

Darlesa Cahoon

Creative Designs for Instructional Materials

Project 1 – Infographic

Final Draft Design Document

## Company History Infographic Project Overview

Columbia Distributing was formed nearly 100 years ago and has a long and varied history. They have acquired many new distributorships over the years, stretched, grown, morphed, and along the way formed partnerships with other companies in a variety of ways.

Explaining this history and what it means to new employees about the culture of the organization is a challenging task, and not done effectively at present. When I attended orientation as a new employee last February, I found the explanation to be not only confusing but a dizzying array of facts and changes that held little meaning to helping me understand the company's history. In addition, at another new employee orientation I was surprised to witness another new employee company introduction which read company history from a binder to another group of employees using not only incomplete and confusing language, but out-of-date language which could potentially be unnecessarily insulting.

I would like to build an infographic to explain this history. This infographic could serve as a consistent, complete, current, and relevant story of Columbia Distributing and how it became the company it is today.

It would include illustrations of statistics showing how the employee base has changed (using illustrative statistical representations) over the years, how Columbia has expanded geographically (comparing map of changing territory), how product representation has changed, and how these changes have impacted company culture.

### Considerations and Potential Challenges:

- There is a lot of data to include
- It may be difficult to tell one story which includes all of this data that can satisfy leadership sufficiently
- There may be facts in the history that leaders won't like – so it could be tricky deciding what to leave in, highlight, or omit.
- I would like the data to be graphically represented so it is more meaningful and understandable.
- The design should be friendly and help to simplify and make meaning of an array of details.
- I will review online software such as Canva, Visualize.me, Easel.ly, etc., but could find that I need to simply create the infographic using PowerPoint and Excel to get the flexibility I need.

### **Unanswered questions and discoveries that will be made during creation:**

- How will this infographic be used?
- Will it be a handout given to new employees at orientation?
- Will it also be posted within the organization as a fun way to help marketing build company identity?
- Will it be possible to contain a simplified version on a PowerPoint slide to use in the new employee orientation slide deck or as an interactive online training course.

### **A Bump in the Road - Challenges**

While I attempted to pull together a comprehensive data set of information for our company history, I found that this was a much more difficult task than I realized. Everyone I interviewed to get data and information had a different idea of how each historical event affected Columbia's size, brands, and future. I realized that if I was going to be able to complete a meaningful infographic, I needed to adjust my focus.

I realized my infographic may be helpful in recruiting. In the next few months, the Culture Manager will be attending several job fairs at local community colleges to recruit new employees. I thought this would be a good use and focus for my infographic.

As I pulled together my data, I realized my content would reflect more of a recruiting call to action than one with a new employee orientation focus. The focus would be to educate, but not overwhelm with historical information, but to include data about informing potential new employees about why they would want to work at Columbia.

### **Revised Learning Objectives**

- Audience will understand that Columbia has a long and stable history and a recent story of increased growth
- Audience will be able to identify Columbia's product focus
- Audience will reflect on company events, benefits and identify if the company appears to be an attractive place to work
- Audience will locate whether Columbia has jobs in areas they want to live.
- Audience will decide if Columbia looks like a place they'd like to work

### **Revised Audience**

Potential new employees, especially community college students who would be interested in entry level jobs in Warehouse or Merchandising positions.

### **Questions and Peer Feedback**

1. **What is your opinion about the amount of items on the graphic? Do you think it seems cluttered or is it a good balance of items?**

**Feedback Peer #1**

I don't think it is cluttered at all. I like the spacing, I think you did great with the CARP rules.

**Feedback Peer #2:**

I don't think that your graphic is too cluttered, but I wonder if it has too many elements on it. Would this fit on an 11x17 piece of paper? I wonder if you could try to give yourself that constraint and see what you feel is most important to keep.

**2. Are the facts understandable to you? Do you have questions or need clarification about any of the data or information?****Feedback Peer #1**

Yes, it was easy content to comprehend. Simple straight forward statements.

**Feedback Peer #2**

I understand all of the facts, and I believe that everything is well reported, but I feel that you could do a better job conveying the purpose behind the infographic. Is it to recruit new employees? Is it to provide information to stakeholders?

**3. Does the infographic lack professionalism because it was created in PowerPoint and not a graphics program? Please list any areas of imbalance or misalignment you recognize or problems with any of the CARP principles.****Feedback Peer #1**

Not at all. I was shocked when I read that you did in PPT. It looks totally professional. You have good contrast with the color scheme of green and blue, you have good alignment where each section has the same size area, you have good repetition with color and font, but I wonder why you chose a different transition shape for the last piece – you went from the ribbon on all the other transitions to an oval shape and you have good proximity.

**Feedback Peer #2**

It is not lacking professionalism because it's in Powerpoint. I feel that the things that I feel lack the most is the bottom section of your graphic. I don't prefer the top 10 image, and I feel that the text in that space also is too small for the size of the section.

#### **4. Does the data presented and the presentation make Columbia look like an interesting place to work?**

##### **Feedback Peer #1**

I didn't get a whole lot about it being a great place to work. There is that section at the end, but if that is the goal of your infographic, I would make that a bigger piece. Highlight it in some way possibly through contrast – go completely different color or font or size.

##### **Feedback Peer #2**

This question makes me feel that you are gearing this towards recruiting potential employees to work there. In that case, I would like to see more of an emphasis to that end, as opposed to statistics about warehouses. What is it that drives a culture of fun? How could your statistics convey a stable industry?

#### **5. What is your overall reaction to this infographic? Are the colors too bright? Is it easy to read? Does it look interesting to you? Is it too simple or complicated?**

##### **Feedback Peer #1**

I like it. The colors are fun and who doesn't love beer? It is a great piece of content for an onboarding program or potentially a recruiting program. I like the history and what Columbia did last year. That was great info. If you want to make a recruiting piece add more content about what the benefits are, what is the culture like, how many company events, what kind, size events those kind of things. You could an entire infographic on that last section.

##### **Feedback Peer #2**

I think that the colors work well together, they definitely complement each other pretty well. I love the hops images as part of the graph in the growth of the company. I think that there is a lot of dead space in the graphic. And knowing that the recommendation to "keep it simple" applies very much to infographics, I feel that the dead space could be maximized with different uses of

the information already on the graphic. In other words, don't add more, but use space more efficiently.

## **Considerations:**

### **Design Decisions**

#### **Decision #1**

Used company colors to go with logo. I decided that I could use a variety of shades of the blue and green company colors in the logo. I also thought it was important to add a picture of a big glass of beer, since that's what we're all about, and because people love working at Columbia if they're passionate about beer, so I thought that would attract them.

#### **Decision #2**

I wanted to try a long skinny infographic format as this is a popular and recognizable infographic format. I thought this would be a fun piece to display on our website and at recruiting events.

#### **Decision #3**

I wanted to paint a picture of Columbia's history, to show how we are a stable, but growing company, so I included

#### **Decision #4**

I tried to keep text at a minimum, used friendly, easy to read and understand fonts and tried to keep the infographic as visual as possible.

#### **Decision #**

I included data showing stability and success as well as pictures of happy employees doing interesting and fun things to drive to my call to action to get people to apply for jobs at Columbia

### **Lessons Learned**

I learned that infographics are a wonderful way to illustrate a lot of information in a friendly and fun format. I also realized that a large data set helps to paint a compelling information picture, and the biggest challenge is fitting the data to a story or the story to the data.