College of Charleston Marketing and Branding Brainstorming Session
Public Relations Practices class-- January 17, 2008

Information below is taken from notes students wrote after viewing the Division of Marketing and Communication’s Integrated Marketing, Communications and Branding Plan PowerPoint. Ideas and suggestions from students: (listed in random order)

- “I really like the whole IMC initiative because with a new logo and everything it will show that the school is changing, drawing attention from people in the community who may have already made up their mind about C of C—it will cause them to reassess what they think about the college.”
- “Be careful with changing our school too much! I like the way our school is small and quaint,” and has a strong academic reputation, one student writes. “In my opinion improvements are always beneficial to any organization but to change an entire identity of a college that is already successful may be more harmful than helpful.”
- High school friends from a Charleston private school used to “look down on” C of C as an “easy, party school” but that’s changing. “Some of my friends who went to school at places like Duke, Washington and Lee and Davidson took summer classes at C of C and said they were just as challenging as classes at their schools.”
- “The school logo could be more descriptive, some symbol that better shows or describes who we are. The pillars just don’t do that.”
- “I think for today C of C needs to focus more on its academics and promote the majors we have. C of C has many great programs that tend to get overlooked.”
- Lack of school spirit on campus—there could be more pep rallies, homecoming parades, block parties to get students interested and involved
- “Charleston as a city has a great draw and the College is well known enough but still somewhat hidden.”
- Add C of C channel to Comcast Cable locally
- Create a TV network targeted at students to receive updates/what’s happening on campus/emergency alerts, etc.
- More news releases to media outlets including the AP, print publications and electronic sources
- Fix the ESPN crawl “C of Cha” which is not clear enough that it’s our school
- Continue to promote the quality of Charleston itself, its beauty and history and our school’s beauty, history and unique style as well
- Existing brand strengths include rising academic acclaim, helpful faculty, great location, vibrant social scene, the beach, general quality of life
- More sports and sports promotion: establish a football team; more pep rallies to get the student body more excited about basketball

--more--
Estimated a law school
- Establish new or enhance existing programs to better promote student unity
- Recruit local military families more
- Need parking discounts for students—current fees way to high!
- Improve the school’s website—needs more pictures of Charleston and surrounding area/beaches to highlight beauty, history and uniqueness
- A wider range of courses and majors should be offered such as a specific major in public relations (”Charleston is a great town for PR”) and a major in fashion
- Decide on a single school logo—”If you look in the bookstore, every shirt has a different logo”
- Integrate downtown Charleston into even more C of C activities
- “Schedule out of conference sports opponents that create a larger buzz around our school which would allow other schools to recognize us as a university on the rise.”
- “Get a game or two on ESPN to emphasize Coach Bobby Cremins.”
- Use the recent campaign visit by Barack Obama and John Kerry to show the growth of the school and its beauty and growing importance.
- Party school image: “I would like it if people didn’t immediately associate C of C with that lifestyle. As you accept students that expect more of a challenge you can get rid of the party school tag little by little per generation of students.”
- Play up small classes more in which we get great feedback from our teachers.
- Classes in new high-tech classrooms and also small well-preserved churches and historic houses are a neat combination.
- Parking Issues: “Students always complaining about parking brings down C of C’s reputation.”
- “Better campus security has made the school safer…I like the new Cougar Alert system since VT…”
- “I like how we get presidential candidates and other prominent people on campus.”

###