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CANCER COALITION IDENTITY & BRANDING



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS**
Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.

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INTRODUCTION

This document is a companion to the *Cancer Coalition Identity and Branding Webinar* that was presented in September 2017.

SEE THE WEBINAR REPLAY

Watch the original Branding Webinar on [YouTube here](#) at a playback speed that works for you. Increase the speed if you consume information quickly, or pause the video while you take notes on lessons learned that might work for your projects.

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SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE

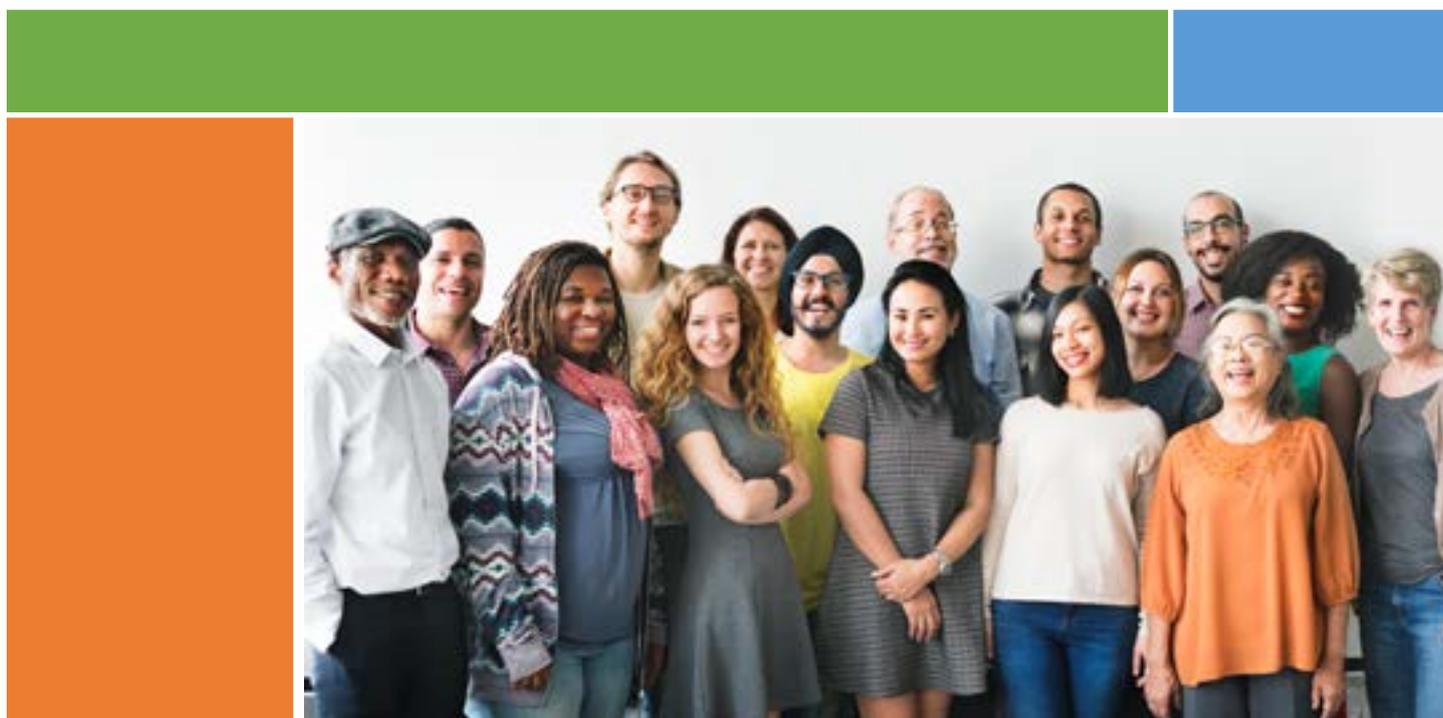
A coalition that speaks with one voice ensures that the audience hears consistent messages at all touch points between the audience and the coalition. Touch points are created wherever the audience interacts with either coalition members or with coalition brand indicators.

Brand indicators include the coalition name, logo, slogan, and messages. Touch points include conversations with coalition members or interactions with brand indicators such as small media brochures, webpages, videos, or even podcasts.

Coalition messages gain strength when all coalition partners share the same consistent messages.

Consistency strengthens both the messages and the coalition brand meaning in the minds of the audience.

In contrast, brands can be weakened by inconsistent messages from members of the same coalition. If people have blurred brand meanings stored in their memories, they won't remember exactly what your coalition stands for.



