المقدمة
والملخص التنفيذي
العودة إلى قائمة المحتويات
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Introduction
Introduction

Governments have created brands for themselves since ancient empires stamped the king’s head on their coinage. Arguably, these coins carried the world’s first brands. In the 3,000 years since then, however, it is private enterprise that has perfected the concept – particularly the super-brands such as Coca-Cola and McDonald’s, born in the US and unleashed on the globe.

Governments have long realized the importance of branding externally for attracting tourism and investment. Only recently they have seen the need to brand internally to shape the perceptions of their citizens and employees. Increasingly, they realize the need to use branding to make their messages heard in a world saturated with commercial advertising.

As a result, in almost every country government brands have proliferated as senior officials have sought attention for their policies and programs. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is no exception – Strategic Gears’ survey found nearly 60 entity/agency brands at a national level, and more still for government programs with the total reaching more than 100 brands.

This report explores the cumulative impact of this proliferation of citizen-facing brands in KSA. It is a deep dive that explores its effectiveness in communicating government services and national unity. It also looks at global trends in government branding and explores whether the experience of countries such as Germany, Netherlands, South Korea, Switzerland, and the UK can inform a more effective branding approach in Saudi Arabia.

The KSA already has experience of world-class government branding with the Vision 2030 program. One of the goals of this program is that the government should engage effectively with citizens. There are substantial benefits for Vision 2030, the government and KSA residents if world-class branding is extended across government.
Executive Summary
Executive Summary

Brands in the public sector are not associated, usually, with physical products but with ideas, beliefs, services and causes which makes branding even more critical to achieve entities’ objectives.

As the government of Saudi Arabia has increased its services for residents over the last few years the number of delivery programs has increased sharply. This has led to a substantial increase in the number of government brands.

This increase in brands has also led to confusion between programs, confusion over programs’ purposes, and confusion over responsibility.

There is no clear brand architecture strategy followed by government entities, each entity is following a different brand architecture model.

The issue of having many government brands that causes confusion for citizens is not unique to KSA. Many countries around the globe have faced a similar challenge and have moved to unified national master brand model.

Having a unified national master brand has many advantages such as:

• Making government entities/programs more recognizable and accessible.
• Putting the focus of communication into the actual service (not the government entity or program).
• Cost savings through standardization and less brand building and brand maintenance which requires ongoing spending.
• Improving government communication to citizens which leads to improving citizens’ satisfaction of government services
• A unified brand architecture leads to a better digital service delivery, through unifying service delivery platforms.

International benchmarks show that the master brand model is highly effective, but other models should be considered such as the “endorser” model, which may be more appropriate for funds or municipalities.

Recommendations:

• Shift government entities and programs to a unified master brand architecture.
• Assign a single body to take control over government branding centrally, creating a strategy that encompasses all government functions including municipalities, agencies and funds.
• A process must be identified to build the new brand. Different countries have used different models – one option would be to create a cross-government committee augmented with private sector experts (as done in South Korea). While the process is getting underway, no new government brands must be launched.
• Consideration must be given to the national emblem. Does it need to be formalized so that it appears the same in every use? Does it need any additional legal protection?
Why Branding Matters for Public Services
Why Branding Matters for Public Services

As the introduction explains, governments have been creating brands for around 3,000 years. Historically they have been focused on their external brand - the image they project to the world and which can help attract tourism and investment. Recently, however, there has been a realization by many governments that the brand they project to their citizens is just as important – maybe more so.

Brands in the public sector are not associated, usually, with physical products but with ideas, beliefs, services and causes, therefore public sector entities should not only care about how sticky or popular their brands are, but rather how effectively they communicate the services' objectives to its target audience.

These brands should represent something more intangible and emotional than products, and this makes branding even more important as it focuses on the building up of strong intangible thoughts, feelings and perceptions.

