

## How to use branding

**About:** This guide outlines the basics of creating, managing and using branding.

**Who is this guide intended for:** Sports Development Teams, County Sports Partnerships and sports clubs

**What is branding:** Branding is the term to describe the design and logo that identifies your organisation, club or the service you provide. Branding assists the public in identifying you as distinct from others who may offer a similar service.

**Why is branding important:** A strong brand can build recognition for your organisation or club, while improving your profile within the community. It will allow you to increase your visibility through the media, on your marketing material and through your website.

## 1. Creating a brand – define your brand values

A brand must promote your organisation or club's strengths. What are you good at? Are you a family orientated club who make new members feel welcome? Are you an organisation that encourages the community to participate in sport?

## 2. Creating a brand – appeal to your customers

Who are your customers? Are they predominantly male, female, young or old? Are they other organisations in the public and private sectors?

Your brand must appeal to them. Ask existing customers or members what they like about working with you or belonging to your club. What do they see as your main role?

### 3. Creating a brand – brand guidelines

Once you have defined your brand values and what it is about you that appeals to customers and members, you need to create the visual brand.

It is recommended that you work with a design agency on the design and guidelines. They will be able to create a visual brand for you and outline it's individual aspects. This includes logo, colours, font and slogan as well as rules for adjusting the brand e.g. cropping and changing colour.

The guidelines help to maintain a positive impression when the brand is viewed. Adjusting aspects of the brand outside of the guidelines, can make the brand and your organisation or club appear unprofessional.

## 4. Building a brand – communicating your brand

Now that you have created your brand and outlined it's guidelines, you can start to build it's reputation and promote it.

Remember, every time you produce communication is an opportunity to promote your brand and build it's reputation.

## 5. Building a brand – be consistent with brand values

Every point of contact you have with the public, including your current customers and members, needs to reinforce your brand values.

This includes your premises, stationery and merchandise, involvement at events, conferences and courses, website and email communication, and most importantly how employees or club representatives behave and dress.

If all these aspects are consistent, your brand will be strengthened. If they are not, it could be damaged as you are not living up to what your brand has promised.

## 6. Managing a brand

It's good practice to appoint an employee to take responsibility for your brand. They would be responsible not only for ensuring the visual brand is displayed within the guidelines, but also that the organisation or club's operations match the brand values.

Obtain regular feedback from customers and members to find out if you are delivering what your brand promises.

## 7. Reviewing a brand

For your brand to have a long life, it needs to change with the needs and expectations of your customers or members.

You need to review your purpose to establish whether it has changed since your brand was established. Are you still delivering what your customers and members expect? Have their expectations changed, or has there been a shift in society or the community?

If your review suggests you need to make changes, go back to basics. Ask yourself whether what you provide meets the needs of your customers or members.