# Healthcare company branding: Examining the role of branding in healthcare

Category: Branding
written by Stewart Hodgson | 15 March 2023

Healthcare company branding can be complex. After all, branding in healthcare isn't just about making your business stand out or differentiating it from the competition. It would help if you also convinced your target audience to trust you with their well-being and even their lives.

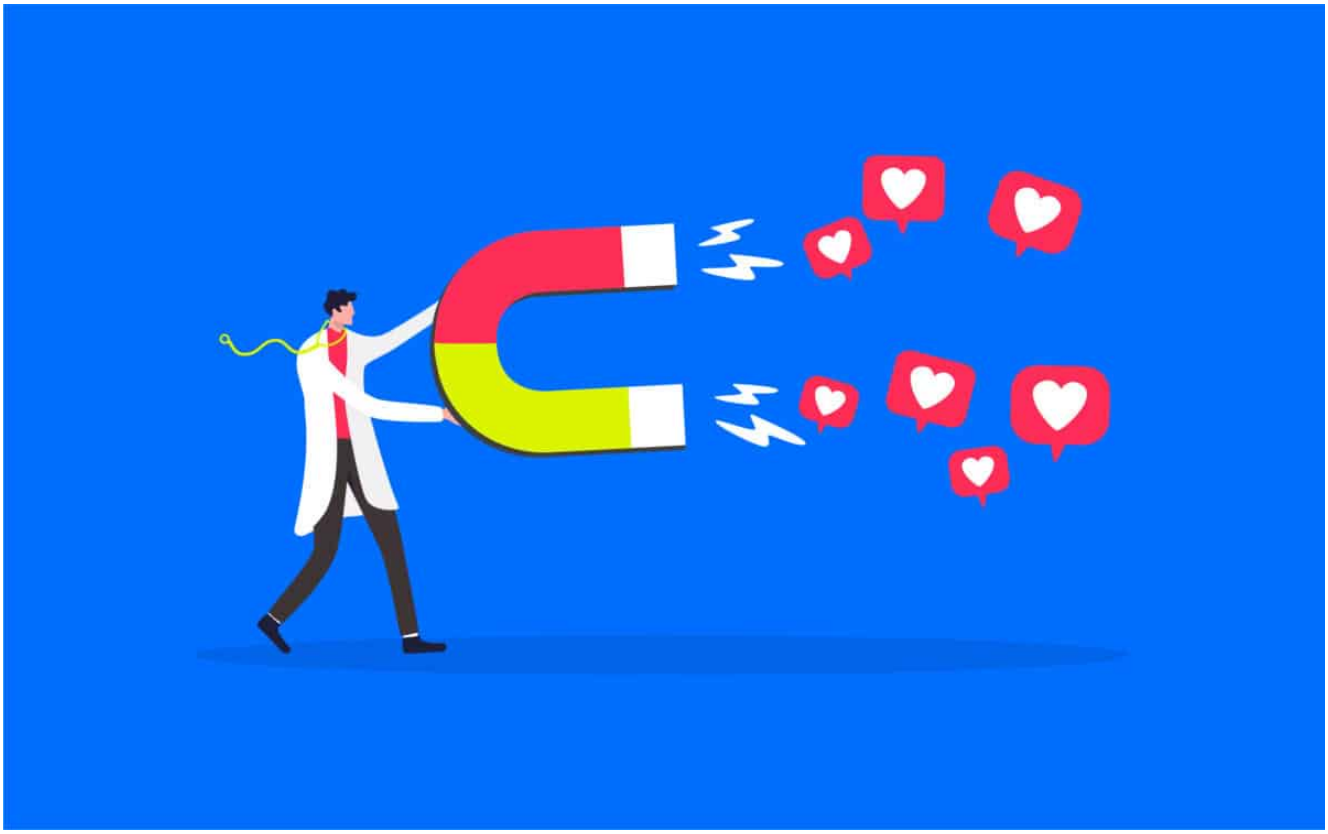
The best healthcare brands use their identity to build long-lasting, lucrative customer relationships.

