

Integrated Marketing Plan Executive Summary

1. The plan is the blueprint to guide how Fresno State will “tell its story” to its students and the community. (Page 2)
2. The plan was developed with a wide variety of input and consultation with campus and community groups. (Page 2)
3. The plan’s goals and objectives are: (Page 4)
 - Set a clear vision for Fresno State’s image and reputation;
 - Establish a dramatic and memorable visual identity for the campus;
 - Provide an organizational framework to ensure the communication of the image through branding and marketing.
4. The first-year goal is image enhancement, concentrating on internal audiences, and prospective and current students. (Page 5)
5. Several key messages will be reinforced in all internal and external communications to sharpen Fresno State’s image and reputation. (Page 5)
6. Ongoing research is needed to assess the messaging and effectiveness of the plan. (Page 6)
7. Specific geographic areas will be targeted for marketing to prospective students and alumni activities. (Page 7)
8. Competitors for Fresno State were identified as proprietary and private universities, the new UC Merced, and some sister CSU campuses. (Page 7)
9. A new Integrated Marketing Council will be created with professionals from across the campus and will meet monthly to create and administer a planned and consistent marketing approach. (Page 8)
10. Marketing messages effectiveness will be assessed with key early audiences: faculty and staff, prospective donors and students. (Page 9)
11. The marketing plan will be re-established every three years. (Page 10)
12. A preliminary budget will be determined by Sept. 15, 2005. (Page 10)
13. A “red team” for media/communication emergencies will be developed with the authority to respond to crises, allowing other staff the ability to move marketing goals ahead. (Page 11)

Laying the Foundation

California State University, Fresno President John D. Welty has described the university as being at a crossroads in its history. The university, as he says, has started on a path that will lead it to become one of the truly great regional universities in the United States; a university that is engaged with its region, nation and world. Fresno State's new Integrated Marketing Plan sets new patterns of operation in place for the university to support the campus as it moves into the future.

The Integrated Marketing Plan is the blueprint to guide how Fresno State will "tell its story" to its students and the community. The plan unifies the marketing efforts of the many facets of the university to best serve and inform the many audiences of the university. The marketing plan develops and reinforces the hallmarks of Fresno State, and does so in a way that our faculty, students and friends can support. The marketing plan also establishes ways to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing and communications efforts and methods to constantly update the plan as conditions change.

In fall 2004 President Welty directed that a campus-wide marketing assessment be made with the view toward moving the campus toward an integrated marketing model. A series of meetings was held during the fall and spring semester to review the prospects for integrated market at Fresno State, guided by a June 1, 2004 concept paper prepared by University Communications, titled "The Next Big Wave." Members of the work group for the marketing plan included faculty leaders and chief administrators from admissions and student outreach, athletics and athletic media, the Alumni Association, the comprehensive campaign, the University Auxiliary, and university communications.

Concurrent with the integrated marketing planning meetings were a series of focus groups assessing the effectiveness of the comprehensive campaign case statement, as well as the completion of a draft feasibility report by the firm Barnes and Rouche. During this period the first meeting of the university's National Board of Visitors was held which generated additional comments about the comprehensive campaign case statement. Discoveries made about the university's messaging and communications requirements for the campaign are reflected in this planning document.

The marketing work group undertook a situational analysis involving key on- and off-campus target audiences: donors, students and counselors, alumni here and elsewhere, community leaders, employers, faculty, and area professional schools.

It was the work group's determination that the university has done a better job in recent years in presenting itself to its most important audiences, but that much work needed to be done, especially as the campus moves into a major fundraising campaign mode.

The group found that the university's mission statement is still of value to our internal stakeholders, however many in the group found the university's overall mission as too diffuse and unfocused. Fresno State's current mission statement is:

Our vision is to be one of the nation's premier interactive universities, recognized for quality teaching, transformational scholarship, and cultural leadership for the benefit of society.

Several factors underscored that the university has been achieving its stated mission, including the increasing number of Fresno State students progressing to higher degrees, improved graduation rates, the diversity of our student body, growth in number and size of grant awards, donor support, and the development of educational programs that reflect the demographics of the region and state. The workgroup felt the mission statement was less valuable for external audiences. The statement is too long and is more of a value statement.

The work group found positive indications that the university's overall mission continues to be of great value to our faculty and other internal stakeholders. The addition of endowed chairs for faculty and the success of the six-year-old Smittcamp Family Honors College has improved the academic environment of the campus. The many new construction projects also have also been encouraging to internal stakeholders, as have the numerous awards and grants that are being won by faculty and programs such as in viticulture and enology and creative writing.

External audiences also are signaling that they still value the university's overall mission though their donor support, student demand and surging growth in applications to Fresno State. Prospective students resonate with the cultural leadership of campus. There are numerous positive remarks in student satisfaction surveys. The willingness of

community businesses and organizations to provide community service opportunities for our students is also an encouraging demonstration of support.

