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Final Capstone Individual Report

MMC 6936 Capstone:

Web Design & Digital Strategy

Summer 2022

MANIFEST
MEDIA

Table of Contents ● ● ● ●

Introduction

THE ORGANIZATION

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For our capstone project, our team worked with leadership consulting company Relationship Acuity. Relationship Acuity offers expert-led leadership guidance and training for both companies and individuals but has been struggling to meet their business goals. Our agency, Manifest Media, was tasked with conducting a complete rebrand for Relationship Acuity, developing an effective communications strategy, and creating a new website, as well.

Relationship Acuity came to us with several challenges that were preventing them from reaching their goals. These challenges included a minimal online presence, limited branding, and a website that lacked a clear direction. Through design and strategy we aimed to amend their issues by providing a new branding guide and logo, a redesigned website, consistency in brand voice, an enhanced online presence, and plan for future success.

MY ROLE

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Within Manifest Media, I took on the role of Creative Director. This entailed having a large part in all design-related tasks. Some of the work I completed included designing both the logo for our own agency as well as the logo for our client, establishing a branding direction, typeface, and color palette, developing a branding guide, designing branded materials, designing a large part of the website, designing the presentation slide show, helping design our campaign book for the client, and completing writing assignments that involved explaining design decisions. I also helped the web design team code and build Relationship Acuity's new website.

Project Scope & Overview

This project consisted of six main components:

1. Situation Analysis

The situational analysis was conducted at the beginning in order to understand the Relationship Acuity's current situation and develop an understanding of how to best meet their needs. The analysis included an organization overview, the history of the organization, a target audience analysis, an industry analysis, a competition analysis, the current communications strategy, and a SWOT analysis of Relationship Acuity. For the situation analysis, my contribution included completing the SWOT analysis.

2. Logo Design Proposal

After developing an understanding of Relationship Acuity's current situation as well as their goals, we created a logo that we felt best reflected the organization's needs and its future direction. The proposal included the logo and an explanation. I created sketches as well as the final logo design, including variations in color, size, and orientation.

3. Branding Guide & Branded Materials

Our team created a branding guide for the client that included a brand manifesto, the brand voice, a moodboard, the logo and best practices, and designs of branded materials. It also included a style tile that dictated the brand visuals including the typeface, color palette, graphic elements, and images. My role included designing the branding guide itself, helping make branding decisions for the style tile including color palette and typeface, creating the moodboard, designing two of the branded materials, and creating the logo and logo best practices sections.

4. Communication Campaign Strategy

For the communication campaign strategy for the client, our team created a GOST framework (goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics), a plan for paid advertising, created a brand statement, developed four content themes for social media, and developed strategy guidelines. The digital strategist team members worked on this portion.

5. Campaign Evaluation Metrics

Our team identified key performance indicators (KPIs) and how to track them, created a glossary of evaluation metrics terms, identified critical success factors, developed a communications timeline, created a communications budget, and developed two methods to track return on investment (ROI).
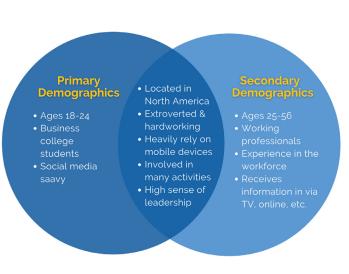
6. The Website

We designed and built a functional new website for Relationship Acuity that is user friendly and responsive at all screen sizes. The site is reflective of the proposed rebranding and communication strategy we developed for the client. I designed and built the home page, contact page, and products page.

Situation Analysis

SUMMARY OF TARGET AUDIENCE

After conducting research and considering the goals of the client, our team concluded that Relationship Acuity's target audience will focus primarily on colleges and universities as well as mid-level organizations. To the right is a breakdown of the details of both the primary and secondary demographics being targeted. Based on input from the client, we aimed to acquire a younger audience than the client has previously worked with.

Primary Demographics
- Ages 18-24
- Business college students
- Social media saavy

- Located in North America
- Extroverted & hardworking
- Heavily rely on mobile devices
- Involved in many activities
- High sense of leadership

Secondary Demographics
- Ages 25-56
- Working professionals
- Experience in the workforce
- Receives information in via TV, online, etc.

BRIEF INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

Trends in the leadership development industry including customized courses, on demand learning online, and topic-specific leadership classes (like diversity.) Other trends include leadership development at all employee levels and in-house learning.

