Multi Marketing: Culture and Brand Communication Audit

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COM 533: Organizational Culture, Identity and Brand

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August 17, 2023

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Executive Summary

This is a brand audit for Multi Marketing, a full-service, national, content marketing agency, headquartered near Raleigh, North Carolina, specializing in franchise marketing. The purpose of this audit is to assess how well the internal organizational culture aligns with the brand. To conduct this audit, I first spoke with the Chief Content Officer to receive permission to conduct the audit, redacting the name of the company for anonymity. The CCO gave me an immediate affirmative response and encouraged me to share this report with the leadership team upon completion. The Chief Operating Officer provided me with information about Multi Marketing on three separate occasions, and made the company survey accessible to me. I separately interviewed two staff members from contrasting departments one virtually and one via email, who agreed to be interviewed and quoted if I protected their anonymity. For purposes of this report, they will be referred to as Employee A and Employee B. I was invited to utilize the results of a comprehensive company-wide survey from the fourth quarter of 2022 and was able to be part of several client interactions to provide a first-hand account of how the organization is perceived by end-users and those outside the company. I also analyzed internal and external artifacts from the organization and the analysis includes my personal experiences through my interaction with the brand as a two-year employee.

The personal interview questions were created by me from a combination of resources, but were based upon wanting to obtain information regarding organizational culture, brand identity as well as consistency, effectiveness and inclusiveness of Multi Marketing's communication. I created my own definition of organizational culture (Watkins, 2014) and consistency, (Dozall, 2012) effectiveness (Dozall, 2012) and inclusiveness (Diggs-Brown, 2013). I referenced the theories of Communication and Organizational Culture, the Organizational Identity Theory, the Organizational Culture theory, Situational crisis theory and sense-making theory and applied it to Multi Marketing to distinguish its effectiveness. Additionally, the survey used was conducted using Survey Monkey and statistical analysis was provided by that resource.

The overall consensus is that Multi Marketing has a positive culture based on staff interviews, and survey results. It was expressed that Multi is doing a good job navigating growth after acquiring two companies in 2021, merging into Multi Marketing, although it was revealed during interviews that the new, merged company may be experiencing growing pains after doubling in size within two years. Based on interviews and surveys, overall, the staff enjoys the remote working environment although some local employees can choose a hybrid work style, going into the office when they choose. Multi marketing equips all employees with computers and any additional equipment they may need to do their jobs remotely. Employees feel accepted, respected and valued for their work and as people. A consistency found in the research is that employees enjoy their colleagues and feel that although the company has grown, there is a "family feel".

Employees are very clear about the mission, values and purpose of the company and their purpose in the organization. There was an overwhelming response to this in the survey. The mission is reviewed at each training, presentation and company town hall meeting, and the company's tagline is "One Team, One Mission". Overall, the staff feels that they have a voice, with the caveat that they express themselves through the proper channels, for example, to a direct supervisor. Based on recent feedback following the first ever company-wide conference held in Raleigh, North Carolina, in June, 2023, the executive leadership team responded to concerns from staff regarding having a better understanding of the company's financials, clients and

decision making. Employees stated that they wanted improved transparency and within weeks, the executive leadership responded.

Staff feels appreciated through various ways like a company "shout out" page, with fellow colleagues giving accolades for various reasons. There's also an employee spotlight page which allows members to get to know one another despite the challenge of working remotely. Multi Marketing also recognizes each employee's birthday with a gift card and electronic cards that colleagues sign. There are also fun tangible surprises given to show employees that they are appreciated throughout the year like gift cards to purchase pizza on national pizza day. Supervisors also personally write their team a card during the holiday season, thanking them for their contribution to the organization.

Another event that employees enjoyed was the previously mentioned Multi Marketing conference. This served as an information, education and social event. The overall consensus was that it was very well-received and it was commented by one interviewee that "it was really a class act" (Employee A interview, August, 2023). Employees also feel very valued thanks to a new training system that allows them to understand more about the company and upskill their talents. Both interviewees mentioned how much they appreciated the company's policy of unlimited paid time off (PTO), and the substantial benefit package including a 401(K) match. These issues also scored remarkably high in the survey results.

Multi Marketing is set up through an organizational chart with executive leadership on the top with departments including administrative, sales and creative, account management, PR and content, operations, and digital, web services and insights. The company pays close attention to doing philanthropic work and providing donations to local charities.

The weaknesses I discovered included inconsistencies with external messaging. At the Multi Marketing conference, the tagline "One Team, One Mission" was used, although on social media platforms there was a tagline using a paper airplane saying that Multi Marketing is "the marketing agency that makes your business fly". It is a clever tagline but inconsistent with the baseball themed, "One team, one mission".

Based on survey results, there was less agreement with the culture of Multi Marketing aligning with the core values of being accountable, keeping promises, refusing to play politics or cause drama. There was an even lower number of employees who felt that the culture aligned with the mission core value of exceeding personal and professional goals and becoming subject matter experts and finding joy in their work. Another low scoring result from the survey included Multi Marketing including appropriate team members in decisions when they will be the ones affected. There was a parallel in comments by both interviewees who felt they were powerless in charting the course of where their positions will go and felt they had qualifications and skill sets that were not being used. The survey indicated that fewer employees were pleased with the company's teamwork and sharing of information. There was also inconsistency regarding opportunity for future career growth. In both the interviews conducted and the survey there was indication about that being improved.

Internally, participating in a merger to strengthen the brand in 2021 in the midst of a global pandemic was a bold move. The organization went from roughly 30 employees to approximately 100. There were challenges going from a smaller boutique marketing agency to a large company with increased number of employees, departments, clients and revenue, with the majority of employees scattered across the country working remote. Although the organization has placed talented people in jobs to make the transition seamless, the changes have come fast and furious. Both employees interviewed feel that although the changes were rolled out in a

comprehensive manner, there was a great deal of "new" in a short period of time, including new systems like Microsoft Teams, Teamwork for daily assignments and new operations and that was challenging to remain consistent at their jobs while learning new systems.

Regarding organizational theories, Multi Marketing mirrors Corporate Social Responsibility, as they work hard to participate in philanthropic activities by making donations to local charities, donating time and resources and encouraging employees to volunteer with local charities in their communities. The organization sponsors a committee made up of employees who volunteer to direct further efforts to philanthropy (Stobierski, 2021).

Communication and Organizational Cultures theory is evident as Multi Marketing works to provide a deeper understanding of the organization for members through company-wide town hall meetings, trainings, conferences and team-building. There are definitely jokes, and stories that circulate among team members that outsiders would not understand like baseball references and referring to technology applications in a unique manner only known internally like referring to the Artificial Intelligence ChatGPT as "Chad." (O'Donnell-Trujillo and Pacanowsky, 1982).

