

INDUSTRY REPORT

Brand Dynamics in B2B Tech: The Current Landscape

by Chris Lumsden

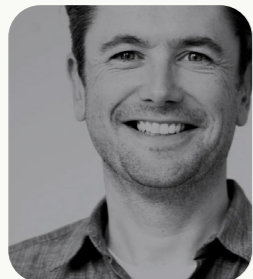
EXEC SUMMARY

The B2B tech sector, while innovative, often underutilises brand as a strategic driver of business growth.

Many companies focus too heavily on technical features, leading to weak brand foundations, fragmented messaging, and missed opportunities for engagement.

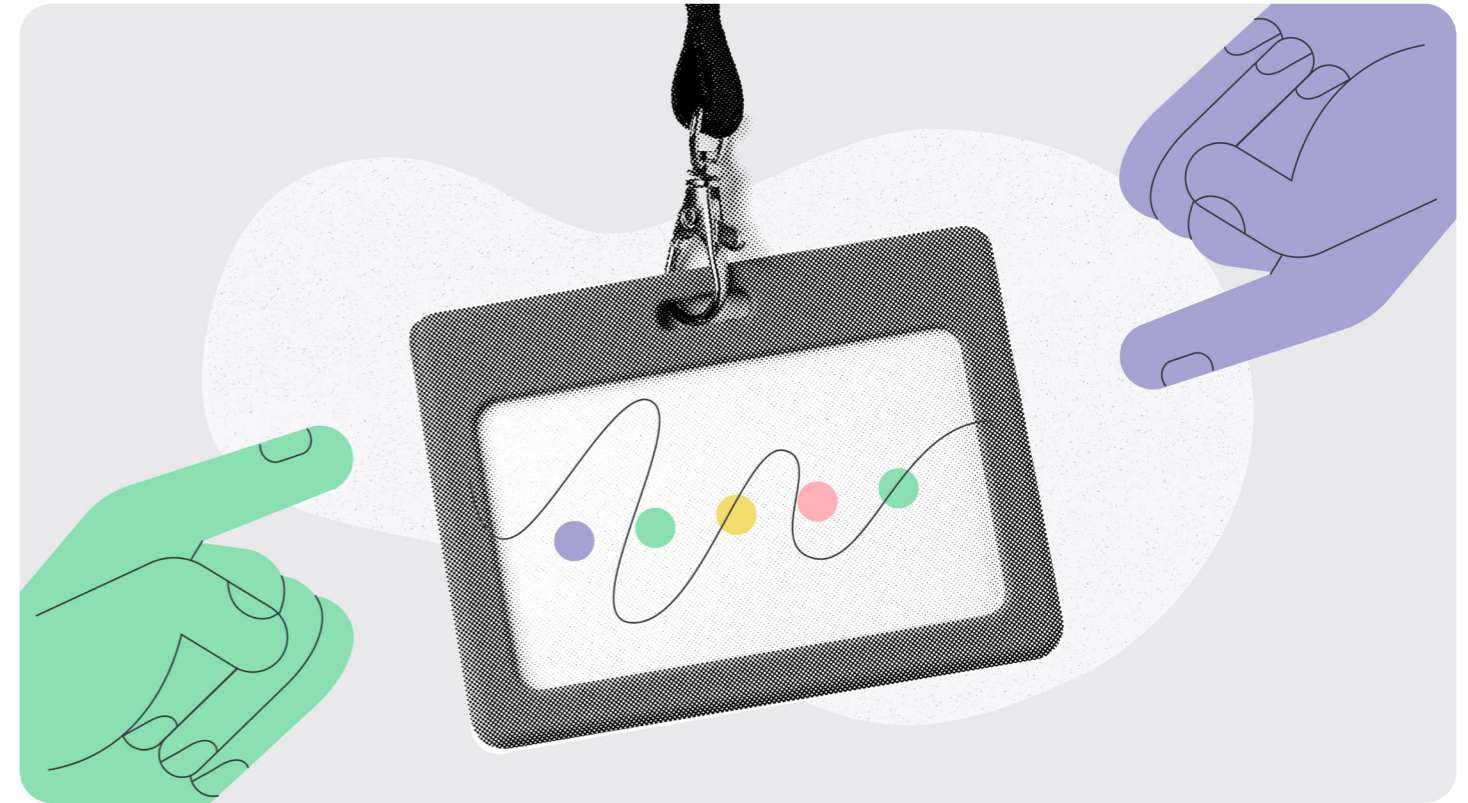
This report outlines the most pressing brand challenges in the sector, offering insights into the pitfalls of poorly integrated acquisitions, overly-complex product portfolios, and uninspired creative execution.

