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Developing a Marketing Plan Using Design Thinking

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Developing a Marketing Plan Using Design Thinking
by

Rebecca L. Reilly

An Abstract of a Project
in
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements
For the Degree of
Master of Science

December 2011

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

Developing a Marketing Plan Using Design Thinking

Design Thinking has become associated with some of the most innovative products coming out in the market today. Though it was originally a model used to design products, practitioners have found it also helps companies develop innovative mindsets throughout their organizations. This project takes Design Thinking in another direction, where it is not applied to something that already exists, but instead serves as the incubator for a marketing plan that will be used to convince small to medium-sized Western New York businesses to consider doing business in Korea. This project will give insight into how to use Design Thinking to overcome cultural and organizational hurdles by using the “customer-centric” focus of Design Thinking to find the opportunities embedded in the differences between WNY companies and potential Korean consumers.

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Date

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Dates of Approval:

Marie Mance
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More than a year ago I started considering the prospect of using Design Thinking to fashion a socially conscious marketing plan. Over the course of work on a Master's in Creativity I shared my many ideas with my cohort, my professors and my family. While making my academic connections and discoveries I have talked of little else to my family and friends who have humored my concepts and supported me unconditionally. I would first like to acknowledge the nurturing love and scholarly relationship I have with my mother, Dr. Jo Yudess. Without her brave example and continuous challenging of my process through spirited academic debate, I doubt my journey with this project would have been so rich. I acknowledge the rest of my family: Jennifer, my sister, John, my brother-in-law, Grandfather Richard Howard and my niece Jaime whose understanding allowed me a great deal of flexibility. They also helped with my many outsized requests of their time or expertise. I would also like to acknowledge the professors of the International Center for Studies in Creativity for their unflinching demonstration of sustainable innovation and my cohort the "Supremes" from the distance learning program for their unwavering support and words of encouragement. I would like to give a very special thank you to everyone who took a wild ride with me in the creation of the Buffalo Yeongcheon Sister Cities project and the business owners who worked with Design Thinking, though none of them had ever heard of it. Finally, I would like to give a special thank you to Mayor Kim, Jeong Sang-woon, and the delegation of Yeongcheon, Republic of Korea. Not only did these gentlemen take a huge risk creating a Sister City relationship with the City of Buffalo, but they trusted me and Design Thinking, though there were times when outcomes looked uncertain. Their patient listening to my slow and less than perfect Korean gave me the courage to take some huge cultural paradigm leaps and helped me put together a plan that will shoot me out into the

world with more confidence and preparation to help small business owners while providing me with a way to make a living.

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Section One: Background of the Project

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to use Design Thinking to create an innovative marketing plan that will encourage small to mid-sized businesses in Western New York to globalize. From this academic and business-world research it has become apparent that it will take an unconventional method to convey this message since organizations that help businesses globalize generally concentrate on larger businesses and are not well equipped to fill the special needs of small businesses.

To date, Design Thinking has gone from a being creative process used to design technology for reorganizing businesses around sustainable innovation, to being a process that is used for social innovation. In the concept (See Appendix A) for this project, Design Thinking will be used to create a marketing plan around an idea, not an existing business. In this project Customer-centricity will be taken to the limit, in effect developing an idea into a marketing plan that will be used for a company that has yet to be created.

Additionally, this is new area of exploration and this project requires an innovative marketing plan. The Design Thinking process levels the playing field for all participants; it is logical that the marketing plan should reflect that sort of participation. This openness is supported by peoples' growing participation on the internet and through social networks.

Potential clients will be instrumental in the creation, development, evaluation and implementation of this marketing plan. This flexibility in structure reflects the Design Thinking process and demonstrates its flexibility as an adaptive creative tool.

Design Thinking and Guerilla Marketing, in my specific marketing approach, are common-sense approaches that, throughout their use in this project, have proven to complement each other.

Rationale for the Project

I was first inspired by the power of the Design Thinking process when I participated in the workshop; Design Thinking: a perfect complement to CPS for innovation projects (Cahen, 2010). Long a practitioner of the Creative Problem Solving process, I was excited that Design Thinking channeled my FourSight (Puccio, 1999) Implementer tendencies in a very productive way. The problem solving preferences of FourSight are: Ideator, Clarifier, Developer and Implementor. Clarifiers look for all the facts and spend a lot of energy defining problems. Ideators enjoy coming up with many new ideas. Developers have a strong interest in refining ideas and finally, Implementors spring into immediate action.

From the first step of Design Thinking, understanding, to the final implementation step, the practitioner is in a constant state of doing (Cross, 1982; Cross, 2011). To help Western New York small businesses globalize, I really needed to jump straight into the problem because time was an overarching constraint on whatever I decided to do as a Master's Project. Since I was already hosting a Korean delegation trip to Buffalo while the Master's Project was in process, I knew I had to combine all of the challenges and do my best to work on solving them in concert.

I was aware that the conceptualization phase would be particularly helpful when bridging gaps between what potential clients needed and how they could get there. Due to the diversity of potential clients and the stark differences between Korean and American ways of doing business, I knew, through prototyping, there was a potential to have some breakthrough innovations that could lead to mutually beneficial results. These differences will be discussed in literature review.

Design Thinking and Guerilla Marketing are a way of being and way of thinking. Design Thinking is a definite process, but the journey of discovery is more important than the steps. The steps are meant as a guideline, much like the steps in the Thinking Skills Model of Creative Problem Solving (Puccio, Murdock & Mance, 2007) are meant to guide users through a rigorous method for solving problems. I am a doer and though learning different ways of thinking is exciting, I am inclined to want to take methods of thinking for practical applications test-drives. That is why Design Thinking and Guerilla Marketing appealed to me. Like Design Thinking, Guerilla Marketing deconstructs traditional marketing's big-business emphasis and uses insights derived from dialogues with customers as high energy, imaginative marketing tools.

In this new era of rapid change, innovation has become a survival skill not only for large companies but also small companies and individuals. More and more research is proving that innovation comes from the empowerment of individuals to use their creativity without limitation. Design Thinking is a perfect vehicle for playing to the strengths of diverse groups of people and supplants the need to be in the same room, same city or even the same country.

Project Contribution

Through this project I hope to raise the awareness of Design Thinking and its inherent flexibility and utility in creating sustainable innovation in uncertain times. Specifically, I would like to show how it is possible to use the Design Thinking process to make the process of going global easier for small to mid-size companies in Western New York. Design Thinking is perfectly suited for problem solving in challenging economic times. The process is flexible and makes addressing complicated business problems more streamlined. Instead of presenting either-or choices, diversity of options reveals opportunities to tailor solutions. Through this

project I hope to add to the body of creativity research by showing the practical applications of Design Thinking.

Section Two: Pertinent Literature

Design Thinking

From a detailed look at both Marketing and Design it has struck me how potentially powerful the two could be when used together in an interactive way. For this reason the literature review is divided into a Design Thinking and a Guerilla Marketing section. In both disciplines one has to reach to the consumer. In traditional marketing and traditional design, the conversation is one-way, marketer to consumer. In both Design Thinking and Guerilla Marketing that conversation is a dialogue. Each process embodies getting to know the client on a very personal basis and using that knowledge to create meaningful product and service experiences.

By contrast, in traditional Design and Marketing, assumptions are made about consumers; a best guess is formulated, and feedback from the consumer comes in the form of sales figures. This inefficient and cumbersome method is the product of a time when manufacturers' sole concern was keeping up with the limitless demand of a post WWII consuming public (Hamel, 2009). The period of war-time rationing has long passed and a new model of innovation, not only for manufacturers, but also marketers needs to occur.

Marketing has evolved with the development of the Internet and social media. "Guerilla Marketing" acknowledges this phenomenon and uses low-budget, highly creative methods to small marketers' advantage. It is no longer a pre-requisite to have a big marketing budget and a marketing department.

History

The origins of Design Thinking lay in the 1960's systemization of creative problem solving and personality assessment (Treffinger, Isaksen & Stead-Dorval, 2005; Koestler, 1964; Osborn, 1962; MacKinnon, 1962; Gordon, 1961; & Barron & Welsh, 1952). Specifically in the

design field, work on artificial intelligence and cognitive sciences established a “Science of Design” which was the empirical, teachable doctrine about the design process (Simon, 1987).

The definition of Design Thinking is: a process to thoroughly understand ill-defined problems and presenting prototyping solutions for evaluation and reiteration that combines empathy with creativity (Bell, 2008).

Design Thinking does away with idea-wrecking attitudes (Schon, 1987). Instead of dealing with “worst case scenarios” Design Thinking is about seeing innovation as a tool for transformation. Prototypes in Design Thinking allow for imagining a new story based on the raw materials of the challenge. The invention of a new story becomes the central aspect behind storytelling (Bell, 2008; Kelley & Littman, 2001).

Design Thinking emerged as human-centered design in the 1980’s (Rowe, 1987), which was an extension of the work in design engineering: express, test, cycle (McKim, 1980). The expressing part is making ideas tangible, next the ideas are evaluated or tested and finally the cycle portion is going back to ideation and expressing the new concepts that have arisen after evaluation, and so on, until the idea reaches full fruition (McKim, 1980). Later in architecture, Rowe (1987) expanded the use of the term Design Thinking to describe the linear model used by architects and engineers to solve highly complex problems in the public space.

Through the 1990’s Design Thinking was popularized (Florida, 2002; Pink, 2006; Gladwell, 2008 and Brown & Katz, 2009) advocating making workplaces more customer-focused and places where employees have an environment that supports their experimentation and thus sustainable innovation.

It is clear that the evolution of business thought is going in the direction of changing how leading thinkers in business management are influencing educational institutions such as the

University of Toronto. In 1995 the Rotman School of Management was established at the University of Toronto (Liedtka, 2004) using principles of integrative thinking, which is philosophically close to the principles of Design Thinking (Martin, 2007). The mission of the Rotman School is to redesign business education. Currently Masters of Business Administration programs teach business functions separately. The Rotman School recognizes the need for the cross-pollination in its integrative approach and encourages the teaching of business functions across various specific fields like technology, finance and management (Rotman, 2004).

An integrative, customer-centric approach was also the focus of the establishment of Stanford's Design School in 2005. The programs at the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design center on the concepts of Design Thinking. They teach design through many different disciplines (Orenstein, 2005; d.school, 2011). The purpose of blending disciplines is to renew sources of exploration through cross-pollination.

Design Thinking Steps

Design Thinking, according to Clark and Smith (2008), has five component steps that are featured in figure 1 below. This model is simple and though it is laid out in a line, it is not strictly a linear process. For example, often after validation you may go back to the conceptualization step and create new prototypes.

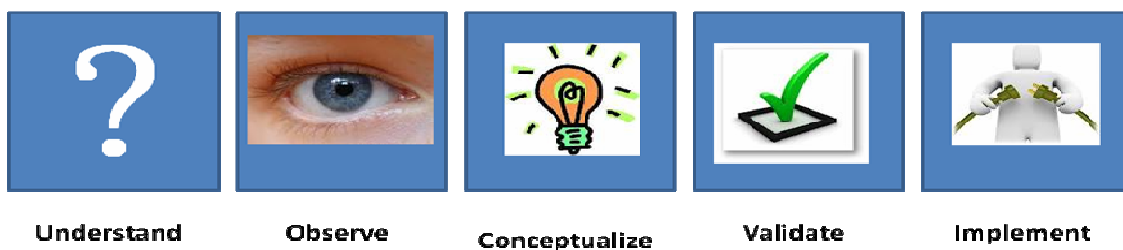


Figure 1: Design Thinking steps adapted from Clark & Smith, 2008, p. 10.

