

Nonprofit 911 – June 25, 2008

Branding Isn't Just for Cattle: Tips for Managing your Nonprofit's Brand
with Katya Andresen
Sponsored by Network for Good

The MP3 audio transcript can be found at
www.fundraising123.org or www.Nonprofit911.org

Jono Smith: Hello everyone and welcome to today's Nonprofit 911 sponsored by Network for Good. My name is Jono Smith and I am the director of marketing here at Network for Good and we are really happy you joined us for today's call.

We are getting ready to celebrate the first anniversary of Nonprofit 911 on July 12th, since that time over five thousand people have attended one of these calls, which are sponsored by Network for Good and our guest speakers who donate their time for us.

As you may know, Network for Good is a nonprofit, just like most of you on the phone and our mission is to help nonprofits, like you, raise money online. Nonprofit 911 is just of the many free resources, Network for Good provides the nonprofit community, to help organizations increase their online fund raising and nonprofit marketing results.

In addition in nonprofit memo and we also provide online fund raising services directly to nonprofits. Many beyond the sun or among the 33 hundred nonprofits currently using our flagship service, Custom DonateNow.

If you do not have a way to do that you are happy with, we hope that you will consider Custom DonateNow. Well this is not a sales call, if you turn to the last slide of today's presentation, you can find out how to save \$250.00 on the year of Custom DonateNow.

Speaking of the slides, if you do not have a copy of those slides, go ahead and go to www.Nonprofit911.org and you can download a copy of those slides right now.

We've had over 250 people register for today's call on "Branding your Nonprofit," and before we get started, I just wanted to go through a couple of housekeeping items.

You probably noticed that all the lines have been muted and this call is also being recorded. That means within 24 hours you will receive a email with a MP3 link to the audio recording of today's call. Then within about five to seven days you can go to www.fundraising123.org and download the text transcript of today's call.

If you have to leave us early for some reason, you can always go back to www.Nonprofit911.org and get all the materials that are part of today's call.

And If you are not in front of your computer, don't worry, you can always go to the websites and continue your learning. You don't need to have the slides in front of you to do that, to get the most out of today's call.

If you like to reach us at any time during today's call, or if you'd like to ask our speaker a question, please email us at fundraising123@networkforgood.org, once again the email address is fundraising123@networkforgood.org.

Now at this point I like to introduce today's speaker, Katya Andresen. Katya is the Vice President of Marketing here at Network for Good. She is also the author of "Robin Hood Marketing: Stealing Corporate Savvy to Sell Just Causes."

She is also author of a blog called the nonprofit marketing blog, and you can find her blog at www.nonprofitmarketingblog.com or if you just go to Google and type in nonprofit marketing, you will see that Katya is right there at the top of the results.

And so without further ado, here is our speaker for today's call Katya Andresen.

Katya Andresen: Thank you so much, Jono, and thank you everyone for taking the time to join us today. I look forward to talking to you about branding. I am going to talk for about 40 minutes I want to leave plenty of time for questions because when I do branding consultations I get some of the most interesting and tricky questions, so I want to be sure there is sufficient time to answer your queries.

So, do email me at fundraising123@networkforgood.org. If you have questions now or as we go along and I will be sure we have time to get to those at the end.

You are following on the slide show, I am on the second slide now, and I wanted to just give you an outline of what we are going to cover today. The first thing is I want to say a word or two about what branding really is, what constitutes a brand.

Then I want to talk a little bit what the process of branding entails. Then I am going to give you five really useful laws of branding that comes from BBMG, which is a consulting firm that focuses on nonprofit branding and it stands for Bemporad Baranowski Marketing Group. I learnt a lot of what I know about branding from Raphael Bemporad.

So, bbmg.com is their website, if you are ever looking for any branding help, they are a wonderful resource, and I will be sharing their laws and a couple of their examples today as per my presentation. I am going to give you one case example at the very end and one as we go along and then as I said, I will leave plenty of time for questions.

So, I want to start out on slide-3 here talking about what is branding? This is just really important point I want to make and if you remember nothing else from the call, I hope this will be your one take-away, which is, I think part of the problem is the word 'branding' it's a bad word for what branding should be.

When we think of branding, we think of cattle branding. We think of this picture where we are searing onto the cattle the symbol of our ranch or in our parlance we are taking a new logo, or color scheme and imposing that on our organization and hoping that, that identifies us in a certain way.

And that's really not a good way of thinking about branding. The best way to think about "what is a brand" is very simple; it's what your audience feels inside when they think of you. It's what you stand for in their mind and their hearts. That is what a brand is. So, it's a much more about how the audiences experiences our organization and perceives our organization, and not about what we hope to project about our organization.

So it's not what we are putting out there. It is about what our audience is taking in. Well, that's a very tricky thing and once you understand branding in that way you realize that a new logo is not branding, because a logo can't possibly transform the mind or heart or attitude or perceptions of an audience towards us. It's a much more complete picture.

Raphael Bemporad, I mentioned BBMG were first to serve a branding universe. Branding is not one part of your marketing plan, it's actually the bigger piece of what you do in marketing communications and fund raising all fit inside it. Branding is about all the ways people interact with you, think about you, experience you. So its very all encompassing. When you think of branding that way and you get good at addressing that audience experience, that's when you develop an iconic brand.

So I am going to move on to slide-4 here and just give you an example of an iconic brand, what do I mean by that. I think, unless you have been off in outer space for the last decade or so, you'd surely recognize this right away.

