



WHITE PAPER

Exploring the Brand
Building Power of
Next-Generation
Auditing

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RizePoint | White Paper

AT THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL LEVEL, YOUR COMPANY'S BRAND IS THE CENTRAL, DEFINING PROMISE YOU MAKE TO YOUR CUSTOMERS—AND THE SUM OF EVERY TRANSACTION, IMPRESSION, AND EXPERIENCE THEY HAVE WITH YOUR BUSINESS. SO IN A VERY PRACTICAL SENSE, THE STRENGTH OF YOUR BRAND IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO HOW CONSISTENTLY YOU KEEP THOSE PROMISES—DAY IN AND DAY OUT—ACROSS ALL OF YOUR LOCATIONS OR PROPERTIES.

Of course, achieving the high levels of consistency required to maintain a resilient and trustworthy brand is also notoriously difficult—especially in diverse, multiunit enterprises with hundreds or thousands of discrete locations scattered around the world. Every time a customer walks into one of your locations, hundreds of micro-impressions and interactions work together to shape and define their overall experience.

If you mishandle even a few of those details, you risk transforming an exceptional customer experience into an average one—or even alienating a loyal customer. Of course, in today's social media environment, a few isolated negative experiences in one location can quickly turn into an avalanche of bad reviews and negative publicity that impacts your entire business.

FINDING CONSISTENCY IN AN UNPREDICTABLE WORLD

If the strength of your brand is linked directly to the consistency of the experiences you provide, how do you deliver that consistency—and keep the same set of customer promises over and over again—when you're faced with diverse geographies, aging facilities, cultural differences, and a long list of other consistency challenges?

The answer starts with your ability to identify the root causes of your brand consistency issues—and then take active, concrete steps to correct them. This process looks a bit different for every company, but there are a few fundamental concepts and principles that apply to virtually any multi-unit organization's consistency-building efforts.

EMBRACE THE DETAILS

Brand consistency is really about getting the details right. Broad customer experience goals and high-level brand strategies are important, but when your customers eat at one of your restaurants or check into one of your hotels, their experience consists of hundreds of small, moment-by-moment, and highly personal impressions and interactions—from the amount of time they spend waiting in line and the appearance of a staff member's uniform, to the carpet in the lobby and the odor inside the elevator.

Your ability to get more of these details right—and get them right consistently at all of your locations—translates directly into better customer experiences and a stronger brand. However, consistency requires much



more than simply training your people and trusting that their best efforts will be good enough. You need a standardized, enterprise-wide system for monitoring all the details that matter to your business, identifying problem areas, holding people accountable, and measuring improvement.

DEFINE AND COMMUNICATE CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

Multi-unit organizations present unique brand consistency challenges because although all of your locations are under a central corporate umbrella, in many ways, they operate as independent entities—with local general managers who are primarily responsible for their employees. All too often, these local “systems” can end up developing their own sets of ad-hoc procedures and practices that may or may not align with corporate standards. This method creates inconsistency from one location to the next, which can have a noticeable negative impact on your brand.

Of course, regional managers and other corporate-level leaders can work to prevent this “independent fiefdom” mentality from taking root, but their ability to control the day-to-day operations at individual locations is limited, and local general managers may resent and resist heavy-handed, top-down efforts to control how they manage the details of their local operations.

A smarter, more productive approach involves formalizing expectations for each location, creating a set of detailed standards based on those expectations, and then actively engaging local general managers and employees to meet them. When local managers and employees understand what your organization is working to accomplish concerning brand consistency, how you plan to reach your goals, and what their roles are, they will view your brand consistency program as a team effort, rather than a top-down power play. Local employees may

not agree with everything you implement, but if they understand the rationale behind the standards and feel like they are an empowered part of a viable improvement process, they will become essential allies in your efforts to improve consistency and strengthen your brand.

ACCURATELY MEASURE, COMPARE, AND DOCUMENT YOUR IMPROVEMENTS

With systematic and detailed consistency standards in place—and with the active support of local managers and employees—you’re ready to begin measuring and documenting your customer experience and brand consistency progress. Of course, these measurement efforts should include traditional customer feedback mechanisms, such as surveys and mystery shopping. A steady, reliable stream of customer input makes it possible to identify weaknesses and measure the effectiveness of your standards. If you’re missing any important details, your customers will certainly find them and let you know.

Customer feedback only provides a partial view because it can’t reveal everything that’s happening behind the scenes. To complete the picture, you need systematic field audits, which allow you to measure and track both what customers experience and all of the factors that influence those experiences. By combining customer input with detailed audits, you gain the most complete, accurate, and detailed picture of how well each location is meeting your standards for quality and consistency—and where improvements need to be made. Trained auditors, backed by competent processes, also know what to look for and can often offer deeper, more informed insights than most customers.

