

MARKETING PLANNING MEETING
MARCH 22, 2006

On March 22, 2006 the Marketing Committee met for an afternoon planning session, concentrating on the Marketing budget.

Those present were: Gregg Allinson, Gary Burbage, Clay Carter, Donna Dunn, Betty Gray, Shields Harvey, Judy Jennette, Mandy Jones, Tracey Johnson, Sandy McFadden, Marcia Norwood, Penny Sermons, Becky Spain, Lentz Stowe, Tony Taylor, and Tricia Woolard

Those unable to attend were: Dixon Boyles and Lou Stout.

I. Welcome/Review agenda/Make additions or deletions

Judy opened the meeting by welcoming the committee members and introducing Shields Harvey, a BCCC Trustee. After the welcome, Judy provided informational handouts to the committee members who had not printed their email attachments.

II. Brief review of FY '05-'06 budget - \$65,000/Discuss problems and issues

Judy reported that in fiscal year 2005-2006, the Marketing committee had a budget of \$65,000.00 Actual dollars spent were \$70,000.00. Judy stated that the budget excess had come from some unanticipated marketing buys, one being billboards and the other being movie theater ads. Judy stated that another reason for the over run was that Continuing Education has the authority to spend Marketing dollars and that when they do, they don't send copies of the requisitions to the PR/Marketing Department. All agreed that there needs to be better communication between the two areas and that simple changes in procedures would eliminate the problem next year.

III. Outlook for next year's budget - \$50,000 (projected by Phillip Price)

Based on lower enrollment figures, and thereby lower state funding for BCCC, the projected marketing budget for fiscal year 2006-2007 is \$50,000.00. This is \$15,000 less than the amount budgeted for FY 05-06.

Gregg Allinson made the point that when enrollment is down, MORE money should be put into marketing. Gregg felt that additional advertising should increase enrollment. Judy stated that it was unlikely there would be any change in Phillip's financial forecast.

IV. Who are our customers? Review current enrollment (1,424 students-fall)

Judy provided BCCC enrollment data.

There were 1,424 students enrolled for fall, 2005. This is the second year in row that enrollment has declined.

The student body is comprised of:

Women	– 67%
Black	– 34%
Age 18-24	– 37%
Age 25-49	– 43%
Hispanic	– 2%
Evening	– 16%
Beaufort County residents	– 67%

The change in the high school calendar (starting later than previous years) has negatively impacted high school student enrollment in Huskins and Dual Enrollment classes.

V. Who are our potential customers? Review planning assumptions data.

Potential students to attend BCCC include: high school students, family breadwinners, dislocated workers, and bored or unsatisfied workers.

The planning assumptions indicate that growth for Beaufort County will remain low.

The planning assumptions indicate that growth for Beaufort County will occur within senior and Hispanic populations.

Gary reported that Northside High School is the largest feeder school to BCCC.

VI. What are we trying to accomplish with our advertising dollars at BCCC?

A. Maintain enrollment numbers.

The question was raised as to how Mount Olive College is affecting BCCC enrollment numbers. All agreed that it's really too soon to tell but everybody seemed to think it would compliment more than it would compete. Certainly, marketing dollars should be focused on maintaining and growing the current enrollment.

B. Enhance programs that are struggling for enrollment.

Focus group data has indicated that the college as a whole needs to be highlighted, not so much one area.

C. Increase enrollment numbers.

Strive to reach higher enrollment numbers than last year. Budget is tied to enrollment. Hence, we must regard increased enrollment as increased funding.

D. Create support of the BCCC Foundation.

Much of BCCC's free publicity is used to promote scholarship donations and the recipients of those donations. A new Foundation brochure is being prepared.

E. Enhance the image of the college throughout the community

1. "Feel good" publicity
(Relay for Life, Alzheimer's Walk, Spelling Bee, festivals, etc.)

In general, everyone agreed that “feel good” publicity was nice but did little to encourage students to enroll. Suggestions were made to look for ways BCCC could participate in these events without spending college dollars. All agreed that this funding should be cut from next year’s budget.

2. Building community connections
(Plymouth, Washington County support, Chamber advertising)

Memberships in the various Chambers were deemed to be worthwhile and should be continued. Advertising in their publications is not as valuable and should be cut from the budget.