With regard to the Organizational Identity Theory, in true fashion, the identity of the company changed through a merger of three companies that became one to provide a wider array of services to clients and compete on a grander scale in the marketplace. This change meant that the staff had to reacclimate to better connect with the company's new image and culture. (Scott 2009).

The Organizational Culture theory is perhaps the strongest with regard to Multi Marketing. The leadership staff and social committee go above and beyond to provide recognition to employees to help make them feel valued and embraced as part of the team. There are special efforts made to create avenues for feedback, giving employees a voice that can be heard. The leadership has consciously worked hard to create a positive work environment (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009).

The business of marketing is a fast-paced environment with many moving parts designed to work in harmony to garner attention, promotion and publicity for clients' brands. But like most businesses, Multi Marketing finds itself exemplified in the Situational Crisis Theory. Being in the public relations field Multi is often faced with clients in a public relations crisis or even Multi faces crises when clients are upset and rapid problem-solving must be done (Coombs, 2022).

In the Sense-Making Theory, organizations try to gain a deeper understanding about human behavior through experiences and how that can be incorporated into company culture. Multi Marketing relies on feedback from staff to best understand how people best fit into a team and which personalities are best suited to work together (Kramer, 2016).

Here are various opportunities that would contribute to Multi Marketing's already strong culture while addressing employee concerns.

Internal ideas to encourage professional growth:

- Continue the effective work of the social committee showing appreciation of employees.
- Provide ways to inspire employees to perform at the best levels. This is most effective on a more interpersonal level. Encouraging leaders and supervisors to provide affirmation of good work. Public accolades can often be perceived as competitive or only recognizing those *seen* by leadership.
- Continue building the in-house training program, adding new ways for employees to upskill.
- Continue twice a year reviews with managers to discover career goals.

Internal ideas to connect employees:

- Encourage fun peer trainings that can be done via online channels. Have employees teach each other fun hobbies like cooking or wine tasting.
- Provide options for video hangouts and other real-time communication channels. This is a simple avenue allowing employees to connect with each other and collaborate on projects.
- Connect colleagues who share hobbies or common interests through clubs.
- Provide break-out sessions during monthly town hall meetings allowing employees to discuss and ask questions about the latest company information.
- Partner someone new to a task or project with an experienced co-worker to create and build a mentorship program.
- Find ways to invite more feedback for employees to be heard in avenues that skip hierarchy such as virtual lunch with leadership.
- Sponsor virtual happy hours with leadership; providing a casual environment to engage.
- Host virtual block parties with group movies.
- Host trivia nights or game nights.

External Ideas to strengthen brand identity:

- Clarify tagline (One Team One Mission)
- Work on ways to increase social media engagement beginning with showing more employees in real life work situations and volunteering for philanthropic activities.
- To increase engagement on social media platforms, incentivize all employees to like and share posts using dedicated hashtags for a chance to win a gift card.
- Provide client testimonials on social media platforms.
- Build space on the website that shows all team members. Currently only the executive leadership team is shown.
- Put photos on the website in the "about us" drop down that truly exemplify the mission statement. (i.e., employees having fun)

Overall Multi Marketing's organizational culture and brand identity are well aligned. Staff members are clear about the mission, values and purpose of the company and their purpose as a member of the team. Employees are supportive of each other and there is a culture of kindness that exists making it a positive and productive work environment. There is always room for improvement, but Multi Marketing has done a superior job making a recent merger successful and combining various work cultures into one. Leadership has recognized that culture is an on-going process that needs to grow and adapt and is positioned to do just that. Externally, clients and the general public can clearly understand through various communication channels the mission and purpose of the organization and that Multi Marketing delivers on its brand promise. External communication is consistent and effective. The recommendations included in this audit are designed to enhance the already strong brand identity to grow, thrive and continue to be successful.

Introduction

Multi Marketing is a full-service, national, content marketing agency, with a specialization in franchise marketing, headquartered near Raleigh, North Carolina. They have been in business for more than 20 years. They provide a myriad of services to clients by helping these other organizations improve their brand identities through marketing strategy and branding, public relations, social media and digital marketing, video marketing, creative services and marketing analytics. In the national scope of competitors, there are about 15 top national marketing agencies that provide similar strategic franchise brand development services (Cheatham, 2022).

The organization is set up with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and founder of the company, the president, the Chief Content Officer (CCO), the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Chief Relationship Officer (CRO), Senior Vice President of Digital Services and the Chief Operating Officer (COO). The various departments include administrative, sales and creative, account management, PR and content, operations, and digital, web services and insights. Each department has a senior leader with a clear hierarchical system in place for supervising accountability. The company has a Board of Directors and stakeholders from a private equity firm.

At Multi Marketing, their mission is five-fold beginning with: “Do the right thing—be accountable, keeping promises, refusing to play politics or cause drama.” Secondly, “generate results, not just reports-generate tangible results that grow our clients’ businesses.” The third point is “make a human connection- be humble, be kind, be curious, be a positive influence on co-workers and clients.” The fourth point is, “get better every day, exceed personal and professional goals, become real subject matter experts.” And the final part of the mission is “have some fun along the way- we don’t take ourselves too seriously-and know how to find joy in our work.” The vision is “to become the most loved and most profitable franchise marketing agency in the country.” Their purpose is, “the relentless pursuit of growing successful people and successful brands.”

The organization consists of approximately 100 employees who are a result of three companies merging in 2021 with the purpose of providing greater client services. Employees are mostly remote, working from areas like Richmond, Detroit, Boston, Tampa, Nashville, Fort Lauderdale, Charlotte and Los Angeles. Employees in the Raleigh, North Carolina metro area are given the option to work remote, hybrid or in-office upon their choosing.

For purposes of this audit, I was in communication with the Chief Content Officer, the Chief Operating Officer and two remote employees who work in different departments. As a public relations content specialist with the company for two years, I also briefly provide my perspective as part of the brand.

Multi Marketing is people-centric both internally and externally. Multi is dependent on obtaining and retaining clients to stay operational and grow. Clients are obtained by pursuing them via external communications channels like the website, trade shows and contacts. Because Multi Marketing has a respected name, specializing in franchise marketing, they have positive brand recognition in the industry and often client leads in the pipeline are the result of companies pursuing Multi Marketing for assistance. Once a client is obtained, they are presented with a choice of tiers of offerings dependent on their goals and needs as a brand. Multi Marketing on-boards clients, communicating the anticipated results of the work that will be completed for them. The client is then assigned to an account team that tracks results based on services provided which may include the digital, video, web, public relations and content teams. For

example, a client may choose to have a new website designed, blogs written for that site taking advantage of search engine optimization for both consumer and franchise development, social media posts with content and graphics, ghost writing, and public relations campaigns to publicize the brand to consumers, just to name a few menu options. The client may choose to have check-ins to assess progress. This can be in the form of weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or as-needed meetings to determine if changes are needed and when applicable will show analytic performance results.