While numerous factors will contribute to your success as a medical brand, from the quality of care you offer to the prices you charge, few things are more important than branding. Your healthcare brand is how you engage your potential customers, turn clients into advocates, and build loyalty.

Everything from the colors you choose for your logo to the vision and values you convey with your marketing campaigns will determine if your organization thrives.

In a world where gaining customer trust is often more complicated than ever for healthcare companies, a brand could be your most valuable asset. So, how do you start building one?

Let's find out.



## Why is branding important in the healthcare industry?

Every business needs a brand. Whether you're selling something essential, like healthcare, or something more indulgent, like designer clothes, it doesn't matter. Brands humanize your company, giving it distinctive characteristics which resonate with your target audience.

They also generate trust. Creating a healthcare brand that demonstrates care, compassion, and commitment to your customers makes you more likely to acquire clients. In fact, 60% of customers say the personality of a healthcare brand influences their purchasing decisions.

In the past, healthcare brands have often mistakenly assumed they'd naturally acquire patients based on inherent needs. Everyone needs medical support from time to time. However, consumers today have more options than ever before.

They expect to feel an affinity with the healthcare brands they work with and want you to share their values.

Investing in effective healthcare company branding ensures you can capture the best possible market share and build revenue for your business. Consistent branding in healthcare can preserve your reputation and even accelerate patient acquisition through positive reviews and testimonials.

Fundamentally, the best healthcare brands capture more customers, benefit from greater brand loyalty (reduced patient turnover), and strengthen their reputation in an increasingly competitive market.



## What makes a good brand in the healthcare sector?

In any industry, consumers have specific priorities. Customers shopping for clothes are looking for a combination of aesthetics, quality, and durability. Clients looking for help

with legal issues want authority, peace of mind, and expertise.

In the healthcare sector, consumers are also looking for brands that convey specific characteristics.

First, in many parts of the world, healthcare can be something of a high-ticket item.

Paying for specialist treatment and support is expensive, so your consumers will be looking for evidence they will get their money's worth. This means they want to see proof you have the expertise to care for them and deliver a better service than your competitors.

Secondly, in the healthcare industry, consumers aren't just trusting companies with their money; they're putting their lives and well-being into the hands of your organization. This means they want to know they can trust you.

The best healthcare brands build trust with their target audience through compassionate messages, welcoming imagery, and exceptional customer service.

Before you dive into healthcare company branding, it's worth paying attention to the most critical priorities for healthcare brands. The top organizations are:

## Empathetic and compassionate

Branding in healthcare should revolve around making deep emotional connections with your audience. It would be best to show empathy and compassion to convince your audience you will care for them.

Your marketing messages, logo, and even your website should demonstrate your vision and values.

