

FutureBrand

Brand Bhutan Project *Executive Summary*

Project introduction

In October 2014, the Department of Trade, together with support from the UNDP and global brand partner FutureBrand, embarked on an extensive program to develop the 'Made In Bhutan' brand strategy and visual identity to promote exports, and add a premium to the goods and services that are produced or originate in Bhutan.

The Brand Bhutan Project began with an extensive immersion and analysis undertaken by the FutureBrand team in Bhutan in order to understand the country, its culture and the key audiences critical to its success – particularly in relation to its goods and services for export. Activities during the analysis phase included site visits to a number of key landmarks and industrial sites; face-to-face interviews with government officials, business leaders and other key stakeholders in the private and public sectors; and detailed review of existing brand strategy analysis reports from previous projects, key government policy, planning and strategy documents, and key studies, thought pieces and news articles.

The immersion and analysis reiterated the challenges outlined in the initial project brief provided by the Bhutan Department of Trade, which can be summarised below:

- The quality of products and services is not consistent but the pricing strategy is high – raising expectations amongst consumers but not necessarily managing to deliver;
- The small size of the population and market and limited resources means Bhutan is unable to benefit from economies of scale;
- The lack of infrastructure (e.g., roads) is leading to high cost of logistics for producers and exporters (grading, assembly, collection, bulking, transport);
- And, there is high competition from conventional agriculture and cheaper imports meaning competing nations are managing to offer the 'uniqueness' more efficiently and cheaply.

Importantly, the immersion and analysis uncovered the need for Bhutan to first define what value '*Bhutan*' (the country) brings to the market before it is possible to define the value of '*Made In*' Bhutan. Consequently, FutureBrand set out to define the strategy and identity for Bhutan the country brand to communicate the competitive difference it offers to the world.

What is a 'country brand'?

Today, the term 'brand' isn't simply a descriptor for consumer goods: it includes products, services, and experiences, as well as destinations and countries, and speaks to how these offerings are marketed to audience groups in order to drive preference and choice. Ultimately, brand is an asset that represents the sum total of the associations that influence preference – and it must be carefully managed. Just like for products or services, countries are known by association, including language, images and media, as well as first-hand experience and peer recommendation.

Brands are important because they influence the choices consumers make, and the same is true for country brands. These perceptions impact on an individual's decision to invest, visit, emigrate, work, study, consume that country's goods or become interested in its culture. And like any brand, a country

brand must be consistent across many touchpoints – from advertising and public relations to political representatives, cultural ambassadors, tourists, companies and products and services.

Why do country brands matter?

Country branding is a vital element in both domestic and international affairs. The difference between a successful, defined and understood brand and a weaker, less differentiated one can have a significant impact on a country's attractiveness for investment as well as tourism, and can compromise domestic confidence and social unity.

A well-defined association around origin and nationality can also become a hallmark of quality in the long-term. For example, the fact that the European Union places such a high legal emphasis on labelling the origin of products and services only underscores the link between a country's branding and the branding of a country's goods. The ability to legally use terms of authenticity around regional origin allows for protection against counterfeiting, false advertising and misleading sales messages. That is where the business of branding meets the assets of a country's brand.

Key success metrics for the development of Brand Bhutan

In order to be successful, Brand Bhutan must be more than a logo – it must be grounded in a robust and rigorous strategy that reflects the values of Bhutanese society, history and GNH philosophy. Ultimately, it must drive consumer choice and align with the nation's strategies and ambitions.

At the conclusion of the immersion and analysis phase, the following points were outlined as key criteria to ensure the success of Brand Bhutan – it must:

- Promote Bhutan to the outside world: increasing demand for Bhutanese products and services;
- Ensure consensus and participation across government departments, the private sector and civil society;
- Result in an implementable strategy that is easy to monitor and manage;
- Enhance exports but be able to work across and benefit most sectors;
- Create local demand to use and leverage the new brand;
- Ultimately, be a brand, logo, tagline and set of guidelines that all stakeholders can understand and leverage.

