

Nonprofit Brand & Marketing Fundamentals



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Agenda

- Welcome/Introductions
- Brand vs. Marketing
- What is Brand?
- The Brand Framework
- Nurturing Your Brand
- What About Marketing?
- The Marketing Plan
- Wrapping Up
- Resources

Introductions



Marketing vs. Branding

Brand is the foundation that informs all organizational efforts (including marketing).

Brand encompasses your organization's mission, values, purpose, personality and visual identity.

Brand is the emotional connection you build and the promises you make to your stakeholders.

Marketing is the vehicle through which you express your brand to the world.

Marketing is the strategic execution of communicating and promoting brand to your target audience

In essence, your brand is who you are, and marketing is how you show it.

What is Brand?

- Public Identity
- Reputation
- Response to Action or Interaction
- Community Perception
- That Feeling

What is not Brand?

- Logo
- Website
- Social Media
- Marketing
- Product/Service
- Leaders

Favorite Brand Exercise

Name a brand you love

- What words would you use to describe the brand?
- Why do you love the brand?
- Would you use competing brands if you had the choice?
- Do you feel loyalty to the brand?

Pause for a PSA

The "ick" factor



The Power of Brand Equity

Brand Awareness
Brand Perception

Brand Loyalty

Brand Associations

Why Brand Equity Matters for Nonprofits

Builds Trust and Credibility

Attracts Stakeholders

Fosters Long-term Relationships

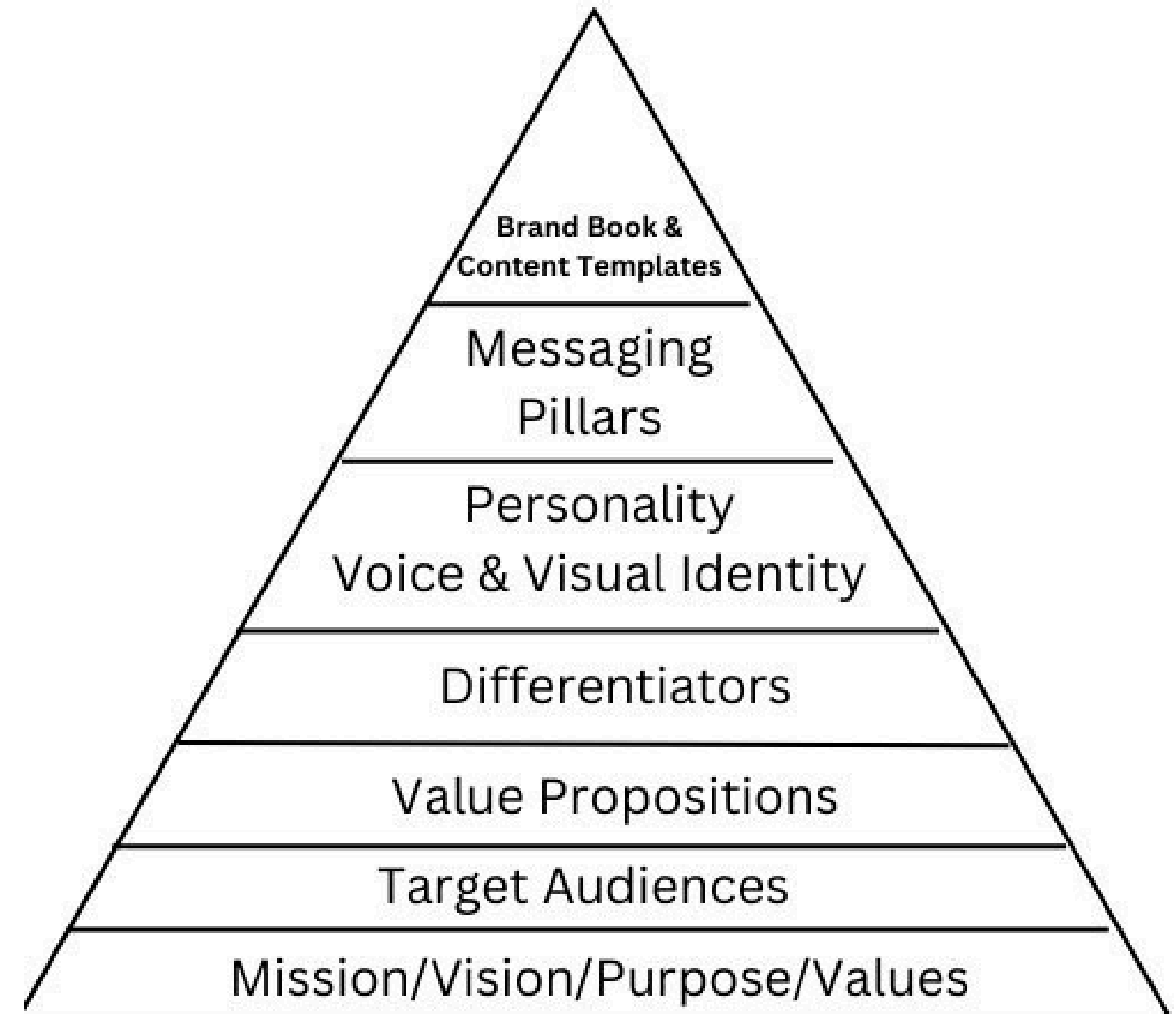
Establishes Competitive Presence

Amplifies Impact

Why is Brand Important?

To strengthen
present day
mission AND grow
future impact

Brand Framework



Brand Foundation:

Mission

Vision

Purpose

Values

**Start from the bottom up.
You need a solid foundation to
build a strong brand.**

Mission -- What we do
Vision -- Where we want to go
Purpose -- Why we exist
Values -- How we operate

charity: water

Mission

Vision

Purpose

Values

 charity: water

Mission

To bring clean and safe drinking water to people in developing countries.

Vision

REINVENT CHARITY

At charity: water, we're creating a new kind of charity. Through genuine transparency, an unshakable 100% model, and a brand built around hope instead of guilt, we're reinstilling confidence in nonprofits and building a community of generous world-changers.

Purpose

Water changes everything. Access to clean water means education, income and health - especially for women and kids.

Values

Integrity, Respect, Excellence, Innovation, Generosity, Passion

