All For Children

"Children are suffering. Let's fix it."

THINKING

UNICEF is the world's leading organisation for children's rights and development.

Across the world, they have a global authority to influence government and other decision-makers, and a richness of partners at grass roots level that enables them to turn plans into reality.

In the UK, UNICEF enjoys the benefit of highly committed, innovative and capable staff and leaders who believe strongly in the global aims and work of UNICEF and bring a natural collaborative stance to their work together.

Yet like many other companies, UNICEF UK's leaders believed that they were operating below their full potential.

They turned to us for help.

We helped brand, reorganise and integrate communications.

Clarity⇒Focus⇒Integration⇒Results

UNICEF UK wanted to address three development opportunities: brand engagement, focus and integration.

Brand performance and engagement

UNICEF's global eminence had not fully transferred to the UK public. Previous agency advice on positioning and messages had led to a brand that felt somewhat detached from the pain of children that engaged many people.

The brand was not clear enough to its internal and external stakeholders and public. Indeed, the percentage of the public that was even aware of UNICEF's relationship to children was lower than expected, given UNICEF's global eminence.

Focus

The intense passion to make a difference for all children in all ways across the world encouraged chasing every opportunity. Unless this was focused UNICEF would not be optimized.

The aim was to express the brand in a way that synthesized its dual mission to raise money and create change for children.

- Get support from UK donors UK government aid budgets for UNICEF's international work.
- Continue activity in the NHS as the authority on breast feeding; work with schools to encourage the rights of children in the UK; and get the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted into UK legislation.

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Integration

The organisation had a classic charitable structure separating the fundraising team and its processes from other communications teams. Collaborative attitudes were not enough. Integrated processes and communications would be vital to improving performance and brand status. Integration would also help to create focus.

UNICEF's project goal was to fulfil their potential on behalf of children everywhere.

Project Engagement

Following a recommendation by a former client working at UNICEF International, we were asked to help UNICEF UK with branding and integrated working.

The two executive directors of the Communications and Programmes and the Fundraising teams, Anita Tiessen and Julie Weston, had a shared purpose to take UNICEF to the next level of brand performance in the UK and asked Angus Jenkinson to design and lead a decision-making process of insight generation, participation and integrated teamwork.

Three interacting work streams were formed:

1. A thorough review of corporate communications, strategies, and research findings led by Angus Jenkinson. This, combined with interviews, workshops and focus groups with staff and agency partners, generated a detailed picture of the current situation and revealed overlooked gems of insights.

2. An identity process with senior management and key staff designed to capture and gain committed understanding and agreement on UNICEF UK's brand system, strategy and organisation development plan.

3. An IMC process designed to establish a strategic understanding of the roles of the different teams, strategic prioritisation, unified decision-making and an architecture and workflow for integration.

UNICEF IS FOR CHILDREN
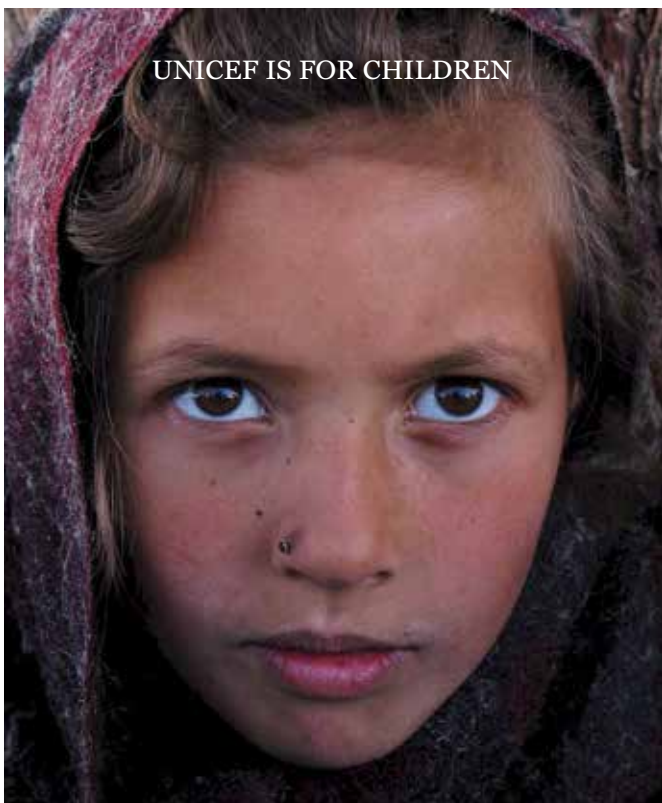
The Virtuoso® process

