

United Planet;

Branding a volunteer nonprofit



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PREFACE

“Establishing a successful brand involves more than having a catchy brand name; it requires hard work and a good strategy.”¹ While non-profit organizations often do not consider themselves brands, having a brand is important to achieve an organization’s mission. Although branding should enhance fundraising and ensure the implementation of the organization’s mission, implementing activities to protect the brand often meets internal resistance.²

This thesis is based upon studies conducted from January 2007 to July 2007 during my internship at United Planet.³ I am writing this thesis on United Planet, an international non-profit based in Boston, Massachusetts. Since the organization is relatively young, it has not yet investigated its current position in the market. I am focusing my research on brand management since the lack of visibility and the ever-increasing number of competitors are influencing the organization’s competitiveness.⁴ Its current lack of differentiation puts United Planet’s competitiveness in serious jeopardy. Brand management would be an effective way of enhancing its competitive edge.⁵

My main research question is:

How can brand management help improve the competitive advantage of United Planet in order to enhance its current position in the market?

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor from The Hague University, Ms. Hernández. Without her advice and unique support this thesis would never have become a reality. I would like to thank the staff of United Planet for their assistance and positive attitude. I would like to express my gratitude to Donnie Baker and Dave Santulli for their valuable comments. I would also like to thank Ana Colmenero, John Philips and Michael Vaughn for their assistance in correcting this thesis.

¹ Retrieved from KnowThis.com (n.d)

² See Appendix 1: Transcript of an interview with David Santulli, Executive director of United Planet

³ For an elaborate overview of my activities, please ask me for my Final Placement Report

⁴ See Appendix 1: Transcript of an interview with David Santulli, Executive director of United Planet

⁵ As can be concluded from my research



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	2
Table of contents	3
CHAPTER 1: Introduction	5
<i>1.1 The Problem Statement</i>	5
<i>1.2 Research Questions</i>	5
1.2.1 Central Question	5
1.2.2 Subsidiary questions	5
<i>1.3 Justification of research & methodology</i>	6
<i>1.4 Organisation of paper</i>	7
CHAPTER 2: Company's profile	8
<i>2.1 Introduction</i>	8
<i>2.2 Mission, vision and objectives</i>	8
2.2.1 Mission statement	8
2.2.2 Vision	8
<i>2.3 Organizational initiatives</i>	9
2.3.1 Quest initiative	10
<i>2.4 Organizational structure and culture of United Planet</i>	11
2.4.1 Organizational structure	11
2.4.2 Organizational culture	12
<i>2.5 Conclusion</i>	12
CHAPTER 3: Analysis of the situation	13
<i>3.1 Introduction</i>	13
<i>3.2 Internal vs. External analysis</i>	13
3.2.1 Internal analysis	13
3.2.2 External analysis	14
<i>3.3 Competitive analysis</i>	16
3.3.1 Recommendations for the Quest department	16
3.3.1.1. Recommendation for each region	17
3.3.1.2. Recommendations concerning volunteer activities	19
3.3.1.3. Recommendations concerning additional initiatives	19



3.3.1.4. Recommendations concerning Mystery Guest Approach	19
3.4 <i>Field of Forces</i>	20
3.5 <i>Target Audience</i>	21
3.5.1 Target segmentation	23
3.6 <i>Conclusion</i>	24
CHAPTER 4: Non-profit brand management; an application of theory	25
4.1 <i>Branding; an introduction</i>	25
4.2 <i>Non-profit brand management</i>	25
4.3 <i>United Planet</i>	27
4.4 <i>Branding recommendations</i>	28
4.4.1. Implementations	28
4.4.1.1 UP Day	29
4.4.1.2 iHeartworld	32
4.4.1.3 Style Guide	34
4.5 <i>Conclusion</i>	35
CHAPTER 5: Survey Analysis	37
5.1 <i>Introduction</i>	37
5.2 <i>Positioning</i>	37
5.3 <i>Survey conclusions</i>	39
5.4 <i>Desired Image</i>	40
5.5 <i>Conclusion</i>	41
CHAPTER 6: Conclusion & Recommendations	43
6.1 <i>SWOT analysis</i>	43
6.2 <i>Final recommendations</i>	44
6.2.1 Recommendations according to the marketing mix	44
6.2.2 Internal recommendations	46
6.3 <i>Conclusion</i>	49
6.3.1 Response to main research question	51
References	53
Appendices	



Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

§ 1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

United Planet is an international non-profit organization based in Boston, Massachusetts. While working in the organization, I have come across a variety of problems. The most crucial issue is the lack of brand management. The organization's competitiveness is clearly influenced by the lack of visibility, the ever-increasing number of competitors and the current lack of differentiation.⁶ As mentioned in the preface, brand management would be an effective way of enhancing United Planet's competitive edge.

After thorough desk research, detailed information will be provided on both the current situation of United Planet (internal analysis) as well as information on its competitors (external analysis). Based on an in-depth analysis of the situation, I will review and evaluate the problem critically. I will also create a positioning map to show a clear view on the position of United Planet in the eyes of alumni volunteers.

The ultimate goal of this research is to advise United Planet on brand management and give recommendations for the future. My recommendations, organized in a marketing communication plan, will help United Planet in becoming a leading non-profit company.

§ 1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

§ 1.2.1 CENTRAL QUESTION

How can brand management help improve the competitive advantage of United Planet in order to enhance its current position in the market?

In order to find the answer to this question, I will need to find out what brand management includes. I will have to find out more about the image of United Planet and investigate its position amongst competitors.

§ 1.2.2 SUB QUESTIONS

1. How does United Planet present itself; what is its corporate identity?
2. According to the executive director and founder of the organization, David Santulli, what is United Planet's desired image?
3. How do alumni volunteers perceive United Planet and its most revenue generating initiative, the Quest program? How do they see its corporate image?
4. According to United Planet alumni, what is the organization's present position amongst USA-based volunteer organizations?
5. What can United Planet improve to grow and manage its brand?

⁶ As discussed in an informal meeting with the Marketing Director of United Planet.



§ 1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

An inductive approach is needed to effectively answer these questions, since a hypothesis will not be the center of this research. I will use descriptive and explanatory research, and perform secondary research on all the subsidiary questions. During my desk research, I will focus mainly on the Internet (relevant websites) and on literature (relevant articles and/or books). My qualitative research will be slightly broader. I will make use of focus groups and surveys to get a clear image of the current situation.

<i>Sub. Res. Question</i>	<i>Research strategy</i>	<i>Data collection method</i>
1. How does United Planet present itself; what is its corporate identity?	Desk research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study of the internet (United Planet's website, etc.) ▪ Study of relevant literature on identity ▪ Articles from newspapers
	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interview with Executive Director
2. According to the executive director and founder of the organization, David Santulli, what is United Planet's desired image?	Desk research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study of relevant literature on brand
	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interview with Marketing Director and Executive Director
3. How do alumni volunteers perceive United Planet and its most revenue generating initiative, the Quest program; How do they see its corporate image?	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus groups⁷
	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conducting a questionnaire
4. According to United Planet alumni, what is the organization's present position amongst USA based volunteer organizations?	Desk research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study of relevant literature on positioning ▪ Study of the Internet (United Planets website, etc.)
	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus groups
	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conducting a questionnaire
5. What can United Planet improve to grow and manage its brand?	Desk research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Background information study of relevant literature and internet sites on non-profit brand management
	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus groups
	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conducting a questionnaire

Terminology

Identity - "Every organisation has an identity. As in humans, the identity is a set of characteristics by that differentiates it from others. Organisations' identity is made different, however, by the fact that it can be used as a strategic tool in the process of fulfilling the goals and vision of the organisation. Organisational theoreticians name organisational identity as the experiences, feelings and ideas the employees have of the organisation, while concepts as corporate identity and corporate brand also consider the external and internal reputation and image. The identity of the

⁷ These focus groups were conducted before the survey.

organisation can be perceived and experienced through the organisation's structure, its products and services, the way it shapes its environment, how it communicates and the way it behaves. These factors will influence how both insiders and outsiders see the organisation." (Vatne, 2003)

Image - "An image is the set of meanings by which an organisation is known and through which people describe, remember and relate to it. That is the result of the interaction of a person's beliefs, ideas, feelings and impressions about an organisation." (Dowling, 1986)⁸

Competitor - According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, "a competitor is a person, team, or company that is competing with others." (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2005) To compete with means to try to be more successful than someone or something else. In my thesis, a competitor is a US-based volunteer non-profit / profit with a short-term program in more than two countries.

Brand - "A brand is a customer experience represented by a collection of images and ideas; often, it refers to a symbol such as a name, logo, slogan, and design scheme. A brand is an approximate - yet distinct - understanding of a product, service or company." (Neumeier, 2003)

§ 1.4 ORGANISATION OF PAPER

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Research question</i>
Chapter 1	Introduction	Research proposal, Research questions	
Chapter 2	Organization's profile	Mission, vision, objectives, organizational structure and culture	
Chapter 3	Analysis of the situation	Internal vs. external analysis, field of forces, target audience	Sub. Question 1
Chapter 4	Nonprofit brand management	Theory and application of theory to United Planet	Sub. Question 5
Chapter 5	Survey analysis	Image, positioning, survey conclusions	Sub. Question 2, 3, 4
Chapter 6	Conclusion and recommendations	SWOT analysis, communication objectives, strategies, tools, activities and implementations	Central question

⁸ As cited by Vos, M. in Integrated Communication; Corporate Image

Chapter 2: COMPANY'S PROFILE

§ 2.1 INTRODUCTION

United Planet is an international nonprofit with 501(c)3 legal status focusing on public education. Its current Executive Director, David Santulli, founded the organization in November 2001. United Planet's mission is to foster cross-cultural understanding and friendship, support communities in need, and promote social and economic prosperity among cultures in order to unite the world in a community beyond borders.⁹

§ 2.2 MISSION, VISION AND ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES

§ 2.2.1 MISSION STATEMENT

*"The mission of United Planet is to foster cross-cultural understanding and friendship, support communities in need, and promote social & economic prosperity among cultures in order to unite the world in a community beyond borders."*¹⁰

§ 2.2.2 VISION

David Santulli, the Executive Director, developed goals for the year 2007, 2011 and 2035¹¹. He based the organizational objectives for those years on results from the past. The organizational objectives below, is the seven-fold path of that vision of 2007. Please note that specifications of the organizational initiatives are indicated below the vision.

UNITED PLANET'S VISION OF 2007

Question of Purpose: How can United Planet create true social change globally?

Seven Fold Path: *organizational objectives for 2007*

- Send over 350-400 short-term trained, skilled and unskilled, volunteers worldwide on Quests and 20-30 trained long-term volunteers to assist communities, build cross-cultural friendship, and educate others about their experiences.
- Build general cross-cultural and global awareness and target conflicting cultures in local communities as a peace-building measure through over 275 Cultural Awareness Project (CAP) presentations.
- Promote leadership, creativity, and exchange through over 3 interconnected school and community clubs worldwide.
- Celebrate cultures and inspire global interest through United Planet Day celebrated in Quest locations worldwide by at least 20 volunteers.
- Utilize the Internet and modern technology to unite a global community with over

⁹ See Appendix 1: Transcript of an interview with David Santulli, Executive director of United Planet

¹⁰ United Planet's mission. Retrieved from the organization's site;
<http://www.unitedplanet.org/mission.html>

¹¹ See Appendix 2: Strategic brief of United Planet; The Making of a Global NGO



8,000 members through stimulating and entertaining educational and friendship-building activities.

- Distribute publications and media to raise cross-cultural and global awareness through the publication of a UP calendar (including volunteer stories, photos, and quotes) and the book of global inspiration.
- Continue to evolve & discover new avenues for change.

§ 2.3 ORGANIZATIONAL INITIATIVES

United Planet's primary mission is *to increase cross-cultural understanding and friendship between different cultures*. This was initially done by organizing lectures on different cultures in front of various audiences; these lectures formed the so-called Cultural Awareness Programs. In 2004, United Planet started providing volunteer opportunities in different countries of the world to develop its activities and get funds to allow its growth. This program became known as the United Planet's Quests. This program is how *helping communities in need worldwide* was added to the organization's mission.

In order to fulfill this mission, United Planet nowadays undertakes a range of initiatives, such as Quest, CAP, VOE, the UP Forum, and UP Ambassadors Club.¹²

- Through the **Quest** program, people of all ages and nationalities get the opportunity to volunteer abroad. Along with voluntary work, they get the chance to get to know the local culture by participating in language lessons, cultural activities and excursions.
- United Planet's **CAP** (Cultural Awareness Project) brings multicultural presentations to schools, nonprofit groups, associations, and government offices and companies around the world.
- The **VOE** (Voices of Earth) online community provides an opportunity to interact with people worldwide, exchange cultures, and examine important global, regional, and country-specific issues.
- In the **UP Forum**, members discuss cultural issues; this makes the forum a mutually beneficial environment for both members and volunteers.
- By founding an **UP Ambassador Club**, students can develop leadership skills while creating and promoting essential educational, humanitarian, and peace-building projects.

Nowadays, the main activity of United Planet is to manage Quest volunteer programs and its main objective is *continuous growth* for the future while *increasing its impact* on the different communities in need.

¹² United Planet's organizational initiatives. Retrieved from the organization's site; <http://www.unitedplanet.org/acc.html>

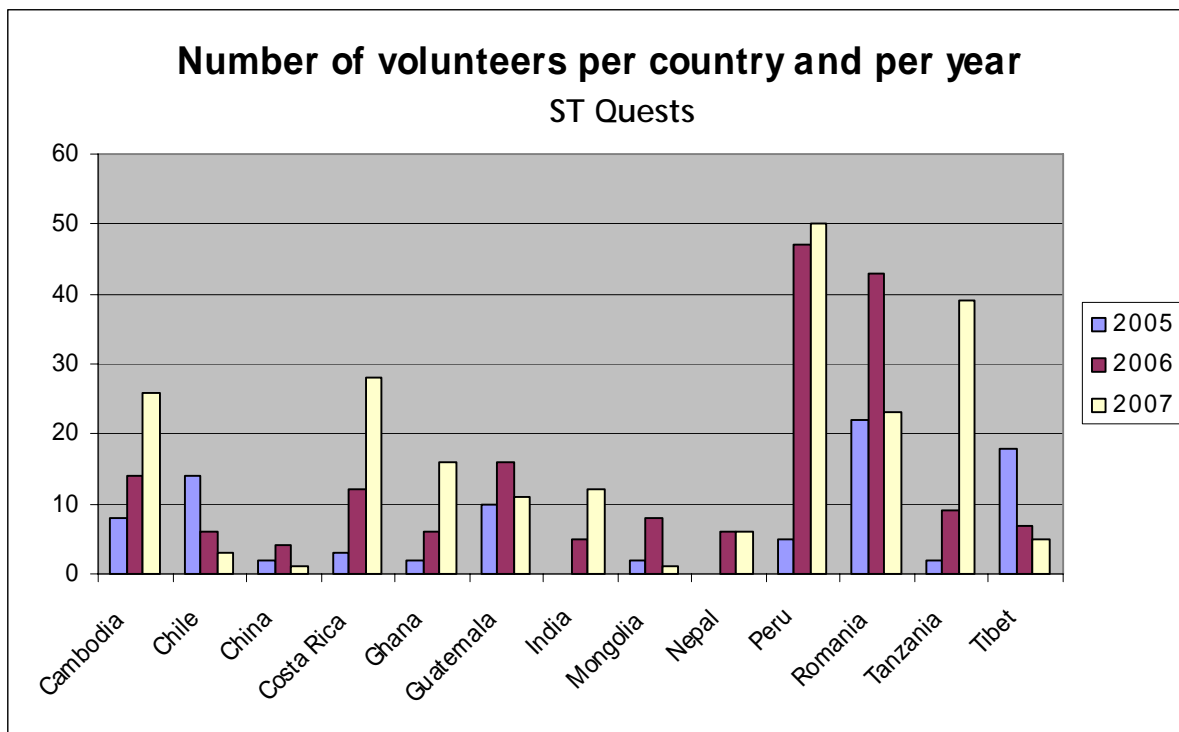


§ 2.3.1 THE QUEST INITIATIVE

Since the United Planet's revenue is predominantly generated from the Quest Program, I will focus on this initiative. The organization offers two different types of Quests:

- o Short-term: Volunteers can choose between seventeen countries, time periods ranging from one to twelve weeks. These programs are available all year round. The organization pays in-country coordinators to take care of the volunteer placements.
- o Long-term: Volunteers can choose from thirty-six countries, time periods ranging from six months to one year. For these programs, United Planet is the US and Canadian partner of the International Cultural Youth Exchange federation. The ICYE has thirty-four National Committees throughout the world, which are both sending and receiving volunteers. Programs start only in January and August. Note that United Planet is not a member of the federation at the moment but only a partner. Additional costs accompany becoming a full member.

People willing to go on a Quest are required to pay a program fee that usually covers all their costs while they are in the country. United Planet provides home-stays, cultural activities and language lessons with the idea of integrating volunteers into various cultures while helping out a community in need. Prices depend on the country and the duration of the stay. If people go as a group, every additional person gets a 10% discount on the quest fee.



The total number of volunteers going abroad with UP has increased by 20% between 2005 and 2006. In 2006, Romania and Peru were the most popular destinations. Currently, short-term Quest fees represent more than 90% of total program revenues and more than 66% of the organization's total revenues.

With 17 volunteers sent abroad for six months or one year in 2006, the increase of long-term volunteers resulted in bigger revenues from the long-term programs. Although an even greater growth is expected in 2007 - in May 2007 already 50 applications were recorded - long-term volunteer programs still represent a small percentage of the organization's total revenues.

When a volunteer participates in a Quest, they can choose from a variety of activities. United Planet offers 22 different activities, varying from community work to conservation work. A full list of these activities is included in the competitive analysis, which can be found in my Research Dossier.

An incredible number of organizations, both nonprofit and for-profit, offer programs comparable to United Planet's Quests. In order to focus the research, a competitor in this report can be classified as a U.S. based volunteer organization that at least provide short-term volunteer opportunities in two or more countries. Short-term volunteer opportunities can be defined as volunteer work from 1 to 12 weeks in length.

§ 2.4 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & CULTURE OF UNITED PLANET

§ 2.4.1 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

In order to have an accurate picture of United Planet, it is important to take a look at its organizational structure. The organization has a decentralized structure with little hierarchy. Please find the organizational chart as of June 2007 and a potential organizational chart for the future enclosed in Appendix 3.

