

Marketing, Branding and Getting our Message to the People We Care About

March 18, 2009 9:30 AM to Noon

Outcomes

1. The ability to convey not only our passion for our program but what it does for people and our community, what it accomplishes, the difference it makes – even better than we already are.
2. An improved ability to hone in from all we know about our program to the two or three most important things we want to convey.
3. Communicating about our work as effectively as possible, so people we are explaining it to walk away with what we want them to walk away with. They “get” what’s important to them – and us!
4. Understanding what branding means, and how it applies to us.
5. The importance of conveying to each audience in our organization’s life what they want and need – and not much else.

Agenda

1. Opening
 - a. Review of outcomes and agenda
 - b. Introductions
2. Get our arms around the subject at hand
 - a. What makes this messaging, marketing, branding stuff hard?
 - b. What does a brand mean? Why is it good to have one? What are we hoping for regarding branding for our organizations?
 - c. Is marketing our organizations a task or a strategy? What purpose does marketing serve?
 - d. Overall, what the heck are we trying to accomplish with our marketing and branding activities ANYWAY! What problem are we trying to solve?
3. Individual brainstorms
 - a. What makes your organization unique? Name the five things that first come to your mind.
 - b. Who are your audiences? Draw concentric circles of the people most important to your organization’s success. Who is at the core; whose opinion and understanding of us is the most important, next most important, next most important, etc.? Whose opinion do we not care one wit about?
 - c. What tools do you already have and use to communicate with them? What do we communicate to them about ourselves and our work? What ways are we currently using to draw attention to your projects to each audience / group of people we care about?
 - d. Report out.
4. Steps in a plan to create awareness or an image or a reputation or our messages across to the people we want to reach. This can be a one-page plan!

The POAM-T System of Effective Communications

I. Problem

What *exactly* is the communication problem you are trying to solve?
Usually it's that a certain group of people doesn't know or understand something you want them to.

II. Objective

What *exactly* are you trying to achieve? What outcomes or results do you want with someone or some group of people?
Usually it's to change the attitude of your audience about some issue or the desire to get them to take some action.

III. Audience

Who are you *specifically* trying to impact? The narrower the better and the more effective. (NO references to the whole community, or everybody in town...)

Ask someone (such as your spouse or next door neighbor) to review your presentation / letter / report / invitation from the audience's point of view.

IV. Messages

Figure out the two or three most convincing things you can say to your audience(s) to get them from where they are now (A) to where you want them to be (B).

V. Tool

What is the most effective way to deliver your messages to this particular group of people. Usually it's through a medium where they normally get information about this type of topic.

5. Five minutes on social marketing: Ask those who we want to influence *how* to go about influencing them, and then *do* what they tell us.
6. Re-draft our messages
 - a. Go back to our original list of five most important unique things, and our circles of most important people. Take each circle and see if we need or want to edit what we want them to know and understand.
 - b. What did we learn by thinking about it in "reverse," thinking about the audience first, what we need and want them to know, and then the message(s) we want to deliver.
7. Share with each other; practice.
 - a. How proud would you be to be associated with the organization or effort you just heard about?
 - b. What two words come to mind as you hear what this group is about and does?
8. Next steps
What are you going to do differently or find out about? How are you going to use this morning's information?