

# Chameleon

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# Standing out from the crowd – Marketing your school

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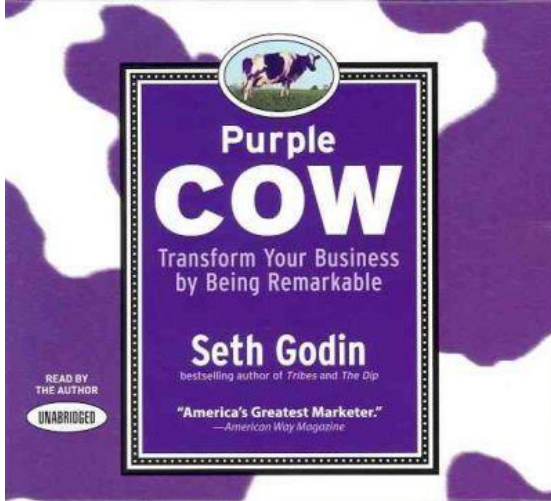
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# Standing out from the crowd

We have so many choices and so little time, the easiest option is simply to ignore most of it.



**How can your school stand out from the crowd?**

# Defining marketing

**‘It’s all about learning: learning about people’s perceptions and needs and then acting on that learning to communicate the school’s core purpose and values, both to the school community and to those outside.’** (Brent Davies)

## Key Components

**Admissions** (pupils) and **Recruitment/Retention** (staff)

**Funding** (not to forget grant funding partners here)

**Community engagement** (recruiting volunteers)

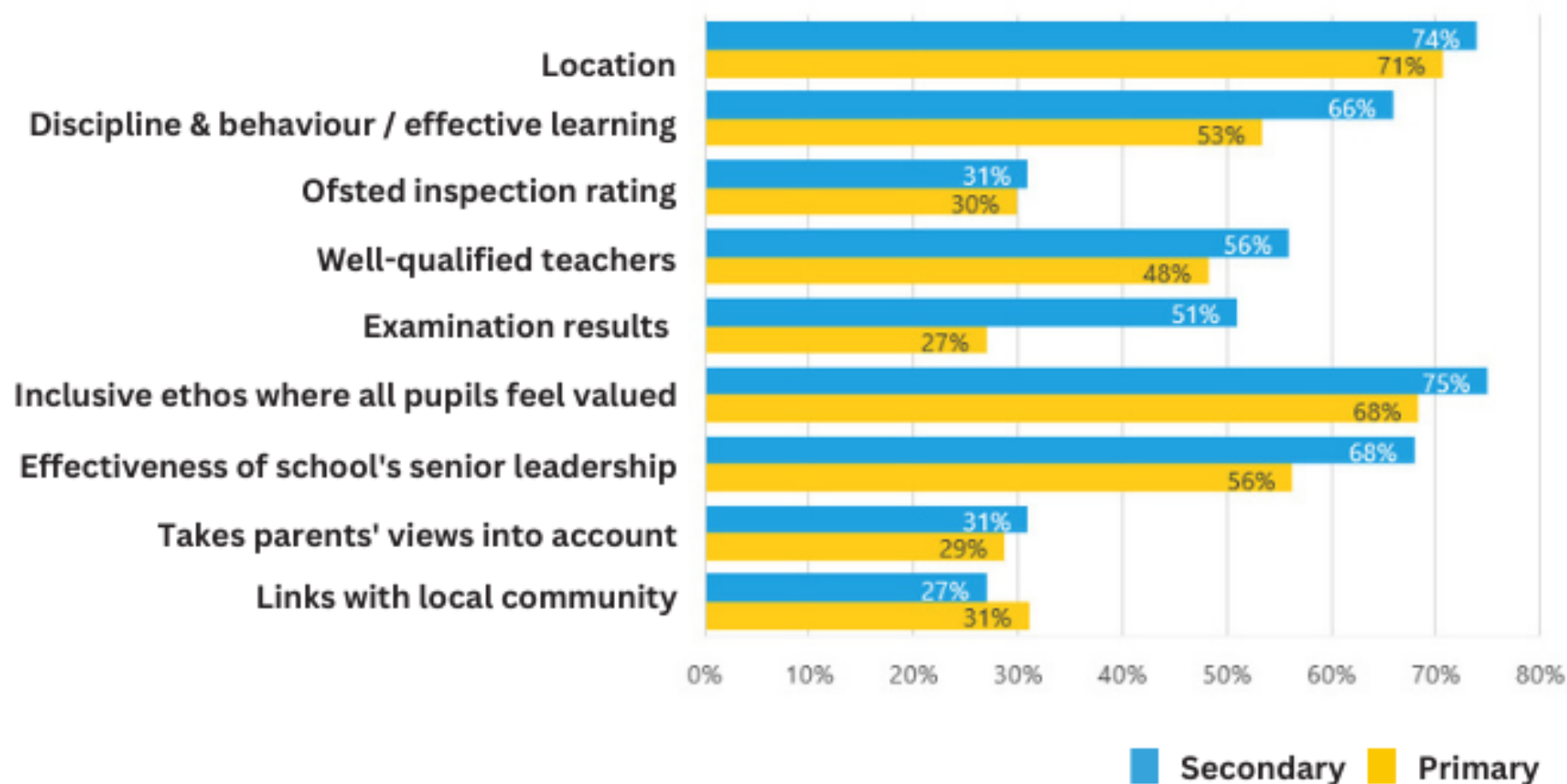
**Reputation management** (reinforce or modify)