## Unique

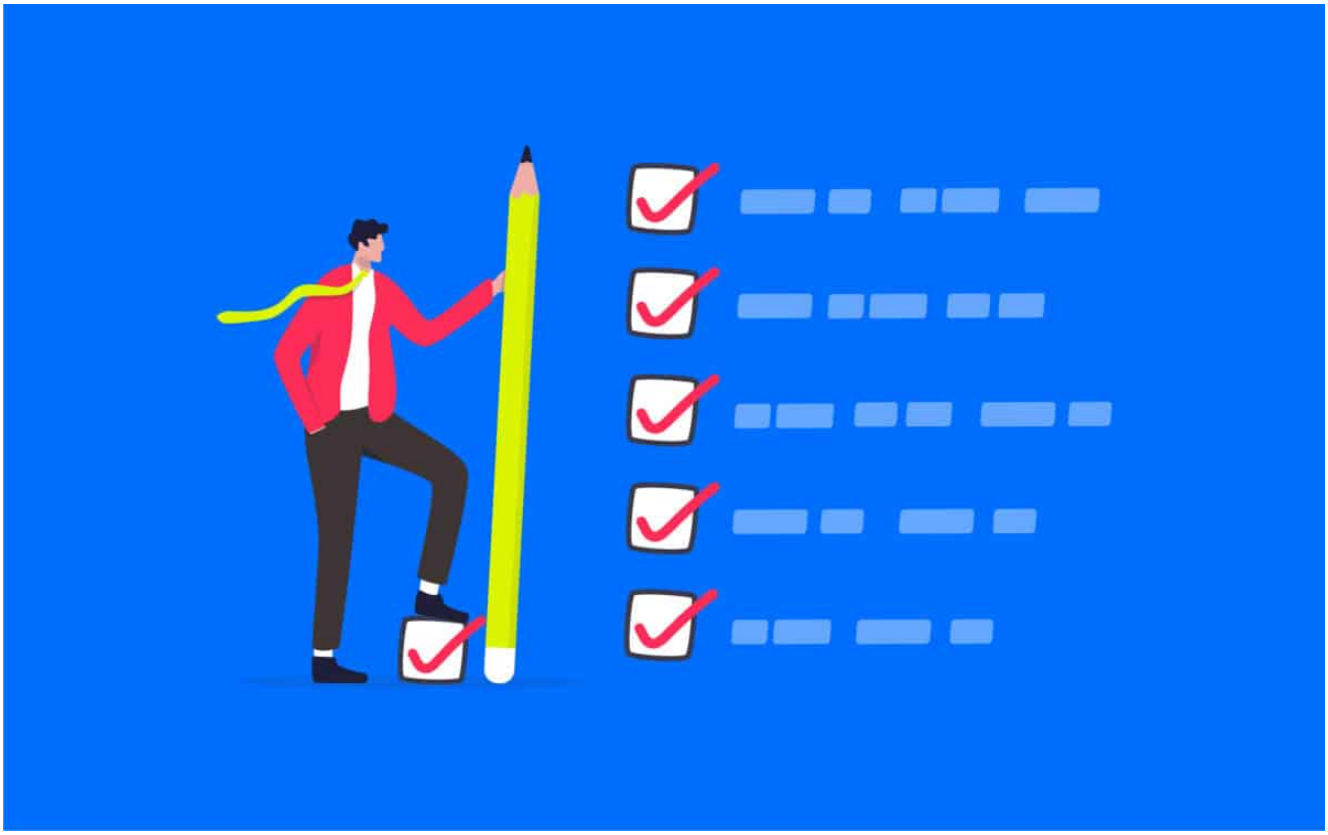
As competition in the healthcare landscape continues to accelerate, it’s vital to ensure you can stand out from the competition. When branding a healthcare company, look for ways to make your unique values stand out.

How do you make life easier for your customers? What kind of expertise and support can you offer?

## Consistent

Building trust requires consistency in any industry. If you want your customers to believe in your company and the support it can offer, you need to ensure you’re constantly conveying the same tone of voice, colors, and images in all of your brand assets.

The more consistent your brand, the more comfortable and familiar it will become.



# How do you create a healthcare brand? Getting started

Branding a healthcare company isn't just about creating a logo or designing signage for your practice. As most brand strategists will tell you, there are numerous steps involved in bringing a brand to life.

Effective branding in healthcare starts with gathering the right information, so you can produce a set of brand guidelines based on what you know about your market, competitors, and audience.

In other words, you'll need to start with a decent amount of research.

Here are some steps to get you started.

## 1. Define your niche

There are many different ways to start and run a healthcare company. You might focus on general care, providing doctors' appointments to customers with various medical concerns.

Alternatively, you may prefer to focus on a specific specialist area, such as oncology or cardiology. The niche you choose will determine what kind of experts you should be hiring and how you might approach your target audience.

Performing some in-depth market research can be helpful here. It makes sense to determine how profitable your chosen niche is and how many competitors exist in your area. Your niche will also help you define your "purpose" and the promises you will make to your customers.

Are you offering exceptional nutritional guidance, allergen support, or something else?

## 2. Know your audience

It might seem obvious, but few things are more critical to effective healthcare company branding than knowing your target audience. Based on your research into your niche, you should have some basic ideas about the kind of consumers you're going to be appealing to.

