Brand Key Model SharePeople

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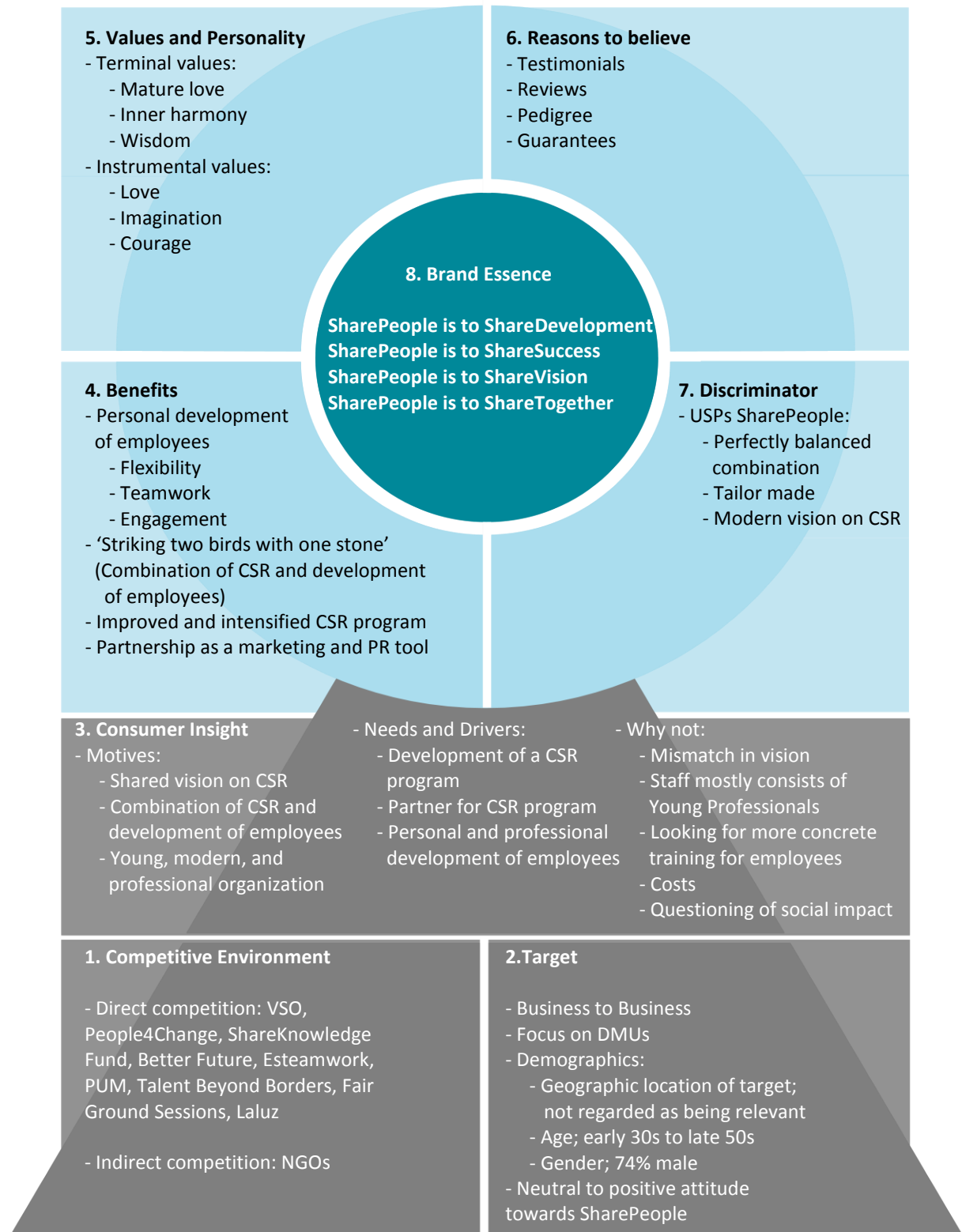
Table of Contents

Introduction

This document is created for SharePeople and to support the thesis 'The Key to SharePeople's Branding Strategy'. In this document the Brand Key Model is further elaborated upon and valuable information and insights for SharePeople are presented. The structure of the information follows the same structure as the Brand Key model; 1) Competitive Environment; 2) Target; 3) Consumer Insight; 4) benefits; 5)Values and Personality; 6) Reason to Believe; 7) Discriminator and 8) The Brand Essence. SharePeople's Brand Key model is presented on the next page.

Brand Key Model SharePeople

5. Values and Personality
- Terminal values:
    - Mature love
    - Inner harmony
    - Wisdom
- Instrumental values:
    - Love
    - Imagination
    - Courage

6. Reasons to believe
- Testimonials
- Reviews
- Pedigree
- Guarantees

8. Brand Essence

SharePeople is to ShareDevelopment
SharePeople is to ShareSuccess
SharePeople is to ShareVision
SharePeople is to ShareTogether

4. Benefits
- Personal development
  of employees
    - Flexibility
    - Teamwork
    - Engagement
- 'Striking two birds with one stone'
  (Combination of CSR and development
   of employees)
- Improved and intensified CSR program
- Partnership as a marketing and PR tool

7. Discriminator
- USPs SharePeople:
    - Perfectly balanced
      combination
    - Tailor made
    - Modern vision on CSR

3. Consumer Insight
- Motives:
    - Shared vision on CSR
    - Combination of CSR and
      development of employees
    - Young, modern, and
      professional organization

- Needs and Drivers:
    - Development of a CSR
      program
    - Partner for CSR program
    - Personal and professional
      development of employees

