Effective positioning

in a difficult economic climate

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The context

- Beyond sector comparisons
- Dilution of confidence
- The vacuum and displacement effect
- Influences on perceptions
- Critical fears
- Brand leadership?

Ineffective brand positioning

Leads to:

1. Inaccurate perceptions
2. Image and reputation lag
3. Less able institutions may appear more successful
4. Institutions appear to fail to keep pace
5. Stakeholders make choices/decisions based on anecdotal information
6. Proposition dissonance
7. Your preferred messages do not get through
8. Others speak for you

Market place realities…

What can happen…

1. Under positioning
2. Over positioning
3. Confused positioning
4. Doubtful positioning

Adapted from Kotler *et al*

Critical risks: why positioning is inaccurate or fails

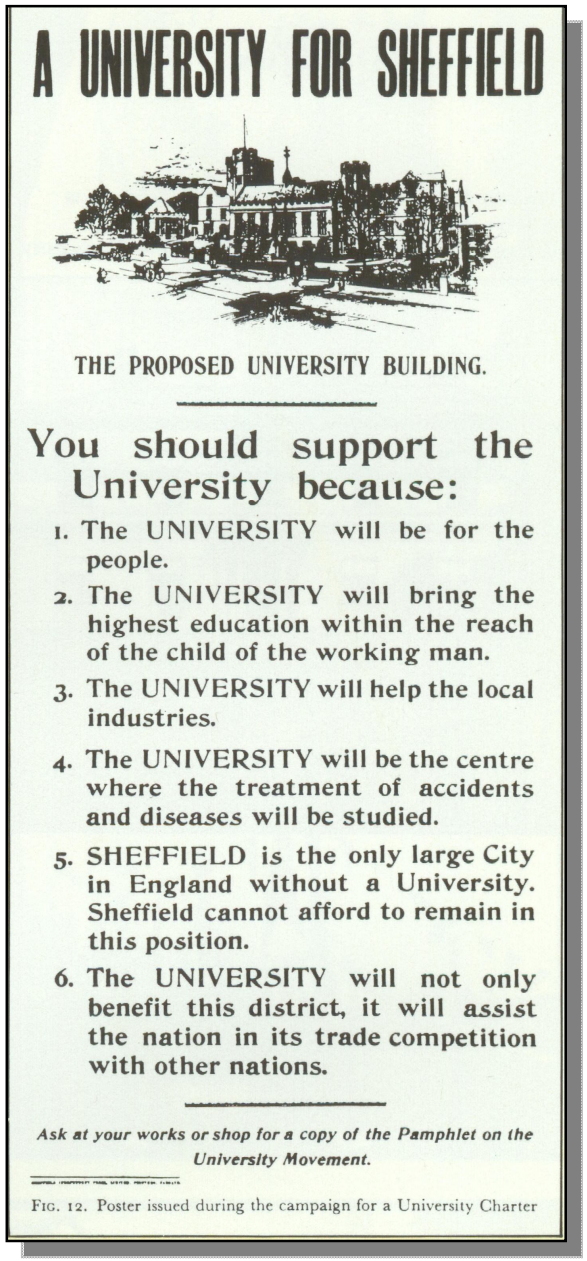
Five recurring issues from brand positioning consultations:

1. Failure to monitor or keep pace with changing stakeholder or market needs
2. Losing contact with stakeholders
3. Failure to recognise the real competition
4. Not articulating or delivering credible “reasons to choose”
5. Undermining consumer confidence in the institution and its services

Positioning success rules…

1. Only promise what you can deliver
2. Ensure and demonstrate relevance of offer to target audiences and markets
3. Re-articulate the brand for a new market context
4. Recognise the real competition
5. Keep it real; keep it simple

Clarity of vision



A UNIVERSITY FOR SHEFFIELD

THE PROPOSED UNIVERSITY BUILDING.

You should support the University because:

1. The UNIVERSITY will be for the people.
2. The UNIVERSITY will bring the highest education within the reach of the child of the working man.
3. The UNIVERSITY will help the local industries.
4. The UNIVERSITY will be the centre where the treatment of accidents and diseases will be studied.
5. SHEFFIELD is the only large City in England without a University. Sheffield cannot afford to remain in this position.
6. The UNIVERSITY will not only benefit this district, it will assist the nation in its trade competition with other nations.

Ask at your works or shop for a copy of the Pamphlet on the University Movement.

