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MPDC 5043: Design Management & Strategy
Module 11, Project Budget
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Instructions

Now that you have a better idea of who your audience is and what their needs are, you can test your assumptions and see how potential customers react to your project ideas. Focus groups are often used in the early stages of project planning and requirements gathering to obtain feedback on concepts, prototypes, designs, and strategies.

Because of the time constraints, you will not be expected to plan and hold a fully developed meeting. Practice what you have learned with two or three people available and willing to help. The number of questions asked need not be extensive (keep to around 10), but should be carefully thought out and based on your findings from previous modules. In preparation for the focus group session, you should:

- Organize a meeting location and time
- Invite a diverse group of participants if possible
- Determine meeting goals and desired takeaways
- Create an agenda
- Prepare questions
- Prepare project presentation (Use your mood board to get reactions from the group)

You will conduct the meeting and should either record the session or have an assistant take detailed notes. It is very difficult to lead a session while trying to write down comments and observations. Be sure to carefully observe and document body language and expressions. Often observations reveal more than words.

After the session, you will:

- Organize your notes
- Analyze the data collected
- Prepare a report consisting of a participant list with demographic information, agenda, meeting notes, key data points, observations, and takeaways
- Prepare project recommendations resulting from the meeting takeaways

Questions

1. What are the first words or images that come to mind when you think about [TEAM]?
2. How would you describe the personality or character of [TEAM] compared to other teams in the league?
3. What aspects of team brands do you find most appealing or memorable?
4. Are there any elements of [TEAM] brand identity that you feel could be improved or updated? If so, what are they and why?
5. How well do you think [TEAM] brand identity aligns with its values and the values of its fanbase?
6. How does [TEAM] branding influence your decision to support or engage with the team, whether through attending games, purchasing merchandise, or following them on social media?
7. When you see [TEAM] logo or colors, what emotions or associations do you experience?
8. In your opinion, what distinguishes [TEAM] brand identity from its competitors within the league?
9. How important is consistency in branding (e.g., logo, colors, messaging) and how well is that consistency maintained across different platforms and touchpoints?
10. If you could make one change to [TEAM] brand identity to better reflect its essence or better resonate with fans, what would it be?

Boston Notes

The focus group consists of 5 women varying in age from 25 to 55, seated in a circle.

Facilitator: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining us today. We're here to discuss Boston and specifically the PWHL Boston team brand. Let's start with our first question; What are the first words or images that come to mind when you think about Boston?

Participants:

- When I think of Boston, I immediately think of history, the Boston Tea Party, and the iconic Boston accent.
- I think of the Red Sox, Fenway Park, and the passionate sports fans.
- Boston Harbor, seafood, and the rich cultural heritage of the city.

Facilitator: Thank you. Now, moving on to PWHL Boston. How would you describe the personality or character of PWHL Boston compared to other teams in the league?

Participants:

- I think PWHL Boston is known for its grit and determination, much like the city itself. They're a hardworking team that doesn't give up easily.
- Compared to other teams, PWHL Boston has a reputation for fostering a strong sense of community among its fans and players. It feels like a family.
- I agree. PWHL Boston seems to embody the blue-collar work ethic that's so prevalent in Boston. They're not flashy but they get the job done.

Facilitator: What aspects of team brands you find most appealing or memorable.

Participants:

- For me, it's all about the connection between the team and the city. When a team's brand reflects the spirit and identity of the city it represents, it's really powerful.
- I love when teams have strong community outreach programs and actively engage with their fans beyond just the games. It makes me feel more connected to the team.

Facilitator: Are there any elements of Boston's brand identity that you feel could be improved or updated? If so, what are they and why?

Participants:

- I think Boston could do more to highlight the diversity within the city. The current branding sometimes feels a bit too focused on the traditional aspects of Boston.
- I agree. Boston's brand identity could evolve to better represent the progressive and inclusive values of the city.

Facilitator: How well do you think Boston's brand identity aligns with its values and the values of its fanbase?

Participants:

- I think there's a strong alignment, especially when it comes to loyalty and resilience. Bostonians are fiercely loyal to their teams, and the branding reflects that.
- Absolutely. The brand identity speaks to the passion and pride that Bostonians have for their city and their sports teams.

Facilitator: How does Boston's branding influence your decision to support or engage with the team, whether through attending games, purchasing merchandise, or following them on social media?

Participants:

- For me, it definitely plays a role. When I feel a connection to a team's brand, I'm more likely to support them in various ways.
- Same here. If I feel like the team's values align with mine, I'm more inclined to show my support, whether it's buying tickets to games or following them on social media.

Facilitator: Thank you. When you see Boston's logo or colors, what emotions or associations do you experience?

Participants:

- Pride and excitement. The logo and colors instantly make me think of the city and all the memories associated with it.
- Nostalgia, especially when I see the logo on old merchandise or memorabilia. It brings back memories of growing up in Boston and going to games with my family.

Facilitator: In your opinion, what distinguishes Boston's brand identity from its competitors within the league?

Participants:

- I think Boston's brand identity is rooted in tradition and history, which sets it apart from other teams. There's a sense of authenticity that you don't always see with other teams.
- Agreed. Boston's brand feels timeless and classic, whereas some other teams might try to be more trendy.

Facilitator: How important is consistency in branding, and how well is that consistency maintained across different platforms and touchpoints?

Participants:

- Consistency is crucial for building brand recognition and trust. If the branding is inconsistent, it can confuse fans and dilute the team's identity.
- Absolutely. Consistency helps reinforce the team's values and messaging across all channels, from social media to merchandise.

Facilitator: And finally, if you could make one change to Boston's brand identity to better reflect its essence or better resonate with fans, what would it be?

Participants:

- I would love to see more diversity and inclusivity reflected in the branding. Boston is such a diverse city, and I think the branding should reflect that more accurately.

