NONPROFIT MARKETING & BRANDING 101

DC | **HEALTH**
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Health**HIV**

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TOOL DESCRIPTION

Nonprofit marketing is the use of **marketing tactics** by a **nonprofit organization** to promote the message of the organization, as well as to raise awareness for its cause. Marketing is as important for nonprofit organizations as it is for for-profit businesses, and uses many of the same tactics to connect with clients, donors, and volunteers. It is often challenging, as nonprofits must convince their audiences to give money and provide/utilize services without getting concrete profit in return.

MARKETING

includes creating awareness of your organization and the causes that it supports, promoting your cause and services among clients and target populations, engaging volunteers, driving political and social change, bringing causes and problems to cultural prominence, and raising funds.

It is very important that the nonprofit sector learn to use marketing techniques as part of its strategy to engage with communities. In this toolkit we will highlight different tools, clarify concepts, and discuss ways to implement different components of marketing and branding.

TOOL DESCRIPTION

In a nutshell,

BRANDING

is who you are.

Marketing is how you build awareness, and encompasses your tactical goals, while branding is your strategy. In order to determine who your brand is, you need to ask questions that go beyond industry generalizations, services, or products offered. You need to ask questions about who you are as a program and more importantly, who you are as a brand. The questions below are an excellent place to begin:

Q: What are your core principles and values?

Q: What is your mission statement?

Q: What inspired you to build your organization or program?

Q: Why do you want to offer your services to your target audience?

Q: What makes you unique?

Q: What do you want to come to mind when someone hears your organization or program name?

Q: How do you want people to feel when they think of your brand?

Your branding will determine what your consumers can expect of you, and what they will experience when they utilize your services. By clearly defining who you are, your branding can then be utilized to precede and underlie your marketing efforts—both today and for years to come.

A strategic combination of branding and marketing tools will engage your target audience and build their trust, as well as encourage them to follow your advice and to use your services.
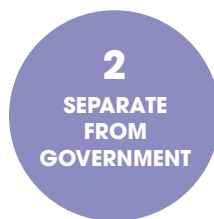
THE NONPROFIT CONTEXT

Nonprofit Organization Features

A key characteristic of nonprofit organizations is their distinct ownership structure and self-governing nature. Unlike businesses or commercial companies, nonprofit organizations do not belong to one person or shareholder. The public "owns" the nonprofit, because it exists and produces services or goods for the benefit of everybody. A nonprofit cannot be sold to another organization.

Another important feature of nonprofit organizations is their separation from government bodies. It is therefore critical that the structure of any nonprofit not be involved in the structure of government.

Lack of distributed profit is a third defining characteristic of nonprofit organizations. It is not within the purpose of a nonprofit organization to make a profit from its activities. The organization can accumulate finances during the year, but they cannot be given to members of the organization or the board of trustees. Thus, when an organization accumulates a profit, the profit must be reinvested or applied in some way to the organization's purpose.

A final key characteristic of nonprofit organizations is voluntary activity. Volunteering is an integral part of the nonprofit company. Volunteers may be present at all levels, ranging from the ordinary members to the board of trustees. Volunteering does not only refer to financial support, but also to spending one's own time to support the organization.

1	2	3	4
OWNED BY PUBLIC	SEPARATE FROM GOVERNMENT	LACK OF DISTRIBUTED PROFIT	VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY

THE NONPROFIT CONTEXT

Nonprofit Marketing Features

Nonprofit marketing has a number of features that should be considered when planning and conducting marketing strategy. Nonprofit marketing, similar to for-profit marketing, relies on the marketing mix.

THE MARKETING MIX is a kit of marketing techniques that companies use to implement their marketing strategy. **These techniques are known as the four P's of marketing: product (the offer), price (monetary and nonmonetary costs), promotion (marketing communication with target audience) and place (distribution, location, and availability of product).**

PRODUCT is the core and most important feature in an organization. The product is the "face" of the company. Only after the organization has decided what it sells or offers can further plans about price, place, and promotion be made. In the context of the nonprofit market, identifying the product can be a challenge. Usually, nonprofit offers/products are rarely goods, and more often they are services or social programs.

