

CASE STUDY: BRANDING - IT'S A LOGO AND SO. MUCH. MORE.



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Branding efforts should help organizations define and live their brand promise.

The situation

In August 2012, the School District of Sheboygan Falls engaged in an effort to build a new brand for the District. The Board of Education created new mission, vision and commitment statements (MVCs). But what were the next steps? How does an organization embed their mission, vision, commitments into the everyday work of all staff?

The solution

First, the leadership team and Board agreed to review and revise the District's mission, vision and commitments (MVCs) through the involvement of staff. Focus groups and facilitated conversations revealed changes to better articulate the MVCs so that they were inclusive of a broader viewpoint. In addition, the District implemented a new logo design, website and complementary materials. The MVCs and logo became a common sight, printed on door decals, posters in the buildings, on letter head, and as a focus on their website.

On to living the brand promise. An engaged school environment was a primary focus that continues today. Using a phased, strategic communication plan, strong internal communication efforts complement a strong curricular and instruction focus. Every initiative from implementing digital technology to hiring staff is purposely aligned to the MVCs, and the alignment is communicated to staff. Engagement activities, such as Monday morning conversations with staff, an internal, consistent e-newsletter, a district leadership team that includes teachers, all helped administrators work with staff to understand how the brand was being embedded into the life of the district. Then the district added an external communication emphasis.



The District's strong curriculum and instruction focus is complemented by a systemic communication program that focuses on embedding the District's mission, vision and commitments into every decision, earning the District statewide recognition.

Using a communication plan that spanned several years, the District has operationalized external activities such as community conversations, business partnerships, and leadership visits to Town and Village meetings and local business. District leaders are involved with community organizations such as the local chamber, economic development board, and the public library. Regular press releases, features on the website, public presentations and district publications featured the district's many recognitions that became evidence that the District was living its brand.

Outcomes

- Facebook data, Google analytics, and Constant Contact results show high engagement with district outbound communication.
- Approximately 150 (and growing) self-selected community-members have joined District committee and/or attended events and agreed to be on the mailing list that is used to keep non-parents, non-staff members "in the loop".
- Successful \$30.9 M referendum, November 2016.
- An expanding business partnership built private-public partnership that provides state-of-the art equipment in new technical education center.
- Collaborative public library-public school pre-school reading program.
- Collaborative fundraiser with the Chamber raised over \$7000 for fire department – *and goodwill!*
- District leadership team provides teacher input and decision making.
- Growing District-wide understanding about the importance of effective communication to support District improvement efforts.
- Mission, vision and commitments are the foundation all types of decisions, at all levels.

COMMUNICATION. Building bridges.

About Dorreen Dembski Communication Services, LLC

Whether you have identified an area of communication concern or simply want to improve your organization's current communication efforts, we consult with you to identify priorities and recommend ways to move forward. Rooted in expertise, I will provide a deep level of commitment to understand your organization's goals and needs. Then, like an extra set of hands, or a guide on the side, I can work with you to deliver the right amount of service, communication products, processes, training, and information you need to move your organization to a new level of communication effectiveness, according to your budget. Please contact me if I can help you with your next communication project!

Dorreen Dembski, owner