

Marketing & Enrollment Retreat

Lead by Scott Battishill, Curator:

In Attendance: MET, Creative Services & Admissions Representatives

Wednesday, June 17, 2009

Northland Offsite Notes – Day one:

Where do we come from?

- Education for employment
- Education for transfer
- Provide the technical aspect
- Save Money – this is big.
- Get an AA
- Don't want big/"I'm not smart enough"
- Open administration
- Become better students
- Good educational reputation/but still a "less than" perception
- Older/newer colleges melded together (issue)
- Vision: Education is possible (this is where they started)
 - Community world view – we want our students to learn and then go back and make a positive contribution to their community. All boats rise mentality.
 - Same as it was before but our boundaries have changed.
- We're more personal, cheerleaders, coaching, getting back to roots of Minn., principles, quality of people, more open, accepting, motivating, relate to the students more, we root for the underdog.
- It's real -- we're making an immediate impact.

Field of competence:

- Provide personal attention/warmth
- We help students get jobs sooner because of our relationships with the local biz community
- We're down to earth, not pretentious
- Dedicated to students
- Faculty growth/training – we're good about this (better serve students)
- **MET:**
 - Recruit/direct student contact

- Ambassadors/smoozers/massagers
- A brain trust for students
- Purpose: make a snowball
- Aggressive
- Establish relationships/recruit/build trust
- Strategic differentiators/builders/keepers
- Where we want to be: New Media – effective social media
- Be more measureable
- Help navigate
- Empower other groups within college to build relationships/build the brand
- Define new markets/but not in a vacuum
- We're the scouts! Wagon trail analogy
- The hats we wear:
 - Student senate
 - Advisors
 - Directors
 - Teachers
 - Tours/transfers
 - Crisis management
 - Evals
 - Walk-ins
- Areas where we can delegate:
 - Ambassadors can help with tours
 - Programmer to help Chad
- Build relationships with HS counselors
 - Finding better ways to do this – currently hard to get in (lunch, they're busy, after school, sports or leaving, etc. how can we make this better)
- We need to go from a push to pull strategy
- How do we factor in "search" – is it more important, effective than something like outdoor, etc.
- Be more aggressive to outside areas (geographic.) Why can't we market to X geographic area that's outside our typical area
- Program specific marketing

What's influencing us?

Inside:

- \$ cuts
- Less staff
- Internal construction (tons going on right now) short term

- Influx of new leaders
- New admin structure
- Change – the dynamic of change
- Becoming one college
- Program tensions – program specific marketing – which ones, which campuses
- An overall sense of “too comfortable” among staff
 - Met
 - Growth needs
 - \$ cuts
 - Retention
- Outside:
 - \$ cuts
 - Economy
 - Two locations
 - Unemployment
 - Competitors
 - Disgruntled people, in general
 - Demographic shifts – reaching out further, younger groups are declining
 - Experience/image perception
- Students:
 - Social media
 - Search – SEO, how are they finding us now
 - Expectations have changed: they want feedback, input, personalized experience
 - Age group diversity – older group less tech savvy
 - Fun factor – they want it fun
 - The trend of job changes from the video (38 years old stat) Northland is better suited to meet the trend.

Audiences:

- HS students – 1
- Non-traditional/continual learners – 2
- Under represented/students of color –3
- Online
- International
- New immigrants
- Athletes
- Dislocated workers
- Characteristics:
 - Arts, Athletics, Academics
 - 20 and below on ACT score
 - 3.0 and below GPA

