Branding	Branding
	Branding is an important issue in the arts sector – we often have a number of different brands working simultaneously – for example brand one is the venue, brand two is the season of work, brand three is the production – there may also be actors in the production or artists in the exhibition that enjoy brand status. Seasons are refreshed regularly and productions can be refreshed monthly – this gives arts marketers an unusually complex challenge in relation to establishing brands and moving from brand acceptance to a commitment to purchase or attend.

What do we mean by branding – why is it important.
If we are to be successful in attracting new audiences we will have to ask some tough questions about the way that arts organisations are perceived. Perceptions, whether they are accurate or not, are the basis for decision making by audiences and potential participants in cultural activity.

The brand is far more than a logo and a slogan. According to Deborah Bowker "It (the brand) anchors the mission and vision, operating principles and tactics of an organisation. Internally, the brand is central to all decisions, actions and values, thus enabling the employees to deliver the brand promise. The internal and external message about the brand must tell the same story…they should relate to the following:

- **Values** – the organisation's core belief: what the brand stands for
- **Behaviours** – how the organisation interacts with internal and external stakeholders
- **Positioning** – what the organisation wants stakeholders to think about the brand
- **Identity** – names, logos, visual standards, verbal themes"

This definition of the brand and the way it shapes perceptions is particularly useful in helping to think about the way that we should consider reviewing brands values to help us to tackle approaches to reaching new audiences.

Many arts companies have struggled to find a suitable verbal identity for the way that they present work or venues. This can be a result of the different stakeholder pressures on organisations and programmers. Arts organisations want to be taken seriously by their peers and have professional credibility, but are increasingly being asked to work creatively to widen the appeal of the arts offer – not necessarily dumbing down, but popularising the way that work is presented. In branding seasons of work, clever arts marketers have to help to overcome any negative perceptions of areas of work/genres. For example MAC in Birmingham has developed a very successful brand for their mime, dance and physical theatre programme under the title of Moving Parts. Sticking with the brand for a number of years has helped widen the audience for work that has traditionally been perceived as work which is difficult to market. Here the verbal identity is key to helping change audience perceptions and behaviour, and MAC has customer-focused values and behaviours which welcome and retain new audiences.

Some parts of the sector have very strong tried and tested conventions for marketing work. Each Christmas many theatres are given over to the traditional pantomime. The whole pantomime concept acts as a brand – the posters for most productions will follow particular conventions and between December and February theatre audiences are transformed. Come March the marketing reverts to traditional theatre marketing which works to differentiate the product – almost the reverse of the way that pantomime is marketed. Some theatre producers have developed very strong and iconic brands for their production – this is particularly true of music theatre. The branding for many major music productions would be readily recognised - they often build on the familiarity of the name of the production and build a strong visual representation with consistent use of colours, type face and logo.

There is a strong tendency when attempting to reposition a brand to change the name and/ or the logo – without changing the underlying behaviours and values. This becomes a really expensive window dressing exercise – the name and the logo are the external embodiment of the brand identity, rather than the heart of the brand values. There are organisations that attempt to change the public perception of themselves through the behaviour and values. The National Trust has a traditional image based on tea rooms in country houses, curating crumbling country piles on behalf of the nation. With well over 1 million members it is clearly very successful in attracting and retaining the chattering classes of middle England. But the National Trust has been changing its behaviour very subtly – and because it has done this without new logos or any fuss they are taking their traditional membership with them. Recent acquisitions for the National Trust have included a number of working class housing programmes (pre-fabs and back to back housing) and a greater emphasis in their curation of cultural diversity issues. The only manifestation of this which attracted widepsread publicity was the acquisition of Paul McCartney's childhood home in Liverpool – most other actions have attracted far less media attention. In addition they are working to open up the rural landscape to a more diverse selection of the population and especially people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. The traditional work continues – but overlaid on this are a new set of relationships around strands of their work. They appear to have successfully moved around their existing audience and developed new audiences through subtle and empowering approaches.

The visual arts sector has been on a similar journey which has seen a real change in the verbal identity – the tone of voice they use with the audience. In the 1980s much of the contemporary visual arts sector wrote about itself in ways that were impenetrable to most people. Most catalogues were written in academic language and made references to events, artistic movements and techniques that would be outside of most peoples' experiences. Gradually they introduced extended text panels and the education teams wrote about the work in ways that were more inclusive and welcoming – Ikon Gallery in Birmingham even employed gallery assistants specifically to engage in conversation with visitors to redefine the verbal identity. These changes have seen a complete transformation in the way that the whole gallery sector is perceived. Through changing the values and behaviour the perception of galleries as a brand has changed out of all recognition.

So it is not just the logo?

Your logo is just part of the story and the visual identity of the brand is the bit that is developed last. Without a clear understanding of the values that are being proposed as the core of the brand it is hard to create a coherent brand identity.

