Rebranding Downtown Fletcher: A Case of Strategic Marketing for a Non-Profit Organization

Mary C. Martin, Fort Hays State University
Jill D. Moeder, Fort Hays State University
Michael J. Martin, Fort Hays State University
Henry Schwaller, IV, Fort Hays State University
Stacey Smith, Fort Hays State University

Synopsis
The Downtown Development Corporation (DDC) in Fletcher, NE was a non-profit organization that organized events in downtown Fletcher, a small community that underwent a downtown revitalization. The DDC hired consultants to develop a marketing and branding plan for downtown Fletcher and the plan was received well by the DDC Board. However, shortly after, a city commissioner publicly questioned the organization’s mission and activities resulting in public scrutiny of the DDC. The DDC was asked to make a presentation to the commissioners in order to justify its existence and receive funding for the next year. They were successful in securing funding, but it was months since the consultants presented their plan and the DDC had done nothing. The executive director wondered, “How should the DDC proceed with the plan? Would it help convince the city to continue to fund the DDC? Would community members support the new brand and continued funding? If we lose city funding and community support, will we have to dissolve the organization?”

Learning Outcomes
In completing this assignment, students should be able to:

1. Analyze a situation and generate a SWOT analysis
2. Develop a positioning statement for a non-profit organization considering the perceptions of the organization by multiple stakeholders
3. Evaluate a marketing and branding process conducted by consultants for a non-profit organization
4. Analyze the marketing and branding challenges non-profit organizations face and evaluate the marketing and branding initiatives of a non-profit organization
5. Recommend courses of action for a non-profit organization in terms of its future, positioning, and branding; recommend branding tactics by applying the Customer-Based Brand Equity Model

Application
This decision case was designed for use in upper-level undergraduate and graduate marketing courses, such as strategic marketing, marketing management, promotional strategy, marketing for nonprofits, services marketing, brand management and entrepreneurship.

Keywords
Strategic marketing, branding, positioning, non-profit organization

Contact
Mary C. Martin, Department of Applied Business Studies, College of Business and Entrepreneurship, Fort Hays State University, 600 Park Street, Hays, KS 67601. Email mmartin@fhsu.edu. Phone 785-628-5877.