



Branding Case Studies

Introduction

Our branding team has the experience and insight to create effective and incisive branding strategies across a wide variety of industries.

Dave Dunn, our president, brings 30 years of branding experience to each unique challenge. His disciplined approach is time-tested, efficient and practical.

We pride ourselves on collaborating with clients to craft realistic, easy-to-implement solutions that can be integrated into any organization's branding program.

To illustrate that our branding approach works, the following case studies detail the impact and results of our branding recommendations:

- Oakland Airport
 - The City of Fairfield
 - Napa Downtown Business District
 - Eureka! Recycled Copy Paper
 - Oakland Museum of California
 - Jack London Square
 - Community Bank of the Bay
 - Oakland Chamber of Commerce
 - KaiserAir
 - Security Safe International
 - Howard Wheatley Allen
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Oakland International Airport



Problem

Oakland Airport wanted to build its passenger traffic to justify the cost of its future expansion plans. In the late 1990s, the Oakland Airport was positioned as San Francisco's most convenient airport. Although this was an effective positioning, it was not enough because people didn't feel Oakland had enough flights to where they wanted to go. As a result, San Francisco Airport was the automatic first choice in most people's minds because it had a long history of having the most flights.

Brand Strategy Solutions

To change people's perceptions it was decided to reframe the brand's positioning to promote its three key advantages: convenient location, more than 200 daily non-stop flights, and low-cost fares. Instead of being just convenient there were now multiple reasons to think of Oakland Airport as a major regional airport (e.g., as Newark is to JFK) – not just local to the San Francisco East Bay. To promote this new positioning the theme "Smart Choice" was used as a tagline and as the Dominant Selling Idea in all its branding communications programs.

Measure of Success

Partially as a result of its rebranding, Oakland International outgrew its facilities earlier than expected. In 2005, 14.5 million passengers used the airport — far more than the airport's designed capacity.

As a result, its expansion plans were started in 2005 and were completed in 2008-2009.

The most significant result of the rebranding is that now, for the first time, the majority of the people in the tri-county area (San Francisco, Contra Costa, and Alameda counties) consider Oakland Airport their first choice for domestic travel.

City of Fairfield



Problem

The City of Fairfield wanted to rebrand itself to help jumpstart its economic development program. It has good highway access, a good labor force and plenty of available and affordable land. The City is located mid-way between San Francisco and Sacramento. It wanted to attract companies from the Bay Area who needed more space to grow. The problem was that most people (including real estate brokers) in the Bay Area didn't exactly know where Fairfield was — other than somewhere on the way to Sacramento. They didn't know it was in Solano County and considered part of the greater San Francisco Bay Area.

Brand Strategy Solutions

To solve Fairfield's identity crisis the client decided to reposition the brand from "the sweet spot between San Francisco and Sacramento" to "the best remaining space for growth in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area". Once people started to understand that Fairfield was actually part of the Bay Area, it became easier for real estate brokers to pitch the fact that you didn't have to leave the Bay Area to take advantage of this opportunity.

Measure of Success

The City of Fairfield implemented an aggressive branding communications plan highlighting its repositioning. Widespread press coverage in many Bay Area and national trade publications resulted in creating a favorable new image for the City and its Bay Area location. After the first two years, dozens of new businesses committed to relocate to Fairfield and a number of large Bay Area companies started to land bank acreage in Fairfield.

Napa Downtown Association



Problem

The downtown area of the City of Napa wanted to grow their visitor traffic to increase retail sales and tax revenue. The addition of the Copia Wine Museum helped, but the downtown merchants felt they were not getting a fair share of the tourist traffic (estimated at 7.5 M people annually) coming to the Napa Valley. The problem was that the two main highways bypassed the downtown district and the primary reason for the trip was the wineries in the heart of the Valley. The downtown just wasn't on their mind. This was a clear case of out-of-sight, out-of-mind.

Brand Strategy Solutions

Research indicated the two things tourists were most interested in were: tasting rooms and where to get a great meal. To give the downtown district its own identity it was positioned as the food capital of the Napa Valley. The district, located on the banks of the Napa River, has dozens of good places to eat. For the advertising campaign, it was recommended that a trip to the Napa Valley should be positioned as a two-step experience: up-valley for wine, downtown for food.

Measure of Success

Changing people's habits and perceptions will take time, but after promoting this very relevant positioning for several years it is believed that more tourists will stop in downtown Napa before or after experiencing the wineries.

Recycled Copy Paper



Problem

A regional paper company introduced a line of recycled copy paper in the West and priced it 12% higher than standard copy paper. The price premium was assumed because the paper took more steps to produce and recycled paper from other producers was always priced at a small premium. Market research in the environmentally friendly region also indicated that people were willing to pay more because using recycled paper was the right thing to do. The company's recycled copy paper was high quality and contained 35% post-consumer waste — which was more than triple the 10% level required for the recycled designation. The paper did well in the first eight years, capturing a 10% share, but sales started to stall and the company wondered how it could jumpstart the growth without spending more on advertising.