The LiveStrong brand, that yellow bracelet. And when you think about it, you probably start thinking about some of the things we see on slide-5 and 6, which are, "you think about strength." You think about Lance Armstrong and you think about strength, which is really a remarkable thing when you think about cancer. This has been a wonderful branding exercise in talking about finding truth and living with cancer, being about strength, and that the word that comes to mind with Live Strong foundation, Live Strong brand is strength.

And they really own that idea. That idea was very sticky because there is a yellow wrist band, there have been hundreds of imitators since then, but as we are going to talk about later, one of the laws of branding if you going to be the first at something, none of them compares to what Lance Armstrong has achieved with the Live Strong brand. That's what I am talking about an iconic brand, because we experience that in our hearts and minds.

OK, so I am now moving on to slide-7 and I want to give you a couple of examples, these are actually from BBMG, but why do we need to worry about changing audiences' mind?

So, why does it really matter, why do we need to own a term in their mind. I see it as a simplest answer is, competition. I have given a couple of talks lately at conferences in person and I've chatted with the audience beforehand, as I like to do. I am hearing more and more that you are really struggling to raise money right now, It's a tough economy and because of a constricted funding environment, donors whether they be individual donors or corporate donors, or foundations are feeling really bombarded by a lot of nonprofits right now.

And in that environment, you don't want to be just another nonprofit; you really need to

stand out.

And this is how extreme it's got. On slide-7 you'll see back in 1940, there were all of 12,000 nonprofits. So that was it. And if you look at slide-8, now we have around 1.5 million. And if you look at IRS records and which nonprofits are incorporating under 501C3 status every day, it's in the neighborhood of 119.

So there's more and more every day; there's so much noise out there. And so we do want to stand for something simple and clear and unique in our audience's hearts and minds. So when they get 10 direct-mail appeals or 20 emails, or they're asked to give to 30 different causes over the course of a year, that we rise to the top with a real sense of strength and clarity in their minds.

OK. Now I hope you have in your mind this sort of holistic, universal sense of branding. I want to spend the rest of the time talking really practically about what do you do about that. If branding is that big, what do you do about that? If branding is that big, how to do tackle it? What concrete steps can you take and what guiding principles should you follow?

So if you look at slide number-9, you'll see that it's called "Before You Delve into Branding." Before you hire a firm to do re-branding for you or you think about upgrading your logo or get into any of that kind of discussion, stop, pause, and think about your audience. Because if you've heard me speak about anything, you know I always say that's the starting point. Who is your audience and what do you want them to do?

And all marketing planning should unroll from that point. We don't start with who we are and what we want to project. That's wrong. That doesn't get us where we need to go. We could go and craft our mission statement and say, "OK, let's get our message out there."

No, what we want to do is say, who are we trying to reach, what do we want them to do? What makes them tick? How do we get them to that action we're seeking from them. So it's sort of throwing into reverse our customary way of thinking about our organization. It's a pretty fundamental paradigm shift.

So as with branding, as with any other thing -- whether you're sending out an email or launching a fundraising campaign -- you want to start with that grounding in who your audience is.

I'm going to move on to slide-10 here. This is a familiar slide to you, I hope. I try to pop it in most of my trainings, which is saying, marketing, branding, it's about looking at the world from the point of view of our audience rather than our own. So that's what we need to understand. What would we see through their eyes?

Now this gets really interesting when you think of branding. When a donor interacts with us, what are they getting? What's the essence of our organization that we're projecting? Is it a bunch of stuff all over the place? Is it one clear thing? What are they seeing? That's the perspective that you want to be grounded within in the course of branding.

And then, looking at slide-11, once you are grounded in their perspective, what are you trying to get them to? What's success? What are you trying to make this audience do? Why are you even bothering to worry about branding marketing with them? Do you want them to write a check?

I have some examples on this grid. Maybe you're a membership organization. Maybe you're the Maryland Nonprofit Association and you want nonprofit executive directors to join. Maybe you're a nonprofit raising money and you want a 40-year-old suburban mom to give you her email address or sign up for monthly giving.

Maybe you are an advocacy organization and you want senators to support legislation that benefits your sector and your audience is primarily members of Congress or their staffs. So think about what the end point is. What experience you want to have them have with your brand that really inspires them to take the action that you want them to do.

You want to start with that orientation. And then, and only then, start getting into how they're experiencing you, which is what's on slide-12.

So how do you understand what they're seeing from their perspective about your organization now? Whether they're a donor, maybe you're a service provider, maybe your audience is policy makers, whoever that person is on the other end of your brand, what are they experiencing now?

So how do you find that out? Well, one, you can ask them. And most good branding exercises start by interviewing stakeholders or your key audience members, saying, "When you hear the name of my organization, what do you think of? What springs to mind? What is the last interaction you had with them? What did you feel about that? What's the last thing you remember hearing from them?" You want to get a handle on what they're experiencing now by asking them.

Another great thing you can do is put yourself in their shoes. So on a personal note, Network for Good's marketing team yesterday, we left the office for the day and had a retreat. We spent an entire day in your shoes, because you're our audience, nonprofits like you, and we actually mapped everything from your first point of contact to us all the way through to people who end up becoming our customers and using our services, all the way through people who need support for our services.

We put ourselves in their shoes, step by step, and looked at every interaction that you have with us. That's the kind of exercise a good branding planning starts with. So how do you do that? How do you put yourself in their shoes? Do what they do.

Do if we're talking about donors, donate to your organization. Through direct mail, through email, through telemarketing, if you do that as well. See what happens. What notes do you get back? How soon do you get them back? How personalized are they? Call your 800 number. When I was working for a big nonprofit organization, I was horrified when I called the 800 number and we ended up getting a different call center.

