2016 AMA Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education
The 2016 AMA Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education: CONNECTED brought together experts and practitioners to explore the challenges and trends shaping marketing in higher education.

Headlined by executives from Edelman, the State University of New York System, Emory University and United Talent Agency, the symposium focused on smart new strategies to differentiate, engage, fundraise and recruit—including innovative approaches for social media and brand building.

Photos by Pierce Harman

Key Takeaways From Presenters and Sponsors

A New Trust Mandate for University Marketers

10 Marketing Plan Hacks to Generate Real-world Results

Marketers Tackle Social Justice on College Campuses

How to Land a Job in Higher Education Marketing

Rebranding a Parent Company: The SUNY Story

How to Translate Your American Brand Globally

The Secret to Loyal Customers

Student-generated Posts Power St. Lawrence University’s Social Media

If Your Brand Doesn’t Represent Your Customers, Get Ready to Lose Them

Rosen Shingle Creek in Orlando, Florida
December 4-7
Key Takeaways from Presenters

MONDAY DECEMBER 5, 2016

Turning Research Into Reality: The University of Florida’s Quest For The Top Ten
Kent Fuchs, President, University of Florida; Greg Ash, Group Creative and Managing Director, 160over90
1. Find the right truth: There is good research and bad research. Make sure yours works as hard as it can for you.
2. Be honest: How can your research drive an honest discovery into who you are as an institution?
3. Be bold: Research doesn’t help sitting on the shelf. It should establish a bold position and inform smart communications that support your stand.

Content Strategy for the Web: Providing Prospective Students with Content They Need
Matt Walters, Vice President, Director of Account Services, Vision Point Marketing; Tony Poillucci, Vice President, Creative Director & Senior Strategist, Vision Point Marketing; Noel T. Manning, Associate Vice President for Communications & Marketing, Gardner Webb University
1. Have a content strategy. Prove its value to leadership, and spend the time you need on it.
2. Your audience is complex. Create content for different types of personas with nuanced goals at different stages of engagement.
3. Build your content community. Get help from within (the admissions team, passionate faculty, student organizations, etc.) and reach outside for help too.

No Longer Blank: Sparking Creative Ideas in your Marketing Team
Laura Shields, Assistant Director for University Marketing, Oregon State University; Kegan Sims, User Experience Specialist for Interactive Communications, Oregon State University
1. When used strategically, play at work can foster professional growth, help develop deeper relationships and provide levity in an institutional environment.
2. We are all creative individuals. It’s within the group dynamic that creativity can either flourish or get trampled and lost.
3. Taking a different approach to creative challenges can yield dramatic and positive results.

Building your Global Brand: It’s not America Everywhere
Avery Waxman, Senior Director of External Communications, Navitas North America; Diego Meeroff, Director of Marketing, Florida Atlantic University; Marta Giri, Director of Marketing Communications, Navitas North America
1. The process of developing an international enrollment management strategy should engage stakeholders from admissions, marketing communications, development and alumni relations.
2. Digital marketing campaigns to attract international students can be run for as little as $50. Conduct a trial to see what works.
3. Consider an external partner with deep international recruitment expertise who will add value to your existing plans, broaden your reach and properly steward your brand.
Leverage The Power of Social Listening
Liz Gross, Data-Driven Marketer, Social Media Strategist, Higher Education Researcher; Mike Horn, Senior Director, Office of Marketing and Communications, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia
1. Social is a 24-7 environment and covers at least five major channels. You don’t have the staff to listen to social media manually without a tool.
2. Social listening is critical for crisis management, essential for customer experience and is very helpful for marketing.
3. Social listening is expensive, both in dollars and resources, but its benefits are invaluable to your brand.

Confessions of an Ex Agency Pitchman: Hard-earned (and Perhaps Unpopular) Insights After Nearly 5 Years in Higher Education
John Thompson, Associate Vice President for Marketing, Albion College; Rich Whipkey, Principal and Co-founder, Waybetter Marketing
1. Demand a discussion of ROI. What’s the cost after the cost?
2. Think about process before you buy product/assets.
3. Engage in open and honest discussion about how brand integrates with a direct sales model at your institution.

From Potholes to Performance: Building a Marketing Function from Scratch
Kim Lawrence, Associate Vice President, Marketing, University of Calgary; Anju Visen-Singh, Director of Integrated Marketing, University of Calgary
1. Embrace your space.
2. Build an ambassador group.
3. Create and protect team culture.

Personalizing Social Campaigns: The “Picture Yourself Here” Experience at Northeastern University
Jennie Moore Marshall, Senior Assistant Director of Marketing and Communications, Northeastern University
1. Use social data tools to help target your key segments and create personalized content.
2. Pay attention to trends outside of higher education, and put your own institutional spin on them.
3. Identify opportunities to go the extra mile by proactively providing users with personalized moments.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2016

Giving a Brand New Direction: The Northwestern Story
Mary Baglivo, Chief Marketing Officer and Vice President of Global Marketing, Northwestern University; Bill Faust, Managing Partner, Ologie
1. A good brand story, told consistently over time, helps create a great brand experience.
2. Establishing a brand framework is an essential component to aligning your story across audiences.
3. Never underestimate the importance of a content and media strategy to communicate a cohesive brand narrative.

