

# A MODEL FOR CONSUMER-ORIENTED PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

By

Copyright 2012

Stephanie Ann Hertel

Submitted to the graduate degree program in Design Management and  
the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

---

Chairperson, Michael Eckersley

---

Richard Branham

---

Catherine Schwoerer

Date Defended: December 7, 2012

The Thesis Committee for Stephanie Ann Hertel  
certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

A MODEL FOR CONSUMER-ORIENTED  
PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

---

Chairperson, Michael Eckersley

Date approved: December 7, 2012

**Abstract:**

Brands are being challenged to reach consumers in different and more relevant ways. Today's consumer is influenced by brand experiences over the number of advertising impressions.

Understanding consumers' needs, wants, and desires can be discerned and shaped the way promotional merchandise is created, sourced, and distributed. A genuine understanding of promotional products client-brand needs can foster better brand engagement and garner desired consumer responses.

## **Introduction:**

Promotional products is a segment of promotional media marketing that offers products usually imprinted with brand's logo or message. Awareness for a company, brand, or event is the most common use of promotional products, which is most often supported by inexpensive giveaway items. Promotional products can also range to higher-dollar items that are traditionally given to executives, celebrities, or as employee recognition gifts. Employees and consumers can also buy promotional merchandise that aligns with their personal brand or form of expression, for instance in the case of sports teams and athletics.

Promotional products dates back to 1789 in the United States with campaign buttons created for George Washington. A printer is credited as the inventor of the industry when he convinced a local shoe store to produce book bags imprinted with their company name. Shortly after, another printer and the original inventor were selling imprinted bags, caps, calendars, and aprons. In the U.S. today, the most common type of promotional product owned is a writing instrument, with over 46 percent respondents owning at least one. Writing instruments are followed by shirts, calendars, bags, headwear, and desk or office accessories. [8]

## **Literature Review:**

Today, there are over 27,000 distributors and suppliers registered with ASI, Ad Specialties Institute. [2] There are three main types of businesses in the promotional products industry: suppliers, distributors, and decorators. Distributors act as the manager and middleman between suppliers and decorators for their clients. Distributors are usually well-versed in sourcing products and have a good understanding of suppliers and decorators capabilities. Distributors are

also responsible for ensuring correct artwork and correct decoration applications for their clients. These steps can save the clients time researching suppliers and preparing the correct artwork. Even after the growth of the internet the supply chain has not changed due to this specialized knowledge. [11] Thirty to forty percent is the industry standard for distributor mark up on supplier and decorator costs. [6]

In 2011, sales for the industry were \$18.5 billion. Staples Promotional Products is leading the industry with an estimated \$364.4 million of sales in North America in 2010. Followed by Proforma with \$269.1 million and BDA with \$256.0 million in sales. [1] Of these top three distributors, Staples Promotional Products is the only company that offers an ecommerce website for online purchase and decoration of products, although many other companies in the Top 40 also offer this model. Websites selling promotional products was perceived as the biggest threat to other competitors. [4] All three of the top promotional products distributors also offer managed in-stock programs and special order programs for clients.

On average, corporate promotional products budgets are split into two equal portions, half allocated toward managed in-stock programs, the other half spent on special order products. [6]

Managed in-stock programs include an inventory of pre-selected, imprinted merchandise ready for purchase and fulfillment. These programs may also include customized eStore design and technology, marketing services, and printed materials such as catalogs and direct mail pieces.

Special order programs can include custom designed products or merchandise that is only needed for a short term that is not developed for the traditional in-stock program, an example may be for a specific marketing campaign or event.

The cost per impression of a promotional product in 2010 was about \$0.005. This ranks on the inexpensive end of other traditional media outlets compared to Spot Radio at \$0.058, National Magazines at \$0.045, and Newspapers at \$0.029 per impression, but is more expensive than Internet advertising at \$0.003 per impression. Promotional products are inexpensive and generate an impression with recipients; 83 percent of respondents said they could identify the advertiser on a promotional product they owned. [8] Not only can consumers recall the advertiser, brand messaging is reinforced every time that item is used and/or shared with others.

In its 2005 Marketing Receptivity Study, Yankelovich Partners found that 54 percent of respondents agree they “resist being exposed to marketing and advertising.” This kind of consumer resistance is causing a general reconsideration of marketing and advertising tactics. [7] In turn, nearly two-thirds of promotional products distributors reported they have been asked to do more than just promotional product fulfillment from their clients. On average, distributors are reporting only 64 percent of total annual revenue coming from products, the lowest figure since 2001. Clients are expecting solutions relating to their marketing objectives and prefer one vendor to handle their promotional needs instead of managing many vendors for different requirements. [12] Les Loggins, a PR and advertising consultant stated in Counselor Magazine, “There is a consolidation, I think, and that's why strategy is so important... If you don't adapt, you'll go away.” [12]

**Research Question:**

How can the prevailing promotional products business model and practices be innovated or reimagined to yield greater value to sponsoring brands, greater relevance to end-consumers, and improved margins to the promotional products provider?

**Objective:**

My objective with this project is to take a critical look at the sourcing models and practices used in the promotional products industry, and develop a new model to achieve the most satisfaction to the B2B client and end-recipient of the merchandise.

**Method:**

Research will comprise collecting information and synthesizing insights and contextual inquiry regarding desires, goals, and aspirations around three main groups: (1) employees sourcing product in the promotional products industry, (2) B2B buyers of promotional merchandise, and (3) end-recipients of promotional merchandise. These insights will be gathered through primary and secondary research. The following additional methods, tools, processes will be employed: Personas, Scenario play, Concept modeling, What is? What if? What wows? What works?, Competitive Landscape modeling, Personal Interviews

**Deliverables:**

The final project deliverables will consist of a presentation comprising documented research, strategy framework, models and visualizations to answer the research question.

**Validating the Results:**

Validation of the work will be solicited through feedback from industry professionals and corporate clients. A presentation will be made to company leadership for implementation. If accepted, trial testing with clients will take place.



## References

1. 2011 Distributors. (2012). Retrieved from <http://www.asicentral.com/asp/open/educationandevents/distributor-top-40-2011.aspx>
2. *About ASI*. (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.asicentral.com/asp/open/aboutASI/index.aspx>
3. Alexis, J. (2008). From Lock-in to Lock-out: Using Design to Create Fiercely Loyal Customers. In L. Thomas & W. Thomas (Eds.), *Building Design Strategy* (pp. 131-132). New York, NY: Allworth Press.
4. Blaise, D. (Performer). Five biggest threats facing promotional products distributors [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <http://bit.ly/Pbe33O>
5. Cummings, B. (2012, Jul 13). SoI 2012 - marketing: More to spend. *Counselor The Voice of the Industry*, Retrieved from <http://www.asipublications.com/Counselor/Research/content.aspx?id=221>
6. Davis, S. (2012, October 16). Interview by S Hertel [Personal Interview].
7. Duffy, J., & Block, E. (2008). Designing for the times. In L. Thomas & W. Thomas (Eds.), *Building Design Strategy* (pp. 186-187). New York, NY: Allworth Press.
8. *Global advertising specialties impressions study*. (2010). A cost analysis of promotional products versus other advertising media Asi power summit. Retrieved from <http://www.asicentral.com/study>
9. Kotchka, C. (2008). The Design Imperative in Consumer Goods. In L. Thomas & W. Thomas (Eds.), *Building Design Strategy* (pp. 113-114). New York, NY: Allworth Press.
10. Lockwood, T. (2008). Design Value: A Framework for Measurement. In L. Thomas & W. Thomas (Eds.), *Building Design Strategy* (pp. 3-10). New York, NY: Allworth Press.
11. Promotional merchandise. (2012, October 2). Retrieved from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Promotional\\_merchandise](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Promotional_merchandise)
12. Vagnoni, D. (2012, Jul 13). SOI 2012 - customer service: More to give. *Counselor The Voice of the Industry*, Retrieved from <http://www.asipublications.com/Counselor/Research/content.aspx?id=218>
13. Vagnoni, D. (2012, July 16). *Here's how they're using past experiences to strengthen each of their company's futures*. Retrieved from <http://www.asipublications.com/Counselor/Research/content.aspx?id=239>
14. Vagnoni, D. (2012, Aug 1). Profile - How We've Managed Rapid Growth. *Counselor The Voice of the Industry*, Retrieved from <http://www.asipublications.com/Counselor/CaseStudies/content.aspx?id=248>