However, to make auditing an effective brand consistency tool, it’s important to develop a culture of teamwork and collaboration between field auditors and local employees. Audits can’t fill their proper



function until local employees view auditors as valuable coaches rather than intrusive police officers. This goes back to the need for open, productive communication between the corporate office and individual locations, and the importance of getting everyone to buy into your brand consistency standards.

Auditing often presents another potential challenge. Audits provide a valuable “point-in-time” snapshot of how well a particular location is meeting consistency standards. In many cases, audits only take place once every quarter—or even once a year—which can limit their effectiveness as a day-to-day improvement tool. Of course, increasing the frequency of audits is not always an option. However, with the right auditing technology platform, you can provide self-auditing capabilities to local general managers so that they can monitor their progress between official audits. This approach also helps engage local managers and employees more directly in your brand consistency efforts and motivates them to make continuous improvements.

“Sustaining an audience is hard. It demands consistency of thought, of purpose, and of action over a long period of time.”

-Bruce Springsteen

PUT CLEAR PROCESSES IN PLACE TO FIND AND ADDRESS ISSUES QUICKLY

Systematically measuring and tracking brand consistency across all of your locations is important, but simply being aware of the issues is not enough. To make an impact on brand consistency company-wide, you need an equally detailed and systematic process for identifying and resolving problems quickly—whether it’s an isolated issue at a single location or a systemic, business-wide weakness that affects everyone.

For many organizations, this involves adding a problem resolution component to their centralized auditing system. So when audits reveal location-specific or business-wide brand consistency problems, the system can trigger a corrective action plan for out-of-compliance items and alert the appropriate people to define and implement remediation tasks.

With this final corrective component in place, your auditing system becomes part of a continuous self-improvement cycle, where you can consistently communicate detailed, company-wide brand consistency standards, uniformly measure performance against those standards, and quickly identify and correct problems.

TURNING YOUR AUDITING SYSTEM INTO AN EFFECTIVE BRAND CONSISTENCY TOOL

Understanding how your auditing function can and should contribute to brand consistency is one thing, but making it happen is more complicated. So exactly what does it take to expand your core auditing function into an effective tool for improving brand consistency across your organization? The first step is understanding that traditional auditing processes that rely on paper checklists, spreadsheets, and printed standards are simply not up to the task. They are too slow, inefficient, and cumbersome to handle the level of detailed information, fast analysis, and efficient response your brand consistency efforts require.

Making brand consistency a successful component of your larger auditing framework requires a technology platform that’s capable of measuring, tracking, analyzing, and responding to thousands of detailed customer experience data points across hundreds of locations. Fortunately, the



recent convergence of two important technology trends—cloud and mobile—make this type of advanced, next-generation auditing solution affordable and relatively easy to implement. However, simply capturing audit results on a mobile device and storing them in the cloud is not enough.

YOUR AUDITING TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM NEEDS TO POSSESS SOME IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS AND CAPABILITIES TO BECOME AN EFFECTIVE BRAND CONSISTENCY TOOL:

- **Speed and Mobility**—A cloud-based auditing system with a strong mobile component allows field auditors to conduct brand consistency audits using their smartphones or tablets—and then send the results to a centralized cloud-based engine where it instantly becomes part of a centralized body of knowledge.
- **Intelligence**—Collecting and making auditing information available quickly is important, but it's not enough. Your solution should also be able to recognize important information as it comes in, compare results from specific locations to a larger body of companywide results, and automatically initiate action. This kind of machine intelligence essentially connects individual auditing results to your larger brand consistency and continuous improvement processes, so you can quickly turn raw data into company-wide results.
- **Flexibility and Efficiency**—If brand consistency is about watching and maintaining thousands of small, ever-changing details across hundreds of individual locations, you need an auditing foundation that's flexible enough to accommodate that level of complexity. With the right kind of cloud-based auditing foundation, you make it possible for the appropriate people and teams to quickly

create, modify, and manage a centralized collection of highly detailed brand consistency checklists and instructions, so field auditors and local general managers always have access to the latest evaluation and self-auditing information.

- **Control**—Every auditing process involves diverse teams of people filling many different roles. For your auditing system to function properly, you need the ability to grant very specific access rights to people and groups based on those roles. For example, with the proper controls in place, you can allow local general managers to access their own limited set of brand consistency preparation tools and information. You can also give people in different departments permission to create and modify brand consistency questions and instructions that are limited to their job functions. In other words, by building fine-grained access control into your central auditing solution, you can easily add questionnaires, reports, and other resources that focus exclusively on brand consistency issues—without getting in the way of other core auditing functions like food safety or regulatory compliance.

