

**Proposal for Tehama County, California
Tehama County Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan
September, 2010**



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Dear Kathy:

We thank you for the opportunity to present this proposal for Tehama County. The Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan will provide the “next steps” for the County to expand its economic diversity, create more opportunities for business and jobs, and help the area become a destination that is more enjoyable for both visitors and residents. We describe this program on the following pages.

Vibrant communities that attract visitors and offer great quality of life for their residents don’t just happen by themselves. That kind of success requires planning and dedication. How do you help your locale become outstanding?

More than ever before, communities are competing with thousands of others for new business, industry, private investment, visitors, and revitalization. They find they must operate more like businesses, setting themselves apart from the competition with a unique image, something that puts them on the map. A successful brand is much more than a logo or slogan – it’s the perception of the community as a special place, a place that will provide a unique and memorable experience.

Tourism is the front door to your non-tourism economic development efforts as well. Anyone thinking of moving their business or residence first looks at potential communities from the viewpoint of a visitor.

To succeed in these competitive times, communities need to operate more like a business:

1. They must have a strong brand: what they are known for, or hope to be known for. Sometimes the branding effort requires repositioning a community so it can effectively attract private investment, new jobs, and tourism spending.
2. The product that reinforces the brand must be in place or developed so that the community “owns” its position, such as Napa Valley in the wine industry. Product includes both privately developed projects as well as public investment.
3. With any branding and product development effort, the plan must include marketing: how to tell the world who you are, what sets you apart from everyone else, and the opportunities in the community for jobs and investment.

Branding is the art of setting yourself apart from everyone else. Logos and slogans

simply reinforce the brand, while branding is what you are known for. It's what people think of you as a community. It's what makes you stand out from the crowd and worth a special trip.

Many communities fail in their branding efforts because they simply promote a list of things they have, not focusing on that which makes them truly unique. A successful brand is based on activities – things to do, not just things to look at. What do you offer that the visitor can't do closer to home? What is it that makes you special? Different? Many communities promote the geography: the city, the county, the region, but not the experiences that make a brand successful. Having "something for everyone" is not a brand.

When you brand your locale, you make a promise. It's vital to deliver on that promise. The community needs to be able to provide the activities, amenities, and ambience that fit the brand. If visitors go to a town that is touted as America's Little Bavaria, and find a town with only two Bavarian-style buildings amid everyday rural America, those visitors will feel shortchanged. The brand won't succeed. The brand must be obvious, it must be based on activities, and it must be pervasive throughout the community.

That's why a successful branding effort needs to involve the entire community. Every organization plays a role in the branding effort and those roles must be defined in the branding process. While a branding plan may be produced by one organization, it's necessary for private businesses and organizations, as well as the local officials, to collaborate in the plan process, offering full support and assistance. The most well-branded and successful communities in the world are those where private industry took the lead with support of local government agencies:

- Bluenose Coast, Nova Scotia - Home of the tall sailing ship Bluenose, fishing, lighthouses
- Whistler, BC - Skiing and mountain recreation in an upscale setting
- Prince Edward Island - The Gentle Island; Anne of Green Gables
- Napa Valley CA - More than 200 wineries (all of them private)
- Anaheim - Disneyland, Universal Studios, Knott's Berry Farm, etc.
- Branson, MO - 49 theaters, all of them privately developed
- Carmel, CA - 125 galleries and a thriving retail trade
- Ashland, OR - Oregon Shakespeare Festival. The festival runs 9 months a year
- Leavenworth, WA - 2.5 million visitors annually to this Bavarian themed town
- Hershey, PA - Chocolate. Need we say more?

Introduction to Destination Development International

For over 25 years, the award-winning Destination Development International (DDI) team has been doing just that – orchestrating the development of outstanding destinations.

Working primarily in the public sector with states, provinces, regions, counties and communities, DDI is renowned for its bottom-line, “make-something-happen” approach. This results in tremendously successful planning and implementation efforts.

Having assisted nearly 1,000 communities in the creation of branding, product development, and downtown revitalization action plans, graphic and identity packages, outstanding marketing programs and wayfinding systems, DDI has become the leading community development consulting firm in North America.

