

# Marketing and Public Perceptions of Water Reuse

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# Value and Risk

## Context for Decision Making is Value and Risk

Solving a Problem - Providing Benefits

A Thrill!

No Benefits or Thrill – Any Risk is Too High!

### Water Reuse

Why Do I Need It? Yuck!



# Why Marketing, Perceptions?

- Marketing
  - Creates Value and Communicates About Value
  - Defines What You Will Do for the Customer
  - Usually in Exchange for Money, Investment
- We Need Support and Investment in Reuse
  - The Reuse Concept – The Need to Sign Up Customers
  - Support for Water Supply Replenishment
- Perceptions
  - Reclaimed Water Comes from Waste – Yuck!

**Branded!**

# Branded

- Constantly Happening
  - People, Products, and Organizations
- Judgments, Perceptions, Expectations
- Negatively Branded
  - Management Shake-Ups, Corporate Failure



# The Brand

- The Set of Perceptions
  - Defined By You and/or Others
- An Asset or Liability
  - Coca Cola Brand Worth Over \$60 Billion
- Logo is an Identifier
  - Not the Essence of the Brand!

The Coca-Cola Company logo, featuring the brand name in its signature script font, set against a red rectangular background.

# Branding

- Creating and Communicating Value
- Can Be Simple Ideas of Value
  - Volvo = Safe Cars
  - Southwest Airlines = Low Cost / On-Time Airline
- **Not a Slogan or Single Idea – An Experience!**

The Hertz logo is displayed on a dark grey rectangular background with a yellow horizontal bar above it. The word "Hertz" is written in a bold, italicized, yellow sans-serif font.

# Trust, Risk, Branding

Trust that the Product is the Best Value

Trust in the Company or Organization

Trust that Someone is Managing the Risks



Branding and Trust Are Directly Related

# The Utility Brand

What You Can Count On!

- Water

- Reliability - Quality
- Customer Service



The Source of Quality!

- Sanitation

- Public and Environmental Health
- Producer of Valuable Resources - Investor in Markets

- General

- Planning and Investment
- Environmental Stewardship
- Efficient and Financially Competent
- **Staff Characteristics!**



# “Tap” Water and Water Reuse Branded!

Tap Water = Safe, But Not Healthy



Physical Source = Water Quality

Potable Reuse = Yuck

“Recycled” or “Reclaimed” Emphasizes Source

Water Utility – Not the Source of Quality

# Water Reuse Branding Advice

- Have a Branding Strategy
  - Meet the Needs of Customers
- Multiple Products, Multiple Uses
  - Quality Tailored to the Use – A Manufactured Product!
- The Name – Recycled, Irrigation Water.....
- Carefully Choose the Water Purveyor



# Reuse Products



- **Non-Potable Reuse**
  - Separate Delivery Infrastructure
  - Need to Sign-Up Customers, Price the Product
  - Easier if You Have Big Industrial Customers
  
- **Water Supply Replenishment – The Future**
  - Investment in Water Quality, Not Separate Pipes
  - Increases Effectiveness of Water Storage Assets
  - Requires Community Acceptance, Not Customers
  - We Are Learning How to Gain Acceptance

# Trust Building for Potable Reuse

## The Message/Commitment

Investing in Water Reliability, Sustainability  
Creating Water Quality Confidence

## The Dialogue

Managing Conflict

Ensuring a Good Political Decision



# Becoming the Source of Quality

- Common Sense Perceptions
  - Improvement/Enhancement
  - Increasing Knowledge
  - Diligence, Carefulness



## A Manufactured Product!

- Activities Build Brand
  - Purification Steps
  - Testing – How Much and For What?
  - Communications - Trusted Source of Information
  - Emergency, Event Response
  - Watershed Quality Monitoring

# Tools For Implementing Reuse

- Phase 1 Report and Guidance Document
- Water Supply Replenishment Website
- Executive Summary and Executive Seminar
- Advice Checklists - Trust-Building Objectives (4)
- Case Study Summaries - Trust-Building Objectives (4)
- Ensuring a Good Policy Decision White Paper
- Sample Project Timeline
- Investing in Water Reliability Sample Communication and Guidance
- Water Quality Sample Communications and Guidance (2 Tools)
- Building a Water Quality Track Record
- Embracing Conflict and Opposition
- Finding Opponents Early - Responding to Conflict

<http://www.watereuse.org/Foundation/researchreport.htm>

# Scottsdale, Arizona

## Water Campus

- Water Resource Leader
  - Strong Relationships with City Council and the Media
- Wastewater - A Valuable Resource in the Desert
- Groundwater Management Code - Clear Standard
  - Reviewed Alternatives to Indirect Potable Reuse
- Established Water Quality Credibility
  - Onsite Laboratory and the “Water Campus” Brand
  - Ongoing Information About Water Quality and Testing
  - Improved Groundwater Quality - Bottled Water Quality Treatment

# Dublin San Ramon, CA

## Clean Water Revival

- Problem Was a Wastewater Disposal Problem
  - DSRSD Proposed a New Ocean Outfall – Not Approved
- Sponsoring Agency
  - Not a Credible Source of Water Quality - Wastewater Authority
  - Opponents “No Ongoing Water Quality Plan”
- Environmental Justice - Growth
  - Pleasanton - Receive Water Because of Rapid Growth in Dublin
- Relationship with the Media Deteriorated
  - Conflict Over Headlines- DSRSD Viewed as Defensive
- Result - New Ocean Outfall Approved

# Orange County, CA

## Groundwater Replenishment System

- Articulated a Clear Set of Problems to Be Solved
  - Seawater Intrusion, Beach Closures, Improved Supply Reliability
- Clear Water Quality Ethic - Trusted Source of Quality
  - Multi-Barrier Treatment Including Reverse Osmosis
  - Track Record with Water Factory 21
  - Aggressive Response to Issues - NDMA
  - Approach to Emerging Contaminants - Increasing Knowledge
  - Relating Treatment to Familiar Processes
- Diligent with Communications
  - Continuously Seeking Out and Interacting with Key Audiences

# San Diego, CA

## Water Re-Purification Project

- No Widely Accepted Supply Problem
  - Project Genesis Related to the Ocean Discharge Waiver
- No Credible Source of Drinking Water Quality
  - Wastewater Officials Were Project Champions
- No Consistent and Credible Leadership
  - Water Department and County Water Authority Not Visible Leaders
- Decision Makers Were Not “Informed” About the Project
- Environmental Justice
  - District 4 Resident Perception - Guinea Pigs

# The Point!

**We Can Design Reuse for Success**

It's Much Easier with a.....

**Strong Value and Branding Strategy**

# Questions?

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