

BRING ALL PEOPLE TOGETER: Maximizing Diversity & Inclusion at Hallmark Cards, Inc.

By

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BRING ALL PEOPLE TOGETHER: Maximizing Diversity & Inclusion at Hallmark Cards, Inc.

Chairperson: Michael Eckersley

Date approved: May 3, 2012



Bring All People Together

Maximizing the influence of
Diversity & Inclusion
at Hallmark Cards, Inc.

Design Management Thesis Proposal, Spring 2012

Introduction

Putting Design Management to the test at Hallmark

While I've been working in a corporate leadership role in Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) for the last two years, I've shifted from a traditional designer role to a new path in Creative Brand Strategy.

This thesis project provides an opportunity to link my Design Management education and skills with my Brand Strategy and corporate Diversity & Inclusion roles to design an integrative solution that maximizes the impact of D&I on the marketplace.



Background Story 1

Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) at Hallmark

Over the past two decades, diversity councils and employee resource groups (ERGs) have helped to bring diversity top of mind in the workplace. In 2007, “inclusion” was added to the charter. Significant shifts in diversity dialogues between companies and their workforce revealed that a diverse workforce isn’t sufficient if that workforce doesn’t feel included. In 2011, corporate-wide D&I goals were implemented into employees yearly objectives, with the intention of holding the entire workforce accountable for making Hallmark a place where everyone:

1. Can bring their whole selves to work and
2. Works to fully understand the diverse thoughts, emotions and perspectives of consumers.



Background Story 2

Leveraging D&I Resources for Growth

Today, Employee Resource Groups continue to change the corporate culture through education and insights, and are being leveraged more often to review product (post development) to analyze cultural and racial relevance.

However, early involvement of these resources (research, insights, ERGs) in brand messaging, strategic marketing, and product development has yet to become the norm.

A 2012 Hallmark D&I analysis resulted in a corporate-level charge for D&I councils and ERGs to have more impact on the marketplace.



Background Story 3

A Demanding Landscape

Because the greeting card category continues to be a challenging market, Hallmark continually seeks new ways to be more relevant to more people. Culturally diverse and ethnic consumers are becoming more demanding of products and services that meet their unique needs, while the marketplace has new expectations of social responsibility among brands.

Innovation cycles are becoming increasingly shorter, and keeping up with technological advancement simply isn't enough to stay ahead in today's consumer product economy.



Cultural Shifts

Gay Issues

For the first time, over half of Americans favor or are indifferent to same-sex marriage. The trend is expected to continue. 77% of men say they “could be close friends with a gay man” and 57 percent say it would not bother them if their child or grandchild was gay.

Faith & Religion

95% of the nation believes in God as an absolute certainty, while only 56% of those feel that religion is an important part of someone’s life.

Interracial Marriage

About 15% of all new marriages in the U.S. were between spouses of a different race or ethnicity from one another, more than double the share in 1980 (6.7%). Among all newlyweds in 2010, 9% of whites, 17% of blacks, 26% of Hispanics and 28% of Asians married out.

Boomers Retire

On January 1, 2011, the first oldest Baby Boomers turned 65. Every day for the next 19 years, about 10,000 more will cross that threshold.

Big Brands Respond with Strong D&I Focus

Kaiser Permanente

KP created an Institute for Culturally Competent Care and nine Centers of Excellence that are making strides at eradicating healthcare disparities for Blacks, Latinos, Asians, people with disabilities and immigrants.

Sodexo

Diversity & Inclusion is one of the company's six strategic imperatives, with 25 percent of the executive bonuses linked to diversity objectives.