Brand Strategy Solutions

To get sales growing again two traditional assumptions were challenged. First, was the market research really telling the full story? Were people just saying what they thought you wanted to hear — that they were willing to pay more for recycled paper? Second, did recycled paper really have to be priced at a premium? With improved production techniques, it was determined that a price premium for recycled copy paper was not necessary. As a result, the price for its recycled paper was reduced to the level of standard copy paper.

Measure of Success

With the price premium eliminated, the recycled paper brand was able to compete with a relevant point of differentiation (recycled at the same price) and with this advantage sales started to grow again.

Oakland Museum of California



Problem

The Oakland Museum, as with many museums, struggles to attract adult visitors to its main galleries. The problem, according to research, is museum-going is not a popular leisure-time activity. As a result, when people in the East Bay decide to go to a museum, they often decide to go to a San Francisco museum because they perceive them to be bigger and thus better. Compounding the issue is the fact that Oakland itself is not a popular tourist destination. Most of the Museum's visitors are local.

Brand Strategy Solutions

A market analysis of all the large museums in the San Francisco Bay Area uncovered the fact that the Oakland Museum is the largest museum in the Bay Area in terms of gallery space and in the number of items in their collections. Armed with these facts, the Museum repositioned itself from just a local museum (2nd tier) to the largest of the three major museums in the Bay Area — and differentiated itself as the world's foremost center on California art, history and natural science.

Measure of Success

The Museum is doing major renovations in 2009 - 2010, and this new positioning and updated differentiation helped facilitate raising the fundraising goal from \$40 million to \$50 million.

It is expected that these new brand strategies will help increase attendance and generate an extra \$2,000,000 in revenue over the next five years.

Jack London Square



Problem

Oakland's Jack London Square has a colorful history that dates back to the Gold Rush Days. By the early 1990's, the waterfront district had fallen on hard times. With only a few restaurants and shops, and no events or attractions, there was little incentive to visit because nothing was going on. Only a few locals came, and outside of Oakland not many people had heard of it or knew where it was. The Port of Oakland, which owns Jack London Square, decided to develop the waterfront and needed to find a way to attract visitors to justify their investment.

Brand Strategy Solutions

A multi-faceted communications plan was developed to attract visitors and businesses and to establish Jack London Square as a dynamic Bay Area destination. Jack London Square repositioned itself and adopted "Something's Always Happening" as the unifying theme of their branding program. Concurrently, an aggressive and dynamic event schedule extended the vision. An aggressive advertising campaign was created, resulting in an increase in awareness for Jack London Square's attractions, and a new logo was developed to help establish its brand identity.

Measure of Success

After 10 years of marketing and of maintaining continuity with the original branding program, Jack London Square became branded as the regional center of activity for the entire Oakland Metropolitan Area. Residents of the San Francisco East Bay now consider it a major entertainment destination. The annual visitor count increased from several hundred thousand to several million.

The Port of Oakland sold the Jack London Square brand and some of the real estate to a major development group which plans to invest heavily to bring it to the next level – competitor of San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf.

Community Bank of the Bay



Problem

The local community bank needed to differentiate itself in a relevant way from the big banks to attract deposits to support its growth. The large national banks had dozens of branches across the city and offered basically the same rates.

Brand Strategy Solutions

To out-manuever the larger institutions, Community Bank decided to offer a new product the others couldn't match.

It introduced an account called the Oakland First Fund that ensured all new designated deposits would be loaned back into the community. This new product gave the bank something unique to promote that was relevant to the customers. It helped create a brand image as someone who cared about the community.

Measure of Success

After the first two years, the Oakland First Fund exceeded its goal, taking in \$25,000,000 in deposits and opened a new branch.

Based on its success, the bank also introduced an innovative environmental product called the Bay Area Green Fund.

Oakland Children’s Holiday Parade



Problem

The Oakland Metropolitan Chamber sponsored the Oakland Children’s Holiday Parade for years, but reached a plateau on how big it could get. It needed larger sponsors and more entries to fuel future growth.

Brand Strategy Solutions

To expand the scope of the parade it was decided to rename and reposition it as “America’s Children’s Holiday Parade.” This new positioning allowed the Chamber to invite bands, floats, participants, etc., from all over the United States. This opened up new opportunities for regional and national sponsorships and media coverage.

Measure of Success

The first year after the repositioning, larger sponsorships were secured and the transition to a national event was started. Parade items and entries came from Nevada, Oregon, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Tennessee. Attendance substantially increased the year following the repositioning.

In the second year, because of its new positioning, Comcast became the major sponsor and the parade was picked up by PBS and televised across the nation and internationally by the Military Channel. The parade has become the holiday championship for the marching band circuit, sanctioned by the Northern California Band Association.

In its third year, attendance was more than 100,000, and it now ranks as one of the top holiday parades, behind only the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day parade and the Parade of Roses.

