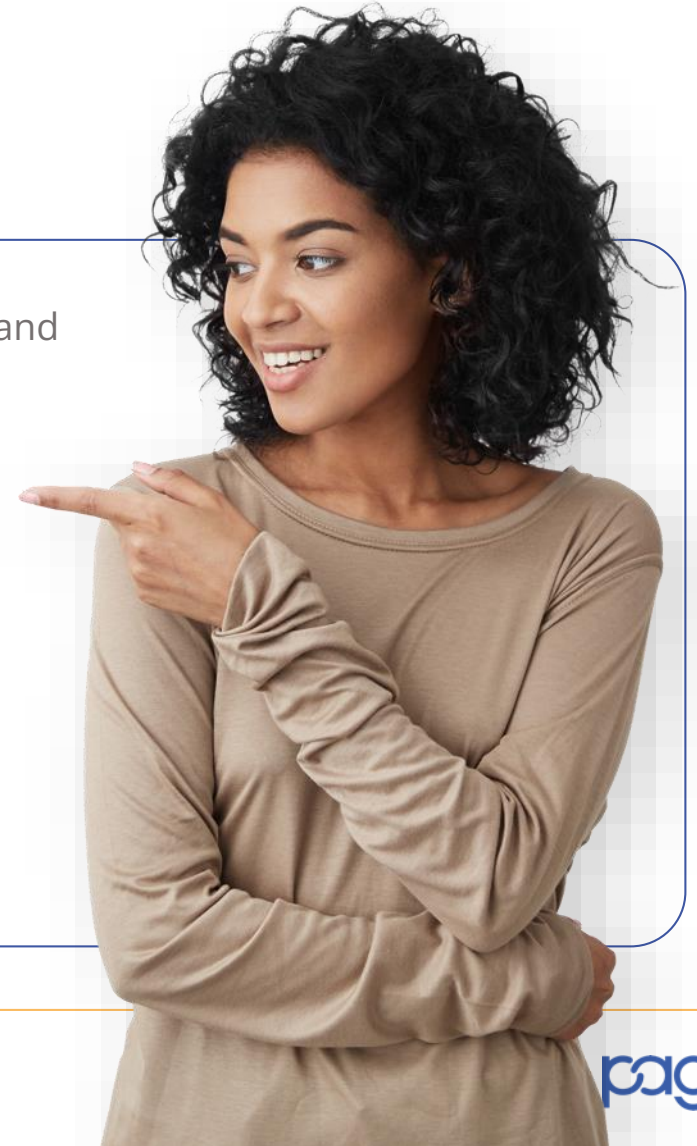
Before addressing perceived gaps in the brand's structure, address these questions:

- What is the problem we are seeking to solve?
- What does your brand stand for? If you went away tomorrow, what would the world miss?
- How do employees, customers and partners experience your brand? Does your brand framework communicate who you are and what you offer?
- Who can help you in raising the issues, and what will be needed to address the issues (people, process, technology, budget)?



Before addressing gaps in the brand's structure, address these questions:

- Do leaders and employees understand the company's mission, core values and brand positioning/attributes/ beliefs?
- Is internal and external messaging clear, consistent and effective?
- What has been the company's history as it relates to brand management?
- Who are the company's key brand advocates and detractors?





1 Develop/Refine the Brand Framework

- Define 'who we are and what we stand for' based on the company's mission, purpose, and values
- Formulate a narrative and supporting messages to help get everyone using same language
- Execute through storytelling, announcements, executive communications, shareholder communications, and sometimes advertising

2 Identify Brand Ambassadors

- Know who they are, build a community and make sure they understand how to activate the framework with their audiences. This requires that you engage them in knowing what the brand stands for and how it contributes to the business in trust, reputation, and performance, and that they are continuously educated to contribute to activating the brand in their community.

3 Define & Implement Visual Identity Standards

- Logos, brand marks, typefaces, color palette and naming conventions establish what it means to “look like” your company. These are the distinct visual cues that communicate your brand identity and personality and differentiate you in the marketplace.

