

Appendix E - UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM
SENIOR PROJECT - APPROVAL

Name: Allison Vandergriff

College: Communications Department: Advertising

Faculty Mentor: Margaret Morrison

PROJECT TITLE: Surviving Campaigns: How to Make the Book

I have reviewed this completed senior honors thesis with this student and certify that it is a project commensurate with honors level undergraduate research in this field.

Signed: Margaret Morrison - Advertising Faculty Mentor

Date: April 22, 2004

General Assessment - please provide a short paragraph that highlights the most significant features of the project.

Comments (Optional):

Allison Vandergriff
Honors Project Description

The project is a paper that outlines the work done in the campaigns class in a “how-to” format. The paper is not a personal narrative, but rather is a guideline of how we created a winning team and campaigns book. The paper will also outline the sections of the campaigns book, and will include how to write and create the best sections possible, and the information for those sections will be drawn from professors, outside resources, and from previous class notes and experience. While the paper is not specifically, “How to Create a Campaign” as it applies to an agency experience, as that would be too varied and too dependent upon circumstance, the paper does outline how to create a winning campaign based on the class experience. The class is designed to be as close to one instance of a real-world scenario as possible.

Finally, the paper will also include what I did specifically for the team and for the creation of the book. My responsibilities were editing the book, helping to write the situation analysis, writing the executive summary and conclusion, and working with one other teammate to produce the media section.

Allison Vandergriff
Senior Honors Thesis
May 3rd, 2004

Introduction: The First Day of Campaigns

It is a moment that every advertising student at the University of Tennessee has a love-hate relationship with: the first day of Advertising 470, Campaigns. Since entering into the program, this class has loomed in the background, and stories of its difficulty and intensity have circulated among peers and in other classes. This is, of course, especially true if the class is taken during the Spring semester, when the competition is set and the client is unveiled the first day of class.

There is a certain level of anticipation and competitive edge that one feels, listening to the first day's lecture and looking over the client materials. Questions run rampant: "Will my team be good enough to win?" "What is it that this client wants?" "What do you mean we only have a three million dollar budget?" and of course, "How in the world can I do this in only a handful of weeks?"

The following paper is part actual account of a spring campaigns semester and part how-to create an award-winning campaign. It is intended to guide readers through the campaigns process of the spring semester, and explain how it can be done in 49 days. Our team won the regional competition, and hopefully the following paper will offer some insight into how it can be done with sanity still left in tact.

It should be noted that while this paper follows a spring semester of campaigns class, many components of that semester have application in an agency setting. In short, if a team can put together a winning campaign in the closest thing the Advertising Department has to a real world situation, then the team should also be able to operate well in an agency environment.

Part I: Teamwork

Creating the Team and Keeping It Together

There are at least two rules when creating a team for campaigns: start early and think like an agency. These rules may sound obvious, but a fair amount of strategy should go into making a team.

Start Early

The last thing anyone's stress levels needs is to enter campaigns and hope for the luck of the draw for a team. As anyone acquainted with the advertising department's curriculum or the business world at large knows, the team can make or break an experience. When given an opportunity to create a team, it is always best to take advantage of that situation and create a team that will allow you to work to your fullest capacity, not to mention that one's sanity will remain in tact longer with a team that functions well as a unit.

Starting early in the creation of a campaigns team simply means keeping track of other individuals who are going to be going through campaigns at the same time, and knowing who is particularly good at each part of the creation of the campaign. There are several opportunities in the curriculum to work with fellow teammates, the most notable being Advertising 450. Take advantage of those opportunities and start building a team early. The competition that fuels spring semester campaigns begins sooner than many think, and it is always nice to have first choice in teammates.

Think like an Agency

In an agency, each distinct department – media, creative, management, production – lends its skills in working on client accounts. For the campaigns class, each member of a team should represent a department. Ideally, the team should consist of an individual who excels at research, one who works well with media, a few strong creative individuals, a person who understands the software that is involved in creating ads and giving the presentation, and a couple other teammates that act as management people who are good at several, if not all, of the tasks.

The creative team is particularly important. There should be at least three types of creative people: the concept person or idea person, the visual person, and the production guru who can use Photoshop, Pagemaker, and InDesign. Obviously, a team can have more than one person who is good at each task, in fact it is often preferable, but it is important to have at least one person who can do each task.

