



MENDOCINO COUNTY TOURISM COMMISSION

RFP RESPONSE

PRIMARY CONTACT

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BACKGROUND

What do you get when you cross an experienced San Francisco creative and strategy agency with a rock star in destination marketing? The perfect fit to drive significant increases for Mendocino County Tourism Commission (MCTC).

This unique approach is perfect for MCTC for several reasons. 1) TheorySF's experienced teams are experts in research and product positioning and excel at discovering untapped potential or "orphan" equity 2) Our director of strategy was also a Vice President for Hilton Hotels Worldwide as well as consulted for the San Francisco Visitors and Convention Bureau. 3) We've also added an award-winning leader in destination marketing to our team for this assignment. What could this group research and devise? I bet it wouldn't be the same old thing. Our experience in developing a travel site for millennials will prove to be very helpful in this assignment.

TheorySF was founded on the principal that great work doesn't need to be wrapped up in big agency bureaucracy and corresponding fees. TheorySF's fast moving and nimble operation thrives under pressure. We'll design the perfect process and relationship together that takes into account the peculiarities of your world and ours.

We're experienced. We've been in the trenches. We know how to forecast and avoid a train wreck. We're not scared of revisions, redirects and changes. We welcome it. Challenge us and we will deliver work that we will all be proud of. That's a promise.

Our senior teams have seen it all. Working on brands like Apple, San Francisco Visitors and Convention Bureau, Yahoo Travel, XBOX, Sony, Rolling Stones, Real California Milk, Dr. Pepper, Walmart, just to name a few.

We're not too big and we're not too small. We're the perfect size. Our core team can handle quite a load of work.

Let's build something great together.

Thank you for your consideration



WHAT WE BELIEVE

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to bring beautiful creative, deeply insightful messaging and an element of the unexpected to our client's communications. Without all three, we believe that marketing communications, in this day and age, will fail.

BEAUTIFUL CREATIVE

In our ultra-competitive marketing world, our goal is to breakthrough standard advertising "noise" by introducing strategically smart and beautifully crafted creative that connects and affects. Humans have an instinctual desire for beauty in all its forms; from art to science and yes, even advertising.

INSIGHTFUL MESSAGING

Today, our audiences are besieged by advertising. Literally attacked. Everywhere they turn is messaging. In fact, the last stat we heard was that the average human sees more than 10,000 marketing messages per day (this is counting even the brand emblems on the cars you see in traffic). To counter this, the human brain developed a defense mechanism—"relevance." The only way to make it through the brain's relevance shield is to create communications that are, well, relevant. Relevant communications are possible when we understand the inner workings of our target audience's minds. Their beliefs, attitudes and values as it relates to products and services. We strive to understand our audience segments before we engage in a creative exercise and often turn towards secondary market research and primary whenever possible. What they think matters deeply to us. How we answer the questions they didn't know they had is priceless.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

UNEXPECTED

Let's face it, advertising's job is changing. From helping to cause a direct sale to helping to channel prospects to a web presence to explore more. How do we drive more visits to a destination web presence? By delivering an integrated brand experience that jumps out of the ordinary. Something special. Unique. And most importantly, unexpected.

STORY "DOING"

We believe that we're in a new era in marketing. "Blast them with the fire hose of marketing" used to be the battle cry to gain sales in the 90s. And it was. And it worked. For awhile. As demographics of our targets have shifted, millennials entered the workplace and the marketing equation shifted. Now we must collaborate with them in our communications. Be allowed entry into their world, and that of their network's. Which means we must transition from traditional "storytellers" into story "doers."

What is story doing?

With the demise of mass media (and the interruptive marketing model that went with it), we are having to move on from the old-school model of agencies as storytellers. The things we learned about positionings, propositions and messaging hierarchies are still valid but they are secondary. Now the most important thing for a brand isn't communication, it's engagement.

Don't take my word for it. Look at the winners at El Sol or Cannes. Virtually all the accolades went to ideas that could in no way be described as ads. From REI to Harvey Nichols, Vans to La Liga, McWhopper to Netflix, they were variously about staff engagement, social movement, acts of empowerment or pieces of drama.

The storyteller is dead. Long live story doing.

