Oak Park Township External Surveys

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2020, Oak Park Township contracted with N2 Studios to begin a **brand review** project with the goal of being a more cohesive brand across all service areas of the Township, and a more recognizable brand within the communities it serves. The project began with a series of eight interviews with each service area, as well as leadership and marketing. Consistent questions were presented to staff regarding their individual services and audiences, communication successes and challenges, and brand equity regarding the Township. These interviews produced a handful of consistent feelings regarding the Township brand:

Variables: Complexity of project, staff size, and budget

Need
MarCom Audit
Company Background
Market Study
Stakeholder Feedback
Identify Brand Equity
Articulate Brand Personality
Identify Visual Personality Components

Input/Research

Results & Analysis

BRAND BRIEF

Goals

- Not well-known within the community
- Mostly known for tax services and senior services
- Confused with the Village of Oak Park
- Logo is not recognizable
- More reactive than proactive in marketing

- The removal of the annual comprehensive booklet of services was detrimental to the community's understanding of Township services.
- Each service area identified a need for assistance in marketing and communications from print materials to online and social media marketing.

Based on a review of the Township marketing materials/website and staff interviews, N2 Studios provided a **Needs Assessment** that delivered a set of challenges, solutions, and courses of action to help create a foundation on which to build the Township brand through cohesive messaging, visuals, and communications. The recommendations would help move the Township brand from a reactive position into a proactive brand manager.

To provide proper feedback throughout the process, a **branding committee** was established that includes a representative from each service area, marketing and leadership with N2 Studios serving as project manager to help lead the team through a rebranding effort.

EXTERNAL SURVEY – Stakeholder Feedback

Brand Perception Surveys were created to determine if the internal perspective above was aligned with what the external audiences were feeling. Two external surveys were conducted: (1) Program Partners and (2) Client/Community Residents.

Unlike customer satisfaction surveys which focus on program needs and development, brand perception surveys focus on impressions and feelings that someone has about the Township. The branding committee met over the course of a few weeks to discuss their own perspectives. These meetings produced a selection of experiences, feelings, and descriptors that were then utilized in the development of the external surveys.
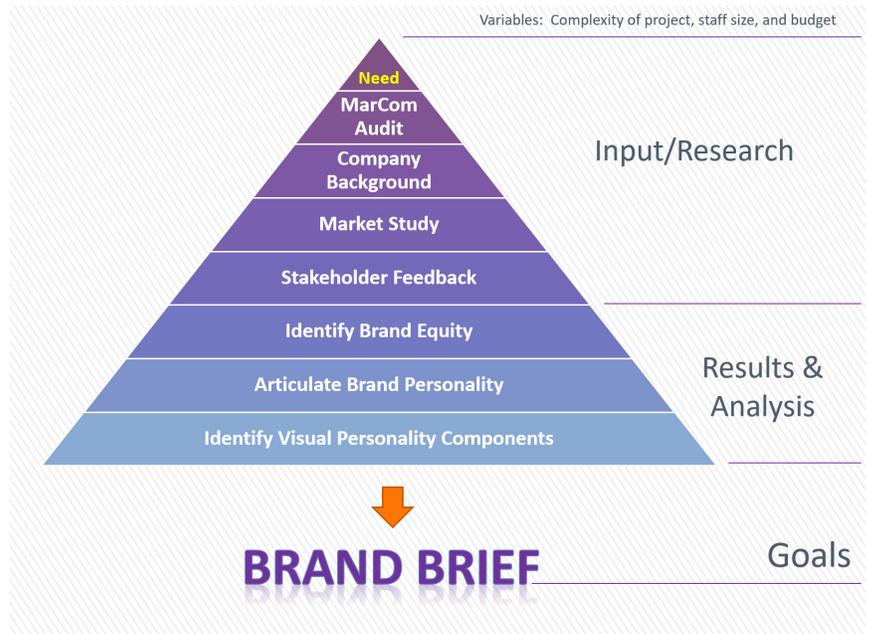
PARTNER SURVEY: Results (295 Distributed; 104 respondents)

The partner survey did not result in any surprises and confirmed a positive relationship between the Township and their professional partners. Below is a summary of leading results:

Responding organizations identified as:

- 20% Educational
- 17% Health & Wellness
- 11% State or Local Government
- 9% Older Adult Service or Youth Service
- 28% Other

Township service areas they are working with:

- 58% (Community Mental Health Board)
- 41% (Youth Services)
- 34% (Senior Services)
- 22% (Prevention Services)
- 13% (General Assistance and Leadership)
- 2% (Assessor Services and Administrative Services)
- *75% of the partners felt they were somewhat familiar with the other Township services.*

The role of the Township in the relationship is:

1. Partner (75%)
2. Resource (61%)
3. Collaborator (39%)
- *They view the Township role less as a Leader (9%), Expert (6%) or Advisor (4%)*

The partners find the overall working relationship to be:

1. Supportive (54%)
2. Professional (53%)
3. Helpful (44%)

Overall feelings when working with the Township:

1. Comfortable (52%)
2. Encouraged and Informed (36%)
3. Confident and Optimistic (30%)
- *They do not find themselves Equipped (9%), and 10% were Indifferent in their response*

Words that best describe the Township are:

1. Valuable (51%)
2. Informative (36%)
3. Reliable (33%)
- *They describe the Township less as Proactive (22%) or Respected (20%)*

When asked to rate the following from Excellent to Poor (or N/A), the Township rated "Good" overall:

- Clear Communication
- Professionalism (rated as Excellent)
- Expertise
- Responsiveness
- Adaptability
- Teamwork
- Accessibility
- Service Offerings

Final open-ended comments resulted in many positive experiences with Caring, Partner and Professional being the most used descriptors.

COMMUNITY SURVEY: (774 Distributed*; 526 Respondents)

Direct reach to clients. Does not include community outreach efforts.

Received Services:

Yes, for self 50.5% (266)
Yes, on behalf of other 9% (47)
No.. 40.5% (213)

63% **31%**

Age:

65+... 40.2%
55-64 .... 16.0%
45-54 .... 19.7%
35-44 .... 13.7%
25-34 .... 4.0%
Under 24 .... 0%

Residence:

Oak Park.................................... 88.2%
River Forest 3.5%
Berwyn.. .44%
Forest Park... .22%
North Riverside .... .22%
Austin Community 0%
No permanent address.......................... .1.1%

Race/Ethnicity:

White/Caucasian....................... 74.0%
Black/African American............................ 8.0%
Hispanic/Latino 4.4%
Asian/Asian American 4.0%
American Indian/Alaskan Native .... .44%
Other... 1%

Total Household Income:

Less than $25,000.................................... 14.8%
$25,000 to $49,999.................................. 8.2%
$50,000 to $74,999.................................. 10.2%
$75,000 to $99,999.................................. 6.4%
$100,000 to $124,999.............................. 9.3%
$125,000 or more 23.5%
Currently unemployed............................. .51%

How many children/dependents:

None 56.6%
1 .... 14.2%
2-4 .... 24.0%
More than 4 .... .44%

Where they get their OPT info:

Village of Oak Park FYI 39.7%
Oak Park Township Newsletter 30.0%
Website 19.5%
Friend/Relative/Neighbor 19.3%
Social Media 14.0%
Emails... 13.5%
Referral 6.4%
Advertisements... 2.6%
Don't know where to find info 8.4%
Other... 12.6%

The Community Survey did result in several observations that seem to support the feelings of staff from the initial interview findings. A summary of results follows:

RECEIVED SERVICES:

Areas that provided support: (BRAND EXPERIENCE)

1. Senior Services (67%)
2. Assessor Services (48%)
3. Administrative Services (32%)
4. General Assistance (12%)
5. Youth Services (5%)
6. Community Mental Health Board (4%)
7. Prevention Services (1%)

Overall experience: (BRAND ATTITUDES)

1. Helpful (46%)
2. Supportive (17%)
3. Professional (10%)
- *They do not find their overall experience Responsive (6%), Rewarding (5%) or Informative (4%)*
- *No strong negative results*

Last experience: (BRAND BENEFITS)

1. Thankful (60%)
2. Informed (29%)
3. Encouraged (20%)
- *Confident (17%); Hopeful (14%)*
- *No strong negative results*

Feelings most associated with Township: (BRAND ATTRIBUTES)

1. Caring (52%)
2. Friendly (47%)
3. Compassionate (28%)
- *Trusting (20%)*
- *They do not feel the Township was very Enthusiastic (8%) or Optimistic (6%)*
- *No strong negative results*

DID NOT RECEIVE SERVICES:

Why haven't you used Township programs or services:

1. <mark>I don't know what they do</mark> (50%)
2. I don't need their services (34%)
3. I don't qualify for their services (10%)
4. I can't afford their services (.5%)
5. Other (3%)

Have you ever recommended Township services to a friend or family member?

