Creating a new marketing formula for silicones

Say you’re the global leader in your industry, with a sterling reputation for customer service and custom solutions, when you learn that a subset of your customers desires a lower-cost ordering option for standard products in both small and large volumes. At the same time, other customers still seek value-added custom solutions. How do you adapt to this changing paradigm without compromising the business model that made you a leader in the first place?

At Dow Corning Corporation, the solution was to enhance its current business model by adapting to the market’s changing needs, and relaunch its Dow Corning® and XIAMETER® brands. And to assist with the global repositioning, branding and marketing communications support, Dow Corning turned to Slack and Company.

The groundwork for the changes started in 2002, when Dow Corning—a joint venture equally owned by The Dow Chemical Company and Corning, Incorporated—launched its XIAMETER brand, featuring a web-enabled ordering platform for customers who knew exactly the standard silicones they required and wanted a fast, direct, streamlined way to buy. At this time, Dow Corning Corporation did not overtly link itself to the XIAMETER brand, because they weren’t sure how it would be perceived. But eventually, the XIAMETER brand went on to be a major transformative success featured in Harvard Business Review, Forbes and other national publications.

In 2008, extensive research and analysis of its customers’ needs led Dow Corning to further refine its business model and go-to-market strategy. For those customers who require customized solutions, the Dow Corning brand is positioned to meet their needs. Conversely, the XIAMETER brand is aligned with customers who require only standard silicone products.
2009: Introducing the dual-brand strategy

Our work began with qualitative research among senior management and employees to gauge current brand positioning and perceptions, and reactions to business model changes. This helped inform our message platform work to determine how to position the dual-brand strategy among key distributors and customers. Creative concepts were developed to express the winning platform and were tested among senior management, a representative cross-section of employees, key distributors and customers.

The creative concept testing validated our umbrella idea of “transformation” used to describe the benefits of the dual-brand strategy. A graphic device called the transformation bar, using the primary colors of teal (Dow Corning brand) and orange (XIAMETER brand), was developed to communicate the idea of how Dow Corning Corporation was once again innovating the category by helping to transform customers’ complex business problems into solutions that were most relevant to them. The two primary colors became a visual device to clearly introduce the dual-brand strategy.

To provide the foundation for all the creative work that followed, we overhauled the existing Dow Corning and XIAMETER brands’ visual identity standards to reflect the transformation bar and other elements pertaining to the new brand strategy.

Examples of transformation bars used for English-, French-, Chinese- and German-speaking countries

Visual identity materials
The fully integrated global marketing and communications campaign that led from this upfront work first engaged the company’s own employees, then its channel partners, and finally, its current and prospective customer bases. For each audience, the focus was intended to:

- Build employee knowledge and shape attitudes
- Communicate to, through and for channel partners
- Retain, protect and defend customer share
- Educate and inform prospective customers

To start building employee knowledge and buy-in, we created educational materials and videos to help them understand the reasons for the brand enhancements, and what the employees needed to do to deliver on the brands’ promises.
That's why we're changing our business. By enhancing two of our main brands to "As one of the world's leading silicone providers, we've spent the last 65 years getting understand your business. We're always working to problems that sets us apart. more than experience, more than the size of our company, it's our passion for solving your up close and personal with our customers. Why? Because more than innovation, more silicon-based solutions like no one process, we can deliver custom, silicon-based materials and solutions to your biggest challenges. With our Dow Corning brand, keep counting on us for smart brand, you get all the benefits of: • Dow Corning quality, global supply and proven reliability • Volume and product mix options • More options to meet your customers' needs • More than 65 years as a global leader in silicone solutions • A globally recognized and trusted brand • The expertise of our chemists, engineers and business people • A spirit of innovation and passion • Marketing tools that enable you to be more competitive • The right balance of innovation and customer experience • A genuinely customer-focused culture • A customer-centric strategy • A focus on solving customer problems that set us apart. It's our relentless pursuit of innovation and our passion for solving customer problems that sets us apart. It's our relentless pursuit of innovation and our passion for solving your challenges and, in turn, to help you be even more competitive. Now we're offering you two enhanced brands to better meet customers' changing needs. To learn more, visit xiameter.com
On the online front, the company got the message across with a full range of tactics including advertising, home page banners, and search engine marketing (SEM), all designed to drive users to a dedicated dual-brand microsite (dowcorning.com/transform). This site describes the newly enhanced business model and how it benefits their business operations.
After the initial dual-brand launch materials were created and seeded, we went to work helping each brand communicate to its key audiences. Dow Corning commercial brand ads were developed, focusing on its leadership in the solar arena. The tone and visuals of these ads reflect the Dow Corning brand’s relentless pursuit of innovation and solving complex business challenges. On the XIAMETER® side, ads were also developed to reinforce the business model enhancements. The tone and visuals, quite the opposite of the Dow Corning brand, reflect the XIAMETER brand’s relentless pursuit of efficiency and how simple, quick and easy it is to access the brand.
As Dow Corning serves a global audience, the media plan for the re-launch program needed to connect with local decision-makers. To this end, Slack and Company:

- Grouped markets based on Dow Corning corporate objectives
- Identified showcase segments within key markets
- Analyzed global and pan-regional horizontal media delivery across markets and within showcase segments
- Identified additional vertical and in-country media required to ensure meaningful presence in each market’s segments
- Incorporated recommended media mix for enterprise as well as Dow Corning and XIAMETER brands

In all, the initial implementation phase of the program was translated, transcreated and placed in more than six countries spanning pan-Asian, European and global markets.