FIG. 12. Poster issued during the campaign for a University Charter

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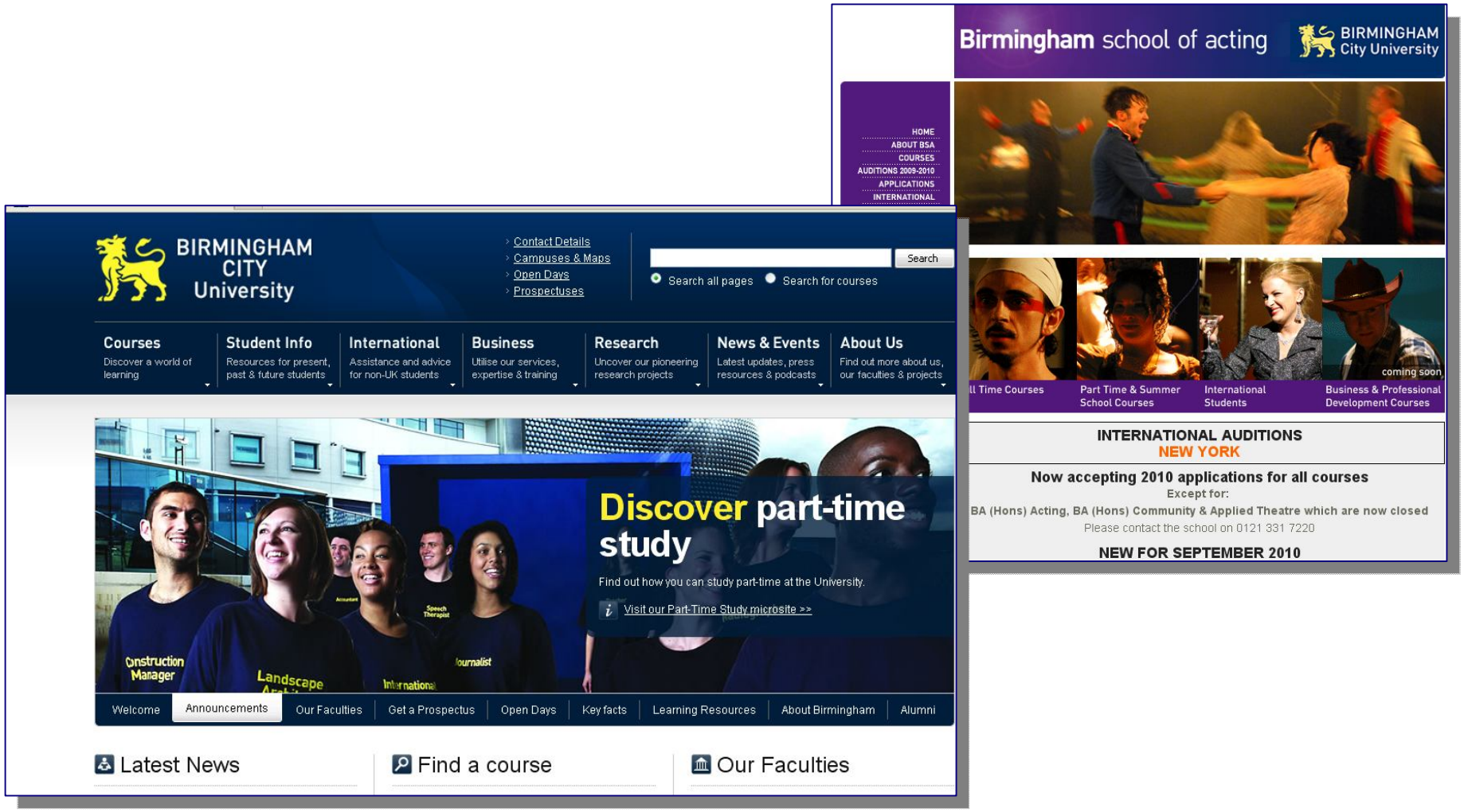
Multi strand brand positioning management



The 10 brand positioning challenges

1. Implications of out-sourcing
2. Private providers and for-profit models
3. Competitiveness in staff recruitment and retention
4. Competitive pricing strategies
5. Brand dissonance
6. Market-led product and service innovation
7. User-generated communications content
8. The REF impact agenda; relevance and credibility;
   fit with the economy and skills agenda
9. Shifts in brand hygiene factors
10. The need to reassure stakeholders and foster confidence in the institution