Understanding

In the understanding step it is important to grasp the basic context of the problem. It is in this step that it is helpful to take a thorough look at the environment in which the problem exists. It is important to track down all of the sources of the problem and understand all of the players who are involved. So, when considering the problem of developing a mouse for Apple Inc. teams at IDEO Inc., (Clark & Smith, 2008) weighed the efficacy of existing technology, how it was used, and the problems resulting from existing technology.

When exploring the basic context of the problem, in my project, it became clear early on that my initial assumptions about the small businessperson's global environment were mostly incorrect. These discoveries led to more research, and in turn, more understanding about the resources that were available to small business people and the type of resources which helped or didn't help them globalize.

Observation

The next step is to observe. This means observing real situations with real people. In this step practitioners actually "...build creativity and innovation into the public imagination" (Kelley & Littman, 2001, p. 18). Design Thinkers employ ethnography, which involves members of the team actually going to where customers are using the product or service. In walking around with users for a period of time, observers take note of all seemingly insignificant details. (Cahen, 2008) When the group again comes together, these nuggets of information become instrumental in the next process step.

Observing the contrasts in ethnography provided some useful clues into the nature of potential conflict between Americans and Koreans during the course of the project. Whereas Americans treasure their creative latitude and are prone to spouting suggestions without self-

ensorship; Koreans are continually concerned about maintaining social harmony (Yang & Rosenblatt, 2001). They are far less likely to spontaneously ideate publicly. The implication would be that their ideas are superior to another person's idea. This can infer criticism, which in turn could be perceived as an insult (Lee, 2005).

Conceptualization

In Conceptualization, the third step of the Design Thinking process, rapid prototyping takes place. In conceptualization, the accent is on action, not just generating ideas. In order to create prototypes, the physical manifestation must take into account problem concepts that have emerged from the Understand and Observe phases. In Conceptualization prototyping is quick so as to refrain from devoting too much emotional attachment to a prototype. In making prototypes, information collected in previous phases helps practitioners make "educated guesses" (Kelley & Littman, 2001) in order to make leaps over areas where a group might be stuck.

By making prototypes practitioners can transform intangible concepts into physical manifestations. In a three-dimensional form a concept has a better chance to persuade. For example IDEO Inc. developed a number of prototypes when their team was creating the first mouse for Apple Inc. (Clark & Smith, 2008). Stumbling and back tracking are a part of prototyping and because it is such a rapid process, the failure impact is dissipated. In rapid prototyping it is easier to shoot down bad ideas. Even bad ideas, when prototyped, can serve as a sort of therapy, giving designers permission to destroy it. In this way, even total failure of a prototype can be productive.

In my project this explicit permission to destroy or shoot down prototypes was integral in gaining the trust of the Koreans that were involved in the process. Korean culture is described as a high context culture meaning that it is important to understand the rank of the person that you

are speaking with in order to choose your words appropriately (Anglebrandt, 2008). This is a common feature in societies with strong Confucian morals (Oh, 1991). This manifests itself when feedback is required in problem solving situations. Koreans are continually concerned with “saving face” by either not upstaging or questioning a superior or embarrassing a peer or subordinate (Song, Hale, & Rao, 2005). Prototyping affords the customer, even when constrained by social convention, to remark on the attributes of the prototype, thus taking away the onus of giving feedback directly to an individual.

Validation

In validation, the fourth phase of Design Thinking, the human make-up of the design team becomes extremely important. Almost like a chance to revisit the Observation phase, validation provides practitioners a chance to see the consumer interact with the new prototype and give meaningful feedback that helps designers improve the design. In the episode of “Dateline” where the company IDEO re-designs the shopping cart, teams present their prototypes to people in a grocery store to take for test runs. As the people use their carts, IDEO team members pay close attention to comments that are made about the ease of use, but more importantly, feedback about what people didn’t like was incorporated in retooled versions of the prototypes (Condon, 1998).

In this project, validation was an integral part in formulating the final Marketing Plan. Validation, because rapid prototyping was almost constantly occurring, became a method to build trust among all involved parties. In the act of presenting prototypes for evaluation, evaluators felt their input was not only listened to, but put into immediate action. Evaluation actually created a space for more innovation because the stakeholders’ evaluation acted as a sort of control lever on the pace and nature of the process as it progressed.

Implementation

In the final step, Implementation, designers work with clients and their associated partners from design to the display rack in a store. Implementing even innovatively designed products takes some creativity. When a product is too far ahead of its time it might not get the attention it deserves because the market isn't ready for it. Not all products can be assimilated into the market at the same pace. Deeply ingrained rituals and myths can be a great obstacle to acceptance (Kelley & Littman, 2001).

Implementation in Design Thinking can circumvent deeply ingrained traditions. In the context of creating a template marketing plan for my potential clients, the work I did in the observation and conceptualization steps identified major challenges early and gave me time to create alternative prototypes. By the time I was ready to implement, major issues had already been explored and meaningful solutions were developed for clients.

Concepts of Design Thinking

Within the Design Thinking steps there are underlying concepts that enrich the whole process and leverage the skills and talents of the teams working on problems. When attention is paid to the process, the whole person is extracted from the situation, and Design Thinking practitioners have the benefit of being able to separate interpersonal behavior from the process allowing for a holistic perspective on the problem (Lafley & Charan, 2008). Comparing and contrasting dimensions of the problem allows for a detachment of thought that lends to more creative flexibility. This was an important concept in my project because the final marketing plan had diverse features reflecting the preferences of my culturally diverse participants.

At the center of the Design Thinking Model is Customer-centricity. Differentiation of products has become more and more reliant on how people choose what they buy. Customers

these days have an evolved expectation of more sophisticated experiences that a product or service may provide. As a result, for companies it is no longer enough to just satisfy basic needs (Brown, 2008).

Due to culture differences and language barriers alone, globalization can be incredibly difficult. The simplest interactions are tangled with the layers of invisible cultural meanings, driven by paradigms developed over millennia. Simple understanding and forewarning can often be enough to diffuse tension. Keeping at the forefront of your thinking can help you navigate through cultural differences.

Prototyping

In order take advantage of data collected about customers, prototyping is a powerful tool in the Design Thinking ideology. Unlike traditional prototyping that includes elaborate, close to real-life mock-ups of design ideas, in Design Thinking a prototype should command only as much time, effort and investment as is needed to generate useful feedback and evolve an idea. These are not a “finished prototypes,” but instead roughhewn mock-ups (Brown, 2008).

Prototypes are extremely useful to run a concept through a scenario to see the kind of obstacles that naturally arise. Designers have found, even with the most brilliant of designs, there must be allowances for maintenance and repairs (Rowe, 1987).

Rapid prototyping provides opportunities to test designs quickly and can provide numerous concepts quickly. In effect, it becomes a face-to-face crowd-sourcing opportunity. In this way, Design Thinkers learn to “fail early and cheap,” (Ward, A., Runcie, E. & Morris, L., 2009, p.81). When I was working on the marketing plan, participants took the ideas beyond styling and aesthetics. Instead of attending to only superficial concerns, there was an accent on the long-term impact of their ideas which led to a better constructed marketing plan. Everyone

became involved, from the people least involved with the process, all the way up to Mayor Kim and Mayor Brown. In this way, the iteration process built trust among group members and participants felt more comfortable giving feedback and giving it often.

Parallel Prototyping

Throughout the Design Thinking process, any stage can have a chaotic feel to people who are experiencing it for the first time (Brown, 2008). Parallel prototyping involves creating a variety of prototypes that can be combined to accent the best features of each. For example, parallel prototyping is demonstrated in the previously mentioned Dateline episode about IDEO Inc. re-designing the shopping cart (Condon, 1998). In that episode there are possible alternatives generated by three separate teams who were addressing three different problem sets. This type of thinking resembles work on Synectics (Gordon, 1961) where disparate concepts are forced together to yield a new source of creative ideas. In the forcing connections with concepts that have nothing to do with each other practitioners' use a dualistic thinking process where they are continually recognizing multi-faceted criteria. The criteria then help to structure the process by framing the project purpose and intention (Lawson, 2006).

In my project, presenting many prototypes was helpful to navigating through high-context Korean culture, allowing me to poke around sensitive subjects while avoiding embarrassment and loss of face. Instead of having to reject me, presenting several possibilities allowed the Koreans the space to wait until they liked something and signal approval.

Cross-Pollination

Cross-pollination gives participants in the Design Thinking process the ability to take on any challenge (Kelley & Littman, 2005). Cross-pollination occurs because there is an emphasis on using multi-functional teams. Going through a process with a team spreads the blame when

things go wrong. Since I involved the Koreans and the small business people throughout the process, failures were blunted. Over time, group members started to see failures more as opportunities to go in new directions. Through the process we had become a mutually supportive team with good relationships. Since evaluation feedback loops were systemized by rapid prototyping, failures became positive events and clues to a more inclusive process.

Observation

Observation, is a step in the Design Thinking process (Clark & Smith, 2008), that provides a richer contextual understanding of the knowledge about the people and issues involved with a challenge. Observation broadens the total knowledge base, allowing for the purpose to emerge. Design itself emanates from cultural norms, myth, lore and peoples' ceremonial rituals (Lawson, 2006). As design became institutionalized and achieved the status of a profession, the personal element in design became limited (Louridas, 1999). The move into human-centered problem solving in the 1980's required ethnography or "people hacking" (Hadnagy, 2011). Design Thinkers rely on the powers of observation. The basic rule of effective observation is that communication is not infallible and there are as many realities as there people (Hadnagy, 2011).

So instead of looking to focus groups as traditional marketing plans do, I took the observation approach of not just asking a potential customer about my concept but developing lists of issues with a product or service. These lists delineated errors and inefficiencies with the services my potential clients were experiencing. I gave special attention to recording their impressions, reactions and questions. When my potential clients interacted with experts in the field, I had a clear view of the globalization services as they existed, and the service I aspire to provide as an alternative.

I followed Kelley & Littman's (2005) basic concepts of observation. Kelley & Littman (2005) suggest keeping close to the action, starting dumb, maintaining a child's eye, embracing crazy concepts, finding rule breakers, and paying special attention to stupid customers.

Multi-functional Teams

The purpose of a multi-functional team is to harness the different expertise possessed by individuals in the group. When heuristics or experiential methods are dropped into the design process it brings about informality which creates the necessary environment for innovation to occur (Rowe, 1987). There is a myth of lone genius, and this project expounded instead on the concept of achieving the results through good team process (Kelley & Littman, 2005). I started with the desired end results and used the team to fill gaps in the project.

Time Deadlines

Time deadlines are also a significant factor in the Design Thinking process. Like having too much square footage, too much time can lead to members wandering off on tangents instead of focusing on the matter at hand. Luckily, the Koreans gave me grueling time deadlines so the necessity of doing multiple iterations of Design Thinking steps was built in. The team had good relationships, so time deadlines represented incremental victories as we passed them successfully. This led to camaraderie which led to being well-rounded because we got to know each other under difficult circumstances (Kelley & Littman, 2005).

Design Thinking is one part of the process in creating a marketing plan. Design thinking is a holistic rather than linear and analytical style of problem solving. The results of ethnography through observation and the development of an understanding of my potential clients did not translate readily into a traditional marketing plan. Most of the established literature about marketing is designed for large companies. Large companies have big budgets and staff to do

the necessary market analysis for niches that represent a wide cross-section of society. For that reason I had to look for a marketing plan that was as revolutionary and shaped by the information age.