4 Establish Baseline Measurement

- Understand that relevant brand metrics differ between brands and that a one size fits all approach is unlikely to help the brand grow
- Individual brand metrics should meet criteria such as credible, reliable, actionable, predictive, and self-aware
- They should paint a holistic, 360-degree picture on how the brand is perceived in the marketplace and among employees



Stage I: Professional

Output

Key Relationships
Involved

Activities /
Capabilities

Deliverables

Tools

Measurement

- Brand framework:
 - Defines the company's brand position
 - Clearly aligns with the company's mission, business strategy performance goals and core values
 - Describes how the company position should be practically embodied throughout multi-audience experiences (customer, employee stakeholder) and therefore consistently understood and applied across the organization
 - Evolves with a long-term perspective to secure continued relevancy and impact
- Communications and marketing plans and programs embody and advance the company's brand framework



Stage I: Professional

Output

Key Relationships
Involved

Activities /
Capabilities

Deliverables

Tools

Measurement

- CEO/Executive leadership team (supports/approves)
- Legal / Compliance / Finance (consulted)
- Marketing / Comms / HR / Digital / Innovation / Product Development / Supply chain / Operations / Agencies (activators)



Stage I: Professional

Output

Key Relationships
Involved

Activities /
Capabilities

Deliverables

Tools

Measurement

- Immersion / audit of brand framework
- Address framework gaps
- Establish and apply guidelines / training
- Employ consistent trademark and brand management
- Continuous monitoring & data-led performance follow-up



Stage I: Professional

Output

Key Relationships
Involved

Activities /
Capabilities

Deliverables

Tools

Measurement

- Brand framework - strategy
- Brand architecture
- Brand goals and measures
- Nomenclature
- Multi- audience-specific messaging
- Visual identity
- Brand guidelines and governance
- Annual plans



Stage I: Professional

Output

Key Relationships
Involved

Activities /
Capabilities

Deliverables

Tools

Measurement

- Surveys / stakeholder interviews
- Identify processes to manage and empower brand use
- Qualitative / quantitative research
- Brand portal / digital asset hub



Stage I: Professional

Output

Key Relationships
Involved

Activities /
Capabilities

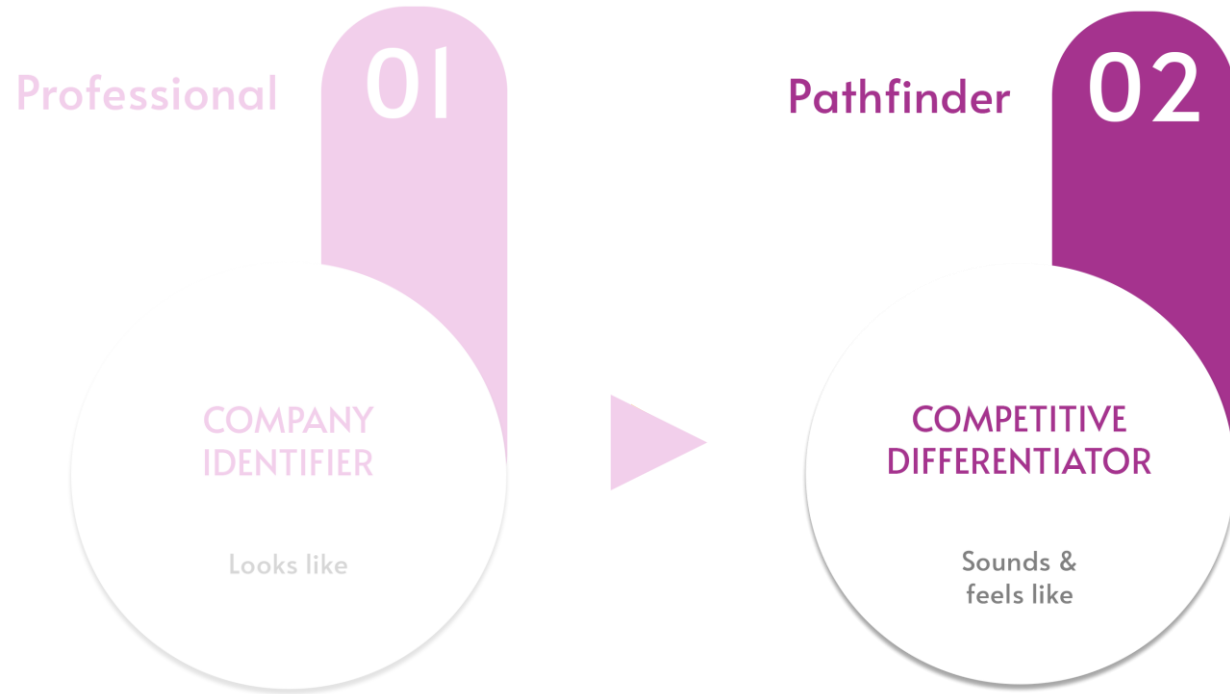
Deliverables

Tools

Measurement

- High level brand measures (multi-audience): awareness, perception, trust, and preference (integrated into total company performance, not measured or reported separately)
- Net promoter score (where relevant)
- Web analytics
- Multi-audience engagement
- Annual evaluation of company strategies and plans that connect to brand framework
- External brand rankings / third party

Stage 2: Pathfinder – Competitive Differentiator



45% of CCOs are at the Pathfinder stage of corporate brand*

* Page survey of CCOs conducted in 2018



Understanding brand touchpoints and experiences enables you to create targeted reputation management programs to help protect and insulate the brand.