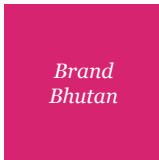




Key recommendations for the development of Brand Bhutan

1. **Align Brand Bhutan with the strategy of the nation:** Brand Bhutan must be more than a certification of origin. It should be used as a platform for decision making, nation building and creating the right experiences for audiences and consumers.
2. **Define and activate an ownable brand experience:** Capture the spirit, atmosphere, philosophy and way of life of the Bhutanese people and place.
3. **Recognise 'country of origin' as a dimension of future brand strength:** Only leverage Brand Bhutan if it will drive consumer choice and preference, and only for products, services and sectors that will build equity in the country brand, not dilute it.
4. **Streamline and manage Bhutan's entire portfolio of brands:** Develop one unified and overarching country brand for Bhutan, which can be leveraged across all sectors and requirements moving in the future (see figure 1).

5. **Identify the products and services that should leverage Brand Bhutan:** Qualify and develop the sector brands that support Bhutan’s sustainable and long-term growth plans (see figure 1).
6. **Create a structure that allows Bhutan to govern the brand successfully:** Establish an effective plan that identifies a clear way forward for the launch, implementation and ongoing management of Brand Bhutan.

Figure 1: The recommended approach – create one unified and overarching country brand for Bhutan, which can be leveraged across multiple sectors

Recommended Brand Architecture: Country brand + 3 Key Sector brands

Umbrella brand/ country brand			
Sector brands	<i>Tourism</i> 	<i>Made In</i> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #ccc;"/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <i>MADE IN</i>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <i>GROWN IN</i>   </div> </div>	
Endorsed products and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism and hospitality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film and media • Handicrafts • Textiles • Fine art 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic farming • Raw food products • Traditional medicines • Biotechnology • Health foods • Food products (FMCG) 	

Why does creating one unified country brand meet Bhutan’s needs today and in the future?

- Creating one country brand that aligns with the strategy of the country will ‘future proof’ and build the most equity and value in Brand Bhutan in the long-term;
- It will more effectively promote Bhutan to the outside world: increasing demand for Bhutanese products, services and industries;
- It is easiest for audiences to navigate and understand what Bhutan stands for and the value it offers to the world;
- It is the most efficient approach, and requires less investment overall than launching and managing multiple brands.

What does this recommendation mean for Bhutan's existing brands and certifications – for example, the current Tourism Brand?

- Today, there are many different brands, seals and certifications in Bhutan (e.g., the Tourism Brand, as well as the Made In Bhutan, Seal of Quality and Seal of Excellence certifications, among others);
- In FutureBrand's expert opinion, the current Tourism Brand **does not have enough stretch or flexibility** to be used across multiple sectors (including as the overarching country brand):
 - The flower icon is not unique to Bhutan. Many countries also use the flower as a way to represent themselves so it is not differentiated enough to leverage for the country or its key sectors;
 - The current Tourism Brand does not have enough 'stretch' to work for all the stakeholders and contexts that it needs to (e.g., across products, services and government initiatives);
 - The current Tourism Brand does not allow for implementation across key touchpoints (e.g., it creates difficulties for large scale implementation and colour consistency, and the number of fine details can create issues for brand extensions, specifically for small size reductions like packaging);
 - Lastly, the current Tourism Brand only consists of a logo, and does not have a well-developed or robust visual identity system with supporting elements such as a colour palette, typography, photography or graphic that can be applied across all touchpoints and applications in the future.
- There is an opportunity, however, to develop one unified and overarching country brand that is **broad and robust enough** to represent multiple sectors;
- A unified and overarching country brand will 'future proof' and **build the most equity in Brand Bhutan** in the long-term;
- A unified and overarching country brand is easiest for audiences to **navigate and understand what Bhutan stands for** and the value it offers;
- A unified and overarching country brand enables a consistent **customer experience** at every touch point;
- A unified and overarching country brand is the **most efficient approach**, and requires less investment overall than managing multiple brands;
- A unified and overarching country brand offers **clear, logical paths** for how to visually and verbally treat new brands and extensions;
- **Now is the time to do it!** Through this project, creating one unified and overarching country brand will meet Bhutan's needs now and in the future.

Consequently, FutureBrand's recommendation is to retire the current Tourism Brand, as well as the Made In Bhutan, Seal of Quality and Seal of Excellence certifications, and replace them with the one unified and overarching country brand (Brand Bhutan) – as outlined in the recommended strategy and visual identity below (see figures 2-6).