KaiserAir



Problem

KaiserAir, the fixed-base operator at Oakland International Airport, wanted to increase the number of landings of out-of-town business jets that traveled to the Bay Area.

KaiserAir had an advantage of having the largest maintenance facility for business jets in the Bay Area. It needed to find a way to communicate this advantage and differentiate itself from the other two regional airports, SFO and San Jose.

Brand Strategy Solutions

Research indicated one of the most important things jet owners want was assurance that they could get the maintenance service they needed without affecting their schedule.

To establish a meaningful point of differentiation it was recommended that this firm's "maintenance" advantage be coupled with a unique brand promise. A new name (KaiserCare) and logo were developed and a promise to get jets back in the air on time. To back up their promise they offered to lend one of their own jets if the service took longer than expected.

Measure of Success

Out-of-town business jet pilots now favor KaiserAir at Oakland International for maintenance because they offer a unique brand promise, which neither of the other two airports can match.

Security Safe International



Problem

Security Safe sales had stalled and it wanted to attract larger, more profitable accounts. It was using its Web site as the primary lead generator, but with product prices listed, it looked like an e-commerce company which was a hindrance in attracting Fortune 500 companies. Although it was bigger than most of the competition and sold internationally, it needed to look bigger, more solid, to attract national clients.

Brand Strategy Solutions

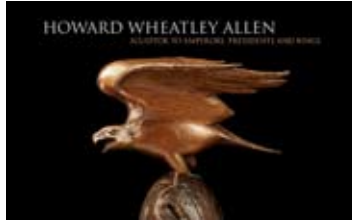
After developing a comprehensive Brand Architecture, the company management agreed to:

- drop the price listings on its Web site so it didn't look like an Internet company;
- add the word "International" to its brand name to signify that it was not just a small local outfit and could handle large national projects;
- develop a new logo and brand identity to project a high quality, capable company;
- differentiate itself from competition by combining the three services it provided: consultative sales, installation, and a national service support network of locksmiths. No competitor could make this claim.
- detail the significant success stories and impressive credentials they have in serving government clients.

Measure of Success

Management believes based on these new branding strategies, it will be able to substantially increase its business within three years.

Howard Wheatley Allen



Problem

Howard Wheatley Allen, a successful San Francisco Bay Area artist, wanted to establish himself as a unique sculptor to increase sales. His pieces start at \$5,000 and he needed a way to communicate to potential buyers the price-value of his art.

Brand Solution

To accomplish this objective it was decided to focus on perceived value and brand association, based upon the people who had his pieces in their collection. Because the United States Department of State purchased Allen's for work presentation to foreign leaders, (e.g., Mikhail Gorbachev, Emperor Hirohito of Japan, King Hussein, etc.) it was decided to position his brand as sculptor to Emperors, Presidents, and Kings. To communicate this niche positioning, he decided to upgrade his Web site and to publish a glossy 4-color book that would showcase the beauty of his work.

Measure of Success

Because of this unique positioning and the quality of his work, Allen was able to sell more commissions for work starting at \$15,000.

Publications

Branding Communications has produced the following publications which can be obtained upon request.

E-books:

- Social Media Planning Guide
- Branding: the 6 Easy Steps
- Inventing BIG IDEAS
- Brand Architecture Workbook
- Web Site Audit Guide
- A Primer on Content Marketing

White Papers:

- Jump-Start Your Brand: Four Changes You Need to Make to Optimize Brand Performance
- How to Build Your Brand with Social Media
- Is Your Web Site Hurting Your Brand?
- How Powerful Web Content Can Build Your Brand
- How Podcasting Can Build Your Brand
- How a Blog Can Build Your Brand
- How an E-zine Can Build Your Brand

Articles:

- What's in a Name? RadioShack and the Branding of Lance Armstrong
- Road Magazine
 - Social Media and HR by the Numbers
- HR West Magazine
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About the Author

Dave Dunn is the managing principal of Branding Communications and BrandEquity Consulting, located in the San Francisco Bay Area. He has spent more than 30 years as a branding professional working for start-ups, Fortune 500 firms and non-profit organizations.



He is recognized as an expert brand strategist and has gained hands-on experience with more than two dozen brands of some of the nation's largest firms. His experience includes new product introductions, brand building and brand restaging for:

- General Foods
- Warner Lambert
- Seagram's
- AT&T
- Georgia-Pacific
- Kentucky Fried Chicken
- Foster Farms
- Tenet Healthcare

In 2002, Dave was honored as the "Entrepreneur of the Year" by the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. Dave is a graduate of Stanford University and has an MBA from the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce. He is active in the community and was chairman of the Oakland Convention & Visitors Bureau from 2005 - 2007.

Dave, a sought-after speaker, has authored numerous newspaper and magazine articles, a series of white papers, and written six e-books on branding:

- Branding: The 6 Easy Steps
- Inventing Big Ideas
- Brand Architecture: Your Blueprint for Success
- Web Site Audit Handbook
- The Social Media Planning Guide
- A Primer on Content Marketing

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