# A model for consumer-oriented promotional products

**Stephanie Hertel**

Design Management Thesis Project

**How can the prevailing promotional products business model and practices be innovated or reimaged to yield greater value to sponsoring brands, greater relevance to end-consumers, and improved margins to the promotional products provider?**

# Promotional Products Industry **Uses**



## Giveaway Items

Promote brands at to consumers at Tradeshows, Conferences, Events



## Logoed Gifts

Thank or attract consumers, clients or employees



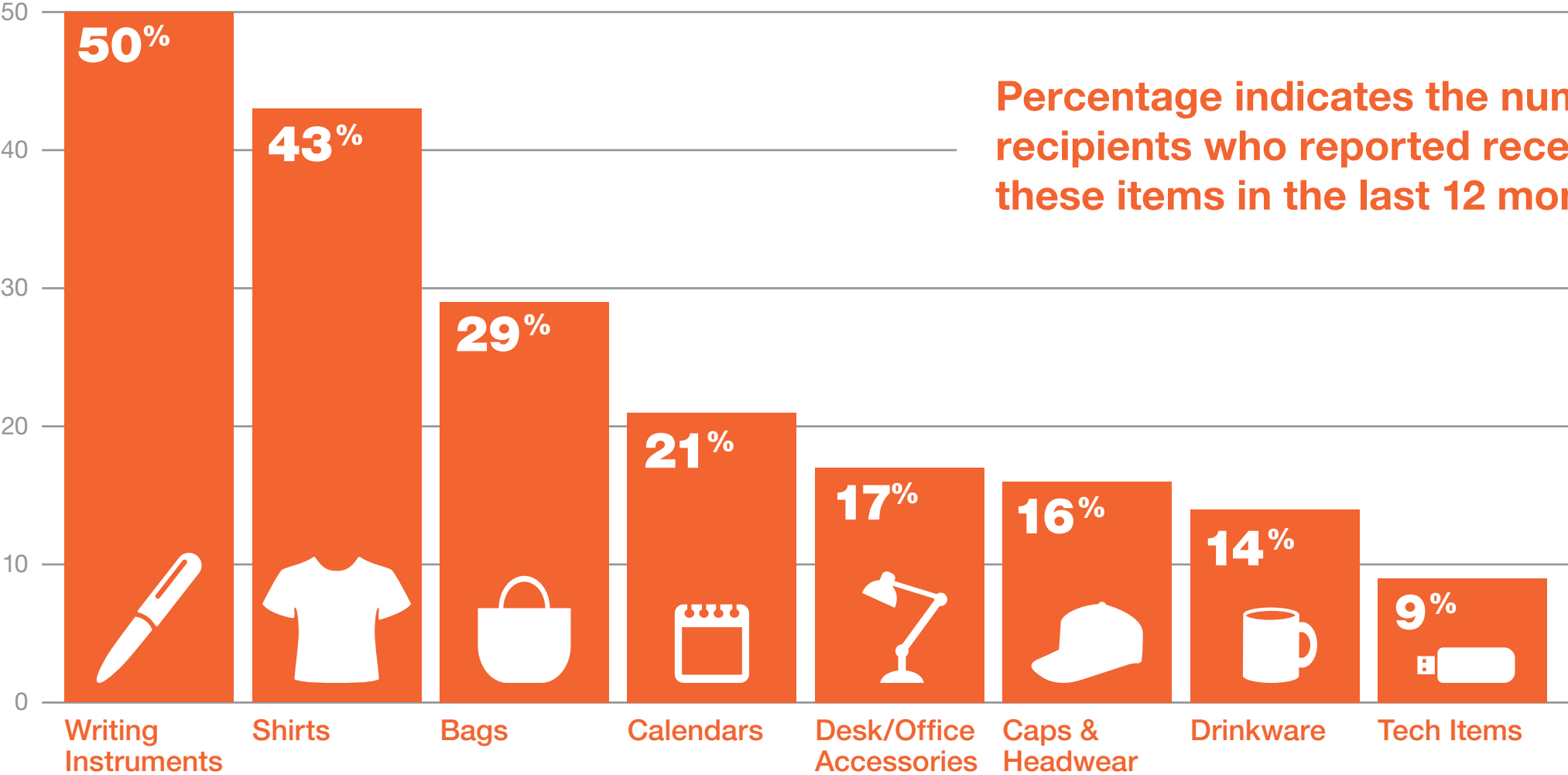
## Employee Uniforms



## Non-logoed Recognition Gifts

Thank employees

# Promotional Products Industry **Product Popularity**



Percentage indicates the number of recipients who reported receiving these items in the last 12 months.

# Promotional Products **Competitive Spectrum**

## Transactional Vendors

Sell decorated products, offer little to no inventory management or assortment selection support.

## Managed Program Vendors

Offers clients customized logoed merchandise programs. May include inventory management and custom websites for employee or consumer purchase.

## Consumer Experience Vendors

Provides consumers with interactive experiences in conjunction with logoed merchandise.



**Event Buyers** need quick items for an upcoming event or promotion. Most likely off-the-shelf, domestic products due to timing, but there is an opportunity to add more creative packaging, kitting, and specialized imprints. These may be multi-location needs for larger events or a one-time purchase.

---

**General Inventory Buyers** are comprised of mid to large size companies that need managed inventory and access for employee or consumer purchase. Interested in products to supplement campaigns and over-arching brand initiatives.

---

**Promo Partners** are looking for promotional strategies instead of promotional products. They are interested in new ways to push product to consumers and strong tie-ins to their brand and campaign. These partners are more interested in “agency” style offerings.

---

**Personalized Solutions** these buyers are looking for standardized promotional products with an additional imprint for the sales force or location information.

---

**One Time Buyers** come from smaller companies or individuals that need a small quantity of items, that can be for an event, promotion, or as general inventory. These buyers manage inventory themselves, as well as product selection. They may or may not provide their own artwork as well.

---



# Needs Cluster Method **Buyer Requirements**

## **Decoration Options**

- Must follow logo/brand guidelines.
- What are new decoration treatments?
- How can products be customized?
- I want access to 3rd Party Trademarks
- I want to supply agents in my company with pre-selected products they can customize with their name/info.
- I want to add additional imprint/decoration to a pre-existing product on my company eStore.
- Agents for my company want to select and customize products with their name/info

## **Product Assortment Support**

- I need it in my brand color.
- I want a variety of color options available.
- Show me product options.
- I want to see all of the options available and pick items myself.
- I know what specific products I want.
- How can I package this?
- I am interested in recycled & sustainable products.
- What's cheap and somewhat disposable?
- What will have longevity with consumers?
- What products should I offer for a tradeshow?
- What products should I give to my employees for

appreciation?

- What products should I give to my best client for appreciation?
- What are the best product deals?
- I require creativity & innovation in product designs.
- I need customized products specific to me.
- What is the lead time on each purchase quantity?

## **Purchase & Inventory Touchpoints**

- I need it by a specific date.
- I want my products now.
- How does it ship?
- I need a website that all employees can make purchases from.
- I need a small website employees from multiple locations can purchase from.
- I need a website for employee uniforms.
- I don't want to pay for and manage extra inventory.
- I am the only buyer for the company.
- I need someone to manage my inventory.
- I can manage my own inventory.
- I want site consumers interested in my products can purchase from.
- I want to work with one vendor and simplify all outgoing promotional products within the company.
- I want products on my eStore immediately.

