

What do you expect your brand launch to achieve? Doing so allows you to measure how your brand is doing in terms of increases in sales, distribution, market share, and pricing, and also in terms of consumer awareness, preference, perceived value, perceived point of difference, satisfaction, and desire to purchase, repurchase, or refer to others. By clarifying your brand introduction message in advance, all brand communications -- formal and informal, from the CEO to the frontline staff -- align, contributing to a strong, clear impression. The more clearly you establish quantifiable outcomes for your brand launch, the more quickly you win buy-in from shareholders, funding partners, top-level executives, and the staff who will help you make your new brand a success. You can find research firms through major city phone directories or by asking for referrals from advertising agencies and branding firms. It's easy for people in your company to get complacent about something that seems like an aesthetic change, but if they realize that, on a certain date, the curtain needs to rise and the brand needs to be ready to go in order to achieve awareness and momentum, they'll step on board with a greater sense of mission. After you set your branding priorities (drawing from the list in the preceding section), you need to set objectives for what you want your brand launch to achieve. If you're starting a new business or brand, you're starting from zero, with no existing brand awareness, emotional connection, credibility, brand differentiation, or sales momentum. If you're realigning or rebranding an existing brand, begin by assessing your pre-launch situation in each of the brand functions. For help conducting research or enlisting professional assistance, turn to the research sections in Chapter 4. What about timing?