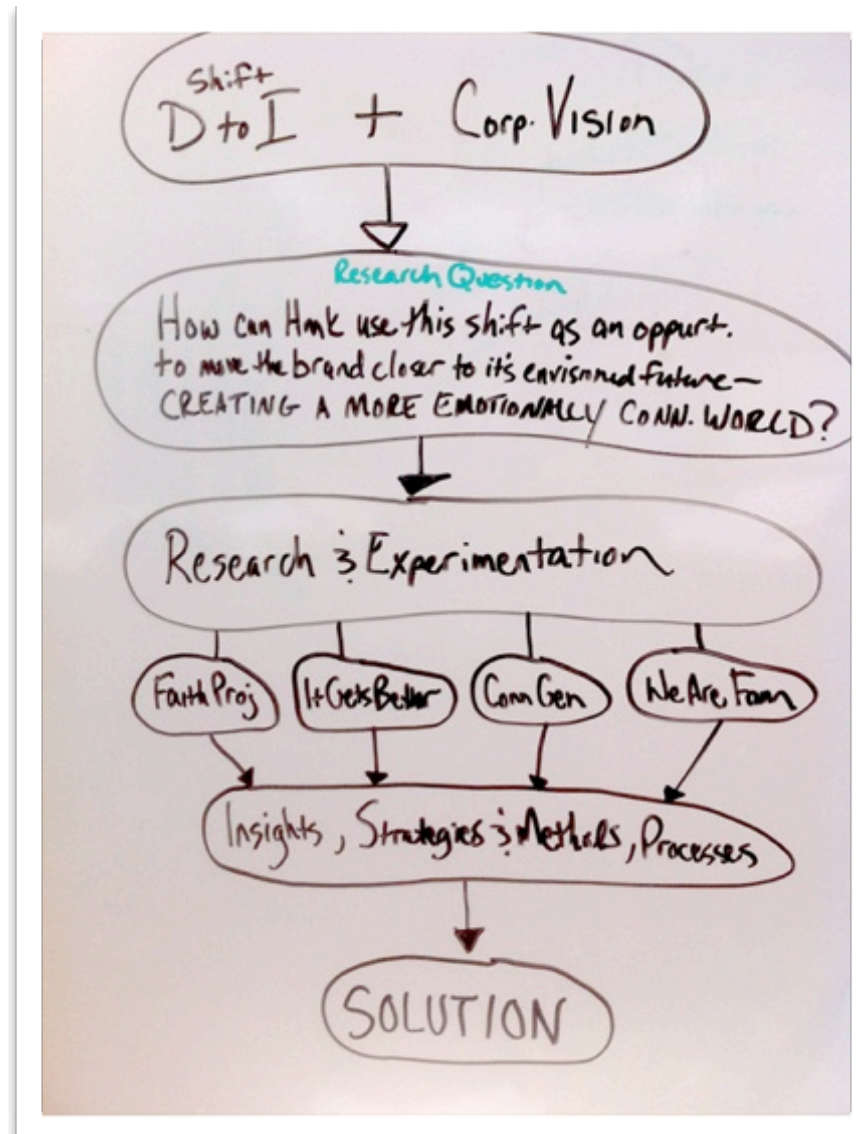
AT&T

ATT&T's involvement with Project Aspire is having a dramatic impact on the high-school-dropout rate, particularly for Latino and Black students. The company also has 10 employee resource groups which are a critical part of on-boarding and talent development.

Ernst & Young

50 percent of it's employees are participating in employee resource groups. 30 percent participate in more than one group.

Framework



Hallmark's Corporate Vision

We will be the company that creates
a more EMOTIONALLY CONNECTED WORLD
by making a genuine difference in EVERY LIFE, EVERY DAY.

Approved by CEO, 2008

Research Question



Knowing that our culture is moving from an emphasis on diversity to one of inclusion, how can Hallmark use this shift as an opportunity to move the brand closer to it's envisioned future—**creating a more emotionally connected world?**

Experimentation

Creating opportunities for discovery

With a new vision to use Diversity & Inclusion as a resource to help us move toward “a more emotionally connected world”, I began seeking opportunities to experiment with different platforms and formats with the intention of mining insights that could help in designing a solution.

With this in mind, I directed four key programs: The Faith Project, It Gets Better, Connecting Generations, and We Are Family.

Each of these recent projects provided me and my new team with:

1. A **design problem** focused on a dimension of D&I
2. **Insights** that reinforce the cultural shift toward inclusion
3. New **strategies** to maximize the value of Diversity & Inclusion at the corporate level.
4. **Methods** that shape a process and migration map that bring accountability to Diversity & Inclusion in a tangible way.





The Faith Project

Enriching Human Connections
through Spirituality

1. Design Problem

Old View: black & white, divisive, dogma-centered



New View: colorful, inclusive, human-centered



Consumers are demanding a more inclusive perspective on faith and spirituality from religious institutions and brands. How can Hallmark shift from using a categorical approach to one that is more universal and culturally relevant?

2. Insights

Modern-day believers pick their own religious routes

- 95% of the nation believes in God as an absolute certainty
- The U.S. national average of all religions indicates that 71% say their belief in God is absolutely certain, yet only 56% say that *religion* is important in a person's life.
- 25% of 18 - 29-year-olds express that they are not affiliated with any religion at this time
- “Though many are defying the custom of adhering to his or her family religion, and some are rejecting organized religion entirely, most Americans are still articulating some form of faith.”



3. Strategy



After research and commissioning a team of writers and designers to explore a more universal approach to faith and spirituality, a plan was put in place to create a program that would help guide product development and platform teams.

4. Method

First, I directed production of two videos to show the essence of an inclusive vision for faith. Initially, these were essential in gaining corporate leadership support.



I then directed development of a visual and editorial guide for product integration.