Use your own services if you're a human services agency. Get a friend to come in and see

what happens when they interact. Map out what happens when someone has a problem with you. How soon do they get a solution? How soon do they get a receptive ear?

Now you want to think about, what did you learn from that? And what do you think it says about what you stand for? If you put together all those data points, you're going to get a pretty good snapshot of what your brand is right now.

And then you want to think about, OK, what do I wish it were? What do I wish my brand was? How do I get from the current experience to a better experience? And so this is the kind of thought process you want to go through.

And then if you look at slide-13, that's really information about what you them to experience. This slide is based on some of BBMG's work as well as -- if you're familiar with Good to Great, or Good to Great for the Nonprofit Sector, you might recognize this as the hedgehog principle from Jim Collins. It's not dissimilar from this. It's a Venn diagram of three intersecting ideas that are pretty close to these.

But I really like this, because this is really what we want people to experience, the middle of this Venn diagram. The intersection of what you're good at, what no one else does -- what's truly unique about you -- and then what's really important to your audience. And the intersection of those three things is your brand sweet spot.

And that's where you want to people to have in their hearts and minds when they think of your organization, that's what you want them to experience. That's what you want to aspire to. So you have an existing snapshot about how people experience your brand now, this is sort of the golden point you want to get to. And then you want to lay out a process of doing that.

So now I'm going to move to slide-14. And I'm going to talk about the laws of branding, as BBMG likes to express them. I think these are just really useful guideposts as you embark on the process of changing the way people experience you, changing the way you talk to them, project a consistency across all that you do.

So the first law is on slide-15, which is the "law of the word." This is about simplicity, which is you really want to just stand for one word or a few words in the mind of your audience. That word should play to the sweet spot we just saw, and it should be really simple and clear.

Now this is really tricky for us. This is probably the hardest law to follow. Because I bet a lot of you on the phone today have a lot of different audiences. You have a lot of different programs. It's very hard to figure out what one word could possibly sum up what you do, that doesn't become a completely watered-down generic word with no meaning, because you need it to cover every aspect of what you do.

If you're starting to feel overwhelmed by that, the law of the word, remember branding is about the audience perception. If they think one thing about you, what do you want them to think? It doesn't matter if it's the perfect word that sums up everything you do, what's important is that it sums up the essence of what you do, and it hits that sweet spot very squarely.

So there's some nice example in here from BBMG. If you look on slide-16, here's an example of owning one word. If you think of watches, and you're in the watch business, what brand do you associate with prestige? The one word "prestige." Well, I assume most of you are going to say Rolex. That's an example of owning a word, or a position in your audience's mind.

Another example, slide-17. If you're in beer, you think of standing for one word and it's Australia, a lot of you are going to think of Foster's. That's another example of owning one piece of your audience's mind.

And last, on slide-18, another example. Car. It could be about cars. Who epitomizes safety to you? Volvo has done a great job wrapping that up. And in everything they do, you will see safety at the backend of their message, very consistently.

OK, so now I want to give you a nonprofit example, and I'm going to use the same example all the way through the presentation, to show how it illustrates all of the laws. And I assume some of you have heard me use the example of CARE before, but I don't think you've ever heard me use it to think about why it's a strong brand.

So that's what I want to today, is talk about how CARE has done a really good job re-branding. And so one of the things I find fascinating is CARE has done a great job positioning itself with respect to a younger audience and an audience, according to their values.

When I worked for CARE, which I actually did a long time ago, about 15-20 years ago, CARE had a pretty -- I think the average donor may have been in their 70s. And they really were interested in reaching a younger audience. In recent years they've done a really nice job doing that, saying, "Let's get in the minds of our audience and what we want them to do. What do we want people to do?"

They knew they wanted to get involved online, reach a younger demographic, particularly women. And so they started thinking about, "What words should we stand for for them? What would be the sweet spot? What are we good at that no one else does and is really something that that audience would care about?"

What's interesting is they came up with is a similar concept as Nike did when they started marketing to women. So Nike was predominantly a brand associated with men, and the shifted to wanting to focus on women in the '80s and '90s. And what's interesting is both Nike and CARE came to a similar conclusion.

If you look at slide-20, this is one of these old Nike ads. I think these are from roughly 10 years ago or so. And I have -- if you're not online, it's OK -- we're looking at two ads and the last is a woman who is saying, "Why do I run?" And she talks about why she runs and she's looking very powerful and leaning against a rock.

And on the right, there's Jackie Joyner-Kersey, who's standing, I guess, on the edge of the

Grand Canyon or some giant canyon, and she's obviously contemplating long-jumping over it. These were ads that really got at an idea of being powerful. And Nike really owned the idea of power in women's minds, with regards to their brand.

What's interesting, if you look at slide-21, CARE has done something very similar and equally powerful with this sort of younger, 30 to 55-year-old female audience in mind, which is when you go their home page, there's some variation -- because they're very consistent -- on she has the power to change her world, you have the power to help her do it.

And you'll see a picture of one woman, and underneath it it often said something like, "I am powerful." This in an example of a home page from last year, and you see this instant idea of owning the word "powerful." What blows off this page so clearly after two seconds is the idea of power.

When people look at your web page, does one idea or word fly off the page? It probably doesn't. That's what you need to do. It's back to the law of the word.

The next law I want to focus on is on slide-22, which is the law of focus. So this is interesting in that the more we heap into our brand, instead of becoming an increasingly big brand, we become a watered-down, confusing brand, which actually diminishes our brand.

So the more words and ideas that we try to glom onto our brand, the less powerful it is. There's an inverse proportion there. And the more attributes you try to lay it on there, the less it means. We really need to stay in our sweet spot, and that's the law of focus.