The integrated marketing work group also has access to a variety of marketing research studies, including studies by Professor Ed Nelson, the PIN follow up survey, surveys completed by the University Courtyard, focus groups from the comprehensive campaign and other campus organizations, Smittcamp enrolled students, alumni surveys and parent surveys and employer surveys from university career services. The work group discussed the results of these reports as the marketing plan was developed.

Fresno State's Integrated Marketing Plan: Key Goals and Objectives

Based on the president's declared mandate, the integrated marketing plan must accomplish the following:

- **Set a clear vision for Fresno State's image and reputation among the key constituencies of the university.**
- **Establish a dramatic and memorable visual identity, or theme, for the campus.**
- **Provide an organizational framework to ensure the communication of the university's image through an institution-wide program of branding and marketing. Unify Fresno State's messaging across the many enterprises of the university.**

Top audiences for Fresno State's integrated marketing efforts

1. Chancellor and Trustees
2. Federal, state and local legislators
3. Prospective & current students and those who influence them
 - a. Teachers & Counselors
 - b. Ethnic Organizations
 - c. Parents
4. Internal audiences
 - a. Current faculty & staff
 - b. New faculty & staff

5. Potential major donors
6. Alumni/Businesses and Corporations

What will be our focus be this year?

With the understanding that all aspects integrated marketing can not be completed simultaneously, the integrated marketing effort will focus, in phases, on those projects that are most critical in advancing the university. The work group identified two key areas of attention for the start-up of the plan.

The group determined that the campus first needs to focus on “image enhancement” that enables Fresno State to have clearer communication of the university’s vision. That vision then needs to be communicated effectively this year to internal audiences, identified in item #4 above, and prospective and current students, identified as audience #3 above.

In the second year the integrated marketing program will focus on prospective major donors, the chancellor’s office and alumni. In year three, the plan will focus on fans and the general community,

Early “wins” for integrated marketing at Fresno State

The marketing effort will seek a set of key early “wins” for the plan.

- Centralized communication and branding of the university
- Vivid descriptors (key marketing messages) are accepted internally, including the Cabinet
- Very prominent placement of university themes at athletic and community events (USC game), banners, existing publications, media presentations.

Key messages

The working group developed the following key messages, which will be reinforced in all internal and external communications efforts to better sharpen Fresno State’s image and reputation. The key messages about the campus are significant, believable and distinctive. They are:

- Fresno State is a place of opportunity and diversity.
- Fresno State provides “hands on experience.”
- Community service and engagement in “real life” is a campus hallmark.
- Bulldog Pride – from a tough environment Fresno State students aspire to and achieve great things
- Transferable learning – You can get anywhere from here.
- Fresno State’s academic hallmarks are preparing teachers, agriculture, arts and cultures, health care, business and entrepreneurship, and regional leadership
- Fresno State is an “engaged” campus, improving the health of California’s heartland, advancing World Class agriculture, treasuring the arts and cultures of New California, creating solutions for today’s classrooms, and helping the economy grow.

Integrated Marketing to be Supported by Ongoing Research

Considerable research on the interests and motivations of key audiences has already been conducted by the university, as cited earlier. The work group recommends that additional research be undertaken to specifically assess the messaging and effectiveness of the integrated marketing plan. That research would include:

- Web surveys of prospective students, current students, parents, faculty, staff and alumni.
- Surveys of prospective donors, members of the National Board of Visitors.
- Personal interviews with legislators, local governmental officials
- Booster surveys
- Surveys of community leaders

The key integrated marketing messages will be tailored for specific audiences:

- Defined from the prospective of our target audiences.
- Tested with our audiences as to what their perception of these descriptors is through surveys.
- Enhanced through discussions with current and new faculty. Question them on how they have experienced key descriptors, how they have seen it on campus and in the community, and suggest ways those descriptors can be visually depicted.

- Consider how various tailored messages can be communicated in the various media available to the campus (calendars, publications, broadcasts, the Web, etc.)

Target geography

Fresno State will market itself based on where alumni live, where first time freshman come from, where alumni chapters are located. The plan will help the university gain marketing focus by aiming at specific geographic areas.

For student marketing the boundaries of the campus geography will be on the Central San Joaquin Valley, the Central Coast, San Jose, and Stockton. Generally, Fresno State will promote itself to prospective students and parents as the CSU “school of choice” in all of California. For alumni activities the boundaries will be broader, stretching from Kern County to Sacramento. The campus will also continue to promote itself as being affordable in the national market.

The work group identified three major competitors for Fresno State. The first competitor group is proprietary and private universities which are more aggressively marketing their programs in our target geography. The first competitor group includes National, Chapman, Phoenix, and Fresno Pacific University. Our marketing positioning strategy will stress our low cost, abundant financial aid, our response time, flexible scheduling and professional environment.

