Proposal

The Mx Group

Contents

Dear Huron Team:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our proposal for the go-to-market capabilities content project. We are excited about the possibility of working with you and the team you've assembled to shape the new direction of the Huron message.

We are confident in our ability to help you achieve your goals to create and implement an overarching go-to-market strategy around Huron capabilities. We understand this is a significant change for your organization. While we (like you) are confident it will serve your external audiences well, we also understand the need to "bring along" your internal audience to embrace the change. We believe The Mx Group is the right partner for this initiative because:

- We have extensive experience and expertise taking complex, internal ideas and translating them into something simple that will resonate with external audiences.
- We help our clients effectively navigate internal change by building consensus and ensuring key stakeholders across the organization are communicated with and feel their opinion is both heard and considered.
- Our proven process enables the Mx team to scale quickly in our understanding of Huron capabilities, cross-selling opportunities and target audience challenges by asking the right questions and seeking the expertize of the right Huron subject matter experts. This creates a solid foundation of trust and a strong partnership between key practice stakeholders and our creative team, leading to more effective content strategy and development.
- Our collection of creative problem solvers (including marketing and content strategists, designers, writers, copy editors, business analysts and developers) bring their skills and perspectives to every deliverable to meet client expectations. Each team member has vast experience assessing current content and creating (or updating) content that is compelling and highly polished within Huron brand standards.
- Our vast knowledge of B2B marketing as The Mx Group focuses solely on the needs of B2B marketers and their brands. We've been working in the space for over 25 years and partner with Sirius Decisions to make best-practice B2B marketing techniques (including those around content auditing and strategy) a reality for our clients.

On the following pages, you will find descriptions of our suggested approach, pricing estimates, and an overview on The Mx Group and the team we would put in place to support this project. We look forward to discussing your needs in more detail and providing any additional information that you might need to complete your evaluation of possible partners. Please do not hesitate to ask if there is anything we can to do assist you in your process.

Thank you again for considering The Mx Group!

Regards,
Ashly Hughes
Account Director
The Mx Group

Your Situation

Huron is shifting from a practice model to an open-platform model. This shift in organizational branding and focus has created a need to consolidate and analyze current capabilities and determine the best way to bring Huron's updated brand into the market in a clear way, while developing new, externally focused content that drives demand across the target marketplace.

In addition to ensuring the market visually sees and understands the entire portfolio of Huron services, Huron also needs a strong partner that can drive the change and adoption of the new model internally, across core departments and stakeholders who may have competing priorities tied to their traditional practice affiliation.

From our existing knowledge of your business and the project at hand, we understand that the project includes the following needs:

- You need to translate your current capabilities map into an external-facing model that makes sense for your target audiences
- You need to identify key challenges across Huron's identified target industries and key buyer personas to create compelling content that will further establish Huron as a thought leader and drive interest in Huron capabilities
- You need to further educate, involve and earn buy-in from top-down leadership throughout Huron to ensure messaging strategy and content (existing now and into the future) will align with Huron's open-platform message.
- You need to review existing content and identify gaps in the current content catalog. This includes understanding which content can be utilized as is, which content can be repurposed, and areas where no content lives and new content needs to be developed to ensure that you have the right message for the right capability at every stage of the sales cycle.
- You want to identify the channels for which the new open-model content strategy can and should apply (website, print ads, sales collateral and presentations, etc.).
- You want a governance plan outlining the process for adding capabilities in the future. This process would include clearly defined roles and responsibilities; defined steps for the authorship, editing and approval of content; and a closed-loop feedback process to ensure that as capabilities are added, internal stakeholders are accountable for keeping messaging in line with the Huron brand.

Success Factors

We believe The Mx Group is the right partner for your project. We will work closely with the Huron team to lead you through the internal and external messaging change (from website architecture to content development to stakeholder engagement) to ensure the end result is truly "one" Huron in the eyes of your employees and your target markets.

