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Cherokee Nation long-range communication plan

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Cherokee Nation Long-Range Communication Plan

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Bachelor of Arts
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1992

A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

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ABSTRACT

Cherokee Nation Long-Range Communication Plan

By

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The Cherokee Nation is the second largest Indian tribe in the United States. It has the rights of a sovereign nation, though those rights are somewhat limited by Congress. Because Congress can take away a tribe's sovereignty, it is important for tribes to maintain a strong public image among the dominant culture, because politicians do not attack popular entities. This paper proposes a long-term plan to keep Cherokee Nation in good favor with the general public, and more specifically the opinion leaders and elected officials who can impact the Nation's future. The plan will include budgets, staffing plans and major project milestones and detail how the Nation should endeavor to reach various audiences with key messages over the next few years.

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PART ONE

Introduction

Public image should be of paramount concern to any Indian Nation. Indian Nations have the rights of sovereign nations, having the legal status of a domestic, dependent sovereign government (*Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*, 1830). However, those sovereign rights are somewhat limited by Congress due to the unique historical relationship between Indian Nations and the United States government. Because Congress can take away a tribe's sovereignty and unilaterally abrogate treaties, it is important for Indian Nations to maintain a strong public image in the dominant culture, because, simply put, politicians do not attack entities that are popular. This paper presents a long-range plan for the Cherokee Nation's communications department to shape public opinion so that the Nation's sovereignty can be maintained or even increased in the future. The paper will make a case for increased emphasis on influencing public opinion, an area Indian Nations have traditionally paid scant attention. The paper will then lay out a plan with major project milestones, target audiences, budgets, staffing plans and detail how the Cherokee Nation should reach various audiences with our messages over the coming years. The paper will also outline the obstacles and constraints inherent in changing public opinion and propose a course of action to deal with those constraints.

Purpose

From any perspective, the Cherokee Nation's foundation is sovereignty. Cherokee Nation operates federal programs because of its special status as a government. Cherokee Nation has business advantages because of its status as a nation. Cherokee Nation generates revenue for services through taxation (tobacco, motor vehicle licenses) because it is a nation with governmental powers and responsibilities. Tribally-owned businesses and businesses located on

tribal land produce revenue primarily because they have special advantages operating under the laws and sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation.

Therefore, the protection of the Cherokee Nation's sovereignty is the highest priority for any employee or official of the Cherokee Nation or Cherokee Nation-owned business. Without sovereignty, Cherokee Nation's governmental structure collapses or becomes irrelevant and Cherokee Nation's businesses lose their primary competitive advantage, and possibly even their reason for existence.

Cherokees have learned from the dark times dating from Oklahoma statehood through the early 1970s that without a government to represent them, the Cherokee people suffer. They are overlooked for services and outsiders create and use predatory laws to take anything of value from them.

Imagine if the Cherokee Nation had a strong presence in Washington, D.C. when its citizens were in the process of losing 90% of their land within the decade following statehood. What if the Cherokee Nation had a strong government in place then, with a loud voice in Washington? The Nation could have prevented the loss of millions of acres of its citizens' individually owned restricted land. But since there was no government to speak for them, and the Cherokee Nation was not a blip on the screen of public opinion, Cherokee citizens lost their land. When the Depression came, many Cherokees had no land, no jobs and no money. They formed a Cherokee diaspora that reached from Texas to California, and the Cherokee Nation became a nation abandoned by half its population because their government was not able to protect them from systematic economic destruction.

Learning from its past shortcomings, the Cherokee Nation government must protect its sovereignty to protect its citizens. The fight for sovereignty must be waged on many fronts:

against encroaching federal government control or cuts in funding, against adverse federal court rulings, against state politicians who may attack sovereignty, even against other groups of Indians. But the overall battle is fought in the arena of public opinion.

Politicians do not cut programs that are popular. Lawyers are more reluctant to sue an entity that has the high moral ground: no one ever sued Mother Teresa. Political candidates also know which way the wind blows: they won't bash the Cherokee Nation or Indian tribes if they think it will hurt them; conversely they will trash tribes if they think they can win votes that way.

So to protect its sovereignty from all future attacks, the Cherokee Nation needs to have the best possible public image. The Nation must present positive information to the public in so many ways, through so many messengers, that a negative comment about the Cherokee Nation, especially in public forum, will become taboo.

These positive messages must be consistent across all Cherokee Nation entities, including the government itself, its holding company, Cherokee Nation Businesses and its subsidiaries, including Cherokee Nation Industries and Cherokee Nation Enterprises.

There must be a structure in place to help keep the message consistent. The messengers must understand the importance of the message and their role in delivering it. The messages must connect the vague idea of sovereignty with real life examples of how the Cherokee Nation benefits every household and community in Oklahoma.

This long-range plan addresses how the Cherokee Nation can protect its sovereignty by strengthening the public opinion upon which that sovereignty is built.

Statement of Problem

The issue of public opinion is more important now for the Cherokee Nation than in any time in recent history. The Cherokee Nation is facing both subtle and overt attacks on its

sovereignty. Foremost is the proposal by Diane Watson (D-CA) to terminate the Cherokee Nation because she does not agree with the Cherokee Nation's Constitution as it pertains to enrollment of citizens. Watson feels the Cherokee Nation should enroll a group of non-Indian citizens and since the Cherokee people disagreed, she has proposed HR 2824, a bill that would terminate the relationship between the Cherokee Nation and the United States (Myers, 2007). Those obstacles on the national level must be fought in Washington, D.C. However, public opinion in Oklahoma is important as the Cherokee Nation asks elected officials in its home state to be champions and stand up for the Nation and fight termination.

Likewise, the Cherokee Nation has powerful forces aligned against it and its tribal neighbors. There are business competitors, like QuikTrip, who see attacking our sovereignty as a lobbying exercise to remove our competitive (tax) advantage. The Renaissance Hotel in Tulsa, Oklahoma probably isn't excited that Cherokee Casino is now a player in the conference and convention business.

There are other businesses and industries, like the oil and gas industry, who view tribal sovereignty as a regulatory hassle. They justify their attacks on tribal sovereignty as a way to keep the costs of doing business as low as possible, though whether tribal regulations would cost an industry or business any money is certainly subject to debate.

Members of those two groups have joined with outspoken anti-Indian bigots to form a group call One Nation United (One Nation United, n.d.). They have not been successfully framed as a hate group, though they take a page right out of the white supremacist handbook with their arguments that they just want what is "fair" and that Indians should not be getting "special treatment (One Nation United)." They just want to "level the playing field (One Nation United)."

The Cherokee Nation must also deal with a threat that is less sinister on its surface, but undermines positive public opinion in a very substantial way: the threat of Well-Intentioned Bigots (WIBs). These vastly outnumber the virulent variety, and generally know nothing about Native Americans. A generation ago, their image of Indians (though they didn't know any) might have been: "They drink too much and work too little." Alcoholism and laziness were stereotypes that stuck to many minorities.

Nowadays, the WIB still doesn't know any Indians, but his image has changed, and Cherokee Nation and other Indian tribes can take credit for changing it. A WIB thinks: "Indians have casino money. They are rich." The Cherokee Nation has spent millions of dollars over the years convincing the public that the Cherokee Nation runs wonderfully entertaining casinos. While those advertisements are true, it creates a misconception that casinos are a priority, or even the identity of the Cherokee Nation. Since that is where Cherokees have spent money, this has become the image of Cherokee Nation to large segments of the population. In the short term, this might make the Cherokee Nation money. In the long-term, it can easily undermine the Cherokee Nation's sovereignty if the Nation does not balance the message by telling the public where the money goes and help push the Cherokee Nation's community message, "what is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma."

The WIB is the person that supports tribal sovereignty in state-wide polling data when he understands the positive things the Cherokee Nation does in the community. This person's well-intentioned bigotry is based in ignorance rather than hatred, and if the Nation can persuade them to become WIBs who love the Cherokee Nation, all the better. WIBs are a large part of Oklahomans, and if the Cherokee Nation wins them over, it will meet its goals.

Cherokee Nation must include its own advertising efforts as an obstacle, because while we have changed the opinion of the WIB, we have not gotten significantly closer to our goal of having him believe that “what is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma.” In fact, it could be argued that his new opinion (Cherokees have all that casino money) is far more of a threat to Cherokee Nation’s sovereignty than his previous one.

Casino gaming falls into either (a) the sovereignty category (tribes regulate business on their land) or (b) the “unlevel playing field” category (Indians can do it but the WIB can’t). A WIB doesn’t understand sovereignty, but he certainly understands if someone tells him something is unfair. Therefore, he’s more likely to be open to arguments by anti-Indian groups like One Nation United, and the Nation has lost ground in the public opinion discussion.

Obviously, if left unguided, public image of the Cherokee Nation will naturally skew towards casinos. Cherokee Casinos will spend millions of dollars on marketing in the coming years, no doubt with great return, producing revenue to achieve the mission of the Cherokee Nation, providing jobs near Cherokee communities and assisting in keeping Cherokee culture alive. However, the marketing of all Cherokee businesses must be balanced with messages that get the Cherokee Nation closer to its goals.

All casino marketing should be targeted as narrowly as possible, focusing on people who are already favorable to gaming. Obviously, it is Cherokee Casino’s best interest to do this because it will keep their costs low, but it is also in the Cherokee Nation’s best interest, because it leaves the door open to present another image of the Cherokee Nation to a non-gaming audience.

Additionally, to prevent a backlash down the road, Cherokees need to invest more heavily in a message campaign showing where the money goes. It should be done proactively

rather than reactively. The Cherokee Nation will miss a valuable opportunity if waits ten years, or until the next public vote, to start telling people the positive impact State Question 712, a 2004 referendum that allowed certainty in the Indian gaming industry in Oklahoma. By waiting, the Cherokee Nation will face a much harder task of trying to change public perception rather than *create* public perception. The Cherokee Nation has the opportunity to create public perception right now.

For this reason, the Cherokee Nation must provide greater funding to an image campaign, combined with other efforts to influence the general public, and show the public that the Cherokee Nation is a good community partner.

To do otherwise means putting the short-term profit ahead of the long-term foundation of the business, sovereignty. The Cherokee Nation must realize that the golden goose is not casinos or any other business the Nation operates, but rather its sovereignty, which relies upon positive public opinion. The golden goose is the Cherokee Nation's sovereignty and the Cherokee Nation's image is paramount to the image of any of our entities.