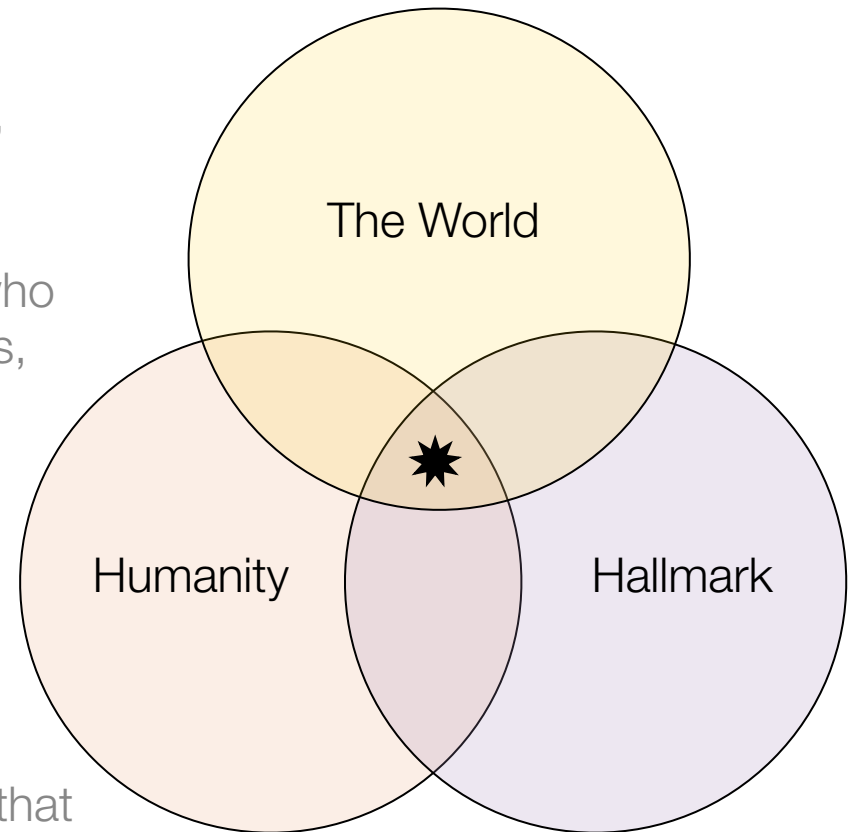
Inclusive Faith Guide

Providing Context

A good branded solution is right for the consumer, the time, and the brand.

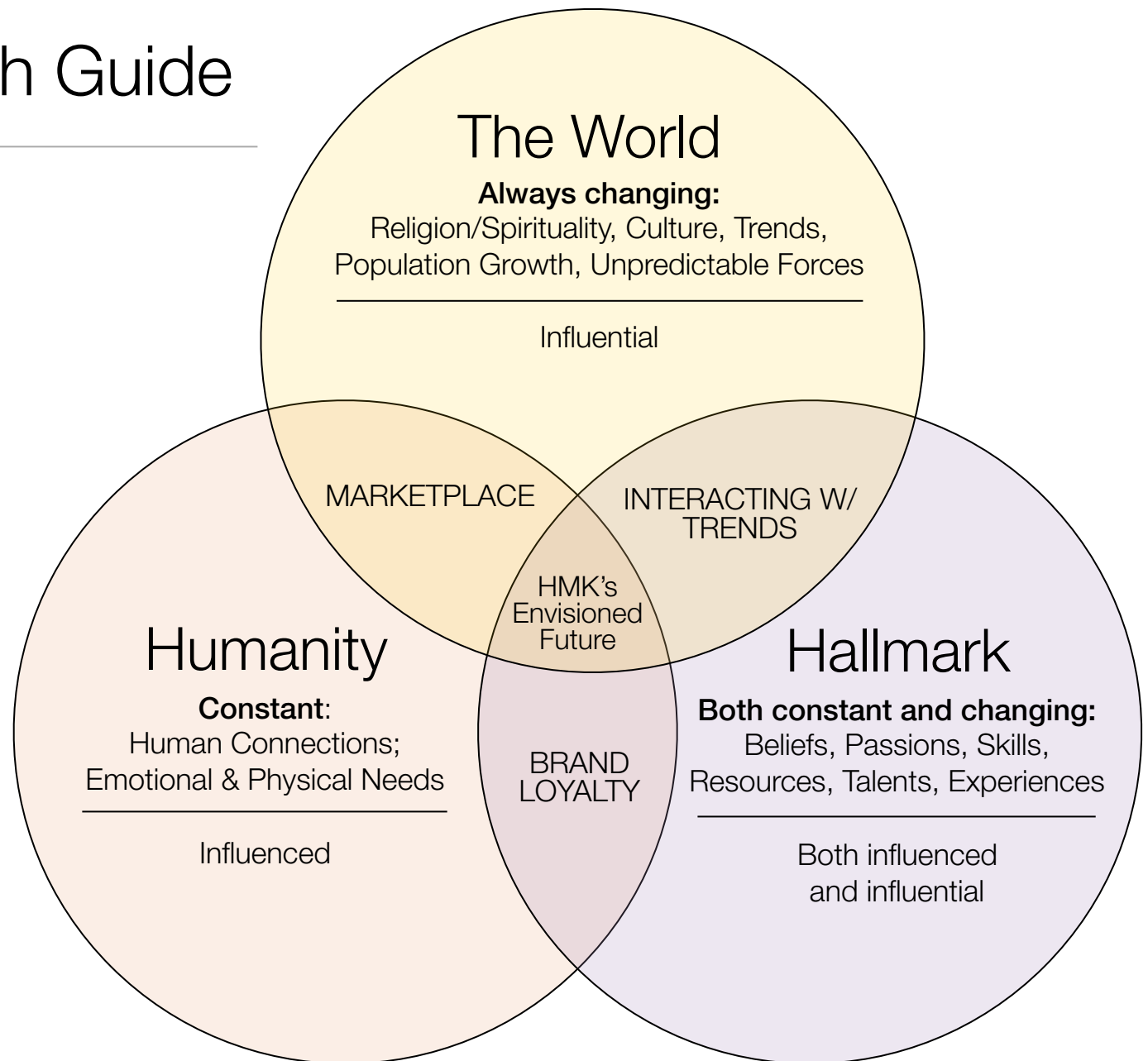
The Inclusive Faith Guide gives context to those who ideate and commercialize product. With the videos, the guide provides product development teams a better understanding of the relationship between humanity, Hallmark, and the world. This mental model is a brand tool that can be used to structure any branded solution.

1. **Humanity:** Making faith personal for consumers
2. **Hallmark:** Creating a strong point of view that all people can relate to (inclusion)
3. **The World:** Resonating with a world aspiring for unity to help Hallmark become more culturally relevant



Inclusive Faith Guide

Providing Context



Inclusive Faith Guide

Designing with Empathy

The guide uses empathy to give product development teams a place to start. Five conditions of faith were discovered and expanded upon with descriptions that connect the divine with human needs and emotions. All faith solutions should fall into one or more of these categories.

