DIY Brand Audit
How can you tell if your brand is due for an overhaul before you hire a branding consultant?
What is a Brand Audit?

A Brand Audit is a review and diagnosis of anything and everything your organization touches: things like company website, signage, on-hold messaging, sales presentations, or tradeshow materials. In some ways, it’s a type of SWOT test, pointing out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to your brand as a whole.

PERFORMING A BRAND AUDIT

If you’ve been in business for several years, you may be surprised at the clues your past marketing efforts can provide for carving out your future Bold Brand.

Who should perform the brand audit? Every professional services firm is different, so there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Regardless of whether you assemble an in-house team or hire an outside consultant or agency, you need one very important thing: honest objectivity.

WHERE TO START

To help guide the process, use the following pages as a simple outline of the many facets of your brand you should explore.
## What to audit?

Here's a list of the most common brand assets you should review. Your needs may vary.

**INTERNAL:**
- Positioning
- Brand values
- Unique selling proposition, brand promise, or brand essence
- Brand Voice
- Culture
- Product/service positioning

**EXTERNAL:**
- Corporate identity—logos and other brand elements
- Collateral—brochures, print materials, tradeshow displays, etc.
- Website
- Social media
- Sponsorships & memberships
- News/PR
- Content marketing and other assets—blogs, white papers, case studies, articles, books, etc.
- Testimonials
- Videos

**SYSTEMS:**
- Corporate identity/brand standards
- HR policies/on-boarding process
- Sales process
- Client touch points
- Internal systems
- Customer service systems
What about ROI?

In today’s increasingly complex market, there is a hyper-focus (and rightfully so) on return on investment (ROI). Of course, ROI isn’t just a tactic to keep the bean counters satisfied. Weighing the financial benefits of your branding decisions throughout the process will help guide difficult decisions, and determine whether the reward outweighs the risk.

One way you can demonstrate ROI is by conducting a brand audit before and after a rebrand. This will show where the branding exercise helped improve systems and close gaps.

What level of ROI do you expect your rebranding process to yield?

DO THE MATH

How many new clients/projects would you have to win to justify the costs of a rebrand?

For many professional services firms, gaining one or two new clients as a direct result of the rebranding process would be more than enough to justify the investment.
How are you positioned in the market?

POSITIONING

- Who are you?
- What is your market?
- What is your product of service?
- What is your Unique Selling Proposition (USP)?
- What is your brand essence?
- What are your brand values?
- Describe your corporate culture. Does it fit your brand?
- What is your elevator speech? Mission? Vision?
- Would everyone in your company describe your brand similarly?
- Are important decision-makers aware of your branding and marketing initiatives?
Describe your brand tone, look & feel.

VOICE AND STYLE

- Describe your brand voice.
- Review sample headlines.
- Review sample copy.
- How do you use your company or brand name in possessive, plural, or in combination with other items?
- How do you write your company name? All caps, title case, shorthand, something else?

VISUAL IDENTITY

- Is your name trademarked or registered?
- Do you have a single logo or trademark?
- Is it used consistently across your materials?
Gather all of your collateral.

**COLLATERAL**

- Round up samples of your materials—brochures, print materials, and print ads.
- Do you have a tradeshow display?
- Do all of your materials look like they’re from the same company?
- Are any of them outdated, or formatted in an inappropriate style?
- Is your brand used consistently, following a standard set of rules?
- Are the colors consistent across various pieces?
Let’s get digital.

WEBSITE
- Search performance—can you be found online when you search for your name, or your product or service?
- What about your core competencies? Do you show up when they’re searched for within your location?

SOCIAL MEDIA
- Are your social media sites up to date? Do they accurately reflect your brand?
- Are you utilizing each social media platform to its fullest potential in an effort to increase your brands’ awareness in your marketing place?
- Are your logo elements correct and consistent on all your social media platforms?
Where else does your brand go?

OTHER BRAND OPPORTUNITIES

- Sponsorships/civic involvement/memberships
- News/PR
- External assets—speaking engagements, articles, books, blogs, etc.
- Testimonials
- Videos
- HR Policies/on-boarding process
- Internal systems
- Customer service
- Internal surveys
- Client surveys
What does the future look like?

Once you've updated your brand, how will you answer the following?

- What does your brand currently look like?
- What types of assets, tools, collateral, or stories do you want to have?
- How will your firm demonstrate expertise?
- How will the market perceive you differently?
- Which of these pieces do you have now, and which are you missing?
- What are the first priorities for reaching your future state?
HOMEWORK

REVIEW THE RESULTS OF YOUR DIY BRAND AUDIT

☐ Rally your team and leadership to plan for the next steps.
☐ Who else should review your findings?
☐ Does your in-house team have the expertise to accomplish these goals?
☐ Will you need to interview branding consultants to help build your brand?
☐ Hire the right team—one that best fits your personality, goals, budget and timeline.
Want to learn more?

WE WROTE THE BOOK ON BRANDING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES.

Bold Brand – The new rules for differentiating, branding, and marketing your professional services firm, by Josh Miles, was just published by Content Marketing Institute. This book is based on Bold Brand™, the proprietary branding process created by Josh Miles, branding consultant and founder of MilesHerndon. Our Bold Brand™ process uncovers the most compelling attributes of what you offer—and uniquely positions your brand to leverage the potential of your organization.

Download a free chapter at www.boldbrand.com
About MilesHerndon:

MilesHerndon is a branding, design, and marketing firm located in Downtown Indianapolis.

Our focus is holistic, brand-centric engagements where we can help impact each organization in a meaningful way.

Contact MilesHerndon to learn how rebranding your firm will help you stand out from the competition.

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