Launch spread ads in German and Korean

YouTube page

Twitter page
2010: Extending the effort
In the second year of the brand relaunch, we continued to communicate to
our target markets the reasons and benefits of the new dual-brand offerings.

A new series of dual-brand ads, customized for key global markets,
was created to clarify the benefits of being able to choose between the
Dow Corning brand’s value-added innovation and the XIAMETER brand’s
outstanding efficiencies. These ads and their accompanying online units
lead users to a revamped dual-brand microsite, which reflected the new
ads’ messaging and provides links to a range of relevant case studies.
www.dowcorning.com/transform
Additionally, during the second year of the relaunch, we worked with select Dow Corning Corporation business units to conduct their own integrated programs designed to promote their innovative, customized solutions to their intended audiences.

For the business unit servicing the construction-related markets, our integrated efforts included series of multiple print ads in global markets, with accompanying online units and landing pages. Print was used mainly in emerging markets, where online is not yet well-established, and online received more weight in established markets where Internet use for business is more common.

The effort also included an ongoing series of e-newsletters designed to capture leads by offering valuable information to help prospects do their jobs more effectively.
CASE STUDY: How teamwork can add more value to protective treatments and solutions

For an advantage in your markets, consider bringing our silicone chemistry expertise to your mix. We work closely with OEMs and post-treatment formulators worldwide to improve the performance of building materials and protective treatments. And we'll bring our more than 65 years of innovation—and global team of scientists and engineers—to work on your toughest challenge. Contact us today to learn how we can help you achieve these goals:

• Improve material strength, durability, and weatherability
• Extend material surface life
• Preserve building aesthetics & versatility
• Reduce maintenance & cost
• Create sustainable, more energy efficient structures

About LEED credits for our silicone sealants
Construction Calculators
Fascinating Silicone for Construction
Burj Dubai Takes Silicone Sealants to New Heights
Structural Silicone Specified on Award-winning Sustainable Structure case study
Dow Corning Architect Specifications for Construction Projects and Curtain Walls
Dow Corning's Quality Bond site

Other helpful links

Download the free article, “Contributions of Silicone Technology to Sustainable Architecture”

See how silicone technology can add comfort and sustainability to building design.
Silicone Structural Glazing: The Art of the Possible

CLICK to view the online presentation

Through these windows, you can see the future.
Achieve greater energy efficiency and improve process productivity.
Innovative silicone-based solutions for building components.

For more sustainable, durable and beautiful buildings, draw on our know-how. We’ll put our 65 years of experience to work to help your creations endure the elements for years to come at a reduced total life-cycle cost.
For the Wind Energy business unit, we created collateral materials and advertising designed to position the Dow Corning brand as a consultative partner to the world’s wind turbine manufacturers and operators. And, to add to the work we started with the Solar business unit in 2009, we created additional print ads designed to reinforce and extend the messaging from the first flight of ads.
Additionally, to support Dow Corning Corporation’s ongoing Fascinating Silicone™ “educate the category” campaign, we created a series of case study–themed print ads, supported by online units, designed to raise awareness of silicone’s world-changing potential. Readers are prompted to visit the fascinatingsilicone.com website for more stories and further details about the uses and advantages of silicones.

Overall, the two-year global campaign included a variety of different vehicles, each designed to:

• Instill a sense of corporate pride, engage employees and convert non-believers into brand champions through consistent open, candid and genuine communications

• Enhance credibility and secure third-party endorsements

• Clearly communicate the Dow Corning Corporation strategy and the benefits of the new business model

• Decrease fear, uncertainty and doubt among all audience groups

• Reinforce the differentiating benefits of working with a leader like the Dow Corning Corporation

• Distinguish the Dow Corning and XIAMETER brands from their competitors with provocative and unique creative

How can Antarctica’s scientists stay just as comfortable?

If you weren’t born in the Antarctic, you’ll need much more than a thick coat. And that’s why scientists studying climate change at the Princess Elisabeth Antarctic Station count on the protection of an innovative insulated glass window system made with silicone technologies from Dow Corning.

So even when the icy winds take temperatures to as low as -50°C, they can always stay as cozy and warm as the natives.

Learn more ways silicones enhance lives around the world.

Visit fascinatingsilicone.com

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We help you invent the future is a trademark of Dow Corning Corporation.

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What helps power a brighter future?

Tomorrow’s looking brighter for children in the Indian village of Karde. Because in their new daycare center and school powered by a sustainable solar energy system, they now have the light and cooling they need to thrive. And thanks to uniquely durable silicone materials developed by Dow Corning, this solar power system will keep performing well, even with exposure to extreme conditions. For the children of Karde, that means a better chance to fulfill their dreams—now and for generations to come.

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Attracting the best and brightest

As Dow Corning Corporation ramped up promotion for its two main brands in 2009-10, it also saw a need to improve its employee recruitment website. We took on a complete revamp of its messaging, usability and design, resulting in a site that allows visitors to quickly get the information they seek, while positioning the company as a place where talented people can enjoy flexible career paths as they do exciting work on the leading edge of technology.

To bring this message to the forefront, we created a bold front-end design featuring the people and projects that exemplify the company’s spirit of innovation. And to help potential employees size up their opportunities—and learn more about the company’s unique culture—we created a series of “day in the life” videos featuring a diverse range of individuals who have benefited personally and professionally from their experiences at Dow Corning.