

## SIMULATION MODULE 2: BRANDING GROUP ASSIGNMENT

Blink Industrial is a technology firm focusing on virtual reality training solutions for military operations. Most recently, Blink Industrial has developed a new technology called AlphaScan that will revolutionize the VR industry. AlphaScan uses visual, auditory, and cognitive elements to drastically shorten the training time for soldiers. Our findings show that Blink Industrial has created a name in the military industry through their past technology and successful acquisitions of other companies, but they have done little to market their AlphaScan technology. We are recommending creating a sub brand for the new technology.

### PROBLEM STATEMENT

AlphaScan is the newest technology to be announced by Blink Industrial and provides the opportunity to position the company as innovators in the industry and meet its goals of widening its audience and investor list. AlphaScan has been added to the Blink Industrial website but is lacking a robust communication plan to reach new audiences and effectively promote the product. By taking these steps to properly brand and communicate the new technology, Blink Industrial will see more investments coming in, additional grant awards, and an increase in brand recognition.

### ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

Blink Industrial aims to:

- Expand its investor base
- Expand analyst coverage
- Pursue research and development grant opportunities
- Increase mergers and acquisitions activity
- Speed up the testing for all custom systems, and time-to-market for new off-the-shelf products

### BRANDING COMMUNICATIONS GOALS

- Create strong, positive brand associations for AlphaScan.
- Establish brand salience and core brand benefits for AlphaScan.
- Establish a distinct brand identity for AlphaScan within the brand umbrella of Blink Industrial.

**SWOT ANALYSIS**

Blink Industrial has been providing cutting-edge technology since incorporating in 2010, but AlphaScan is revolutionizing the company’s output. AlphaScan is faced with unique threats and weaknesses, such as poor communication plans and limited market audiences. However, by leaning into AlphaScan’s strengths like having a strong parent company (Blink Industrial) or intelligent product development, AlphaScan can maximize its opportunities, grow brand recognition, and increase investment opportunities for Blink Industrial.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intelligent product development</li> <li>• Recognized as leaders in their field</li> <li>• Strong brand recognition</li> <li>• Name is already trademarked</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor communication plan</li> <li>• Poor website layout (for example there isn’t a ‘contact us’ tab)</li> <li>• New and unknown technology</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to make AlphaScan as a sub brand</li> <li>• Identify a target audience</li> <li>• Display product in action to result in investment and grant opportunities</li> <li>• Improving website and/or creating new website</li> <li>• Adding social media accounts to the website/ creating social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of funding</li> <li>• Time constraints</li> <li>• Clearly branded competitor simulation training systems</li> <li>• Niche audience, could result in limited sales</li> </ul>

**TARGET AUDIENCE**

Target audiences include:

- U.S. Government (both as buyers, purveyors of grants, and regulators)
- U.S. Military / other military outlets for military training
- Potential & existing investors (companies & individuals)
- Analysts (experts publicly vouching for AlphaScan’s product quality)
- Adjacent companies/ competitors (for M&A)
- R&D granting agencies other than the government
- Medical School & Hospitals for surgical training
- Other defense contractors, e.g. aviation industry manufacturers as partners
- General public interested in the societal impact of Blink Industrial technologies

We will build buyer/ customer personas/ profiles for each of the above and develop a content strategy targeting each group.

