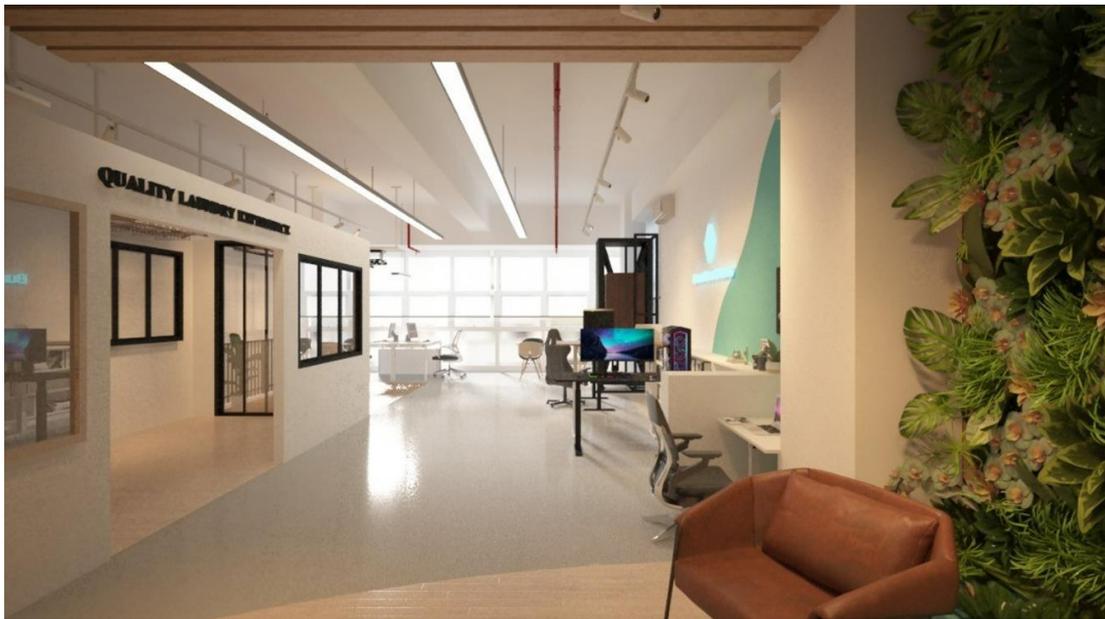




A Smarter Wash and Dry: Component Singapore Pte Ltd

Guided by the firm belief that a modern-day family should enjoy the many benefits offered by technology to make chores simpler and more efficient, a mechanical engineer set out to enrich lives by equipping families with smart home appliances.

Drawing from his own experience as a newly-wed who was “intimidated by the thought of doing housework in our new flat”, the engineer-turned-entrepreneur and his wife wanted to find a “smart and affordable solution” to minimise the tedium of household chores. Where doing the laundry was concerned, their experience with the smart laundry rack technology afforded them “tremendous amounts of energy and time” savings.



Component Singapore's showroom and office

In 2017, the brand GoodWife, rebranded as GoodLiving in 2021, was set up to forward the vision of introducing innovative technology solutions to impact every household. Business took off quickly and soon, its intelligent laundry system, automated through the touch of a button and featuring ultra-violet (UV) rays to aid in the drying process, became one of the SME's top sellers. As the SME's portfolio of intelligent laundry solutions grew, company Founder and Director Elvis Yang saw the need for a stronger and more defined brand positioning. Looking ahead, he knew that a clear brand narrative was essential to scale up the business for longer-term sustainability. With that in mind, Mr Yang turned to the UOB-SMU Asian Enterprise Institute to develop the brand narrative, identify the customer segments and recommend implementation ideas to gain mindshare.



Through the Institute's SME Consulting Programme (SCP), a team of student-consultants, supervised by an industry veteran as Project Advisor and a Project Manager from the Institute, undertook the brand strategies project.

A thorough scrub

As with other SCP projects, all the research and analysis have their basis in science, as the hallmark of the SCP is the use of scientific research methodologies to deliver high-quality consulting services that provide feasible solutions to business problems. To this end, the student-consultants began by gaining an understanding of the industry that GoodLiving operated in, and how it compared with its competitors. GoodLiving was the brand under which the SME marketed its smart laundry systems.

Primary and secondary research was carried out to garner the salient information. The primary research, comprising focus group sessions featuring both GoodLiving's customers and its competitors' customers, provided the student-consultants with insights into the respondents' purchase journey, ranging from the pre-purchase through to purchase and post-purchase phases. They discovered the key attributes that differentiated the competitor-customers' brands of choice. The face-to-face albeit virtual sessions also provided the student-consultants the opportunity to determine the elements that would contribute to effective visual communication, such as the preferred design styles, graphics and typography, and preferred modes of interaction.

