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The Branding Guide for Franchise Success

Best practices for 2022



Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	3
01 The brand consistency problem in a franchise network	5
02 The power of branding & brand positioning	7
03 So what exactly is branding?	9
04 Developing & positioning your brand	11
05 How to build a brand position statement	14
06 What to include in your franchise brand guidelines	16
07 Considerations when enabling your franchisees to promote your brand	18
08 Going beyond traditional brand guidelines	20
09 Four tips to create consistency (without being boring)	23
10 The ROI of creating genuine design efficiencies	25
11 3 key advantages of developing templates for your franchise business	27
12 Empower your franchisees with real autonomy to create	31
13 A final note	35
<i>The best tools for success</i>	37

Introduction

It won't be news to you that for franchise businesses to be truly successful, consistency is absolutely crucial.

Consistency in:

- Customer experience
- Product quality
- Brand look and feel
- Message and tone
- Price
- Delivering on your key brand promises

The list goes on and on. It's all well and good to state the obvious about the importance of consistency within a franchise eco-system, but we all know that understanding the need for consistency and actually delivering on it are two separate issues, especially in 2021 and beyond. But, there are solutions out there that will enable you to keep you brand safe, but also empower your franchisees.



For example at Outfit, our technology enables franchises to control their brand while giving franchisees autonomy to create content that supports their business. Our customer, Bakers Delight, arguably Australia's most well-known franchise, uses Outfit to enable their franchisees to create custom local area marketing collateral and signage.

Since implementing Outfit, there's been a 60% reduction in bespoke artwork creation by head office and franchisees report feeling empowered to market their own business.

Head office at Aussie, a financial service customer of ours, supports 250 retail stores and 950+ brokers. They too feel the brand consistency challenge due to managing so many stakeholders. Since implementing Outfit, 5,538 hours of head office's time has been saved, as has a substantial amount of budget.

By the time you finish reading through *The Branding Guide for Franchise Success* you'll understand why branding is imperative, know the crucial steps you need to take to brand your franchise and you'll understand that there is a better way of doing things. Branding your franchise doesn't have to be hard.

So let us show you.

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01

The Brand Consistency Problem in a Franchise Network

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When looking at brand consistency one of the major headaches franchise marketers face is wrestling with their design teams, multiple external agencies and their franchise network to ensure their brand guidelines and principles are being followed to a tee.

While most franchise marketers already have a vision in their mind as to how their brand should be represented out in the world, this is often not the result that they are able to produce across their networks.

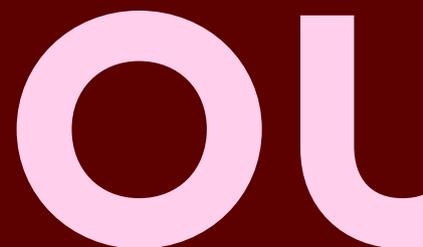
If you're currently experiencing this pain, you're not alone.

This ebook is here to help:

- Provide you with additional guidance on key areas of franchise branding
- Arm you with the know-how and tools to achieve genuine brand consistency throughout your franchise network

02

The Power of Branding & Brand Positioning



Why should branding be such an important priority for your franchise network?

The enormous advantage that franchises have over non-franchise competitors is that you have the opportunity to become a known quantity; with consistent branding and positioning, your customers will know exactly what their next experience with your brand is going to be like - no matter what individual franchise they make contact with. You can become the dependable, reliable and trustworthy option for your most valuable customers. In a pandemic riddled world filled with uncertainty, this has never been more important.

Possessing this dependability and ingrained trust really does make a huge difference (if your franchise is able to achieve it). In fact, a Nielsen study found that “nearly 6/10 global respondents (59%) prefer to buy new products from brands that are familiar to them.” People flock to brands that they recognise, know, trust and love as these are safe bets.

While it is widely understood that branding is one of the most powerful tools in any franchisor’s toolkit, it is also one of the areas that is often most neglected.



**“6/10
consumers
prefer to buy
from brands
that are familiar
to them”**

- Nielsen Study

03

So What Exactly is Branding?





In 2001, Hislop defined branding as “the process of creating a relationship or a connection between a company’s product and emotional perception of the customer for the purpose of generating segregation among competition and building loyalty among customers.”

In its essence, your branding is the collective functional and emotional associations your key customers have with your business.

This includes:

- Your logo
- Your slogan
- Why you do what you do
- Your key benefits
- What makes you unique
- What you stand for

- Your marketing materials and brand collateral
- Your ability to deliver on your brand promise
- The perception your critical audiences have of your brand in both their hearts and their minds

When you are able to provide clarity and consistency around these emotional and functional elements in a manner that cuts through to your audience’s needs and desires, your franchise brand becomes stronger.