- I need a printed catalog for my employees/ consumers.
- I like the idea of a microsite, but I want orders immediately instead of waiting for others.

## **Consumer & Trend Knowledge**

- What do my consumers want?
- What are the latest trends in the industry?
- What are the latest consumer retail trends?
- What is memorable for my consumers?
- What are the newest products?
- I want a promotional solutions instead of promotional products.
- I want a consultant to deliver marketing strategies.
- I want a consultant to deliver new ideas and ways to engage consumers.
- What products can I tie into my marketing campaign?

## **Safety & Regulations**

- Does it follow safety guidelines?
- I want products made in the USA.
- My company requires Social Compliance Monitoring.
- Do you follow International Trade Restrictions?
- I need to maintain my company's quality standards
- I want to buy from someone with a local presence



---

**Speed to Market** Businesses are interested in new consumer products as fast as the trend occurs. Currently, it is a challenge to get products online fast enough to support this request.

---

**Vendor Consolidation** Thousands promotional products vendors exist. Businesses are asking for consolidation of all promotional items to better manage and control brand standards.

---

**Competitive Pricing** Promotional products, while a cost-effective marketing medium, can be considered a commodity item unless additional value and customization is added. Companies are looking for the best prices in this category.

---

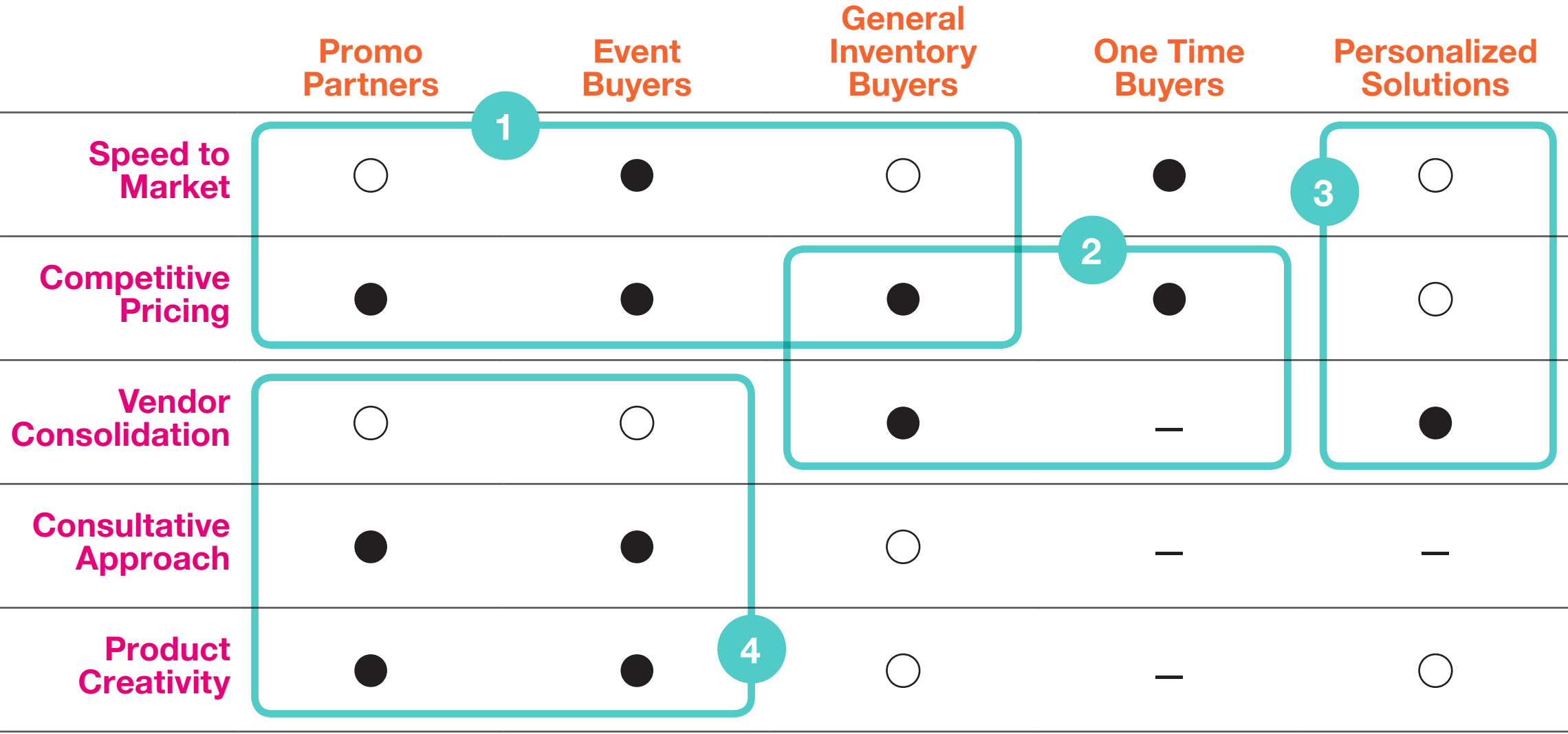
**Consultative Approach** Businesses want experts to guide them in their decisions regarding breadth, volume, and decoration of their merchandise assortment. As well as an understanding what is best for their brand and their end-consumers.

---

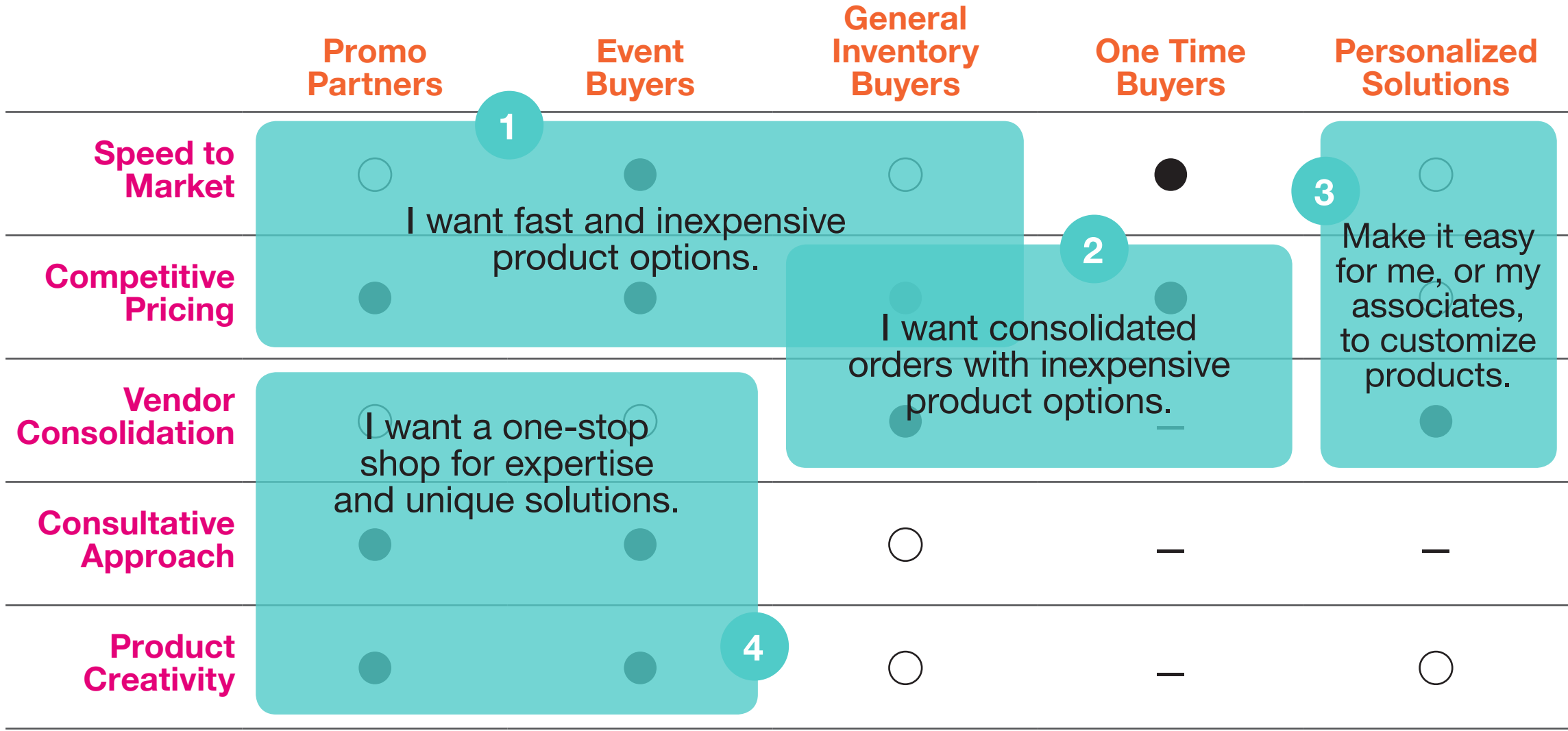
**Product Creativity** Increasingly clients are asking for non-standard solutions or creative products tailored to their brand. These clients want to see a custom product offering first, but may eventually select more “traditional” products.

