

Glossary of Identity Terms

When the founders of Lippincott & Margulies originated the concept of "corporate identity", the term denoted the most fundamental ways that a company projects its individuality. Over time, the firm has developed sophisticated new methodologies and tools for building and managing distinctive corporate, retail and brand identities. With it has grown a vocabulary of industry terms, honed and refined through client assignments, highlights of which are collected in this glossary for reference.

Brand Equity—The power of a brand—through successful creation of a positive image—to shift demand and change customer behavior.

Brand Identity—The visible elements that can be used to identify a brand (name, logotype, symbol, product configuration, service offering and packaging).

Brand Image—The complete bundle of thoughts a customer has in his or her mind about a company, product or service developed through communications and experience, including the distinguishing "human" characteristics of a brand personality (e.g., warm and friendly, strong and reliable).

Brand Promise—A statement of the enduring, relevant and distinctive benefits customers associate with a product, service or company.

Brand Strategy—Long-term plan for the brand including a determination of key audiences and an understanding of what those audiences need to know about the brand and experience.

Communications Audit—A formal examination of an organization's visual and verbal communications practices.

Communications Plan—A company's communications goals and objectives, and the messages and vehicles that will be used to meet them.

Corporate Identity—The visible elements (name, logotypes, symbols, signs, offices, factories, advertising, trucks, packaging, letterhead, business cards, etc.) which can be used to identify a company.

Corporate Image—The perception that people have of a company, based on a combination of various communications and personal experience.

Corporate Mission—Defines why the organization exists, its core values and intent, and serves to unite organizational behavior.

Culture and Style—Distinctive attributes and competitive advantages relating to organizational beliefs, values and traits; how the organization behaves as it uniquely goes about its business.

Image Attributes—Help define the tone, manner, personality and style of a brand, often the differentiating factor between similar products and services.

Image Criteria—The desired "personality" attributes of a company, product or service that guide name and design

development.

Logotype—A unique group of letterforms that represent the corporate brand. IBM, Nuveen and GAP feature logotypes as their primary form of identity.

Message—The information (facts, strengths, culture/style and future direction) that is most relevant to priority audiences and serve as major content points for all communications.

Name Direction—Creative concepts and approaches that guide name generation.

Name Generation—Creative development of a comprehensive yet focused list of names that address specific image and functional criteria.

Naming—The strategic and creative discipline of developing the most appropriate word or words to identify an organization, product or service.

Nomenclature System—Method for associating divisions, subsidiaries, brands, etc. with the parent company.

Positioning Statement—Provides the underlying platform for communications, reflecting the company's/brand's value proposition. Address:

1. definition—how the company defines its business or how the brand defines its competitive set; who we are and what we do;
2. differentiation—what makes the company/brand special; how we do it; and
3. deliverables—benefit delivered to its customers.

Symbol—A non-typographic element of an abstract or representational nature. Texaco, Apple and Continental Airlines feature graphic symbols as an important form of their identity.

Visual Communications System—A planned method of identification including the use of a company's name, logotype, color palette and secondary typography; a company's graphic "look and feel," applied to a wide cross-section of media to create a cohesive brand presence.