We don't want to stray over too much into just what our audience cares about if it's not something we're good at and unique at doing. We don't want to do something just because we're good at it. We want to stay in that sweet spot, that intersection that I spoke about earlier.

So a couple of examples. On slide-23, you'll see the law of focus example of, there used to be a chain called Children's Super Mart. I don't think very many of you probably remember what that is, but if you look on slide-24, they re-branded as Toys 'R' Us -- which has seen better days -- but had a heyday by focusing on toys, rather than saying Children's Super Mart, which doesn't really convey a sense of focus.

On slide-25, again, back to the CARE home page. Here we see a really nice example of a crystal-clear focus on power.

OK, I'm going to go to the third law now, which is on slide-26, which is the law of leadership. This is what I alluded to earlier, when I said something about we really want to be the first at something. We want to own the category we're in. That's why if you try to go do wrist bands and have them face a different word and be the centerpiece of your campaign, that's not going to work very well.

Because the leader in that is Lance Armstrong and LiveStrong. And if you try to be an

also ran, it's just not very effective. For example, there's Dr. Pepper and Mr. Pibb. The sort of "me too" moves are not necessarily a good idea. And particularly in our sector, because we have so much noise.

It's better to be known for a strong niche than to be an also-ran in a category that an audience is confused about and sees a huge amount of nonprofits involved in and can't discern between them.

If you look at slide-27 -- Goodyear, they positioned themselves at "#1 in Tires." If you look at slide-28, Barilla. They don't claim to be #1 in pasta, they talk about being Italy's #1 pasta. That's an example of, they can't be #1, so they picked what they can be #1 at. They narrowed their focus so they could own an area in their audience's hearts and minds, and be the leader in that area.

Slide-29: we have a lot of beer examples today. I don't think that was intentional. But Budweiser is the "King of Beers," of course. And it's the consummate American beer brand, and that's what they seek to own.

Slide-30 talks about, if you can't own the idea of one thing -- like being *the* environmental organization in your community -- you want to start narrowing down so you can own something. So the beer example, Heineken says they're the leading imported beer. Samuel Adams is the leading micro-brew. Corona is the leading Mexican beer. Asahi is the leading Japanese beer. You want to figure out what you can own.

On slide-31, this is something interesting that CARE has done. How do you own the idea of "powerful" and how do you show leadership in that? They've done something very interesting. They said about their audience, "Who is our audience and what do we want them to do? We want, say, women 30-55, and we want them to feel powerful and feel we're the go-to place to make other women feel powerful and in so, feeling powerful about yourself. So how do we show leadership in that, and what do we really want people to do so we can get to that point of leadership?"

And what they settled on is they have a fabulous website that's really aimed at capturing your email address all over the place, which is really smart. We always want a gigantic "donate now" button on our home page, no question. But we also have to recognize not everyone's going to donate immediately.

So one of the actions we may want from our audience is to give us some way to start a conversation with them. And so, what CARE has done here is they've created a Power Circle where they ask you to add your name. Surprise to get your name in lights is a really cool rotating graphic. You have to surrender your email address, which enables CARE to start a conversation with you.

But, in establishing this Power Circle, it really reinforces their leadership and their owning the idea of power across all nonprofits, particularly across all international relief and aid and development organizations.

The next one I want to go to, law four, starts on slide-32. And this is called the Law of

Authenticity. This is really important. And this goes back to where I started our conversation today, when I was talking about branding.

Branding is really how people experience you--and not just what they think about you but how they experience you. So it's great that Volvo owns the idea of car safety. But if Volvo started making terrible cars that fell apart and crashed and finished at the bottom of "Consumer Reports" testing, and people went to Volvo dealerships and had an experience that put no emphasis on safety, or whatever, it would fall apart pretty fast. You have to walk the talk of what you're owning, in your audience's hearts and minds.

And so that's why it's so important to map through the whole experience your audience members are having with you. Are you really proving your brand's promise every day in what you do and how you conduct yourself and what kind of outreach you provide?

An example of consistent, good outreach that reinforces this is on slide-33, which is an email I got from CARE after I joined the CARE Power Circle. They sent me a Power Quiz and asked me to take a quiz to find out how powerful I am and what my power is.

And that was pretty irresistible, because they have good targeting; they know I value the idea of feeling powerful and helping other women feel powerful. And a Power Quiz is a great way to get me engaged and to make me want to continue to experience, with the CARE brand, the idea of power.

What it actually was was a quiz that asked me all about when I feel motivated to donate or support other people. That was the quiz. And then they told me what kind of power I have, which happens to be the power of compassion, I was told when I completed this quiz.

And so, what's interesting about that exercise is they got all kinds of great data about me. And they could've sent out a marketing survey, like "Tell us about yourself, " but that wouldn't have been consistent with the brand. Instead, they positioned it, again, consistently and authentically with the idea of power.

On slide-34 is the email I got back: "You are the power of compassion." Gave me specific things I can do that are in line with the way I view the world and with how I might like to help CARE.

I'm going to move on to the fifth law now, which is the Law of Consistency, which I just touched upon a bit. You'll see all the CARE examples show great consistency, which is, you want to stand for one thing over time. If you get too trendy and you try to morph your brand too much, that's not a good idea.

You want to keep your brand solidly placed in that sweet spot. And don't leave that sweet spot just to chase a new funder or because you think something's popular in a certain time or year and lose touch with what you really are as an organization and what your essence is. Really bad things happen when you stray from that brand.

