

HOW TO *brand* YOUR CLEANING BUSINESS

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Branding relates to the first impression we have of your company, and the impression we have formed about you every time we see your name or logo.

People judge others on their overall look in the first seven seconds. They make an instant assessment - whether it's right or not - based on style, colour, cleanliness, professionalism, etc.

So why is it that some businesses don't take much care when it comes to the presentation of their company?

A lot of the business cards, websites, emails, ads and brochures I've seen are poorly designed and produced. Often staff are dressed shabbily in grungy stained clothes with dirty shoes and greasy hair. It's really off-putting and screams "We don't care about ourselves, and we're not going to care about you the customer either."

Now I know that the process of cleaning up other's people's messes makes it hard to stay clean yourself! However a uniform - even if it's hard wearing shorts and a branded tshirt or polo neck shirt - will look a lot better soiled than a clean but grungy and torn pair of jeans and singlet.

TIP 1 - USE A GOOD GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Make sure you use a graphic designer to produce your logo and design all your branded material. Just because you have Photoshop on your computer, doesn't mean you're a good graphic designer. You haven't been taught typography, web colours, the rule of thirds etc. Leave it to the professional, brief them properly, and get them to design everything. You don't have to pay a fortune. There are plenty of fantastic resources online where you can get this done quite cheaply.

TIP 2 - DEVELOP YOUR UNIQUE ADVANTAGE TO ENHANCE YOUR BRAND

Your business name, your logo, the colours, the fonts, your Unique Advantage message - all this is part of your branding, and should be used on everything you send out; everywhere your name appears. Your Unique Advantage message is your tag line or service descriptor and should immediately portray the benefits you offer and the market niche in which you operate.

This might be something like 'Housework Services for Busy Executives' or 'Chemical Free Home Cleaning Service for Sensitive People' or 'Spring Clean Makeovers for Property Investors' or 'Fussy Office Cleaning Experts'. Each of these either identifies a niche or creates a competitive differentiator.



The idea is to define and differentiate yourself so it's immediately clear who you are and what you do that makes you stand out.

TIP 3 - EXTEND YOUR BRANDING TO EVERY FORM OF COMMUNICATION

Put your 'brand' on everything. Make sure it's consistent, so when people see it they can immediately identify you. The 'look' is clear and related to your industry; it's

modern and easy to read in any colour; and the message is always the same.

- Business cards
- Email footers
- Website
- Letterhead
- Compliments Slips
- Quotes
- Invoices
- Books
- Banners and Signs
- Uniforms
- Vehicles

TIP 4 - ENSURE YOUR BUSINESS CARD WORKS HARD FOR YOU

I have a collection of business cards which are eclectic to say the least. Some have had a bit of thought put into them. A catchy business name, a colour scheme, perhaps a logo and contact details. But most of them haven't. Here's some tips to ensure your business card works for you as marketing collateral.

Print on both sides - why waste the valuable real estate on the back? This is the perfect place to print your Elevator Speech - the short sentence or two which expresses how you help people and why you're different. 'Joe Brown, Cleaning Services' as the only descriptor of your service doesn't say much at all.

Why not say something like..

'Are you houseproud and fussy? So are we. If you think there's no-one out there that can clean your house as thoroughly as you do, then you've >>