The organization has only three paid, full-time employees internally: David Santulli, Executive Director; Theresa Higgs, Quest Director; and Donnie Baker, Marketing Director. All other team members are volunteering for United Planet. The staff is therefore rather young and mostly inexperienced. Team members volunteer for diverse periods of time. The staff turnover is therefore very high. It is important to note that United Planet also has external staff members. All the in-country coordinators, for example, coordinate the Quest programs from their home country. These country coordinators receive a commission for each volunteer they receive in their country.

United Planet consists of 2 main departments: the Quest department and the marketing department. The Quest Director provides guidance for the Quest team. The Marketing Director, Donnie Baker, guides the marketing team. Both the Quest department and the marketing department have to report to David Santulli, the Executive Director, and the Board of Directors. The organization also has an accountant, an HR coordinator, an IT/Media Design coordinator, and diverse Project Coordinators; currently they are all volunteers with an average contract length from



three to six months. They work independently and have weekly meetings with David Santulli.

During my first two months at United Planet the lack of organizational structure became clear. This lack of structure was especially noticeable in the marketing department. Since it was clear that this lack of structure was confusing for the interns, I was asked to develop a draft version of a marketing plan. In March 2007, United Planet hired a Marketing Director whom, based on my marketing plan of February 2007, is in process of creating a final Marketing Plan. In Appendix 4, you can find the marketing plan I developed preceded by the preliminary marketing departmental structure designed by the Marketing Director.

Since United Planet is only six years old, it is important to better structure the organization in order to enable future growth. Lack of strategic planning will cause poor results in the long term. In this situation, it is relevant to have a clear strategy with SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time framed). More strategic planning in marketing should, therefore, help manage the growth of the organization.

§ 2.4.2 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

United Planet wants its staff to be perceived as passionate, creative, and relentlessly determined. According to Dave Santulli, these characteristics are necessary for a future intern at United Planet. "Our organizations needs a passionate team of coordinators, since they are crucial to taking United Planet to the next level. Our volunteers are the force behind the organization, without them we would not have been able to grow United Planet as it did." (Santulli, 2007)

However, there are some issues involved, since limited revenue has prevented the Board of Directors from increasing the number of paid staff members. The high turnover results in loss of experienced people and a need to constantly train new employees. One of the key problems with losing staff members is that relevant information gets lost in the transition. Information about countries, projects, past volunteers, current volunteers and potential volunteers is crucial and should not be dependent on individuals. Part of my recommendations will be based on this lack of continuity.

§ 2.5 CONCLUSION

United Planet is a relatively young organization, with a lack of internal organizational structure. In order to grow in the future, the organization should focus on building a solid internal structure while hiring some key paid positions, such as an accountant, HR manager, Development Director and an IT/Media design manager. United Planet should also focus on improving the process of turnover, since too much relevant information gets lost in transition. The vision of United Planet needs some attention as well. The organizational objectives are not SMART and not department-specific.



CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION

§ 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to clearly give recommendations for the future, it is important to understand United Planet's current status. It is thus necessary to give a complete review of the organization's environment and the past performance of the marketing function. The marketing department needs a detailed understanding of the organizations' current strategic position in order to develop meaningful objectives for the future.

This chapter focuses on the internal and external analysis of United Planet. Important financial information is also provided.

§ 3.2 INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

§ 3.2.1 INTERNAL ANALYSIS¹³

Income by account per year

	2005	2006	June 2007
	%	%	%
<i>Short term quests</i>	91.05	61.31	80.86
<i>Long term quests</i>	7.57	23.90	8.29
<i>Donations</i>	1.38	11.68	11.12
<i>Other</i>		3.11	
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100

Taking into account the tables shown above, it is possible to make conclusions. First of all, in 2005 over 91% of the revenue was generated by the ST Quests. In 2006 this changed, with only 61% of the revenue coming from the ST Quests. In 2007, however, the organization's bulk of income is again the ST Quest program, with respectively 81%. In the past two years United Planet has seen an increase in donation rates.

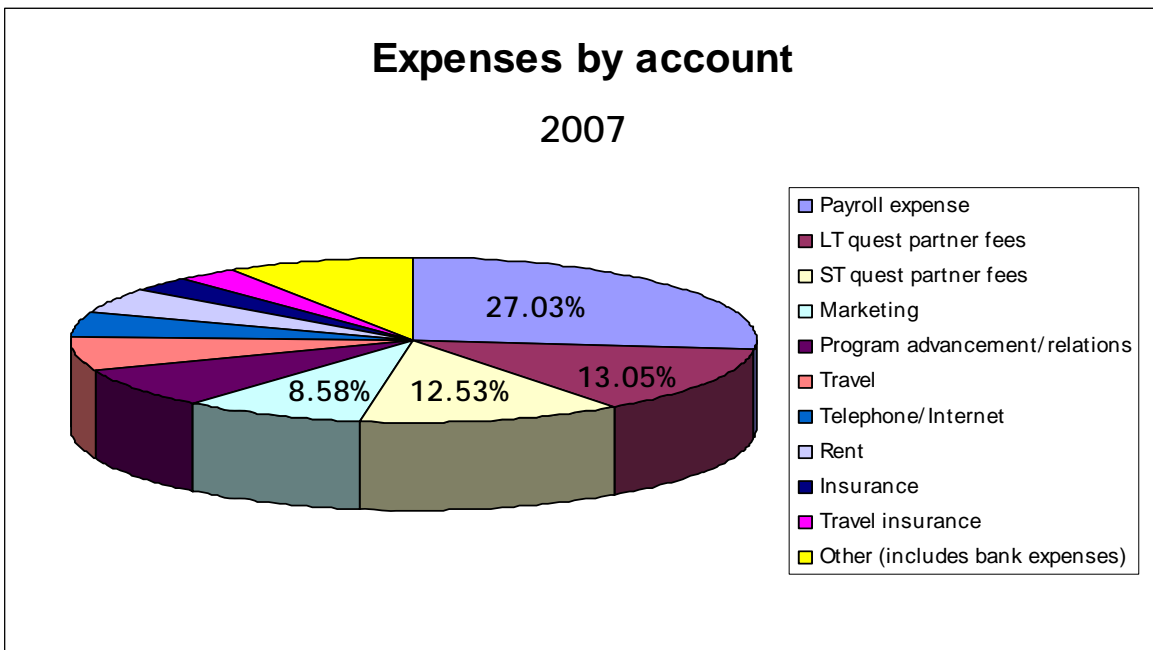
However, when looking at the graph, the year 2006 clearly shows more diversification and less dependence. Since the 2007 figures date from June and there is a clear seasonality,¹⁴ these figures may still change. Donnie Baker, the marketing director, has informed me, however, that United Planet is working toward a more balanced revenue mix.

In the graph shown on the next page, you will find the expenses of United Planet in percentages by account. Please take into account that these results are based on data of June 2007. Payroll expenses are a significant part of the organization's expenses. Marketing is responsible for less than 10% of the expenses. Having worked at United

¹³ This information is based on (financial) information, provided by L'Homme, M. United Planet's accountant.

¹⁴ The Quest volunteers have to subscribe at least two months in advance. There are two 'waves' of volunteers that can be identified, one which peaks in June, and one which peaks in September. The applications of September are already taken into account in these figures.

Planet, I have seen that for the marketing department, these funds are sufficient. In the future however, the organization should focus on expanding the marketing budget.



§ 3.2.2 EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

Market analysis

No market analysis had been carried out in the past to see where United Planet would be positioned among the other organizations in the field. It is interesting to see that non-profits as well as for-profit organizations operate in the same field; this makes it difficult for the organization to compete and make itself more visible. Even if the way of operating becomes more businesslike for nonprofits, United Planet still has few resources and is deeply dependent on the program fees received from the volunteers the organization sends abroad.

It is important to recognize the current state of the independent sector in order to accurately understand and plan the future of United Planet. The independent sector consists of two tax-exempt organizations: 501(c)(3) charitable organizations and religious congregations and 501(c)(4) social welfare organizations. Combined, the two account for 5.9 percent of all organizations (including for profit) in the United States.¹⁵ More importantly, this number is growing. The number of US non-profit organizations grew 31 percent from 1987-1997; the number of non-profits is also growing worldwide. "Indeed, a veritable 'global associational revolution' appears to be under way, a massive upsurge of organized private, voluntary activity in virtually every region of the world—in the developed countries of North America, Western

¹⁵ The New Nonprofit Almanac & Desk Reference, Pg 28.

Europe, and Asia; throughout Central and Eastern Europe; and in much of the developing world.” (Lester, 1994)

PORTER'S FIVE FORCES¹⁶

Supplier Power (Partners)	Barriers to Entry (New Entrants)	Threat of Substitutes	Buyer Power (Volunteers)	Rivalry (Competitors)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are needy people all over the world, and therefore there are many programs catering to them • They are often ill-funded and somewhat unreliable • Supplier power is moderate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established relationships with global programs is extremely important for company reputation and volunteer safety • Low costs to enter, but sustaining revenue is very difficult • Government funding for non-profit • Barriers to Entry are moderate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers have a variety of other choices, including choices that are low or no cost and within safer environments • Other programs can also be used for college credit. • Local non-profits seem more reputable • Threat of Substitutes is high 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers are very sensitive to changes in price. • Buyer power is high because there are many substitutes and differentiation among competitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue is mostly fee-based so it's important for companies to gain volunteers • Although there is competition between the various programs, most have the “greater good” in mind and therefore are reluctant to be competitive • Rivalry is moderate

The Porter's Five Forces table shows the difficulty of operating in the industry. Within United Planet's segment, there are many substitutes and buyer power is high. This means that United Planet volunteers have choices as to where they will donate their time and money. Therefore, United Planet must further differentiate itself from the competition. The industry also has relatively low barriers to entry, allowing for competitors to infiltrate the sector, furthering the competitive environment.

Being a young, small organization, no market analysis had been carried out in the past to see where United Planet would be positioned among the other organizations in the field. It is interesting to see that not only nonprofit organizations, but also for-profit ones operate in the same field, which makes it difficult for the organization to compete and make itself more visible. Even if the way of operating becomes more businesslike for nonprofits, United Planet still has little resources and is deeply dependent on the program fees received from the volunteers the organization sends abroad.

¹⁶ Porter's Five Forces is developed with help of and information from Baker, D. United Planet's Marketing director.



§ 3.3 COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS¹⁷

Competitive analysis is crucial to building a strong identity for your organization.¹⁸

It has been difficult to compare the organizations in this niche, since the content of the programs differ substantially. The differences include location and in-country partner variability, as well as the possibility of additional services. The programs change frequently as well, as can be seen in United Planet's offering of Quest programs. The purpose of this Quest competitive analysis is to see where United Planet is positioned among its competitors. The competitive analysis has been done on U.S.-based volunteer organizations that provide at least short-term volunteer opportunities in multiple countries. Short-term volunteer opportunities can be defined as volunteer work from 1 to 12 weeks in length.

The following analysis is accurate for the period in which information was gathered (January 2007 - June 2007). After thorough research, 26 competitors have been found of whom 65% are not-for-profits (17) and 35% are for-profits (nine). These competitors consist of:

Not-for-profits

Cross-cultural Solutions
Global Citizens Network
Cosmic Volunteers
Instit. for Field Research Expeditions
Global Volunteers
Volunteers for Peace

Global Service Corps
Foundation Sustainable Development
AFS Intercultural Programs
Global Routes
International Volunteer Program
Amigos de las America

International Student Volunteers
Amizade
Habitat for Humanity
PeaceWork
YMCA Go Global

For-profits

I - to - I
Volunteer Adventures
Projects Abroad

World Endeavors
Global Crossroad
Global Vision International

AmeriSpan
Alliance Abroad
Exploration in Travel

Ideally, I would have ranked competitors according to significance. In this competitive analysis, however, I have had problems obtaining important data: specifically the number of volunteers each organization sends a year. The following conclusions are thus based on the offer of United Planet's competitors, i.e. presence in x countries, volunteer activities, and additional initiatives.

§ 3.3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE QUEST DEPARTMENT

The Quest Department is a crucial part of United Planet, since they receive all the applications of potential volunteers. "The Quest Coordinators are doing everything they can to make the experience for the volunteers as best as possible" (Santulli, 2007). However, my research shows that there is room for improvement. My recommendations will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

¹⁷ See my Research Dossier for the complete version of the competitive analysis.

¹⁸ Communication toolkit, Pg 6.



3.3.1.1 Recommendations for each region¹⁹

3.3.1.1.1 Africa

In Africa, Ghana is the most popular country among the competitors, as 57.7% of the total number of competitors provides volunteer opportunities there. In March 2007, 13 future volunteers have applied for Ghana. In 2005, only two volunteers went there, while in 2006 the number increased to seven. However, compared to the 290 applications registered in March 2007, Ghana is evidently less popular for future volunteers at United Planet than other countries.

Tanzania, for example, has already received 42 applications. Reasons for this could be the fact that United Planet offers a wider variety of activities in this country. After review of surveys, filled in by alumni, a discovery has been made that the quality of Tanzania is very poor, in contrast to the quality United Planet would like to provide. The in-country coordinator seems to be the main factor in the volunteers' disappointment.

For the future, it is extremely important to improve the quality of both Quest programs to compete in an efficient way against the competitors. Africa is one of the most popular continents among the competitors with respectively 76.9% of the total number of competitors present.

3.3.1.1.2 Asia

Cambodia is an unsaturated geographic location, when it comes to a competitive presence. Only three out of the 26 competitors (11.5%) offer programs here. Nevertheless, the competitors in Cambodia are relative 'big' for-profit players with an average of 26 sites per competitor. The organization has a big opportunity here, as only nonprofit organizations are present in this niche.

In the last two years, the number of future volunteers applying for a short term Quest in Cambodia has been growing from eight (out of 158 applications) in 2005 to 20 (out of 227 applications) in 2006 to 33 (out of 290 applications) registered in May 2007. At United Planet, Cambodia is ranked 4th when it comes to the total number of applications per destination.

Besides Cambodia, Japan is also an unsaturated geographic location, when it comes to competitive presence. There are only two nonprofits situated there. United Planet launched its program last November (2006). At the moment, United Planet has already received 18 (out of 290) applications, which is extremely promising.

A disturbing fact has been discovered while researching the continent Asia. In 2005, 65 (out of 158) United Planet volunteers went to Thailand. However, due to the lack of an in-country coordinator, United Planet decided to close the program. The organization should work on finding a suitable in-country coordinator as soon as

¹⁹ These recommendations are based on research of the internal database of United Planet. This information is considered confidential and could thus not be included in the Appendix.

possible for Thailand. As can be seen from the results of 2005, Thailand has been very popular in the past; it would be a waste if the organization were not to exploit this opportunity.

3.3.1.1.3 Australia

In Australia, only five nonprofit and two for-profit organizations offer volunteer opportunities. Compared to the other continents, Australia has the fewest volunteer programs available. However, United Planet is looking for an in-country coordinator to develop at least one volunteer program on the continent. The continent of Australia can be considered a latent market for United Planet.

3.3.1.1.4 Europe

In Europe nonprofit organizations have a multitude of sites. Nine nonprofit organizations provide volunteer opportunities in 40 countries (ratio: 1:4.44), whereas three for-profit organizations have sites in five countries (ratio: 1:1.67).

Only one competitor (for-profit) has a site in Romania. No organization has a site in any of Romania's neighboring countries yet. In 2005, United Planet sent 22 volunteers to this country. In 2006, the amount of volunteers traveling to Romania was more than doubled with 51 volunteers going there. In May 2007, the organization has already registered 33 applications, but chances are this number will grow. Expanding the Europe programs with Eastern European countries near the Mediterranean Sea, such as Bulgaria, Hungary and Macedonia, is a strong recommendation.

3.3.1.1.5 North America

United Planet doesn't have short-term volunteer opportunities in North America. Nine of the 26 competitors (34.6%) are situated in the United States of America, Canada or Greenland. With an increasing number of local partnerships, the organization can easily develop United States programs.

3.3.1.1.6 Latin America

Latin America is the most popular continent among both nonprofit and for-profit organizations. 25 out of 26 competitors have sites in at least one or two countries. United Planet has programs in five countries.

In the past, United Planet has sent a significant number of volunteers to Costa Rica and Peru. In May 2007, the organization has already registered 47 applications for Peru and 35 for Costa Rica (out of 290 applications). These two countries are also represented in the top three of most popular countries among the competitors. That means that there is little or no competitive advantage in these countries, but somehow the organization managed to receive many applications.

However, there are some difficulties with other sites in Latin America, especially Chile. In 2005, the organization has sent 14 volunteers to this country. In 2006, the



number of volunteers has declined to eight. Right now, only four volunteers have registered. Therefore, I recommend that the quality of this program be evaluated.

3.3.1.2 Recommendations concerning volunteer activities

As mentioned before, when a volunteer participates in a Quest, they can choose from a variety of activities. United Planet offers 22 different activities. According to the Quest Coordinator for Latin America, Iraklis Grous, the most popular activity among United Planet volunteers is community-based volunteer work, especially working in orphanages and working with young children.

Both for-profits and nonprofits provide their target audience with a variety of activities to do during their volunteering period. Research has shown that from the total number of competitors, 73% provide community work as an activity.

However, there is some inconsistency in the activities on offer in the organization. In Cambodia, for example, you can choose to work in an orphanage and teach English to young children. United Planet uses four different activities to describe this program, working in an orphanage, working with young children, teaching English and teaching young children. The organization should improve these descriptions by clarifying it to the potential customer.

My research on the Internet shows that many competitors use similar language as United Planet when describing activities. Reformulating some of the activities is therefore recommended in order to differentiate the possible activities. For example, the term 'working toward women's empowerment' is rather vague and does not give an adequate description of the actual activity.

3.3.1.3 Recommendations concerning additional initiatives

12 nonprofit and eight for-profit organizations provide more than short-term volunteer opportunities; they also offer additional initiatives as well. These initiatives vary from doing an internship abroad to fundraising events. As stated before, not all the competitors offer additional initiatives. 22% of the competitors (five nonprofits and one for-profit organization) focus only on sending volunteers abroad.

United Planet offers, besides sending volunteers abroad, several additional initiatives. At the moment, United Planet provides internship possibilities, the CAP-program, the UP Ambassador's Club, Voices of Earth and the UP forum. It is important that United Planet develops these initiatives and uses them as a competitive advantage. It is more important to improve the current additional initiatives before expanding these initiatives.

3.3.1.4 Recommendations concerning mystery guest approach

A mystery guest approach is a type of research method that can be used to analyze customer relations of an organization's competitors. The mystery guest approach has been performed between the end of March and the second week of April 2007. Several emails have been sent to all the competitors of United Planet's competitive analysis.



Different template e-mails have been used for each continent. Note that the conclusions of the mystery guest approach are subjective rather than objective.