There's really fascinating blogs on branding, and we can post those on the Learning

Center. But there's always a really healthy debate going on online about when is it appropriate to extend your brand, and when is it not?

There's some funny slides on page-36. Every year, there's a worst-brand-extensions list that comes out. Here's a Harley-Davidson cake decorating kit, a Budweiser energy beer, and a Rambo/Sylvester Stallone high-protein pudding.

So, what are the problems here? I mean, these are funny. But I don't mean to be flippant here. What does Harley-Davidson stand for? It does not stand for cake and frills in our mind. Budweiser? It sounds like relaxation with a beer in my hand, not energy. And Rambo: I don't really think of pudding when I think of Sylvester Stallone.

So, what if you're a nonprofit organization and you do health programs for teenagers and you do education and adult literacy programs simultaneously? Right? What do you do with your brands, then?

So there's a couple of things you want to figure out. One is, is there something really overarching and unique you can stand for that spans all your programs? If not, you may need another brand. You may not be able to extend your brand across all those things.

If you look at slide-37, when Coke and Pepsi got into the bottled water business, they did not do Pepsi Water and Coke Water, because that, pun intended, truly dilutes their brand. That "Coca-Cola" and "bottled water" don't go together.

They have "The Coca-Cola Company" written on the label at the bottom so that, if you trust the Coke brand, you get some of that nice halo effect on Dasani. But they came up with Dasani as an appropriate name for water. They were going after a different target market. It was a different product. They wanted it to be consistent with what Coke stood for. Pepsi came up with Aquafina.

If you look at slide-38, here's an example. Again, with CARE, they're very consistent with the "power" motif, and they're not straying from it. And the reason I'm bringing back the home page here is this is a good example of some of the things you're wrestling with.

So CARE has a home page that they want to do a bunch of things with it, right? They want to speak to donors, potential funders. They want to speak to institutional-level funders, like the US Agency for International Development. But they also want something consistent with their human services.

So, what does CARE do? Well, it helps women across the world with micro-enterprise loans. It helps women start their own farms. It helps women with health programs. It keeps girls in school. They build schools for girls.

Wow. They do all those programs. That is really a lot of things. But what's the common denominator? It's helping make women powerful so that they can have better lives. And great things happen when women are empowered, which is overall poverty rates drop, countries become more prosperous and healthy.

And so, when you look at power, power works really well. It doesn't need a brand extension because CARE's programs, their human services, are all about empowerment, and their outreach to donors is all about helping donors feel powerful. So that's great brand consistency that works really well. Even though they've got many different types of programs and many different types of audiences, they found one brand that bridged all of them really effectively.

OK. So, to review the Laws of Branding, we have: you want to own a word. You want to focus on your unique value proposition, which is marketing jargon for what you do that no one else does that your audience wants--what is unique about you. You want to lead your category. You want to walk your talk; that's about being authentic. And you want to build your brand consistency over time.

Now, some of that is, yes, you want your logo to look similar, you want your materials to look similar. Put out all your materials on a table. Do they look like they came from the same organization? That's important. But also, consistency in your actions, in your outreach, in how you talk about yourselves and the words you use. Consistency: think of that in a very expansive way.

Now, I want to emphasize for a moment what's on slide-40, which is: "That's really hard for us." It's one thing to be Coke or Burger King or Harley-Davidson, and it's quite another to be an underfunded, overworked, overwhelmed nonprofit that has a culture of consensus--doubtless, I'm sure--real human needs left and right, and social needs left and right, animal needs left and right, that you're being asked to address. It's very hard not to have a morphing mission.

And then there are things that you should do because they're the right thing, and then there are things that funders want you to do, and there are things that your supporters want you to do. And there are a lot of different imperatives there. So staying focused and consistent, all these things that are perhaps easier for a multinational corporation can be very challenging for us. So I recognize that.

I want to wind up here on a story about how an organization managed to do that, with very little money. And then I want to take your questions to help you with the challenges that you have, as illustrated in the slide, so we can provide you some examples to your branding problems and challenges.

And I'd also like to hear about any branding successes you've had. Have you recently re-branded and had great success with that? Don't forget, the email address is fundraising123@networkforgood.org.

OK. So a closing story here. Slide-42. This is an example that I like to use that really underlines branding. This is about an organization called Feet First, which is a small organization in Seattle that works for more livable, walkable communities.

And when I first met them, they had no marketing budget, really, to speak of but were extremely ambitious, which is a good thing. They wanted a lot of media attention around the fact that streets aren't walkable. They wanted policymakers to plan for more

walkable-friendly communities.

They wanted folks in the community to start donating to them so that they could take these advocacy efforts broader so they had funding to do the types of things they wanted to do, so that Seattle, where they were, is just a nicer place to walk around.

And so, what they did is they tried to think about, "How can we apply branding principles to really get where we need to go? Who are we trying to reach?" And they thought, "Well, we're trying to reach people who walk around our community, drive around our community. And what we want them to do is donate to us, and also speak out, if they're policymakers, about making things better in Seattle, where it can be very dangerous to cross the street."

So they started thinking about, "Well, how can we boil that down? What can we stand for in people's minds that they will understand and instantly grasp, address all this, and could be important to them?" And I came up with a really fun idea, which was, if what they're really about is making it easier to walk around the community and across the road, there's an old joke that is a great summation of that concept, which is: "Why can't the chicken cross the road?" And so they've had a lot of fun by building off that idea.

If you look on slide-43, you can see the executive director, the tall guy in the background, and one of his fortunate staff members there is wearing the chicken suit. And the chicken goes out and crosses busy intersections at rush hour all the time. Here's a great rally with kids from a school where a child at that school had been hit by a vehicle and had some difficulty in recovering from that. And that's his class at school, out with him and his family, talking about more-walkable communities.