**Identity and Core Values** (consistency of appearance and message)

**Communications** (PR, Media, Crisis management, Continuity Planning)

# What's important to parents?

## Which factors are most important when choosing a school?



Survey of 1000 parents of school-age children

 **SchoolGuide.co.uk**

# Understanding the data

**Staff Recruitment** (MyNewTerm, 3500 schools/300 MATs)

On average 5 applications per support staff vacancy

Median distance of candidates applying for school vacancies (Based on 210,000 candidates via MyNewTerm)

**Support Staff?**

2.2 miles

What does this mean to you?

**Teaching Staff?**

7.0 miles

How might this inform your marketing strategy?

**Leadership?**

10.1 miles

# Organisational Reputation

## What is it and does it matter?

“The **beliefs or opinions** that stakeholders hold about an organisation.

Reputation impacts various aspects of the business, including customer loyalty, employee morale, market positioning, and financial performance. A strong reputation can be a valuable asset, while mismanagement can lead to a competitive disadvantage.”



# Who are our stakeholders?

List all existing and potential stakeholders:

Internal stakeholders

External stakeholders

Interface stakeholders (Governors, PTA)

Consider their 'legitimacy' – how much power and influence do they have?

Are we listening to them?

Can we engage better with them?

How can they help us?

Are we maximising their marketing potential?

