



Global marketing

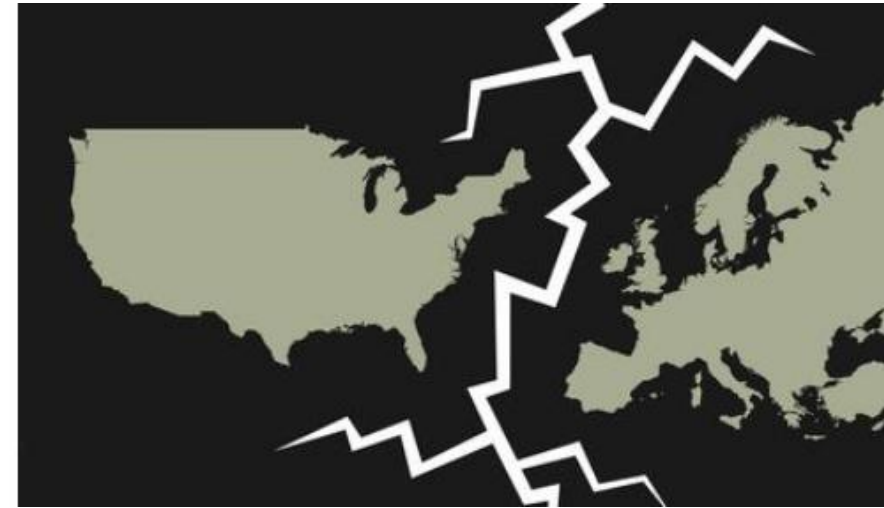
Communicating across regions

Jennifer Smither

Senior Product Marketing Analyst

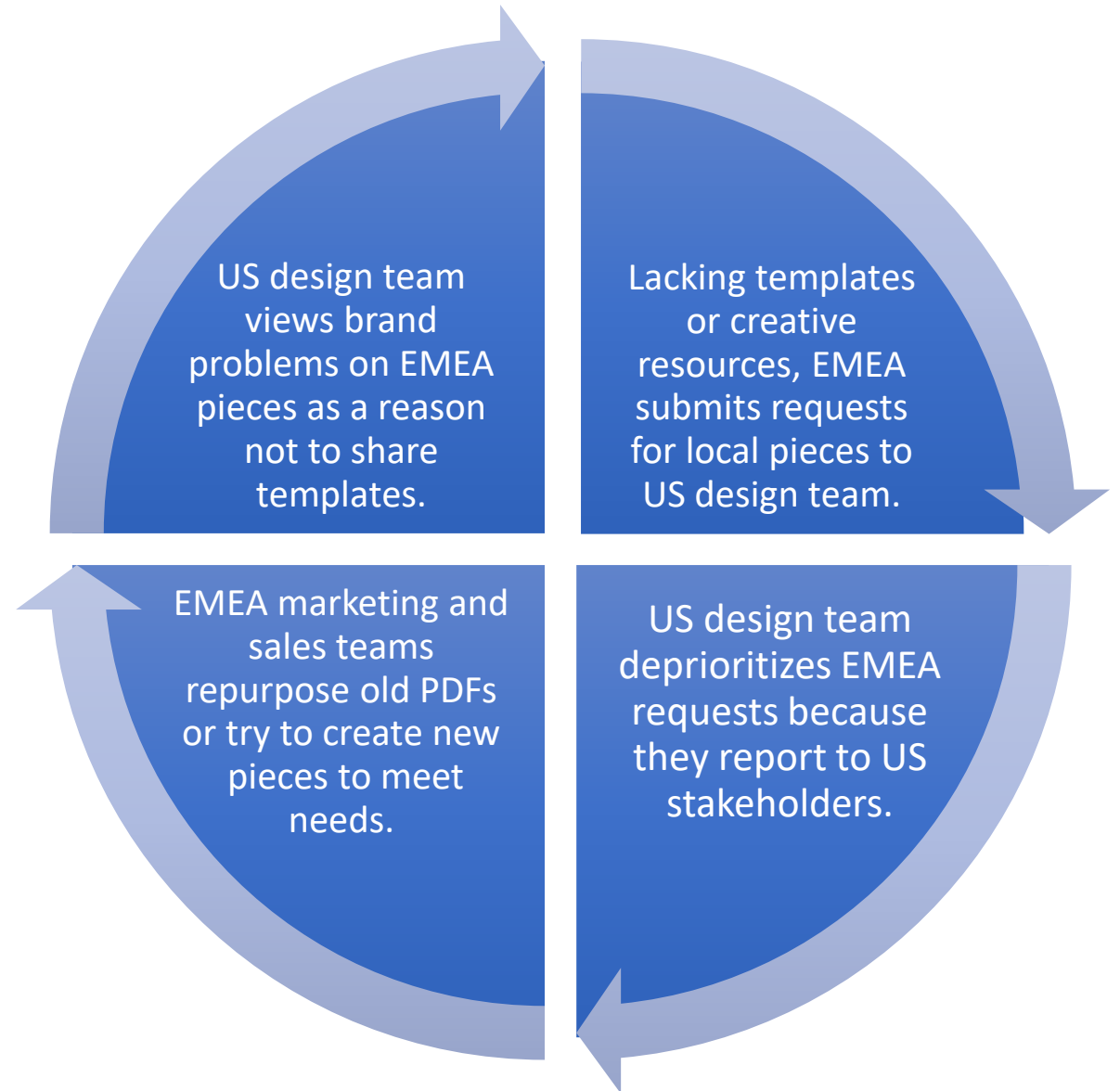
Are we a global company? Or a regional one?