1. **Seeking:** I'm looking for meaning... in my life and relationships.
2. **Humility:** I don't have all the answers, and want to be open to the world and those around me.
3. **Wonder:** I know there has to be something bigger than me, and I want to feel connected to it.
4. **Acceptance:** I want to become who I am meant to be and to know others as they truly are.
5. **Mindfulness:** I want to feel what is sacred in both the big and small parts of my life.



Inclusive Faith Guide: Editorial Voice

Providing Inspiration through Human Story

Whether it's a video script, a greeting card, an advertisement, or a blog—the voice of Inclusive Faith should connect the human to the divine.

*“Knowing we have God all figured out
is a pretty good sign that we probably
have no idea what we’re talking about.”*

*“I’m saying ‘yes’
to real love
to soul searching
to unanswerable questions
to the big, beautiful mystery of life.”*

Inclusive Faith Guide: Visual Voice

Providing Inspiration through Visual Metaphors

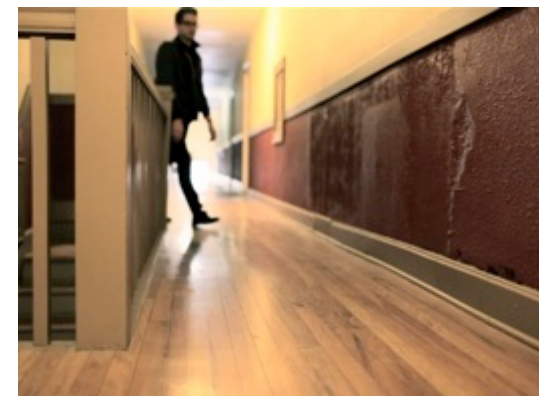
Finally, the guide provides visual metaphors to inspire designers and directors on product development teams to see universal themes in imagery. One example of these metaphors is:

Little Kid in a Big World: This is all about possibility. Everyone remembers a time when the world was wide open and SO much bigger than we could comprehend. Possibilities were endless...but time seemed endless as well. In a big world, there's always an adventure just over the horizon.

Themes: *childhood, big and small, feelings of awe, a carefree spirit, surrender to the moment, delight*

Corresponding faith conditions:
Humility, Wonder





It Gets Better

Bringing a Genuine Voice of the Brand
to the LGBTQ Community

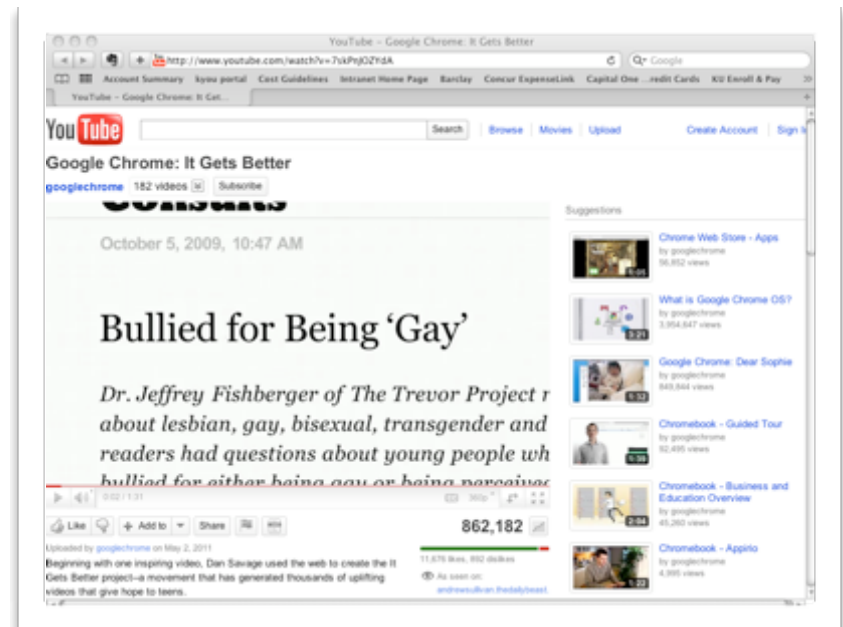
1. Design Problem

Can Hallmark join a trending social cause?

“In September 2010, syndicated columnist and author Dan Savage created a YouTube video with his partner Terry to **inspire hope for young people facing harassment.**

In response to a number of students taking their own lives after being bullied in school, they wanted **to create a personal way for supporters everywhere to tell LGBT youth that, yes, it does indeed get better.”**

With celebrities, politicians, big brands, thousands of everyday people and over ten million page views, our LGBT employee resource group wanted to participate.



Submissions include celebrities, organizations, activists, politicians, military and law enforcement personnel, and media personalities, including President Barack Obama, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Adam Lambert, Anne Hathaway, Colin Farrell, Matthew Morrison of 'Glee', Joe Jonas, Joel Madden, Ke\$ha, Sarah Silverman, Tim Gunn, Ellen DeGeneres, Suze Orman, the staffs of The Gap, Google, Facebook, Pixar, the Broadway community, and many more.

2. Insights

Social responsibility is an expectation.

“...consumers in particular—don’t distinguish between corporate philanthropy, cause branding, corporate responsibility, sustainability, or any other terms we use to define how a company approaches its obligation to society. Ultimately, they expect companies to do it all.”