STORY“DOING”

Red Bull Stratos generated more than 40 million views when Felix Baumgartner jumped from that balloon. From REI to Harvey Nichols, Vans to La Liga, McWhopper to Netflix, they were variously about staff engagement, social movement, acts of empowerment or pieces of drama.



WHAT WE BELIEVE

CAREFUL ONBOARDING

The last thing a new client needs is to hand hold the junior agency talent that has been assigned to their account. Shouldn't it be the other way around? At TheorySF, we don't believe in assigning more talent to an account until we understand the business better, the workload, the personalities and the expectations. As an experienced agency account manager, Russell will perform the account management role until we have enough history with Mendocino to guide us in deciding which account manager will be the right fit.

TEAM LEADER

Who will service as the Mendocino County Tourism Commission's main point of contact?

RUSSELL QUINAN

FOUNDER, ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT & STRATEGY



Russell is a veteran account manager and marketing strategist in the advertising agency world having spent 22 years in traditional and interactive agencies managing global and emerging technology and consumer brands. Russell's experience comes from working at some of the world's finest agencies: McCann, Foote Cone & Belding, Publicis and Lowe SMS NY as well as being a founding Partner of SF Interactive. SF Interactive was the largest independently-owned interactive agency in the United States and widely regarded as the industry leader for online advertising. He has launched award-winning integrated advertising campaigns for numerous Fortune 500 brands including XBOX, Yahoo, Microsoft, Louis Vuitton Moet Hennessy, Levis, , Sun Microsystems, Java, AT&T, Sony, Loreal, Snapple and General Motors to name a few. As a Partner and Director of Strategy and Account Services for three premier ad agencies in San Francisco, his strategy experience runs deep with consumer luxury and technology brands.

