Division of Communications

Strategic Plan

The Division of Communications is a team of talented, dedicated communications professionals who work to tell the story of Eastern Michigan University. The Division includes:

- Marketing
- Media Relations
- Integrated Content
- Alumni Relations
- WEMU Public Radio

Mission Statement

The mission of the Division of Communications is to promote and enhance the reputation and visibility of the University, contributing to student recruitment, retention and enrollment growth.

Strategic Direction

In 2012, our Division leadership agreed that our top priority going forward is to support student recruitment. In order to recruit students, the image of the University must be positive, appealing and reflect the quality of our faculty and programs. The Communications team has many assets and skills that can be used to enhance the University’s reputation in order to support enrollment growth.

Each of the departments in the Division of Communications has unique responsibilities and activities. But, in all that we do, we ask ourselves if our efforts contribute to growing enrollment and/or enhancing the University’s reputation. The majority of our resources are dedicated to these two efforts.

Strategic Goals

The following four goals have been established to support our mission and strategic direction. A variety of strategic actions will be taken by each department for each of the goals.
Strategic Goal #1

*Increase the visibility of the University, its programs, faculty, students and staff*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Strategic Actions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>• Execute integrated advertising campaigns via television, radio, print, billboards and online  &lt;br&gt;• Target online advertising toward student recruitment while supporting the University’s image with positive messages  &lt;br&gt;• Maximize social media marketing on FaceBook, Twitter and YouTube  &lt;br&gt;• Use Search Engine Optimization (SEO) best practices throughout the Division to ensure the best possible results/page rankings for our positive content  &lt;br&gt;• Promote the Eagle Discount Card program and support the community with local sponsorships</td>
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<td>Media Relations</td>
<td>• Generate media coverage about accomplishments and expertise of Eastern’s faculty, students and staff, and growth programs  &lt;br&gt;• Appropriately handle media inquiries with timeliness, transparency, and professionalism  &lt;br&gt;• Use social media channels FaceBook, Twitter and YouTube to promote positive news about Eastern  &lt;br&gt;• Use SEO best practices throughout the Division to ensure the best possible results/page rankings for our positive content  &lt;br&gt;• Generate photography and videography that is used to support enrollment growth and enhance the University’s image</td>
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<td>Integrated Content</td>
<td>• Use high-quality imagery and strong writing to tell student success stories on the website home page  &lt;br&gt;• Ensure all public-facing websites have content that will appeal to prospective students  &lt;br&gt;• Use web best practices to ensure the best possible user experience  &lt;br&gt;• Use SEO best practices throughout the Division to ensure the best possible results/page rankings for our positive content  &lt;br&gt;• Create Eastern magazine content that communicates the high level of academic achievement of students and faculty, and the accomplishments of EMU alumni  &lt;br&gt;• Develop well-branded divisional/department/program brochures and other promotional items that illustrate the quality of the academic programs and other University entities</td>
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<td>Alumni Relations</td>
<td>• Generate Alumni communications, traditionally and via social media  &lt;br&gt;• Execute outreach activities for alumni in Michigan, Ohio and other designated geographic areas  &lt;br&gt;• Grow existing alumni chapters and develop new alumni chapters where strong potential exists  &lt;br&gt;• Increase student engagement, and enhance programming with the Colleges, other divisions and departments  &lt;br&gt;• Use SEO best practices throughout the Division to ensure the best possible results/page rankings for our positive content</td>
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<td>WEMU</td>
<td>• Run media coverage of EMU programs, students, faculty and staff as appropriate and relevant to audience expectations, and consistent with WEMU’s mission of editorial integrity and unbiased journalism and coverage  &lt;br&gt;• Raise visibility of EMU and WEMU by supporting the community through media partnerships and community engagement  &lt;br&gt;• Provide consistent, ongoing underwriter announcements, a combination of image and event spots  &lt;br&gt;• Use SEO best practices throughout the Division to ensure the best possible results/page rankings for our positive content</td>
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### Strategic Goal #2