Governments worldwide have used branding to achieve strategic objectives. These include:

- Practical benefits such as improving the image of government as an employer and helping citizens understand which services are provided by the state.
- Building a stronger sense of national purpose - this was an aim of one of the earliest national branding exercises, by the newly-unified Germany in the 1990s.
- Facilitating the delivery of digital services - brand changes in the UK were partially driven by a move to an advanced digital portal for the delivery of all central government services.

All three of these motivations are relevant for KSA - doubly so in light of the Vision 2030 program. Enhancing government effectiveness is a Level One objective of the program, and improved branding can contribute to Level Two and Level Three objectives including:

- Engage effectively with citizens
- Improve performance of government apparatus
- Enhance performance of government entities
- Develop the e-Government
- Enhance transparency across government roles
- Strengthen communication channels with citizens and business community
- Ensure responsiveness of government entities to stakeholders' feedback.

In contrast, without effective branding the government risks:

- Poor management of government funds, as large sums of money are allocated to developing and maintaining government brands.
- Confusion between public and private sector brands and services.
- Confusion in associating public sector brands with their related entities.
- Difficulty differentiating between separate programs with similar brand names.
- Confusion in identifying roles of different government entities.
- Poor recognition of government brands as they fight for attention.

1. KSA Vision2030 Strategic Objectives and Vision Realization Programs
Public Sector Branding In Saudi Arabia
Public Sector Branding In Saudi Arabia

The government of KSA has grown rapidly over the last few years as it has sought to enhance the lives of its residents. Ministries have been restructured and programs have been launched, and throughout this rapid expansion officials have, rightly, used branding to improve public understanding of their role.

With no central control or policy, however, there has been an explosion of brands across government, many of which have no apparent link to the service they are providing. This could lead to confusions between programs and the entities providing them. Below is a sample of the similar brands KSA residents are expected to identify:

Note: Throughout this report many of the comparisons are visual but the logo is just one part of a brand. We are using the visual confusion as a sign of broader confusion about brand identity.

They have names that come from the same root word (Sanid: to help/ Musanid: helper) but neither explains in its name who or what is being helped. This becomes more confusing when we look at brands outside the public sector that use a similar name, such as Sabic’s Nusanid. They have different functions and the names have different Arabic roots – yet the names are almost identical.

The **Musanid** program by MLSD for recruitment of domestic helpers

The **Sanid** program by GOSI for helping jobless Saudi citizens

The **Nitaqat** program (managed by the ministry of labor and social development) that aims to increase the employment prospects of Saudi Nationals.

**Taqat** online employment portal (managed by the Human Resources Development Fund) targets job seekers and entities to offer job matching and other services.
Constructing “brand trees” shows that over time brands have been built up often with no relationship with each other or the organization that is responsible for them.

**EXAMPLE**

Take as an example, the brand tree of the Human Resources Development Fund:

The Meras program was launched by the Ministry of Commerce and Investment in May 2017 to boost the private sector business environment. Nebras is a committee to combat drug abuse. Neither brand gives a clear indication of function.

These two programs also have similar names - but no connection.

The HRDF brand images include more than ten different Arabic and English fonts; images of the sun, a book, and two different abstract visuals of people. The HRDF’s main color is blue, and its main operational units mostly use this color; however sub-units use orange (which is a small part of the HRDF logo) and grey (which is not).
Another example of a wide variety of brand identities is shown below in the programs of the Ministry of Housing:

Other similar “brand trees” with many, multicolored branches for the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology and Ministry of Labor and Social Development are shown in the appendix.

**Is the public sector branding working in Saudi Arabia?**

To assess whether branding in the public sector in Saudi is serving its purpose of spreading awareness of programs and services, Strategic Gears conducted indicative surveys of job seekers, entrepreneurs and the general public in Jeddah and Riyadh. Based on the results it was clear that government brands have led to five strands of confusion:

1. **Confusion between programs**

In the survey of members of the general public, some 44% were confused between Nitaqat and Taqat, two core labor market programs discussed earlier. Some 41% were unable to distinguish between the Sanid and Musanid programs.