Marketing Plan

Traditional marketing is the process used to determine what products or services may be of interest to customers, and the strategy to use in sales, communications and business development (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). A marketing plan is a document which formulates a plan for marketing products and services (Westwood, 2002). Guerilla Marketing relies on unconventional promotions, time, energy, and imagination. Guerilla Marketing is designed specifically to avoid big advertising budgets. Guerrilla marketing campaigns, like Guerilla warfare, are experiential, surprising, and unique (Levinson, 2007). The essential purpose behind a Guerilla Marketing campaign is to surprise and engage potential customers in a meaningful way; one that has sticky, thought-provoking qualities. The strategies employed by Guerilla Marketing concentrate on low or no-cost tactics that emphasize customer retention and repeat buying.

For the purposes of the project, a traditional marketing plan is an inappropriate approach to finding what matters to a small business and establishing the “dialogue” needed to tailor the approach to potential Korean partners. Large businesses, by the nature of being large, are unable to reach out to consumers on a personal basis and maintain a meaningful dialogue. Traditional marketing plans reflect the need of big companies to reach as many people as possible. So focus groups and a lot of analysis are necessary to craft the perfect message that will span the most potential customers. Big businesses are not trying to start a dialogue with their customers; they are participating in a one-way conversation where a “monologue”, crafted by carefully gauging

focus group reactions, has the most positive impact on the largest number of people (Hiebing & Cooper, 1992). Traditional marketing plans, as they are taught in business school, are oriented to large companies and take in as broad a target market as possible (Levinson, 2007). Marketing is the art of making the truth interesting and a traditional marketing plan provides a quantitative and qualitative decision making plan and rationale for strategic decision making (Hiebing & Cooper, 1992; Levinson, 2007).

In Guerilla Marketing it makes more sense to targeting a small niche. Consumers are subject to constant bombardment of T.V. commercials, radio ads and internet pop-ups. The younger generation, having grown up in this environment, is generally skeptical of advertising in general (Todd, 2004). The logic is that the more targeted the market, the more refined a message can be made to the potential customer. Also, by sticking to a small segment, it is easier to become the leader in that segment. The customer should be the center of attention in any company and empowering employees to make timely decisions is critical.

When employees have autonomy in decision-making, the company is more flexible and thus more competitive in the marketplace (Levinson, 2007).

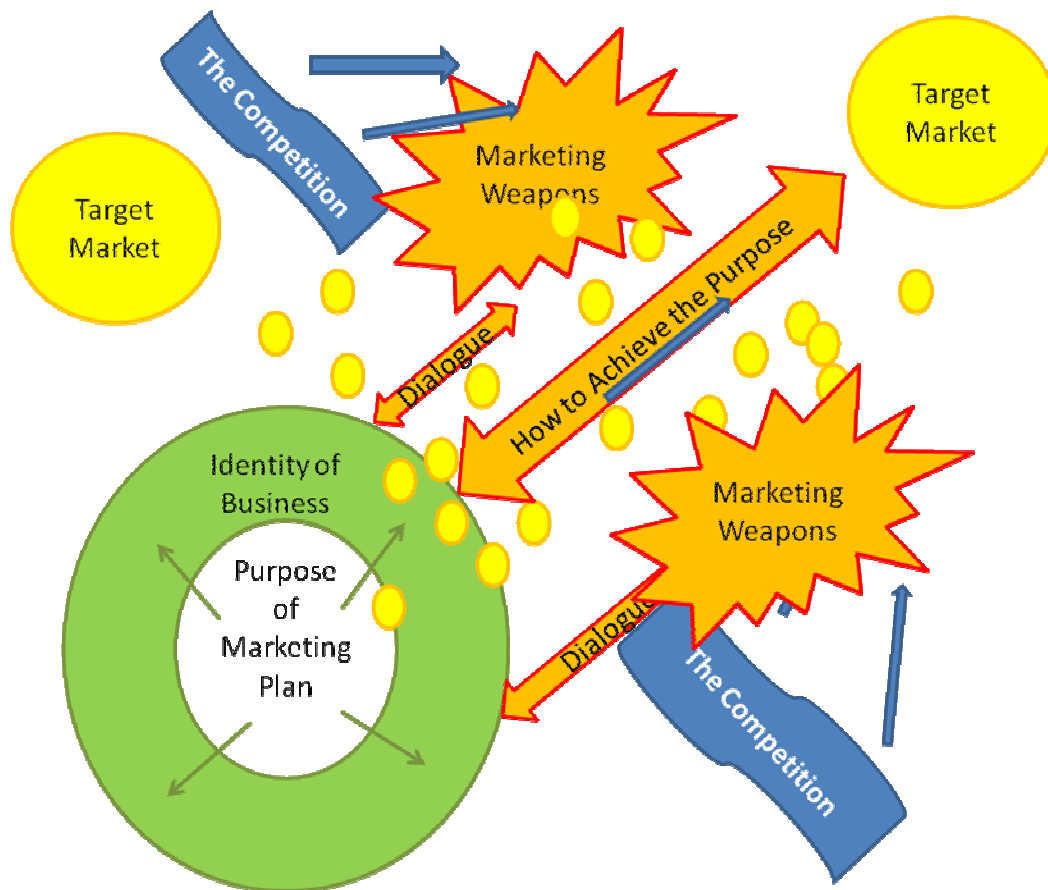


Figure 2: Components of Guerilla Marketing adapted from Levinson, 2007.

Purpose of the Marketing Plan

The purpose of marketing is to make the truth interesting and convince customers to change their minds or maintain loyalty to a product or service. The purpose of a Guerilla Marketing plan is to enlist the consumer as a co-developer. The interactivity, like the prototyping and evaluation phases of Design Thinking, gives tremendous insights into the needs and wants of the consumer are. Knowing exactly what consumers want it is then easy to turn those nuggets of clues to achieving that purpose. The purpose of a small business Guerilla

Marketing plan is to take advantage of geometric versus linear growth. Referrals, fusion marketing, and catchy campaigns can promote lifelong relationships with potential clients (Levinson, 2007).

How to Achieve the Purpose

Achieving the purpose of the marketing plan means establishing brand identity in a specific local market, (Anonymous, 2007) through one-on-one encounters and communication on a personal level. In achieving the purpose of the marketing plan it is necessary to develop a deep understanding of the target market so marketers know how to communicate (Todd, 2004).

There are ways not to achieve the purpose that can actually be very destructive. The nature of Guerilla Marketing is that it gets into the consumer's personal space. Guerilla marketers should capitalize on subtle and passive approaches rather than being ambiguous and assaulting (Todd, 2004). Large companies attempting viral marketing may use big advertising budgets while missing the point that it is the "cool" factor of kids reinterpreting the message on their own which makes viral marketing work (Todd, 2004).

Identity of the Business

The identity of the business should be reflected in the purpose of the Marketing Plan. What the company does should be clearly defined and congruous with the niche market it is representing. The core of the business is clearly expressed in marketing materials and not confused by trying to achieve too much at once.

I used the Design Thinking process to observe my potential clients. While interacting with my potential clients, it became apparent in the prototyping and evaluation phases that I wanted to work with a certain type of businesses and that began to define my business. There

was a larger potential client, but his style of business, which had long been a successful for him, was at odds with what I wanted my business to represent.

By choosing a niche to represent, a business, in effect, self-selects and defines itself to the world.

Target Market

A target market is a group of customers to whom the business has decided to aim its marketing efforts (Cohen, 2006). Target markets may be broken down by geography, demographics, attitudes and lifestyle, loyalty and product relation. Often when buying ad space on either broadcast or print media, there is a general splash that is categorized by these market segmentations. For a Guerilla Marketers it is important to break these niches down into micro-niches that get at an even narrower defined market. The point of this is that when that micro-niche is represented, the company then has the ability to perfect its craft, either with that product or service. It then provides itself the opportunity to become a market leader, build a reputation and following, in the long run, strengthening the brand name (Hiebing & Cooper, 1992; Levinson, 2007).

An example of target marketing is Rheingold beer. It was re-launched, capturing a niche market of young consumers that were drawn to classic brands. The campaign was successful because it appealed to the preferences of that target market. After 30 years of obscurity, Rheingold used Guerilla Marketing weapons that included using its packaging and New York City bar placement as their advertising. Their packaging was gritty and consumers were invited to participate in the “living history” of the brand by electing a favorite New York City nightlife employee as their favorite (Todd, 2004). The campaign had resonance because the Guerilla

Marketers had gotten to know their target market well and made direct appeals to their target market's personal preferences.

Marketing Weapons

A marketing weapon is a creative, cheap or free method of connecting with a potential repeat customer in a meaningful way. Interactivity in Guerilla Marketing is crucial. Like Design Thinking, it is the dialogue that makes the most of precious resources. Mistakes made by smaller companies are not as easily absorbed as those made by a bigger businesses with more financial flexibility. So Marketing Weapons need to be chosen carefully (Levinson, 2007).

One weapon could be as simple as an attractive woman at a bar ordering cocktails with the particular brand and talking about it with the people to whom she gives drinks. Another would be Pepsi's Aquafina blimp that spotted consumers and radioed down to the ground for on-the-spot prize awards. Companies have also sponsored skateboarders, an underground dodge-ball movement, and gospel music singers because they represented a group that had its own momentum.

In several cities around the United States an online bank planned a Guerilla Campaign during the winter morning commute - handing out free rides. Bank employees wore orange T-shirts and wherever they were, there were orange advertisements nearby. It turned out to have such a big impact it actually received free media coverage (Hatch, 2005).

Levinson (2007) emphasizes the impact of targeting marketing weapons so they are most effective. In academic literature on the topic of marketing, the majority of articles and textbooks focus on the needs of established and larger businesses. For start-ups and small businesses, standard marketing plans, no matter how carefully analyzed, can swing wide of the appropriate target market. The diversity of marketing weapons described previously is the key in the

Guerilla Marketing concept. If there is no budget for an advertising campaign, that deficiency can be remedied with creativity.

Niche Represented

Although “niches represented” is not a category specifically mentioned in Levinson’s (2007) Guerilla Marketing components (figure 2), he stresses their importance. He notes niches represented are an aspect of the Guerilla Marketing ethos that require special care and attention. In traditional marketing plan, niches are necessarily more all-inclusive (Hiebing & Cooper, 1992). A niche to a large company is a universe to a small company (Levinson, 2007). The niches that a small company, with a limited budget, chooses can minimize the risk and potential waste of any budget that might be available. Smaller companies, generally cash poor and not in as good of a financial position to have the lines of credit that would grant them access to larger markets, can ill afford to spend money on tactics that are almost guaranteed to fail or have minimal impact.

Also a consideration about niche marketing is the type of competition a small company faces in that niche. It is possible that if a Guerilla campaign is targeted to the right audience it can be exponentially more effective than a typical advertising campaign. Advertising is not experiential because there is no interactivity between the marketer and the consumer. In essence, the initial contact is maximized if the niche is well chosen (Levinson, 2007).

Budget

Though the budget is not shown in the above model of Guerilla Marketing Components (figure 2), according to the literature, (Levinson, 2007; Todd, 2004; White, 2007) it is important because smaller budgets preclude the ability to throw money into ineffective advertising campaigns.

For small marketers there may be an extremely small budget or none at all. So when a franchisee of 1-800-GOT-JUNK has to pay the \$21.45 for a billboard to become visible to 1,000 potential consumers, it made sense that they decided to spend .90 cents for truck painting that exposes it to the same 1,000 consumers but comes with bonus mileage of moving around all day (Genn, 2006). In marketing the aim is to reach the influencers, the high profile consumers that other consumer's look to as an opinion leaders and whose buying decisions are strongly influenced by these kinds of people (Hatch, 2005).

I had no operating budget for this project, so I had to find marketing strategies and tactics in marketing that were either cheap or free. So far, all of my marketing has been fuelled by my observational contact with potential clients and has had a minimal expense.