1. No (71%)
   a. <mark>69% don't know what the Township does</mark>
   b. 24% feel they do not have a need
   c. 2% think it is only for Seniors
2. Yes (29%)

Which of the following come to mind regarding Oak Park Township: (CATEGORY ASSOCIATION)

1. <mark>Social Services</mark> (51%)
2. Property Tax Assistance (36%)
3. <mark>Support</mark> Services (35%)
4. Administrative Services (11%)
5. **Village of Oak Park Services – combined (77%)**
6. **Nothing comes to mind (15%)**

Which services are recognized as Oak Park Township offerings: (SERVICE ASSOCIATION)

1. Senior Services (62%)
2. Property Tax Appeals (54%)
3. Meal/Nutrition and Transportation (44%)
   o *Unemployment Assistance isn't recognized (7%)*

BOTH CLIENTS AND COMMUNITY:

How they view the Township's role in the community: (POSITION)

1. Provider (50%)
2. Advocate (43%)
3. Partner (25%)

o *They view the Township less as a Leader (9%), Friend (9%), Funder (6%), Mentor (4%) or Teacher (2%)*

o *15% did not have an opinion*

Which would you consider the Township to be: (BRAND VALUE)

1. Beneficial (56%)
2. Resourceful (40%)
3. Important (39%)
4. Vital (32%)

o *They do not value the Township as Wasteful (3%), Unnecessary (5%), Expendable (5%), or Economical (9%)*

What words best describe Oak Park Township: (BRAND ATTRIBUTES)

1. Helpful (47%)
2. Caring (33%)
3. Knowledgeable (23%)

o *Hidden (13%); No opinion (12%)*

o *They would not describe the Township as Ineffective (2%), Frustrating (4%), Outdated (6%) or Limited (8%)*

Which of these logos do you recognize as the logo for Oak Park Township? (BRAND RECOGNITION)

1. **Village of Oak Park (33%)**
2. **I do not know what the logo looks like (30%)**
3. Oak Park Township (28%)
4. OP Township/River Forest Partner Logo (7%)
5. CMHB Logo and Face It Logos (2%)
6. PYD Logo (0%)

First thing that comes to mind when looking at the Township logo: (BRAND EQUITY)

1. **Literal/Leaf (51%)**
2. **No Answer/Nothing (12%)**
3. Other (11%)
4. Oak Park (8%)
5. Nature/Environmental/Forestry/Trees/Conservation (7%)
6. Oak Park Township (4%)
7. Parks/Outdoors (2%)
8. Fall/Seasonal (1%)

Final Additional Comments: (OPEN-ENDED)

- **Received no service (73 responses)**
    a. Don't know Oak Park Township (30)
    b. Taxes/Redundant/Consolidation (12)
    c. Positive Comments (17) / Negative (4)
    d. Housing Comments (2)
- **Received services on behalf of someone (17 responses)**
    a. Taxes/Redundant/Consolidation (4)
    b. Don't know Oak Park Township (4)
    c. Positive Comments (11)
- **Received services for self (90 responses)**
    a. Don't know Oak Park Township (14)
    b. Taxes/Redundant/Consolidation (13)
    c. Positive Comments (49) / Negative Comments (4)
    d. Confused with Village (2)

OBSERVATION & BRANDING CHALLENGES – Community Survey

- **If they experience the Township, the impression is positive**

  There are very few negative impressions for those individuals who have received services either directly or on behalf of someone. Some foundational messages, such as mission, vision and value words, are coming through in feedback.

  Staff would like to see the Township be viewed more as a 'Leader' and 'Expert' than what the results are showing.

- **Little knowledge in the community of Oak Park Township _services_**

  The limited knowledge revolves around tax appeals and senior services, resulting in a skewed view of community offerings and value.

- **Lack of understanding and confusion around the Oak Park Township _overall_**

  There is a lack of understanding of the Township's role within the community caused by a confusion between the Township and the Village of Oak Park. The two organizations are being lumped together in various ways, such as service provisions and taxes, which can falsely impact the Township.

- **Lack of marketing communication within the community**

  Throughout the survey, there are numerous mentions that people feel the Township is not doing its job informing and educating the community on its offerings. To receive support within the community, the Township must be visible in what it provides, who it serves, and how it benefits the residents.

- **Misunderstanding of taxes supporting the Township**

  There are over 50 comments in the survey regarding the subject of high taxes in some form. The lack of awareness and limited communication regarding the Township, along with the confusion between it and the Village, lends itself to a tax burden perception that can be incorrect.

- **There is little to no brand recognition for Oak Park Township**

  There seems to be a lack of fundamental branding for Oak Park Township that has caused its image to be limited or unknown within its own community. There is little brand equity, which opens the possibility to redesign the logo without a negative impact to the Township's image.

- **There is some language that shows confusion in understanding the Township properly**

  - The category association fluctuates between 'social services' and 'support services' and 'Human Services'.
  - Some internal language may not be easily accessible to external audiences. For example, 'Administrative Services' does not resonate as a category association, but the direct services themselves (such as Notary, Medical Equipment Lending, etc.) do offer some recognition.