Drawing on over 20 years of experience working with B2B tech companies, we present actionable strategies to elevate brand and align it with business goals, ultimately driving sustained growth.



Chris Lumsden
Partner

The Importance of Brand in B2B Tech



Despite its critical role in business success, many B2B tech companies fail to fully leverage brand.

The B2B tech sector, while innovative and dynamic, often underutilizes brand as a strategic tool. This sector, like B2B in general, has been criticised for being slow to adapt and overly focused on technical features, which can alienate customers and miss broader opportunities for engagement.

There are inherent challenges in this industry, such as the dominance of technical and engineering mindsets, which often result in communication focused on features rather than customer needs. However, the sector also offers significant advantages, characterised by rapid cycles of change and a workforce passionate about making meaningful contributions to the world.

This report explores the sector's key challenges—such as poorly defined brand foundations, complex product portfolios, and inconsistent messaging—and offers actionable strategies for leveraging brand as a driver of business growth. While the focus is on B2B tech, the principles discussed here apply broadly across the B2B landscape, offering valuable insights for any business looking to strengthen its brand.

Market Overview

The B2B tech sector broadly encompasses a wide range of businesses that provide technological products or services to other companies, driving innovation and efficiency across industries.

It's characterised by a relentless pursuit of innovation, driven by highly skilled engineers, developers, and technicians. This emphasis on technical excellence has led to continuous advancements in areas like digital transformation, AI, and automation.

However, while these innovations are crucial, they often prioritise technology over the needs and experiences of the end user, which can create a disconnect between what is produced and what customers truly value.

In the interests of being specific, we think it's useful to drill down into the B2B Tech sector to identify and highlight the different types of businesses living under this umbrella. In our experience, we have identified a group of 'client type' organisations within the sector:

1. B2B Software and Service Providers

Primary Focus: Cloud services, enterprise software, CRM, automation, and professional services (consulting, implementation, and integration).

Brand Characteristics: These companies are sophisticated and may be beyond many of the challenges we're outlining in this report. They place a heavy emphasis on brand identity and their branding often reflects a strong understanding of user experience, trust, and thought leadership. Consultancy elements bring an additional focus on partnership and future-readiness.

Design & Tone: Clean, modern designs with a human touch. Communications are benefit-focused and often framed around customer success stories and how the brand can improve business outcomes.

Defining Communication Traits: Their tone is agile and customer-centric, with a strong focus on innovation. They avoid technical jargon, opting instead for approachable, solution-driven messaging. These companies aim to position themselves as partners, offering both technology and the expertise to implement it.

Examples



2. B2B Tech Product Innovators

Primary Focus: Hardware, industrial equipment, and specialised solutions for industries like automation, engineering, and manufacturing.

Brand Characteristics: These companies balance product-driven messaging with a growing awareness of branding. While still focused on technical specifics, they increasingly recognise the importance of telling an innovation or solution-oriented story.

Design & Tone: A mix of technical detail and aspirational language. They adopt elements of SaaS sophistication but remain focused on their product's practical applications and benefits.

Defining Communication Traits: They emphasise credibility and expertise, using branding to project reliability and long-term value. While more technical in nature, they try to incorporate future-readiness and innovation into their communications.

Examples



3. Tech-Driven Industrial Manufacturers

Primary Focus: Components and equipment manufacturing, often highly technical and specialised.