Make sure you understand their pain points – not just what medical issues they have, but what kind of challenges they face when getting care.

Think about your reach and whether there are any particular areas or geographical locations you will serve. Most healthcare companies use a local branding approach, as they can only support people in their country or city.

Creating a set of buyer personas can be a valuable strategy to help you step into your patients' shoes and create a more compelling brand.

## 3. Analyze the competition

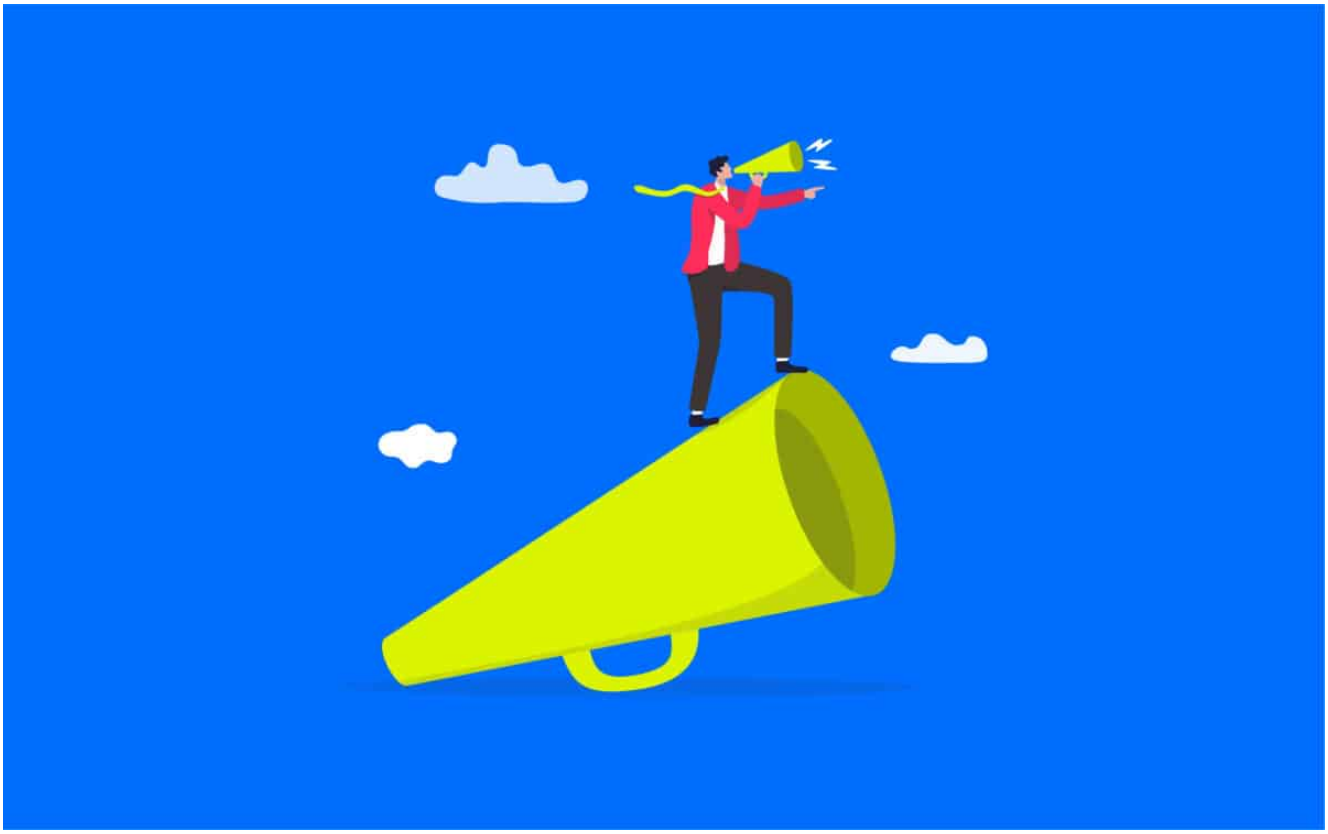
Just like any brand, healthcare brands also have competition to think about. Even if you're serving patients in a particularly niche area, there are likely to be other specialists offering the same support. With this in mind, it's crucial to conduct some competitor research.

