

## Logo Logic

### Your company's brand extends beyond your stationery

By Christine Pilch & Dennis Kunkler  
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Why is it that some professional service firms and practices are still doing well while others are struggling? Firms become successful because they have built a solid reputation. They don't have to work as hard at educating and convincing clients and prospects about who they are, what they do or why they should be trusted, because people already know what they're going to get.

Those firms have established an effective brand. By eliminating their competition in the minds of their clients and prospects, they have, in essence, created a category of one.

#### **More Than Stationery**

Your brand is not just your logo, stationery, web site and other graphic materials. Your brand should communicate who you are, not just how you look. It's the back story of what your graphic materials are designed to project.

One of the quickest ways for firms or practices to prosper is to distinguish themselves by defining exactly who they are and what they stand for, and then concentrating on being that all the time. Your brand grows from your reputation and values and is how you are perceived in the minds of your prospects. You demonstrate it in what you do, what you say and how you say it.

If you can be remembered for something of specific or unique value, you can build a brand around that value. Without a strong brand, every new prospect who doesn't know you will have to go through their own trust building and comparative shopping exercise until they are comfortable choosing you. When you create a distinct value, your reputation (brand) will precede you — and you won't have to sell as hard.

When your brand is defined, focused and communicated by congruent, consistent and repeated acts, it strengthens your firm's distinction in the consciousness of the marketplace.



brand has to be organic and permeate your firm like DNA. Your firm's leaders have to understand and champion it, making it your firm's culture. A brand has to be authentic. It cannot be hung on a meaningless slogan lacking a promise. It cannot be faked.

The essence of your authentic brand becomes the vision that your managing partner can use to lead your firm. It is the idea that the entire organization can get behind to ensure a unique and consistent client experience.

All firms have a brand, whether deliberately crafted or by chance. Firms with strong brands do well regardless of the economy because they are focused solely on their constituencies' wants and needs. They're passionately focused on a mission to be the best and constantly look for ways to add more value to their clients' experience.

When a service firm or practice becomes a category of one in its market, it has no competition. It no longer has to persuade prospects to become clients because prospects are attracted to it. These firms usually find themselves in a position to choose the clients they want to work with.

Create a strong brand. Become a category of one — eliminate your competition.

*Christine Pilch and Dennis Kunkler are partners with Your Brand Partnership in Ware. They can be reached at: 413-537-2474 and [www.YourBrandPartnership.com](http://www.YourBrandPartnership.com).*

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