



ESL Podcast 208 – Corporate Image

GLOSSARY

expansion – to become larger; to spread from one area to other areas

* The expansion of the company from telephones to computers has required the hiring of many new employees.

corporate image – the way people see a company

* The financial problems the company has had will probably negatively affect their corporate image.

brand – a type of product made by a company that is given a specific name

* I recommend this brand if you want to buy some high quality luggage.

brand loyalty – preference for a brand; usually means that someone will continue buying a specific brand

* Our company hopes that with endorsement from major athletes, we will get customers to develop brand loyalty.

product image – the way people see a product that is made by a company

* According to our company's research, we'll need to improve product image if we want to increase sales.

to reposition – to change a company's image for a new or bigger audience; to change position

* If our organizations is to continue for another 100 years, we need to reposition ourselves as a leader in the field.

to lose sight of – to overlook; to forget

* It's hard not to lose sight of my goal to lose weight when I see all of these delicious desserts!

end-user – the person who will use a company's products

* The reports from our marketing department are important, but what I really want to know is what our end-users think of the new product.



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registered trademark – a name, symbol (small picture), or thing used for identifying a product that has been legally registered with the government so that no one else can use it

* We can't use the symbol with a circle with the line through it for our product because it's a registered trademark.

prestige products – the most expensive or respected products that a company makes

* We build a lot of cars but this new sports car is our top prestige product.

household name – a product name that is popular or common and that most people know

* You may not have heard of this brand yet, but in five years, it will be a household name.

to update – to bring something up to date; to add or change something so that it reflects current tastes or opinions

* Have you updated our website yet with information on this week's events?

logo – a name or symbol (small picture) used by a company or organization to identify its products

* I don't like wearing clothes with the company's logo on it.

to shape – to have influence on; to develop

* One of my high school teachers helped me shape my plans for a career in music.

corporate identity – a company's name, logo, or tagline (or a phrase a company uses to say what their company represents); the way a company is seen by customers

* We've hired a team of writers and designers to develop our new company's corporate identity.

logical next step – the next thing to do based on common sense; the obvious thing that should be done next

* After you graduate from college, the logical next step is to try to find a job.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does the company need to change its corporate image?
 - a) Other businesses are trying to compete with it.
 - b) The company has stopped being a paper company.
 - c) The company has expanded and changed.

 2. Which of these are NOT a part of the company's plans?
 - a) The company plans to become a PR firm.
 - b) The company plans to change its logo.
 - c) The company plans to stop brand loyalty.
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WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

brand

In this podcast, the word “brand” means a type of product that a company makes that has a specific name: “What brand of soda do you like to drink?” “Brand” can be used as a verb to mean to describe someone or something as being bad. After something has been “branded,” it’s difficult to change other people’s opinion about it: “Because of problems at home, she didn’t do well in school and was branded a poor student by her teachers.” Or, “I used to cry a lot as a child and was branded a ‘cry-baby’ by the other kids in the neighborhood.” The use of “brand” in this way comes from the original use of the word to mean to make a permanent mark on something by burning a word or symbol into its skin. This is usually done with animals so that other people will know who its owner is: “Can you see the brand on those cattle (cows) over there?”

to shape

The verb “to shape,” in this podcast, means to influence something, usually as it is being developed: “Listening to classic rock when he was a child helped shape the way he writes music today.” We can use the verb “to shape” to mean to form something physically: “Let’s shape these cookies to look like Dr. Jeff McQuillan’s head!” Or, “Can you teach me how to shape this clay into a vase?” As a noun, “shape” can be used to mean something that is difficult to see or to identify clearly: “Did you see that shape in the sky last night? I think it was a big bird.” Or, “I couldn’t tell the police what the robber looked like because I only saw his shape in the distance.”



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CULTURE NOTE

In the United States, trademarks can be registered so that only one company or person may use them. There are restrictions on what can be called a trademark, however. Trademarks must be different from other trademarks already being used and they must be different from commonly used words. For instance, the word “pants” could not be a registered trademark. Trademarks that have been “abandoned,” or never used again, also cannot be registered.