Among a sample of entrepreneurs, 81% were unable to distinguish between Nitaqat and Taqat. Some 40% of jobseekers were unable to differentiate the two, even though they are the beneficiaries of the programs.

**% of Respondents Unable to Identify Difference Between Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>General Public</th>
<th>Entrepreneurs</th>
<th>Job Seekers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nitaqat</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musanid</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanid</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Confusion over purpose

Nitaqat and Taqat both serve the same broad policy. But confusion was also found between programs and entities with completely different policy goals, which indicates that the brands are disconnected from their social purpose.

In the survey of members of the general public, for example, 67% were unable to differentiate between Meras and Nebras. The former aims to improve private sector interaction with the government and the latter is an anti-drug program; this demonstrates that both brands lack any conceptual link with their underlying policy.

In some cases, citizens know a program exists but are unable to recall its name, which could cause problems when they try and access it via internet search.

An example is the Sakani program run by the Ministry of Housing. Just 9% of citizens had top-of-mind awareness of the brand. When prompted about government housing programs, however, that figure rose to 49% - indicating the brand had failed to connect to its public purpose despite tackling one of the most important issues for citizens.

3. Confusion over responsibility

Some Ministries have established strong brand identities which allows citizens to see clearly that they are responsible for their policy programs.

The Ministry of Interior, for instance, uses “The endorsement model” approach that links services to their parent. This is demonstrated in the heavily-used Absher broad-service web portal that has its own logo (left) but it is closely linked spatially and visually with the Ministry’s brand (right) and uses common colors. The entrepreneurs polled closely associated Absher Business - which uses a daughter brand with a switch from green to blue - with the MoI.

However, the MOI approach is not typical. Some of the biggest confusion was over programs relating to the labor market. As a result of unclear branding it appears that the public believes the Ministry of Labor and Social Development is responsible for a wide variety of programs that are in fact run by other entities or departments.
Some examples: 39% of jobseekers thought the Hafiz job seeker support program (logo left) is run by the MLSD; 29% thought the MLSD runs the Taqat job search program; and 23% think MLSD runs the Doroob training program. In fact all are run by the HRDF.

In addition 60% of the entrepreneurs surveyed believed the Ministry of Education’s Moahhal service - which allows employers to check on education qualifications - was the responsibility of the MLSD.

The MLSD is also getting credit for running the Saned system of unemployment insurance. Which is in fact run by the General Organization for Social Insurance (GOSI).

This confusion has practical implications. Citizens may go to the wrong government web site to find a service and assume when they cannot find it that the service has been discontinued. More seriously, if a citizen is dissatisfied with a service they may address complaints or suggestions to the wrong department or entity. Equally, a department or entity that runs a program effectively will not get appreciation from those who benefit from it.

4. Confusion over status

One function of a government brand is to indicate clearly that a service or program is provided by the government. This becomes increasingly important as the KSA government offers an increasingly wide range of services, expanding beyond the traditional basic government functions into areas where citizens could easily be confused over a program’s status - as an example the Kafalah small business funding service is an initiative of the government but delivered as a service by commercial banks. If we look at the poster below as an example, beside the domain name, nothing on that poster indicates that this service is linked to the government.

This brand signaling will become yet more important as privatization progresses under the Vision 2030 program, making the boundaries of the government more fluid. The pattern seen in other countries is that some services currently operated by the government will be operated by private firms but the government will remain responsible for quality and development. In other cases, government services will be fully privatized, with quality and development left to market forces.
In this environment branding becomes a powerful way of signaling to citizens whether a service is directly or indirectly provided by the government and therefore can be fully trusted. However current public sector branding practices are failing to send the right signal.

At a basic level, citizens might expect that the national emblem - specified in the Basic Law as a palm tree with two crossed swords - identifies that a service is provided by the government. However, they would be wrong to make that assumption.