Be Your Audience: Best Practices for Including Students in Social Content Strategy
Megan Keniston, Associate Director of Marketing, St. Lawrence University; Ryan Orvis, St. Lawrence University
1. Current students can provide a lot of value and insight that can help your institution’s social media presence resonate with target audiences.
2. Find ways to involve students at some level in developing strategic content for your channels.
3. Surround yourself with students who aren’t afraid to provide you and your colleagues with constructive feedback—they know what they like better than we do.

How To Market New Ventures Inside Existing Institutions
Nicole Ferry, Executive Director of Strategy, Cornell Tech; Meghan French, Senior Director of External Relations, Cornell Tech
1. Find the need, both at a macro and micro level, versus other options available.
2. Use social campaigns as a quick way to hone in on your audience. We used Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter campaigns to rapidly refine our definition of “prospective students,” then evolved our campaign’s message to better address them.
3. Give key audiences a realistic next step. It’s difficult to convince a prospective student (or faculty member, or any key audience) to uproot their life and come to your institution—doubly so when your institution doesn’t yet have a track record. Therefore, communications should gradually introduce them to the school with realistic next steps.
The Anatomy of a Redesign: Recruiting Gen Z
Maegan Steele, Digital Marketing Specialist, St. Edward’s University; Rick Ramos, Creative Director and Brand Manager, St. Edward’s University
2. Present your designs and back them up with proof.
3. Activate your new communication streams, then measure and tweak as necessary.

The Three R’s: How to Reach, Recruit and Retain Non-traditional Students
James Vineburgh, Senior Director, Campus Explorer; Stephanie Geyer, Vice President, Web Strategy and Interactive Marketing Services, Ruffalo Noel Levitz
1. Reach: Use contemporary SEO techniques to enhance website content to ensure that prospective students can find your website.
2. Recruit: Once they get to your site, be sure that all users, especially mobile users, can engage effectively through calls-to-action, such as inquiry forms.
3. Retain: Be sure that your content is an accurate and compelling reflection of your institution and the student experience. The secret to retention is to recruit the right students from the beginning—those who are most likely to fit and sustain their enrollment.

Getting the Most Out of Google Analytics in Higher Education
Christine Osazuwa, Web and Social Media Coordinator, UMBC
1. Google Analytics works best if you have at least one goal set up.
2. You don’t have to reinvent the wheel: look to Google Analytics’ Solutions Gallery for pre-built templates, dashboards and reports.
3. The more data you collect, the more insights you can gain. Identify what you want your audience to do and make sure you track it.

If You Build It, Will They Come? 10 Insights for Reinventing and Leading Your Department
Joel Seligman, Chief Communications Officer, University of New Hampshire; Nichole Johnson, Executive Director of Integrated Marketing Communications; Jessica McWade, Senior Consultant, Maguire Associates
1. Know yourself. Be honest about your strengths and weaknesses. How prepared are you (or will you be) to lead and manage? Seek trusted counsel. Continue to develop, especially in the realm of emotional intelligence.

2. Be as a fierce an advocate as possible. Nobody else is going to fight for your department and your people. Calibrate your advocacy to fit the context, of course, but know that resources often accrue to those willing and able to assert their strategic vision and financial necessity.

3. Don’t fly blind. Make your efforts more effective and credible with the right mix of independent market research. You may think you fully understand your constituents, their needs and motivations. Too often, however, we’re all blinded by our own biases, histories and perceptual filters.

Communicating You’re Worth It In a Noisy Marketplace
Paul Redfern, Executive Director of Communications and Marketing, Gettysburg College; Kent Barnds, Executive Vice President & Vice President of Enrollment, Communications and Planning, Augustana College
1. Your value proposition needs to be integrated throughout the institution.
2. Your team needs to be able to execute your value proposition.
3. Your value proposition has to be tested through research.

Beyond Sugar vs. Substance: Rethinking Brand-driven Social Media
Rob Zaebst, Director of Digital Strategy, Michigan State University; Ellen Doepke, Social Media Manager, Michigan State University
1. What is your brand message? How are you telling your brand message on social media today? Know what you are aiming to achieve overall with content. Knowing what you’re saying today and how its performing will help get to the core of what’s effective with your brand’s social media content.
2. What are trending topics, variations and campus events, and how can you create content that aligns with the brand? Metatags are crucial to being able to mine your content for similarities, differences and characteristics between content. Look for social media tools that enable content metatagging.
3. Try not to rely too heavily on one type of content in social media.
Thought Leader Key Takeaways

Adobe
The Digital Experience for the Student Lifecycle
1. Higher education needs to think like a large business.
2. Parents and students are highly educated consumers when it comes to choosing a college.
3. Data-driven marketing is necessary to reach admissions, development and engagement goals.

IBM Watson Analytics
Data-driven Decision Making: Empowering Employees at Every Level of Your Organization to Be Citizen Data Scientists
1. In most industries, data-driven decisions in higher education are becoming an expectation not a consideration.
2. Data helps eliminate bias and improve outcomes.
3. Technology is helping simplify the data analytics process.

LinkedIn
Change Brings Opportunity: The New Landscape of Higher-Education Marketing and How Social Media Fits
1. Use social media to break down internal silos and provide a seamless experience throughout the student life cycle.
2. Use social networks to find the best graduate candidates.
3. Use tangible career motivations in your messaging to attract quality students, such as higher salary, up-skilling for a new role or accelerating career.

Mongoose
The Art of Texting Students
1. When texting students, it is important to consider obtaining consent and honoring opt-out requests if and when they occur.
2. To get a good response rate, end your text messages with a question.
3. Remember to always be polite and personal. Texting is a highly personal medium. Students respond best to messages that are direct and personal in nature.