50% of the organizations responded within one or two days. The same goes for United Planet. Two Quest Coordinators both responded on the same day. One of them answered in a personal way. However, the reply could have been more detailed. One Quest coordinator answered after a week. The response was accurate, but too late. It is important that the coordinators answer within one or two days. This gives potential volunteers the feeling that the organization cares about them and is willing to answer all their questions.

Unfortunately, United Planet didn't answer the e-mails with questions concerning volunteer work in Africa, North America and Australia. After inquiry, I discovered that the Coordinator was not in the office at that time. United Planet was not the only organization that did not respond to some of the e-mails. Global Routes, PeaceWork and WorldEndeavors did not respond to any of the e-mails that have been sent. Besides that, there are several other competitors that did not respond to at least one of the e-mails.

After a thorough analysis, the conclusion can be drawn that United Planet's Quest Coordinators are doing quite well compared to the competitors. Almost all Quest coordinators responded to the e-mail, and the reply did not look too standard. For the future, it is extremely important that the Coordinators stay alert and answer their e-mails in an accurate way within one or two days. Monitoring and processing incoming emails should be a priority. They should focus on answering the questions of the potential volunteer. In order to cover for each other, the Quest Coordinators should make an agreement when one of the team members is out. It is necessary to respond quickly to all the incoming emails, because this will eventually attract more volunteers. It might also be wise to add more informational material about the country the person requested information about.

Another point of improvement would be to follow up more thoroughly with Quest volunteers. This works as follows: after a potential volunteer requests information, the Quest Coordinator responds to the e-mail. After a week, the Quest Coordinator sends another e-mail, asking whether the person received the information and if he or she has additional questions. In this way, the person stays involved, and the risk of forgetting United Planet will decrease.

§ 3.4 FIELD OF FORCES

In United Planet's case, the principal Field of Forces includes employees, mass media, donors, volunteers, community neighbours, distributors, educators, suppliers, governments and competitors.

I would like to stress the importance of employees in a field of forces. Within this Field of Forces, employees of the organization, both paid and unpaid, tend to have a different image of the company than consumers, who are considered the 'mass'. United Planet wants its employees to be perceived as passionate, creative, and



relentlessly determined.²⁰ This would be possible if they will pay more attention to the training, supervision and remuneration of the coordinators. At this moment, coordinators are the first contact point with potential customers. Since the organization demands a certain commitment of its coordinators, it might be mutually beneficial to come up with a way of compensating them. If the organization takes better care of their coordinators, they will ensure better mouth-to-mouth advertising as well.

Donors have great importance and influence on United Planet as well. A donor is an individual or company that donates money to United Planet. It is possible that if they lose trust in the company, they will decide to donate their money to one of the organization's competitors. United Planet receives a variety of donations every year, resulting in 11.12% of 2007 income (note that these figures are based on data until June 2007). Effective brand management can increase trust in the organization's brand and thus result in a further augmentation of donors.

Pressure groups also often influence managerial decisions within United Planet. To prevent actions from pressure groups, the organization is focusing on Corporate Social Responsibility. At this moment, for example, United Planet is making efforts towards AIDS prevention. Since the organization already is a charitable non-profit, it has to pay few attention to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Lastly, the importance of competitors is extremely high in United Planet's case. Since competitors influence the positioning of United Planet in the market, I should not only focus on United Planet, but also on their main competitors. This is why I included a very detailed competitive analysis. This analysis allows me to make a proper SWOT analysis for United Planet and will allow me to give recommendations on differentiation. The full competitive analysis can be found in my Research Dossier.

§ 3.5 TARGET AUDIENCE

United Planet's social mission, along with its volunteer opportunities, make this organization attractive for anyone interested in helping communities while travelling internationally. After having performed research²¹ on all applicants of the United Planet short-term / long-term Quest in 2007, the following patterns were discovered.

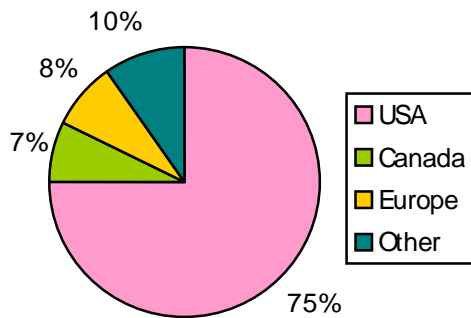
Firstly three times more females than males apply for a short-term Quest (224 females and 73 males applied for a short-term Quest in 2007). Since more females than males apply for a Quest, it might be interesting for the future to try and evoke the interest of males. However, the organization should also continue to focus on women since they are more willing to invest their time and skills in volunteer opportunities.

²⁰ See Appendix 1: Transcript of an interview with David Santulli, Executive director of United Planet.

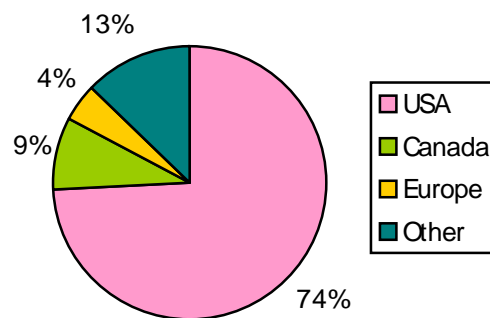
²¹ Again, this information is confidential and I have thus included solely percentages.



Nationality ST Female
volunteers who applied in

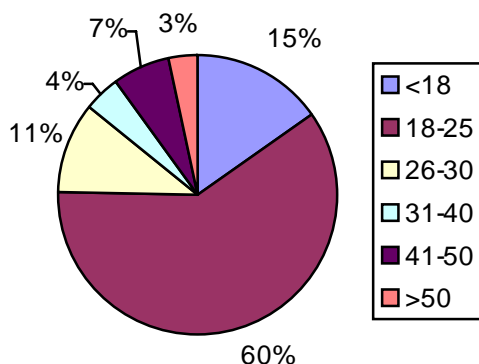


Nationality ST Male
volunteers who applied in

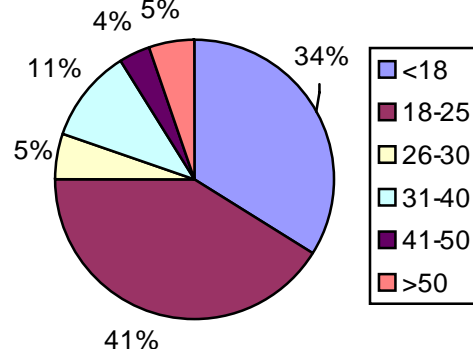


Furthermore, the majority of the applications come from the US, with respectively 75% of the females and 74% of the males. It is obvious that most of the applicants come from the U.S., because United Planet puts forth most effort into working with American markets. United Planet should keep focusing on U.S. and Canadian citizens in the future. However, it might be wise to emphasize on the website that citizens from Europe and other countries can also apply for a short-term Quest.

Age ST Female volunteers
who applied in 2007



Age ST Male volunteers
who applied in 2007



Moreover, 75% of all females and males who applied for a short-term Quest are under 25. Since the majority of the applicants are under 25, an ongoing focus on this target group is strongly recommended. However, it is also important to concentrate on other groups, such as professionals working in healthcare, education, construction and business.

Furthermore, senior citizens could become an important group to focus on, because of their earnings and spare time. As can be concluded from my research, many applicants for a short-term Quest are still in high school and depend financially on their parents. Therefore, parents have a strong influence on their decisions. This is why the organization has to focus on the parents; they lead their children in United Planet's direction. Therefore, is it necessary to assure that the website emphasizes both the safety of the Quests as well as the consistent availability of in-country coordinators.

Profession of females:	46% who applied for a ST Quest are high school and college students 12% who applied for a ST Quest work in healthcare 8% who applied for a ST Quest work in education
Profession of males:	47% who applied for a ST Quest are high school and college students 11% who applied for a ST Quest work in healthcare 8% who applied for a ST Quest work in business

These figures show that the current target group consists of high school and college students, as well as gap-year students. An effective way to reach these students is to increase on-campus presence.

§ 3.5.1 TARGET SEGMENTATION

According to Dave Santulli²², United Planet has been focusing on the following demographic focus in the past.

Target audience; the demographic focus

- Age: 18 - 25
- Geography: United States
- Interests: understanding different cultures, traveling, and community service
- Income: limited, may still be parent dependent
- Occupation: mostly students, some working

Target audience; the segments²³

Students

- o High school students, individuals and groups from both private and public high schools (including younger students as well as graduating seniors).
- o College (university) students, individuals and groups from both private and public colleges (including undergrads and graduating seniors).
- o Graduate students, young professionals, i.e. MBA candidates, law students or lawyers, healthcare students or healthcare professionals
- o International students, both individuals and groups from both private and public schools. Not only underclassmen but also graduating seniors
→ Alternative Spring/Summer/Winter break and sabbaticals

Groups and associations

- o Study abroad offices and career centers
- o Fraternities and Sororities
- o Churches and religious associations
- o Teacher associations
- o Families
- o Senior citizens (AARP)
- o Other associations, Boy and Girl Scouts, Key Clubs
- o Special interest groups, i.e. photography clubs, etc.

²² As mentioned in Appendix 1; Interview transcript

²³ See Appendix 5 for the Marketing plan and target segmentation I have developed in February 2007



Professionals

- o Companies, teams, and individual employees
- o Established professionals, college alumni

According to United Planet's vision of 2007, the organization would like to focus on attracting skilled volunteers in the future. These skilled volunteers may include doctors, dentists and business professionals. I would like to recommend that the organization better segment the target audience, that segmentation can be found beneath the demographic focus. At this moment, their priority seems to lie primarily on students. However, before the organization focuses on attracting professional people, the United Planet team should evaluate the current marketing effectiveness.

§ 3.6 CONCLUSION

There have been slight changes in revenue of United Planet in the past few years. Evidently the short-term Quests represent the major part of revenue, with 91% in 2005, 61% in 2006 and 81% as of June 2007. The organization has seen an increase in donations as well, especially when comparing 2005 and 2006, with an increase from 1.38% of the total income in 2005 to 11.68% in 2006.

The external analysis shows that, according to Porter's Five Forces, operating in United Planet's segment is difficult. Not only are there many substitutes, there is high buyer power as well. Not only nonprofit organization compete in United Planet's industry, for-profits operate in this field as well. With little resources and highly dependent on the revenue generated from Quest fees, United Planet is in a delicate position here.

A Quest competitive analysis in this chapter discussed some recommendations for the Quest department. There were some unsaturated geographic locations found, such as Cambodia, Japan, as well as untapped markets, such as Romania's neighbouring countries. The main recommendation concerning countries, however, is that the organization should focus on improving the quality of the programs rather than increasing the quantity.

The recommendation concerning activities was a dual one; the organization should clarify the programs and differentiate by reformulating the activities. Concerning additional initiatives, the organization should further develop the existing initiatives and use it as a competitive advantage. As can be concluded from the Mystery Guest Approach, United Planet Quest coordinators are performing quite well in comparison to its competitors, but there is always room for improvement.

When it comes to the field of forces, the organization should especially focus on employees, donors and competitors. The target audience should be segmented in accordance to United Planet's vision and the current Quest applications.



Chapter 4: NON-PROFIT BRAND MANAGEMENT; an application of theory

§ 4.1 BRANDING; AN INTRODUCTION

A brand is an approximate - yet distinct - understanding of a product, service or company. To compare a brand with its competitors, we only need to know what makes it different. Brand management is the management of differences, not as they exist on data sheets, but as they exist in the minds of people. (Neumeier, 2003)

Many not-for-profit organizations are reluctant to think of themselves as (potential) "brands". As Roxanne Greenstein, Development Director of the Arts and Business Council, says, "They are happy to exercise what value they may enjoy as brands when marketing their activities," but maintain that their main reason for being lies in their cause or their specific commitment to society. This unwillingness comes from a narrow understanding of "brand" as a marketing tool rather than as a core organizational principle.²⁴

According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), a brand is a 'name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.'²⁵ Branding is the process of creating a clear, consistent message about your organization, so that when people see your logo or hear your name, they'll think of your mission and programs in terms you have defined, i.e. the way you want them to.

"The value of a brand resides, for the audience, in the promise that the product or service will deliver. The concept of branding applies to any individual, organization, product, or service, as long as there is a transaction between human beings. Indeed, branding relies on fundamental principles of psycho-sociology - essentially the way our memory processes, stores, and recalls information. Not to actively manage one's brand name is therefore the equivalent of putting one's head in the sand and wishing for the best." (Grimaldi, 2003)

In conclusion, branding is the concept that manages associations between a brand and memories in the mind of the brand's audience. It involves focusing resources on selected tangible and intangible attributes to differentiate the brand in an attractive and meaningful way for the target audience. Brand management then becomes the organizational framework that systematically manages those customer-centric processes. Branding aims at consistently delivering the brand promise at each contact-point with the customer.

§ 4.2 NON-PROFIT BRAND MANAGEMENT

According to John Quelch and Nathalie Laidler-Kylander, one of the challenges nonprofit brands face is that they must appeal to a broader array of stakeholders than

²⁴ As cited by Tan, P. in Down to the core; branding not-for-profits.

²⁵ As cited by Sargeant, A. in Marketing management for nonprofit organizations, Pg 125.

for-profit brands. Nonprofit brands have a dual objective: to enhance fundraising and to ensure the implementation of the organization's mission. In addition, nonprofit organizations tend to be more decentralized, with little formal hierarchy. This may indicate that implementing activities that protect the brand or attempting to update or modify the brand often meets with resistance internally.²⁶

Trust between a donor and a nonprofit organization is an essential element of the marketability of the nonprofit, since donors are not the ones receiving or benefiting from the nonprofit organization's services and programs. Since the purchasers cannot directly evaluate the quality of these services and programs, they rely on the reputation of the nonprofit and the belief they have that the organization is performing, and will continue to perform, well.

All these donors want to see clarity of purpose in the programs and organizations they support. As Patricia Tan explains, a strong brand is useful in development because it provides the context within which the entire enterprise of the organization is understood. "It demonstrates how an organization's various activities follow a definable strategic trajectory." (Tan, 2003) Clear brand architecture also establishes ownership of past and future programs so that the organization is able to nurture success and support new endeavors.

Donors are more content when they are certain that their money is being used wisely. Tan stresses that donors need to know that grants are carefully managed and employed in the name of the causes they support. A strong, consistent brand suggests that an organization has the commitment and capacity to work as a sustainable enterprise, even as board members, executive directors, and program directors come and go.²⁷

It is important for nonprofits to clearly understand their donor's needs, and use marketing strategies to target potential donors. Quelch discusses that by aligning the current mission with their target donors, nonprofits can create a brand identity that both accurately reflects the organization's activities and mission, and resonates with their target donors and or volunteers.²⁸

Since branding is too important to be left to the marketing team alone, the successful implementation of a strategy is everybody's responsibility and should involve everyone in an organization. In fact, it is the purpose of brand management to transform a company into a customer-centric organization. Donnie Baker states that if there is lack of consistency in delivering the brand message, it creates a promise on which the organization can not fully deliver.²⁹

²⁶ As cited by Salls, M. in The Tricky Business of Nonprofit Brands, Q and A with Quelch, J.

²⁷ As mentioned in Tan's article on branding not-for-profits

²⁸ As cited by Salls, M. in The Tricky Business of Nonprofit Brands, Q and A with Quelch, J.

²⁹ As discussed in an informal meeting with the Marketing Director of United Planet.



§ 4.3 UNITED PLANET

In the United States, a mission statement is a prerequisite for qualifying for 501(c) 3 (tax-free) status. The mission statement is a key step in setting brand direction, even if many organizations do not recognize it as such. Traditionally, a mission statement not only defines the goals of the organization, but also sets the parameters within which it will operate.

United Planet has a very extensive mission statement, since the organization's mission is "*to foster cross-cultural understanding and friendship, support communities in need, and promote social & economic prosperity among cultures in order to unite the world in a community beyond borders.*"³⁰ The result however of such a verbose mission statement may be loss of its motivational force and relevance, as modes of expression, activism or exploration evolve beyond the scope of the original wording. As Tan states, a mission statement acts as a crucial building block of the organization's brand, where the brand is the "big idea" that illuminates the organization's long-term goals, driving the organization internally and in its relations with all its constituents;

"Branding lays the foundation for collaboration, it streamlines organizational goals, it directs effort towards institutional credibility and distinction. [...] To this end, not-for-profit organizations should view the brand as a symbolic and strategic guide for organizational growth. Conscientious brand management, like fiscal prudence, good governance, transparency and accountability, is a principle relevant to all organizations that care about the impact, importance and sustainability of their endeavors." (Tan, 2003)

Furthermore, successful brand management relies on the coordination of functions across the organization to meet strategic ends. In order to remain effective in the long run, however, all organizations need to institutionalize values, goals and good practice. Proactively managing your brand it helps distinguish you from your other institutions, brings consistency and focus to all your communications and services and builds trust and support among your stakeholders.³¹

Let us assume that United Planet is a corporate brand (i.e the brand is the company). Since the organization already has a brand, the most important action is to create a tagline. A tagline is the brand promise to the customer. After some brainstorming the following phrases seem promising:

Choose your cultural challenge
World's largest cultural exchange
Community beyond borders
Expand your cultural horizon
Volunteer yourself
Bringing the world together

³⁰ United Planet Mission, <http://www.unitedplanet.org/mission.html>

³¹ Communication toolkit, Pg 12.



However, most of the aforementioned taglines were either too vague or lacked appeal. Furthermore, words such as experience and meaningful already are being used by many nonprofits. After a brainstorming session amongst the staff, it became clear that one tagline seems to represent all United Planet initiatives stands for;

United Planet; Bringing the world together

I also realized the possibilities of adding a subtitle for each initiative. In this way, the umbrella tagline is used more often and would more likely be remembered.