A Strategic Gears survey of government brands shows its use is highly inconsistent. Of 21 ministries, 17 used the national emblem in their brand. Among eight government funds, 6 used the national emblem.

The situation became more confusing when looking at government commissions and authorities. A survey of 34 brands showed only 21 used the national emblem in an identifiable way, although it may have been stretched or made into a compound image.

In some cases, nothing about the visual identity will include any elements from the national emblem (Example: Public Transportation Authority).

Visually, are these organizations part of the Saudi government? It is difficult to tell. Such brands look similar to many KSA companies that reference the palm tree in their logo (see left). How is a citizen to tell which palm tree design signifies that a body is backed by the government?

As a demonstration of the wide range of visual designs, here is a selection of national emblems from KSA government ministries, funds and agencies:

In contrast to this visual variation, many countries have laws that mandate how the national emblem is to be drawn, colored and used. Hong Kong’s Regional Flags and Emblems Act of 1997, for instance, specifies the Hong Kong emblem in great detail and states that the emblem must not be used if “damaged, defiled, faded or substandard”.
5. Confusion Due to Changes

In recent years, we’ve seen many government entities change their visual identity and move towards a more modern look, some have even changed it multiple times within a span of one year, such as the General Sports Authority.

Another issue with these changes are the cost implications, not only the cost of developing a new visual identity, the cost of insuring awareness of the new changes, but also the cost of all the physical aspects that go with the change from stationary to signage and everything in-between. When the Ministry of Education changed its visual identity in 2012 over 25,000 schools had to change their signs to accommodate the new logo, and when that logo was changed again in 2015, those schools had to change their signs and all other materials that shows the old logo once more.

And in some cases, these changes could lead to confusing the entities’ identities which is crucial. For example, the Social Development Bank changed their name (previously the Saudi Savings & Loans Bank) and their visual identity twice within one year as well. Insuring clarity here is very important, considering how critical SDB loans are for many citizens’ lives.
Analysis of KSA Government Brand Architecture
Analysis of KSA Government Brand Architecture

Different brand architecture models exist in the brand strategy field, these models can be clustered into three main approaches:

- The House Of Brands Model
- The Endorsement Model
- The Master Brand Model

House Of Brands

In this strategy each brand is separate. In commercial branding it is typically used where products are being managed within autonomous business units that need flexibility to respond to market conditions and have no need for brand connections.

Internationally, Procter & Gamble of the US is perhaps the most famous example, allowing brands such as Tide detergent and Pampers baby diapers to have a high degree of autonomy.

Parent company brand:

Locally, the products of Savola Group each acts as an independent brand

Parent company brand:

Some KSA entities, for example the HRDF, are in effect following this concept by allowing unrelated brands to proliferate (As shown above). However other parts of the government are following different approaches.

The Endorser Model

Here, visually separate brands are tied together with an “endorser” - a visual device that indicates that a brand belongs to a family. It allows flexibility but helps indicate that brands form part of a greater whole. An example is the Marriott Hotels group which has sub-brands linked back to its main mother brand:
A local commercial example is MBC Group:

This is the approach used by MOI in branding Abshir

Master Brand Model

Here a central, unchanging brand is driven across a wide range of products and services – an approach taken by many of the world’s most iconic brands including Apple and FedEx.

This is the approach of Rotana:

This is also the approach used for the Vision 2030 program which visually links the elements to highlight the connection between the vision and its realization programs.

The examples above show that every branding model is used by different government entities and programs. Hence, they don’t only lack a coherent brand image, they lack a coherent branding strategy.
The International Benchmarks
Many countries across the world have, over years, built up large numbers of brands for ministries, programs, municipal bodies and other parts of the government. Increasingly they are taking action, however, reducing brand noise and moving to a simple but powerful brand architecture. Here is just a sample of those that have followed such an approach: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK.