Salesforce
Transforming Communication Across the Constituent Lifecycle with Personalized Journeys and 1:1 Engagement
1. Provide real-time communications across multiple channels to increase engagement.
2. Partner with units on campus to enable a collaborative communications model.
3. Use a marketing platform to manage decentralized communications across any school or constituent group.

Gizra
Reigning in Your Web Presence: Brand Control and Cost Efficiency in the Higher-Education Web
1. Colleges and universities have a complex and highly distributed web presence as a result of the culture of academic institutions.
2. Changes in the higher-education marketplace are putting higher demand on brand managers and an increased need for a more unified web presence.
3. Modern web frameworks make it easier than it was, even five years ago, to deliver the individual autonomy that faculty and staff demand, and the brand management that a college or university requires.

InMotionNow
Adoption Made Easy: How to Help Your Team Buy In to Creative Work Flow Management
1. Creative work flow management helps teams meet the demand for more content at a faster rate without compromising quality by facilitating efficiency at each stage of the creative production process.
2. Conducting a thorough needs assessment, performing a process evaluation and getting buy-in from individual team members and stakeholders before unrolling a new solution are key to driving adoption.
3. Prioritizing scalability and flexibility and continuing to test and learn will firmly establish new processes and solutions and deliver maximum benefits.

InsightBee
Strategic Insights for Marketers (in Higher Education)
1. Technology is necessary, but not sufficient; it needs to be married with knowledge, assets and insights.
2. Generate actionable insights using a combination of technology, relevant research and analysis.
3. Quick wins where knowledge assets can drive significant value don’t always mean large monetary investment and months of implementation.
Leading universities rate LinkedIn the #1 social platform to find quality students.

The most effective platform to engage prospects, current students, and alumni.

Learn more at lnkd.in/highered

Source: Quality Leads to Successful Grads study, LinkedIn / CarringtonCrisp, 2016
A New Trust Mandate for University Marketers

Well-known public relations expert Richard Edelman has assessed public faith in American institutions, and what he sees is grim

By Zach Brooke

Across the board, Richard Edelman, CEO of marketing communications firm Edelman, finds that public confidence in institutions is down, and the gap between the elites and the masses is wider than in any other country surveyed by the Edelman Trust Barometer.

Government? Hopeless, he says. Businesses and CEOs are in the dumps. This visceral doubt is apparent in the marketing world, too.

“Marketing lacks trust at the moment. Half of people think you’re lying to them,” Edelman says. “The way that you have been working as communicators and marketers isn’t going to work anymore.”

Edelman says higher education has by and large made a decision to retreat from public controversies. Instead of weighing in on problems, universities have become a walled garden. Edelman equates the reaction to being a rudderless ship waiting for a storm to blow it one way or another. This has eroded the reputations of universities, which Edelman argues are now seen as representing the status quo as opposed to being part of the change. He points to surveys showing that 60% of respondents believe that college and universities serve only their own interests.

Universities are being seen as enforcers or representatives of the status quo as opposed to agents of change. Edelman believes the time to fight back is now. “Universities have to be the fifth estate in global governance,” he says. “What really is necessary for higher ed, as a group, is to step forward to solve the larger problems of society. ... You have the scale, insights, objectivity, funding and you’re a safe place. You’re a place people can disagree. You have the ability for long-term thinking. No business or government can match those skills.”

Despite the dismal showing of institutions as a whole, Edelman says higher education, along with the armed forces, are two sectors that retain some authority. He says the smart pivot in today’s uncertain world is to use that authority to play offense instead of defense. One big way to do this is for universities to set up their own media companies.

Richard Edelman delivers a hard message to marketers in his keynote address.

Since 2000, the total number of working journalists has been cut in half. As a result, the quality of reporting is poorer, and its voice is diminished. This has facilitated the rise of peer-to-peer communication, in place of the old top-down model. According to Edelman, the mass population believes they have better information than what is coming from traditional outlets.

“What does the average person believe? Search and social,” Edelman says. “If you don’t have your own media operations, which is its own media company, you are going to be shut out of the news.”

Edelman calls upon universities to hire reporters to staff a robust communications office that will report on thought leadership and problem-solving coming from classrooms and lecture halls. He stresses that universities should not offer policies as much as platforms for dialogue. One possible example he cites involves Purdue University, which, through a confluence of factors, is well-positioned to assert itself into a debate about the future of manufacturing jobs. The university president is a widely renown former state governor and once-courted presidential candidate who has the ear of many. And the state itself is proving to be ground zero in the debate over the health of manufacturing jobs.

Edelman suggests that if Purdue wanted to seize its image in the public, it should create a center on manufacturing and invite CEOs and policymakers to talk about the state of the industry and offer ideas to transition toward the future. A university-created media company could report on its efforts to dissect the factors responsible for the state of manufacturing and offer solutions. It would also provide publishing platforms to student reporters and even community members to share stories throughout their peer networks.

But it can’t be merely an expansion of the press-release mills that currently promote university achievements. Rather, a college media company needs to communicate with video, pictures, infographics—all of the elements that are quick to gain traction through online social channels.

As a fully realized fifth estate, Edelman says universities should also establish an office of engagement that directs university response to social questions and outreach. It is a recognition of this new age in which trust has evaporated.

