

The Importance of Branding for Social Enterprises

YOUR GUIDE TO THE BRANDING PROCESS



*Social***Firms UK**

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The Social Enterprise Partnership (SEP GB Ltd.) is a project funded by the EQUAL Community Initiative programme and other funders to deliver a three-year project of infrastructure and systems development, capacity building, research and development for the social enterprise sector.

The members of the Social Enterprise Partnership are the leading organisations working in the social enterprise field in the UK: Co-operatives UK, Development Trusts Association, New Economics Foundation, Social Enterprise London, Social Firms UK and the Social Enterprise Coalition. For further information please visit: www.sepgb.co.uk.

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Introduction

Once upon a time, branding was something that cowboys did to identify their cattle. However, over time this principle has developed and whilst we in the UK talked about the ‘make’ of a product, Americans began referring to their favourite ‘brands’. Today the word is part of our everyday language, and we now rely on branding to help us choose between different products and services. But what exactly do we mean by the term ‘Brand’ and how can we ensure that we develop consistently successful brands for Social Enterprise? This brochure will hopefully provide some answers. At the back of this brochure you can also see the theory in practice for the EcoStore Social Enterprise concept that is due to be rolled out at the end of 2005.

What is a brand?

Although it is true that brand as a concept started with consumer goods manufacturers and is most highly evolved in this area, increasingly the language of branding is stretching to refer to anything where a reputation is involved. In addition, in the interests of more efficient communication, companies are increasingly marketing their products and services under the one company name, rather than in a series of separate products. Hence the increase in the importance of defining the overall corporate brand in the most motivating way. What is meant by ‘brand’ is illustrated very simply in the following diagram:

Why is a brand different to a product?

A brand is a product’s total presentation beyond merely its functional characteristics. In other words, a brand carries more evocative associations which, added to the company’s product functions, will discriminate the company in the minds of all its different audiences: customers, opinion leaders, partners, or suppliers.

These associations should be rich and unique to the company. They are therefore often the real discriminators. It is these more intangible associations, connected to product benefits, that make a company more memorable and its offerings more competitive. This principle holds true for a soft drink or a car, or a financial services company. Or whether the audiences are end customers or business intermediaries. Or whether the publicity vehicle being used is advertising, PR, sales process or promotion.

What can a brand achieve?

By creating a consistent impression of the brand wherever it is encountered (through the way it looks, sounds, feels and acts), a brand can differentiate itself from others on both a rational and emotional level.

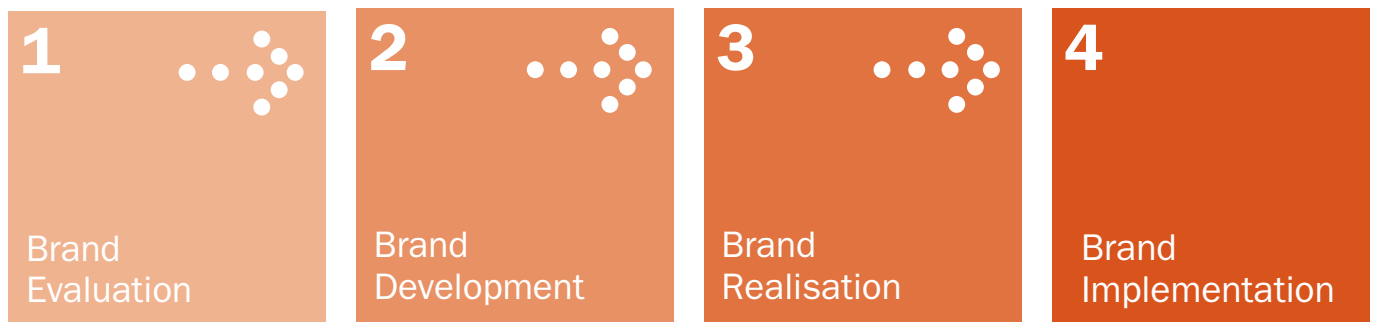
Ultimately a brand is a combination of a strong identity and effective communications, as well as the total experience that it offers. Therefore, by conjuring up a specific rational and emotional response, a successful brand can act as a shorthand reminder of the perceived value of one over another.

For example, Ford and BMW both produce cars, but given the choice, which would you choose to drive? Now ask yourself why. You have just started to understand the importance of branding.



