

THIS IS SOUTH SIMCOE

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Welcome to *This is South Simcoe*, an interactive column designed to offer you the local business community helpful, useful and applicable strategies, techniques, and advice on "doing business" and building a successful business in the South Simcoe area. Each edition of *This is South Simcoe* will provide insight on how to improve your business image, build your business, and more importantly, find solutions to meet the needs of your customers.

The column will also offer SNAP South Simcoe's readers and consumers that live and shop within our communities an opportunity and venue to submit and share positive consumer experiences and stories from the South Simcoe area.

Our premier column we will talk about branding and the importance and value of having a true, solid business brand. One of the most common misconceptions is the definition and purpose of a business brand.

A brand is a persona that communicates to consumers the character and image that a business wants consumers to feel, know and think about them. A brand acts as a promise that outlines and displays what consumers can expect from a business.

A brand is not just a logo. On its own, a logo is simply a graphic that helps consumers to recognize and relate to a business brand. Without a logo, your customers have no way of identifying with your business or any reason to trust in your product or service.

As a business owner, it's wise to look at your business and ask yourself, does my business have a brand? Do my customers know what they can expect when buying a product or service from my business? Do I really know what my customers think, feel and know about my business? And if so, is what they think or perceive what I want them to know and feel about my business? What message are you really sending to consumers?

From the consumer side, what bothers consumers even more than a business that doesn't invest in the development of a professional brand that consumers clearly understand and can predict what to expect when choosing to buy a product or service from a particular business, is a business that presents a brand that they can't or have no intention of living up to.

This is South Simcoe wants to hear from you – the business owner – the consumer. Send your business questions or comments on business and positive consumer experiences via email to dmhpr@dmhpr.ca with the subject line *This is South Simcoe* and then watch for the answers, tips and advice in each edition of the *This is South Simcoe* column right here in your community newspaper SNAP South Simcoe.

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