



St. Louis Community College Consulting Report

**Submitted by Dr. Jim Black
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Executive Summary of Recommendations

LEGEND: MC (Mission Critical), E (Essential), D (Desired)

Priority	Recommended Strategy	Ownership	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Effectiveness Measure	Objective Met
MC	Develop and disseminate employee expectations associated with the “one college” philosophy	LT	Chancellor	Spring 2007	“One college” philosophy reflected in employee behavior	
MC	Hold employees accountable to “one college” expectations	LT	Chancellor	Spring 2007	“One college” philosophy reflected in employee behavior	
MC	Address existing practices that are contributing to a fragmented institutional image	LT	Chancellor	Spring 2007	Issues are resolved	
MC	Establish a college brand identity and develop campus and program identities that align with the college brand	Communications	Director	Spring 2007	College brand identity established with sub-brands	
MC	Create secondary messages that are relevant to target audiences and have some audience affinity	Communications	Director	Spring 2007	Secondary messages created	
E	Ensure consistency of printed communications and advertisements by establishing a formal approval process housed in the District Communications Office	Communications	Director	Spring 2007	Compliance with approval process	
E	Create and widely disseminate communication templates such as brochures, e-mail campaigns, flyers, and postcards	Communications	Director	Spring 2007	Template usage	

Priority	Recommended Strategy	Ownership	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Effectiveness Measure	Objective Met
MC	Launch an internal marketing campaign to increase campus-wide understanding and adoption of the marketing message	LT	Communications	Spring 2007	Consistency of communications	
MC	Develop a campus-wide communications plan that outlines every communication with a student from the first point of contact as an inquiry on through his or her life as a student at SLCC	Communications	Director	Spring 2007	Consistency and coordination of communications	
MC	Use the institution's primary marketing message on all publications, advertisements, Web pages, and electronic communications to external audiences	Communications	Director	Spring 2007	Consistent use of the primary marketing message	
E	Stress student benefits and outcomes in all communications	Communications	Director	Ongoing	Focus group testing	
E	Reinforce themes used to define SLCC whenever possible	Communications	Director	Ongoing	Focus group testing	
MC	Create salient selling points for the college and your academic programs that distinguish you from competitors	Communications	Director	Spring 2007	Focus group testing	
E	Adopt branding design elements that permeate everything the college produces	Communications	Director	Spring 2007	Consistent usage of design elements	

Priority	Recommended Strategy	Ownership	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Effectiveness Measure	Objective Met
D	Consider other logo design options	Communications	Director	Spring 2007	Decision made regarding logo	
D	Cease using stock photos	Communications	Director	Ongoing	Focus group testing	
E	Ensure the “call to action” is prominent in every communication	Communications	Director	Ongoing	Responses to “call to action”	
E	Expand the number of printed publications to allow for audience segmentation and multiple communication touch points	Communications	Director	Spring–Fall 2007	Number of publications	
D	Increase the number of publications available in electronic format	Communications	Director	Spring–Fall 2007	Number of publications available in electronic format	
MC	Create an entirely new Web site for the college that is marketing oriented and audience driven	Web Committee	Chair	Fall 2007	Focus group testing	
E	Acquire a content management system for continued Web maintenance	IT	Vice Chancellor	TBD	CMS operational	
E	Implement Web features that cause visitors to engage with the site, find critical information easily, transact business with the college, create community, and communicate with others	Web Committee	Chair	Fall 2007	Focus group testing	

Priority	Recommended Strategy	Ownership	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Effectiveness Measure	Objective Met
MC	Ensure Web visitors can request information, arrange a campus visit, and search for course offerings directly from the home page	Web Committee	Chair	Fall 2007	Focus group testing	
E	Adopt a multichannel approach to communication	Communications	Director	Spring–Fall 2007	Enrollment yield	
E	Customize communications to the individual	Communications	Director	Spring 2008	Enrollment yield	
E	Communications should shift from general and brief to specific and comprehensive	Communications	Director	Spring–Fall 2007	Enrollment yield	
D	Create communications that possess a “WOW” factor	Communications	Director	Spring–Fall 2007	Enrollment yield	
D	Ensure communications are permission-based and preference-based	Communications	Director	Spring–Fall 2007	Unsubscribe rate	
D	Develop a written objective for every communication that defines the intended audience, the purpose of the communication, the “call to action”, and the desired outcome	Communications	Director	Spring–Fall 2007	Written objectives exist	
D	Track all communications to determine effectiveness	Communications	Director	Spring–Fall 2007	Effective measures used to improve communications	
E	Implement the segmented communication plans depicted in this report	Communications	Director	Fall 2007	Communication plans programmed in Banner	

Priority	Recommended Strategy	Ownership	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Effectiveness Measure	Objective Met
E	Create key performance indicators, related metrics, strategies, and action plans	Communications	Director	Spring 2007	Actionable intelligence to ensure strategies impact key performance indicators	
E	Identify 3–5 research questions	Communications	Director	Summer 2007	Actionable intelligence to ensure strategies impact key performance indicators	
E	Optimize usage of the Banner system via staff training, restructuring positions, and changing mindsets	LT	IT Vice Chancellor	Ongoing	Improved efficiency and effectiveness with Banner	
D	Explore the acquisition of a “bolt-on” CRM system to automate and customize outbound communications	Communications and IT	Director and Vice Chancellor	Summer 2007	Decision to acquire CRM system made	
E	Reconsider the purchase of the Lumens system for non-credit enrollment transactions	Continuing Education and IT	Dean and Vice Chancellor	Spring 2007	Decision to acquire Lumens system made	
MC	Adopt a centralized communications model for prospective student marketing campaigns, search, fulfillment, cultivation, missing information requests, admission notification, enrollment-related information, e-mail and phone campaigns	LT	Director of Communications	Summer 2007	Centralized communications unit fully operational	

Priority	Recommended Strategy	Ownership	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Effectiveness Measure	Objective Met
MC	Staff the central communications unit with existing admissions processing staff, student callers, a coordinator of data processing and outbound mail, a call center coordinator, a student marketing coordinator, and a research analyst	LT	Director of Communications	Summer 2007	Centralized communications unit fully staffed	
E	Develop a clearly articulated marketing plan	Communications	Director	Fall 2006	Plan complete and in production	
E	Invest in staff development	LT	Chancellor	Ongoing	Performance levels and quality of execution	
E	Ensure staffing levels are adequate to guarantee successful implementation	LT	Chancellor	Ongoing	Performance levels and quality of execution	
E	Create a pool of seed money to jump start new marketing and recruitment initiatives	LT	Chancellor	Ongoing	Marketing and recruitment return on investment	
E	Build the infrastructure as enrollment grows by dedicating a portion of enrollment growth funds to marketing efforts	LT	Chancellor	Ongoing	Marketing return on investment	
MC	Consistently deliver services that reflect the promise inherent in the brand message	LT	Service providers	Ongoing	Student satisfaction	

Priority	Recommended Strategy	Ownership	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Effectiveness Measure	Objective Met
MC	Consistently deliver academic experiences that reflect the promise inherent in the brand message	Academic Leadership	Academic Units	Ongoing	Student satisfaction and learning	

Introduction

SEM WORKS, an enrollment management consulting firm, was hired by St. Louis Community College (SLCC) to complete a marketing and communications audit. The audit was conducted September 20 through 22, 2006, by Dr. Jim Black, hereafter referred to as the consultant. Findings from the consulting visit are presented in this report along with related recommendations. Said recommendations are qualified by an indication of their respective importance to meeting St. Louis Community College's enrollment and marketing objectives. Accordingly, recommendations in the Executive Summary are designated as mission critical (MC), essential (E), or desired (D).

Methodology

The three-day consulting visit included interviews with groups consisting of students, staff, administrators, and senior management. Prior to the site visit, the consultant reviewed documents and marketing materials provided by the institution. During the visit, additional information was supplied to the consultant.

Using a combination of the physical evidence described above along with secondary data sources, on-campus interviews, and direct observations of existing practices, the consultant utilized a research method known as "triangulation" to validate findings. Any finding supported by all three research techniques was considered to be valid. The consultant used a complementary method called "pattern matching" to validate findings that did not appear to be triangulated. Pattern matching describes reoccurring themes that emerge from one or more of these research techniques.