The four part branding process

To help you create an effective and relevant brand for your Social Enterprise, there is a simple 4 part branding process (detailed below). Based on comprehensive internal and external research and a sound strategic rationale, it will help you create a successful brand that can communicate its values and positioning however it is required, and to a varied audience.



Brand Evaluation is the first part of the process and involves research into, and an understanding of, internal and external perceptions of your proposition or current brand and the dynamics of your marketplace.

In the second part of the process, **Brand Development**, this information is used to help us create a range of possible brand positionings, personalities and values.

The third part, **Brand Realisation**, is designed to demonstrate how the new brand might come to life more specifically, detailing all its brand attributes and brand elements.

The final **Brand Implementation** module involves applying the brand created to the design and production of all communications material to produce dynamic, co-ordinated and effective marketing collateral.

1. Brand Evaluation



The Brand Evaluation process is all about immersing yourselves in the marketplace in which your business operates, whilst also gaining a detailed understanding of your brand.

Put simply, its aim is primarily to help everyone involved in the 'Branding Project' to understand:

- the client
- their brand
- their products and services
- their market
- their competitors

This can be achieved by conducting an audit of the marketplace (both external and internal) to understand the key points of brand interaction. Information on brand values, history and the services the brand offers, would also be gathered and assessed.

By analysing these market research findings you can start to define the dynamics of the marketplace, such as how much of a role personality plays within your specific market, the current success factors and key drivers for business within it and any key points of brand interaction.

Some of the key questions that you will require answers to in this module include:

- What is the business objective?
- What is the marketing objective?
- What is the brand positioning?
- What is your overall proposition?
- Do you have a genuine point of difference?
- What do your staff and customers think about you?
- How do your competitors' offers differ to yours?
- What are the mandatories?
- What is the big picture – real and perceived?

At the end of this Brand Evaluation process, you can start to clarify the brand values, services and position in the marketplace. Effectively '*The new brand position.*'

You can then move on to the second part of the branding process.

2. Brand Development



The objective of this part of the process is to define the dynamics of the 'new brand' (and the marketplace) more specifically. In so doing you can develop the most effective verbal and visual branding route for you.

From the information gained in the Brand Evaluation part, the target audience, key messages and brand values can be defined. Success factors of competitors and insights into market attitudes can be considered and a visual articulation of the brand can be explored.

All options considered will explore a different way to visually articulate the 'New Brand Position.'

For example:

- Name*
- Signature (logotype)
- Strapline
- Positioning
- Core values
- Colour palette
- Typography
- Imagery
- Tone of voice
- Graphic elements

At the end of this Brand Development stage, one definitive option will have been agreed upon and this will define your vision for your brand.

*A specific guide to name generation can be found on page 08.

3. Brand Realisation



In the Brand Realisation part of the process, learnings from the Brand Evaluation section and the agreed brand option are realised in the form of working design principles and applied to specific marketing collateral such as shop fascia, website, brochure etc.

This helps to better:

- Understand the brand vision, brand assets and brand positioning
- Understand the marketing and sales vision, targets and requirements
- Understand customer requirements, perception and environment
- Exploit relevant brand values for agreed marketing strategy
- Realise creative solutions within a commercial framework

At this stage any issues concerning the application of the 'brand tools', brand values and tone of voice can be raised and resolved before final implementation is begun.

Implementation of the brand across these marketing materials will test the success of its application.

4. Brand Implementation

With the brand positioning agreed and the design principles approved, the implementation of the full range of marketing collateral to support the brand can begin.

A synergy across all marketing collateral is key to a creating a cohesive brand. However, whilst this does not mean that everything should look the same, it does mean that wherever you touch the brand, the visual identity and tone of voice should be consistent and reiterate the new brand and its values.

Name Generation

Why brand names are important

Brand names are important because, quite simply, first impressions count. They set up an expectation of what the brand will deliver, and whilst the products, packaging and retail environment might change, the name won't. So if a new name is for life, you must be sure to choose one you can live with, and the first step in making that choice is to define the role of the new name:

- is it going to sit with the existing market language, or
- be a radical departure from everything else in the marketplace?