04

Developing & Positioning Your Brand



Your brand position is not how your target audience perceives your brand, but rather, how your current and potential customers perceive it within their hearts and minds.

The first modern franchise empire – Coca-Cola – put an unprecedented level of importance and energy into the way the American public perceived it. In 1886, Coke’s directors decided that instead of positioning Coke as medicine or wine (as many other competitors did at that time), they would market it as a “delicious, refreshing, exhilarating and invigorating” beverage.

None of Coke’s directors could have ever guessed that this same strategy would be used with great success by an Australian mum over 100 years later.

Most Australians have heard of ‘Boost’; the fruit juice and smoothie empire founded by Janine Allise in 2000. But fewer

people know where the idea for Boost was born.

During a trip to the U.S. in 1999, Janine noticed that the juice and smoothie market was booming. But there were barely any juice bars in Australia. She sensed an opportunity, and went to work taking advantage of this opportunity in the Australian market. Janine would eventually position her own beverages as “healthy and fresh”. At the time, this was as unique a position as Coca-Cola was able to adopt back in 1886.

The strategy clearly worked, Janine opened her first store in 2000, and now Boost is in 17 countries with over 350 stores.

Study your competitors

Many franchise businesses avoid having anything to do with their competitors. This is a mistake. If you want to ensure your target brand position remains strong, visit your competitors, learn from them, study them and unearth your competitive advantage (or opportunities).

Ask your customers

In order to properly position your franchise brand, you must first understand what people think of your business right now. You can achieve this by actually talking to and listening to your customers. Find out specifically what they do and don't like about your business and your competitors. What comes to mind when they think of your brand? This is your actual brand position.

Get your marketing and brand collateral in order

Keeping all stakeholders up to date with on-brand collateral isn't an easy feat. But, not doing so runs the risk of losing control of your core messaging and brand consistency. In turn, this can seriously affect your franchise brand's position in the market by creating damaging brand confusion and noise.

A brand automation platform enables you to automate many aspects of your brand building and asset development efforts. This is especially important when it comes to streamlining and unifying your marketing materials. Not entirely sure what brand automation is? Take 2 minutes to read this blog that explains what it is and what benefits are.



Learn exactly what Brand Automation is by reading this short blog.

[Read more →](#)

05

How to Build a Brand Position Statement

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Your positioning statement is your branding roadmap. It is your end goal of how your franchise would like its audience to perceive the brand.

If you have not yet developed a clear positioning statement (or have lost focus on reinforcing this positioning statement), you are losing your ability to influence your audience's perceptions of your franchise.

Grab a piece of paper and write out a quick brand positioning statement for one (or all) of your key target audiences using the template on the right.

Your position in the market revolves around how your franchise brand is perceived in the hearts and minds of your key audiences. First, you need to understand your current position and next, you'll need to decide if this position is competitive and appealing enough to compete (or if you need to work on changing this perception).



Positioning Statement Activity

For *[your target audience]* who wants / needs *[what is the problem they are trying to solve]*, *[your brand]* is a *[brand category/vertical]* that provides *[your key benefit]*. Unlike *[your main competitor/s]*, *[your brand]* *[your unique selling proposition/key differentiator]*.

06

What to Include in Your Franchise Brand Guidelines



The essential brand guideline elements every franchisor should consider

In its essence, your franchise brand guidelines are simply a set of rules to be followed by any stakeholders developing branded material for your franchise. If you don't already have your brand guidelines set up, put this at the top of your to-do list!

So what should you include in your brand guidelines, and how can you keep it flexible and adaptable?

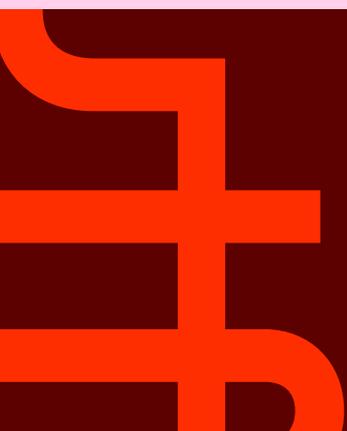
Brand Guidelines Checklist:

Here is a short list of the essential tips when developing your brand guidelines:

- Provide approved logo styles and placement instructions, include acceptable and unacceptable usage standards
- Set photography filters, tone and standards for your franchise brand
- Pick your approved, dedicated and uncompromisable colour palette and include the corresponding pantone, HEX and CMYK codes
- Provide specific, approved fonts
- Provide specific, approved icons
- Include in-situ examples of everything
- Include in-situ examples of what is unacceptable
- Include your brand tone and personality statement

07

Considerations When Enabling Your Franchisees to Promote Your Brand



While it's imperative that the guidelines include your assets, as this will set your franchisees up for success, there are a few other considerations to keep in mind.