Using a Guerilla Marketing plan for this project made more sense than using a standard marketing plan. With a Guerilla Marketing plan I could easily use materials I gained from the observation and prototyping stages of Design Thinking. It was through the discovery of my potential clients true challenges that I began to understand the niche my company could represent (See company information in Appendix B). In understanding my niche, my target market, and the environment in which we all operated, I began to see clearly the issues my potential competitors do not address or address poorly. I started to see my target market as the small businesses that have been left behind in globalization.

The next section describes in a little more detail how I started with a concept and engaged everyone as I progressed including potential clients, the Korean delegation, and City officials in Buffalo. Since the service was for, and about their globalization, it was their input that was the most valuable to the project.

As the world gets more global and global influences are as close as a click away, the consuming public is no longer an easily definable segment. The process plan shows how the Design Thinking process allowed information and ideas to flow, not from just American to American, but around the world to my Korean partners, and back again.

Section Three: Process Plan

When creating this Guerilla Marketing plan I simultaneously employed the steps and concepts of Design Thinking, as well as the components of Guerilla Marketing, as outlined in Levinson (2007). Since there were many participants in this project operating on a variety of levels and in different countries, coordination of the disparate parts converged when representatives of American and Korean parties met in person. In order to maximize the effect of my research, both academic and through personal observation, it was necessary to conduct hundreds of iterations of prototyping to describe possibilities, particularly when transcending paradigms of culture and language.

This following section shows, in broad terms, the initiation, development and culmination of an international relationships among the city governments of Buffalo and Yeongcheon, Korea, as well as the many relationships that were begun with people throughout Western New York in small business, trade agencies and higher education institutions. In Appendix C, Case study about the Buffalo Yeongcheon Sister Cities Project, there is a more detailed look at the creation and development of a marketing plan, by showing details of the important work behind the scenes. In Appendix D there is an account of how particular intercultural barriers manifested and were subsequently overcome.

Timeline

September

- Interviewed first potential clients to ascertain their objectives in globalization.
- Started Design Thinking and Marketing research to figure out how to use in concert.
- Submitted final version of Concept Paper.

- Met with several small business entrepreneurs at the China American Trade Conference and followed a few around observing how they discuss their obstacles to globalization with experts in the field. Through this experience I discovered where the gaps lay between business owners' questions and experts' responses.

October

- Began initial construction of the framework for the marketing plan.
- Continued literature review and interviewing international trade agents
- During New York Delegation visit to Korea observe Koreans reacting to New York State Coordinator and share multiple prototypes about how to connect Western New York small businesses to Korean buyers. Also gave multiple prototype possibilities about the organization of the upcoming Yeongcheon Mayor Delegation visit to Buffalo.
- Completed final draft of sections 1, 2, and 3.
- While planning upcoming Mayoral delegation visit met with various politicians and staffers regarding their desires about how the visits would proceed with the Korean delegation. Also, presented prototypes that were developed with Korean input about how to introduce Buffalo-made products in Korea.
- Merged the needs of potential clients in Western New York and their potential Korean clients into a Guerilla Marketing framework.

November

- Korean delegation visited Buffalo and I facilitated prototyping sessions by telling each side the other side's desired outcome from working together.
- Took marketing plan and brochure to the Buffalo State Small Business Development Center for feedback and advice.

- Incorporated feedback into evaluation in of sections 4, 5, 6.
- Met with graphic designer to create a logo for the word I created as the name of my business that will be used in the marketing brochure.
- Created power point presentation to demonstrate how I used Design Thinking with Guerilla Marketing to create a marketing plan to help Buffalo-area businesses go global.

Section Four: Outcomes

If I hadn't invited the Koreans, small business people and city officials to experiment with me it would've been impossible to derive such a clear and relevant marketing plan. Owing to the Design Thinking concepts of Cross-pollination and multi-functional teams, it was possible to involve everyone in the creation of the marketing plan. What resulted was a unique approach that has yielded positive feedback from members of the Small Business Development Department at Buffalo State College, as well as small business people who otherwise would not have considered taking the risk of going global.

Guerilla Marketing Plan for Globalizing Small Western New York Businesses

Purpose of the plan

The purpose of this Guerilla Marketing plan is to convince small businesses in Western New York that globalizing is in their best interests. Usually when businesses look for help in globalizing they are directed to agencies such as the United States Commerce Department, the World Trade Center and the Buffalo Niagara Enterprise. The difficulty in this approach for small businesses is that these agencies' focus is dominated by larger businesses that are already well-established.

How to achieve the purpose of the plan

A crucial component of achieving the purpose of the plan is developing strong relationships with the Mayor and the Enterprise Attraction Team of Yeongcheon, South Korea. In creating a Sister City relationship, it was my intent to create a groundswell of public interest in globalization as an economic option for Western New York. I see it as a chance for Buffalo to distinguish itself from other cities in New York as being a forward-looking, economic

trendsetter. Finally, by being the first city in New York State to have a Korean Sister City, I hope that when Koreans think of investing in the U.S. they think of Buffalo first.

Identity of the business

Part of the purpose in using Design Thinking to create a marketing plan was to leverage concepts I learned about what my potential clients needed. This helped me determine how best to use my unique skills to help these businesses globalize. I have long been inspired by Grameen Bank, because it employs a bottom-up theory of economics that empowers small business people for the benefit of the community at large (Yunus, 2003). The identity of the bank is thus strongly linked to the community.

Niche represented

When meeting with area international trade agencies, and then with a larger business client, I realized that I didn't have the experience or track record to confidently guarantee that I could represent that niche of the market. Other regions in the United States, because they have larger Asian American populations, have shorter learning curves when it comes to globalizing in Asia. Buffalo, unlike other larger cities in the U.S., has a small Asian-American population (United States Bureau of the Census, 2010) so globalizing to Asia might seem too new to my potential clients. Since I'm steering these potential clients to Korea because of my personal knowledge base, I am effectively creating the niche I hope to represent. By bridging the gulf in American understanding of Asia (Manzo, 2001), I hope to represent a new way of translating American ideas for Asian markets.

Target Market

Client	Business	Response to Ethnography	Segment to go to Korea
Mr. A	Real Estate Re-investment	Poor	Looking for Korean investor
Mrs. B	General Practice Physician	Excellent	Shopping medical equipment
Mrs. C	Christian Votives Maker	Excellent	Shopping raw materials
Mr. D	Brick maker	Excellent	Bricks
Ms. E	Plus size fashion	Excellent	Shopping fabrics

Figure 3: Client Interviews with Small to mid-sized Buffalo-area business

I decided my target market (represented in Table 2) needed at least a basic level of respect for globalization. Possessing a deep knowledge of Korea was not necessary. Accepting that I might know something more about Asia than they know is a good sign. For my target market to not to know the difference between Japan, China and Korea actually works in my favor because it gives me the opportunity to demonstrate my depth of knowledge and expertise. I also need a target market that is willing to work with my ethnographic methods. Finally, I decided it makes sense for me to target clients who had negative experiences with trade experts. In Mr. D.'s case he had actually spent about \$7,000 with the Commerce Department and saw no sales at all. This experience gave Mr. D. the kind of humility that was utterly lacking in Mr. A. and made it easier for him to try something totally outside his own experience.

Marketing Weapons and Budget

In budgeting for my Guerilla Marketing plan, the overarching constraint was a limited access to funding (See budget in Appendix E). My plan included either cheap or free options. When I spent money, there had to be a definite result associated with the expenditure. For that reason, I set up a Face book page for the Buffalo-Sister Cities Project

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/250725314965132/>, wrote hundreds of thank you letters, kept good records of everyone I met and gave presents after significant events. I wanted to convey a personal touch and the intent of starting a long-lasting relationship. I also wanted to show I valued the time and input people gave me. Also, I copied what worked well for others, such as calling the Niagara-Buffalo International Airport and requesting a welcome sign for Mayor Kim on the LED screen (See Appendix F) and creating a large welcome banner for the Korean delegation like they did for our delegation when we went to Korea (See Appendix G). These small touches not only meant a lot to the Korean delegation, but they generated a buzz that lent an air of officialdom to the delegation's arrival. Above all else, I tried to foster an environment where everyone involved took care of each other. By modeling this behavior, people got as good or better impressions about their involvement because they felt they were valued. It was personalized treatment and care that enriched the project, something money could not necessarily buy.

All of the Design Thinking steps were essential in the creation and testing of concepts of the Guerilla Marketing plan. Potential clients self-selected out of the project when they showed resistance to the Design Thinking process. This indicated that they probably weren't a good fit for the purpose of my business. In those who resisted Design Thinking I also found a general resistance in learning about other people, not just Koreans. Those people resistant to Design Thinking also tended to be resistant to doing things in new ways. Since these people were not currently doing business in Asia, I took their resistance as an affirmation that I was on the right track.

Section Five: Key Learnings

I became more aware of small business peoples' challenges and concerns which helped me to develop a bit more humility and I learned much more. A base of respect gave way to vigorous cross-pollination, which led to excitement, which that seemed to follow the Koreans everywhere they went. The happiness, in turn, attracted attention which turned the Korean delegation, and anyone involved with them into a sensation (See article in Appendix H and interview in Appendix I). By accident, my first guerilla tactic happened just by getting a Korean delegation to the U.S.

The essential empathy between people was a powerful force that magnified all interactions and I have no doubt that it will set Buffalo's small businesses on a path to succeed in Korea. These relationships won't just be familiar; they will hopefully become the bonds that develop into a source of professional and emotional support. They will also provide hope for others to take the chance at globalizing.

I realized there were some tremendous opportunities when I spoke with small business people and visited the United States Department of Commerce site (http://export.gov/salesandmarketing/eg_main_018195.asp) and the Office of the United States Trade Representative website <http://www.ustr.gov/countries-regions/japan-korea-apek/korea>

When I put myself in the shoes of my potential clients, I was overwhelmed by the number of services and analyses that were available. I imagined what it must be like for someone who knows nothing about Asia looking at these services, which started billing at around \$1,500. It was troubling, even knowing what I know, to decide which services would be appropriate for a small business. From my impression of the United States Department of Commerce website (http://export.gov/salesandmarketing/eg_main_018195.asp) it seemed like a

very big risk with a very uncertain result. I had no idea how scary these sites really were until I watched my potential clients try to extract clues from actual people who were representing the U.S. Department of Commerce at the U.S. China Trade Conference (Appendix J).

When I went to the Small Business Administration site, <http://www.sba.gov/about-offices-content/2/3134>, I discovered that public information about Korea didn't exist.

Additionally, the Small Business Administration branch offices in Korea were in Seoul. When looking at this from a small business person's perspective it dawned on me that it might be a terrifying prospect to show up in Seoul and try to make sense out of it. I know New York City to American born, English speakers can be terrifying. Seoul is a gigantic city where English is not widely spoken, which makes doing business there very intimidating.

Listening to the advice experts were giving to small business people, I watched as they were deflected and given insufficient advice. The experts kept telling the business people they needed to build relationships, but never gave any solid advice about how to start that process. I was surprised how I became increasingly frustrated with these answers. The small business men and women patiently kept asking different people with the same results. I didn't realize there was such a disconnect between small business people wanting to globalize and the supposed experts in the field. I didn't realize how little Americans understood about Asian countries until they started talking about copyright infringement horror stories. It seemed everyone I spoke with thought copyright infringement was something that happened to the same degree, in every country of Asia, as it happens in China. After I described Korea's political and judicial system people were genuinely surprised, and to my surprise they would ask me if Korea was a different country than China.

The greatest learning from creating the marketing plan using Design Thinking methods was how much prototyping dissipated potential conflicts. By continually prototyping happy endings, especially during difficult periods, I was forced to concentrate not on the obstacles but how we could overcome them.