In order to ensure that this project is as successful as possible, the following items are critical:

- Timely communication on any changes to the project scope to the Mx team to ensure deadlines and estimates impacted are adjusted accordingly
- Background materials (including research, existing assets, etc.) are provided to The Mx Group upon request to ensure that the team has all information needed to assess and make the most effective recommendations
- Access to key stakeholders across practices to facilitate exercises, gather feedback and ensure communication of key activity status as the project progresses
- Cooperation with Huron team responsible for managing the project to ensure that meetings are scheduled, internal teams are prepared for the discussion and appropriate follow-up occurs on post-meeting action items
- Participation in ongoing progress reviews from key stakeholders on regular cadence (weekly or bi-weekly) upon launch of project

Our Approach

Based on the situation outlined above, we recommend the following approach over the course of the next 12 months:

Step One: Develop New, Market-facing View of Huron Capabilities Map

For years, the business practices within Huron have been operating as siloed businesses, each with its own list and language describing capabilities offered to the marketplace. Over time, this has led to a number of challenges for Huron, including:

- Internal frustration around siloed practice selling and lack of cross-sell opportunities
- Customer and prospect confusion due to overlapping practice capabilities and competing sales and marketing messages using different language by each practice around the same capabilities
- Limited market exposure and understanding of the full catalog of capabilities that Huron offers
- Inability to properly leverage the solid brand reputation Huron has earned in core industries (such as healthcare or higher ed) across other target industries of interest

Huron has taken a step in the right direction by acknowledging these challenges and moving toward an open-platform concept which focuses on five core capabilities: strategy, technology, operations, advisory and analytics. Huron has also started analyzing and categorizing Huron capabilities offered across all practices to identify the overlap and create an internal capabilities map.

Our first step is to make a best-practice recommendation on how to translate the internal capabilities map to a clear, resonate view for Huron's external marketplace.

This phase of the project would include:

- Information gathering to understand the current internal capabilities map in more depth
- Creating and / or refining definitions of each capability using insight and expertise of Huron stakeholders
- Making recommendations to further refine capabilities offered if applicable upon completion of exercise above to streamline offerings and ensure as much market place clarity as possible
- Presentation of deliverable to key stakeholders to gather feedback
- Final deliverable: an external, market-facing capabilities map with copy descriptions of high-level and sub-categories, defined criteria for each level within the hierarchy, and a suggested governance plan for future capabilities

Step Two: Website Architecture and Development Based on External Capabilities Map (Optional)

The Mx Group understands that Huron has a website redesign project which will be running concurrently with the capabilities content project. The final deliverable resulting from Step One above should have an impact on Huron's website information architecture. The Mx Group will share findings

with key stakeholders on the website project upon completion in order to allow the Huron team to make a final determination on if or how the final deliverable will impact site architecture plans.

Since our understanding is that architecture design changes have been defined and are near final at this time, The Mx Group is not including additional website consulting hours as a required component of the project at this time. However, if Huron is interested in more comprehensive consulting from The Mx Group on architecture and site experience, we can assist as needed.

If assistance is requested, this phase of the project would include:

- Strategic consulting from Mx experts on how to incorporate best-practice design into revised site architecture to optimize user experience and conversion (including suggestions on page design, calls to action and copy suggestions)
    - *Note: Actual development of copy for site pages would be quoted separately from this project

Step Three: Rationalize Current Content Hierarchy & Catalog

The Huron practices have started content inventory exercises with the goal of organizing practice assets by type, sales stage, format and a number of other key categories to assist in the process of evaluating existing content and identifying gaps in their current content catalog.

The Mx Group will conduct an evaluation on completed content inventories to get a solid understanding of the topics, type and audience existing content supports by practice with the goal of consolidating all practice inventories into one master content catalog. The master content catalog will be continuously reviewed and updated as assets are repurposed, refreshed and created in later steps.

This phase of the project would include:
- An in-depth review of existing content inventories by practice
- Working closely with practice stakeholders to get clarity on category definitions and decisions made within the workbooks as needed
- Consolidation of existing practice content inventories into one master content catalog based on external capabilities content map
- Presentation of master content catalog to Huron stakeholders, including observations on key findings as result of consolidation

Step Four: Content Assessment & Recommendations

Based on the rationalization of current content catalogs and the consolidation of assets into a master content catalog, The Mx Group will conduct an analysis to determine:

- How the current content catalog aligns with open-platform model and what updates are needed to ensure the content catalog reflects Huron's new messaging strategy
- What gaps exist in the current catalog based on existing content format, topic and buying stage categories assets fall under
- Which current assets can be utilized to promote open-platform capabilities vs. what assets may need to be repurposed based on practice or industry specificity
- Whether current assets touch on common pain points, empathize with the struggles caused by those pain points, and offer compelling value statements around Huron's ability to help overcome pains

This phase of the project would include:

