

HOW TO:

MAXIMIZE THE BRAND VALUE OF HEALTH SYSTEM MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

BACKGROUND

The health system M&A train isn't slowing any time soon. But if history is a guide, 70-90% of these initiatives won't achieve their expected outcomes. After working for many years with health system and hospital leadership teams throughout the country on M&A's and rebrandings, we know how to navigate the process, mitigate the pitfalls and grow brand value through proper integration planning and execution. Here below are seven tips for success:

SEVEN TIPS FOR M&A SUCCESS:

- **Acknowledge The Intangibles**
For people joining into an acquisition, they're likely anxious, skeptical, confused and resistant. Acknowledging and addressing these feelings will help smooth the long process of creating a coherent organization-wide culture.
- **Structured Process**
While it might feel like the event is a long way off, it quickly creeps up. As early as feasible, create a cross-functional team to oversee the operational and cultural aspects of the integration: prior, during and post event.
- **Strong Communication**
Meaning clear and often. From organization-wide leaders who need to collaborate in setting clear expectations, building confidence and trust. Of note, proactive and appropriate transparent communications strategy was one of the clear differences in transactions that created value and fell short according to a 2017 survey from Deloitte.
- **Me Vs. We**
Recognize that whenever people hear messages about the organization, they quickly translate that to "what does that mean for me." So be prepared. For every statement about "we", leaders need to be ready to address "me."
- **Brand/Business Strategy Alignment**
Brand strategy must be informed by, and aligned with, business strategy to support strategic objectives and intent. This begins with purpose and extends to culture, strategy, design, communications and experiences.
- **One Brand**
Consistency is key to building credibility and a strong brand-led culture. So teams need to work together under the guidance of chief communications and experience officers to coordinate communications and activities to avoid a schizophrenic brand experience – which is confusing and debilitating both internally and externally.
- **Think Beyond Today**
Once one M&A is in place, more are usually in the pipeline. So think beyond current "events" and leave the door open to strategically and creatively accommodate future similar initiatives.