Virtuoso identifies the functional dimensions of the organizing identity to enable performance improvement.[1]

It facilitates 'diverse unity' of brand, vision and business development insights and heals silos across the functions. *A trusted view of identity across the company helps coherence, flow and purpose.*

The approach reveals how the organizing identity '*gets it right*' across all brand and functional dimensions. Any viable organisation has these unique seeds of potential. Users identify the contexts and drivers of success. *The sweet spot is always centred on uniqueness of value and service.*

This project workstream distilled UNICEF UK's organizing identity, using the Virtuoso architecture to get a joined up set of insights and strategic actions. A series of workshops drawing on internal and external research achieved a melding of minds on how to achieve UNICEF's full UK potential.

The methodology is practical, rich and multi-functioned. It articulates the identity of the organisation in a 12-dimensional framework that can be used in a variety of powerful ways, including four interdependent management strategies, each based on a Virtuoso Triad:

1. *Orchestrating strategic intent:* the interaction of vision, organising idea, and performance dashboard;

2. *Designing differentiated value:* the interaction of customer needs, positioning and core purpose;

3. *Optimizing products and services:* the interrelationship of core competence, organisational culture and product design principles;

4. *Leveraging brand equity:* the interaction of brand essence, brand personality and the business model

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1   At the time, we were using the base version known as Stellar. which had been developed during more than 10 years of research, development and practice around the world. Client cooments originally used "Stellar." The IP, which was co-created by Angus Jenkinson and Richard Leachman, was made open source by them and provides the kernel for the contemporary Virtuoso process. Stellar is a trademark of Stellar Ltd., which makes the tool freely available.

Focusing on the organisation at its best is not only scientifically sound, it's a great way to get co-operation and resolution between different views.

According to Anita Tiessen, the Deputy Executive Director, Communications

"Team working was an important part of the process, strengthening the ties between us based on open conversation, shared insight and precise understanding".

Unearthing insights

Excellence is immanent in actions. This is how customers legitimately interpret experience as brand. A deep structured dive unearthed the coherent design principles that shape UNICEF UK's at its best. These insights are tools for company-wide adoption.

