

City of Garland

Key Informant Interviews

Findings From 37 Telephone In-Depth Interviews
May/June 2010

Garland

T E X A S

The Branding Process

Strategy:
Research Studies Review

Review Existing Research

Feb

Setup Public Microsite

Feb

Identify Peer Cities

Mar

Inventory & Analyze Marketing Materials

Mar

Prep for In-Depth Interviews

Apr

Strategy:
Gap Research

Identify Research Gaps

Apr

Conduct In Depth Interviews

May, June

Final Research Report

July

Identity & Messaging:
Tagline & Logo, Market Testing, Brand Standards Guide

Deliver Creative Brief

Aug

Develop Brand Platform & Key Messages

Aug

Deliver Preliminary Logo & Tagline Options

Sept

Market Testing

Oct

Deliver Market Testing Results

Oct

Finalize & Deliver Logo, Tagline & Brand Standards Guide

Oct

Outreach:
Marketing Communications & Launch Plans

Develop Marketing Communications Plan

Nov

Develop Launch Plan

Nov

Refine & Deliver Plans

Dec

TEXAS

Garland TEXAS

Methodology

- Telephone In-Depth Interviews (IDIs)
- Interviewed community leaders inside and outside of Garland
- Two-thirds have been residents of Garland for an average of 33 years

Key Question Topics

- **Garland Today vs. Ideal Garland**
- **Internal and external perceptions**
- **Current “brand image”**
- **Attracting visitors, businesses and jobs**
- **Favorite places in Garland**

The Dominant Themes

A Tale of Several Cities

Little Big Town

Progressive City Government & Chamber of Commerce

A Place for Families

A Place for Business

A Best Kept Secret

The View from the Outside

All Roads Led *Past* Garland

Garland

TEXAS

Dominant Theme: A Tale of Several Cities

Garland is not one entity – it's many communities and contains "something for everyone."



- Firewheel mall, golf course and neighborhoods
- The 190/George Bush corridor with new businesses coming in
- The downtown area w/ performing arts center and Trammell Crow development



- Abandoned strip malls, vacant big box stores
- Areas with unsightly used car lots

Dominant Theme: Little Big Town

Garland is a large city with a small town feel.



- Walk into a neighborhood store and people know you by name
- Big city amenities – shopping, restaurants, entertainment, etc.
- Despite growth people say, “This is home,” and “I love this place.”



None

Dominant Theme: Progressive City Government, Chamber of Commerce

The city government was portrayed as forward looking and business-friendly.



- Planning commission, others working harder to facilitate new business
- City, Chamber sister city efforts to woo Asian companies
- GP&L
 - Outperforming others in reliability, affordability



- Some felt Chamber was more focused on larger businesses

Dominant Theme: A Place for Families

Two-thirds of respondents boasted Garland is a “great place to raise a family.”



- Families in neighborhoods do things together, watch out for each other
- Low crime rate; good police, fire, EMS departments
- Award-winning GISD school system; many parks and rec. areas



None

Dominant Theme: A Place for Business

Many feel Garland is poised to attract new businesses, especially in the high-tech sector.



- A well-trained workforce – Richland College w/ ongoing tech training
- A business-friendly Council, Chamber to recruit, establish and support new businesses
- A range of housing stock – from well priced to luxury



- May need to take steps to attract more business visitors
 - Not enough hotel or exhibit space
 - Need to promote golf and other activities

Dominant Theme: A Best Kept Secret

Garland is a hidden brand, not only among outsiders, but even among insiders.



- Firewheel Mall, plus shopping and restaurants throughout the city
- Large manufacturing companies (Raytheon, Kraft, Daisy, etc.)
- The revitalization of downtown, including performing arts venues



- Nearly every respondent pointed out that Garland does not promote itself and needs more marketing.

Dominant Theme: View from the Outside

Nearly all feel that the outside world (the Metroplex) has a generally negative and distorted view of Garland.

e.g. Zombieland: "I'm in Garland Texas, and it may look like Zombies destroyed it, but that's just Garland."



- **Garland has assets worth marketing:**
 - The revitalizing downtown area
 - The arts offerings
 - The shopping, restaurants, golf and more available in the Firewheel/190/George Bush corridors



- **Outsiders view Garland as a sleepy, blue-collar bedroom community because of what they see passing by the city:**
 - The “entrances” are not well maintained
 - Too many run-down used car lots with garish signage
 - Abandoned strip malls, vacant big box stores, stark warehouses

Dominant Theme: All Roads Led *Past* Garland

The major highways essentially skirted Garland with few off-ramps and difficult on-ramps.



- **Transportation infrastructure is improving**
 - I-30, I-635 and 190 make Garland a jumping off point for residents, businesses looking for a hub
 - The DART line now has a downtown station



- **To many, this is a prime reason why Garland has been isolated socially and economically from the rest of the Metroplex.**

Garland's Brand S.W.O.T.

Strengths

- Family-friendly community
- Well-trained workforce
- Wide range of housing stock (inexpensive to luxury)
- Variety of lifestyles all in one community
- Cultural diversity
- Numerous national and international companies located in Garland
- Transportation infrastructure – I-30, I-635, 190, the DART line
- City services

The Crown Jewels

- Firewheel – the mall and golf course
- Restaurants
- Lake Ray Hubbard
- The new Hyatt hotel
- Convention space
- The Patty Granville Performing Arts Center
- Revitalizing downtown

Garland's Brand S.W.O.T.

Weaknesses

- Most agree that the “branding” of Garland is non-existent
- Abandoned strip malls and stores
- Used car lots
- Note: Branding interviews tend to be positive; very little discussion time was spent dwelling on negative issues

Opportunities

- Improve/beautify the “entrances” to Garland
- Add more destination attractions – sports, restaurants, theme parks, and lakeside activities
- Bring some of the luster of north Garland to the south and do even more to revitalize the downtown area

Next Steps

