

The background of the entire image is a light pink color with a dark grey geometric pattern of overlapping triangles. In the center, there is a white rectangular area containing the text. Surrounding this white area are several large, soft-focus pink peonies and scattered pink petals. A cup of latte with a heart-shaped foam design is positioned to the right of the word 'BRAND'.

OUR IMAGE MATTERS LLC

TIPS BEFORE YOU LAUNCH YOUR BRAND

Sabryia Reese

MAKEYOURIMAGEMATTER.COM

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Letter from the author



Thank you for downloading this quick guide to jump starting your brand and congratulations! You're already one step ahead.

One of the main reasons I started my own business was because I realized I was very good at figuring things out & I can use that to help others. Not all things can be done by ourselves. We need each other to really build an empire! So many of us have ideas and dreams but don't know where to look, where to start or how to begin and unfortunately, not everyone is willing to share their resources.

When I began, I failed a lot! I went through many seasons of trial and error and because of that, I know how it feels to walk in the dark. So I decided to put this informational e-book together so you won't have to.

Biz Check List

This is a quick check list if you want to skip all the breakdowns and get right to work

☐

Choose brand/business name

ie: "Dunkin Donuts" This guide will list different types of names you can choose from as well as the pros and cons

☐

Research business name and obtain EIN

Your EIN is like the social security number for your business. It stands for "Employer Identification Number." You will need this moving forward. You can go [here](#), its free.

☐

Choose business structure

Do you want to run your business by yourself? With a partner? A team?

In this guide, I cover what types to choose from and what's the difference

☐

Register your business name with your state/town

If your brand name is also your business name, google your state's registration

☐

Research your domain name

Your domain is the weblink your clients will go to (ie. "dunkindonuts.com")

You can conduct a search online.

☐

Is the domain available for purchase? Secure it

I use [google domains](#) because they're \$12/yr and your domains are easily accessed through your gmail account but I recently discovered a cheaper alternative [here](#)

☐

Is it available on social media handles?

You can use [www.namechk.com](#) for reference

☐

Secure all social media platforms

Start an account with your name, even if you're not using the platform now.

ie. Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat, LinkedIn, etc

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C H O O S I N G A A N A M E

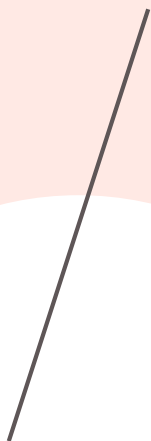
03

C H O O S I N G A B U S I N E S S S T R U C T U R E

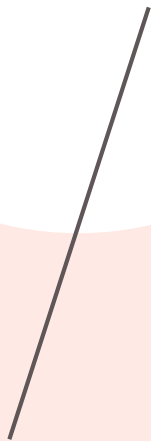
NEED HELP REALLY DIVING INTO YOUR BRAND AND GETTING STARTED?

DOWNLOAD MY
BRANDING MANUAL
TODAY FOR JUST \$19.99

01



C H A P T E R



01

The importance of a brand!

Recognition

When it comes to consumers, they tend to go with what they know and recognize. What's familiar and relatable.

In other words: people buy from people they like! So, you have to establish yourself apart from your competitors and allow for people to become comfortable enough to spend their money with you and not someone else.

Create your own lane

The experience your business (brand) gives to your clients and customers, from the visual elements such as your logo, your invoices and email signature; to how you handle a disgruntled client who did not receive their package in a timely manner are all ways that explain and show what type of business you are. Therefore, consistency is key here and having a brand that has a clear bottom line all across the board leaves no room for confusion.

Referrals

I don't know about you, but I usually purchase new things if they are referred. It gives me a little more security in knowing my money will be well spent. And I am blessed to say all of my clients are referrals as well. Therefore, creating a strong, great and reliable brand is critical in creating referrals and establishing a consistent client base.

You are your Brand

Like I mentioned earlier, people buy from people. You are your brand. Therefore, your brand is a clear way to introduce yourself and connect to your consumers on a more intimate level without having to speak to each and every person. Purchasing an emotional experience is very valuable and helps customers feel good when investing in you because after all, they're really investing in themselves first.

Stronger Brand = Greater Value

Your attention to detail in packaging, follow up emails, thank you notes and impeccable customer service is what ensures consumers of the quality of your business. Therefore, you have to make it count.

Your brand is the **THEME** for your
business!

”

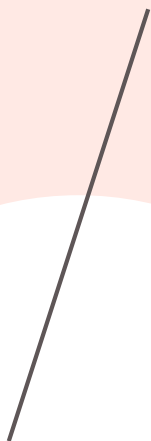
A good brand doesn't just
happen.

It's a well thought out &
strategic plan.