- Why not:
    - Mismatch in vision
    - Staff mostly consists of
      Young Professionals
    - Looking for more concrete
      training for employees
    - Costs
    - Questioning of social impact

1. Competitive Environment

- Direct competition: VSO,
People4Change, ShareKnowledge
Fund, Better Future, Esteamwork,
PUM, Talent Beyond Borders, Fair
Ground Sessions, Laluz

- Indirect competition: NGOs

2.Target

- Business to Business
- Focus on DMUs
- Demographics:
    - Geographic location of target;
      not regarded as being relevant
    - Age; early 30s to late 50s
    - Gender; 74% male
- Neutral to positive attitude
towards SharePeople

1. Competitive Environment

1.1. Identifying Competitors

In order to identify SharePeople's direct and indirect competitors, different resources are used as input. The first resource is input from SharePeople's employees, which were asked to answer questions regarding SharePeople's competitive environment and key competitors. The second resource is the input from SharePeople's customers who have answered the question; did you look into other companies or organizations before you decided to work with SharePeople? If yes, which companies or organizations were these? A similar question was asked to non customers; "With which organization did you decide to work with instead of SharePeople?" The answers to this question are the third input for this analysis. The final input was a list of competitors SharePeople have created in 2009. The following competitors have been identified.

1.1.1. Direct Competition

After analyzing the three inputs mentioned above, different direct competitors where identified: VSO, People4Change, ShareKnowledge Fund (part of ShareBusiness), Better Future, EsteamWork, Pum, Talent beyond Limits, Fair Ground Session, and Laluz. These are companies that offer a service very similar to SharePeople's product; a combination of personal and professional development for their employees, while serving as a partner for their CSR policy. However, most competitors lack a balance between these two aspects, having a strong focus either on the personal and professional development aspect, or on the CSR aspect. It can therefore be assumed none of the competitors provide a service similar to that of SharePeople.

The direct competition was analyzed and described with respect to five important characteristics: service, results, target market, costs, and important partners. The information for this analysis was retrieved from the organizations' websites and from a brief competitor analysis by SharePeople in 2009. The analysis of the direct competition can be found in appendix 1.

1.1.2. Indirect Competition

Alongside direct competition, the organization also has to deal with indirect competition. To identify these indirect competitors, the customers and non customers interviewed for this report have also been asked to name the competitors they had considered before making their decision on working together with SharePeople or a competitor. The indirect competition can be divided into two groups; NGOs and training companies.

1.1.2.1.   NGOs

The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have been the indirect competition of SharePeople so far are Cordaid, the Red Cross, the Fund for the Mentally Disabled (Fonds Verstandelijke Gehandicapten), and WarChild. These NGOs do not offer any service similar to that of SharePeople, however they do offer individuals the opportunity to 'give back to society', to help the disadvantaged abroad or in the Netherlands, to do voluntary work etc. They can also be a partner for companies in the field of CSR, PR, and engagement of employees.

1.1.2.2.   Training Companies

SharePeople employees have indicated training companies as indirect competition. However, this view is not supported by the interviews with customers and non customers, and therefore will not be regarded as such. Also, none of the services provided by training companies regarded by SharePeople employees offer a service remotely similar to that of SharePeople.

1.2.   Conclusion

Based on the information retrieved from the interviews, it is safe to conclude that no other organization offers exactly the same service as SharePeople. The main differences lay in the balance between the development and CSR partner aspects, duration of the programs, the organizations' target markets, the kind of companies that are visited by the experts in developing countries, and the flexibility of the programs. Cost wise, SharePeople's service is in the same range as its competitors. Looking at the indirect competition it can be concluded that NGOs need to be considered, while training companies can currently be ignored. It is important to SharePeople to know which organizations it is competing with and therefore it is highly recommended to update the competitor analysis on a regular basis.

2. Target

2.1. B2B or B2C

Even though the organization also works with individuals who participate in a SharePeople program without the support of a company, SharePeople is not focused on the business-to-consumer market but on the business-to-business market. In this market the organization offers services in the form of tailor-made group programs.

Three different types of customers can be identified in the customer base: 1) the employee who arranges participation in a program bottom up, 2) the decision making unit (i.e. management team) of a company that sees added value in a partnership with SharePeople, 3) entrepreneurs with their own (one-man) business participating at their own cost. SharePeople's management has decided that only customers of type two will be actively targeted. Therefore, this will also be the main focus of this research.

2.2. Companies

SharePeople's exact target market is unclear due to the fact that the organization is not targeting one type of company and is not active in one specific branch. However, the organization has most often worked with so called small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs). According to central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) in the Netherlands, there were 863.840 active SMEs in 2010, they made up for 58% of the total revenue made by businesses, and have provided 60% of the working population with a job.[1] It would be safe to assume that this is a large market.

Although there is no specific targeting of one professional branch, there are a few branches where SharePeople has been most active in the past. These branches will be explained below to give a clear overview of the current target market.

2.2.1. Consultancy

According to the Dictionary consultancy is "a business or agency offering expert or professional advice in a field".[2] In the Netherlands there are thousands of consultancy firms and these firms can be active in any kind of field. The reason that this branch is attractive for SharePeople is due to the fact that these firms in general are very active when it comes to developing and engaging their employees.

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[1] http://www.mkbservicedesk.nl/569/informatie-over-mkb-nederland.htm
[2] http://www.thefreedictionary.com/consultancy

2.2.2. Training

In general, training firms offer other companies the service of educating and coaching their employees in order to improve or change practises. This branch is especially attractive for SharePeople to start partnerships and have its services adopted in the training-company's portfolio. It is unclear what the exact size of this branch is.

