

BrandForcesm – Positioning non-profits for success

Competition among non-profits only continues to intensify. Limited donor contributions, fewer volunteers, and an increase in the number of NFPs are all contributing to the need for strong brands in order to accomplish the organizational objectives and provide for important needs. While some NFPs recognize the need for developing their brands, more still don't believe that brand-building is an appropriate or important activity.

The fact is, the most successful NFPs have committed to and invested in developing their brands. They recognize that the same principles that create loyal customers and engaged employees among well-known and -respected consumer brands can be applied to the world of not-for-profits, as well. So, just what do they know and what have they done to stand apart from others? In other words, what can you do to build a successful brand?

Know what your brand stands for and how it is important to your constituents.

- Identify your brand's attributes (rational and emotional)—what characteristics about it stand out, define it, and make it different or unique? How are they important to your donors/contributors, employees/staff, and other beneficiaries—what benefits and values does your brand provide to each?
- Identify your brand's personality—how does it behave, what style does it project, what language does it use? Is this personality a consistent part of all communications and interactions with your constituents?

Position your brand to strongly appeal to each of your constituents.

- Identify who your brand competes with (for funding/contributions, volunteers, employees, members). Are there unmet needs? Where does your brand excel?
- Discover what about your brand is the most compelling, what differentiates it from other alternatives. Establish a promise your brand can deliver that is needed and permissible?

Operationalize your brand throughout all parts of your organization.

- Align your organization's departments and employees with the promise your brand makes. Create specific processes and actions that deliver a brand experience consistent with its attributes and personality.
- Train, equip and empower employees and volunteers with the tools to deliver the brand's promise. Incent and reward employee behavior that promotes delivery of the brand's promise every day, by all employees.

Express your brand powerfully and consistently at every meaningful encounter.

- Map every brand encounter and prioritize the impact of each constituent group.
- Identify and formalize graphics (colors, images), language, and stories that can be used when presenting the brand. Design all communications and every brand encounter to reflect the brand's unique character—be consistent.

For over 20 years, we've been helping organizations of all types, including not-for-profits, successfully unleash the full potential of their brands and achieve impactful results. We look forward to doing that for you. Call us to discuss what could be the most important action you take. Discover opportunity. Deliver extraordinary.