Across the international experience, themes reoccur. Typically, a single unifying, national image acts as a master brand, expressing strategic direction and vision. Sub-brands such as those of government ministries work hard to deliver the master brand policies and promises. Product and service brands are influenced by these brands and deliver specific experiences. All have strong visual links back to the master brand, showing clearly that these services or policies are the responsibility of the government.
There are four, often overlapping, motivations for such transformation:

- The financial benefit: saving money by investing in less brands.
- Practical brand-building: improving service delivery.
- Building a better bond between citizens and nation.
- Brand rationalization driven by digital service delivery.

In the digital age, every logo requires constant maintenance as new platforms are developed and new screen resolutions become popular, not to mention the initial cost of developing each visual identity and continuously investing to keep it in audiences’ minds. Focusing on a single brand allows this work to be done efficiently and promptly as new devices are released. Switzerland estimated that moving to a master brand would pay for itself in a single year.

**Practical brand-building: improving service delivery**

**Case study: The Netherlands**

The Netherlands has a population of just 17 million and a simple government structure. Yet by 2008 the central government was displaying and maintaining around 200 brands. Prime minister Jan Peter Balkenende said citizens «see a mishmash of different logos and visual identities» while the Minister for the Interior and Kingdom Relations talked of «fragmentation» that could lead citizens to question the strength of the central authorities.

Dutch government logos before 2008¹

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¹ Taken from Beyond the Blue Ribbon: An Evaluation of the Rijkshuisstijl from a Branding Perspective, Cyril Tjahja
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321225192_Beyond_the_Blue_Ribbon_An_Evaluation_of_the_Rijkshuisstijl_from_a_Branding_Perspective
The new single design had four aims:

- Make the government more recognizable and accessible.
- Reduce barriers between government departments.
- Put the focus of communication into the service (not the government department).
- Improve efficiency and minimize spending.

A decision was taken to move to a master brand nicknamed the “blue ribbon”, an image based on a national design from 1815 (see right).

Whether it is on paper, a street sign or a web page, the Dutch government guidelines state that the national brand must always be in the middle and at the top, symbolizing that the government is at the center of society and neutral, above all parties.

Costs were kept low with a phased implementation.

Government polling data showed an increase in satisfaction with government services in the five years after introduction.

**Case study: Switzerland**

In 2003 Switzerland decided to replace more than 80 government brands with a single, national brand, known as the “CD Brand”. Its primary stated aims were:

- Improving the transparency of government services.
- Cost savings through standardization.
- Strengthening the sense of belonging among the employees.
- Simplified collaboration between the individual administrative units.¹

Two other goals were specified: to clarify which services were provided by the government, and to help create a stronger central image for a state that, although it has less than nine million people, is highly decentralized with four official languages.

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¹ CD Bund website [https://www.bk.admin.ch/bk/de/home/dokumentation/cd-bund/geltungsbereich-philosophie.html](https://www.bk.admin.ch/bk/de/home/dokumentation/cd-bund/geltungsbereich-philosophie.html)
Case study: South Korea

South Korea moved to a master brand system for government departments as part of a broader, global brand-building exercise.

President Lee Myung Bak was concerned that a weak national brand meant goods produced in the country sold at a discount to equivalent products from Germany or Japan and established a Presidential Council on Nation Branding in 2009. This council not only included government officials but also academics, consultants, and leaders of well-branded businesses such as McDonalds Korea.

All government departments were moved to a master brand system based on the Taegeuk circular image in the national flag that dates back at least 1,500 years.

One of the main aims was to end confusion about state and non-state functions. Reports said even Korean officials were getting confused by multiple branding and the large number of logos was adding to costs.

An official from the Presidential Council on Nation Branding said: “This (introduction of an integrated logo) will allow people to find out with just a glimpse whether an office using the new logo is a government office or not”.