Justification

Firestone went from a good tire company to an iffy one in just a few days, severing relationships and goodwill that spanned more than a century (Ackerman, 2001). Exxon became a punch line because of the drunken stupor of one oil tanker captain (Susi, 2002). Richard Nixon won a landslide victory in 1972, but less than two years into his term he resigned in disgrace. For years people talked about the "stain" Nixon's actions left on the office of the President and how the Watergate scandal scourged the psyche of our nation. The words "I am not a crook" forever changed the way Americans looked at their president.

Could the Cherokee Nation be sideswiped by waves of negative publicity stemming from an event beyond our control? Certainly. Someone could go postal at Cherokee Nation Industries. There could be a scandal involving corruption at Housing Authority of the Cherokee Nation, Cherokee Nation Enterprises or within the Cherokee Nation government. A giant Cherokee Connex tower could collapse onto a vagabond circus troupe, indiscriminately crushing elephants, clowns and carnies. The possibilities are limitless. Can the Nation be prepared for them all? No. But the more goodwill the Nation builds up in advance, the less likely a single scandal or attack can ruin its public image.

For example, when the Tylenol scare broke out the early '80s, Tylenol's parent company recalled every pill and caplet bottle and came up with tamper-resistant packaging (Susi, 2002). They were selling health care and pain relief, and acted in the best interests of their customers' health. They improved their brand loyalty because of how they handled their crisis, even though people actually died after taking (tainted) Tylenol.

Exxon got no such break from the public, in part because they initially reacted to the *Valdez* disaster like a global, bottom-line oil company (Susi, 2002). Which is exactly what the public expected them to do: put the environment a distant second (or third, or fourth, or...) to making a profit. Their initial bad actions combined with the public's predisposition to thinking oil companies are generally evil made Exxon look a lot worse than they probably deserved.

One analysis would be: Tylenol's product killed people and caused a national scare, but because they had goodwill (who doesn't like a company who actually delivers on a promise to relieve headaches?) and reacted well, they fared far better in the world of public opinion than did Exxon.

The Exxon *Valdez* killed no one and doesn't even rank in the top 50 oil spills of all time, but because they had no goodwill (who likes the guys who are always raising your gas prices?) and reacted poorly, they became a national laughingstock and had to resort to removing the name Exxon from of several of their businesses (Susi, 2002).

Polling data from proprietary surveys conducted on behalf of the Cherokee Nation by the firm of Cole, Hardgrave, Snodgrass & Associates shows that the Cherokee Nation has some goodwill. Is it enough goodwill to inoculate ourselves against a crisis on the scale of allotment and termination? The current acceptance of anti-Indian rhetoric in public discourse suggests that it is not.

In the past, attacks on Cherokee sovereignty have been piecemeal and capable Cherokees fought, and for the most part won, the good fight. But now that the stakes have been raised to the level of tribal termination, will Cherokee Nation prevail? Will public opinion force Oklahoma's delegation to be standard-bearers for the Cherokee Nation's cause, not just voting for Cherokee issues but also twisting arms and calling in favors to make sure our interests were protected? The Cherokee Nation cannot afford negative answers to those questions. That is why this plan must be developed, funded and executed.

Constraints

The Cherokee Nation has far more uses for funds than it has funds available. Sovereignty protection must be weighed in a difficult balance against needed services for Cherokee Nation citizens, like educational assistance, diabetes treatment and research, building infrastructure and preserving the Cherokee language and culture. Funding the initiatives outlined in this plan must be a conscious choice to emphasize and protect that which is most valuable, and the foundation upon which funding for many worthy service programs is provided: the Cherokee Nation's

sovereignty. This plan will propose budgets and staffing plans that consider those potential financial limitations.

Further limitations to the plan involve elements that are inherently political and will complement the actions outlined as tasks in the communications plan. For instance, though politicians listen to public attention, they also have been known to listen to their campaign donors. Other groups within the Cherokee Nation deal with government relations, keeping elected officials informed and making donations where appropriate. The plan also must be read with the understanding that the elected leaders of any government have a strong role in how that government is perceived; for example Minnesota will forever be known as a state that elected a loud-mouthed former professional wrestler to the governor's mansion (Associated Press, 1998). The Cherokee Nation's image can change drastically as well, based upon who is elected as Principal Chief and Deputy Chief (the Nation's top executives) and the Tribal Council (the Nation's legislative body).

PART TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

Assuming that the Cherokee Nation, indeed, wants to preserve its sovereignty by keeping public opinion of the Nation as favorable as possible, the Cherokee Nation must undertake a proactive course of action to make this happen. The first step in such a course of action involves developing a long-range plan that provides the broad guidelines and milestones for such a plan. The plan must also fall under the guidelines laid out by the Cherokee Nation itself. This literature review focuses on the methodology recommended by the Cherokee Nation for its long range plans. It also synthesizes information from other long range planning templates involving

both for-profit and governmental long-range plans for communications departments, because it is essential that the resulting plan provide strategic direction and the agenda for the Cherokee Nation and all its business units to align with (Baron, 2004).

Literature Review

The Cherokee Nation has a strategic planning process, and its communications department has been tasked with developing a plan that fits the format proscribed. The format is designed as an inverted pyramid, boiling down a strategic plan for a specific group or department based on the overall mission and desired outcomes of the Cherokee Nation (Cherokee Nation, 2001). The plan then requires “an analysis of external environmental factors; analysis of Cherokee Nation assets; strategic issues and uncertainties; strategy; and strategic planning (Cherokee Nation).” Though the strategic planning template is not new to Cherokee Nation, the request for such a plan may mirror a national trend, in which senior management places more stock in strategic communications because they realize it “can be an important distinctive competency or critical enabler in promoting a better fit among and between different organizational elements (Fleischer, 1998).”

The plan developed as part of this process will encompass the communications groups at all business entities as well as the Cherokee Nation government itself, as recommended by Samansky (2003), who wrote that it would be “counterproductive not to coordinate the plans of all communications disciplines. Changes in any one plan can, and generally do, have a cascading impact on what other disciplines are working toward.” The plan will incorporate new media as well as traditional PR methodologies, including grass roots and online strategies. The rapid “growth of the Internet and email (Public Relations Quarterly, 2000)” has led to new ways to

organize and mobilize grass roots organizations, which is of particular interest to an entity dependent on public opinion for its strength (Public Relations Quarterly).

The communications plan will also include details beyond the established Cherokee Nation template but essential for successful implementation as it pertains to this particular discipline. It will estimate budgets, including staff related and non-staff related costs over a period of years, so that decision makers will have the opportunity to see costs associated with goals and make decisions accordingly (Samansky, 2003). The communications plan will be specific with regard to goals and budgets, identify costs and revenue associated with each major project, and will include a plan for implementation (Weiner, 2007).

It is important to have the right information in place to incorporate mechanisms for review and course corrections as market and competitive landscapes shift (Baron, 2004).” Those shifting landscapes demonstrate why even a long term plan has to be flexible, allowing for frequent environmental scans to make sure the goals set are still the goals desired, and that the means for achieving the goals hasn’t changed or the technology available to reach those goals hasn’t changed either. This is especially important for communications plans, because “the rise in activism, globalization and the use of the Internet have all made the environment more unpredictable (Public Relations Quarterly, 2000).” For that reason, goals in a communications long-range plan have to be real in the near term, realistic in the mid-term, and understood to be “best estimates of likely conditions” in the long-term (Samansky, 2003).

Other research on communications long-term plans, though it may not fit the Cherokee Nation’s government model, still proves useful in developing the Cherokee Nation plan. The Cherokee Nation is not the only organization that finds its “external environment and its management (to be) a critical component of success (Fleisher, 1998).” In developing such a

plan, goals and milestones need to be prioritized based on resources available, timeliness of message and how the messages fit with the Nation's overall mission (Samansky, 2003).

The plan will also incorporate targeted audiences that must be reached for the plan to be successful, including both internal and external audiences and subsets of each (Samansky, 2003). As much as possible, the plan will incorporate opportunities for those audiences to provide feedback on the direction and effectiveness of the implementation of the plan, through focus groups, surveys, and face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders (Weiner, 2007). Specific activities within the plan should target those audiences, as well as be timed chronologically with efforts aimed at other audiences so that messaging stays consistent across platforms, media and audience bases (Samansky).

The Cherokee Nation's template and structure provides an outline, structure and sets expectations for content for a long-range communications plan. Most importantly, it states that "the validity of any strategic plan can be tested by comparing its contents to the desired outcomes of the Cherokee Nation (Cherokee Nation, 2001)." It requires contingency planning and an accounting for resources (Cherokee Nation). Finally, and most importantly, it must be submitted to authorities in the Cherokee Nation's executive branch, approved and incorporated into the budgeting process, and be successfully implemented.

Conclusion to Literature Review

The Cherokee Nation faces unique challenges as a sovereign government that also operates for profit businesses, including some businesses, such as gaming, which are wholly dependent on that sovereignty. Plans and templates exist for long-range business plans, long-range corporate communications plans and long-range plans for government entities. Combining the most applicable parts of each, and placing them within the structure of the Cherokee Nation's

strategic planning template, is the challenge presented to, and answered by, the following communications plan. The plan attached is viewed as stand-alone document, formatted for presentation to the Cherokee Nation, and, as such, may repeat material in previous sections of this paper and adhere to that format rather than APA format in some cases.

PART THREE

Long Range Plan, as to be presented to Cherokee Nation leadership.



Cherokee Nation

Communications Long-Range Plan

Executive Summary

- The foundation of the Cherokee Nation and all its wholly-owned businesses is sovereignty.
 - Cherokee Nation's sovereignty is being challenged every day.
 - By tying the Cherokee Nation's well-being and sovereignty to the overall welfare of the state, the Nation can greatly reduce the number and strength of those attacks.
 - The best way to make that connection in the minds of the general public is to shape public opinion.
 - Right now, public opinion of the Cherokee Nation is shaped in a large part by the messages the Nation sends them, primarily gaming related.
 - If left unchecked, the Cherokee Nation's image will become predominantly a casino image, which, at best case is benign and at worst case is a foundation for an attack on the Nation's sovereignty as people with special rights.
 - Facing a looming sovereignty and termination crisis based on citizenship issues, the Nation must prepare immediately to protect itself.
 - The Cherokee Nation should match marketing expenditures with expenditures showing what the Nation does with its money and how it contributes back to the state, or else the Nation risks spending millions promoting an image that actually undermines sovereignty long-term.
-

The Case for Communications

No matter how you look at it, the Cherokee Nation's foundation is sovereignty. The Cherokee Nation operates federal programs because of its special status as a government. The Cherokee Nation has a business advantages because of its status as a nation. The Cherokee Nation is able to generate revenue for services through taxation (tobacco, motor vehicle licenses) because it is a nation with governmental powers and responsibilities. Tribally-owned businesses and businesses located on tribal land produce revenue primarily because they have special advantages operating under the laws and sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation.