Quest: Volunteer yourself

CAP: Show yourself

UP Ambassadors: Represent yourself

UP Forum: Explore yourself

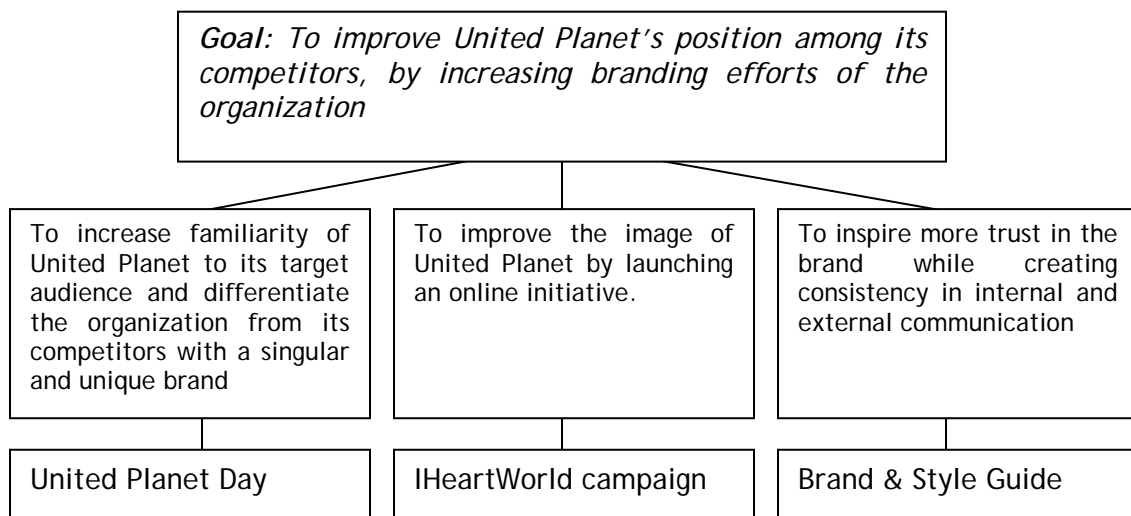
VOE: Share yourself

Special projects: Challenge yourself

I have realised a more extensive tagline survey recently. The results of this survey, conducted among the Advisory Board, Advisory Council and the Board of Directors, will be presented during my defence.

§ 4.4 BRANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to improve United Planet's position by increasing branding efforts, I have developed a communications objectives tree that can promote or improve United Planet's brand management. Please find the goal on top, followed by the communication objectives and recommended activities. Below the communications objectives tree, I will specify the implementation of these activities.



§ 4.4.1 IMPLEMENTATIONS; COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES, TOOLS & ACTIVITIES

My eventual goal is to reposition United Planet in the market in such a way that the company will move closer towards the 'ideal position' in the market. In order to do



that, I have come up with various communication objectives. Those include increasing familiarity of the organization to its target audience and improving the image of UP by launching the iHeartworld campaign.

In the organization's past advertising efforts, United Planet has used multiple taglines for the organization. Past taglines include 'a community beyond borders', 'the ultimate educational adventure' and 'gaze beyond'. As we have discussed in previous pages, neither of these taglines truly represent United Planet's brand. The tagline is the brand promise to the organization's customers. United Planet should perform more research on a new tagline and do more campaigning in order to create awareness and credibility for its new brand promise. Results from my survey have shown that credibility is one of the things United Planet can definitely improve.

In the next paragraphs, you will find some creative ideas to achieve the communication objectives. In order to make it more clear and consistent, the format of a project brief has been used.

§ 4.4.1.1 UP DAY; SPONSOR WALK & OPEN-AIR CONCERT

Objective: To increase familiarity of United Planet to its target audience and differentiate the organization from its competitors with a singular and unique brand

Events: The most interesting way for consumers to get to know more about the organization is to experience the mission. United Planet established the United Planet Day in September, on the Fall Equinox, the first one being in 2006. For the first UP Day, resources did not allow organizing an event, but a Writing & Photo contest was offered to the website's visitors, and two winners got free Quests during two weeks. The winning picture was used to make Holiday Cards for Christmas.

United Planet Day 2007, on the Fall Equinox, could be an opportunity for the organization to increase familiarity and raise funds for the organization. The events taking place on this day should promote multiculturalism, the goals of United Planet, and increase awareness of the organization's brand, brand promise and its initiatives.

Who:

Participants are children and teens from local schools and High Schools who are interested in helping communities in need and actively participate in a fundraising event for a good cause. Visitors, parents of the children and the general public, will be motivated to be involved after seeing the children participate so actively. Corporate Social Responsible companies will want to improve their image by participating in the event as well.

Format & media:

Sponsored by people from their neighborhood, children and teens participate in a sponsored walk for a specific cause (orphanage, school or shelter → something with which children can identify themselves). Each child gets a list and has to find as many sponsors as possible. These sponsors are people in their environment, such as family,



friends, neighbors, etc). These people sponsor the participant per achieved mile or round.

After the walk, the executive director will thank the participants by an open-air concert. In this concert, foreign artists who are in the US at the moment (easier regarding logistics) will perform. They have to represent multiple music types and cultures. With this concert, the organization should set up a stand of the Quest team, so they can present them to potential volunteers. Besides that, United Planet can have a booth that sells hoodies and t-shirts.

This idea has major PR possibilities, from free publicity in the press to the local news centers. With a 'Temperature' meter with the increasing amount of money, an award/prize for the child who raised the highest amount of money and T-shirts in which the kids walk (logo UP and sponsoring companies, souvenirs for kids) the awareness will further increase.

Call to action:

All campaign promotional material will encourage the intended audience to donate for a good cause. In addition to this fundraising, it is also possible to “get involved” by participating in the Cultural Awareness Project and/or by going on a Quest trip. A Quest booth will be set up for people that want to subscribe.

The target audiences will ideally seek out more cultural diversity in their own lives as a reaction to the events of United Planet Day as well as participate or participate more in United Planet's various initiatives.

Benefits

- ∞ Major fundraising possibilities
- ∞ Increase in brand awareness
- ∞ Competitive advantage: original idea
- ∞ Newsworthiness > Media attention to communities in need
- ∞ Involvement of alumni and potential Quest volunteers

Style/tone:

The campaign's style will be complementary to the United Planet brand style (colors, typefaces, imagery, etc.). Major companies can advertise during both events (back numbers of participants, fence/board advertising, own CRS booth during open-air concert). Use the style guide for promotional materials. The tone will be exuberant, happy, and celebratory of the progress United Planet has made in the last year.

Mandatories:

All official campaign materials and videos should display the UP Day and UP logos and state: “UP Day; Sponsor walk & Open-air Concert - A United Planet initiative - www.unitedplanet.org”. Observe the style guide for the mandatory design elements.



Schedule:

The new relationships team should develop a production schedule for the organization of UP day with the goal of launching the campaign by August of 2007.

Challenges:

- ∞ Find a place for the walk (Boston common)
- ∞ Round or start and end point
- ∞ Does the city council agree?
- ∞ Traffic?
- ∞ Media attention → make sure local and national TV is aware, what about newspapers and the radio?
- ∞ High schools & elementary schools → how can they participate?
- ∞ What will be the good cause?
- ∞ Make sure that all the money goes to the good cause, not United Planet itself!!!
- ∞ Approach to schools (make a video to inform the children and present the good cause)

Communication tools to promote the event:

Printed promotion

Direct mail - With direct mail I plan to inform our consumers about the new brand promise and the organization will give information about the UP Day. The most important aspect here is that there needs to be a focus on the organization and especially on the good cause. This direct mailing will not only include mail (as in postcards), but also email postcards, to increase the brand awareness among students. The frequency will be twice a year, in the summer and in the fall. The direct mail in the summer will focus on attracting people to the event; the one in the fall will thank them for having participated.

If evaluation shows that it has not been effective, the marketing team should change the information and the frequency. After this 'bursting' strategy, the evaluation is planned in January, approximately two months after the second direct mail.

Flyers - Distributing flyers to the general public might not be the most effective way to get more people joining the event, but it will definitely increase brand awareness. It is also one of the less expensive ways in promoting the event.

Newspapers - Daily newspaper advertising can be very expensive. Therefore, United Planet is going to display adverts once a week in Saturday or Sunday issues of a newspaper. The organization should include information about new programs as well, if possible. This may bring big results in the long run.

Magazines - The reason for using magazines is because it gives the organization a more tightly targeted audience. The more closely United Planet matches the media with the organization's customers, the better the advertising will work. Magazines usually require a couple of months before United Planet's ad will appear, so the marketing



team should plan it well in advance and stick with the plan of the advertising campaign.

Internet promotion

Internet promotion is becoming more and more popular. Through website and Internet access, United Planet's brand is spread among the target audience and awareness may be increased. On the other hand, United Planet should create and improve partnerships with several key organizations in the volunteering business, such as Volunteers for Prosperity, in order to advertise on their websites and promote through their organization. The organization should also create the possibility for customers to subscribe themselves to the organization's mailing list (i.e. personal contact). With this tool United Planet can inform its customers about the new brand promise and can give information about new projects.

e-Newsletter - The e-Newsletter will be distributed to the organization's mailing list every month. Ideally, the e-Newsletter contains the following items:

1. Intro, including info on the alumni link and how to become a member
2. Featured volunteer
3. Featured Quest w/ emphasis of discounts for returning volunteers
4. Highlight UP news (new partnerships, marketing campaigns, initiatives, etc.)
5. Alumni involvement opportunities (recruitment, CAP, Ambassador program, mentoring, join the team)
6. Upcoming events (online reunion/info session/UP day)
7. Survey reminder with link to online survey (get a \$100 refund!)
8. Links to homepage, Quests, and "tell a friend" on sidebar
9. Option to unsubscribe

Under number 6, upcoming events are to be presented. United Planet Day will of course be the center of this e-Newsletter, since United Planet should encourage people to go.

§ 4.4.1.2 iHEARTWORLD CAMPAIGN

Objective: To improve the image of United Planet, by launching an online campaign iHeartworld

iHeartworld: The iHeartworld Campaign offers the *culturally curious* a space (voice) to express their personal interest and longing for another culture which differs from the culture that they were born into. The campaign is designed to promote United Planet, its programs, initiatives and vision for a community without borders.

Who:

The *culturally curious* - individuals who naturally gravitate towards cultural-exchange. This "gravitation" is often unexplainable and usually begins during childhood or adolescence.



Format & media:

The iHeartWorld campaign will be hosted on www.iheartworld.org. While it is under a separate domain, the site will integrate promotion of United Planet at every level. User-generated content will attract traffic and will be tied to specific Quests or other United Planet initiatives.

The content will comprise of a series of videos where users will be contributing their thoughts on why they “heart” a certain country, culture or language. The videos will be submitted by the users, edited for clarity and uploaded on video sharing sites.

The campaign will aim make effective use of social networking to capture the attention of a whole new breed of potential volunteers.

Call to action:

All campaign promotional material will direct the intended audience to visit www.iheartworld.org. There, in addition to viewing videos, website visitors will be invited to produce their own videos and to “get involved” by participating in the Cultural Awareness Project and/or by going on a Quest trip.

Benefits

- ∞ Increase in brand awareness
- ∞ Competitive advantage: original idea
- ∞ Media attention to cultures

Style/tone:

The campaign's style will be complementary to the United Planet brand style (colors, typefaces, imagery, etc.). The videos will be similar to the *MTV Real World* confessional booth.

Mandatories:

All official campaign materials and videos should display the iHeartWorld and UP logos and state: “iHeartWorld - A United Planet initiative - www.unitedplanet.org”

Schedule:

The new media team will develop a production schedule for videos, website and promotional materials with a goal of launching the campaign by September of 2007.

Communication tools to promote the campaign:

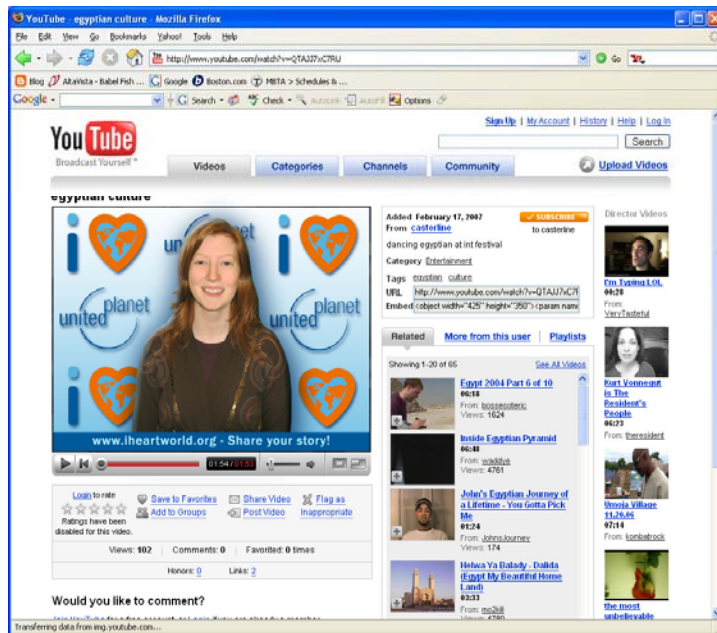
Internet promotion - With this tool we plan to inform our customers about the new iHeartworld campaign.



Social Networking

Facebook - This social networking tool is a way of reaching out to American college students. By creating a United Planet Facebook group, the marketing department will be able to inform our Facebook members about the iHeartworld campaign and engage them online.

MySpace - MySpace is a similar social networking tool. It is a way of reaching 18 - 25 year old people. The marketing department has already set up a United Planet account, so it would be easy to post the information and inform the people about the iHeartworld campaign and engage them online.



You Tube - YouTube is a popular video sharing website where users can upload, view, and share video clips. Videos can be rated, and the average rating and the number of times a video has been watched are both published. United Planet is currently on YouTube through a YouTube account.

Example of iHeartworld on YouTube

e-Newsletter - The e-Newsletter will be distributed to the organization's mailing list every month. Under the United Planet News Button, we will present the iHeartworld campaign.

§ 4.4.1.3 STYLE GUIDE

Objectives: To inspire more trust in the brand while creating consistency in internal and external communication by use of a United Planet style guide

The United Planet brand is conveyed visually and thematically through careful consistency in phrasing, tone of voice, color palettes, shapes, dividers, fonts, and other components such as the key words "global," "intercultural," and "community." If we maintain a marketing strategy that makes uniform stylistic choices in all of our external communications, our target audience will become confident in the integrity of our organization as a product of their familiarity with it. Please find the style guide enclosed in Appendix 5.



Communication tools to inform the organization about the Style Guide:

Internal newsletter - This internal newsletter will have the same format as the e-Newsletter. It will inform the United Planet staff about major internal changes. The Style Guide can be presented during one of this monthly newsletter, since it is crucial that the entire staff is consistent with our brand.

With all these creative ideas, the marketing team should not forget to evaluate the results with an evaluation survey. An evaluation survey of a campaign can give the organization further guidelines for the future.

§ 4.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have focused on the subject of branding. As shown in literature, many non-profit organizations are reluctant to think of themselves as potential brands. This unwillingness comes from a narrow understanding of 'brand' as a marketing tool rather than as a core organizational principle. Branding is the concept that manages associations between a brand and memories in the mind of the brand's audience.

In fact, not-for-profit organizations have great potential to become powerful brands, because people working in these organizations are passionate about their work and the significance of the response they generate from the community. Due to this passion, the staff will be able to communicate a consistent message, which is a fine basis on which to build a brand. In conclusion, it can even be said that the purpose of brand management is to transform a company into a customer-centric organization. Since inconsistency in delivering the brand message creates a promise, which cannot be fully delivered by an organization, successful implementation of a brand strategy is everybody's responsibility.

United Planet should pay attention to its extensive mission statement as well. A verbose mission statement can lose its motivational force and relevance quickly. In order to better represent the organization, the executive director should also ensure that all programs and activities deliver the organization's mission in form as well as content.

United Planet is a corporate brand and has been using a variety of taglines in the past. After brainstorming, one tagline, or brand promise, represents United Planet's initiatives: "Bringing the world together." In order to improve the organization's position, I have provided you with three creative concepts, which reflect an increase in branding efforts. The eventual goal of these concepts is to improve United Planet's position among its competitors by increasing branding efforts.

- In order to increase familiarity of United Planet and differentiate the organization from its competitors, UP Day can present the organization as a unique and singular brand. 'UP Day; Sponsor walk and Open-Air concert' is a way for consumers to experience the mission. Benefits are that it will increase familiarity, raise funds and increase media attention. I wish to promote this event using printed promotion, such as direct mail, flyers, newspapers and magazines, and Internet promotion, such as the e-Newsletter.



- The launch of the online iHeartWorld campaign can improve the image of United Planet as well. iHeartWorld offers the culturally curious a space to express their personal interest. User-generated content will attract traffic and will be tied to specific Quests or other United Planet's initiatives. The campaign will make use of social networking, Facebook, MySpace and YouTube, to capture the attention of potential volunteers.
- A Brand Style Guide is necessary to inspire more trust in the brand while creating consistency in internal and external communication. Uniform stylistic choices in United Planet's external communication should increase the familiarity with the organization's brand. An internal newsletter is crucial in order to inform the United Planet staff about the changes.

The power of a brand lies in what resides in the minds of customers. The challenge for marketers in building a strong brand is ensuring that customers have the right type of experiences with products and services and their accompanying marketing programs so that the desired thoughts, feelings, images, beliefs, perceptions, opinions, and so on become linked to the brand.³²

³² Strategic brand management, Pg 59.



Chapter 5: SURVEY ANALYSIS

§ 5.1 Introduction

The survey³³ has been performed using the CIMM (Corporate Image Measurement Model) of M. Vos, a communication manager from the Netherlands. It is a survey developed on a few key areas: the primary impression (top of mind awareness), familiarity (awareness of the product), perception and preference, and position. I have used the Internet site www.surveymonkey.com to receive the online surveys.

The survey was sent to 321 United Planet Quest alumni, of which only 30 replied. I am aware of the fact that the results of this survey may be considered biased, due to the level of involvement of the respondents. However, these email addresses were the only ones that could be used. United Planet did not have other data available. The conclusions of the survey and the positioning map are thus based on the results of the survey.

§ 5.2 Positioning

In simple words, positioning is how your target market defines you in relation to your competitors. In order to begin positioning itself, United Planet's marketing environment and competitive advantage needs to be known. With help of the results of the survey, United Planet will be positioned in the market.

