

Your Customer-Focused Digital Communications Strategy – Are You Ready?

While you've been doing your best to keep up with your stakeholders during the pandemic, their behavior has changed. They're all-in on digital. And they're not going back. Are you ready for that?

As your institution opens back up and you transition from remote or blended offices, what will your on-campus office look like? Will all your staff come back or will some still work remotely? How do you determine the right model? What will your campus constituents need in terms of new messaging through your communications and marketing? What upskilling will be required of your people? How will you organize the work?

We've been in the communications and marketing business for a long time, but one strength that has distinguished our work is our agility. We quickly adapt to new expectations, habits and methods. That's why we've retooled our consulting services and data-informed models for strategic communications and marketing.

We're here to assist you shape your digital-first strategy geared to the strategic needs of your institution – from recruitment of new students to serving alumni across their lifetimes. Our program is directed at action, not process. In four sessions, we'll work with you to create a custom approach that leverages “pandemic lessons” and an implementation plan you can apply right away. And we've transitioned to a fully virtual consulting model so we can deliver our advice and marketing communications plans faster and without additional travel expense.

When you read the related whitepaper on our website – “Digital Transformation in University Communications & Marketing” – you'll see how higher education organizations can learn from the business world about timely communications and marketing to engage their constituents, from central communications offices to advancement and enrollment management. We can help you integrate into your communication strategies the “platform” approaches used by many organizations by leveraging information from customer relationship management (CRM) systems often residing elsewhere in the institution and with potential impact diluted by decentralization. Enabling personalization and segmentation, our digital-first strategy meets stakeholders “where they are” – online, in email and on their phones from staying informed to shopping, donating and connecting with each other on a regular basis.

The old scripts are outdated, but our experience and expertise are at the leading edge of change. We will provide the assessment, strategy, tools, organizational design and coaching to get you up to speed quickly.

During the pandemic, college and university constituencies, like everyone else, have moved ahead with new ways of connecting, donating, shopping and volunteering. Now it's time for all institutional communications and marketing practices to align with them.

In just four sessions, here's how we'll work with you to shape your digital-first communications and marketing program:

- **Session 1:** We'll meet together virtually to learn more about your existing communications and marketing program, pain points and desired outcomes. We'll determine what's needed, where you have opportunities and what no longer works.
- **Session 2:** We'll provide best practice data and analytics to guide your evolving thinking.
- **Session 3:** We'll customize your strategic communications and marketing program together to ensure it serves outreach from all parts of the institution. This roll-up-our-sleeves meeting will produce a framework for action. The result will be agile in applications, digitally focused and data-informed – and plan for “upskilling” staff and leaders.
- **Session 4:** We'll review, fine-tune and complete an implementation plan with actions, timelines, responsibilities, metrics and resources. Then we'll be available on an ongoing basis to guide you and your staff as you move forward.

Most importantly, your updated approach and practices will be aligned with your institution's strategic goals, integrated across the entire enterprise and use CRM data that you already have or will obtain to personalize your communications to your stakeholders. Your customers expect it.

Are you ready for this? We are!

The Napa Group's Strategic Communications Practice

Janis Johnson, Senior Partner and Lead

For nearly 25 years, Janis Johnson has been a senior executive and consultant to higher education, health care, fundraising and advancement organizations, alumni associations and community nonprofits and as communications counsel to executives and leaders. She was Assistant Vice President for Constituent Communications in Georgetown University's Office of Alumni and University Relations, overseeing communications for the university's first \$1 billion comprehensive campaign in the late 1990s. As Assistant Vice President for Communications and Public Affairs at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles from 2001 to 2005, she built an enterprise-wide integrated strategic communications program and led the multi-year LMU-LA rebranding initiative. As a Napa Group consultant since 2005, she has assisted more than a dozen public and private colleges, universities and advancement offices in developing multi-year strategic plans and reshaping their communications and marketing programs to align with institutional objectives. This included consulting and onsite leadership, including nearly year as Interim Executive Director of the Office of Communications and Marketing at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. Previously she was a staff reporter for The Washington Post and a journalist for other major media.

Bill Walker, Napa Group Consultant

For more than four decades, Bill Walker has served in senior leadership positions in communications and marketing with major public and private universities and colleges, including Dartmouth College, Rutgers University, the University of Arizona, the University of Missouri, Brandeis University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, the College of William and Mary in Virginia and Skidmore College. He most recently served as Interim Senior Vice President for Communications, Marketing and External Relations at Brandeis University and as Interim Senior Vice President for Marketing and Communications at the University of Arizona. He earlier served for six years as Vice President for Strategic Communications and External Relations at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and six as Vice President for Public Affairs at Dartmouth College. He later worked for two years during a presidential transition as Interim Vice President for Advancement Resources at the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) in Washington, DC. His other clients have included Holy Family University, the State University of New York, the University of Massachusetts, the University of Missouri, North Carolina State University and the Naval Postgraduate School. He worked as a newspaper, radio and television reporter while earning a degree at the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

How?

Building on our expertise in organizational multi-year planning

Incorporating innovative “platform” strategies and “design thinking” methodologies

Linking strategic communications design and practices to enterprise priorities and lifelong customer loyalty

Applying a digital-first strategy to meet consumers “where they are”

Contact us today:

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