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## How to Build a Retail Brand

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*The beer barrel embellishment outside Milwaukee's Lakefront Brewery underscores the company's line of business and creates a lasting impression, particularly at night (left).*

*Your company's identity is more than just a logo.*

By Lyn M. Falk, Retailworks, Inc.

Most people think of a brand as a two-dimensional logo, which is made up of a font, color palette, and sometimes a graphic.

Others may think it also includes a business's mission statement, and/or a tagline.

Fact is, brands today are represented by much, much more. It's everything your customers see, hear, touch and even smell during their shopping journey.

The brand experience begins with your website and social media platforms, and/or a video, print or digital ad. How these look and how they're laid out (i.e., the selection and use of fonts, colors and graphics) makes an important statement. These 2D forms of communication are often your customer's first introduction to your brand.

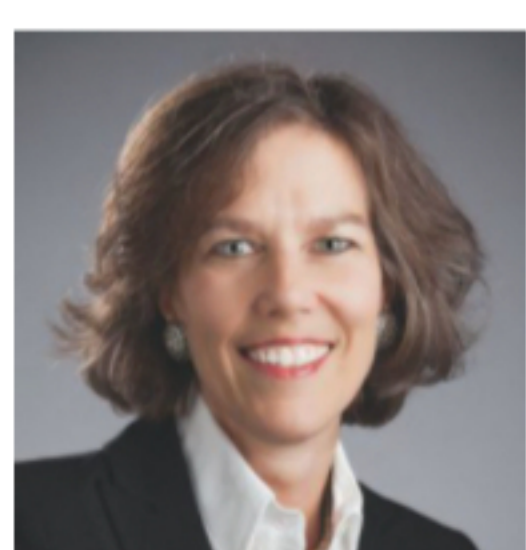
From there your storefront takes over. This is the second expression of your brand, which is communicated in a 3D format to all who drive and walk by. Your signs, displays, decorative accessories, awnings, entrance door and even your door handles all represent your brand. These items should not be neglected or kept generic, as they are opportunities to reinforce and celebrate your brand. Think of a restaurant that uses an oversized fork and knife for their door handles; this leaves an impression with you. It engages you with their brand before you even enter the space.

Third, consider every design element you select and place within your store's interior. They should all be carefully curated to support your brand. Wall colors, flooring, signage, fixtures, displays, and transaction counters should all coordinate to tell the story of who you are. And don't forget the music you play and the aromas your customers smell!

Finally, your employees — how they dress, speak and sell — are extremely important to how customers perceive your brand. Your employees are walking, talking brand ambassadors!

Oh, and while many of you sell popular brands of merchandise that help bring customers into your store, don't let your business brand get lost in the mix. Your brand should rise above of them all. After all, it's *your* store's personality, so bring it to life!

*Want to learn if your brand measures up? Attend Lyn's education session at [Summit 2022 on Monday, March 7](#).*



*Lyn M. Falk is owner/president of Retailworks, Inc., an award-winning design, branding and display firm. As a retail consultant, registered interior designer, BrandSource guest speaker, and contributor to AVB's showroom Makeover Manual, Falk has devoted more than 36 years to helping retailers build healthy, purposeful, and productive spaces that move hearts, minds, and merchandise. Contact her at [lfalk@retailworksinc.com](mailto:lfalk@retailworksinc.com) or visit [www.retailworksinc.com](http://www.retailworksinc.com).*

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