



Ryan Rieches On... Branding: How to Discover Your Unique Promise of Distinction

- Steve Sanduski: Hello everybody and welcome back. You are listening to, On Your Mark, Get Set, Grow. Which is the podcast of CEO Coaching International. I'm your host, Steve Sanduski and today we are going to talk about branding. Which is such a critical part of building a successful business, to get your message out there. Today we brought on one of the best in the business. His name is Ryan Rieches. Ryan is the founding partner of Branding the Business. Which is one of the country's most B to B branding companies. You have tremendous career Ryan, in the whole branding area. I'm really looking forward to our conversation today.
- Ryan Rieches: Great to be with you Steve.
- Steve Sanduski: Well Ryan, first of all, I've got a lot of questions I want to talk to you about here. Let me just start with the basics. Why don't you define what branding is for us?
- Ryan Rieches: Good starting point. We find that branding is a very misunderstood word. It comes with a lot of connotations and I think misunderstanding as well. The way we define it, it's your unique promise of distinction. How you are distinctly different that your competition. Hopefully when your name and your brand is said, your target audience has a clear idea of the promise that you offer.
- Steve Sanduski: Well I guess you're making an assumption in there, that your company is distinct.
- Ryan Rieches: Well that gets down to the process. How do we figure out what is that unique distinction yet?
- Steve Sanduski: It's okay. We'll get into that. Now what would you say is the state of branding today? Where I'm getting at there is things have changed so much in the last ten, fifteen years with the rise of the internet. How it's so easy for people to switch brand loyalty. There's always the newest app that comes along. What's your take on where branding is today? Is branding more important that it used to be? Less important? Are people more brand loyal or less brand loyal, today than in the past?

I know that's several questions in there. What are your thoughts on that?

Ryan Rieches: Well I think it's more important today than ever. Partially for the reason that you described. Is that we have so many choices available at our fingertips. That in loyalty, I think unfortunately has slipped. I mean that's why branding is imperative so that you can develop a relationship with your target audience. I think that relationship is the critical component. You're right, technology has changed things quite a bit. We do a lot of research on the front end. We use technology for that. Basically anyone in the world can have, buy access to the web. Have access to knowledge and information and choice. The idea behind branding is to clarify what your company's good at. How you stand apart from the competition. More importantly how you develop relevancy with your target audience. That is the key and that's how you develop a true relationship. That takes time. That's also part of the reason and challenge behind brand loyalty. It's more important today than ever.

Steve Sanduski: Do you find that when companies are getting started, it's all they can do just to kind of get the product out the door. They're not too concerned about the brand. At what point do you find in the evolution of a company, where they start to get serious about, okay we've really got to focus on the brand? We have to be intentional about the brand that we're creating in the marketplace. At what point in the evolution, do you think that typically occurs?

Ryan Rieches: Where it typically occurs or where I would suggest it occur?

Steve Sanduski: Well, let's do both. Let's do both.

Ryan Rieches: Yeah, right. No, you're absolutely right. Companies initially start out with what they think they're good at. Where they think there's opportunity in the marketplace. We work a lot with B to B companies, primarily technology companies. What we see is that they develop this great technology and they think because it is better than the competition, that the world is going to knock their door down. That just simply isn't the case. You have to clearly articulate your value proposition and get it out there to the target audience. We were saying, that unless you define your brand, others will. Sometimes those misperceptions are at the detriment of your company. Worst case, your competition is redefining you. I think it's very, very important to do it as early as possible. We don't work with too many start ups. Most companies are established. That they, for whatever reason or another, whether it's M and A or new product expansion or new executives, they need to re-evaluate their brand, and change the existing perceptions out there. What we find is that most of time with existing companies, there's a lagging perception. They only know you for what they've experienced in the past. Meanwhile your company's moved on. When we work with clients we're developing a brand for the future. It's important to understand where they want to take the business. Then develop that brand that can align with that business and brand strategy, to go forward and prepare for the vision.