This requires a management system, an understanding of business processes, collaboration with relevant functional and business leaders across the enterprise and KPIs that are different from the previous stage.



Leveraging your brand as a differentiator starts with understanding your unique value and position. Ask yourself these key questions:

- How is the brand driving preference?
- How do stakeholders experience your brand? What do they expect, and how do they navigate your corporate portfolio?
- Which brands have equity (if there are multiple in the portfolio)? How do you build around those brands and address/migrate the ones that do not?
- Where does the company want brand equity to be?
- Does your brand connect emotionally across audiences?
- Do brand and reputation align? Where are the gaps?



Leveraging the brand as a differentiator starts with understanding your brand's value and position. Ask yourself these key questions:

- Are there different audiences with different needs?
- Are there risks to consider?
- How do we organize and communicate our key capabilities, market segments, and offerings?
- Does the brand story clarify the value you provide customers?





Identifying gaps between what the brand stands for and how it is perceived and experience helps define the roadmap.

- Establish benchmarks and ongoing measurement
- Create a brand operating model
- Conduct customer insights research
- Activate brand strategy
- Create advanced naming systems
- Identify strategic and tactical actions to deliver on brand strategy in the marketplace and workplace
- Create brand communities to actively manage brand governance

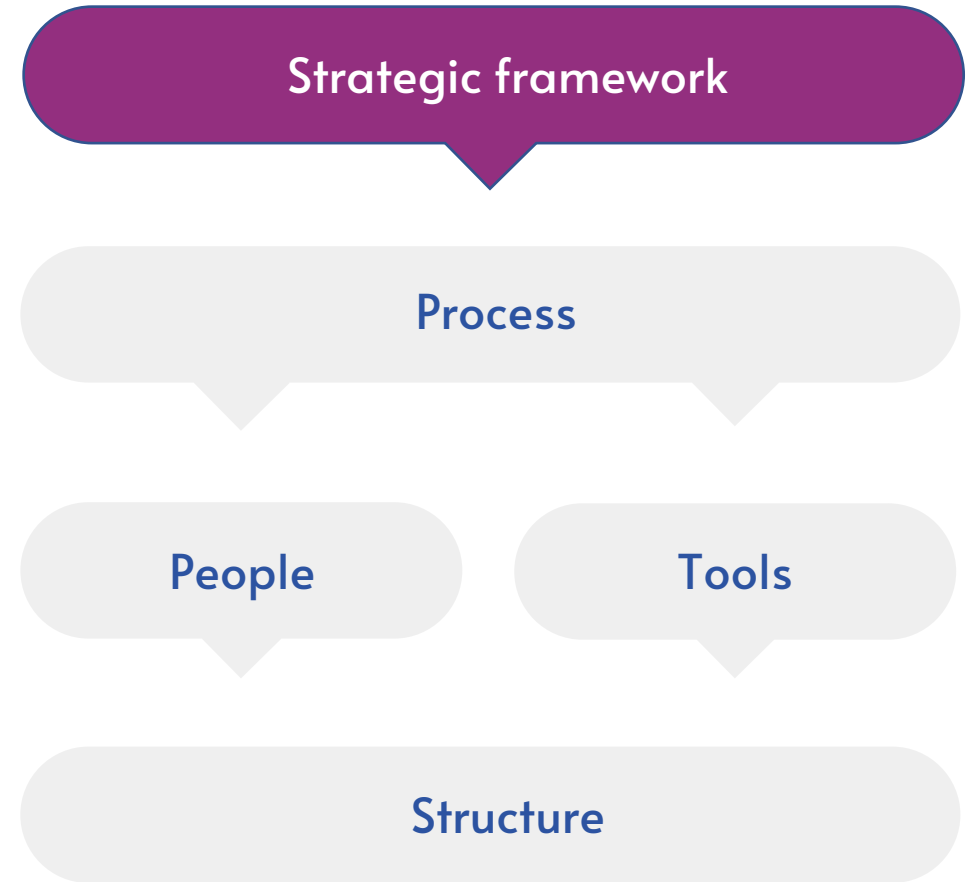
Deliverables

- Branded environments
- 360 degree experiences
- Advanced visual identity design, video and motion graphics
- Digital and social media programs
- Brand experience and ambassador programs



Organizations that manage their brand well are more successful in delivering their brand promise than companies that pay less attention to the way the brand is organized. In other words, the better a brand is managed, the better it performs.