Overtured assumptions

Assuming Buffalo's Mayor would keep his word was a mistake on my part. Like so many things that happened during my implementation of Design Thinking to create the marketing plan, I assumed I knew my own countrymen. Every challenge I ran into while employing Design Thinking methods generally occurred because I hadn't observed Americans honestly. I had violated the observation and ethnographic rules to my own detriment. Assuming that Americans would behave the way I expected usually foreshadowed a major difficulty when bringing the Americans and the Koreans together.

I learned, from my assumptions about Americans, that some of my assumptions about myself were also wrong. There was a time when I thought the whole project was going to end in disaster because the Mayor of Buffalo wasn't meeting with Mayor Kim. I truly didn't think I would be able to make that meeting happen. I did not think I was smart enough, connected enough, or influential enough to turn what seemed like an impossible situation completely around. It turned out that I was persistent enough to get a well-timed message to exactly the right person. I did a better job than imagined. This also became evident as I came to understand that the elements I brought to our multi-functional team were quite valuable. Things that were difficult or impossible for other people became readily apparent when we were on site performing specific tasks. It became clear, when watching others struggle to translate across

paradigms, exactly what my personal expertise was. This, as a marketing weapon, is incredibly valuable.

Design Thinking made me see that because we had major challenges there was no way of knowing just what skills I could market unless I had tried. I became a prototype. Adjusting to the needs of the client became a way for me to articulate the heart of my marketing message, and what specifically I could offer to a small business that wants to go global.

How Design Thinking is Helpful as a Creative Process

Design Thinking, particularly between prototyping and evaluation, can be an excellent brainstorming process. For people who are not familiar with brainstorming, it is an easy way to ease into an ideation phase by following the lead of the person doing the initial prototyping. As the potential client becomes more flexible with prototyping and comfortable submitting feedback in the evaluation phase, it becomes easier for the client to actually become a co-creator and start participating in the prototyping phase.

In the creative problem solving process, as it is taught at the International Center for Studies in Creativity, there is an implicit expectation that participants in a problem solving process take ownership of the product because with increased buy-in from participants, the greater the contributions they are likely to make. Since Design Thinking is inherently customer-centric, it made sense from the beginning to involve potential clients to participate in the creation of the marketing plan.

By allowing both the Americans and the Koreans to participate in the prototyping, a great deal of understanding was conveyed between them since one person could walk around in another person's prototype. In essence, it allowed me to actually take American small businesspeople to Korea and meet Korean people without ever needing to leave America. The

same was true for the Koreans. When the two parties met, the transition from uncomfortable to joking was quick. As communication progressed, the mood turned to genuine warmth and a atmosphere of trust.

In this creative environment we created, what Rhodes (1961) refers to as the press, real magic happened. Whether it was Mayor Kim intently listening to Councilman Kearns's dreams of improving Buffalo's waterfront or Mayor Kim describing to the International Center for Studies in Creativity staff and faculty how important he thought creativity was for the future of Yeongcheon City, the space between different peoples was bridged quickly. Almost instantaneously we were speaking the languages of the heart and common human experience.

What Worked

From the beginning, the delegation itinerary (See Appendix K) was open to everyone who was involved in the visit. I did this so people had the latitude to take care of things they needed or add things when they had ideas. This is how I incorporated the concept of cross-pollination because by leaving the itinerary open to suggestion, I got to truly see what people had to offer. This openness led to our multi-functional team working so well together. It led to an ubiquitous attitude that everyone's time was valuable. Everyone contributed and everyone was taken care of. For me it was a test run because it allowed me the chance to work with a number of diversely skilled individuals, on their terms.

Another decision that worked was concentrating on making Yeongcheon's Mayor Kim happy. This opportunity provided me with a window into what high-ranking Korean officials expect, which is an excellent insight to understand for future commercial ventures. Also, every meeting provided an opportunity to see how Koreans and Americans interacted together in a variety of official situations. To satisfy Mayor Kim I had spent a lot of time prototyping the visit

with my Korean counterparts. In describing situations and likely American behavior, I prepared them for situations like waiting for Mayor Brown on the day of the signing. That turned out to be an excellent idea because the Koreans were ready and not unduly offended.

For the signing of the Sister City Agreement, I learned how to explain Mayor Brown's 45 minute delay. When setting up meetings with members of the Erie County Executive (See Appendix L) and Buffalo Common Council members (See Appendix M), I learned how easy it was to just make an appointment. At those meetings, I learned what was important to local politicians and how passionate they were about trying to help local small businesses go global.

Though the Korean delegation trip was important to me, I didn't know how important it was to the Buffalo Common Council President, David Franczyk. While I watched Mayor Kim give a speech to the Common Council (See Appendix N), I thought the Council President looked annoyed. To my surprise, when Mayor Kim was finished addressing the body, the Council President went on for quite a long time about how important Mayor Kim's visit was to the City of Buffalo, and how honored they all were to welcome the delegation during the signing (Appendix O) of the Sister Cities Memo of Understanding (See Appendix P).

Another thing that worked was preparing the Americans with different scenarios which helped them visualize how they would handle meetings with Koreans. They often demanded to know more about cultural differences and made a point of sharing their prototype of a perfect visit.

What I Would Do Differently

Without a doubt, I would have involved Buffalo State's Small Business Development Center more in the coordination of the Korean delegation trip. There were numerous occasions when all the members of the office helped the project. Initially I was given very helpful advice

about the concept of starting a business to help small businesses globalize from the SBA Business Advisors. Later, another staff member worked hard to set up a factory tour that Mayor Kim requested. My attendance at the China Trade Conference would not have been possible, if the International Small Business Director had not worked so hard to organize the conference. Finally, had it not been for the open ear of a very special person there may have not been a Mayors' meeting and signing of New York State's first Korean Sister City.

In sizing up the character of people that I would have help me, I would employ more observation. I made a poor assumption of thinking someone who said they would help me would actually help me. Generally, people who mean to help, help. There was one volunteer I left out of planning because she had some unhelpful behaviors I thought would jeopardize the delegation visit on a whole. The reality was she only talked about helping, but did little for me that was actually helpful. Unfortunately because of her reputation for this type of behavior, some who were close to the situation indicated this may have been a contributing factor to difficulties with the Mayors' meeting.

Finally, when money is not immediately forthcoming, it is easy to be sucked into the trap of doing what people want, even when it possibly violates personal ethics, if there is the hope of a big pay-off. In the end, I spent a lot of time helping two people who didn't help me in any way. That time could have been better spent elsewhere.

Next steps

My immediate next step after the completion of this project will to research the Korean market with the same vigor I have used in researching Design Thinking and Guerilla Marketing. From the small business contacts I have made, I will look at the specific Korean markets that would be good starting points for distributing their products.

In the conversations between Mayor Kim and various political officials around Buffalo, he indicated a strong desire to start Sister City stores in our respective cities that would feature products, history and culture of our cities in both Yeongcheon and Buffalo. To this end, I will begin looking for an appropriate location for a Yeongcheon store in Buffalo and have already begun talks with the directors of Buffalo's other Sister Cities about making the store multi-cultural, perhaps also involving Buffalo's refugee community on some level.

Since I would like my business, Imaginomics, to accrue success immediately, like my marketing plan attracted attention as soon as I released it, I intend to put together a comprehensive business plan that maps out the first five years of business, and the type of business I want Imaginomics to be.

I intend on upgrading the Marketing Plan by asking clients, as they indicate their satisfaction with the service, to give some sort of testimonial. It would be nice to have clients film a video, but I would leave that up to their comfort level.

Section 6: Conclusion

The intent of this project was to create a marketing plan, tailoring it to the specific needs of small Western New York businesses. After serving in the military and returning home during an economic recession, I've felt a tremendous debt of gratitude for the G.I. Bill, which made it possible for me to study Design Thinking so I didn't have to worry about food and gas while working towards a Master of Science in Creativity.

I fully expected there to be change from an initial concept to the final marketing plan. I thought it was likely I would have to abandon pieces and components of my vision on the side of the road in the rigorous process of creating a project. It is a happy fact that I left nothing behind I didn't want to leave behind. To understand my target market I had to leave what I thought I knew to understand their challenges. In the end, I came to a new improved version of myself.

Design Thinking excited me before I began with the Creative Studies program. The military world is a world divided by boundaries and ranks. These divisions are clear cut, defining and inflexible. In the first few days away from the Marine Corps, I was in a Design Thinking and Creative Problem Solving (Cahen, 2010) session at a conference at Buffalo State. After eight years of strict, rigid behaviors and instantaneous compliance to orders, being in the Design Thinking world had a lack of boundaries that gave me an anxiety attack.

The session reached me on a very deep level. It reached the creative part of me that had been cowering in a corner hiding from the thought police for eight years. It reached right into that part, allowing no time or room for my own internal judgment and I couldn't get enough of it.

After eight years spending my working life figuring out how to destroy things, and then figuring out how to help my teams destroy people, I'm excited to think that I might actually have

a plan that will put my interests and skills together in such a way that it might actually help people build things and earn a living.

Through this project, the focus was almost entirely outside of my own psyche. After the military it was a wonderful break. Prototyping is a practice in empathy because without empathy appealing to peoples' preferences would be difficult. In leaving myself and going as far away as the Korean psyche, and literally as far away as the nation of Korea, I ended up coming to a clearer version of myself, someone I liked a lot better than the person who first met Design Thinking in May of 2010.

Some say problem solving is 90% problem definition. I think 90% of creativity is getting people to work with each other. We don't have to like each other, or think we like each other; we just have to give each other a chance. Of all the languages I speak, I love the people who speak Korean the most. Korea has been occupied throughout its history and discounted by other countries in Asia. The five years I've spent learning their language and working with them has been exquisite and an experience I want my fellow Americans to share.

Of the Americans I'd like to share that experience with, the ones I think would benefit most from the experience are the small business people in Buffalo, NY. Life in Buffalo has been hard for a long time, and I wanted to repay a debt of gratitude by making things a little easier.

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Appendix A Concept Paper

Concept Paper – CRS 690

Title of Project:

Using the Design Thinking to Create a Marketing Plan**Name:** Rebecca Reilly Date Submitted: 9/29/2011**Project Type:** How to meet a product need or vision

Section One**Purpose and Description of Project:**

The purpose of this project is to develop a marketing plan for a consultancy that will help Western New York businesses expand into the Korean market. The Design Thinking model and Guerrilla Marketing techniques will be utilized as appropriate. The initial client will serve as a case study serving as a template for use with future clients.

Rationale for Selection:

I am attracted to Design Thinking because it is based on creating products or services that can serve as major innovations within industries. With the continuing shift of economic power to the east, the world market is turning into an unfamiliar place for U.S. business accustomed to decades of economic primacy. The methodology of Design Thinking examines the spectrum of innovation while maintaining a sharp focus on human-centered activity. The strength of Design Thinking lies in the emphasis on understanding by direct observation and prototyping products and services based on what people want and need. Preferences are taken seriously and decoded as design cues. Design Thinking enables teams to work continually through trial and error loops

and learning based on failing fast and failing often. Designs are generated then matched to technical reality and strategic business viability. In a crowded marketplace, innovation is the only guarantee in differentiating services and products. Business leaders in this current economic climate are forced to look at innovation as a way distinguishes them from the competition.

I am most comfortable in leadership roles as a facilitator. I am inclined to use my Creative Problem Solving skills in new and innovative ways. Finding a way to market my creative problem solving skills in combination with my foreign language skills has been a challenge. Due to the economic climate, managers reviewing my resume seem to be looking for a higher level of language skills than I possess, or a traditional MBA. In previous professions I have discovered a unique skill mediating between Koreans and Americans in a variety of professional situations. I have also facilitated problem solving workshops with Koreans in efforts to create a Sister City relationship with the City of Buffalo. These skills have global value and through the Design Thinking process I hope to demonstrate how my skills can bring value to my potential clients through my marketing plan.