In UNICEF UK's case the revealing actions included such specifics as rallying to respond to major disasters, developing new innovations in fundraising, shared passion for the cause, enduring relationships with government leaders and celebrities, and examples of its flexible and encouraging internal culture.
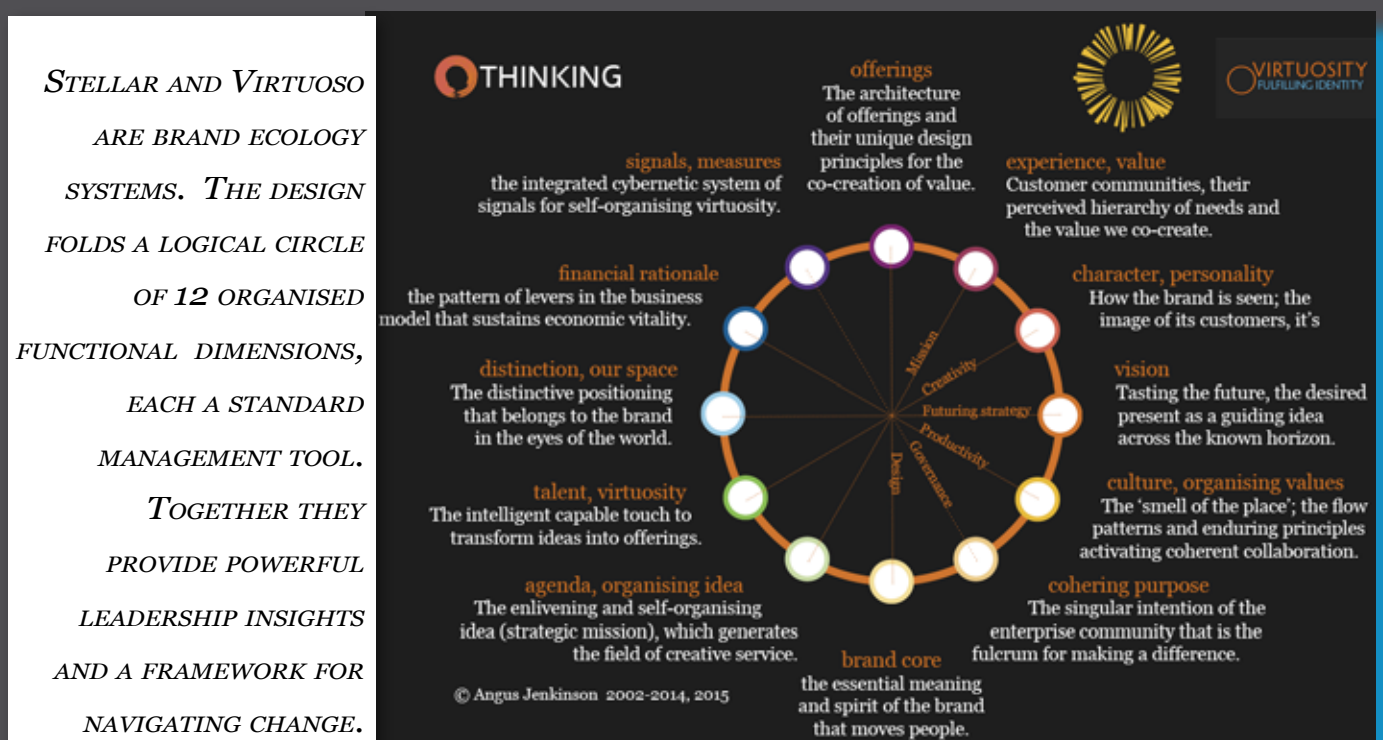
The process is empirical, evidential and based on reality, ensuring every defining statement could be backed up as a truth of the brand. At UNICEF UK, the experience was challenging, motivating, revealing and practical.

By contrast, many branding and leadership vision processes tend to produce highly optimistic, generic or platitudinous statements that gain little traction among cynical staff and customers.

UNICEF UK then followed Virtuoso's second stage: Identifying how closely 'business as usual' matched peak performance. From this, it was possible to identify strategy to dissolve the gap and move to peak performance.

According to Anita Tiessen

"Virtuoso has achieved engagement, understanding and commitment across the organisation, enhancing the effectiveness of our communications and teamwork."

STELLAR AND VIRTUOSO ARE BRAND ECOLOGY SYSTEMS. THE DESIGN FOLDS A LOGICAL CIRCLE OF 12 ORGANISED FUNCTIONAL DIMENSIONS, EACH A STANDARD MANAGEMENT TOOL. TOGETHER THEY PROVIDE POWERFUL LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS AND A FRAMEWORK FOR NAVIGATING CHANGE.

THINKING

offerings
The architecture of offerings and their unique design principles for the co-creation of value.

signals, measures
the integrated cybernetic system of signals for self-organising virtuosity.

experience, value
Customer communities, their perceived hierarchy of needs and the value we co-create.

financial rationale
the pattern of levers in the business model that sustains economic vitality.

character, personality
How the brand is seen; the image of its customers, it's

distinction, our space
The distinctive positioning that belongs to the brand in the eyes of the world.

vision
Tasting the future, the desired present as a guiding idea across the known horizon.

talent, virtuosity
The intelligent capable touch to transform ideas into offerings.

culture, organising values
The 'smell of the place'; the flow patterns and enduring principles activating coherent collaboration.

agenda, organising idea
The enlivening and self-organising idea (strategic mission), which generates the field of creative service.

cohering purpose
The singular intention of the enterprise community that is the fulcrum for making a difference.

brand core
the essential meaning and spirit of the brand that moves people.