“You have a choice,” Edelman says. “You can be a convener seeking solutions, instead of being a refuge to hide from them.”
10 Marketing Plan Hacks to Generate Real-World Results

All marketing plans are not created equal, which is why Jennifer Kendall believes there are 10 important hacks higher-ed marketers need to adopt if they want their plans to work.

By Zach Brooke

As account services manager for North Carolina State University Communications, Jennifer Kendall has had the opportunity to hone her hack list and generate real-world results. Here’s what she says higher-ed marketers should do:

1. Focus is your friend.
   “Too often I hear, ‘We want to be everything to everyone,’” Kendall says, adding that the shotgun approach rarely hits the mark. Kendall’s advice is to start with a strategic plan, firmly rooted in reality, and aim toward clear, measurable objectives.
   “Marketing strategy isn’t about choosing what to do; it’s about choosing what not to do,” she says.

2. Engagement is everything.
   Marketing plans aren’t created in a vacuum, but rather by a team of talented professionals working toward a common goal. Flying in the face of certain schools of thinking, Kendall says engagement happens from the bottom up. She believes it’s the manager’s job to assemble a staff of thinkers and doers, give them objectives and get out of the way. The marketers at the front lines are responsible for nurturing engagement.

3. Learn before you leap.
   This is the hack that Kendall believes is the most important step to delivering marketing results. “If I had to choose the top tip, this would be it,” she says. “If you’re going to invest money, this is where.”
   According to Kendall, it’s paramount for marketers to do research on who their customers are before embarking on any strategies to reach them. She also believes that, contrary to popular perceptions about grouping consumers by generation, it’s important to get to know collegiate targets—students, alumni, donors—as people. She does, however, believe it’s beneficial to break customers into persona buckets that outline a bit of their backstories and motivations.

4. Find inspiration beyond education.
   The meaning behind this hack is twofold. First, more so than most other marketed products, college really lends itself to lifestyle marketing and encouraging consumers to find personal fulfillment in connecting with your brand.
   Second, Kendall advises higher-ed marketers to seek inspiration outside of the world of higher ed. “How many of you have heard, ‘What is our competition doing?’” she asks.
   That sort of opposition research isn’t enough. “If we’re all looking at one another for inspiration, what happens? We all look the same. Differentiate or die,” says Kendall.

5. Be bold.
   Kendall believes playing it safe is dangerous. The better move is informed risk-taking to expand your brand’s horizon.

6. Customer experience is king.
   “Three years ago at these conferences, we heard a lot about how content was king. It’s not,” says Kendall. Great content may get attention, but only great customer experiences earn loyalty.
   “We don’t care if you look at our website. We want you to come to our school,” Kendall says. “Put yourself in students’ shoes. What is their experience like?”

7. Don’t put the cart before the horse.
   Kendall says this hack is inspired by marketers (and their bosses) who show a tendency to put tactics before strategy. These people will ask that marketing be done through a certain channel or program before doing the research to see if it’s going to have a measurable effect.
   Plan first, act second.

8. Actions speak louder than words.
   “If you want your marketing plan to be a success, you have got to invest a significant amount of time and resources,” Kendall says.
   A good barometer of how much execution is getting done is to measure implementation time against concepting time, with the former outpacing the latter in a well-run department.

   Kendall stresses usage to emphasize that collecting data is not enough. It needs to be analyzed. And that analysis needs to be folded into the marketing plan.

10. Plan to change your plan.
    “A marketing plan can’t be a document that’s thrown on the shelf.”
    The best marketing is situational. And situations change all the time. Game-changing innovations in tech drop every few years. Campus dynamics change even more frequently. Be aware that marketing is a journey, not a destination, and use it how you need to in the moment.
Marketers Tackle Social Justice on College Campuses

Five ways marketers can ensure an inclusive campus experience for students

By Zach Brooke

As a senior vice president and dean of campus life at Emory University, Dr. Ajay Nair is at the vanguard of debates over culture and inclusivity. And he believes that colleges have some work to do.

“I don’t claim to have any marketing expertise at all, but I do know about higher education,” he told the audience at the AMA’s 2016 Symposium for Marketing of Higher Education. “I am convinced that best practice around [multiculturalism] has been woefully insufficient. Our students are polycultural beings waiting for us to catch up.”

Nair says there are five steps universities and colleges need to take in order to bring discussions about identity into the 21st century and make certain that the reality of the campus experience lives up to its marketing.

1. Ensure that every student feels a sense of belonging.

Nair is an emphatic defender of the concept of safe spaces, although he concedes the terminology may have to change given how laden with baggage it’s become. Nair does not advocate spaces as a haven from dissenting views or discomforting thought, but rather he sees them as a place where students in protected classes can congregate without feeling physically threatened.

Nair told the audience about his own experiences hearing slurs while attending college as an undergrad in 1994. His race made him stand out from his assailants and bystanders as he walked through an area near campus known to be a magnet for drunken undergrads. No one intervened as he was threatened and forced to endure a barrage of racial invective.

Nair says the incident made him question the campus marketing materials he had scanned while he was making his decision to commit.

“Was I sold a false bill of goods?” he asked.

According to Nair, many of the offenders and bystanders often have their own safe spaces where behavior is tolerated, if not actively fostered. He believes them to be fraternities, sororities and churches. Creating on-campus safe spaces for protected classes is a step toward leveling the playing field and realizing the idyllic version of schools depicted in brochures.