**Increase engagement between stakeholders and the University**

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<td>Marketing</td>
<td>• Generate positive, consistent, frequent interactions and conversations by posting quality content on our social media channels FaceBook, Twitter and YouTube  &lt;br&gt;• Increase engagement numbers of social media marketing channels  &lt;br&gt;• Use social media channels to get feedback by asking questions and listening to feedback, and then implement new approaches as necessary  &lt;br&gt;• Work to increase attendance at enrollment open houses and daily campus tours  &lt;br&gt;• Work to increase attendance at notable University events, with consideration for budget and available resources  &lt;br&gt;• Work to increase attendance at athletic competitions and student participation in fan programs, with consideration for budget and team performance</td>
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<td>Media Relations</td>
<td>• Work to get media to visit campus to cover positive stories about Eastern  &lt;br&gt;• Identify campus experts and encourage media to use them as resources for stories  &lt;br&gt;• Use social media channels FaceBook, Twitter, and YouTube to promote positive news about Eastern  &lt;br&gt;• Upload videos to YouTube regularly to help grow our YouTube channel  &lt;br&gt;• Communicate campus announcements and information to our internal audience with timeliness, transparency, and professionalism</td>
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<td>Integrated Content</td>
<td>• Continue working to convert older web pages to new design, with more concise, appealing information and improved navigation, and monitor page view data  &lt;br&gt;• Continue to stay current with new technologies and develop content that suits current/emerging devices  &lt;br&gt;• Continue to add new content to the online edition of Eastern magazine, including “web extra” features, and monitor page view data</td>
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<td>Alumni Relations</td>
<td>• Enhance and promote the benefits of the Alumni Association membership and increase the number of membership requests  &lt;br&gt;• Generate positive, consistent, frequent interactions and conversations by posting quality content on our social media channels FaceBook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube  &lt;br&gt;• Increase engagement numbers on social media marketing channels  &lt;br&gt;• Increase attendance at Alumni events  &lt;br&gt;• Focus on reaching southeast Michigan alumni with new types of events, monitor interest and participation, and build this base  &lt;br&gt;• Plan Alumni events in other geographic areas with large numbers of alums and/or active Alumni chapters  &lt;br&gt;• Involve alumni in volunteer roles affecting recruitment, career development and mentoring, legislative advocacy, and community service, as appropriately determined and approved with collaborative University involvement</td>
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<td>WEMU</td>
<td>• Increase listenership numbers and engage younger listeners  &lt;br&gt;• Continue to establish and meet higher financial support targets  &lt;br&gt;• Generate positive, consistent, frequent interactions and conversations by posting quality content on our social media channels FaceBook, Twitter and wemu.org</td>
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### Strategic Goal #3

