



June 30, 2011

## Educational Support and Administrative Review

University Communications  
Fiveyear Report ending 2011

Mr. Josh Woods  
Director

## 1. Overview of Department

### 1.1 Brief overview of department/area

The Office of University Communications serves the University of North Alabama community by providing public relations, marketing and advertising services. The in-house staff operates as an in-house ad agency, providing communication strategies and media relations supported by professionally written, photographed and designed print and online pieces.

### 1.2 Mission statement for the department/area

The mission of the Office of University Communications is to communicate UNA's history – past, present and future by providing a coherent, cohesive positive image of the university through marketing and media relations.

### 1.3 Goals and objectives of the department/area

Since October 2008, many of the goals and objectives for the Office of University Communications have centered on building a program. Prior to that time, the university had

reporting to the director of university communications. A videographer will be added to the staff this fall, and he or she will also report to the director of university communications.

### 1.5 Brief description of the national status of the department/area (including emerging issues and trends)

The model upon which the Office of University Communications is based is one that makes it the hub of all university marketing, advertising and public relations. This has been a common one nationally since at least the 1990s. Most universities now include an office very similar or identical to ours, and many have even made this office a vice presidential division of the university. Professionals commonly employed in university communications offices include graphic designers, photographers, videographers, copywriters, media relations coordinators, traffic coordinators, Web managers and Web developers.

## 2. Department/Area Evaluation

### 2.1 Description of the means of assessment of department/area goals. [Mean of assessing outcomes should be based on typical and/or accepted assessment measures with the department/area.]

The assessment of several of our goals requires only a simple comparison of the structure, mission, operations and products of our office from its inception in October 2008 to now. Other goals have been assessed through a continuous monitoring of the news media through careful attention to a marketing plan developed in 2008.

### 2.2 Summary of the results of the assessment(s):

The Office of Publications and Office of University Relations successfully merged to create the Office of University Communications and now operate extremely well as a singular team.

Where the Office of University Relations functioned solely to represent the university through the news media and the Office of Publications functioned to create university print materials of all kinds, the two teams together, as the Office of University Communications, now successfully operate behind the mission of communicating a coherent, cohesive positive image of the university through marketing and media relations.

With a new office mission, the Office of University Communications evaluated the types of jobs previously done by the offices of publications and university relations and flagged many that did not support our new mission. For example, flyers, banquet programs and invitation cards and so on. The communications staff worked with departments throughout campus to ensure they found efficient alternative ways of producing these materials.

Utilizing a student from the Department of Computer Information Systems, we developed an organized system that numbers each job by department code, marks deadlines and progress status on each job, archives completed jobs and deadlines, flags rush jobs, and holds in a queue all jobs without sufficient information from the client to begin production.

In addition to implementing this new online system, we began attaching offprints to each proof, thereby making clients responsible for each detail of the final product. A full -

## 2.4 Appropriate documentation to support the assessment of the departmental/area goals

The following Web sites support accomplishment of the goal for a new marketing university Web site, with consistency throughout all its pages, and the incorporation of social media into the university's marketing plan:

<http://www.una.edu/>

<http://www.facebook.com/northalabama>

lighting equipment. Upon adding a videographer to our staff this fall, additional equipment will include a professional grade video camera, a variety of camera accessories and *FinalCut* or comparable editing software.

### 3.2 Space

The Office of University Communications is located on the ground level of Rogers Hall, which offers adequate space for general office operations. However, we do lack a high ceiling studio space for professional photo and video shoots. Even a modest 14X14 room would work well for this space, provided it has a 10-foot ceiling or higher, which is a lighting requisite for any professional studio.

### 3.3 Staff

Current positions in the Office of University Communications include a director, administrative assistant, photographer, Web communications manager, creative director and a graphic designer. Each of these positions is extremely important, and the videographer being added this fall will be a tremendous asset. Other positions needed for this office to advance with a growing UNA include a Web developer, a media relations coordinator and an additional graphic designer.

