



Find a Different Idea for Your Business

**By Catherine Kaputa, Founder of SelfBrand LLC
and Author of *Breakthrough Branding: How Smart
Entrepreneurs and Intrapreneurs Transform a
Small Idea Into a Big Brand***

Small, “high-concept” ideas are different. They’re not copycat ideas but try to break new ground. They provide a fresh benefit, appeal to a hungry target audience, have a new process - different something. That makes them stick in the minds of all who hear about them.

Being different is a cardinal rule of branding.

You don’t have to have a big idea, but you do have to have a different idea from those of your competitors. Having a different idea for yourself or your business is powerful.

Just being different from everything else in your category in some way is immensely helpful for your brand because you can position your business and products as unique, occupying its own niche.

You can’t own what someone else owns, so don’t even try. Once you’ve claimed your position in the market, no one can easily move in on your spot, either.



There are a lot of ways to be different.

The ultimate way is to create a whole new product category and, in the process, to create a consumer need that no one has previously exploited– possibly even a need that consumers didn't know they had.

You could utilize a new technology that gives your product a competitive edge, as the various smartphone makers do every year, in an attempt to outmaneuver their competitors.

Or your product might be made out of ingredients or by a process that's different.

The television cook and author Sandra Lee created a new cooking concept she called Semi-Homemade. She came up with the name while walking down the aisle in a grocery store one day and seeing bags of semisweet chocolate for cooking. That's sort of what I'm doing, she thought, because her dishes are made up of about seventy percent prepackaged ingredients and thirty percent fresh foods.

While Lee's concept is more than semi-controversial with many cooks, she has a thriving business with adoring fans that love her easy-to-prepare recipes and her appealing personal brand.

Sandra Lee's tagline for her cooking concept is, "Keep it Simple, Keep it Smart, Keep it Sweet, Keep it Semi-Homemade."