Minnesota Notes

The focus group consists of 5 women varying in age from 25 to 55, seated in a circle.

Moderator: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining us today for this focus group discussion about the Minnesota Frost women's hockey team. I'm excited to hear your thoughts and insights. What are the first words or images that come to mind when you think about Minnesota?

Participants:

- When I think about Minnesota, I immediately picture snowy landscapes, lakes, and a strong sense of community.
- I agree. Minnesota brings to mind images of friendly people, outdoor activities, and a rich hockey culture.
- For me, it's definitely the cold weather, but also the warmth of the people. There's this unique blend of resilience and hospitality.
- I think of the Twin Cities skyline, the Mall of America, and definitely hockey.
- As a lifelong Minnesotan, I'd say the state's natural beauty, like the Boundary Waters and North Shore, along with its Scandinavian heritage.

Moderator: How would you describe the personality or character of PWHL Minnesota compared to other teams in the league?

Participants:

- I think PWHL Minnesota embodies a sense of grit and determination. They're known for their strong work ethic on the ice.
- Absolutely. I'd also say they have a reputation for being inclusive and supportive, both on and off the rink.
- Compared to other teams, I think PWHL Minnesota stands out for their emphasis on teamwork and camaraderie. There's a real sense of sisterhood among the players.
- From what I've seen, they seem to prioritize community engagement and giving back, which sets them apart.
- I think they're also known for their competitive spirit and passion for the game. They never back down from a challenge.

Moderator: What aspects of team brands you find most appealing or memorable.

Participants:

- Personally, I love when teams have a strong visual identity, like a distinctive logo or color scheme. It makes them easy to recognize.
- I agree. Consistency is key. When a team's brand is cohesive across different platforms and merchandise, it really leaves a lasting impression.
- I think storytelling is important too. When teams share their history, values, and the stories of their players, it creates a deeper connection with fans.

- I'm drawn to teams that are active on social media and engage with their fans regularly. It makes me feel like I'm part of the community.
- For me, it's all about authenticity. I appreciate when teams stay true to who they are and don't try to be something they're not.

Moderator: What elements of Minnesota's brand identity do you feel could be improved or updated?

Participants:

- While I love their logo and colors, I think they could do more to highlight the diversity within their team and fanbase.
- I agree. It's important for teams to reflect the communities they represent, both on and off the ice.

Moderator: How well Minnesota's brand identity aligns with its values and the values of its fanbase?

Participants:

- Overall, I think they do a good job of embodying values like teamwork, perseverance, and community.
- Their brand seems to resonate with fans who value hard work, inclusivity, and a love for the game.
- However, I think there's always room for improvement. It's important for teams to continually reassess their values and ensure they're reflected in their branding efforts.
- Absolutely. Values like diversity, equality, and social responsibility are increasingly important to fans, so it's essential for teams to prioritize them.

Moderator: Does Minnesota's branding influence your decision to support or engage with the team?

Participants:

- For me, a strong brand identity definitely makes me more inclined to support a team. It shows they're invested in their fans and their community.
- When I feel a connection to a team's brand, whether through their values, storytelling, or visual identity, I'm more likely to attend games, buy merchandise, and follow them on social media.
- I think branding plays a significant role in shaping the overall fan experience. It sets the tone for how fans interact with the team and each other.
- In today's digital age, branding is more important than ever. It's often the first point of contact between fans and the team.
- At the end of the day, I want to support a team that I feel proud to be associated with, both as a fan and as a member of the community.

Moderator: What emotions or associations do you experience when you see Minnesota's logo or colors?

Participants:

- For me, it's a sense of pride and belonging. Seeing the logo or colors instantly reminds me of home and the hockey community here in Minnesota.
- I'd say it evokes feelings of excitement and anticipation, especially during hockey season. It's a symbol of the energy and passion that surrounds the sport.
- I agree. There's something about those colors that just feels inherently Minnesotan. It's like they're woven into the fabric of our state's identity.
- I think there's also a sense of tradition and heritage associated with the logo and colors. They've become iconic symbols of Minnesota hockey.
- Definitely. And I think that's part of what sets them apart from other teams in the league. There's a rich history and legacy behind those colors.

Moderator: What distinguishes Minnesota's brand identity from its competitors within the league?

Participants:

- I think their emphasis on community and inclusivity sets them apart. They've built a reputation for being a team that welcomes everyone with open arms.
- I'd also say their commitment to excellence both on and off the ice is a distinguishing factor. They hold themselves to a high standard in everything they do.
- I think their branding reflects a deep connection to Minnesota.

Moderator: How important is consistency in branding and how well does Minnesota maintain that consistency across different platforms and touchpoints?

Participants:

- Consistency is crucial for building brand recognition and trust. It ensures that fans know what to expect from the team, whether they're interacting with them on social media, attending games, or buying merchandise.
- I think Minnesota does a great job of maintaining that consistency. Their branding is cohesive and recognizable across all touchpoints.
- Consistency also helps to reinforce the team's values and identity. When fans see the same messaging and imagery repeated consistently, it reinforces their connection to the team.
- I think they could always strive for improvement, but overall, I'd say they're doing a good job of staying true to their brand across different platforms.
- And as long as they continue to listen to their fans and adapt to their evolving needs and preferences, I think they'll continue to succeed in maintaining that consistency.

Moderator: If you could make one change to Minnesota's brand identity to better reflect its essence or better resonate with fans, what would it be?

Participants:

- Personally, I'd love to see them incorporate more storytelling into their branding efforts. Sharing the stories of their players and the impact they're making both on and off the ice could help deepen the connection with fans.
- I'd love to see them partner with local artists and designers to create unique and creative merchandise. It would help them stand out and appeal to a wider audience.