Update your collateral regularly

If any aspect of your brand is updated or changed, this change should be reflected in your brand guidelines.

Communicate

Communication is key to ensure your brand is reflected in the market exactly how it should be. Communicate to your franchisees that there are changes coming and that you've updated the assets. Then ensure you let them know of any items that you've added to their asset library!

Consistency is key

Logos, colours, font choice, spacing – all of these design aspects must be outlined with a consistent theme or message in mind.

Always ask yourself: what am I trying to communicate with this font/colour/image?

Make sure to include measurements, dimensions, whitespace/cushioning and all relevant information.

How technology can help

Brand automation software such as Outfit can save you a lot of time in regards to controlling and executing your brand in the market. It enables you to synchronise your marketing materials across the entire franchise network and empower your franchisees, with the click of a button, to gain access to on-brand collateral that they can make amendments to.

No more stretched logos, wrong fonts or wacky colours – all of your design guidelines are set in stone, simplified and in one place.

08

Going Beyond Traditional Brand Guidelines





How to maintain brand consistency in an increasingly fragmented media landscape

In the digital age, a set brand guidelines document (PDF or hard copy) is rigid and clunky with regards to keeping up with an ever changing media landscape. As new ad units and branding opportunities pop up almost daily, franchise businesses constantly have to juggle between brand consistency, brand policing and brand building efforts.

This is where branding automation platforms such as Outfit will save your business from the familiar pains of franchise branding. These platforms provide a scalable system for branded marketing across your entire franchise network.

Rather than archiving your brand guidelines in a static document, you have the ability to embed your brand rules within the tool itself. You can also update these in-built rules when necessary in no time at all. This ensures that any collateral you create, no matter what size, automatically complies with your most up to date brand guidelines - no version control issues from clunky old PDFs.

Brand automation platforms are essential for franchises who are ready to start taking their brand consistency seriously. Bakers Delight, arguably Australia's most well-known franchise, uses Outfit's brand automation platform and this is what they had to say:

“The sentiment within the network for local marketing is so much more positive now. The ease of use and immediacy of creating their own artwork for our franchisees is very powerful. Outfit has changed the way franchisees approach local marketing.”



Elise Cittadini
- Local Marketing Manager

Bakers Delight

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09

Four Tips to Create Consistency (without being boring)

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1. Never compromise your standards

Every business should know, by heart, the core values they consider to be unbreakable. Exceptional customer service, always offering the highest quality products, being honest and truthful – these are some examples of core values that should never be broken.

2. Have a focussed message

Once you know what your business' core values are, you can now create a consistent and focused branding 'message'. These are the little 'chapters' that will build over time into a powerful brand story.

3. It's all about consistent delivery

At the end of the day, how you spread your brand story is just as important as why you do it. It's no use having an incredible brand strategy that is executed poorly and inconsistently.

4. Allow for local autonomy

Your franchises don't need to be an absolute clone of all the other franchises in your network.

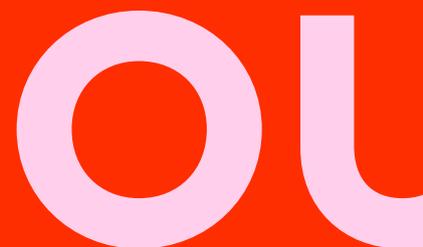
For example, each franchise can sponsor a local sporting team, promote localised content on social media or organise an event in their community. It's all about staying fresh, unique and true to your brand's positioning.

This is where branding automation platforms such as Outfit come in handy; they provide a scalable system for branded marketing across your franchise network. You really need this ability if you're going to stand a chance of growing without diluting your brand's image.

Brand Automation platforms also keep your branding consistent while allowing for flexibility and agility to seize new opportunities as they arise.

10

The ROI of Creating Genuine Design Efficiencies



The advantages of ‘unbreakable’ template designs for your brand materials

If you have experience producing marketing collateral for national and local level campaigns, then you’ll know there are plenty of tasks that can (and should) be automated.

Some examples include:

- Resizing existing assets to fit in different online and offline media;
- Creating assets for conferences and events;
- Creating new assets from scratch;
- Synchronising and collaborating on several rounds of copy/design changes;
- Localising your creative;
- Repurposing your historical creative

At Outfit, we believe these tasks don’t belong to the creative process, so we offer a faster way to perform them, while maintaining strict brand consistency according to your custom franchise brand rules and guidelines.