After having analyzed the survey, the main competitors of United Planet in the mind of the alumni volunteers are Cross-Cultural Solutions, I - to - I, Projects Abroad and Habitat for Humanity. The alumni volunteers were asked to judge all competitors on seven aspects; price/quality, accountability, credibility, innovation, customer satisfaction, overall service and type of organization (i.e. nonprofit vs. for-profit). Please note that the averages mentioned above are rated out of 10. According to the results of the survey, the three highly ranked aspects are:

Customer satisfaction	Evaluation of 7.76 (out of 10)
Credibility	Evaluation of 7.52
Accountability	Evaluation of 6.57

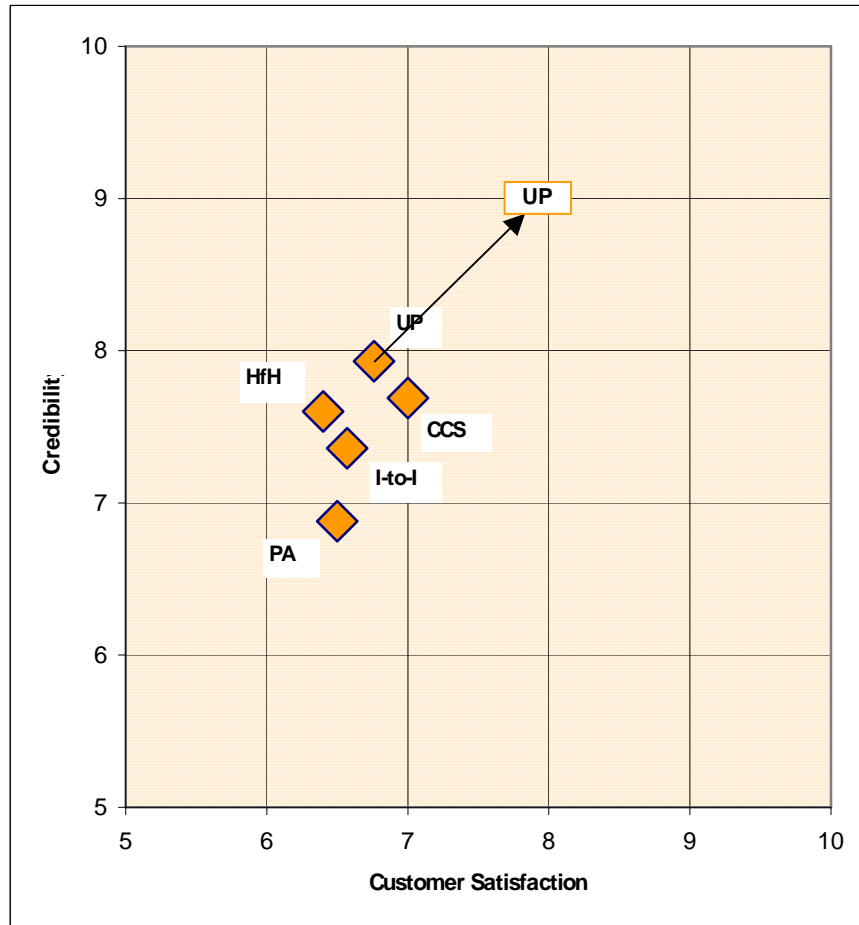
Since two of the seven aspects, customer satisfaction and credibility were judged as very important characteristics of a volunteer organization, I have drawn a positioning map based on these two aspects. The companies 'scored' as follows:

	<i>Customer satisfaction</i>	<i>Credibility</i>	<i>Average of all aspects</i>
United Planet	6.76	7.93	7.18
Cross-Cultural Solutions	7.00	7.69	7.56
I - to - I	6.57	7.36	6.72
Projects Abroad	6.50	6.88	7.03
Habitat for Humanity	6.40	7.60	6.42

³³ The survey can be found in the Competitive Analysis, which is included in the Research Dossier.

Positioning map for top-of-mind volunteer organizations

Customer
Satisfaction
versus
Credibility



From the positioning map above, the conclusion can be drawn that participating in Quest did not leave a very good impression amongst United Planet alumni. In order to reach a more desirable position in the market, the United Planet brand should differentiate itself more. The first step to that is to differentiate itself in the mind of those who know the organization best (amongst them its own alumni). United Planet should improve customer satisfaction and use brand management to increase credibility.

Please note again that this positioning map is based on a survey conducted among United Planet Quest alumni. The outcome is therefore limited and might be biased when it comes to analyze the individual position of the competitors. The survey is however very useful to reach conclusions about United Planet. The fact that United Planet's alumni have not positioned United Planet well above its competitors is an alarming fact. I will discuss this fact in detail in the following pages. The reason to conduct the survey among United Planet alumni is that many Bostonians are not familiar with the organization. A survey among the citizens of Boston would not have given usable results.



§ 5.3 Survey conclusions

As mentioned before, the respondents of this survey are alumni of the Quest program. From the 321 surveys sent, only 30 responses have been received. Shockingly, only 53.33 % of our alumni, ranked United Planet as the organization that they preferred and that first came to mind.

The majority (83.3%) of all respondents were American. Most of them were between 18 and 25 years old (60%). They have been on Quests in a variety of countries, although 23.3% went to Romania and 16.7% did a Quest in Costa Rica. 86.7% heard about the organization by the Internet. 16.7% became familiar with United Planet because of their friends, and 13.3% heard about it through their school.

When it comes to the preference of people for a certain volunteer organization, particular results can be seen. According to the question on preference: United Planet received an evaluation of a 7.18 (out of 10) average, Cross Cultural Solutions an evaluation of a 7.58 average and Projects Abroad one of 7.03. Respondents graded United Planet relatively high with a 7.67 average for the Quest program and an overall judgment of 7.30.

53% of all respondents immediately thought about United Planet when they thought about volunteer organizations. 16.7% placed United Planet in second place and 23.3% put United Planet in third place. Other volunteer organizations that came up in the mind of the United Planet alumni are Cross Cultural Solutions, Projects Abroad, I-to-I and Habitat for Humanity. Especially Cross Cultural Solutions and I-to-I were mentioned several times. Only 53.3% of the alumni ranked United Planet first. This shows that doing a Quest with United Planet didn't leave a very strong impression among some volunteers. For the future, it is extremely important that United Planet is aware of this fact and that it does everything it can to increase brand awareness.

Besides ranking volunteer organizations, alumni also judged the previously ranked volunteer organization by certain criteria, i.e. price/quality, accountability, credibility, innovation, type of organization. The survey has shown that United Planet has a good score when it comes to accountability, credibility and type of organization. 28.6% rated United Planet's accountability as a seven and 39.3% of all respondents gave an eight. 64.3% ranked United Planet's credibility with an eight or higher. When asked about the type of organization, 67.9% gave an 8 or higher. However, United Planet has to pay more attention when it comes to pricing and innovation. 35.7% of all respondents gave United Planet a six for its prices and 14.3% rated them lower than a six. Besides these, 32.1% gives United Planet an unsatisfactory mark in the field of innovation.

United Planet has to watch out for Cross Cultural Solutions. This organization scores quite well in general. Nevertheless, some of the respondents were displeased with prices and customer satisfaction. 12.5% gave a five for both prices and customer satisfaction. United Planet also has to take into account the presence of I-to-I. This organization scores well for its prices, credibility, innovation and overall service. Respondents are less positive about I-to-I being a for-profit organization. They rated the type of organization with a 6.1.



The credibility of an organization and the customer satisfaction have the most influence on the opinion of the respondents when they have to choose a volunteer organization. For the future, it is important that United Planet focuses on these two aspects.

The top three reasons Quest alumni gave for volunteering with United Planet are: 1) to help communities in need (26.44%), 2) because I like to travel (19.54%), and 3) to increase my understanding of different cultures (17.24%). This shows that alumni think that helping communities in need is an important issue. Reasons to go at a Quest are United Planet's reliability and great variety of programs.

63% of all respondents feel that their primary expectations about volunteering with United Planet were met. 36.7% do not feel that way. Main reasons for dissatisfaction are unqualified in-country coordinators, price, and a lack of instructions and structure. This percentage can be seen as a reason for concern. 50% of the respondents would go again on a Quest. It is extremely important that this percentage increases in the future.

The respondents rate the Quest Program with an average of a 7.7. The overall grade for United Planet as an organization is a 7.3. The overall grade shows that there is enough room for improvement.

In conclusion, United Planet is not perceived as the volunteer nonprofit it aspires to be. Very often, as shown in the conclusion of the Top of Mind Awareness (TOMA), the target group only associates United Planet with a part of its company (i.e. Quest). This shows that more differentiation is necessary for United Planet to increase its competitive advantage.

§ 5.4 DESIRED IMAGE

"A corporate image refers to how an organization is perceived. It is a generally accepted image of what a company "stands for"." (Testa, 2006) A corporate image is designed to be appealing to the public so that the company can spark an interest among consumers and create share of mind. According to Testa, a successful corporate image must also be believable; the image must be relatively close to your actual behaviours to be credible.³⁴

A corporate image should be consistent with the positioning of the company's product (or, in United Planet's case, service), product line, or brand. Any incongruence between the overall corporate image and the positions of individual product offerings will be confusing to potential customers and will tend to reduce credibility. A good overall corporate image can be seen as the sum of all the images associated with the firm's individual product positions.

As we can see, image is everything. It is what conveys who you are to your customers. Branding goes hand-in-hand with image. When people see your brand name, it must

³⁴ Corporate Social Responsibility and reputation risk analysis, Pg 5.



convey a positive image to them. The company's name must be at the top of the customer's mind because that is how purchase decisions are made. Research has found 9 out of 10 consumers reporting that when choosing between products that are similar in quality and price, the reputation of the company determines which product or service they buy (Mackiewicz, 1993). The company that comes to mind is the company that gets the business.

United Planet does not seem to have defined a brand promise yet. After an interview with the executive director and founder of the organization, David Santulli, he referred me to the positioning statement of United Planet. United Planet does not want to be perceived as 'just' a volunteer organization. This should be the message at the heart of all future UP collateral.

A marketing communication plan can bring structure to United Planet. While taking into consideration the underlying structure, the incoming team will be able to monitor and evaluate its process now. Eventually, consistency in brand management can bring United Planet closer to their desired image and the ideal position in the market. Within the chapter 'Conclusion & Recommendation', I will provide United Planet with communication objectives, taking into account these research results.

Positioning statement

"To create the world's largest international multi-cultural community by providing a diverse range of exciting and fun local, online, and international initiatives.

United Planet wishes to offer high quality programs at a lower price than Cross-Cultural Solutions and Global Volunteers in the volunteer program market. United Planet also wishes to expand more into learning Quest market for people of all ages. These learning quests will be unique in that each program will also have a volunteer component. United Planet wishes to provide more group and group-only programs.

At the same time, United Planet wishes to emphasize that as the world's largest cultural exchange, we have a variety of programs to build global understanding and friendship including CAP, online initiatives, and UP Day.

United Planet wishes to do more healthcare and education quests to bring doctors, dentists, medical students, dental students, etc to areas for both practical and educational support. United Planet also wishes to bring professional teachers to areas in need during their summer break season.

United Planet would like to reach out to corporations to gain support for our efforts to provide healthcare, healthcare education, and educational support." (Santulli, D. 2007)

§ 5.5 CONCLUSION

According to my survey conducted among United Planet Quest alumni, we can conclude the following. Firstly, the response rate was very low with only 30 replies out of 321 requests. The survey analysis shows that the majority of all respondents were American, between 18 and 26 years old. Most of the respondents heard about United Planet through the Internet.



In the mind of the alumni volunteers are Cross-Cultural Solutions, I - to - I, Projects Abroad, and Habitat for Humanity. The respondents of the survey gave United Planet an evaluation of a 7,18 (out of 10) average, Cross Cultural Solutions an evaluation of a 7,58 average and Projects Abroad one of 7,03.

The survey has also shown that the organization has a good score when it comes to accountability, credibility and type of organization. However, exceptions of pricing and innovation show room for improvement. When it comes to choosing a volunteer organization, credibility and customer satisfaction are the most important criteria to most respondents. The positioning map shows that the differences between the above mentioned competitors are very little. United Planet should differentiate more in order to reach a more desired position in the market.

The main reason for participating in a Quest is to help communities in need. The primary expectations for volunteering with United Planet were met in the eyes of more than half of all respondents. According to United Planet's positioning statement, the organization wishes to create the world's largest international multi-cultural community by providing a diverse range of local online and international initiatives.



Chapter 6: CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

§ 6.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

	United Planet	Cross Cultural Solutions	I - to - I
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Holistic approach to the mission (Quests, Cultural Awareness Project, Voices Of Earth) - Offering vast opportunities for volunteers (choice of duration, country, type of work, one person or groups) - Flexibility in trips (the organization can tailor the programs to specific demands) - Large variety of volunteer activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very clear, informative website - Strong target segmentation - A good reputation (accredited with UN status) - Highly innovative organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type of organization (no limited resources) - Low prices - I-to-I Foundation increases fundraising possibilities - High variety of volunteer activities - Lots of additional initiatives - Accreditation for TOEFL-courses
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited resources (both labour and capital) - Operational inefficiencies - Revenue relies heavily on Quest fees - Ineffective use of constraint expenses - High turnover and predominantly young and inexperienced staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short-term volunteer opportunities are relatively expensive - Limited variety of sites - Limited choice of additional initiatives - Revenue relies on volunteer contributions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type of organization (for-profit tends to be less attractive) - Limited target audience - The fee includes only food and accommodation
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differentiating and building "brand" image - Increase of fundraising efforts - Improving operations - Improving programs' quality - Supplier power is moderate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supplier power is moderate - Established relationships with local partners - Increasing brand awareness - Many partnerships with universities, this gives very good opportunities to recruit new volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supplier power is moderate - Large team, which increase the capacity to accept new applicants - Partnerships with STA Travel, Opodo and Lonely Planet
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High amount of competitors (both nonprofit and for-profit organizations) - Revenue is mostly fee-based - Low barrier for new entrants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High amount of competitors (both nonprofit and for-profit organizations) - Low barrier for new competitors to establish themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High amount of competitors (both nonprofit and for-profit organizations) - Low barrier for new competitors to establish themselves - The opportunity for nonprofits to file for government funding

§ 6.2 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

United Planet should definitely take a look at the current state of things. The organization has to bear in mind that the main goal is to build name recognition and improve its competitive advantage through better differentiation with the competition.

§ 6.2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS ACCORDING TO THE MARKETING MIX

My recommendations for the Marketing Department are based on the seven P's of service marketing. These are:

- Product
- Pricing
- Promotion
- Placement
- People
- Process
- Physical evidence

Product

Every member of the Marketing team should know the ins and outs of at least all the Short-Term programs that United Planet offers. It might be wise to make a handout with all the important information of the Short-Term Quests, as well as some country information. In this way, it will be easier for the Marketing team to answer the phones and it will also result in a better performance at fairs and events.

The Marketing team should also focus more on developing the other initiatives of United Planet. The Cultural Awareness Presentations, Voices of Earth, Ambassador's Clubs and the UP Forum are not performing in the way their founders expected. Correcting their problems will take a lot of time. However, it is necessary to do this so people know United Planet for more than its Quests.

Research should be done to see whether there is interest for a program in other countries, such as Australia and Eastern Europe as well. However, please not that expanding is not yet the priority. An evaluation of the quality of Quest has priority over this.

Pricing

In the future, the Marketing team should focus more on emphasizing discounts. It turned out that a lot of potential volunteers don't know about them and it is important to emphasize discounts on the website and in the promotion material.



Promotion

In the field of promotion, it is extremely important to highlight United Planet's competitive advantage: the organization offers individualized programs, adapted to the needs and wishes of the customer. I would recommend more promotion on programs that receive few applications as well. United Planet's programs in Chile, Guatemala, Tanzania and Ghana have not been promoted in a sufficient way. These programs face difficulties and it is important to encourage potential volunteers to go there.

Following the research data collected, some other recommendations may be made concerning promotion. United Planet does not make sufficient use of press releases. The Marketing Department should write more press releases in the future, in order to attract more volunteers. Sending out Press Releases is a way of receiving free publicity and should be used more often by United Planet.

It is also necessary to increase the brand awareness in Boston. A way to do this is to write letters to local media about United Planet. With the Corporate Social Responsibility trend, it might even be possible to have a local broadcaster do a feature on United Planet.

Placement

As an HR coordinator, I have found some difficulties with the office space. United Planet is a growing organization and should therefore focus on other office space in the future with more growth possibilities.

Besides that, it would be wise to see if there are opportunities to open new offices on other continents. At the moment, United Planet receives a lot of volunteers from the United States. It is crucial to do further research to see whether there is a market for this United Planet concept in other continents as well. The marketing team should also research Quest programs that receive few applications. Why is that? What can the organization do about it?

People

In the future, every new member of the Marketing team should get proper training. The Marketing Director should motivate the interns in a better way. This could be achieved by giving them a small stipend in order to show them that the work they are doing is appreciated. It is also necessary to have regular evaluations sessions with all the employees as well as the in-country coordinators.

The Marketing team has to focus on maintained involvement with United Planet's alumni. They can send e-newsletters to them and inform them about what is going on in the organization. The alumni can also assist the Marketing team during fairs since they could promote Quest better than anyone else.



Process

There is room for improvement when it comes to the Quest Process. The Marketing team should evaluate this process. They have to look at the pre-departure materials, and the trips themselves. However, the most important part of the Quest process to focus on is the after-sales. The Marketing Department should stay in contact with the alumni by use of monthly e-Newsletters.

Physical evidence

The Marketing Department should attend as many fairs as possible. There are a lot of local fairs in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island and most of them can be attended for free. The Marketing Team should stay in contact with all the universities, colleges and high schools in this region in order to be aware of upcoming fairs. Next to this, the on-campus presence has to be improved. In this way, the organization can attract more volunteers than they do at the moment.

Lastly, it is extremely valuable to research the quality of United Planet's service. The website should put more emphasis on the safety of the trips as well as the fact that the organization provides excellent insurance. In this way, United Planet can reduce the feeling of risk among its potential volunteers and improve its chance of success.

Additional marketing recommendations

Since research has only been done on competitors who are located in more than one country, more research on one-country-competitors is recommended. Besides that, further research should be done on competitors based in countries other than the United States. During the research, more competitors were found than were originally encountered. Further research and analysis on additional competitors such as USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network and Volunteers for Prosperity is recommended as well.

As mentioned before, the Cultural Awareness Project should be further developed. In fact, it is a program part of United Planet's mission but can also be seen as a very good marketing tool to increase awareness about the organization. It is important to improve the quality of such existing programs, building a strong base to spread the word about United Planet.

§ 6.2.2 INTERNAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The first thing United Planet should do is deciding on a tagline. The lack of a tagline equals the lack of a brand promise. A brand promise is crucial in the competitive market of volunteer organizations. Deciding on a tagline and living the brand throughout the organization should be the focus of United Planet.

Public Relations is an aspect on which the organization should focus in the future. Sending out press releases is a free communication tool and will increase the organization's media exposure. Finding new ways to get individuals or companies to donate is also crucial to United Planet's growth. Increasing fundraising efforts will



make the organization less dependent on revenue generated from the Quest program. The fact that United Planet is not yet a very well known organization is a weakness for receiving donations. It is very important to reassure people on the quality of United Planet's offer, on the reliability of the organization. Hiring a Development Director and Grant writer would definitely help here.

Furthermore, United Planet needs to focus on developing partnerships. The organization should not only partner with community related organizations, but also think about partnerships with, for example, airline companies, travel agencies, insurance agencies, and socially responsible corporations.