TEAMWORK

TODD MORITZ
INTERACTIVE DESTINATION MARKETER



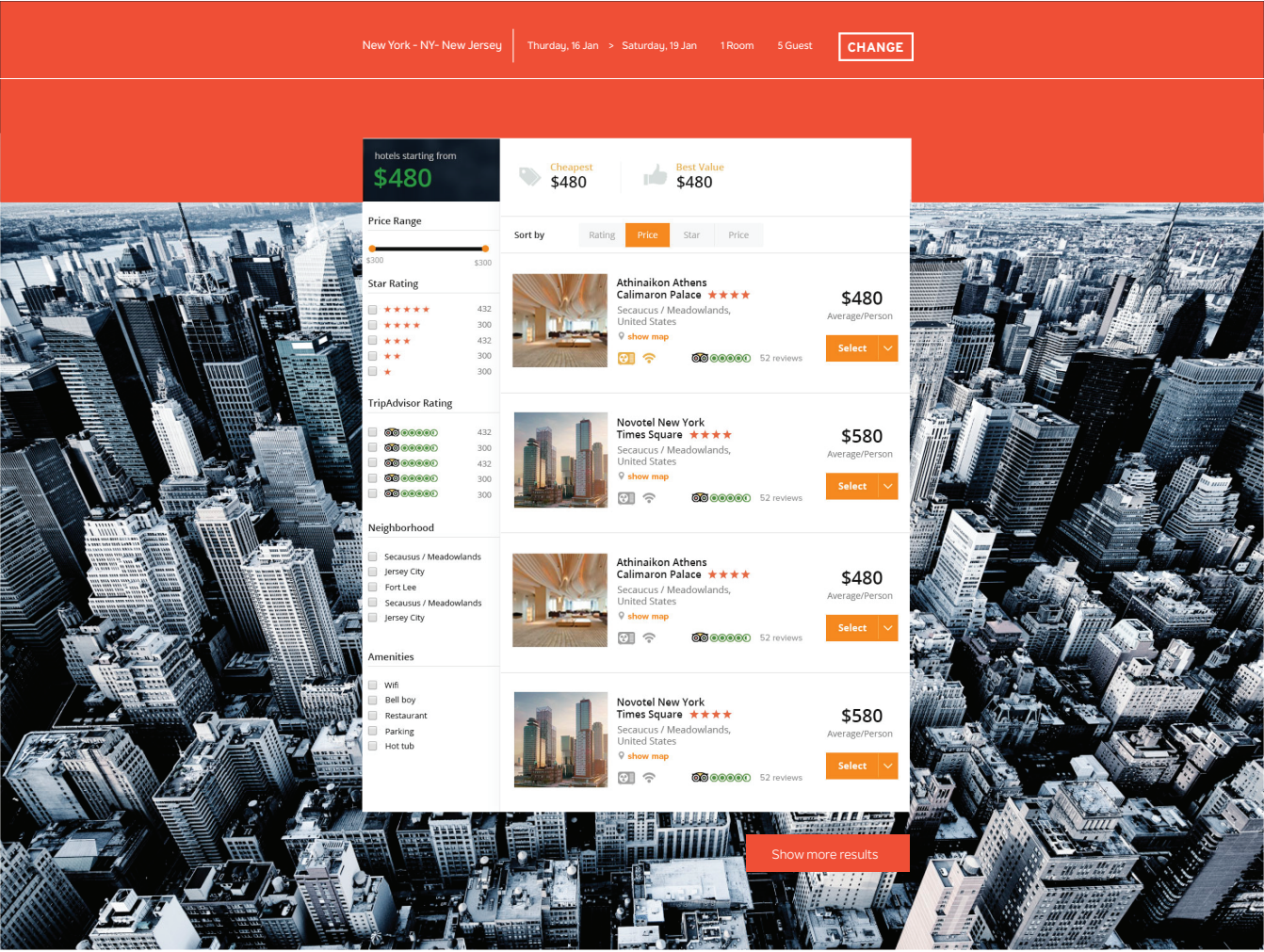
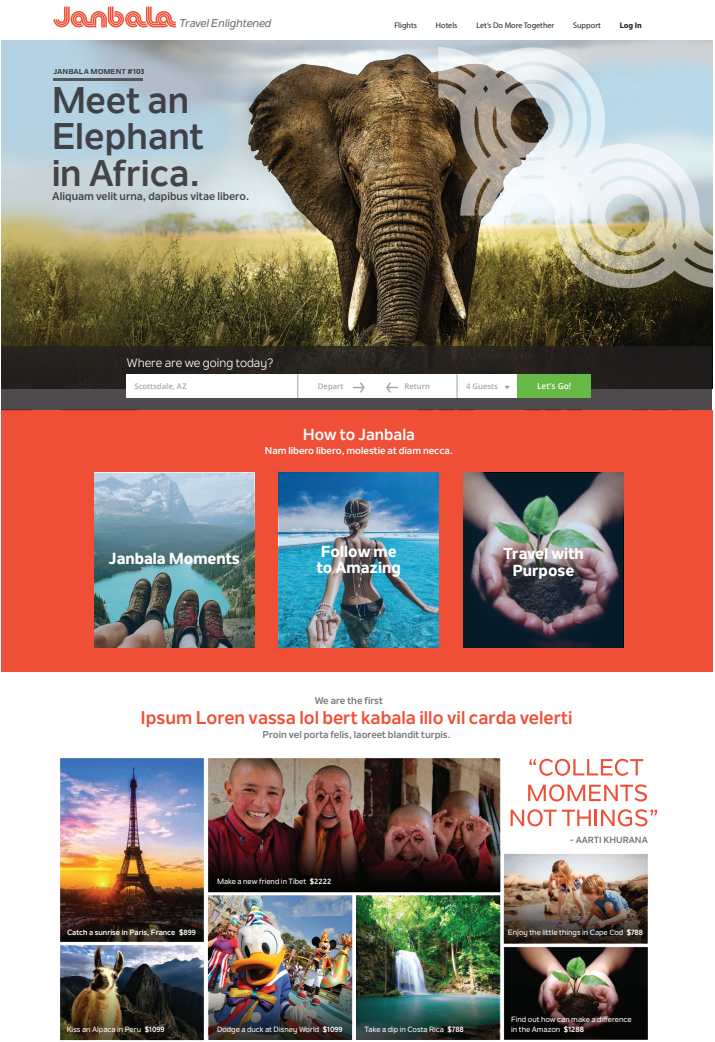
Todd Moritz was partner and Chief Operating Officer at Substance, a highly regarded digital creative agency in Portland, OR with a focus on travel and tourism clients. Todd's team created award-winning digital strategies and content driven websites for Travel Oregon, National Geographic Lodges, Visit Santa Barbara, Visit Buffalo Niagara, The Oregon Coast Visitors Association and many others. With 9 years of direct experience working with DMO and not-for-profit clients, Todd brings a unique perspective on what it takes to get "heads in beds" while fully understanding the unique business challenges that destinations face. Todd now joins TheorySF as a strategic partner and subject matter expert on travel and tourism related business.