---

# Needs Cluster Method **Matrix Cluster**



Needs Cluster Method **Matrix Cluster**



## Needs Cluster Method **Buyer Types**



**eric** *I want fast and inexpensive product options.*

- Procurement Manager
- Agriculture company
- Facilitates promotional product purchases for dealers and end-consumers.
- His primary concerns are regarding safety regulations and cost.
- Eric works closely with his company's internal marketing department and understands the desire for current product merchandise. His brand has a large consumer fan base, therefore they turn merchandise quickly and add to the selection multiple times per year.



**trish** *I want consolidated orders with inexpensive product options.*

- Marketing Strategist
- Medium-sized insurance company
- The company is made up of local franchises, which has made promotional product purchases very fragmented in the past.
- Trish is looking to consolidate all promotional products purchases with one vendor to control brand management and consistency.
- Individual insurance agents and franchises still require name and location customization.
- Trish requires different ordering methods and inventory management for different buying cycles.



**mary** *Make it easy for me, or my associates, to customize products.*

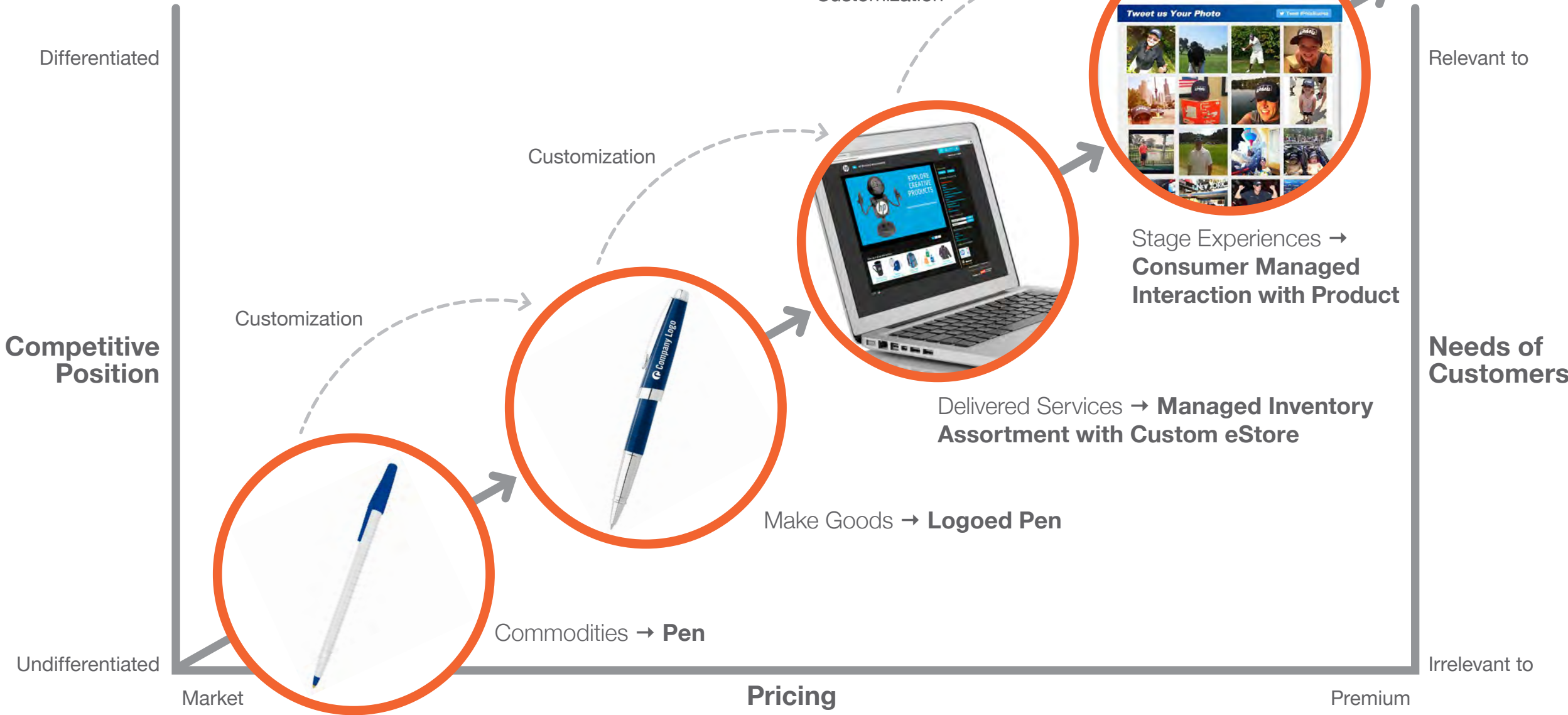
- Office Manager
- Law firm
- Mary is responsible for ordering promotional products for the company. All of the partners prefer personalized merchandise with their name and contact info. It's easiest for Mary to get all of her promotional items in one place to keep her records and orders straight.
- Mary is also a member on her church council. Each year Mary volunteers to order the T-shirts for their summer bible camp. She needs an expert to create artwork for the event.



**troy** *I want a one-stop shop for expertise and unique solutions.*

- Brand Manager
- Auto Manufacturer
- Recently, the company started a new campaign to reach a new, younger consumer group and restore their outdated brand image. Troy is interested in promotional strategies to hit this new segment.
- He is interested in creating a brand experiences for the consumer with promotional products at large events and at their auto care centers.
- **Focusing on Troy, because he offers the higher value and more customized opportunities.**

# Progression of Value



1. Theme the Experience
2. Harmonize Impressions with Positive Cues
3. Eliminate Negative Cues

### 4. Mix in Memorabilia

*“Many of the goods traditionally used for memorabilia are **boringly overabundant**. You have the opportunity to make your goods an appealing alternative to the pedestrian merchandise generally available.”*

5. Engage all five senses



A consumer-oriented agency offering social engagement opportunities through promotional product design and fulfillment. Dedicated to large, high value companies.

