

# Ep 74: The Importance of Brand in the B2B Space

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- Brand recognition builds credibility and recognition.
  - Too many companies in the B2B space believe that relationships and reputation is what opens doors and makes a business successful. That is definitely part of it. But if you do not start from a foundation of a brand and intentionally build it from the ground up, a few things can go wrong:
    - A disjointed experience leaves people scratching their heads about what you stand for.
    - The industry makes up its own interpretation of you and what you offer.
    - You lose control of the narrative and subsequent leadership in the space.
  - By starting with brand and cultivating YOUR story, you stay in the driver seat AND build consistency across all aspects of your brand.
- Successful marketing needs a strong brand to differentiate.
  - Distraction by "all the things" without a strategic brand POV can lead to a lot of materials that don't say a lot and tell whatever story is the "flavor of the day".
  - A marketing campaign needs to be tied closely to the foundation of the brand. When this doesn't happen, there ends up being a lot of 'category-speak' and 'me-too' strategies that take place. The industry is talking to each other, their competition and themselves vs. talking to the clients they are trying to target in an effective way.
  - This makes it EASIER to build your marketing materials, not harder. It takes a level of discipline and investment on the upfront, but alignment and objective decision making based on the criteria of the brand becomes easier.
- The sales process starts with a search for brand.
  - Search is big in the manufacturing space, which is why it is important that everyone knows your name. With the digital world we are in, if people can plug in your name in a search bar, it eliminates them searching for generic terms that give a chance of your competitors showing up.
  - In defining your brand, you also identify things like key principles, services, offerings, etc. that your client is looking for, which makes the tie between what you are offering and what they might be searching for.
  - Once they find you, they go to your website to assess whether you are who you say you are and can offer what they are looking for.
- Brand helps you build long-term relationships that continue to pay dividends.
  - Once you made the sale and have a new client, now you must continue to cultivate that connection and deliver the experience they are expecting from you based on their sales process. You want them to have a strong bond with you. It is easier to keep current clients then sell new ones. You want them to recommend you and become ambassadors for your brand.
  - This is also your ability to stay differentiated. Gardner Business Media is THE leader people look to in the manufacturing space. This is because they have continued to cultivate their brand all of these years and have EARNED the reputation and continued to earn it through the years.

## Areas to address immediately are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Action Plan:

Action	Timing	Progress	Complete