Secondly, it is important to think about the type of name you require. For example, should it be:

- Descriptive
- Evocative

Obviously the more abstract the name the more time and money may be required to build an understanding of the brand. The more descriptive the name, the more problems you are likely to have in creating stand out or registering the name at Companies House, as a Trademark or as a domain name online.

Name Generation

Creating a brand name for you

It would be good to be able to explain here the industry standard process for name generation, but the simple fact is there are no rules regarding where a name comes from, except to say it is largely perspiration with a hint of inspiration.

Here, though, is an example of some of the more familiar sources of 'perspiration':

- Family names
- Product ingredients
- Nature/Agriculture/Environment
- Greek/Roman Gods
- Foreign languages
- Made up names

Obviously a browse through the Thesaurus, papers and dictionaries is valuable too.

However, the best way to start the process is with a creative workshop, exploring as many words and phrases that you can think of that relate to your brand, your market and your audience. It is also worth remembering that to get the best from a workshop session everything is relevant, and nothing should be deemed wrong or inappropriate at this stage.

Bringing the brand name to life

When you are creating a new name, it will initially lack context when first seen and heard, unlike established brand names that immediately convey a style, promise, meaning and emotion that has been built up over time. So you must try hard not to judge any proposed name in isolation, and try instead to get a feel for your brand name and your offer. There are several ways to do this.

1. Say it

- i. The more you say a name the more comfortable you become with it.

‘New name, New name, New name, New name.’

- ii. Put it into the context of a sentence too.

‘I’ve just bought some *New name* product, it’s terrific.’

‘The great thing about *New name* is their extensive product range.’

- iii. Get different people to say it.

See how those familiar with the name and those seeing it for the first time say it. Try it with would-be customers and people of different ages and different regional accents. How do they pronounce it? Can they say it easily?

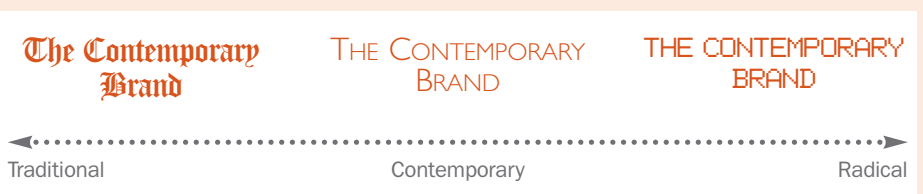
2. Visualise it

Think about how the name might look in the marketplace, on pack or instore. These visual triggers will help your audience understand your brand name and brand offer better. This visual language will also help you get a clear understanding of how you are going to position your brand, as the example below demonstrates.

3. Support it

Depending on the name you choose a supporting or qualifying line may also be required to explain or define the brand name. This may be used initially and then changed or developed as the brand grows, or ultimately dropped as the brand name becomes well recognised in its own right. Either way the power of a supporting line should not be overlooked. For example:

- The future’s bright. The future’s xxxxxx
- xxxxxx. Because you’re worth it.
- xxxxx. Every little helps.



Branding and Social Enterprise

When approaching brand work for a Social Enterprise, it is important never to make any differentiation or allowances just because of that fact. The issues facing such enterprises from a brand perspective are no different from those facing any commercial organisation, in that they require the best solution at the most economically viable cost.

As demonstrated in this document, always attempt to think in a relevant fashion, relevant that is to the project in hand. Had the EcoStore project been on behalf of, say, Tesco, then the parameters and scope of the briefs would no doubt have been very different, but the thinking would be the same. There would also have been a requirement in part to conform to existing brand identity guidelines (one of the joys of working on projects such the EcoStore project is that it comes without these constraints).

Working on branding projects for a Social Enterprise does, however, demand that one is aware and sensitive to the following:

- any brand identity solution must not come with implications for expensive ongoing implementation
- just because it's a Social Enterprise does not mean that any creative solutions should look patronising in any way or 'cheap' in execution
- just because it's a Social Enterprise does not mean that any creative solutions should focus on this as the solution itself

Other key observations one would make with regard to how any Social Enterprise might approach a branding project from scratch are as follows:

