

4 Misconceptions early-stage tech startups have about branding, and what's actually true

Unveiling the intricacies of these concepts can open doors to your startup success. Branding often takes a backseat for early-stage technology startups. In the beginning, nascent companies have a myriad of other priorities to tackle, leaving little time to delve into the intricacies of colour palettes and logo design.

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Brand guidelines are often an afterthought, with entrepreneurs dedicating sleepless nights to more pressing matters.

During my conversations with entrepreneurs from various industries, I've come across recurring missteps that can lead to headaches for marketers and senior leadership, not to mention wasted promotional budgets.

Recognising the significance of addressing these misconceptions, I aim to shed light on the most common ones that startups encounter.

In this article, I'll delve into four specific misconceptions and explore the untapped opportunities to maximise value right from the foundation. Let's unravel the mysteries surrounding startup branding and discover how to make the most of it.

1. "Branding is just about logo and tagline"

Many early-stage startups mistakenly believe that branding is solely

about creating a catchy logo and memorable tagline. However, branding encompasses much more than just visual elements. It involves defining the company's values, positioning, messaging, and overall customer experience.

2. "Branding is only about how things look"

Another misconception is that branding is solely focused on aesthetics. While visual identity is an important aspect of branding, it is not the only factor. Branding also involves creating a consistent and compelling brand story, building emotional connections with customers, and delivering a unique brand experience.

3. "Branding is the same as marketing"

Some startups confuse branding with marketing. In reality, branding is a holistic approach that encompasses all touchpoints with customers, including product design, customer service, and overall perception of the company or product.

4. "Branding is not necessary because the product speaks for itself"

Many early-stage startups believe that if they have a great product, branding is not necessary. However, even the best products need effective branding to differentiate themselves in the market, build trust with customers, and create a strong identity.

Let's explore how branding has been utilised by Uber, the global ride-hailing platform.

Uber is known for revolutionising the transportation industry. When Uber first emerged as a startup, many people associated its branding solely with its iconic logo and tagline, "Get there. Your day belongs to you." However, Uber's success can be attributed to a comprehensive branding

strategy that goes beyond visual elements.

One aspect of Uber's branding strategy is its focus on convenience and accessibility. The company positioned itself as a convenient alternative to traditional taxis, offering users the ability to book rides seamlessly through a mobile app. This positioning is reflected in their messaging, which emphasises the ease and efficiency of using Uber's services.

Uber's brand experience is another crucial component of their branding strategy. The company prioritises providing a consistent and reliable experience for riders. This includes factors such as driver professionalism, vehicle cleanliness, and promptness of service. By ensuring a positive brand experience, Uber has built a reputation for reliability and customer satisfaction.

Moreover, Uber's branding extends to its values and mission. The company has positioned itself as a technology-driven platform that aims to transform transportation by providing safe, efficient, and affordable rides. This aligns with their messaging, which emphasises the importance of innovation, convenience, and improving urban mobility.

In addition to the visual elements, Uber's branding strategy encompasses various marketing initiatives. They leverage digital advertising, social media campaigns, and partnerships to reach their target audience and reinforce their brand identity.

The result is, Uber has created a strong and recognisable brand in the transportation industry by consistently delivering their value and engaging with customers through various touchpoints.

This example illustrates how by taking a holistic approach to branding, startups can establish a strong brand identity, differentiate themselves from competitors, build loyalty among their target audience, and eventually develop a more comprehensive and effective branding

strategy.

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