

The Global Brand Communications - Are you up for the Challenge?

By Wesley A. Ford

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The issue at hand

Business is built on relationships. Those relationships are built on communication. That communication is built on dialogue. This dialogue requires a message to be sent and received, both verbal and visual. If you are responsible for your company's brand or marketing and communications, then you must learn the challenge and tools that will help you position your company for its future success.

A clear trend is that companies are attempting to manage their brands nationally and/or globally. There is more value for companies in a national or global brand. Regional brands do not provide the economies of scale that strong national or global brands offer.

You, as a marketer, are faced with complex communication issues. Your objective is to provide a broad spectrum of communications to your company and customers. Employee communications will become more critical than ever. International mergers have created challenges for most Marketing and Communications managers (MARCOMS). Foreign speaking employees will eventually make up more than 15% of your company's workforce. How will your executive management effectively communicate with them if they cannot speak their various languages? Your challenge is to get these employees thinking like all the rest to build one cohesive team. Are your executives communicating with them now?

The Challenge

Translation. Translating material, however, can be particularly challenging. Sometimes the greatest challenge is the interpretation by the end presenter or presentation system, not the actual translation. Utilizing some digital tools can help minimize the potential damage of translation. You may sometimes get someone to translate the words of your message, but the person reading it at the other end may not understand it at all. This non-understanding is better than a misunderstanding. One thing is certain, your message is not being effectively communicated to those employees. This is the type of challenge that more companies will face in the future. However, this creates opportunity for marketers. Acknowledge the challenge now and get a vendor that can provide you with the new media tools you will need with the additional translating skills.

The Solution

Vendor selection is critical. The consistency of your message is vital to your success. Select a vendor that can provide you these tools across all mediums of your business from sales tools to trade show media. Some of the latest trends for employee communications are interactive CD-ROMs or custom digital games that focus on your company and industry to help bridge the communication gap. The imagery assists in the effective communication process. An effective picture translates into most languages.

Potential Tools

- International teleconferences
- Develop videotapes or DVDs
- Create presentations and distribute them through newsletters, web sites or Intranets.
- Creative trade show media

In order to build your cohesive team, assist your executive management in effectively communicating to the employees. Begin to develop your strategy for your effective employee communication strategy today. Getting all your employees working towards the same goals will assist in building your national or global brand.

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