



VOLUNTEER REPORT

Assignment information

Volunteer Name: Barbara Pietuch
Host Organization: Sweet 'n' Dried
Assignment: Product Branding and Marketing
Dates of Assignment: 4/29/2016 – 5/17/2016
Number of days worked: 14

OBSERVATIONS

While the focus of the SOW centered on branding & packaging, there is an urgent need for a functional business plan and accounting system. In addition, an initial SWOT analysis had not been done for Sweet 'n' Dried. During this assignment, I put together a SWOT for the client and we discussed how SWOT can be used as a tool for strategic planning /business planning. Likewise, we plotted a work plan, set priorities and time lines addressing urgent May - June deadlines for NetFund-Green Innovations, HACCP/Records, HACCP/Factory Completion, Taxes/Training, Loans, School Registration & Testing and Day-to-Day Operations (Projects must be prioritized. It is not humanly impossible to do everything all at the same time. Operating from this prospective is a recipe for disaster – important steps are missed and mistakes are made.).

Because the Sweet 'n' Dried owner has no department specific staff to help Ms. Mwende with Admin functions relating to sales/marketing, finances, R&D, day-to-day, etc., it was decided the branding development and implementation must be pushed back in the schedule - possibly picking up again in July - September.

OTHER: Quality Control Concerns - the Sweet 'n' Dried Pineapple packaged product I sampled had live and dead worms on the fruit and in the package. I was told this had happened on several occasions with the pineapple product that customers had purchased. A step had been missed in the production process. I'm told it has since been corrected. Quality product is paramount. The most fantastic branding campaign in the universe cannot save a defective product.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Start the Re-Branding Process with name change, logo redesign, tag lines, collateral materials, social media. The start of a new image for Sweet 'n' Dried -- Crash course in branding design.

Progress with the objective: Discussions centered on a new image and what Sweet 'n' Dried wants to convey to the target demographics. What's important? Why should the consumer care? What makes Sweet 'n' Dried different? What makes your products different? What are the selling points. (I brought several branding & marketing books as reference materials).



Expected impacts/results:

Name Change - Sweet 'n' Dried will shorten its name to SnD. (Will still remain registered as Sweet and Dried, Ltd.). In Kenya, SnD is easier to remember and pronounce.

Logo Design - We reviewed many logotypes and design examples on products and online. I discussed color theory & selection, reproduction considerations & graphic elements. A rough sketch idea was worked up during this assignment and will be used to help graphic designers understand what SnD is wants to achieve with their logo design. Once logo is complete it will be registered.

Tag lines - Developed a possible new tag line: *"Simply Delicious. Totally Nutritious."* Tag line will also be registered.

Collateral Materials - Analyzed various brochures, flier sheets, outreach materials, signage, booklet designs, stationary examples, etc. SnD needs to create training/outreach materials to educate local communities of the benefits of SnD's product lines (Volunteer coming in June maybe able to help with this task?). These material can then be used at Ms. Mwende's shop (signage is needed as well). We did create a new flier sheet for the NetFund-Green Innovations Awards (May 17-19, in Nairobi).

Social Media – While social media may not be an effective way to reach potential target markets within Kenya at the moment, it is vital to the global market. In addition, having an online presence is appealing to potential donors. Ms. Mwende attends international trade fairs and expos and social media is a way to keep in touch with those she networks with. SnD currently has an outdated troublesome website and a somewhat dormant LinkedIn profile along with a Facebook page. SnD will work on getting these sites back up to speed across all platforms. We reviewed many websites online that specialize in fruited fruits & flours products. Again, focused on branding continuity, design, content management, and how to proceed.

Recommendations: Nobody can learn everything there is to know about branding (or any other discipline) in two weeks. Very basic design tools and suggestions were presented that will help Ms. Mwende continue the rebranding process in July and beyond. Ideally she should assemble a dedicated team to help with all that is involved in rebranding and running a marketing/branding department.(See #1 in the Action Plan)

Objective 2: Identify Efficient Packaging & Labeling

Progress with the objective: Introduction & Design Development

Through the course of the assignment, we spent a great deal of time reviewing the bag full of packaging examples and dried fruit & flour product samples I brought. Likewise we critiqued online and local markets products. I walked Ms. Mwende through design basics (I threw a lot of information at her and she soaked it up like a sponge!)