- forget that you are a Social Enterprise. Approach professional creative agencies to help you develop the brand. Your projects might carry much smaller budgets but the work itself is exciting and challenging, which matters as much to such people as the money
- don't be tempted to use non-professional companies such as university departments either on a pro-bono or limited fee basis. Branding is a complicated business and should not be trusted to amateurs, no matter how full of good intentions they are
- get involved! Branding projects are unique in many respects in that it is your chance to really influence the 'brand' from the start. Once the brand identity is created all that follows, by the nature of it, must conform, so make the most of the development process
- creatives hate a blank canvas so work hard on the brief. The work they deliver is only ever as good as the briefs they get, and the level of client involvement. You will always know more about your proposed brand than they can, particularly at the start. Tell them about your vision, share examples of work from similar or different organisations which you think they should see, make them aware of any politics or other fundamental issues which might constrain their thinking or approach. The more you put in at the start, the more you will get out at the end.
- creating brands obviously has legal implications, and thus costs! From the start you should factor in costs for legal fees, especially if a new brand name is being created. If you want to try to trademark your new brand this also comes at a cost.

Finally, enjoy the process if you can. Developing new brands or concepts is not a regular, daily activity, such projects really are rare in that nothing is set in stone and anything can be considered in arriving at the solution you desire. Once established the brand is real and everything that follows will come with constraints which were non-existent at the start.

A Social Firm Brand Case Study

CREATING A BRAND FOR 'THE ECOSTORE'

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1. EcoStore Brand Evaluation



The Client

'EcoStore' is the project name given by Social Firms UK to a wholefood warehouse business it wishes to establish in the UK based on the systems established by the existing Daily Bread enterprises (of which there are outlets in Northampton and Cambridge).

The Brand

The trading and brand name for the company are to be developed.

Products and services

We understand this to be the sale to individuals and the trade of pre-packed and packed-down food products, as well as some non-food items in a warehouse-type environment similar to Daily Bread.

Their market

'EcoStore' will attract customers who want to buy good quality wholefoods and ethically sourced products at a fair price and to learn more about the whole area and how it can benefit their lifestyle.

Their competitors

We understand competitors to be other organic and wholefood stores, as well as the major multiple grocers who all offer 'healthy' eating ranges. That said, apart from Daily Bread, no directly comparable competitors exist for the 'EcoStore' concept.

The big picture

To build a successful franchised business based around the Daily Bread concept.

Genuine point of difference

The Daily Bread concept is believed to be relatively unique with a strong appeal to health conscious people at a reasonable price.

Your marketing strategy

As potential franchise partners are being sought this has yet to be defined.

Staff and client feedback

N/A

What is the marketing objective?

To develop a name for the 'EcoStore' concept and, thereafter, produce a logo and brand identity implementation programme to help get the first franchisees on board.

What is the overall proposition?

To develop a trusted brand where people will want to come and buy healthy and ethically sourced products as well as learn more about the whole subject area, products, cookery techniques and more.

What is the specific requirement?

To develop a name and brand identity.

Who is the project talking to?

A wide range of people from potential franchisees to customers, suppliers, staff, local press and so on.

Why is the project needed?

Because no company name and brand identity exist.

What is the required audience response?

This requires much further clarification once the brand identity has been developed and is ready for implementation. In simple terms, the new brand identity must appeal sufficiently to the target audience to drive them to the new stores as they open.

What are the mandatorys?

Any creative solution must be cost effective to implement and highly versatile, as applications required will potentially range enormously from business stationery to signage, marketing collateral to uniforms.

EcoStore Concept Name Generation

As you will see below, we came up with a range of possible names for the 'EcoStore Concept' from which '**Wholefood Planet**' was chosen as it was felt that this most accurately summed up the following: the range of products sold; the environmental nature of the products; that it is attractive and homely; its great potential for creating a distinctive brand; its availability as a domain name.

Recommendations	Natural		
Organica	Organic	Biological	Sow
Eco-Essentials	(Re) Fresh	Botanical	Harvest
Natures' Way	Nature	Mind & Body	Wheat
Genuine Articles	Healthy	Sensual	Fertile
Way-to-grow	Unrefined	Spiritual	Tactility
Vital Ingredients	Raw	Invigorating	Sincere
The Greener Grocer	Simple	Feel-good factor	Planet
Greener Grocer	Good	Replenish	Unaffected
Life's Larder	Innocent	Detox	Naked
Wholefood Planet	Pure	Nourish	Real
Evergreens	Genuine	Admirable	Roughage
The Green Market	Moral	Deserving	Faithful
	Responsible	Goodwill	Modest
	Ethical	Reputable	Wholesome
	Conscious	Elements	Foliage
	Free	Essential	Understated
	Honest	Basic	
	True	Forest	
	Humane	Greenery	
	Honourable	Life	
	Trustworthy	Friendly	
	Decent	Thoughtful	
	Fruit	Open-air	
	Vegetables	Rustic	
	Conservation	Mother Nature	
	Protective	Preserve	
	Environment	Balance	
	Renewable	Simplicity	
	Resourceful	Peaceful	
	Recyclable	Botanical	
	Caring/Sharing	Woody	
	Authentic	Grain	
		Reap	

