



Unit 28: Branding

Delivery guidance

This unit will equip learners with the practical skills and knowledge to identify how branding is used within a variety of businesses and sectors. They will learn to identify why businesses use branding and its effectiveness in transmitting its intended message. Learners will also learn that branding is more than just a symbol or image.

Learners will gain the knowledge and skills required to assess the effectiveness of branding for a business, and the opportunity to gain insight into the tools that can be used to establish the success or popularity of a brand. This knowledge could then be potentially used later in the assignment writing process.

Investigating branding opens learners up to the opportunity of understanding the significant impact that branding plays in our everyday lives. There are many questions that can be raised and explored by studying branding, which could include the use of child poverty labour through to adolescent peer pressure and its effects on young people. Learners should play an active role in understanding the power of branding through comparison and blind testing of products. Increasingly, learners should be aware of the exponential growth of branding through the use of technology.

To gain a full appreciation of the power of branding, learners should have the opportunity to engage with professionals who work in the sector. This could be further supplemented by work experience opportunities, which would give a strong base to carry out the summative assignment requirements.

Approaching the unit

Learners will need to know that branding is what often separates average products from perceived high-quality items. Learners will understand the key principles of branding and carry out an analysis of how well a brand meets its intended use. Finally, based on research, learners will make real-life workable recommendations to change the brand and make it more effective.

Learning aim A will introduce or develop learners' understanding of branding. It is primarily focused on investigating the principles of branding, branding as an asset and the benefits and drawbacks of branding for a business.

Central to the successful understanding of this learning aim is providing learners with the opportunity to gain a clear insight into what a brand actually is. Learners should focus on dissecting the elements that make up the brand image of leading companies. This could give scope for developing into evidence for the assignment. Ideally, learners could consider the reasons why they purchase brands and the way in which they relate to the brands that they buy.

Learning aim B is primarily concerned with gaining an insight into why businesses have a brand strategy. It requires learners to carry out an investigation that analyses why a business might have a brand strategy. It is important for learners to remember that they should investigate a large business. Therefore, a market leader would not necessarily use branding as a key tool to attract new customers.



Learners would benefit from investigating the brand strategies of large businesses. Whilst the obvious signs of a consumer brand are easy to identify (e.g. sportswear manufacturers endorsing events or participants), learners will need to give a more in-depth analysis than simply looking at aesthetics or brand ambassadors. Learners need to understand the complexity of brand management and that every element is precisely chosen to fit and align with all others (e.g. the link between brand ambassadors and the socio-cultural demographic that the business is appealing to).

Learning aim C mainly focuses on reviewing the effectiveness of the branding of an existing organisation. This will involve learners carrying out an analysis of a brand by looking at its strengths and weaknesses and comparing this to a competitor brand. Based on this, learners will then suggest a series of recommendations to improve or even change the brand.

In delivering this learning aim, learners will investigate the underlying reasons for the challenges that face the management of a brand. This will give learners the opportunity to recognise that brands are always evolving in order to constantly meet the needs of customers. Learners should gain practical experience in auditing a brand and then investigating how to make it more effective by making changes to reflect the most recent social trends.



Assessment model (internally assessed unit)

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Investigate the role of branding in a selected business	A1 Principles of branding A2 Brand as an asset A3 Benefits and drawbacks of branding for a business	A report on the impact of branding on a selected large business.
B Review how branding is used by a selected business	B1 Branding as part of business strategy B2 Brand design B3 Factors influencing branding activities	A report on the extent to which the branding of a product meets the aim(s) of the selected large business, including recommendations on changes to be made to a brand in response to a brand audit.
C Recommend changes to a brand for an existing product	C1 Challenges of managing a brand C2 Changing a brand	



Getting started

This provides you with a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Unit 28: Branding

Introduction

Learners are required to gain a full understanding of the principles of branding and the role that it plays in being an asset to a business, along with the benefits and drawbacks of branding. Research into how large businesses use branding will give a platform that learners can use to examine how it is implemented in practice, as well as providing any recommendations for further improvements or changes.

