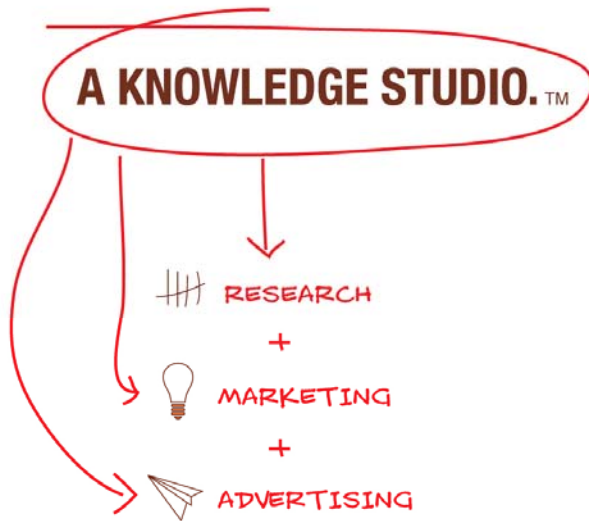




**Presentation to High Tech Communicators Exchange  
04.03.06**

- **About Sentient Services**
- Current state of market research
- The future of market research
- Brand – what it all leads to
- UI, Prod Dev and Needs-Based-Marketing
- Research principles
- Q&A

# A Knowledge Studio™



## RESEARCH + MARKETING + ADVERTISING

- Sentient Services is a Knowledge Studio™ that combines proven research principles with marketing and advertising
- Our difference - **we always ask first**
- Market insights and analytics drive every project we undertake, enabling us to deliver the right message to the right audience at the right time
- The result? **Informed, salient, inspired and measurable campaigns that deliver each and every time**

# Services We Offer

## Research

- Ad & message
- Usability
  - Product, software, services
- Customer engagement
- Win/loss analysis
- Brand equity
- Website testing
  - UI, navigation, content
- Advanced analytics
  - Segmentation, conjoint...
- Product / service development
- Ideation
- Observational design

## Marketing

- Positioning & Messaging
- Targeting
- Branding and identity
- Internal branding
  - Employee, process...
- Website development
- Marketing strategy

## Advertising

- Interactive advertising
  - Web, email, experiences
- Traditional
  - Print, outdoor, trade shows
- Out there
  - Events, sponsorships, placement

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# Research Today

- Response rates are declining, development cycles are shortening, costs are increasing...
- Just because it worked 50 years ago does not mean it works today
  - Non-response bias, large internet samples lead to false stats...
- There is still a place for market sizing and large scale quant segmentation studies
  - However, these are few and far between
- Biggest value in market research for the technology sector lies in
  - developing the right product/service (usability, UI, lead user and observational design)
  - clearly communicating emerging and technical concepts with associated value propositions
- ... all targeted to the right person at the right time via engaging and salient media

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# The Future

- The future is in integrated marketing and research – not just talking together, but truly having research drive marketing and having marketing/prod. dev. drive research (examples to follow)
- The first step in understanding consumer behavior is to ask. In particular, to do primary branding, sales and customer engagement research covering:
  - What is the market looking for
  - Why – what drives these needs (this is what you mesh with P&M)
    - Pain points
  - Where are they looking
  - Pricing
  - Purchase drivers that close the sale
  - Competitive analysis
  - Branding...
- Understanding the market from day one allows a campaign to deliver the right message to the right audience in the right way. This is key to increasing sales traffic, building momentum and a core brand that will sustain future growth potential and continue to differentiate and drive value in the face of a myriad of competitors and disruptive technology

