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Guam Community College

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Marketing the Mission/Vision

The mission of Guam Community College is to be a leader in career and technical workforce development by providing the highest quality education and job training in Micronesia.

GCC's vision statement states that the College will continue to pioneer labor force development within the Western Pacific, best understanding and meeting the educational, career, and technical training needs of the economy. It will be Guam's premier career and technical institution and finest secondary and post-secondary basic educational institution serving the island's adult community. Its excellence will continue to be recognized because of its service to employers, employees, and the community at large.

In order to market GCC's mission and vision, this cohesive plan has been developed to highlight its three main components: Postsecondary programs, Secondary (High School CTE programs) and Continuing Education (CE) programs.

Brand History

The GCC "brand" consists of the intangible relationship that the community at large has with the College. When the GCC Vocational-Technical High School closed in 2000 and its programs moved into the respective public high schools, public perception of GCC suffered. For nearly 10 years, the perception of GCC in the community was that it had abandoned its high school programs. Accomplishments at the postsecondary level were largely overshadowed by this perception.

Re-Branding the relationship

In 2009, GCC released its Institutional Strategic Master Plan, which serves as guide to action for the College for the years 2009-2014. Part of that plan called for the development of a GCC brand – a relationship with the community in which GCC is a household name.

GCC's image has improved markedly in the past two years, and the College has experienced record enrollment each year. (In part, this is due to an impending military buildup that is estimated to increase the island's population by 30,000 and provide a boon to the local economy by the year 2020.) The College has also added new programs (or reinstituted archived programs) based on employment needs in the business community, constructed three new buildings, is currently undergoing renovations to two more buildings, and increased its visibility in the community

through the local media, through advertising campaigns, and through outreach programs such as the College Access Challenge Grant Program and Project AIM.

The re-branding of the College included the issuance of over 250 media releases from August 2009 to August 2010 – nearly one every other day, plus appearances on radio talk shows by the president, enrollment advertising campaigns, and the launching of an Open Campus Day to invite the community to the GCC campus to see the progress being made. The result has been a positive image shift for the College, and record enrollment in fall 2010. The same strategy was used from 2010 to 2011, with the same result.

This re-branding campaign captures the essence of what GCC has to offer the community: the means to provide people with the education, skills and training they will need to build a better quality of life for themselves, their families, and their community. The tag lines: “Be your own success story,” and “Metgot hao – get stronger,” appear in GCC advertisements for registration and College events, strengthening that message.

Part of the GCC relationship with the community consists of getting middle and high school students to consider the College as a viable option for their postsecondary education – in fact, the first option. Toward that effort, a federal grant was obtained for the College Access Challenge Grant Program. The grant provides funding to promote the program, which at the same time promotes the College as program host.

Further efforts at re-branding include, within budget constraints, the re-design of all College print materials to use the GCC logo colors of blue and gold: folders, brochures, program cards, and t-shirts, so that the “GCC colors” are recognizable throughout the region.

Marketing Tools:

Web site

The GCC web site is currently undergoing a redesign that will be launched in summer 2012. The web site will be GCC’s main *information* connection to the community. Drive all ads and promotions to www.guamcc.edu for program information and registration. Include extensive information on postsecondary, secondary, and CE programs.

E-Catalog system

GCC is converting to an e-catalog system that will be fully operational by fall 2012. The transition from a print catalog to an integrated e-catalog has begun. The e-catalog will allow for instantaneous course and program updates. It will serve as an educational planning tool by allowing students to create their own educational plan within the catalog. They will be able to create a file, save it, and plan their courses

per semester. The e-catalog, accessed through our main web site, will create an increased on-line presence, and serve as a registration marketing tool.

Media

Conduct media campaigns surrounding new programs, program highlights, and special events at the College (within budget constraints). Campaigns to include:
 Print/Radio/TV advertisements
 Movie Theater advertisements
 Free media air time

Individual media campaigns may surround registration, but will focus primarily on program highlights as a marketing tool to promote education and training at GCC as a means to better employment opportunities and a more advanced workforce.

Secondary programs marketed through promotion with the College Access Challenge Grant Program. Use students in the program in advertisements highlighting the benefits of the program, and its emphasis toward postsecondary education.

Free airtime will be taken advantage of whenever possible. One local television station provides GCC with a half-hour talk show format twice a month. The program, called "A Higher Degree," highlights programs, student and faculty accomplishments, and general news and information about the College. Also, schedule guest appearances for College personnel on local radio talk shows prior to a newsworthy event or new program launch.

Media releases

Issue media releases to local news outlets (this marketing tool has been particularly valuable to the College's re-branding campaign). Releases will continue to highlight postsecondary, secondary, and CE events, programs, grant funding, new equipment and various other newsworthy items surrounding the college. (Media post the releases on their web sites. Information is then picked up by international web sites. The College's image has been strengthened by this dissemination of information.)

Social networks: Facebook, Twitter, Youtube

Monitor GCC Facebook and Twitter accounts daily. Advertise events and answers students' questions about various issues such as financial aid and registration. Upload GCC videos and commercials produced by the college onto College's YouTube account. Provide links from web site to YouTube videos. (Advantage to YouTube is the free analytics provided: The College can track how many viewers a particular video receives at any given point.)

Surveys

Use surveys conducted by Apprenticeship program under Continuing Education department to monitor satisfaction of businesses with the program, courses offered, performance of students/employees. Use testimonials from satisfied managers,

owners, and supervisors in print/radio/TV ads for registration and promotion of College events.

For additional data, new web site will contain front-page survey that can provide instantaneous results with protected voting mechanism (prevents multiple voting from one computer).

Focus Groups

Also use focus groups to obtain feedback about student satisfaction with postsecondary programs and events. Use feedback to market specific College programs, courses, advantages, etc.

At least three times per semester, the OCP will host “brown bag lunches” at the Student Center or another appropriate location on campus in order to informally meet with students from a particular program. During these lunches, discussion will center on students’ and their families’ perceptions of GCC, the methods through which they receive information about the college, and how information dissemination and public perception of the College can be improved. Students are the College’s primary focus, and, absent a formal scientific survey, these lunches will serve as valuable sources of input from the primary target regarding the College’s marketing efforts.

Students/Graduates

Use student and graduate testimonials about quality of education at GCC and how it helped graduates to become gainfully employed. Testimonials can be used in radio, TV, and print ads. Also include brief testimonials in annual report.

Business partnerships

Use partnerships with businesses that are enrolled in GCC Apprenticeship program, and that partner with GCC on other projects. Promote these businesses in radio and print ads that highlight the partnership and the particular business’ satisfaction with the GCC program. Send notifications to media whenever new businesses enter the apprenticeship program (especially business publications).

Marketing to alumni

Work with Office of Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) to market special events hosted by the College. Marketing will consist of paid advertisements (within budget constraints) announcements on web site and social media pages, and scheduling of free appearances on radio and TV talk shows. Pull in Board of Trustees and Foundation Board of Governors members to appear in ads whenever appropriate.

Note: ISMP calls for outsourced and targeted research of the College’s primary audiences. The ISMP noted, “to effectively implement any marketing plan, as well as retain effective internal communications, it will be necessary to increase the communications budget significantly based upon the average communication budget of similar institutions and factoring in the increased

communications needs of the upcoming military buildup.” However, the buildup has been delayed, and GCC has experienced increasing budget constraints with regard to non-receipt of allocated funding from the Guam Legislature. The Office of Communications and Promotions has adapted this Marketing Plan to reflect the College’s budget constraints, and used other means to effectively market the College to the community.