Packaging topics addressed:

- Element placement and function
- Quality
- Message content - required elements
- Package logo & graphic usage
- Color
- Windows
- Materials - plastics, paper
- Front & back design – likes & dislikes. What works and what doesn't.
- Basics of graphic design
- Required elements – label requirement
- Overall branding, Continuity
- Product taste, texture, color, overall quality, overall consumer experience

Expected impacts/results: Brand Building - Improved packaging design & quality. Improved graphic design, readability & shelf visibility (“User Friendliness”). Continuity.

Recommendations: Continue with the packaging concept sketches (July - Dec). Work with packaging/ label designer.

Action Plan

Recommendation	Specific Action	Who	By when
1. Quality Control	Are checks and balances in place to monitor all production and admin system process? Product quality issues.	ALL	On-going
2. Build a team	Freelancers, Local temporary assistant (Betty), Website (Victory), Bookkeeping help, Freelance Designers, Copywriters, Students (perhaps set up an internship)	Mercy Mwende & Others	On-going
3. Prioritize	What are the deadlines? Map it out. What needs to be done now and what can wait. What's Important? One project at a time. Break large project into small manageable bits.	Mercy Mwende	On-going
4. Continue with Branding	Key points discussed with Ms. Mwende: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with freelance logo designers for “ SnD” mock-ups (use several designers, if possible). • Register logo & tag lines • Work on messaging • Social media - across all platforms - keep the donor/international audience in mind. • Work with Victor on editing one of the three free website templates options that were discussed. New web host by Sept. • May want to consider hiring a journalism/advertising, writer/copywriter student to help develop content. • Continue with packaging designs that were sketched out. Work with packager/label printer • Continue with the clean simple design. Use white space effectively to achieve the image (“look & feel”) of SnD. • Add education/outreach materials and signage to shop • Continuity! Attention to details. 	Mercy Mwende	Continue July- Sept and beyond
5. R & D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Research for Retail Market - Know who your target audience is (rural vs high-end expat). Data may be scarce in Kenya. • When in Nairobi & local markets- look at competition/buy/try/analyze. On-going, • Package product field testing (Possibly next year) Nairobi (dried Fruits) Local (Dried Fruits & Porridges) • Develop porridges mixtures, mixed dried fruits, animal fed possibilities in the future • Continue partnerships Bulk Buyers (info gathering) • Donors/Agencies/Export. Continue attending trade fairs, Expos, etc. Networking (LinkedIn, Facebook) 	Mercy Mwende	On-going



Number of people Assisted

- a) Through formal training 2
- b) Through direct technical assistance (Do not double count)
- c) Out of these above, number of host staffs n/a
- d) Training/assistance by field n/a

Category	Total	Males	Females
Members/ owners	2	1	1
Employees			
Clients/ Suppliers			
Family Members			
Total	2	1	1

Gender

- a) What gender roles did you recognize in your host community? Did these roles play a part in your assignment? How?

Having worked on many USAID-funded projects in Africa. I am well aware of gender roles and the difficulties many women face. That said, SnD is a woman-led organization, with a strong and intelligent woman at the helm. The company has done a tremendous job empowering rural women and youths by providing skill set training & jobs, thus creating incomes and improving livelihoods. Ms. Mwende is a prime example of what women can accomplish even under the most challenging of circumstances.

How might CRS or the host organization improve opportunities for the women in this host or host community? (See Recommendations for CRS on the last page)

Value of volunteer contribution

- a. Hours volunteer spent preparing for assignment 40
- b. Estimated value of all material contributions volunteer contributed to host during assignment \$100

Value of hosts' contribution in (Please consult the host as well)

- a) Meals 0
- b) Transportation
- c) Lodging 0
- d) Translation 0
- e) Other (Specify)



Host Profile Data:

Did you obtain any data that supplements or corrects the data in the existing host information as detailed in the SOW? Please list it. SWOT Development

Recommendations for CRS:

If this hasn't been done already, it would be a good idea for CRS to sit down with the host face-to-face and develop a work plan to monitor progress and review the need for future volunteers. Speaking from past experience, I have found F2F hosts do need guidance in this area and may not know what volunteers they actually require and when in the process they need them. A constant stream of volunteers, with various levels of knowledge and delivery styles may not be the most effective way to achieve goals.

Better sequencing of volunteers would improve productivity. For example in SnD's case – if possible schedule the accounting systems specialist first, then the Business Planner, followed by the Branding Specialist – Spaced out in at least 6 month intervals or longer.

Other: Does CRS conduct general group workshops for hosts (for examples, basics of business planning, record keeping, SWOTs, strategic planning, etc.)? Since time is so limited for volunteer assignments, group workshops would provide hosts with more of a foundation prior to the volunteer's arrival.