Mission · Creativity · Futuring strategy · Productivity · Governance · Design

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VIRTUOSITY
FULFILLING IDENTITY

Children's rights & the need to connect.

An external partner can offer a new perspective. A significant shift in thinking about mission and communication took place, internally and externally.

UNICEF's worldwide development work is based on the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child. At the global level, UNICEF both inspires and holds governments and other power groups accountable for meeting their obligations to children; it also designs development programmes with local communities focused on the rights of children. This dual role is sometimes described as "clean suit: dirty boots". The framework of rights is locally vital to the design and implementation of development programmes.

Building on this, a previous agency had recommended a creative strapline: *Denying Children's Rights Is Wrong: Put It Right.* This had effectively evolved into UNICEF UK's brand idea. But did it make sense?

But in the hurly-burly world of modern communications and compassion fatigue, the public could not easily engage with such a complex idea. It did not sufficiently connect to the core values of donors and other supporters.
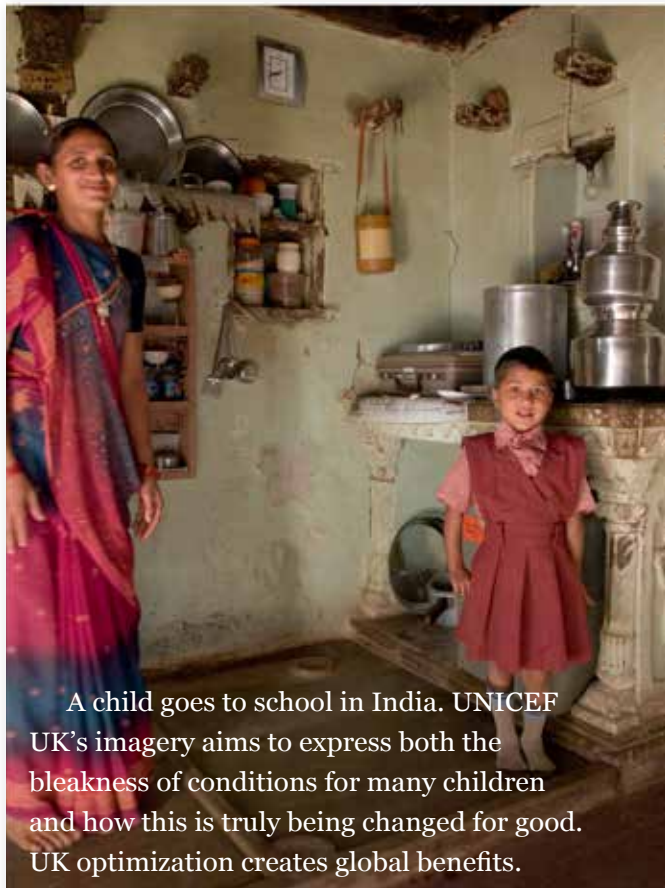
A child goes to school in India. UNICEF UK's imagery aims to express both the bleakness of conditions for many children and how this is truly being changed for good. UK optimization creates global benefits.

Julie Weston, Executive Director, Fundraising, shared insights from UNICEF in another country: "UNICEF staff are often 'Global Idealists'; while our most important supporter group is 'Child-Focused Parents'. It is vital that values differences do not create gaps in our communications."

The challenge was to marry heart and head for children.

This means enabling donors and supporters to respond from the heart to the needs of children while understanding how permanent solutions really do move children out of perennial states of neediness and inadequate care.

No organization has won, led and inspired so much change for children as UNICEF. Communicating UNICEF's role for children, in even the most hard to reach places in the world, so people understand how lasting differences are made, every day, is a crucial task.

UNICEF UK's chief executive, David Bull, summed up staff commitment in this moving statement, which became the baswis for the purpose statement:

"Children are suffering. That pains me. It outrages me. I want all children, everywhere, to grow up safe, and healthy, with a voice, a chance to be children: to play, to learn, to become creative, happy, responsible human beings. If only one child, however hard to reach, cannot do that, it's wrong."

