

**Title of entry**

Integrated Marketing and Communications transformation model at UW Oshkosh

**Category number and title**

18c. Teresa Du Bois Exline Award for Best Practices in Communications and Marketing

**Institution**

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

**Name and contact information**

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**Names of individuals responsible for entry**

Jeanette DeDiemar, executive director of Integrated Marketing and Communications; Jaime Hunt, associate director, news and public information; Jamie Ceman, Web brand and new media strategy manager; Natalie Johnson, marketing communications manager; and Rebecca Sullivan, interim art director.

**General description of entry**

This project was a groundbreaking overhaul of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's Integrated Marketing and Communications department to implement five new strategic initiatives designed to provide better service and accountability to campus colleges, units and departments, and to transform marketing and communications across a campus with a historically decentralized approach:

- Account liaison system – launched September 2008
- Project manager system – launched September 2008
- Plan-Act-Assess-Improve – launched September 2008
- IMC Web site with an online toolbox for campus communicators ([www.uwosh.edu/imc](http://www.uwosh.edu/imc)) – launched September 2008
- IMC Workshops – launched October 2008

**Goals and objectives of the project**

The goal of deploying **Integrated Marketing and Communications Account Liaisons** was to strategically enhance communications with IMC and units across campus. Account liaisons work to cultivate and maximize IMC client relationships in order to collaboratively promote UW Oshkosh's brand identity in a strategic and consistent manner and to raise campuswide awareness and support of key marketing messages regarding UW Oshkosh's distinct brand identity. Additionally, account liaisons work with UW Oshkosh departments and programs to aid in the determination of marketing project possibilities and to ensure a client's needs are fulfilled. Finally, the liaisons work to raise awareness of IMC's expertise and services and build relationships with departments and units that hadn't previously worked with IMC.

In an effort to provide the highest level of customer service, professionalism and consistent brand, the **Integrated Marketing and Communications Project Manager System** ensures that each University client that commissions IMC to assist in the development of marketing communications materials has a single point of contact that oversees their entire project. The project manager utilizes a comprehensive creative brief questionnaire to establish the project's goals and works to ensure the project meets those goals and conveys the University's brand and key messaging. Project managers oversee teams that allow IMC staff with a broad cross section of skill sets to use those skills to strengths to develop projects and to ensure an integrated approach across all media is deployed.

The **Integrated Marketing and Communications Plan-Act-Assess-Improve (PAAI) Program** strives to emphasize what the client wants to achieve and an effective process to reach those goals. Fundamentally, the assessment process provides the opportunity to find better ways to support the University's marketing and branding efforts. The process helps to answer many questions about what projects, such as:

- What are we trying to do and why?
- How well are we doing it?
- What do we expect from the materials we create?
- How do we know if the materials are effective?
- How do we use information to improve or to celebrate success?
- And, do the changes we make really work?

Prior to the development of the program, many projects were "reorders" of a previous year's work. With the PAAI program, project managers examine projects to determine if there is a better way to accomplish the goals and apply those insights to the project.

The goals of the **IMC Web site** were: 1.) to create an effective Web site for the University to use as a resource for integrated marketing services such as marketing projects, web projects, publications and photography needs; 2.) to create a communication tool to keep campus informed and involved in the brand development and associated projects; 3.) to provide the necessary tools for campus to be more effective in their marketing efforts; 4.) to provide the highest level of customer service to campus clientele; 5.) to introduce campus to the services provided by the Integrated Marketing and Communications department in an effort to shed the negative perceptions that came with the former University Relations area; and 6.) to educate and train campus communicators and provide a toolbox of resources that allow for marketing and communications efforts to be truly integrated, impactful and effective.

IMC held a series of seven workshops that focused on media relations and internal communications, emarketing and graphic identity. The goals of the **IMC Workshops** were: 1.) to introduce the campus community to IMC's services; 2.) to effectively share knowledge about the tools available and best practices for communicating; and 3.) to

educate the campus community in utilizing the account liaison/project management systems.

