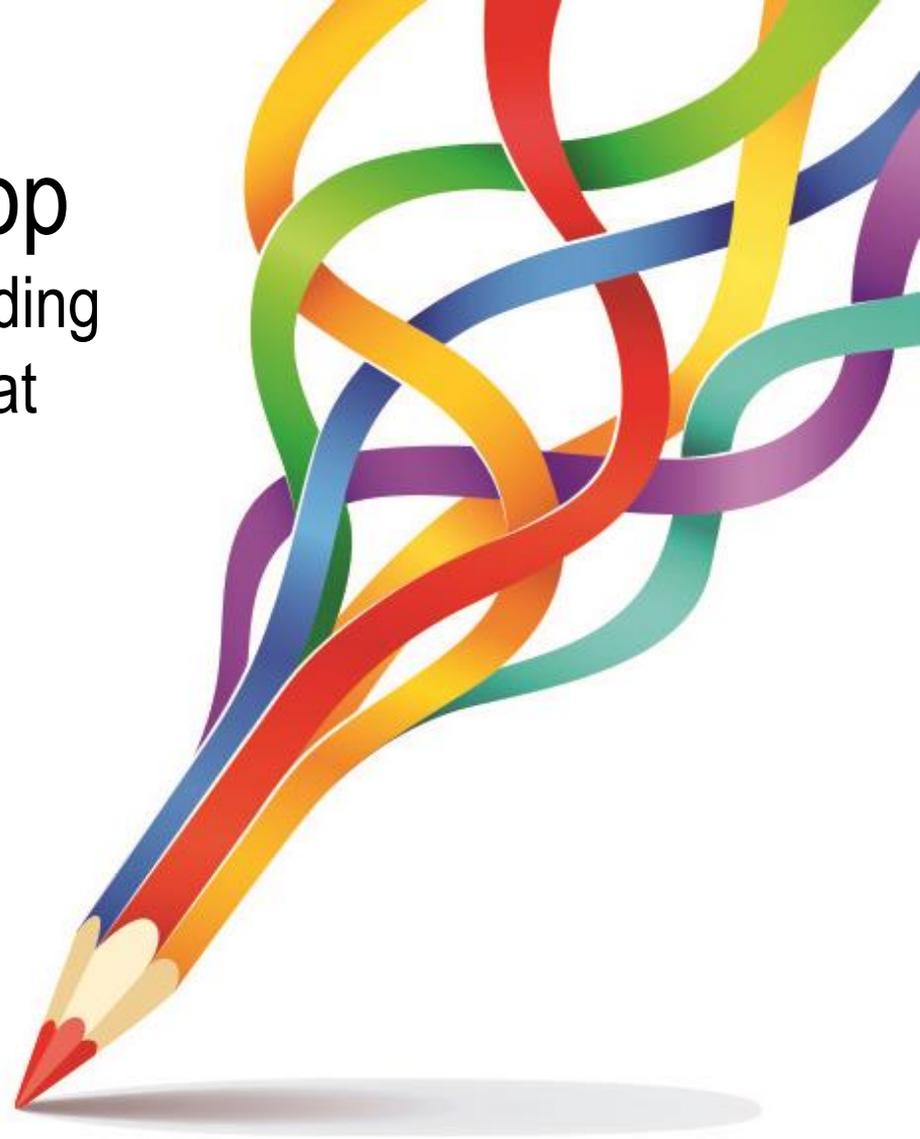


# Brand Focus Workshop

A rather useful way to help branding and design professionals do what they do a little better.

Frank Topper, President  
Topper Facilitation, Inc.



**It took longer than expected to get agreement on the brand.**

---



# When does a Brand Focus Workshop help?

---



A facilitated workshop works well in the following scenarios:

- It is anticipated that a **client group does not have internal consensus** on what their brand/business stands for
- **Timing is critical** and there is need to quickly arrive at what all significant stakeholders honestly think and want, developing or quickly validating a brand or line extension
- There is disagreement or **contention on the agency side** to strategic brand development of a client product or business
- **Clients want to interact** with agency in brainstorming and building solutions to business/branding issues, rather than having solutions presented to them
- It is a **new venture, new market** with very little competitive and end user information to analyze brand potential
- As **an additional tool** to develop an effective creative brief and design direction, injecting of passion, inspiration, unique ideas
- When **everybody refuses to agree with everyone else**: frustrating, painful and costly

