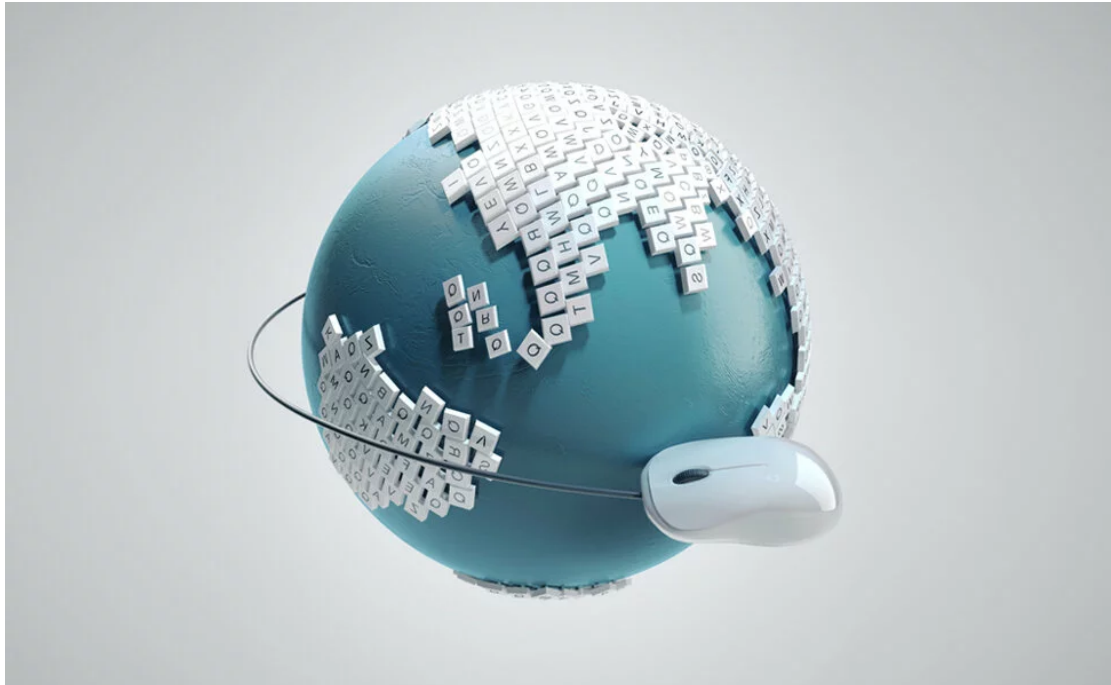


PROJECT REPORT

Silke Boysen-Korya

Global Marketing for Disruptive Digital Innovation

Cultural change | Branding | Product communication



The Project in a Nutshell

- ❖ Vision & Mission: Translate strategy into internal and external communication
- ❖ Communicate disruptive change without harm to the high brand value
- ❖ Redefine communication goals and develop a project plan
- ❖ Achieve branding success through social media promotion and media presence
- ❖ Engage the workforce in the change | Product becomes a revenue driver

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An internationally operating German company in the field of automation technology had developed a groundbreaking product innovation that was visionary for the company and revolutionary for the market – yet equally demanding in terms of explanation. Since the company had been successful for many years with products requiring little explanation (commodities), marketing and corporate communication had to realign themselves for this disruptive change. The interim manager was hired as the Director of Corporate Marketing to develop a global marketing strategy for the product innovation and, in turn, to realign the communication of the corporate strategy.

Vision & Mission: Implementation of the Strategy in Internal and External Communication

When the interim manager joined the project, external consultants had already begun aligning a new global corporate strategy with the management. The interim manager played a significant role in developing a new vision and mission from the strategy and implementing them in marketing and corporate communication.

Driving Cultural Change in Marketing and Corporate Communication

The company's product innovation involved technology that could be considered disruptive. This disruption, both for customers and the company itself, required a complete cultural shift in external and internal communication, involving all customer- and production-related departments of the company.

Communicating Disruptive Change Without Harming the High Brand Value

The challenge for product communication was twofold: on one hand, involving all internal stakeholders in the transformation process; on the other hand, convincing the market without unsettling existing customers.

To address this challenge, the interim manager, in collaboration with an external agency, developed maritime motifs as key visuals for the product campaign. For example, a lighthouse does not force anyone to follow it, but it makes sense to follow its beacon. The background of this idea: the motif gives viewers the opportunity not to feel pressured but to follow their own reason.

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Redefining Communication Goals and Developing a Project Plan

In the meantime, the interim manager identified the communication goals to be achieved (Communication Needs Analysis) and developed a corresponding project plan.

To overcome internal skepticism, she, along with the agency and her team, designed a targeted information campaign tailored to each country. The workforce was gradually "captured." Whether through intranet pages, company meetings, family or employee events, posters and screens (e.g., in lobbies and cafeterias), consistent internal communication ultimately ensured that the new corporate message could reach all employees – strengthening their trust in the new corporate strategy and product innovation.

With Social Media Promotion and Media Presence to Branding Success

Social media played a central role in external communication. Under the leadership of the interim manager, the Corporate Marketing and PR team developed content and engaged with relevant social media channels. The result: Within a short period, the five-digit number of LinkedIn followers grew by more than a third.

Due to her excellent network in trade media, the interim manager also succeeded in a comprehensive PR campaign. She placed company employees in target-specific interviews and prestigious compendiums, and initiated having company experts interviewed as opinion leaders. The company had media presence for the first time in decades, including cover stories and features.

Parallel to the social media promotion, media presence was fundamentally established. In the first quarter alone, the presence equated to a media value (Equivalent Advertising Value, EAV) of more than 250,000 euros: 'merit-based,' without having invested this sum in advertising.

Engaging the Workforce in the Change | Product Becomes a Revenue Driver

The communication initiatives of the interim manager and her teams had multiple effects. The product innovation has since become one of the significant revenue drivers for the client. Thanks to the quickly implemented marketing strategy, it was also successful in outpacing similar products from competitors – and maintaining that lead.

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Additionally, the company atmosphere benefited. With growing visibility, pride developed in being part of a success story. More and more employees became active on social media, becoming ambassadors for the company – also positively impacting the company's employer branding. Applicants sometimes applied, mentioning that they were 'impressed and wanted to be a part of it.

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