

Case Study

Brand Development for a \$ 700 Million Regional Bank

The Challenge

A \$700 million Midwestern regional bank with 14 branches based in an area dominated by manufacturing was experiencing declining population and slow deposit growth. Their strategic plan identified two new markets that were more diversified and growing. One market was the home of a major public university and the other was a rapidly growing Chicago suburban area. In their home market, the bank was the only remaining locally owned bank and had developed a leading market share position. The geographic growth strategy allowed them to increase their assets and remain a viable competitor.

They opened two new branch locations in the university market and five new branches in the Chicago market but did not have the critical mass necessary for effective retail advertising. The plan called for a total of 10 branches in the Chicago market.

The long-term strategic objectives are to double market share in the new markets and maintain share in the home market.

Key Management Issues

- How does the bank establish brand awareness in the new markets and maintain their position in the home market?
- What brand positioning and marketing communications messaging would resonate with customers and prospects in all markets?
- What marketing strategies and communications are necessary to achieve the marketing and business growth objectives?

The Action

PHASE I – The Current Assessment

Align FSC conducted a thorough review of the bank’s brand equity and marketing strategies and implemented primary marketing research in all markets to identify and quantify current brand awareness and positioning.

PHASE II – The Marketing Objectives and Strategies

Using the Current Assessment Report, Align FSC defined three core marketing objectives and developed supporting strategies and tactics for each:

1. A brand building program that included identifying a differentiating brand personality, implementing internal brand communication, employee training and integrating consistent marketing communications and customer touch points. A new tagline “Success Happens Here” was adopted for all touch points.
2. An aggressive cross-selling program was developed to increase the number of accounts per household. Components of the program included customer service excellence, leveraging the high number of home mortgage-only customers and bundling products to target specific segments.
3. The number of new retail and commercial customers were increased by creating financial incentives to gain new deposit accounts and then cross-selling to obtain “my bank” status, developing an “easy switch” on-boarding program and implementing a CRM program for the commercial business. Commercial banking was prioritized in the new markets and a staff of experiences bankers was added to nurture and growth this line of business.

The Result

The plan redefined the bank’s brand and marketing strategy and supported growth in deposits of 13 percent per year during the past three years.

Customer Touch Points

