NONPROFIT COMMUNICATION & BRAND BUILDING

Kate Brannen

Suzette Heiman, Project Chair

ABSTRACT

This study examines the brand-building efforts of nine nonprofit organizations through semi-structured interviews with nonprofit employees and through the grounded theory method. Questions focused on the efforts made by nonprofit organizations to build their brands, the way nonprofit employees articulate their brand identities and images and the way nonprofit organizational culture supports or hinders brand development. Results show that one great problem facing nonprofit brands is public confusion or misunderstanding of what organizations do. It is posited that, in order to build their brands, organizations need to communicate not only who they are and what they stand for, but also what they do. This study builds on research that shows the importance of nonprofits’ effectiveness and differentiation for public support and provides insight into ways in which organizations can communicate to the public what they do.