

luminous

The secret to B2B branding success

In today's crowded B2B landscape, the opportunity to differentiate through brand has never been greater.

68% of B2B buyers say the marketing messages sound and act the same (Dentsu)

81% of B2B ads fail to drive attention or recall (LinkedIn).

Over 70% of employees want to work for brands that reflect their values and purpose (Deloitte).

In a world where sameness dominates and values matter more than ever, brand building isn't just a 'nice-to-have', it's your competitive edge.

How can a B2B brand truly stand out?

Humanise your story

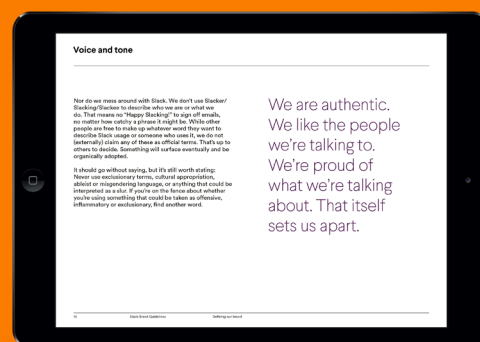
B2B audiences buy brands they can relate to and can engage with. By showing real customers and employees, and demonstrating what your product / service enables, you can help create a connection and trust. Asking 'why should people care?' and then showing that in your brand and marketing through authentic human storytelling can help you move away from being a faceless business into something real and meaningful.

Cisco gets this right in its 'Never Better' campaign. By showing its vital work – saving lives in disasters and enabling doctors to treat patients 6,000 miles away – it proves that its tech is trusted (without even showing the technical specification of its products). In our work for Octapharma, we put personal stories front and centre to demystify its complex science and celebrate the lives it has transformed.

Find your voice

For many B2B brands, tone of voice is usually an afterthought, but it shouldn't be. It's not about sounding like Virgin or Innocent – because this is very likely wrong for your B2B brand. Instead, the aim is to forge an emotional connection with your audience. Think about who you're trying to engage with and what they are trying to buy from you – a complex financial service or digital platform? And sometimes playing it simple and straightforward is perfectly acceptable.

Slack is a business collaboration tool that uses simple and pleasant language. It speaks directly to its customers, talking less about the product and its features, and more about the user and the benefits. It is thoughtful with the way it uses language, which enables people to feel a deeper connection with Slack.



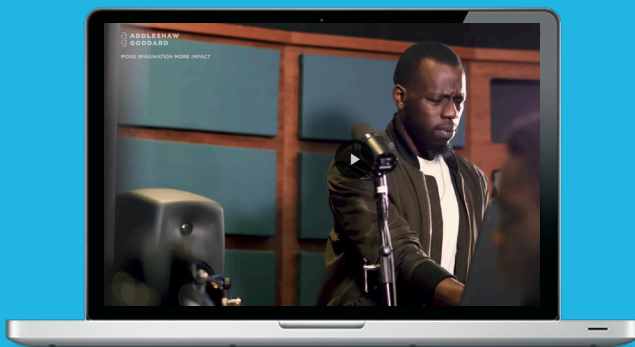
Make it resonate

One thing B2B brands can learn from consumer brands is the power of sonic branding (the use of audio). Moving image is an extremely powerful tool that brands are using more and more, but audio is usually an afterthought. Instead, videos and animations are often soundtracked by generic stock music that misses a trick. There are some great examples from the B2C world to be inspired by.

Given the increased popularity of moving image in B2B brands, we think audio will be the next 'big' thing. But for it to be a success, you need to make it part of your branding from the start.

Break the mould and be bold

Today, more B2B brands embrace strategies that break the mould. Those that stand out aren't just competing on services or product features; they're competing on perception. It starts with clarity on positioning. We've helped brands completely shift how they're seen in their industries by changing the conversation around them. We've taken them from being 'just another supplier' to the go-to expert by owning a single, powerful narrative. That's what great positioning does.



Law firm Addleshaw Goddard's highly creative campaign uses musical compositions to present research in a way that B2B has never seen before. Octopus Legacy is challenging the wills and probate sector with a more compassionate, human and accessible brand.



Scan the QR code to access the full webinar recording

To chat about your B2B branding, get in touch:

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Get emotional

According to research, 95% of our purchase decisions are based on emotions. This has big implications for B2B brands. Many go to market with something they want to shout about: a product feature, a level of service or the quality of their product. But as the market evolves, competitors catch up and a once-unique idea becomes common. The result is a brand that loses meaning because it is easily replicable. Leading B2B brands understand that their audiences are people first, not just decision-makers in boardrooms. They build their brands around a central belief that means something – and therefore they are more likely to resonate on an emotional level.

EY's new brand promise to 'Shape the future with confidence' aims to set it apart and reminds us that even serious B2B buyers can be moved by a compelling story. In the logistics sector, Yusen and Menzies stand out because their brand positionings are built on something else than function and features – they are the expression of a perfect version of their customers' expectations.

Avoid visual blanding

Simplification and minimalism are causing brands to look the same. B2B brands are beginning to realise that they need to push creativity and authenticity to break out of the sea of sameness. Purpose is a core part of getting this right. Many companies have worked hard to articulate their purpose and talk about their role in the world beyond profit. Using your purpose to inform your brand identity is a great way to ensure it is unique to you.

We worked with audio technology group Focusrite to help bring what makes it unique to the surface of its brand. The company is made up of passionate creatives – many of whom are customers themselves. This sparked a brand identity that celebrates a passion for its products and the musicians who use them. Through a distinct tone of voice, sound and a vibrant branding, we helped them stand out.