PRICING is one of the most nuanced components of a nonprofit organization, and is a much more complex topic than in a commercial organization. According to the official definition of a nonprofit organization, nonprofits have no profit objectives. They are prohibited from generating profits from operations or other sources. However, nonprofits also need funds to operate as a typical commercial structure.

The aspect of **PLACE** has to do with the decisions concerning the utilized distribution channels and their management, the location of outlets, the methods of transportation, and the inventory levels to be held. In the case of nonprofit organizations, this aspect is not as important as it is for for-profit organizations.[6]

PROMOTION can be very useful in the nonprofit world. Promotion is communication to the target audience about the availability and benefits of a service. It is used to inform target groups about an organization's offers and programs. Promotion can also be used to remind customers that a product is ready to be used, and to teach customers about a product's features.

PRODUCT

PRICE

THE MARKETING MIX

PLACE

PROMOTION

HOW DOES MARKETING RELATE TO NONPROFIT WORK?

In the nonprofit sector, we work for the common good rather than to make a profit, leading to a belief that marketing is not related to what we do. We also think that "marketing people" know a lot about consumer behavior, TV ratings, and how to make money on social media. But the truth is, we know more about marketing than we think. Let's go back to The Marketing Mix.

PROMOTION can be integral in the nonprofit world. Promotion is communication with the target audience about the availability and benefits of a service. It is used to inform target groups about an organization's offers and programs. It can also be used to remind customers that the product is ready to be used and to teach about its features.

HOW ARE WE RELATED TO MARKETING?

We have the best knowledge of our mission, our services and our programs, and how they impact the quality of life of our consumers. Thus, we are actually experts in the first technique called **PRODUCT**.

We know the community where we work, we understand their challenges, and we deliver our services to our communities where they live. We are experts in the logistics of how to bring our programs, interventions, and testing capabilities to communities. We understand where to locate social workers that can link individuals to health care. This means we already know and manage the second technique which is **PLACE**.

We understand the value of what we bring to the community. Value has a close relationship with price and funds. We don't charge for the services we provide to the community, but we know how to collect these vital funds from government agencies, donors, and the community at large. We rely on the financial and long-term stability of our organization, and this covers the third technique in marketing called **PRICE**.

TRADITIONAL V.S. DIGITAL MARKETING

- ☑ **NEED FOR COMUNICATION THAT ADDRESSES A NEED, A PROBLEM OR AN OPPORTUNITY**

- ☑ **RAISE AWARENESS OF A PRODUCT, SERVICE OR A CAUSE**

- ☑ **DIRECT MESSAGES TO A SPECIFIC POPULATION OR AUDIENCE**

- ☑ **CALL TO ACTION**

- ☑ **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Traditional Communications/Advertising

BUYING THE SPOT

Traditional advertising is priced and measured by volume, by asking questions such as: "What is the newspaper readership? How many listeners does that radio station have? What is the viewership/rating of this TV program?" A business's decision to purchase ads using a specific media outlet is mainly based on how many people they can reach, rather than how close the viewership of an outlet is to their target audience.

To make traditional advertising effective, a business must deduce when, where, and how to get their message in front of their target audience. A business must then buy an ad in the physical space that best matches their assumptions.

Traditional advertising return on investment (ROI) is very difficult to calculate because we don't know how many people see or engage with a given advertisement.

Digital Communications/Advertising

BUYING THE MATCH

Targeting your specific audience with digital tools can be extremely beneficial. Instead of creating a blanket message for a blanket audience, you can tailor your message and get it in front of the exact audience you believe your products or services are right for. Then, re-targeting and other similar tools allow you to continually market to your audience.

The most important aspect of digital advertising is the opening of a two-way communication channel between you and your target audience. This channel allows you as the advertiser to maintain, nourish, and grow the relationship with your target audience.