Brand Characteristics: Conservative in their branding, they focus on reliability, precision, and expertise. Branding is often functional, emphasising scale and tradition over emotional engagement.

Design & Tone: Lots of blues, greys, and global network metaphors. Messaging is abstract and often revolves around global connectivity and forward-looking statements like "Empowering Tomorrow."

Defining Communication Traits: They prioritise technical precision and detailed product information, targeting engineers and procurement teams. Emotional storytelling is rare; instead, they focus on stability, quality, and long-term reliability.

Examples



Our agency experience lies primarily in the second subsector: B2B Product Innovators, although we have worked with clients in the other two subsectors at times. Having said that, the challenges and issues we're about to explore tend to happen across the board; it's just that they may be more pronounced in some subsectors than others.

Brand Challenges

Branding challenges are prevalent across the B2B tech sector, particularly in subsectors dominated by technical expertise.

Over the past 20 years, we've encountered recurring issues in many organisations that restrict brand's potential to drive business success.

In this section, we'll highlight the most common branding challenges, from poorly defined brand foundations to overly complex product portfolios and fragmented brand architectures. These challenges stifle the role of brand, but they are not insurmountable.

We'll draw on examples from our work to illustrate how businesses can tackle these issues head-on and build stronger, more cohesive brands.

1

Not Taking it Seriously

Because many B2B tech firms do not view brand as business-critical, it is often forced to work in isolation. We believe this is the single biggest mistake these organisations can make. At Good, we understand that brand strategy is synonymous with business strategy. It must transcend a narrow focus on logos and colours, integrating deeply into value-driven business outcome.

While the intangible value of brand is well understood in consumer markets—think Coca-Cola or McDonald's—it is underappreciated in B2B, leading to uninspired and ineffective marketing outputs.

However, it's clear that brand equity in B2B is built in the same way as in consumer markets, reinforcing the notion that brand investment is a strategic value lever.

2

Poorly Defined Foundations

Given that this sector is disproportionately driven by technicians and engineers, it's unsurprising that many businesses struggle to articulate what lies at the heart of their brand. The vision, mission, and values that underpin the business must be meaningful and relatable; they are the foundation from which all compelling communications are built. In a recent [article](#), we highlighted how many large B2B organisations publish values that come across as anodyne and meaningless. (Hint: the top four offenders are "integrity," "performance," "innovation," and "teamwork").

When a company's values are nothing more than a list of characteristics that should be a given in any business interaction, it's no surprise that the communications built from them appear generic and uninspired as well. The vision, mission, and values should come together to create a distinct brand

platform—an ownable expression of the brand that underwrites value across the business. This can influence everything from internal communications and employee engagement to sales decks, health and safety protocols, and recruitment advertising. A strong, well-defined brand can permeate multiple departments, preventing the creation of isolated and confusing sub-brands.

Example 1.0

Description: The Vision, Mission and Values framework we use to underpin all brand creation/evolution.



3

Distracted by Purpose

The trend of brands needing to find their purpose has permeated marketing over the past decade, becoming a contentious area.

Many businesses struggle when making bold, aspirational claims about their higher purpose, such as Hellman’s Mayonnaise with its claim of fighting food waste. Such abstraction from the product’s core functional role detracts from the brand’s foundational strengths and creates friction in clearly defining who they are, what they do, and whom they serve.

In our view, a focus on vision, mission, and values provides a practical framework to guide an organisation’s strategic decisions without getting lost in the search for a higher purpose.

4

Overly Complex Product Portfolios

The biggest curse of this sector’s rapid innovation cycle is the haphazard way products are brought to market. The driver seems to be “because we can” rather than “because the consumer wants it.” As a result, product names and coherence often go out the window. Customers frequently struggle to differentiate between similar models, for example the PTS-73/X and the PTP-45/A. What might be immediately distinguishable for the internal team, appears as confusing gobbledygook to the customer. (we call this an inside out bias). As these new products accumulate, the confusion and friction builds, and customers often seek easier solutions elsewhere.