**Description of how project fits into overall institutional goals**

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's Integrated Marketing and Communications focus began nearly three years ago as the institution realized that a unified effort would strengthen and realign its identity and image while re-engaging alumni and impacting student recruitment and faculty and staff retention while impacting donor relations.

The effort involved providing a dynamic vision through the development and implementation of an integrated communications plan that reflects the University's mission and goals and effectively uses resources.

The IMC team's creative resources and expertise are the cornerstones of an innovative mix of communication and promotional efforts that span multiple mediums and channels, while providing services to colleges and various departments and programs throughout the University.

While developing and launching an integrated brand effort, the team provides both creative, thought leadership and strategic support to the campus and its communication efforts externally and internally. This integrated strategy provides UW Oshkosh with opportunities to strengthen and best communicate the distinctiveness and relevance of the institution and its role in delivering a quality, accessible and affordable education to the citizens of northeastern Wisconsin.

**Audience**

The primary audience is current faculty/staff of the University and all those impacted by the re-branding efforts led by Integrated Marketing and Communications.

**Total number of staff who worked on the program: 5**

**Program budget and unit costs where applicable: \$0**

**Any special circumstances or challenges faced**

Because Integrated Marketing and Communications was a new concept for many of the staff in the department, it was necessary to overcome an inherited culture that took a "what the client wants, he/she gets" approach. Some staff were reluctant to see themselves as experts and/or were reluctant to step outside of their comfort areas to develop and manage more effective marketing projects.

An internal campaign created a cultural shift over a period of 18 months that encouraged adoption of core values for the team that stressed creativity, strategic thinking and shared responsibility.

The department also worked to build credibility across the campus community by holding workshops and open houses that showcased the team's portfolio and highlighted industry recognition received.

### **Documented results, measurements of effectiveness**

The account liaison model was quickly embraced by the campus, and the increased awareness of IMC's services resulted in a 34 percent increase in the number of projects managed by the department.

Thanks to the account manager system, the following results were observed:

- 60 percent improvement in the number of projects completed on deadline
- 100 percent of surveyed clients reported that the projects met their marketing goals
- 100 percent of surveyed clients reported that the projects relayed their key messages
- The average satisfaction rating for clients utilizing IMC's services was 8.9 out of 10.
- The average workshop feedback rating was 4.6 out of 5.

The Plan-Act-Assess-Improve program resulted in determining that a project that had been "reordered" year after year was actually the University's first point of contact with perspective students. Upon making that determination, the IMC team encouraged the client to take a more strategic approach to the project. The re-envisioned project featured key messaging from the University's Viewbook and directed students to a new Web site that allowed them to register online for a campus visit.

Since implementing the transformation of IMC, the department has garnered several industry awards – another first for the institution – including:

- **2009 Fourth Annual National Admissions Advertising Merit Award**, MyPlace Admissions Marketing Materials
- **2008 Pride of CASE V Silver Award**, Best Web Site, Individual Page or Section, UW Oshkosh Today
- **2008 Pride of CASE V Bronze Award**, Excellence in Special Events, Invitations and Collateral Materials, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Report to the Community: University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Foundation
- **2008 Gold ADDY® Award — Fox Valley Chapter**, Best Brochure, UW Oshkosh Foundation Campaign Cornerstone Brochure
- **2008 Silver ADDY® Award — Fox Valley Chapter**, Best Online Newsletter, UW Oshkosh Today News Site
- **2008 Silver ADDY® Award — Fox Valley Chapter**, Best Brochure, UW Oshkosh Admissions Viewbook

Additionally, members of the team have been asked to present UW Oshkosh's best practices at the following conferences:

- **2008 CASE V Conference**, Navigating Communications through a Budget Crisis
- **2009 Higher Ed Web**, Creating an Online Brand: From Buy-in to Execution
- **2009 CASE V Conference**, Creating an Online Brand: From Buy-in to Execution
- **2009 Academic Staff Leadership Conference**, Organizational Change: Building a Team and Infrastructure
- **2009 Adult Student Recruitment and Retention Conference**, Putting Resources Where They Count