OUR EXPERIENCE

Rate your company's experience and effectiveness in the following areas (1-5, with 1 being no experience and 5 being expert). You may include a few lines in each for explanation.

- (5) Creative Partnerships
- (5) Destination marketing
- (5) Non-profit Rebranding
- (5) Digital, print and broadcast media
- (3) Industry partners, including but not limited to CalTravel, Visit California, Destination Marketing Association
- (3) Online portals, including TripAdvisor, Visit California, Gay Travel
- (5) Photography & videography
- (5) Website production
- (3) Trade Media, including group travel, sports and meetings & events

Travel for Millennials





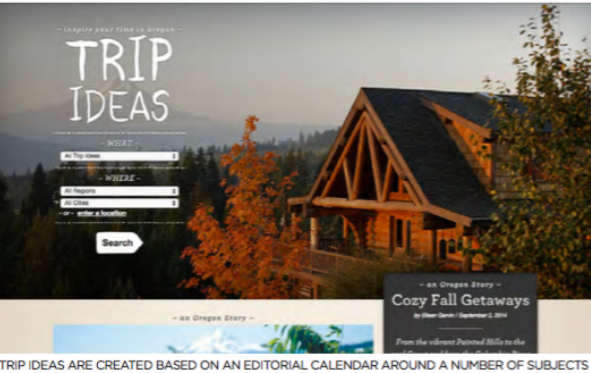
DESTINATION MARKETING

Case Study: Travel Oregon

Local, regional and state marketing organizations have “information competitors” on all sides: Google, Yelp, and TripAdvisor are some of the first places people go when researching a trip. Why should potential visitors come to your site? This was our challenge with TravelOregon.com – to create a trusted resource for Oregon travel inspiration and trip information.

Travel Oregon’s old site had a number of issues that needed to be resolved with the redesign. The old site was built on an inefficient Content Management System (CMS); the brand and visual language

was outdated; the site structure didn’t support new editorial content types; and the site wasn’t tablet- or mobile-friendly. Beyond the site structure, CMS and brand updates, one of the areas of focus on the new site is what makes Travel Oregon unique – a huge publishing effort to create new, compelling, inspirational editorial content.



We started by defining what makes Travel Oregon unique and why people would want to come to (and return) to TravelOregon.com. What Travel Oregon offers is an editorial perspective and context for content. Hand-crafted itineraries and Scenic Byways provide collections of things to do, see, eat, drink and places to stay.



WELCOME TO TRAVELOREGON.COM

Infinite lists of restaurants or attractions – while important from an overall database of resources standpoint – don’t provide a curated quintessential Oregon experience. That being said, there are thousands of resources available for TravelOregon.com visitors, so we created what we call “Finder Bars” that are used across the site – search widgets that allow people to choose recreation and activity types, restaurant cuisine, attractions, types of natural wonders, events... any number of places to see, stay, eat, drink and play. Finder Bars also help people find where to do these things in specific locations, either by choosing the region and/or city, or even using GPS data on mobile devices to find nearby resources.

Key to the content publishing needs was reinventing the Content Management System. Integrating and importing data from Travel Oregon’s central repository of resources (the Orb) with editorial content meant building a system that facilitated extensive data relationship-making and flexible publishing templates based on associated content. The site needed to support all of this content while remaining responsive to differing screen sizes, from desktop to laptop to tablet to mobile. WordPress provided an excellent framework and extensible structure to build the CMS on.