EXAMPLES OF INCONSISTENT MESSAGES

One example of creating an inconsistent message might occur when a coalition member writes an opinion piece for a media outlet. Even though the piece is well-intentioned to promote the coalition's work and messages, if it contains viewpoints that are not consistent with the core coalition messages and brand indicators, it may confuse the audience and become confused.

A second example might occur if a reporter wants to speak with several different coalition members at a local event. Reporters often seek multiple viewpoints on a topic so they can gather quotes to make their stories more interesting to their audience.

If a reporter finds inconsistent messages among your coalition members, they might make the divided opinions of the members the main story, instead of the coalition messages.

To speak with one voice, your coalition should have one identity, one brand, and one set of messages, as described in the following sections.



TO SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE

- ▶ Create a media gatekeeper for your coalition.
- ▶ Create a media committee.
- ▶ Prepare key messages and brand indicators.
- ▶ Select and train media spokespeople.

DEVELOP A UNIQUE COALITION IDENTITY

Your coalition identity is primarily about the values and desires of your coalition stakeholders – who they are, what they believe in, what they want to achieve, and what services and actions they want to offer the public.

Make sure your stakeholders understand why your coalition was formed, what distinct services you offer, and what unique solutions your coalition can offer?

Forming a coalition identity is about finding common ground for sharing goals and efforts among coalition stakeholders.



TO CREATE A STRONG COALITION IDENTITY

To create a strong identity for your coalition, find common ground for:

- ▶ What your coalition stakeholders believe (values)
- ▶ What your coalition stakeholders want to do (desires)
- ▶ What your coalition stakeholders can do (capabilities)
- ▶ What your coalition stakeholders will do (services/ actions)
- ▶ Then write an identity statement that begins with "We are a coalition that ..."

DEVELOP A STRONG COALITION BRAND

Once your coalition has reached consensus on an identity, you can create coalition brand indicators that are consistent with your identity.

The Most Important Goal of Branding

- A brand should invoke **a unique meaning** (for your coalition) **in the audience's mind**
- The meaning should reinforce key coalition messages



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BRANDS ARE DIFFERENT FROM IDENTITIES

A coalition brand is different from a coalition identity. Your coalition identity is built from the beliefs, values, goals, and services of your stakeholders.

After your coalition has formed its identity, you can create a variety of **brand indicators** to carry your coalition purpose and goals to the public. Ideally, the brand indicators you choose will create the desired brand meaning in the minds of your audience.

The meaning of your coalition brand is formed in the minds of your audience. When a person sees one of your brand indicators, such as a name or a logo, they will associate it with various thoughts and feelings about your coalition that they have stored in their memories over time. Their perceptions **are** your brand, in their minds.

How can your coalition create the right brand images in the minds of your audience?



BRAND INDICATORS VERSUS BRAND MEANING IN THE MIND

From the coalition side, your desired brand meaning is what your coalition wants to project into the minds of the audience. Coalition members might point at their collective set of brand indicators (name, logos, sayings, messages) and say "This is our brand."

But that viewpoint is not quite correct. The brand indicators are just indicators and are not the actual brand meaning in the minds of your audience.

From the audience side, your coalition brand is what people remember after receiving and perceiving your brand indicators over time. For example, when a person is shown a coalition logo, saying, or message, they might say, "Oh yes, I recognize that from my memory. That logo or message is from the coalition that is all about X. They do A, B, and C."

Your actual brand is what is formed in the minds of the audience. It's what they think of your coalition when their memories are triggered by a brand indicator.

The sequence of branding flows from the coalition identity, through coalition brand indicators, and into the minds of the audience.



MAKE YOUR BRAND INDICATORS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT

People keep their perception of your brand in their memories, so your coalition should strive to create clear, consistent brand indicators that make it easy for people to store the right brand meanings in their minds. Here are some tips for branding.

BRANDS LIVE IN THE MIND

A brand is not about what your coalition is or what it does (that's identity). Instead, a brand is about the coalition image in the minds of your audience. Their perception of your coalition is what your brand means to them.

STRONG BRANDS TRIGGER A STRONG MEANING

The test for a strong brand is: "What's a <brand name>?" Examples: What's a Cadillac? What's a Maytag? What's a Facebook? What's an iPhone? Each strong brand triggers one strong meaning in the mind.

WEAK BRAND NAMES TEND TO HAVE A FUZZY MEANING

Brand names are weaker if they mean multiple things in the mind. Examples: What's a Chevrolet? What's a Procter & Gamble? What's an Apple? (A computer? An iPod? An iPad? An iMac? An iPhone? An Apple logo? Notice that each "iBrand" is very strong. Almost everyone knows what an iPhone is, what an iPad is, and what the Apple logo is. The iPhone brand is extremely strong; everyone knows exactly what an iPhone is. The manufacturer name Apple has a fuzzy meaning in comparison to the iPhone brand.)