3. Special events
(40th anniversary celebration – 12/7/67 – 12/7/07)

Judy felt that this could be planned in the upcoming fiscal year (06-07) and budgeted in the next (07-08). All agreed that this would be appropriate

The question was raised as to how we determine if a method of advertising gets a good return for the marketing dollar. The media use survey provides some information on this. Gary felt that direct mailings and advertisements in the Washington Daily News provide a good return on the investment. Gary based his conclusion on responses that he gets after the information is disseminated.

Also, there are surveys sent to non-returning students which committee members could follow up with to determine how to encourage these students to return. Maybe include a question on the survey asking for suggestions on how to encourage the student to return to BCCC.

Gary stated that direct mail was his best means of advertising. He felt that it could be used in the spring to suggest to parents that BCCC is a way to save money. Conversely, direct mail could suggest to students that BCCC is a way to make money. All agreed that more should be done with direct mail in the upcoming year.

The suggestion was made to coordinate ads on TV and radio to run when a direct mailing is going out. Use TV, radio and direct mailings to reinforce each other and to present the idea that BCCC is affordable and convenient. Judy suggested that TV and radio might be too expensive to coordinate with direct mail, but that she and Betty could certainly align it with newspaper coverage.

A few years ago, there was much discussion as to which community college, (Beaufort or Martin) should serve Washington County. Significant marketing funds were used to strengthen BCCC’s presence in Washington County. Since then, the state has decided that both Beaufort and Martin Community Colleges will continue to service Washington County. Advertising related to this issue can be eliminated. However, all agreed that BCCC must maintain a media presence on some level throughout its service area.

The recommendation was made to continue membership with the Belhaven, Washington, and Plymouth, Chambers of Commerce. However, BCCC should consider joining at a less expensive membership rate for each.

Mandy made the suggestion that all employees be willing and available to speak about BCCC during off-campus meetings they attend.

Gregg suggested that we review the miscellaneous marketing expenses and group them into categories. Then based on last year's expenditures in each category, we should assign an appropriate percentage of the marketing budget to each category. Hence, given the proposed cut in next year's budget, each category would be reduced by 23%. All agreed that this would be a reasonable approach if no new money is allocated to this budget.

The 40th anniversary of BCCC is December 7, 2007. Marketing will be responsible for the promotional materials and expenses.

VII. Review marketing data

Judy showed the four TV ads (2 generated by BCCC, 2 generated by the state) for committee members to see. These were the same ads shown to both of the focus groups. Comments from the focus groups included the need to show the diversity on the BCCC campus as well as the beautiful, well-maintained campus.

Judy also played a TV ad created by Jay Chris for McDowell Technical Community College. The ad, which was program specific (photography), did a good job of creating the look and feel that the BCCC focus groups preferred.

In discussing the creation of a new BCCC ad for TV, the committee considered the possibility of having Jay do the taping rather than WITN. Maybe Jay could shoot the raw footage and BCCC could produce the finished product. Could we do the taping completely by ourselves? Tricia indicated that she has the equipment to edit the raw footage. All agreed that a videographer would have more time and equipment to produce better material from which to work with. All agreed that the suggestion of the focus group – to have a generic commercial for the entire college would be better than having a commercial focused on one or two programs.

In reference to the different slogans presented to the focus groups, "BCCC opens the door to your future" was liked the best. Also consider changing "BCCC works for you!" to "BCCC can work for you!" Judy suggested that a commercial featuring doors opening into various departments on campus would make an eye catching ad. However, it will take time and a new budget cycle to produce it.

Gary suggested that we not rush to change our current slogan since we have so much printed material featuring "BCCC works for you!" All agreed that we could phase out the old material over the next six months, refine the new slogan, and produce ads based on the new material for next year.

Consider during Spring Fling having a contest to generate slogans. Judy suggested that we not lock ourselves into choosing one of these just in case none of them are suitable. All agreed that these entries be merely suggestions.

Once a slogan is selected, BCCC needs to stay with that slogan to promote continuity.

The committee will use focus groups to test the impact of new slogans.

VIII. Responding to the “Media Use Survey” data

\$20,147 was spent in FY '05-'06 for TV ads.

WITN- \$12,450.00, Cox Cable - \$5,897.00, FOX - \$1,800.00

\$12,100 was spent for radio ads.