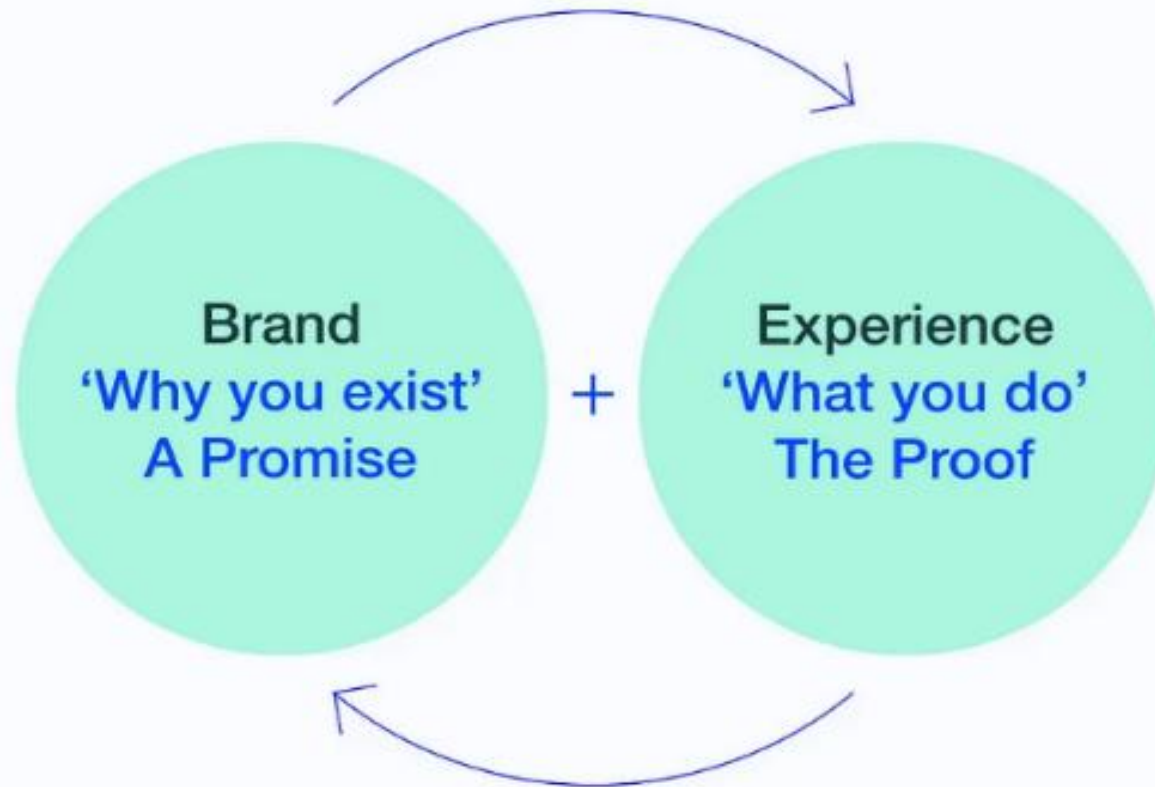




## Branding and identity

'Brand' sets the direction, answers the insight, and translates strategy into tangible actions.

'Experience' delivers it, shows us what 'sticks' and what doesn't.



Courtesy: Hector Pottie, Creative Director, Method London

# Building Trust

**Brand** is the promise you make as a school

**Reputation** is how well your parents and stakeholders think you are living up to that promise

That perception will only ever be based on **reality**

Over time, trust can build to provide a surplus in the 'reputation bank' – giving the school some leeway and headroom when things inevitably go wrong.

# Building a trusted reputation over time

Our four top themes:

- 1) **Storytelling** to share, recognise and celebrate (platform/process/people)
- 2) **Consistency** of message (a powerful narrative, reinforcing values)
- 3) **Authenticity** of values (proving the lived reality)
- 4) **Culture** (students and staff are marketeers, parents can be powerful advocates for our school)

*“Culture eats strategy for breakfast”, Peter Druker*

# Consistent messaging

**How would you define your school brand?**



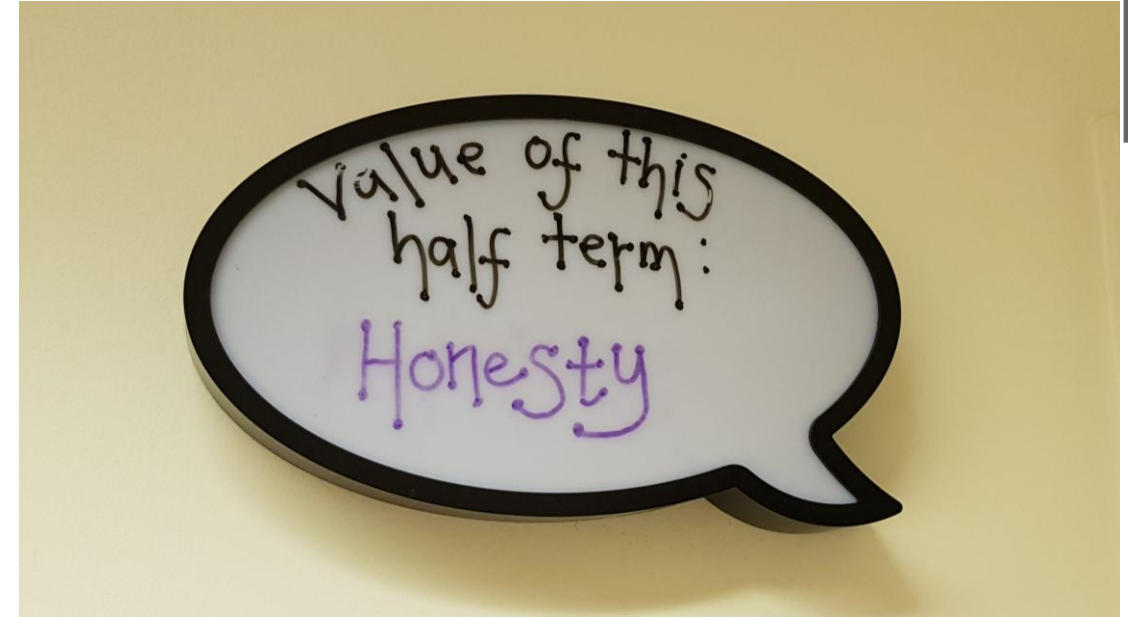
## Imagine this scenario...

