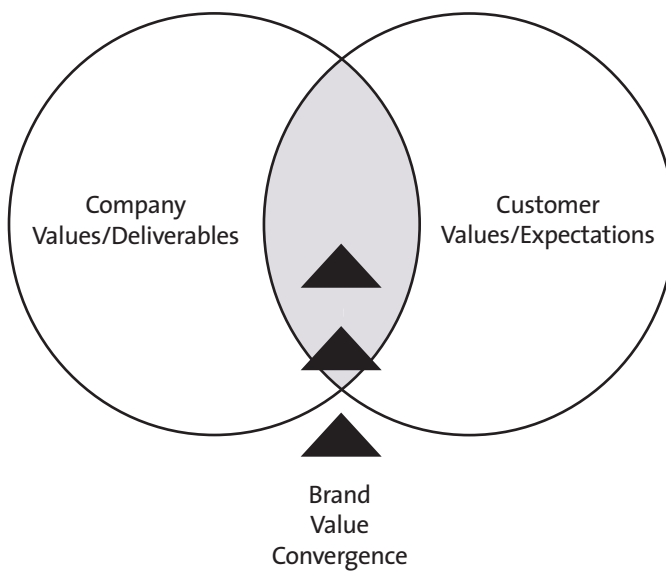


BRAND PLANNING STEPS

1. Establishing Branding Objectives



A. Determine expected role of branding in overall marketing strategy

1. Review current internal brand practices
2. Identify market brand leaders

B. Identify special situational factors

1. Historical issues
2. Business mandates
3. Marketing constraints

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3. MARCOM PLANNING

C. Articulate desired outcomes and time frames

1. Intangibles (image, awareness, etc.)
2. Tangibles (growth rates, service mix, etc.)

D. Establish program metrics

II. Positioning the Brand

A. Establish brand benefits

1. Profile the Company/Organization

- a. Use existing research or survey marketplace to determine existing perceptions of the company/organization and its existing and likely competitors
- b. Identify the core values (attitudes, traits, principles and beliefs) that best describe company/organization personality, culture and operating style
- c. List the organization's characteristics and competencies arising from core values
- d. Describe customer benefits (tangible and intangible) flowing directly from noted characteristics and competencies
- e. Establish above-parity strengths by rating each benefit from 1 (weak) to 4 (strong), relative to identical or similar benefits offered by competitors

2. Profile the Customer

- a. Use primary and/or secondary research to determine the marketplace values (wants, needs, beliefs) that drive attitudes and actions of customers, and other stakeholders

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- b. Describe characteristics and competencies needed to fulfill observed marketplace values
- c. Identify benefits (intangible and tangible) flowing from required competencies
- d. Based on market feedback, rate each benefit from the customer's perspective, on a scale of 1 (somewhat important) to 4 (extremely important)

3. Profile the Brand

- a. Identify and merge similar benefits from steps one and two, eliminating any that appear on only one list
- b. Eliminate all remaining benefits with a combined score of five or lower
- c. Adopt surviving factors as provisional core brand benefits

B. Focus the Brand

- 1. Develop a brand vocabulary – Key words and phrases that express adopted brand benefits in terms of rational and emotional brand appeals
- 2. Develop a Unique Selling Proposition that effectively summarizes brand benefits
- 3. Identify an ownable brand-positioning word or phrases that captures the essence of the Unique Selling Proposition
- 4. Develop a basic brand communication strategy based on: (1) disseminating new brand messages, (2) leveraging, modifying and/or enhancing pre-existing brand perceptions

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III. Developing Physical Brand Attributes

- A. Affirm and/or re-craft physical attributes of the brand
 - 1. Symbols, colors, graphics, typography
 - 2. Objects
 - 3. Sounds
- B. Perform appropriate contextual review
 - 1. Target-audience testing
 - 2. Cross-cultural validation
- C. Establish brand hierarchy
 - 1. Determine brand portfolio structure/rationale
 - 2. Create protocols governing relationship of primary brand to other portfolio brands

IV. Applying the Brand

- A. Design corporate communications elements, consistent with brand positioning and physical brand attributes
 - 1. Letterhead, envelopes, business cards
 - 2. Other standardized communications tools
- B. Assure brand continuity by establishing graphic standards and style guidelines – the do's and don'ts of brand usage
 - 1. Visual standards for logo and other identity elements
 - 2. Application of identity elements to all communications media

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- 3. MARCOM PLANNING

- C. Determine and implement basic communications tactics to be used in rationalizing and introducing the brand to all internal and external audiences
- D. Build and sustain brand equity
- E. Monitor brand usage
- F. Measure market perceptions
- G. Re-evaluate brand positioning
- H. Refine brand messages, as needed

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