Section Two

Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:

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Section Three

How Do You Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes?

To start I will do a preliminary client interview with the proprietor of a Western New York company owner to determine what his goals are in entering the Korean market to attract Korean institutional investors to his investment opportunities here in the U.S. Once we have determined what it is he aims to do I will ask him to compile some background information about his company. While he compiles his information I will research the challenges presented to a company like his in the areas of: cultural gaps, social innovation and design thinking as a methods of bridging those gaps, potential areas where his company could extend its influence and identifying assistors and resistors to his objectives. Through problem solving sessions with the proprietor of this company I will create a preliminary strategic framework. I will generalize it so it can serve as a template for future prospective clients and cast it as the centerpiece of my marketing plan. The literature research is intended to support the interpersonal strategies and provide a context for my cultural and language skills. From this published literature on cultural trends in creativity and social engineering I will extrapolate best practices that serve the interests of both my client and his potential clients. To keep on target with the requirement of finishing the project in one semester I will set out achievable milestones that will progress at a regular pace ensuring the success of the project.

Prepare Project Timeline:

September

- Interview primary client to ascertain his objectives in globalization September 12
- Connect Design Thinking concepts to a Social Engineering plan September 12
- Submit final version of Concept Paper by, September 29

- Begin interviews with international broker organizations September 20
- Meet with array of entrepreneurs and discuss their obstacles to globalization September 21, 22 (China American Trade Conference)

October

- Start constructing framework for marketing plan October 3
- Continue literature and international trade facilitation agencies research
- Send Korean contacts initial globalization objectives questionnaire ahead of delegation trip, complete draft of sections 1, 2, 3 October 6
- Delegation visit to Korea: facilitate initial “observation” business meetings for potential clients October 10
- Complete final draft of sections (with post-meeting adjustments) 1, 2, 3 October 10
- Incorporate lessons learned about framework for case studies, hone down central principles that apply to a spectrum of industries. Complete modifications to sections 1, 2, 3 October 15
- Final Draft including outline of Design Thinking process as manifested in Korea meetings 1, 2, 3 October 20
- Korean delegation visit to Buffalo: facilitate “prototyping” sessions between WNY businesses and Korean contacts October 31- November 3

November

- Submit sections 1, 2, 3 for evaluation by International Small Business Office at Buffalo State, Buffalo Niagara Enterprise and client November 2
- Submit sections 1, 2, 3 to Doug Reid of New and Improved and Tim and Laura Switalski, of Darwin Associates for professional feedback November 2

- Incorporate feedback into evaluation in submitted draft of sections 4, 5, 6 November 3
- Collect, collate and scan documents to supplement marketing plan Thursday, November 10
- Meet with Buffalo State Graphic Design Department for help creating final product marketing plan Friday, November 10
- Revise final draft of sections 4, 5, and 6 after receiving feedback from Professor Mance November 17
- Create power point to demonstrate the evolution of the globalization marketing plan November 25

Section Four

What Will be the Tangible Product(s) or Outcomes?

The outcome of this project will be marketing plan created from converting the case study built on my initial client's needs. This marketing plan will facilitate future clients' ability to envision expanding their businesses to Korea. As I develop prototypes to satisfy my initial client's needs, prototypes from the case study will then become steps in the marketing plan. I will capture what I learn about the client through Design Thinking methodology to maintain a client-centric marketing plan.

Section Five

Personal Learning Goals:

- How to use Design Thinking and Guerilla Marketing to bring businesses together in global relationships
- How to learn what aspects of the Design Thinking process on matchmaking Western New York business with Korean clients and consumers

- How to learn what aspects of the Design Thinking process most easily correspond to objectives outlined in the marketing plan
- How to use these processes in concert with Creative Problem Solving steps and techniques
- How to learn which methods work best when working with prospective clients.

What Criteria Will You Use To Measure The Effectiveness Of Your Achievement?

Like the Design Thinking process I will create benchmarks based on my client and his potential client's needs and wants. Through facilitation of creative "conflict" together we will identify the gaps and collaborate on methods to narrowing them. One way I will measure efficacy of the marketing plan-portfolio will be to present it to a business owner whose business I will target after the project is complete. I will also look to various small business support organizations in the Buffalo area for feedback on the marketing plan and final product. Whether I am successful in attracting additional clients will be an added benefit. At the completion of the project I will be satisfied with a strong marketing plan-portfolio which has emerged from the collective international business experience as I facilitate this knowledge from business leaders.

Evaluation:

In evaluating personal learning goals I will compare my assumptions at the beginning of the project and compare and contrast those assumptions with the actual trajectory of the project. From the variance I will analyze how well I will express the project history in terms of stages in the Design Thinking process including observations of the clients; prototyping client needs backtracking and redesigning prototypes to better address clients' needs. How well I use the Design Thinking on this particular project will be a direct indicator that I have assimilated the methodology fully and have demonstrated my ability to use it with clients in such a way that is useful to him in his effort to globalize his business. In determining my own fluency in the

process of facilitating Design Thinking I should be able to bring this U.S. businessman and a Korean investor together in a way that is meaningful to them. In using different aspects of the Design Thinking methodology I will be able to identify which aspects of the process are most useful at different stages of the marketing plan. Finally, while using the Design Thinking process I should also discover Creative Problem Solving steps and techniques that enhance different stages of the overall process.

Appendix B Imaginomics meme, logo, and brochure



We want to hear from you...

We will help you increase your bottom line.

We will find long term business partners you'll feel good about.

We'll get your product or service into markets you haven't yet considered.

We'll help you every step of the way with cultural and language challenges

We'll help you see your own product or service in a whole new way!



Imagine your product here!

Imaginomics
65 Niagara Square
Suite 2001
Buffalo, New York 14203
Phone: 813-974-0064
Fax: 716-877-2820
Email: info@imaginomics.com



Imaginomics

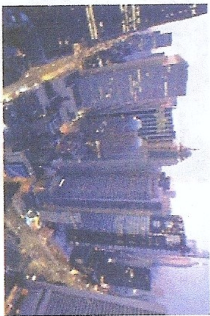
Place
postage
here

Name of Business: _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zipcode _____
Website: _____
Email address _____
Point of Contact _____
Telephone: _____
Mobile Phone: _____

Imaginomics

Taking Local Global

▶ Global Market
Placement for WNY
Business



Tel: 555 555 5555

Dare to look at a global future for Buffalo

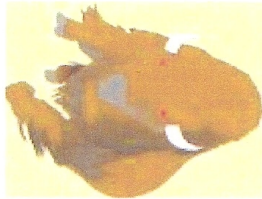
On October 12, 2011 President Obama signed the historic Korea-US Free Trade Agreement.



On November 3, 2011 Buffalo Mayor Brown signed New York State's first Korean Sister City Agreement. Let's put Buffalo on the world map!

In Korea everything starts with relationships ...

- Start getting to know people in Korea on line
- Keep your costs down by well-targeted approaches
- Create new market share by getting to know your market and taking advantage of your business's flexibility by catering to that market
- Beat your local competitors to globalization
- Grow with us, as we include more countries your product can come along for the ride



Imaginomics

Imaginomics
65 Niagara Square
Suite 2001
Buffalo, New York 14229
Phone: 831-747-4064
Fax: 716-877-3439
E-mail: reilly.rebecca38@gmail.com



Imaginomics Taking Local Global.



How We Do It

- We get to know you
- We get to know your market situation
- We get to know your customers
- We suggest new uses and strategies to appeal to new markets
- We use your feedback to find your Korean match

Tel: 555 555 5555

Appendix C Case study about the Buffalo Yeongcheon Sister Cities Project

1. Mayor's office asked me to find a Sister City in Korea

In June of 2010 the City of Buffalo Mayor's Liaison to Sister Cities asked me to find a Sister City for Buffalo in the Republic of South Korea. At the time I didn't know what Sister Cities International did or how to start the process for establishing Sister City relationships.

2. I decided it had to be an economic purpose

Through research I discovered Sister City relationships are usually cultural and educational exchanges. I was unemployed when I began the project so my primary interest was creating a Sister City relationship with a Korean city that would lead to economic benefits and a job for me. .

3. Decided it had to benefit local Western New York businesses

City governments rarely give funds to Sister Cities committees. In order to establish new sources of future revenue I decided I needed local support. My reasoning was that if companies stood to add to their profit margin by cooperating and participating in a Sister City relationship they would be more likely to become a consistent benefactor as they would see an immediate economic gain in doing so.

4. Email Koreans

I understood that in order to gain the support of the Korean-American community in Buffalo, I would have to canvass them in order to find an appropriate Sister City for Buffalo. In the process of visiting local area churches to find out what the best way to approach a potential city in Korea I was introduced to a visiting Korean professor who offered to put me in contact with an official in Yeongcheon, ROK. The official

introduction is the way most Koreans feel comfortable with initial business inquiries.

Through this contact I began emailing in Korean describing what I was hoping to accomplish and to gauge their initial interest.

5. Exchange info

This young official was part of the Yeongcheon Enterprise Attraction Team. As he was the lowest person in the hierarchy it is likely that is why the idea was so well received at first. His excitement turned into requests for detailed information so he could make presentations to his superiors and ultimately to the Mayor of Yeongcheon. At this time I was communicating my progress to the Buffalo Mayor's liaison to Sister Cities International and he was advising as to next steps and where I could find specific data about the City of Buffalo.

6. Convince them to trust me

Having worked with Koreans for eight months as a Marine in Seoul, I was accustomed to their need for prodigious amounts of background information. Due to my experience with the American media, I would happily provide copious amounts of research material as quickly as I could possibly get it to them. Additionally, I always to attempt to provide more than what was originally requested and translated most of the material I sent so it would be easy for my Korean counterpart to read and brief to his Mayor. My counterpart was very grateful for my work and came to trust me more and more.

7. Visit them

Since I was still a reservist in the USMC I was assigned on temporary duty to Korea for three months. During that time I told my counterpart that I was in the country and he suggested that I come and visit Yeongcheon and do some initial planning for a fact

finding trip they were considering. The visit was a great success and I learned a great deal about how they conducted official visits. I modeled the Korean delegation's visit to Buffalo using the treatment I was given when I visited Yeongcheon. To up the ante I inquired with my counterpart about specific elements they would like to include that would make them feel their visit was a success.

8. Economic development meetings

The delegation visited Buffalo and I was unable to host the trip as I was detained in Korea. I made sure to honor all requests with volunteers' help. The delegation ended up accomplishing everything so they were very happy. I wanted to put all of these people in the same room so in the instance that a business person from Buffalo wanted to start the process of exporting to Korea, the path would be blazed and hopefully much easier to negotiate since everyone now knew each other. Debriefed everyone involved with trip upon my return from Korea.

9. Visit Yeongcheon

About seven months later I took a delegation to Yeongcheon as an official representation from the State of New York and as a declaration of intent and importance. On this trip we visited local area businesses that wanted to export to Buffalo. Asian trade systems operate on connections and the implication that one good turn deserves another. The intent behind finding out about these Yeongcheon businesses was that if we provided them a new market and a gateway to the U.S. through Buffalo, that according to rules governing informal business relationships, the Koreans would do us the same favor by finding markets for Buffalo made products and a gateway to the nation of Korea.

10. Get an idea what Koreans want

While I was in Yeongcheon I also painted a picture of what the Mayor of Yeongcheon's visit would be like to Buffalo. I prodded them to request things be put into the itinerary and promised to do my best to come through on those promises. The Koreans provided me some wiggle room by saying "it would be nice" if they visited an auto plant, but that some things were non-negotiable like visiting with some local politicians and specifically the Mayor of Buffalo. They also indicated what sites they wanted to see, but since they were pleased with the prior visit they left most of the planning up to me.