“MEGA MENUS” PROVIDE WAYS TO PROMOTE CHANGING EDITORIAL CONTENT IN THE NAVIGATION

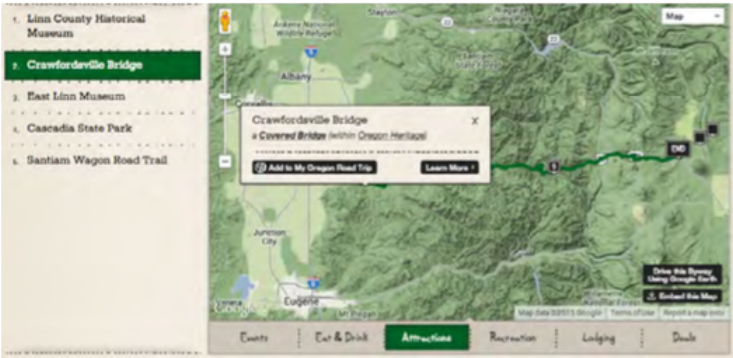
Beyond the site navigation and “mega menus” which provide editorial context for sections of the site, site search is a useful piece of navigation (not just a text field in the upper right corner). We implemented a “suggestive” search where letters and words typed into the search field are queried against content on the site to help people find what they are looking for.



TRAVEL OREGON’S RESPONSIVE DESIGN MAKES SURE THE SITE LOOKS GREAT ON ALL PLATFORMS AND DEVICES, AND EXTENDS DEVICE FUNCTIONALITY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FEATURES LIKE GPS LOCATION

One of the technical features that is a highlight of traveloregon.com is the responsive design. Depending on the browser size (large desktop, small desktop, tablet horizontally, tablet vertically, small tablet, smart-phone), the site layout, navigation and content adjusts to provide an appropriate, relevant browsing experience.

The site structure and CMS enables the Travel Oregon team to publish and feature content across the site, creating new opportunities for storytelling and advertising revenue. One of the biggest impacts of the new site is the independence created between the presentation layer (what people see) and the data layer (the CMS). This has allowed us to implement continuous improvements to both the design, content hierarchy and publishing system. That's one of the long term goals for TravelOregon.com: to see how people are using the site, determine if the publishing methods need to change, and implement enhancements in small increments instead of ending up with a site that is outdated in a couple of years.



SCENIC BYWAYS SHOW EDITORIAL-SELECTED ATTRACTIONS, BUT ALSO ALLOW VISITORS TO FIND OTHER RESOURCES ALONG THE ROUTE - YOU CAN EVEN "VIRTUALLY" DRIVE THE ROUTE USING GOOGLE EARTH

One example of continuous improvement has been the integration of the 7 Wonders of Oregon campaign. Featuring video and user generated content, 7 Wonders combines the inspirational images people are posting on Instagram at locations like Crater Lake, the Painted Hills, and the

Oregon Coast, with the information needed to go and visit that location. Approved Instagram photos are pulled into the CMS and "assigned" to a Wonder based on the geolocation of where the photo was taken compared to geofences created around each Wonder (with overrides for any errors). This created data relationships between all the Wonders and the images, so when a site visitor clicks to enlarge an Instagram photo, it links to more information about that location. Conversely, each Wonder page is populated with photos associated with that Wonder. Not being ones to build something once and throw it away, we've extended this functionality to Travel Oregon's fall Bounty campaign, featuring Food Trip photos from Instagram on the home page, while keeping all the Wonders content displaying in the appropriate places.



INSTAGRAM PHOTOS LINK TO THE APPROPRIATE WONDER TO PROVIDE BOTH THE INSPIRATION TO DRAW PEOPLE IN, AND THE INFORMATION TO GET THEM ON THE ROAD TO THE LOCATION

It's nice to see the site being recognized by our peers in the design and travel industries, being named a Communication Arts Site of the Week, a Webby honoree in the 2013 Tourism category, and winning a Mercury Award for Best State Travel Website in the country.