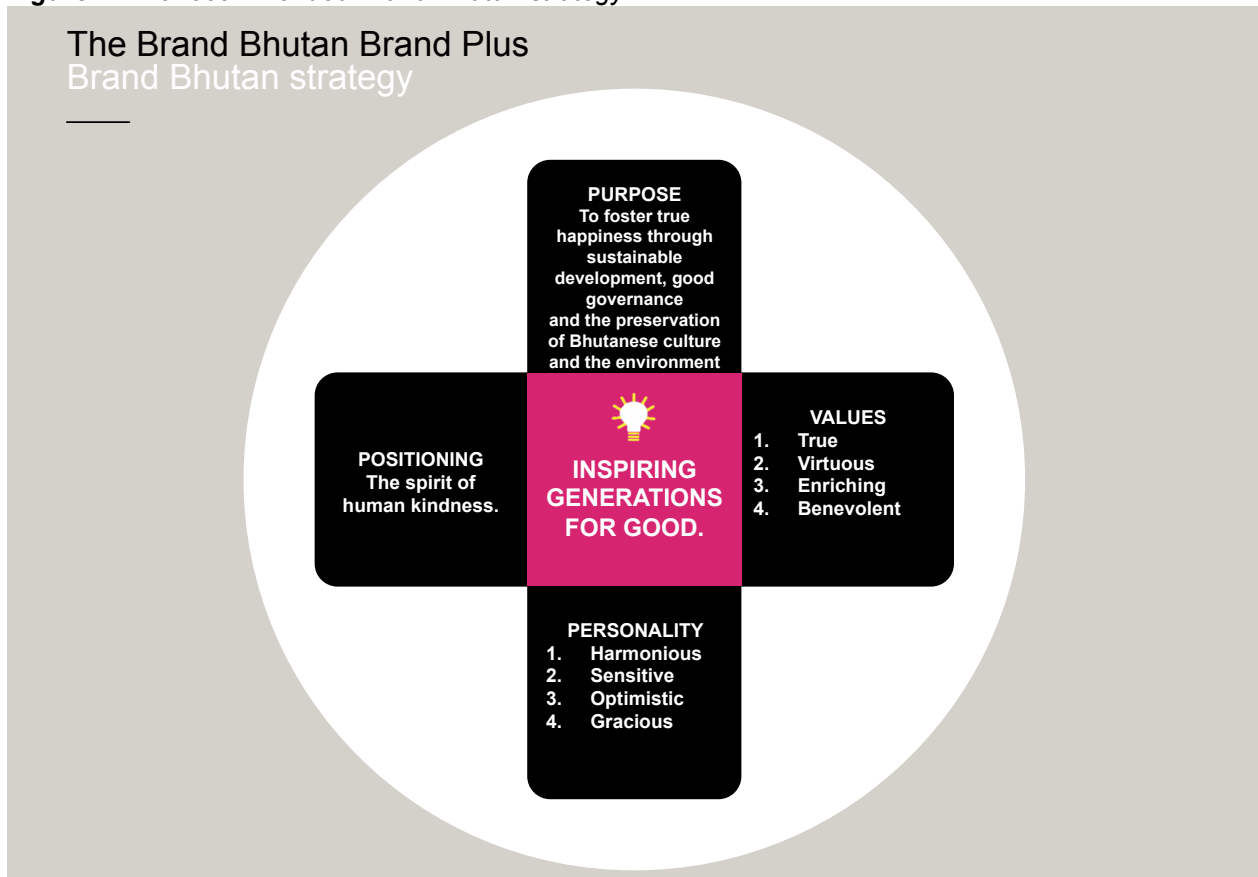
The recommended Brand Bhutan strategy

The Brand Plus (figure 2) is the strategic foundation that captures and articulates what Brand Bhutan stands for in the market – the role it plays in the world (its *purpose*), the offer it provides (its *positioning*), the beliefs it holds dear (its *values*) and the tone and style of its communications (its *personality*).

Above all, the essence of Brand Bhutan is about ‘Inspiring Generations for Good’ – encouraging people from around the world to be the best they can be now and for generations to come.

The brand Bhutan strategy is the foundation for the visual identity system and all creative executions and experiences to follow.

Figure 2: The recommended Brand Bhutan strategy



The recommended Brand Bhutan identity

The brand identity (figures 3-6) is designed to capture the spirit of the country. Through the visual identity system, audiences and consumers can connect with everything that makes Bhutan so special and unique – from the vibrant colours of the prayer flags to the spiritual patterns and symbolism of the country's handmade treasures. Ultimately, the Brand Bhutan identity system is a platform to share the country's culture with the world and inspire people with the Bhutanese philosophies and way of life.