2.2.3. Temporary Employment Agencies/Secondment Agencies

This branch is attractive for SharePeople because people working for temporary employment and secondment agencies might have breaks between two jobs and would have the time to do a SharePeople program. Also, these people have new employers all the time and therefore must find innovative ways to stay attractive like going on a program with SharePeople for personal and professional development. It is, unfortunately, unclear what the actual size of this branch is.

2.3. Decision Making Units

Although SharePeople does not target companies in one specific branch, the organization does target one specific layer within the companies. This is the layer of management (referred to as Decision Making Unit, or DMU) that has the authority to make strategic management decisions, like striking up a partnership with SharePeople. Due to its inherent heterogeneity, it is impossible to describe this layer in detail. However, in order describe SharePeople's target market as complete as possible three main DMUs are being described.

2.3.1. CSR Management

A Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) manager's role is to determine a company's corporate objectives for CSR providing expertise, advice, and direction. The CSR manager's task is to develop an effective CSR program, engage employees, develop an annual CSR report, establish partnership programs, and to act as the knowledge leader and expert for CSR.[3]

2.3.2. HR Management

According to the Business Dictionary human resources (HR) management is "the administrative discipline of hiring and developing employees so they become more valuable to the company".[4] A HR manager has many tasks including orienting and training. That is the part where SharePeople's service can fit in.

2.3.3. Talent Management

"Talent management refers to the process of developing and integrating new workers, developing and retaining current workers, and attracting highly skilled workers to work for a company. Talent

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[3] http://acre-resources.com/downloads/Reactive_phase_CSR_Manager.pdf
[4] http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/human-resource-management-HRM.html

management in this context does not refer to the management of entertainers" (Schweyer, 2004). Talent managers are most likely to be attracted to SharePeople's service because it offers an opportunity for personal and professional development of employees.

2.4. Demographics

This section will elaborate on the demographics of the decision making units of SharePeople's target companies. It must be noted that this information is generic.

2.4.1. Location

SharePeople is located in the city center of Utrecht, which is in itself centrally located in the Netherlands. However, geographical location of customers (both national and international) is not regarded by SharePeople as an influential aspect of the branding strategy.

2.4.2. Age

Due to a lack of research, the average age of higher management can only be deduced from the interview data. The average age of the interviewees lies between the early thirties and late fifties. Eligible employees must have at least five years of relevant working experience and are therefore expected to be around 25 to 65 years of age.

2.4.3. Gender

According to the CBS only 26 percent of the managers in higher management position are female.[5] The gender of eligible employees is assumed to be evenly distributed.

2.4.4. Motives

SharePeople has so far not monitored customers' motives for choosing their service. The interviews used in this research aim to shed light on this matter. Frequently mentioned motives from the interviewees are; the shared vision on CSR (especially development aid), the opportunity to develop employees personally and professionally, and a combination of the previously mentioned motives. Customers' motives will be further elaborated on in the next chapter: 'Consumer insight'.

2.5. Attitudes and Values

It is difficult to say what the common attitudes and values of SharePeople's many different customers are, with the exception that all customers see the added value of SharePeople. After interviewing a few of SharePeople's customers and non customers, it became clear that no one dislikes the brand SharePeople. It may be concluded that the overall attitude towards SharePeople is neutral to positive among the interviewees.

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[5] http://www.cbs.nl/nl-NL/menu/themas/dossiers/eu/publicaties/archief/2009/2009-2811-wm.htm

2.6. Conclusion

With the information provided above, SharePeople's 'perfect customers' can be described. This customer is a male or female manager with strategic decision making authority and works at a company that is either interested in developing its employees personally and professionally, is looking for a partner for its CSR policy, or is looking for a combination of both. The companies where the DMUs work must employ professionals 25 to 64 years of age and with at least five years of relevant working experience. The geographic location of the company that the customer is employed at is not regarded as being relevant.

3. Consumer Insight

3.1. Motives

During the interview customers have been asked to name the motives for working with SharePeople over working with the competition. After analyzing the results from the interview three main motives were identified; Vision (60%), Combination (80%), and Young, Modern, and Professional (60%), which will be described below.

3.1.1. Vision

Companies are not only judged or valued based on their quantitative results; partnerships with suppliers and other organizations are also highly important since they tell a lot about the company's vision and strategy. Thus, when a company is looking for a partnership it is important for the company to find a partner that matches with the company in terms of values, vision and attitudes, among others. Interviewed customers have communicated that one of the main motives for the company to choose to work with SharePeople is because the organization matches with their company on different aspects. One important aspect shared by the company and SharePeople is their vision on CSR and especially on the aspect of development aid; "to have an entrepreneur support another entrepreneur with knowledge instead of money, in order to make a social impact" (Consultant at EMC performance).

3.1.2. Combination

SharePeople's service can be used for both CSR and the development of employees, striking two birds with one stone. This combination, which is unique to SharePeople, provides the organization with a competitive advantage. The Talent and Leadership program manager at Capgemini, a large consulting firm in the Netherlands, mentions "SharePeople was right in the middle; yes, it is socially responsible, but there was also something in it for us". Apparently, the interviewees did not feel that the direct competition was also providing a product with this combination.

3.1.3. Young, Modern, and Professional

Organizations committed to making social impact in developing countries, in whichever way, usually have to cope with a soft and dull image. However, this is not the case for SharePeople. SharePeople's young, modern, and professional image appeals to the interviewees, such as the commercial manager at Looije Tomaten, a large Dutch tomato grower, who said that he preferred "working with a young and modern organization such as SharePeople". The interviewees (40%) further noted that SharePeople's image was one of the main motives for them to have chosen for the organization. Therefore, it can be assumed that SharePeople's image is also a competitive advantage.