By utilising web technologies, Outfit develops templates that lock in the design elements of your franchise materials, which makes them impossible to break (or go off brand). With unbreakable templates, you avoid the brand inconsistencies that pop up in your marketing and brand collateral when working with internal teams, external agencies, contractors and franchisees.

This ensures your marketing staff and franchisees can only create marketing materials that comply with your brand guidelines (and in a fraction of the time it would have taken previously).

11

3 Key Advantages of Developing Templates for Your Franchise Business





1. Cost savings

Using templates saves franchises in multiple ways:

- Less reliance and budget going to agencies and freelancers to make small tweaks and amends, instead franchisees can make their own edits. One Outfit customer saved 5,538 hours in just one year.
- Reduces the cost of expanding the internal design team to cater for never ending edits and tweaks from stakeholders.
- Reduces cost and time of head office finding and fixing brand compliance issues.

2. Turnaround speed

For many franchise businesses, launching campaigns to market in an agile fashion is their key to success. Moreover, quickly taking advantage of seasonality and marketing opportunities can help your brand establish a strong position against your competitors.

Platforms that offer a proven marketing production model, such as Outfit, are priceless in value for franchise businesses as they help speed up the creative asset development process at extremely lower production costs.

If your franchise already has a proven marketing production model, it will assist your business in two major ways: it will increase your marketing production speed and consistency, and it will give you an edge over your key competitors.



3. It's all about consistent delivery

Franchisors and franchise marketers are caught in an ongoing balancing act; they are continually tasked with the job of both governing (and controlling) their franchisee network's local area marketing efforts, whilst working to empower their franchisees to drive local business themselves.

It's this challenge and contradiction that franchise business owners need to pay close attention to.

Brand Automation platforms are perfectly placed to help balance and enhance the franchisee/head office relationship as it opens up the conversation.

Outfit is the only platform to address the challenge in a way that will ultimately empower the franchisee, rather than stripping them of their autonomy. Now they can take advantage of marketing opportunities in genuine collaboration with head office (and without the risk of going off brand thanks to the easy-to-use on brand templates).

“We have realised we are gaining far more return on investment than we ever could have even anticipated.”



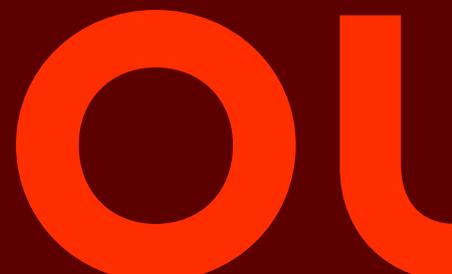
Hannah Roy
- Senior Manager, Marketing

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12

Empower Your Franchisees With Real Autonomy to Create





You've probably dealt with challenging franchisees before. They are those owners within your network who go off script and start taking their local marketing into their own hands without your knowledge.

It takes years to build trust and only one negative experience to destroy it. Just one poorly designed or inappropriate advertisement, or social media interaction, can shatter the public's trust in your brand.

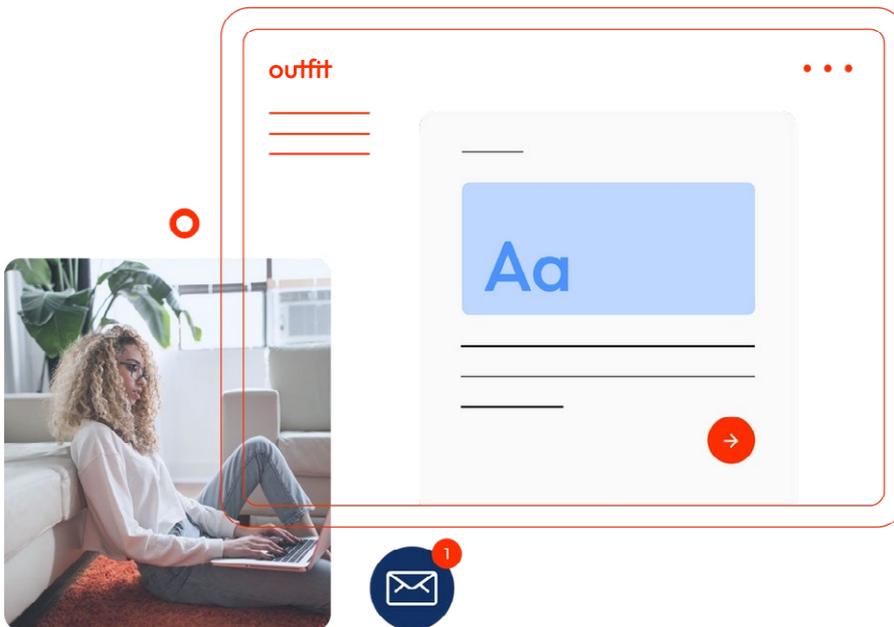
Having challenging franchisees is a very slippery slope for franchisors, as franchisees are in a constant battle for autonomy and ownership over their business.

