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The Rochester Institute of Technology

Department of Communication

College of Liberal Arts

More Than a Library: An Outline for an Integrated Marketing Communications Campaign

by

Erica MacArthur

A Thesis Project submitted

in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Master of Science degree
in Communication and Media Technologies

February 18, 2014

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MORE THAN A LIBRARY:
AN OUTLINE FOR AN INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

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Abstract

The evolution of the academic library occurred amidst disruptive changes in the information landscape and has resulted in changing definitions of the role of libraries on academic campuses. The Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) Libraries are an example of the library enterprise “in transition;” however, communicating value through this transformation requires strategic communication. The present project discusses trends in communications and applies it to RIT Libraries by creating a suggested outline for the strategic and tactical components of a marketing communications campaign. Based on a review of the literature, this thesis posits that the forward-thinking library will use the changing landscape as an opportunity to create a strategic marketing program and will thus make a profound investment in its future.

Keywords: integrated marketing communications, marketing campaign, services marketing, academic libraries

**More Than a Library:
An Outline for an Integrated Marketing Communications Campaign**

In an increasingly digital world, there is speculation and debate of libraries' impending extinction (Kolowich, 2009). The vast amount of information available online combined with massive budget cuts has reduced circulation of print materials and resulted in changing definitions of the role of libraries on academic campuses. The emergence of Web-based tools, digital content, and outsourced services has raised legitimate questions about the fate of brick-and-mortar campus libraries (Association of Research Libraries, 1996; Clouten & Gane, 2002; Kolowich, 2009). However, rather than becoming relics of the past in this changing landscape, many libraries are attempting to evolve by adapting to contemporary student learning styles and incorporating a creative range of technological services from apps and devices to social collaboration spaces.

The Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) Libraries can be seen as an example of the library enterprise "in transition." In 2009, a merger with RIT's Teaching and Learning Services expanded the libraries' traditional role. The resulting entity, The Wallace Center (TWC), encompasses several co-located units with similar missions, including the RIT Libraries, production services, special collections, faculty development, and an academic publishing enterprise, among others. TWC was envisioned by campus leadership to provide a multi-unit, "one-stop shopping" experience for patrons, offering a suite of services in a centrally located physical space (Bower & Dickson, 2010). This vision transcends the traditional concept of a campus library, blending staff expertise with redesigned library services, which provide greater potential means for students to engage with information and tools outside the classroom.

To realize this revitalized institutional vision, TWC undertook a major renovation project to the first floor of the building during summer 2013. The renovation sought to strengthen the role of TWC as a collaboration space, leading to greater use of the services and collections (Bower & Dickson, 2010). The redesign included a writing studio, collaborative work areas, dynamic exhibit environments, and a communal learning space.

Notwithstanding the renovation project, which supports the vision of TWC as a revitalized entity, engaging today's student users with TWC services remains challenging. A recent national survey from the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project suggests that while libraries still resonate in the digital age, only 22% of Americans surveyed said they were aware of the services their library offered outside traditional amenities, such as checking out print materials and using computer terminals (Zickuhr, Rainie, & Purcell, 2013). While the study looked specifically at public libraries, parallels can be drawn to TWC in particular and academic libraries in general. Those surveyed also claimed that they would embrace broader technological offerings at libraries, including question-and-answer services with librarians, app-based access to library materials, and Amazon-style recommendations based on patron preferences, among others (Zickuhr et al., 2013). Interestingly, many libraries already provide these services and several libraries were at the forefront of technological innovation, offering Google-like search assistance by librarians before search engines existed. The Pew study demonstrates that libraries need to better communicate and market their services to patrons.

Project Rationale

The role of marketing in most academic libraries, if marketing exists at all, is mired by lack of resources, expertise, and time. Library budgets rarely accommodate marketing or

promotional campaigns and even fewer are able to dedicate a staff member to focus exclusively on marketing the library. Furthermore, curricula for American Library Association-accredited library school programs seldom require marketing courses and students have limited opportunities to pursue them outside of the program requirements (Winston & Hazlin, 2003). As a result, libraries are, by and large, unable to strategically plan a marketing program (Germano, 2010). To date, little research exists on what such a program might look like for an academic library or the outcome of such efforts.

For this reason, the present thesis project proposes the design and development of an integrated marketing communications campaign to engage patrons with TWC's suite of services.

Although TWC serves a wide range of campus constituents, members of TWC's executive leadership team identified undergraduate students as the primary target (L. Wild & S. Bower, personal communication, June 3, 2013). Qualitative interviews with select students, conducted by the researcher, further refine the target population and provide an informed basis for the campaign architecture.

Most discussion of the future of the academic library remains focused on programmatic changes rather than strategic marketing. By placing focus on facilitating and encouraging user engagement, TWC will communicate more value, competing more effectively in today's digital world. Further, this project extends the body of marketing research focused on academic libraries.

Literature Review

History of Change within the Academic Library

The information landscape of today is characterized by ubiquitous, immediate access to information online. A 2007 article reported that IBM was working on a mobile storage device that would allow every consumer to carry and stream data equivalent to a college library on a device as small as an iPod (Markoff, 2007). While the full extent of that technology has not been realized as of this writing, it is clear that students find and retrieve the majority of their resources through the Internet (Jones, 2002). As the methods of information consumption change, the impact on the library with respect to collecting and providing access to patrons is profound.

However, this is not the first time that academic libraries have responded to disruptive changes in the information landscape. The preconditions for this remarkable period were laid during the nineteenth century by the development of audio-visual formats such as recorded sound, photography, and later, moving images, and throughout much of the twentieth century with records, cassettes and VHS, microfilm and microfiche, CD-ROM, databases, and eventually computer networks (Lyman, 1991). For this reason, the future of the academic library cannot be considered apart from the history of its evolution.

The first academic library in the United States was created in the seventeenth century when John Harvard donated over 400 volumes to Harvard University. Although the bequest was transformational for the institution, the library remained nonessential to the college mission for about another 200 years. When John Langdon Sibley was appointed assistant librarian at Harvard in 1841, he began a revolutionary quest to collect everything printed that was suitable for a research library. His pursuit resulted in dramatic growth of both collections and library

funding. Yet despite his determination, it was still much later before other libraries shared his vision. In fact, by 1876, only one other institution had surpassed 50,000 volumes. Following the formation of new graduate schools during the nineteenth century as well as increased emphasis on faculty research, academic libraries began to develop a formal structure and became more integrated with the mission of the college (Hamlin, 1981).

The latter half of the twentieth century witnessed explosive growth in scholarship, as well as in the number of students and faculty to be served. Serials departments grew rapidly to hold the physical products of scholarly output and were able to respond affirmatively to most requests for new titles (Hamlin, 1981). It was the “golden age” of acquisition. During the 1980s, however, demands on university budgets combined with double-digit price inflation for scholarly materials caused a widening gap between serials published and serials acquired (Clouten & Gane, 2003). A 1996 Association of Research Libraries (ARL) report indicates that the average price of serials increased by nearly 50 percent in the short period from 1986 to 1990 (Association of Research Libraries, 1996). In an effort to maximize budgets, librarians turned their attention to alternative paths for providing access to scholarly resources, especially electronic dissemination. The establishment of inter-institutional agreements, such as interlibrary loan, reduced the necessity for duplicate collections among regional universities (Association of Research Libraries, 1996). Powerful personal computers with high-capacity storage created new possibilities for information storage and management; and CD-ROMs, online library catalogs, electronic databases, and eventually the World Wide Web allowed users to share limited resources simultaneously (Clouten & Gane, 2003).

By the 1990s, the Internet had evolved from an experimental network to a massive global system (Abbate, 1994). CD-ROMs and paper titles moved toward Web access. Key phrases related to library issues during this time included “just in time versus just in case” and “access versus ownership,” indicating a landscape that was very different from prior decades (Miller, 2000, p. 646). Today, the average ARL university library now spends in excess of 65% of its total materials budget on electronic materials (Association of Research Libraries, 2012).

The academic library’s history, characterized by change, is indicative of the landscape ahead, representing a need for forward-thinking approaches.

Marketing Theory

The majority of marketing theory is influenced by the “marketing mix,” or 4Ps of marketing: product, price, promotion, and place. The 4Ps framework focuses on developing messages that convey the benefits of a product, establishing the appropriate price, conceptualizing promotions, and discovering outlets for delivering that product to consumers (Constantinides, 2006). While the concept does serve as a memorable and practical construct, it was established some 50 years ago when most companies produced a tangible good. Since then, the U.S. economy has evolved in response to a number of factors, namely the rapid development of digital technology and its emphasis on information and service rather than goods.

Computerization not only allowed organizations to reduce manufacturing time and cost considerably, but also to capture and manage vast amounts of information about consumers. As a result, manufacturing changed fundamentally from production-oriented objectives to consumer-oriented objectives, giving rise to the growth of service organizations (Schultz & Schultz, 1998). In the modern marketplace, differentiating solely on the transaction-based

elements of product, price, promotion, and place is no longer sufficient for creating long-term competitive advantage (Gentile, Spiller, & Noci, 2007). Consequently, marketing theory has evolved to include more complex notions of marketing communications.