- If they are 3.0 and above they are likely program specific – medical
- They are choosing an experience
- They have jobs
- They're parents
- They're athletes
- The non-living on campus experience plays a role
- College is something they're trying to do while living their life
- Average age is going down.
- Outside audiences:
 - State/local gov./MNSCU – 1
 - Surrounding communities – 2
 - Parents/student's friends, peers – 3
 - Alumni
 - Donors
 - Facility staff
 - Pastor/faith based orgs
 - Coaches
 - HS teacher/counselors (though the counselor group is losing influence)
- **Who we are: (Brand attributes)**
 - Today: Reese Witherspoon: underestimated, down to earth, steady, family oriented, lots of hats, not perfect, but attractive, hard working
 - Aspire: Tom Hanks, Will Smith: Creative, Trustworthy, Innovative, Youthful/fun vibe, longevity, high moral fiber, connect with different groups, they support their spouse's ambition/family
- **What we fight for:**
 - Education access
 - Market share
 - Equal access
 - Student success
 - An identity
 - Students
 - Equitable treatment of students/co-workers and that has a halo effect
 - Attention
 - Resources
 - Strong communities
 - Unity within college
 - Quality/excellence in all we do
 - College of choice

- **What we value:**
 - Commitment
 - Trust
 - Belief in the program/college/one another
 - Dedication
 - Integrity
 - Honesty
 - A clear vision
 - Honest critiques
 - Leveraging of strengths
 - Transparency
 - Communication
 - Consistency
 - Sincerity
 - Respect
 - Motivation
 - Creative environment
 - Enthusiasm

The Parking Lot (issues to tackle – not resolved)

- Data Capture
- Measurement

Key takeaway thoughts from Group positioning statement

1. Gateway/speed concept
2. Relationship with the community/business opportunities
3. Personalized experience
4. “Career specific” – used in place of “technical”

Friday, June 19, 2009

Northland Offsite Notes – Day Two:

College Goals: Primary Focus Highlighted

- Inspire student success
- Cultivate high quality programs, services and employees
- Revolutionize growth strategies to sustain vibrant learning communities – this is our sweet spot, the area we can impact most

Elephants in the room:

- Two campuses
- Effectiveness of prioritizing how we spend our time as an enrollment group – where we go, what we engage in
- Program specific marketing vs. overall college marketing

MET Goals – things we want to do:

- Prioritize resources
- Increase student enrollment
- Increase/position our perception internally (MET)
- Create a social media campaign
- Conduct research on our outward perception
 - CRM research/data collection
- Create an efficient data collection process (for marketing purposes)
- Develop an SEO/search campaign
- Develop a PR program
- Develop an internal PR program
 - Work with our student facing staff/support staff to train in talking points, messaging.
 - Create a “tales from the road” mechanism for enrollment to share
- Establish communications/marketing standards of consistency
- Develop a Roll-out campaign to promote external initiatives internally to get everyone informed/excited.
- Consider using the Net Promoter scoring study

Enrollment Management Goals:

- Growth

- Put a firm plan in place
- Increase image with: HS, area communities, regional business/organizations
- Develop a Social Media campaign
- Improve the ability to identify and utilize student ambassadors
 - Create a larger, more incentivized “program” for them where giving tours is merely a part of the program, but the value comes from personal promotion from the college, networking opportunities with business leaders in their space, physical awards like iPods, etc. Make it a highly desirable distinction to be a part of
- Needs:
 - Faculty toolkit – to ensure we’re on the same page from a talking point/marketing perspective
 - Donor toolkit
 - New collateral – jump drives instead of catalogs?
 - Logistical needs for job fairs, etc., things like higher elevated tables and signage
 - Faculty buy-in (part of internal PR program)
 - Perhaps create a “recruitment funnel” with drivers per section

Creative Services:

- Develop a social media campaign
- Create clarity around our identity – one name consistently used across all platforms
- Add additional staff
 - Programmer
- Define drivers per task – mapped to strengths
- Streamline communications channels by influence/effectiveness
 - Online
 - PR
 - Some TV (cable inserts)
- Effectively track campaign
- Create an overarching campaign – not one-offs
- Create the process for upping our quality standards (updating things like our style guides)
- Define and prioritize programs to market
- Explore if “New Media” is the right term for Mark’s new program (perhaps Interactive Media?)

Parking Lot:

- \$ to grow/program marketing/number of students, etc. how to be successful
- How can we get representation on the group that determines which programs should receive the most marketing dollars – play the role of scout “these are the programs that can create the most demand...”
- We need to identify drivers for each initiative – we need singular owners for accountability – nothing gets down by a committee.