

# How to Build a Brand for Seniors

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**Brand Vision & Logo** The most recognizable element of a brand is its logo. The logo should be able to “sum up” your entire business and distill it down to one symbol. That's a big task! In order to get to a place where you can hire a designer (or agency) to create a logo for you, you have to know what the most important things are that need to be communicated. A marketing or advertising agency can help you by taking you through a branding process. In this collaborative process, the agency will conduct a series of interviews of your staff, your customers, and your partners to truly understand the impressions of the business from every angle. Once that is complete, they will craft a vision for you that will help inform the logo. A vision statement is one to three sentences, and it is distributed internally to keep all parties in alignment as your business moves forward.

From there, your agency or designer will create a variety of symbols that represent the newly defined vision. Here's an example:

**COMPANY:** Forest Park Senior Community

**VISION:** Forest Park Senior Community is the destination for active seniors looking for a living environment that combines the comforts of home with the amenities of a resort.

**SYMBOL (logo):** The designer or agency would likely explore a variety of symbols from trees to abstract designs that represent activity.

**Color** This is the element of brand that is the direct input into the emotional response of your viewer. Color can equally make someone angry, or it can make someone feel warm, fuzzy, and joyous. The trick to selecting the right colors for your brand lies in understanding that there are three different factors at play determining how someone will react:

1. **Nature:** We have instincts to react certain ways to certain colors via evolutionary programming.
2. **Nurture:** We are programmed to respond to color by the society in which we are raised.
3. **Personal Experience:** Each person has a set of colors that triggers different responses based on situational factors from childhood to adulthood.

In the case of our Forest Park Senior Community, we would select colors that combine nature elements (bright hues) to inspire action, with colors that come from our nurture elements (comforts of home). In addition, special care would be taken to the temperature of the color. As our human eyes age, the ability to detect warm tones (yellows, ivories, oranges) diminishes.

### **Tone**

When you think about your brand try to visualize it as a living, breathing person. How would this person talk? What would they say? With whom would they choose to socialize? If you personify your brand and apply the company vision to that, it helps you determine what to say and how to say it. Do you speak quietly and respectfully? Do you come across as authoritative or friendly? Each project requires careful consideration of tone and the selection of just the right copywriter who can capture it.

### **Style**

Have you noticed that a McDonalds looks quite a bit different than a Ruth's Chris Steakhouse even though you can get a burger at both locations? Style refers to a number of intangible elements that, through careful combination, evoke a certain feeling. In the McDonalds vs. Ruth's Chris case it would be a feeling of speed, cheapness, and convenience as opposed to a feeling of quality, opulence, and fine dining. Just as the physical elements of the space (furniture, color, lighting, and design) come together to create this feeling architecturally, the elements of typography, color, size, proportion, scale, and syntax come together to form the style of your brand logo. Considering all of these elements will help you intentionally craft a brand that will not only serve you well, but inspire potential clients and customers to want to be a part of whatever you have to offer them.

*Yellowfin Creative is a full service branding agency in Austin, Texas, dedicated to helping clients build their brands and enhance their customer experiences, both online and offline.*

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