2. Embrace polyculturalism.

Nair says higher-education administrations need to think beyond managing diversity by creating student centers based on race, sexuality and gender. These offices, while well-intended and often engines of positive change on campuses, can also pigeonhole members by reducing the totality of their experience to a single trait. They don’t describe everyone who might align with the office in some, but not all, respects.

“Students are forced to conform to representation,” he says. “We had created a bureaucratic multiculturalism that helped us manage diversity. These spaces are incredibly important to affirm identities but the framework needs to change.”

“Society has compartmentalized our identities,” Nair adds. “We no longer can ignore ... the porous nature of culture.”

3. Adopt a social justice agenda.

To Nair, this means much more than discussions over resource distributions. He cites as an example ongoing developments at Emory. Challenged by a student to affirm that the university was standing up for racial justice, he realized that there was more his school could be doing.

In response, with the help of students, he created a committee that culminated with persuading Emory administrators to consider racial justice as a matter of routine in everyday decision making. “I’ll say it again: Every executive is having routine discussions about promoting racial justice,” he says.

4. Develop cultural humility.

Nair believes that concepts like tolerance and respecting diversity for its own sake are no longer enough. He calls for people from all backgrounds to engage in self-reflection and self-critique and ask themselves why they hold the views that they do. “We need to think about our own thinking,” he says.

5. Have impossible conversations.

Nair acknowledges that there will not always be agreement on the causes, effects and best practices surrounding issues related to diversity. But, in his view, too often the loudest voice wins the argument and shuts down debate. Nair says there should be a culture of respect for debate that can be allowed to develop in order to have conversations where all sides are heard.

To achieve these goals, Nair offers five questions campus officers can ask themselves before taking action:

• What are the values and principles of the community?
• How does the power operate?
• What processes are already at the institution that can serve as a model?
• How are we deploying resources?
• How can we create best practices?
How to Land a Job in Higher Education Marketing

There's no secret to rocketing up the higher education marketing career ladder. Just a good sense of which way the industry is trending and lots of legwork

By Zach Brooke

College and university marketers looking to broaden their résumés and take the next step of their career can rest assured knowing that the total number of higher-education jobs grew 1.9% in the third quarter of 2016.

There's a little networking involved, which includes talking to recruiters even when you're not interested in leaving your current job.

“Always answer an e-mail from a recruiter. Even if it's just to say, ‘Thanks, but no thanks.’ We more than likely want to chit chat with you, even if it's not the right time to make a move,” says Mindy Cohen, president of HigherTalent. Cohen and others shared their insight at a panel discussion at the AMA 2016 Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education.

“You’re most likely talking to someone who knows your competitive set. It's good to understand what another college or university is looking for. It makes you smarter,” adds Julie Ried, vice president of the Ward Group.

The two recruiters on the panel say a current, informative LinkedIn profile can go a long way toward getting you noticed.

“LinkedIn is obviously the place where university HR teams are looking,” Ward says. “Update it with key words. Make sure your background and résumé is contemporary. That you are using the latest phrases. … I am against including 25 to 30 recommendations on your profile [however].”

Ward also recommends that candidates learn a solid list of hard skills they can bring to an organization. These aren’t soft skills, the essential but non-technical collaboration strategies such as writing or time management. Rather, Ward says, they are the specialized skills that're developed through a unique career path and can be applied tomorrow if you parachuted into a job with a leadership vacuum.

Tony Proudfoot, associate vice president of marketing communications and brand management at the University of Arizona, echoes the theme of well-defined hard skills.

“What is your distinctive super power? What do you bring to the world?” he asks.

While the consensus is that familiarity with traditional marketing channels remains important, the latest jobs seem to be created for digital marketers, meaning some marketers looking to move may need to start thinking about continuing education.

“We have digital in our titles because consumers have driven that demand. I think focusing on the consumer aspect will allow you to grow your career in the next couple of years no matter what happens,” says Alex Parraga, chief digital officer at the University of California-Santa Barbara.

When the panelists were asked which positions they've filled recently, responses included digital strategist, SEO specialist, full-stack developer, digital director and project manager.

“When you find that great project manager, they are everything,” Parraga says.

Finally, it's important to consider outlining your career expectations to your current or prospective employer. Doing that might just save you a job search down the line.

“I've always asked for every job that I've ever had, including the position that I'm sitting in right now,” says Ashley Budd, director of digital marketing at Cornell University.
Rebranding a Parent Company: The SUNY Story

The State University of New York System rebranded with the identities of 64 unique institutions in mind

By Michelle Markelz

“Systemness” is a neologism, a new and rarely used term, that describes a key asset of the State University of New York System. The 64-campus, 68-year-old system of public higher-education institutions took to Wikipedia to document the word when it believed itself to have achieved a cohesion and harmonious coexistence of many identities under a single, goal-oriented brand. Put most simply: the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

SUNY achieved its peak systemness under the leadership of Nancy Zimpher, SUNY’s current chancellor, and a keynote speaker at the AMA 2016 Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education. Zimpher shared with attendees her theory of branding to tell how SUNY rebranded itself.

Zimpher set the context of the system’s rebrand story by quoting New York Times op-ed columnist Frank Bruni’s 2013 piece, “College’s Identity Crisis”: “We’re in a tricky, troubling spot,” he writes. “At a time when our nation’s ability to tackle complicated policy problems is seriously in doubt, we must pull off a delicate balancing act. We must make college practical but not excessively so, lower its price without lowering its standards and increase the number of diplomas attained without diminishing their currency in the job market but also the fitness of the country’s work force in a cutthroat world.”

