

Communicating Your Brand with Conviction, Consistency and Clarity

By Vicki Karabinus, President of InFocus Small Business Strategies, LLC

Reprint from [Forward/Adelante Business Journal](#), Vol. 2, Issue 12

Building your business during an economic downturn is possible if you have a strong brand and you are communicating it well. Here are some helpful tips for growing your business during tough times, relying on the strength of your brand:

1. Set goals

Have you thought about what your goals are for this year? What do you want to accomplish? Who do you want to be aware of your brand? What do you know about them, and how can you reach them?

2. Take stock of your branding and marketing efforts

If your business uses print marketing materials, pull them all together and give them a good, hard look. Does each piece look as if it came from the same company? Is your logo used consistently? Is the design clean and neat, and does it appeal to the reader?

Does your website present a professional image? Does the content need to be updated? Do your print materials and your website compliment each other, or do they appear to come from different companies?

If you have employees who interact with your customers, do they represent your brand well? Is each customer greeted with a smile and a helpful attitude? Are your employees committed to delivering great service each and every time?

All of these elements represent your brand! It is important that they work together to communicate your message – your brand promise – consistently and clearly.

3. Make a plan for where you want to go

Write down what you need to do this year to improve your marketing efforts, whether it is re-working a brochure, updating your website, or training your staff. Determine your budget: What will each project cost, and where will the dollars come from? Then put target dates on each activity and hold yourself accountable for getting the work done.

Your brand is the core of your business, representing value to your customers and making a difference in their lives or their businesses. In an economic downturn, communicating your brand is more important than ever. Take time now to make a plan that will communicate your brand with conviction, consistency and clarity.