



Questions to ask when defining your brand

As you begin to define your student organization brand and marketing strategy, consider the questions below. Always keep in mind your primary audience, their needs, and what content you would like them to obtain from your website, social media, and overall organization presence.

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

Who do you want to interact with your organization? Who are you targeting?

Define the consumer you would like to target and be specific. (hint: "students" is not specific - define class year(s), whether they are engaged on campus, what their major might be, where they hang out, what clubs are they involved in, where do they get their information about events and activities, are they even students yet or will they be? etc.)

SECONDARY AUDIENCE

Who else would you like to interact with your organization?

Don't forget to include this population when you define your strategy. Though a lot of your content might focus on your primary audience, who do you want to make a conscious effort to include - even if it is on a less frequent basis.

PERIPHERIAL AUDIENCES

Who else might/will engage with your content?

Remember, other vested parties may view or seek out your content. Examples may include faculty, staff, the office of the President, alumni, residents of Troy, local newspapers, national news outlets, global consortiums. Be aware that when you share information and content, you are sharing with an audience beyond your primary and secondary target audiences. Beware of others viewing your content and how such content might be interpreted and used.

UNIQUENESS

Why should people follow you or view your website? What makes you different and unique? What can they get from you that others aren't already providing?

It is crucial to remember that in order to successfully engage an audience you must differentiate yourself from the crowd and provide something that is not currently offered to the greater community. Remember to consider the main active platforms already engaging the RPI community - in what ways can you work with them and what makes you unique.

COLLABORATION

In what ways can you collaborate with others who have identified their brand and strategy at RPI? How can you work together towards a bigger goal? Also consider how you can work with other established groups and organizations within your field/interest or higher education as a whole.

Remember to build face-to-face relationships with those managing active brands throughout the university. If you're trying to boost attendance at an event, it's easier to ask for help from someone you know personally than it is to blindly ask for help from a Twitter account. However, don't be afraid to reach out to others who are active in the global community - follow and interact using global hashtags and reach out to those who are doing things you aspire to and ask them how they got to where they are.

OUTCOMES

What do you want your ideal audience to do with the content you share?

Think about the ways in which you would like the actions of your primary and secondary audiences to change. Do you want them to attend more events or join a committee? Is the primary audience current club members, if so do you want the club members to do something or use the site for a specific purpose?

CONTENT STRATEGY

Based on your primary and secondary audience, what is types of content will you be promoting? What information do you want those viewing your platforms to obtain?

Think about types of messages. Do you want viewers to know about your events? If so, events should be pushed out on your social media channels and located on your main webpage, or at least very easy to find. Do you want viewers to know how to get involved? Include contact information on each page. Keep hoops a viewer needs to jump through to a minimum – minimize clicks and clutter.

SECONDARY MESSAGES

Will be other elements that will engage your audience in addition to your primary message?

Beyond your primary message, what else does your audience care about? What can you share from others when there is a lack of information coming out of your organization to keep your audience engaged and your page active?

IMAGE/TONE

What kind of image do you want the your organization to have?

Describe your image/tone the same way you'd describe a person - upbeat, professional, enthusiastic, somber, straight forward, silly, etc. Define the tone of the content you share. Does the tone change depending on the season or depending on whether it is aimed at your primary or secondary audience?

PLATFORMS

What platforms will be most effective in helping you distribute your message?

Remember to consider your audience when you decide how and where to focus your promotional activities. Use those platforms that a reputable and utilized by the largest segment of your audience.

RESPONSE & INTERACTION

How will your brand engage with others who would like to engage with you?

Do you allow comments on your website or social media platforms? If someone posts information or a comment on your page, do you respond? Who do you respond to and why? Do you respond to anonymous comments? How will responding to anonymous comments help or hurt your brand?

Revisit these questions often as you develop your initial strategy and occasionally each semester to make sure you are staying true to your goals. Use analytics to determine whether or not your current strategy is working and then make any necessary adjustments while remaining true to your brand.



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