The goal of this audit is to assess how well organizational culture and brand are aligned at Multi Marketing. This will be achieved by analyzing artifacts, conducting interviews and evaluating any inconsistencies between the internal and external communication messaging. I will provide recommendations on how Multi Marketing can enhance their current plan with the goal of providing concepts that will strengthen brand identity and build on the organizations' culture with the purpose of improving overall communication.

Methodology

I sampled various touchpoints of the brand to gain a better understanding of its brand identity and cultural alignment for purposes of this audit. First, I personally observed several remote client interaction meetings to identify the behavior and satisfaction of customers of Multi Marketing, this provided great external perspective of the brand. I also analyzed client testimonials available on the company website to determine the effectiveness of deliverability on brand promise. The heterogenous survey are interviews with those connected in some way to Multi Marketing like stakeholders and clients (Daymon & Holloway, 2010).

To gain a better perspective about internal communications, I emailed the Chief Content Officer (CCO) to receive permission to conduct the audit. The CCO responded within hours of my email with a brief and friendly phone call, giving not only permission to pursue the audit but was encouraging of my endeavors and mentioned interest in seeing the final audit upon completion. I assured the CCO that the name of the company would be redacted for privacy and that I would only utilize resources that are made privy to me on a professional level. In addition, I contacted the Chief Operating Officer by messaging through the company's internal communications system, Microsoft Teams. We followed up with a brief on-camera Microsoft Teams chat about information I needed for the audit and where I can locate certain artifacts for analysis. For the next three weeks, the COO and I connected briefly to exchange information. The COO provided invaluable insight about the organization. The COO and I discussed the survey that I wanted to conduct, which would request employees to answer a series of questions to better assess the organizational culture. I expressed that the survey would be very similar to the one given a few months ago sponsored by the company using Survey Monkey. The COO allowed me to streamline my analysis by utilizing the results of that survey. I was privy to the answers for 49 questions regarding the operations and culture of Multi Marketing, which proved valuable for this audit.

In addition, I interviewed two employees from the company who are not part of the executive leadership team. One works in digital, the other in content. I felt that these were vital interviews that would provide perspective of employees who were not in a leadership or decision-making role. Both have been with the organization for more than a year with the digital member being part of the merger from another company. I believed this could provide greater insight about the possible change in culture with the change in brand identity. I reached out via Microsoft Teams to invite these employees to chat with me. I assured both team members that their identities would be kept anonymous. I believe this helped considerably with me obtaining very honest and transparent answers with no concerns on their part for retribution if their answers were deemed in any way negative. Within two days after first reaching out, I was able to have on-camera virtual conversations with each team member, describing my needs and explaining the purpose of the interviews. I immediately set up an interview with the content employee for the next day and had a 30-minute recorded interview asking specific questions that I had created based on organizational culture, consistency, inclusiveness and effectiveness regarding company culture and brand alignment with research done looking at online questions (Survey Monkey). Because I wanted more than yes/no or measurable responses that I would have access to from the company-wide survey, I chose to use open-ended questions and gave each respondent ample time to formulate answers. They were not given the questions prior to the interview. Scheduling conflicts prevented me from conducting a second interview in-person. Instead, I sent the questions via email to the digital employee who promptly responded with detailed answers.

Based on qualitative sampling information, I have a small sample size after conducting three interviews; one with a member of the executive leadership team and two others with employees each from different departments. Where to sample or the site of the study is via Microsoft Teams calls and email, what to sample is how these employees feel about the company at the present time. When answering whom or what to sample, it is advantageous to utilize a cluster of materials to obtain the best possible snapshot of the brand at this time. I analyzed events, activities and processes like communication interaction between managers and staff. The homogeneous survey will be people from the same subculture—the marketing firm (Daymon & Holloway, 2010).

Finally, I utilized many internal artifacts that I has access to including an online information site for employees to receive the latest information and activities regarding the company—called "Lounge." I also examined a shared company "shout-out" page on Microsoft Teams, the company website, internal email, several of Multi Marketing's social media platforms including Facebook and LinkedIn, the organizational chart, the mission and vision and purpose statements, a town hall meeting, internal training, and diversity statements released by the company. By utilizing these artifacts in combination with the Survey Monkey survey and interviews, I can assess any common beliefs or themes that may provide better insight analyzing the organizational culture and brand identity determining if improvements need to be made or if communication is effective.

Audit Diary

I initially contacted the Chief Content Officer of Multi Marketing on Tuesday, July 18, 2023, to confirm that it was acceptable that I conduct a brand audit for purposes of a class project and I would change the name of the company for the report and that it would only be seen by my professor both in written report form and through a final voice thread project. The CCO agreed and was happy to provide any information I wanted. The CCO added the desire to see the final audit when completed.

I talked with the Chief Operating Officer of Multi Marketing on Thursday, July 20, 2023. I expressed that I was working on an audit of the company and asked if I could obtain information about the company. I expressed that the information shared would only be seen by my professor and I would gladly share my results with the company for further review. The COO graciously agreed with the stipulation that I change the name of the company for the purposes of this project. The COO and I subsequently met on a total of three occasions both on Microsoft Teams live and twice through detailed written conversations on Microsoft Teams. Those interactions occurred from July 24, 2023 through August 11, 2023. The COO provided background information about Multi Marketing, including how they utilize feedback from employees, the organizational chart, how decisions are made, employee recognition, PTO, benefits and the extensive training and development programs available to employees. The COO provided detailed information about the merger of three companies to create what is now Multi Marketing. I asked if I could survey employees about how they felt about the company culture at Multi Marketing and that my survey would be similar to one recently conducted by the company. The COO agreed to allow me to use the results from a recent company-wide survey that had the same questions I was interested in asking. She felt like surveying the employees again so quickly on the heels of the first survey may seem redundant and I may not get the number of responses I wanted. In light of these facts, the COO made those results accessible to me. I was able to gain very comprehensive information through this company-wide survey that was previously conducted and made available to me. The survey provided insight about company culture and how valued employees at Multi Marketing feel. It consisted of an estimated 50 questions. There were sections on the survey for employees to write in responses. For privacy purposes, I was not made privy to those responses. This survey was open to all staff members during the fourth quarter of 2022 and all were encouraged to participate although half of the staff responded.

I conducted two additional one-on-one interviews with employees. One from the content team and another from the digital team. I assured both team members the answers they provide are for a brand audit to be used for a class and that I would also make my report available to the Executive Leadership Team at Multi Marketing, but their identities would not be revealed. They both agreed to a short ten question interview. One interview, with Employee A was conducted on camera via Microsoft Teams, on Friday, July 28, 2023 and lasted approximately 30 minutes. The questions were not provided prior to the interview and were open-ended. The other provided answers to the open-ended questions with responses coming via email due to scheduling conflicts. Employee B completed the interview on Tuesday, August 1, 2023.