Target Audiences

People You Serve

Donors

Volunteers

Corporate Funders

Foundations/Grant Makers

Employees

Board Members

Government Leaders

Community Members

Audience Personas

A detailed and semi-fictional profile of any individual your organization needs to engage with.

Serves as a reference point for decision-making, so all activities align with the needs and preferences of your intended audience(s).

Sample Audience Persona

Donor Persona for



Worldview Will/Wendy

Details

- Age: 18-35
- Gender: Male/Female
- Location: Urban or suburban area
- Occupation: Professional
- Income: Middle to upper-middle class

Background

Will/Wendy connects to the world through digital communication channels, and is very concerned with worldwide societal issues. This makes charity:water's mission all the more real and important to them. Because they are still in college or just starting their career, financial resources are limited. However, they are also willing to spend time and talent to help causes close to their heart.

Motivations and Values

Will/Wendy is passionate about ensuring all people have their basic needs and believes in doing their part to make the world more livable. They want to make a positive impact on the lives of people around the world. They value transparency and only support organizations with a clear mission and measurable outcomes. Authenticity and transparency are critical to gaining their support. An organization's mission, values and impact must be consistent.

Communication Preferences

Will/Wendy is active on social media, especially Instagram. They prefer video messaging to email and engage with others on their favorite nonprofit social media pages often. They make a personal connection through personalized messaging related to a nonprofit's values. They mainly give by clicking the donate button in a bio link or in a story. Their preference is to give online in as few steps as possible. Knowing the impact of their donation moves them to action. Impact statements that clearly explain how their money is used really speak to them.

Giving Behavior

Will/Wendy is already making small, regular monthly donations to multiple worldwide and local organizations. They prefer to support initiatives that focus on long-term solutions that directly support people in need.

Barriers to Donation:

The largest barriers to donating include lack of available funds, lack of transparency in how their money will be used, and clunky donation pages that require a lot of information.

Value Proposition

A value proposition is a promise.