To be granted a registered trademark, you have to make sure no one else is using your trademark already, and you must fill out an application form and pay a fee. After that, if you have not used your trademark yet, you should use it and then send in “proof,” or evidence, that you have used it. If you have already used your trademark before the application process, then you wait for your trademark to be approved by a lawyer and to be published in an “Official Gazette,” a government publication. After that, anyone who has objections to or problems with your trademark has 30 days to “oppose,” or to try to prevent your registration. If you are not opposed, you will receive a “Certificate of Registration,” which will last for ten years.

“Trademark violation” happens when one company uses a trademark that is very similar to another company's mark. For example, if Crimson Paper Company was registered as a trademark and sold paper, and then the Crimson Leaf Company was created later and also sold paper, this may be considered a trademark violation. While the word “crimson,” which means the color red, is free for everyone to use, these two companies sell the same product. The law is written so that the Crimson Paper Company should not have to worry about customers confusing it with the Crimson Leaf Company.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – c; 2 – b



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 208, “Corporate Image.”

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 208. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

If you visit our website at eslpod.com, you'll find the Learning Guide for this podcast that contains all of the definitions, additional terms that we don't discuss on the podcast, as well as a complete transcript of this episode.

Today's episode is about the image of a company, the “Corporate Image.” Let's start.

[Start of story]

Adam: With our expansion into these new areas of business, I think we need to think seriously about changing our corporate image. We're much more than just a paper company now.

Eva: I think you're right. Our brand has changed, and if we want to keep brand loyalty, we need to think about protecting and improving our product image.

Adam: I agree that that's a key issue as we reposition ourselves in the industry. We can never lose sight of our end-users.

Eva: And, even though we have registered trademarks on some of the new prestige products, we need to have a plan if we want to turn these new products into household names.

Adam: I suggest we think about hiring a public relations firm. They may be able to help us update our corporate image and logo, and to shape our new corporate identity.

Eva: Why don't I contact a few PR firms and set up some meetings?



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Adam: Yes, do that. That seems like the logical next step.

[End of story]

Our podcast today is called, “Corporate Image.” Corporate, “corporate,” refers to a corporation. A corporation is a large company that has registered with the government for a specific kind of organization, business organization usually. So, corporate, as an adjective, describes something related to a large company or a corporation. Image, in this case, means how people view you, how people think about you. So, the corporate image would be what people see as your company, what it is like, what does it do and so forth.

We have a dialogue between Adam and Eva. Adam says, “With our expansion into these new areas of business, I think we need to think seriously about changing our corporate image.” An expansion, “expansion,” is a noun that comes from the verb to expand, “expand.” To expand means to get bigger, to grow larger. So, an expansion, as a noun, is when a company or a business decides to grow, decides to become bigger. Adam is saying that because their business is growing - because of their expansion into new areas for their business, new things for their business - he thinks that the company should think about changing its corporate image. “We’re much more than just a paper company now,” Adam says, meaning that we do more just, I guess, make paper.

Eva says, “I think you're right. Our brand has changed, and if we want to keep brand loyalty, we need to think about” improving, protecting rather, “and improving our product image.” Brand, “brand,” refers to the name of a product or a series of products made by a company. For example, I have an Apple computer. That is the brand. That's the company that makes it. Usually the brand is the same name of the company, but it is not always the case. Sometimes companies will choose different names for their products or types of products. A brand usually has more than one kind of product, however, so Apple, as a brand for computers, has many different kinds of computers.

Eva says that “if we want to keep” our “brand loyalty,” loyalty, “loyalty,” means the same as support. So, someone who is loyal to you is someone who supports you or someone who is faithful to you. To be faithful, “faithful,” means that you don't do anything against that person, you stay with that person. Brand loyalty then, is the idea that people who buy your products - your customers - will continue to buy your products in the future, the things that you make.



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Eva says that “we need to think about protecting and improving,” or making better, “our product image.” A product is something that a company makes and sells to other people. Product image then, would be what people think of the particular thing they sell.

