



## Summary: June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006, Asia Society, NY Association of Pakistani Professionals

### Summary of AOPP's Brand Pakistan kickoff strategy conference in New York

On June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006, with the enthusiasm and positive energy of a 100+ Pakistani professionals in New York, AOPP successfully kicked off an ambitious US wide 'Brand Pakistan' strategy initiative.

#### **Mission**

- To develop and launch an ongoing program to project a positive brand image for Pakistan
- To strive for a "balanced view" of Pakistan with recognition of both negative and positive attributes of the country

#### **Scope**

- Address 'Brand Pakistan' as it relates to the US population primarily.
- No 'sugar coating' - identify and work with true strengths and counter recognized negatives

#### **Initiative Road-map**

- AOPP 'Brand Pakistan' Online Survey – 10 questions
- **"Brand Pakistan" Panel Discussion & Strategy Working Session – New York**
- "Brand Pakistan" Events in Washington DC, Chicago & Los Angeles
- An *Integrated Programs Recommendation Report* based on the input of the Pakistani American community, brand experts, and other key stakeholders gathered at the above events. The report will be a strategic guide to organizing events/initiatives that deliver the highest impact in developing a strong brand for Pakistan
- Organize, fund, and partner with various organizations to launch specific programs in conjunction with an integrated marketing campaign.

#### **New York Event**

The prestigious Asia Society, New York provided an outstanding venue for kicking off an engaging and hands-on day designed to reach an action oriented outcome.

The Board of Trustees of AOPP is greatly appreciative of the sponsors, Pakistani American community members and the AOPP team/ volunteers who made this a memorable first event possible. Please sign-up for the Brand Pakistan Yahoo Group ([brandpakistan@yahoo.com](mailto:brandpakistan@yahoo.com)) to keep abreast of the latest updates on the initiative and relevant discussions.

#### **Panel Discussion**

Professor Adil Najam, of Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, Tufts University, who also serves on AOPP Board of Advisors moderated a highly interactive discussion amongst a distinguished panel of experts and the audience. The hour and a half long panel discussion provided food for thought on Pakistan's current challenges and opportunities that set the perfect stage for the afternoon's strategy working session. Some key concluding points by each panelist were as follows:

Mahreen Khan, Media Advisor for Prime Minister of Pakistan

- Use facts on our side
- Improve messaging skills
- Get involved - respond to the government, respond to the media,

Robin Thompson, Senior Branding Advisor, Landor Associates

- Produce new content
- Develop a 'Brand Platform'
- Obtain professional Media Relation expertise

Danny Schechter

Executive Editor, MediaChannel.Org

- Pakistani-American's should address American issues as well
- Partner with other organizations and American community members who empathize with the challenges faced by Pakistan
- Obtain Media Skills

Ethan Casey

International Journalist & Editor of the book "Alive and Well in Pakistan"

- Do-it-yourself
- Be Assertive
- Philanthropy for the US

Professor Adil Najam

Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, Massachusetts

- Ask Questions
- Build it/ they will come
- Keep doing it

## Strategy Working Session

Rafi-uddin Shikoh, Editor of DinarStandard.com, led hands on strategy working session which was kicked off by first understanding the elements that contribute to a nation's brand success as well as understanding what influences the initiatives primary US audience.

### **AOPP 'Brand Pakistan' Survey results:**

- Imran Hussain, presented the key insights gathered by the survey thus far

### **Key Attributes Identified:**

Six teams separated in groups to identify the following key attributes to work from:®

- *Pakistan - Key Strengths:* Culture (art, poetry, music, cuisine, fashion), diversity, women in politics and academia, philanthropic, successful diasporas, large young population, economy (sporting goods, textile, rice, surgical, ports, tourist attractions), geo-political strategic
  - location, moderate Muslim country, values (family, respect for elders, openness, hospitable), emerging free press
  - *Pakistan - Areas to Work on:* Governance (sustained democracy, checks & balances, military influence on society), identity, law & order, corruption, education, minority/ women rights, extremism, economy, behavior (cynicism, victim psyche, more criticism/ less action)
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- *External Opportunities/ Threats:* Technology, Outsourcing, India Buzz, Muslim world bridge, War on Terror, extremism, media exploitation, relations with Bush Administration

### **Key Program Ideas Identified:**

Following the identification of key attributes to consider for designing successful brand related initiatives, the six teams proceeded to brainstorm various programs and initiatives. A select set of key initiatives suggested are as follows:

- An annual Pakistan week, to be observed and promoted by all Pakistani groups in the US.
- Organize and fund Pakistan-US people visits
- Inviting non-Muslims to break the fast during Ramadan, celebrate Eid, etc.
- Holding free or subsidized clinics for Americans without health insurance, staffed by volunteer Pakistani doctors.
- Collaborate and volunteer with other US community organizations
- Visible involvement in American civic life: make your vote count; participate in PTA meetings, local town meetings
- More effective promotion/exchange of visual and performing arts (miniature arts, contemporary artists etc.)

### **Next Steps:**

AOPP is planning similar events in Washington DC, Chicago, Los Angeles and possibly other cities. Please sign-up with the Brand Pakistan Yahoo Group to keep abreast of the latest progress on these events and discussions.

An *Integrated Programs Recommendation Report* based on the input of the Pakistani American community, brand experts, and other key stakeholders gathered at the above events will be produced. The report will help organize and launch the next set of 'Brand Pakistan' events/initiatives that deliver the highest impact in developing a strong brand for Pakistan.

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