Increasing brand awareness in Boston should also be a point of focus. If the organization aspires to be known in the United States, it is necessary to raise familiarity with the brand in the nearness of the organization's headquarters.

A lot of details can be added or clarified on the website to make the organization more transparent for the general public, and thus more credible.

- I have developed an organizational chart for United Planet. This chart should be added to the website to inform the website's visitors about United Planet's organizational structure.
- Give achievements of the organization so far in a quantitative way. How much has been done until now? How many villages does United Planet support, how many volunteers have been send? Since the organization wants to improve its credibility, the numbers should display the truth.
- An item on 'Why choose us?' is also really important. Creating this type of page would allow United Planet to promote what makes it a unique organization
- On the website, a page stating the allocation of the program fee should be more visible, as it is an important aspect in someone's choice of organization. People often need to be reassured on where the money goes. What is the volunteer paying for?
- Another point of criticism is the language on the website. The language that United Planet uses at the moment is too passive and unclear. This should be a top priority in the future.

Following the **branding guidelines** by Bill Nissim, United Planet should:

1. Define your overall brand perception.

Step back and view United Planet through the eyes of a potential donor. What do people see as your organization's mission? What do they think are its most important activities? How do they define your goals? If you are not content with what you see, it's time to reevaluate every component of your brand.

2. Describe your goal for your brand.

Every organization should ask itself, "What is the *one thing* that we do better than anyone else?" To be a meaningful brand, your cause must be a *first*—a new category, approach, or service that hasn't been exploited.



3. *Create a plan to reach the brand goal.*

This step bridges the gap between the current perception of your brand and your brand goal. As with any planning process, a series of activities that culminate in a brand shift takes time and patience. Great brands are not invented overnight; achieving them requires careful planning and attention to detail. A brand that lives on in the mind of each donor must be developed through years of message layering.

4. *Make the brand live throughout your organization.*

Finally, the key to successful branding is top-down commitment and involvement. The greatest obstacle to creating an effective brand lies in its execution; most plans are written and then collect dust on the shelf. Brand planning requires daily attention for progression and change to occur.

(Nissim, 2004)



§ 6.3 CONCLUSION

As I discussed in the preface, I have written this thesis on United Planet, an international non-profit based in Boston, Massachusetts. This thesis is based upon studies conducted from January 2007 to July 2007 during my internship at United Planet.

Since the organization is relatively young, it has not yet investigated its current position in the market. I focused my research on brand management since the lack of visibility and the ever-increasing number of competitors are influencing the organization's competitiveness. Its current lack of differentiation puts United Planet's competitive advantage in serious jeopardy. Brand management would be an effective way of enhancing its competitive edge.

As discussed in **chapter 1**, my main research question is:

How can brand management help improve the competitive advantage of United Planet in order to enhance its current position in the market?

In **chapter 2**, the organization's profile has been discussed. United Planet's Executive Director, David Santulli, founded the organization in November 2001. The organization's mission is to foster cross-cultural understanding and friendship, support communities in need, and promote social and economic prosperity among cultures in order to unite the world in a community beyond borders. The vision of United Planet was discussed in this chapter as well. All in all, the organizational objectives of the vision are not SMART and not department-specific. In the future, it will be essential for United Planet to take a look at these objectives and formulate a more realistic vision.

Chapter 2 also explains the significance of an improvement in the internal organizational structure. In order to grow in the future, the organization should focus on hiring some key paid positions. United Planet should also focus on improving the process of employee turnover. As the system stands, too much relevant information gets lost in transition.

With use of an internal and external analysis, **chapter 3** has provided you with a complete review of the organizational environment. The conclusion of this chapter has told us that, since the launch of short-term Quests, the income mix has shown few changes. Short-term Quests has always represented the bulk of revenue. Last year, however, the organization experienced an important increase in donations.

The external analysis showed that, according to Porter's Five Forces, operating in United Planet's segment is difficult, since there are many substitutes and there is high buyer power. Not only non-profit organizations compete in United Planet's industry; for-profits operate in this field as well. With few resources and dependence on the revenue generated from Quest fees, United Planet is in a delicate position in the market.



A Quest competitive analysis in this chapter discussed some recommendations for the Quest department. The main conclusion is that United Planet relies on expanding rapidly both in destinations and programs in order to appeal to a broader audience. United Planet, however, markets those destinations and programs inefficiently and consequently the target audience largely is unaware of new programs and destinations. Keeping in mind growth goals for the next few years, United Planet should not continue on this track. The organization should take an honest look at its target market demands as well as its current capabilities before incorporating new programs. It is important to keep in mind that improving quality is better than increasing quantity in this field.

The recommendation concerning activities was a dual one; the organization should clarify the programs and differentiate by reformulating the activities. Concerning additional initiatives, the organization should further develop the existing initiatives and use it as a competitive advantage. As can be concluded from the Mystery Guest Approach, United Planet Quest coordinators are performing quite well in comparison to its competitors, but there is always room for improvement. When it comes to the field of forces, the organization should especially focus on employees, donors and competitors. The target audience should be segmented in accordance to United Planet's vision and the current Quest applications.

In chapter 4, I have focused on the subject of branding. As shown in literature, many non-profit organizations are reluctant to think of themselves as potential brands. This unwillingness comes from a narrow understanding of 'brand' as a marketing tool rather than as a core organizational principle. Not-for-profit organizations, however have great potential to become powerful brands, because people working in these organizations are passionate about their work and the significance of the response they generate from the community. Due to this passion, the staff will be able to communicate a consistent message, which is a fine basis on which to build a brand. Inconsistency in delivering the brand message creates a promise, which cannot be fully delivered by an organization. Successful implementation of a brand strategy is everybody's responsibility.

In order to improve the organization's position by increasing branding efforts, I have provided you with three creative concepts; UP Day, iHeartWorld campaign and the Style Guide. The eventual goal of these concepts is to achieve the communication objectives underlined in § 4.4. United Planet should pay attention to its extensive mission statement as well. A verbose mission statement can lose its motivational force and relevance quickly. In order to better represent the organization, the executive director should also ensure that all programs and activities deliver the organization's mission in form as well as content.

In chapter 5, the survey analysis, with an extremely low response rate,³⁵ shows that the majority of all respondents were American, between 18 and 26 years old. Most of the respondents heard about United Planet through the Internet. In the mind of the alumni volunteers are Cross-Cultural Solutions, I - to - I, Projects Abroad, and Habitat for Humanity. In comparison to its competitors, the survey has shown that the

³⁵ The survey is slightly biased, due to the respondent's level of involvement.



organization has a good score when it comes to accountability, credibility and type of organization. However, the aspects pricing and innovation show room for improvement.

When it comes to choosing a volunteer organization, credibility and customer satisfaction are the most important criteria to most respondents. The positioning map shows that the differences between the above mentioned competitors are very little. United Planet should differentiate more, in order to reach a more desired position in the market. In order to improve its positioning, United Planet should increase the awareness of its brand, mission, and programs. Differentiation from the competition and branding should be the main goals for 2007, with a specific focus on public relations and fundraising to drive stronger growth for United Planet.

According to chapter 5, the main reason for participating in a Quest is to help communities in need. The primary expectations for volunteering with United Planet were met in the eyes of more than half of all respondents. According to United Planet's positioning statement, the organization wishes to create the world's largest international multi-cultural community by providing a diverse range of local online and international initiatives.

At the beginning of chapter 6, I have provided you with recommendations according to the marketing mix. Out of the seven P's, the two most relevant to my research case are:

- Product:*
- In order to create consistency in external communication, the marketing team should be more familiar with United Planet's initiatives.
 - Developing and emphasizing other initiatives should be a priority.
- People:*
- United Planet should find ways to provide the coordinators with incentives and proper training.

Additional recommendations concerning further research to be performed in the future were added following the marketing recommendations.

§ 6.3.1 Response to my main research question

How can brand management help improve the competitive advantage of United Planet in order to enhance its current position in the market?

The first step United Planet should take would be to decide on a tagline, or brand promise. Proper research is crucial to evaluate the effects that the potential tagline could have on the organization's image.

Once a tagline has been chosen, United Planet has to work towards consistency in internal and external communication. To reach this level of consistency, the organizational structure should be improved: key positions should be hired, and coordinators should receive proper training and incentives. United Planet should



persuade the team that successful implementation of brand management is everyone's responsibility.

Since credibility and customer satisfaction has shown to be the most important criteria to choose a volunteer organization, United Planet should focus on these in order to reach a more desired position in the market.

- a. In order to improve United Planet's credibility, the organization should increase brand awareness.
- b. In order to improve customer satisfaction, the organization should enhance the quality rather than quantity of the programs it offers.

Another positive aspect of brand management is that by increasing the organization's credibility, United Planet will be able to reach out to potential donors. In addition to a reduction of dependence on Quest revenue, an increase in grants and donations will allow United Planet further growth towards the ideal position in the market.

All in all, improving United Planet's brand and differentiating from the competition should be the main goals for 2007, with a specific focus on brand management, public relations and fundraising. A plan of action including my recommended communication campaigns (UP Day, iHeartWorld and the Brand Style Guide) could assist the brand to live throughout the organization.



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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1; Interview transcript David Santulli

Appendix 2; Strategic Brief of United Planet, the Making of a Global NGO

Appendix 3; Organizational Chart

Appendix 4; Marketing Departmental Structure

Appendix 5; United Planet Brand & Style Guide

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Appendix 1: Interview transcript with David Santulli

Interviewer: Danielle Saan, HR / Marketing coordinator United Planet

Respondent: David Santulli, Executive director United Planet

Boston, May 1, 2007

Interview transcript

- I-1: Good afternoon, Mr. Santulli, and thank you for receiving me.
- R-1: You're welcome, Danielle.
- I-2: The purpose of this interview is to get more detailed information on United Planet. I am taking notes of this interview in order to include it in the Appendix of my thesis. Is that okay?
- R-2: Sure, I will help you with as many questions as I can.
- I-3: Thank you. Mr. Santulli, can you please inform me of the founding of United Planet?
- R-3: Well, I founded United Planet, an international nonprofit with 501(c)3 legal status focusing on public education, in November 2001. United Planet's mission is to foster cross-cultural understanding and friendship, support communities in need, and promote social and economic prosperity among cultures in order to unite the world in a community beyond borders.
- I-4: It is thus still a relatively young organization?
- R-4: Yes, you can certainly state that.
- I-5: Since the mission is related to unite the world in a community beyond borders, what is the organization's vision?
- R-5: Well, I have developed organizational goals for United Planet for the year 2007, 2011 and 2035. You will be working on the new strategic brief for 2007, 2008 and 2011. Anyway, United Planet's vision, a seven-fold path of the vision of 2007, is based on the results of the implementation of past organizational objectives. United Planet undertakes a range of initiatives, which are also indicated in that vision.
- I-6: I assume that you are referring to Quest, Cultural Awareness Project, Voices of Earth, the United Planet forum and the UP Ambassador's club?
- R-6: Yes, that's correct. Right now, United Planet's focus is more on Quest than our other initiatives, simply because Quest is a revenue-generating initiative. However, in the future we hope to further develop our other initiatives as well.
- I-7: Of course. That sounds understandable. What can you tell me about the organizational structure?
- R-7: United Planet currently has three paid employees; Donnie Baker, our marketing director, Theresa Higgs, our International Operations or Quest director and myself. I have to report to United Planet's Board of Directors, and together we make the organization's most important decisions.
- I-8: I see.
- R-8: The rest of our staff are passionate, creative and determined volunteers. Our organizations needs a passionate team of coordinators, since they are crucial to taking United Planet to the next level. Our volunteers are the force behind the organization, without them we would not have been able to grow United Planet as it did.
- I-9: Oh.. Okay.

- R-9: Not only the different coordinators are crucial, our Quest team is important as well. The Quest coordinators are doing everything they can to make the experience for the volunteers as best as possible.
- I-10: So, if I understand correctly, the volunteers that work for United Planet are of considerable importance to United Planet?
- R-10: Yes, correctly.
- I-11: Which other field of forces are considered important for the organization?
- R-11: Well, donors have a great influence on United Planet as well. Their trust is crucial for any nonprofit. Pressure groups are another field of forces, although we have to pay few attention on CSR.
- I-12: You mean Corporate Social Responsibility with CSR?
- R-12: Yes, yes. Our competitors are a force to be reckoned with as well. In the United States, these volunteer service organizations are booming. We have, however, not yet developed a market analysis or positioning map, since it is difficult to compare these organizations. Each organization has a different specialization and different so-called 'extra' organizational initiatives.
- I-13: I would thus have to state this information with my competitive analysis?
- R-13: Yes. But I have already seen your research specifications, and don't think it will be a problem.
- I-14: I see. What can you tell me about the demographic focus of United Planet's target audience?
- R-14: Well, currently, we mostly focus our marketing efforts on US citizens, between 18 and 25 years old. They are mostly students and have a limited income. They are interested in understanding different cultures, travelling and participating in community service.
- I-15: What do you mean with limited income?
- R-15: I am referring to the fact that they are students. During their study, most of the US students depend on their parents for income.
- I-16: Okay. And will this demographic focus remain for the next few years?
- R-16: No, not really. The organization would like to focus on attracting skilled volunteers in the future, such as doctors and business professionals.
- I-17: That sounds interesting! Let me try to conclude some key points here. United Planet's field of forces consists of employees, donors, pressure groups and competitors. You have not yet conducted a market analysis and the demographic focus of the target audiences lies with US students, but in the future, you wish to attract skilled volunteers?
- R-17: Correct.
- I-18: However, I have heard from Donnie Baker, the marketing director, that you have developed a positioning statement for the organization?
- R-18: That is true. Our positioning statement is to create the world's largest international multi-cultural community by providing a diverse range of exciting and fun local, online, and international initiatives. United Planet wishes to offer high quality programs at a lower price than Cross-Cultural Solutions and Global Volunteers in the volunteer program market. United Planet also wishes to expand more into learning Quest market for people of all ages. These learning quests will be unique in that each program will also have a volunteer component. United Planet wishes to provide more group and group-only programs. At the same time, United Planet wishes to emphasize that as the world's largest cultural exchange, we have a variety of programs to build global understanding and friendship including CAP,

online initiatives, and UP Day. United Planet wishes to do more healthcare and education quests to bring doctors, dentists, medical students, dental students, etc to areas for both practical and educational support. United Planet also wishes to bring professional teachers to areas in need during their summer break season. United Planet would like to reach out to corporations to gain support for our efforts to provide healthcare, healthcare education, and educational support.

I-19: And this is included in the vision or strategic brief as well?

R-19: It should be, yes.

I-20: Okay. My last question is about the SWOT analysis I am going to conduct. Can you think of any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats, I should include in the analysis?

R-20: Well, let me see. I think that United Planet's biggest strength is our holistic approach to the mission. We are not only a 'volunteer sending organization', but have more organizational initiatives. Our biggest weakness would be the high employee turnover. Each six months, new interns come work for United Planet. This brings a lot of stress with it as well.

I-21: I seem to have noticed that, yes. And which opportunities or threat are there for the organization?

R-21: Fundraising and branding are two of our biggest opportunities. Right now, our revenue is mostly based on the Quest program, which is a serious threat to United Planet.

I-22: I see. Well, mr. Santulli, thank you very much for your participation in this interview.

R-22: You're welcome, Danielle. Can I have a copy of the transcript as well? I can use that for our future interns.

I-23: Of course. I will also provide you with a copy of the competitive analysis and my thesis, as soon as I have finished it.

R-23: Thanks, Danielle.

I-24: No, thank you! Thank you for your time, mr. Santulli.

R-24: Please call me Dave.

Appendix 2: Strategic Brief
 United Planet in 2007 through 2011
 Envision the Change: The Making of a Global NGO

Question of Purpose: How can we create true social change globally?

Vision

Unite the Planet

Mission

United Planet (UP) is a leading international, educational, humanitarian, and peace-building, non-profit organization with members and volunteers in over 150 countries. The mission of United Planet is to foster cross-cultural understanding and friendship and support communities in need in order to unite the world in a community beyond borders. United Planet utilizes a diverse and creative range of local, online, and international programs to achieve this essential mission. The underlying principle of our programs is based on the concept of Relational Diplomacy, in which we recognize that the relationship between two people of diverse backgrounds is the vital thread – the basic building block—for bringing the world together in a community beyond borders. United Planet’s innovative programs are designed to expose our common human bonds and foster respect and appreciation for our cultural, racial, and religious diversity, while improving and enriching lives worldwide. All people of the world are invited to join United Planet's membership in a community beyond borders.

A Holistic Approach: Diverse programs for a diverse world

The United Planet Advantage: United Planet orchestrates a creative and diverse range of programs for a diverse world.

“Join us to bring the world together.
 There are many ways.”

United Planet’s carefully designed initiatives each feed into one another. This cyclical process energizes members and volunteers and builds momentum for United Planet programs.

- **United Planet Quests:** Provide cross-cultural volunteer opportunities for people from different countries and cultures to perform meaningful community service work together, while sharing and learning cultures and experiencing different parts of their own country and the world. Quests are offered in 50 countries for 1-52 weeks. Volunteers participate as individuals or in groups either internationally or within their own country.
- **Cultural Awareness Project:** Offers the opportunity for people from different cultures and countries to share about their cultures and countries within their local communities and while overseas in order to build respect and appreciation cultural diversity, while fostering friendship and understanding.
- **Special Projects:** Provides the opportunity for United Planet to work together with local NGOs, organizations, and foundations to develop special projects to

benefit the local community. As part of this effort, United Planet can provide skilled and general volunteers, such as professional English teachers, entrepreneurs, and field specialists, to assist in the development of sustainable projects to achieve mutual goals with partner organizations.

- **United Planet Ambassador Clubs:** Empowers people of all ages, especially the young, to become catalysts for change by giving them the tools to create and lead their own United Planet clubs and pursue programs consistent with the United Planet mission. By fostering global knowledge and cultural understanding, futures leaders will become empowered to become responsible future caretakers.
- **Online Programs:** Creates an unprecedented opportunity to develop a global network to connect people from every country on earth to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, cultural heritage, and global issues, while encouraging the generation of innovative solutions and international cooperation on a range of essential issues shared by all humanity.
- **United Planet Day:** Brings together diverse populations within the local community to both share and celebrate their own cultural differences in order to foster understanding, friendship, and cooperation. United Planet Day falls on the Autumn Equinox- a day on which the sun shines equally on all people on Earth.

5 Year Plan Summary

Over the next five years, United Planet would like to fully develop as a globally recognized non-profit organization. In order to achieve this essential objective, United Planet seeks to expand our Board of Directors and Board of Advisors to include a truly international team and also develop regional offices around the world.

