

# Five steps to building a strong internal brand

*“The essence of branding is promising and delivering.”*

It’s a simple, yet incredibly powerful notion. A healthcare organization makes a promise to its patients and their caregivers. The most successful providers understand that if employees are aligned with the brand strategy, including the promise, they will deliver a consistent expression of the brand to its customers. They dedicate themselves to helping their employees understand the power of the brand and reap the benefits of a consistent brand expression delivered at every touchpoint.

Conversely, if employees are not living the brand every day, then growth and success of that organization will be fundamentally impeded.

So what does it take to “rally the troops” and ensure that every team member is delivering on the brand promise? Movéo has identified five essential keys to a successful internal branding effort:

1. C-level support
2. It’s not an “initiative”
3. Understand who is going to pay for it
4. Build it one step at a time
5. Continuing education

## 1. C-level support.

A successful brand begins at the C-level. From clearly communicating a vision to being the spokesperson, leadership must be seen as the “driver” of the brand. An integrated campaign that enables leadership to effectively communicate with every employee on an ongoing basis should be developed.

This may initially include a series of “Brand Road Shows,” where the leadership of an organization visits all the facilities/departments to discuss the brand. A Brand Road Show is one of the most important and effective events for building awareness and commitment to the brand. It also facilitates employee buy-in and understanding of their role in delivering the brand to the marketplace.

Putting leadership face-to-face with employees in an effort to create awareness and understanding for the brand can be very effective. Leadership is seen as an evangelist for the brand, which in turn creates brand disciples.

## 2. It’s not an initiative. It’s not a program. It’s THE BRAND.

Rallying management should be simple. But how do you engage and excite personnel working directly with patients? Or those working in accounting or human resources?

Employees must understand where the organization is going (vision) and how they will get there. But more importantly, they must understand their own role in delivering the brand. Without this understanding, “brand” becomes a series of posters, a CEO video, a workshop — it becomes a “program” perceived as just another motivational tactic rolled out by management.

Thus, ongoing commitment by both management and employees is necessary to ensure that the brand is integrated into every facet of the organization.

### Did you know?

Studies have shown that up to 86% of employees who interface with customers are communicating inaccurate or incomplete vital information.

Employees focused on delivering your brand stay at your company longer, work harder and deliver on-brand work every day. In addition, they build your brand outside the walls of your organization.

## 3. Who is going to pay for it?

Too often, the brand becomes siloed in the Advertising/MarCom area. While these areas may be best qualified to assist in the development and execution of the brand strategy, many of the deliverables rest in other areas.

The brand should impact and play a role in every department/area in the organization. Ideally, the funding for the development, internal roll-out and ongoing education should come from the C-level.

Not only is this approach appropriate, but it also sends a signal to employees that the brand is truly “owned” by senior management. It is important to note that while MarCom budgets may rise and fall, the commitment to the brand must remain consistent.

## 4. Building it one step at a time takes time.

The goal of the internal roll-out is to move employees through a process that begins with awareness and eventually migrates to modifying their behavior. The result is a clear understanding of the brand.

From the service industry to manufacturing, brands are defined by numerous touchpoints by which a customer comes in contact with the organization. The most obvious of which may be a call from a salesperson. However, touchpoints also include how efficiently requests are fulfilled by customer service, the accuracy of invoices sent by accounting, the rate at which new products are developed by R&D, etc.

Therefore, to be truly effective, the brand must be carefully introduced across every level of the organization and within each region. Like a concentric circle, the brand must be built from the inside out. This process begins with senior management, followed by each and every employee. From there, the brand is communicated to other key stakeholders such as financial contacts, media, prospective employees, etc.

## 5. Continuing education.

In order for any brand to thrive and grow, it must be nurtured. Brand awareness and education must become an integral part of the organization.

This may include many traditional activities such as workshops and newsletters, as well as some more innovative techniques.

Movéo works with each of its healthcare clients to help ensure that the brand continues to be at the center of every successful healthcare provider.

**Want help building a more loyal customer base for your company? Contact Bob Murphy at 630-570-4803 now or visit us online at [moveo.com](http://moveo.com).**