Branding during a pandemic: How Labcorp launched forward when the world seemed stalled

Kelly Chtcheprov
August 24, 2021
About Labcorp

With over 70,000 employees worldwide, our mission to improve health and lives started in North Carolina and spans the globe.

Today, through our comprehensive clinical laboratories, we process more than 3 million patient specimens per week—and, in doing so, help medical professionals and patients make important health decisions.

With the support of our diagnostics capabilities and a commitment to deliver drug trials that are both reliable and rigorous, we're able to support clinical trial research efforts in nearly 100 countries. And that's one of the reasons why fifty of the top drugs developed in 2019 were supported by our clinical data.
A tale of two launches

Pixel by Labcorp
Scrappy, urgent product launch in response to the growing need for COVID-19 testing

Labcorp Corporate Brand
A thoughtful, deliberate corporate rebrand in a remote setting
How a small, scrappy team launched the world’s first at-home kit for COVID-19
Pixel by Labcorp had been around since 2018

At-home Blood Collection

Consumer-initiated Testing Platform
Launch Timeline

5 March
Labcorp launches COVID test
Labcorp was the first commercial lab in the U.S. to launch an RT-PCR test to detect COVID-19

19 March
Pixel begins work on at-home kit
Labcorp CEO Adam Schechter asks the Pixel team to develop an at-home test for COVID-19

21 April
Pixel launches for healthcare workers
A little over one month later, Pixel receives FDA authorization and goes live for healthcare workers and first responders

12 May
Pixel kits available broadly
Three weeks later, users are notified that Pixel kits are available for anyone who meets CDC guidelines
Launch an at-home test kit in less than a month

Launch Strategy
1. The product experience
2. Press release and media
3. Owned digital channels
Creating a Category Through Marketing Assets

1. Key message document
2. Existing Pixel brand guidelines
3. FDA Instructions for Use

Press Release

FAQ: multiple versions for multiple audiences
   Media, Consumers, Contact Center, Billing, Managed Care, Labcorp Employee Benefits

Digital Channels (Pixel and Labcorp)
   Social posts, Labcorp.com microsite, videos, etc.

Email Sign-Up / Interest Form

Physical Assets
   Pixel box, instructions, FedEx requirements, etc.

Nasal swab instructions
How to safely swab your nasal cavity.
The response

**The Washington Post**

FDA authorizes first rapid, over-the-counter home coronavirus test

"Today’s authorization is a major milestone in diagnostic testing for COVID-19," FDA Commissioner Stephen M. Hahn said in a statement.

Dec 15, 2020

**TechCrunch**

LabCorp’s at-home COVID-19 test kit is the first to be authorized by the FDA

LabCorp is a U.S. medical diagnostics company with over 40 years of experience, including at-home testing via its Pixel line for colorectal ...

Apr 21, 2020

**The New York Times**

Travel and Coronavirus Testing: Your Questions Answered

Some airports have clinics in terminals. Companies, including CareCube and Pixel by Labcorp, will mail a test to you and you send back a sample; ...

Dec 22, 2020

**Yahoo Finance**

Labcorp Launches COVID-19 Test Kits for Small Businesses to Support Return to Work and Life Safely

Businesses can order Pixel by Labcorp’s COVID-19 PCR Test Home ...

Labcorp (NYSE: LH), a leading global life sciences company, today ...

Apr 26, 2021
Lessons Learned

1. Product experience is critical
2. Importance of documented brand guidelines and key messaging
3. PR and marketing must support each other
4. Diverse skills and collaborative communication make a great team

*Be careful what you put on the internet*
Brand Evolution
Branding Process
It takes a team and it takes time.

1. Business leaders who have a vision.
2. Creatives who can translate.
3. Open dialogue and lots of feedback.
Align, Design, Refine

STEP 1 ALIGN

We started with market research of our customers and competitors.

We surveyed groups of employees, especially Covance employees.

We conducted 1:1 stakeholder interviews with executive decision-makers.

Held a half-day virtual brand workshop guided by the 1:1 conversations to get full alignment

Used those inputs to craft our brand promise.
But it was a complex process lasting most of 2020
We are your source for advancing health: powering clear, confident decisions.
Using stakeholder feedback, our creative team at Publicis Groupe began concepting.

A smaller group of marketers gave weekly feedback.

Each concept was a trailhead that could be explored further.
Align, Design, Refine

STEP 3 REFINE

The creatives at Publicis continued to refine based on the sub-team’s feedback.

Once our internal group felt confident, we brought two options to the C-Suite and then ultimately the board, refining at each step.
It starts with us as the source
And these layers represent the knowledge we share out.
But it was a complex process lasting most of 2020

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<tr>
<th>Align</th>
<th>April</th>
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<td>Market research</td>
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<td>Stakeholder interviews</td>
<td>Twice weekly calls with agency</td>
<td>Two half-day workshops with C-suite</td>
<td>Brand promise</td>
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| Design  |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | Brand guidelines |

| Refine |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                  |
|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                  |
|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | Internal feedback |
|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | Board feedback |
|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | Additional Assets |

|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | Key decision |
|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                  |

|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | Key decision |
|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                  |
INTRODUCING OUR NEW BRAND IDENTITY

Rolling out our new brand identity across all touch-points
Rolling out our new brand identity across all touch-points

INTRODUCING OUR NEW BRAND IDENTITY

CORE TEAM MEMBERS

BRAND AMBASSADORS

HUNDREDS OF PROJECTS
THOUSANDS OF ASSETS
Branding Lessons Learned

• Get alignment at every step, whether a key message document or a global brand promise.

• Have patience. Big changes take time, and the work doesn’t stop with your launch moment.

• Marketing is a team sport. Feedback and iteration are the tools.
Thank you.