11. Merge what Western New York businesses want

When meeting with important people around Buffalo I had to discern what their goals were and how that might blend with the Yeongcheon goals. Generally both sides want investment dollars that they cannot get from local or federal sources. Korea is highly dependent on exports so their concern is primarily opening up new markets for Korean made products. Americans fearful of losing more jobs to Asia want to see cash and development so they are able to keep jobs in the states. I started explaining how Korea is different from China and what the benefits would be of a partnership with Korea versus China. With the local politicians' help I believed I could amplify that message throughout Western New York.

12. Various prototypes of bringing business to Buffalo

To encourage local politicians and economic development agencies to see things my way, I proposed a variety of prototypical commercial relationships that would directly benefit Buffalonians. The first was inviting Hyundai-Rotem to start a conversation with New York State lawmakers about helping jumpstart the High-Speed Rail initiative. This was

largely a failure so I then conceived of various ways to help local businesses go global; deciding in the end to focus on the underserved small and medium sized businesses.

13. Initially interested until they realize it will take work on their part

Most large enterprises were initially excited about the prospect until they realized it would take some money and work on their part. Bigger businesses expect a fully tailored money making proposition to be laid at their feet before they even think about committing. For the Economic Development Agencies, unless the prospect was bringing in substantial fees to their organizations, they were generally reticent and reluctant to meet or help. Since I lack capital or experience I had to figure out a way to put my skills to work without an initial outlay of capital.

14. Attend the U.S. China Trade Development Conference

To gain a more in-depth understanding about businesses that have a strong desire to go global specifically to Asia I went to a China Trade conference. At this conference I discovered that the small to mid-sized companies were almost completely left to fend for themselves. Larger companies can afford staffs of lawyers and could hire foreign nationals and translators as well as pay for the tailored market prospecting services of the U.S. Commerce Department or the World Trade Center.

15. Meet with Mr. A and Mrs. B

Mr. A requested immediately that I find his company a \$10 million dollar investor from Korea. He tells me he's culturally aware because he does business with Hasidic Jews and Christians from different parts of the country. Mrs. B, a Nigerian doctor wants to buy cheap medical equipment to stock her clinic in Nigeria. She also wants to buy solar

powered lamps, generators equipment for poor people because the electric situation is unreliable in Nigeria

16. Go to Korea, delegate takes over

I invited another delegate, as she is the head of the New York State Sister Cities committee. She seemed to do well with Koreans and other foreigners initially. Delegate talks too much in run on sentences and even when I explain my issue translating she continues speaking in paragraphs. The reciprocal help this delegate promised months ago never materialized and I begin to worry that she will make outlandish promises to Koreans that she will not keep. I tell her to stop making promises unless she intends to see them through. She promises she won't but keeps making more and more promises.

17. Planning for Mayor's trip

Decide to leave delegate out of all planning. I contact Sang-woon and tell him the other delegate has no intention of fulfilling promises. At this point Mayor Brown still hasn't agreed to meet. So I plan to fill-in activities like meetings with politician meetings. I also had to write the economic benefit summary for the Buffalo Mayor. I met with a Small Business Development Center staffer to make the most of the schedule.

18. Providing opportunities providing connections

When I approach County Executive Collins and the Council Members asking them to meet with Mayor Kim I begin by telling them he's there for a Sister City signing but necessarily don't want to talk too much about that in case it doesn't happen so I spend most of my time painting a picture of what Korean American cooperation might look like with accents on the things that are important to the people I'm talking to, for that I do

research about their constituents and what they personally are involved in. Before the visit I translate all that into Koreans so they know who they are meeting.

19. Volunteers add to itinerary

I sent the schedule to everyone that was helping so they could see where they'd fit and told them that though things were scheduled, some were movable. So, if it was more convenient to put something on a different day, to just let me know and there was a chance I could change it. I was changing the schedule constantly but as things got firmed up it was easy to explain why I couldn't change some things around. I'd been planning for the visit and collecting volunteers for months beforehand.

20. SBA staffer saves everything

In the end, with relentless efforts to get the attention of people and using the help that was suggested to me, we were successful in getting a meeting with Mayor Brown. This was because an SBA staffer at the Buffalo State Small Business association office kept reminding another important staffer. Staffer number two ultimately met with Mayor Kim at social hour and then after hitting it off called the Buffalo Mayor and an appointment was set up for the following day.

21. Highlights of the trip

Councilman Kearns told a Mayor Kim chicken wing story at the Common Council that everyone loved, including Mayor Kim. Mayor Kim flirted with my mom. Mayor Kim met cool ordinary Buffalonians everywhere. One lady waiting for a bus took the Korean Council President by the arm and walked him up the stairs like they were going to the Opera. The Korean's patience was pretty thin with Mayor Brown but it all worked out great and Mayor Brown was perfect. Buffalo State gave the warm and genuine welcomes.

Medaille threw a catered official dinner. Dr. Kim and her entire family worked hosted “Korea Day” at Medaille. Sung’s grocery donated home-made Korean BBQ

22. Sister City agreement signed

At a very cordial meeting, English and Korean versions of the MOU were signed. Mayor Brown was 45 minutes late but it was a terrific meeting and the Koreans were very understanding. I insisted on two languages to reflect an inherent respect for the Korean perspective and culture.

23. American tone changes

Once the Koreans were on the arrived in Buffalo suddenly people went from wanting nothing to do with them to wanting to be involved. The Korean difference in the formality was surprisingly very exciting for Americans to see. It gave an air of importance and gravity to everything they did, so being involved meant that they were a part of that historic occasion

24. Koreans go home happy

The Koreans went home very happy, particularly my direct Korean counterpart Sang-woon. Taking care of Sang-woon meant having stories ready to explain Mayor Brown’s reticence, keeping some of the more scary aspects of what was going on out of the picture and making sure that one particular delegate wasn’t involved at all. I knew, for Sang-woon’s sake, I had to take control of the situations as they arose. That meant that some people who were culturally insensitive on the first Yeongcheon delegation visit were not asked to help again.

Appendix D Overcoming cultural misunderstandings from my perspective

Using Design Thinking Exercises

Throughout the process of creating a marketing plan I exposed my small business contacts and the Koreans to various Design Thinking methods. The Koreans allowed me a lot of latitude and would humor my efforts. American response varied. Mr. A resisted all of my attempts to better understand his business and how he interacted with people. Mrs. B was almost completely opposite responding to my ethnographic questioning and enthusiastically participated in conceptualization and evaluation.

I found in order to bridge the gap between Korean and American culture, it was necessary at the very least, the people I worked with had an open attitude about people who did things differently than they were used to.

Hierarchy

It is extremely important that in Korean and other Asian cultures, even though they may act like Americans, the leader sets the priorities. It is the reason for delays in decision making. Where a typical American thinks it shows initiative and competence for an underling to think for himself, this behavior is seen in a hierarchical culture as willfulness and arrogance.

Accommodation

Some Americans seem to think that accommodation on any level is an admission of failure. They are so committed to asserting their own aims that they seem completely inflexible. Mr. A concentrated so entirely on his own gain that he was totally unhelpful when Koreans' needed some background information that would help them move forward on a potential deal. There was no sense of conversation. The Koreans, not knowing who they were dealing with were very reticent about finding him an investor for a large amount of money.

One of the barriers that I perceive in helping American business to globalize is how little they know about the other culture. The small business people I followed at the U.S. China Trade Development conference had open minds about what might be required in their own misunderstandings of other cultures. So when I asked them questions about how they approached foreigners they recognized my need to prototype was essential in setting up potential meeting situations.

When Americans feel they are being taken advantage of, they seldom look at what a foreigner has gone through to meet them half way (Choe & Pittman, 1993). Although the Buffalo Mayor's office invited the Koreans to the states, Mayor Brown changed his mind about meeting with Mayor Kim. In Asia, cancelling important appointments is often meant as a direct insult. The problem lies in that Americans are prone to make pronouncements without ever expecting to follow-through. This cultural hiccup kept happening throughout the planning and during the Yeongcheon delegation visit.

American Exceptionalism

The willingness to try is incredibly important. From living abroad I have a difficult time accepting rude American behavior because it often comes from a feeling of cultural superiority. It is just this kind of behavior that is embarrassing for someone who gets along with Koreans quite well and can understand the conversations of people who are deeply hurt by callous and arrogant behavior (Koo, 2011).

What Mr. A didn't really understand is that for about seven months I did research, translated documents and tried to fulfill my Korean counterpart's requests so my direct Korean counterpart could feel good about pitching the Sister City concept to Mayor Kim.

That work was partly about being prepared but mostly it was about building a relationship. The work the Koreans asked me to do was often tedious and didn't make sense in the American context. However it was important so the Koreans would have confidence in me, so I did it. Mr. A assumed his successful methods in the U.S. were directly relatable to a Korean audience. He was unwilling to try their methods, or even my methods. But, his scripts, that had proven successful in past, wouldn't work in this new context (Stempfle, 2011).

Identity Confusion

Americans, seem to me, not to be able to not be able to distinguish between all of the cultures in Asia. Since the nation of Korea has been alternately brutally occupied by both China and Japan, it would make sense that making nationally confused remarks to Koreans can be the source of unnecessary cultural friction between Koreans and Americans (Kang, 2001).

What many Americans don't understand, is that Koreans won't always complain about poor treatment. They will just stop communicating or act like everything is fine, but things will start getting harder and harder to do.

Language

As a speaker of several languages, I notice that often the level of linguistic variance seems to be an indicator of how different two cultures' paradigms from each other. Possibly the biggest difficulty with Americans and foreign languages is that generally, Americans who can speak a foreign language with any kind of proficiency, are rare (Gallup, 2011). The problem is not so much that Americans don't speak foreign languages; it is largely that there is a tendency to trivialize the hard work of speaking two or more languages. The average monolingual American has a difficult time adjusting to translating speeds (Yang & Rosenblatt, 2001). Not everyone who can translate is United Nations translator quality. Korean is much more difficult

language to translate as it has almost completely opposite sentence structure, six different politeness levels and mistakes of either type renders communication absolutely unintelligible (Liu & Bianco, 2007).

Additionally, in Confucian-ordered hierarchical societies like Korea, even if an American is fluent in the language it is considered inexcusably rude to speak directly about almost anything (Liu & Bianco, 2007). I witnessed this problem often while working in Korea side-by-side with Korean nationals. Americans who spoke Korean were too blunt about their requests. No efforts were made to develop a relationship first and then ask for favors. Americans were also prone not to remember to thank a Korean or return a favor. Those who reciprocated Korean manners were far more successful than those who did not.

Gender Differences

After eight years serving as a United States Marine, I have grown accustomed to male-dominated culture. I didn't realize how male-dominated Korean culture was until I was working with Korean-American women in the United States.

For the first six months I communicated with my Korean counterparts, before I met them in person, they didn't know I was a woman. Since we only communicated through the email and in Korean they were also surprised to find when they met me in person that I was a white American. This misunderstanding actually smoothed out many aspects of the project without my ever being aware.

A woman raised in Korean culture is still prone to receiving a lot of institutional sexism. Due to wide-spread gender-bias, women are often prevented from getting and retaining good jobs, especially after getting married (Anonymous, 2010). Some literature advises negotiating teams not to bring women to Korea since they will largely be ignored (Lee, 2005).

The Korean-American women who helped me had difficulty making direct requests and often came to me with requests for Mayor Kim or members of the delegation. For everyone concerned, it was easier having me do it, since somehow I'd circumvented these issues by being without my proper gender through email for six months.