Traditional marketing theories, including the 4Ps framework, have always claimed to be customer-centric. Yet the reality was that most marketers remained product- or service-focused. Marketing messages were delivered through mass media in an attempt to persuade customers and prospects to respond by purchasing, thereby generating volume growth. Now modern consumers have access to a tremendous amount of information about products and services and can make purchase decisions at any place or time that is convenient for them. It is the consumer who decides which brands are valuable and which relationships are worth having. The consumer drives the marketplace (Schultz & Schultz, 1998). As a result, the one-way marketing message paradigm has changed, requiring a re-visioning of the marketing communications process and a genuine customer orientation (Schultz, Tannenbaum, & Lauterborn, 1994). The 4Ps of marketing conceived during the 1960s are necessarily replaced, or at least supplemented by an ongoing, dynamic interaction with people.

Integrated Marketing Communications

Integrated marketing communications (IMC) provides a sophisticated approach for reaching consumers at each point at which they come into contact with a brand (Schultz & Schultz, 1998). Percy (2008) defines IMC as the “planning and execution of all types of advertising-like and promotion-like messages selected for a brand, service, or company, in order to meet a common set of communication objectives, or more particularly, to support a single ‘positioning’” (p. 5). Critical to this definition is a strategically coordinated plan to communicate

a consistent message to consumers. Rather than looking at the marketing communications effort as individual functions (e.g., advertising, public relations, sales), IMC instead looks at the effort as a holistic, integrated approach (Schultz, Tannenbaum, & Lauterborn, 1994). IMC attempts to see the message from the consumers' point of view, strategically considering where and under what circumstance one might encounter a brand, providing relevant and customized messaging through a variety of channels (Schultz & Schultz, 1998).

The Shift to Two-Way Communication

While many organizations continue to focus on delivering one-way persuasive messages, the most effective marketing programs focus on improving the customer experience throughout multiple channels in order to stand out in the cluttered marketplace. Studies of consumer behavior have shifted away from the classical decision theory—consumers as rational decision makers whose consumption decisions are based on a process of identifying needs, collecting information, evaluating alternatives, and finally making a decision—toward a new focus on a somewhat irrational consumer who perceives emotional value in consumption (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) suggest that the classical theory for consumption neglects elements such as sensory pleasure, esthetic enjoyment, and emotional responses. Consumption involving fantasies, feelings, and fun encompasses what the researchers refer to as the “experiential view” (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). The experiential view recognizes the role that symbolic meanings play in consumption decisions.

Leiss, Kline, Jhally, and Botterill (2005) analyzed advertisements from 1890 through 2000 to identify how cultural contexts influence advertising content and form. They suggest that consumer goods are marketed in modern culture in a way that reflects the culture itself. Their

analysis identified five main marketing strategy phases, called cultural frames for goods, which have emerged over time. Economic and socio-cultural changes influence how people relate to goods. For instance, *totemism* was influenced by counter-culture movements in the post-1980s era, which brought a reworking of cultural ethos linked to the private pursuit of pleasure.

Advertisers moved away from hard selling motifs of the previous decades toward creative designs, placing emphasis on a healthy and leisurely lifestyle achieved through consumption. Each successive cultural frame expands on its predecessor, creating a complex marketing environment.

The current frame, called *mise en scene* (literally “to put into the scene”), encourages consumers to participate in the experience of the brand. The French phrase originated in a theatrical context to describe what happens on a stage, such as stage setting, actor arrangement, and action sequences, among others. The elements combine to set the stage for action. In this contemporary frame, willing consumers are active participants in the construction of changing life scenes, and goods put into the scene function as props. Contemporary consumers believe that they begin with a blank script from which their participation in the experience of the brand helps them to achieve transformation through consumption (Leiss et al., 2005). To illustrate, the Starbucks brand is often viewed as urban, young, and trendy. Consumers that visit Starbucks stores and purchase Starbucks drinks may feel that they themselves are urban, young, and trendy for participating in the Starbucks experience. Their consumption choices make a statement to the world about how they view themselves. Value is co-created during the customers’ experience with the brand.

Gentile et al. (2007) investigated consumer motivation to purchase based on a variety of components for some well-known products. The survey questions selected spanned two types of distinct customer values: *utilitarian value* (the functional components of the product) and *hedonic value* (the experiential components). For example, questions related to Apple's iPod included components such as sound quality, user-friendly interface, and extra functions (utilitarian values), as well as distinctiveness from other MP3 players, prestige of the Apple brand, opportunity to share music files with other iPod owners, etc. (hedonic values).

Participants were asked to rate their agreement to belief statements on the questionnaire using a 1-4 Likert scale. The study found that consumers perceived the hedonic features as relevant values almost as much as the utilitarian ones. In fact, seven out of twelve products were classified as balanced, and two were classified as hedonic: Harley Davidson motorcycles and Smart cars (Gentile et al., 2007). This is not surprising considering that both Harley and Smart require substantial interaction with the consumer and facilitate exploration and travel, both experience-based activities. The study also shows that these products involve customers' feelings, emotions, and values in differing ways; each of the products leverages more than one component. The study indicates that it is possible for the brand to intensify the customer experience with messages that balance both function and experience (Gentile et al., 2007). While the study focused on tangible consumer goods, the same can be true for service delivery.

Arnould and Price (1993) explored how extraordinary experiences on multi-day river rafting trips in the Colorado River basin influence service relationships. The researchers conducted exploratory research over several years on participant expectations and post-trip evaluations. Due to the complexity of the situation and therefore the difficulty of gathering data,

multiple methods were employed: participant observation, focus group, and survey methods.

Used together, the reports combine to tell a story about “river magic” (p. 41). The researchers suggest that the power of the river rafting experience lies in the cultural scripts that evolve over the course of the experience: communion with nature, connecting with others, and renewal of self. The researchers also infer that these three themes are frequently unfulfilled values that American consumers seek and cherish. Participants frequently report returning feeling transformed (Arnould & Price, 1993). Leiss et al. (2005) suggest that the value placed on positive experiences is a result of the contemporary consumers’ desire to remove themselves from a world of intense promotion and commercialization to instead seek something intrinsically meaningful. People are able to transform, or improve themselves through displays of consumption. Although it may seem far-fetched to suggest that an academic library could provide a patron with a transformative experience, Arnould and Price (1993) imply that incorporating culturally-situated experiences into marketing can have highly satisfying results for customers seeking just that. An extraordinary experience is embedded in the relationship between the customer and the service provider and implies a long-term relationship.

Narrative-Based Campaigns

Connecting a brand emotionally with its users is often predicated on narrative forms of communication. The premise is that for many purchase decisions, especially those concerning experiential services, people tend to construct stories about marketing information based on personal experience in order to make judgments about consumption choices (Mattila, 2000; Padgett & Allen, 1997). Goldfarb and Aster (2010) refer to this as brand “affinity.” Striking a balance between knowing (a rational process) and loving (an emotional experience) is crucial for

an enduring brand. For example, consumers rationally use 4-wheel drive, but they love their Subaru. In fact, the current Subaru campaign plays on this notion with the slogan, “Love. It’s what makes Subaru, a Subaru.” Affinity helps to establish “cultural relevance and emotional connectedness” (Goldfarb & Aster, 2010, p. 72).

Mattila (2000) examined the influence of a narrative approach to advertising a service brand. During the experiment, half of the participants were exposed to restaurant advertising in a narrative format, stressing the “temporal relatedness of the elements of the service experience,” while the other half were exposed to advertising for the same restaurant in an attribute list format (p. 39). The researchers also distinguished between participants with limited familiarity with the restaurant versus those with familiarity. Results found that those with limited familiarity had more favorable attitudes and positive emotional reactions to the ad when the information was presented in a narrative format rather than a list format. Experienced consumers were unaffected by ad format. This study suggests that communicating experiential service benefits in a narrative way might be particularly useful to inducing trial (Padgett & Allen, 1997). Narrative marketing has the potential to take the audience on an extraordinary journey, demonstrating the personality of the organization and the value to the customer.

In order for narrative-based marketing to be effective, it must be based on customer-created narratives. At libraries, the message must resonate with patrons’ perceptions of how library services offer benefits to them, adopting the language, goals, and concerns of the individual (Germano, 2010). Chicago Public Library (CPL), for instance, launched the “It’s Not What You Think” campaign in 2008 aimed at the post-college, young adult crowd to challenge library stereotypes that have persisted, including spinster-like librarians and stacks of outdated,

dusty books. The communications campaign leveraged a novel depiction of what the library is and what it has to offer, encouraging patrons to visit and explore how the library has evolved. The integrated campaign included humorous transit advertising as well as viral video. One particular ad featured an image of one of CPL's young, tattooed librarians with the words "it's not what you think" and language about a "surprising" feature of the library (PRLog, 2008). The campaign demonstrated the relateability and personality of the library staff while encouraging patrons to develop their own narrative of their library experience.