Keeping the Team Together

David Jacobs, an account executive at the Tombras Group in Knoxville, Tennessee, once said, “I don’t like being the only person who knows something about a client.” To keep a team together and working, a harmony between division of tasks and group think must be attained. It is counterproductive to do everything as a whole team. The time constraints simply will not allow for it. However, it is equally counterproductive for the people working on the creative strategy to know only about the creative strategy. To make the most synergistic campaign possible, all levels of the

creation of the campaign – from research to evaluation – should be familiar to all the team members. This will allow for each phase of the campaign to feed into the next.

Basically, communication is key. Meet several times briefly during the week to go over progress and to ask any questions. Keep in touch via email, and make sure that everyone always has the most updated copy of the book as it is being developed. Keeping all the team members in touch with the progress of the book will make the campaign process and the presentation go much smoother. If everyone is an expert on the campaign, then everyone can work toward the same goal.

Part II: The Campaign Book

Overview

The campaign book is your pitch. It is the summation of all the work you've done during the class presented in a logical and appealing format that tells the potential client what you can do for them. The book is not the place to go into lengthy detail about the client's history, how they began, or what makes them a great company or why they have a great product. The client already knows why they are successful. The point of the book is to show them that you understand the client, their goals, the current market situation, the competition, and how best to put all that knowledge to work to solve the client's problem and meet their objectives.

There is one other thing to remember when planning the book and creating it: everything must flow from one part to the next. Don't make the mistake that some teams make and start thinking about the best creative before you even do the primary research. Every phase of the book must be clearly supported by a previous phase. If the client

cannot clearly see how your creative strategy flows from the research and concept testing, then that will kill your book's success.

So basically, show the professor and the client how all your knowledge fits together to make the best solution, and be sure that your book makes a logical progression from beginning to end.

The Situation Analysis: Secondary Research

In the beginning, there is always research. Jim Avery, the author of *Advertising Campaign Planning*, states that the first step in the situation analysis is to outline what you already know. "You need to know where you are before you can determine where you'll need to take the business. When all this information is assembled in one location, it's called the Situation Analysis" (Avery, 42).

By now you've written a few situation analyses, so some of this should come as second nature. You know that the first step is secondary research: gather what you and other information sources already know about the market and the client. One of the main differences in the campaign's class situation analysis and the other situation analyses that you may have done, however, is space constraints. Our book could be no more than 32 pages. When you consider how much space is taken by the ads, the media charts, the flowcharts and other tables and graphs, this does not leave any room to be verbose in the description of the current market overview and the brand's position in that market. The best way to combat space is to get to the point. Be concise, be accurate, and then move on.

The Situation Analysis: Primary Research

Dr. Margaret Morrison at the University of Tennessee states that there are several things that make a good situation analysis. The analysis should demonstrate an understanding of the industry, the client and its problems, the competition, and the current consumers. The situation analysis should be the basis for all decision making for the campaign; it should lay the groundwork for all the following parts of the book. Finally, the situation analysis should include primary research with clear insights that directly relate to the consumers.

These insights come from the second phase of the situation analysis: primary research. The insights can be the most difficult things to uncover in the research phase, and they are also one of the most vital components in the campaign. Without consumer insight, you will miss what will become the crux of the campaign: why the product appeals to the consumers or how best to appeal to the consumers with the product.

In *Hitting the Sweet Spot*, Dr. Lisa Fortini-Campbell explains that the “sweet spot” is brand insight and consumer insight combined in the most appropriate way to market the brand or product (Campbell, 15). However, there are two explanations as to why marketers don’t hit the sweet spot all the time: they don’t dig deep enough to uncover real insight or they have a brand’s insight and don’t use it. Don’t make the same mistakes. Our team did two phases of primary research: a general survey about the product and how consumers’ feel about it now and another survey that was geared more toward information about the competition. If you do enough research, trends will start to emerge. However, don’t just ask yourself, “How many people thought Florida was a

dolphin?” Instead, ask yourself, “Okay, thirty-two people thought Florida was a dolphin. What does this mean? Does it mean anything at all?”