Though Bruni was speaking of higher education, the scenario he presents is familiar to most in the business world. Everyone is trying to do more with less without sacrificing quality. And a parent company like SUNY can take the same approach to rebranding to achieve similarly successful results.

Zimpher’s hierarchy of strategy for overcoming such challenges puts vision first, followed by quantifiable impact and design thinking.

**Vision trumps everything.**
The first thing a new leader of any organization should do, says Zimpher, is talk to stakeholders about the future they want to see come to fruition. When she served as chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Zimpher says this task could have been accomplished in a golf cart, driving around the city for a day. In New York, it took 95 days and thousands of miles covered in a Chevy Tahoe.

What came of that survey, however, was the certainty that the inextricable link among the 64 institutions SUNY comprises is community, and the vision of the system would be: “SUNY will be a key engine of revitalization for New York State’s economy, and ... it will enhance the quality of life for the state’s citizens.” Zimpher calls this vision the system’s public narrative by articulating their purpose and how that purpose will be achieved, then holding every process, product and decision up against it.

**Impact advances improvement.**
“What does a dog do when it catches the car?” Zimpher asked the audience of her keynote. “We caught the car,” she said, referring to SUNY’s impact on the state of New York with its 93,000 degrees awarded in 2015. But just because the system has already made an impact, doesn’t mean it’s done.

Zimpher encourages brands not to think of impact as an end, but a means. The next goal for the system is to award 150,000 degrees by 2020, and to get there, Zimpher uses a formula for what she calls collective impact. The four pillars of collective impact are:
- Convene stakeholders.
- Identify shared goals.
- Make evidenced-based decisions.
- Sustain success.

**Design expresses a promise.**
SUNY worked with Lipman Hearne and LPK, a brand design agency, to define a new logo for the system that would both represent the identity of the system as a whole and complement its parts. The outcome was SUNY’s circumscribed SU and NY, with a bolder emphasis on NY. Its monochromatic blue color scheme makes it easy to incorporate in the 64-member house of brands, and its simple design achieves an updated look for the system without distracting from the family of logos it is paired with across the system.
How to Translate Your American Brand Globally

Marketers can’t afford for their messages to be lost in translation to international audiences

By Michelle Markelz

With online retail and the ubiquity of the internet, it is almost unheard of to be a purely domestic brand. Marketers are now expected to navigate their brands across borders and along the journeys of international customers.

And just as domestic marketers grapple with the nuance of an increasingly diverse American consumer population, international marketers similarly must find a way to scale their efforts without losing the potency of their message or allowing it to get lost in translation.

When Florida Atlantic University named its new president, John Kelly, in January of 2014, it underwent a rebrand, which included making the university a destination of choice for international students. Working with Navitas North America, in just two school years, FAU increased its international population from 2% to 5% of the student body, making it the most diverse institution in Florida’s State University system.

“As marketers we’re very tuned into who we’re talking to,” but perhaps not always at the international level, says director of marketing for FAU, Diego Meeroff. Simply playing a game of telephone can demonstrate how messages can become garbled even shared in the same language, but when crossing linguistic borders, the chances for miscommunication increase. So what did FAU get right?

Meeroff recommends outsourcing international strategic planning and campaign management where possible. Choosing an outside partner in Navitas, he says, bolstered the FAU international marketing function by helping the university consider the nuances of its target markets, whether it be large-scale tactics, like rephrasing communications to make them culturally appropriate, or granular differentiation, such as marketing the university’s proximity to one of only a handful of cricket stadiums in the U.S. (an amenity that swayed one student’s decision away from a Kentucky institution).

Many have heard of verbal faux pas made by brands in the past (think the Chevy Nova, which in Spanish markets translates to “does not go”). When FAU took a closer look at its international messaging, for example, it realized that it’s tagline, “Be bold. Be daring. Be FAU,” didn’t resonate well in China, where the acronym more frequently refers to an aid organization of the Sino-Japanese War—not necessarily the association the university wanted to make. Thanks to the Navitas extended network, the university was able to repackage its message without creating any negative associations.

Avery Waxman, senior director of external communications at Navitas offers five steps for brands looking to make their first foray into international marketing or for brands that need to get a focused handle on their efforts:

1. Evaluate Your Offerings and Existing International Reach
- Consider your product differentiation and competitive advantages. What are international customers already buying or choosing? Build on your successes.

2. Select Your Target Markets Wisely
- Consider your budget first; this will always be a limiting factor. Narrow down the five to seven key countries and/or cities you want to target. If you have data on where your customers or leads are already coming from, pay attention to patterns in those numbers to help focus your efforts.

3. Regionalize and Localize Your Message
- Identify existing messages and advertising within your target markets and review it for quality translation, cultural sensitivity and relevance. Remember, idioms rarely translate clearly, and make sure any acronyms or English-exclusive words are not misunderstood.

4. Utilize Digital Marketing to Widen Your Reach
- Use online global geo-targeting and ad boosts. Target leads who are similar to your existing customers. On the international level, Facebook is still the best application to do this, says Navitas. Using the lookalike feature, you can target prospects who are similar to your current customers.

