



Challenge Based Integrated Brand Promotions Project  
 Genessa M. Devine, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC

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Background: The Integrated Textile and Apparel Promotions course examines the utilization of textile brand marketing communication and promotion tools to build, maintain, or expand a brand's value in the textile complex. To improve the students' understanding and application of the course concepts, the instructor developed an Integrated Brand Promotions (IBP) Challenge Project that incorporated business, creative and presentation skills to address timely industry issues through challenge based learning. This innovative project allowed students to work in agency teams to develop an integrated brand promotions campaign for an industry "client".

Project Development and Implementation: During the second week of class, the students were presented with the five client challenges. The challenges were developed by the instructor and based on discussions with industry contacts at these companies and secondary research. The following challenges were provided to the students:

Table 1. IBP Client Challenges

| Challenge Title                 | Challenge Description   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Local Luxury                    | Identify the next local/regional brand for the Saks Fifth Avenue store in Raleigh, NC and develop an IBP plan that includes an in-store launch event.   |
| Sustainable Sourcing Promotions | Develop an IBP plan for Urban Outfitters' BDG denim brand that promotes their use of Denimatrix as a sourcing partner and tells the denim jeans story from the "fields to final garment" in the retail environment. |
| Collegiate Denim Redux          | Develop an IBP plan to relaunch PCCA's (Plain Cooperative Cotton Association) All American – All Cotton collegiate denim brand under a new brand name and with a new logo design.                                   |
| Wolfpack Warriors               | Develop a branded tailgate event for Under Armour at a NCSU football game that allows attendees to experience the brand and also raises awareness and financial support for the Wounded Warriors Project.           |
| Music Warriors                  | Develop a branded music festival for Under Armour that allows attendees to experience the brand and also raises awareness and financial support for the Wounded Warriors Project.                                   |

The project included five milestones.

1. Agency Creation
2. Situation Analysis
3. Objectives, Strategies and Budgeting
4. Creative Execution, Timelines and Measurement and Evaluation
5. Client Pitch

The learning objectives for each milestone were reinforced with course content, and students were provided additional depth through guest lectures in the areas of advertising research, retail promotions, and omni-channel marketing. Milestones 1-4 were compiled to create a final report that the students provided to the “client” during their pitch.

Agency Creation phase started on the first day of class. Students were asked to write a biosketch that highlighted their background, interest and experiences with graphic design, market analysis, market research, copyrighting and branding. The biosketches were compiled into one document and viewable on the course webpage. The students were encouraged to use the biosketches in order to create an agency team that consisted of people with a mix of core competencies. Students were asked to select the top three challenges and provide a justification for their decision. The agencies were required to create an agency profile that included their agency name, logo, history, approach, expertise and biosketch and photo of each agency team member. In the Situation Analysis phase, the agencies compiled a client and brand summary. The goal of this milestone was to demonstrate their understanding of the client, challenge and brand. This included the client’s business demographics, marketing mix, target markets, competitors and external market factors. For the brand summary, the agencies focused on the brand’s marketing mix, existing promotional programs, brand image, target markets, competitors and external market factors contributing to the challenge. The goal of the Objectives, Strategies and Budgeting milestone was for students to outline the strategic and creative direction of their campaign and the resources needed to execute the campaign. This milestone included the development of a Creative Brief. The Creative Brief included the project objective, target audience, message/copy strategy, competitive context, desired consumer response and resources/budget. The Creative Execution, Timelines and Measurement and Evaluation milestone focused on the timing and flow of the campaign, how the agency would determine the success of the campaign, and the development of the creative elements of their campaign. For the Final Report and Agency Pitch the agencies pitched their idea to their classmates and a mock “client team”. Their client pitch demonstrated a culmination of their plan including a situation analysis, objectives and strategies, and mock-ups of their creative executions. After the presentations, students provided feedback to the teams regarding the effectiveness of their “pitches”. Self and peer evaluations were used to assess teamwork and individual participation.

Future Plans: The students’ performance on the final report and pitch presentations demonstrated their comprehension of the course objectives and their ability to execute the learnings in a professional yet creative manner. Future projects will include an industry panel as the “client” team. This panel will judge the agency pitches and provide the students with a professional audience and critique. To address current industry trends, moving forward, all projects must have at least one digital component including, web, mobile, social media, video, etc.