Principle Nine of the Twelve Principles of Consumer Insight is, “Talk to your customers, work hard on your questions, really listen to what they have to say. Use what you hear” (Campbell, 161). Principle Ten is, “Organize your insights in a way that makes them clear and easy to understand.” When you’re working on the primary research section of your book, organize the *insights* into paragraphs that mean something to the client. For instance, in our primary research, people kept telling us that they wanted a vacation that took them away from everything in their lives. Using this bit of information among others, we determined that people don’t just want a vacation; they want an experience that takes them away from everything in their day to day lives. That’s a useful insight because it tells you and the client a way to reach out to the consumer. After you organize the insights, take the insight or combination of insights that makes the most sense for the client’s goals and run with it.

Setting the Objectives

Setting the marketing objective for your campaign will follow the formula that you are no doubt familiar with by now: increase what by how much among whom in what amount of time. You will also set media objectives and you will more than likely set advertising and communication mix objectives. All of them should directly relate to the campaign and they should be measurable. Keeping them measurable will make your life much simpler when it comes time to create an evaluation plan.

In *Campaign Planning*, Avery points out that Proctor and Gamble use the acronym SMAC when creating their objectives: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, and Compatible (Avery, 131). Avery also states that the marketing objective is “most often a sales number” (130). For our campaign, VISIT FLORIDA (Florida tourism) wanted to increase net leisure night stays. Our marketing objective was, “Increase net leisure night stays in paid lodging 10% among the affluent target market during the campaign period.” This objective was straight from the client’s goals, it was measurable, and it was reasonable.

One thing our team learned the hard way is that objectives must be backed up with numbers. Simply writing an objective that sounds good will mean nothing without support. Avery also stresses the importance of relating numbers to the marketing objective: “[The marketing objective] must be made believable, and the best way to make it so is to substantiate it with numbers” (132). Being able to create a quantifiable objective with numbers to back it up will make your client feel confident that your objective relates to them, and it will make it easier for them to support your ideas. Understand the need for benchmark numbers: know where your product stands now and where it needs to go in terms of marketing, media, and sales promotion.

Essentially, keep the objectives simple, direct, targeted, and made with the client’s goals in mind. This logic applies to the marketing objective as well as the media objectives and promotional objectives for advertising, sales promotion, public relations, etc.

Finding the Benefit: Concept Testing

Concept testing, according to Dr. Morrison, is taking the strongest thing you can say about a product or brand and presenting it to the consumers in a relevant and meaningful way. Concept testing is gathering all the information you know about your brand and your audience and saying, “Alright, now, what do they want?” There are two difficult things about concept testing: stating the benefit and writing the copy.

The benefit statement should be concise and offer a relevant benefit to the consumer. An example that doesn’t work might be, “Florida is perfect.” Well, that’s lovely and all, but why is it perfect? For whom is it perfect? A better statement, and one that our team used, would be, “Florida is a perfect place for a short destination.”

There is an art to writing the copy for a concept test. It must be plain, simple, without “adspeak,” but also must convey the direct benefit to the consumer and paint an image in their minds. For example, instead of “Florida: the perfect 2-day getaway,” you would say, “If you only have a few days to get away, Florida is the ideal place to go.”

You will probably be testing five or six concepts, and from one or two of these you will pull your creative strategy. Concept testing, therefore, is crucial to the rest of the campaign. If you have made every effort to understand the market and your product and if you have gleaned true insights from the consumers, then you should be able to create several strong benefits that will appeal to your target market.

Creative Crux: The Strategy

The formation of the creative strategy represents an exciting time during campaigns. After this, you know you get to start on the best part of advertising: the

creative executions. The executions will not get very far, however, without a solid strategy behind them.

The strategy should be simple and direct; make sure you can state it in one sentence. If it takes more than that, then it isn't direct enough. The strategy should come straight from the concept testing. It should really be an easy decision: "Everyone in concept testing agreed that number three and four were the most believable and relevant. Let's make a strategy." Remember, good creative isn't about choosing something that will make the best ads or promotional pieces. The creative strategy is concerned with the best way to reach the consumers in a relevant way. The ads and communication mix elements will follow easily with a good strategy.

Creativity Comes Alive: The Executions

Tom McElligott, the creative leader of Fallon McElligott said, "We believe that imagination is one of the last remaining legal means to gain an unfair advantage over your competition" (Avery, 168). Your creative is also a large part of your campaign score, and it will play a major role in making your team stand apart from the others.

