

Xhilarate Branding & Design announces tips to help ensure that your brand is ready for 2021

See which “brand resolutions” make the most sense for your brand.

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For a multitude of reasons 2020 was a year like no other– Covid-19, continued racial injustice and inequality, the stock market roller coaster and the election...to name just a few. These were arguably the top stories that had significant impact on brands and brand performance. Lockdowns and restrictions forced many marketers to rethink brand experiences across

hospitality, retail, travel & leisure and entertainment and all brands had to rethink messaging and hiring strategies. On one hand we saw many national and local brands go out of business and on the other many brands flourished and could not keep up with consumer demand. “2020’s events had a significant impact on branding where we saw some well-known and established brands come under attack compelling them to change their names,” says Michael McDonald, Partner, Lead Creative, [Xhilarate](#). Michael adds, “Uncle Ben’s is now Ben’s Original, Eskimo Pie became Edy’s Pie, The Washington Redskins are now known as The Washington Team and Aunt Jemima will reveal its new name some time in 2021 with her likeness already removed from all packaging and promotional materials.”

“We have seen that many brands took a “wait and see attitude” last year, hoping that the pandemic would end and the election would help define a clear path forward. Unfortunately, neither of this turned out to be true,” says Russ Napolitano, Partner, Client Relationships. Russ adds, “Many of the events that defined 2020 are spilling over into 2021 with no end in sight. Not to mention the fact that 2021 is already fraught with its own defining moments. These defining moments will continue to change the way brands communicate, behave and engage with their customers. As a result, Xhilarate has put together a list of [brand resolutions](#) to help marketers ensure that their brands are ready for 2021.”



Xhilarate's Brand Resolutions

- Optimize your brand against its key competitors
- Explore opportunities to work with some of your competitors to provide customers with a new and even better brand experience.
- Ensure that your brand is inclusive, representing a diverse team member and customer base
- Correct your brand's visual and / or verbal expression if it is found to be offensive in any way
- Update your image library to ensure that it is up-to-date reflecting your company's / brand's commitment to diversity and inclusion
- Evaluate your brand's website to make sure that it presents itself in the best possible light through its messaging and look and feel
- Make sure your website is ADA compliant
- Explore ways in which you can improve your brand's experience given current limitations on how customers can connect with many brands
- Identify non-traditional ways in which my brand can connect with customers
- Ensure that brand's strategy allows you to pivot quickly should unforeseen circumstances arise - again
- Determine ways in which current events provide an opportunity for brand expansion / contraction in a way that is relevant and not pandering

"Asking yourself and your brand management team these questions quarterly (at a minimum) will help your brand achieve maximum performance and be prepared for the next "unexpected," says Zave Smith, Partner. Zave goes on to say, "While it is critical for your brand to stay connected to your customers during times like these, it is paramount that your brand convey visual and verbal expressions that are on point and will resonate with your stakeholders – employees, customers, Board of Directors, media and the community – in a relevant way. Now is the time to closely inspect your brand to determine if it is in need of a tune-up."

Cheers to much [brand success](#) in 2021!

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