3.2.   Needs and Drivers

Before people and companies start looking for a product or service there must be a need for it. This section aims to reveal the latent needs driving consumers to buy a certain product. Again, the interviews with SharePeople's customers and non customers are used as input. When analyzing the interviews three different needs were identified; the need to set up a CSR program (30%), the need of a partner in an already existing CSR program (40%), and the need to develop employees personally and professionally (50%).

3.2.1.   Develop CSR Program

Some of SharePeople's customers did not have CSR policy before working with SharePeople. They were however looking for a partner to develop a CSR program in order to make a social impact. Like a consultant at the Dutch consulting firm House of Performance, said; "to truly help others", and to inspire the company's staff. The Talent and Leadership manager at Capgemini has noted that after participating in a SharePeople program, employees were proud of their company and felt more connected to it. Interviewees have indicated that they were looking for a long-term partner for their CSR program.

3.2.2.   Additional Partner CSR Program

On occasion SharePeople's interviewed customers and non customers had already developed a CSR policy for the company but were still in need for an additional partner or program. This was the fact with SharePeople's largest international customer Imtech. This company had already developed a CSR program; SSDC (Shared Success in Developing Countries) and was in need for a partner to facilitate the program's projects. A non customer, the House of Performance, has indicated that they were looking for a partner like SharePeople because they wanted to do bigger projects within their already existing CSR program. Just like the companies that had no CSR policy yet, companies with an already existing CSR program were also looking for a long-term partner rather than a short-term partner.

3.2.3.   Personal and Professional Development

Personal and professional development includes all types learning opportunities, ranging from formal course work like specific trainings to informal opportunities situated in practice (Speck & Knipe, 2005). Martin (1991) claims that professional staff members will need to engage in lifelong learning in order to maintain professional expertise in relevant areas. The importance of developing employees has been acknowledged by many companies. Unfortunately, companies often prefer to invest in their leaders (Weis, 2005/2006) while development of employees increases retention of

staff at all levels, simultaneously improving the quality of the company's products and services (Garrett, McKinney, Kinukawa, Redd, & Moore, 2003).

Personal and professional development of employees is the third need for SharePeople's interviewed customers. A senior trainer and coach at EMC performance mentioned: "I wanted to do something meaningful using my expertise in an out-of-comfort experience". Some companies like Capgemini have adopted SharePeople as an integral part of their Talent and Leadership program. The Talent and Leadership program manager tells the story of how one employee was completely stuck in his routine and Excel programs but was able to make new steps and applied for a new position within Capgemini after the SharePeople program.

Another non customer has indicated that there was a need for their employees to become more international and therefore was looking for a partner like SharePeople. This need is also often found in SharePeople's 2006 overview of reasons and motives. However, some customers have also indicated that the development of their employees is a convenient side effect but not the main reason why they started looking for a partner like SharePeople in the first place.

3.3.   Why Not?

It is useful to know what the organization does right and why the interviewees have chosen SharePeople over the competition. However it might be even more useful to know on which points SharePeople could improve. Because of this not only SharePeople's customers but also non customers were also interviewed. During these interviews, questions about the motives for not choosing SharePeople were asked and four main motives were uncovered; the company's vision and SharePeople's did not match (60%), the companies work mainly with young professionals who are not qualified for a SharePeople program (40%), the companies were looking for more concrete trainings for their employees (40%), the costs of a SharePeople program are too high (40%) and interviewees have indicated that they doubt the impact the experts can make with SharePeople in the developing countries (20%).

3.3.1. Mismatch

Where some companies matched with SharePeople in their vision, other interviewees indicated that their company did not have enough of a match vision wise. For example; House of Performance was looking for a partner for their CSR program and wanted to do larger projects nationally and internationally, wanted to make a commitment to one NGO, and they did not want to invest money; solely time. Unfortunately SharePeople could not offer this company what they wanted and House of Performance decided to continue looking for partner that could. Another example is the case of Nyenrode, the only private university in the Netherlands. Nyenrode came in contact with

SharePeople when a few students of the Master of Science in Management (MSc) indicated that they wanted to participate in a program with SharePeople in Kenya. The students managed to integrate the SharePeople program in their learning curriculum. A year and a MSc coordinator later, SharePeople was again contacted to look into the options for adopting SharePeople as a long-term partner for learning journeys in the learning curriculum. However, the new MSc coordinator's view on learning journeys focused more on business instead of personal and professional development, thus did not match with SharePeople's view. He subsequently decided to abandon a partnership with the organization for the time being.

3.3.2. Young Professionals

Some motives for not working with SharePeople were purely practical. One of SharePeople's requirements for the experts is to have at least five years of working experience because juniors and young professionals do not receive as much respect and authority in, for example, African countries as seniors do and the business case requires a high level of knowledge and expertise. Companies like Royal Haskoning, an international consultancy firm founded in the Netherlands, and Talent-Pro, a secondment partner in the financial sector in the Netherlands, work mainly with young professionals, simply making SharePeople an unqualified partner.

3.3.3. Concrete Trainings

SharePeople's service is an opportunity for companies to develop their employees personally and professionally. This development is a result of supporting an entrepreneur with professional expertise during an out-of-comfort experience. The learning aspect for the expert is very personal and it is not guaranteed that every expert will have the same learning experience. Some companies like Talent-pro have already a well developed trainings program with other partners that offer specific knowledge- and skills training. SharePeople's service is not concrete enough for companies like this.

3.3.4. Costs

The Human Resource Manager of Royal Haskoning has expressed that a SharePeople program is too costly, especially the missed working days of the employees. A consultant at the House of Performance adds to this; "fundamentally it is not right that you should go and buy a case", where case is referring to a SharePeople program. Nevertheless, SharePeople's programs are in the same range as most of its competitors.