- Analysis of existing content based on external capability map and open-platform model
- A combination of exercises and interviews with key stakeholders to gather information and feedback that assists with analysis outlined above – suggested method to incorporate stakeholder feedback will be refined upon project launch
- Final recommendations on the total number of pieces that can be refreshed or need to be developed to support Huron's open-platform model
  - Pricing will be presented, finalized and prioritized by most critical assets and presented using low, medium and high ranges for workshare between The Mx Group and internal Huron resources
- Final recommendations on how Huron can and should leverage existing and new content in the marketplace

Step Five: Content Editing & Creation

Currently, the number of assets in need of editing (or creation) and the amount of support Huron will need from the Mx team to supplement Huron's internal copy resources are unknown. Therefore, The Mx Group is offering the following workshare options with three different levels of support based on blocks of hours: low (150 hours), medium (300 hours) and high (500 hours). As we approach Step Five, the Mx team would work closely with the Huron team to finalize workshare needs, and any adjustments to hour blocks can be made as needed.

Over the course of developing our approach to the creation of assets and editing of copy, we will work closely with Huron practice leaders to gather feedback on approach, language used, point of view expressed and value proposed to ensure the Huron sale and marketing teams have a content catalog that they support and believe fits their needs across the sales cycle. Our goal is also to ensure content created or edited will tune into common challenges customers face to ensure Huron messaging is compelling and will resonate with your target audience.

This phase of the project would include:

- Creation of a content development calendar starting with high priority assets
- Kickoff meetings with key stakeholders to gather details needed to repurpose or create new assets related to their capability / area of expertise (including background on personas, market trends, key words, themes to ensure language and approach are powerful and consistent)
- Adequate time allocated for review and revisions of assets by key stakeholders (including creation of outline based on initial information gathered and two rounds of revisions leading to best and final asset)
- Copy writing and editing from dedicated Mx account team
- Ongoing updates to Huron master content catalog as assets are repurposed and / or created

Proposed Budget

The budget proposed below represents 12 months of support on the project as outlined in the approach above. Content editing and creation costs are broken out separately below based on Huron's support needs – the cost for the workshare option chosen will be added to the total sum.

Step 1 - 4	
Project Management & Strategic Oversight	**$15,000**
Develop New, Market Facing View of Huron Capabilities Map	**$25,000**
Website Architecture and Development Based on External Capabilities Map (Optional)	**$10,000**
Rationalize Current Content Catalogs	**$15,000**
Content Assessment & Recommendations	**$20,000**
Total	**$85,000**
Step 5	
Content Editing & Creation Option 1: Low Workshare (150 hours)	**$30,000**
Content Editing & Creation Option 2: Medium Workshare (300 hours)	**$60,000**
Content Editing & Creation Option 3: High Workshare (500 hours)	**$100,000**

Note: The project components within the high-level categories listed above will get refined and reviewed with Huron project stakeholders as individual projects launch within each suggested step of the outlined approach.

Proposed Schedule

	2017									2018			
	April	May	June	July	August	Sept,	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April
Project Management & Strategic Oversight	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦
Develop New, Market Facing View of Huron Capabilities Map	▦	▦											
Website Architecture and Development Based on External Capabilities Map			▦										
Rationalize Current Content Catalogs			▦	▦									
Content Assessment & Recommendations				▦									
Content Editing & Creation (Mid-Level Workshare– 300 hours)					▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦	▦

Note: Timeline will be reviewed and refined over the course of the project. Any delays that impact deadlines will be proactively communicated to the Huron team. Chart above is dependent upon contract approval date.

Your Team

The Mx Group delivers services across multiple disciplines by utilizing talent from cross-functional areas, led a by single-point-of-contact Account Director and account management team. The Account Director is the primary point of contact for our clients and is responsible for developing a deep understanding of our clients' business. In turn, the account team manages workflow and communications with the appropriate team leads. Huron will have significant direct contact with subject-matter experts (designers, business analysts, demand generation and lead management experts, etc.), but that contact will always managed by the account team.

Tim Cook
Vice President of Client Services & Partner

Tim has more than 20 years of B2B marketing experience. He leads The Mx Group's Client Services department. He manages relationships and programs for numerous clients, including Catamaran, GE, Zekelman Industries, Siemens and vAuto. Previously, Tim held senior marketing positions at the global outsourcing firm Convergys, and served clients such as Intel, SAP, AT&T, Charles Schwab, HP and Sun Microsystems while working at McCann-Erickson and Resource Marketing. Tim completed his B.A. in English literature from Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts. He completed certificate programs in integrated marketing communications and change management at the Chicago Graduate School of Business.

