University of Arizona College of Engineering Marketing, Branding and Communications Plan

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Introduction

The College of Engineering at the University of Arizona has eight departments and offers 14 undergraduate degree programs. The College spends about $30 million on research annually.

Graduates of the UA College of Engineering are the entrepreneurial thinkers leading the way for the development and support of high-tech companies that are creating jobs and improving quality of life.

As the national economy grows and diversifies, UA Engineering continues to play a pivotal role in providing the research and engineering expertise necessary for that growth.

The University of Arizona College of Engineering Marketing, Branding and Communications Plan outlines the vision, mission and values of the College as a whole, and its intended audiences, and sets out the goals the plan will achieve and the strategy for reaching these goals.

1. Vision

The UA College of Engineering will be one of the top 10 U.S. public engineering institutions and a global leader in technology innovation to improve the quality of life. Our graduates will be actively sought as leaders to solve complex societal problems, and we will be recognized as an economic engine and community partner.

2. Mission

Our mission is to improve the quality of life through excellence in education and research. To achieve this we will serve all who have an interest in our success and be the vanguard in the creation and improvement of the nation's essential systems and technologies. By emphasizing the fundamentals of math, science and engineering, we will foster life-long learning, leadership, and productive careers.

3. Values

Excellence. Faculty and students will have academic freedom and our research and educational programs will be of the highest quality.

Openness. We will communicate openly and treat people fairly because we value the opinions and respect the needs of all.

Ethics. High ethical standards and sound decision-making will be at the heart of our practices.

Diversity. Diverse people and ideas produce lasting solutions and we will make it our duty to encourage and help all to be successful.

Cooperation. We will forge partnerships on and off campus in our drive to solve society's complex problems and improve the quality of life.

4. Situational Analysis

In order for the UA College of Engineering to be recognized as an economic engine and community partner, and to have its graduates recognized for their leadership skills, research and productivity, the overall visibility of the College must be raised. The UA College of Engineering and its departments must be recognized for their many strengths, subsequently improving national rankings and positively differentiating the UA College of Engineering from other engineering colleges and departments.

This will have a subsequent overall effect on new student recruitment and student retention, while increasing the number of high-quality undergraduates, key faculty members, research staff, and new and longtime donors of the college.

5. Goals

- Increase visibility of the college with the overall goal of improving national rankings and attracting high-caliber students and faculty
- Increase the number of national scholars and high-quality undergraduates
- Increase number of faculty nominations and awards
- Increase the number of domestic graduate students
- Increase visibility of alumni successes and accomplishments

- Increase the number of graduate students supported by industry
- Increase donor retention and giving

6. Audiences

Key UA College of Engineering audience segments include an internal audience and an external audience.

Internal Audience

- Individual departments
- Faculty members
- Research fellows
- College staff
- Students, student clubs and organizations
- University leadership

External Audiences, Marketing

- Local media, print and online
- National media, print and online
- Engineering community
- Business community
- Tucson community
- Other UA colleges/units and their staff, students and faculty

External Audiences, Development

- UA College of Engineering alumni
- College contributors and donors
- Scholarship donors
- College supporters
- Lifetime donors

External Audiences, Research and Faculty Recruitment

- Peer colleges and faculty
- Engineering researchers

- Government agencies
- State agencies
- Funding organizations
- Industry partners who may fund or jointly pursue research

External Audiences, Student Recruitment

- Actively engaged education seekers
- Actively engaged parents of education seekers
- Children of UA alumni
- Employers of engineers seeking continuing education
- University admissions counselors
- High school counselors
- STEM-oriented and talented youth

7. Strategy

The goals of the plan will be accomplished by:

Increasing internal acceptance

Regularly communicate successes of the College directly to department heads, faculty, staff, industry partners and university leaders.

Conduct marketing and website training on a regular basis for all interested faculty and staff.

Share external communications with internal audiences.

Strategically advise departments on their specific marketing needs.

Assist departments with website development and creation of marketing content.

Ensure department faculty and staff are informed of the progress of the College as each goal of the University of Arizona College of Engineering Strategic Plan is achieved.

Increasing visibility to external audience

Encourage and execute early communication and promotion of activities by UA College of Engineering departments that are relevant to key external audiences, such as mainstream, social and specialist media, actively engaged education seekers, peer engineering colleges and UA Engineering alumni.