3.3.5. Impact

The motives for not working with SharePeople mentioned above are all important points for SharePeople to look into for possible improvements. However one point of criticism mentioned by a

non customers, and even by one customer, is probably most important because is directly attacks SharePeople's core business and values. This is the fact that these people doubt the impact that SharePeople together with the experts can make and are making in the developing countries. Since companies might approach SharePeople as a potential partner for their CSR policy it is important that the social impact the experts together with SharePeople can make is clear and also clearly communicated.

3.4.   Future needs

In order to make get the most complete overview of motives and needs, a part that explains the future needs of interviewees are added. In this part future needs in terms of CSR, personal and professional development of employees, and discovering upcoming markets are explained. Discovering new markets is added because SharePeople believes that that could also be an important need and motive for potential customers.

All interviewees have indicated that developing a CSR program or maintain a CSR program will definitely continue to do so in the future. The same goes for companies that are already developing their employees personally and professionally. However, due to the current financial climate some interviewees have hinted that the budgets for CSR and development of employees are frozen or even reduced. Interviewees working at a company that is not developing their employees using different kinds of trainings have not indicated to do so in the future. As for the future plans for discovering upcoming markets; SharePeople's largest interviewed (non) customers, like Imtech and Royal Haskoning, are already very international active and have their special people and offices which constantly discovering opportunities in upcoming markets. SharePeople's smaller interviewed (non) customers in general do not have the ambitions to become international and have no need to discover upcoming markets.

3.5.   Conclusion

This chapter gives a small representation of the motives and needs of SharePeople's customers and non customers. When this research would have been more extensive surely more motives and needs for working with SharePeople, and for not working with SharePeople, will be discovered. However, it can be assumed that this research is at least representing a part of SharePeople's customers and non customers. Looking at the motives and needs of SharePeople's customers it can be concluded that SharePeople has been rather successful in identifying its customers' needs and have responded well to them by creating a combination that can be used for CSR and development of employees. Being a young, modern and professional organization with a modern view on development aid had attracted many customers so far. However, it also attracts a group of people that SharePeople cannot offer its

services; juniors and young professionals. Since this is a large group and many companies work with them, it might be rewarding for SharePeople to look into their product again and find a product that the organization can offer this group.

Responding to needs and motives is something SharePeople has done well but is also something that the organization must always be monitoring to see where they can improve. Unfortunately, when looking at the motives for not working with SharePeople there already some aspects identified that SharePeople must improve. Some of the motives are rather practical and although it is convenient to know, SharePeople cannot satisfy every potential customer. However, doubting the impact of SharePeople product is definitely a motive that SharePeople must look into. Improving this point has mostly to do with the communication about the impact and the branding.

4. Benefits

4.1. SharePeople

Just like many other organization SharePeople is focused on communicating the features of their service instead of the benefits of their product. However, the organization did develop the "Triple Return on Investment (ROI)", which describes the general benefits for the customers. The first ROI of the Triple ROI is exploring new markets. SharePeople provides companies the opportunity to enter new markets by working on a business case with a local entrepreneur. The second benefit mentioned in the Triple ROI is personal development of employees in terms of authentic leadership, professional knowledge, teamwork, change management, creativity, flexibility, and project and intercultural consultancy skills. These benefits are mainly in the field of HRM. The last ROI for SharePeople's customers is inspiration which leads to renewed motivation and company engagement among employees. The benefits describe in the ROI are all of a psycho-social nature. Functional and practical benefits of SharePeople's service are not clearly communicated through the organization's media.

4.2. SharePeople's Employees

During interviews with SharePeople's employees they were asked what they thought were the benefits for companies when working with SharePeople. The main benefit according to the employees is the fact that the company's employees develop themselves personally during SharePeople's programs and improve their authentic leadership. This is benefit adds to the third ROI. The second benefit is that a SharePeople program is a different kind of development aid. This is a benefit for a company which are looking for a CSR partner and is has a functional nature. The third benefit according to SharePeople's employees is the fact that participating in a SharePeople program in is a unique international experience which creates a broader view among the participants and makes them more international. This is a benefit for the company in the field of HRM. The fourth benefit is not as much a benefit for the company but only for the participants of a SharePeople program. This is the fact that they will become part of the "SharePeople ambassador's network" where they can get in contact with like-minded to share experience and learn from each other.

4.3. SharePeople's Customers

Personal and professional development is a benefit that has been mentioned in SharePeople's media and by SharePeople's employees, but is also a great benefit mentioned by SharePeople's interviewed customers. The Interviewees describe personal development in terms of improved flexibility, team work, and engagement. SharePeople's interviewed customers add to this that personal development is great especially since SharePeople it is combined with CSR. The companies kill two birds with one stone while paying for only one program. Finding a CSR partner in SharePeople and the ability of

adopting SharePeople's service in their CSR program is a benefit for the companies of a functional nature. Not only is finding a partner for a CSR program a benefit, the interviewees have also indicated that SharePeople has improved and intensified the company's CSR program. Another benefit with a functional nature mentioned by SharePeople's customers is the fact that the company can use SharePeople and its programs for their public relations (PR) and positive marketing in the field of CSR.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter was purely intended to describe SharePeople's benefits from different angles and not to describe the features of SharePeople's service. After explaining and analyzing the different angles it may be concluded that some of the benefits offered by SharePeople are also perceived by the interviewees. This is especially the case with the benefit of personal and professional development. SharePeople's media and SharePeople's employees have mentioned this benefit, and fortunately this benefit is also perceived as one of the main benefits by SharePeople's interviewed customers.

