

Building Your Company Brand and Image

By: Larry Cooper, Textile Consultants, Inc

For years I have worked with branding companies and building their image so that customers recognize their company immediately as a high quality, exceptional, customer caring company that the consumer would want to work with. The process includes standing back and looking through a different lens to see what others see when they come in contact with the company, your company.

Recently, I have been looking more closely at the little things. I started with the appearance of company trucks, the inside of trucks, the equipment and the tools. What image do they display to the customers that you are trying to, not only sell to, but make into your cheering section? What about uniforms, the appearance of your people on the job sites, the sales people who are out front selling your company?

Logos and color describe who your company is and what your core values are. I see so many companies misbranding their image, that they actually lose business even before they have an opportunity to show off their technical abilities. Walking into a customer's house with a poor appearance, damages your image.

Over the next couple of months I will bring to you my ideas and suggestions of what I have found to work in the cleaning and restoration industry, and hopefully get to start reviewing your brand and image as you grow your company. I look forward to your suggestions and comments on this subject.

Part 1

Your truck's appearance represents a crucial portion of your Brand and image. Your truck is a running billboard presenting your company logo, name, services and colors. Follow a uniform program for the development of your moving billboards and it will enhance you Brand and make your company recognizable.

In my company I used a white van ¾ ton, same make and model, with a V-8 engine. I lettered all of my trucks with plastic letters, logos and images. I used the same color blue on every truck and I lettered all four sides of the vehicle. If you are working in a downtown area, you can also letter the roof.

We would hear from our customers and competitors that they had seen our trucks and we must have grown tremendously. When I had 4 trucks lettered, my competitors thought that I had 10 trucks, and when I had 20 trucks, they thought that I had 50. Why, because they all looked exactly the same, they were professionally lettered, and they were recognizable.

Cleaning trucks must be clean! Your whole team must have pride in the appearance of the outside and inside of your vans and trucks. Wash the exterior of your trucks. You must come up with an internal policy for your company to fix the dents. Build a fund or set a standardized policy that he or she who dents the vehicle, pays the deductible. Fix the dents immediately; don't wait for the rainy day. It is the Brand. Don't dent the Brand!

The condition of the inside of cleaning trucks and vans are my pet peeve and they are one issue that destroys your company image. Cleaning trucks must be clean! When truck mounted units are installed in our vans, the first day, we are so proud of the way the units and interior look. It is all down hill from there unless you actually care enough to put in place a company policy requiring that the interior of the trucks be cleaned and maintained every, every, every DAY.

Take a look at some of these beauties:



I cannot stress it enough...clean up your trucks, clean up your image and build your Brand!

Next, let us look at your logo.

Logos define your company. They should be recognizable, and easy to replicate. They should be simple enough to use in any size for advertising and with all of your company forms and marketing activities.

Define you company colors with your logo. Keep it simple. Can you think of a few simple logos: Nike, Pepsi, KFC, and DQ. Use it everywhere, get exposure in your marketplace.

Take a look at a few of these great billboards from a few PCUCA members:



Look for part 2 to come. It will cover more on building your Brand!

Larry Cooper founded Textile Consultants, Inc. in 1975. He is an experienced business owner from the cleaning and restoration industry with over 30 year's experience. Larry owned and operated the largest independent Commercial Carpet Cleaning operation in Colorado with over 80 employees cleaning over 25 million square feet per year. He was also involved in business consulting for 8 years and now is involved in consulting for carpet specifications, inspections of carpet and fabrics, and water damage situations.

Larry is a Past President of PCUCA. He also served as President of the IICRC for 4 years and then served on the IICRC Board of Directors for 19 years. Larry chaired the IICRC Standards Committee for 12 years and oversaw and managed the development and writing of the S500 Water Damage Standard, the S520 Mold Remediation Standard, the S100 Carpet Cleaning Standard, and the S300 Upholstery Cleaning Standard. Larry is currently a paid technical consultant to the IICRC for the continued development and updates to the IICRC Standards and works with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) in getting the IICRC Standards approved as National Accredited Standards. Larry currently serves as the Executive Director of the Professional Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners Association (PCUCA).