Produce a steady, reliable stream of quality outbound communications that highlight:

- Achievements and accomplishments of the department faculty, staff and students
- Research innovations and technology evaluations coming from the College and its partnerships
- Achievements of alumni and supporters
- Special events and conferences hosted or supported by the UA College of Engineering.

Other strategies include the collection and categorizing of data to be used in marketing materials and future marketing plan development, including:

- Collecting annual reports from each department and extract faculty awards and grants
- Mining ABET reports for student quality data
- Collecting departmental information to issue as college marketing materials
- Identifying and promoting projects from each department
- Working with industry partners to identify projects for joint publicity
- Emulating successful marketing strategies from Top 10 public engineering colleges
- Aligning a formal marketing and branding plan with UA.
- Developing a Facebook/LinkedIn/Twitter/YouTube presence for connecting with students

- Ensuring current marketing message is being maintained with all social media platforms administered by the College
- Coordinating elements of the marketing plan with on- and off-campus strategic partners.

8. Methodology

Examples of communications methodologies to be established, reactivated or improved to help positively differentiate UA College of Engineering from peer colleges and other engineering schools include:

Form a "Visibility Committee" that includes members from the college as well as members from industry and the community.

Increase overall visibility of the college to peer colleges and information outlets which provide feedback to college national ranking organizations.

Work with industry partners to identify projects for joint publicity.

Establish annual visibility metrics.

Examples of outbound messaging and marketing materials include:

Arizona Engineer, website and email
The latest UA College of Engineering news published for students, faculty, alumni, supporters and other highly interested parties. Arizona Engineer is the direct source of College updates, events, announcements, awards, achievements and more. Frequently updated, published as a color glossy twice a year, and delivered monthly via email.

UA Engineering Fast Facts
Fast Facts are information sheets describing the history and accomplishments of individual UA College of Engineering departments, used by internal audiences for recruitment, development, retention and more. Fast Facts are available online and increase visibility of individual UA College of Engineering departments to most external audiences.

Progress Reports
A showcase for top-level focus areas of the college departments, this high-quality printed report from the UA College of Engineering is directly delivered to supporters, alumni, prospective students and other external audiences.

Arizona Engineer Online email newsletters
Delivery of high-quality email newsletters from UA College of Engineering to 12,000 supporters, alumni and other external audiences with the latest research announcements, news, college recognitions and more which are engaging and interesting to external audiences.

High-quality promotional videos
Produce promotional videos of the best of UA College of Engineering for use by multiple departments to reach external audience with high quality, branded message. External UA Engineering audiences reached by this new multimedia effort include those of recruitment, development, research, faculty and student recruitment, marketing and more.

High-quality print promotions
High-quality print promotions coordinated by UA Engineering communications and maintaining the UA Engineering brand for use by departments for their outreach efforts.

Align a formal marketing and branding plan with the university
Partner with the University of Arizona and other colleges within the university community to increase visibility of the College of Engineering.

Participate in university publications and other co-branding opportunities when relevant to reaching identified audiences. Maintain active partnership with UA News.

Other ongoing methodologies

Support departments in marketing efforts
Assist UA College of Engineering departments with marketing and communications materials, planning, efforts and tracking.

Regular media training for faculty, students and alumni
Offer media training on a regular basis for all interested departments, faculty and staff. Topics include strategies for interviewing print media, television media, online media, and radio media; what kind of headlines editors are looking for; tricks of the trade for reporters; how to best communication your message clearly to any reporter; what the difference is between a reporter, freelancer and blogger; and more.

Maintain consistent social media presence
Ensure consistent, exciting messaging is posted on active social media platforms including the UA College of Engineering Facebook page, Twitter account, YouTube channel and others. Promote the presence of UA Engineering on these platforms to students, alumni and supporters while acting as a social media hub for departments.

9. Metrics

Metrics used to gauge the success of the University of Arizona College of Engineering Marketing, Branding and Communications Plan include:

- Increased number of media and marketing promotions placements, both online and offline
- Increased number of quality students enrolling and remaining in the College of Engineering
- Increased number of national scholars and high quality undergraduate engineering students
- Increased number of domestic grad students
- Increased number of faculty nominations and awards, both local and national
- Increased number of graduate students supported by industry
- Increased donor retention and giving
- Improved national rankings of the college

10. Conclusion

The Vision, Mission, Values, Situational Analysis, Goals, Audiences and Strategy described in this plan will increase the national profile of the University of Arizona College of Engineering, differentiating UA Engineering from other colleges in the University of Arizona community as well as other U.S. engineering colleges nationally and internationally.