

A close-up photograph of water being poured into a clear glass. The water is captured in mid-pour, creating a dynamic splash and bubbles within the glass. The background is a soft, out-of-focus bokeh of warm, golden-brown light. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# Update on Branding Effort: Presentation to Commissioners

February 21, 2018



# Agenda

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- + Introductions
- + Background + Objectives
- + Process Overview
- + Timeline + Milestones

About GMMB (75%)  
+ SRB (25% MBE)  
Communications

- + **We are experts at branding.** We specialize in mission-driven branding for organizations, causes and campaigns of all sizes
- + **We have deep expertise working with utilities.** Our team has decades of experience working with utility companies in the Mid-Atlantic region
- + **We understand you and your challenge.** Together, our team brings six years of experience working with WSSC
- + **We have deep roots in the region.** Our team is both your neighbors and customers
- + **We are full-service.** We integrate unrivaled brand, creative and strategic expertise in everything we do



# PROCESS OVERVIEW

a brand is not a logo

a brand is not a word

a brand is a feeling

a brand is an image



winning



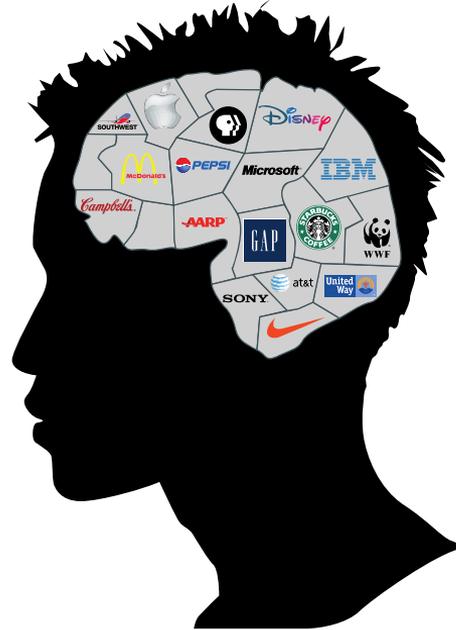
magic



rebellion



safety



happiness



mother/baby bond



intuitive technology



**American Red Cross**

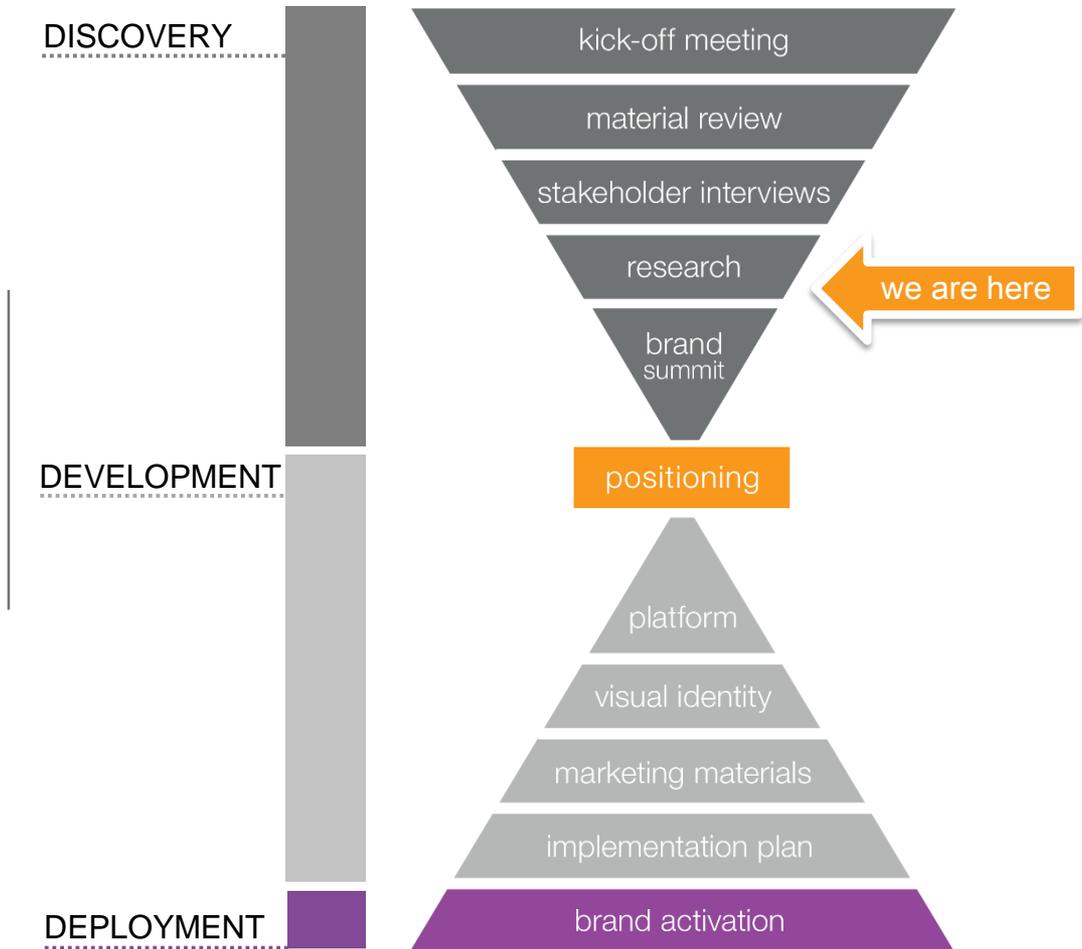
aid

brand management

=

relationship management

# Approach





# BACKGROUND + OBJECTIVES

# Context

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- + One of the largest water and wastewater utilities in the nation, you serve nearly two million residents in Prince George's and Montgomery counties, but WSSC is still not widely recognized in the community
- + WSSC is actively involved in community development and engagement efforts, but such involvement often goes unnoticed
- + Backdrop of a new rate structure

# Challenges

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- + Replacing aging infrastructure is **costly and disruptive**
- + **Consumer trust of water utility companies is wavering**, amidst water contamination findings in cities around the nation
- + **Customer service operations impact consumer perception of product quality**

# Opportunities

- + An untarnished record of providing safe and reliable water
- + New leadership team with a bold vision for the next 100 years in celebration of WSSC's centennial
- + Recommitment to customer service, 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure, and an investment in people