Building a bond between citizens and nation

Case study: Germany

When West Germany reunified with East Germany in 1990 two giant government machines had to be integrated. Citizens who were loyal to their country had to transfer their allegiance to the merged entity. The very substantial costs of reunification took a toll on the residents of the more prosperous West Germany – economic transfers to the East have totaled around €2 trillion.

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The branding has been continuously updated and extended to include web buttons, app icons for iOS, Android and Windows (left), browser bookmarks and other electronic assets to ensure that citizens that encounter a new government service can quickly navigate it.

Nearly two decades after introduction the brand is still in use.

The digital drive for brand rationalization

Case study: UK

In the UK, the move to a national brand was linked with the development of a single government online portal.

As far back as 2006, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was saying that the real benefits of digital government could only be unlocked with portals under which citizens could access multiple government services. It stated: “The leading principle for a government that is responsive to citizens and businesses is that it is focused on user needs and assists in solving problems regardless of its own structures.”

By 2012 the UK government was moving towards the development of such a single portal but was also wrestling with at least 47 logos for department and ministries, plus hundreds of other logos for programs and agencies (see diagram at the beginning of this section).

1. e-Government for Better Government, 2005
It was decided the only way to handle this profusion of images was to simplify. To control costs, the design work was handled by the team also designing the portal of Government Digital Services. The final design uses the UK’s royal crest, with the only variation for each department being a colored bar to the left. By law, it is an offence for commercial firms to use the royal crest: the UK government says “It is important that the public is easily able to recognize the work of government, departments, their agencies and arms length bodies.”

The image is not used outside the UK, where the names of government departments would not be recognized. Instead, the UK government uses an outward-facing brand based on the national flag (left). Large, public-facing agencies such as the police and National Health Service have kept their familiar brands. Official guidelines permit some flexibility, saying government campaigns can have a brand created for them when they need “a distinct visual identity”.1

All government departments have closed their web portals and the new site, launched in 2012, now offers the services of 25 government departments and 376 other agencies and public bodies. The UK followed up the single branding in 2015 with the elimination of departmental digital marketing teams. Digital marketing specialists now sit in pooled government hubs that cost less and ensure better government co-ordination when communicating with citizens.

The UK’s portal goes an important step beyond the saudi.gov.sa portal, which serves mostly as an electronic signpost, helping citizens find the correct government site. In the UK all the services can be accessed through one portal, with a single sign-in mechanism with a single user interface. The portal handles more than three billion transactions a year and has helped the UK to top the United Nation’s most recent list of e-government development. 2

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Conclusions and Recommendations
Conclusions

Government brands are proliferating in KSA. There are areas of excellence such as the Vision 2030 program but overall the large number of brands is causing confusion.

- **Citizens are confused between programs**: Programs have been allowed to choose the house of brands model which has a high maintenance cost and can result in brands that are similar to other existing programs. Some programs with similar names have completely different functions. Others serve similar policy functions, making the scope for confusion yet greater.

- **Citizens are confused over purpose**: Too many programs have brands that do not indicate their purpose and confused citizens over their functions.

- **Citizens are confused over responsibility**: Our survey showed that weak branding links between ministries/agencies and their programs meant that in some cases citizens had no idea who was responsible for important services. This has implications for accountability.

- **There is no clear signal over what services are provided by the government**: Although the KSA has a national emblem many government services do not use it - yet many private companies do. As privatization proceeds this will leave citizens unable to understand which services are provided by the government and which by the private sector.

- **There is significant spending requirements to establish, build, and maintain awareness and equity of brands**: Although large amounts are spent on developing new brands for programs and services, there’s no consistent effort being made to build or maintain those brands. Those amounts would be better spent on building and maintaining existing brands, such as those of ministries, authorities, and funds.

The KSA’s problem is not unique, our international research shows that many countries have faced the same problem - and have taken action – and there is a clear global trend. There is an opportunity for the KSA to build on the experience of other national branding programs, adjusting to fit the needs of local society, and create a world-class brand architecture.