Managing complex and overlapping products and sub-brands is costly and inefficient. In B2B, brand equity almost always resides in the mother brand and most of the brand architecture work we’ve done is focused on consolidating sub brands into a branded house structure. This cuts through the complexity, streamlining the brand and reducing marketing spend over the long term.

5

Badly Integrated Acquisitions

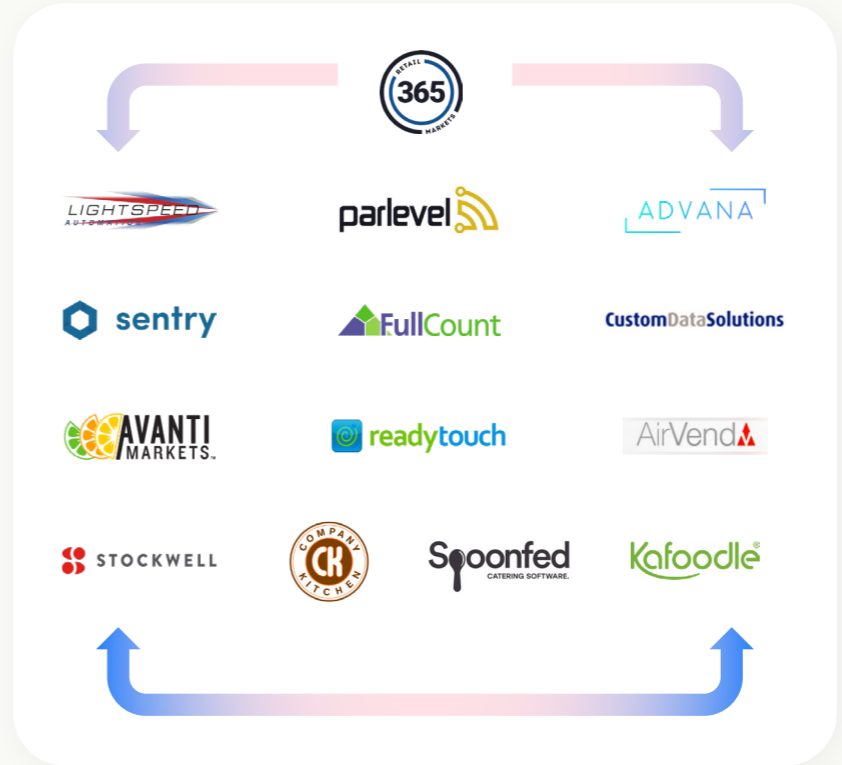
The B2B tech space is a dynamic marketplace with significant M&A activity. Many organisations are on an acquisition drive, buying companies from startups to established players to assert dominance within specific sectors. In this sense it’s crucial to have a corporate brand strategy that complements the acquisition strategy.

We’ve witnessed B2B tech clients acquiring numerous companies without proper brand integration leading to multiple salespeople meeting with one customer to sell overlapping solutions. This is a clear sign that the brand architecture is due for a review.

Too much M&A activity happens without considering the role brand can play in driving long-term value. Whether it’s conducting due diligence to determine the architecture the acquired business will live under or planning how the combined propositions are communicated to remove friction—brand lies at the heart of it and is the glue that holds everything together.


Example 2.0
Client: Devro
Description: We helped to build their equity under the main corporate brand, and adopt a simple, descriptive product naming convention to prevent confusion.