Unfortunately, there are also some benefits that SharePeople's media and employees mention mentioned but which are not perceived by the interviewed customers. This is the fact with the benefit of entering new markets. In SharePeople's media this is mentioned as one of the benefits of SharePeople's service; however none of the interviewees have indicated that this is a benefit they have experienced. If SharePeople wants to use this benefit when marketing its service the organization must adapt its service in a way that customers actually experience this benefit.

A benefit mentioned by SharePeople's employees and the interviewees but is not clearly communicated though SharePeople's media is becoming a part of the ambassador's network and that SharePeople could add value to the company's CSR program. The fact that SharePeople does not emphasize the SharePeople ambassador's network has to do with the fact that it is not directly beneficial for the company, only for the participating expert. However, SharePeople being a partner in a CSR program can be a direct benefit for the company. Since companies are clearly still looking for CSR partners and programs, SharePeople should reconsider emphasizing this benefit through its media because it might attract more customers.

5. Values and Personality

5.1. Terminal Values

Terminal values represent the desirable end-states of existence, or to put it more dramatically; "the meaning of life" (Puolimatka & Airaksinen, 2002). The following three terminal values were indicated by four of SharePeople's customers to be most important to them personally.

5.1.1. Mature Love

Mature love is the love between two people when there is acceptance, emotional support, commitment, calmness, respect, caring, kindness, friendship and consideration. Although, this is a beautiful value to live by it is not of good use for SharePeople in their branding because the organization is not able to provide people with, a chance on, mature love.

5.1.2. Inner Harmony

According to Estrada (2008) inner harmony is the absence of cravings to what we lack and aversions to surroundings. Inner harmony, just like all values, is very personal and every individual will need to do different things to reach for inner harmony. However, it may be assumed that helping people in developing people with your expertise will bring a positive feeling and may help in reaching inner harmony.

5.1.3. Wisdom

"Wisdom is right use of knowledge" (Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 1834-1892). The dictionary adds that wisdom as the ability to judge what is true and right, or lasting. SharePeople is not offering concrete knowledge to its customers but the organization does offer an opportunity to develop personally and professionally by making use and extending your current knowledge and expertise. Knowledge is also an aspect in SharePeople's vision and directly links to this value. This would be a good aspect to adopt in SharePeople's branding strategy.

5.2. Instrumental Values

These values refer to the preferable modes of behavior. Unlike terminal values it is not a desired end state; it is a mean of achieving something else.

5.2.1. Love

It is no surprise that love is the most important instrumental value for the four customers when looking at the most important terminal value. Unfortunately SharePeople is not able to act upon this value in a direct way, but the organization can incorporate love related values as caring for another into their branding strategy.

5.2.2. Imagination

During a SharePeople program the experts will completely out of their comfort and will need to be creative, and there is a need for imagination. Since imagination is an important instrumental value to the four customers, and it may be assumed that they also find it important for their employees, SharePeople should act upon this and use it in its branding strategy.

5.2.3. Courage

Just like mentioned above, a SharePeople program is an out-of-comfort experience and asks for a lot of courage from the experts, especially from those who have never travelled to a developing country. When the managers find courage an important value it may be assumed that they also find that an important value for their employees, and therefore SharePeople must encompass this value into their branding strategy.

5.3. Conclusion

The four customers have mature love, inner harmony, and wisdom indicated as their 'vision'. They want achieve this with the values of love, imagination, and courage. Except for mature love, these values match what SharePeople's mission and vision, and service and should be used in the branding strategy.

6. Reasons to Believe

6.1. Kitchen Logic

According to Hall the most important aspect of kitchen logic is that the benefits of your product or service are communicated in a simple and logical way. SharePeople's interviewed non customers and a few customers have raised questions about the impact and added value of SharePeople's service when hearing first about it. That indicates that SharePeople's story about the benefits of its service is not yet logical enough to prevent critical questions and might not be the best reason to believe for the organization to use.

6.2. Personal Experience

Personal experience as a reason to believe has been used by SharePeople in the last years. SharePeople has chosen a few companies per year that had the opportunity to send one of their employees on a program completely financed by SharePeople, hoping that it would lead to more business with those companies. Unfortunately this has only worked out with one company and is clearly not an effective reason to believe.

6.3. Pedigree

Although SharePeople is a fairly young organization, it was one of the first providers of this kind of service to European companies on a greater scale and with consistency, and had gained lots of experience. SharePeople has also been a partner of the ICCO alliance since the founding of the organization, a well known and respected NGO. The fact of the organizations being one of the first in the market, having years of experience, and SharePeople being a partner of the ICCO alliance might work as a strong reason to believe and should be used in SharePeople's branding.

6.4. Testimonials

However, the organization should make use of the fact that they have had some very well-known and influential customers, like Imtech and Capgemini. According to Hall (2001) it would be even more effective when the organization would use reviews of these important customers in their communication to potential customers. The message will be most effective when the review also contains a little something negative because customers all know nothing is perfect and will trust the few organizations who can acknowledge that.

6.5. Guarantee

The last reason to believe is to offer a guarantee to customers. SharePeople's service is tailor made for each company and will not take place before both parties are satisfied and ready to go. Therefore offering customers a refund when customers are not satisfied will not be effective. However the

organization can guarantee their potential customer success because of the tailor made aspect of the service.

6.6. Conclusion

Due to the fact that SharePeople is such a young company, selling a service, and the fact that the service is tailor made, makes it difficult for the organization to form a standard set of reason to believe for its customers. However, testimonials and reviews of customers are according to Hall most trustworthy as reason to believe, and that something SharePeople should fully exploit. Together with the emphasis on pedigree and guaranteed success because of the service being tailor made, SharePeople can create valid and trustworthy reasons to believe for its branding.