At an emotional level, effective government branding can increase the bond between citizen and government. At a practical level, the creation of a government brand architecture can increase the effectiveness of government - an important move as the KSA government increases its efforts to develop Saudi society and economy. Better branding also facilitates the move to e-government, helping citizens find and access services online and boosting their use.

These benefits would be worth paying for. However the experience internationally is that these benefits come with reduced - not higher - costs as the number of brands maintained is slashed.
At this point, the process of creating a brand architecture can begin. International experience shows that the master brand approach is highly effective, but other approaches should be considered such as the “endorser” model, which may be appropriate for funds or municipalities. The KSA can improve on international practice by setting key performance indicators, for example setting targets for citizens’ awareness one year after introduction. Of the international examples discussed only South Korea set KPIs – and the metrics were altered after launch. Pre-brand research will help with the formulation of KPIs and also inform the branding strategy.

Recommendations:

- Shift government entities and programs to a unified master brand architecture.
- Assign a single body to take control over government branding centrally, creating a strategy that encompasses all government functions including municipalities, agencies and funds.
- A process must be identified to build the new brand. Different countries have used different models – one option would be to create a cross-government committee augmented with private sector experts (as done in South Korea). While the process is getting underway, no new government brands must be launched.
- Consideration must be given to the national emblem. Does it need to be formalized so that it appears the same in every use? Does it need any additional legal protection?
Appendix
Strategic Gears Marketing and Branding Capabilities:

Strategic Gears offers full range of Marketing and Branding services which includes: Marketing & Communication strategy, Brand Architecture Strategy, Brand Building and more. Strategic Gears has worked with the largest government and private entities on developing and executing marketing strategies for their organizations and/or programs. Our team includes talents with prior experiences in handling the largest local and international brands in Saudi and internationally. Below are some of our team members:

Hattan Saaty
Managing Partner

Hattan has an experience in marketing strategies for over 11+ years. He led the marketing strategies of some of the most critical brands on the national level in the public sector, Hafiz unemployment program for HRDF, Nitaqat the Ministry of Labor’s flagship program. Earlier in his career, he achieved historic results in the private sector with multinational brands such as Unilever’s OMO and US Prepaid Telecom in the USA. He was the marketing manager at Goody, under this management the Goody Flagship products Pasta and Tuna both became market leaders in their categories for the first time ever. In the clothing and fashion sector, he was also the marketing consultant for AlShiaka company (part of SEDCO). In addition to his part-time experience and out of passion, he was a marketing Professor in KAU and Jeddah’s Community College.

Sameer AlMehmadi
Partner

Sameer has 10 years experience in management, marketing, branding, and strategy development in the public and private sectors. Sameer led multiple projects for government entities including Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Economy and Planning, and recently established government entities such as SMEA** and others. Also, companies like P&G and Goody on the private sector side.

Sameer’s experience covers a wide range of communication and marketing related topics including external and internal communication strategy and execution, brand building and revamping, perception change initiatives, mega campaigns design and management, stakeholders engagement strategy and plans, and organization and capabilities building.

Sameer also comes with significant experience on the commercial side of the business that is leveraged to create impactful communication strategies.
Hatim developed a wide range of expertise working in Procter & Gamble in different fields such as Marketing, Financial Analysis, Accounting, Commercial Operations and Tax. His experience includes working on world class brands such as Tide, Ariel, Downy, Pampers, Always, Fairy and Febreze. During his career, Hatim worked in the Saudi local organization handling the Arabian Peninsula markets and in the Geneva regional office managing different markets in the India, Middle East and Africa region. In his regional experience, Hatim worked on setting the communication strategies for his brands, executing the brand strategy across touch points, worked on future innovations, and assessed feasibility of white space expansions and brand investment opportunities. He also worked on building commercial strategies for the different markets and different brands within his portfolio.