I gathered additional artifacts throughout the following three weeks from July 20, 2023 through August 10, 2023 including the company's organizational chart, the mission and vision statements, a screen shot of a town hall meeting, a Facebook post of the company's first conference, a company-wide email regarding national breakfast day, a screenshot of casual banter between colleagues, shout out posts, team trainings, testimonials from clients,

philanthropy efforts, the company's diversity information and my personal evaluation of client meetings.

Included in the artifacts used to measure consistency, inclusiveness and effectiveness, are the company's mission, vision, and purpose statements. The organizational chart reveals how Multi Marketing is designed to work efficiently so that employees know who their supervisors are and who is ultimately responsible for the work being done. These are important artifacts to show whether or not Multi Marketing has consistent messaging internally and externally and how effective it is. I also look at some of their internal practices like recognition programs, promotion, social activities, conferences, employee trainings, vacation policy, and benefits. These artifacts will begin to build a case to explore brand identity. It will show if internal communication is aligning with brand goals.

To discover external elements, I will determine if these artifacts align with the public view of Multi Marketing by looking at the company website and testimonials available from clients or stakeholders. I will also identify any promotional artifacts that the company uses to attract clients, this includes items used at trade shows to advertise the company. Additionally, it is important to see how well social or traditional media is used. Assessing key external messaging tools that will be vital to understanding if Multi Marketing is achieving the desired results of being inclusive, effective and consistent.

Even though a company may have all these artifacts in place, if they are not being communicated effectively and efficiently, then it's not serving its intended purpose. I will assess what's working and what's not and provide recommendations to assist with ideas that could improve the brand.

Results of Audit Process

Multi Marketing is a full-service, national, content marketing agency, headquartered near Raleigh, North Carolina, specializing in franchise marketing. The services provided include: marketing strategy and branding, public relations, social media and digital marketing, video marketing, creative services, and marketing analytics. The point of conducting an audit of this nature is to answer how the messaging is being interpreted (Diggs-Brown, 2013). The audit should answer these questions:

- Does the organization present audiences with clear and consistent messages or are there discrepancies?
- Does the organization send its messages through appropriate, effective communication vehicles in a timely manner to the correct target audience?
- Are there open lines of communication between all levels of employees?

To achieve these goals, it is important to define important terms. For example, Organizational Culture is the internal behavior and communication of a brand and you can't have a strong external brand identity without a strong internal culture. My definition is: organizational culture is the encapsulation of a company's unspoken and informal shared values, ethics, beliefs, and attitudes—reflective of societal norms- that create a brand's essence and internal environment by shaping and influencing the behavior and communication of all employees.

Consistency is important for a brand because it shows that the collection of brand communication is fair, logical and repeatable (Dozall, 2012). This involves establishing a measurement against an agreed upon norm to maintain standards including messaging, mission, values and items like brand name, logo and different brand elements (Keller, 2013). It allows brand messaging to strategically align, providing clear messaging with no discrepancies in a uniform manner helping to improve identity and build brand trust.

Inclusiveness is bringing together a thorough and extensive collective of an organization, showing cohesiveness in messaging that provides representation of all members of the organization at all levels (Diggs-Brown, 2013). It provides the opportunity allowing all members of an organization to be empowered by being heard and given a voice, feeling respected and fairly represented through diverse perspectives, content messaging and values.

Effectiveness in communications is achieving a desired result or goals when a strategic communications plan is implemented. The ability of an organization to convey and receive messaging in many forms that provides clarity in an ongoing manner that is regularly assessed. "To develop an inventory of the full range of communications channels, platforms and programs utilized across the organization and complete an assessment of the purpose, benefits, cohesiveness and *effectiveness* of each" (Dolzall, 2012).

While I used various artifacts to assess the culture and communication of Multi Marketing, I also conducted interviews with two employees (Employee A and Employee B) and asked the following open-ended questions:

Interview Questions:

Organizational Culture:

1. How would you describe the workplace culture of Multi?
2. Do you feel like you are valued, if so, how?
3. Do you have a voice at Multi, please provide an example?
4. Are there avenues to provide feedback? If so, what are they?

Brand Analysis:

5. Tell me three words that describe Multi Marketing.
6. Does the internal culture align with the brand? Please provide an example.

Consistency:

7. Is there anything inconsistent with Multi Marketing's communication? If so, what?

Inclusiveness:

8. Do you feel there is diversity and inclusion at Multi? Please provide an example.

Effectiveness:

9. Are you clear about the mission of Multi and your purpose on the team?
10. Does Multi's work positively impact people's lives? Provide an example.

I am utilizing six theories of organizational communication to better describe Multi Marketing.

Regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), a growing trend in corporate America, Multi Marketing works hard to participate in philanthropic activities by making donations to local charities, donating time and resources and encouraging employees to volunteer with local charities in their communities. The organization sponsors a committee made up of employees who volunteer to direct further efforts to philanthropy (Stobierski, 2021).

The Communication and Organizational Cultures theory is evident as Multi Marketing works to provide a deeper understanding of the organization for members, through company-wide town hall meetings, trainings, conferences and team-building. There are definitely jokes, and stories that circulate among team members that outsiders would not understand like baseball references and referring to technology applications in a unique manner only known internally like referring to the Artificial Intelligence ChatGPT as "Chad" (O'Donnell-Trujillo and Pacanowsky, 1982).

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are special efforts made to create avenues for feedback, giving employees a voice that can be heard. The leadership has consciously worked hard to create a positive work environment (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009).

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With regard to the Sense-Making Theory organizations try to gain a deeper understanding about human behavior through experiences and how that can be incorporated into company culture. Multi Marketing relies on feedback from staff to best understand how people best fit into a team and which personalities are best suited to work together (Kramer, 2016).

Overall, based on artifacts, surveys and interviews, and client interactions, there is a strong workplace **culture** and it aligns well with the brand identity. Employee A noted, "there is family feel here that I don't see in other companies. They [Multi Marketing] continues to show us that they value us here making me feel like this is a place where I've made friends, feel valued and do more than just collect a paycheck." Mirrored in both the Survey Monkey results and interview, employees also experience a positive culture through actions shown by the company like the flexible work schedule. In the survey when asked, are you pleased with the company's flexible work schedule, an overwhelming 95% of respondents said yes. Employee B stated, "being able to work for a great company that I can work in my pajamas if I want, unless I have a meeting where I have to be on camera, I feel very fortunate. I'm not in the same town or state as my employer, that's something I getting more accustomed to. I can work early in the morning or late at night as long as the job is complete. It's definitely given me a better work-life balance." Multi Marketing invites employees to work remote, or if in the local area, they are welcome to come into the office as often as possible being full-time on site or exercising a hybrid opportunity. Multi marketing equips all employees with computers and any additional equipment they may need to do their jobs remotely. Employees also feel very valued thanks to a new training system that allows them to understand more about the company and upskill their talents. Both interviewees mentioned how much they appreciated the company's policy of unlimited paid time off (PTO). Employee A stated, "I never take advantage of the trust they place in me with paid time off, although it's really nice to be able to take time off here and there not worrying that I only have so many vacation or sick days or hours banked for a vacation." Employee B made mention of the benefits, "I think right now in America, health benefits are gold, and the fact that Multi Marketing also provides a substantial benefit package including a 401(K) match, you feel like you should add that to your overall value along with your salary. It's that important." These issues also scored remarkably high in the survey results. 85% of respondent were very pleased with PTO and benefits.