- + Opportunity to build trust and tell a story of transformation

# Objectives

- + **Understand our customers** through stakeholder interviews and focus groups
- + **Define our distinction** through competitive analyses and situation analyses
- + **Refine messaging** to better tell WSSC's story and communicate our value to customers
- + **Develop** customer-centered public education materials and platforms, including WSSC's website

- + Established Internal Advisory Committee
- + Conducted Material Review
  - Existing research
  - Marketing materials
  - Media coverage
  - Competitive analysis
- + Facilitated 14 Stakeholder Interviews
- + Led 2 Focus Groups
  - Montgomery County
  - Prince George's County
- + Facilitate Brand Summit

## Discovery

uncovering opportunity

- + Develop Positioning Strategy
- + Conduct Qualitative Research + Testing
- + Create Brand Platform + Message Architecture
- + Create Visual Identity + Style Guide
- + Produce Marketing Materials
- + Develop Brand Implementation Plan
  - Approaches to presenting new brand
  - Media strategy, both paid + earned
  - Social media strategy
  - Community outreach + visibility

## Development

creating data-backed strategy

A row of ornate, dark metal faucets, possibly made of bronze or copper, is shown in a close-up, shallow depth-of-field shot. The faucets are mounted on a light-colored, textured wall. Water is flowing from the spouts of the faucets, creating a series of parallel streams that recede into the background. The lighting is warm, highlighting the metallic sheen and the texture of the water. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the same row of faucets and a hint of a wooden surface.

TIMELINE +  
MILESTONES

## Timeline + Milestones

- + **Discovery:** October 2017– February 2018
  - **January 9 & 11:** Customer Focus Groups
  - **January:** Materials Audit and Stakeholder Interviews
  - **February 22:** Brand Summit
- + **Development:** February – September 2018
  - **March:** Message Testing Focus Group
  - **May 2:** Internal Advisory Committee review of positioning and recommendations
  - **July:** Visual Identity Development
  - **August:** Brand Implementation Plan Development
  - **Sept. 26:** Internal Advisory Committee review and approval of Brand Implementation Plan

A person stands on a dark, pebbly beach with their arms raised in a gesture of awe or gratitude. In the background, a massive, powerful waterfall cascades down a dark, rocky cliff. A vibrant rainbow arches across the scene, its colors appearing to emanate from the mist at the base of the waterfall. The overall atmosphere is one of natural grandeur and wonder.

THANK YOU