It answers the fundamental question, "Why should a person support our organization over others like us?"

A well-crafted value proposition highlights the distinct benefits your organization provides that address your target stakeholders' needs and make their lives better.



The 100% Model

When charity: water began, we made a bold promise: 100% of public donations would go directly to fund clean water projects.

Sustainable Solutions

We travel the world to find inspiring organizations who are providing long-lasting water and sanitation services, and then we fund their most successful programs. Our goal isn't just to get water flowing, but to make sure it flows for many years.

Differentiators

Differentiators help shape and reinforce the value proposition.

They are the unique
benefits
qualities
features
attributes

that set your organization apart

Differentiators contribute to your competitive advantage.

The logo for Charity: Water, featuring a yellow square with a black water tap icon and the text "charity: water" in a lowercase, sans-serif font.

Concentrates purely on water
100% model

Visual messaging appealing to younger generation
Digital storytelling
Makes it cool to do good

Personality

When we describe a brand using human traits, we feel an emotional connection.

Brand Personality is a set of human-like characteristics, traits, and qualities that describe a brand to create a unique and relatable identity.

 charity: water

Helpful, Optimistic, Honest,
Adventurous, Generous,
Grateful, Creative, Respectful

Voice and Tone

Voice is

a brand's unique and consistent verbal and written style, including vocabulary, language, personality, and sentence structure.

Tone is

the emotional quality and attitude expressed in communication, from formal and professional to casual and conversational.

Voice and Tone Example



How do you write for charity: water?

Above all, we want our brand to be inspirational. We also want our brand to feel clear, in both message and design. Our brand voice is friendly, smart, and simple.

We keep things professional. When talking about the water crisis, we're downright experts.

So though we like to keep things casual, we steer clear of LOLs and emojis.

Visual Identity

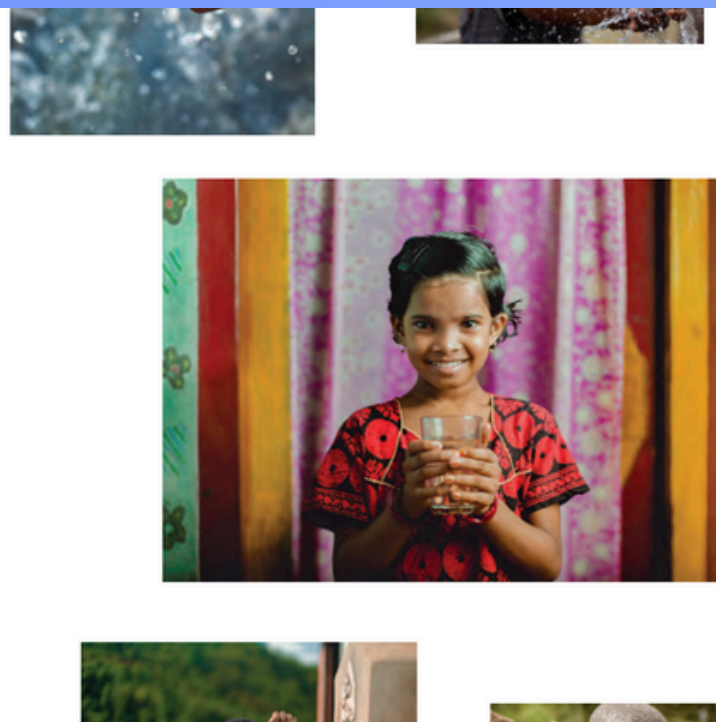
 charity: water

Our Photo Approach

Focus on hope, not guilt.

Photography is an enormous part of the charity: water brand. You'll see beautiful photos of smiling people in just about everything we do. We like it that way. Our photographic style is built on one simple thing: possibility.

We never guilt people into giving. Instead, we portray the people we help with dignity. And anytime we show photos of harsh reality, we pair it with explanations of what you can do to help. We want everyone who interacts with our brand to feel inspired, hopeful, and motivated to take action. Our imagery is about opportunity.



A collection of visual elements that represent your brand's personality and create a distinctive and recognizable image.

