



## IS YOUR COMPANY IMAGE COSTING YOU MONEY?

**W**hen was the last time you stood across the road from your office and had a really objective look at the presentation?

Have you recently reviewed your stationery, business cards, checked the standard of brochures, upgraded the internet, attended one of your own sales staff's Open Houses or been out for an appraisal in a staff member's car?

The standard we set and rigorously maintain reflects our image to the market place. The company image that you portray must show total consistency and quality in everything you and your staff do, say and produce.

In my role over the past 15 years I have personally visited 600 offices and interviewed many principals and staff.

I have witnessed countless organisations where principals drive expensive, well maintained vehicles and are extremely well groomed personally, but allow their image to be eroded with poorly lit windows displays filled with faded photographs and copy with simple spelling errors. The same errors often appear on the website. Many reception areas are tired, lack life and energy, and are disorganised with counters filled with tacky photocopied 'brochures'.

Conversely, I have had the pleasure of seeing the total opposite, where the offices reflect pride of ownership, a genuine caring atmosphere and portray total professionalism.

A simple standards program conducted initially and executed on a quarterly basis should be a sound beginning to improving quality of image.

You, and importantly your staff, should review every aspect of each department within your business. Include quality of signage, lighting, cleanliness, condition of furnishings, stationery, systems, advertising and external signage. The telephone greeting, punctuality, grooming, customer service and equipment are also essential elements to the image you portray.

When making the assessment, put on another hat and see these areas from the public's point of view. Have a friend (in another industry) or an independent specialist assist you with your assessment.

If you wish to portray your company as competent, effective and successful, every aspect of your business must convey that message.

"All very well", you may say, "but how much will it cost?" Perhaps it may be more prudent to ask yourself "How much will it cost me if I don't invest the time and money?"

Present yourself with a first class image right across the board rather than allowing a tired company image to cost you money.

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*Recreated from one of Geoff's regular articles appearing in REI Journals and may be contacted on 0418 306 588.*