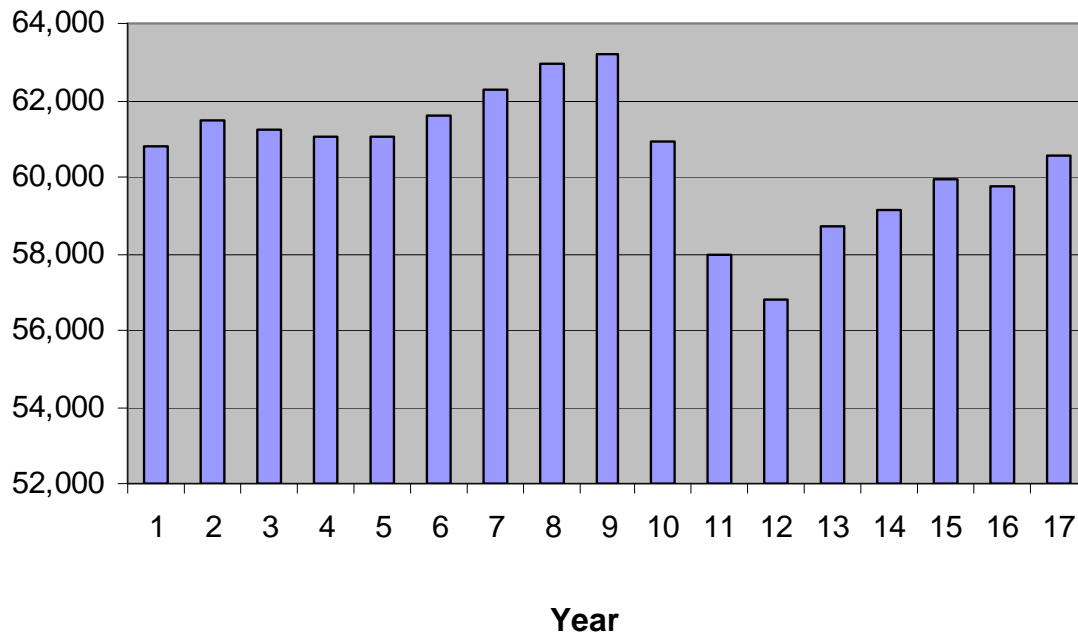
Situational Analysis

There are forty-three educational providers—accredited and non-accredited institutions—that make SLCC’s market one of the most saturated and competitive in the country. Among these competitors are formidable marketing entities such as St. Louis University, the University of Missouri at St. Louis, and the University of Phoenix. In this competitive context, no institution can afford to have a “plain vanilla” or fragmented image. Such is the case at SLCC. Identity confusion appears to stem from the large complex nature of the college and the diverse audiences you serve as well as from the discreet and separate images of the three campuses. Regarding the latter, promotion efforts not aligned with the “one college” concept; campus-specific processes, policies, practices, and departmental nomenclature; DOT signage; Web navigation and design; and even recruitment outreach contribute to SLCC’s fragmented image.

From an enrollment perspective, the college has experienced several consecutive years of declining enrollments. Environmental factors such as a declining population of high school graduates in St. Louis and all of Missouri (*Graph I*), a relatively healthy local economy eliminating some of the compelling reasons for adults to return to college (*Graphs II and III*), and “urban flight” from the city of St. Louis (*Tables I and II*) as well as the county (*Appendix A and B*) suggest further enrollment declines without serious institutional interventions. In other words, “business as usual” will likely yield fewer students over the next decade. Moreover, with the addition of the Wildwood Campus, it is probable that SLCC will have expensive, unused capacity if enrollments continue to decline.

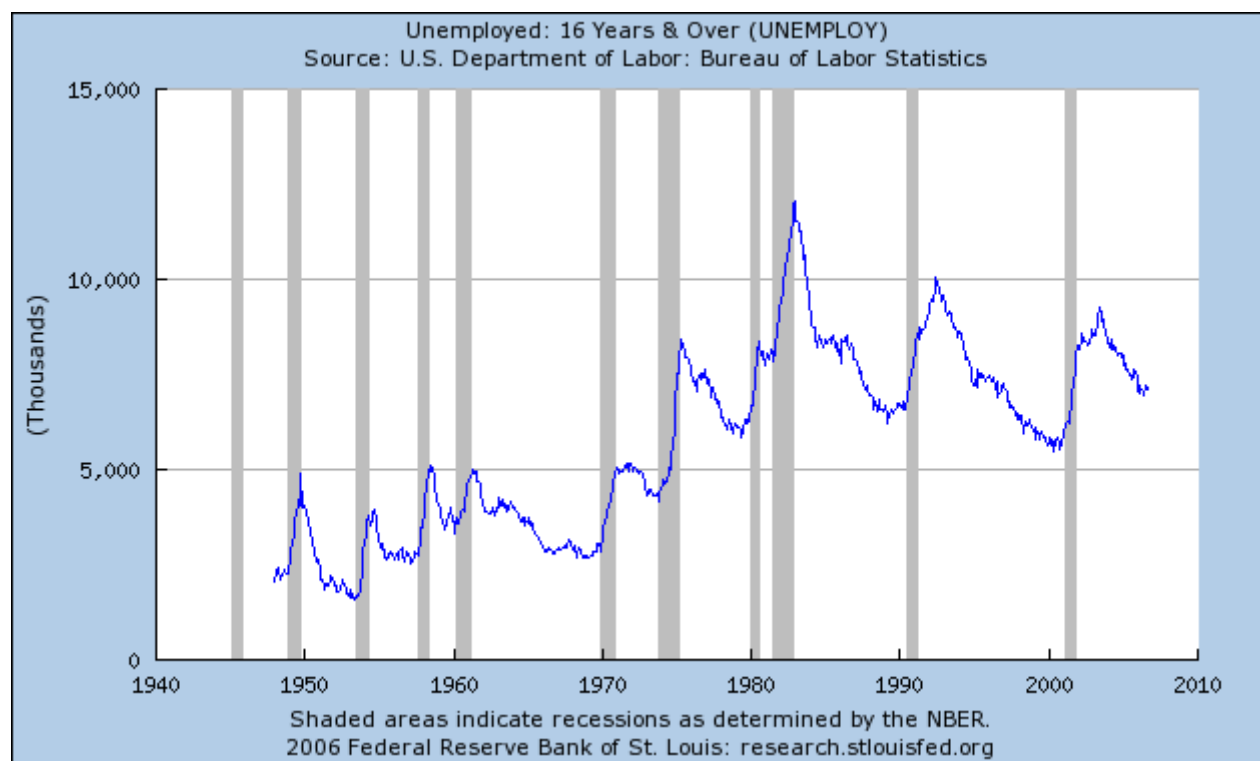
Graph I: Missouri High School Graduates 2001–2017