It goes beyond just a logo and encompasses a range of design elements that contribute to the overall look and feel of your brand.

 charity: water

Our Favorite Fonts

Our primary brand font is Proxima Nova. We use it in print and on the web. When Proxima Nova isn't available, we use Avenir. We don't use serif fonts often, but sometimes we use Georgia for body copy, especially on the web.

Use the font that works best with your design, and always be consistent throughout whatever you're working on.

Messaging Pillars

3-4 messages
that
help stakeholders
understand
**what makes your
organization unique**
and
**why they should get
involved**
using
**real-life evidence or
examples**

Messaging Pillars Example

Messaging Pillar	Proof Points	Summary
<p>Faith-Based Organization Example</p> <p>Affirming</p>	<p>Choice of worship services</p> <p>Fellowship</p> <p>Inclusive programming</p> <p>Weddings</p> <p>Community gathering place, open to all (Church and retreat)</p>	<p>We have open hearts and open arms to accept, support and inspire you on your faith journey. Your unique perspective and experiences enrich and strengthen our community. You will be challenged to share your unique point of view and explore others for greater understanding and meaning.</p>
<p>Belonging</p>	<p>Choice of worship services</p> <p>Long term history and traditions</p> <p>Family-oriented</p> <p>Social and community activities</p> <p>Opportunities to lead and interact with members</p> <p>Fellowship</p>	<p>No matter who you are, you belong here. Everyone is a cherished member of our family. We are a community built on unconditional love and support. Every person is welcomed and valued and no one walks their journey alone.</p>

Content Templates

Using the brand pyramid as a guide, content templates are **standardized formats (copy and visual)** designed to **guide the creation of content** for **various communication channels and platforms.**

Content Templates

Social Media Post Template:

- Layout with designated spaces for images and text.
- Consistent placement of the brand logo.
- Brand hashtags or calls-to-action.

Email Newsletter Template:

- Header with the brand logo and tagline.
- Sections for featured content, promotions, and updates.
- Consistent fonts, colors, and formatting.

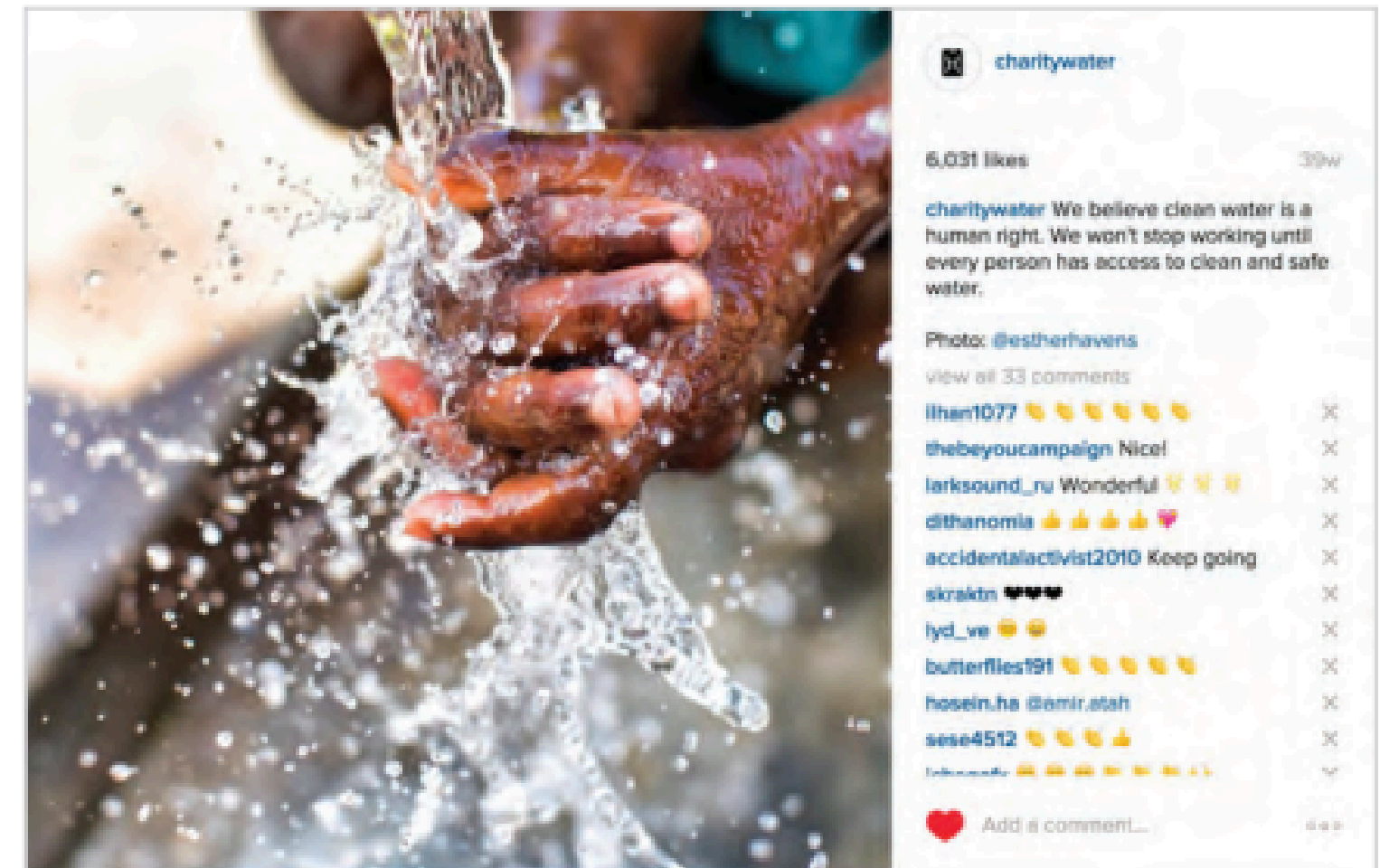
Press Release Template:

- Header with the brand's logo and contact information.
- Structured sections for headline, subhead, body, and boilerplate.
- Space for quotes, images, and relevant details.

Advertisement Template:

- Clear headline and subheadline.
- Space for compelling visuals or product images.
- Call-to-action with a defined area for a link or contact information

Social Media Template Example



Tagline Templates

A short and memorable phrase
from your messaging pillars
that expresses the
essence, mission, or key message
of your brand.

(Choose ONE that reflects your most important messaging pillar or differentiator)

Classic Tagline:

- Brand Name: [Tagline]
- Example: "Unicef: For Every Child"

Descriptive Tagline:

- Brand Name: [Tagline] - [Descriptive Phrase]
- Example: "Connecting Communities, Providing Hope: [Nonprofit Name]"

Value Proposition Tagline:

- [Tagline] - [Value Proposition]
- Example: "Innovating for Social Good: Where Vision Meets Action."

Aspirational Tagline:

- [Tagline] - [Aspirational Statement]
- Example: "Inspiring Change, Igniting Futures."

Headline Templates

Short, attention-grabbing statement
from your marketing pillars
that **serve as the title or main heading**
of a piece of content.

Benefit-Oriented Headline:

- Template: "Discover the [Benefit] with [Brand]"
- Example: "Transform Lives Today: Your Support Brings [Benefit] with [Nonprofit]."

Problem-Solving Headline:

- Template: "Solving [Problem] with [Brand]"
- Example: "Breaking the Cycle: [Nonprofit] Takes on [Issue] for Lasting Change."

Emotional Appeal Headline:

- Template: "Feel [Emotion] with [Brand]"
- Example: "Healing Hearts, Restoring Lives: Join [Nonprofit] in the Journey of Hope."

Curiosity-Driven Headline:

- Template: "Unlock the Secret to [Benefit] with [Brand]"
- Example: ""What if You Could Change Lives Today? [Nonprofit] Invites You to Discover How."

Call-to-Action Templates

A call to action (CTA) is a **prompt or instruction** that encourages a stakeholder to **take a specific action.**

Donate Now:

- CTA: "Support our mission. Donate now to make a difference."

Join Our Community:

- CTA: "Be part of something bigger. Join our community and stand for change."