THE BUSINESS OF HIV PREVENTION

Much has been accomplished over the past two decades in HIV treatment and prevention. Despite a need for renewed emphasis, the worldwide scale-up of antiretroviral therapy (ART) has gone beyond what many imagined possible. Oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is available in the United States and in some lower-income and middle-income countries. The US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and other funders are expanding access to rapid or same-day ART initiation and piloting PrEP programs in international settings.

Despite advances towards ending the HIV epidemic in the United States, we must continue to expand services to communities of color and low income populations that have traditionally been medically underserved.

Up to one-quarter of HIV-infected individuals in the United States are unaware of their infection. Without knowledge of their HIV infection status, patients cannot enter into treatment programs and may unknowingly continue to spread the virus. Almost one-half of patients will undergo testing late in the course of HIV disease and will receive a diagnosis of AIDS within a year after receiving a diagnosis of HIV infection. One-quarter of individuals who receive a diagnosis of HIV infection will remain outside of care. As a result, only 56% of those who are eligible for antiretroviral treatment in the United States actually receive it.

From a marketing perspective, there is a huge problem with engagement within HIV prevention. We know the target population, we know where they live and congregate, we have community-based organizations working with these communities for more than twenty years, and they most likely know about us. However, large percentages of patients are lost at each stage of the HIV continuum of care, illustrating systemic issues around engagement.

Multiple factors are causing this disengagement. We know that patients who access case management, transportation, mental health support, drug treatment, and other supportive services are more likely to be retained in care than those who do not. Marketing can be used to increase community awareness of these services and improve the clarity of information about clinic locations, hours, etc.

Some healthcare centers have attained a higher degree of success through outreach to patients who are lost to follow-up. These healthcare centers utilize their existing organizational relationships to create linkages to other community-service providers.

So, it comes back to us, the community-based organizations who have in-depth knowledge of our constituencies, and who can really help re-engage individuals who get lost in the process. We should think of marketing as a potential mechanism for increasing outreach and engagement.

EXPLORING BRANDING

Now let's revisit the questions we explored early in this toolkit. Do your best to answer them, thinking about how you could incorporate the answers into a company brand.

These questions are an excellent place to begin:

- What is **YOUR MISSION STATEMENT?**
- What **INSPIRED YOU TO CREATE YOUR ORGANIZATION?**
- Why do you want to offer **YOUR PROGRAMS OR SERVICES** to your target audience?
- What **MAKES YOU UNIQUE?**
- What is **YOUR INTERNAL COMPANY CULTURE?**
- What are **YOUR COMMUNICATION CHARACTERISTICS?**
- What do you want to come to mind when someone **HEARS YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME?**
- How do you want people to feel when they **THINK OF YOUR ORGANIZATION?**
- How do you want clients to **DESCRIBE YOUR ORGANIZATION?**
- What are **YOUR CORE PRINCIPLES & VALUES?**

Take the time to create extensive answers and share them with your colleagues and professional mentors. What you will notice is that all of the questions are related to your internal operations and your internal culture. What you build on the inside is what will emanate externally as a brand.

BRANDING

The Brand Promise

At its core, a brand is a promise to consumers. The brand promise incorporates more than just those tangible products and services. It also includes the feelings that consumers have when they use them.

Example: Think about your favorite brand and what that brand promises to you. If you're a Nike fan, the brand might represent athleticism performance, strength, good health, and fun. Your brand promises something to consumers. What is it?

The Brand Perceptions

Brands are built by consumers, not by companies or organizations. It doesn't matter what you think your brand promises. The only thing that matters is how consumers perceive your brand. You need to work to develop consumer perceptions that accurately reflect your brand, or your brand is doomed to limited growth potential.