of Grads



Source: Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education, 2003

Graph II: St. Louis Area Unemployment Trends



Graph III: Civilian Job Participation Rates

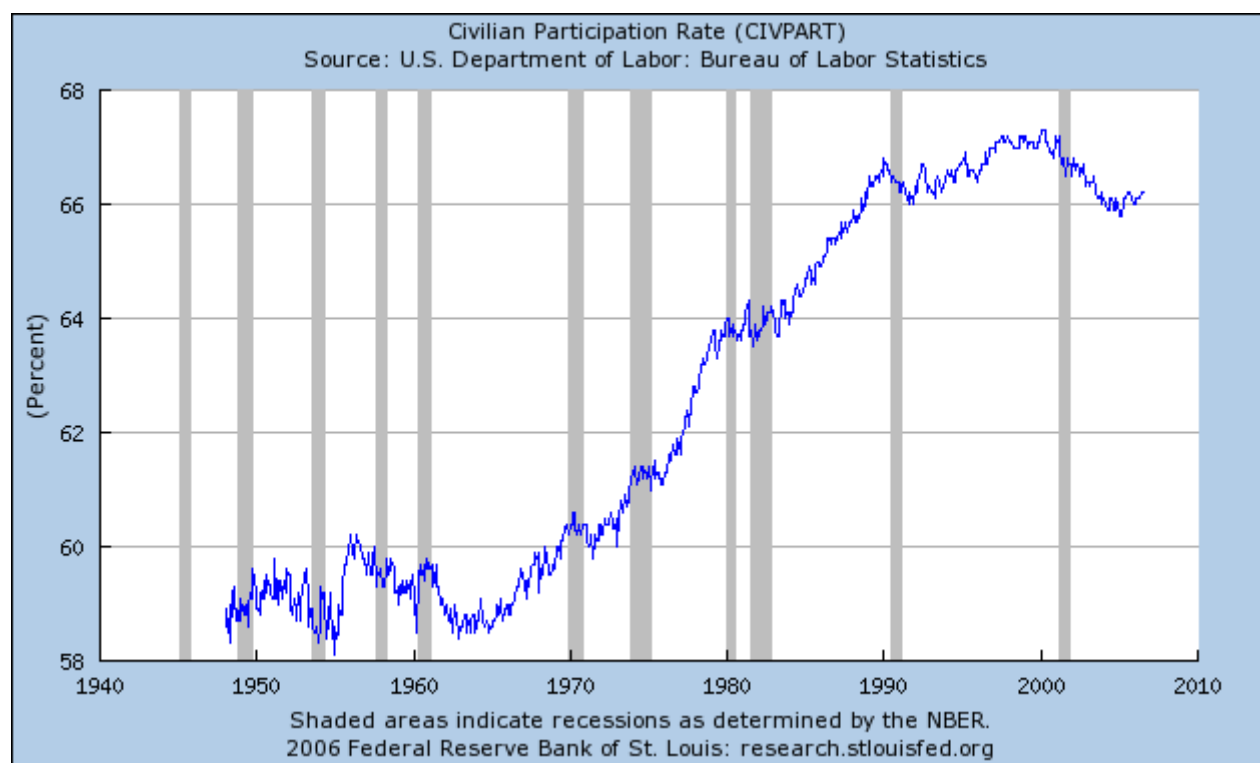


Table I: City of St. Louis Population Characteristics 2000

Subject	Number	Percent
Total population	348,189	100.0
SEX AND AGE		
Male	163,567	47.0
Female	184,622	53.0
Under 5 years	23,477	6.7
5 to 9 years	26,709	7.7
10 to 14 years	25,014	7.2
15 to 19 years	24,729	7.1
20 to 24 years	26,541	7.6
25 to 34 years	54,395	15.6
35 to 44 years	53,144	15.3
45 to 54 years	41,260	11.8
55 to 59 years	13,466	3.9
60 to 64 years	11,612	3.3
65 to 74 years	23,047	6.6
75 to 84 years	17,482	5.0
85 years and over	7,313	2.1
Median age (years)	33.7	(X)
18 years and over	258,532	74.3
Male	118,186	33.9
Female	140,346	40.3
21 years and over	242,835	69.7

Subject	Number	Percent
62 years and over	54,824	15.7
65 years and over	47,842	13.7
Male	16,921	4.9
Female	30,921	8.9
RACE		
One race	341,650	98.1
White	152,666	43.8
Black or African American	178,266	51.2
American Indian and Alaska Native	950	0.3
Asian	6,891	2.0
Asian Indian	845	0.2
Chinese	1,038	0.3
Filipino	454	0.1
Japanese	217	0.1
Korean	289	0.1
Vietnamese	3,319	1.0
Other Asian	729	0.2
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	94	0.0
Native Hawaiian	16	0.0
Guamanian or Chamorro	23	0.0
Samoan	31	0.0
Other Pacific Islander	24	0.0
Some other race	2,783	0.8
Two or more races	6,539	1.9

Table II: St. Louis Population Characteristics 2005

General Demographic Characteristics: 2005	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>Margin of Error</u>
Total population	333,730	*****
SEX AND AGE		
Male	156,343	+/-686
Female	177,387	+/-686
Under 5 years	26,160	+/-237
5 to 9 years	20,745	+/-2,126
10 to 14 years	25,131	+/-2,146
15 to 19 years	21,911	+/-326
20 to 24 years	22,705	+/-424
25 to 34 years	48,137	+/-815
35 to 44 years	50,829	+/-797
45 to 54 years	48,707	+/-757
55 to 59 years	16,828	+/-1,281
60 to 64 years	13,409	+/-1,205
65 to 74 years	18,758	+/-397
75 to 84 years	15,661	+/-919
85 years and over	4,749	+/-879
Median age (years)	35.4	+/-0.2
18 years and over	247,799	+/-236
21 years and over	235,622	+/-1,619
62 years and over	46,877	+/-1,130
65 years and over	39,168	+/-404
RACE		
One race	329,069	+/-1,762

Two or more races	4,661	+/-1,762
Total population	333,730	*****
One race	329,069	+/-1,762
White	147,955	+/-1,338
Black or African American	168,909	+/-1,927
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,603	+/-721
Cherokee tribal grouping	N	N
Chippewa tribal grouping	N	N
Navajo tribal grouping	N	N
Sioux tribal grouping	N	N
Asian	7,199	+/-396
Asian Indian	1,724	+/-933
Chinese	1,092	+/-663
Filipino	719	+/-505
Japanese	183	+/-155
Korean	365	+/-222
Vietnamese	2,272	+/-1,046
Other Asian	844	+/-881
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	+/-256
Native Hawaiian	N	N
Guamanian or Chamorro	N	N
Samoan	N	N
Other Pacific Islander	N	N
Some other race	3,403	+/-1,668
Two or more races	4,661	+/-1,762
White and Black or African American	2,156	+/-1,364
White and American Indian and Alaska Native	435	+/-322
White and Asian	318	+/-272
Black or African American and American Indian and Alaska Native	570	+/-422

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 American Community Survey

Besides a compelling enrollment rationale for enhancing SLCC's image, the college has other reasons for investing in branding. The recent defeat of a tax referendum serves as a clarion call to improve the institution's image in the minds and hearts of the local community. With anticipated decreased levels of state support, St. Louis Community College will increasingly need to rely on local tax support as well as private donations. People and organizations are inundated with requests for donations and other forms of financial support. They elect to contribute limited resources to causes they understand and have a personal connection with as well as some emotional bond. Failure to create an image that establishes a strong emotional appeal causes people to revert to what they know (e.g., controversial news, preconceived notions of a community college education, and anecdotal experiences with graduates). In a highly competitive enrollment and fund-raising environment, such as the one in St. Louis, the college must take control of its destiny and aggressively shape the image you want others to embrace.

Solidifying a Clear and Compelling Image

As inferred in the Situational Analysis, there are multiple causes for the institution's blurred image. To address image fragmentation, you must first solve the college's internal identity crisis. The concept of "one college" has been embraced at the highest levels within the organization but has not permeated into the operational units. Consequently, the people who have the most contact with key constituent groups still have a campus-oriented mind-set.

A pervasive "one college" philosophy begins with an employee's first week on the job and continues throughout his or her work experience. Expectations associated with

the “one college” concept should be reinforced with every opportunity. Moreover, there should be real consequences for not meeting said expectations, as well as real incentives for doing so. One tangible way to accomplish this is to integrate “one college” expectations into the annual evaluation so that employees receive feedback specific to their performance in relation to this philosophy.

A significant component to creating a culture of accountability is in holding supervisors accountable for their faculty and staff. To the grassroots employees, symbolism matters a great deal. They will be watching the Leadership Team and their supervisors to determine if “one college” really matters in this culture or not. Their behaviors, their actions or lack thereof related to faculty and staff, will determine how successful this culture shift is. When supervisors do not hold their faculty or staff accountable, corrective action needs to occur.

Existing practices that contribute to a fragmented image must be confronted. Specifically, the college needs to address:

1. Multiple schedules (in progress)
2. Information silos
3. Campus-specific practices and procedures that should be standardized
4. Student runaround particularly in the admission, advising, and registration process
5. The lack of cross-selling among campus-based recruiters
6. Enforcement of the college’s graphic standards manual
7. Sporadic and uncoordinated advertising that limits opportunities for synergy and cost savings

8. The disconnect between campus and district marketing efforts
9. The lack of a common nomenclature for offices and services

Brand Strategy

The brand strategy should be grounded in St. Louis Community College brand identity. Once established, identities for each campus, program, and service can be developed that are aligned with the college brand but allow for the uniqueness of each entity to be conveyed. Secondary messages should be developed that create audience affinity and are relevant to the target audience. For example, “Expanding Minds, Changing Lives” has a different meaning to a degree-seeking student than to someone who is interested in corporate training or to the person who is being solicited for a donation. So, the articulation of messages underneath the college brand must be different.

Consistency Matters

To ensure quality control and consistency, all communications should go through an approval process housed in Community Relations. For SLCC, this means every printed communication and advertisement designed for consumption by an external audience must come through the campus communications coordinator and then through the Cosand Center community relations staff. This quality control is intended not to dictate content, but rather to ensure consistency of look, feel, and message and thus manage the institution’s brand. To be successful, campus presidents, deans, and department heads must visibly support the branding effort. No printed marketing or communications piece or advertisement should be institutionally funded without complying with this

review process. At a minimum, campus communications coordinators should have a dotted line reporting relationship with the director of communications. This reporting relationship will help facilitate a sustainable and expedient review process.