Fresno State’s second major competitor is the new University of California, Merced. The work group’s positioning strategy with Merced will be to contrast the urban lifestyle and cultural amenities of the Fresno/Clovis metro area against the more rural culture in Merced. Fresno State will also highlight its professional degree programs against UC Merced’s lack of such professional school programs. Fresno State will also highlight the overall high quality of student life at our established campus, with a full retinue of student services and activities, such as the new recreation center, student government, campus organizations, fraternities and sororities, athletics, etc.

Fresno State also competes with its sister CSU campuses. For example, students and parents choose between the agriculture programs offered in Fresno verses Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. To build a distinctive presence among the CSU campuses, Fresno State will stress the personal aspects of the educational experience here, such as community

service and mentoring. Fresno State's unique educational programs will also be highlighted. The marketing efforts will also highlight our athletic programs and the pride attached to a high profile sports program.

Marketing goals 2005-06

1. **Formal creation of the Fresno State Marketing Council.** Fresno State's Integrated Marketing Council will meet monthly to direct the overall marketing plan. The marketing council mission will be to develop, enhance and maintain a strong and consistent institutional image, across all of the interests of the campus—athletics, development, institutes and centers, etc. The marketing council would development an overall collaborative marketing program for the campus designed to accomplish key institutional goals. The council brings together professional from across the campus to create and administer a planned and consistent marketing program. The council will:

- Aggressively market campus services, athletics and entertainment.
- Support and reinforce the themes of the comprehensive campaign.
- Fully incorporate athletics into the overall university strategic plan.
- Fold entertainment into the overall university strategic plan.

The membership of the group will include the following faculty, administrators and staff.

1. Admissions/Student Outreach – Associate Vice President for Admissions
2. Marketing representative from the Academic Senate
3. Administrator/Faculty Academic Resources
4. Athletics – Athletic Director
5. Alumni Association – Executive Director of the Alumni Association
6. Comprehensive Campaign – Executive Director of the Comprehensive Campaign
7. Digital Instruction – Executive Director of the Digital Campus
8. Executive Director of the University Auxiliary
9. Strategic Communications – Associate VP for University Communications

10. Athletic Media – Director of Athletic Media
11. University Communications – Director of News Services
12. Special Events -- Events Planning Director
13. Housing and Dining -- representative
14. University Extension -- representative
15. Digital Production Group – representative
16. Publications – Director of Publications and New Media
17. Madden Library – representative
18. Web – Web Manager
19. Web/Digital Services/CVIP – representative

2. **Assess and promote the marketing themes with faculty and staff.** The marketing work group stressed that the internal university community needs to support and believe in the marketing messages.
 1. Establish a method of communicating the vivid descriptors to faculty and staff and solicit their comment.
 2. Fully inform faculty and staff and solicit their input.
 3. In the first year we will measure how much the vivid descriptor is accepted by faculty and staff. Have a measurable outcome for change.
 4. Assess which communications are actually used and which are thrown away or deleted. Identify what is the best method to communicate to campus audiences. Communicate that we value and need their input. Investigate the use of pay stubs for communicating messages.
 5. Get all existing communications unified and measure effectiveness.
 6. Establish why it is important to Improve university's image among top students in our selected geographic area.
 7. Document the positive results of increased enrollment demand.
 8. Need President and/or Provost to ask faculty to help the Council by participating in integrated marketing survey. We will need multiple reminders, calls, etc. to get survey done. Make it important to them.

3. Assess and promote the marketing themes with donors

1. Gain feedback from the campaign theme assessments, including:
 - a. National Board of Visitors focus groups
 - b. Feasibility and capacity study interviews
 - c. Responses to the draft case statement from leaders and prospective donors.
2. Include marketing themes in communications to donors.

4. Assess and promote the marketing themes with students

1. In collaboration with Student Affairs, establish a method of communicating the vivid descriptors to students and solicit their input.
2. Unify existing communications with the use of the key messages and measure effectiveness.
3. Improve university's image among top students within our selected geographic area.
4. Stress the positive results of increased enrollment and more qualified students to internal constituencies.

5. Conduct ongoing reviews and surveys to determine whether or not this plan was successful.

1. Conduct surveys faculty and staff, students, community leaders, media, employers, and other professional schools.

6. Develop the marketing plan to run for three years.

1. Plan will be re-established every three years.

7. A preliminary integrated marketing budget will be determined this year.

1. Budget determined by September 15.
 - a. Determine current expenditures in marketing across the campus.
 - b. Identify possible areas for additional resources.

8. Development of a “red team” for media emergencies.

1. “Red Team,” consisting of key staff members from University Communications, athletics, academic affairs, administration, student affairs to respond to crises while other staff continue to move marketing goals ahead.