



smart.
creative.
connected.



RESULTS
THAT COUNT.

REPUTATIONS
THAT MATTER.

Image, Branding and Corporate Strategy

CommNexus – December 10, 2009

Why worry about brand image?

- Because it matters!
- Studies show a positive impact on:
 - *Differentiation versus the competition*
 - *Developing “reputation capital”*
 - *Growth versus peers*
 - *Profit margin*
 - *Employee morale*
 - *Community goodwill*
 - *Investor support*
 - *Relationships with vendors, suppliers*

Positioning and Differentiation

- Are the company and brand names distinctive, compelling?
- Will you own a category or niche, or start a new one?
- Can you clearly differentiate against the competition?
 - *Does everyone sound alike?*
 - *Can you be provocative (even controversial)?*
- *What do you stand for – the core values?*
- *Can you demonstrate proof of principle over time?*
- *What's the headline two years from now? Where?*
- *Is your strategic plan, financing, mindset, commitment and other resources up to the task?*

A Brand or a Generic?

- Competitive landscape
- Business models, niches, share
- Literature
- Analyst reports
- Developing a competitive matrix
 - *The boilerplate*
 - *Tag line*
 - *Descriptive clauses*
 - *Key words*
 - *Brand and product names*

Targeting External Audiences



- Multiple constituencies
 - *Customers*
 - *Consumers*
 - *Investors*
 - *Potential Partners*
 - *Decision Makers*
 - *Regulators*
 - *Suppliers*
 - *Distributors*
 - *Analysts*
 - *Community*

Establishing Position, Core Values



- What do you stand for? The promise of the brand?
- Focus on three to four essential elements
 - *The pillars of your image and reputation; important core values and how they benefit your market or future market*
- Develop the supporting evidence for each
 - *Can you walk the talk for each core value over time, proof of principle for each target audience?*
- Anticipate pushback, cynicism, ambushes along the way

Creative Planning – the Brand



- Brand name
 - *Distinctive (maybe even unique)*
 - *Creative (but connected)*
 - *Powerful*
 - *Proprietary*
 - *Clear, evocative*
 - *Memorable*
 - *Future focused*
- Naming taxonomy, hierarchy
- Domain names
- Global translation, languages
- Registration strategy

The Channels of Communication



- Communities, networks
- Media Relations
- Analyst and financial relations
- Social Media
- Public Affairs
- Community Relations
- Guerrilla Marketing
- Trade Shows and Conferences
- Literature
- Advertising and Direct Marketing
- Collateral Material, Packaging

Strategic Planning – the Road Map



- Building the image like a great skyscraper
 - *Project management components, timing*
 - *Orchestrating tactics*
 - *Creating leverage*
 - *Media relations impacts analyst relations*
 - *Analyst relations impact the public*
 - *Trade shows impact media and analysts*
 - *Alpha and beta tests, clinical trials, new product launches should have multiple impacts*
 - *Positioning*
 - *Validation, proof of principle*
 - *Media education, acceptance*

Five Lands Mines Along the Way



- Weak positioning, lack of differentiation
- Ambiguous or unclear core values and theories
- Confusing branding
- Insufficient or contradictory proof of principle
- Talking to yourself instead of the market (no one listens)
- Failure to change

Tracking Progress



- Media coverage
- Marketing research
- External image audits (media, gurus, peers)
- Online surveys
- Online trends
 - *Traffic, comments, requests, hits, leads*
 - *Buzz in the blogosphere*
 - *RSS feed volume*
- Other metrics
 - *Citations in literature*
 - *Calls to 800 numbers*

A Few Last Words



- In Summary
 - *Invest in brand image, reputation management*
 - *Protect the brand strategically*
 - *Stand for something, differentiate*
 - *Set the vision, knowing the evidence and proof of principle will be there (no hype!)*
 - *Offer consistent, creative, strategic messages and actions to support the brand image*
 - *Monitor the market and the competition*
 - *Conduct ongoing analysis, make course corrections*
 - *Grow and prosper versus the evil competition!*
- Questions and Answers

Contact Information



Tom Gable

CEO

Gable PR

591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 730

San Diego, CA 92108

Ph.: 877-251-3888

Email: tom@gablepr.com

Web: www.gablepr.com