



Rediscovering the Power of Your Brand

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As marketers, we are devoted to communicating what is distinct about our brands. As Warren Buffet said, “Your premium brand had better be delivering something special, or it’s not going to get the business.” **Sometimes it’s necessary to revisit and refresh your brand to ensure that your special, distinguishing qualities still resonate with employees, customers and prospects.**

Larger organizations should refresh their brands infrequently and with deliberation. A refresh seldom requires starting from scratch — you don’t tear down a house and rebuild because a room needs repainting. Yet occasionally even the greatest houses or structures need touching up. The Washington Monument, Taj Mahal and St. Paul’s Cathedral have all gone through periods of renovation that strengthened their structures without tarnishing their legacies, keeping them vital, appealing and accessible to modern visitors. A brand refresh can accomplish the same goals for your organization.

Timing is everything.

My company is now entering its 40th year, and much has transpired in that time. Forty years ago, the last of the baby boomers were entering high school. Elvis Presley gave his last concert. The space shuttle was being tested for flight, and the Concorde was whisking passengers from Europe to New York at twice the speed of sound. Today, the youngest baby boomers are getting their AARP cards, the King is dead, and the space shuttle and the Concorde

are in museums. Meanwhile, technology introduced 40 years ago — personal computers and fiber optics for communications — have transformed how we work and live.

SYKES has also evolved, growing from a three-person engineering firm to a global corporation with 55,000+ employees, assisting our brand partners in executing marketing and customer-service initiatives. On the eve of our 40th year, it became evident that it might be time to revitalize our brand.

Here are some of the clues it was time for a refresh — factors which might also apply to your brand:

- The brand was last refreshed in the mid-1990s after SYKES went public.
- A series of business acquisitions over time resulted in a patchwork of existing and legacy branding.
- Our services had evolved, driven by new technology, new customer expectations and changing market needs.
- Rapid growth in verticals as well as expansion across a global landscape had added color and depth to our story, which we wanted to convey in our brand identity.

Refreshing a brand across a global company with a rich, 40-year history takes careful precision. Stakeholder alignment, inclusiveness, careful research, and a strategic and sustained rollout are all steps that can renew a brand with a sense of purpose.

Cultivate stakeholder buy-in.

Everyone in your organization is a stakeholder and living embodiment of your brand — representing the values, culture, service, experience and focus that makes up your brand promise. Cultivating alignment and support is a critical component of a brand refresh, creating a process that engages your entire organization and inspires brand champions.

Set broad goals within an organic process.

Since the lifeblood of your brand is your story and your people, it's important to allow the process to be organic within a broad framework that you create to guide it. The framework I found most effective was forming a global communication and branding council comprised of representatives from our entire organization. Using a carefully laid out set of blueprints as a guide, the council channeled the power of our global organization so that the result was inclusive of a multifaceted company guided by a common, unifying brand voice and spirit.

Find your uniqueness.

Conducting thorough research is the key to making your refresh impactful. Discover what your customers, investors and employees find distinctive about you. Conduct surveys, one-on-one interviews and focus groups. Seek out testimonials, case studies and stories. Map out the customer journey to better understand evolving market needs. Where do sales and service align, and what is the brand promise that your customers respond to?

Once you've collected these inputs, summarize insights, points of distinction, positioning and personality. Use this to guide and inspire your new brand creative.

Plan for sustained communication.

In addition to ensuring our organization was represented at all levels in the process of rebranding, we planned for a sustained rollout that included presentations, internal webinars, new signage, storytelling and brand element—resource sharing.

Actively and methodically communicate to make the transformation occur as seamlessly as possible. Your rollout strategy is the continuation of the rebrand process. The rollout is a tremendous opportunity to unite employees, clarifying and reinforcing who you are and why you exist. As Simon Sinek observed, "All organizations start with WHY, but only the great ones keep their WHY clear year after year." A refresh will create that clarity.

Reap the benefits.

Our end result was a refreshed brand identity aligned with our people, culture and unique position in the marketplace. Through the discovery process we gained invaluable insight about our market strengths and our unique competitive advantage. We gained renewed attention from clients and prospects, as well as increased web traffic and social media engagement. Our employees are reenergized around "why" we exist, giving us a realigned sense of purpose centered on today's integration of technology, speed and simplicity.

Brands shouldn't change often — but if done for the right reasons and with the right process, your brand can be more powerful in a crowded marketplace.



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Eileen M. Canady brings over 20 years of professional experience to SYKES in her role as Senior Vice President, Global Marketing. Her in-depth knowledge of both domestic and international markets has provided her with a unique skill set and creative vision to lead the global marketing organization and to help foster a growing demand for SYKES' solutions globally.

ABOUT SYKES

Sykes Enterprises, Incorporated is a leading provider of multichannel demand generation and customer engagement services for Global 2000 companies and their end customers. SYKES' differentiated full lifecycle solutions and services — digital marketing, sales expertise, customer service, technical support and more through multichannel delivery platforms — effectively engage customers at every touchpoint of the customer journey. Our complete service offering helps clients acquire, retain and increase the lifetime value of their customer relationships through cost-effective solutions that enhance the customer service experience, promote stronger brand loyalty, and foster high levels of performance and profitability.