

Perception is everything - It's MY website, I can do what I want!

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Background:

Loras College is a four-year, Catholic, liberal arts, technology rich laptop campus located in Dubuque, Iowa, granting undergraduate and graduate degrees. Iowa's oldest college, Loras is at home on 60 acres atop the highest bluff of historic Dubuque, overlooking the Mississippi River at the junction of the states of Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin. . With over 1,700 students and more than 250 faculty and staff, Loras strives to develop active learners, reflective thinkers, ethical decision makers and responsible contributors in their diverse professional, social, and religious roles.

Abstract:

More than ever, every person, place, department, program, idea wants their own web page; some want to maintain their own – some want complete hands-off. Is brand really that important; it's MY page? The reputation of a professor, program, department and institution is based on branding. Perception is everything. Why/how is it more than just a logo? This session will explain how Loras College is addressing web branding and site saturation challenges. The session will entertain an open discussion on "Expectations and perceptions related to individual, departmental and program web sites."

What is a brand? "In its most advanced form it is the core of your strategy, your DNA. It embodies your image, determines your marketing from concept to execution..."

-<http://www.davidrohlander.com>

A brand is more than facts or a logo; it's how we talk, express and share common goals and expectations. It's what people feel about us once we're in their lives: it's perception. It's all about creating an image in the eye and mind of your prospects. Academics, campus life, co-curricular activities, history – individually these do not make a brand; a brand is emotional. It reflects a personality, your core values, and the things you believe in – who you are. The ultimate goal is when reality and perception are the same. The challenge comes in when reality and perception are very different.

A successful branding program should be multidimensional emphasizing the total customer experience. It needs to articulate to your prospects that you are the best choice for them fulfilling all their expectations; the total student experience. It's not just academics or student life, it is all encompassing.

2007 ASCUE Proceedings

GET INVOLVED

Branding - It's not just for Marketing and Public Relations
(*entire campus needs to be involved*)

Loras College Brand Review Approach:

Listen, listen, and listen

Need to evaluate our brand

Globally: A collaborative campus approach not just administratively

- Appreciative Inquire
- Market Research [Perception Research]
- Change is Challenging
- Revamp Marketing Strategies [and tools needed to support strategies]
- New Tagline
- Fresh Look
- Usage Standards (logos, tagline, fonts, graphics, colors, etc.)
- Communicate and Collaborate – LISTEN

Web: A collaborative campus choice not an IT or Marketing directive

- Revisit Redesign [smaller –phase changes vs complete redesign]
- Form Web Committee for global web policy and long term goals
- Incorporate Global Marketing Changes/Recommendations on Web
- Evaluate / Update Policies
- Select Few Faculty and Use As Examples
- Develop Program sites [replace departmental sites with divisional sites]
- Catalog content AUGH-*that's a topic all by itself* ☺
- Communicate and Collaborate - LISTEN

It's my web page. I want a web page. I want a brown background, with gold and green copy on a three column page with frames, java script (something cool I found on the internet) and a page counter at the bottom. I want to add a few pictures of my dog and my trip to the mountains (pulled directly from my 4mp camera). I retyped the 4 year plan for pre-dental students because I really don't like how the catalog worded it, so add this also. Oh yea, and I don't want my phone number on the site; only my email address.

Why? Why not? Understanding the why(s) and the why not(s) are critical. Communication and collaboration with faculty and staff will make a huge difference.

Share Page Examples:

- Easy ways to incorporate the brand into your site
- Good and not so good site examples
- Before and After

URL with PowerPoint and examples available at presentation.

Discussion:

Expectations and perceptions related to individual, departmental and program web sites.

- Is it necessary to extend the college brand on individual faculty or staff pages?
- How do teens react to branding? What are their expectations and perceptions?
- How do faculty/staff react to branding? What are their expectations and perceptions?

References:

<http://www.davidrohlander.com>

<http://www.loras.edu>

http://www.datatel.com/experience/products/activecampus_portal.cfm