

Business, ultimately relies on TRUST. So when was the last time you took stock in yours?

Brandspa offers the Strategic Brand Audit—
a powerful tool for measuring
your brand's health, strength and value.

In affiliation with one of the world's most progressive strategic research affiliates, Brandspa now offers organizations the first comprehensive research tool created to measure, manage and master the dynamic components of *Intangible Value*, the driver of corporate valuation. Our work is based on the application of this research methodology to analyze and compare scores of companies, public and private.

As a matter of nomenclature, we find Intangible Value (an FASB term) a label that is fundamentally at odds with the stated goal. We prefer to call this force The Corporate Brand. By use of the term "brand" we do not intend to invoke such imagery as logos, taglines, advertisements or any of the executional layer of outward communication. Instead, we define Corporate Brand as the essence of the corporation from inception to present as it exists in the minds of customers, prospects, employees, partners, pundits and shareholders.

The nub of this important new management tool is encapsulated in this formula, which is also the foundation of the perception studies we undertake to measure and help you manage your Corporate Brand:

$$B = (R * M * V) C$$

B = Brand. Perceptions and expectations that drive valuation and shape your destiny
R = Reputation. The trust you've earned. A summary of your Past
M = Momentum. Your clout. How well you're executing. A snapshot of the Present
V = Vision. Your unique perspective on the Future. Your roadmap to success
C = Connection. The strength of your bonds with constituencies and the credibility you carry.

Highly valued corporations manage to balance Reputation, Momentum and Vision. The dot.com companies, for example, were entirely dependent on Vision and couldn't execute well enough or quickly enough to establish Momentum. As startups, most had no Reputation to fall back on.

More recently, the most egregious examples of corporate fraud were companies living only in the present, jacking earnings at the expense of both their Reputation and their future.

In the current economic slowdown, in which so many companies have become risk adverse to the point of paralysis, the Future has been put on hold. Truth is, only Vision has the compelling power to get things moving again, to reestablish Connection with customers and to replace stagnation with growth.

Understanding where your corporation stands in each dimension-- R, M and V-- enables you to understand in dramatic new ways the strengths and weaknesses that are affecting your progress.

The Methodology

Our proprietary research tool is used to create a benchmark Brand Index for your corporation, a numerical value on a scale of 1-100. This benchmark represents an overall Brand value as well as values for Reputation, Momentum and Vision components and sub components. Both current customers and prospects are polled via email or phone for attitudes and perceptions towards your corporation compared with two or more direct competitors. The Connection power and credibility of alternative strategic directions are tested as well to identify high potential future opportunities.

The result is a highly insightful, immediately actionable report that uniquely combines a) customer wants and needs and b) competitive strengths and weaknesses with c) your corporate competencies and opportunities. It can point to remedial action needed to assure higher success rates for future initiatives. It can define strategic areas of focus for greatest impact. And it can be repeated at regular intervals to track progress and shifts in the competitive landscape.

Trust, Validation and Motivation

The Brand Index report we provide goes farther than traditional market research on several planes because it is designed to reveal truths about your Corporate Brand, the intangible value that drives your market capitalization in the long run.

For example, the Reputation component of your Brand Index provides insights into the level of Trust you've created in the marketplace. Trust is the critical linchpin in all commercial transactions and relationships and, unfortunately, is the one component of the Corporate Brand that has most eroded over the past few years. Without repairing or reinvigorating Trust, any attempt to re-establish Momentum in the marketplace will be hampered.

Similarly, the Momentum component of your Brand Index identifies marketplace validation or "buy in" to your current strategies and messages. Earnings and growth are measures of Momentum. But in an era where growth is hard to come by and earnings are impacted not just by reality but by accounting reform and understandable skepticism, your Momentum score provides an alternative marketplace answer to "how are we doing right now?"

Are customers, prospects and partners Motivated to reconnect with you and get on your bandwagon, so to speak? The Vision component of the Brand Index goes a long way towards revealing attitudes about the relevance, impact and importance of your Vision as well as your credibility to claim the higher ground you seek vis a vis competition.

Brand Index results are provided initially in an interpretative presentation and are provided in hardcopy and digital format as well.

How You Will Use Your Brand Index

There are five immediate uses of your Brand Index that can make it an important strategic tool for competitive advantage.

See the Big Picture. Intangible Value goes wholly unmanaged in most corporations, largely because there has never before been a unified approach to understanding it and quantifying its components. Your Brand index will enable you to see your corporation in a whole new light, and to discover how perceptions and expectations for your future, if left untended, work like self-fulfilling prophecies.

Enhance your Valuation. The quarterly reporting trap can mislead top management into focusing overwhelmingly on short-term earnings. Earnings are essential. But they have nowhere near the impact on valuation of a strong Corporate Brand. Incorporating a discipline to measure and manage influences on your Intangible Value gives you enormous new leverage to enhance shareholder value. Your Brand Index is a powerful new tool for Investor Relations.

Remove the Obstacles. Is some flaw in your past, a stain on your reputation blocking opportunities for growth? Are misconceptions about your market standing, size and profitability shortchanging the real strengths of your company? Are mixed messages causing prospects to second guess the wisdom of including you in their consideration set?

Our Brand analysis can discover these and other situations that are obstacles to getting ahead. And we can help you define specific initiatives to repair reputation and leverage momentum for greater advantage.

Validate your Vision. By contrasting customer and prospects reactions to various articulations of the future, in the context of both your company and key competitors, we can identify winning directions that are relevant, impactful, differentiating—and not available to your competitors!

Because we elevate Brand to the corporate level, rather than treating it as simply a marketing concept, we are able to discover reactions and predisposition to your strategy, not just your messaging. Your vision is validated at a higher, more meaningful level.

Focus your Resources. It's hard to change the past. The present is what it is. The Brand Index emphasizes the importance of focusing on the future—your Vision. By discovering the impact a well articulated vision has on your Intangible Value you'll be better able to focus resources on making that vision come about.

How Your Company Can Benefit

Establishing a Brand Index benchmark enables companies to compare perceptions and expectations about their companies against both public and private competitors. You can use your Brand Index to build the case for valuations close to or above public competitors with similar Brand Indexes.

And our Brand Index report will provide all the useful insights into your Reputation, Momentum and Vision.

Learn More

Brandspa helps companies, who won't settle for parity, attain and maintain market leadership. To learn more about the value of establishing a Brand index benchmark for your corporation, or to schedule an initial consultation, contact us at 973. 509.2728