# What it is and how it works with your methodologies.

---



- A Brand Focus Workshop utilizes expert, neutral facilitation to create a highly interactive, democratic and collaborative idea generating and prioritizing approach. Techniques such as drawing, electronic polling, visioning and rapid idea prototyping are used to bring out the essence of a brand.
- Planning discussions include incorporating agency unique or proprietary branding methods. E.g., Brand Analytics, White Room, Differentiation Matrix, Personality Developer

# What are the benefits?

---



- Encourages and manages **active participation by all attendees**
- Builds on ideas generated from others
- Keeps the discussions active and interesting
- Able to include 8-24 key constituents (leaders, implementers, experts)
- **Promotes high level of buy-in from participants**
- Rapid generation of positioning schemes for market testing, refinement and selection
- Permits in-depth client understanding and relationship
- **Self-documenting**: ideas and scenarios captured and saved as reference materials
- The agency and their clients can focus on their meeting **without the tedious distraction** of note-taking and conflict management
- It is cost-effective and **avoids brand regret**

**Get me out of this meeting. Please.**

---



# What is the process?

---



The Agency guides facilitator during workshop planning and design, and addresses content issues that may arise during workshop. Then facilitator produces a report.

## Prepare

Pre-workshop planning, design, logistics and advance survey

## Workshop

Facilitated agenda to generate key brand attributes and rating, validate target markets, position the brand against competitors, validate key brand attributes, and develop positioning scenarios -- kickoff, discovery, definition

## Reporting

Comprehensive written report of entire workshop with clear next steps in 24 hours

# We have consensus!

---



# What are the deliverables to agency and client?



- Broad exploration of potential branding/re-branding positioning strategies with group consensus on 2-3 positioning platforms that will drive marketing/design – distribution, promotion, pricing, advertising, and public relations
- Qualitative competitive analysis/industry review
- Brand attribute list with group consensus on key attributes for new brand
- Defined “best” company/brand positioning, key features, benefits and core value
- Materials to write positioning/personality statements and design objectives for next phase in brand development
- Wholehearted listening and **enthusiastic consensus agreement** in a short time without arguing

# How does having a neutral facilitator payoff?



- Neutrality means assured respect and safety: *everyone is heard*
- Everyone sees what is being captured: *notes adjusted real-time*
- Multiple ways and opportunities for people to get their views in: *speaking, writing, drawing, anonymous polling*
- Entire workshop documented as-we-speak: *next day report*
- Building 2-3 positioning scenarios with key players means no surprises later: *when your agency presents options the client has already bought in*

# My qualifications as a facilitator

---



For over 20 years I have helped a wide range of corporations, non-profits and universities solve business issues efficiently and cost effectively. Whether for giants like Google, Stanford University, and Red Cross, or for small branding, design and architectural firms.

I offer customized facilitation services addressing change management issues, conflict resolution, new brand development or re-branding/repositioning of products, services and companies.

# Avoid brand regret. Use a Brand Focus Workshop.

---



# Thank you

---





---

## Case Studies

# International Linear Collider

---



The International Linear Collider (ILC), a **multi-billion dollar global collaboration of 40 scientists, needed to agree** on a consistent, credible, and compelling messaging and outreach strategy for their high-visibility project. Ask any ILC scientist about the project and you'd get different answers:

- some will talk about its high discovery potential in basic science
- others will focus on it as a “high tech” research and development center networked world-wide
- some consider the ILC an educational center for the next generation of world scientists
- others feel the project addresses humanity’s shared curiosity about the nature of the world by answering important questions about the universe.

*Each scientist felt their answer was the right one, but no answer were the same.*

# International Linear Collider (continued)



Utilizing rapid polling and real-time results, participants in a 1-day workshop agreed on key ILC audiences and what their needs would be

- government officials needed a clear, memorable explanation for why there should be an ILC which **they could communicate to their constituents**
- funding agencies needed to believe the science is worth the investment, costs are understood and **there would be synergy with key scientific initiatives** such as the Large Hadron Collider (LHC)
- **press needed to understand the unprecedented global nature of the project**
- industry and business partners needed to understand the project well enough to **define potential opportunities.**

**It was unanimous** that successful communications would be government officials and science ministers requesting presentations for their constituents, using the ILC as an example of scientific cooperation solving world problems. Positive press such as a New York Times article would indicate communications efforts are paying off.