BRIEF CEMPETITION ANALYSIS

Competitors to the client span across three main areas: leadership reading materials, self-assessments, and leadership training services (2022 Top Leadership Training Companies, 2022). Competitors from leadership training include Franklin Covey, Korn Ferry, and The Table Group. Leadership reading competitors include Brene Brown, Simon Sinek, and Marshall Goldsmith. Self-assessment competitors include Birkman, Leadership Circle, and Strengths Finder. An advantage that competitors have includes a practical application of leadership learning while Relationship Acuity excels at providing leadership training inclusive of all levels of employees rather than just executives.
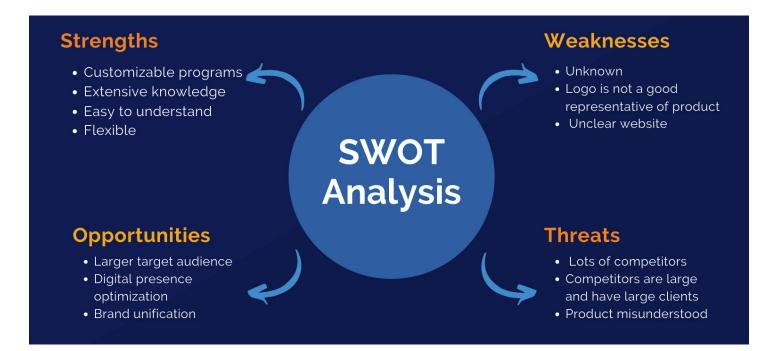
BRIEF COMMUNICATION ANALYSIS

Relationship Acuity has a website and a moderate SEO presence. At the moment, sales are made primarily through word of mouth. They currently rely heavily on referral-based business because their online presence is minimal. Many opportunities exist to improve the digital presence of Relationship Acuity.

SWOT ANALYSIS

I created a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis (SWOT) to help take stock of the client's current standing.

Strengths

- Customizable programs
- Extensive knowledge
- Easy to understand
- Flexible

Weaknesses

- Unknown
- Logo is not a good representative of product
- Unclear website

SWOT Analysis

Opportunities

- Larger target audience
- Digital presence optimization
- Brand unification

Threats

- Lots of competitors
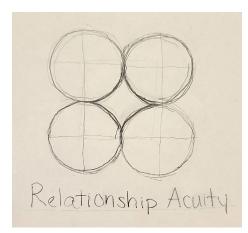- Competitors are large and have large clients
- Product misunderstood

Logo Design Proposal

OUR PROCESS

Each member of our team made 4 sketches of logo ideas and presented them to the group. We then voted on which logo we felt best fit the client's needs and identity. Further tweaks to the logo were made after getting feedback from the client including adjusting the color palette and adding the Relationship Acuity tagline.

My Initial Sketch & Mockup:
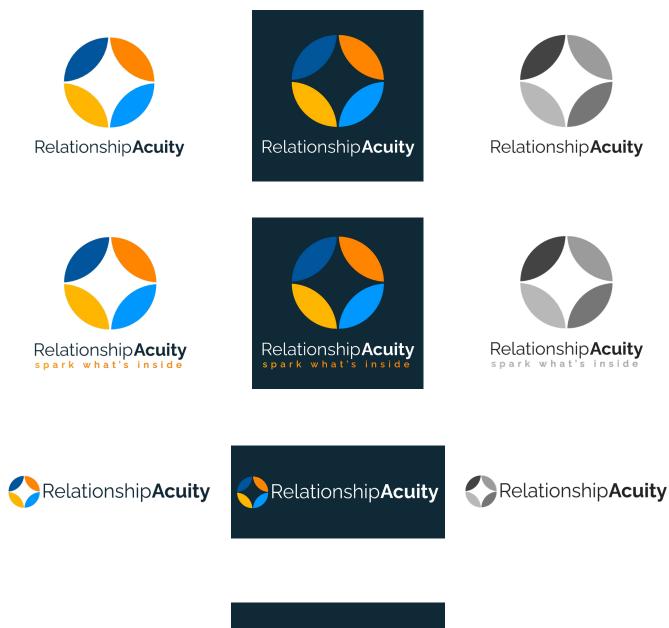
Our Final Logo Designs:

Branding Guide & Materials

LOGO VARIATIONS

We provided the client with multiple versions of the logo so that there was an appropriate version for every situation while maintaining consistent branding.

LOGO USAGE GUIDELINES

We provided the client with recommendations for how to use the logo for the best effect.