Hence why it is essential to establish and implement clear brand governance. The desired way of doing this is to define a brand operating model.





Stage 2: Pathfinder

Activities / Deliverables

Capabilities

Measurement / Metrics

Tools

- Corporate narrative
- Verbal (and sonic/voice) identity
- Define Brand Operating System
- Brand campaigns
- Internal branding / brand education
- Brand experience mapping and customer journey mapping
- Integrated communications (corporate, marketing, internal)
- Social media listening
- Appoint and educate Brand Council & Brand Ambassadors



Stage 2: Pathfinder

Activities / Deliverables

Capabilities

Measurement / Metrics

Tools

- Copywriting / content marketing / content management
- Search engine optimization
- Concept Development
- Customer Experience Management / UX
- Design & Brand Management expertise



Stage 2: Pathfinder

Activities / Deliverables

Capabilities

Measurement / Metrics

Tools

- Brand compliance
- Reputation
- Brand attributes
- Sentiment
- Brand experience / monitoring proof points
- Brand preference / consideration
- Net promoter score (NPS)
- Customer experience



Stage 2: Pathfinder

Activities / Deliverables

Capabilities

Measurement / Metrics

Tools

- CommTech
- Creation tools
- Workflow management
- Content management
- Marketing automation

Stage 3: Pacesetter – Business Driver



19% of CCOs are at the Pacesetter stage of corporate brand *

* Page survey of CCOs conducted in 2018

Fully integrated brands drive business decisions. Ask yourself these key questions:

- Are the brand, business strategy, reputation, and societal value all in alignment?
- Does a shifting business strategy or changing market dynamics necessitate a fresh look at brand framework and architecture?
- Do we need to reconsider brand due to organic and/or M&A growth?
- How do we get investors to understand better the value proposition or change how they value our business?

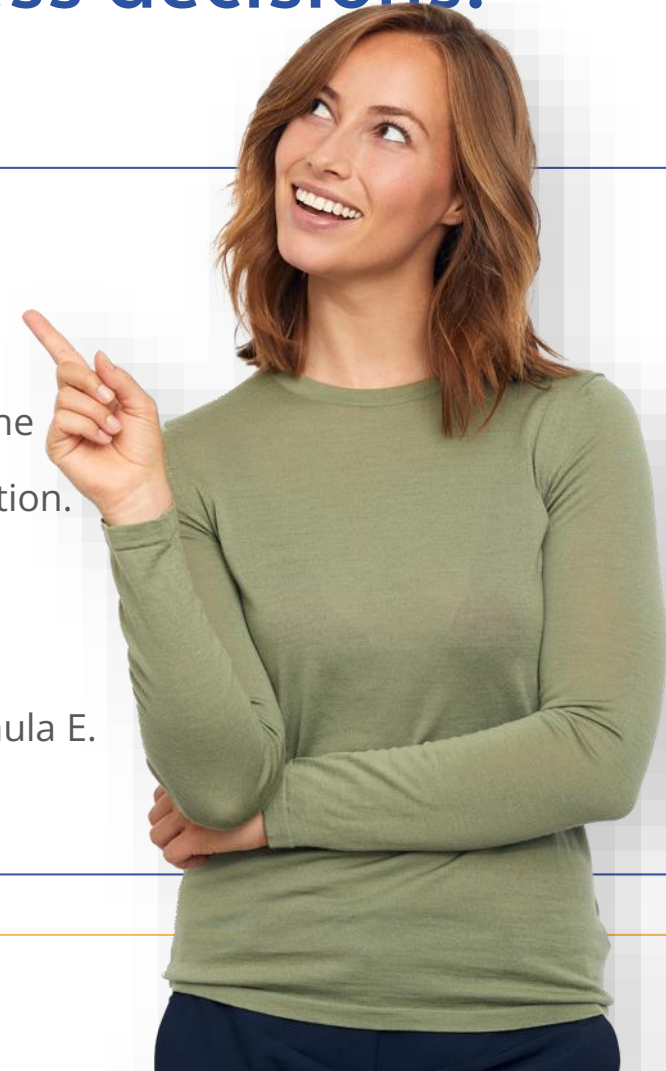




Fully integrated brands drive business decisions. Ask yourself these key questions:

- Which are your key Brand Flagship Initiatives?

Manage your brand as a business transformer through signature brand experiences. Identify, instrument and scale brand flagship initiatives. Identify the strongest elements of your brand and scale them up as a “flag” for a new direction. For example, through iconic partnerships/activations (Volvo Ocean Race), what Apple has been doing with its biannual proprietary Apple events or ABB, who activated their electrification-strategy through their title-partnership with Formula E.