- 50-year-old, US-based company
- Expanded to Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) through acquisition
- EMEA marketing and sales expected to be mostly self-sufficient, but not given enough creative resources
- No clear communication or processes between regions, no EMEA input into messaging or branding



The problem

**Our company
does not
communicate a
consistent global
brand.**



Why it's a problem

When a brand isn't consistent, it loses meaning. Each product then must stand on its own features, rather than the promise of support, infrastructure, and community the brand offers.

Without support or an open line of communication between the US headquarters and the EMEA region, it's impossible to operate as a global company.



Our requests for help fall into a black hole, so we've learned to do the best we can on our own.



The stakeholders

\$ US \$

Product
Marketing

Corporate
Marketing

Creative/design
team

Me

Product
Marketing
Writer
(and de facto
marketing
content
manager)

€ EMEA €

Product
Marketing

Sales

“

No one who
could solve the
problem could
prioritize it,
and no one who
prioritized it
could solve it.





GOAL

Bring EMEA marketing into collateral planning and conversations.



What can we build by working together?

Benefits

- To save time and effort by sharing work
- To reduce conflict between US creative and EMEA marketing teams
- To close more EMEA sales with the collateral and other content they need

Consequences of the status quo

- EMEA sales suffer because products do not have the brand story to back them up
- Both EMEA marketing and US creative teams are frustrated and unhappy for not getting the resources they need

“

How do your needs align with our needs? Can we save effort by working together instead of in silos?



Solution options



	IMPLEMENTED
Give EMEA more budget for creative marketing resources	
Give EMEA creative control and templates to develop their own collateral	
Make translation requests easier than new content	✓
Liaison between EMEA marketing and US creative teams	✓
Open awareness of status quo to more stakeholders	✓
Implement localization teams in each region to manage and maintain content	
Give source of truth insight into all teams	✓



What hasn't worked

1

Give EMEA more budget for creative marketing resources. The people struggling with the issue don't have high-level budget control. With priorities competing throughout the company, the team has not failed loudly enough to attract more funds.

2

Give EMEA creative control and templates to develop their own collateral. Designers feel responsible for branding and hesitate to release control. However, since withholding help results in "bootleg" content, they agreed to prioritize EMEA projects.

3

Implement localization teams in each region to manage and maintain content. Each region has one or two marketing staff handling translations, content, and sales enablement. Similar to #1, the team has avoided major failures that invite restructuring.



What we tried instead

1

Make translation requests easier than new content. Translators, designers, and supporting teams worldwide worked together to establish standard processes. We consulted EMEA before finalizing English pieces to better align messages.

2

Liaison between EMEA marketing and US creative teams. I was in a unique situation to listen closely to both teams. Understanding their priorities, I could advocate for EMEA during in-person design meetings and set expectations for deadlines.

3

Give source of truth insight into all teams. By creating and promoting a collateral inventory, EMEA could finally see English resources available and request translations. Design and US marketing could see the pieces EMEA created and collaborate better.

4

Open awareness of status quo to more stakeholders. Through honest conversations, backed up by the items in the inventory and sales results, many team members were able to raise the issue in a way that captured leadership's attention.



How it all came together

Two key initiatives made it possible to bring EMEA marketing into collateral planning and conversations.



Open lines of collaboration



Collateral inventory



Conduct listening tour

STEP

1

Timing

About 1 month,
ongoing



Learn where the pain points are without trying to fix them.

Challenges and barriers

- Making time with busy staff across time zones
- Building trust
- Overcoming past hurts

Tips for success

- Don't correct "wrong" ways of doing things; ask about why they are that way
- Bring humility and attitude of learning

Essential collaborators: US designers, EMEA marketing, US marketing and leadership

Serve as unofficial liaison

STEP

2

Timing

About 6 months,
ongoing



Advocate for both sides and manage expectations

Challenges and barriers

- Prioritizing requests diplomatically
- Learning which battles to fight and which to concede

Tips for success

- Find ways to remind everyone that we're on the same team, and we succeed together

Essential collaborators: US designers, EMEA marketing, US marketing and leadership

Collect all active assets

STEP

3

Timing

About 3 months,
maintenance



Go beyond the known assets to gather the ad hoc pieces

Challenges and barriers

- Finding out who had hidden resources
- Convincing them that it was safe to share

Tips for success

- Keep focus on collecting, not on solving the problem
- Remember that they created what they needed to do their jobs, it's not personal

Essential collaborators: EMEA marketing and sales, US marketing and sales

Build collateral inventory

STEP



Timing

About 2 months,
maintenance



Demonstrate value of transparency and get participation

Challenges and barriers

- Learning how to build and use tables in SharePoint
- Including the most useful info
- Helping others understand how this benefits them

Tips for success

- Don't assume others will see the value in a digital asset manager; sell it
- Balance info with ease of use and maintenance

Essential collaborators: Internal SharePoint team, US sales

Facilitate translation requests

STEP

5

Timing

About 1 month,
regularly revisited



Meet needs through translations instead of new pieces

Challenges and barriers

- Facilitating conversations to identify needs and define process
- Helping others stick to the process with rare deviations

Tips for success

- Document process in detail and in a simplified one-pager to hang up by their desks
- Enforce process but allow for necessary exceptions

Essential collaborators: Internal translation teams, EMEA marketing, US design

The view today

Revenue increase



9.1% increase in global product revenue over the next four years, in part due to EMEA sales success.

Better relationships



EMEA and US team members began to appreciate each others' challenges and forge friendships.

Better content



Planning for a global audience resulted in more targeted, on-brand messages. Usage helped teams understand each piece's value.

Evolution of platform



Stakeholders championed collateral inventory upgrade for better sustainability and alignment with other internal services.

