

4 Ways that Brand Architecture Empowers Sub Brands

Don't just create your sub brand, give them a reason to exist and thrive

- It gives each sub brand a "home" under the master brand.
 - There comes a time in a company's life cycle where there are multiple brands, products, services and offerings and they all need to be organized in a way that ties them back to the master brand. Another way to think about this that might be more intuitive is "parent" and "child" brand. They all have a role in the "family", know that role and also know how they contribute to the bigger picture.
 - What does that look like? The master brand needs to be clearly defined. The master brand must have a brand story and positioning, character, MVV before the sub brands can be defined with intention and organized appropriately.
 - If this work is complete, then your job is to create these for all of the sub brands. This does NOT mean that you go and create brand new ones for all sub brands. The exercise is to take what exists at the high level and give each sub brand a "home", you nuance these tools so that they work for the sub brand in both the ways they are similar and different to the master brand.
- It gives each sub brand its own visual and verbal toolkit for strategy creation.
 - The start of the toolkit is nuancing the strategic tools.
 - From there, you have to take all of the executional elements and complement then with additional ones for each sub brand.
 - This is inclusive of logos, colors, fonts, iconography, photography treatment, messaging toolkits, visual executions, etc.
 - It is supplementary to the main toolkit, and those should be the predominant elements with these assisting in pushing toward differentiation.
 - CAVEAT: There are different approaches here that dictate how closely the toolkit are tied to the master brand.
 - The point is to build the toolkits so that the sub brands are easily connected to the master brand, but can also stand on their own two feet when appropriate. And remember the family analogy; they should all fit together as well under the "parent" brand.
- It unites the sub brands and creates success criteria.
 - When you have the brand architecture, it makes it much easier to set goals for each sub brand against the broader initiatives and also define success.
 - It also makes it easier to stay on strategy when creating for the sub brands- visuals, verbal communications, strategic documents, advertisements, promotions, ways for employees to talk, you name it.
 - It helps the sub brands know their "guardrails" without penning them in too much, and also leads to objective decisions about what is or is not on brand.
 - SIDE NOTE: It helps the master brand decide what other sub brands are or are not appropriate to the family of brands.
- It allows for cross promotion and leveraging the collective impact of the sub brands.
 - When brand architecture is established, it lets the sub brands see how they relate to the master brand and to each other. This means that when they can see how they all "fit", they can see bigger opportunities to "cross pollinate" and support each other.
 - It promotes bigger picture thinking and alleviates the desire to be competitive- the sum is greater than each individual part.
 - CAVEAT: Company goals must be built at the highest level to achieve the success of the brands working together.