Societal value of the brand

Use the definitions, measurements and management systems that close the gap between brand and reality, in combination with related management systems, to define, measure and enact the organization's societal value system (see Societal Value Progression Path), to ensure that the company's impact on society at large is on brand.

Brand Engagement

- Brand-driven business decision making
- Brand-driven human resource management
- Brand community management (internal and external)
- Brand education



Brand Experience

- Data-driven insights for brand experience management
- Multi-sensory branding
- Focus on experience through key touchpoints (flag ship experiences)

Financial Value

- Brand valuation
- Brand licensing
- Brand performance analytics



1 Align with Your Company's State of Transformation

Change is continuous currently in organization – acquisitions, changing market dynamics, changing customer profiles, innovation, etc.

Stewarding brand means that there is continuous adaptation of the brand to maintain alignment in conjunction with the business strategy and other transformational processes. In this phase brand or business strategy may take lead depending on the organizational focus

2 Apply Brand to Societal Value

Use the definitions, measurements, and management systems that close the gap between brand and reality, in combination with related management systems, to define, measure and enact the organization's societal value system to ensure that the company's impact on society at large is on brand



3 Future-proof Your Brand Governance

Regularly assess your brand organization in the light of needs of stakeholder groups, the company's strategy and external trends and developments. Pacesetter brand leaders anticipate and help lead the discussions at this stage

4 Apply Brand to Culture

Use the definitions, measurements, and management systems that close the gap between brand and reality, in combination with related management systems, to define, measure and transform the organization's culture to ensure that employee behavior is on brand



- Customer insights research
- Brand strategy activation
- Instrument brand flagship initiatives
- Advanced naming systems
- Identify strategic and tactical actions to deliver on brand strategy in marketplace and workplace
- Create brand communities to actively manage brand governance

Deliverables

- Demonstrate future-focused intent and connectedness to investors and stakeholders; may require transformation and change management plans if changes to business strategy / brand strategy changes are required
- Develop mechanisms to actively engage with community or the wider world



Stage 3: Pacesetter

Activities / Deliverables

Capabilities

Measurement / Metrics

Tools

- Multi sensory branding
- Brand analytics / performance measurement (full brand funnel)
- Brand-oriented HR (employer branding, talent acquisition, performance management, learning & development, employee engagement)
- Brand-driven innovation (e.g. product development)
- Brand licensing, eventually through a brand-company
- Ongoing brand education (online/offline) cascaded through brand ambassadors community
- External brand ambassador programme (e.g.; customers involved in testing of products)
- Brand valuation



Stage 3: Pacesetter

Activities / Deliverables

Capabilities

Measurement / Metrics

Tools

- Brand embedded leadership
- Data analytics / business intelligence
- Brand valuation
- Human Experience Management
- Community management

Stage 3: Pacesetter

Activities / Deliverables

Capabilities

Measurement / Metrics

Tools

- Relation between brand metrics and business metrics (return on marketing investment, return on sales, return on investment, net profit, stock prices)
- Brand equity



Stage 3: Pacesetter

Activities / Deliverables

Capabilities

Measurement / Metrics

Tools

- Integrated Brand Ecosystem (CommTech/Marketing Automation, Business intelligence Tools)
- Artificial Intelligence based digital interfaces



Summary

Summary

Professional

01

COMPANY
IDENTIFIER

Looks like

Establish Identity: Who the company is and what it stands for

- Purpose
- Company narrative
- Brand Architecture
- Visual identity standards
- KPIs: Recognition, awareness, perception; Rankings on third-party lists; Compliance with design standards
- 36% of CCOs are at the Professional stage of corporate brand*



Summary

Pathfinder

02

COMPETITIVE
DIFFERENTIATOR

Sounds &
feels like

Manage brand as a competitive differentiator

- Communicate the company narrative
- Develop brand attributes as decision criteria
- Brand performance measured against peers
- Gap analysis on “moments of truth”
- KPIs: Performance by brand attribute and stakeholder
- 45% of CCOs are at the Pathfinder stage of corporate brand*



* Page survey of CCOs conducted in 2018

Summary



Brand as lever of transformation, on-brand experiences

- Instrument key touchpoints
- Apply brand to culture and societal value
- Establish/ participate in management system
- KPIs: Net Promoter Score, user reviews, job offers accepted
- 19% of CCOs are at Pacesetter stage of corporate brand *

* Page survey of CCOs conducted in 2018



Special Thanks

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