

a working session comprising 120 staff to develop, as a group, a statement of purpose for the organisation.

This considerable body of information was recorded, transcribed, distilled, synthesised and categorised into a series of high-level narratives, tested among the primary stakeholder group, resolved into a set of communication priorities and then used to inform the development of all outputs. Secondary to this, but of critical importance was a small research project probing the conception and origin of value within education which we used to model the relationships between students, parents, the institutions and broader society. Early discussions revealed that the education industry has inherited a structure formed in the industrial age and although it is embracing a 21st century framework, many parts of society cling to an outdated value system. Our model generated deep insight and clarity into the overarching narratives informing parent's choices in education. The research process can be summarised as: observation, assumption, insight, clarification and testing. The separate expert reference group we convened was utilised throughout the project to further test assumptions and challenge thinking through to project completion.

In developing the brand identity for the SACE Board we were faced not only with historical precedents concerning the conception and representation of education but pervasive and outdated stereotypes that had successfully obscured the value in the SACE programs. Our research was used successfully to challenge these stereotypes and to then shift the conversation to new ground. Through the brand process we also embarked on several smaller studies focused on the perceptions and representations of authority – our goal in this being to establish a brand that positioned SACE as a twenty first century education authority. The program naming was also reviewed, challenged and tested with stakeholder groups and though no basis could be found for an immediate and wholesale change it was noted for future consideration.

Mirroring a modernisation within the organisation, and more broadly in education, the new SACE brand identity referred to as the plus-mark, has successfully worked to reframe the organisation, affirm its position as a twenty first century education authority, to clearly communicate the value in the programs and project both a space and a role into the future.

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