Communication Templates

To provide a level of consistency and to simplify communications with various units and campuses, you are encouraged to create communication templates. In particular, templates for e-mail campaigns, postcards, flyers, and basic brochures should be produced and shared with the entire college at no cost to the unit. These templates should be branded with the college's design, message, and where appropriate, navigation.

Templates can be made available for download on the institution's intranet, extranet site with a password, or on a share drive. These templates should be accompanied with some guidelines for appropriate usage and a simplified method of inserting text and personalizing the communications to the potential student. Units utilizing these templates may forgo the aforementioned Cosand Center approval process, thus providing a mechanism for responding quickly to marketing and recruitment opportunities as they arise.

Internal Communications

St. Louis Community College has engaged in extensive market research and a branding process to identify a corporate marketing message that will be used in all external promotional and recruitment activities. While the external promotion of the

college's message is critical, it should not be devoid of an internal campaign to ensure that there is a common understanding of the meaning behind the message. For the message to reflect reality, it must be operationalized in daily practice, both in and outside of the classroom. Senior management should be actively involved in this internal campaign in face-to-face meetings with every academic and administrative unit on campus. The purpose of these meetings would be to explain the rationale for the message, its various uses, and the importance of internal consistency. The internal campaign should be ongoing and designed to create a sense of shared ownership around the message.

The college should develop a comprehensive college-wide communications plan that outlines every communication with a student from the first point of contact as an inquiry on through his or her life as a student at SLCC as well as touch points with other constituent groups. Included in the plan should be the nature of the communication, the intended audience, the timeline for implementation, the owner of the communication, the objective, and the effectiveness measure.

Communication plans should be created through a campus-wide taskforce to ensure synergy and a highly coordinated effort. Your communications need to be entirely seamless and not reveal any internal silos. Remember, you want to project "one college" to students. They often do not discriminate by department or campus. The college-wide communication plan should be disseminated broadly and included on an intranet site or internal network. Included in the communication plan should be samples of the communications that are being disseminated. This will allow for each individual to

access the communications promptly if they are contacted by a prospective or current student so that they will know exactly what the college has said.

Messaging

The consultant spent hours reviewing SLCC publications, advertisements, and Web pages looking for messaging deficiencies. After this extensive evaluation, the consultant found the messaging to be inconsistent. The primary marketing message, “Expanding Minds, Changing Lives” is present only on the home page of the Web site, district-produced advertisements, and most college-level publications. With few exceptions, the message does not appear on campus or program publications, advertisements, or Web pages. However, other messages such as “Start Smart”, “You Make the Connection”, “Choose a Career for the Future”, “Creating a Qualified Workforce”, and the “Partners” message family used by CBIL are seen by many of your key constituents. While there is nothing inherently flawed with these messages, their use without a unifying corporate message further blurs the college’s image.

Narrative copy, testimonials, stories, statistics, and third-party validations support the “Expanding Minds, Changing Lives” message in the viewbook but the evidence to substantiate the claim inherent in the message is largely missing from other publications and the Web site. That being said, the balance between factual information and constituent benefits and outcomes supporting the message need to be shifted toward the increased use of compelling stories, testimonials, and third-party validations. The narrative copy needs to be pithy and a bit edgy to appeal to today’s students more than the bland text found in most of your publications and Web pages.

You define yourself internally as having a diverse student body, emphasizing teaching over research, responsive to community needs, providing a variety of learning options, being a springboard to a career or further education, having accessible locations, and welcoming students from “all walks of life.” In the viewbook, these themes are represented through copy and photography (pictures depict a diverse student body from “all walks of life”). CBIL and Continuing Education pieces demonstrate a response to community needs and a variety of learning options. Yet, these themes are not reinforced as often as they could be. In fact, some of your marketing activities discount or dilute these themes. For example, when the only college publication entering the homes of the residents of St. Louis is the Continuing Education schedule of courses and each campus has a separate schedule of courses, the consumer has a limited view of the variety of the college’s learning options.

Beyond these institutional identified defining characteristics, consider incorporating audience-relevant selling points. Workforce and Community Development has done a masterful job of developing selling points that are compelling to the diversity of learners they serve. For many of the student audiences served by the college, SLCC could easily expand on “the variety of learning options” theme to focus on flexible and practical learning options. The uniqueness and quality of your academic offerings should be central to most of your marketing efforts. And any time low cost is the focal point of an ad like the “Why pay more than \$78 per credit hour?” campaign, this message should be coupled with a message regarding the high quality of education delivered by SLCC—promote high value, not low cost in isolation. Many students are interested in the college transfer track, and thus, the ease of transfer and the

value/savings gained by starting at SLCC on the way to a four-year degree represents a strong selling point to high school students and their parents. Because high school students and their parents often have misperceptions about a community college, proactively showcase the success of your graduates. Help them to understand what is possible with an education from SLCC.

Key selling points for your alumni audience also include the successes of graduates as well as the experiences of current students. They revel in reading student stories, hearing positive news about their alma mater and making connections with people they knew when they were in school. The communications, along with opportunities for alumni to stay engaged with the college and their home campus, foster a feeling of being part of the SLCC family. If they feel a sense of loyalty, they are more likely to contribute time or money, support tax referendums, and even consider returning to the college for lifelong learning. Regarding the latter, SLCC should have a communications strategy designed to cultivate an interest in returning to the institution for continued learning, credit or non-credit. The people who are most likely to invest in the college in the future are those who know you best.

For the community and friends of the college audiences, they will be inspired by the success stories of your graduates along with contributions SLCC has made that directly impact their lives. You possess compelling economic impact data, but it must be personalized and conveyed broadly, not just in the Chancellor's Report. Likewise, develop evidence of the institution's impact on business and industry as well as the community in general. You have a wealth of public relations opportunities in this regard.

Design

To state the obvious, there is minimal consistency of design elements among print material and Web pages. Navigation consistency is also inconsistent on the current Web site. The only consistent graphic element is the institution's logo and word mark. In publications and advertisements the logo and word mark are often accompanied by the listing of one or more campuses depending on the target audience. This level of differentiation is appropriate and serves to guide readers to the specific campus where they can find desired programs or course offerings.

As part of the branding process, you are encouraged to identify and adopt design elements that will permeate everything you do. Also, the institution's logo is nondescript and certainly not an image that evokes any emotion. SEM WORKS will provide design elements and alternate logo options for your consideration at a later stage of the branding project.

Publications

Within the mix of existing publications there are several outstanding marketing pieces, especially the viewbook and the CBIL family of publications. However, most of the publications suffer from the consistency issues illuminated previously in this report. Unlike the CBIL publications, the college, as a whole, does not have a family look.

Some publications and ads use stock photos, which is a missed opportunity to spotlight SLCC. For a visually oriented audience, like most high school students and many adults, some of the college photos you have appear dated or are not engaging. Invest in quality photography. Build a photo library for use in print, advertisements,

electronic communications, and the Web. Provide the college community with online access to the photo library.

In the majority of your publications, a “call to action” is subtle or nonexistent. For instance, the viewbook should include a strong “call to action” to visit and apply for admission. Instead, there is no information about campus visit options or a mechanism to arrange a visit. The viewbook does not include an application or tell the reader how to acquire one. It does, however, have an entire page dedicated to “admissions categories.” Why would students care or need this information? Their admissions category is an administrative labeling process that should be invisible to them.

Other than communications generated by Continuing Education and Workforce and Community Development, there is minimal audience segmentation. The college simply does not have an adequate arsenal of publications for credit recruitment and marketing. There is no road piece other than the viewbook, no fulfillment piece, no search piece, no parent’s piece, no minority student piece, etc. Furthermore, none of the existing publications other than the catalog and schedule of courses are available in an electronic format. The absence of electronic communications combined with the current practice of inquiry follow-up speaks to an inadequate delivery system of marketing and recruitment publications. A robust delivery system is illustrated in the communication plans in this report.

The Web

The college's decision to create an entirely new Web presence that is marketing-oriented and audience-driven is commendable. Recommendations made by Ervin Marketing Creative Communications, Inc. are consistent with best practices in Web design and the consultant's findings. The formation of a college-wide Web Committee with technical support from IT along with marketing and content expertise from College Communications personnel is a model that is sustainable beyond the initial design by an external firm. The planned acquisition of a content management system to facilitate updates, cascading style sheets, consistent navigation and design, role-based authorization to create content or publish, and a built-in approval process is endorsed by the consultant. It appears that the structure and expertise is in place to have a successful implementation with continuing enhancements.