Adam says, “I agree that that is a key issue as we reposition ourselves in the industry.” Key, “key,” issue means important issue. When we say something is key, we mean it is very important. We might also say it is vital, “vital,” it's very important. To reposition, “reposition,” means to change your position, to change your place, to change where you are. It is a verb that you sometimes hear in business. When businesses talk about repositioning themselves, they're talking about changing what they do, changing how people perceive them, or see them, changing what they do in terms of what they make and what they do. The prefix re, “re,” in front of a verb in English usually means to do it again, and so to reposition would mean to position, or place yourself again.

Adam says that the company “can never lose sight of” its “end-users.” To lose sight, “sight,” means to forget about, to not pay attention to. Someone may say, “Don't lose sight of your goal,” or “of your objective,” what you are trying to do, don't forget about that. An end-user, “end-user,” is the person that actually uses your product, uses what you are selling. It may be the same person as the customer - the person who buys it - but not always. For example, in a company, the company may be the customer. They may buy some new computers, but the end-users are the individual employees, the individual workers in the company. They are the end-users.

Eva says, “Even though we have registered trademarks on some of the new prestige products, we need to have a plan if we want to turn” those “products into household names.” A trademark, “trademark,” is a word or a name or even a sign or a symbol that represents a company or represents a particular product, and a trademark - a registered trademark - is something that you do with the government. In the United States, the federal government has an office where you can register your trademark so no one else steals it, so no one else tries to use it and say it's theirs. So, that is a registered trademark. Usually if someone has a registered trademark, you'll see the letter “R” in a small circle next to name. For example, on the TOEFL Podcast there's a little “R” next to the word TOEFL. That means it is a registered trademark of a particular company.



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Eva says that they “have registered trademarks on some of the new prestige products.” Prestige, “prestige,” is an adjective to describe something that people admire, something that people like, something that, if you have it, it's considered to be an important sign or symbol of how important you are or how rich you are. So, a prestige product might be, in the United States, a Mercedes Benz, or a BMW, or a similar expensive car - that might be considered a prestige product.

Eva says that, “we need to have a plan if we want to turn these new products into household names.” To turn something into the something else means to change them into something else, to change them so that they are different. Eva's suggesting that the company needs to make changes if it wants “to turn these products into household names.” A household, “household,” all one word, usually refers to the people who live in a house or an apartment. Everyone who lives there is part of the household. But, the expression, a household name, means that everyone in the country knows about it. It is very popular. A household name could be a product; it could also be a person. For example, Brad Pitt, who looks just like me, is a household name. Everyone who lives in the United States, or almost everyone, knows who he is.

Adam says that the company should “think about hiring a public relations firm,” or a public relations company. These are people who work on advertising, for example, or helping people change their image, what people think of them. That public relations firm, which we would often just say PR firm, if someone says PR firm they mean it's a public relations firm, this PR firm may be able to help the company update their corporate image. To update, “update,” means to change something so that it is more current, more modern. They want to update their corporate image and their logo. A logo, “logo,” is a sign or a symbol of a company. For ESL Podcast, if you go to our website, in the top left corner you'll see our logo that says, “ESL Pod,” with a little picture.

Adam says he hopes the PR firm can “shape” their “new corporate identity.” To shape, “shape,” means to change, to influence, to control. If someone shapes the plans that means they influence the plans, they have some control over them. Corporate identity is a larger name that's similar to corporate image. It's how a company sees itself, how they identify themselves, what people think of when they think of the company.

Well, Eva says that she will “contact a few PR firms,” and Adam says, “Yes. That seems like the logical next step.” A step, “step,” is the next part of a plan or next



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part of a process that you are doing. So, when we say something is the logical next step, we mean it's the most reasonable, it's the most intelligent next thing that you should do.

Now let's listen to the dialogue, this time at a native of rate of speech.

[Start of story]

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Adam: I suggest we think about hiring a public relations firm. They may be able to help us update our corporate image and logo, and to shape our new corporate identity.

Eva: Why don't I contact a few PR firms and set up some meetings?

Adam: Yes, do that. That seems like the logical next step.

[End of story]

The script for today's podcast was written by Dr. Lucy Tse. Remember, you can email us at eslpod@eslpod.com if you have a question, comment or suggestion about our podcast.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.



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