The Brand Bhutan identity consists of the logo, colour palette, typography, iconography, pattern and photography (see figure 3). The identity, which has been documented in a Brand Guidelines, is a comprehensive system that includes a visual representation for the overarching country brand, as well as key sector brands: 'Made In Bhutan,' 'Grown In Bhutan' and the 'Tourism Brand' (still under discussion) (see figure 4).

Figure 3: The recommended Brand Bhutan visual identity system elements



Figure 4: The recommended logos for Brand Bhutan and its key sector brands

Summary of the Recommended Brand Architecture – Option 1



Figure 5: The recommended Brand Bhutan example applications

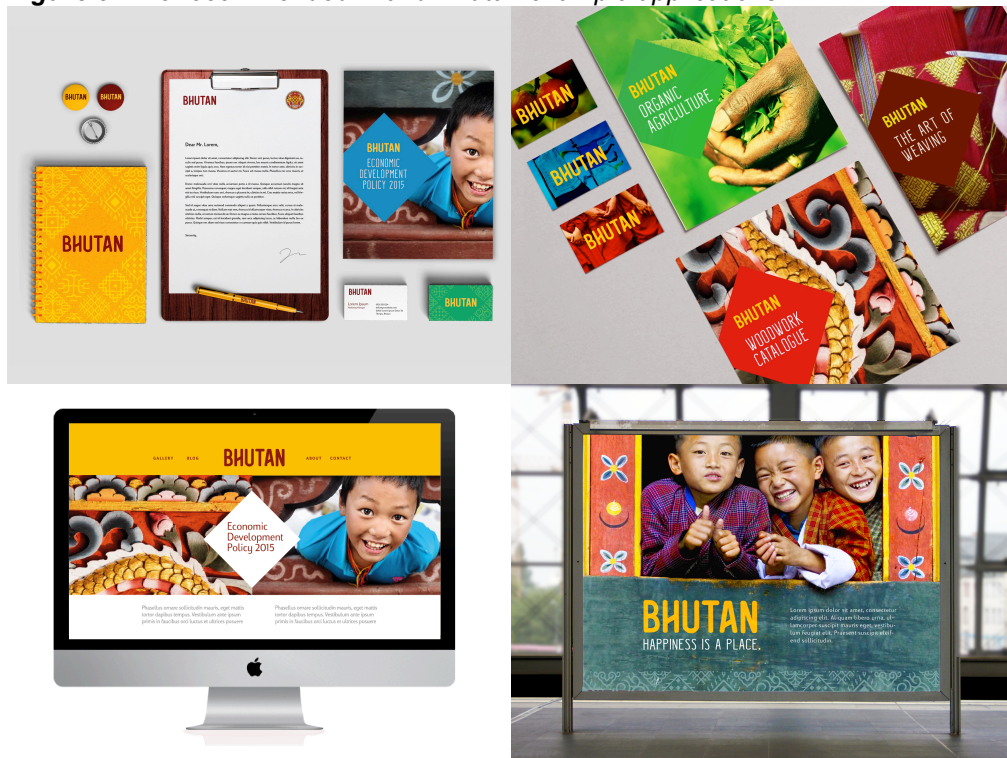


Figure 6: The recommended Brand Bhutan visual identity system summary

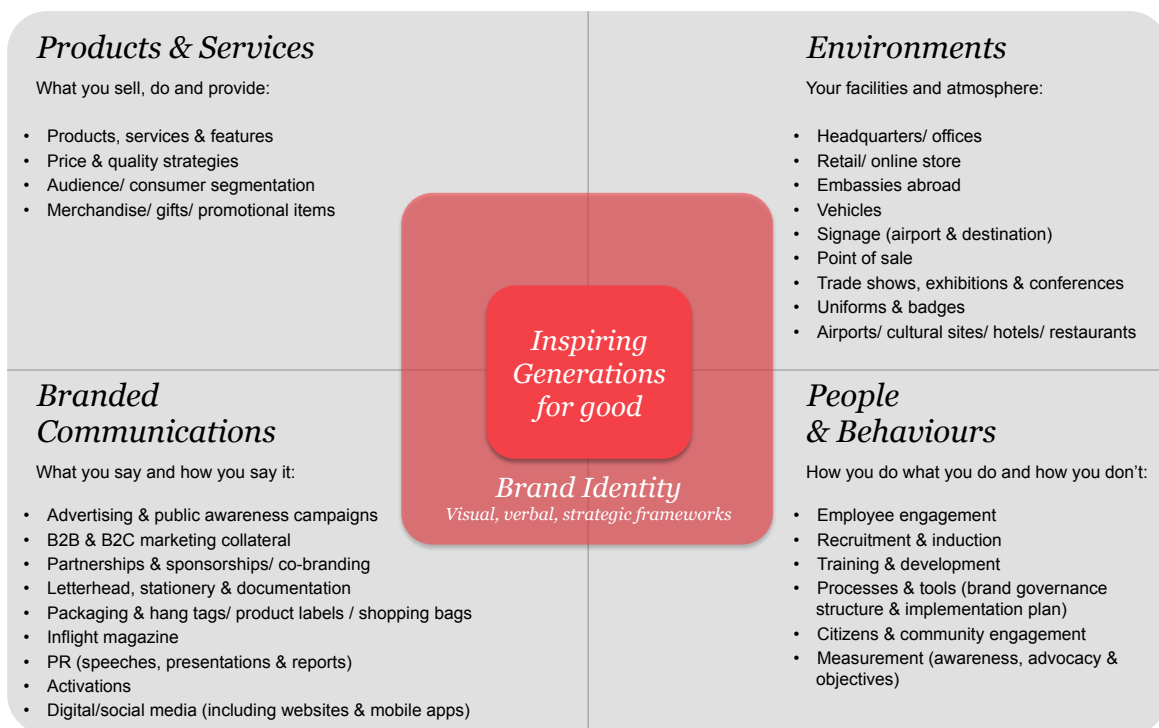


Brand governance and implementation

