



Grady Britton was tasked to reinvigorate this 100 year old southern Washington institution and develop a new (younger) following in existing and new markets (e.g., Portland.)

As part of this grand endeavor, focus groups with core customers and prospects were conducted to establish current brand equities and perceptual landscape. Most interesting, there was a *habit and tradition* of being a First Independent customer, but they were not passionate about the brand. Prospects had felt the lukewarm endorsement from current customers when they asked around and had few positive perceptions of the brand.

With this scenario as the reality, the task was reframed to be a full re-launch of the brand. The position came from an understanding of what customers and prospects wanted in an ideal world from a bank: a stepping stone approach to reaching their goals and dreams. An experience that was not a 'one size fits all' approach in a language they could understand. We learned that when people had an epiphany about money, that's when they looked into finding a banking partner and not a transactional bank they picked up in college. We sought to lure these people at these moments.

To create their ideal, much work had to be done. Financial products were retooled, a fully-functional internet banking site built, a new logo created, branches face-lifted and front line staff retrained (using On Your Feet, an improvisation group, to role play.) An internal launch event was given as much importance and fanfare as the external launch.

**First Independent exceeded the 1 billion revenue mark the first year after re-launch and continues to grow even in a down economy.**