If one franchisee does start developing their own marketing materials without consent, it's possible that more may follow suit.

Imagine having over 100 locations in your network and trying to stop this from happening...it's almost impossible without a systematic approach.

Beyond writing branding and marketing clauses into each franchise agreement (and policing these strictly), tools like Outfit can genuinely help you manage.

By empowering these franchisees with a platform that has embedded, unbreakable branding templates with rules, you can create invaluable business and design efficiencies.



Business Efficiencies

You will spend less of your time battling and debating with one-time rogue franchisees and more time actually collaborating with them.

Design Efficiencies

Once you have your rogue franchisees working with you to generate cut-through local content and collateral, it's one less design job that you need to deliver from central marketing in head office.

Further to these reasons, the benefits go beyond return on investment; through empowering your once rogue franchisees and giving them a platform that enables them to work within the brand guidelines that you've set for them, you will be on your way to seriously strengthening your relationship with these key stakeholders.

“With time and experience, you realise there’s always a better solution out there.”



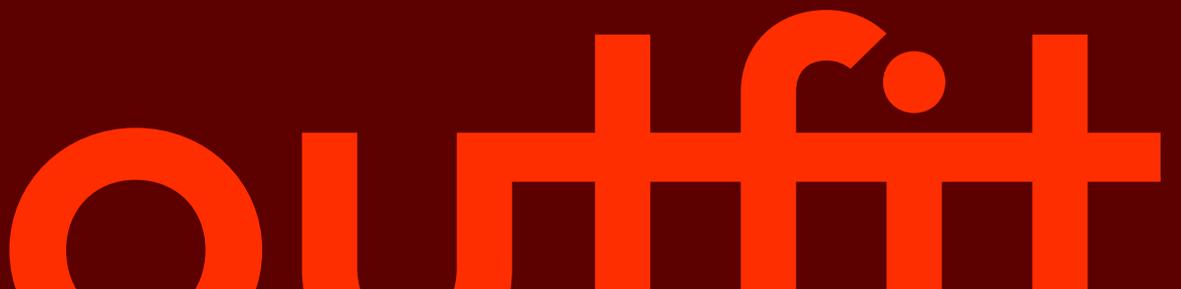
Hannah Roy
- Senior Manager, Marketing

 **Aussie**

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13

A Final Note

A large, stylized, orange-colored word, likely 'outfit', is positioned at the bottom of the page. The letters are thick and blocky, with a modern, sans-serif font style. The 'o' is a simple circle, and the 'i' has a dot. The 'f' is tall and thin, and the 't' is also tall and thin. The 'i' and 't' are connected to the 'f'. The word is set against a dark red background that occupies the bottom portion of the page.



All successful franchises built their value and position in the market by developing systems and procedures that help them maintain a high level of consistent service and branding. In many ways, it is this structure that investors are buying into when they invest in a franchise business.

By consistently reinforcing the tone, themes, look, feel, communication and customer experiences behind your products and services, the perceptions and position of your brand in the consumer's mind will solidify. From this firm foundation, repeat business and customer loyalty become a natural progression.

A final bit of advice on the pitfalls of franchise brand inconsistencies

Brand inconsistencies are misrepresentations of your brand. You may have spent years or even decades trying to craft your brand's image, only to have it unravel as you try to scale and manage your franchise network.

Even a small stream of inconsistencies can have a negative impact on the perception of your franchise brand over time. For this reason it is so important to guard and police your brand positioning and to ensure the right frameworks and tools are in place, so you can enable your franchise network to scale effectively while growing your brand.

The best tools for success

Throughout this guide you've learnt exactly how a tool like Outfit can save you money, time and strengthen your brand and relationship with your stakeholders. Bakers Delight uses Outfit to control its brand and empower their 540+ franchise locations.

Since implementing the tool:

- There's been a 60% reduction in requests for bespoke artwork creation by corporate offices
- A 33% increase in artwork created within the platform
- A clearly improved sentiment across franchisees as they feel empowered in their local marketing efforts

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Outfit's brand automation platform empowers teams to self-produce content at scale, at speed and on brand - every time.

Discover how to empower your franchisees and keep on brand with a custom Outfit demo.

[ROI calculator →](#)

[Request a demo →](#)