As you proceed with this project, you are encouraged to explore and adopt best practices from other institutional sites. Look for features that will cause Web visitors to engage with the site, find critical information within "three clicks" or fewer, transact business through the site in combination with Web for Student in the Banner system, create community, and communicate with others. Since the Web has become the primary source through which potential students search for a college and find relevant course offerings, ensure these opportunities are available from the home page—including prominent links to request college information, arrange a visit to a campus, and search for course offerings.

Communication Principles

Regardless of the target student population, you are strongly encouraged to use a multichannel approach. Multichannel means communicating through various media (e.g., mail, e-mail, telephone, person-to-person, Web chat), as well as from multiple authors (e.g., admissions, continuing education, current students, and alumni). All of this communication should be highly personalized using the student's name, and where possible, other relevant pieces of information that are unique to the student.

To reach today's student audience, you must customize communications as much as possible. At a minimum, you should look for targeted groups to provide segmented communications, such as day or evening students, face-to-face or online students, and credit or non-credit students. If possible, segment these larger groups down to a more granular level such as freshmen or transfers who are interested in a particular program or term. Regardless of whether the communication is customized or segmented, it should be focused not only on disseminating information, but also on building a relationship between the institution and the student. It is these relationships that will ultimately influence the student's decision to enroll. Relationships between peers, as well as between faculty and students, are particularly powerful in influencing choice. Leverage these relationships whenever possible and follow any kind of interaction at the relationship level with a "call to action" by asking the student to take some specific action (e.g., apply for admission, visit the campus, sign up for an interview or an appointment with an advisor, register for courses).

The type of communication should change as the student increases interest in the college. When the student's interest tends to be the lowest, at the inquiry level, the

information should be general, very concise, and designed to peak interest. As the student continues a relationship with the institution and his or her interest develops, the content can move from general to more specific and the nature of the content should become more comprehensive.

Whenever possible, include in the communication some “WOW” factor—defined as a communication that is memorable and exceeds the recipient’s expectations. All communication should be permission-based, particularly electronic communication that can be perceived as spam. Always give the student the option to unsubscribe or to otherwise opt for another communication vehicle. Ideally, the communication also should be preference-based—meaning that the type and nature of communication is driven by the student’s pre-disclosed set of preferences. Such preferences may include interest in a major, a method of instructional delivery, a particular instructional site or items related to the student’s educational goal.

Purpose and Objective for Every Contact

Communication for communication sake is never effective. The art of influencing student, donor, or voter choice is not about volume, but more about relevance and having a specific objective for every contact. As you develop communications you are strongly encouraged to have a written objective for each contact. These objectives should state (1) the intended audience, (2) the purpose of the communication, (3) the “call to action”, and (4) the desired outcome. Regarding the latter, the desired outcome should be measurable and if possible, quantifiable. Every type of communication that

you engage in should be tracked for its effectiveness and the degree to which it has met stated objectives.

Communication Plans

Listed below are customized communication plans for St. Louis Community College. You are encouraged to use these as a beginning point, but further refine these plans to meet your needs and align with your recruitment and marketing resources. Much of these communication plans can be managed effectively within the Banner system.

Prospective Student Communication Plan (Credit)

Enrollment Stage	Communication	Audience	Delivery Method	Timeline	Objective	Effectiveness Measure
Inquiry Generation	Student search (NRCCUA, CBSS, PSAT, ACT)	hs sophomores and juniors	E-mail, direct mail	Following each test administration	increase response rate	response rate
	Solicitation to former SLCC students to include the steps to re-enrolling, a course schedule, and an application for admission	stop-outs within the last two years	Mail	Two months prior to semester start	increase inquiry pool	inquiries from this source
	Faculty contact to discuss returning to SLCC	stop-outs who have been out for only one semester	Phone	One month prior to semester start	increase inquiry pool	inquiries from this source
	General information posters and inquiry cards distributed to area high schools, community agencies, businesses, and high traffic areas	general	In person	Ongoing	increase inquiry pool	inquiries from this source
	Generating Internet leads	potential students	High school Web sites, search engines	Ongoing	increase inquiry pool	inquiries from this source
	"Did you know?" SLCC postcards (Highlight one notable SLCC accomplishment or factoid with a "call to action" of visiting the Web to review the online schedule of courses.)	former SLCC students and surrounding community	Mailing to former SLCC students, area students attending other colleges, St. Louis residents who have "some college"	Each semester	increase course registrations	Web visitors to the schedule of courses page
	Advertising	surrounding community	School newspapers, local newspapers, radio, billboards	Ongoing with increased frequency prior to semester starts	increase inquiry pool	inquiries from this source

Enrollment Stage	Communication	Audience	Delivery Method	Timeline	Objective	Effectiveness Measure
	Evening program information sessions	potential evening students	Local newspapers, radio, cable TV, and mail invitation to current prospects	Once per semester	session attendance	number attending
	Career information sessions	general	Local newspapers, radio, cable TV, and mail invitation to current prospects	Once per semester for each academic school	session attendance	number attending
	College planning sessions	High school students and their parents	School newspapers, fliers, and Web sites	Fall and spring	session attendance	number attending
	Transfer information sessions	potential transfers	Local newspapers, radio, cable TV, mail invitation to current prospects and area students attending other colleges	Once per semester	session attendance	number attending
	Financial aid workshop	general	School newspapers, fliers, and Web sites; local newspapers; radio, cable TV, and mail invitation to current prospects	Fall and spring	session attendance	number attending

Enrollment Stage	Communication	Audience	Delivery Method	Timeline	Objective	Effectiveness Measure
	Google and Yahoo ads	all prospective students	Web	Ongoing	increase inquiry pool	inquiries from this source
Inquiry Follow-up	"Did you know?" SLCC postcard series ("Call to action" is come for a visit)	hs sophomores and below	Mail	Quarterly	awareness	number of campus visitors
	Junior brochure (college planning guide)	hs juniors	Mail	Within 24 hours	Increase the number of campus visitors	number of campus visitors
	Fulfillment package (viewbook, application, and course schedule)	hs seniors, nontraditional students	Mail	Within 24 hours	increase the number of applications	number of applications
	E-mail or postcard to schedule an advising appointment and take placement testing	prospective students for the upcoming enrollment period	E-mail or mail	7 days	increase the number of advising appointments	number of advising appointments
	Academic advisor call to schedule an appointment (assumes an advising center model is adopted at SLCC)	prospective students for the upcoming enrollment period	Phone	14 days	increase the number of advising appointments	number of advising appointments
	Information session, workshops, and Webinars invitations	all prospective students	Mail, e-mail, phone	30 days prior to event	increase the number of prospective students attending	number of attendees
Inquiry Cultivation	Information session by target audience (e.g., high school students, transfers, evening students) or by academic area (e.g., health services)	attendees	In person	Ongoing	increase number of applications	number of applications
	Advising session	prospective students with appointments	In person, phone	14 days and rolling	complete a program plan	number of program plans completed
	Joint Admissions & Transfer program brochure	hs seniors	Mail	21 days	increase number of applications	number of applications

Enrollment Stage	Communication	Audience	Delivery Method	Timeline	Objective	Effectiveness Measure
	Employer reimbursement information	Prospects from companies that provide reimbursement funds	Mail, e-mail	14 days	increase number of registrations	number of registrations
	Parent's brochure	parents of prospective hs students	Mail	28 days	increase the number of campus visitors	number of campus visitors
	Academic selling points	all prospective students	E-mail	35 days	increase number of applications	number of applications
	Student call to sell the benefits of attending SLCC	hs seniors	Phone	45 days	increase number of applications	number of applications
	Student call to address motivators and barriers to taking evening courses	potential evening students	Phone	45 days	increase number of applications	number of applications
	Student contact to share the benefits of transferring to SLCC	potential transfer students	E-mail	45 days	increase number of applications	number of applications
	Invitation to participate in Web chat or threaded discussion with current SLCC distance students	potential online learners	Online	45 days	increase number of applications	number of applications
	Postcard to non-registrants indicating "it is not too late to enroll"	non-registrants	Mail	One month prior to semester start	increase number of registrations	number of registrations
Application Completion	Acknowledgement of receipt of application	all applicants	Mail or e-mail	Immediate	increase rate of completed applications	percentage of completed applications
	Missing information checklist	incomplete applicants	Mail, e-mail, portal	Immediate	increase rate of completed applications	percentage of completed applications
	Call for missing information	incomplete applicants	Phone	30 days	increase rate of completed applications	percentage of completed applications