Brand Personality

Aaker (1997) defines brand personality as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (p. 347). Advertisers use strategies such as personification and anthropomorphism to imbue the brand with personality traits (Aaker, 1997). To illustrate, Apple is often associated with traits such as creativity, imagination, and style. The "Get a Mac" advertising series personified the brand using two diametrically opposed characters: PC Guy and Mac Guy. PC Guy, with a multitude of operating problems, is awkward and geeky-looking compared to the hip and cool Mac Guy. Sirgy (1982) suggests that the greater the congruence between product images and the individual's concept of an ideal self, the greater the brand preference, purchase intention, and brand loyalty. Arguably, most consumers prefer to imagine themselves as hip and cool versus awkward and geeky.

Case Examples

Case studies provide insights about how marketing and integrated communications have been used to promote service organizations. Cases on academic library campaigns specifically are limited, indicating that coordinated marketing initiatives within the academic library remain

at an early stage. Although cases on library campaigns are minimal, parallels can be drawn from commercial examples. Despite the absence of a monetary exchange, libraries can leverage creative, narrative-based tactics from particular commercial campaigns.

The central idea a brand intends to convey should be developed from a consumer passion (Young, 2010). For instance, the Los Angeles Kings, a Southern California National Hockey League team, launched the “We Are All Kings” campaign in 2013 aimed at uniting fans around a common interest—being a Kings fan. The most notable element of the integrated campaign includes videos of Kings players talking with prominent fans like actor Colin Hanks and producer Jerry Bruckheimer, among others. The fan stories develop through the videos as each shares with a current player the specific moments that made them a devoted fan. The player-fan interaction occurs between compelling game footage from prior seasons. Videos are being added to the Kings website throughout the season (LA Kings Press, 2013). The campaign takes narrative communication literally. Since the message comes directly from players and fans rather than marketers, there is a sense of genuine personality. Fans feel they belong together in an exclusive community; they are all part of the same tribe (Goldfarb & Aster, 2010). The campaign blends nostalgia and storytelling, encouraging Kings fans to rally around a united passion for the team.

In another instance, the state of Montana Tourism Office launched the “Get Lost in Montana” campaign in 2012 designed to motivate locals to explore their own state. The campaign incorporates both traditional and online media, but the heart of the campaign is a community-based website where Montanans can share their favorite places and build a bucket list of Montana activities they aspire to do during their lifetime. By creating a place to share

experiences and stories, the aim is to inspire discovery and action among locals (Montana Press Room, 2013). The website cultivates social relationships and communicates contemporary consumer values of authenticity, honesty, and pride (Leiss et al., 2005). In doing so, the Tourism Office keeps leisure dollars in the state and residents act as ambassadors for out-of-state visitors (Montana Press Room, 2013). Furthermore, the language used throughout the site is engaging and infused with personality. For instance, a search for Bozeman, MT results in a description of the town: “the tan lines are real, the peak-bagging stories are true, and the burly mountain bikes aren’t just for show,” followed by a lengthy list of items to add to a trip itinerary (Montana Office of Tourism, 2013). The website speaks directly to the consumers’ self-interest.

In the case of both the LA Kings and the Montana Tourism office, the narrative-based, integrated marketing communications strategy proved to be an effective route for reaching the target audience.

Summary

The history of the academic library offers information on its somewhat turbulent past and how it has both persisted and evolved despite tremendous change, and offers guidance for the road ahead. The literature also examines current marketing trends and cases of successful promotional activities, providing insights on both theoretical and practical tactics for marketing a service organization. This review highlights the value and necessity of strategically marketing the library in order to cultivate interest and loyalty from patrons and ultimately garner financial support.

Methods

There are many useful techniques for conducting marketing research. Beall (2010) suggests that it is important to first define the client's objective and then determine techniques that are appropriate to obtain the necessary information.¹ An informational interview-style meeting with TWC's executive leadership team revealed that the problem is informing users of the full scope of services available (L. Wild & S. Bower, personal communication, June 3, 2013). Students will always find a purpose for the library: to study, to meet up with friends, or to pass the time between classes (Mathews, 2009). In fact, TWC computer stations and group workspaces are frequently filled, indicating that TWC is actually a popular place on campus. However, despite making use of the building, students tend to be largely unaware of everything TWC has to offer. The leadership team wants TWC to be positioned as a multi-unit entity with a robust suite of services that has evolved as a result of the organizational merger in 2009 and the building renovation project in 2013 (L. Wild & S. Bower, personal communication, June 3, 2013).

A strategic questions-based approach addressing *why* awareness of TWC's full offering remains low provided the structure for the marketing research. This approach has the potential to

¹ While TWC is referred to as the "client," TWC is only in the client role as a result of this thesis project. For this reason, the client/researcher relationship is limited to the duration of the project. Moreover, the researcher is employed by TWC. Advantages of this role as an employee include an internal perspective on organizational practices as well as increased access to information that might otherwise be difficult to obtain. Critics may point out that the employee role results in bias due to being nested in the culture. In order to reduce bias, the researcher asked open-ended questions and maintained thorough accounts from users.

reveal a great deal of in-depth information about a particular issue (Beall, 2010). The premise is that marketing decisions require information to make informed business decisions. In many cases, the organization is trying to design better products; however, marketing research is important in service organizations as well and can be employed to address the way people view and use an organization's offerings (Zikmund & Babin, 2013). The advantage of this conversational style of marketing research is that it allows for deeper investigation into the student psyche; participants are able to go into detail in their own voice. The campaign architecture for the present thesis, described in detail in a later section, aims to encourage participation with TWC's suite of services based on user-driven narratives. The questions-based approach lends itself to this campaign by understanding firsthand the language patrons use to talk about their library experience.

Procedure

Strategic open-ended questions were used to guide 12 in-depth exploratory interviews with users: how/when a person seeks out library services, which services the user knows exist, if he or she would make use of the service again, and what he or she might share with friends about the experience. Follow-up questions encouraged recollection of more specific memories in order to narrow a broad topic. Together, the questions sought to provide a big picture of a user's TWC experience (Mathews, 2009). Although the questions were used as a guide, participants were encouraged to take the conversation in other directions, bringing up subjects on their own.

Of the 12 interviews, eight were conducted in person, three over the phone, and one via email. Two additional interviews were conducted initially as practice/pretests. Since the guiding

questions were modified after the first two interviews, the information from those interviews was not considered. The interviews were conducted between June and July 2013.

Sample

The convenience sample consisted of 12 undergraduate student volunteers from RIT. Of the 12 student participants, five were sophomores, six were juniors, and one was a senior.² Some were selected from a summer communications course, some from faculty members' recommendations, and others by approaching students studying in outdoor spaces on campus. Participation was voluntary. To ensure privacy, student names are not included with comments.

Although the students selected do not represent the full spectrum of TWC users, the individual testimony provided a detailed perspective from a particular user that would not be possible through survey research. Several similarities across participants indicate a somewhat homogenous group. Transfer students and nontraditional students were not included in the sample.

Interview Results

The study was designed to reveal students' perceptions of their TWC experience and their understanding of TWC services. As a result of this marketing research, the following trends stand out:

What users value about TWC:

- The ability to meet with groups; group study rooms

² Since the interviews were conducted during summer session, the students' year in school refers to their status for fall 2013. In June and July, freshmen students are not yet on campus.

- Easy place to meet; common place between colleges
- Databases are helpful
- Computer use; laptop check out
- Quiet levels, especially during finals week

TWC services awareness:

- Most have rarely, if ever, talked to a reference librarian
- Databases are used primarily as a result of a course requirement
- Some book group study spaces online

TWC service experience:

- Java's (the café at the entrance) is described by several students with language such as fun, inspiring, cool, unique atmosphere
- One student indicated surprise that her friends would "hike all the way from the dorms in the cold to work [at the library]"
- Students spoke of staff as pleasant, friendly, "provide help with everything I ask for"

One important discovery was that while students are clearly coming to the building—sometimes going out of their way to do so—librarians and other TWC resources are almost never considered when students need academic guidance. Students frequently mentioned that they know that their college has a dedicated reference librarian, and that staff was friendly and helpful, but have never taken advantage of that assistance. When addressing *why not*, students had difficulty articulating reasons. Many used language such as, "I know I should, but I don't"; or "[reference services] slips my mind unless a teacher requires it." This discovery indicates a need for making TWC

services more visible, engaging, and accessible to users. For instance, by showing how a librarian fits *within* a particular student's lifestyle, TWC can be a source of encouragement and inspiration rather than a compulsory service (Mathews, 2009). Other components of the TWC offering, such as archives and special collections, were never mentioned at all, indicating these students are largely unaware of their existence. The marketing goal, then, is to isolate opportunities to engage with students, offering services that meet specific needs at specific times.

The literature review revealed somewhat minimal information about specific library marketing programs. For this reason, the marketing research conducted was essential for creating a marketing program relevant to library customers in general, and the RIT student population in particular.