While expanding our global presence and building a global leadership team, United Planet seeks to strengthen and expand all of our key programs in terms of both quality and number of participants. A yearly plan follows for each program.

By 2011, United Planet strives to have programs and regional offices on 6 continents. In order to achieve these considerable goals, United Planet must build a strong financial foundation, establish a skilled core team, dedicate to total quality program improvement, and develop a clear and compelling brand, along with powerful messaging.

Foundation Building Blocks: Focus on Basics

1. Build strong programs: Designate managers for each program/project. Commit to Total Quality Improvement of all programs.
2. Build strong financial foundation: Create Development team and engage Board in fundraising and partnership development.
3. Build strong leadership & team: Hire key positions and fully engage and develop the Board to take United Planet to the next level.
4. Build strong brand & messaging: Develop clear empowering messaging, redesign the website, and create powerful marketing and PR strategy and team.

7 Fold Path: Beginning with the end in Mind: Defining our Program Success by 2011

- Send over 1,000 short-term trained, skilled and unskilled, Quest volunteers per year to assist communities, build cross-cultural friendship, and educate others about their experiences.
- Build general cross-cultural and global awareness and target conflicting cultures in local communities as a peace-building measure through over 1,200 Cultural Awareness Project (CAP) presentations.
- Promote leadership, creativity, and exchange through at least 15 interconnected school and community Ambassador clubs worldwide.
- Celebrate cultures and inspire global interest through United Planet Day celebrated in Boston and Quest locations worldwide by over 1500 participants.
- Utilize the Internet and modern technology to unite a global online community with over 15,000 members through stimulating and entertaining educational and friendship-building activities.
- Distribute 7 publications per year to raise cross-cultural and global awareness through publications of global inspiration, volunteer stories, volunteer travel lessons, as well as a popular UP calendar and quarterly newsletter.
- Develop at least 7 sustainable projects in Quest locations per year to make a greater impact in communities in the field of healthcare, education, community development, housing, poverty alleviation, etc.

Program Specific Goals: 2007 and 2008

Quest Program:

The Quest team hopes to improve total program quality as well as all support processes. The Quest team will undertake a rigorous training initiative to work with all stakeholders, including volunteers, country coordinators, host families, team members, etc. All Quest materials, including pre-departure materials, health & safety manuals, etc. will also be improved.

United Planet seeks to develop an incoming U.S. program, 5 total programs in predominately Islamic countries, programs in areas in which we are underrepresented, and in countries which have high demand. In order to fulfill our global mission, we would like to establish a presence in all major regions. Currently, we do not have any short-term programs in Western Europe, Australia, or the Pacific. We would also like to introduce programs in very popular countries to increase the number of volunteers. These countries include: South Africa, Italy, France, UK, Australia, Brazil, etc.

The Quest team will also focus on developing evaluation methods, which include statistical analysis of volunteer surveys, host family surveys, and recipient surveys. The Quest team aims to achieve at least a 4 rating on 90% of all Quests in 2008 and a 5 rating on 80% of all Quests in 2009.

Key Quest Goal review:

- Improve quality of programs and the volunteer experience
 - Enhance pre-departure support with better quality materials

- Improve pre-departure trainings and make them mandatory for all volunteers
- Provide in-depth, in-person training to all Country Coordinators (CCs)
- Use IT to create a space for past, present and future volunteers, CCs and Boston-based Program Coordinators to communicate and exchange experiences
- Develop Re-entry materials and training
- Use and enhance Health and Safety Guides
- Build infrastructure to support growth of Quest programs
 - Enhance the Manager and other IT resources
 - Create a Risk Management Manual
 - Create Emergency Procedure Manuals for all short-term programs
- Develop a program in Egypt and possibly one other country
- Determine key evaluation indicators, such as overall Quest satisfaction ratings on volunteer surveys. Aim to achieve at least a 4 rating on 90% of all Quests in 2008 and a 5 rating on 80% of all Quests in 2009.
- Develop US incoming program for both short-term and long-term

II. CAP Goals

United Planet seeks to establish a very strong foundation for CAP in 2007 and 2008 by dedicating a full-time team member to manage this innovative program. Until funds can be raised to support this program, the CAP manager will be a full-time volunteer.

United Planet seeks to fully integrate CAP into the Quest program and encourage all Quest alumni to participate. United Planet aims to have 90% of Quest volunteers participate in CAP by the end of 2011 if not sooner.

CAP will also reach out to diverse communities and establish deeper bonds with CAP volunteers and groups interested in receiving CAP volunteers.

United Planet will also institute a policy beginning in September 2007 to require each UP team member to organize a CAP presentation during their time at United Planet. This presentation is to be conducted out of the office, i.e. at a bookstore, library, classroom, etc. The CAP can be done by the team member or an external volunteer recruited by the team member.

Key CAP Goal Review:

- Appoint program manager.
- Fully engage Quest volunteers, Quest alumni, and community CAP volunteers to conduct CAP in 2007. Conduct 325 CAP in 2008 (250 overseas, 55 by alumni, 20 in communities by local presenters) with the ultimate goal of requiring 90% of Quest volunteers to do a CAP presentation in all countries by 2011.

III. Unite a Global Community Online

United Planet seeks to unite members and volunteers worldwide through an interactive online community. The United Planet online community will promote the

organization to a global audience while fulfilling our mission through inspiring dialogue and connecting people worldwide. The online community is the vital glue which will both bring in new members and volunteers and serve as a crucial gateway for sharing information.

The online community should include the most current technology, including blogs, member profiles, social networking capability, photo galleries, forums, etc. United Planet seeks to rebuild our website to feature the online community of United Planet.

It is an essential goal of United Planet to develop a global movement by harnessing the power of these volunteers and members worldwide and involving them as off-site team members in their own country. These critical members can help us deepen awareness for UP in their countries through a diverse range of techniques, including postering, sending out e-mails, doing talks, providing content to forums and country pages, etc.

All team members in the office shall visit and post one comment in the UP Community per day on the forum.

IV. Special Projects Goal

United Planet seeks to make a deeper contribution to communities in which we send volunteers. By developing special projects, United Planet will develop deeper ties with the local community, while enhancing our impact in the fields, including healthcare, education, community development, housing, poverty alleviation, etc.

United Planet will refine the micro-empowerment concept with Guatemala Laundromat project and introduce virtual mentoring as next special project under Special Project Manager.

Micro-empowerment is a term created by United Planet in which we provide comprehensive support, i.e. partial/complete funding, volunteer support in-country, volunteer support through virtual realm. Support will be provided before, during, and after the project completion to ensure sustainable delivery to the recipient.

United Planet will also set up Country Funds for each program in which we send volunteers. We will take a portion of each Quest volunteer's program fee to donate to this country fund, ranging from \$50 to \$100.

V. Establish Ambassador Clubs Worldwide

United Planet seeks to develop a grassroots network worldwide through develop Ambassador clubs for different age groups, including high schools, colleges, companies, and communities.

Ambassador Clubs will help engage members on a deeper level, allow clubs to develop and expand upon UP programs, and encourage creativity and leadership among new participants.

By creating a diverse network in communities worldwide, United Planet will expand its presence and impact through individual clubs and synergistic partnerships among clubs and UP's home office.

VI. Celebrate UP Day Worldwide

United Planet seeks to develop United Planet as a day to celebrate the involvement of past volunteers and members, raise awareness for UP in local communities, recruit new members and volunteers, while fulfilling the mission of the organization through bringing people together, exploring global issues, and sharing world cultures.

United Planet will build UP over time with the ultimate dream of doing festivals worldwide on this day. For the short-term, United Planet will use the day for more limited activities, such as a UP Day writing and poetry contest, encouraging alumni to do CAPs on this day, mini-festivals for Quest volunteer communities, etc.

DEPARTMENTAL GOALS:

MARKETING:

- Request Marketing Director to prepare 3 month plans with clear performance measures and objectives based on key priorities
- Develop clear messaging in all UP communications, including website, collateral, partner websites, etc.
- Develop UP brand as an innovative leader in the NGO sector.
- Ensure achievement of key program goals by driving needed participants into the programs. Reach recruitment targets.
- Focus on converting participants among programs. Achieve conversion rate goals for program alumni.
- Cultivate very strong participant and alumni relations with all program constituents.
- Develop key partnerships which will enable United Planet to achieve organizational and program goals, i.e. partnership with returned Peace Corps Association for Quest, partnerships with corporations to host CAP, participate in Quest, and support special projects, etc. Marketing Director should function as partnership manager for the organization.
- Develop United Planet PR effort

Program Specific Goals:

- Quest: Recruit 400 short-term volunteers in 2007 and 30 long-term volunteers. Recruit 500 short-term volunteers and 45 long-term volunteers in 2008.
- Quest: Develop Campus recruiter program at 2 universities in Boston in 2007. Roll-out to 6 universities in 2008. Expand further in 2009.
- Quest: Develop special pages for the website, such as healthcare pages, to reach out to specific volunteers.
- Quest: Reach out to more groups, including high school, college, graduate school, religious, professional, associations, and retired pre-existing groups.

- Develop strong volunteer/member relationship management system in which each participant has a record of involvement (history file) for us to examine.
- Create strong global Internet presence, including postings and links, etc.
- Online Programs: Register 8,000 members by 2008. Convert 5% of online members into Quest volunteers, CAP volunteers, or Ambassadors.
- Alumni Programs: Create incentives to get 50% of the Quest alumni involved and at least 20% of the alumni to do CAP presentations. Alumni involvement includes: sharing photos and videos, becoming a mentor, doing a CAP, etc. Marketing Team should call every returning volunteer to congratulate them, present the Global Caring Award, and offer opportunities for future involvement. Register 90% of Quest volunteers in the online community. Use UP Day as a day for alumni to give CAPS.
- Develop 2 key major highly synergistic partnerships in 2007 and 4 in 2008.
- Ambassador Clubs: Appoint program manager. Test model with 2 clubs, including at least 1 high school and 1 college. Convert 10% of Ambassador participants to do Quest, 20% to do CAP, and 90% to join the online programs.
- UP Day: Appoint UP Day event manager. Focus on Awards and Contests to start. Introduce Festivals in 1-3 years. Convert 5% of UP Day participants to join Quest, CAP, or Ambassadors and 20% of participants to join the online community. Use the writing and photo contest as a method of expanding membership. Establish mini-activities in Quest sites for this day to involve Quest volunteers and community members.
- Establish roles for off-site volunteers worldwide to contribute to the organization as indicated in the online member section.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

The primary goal of the Project Development Director will be to raise funds for United Planet. The Project Development Director will develop partnerships with potential donors and submit grants. With the support of the board and Executive Director, the Project Development Director will set a goal to raise \$250,000 by the end of 2008.

ACCOUNTING & FINANCE MANAGER

The primary goal of the Accounting & Finance Manager is to record financial transactions, coordinate payments with volunteers and donors, handle insurance & legal issues, and assist in budgeting and projections.

Key Goals:

- Set exact pricing with all partners and switch completely to the accrual basis
- Develop yearly budgets & projections
- Assist in assessment of strategies based on financial analysis
- Control costs of the organization

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

The Human Resource Department assists in recruiting and administering staff members and volunteers, arranging office functions, managing the office, and assisting the Executive Director.

Key Goals:

- Hire a Online Community Manager in 2007
- Recruit a full-time CAP Director in 2007
- Hire an Accounting & Financial Manager in 2008 (1 year paid intern with stipend or full-time paid staff) with possible hire of HR Manager & Personal Assistant to the Director, and Long-term Quest Manager
- Institute key policies and develop full role descriptions to delineate responsibilities.
- Create opportunities with program and marketing departments to enable people all over the world to volunteer
- ED speaks with all team members individually every month to check in.

Internal Communications, Goal Setting & Reporting Practices

- Propose and set measurable Yearly, Quarterly, Monthly, and bi-weekly goals and timelines
- Report progress at weekly Directors' meetings among all key Directors and Managers.
- Set up bi-weekly entire office team meetings in which Directors share team goals and team members share key bi-weekly goals.
- Provide monthly reports to the Board of Directors and the Board of Advisors. Report will include: Monthly revenue, monthly donations, number of CAP participants, number of Quest sign-ups, number of new registrations in online community, number of Ambassador clubs developed, number of YouTube views, number of Face Book members, number of My Space members, etc.
- Conduct monthly Quarterly Evaluations of Team member performance

Financial Goals

Financial/Operational Projections (Quest Revenue Growth based on average Quest fee of \$1800 for Short-term programs and \$5,000 for Long-term programs)

Year	Paid Staff	Quest Revenue	Donations	Quest/Donations	Total
2007	6	\$740,000	\$60,000	93/7	\$800,000
2008	9	\$995,000	\$250,000	80/20	\$1,245,000
2009	11	\$1,340,000	\$400,000	77/23	\$1,740,000
2010	12	\$1,685,000	\$750,000	69/31	\$2,435,000
2011	14	\$2,030,000	\$1,000,000	67/33	\$3,030,000

Goal: By 2011, achieve at least a 70-30 ratio between program revenue and donations and exceed \$3,000,000 in annual revenue by 2011.

Staffing Roll-Out Goals:

2007: Executive Director, Quest Director, Marketing Director, Project Development Director, Short-term Quest Manager, Online Community Manager

2008: Add Accounting & Finance Manager, Human Resources & Personal Assistant to the Director, & Long-term Quest Manager (Consider also CAP Manager and Partnerships Manager).

2009: Add Support staff as needed

2010: Change to Corporate Model, i.e. Executive Director becomes President/CEO. Directors become Senior Vice Presidents, etc. Add Chief Operating Officer

2011: Add as needed 2 additional employees

Office Roll-Out:

2007: Develop European Presence through country/region representatives.

2008: Explore regional offices in Europe, Middle East, South East Asia as well as a Canadian country office.

2009: Launch regional/country offices in Europe, Middle East, Southeast Asia, and possibly Canada .

2010: Develop regional offices

2011: Launch regional office in Africa, Latin America, and Australia.

Regional/Country Office Analysis:

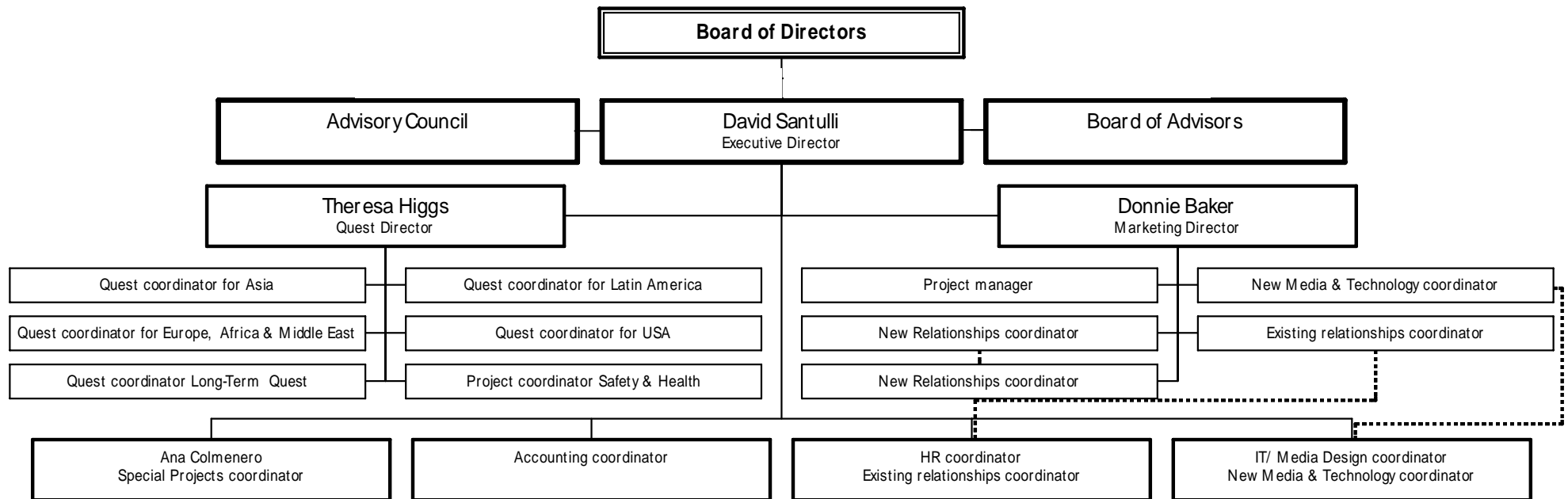
- Develop and expand all UP programs locally and regionally.
- Improve marketing & PR efforts with local presence.
- Expand opportunities to develop local and regional partnerships and enhance international synergies among UP head office and regional/country centers.
- Provide more direct services to the local population through programs.
- Raise money locally and internationally through registration as in-country NGO, i.e. access EU funds, etc.
- Develop local language sites to cater directly to local audiences, while maintain global core on all websites to link to online community and other centralized programs.

