

## Case Study — Global retail and leisure business

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Company mergers often call for a large measure of diplomacy, tact and, of course, decisiveness. During a six-month assignment in which Marc was tasked with merging three retail businesses on behalf of the rich and powerful owners of a £55 billion private investment fund in Dubai, it was not only his outstanding business skills which were called into play, but the immensely charismatic personality for which he is very well-known.

Based in Dubai for the latter half of 2008, Marc worked on the merger and on redesigning the corporate structure of the business to create a new Board for the company. Where previously 20 individuals formed the three original Boards, the aim was to reduce this number to just six. Not only were tact and diplomacy key to meeting this particular challenge, but speed was also of the essence.

With the new Board in place, Marc's next challenges came as a result of putting together the brand for the company, as well as the business plans for the next five years. As a seasoned expert in the field of marketing with a track record of success stemming from his years in senior management roles in Blue Chip organisations and in working alongside a large number of private clients, once again it was not the complexity of the job itself which proved to be the greatest test, but the ability to effectively start from scratch and to educate the client.

Albeit that branding is considered to be an essential element of modern day marketing in the eyes of most businesses, it is a concept which is relatively new to those in Dubai. For Marc, this meant going back to basics in terms of the client's understanding and also involved the building of a new marketing team from scratch.

Another basic difference that Marc encountered revolved around strategic planning. Traditionally, the Board members had been used to taking a rather shorter three-year view, but Marc needed them to extend their planning horizons to take in a longer five-year picture.

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Treating causes not symptoms.