There are three stages in brand development:

Map the values and behaviours of the organisation to explore the brand positioning.

Explore the potential names to give the brand an identity – check the various legal requirements that could prevent you being able to use the name. You will want to be able to enjoy the URL (web address) as the trading name.

Only then is it appropriate to start to think about the way that the **verbal and visual identity** will work. There are a number of elements of visual identity:

- The type face
- Colour
- Symbols
- The logotype, commonly known as a logo, is the graphic element of a trademark or brand, which is set in a special typeface/font, or arranged in a particular, but legible, way.

The verbal identity has a number of key elements:

- The name
- The naming system for products and sub-brands
- The tone of voice – the extent to which organisations decide to be customer-friendly

Commissioning a brand:

When you are thinking about developing a brand – for a programme of work or to re-brand the whole organisation there are a number of steps to be considered.

Testing perceptions, values and behaviours of the organisation
Source of data will be:
- Customer surveys
- Staff surveys (such as the ones done for Investors in People)
- Mystery shopper exercises
- Focus groups of audiences/ participants
- Focus groups of non-users (usually based on individuals that are not hostile to the idea of attending your venue)
- Discussions with other stake holders

Explore potential names
- Focus groups with staff, audiences / participants, current, lapsed and potential users
- Discussions with other stakeholders
- Produce a short list and undertake searches of trade marks and URL availability
- Finalise name and register it as appropriate

Visual Identity
- Focus groups
- Questionnaires

This three stage process should ensure that the brand you develop will be robust and well thought through and accepted. It is important to plan for the internal communications issues – and communications with external stakeholders at appropriate times in the development of the exercise. The public relations aspects of the process are important, especially over the period of change – when it goes wrong, the results can be spectacular. Remember the press coverage of Royal Mail changing its name to Consignia (and subsequently back again …) or Margaret Thatcher covering the tail fin of the British Airways plane model with her hankie, when they replaced the Union Flag with contemporary art designs – she did not appreciate the move the company was trying to make from a national carrier to a global player that had diversity at the heart of its business.

The brand as a visual identity:	**On and off line issues**
On-line • Web sites • e-mail **Off-line** • Signage • Brochures • Letterhead • Newsletters • Job adverts In his presentation to the venue managers in the East Midlands Chris Denton Marketing Manager at the Barbican talked about how he was gradually bringing visual identity into line. A strong central logo had been developed into sub-brands for the different artforms – largely differentiated by colour. Chris was lucky that his re-branding coincided with a major capital programme which meant he was able to also change the signage around the Barbican. The other challenge he faced was bring greater brand coherence between the on-line (web and e-mail) and the off-line (print and signage elements), to bring greater consistency both in terms of what was said and how it was presented.	Many arts organisation have stumbled into the digital age, but increasingly they are providing more information via the internet and e-ticketing is gaining in importance in the sector. There is a companion tool kit which looks at the issues of online media, however it is important to look at the way that the on-line and off-line identities are delivered. However in doing this it is important not to create web based communications that are over branded and which will take too long to download – especially in e-mails. Web sites can be an extension of your overall brand and can be customised for particular markets – link pages can be developed with cut down versions of the home page and a verbal/ visual identity designed that is in line with the overall brand – but customised to feel welcoming to the audience you are developing. Metier achieved this very successfully with a tie-in with BBC blast where they created a new home page which contained only a couple of options, highlighting information on careers in the arts and producing a design that was attractive to young people following the link from the BBC site. When thinking about branding and the net it is import to remember that words in everyday use will be very hard to search for them on the net. For example, information on the European funding stream "Leonardo" was much easier to find information on than "Equal". **Trade Marks and URLs** A consortium of community arts organisations received lottery funding for a project to create new digital content. As conversations continued with the New Opportunities Fund, a content management system was developed that could be directly accessed by interested members of the public. This became known under a working title of arts explorer – as it was essentially a web search engine. The name was eventually adopted as not just the project name but also the name of the search engine. The team successfully acquired the rights to the URL and various web names were registered. The search engine was launched in a blaze of publicity including the publication of several thousand newspapers setting out what Arts Explorer would do. Unfortunately the newspaper was received by an arts organisation that had, with some difficulty, registered the name arts explorer as the trademark for their educational work. They wrote to formally request that the search engine should not use the name arts explorer in future and a costly rebranding exercise was required. The group had not seen the need to have trademark protection for their work, they had made checks of what was in the public domain, but had considered registering the trademark a bit over the top for a small web project – this decision proved expensive and set the project back considerably. You'll find more about trademarks below. Similarly you may want to explore purchasing the full range of URLs – the .nets; .coms; .co.uks etc to stop other people using similar web addresses to yours – you can even have them all bringing traffic to your web site and use different addresses to monitor campaigns.