When American Style is good

The fundamental purpose of Design Thinking is creating designs that are human-centric. Rapid prototyping in the conceptualization step showcases Americans at their best while the evaluation step allows Koreans some control over the process that complements a high-context cultural style.

Koreans, have a strong admiration for American creativity (Sohn & Jung, 2010). For the most part, the out-of-the-box storytelling and ethnography I used with them were well received. I used storytelling to smooth over some potential cultural misunderstandings. For example what I intended to do about someone who was prone to be late.

Learning from Small Business People

Culturally, it is easier to understand people when you take a walk around in their shoes. At the U.S. China trade conference (See Appendix J) and throughout my meetings with small business people I made a habit of putting myself in their shoes. Inadvertently, I become a confidante and was able to create meaningful one-on-one relationship with them.

Appendix E Guerilla Marketing plan budget

Dollar amount	Event Expenditure	Purpose	Benefit Derived
\$1,000	Delegation trip to Korea	Solidify relationships	Detailed planning, demonstration that we can do business the way they do it
\$200	Gifts for Koreans	Reciprocation	Koreans defray U.S. gift costs by providing \$1,000's worth of gifts
\$200	Thank you gifts and cards for Buffalo politicians	Name recognition	Amplification of Imaginomics marketing message
\$10,000	Translation and other professional services unpaid	Opportunity cost defrays cash outlay	Speed in communication between Korean and American parties, in-person translation provides immediate differentiation from the competition that must use a service, ability to seamlessly blend prototyping into the process.

Appendix F Yeongcheon delegation arrival at the Buffalo Niagara International Airport






Appendix G Welcome Signs

Buffalo Delegation Welcome Sign




Yeongcheon Delegation Welcome Sign

Welcome to Buffalo “The City of Good Neighbors”
Mayor Kim and Yeongcheon City Delegation

김시장님과 대표단
 버팔로시에 환영합니다



버팔로시 “좋은 이웃의 도시”

Appendix H Buffalo State Newspaper Article and Channel 4 Interview



Buffalo State Welcomes Delegation from South Korea: November 2

Posted: **November 1, 2011** by Mary A. Durlak

Buffalo's latest sister city is Yeongcheon, South Korea, thanks in large part to the efforts of Rebecca Reilly, who is pursuing a master's degree in creative studies. Reilly, who speaks Korean, joined the Buffalo Ambassadors, a group that welcomes visitors to Buffalo through Visit Buffalo Niagara. "I wanted to keep my Korean current," said Reilly, "and I met Emerson Barr, Buffalo's liaison to the sister cities program. He expressed an interest in developing a sister cities program with a city in Korea."

So Reilly reached out to the Korean community in Western New York. "I attended church services," she said, "and I met a professor who suggested the city of Yeongcheon." A delegation from Yeongcheon visited Buffalo in early 2011, and the two cities decided it was a match.

On Wednesday, November 2, Yeongcheon and Buffalo will make it official by signing a sister city agreement at the Buffalo Common Council—before a visit to the International Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State.

"The delegation visited Creative Studies on its first visit," said Reilly, "and it was a great success. Jo Yudess [lecturer in creativity] used storyboarding, which helped us communicate

directly despite the language barrier.” Jaeky Yu, another creative studies student and a native of Korea, translated.

“We’re very excited to have them here again,” said Yudess. “And they are very interested in making connections with Buffalo. One of their industries involves manufacturing parts for high-speed rails, so they are interested in business connections in New York. They are also very excited about many aspects of our culture, and the creative studies program is, of course, a draw for many international students.”

The seven-person delegation from Yeongcheon includes its mayor, Young-suk Kim, and Ki-taek Jeong, the president of the Yeongcheon City Council. The campus community is invited to welcome them on Wednesday, November 2, at 9:00 a.m. in Chase Hall 235. Afterward, the delegation will tour the Burchfield Penney Art Center.

The Yeongcheon delegation will return for the International Social Hour at 3:00 p.m. in E. H. Butler Library 208, where they will be joined by a group of students from Brazil, who are in Western New York as part of an exchange program with UB.

“It’s going to be an exciting day,” said Reilly, “and I’m thrilled that Buffalo State is part of it.”

Appendix I Channel 4 Interviews**Buffalo has new sister city in S. Korea**

Published: Tuesday, 01 Nov 2011, 11:17 PM EDT by Aaron Mason, posted by: Eli George
BUFFALO, N.Y. (WIVB) - Buffalo now has a sister city in South Korea. A delegation from Yeongcheon is in the area for a four-day visit. The group stopped by The Park School of Buffalo on Tuesday. Organizers hope this exchange of ideas will develop economic, cultural and educational opportunities for both cities. Sister City Committee president Rebecca Reilly said, "It's a very exciting time. We need to take advantage of the economic possibilities and get ahead of the pack and show that Buffalo is a world player on the world stage." Buffalo is the first city in New York to establish a sister city in South Korea.

Copyright WIVB.com Link to the Channel 4 Interview:

http://www.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.wivb.com%2Fdpp%2Fnews%2Fbuffalo%2FBuffalo-has-new-sister-city-in-S-Korea&h=IAQFLOWnoAQE8iWvSNfrprqg_UA8B3UvyXNptsYynRQgy0w

Appendix J U.S. China Trade Development Conference



September 20th & 21st, 2011
The Conference Center Niagara Falls
 101 Old Falls Street
 Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Please join us in Niagara Falls, NY for the 2011 US-China Business & Trade Development Conference. This is an exciting opportunity to learn how to get your business or organization involved in International Trade, focusing on China. We'll have more than 100 attendees from China representing small and medium-sized businesses and government agencies. Industries to be represented but not limited to: Agriculture, Electronics, Information Technology, Alternative Energies, Manufacturing, Food Supplements, Automotive, Biotech, Pharmaceutical/Medical and Construction.

The Conference schedule will include:

- Matchmaking group sessions for business, trade, and investment
- Networking breakouts
- Showcase of products and services of sponsors
- Introduction of opportunities for trade, business development, and investment projects
- Presentations on business and trade development from private sector and government officials
- Business and trade information briefing and updates
- Panel discussions about issues including government regulations, taxation, financial transaction, and business practice
- Simultaneous translation during conference, and translators available for matchmaking and networking

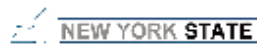
Who should attend the Conference?

- Business/trade executives and leaders
- Firms looking for importing/exporting opportunities
- International business marketing and sales managers/directors
- Manufacturers and suppliers
- Managers for purchasing, procurement, global sourcing
- Government economic development groups, chambers of commerce members
- Anyone interested in developing trade/business/investments in US and Chinese markets

To register, please visit: www.nyssbdc.org or call: 800-732-7232



Empire State Development



Appendix K Yeongcheon Delegation visit itinerary

Day	Date	Activity	Pt Person
TUE	1- Nov		
830		Flag up at City Hall	Me/Emerson
900		Tour of City Hall	
900		Meet Councilman Smith	Emerson
1000		Meet Councilman Kearns	
1030		Leave for Rath	
1100		Chris Collins	Grant Loomis
1200		get tix from Louise	
1200		Liberty Building	Louise
1330		Council members	Emerson
1345		Ready to address Common Council	시장님/의장님
1400		Address Common Council	
1430		Jenni picks them up from City Hall to Park School	
1445		Pick up Jaeky	
1515		Pick up Sung's grocery	
1500		Leave for Park School	
1530		Drop Jaeky Park School	
1600		Pick up Sang-woon	
1600		Mom arrives Park School	
1600		Park School 4625 Harlem at Main	Kathleen Gaffney
1700		Dinner	Hamburgers
		Karaoke?	
WED	2- Nov		
800		Meet Jen at hotel	
830		Pick up Jaeky	
900		Meet the President?	ICSC
1030		Burchfield Penney	Katy
1200		Bag lunches at Medaille	
1200		Order food Sung-shin 836-5858	
1215		Medaille Korea Day	Dr Kim , Dr Muir
1500		Mayor Kim etc to Social Hour	Mayor 4 others
1500		ESL Planning	ESL Team, Lee Han-jin
1600		Han-jin to Historical Society	Kims

1600		Social Hour	
1715		Take everyone to Medaille	
1730		Medaille President Dinner 88 Lincoln Ave	Dr Kim Dr Muir
THURS	3- Nov		
830		Meet Jen at hotel	
830		Go see Buffaloes at the Zoo	
900		Tapestry	백경희
1100		West Side Walking Tour	백경희
1230		Chefs 856-9157	Mayor Kim's treat
1430		Botanical Gardens	
1500		Basilica	
1500		Pick up Jaeky	
1800		690	
1600		Pick-up Korean food 1010 Niagara Falls	Sung-shin 836-5858
1800		Party at David Granville's	
FRI	4- Nov		
600		pick up take to airport/check out	Extra baggage if needed
		Leave for NY	

Appendix L Yeongcheon delegation visit with Erie County Executive Chris Collins





Appendix M Yeongcheon delegation visit with Buffalo Common Councilman Kearns



Appendix N Mayor Kim's address to the Buffalo Common Council



Appendix O Mayors Brown and Kim sign official Sister City agreement



Appendix P Memo of Understanding

English

**Memorandum of Understanding for Establishing
A Sister City Relationship**

between

The City of Buffalo, the United States of America

and

The City of Yeongcheon, the Republic of Korea

Background and Purpose

The City of Yeongcheon, Republic of Korea and the City of Buffalo, the United States of America enter into a Sister City relationship that will initiate international exchanges in the areas of education, culture/sports, industry and human-resource; as well as enhancing mutual understanding and further promotion of long-term cooperative relations.

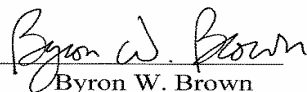
Fields of Exchanges and Cooperation

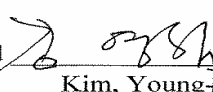
The purpose of this relationship shall be to build solid bonds and enhance mutual development between the two cities through international exchanges in various areas as follows:

1. Exchanges and cooperation of education and development of education programs
2. Participation in local festivals, exchanges of sports and cultural activities
3. Enhancement of economic development through the nurture of industry including supporting business counterparts
4. Exchanges of officials and local community representatives

This agreement is written in Korean and English and shall be in effect from this date forward. The duration and specific exchange programs of this MOU are open to change or negotiation.

November 3, 2011

Signed 
Byron W. Brown
City of Buffalo

Signed 
Kim, Young-suk
City of Yeongcheon

Korean

대한민국 영천시와 미합중국 버펄로시 간 자매결연 양해각서

배경과 목적

대한민국 영천시와 미합중국 버펄로시는 상호이해를 증진하고, 양 도시의 장기적 발전을 도모할 수 있는 협력적 관계를 형성해 나갈 것을 기대하며, 인적, 문화·스포츠, 교육, 및 산업분야의 국제교류를 시작하기 위하여 자매결연을 체결한다.

교류협력 분야

이번 자매결연의 목적은 두 도시간 유대를 강화하며, 특히 다음 분야의 국제교류를 통해 양 도시의 상호발전을 도모한다.

1. 교육의 교류협력 및 교육 프로그램 개발
2. 지역축제, 스포츠 및 문화활동 교류
3. 기업활동 지원을 포함한 산업육성협력으로 경제활성화 도모
4. 공무원과 지역 커뮤니티 대표의 인적교류

본 양해각서는 국문본과 영문본으로 작성하며 서명일부터 효력이 발생하며 두 도시간 협의를 통하여 협약내용을 변경할 수 있다.

2011년 11월 3일

Signed

김영석

대한민국 영천시장

Signed

Byron W. Brown

미합중국 버펄로시장