BRANDING 101

DON’T KNOW JACK ABOUT BRANDING?
WELL, HERE’S TIP #1: WE CAN HELP.

STORY BY KASEY JACKSON

Kiwanis focuses on serving children around the world so that future generations will thrive. So it should come as no surprise that thousands of Kiwanis clubs are doing a lot of things right. But the flip side of the coin shows that many well-intentioned Kiwanis clubs are doing a lot of things wrong. Hard to believe? Wonder if your club is on the right track?

Consider this: Research shows us there’s a disconnect between what Kiwanis does and what the public thinks Kiwanis does. Why would this be? Bad branding can be at least part of the problem. Here’s why.

Consistency is key to a strong brand and image. With almost 8,000 clubs around the world, that’s 8,000 potential versions of the Kiwanis brand. If a club uses the Kiwanis logo incorrectly, it makes it more difficult for people to recognize Kiwanis and the work your club is doing to make the community a better place to live. And the logo is just the beginning.

So, read up and find out: Is your Kiwanis club a branding pro, or do you have an image problem that rivals the latest celebrity gossip?
**POSTER CHILD**

Meet Jack. He’s been a Kiwanis member for 60 years—and has never missed a club meeting. To help him celebrate, our club surprised him with a cake … and a special scholarship in his name: the Kiwanis Jack Scholarship, complete with posters and a logo to help advertise to the local high schools. Now, Jack's face and the Kiwanis name will be plastered over every bulletin board in every high school and bus stop in town. That's Jack's face … right in the center of the Kiwanis seal and with the Kiwanis K right on top. I designed it myself! It's the perfect way to get the word out about Kiwanis—by offering free money. And we have a new tag line: “Don't know Jack about Kiwanis? Well, now you do.” It's brilliant! ~ Sally Jane, proud Kiwanian

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**BANNER CLUB**

The Kiwanis Club of Nowhereville is almost 100 years old and boasts a membership of 56 men and women of all ages. The club sponsors three Service Leadership Programs—one Key Club, one Builders Club and one Aktion Club—and it has always highlighted its own history. In fact, we've recently taken to the streets of Nowhereville with new banners we had printed. Some have photos of our earliest members selling popcorn at the Lions Club Spring in the Park event, while others show the first office we used for our club—right on Main Street! All of our signs feature the Kiwanis logo … a really cool one we designed to look old. And, to focus on our history, all signs feature vintage photos of our members. Black and white photography is popular again! ~ Bob, Kiwanis Club of Nowhereville

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**IN THE PINK**

The Kiwanis Club of Lunduntown has a long record of successful service projects. So when one of our longtime members, Florence van Buckle, recently became the president of her Pink Flamingo Club, some of us—we're all Kiwanis members!—came up with a great idea. Why not take the flamingos to our next Kiwanis club meeting and talk about selling them as a fundraiser? We think this would be a great fundraiser, and it would be fun to become the club known for the pink flamingos. We've already made our club website pink to get ready for the first fundraising event! Everyone loves flamingos, right? Can’t wait to see how this goes! ~ Billie, Lunduntown Kiwanian
IF you haven’t figured it out, these three examples are not real. But they’re not that far from reality, either. Kiwanis members have, for more than 100 years now, had the best intentions. They’ve always wanted to help. To do the right thing. But sometimes, we can do harm to Kiwanis’ brand even when we’re doing good.

Kiwanis’ image is important; whether you’re representing Kiwanis through service in your community, showing off your club to a guest or just wearing the Kiwanis logo at the grocery store. Our brand is key. It’s what connects potential members, donors, partners and even our existing members to who we are, what we do and why they should care to be a part of Kiwanis.

But our brand is more than a logo. It’s how we talk about Kiwanis and our club. It’s focusing on our mission. It’s everything people see and hear about us.

Sound intimidating? It doesn’t have to be. If you don’t know brand promises from Pantone colors or key messages from mission statements, don’t worry. You don’t have to be a marketing expert to get our brand right. We’re here to help.

It sounds intimidating. But really, it isn’t.
5 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO STRENGTHEN THE KIWANIS BRAND IN YOUR COMMUNITY

1. Download or view the Kiwanis Brand Book at Kiwanis.org/brand. You’ll find everything you need to know to get your club on the right track. If you only do one thing on this list, this one will cover everything. Do it. Now.

2. Nail your elevator speech. No, you don’t have to memorize it. But have an idea of what you’d like people to know about Kiwanis, and be ready to confidently talk about it when asked. Or even when you’re not! As we like to say, kids need Kiwanis. It’s almost as simple as that. Think of yourself as a salesperson; tell anyone who will listen about the good your club is doing. Read more about elevator speeches on page 4 of the Kiwanis Brand Book.

3. Don’t add a pink flamingo. Please. Kiwanis has, as mentioned, an official logo. It’s trademarked. Use it. Don’t stretch it. Don’t put it upside-down, and for the love of Pete, don’t add a pink flamingo to it. Or a photo of Jack. No matter how much you love the guy. A logo is not art, nor clever, nor customizable. It’s an essential element of our brand.
Jack just wasn’t cutting it as the “face” of Kiwanis. Someone started drawing mustaches on our logos and blacking out his front teeth. The comedy duo on our local drive-time radio program lampooned us every morning for two weeks. What a disaster! I found Kiwanis’ brand guidelines online, and we’re using the official logo everywhere. People are noticing the “K” now, not Jack. One of our local firms just hired a new CEO from Norway. He recognized the logo as the same one his club used in Oslo. He came to our meeting last week and just sent us his application. I can now say I know Jack about branding. And it isn’t about Jack.

~ Sally Jane, very proud Kiwanian

**ANOTHER HAPPY ENDING**

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