Product descriptors

Grain
Crop
Fresh
Golden
Ripe
Pure
Natural
Toasted
Wholefood
Wholesome
Healthy
Beneficial
Good
Nourishing
Decent
Curing
Remedy
Pick-me-up
Tasty
Nutricious
Balanced
Alternative
Cleansing
Chunky
Hand-picked
Handmade
Organic
Authentic

Made up/phrases

Organica
Organical
Organic Essentials
Organic Matters
Organic Planet
Organic Choice
Eco-Essentials
EcoStore
Eco-op
Natural Selection
Natures' Way
Mother Nature
Earth Mother
Genuine Articles
Way-to-grow
Vital Ingredients
The Green Grocer
Green Grocer
The Greener Grocer
Greener Grocery
Oh Naturel
The Eco Friend
Food for thought
Body & Soul
Pure & Simple
Back to Basics
Fresh Connection
The Ripe Stuff
Feel-good Factory
Écologie
Ambiance

Moods

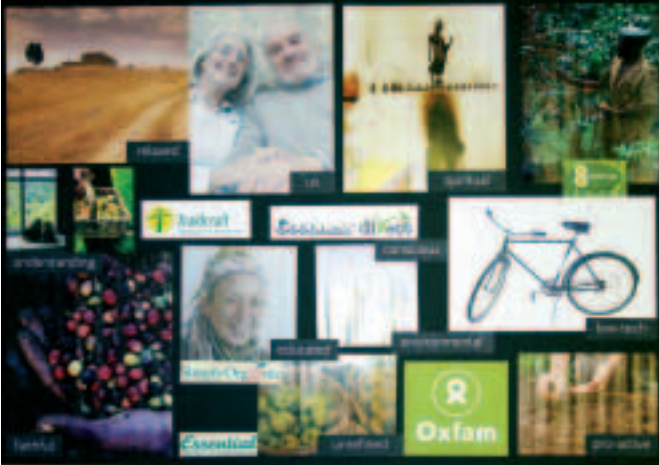
Beneficial
Pleasure
Body & Soul
Spirit
Relieve
Heal
Feed
Provide
Purify
Positive
Remedy
Nurture
Benefit
Constructive
Active
Advantageous
Healthful
Worthy
Contributive
Enriching
Uplifting
Energising
Responsible
Supportive
Co-operative
Pride
Respectable
Natural
Helpful
Kind
Economic

Productive
Pro-active
Ecological
Considerate
Helping others
Helping yourself
Nourish
Freedom
Equality
Fairness
Charitable
Decorum
Honesty
Truthful
Sincerity
Morality
Integrity
Giving
Admirable
Faith
Religion
Philosophy
Selfless
Humanitarian
Devoted
Noble
Calm
Authentic
Fruitful
Sense
Homely
Innocence

Cultivate
Summer
Garden
Grow
Harvest
Bare
Flavour
Spirit
Morale
Friendly
Team
Harmony
Blend
Peaceful
Partnership
Subtle
Fields
Hay barrels
Us
Stripped
People
Environment
De-tox
Inspire
Renew
Replenish
Well-being
Sustainable
Caring/Sharing
Balance

Wholefood Planet Brand Development

Option 1 | Environmental ethics



In Option 1 we looked at the ethical side of the wholefood marketplace and considered 'spiritual', natural images, earthy colours and values such as Understanding, Conscious and Pro-active. We also looked at brands that worked in this marketplace to see what kind of visual language we would need to use if we were to work in the same space as them. Examples of some initial logo themes for this option are shown below.