Another way that staff feels valued and appreciated is within an area in Microsoft Teams where there's a "shout out" page, with fellow colleagues giving accolades for various reasons. There's also an employee spotlight page which allows members to get to know one another despite the challenge of working remotely. Multi Marketing also recognizes each employee's birthday with a gift card and electronic cards that colleagues sign, as well as other special treats throughout the year like a free breakfast on national breakfast day. When asked about these special treats relating to organizational culture, Employee B stated, "It's really fun to get mail

other than bills. When I open a card from my company and there's a $25 gift card for me to go buy a pizza for dinner on National Pizza Day! Are we kidding? Who does that? That was such a nice touch. I definitely felt appreciated. Then a lot of people shared pictures of themselves and their family's enjoying pizza on the Shout-Out page." Multi Marketing makes a concerted effort to provide fun tangible surprises given to show employees that they are appreciated throughout the year." Employee A remarked in the interview "I don't always need some grand gesture to feel appreciated. During the holidays, I received a hand-written note from my supervisor, thanking me for my contribution to the organization, that was really awesome. They make such an effort and it's noticed by all of us."

Employees are very clear about the mission, values and purpose of the company and their purpose in the organization. There was an overwhelming response to this in the survey, with nearly 80% of team members saying that they both understand and agree with the vision, purpose and mission. Employee A remarked, "we hear that mission statement at every meeting. I mean it's good to reiterate it, I know bits and pieces of it." The mission is reviewed at each training, presentation and company town hall meeting, and in fact, the company's tagline is "One Team, One Mission." In the company-wide survey, the mission statement was broken up and when questioned about alignment to the mission there appeared to be some **inconsistencies**. Only half of the respondents said yes about alignment, another 28% said they believe that core value happens only sometimes. There was less agreement with the culture of Multi Marketing aligning with the core values of being accountable, keeping promises, refusing to play politics or cause drama. About 48% of respondents said that was true, about 29% said that it is true sometimes. There was an even lower number of employees who felt that the culture aligned with the mission core value of exceeding personal and professional goals and becoming subject matter experts and finding joy in their work. Only 40% of respondents said yes, and 30% said it is true sometimes.

Another low scoring result from the survey included Multi Marketing including appropriate team members in decisions when they will be the ones affected. In the survey, about 38% of workers felt that only happened sometimes. There was a parallel in comments by both interviewees. Employee A stated, "there is a hierarchy here, as there needs to be in any company. I'm aware of my role, but I'm not sure if I'll ever get the chance to grow because they see me only in this role. I have a great skill set and qualifications that are not being utilized. Decisions are made that affect my job and I don't really have buy-in. Although I will say, leadership has given us opportunities to express ourselves, but I'm not sure I use my voice as effectively as I should." Employee B said, "there are times I feel like I'm powerless about my role. I know my role, but there have been a lot of changes and I sometimes don't know if things are going to be changed again. I have not expressed this to my supervisor, I guess that's a start." As discussed with the COO, "decisions are made depending on the level of the decision which is based on the company's financial impact. If it is department, quick hits with not major impact, then the leadership team member will make the decision for their department. If there is a larger impact we definitely meet as a group to discuss and weigh out some options for next step. The executive leadership team meets every Wednesday afternoon to discuss high level decision making." The COO reiterated the organization chart which is available on a company-wide accessible information page called "the Lounge." Multi Marketing is set up through an organizational chart with executive leadership on the top with departments including administrative, sales and creative, account management, PR and content, operations, and digital, web services and insights.

Overall, the staff feels that they have a voice, Employee A restated, “I do think I have a voice and those who use their voice are probably more satisfied, but I’m concerned that if I express myself, it may not make a difference. But my supervisor has an open-door policy that I should take advantage of.” To prove that feedback is being heard, recent responses following the June company-wide conference held in Raleigh, North Carolina, the executive leadership team responded to concerns from staff regarding having a better understanding of the company’s financials, clients and decision making. Employees stated that they wanted improved transparency and within weeks, the executive leadership responded with a town hall meeting that revealed the economic health of the company along with a client list and prospective client leads in the pipeline.

When examining effectiveness of communication, another event that employees enjoyed was the first ever Multi Marketing conference. This served as an information, education and social event. The overall consensus was that it was very well-received and it was commented by Employee A that “it was really a class act.” Team members from all over the country were flown in at the company’s expense to be in person for the first time since the merger. Employee B felt like the conference was a big success. “I literally had never seen most of my fellow teammates in person until the conference. I had only seen their heads in an online meeting. I think just meeting everyone was the best part of the two-day conference!” This conference was also utilized to show recognition of exceptional service to the company with the first ever awards ceremony. Just another example of how employees are recognized for their contribution and hard work.

The conference was an important and effective strategy to bring the team together to stress the significance of teamwork. Multi Marketing went through a merger to strengthen the brand in 2021 in the midst of a global pandemic. The organization grew from roughly 30 employees to approximately 100. There were challenges going from a smaller boutique marketing agency to a large company with increased number of employees, departments, clients and revenue, with the majority of employees scattered across the country working remote. This has created its own set of challenges. Employee A remarked, “they have placed talented people in jobs to make the transition seamless, but the changes have come fast and furious.” Employee B echoes the sentiments, “there were a lot of changes happening very quickly, but they did a great job rolling all the new stuff out in a comprehensive way. I never felt like I wasn’t gonna get it.” This is in reference to the roll out of new operational systems like Microsoft Teams and Teamwork for daily assignments. The COO led the training for the cross-over for the new systems and has also unveiled a new training platform available to all employees as a central location for policies, procedures and career development.

Another internal element discussed was **inclusiveness**. When surveyed, nearly 60% of employees said the company appears to reflect its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, about 12% said that is true most times, 23% responded sometimes and 5% said not at all. Multi Marketing’s policy is, “[we] are dedicated to fostering an inclusive company culture that attracts more diverse talent, perspectives and insight.” They go on to add that they want to continue building a company that reflects the diversity across our country. They provided employees with the following statistics: 65% of the company are women. In fact, of the seven members of the executive leadership team, four are women. Additionally, 86% of Multi Marketing employees are white. About 48% of the team is aged 20-30. About 26% of the company is aged 31-40. Research shows 10% of the company are ages 41-50 and about 15% are 51 years old+. One in five employees have been with the company for five years or more. When asked, Employee A responded that “there is inclusion on a number of levels. For example, as a remote worker, I feel

included and part of the team." Employee B remarked, "I think diversity, equity and inclusion mean more than race or culture, it's how we treat each other and accept people's differences. In that regard this company is top notch!"