95.9 in Plymouth - \$4,000.00, WDLX AM - \$200.00, WIKS - \$1,500.00,

WNCT - \$1,500.00, WXNR - \$4,500.00

\$17,335.60 was spent on print ads

Washington Daily News - \$10,442.75, The Roanoke Beacon - \$2,993.85, Beaufort-Hyde News and Down East Magazine - \$3,899.00

\$9,688.00 was sent on other types of advertising

Carolina Business - \$173.00, Phone books – Sprint-\$768.00, Tri-County-\$475.00, Moving On - \$2,450.00, pharmacy bags - \$832.00, movie theater slides - \$1,700.00, billboards - \$2,220.00, banners - \$620.00, high school annuals - \$450.00

Results of the Media Use Survey were reviewed. The Washington Daily News is the primary newspaper the students read. Want ads are read the most. Suggestions for good locations for BCCC ads were: in the job section of the want ads and page 3 (across from the obituaries).

The Bargain Trader is widely read and may need to consider increasing the number of ads placed in it. Maybe even to run a yearly ad. This is a weekly publication and is now on-line.

BCCC students also read the Greenville Daily Reflector. We do not advertise in the Daily Reflector due to a “gentlemen’s agreement” with Pitt CC and ECU. Consider advertising a program that would not be offered at either of these schools. Consider advertising in the county.

Increase the ads in the Washington Daily News. Judy went to explain that over the years WDN has helped BCCC by giving reduced rates and free advertisement and BCCC may want to consider naming something on campus for the Futrells and WDN.

It is possible to place an ad on the BCCC website in different areas.

Look into using a BCCC soundtrack on the phone while people are on hold.

There was a brief discussion about the need to become familiar with current technology (text messaging, instant messaging, etc.) and determine how to use it to advertise the college. Consider having a workshop in the fall on how to use current technology.

Would it be possible to obtain students' cell phone numbers and send college information to them?

The media use survey revealed that some older and younger students listen to the same radio stations.

Country stations did not rank high.

The primary ethnic (African American) music station is popular among BCCC students.

Those over age 25, tend to listen to oldies stations.

With the growing Hispanic population, the suggestion was made to place ads on the Hispanic radio station for ESL courses.

Consider focusing advertisement on the three stations most listened to and ESL ads on the Hispanic station.

Three-fourths of those who responded to the survey have cable TV. CSI and Law and Order are the popular shows. Broadcast shows are more popular. May need to focus ads used on cable to specific shows. Also focus the time the ad runs instead of allowing the station to decide when to run the ad. Local news is watched heavily, especially WITN.

Continue with Mediacom out of Plymouth which is provided at no charge.

Continue with the Roanoke Beacon.

Discontinue placing ads in the Down East magazine.

Continue with the Hyde News.

For the East Carolina Reminder and Pamlico News, send articles to be published, but not purchase ads.

Discontinue advertising in Carolina Business.

Continue with the Sprint and Tri-County phone books.

While it is nice to have the Movin On "slick" publication for career fairs, it is not bringing in many students. Maybe consider producing something in-house. Also considered a piece like Pitt CC's Career Focus and, while it looks good, not sure how much good it does. Will not pursue.

The movie theater slide advertisements will run for a total of 6 months and will not be renewed.

After some discussion it was decided that we should continue using billboards, maybe not as many as before. Other colleges in the area are using billboards. Run ads at registration time, not yearly.

Banners are purchased and available for use.

Continue advertising in high school annuals.

For the summer schedule, the Job Fair was advertised on the cover.

In reference to the promotional items provided (pens, pencils, bags, etc.) there is a supply on hand so the cost to restock should be not as high as the order last year.

There is a need for a stock of professional pictures of the students and campus to have for future use. Uses could include: billboards, the 40th anniversary, catalogue covers, etc. Judy has interviewed photographers and has selected David Clark. For him to be taking pictures one day in the spring and one day in the fall would be \$750.00/day. Prior to him being on campus would need to: 1) let teachers, staff and students know he will be on campus taking pictures, and 2) develop a list of desired pictures to be taken.

Look into setting up a virtual campus tour for the website.

Have release forms signed by students in pictures used on the website and/or billboard

Focus groups will continue to be used to gain feedback on marketing ideas.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.