<http://traveloregon.com>

TRANSFORMING TECH TO HUMAN



Cisco =
Bringing people
together



BREATHING NEW LIFE

HP "On" Campaign

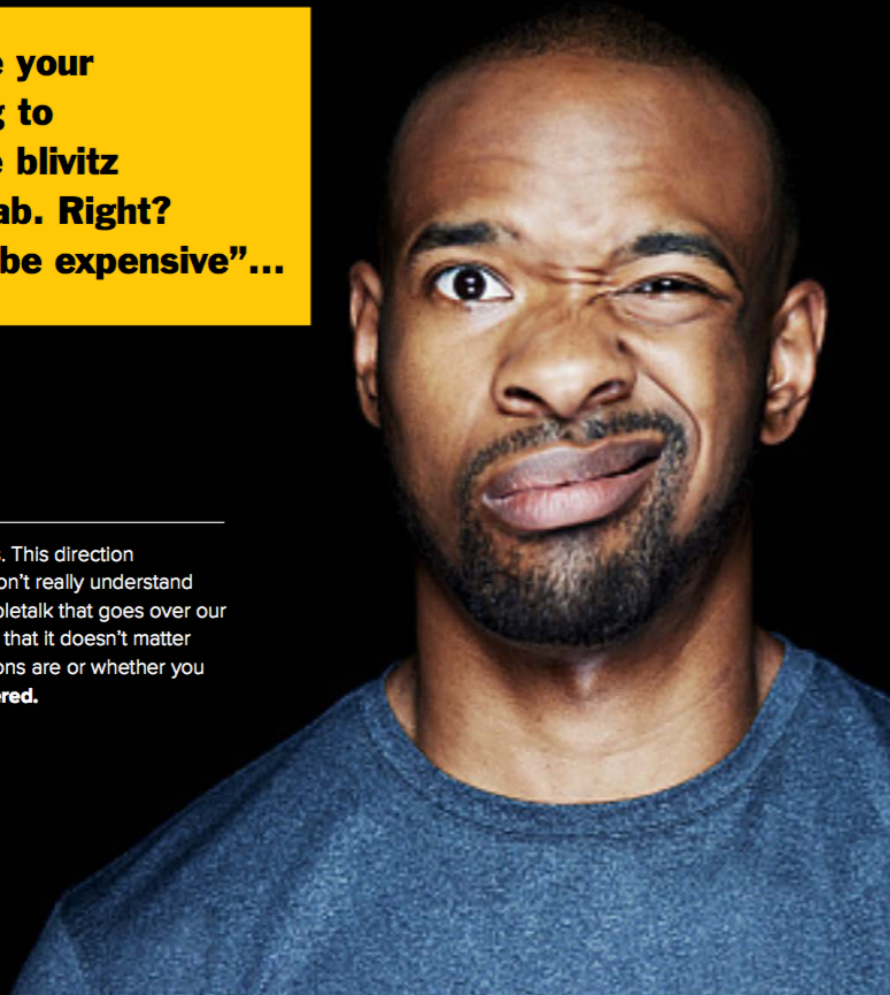


CONNECTING

“O yeah, it looks like your water heater is going to need a new frontside blivitz off the squeebsquwab. Right? Ya follow me? Could be expensive”...

Repair Jibberish

There has long been distrust of mechanics. This direction is based on the insight that most people don't really understand the “repalrese” mechanics use. It's all doubletalk that goes over our heads. In this campaign platform, we show that it doesn't matter what the ridiculous unintelligible explanations are or whether you understand it or not. **Usurance has it covered.**





Outdoor

1

Out-of-warranty:

Wow, that flurbitz is really stuck in your carburetor!

2



3

Don't get stuck paying for repair gibberish.

Get **Usurance**.

4

Premium Extended Service Plans for home and auto.

Get a free quote now

usurance

Protect the things you love, longer.

1

Out-of-warranty:

Yep, it's a busted valve in your upper squeeb squab.

2



3

Don't get stuck paying for repair gibberish.

Get **Usurance**.

4

Premium Extended Service Plans for home and auto.

Get a free quote now

usurance

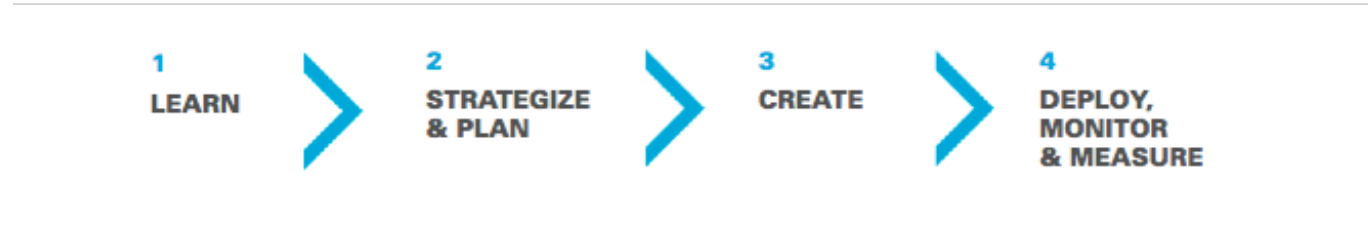
Protect the things you love, longer.