## Current Merchandising Model

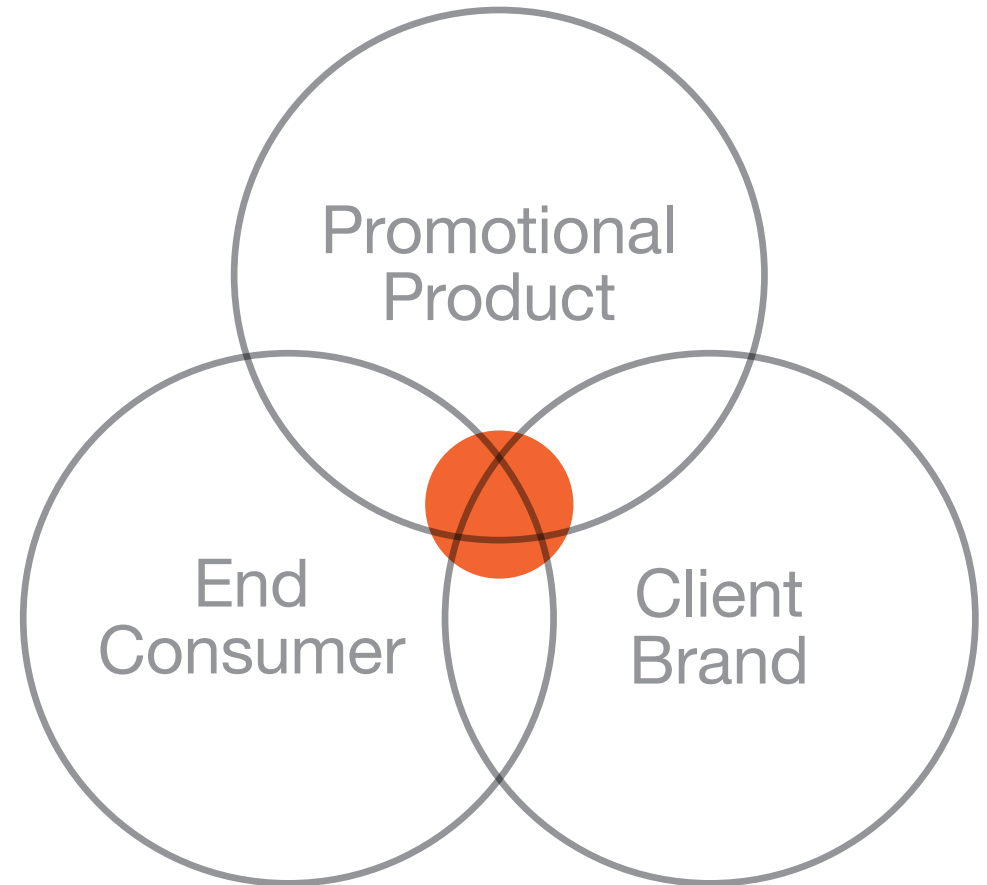


Currently, Merchandise Specialists start by sourcing products only from vendors denoted as “Preferred Vendors.” If no suitable items are found, they will continue to source items from Acceptable Vendors or create a custom product.



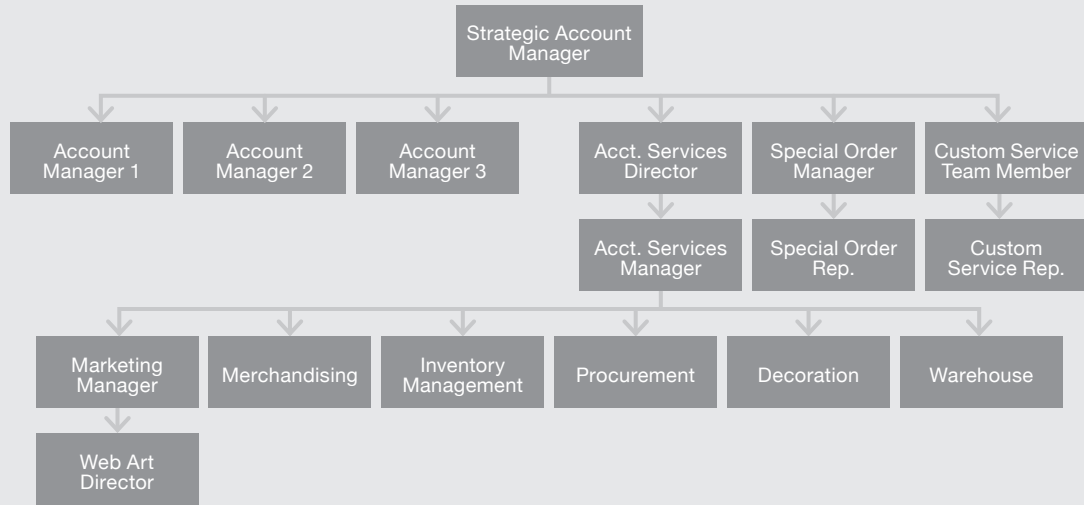
## Swag Agency Merchandising Model

Find the cross-section between brands and their customers first, then consider sourcing.





## Current **Account Team Structure**



With the current team structure, all communication is filtered through the Account Services Manager. Merchandising team members have expressed frustration because they aren't allowed the resources to help visualize more creative ideas. Because there is little to no collaboration between team members, the end products and services result in very little integration and creativity.

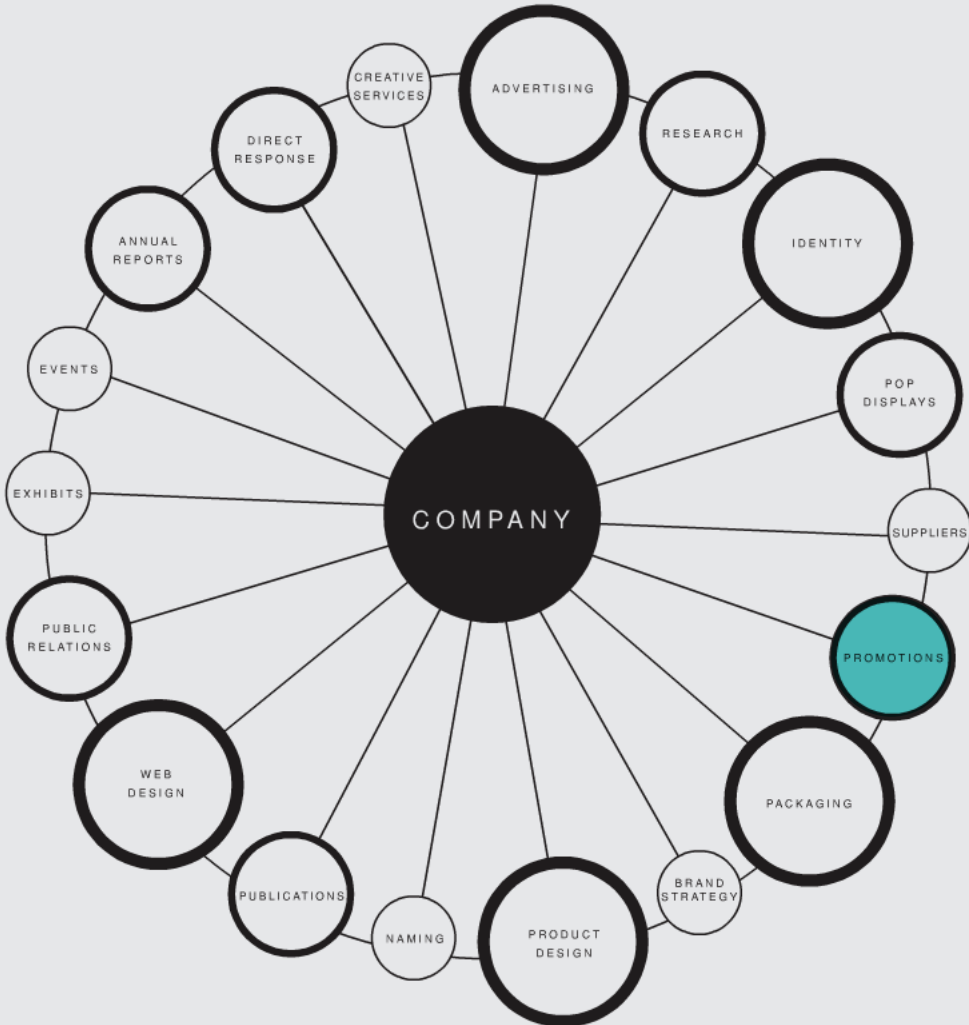
## Swag Agency **Account Team Structure**

Encourage cross-function collaboration for more sophisticated and functional end results.

