

## **SUMMARY socbrandng**

**Social Branding® is a progressive form of social marketing that was developed by Rescue SCG in 2003 to utilize commercial branding practices to motivate social change. The strategy goes beyond the four P's of marketing and incorporates commercial concepts rarely utilized in prevention, including branding, promise establishment/fulfillment, brand equity, influencer models, and identitarian desires.**

**The foundation of Social Branding® is firmly grounded on identity theory, with a belief that who we are motivates our behavior more powerfully than what we know. Formally defined, Social Branding® is the process of associating a certain positive behavior with the population segment's desired identity by fostering branded experiences. Social Branding incorporates multiple psychological and sociological theories to form a clear and deep change process. Many of these theories have been accepted for decades in academia but without effective application in prevention. They include symbolic interactionism,**

**the functional approach to attitudes, cognitive dissonance, self-fulfilling prophecies, and role theory, among others. In application, the strategy utilizes some traditional marketing strategies like mass media, but places more of an emphasis on alternative media and marketing approaches, such as experiential marketing, influencer marketing, and socio-interactive marketing.**

**Social Branding® is fundamentally different from current public health interventions that only include education and policy. Most current public health programs rely on the conscious reasoning of the focus market to behave logically at all times. Social Branding® recognizes the power of identity and the subconscious desires that too often drive individuals, especially youth and young adults, to perform unhealthy behaviors. For example, teens smoke because they think it is cool, while college students binge drink because they think it is what a social college student does. Many people perform risk behaviors because they believe that those behaviors are an effective way to achieve or maintain their desired identity. Social Branding® believes that efforts focusing only on logical reasoning, such as education and policy, do not address this powerful and common source for unhealthy behaviors.**

**While identity and desire can be strong motivators to perform risk behaviors, a Social Branding® campaign can alter the attitude that**

**fuels this desire and redirect it toward a healthy behavior instead. Social Branding® associates this healthy behavior with the focus market's desired identity, or who they want to be. A "social brand" is developed which, through careful planning, becomes a role model among the focus market and presents a better strategy to embody a desired identity. This is a powerful behavior motivator that leads to passionate and sustainable behavior change. In addition, since Social Branding® focuses on identity, campaigns also ignite cultural change which creates a social environment that supports and promotes the healthy or desired behavior.**

**To be able to build and maintain a successful Social Branding® campaign, Rescue Social Change Group developed this four-step approach:**

**Step 1: Identity Research - A formative research process must first be conducted to understand the association between the identity assumed by the focus market and the unhealthy behavior.**

**Step 2: Brand Development - The social brand is selected based on the qualitative research findings to reflect the identity images the focus market identifies with and the state of being the focus market desires.**

**Step 3: Fostering Experiences - Since attitudes or beliefs towards a behavior and identity are formed through experiences, a Social Branding® campaign fosters controlled experiences where the social brand presents the healthy behavior as a better strategy to reach the focus market's desired identity, leading to behavior change. Experiences must present a consistent brand identity and brand promise. Half of the experiences (such as media and street teams) should establish the brand promise, while the other half (such as events, influencers, and socio-interactive) should fulfill the brand's promise.**

**Step 4: Measuring Determinants - To ensure that the social brand is effectively motivating behavior change within the focus market, Social Branding® campaigns are measured with three determinants: identification—the measurement of how much the focus market relates to the identity and image of the**

**social brand; social authority—the social brand’s social right as granted by the focus market to present the new behavior within the focus market’s culture; and comprehension—confirmation that the focus market understands how the social brand’s promoted behavior is associated with their desired identity.**

**While Social Branding® uses an approach that is drastically different from most public health interventions, it can be effectively managed and executed with proper research, training, and professional support. The complete Social Branding® strategy and application is published in the book, The Social Branding Dogma, available at [socialbrandingdogma.com](http://socialbrandingdogma.com).**

**SOCIAL BRANDING® IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF RESCUE SCG, LLC**