Become a Member:

- CTA: "Become a member today. Together, we can achieve more."

Volunteer Today:

- CTA: "Your time can change lives. Volunteer with us today."

Spread the Word:

- CTA: "Help us raise awareness. Share our story and mission."

Advocate for Change:

- CTA: "Stand up for what you believe in. Advocate for change with us."

The Brand Book

**The essential elements and
rules for maintaining a
consistent and cohesive
brand**

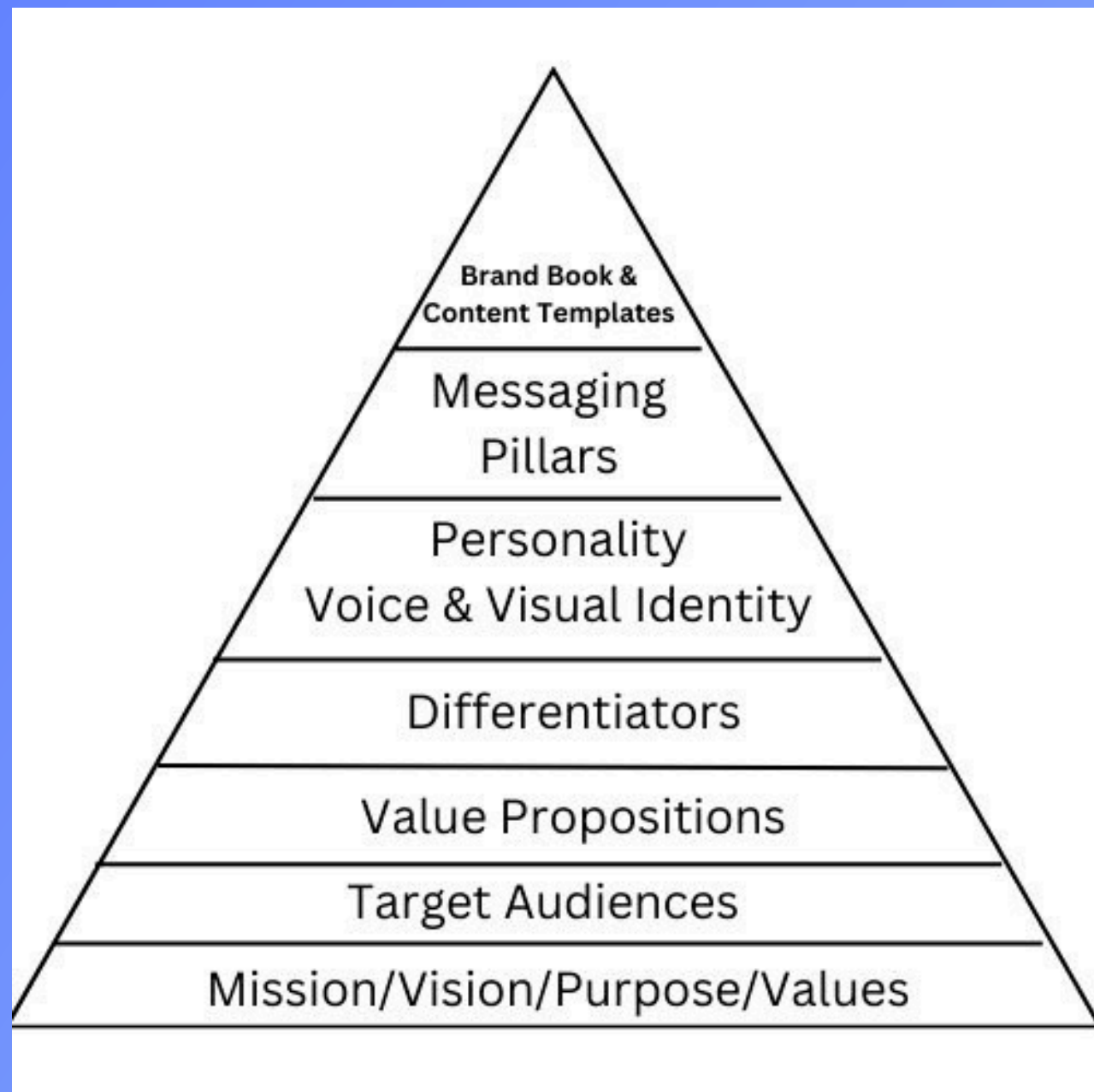
including...
visual identity
verbal communication guidelines
written communication guidelines
and more!