Therefore, the protection of the Cherokee Nation's sovereignty is the highest priority for any employee or official of the Cherokee Nation or Cherokee Nation-owned business. Without sovereignty, the Cherokee Nation's governmental structure collapses or becomes irrelevant and the Nation's businesses lose their primary competitive advantage, and possibly even their reason for existence.

The Cherokee Nation has learned from the dark times, dating from Oklahoma statehood one hundred years ago through the early 1970s, that without a government to represent them, the Cherokee people suffer. They are overlooked for services and outsiders create and use predatory laws to take anything of value from them.

Imagine if the Cherokee Nation had a Washington, D.C. office when its citizens were losing their land after statehood. What if the Cherokee Nation had had a strong government in place then, with a loud voice in Washington? The Cherokee Nation could have prevented the loss of millions of acres of its citizens' individually owned restricted land. But since there was no government to speak for them, and the Cherokee Nation was not a blip on the screen of public opinion, Cherokee citizens lost their land. When the Depression came, many Cherokees had no

land, no jobs and no money. They formed a Cherokee diaspora that reached from Texas to California, and it became a nation abandoned by half its population because their government was not able to protect them from systematic economic destruction.

Learning from its past shortcomings, the Cherokee Nation government must protect its sovereignty to protect its citizens. The fight for sovereignty must be waged on many fronts: against encroaching federal government control or cuts in funding, against adverse federal court rulings, against state politicians who may attack sovereignty, even against other groups of Indians. But the overall battle is fought in the arena of public opinion.

Politicians do not cut programs that are popular. Lawyers are more reluctant to sue an entity that has the high moral ground: no one ever sued Mother Teresa. Political candidates also know which way the wind blows: they won't bash the Cherokee Nation or Indian tribes if they think it will hurt them; they will trash tribes if they think they can win votes that way.

So to protect its sovereignty from all future attacks, the Cherokee Nation needs to have the best possible public image. The Cherokee Nation must present positive information to the public in so many ways, through so many messengers, that a negative comment about the Cherokee Nation, especially in public forum, will become taboo.

These positive messages must be consistent across the Cherokee Nation's entities: Cherokee Nation Industries, Cherokee Nation Enterprises, Cherokee Nation Businesses, the Housing Authority of the Cherokee Nation, and of course, the Cherokee Nation itself.

There must be a structure in place to help keep the message consistent. The messengers must understand the importance of the message and their role in delivering it. The Cherokee Nation's messages will connect the vague idea of sovereignty with real life examples of how the Cherokee Nation's success benefits every household and community in Oklahoma.

This long-range plan addresses how the Cherokee Nation can protect its sovereignty by strengthening the public opinion upon which that sovereignty is built.

Mission of the Cherokee Nation

“The mission of the Cherokee Nation is gadugi: working together as individuals, families and communities for a quality of life for this and future generations by promoting confidence, the tribal culture and an effective sovereign government (Smith, 2000).”

Cherokee Nation Communications Group plays a key role in “promoting confidence” and “effective sovereign government...” Communications can re-enforce confidence in identity by providing Cherokee citizens positive feedback about the good things the Cherokee Nation does. The message: “What is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma” certainly implies that individual Cherokees are an asset to their state and community.

More importantly, as discussed above, if sovereignty is the foundation of the Cherokee Nation, public opinion is the bedrock upon which that sovereignty rests. The task of the Cherokee Nation Communications Group is to drive the pillars of our sovereignty foundation so deep into the bedrock of Oklahoma’s public opinion that they become inseparable. Any call for the destruction of Cherokee Nation’s sovereignty will be seen as an attack on the bedrock itself, an attack on Oklahoma’s very fiber. While it is impossible to eliminate hate groups that will overtly try to destroy the Cherokee Nation, the goal should be to render their opposition so far outside the mainstream of public opinion as to be comical, much like the KKK and the Nazis are objects of ridicule today.

A well-implemented, long-term communications plan is essential to the mission of the Cherokee Nation because communications (public relations, marketing, advertising, branding, etc.) is the most effective way of shaping public opinion.

Analysis of External Environmental Factors

To shape public opinion, of course, the Cherokee Nation must first understand what it already is. The Nation must have a baseline, an assessment of its current image. As part of the Sooner Survey, conducted by Cole, Hardgrave, Snodgrass & Associates, Oklahomans were asked a series of questions, the results of which are proprietary to the Cherokee Nation and its wholly owned corporations. For full data on the questions selected below, see Appendix A. The data suggests certain conclusions. First, by more than a 2-1 (63%-26%) margin, people think gaming is good for the tourism economy. On the other hand, more Oklahomans disagree with the fundamental premise that what is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma (36% agree, 41% disagree).

Another set of questions were asked over a two year period of time, allowing the Cherokee Nation to determine if public opinion is trending one way or another. One question asked Oklahomans if they thought tribes are guaranteed the right to own and operate in business, or if they thought Indian tribes had abused their treaty rights. Over the course of the year, there was a sixteen point negative swing in the answers, with positive responses dropping from 50% in year one to 43%, and negative responses rising from 35% to 44%. Also disturbing was the trend in answers to another question, which asked whether tribal governments are an asset to Oklahoma or whether they have outlived their usefulness. While positive responses stayed statistically flat (55-56%) over the course of the year, negative responses rose from 27% to 33%, while people who volunteered that they were undecided fell from 18% to 11%. It is apparent that over the course of the year, anti-Indian messages won over undecided Oklahomans at a rate of 6-1.

But all is not lost. More data reveals that 59% of Oklahomans had a ‘favorable’ opinion of the Cherokee Nation (29% strongly favorable) while only 10% had an ‘unfavorable’ opinion (5% strongly unfavorable), 28% had no opinion, and 4% never heard of the Cherokee Nation. Other interesting findings from the survey showed that 27% of Oklahomans think Indian tribes have too much power, while 50% think Indian tribes have the right amount of power. 37% say tribes should not remain sovereign entities, while 55% say tribes should remain sovereign entities.

Clearly, these numbers show that, without prompting, Indian tribes have a 1.5-2.0:1 ratio of positive to negative, even on nebulous questions about sovereignty and treaties, and emotional arguments like “outlived their usefulness” and “too much power.” However, a significant portion of that positive support is relatively weak. While the idea of Indian sovereignty plays relatively well, it is hardly a slam dunk. Sovereignty is a concept, an idea that the general public takes for granted in its own government, but may see as a novelty when applied to Indian Nations. So it is helpful for the Cherokee Nation to know what messages might make the general public more favorable to the idea of tribal sovereignty, or the belief that “What is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma.”

Message Testing

The same survey by the Cole group also tested which messages are more likely to change public opinion about tribal sovereignty in a positive way. A detailed analysis of the questions and answers can be found in Appendix B. An analysis of the survey concludes that Oklahomans are moderately impressed that the Cherokee Nation saves the state money and that treaties are relevant today, but in a state-wide sample, stronger arguments for preserving sovereignty can be found in promoting Indian culture. The survey also showed that the public is generally in favor

of tribes and the state working together, even on controversial issues like water rights, rather than having an adversarial relationship. On a broad range of questions, ranging from health care, business diversification, road construction and education, knowledge of tribal contributions to the overall well-being of the state generated positive feedback from Oklahomans.

These numbers are very positive because each of these true statements causes the respondents to see Indians in a more favorable light. The good news appears to be that the Cherokee Nation need only to spread the word. If the Cherokee Nation told 400,000 people these statements, instead of 400, if every Oklahoman was bombarded with messages about the Cherokee Nation's economic impact, its funding for education and roads, even the fact that tribal citizens pay taxes, it stands to reason that the overall image of tribes and the Cherokee Nation would improve dramatically over time. With this data as a baseline, the Cherokee Nation must decide what it wants the public's opinion to be.

A target goal would be to have as much influence with the public and elected officials as the oil and gas industry does. As the Cherokees have seen with Five Nations Indian Land Reform Act in 2002 (Myers, 2002), U.S. Senators will kill a bill at the request of the oil and gas lobby, regardless of its impact to citizens of the state. State politicians tell their constituents that what is good for the oil business is good for Oklahoma (Garrison, 2007). One of the poll questions is: "What is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma," and the response is negative. In the future, the answers must be comparable to Oklahoma's most powerful industry, oil and gas. The Cherokee Nation's influence must rival theirs and since the interests of the Nation and the oil industry do not consistently conflict, there is room at the table for the Cherokee Nation. A final measurable goal is for Indian tribes and the Cherokee Nation to be perceived as the most powerful industry in Oklahoma. Further sampling will give an idea what level of response will

indicate that Indian tribes have the same perceived influence and favor that the oil and gas industry does in Oklahoma.

Obstacles

What are the obstacles that stand in the way of the Cherokee Nation reaching those goals? The Cherokee Nation is facing both subtle and overt attacks on its sovereignty. Foremost is the proposal by Diane Watson, a Democrat and U.S. Representative from California, to terminate the Cherokee Nation because she does not agree with the Cherokee Nation's Constitution as it pertains to enrollment of citizens. Watson feels the Cherokee Nation should enroll a group of non-Indian citizens and since the Cherokee people disagreed, she has proposed HR 2824, a bill that would terminate the relationship between the Cherokee Nation and the United States. Those obstacles on the national level must be fought in Washington, D.C. However, public opinion in Oklahoma is important as the Cherokee Nation asks elected officials in its home state to be champions and stand up for the Nation and fight termination.

Likewise, the Cherokee Nation has powerful forces aligned against it and its tribal neighbors. There are business competitors, like QuikTrip, who see attacking our sovereignty as a lobbying exercise to remove our competitive (tax) advantage. The Renaissance Hotel in Tulsa probably isn't excited that Cherokee Casino is now a player in the conference and convention business.

There are other businesses and industries, like the oil and gas industry, who view tribal sovereignty as a regulatory hassle. They justify their attacks on our sovereignty as a way to keep the costs of doing business as low as possible, though whether tribal regulations would cost an industry or business any money is certainly subject to debate.

