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The Proven BrandSolutions Branding & Market Research Methodology Sample Proposal

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BrandSolutions' Branding Experience

Since 1997, BrandSolutions has been working with companies in a wide variety of industries to help them raise brand awareness, increase sales, gain market share and increase profits. Our proven process can be applied to any industry, as our branding philosophy has universal application.

Our past & current clients include:

Telecommunications

- Nokia
- Motorola
- Nortel Networks
- OneComm (now Nextel)
- VoiceStream (now T-Mobile)

Agriculture

- Bayer CropScience
- NC Sweet Potato Commission

Computer Industry

- Microsoft
- Hewlett-Packard
- Sun
- AMD
- The Open Group
- Packet Engines
- Quantum
- SMC
- Sybase, Inc.
- 3Com
- UNIX
- Veritas Software

Electronics

- Synopsys
- Rambus

Manufacturing

- Coherent
- Hi-Speed Checkweigher
- Toledo Scale

Internet

- PayScale.com
- EquityCity.com
- eSoft
- IONA
- TotalLivingChoices.com
- Verio
- World Wide Packets

Consumer

- JELD-WEN
- Door to Door Storage
- Nordstrom
- REI
- Simon
- HaloSource
- Chelsey Henry
- International Masters Publishers
- US-Bags – “Status”
- La Plaza (Martini Design)

Financial

- PayScale
- Buerk Dale Victor
- FINCAD
- First Security Bank
- PFF Bank & Trust
- Credit Unions of Washington
- WSECU

Healthcare

- Diagnostic Ultrasound
- National Jewish
- St. Vincent
- United Healthcare

Service

- Tavis Smiley Presents
- DAVIS & DEAN
- First Security Bank
- Pegasus Systems
- Provant
- Washington State Dept. of Transportation

As you can see from the client list above, BrandSolutions is one of the leading branding agencies in the world. Our work focuses on helping companies identify and then communicate the most compelling brand identity (i.e., messages, images, emotional hot buttons, framing, etc.) for their brand(s).

BrandSolutions does the upfront brand research to identify the most compelling brand identity and what our sophisticated business clients call “the best creative brief they have ever seen.” From this creative brief, BrandSolutions develops key messages, web sites, advertising, collateral, and other marketing communications that are on-strategy and on-target to ensure great results.

The professionals who will work on your project are Chuck Pettis, Kendra Howe, Jim Young, John Engerman and Terry Short. Our bio’s can be viewed at: <http://brand.com/AboutUs.htm>. We provide the benefits of senior-level expertise in branding, research and creative execution in print and digital media, without the cumbersome and costly processes of traditional agencies.

The BrandSolutions Branding and Market Research Methodology

BrandSolutions takes a step-by-step approach to branding using our proven methodology. We “build the brand from the inside-out” by starting with a branding workshop. The client is involved in each step of the entire process.

Following is a brief description of the process.

Step One: Conduct a Branding Workshop

The **BrandSolutions Branding Workshop** is designed to provide organizations with a systematic and strategic way to:

- *Brand* their company and its key products and/or services.
- Clearly define the brand so that it is compelling and credible to your key target audiences.
- Create a Version 1.0 Brand Identity Map that all key internal constituencies (i.e., top decision makers) can agree on and work from.
- Enhance the reputation, image, perceived value and brand awareness of the company and its products and/or services.

The BrandSolutions Branding Workshop is also an excellent forum for strategic planning. This workshop shows participants how to develop and use brand identity and create a compelling story for their organization. At the beginning of the workshop, the key concepts of branding are explained. Each section of the workshop is interactive, stimulating and filled with relevant examples. Brand association, brand naming, and brand identity exercises provide hands-on experience in developing the key components your own brand.

Branding Workshop Outline

Introduction to Branding – Presentation

- Brand: What is it?
- Why is it important?
- ArchetypalBranding™
- NeuroBranding™

What Questions Need to Be Answered and What Problems Need to Be Solved? – Interactive Easel Session

- Who are your key target audiences/stakeholders?
- Brand name discussion – What makes up a good brand name? What is your brand name?
- How do you clearly describe your brand and its benefits in 10 words or less (positioning statement)?
- What are the most important purchase factors? Why are those top-ranked purchase factors important to customers? What are the key benefits?
- What are the emotional triggers that will make potential customers “want” your product/service?

- What are your organization's top shared values? Based on those values, discover your Brand Archetype.
- What is the brand's category descriptor? What is the cultural archetype for your brand's category?
- What is the best position for your brand relative to competitive brands?

Brand Identity Map

- Brand Identity Session: Develop your Brand Identity Map

The information from the Branding Workshop will drive the subsequent quantitative research.

