

next tuesday afternoon

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Walk around any marketing conference and you'll hear people talking about brands. Brand tactics, how to create a brand identity, how to build brand messages, etc. The question I get most often from business owners and interested parties is: *How do you create a brand? And for that matter, what's a brand really worth?* More times than not, it's asked with almost a mystical look on their faces.

Creating brands is a process, which will be different for everyone, as so many factors must be taken into consideration, such as age, identity, existing brand awareness or lack thereof. What is easier for many to understand is the value and it goes something like this:

Brands increase sales effectiveness: If a potential buyer says, "I know your company...you have a reputation for doing a great job and treating clients well," you'll be in much better shape than if they say, "Now who are you again and why are you here?"

Brands help generate leads: If a prospect knows and respects your company and reputation, they'll be more likely to accept when they get an invitation to an event, or to download a new white paper, or a call to see if they'd like to have lunch and discuss business. If they've never heard of you, the messages can often go unnoticed and untouched.

Brands create premium fees and pricing: It may be basic, but buyers are looking for services firms to do what they'll say they're going to do. If your brand and reputation a) creates a promise for what the buyer can expect from you, and b) supports the belief that you deliver on your promises, you'll garner higher fees.

Brands help you beat competition: If a buyer knows he's going to get top quality, high output, reduced risk, leaders and thinkers, or whatever your brand is they often value that over the lowest price.

Brands facilitate repeat business: When buyers know what to expect from interactions with you, that you keep your promises and that you deliver at and above their expectations, they're less likely to switch or stop buying.

Brands draw strong labor pools: In good economies and bad, services firms with high brand value attract the best people.

Brands increase the value of a company: With the right people on board, the process becomes less of a mystery. Everything noted above translates into higher market value. That is surely worthy of universal applause.

I'm Lisa Davis. Let me know if I can help you in any way, please feel free to visit at OneAlliance.com and I'll be back next Tuesday afternoon.

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