Members of those two groups have joined with outspoken anti-Indian bigots to form a group call One Nation United (formerly One Nation). They have not been successfully framed as a hate group, though they take a page right out of the white supremacist handbook with their

arguments that they just want what is “fair” and that Indians should not be getting “special treatment.” They just want to “level the playing field.”

The Cherokee Nation must also deal with a threat that is less sinister on its surface, but undermines positive public opinion in a very substantial way: the threat of Well-Intentioned Bigots (WIBs). These vastly outnumber the virulent variety, and generally know nothing about Native Americans. A generation ago, their image of Indians (though they didn’t know any) might have been: “They drink too much and work too little.” Alcoholism and laziness were stereotypes that stuck to many minorities.

Nowadays, the WIB still doesn’t know any Indians, but his image has changed, and Cherokee Nation and other Indian tribes can take credit for changing it. A WIB thinks: “Indians have casino money. They are rich.” The Cherokee Nation has spent millions of dollars over the years convincing the public that the Cherokee Nation runs wonderfully entertaining casinos. While those advertisements are true, it creates a misconception that casinos are a priority, or even our identity. Since that is where Cherokees have spent money, that image has become the sole image of Cherokee Nation to large segments of the population. In the short term, this might make the Cherokee Nation. In the long-term, it can easily undermine the Cherokee Nation’s sovereignty if the Nation does not balance the message by telling the public where the money goes and why “what is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma.”

The WIB is the person that supports tribal sovereignty in our polling data when he understands the positive things the Cherokee Nation does in the community. This person’s well-intentioned bigotry is based in ignorance rather than hatred, and if the Nation can persuade them to become WIBs who love the Cherokee Nation, all the better. WIBs are a large part of Oklahomans, and if the Cherokee Nation wins win them over, it will meet its goals.

Cherokee Nation must include its own advertising efforts as an obstacle, because while we have changed the opinion of the WIB, we have not gotten significantly closer to our goal of having him believe that “what is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma.” In fact, one could argue that his new opinion (Cherokees have all that casino money) is far more of a threat to Cherokee Nation’s sovereignty than his previous one.

Casino gaming falls into either (a) the sovereignty category (Indian Nations regulate business on their own land) or (b) the “unlevel playing field” category (Indians can do it but the WIB can’t). A WIB doesn’t understand sovereignty, but he certainly understands if someone tells him something is unfair. Therefore, he’s more likely to be open to arguments by anti-Indian groups like One Nation United, and the Cherokee Nation has lost ground in the battle for public opinion.

Obviously, if left unguided, public image of the Cherokee Nation will naturally skew towards casinos. Cherokee Casinos will spend millions of dollars on marketing in the coming years, no doubt with great return, producing revenue to achieve the mission of the Cherokee Nation, providing jobs near Cherokee communities and assisting in keeping Cherokee culture alive. However, the marketing of all Cherokee businesses must be balanced with messages that get the Cherokee Nation closer to its goals.

All casino marketing should be targeted as narrowly as possible, focusing on people who are already favorable to gaming. Obviously, it is Cherokee Casino’s best interest to do this because it will keep their costs low, but it is also in the Cherokee Nation’s best interest, because it leaves the door open to present another image of the Cherokee Nation to a non-gaming audience.

Additionally, to prevent a backlash down the road, Cherokees need to invest more heavily in a message campaign showing where the money goes. It should be done proactively rather than reactively. The Cherokee Nation will miss a valuable opportunity if waits ten years, or until the next public vote, to start telling people the positive impact State Question 712, a 2004 referendum that allowed certainty in the Indian gaming industry in Oklahoma. By waiting, the Cherokee Nation will face a much harder task of trying to change public perception rather than *create* public perception. The Cherokee Nation has the opportunity to create public perception right now.

For this reason, the Cherokee Nation must provide greater funding to an image campaign, combined with other efforts to influence the general public, and show the public that the Cherokee Nation is a good community partner.

To do otherwise means putting the short-term profit ahead of the long-term foundation of the business, sovereignty. The Cherokee Nation must realize that the golden goose is not casinos or any other business the Nation operates, but rather its sovereignty, which relies upon positive public opinion. The golden goose is the Cherokee Nation's sovereignty and the Cherokee Nation's image is paramount to the image of any of our entities.

Strategic Issues and Uncertainties

Firestone went from a good tire company to an iffy one in just a few days. Exxon became a punch-line because of the drunken stupor of one oil tanker captain. Richard Nixon won a landslide victory in 1972, but less than two years into his term he resigned in disgrace. For years people talked about the “stain” Nixon’s actions left on the office of the President and how the Watergate scandal scourged the psyche of our nation. The words “I am not a crook” forever changed the way Americans looked at their president.

Could the Cherokee Nation be sideswiped by waves of negative publicity stemming from an event beyond our control? Certainly. Someone could go postal at CNI. There could be a scandal involving corruption at HACN, CNE or the Cherokee Nation. A giant radio tower could collapse onto a vagabond circus troupe, indiscriminately crushing elephants, clowns and carnies.

The possibilities are limitless. Can the Nation be prepared for them all? No. But the more goodwill the Nation builds up in advance, the less likely a single scandal or attack can ruin its public image.

For example, when the Tylenol scare broke out the early '80s, Tylenol’s parent company recalled every pill and caplet bottle and came up with tamper-resistant packaging. They were selling health care and pain relief, and acted in the best interests of their customers’ health. They improved their brand loyalty because of how they handled their crisis, even though people actually died after taking (tainted) Tylenol.

Exxon got no such break from the public, in part because they initially reacted to the *Valdez* disaster like a global, bottom-line oil company. Which is exactly what the public expected them to do: put the environment a distant second (or third, or fourth, or...) to making a

profit. Their initial bad actions combined with the public's predisposition to thinking oil companies are generally evil made Exxon look a lot worse than they probably deserved.

One analysis would be: Tylenol's product killed people and caused a national scare, but because they had goodwill (who doesn't like a company who actually delivers on a promise to relieve headaches?) and reacted well, they fared far better in the world of public opinion than did Exxon.

The Exxon *Valdez* killed no one and doesn't even rank in the top 50 oil spills of all time, but because they had no goodwill (who likes the guys who are always raising your gas prices?) and reacted poorly, they became a national laughingstock and had to resort to removing the name Exxon from of several of their businesses.

Polling data shows that the Cherokee Nation has some goodwill. Is it enough goodwill to inoculate ourselves against a crisis on the scale of allotment and termination? The current acceptance of anti-Indian rhetoric in public discourse suggests that it is not.

In the past attacks on Cherokee sovereignty have been piecemeal and capable Cherokees fought, and for the most part won, the good fight. But now that the stakes have been raised to the level of tribal termination, will Cherokee Nation prevail? Will public opinion force Oklahoma's delegation to be standard-bearers for the Cherokee Nation's cause, not just voting for Cherokee issues but also twisting arms and calling in favors to make sure our interests were protected? The Cherokee Nation cannot afford negative answers to those questions. That is why this plan must be developed, funded and executed.

Strategy

So how does the Cherokee Nation do it? The strategy for the Cherokee Nation Communications Group is simple and involves grassroots efforts as well as traditional public relations and communications strategies.

Here are the basic steps. First, the Cherokee Nation must find out what the public needs to know, then define the audiences and target messages. Then the Cherokee Nation must create ambassadors who know their Nation, starting with employees of the Cherokee Nation and its business entities. After that, the plan expands around that core base of knowledge and messengers, to other Cherokee Nation citizens, utilizing Internet strategies, columns in local papers, radio broadcasts, local cable TV and books targeting young citizens. The next circle of audiences include a broader range of citizens in northeastern Oklahoma, influencing media through both paid ads and positive earned positive media coverage. Finally, the Cherokee Nation can control the message most effectively by using its assets to become a gatekeeper for the message by acquiring media outlets and having access to radio, television and print media. Simply put, the five steps could be called:

- 1) Know the message
- 2) Tell Cherokee Nation's friends
- 3) Tell Cherokee Nation community
- 4) Tell the world
- 5) Own the world (or the public opinion in the Cherokee Nation's corner of it)

Implementation

This would be a good time to restate the end goals in a very specific way. What does the Cherokee Nation want its image to be in ten years? The Communications Group of the Cherokee Nation posits that the Nation wants Oklahomans to believe that “what is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma,” and to believe it about the Cherokee Nation as much or more as they believe it about any other entity or industry in the state. The fundamental message that every Oklahoman needs to understand is that simple: Cherokee Nation is a good community partner. The Cherokee Nation wants the general public to have an ownership interest in the success of the Cherokee Nation. The Cherokee Nation wants believers.

In 2002, people in Webbers Falls, Oklahoma bought into a pipe dream made up by a group that called itself the Southern Cherokee Nation but in fact had no standing whatsoever as an Indian Nation. The group convinced the local population that they could bring riverboat gaming to their sleepy little town and would create great economic benefit for the town in doing so (Associated Press, 2002). The leadership of Webbers Falls bought the idea because they thought it was in their best interest to buy it, not because it actually made sense. Imagine if the Cherokee Nation could get that kind of buy-in for its real economic impact. The Cherokee Nation needs to create community ambassadors who tell people that the best thing that has happened to their community is the Cherokee Nation.

Owning public opinion in the Cherokee Nation’s corner of the world is easier said than done. The first part of this section will show the Cherokee Nation Communication’s Group’s deliverables and timelines. The second part will discuss the resources needed to make it happen.

Know the Cherokee Nation's Messages

Knowing the Cherokee Nation's messages requires polling and/or focus groups, research and other external assistance. Among the first steps will be to identify best practices in image campaigns and find a consultant to help us navigate the research and strategy for implementing a campaign to the general public. Cherokee Nation can utilize consultants who are already working with other CN entities or the Nation can find others to assist.

Tell Cherokee Nation's Friends

Enduring messages need to work from the inside out and from the top of an organization down. Long-term messages only work if there is a core of Kool-Aid drinkers who can sustain the message. If the Communications Group tells the general public that the Cherokee Nation is great and its employees go home saying the opposite, the message gets shot down quickly. There is a fine line to draw here between whether people really like their jobs (not usually very common) and people who have bought into the big ideas their employers are creating. The Communications Group is not selling a product, but an image, and Cherokee Nation employees are the first in line. It may even be worthwhile to do scientific polling of Cherokee Nation employees to test what messages are needed to target to them. Regardless, Communications Group must create an atmosphere where employees are happy and knowledgeable.