From a stakeholder perspective, Multi Marketing has very consistent messaging. One of the testimonials on the website includes this statement from a client brand, "I was especially impressed with their expertise in PR and digital/social media programs. They are inventive, innovative, and work on a platform that provides the hard framework for all campaigns**,** as well as frequent updates on the campaign's progress." From a personal perspective, I am part of a team that meets with a client on a weekly basis. The banter during the meeting is warm, friendly, relaxed and comfortable. The account managers leading the Multi Marketing team are always prepared with an agenda and to meet the needs of the client. When the client expresses changes that might be needed, the team is very accommodating, professional and kind about meeting those needs. Every interaction with the client ends with inquiring about the client's comfort level, anything else that needs to be done—all ensuring their satisfaction. There was another observational opportunity for me to see firsthand a client interaction during another meeting with a different brand. During that interaction there were results of website and social media performance analytics provided to the client. The Multi Marketing team was well-prepared, presenting a clear and concise report with a PowerPoint presentation that was effective in getting the information across in a simplified manner. All of the client's questions were answered honestly and truthfully. The analytics showed that the Multi marketing system was working by gaining hits on their website and social media thanks to SEO. There were some problems discussed that required some changes on the part of the client. The Multi team described the necessary changes and allowed the client to think about options without pressure. Once again, the client's overall comfort level and satisfaction with Multi's performance was a top priority.

The weaknesses I discovered included **inconsistencies** with external messaging. At the Multi Marketing conference, the tagline "One Team, One Mission" was used and has been continually used since then internally, for example, at the latest town hall meeting. However, publicly, on social media platforms like Facebook, there was a tagline using a paper airplane saying that Multi Marketing is "the marketing agency that makes your business fly." It is a clever tagline but inconsistent with the baseball themed, "One team, one mission". In addition, Multi Marketing's social media platforms share the same messaging throughout with a small amount of engagement. Facebook for example has 905 followers with 847 likes. Understandably for a business, the company's LinkedIn has many more followers a total of 2,052. The website effectively promotes the brand with consistent logos, colors and simple terms helping prospective clients understand the brand's offerings.

Overall, the culture of Multi Marketing is positive with the leadership team putting quite a bit of effort in creating a positive place to work with opportunity to grow. Not all messaging internally and externally is consistent, but to improve that there are opportunities to make changes. Overall, their communications internally and externally is effective, with some modification needed. When it comes to inclusiveness with the brand, Multi Marketing has clearly defined what they are doing to grow, knowing that it's an ongoing brand promise.

Conclusions and Recommendations

By utilizing data collected from various artifacts, surveys, interviews and external communication like website and social media platforms, overall Multi Marketing has created a positive organizational culture which aligns with its brand identity.

These recommendations are intended on being an ongoing process. Multi Marketing is a powerhouse agency with a highly skilled team dedicated to providing best practices achieving dynamic goals for each client. The organization has been faced with the challenges that come when merging three companies into one and working to make that merger seamless. They have a positive culture that overall aligns with the brand identity. They have made great efforts to show employees that they are valued and provide them with a voice. Some of the concerns of employees need also be the responsibility of the employees to speak up and communicate with supervisors without fear of retribution. The responsibility of building a strong culture begins with leadership but does not rest solely on that group but the entire team.

The following are internal ideas to encourage professional growth, building a better culture:

- Continue the effective work of the social committee showing appreciation of employees.
- Provide ways to inspire employees to perform at the best levels. This is most effective on a more interpersonal level. Encouraging leaders and supervisors to provide affirmation of good work. Public accolades can often be perceived as competitive or only recognizing those *seen* by leadership.
- Continue building the in-house training program, adding new ways for employees to upskill, including peer training.
- Continue twice a year reviews with managers to discover career goals and encourage employees to speak up and express themselves.

Based on results from the survey and interviews, there were concerns from employees about not having opportunity to grow or be heard. These are recommendations that address those concerns and build a stronger line of communication.

The following are internal ideas to connect employees to meet the needs of employees and enhance the culture:

- Encourage fun peer trainings that can be done via online channels. Have employees teach each other fun hobbies like cooking or wine tasting. This embraces part of the mission statement to have fun along the way.
- Provide options for video hangouts and other real-time communication channels. This is a simple avenue allowing employees to connect with each other and collaborate on projects.
- Connect colleagues who share hobbies or common interests through clubs, this can help employees who might be reluctant to use their voice, more comfortable in a work setting knowing they have connections.
- Provide break-out sessions during monthly town hall meetings allowing employees to discuss and ask questions about the latest company information. This allows a less threatening, smaller group opportunity for employees to seek additional information and get to know colleagues better.

- Partner someone new to a task or project with an experienced co-worker to create and build a mentorship program. Often having a mentor that is not an immediate supervisor is a more comfortable relationship that feels less judged.
- Find ways to invite more feedback for employees to be heard in avenues that skip hierarchy such as virtual "lunch with leadership." This builds trust with the executive leadership team and allows employees to express themselves in a casual setting, without going through traditional channels of leadership.
- Sponsor virtual happy hours with leadership; providing a casual environment to engage.
- Host virtual block parties with group movies. There does not have to be great attendance, but it is a great offering for those interested in attending.
- Host trivia nights or game nights. This is also something that can be done during "lunch with leadership."

Again, some of these examples will help promote positive culture and address concerns about meeting the expectations of the mission statement and more effectively allowing employees voices to be heard. I use the word, "connect" quite often because I believe people need to feel connected to people in all aspects of their lives, especially work, where we spend the majority of our time. When employees feel like they are part of a team and that they are appreciated, they are more likely to be engaged and productive.

The following are external recommendations to strengthen brand identity and have more effective and consistent communication:

- Clarify tagline (One Team One Mission).
- Work on ways to increase social media engagement beginning with showing and posting more employees in real life work situations and volunteering for philanthropic activities.
- To increase engagement on social media platforms, incentivize all employees to like and share posts using dedicated hashtags for a chance to win a gift card.
- Provide client testimonials on social media platforms.
- Build space on the website that shows all team members, currently only the executive leadership team is shown.
- Put photos on the website in the "about us" drop down that truly exemplify the mission statement (i.e., employees having fun).