The bottom line is that when you deploy the right type of mobile, cloud-based auditing solution, you create a platform that allows you to quickly create virtually any type of custom survey or checklist, make them easily accessible to specific people or groups in your organization, collect the results in nearly real time, thoroughly analyze them to gain new insights, and immediately initiate corrective action plans. This workflow is obviously ideal for monitoring and improving brand consistency, but you can also apply it to self-assessments for specific locations, customer experience surveys, employee input, and many other purposes. Moreover, because the solution is grounded in your core auditing function, it's a tool that people in your organization already understand and feel comfortable using.

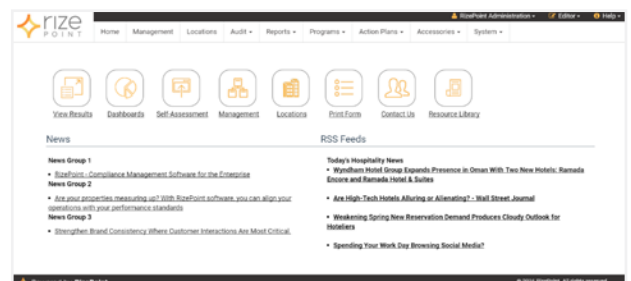
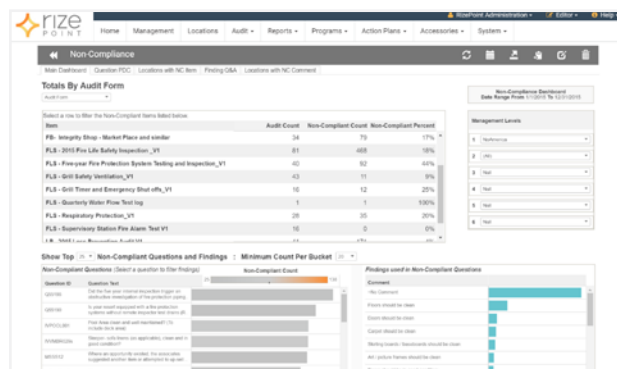


RIZEPOINT—YOUR COMPLETE NEXT-GENERATION AUDITING SOLUTION

RizePoint has spent more than a decade designing, building, and perfecting a solution that includes all of the characteristics and capabilities you need to add powerful brand consistency capabilities to your core auditing system quickly and affordably.

THE RIZEPOINT SOLUTION INCLUDES:

- A Powerful Mobile App that makes it easy for auditors, local general managers, and other users to conduct detailed audits, assessments, and surveys—and upload the results—directly from their mobile devices.
- A Secure and Capable Cloud-Based Engine that stores, processes, and analyzes audit and assessment data in nearly real time.
- Advanced Survey Building Capabilities that allow anyone in your organization to create and update sophisticated conditional surveys with more than ten question types—and then make them instantly available to specific users.
- A Sophisticated Rules Engine that carefully monitors incoming data, quickly identifies potential brand consistency issues and problems, triggers action plans, and alerts the appropriate people.
- Built-In Business Intelligence that analyzes and transforms raw assessment data into valuable insights within minutes.
- Flexible Reporting Capabilities that allow you to get the right brand consistency information to the right people—in a format that's most relevant and meaningful.
- Granular Access Control that allows specific people and groups to create, distribute, and access specific brand consistency assessments, forms, historical information, and reports.
- An Advanced Administration Console that brings business-wide access management, form administration, alerts, filtering, reporting, remediation, and other functions together into one convenient location.



The RizePoint Administration Console allows you to manage every aspect of your auditing solution from one location.

The RizePoint solution includes advanced custom reporting capabilities, so you can always deliver the right information and results to the right people.





Start Expanding Your Brand Consistency Capabilities Today

Audits and assessments can play an essential role in your efforts to improve the consistency of your brand and the quality of the experiences you provide to your customers. Find out how RizePoint can help—with a next-generation auditing solution that applies the full power of cloud and mobile technology to your brand consistency building efforts.



- Over 285,000 users
- 1.67 million audits per year
- 27,000 hotels and resort properties
- 120 countries and territories
- 39 languages supported

FIND OUT HOW RIZEPOINT CAN HELP YOU IMPROVE YOUR OPERATION TODAY.

► Contact us at **info@rizepoint.com**,
call **1.888.313.7095**
or visit us at **rizepoint.com**