Useful reference materials:

Logos - *Logo, Identity, Brand, Culture*
by Conway Lloyd Morgan
Pub Rotovision, 1999, £22.50, ISBN
2880463289

Culture Incorporated: *museums, artists, and corporate sponsorships*
By Mark W Rectanus
Pub University of Minnesota 2002 ISBN
0816638527 £16 [£20.03 inc p&p]
Commercial branding explored through
current sponsorship packages with
museums in the USA and Germany. How
sponsorship is a function of corporate
cultural politics, and cannot be isolated
from social and political agendas, and the
degree to which corporate cultural politics
can influence, define and shape culture.

The Invisible Grail: *in search of the true language of brands*
By John Simmons
Pub Littlehampton Book Services 2003
ISBN 1 58799 156 X £14.99 [£18.65 inc
p&p]

Creating Powerful Brands
By Leslie de Chernatony & Malcolm McDonald
Pub Butterworth Heinemann 2003 3rd Edition ISBN 0750659807 £22.99
[£28.35 inc p&p]
A good resource for those developing brands. The book covers why it is
important to create powerful brands, understanding the branding process,
brands on the internet, the challenge of developing and sustaining added
values, brand evaluation, and brand management in different sectors,
including management in different sectors, business to business branding
and service brands.

No Logo: *No Space, No Choice, No Jobs*
By Naomi Klein
Pub Flamingo 2001 ISBN 0006530400 £8.99 [£12.55 inc p&p]
As Naomi Klein says in the introduction "The book is an attempt to analyse
and document the forces opposing corporate rule, and to lay out the
particular set of cultural and economic conditions that made the emergence
of that opposition inevitable. "No Space" examines the surrender of culture
and education to marketing, "No Choice" reports on how the promise of a
vastly increased array of cultural choice was betrayed by the forces of
mergers, predatory franchising, synergy and corporate censorship. "No
Jobs" examines the labour market trends that are changing working patterns
and relationships."

Making Sense of Place: *new approaches to place marketing*
By Chris Murray
Pub Comedia 2001 ISBN 1 873667 18 3
£9.00 [£11.72 inc p&p]
An important critique of place marketing
practice. It promotes an inter-disciplinary and
creative approach to understanding places as
complex and multi-faceted cultural entities.
Based on research of current practice,
sections include 'From Images to Icons',
'Place, Identity and Self', and 'Defining the
Solution'. Its alternative approach is
applicable to Cultural Planning and
Development as well as place marketing

Brand Child

Looks at the relationship young people have
with brands and branded products.
by Martin Lindstrom published by Kogan Page
ISBN 0749438673 £25 plus p&p

Low cost and time	**Medium cost and time**	**Resource Intensive**
The entry point for working in this area would be to look at how consistently your current visual identity is applied. Look also at the verbal identity – how consistently is it applied? Can you make either of these more consistent?	It is possible to do work around reviewing the brand values, corporate behaviours and the overall brand position without necessarily committing to re-branding	At the top end of the scale is a full re-branding exercise with the processes, redesigns and re-printing the visual identity. This needs to be very carefully planned and any new name or new identity needs to flow out of a process of research and development. It is important that the process of rebranding is not led by a graphic designer or that it starts with the visual identity.

Legal and moral issues

Intellectual Property – Trade Mark Act (1994)
When you are looking at issues of branding you will need to consider issues of Trademarks. In developing your brand you need to be confident that no one else has a prior claim to a Trademark you are considering. A trademark is legal term for a distinctive sign of some kind, whether it comprises a name, word, phrase, logo, symbol, design, picture, styling or some combination of these elements.

A trademark is used by an organisation to identify itself and to differentiate its products or services to consumers, and to set itself and its products or services apart from other businesses. A trademark is a type of intellectual property. This means that the owner enjoys legal protection over that trademark. Trademark rights are generally derived from use and/ or registration

In developing a brand you need to ensure that you can enjoy unrestricted access to the logo, trade name and url (web address) associated with the brand you are developing. If anyone had a prior claim to any of these, it will create expensive problems for you in the longer run. Securing a URL does not automatically allow you to use that address as part of your brand – if someone else enjoys a trademark over that name. See on and off line issues above.

In addition to the Trade Mark Act people also need to be aware of the case law concerning Passing Off. Passing Off is the name given to the practice of deliberately causing confusion in the peoples minds – it would stop, for example, someone opening a shop called Marx and Spencer and copying their logo and brand identity.

Peoples' Names as brands
There is a potentially difficult area for companies which bear individuals names. The Annabel Fox Theatre company could have public funding an independent board, and run a number of different aspects of its business. The Board should have clear arrangements in place to clarify that the name Annabel Fox Theatre Company is an asset of the company and not the individual (even though it is her name). Some companies in this situation use the name under licence.