Compare the strengths and weaknesses of other companies in your industry to your own, and look for new opportunities.

Ask yourself what you can do to differentiate yourself from competing brands.

What will your unique selling point be? Do you offer 24/7 support whenever your customers need it? Are your medical experts some of the best in the world? What kind of customer service do you offer, and how's your bedside manner when

dealing with patients?



## How to brand a healthcare company: Finding your voice

While many factors are involved in healthcare branding, most fall into two categories: your image and your voice. Your voice is how you convey the message or promise of your company to your target audience.

This is one of the most important things to consider when branding in healthcare, as your voice is what generates trust and credibility.

In most cases, defining your voice begins with choosing your organization's name. Customers will encounter your name before they read your marketing messages or check out your website. This means the name also needs to convey some helpful information about you.

For example, the UnitedHealth Group tells customers they will

get a collaborative, compassionate level of care. Alternatively, Elevance Health makes consumers think of improving their lives and wellbeing. Ask yourself what kind of message you want to send with your own name.

Once you have your name, you can start to think about how you'll integrate the unique aspects of your personality into your tone of voice. This refers to the language you will use when creating marketing campaigns, writing copy for your website, or just interacting with patients.

Your tone of voice should show through in every interaction you have with clients, whether you're setting up appointments or following up on an exam. In most cases, the best healthcare brands attempt to portray two things in their tone of voice: expertise and compassion.

On the one hand, your customers want to see evidence you know what you're talking about. Thought leadership articles, research, and professional-sounding copy on your website can help with this.

On the other hand, they're looking for evidence that you will speak their language, reassure them, and deliver compassionate support. Make sure your personality tells customers you're both compassionate and knowledgeable in your space.



# Branding healthcare companies: Visual identity

Defining your personality and voice towards the beginning of the healthcare company branding process is often extremely helpful. It gives you a foundation to work with when you start building your image.

Like your voice, your image will give customers valuable insights into what makes your brand different and why they should trust you.

Your visual identity should reflect the core characteristics of your personality. For instance, if you want to show customers you're an innovative, forward-thinking company, you would use modern logos, sleek website designs, and advanced marketing campaigns.

To show compassion, you might highlight customer stories in your marketing, use softer colors like purple, blue, and pink,

and choose different logo shapes, like hearts.

Some of the core visual elements you'll need to define when branding in healthcare include:

## A color palette

Colors have a huge impact on how we feel about brands.

Check out some leading healthcare company logos, and you'll notice many use purple for compassion, blue for reliability, or red for vitality. A holistic healthcare brand might use green to refer to the natural world, while a tech-focused company might use shades like silver and black.

## Your logo

Your logo is one of the first things your customers will see when interacting with your brand. It might include graphics, like pictures of hearts, people, or other health-focused designs. It may also include a wordmark to highlight your brand name.

For example, Molina Healthcare uses a simplistic image of a family alongside its name.

## Offline presence

Most healthcare companies will spend much time interacting with customers in the physical world. This means you need to think carefully about your signage, the design of your offices, and even the uniforms your experts will wear.

The offline components of your brand should create a sense of trust, credibility, and reliability.

## Online presence

As consumers continue to conduct research online to find the best healthcare brands, it's also important to have a robust online presence. Think carefully about your web design, and

how easy it is to navigate your site, book an appointment, or request a call.

Consider your social media presence and the icons or marketing tools you use.

### Marketing assets

Speaking of marketing assets, there's a good chance you'll use various solutions, from pictures and blogs, to videos, to help you connect with your target audience.

Ask yourself how you can make the unique components of your visual brand shine through in every campaign, both online and offline.

Since consistency is critical to building a good healthcare brand, it's helpful to create a set of guidelines your team members, marketing companies, and contractors can follow.

