

Brand new slogan for Swift Current

After a year of research and planning, Action Swift Current has finally come up with the perfect answer to the question, "Why live, work and play in Swift Current?"

It's where life makes sense.

The organization of local residents, volunteers and businesspeople dedicated to promoting the community both in and outside of the city limits released their long-awaited brand on Monday night at the Cypress Regional College gymnasium: "Swift Current: Where life makes sense."

Branding committee member Al Chilton said that coming up with the new tag line was simply a matter of asking the right people. He said that by interviewing the community's stakeholders-everyone from retailers and health care workers to educators, clergy and senior providers-the committee was able to examine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the city of Swift Current.

"The only way to provide a long-lasting community brand is to build on the core values, and the only way to know for sure what those core values are is to ask," Chilton said simply during his presentation to a gymnasium full of excited Swift Current residents and business people.

The committee identified eight core values within the city: affordability, accessibility, education, health care, culture, recreation, environment and security. Chilton said he hopes that these come to mind when people see the new city brand.

In addition to devising the tag line, the committee developed a logo to go with it. The picture is simple, with just a few sweeping coloured strokes representing water, land, air and sunshine.

"The sun reflects life and warmth, land and water represent health and environment, air and sky represent the wide open space and accessibility," Chilton explained. "The smooth design represents

safety and comfort, the flow represents growth and adaptability, the colours are to suggest a mature quality, bright but not overbearing. The feel is to be ageless and reflect the needs and desires of all who call Swift Current home."

Chilton says he thinks that the new tag line and logo will be a highly effective way to create more community spirit and market the city, as long as the city can stick to the core brand, which is not the tag line and logo, it's the eight core values.

"If you think about Coca Cola, the brand is not the written Coca Cola word, that just represent Coca Cola. Coca Cola is different things and different people... They have a number of tag lines, because tag lines tend to evolve. The core brands behind Coca Cola: cold, refreshing, all of those things, those have always been around. That's what this logo and statement is. It stands for the eight pillars, which is what we're all about.

"Now that the brand has been released, the city will begin to implement it by using it on its trucks, equipment and stationary. Promotional materials such as T-shirts are also available. Chilton said the idea of Swift Current license plates bearing the brand is also being tossed around.

The branding committee worked with a Calgary consulting firm called Trigger Communications on the initiative and invested \$50,000 into changing the city's image. Chilton said that the money, given to the committee by the City of Swift Current, turned out to be a more than worthwhile investment.

"Because of having the brand, we got \$200,000 back from Western Economic Diversification," he explained. "I don't know about your investments but I've never put in \$40 or 50,000 and got \$200,000 out. These funds only came about by having a brand and showing a plan."

The \$200,000 was used on marketing materials such as promotional video and a trade show booth, both of which were on display at Monday's presentation. Some of the money is also going to the Regional Cluster initiative that should be announced in the next month or so.

Mayor Sandy Larson was impressed with the brand, calling it a perfect way to summarize what the city is all about.

"Isn't our logo beautiful?" she said, gesturing at the new brand during a speech to the crowd.

She said Action Swift Current deserves a great deal of credit for making it happen.

"When we talk about Action Swift Current, we're talking about a whole community who came together: businesses, volunteers, focus groups, they all came together to do this.

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