Hand picked from around the country, the DDI team includes some of the most creative minds in the business – minds that know how people move, and know what moves people. And perhaps best of all, the team specializes in getting communities excited about the possibilities, with everyone on the same page and pulling in the same direction.

Proposal: Tehama County Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan

The Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan will provide Tehama County with a unique, flexible plan that provides a step-by-step guide to developing a strong county-wide umbrella brand (what you want to be known for); it includes product development action steps (what you need to do to “own” the brand) and a marketing plan (how to tell the world). The plan will also provide a guide for brand development for the communities of Corning, Red Bluff, and Manton – their own unique focus under the county-wide umbrella brand.

DDI has completed the Community Assessment for Tehama County, which focused on where you are today from the eyes of a first-time visitor. The Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan will build on that foundation, adding solid research and input from stakeholders and county residents to provide the next steps in the process of creating or further developing an outstanding destination.

The Tehama County Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan will include:

- A graphics package: Brand identity (brand mark) for Tehama County, variations of the identity for other local county-wide organizations, plus concepts for full-page print ads, website home page, pole banners, wayfinding signage, brand poster, business papers, activities guide brochure cover, and promotional bookmark.
- Brand identities for each of the three communities of Corning, Red Bluff, and Manton.

- Identification of the Brand Leadership Team for the county - a core group of interested local people who will be charged with championing the brand and implementing the plan.
- A review of the branding process: what a brand is and isn't, what it takes to establish and own a brand, and the steps to achieving a successful effort in terms of product and marketing.
- The brand promise and key marketing messages for the county – what you want to be known for in ten, twenty years. The perception you want people to have of you as a community.
- The brand promise and key marketing messages for the communities of Corning, Red Bluff and Manton.
- Next steps action plan, giving specific to-do items to make the brand successful in the county. These county-wide recommendations are designed to bring the brand to life and fulfill the brand promise. They include product development recommendations as well as marketing recommendations.
- Review of research including demographics, primary and secondary markets, tapestry studies (lifestyle and psychographic analysis), perceptions analysis, and competitive analysis.
- Case history examples. This includes photographic examples of what similarly situated communities have done to achieve success.

In developing the Tehama County Branding, Product Development & Marketing Action Plan, DDI will perform the following steps:

1. Review of the previously completed DDI Community Assessment

The assessment provides a strong foundation given by an in-depth on-site review of the community. We start by reviewing the findings and suggestions, which show us where the community is at this point – from the eyes of a visitor.

2. Community survey

DDI will prepare a survey to offer residents and stakeholders of Tehama County the opportunity to provide their input regarding the future brand of the county. The link to this on-line survey will be posted on a local website – perhaps the county's website. Tehama County will promote the survey so that the local population will learn of it and be encouraged to participate. DDI will gather the feedback.

2. On-site work in the community

This is the first of two community visits and includes a combination of activities including interviews, a Branding Workshop, open-house, and work with the “Brand Development Committee” – our steering or working committee as we go through the process.

A typical schedule of this week in the community is as follows:

A. Travel to the community

While en route, we would review current and past marketing materials, graphics used by the governing body and local organizations, advertising, and the executive summaries of past plans, studies and surveys. This way we can make sure there is no duplication of efforts, and we won't make recommendations that fly in the face of comprehensive plans and other planning efforts.

B. Branding Workshop

- The Art of Branding a Community – Roger's most popular workshop and a great tool to educate locals on what a brand is and why you are going through this process.
- Step-by-step branding guide, the brand options. This part of the workshop involves the audience – working to develop a list of brand options and ideas, as well as current perceptions of the community. This is a very hands-on portion of the workshop.

The workshop should be open to the public and should include elected officials, city/township/county staff members, planning officials, local business organizations (chambers of commerce, destination marketing organizations, economic development practitioners), historical societies, garden clubs, auxiliary organizations, and particularly businesses who make up the core tax base for any community. It should also include the press so that this effort reaches the people in the community, who will in turn have the opportunity to weigh in via e-mail, or web-based survey.

