



Begin With Curiosity

Sample Question Sets for Marketing & Branding

Thanks for downloading this PDF. The following is a sample of questions sets we use to co-create branding strategies and marketing plans with clients. The table of contents to the complete set of questions is on page 2.

If you would like the full library of 131 questions and 169 tactics, send an email to dan@ideafood.com with your most pressing marketing or branding questions.

Stay curious!

Dan Wallace

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Wallace".

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Idea Food works with leaders to differentiate brands, enter new markets and improve the customer experience. Clients gain a long-term brand strategy and one-year marketing plan. We also find and place talent and technology. Our purpose is to help people learn, create and grow.

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Current State

Here are two sections on the current state from our master library.

Brand Assessment

Brands and customers meet across time and space. Positive memories from those experiences can result in sales, profits and brand equity.

- 1 How do customers experience your brand physically, online and through employees?
- 2 How is your brand dramatically different?
- 3 What are the reasons to believe this difference?
- 4 What single point of difference from competitors is vital to customers?
- 5 How do you see your brand personality?
(e.g., Rugged, Exciting, Sophisticated, Competent or Friendly)
- 6 How do you think your customers see your brand personality?
- 7 What mental associations do people have with your brand?
- 8 What promises does your brand make?
- 9 How are employees educated to represent the brand?
- 10 Do employees and customers advocate for your brand, and if so, how?
- 11 What brand stories are relevant to customers?
- 12 What are your honored symbols, and what do they stand for?
- 13 What are your key words and phrases?
- 14 What is your brand against?
- 15 Who is the public face of your brand?
- 16 What are your brand's trade names and symbols?

Current Business Strategies

Business strategies differentiate you from competitors—and result in the experience that you provide customers.

- 1 What are your main agents, alliances, sales channels, partnerships and suppliers?
- 2 What valuable patents, trademarks, copyrights and trade secrets do you hold?
- 3 How are your work processes, technologies and human systems unique?
- 4 How does your offering perform better than competitors?
- 5 What financial innovations make it easier for customers to buy?
- 6 How do your sales and distribution channels make it easier to buy?
- 7 How do your pricing strategies differentiate your brand?
- 8 How is your customer experience distinctive?
- 9 How is your brand perception distinctive?
- 10 What is your primary focus low price, innovation or customer satisfaction?

Future State

Here are two sections on the current state from our master library.

New Marketing Communication Strategies

Communication is often low hanging fruit because small changes to words and pictures can transform how people perceive your brand.

- 1 How will you attract attention that leads to engagement?
- 2 How will you stimulate interest and the desire to buy?
- 3 How will you create word-of-mouth and social media buzz?
- 4 How will you make your brand newsworthy to mass media?
- 5 How will branding activities support sales and business development?
- 6 How will you promote your brand in new and useful ways?
- 7 What branding tactics will you use and how will they create synergies?

- 8 How will you use visual design, symbols and stories to express your brand?
- 9 How will you integrate and unify communication in all touch points?
- 10 What actions will you ask your prospects to take?
- 11 How will you communicate the change to your leaders and organization?

New Direct Sales Strategies

Well conceived marketing can replace the need for sales and business development. Marketing can also enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of salespeople.

- 1 What new sales and business development strategies will you initiate?
- 2 How will you reduce the cost of gaining customers?
- 3 How will you cross-sell, upsell, and gain referrals?
- 4 What complementary and mutually beneficial sales channels will you form?
- 5 How will you use digital, mobile, social media and online search?
- 6 How will you generate and sort leads, nurture leads and close sales?
- 7 How will you make it easier to buy?
- 8 How will you enhance your customer relationship management systems?
- 9 How will your sales team be educated, managed and incentivized?

Marketing and Branding Tactics

This is a partial list. Check off the tactics you want to explore.

Website

- Keyword and Keyphrase Research
- Digital Platform Selection
- Technology Partner Selection
- Custom Website
- Custom Mobile Site
- Custom App
- Responsive Website
- Template Website (e.g. Squarespace, Wordpress, Drupal)
- eCommerce
- Back-End Databases & Tools
- Cloud-Based Integration (e.g., Survey Monkey)
- Site Map or Wireframes
- User Interface Design (UI)
- User Experience Design (UX)
- Microsites
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Google Analytics

Digital Sales & Marketing

- Search Marketing Strategy
- Search Pay-Per-Click Ads (PPC or SEM)
- Social Media Pay-Per-Click Ads (e.g., Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook)]
- Supporting Technologies
- Inbound Landing and Leadpages
- Surveys and Incentives

- Value Added Offers
- Mass Email Tool (e.g., Mailchimp)
- Real Time Marketing Response
- Predictive Analytics
- Cloud-Based CRM System
- Lead Scoring
- Lead Nurturing Email
- Native Advertising through Affiliates
- Banners, Pop-Ups & Interstitials
- Retargeting
- Marketing Automation (e.g., Hubspot)
- Programmatic Advertising

Talent Resources

- Copywriting
- Graphic Design
- Software Development
- Web Development
- Content Development
- Social Media
- Public Relations
- Mass Advertising
- SEO/SEM
- Event Management
- Integrated Branding

Next Steps

5-15 Burning Questions

After reading this document, there will be some questions that stick in your mind, or new questions will come to mind.

What are 5-15 burning questions about your branding and marketing efforts?

Prioritization & Planning

The limitations of time and money are a constant. It's important to stretch, but also be realistic about what can be done by whom by when.

- 1 What is our budget and is it adequate?
- 2 What internal talent is available?
- 3 What talent and technology can be outsourced?
- 4 What should we stop doing to free up finances and time?
- 5 What strategies are likely to provide the greatest return short-term?
- 6 What strategies are likely to provide the greatest return long-term?
- 7 What is the smartest course forward at this point?
- 8 How will we measure success?
- 9 Who will manage the plan and adapt to changing market feedback?
- 10 Who will have oversight over the plan implementation?
- 11 What is the timetable?

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