To answer your question, earlier in the process is better. We're able to provide insights on the marketplace that can provide clarity on where to take the business. Sometimes we see companies get too far down the path. Chasing a rabbit down a hole, that particular direction is not going to be effective. That market share in that particular category is not going to get you where you want to go. I would recommend ... I've told this to many, many companies. Evaluate the brand, very early on in the process and align it with your business plan.

Steve Sanduski: All right. Let's walk through some of the steps here. Let's say I'm the CEO of a company and I'm at the point where I realize, okay I got to get serious about being intentional about my brand. I want to be thinking about the future of my company. I want to get people to get thinking about my business the way I want them too, not through some type of default. Let's start walking through what are some of the different steps that you would take my company through to really develop our brand.

Ryan Rieches: Okay. We'll perfect, I'm glad you mentioned the CEO perspective. That's where it starts. If a company relegates branding just to the marketing team, they will not be successful. I have had some cases where that is expectation. Frankly, we turn down the assignment. We know it won't be successful if branding is only associated with marketing. A brand is once again going back to your company's unique promise of distinction. Marketing may be able to create a promise but they need the entire company to deliver upon that promise. It starts with the executive team. When we work with clients, we suggest that they have a brand steering committee. This is a cross functional team, comprised of executive leadership, marketing, sales, even financial. Everybody's on the same page or they aren't benefiting through the process. Then can really hit the ground running when it's ready to launch the brand.

We also believe in the power of research. I think that's one thing that separates our company from a lot of the competition. Too many firms that claim they do branding just want to jump in and do a creative campaign or build a website. That's a huge mistake. It begins with research, starting internally. What is this company really, really good at? What do we think we do better than anybody else? Where's our passion? Where is the industry going? What are our opportunities? We start with that. We develop a workshop with that brand steering committee. Then we take a look at the target audiences. We do research in a variety of different forms, with the different audiences. It's very important to prioritize your audiences as well. Once again, we do a lot of work with B to B, so the channel is a very important audience. Of course the customers, and you can segment them. We do a lot of research with existing customers, the channel. Then if possible we also look at the perspective customers, to get a better understanding of what they're looking for out of a company. We can ensure that we are relevant to their specific needs.

We also take a look at the competition. The worst thing we could do is come out with a brand positioning that is very, very similar to the competition. We want to find that blue ocean space where we have unique brand positioning that is once

again relevant to the target audience. That's why that research is just a real critical component. The nice thing about it, is we come back and present the research findings from the, once again the competition, the customers, the perspective customers, as well we interview the senior executives. We are able to provide all these insights that the client could have never gotten before. Customers won't tell you, Mr. Customer the truth but they'll tell a third party. We hold all the information very confidential and we don't share who said what. We're able to provide these insights that the clients find tremendous value in. We begin with once again, what are you really good at? What are you passionate about? Where do you want to go? Overlay that with all the research insights and then we build that brand on top of that.

Steve Sanduski: Ryan, let me ask you this about the research. What if your research shows that your customers, your clients have a certain impression of your brand, but you as a company are like, oh that's not what we want. We actually need to totally exchange that. Does that happen very often?

Ryan Rieches: Well there's always a disconnect.

Steve Sanduski: Okay.

Ryan Rieches: The question is how big is that gap?

Steve Sanduski: Okay.

Ryan Rieches: That's another reason. Good question. I'm glad you brought it up. There's always a gap. Sometimes it's small and it's really mostly just the customers don't know because they've only used you for a certain thing. They don't know you do all these other great things. That happens more often than you would imagine. They just don't know because people haven't taken the time to share, hey, this is what's happening at our company and here's where we're going. Here's the things we're offering now. That's a small gap. Sometimes there's misperceptions. Whether it's in service, quality or innovation, then it's just a matter of understanding how big that gap is. Can that gap be filled? What type of information do we need to share to the customer so they can have a new perception of the company.

Steve Sanduski: Okay. You present all the research to the brand committee here. Then what happens next?

