

## BUSINESS AND PEOPLE BUILDERS

## Rebranding your pharmacy as a healthcare destination

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CPD CREDIT

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### What is a brand?

Your brand should reflect your point of difference, rather than try to imitate other brands or try to conform to an industry norm. While customers will always want to feel comfortable that their pharmacy is a safe, clean, professional environment where they are treated with respect, your brand should let them know what makes your pharmacy different from other pharmacies, health food shops or supermarkets.

Your customers' brand journey begins in the pre-purchase phase. Whatever they have seen or heard about you, including your website, physical products and the word-of-mouth experiences spoken of by other customers, contributes to the impression that prospective customers have of your brand.

Once a customer enters your store, their brand experience continues through to the next phase, where they make a purchase. However, this is not the end of the story. The brand journey follows on into any post-purchase interaction that your customers have with you. This might include a question they

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”

### Learning objectives:

After completing this CPD activity, pharmacists should be able to:

- Define their brand.
- Formulate a strategy to rebrand their business.

Pharmacist competencies addressed: 2.1, 3.1, 3.3.

Accreditation number: A1407RP4

have about their medication, a problem with a particular product or some other communication that they receive from you. Every touch point on the customer journey from pre-purchase, through purchase, to post-purchase should reflect your desired brand position.

### Growing your competitive advantage as a healthcare destination

As a pharmacy, you certainly compete against other pharmacies, but you also compete against other retailers for different product segments. For example, in baby care you compete against supermarkets, but also against specialist baby stores. In vitamins and nutrition, you compete against supermarkets in addition to health food stores and other sports-oriented retailers who offer nutritional products, including gyms. What makes your pharmacy's offering unique? Why do customers choose you to meet these needs, instead of another retailer? The professional advice of pharmacy staff is a distinct advantage, so this should be emphasised in the way you offer products and services. Access to pharmacy medicines and pharmacist-only medicines is another unique feature of pharmacies that means you can offer a complete range of effective healthcare solutions that are not available to other retailers. If your schedules counter is hidden at the back of the store, or barely recognisable, many customers may not be aware of the benefits that are exclusive to pharmacy.

Does your current branding position you as a healthcare destination? If not, how would you characterise your brand? What would your customers say about you and how can you ensure that every customer touch point reflects your brand strategy?

### The rebranding process

As a brand expert, Chris Moody is often engaged by companies to revamp their brands, as well as to create brands from scratch. According to her, the first step in a successful rebranding process is to conduct a brand audit, the starting point for which is your business strategy. Through the collection of brand artefacts, relevant to each customer touch point, a brand audit builds a picture of how your business is viewed through a customer's eyes. An important part of the process is a series of customer interviews to gain insights on the essential essence of your brand. This can be quite revealing and you may be surprised by what customers notice and value.

What are some of the key features of a healthcare brand and how can you reflect these brand values in your own business? Ms Moody says that The Organic Pharmacy, based in London and with stores around the world, is a good example of a pharmacy business that has directly targeted the healthcare and wellbeing market. The brand is centred around organic products, herbal medicines and homeopathy. Offering a complete healthcare solution, the stores are designed to be a haven of wellbeing, with clean lines, modern fittings and thoughtful use of light.

“My principles were very simple,” says Margo Marrone, founder of The Organic Pharmacy. “The best organic ingredients, honest expert advice, quality service, incredibly effective products and a caring environment.”

Inside the stores, the feeling is more like a day spa than a pharmacy. They manufacture their own range of treatment product and beauty and massage services are available, as well as healthcare consultations. This business model is based on a fee for service, with consultations charged at market rates, as for a private practitioner. There is no attempt to discount or use price promotion.

This is just one example of how a pharmacy may target a market niche by employing a clear strategy that is followed through at every customer touch point. Ms Moody advises that it's useful during this process to imagine your ideal customer. What do they look like? What do they wear? How do they shop? What are their values? What are their priorities?

The brand framework




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For example, is it more important to your ideal customer to be served promptly or to receive thorough advice? Being very specific about these factors helps you to create your offering around that customer. As much as it's tempting to be all things to all people, this is rarely a successful strategy. Ms Moody also advises that an important part of the rebranding process is to test the concept on customers. One way to do this is by setting up a trial area in your store, for example, vitamins. If your pharmacy was renowned as a healthcare destination, what would your vitamin section look like? How would customers feel when they walked in? How would staff respond to customers and what would they be offered? Gauging these responses from real customers is far more effective than using focus groups or other similar market research, as it allows you to observe how customers interact with the concept in a realistic context. Finally, when you are thinking about the possibilities for your new brand, feel free to explore unconventional options. Think about what you would like to have if you had no resource constraints. Once you have painted the ideal picture, you might be surprised at how much of it you can achieve within your given resources. Many

brand elements do not necessarily add costs to your business. Instead, they require a change in mindset and behaviours for you and your staff. When exploring ideas, think outside the box by visiting other retailers and observing how they do things. Note, in particular, what works and what doesn't from your point of view as a potential customer. Would this idea work in your pharmacy? While visiting competitors, such as supermarkets and other pharmacies is useful, also visit retailers who are well outside the healthcare sector – jewellers, luxury goods or electronics stores. What elements of these retail concepts could you use? Ms Moody runs brand 'walking workshops', which allow participants to see, touch and feel a variety of brands and learn how to apply the best ideas to their own businesses. "Everybody shops!" she says. We can all learn from our day-to-day experiences how to gain the best competitive advantage from our own brand. <sup>RP</sup>