Americans hold companies highly accountable for a variety of global issues:

- 87% - ensuring human rights
- 81% - promoting diversity
- 86% - use other company resources beyond charitable dollars to support a nonprofit or issue
- 86% - collaborate with nonprofits, governments, competitors or other groups to address issues collectively
- 86% - educate consumers about the issues and how they can become involved
- 84% - educate employees to take action

3. Strategy

Seize an opportunity to connect with our workplace and the marketplace through a cause.

By publishing a social media video that gives hope by showing happiness in the lives and relationships of Hallmark employees who have made it through the difficulties of growing up gay, we support our vision of creating a more emotionally connected world.



4. Method

Develop a plan to ensure buy in, prepare for conflict, and raise awareness.

2011 Schedule - educate internally before sharing externally

- February-April: gather interviewees and video resources and develop interview questions
- May-June: share video, strategy, and business case with corporate leaders (VPs, CEO)
- July-August: present video and strategy to division leaders
- July-August: present video and strategy to HR leaders; develop Q&A to proactively respond to employee and consumer questions
- August 23: Diversity Trends Week presentation
- August 29 (week of): publish corporate Noon News article about It Gets Better and share internal link to video
- October 11 (National Coming Out Day): publish my personal story through corporate blog with link to video and ItGetsBetter.org.
- October 18: Public release of Hallmark's It Gets Better video on ItGetsBetter.org, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter

The screenshot shows a webpage from Hallmark's Intranet. At the top, it says "It gets better" and "http://home.hallmark.com/News-And-Events/It-gets-better". The main heading is "HallMark INTRANET" followed by "Buck Wimberly: It gets better" and "Comments 56". The article text begins with "As soon as we learned more about the broad scope of the 'It Gets Better' project, we in the Hallmark Employee Reaching Equality (HERE) employee resource group felt strongly that we should add our own voices to those of other individuals, groups and corporations attempting to help LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender) children, teens and young adults." It continues with "The result is our own testimonial video that speaks to the pains of growing up gay, while showing evidence that LGBT people can and do have fulfilling lives." Another paragraph says "This project gave nine other Hallmarkers and me the opportunity to work together, looking to our individual paths to tell our stories. Each is rich and unique and filled with sorrows, joys, and even some nice surprises." A photo of Buck Wimberly is shown with the caption "Buck Wimberly, creative strategy - brand and essence". Below that, another photo shows him with two children, captioned "Buck enjoys doing things outdoors with his kids Everett (left) and Elliot, such as fishing and camping." The article concludes with "In both society and in our workplaces, we who come out often encounter stereotypes that leave us wondering what barriers we have before us. You'll find in the 'It Gets Better' video that these fears are common among people who are contemplating coming out as their authentic selves. In the video, Lance Pierce says it well when it comes to the workplace: 'I often worried about my career... if I could achieve all that I wanted to achieve.'" The final paragraph reads "In many ways, working in a large corporation made me feel as if I were in a giant fish bowl. I wasn't sure what my co-workers and managers would feel about my coming out - which felt more public because of the fact that I had to transition from being married in order to fully become myself." The page number "1 of 3" is at the bottom left and the date "2/23/2012 8:32 PM" is at the bottom right.



Connecting Generations

Discovering Commonalities & Differences within Generations

1. Design Problem

Can Hallmark bridge generational gaps?

While digital natives enter the workforce, their bosses are immigrants to the digital world. This has caused misunderstandings on both sides of the gap, which disrupts the workplace and strengthens stereotypes that bleed into the marketplace.



2. Insights

The established way of doing things in the business world is being challenged.

This has pushed forward 5 realities:

1. There are different expectations about how to learn, work, and pursue careers.
2. There is a difference between being technologically literate and media literate.
3. Notions about privacy and property are vast between generations
4. Propriety is understood differently among the generations.
5. Multi-tasking means something different to digital natives.



3. Strategy

Build bridges.

With the sponsorship and collaboration of MERG, the Millennial Employee Resource group, I directed a new project, Connecting Generations.

Vision and purpose statements were developed to guide them in their projects moving forward:

Vision:

“MERG will help all employees understand the value of every person and to use generational commonalities and differences to discover more about ourselves, our work relationships, and ultimately, our consumers.”

Purpose:

“To help Hallmark create a more emotionally connected world by helping employees develop a more empathetic understanding of the joys and challenges experienced by people of all ages.”



4. Method

Use commonalities to inspire connections.
Use differences to promote appreciation.
Make it interactive.

We assembled a team and created an interactive display, a video, podcasts, an intranet page, a corporate blog story, and a corporate news article.



Interactive Pod that raises the question “what do you have in common?”. Participants are encouraged to bring a co-worker from a different generation, take a polaroid, and write a commonality on the photo.



“Ties That Bind”: A station with markers and papers are provided with instructions to write their hopes and dreams on the threads that connect each generational panel in the display.



This interactive pod illustrates four case studies out our corporate “Generational Buddy” program to show the value of building relationships across generations.



Dreamer
SILENT



We Are Family

Addressing Family as Culture
Defines it Today

1. Design Problem

Can Hallmark remain relevant with America's changing definition of family?

“Some families look very different...at first glance. They are part of the new norm, broadening our concept of how ‘family’ is defined today.

There are times when these external differences cause us to forget the powerful ‘universals’ we share... The hopes and dreams we carry in our hearts, the meaningful moments and sweet memories that over time, build the fabric of family.

We are all simply people living day to day, doing our best to support, nurture, and love one another.

We are family.”