Research shows people do feel heartened when they realise they make a decisive contribution to changing children's lives.
This is key to the UNICEF brand.

According to Julie Weston:

"The Virtuoso process gained a shared commitment to a new voice, one that will enhance fundraising and other communications."

The IMC process

UNICEF UK is determined to be the UK's leading voice for the world's children. The goal is to express the injustice of children's suffering, and UNICEF's unceasing commitment to every child, especially the most vulnerable.

According to the Director, David Bull: "Our voice demonstrates that UNICEF cares with heart and head. It expresses our empowering, resourceful and practical energy."

Doing this requires focus and integrated energy. This work stream focused on establishing an integration workflow and policies to orchestrate efforts across UNICEF UK, releasing creativity and efficiencies. A follow-on communications review led to a consolidation and clarification of roles and responsibilities.

The integration framework

UNICEF UK's integration framework links their perennial identity to the mission to communicate UNICEF's worldwide efforts for children, to be articulated through series of specific integrated campaign themes.

Integration practice agreements

1. Strategy and focus.
2. The role of programmes.
3. A steering group to provide shared responsibility and decision-making across all communications projects. It is responsible for resolving all creative, budget and planning decisions and priorities.
4. Agreed planning objectives. Focus!
5. Clarity on segments and stakeholder groups, including where further research was needed.
6. Agreement on tone, image, and stories from the field to identify principles of what is 'in' and 'out' and priorities for collection of evidential material.
7. Integrated operational process.
8. We provided a Master Communications Brief and the CODAR® integration tool to brief each campaign.
9. Structural changes.

The insights embedded into Virtuoso create a framework for excellence. The agreements together represent intentions for a new level of shared best practice.
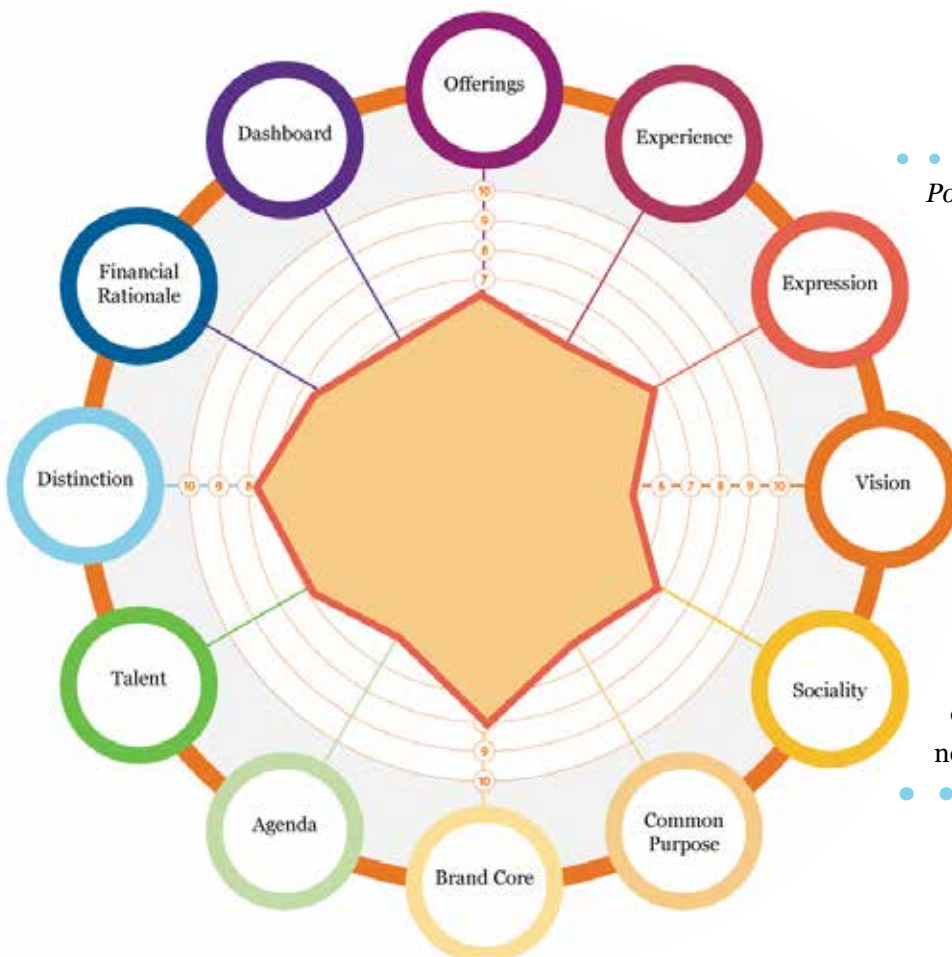
Potentials chart in Virtuoso
The pattern and difference between latent potential ("at our best", "when we get it right") and everyday norms or working identity is also understood and agreed and may be plotted using a Potentials chart. It defines how close to full potential the enterprise is. This is scored with a precise description of lines of adjustment required, enabling the design of interventions. This diagram is for illustration and was not UNICEF's potentials chart.

