

WHY BRANDING NOW ?

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Why does branding matter?

A start-up has a lot to worry about: perfecting the product, understanding customers, securing capital, building a strong team. It's reasonable to think that matters of branding – seemingly superficial matters – should come later, rather than sooner.

However, branding is more than just a logo. It bubbles up out of every interaction a person has with your business. It is an outgrowth of your vision and your culture. It is deeply intertwined with the user's experience with you in its entirety.

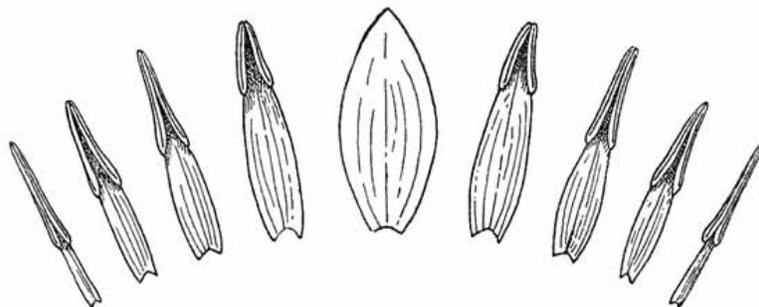
From the moment someone first discovers you – whether on your website, by ad, by word-of-mouth, or some other channel – they begin to form their opinion about you.

Does what they see reflect who you are? Does it reflect who you aspire to be?

The botany of a brand

You might think of the relationship between brand, product, and your business culture as being like a flowering plant.

The Metamorphosis of Plants, a poetic approach to botany written by the German polymath Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, encourages readers to think of all plant organs – stem, root, leaf, petal, pistil, stamen – as transformations (metamorphoses) of a single core organ type. Stem becomes leaf, petal becomes stamen: all are fluid, connected expressions of the same plant “essence.”



“Successive transformation of petal into stamen in white water lily (*Nymphaea alba*)”
(from *The Metamorphosis of Plants*, [2009 edition](#))

Intuitively, you might say “aha – and the flower is the brand!”

Well, yes and no.

The flower is a *part* of the brand. It's the part that people encounter first and that people associate mentally with you: logo, color palette, name.

But it's only a part.

The brand does not end where the flower ends, and the product and culture do not end where the flower begins. Each facet of your business is an expression of the same core DNA – transforming seamlessly into every other part.

To be effective, your branding must be rooted deep.

It must erupt, uninterrupted, from the core of your vision.

But why branding *now*?

Rebranding a recognizable company is an expensive process, and only gets more [expensive](#) and [risky](#) as the company gets more and more established.

The better the brand expresses the spirit of the company from the get-go, the less cumbersome future updates to that brand will be. Consider the evolution of Apple's brand, from Rob Janoff's [website](#):



1976
By Ron Wayne



1977 - 1998
By Rob Janoff



1998 - 2000
Monochrome Version



2001 - 2007
Aqua Version



Current
Chrome Version

Apple was founded in 1976. The original logo, depicting Newton under an apple tree, did not last long. However, the spirit behind it – the brand as a whole – was perfect for the company, and continues to be: championing exploration and new ideas, with a hint of transgression and playfulness.

It's true that in some cases, a young company outgrows its original brand and needs a complete overhaul. But by letting the buds of your brand form early on, you and your client base can align, and evolve together.

Survive? Or blossom?

You know your own company best. However, finding the voice to express who you are in terms of a design sensibility may not be your forté – or maybe you just don't have time for it!

ZeBrand can help you blossom sooner rather than later – while keeping the power to speak for yourself in your hands.