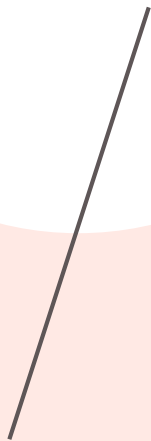
It's showing up with
intent.

A brand gives you the edge needed in
increasingly competitive markets.

02



C H A P T E R



02

Choosing a brand name

The name you choose defines the success or failure of your business. It's the first impression you will make, what consumers will always remember and what will spark the conversations that will allow you to get more in depth about what you offer and hopefully close the deal.

If you would like more exercises on choosing a name,
please download my [branding manual](#).

For now, let's break down some types of names to choose from as well as the pros and cons:

Acronym

This type of name is used when the entire name is too long or may be hard to pronounce.

ie: IBM: International Business Machine or UPS: United Parcel Service.

Pro: Easy to remember | **Con:** Hard to trademark

Descriptive

This type of name explains the service offered by the company.

ie: Dunkin Donuts or Whole Foods

Pro: Easy to understand what's offered | **Con:** Hard to diversify business

Evocative

This type of name evokes (brings to a persons conscious mind) relevance and a particular image.

ie: Amazon, Google or Nike

Pro: Original & innovative | **Con:** Value isn't clear

Lexical/Rhythmic

This type of name is fun, rhymes and relies on word play to stick in the mind of the consumer.

ie: Reese's Pieces or Coca Cola

Pro: Easy to remember | **Con:** May become generic

Geographical

This type of name derives from a particular landmark or place.

ie: American Express or Fuji Film

Pro: Distinctive | **Con:** Harder to expand & diversify

Founders

This type of name comes from real people who usually founded the company.

ie: Disney or Hewlett Packard

Pro: Easier Option | **Con:** Limits growth & hard to scale

This is just to name a few. You can always create something new and what suits the vision you have for your company. Ask yourself, what do you want your customers to see? Feel? Remember about you?
And then.....name it!

Brand Name Check List

☐

Is it catchy?

Recite it yourself and maybe run it across a friend. See if they remember it a few days after. The goal is to be remembered and the preferred choice above your competition

☐

Is it easy to pronounce or spell?

Be mindful of how complicated it may be when someone else refers you

☐

Is it not already being used/registered?

You can go to: <https://www.uspto.gov/trademark> for reference. It's good to trademark your name, especially if it's made up and an original slogan

☐

Is it available to use as a business name?

If your brand name is also your business name, google your state's registration

☐

Is it similar to a name that's already being used?

Use google or any major search engine you are more comfortable with. You don't want to be accused of copying anyone else's business

☐

Is the domain available for purchase?

I use google domains because they're \$12/yr but you can research domains on many other platforms

☐

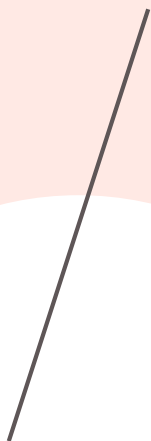
Is it available on social media handles?

You can use www.namechk.com for reference

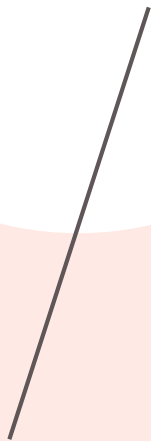
Once you've chosen your brand name, it is very crucial
to protect it!

Make sure you go back to the list from the beginning .
Each step will be crucial in securing your business and
make things easier moving forward.

03



C H A P T E R



03

Choosing a Business Structure

Another very important decision you will face is choosing the legal structure aka "what type of company" you will run. This decision will impact how much you will pay in taxes, the type of paperwork required for your business, who will face liability and how you will be able to raise money.

So, the main question you need to ask is: do you want to run the business by yourself, with a partner or with a bigger team of people?

The most popular types are:

Sole Proprietorship

Partnerships

Corporations

Limited Liability Company

Let's break down the different types

01.

Sole Proprietorship

A sole proprietorship is easy to form and gives you complete control of your business. You're automatically considered to be a sole proprietorship if you do business activities but don't register as any other kind of business.

However, this also does not separate your assets and liabilities.

Which means, if anything happens in the future, you will be fully responsible for any debts owed. (if someone sues you, you can lose other things you own like your house, car, etc)

Sole proprietors are still able to get a trade name but it will be hard to raise money because you can't sell stock, and **banks are hesitant to lend to sole proprietorships**. Sole proprietorships can be a good choice for low-risk businesses and owners who want to test their business idea before forming a more formal business.

All profits are yours to keep however, creditors can make claims against your business to pay off personal debt.

02.

Partnership

Partnerships are the simplest structure to form when there's two or more people starting a business.

There are two common kinds of partnerships: limited partnerships (LP) and limited liability partnerships (LLP).

Limited partnerships have only one general partner with unlimited liability, and all other partners have limited liability.