So, the first step to changing public opinion is to have employees who genuinely believe the message, that the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma. The Know Your Nation employee training is currently in development and should be ready for implementation soon. Within 18 months, the Communications Group should have the more than 6,500 employees of the Cherokee Nation and its entities trained as goodwill ambassadors who know the basic facts about the Cherokee Nation.

Based on messages developed for Know Your Nation, the Communications Group will design an experience for opinion leaders/speakers to see first-hand how different departments and entities do their work. Similar to programs like Leadership Oklahoma, these programs would involve a cohort of selected leaders for field trips, projects and networking. Such a program would foster *gadugi* by letting them get to know other people in other areas. Speaker training would then be supplemented by a speaker's bureau that actively tries to place people with the Cherokee Nation's message in communities. Other activities include a visual management plan that would establish branding standards for all business and entities, improve both the informational content and customer service focus of public areas in Cherokee Nation offices and developing a plan to consistently identify Cherokee Nation buildings to the public, and developing a comprehensive archiving plan for important communications material, allowing for better usage across multi-media platforms. For a detailed plan for all activities proposed for this second step in implementation, please see Appendix C.

Tell Cherokee Nation Citizens

After Cherokee Nation employees are on message, it is essential that Cherokee Nation citizens also become standard bearers, or at least have the information necessary to inform their neighbors, friends and co-workers about the good the Cherokee Nation does in their community. There are several vehicles for informing Cherokee citizens, though part of the initial research should include gathering data on citizens' media preferences. To leverage existing resources, the Cherokee Nation will continue developing and improving its radio show. It has already been expanded to an hour in length and integrated English as well as Cherokee. The next step is to make the show more interactive, answering questions and giving feedback on what people want to know. This is a building block to a time when the show can be broadcast in real time with an

interactive audience. Along this timeline, Cherokee Nation will identify ways to ‘cross-over’ and address mass-market issues, through underwriting shows, owning its own stations and developing its own talent. Cherokee Nation could also pursue its own low-power radio and/or television stations or even a commercial station as startups, rather than paying top dollar for established stations.

Other projects for informing Cherokee citizens include weekly columns in selected local/rural newspapers, publishing success story books for young Cherokees, and producing quality informational videos for the Cherokee Nation Web site, www.cherokee.org. It also includes an in-house TV network that informs citizens when they are in Cherokee Nation offices or clinics, and a series of videos for distribution through the Nation’s web site and directly to citizens. It also includes community based exhibits that can be taken to community buildings and events that cover basic fundamental messages about the Cherokee Nation government, its businesses, economic impact and its services. For a detailed plan for all activities proposed for this third step in implementation, please see Appendix D.

Tell the World

The Cherokee Nation must first continue to update its baseline data. The Nation must continue to see if media coverage of controversial topics, including the citizenship issues, will affect the public’s perception of the Cherokee Nation and Indian tribes. The Communications Group must compare baseline data with updated data and assess how to best reach the goals with external audiences. The only true way to track public opinion is through research. Continued polling will be required, with significant research expense. However, this research and polling can be a very valuable asset to the Cherokee Nation’s friends in the political spectrum. By conducting our own polls, we can allow others to piggyback with a question or two and find out

general attitudes on things that the Cherokee Nation wants to know. The Cherokee Nation can also find out more about sensitive issues as it moves forward, like water rights and hunting and fishing. The details of this plan will be formulated based on available budget and input from consultants.

The paid media plan would include periodic research to determine progress and refine messages as the plan progresses. The Cherokee Nation should proceed with a media campaign that improves the image of the Cherokee Nation specifically and may help the image of tribes in general. It is important that the Cherokee Nation continue to develop relationships with other tribes and come together with a multi-tribal effort that improves the image of Indian Nations in general. The Cherokee Nation should develop its own strategy independently, because of the length of time it takes to pull multi-tribal efforts together and the uncertainty of the longevity of any such plan. The advantages of a multi-tribal effort include shared research costs and possibly production costs.

Additionally, it is important that government and community relations are involved in this process. The Cherokee Nation must live up to the hype the Communications Group creates. The Cherokee Nation must continue to do positive things in local communities. A message has to have substance, and the Cherokee Nation's does: The Cherokee Nation *is* good for communities. But to make the message sink in, the Cherokee Nation must do more community investment and government relations. County governments pay the Cherokee Nation a lot more heed now, because it spends \$60,000 per council member per year on county roads projects. Right or wrong, that money goes a long way in changing public perception. The Cherokee Nation does not need to become a piggy-bank for other governments, but it is important that government relations and community relations have the resources to do strategic grassroots work

to back up the overall communications plan. For a detailed plan for all activities proposed for this fourth step in implementation, please see Appendix E.

Own the World (Or at least the public opinion in the Cherokee Nation's corner of it)

The further into the implementation the Communications Group looks, the more ambitious the plan becomes. That's okay, because there is time to achieve those goals. There is no better tool for controlling public opinion than being a gatekeeper for public information. TV stations, newspapers, radio stations control what stories are told and what stories are not told. As the dominant culture moves into a world with hundreds of TV options, access to thousands of newspapers online and satellite radio signals, local media faces increased pressure to be relevant and accountable to their communities. They must provide information that their audience cannot get anywhere else. Over the next ten years, the American public may see dramatic shifts in how mass media messages are delivered. But it is safe to say that localized media outlets will exist in the coming years and will be important instruments in shaping local public opinion.

Opportunities for Cherokee Nation to control media outlets will range widely. There may be opportunities for the Cherokee Nation to control local, low-power radio and television stations. The Cherokee Nation can explore partnerships to purchase local media outlets, including television, radio and print publications. The key idea behind media ownership is to be a gatekeeper, not so much push our messages down the public's throats, but rather to control the gateway through which information flows. If anti-Indian sentiment never reaches the ears of the general public, it can wither on the vine.

The Cherokee Nation can also own public opinion by developing Cherokees who understand marketing, public relations, media relations and internal communications and journalism by promoting special scholarships and internships, possibly even developing its own

curriculum of study for tribal programs. For a detailed plan for all activities proposed for this fifth step in implementation, please see Appendix F.

Structure

To achieve the lofty goal of solidifying Cherokee Nation's sovereignty by controlling public opinion, there must first be buy-in from the top of Cherokee Nation's organizations. The leaders of Cherokee Nation's businesses must understand that they would not be in operation if not for the Cherokee Nation's sovereignty. Anti-Indian forces threaten the Nation's sovereignty. To prevent attacks on the Cherokee Nation's very existence, the Communications Group must build an unassailable image of partnership that no one dares attack.

One business example would be Chrysler. In the 1980s, the automaker was in shambles, manufacturing a shoddy product and was doomed to bankruptcy (Chrysler Crises, 1979). But politicians in Washington deemed Chrysler to be too big to fail. They perceived the ripple effect of Chrysler's closure to be too much for America's economy (and pride) to take. In a huge federal bail-out, the government made sure that Chrysler pulled through, preserving jobs and goodwill (Chrysler Crisis).

The Cherokee Nation must get to the point where it is too important to Oklahoma for the state to allow it to be attacked. Cherokee Nation must create the image that it is so indispensable that its neighbors will fight for it in times of trouble. To do this, Cherokee Nation needs a centralized image management mechanism that oversees external relations. CNI can't be telling the public one thing while CNE is telling them something else and Cherokee Nation is on an entirely different page altogether. So a structure must be created to fulfill the goals laid out in this plan. This structure should be charged with six main areas of on-going responsibility, in addition to plan implementation:

1) Media Relations

Consulting with each entity on its needs, advising on strategy and working directly with the media for placement of positive stories and filtering negative ones.

2) Message Planning for big events

Some major events are known well in advance, and a unified Communications Group can plan publicity and media relations for these. This will ensure cooperation with government relations and community relations groups with each entity.

3) Crisis Management

When a crisis happens, or is on the verge of happening, external relations should be involved to help shape the messages and monitor the timed release of information.

4) Overall Image

Involves implementing the communications plan and assisting each entity with their external communications, making sure the messages are consistent with the image we want to project. This would also include pushing forward any image campaigns.

5) Special Projects

Assist on community relations and government relations projects as requested.

6) Internal Communications

Employees of different entities need to be kept on message on a continuing basis. A one-time Know Your Nation training is not enough, especially since these messages must work inside out.

At many organizations, these projects are handled internally by a group that includes PR, media relations, marketing, advertising, community relations, government relations and internal communications. It also has resources like internal communications specialists, writers, media

relations specialists, graphic artists and multi-media specialists. The Cherokee Nation has expertise in all these areas, but the expertise is scattered among our entities. There are many possible solutions to bringing these resources together.

The most efficient would be to overlay the existing structures with a clear, unifying direction and message and have resources available to assist those entities and make sure they can carry out their responsibilities under this plan. In the short term, and to move forward on the proposed timeline, this new group would need to implement the following staffing plan. This group, and its projects, would be funded by matching the marketing expenditures with image expenditures, ideally on a dollar-for-dollar basis. There would need to be some room for give and take in the formula with reasonable exceptions. Appendix G contains a detailed staffing plan for an integrated communications team to implement this plan, along with estimates for additional funding for new positions identified to implement the plan.

Budget

All of this costs money. Appendix H contains a line item description that covers projected costs of individual projects for the first two and a half years of operations. Budget numbers beyond that would be speculative, but this plan presents a reasonable benchmark for determining those costs. Personnel costs for year one are prorated for six months, except for internships, with full year salaries and benefits included for years two and three. The work plan helped create the staffing plan, the staffing plan, in part, creates section I of the budget.

Section II focuses on message development and the most money is spent in the first year, with the cost dwindling significantly as time goes on. Section III deals with costs associated with the speakers bureau and Know Your Nation campaigns. Section IV deals with costs associated with the effort to get messages into public schools. Section V focuses on community outreach campaign and print ads aimed at building goodwill with the media and local communities. It also includes some funding in years two and three for contract work with an Oklahoma City PR firm that can help with placement of stories in that market. Section VI contains funding for most of the special projects, like videos, books and in year three, a cable TV program, as well as some travel expenses to pay mileage for people who are part of the speakers bureau.