7. Discriminator

7.1. Combination

Only SharePeople offers the perfect combination and balance between CSR and personal and professional development. The organization's competition has the tendency to focus most on CSR and did not emphasize the added value for the company when it comes to engagement and development of the employees. SharePeople has found the balance between being making a social impact and being commercial at the same time, and that is what appeals to its commercial customers.

7.2. Tailor Made

Only SharePeople offers tailor-made group programs for companies. Some of the organization's competitors also offer group programs for personal and professional development to companies. However, interviewed customers have indicated that SharePeople was the only organization who was able to adapt the whole program to their wishes, and was therefore the most attractive organization to choose for.

7.3. Modern Vision

Only SharePeople offers the opportunity to an entrepreneur to support another entrepreneur. SharePeople is a young and modern company and therefore understand what the customer wants. The organization's customers are commercial entrepreneurs but with a social interest, and it appeals to them to support another social entrepreneur instead of a non-profit organization. This also fits with the modern vision that SharePeople and its interviewed customers share on CSR, with the emphasis on sharing success and giving back to society, and engagement of employees.

7.4. Conclusion

SharePeople's direct competitors all offer a similar, and sometimes very similar, but no other organization offers exactly the same service as SharePeople. The organization differentiates itself because of offering the perfect combination and balance between CSR and development of employees, tailor-made programs, and because the organization shares the same modern vision as it customers. These aspects are unique, credible, and relevant to the consumer insights, and therefore form SharePeople's unique selling points.

8. The Brand Essence

The brand essence is, according to the Brand Key Model, "the distillation of the brand's generic code into one clear thought". In other words; the brand essence characterizes what the brand stands for in the mind of the consumers and should be viewed as a long-term positioning.

❖ *SharePeople is to ShareSuccess*

Sharing success acts upon the mentioned needs for a CSR program or the need for a CSR partner. It also matches the value of love and inner harmony, and the motives of 'giving back'. To prevent potential customers from doubting the actual impact made in the developing countries, testimonials and reviews of customers while being on a program should be used.

❖ *SharePeople is to ShareDevelopment*

Emphasizing that SharePeople is a way to share knowledge refers to the win-win situation; helping social entrepreneurs in developing countries to be more successful while engaging and developing employees. Engaging and developing employees responds to the benefits and the customers insights, but also to the value of imagination and courage. For this aspect of SharePeople's service testimonials and reviews of other customers should be used.

❖ *SharePeople is to ShareVision*

Customers have indicated to think of SharePeople as a young, modern, and professional organization with a modern vision on CSR and especially development aid. The fact that SharePeople's offers a service were social entrepreneurs in Europe can empower social entrepreneurs in developing countries as part of this modern vision this should be empathized towards potential customers. For this aspect of the service testimonials and reviews should also be used in the communication.

❖ *SharePeople is to ShareTogether*

One of SharePeople's USPs is that its services are always tailor made and ShareTogether refers to creating a service together, SharePeople and the customer. Guarantees should be used to convince and ensure potential customers that the program will only take place when they are satisfied. Pedigree should also be used to communicate that the organization is experienced and the employees are experts in this field.

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10. Appendix 1: Competitor Analysis

VSO[6]

VSO claims to be "the world's leading independent international development organization that works through volunteers to fight poverty in developing countries".

Service:

- Employee engagement & Talent development: sending employees to Africa or Asia for a concrete VSO project.

- Joint Partner programme: utilizing your specific business expertise for the development of VSO programs.

- Sponsoring: sponsor as a company (a part of) a VSO project that connects with your organization

- Business challenge treks & Fundraising activities: an interactive way to contribute with you employees to a better world.

Results:

- Concrete implementation CSR policy
- Become an attractive employer
- Image improvement
- Expand business network
- Improve team spirit

Target market: Professionals with at least 2 years working experience and who are at least six months available.

Costs: Depends on the product. The cost of Employee engagement & Talent development is similar to a training program in the Netherlands.

Important partners: Randstad and Accenture

People4Change[7]

People4Change supports NGOs in developing countries that support people without access to opportunities and basic facilities.

Service: People4Change sends Dutch professionals to local NGOs in Africa and Asia to exchange their knowledge and experience. Most projects are on individual basis, however People4Change has also two groups projects planned for 2012.

Results:

- Life changing event

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[6] http://www.vso.nl/
[7] http://www.people4change.nl/wp2/

- Personal development
- Personal leadership
- Knowledge impulse

Target market: Companies which want to develop the personal leadership of the employees and individual professionals who want to develop their own personal leadership.

Costs: The costs for going on a project are €500,- for the mediation, €10,- for the intake, and €10,- for the paperwork of arranging the ticket, visa etc. This excludes VAT and the actual visa and ticket costs.

Important partners: Accenture, Menzis, SNS REAAL, and Yacht.

ShareKnowledge Fund (part of ShareBusiness)[8]

"Our aim is to bring as much practically applicable knowledge to developing countries all over the world."

Service: The ShareKnowledge Fund works together with different parties, including SharePeople, which provides the organization with business cases in developing countries. The organization then links the partners of their mother company, ShareBusiness, to these business cases.

Results: Not clearly communicated on the website.

Target market: Professionals in general. No further specifications are communicated.

Costs: Everything is paid by the fund

Important partners: SharePeople, Talent Beyond Limits, BHold, and People4Change.

