

Marketing a one-year old company with a 100-year history

In April 2007, KBR underwent an identity transformation as it separated from Halliburton after 44 years and became its own company. Under the supervision of KBR's Marketing Communications & Strategy team, that year of independence has helped KBR flourish as one of the world's largest engineering, construction and services contractors.

Karen Hooper, director of marketing communications & strategy with KBR, explained that after becoming completely independent the company faced new responsibilities, including creating an identity while maintaining KBR's history.

"KBR is a one-year old company with a 100-year old legacy," said Hooper, speaking at a luncheon hosted by the Houston chapter of the American Marketing Association (AMA).

Hooper said that while KBR had to transform after separating from Halliburton and pursuing an initial public

offering (IPO), it still faced the challenge of upholding its rich history while linking past to future to create and communicate KBR's own brand promise.

"Although that challenge has been fun, it has also been exigent at times to define KBR and convey its mission externally:

'To safely deliver any project, any time, in any environment for the benefit of our customers, shareholders, employees and the communities we serve,'" Hooper said.

Hooper's department, which works with KBR's upstream, downstream, services and technology business units, first had to develop a marketing plan that would satisfy their business units and meet their clients' needs.

"Our first challenge was to be strategic to ensure quality and efficiency," Hooper said. "As we focused vertically and horizontally with the end goal of meeting clients' needs across our diverse services, we tied KBR's business unit strategies to our marketing communications plan."



Karen Hooper, director, marketing communications & strategy at KBR, spoke to Houston AMA members on successfully marketing KBR after its split from Halliburton in 2007.

"It was important that the plan include the individual business units' and KBR's mission, vision, values and strategy to convey exactly what our company was offering clients," Hooper explained.

"The second element of our marketing communications plan is to deliver integrated marketing and communications that are consistent across all markets, all services and all regions," Hooper said.

"This element consisted of five steps: connecting KBR with its brand promise, creating a consistent look and feel, unifying the company's voice with its message, connecting the client's centric media mix and last, making sure our communication channels are relevant to our clients," added Hooper.

"The third step in KBR's marketing communications plan was fine-tuning our company message," Hooper said. "Involving KBR's sales organization in marketing strategy, company collateral and Web site development became key in communicating our message."

"Last, the fourth element involves measuring the return on investment through various metrics to gauge our progress. Our

marketing communications department uses several methods to measure impact, including performance surveys, marketing dashboards, Web banners, print ads and Web tracking tools such as Google Analytics."

"Those four elements spoke distinctly during KBR's first year as a stand-alone company," said Hooper.

KBR won AMA Marketer of the Year in 2008 for the engineering and construction services category and placed in the top five overall. Additionally, KBR won an AMA Crystal Award for a training video on Hearing Safety, benefitting workers at a number of client project sites. Content with the company's efforts, Hooper's department is always seeking new avenues to reach clients, while staying true to KBR's promise of "any project, any time, anywhere."

KBR (NYSE:KBR) is a Fortune 500 company on the New York Stock Exchange.

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