# The Future – Tying It Together

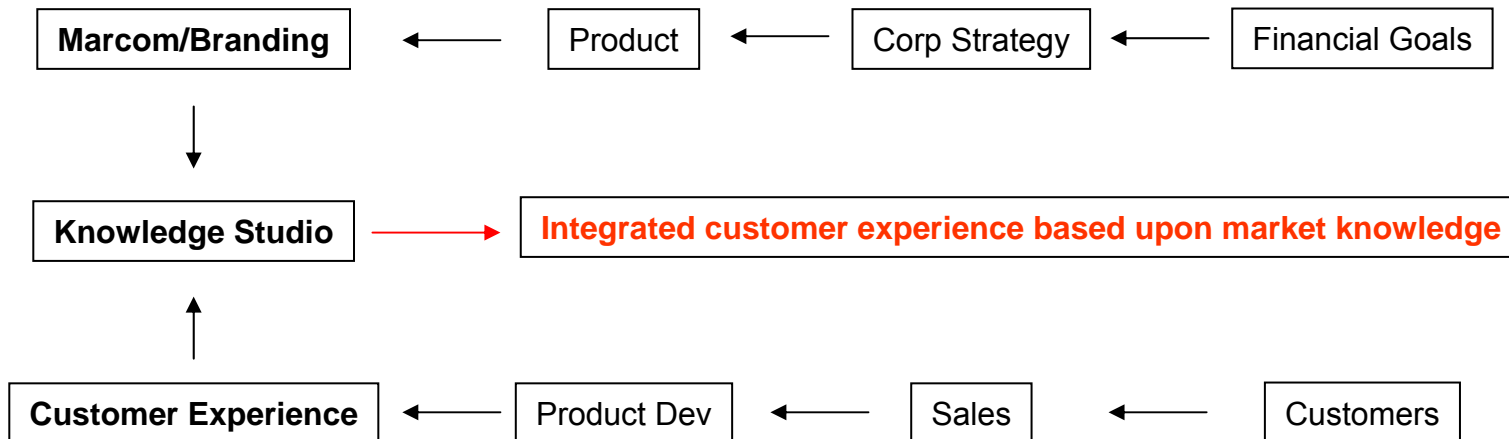
- Campaigns and research are intertwined with both informing each other in a unique integrated environment where we adjust on the fly to bring forth the most compelling and engaging marketing experience
  - Flash tours that gather click streams, interest, prod dev and user profiles
- Websites should be extremely interactive with Flash Motion Intelligence™, virtual tours and so forth all tied back to the P&M and key purchase drivers
  - Full website metrics and tracking are needed and used to adjust content and messaging on the fly to take advantage of where we see the most traction (e.g., if remote deployment security is leading traction those points will become highlighted above secondary interest items – adjust to consistently deliver maximum effectiveness).
- All end-user informational sources are tied to the key user needs and purchase drivers developed via primary research and will be prevalent throughout all marketing material. Integrating all of these phases is key in delivering results