Ryan Rieches: From there, we begin the process of the positioning. Once again, we go back to those really important components. What are we really good at and where do we want to go? Now we overlay that with the perceptions. We have usually a good amount of core strengths that we can build upon. The question is how do we package it together? We typically take all those great things that we can say about ourselves, we call them compelling truths, then create brand pillars. We typically would end up with three to four brand pillars. The nice thing about that is rather than trying to remember all those great things, you can remember two, three or

four great things. From those brand pillars then, we start to put together the brand positioning statement.

A positioning statement is typically around two, three, maybe four paragraphs long. It gets into celebrating what we're great at. We also overlay that with the brand personality traits. Those are things that really reflect who we are. People do business with people not you know, faceless, nameless organizations. We want to bring forth our personality attributes and add that human element. We add that into the brand, the platform and the positioning statement. Then we break into some level of emotion as well. That's really important to connect emotionally to the target audience.

Steve Sanduski: Now let me ask you about positioning. I remember back in the day, when you and I were just talking offline about our college days, back in the early eighties in Illinois. I think this book probably came out back in those days. I'm sure you're going to remember this. The book, Positioning, was it by Al Ries and Jack Trout?

Ryan Rieches: Yeah, classic.

Steve Sanduski: Yeah. Is that what you mean by positioning? If you would, just define what you mean by positioning here?

Ryan Rieches: Well once again, it kind of goes back to our definition, It's a bit of owning a piece of the prospects mind. That's what you want to do. Be able to stand apart from the competition. If you aren't standing apart and you're just like everybody else, you're a commodity. You're just competing on price.

Steve Sanduski: Right. I remember back in that book, they were talking about Volvo, for example.

Ryan Rieches: Yeah.

Steve Sanduski: They said, when you think of Volvo, you think of safety.

Ryan Rieches: Safety, yeah.

Steve Sanduski: You own a word. Now I know you had talked about the positioning statement being perhaps two to three paragraphs. Do you then pull that or get that down to one sentence? How does that work?

Ryan Rieches: Yeah, good question. What we typically try to do is come up with what we call the brand essence. After we have these paragraphs, we try to end with what we call the brand essence. Which is anywhere from two to five words if possible, that really, we like to say that it's the exclamation point on the brand positioning. It really is the core idea of what makes us unique and different. Sometimes that actually transcends and becomes the tag line or brand line, we call it, that gets locked up with the logo. That's not always the case. We always want to begin with just the core idea so that they brand steering committee and the internal team can

get behind it. Just immediately putting a tag line on your logo and put it on your business card and getting it out there, is not going to get the job done. It has to be first, really understood, believed and lived by the internal team. Yeah, those few words that really define the essence and the emotional connection to the brand is very important.

Steve Sanduski: Now here's a couple that I remember. I know everyone listening to this is going to recognize these as well. Now these might just be slogans or tag lines and not necessarily the brand essence statement you're talking about. The first one is, so I'm going to quiz you here, Ryan.

Ryan Rieches: Okay.

Steve Sanduski: We bring good things to life.

Ryan Rieches: GE.

Steve Sanduski: GE, of course. Then this one ...

Ryan Rieches: Now they have innovation at work.

Steve Sanduski: Innovation at work, okay.

Ryan Rieches: Okay, because they've gone well beyond that so absolutely.

Steve Sanduski: Okay. The of course the everyone knows this. Just do it.

Ryan Rieches: There you go, Nike.

Steve Sanduski: Nike, yeah. Are those just slogans or are those tag lines? How do those fit within what you're talking about here from a branding standpoint?

Ryan Rieches: Well, they're used as tag lines and slogans. They do, I think a pretty good job of emanating what the brand stands for. You know with Nike, it was the idea of celebrating the athlete, within all of us. We don't have to be a world class athlete to appreciate a good pair of running shoes, right. It was a much bigger idea. That's what breaks through, big ideas.

Steve Sanduski: Right.