Section VII deals with production costs for paid media campaign. The numbers are middle of the road for television production; top notch ads may cost more and bargain ads can be done for less. Radio spots are so high because of a large budget for well-known voice over talent. In all likelihood, Cherokee Nation may not use such high priced talent. Section VIII is where the bulk of the money goes, buying airtime on radio, cable and television. Buying at this rate, discount for broadcast television is likely to cover cable costs, so cable is not budgeted

separately. A quick glance at the numbers shows annual payroll and fringe to cost upwards of \$300,000 for the first full fiscal year, increasing over time. Some programs would have high startup costs, decreasing over time, like the Know Your Nation effort and message research, while others, like the classroom outreach, might have high recurring costs. Overall, this would become a \$9-\$10 million/per year program. Though this dollar amount would still be a fraction of the marketing budget for casinos, it would be a good start towards building an image beyond casinos in the minds of the public. The assumptions and conjectures upon which the rolled up budget numbers are based are included in Appendix I.

Conclusion

The Cherokee Nation must proactively define its image. If it does not, its default, best case definition will be something to do with casinos. In the worst case, a negative image cultivated by the Cherokee Nation's enemies can be used to plot its downfall. The Cherokee Nation has the opportunity and the resources to create the kind of public opinion that can safeguard its sovereignty for generations. It is an investment worth making and an investment the Cherokee Nation can't afford not to make.

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Appendix A

Excerpts from Cole, Hardgrave, Snodgrass & Associates proprietary survey for the Cherokee Nation

1. Do you believe that the expansion of gaming and casinos in Oklahoma will help or hurt Oklahoma’s tourism economy? (After response, ask:) Do you think it will (help / hurt) a great deal or only somewhat (help / hurt)?

- Greatly help.....28%
- Somewhat help.....35%
- Somewhat hurt11%
- Greatly hurt15%
- Undecided (vol.)11%

2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: What is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma. (After response, ask:) Would you say you strongly (agree / disagree) or only somewhat (agree /disagree)?

- Strongly agree19%
- Somewhat agree17%
- Somewhat disagree22%
- Strongly disagree19%
- Undecided (vol.)22%

3. Some people say... / While other people say... (Rotate arguments)

Indian tribes are guaranteed the right to regulate their own businesses on Indian land by solemn treaty with the United States government.

Indian tribal governments have abused their treaty rights and have moved into areas of economic activity that were never envisioned when the treaties were signed.

What do you think? Do you think Indian tribes are guaranteed the right to own and operate any business or do you think Indian tribes have abused their treaty rights?

| | Year 2 | Year 1 |
|-------------------|--------|--------|
| Guaranteed rights | 43% | 50% |
| Abused rights | 44% | 35% |
| Undecided (vol.) | 13% | 15% |

4. Some people say... / While other people say... (Rotate arguments)

Indian tribal governments are an asset to Oklahoma and should be dealt with as sovereign entities by the state.

Indian tribal governments have outlived their usefulness and have abused privileges and engaged in inappropriate economic activities.

What do you think? Do you think Indian tribal governments are an asset to Oklahoma or do you think they have outlived their usefulness?

| | Year 2 | Year 1 |
|---------------------|--------|--------|
| Asset | 56% | 55% |
| Outlived usefulness | 33% | 27% |
| Undecided (vol.) | 11% | 18% |

Appendix B:

Excerpts from Cole, Hardgrave, Snodgrass & Associates proprietary survey for the Cherokee Nation

1. Tribes build pride and self-respect through revitalizing their cultural heritage and tribal traditions, which is made possible, in part, due to their sovereign status.

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Much more likely | 38% |
| Somewhat more likely | 30% |
| Somewhat less likely | 13% |
| Much less likely | 9% |
| Undecided (vol.) | 11% |

2. As Americans, it is our obligation to fulfill the commitments made by our forefathers in solemn treaties they signed with the various Indian nations.

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Much more likely | 39% |
| Somewhat more likely | 29% |
| Somewhat less likely | 14% |
| Much less likely | 10 % |
| Undecided (vol.) | 9% |

3. Because the tribes have sovereignty, the State of Oklahoma does not have to spend its tax dollars on road maintenance, police and fire protection, or many other costly services on Indian land.

| | |
|----------------------|------|
| Much more likely | 30% |
| Somewhat more likely | 28% |
| Somewhat less likely | 17% |
| Much less likely | 15 % |
| Undecided (vol.) | 11% |

4. Because of their sovereignty, Oklahoma’s tribes do not have to enter into compacts with the State of Oklahoma on issues such as tobacco taxation, gaming or car tags, but have done so in a good-faith effort to improve the state.

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Much more likely | 34% |
| Somewhat more likely | 32% |
| Somewhat less likely | 14% |
| Much less likely | 13 % |
| Undecided (vol.) | 7% |

5. Equitable compacts between the tribes and state governments in the areas of gaming, cigarettes and gasoline can benefit all Oklahomans by bringing jobs and investment to the state.

Strongly agree 34%
 Somewhat agree34%
 Somewhat disagree 11%
 Strongly disagree 16%
 Undecided (vol) 5%

6. As you may or may not know, some Indian tribes claim water rights in Oklahoma; however, the courts have not yet decided the issue. Which of the following do you think is the best way to settle any disputes over water rights in Oklahoma?

Allow the courts to decide whether or not the Indian tribes have a legitimate claim to water rights36%
 Have the state and the Indian tribes enter into a water rights compact that would give the tribes some control but also protect the state’s interests 50%
 Undecided (vol.)14%

7. While tribes cannot be forced to pay state taxes, individual members of the tribes pay taxes just like every other Oklahoman.

Greatly improves..... 41%
 Somewhat improves..... 36%
 Somewhat worsens..... 5%
 Greatly worsens 4%
 Undecided (vol.) 13%

8. Indian tribes provide more than \$367 million in healthcare funding to the state each year.

Greatly improves..... 53%
 Somewhat improves..... 31%
 Somewhat worsens..... 5%
 Greatly worsens 3%
 Undecided (vol.) 9%

9. Without Indian healthcare funding, Oklahoma’s rural healthcare would be in an even greater crisis because the thousands of Oklahomans who currently receive care at Indian hospitals and clinics would inundate already understaffed rural hospitals.

Greatly improves..... 41%
 Somewhat improves..... 33%
 Somewhat worsens..... 7%
 Greatly worsens 6%
 Undecided (vol.) 15%

10. Oklahoma’s Indian tribes employ more than 20,000 Oklahomans-combining to be the state’s fourth largest employer.

Greatly improves..... 47%
 Somewhat improves..... 37%
 Somewhat worsens..... 5%
 Greatly worsens 2%
 Undecided (vol.) 10%

11. Oklahoma state government receives almost \$10 million a year in revenue from the sale of tobacco in tribally owned or tribally licensed tobacco retailers.

Greatly improves..... 31%
 Somewhat improves..... 40%
 Somewhat worsens..... 10%
 Greatly worsens 5%
 Undecided (vol.) 15%

12. Tribes in Oklahoma are involved in businesses other than just gaming and tobacco, such as aerospace engineering, banking, construction, manufacturing and others.

Greatly improves..... 50%
 Somewhat improves..... 36%
 Somewhat worsens..... 4%
 Greatly worsens 3%
 Undecided (vol.) 8%

13. Oklahoma’s Indian tribes spend more than \$60 million on road and bridge maintenance and construction. If not for the tribes doing this, the Oklahoma state government would have to pay for these improvements.

Greatly improves..... 52%
 Somewhat improves..... 31%
 Somewhat worsens..... 4%
 Greatly worsens 3%
 Undecided (vol.) 11%

14. Oklahoma’s Indian tribes add more than \$7.8 billion to the Oklahoma economy each year.

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Greatly improves..... | 54% |
| Somewhat improves..... | 30% |
| Somewhat worsens..... | 4% |
| Greatly worsens | 3% |
| Undecided (vol.) | 9% |

15. Oklahoma’s Indian tribes contribute more than \$25 million to education funding in Oklahoma each year.

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Greatly improves..... | 52% |
| Somewhat improves..... | 35% |
| Somewhat worsens..... | 3% |
| Greatly worsens | 3% |
| Undecided (vol.) | 7% |

16. Each year, Indian tribes bring in more than \$530 million to our state’s economy from the federal government that would go to other states if Oklahoma did not have tribal headquarters and the high number of Native Americans.

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Greatly improves..... | 48% |
| Somewhat improves..... | 31% |
| Somewhat worsens..... | 7% |
| Greatly worsens | 3% |
| Undecided (vol.) | 12% |

17. Which of the following do you think does the most to improve your image of Oklahoma’s Indian Tribes? (Rotate)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Tribes help provide needed healthcare in the state | 18% |
| Tribes employ more than 20,000 Oklahomans | 12% |
| Tribal activities add more than \$7.8 billion each year to the state’s economy | 13% |
| Tribes are involved in many types of businesses from aeronautics to banking | 7% |
| Tribes invest in Oklahoma’s roads and bridges so state government does not have to...6% | 6% |
| Tribes pay millions a year in taxes to the State of Oklahoma | 9% |
| Tribes provide \$25 million annually for education in Oklahoma | 20% |
| Undecided (vol.) | 15% |

Appendix C

Task plan for implementation of step two of the long-range plan, Tell the Cherokee Nation's