5. Engage Brand Advocates
- Connect positive experiences of current customers with prospective customers.
- Gather testimonials. Your already-satisfied customers are your best marketers. Leverage them as influencers.
The Secret to Loyal Customers

Brands must manage expectations and experiences to earn customer loyalty

By Michelle Markelz

James Kane, author of The Loyalty Switch and an expert on customer loyalty, contends that there are four types of relationships that brands have with consumers:

1. A small portion of your relationships are hostile. They are dissatisfied and will tell everyone.
2. Most of your relationships are transactional. With every promise you make, all you're doing is setting up an exchange.
3. Your best relationships are predisposed. Your customers have no complaints, but when something better comes along—and it will—they’ll leave you in a second.
4. The only safe relationships are loyal. They have formed a nearly unbreakable, emotional bond with you.

Speaking at the AMA’s 2016 Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education, Kane addressed how and why humans develop relationships and what that means for marketers attempting to accumulate as many loyal customers as possible.

The difference between loyal and satisfied customers, Kane says, is the difference between cats and dogs. While a dog anxiously awaits your return, a cat is only bothered by you because it knows you’re the one who’s given it food. “Satisfaction is about the past. Loyalty is about the future,” says Kane. “That doesn’t mean you don’t have to satisfy your customers. It just means that those who are satisfied aren’t loyal.”

How marketers develop loyal relationships is both simple and complex.

“It’s not about brand; you can’t be loyal to the brand. It’s not about reward programs or any version of them,” says Kane. “And it’s not about satisfaction.” Rather than the metrics that marketers traditionally measure customer satisfaction and engagement on, Kane suggests the true indicators of a loyal customer are found in the experience, not the outcome, and in those touchpoints that are important to the customer, not the marketer.

Basic analytics will suggest measuring time on page, clickthroughs and bounce rates, but which of the events in your Google Analytics report notes that you helped a customer send a last-minute anniversary bouquet? And which one sends that same customer a reminder the next year? That’s the data, says Kane, that is gathered insightfully, and is the key to truly knowing your customer.

“Loyalty is about fostering a sense of trust, belonging, purpose,” he says. Trust is engendered by managing expectations. Giving your customer a sense of belonging involves knowing them as more than a segment or a demographic buzzword, like millennial or Gen Z. And purpose allows both your company and your customers to strive for something bigger than themselves.

Loyalty answers three questions, according to Kane:

- Do you make my life safer?
- Do you make my life easier?
- Do you make my life better?

Marketers who can answer, “Yes,” to those questions have a winning combination, but Kane cautions that there isn’t only one formula that will have all your customers responding positively. The key is to understand them so well that you can manage their experience and earn their trust in a relationship with you.
Student-generated Posts Power St. Lawrence University’s Social Media

The effort is a response to incoming freshman whose customer journey starts on Instagram

By Zach Brooke

“I don’t know anything about what he’s talking about unless I have students in the room with me consistently,” says Megan Kenistan, associate director of marketing at St. Lawrence University, a small liberal arts college in upstate New York.

She’s talking about Ryan Orvis, a recently graduated senior that worked closely with her while he was enrolled as a student. Orvis, 21, shared at the 2016 Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education that to capture young people’s attention on social media, posts need to be authentic (no smiling students cramming for finals), timely (don’t post weeks after we already heard about it), relevant and creative.

Kenistan says that taking on students like Orvis gives her insights into reaching college-aged students that can’t be gained merely from focus groups or market research.

Each year, Kenistan onboards 10 to 12 undergraduates as unpaid assistants in her office to help her manage social media accounts for the university. The entire group only meets once a week. They are broken into two teams, each with one student appointment leader. One team monitors and posts to the school’s Instagram account while the other handles its Snapchat account.

Why these accounts? Kenistan says surveys of incoming freshmen show that when they are considering St. Lawrence University as a potential alma mater, the first thing they do after visiting the school site is visit Instagram accounts of current students. The survey respondents say they feel students’ Instagram accounts provide the most accurate reflection of what campus life would be like for them.

Kenistan relies on her students to fill these accounts with content that will spread the university’s marketing message in ways prospective students will find engaging. This means showing students in the moment of creation or discovery instead of sporting stock photo poses. It also means enlisting large amounts of students to participate in social media campaigns, which they will do, but not entirely out of goodwill.

“Student’s won’t interact unless you give them swag,” Orvis says, noting that clothing, water bottles or phone chargers can be a cheap ticket to campus-wide participation.

Finally, the group combs the social media accounts of enrolled students not involved with the team for content they can borrow and share on their channels, using search techniques like hashtag filters and geo-location.

Once Kenistan’s teams finds an incredible piece of content they want to tie to St. Lawrence’s brand, they just reach out to the creator and ask to repost. Afterward, the team will circle back to the creator with a thank-you note and stats about how well it did on the university’s social media accounts.

Though Instagram and Snapchat are the dominant channels to concentrate marketing, the university has a presence in several other spaces as well. To decide what gets posted where, Kenistan has created the following chart:

- Facebook = Share something.
- Twitter = Discuss something.
- Instagram = Feel something.
- LinkedIn = Connect with someone.
- Snapchat = Experience something.
If Your Brand Doesn’t Represent Your Customers, Get Ready to Lose Them

Consumers are looking for brands that share their values and represent the lifestyle, experiences, ideas and aspirations they identify with

By Michelle Markelz

“Liking a brand is not the same as feeling a brand is like you,” Larry Vincent told the audience in his address at the 2016 AMA Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education.

Vincent, founder and chief branding officer of United Talent Agency, spoke of brand attachment and how marketers need to reframe the way they share their brands to get millennials and Gen Z (or Founders, as he calls them) hooked.