Ryan Rieches: Too often, companies want to take the safe choice. You end up with more of a descriptive line rather than something that's emotional. The emotional connection is the most powerful.

Steve Sanduski: Can you give me an example or two of companies that you've worked with in the B to B space, where you've come up with a brand essence statement? What would be some examples of statements that you've come up with for your clients?

Ryan Rieches: Oh, okay. Well, I guess just a couple recently. We were asked to re-brand a company in the financial technology space. They lend money to small businesses that can't get loans through traditional banks because they don't have the collateral or they're just too small. A real growing category in America. It was for BFF Capital. When we took a look at the competition out there. Everybody is claiming fast and easy. That get your funding today. Little requirement of financials, etc. You'd be lost in the shuffle by trying to compete with that.

When we looked at this particular brand, we uncovered that the reality is that they've been around virtually longer than everybody else. They can loan more money than anybody else. The most important part is they have an underwriting process that is diligent and takes the time to understand the business and not just blindly loan money to businesses, whether they need it or not. They really did understand how small business works. Were really important in the process of allocating loans or not. What we ended up with in terms of a brand essence line was the champions of small business. That this organization could be your partner in helping you grow. What we found is that companies would borrow money, pay it back within a few months. Grow a little bit, borrow more money, pay it back. It really helped them get to places where they couldn't have got to any other way. They in essence became the champion of that small business and that partner.

Steve Sanduski: What's interesting about that is when I hear that tag line, I don't associate lending money to my company. Just like with the GE one, we bring good things to life. No way would I ever associate that tag line with GE unless I saw it on the commercial. It makes me feel good about GE, when I hear that.

Ryan Rieches: Yeah.

Steve Sanduski: I think that's the same thing with this, champions of small business. If I'm a small business owner and this lender, that's their brand essence, I'm going to feel good. You talked earlier about this emotional connection. That gives me a little bit of emotional connection, like these guys are on my side.

Ryan Rieches: Right, right. That's it. Another one we did was for M4, which is a mobile research company. They are able through mobile technology to do surveys across America and get insights from the target audience in very quick turnaround, due to GPS technology. Suppose you wanted to know more about the returns, the insights on a particular product in a Home Depot. A person entering the store can get pinged a text message, would you like to take a survey. Go inside and evaluate the brand. Understand the brand and be able to provide real time insight on that. You go to a movie or something like that, you immediately now get that opportunity to do a survey. The brand essence for us on that was real insights in real time. Traditionally research takes days if not weeks to field and get back. Here we're bringing forth the true benefit of the brand in that essence.

Steve Sanduski: Great. I was listening to another podcast not long ago. This was a company that

was talking about, they had a client who provided services to stores that, like Home Depot for example. They provided the shelving for those companies. They were trying to figure out how do we position our company to really stand out, that we can help firms like Home Depot and other big box retailers get up and running. When they open up a new store, they come in and put up all the shelving in. They realized that what they do better than everyone else is they can get the job done quicker. Their slogan or brand essence, maybe that's what we'd call it here, was opening sooner.

Ryan Rieches: Right.

Steve Sanduski: Their difference was, if we can get your store opened a week or two weeks sooner than the other people that do what we do. We are going to make Home Depot and other firms like that get revenue a week or two sooner and make more money. Ultimately then, it's actually less costly to do business with us because we're going to get you up and running sooner.

Ryan Rieches: Right. The idea is to celebrate what you're really good at and the benefit that you provide. Another example would be, we were asked to help through the merger of Georgia Gulf and a division of PP&G. This is three billion dollar company merging with a two billion dollar company. They wanted a new name because neither one of those names were going to go forward. We came up with the name Axiall. What this company offers is through the process of chemistry, they develop PVC and they apply it to a variety of different applications. Anywhere from building products like fencing and decking and that kind of thing to a tremendous amount of medical products, to of course PVC tubing and so forth. What they're doing is creating a product that is significantly better than alternatives and really, really important for the growing economies and growing parts of the world. The brand essence we came up with is at the intersection of chemistry and progress. Once again, they're a chemical company. We choose not to use that word. Chemistry is a lot softer and progress is they're able to help developing countries improve the quality of life.