Ashly Hughes
Account Director

Ashly brings six years of integrated marketing experience to her clients. She has devised and executed successful demand generation strategies across a wide variety of industries, for businesses ranging from startups to Fortune 100 companies. Her experience encompasses best practice sales and marketing alignment tactics, channel support and development, data analytics, marketing automation optimization, CRM strategy, and telemarketing (from event recruitment to inside sales). Ashly earned both a B.A. in journalism and an MBA from Arizona State University.

Colleen Croft
Account Coordinator

Colleen joined The Mx Group in May 2016 following her graduation from Indiana University, where she received a B.A. in communication. Preceding The Mx Group, Colleen worked at two other marketing agencies, focusing her time on marketing, PR and brand placement. Colleen's clients utilize the full range of The Mx Group's marketing specialties, from lead management and demand generation to design and content.

Tom Barg
Executive Creative Director & Partner

Tom brings more than 20 years of B2B design expertise to the table. He is highly skilled in developing core branding and messaging platforms that produce short- and long-term results for clients. Tom oversees The Mx Group's Design & Content department and the Traffic department. Tom has been with the company for 14 years. Prior to his role at The Mx Group, Tom was an art director at a major health care business magazine publisher. Tom holds a B.A. from Loyola University Chicago and received an MFA in medical illustration from Rochester Institute of Technology.

Emily Williams
Associate Creative Director

Emily has been with The Mx Group since 2008. In her role as associate creative director, she provides strategic oversight for a diverse client base and manages The Mx Group's social media and content editing functions. Emily came to The Mx Group with five years of experience as a book editor, with expertise in fiction and nonfiction. She holds a B.A. in philosophy and creative writing from Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

Thomas D. Hayward
Associate Creative Director

Thomas brings nearly 20 years of print and interactive design experience to The Mx Group. In his six years at the company, he has led the development of multiple award-winning campaigns encompassing print, email marketing and web design. Prior to joining The Mx Group, Thomas was senior art director at a major B2B publishing company where he won several Ozzie and APEX design awards. He holds a B.A. in graphic design from Carthage College in Kenosha.

Miroslav Zugovic
Manager of Video and Front End Development

Miro brings more than 10 years of interactive experience to The Mx Group, providing best practices in front end web development. He considers himself a jack-of-all-trades when it comes to interactive work, and has a broad background that covers graphic design, video, 3-D, web development and content management systems. Miro holds dual degrees in multimedia production and design and in interactive media.

About The Mx Group

The Mx Group is a digital and demand generation agency that empowers companies with the competitive edge of modern B2B marketing. We integrate digital strategy, technology, operations and sales optimization services to help companies attract, convert and retain customers. For more than 25 years, clients have trusted us to help turn their marketing investments into measurable revenue. The company has been recognized as a top B2B agency by both AdAge and BtoB Magazine every year since 2008. The Mx Group was also selected as a Best Places to Work in Illinois every year since 2014 and named to the Built In Chicago Top 100 Digital Companies in Chicago list every year since 2014. The company is privately owned and located 20 minutes west of Chicago in Burr Ridge, Illinois. For more information, visit TheMxGroup.com or call 800-827-0170.

Quick Stats

Company name
The Mx Group

Ownership structure
Privately held

Years in operation
27

Total number of employees
110

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Website
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LinkedIn: *TheMxGroup*
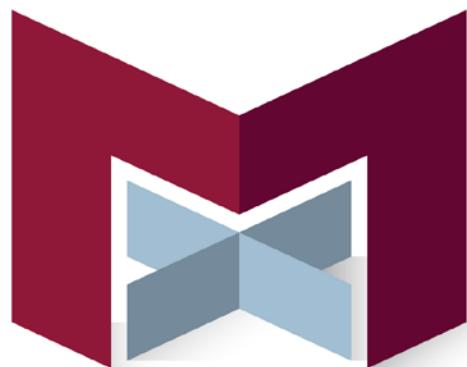Instagram: *@TheMxGroup*

Services

Marketing and program strategy
Branding and messaging
Content and design
Website development
Mobile app development
Video production
Customer software development

Demand generation
Lead management
Telemarketing
Sales enablement
Social media marketing
Marketing technology outsourcing
Sales and marketing operation

Thank you for considering us!

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