# Knowledge Studio™

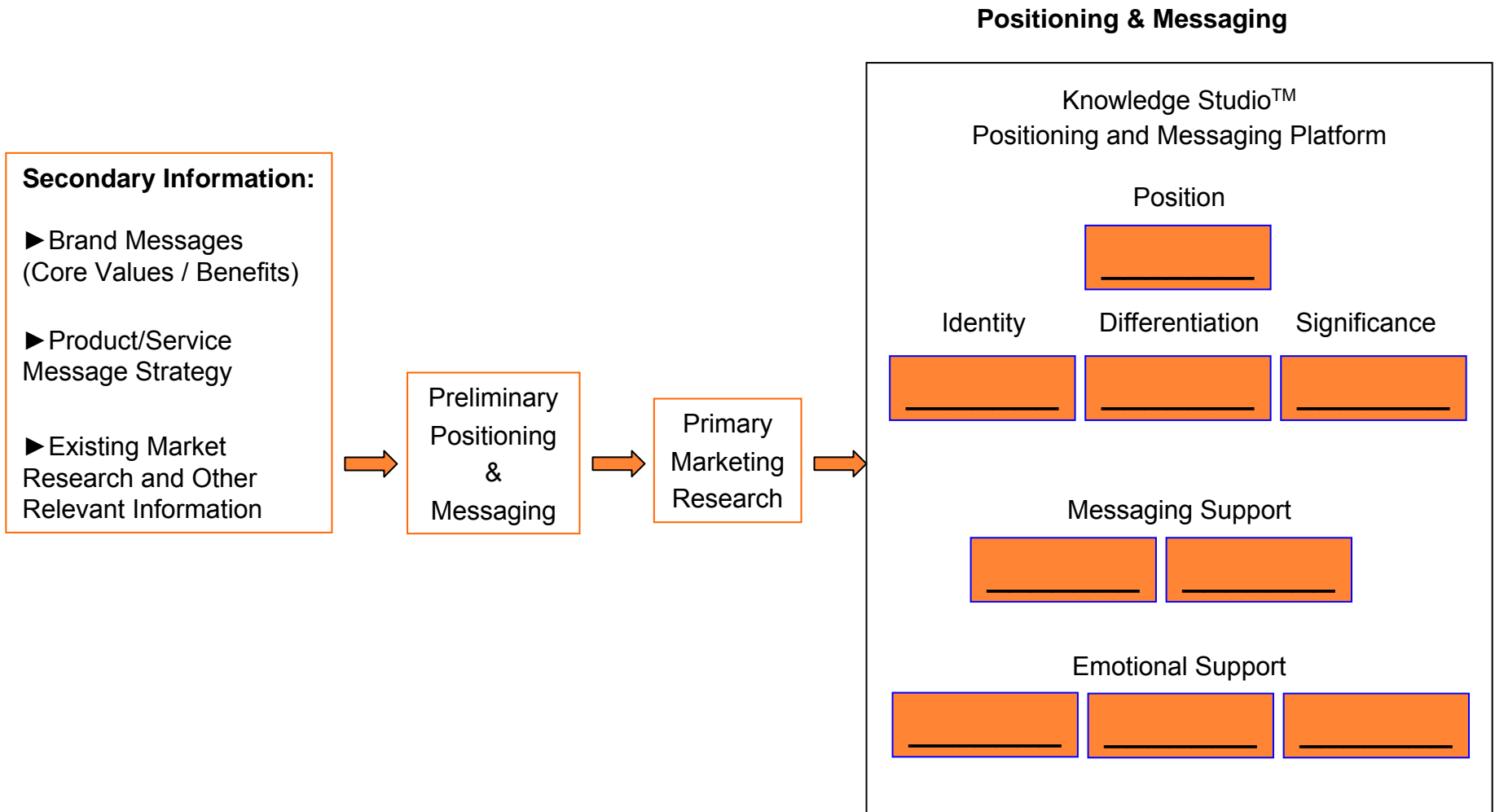
Built on knowledge, driven by sales, executed with perfection

Integrated marketing is not about channel but about:

- Being driven by customer needs – listening
  - Builds the right product/service for the right audience = success
- Knowing what/who/when/why for everything
  - Right message to the right person at the right time = ROI on marcom \$
- Singular and compelling customer experience = brand
  - Brand «=» equity + profit + sustainability



# Knowledge Studio™ Positioning & Messaging Synthesis Framework



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# Why “brand” Is So Important In Technology

- Few other verticals are in as much need of branding as tech
  - Rapidly changing paradigms make today’s bleeding edge old tomorrow – you can get leapfrogged much too easily
  - Minimum ownership of means of production – the true knowledge economy
  - As quickly as tech is emerging many sectors are becoming “commodities” where good enough covers end-user needs
  - Significant share of sales are B-B where reverse auctions and just specs drive decisions, again leading to commoditization

# Experience-Based Branding

## EB2™

- In order for a brand to be effective it must move beyond the extant (advertising, competitive differentiation, etc.) and become latent (emotional, promising, relational and interactive – an enhanced experience). Extant brands must be constantly fed with expensive new campaigns, reinventions, sales, launches, and the like. They are always open to a hostile takeover, as performance-based brands are only as good as the last launch and the competitive benchmark. Latent brands, on the other hand, survive beyond product life cycles and are the sum of a complex interaction of marketing and advertising, products and services, employees, the marketplace and corporate philosophy.
- The ultimate goal is to become a brand that is bigger than product/service offerings and to develop an Experience Based Branding™ platform. At Sentient Services we develop this platform through every stage of the customer engagement from understanding needs to product development, web presence and employee management. We deliver a roadmap to EB2™ performance with positioning and messaging, driver analysis, customer and employee engagement programs, and marcom that builds the brand every step of the way. The difference is clear and EB2™ companies thrive and lead their markets in profitability, growth and innovation by being driven by customers and the experience of the relationship.