-  DEVRO PROCESSED
-  DEVRO FRESH
-  DEVRO NON EDIBLE
-  DEVRO PLÁSTICOS
-  DEVRO i-DEAL



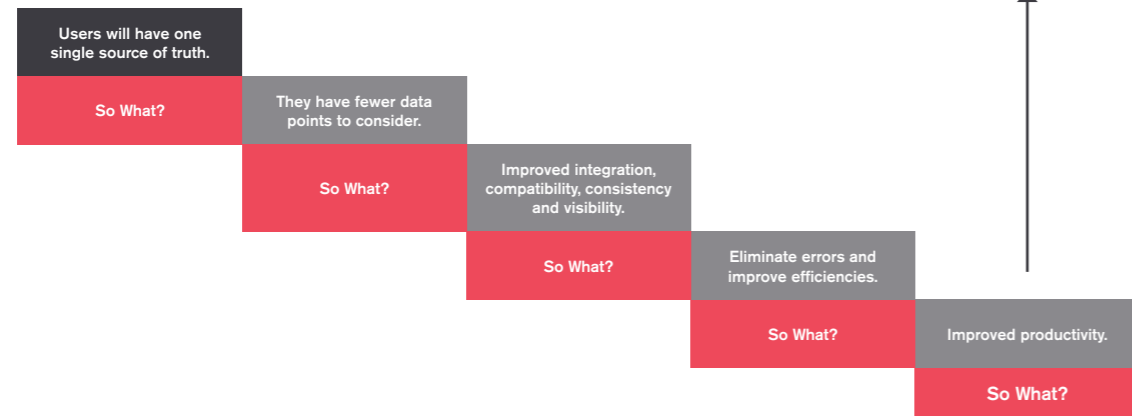
Example 3.0
Client: 365 Retail Markets
Description: We helped 365 Retail Markets fully integrate more than 15 acquired businesses into a single, corporate brand umbrella with a single voice.

Sell, manage and track thousands of products – all from one powerful platform.