Thanks to Chris Moody of Brand Audits for her time in being interviewed for this article. [www.brandaudits.com.au](http://www.brandaudits.com.au).

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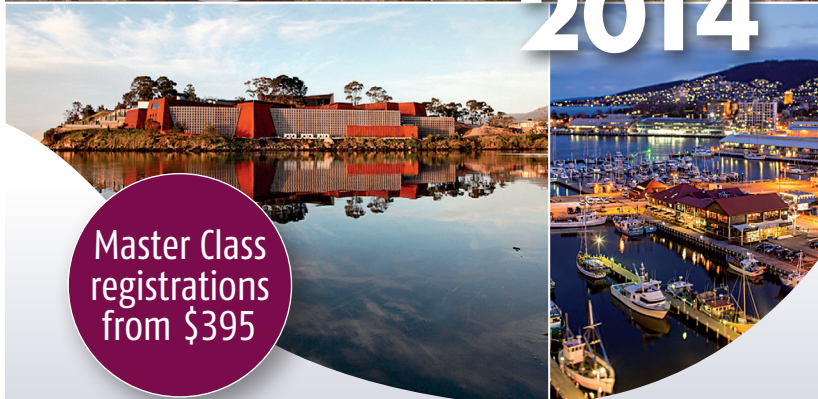
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#### Rebranding your pharmacy as a healthcare destination

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It's a common misperception that your brand means your logo. Chris Moody, CEO of leading brand consultancy Brand Audits, emphasises that your brand covers, "all touch points on the journey of the customer". This includes everything from your store fit-out, marketing materials, website and staff uniforms, to packaging, labelling and signage. Ms Moody suggests that a good test of your brand is to cover up the logo. The customer should still be able to recognise which store they are in, because all brand elements will be consistent

#### 1. Your brand means:

- A) Your logo.
- B) Your uniform.
- C) Your company colours.
- D) All touch points on the customer journey.

#### 2. The three main phases of the customer journey are:

- A) Compare brands, select preferred brand, make payment.
- B) Pre-purchase, purchase, post-purchase.
- C) Choose product, choose payment method, choose packaging type.
- D) Order goods, pay for goods, receive goods.

#### 3. A unique competitive advantage for pharmacies is:

- A) Exclusive access to pharmacy medicines and pharmacist-only medicines.
- B) The ability to stock baby products.
- C) Range of vitamins.
- D) Size of store.

#### 4. The brand audit process starts with:

- A) Your colour scheme.
- B) Your marketing collateral.
- C) Your business strategy.
- D) Your logo.

#### 5. An important step in the rebranding process is to:

- A) Conduct a brand audit.
- B) Imagine your ideal customer.
- C) Define your brand positioning.
- D) All of the above.

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#### Time can be on your side

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I recently attended and presented at a pharmacy retail and marketing group conference. There was a great range of relevant (and practical) topics covered: reiterating that in the midst of all the change and uncertainty, there is real opportunity for those able to make the necessary changes to their businesses. The path to survival is to get the whole store performing (script/retail/services) and to look at your range of services and how they are presented. I have said before that the biggest challenge I see with stores is the ability of an owner to commit to change and drive (or allow) the implementation of that commitment. One overriding issue struck me: while it is somewhat easy to stand up at the lectern and talk about owners having to *make* time to drive and support change, how do you actually go about making the time to work on a business, and where do you start?

#### 1. The best definition of a known-value Item is:

- A) A product that your staff know the cost of and are trained to sell.
- B) A product for which the market price is known by many consumers and therefore acts as a measure of the price competitiveness of a retailer.
- C) A bulk product that your store is currently selling at a competitive price.
- D) A product that is advertised in catalogues and may be part of a good selling range.

#### 2. Which of the following is NOT one of the areas of the 'retail pentagon' to use when assessing data?

- A) People.
- B) Product.
- C) Professional service.
- D) Place.

#### 3. When setting SMART goals, the 'S' stands for:

- A) Structured.
- B) Stated.
- C) Simple.
- D) Specific.

#### 4. When using Covey's Time Management Matrix the quadrant of focus is managing tasks that are:

- A) Urgent and important.
- B) Not urgent and important.
- C) Not important and urgent.
- D) Not important and not urgent.

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