Better Future[9]

"Authentic, Innovation, Impact"

Service: 'Leaderships journeys'; Local leaders, entrepreneurs, and societies are connected with leaders from Europe. Together they work on local projects. The duration of the programs is unclear.

Results:

- Deepening: Local leaders and European leaders learn from each other and are being coached by professional coaches in order to become even stronger leaders.
- Connection: "Better Future helps organizations to reassess their relevance to society, to unleash their creative potential and confidence both within and outside the organization to expand."
- Improvement: "We create leadership programs accessible to those who normally have no chance to develop themselves professionally."

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[8] http://www.shareknowledgefund.nl/
[9] http://www.shareknowledgefund.nl/

Target market: Managers, teams, and professionals working at different companies. Pictures at the website show mostly, who are assumed to be, 45+ years old participants.

Costs: Not clearly communicated on the website.

Important partners: de Baak, Hay Group, Atom tdf (Kenya), Fresh Forward, and Woudschoten Hotel & Conferentiecentrum.

EsteamWork[10]

"Connecting world and enhancing social leadership through inspiring learning journeys based on real business cases"

Service:

NGO services:

- Workshops entrepreneurship for non profits
- Social venturing: Create social business models to enable a charity to generate income
- Corporate fundraising
- Corporate-NGO partnerships

Corporate services:

- Learning journey (similar to SharePeople's product): "work in teams on knowledge-intensive projects at small- and medium-sized companies or NGOs in developing countries for a short period of time.
- Microfinance Serious Game &Real Life Case : "in-company serious game that stimulates intrapreneurship and creativity, boosts cultural awareness and mutual learning, facilitates teamwork, triggers competition and directly contributes to poverty reduction though small business creation in developing countries."
- Sustainable partnerships between corporations and NGOs

Results learning journey:

- Impulse social image
- Unique and inspiring learning experience

Target market: NGOs, Dutch corporations, and individual professionals.

Costs: €2750,- exclusive travel- and hotel expenses for a 8-day learning journey (2009)

Important Partners: de Beukelaar Groep, Endemol, Red Bull, Berenschot, KPMG, Danone, Ordina, Delta lloyd etc.

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[10]http://www.esteamwork.com/EsteamWork/innovatie_in_zakelijke_fondsenwerving_en_sociaal_ondernemer schap_voor_goede_doelen.html

PUM[11]

"Entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs"

Service: The ability for senior experts to help small- and medium-sized companies and NGOs in developing countries with their expertise. Duration of the journey is usually one to three weeks.

Results: What it will bring the experts is not very clearly communicated. The only motivation given on the website is the smooth transition to the end of the expert's career.

Target market: Experts from 50 to 70 years of age, with at least 30 years of working experience

Costs: Everything is paid by the organization, even some pocket money. Housing is arranged by the business case owner in the developing country.

Important partners: The experts working with PUM are no longer employed by a company, therefore PUM does not have relevant partners to mention.

Talent beyond Limits[12]

Service: 4 to 6 Dutch professionals are being linked to 4 to 6 professionals at an NGO in Ghana. Together the professionals will work together for 10 months; the professional will locally work together for 10 days, the rest of time will be on long distance. The professional will work on a strategic issue during those 10 months.

Results:

- Personal and professional development
- Put things in perspective, broaden your outlook on the world
- Sense of pride about your contribution to the reduction of poverty
- Development of specific skills and behaviour in the field of management- and leadership competencies

Target market: Higher educated with at least four years of working experience. Talent beyond Limits also target companies which are looking for a partner in talent management.

Costs: All costs of the program are being paid for by the professional and their employee. Next to the investment in money required, this program will also cost around 20 days in 10 months time.

Important partners: Besides ShareBusiness, it seems that this organization has no very well-known partners yet.

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[11] https://www.pum.nl/
[12] http://www.talentbeyondlimits.nl/

Fair Ground Sessions[13]

"Fairground inspires people, teams and organizations to develop, through a connecting link to social projects in developing countries. We have been doing this for seven years, in ten countries and with more than twenty project partners."

Service:

- Fairlab: Working on a real life business case of an NGO in a developing country with a team in the Netherlands.
- Social teambuilding: Working with a team for one or more days on activities that will increase your company's social involvement.
- Building for development: a team will help building schools, townhouses etc. for a week together with the local community.
- Leadership journeys: a combination of charity work at small, local NGOs and personal development with the support of a coach.
- Mutual learning journeys: a Dutch professional will be linked to an organization in a developing country where the professional will work on a real life business case for 11 days.

Results *mutual learning journeys* (product is most similar to SharePeople's product:

- Inspiring and instructive experience
- Broadening or perspectives
- Learn to learn together, develop, and create
- Answer and deepen your learning objectives
- Combine HRM with CSR

Target market: Dutch companies which are looking for a partner in CSR and/or talent management

Costs: The costs of any program are not communicated through the website.

Important partners: MVO Nederland, SVN, Commundo, and CWT Meetings&Events.

Laluz[14]

"Laluz matches organizations with idealistic young professionals who, in addition to their professional career, on a voluntary basis want to do jobs where specific expertise and drive are required."

Service: Laluz matches young professionals who wish to offer their professional expertise on a voluntary basis with idealistic organizations in need of volunteers. Laluz also offers organizations tailor-made program in the field of CSR.

Results: The results of the different products are not clearly communicated on the website.

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[13] http://www.fairground.nl/
[14] http://young.stichtinglaluz.nl/

Target market: Higher educated young professionals with at least three years of working experience, idealistic, Dutch companies looking for volunteers, and Dutch companies looking for a partner in CSR.

Costs: The volunteer pays a matching fee to Laluz. Other costs are unclear.

Important partners: PWC and Loyens&Loeff