Campaign Architecture

The proposed integrated marketing communications plan (IMC) is developed at two strategic management levels: strategic planning and tactical marketing (Schultz, Tannenbaum, & Lauterborn, 1994). Strategy identifies the broad, organizational objective; tactics are the specific means by which the objective is achieved (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012). Based on descriptions found in the literature of marketing campaigns for academic libraries, tactical methods are often employed without strategic analysis and planning in a somewhat ad hoc, reactive manner (Germano, 2010; Winston & Hazlin, 2003). Successful marketing requires both the prescribed framework and analysis of strategic planning, and the specific, dynamic activities delivered by tactical marketing (Dibb & Simkin, 1993).

The ideal IMC planning model also includes implementation and measurement components to determine how the strategic plan actually impacted the behavior of the intended

audience (Schultz, Tannenbaum, & Lauterborn, 1994). Implementation and measurement were not carried out as part of the thesis project and are therefore discussed only briefly in the conclusion.

At the strategic planning level, strategies for the present thesis project include assessing TWC's current situation, completing a competitive analysis, identifying a target market, articulating the vision of the organization, and identifying the objective of the campaign. Broadly, tactics for TWC include a revitalized visual brand identity, a video brochure, a new website, and social media. The proposed IMC plan would not be complete without articulating tactics for driving traffic to the website, so basic search engine optimization is addressed as well.

Strategy

In the IMC planning model, strategy development is the crucial element that refines the organization's selling message. As Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn (1994) explain, disciplined thinking during this phase sets the direction for the brand. It defines the position of the organization, its personality, what gives it competitive advantage, and ultimately, what benefit it will bring to the target market. This process results in a message that reaches the consumer in a unified manner, offering "one personality, one benefit, one selling idea" (p. 67). The tactics that flow from the strategic phase serve to reinforce the reason why a user should believe in the service. When done well, the strategy creates an enduring bond between the company and the customer.

Situational analysis.

Major environmental forces, both internal and external, influence the services and resources as well as the future viability of TWC. One way to conduct a situational analysis is

through a SWOT analysis. SWOT is an acronym used to describe an organization’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Strengths and weaknesses consider variables within the organization; opportunities and threats consider variables outside the organization. While SWOT is effective at identifying an organization’s capabilities, there is no link to strategic implementation. For this reason, combining SWOT with the TOWS (SWOT backwards) matrix as in Figure 1 is useful for matching capabilities with strategy (Wheelan & Hunger, 2012).

	S-Strengths	W-Weaknesses
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A revitalized, remodeled physical space 2. Central location on campus 3. Creative and supportive leadership 4. Staff rated as helpful and friendly 5. In-house web development team 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of financial resources 2. Lack of communication/marketing, therefore services not widely known 3. Website confusing/difficult to navigate 4. Confusion about brand (patrons don’t see differentiation between TWC and RIT libraries)
O-Opportunities	SO	WO
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low cost online marketing channels 2. Growth in online/mobile technology 3. Large social networks 	<p>Increase utilization of in-house talents and capabilities (SS, O-1)</p> <p>Launch new web-based experiences (S5, O2, O3)</p> <p>Explore new value-adding services/experiences (contests, social media) (S3, O3)</p>	<p>Utilize online marketing tactics (W1, O1, O2)</p> <p>Boost outreach/marketing efforts (W2, W4, O1)</p> <p>Leverage peer networks for word-of-mouth promotion (W2, W4, O2, O3)</p>
T-Threats	ST	WT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception of libraries as obsolete 2. Limited university library funding (nationwide) 3. Alternative information providers (Google, GoogleScholar, JStor, etc.) 	<p>Leverage personal connections with staff to deliver personalized service (S4, T1, T3)</p> <p>Introduce and promote new uses for physical space (S1, S2, T1)</p> <p>Promote one-stop, comprehensive source (S1, S2, S4, T1, T3)</p>	<p>Patron engagement to increase lifetime value; future donations (W1, W2, T1, T2)</p> <p>Revamp website to increase customer engagement and online reputation (W3, W4, T1, T3)</p>

Figure 1. SWOT and TOWS combined matrix.

Competitive analysis.

Since TWC is the only library-like entity at RIT, it does not directly compete with other academic libraries on campus. Yet it operates in an increasingly competitive environment. Identified in the SWOT analysis, alternative online information providers such as Google, Amazon, and Wikipedia have provided access to a rich collection of information resources. Academic libraries typically catalog anywhere from 50,000 to 1 million volumes (Association of College & Research Libraries, 2008); Google's Library Project—a partnership with several major libraries to include their collections in a worldwide card catalog—currently exceeds 20 million volumes (Miller & Bosman, 2013). In 2002, Google co-founder Larry Page questioned the University of Michigan about how long it would take to scan its entire collection of seven million volumes. Library staff estimated nearly 1,000 years. Page did it in six, and new libraries join the project every year (Google Books History, 2013). Attempting to compete at the scale of a Google or Amazon is simply not within university library capabilities. Determining TWC's competitive advantage instead requires a focus on the *distinctive* elements of the service.

A differentiation focus concentrates on a niche consumer group and aligns its efforts with serving the special needs of that group more effectively than its competition (Wheelan & Hunger, 2012). In other words, rather than competing head-to-head with an information provider as large as Google or Wikipedia, TWC can instead focus its messaging on service traits that are *distinct* from its online competitors. To illustrate, TWC can provide a “one-stop shopping” (but not a “one-size-fits-all”) experience. Staff can assist patrons with inquiries from finding a book in the stacks and database research assistance to online exhibits and collaboration tools. Bringing together units outside the traditional concept of a library such as the writing center,

coffee shop, and technology support services expand the library's service portfolio and offer value that its online competitors cannot. This strategy seeks differentiation in a targeted segment (Wheelan & Hunger, 2012).

Target market.

The suite of services desired varies between target audiences. TWC serves a broad range of users: undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, staff, alumni, the local community, and potential donors. Some overlap may occur between groups. Specifically, the executive leadership team identified undergraduate students as the primary target (L. Wild & S. Bower, personal communication, June 3, 2013). While the undergraduate student population is largely homogenous, qualitative interviews conducted by the researcher suggest further distinctions within the group, shaped largely by year in school. As students progress in their academic programs, their familiarity with campus, and therefore TWC, increases. For instance, when asked about services sought, third and fourth year students mentioned databases, booking group study spaces online, and even letterpress printing demonstrations, indicating a more "expert" experience with library resources. Sophomores, on the other hand, frequently mentioned Java's (the coffee shop at the entrance) and the Idea Factory (a communal work space on the first floor), suggesting that use is limited primarily to study hall-type experiences. Therefore, this thesis project refines the target population to freshman and sophomore undergraduate students. Compared to upperclassmen, the group is less likely to be aware of TWC service offerings or to understand the connection of TWC services to academic success, and they tend to have less "expertise" about library services and resources. Segmentation based on user characteristics or

compatible needs allows for greater precision in crafting effective marketing messages (Mathews, 2009).

Although segmentation by age has been a marketing practice for decades, in-depth exploration of the *values* held by each cohort has gained momentum more recently. This is often referred to as psychographics (Parment, 2013). Parment (2013) suggests that significant events experienced by individuals during adolescence/early adulthood (e.g., war, economic changes, technological advances) have been found to create lasting values. TWC's target age group is identified as Millennials—the twenty-somethings born after 1981 who are now “coming of age.” For this group, their “coming of age” is characterized most notably by the tremendous growth in digital technology. They are digital natives and enjoy mobile communications that are available anytime, anywhere (Sweeney, 2005). In the context of the academic library, this technologically savvy cohort is more likely to conduct research using the Internet, changing the way the physical library is used (Carlson, 2001).

Several behaviors and characteristics of this group can be found in the literature (Gardner & Eng, 2005; Sweeney, 2005) and are consistent with the interviews conducted for the present thesis project. As consumers, Millennials want more personalization and choices and expect instant gratification (Sweeney, 2005). For instance, when asked, several students indicated that research on Google was much faster and more convenient than searching for physical books and artifacts. It is clear that Millennials sense that the library cannot deliver the broad array that is available online or the convenience afforded by mobile computing. Another Millennial value is education; the group places a great deal of emphasis on academic achievement (Gardner & Eng, 2005). When asked about what services patrons make use of at TWC, the top responses were

related to academic success goals: to study, to use a computer for course work, or to meet with a group to work on a class project. These findings indicate that this segment might take advantage of TWC services if it saved time and improved chances of getting a good grade, beyond what the individual can do online on their own. Tapping into Millennials' values illuminates incentives for services that the group may want from the academic library that it does not currently know how to get.

When designing marketing messages, it is critical to understand where and by what means the target consumer is affected. Communication modes of Millennials are dramatically different than those of previous generations. They expect flexibility, speed, interactivity, and multitasking, all of which are made possible by digitally networked services (Sweeney, 2005). A 2011 national survey conducted by the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project indicated that 98% of undergraduate students surveyed are Internet users, 93% have broadband access at home, and 92% connect wirelessly via a laptop or mobile device (Smith, Rainie, & Zickuhr, 2011). This survey reveals that TWC's target market is well above the national adult average in all categories, indicating that reaching this group online is crucial to a marketing strategy. They also tend to prefer to learn in the evening, after six o'clock (Gardner & Eng, 2005). Consequently, this group may better receive marketing messages sent during nontraditional hours. Finally, this group tends to find peers more credible than teachers and authority figures (Gardner & Eng, 2005). TWC can best engage the target group through online and mobile venues during nontraditional hours. TWC can also leverage peer networks for word-of-mouth promotion.