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# Product Development

- If you want to keep your customers, if you want to know why you are losing business, if you want to know how to make your product/service better – **just ask**
- Observational design and lead-user development are key and cost-effective tools to avoid extremely costly mistakes AND to develop additional breakthroughs that internal teams simply can't have imagined

# Needs-Based-Marketing w/ UI

- Use research to not only develop needs and the P&M but then to create a UI that:
  - Revolves around end-user information usage
  - Needs tied to product value proposition
  - Navigation that is driven by needs the product is addressing the unique user
    - Multiple paths and messaging based upon navigation and updated metrics
  - The difference is huge and is the next step in 1-1 marketing – truly the right message to the right person at the right time – call it “just-in-time” marketing

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# Market Research

- What is it?
  - Understanding why you are in business
- When to use it?
  - When you don't know, really
- When not to use it?
  - When you can't do anything with the answers
- What can you do with it?
  - Make better products, say the right thing to the right person at the right time – spend your money wiser!
- What it is not? Why are budgets hard to get sometimes?
  - Production, sales staff, advertising...not historically tangible or integrated
- Why spend money on market research?
  - Because it makes the list above infinitely and measurably better

# Scoping a Project

- What to do in-house?
  - Understand your business and where you have questions – don't pay someone to do basic homework.
- What to outsource?
  - Survey writing and analysis at a minimum – these are where the adage “Forest for the trees” can bite you.
- How to choose a methodology?
  - Quant. – when you need to size, project, track and otherwise measure
  - Qual. – when you need to understand, develop, “speak” and interact
- How to choose a vendor?
  - Varies by your internal expertise and need for output and implementation

# Steps

WEB-001				Sentient
Task	Date	Revised Date	Final Date	Notes
Deliver proposal	wk1			
Project awarded	wk1			
Project kick-off call	wk2			
Draft 1 of survey to client	wk2			
Order sample	wk2			
Final survey	wk3			
Sample received	wk3			
Setup email address for web services	wk3			
Program and test	wk4			
Begin fieldwork	wk5			
Tab plan to client	wk5			
Finish fieldwork	wk6			
Tab plan finalized	wk6			
Coding and data cleaning	wk7			
Tabs delivered	wk7			
Rough draft	wk8			
Final presentation	wk9			
In-person presentation	TBD			

# Survey Writing

- Tone – don't speak down, assume limited time and attention (respondents will skim), but don't make too techy
- Scales – huge debate here but some general guidelines:
  - Allow a Don't Know/Refuse option
  - If the survey is short anchor all points
  - Avoid a mid-point (unless you can make a strong argument)
  - Create positively skewed response scales
- Design and layout
  - Just because the web is “easy” does not mean that design can be ignored
  - Same basic principals that go into mail surveys apply here
    - Eye movement (columns, scrolling, etc.)
    - Column widths, number of pages vs. scrolling etc.

# Fielding and Project Management

- Invitations and reminders
  - Subject line is important
    - “Need your feedback”
    - Check for common words that will get caught by SPAM filters
  - Have a call to action and how they benefit – “This is your chance to provide direct feedback on the products you use and to help make them better.”
- Timing
  - Launch Tuesday-Thursday 10-2pm CST – for US
  - Majority of responses will come back within 48 hours
  - Send reminders out 3-5 business days later, no more than 2 reminders at most
- SPAM and customer service
  - Stay in compliance (physical address, opt-out links, etc.)
- Quality control
  - Check responses – do numbers make sense, if it looks wrong it probably is
  - Check for response outliers and remove if needed
  - Ensure that survey fielding period is long enough to get hard to reach respondents – replicates
  - Non-response bias
  - Sub-par response rate
  - Panels vs. RDD

# Turning Data into Insight and Action

- Don't walk.... Run – don't let the results gather dust
- Do share the results – don't worry about knowledge ownership
  - But, ensure that implications and application of the data is clear in presentation/ briefing
- But, don't rush – one insignificant (there is not such thing) wrong number will call the entire study into doubt
- Don't overcomplicate the data or the results
  - Avoid weighting if at all possible
  - If you can't summarize the key points on one page, try and try again

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# Contact

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