Brand Book Example

Charity Water



The Brand Framework



Putting it all Together Brand Framework

This is the blueprint that will guide for all decision-making, ensuring that your organization presents a unified and compelling image to your stakeholders, both internal and external.

But wait! You're not done!

Your brand is an asset.
It's not a one-and-done project.
It must be nurtured and protected.

Nurturing Your Brand

**Like all organizational assets,
your brand must be consistently
supported, promoted, updated,
and measured.**

Internal Alignment

Audit and Update Collateral and
Materials

Digital Communication Channel
Alignment

Build a Brand Marketing Plan

Monitor and Measure Impact

What about Marketing?

Marketing

is

**communicating and promoting
a brand/service/product/offer/message**

to your target audience. It's about

**getting the word out,
attracting attention,
and driving action.**

Marketing activities include

direct mail

digital and traditional advertising

public relations

social media

email

content marketing

thought leadership

search engine optimization

influencer marketing

events

and more

The Marketing Plan

The Marketing Plan

Summary

Objectives

- KPIs
- Measurement/Evaluation
- ROI

Situation Analysis

- Market Analysis
- Competitive Analysis
- Target Audience

Strategies

- Product/service
- Pricing
- Promotion
- Place/Distribution
- Positioning

Messaging and Creative

Content Calendar

Tactics

- Traditional Marketing/Advertising
- Digital Marketing/Advertising
- PR and Media
- Influencers, Referrals, WOM
- Supporting Sales Efforts

Operational Considerations

- Digital Channels
- Marketing Automation
- Technology Needs
- People/Talent Needs

Budget

Supporting Customer Research

Risks and Contingency Plans

The Marketing Plan

Benefits

Clearly states measurable goals, target markets, and strategies to reach them.

Keeps your team focused and provides a structured approach.

Allows for more targeted and personalized engagement strategies.

Allocates limited resources—time, money, and staff—more efficiently.

Enhances strategic and data-driven decision-making on marketing efforts.

Increases your chance of achieving success.

The Marketing Plan

The Secrets to a Good Marketing Plan

Tailor the template to your organization's needs and goals.

Include SMART goals to measure success.

Lean heavily on the brand framework for guidance on your target audience and messaging.

Build an integrated marketing plan that includes several communication channels and marketing strategies.

Create the content for a marketing plan as a package to ensure consistency.

Develop a comprehensive timeline that includes internal deliverables and who's accountable.

Wrapping Up

Your brand is the foundation on which all operational efforts (including marketing) are built.

It is an operational tangible asset.

A strong brand provides a strategic framework and direction, guiding every decision and action you take.

Brand provides coherence and consistency across all marketing initiatives.

It ensures that every message, every interaction, and every touchpoint reflects the core identity and values of your brand.

When your brand is strong, your marketing efforts become more focused, more impactful, and more likely to achieve your goals.

Brand is the secret ingredient that can turn an ordinary marketing plan into an extraordinary success.

Resources

[How Do You Know if Your Brand is Strong? Take the Brand Quiz.](#)

[Marketing vs. Branding: What's the Difference?](#)

Resources

Podcasts

- [Connecting to Your Community Through Branding](#) by The Influential Nonprofit
- [How to Foster Trust + Connection with Your Brand](#) by We Are For Good
- [Why “Branding” Matters to the Modern Nonprofit](#) by A Modern Nonprofit Podcast
- [How Branding has Changed in the Nonprofit Sector](#) by The ENGAGE Podcast

Articles

- [The Role of Brand in the Nonprofit Sector](#) -- from SSIR
- [Nine Aspects To Consider When Branding A Nonprofit](#) -- Forbes

Resources

Brand Books

Boy Scouts of America

NAACP

World Wildlife Fund

Pencils of Promise

Questions?



Thank you!

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