Opening statement for We Are Family photo essay, 2011



2. Insights

The evolution of the American family requires new ways of thinking.

“During the past 20 years, the American family has undergone a profound transformation...if one was to define the most original demographic feature in the post-1980 period in the United States, it would be the changes that were occurring in both families and households for all sections of the national population.”¹

- In 2010, unmarried households were 45% of all U.S. households
- The number of cohabiting unmarried partners increased by 88% between 1990 and 2007.
- 12.8% of unmarried-partner households report being same-sex.
- 13% of male-male unmarried and 26.5 % of female-female unmarried couples have children ²



1. The Hoover Institution: *The Changing American Family*, 2006;

2. U.S. Census Bureau: *Demographics of Same Sex Couple Households with Children*

3. Strategy

Show the commonalities that exist behind the more obvious differences.

The employees at Hallmark who make up some of these unconventional families are a reflection of those in the marketplace.

By showing the stories and values behind these unique families, Hallmark employees can gain a more empathetic understanding of the hopes and dreams held by this growing consumer base.



4. Method

Create a photo-essay series that serves as a platform for diverse families.

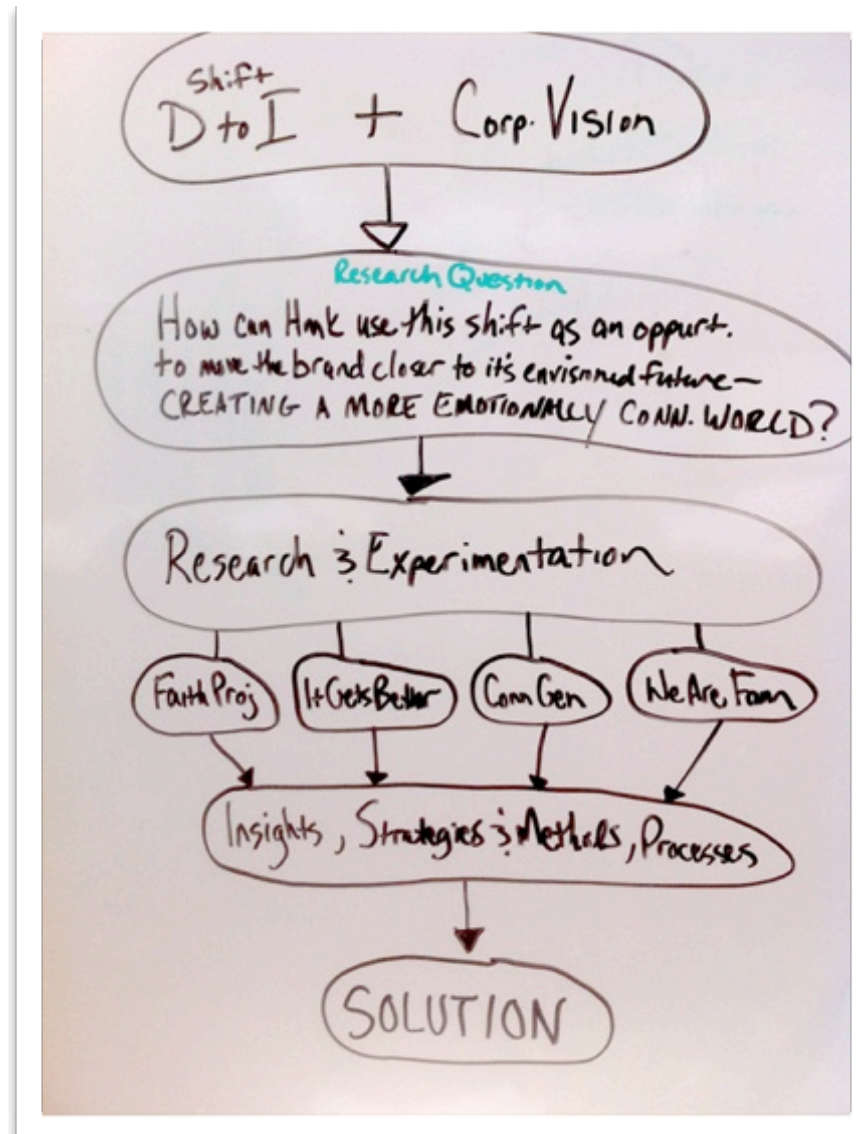
LGBT Families would make up the first We Are Family photo-essay. Each family consisted of at least one Hallmark employee and either a same-sex couple or an LGBT person in the household. Photos, stories, and anecdotes were combined with a looping video and music that reinforced the value of strong relationships.





Families are: **HAPPY CHILDREN**

Framework



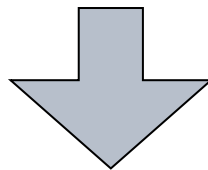
Research Question



Knowing that our culture is moving from an emphasis on diversity to one of inclusion, how can Hallmark use this shift as an opportunity to move the brand closer to it's envisioned future—**creating a more emotionally connected world?**

The Solution: Align D&I with the Brand

| HALLMARK BRAND PILLARS | | |
|--|---|---|
| Purpose | Key Attributes | Envisioned Future |
| <i>To inspire meaningful connections, which enhance relationships and enrich lives</i> | GENUINE EMOTIONALLY RELEVANT LIFE-AFFIRMING CREATIVE THE VERY BEST | <i>We will be the company that creates a more emotionally connected world by making a genuine difference in every life, every day</i> |



Using Diversity & Inclusion to leverage our brand pillars will create a more EMOTIONALLY CONNECTED WORLD through:

MARKETPLACE

WORKPLACE

WORKFORCE

The Solution: Start with a vision for D&I

We will provide maximum value and influence of our corporate DIVERSITY & INCLUSION resources by working together to provide EMPATHY DRIVEN INSIGHTS that impact the marketplace, workplace, and workforce.