You will leave the workshop with:

- A hands-on understanding what *brand* is, how it works and why it's important.
- The key deliverable - the first draft of your Brand Identity Map, a short and compelling description of your brand and the key benefits/messages.
- A roadmap for strategically communicating your vision and services/products in the most succinct and persuasive manner to your key target audiences.
- A foundation for implementing and using your brand identity.
- The internal input needed to conduct market research with your target audiences in order to validate the brand identity.

Step Two: Validate the Brand Identity Via Market Research

Deliverable: Market-tested brand identity, including:

- Key target audiences
- Brand name
- Positioning statement – your core, most repeated message
- Key purchase factors and their associated tangible benefits and emotional appeal
- Category descriptor
- Reptilian and Limbic hot buttons
- Brand archetype
- Top shared organizational values

The second step in our process entails market research that is tailored to the needs and budgets of our clients.

BrandSolutions uses either SurveyMonkey or SurveyWriter, depending on the complexity of the survey, for most of its research. Both of these online survey systems are very inexpensive, high-quality, and relatively easy to program, test, edit, and administer.

The research steps below provide an outline of our typical approach (although every project, like every client of ours, is a little bit different).

Overall Objective: The market research is conducted to validate the brand identity, positioning and messages identified in the Branding Workshop.

Step Two Methodologies:

- Conduct either an online survey or, if an email list isn't available at a reasonable cost, conduct a telephone survey of the key target audiences.
- With both the online and telephone methodologies, BrandSolutions is responsible for project coordination, questionnaire development, specifying data parameters, and analysis and reporting of the results.

Online Survey Methodology – Task Responsibility:

- BrandSolutions administers the email blast and programs, tests, and manages the survey on SurveyMonkey or SurveyWriter. (Note: In the case of customer surveys, it is often more

appropriate for the email blast to come from the client. In this case, BrandSolutions would set up the blast, but the blast would come from the client).

Survey Reporting Options:

- a) A full-length Word report that includes:
 - a. Overview of Goals and Objectives
 - b. Methodology
 - c. Detailed analysis of all findings.
 - d. Analysis of cross-tabulations, which will identify key differences between the relevant identifiers within the audiences
 - e. Comprehensive tables and charts
 - f. Full set of verbatim comments from respondents
 - g. Overall Conclusions and Recommendations, and a final Brand Identity map
- b) A PowerPoint summary BrandSolutions report that includes:
 - a. Overview of Goals and Objectives
 - b. Methodology
 - c. Succinct commentary on all findings.
 - d. Optional: Analysis of cross-tabulations, which will identify key differences between the relevant identifiers within the audiences
 - e. Overall Conclusions and Recommendations, and a final Brand Identity map
- c) A simple, short 2-3 page Word report that includes:
 - a. Bullet point key findings
 - b. Overall Conclusions and Recommendations, and a final Brand Identity map

A presentation of the report via conference call is included in the costs in the budget section. Optional in-person presentation for an additional cost.

Telephone Methodology Overview:

- BrandSolutions handles all aspects of the telephone surveying and the coding and data processing of the results. We use Venture Data of Provo, Utah, a trusted and long-time research partner, to conduct our telephone interviewing.

Step Three: Develop and Test Alternative Creative Themes

Deliverable: Market-tested Strategic Creative Theme, including:

- Most compelling images to use in your marketing communications, as well as those NOT to use
- Best creative theme to use in your marketing communications.
- Optionally, create and get feedback on alternative logotypes, logos, color palettes, web site layout, and other creative alternatives.

The purpose of the creative theme testing is to know the most compelling and effective theme, word phrases, and images to use in all marketing communications.

Based on the results of the Step Two survey, the next step is to create and test three to four alternative creative themes (word and picture collages based on a thematic approach to communications) that follow from the research and the brand identity developed in the Branding Workshop.

Step Three Methodology:

- Based on the Step Two survey results, create and present three to four alternative Creative Themes to the Client for feedback, editing and refinement.
- Also create optional design elements for testing, which typically include advertising layouts, web site layouts, color palettes and font types.
- Finalize the Creative themes and design elements to be tested.
- The Creative Theme survey will be done using an online methodology, surveying a sub-sample of the sample of respondents from the first survey. In the first survey, respondents are asked if they would participate in a follow-up survey. Oftentimes an incentive is needed to motivate respondents to participate in the follow-up survey.
- BrandSolutions is responsible for project coordination, development of preliminary Creative Themes and design elements, questionnaire development, online survey programming, specifying data parameters, and analysis and reporting of the results.
- BrandSolutions administers the email blast and programs, tests, and manages the survey on SurveyMonkey or SurveyWriter.

Survey Reporting Options:

- a) A full-length Word report.
- b) A summary PowerPoint report.
- c) A simple, short 2-3 page Word report.

Step Four: Create Your On-strategy Marketing Communications