As of fall 2013, RIT's undergraduate student body consisted of approximately 15,000 students, of which 8,200 are freshman and sophomores (T. O'Connor, email communication, October 23, 2013). Although the refined target is a smaller population, TWC's return on investment may be greater due to the time remaining on campus for this group. If TWC can build a relationship and earn this group's trust in the early stages of their academic programs, they are likely to return often and recommend TWC services to others, perhaps remain at RIT for graduate programs, and ultimately donate as alumni to TWC. Furthermore, the components of the proposed plan that address ways to reach the freshman and sophomore population may serve as a starting point for reaching other target user populations in the future.

Vision Statement

A mission statement puts in writing what the organization is now, and the vision statement describes what it wants to become (Wheelan & Hunger, 2012). Some organizations differentiate mission and vision as two distinct concepts, but this thesis project considers them together, describing TWC's strategic position and the future TWC intends to create.

During early renovation-planning stages, a student-led design team polled undergraduate students using the library on their perception of the library's purpose. Based on the participants' responses, four core tenets of TWC emerged, categorized as discovery, technology, scholarship, and community. Considering these student-identified values, the proposed vision statement follows:

The Wallace Center has evolved into an academic center of excellence focused on the success of our students and faculty. We believe in honoring our traditions while examining emerging models of social learning and research. We are a customer centric

organization, committed to tailoring our services and resources so that each person can find the things that are truly important and meaningful to them. Our core mission is focused on facilitating discovery, technology, scholarship and community.

Campaign objective.

Consistent with the goals of TWC's executive leadership, the objective of the proposed marketing communications plan is to increase awareness of *and engagement with* TWC's suite of services. While specific objectives should be articulated during the implementation phase, a sample goal for TWC may be to increase website traffic by 15 percent in one year, and in the same period, increase social connections by 10 percent, measured by "likes," online chat requests, research inquiries to librarians, etc. Campaign messages will center on reinforcing TWC's multi-faceted services. In doing so, TWC can alleviate confusion over the brand while encouraging patrons to take advantage of a multitude of available services.

Tactics

Logo/identity.

TWC's summer 2013 renovation project included several visual enhancements including new carpet and paint, better lighting, flexible furniture, and modern metal signage. As the physical building is reimagined, a refreshed brand identity can serve to unify the new look, providing consistency across elements. The proposed TWC graphic standards to follow include colors, logo, and typography. These visual cues combine to reflect the new vision for TWC while articulating the refreshed brand within the larger RIT campus community. The guidelines will necessarily evolve with the organization, always ensuring maximum coherence with TWC's identity.

During the renovation, the four core tenets of TWC (discovery, technology, scholarship, and community) were articulated visually with colors that correspond to each. The colors are orange (RIT's orange), green, yellow, and grey, respectively. This color palette, complemented by RIT's standard brown and tan colors, is infused throughout the renovated first floor space and in all proposed marketing materials (see Figure 2).

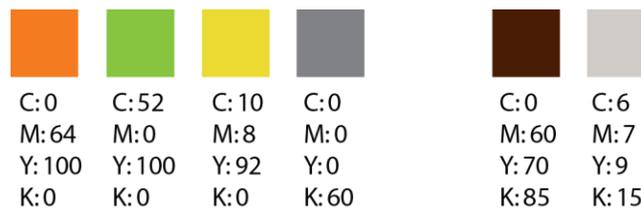


Figure 2. TWC color palette for brand identity.

The current TWC logo provides a familiar identification with the TWC brand. It communicates dependability and professionalism. Moreover, a multitude of permanent signage has been established throughout the building using the current symbol and would be cost prohibitive to replace. For these reasons, this mark should be the official brand identity symbol and used for all marketing communications.

Typography for the website should be set in Optima and Univers.³ In instances when a serif font is needed, primarily in printed materials, Baskerville should be used. This ensures uniformity and maximum legibility in communications. For some printed materials, particularly one-time event promotion, a range of typographic choices is available to allow room for creativity and impact. Consistency in logo mark will tie these one-time promotions to TWC.

³ The marketing prototypes shown in this thesis project use different fonts than those identified here. Should TWC move toward implementation, the fonts mentioned will require purchase.

Brand personality.

Building the TWC brand is more than visual appearance. The outward-facing elements of the TWC brand—color, logo, typography—must also connect clearly to the brand’s personality. As stated previously, brand personality is a set of human-like characteristics linked with a brand (Aaker, 1997). The greater the congruence between brand images and an individual’s sense of an ideal self, the greater the brand preference (Sirgy, 1982). TWC’s personality is identified as approachable, friendly, and above all, helpful. These characteristics will be evident in TWC’s marketing communications and upheld in each personal encounter with patrons.

Campaign narrative/message.

A crucial piece in a cohesive IMC plan is a clear narrative that resonates with patrons’ perceptions of how library services offer benefits to them, adopting the language, goals, and concerns of the individual (Germano, 2010). Organizations can increase customer loyalty to the brand by aligning customer values with those of the organization (deMatos & Rossi, 2008).

TWC’s target market is highly concerned with achievement, but may not fully understand the connection of TWC services to academic success. The campaign message, then, will center on building awareness that TWC is more than a library; it is an academic support center with a robust suite of services where students can go to get the support necessary to navigate their academic journey and find the inspiration to pursue their professional goals.

To connect this message with students, the campaign narrative will be: *More than a library*. The philosophy will be articulated on the new website in language that reflects the TWC personality:

What is More than a library? More than a library is an attitude. It is an invitation to push the boundaries. Whatever you love to do, whatever you are passionate about, TWC is a place to pursue your goals.

This narrative reflects TWC's student-identified values of facilitating discovery, technology, scholarship, and community. TWC will be a place for inspiration and support. This story will be infused throughout multiple channels, building brand "affinity" (Goldfarb & Aster, 2010).

The duration of the campaign message will be one year. In subsequent years, the campaign message will change based on revised objectives, maintaining consistency in other brand elements.

Lobby display.

The revitalized TWC space features a large white entrance wall with a custom metal logo that reads "The Wallace Center at RIT," covering approximately half the wall. The signage functions both as a welcome and a point of orientation on campus. However, it does little to orient users throughout the building. In an effort to inspire users to explore other areas and services within TWC, the other half of the entrance wall should be utilized as a navigation display. In front of the wall, a glass floor display will feature a floor map of each of the five building levels. This will help users navigate the physical space and perhaps introduce some to areas they did not know existed, particularly new services such as the Writing Center and the RIT American Sign Language & Deaf Studies Community Center (RADSCC).

On the wall, a plasma screen display will feature an infographic-style video that functions as a video brochure, providing users with a better understanding of what is available at TWC. The script will tie in the campaign messaging with words such as expect more, explore more, do

more, and dream more, ending with *more than a library* and the TWC URL. The benefit of a video welcome is that it is easier to consume than text as a passerby (Luke, 2013). The video will be informative and visually engaging at every stage so that visitors can capture a useful clip even if they only view a very small segment. Repeat visitors will likely see different small segments of the video brochure each time they come in. Because the proposed video will be the first introduction a visitor has to TWC, it is essential that it be professionally produced (Luke, 2013). TWC can take advantage of video production expertise currently on its staff. The video will be produced without spoken words so that it makes sense with or without sound. At the entrance it will be shown without sound; in online channels, users can opt in for music. (A sample script sample can be found in Appendix A.)

Social media.

TWC community website.

The proposed website is described under the subheading “social media” due to its highly social nature. The basis for the site is a social community organized around the lifestyle and needs of the target market. Patrons participate by viewing and interacting with information published by TWC. In turn, TWC gains a remarkable amount of information about its patrons and can customize services based on correlated needs and concerns.

With the increase in mobile devices in recent years, publishing valuable—and shareable—content has gained considerable attention as a marketing practice (Jefferson & Tanton, 2013). This concept, often referred to as inbound marketing or content marketing, is defined as “the publication of material designed to promote a brand, usually through a more oblique and subtle approach than that of traditional push advertising” (WhatIs.com, 2013). The idea is that by

providing meaningful content for free, an organization generates interest and trust in the brand, reinforces expertise, and ultimately leads to loyal customers. The more an organization shares useful content, the more often prospects “encounter” the brand. TWC’s vision proposed by this thesis project states that it is dedicated to *“the success of students and faculty...committed to providing personalized resources so that each person can find the things that are truly important and meaningful to them.”* The website, then, will serve as a portal for personalized content to help students progress through their varied programs.

The website uses a Pinterest-style design, made up largely of photos or other graphical elements, displayed in a grid of tiles (see Figure 3). The appearance is hyper visual, allowing users to scan for information, easily consuming the content most interesting and pertinent to them. Since TWC’s target market is largely unaware of the full suite of TWC services and is likely unsure of what the TWC site might be used for, this is an effective way to engage users with the content because it lends itself to exploration and discovery (Needleman, 2013).