Steve Sanduski: Yeah, I like that. Again, you're getting the emotion into it. It's something that the employees of company can get behind and feel good about.

Ryan Rieches: Yes. I'm glad you brought that forward.

Steve Sanduski: Good. All right, so we've talked about if you want to implement a branding or re-branding campaign, it's got to start at the CEO level. Then you put together this branding steering team, which is going to be cross functional throughout the company. Then you go out and you do a lot of research. Then you come up with these three to four brand pillars. You come up with a positioning statement. Which might be two or three paragraphs. You overlay that with a brand personality. Add some human elements. Add some emotion to it. All right, with that, then what's the next step?

Ryan Rieches: We typically develop a messaging matrix. Kind of going back to that list of the

priority target audiences. Each of those audiences, are a little bit different from each other. We have an over our team brand promise that goes for everybody. We're trying now to bring it down to a personal level on these target audiences. Through the research, we uncover what's important to each of those audiences. Then we develop the personas of each other's audiences. What makes them tick? What they're interested in? Then we develop messaging that's appropriate for each of those audiences.

Steve Sanduski: Okay. Now in terms of the messaging, I know you also ... I don't think we've touched on it here, on our call but also this idea of a brand lexicon. I think of Starbucks as an example here. If you go to Starbucks for the first time and you look at the language that they use. They have essentially created their own terminology. It's almost like you're part of this insider's club when you go to Starbucks. You know that you order a grande or whatever those other things are there. How important is that to create your own language within, as part of your branding?

Ryan Rieches: Well, it's very important if possible. That takes time though too. I think it's really, really important. We call it the voice of the brand. You're absolutely right. The words that can be used that doesn't fall into the trap of going under your radar. They just become too common. Once again, going back to the commodity. You want to rise above the commodity and stand for something unique. We try to do the same thing when we're developing and clarifying the category a client works within. We always ask our clients, saying what category you in? Sometimes they're really clear and some are like, well we're unsure or we're in these following categories. Once again, we're trying to stand apart. In some times, we actually create a new category for our clients all together. We get out of that real crowded space and stand for something different.

Let me give you an example. We were asked to work with a client who developed this technology to basically take the moisture out of the air we breath. Through a process, create clean drinking water that could be used for offices, without plumbing. On a larger scale, create drinking water where you don't have it at all. That's for use in developing countries where they don't really have access to clean water. We came up with this terminology, we call it air water. How many types of water are there, right? Purified water, sparkling water, you know you ...

Steve Sanduski: Polluted water.

Ryan Rieches: Yeah. Coca-Cola is in the water business now.

Steve Sanduski: Sugar water.

Ryan Rieches: There's probably twenty or thirty different types of water. We came up with air water and that's our category. Now we own that. Once again, you have to change the vernacular a little bit. Really be able to stand apart and own something.

Steve Sanduski: Right. That reminds me. You mentioned Coca-Cola. It reminds me of 7-Up and they

stood out as the un-cola.

Ryan Rieches: Right. There you go.

Steve Sanduski: Now Ryan we've talked about ... First of all are there anymore steps in the process here?

Ryan Rieches: Well, now you've got a really strong platform to build upon. Now what do you do with it, right?

Steve Sanduski: Yeah.

Ryan Rieches: You're first reaction would be, all my sales people, let's get out there and let's get this to marketing so they can develop some advertising and so forth. You know supply it to the website. Well, you definitely have to do that. Let me just take one step back. Typically now we need to add the visual component as well.

Steve Sanduski: Right. I think often times people will think of the visual as the brand. Like Twitter's got the little bird. Of course we know that's just one component of the overall brand.

Ryan Rieches: Yeah. Right. Yes. If I was to say most common association to branding is the logo. I hear that quite often. That means just that I want to change my logo.