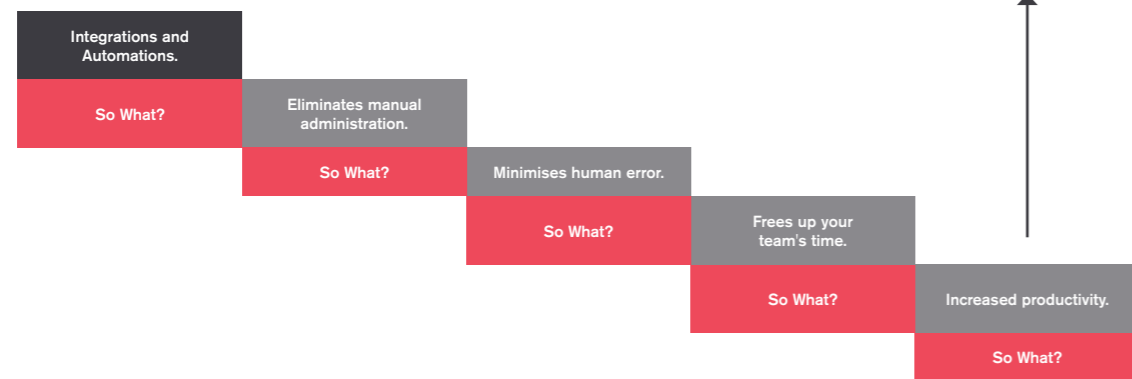


 365 Retail Markets

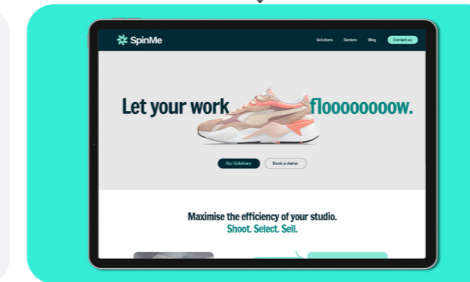
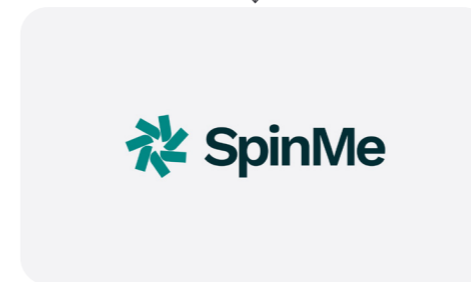
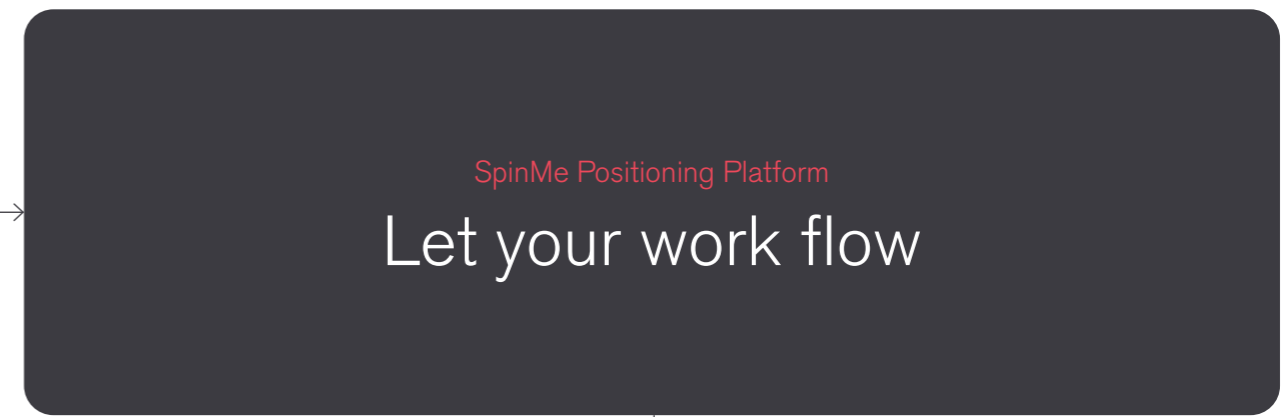
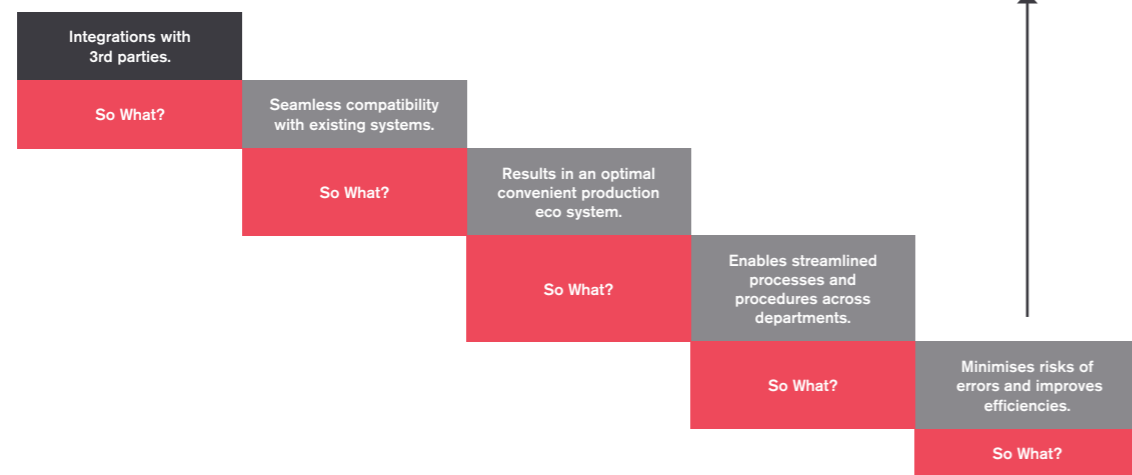
Pick a big-deal feature or capability
SpinMe being a single interface → **Increase your ROI**



Pick a big-deal feature or capability
Integrations and Automations → **Quicker speed to site**



Pick a big-deal feature or capability
Integrates with 3rd parties → **Encourages scalability**



6

Poorly Positioned Products

In the context of complex B2B tech purchases, the primary competitor is often not another business but the prevailing status quo. Matt Dixon's excellent research* shows that between 40% and 60% of B2B purchase journeys end up in no sale because consensus can't be reached.