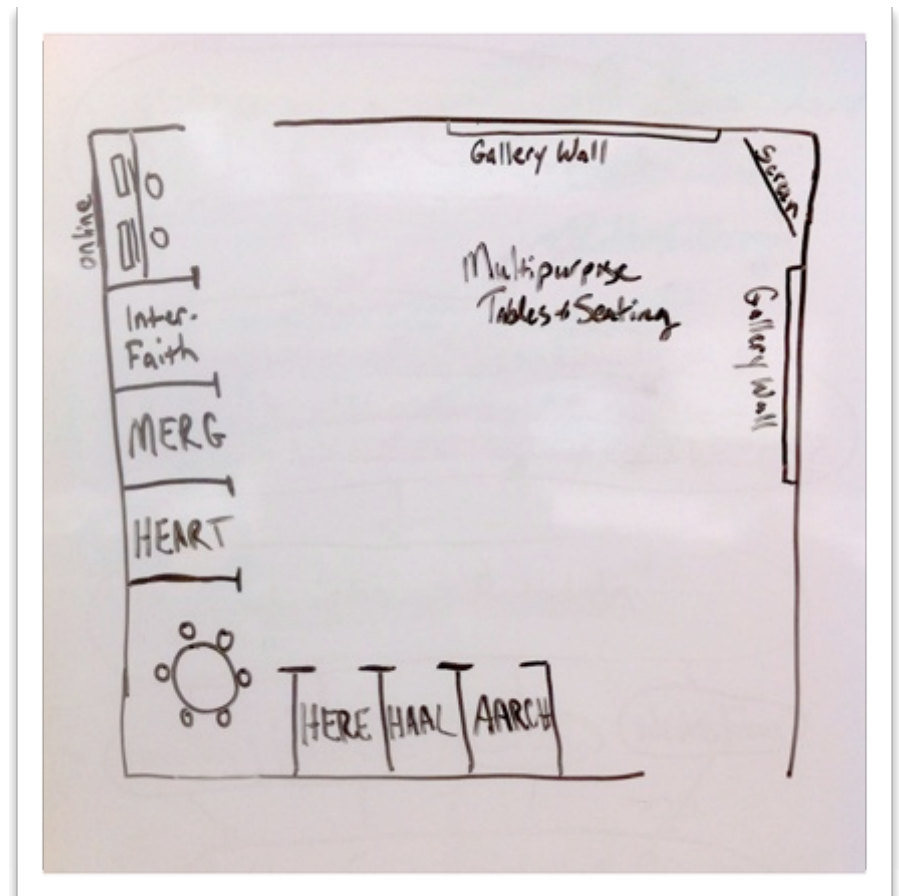
The Solution: Phase 1

Make Diversity & Inclusion Tangible

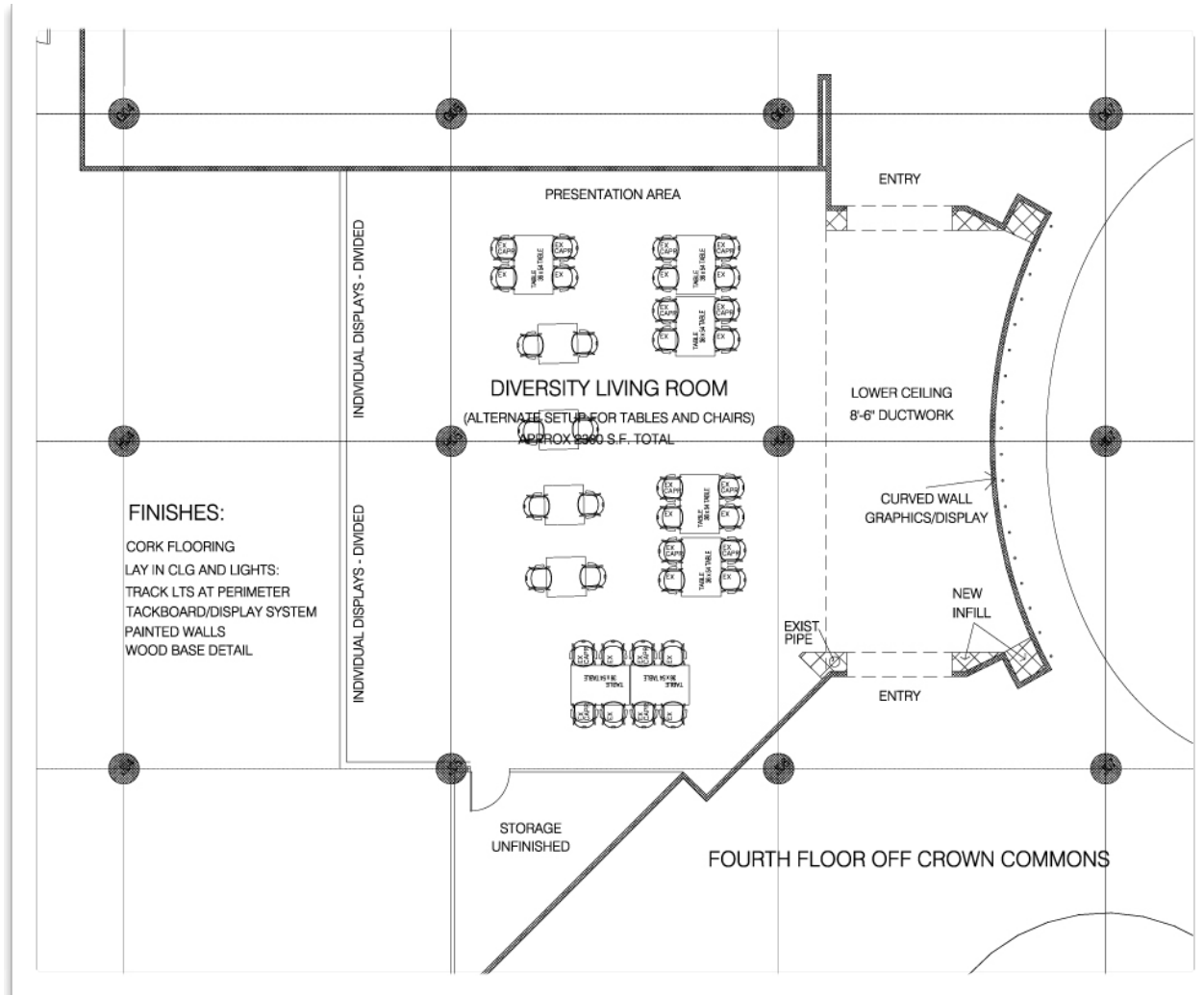
The solution begins with the development and creation of a Diversity & Inclusion Center within our corporate headquarters.

