

3 WAYS
TO
LEVERAGE TRAINING
AND BUILD A
POWERFUL BRAND



TORTAL™
TRAINING

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INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF “THE BRAND”

Imagine you’ve just walked into a McDonald’s restaurant after a long day on the road. It’s late. You’re exhausted. And for the past hour, you’ve had a craving for the Quarter Pounder with cheese, some fries, and a Coke.

You approach the counter, knowing that in a few short moments that savory burger will be in front of you. You give the employee your order and she tilts her head curiously. “I’m sorry, but we don’t serve that burger here,” she apologizes.

Perplexed, you try to determine if you perhaps mispronounced the name. The Quarter Pounder with Cheese. After all, when has a McDonald’s not served that burger?

Again, the employee apologizes, and explains that the owner of this location recently decided to remove a few McDonald’s favorites from the menu in order to create a more ‘specialized’ selection. You’ve just experienced a major breach in your relationship with McDonald’s, due to an unexpected lack of brand consistency.

Brand consistency is the glue that connects every piece of your customer’s experience together. From initial contact, to point of sale, to ongoing engagement, every touchpoint is a chance to fulfill your brand’s unique promise.

Without this consistency, your customers can feel disconnected from your brand, and ultimately, hesitant to offer you more business.

This ebook reveals the most common mistakes made by many companies, the practices that set great brands apart from their competition, and the best training methods for building a brand that will stand the test of time.

THE 3 MOST COMMON REASONS COMPANIES FAIL AT CREATING A CONSISTENT BRAND EXPERIENCE

Great brands are built upon two things:

1. Memorable interactions
2. Consistent delivery on those interactions

If we look at Apple, Inc. as an example of a strong brand, many people can agree that they offer an extraordinary product experience and deliver on that experience time and time again. Everything from their advertisements to their packaging feels connected and intentional, and when you unwrap the newest iPhone or watch the latest device announcement, you get the feeling that you're a part of something exceptional.

This kind of experience doesn't come about by chance. Rather, it's the result of intentionality, care, and a commitment to excellence. There's no doubt that most entrepreneurs are dedicated to this level of excellence in the early days of business, but over time – as the company grows – it's easy to dilute the brand message or hire employees who have no connection to the original vision.

There are three major reasons that a brand suffers as the company increases in size:

1. The inability of the owner to always be onsite and ensure standards are being upheld
2. Disagreements between owners and employees about what the brand experience should be
3. Employees not understanding what's expected of them, or why consistency is important

Of these three, the third lies at the heart of nearly all issues with brand consistency. If an employee or manager doesn't fully understand the vision for the brand, it's easy for them to feel that it's open to interpretation, or that it doesn't matter at all.

On the other hand, when employees are fully committed to delivering an extraordinary brand experience based around a singular vision, it removes the need for an owner to "micro-manage" and eliminates any disconnect before it arises.



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WHY BUILDING AN EXTRAORDINARY BRAND STARTS WITH TRAINING

Building an extraordinary brand starts with understanding that every person in an organization – from the CEO to the front line employee – has a role to play in delivering the brand experience. The most effective way to inspire this kind of commitment to excellence is to ensure that every person understands his or her unique function, and why it's important.

This won't happen overnight, but the right kind of training processes will create a company full of “brand stewards” who take your vision as seriously as you do.

When employees understand the “why” behind what they're asked to do, they are empowered to take ownership. Their willing cooperation frees up their creative energy from trying to buck the system, so they can apply that energy to making it better. Your best employees will use the opportunity to offer ideas that will further the goals of your organization.

For instance, it was a McDonald's employee who came up with the idea to start serving breakfast. It was a Subway employee's idea to bake fresh bread onsite. Both examples are now iconic parts of each brand experience.

In both cases, rather than create tension with headstrong ideas, the employees understood the brand goals and used their creativity to help further the cause.

If you want to create an environment where people not only buy in, but actually add to the collective vision, it's vital that you have the right kind of training in place.

DON'T JUST RELY ON OPERATIONS MANUALS FOR TRAINING

It's tempting for many organizations to think that they already employ proper training techniques because they provide their employees with thorough operations manuals. However, these manuals are only one piece of the puzzle.

Operations manuals are audit tools designed to measure employee performance against operational standards. When you rely on them as the sole means of training, it often backfires. Instead of training your people toward delivering a specific brand experience, you train them to simply "check boxes" off their to-do list.

To understand the difference, consider the contrast between these approaches to training for the same job:

1. How To Make A Sandwich: Place the bread on the counter, cut it at a 35-degree angle, and then insert the customer's selection of meat, cheese, and condiments.
2. Every time you make a sandwich it's an opportunity to make a customer's day. You're making an artisan lunch and sending them off with a smile on their face. Your goal is to give them an experience so memorable that they can't wait to come in again or tell a friend about their experience with you.

The first is operations based, and the other is experience based. An employee can complete the first task with a blank stare and a bad attitude, but not the second.

A great brand experience begins with a training process that provides your people with the "what" (what we're trying to accomplish), the "why" (why it's important), and the "how" (how you get the job done), and then reinforces those ideas on a regular basis.

HOW ELEARNING PROMOTES A CULTURE OF BRAND ADVOCACY

Providing the “what”, “why”, and “how” in a training setting promotes a strong culture of learning within your organization. A study by Bersin & Associates found that organizations with this kind of learning culture are 46% more likely to be the leader in their industry. A culture built around brand-based learning requires regular engagement with your employees in order to reinforce brand values and offer updated training as necessary. Modern eLearning platforms provide leaders with the tools to develop that culture across the organization. The primary benefits of an integrated eLearning system include:

- Integration across training types, including live orientation, webinars, and self-paced modules
- Ability to design custom trainings that are consistent across the organization
- Ability for leaders to track what people are actually learning, rather than just what they are checking off
- Individualized tracking that allows managers to measure employee training performance across all training modules
- Ability to create separate tracks for specific roles (e.g., employees, managers, and executives) to ensure everyone receives the exact information they need
- Ability to push out updates as often as changes occur

These benefits allow any organization to maintain a fast and flexible approach to training – which is necessary to support an ever-evolving brand.