The workshop is designed as an educational tool so that people understand branding is far more than just an exercise to come up with a logo and tag line – that branding is not a shallow exercise. It also starts the thought process on what the community can hang its hat on that will put the community “on the map.”

After the half-day workshop, DDI performs a driving/walking tour looking at key elements that have the potential to form a brand foundation.

C. Interviews with local stakeholders and groups

The next step is to interview local stakeholder groups to solicit feedback, ideas, and challenges that might arise when developing the brand.

This will include a maximum of eighteen 60-minute meetings with local stakeholders, divided between the county and communities. You choose and set up the location, and the DDI staff will lead the meetings. A typical schedule will be as follows:

8:00 – 9:00

9:30 – 10:30

11:00 – 12:00

1:00 – 2:00

2:30 – 3:30

4:00 – 5:00

Groups might include city/county council officials (elected and staff), economic development, tourism, downtown organizations, chambers of commerce, and perhaps arts, culture, or heritage organizations. We'll work with you to help determine which groups should take part in these meetings.

D. Evening: Open House (typically held from 5:00 to 7:00)

The open house provides another opportunity for local residents to see what the branding process is about and what some of the input has been to date, and to offer their own additional comments and feedback.

DDI will prepare poster displays of the input received through the survey and at the branding workshop, so that residents can easily review the topics and feedback. They have the opportunity to add their comments, and to speak with DDI staff in a relaxed, informal setting.

E. Meeting with the Brand Development Team

DDI will meet with the steering committee to review our findings of the week and the brand directions we will be exploring in greater detail.

3. Research

Because a brand is based on the art of setting yourself apart from everyone else, several research elements are necessary to completing a successful plan:

1. Geographic markets identified: Who are you trying to attract? This identifies the primary and secondary markets, geographically.
2. Demographics: who lives and works in these markets? This looks at age groups, race, home ownership, educational achievement, work status and income levels, etc.
3. Tapestry and lifestyle segments, often referred to as psychographics. This gives us a picture of leisure time activities, shopping and spending habits, driving distances to frequented destinations (for nightlife and events), advertising venues (where you get the most bang for the buck), and other lifestyle facts.
4. Competitive analysis lets us know who you are competing with and to make sure that your brand direction isn't duplicated within the major and secondary markets you hope to attract.

The initial Assessment tells us where you are today, from the eyes of a visitor. The interviews and review of existing/past plans and studies helps us identify where you want to go. The research helps us make sure the direction is feasible. Community brands should be built on feasibility, not just local sentiment. In the end, this process is designed to import new cash into the county by truly making it a

great place to live, have a business, invest, or visit.

4. Plan development

Creation of the plan provides the “how to get there” recommendations. It ties together all the pieces: assessment, interviews, community input, review of current and past efforts, research, and DDI’s own expertise and creative vision, into the package of recommendations.

Upon return to the office, Roger and his staff will develop the brand direction. The week spent in the community helped develop a list of brand ideas and options. Each of these is run through a ten-point Feasibility Test and a recommended brand direction is developed.

Roger will then host a tele-conference with the Brand Development Committee to inform them of the direction we’re headed and to garner feedback. We will discuss the merit of the brand, sub or niche-brands, road-blocks and challenges, and potential community buy-in.

Once we’ve determined the brand direction, we work on creation of the “Brand Promise,” key marketing messages, tag lines, and development of the Action Plan to-do list.

DDI’s award-winning Creative Director will create four brand identity concepts for the county, which will be tested with DDI’s International Testing Team and the Brand Development Committee. Other brand identity concepts will be developed for the communities of Corning, Red Bluff, and Manton.

If you’ve ever tried to do “branding by public consent” you already know it is an impossible task. You will never get everyone to agree to a brand direction, and when it comes to graphics – the look and feel of your brand – it gets even more difficult to reach a consensus. Branding by public consent will always lead to a watered down, “something for everyone” brand that won’t set you apart from anyone else.