You're at a dinner party and guests ask about your school.  
How would you answer?

Take a few minutes to think about how you would succinctly define your school - your '*Pass-along Message*'

## Consider:

- ✓ The uniqueness of your school
- ✓ The things you're most proud of / excel at?
- ✓ The aspects you think differentiate your school from others?



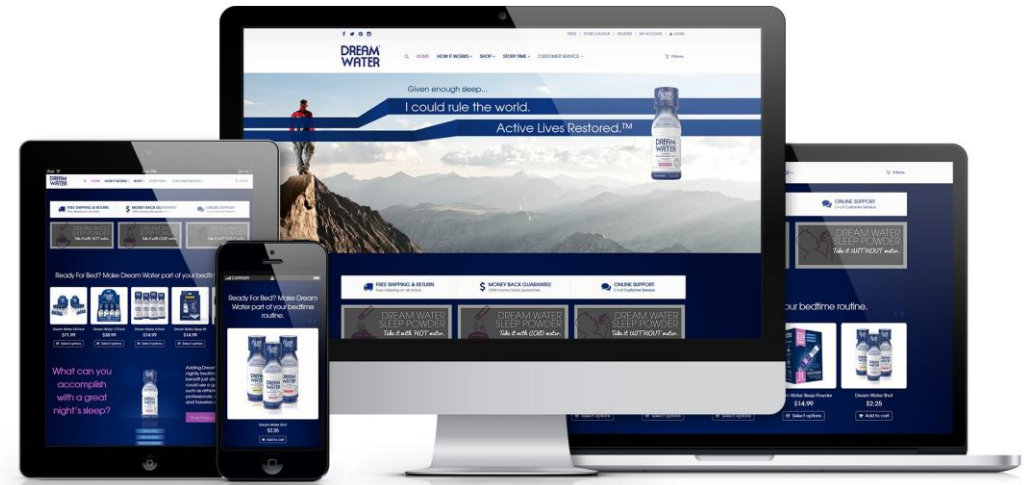
Do you present your values and key messages effectively?

# Your Website

Your primary source of communication

Having to serve three purposes:

- 1) A portal for accessing statutory information and data (Ofsted).
- 2) Information flow to (and from) existing stakeholders (parents, staff, students).
- 3) A marketing tool to new and prospective stakeholders (parents, donors, suppliers, new employees). Providing an insight into school life.



**Does your website effectively deliver on all three fronts?**



Easy to navigate, all the important information one or two clicks away





Make it easy for people to find your fundraising/PTA/lettings

[Home](#)

[About](#)

[Prospective Students](#)

[Key Information](#)

[Admissions](#)

[Current Students](#)

[News](#)

[Support Us](#)

[Contact](#)

AMBITION. PERSEVERANCE.

# Website Essentials

Think about:

- News from around the school – templates to help staff promote what's going on
- Recruitment page for staff (not just a list of vacancies)
- 'Support Us' – community, lettings, crowdfunding

Keep it as compact as possible and make navigation simple ('3 clicks').  
Is the site tablet and mobile friendly?

Test your site – what is your search experience like?

Website termly audits – cull old content

**Assume you're new to the site – what's this experience like?**

# Telling your story

**The brain processes visual information  
60,000 times faster than text!**

Visual content is 80% more likely to be read.



- Rotate Departments/Faculties for good news stories
- Engaged parents are fantastic ambassadors!
- Celebrate these stories widely internally and externally
- Make stories easy to share externally (digitally or physically)
- Consider distribution systems – PR, newsletter, flyers, ambassadors

# Social Media Trends 2025 (ambleglow.co.uk)

1. **Short video** (60 seconds or less) are more powerful than ever – Insights, stories, humour, reinforce messages.
2. Social media **commerce** boosting fundraising campaigns – event tickets, crowdfunding, etc.
3. **Segmentation** and niche communities – parental groups, former students (alumni), sports groups.
4. Ensure **digital safety** and set expectations – more concerns now over ethics/ security of data.
5. **Authenticity** carries most weight – stakeholders want to trust you.  
Real, unfiltered content that tells stories and reinforces values is gold dust.  
Use of AI?