BRAND PERCEPTIONS ARE ALMOST PERMANENT

Once a brand perception is formed, it is very difficult to change. Example: What's an Amazon? Books are remembered first, even though Amazon sells tens of thousands of other products on its website.

A STRONG COALITION BRAND IS UNIQUE IN THE MIND

Try to find something unique about your coalition that is not already associated with another brand in the minds of your audience. Then you won't have to compete with other brands. People won't confuse your coalition with another duplicate coalition. You'll be on fresh ground in their minds.

The best way to be unique is to be the first in some new category in the minds of your audience. Your coalition will be easier for your audience to remember because it is new. People will find it easier to associate your brand indicators (name, logo, messages) with a fresh, new brand meaning in their minds. Perhaps you can be the first cancer coalition in your city, the first cancer transportation coalition, or the first coalition in some other category in the minds of your audience.

Being first means that your coalition has a chance to create a first impression that will last a long time in people's minds. Your coalition will be newsworthy at the beginning, because it's a new idea the media can report on. Since the media will amplify your initial brand indicators and messages, it's important to make your brand indicators consistent.

For more information on positioning and branding your coalition, consider the classic books *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind*¹ and *The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding*².



BRANDING CONCEPTS

Brands are different from identities.

- ▶ Brand indicators are what you send (logos, images, sayings, messages).
- ▶ Brand meanings flow from your coalition identity, to brand indicators, to your audience.
- ▶ Design your brand indicators so they are easy for the audience to remember.
- ▶ The first impression of brand indicators creates and locks in the perception of your brand.
- ▶ Your brand is what your audience remembers about you.

DEVELOP CLEAR MARKETING MESSAGES

Ideal messages for public consumption are short, single, simple, smart, and stark. Short, single, and simple messages are easier and faster for the public to consume in their busy lives. Stark messages help to cut through the clutter of all the other messages that people receive in their daily lives.

Educational messages – even small educational sound bites – give people a reason to be interested in your coalition messages and to think about the message after they have seen it.

Here are two examples of messages. One part is simple and clear. But the rest of the example is long, complex, and involves multiple points of view that blur the message.

The phrasing of a message is critical to achieve good sound-bite clarity that will cut through the clutter and stick in the recipient's mind. Use a blend of emotion, logic, and connections to other people and movements to help increase engagement for your coalition messages.



INCLUDE A CALL TO ACTION

Be sure to include a clear call to action in your messages so that your audience knows exactly what to do next. The call to action gives people the final impetus to get them to take action.

A fuzzy call to action can leave people confused and wondering what they should do next. If they get stuck in the thinking pattern, they might not take any action at all.

Here are some images showing clear calls to action. Each call to action is a short, single, focused phrase that is written in the active voice. Call Us Now. Colon Cancer Can Be Prevented. Quit (smoking) Now.



The **Call Us Now** example is a strong call to action image because it tells the audience exactly what to do and emphasizes the point with images of a telephone and conversation bubbles. The reason people should call must be expressed in some other part of the ad, webpage, or brochure, so this call to action is not complete.

The **Colon Cancer Can Be Prevented** ad is well done. The title opens with a clear, important message. The image of a daughter and father shows warm human feelings and eye contact that draws readers further into the ad where they will read a simple, emotional story about how screening might have prevented the loss of the father's life to colon cancer. The end of the story has a clear call to action: Get screened and prevent colon cancer.

COLON CANCER CAN BE PREVENTED
EL CÁNCER DE COLON PUEDE SER PREVENIDO

Hi, my name is Maria. I lost my father to colon cancer. He was too stubborn to get screened, but the cancer might have been prevented if he did. Don't let your family lose you, too. Get screened, and prevent colon cancer.

Models used for illustrative purposes only.

The **QuitLine** ad contains a very strong call to action in the 1-800-Quit-Now phone number and emphasizes the **Now** for timing. The main call to action (Quit) is repeated twice in the ad and is colored in bold red to emphasize the message. This ad is an example of how a message can appear in both text and phone numbers. Other ads might embed the main call to action in a web link.



EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL CALLS TO ACTION

When you are creating your call to action, determine the most important action that you want your audience to take and then write your ad message to clearly identify the desired action.