Example: What are consumers' perceptions of Lady Gaga? You can bet everything she does is meant to create specific consumer perceptions.
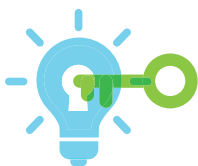
The Brand Expectations

Based on your brand promise, communities develop expectations for your brand. When they put their trust in your programs and services, and when they volunteer for your organization or donate for your cause, they assume their expectations for your brand will be met. If your brand doesn't meet the community expectations in every interaction, they will become confused by your brand and turn away from it in search of another brand that does meet their expectations in every interaction.

Example: Imagine Rolls Royce launched a $10,000 car. Consumers would be extremely confused because such a product doesn't meet their expectations for a luxury brand.

BRANDING

The Brand Persona

Rather than asking, "What is a brand?" a better question might be, "Who is a brand?" Every brand has a persona. Think of your brand as a person. What is that person like? What can you expect when you interact with that person? From appearance to personality and everything in between, your brand persona is one that consumers will evaluate and judge before they do business with you.

Example: Who would you rather spend time with — Apple or Microsoft? These two brands have very different brand personas. Your brand should have one too.

The Brand Elements

Your brand is represented by the intangible elements described above, as well as tangible elements such as your brand logo, messaging, advertising, and so on. All of these elements must work together to consistently communicate your **brand promise**, shape **brand perceptions**, meet **brand expectations**, and define your **brand persona**. If one element is awry, your entire brand can suffer.

Example: There is a reason why that blue Tiffany's box has been around for so long. It means something to consumers.

A brand is clear, reliable, and believable to both your consumers and your employees. However, brands aren't built overnight.

Before you can define and live your brand, you need to do some research. Doing so will ensure that you don't waste time taking your brand in a direction that won't allow you to reach your goal.

You must understand your competitors and audience, so you can develop a brand that promises the right things to the right people. Research first and your definition, strategy, and execution will follow.

BRAND AWARENESS

Brand awareness is the level of consumer consciousness of a company. It measures a potential customer's ability to not only recognize a brand image, but to also associate it with a certain company's products, programs, or services.

Brand awareness is best spread through both inbound and outbound marketing efforts. When competition in an industry is high, brand awareness can be one of a business' greatest assets.

Why is brand awareness important in marketing?

As there are many options for products and services, it is crucial to have a brand that is unique from one's competitors. A distinct brand identity can be the difference between success and failure.

Entire marketing campaigns are constructed around promoting awareness of a brand. If you are new to a community or introducing new services in the community in which you operate, it is critical that you invest time and resources into communicating your new brand.

When consumers are aware of the services and programs an organization offers, they are more likely to go to that organization for services instead of researching other organizations that provide those same services.
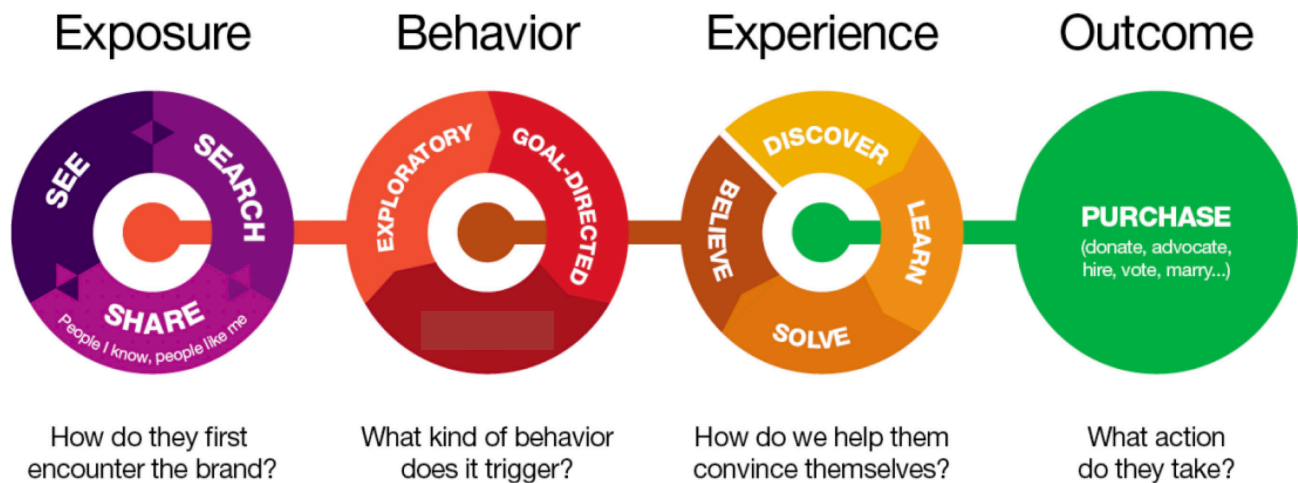
Organizations with strong branding are viewed as accepted by the community. They are trusted more by community members who are looking for help, advice, and services.