Friends

| Project | Activity/Task | Product | SMART Goals | Costs | Who |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| Know Your Nation Plan | | | | | |
| | Employee Training | Knowledgeable, proud workforce, ambassadors | 100 % employees trained | Minimal, within HR budget, part of one salary in Communications and \$25,000 for materials cost (first year) | CN HR, KYN Coordinator |
| | Other Entity Employee Training | | 100 % Oklahoma based employees trained | Should be able to be absorbed in HR budgets | Entity training and HR, KYN Coordinator |
| | Speakers Bureau -- Presenter Training | Employees who can speak about the Cherokee Nation on selected topics Packets-- promo materials targeted to speakers' audience Speakers presenting | 200 employees (total from all entities) trained Representation proportional geographically and across entities Three presentations per week (Community meetings, civic clubs, schools) | HR \$18,500 first year, \$16,000 recurring for materials and mileage for speakers. | Entity training and HR, KYN Coordinator Graphic Designer KYN/Speakers Bureau |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| Leadership Cherokee Nation (Advanced Speaker training, employee cross-training) | | Employee-cross training, giving employees first person experience in other departments and entities | 20 employees per quarter go through program | HR \$4,000 first year, \$16,000 recurring (for materials and employee reimbursements) | KYN/Speakers Bureau |
| | Develop curriculum | Standardized format | | HR | Graphic Designer |
| Visual Management Plan – that conveys that the CN cares about its citizens, its employees, its communities, its land. | Develop common look and feel (branding) plan for print materials. | Establish Nation’s visual branding, i.e. graphics standards for seal, CN font, color palette (for use on correspondence, banners, marketing products, etc.) | Write a “style guide” that outlines graphics standards – and post on intranet site. | In budget | Graphic Designer, Communications Manager/Director |
| | Develop library of icons and images that reflect CN today, yesterday and tomorrow. | Establish Nation’s visual branding, i.e. create icons/images to represent who we are and what we do – i.e. each program and service area, language, community, history and culture. | CN branding library of icons and images that are copyrighted. | In budget | Graphic Designer, Communications Manager/Director |
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|----------|-------------------------------------|
| | Develop CN “service posters” for each CN program or dept. The posters are to be used in public office spaces. | Design service poster display template for use by all CN programs/depts. that graphically describes services and displays employee competency. | Poster images displayed in public spaces of each program/dept in the Main Complex. Dept/program posters displayed by outlying CN offices. - CN service posters displayed by CNE, CNI and other CN offices. | | Graphic Designer |
| | Design a “public education” or welcome center area in Main complex and other key public spaces. | Build/design a welcome center that offers information to visitors. Outsource design to professional exhibit planners. | Welcome Center in current lobby area of Main complex. | \$40,000 | Graphic Designer/Exhibit Designer |
| | Brand the exterior of CN buildings with “educational” green spaces that are culturally significant and attractive to employees and visitors. Incorporate Cherokee stories and | Research plants and trees relevant to the area and to Cherokee culture. Engage employees to create green spaces around their workplace buildings. Using volunteers, employees and mostly donated | First event to engage employees is to plant trees in Main complex area and outlying clinics. Plan future events to continue to engage employees. | | Graphic Designer, Outsource, CM, CD |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|--|----------|---------------------------------------|
| | language. | trees and plants | | | |
| | Create “museum” look to key main areas of CN buildings. | - Purchase Cherokee artwork and use existing art, have it professionally framed and hung. Use interior designer. | - Create interior look for Main complex. | | Graphic Designer, CM CD |
| | Branding plan for exterior of all CN facilities that is identifiably CN, consistent to all buildings, pleasing for visitors and employees | - Building exterior branding using consistent signage. - Plan future buildings using consistent ext. materials that reflect CN. - Commission artwork for exterior of buildings. | - Correct all existing exterior signage. - Hire architect - Commission Cherokee artists. | | Architect, Graphic Designer, CM,CD,CO |
| Archive Material | | Archive messages, speeches, letters columns for repurposing | Hard copy and digital copies, backed up and updated monthly. | Budgeted | Communications staff |

Appendix D

Task plan for implementation of step three of the long-range plan, Tell Cherokee Citizens

| Project | | Product | SMART goals | Costs | Who |
|------------------------|--|--|---|--|------------------------------|
| Radio | | 1 hour radio show (Cherokee and English) | heard throughout 90% of Cherokee Nation | Budgeted | Radio Show Host |
| | Develop feedback | Emails, faxes, phone messages to respond to on the air | 2 messages/week | Budgeted | Radio Show Host |
| | Develop mass market issues Radio Program | | | Budgeted | Radio Show Host |
| | Distribute mass market Program | | | Purchase air time \$50,000-\$100,000 min (Money not needed to fund until 2008) | Additional host |
| | Purchase Strategic Radio Stations | Access to prime time slots to promote, protect sovereignty | 3 stations (out of Vinita, Grove Bartlesville, Tahlequah) | | CNB |
| | Develop Low Power Stations throughout CN | Community Based radio | 5 stations in predominantly Cherokee communities | \$50,000 | Comm. Group, Gov't relations |
| Columns in local news- | | Cherokee Nation column in | Weekly column in 80% of the | Salary cost, Earned Media | Earned Media Staff |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|--|---|--|---|
| papers | | rural newspapers | following: Tahlequah, Vian, Seq. County, Muldrow, Roland, Westville, Stilwell, Grove, Jay, Delaware County, Banner, Paper, Pryor, Chelsea, Catoosa, Claremore, Vinita, Sperry, Bartlesville, Inola, Siloam Springs, Miami, Ok. Legend | | |
| Success Story Book | | Book aimed at middle school students. Book highlights successful Cherokees in many career fields. Community leaders edition Self-help projects | 10,000 books published 10,000 books published 10,000 books published | \$25,000 to write \$25,000 to print \$25,000 to write \$25,000 to print \$25,000 to write \$25,000 to print | Contract writer Contract writer Contract writer |
| Web site | | | | | |
| | Video | Media Center with | | Budgeted | IS/Media Specialist |

| | | | | | |
|-------|----------------------|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| | | links to positive video stories about CN | | | |
| | | Video Annual Report content and success stories on-line | | Budgeted | IS/Media specialist |
| | | Webcasts of Cherokee news | | See budget breakdown | IS/Media Specialist |
| | Audio | Radio show online and archived | New show weekly, incorporating Cherokee language lessons | Radio Budget | IS/Media Specialist/Radio Show Host |
| | Strategy History Map | Developed, explained, posted | | Budgeted, Strategy | IS/Sam Kidd |
| | History Quotes | Developed, posted | | Budgeted | IS/History expert |
| Video | | | | | |
| | In-House TV network | Cherokee Nation initiated TV programming in all our clinics and high traffic waiting areas | 100% of clinics with programming | IS/Communications Budgets | Media Specialist |
| | Video News Releases | Broadcast quality VNRs produced and aired on local stations | 1 VNR aired/month | Communications | Media specialist |
| | Video Projects | Registration Video | | Staff increase, \$40,000 in production/reproduction costs covers this and the following projects | Media specialist |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| | | Gadugi Video | -Video with citizens talking about what gadugi means to them and footage from projects | “ | Media specialist |
| | | Help Yourself Video | Community Works Projects | “ | Media specialist |
| | | Overview of Cherokee Gov't | | “ | Multimedia specialist |
| | | DODP Video | | “ | Multimedia specialist |
| | | Best of CN Video | Video highlights of success stories we can distribute. | “ | Multimedia specialist |
| Community Based | Traveling Exhibit --- Materials we can take to community events and buildings to educate people about what the Cherokee Nation does | 3 sets of materials for each of four exhibit content areas: 1) Gov't 2) Business 3) Econ. Impact 4) Services | At least one set of each exhibit on display at all times in local community buildings and field offices. To rotate on monthly basis. | \$16,000 first year, \$8,000 recurring. | Graphic Designer |

Appendix E

Task plan for implementation of step four of the long-range plan, Tell the World

| Project | | Product | SMART goal | Cost | Who |
|----------------------|---------------------|--|--|---|------------------------|
| Media Image Campaign | | | | | |
| | Earned media | Positive stories in media | \$200,000/month of positive media coverage | 2 Earned Media Staff | CO, Earned Media staff |
| | Paid media | Plan developed | Baseline survey complete, outside assistance in place, messages refined, media targeted | \$70,000 | CO, Outsource |
| | | Plan implemented | Compare to oil industry with public opinion and lobbying influence. Better percentages agree that "What is good for the Cherokee Nation is good for Oklahoma" than oil industry. | \$2 million first year, \$8 million in following years (see budget for details) | CO |
| | Multi-tribal effort | Media plan and implementation based on improving the image of Indian tribes in general | Five tribes dedicated to funding image efforts on a long-term basis. | TBD – Based on other tribes commitment and available funds. Would come out of figures listed above. | CO |

Appendix F

Task plan for implementation of step five of the long-range plan, Own the World (or at least the public opinion in Cherokee Nation's corner of it)

| Project | Activity/Task | Product | SMART Goals | Cost | Who |
|---|--|--|---|------------------------------|--|
| Develop new Generation of Cherokee PR Professionals | Establish pipeline from college students to Cherokee Nation entities | Internships- Place Cherokee marketing and PR students into long-term internships at CN entities. | At least five students a year in both PR and marketing. | \$15,000/year | Education, Group Leader, Individual entities, HR |
| | | Cherokees ready for hire | All every entry-level PR/Marketing job filled by Cherokees | | Education, Group Leader, Individual entities, HR |
| Broadcasting on cable | CN using public access avenues for airing programming | 30-minute weekly show | 52 broadcast quality shows per year | Studio, additional staff TBD | Multi-media |
| | | Announcement Screens | Announcements on 3 public access cable systems in high-density Cherokee areas | In budget | Media Specialist |
| Print | Own local newspapers (whole or part) | | Ownership interest of three publications in high-density Cherokee areas | TBD, market cost | CNB |
| Broadcast | Own radio station(s) | | Ownership interest in at least one commercial broadcast station | TBD, market cost | CNB |

| | Own television station(s) | | Ownership interest in at least one commercial broadcast station | TBD, market cost | CNB |
|--|---------------------------|--|---|------------------|-----|
|--|---------------------------|--|---|------------------|-----|

Appendix G

Staffing plan for Communications Team:

Salary + Benefits (40%) Staffer

(Projected cost if not budgeted)

Communications Officer (CNB) Mike Miller

Budgeted

Implement long-range plan, develop image and branding for all CN entities

Including responsibilities for projects like:

Gaming: where the money goes

Good for Oklahoma as an organization and as a people (Will Rogers, Sequoyah)

Know Your Nation Plan

Issue Briefings

Standardize visual management

TV/Mass Media campaign/ Paid Media Plan

Strategy History Map

Long Term Training of Cherokees in PR (WITH EDUCATION)

Construct Entrance exhibits

Manage visual imaging

Multi-tribal PR effort

Oversee any purchased local media operations

Communications Director (CNE) Gina Olaya

Budgeted

Marketing Director (CNE)

Molly Jarvis

Budgeted

Communications Director (CN)

Sammye Rusco

Budgeted

Overall Communications day to day for the nation, work with Group Leaders, implement long-range plan.

Communications Manager (CN)

Randy Gibson

Budgeted

Oversee CN communications staff, work on major special projects.

Sr. PR/Marketing Specialist (CN)

LeeAnn Dreadfulwater

Budgeted

News Releases, special projects, ad purchases.

Radio Show Host (CN)

Dennis Sixkiller

Budgeted

Host CN radio show in English and Cherokee, assist on incorporating language properly in communications projects.