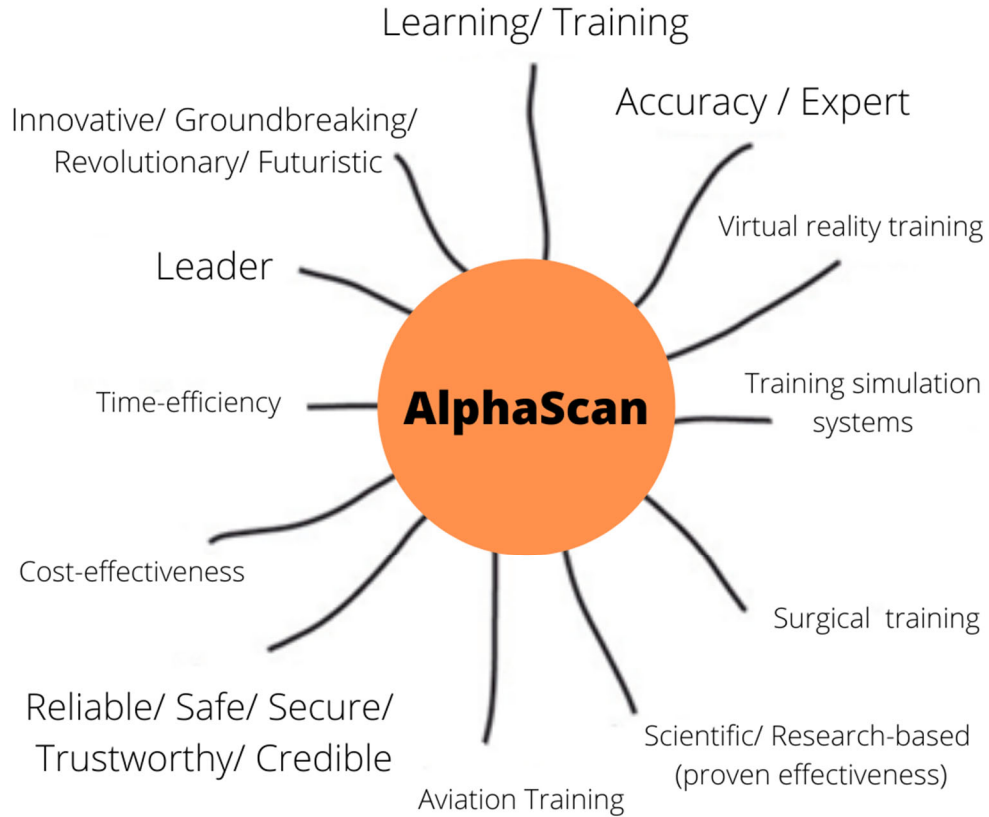
## TACTICS

A range of integrated tactics across will be implemented towards achieving the branding communications goals for AlphaScan. The content and messaging for each tactic will be guided by brand messaging tailored to each brand association, insights gained from buyer/ customer personas, and the current best practices for the channel or format of distribution.

- **Create a new, independent website for AlphaScan** – a new site would provide a home for all things AlphaScan and help avoid potential brand confusions by continuing to house the AlphaScan information within the Blink Industrials site.
  - *Evaluation pathway: website analytics*
    - *Feedback page on website*
    - *Request additional information page on website*
    - *Average time on page*
    - *Pages viewed per session*
    - *Bounce rates*
- **Create appropriate social media presence for AlphaScan** – the new channel(s) would be utilized for distribution of brand-focused content as well as paid social media advertisement of products.
  - *Evaluation pathway: social media analytics*
    - *Average engagement rates*
    - *Audience growth rates*
    - *Clickthrough rate and sessions*
- **Identify and enlist the aid of brand ambassadors or influencers** – Blink Industrials military and medical contacts could be tapped to identify potential candidates include satisfied customers (i.e., pilots/surgeons trained using AlphaScan, simulation training professionals).
  - *Evaluation pathway: referrals from influencers/ambassadors' networks.*
    - *Tracked links*
    - *Traffic sources*
- **Media engagement through press releases**
  - *Evaluation pathway: media pickup*
    - *Analyst coverage*

CREATING BRAND ASSOCIATIONS FOR ALPHASCAN

Associative Network Memory Model



Consumer Based Brand Equity Elements

**SALIENCE**

Achieving brand salience is the first step to establishing AlphaScan as a brand. It involves building and cementing connections, within the mind of consumers and potential investors, between AlphaScan and the interrelated product categories of virtual simulation training and training simulation systems – specifically in the application areas of surgical and aviation training. This helps create awareness of the consumer need AlphaScan, as a product, can meet which is a precondition for any successful marketing efforts. This will be achieved by incorporating a range of messaging and imagery, across the company’s digital presence and advertisements that directly highlights this association.

## PERFORMANCE

To help create strong, positive associations for AlphaScan related to product performance, the product's reliability, credibility, effectiveness, and potential return on investment (ROI) will be emphasized. This will help demonstrate how AlphaScan can satisfy the functional needs of consumers of simulation training technologies. Efforts towards achieving this will include (1) establishing transparency and providing access for consumers and investors to information relating to AlphaScan's development and foundational research, (2) communicating client testimonials and success stories from both fields of application, (3) sharing the findings of independent training experts that highlight AlphaScan's effectiveness and safety record – (3) allows an objective measure of the quality and effectiveness to be introduced.

## IMAGERY

A range of imagery will be utilized to help demonstrate meaning, elicit emotion and create positive brand associations. For example, medical and aviation imagery will be paired with AlphaScan brand elements to create an association in the mind of consumers/ investors between AlphaScan and these fields of application. Medical and military uniforms and other visual elements that elicit feelings of respect and create a perception of credibility will also be utilized to help establish positive brand associations. In general, imagery will be selected to align with AlphaScan's positioning as a respected, innovative, leader in virtual simulation training technology.

## JUDGMENTS

Brand quality and brand credibility will be emphasized by highlighting the expertise and of the company employees as well as regulatory compliance within AlphaScan's product category. This will include creating and sharing staff, profile content on Blink Industrial's founders, department heads/ leads, etc. As the client-base of AlphaScan grows, customer testimonials will be collected and incorporated into the company's digital presence and advertisements to demonstrate the benefits of AlphaScan when compared to competitors.

## FEELINGS

The emotional response of consumers and investors to AlphaScan is key to establishing strong, positive and enduring brand associations. AlphaScan's branding and messaging will seek to instill feelings of trust – security, reliability, confidence; respect – being impressed by this highly credible product and the performance excellence it creates through training; excitement and enthusiasm – eagerness to adopt the product for its commercial and societal potential. This will be achieved through use of emotive language and expression, particularly in testimonials and product reviews.

## RESONANCE

AlphaScan will seek to attain brand resonance through intentional relationship building with key consumers in both the aviation and medical fields. We aspire to achieve resonance by capitalizing on the intimate nature of the product (i.e., it enhances skill-building, life-saving, enhancing human capability – both psychological and physiological – in high-stakes professions). In this process we will also place an emphasis on the company's collective expertise.