4 CONSIDERATIONS WHEN BUILDING AN ELEARNING TRAINING PROGRAM

Building an eLearning training program can incorporate a variety of channels. The four primary types of trainings to consider are:

- Webinars
- Self-paced, online courses
- Videos
- Live training

Webinars use a web-based meeting platform like WebEx or GoToMeeting, and require that your people log in using a computer, or call in via telephone at a scheduled time. The greatest benefit of webinar training is that it is interactive. Even with your people logging in remotely, you can open the meeting up for a time of Q&A, allowing them to get the exact information they need in real time. You also have the option of recording these meetings, which allows your team to go back and review the information at a later time. This option also provides the greatest flexibility for offering training updates, as you can simply schedule a new webinar when new information needs to be distributed.

Video training is powerful in part because retention is generally very high compared to other methods of delivery. Lay out your training information in a visually engaging way, and your people can absorb the information as they watch the training videos on their own time. Video training requires a larger initial investment of resources, as they can be expensive to produce and update, but they provide correspondingly high value. Uploaded to a centralized location, your people can view and review as often as necessary.

Self-paced courses usually consist of a “lecture” element and a “review element.” This allows your employees to log in on their own time, learn at their own pace, and be held accountable for understanding and retention. Self-paced courses can be authored using programs like Lectora Inspire.

Live training sessions are excellent as a high-powered supplement to online resources. In-person training is the most engaging form of training, and with modern eLearning platforms, employee engagement and performance in these sessions can be tracked alongside the rest of the program.

Designing an effective mix, and creating custom content that achieves the organization’s goals, can be a complex and time-intensive task. Many organizations benefit from hiring a partner with training expertise to audit the current system and design one that better meets the organization’s needs. Due to their expertise and experience, a good quality training design partner can create the full-scale program at a lower cost than doing it in-house.

3 KEY STEPS TO BUILDING BRAND ENGAGEMENT INTO YOUR TRAINING PROCESSES

Once you've determined the best approach to building your training program or eLearning initiative, it's vital that you include the necessary brand-based considerations. Now that you understand the importance of providing the "why" in your training program, you're already partway to launching a successful initiative. Here are three additional steps to follow that will ensure brand engagement is an integral part of your training:

1. FOCUS ON CREATING "BRAND STEWARDS"

When building out a training initiative, most people tend to jump immediately into building processes, and bypass the importance of providing context.

Instead, think of training through the lens of inspiring people to be good stewards of the brand. Consider what the executive, manager, or employee needs to know in order to be a good steward of your brand, and develop a list.

Next, do an internal audit to determine which trainings you already have in place that lend themselves to this result, and which ones you're missing. Go to work developing the missing pieces first, so you can offer a cohesive brand-based training program.

2. PROVIDE THE FOUR PILLARS OF SUCCESSFUL TRAINING

Check each element of your training program against these four pillars:

1. What
2. Why
3. How
4. Verification

In every training initiative, explain what it is each person is expected to learn, why it's important that they learn it, and then how to get the results. For the last step, verification, set up a system to verify that people actually complete the training, and be sure to track how well they're learning the necessary concepts.

3. REINFORCE BRAND CONSISTENCY IN ALL AREAS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION

Although formal training should be at the heart of your brand building efforts, it's important to also reinforce the brand experience outside of the classroom. Be sure to talk about what your brand stands for and why it's important, and provide examples of your brand in action across all organizational avenues. Talk about it in company meetings, include it in your employee onboarding process, and send out an internal newsletter to all employees. Use every chance you can to reinforce the power of a great brand experience. This will cement your people's understanding of the importance of the brand values, and you'll soon see them put it into action.

START BUILDING YOUR BRAND TRAINING TODAY

If you're interested in working with a professional, full service training and development company to help you uncover the best way to train brand engagement across your organization, we'd love to speak with you.

At Tortal Training, we set ourselves apart from DIY options and other training companies with our history of customer education and proven effectiveness. We've created trainings for some of the largest names in the business world.

If there's one thing we want you to know about us, it's that we're never going to rest on our laurels. We're a training company that's always learning, researching, and working to uncover the best ways to leverage training and strengthen your brand. Our core competency is to stay on top of the latest information and be your resource for making informed decisions.

If you'd like to schedule a Training Impact Assessment, or just ask us a few questions, give us a **call at (704) 323-8953**.

We're here as a resource for you. We'll point you in the right direction to reach the business objectives you want.

ABOUT TORTAL TRAINING

Based in Charlotte, NC, Tortal Training is a leading provider of online training systems. Since Tortal Training's inception, we've focused on supporting our clients' success through creative solutions, that meet the never-ending training, development and learning needs of today's demanding businesses.

Specializing in the development of engaging and interactive eLearning solutions, Tortal makes effective training easier for companies of all shapes and sizes. We've created online eLearning systems for clients in a variety of industries, including corporate, government, non-profit, education and multi-site franchise organizations.

No matter if you have 5 local team members or a distributed workforce of 100,000 employees, Tortal Training has the experience to solve your company's operational, compliance, regulatory, HR-related, and other needs.

In an era where talent development is essential in driving sustainable business results, Tortal Training is the only training partner that maximizes training effectiveness by focusing on engagement and interactive solutions.

For more information, please visit

WWW.TORTAL.NET OR **CALL (704) 323-8953.**