Enrollment Stage	Communication	Audience	Delivery Method	Timeline	Objective	Effectiveness Measure
	Missing information checklist	incomplete applicants	Mail, e-mail, portal	60 days	increase rate of completed applications	percentage of completed applications
	Notification of admission decision	complete applicants	Mail	24 hours	increase rate of completed applications	percentage of completed applications
Admit Conversion	Chancellor's congratulation letter	all admits	Mail	7 days	increase yield	yield rates
	Financial aid/scholarship brochure	all admits	Mail	September/January	affordability of SLCC	amount of unmet need and loan
	Financial planning call	all admits	Phone	28 days	affordability of SLCC	number of financial aid applications received
	Parent-to-parent phone-a-thon	top hs admits	Phone	November/March	increase yield	yield rates
	Orientation invitation	all admits	Mail, e-mail, phone	30 days prior to the event	student engagement	number attending orientation
	Orientation	all admits	In person	One month prior to semester start	student engagement	satisfaction with orientation
	Open registration invitation	non-registered admits	Mail, e-mail, phone	15 days prior to the event	student engagement	number attending open registration
	Open registration	non-registered admits	In person	Semester start	register for classes	number of registered students

Prospective Student Communication Plan (Non-credit)

Enrollment Stage	Communication	Audience	Delivery Method	Timeline	Objective	Effectiveness Measure
Registration Generation	Solicitation to former non-credit SLCC students to include the steps to enrolling, a listing of offerings similar to what they have taken in the past, and a course schedule	stop-outs within the last two years	Mail	Three months prior to semester start	increase course registrations	number of registrations
	A postcard series to former non-credit SLCC students featuring NEW upcoming offerings	stop-outs within the last two years	Mail	Two months prior to semester start	increase course registrations	number of registrations
	Mail Continuing Education schedule of courses to residents of the St. Louis MSA who have "some college"	surrounding community	Mailing to former SLCC students, area students attending other colleges, St. Louis residents who have "some college," and placement in commercial racks	One month prior to semester start	increase course registrations	number of registrations
	Google and Yahoo ads	all prospective students	Web	Ongoing	increase course registrations	number of registrations
	Advertisements	all prospective students	Newspaper, radio, industry publications, community Web sites and publications	Ongoing	increase course registrations	number of registrations
	Video demos of course offerings	all prospective students	Web	Ongoing	increase course registrations	number of registrations

Enrollment Stage	Communication	Audience	Delivery Method	Timeline	Objective	Effectiveness Measure
	Wednesday Webinars showcasing offerings with a one-hour preview	all prospective students	Web	Ongoing	increase course registrations	number of registrations
	Portal postings of course offerings based on preferences established by the student	all prospective students	Web	Ongoing	increase course registrations	number of registrations
	E-mail campaigns based on a student's area of interest	all prospective students	E-mail	Quarterly	increase course registrations	number of registrations
	Faculty lecture series to community agencies and organizations	all prospective students	In person	Ongoing	increase course registrations	number of registrations

Current Student Communication Plan

Enrollment Stage	Communication	Audience	Delivery Method	Timeline	Objective	Effectiveness Measure
Continued Enrollment	Postcard announcement regarding priority registration and meeting with advisors	non-graduating SLCC students	Mail	October/ March	register for classes	number of registered students
	Banners and fliers advertising priority registration	SLCC students	Display	October/ March	register for classes	number of registered students
	Ad in school paper advertising priority registration	SLCC students	Newspaper	October/ March	register for classes	number of registered students
	Web banner promoting priority registration with link to registration system (Though priority registration does not currently exist, it should be considered.)	SLCC students	E-mail, Web	October/ March	register for classes	number of registered students
	Reminder to register for classes before leaving for the semester	non-registrants	E-mail, automated phone message, Web posting	December/ April	register for classes	number of registered students
	Campaign encouraging eligible students to use financial aid funds for Summer I classes	SLCC students with remaining financial aid eligibility	Mail	April	register for Summer I classes	number of registered students
	Postcard encouraging students enrolled in the prior academic year to register early in the new year or summer to secure the best selection of classes	non-registrants	Mail	Early January/June	register for classes	number of registered students

Other Constituent Groups

Audience	Communication	Call to Action	Delivery Method	Timeline	Effectiveness Measure
Parents of Prospective Students	List creation (schools for their son or daughter to consider)	Have student inquire	Mail, phone, college nights, information sessions	Student's hs sophomore/ junior year	Number of inquiries
	Invitation to visit	Visit the campus	Mail, phone	Student's hs junior/senior year	Number of campus visitors
	Parents brochure focusing on affordability, cost savings, academic quality, success of graduates, ease of transfer, and campus safety	Encourage the student to apply	Mail	Student's hs senior year	Number of applicants
	The final decision	Confirm intent to enroll	Phone, open houses, parent portal	Prior to May 1 st of the student's hs senior year	Number of enrollment deposits
Guidance Counselors	Awareness campaign	Identify SLCC with new brand identity	Branding campaign brochure, high school visits, counselor luncheons, counselor newsletter, counselor portal, promotional giveaways	Starting September 2007 and ongoing	Perceptions of SLCC and student referrals
Alumni	Awareness campaign	Identify SLCC with new brand identity	Branding campaign brochure, alumni magazine, local and campus events, letter from president of the Alumni Association, alumni portal, promotional giveaways	Starting with Alumni Weekend and ongoing	Perceptions of SLCC, student referrals, and donations
Donors	Awareness campaign	Identify SLCC with new brand identity	Local and campus events, branding campaign brochure, meetings with the president and development officers	Starting with launch of capital campaign, if not sooner	Perceptions of SLCC and donations

Audience	Communication	Call to Action	Delivery Method	Timeline	Effectiveness Measure
Legislators	Awareness campaign	Identify SLCC with new brand identity	Local and campus events, branding campaign brochure, meetings with the chancellor and legislative staff	Starting with launch of capital campaign, if not sooner	Perceptions of SLCC and political support
General Public	Awareness campaign	Identify SLCC with new brand identity	See promotional activities	See promotional activities	Perceptions of SLCC and voter support

Knowing What Works

To maximize return on investment (ROI), you have to know what works and what does not. Intuition and anecdotal experience are important but are limiting and must be complemented with data analysis. The ability to make data-based decisions is dependent, in part, upon fully utilizing the college's integrated information system—SunGuard SCT Banner. This cannot occur without highly skilled staff in IT and the functional areas, a commitment to data integrity at every level within the organization, and the right research questions. As you implement branding strategies, predetermine what data are critical to inform tactical as well as strategic decisions. Focus on actionable intelligence (information applied to action) that reveals necessary adjustments to strategies that can be made “on the fly”—in order to improve performance or affect outcomes. Identify key metrics that can be incorporated into standard reports.

Also, find three to five research questions that will guide strategy. Some suggested research questions for St. Louis Community College include the following:

- ◆ Does each recruitment or marketing activity have an objective, and is the objective achieved? As illustrated in the communication plans in this report, objectives usually relate to moving the prospect to the next level in the enrollment funnel (e.g., number of inquiries, number who apply, number who deposit, number who enroll). Objectives also may include measures not specific to a stage in the enrollment process such as visiting the campus, attending an event, or responding positively to a publication or Web page.

- ◆ What is the cost-benefit ratio of specific recruitment and marketing activities? To illustrate, assume that acquired SAT and ACT test-taker information produced 33% of the new student enrollment. The purchase of student names and mailing service fees consumed 39% of the budget and 8% of the publications budget. This cost-benefit ratio demonstrates a reasonable ROI.
- ◆ When do SLCC prospects typically move to each stage in the enrollment funnel? And which inquiries and applicants are most likely to enroll based on when they transitioned to the various stages in the funnel? For example, are late applicants the most likely to enroll?
- ◆ What recruitment territories are likely to yield the best results, and why?
- ◆ What is the profile of successful SLCC persisters (academic, geographic, demographic, and where available, psychographic)? This information segmented by intended major and campus will tell you where to find more students like those who appear to be a “best fit” with St. Louis Community College. Ideally, such a profile can be used to increase retention and graduation rates.
- ◆ What are the motivators and barriers of the various market segments SLCC enrolls?
- ◆ What image does each market segment have of the college?

This list of research questions is by no means exhaustive, but rather it is intended to answer the major who, why, when, where, and how questions related to new student enrollment and marketing. Much of this data already exists at SLCC. It is simply a matter of extraction and analysis.