- ▶ On a website, it might be to click a link, sign up on a mailing list, to contact the coalition, or to donate a small amount of money to the cause.
- ▶ On a brochure, the call to action might be to go to the website, or to call a hotline number.
- ▶ On Twitter or Facebook, the call to action might be to retweet or forward the message to others to spread the message.

Align with a Cause

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USE CAUSE MARKETING

The only thing better than being first to place your brand indicators in the minds of your audience is to connect to brand indicators that are already there.

Cause marketing occurs when your coalition associates itself with an existing popular health cause that is bigger than your coalition. For example, your coalition might associate itself with the larger cause of fighting cancer in general, or with a more focused cause of fighting breast, colon, or lung cancer.

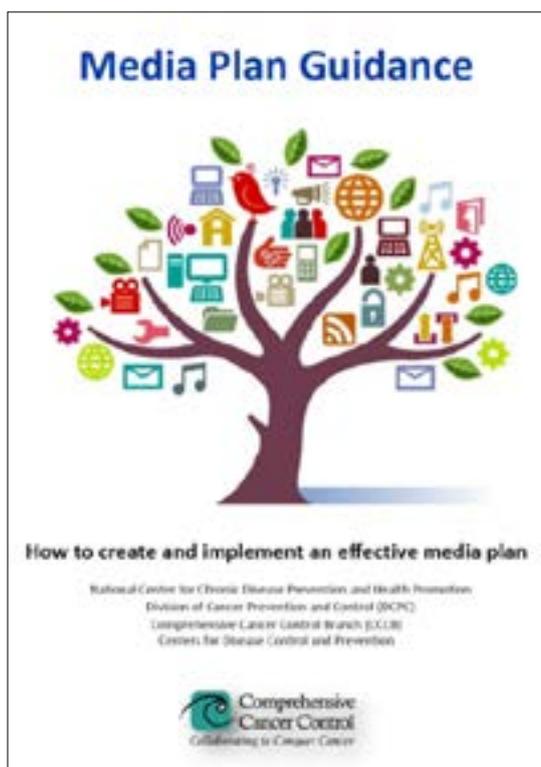
Associating your coalition with a cause makes it easier for your audience to recognize they are supporting a broader vision. For example, they can feel they're associating themselves with a significant and popular national movement to fight breast cancer.

If you associate with a cause, you can strengthen your brand indicators and reduce confusion by using colors and symbols that are consistent with the larger cause.

For example, if your coalition wants to associate with the existing breast cancer cause, consider using a pink color for your brand indicators. Then your pink brand indicators can connect with the strong breast-cancer brand indicators that are already in the minds of your audience.

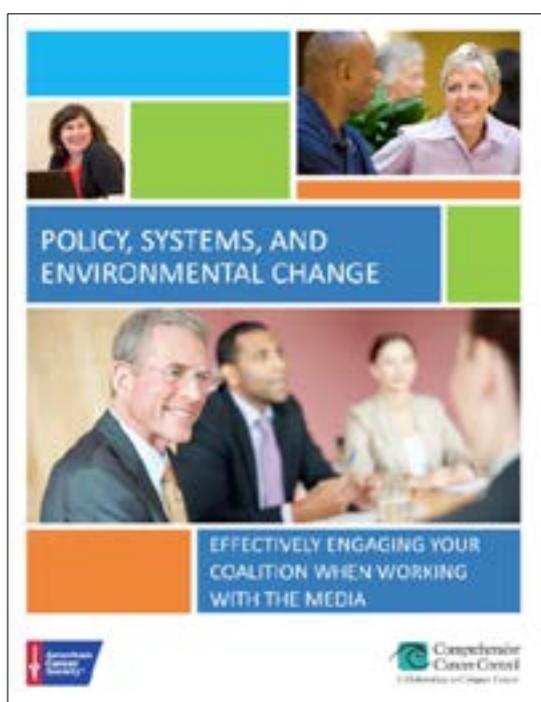
OTHER RESOURCES

Here are two useful resources that might help your coalition create an effective media plan. Both are available on the Comprehensive Cancer Control National Partners website.



MEDIA PLAN GUIDANCE: HOW TO CREATE AND IMPLEMENT AN EFFECTIVE MEDIA PLAN

This PDF can help you to create an effective media plan. It explains the difference between a communication plan and a media plan, describes the recommended components of a media plan, and provides media plan templates.



POLICY, SYSTEMS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE - EFFECTIVELY ENGAGING YOUR COALITION WHEN WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

This PDF provides information and tools to help you organize your media efforts and maximize your success.

REFERENCES

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3. **Veloso, Maria.** Web Copy that Sells. s.l. : Amazon Digital Services, 2013.