Entrepreneurial marketing professional with +13 years of strategic marketing, strategy & commercial management experience from Fortune Global 500 companies, which involves working on strategy, brand equity, innovation, integrated brand communication, pricing, maximizing ROI of marketing investment, operations, business development, and marketing execution. Abdul-Aziz has led several projects for Job Creation Commission. That includes developing the marketing strategy and plan, the marketing positioning, the marketing and PR key communication messages approach, the social media plan, the stakeholders communication plan, the marketing department structure, and the marketing department processes. Abdul-Aziz worked extensively on a lot of strategic marketing projects. A few of them are: on laundry care category at Henkel he helped turn around the category for in GCC driven a lot by growing the liquid detergents portfolio while maintaining the core business.

Ben Myers is an Australian public policy and strategy expert who has nearly 20 years of experience in high profile government and private sector roles across Australia. Ben has extensive public sector experience, specifically within branding and communications, having held key director roles in this field with Australian government entities. His experience includes senior positions at all levels of Australian government (Federal, State and Local), and a period as the Australian head of communications for the global energy producer BG Group. Ben holds a Bachelor of Economics and an MBA degree from The University of Queensland.
Ghaida Fatany
Subject Matter Expert

With almost 20 years of experience in Market Research, Ghaida started her career in Savola research division then worked at Synovate International for 14 years. She’s currently an independent research consultant sharing her years of experience and knowledge with Strategic Gears. She has extensive experience in both private & public sectors including: financial, tourism & aviation, Consumer Goods, social research, services, Real Estate. She worked with key clients locally and globally (e.g. Ministry of Labour, Minister of Hajj, Saudia, Unilever, Al-Alali, Sadafco, Friesland, Sunbula, KAEC, MEC, J&J, Emaar and Pfizer). She has a Masters’ with honors in Social & Market research from Westminster University of London, Management degree from NEBS, UK, Market Research Diploma from De Mont University UK, and BS degree in Computer Science.

Abdulrahman Aljifri
Senior Consultant

Abdulrahman has a successful track record in several industries; healthcare, banking, and management consultancy. He has been working with the Small & Medium Enterprises Authority on several strategic projects. Led several projects, starting from developing a communication strategy for SMEA, with an effective operating system to ensure Build-Operate-Transfer, which provides his client great results. Notable project was developing the brand strategy for the authority which includes the brand positioning and brand architecture. His contributions involved developing & monitoring BIBAN too, Monsha’at annual event for SME’s. His experience is well-rounded covering marketing, business development & strategy for multiple mega projects worth billions of Riyals. In addition, he managed high net-worth relationships with a portfolio of 200 million Riyals.

Khaled Shuwail
Senior Consultant

Khaled has more than 8 years experience in developing and executing communication & marketing strategies, product management, business development and branding. During his experience period, Khaled worked with many large entities in the public and the private sector such as Tadawul, Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Economy and Planning, Social Development Bank and other newly established entities in the government. Prior to that, Khaled worked with many global and local companies like Unilever, Nokia, and Goody.

Khaled’s main experience is in the field of behavioral change through communication, Brand House Development, Brand Management, Business Development, Brand Activation & Impact Monitoring, Stakeholders Engagement Strategies and Commercial Innovation and Ideation.

Khaled has a strong track record of success in the public sector, where he led many nationwide initiatives to the market. Starting from developing the business concept and communication strategy, all the way to managing the execution and tracking the results while engaging different stakeholders to maximize the impact.

Similarly, Khaled has a strong track record in the private sectors where he delivered solid business results by developing and executing relevant marketing strategies.
About Strategic Gears:

Strategic Gears is a Management Consultancy based in Saudi Arabia, with presence in Riyadh and Jeddah, serving clients across the country. Strategic Gears’ clients include the biggest public and private sector organizations, including a number of ministries, authorities, financial institutions, and companies.

The company utilizes its top notch local consultants, and global network of experts to offer strategic solutions in the fields of public policy, analytics, product development, and strategic marketing, and have a proven track record with multiple clients in each.

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