**Build substantive relationships with key stakeholders**

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| Marketing        | • Strengthen collaboration with Admissions, Campus Life, Athletics, Government Affairs and each of the Colleges  
                   • Use focus groups, surveys, social media or other research tools to get feedback  
                   • Support the efforts of local community leadership groups |
| Media Relations  | • Communicate expertise of Media Relations team to University entities and strengthen collaboration with each of the Colleges and other entities so that we can actively promote great stories about student, faculty and staff  
                   • Identify and promote faculty experts to media as resources for stories or to react to news coverage  
                   • Build and maintain professional relationships with key reporters  
                   • Use social media channels to promote positive news about Eastern and generate interactions/conversations with media  
                   • Increase trust and understanding through timely, truthful, sensitive and professional communication during an emergency or crisis |
| Integrated Content | • During process of converting older websites to new design, use opportunity to build new collaborative relationships with campus entities  
                   • Implement user testing methods and actively monitor analytics to gauge effectiveness of web navigation and content  
                   • Continue to inform, entertain, and connect with Eastern magazine readers by creating content that reflects the values of EMU and supports its mission |
| Alumni Relations | • Increase trust and understanding through timely, truthful, sensitive and professional communication with stakeholders  
                   • Strengthen collaboration with each of the Colleges and the EMU Foundation  
                   • Engage first-time participants at Alumni events to improve likelihood of future participation  
                   • Build and maintain positive relationships with supporters who regularly attend events  
                   • Maintain strong, supportive ties with alumni chapters and the Alumni Association Board of Directors  
                   • Use pre/post analysis, surveys or other research tools to get feedback on events, programs and services |
| WEMU             | • Build and maintain positive relationships with donors, listeners and local businesses and organizations  
                   • Work with Media Relations team to identify faculty and student stories for broadcast as appropriate and relevant to audience expectations, and consistent with WEMU’s mission of editorial integrity and unbiased journalism and coverage  
                   • Use designated research tools to get feedback from key constituencies |
| ALL              | • Use good customer service techniques to ensure that stakeholders (i.e., guests, callers, prospects, listeners, participants, partners) have positive interactions with our Division as a whole |
# Strategic Goal #4

**Produce top-quality work products**

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<td>ALL Departments</td>
<td>• Contribute to a collaborative environment, and communicate consistently with a unified message based on our priorities of growing enrollment and enhancing the University’s reputation&lt;br&gt;• Develop a better understanding of the responsibilities and expertise of each of our Divisional units, so that we can answer general questions from stakeholders, direct them to appropriate resources within our Division, and positively represent our Division as a whole&lt;br&gt;• Collaborate with Division staff across our five units, use Division resources, and use vendors and freelancers to produce top-quality communications&lt;br&gt;• Ensure all communications materials represent Eastern positively, and are effective, professionally well-written, and well-designed with high-quality imagery&lt;br&gt;• Ensure all writing is grammatically correct and accurate, and follows AP Style as appropriate&lt;br&gt;• Ensure use of high-quality imagery and strong writing to tell student success stories on the website home page&lt;br&gt;• Use Search Engine Optimization (SEO) best practices throughout the Division to ensure the best possible results/page ranking for our positive content&lt;br&gt;• Invest in software, equipment and/or training when it will enhance or improve our work products and results, with consideration for budget&lt;br&gt;• Contribute to the improvement of communications materials throughout the entire University by promoting the use of new templates, collaborating with other University entities on materials and coordinating messages/themes whenever possible&lt;br&gt;• Each of us will further develop our professional skills through self-study and/or collaboration in order to ensure our work products are of the highest possible quality&lt;br&gt;• All staff will work with student employees to ensure they represent the Division positively, display good customer service skills and have a high level of quality in their work – and learn from their experience working with us</td>
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**Implementation**

It is the responsibility of the Vice President for Communications and the five Executive Directors to implement the Strategic Actions described above, and to strongly support our efforts to grow enrollment and enhance the University’s reputation.

In the weekly management meeting (VP and Directors) and the weekly individual meetings (VP one-on-one meetings with each Director), we ensure the Division’s focus remains on these two priorities. Although other unrelated tasks and responsibilities exist, we try to minimize the time and resources that are spent on those activities. Whenever possible, we try to eliminate activities that are not related to enrollment and reputation.

In quarterly All-Staff Meetings, we present and discuss topics that support our two priorities, sharing a consistent, unified message with everyone in the Division. As issues and questions come up each week during normal operations, we consistently make decisions based on our priorities of enrollment and reputation.

**Strategic Plan Revisions**

The Division leadership will review the Strategic Plan annually and will revise the Strategic Direction, Goals and Actions as needed. It is likely that our two priorities will remain the same for years to come, although our Strategic Actions are likely to evolve and change.

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Questions regarding the Division of Communications Strategic Plan may be directed to Walter Kraft, Vice President for Communications. He can be reached at wkraft@emich.edu or at (734) 487-6895.