BRAND ENGAGEMENT

Brand engagement signifies an emotional commitment to a brand. It is more than brand awareness; it is loyalty and word-of-mouth marketing. Brand engagement is important both internally and externally. Building the brand internally and obtaining employee engagement with the brand helps to further solidify its quality, which ultimately improves the brand for consumers.

Social media has given new meaning to word-of-mouth marketing and has allowed consumers to interact with brands in new ways. Brand engagement goes hand in hand with community and client engagement, because engaged communities translate to increased linkage, number of clients served, and brand prosperity.

Exposure	Behavior	Experience	Outcome
SEE, SEARCH, SHARE — People I know, people like me	EXPLORATORY, GOAL-DIRECTED	DISCOVER, LEARN, SOLVE, BELIEVE	PURCHASE (donate, advocate, hire, vote, marry...)
How do they first encounter the brand?	What kind of behavior does it trigger?	How do we help them convince themselves?	What action do they take?

HOW TO ENGAGE PRIORITY POPULATIONS

Brand Engagement

So, does your brand matter? Yes - it matters to your employees, your community, and your donors. Surveying your client base, the community, and your employees can identify the level of brand engagement that exists today and can identify key action items to increase brand engagement across these key populations.

BRANDING
Build or re-brand your program or organization

MARKETING
Set all marketing tools and commit to them

BRANDING
Operate your social media, don't stop, evaluate, repeat

ENGAGEMENT
Monitor your engagement reports, stick with the plan

LINKAGE
Use trust and the power of engagement to stay connected

In conclusion, doing great work in the right community would not be enough without engaging in a serious branding process. Once you get signals from your community that awareness and engagement are happening, make sure you have all the right marketing tools to strategically communicate your brand. This involves an updated and quality content-heavy website, vibrant updated and engaging social media outlets, and team members dedicated to operating and maintaining both a website and social media.

The business of marketing and communications is no longer the job of a temporary volunteer or a back office incidental role in a nonprofit. Branding and marketing is now a core function that needs to involve all levels of the organization, including the board members, the executive director, and every member of the team.

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THE EFFI BARRY
TRAINING INSTITUTE

The Effi Barry Training Institute provides trainings and technical assistance to support current and prospective HAHSTA grantees and community-based organizations in the Fee-for-Service business process; basic HIV service competencies; advanced skills in health care systems, data and health informatics; high-impact prevention programs, including biomedical; and emerging evidence-based or informed approaches through a series of group-level trainings, boot camps, community forums, and individual consultation.

Rooted in the idea of holistic, integrated, patient-centered care, HealthHIV capacity building efforts help develop an organization's ability to improve patient outcomes and increase efficiencies, while remaining organizationally sustainable. The agency's unique approach involves structuring sustainable systems and services that span the HIV care continuum. HealthHIV's ability to diagnose and address multisystem challenges is enhanced by a comprehensive team of expert consultants and focuses on achieving measurable outcomes. By remaining data and outcomes driven, HealthHIV employs state-of-the-art, and state-of-the-sciences approaches to improve health care delivery.

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