

Branding and Communications for Life-Care Companies



**Business Services
Branding & Communications**



**Rob Rosenberg
President**

BIO: Rob Rosenberg is a branding and advertising thought-leader who has contributed to the industry for over 30 years. Rob was a senior manager in two leading communications companies before founding Springboard in 2002. A frequent contributor to text books and marketing publications, Rob is also the author of an award-winning blog on branding.

About Springboard Brand & Creative Strategy

Springboard Brand & Creative Strategy is a national branding and communications firm specializing in life-care industries. From healthcare companies to educational organizations, Springboard helps enterprises move from their Mission to Market via its Brand CURE, a proprietary branding process designed to discover a brand's unique heritage and "heart-beat."

We use proven **branding** models and **creative strategy** to distinguish your story from the competition. Your **brand** isn't just what you say, but how WE deliver.

**Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor
CEOCFO Magazine**

CEOCFO: Mr. Rosenberg, what is the concept at Springboard Brand & Creative Strategy?

Mr. Rosenberg: The concept is we are a branding and communications firm that helps healthcare organizations and other life-care companies to tell their stories in the marketplace and to their respective customers.

CEOCFO: What is your philosophy on how to accomplish this and what have you figured out about the process that perhaps others have not quite understood yet?

Mr. Rosenberg: I think what we have found philosophically is that the brand does reside an organization and the process should be driven to find the heartbeat of the brand as opposed to a chest beat.

CEOCFO: How do you find the core of the organization?

Mr. Rosenberg: Our process is what we call the Brand CURE. One of the things that we do is research stakeholders such as board members, senior leadership and sometimes customers. We talk to them about their perceived strengths, weaknesses and expectations, so we are really trying to get a handle on why people buy, what they look for and what makes this particular brand unique. That is one piece of the process and the other which is just as important is you have to do a thorough competitive analysis because you should not have a "me too" type of strategy. You need to understand the competition and how they position themselves and what openings are available that match with the vision, direction and heritage of our client company.

CEOCFO: There are many segments in healthcare; do you have a particular area of focus?

Mr. Rosenberg: I would say the majority of our clients in healthcare are with medical associations or hospitals and health systems across the country.

CEOCFO: When will someone come to you?

Mr. Rosenberg: Probably the most popular reason today is all of the continued mergers and acquisitions in the marketplace among hospitals and health systems. There are all these different factors that are causing organizations to come together and form a new brand and that is where we come in.

CEOCFO: Do most organizations of this type seek outside services?

Mr. Rosenberg: Most do. Very few keep it in-house and those that do are usually smaller. What is interesting is that many of these organizations from a marketing standpoint now have chief marketing officers, executive vice presidents of marketing etcetera. They tend to come from larger industries.

CEO CFO: When someone comes to you are they asking for advice or are they asking for help with billboards or both?

Mr. Rosenberg: The ideal would be more of the former which would be come in and tell us what to do and how do we undergo the entire process to discover that core element to our story. If somebody came in and said we just want advertising, we probably would ask a lot of strategic and brand related questions but if it is the right budget we would probably do it.

CEO CFO: What is the key to keeping things fresh and specific to an organization?

Mr. Rosenberg: The biggest philosophical question that falls on us here is how we keep it fresh and we challenge ourselves every day. There are some agencies and companies in our field that you can “rubber stamp” the execution and you know exactly who they are, they all look alike and sound alike. We dig deep to find not only that unique selling point but how to push it creatively in a different way that has never been done. Sometimes you look at it at the end of the day and you say it has satisfied the strategy but it is ok. Sometimes it is breakthrough and you say it is a job well done.

CEO CFO: Can you give us an example of how you may have been surprised at a response to a branding effort that you put forth?

Mr. Rosenberg: Yes, I was surprised at how effective these can be especially today when so much of it is as much digital as it is offline. You can

gauge the success rather quickly with online metrics and other analytics. That is the surprising part whether it is the number of impressions, you do not have to wait like the old days until you see the meter go in more attitudinal shifts in terms of awareness or preference or loyalty. We go in and measure the market every twelve or eighteen months. Now in literally the next day you can see how many hits we have had, how many impressions and click-throughs. To me it is exciting because it is more instant gratification.

CEO CFO: How far along do you stay with the clients?

Mr. Rosenberg: The company is eleven years old. I have a client that has been with us for eleven years and others that are year-long projects. I

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would say the average is probably four years for us.

CEO CFO: How do prospective clients find you?

Mr. Rosenberg: We do a lot of outreach from a public relations standpoint. We do a lot of speaking at various national conferences. We do a lot of writing for publications and text books. We have a well-read blog called hospital branding that is all linked back to our website where we can track the usage and the analytics and the readership. I think that spawns from word of mouth.

CEO CFO: When you are speaking with a prospective client is there an ‘aha’ moment when they understand the difference in your approach?

Mr. Rosenberg: I do not know if they hear the difference because I think many people in my business kind of say the same thing. We let our clients sometimes do the talking for us. We have referrals or testimonials or we encourage prospects to call our customers. I know our brand cure process is probably like five thousand other processes that are somewhat similar. It comes from the core of the people here and that is hard to articulate. Once you engage in a conversation, the passion has to come through in the personality and the vision of the people.

CEO CFO: How is business these days?

Mr. Rosenberg: Business is good. Our organic growth with existing clients has been terrific. We are expanding our clients business and as a result we are getting more opportunities. The creative or campaigns have been really breakthrough and the clients want more of it. Organically it has been very good. The new business pipeline has been ok across the board. We have been picking up smaller national accounts that are giving us a foot in the door and trying to turn that into more of that organic growth.

CEO CFO: Why should the business and investment community pay attention to Springboard Brand Creative Strategy?

Mr. Rosenberg: I think what your readers should pay attention because leadership in an organization is vital to the success of the brand. A brand cannot live within an organization if the senior leadership does not understand, believe and buy into it or are not part of the process. From the top down people need to buy into it and live the brand promise and deliver on it. Only the senior leadership team can make that happen. That is our philosophy and we process to make sure that is a key element of the branding.