

88 POV: Living Your Brand

Every stand-out brand should have a compelling logo, distinctive messaging and on-target tagline.

But the most essential component for any organization is a brand that is lived from within, extending from its goals and core values and embraced by everyone—from the C-suite to the entry-level employee.

How can you harness the potential of your brand to **drive your own organization and strengthen the experiences you create for your clients?** Here are three best practices to help guide you.

Brands that are lived from within:

1. Are developed with active participation from your organization's stakeholders.

The development of your brand's components—from your logo to key messages—may be “owned” by your internal marketing team (perhaps in partnership with an outside agency), but it's critical to engage with stakeholders across your organization throughout this process. This doesn't mean decisions should be made by committee, but it does ensure that your brand will be robust enough to support the goals and communication needs of everyone in your organization.

So consider creating an internal task force at the earliest stages of brand development, and engage them at key decision points along the way.



At 88, we work with client stakeholders at every stage of brand development.

2. Have guidelines that inspire.

Yes, your brand guidelines should provide direction and parameters for expressing your brand consistently both visually and in words. (Usage rules for your logo should be unambiguously clear.)

But the most effective guidelines should also serve as a source of inspiration for anyone entrusted to communicate on behalf of your organization. They should motivate writers, designers, P.R. specialists... anyone on your team working to bring your brand to life.

This means not just sharing the usage rules, but also the rationale and reasoning behind them. Not just sharing the tagline and messages, but the organizational values that drive them. This is how guidelines can become a launching pad for (appropriately) innovative interpretation.

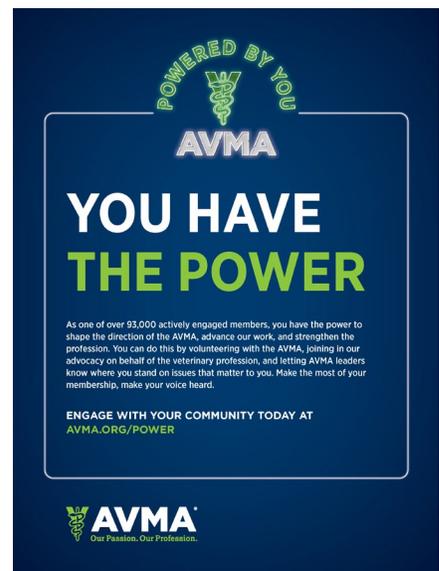


Guidelines should be specific enough to protect consistency, while also inspiring creative interpretation.

3. Are an engine for powering your culture.

It's important to keep in mind that everyone within your organization is a steward of your brand. And the experience you create for your external audiences should extend to every touchpoint—from your email signatures to your mailed material to the manner in which you answer your phones.

Just as important: your brand has enormous potential to drive your internal culture, bringing your teams together around a shared vision and purpose. This can be expressed simply through branded “swag” for employees, or more meaningfully through internal communication efforts focused on your organization’s goals and values. A thriving brand has the power to push your organization forward.



Explore ways for your brand to drive your culture and rally your team.

It may take some time and effort to build a brand that’s lived from within, but experience has taught us that it’s a goal worth aiming for. Organizations with thriving brands enjoy stronger client relationships, greater satisfaction among employees and increased potential to win new business.

What simple steps can you take today to help your organization live its brand to its fullest?

To learn more about our collaborative approach to brand building, contact Barbara Jurgens at bjurgens@88brandpartners.com, or give her a call at 312-465-5083.