We will design and build a collaborative space that will host speakers, group discussions, projects, and gallery shows. Individual resource alcoves around the perimeter will be maintained and owned by each Employee Resource Group (ERG/minority group).

This phase has been approved by the VP of Community Relations and the head of HR. We are currently looking at location options to determine renovation costs to the develop the D&I Center.



The Solution: Phase 1



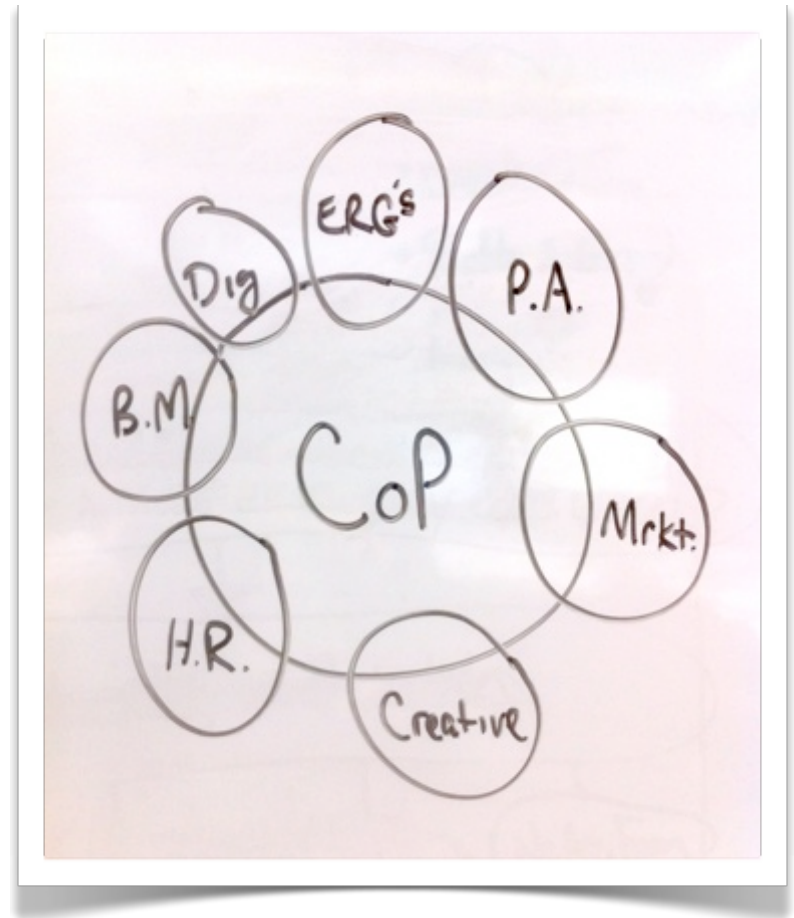
The Solution: Phase 2

Form a Community of Practice (CoP)

We will create a multi-disciplinary CoP to act as ambassadors to maintain the integrity of the Diversity & Inclusion vision and keep it moving forward.

This process has begun through networking, and will continue to strengthen as Phase 1 is developed and builds equity in the vision. As the appointed leader of the D&I vision project, I have initiated collaboration efforts with multiple corporate leaders. The community of practice will also consist of representatives from Public Affairs, Marketing, Human Resources, Brand Management, Creative, Facilities Management, and Digital Solutions.

Other large brands who use CoP include British Petroleum, Buckman Laboratories, IBM, NCR, Monsanto, National Semiconductor, NYNEX, Texas Instruments, and XEROX.



The Solution: Phase 3

Reach the Consumer

Diversity & Inclusion will become a path to brand advocacy. We will use our newly integrated D&I resources to influence product development and policy changes with empathy driven insights.

We will maximize our Community of Practice to develop consumer facing brand messages that clearly articulate the heart of the Hallmark brand.



Rapid Marketplace Impact

