

Branding Your Business Worksheet

An Exercise for Advisors Who are Creating or Changing Their Name and Overall Branding

Every marketing team, agency, or creative boutique has their methods to their madness when it comes to creating the perfect business name. But, in a profession where so much is changing, advisors don't have the time (nor the desire and capital) to shop around to find the ideal group that will take them through an overwhelming experience just to present a few clever names.

To help advisors begin the "name-storming" process, Carson Coaching has developed a two-part exercise that is specific to financial services. Start by answering the following questions about your business. Then, after seeing the characteristics of what you represent and the value you provide, create a name that is authentically you. Doing so will ensure you come up with a name that is consistent with your story, authentic to your mission, and compelling according to your unique value.

Step 1: Reflect on Your Business and Create the Branding *Concept*

1 What do you want your firm name to convey about your business? *(select those that apply)*

I want my firm name to speak to the client experience we deliver

I want my firm name to reflect our core values first and foremost

I want my firm name to represent our mission statement

I want my firm name to attract a specific niche market, lifestyle, or demographic

I want my firm name to directly address the challenges my ideal clients face

2 What problem are you trying to solve by creating this new brand name? *(For rebranding only)*

3 What is the client profile of the people you serve?

- » What lifestyle stage are they in?

- » What interests/hobbies do they have?

- » What kind of services are they most interested in receiving from you?

4 Is there anything unique or inspiring about why you became an advisor?

5 If you could describe your value proposition in 15 words or less, what words would you use?

6 How do you describe the services you offer to clients?

7 At a high level, describe how the planning process works in your firm.

8 Choose 3-5 words that describe the way people should feel after hearing your firm's name?

» Word 1:

» Word 2:

» Word 3:

» Word 4:

» Word 5:

9 What one thing do you want people to remember about your brand after hearing about your firm?
(i.e. a feeling, an idea, a person?)

10 What do your competitors use as their position/unique differentiator against you?

11 If you could describe what you deliver to people as a result of them working with you, what would you say is the bottom-line benefit?

12 How is their life better after working with you?

Step 2: Use the Branding Logistics Checklist

Conduct a trademark search

- » An initial search at the US Government Trademark site can be done quickly and easily at this site: <http://www.uspto.gov/main/trademarks.htm>

Secure the domain name

Follow the steps your tax advisor suggests to create your legal entity

Start the process to set-up your name with your broker/dealer and any other firms or authorities

Find a graphic designer to create your brand identity/logo

- » Set brand guidelines/standards that you will apply across all media
- » Get template pdf/word docs/PowerPoints
- » Build new website
 - Maintain old email and URL with auto forwarding to new site and clear pop-ups indicating that firm has new name
- » Create new printed collateral material (if you are still printing materials – many firms only distribute electronic documents)

Step 3: Launch Your Brand

Develop a Brand Communication Plan:

- » Client communication (email, phone conversations, events, website, blog posts)
 - Send notification email to all possible contacts
 - If rebranding, focus on, “New look and name – SAME TEAM”
 - If mailing, send on legacy stationery
- » Internal training and communication to your team
 - Have script for entire team to explain the change
- » Advertising/PR (press release, billboard ads, TV spots, print ads, etc.)
- » Update Signage

Update your social media presence (Twitter handles, Facebook business page, LinkedIn company page, etc.)

Establish or update your annual marketing budget

Define a project timeline of deliverables and action items to prepare for launch

Update the post office

Update your email host and email signatures, business cards, and stationery

Update your utility accounts

Update your information with partner organizations:

- » CPA firms, Insurance firms, etc.
- » Local Chamber of Commerce
- » The BBB

Update your Google My Business profile

Update government records and legal agreements



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