Learning aim A – Investigate the role of branding in a selected business

- Introduce the teaching by outlining the three main areas for Learning aim A: principles of branding, branding as an asset and the benefits and drawbacks of branding for a business.
- For Learning aim A1, teaching of this content should focus on factors that identify what a brand is, how branding is used and the relationship that branding has with the consumer. You could organise a series of visits to town centres to teach learners how multinational businesses use branding and the elements that make up a brand. They can examine how different businesses use it as a vehicle upon which to promote emotional attachment with consumers, such as brand awareness, perceived qualities and loyalty.
- It is important that learners conduct their own effective research on the role that branding plays in attracting and retaining customers. This work is used to support their evidence for their summative assignment. Carrying out an online search can often yield revealing information as to why certain businesses use branding in the way they do. There are also many freely available resources on the internet. A useful example is 'Creative Market', which is a website that provides a beginner's guide to branding.
- For Learning aim A2, delivery should focus on the value that a brand brings to a business. An excellent delivery tool for this is the use of athletic sports branding in major sports. Learners should identify why certain brands want to be associated with particular sports people, clubs or associations and the importance of brand equity.
- This research gives an excellent opportunity to discuss and debate the value that a brand brings to a business. Learners need to be aware that businesses have to protect their brand assets and this is done through legislation. This gives an opportunity for learners to investigate any legal cases that involve branding transgressions, which may include trademark registration, copyright, patents or intellectual property (IP) disputes. You could give learners a selection of world-famous brands, which could include brands from the world of sportswear and motorsport. You could then facilitate a class discussion on how sub-brands are created (e.g. VAG – Audi, Volkswagen, SEAT and Skoda) and used to extend brand identity.
- You must ensure that learners understand that brands are targeted at specific groups of people. You could organise an activity which refers to ACORN (i.e. A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods) data and then get learners to compare products in order to help conceptualise learning.



- Discuss the customer loyalty ladder, ensuring that learners are aware that this is a marketing framework used to convert prospective customers into loyal repeat purchasers. This is achieved by constantly evaluating the needs of customers and marketing to them in an integrated way. For example, through online offers combined with samples in-store.
- Discuss the role of 'branding' as part of the marketing mix, highlighting the fact that branding is intrinsically linked to the 4Ps. This is because branding is about creating a positive image in consumers' minds and, if one of the 4Ps is lacking, then the overall impact will be diminished.
- For Learning aim A3, delivery should focus on how branding makes a business uniquely different from its competitors whilst providing the company with many benefits. An approach that could be taken here is to look at the branding used in the mobile technology market. For example, do certain brands or brand images belie the quality of the product being sold? How is branding used to create value for a business?
- A useful approach is to ask learners to carry out brand perception mapping and then link this to the perceived socio-economic classes of consumers.
- Finally, learners need to understand the drawbacks of branding in terms of cost and keeping it visible. Learners could investigate the advertising used in television programmes, which will give a good starting point for investigation. To be successful with this task, learners need to compare the cost of branding against its market visibility. For example, in terms of potential audience size, how does the visibility of adverts in a popular TV series such as Coronation Street compare in terms of cost and visibility to other forms of branding?
- As a formative assessment activity to check learner's understanding, you could prepare a short question and answer assessment to cover Learning aim A.
- Allocate time for learners to complete their summative assignment for Learning aim A, which is a report on the impact of branding on a selected large business.

Learning aim B – Review how branding is used by a selected business

- For Learning aim B, learners need to understand how branding and business strategies align, including how branding activities can be affected by internal and external factors.
- For Learning aim B1, learners need to focus on understanding that branding is an ever-evolving process. A good way to understand this is to carry out online research and compare multinational businesses over the last thirty years to examine their long-term plans for the development of their brands. This will reinforce the point that branding is always changing to meet the demands of the business and consumers. You should clearly outline that branding is planned and managed to ensure that a business remains current in the eyes of the consumers.
- Learners should compare the vision and values of the businesses they are investigating to examine how the branding used fits in with the businesses' aims and objectives. For example, why do some businesses have text-rich brands whilst others use symbols of quirky caricatures? Learners should ask themselves, 'What is this telling me about the business?'
- Learners should also be clear about how branding fits in with the overall marketing strategy of a business. Use models such as Porter's Five Forces to give an interesting avenue to explore this topic.
- For Learning aim B2, learners need to know about how brands reflect the core values and personality of a business. It would be useful to invite a guest speaker, such as a brand manager or an employee of an advertising agency, to the Centre



to speak to learners about this process. Learners need to be given a full perspective on brand design, including the channels that are used to make branding visible to consumers. Introduce learners to a number of key concepts in order for them to successfully complete this work, such as:

- brand identity – learners need to understand that brand identity relates to the way in which the brand is seen through the eyes of the consumer. This could be taught by facilitating a discussion on the range of brands available, such as prestige to value brands. It is interesting to note the language used to describe the brands.
- tangibles/intangibles – learners need to know the difference between tangibles and intangibles. Tangibles are the part of branding that can be seen and heard (e.g. symbols, logos and jingles). Intangibles are the aspects of branding that cannot be seen or heard. This includes the creation of emotional attachment and how the brand is positioned in the eyes of the consumer. This could be covered in the earlier discussion about brand identity.
- packaging – ensure that learners understand the role that packaging plays in branding. For example, ask learners to answer the following question using their own research: 'What does the packaging used by Apple say about its products? How is packaging used to complement the branding process?'
- touchpoints – explain the principle of touchpoints (i.e. this is at any point in which the consumer comes into contact with the brand). Ask learners to answer the following question using their own research: 'How does a business manage touchpoints to create a relationship with consumer?'
- For Learning aim B3, learners should focus on understanding the many internal and external factors that influence how a business carries out its branding activities. Whilst researching branding, budgets might prove difficult as many businesses do not want to disclose them, however, it may be possible to extrapolate the information from published company accounts. This information could then form a debate with learners discussing whether the money could be invested more effectively in other parts of the business.
- In understanding the external influences on a business's branding strategy, learners should be taught how to carry out a STEP analysis. This will emphasise the range of pressures that brand managers face.
- As a formative assessment activity to check learners' understanding, you could set an online quiz using *Kahoot!* based on the criteria outlined in Learning aims A and B.
- Allocate time for learners to begin their summative assignment for Learning aims B and C, which is a report on the extent to which the branding of a product meets the aim(s) of the selected large business, including recommendations on changes to be made to a brand in response to a brand audit.

Learning aim C – Recommend changes to a brand for an existing product

- For Learning aim C, learners will need to know how brands are managed and why they are changed, including how this is achieved.
- For Learning aim C1, you could focus on learning about how brands are perceived in the market. A good way of developing understanding is to ask learners to carry out a survey with friends and family to ascertain the perception of brands, considering different ages and demographics. Additionally, learners need to know how a brand establishes and maintains its relationship with customers. An interesting way to investigate this is to look at how branding communication has



changed from the 1960s through to the current day, including the use of technology.

- For Learning aim C2, learning should focus on how a business knows when to change a brand. This should be underpinned by learners carrying out an audit primarily based on the SWOT technique and supported by primary and secondary research. This could be set up as a class exercise where peers can form a focus group and carry out a survey on brand perceptions, which encompasses comparisons of major brands.
- You could arrange for discussions to take place with industry experts, which would give learners an excellent opportunity of understanding how and why businesses change the perceptions of brands. It would be useful for learners to investigate the evolving nature of major brands to recognise how social change impacts upon them.
- Learners should focus on how technology has evolved and how it affects the changing nature of branding and promotion in relation to social trends. Emphasise how technology is now one of the main channels by which consumers observe branding.
- Learners need to understand how technology has created new ways of branding businesses. More importantly, learners should reflect on their own experiences and identify how they have been subjected to viral marketing through the internet or social media.
- An interesting way to explore this is the process by which businesses create emotional attachment through online branding. Learners should investigate businesses that use social media to elicit response from consumers, which then guides how the business targets consumers.
- As a formative assessment activity to check learners' understanding, you could set an online quiz using *Kahoot!* based on the criteria outlined in Learning aim C.
- Allocate time for learners to complete their summative assignment for Learning aims B and C.



Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

- Unit 2: Developing a Marketing Campaign
- Unit 14: Investigating Customer Service
- Unit 16: Visual Merchandising
- Unit 17: Digital Marketing
- Unit 22: Market Research
- Unit 29: Relationship Marketing

Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson-endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC Nationals in Business. Check the Pearson website (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources>) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

Textbooks

Jones R, *Branding: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2017 ISBN: 9780198749912 – Provides a very short but detailed overview of branding throughout history to the modern day.

Miller J, *Sticky Branding*, Dundurn Press, 2015 ISBN: 9781459728103 – Well received text on branding which discusses strategies used by multinational businesses.

Journals

Journal of Brand Strategy (Henry Stewart Publications) – Provides an up-to-date reference of how branding is used in today's business world.

Websites

<https://99designs.co.uk/blog/tips/brand-identity/> – Article *What is brand identity? And how to design and develop a great one* by Deanna deBara. This website also provides a step-by-step walkthrough of how to create a brand identity.

<https://brandfolder.com/> – This website showcases the latest approaches used by businesses and brand managers.

<https://identitydesigned.com/roger-the-barber/> – This is a really interesting website which case studies a range of contemporary brands and provides the history of the development of the brands.

Pearson is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites. It is essential for tutors to preview each website before using it in class so as to ensure that the URL is still accurate, relevant and appropriate. We suggest that tutors bookmark useful websites and consider enabling learners to access them through the school/college intranet.