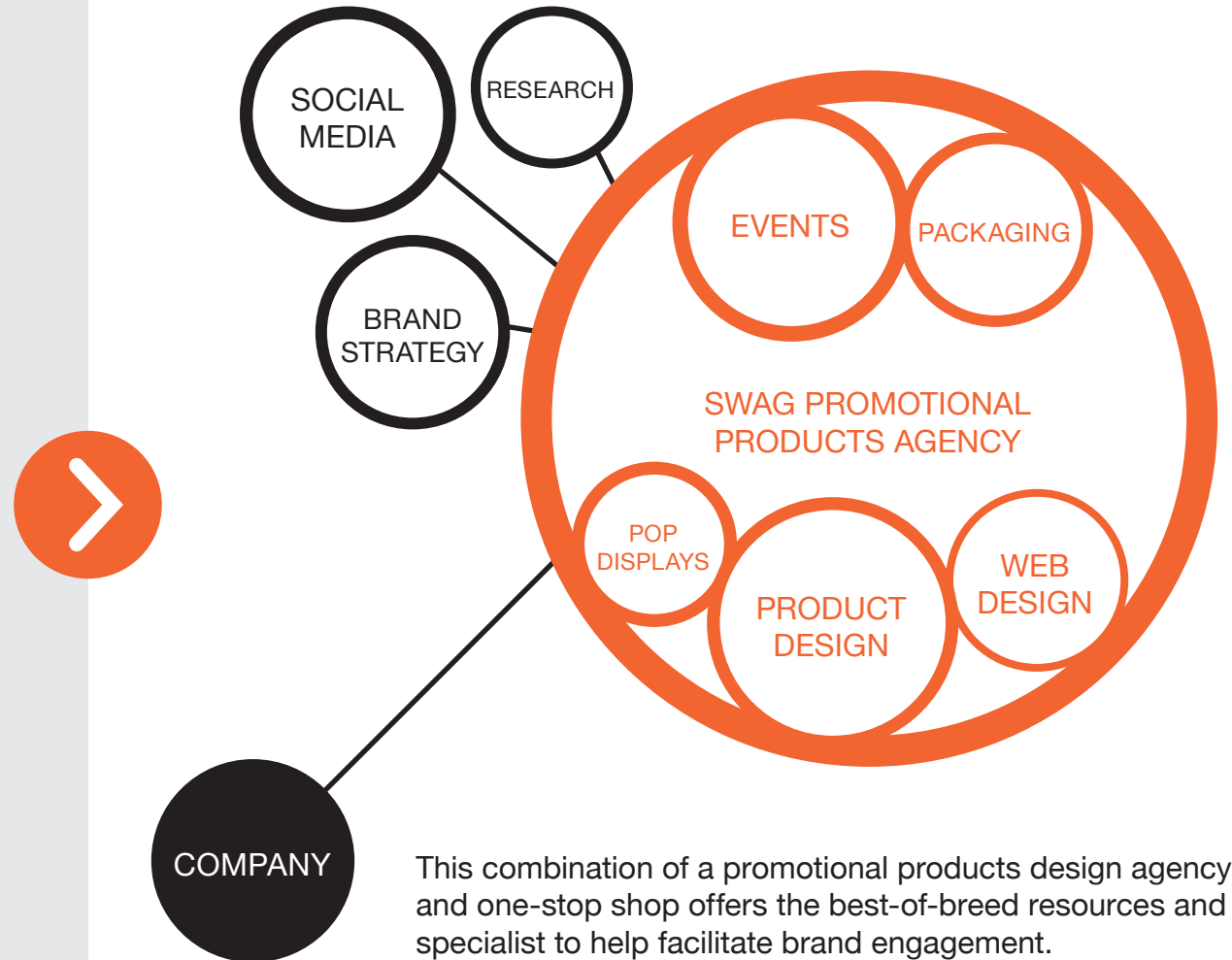


## Current **Integrated Marketing Team Approach**

This model is difficult for companies to manage. Currently, many companies have multiple promotional product vendors for their various needs and specialties. One insight discovered in research is companies are interested in consolidating promotional product vendors. Swag takes it one step further and offers a design agency approach.



## Swag Agency **One-Stop Shop & Agency Combo**



This combination of a promotional products design agency and one-stop shop offers the best-of-breed resources and specialist to help facilitate brand engagement.

This model is easier to manage, all teams work together to deliver consistent and cohesive results. To a certain degree, this model also offers the company a choice of their teams.

# Swag Agency **Development Approach**



- 2 weeks
- Ongoing

- 4 weeks

- 4 weeks

- After each promotion/event
- Quarterly



# 1. Cultural & Consumer Fieldwork

Swag will monitor economic and environmental issues, cultural changes, trends, and fads. This will ensure a better understanding how the world and culture is changing and how that may effect different engagement and experience opportunities for each company.

Working with other trend and data analysis organizations, we will begin to build deep insights and key consumer groups. Each segment will be based on understanding consumer demographics of age, gender, income, education, nationality, living environment. And then we will get to know consumers on a personal level. How do they communicate with companies? With their peers? How do they use technology? And then at a product level. What products resonate with their mind-set? What products are no longer relevant? What items will have long-lasting impressions? What are the best methods to reach this group?

Example consumer mood board on following page.



# Families who protect.



- **Home Dynamic:** Multigenerational, white & blue collar workers, one or more incomes, owns their own home
- **Values:** Hardworking, flexible, value loyalty, national pride, dream of the good life, simple living, takes time for leisure, frugal, independent, work-life balance, child-centered focus, focus on education, family is key, conventional, sentimental, habitual, conformist, domestic
- **Spending habits:** Clips coupons, DIYers, on the go, sports enthusiasts, may splurge on certain items to “keep up with the Jones” (ie. iPads, cars, clothing, etc.), pet lovers, beer drinkers, mall shoppers
- **Stores:** Target, Walmart, Macy’s, Kohl’s, Gap, Old Navy, Bed Bath & Beyond
- **Products:** products made in the USA, household items, brand name merchandise



## 2. Promotional Road Map

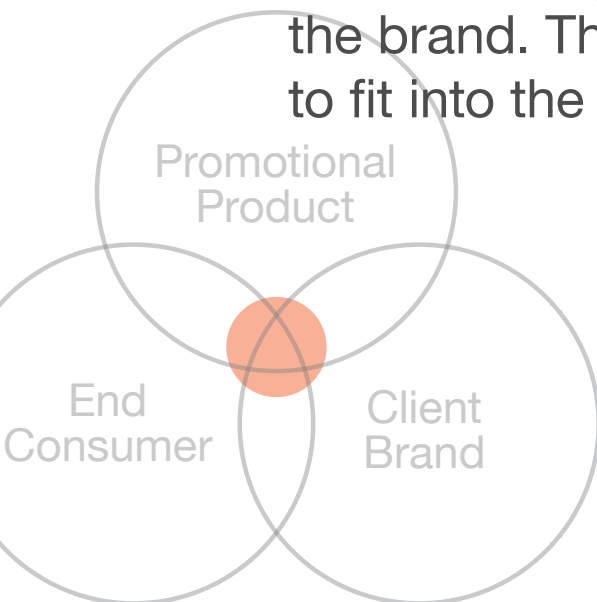
A promotional and merchandising road map or strategy will be created to deliver a unique brand experience for each company. This road map will vary by company, it can be generated for one event or a more forward-thinking 2-3 year strategic plan. We will work with each company to determine the best method for consumer-product-experience initiatives to enhance each brand. An example may be a pop-up store at a conference or engaging consumers via social media.



### 3. Merchandise Development

Swag will conceive, design, develop and source unique consumer lifestyle promotional products. We will rely on the **Client Brand** → **End Consumer** → **Promotional Product** model. During development we will answer direct questions about each product. What will each product enable consumers to do? What need or desire will it fulfill?