Effective implementation and ongoing brand governance is critical to the success of this engagement. Bringing Brand Bhutan to life will require equal effort across government ministries and departments as well as Bhutan's private sector.

The Brand Bhutan implementation plan has been discussed during several workshops held in Bhutan, and as a result FutureBrand has recommended a number of key activities and initiatives required to bring Brand Bhutan to life (see figure 7).

Figure 7: The recommended activities and initiatives to bring Brand Bhutan to life



FutureBrand then proposed an approach to filter and prioritise these actions and initiatives (see figure 8).

Figure 8: The recommended filter to prioritise actions and initiatives

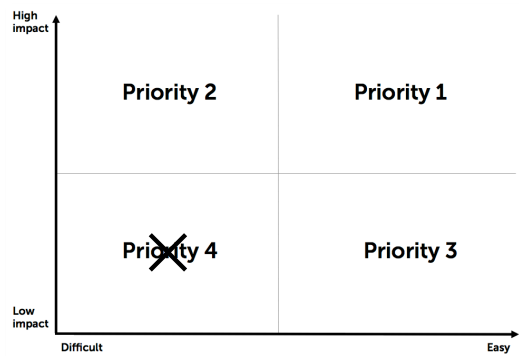
Impact vs. Ease analysis:

Impact:

The influence and effect this activity or initiative will have on successfully implementing and building value in Brand Bhutan.

Ease:

The time, effort, resources and cost involved in bringing each activity or initiative to life.