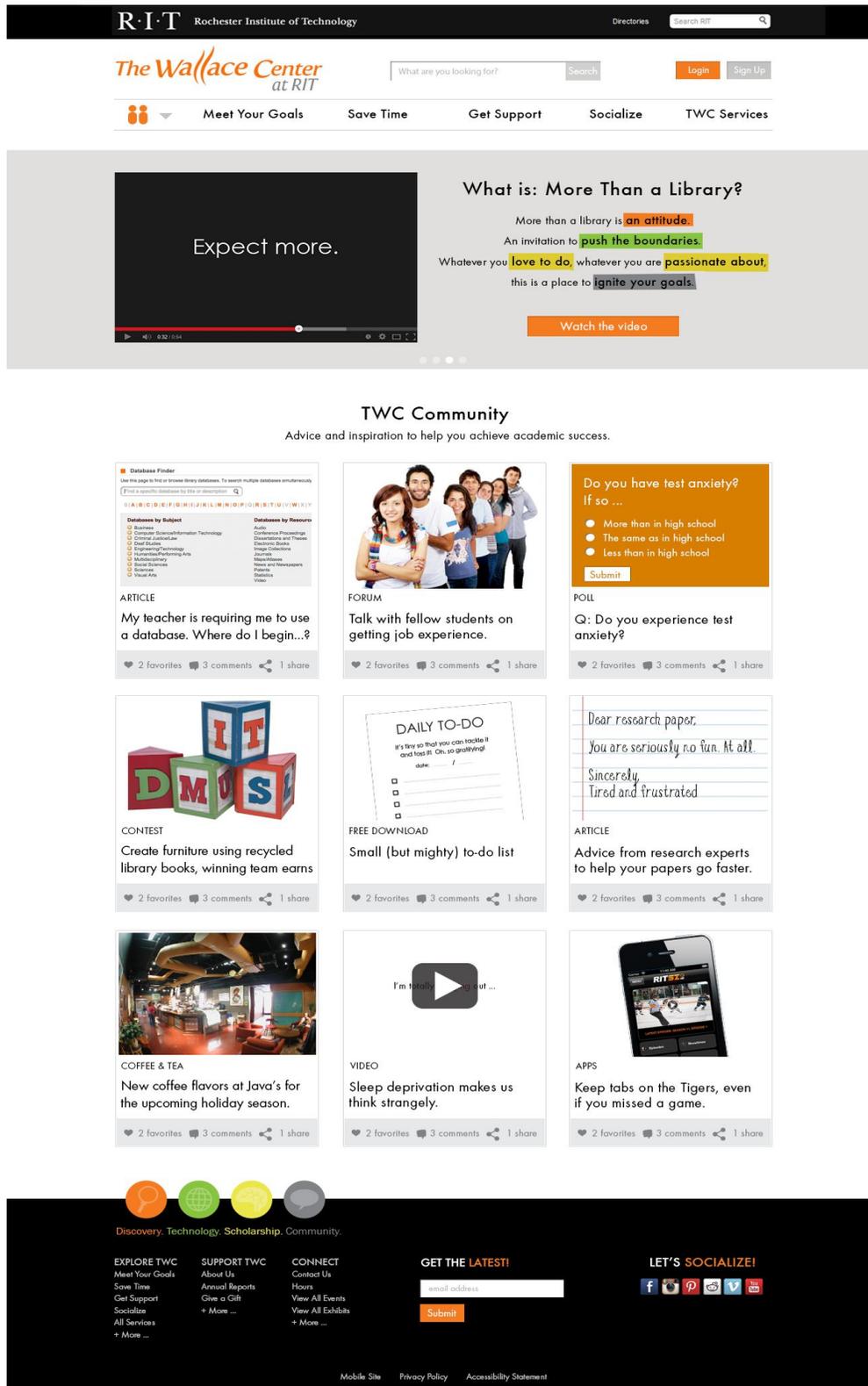


Figure 3. Proposed TWC community website.

Harad (2013) suggests that shared content should provide education, editorial/opinions, and/or entertainment. With community at its core, the TWC site incorporates polls, videos, contests, articles, forums, free downloads, and other interactive elements. (A sample free download can be found in Appendix B.) New content for the site will be published weekly and tailored based on emerging trends in education and concerns students bring up. Users can sign up with the site using their RIT accounts and create a profile to become part of the TWC community. By joining the community, they can post questions and participate in forums, helping students to connect with TWC staff and other RIT students. These profile accounts can help TWC staff generate content that is specific to a particular user, avoiding overarching generalizations (Harad, 2013). For instance, if an international business student creates a profile, TWC staff can respond by posting content related to an international business writing competition. Presumably, the needs of an international business student differ from those of students majoring in chemistry or language studies. Student concerns may also arise during informal interactions with staff members. TWC can leverage those insights for fresh content. Harad (2013) suggests that topics arise by listening to the anxieties and fears that keep users up at night and aspirations that the target market dreams about. The resulting content is built from user-generated narratives (Germano, 2010). TWC can also include surveys and polls in the site. For instance, a survey could go up a week before final exams asking students how much anxiety they feel around studying for finals and if it is more or less than studying for exams in high school. These insights can then be transformed into content on “How High School Study Practices Might be Harming your Exam Outcomes.” (A sample article can be found in Appendix C.)

Based on the informational interviews conducted for this project and the literature on Millennials, the following needs and concerns emerge: academic achievement, limited time (and immediate gratification), academic support, and socialization. Based on these needs, the website is organized into four categories: Meet your Goals, Save Time, Get Support, and Socialize. Content is then further organized into subcategories.

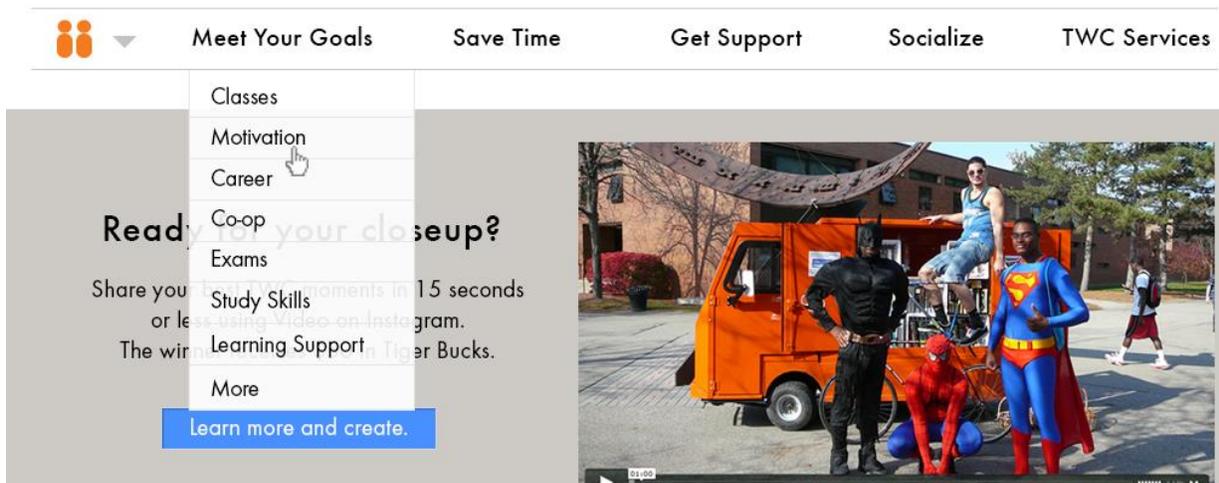


Figure 4. Organization of proposed website into categories and subcategories.

For users seeking specific services (e.g., I need the library catalog, Java's Coffee Shop menu), a fifth category called TWC Services will list each service subcategory. A site search bar will also allow users to search for specific answers.

The homepage features a rotating banner of promotional messages aimed at encouraging participation with the TWC brand. For instance, one banner might highlight a TWC-sponsored video contest, encouraging students to submit TWC video advertisements. The winning video could then become one of the highlighted banners.

Each Pinterest-like content tile has social stats below it to indicate the popularity of that piece of content. Users are able to see how many comments have been posted on the item and how many times it has been shared. Users can join the community to add to the comments (see Figure 5).

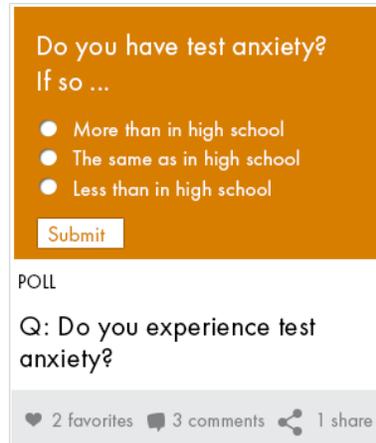


Figure 5. Proposed TWC community website content tile sample.

