The Branding of a BIT: From Idea to Image

By Dawn Dooley and Caitlin Poindexter

Abstract

This article provides an overview of the steps the University of Alaska, Anchorage took from the initial idea of creating a branding campaign for their Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) to the final image chosen for the branding campaign. The team had to brainstorm, research, and work with a few graphic designers along the way. The final design concept is an image that portrays both a verbal and visual message that helps us market the work of our behavioral intervention team and has helped create a “culture of reporting” on our campus.

Introduction

In order for a Behavioral Intervention Team to be effective in creating a safer campus community for the faculty, staff and students, the community must be aware that the team exists. That led the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Care Team to the realization that an easily recognizable brand was needed, in order for community members to learn how and what to report.

The first challenge was creating a brand that effectively illustrates the importance of reporting behavior that is perceived as being out of the norm. What image could represent behavior that should be reported without creating unnecessary panic or alarm? What image would Care Team members identify with, given the diverse composition of the team? What would resonate with students, staff, and faculty? What would fit with the current brands at UAA?

Brainstorming seemed an appropriate starting place. To direct the brainstorming process, we believed it was important to view images from a variety of sources including Google Images. Key word searches using care, behavioral intervention teams, National Behavioral Intervention Team Association (NaBITA), teamwork, network, connection and communication led to a number of possible images. The University of Santa Cruz uses an image
of two hands reaching for each other which can be found at: deanofstudents.ucsc.edu/student-care/see-say-do/index.html

In reviewing the research, the University of California, Santa Cruz was the only university that used an image to market its team. The majority of universities used the name of their team to demonstrate their purpose. There were no images or “faces of” any behavioral intervention teams. Many BITs had mission statements instead of mottos and websites that seemed primarily focused on explaining the reporting process. This was in line with NaBITA’s recognition of the importance of creating a “culture of reporting.” The research led to the conclusion that the image used would need to lead campus community members to the reporting process.

A graphic design team was hired with a $1000 budget to create an image to represent the UAA Care Team. The graphic design team was provided an overview of the purpose and function of the BIT and our goals of the branding campaign. The initial draft was nondescript. It did not have any visual aspect that would draw the viewer to the reporting process nor illustrate the purpose of a behavioral intervention team.

To find an image that would lead someone to the reporting process and depict the purpose, coordination occurred with the Student Affairs Marketing & Creative Design Coordinator, Elizabeth (Liz) Shine. After the design coordinator created a set of draft logos, the chair and coordinator for the Care Team met with her to continue the creative process. These are the original drafts:
While reviewing the drafts with the Student Affairs Marketing & Creative Design Coordinator, the formation of the brand took shape. There were several aspects of the logo drafts that were important to include in the final design. The vibrant green is appealing, the gender-neutral characters are inclusive, and the caption bubbles portray a verbal and visual message.

The decision to use caption bubbles was a breakthrough in the development of the Care Team’s brand because it served the dual purpose of providing a verbal and visual message to the viewer. The final meeting centered on two slogans: the national campaign slogan, “See Something, Say Something” and “Sense Something, Text Something” (with the thought of moving towards receiving reports via text message in the future). As the discussion progressed, the team moved towards either using, “see something, say something, do something” or “sense something?, say something, do something.” The design coordinator agreed to come up with a few different options to incorporate both slogans and see what the team preferred.

The top four design concepts were presented to the Care Team. The team decided that the slogan should be “sense something?, say something, do something”, because “sense” highlights using gut instincts and is inclusive of all the senses. The oval bubbles were selected over rectangles because they were softer and more appealing to read. The Care Team web address, Care Team Coordinator phone number and QR code (smart phone scanable code used in advertisements) were placed on the poster to make reporting accessible. A brief explanation about the Care Team was included, to ensure that campus community members understood why and what to report.

The Care Team reached a consensus and the final design concept was submitted to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and Dean of Students for review. After final revisions, the campaign was launched. The campaign included print media, a website, an on-line portal for reporting and presentations across campus. There was an immediate increase in the usage of our online portal. People talked about seeing our posters around campus or learned about our team from a co-worker or friend. The “culture of reporting” began to take hold and the recognizable brand helps keep a constant presence and allows community members across campus to learn about us at any time. This process was a positive one for the University of
Alaska, Anchorage. The culture of reporting improved through the creative and professional branding of the Care Team.