Outline all necessary details connected to your color palettes, logo usage, and even typography to reduce inconsistencies.

## Healthcare branding examples from the best healthcare brands

Branding in healthcare can often be a complex process, with many different components to consider.

For beginners, it can be helpful to gather some inspiration by checking out some of the best healthcare brands in your industry. Here are some effective medical brand strategies from around the world today to help guide you in the right direction.




## UnitedHealth

The UnitedHealth group is one of the biggest healthcare companies in the world and the largest brand by revenue in the United States. The company built its brand around a commitment to providing consumers with variety, support, and compassion.

The term “United” in the brand’s name conveys a sense of collaboration, community, and compassion.

The UnitedHealth Group logo also helps the brand to appear more reliable and professional. The simple blue wordmark in all capital letters on a single line creates a sturdy, strong image. The color blue is also associated with credibility.




## Humana

Another well-known health company from the United States, Humana is an excellent example of good healthcare company branding. The name “Humana” immediately connects the company to a people-first approach to care.

The organization also has a fantastic website, which welcomes consumers from around the world (based on their time zone).

Humana’s logo, depicted in a shade of green, presents the company in a friendly format, with soft, sans-serif letters. Even the color green is commonly associated with concepts like the natural world, growth, and vitality.

Find out more about the Humana logo here.




## CVS Health

The CVS Health group is one of the better-known organizations in the healthcare industry, with locations all over the United States. The term “CVS” stands for “Customer Value Stores” and connects the company to its larger parent brand.

The design of the organization’s logo is particularly compelling here. CVS is depicted in bold, red letters to remind us of passion and strength.

The “Health” component is written in a simple, serif-style font, making the company appear professional and approachable. The red heart graphic reminds us of compassion, care, and love.

# How can I promote my healthcare business?

One of the reasons branding in healthcare is so important is

that it provides you with the foundations you need to promote your organization. Your marketing strategy will depend heavily on your brand's position and the audience you want to reach.

The good news is there are numerous options to consider, from engaging customers regularly through automated email marketing to generating awareness through social media. Many local healthcare brands advertise offline with billboards, radio ads, and leaflets.

Here are some top tips to ensure you're generating the right results with promotion:

## Put the customer first

62% of customers say they want to see evidence their healthcare brands care about them. With this in mind, your marketing campaigns should always be human-centric. Focus on what you can do for your audience, what pain points you can solve, and why they should trust you.

## Leverage existing customers

80% of patients use online reviews and testimonials to help them decide which healthcare company to choose. Used correctly, your existing patients can be your most valuable marketing asset.

Share stories (with permission) from your patients, and utilize user-generated content, like statements and reviews.

## Consider the full customer journey

Succeeding as a healthcare brand means consistently capturing new clients and nurturing and engaging your existing patients too.

It's important to maintain your relationships with your existing audience through regular content production, news updates, social media, and email.

### Monitor your reputation

A single bad experience can significantly impact your brand’s reputation. It’s important to keep a close eye on what customers say about you to preserve the right identity.

Use social listening tools to find out what consumers are saying about you, and regularly ask for reviews throughout the customer journey.

### Explore different marketing methods

As competition in the healthcare landscape continues to grow, it’s essential to ensure you’re taking full advantage of all your available marketing channels. Don’t just build a website, be active on social media, experiment with offline marketing, and discover new ways to reach your audience.

## Creating a powerful healthcare brand

Branding in healthcare isn’t without its challenges. Investing in healthcare company branding means committing to building an identity that resonates with your target audience and creates trust. You must consistently show your expertise, compassion, and care for your target audience.

However, if you can create a distinctive healthcare brand, your business will likely thrive. A good healthcare branding strategy ensures you can connect with your customers emotionally, build loyalty, and generate consistent revenue.

It also helps separate you from competitors and guide your future marketing campaigns.

The best healthcare brands succeed because they commit to constantly conveying the right identity. The better your branding is, the more chances you’ll have for growth.

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