Steve Sanduski: Right.

Ryan Rieches: Well, that's not going to get the job done.

Steve Sanduski: Right.

Ryan Rieches: The logo should represent everything the brand stands for. Often the logo is used as an example to say something is different about this company. It's evolved. We typically, I would say ninety percent of the time when we're re-branding a company, we evolve their identity as well. Then we talk about the voice of their brand. Now we're talking about the face of their brand. The logo starts that. I might add a brand line to it. Then we also have what we call brand expression. Which is how is the brand going to visually going to communicate beyond just the logo? Taking cues from the logo, we're able to develop graphic elements, a color pallet, a typography system. An imagery system, where there's photography or illustration. Then start putting it all together. The goal would be that you see this communication from this particular company, you don't even need to look at the logo and you know it's from that company. It's just so clear that they own a visual identity that is distinct. That is really, really important as well.

Steve Sanduski: I might be trying to simplify this too much. You've talked about the whole strategy, the whole process here to come up with the brand or the re-brand. Now, if I'm an employee of the company that has just gone through this process, can you distill it

down to me as an employee, to say okay this is what you need to know about our brand? This is how you need to think, feel, act and represent yourself as an employee of this company, so that you are a great representative of our brand. What do the employees need to know about the brand in order for them to be great brand ambassadors?

Ryan Rieches: I'm really glad you brought that up. It's kind of where I was going before you go out with an external sales message, you have to have that alignment within the company. It's just so critical that, we like to say, you have to develop the brand champions or brand ambassadors. I can tell you what's not effective, is having one big rah rah meeting and saying, here's our new brand. Here's our new positioning and here's what we're going to do. Everybody get back to work and do it.

Steve Sanduski: Just do it.

Ryan Rieches: That just doesn't work. It's effective to do a big launch like that but it's considered only one step in the process. It is a multi step process. To take people through it. You just can't, you think about it. The executive chain with a branch steering committee has gone through three or four months to get to here. How can you expect your staff, your team members to get it in a half hour. It is a step process where we take the employees through these steps. First it's one thing to hear it. Then you have to understand it. Then you have to believe it. Then you can start living it. The team and living the brand promise, that's when you've got real power.

Steve Sanduski: Okay, great. Now I could go on and on about branding. I think again this is such an important topic. I'm just going to give you some rapid fire questions here. Let's talk about technology space. We talked about that a little bit earlier. Three companies that come to mind in the past few years, that we all know re-branded. Yahoo, Earl and Marissa Meyers tenure there, they did a slight re-brand of Yahoo. Uber, recently came out with a re-brand. Airbnb, recently re-branded. Do you have any comments on those three companies? What did they do right? What did they do wrong in their re-branding process?

Ryan Rieches: Well first off, just thinking about re-branding, it is really, really important to keep your brand fresh. You can not just resign the laurels of your brand, of what you did five, ten years ago. You have to keep it fresh. Technology is making it go faster and faster. Used to be, we'd say between five and ten years, you have to re-brand. In these cases, with Uber and Airbnb, you have to do it much faster because technology is moving at a much faster pace. Their promise is evolving and changing. You have to keep current with your brand. I think it's too early to tell about Uber and Airbnb. It's certainly bringing up the conversation with you and I though, right?

Steve Sanduski: Yep.

Ryan Rieches: Things have changed and they got a new story to tell. Re-branding gives you an opportunity to tell a new story. I think that's the key. People have lagging perceptions about the brand and sometimes they're false. It give you an

opportunity to take it to a new level.

Steve Sanduski: Yeah. I really like what you just said there about re-branding gives you the opportunity to tell a new story. Also I like how you highlighted the importance of you've got to keep the brand fresh. In this day and age, as things are changing so quickly and people's businesses are evolving so quickly that the brand needs to keep up with that. I think that's great. Now, where do people go wrong in branding? What are they doing wrong?