Outdoor



OUR STANDARD PROCESS



PHASE 1: LEARN

The purpose of this phase is to learn as much as possible about the MCTC offering, your vision, target audiences wants, needs and desires, competition and current trends. Focus would be on competitive positioning as well as the thoughts and feelings of our target audiences and potentially media, We'll also turn to any client-supplied secondary market research to help inform our efforts. There are many variables to understand. Once we have all the facts on the table and we're confident in our assessment, we'll move to the next stage.

Activities include:

2. Review any client supplied research materials or online "freesearch" information.
3. Perform creative asset audit
4. Perform key stakeholder interviews internal/external (up to 10)
 - a. Attempt interviews with media
5. Key competitor review and audit

OUR PROCESS

PHASE 2: STRATEGIZE & PLAN

The purpose of this stage is to develop the strategic brand positioning and creative big idea. It's here that we will develop a positioning and brand strategy for MCTC. Who are we? What are our brand building blocks? Who are we talking to? What do we need to say? How do we position our benefits so that it provides maximum brand impact? How do we really get "butts in beds?"

We'll know the answers to these questions and more after this phase.

Activities include:

1. Development of brand positioning
2. Development of creative brief
3. Develop the big "brand idea"
4. Develop key messaging alternatives by segment

Deliverables include:

1. Brand positioning
2. Master brand strategy
3. Brand creative "Big Idea"
4. Key messaging options by segment

OUR PROCESS

PHASE 3: CREATE

In this phase, we will use the approved documentation from the previous phases and begin a brand identity creative exploratory with multiple brand designers. We will leave no stone unturned in exploring the proper brand expression. It must be perfect. We'll develop numerous creative options (3-5) along a continuum of softer through more aggressive alternatives. Based on your feedback, and or testing, we will revise one direction up to 3 revisions to get it to final and approved. Once the creative direction is set in stone, we will develop a Brand Style Guide that will enable TheorySF or your team to implement branding on all communications.

OUR PROCESS

PHASE 4: LAUNCH & OPTIMIZE

Our advertising/marketing tactics will be driven by an approved media plan. The plan will outline actual creative elements that will need to be developed for launch (print/TV/online/social/outdoor, etc...). This plan will be approved by you in advance of our production work. There will be no surprises. Part of the job is to also assess the impact of communications and fine tune them.

Analytics.

Our communications will stimulate the marketplace. We definitely want to understand what works and what doesn't from the perspective of ROI. We will recommend either a basic analytics system (Google Analytics) or something more advanced depending on the outcome of our kick off meeting and your desire to understand every element.

Regardless of system selected, we would engage in numerous multivariate tests to ensure that each creative element is working as hard as it possible can. When we launched Alibaba in the United States, we spent most of our time in optimization. It's amazing what a few tweaks to messaging, media and creative can accomplish.

BRINGING TEAMS TOGETHER

Our team has significant experience of bringing disparate groups together.

As the SVP, global leader on the XBOX account for McCann Erickson, Russell was responsible for managing XBOX marketing and partners in 39 countries. As you can imagine, competing interests, cultural differences, personality differences, business objective differences, language differences and political issues were always on the table. At the same time, numerous global business partners needed to be brought into alignment. Russell was tasked with ensuring all XBOX resources were brought into the fold, had a clear purpose, marching orders and swim lanes.

Russell has developed an honest, diplomatic, team-building approach to collaboration and management.

We know the we can make a positive impact on the MCTC. Our experience finding the right connective tissue between brands and audience segments, creative that moves the needle, and team strength gives us a strong chance at a home run!

Batter up!

**Thank you for your
consideration!**