We will work with each client to create a visual voice. This visual voice is more than logo guidelines, but will develop a deep personality and voice of the brand. This visual system will be generated as an additional touch point to fit into the clients' online, advertising, and PR touch points.

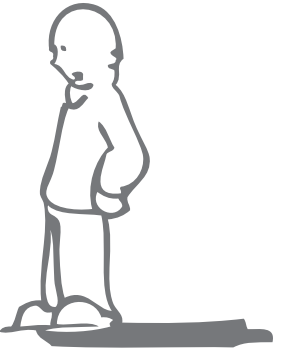




## 4. Implementation & Refinement

Upon client approval, we will begin to implement the promotional and merchandising road map. Results will be analyzed at specific milestones with performance measurements required for success. Refinements and course-correction will take place as needed.





## For whom are we creating value? Who are our most important customers?

### **Current**

- Focused on B2B businesses
- Our most important customers are our “Top 75” accounts, those spending with the most promotional spend

### **Swag**

- Niche market of high value consumer-oriented brands
- Strives to create value for brands, as well as their consumers
- Our most important customers are those most interested in consumer engagement



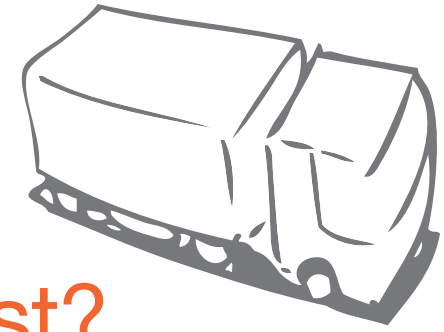
## What Value do we deliver to the customer? Problems and needs we solve? Services we offer?

### Current

- Value: Getting promotional products manufactured and decorated with the correct logo, on time, and at a fair value.
- Services: Merchandise assortment, custom product development, customized eStore, microsite for group buying, Incentive Programs, Global support, generic eStore with product customization capabilities
- Characteristics: “Getting the Job Done”, Price, Risk Reduction

### Swag

- Value: Development of consumer engagement opportunities via designed and manufactured branded merchandise tailored to each of our client’s consumer groups.
- Problems/Needs: Strategies to support client’s brand reputation through branded products
- Services: Understanding consumer groups, merchandise assortment, custom product development, customized eStore, microsite for group buying, Incentive Programs, Global support, event design, social media engagement creation and monitoring
- Characteristics: Improved performance, customization, design



## Through which Channels do our Customer Segments want to be reached? Which works best? Which is most cost-effective?

### Current & Swag

- How we raise **awareness** about our products/services:  
Sales force, website/blog, Quarterly newsletter
- How we help customers **evaluate** our Value Prop.:  
Sales force, Customer Service surveys, Review Panel
- How we allow customers to **purchase** products/services: eStore, Sales force, Account Team
- How we **deliver** our Value Prop.:  
eStore, microsite for group buying, Special Order representatives
- How we provide **post-purchase** customer support:  
Sales force, Customer Service Rep., Quarterly Business Review with account team



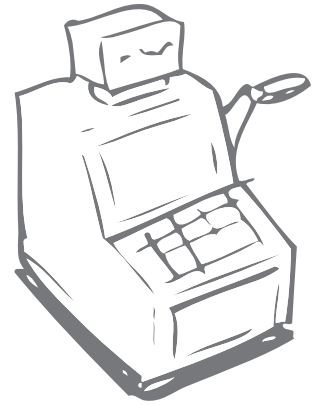
What type of relationship does each of our Customer segments expect us to establish and maintain with them? How are they integrated? How costly are they?

### **Current**

- Objective: Customer Retention
- Dedicated account team & self-service opportunities
- Business relationship

### **Swag**

- Objective: Boosting Sales/Upselling
- Dedicated account team & co-creation opportunities
- Interaction and engagement between client and design team, as applicable
- Forge business & personal relationships
- More costly approach than currently offered, but this style gives clients visibility to team working on their projects and builds more long-lasting relationship ties with the company.



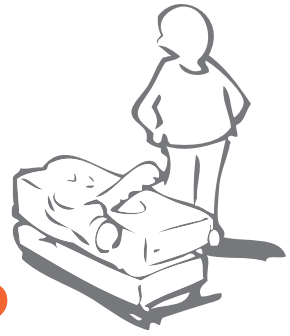
What value are our customers really willing to pay?  
What do they currently pay? How much does each  
Revenue Stream contribute to overall revenues?

### **Current**

- Product Volume dependent
- Depending on contract negotiated, currently, design services and marketing are paid for with billable hours, merchandising services are not

### **Swag**

- Product Feature dependent
- For high engagement projects, charge customers on a per-project basis instead of billable hours, based on performance



# What Key Resources does our Value Prop. require? Our Distribution Channels? Customer Relationships? Revenue Streams?

## **Current**

- Physical: Warehouse & Distribution centers

## **Swag**

- Physical: Warehouse & Distribution centers
- Human: Invest in best-of-breed creative team members for merchandising & design support



# What Key Activities do our Value Prop. require? Our Distribution Channels? Customer Relationships? Revenue Streams?

## **Current**

- Sourcing and facilitating production & decoration of promotional products
- Generate eStore & Microsite platforms

## **Swag**

- Problem solving for engaging brand experiences
- Sourcing and facilitating production & decoration of promotional products, collateral, and packaging
- Generate eStore & Microsite platforms



## Who are our Key Partners? Suppliers? Resources? Key Activities partners perform?

### **Current**

- Key Partners: Prestige Partners, traditional ASI vendors & decorators
- Key Activities Partners Perform: manufacture & decorate product

### **Swag**

- Key Partners: Product suppliers (ASI and non-ASI), ASI decorators, Event Agencies, and Social Media experts
- Key Activities Partners Perform: Manufacture & decorate product; Plan and execute events; Social Media management, monitoring, and analytics