Stages of Entry:

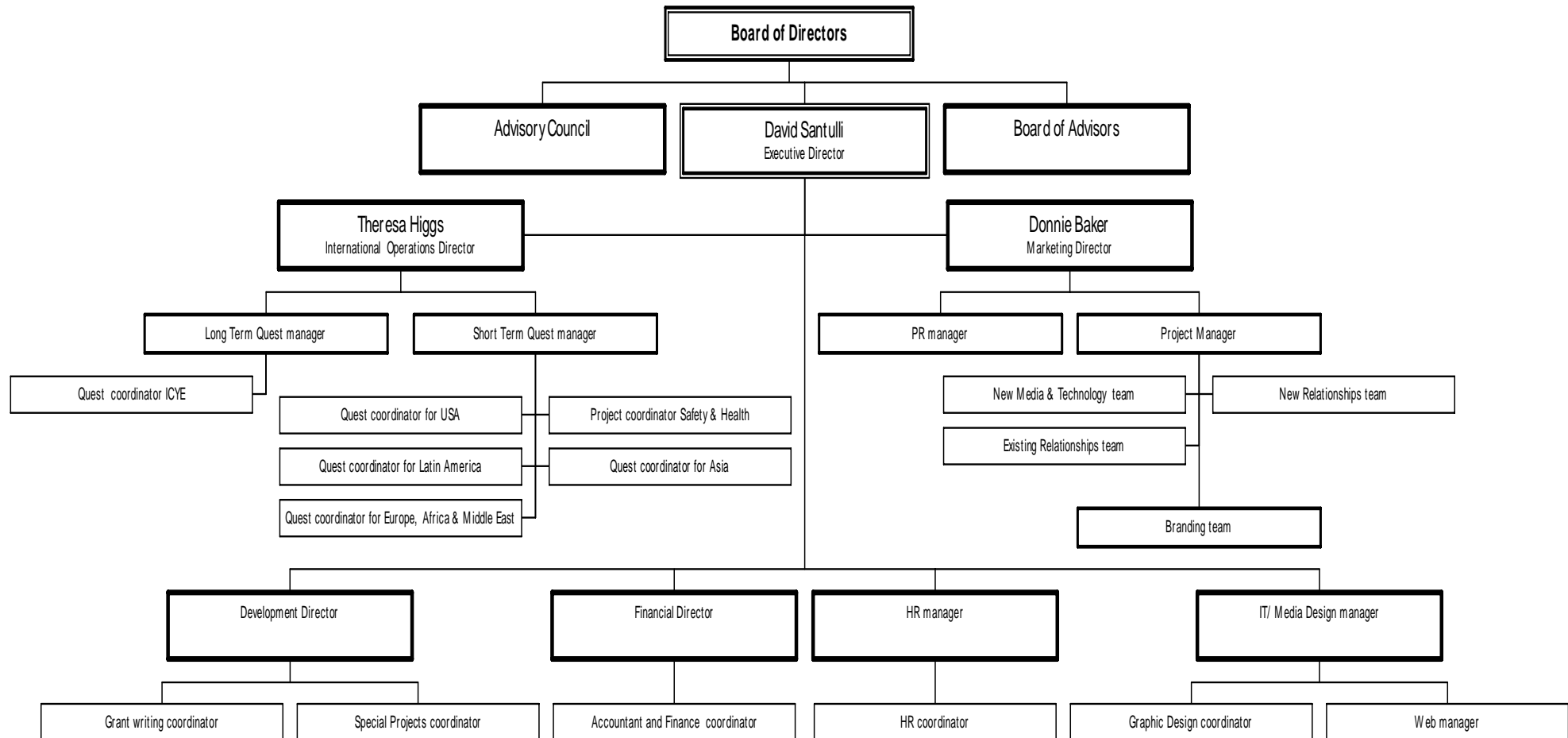
- Manage from afar- Localize website while managing from US base (There are degrees to this level, including partial and complete website translations.)
- Manage from afar with local representation- Localize website and hire local representative to act as liaison for inquiries about all UP programs. (Some countries would require a local native person in-country, such as France, Germany, Spain, Italy, and the UK. Other countries might be open to working with a regional office based outside of their country.)
- Develop in-country regional office with continued local representation. For example, United Planet could develop an office in Paris or London, which would cater to the whole of Europe while still maintaining a team of in-country representatives.
- Develop more than one country office to focus on regions, such as developing offices in London and Paris.

Appendix 3; Organizational Chart

United Planet Organizational Structure, June 2007



Potential United Planet Organizational Structure



Appendix 3; Marketing Departmental Structure

Appendix 3.1; Renewed Marketing Team Structure



The United Planet marketing team will be structured into four sub-teams, with two-three members each. Under the direction of the marketing director each sub-team will have core goals and will also be responsible for collaborating when necessary with other sub-teams.

BRANDING (marketing director, project manager, public relations manager)

The branding team will be responsible for overseeing all UP marketing efforts, managing and growing the UP brand, keeping abreast of current trends and researching and tracking competitive efforts.

Specific Tasks:

- Maintain style and messaging guides

- Maintain all schedules and calendars
- Manage special campaigns
- Manage key partnership initiatives
- Assist and collaborate with external PR manager

NEW MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY (new media manager, internet marketing coordinator)

The new media and technology team will be responsible for guiding the online and multimedia efforts, keeping abreast of current trends and researching and tracking competitive efforts.

Specific Tasks:

- Manage and promote blogs and forums
- Produce and manage YouTube campaigns
- Manage google and yahoo keywords and listings
- Maintain social network website profiles and campaigns
- Identify needed website and technology improvements
- General website updates and maintenance
- Assist other teams with e-news distribution
- Maintain marketing contacts database
- Assist with multimedia presentations for events

NEW RELATIONSHIPS (new relationships manager, campus ambassador coordinator)

The new relationships team will be responsible for outreach and promotion of UP programs, researching new potential markets, keeping abreast of current trends and researching and tracking competitive efforts.

Specific Tasks:

- Promotion of programs to related key markets
- Attend events and fairs to recruit volunteers and conduct event follow-up
- Assist branding team to identify potential new partnerships
- Manage and promote "Ambassador" program
- Identify and strategize how to best reach new markets

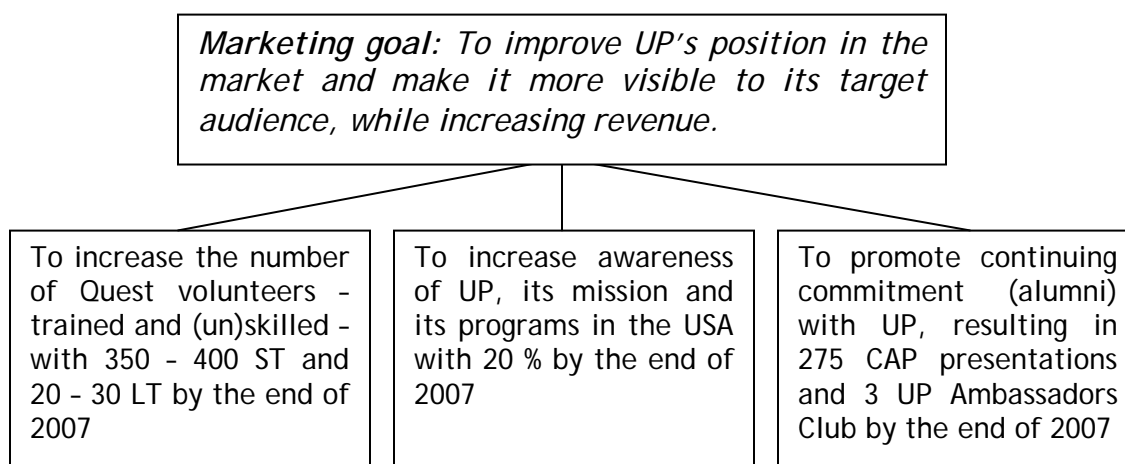
EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS (existing relationships manager, alumni relations coordinator)

The existing relationships team will be responsible for maintaining relationships with UP program alumni, keeping abreast of current trends in volunteer management (CRM) and researching and tracking competitive efforts.

Specific Tasks:

- Reach out to and maintain relationships with all post-program volunteers
- Create unique alumni focused events, web content and e-newsletters
- Manage and promote "Cultural Awareness Project"
- Assist branding and new relationships team to engage alumni for campaigns and recruitment
- Assist in engaging and collaborating with the advisory board and advisory council.

Appendix 3.2; Marketing plan (Feb 2007)



Marketing goal: To improve UP's position in the market and make it more visible to its target audience, while increasing revenue.

To increase the number of Quest volunteers - trained and (un)skilled - with 350 - 400 ST and 20 - 30 LT by the end of 2007
(Target audience: all segments)

To target all the specific segments of the target audience mentioned beneath in a differentiating way (different brochures)

To increase the presence at the study abroad / international relations offices of HS / Colleges in the USA (newsletters, posters, flyers)

To further develop the PR department (creation international media pages and sending press releases)

To increase awareness of UP, its mission and its programs in the USA with 20 % by the end of 2007

(Target audience: the mass)

To improve the image of United Planet by investigating UP positioning in relation to its competitors from the consumers point of view

To improve the identity of UP by

- > homogenizing the style (Style guide) of UP
- > defining the roles of the Marketing Staff (org. chart)
- > creating the Little Book of Worldly Wisdom

To let more people be involved with UP by

- > reactivating the Forum (with at least 5% of Quest volunteers) and using an active moderating team
- > utilizing MySpace
- > creating an event (UP day)
- > integrating UP and its programs, by creating 10 Volunteer blogs online

To increase the presence of UP

- > in schools (HS/Colleges)
- > on the internet, by using internet marketing (for details check the division of labor)

To promote continuing commitment (alumni) with UP, resulting in 275 CAP presentations and 3 UP Ambassadors Club by the end of 2007

(Target audience: alumni)

To improve contacts with alumni volunteers, more attention on post-departure

To involve current student alumni volunteers as on-campus UP representatives

To create a three-monthly newsletter for alumni

Appendix 5; United Planet Brand Style Guide

Demonstrating the Brand

The United Planet brand is conveyed visually and thematically through careful consistency in phrasing, tone of voice, color palettes, shapes, dividers, fonts, and other components such as the key words "global," "intercultural," and "community." If we maintain a marketing strategy that makes uniform stylistic choices in all of our external and internal communications, our target audience will become confident in the integrity of our organization as a product of their familiarity with it.

If any graphics or materials are required, they will be located in UPShare under Marketing > Document Templates.

Messaging

Our message is centered on the idea of improving and creating positive intercultural relationships. We must make sure that the language we use is reflective of that. Adhere to the tagline and the key words carefully. Convey a positive message of hope for the future in every communication put forth.

Use of United Planet name/"UP" Acronym - All Communications

United Planet (the full name) is the preferred moniker for the organization. Each paragraph that mentions United Planet by name must use the full name in the first instance. After that, the abbreviation UP may be used. However, the abbreviation may not be used more than twice in a single paragraph. If possible, keep paragraphs concise and focused enough so as to avoid mentioning the name of the organization more than three times.

Tagline - All Communications

"Bringing the World Together." It is memorable, short, and includes the Quest program as well as other initiatives.

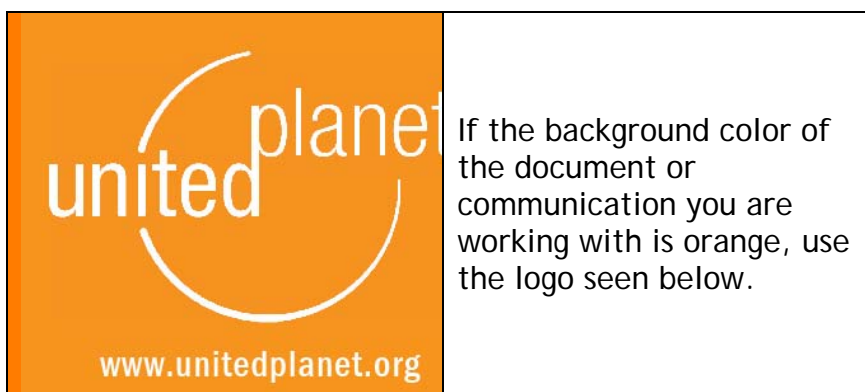
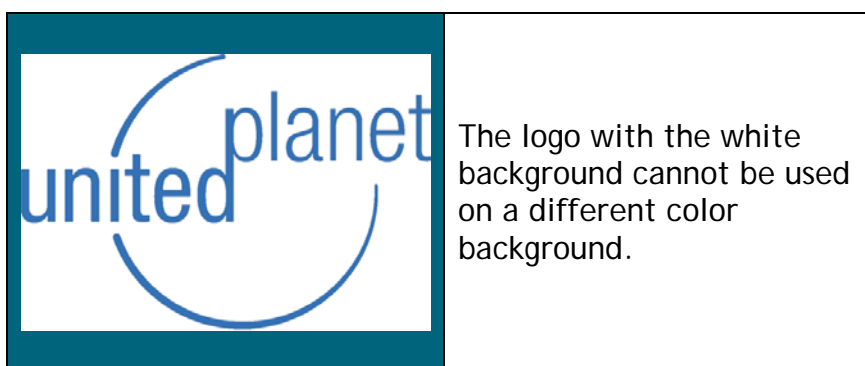
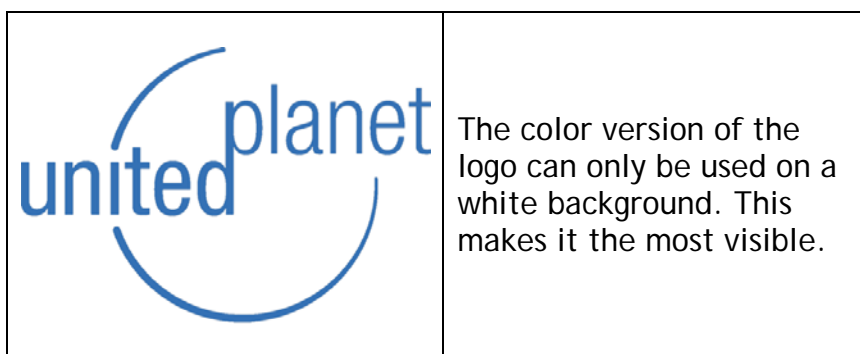
Use of Tagline - All Communications

The tagline, "Bringing the World Together," will be visible on the first page of every document or piece of communication. It should be in the top 1/3 of the page, "above the fold." It may be included underneath the logo although it must appear in a semi-circular fashion along the bottom of the logo.

Other past taglines will not be used in a prominent way on any communications. This is very important for the integrity of the updated brand. "A Community Beyond Borders" and other past taglines will not be used under any circumstances and any materials that retain these taglines must not be circulated externally. There will be no other phrase besides "Bringing the World Together" that appears prominently and consistently on all communications.

Logo - All Communications

The logo should be used in the top third of the page (the first page, if it is one of a series) on either the right or the left hand side of the page. If possible, use the logo as seen on the letterhead with the orange bar, the logo, and the "Individually.." quote at the top. This is the preferred look for printed communications. This must be done on formal internal communications as well as external ones to maintain consistency.



The logo can also be shown in black and white. If this is done, the graphic must be black and the background white or vice versa. Do not use grays for the logo.

Header - Web communications

No header is required for e-mail. The logo and the tagline should be used in a way that is consistent with the instructions above.

Header - Print Communications

Use the printed letterheads that will be available. For the first page, use the letterhead with the orange header. Do not use plain paper or any other type of letterhead for printed communications. The letterhead should look as it does below:



Second Page and Beyond - Printed Communications

On the second page and beyond, the sidebar of circles will be used on the right side of the page. The template will be available for a multi-page document in UPShare under General Templates. This template will contain the appropriate header and footer and instructions on how to format the page.

Footer - All Communications

The footer will contain contact information in the following format:

11 Arlington Street, Boston, MA 02116
 Local: 617.267.7763 | Toll-free: 800.292.2316 | Fax: 617.267.7764
 Email: info@unitedplanet.org | Web: www.unitedplanet.org

This information will be centered at the bottom of the page and be presented at the end of each printed document or at the bottom of an individual web page. If there is only one page of the document, it will be on this page.

This information is not mandatory for internal communications but will be strictly required on all outgoing materials. We must maintain careful consistency in using the same format and the same location for our footer so target groups know how to gain access to more information.

Colors

Color consistency is a crucial component of style. These are the colors that may be used. White and black are also acceptable. Black is the preferred color for text since any non-graphic elements (i.e., text, navigation) should be set against a white background. Any other colors are not acceptable.

Primary Colors

United Planet Orange	
Pantone - 152	RGB - R255-G125-B0
CMYK - 0-51-100-0	HEX - FF7D00

United Planet Blue	
Pantone - 302	RGB - R0-G102-B125
CMYK - 100-18-0-51	HEX - 00667D

Accent Colors

Medium Blue	
Pantone - 3015	RGB - R0-G161-B-209
CMYK - 100-23-0-18	HEX - 00A1D1

Orange-Red	
Pantone - 173	RGB - R240-B74-G0
CMYK - 0-69-100-6	HEX - F04A00

Bullets

The bullets used for United Planet materials will be the arrows seen below:

- Item 1
- Item 2
- Item 3

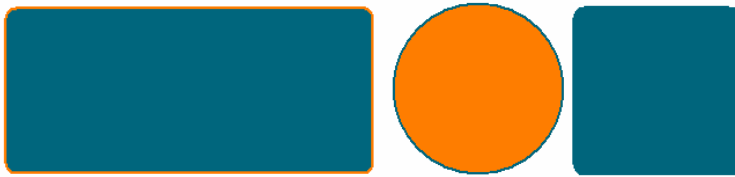
- They can be selected in the following way:
 - Creating a list
 - Bulleting the list
 - Right-clicking on the bullets
 - Selecting the open circle from the options that appear on the screen

Do not change the indentation or any other aspects of the default settings for bulleted lists. Unless it is absolutely necessary, use bulleted lists as opposed to numbered lists.

Shapes

United Planet uses primarily circles and round-cornered boxes as design elements. If you are creating graphics, use these shapes as much as possible and avoid others.

Appropriate:



Inappropriate:



Font Use - Printed Communications

Heading Font (as seen in "Brand Style Guide") - Franklin Gothic Heavy, 20pt, UP blue

Subheading Font (as seen in "Font Use") - Franklin Gothic Medium, 16pt, UP orange

Body Font - Franklin Gothic Book, 12pt, black

Font Use - Web Communications

Heading Font - Arial, 20pt, UP blue

Subheading Font - Arial, 16pt, UP orange

Body Font - Arial, 12pt, black

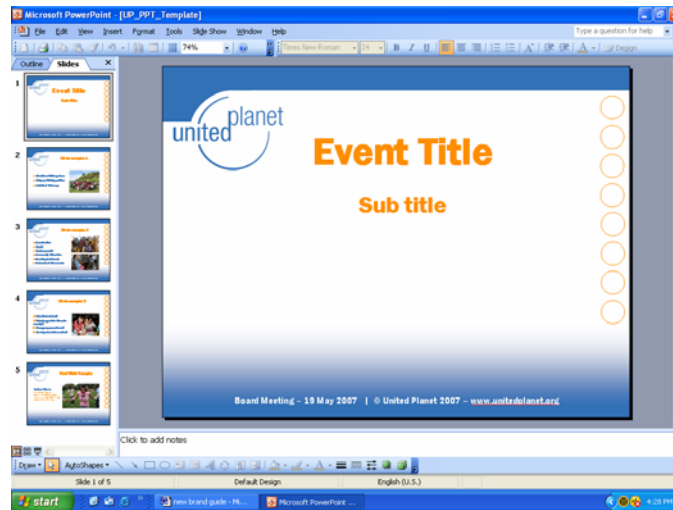
Photography

Photographs must be natural and pleasant. They will consist of primarily portraits and will ideally be circular as seen in the Quest brochure. They can be un-bordered or bordered with either the primary blue or the primary orange. Alternatively, they may be presented in rectangular format so long as they focus on the human or cultural aspects of United Planet. Please use well-lit photos. Try to convey a sense of hope and intercultural friendship in the photographic elements.

PowerPoint Presentations

Use the PowerPoint template available in the Document Templates folder for PowerPoint presentations. Try to include photographs as much as possible from

the folder containing the ones set aside for promotional use. Do not change the format of this template or create one of your own.



To be updated every two months by the Branding Coordinator.

Must be distributed to all employees.