Effects and goals

The internal organisation changed, responsibilities were clarified, integrated working was put in place, and a clear and inspiring understanding of the brand and organisation at its best formulated.

The results are leading towards more streamlined work, enhanced teamwork, and brand and fundraising performance improvements.

"We could not have moved forward without you. You were the catalyst for what we achieved!"

Cathy Keable Elliot, Communications Director and project leader ■

Virtuoso brand ecology

Organising Idea

Creative idea
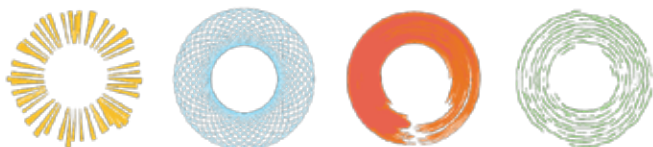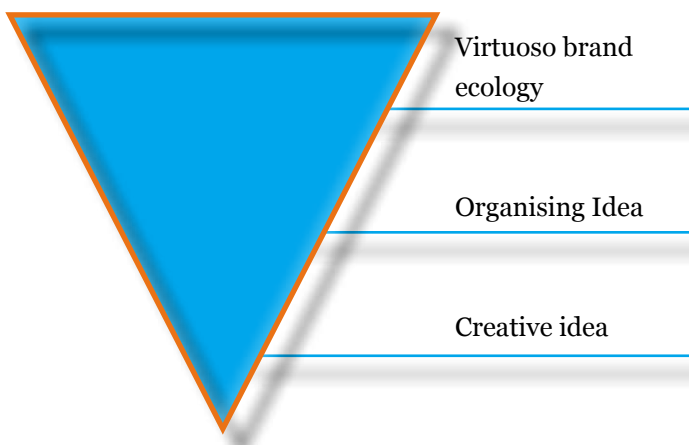
Thinking

Thinking is a consulting agency. We shift organisations to their highest potential and richest customer value.

Formed in 1991 to help organisations get closer to their customers, we have served many of the world's great companies and brands, including IBM, Vodafone, Mars, HP, NSPCC, AT&T, OgilvyOne worldwide, Pitney Bowes and Nestlé, most on an international basis.

Benefit from world class services:

1. Our proprietary performance-enhancing approach, based on Virtuoso®, elegantly and practically aligns effort beautifully across the organisation.
2. Design of unique service, integrated brand experiences and compelling customer journeys.
3. Resilient organization design, enabling flexible strategy and adapatation to market change.
4. Innovation that is strategically creative.
5. Light Touch Change. We design rapid and effective change. For intractable problems we offer perfect nudges. These methods have proved, irrespective of scale, to be able to pinpoint one or more small, low risk, catalytic actions sufficient to trigger, reliably, a transformation from the existing state-of-affairs to the desired state-of-affairs in even the most difficult situations.

May we partner? We welcome challenges, big or small. Invite us to brief you on our credentials ☐

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