Office Manager/Special Assistant (CN)

Paulette Thomas

Budgeted

Budgets, paperwork, in house newsletter, archive materials

Graphic Designer (CN)

OPEN

Budgeted

Hymnals

Traveling exhibits (5)

Clip art to distribute for free

Promo literature to include in every business letter

Ambassador Plan

Standardize visual management

Style book (gfx, colors, fonts, colors

For different formats (letters, mkting materials, etc)

Posters for service areas

Technical assistance, brochure design

Disks with icons

History guides

Bumper Stickers

Media Specialist (CN)

Robby Robinson

Budgeted

In house network, announcements, special projects, video channel on all cable systems

Media Specialist (CN)

OPEN

\$56,000

Gadugi video

Overview of government

Visual declaration of designed purpose

Past

Present (Know Your Nation)

Future (Critical Thinking)

Web broadcast for all of above

Other video projects as they develop

Video Annual report

Contract writer (CN) Books and special projects OPEN

\$75,000

Success story book, community leader book, etc,

(3 books, 18 months)

Earned Media Coordinator OPEN

\$56,000

Earned Media Assistant OPEN

\$35,000

Promote positive image of Cherokee Nation in media outlets across the state. Assist in writing news stories and working for placement of news items. Developing relationships with the media and pitching them positive stories. Biggest bang for the buck is right here.

Email list of friends/letters to the editor

Rapid response team

Columns in local papers

Earned Media (\$200,000/month)

Know Your Nation Coordinator/Leadership Training/ OPEN

\$42,000

Speakers Bureau

Run Leadership Cherokee Nation

Coordinate KYN program and training

Vendor Relations/Internal Comm./Pro. Assist. full-time OPEN

\$42,000 Maintain vendor contact database for communications purposes

Handle internal/employee communications

Back up other functions

Marketing/Communications/Brand Management (CNI) OPEN

\$ 64,400

Needed in future if not presently, someone to help promote CNI's business within their targeted customer audiences as well as community and media relationships.

Appendix H

| Cherokee Nation Communications Long-Range Plan Budget for Phase I | | | | |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Years One through Three | | | | |
| | Year One | Year Two | Year Three | TOTAL |
| I. Personnel | | | | |
| Earned Media Coordinator full-time* | 20000 | 40000 | 42000 | 102000 |
| Earned Media Assistant full-time* | 12500 | 25000 | 26250 | 63750 |
| Speaker's Bureau/Leadership Nation/KYN full-time | 15000 | 30000 | 31500 | 76500 |
| Vendor Relations/Internal Comm./Pro. Assist. full-time | 15000 | 30000 | 31500 | 76500 |
| Multi-media Specialist full-time* | 20000 | 40000 | 42000 | 102000 |
| Paid Internships (10 per year for 3 months ea) | 15000 | 15000 | 15000 | 45000 |
| Expenses | 35000 | 50000 | 50000 | 135000 |
| Taxes and Benefits* | 39000 | 72000 | 75300 | 186300 |
| Subtotal | 171500 | 302000 | 313550 | 787050 |
| II. Research & Message Development | | | | |
| Focus Group Research for Message Development* | 16000 | 0 | 0 | 16000 |
| Message Development Survey* | 25000 | 0 | 0 | 25000 |
| Initial Employee Survey* | 14000 | 0 | 0 | 14000 |
| Assessment Survey of Employees (at 18 months)* | 0 | 7500 | 0 | 7500 |
| Focus Group Testing for Television commercials* | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | 30000 |
| Assessment Survey of Program Progress (18 mo)* | 0 | 18000 | 0 | 18000 |
| Annual program evaluation – Consultant | 5000 | 5000 | 5000 | 15000 |
| Subtotal | 70000 | 40500 | 15000 | 125500 |
| III. Know Your Nation Program | | | | |
| Employee training materials only* | 25000 | 5000 | 5000 | 35000 |
| Newsletter updates | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Leadership Cherokee Nation materials* | 1000 | 4000 | 4000 | 9000 |
| Leadership Cherokee Nation travel expenses* | 4000 | 16000 | 17600 | 37600 |
| Speaker's Bureau materials* | 1000 | 1000 | 1000 | 3000 |
| Speaker's Bureau promo packet* | 15000 | 0 | 10000 | 25000 |
| Subtotal | 46000 | 26000 | 37600 | 109600 |

| | | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| IV. Classroom Outreach Programs | | | | |
| Classroom Outreach coordinator/consultant | 7500 | 20000 | 21000 | 48500 |
| Teacher Summit* | 3125 | 0 | 0 | 3125 |
| Teaching material packets* | 0 | 684200 | 684200 | 1368400 |
| Subtotal | 10625 | 704200 | 705200 | 1420025 |
| | | | | |
| V. Community Outreach Programs | | | | |
| Traveling Exhibits* | 16000 | 8000 | 8000 | 32000 |
| Newspaper Goodwill Program | 100000 | 400000 | 420000 | 920000 |
| Radio Show | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Vendor Newsletter* | 3000 | 12000 | 12000 | 27000 |
| OKC Public Relations Firm (contract) | 0 | 10000 | 10000 | 20000 |
| Subtotal | 119000 | 430000 | 450000 | 999000 |
| | | | | |
| VI. Earned Media | | | | |
| Newspaper columns (only cost in personnel) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Local cable TV program studio and tapes* | 15000 | 15000 | 75400 | 105400 |
| Web Site Enhancement | 5000 | 5000 | 5000 | 15000 |
| Video Production Equipment | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | 30000 |
| Video Production and duplication | 0 | 40000 | 40000 | 80000 |
| Contract writer for three books | 25000 | 50000 | | 75000 |
| Success story book for middle schools (printing)* | 0 | 37500 | 0 | 37500 |
| Success story book for community leaders (printing)* | 0 | 37500 | 0 | 37500 |
| Self help projects book (printing)* | 0 | | 37500 | 37500 |
| Speaker's Bureau travel expenses | 2500 | 10000 | 10000 | 22500 |
| In house TV network | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Subtotal | 57500 | 205000 | 177900 | 440400 |
| | | | | |
| VII. Paid Media Production | | | | |
| TV Ad # 1* | 100,000 | 105,000 | 110,250 | 315250 |
| TV Companion ad # 2* | 30,000 | 31,500 | 33,075 | 94575 |
| TV Companion ad # 3* | 0 | 31,500 | 33,075 | 64575 |
| TV Companion ad # 4* | 0 | 31,500 | 33,075 | 64575 |
| TV Companion ad # 5* | 0 | 31,500 | 33,075 | 64575 |
| TV Children's Ad | 100,000 | 105,000 | 110,250 | 315250 |
| Radio Ad # 1 | 15,000 | 16,650 | 18,482 | 50132 |
| Radio Ad # 2 | 15,000 | 16,650 | 18,482 | 50132 |
| Radio Ad # 3 | 15,000 | 16,650 | 18,482 | 50132 |
| Radio Ad # 4 | 15,000 | 16,650 | 18,482 | 50132 |
| Subtotal | 290,000 | 402,600 | 426,726 | 1,119,326 |
| | | | | |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| VIII. Paid Media Air Time | | | | |
| Television Time adults* | 1096000 | 4438800 | 4660740 | 10195540 |
| Television Time children* | 189000 | 756000 | 793800 | 1738800 |
| Radio Time* | 558312 | 2233248 | 2233248 | 5024808 |
| Subtotal | 1903312 | 7668048 | 7927788 | 17499148 |
| | | | | |
| TOTAL BUDGET | 2,607,937 | 9,538,348 | 9,813,764 | 21,960,049 |

Appendix I

Cherokee Nation Communications Long-Range Plan Budget Assumptions and Conjecture

Years One through Three

I. Personnel

- A. Salaries for first year are based upon personnel starting in mid-fiscal year
- B. Salaries increase at 5% per year beginning in year three
- E. Multi-media specialist to assist with web site enhancement; assist with video production; in house TV, etc.
- H. Taxes and benefits figured at 40% of salary costs

II. Research & Message Development

- A. Initial focus group research – 2 focus groups in OKC and 2 in Tulsa prior to the survey
- B. Initial message development survey 800 sample
- C. Employee survey – two surveys with a 250 sample each – one with casino employees, one with other employees
- D. Assessment survey of employees to be conducted 18 months after initial survey – one 250 sample of all employees
- E. Focus groups for TV commercials would be one in OKC and one in Tulsa each year prior to finalizing the spots
- F. Assessment survey of the public at 18 months after program begins – 600 sample size

III. Know Your Nation Program

- A. Employee training materials estimated at \$5 per employee for 5000 employees in the first year, assuming a 20% turnover year two and three were budgeted for 1000 employees per year
- C. Leadership Cherokee Nation with 20 participants per quarter – first year only one quarter. Materials estimate for Leadership Cherokee Nation is \$50 per person.
- D. Leadership Cherokee Nation travel expenses estimated at \$200 per employee increasing by 10% in year three
- E. Speaker's Bureau materials are for use by the speaker
- F. Promo packet – if three presentations per week @50 brochures per presentation would need 7800 brochures/year. Promo packet first year includes graphics and printing for last quarter Year One and all of Year 2.

IV. Classroom Outreach programs

- B. Teacher summit–25 teachers at \$100 stipend each and \$25 each for dinner
- C. Teaching packets figured at an average of \$200 per class for each Oklahoma 4th grade class (3,421)

V. Community Outreach Programs

- A. Traveling exhibit year one only includes the four trade show type booths estimated at \$4,000 each
- B. Newspaper expenditures to create goodwill among local papers and hit communities we can't reach well otherwise, since this is a statewide effort

D. Vendor newsletter – monthly – estimate 500 @ \$2/each – first year only included the last quarter

VI. Earned Media

B. Cable TV program – each program est. at half-day shoot. The half-day shoot includes studio and personnel @ \$175/hour for 4 hours plus master and ten dubs at \$750. Cable TV program budgeted for last quarter of 2005 then 52 spots per year for years two and three. No talent or production included in the budget

G.– I. All books at 10,000 copies for each, 100 page, press ready, soft cover

VII. Paid Media Production

A. TV advertising production estimated increase at 5% per year

B.– E. TV Advertising estimate for four spots per year – one main spot with four spin offs using some of the same footage

VIII. Paid Media Air Time

A. TV time for adults is aimed at audiences 18+ and is estimated at 4,000 points per quarter – 2,000 points for each of two spots. For Year One, only the last quarter budgeted.

B. TV time for children estimated at 1,500 points per quarter.

A.– B. All television time estimated to go up by 5% in the fourth quarter of Year Two and in Year Three.

C. Radio is for 18+ and is estimated at three spots per year – targeting to be determined by survey research. Radio production estimated to increase at 10% per year.