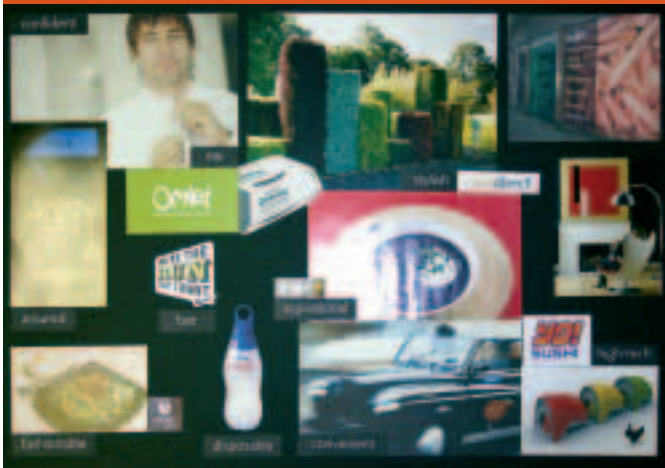
Option 2 | Family friendly, environmentally aware



In Option 2 we considered a more family oriented approach to the wholefood marketplace with brighter colours and more mainstream imagery. Values considered included Caring, Aware and Supportive. Again we looked at brands that worked in this marketplace to understand the visual language. Examples of some initial logo themes for this option are shown below.



Option 3 | Convenience lifestyle



Option 3 was the most modern option to be considered with regard to the wholefood marketplace with a sophisticated colour palette, striking contemporary imagery and values that included Aspirational, Convenient and Stylish. Again we looked at brands that worked in this marketplace to understand the visual language. Examples of some initial logo themes for this option are shown below.



Selected | Family friendly, environmentally aware



Option 2 most closely matched both our research findings and our client's own view of the positioning for the Wholefood Planet brand. Consequently we were able to finalise a working mood board (shown above) and begin developing some final identity solutions from the chosen examples shown below.



Wholefood Planet Brand Realisation

The chosen 'sun-flower' logo was then developed still further until the final logo was chosen. This identity was then applied across a range of items to see how it would work in reality. Some of these items are shown below.



Chosen Identity





Introduction

The Whole-Food Planet is a community-based organization that provides access to fresh, organic, and locally sourced food for all. Our mission is to create a sustainable food system that is healthy, equitable, and environmentally sound. We are committed to providing our community with the highest quality food, while also supporting local farmers and producers. Our focus is on providing fresh, organic, and locally sourced food to our community. We are committed to providing our community with the highest quality food, while also supporting local farmers and producers. Our focus is on providing fresh, organic, and locally sourced food to our community.

Background and Vision Statement

The Whole-Food Planet was founded in 2010 by a group of community members who were concerned about the quality of food available in their community. They saw a need for a place where people could access fresh, organic, and locally sourced food. They also wanted to support local farmers and producers. The Whole-Food Planet was born. Our vision is to create a sustainable food system that is healthy, equitable, and environmentally sound. We are committed to providing our community with the highest quality food, while also supporting local farmers and producers. Our focus is on providing fresh, organic, and locally sourced food to our community.

Our Impact

The Whole-Food Planet has had a significant impact on our community. We have provided access to fresh, organic, and locally sourced food for over 10,000 people. We have supported over 50 local farmers and producers. We have also provided a space for our community to come together and share their passion for healthy, sustainable food. Our impact is growing, and we are committed to continuing to provide our community with the highest quality food, while also supporting local farmers and producers. Our focus is on providing fresh, organic, and locally sourced food to our community.

Our Future

The Whole-Food Planet is committed to continuing to provide our community with the highest quality food, while also supporting local farmers and producers. Our focus is on providing fresh, organic, and locally sourced food to our community. We are committed to providing our community with the highest quality food, while also supporting local farmers and producers. Our focus is on providing fresh, organic, and locally sourced food to our community.

Our Values

The Whole-Food Planet is committed to the following values: transparency, accountability, and integrity. We are committed to providing our community with the highest quality food, while also supporting local farmers and producers. Our focus is on providing fresh, organic, and locally sourced food to our community.

Our Contact Information

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Wholefood Planet Brand Implementation

4

Brand
Implementation

This stage of the project is currently in development. When completed, examples of how the Wholefood Planet brand has been implemented on packaging, in-store and on marketing materials will be shown.

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