A brand-led approach helps address this challenge with a customer-first mindset. Product positioning extends beyond features and benefits; it encompasses a broader strategic context. Effective positioning helps potential customers understand why a product is valuable to them, placing it within a context that resonates with their own needs.

This enables customers to understand the whole market, make better choices, and effectively advocate for those choices within their organisations. Thinking through how a product is positioned creates an opportunity to craft compelling communications that express the product's value clearly and persuasively.

*Matt Dixon: The Jolt Effect

Example 4.0

Client: Spin Me
Description: We simplified complex technical details to uncover the true value their software delivers to their ideal customers.

7

Absence of Brand Storytelling

In the B2B tech sector, where communication often focuses on technical details, effective brand storytelling is crucial for engaging customers on an emotional level. However, storytelling frequently takes a back seat, resulting in messages that are just plain boring, and which fail to resonate with broader audiences. To stand out, B2B tech companies must go beyond technical specifications and craft narratives that connect their products to real-world benefits for customers.

A compelling brand story should be rooted within the brand's foundations, built out from the vision, mission, and values which (if they've been crafted well) should act as a catalyst for creating messaging that's rich in feeling and emotion. So, rather than a focusing solely on product features, the trick is to harness this feeling to guide the creation of narratives that demonstrate how the brand solves problems and adds tangible value to the customer's business.

To do this effectively, brands must understand the customers and how they use the products. Insights from these users can be woven into the brand story, demonstrating the real-life impact of the technology.

This approach creates a distinctive emotional connection between the brand and its audience, differentiating it from competitors focused only on technical capabilities.

By integrating storytelling into their brand strategy, B2B tech companies can enhance customer engagement, build stronger relationships, and drive business success. Well-crafted stories transform complex technical details into compelling narratives that capture attention and inspire action.

Example 5.0

Client: Stratasys
Description: We created a campaign headlining the real-world impact Stratasys makes for its customers.



8

Boring Creative

If an organisation isn't prioritising brand as a value lever, then perhaps it's no surprise that their creative output is below par. In our experience, the poorest creative in this sector tends to conform to the same conventions. I've written about this in more detail in a previous [article](#):

"The most obvious [visual conventions] was their use of visual metaphors to communicate 'networks' or 'connectedness'. For example, many of them will use a stylised globe illustration (stock imagery) with a blue/black background. Dots and lines or a grid over the image create the sense of connection. It might also animate or move to show how clever they are. The chances are there's also some sort of abstract statement about how they're 'delivering tomorrow's future today' – what we call Buzz Lightyear positioning statements. That's perhaps a little unfair and stereotyped, but you get the gist – it's basically what happens when there's an absence of proper thought about how to create a first impression."

Frequently this mindset is driven by a belief that B2B buyers don't want or need 'fluff'; they're rational buyers who are just interested in facts. The reality is somewhat different. Consumers have become accustomed to and enjoy being seduced by high quality comms in the B2C sector; and expect the same level with the B2B comms they experience.