Multi Marketing exemplifies the theory of cocreation involving the engagement of brand and brand users to grow and strengthen the organization. Multi uses emails, website, social media, traditional media and in person client engagement to grow the brand. Multi has worked strategically to gain a greater customer base by seeking new clients and is people and customer-centric, always evolving, innovating and adapting to client needs in the marketplace whether that's market trends or customizations that are tailored to a specific client. Multi is perhaps the greatest example of a company built, sustained and grown through building relationships. They are very successful in connecting, establishing and expanding relationships with their key audiences. Through one-on-one interaction and regular meetings, the company is able to grow their community base and simultaneously connect members internally.

A few additional notes after weeks of collecting information about this brand for purposes of this audit. I am a huge proponent of something I like to call "brand bragging." No one knows how wonderful your brand is, until you tell them. This is especially true for an organization tasked with growing other brands. Showing and telling the world about the innovative brand you

are building and how effective brand culture is only works to build trust and value in the eyes of potential clients. I feel there is an opportunity to improve Multi Marketing's external footprint through greater social media interaction and engagement. Having a dedicated employee or intern responsible for posting candid shots of employees interacting, volunteering at philanthropic events and increasing interesting posts about the organization can be an effective tool to build brand identity.

Multi Marketing's executive leadership team has been very dedicated to compassionately creating a positive work environment especially on the heels of a merger; which has a tendency to cause of wave of growing pains throughout an organization. But the executive leadership team has consistently strived to make the transition as smooth as possible welcoming new employees allowing all to feel accepted, respected and valued for their work and as people. However, it is important that not all responsibility lands on the executive leadership team. As leaders, they have created a culture of kindness and compassion that has trickled down to the rest of the team. It is important that leadership allows the rest of the team to understand they have a role and responsibility to the organization; basically, now that they have a voice, they can feel free to appropriately use it.

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Appendix A

The following list are the questions from the 4th Quarter 2022 Survey Monkey distributed to all members of Multi Marketing.

Do you agree with our Vision, Purpose, and Mission?

- **Yes 78%, Most Times 14%, Sometimes 6%, No 2%**

Do you believe our culture aligns with our Mission core value: be accountable, keep promises, refuse to play politics or cause drama?

- **Yes 49%, Most Times 29%, Sometimes 17%, No 3.9%**

Does the company appear to reflect its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion?

- **Yes 58%, Most Times 11%, Sometimes 23%, No 5.8%**

Does the company enable you to balance your work and personal life?

- **Yes 62%, Most Times 19%, Sometimes 13%, No 3.9%**

Are you pleased with the company's Unlimited Paid Time off (PTO) policy?

- **Yes 84%, Most Times 9.8%, Sometimes 3.9%, No 1.9%**

Are you pleased with the company's flexible work schedule/location?

- **Yes 94%, Most Times 3.9%, Sometimes 1.9%, No 0%**

Are you pleased with the company's 401(K) plan?

- **Yes 74%, Most Times 19%, Sometimes 5.8%, No 0%**

Do you have a good understanding of your opportunities for career growth?

- **Yes 31%, Most Times 35%, Sometimes 15%, No 17%**

Do you believe you have a sense of purpose at Multi marketing?

- **Yes 62%, Most Times 25%, Sometimes 9.8%, No 1.9%**

Appendix B

The questions I used for personal employee interviews were:

Organizational Culture:

1. How would you describe the workplace culture of Multi?
2. Do you feel like you are valued, if so, how?
3. Do you have a voice at Multi, please provide an example?
4. Are there avenues to provide feedback? If so, what are they?

Brand Analysis:

5. Tell me three words that describe Multi Marketing.
6. Does the internal culture align with the brand? Please provide an example.

Consistency:

7. Is there anything inconsistent with Multi Marketing's communication? If so, what?

Inclusiveness:

8. Do you feel there is diversity and inclusion at Multi? Please provide an example.

Effectiveness:

9. Are you clear about the mission of Multi and your purpose on the team?
10. Does Multi's work positively impact people's lives? Provide an example.

Appendix C

Employee A and B responses to interview questions:

Employee A- Responses

Organizational Culture:

How would you describe the workplace culture of Multi?

There is family feel here that I don't see in other companies. They [Multi Marketing] continues to show us that they value us here making me feel like this is a place where I've made friends, feel valued and do more than just collect a paycheck. I think there's kindness here that's infectious. People treat each other well. I don't see back-stabbing and competitiveness like I've experienced at other places.

Do you feel like you are valued, if so, how?

I would say for the most part I feel valued, although I'm also realistic because everyone is replaceable. But I recognize how much they try to make us feel appreciated. I do think we're part of something special here. I don't always need some grand gesture to feel appreciated. During the holidays, I received a hand-written note from my supervisor, thanking me for my contribution to the organization, that was really awesome. They make such an effort and it's noticed by all of us.

You know when they had the company conference, I thought it was very cool that they spared no expense flying all of us in, giving us a nice room at the Marriot, taking care of our meals. You just don't get that everywhere; it was really a class act.

It's just all those things that create the bigger package that are impressive like the birthday gifts and special treats not to mention the benefits and PTO. I love the PTO policy. I'm so used to only having a certain amount of time off. We've got it good here.
I never take advantage of the trust they place in me with paid time off, although it's really nice to be able to take time off here and there not worrying that I only have so many vacation or sick days or hours banked for a vacation.

Do you have a voice at Multi, please provide an example?

I do think I have a voice and those who use their voice are probably more satisfied, but I'm concerned that if I express myself, it may not make a difference. But my supervisor has an open-door policy that I should take advantage of. I think the leadership team has shown that they are open to hearing from us. I just sometimes don't have the courage to speak up, I guess I'm kind of shy.

Are there avenues to provide feedback? If so, what are they?

For those of us who do not have a direct line to the executive leadership team, we have to express ourselves through the chain of command. I feel like I have other skills and qualifications that they don't see and I don't have a lot of control in my position. There is a hierarchy here, as there needs to be in any company. I'm aware of my role, but I'm not sure if I'll ever get the chance to grow because they see me only in this role. I have a great skill set and qualifications that are not being utilized. Decisions are made that affect my job and I don't really have buy-in. Although I will say, leadership has given us opportunities to express ourselves, but I'm not sure I use my voice as effectively as I should.

Brand Analysis:

Tell me three words that describe Multi Marketing.

Fast moving
Energetic
Clients first

Does the internal culture align with the brand? Please provide an example.

I would say yes it does align. I mean**,** we hear that mission statement at every meeting. I mean it's good to reiterate it, I know bits and pieces of it. I think especially since the company has recently expanded; they do a good job helping us understand what we're all about here.

Consistency:

Is there anything inconsistent with Multi Marketing's communication? If so, what?

I think because of the recent growth there's been lots of "new." There are new systems in place, they are introducing new ways of doing things. It's like they've moved into this new role to compete with the big boys but they're still hanging on to that smaller boutique firm feel. I will say they made the changes easy on us moving over to Microsoft Teams and Teamwork, they have placed talented people in jobs to make the transition seamless, but the changes have come fast and furious.