Brand and communication professionals took workshop results, crafted desired messages to different constituents, and the scientists began speaking and writing from a common positioning platform.

# Enterprise IG #1

---



Enterprise IG (EIG), an international branding company wanted a **fast, inexpensive process to redefine or develop the essence of a brand** that included **agreement from all stakeholders** including client management and branding, marketing, public relations, naming, and advertising consultants. Topper Facilitation was contracted to work with EIG to help them develop this process.

The result was a “Brand Focus Workshop:” one or two day workshops created to develop **full buy-in and consensus with all stakeholders in record time and at reasonable cost.**

## Enterprise IG #2

---



Enterprise IG (EIG) utilized Brand Focus Workshops with a dozen clients. One client, Del Monte, asked EIG to analyze and reposition their entire portfolio of brands utilizing EIG's proprietary, quantitative "Brand Analytics" process.

Prior to the quantitative research phase, however, a Brand Focus Workshop was used to **fast track positioning attributes** for one of their leading products: "Single Serve Fruit Cups", which was to be re-launched prior to the other products in the portfolio. Not only did the brand Focus Workshop help to identify the key brand attributes for that product, the findings were later verified and supported by Brand Analytics.

# DispenseSource



---

DispenseSource wanted a broad exploration of potential re-branding strategies for their manufacturing control products. There were multiple and conflicting viewpoints on key attributes. They had **a lot of partners and alliances** – industrial consulting firms, distributors, hardware system suppliers, manufacturer decision-makers (Vice Presidents), end-users on the manufacturing floor, and multiple levels of internal staff. **How to get all these people to agree?**

The BFW was structured to collect expert opinions and needs, review competitive offerings, rapidly prioritize and determine the most important brand attributes with full consensus, then test the current brand name against those brand attributes and messaging themes to ensure it said what they wanted it to say. Everyone was heard and **best ideas were selected with complete ownership of stakeholders**. All in a day's work with a handful of advance questions

# Creditel



A new hardware/software provider of point-of-sales credit card recording devices was struggling with brand considerations. **Should they brand the company or brand their one product**, and for either of them, **what would the brand be**? Should company and product share the same name? How would they position the new company and product against perceived competitors?

This client wanted to actively engage and shape the branding discussion. They **wanted real-time input from sales people and from their wireless supplier**, Nextel, to get ideas and test the workshop team's assumptions. Based on input from the sales force and Nextel in a 1-day workshop, Creditel's team developed the **unique selling proposition for company and product**, and crafted highlights of customer-facing materials (sales presentation kit, quick reference sheet, direct mail sheet) with **buy-in from sales people**.

# Steinberg Architects

---



Steinberg Architects gets design attribute input from all stakeholders for building and space design – **from senior management and building end-users to local communities** in large outreach sessions.

Steinberg’s approach to gathering constituent input uses Topper Facilitation and our electronic polling system to ensure **everyone’s ideas are publically recorded and rated**. This includes perspectives **from small groups to 300 people** in two hour, half day, and full day sessions.

Topper Facilitation has run dozens of these sessions ensuring all voices heard with issues, goals and design attributes prioritized with **understanding and solid consensus buy-in to ideas**. Every client of the architect has been relieved and amazed to have successful sessions with tangible and productive stakeholder experiences.

# Silicon Valley Red Cross

---



The Palo Alto Red Cross was merging with the Silicon Valley Red Cross Chapter for financial and productivity reasons. **Two different cultures** of paid and unpaid volunteers and board members had to craft an integrated, sustainable culture and brand going forward.

The Brand Focus Workshop **created an agreed-to strategy** to achieve financial stability while maximizing organizational impact, capacity and capability. This include five measurable, shared, and realistic initiatives including draft action plans.

The members actively listened, discussed, and then selected their communications and behavioral strategy to achieve their now shared goals. **No one was left behind.**

*End of Presentation*

[franktopper@sbcglobal.net](mailto:franktopper@sbcglobal.net)