The partners with limited liability also tend to have limited control over the company, which is documented in a partnership agreement. Profits are passed through to personal tax returns, and the general partner — the partner without limited liability — must also pay self-employment taxes.

Limited liability partnerships are similar to limited partnerships, but give limited liability to every owner.

An LLP protects each partner from debts against the partnership, they won't be responsible for the actions of other partners. Partnerships can be a good choice for businesses with multiple owners, professional groups (like attorneys), and groups who want to test their business idea before forming a more formal business.

03.

Corporation

C Corp

A corporation, sometimes called a C corp, is a legal entity that's separate from its owners. Corporations can make a profit, be taxed, and can be held legally liable. Corporations offer the strongest protection to its owners from personal liability, but the cost to form a corporation is higher than other structures.

Corporations also require more extensive record-keeping, operational processes, and reporting. Unlike sole proprietors, partnerships, and LLCs, corporations pay income tax on their profits. In some cases, corporate profits are taxed twice — first, when the company makes a profit, and again when dividends are paid to shareholders on their personal tax returns.

Corporations have a completely independent life separate from its shareholders. If a shareholder leaves the company or sells his or her shares, the C corp can continue doing business relatively undisturbed.

Corporations have an advantage when it comes to raising capital because they can raise funds through the sale of stock, which can also be a benefit in attracting employees. Corporations can be a good choice for medium- or higher-risk businesses, businesses that need to raise money, and businesses that plan to "go public" or eventually be sold.

S Corp

An S corporation, sometimes called an S corp, is a special type of corporation that's designed to avoid the double taxation drawback of regular C corps. S corps allow profits, and some losses, to be passed through directly to owners' personal income without ever being subject to corporate tax rates.

Not all states tax S corps equally, but most recognize them the same way the federal government does and taxes the shareholders accordingly. Some states tax S corps on profits above a specified limit and other states don't recognize the S corp election at all, simply treating the business as a C corp.

S corps must file with the IRS to get S corp status, a different process from registering with their state. There are special limits on S corps. S corps can't have more than 100 shareholders, and all shareholders must be U.S. citizens. You'll still have to follow strict filing and operational processes of a C corp. S corps also have an independent life, just like C corps. If a shareholder leaves the company or sells his or her shares, the S corp can continue doing business relatively undisturbed.

S corps can be a good choice for a businesses that would otherwise be a C corp, but meet the criteria to file as an S corp.

B Corp

A benefit corporation, sometimes called a B corp, is a for-profit corporation recognized by a majority of U.S. states.

B corps are different from C corps in purpose, accountability, and transparency, but aren't different in how they're taxed.

B corps are driven by both mission and profit. Shareholders hold the company accountable to produce some sort of public benefit in addition to a financial profit. Some states require B corps to submit annual benefit reports that demonstrate their contribution to the public good.

There are several third-party B corp certification services, but none are required for a company to be legally considered a B corp in a state where the legal status is available.

Close Corporation

Close corporations resemble B corps but have a less traditional corporate structure. These shed many formalities that typically govern corporations and apply to smaller companies. State rules vary, but shares are usually barred from public trading. Close corporations can be run by a small group of shareholders without a board of directors.

Non-profit Corporation

Nonprofit corporations are organized to do charity, education, religious, literary, or scientific work. Because their work benefits the public, nonprofits can receive tax-exempt status, meaning they don't pay state or federal taxes income taxes on any profits it makes.

Nonprofits must file with the IRS to get tax exemption, a different process from registering with their state. Nonprofit corporations need to follow organizational rules very similar to a regular C corp. They also need to follow special rules about what they do with any profits they earn. For example, they can't distribute profits to members or political campaigns. Nonprofits are often called 501(c)(3) corporations — a reference to the section of the Internal Revenue Code that is most commonly used to grant tax-exempt status.

04.

Limited Liability Corporation































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Lets compare

	C Corp	S Corp	LLC	General Partnership	Sole Proprietor
Owners have limited liability for business debts and obligations					
Created by a state-level registration that usually protects the company name					
Business duration can be perpetual					
May have an unlimited number of owners					
Owners need not be U.S. citizens or residents					
May be owned by another business, rather than individuals					
May issue shares of stock to attract investors					
Owners can report business profit and loss on their personal tax returns					
Owners can split profit and loss with the business for a lower overall tax rate					
Permitted to distribute special allocations, under certain guidelines					
Not required to hold annual meetings or record meeting minutes					

Your Brand Summary

Brand/Business name: _____

What type of business is this: _____

LLC, SCorp, CCorp, etc

Why did you choose that structure? _____

What will you be selling? What services will you offer?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

If you were to explain your business to an investor,
what would you say? (keep this to 30-90 seconds)

Your Brand Goals

1 year vision

5 year vision

Notes

