

# Creating Brand Identity within Retail Space



by  
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With a bank on every corner these days, and access to countless more through the internet, it is more important than ever for banks to differentiate themselves. One of the most proven ways to do this is through effective and consistent communication of your brand. Your brand is your very own unique story. It is a combination of how you want to be perceived by your employees, customers or the market in general. It is also a promise to deliver a predefined experience to the consumer on a consistent basis evoking ideas of quality, reputation and trust which sets you apart from your competition. A Bank's brand becomes what both your customers and employees expect from you.

Banks are unique in the fact that they emphasize relationship banking, personalized underwriting, and customization of financial products that meet the specific needs of the community they serve unlike their much larger national competitors. They also provide local economic stability and can most often offer a greater sense of security to their local customer base. Banks would be well served to capitalize on these characteristics by tying these qualities in with their brand.

Once you have built your brand, you need to establish and communicate your brand's identity. Your brand identity is a visual position that makes you recognizable in the marketplace and allows you to meet the demands of different media, while still presenting a cohesive identity.

No matter what your brand story is, consistent branding of your retail branch space is one of the best ways to establish brand identity and communicate and reinforce your brand position with your customers and the community. It also helps ensure your employees are delivering the right customer experience consistently.

There are many facets to establishing your brand identity including your logo,



Those concepts should then be carried throughout the interior of the bank as well. Use of welcome walls, community walls, banding and corporate colors not only enhance the look and feel of your interior retail space but also continue to help differentiate you from the competition by reinforcing your unique brand identity.

tagline, key colors, corporate typefaces and a consistent style for graphics and images. Regular utilization of these elements within your retail space will reinforce your brand to all who walks in, invoking all the qualities, reputation and expectations that your brand represents.



There are no second chances to make a good lasting first impression so branding needs to begin with the curb appeal of your branch. Banks can set themselves apart from competitors and establish brand identity right from the onset by branding the exterior of their building with signage, corporate colors and key design elements. Does your branch look like every other business on the street or is it unique to your specific brand?

With so many financial options for consumers to choose from today, it is more important than ever to differentiate yourself and effectively communicate your brand identity along with your ties to the community within your retail space is one of the best places to start. Historically, financial institutions have not been known as proficient retailers, but today's competitive environment is forcing banks to take a hard look at their retail space and make some necessary changes.

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James G. Caliendo is a former bank executive and now President and COO at the 109 year old design/build and retail services firm. In the past 18 years alone, under Jim's direction, PWCampbell has worked with over 500 financial institutions influencing millions of square feet of retail and operational space to create engaging, impactful and scalable solutions for every sized facility project.