### 3.4 Other

Since its inception in 2008, the Office of University Communications has grown, and continues to grow, with the adoption of a new mission, the addition of a Web communications manager in 2008 and the addition of a videographer this fall. However, this office still operates strictly from the annual budgets provided for the former Office of Publications and Office of University Relations. Those budgets were created on the basis of specific needs to those

N/A

## 6. Vision and Plans for the Future of the Area

The vision of the Office of University Communications is to become a nationally recognized and respected team of communications professionals. As we grow and advance toward that vision, we are currently working to accomplish the following goals:

- The addition of video production as one of the professional services offered in our office
- The implementation of a Web content management system to create a more streamlined, efficient approach to updating pages throughout the university Web site
- The development of a variety of Web-based marketing tools, such as iPhone apps, online viewbooks and so on
- The creation, development and execution of an aggressive, scalable campaign to market the entire university from admissions to alumni to academics to athletics to student life – as a culture of continuous building and progress
- The creation of an advertising budget, enabling the university to aggressively market itself locally, regionally and nationally as a first choice university

## 7. Unit Recommendations

### 7.1

While the success of some of our goals will require actions from the top leadership levels, most of our goals will be accomplished through our current progress.

### 7.2

The creation of a university advertising budget, enabling us to aggressively market UNA as a first choice university

The addition of a modest studio space for professional photo and video production

**UNA Media Plan**  
2008-09





**UNA Media Plan  
2009-10**

The following pages outline the media plan and budget the UNA communications staff has prepared for the coming year.

## **Television**

From Dec. 26, 2008, through February, UNA ran a \$75,000 television campaign on four prominent Alabama networks, resulting in 759 total commercial spots over a nine-week period. These commercials were placed by Vimardi Media in Birmingham, which increased our buying power by well over 100 percent.

three-month period as opposed to only eight or nine weeks. This would require \$25,000 more than UNA spent on television advertising in the first quarter.

The television campaign budget is provided below in as much detail as possible before Vimardi Media begins negotiations with the network affiliates. Production costs are not included, as those costs have already been allotted for the fourth-quarter campaign.

Service fee to Vimardi Media	\$8,800
Advertising fees to four Huntsville and Birmingham networks	\$91,200

**Print Ads**

In the past year, UNA has placed a number of print ads in local and statewide media for the purposes of imaging and student recruitment. While some of these have been one-time placements, most recur on an annual basis.

The budget below reflects all recurring print ads purchased in the past year, plus a couple we declined but wish to purchase in the

## **Event Promotions**

Throughout the year each year, several departments across campus like to promote UNA events through paid advertising in some of our local media. While the ads are always developed in the communications office, purchasing requests for the ads are submitted by various offices, and

## **Facebook**

This past spring, UNA has had a significant presence on Facebook in two ways. First, we have had, as of late May, nearly 3,000 people sign up as members of the UNA Facebook fan club. As members, each of these individuals receives daily news updates, photos, videos and other materials from UNA via their Facebook accounts.

In the coming year, we wish to increase the membership number for our Facebook fan club, as that club has become a very strategic and useful tool for communicating daily news and other information about UNA. To do this, we wish to advertise the fan club through pay-per-click ads on Facebook, targeting Facebook users throughout Alabama plus key areas of Tennessee and Mississippi. These ads would not only drive up the number of people receiving daily news and information about UNA; for those not signing up as members of our Facebook fan club, the

UNA more top-of-mind.

These ads would cost, on average, between 50 and 70 cents per click. The campaign would be managed to run during specific dates, or to target specific demographics, or to change the ad design and call to action from time to time.

Facebook advertising     \$3,000

## **Contingency**

While most UNA advertising for 2009-10 is being scheduled in advance, some promotional advertising cannot be planned as easily. Opportunities are occasionally presented unexpectedly, and we must budget for such opportunities. A contingency line item within the advertising budget would prepare us for these occasional unplanned advertising opportunities.

In addition, it would better prepare us to handle event-promotion advertising through this budget, as we would be equipped to pay media without waiting on a budget transfer from the event-sponsoring department.

\$20,900.80\*

Television	Service fee to Vimardi Media	\$8,800
	Advertising fees to four Huntsville and Birmingham networks	\$91,200
Print ads	Birmingham Magazine Education edition	\$3,050