The goal of any branding effort is to bring new cash into the community, and to build community-pride within the community. In order to fulfill that goal the DDI team developed an International Testing Team that includes more than 150 individuals, carefully selected, to include:

- Various age groups (20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, and 60s)
- Geographic diversification (urban, rural, southern, northern, eastern, western, U.S. and Canada)
- Demographic diversification that includes race, married’s, unmarried’s, empty nesters, families with kids (young children, teens)
- Professions: lay people, branding experts, community development professionals, retail, retired, graphic design expertise, white and blue-collar workers, stay at home folks.
- Lifestyle segments: Outdoor adventurers, sports enthusiasts, recreationalists,

environmentalists, vegan and meat lovers, various religious affiliations (and non-religious), culinary preferences, etc.

The Testing Team, along with the Brand Development Committee, is sent the identity concepts in an online questionnaire and asked for their opinions. Then we balance the feedback to the demographics and geographic markets we are hoping to attract. For instance, if a downtown wants to become a hip, happening place with lots of nightlife and entertainment, the concepts might not hit a home run with our testing group in their 60s, but may strike a chord with our younger demographic. If so, we know we're on the right track. Once again, the art of branding is built on NOT trying to be all things to all people.

Once the brand identity and key marketing messages have been refined, the conceptual marketing pieces will be created and added to the plan.

The next-steps Action Plan will be developed, and includes recommendations for implementation of the county-wide brand, product development initiatives, and marketing.

Typically the base plan will be laid out as follows:

- The introduction and scope of work, the process that brought us to this point, and the executive summary or vision statement – outlining how the community would be perceived ten years down the road, and what the product would be that supports the brand.
- Graphics that showcase what the brand looks and feels like when implemented.
- Brand Leadership Team information including recommended members of the team and their responsibilities. The Brand Development Committee typically morphs from “brand development” to “brand leadership” or implementation of the brand.
- Recommendations, which will be broken into three categories:
 - Brand implementation
 - Product development
 - Marketing

The recommendations will be presented in order of implementation, and will include:

- A description of the recommendation including rationale
- Who would implement it
- Approximate cost
- When it should be implemented
- Possible funding sources
- Research and interview summaries.
- Photographic case histories, downtown idea book, next steps, funding sources

and other supporting documentation.

Deliverables include six hard copies of the Action Plan, plus the plan in PDF format along with the brand graphics on two CDs. The Brand Leadership Team, or contracting entity, will “own” the selected graphic identities, and will be free to use them as the brand develops. Often stock photography is used in the concepts, and the community will need to swap those out for locally shot professional photographs.

Once the draft plan has been developed, it is sent to the Brand Development Committee for review and feedback.

5. Final presentation

Roger Brooks will visit the community to present a Brand Direction Workshop. This is where we present the brand direction, the look and feel of the brand, and begin the process of “selling” the brand to the community. The workshop typically lasts an hour and a half. One thing that’s important to remember is that you never “roll out” a brand. A brand must be earned. After all, it’s based on perceptions of the community – what people think of you, and that happens through public relations and word of mouth. This is the beginning of that process.

Typically this meeting is held in the evening, and the public is invited, but that is not always necessary. The most successful brands are those that just start slowly and are eased into the market. A new identity shows up on a business card or a wayfinding sign, and product is developed and promoted to showcase the community in a certain light. Therefore, a subtle introduction to the brand can be a good strategy.

Roger will also spend two to three hours with the Brand Leadership Team so they can ask questions and understand their next steps, as they will be charged with implementing the plan.

6. Follow-up: A Lasting Relationship

Once the plan and final presentation have been delivered, the DDI team wants to keep in touch with you to see how you are doing. We want to hear from you as implementation takes place. Although not included within this scope of work, often communities will have Roger, or a member of the DDI team, return every six months or once a year to make sure things are on track and to cut through red tape or local politics that can derail a branding effort. Follow-up visits can be added at a later date, depending on your community’s needs. DDI takes great pride in helping to create outstanding case histories – making something happen – as opposed to simply developing plans.

Cost for developing the Tehama County Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan will be \$125,000.

We thank you for giving us the opportunity to present this proposal, and we look forward to working with you on this project. If you have any questions, please let us know.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Jane Brooks
Destination Development International