So look at this picture and think about their audiences. Their audiences are people walking around. A chicken walking around is a great way to get people where they're in a moment where they're thinking about walkable communities. But it works well for the media. It works well for policymakers, because it really brings it home. If you see a bunch of kids walking with a chicken, trying to cross the street around that school, that's a very vivid image.

I say, if they stand for one thing anyone's minds, it's probably chicken, but in a really good way, which is they brought their mission to life. They don't talk about walkable communities; they talk about the fact that it's hard to cross the road, which is something everyone can relate to.

Now, talk about branding consistency. If you look on slide-44, their "donate now" button is a "click the chicken" button, which is, again, consistency. They have a MySpace page for their chicken. They send out little chickens if you're a recurring donor. I've gotten one of those. And they continue to play with that brand in a really fun way and expand upon it and are very consistent about it. And they've been covered in all the media, because it also stands for fun--an attention-getting way to engage people and policymakers in social change.

OK. Slide-46. Before I take your questions, I want to do a piece of shameless but very

sincere product placement here. Jono mentioned earlier that our nonprofit Network for Good gives you a way to process donations online. It's our flagship product, Custom Donate Now, which we do have a big discount on for you on the phone today.

I've got to tell you, let me make a little pitch here about why this is so important. When people come to your website, or when they interact with you, we want them to have that fabulous experience start to finish. At no more moment in time is that experience more important than when they're giving you their money.

We're a nonprofit organization. We want to help nonprofit organizations raise more money. We decided the way to do that was to have something that allows you to customize your ask and your donation process to look just like your website, to reflect the essence of your organization, to be in your own color scheme, to have whatever questions and language you want around it, so that you can control your brand.

And if you use an outside service or someone that doesn't allow you to do that degree of customization, you're losing your brand at the most important time, which is when someone has their credit card out to make a donation.

So I encourage you, if you don't have a donate button or you don't have a great branded experience for people giving money online, do consider us, because this is really important, when we're thinking about the experience that our audiences have with us.

So, last thing. I talk about branding quite a bit in my book. And if you see, I've branded these slides with my book on the bottom, sort of as a meta-level example of consistent branding. But there's an interview with BBMG in there if you're interested. As always, visit www.fundraising123.org for great information, or my blog, nonprofitmarketingblog.com. And please do come back to the Learning Center, and I can put up some of those links I talked about earlier.

And now I want to turn things over to Jono and take some of your questions.

Jono: Great. Thanks, Katya. Just a reminder: you can email us your questions to fundraising123@networkforgood.org. Also, if you have a branded donation page right now that you're especially proud of, go ahead and email us a link to that donation page, and it may be featured in one of our upcoming 911 calls or, potentially, one of our newsletters.

So, once again, if you have a donation page that is branded that you're especially proud of, go ahead and email us, along with your questions, to fundraising123@networkforgood.org.

OK. Our first question comes from Stacy. And Stacy has a question about terminology. She says: "We have mission statements and vision statements, and then I hear about branding and tag lines and slogans and marketing messages and positioning and all these things. So, where does branding fit into this mire of slogans and words?"

Katya: Good question. And I agree: there are just too many slogans and words, and it just renders marketing largely meaningless, I think.

So, to cut through all of that, your brand is the result of everything you do that you just mentioned: your tag line, your logo, your marketing, your fundraising, your communications, your newsletters. You name it. You hope that the summation of all those efforts is that your target audience--or target audiences, plural--will experience you and hold in their hearts and minds a perception of you that is great, positive, and compels them to take action.

Your brand is how people have taken in everything you've put out there. So it is the receiving end of the long list of things you just mentioned.

Jono: OK. Apologies if I mispronounce your name. But the next question comes from Washington, DC, from Queshia. And this is a fantastic question.

"Katya, you have a blog. My nonprofit, The Alliance for Consumer Education, has a blog. You mentioned that Feet First had a MySpace page. So I was wondering, with so much emphasis being placed on new media and social networking, what effect, positive or negative, does all this have on a nonprofit's brand?"

Katya: Wow, that's a great question. I could probably work on that for about an hour. Let me try to go through some of the highlights of what you asked.

First of all, with social networking and social media, there are a lot of places you can put out your brand now. But even more important, because there are blogs out there, conversations out there, Facebook pages out there, where people are talking about your brand, your brand is also being communicated in social media by other people.

So, it's not just about you having a blog or doing things with social media. It's about other people portraying and reflecting your brand in what they do online.

This is a really interesting time for branding. When I was first learning about marketing and branding two decades ago, we were the 'brand police'. We were taught control your message; always have your logo be consistent, etc.

And, it works now in that you want to be consistent about what you put out there, but you can't control everything that's out there. Blogs are going to come up and mention you, or other things are going to come up and mention you that you don't have control over, and it will reflect your brand in different ways.

So, if you do a really great job with branding, hopefully, a common theme will be coming out in those conversations online that reflect your core brand - one would hope. But second, you have to let go of a little bit of control of your brand, and understand that great brands applaud that lack of control, embrace it and give their 'brand champions' - people out there talking about you in a positive way, who love you - the tools to spread the word about them online.

So, I think my answer to your question is social media gives us a whole new way to get our brand out there, and a whole lot of new messengers to project our brand efficiently.

So, how do you do that? Well, think about everything you do. How can you make it portable? How can you take what you do and put it in the hands of your supporters, so they can reflect your brand wherever they are online? There's a great opportunity.