When users click on a tile of interest to them, they are taken to the full article, video, or other respective piece of content (e.g., see Figure 6). Left and right arrows encourage students to browse other topics within the category. Related content is listed to the right to facilitate discovery of additional relevant content with the goal of engaging users at multiple points throughout the site. Based on the content a user has selected, related TWC services may also be suggested under the headline “How can we help?” For instance, the student that viewed content about the international business writing competition may also be shown content that ties in TWC’s Writing Center and/or library reference services. These types of promotional messages are integrated seamlessly in a less interruptive way than traditional advertising. The goal is to add value to the end user based on content that user finds to be of interest.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Wallace Center at RIT website. The header includes the RIT logo, a search bar, and navigation links for 'Meet Your Goals', 'Save Time', 'Get Support', 'Socialize', and 'TWC Services'. The main content area features an article titled 'How Your High School Study Habits Could Be Harming Your Exam Outcomes' with a photo of a student. The article lists five tips: 1. Get into the habit of reading every day. 2. Alternate between subjects. 3. Create your own study guide. 4. Get to know your professors. 5. Turn off electronics. Below the article is a comment section with three comments from Jordan, Marcus, and Alice. To the right of the article is a 'RELATED CONTENT' section with a poll, a video, and an article. Below that is a 'HOW CAN WE HELP?' section with a chat link. The footer contains navigation links, a newsletter sign-up form, and social media icons.

Figure 6. Example of related webpage linked to TWC community website content tile.

The website homepage will default to the freshman and sophomore target market, but filters for user type are built in to provide valuable and relevant content to other TWC target groups (i.e., faculty, graduate students, visitors, etc.). Users can select or unselect their status at any time during their visit (see Figure 7).

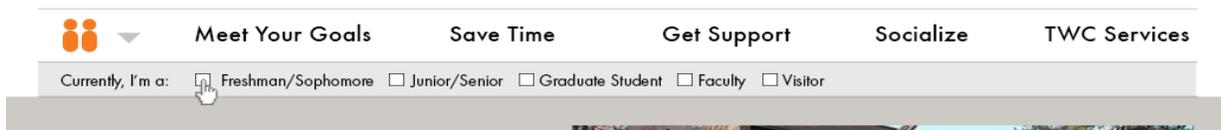


Figure 7. Sample status selection filters for proposed website homepage.

The design is the same for each group, but the way the content is organized differs. For instance, content for freshmen and sophomores will be geared toward exploring TWC services and instigating trial, while content for faculty may be geared more toward career development or scholarly publishing. This filter tool provides great future potential for personalized content targeted toward small, niche groups like adjunct faculty or prospective donors.

Navigation at the foot of the site reinforces TWC's brand values and helps users further navigate. A column for "support TWC" provides an outlet for other target groups, especially potential donors. Links to give a gift or view annual reports will take users to a separate branded "investor-like" site. Site visitors can also submit an email address to remain up-to-date on events and exhibits, and social media icons encourage users to connect with TWC in other online channels (see Figure 8).

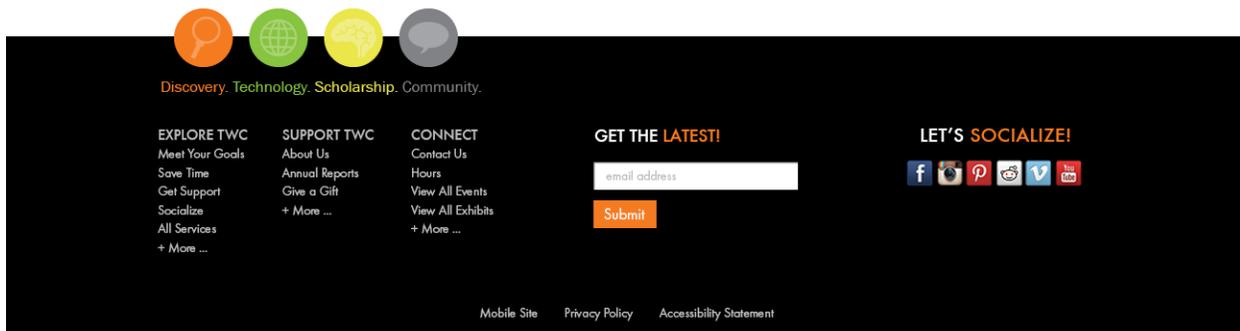


Figure 8. Proposed TWC website footer navigation.

Other social media.

At the heart of an IMC approach is reaching consumers at each point where they come into contact with a brand (Schultz & Schultz, 1998). Accordingly, content creation must not lie solely within the boundaries of the website. Across the web, people are publishing content on hundreds of social media platforms. TWC can leverage this opportunity to monitor topics students are talking about, spot communication opportunities, and generate relevant content to deliver across channels. The aim of TWC's social media component is to cultivate relationships and engage patrons in conversation.

Organizations can learn about topics customers are interested in by listening to existing communities. TWC should create Google Alert–email updates of relevant Google results based on search parameters–focused on TWC brand name components such as “RIT Library,” “The Wallace Center,” “TWC,” and “Wallace Library.” Once conversations have been identified, TWC can participate in the conversation and manage relationships with patrons.

Social media marketing practices are particularly advantageous for organizations that lack the resources necessary for paid forms of advertising. Networks of friends tend to be well

suited for word-of-mouth referrals (Castronovo & Huang, 2012). However, with limited resources and time, social media platforms should be chosen selectively based on objectives to be achieved by each. The following platforms should be established for TWC:

Facebook

- Objective: get (specific #) users to “like” the TWC Facebook page, engage (specific #) users to comment and (specific #) to “like” posted content, elicit (specific #) users to share content with their personal network
- Strategy: post relevant links, questions, videos, quotes, and pictures to prompt “likes,” comments, and shares

Pinterest

- Objective: get (specific #) users to follow TWC on Pinterest, drive (specific #) users to the TWC website, elicit (specific #) users to share pins on their Facebook feed
- Strategy: utilize board and pin names to drive search results, follow other users’ boards to prompt users to follow TWC on Pinterest, use boards to provide inspiration for TWC initiatives (such as the Upcycled Furniture Contest) and drive users to the TWC website

YouTube

- Objective: drive (specific #) users to the TWC website, engage (specific #) users to comment and (specific #) to “favorite” posted content, elicit (specific #) users to share content with their personal network
- Strategy: provide instructional videos to enhance credibility and entice viewers to the TWC website, host student video contests to garner video content and drive further

engagement, utilize tags and titles to drive search results, monitor comments to personalize future videos

Metrics such as number of followers, number of interactions, and total reach over a period of time will determine whether to keep a platform as part of the ongoing social media strategy. To maintain consistency with the *more than a library* campaign, content should follow a generally outlined timeline, with flexibility for spontaneously generated content. (A sample of relevant links, questions, videos, quotes, and picture posts can be found in Appendix D.) TWC should also take an inventory of all active social media accounts for individual departments to ensure consistency in style and voice across platforms.

Search engine optimization.

The proposed IMC plan would not be complete without articulating tactics for driving traffic to the website. Search engine optimization (SEO)—loosely defined as the “methodology of strategies, techniques and tactics used to increase the amount of visitors to a website by obtaining a high-ranking placement in the search results page of a search engine”—tends to be a moving target (Webopedia, 2013). Search engines frequently update their search algorithms, resulting in constantly evolving SEO practices. Some experts point to entirely new terminology for the field, including web presence optimization. This all-encompassing approach attempts to optimize content from the organization’s website, social platforms, articles, and press releases, among others, for maximum discoverability (LaRiviere, 2012; SEOmoz, 2012).

SEO literature identifies several best practices for basic optimization that should be implemented across TWC platforms. First, technical components include sitemaps and title tags so that search robots can easily find applicable information, cross references to social accounts,

implementation of social sharing icons throughout the website, and optimizing for web page load times (LaRiviere, 2012). Second, at the center of every search strategy is keyword optimization. Understanding what the target market is typing into a search box to produce relevant results ensures that visitors find what they are looking for when they arrive at the organization's site. Free online tools, such as Worktracker, Microsoft Advertising Intelligence, and Google Adwords, can provide a starting point for search word research, indicating search volume for particular keywords. Although it may be tempting to rank well among high volume keywords such as "academic library," long tail keywords such as "best place to collaborate on RIT's campus" will return more qualified leads (SEOmoz, 2012). Third, optimized content marketing is imperative for search success. Search engines favor fresh, relevant content in the form of news, events, and status updates, among others (LaRiviere, 2012). The TWC site can incorporate keyword tags with its content to further discoverability. Another free online tool, Google Trends, showcases the most popular search terms for the day, updated every hour on average. TWC staff can periodically view the list to determine if there could be any TWC tie-ins. To illustrate, on November 25, 2013, the fourth highest-ranking search word was "Thanksgiving," and results feature the associated wintry weather threatening the area. TWC could create a Thanksgiving holiday send-off and safe travels message to post on the website and across social platforms, tagged with these "hot search terms." Content of this nature will be published on a regular basis on TWC's website and shared across social platforms. The dissemination across platforms aids optimization by building backlinks, shares, and views so that Google can more easily find and index the information (LaRiviere, 2012).

Conclusion

The evolution of the academic library occurred amidst disruptive changes in the information landscape. Currently, libraries are feeling the effects of a world firmly nested in the digital age. Many academic library enterprises—including TWC—have responded by redefining the 21st century library as a multi-unit entity, providing broader means for students to engage with information and tools outside the classroom. However, as this thesis project suggests, a library's ability to communicate its new roles and their value through this transformation requires strategic communication and integrated marketing.