Practices to Avoid:

Do not place logo on a busy background

Do not crowd logo with other images and text

Do not distort logo proportions

Do not alter established colors or text styling of logo

Reccomendaed Practices:

Use a simple contrasting background

Maintain logo proportions

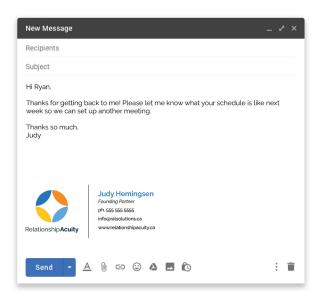Provide ample negative space around logo

Maintain logo colors and text styling

BRANDED MATERIALS

Our team mocked up designs of branded materials with our proposed logo so that they could envision their new branding in the real world. Below are the items I created.
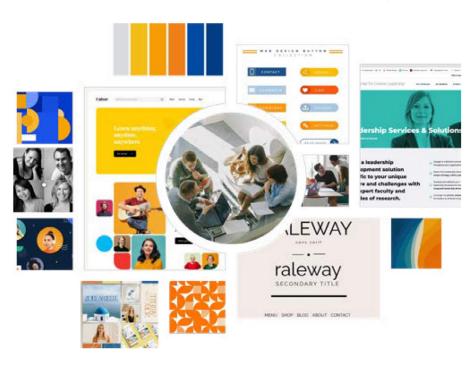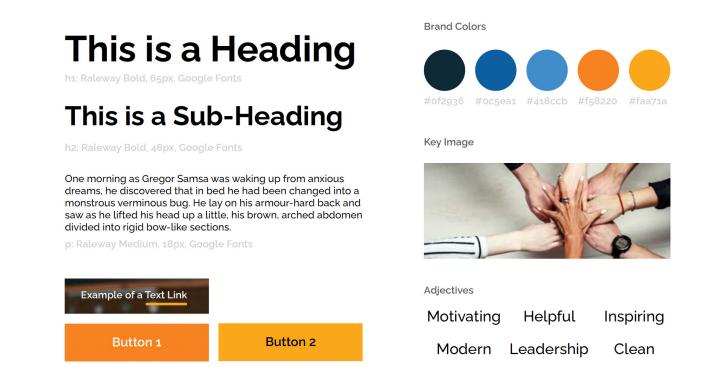

MOODBOARD

Our team created a moodboard to set the tone for Relationship Acuity's new branding direction.

STYLE TILE

We created a style tile to establish the typography, color palette, and other stylings and ensure consistent branding for the client across all mediums.

This is a Heading

h1: Raleway Bold, 65px, Google Fonts

This is a Sub-Heading

h2: Raleway Bold, 48px, Google Fonts

One morning as Gregor Samsa was waking up from anxious dreams, he discovered that in bed he had been changed into a monstrous verminous bug. He lay on his armour-hard back and saw as he lifted his head up a little, his brown, arched abdomen divided into rigid bow-like sections.

p: Raleway Medium, 18px, Google Fonts

Example of a Text Link

Button 1

Button 2

Brand Colors

#0f2936   #0c5ea1   #418ccb   #f58220   #faa71a

Key Image

Adjectives

Motivating   Helpful   Inspiring

Modern   Leadership   Clean

BRAND MANIFESTO

Leadership is not defined by shape, age, color or gender. It's defined by pushing boundaries, rising up to challenges and being the best version of yourself because the potential for a great leader exists within us all.

Through a clear perception of what motivates us as individuals, we can learn how to lead ourselves and others. By finding our inspiration, we can unlock our untapped energy and ignite the spark inside.

Communication Campaign Strategy

GOST FRAMEWORK

We started our communication strategy by creating a GOST framework and defining our goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics for Relationship Acuity. Goals were to increase brand awareness and recognition, increase lead generation,and increase overall revenue. Objectives include generating 10 new leads per week via digital platforms and reaching 1,000 followers within six months. Strategies include rebranding the website and social media accounts, creating accounts across several platforms, and establishing a clear brand voice across posts. Tactics include creating "snackable" content to hook potential consumers and create and promote relevant leadership management content.

CONTENT THEMES

Our team created 4 content themes:

 1. Leadership facts and statistics,

2. Tips for the workplace,

3. Situation analysis

4. Book promotion

Campaign Evaluation Metrics

THE MAJOR KPIs TO TRACK

Our team provided the client with five major KPIs to track:

1. Have a 20% increase in qualified leads by the end of 2022 through website tracking form.

2. Increase social media following by 100% by the end of Q4.

3. Increase web traffic from social media by 100%.

4. Have 20 complimentary consultations by December 2022.

5. Have 5 program enrollments by the end of the year.

TERMS TO KNOW

We also provided the client with a brief glossary of key terms to be familiar with.

1. Qualified Leads: A potential consumer that has been deemed potentially likely to become a consumer based on information they've filled out on a web page.