Leverage Technology

Technology is an enabler that allows for rapid turnaround, data mining for actionable intelligence, mass customization of communications, effectiveness measures, information available to students 24/7, and so much more. Institutions that leverage technology effectively while developing capacity within their people will have a sustainable competitive advantage.

Like most institutions, SLCC is using only a portion of the capacity of the Banner system. Invest in ongoing Banner training and send key staff to Banner user conferences as well as explore Banner features in new releases. With every staff vacancy, look for opportunities to restructure staff positions to make them more technically oriented. The user departments must increasingly become more self-reliant and may do so only by continuous training and the restructuring of positions.

Currently, the staff in enrollment areas are not as technically proficient as they need to be, particularly in the Banner environment. Your success in recruitment, student marketing, report generation and the like will be severely limited without an increased emphasis on technology skills among your functional staff. This not only requires appropriate resources, but more importantly, a shift in the culture and in staff roles. Employees must begin to think of their work as enabled by technology.

SunGuard SCT Banner is a transactional system, not a relationship or communications tool per se. The Banner recruit module will allow you to manage basic communications; however, audience segmentation, communication customization, and communication flow require data extraction and manipulation and thus, limit the ability to automate multichannel communications. Many Banner campuses have opted to acquire

“bolt-on” CRM (Customer Relationship Management) tools that provide them with the opportunity to learn with every interaction the institution has with a prospective student and therefore create a dynamic profile as you continue to evolve your relationship with the student. Utilizing these dynamic profiles to customize communications with prospective students, you will be providing them with increasingly relevant information for decision making. Relevant information conveyed at the proper time in the decision making process is powerful in terms of influencing choice.

At your request, SEM WORKS will provide you with a high-level overview of higher education CRM systems. If you require a more in-depth analysis of the CRM options, SEM WORKS will work with one of our strategic partners to supply this information at a modest cost to the college.

The Division of Continuing Education has struggled to manage non-credit enrollments with Banner. Of the Banner clients SEM WORKS serves, we have never encountered an effective method of managing non-credit enrollments with Banner. For years, SCT has claimed to be working on a more effective system for non-credit students, but there is no evidence to suggest they are close to a solution. Therefore, you are encouraged to reconsider the Lumens system. However, to keep student data clean between Banner and Lumens, you limit student transactions in Lumens to non-credit only. Any student enrolled in a credit course, even if the student is also enrolled in non-credit courses concurrently, must have a student record in Banner. How you accomplish this should be determined by the institution prior to the acquisition of the Lumens product.

A New Communications Model

Regardless of the software solution you select, the consultant strongly recommends that the communication plans described in this report be centralized at the Cosand Center or some campus-neutral site. Creating the infrastructure to support a comprehensive communications model at three campuses (soon to be four campuses) is cost prohibitive, inefficient, and unnecessary.

Under the proposed model, all outbound communications to prospective students, and perhaps other constituent groups, would be developed and disseminated from a central communications unit. Generally speaking, outbound prospective student communications would consist of:

- ◆ marketing campaigns
- ◆ student search mailings
- ◆ fulfillment to inquiry requests
- ◆ inquiry cultivation communications
- ◆ requests for missing information
- ◆ admission notification
- ◆ admitted student cultivation communications
- ◆ enrollment-related information
- ◆ e-mail campaigns
- ◆ phone campaigns

A cadre of employees, primarily responsible for data entry and outbound mailings, could be created by centralizing all admissions data personnel and consequently, the application process. In our experience, we have encountered

numerous multicampus colleges, state systems, and even entire countries that have centralized application processing combined with decentralized admission decision-making. Most of these central processing units utilize document imaging to make application information and related credentials available to campus-based personnel. Document imaging systems can be costly, so for basic archiving and information sharing, it is recommended that you scan documents, create pdf files of said documents, file them in searchable, student-specific electronic folders, and store them on a password protected area of SLCC's internal network drive for easy access by approved personnel. If you prefer a more robust document imaging system with features such as automated workflow, SCT has a system designed to work with Banner. Another system, NOLIJ, was designed by former Banner developers and is in use on several Banner campuses.

The employees assigned to this unit would be complemented with a bank of student callers to staff an outbound call center. Student calling efforts are among the lowest cost, most effective recruitment strategies at community colleges. Prospective student calls would focus on relationship development contacts, promoting attendance at campus-hosted events, visiting the campus, and applying for admission. At the applicant level, calls would be designed to move individuals through each phase of the enrollment process (e.g., submitting missing application credentials, FAFSA forms, registering for orientation) as well as reduce procrastination and attrition prior to enrollment.

In addition to the existing employees previously mentioned and student callers, there are four new positions needed to implement this centralized communications

model. A **coordinator of data processing and outbound mailings** (1.0 FTE) would oversee the processing staff; hire, train, and evaluate staff; ensure data integrity; optimize usage of Banner and other software tools; monitor the accuracy and timeliness of outbound mailings; mine the prospective student database for segmented communications; and work the communications team and campus personnel to develop the flow of outbound mailings. The student callers would be supervised by the **call center coordinator** (.5 FTE), who would hire, train, and evaluate student callers; pull prospective student call lists; develop calling scripts with appropriate “calls to action”; monitor the quantity and quality of calls; recruit and train faculty callers for phone-a-thons; provide guidance for staff calling efforts; and work the communications team and campus personnel to develop the flow of outbound calls. In addition to these supervisory positions, the college needs a **student marketing coordinator** (1.0 FTE) to develop content for print, advertising, Web, portal, and electronic communications. This individual also would be responsible for related project management along with oversight of design, printing, and media selection. Finally, the institution needs a **research analyst** (1.0 FTE) to measure the effectiveness of communications in terms of the degree to which they achieved stated objectives. Of utmost importance is the measuring of return on investment (ROI) and making related recommendations to the communications team, Web Committee, and campus personnel regarding areas for continuous improvement.

Because these communications efforts would be centralized, it is recommended that this unit report to the newly established position of director of enrollment management.

Antecedents to Success

Regardless of the recommendations selected by senior management for implementation, it is imperative that the institution develop a clearly articulated marketing plan. The plan should be driven by institutional objectives and informed by the internal and external factors that will impact your enrollment and image in the future. Regardless of the format of the plan, you are encouraged to use information from this report, existing strategies, as well as recommendations from college committees. The plan should be built on actionable intelligence (data that can be used to inform decisions and strategies). Progress toward implementation should be monitored on an ongoing basis and staff held accountable to implementation, time schedules, as well as quality. As previously stated, every marketing strategy should have a related metric, and those metrics should be assessed periodically to determine the effectiveness of strategies, particularly as they relate to return on investment.

Even with the best marketing strategies, SLCC's success is directly correlated to your ability to execute. Execution of strategy is highly dependent upon people. People are indeed your greatest asset, and your only sustainable competitive advantage. Investing in them properly to ensure the quality of implementation is fundamental to your objectives as an institution. Said investment should include adequate staffing in critical office areas, a commitment to staff learning, a focus on employee culture, rewards and accountability, as well as incentives for innovation. Your success will be largely determined by your capacity to motivate employees and develop their competencies to their highest levels possible.

In addition to adequate staffing and highly capable personnel, the operational budgets of marketing and enrollment offices must be supported at a level to ensure quality execution. As recommendations from this consulting report are considered as well as those from SLCC committees, create a pool of seed money in the upcoming budget cycle for anticipated initiatives. Without said seed money, the implementation will be delayed or diluted to the point that the institution will not reap the benefits in the upcoming enrollment cycle. Add to operational base budgets as enrollment revenue increases. Build the necessary infrastructure systematically as enrollment grows. Consider allocating a fixed percentage of enrollment increase dollars automatically to the marketing effort. This will allow for a planned approach to marketing rather than the “panic-driven,” last minute allocations of funds to address marketing or recruitment challenges. When funds are allocated near the end of the recruitment cycle, the desired result is seldom achieved.

The consultant is not recommending allocations of new money without thoroughly evaluating the effectiveness of existing strategies, potential for reallocating existing resources, and the thorough examination of process efficiencies, many of which have been alluded to in this report.

Delivering on the Promise

To this point, everything described in this document has been related to the promotional side of the brand equation, which was the charge given to SEM WORKS. However, it must be noted that if the brand and consequently the message do not permeate all that the college does and is, “Expanding Minds, Changing Lives” or any

message you create to reflect the brand identity of SLCC will be “full of sound and fury, signifying nothing” (William Shakespeare). The degree to which the college delivers on the promise inherent in the message will determine the success of the SLCC marketing campaign.