Echoing remarks made by James Kane, Vincent points out that brands can fall victim to false positives when they are the only player in the game or, conversely, there is so much competition that consumers shy away from choice and choose them out of habit. “People take the easiest route. Given the choice, most people don’t want to choose,” he says.

But a new breed of brands has tapped into this consumer feeling of resignation and is taking shares from former category giants by making choices for the customer. Look at Dollar Shave Club and the customers it’s nabbing from Gillette with its curation model, Vincent says. Legacy brands are not safe to rest on their success, especially as they look to capture young consumers or retain their business.

Though it may seem like an intangible or abstract idea, attachment is measurable, says Vincent, and it is the most effective predictor of difficult brand behaviors, such as:

• Willingness to pay a premium.
• Tendency to defend the brand.
• Likelihood to recommend.
• Propensity to promote.

“Your brand is worth the sum of your experiences over the expectations you set,” says Vincent. And your brand must be grounded in something that’s true while expressing possibility, he adds.

The possibility that younger consumers report they are looking for is a brand that shares their values and represents the lifestyle, the experiences, the ideas and the aspirations they identify with. More than 70% of U.S. consumers agree that they make a point to buy brands from companies whose values are similar to their own.

And corporate do-gooding isn’t enough. Consumers want to support eco-friendly companies and philanthropic endeavors, but they’re also looking for brands that will affirm their identities and raise their credit as unique individuals or members of a hip subculture.

Vincent points to two campaigns that have tapped into their consumers’ desires to see themselves reflected in the products they buy (dolls for their children and vodka they drink with friends).

After listening to fierce backlash from millennial moms, the marketers at Barbie understood that for the next generation of parents, the doll had to represent opportunity and empowerment for their girls.

When Channing Tatum wanted to launch his own brand of vodka, he wanted to appeal to a specific imbiber: not one who drinks in dimly lit clubs or at black tie affairs, but one who retreats to the wilderness for raucous (but still trendy) fun with an intimate group of friends.

Both successfully communicated to consumers the ideals and the experiences they wanted and could have, if they purchased the respective products.

“You’re helping people understand what they’re buying into,” Vincent says of branding, and those who promise a desirable, resonant experience can expect attachment in return.
The American Marketing Association’s Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education Conference would not be possible without the generous support of our Sponsors, Supporters and Exhibitors. We thank them for their partnership and their contribution to this event.
AMA 2017 Calendar of Events

American Marketing Association conferences and training events are built to surround you with peers who understand your business challenges and provide access to top speakers who can help you find solutions. Whether you’re a busy marketer working on a lean team or a scholar pushing the boundaries of traditional thinking, we have you covered with events ready to help you put Answers In Action™.

For Marketing Professionals

AMA Marketing and Public Policy Conference
June 1-3 | Washington, D.C.
This is the premier international event for marketing academics, policy makers and marketing practitioners interested in social and public policy. The 2017 conference theme, Promoting Solutions for Quality of Life and Consumer Well-Being, celebrates the incredible strides made in improving the lives of consumers and the quality of our society.

AMA Advanced Research Techniques (ART) Forum
June 25-27 | Seattle, WA
Data scientists, marketing professionals and academics attending the ART Forum develop a network of colleagues who are serious about developing tools that can solve the next generation of problems in the field of marketing. New hands-on sessions will make sure you leave with practical takeaways—and the right code—for applying sophisticated methodologies and quantitative techniques to support strategic marketing decisions.

AMA Nonprofit Marketing Conference
July 10-12 | Washington, D.C.
Marketers in nonprofits face a unique set of challenges when competing for people’s attention with big companies with large budgets. At this event, expect one-of-a-kind perspectives from speakers who understand the nonprofit space. You’ll also engage with others from nonprofits of all types and sizes, including foundations, charities, education, museums, associations, hospitals and government agencies.
AMA Annual Conference
September 11-13 | Las Vegas, NV
Successful marketing leadership results in high-achieving brands. At the AMA Annual Conference, you’ll hear from industry experts who will help you understand the 7 Big Problems in Marketing and provide solutions that will make you a more impactful leader when you get back to the office.

CONNECTED: AMA Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education
November 12-15 | Atlanta, GA
Individually, you might be a part of a small marketing team. But coming to CONNECTED gives you access to more than 1,000 higher education marketers who are ready to help you navigate the unique challenges of your field. Learn the latest marketing techniques from experienced professionals who understand how to build brands, fundraise and recruit in higher education.

Face-to-Face Training Series
Multiple Cities and Dates
Our two-day, hands-on learning events are a place where you’ll connect with peers who share your struggles and engage with top instructors to boost your marketing knowledge. Topics for 2017 include digital strategy, content marketing, integrated marcom, effective marketing writing, B-to-B strategy, measuring ROI and more.

For Academics

Winter AMA
February 17-19 | Orlando, FL
We bring together top scholars who are focusing on the most critical areas of thinking in the field of marketing. Formerly the Winter Marketing Educators Conference, Winter AMA is the go-to, faction-busting event where academics explore cutting-edge research and impactful ideas to create better marketing for a better world.

Summer AMA
August 4-6 | San Francisco, CA
The 2017 Summer AMA Conference returns to the City by the Bay, San Francisco, CA, an area that exemplifies our conference theme: Innovation and Sustainability through Marketing. Previously known as the Summer Marketing Educators' Conference, this event brings together scholars to present their latest research and boasts the largest academic hiring conference in the field.

Learn more and register at ama.org/2017events