Ryan Rieches: Well, I think underestimating the amount of time it takes to do it right. You can't just call a strategic meeting and bring in some pizzas and try to figure this out over a few hours. I think also if you're not really committed, you might give it to your internal marketing department and say figure it out. Hire an ad agency or web development firm and say, give me a new campaign. I think that's the biggest mistake. A brand is not a campaign. Campaigns are very short lived and a brand should be much more enduring. Even if we're evolving a brand, we're building upon the strengths of the past, not changing it completely. There is legacy, there is equity in brands. We've got to carry that forward. I think those are a couple of areas.

I think also, under appreciating the power of internal branding. Smart business people understand the power of their employees. If the employees do their job well, it's going to keep the customers happy. If the customer's happy, the shareholder is going to be happy. It really begins, not really a focus on the shareholders but a focus on the employees. Giving them everything they need in order to do their job and live the brand promise. From the education that we spoke of a moment ago on building those brand champions and taking them through the process of hearing, understanding, believing and living the brand. I think that's really, really critical.

Steve Sanduski: Now, I'm going to ask you to name names. As you look across the business spectrum, what companies do you think are doing a great job in branding right now?

Ryan Rieches: Oh, let's see. Well, I think GE is doing a good job. This innovation at work. The idea that they're vesting themselves of a number of business units that don't seem to fit. The power focus is very, very important. Be able to understand what you're really good at and where you want to take the business is critical. I think that's one that kind of stands out. Of course, Apple's always done a great job. I think they're floundering a little bit right now. Overall, they've done a great job at differentiating themselves behind the brand and from a user perspective.

Steve Sanduski: Ryan, as we wrap up here, is there anything else that you want to add here?

Ryan Rieches: Yeah. I think there's another component to branding that is related and that is visioning. When we work with companies, I always sit down with the CEO or top executive and say, okay we're building a brand for the future. Tell me about your

vision. Then there's a long pause.

Steve Sanduski: The awkward pause.

Ryan Rieches: I usually don't get a very clear answer. It's usually a three year sales goal or yeah, we did that. I know we came up with it or we're thinking of coming up with it. There's power in the idea of developing a very, very clear set of core statements. It's purpose, vision and mission in my mind. It begins with purpose. This is really important in tying it to the brand. The purpose is why we exist. That's that emotional connection. That is really, really at the core of any brand and any brand positioning. Why do we exist? What difference do we make in the world? Why should anyone care that we do what we do? If you get that emotional and that caring component right, the brand really can have legs to build upon. The purpose is at the core. Vision comes next. Vision is what we aim to achieve. It's more that destination in mind. Then the mission is how we're going to achieve it. A lot of people get things mixed up. Vision and visioning, purpose and cause and so forth but we just clarified it by purpose of the core vision. Mission and then of course you add values. Then brand positioning. Now you've got a really strong set of statements that can take the organization forward.

Steve Sanduski: Well Ryan, this has been fantastic. I really appreciate it. I just love this topic of branding. I think it is just critical that firms really get focused on this. If you already have a brand, which we all have brands, whether we like them or not.

Ryan Rieches: Absolutely.

Steve Sanduski: Maybe it's time for a brand refresh for a lot of the folks that are listening to this. You've given us some great info and a great strategy and process for people to go about doing that. We'll have a lot of this out on the show notes page. Make sure those of you listening here, that you also check out ceeocoachinginternational.com, go to the website and we'll have the show notes there as well. Ryan, again thank you for being on the show, very much appreciate it. Look forward to catching up with you down the road.

Ryan Rieches: Very good. If you'd like to learn anymore about our world. Please visit us at brandingbusiness.com.

Steve Sanduski: Fantastic. I know you have a lot great stuff on your website there. Lots of great articles and good content, so a great place for folks to go to, to brush up on branding. Thank you.

Ryan Rieches: Thank you. We have hundreds of blogs. We actually have our own podcast as well. Steve, I really appreciate the time. I enjoyed it.

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