All service areas must deliver on the promise of the brand with every interaction they have with students. If an administrative office is perceived to be inhibiting a student’s ability to excel or does not deliver “Expanding Minds, Changing Lives”-level service, the covenant between the student and the institution is broken and trust is eroded. To personify the brand message, service areas must ensure they have high-performing, knowledgeable, courteous staff; intuitive, efficient processes; high tech and high touch student services; as well as a service philosophy that permeates every aspect of their work.

Equally as important, faculty and the academic leadership should grapple with the meaning of the new brand as it translates to the curriculum, delivery of instruction, and academic advising. Where appropriate, existing bodies of the faculty should look for opportunities to revise curriculum as well as alter teaching styles to empower students to “expand their minds and change their lives.” This may mean more hands-on, active learning; required internships; as well as boundary-spanning activities such as service learning, research assistantships, capstone courses or projects, interdisciplinary programs, or the completion of a thesis.

Whatever the pedagogy, SLCC must find innovative ways to ensure that students leave the institution having been empowered with a thirst for learning and the capacity to

transform knowledge to action. By doing so, you will not only make the brand real, but you will equip students with the tools to “expand their minds” throughout their lives.

Next Steps

Findings and recommendations in this report are intended to generate discussion, questions, and even discomfort. You will receive maximum benefit from the consulting audit if this report is disseminated broadly and opportunities for dialog are created. Ultimately, the leadership team at St. Louis Community College will need to determine which recommendations to accept, reject, or modify, but what you learn from this campus discussion will further guide your decisions.

As you grapple with setting priorities remember, do not try “to eat the whole elephant.” Select a few initiatives that can be accomplished quickly (“the low hanging fruit”) as well as a few long-term initiatives with the highest potential return on investment. Regarding the former, early successes are needed to build momentum and symbolically convey the importance of the change effort. The more complex, prolonged change efforts generally reap the most meaningful results. They tend to focus on changing the culture, shaping the institution’s image, integrating marketing efforts, or improving core operational functions. Once priorities have been established, implementation teams can be identified, and the work can begin.

Final Thoughts

In the Jim Collins book, *Good to Great*, the author describes a common phenomenon among companies that is equally as prevalent among colleges and

universities. Collins calls it “the flywheel”—the belief that one dramatic strategy or effort transforms an organization from good to great. You are discouraged from searching for the “quick fix” that will propel SLCC to a new market position. Unfortunately, there is no single defining action or strategy significant enough to turn the giant flywheel—to yield dramatic results that are sustainable over time.

It will be the cumulative effect of your efforts that will pave the path to success. It will not be the strategies per se that will get you there but rather your ability to execute better than your competitors. Indeed, every strategy currently in place at SLCC or recommended in this report can be replicated. There is no sustainable competitive advantage in a strategy. SLCC will ultimately be successful in achieving its bold aspirations by fostering a singular focus on improving the capacity to execute.

Appendix A: St. Louis County Population Characteristics 2000

Subject	Number	Percent
Total population	1,016,315	100.0
SEX AND AGE		
Male	481,371	47.4
Female	534,944	52.6
Under 5 years	63,851	6.3
5 to 9 years	72,440	7.1
10 to 14 years	75,093	7.4
15 to 19 years	70,898	7.0
20 to 24 years	57,773	5.7
25 to 34 years	128,486	12.6
35 to 44 years	166,048	16.3
45 to 54 years	145,894	14.4
55 to 59 years	51,811	5.1
60 to 64 years	40,759	4.0
65 to 74 years	73,663	7.2
75 to 84 years	51,176	5.0
85 years and over	18,423	1.8
Median age (years)	37.5	(X)
18 years and over	760,324	74.8
Male	350,806	34.5
Female	409,518	40.3
21 years and over	722,371	71.1
62 years and over	166,674	16.4

Subject	Number	Percent
65 years and over	143,262	14.1
Male	56,634	5.6
Female	86,628	8.5
RACE		
One race	1,003,485	98.7
White	780,830	76.8
Black or African American	193,306	19.0
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,717	0.2
Asian	22,606	2.2
Asian Indian	6,197	0.6
Chinese	6,875	0.7
Filipino	2,276	0.2
Japanese	1,137	0.1
Korean	2,348	0.2
Vietnamese	1,557	0.2
Other Asian ¹	2,216	0.2
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	251	0.0
Native Hawaiian	56	0.0
Guamanian or Chamorro	36	0.0
Samoan	74	0.0
Other Pacific Islander ²	85	0.0
Some other race	4,775	0.5
Two or more races	12,830	1.3
<i>Race alone or in combination with one or more other races ³</i>		
White	791,139	77.8
Black or African American	198,695	19.6
American Indian and Alaska Native	5,259	0.5

Subject	Number	Percent
Asian	26,261	2.6
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1,009	0.1
Some other race	7,777	0.8
HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
Total population	1,016,315	100.0
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	14,577	1.4
Mexican	7,309	0.7
Puerto Rican	1,300	0.1
Cuban	606	0.1
Other Hispanic or Latino	5,362	0.5
Not Hispanic or Latino	1,001,738	98.6
White alone	772,041	76.0

Appendix B: St. Louis County Population Characteristics 2005

General Demographic Characteristics: 2005	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total population	985,393	*****
SEX AND AGE		
Male	470,226	+/-457
Female	515,167	+/-457
Under 5 years	60,538	+/-204
5 to 9 years	62,526	+/-3,408
10 to 14 years	67,030	+/-3,415
15 to 19 years	69,002	+/-591
20 to 24 years	62,041	+/-521
25 to 34 years	108,780	+/-1,064
35 to 44 years	146,242	+/-921
45 to 54 years	160,645	+/-469
55 to 59 years	66,384	+/-2,954
60 to 64 years	50,497	+/-2,718
65 to 74 years	68,579	+/-543
75 to 84 years	47,616	+/-1,576
85 years and over	15,513	+/-1,592
Median age (years)	39.6	+/-0.3
18 years and over	752,150	+/-147
21 years and over	714,164	+/-2,146
62 years and over	163,306	+/-2,794
65 years and over	131,708	+/-834
18 years and over	752,150	+/-147
Male	351,530	+/-253
Female	400,620	+/-191

General Demographic Characteristics: 2005	Estimate	Margin of Error
65 years and over	131,708	+/-834
Male	55,727	+/-470
Female	75,981	+/-570
RACE		
One race	975,360	+/-2,431
Two or more races	10,033	+/-2,431
Total population	985,393	*****
One race	975,360	+/-2,431
White	726,266	+/-2,109
Black or African American	211,576	+/-2,450
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,827	+/-611
Cherokee tribal grouping	N	N
Chippewa tribal grouping	N	N
Navajo tribal grouping	N	N
Sioux tribal grouping	N	N
Asian	29,709	+/-1,095
Asian Indian	7,544	+/-1,931
Chinese	9,093	+/-2,159
Filipino	4,130	+/-1,583
Japanese	1,883	+/-1,292
Korean	2,039	+/-1,064
Vietnamese	2,775	+/-1,443
Other Asian	2,245	+/-973
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	127	+/-150
Native Hawaiian	N	N
Guamanian or Chamorro	N	N

General Demographic Characteristics: 2005	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>Margin of Error</u>
Samoan	N	N
Other Pacific Islander	N	N
Some other race	5,855	+/-1,829
Two or more races	10,033	+/-2,431
White and Black or African American	3,847	+/-1,687
White and American Indian and Alaska Native	1,856	+/-643
White and Asian	1,879	+/-1,089
Black or African American and American Indian and Alaska Native	669	+/-482
<i>Race alone or in combination with one or more other races</i>		
Total population	985,393	*****
White	735,164	+/-3,346
Black or African American	217,200	+/-1,315
American Indian and Alaska Native	5,110	+/-827
Asian	32,156	+/-690
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	N	N
Some other race	6,529	+/-1,905
HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
Total population	985,393	*****
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	17,051	*****
Mexican	10,324	+/-1,907
Puerto Rican	1,166	+/-755
Cuban	275	+/-320
Other Hispanic or Latino	5,286	+/-1,483
Not Hispanic or Latino	968,342	*****
White alone	716,084	+/-627
Black or African American alone	209,999	+/-1,969
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1,732	+/-591

General Demographic Characteristics: 2005	Estimate	Margin of Error
Asian alone	29,655	+/-1,094
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	127	+/-150
Some other race alone	1,648	+/-900
Two or more races	9,097	+/-2,351
Two races including Some other race	36	+/-60
Two races excluding Some other race, and Three or more races	9,061	+/-2,357