A strategic integrated marketing program, based upon patron-generated narratives, can help establish an emotional connection to the organization (Goldfarb & Aster, 2010; Mattila, 2000; Padgett & Allen, 1997). Such a program has the potential to demonstrate the personality of the library and its connection to academic success, which may translate to deeper exploration of library services. If the library can build a rewarding relationship with students in the early stages of their academic programs, they are likely to return often and recommend services to others, perhaps remain at the institution for graduate programs, and ultimately donate as alumni to the library. When the library's value is distinct from its search engine competitors, consumers remain loyal to the brand (Schultz, Tannenbaum, & Lauterborn, 1994). Based on a review of the literature, this thesis posits that the forward-thinking academic library will use the changing landscape as an opportunity to create a strategic marketing program and will thus make a profound investment in its future.

Limitations

The thesis project is limited by several factors. First, data collected through exploratory interviews was self-reported. Second, the exploratory interview method employed by the project looks specifically at one largely homogenous group. The results, therefore, cannot be generalized to a wider population. Further, since the interviews were conducted over the summer, interviews included only summer school students and incoming freshmen were excluded. Finally, a measurement component in an IMC planning model is necessary to determine how the strategic plan actually impacted consumer behavior. Implementation and measurement were not carried out as part of the thesis project.

Key Components for Campaign Execution

As evidenced in the literature, academic library marketing activities have historically suffered from lack of strategy, resources, and expertise (Germano, 2009; Winston & Hazlin, 2003). Although the present project has identified a campaign strategy for TWC, little return on investment can occur when executed in a vacuum. The process of implementation and the messages that accompany it are certainly not effortless or cost-free, though they are not necessarily financial-resource intensive. Although execution of the plan was not carried out as part of the project, several key components for effective delivery are identified below.

TWC should begin their marketing efforts by charging a dedicated staff person with overseeing the plan's development and implementation. When marketing tasks are assigned to various staff members as part of their other responsibilities, they often lack the coherence necessary to encompass the organization as a whole. This dedicated person, whether part- or full-time, will schedule and plan the content several months out and manage eventual

implementation in order to maximize the return on investment. The schedule should include an annual overview which articulates the purpose and approximate number of items per category to be published during each period as well as a more specific topic plan for each item, divided by week or month depending on the established goals. (A sample timeline for each can be found in Appendix E.) Responsibility for content creation can be divided among TWC staff members. This way, the labor required of individual staff members remains manageable, but combined may provide impressive results. To illustrate, one staff member may be asked to write two or three short articles in a year, keeping the task a manageable responsibility. Yet when the whole staff contributes, content remains fresh and relevant throughout the year. Periods during the year that demand more staff attention, such as the final weeks of a semester, will be taken into consideration during the planning stage and the calendar will be prioritized accordingly. Without a dedicated person to manage the plan, the marketing effort risks complete abandonment during busy times.

Finally, the plan manager will determine engagement metrics (i.e., “likes,” attendance, or donations) during the content planning stage and will measure the plan efforts against these goals on a regular basis. This person will report the results to TWC’s leadership team periodically so that TWC can determine whether the efforts resulted in the intended impact. This measurement component can help determine the type and tone of messaging to go out in subsequent rounds of communications. A strategic focus on the marketing function, even if the effort begins small, can provide a significant return on the time invested.

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Appendix A

Sample Video Brochure Script

---- animated infographic style ----

Last year, you checked out 12,781 laptops
Engaged us in 10,809 research inquiries
You reserved study rooms 17,800 times
And you used more than 2 million library resources.

Your ambition inspires us.

Whatever you love to do,
Whatever you are passionate about,
The Wallace Center is a place where you can collaborate and be creative,
And find the support to prepare for a bright future.
It is an environment in which students, year after year, ignite their goals and pursue their dreams.

When you enter these doors, you have an incredible array of services at your disposal –
and staff that is excited to help you navigate.

Explore all that TWC has to offer.

---- photo collage style ----



[images/video of study rooms, reference desk, Collaboration Station]
Expect more

[images of writing center, RADSCC, RIT Museum, Cary Collection, and others]
Explore more

[images of Upcycled Furniture, De-Stress with Letterpress, BookMobile]
Play more

[images of students working with fellow students, working with TWC staff]
Dream more

---- TWC logo and URL ----
More than a library.

Appendix C

Sample Web Article

You likely faced a multitude of challenges transitioning from high school to college academics. While you've certainly adapted, some lingering high school study habits may be preventing you from achieving the grades you want. Here are some tips to defeat bad habits and make the most of your study time.

1. **Get into the habit of reading every day.** While you may have been able to catch up at the last minute on English reading assignments in high school, the volume of reading in college can be intense. Set aside time to chip away at it every day and you'll be in a less stressful place by the time exams roll around.
2. **Alternate between subjects.** If you're used to focusing your energies on one subject before conquering the other, you may need to develop some strategies for managing multiple priorities. Alternating between subjects when studying for final exams can help to avoid becoming overwhelmed with one topic.
3. **Create your own study guide.** You can't always rely on your professors to provide a comprehensive study guide. Instead, take notes in class and pay attention to topics that your professor mentions multiple times. You can organize this material on your own study guide for productive study sessions.
4. **Get to know your professors.** After leaving a familiar high school faculty, getting to know your professors can feel intimidating. However, most are incredibly approachable

and will offer helpful hints on how to succeed in their course. Plus, it certainly can't hurt to show them that you are engaged and interested!

5. **Turn off electronics.** Although our devices are difficult (ok, maybe impossible) to part with, they are big time wasters. If you feel that you can't disconnect altogether, set time limits for yourself. Make a rule that you're only allowed to check your phone after 30 minutes of dedicated study time.

Develop these study habits early and you're well on your way to success in college courses!

If you have unique study methods that have proven useful, please share below!

Appendix D**Sample Social Media Content for Posts**

Surveys/Questions:

- No matter how difficult the exams, we understand the importance of taking a break. How will you unwind this week? (a. exercise, b. coffee break with friends, c. nap, d. video games)
- What book inspired you recently? Share in the comments section below!
- Fill in the blank. After I graduate, I plan to _____.

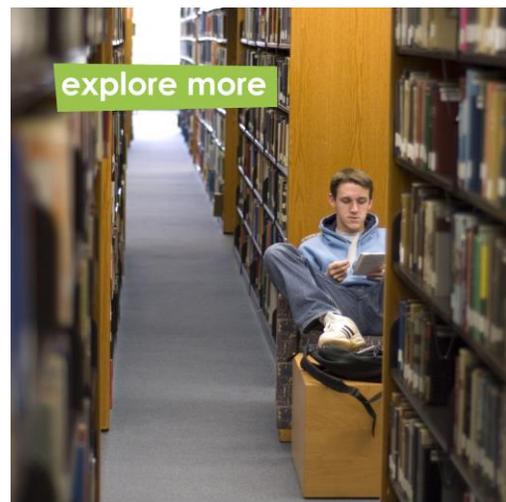
Inspiration/Quotes:

- It's a new day. Make a plan. And rock it!
- Allow your passion to become your purpose, and it will one day become your profession.
– Gabrielle Bernstein
- Create a plan to tackle your obstacles. Challenge accepted.
- Note to self: go big, or go home.



Pictures:

- Play more. [pic of ImagineRIT]
- Explore more. [pic of current exhibit]



- Create more. [pic of Upcycled]
- Wander more. [pic of student in stacks]

Appendix E

Sample Content Timeline (annual timeline and week-by-week template)

Qtr	Month	Website Activity						
		Polls	Contests	Articles	Downloads	Press rel.	Infographic	Video
1	Jan	1-2	1	1-2	1	1-2		1
	Feb	2-3		2-3			1	
	Mar	2-3		2-3	1			
2	Apr	2-3		2-3		1-2	1	1
	May	2-3		2-3	1			
	Jun	2-3		2-3			1	
3	Jul	1-2		1-2		1		1
	Aug	1-2		1-2	1		1	
	Sep	2-3		2-3				
4	Oct	2-3	1	2-3	1	1-2	1	1
	Nov	2-3		2-3				
	Dec	1-2		1-2	1		1	

Qtr	Month	Social Media Activity		
		Facebook	Pinterest	YouTube
1	Jan	1-2 week	1 x week	1-2
	Feb	1-2 week	1 x week	
	Mar	1-2 week	1 x week	
2	Apr	1-2 week	1 x week	1-2
	May	1-2 week	1 x week	
	Jun	1-2 week	1 x week	
3	Jul	1-2 week	1 x week	1
	Aug	1-2 week	1 x week	
	Sep	1-2 week	1 x week	
4	Oct	1-2 week	1 x week	1-2
	Nov	1-2 week	1 x week	
	Dec	1-2 week	1 x week	

Content Topic					
Week of ____	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Polls					
Contest					
Articles					
Downloads					
Press release					
Infographic					
Video					
Facebook					
Pinterest					
YouTube					