2. Social Media Followers: The total number of followers that a particular media account has.

3. Web Traffic from Social Media Links: The number of visits to the website that came through linked content on owned social media accounts.
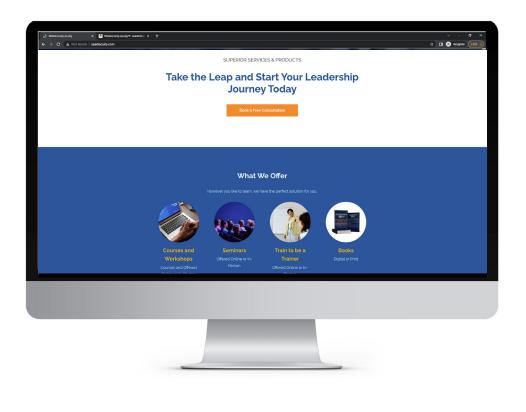
The Website

APPROACH TO WEBSITE

Our approach to the website was firstly to reflect the branding in visuals and voice that we had established for Relationship Acuity according to our communication plan. We strived to make a design that was straightforward and user friendly so that users could easily navigate and readily understand the content. Further, we aimed to attract users to become new consumers through an attractive, modern, and professional aesthetic while using friendly land approachable language and imagery. Implemented interactive elements to engage with users and used call-to-action buttons to encourage users to reach out to the client. The website is fully functional and mobile responsive. I designed and built the homepage, the shop page, and the contact page.
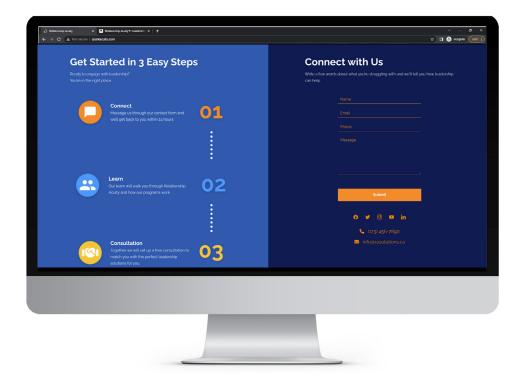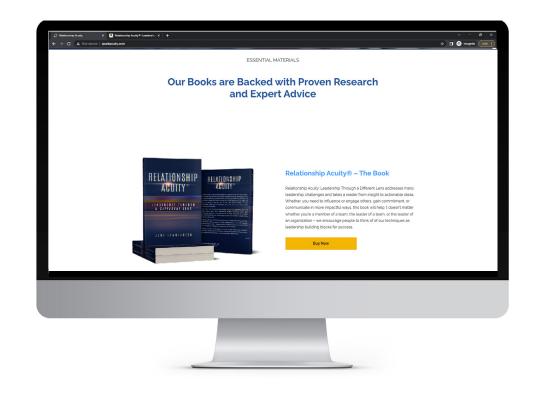
SCREENSHOTS

Homepage Shots:

SCREENSHOTS

Contact Page Shot:

Shop Page Shot:

Conclusion & Personal Takeaways

Manifest Media aimed to create a comprehensive branding, web design, and digital strategy campaign that both we and the client could be proud of. I think we were successful in producing and executing a plan that will help Relationship Acuity grow and accomplish their goals in the present and the future.

This was my first experience creating full branding and web design materials for a real client with real business needs. I was humbled to listen and learn from our client, Relationship Acuity, and tailor my design process to the wants and needs of others. I learned how helpful critical feedback can be and it was incredibly gratifying to find solutions for them and receive positive responses. I started the process being rather uncomfortable with the communication and presentation side of design and feel tremendously more experienced and confident after practicing and growing throughout this semester.

It was also incredibly enlightening to work with digital strategists and learn on the job how a communications strategy is developed from the ground up. I asked the digital strategy specialists on the Manifest Media team plenty of questions and gained tremendous knowledge from working in tandem with them. I have come to really respect and appreciate how successful digital marketing is accomplished and how truly indispensable it is.

Most of all, I feel I grew personally and professionally and learned a lot about myself. I've learned that I have a passion for both design and programming. I was surprised at and deeply proud of the positive responses I got from my design work, both from my peers and the client, and I have gained an improved sense of self from that. Further, my strongly felt instincts for programming decisions and desire to execute our designs and goals brought out my own leadership skills. As I practiced those leadership skills throughout the semester, I honed my ability to work collaboratively and execute a plan with a team. This has been a tremendous, transformative experience that I am extremely grateful for. I look forward to applying the skills I've developed in my professional career.

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