## But...first things first

### People

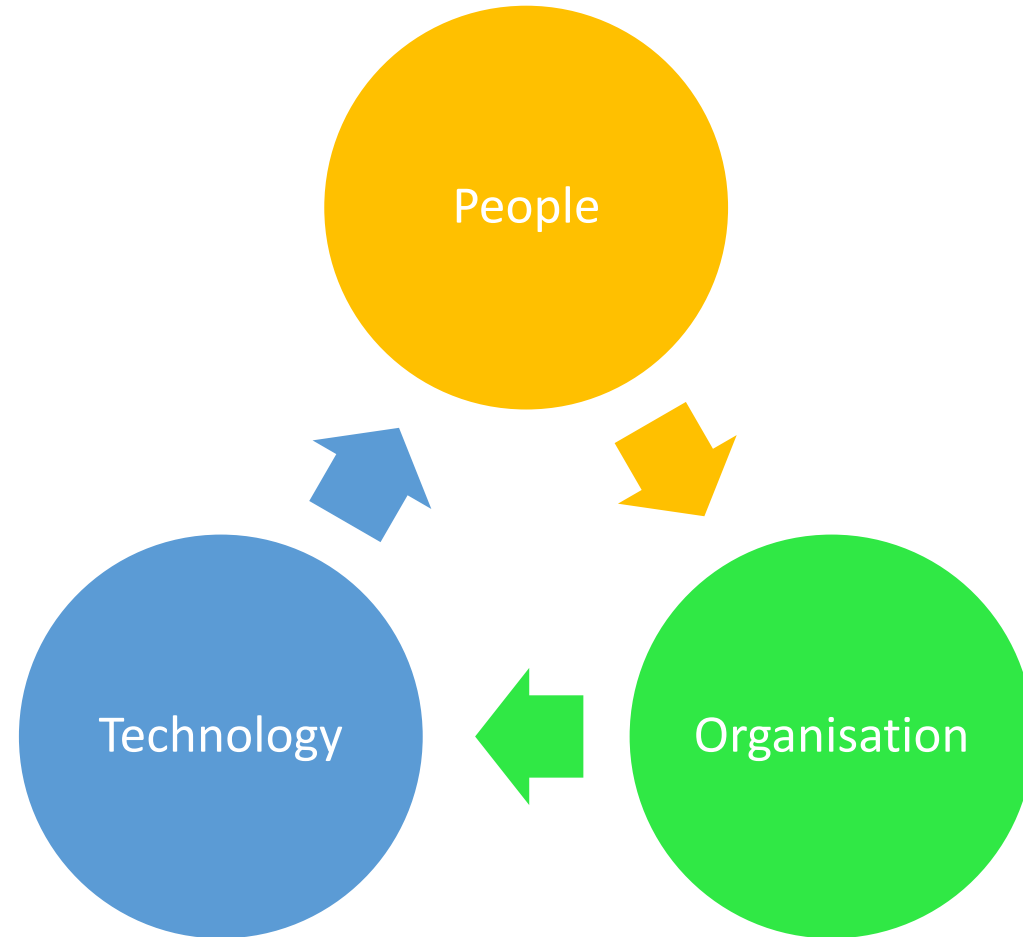
- Technical ability
- Communication skills

### Process

- Story network
- Policies

### Platform

- Right Platform(s)
- Monitoring





## We're all marketers!

- **Do our people know the school's goals?**
- **Do they know how they can help achieve them?**
- Explain what marketing is and why it matters
- Find out their skills – marketing ambassadors (team?)
- Share impact
- Remember the cultural iceberg model...

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast!”  
Peter Druker



# Your Top 5

1. Really get to know your stakeholders
2. Define your unique features ~ your offer
3. Tell your story
4. Involve your children and parents
5. Innovate, but authenticity is crucial





# Remember

Your best  
ambassadors are  
students , staff  
and parents

Engage, inspire  
and motivate  
them

ONE PERSON WITH  
A BELIEF IS EQUAL  
TO NINETY-NINE  
WHO HAVE ONLY  
INTERESTS.

*John Stuart Mill*

[www.quote-coyote.com](http://www.quote-coyote.com)



*Thank  
you!*

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