There's a lot of noise out there, but there's a great opportunity to get your name in a whole lot more places than there used to be. You have your outreach, but you want your supporters to be incorporating you in their own outreach as well.

So, you want to think about are there little badges that people can put on their blog, if they're a supporter of you? Are there fundraising widgets you can ask supporters to put out there on their Facebook or their MySpace page? Are there ways you can have fun letting people express how they experience your brand? American Rivers did a great Flickr contest - which is a big photo-sharing site - where people submitted photos. That's a great example of taking advantage of social media to bolster your brands.

Jono: OK, before we read the next question from Anthony, a reminder that the email address for questions is Fundraising123@NetworkforGood.org.

And Anthony says, "Our organization educates youth in schools about the benefits of abstinence for their future. However, our target audience is not area teens, they are area donors who are passionate about abstinence and providing positive futures for teens. How would one deal with the differences between a nonprofit's mission and its target audiences, in terms of branding?"

Katya: That's another really good, complex question. What's most important, it sounds like, is that your key audience and outreach are those donors. So, you want to stand for, in their minds, that you're the organization that reflects their values and propagates those values among young people, which is clearly something they want, and you want to build your brand around that for that audience.

You have another issue though. I assume that you have education programs and other things that you want to be effective in schools. And, this gets a little bit into the 'Pepsi, Aquafina, Dasani, Coke' issue, which is it's very hard to target parents and children, or youth, especially teens, that's the toughest, with the exact same messaging.

So, you want your brand to be consistent. You want your brand to consistently stand for whatever aspect of abstinence that you chose to reflect as part of your brand. But, you are going to need different messages within that brand for different audiences.

So, you can have one brand with different messages under it, as long as they're not inconsistent with the brand. So, say that you stand for health and safety or whatever. I don't know what you've decided to project in terms of what you want to stand for in the community's minds. You want to send messages to your donors about how you're upholding their values.

And then, when you're messaging to youth, you want to play to their values, and they're not going to value the same things your donors do - most teenagers don't. Their list of values, well we would probably consider them rather shallow, but they care a lot about what their friends think. They care about appearance. They care about excitement, friendship, and community, and those are the values of teens.

So, you're going to have to figure out if my brand stands for my values, and you want to play to their values with your messaging. So, you're going to look for consistency across the brand for different audiences, and different messages for those audiences. It's very rare that you can have one message that works with every audience. But, what you want to work towards is one brand that is consistent with everybody.

Jono: OK, once again the email address is Fundraising123@NetworkforGood.org. And, the next question comes from Rebecca. Rebecca is wondering do you have examples of your favorite nonprofits that have a really great brand.

Katya: One example comes to mind is a guest we recently had on our Nonprofit 911 call, on online fundraising basics, day six, Kirt Manecke, who is from something called LandChoices. They have a great brand. And, it's amazing because he's the head of the organization, but he's a volunteer and he does this on his own time.

It's an organization that's trying to make sure that local zoning laws assure sufficient green space and livable communities, not far off from Feet First, which is another brand we talked about during the presentation.

And, a couple things are interesting about their branding. One is LandChoices is an interesting name. 'Choices' is a very good word to have out there, because most people want control over their own circumstances, and choice is something most of us value, particularly here in our country. That we have the ability to chose what we want to do with our lives, where we want to live, etc. We highly value that sense of independence, so their name is very good. And, what they've done is they've done some really interesting campaigns within that brand, which stands for green communities.

They did a great campaign called "Supersize My Backyard," which is another way of showing choice in getting a nice environment to live in as reflected in the name of that campaign. Zoning is boring. You're not going to get people excited about city zoning, or out in droves at town council meetings to talk about how you can zone for green areas, except for your most ardent champions. So to the rest of the people, you want to show how this applies to them, and how this applies to the community you chose to live in, and the type of community you want to live in.

And, what they've done is have a really nice campaign that reinforces that called "Supersize My Backyard," the idea being give me a big collective backyard in my community. Give me a field across the street where the neighborhood kids can safely play soccer or baseball. Those are the things that people want. They've done a really nice job taking something pretty dull, and turning it into something pretty compelling through a narrowly focused, clearly articulated brand.

Jono: OK, the next question comes Neil. And, Neil works for a small 25-person nonprofit. He says, "We have an internal branding problem. If you asked five different people in our organization what our brand is, and what the strengths of our brand are, you would get about 15 different answers. Do you have any advice or any tips on how to get our internal branding house in order?"

Katya: Great question. You're not alone, that's very common. I guess the main tip there is when I talk to at the outset of this presentation about how to go through the branding planning process, one of the first things was: ask your stakeholders what they perceive your brand to be.

So the first thing you just do some diagnostics. So, it sounds like you are going to predict, you're going to hit five to ten different branding answers within your organization. So start there. Write those down. Go out then and talk to your stakeholders. Talk to your funders. And then talk to your end audience as well. This doesn't need to be a gigantic research project. You may do, say, ten quick calls or interviews. But what you want to map out is: what are all the different things being attributed to your brand, internally and externally.

And then present that to your organization internally. It's one thing to say, "Hey, we're being inconsistent about our brand, what do we stand for, we should stand for this." It's another to reflect that back to the organization so that they understand how internal confusion is manifesting itself in external confusion. And that can be a very interesting exercise.

Now, one of the negative things that could happen, if you don't manage it right, it could become, well, we're right and why do they see it that way? And that's the wrong attitude. We have to do a better job projecting our brand out there, mine's better than yours in presenting what different stakeholders and internal audiences are saying, versus what your target audience perceives. That's going to become interesting if you overlay it on that then diagram.