In the secondary research, the student-consultants conducted a competitor analysis to determine where GoodLiving stood in relation to its main competitors. They visited the different websites and social media business accounts, surveyed customer reviews to ascertain the level of customer satisfaction, collected data on pricing and products, and compared their social media presence and customer engagement. They also examined case studies of successful brands and noted the pertinent best practices.

Having collated the required data, the student-consultants leveraged established data analysis methods and techniques including branding frameworks, namely, Customer-based Brand Equity Model and Brand Value Chain, to draw meaningful insights that would form the basis of their recommendations.

Who's doing the laundry?

Based on their research findings, the student-consultants identified three areas that the SME could address, comprising GoodLiving's brand positioning, brand personality, and brand elements. They proceeded to develop a brand positioning, along with an impactful brand mantra to direct the marketing activities.

Having identified the characteristics of the brand's target customers using Aaker's Five Dimensions of Brand Personality, the team introduced two personas with differing personal profiles and preferences, with each possessing the typical personality traits of GoodLiving's.

two key customer groups. They also crafted a design guide consisting of the brand elements aligned with the intended new brand positioning.

The final report incorporated an implementation timeline to inaugurate and reinforce a strong and distinct branding aimed at effectively capturing mindshare. The critical phases start with an internal review of the recommendations to finalise the brand strategy and for the planning of the marketing strategy. It was recommended that the first brand tracking study should take place six months after the launch of the marketing action plans, so that analysis and refinements could take place where necessary. A second brand tracking study should ideally take place six months later.

“Very satisfied”, “very beneficial”

Company Founder and Director Mr Yang pronounced himself “very satisfied” with the project. From gaining “a lot of insights” from the research and analysis to the thoroughness and feasibility of the recommendations provided, he regarded the whole process as “very beneficial”. “The project outcomes validated our business plans, and the bite-sized implementation work was overall well executed by the student team. The tasks were organised and everything went smoothly with incredible results,” he shared. He was especially pleased to be able to discern the potential customer segments for the smart laundry systems.

The student-consulting team had wanted to “gain more exposure” working with a client on a real-life project. They appreciated the “autonomy to craft our own proposals and project directions with the client”, under the guidance of Project Advisor Nicole Cham and Project Manager Chen Shan Shan. “As a lot of our academic lessons could be applied in real life, it gave us the added confidence when conducting the brand audit, and deepened our research and analysis.” To their SMU juniors who may be considering the SCP, they had this to say, “It’s a fantastic opportunity to test one’s skills and aptitude in managing and leading a project that has real-world impact and application.”

Ms Cham had given them “significant space to express and innovate diverse ways to approach the tasks at hand”, acknowledged the student-consultants. She provided valuable feedback at important junctures that helped them “structure the deliverables to a higher standard”, prompting them and pushing them to “dive deeper into the analysis to create an extraordinarily rich thinking environment that stimulated their thinking, helping them develop into better working professionals”.

Ms Cham acknowledged the intentionality of the space given to the students to “suggest a direction, as well as give their interpretation of the problem statement”. This strengthened the “learning journey as they can learn what they need to ask, what they need to do, and how to achieve the goals”. For her, the SCP was a “good experience”. She found her young charges “teachable” and “willing to take feedback”. Significantly, the client was happy with the recommendations – he was already integrating the findings and proposals in his



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marketing materials, customer relationship management, and branding when they were just midway through the project, she revealed.

Calling it a “meaningful and timely project for the SME”, Ms Chen shared that the company was just embarking on its rebranding journey and looking to “refresh its website and various digital touchpoints”. The in-depth research on consumers, especially the detailed recommendations on the various brand elements, provided the SME with relevant, well-timed and easy-to-implement action plans and other information which all contributed to a strong, consistent brand outlook – exactly what the client was looking for.

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Project Manager **Chen Shan Shan**

