

Section 1 - What's in this Chapter

Updated 2011

After completing your marketing plan, especially the market analysis section, your board should have a good understanding of your community. In this chapter, we'll discuss ways to formalize your identity, the use of logos, and purpose/mission/vision statements.

Section 2 - Who You Are: Branding

Updated 2011

If you outsourced your marketing plan, your board may already have wrestled with the meanings of some common marketing terms such as branding, image, and identity. If not, here is a thumbnail description of each:

- Branding is the message you are trying to get to your customers. It is an ongoing process that includes marketing, the use of your logo or other graphical images, and customer service.
- Image is the impression your customers have of your community.
- Identity is what your community really is. With this set of definitions, your goal as a lodging tax board is to convey enough appropriate information to your customers (branding) so that their impression of your community (image) will match the reality (identity.) This continuous and sometimes daunting process (e.g. Yellowstone Park after the 1988 fires) begins with understanding who you are as a community. Using your travel inventory, try to come up with one or two statements that capture the essence of your community. It might help to take a look at some corporate branding such as Tiffany - elegant, exclusive, high quality; McDonald's - fast food, consistency; and Burger King - fast food, personal choice. These corporations offer much more than these two or three features but have chosen a few key features to emphasize. You also need to choose – and market – the one or two things from your community that will have the greatest impact or appeal to your customers.

Section 3 - Slogans and Logos

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You may choose to encapsulate the key features of your community in a slogan or logo or perhaps both. A sampling of slogans from around Wyoming may help you get started:

- Cheyenne - Live the Legend
- Gillette - Energy Capital of the Nation
- Casper - Adventure Capital of the West
- Cody - Gateway to Yellowstone National Park

Unless you are going to run a large amount of advertising, it may not make sense to spend the time and money to create a symbolic logo for your community. It may be better, and is certainly much easier, to simply select a distinctive typeface and/or color for your community's name.

Whatever decision you make, it is important to use your slogan and name deliberately and Community Identity.