## Important costs in our business model? Which Key Resources are most expensive? Key Activities?

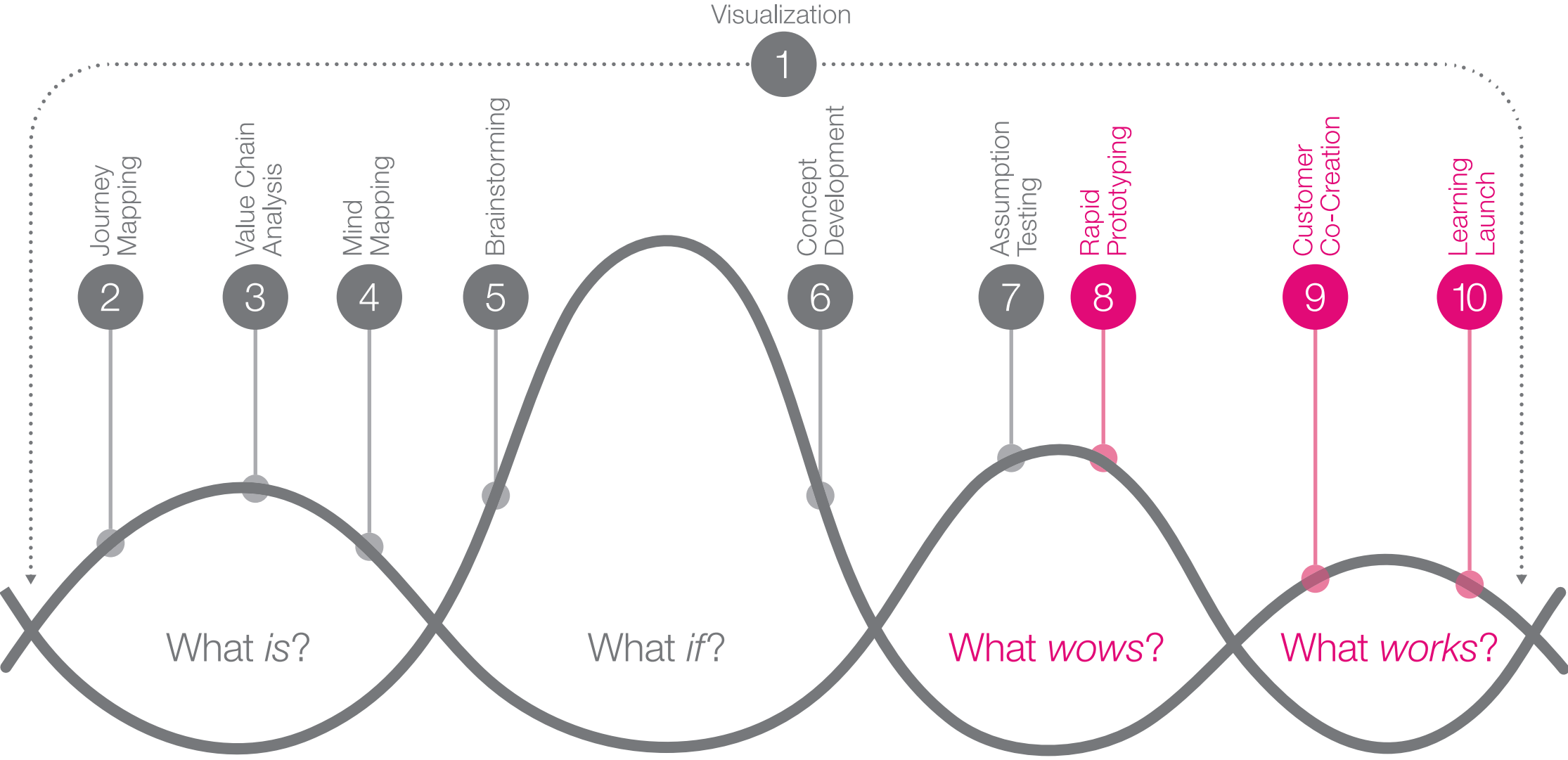
### Current

- Cost Driven business model
- Basic model for enterprise accounts: Factory Direct Cost + Variable Cost per unit (i.e. product decoration) + Product Cost Adders (Freight & Duties) + *Net Profit Before Tax (Agreed upon percentage)*

### Swag

- Premium value proposition, focused on value creation for clients
- Possible model: Factory Direct Cost + Variable Cost per unit (i.e. product decoration) + Product Cost Adders (Freight & Duties) + *Project Value*

# What is? What if? **What wows? What works?** Method



Validity can only be demonstrated by future events through the passage of time.



Bite off as little a piece as possible to generate proof.

Currently, small, non-traditional teams are taking steps to implement the proposed merchandise model and consumer group research on key **consumer-oriented projects**.

## Client Feedback

- [Merchandising Model Approach] Recently won accounts with approach.
- [Merchandising Model Approach] The design team is increasingly asked to brainstorm and collaborate on new creative and unique merchandising solutions.

## Internal Feedback

- [Design Engagement] Design is perceived as too expensive and we cannot afford non-standard solutions in our current marketing budgets. (Based on the lean cost-driven model.) → Need for validation during and after campaign completion.

**How can the prevailing promotional products business model and practices be innovated or reimaged to yield greater value to sponsoring brands, greater relevance to end-consumers, and improved margins to the promotional products provider?**

# Bibliography & References

1. 2011 Distributors. (2012). Retrieved from <http://www.asicentral.com/asp/open/education-andevents/distributor-top-40-2011.aspx>
2. About ASI. (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.asicentral.com/asp/open/aboutASI/index.aspx>
3. Alexis, J. (2008). From Lock-in to Lock-out: Using Design to Create Fiercely Loyal Customers. In L. Thomas & W. Thomas (Eds.), *Building Design Strategy* (pp. 131-132). New York, NY: Allworth Press.
4. Alexis, J. (2008). Needs Clusters: a research strategy for accelerating user-centered design innovation. Institute of Design.
5. Blaise, D. (Performer). Five biggest threats facing promotional products distributors [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <http://bit.ly/Pbe33O>
6. Osterwalder, A., & Pigneur, Y. (2011). Business model generation. Retrieved from <http://www.businessmodelgeneration.com> and <http://www.slideshare.net/rjzvieira/business-model-generation-10438084#btnNext>
7. Christensen, C. (1997). *The Innovator's Dilemma*. St. Paul, Minnesota: HighBridge Company.
8. Cummings, B. (2012, Jul 13). SOI 2012 - marketing: More to spend. Counselor The Voice of the Industry, Retrieved from <http://www.asipublications.com/Counselor/Research/content.aspx?id=221>
9. Davis, S. (2012, October 16). Interview by S Hertel [Personal Interview].
10. Duffy, J., & Block, E. (2008). Designing for the times. In L. Thomas & W. Thomas (Eds.), *Building Design Strategy* (pp. 186-187). New York, NY: Allworth Press.
11. Global advertising specialties impressions study. (2012). A cost analysis of promotional products versus other advertising media ASI power summit. Retrieved from <http://www.asicentral.com/study>
12. Global advertising specialties impressions study. (2010). A cost analysis of promotional products versus other advertising media ASI power summit. Retrieved from <http://www.asicentral.com/study>
13. Hadley, K. (2012, November 12). Interview by S Hertel [Personal Interview].
14. Kotchka, C. (2008). The Design Imperative in Consumer Goods. In L. Thomas & W. Thomas (Eds.), *Building Design Strategy* (pp. 113-114). New York, NY: Allworth Press.
15. Liedtka, J., & Ogilvie, T. (2012). Helping business managers discover their appetite for design thinking. *The Design Management Institute*, 23(1), Retrieved from [dmi.org](http://dmi.org)
16. Lockwood, T. (2008). Design Value: A Framework for Measurement. In L. Thomas & W. Thomas (Eds.), *Building Design Strategy* (pp. 3-10). New York, NY: Allworth Press.
17. Martin, R. (2012). Design & Business: Why Can't We Be Friends?. *Step Inside Design*, Retrieved from <http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/rogermartin/designandbusiness.pdf>
18. Mass Relevance. (2012). KPMG Phil's blue hat. Retrieved from [www.massrelevance.com](http://www.massrelevance.com)
19. Mass Relevance. (2012). Victoria's Secret PINK Nation Tailgate. Retrieved from [www.massrelevance.com](http://www.massrelevance.com)
20. Neumeier, M. (2006). *The brand gap*. Berkley, California: New Riders. Retrieved from <http://www.slideshare.net/coolstuff/the-brand-gap>
21. Pine, Joseph, and James Gilmore. *The Experience Economy: Work Is Theater & Every Business a Stage: goods & services are no longer enough*. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press, 1999. Print.
22. Poe, A. (2012, November 9). Interview by S Hertel [Personal Interview].
23. Promotional merchandise. (2012, October 2). Retrieved from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Promotional\\_merchandise](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Promotional_merchandise)
24. Simmons, S. (2012, October 23). Interview by S Hertel [Personal Interview].
25. Thorpe, M. (2012). Reframing Our Ways of Working, and Stretching the Creative Spirit. *The Design Management Institute*, 23(1), Retrieved from [dmi.org](http://dmi.org)
26. Vagnoni, D. (2012, Jul 13). SOI 2012 - customer service: More to give. Counselor The Voice of the Industry, Retrieved from <http://www.asipublications.com/Counselor/Research/content.aspx?id=218>
27. Vagnoni, D. (2012, July 16). Here's how they're using past experiences to strengthen each of their company's futures. Retrieved from <http://www.asipublications.com/Counselor/Research/content.aspx?id=239>
28. Vagnoni, D. (2012, Aug 1). Profile - How We've Managed Rapid Growth. Counselor The Voice of the Industry, Retrieved from <http://www.asipublications.com/Counselor/Casestudies/content.aspx?id=248>