So, here's what we think we're good at. Here's what no one else does. Here's what our audience cares about. Here's how they perceive us. And start putting all those words you are hearing in that matrix. I think what you are going to find is your audience is very focused on all the things that you are good at.

Your internal audience is going to have the parts of the brand they are expressing are all going to be different dimensions of what they think your organization's really good at. What you are going to introduce to them is by talking to other people, outside your organization. Say, well when you think of my organization, what do you think of? When you think of similar organizations, how are we different?

By filling that in as well as what your end audience is saying important to them, they're going to see this branding picture, not only differs internally from externally. But they are going to see the missing pieces. Your brand is not what you think you are good at but your brand is the interaction of these three things.

And then see if you can come to some consensus. Again, consensus is rough. Which is why I had as a barrier on one of these slides. As to what is in that sweet spot. And that's what that process is only going to get easier if you have a lot of data points and a lot of feedback from these different key audiences. At the end of the day, I would hope that even for your most recalcitrant internal staff, what a big funder or important audience thinks you are, or should stand for, should trump some of that internal dissent.

Jono: OK. We have time for one more question. This is a great question. I'll read the question first and then provide the context and review the question once again. This is really interesting here.

Lisa is asking, "What is the best way to bring the branding idea home to a management team that has never worked or thought this way?" Basically she says, "We are currently undergoing culture changes in our organization. Because we offered so many programs and services in the past, we thought in terms of the partners. In an effort to become more mission focused in all our programs, everyone wanted to first change our program guide."

"I understand the need to brand and to have an overall marketing plan. Instead of picking one item to work on when all other marketing items are not consistent within the organization. Some think because the 'Y' is so brand recognized, it is a given that it is recognized the same way in our community. Being the rookie on the management team, I know it's not."

So, once again Lisa asks, "What is the best way to bring the brand name idea home to a management team that has never worked or thought this way?"

Katya: That's great, Lisa. I think a lot of the previous response I gave would apply to you. I think for your management team, I'd ask them to write down what they think the brand is, right. And then I would go out and get a lot of data from the community, which you know to differ from what they think that your organization is recognized for.

And that delta should be pretty stunning to your management team. Now, important, because if your management team is really stubborn, you're going to say, well, how many people did you interview? I don't know if this data is consistent, etc. So I would recommend you collect as much data as you can with phone calls or some simple survey of your existing donors, but add some faces and personality to that.

Go out with a tape recorder into your community and ask people, "Hey, I'm from Ocean County YMCA, what do you think of when you think of the YMCA? What do you think goes on there? What do you think they have? What do you do, do you like it, do you not? What's in your mind when you think about them?"

And take some of that first hand, right out of the mouth of your audience data back to your management team. One thing that's interesting is... I used to be in this line of work. I would do this kind of market research for clients. The client would... it was very hard to unlock their mind of how they were perceived until they heard real people talking in a way that was stunningly different from their perception.

So, one is to put your message, which is, "Hey, we're not perceived that way" or "we're perceived in different ways" in the mouths of audience members. So, people who are coming to the Y, members, perspective members, people in the community, etc., get some of that data, first hand data, the quotes and put it in front of them.

Another thing that is a fun exercise to do with management teams. I know Andy Goodman used to do. He is a great nonprofit marketing and story telling person. He's got a great website, agoodmanonline.com.

Andy had a couple of branding exercise for some environmental groups he worked with, where he took all their mission statements. He had been to organizations and put them up on a slide and asked the board members which organizations, or which mission statements. Some of them couldn't even pick out their organization lists. So that's another interesting test, is you can take the data you are getting and data you are getting from other organizations you conceive as competitors and put that in front of your management team.

Say, "People described this organization as blah, blah, blah. Who do you think this is?" And they might say, oh, that's the Y. You might come back and say, "Actually no. That's how this organization is perceived." So the short answer is you need data from your audience to put in front of the team so they see that delta.

And the next thing that you need to get them to do is to incorporate that perception into the branding exercises we're talking about today. Sit down with the team, do the tree bubble exercise. Figure out from what you are hearing and what you believe internally what is in the center there.

And then go out and test it. Because once the management team sees traction behind something. Once you are doing the appeal that has some of the branding approach you want to take and it does much better than the other appeals, then it becomes harder and harder to argue with and then you can really get your management team behind you.

Jono: Great. I want to thank Katya for her time today. Unfortunately, we don't have any time for any more questions. But just to wrap up with a few quick reminders.

The audio transcript will be available within 24 hours on www.fundraising123.org, under the training tab as well as the text transcript in about five days.

I just wanted to remind folks: if you have a branded donation page that you think really sings your brand values, please email that to us at fundraising123@networkforgood.org and we'll pick a couple to feature in a future newsletter or on a future 911 call, perhaps.

And if you are still not convinced of the benefits of having a branded donation page, for example, if you are using PayPal right now and so you are sharing co-branding with PayPal on your donation page, there's a great new report that was recently released by Donor Digital and Amnesty International. It's available on our learning center. You can search for "donor digital," you will find it there.

It talks about the benefits of having a branded donation page. And how the customization and the branding that you put on a donation page can help increased the conversion rate and brings more donations to your organization. So, whenever people have faith in your brand, you should put that brand in front and center.

Once again, if you are ready to make the leap from a service like PayPal, we'd love to work with you. We invite you to try custom "donate now." There's information in the very last slide of today's show.

Once again, thanks for joining today's call and you can always reach us at fundraising123@networkforgood.org or you can call us at 888-284-7978. Thanks for your time today and we look forward to speaking with you again soon on another Nonprofit 911 call.