Jim Avery defines creative advertising as advertising that is different and that stands apart (169). He explains that the sequence of the creative development should flow something like this:

Step 1: Understand your target audience

Step 2: Understand your TA's motivation

Step 3: Differentiate your brand

Step 4: Write a creative platform that outlines what you want to accomplish with the creative

Step 5: Develop the concepts – get your selling premise

Step 6: Make the ads (Avery 171-172)

Whether you follow a formula like this or simply brainstorm and hit upon the perfect executions, it is vital that they carry your creative strategy. Dr. Morrison claims that good creative executions are memorable and make the strategy come to life. You don't want to make ads that allow the consumers to remember the ad but not the product.

For our team, it took a few brainstorming sessions before the "Eureka" occurred. When it happened, however, we knew that we were right on strategy, we had an appealing campaign, and it was going to be fun to make the ads.

Media Planning: Now Where to Put the Ads?

Media planning is best taken in phases. According to Dr. Morrison, you should first understand that you need a good mix of traditional and non-traditional media. You should also have a good understanding of how members of your target audience use media in their daily lives and then apply that knowledge to your product.

So, first you will need to set your objectives. According to Avery, you will create several media objectives. The target audience objective will describe who the target audience is and how you will reach them (Avery, 191). The geography objective will limit the campaign to certain parts of the country, or state that it is national in scope. Basically the geography objective states where you will focus your media geographically. The seasonality objective will identify when sales are the highest during your campaign period. This objective will tell your client when you plan to focus your media during the campaign. You will have an objective that states if the advertising is to be continuous or use in a flighting pattern. You may have an objective that states the creative constraints for the media plan. For instance, if your product requires a highly visual medium, then

newspapers or radio might not be the best media choices. Finally, you will have an objective that outlines your reach and frequency goals. In our campaign, we had several of these objectives, and then some of the information was included in the explanation paragraphs. However you do it, make sure you have the goals in mind.

The next phase is information gathering. Find your numbers. Go into Simmons Choices III and find out all the information you can by crossing your target audience with different media types, quartiles, and media use information. Then note the ones with the most appropriate content and the best ratings. If you have segments in your target market or multiple target markets, then think strategically about what media types could reach those segments in the best ways. After you know the ratings and the media types the target uses, find your pricing information in the library and ad office.

Then it is time to enter AdPlus and arrange your media to meet your reach and frequency goals. Get your numbers, and then create your flowchart. The final stage is writing the media section and explaining your rationale.

It is sometimes tempting to try and get ahead of the schedule when you are in campaigns, and one of the places you can do that is with media. Generally speaking, however, media cannot really be tackled until the creative strategy is soundly in place and the execution brainstorming has begun. That way, you can communicate with your team, tell them what the best media types are for your audience, and work with the creative team to make the best media plan.

Communication Mix: Complete the Wheel

Many components of the communication mix will be determined by the client's needs. You will probably have to come up with ways of expanding your creative strategy into components such as sales promotions and public relations.

The creative strategy should be clearly illustrated in your sales and PR tactics, and the tactics should directly help to meet the stated objectives for sales and PR. We found it easiest to think of the communication mix components as a way to complete a circle for our target audience. Advertising will reach them through our selected media types, sales will offer a reason for immediate action, and public relations will allow them to learn more about the product and company. Each slice of the plan should support the others and allow you more ways to reach your target market with your message.

Evaluation Plan

Simply put, the evaluation plan should measure the objectives. If you set your objectives with benchmark numbers and the client's goals in mind, then it should be fairly easy to measure them with some amount of accuracy. You will want evaluation measures for each component of your campaign – the marketing objective, the advertising, and the sales and PR tactics. The amount of detail depends heavily on the client. VISIT FLORIDA stated repeatedly that they are “research based and accountability obsessed.” Therefore, our evaluation plan went into some amount of detail to let them know how their money would be spent.

Executive Summary

The executive summary should be written last, about the same time as you are writing the conclusion of the book. The summary should be a one to two page overview of the campaign that includes your knowledge of the client's current needs and goals. Dr. Morrison explained that a good executive summary should clearly outline the target market, the creative strategy, the communication mix, and the media plan. The summary should be appealing and catch the reader's attention. This is the introduction to your campaign: make it clear and make the client want to continue to read.