Inclusiveness:

Do you feel there is diversity and inclusion at Multi? Please provide an example.

I just finished my training on diversity and inclusion. I think there is inclusion on a number of levels. For example, as a remote worker, I feel included and part of the team. I feel like I'm included in client meetings that I may want to attend.

Effectiveness:

Are you clear about the mission of Multi and your purpose on the team?

I would say yes, I am clear about the mission, again, they repeat it which is a good thing. And I think, overall, I do know where I fit in the grand scheme of things. Again, though, I would love the opportunity to spread my wings and grow into a different position here.

Does Multi's work positively impact people's lives? Provide an example.

I think we are positively impacting our clients by doing good work. I'm especially proud of the charity work that the team does. I have donated to some of the collections although I have not myself volunteered.

Employee B Responses:

Organizational Culture:

How would you describe the workplace culture of Multi?

I think it's a very positive place to work. People here show kindness. There's a mix of younger and older people and I think there's a great deal of respect shown because of that. I love working remote. I never thought I would find myself being able to work for a great company that I can work in my pajamas if I want, unless I have a meeting where I have to be on camera, I feel very fortunate. I'm not in the same town or state as my employer, that's something I getting more accustomed to. I can work early in the morning or late at night as long as the job is complete. It's definitely given me a better work-life balance.

Do you feel like you are valued, if so, how?

I absolutely feel valued. They go out of their way to make us feel valued. They show us that we are appreciated in little ways and big ways. For example, it's really fun to get mail other than bills. When I open a card from my company and there's a $25 gift card for me to go buy a pizza for dinner on National Pizza Day! Are we kidding? Who does that? That was such a nice touch. I definitely felt appreciated. Then a lot of people shared pictures of themselves and their family's enjoying pizza on the Shout-Out page. On a bigger scale I have a family and I need not only a paycheck but benefits. I think right now in America, health benefits are gold, and the fact that Multi Marketing also provides a substantial benefit package including a 401(K) match, you feel like you should add that to your overall value along with your salary. It's that important.

Do you have a voice at Multi, please provide an example?

I do feel like I have a voice and I feel like they do their best to listen, but you still have to let them be leaders and lead us! Can't let everyone have their way, so feedback is important but they're making big decisions. Like when we merged with [the two other companies], there were a lot of changes happening very quickly, but they did a great job rolling all the new stuff out in a comprehensive way. I never felt like I wasn't gonna get it.

Are there avenues to provide feedback? If so, what are they?

Yes, there are many available opportunities for feedback. I talk with my supervisor/manager. They conduct surveys, they had the big conference in June when they asked for our buy-in. I loved the conference. I literally had never seen most of my fellow teammates in person until the conference. I had only seen their heads in an online meeting. I think just meeting everyone was the best part of the two-day conference!"

Brand Analysis:

Tell me three words that describe Multi Marketing.

Changing
Growing
Unknown

Does the internal culture align with the brand? Please provide an example.

Yes. The company has a great reputation in the franchising industry and internally people treat each other well.

Consistency:

Is there anything inconsistent with Multi Marketing's communication? If so, what?

I can't think of anything inconsistent. I mean we are a marketing agency, I think we do a good job communicating who we are.

Inclusiveness:

Do you feel there is diversity and inclusion at Multi? Please provide an example.

I think diversity, equity and inclusion mean more than race or culture, it's how we treat each other and accept people's differences. In that regard this company is top notch!

Effectiveness:

Are you clear about the mission of Multi and your purpose on the team?

I am clear about the mission. As far as my purpose, yes, although there are times I feel like I'm powerless about my role. I know my role, but there have been a lot of changes and I sometimes don't know if things are going to be changed again. I have not expressed this to my supervisor, I guess that's a start.

Does Multi's work positively impact people's lives? Provide an example.

I think we do a good job for what we're all about. I know we do a lot for charities and I think that's important, in fact, I proud to be associated with that.

Appendix D

Information from Chief Operating Officer

As discussed with the COO, "decisions are made depending on the level of the decision which is based on the company's financial impact. If it is department, quick hits with not major impact, then the leadership team member will make the decision for their department. If there is a larger impact we definitely meet as a group to discuss and weigh out some options for next step. The executive leadership team meets every Wednesday afternoon to discuss high level decision making.

Information Obtained by the COO:

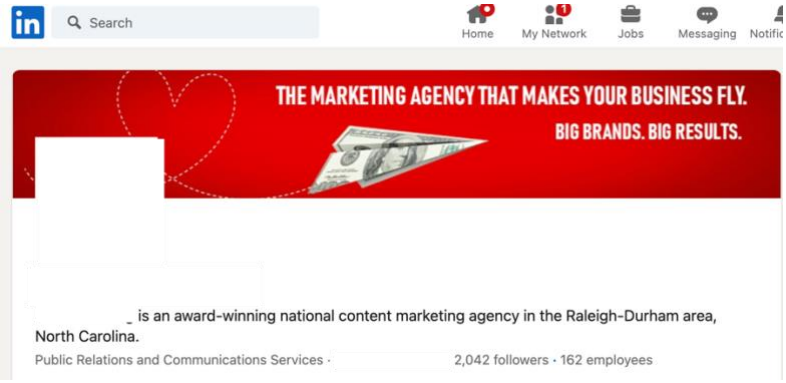
How are decisions made at Multi Marketing?

Short answer, depends on the level of the decision which, is based on company financial impact. If it is departmental, quick hits with not a major impact, then the leadership team member will make the decision for their department. If there is a larger impact we definitely meet as a group to discuss and weigh out some options for next steps. ELT meets every Wednesday 12-2 to discuss high level decision making. In some cases we come to agreement on those calls, others we may say "Take it offline" If it does not involve all parties.

How are conflicts resolved?

1. Healthy conflict and banter honestly. People give their opinions and look at it from a Leadership perspective on how it will impact the company as a whole. Each team member will discuss their opinions on the matter and we typically just have open and honest confrontation on it. We always make the decisions based on what is best for the company.
2. Reiterating the company mission and vision during conflict helps the team get on the same page.
3. Accountability is a big piece with conflict, especially on the lower level, no finger pointing, but addressing as a team who was wrong and what can be improved so we can learn from it in future.
4. Leadership is typically looped in if the team members cannot handle the conflict on their own.
5. Also, we have Human Resources to help step in to work through matters at the team member level.

Appendix E





How We Set Goals and Objectives

At Marketing, the Executive Leadership Team refines our corporate goals for the next three to five years as part of the company's strategic planning process.
Under our management by objectives (MBO) process, individual managers use these corporate goals to set their departmental objectives and their own objectives, and they collaborate with employees to help develop employees' individual objectives.
We evaluate the performance of managers and employees based primarily on their accomplishment of these objectives.