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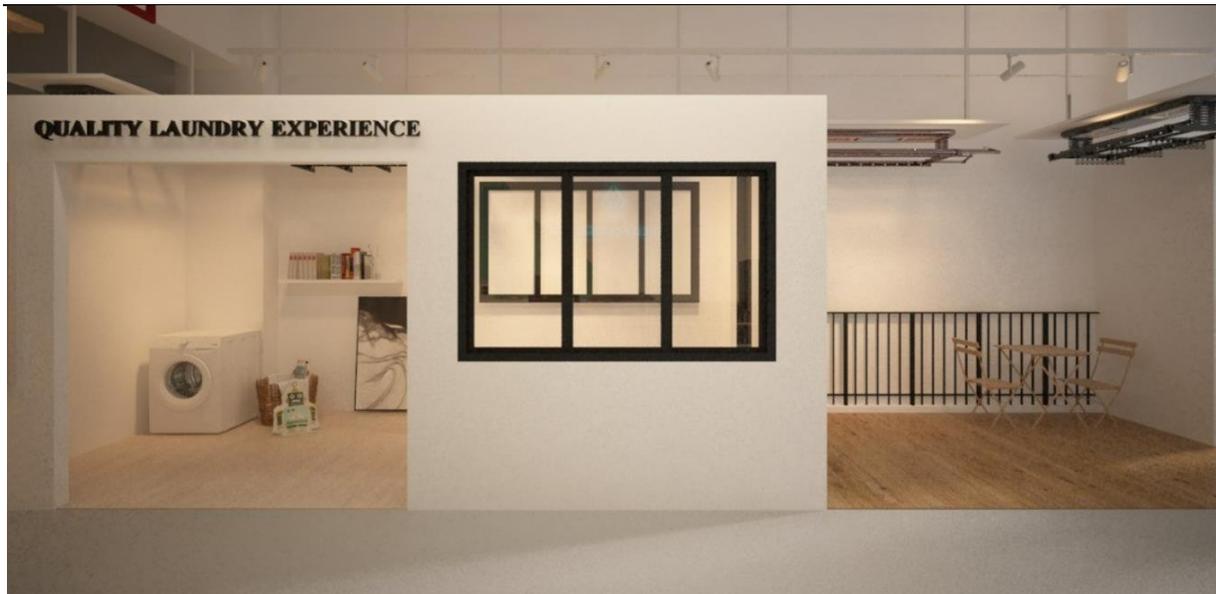
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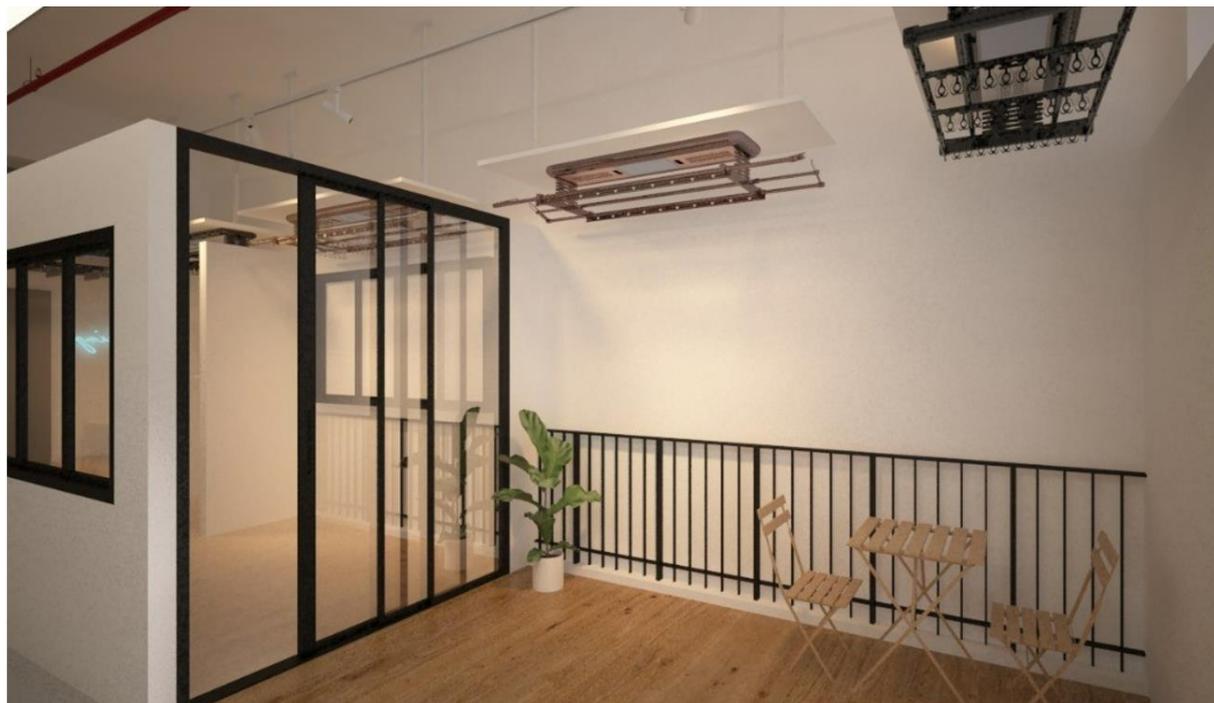
Showroom waiting area, with ceiling-mounted laundry rack



Service yard mock-up: laundry racks fit neatly in the spaces available



External view mock-up: helping customers imagine the racks in their homes



Balcony mock-up: laundry racks are unobtrusive and can be fitted in various locations