Part IV: Making the Bid

The bid for your campaign comes in two parts: the conclusion of your book and your presentation pitch. You are essentially asking the client to choose your team to represent them and create their campaign.

Conclusion for the Book

The conclusion for the book should have an attractive and relevant title, (for instance, for travel or tourism the title could be "Making the Reservation") and should explain the problem once again. Instead of explaining how your campaign will solve the problem, however, you should emphasize why your team is best suited to help the client and create the best campaign. The logical progression of the book and the impact of the conclusion should leave no doubt in the client's mind that this campaign will address the current problem and goals and that your team is the best match for the client.

Presentation

The presentation is by far the most nerve-wracking part of the campaign. The most anxious moments can be when you and your team are pacing around outside the door of the presentation room, reciting your parts from memory and trying not to think that you have to get everything right.

The presentation can be easier, however, if everyone knows the campaign inside and out. The importance of everyone understanding the campaign comes through during the 20 minutes you are standing in front of the judges talking about what you've been doing for the last few weeks and during the question and answer session. Mark Goldstein of Fallon Worldwide states, "You can't afford to have the pitch sound as though five separate people shipped it in sections and then someone in the word-processing department patched them together" ("Million Dollar Pitch"). Exactly. When your team is presenting, it can't sound like one person only understands the creative, one person the media, etc. You must have a unified voice when presenting to the judges. "Pitches need to be like a laser beam – one straight line that never takes a side trip" (Goldstein, "Million Dollar Pitch").

The other necessary component of the perfect presentation is practice. Get the script ready early, get it revised, and then tackle it. Rehearse in a large room with the ads that you plan on using as boards and with people pretending to be the audience. The more you run through it, the less likely you will get up there and freeze. Remember: this is your campaign. You know it extremely well. The pitch is a conversation with the judges – let them know what you can do.

Part V: Personal Experience

My part of the campaign was fairly clear from the beginning: organize, write, edit, do media, and present. This is not to say that I didn't expect to do other things, or that I was confined to only those parts of the campaign. However, my strengths that I could bring to the team were writing and editing ability, a tolerance for media, and I knew I could present the campaign.

For the organization part of the experience, another team member and I acted as "team leaders." We set times to meet, we assigned tasks, we kept up the communication and the most current copy of the book. We acted, essentially, as a small management team.

Another team member and I actively edited and revised the book several times. We were in charge of making sure things flowed correctly, and making sure the book had a unified voice. In other words, we made sure to get rid of spelling and grammar errors, and we made the book sound like it was only written by one person. I also wrote several of the sections of the book, including the executive summary and the "pitch" or conclusion.

My editing partner and I also did the media placement for the campaign. We chose the vehicles, did the flowchart and other graphs for the media section, and we used a program to analyze the effectiveness of our media plan called AdPlus. Together we wrote the media section and objectives. We also wrote the evaluation plan, which was designed to test if the objectives we set for the campaign were actually met.

Finally, I was one of the five presenters for our team. We could have four individuals speaking and one person operating the audio/visual equipment. I presented

the media section, the evaluation plan, and I closed the presentation for the school competition.

Part VI: Conclusion

Overall, the campaigns class experience was one that I know I will value in the future. It taught me some very hard lessons about teamwork and time management. It taught me that it was possible to operate on four hours of sleep a night for three or four weeks straight. Mostly, however, it confirmed for me that I was in the right major and the right field. While advertising campaigns was indeed, at times, “a time-consuming, nerve-wracking, emotionally wrenching experience,” (Morrison, 2) it was also a time to make great friends and learn more about advertising.

In the end, campaigns is more than “just a class.” It’s an experience you should treat as one that you would face in the real world. Choose a team you can work with. Communicate with that team constantly. Know the campaign, the client, and the book inside and out. Let one part of the campaign logically flow into the next. Present your campaign in a way that will leave no doubt in the judges mind that you took your work seriously and thought creatively, and do the best job possible and win. If you follow those guidelines, you’ll be on your way to the regional competition. And when the judges ask if you are ready, you can say with certainty: “Absolutely.”

Works Cited

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