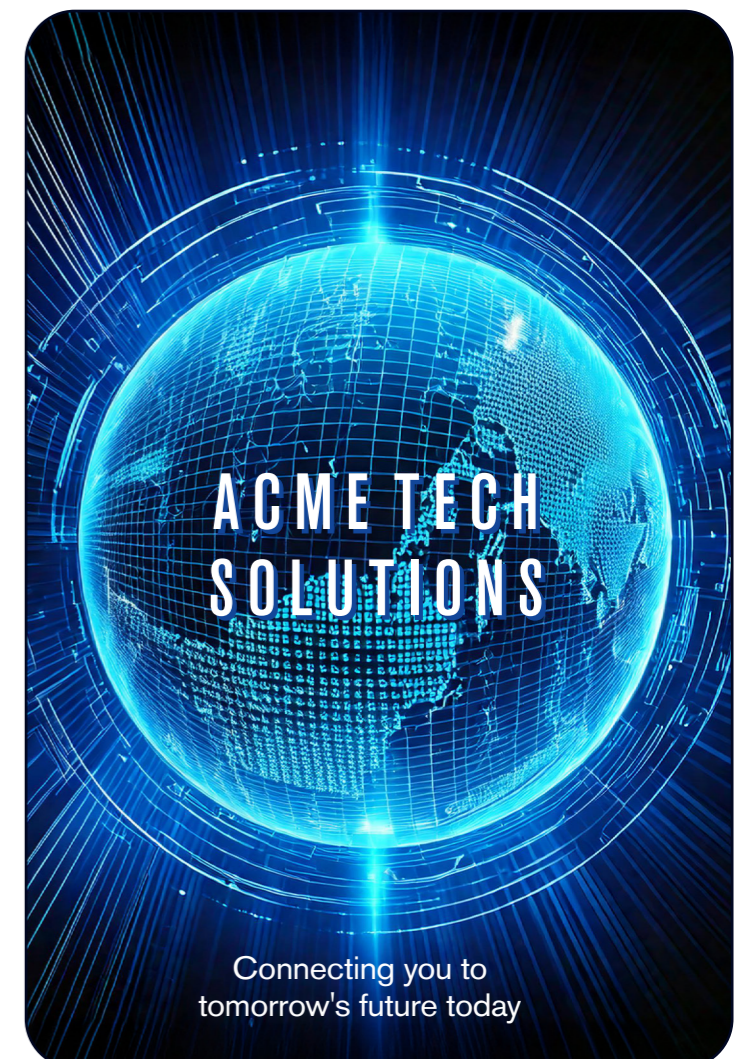
As highlighted in LinkedIn's Cashing In on Creativity white paper, the data is clear: powerful creative can be the difference between mediocrity and exponential growth. Research by Peter Field reveals that 77% of B2B ads score just one star out of five in effectiveness,

Example 6.0

Client: ACME Example B2B Tech Brand
Description: Much of the B2B tech world is plagued with cliched and stereotypical brand communications, which becomes wallpaper to the customer.

underscoring the crisis in B2B advertising. Yet, campaigns that achieve high creative standards can deliver market share growth up to ten times more effectively than their mediocre counterparts. This isn't about the medium—whether digital or traditional—it's about the strategic undervaluation of creativity. Companies like GEICO and Salesforce have demonstrated that systematic approaches to creative development and investment in emotionally resonant, clear, and strongly branded advertising can secure a lasting competitive advantage. B2B marketers must shift their perspective, recognising that creativity isn't just a cost centre but a critical driver of future profitability.

So, the picture is crystal clear. Investing in good quality creative is a powerful differentiator for businesses in this sector. A huge opportunity to stand out from the competition.



SUMMARY

The B2B tech sector consistently undervalues the role of brand in driving business growth. While technical innovation remains the primary focus, poorly defined brand foundations, fragmented acquisitions, and overly complex product portfolios weaken brand equity. Additionally, the absence of storytelling and clear product positioning limits the effectiveness of customer engagement.

To thrive, B2B tech companies must prioritise brand as a core strategic asset, simplifying product offerings, integrating acquisitions more effectively, and crafting narratives that resonate. By embedding brand into the business's core, companies can unlock stronger customer connections, differentiate themselves, and achieve sustained growth.



About Good Brand Consultants

Good Brand Consultants is a highly regarded brand consultancy with more than two decades of experience in the B2B tech sector. Since its founding in 2004, the agency has earned a reputation for delivering strategic, no-nonsense branding solutions that prioritise long-term value and cut through market noise.

Their approach is rooted in straightforwardness and practicality, partnering with ambitious businesses to elevate their brands without unnecessary

complexity. Known for asking the tough questions and driving meaningful change, the firm has formed lasting relationships with some of the world's leading B2B tech companies.

Operating globally from their UK base, Good has collaborated with organisations such as Honeywell, Resideo, Universal Robots, 365 Retail Markets, Stratasys, Drayton, and Schneider Electric, helping them address complex brand challenges—from brand definition and architecture to positioning and creative expression.