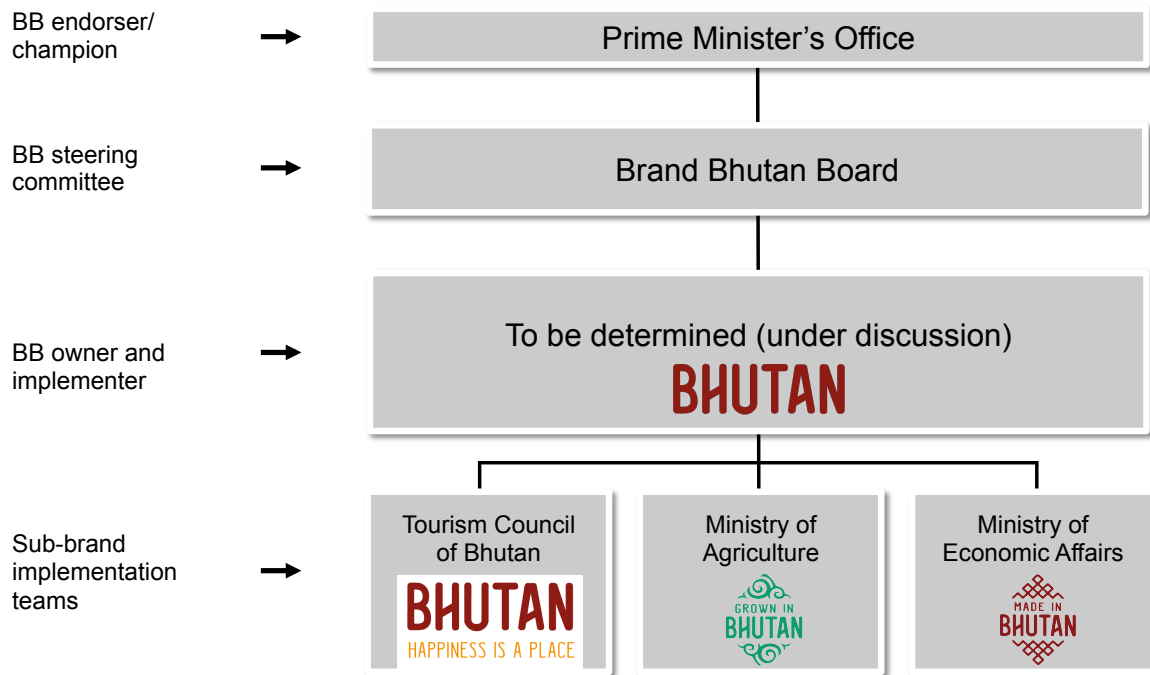
FutureBrand then recommended an implementation roadmap to guide the rollout of Brand Bhutan (see figure 9).

Figure 9: The recommended implementation roadmap to bring Brand Bhutan to life in the next 4-5 years

Priority 1 0 – 24 months	Priority 2 24 – 42 months	Priority 3 42 – 60 months
<p>Products & services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience/ consumer segmentation • Initial merchandise/ gifts/ promotional items <p>Branded communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packaging & hang tags/ product labels/ shopping bags • Letterhead, stationary & documentation • Advertising & public awareness campaigns • Activations • B2B & B2C marketing collateral • PR (speeches, presentations & reports) • Digital/ social media (including websites & mobile apps) • Inflight magazine <p>Environments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airports & welcome signage • Hotels & restaurants • Retail • Headquarters/ offices <p>People & behaviours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes & tools (brand governance structure & implementation plan) • Citizens & community engagement • Employee engagement • Training & development • Measurement (awareness, advocacy & objectives) 	<p>Products & services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates to current products, services & features • Price & quality strategies • Additional merchandise/ gifts/ promotional items <p>Branded communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships & sponsorships/ co-branding <p>Environments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Made In' official store • Destination signage (e.g., park signs) • Point of sale • Cultural sites (e.g., museums) • Trade shows, exhibitions & conferences <p>People & behaviours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria for products & services to use Brand Bhutan • Recruitment & induction • Citizen ambassador program (encouraging and incentivising use of the brand) 	<p>Products & services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New products & services <p>Branded communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global advertising campaign and/or activations <p>Environments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online store • Embassies abroad • Uniforms & badges • Vehicles

Finally, FutureBrand has recommended a governance structure for how to implement and manage Brand Bhutan, including details around roles and key skills and capabilities required (see figure 10).

Figure 10: The recommended governance structure to manage Brand Bhutan and its key sector brands



In conclusion and next steps

FutureBrand has provided the Department of Trade and Tourism Council of Bhutan with the necessary tools to start the basic implementation of Brand Bhutan: the brand guidelines, the messaging matrix and a proposed governance structure for brand management.

As the implementation goes beyond the simple production of collateral and the licensing of the brand to retail partners, the Department of Trade will find itself in need of more sophisticated implementation tools – tools that will not only help ‘apply’ the brand, but manage it, protect it and ultimately grow its equity. FutureBrand can provide these tools and can tailor them to ensure maximum cost and operational efficiencies.

Upon the approval of Brand Bhutan, FutureBrand has provided additional recommendations for key implementation activities and initiatives, which are summarised below:

1. Brand Bhutan Team Set-up (To bring the brand governance structure to life);
2. Brand Bhutan Digital Hub (To manage artwork and files);
3. Brand Bhutan Accreditation (To train and induct audiences on Brand Bhutan);
4. Brand Bhutan Ambassadorship Program (To promote, energise and personify the brand);
5. Ongoing Brand Bhutan Guardianship (To provide effective, long-term brand management support).