Clayton State University

Integrated Marketing Plan

2014-2017

Clayton State University cultivates an environment of engaged, experienced-based learning, enriched by active community service, that prepares students of diverse ages and backgrounds to succeed in their lives and careers.

Through a distinctive combination of proven and innovative methods of teaching and learning, Clayton State University will excel in preparing students from many walks of life to meet the challenges of living and working in a dynamic, global society.

Clayton State University is committed to:

- *Active Learning and Student Success*
- *Teaching and Scholarship*
- *Inclusiveness*
- *Ethics and Integrity*
- *Community Engagement*

Introduction

Clayton State University has a clear mission to prepare its students to succeed in their lives and careers by providing them with an engaged learning experience enriched by community service. With a nearly 19% growth in enrollment in the past five years, the University continues to strive to fulfill its mission while outpacing growth projections and graduating nearly 1,000 students a year.

With the number of Georgia high school graduates projected to increase only slightly over the next five years, competition will continue to grow for those students, as well as, those dual enrolled and graduate students. On a positive note, there are 1.1 million residents of Georgia who have some college credit and no degree making this audience prime prospects to entice back to complete their degree.

Projected growth in metro Atlanta continues to be strong. With that growth will come opportunities for our graduates. As a university, not only do we need to continue to prepare our students for success after graduation through engaged experiential learning, but we need to communicate to our prospective students how their education at Clayton State can lead to career growth and success.

It is an exciting time to be at Clayton State University. Numerous critical pieces are in place to frame our vision as we embark on a campus-wide integrated marketing effort. The strategic plan and the facilities master plan are in place to direct and shape the University's forward progress. In addition, baseline market research was conducted in 2010, the brand positioning development project was completed in 2012, and a program assessment of marketing and communications was conducted in 2013. This integrated marketing plan will build upon these outcomes.

The purpose of this marketing plan – to increase *awareness* of the University, to broaden *understanding* of the University, and to enhance *engagement* with the University – will support the University's strategic plan. The goals outlined in this plan are straightforward and address critical areas that require focus if we are to better position ourselves in the higher education marketplace. The marketing plan goals are:

1. Increase external visibility and awareness of Clayton State University
2. Optimize admissions communications
3. Increase stakeholder ownership in University message.
4. Enhance reputation through media relations

Guided by the goals outlined in this plan, the marketing and communications team can incorporate best practices and trends in marketing and advertising campaigns. With assistance from the Marketing Advisory Council, they will work to collaborate with campus units on marketing initiatives to achieve these goals. This plan also provides the template for generating information regarding marketing budget utilization which can be shared across campus.

As the University continues to focus on student success and retention, an integrated approach to marketing will complement enrollment management and fundraising initiatives and assist in generating interest from targeted audiences and geographies. This plan will be administered through the Division of External Relations with guidance from the Marketing Advisory Council to ensure participation and collaboration of all campus departments involved in marketing endeavors.

Challenges and Opportunities

As with every institution, Clayton State University has both opportunities and challenges. The effectiveness by which we are able to capitalize on these opportunities and overcome our challenges will be a critical factor in the future success of this plan and the University.

Affordability is a real challenge for the majority of our students. Last year, nearly 80% of our students demonstrated financial need with more than 60% qualifying for Pell Grants. For many, lack of financial resources is a significant impediment to beginning, continuing, and even completing their journey towards a degree. Even with an increase in private gifts and a growing scholarship program, the needs remain pronounced.

With the groundbreaking of the new science building in the fall of 2013, what was once a challenge has become an opportunity. The increased laboratory space will create great potential for growth in the sciences and some science related majors. Other majors, such as nursing and dental hygiene will remain constrained by the limited specialized lab and clinic space.

Clayton State University has long faced challenges with perception. First, with its historical perception of being a community college as opposed to the comprehensive university it has grown to be. Secondly, with its geographical location south of Atlanta in Clayton County it is impacted by the past struggles of a challenged public school system and a slow to no growth rate in the immediate vicinity. This is interestingly counter to the positive opportunities that come with the University's close proximity to Hartfield Jackson International Airport and in what is seen to be one of the faster growing areas of Atlanta over the next decade.

Educational options abound throughout the greater metropolitan Atlanta region. There is a strong presence of public, private, and for-profit institutions vying to be seen and heard in the market. Because of this, research has shown that our direct competition is not necessarily those institutions in our peer group, but rather larger institutions such as Georgia State University and Kennesaw State University. Not surprisingly, Clayton State is being significantly out-spent by such institutions when it comes to marketing and advertising. While our resources will never be comparable to these institutions, it is imperative that we maximize our impact by being very strategic and mindful of our marketing goals as we allocate budget dollars.

Key Messages

Clayton State University is unique within the USG system and across the higher education marketplace. While other colleges and universities share certain attributes with Clayton State, no other offers the complete set of attributes that are Clayton State: an empowering experience, an inclusive diversity, engaged preparation, all within a supportive community. Communicating these in a sincere, relevant, and distinctive way to our most important target audiences will allow us to achieve our marketing goals.

As an institution, we strive to live out our mission of preparing students of diverse ages and backgrounds to succeed in their lives and careers. Providing our students with practical experience as well as a strong foundation of knowledge allows our students to get jobs, and be successful in those jobs, after graduation.

Empowering Experience

Clayton State University is a place of empowerment. Without question, Clayton State University is a university where students—from all walks of life and from a wide range of life experiences and backgrounds—know they can come and receive an excellent education, develop relevant skills, and position themselves for impressive professional achievements. Students encounter an experience that empowers them to make the most of their potential and achieve their goals in life.

Inclusive Diversity

With more than 75 percent of our students comprised of minority students, race and ethnicity are a big part of the diversity conversation. However, at Clayton State, diversity goes much deeper than that. Age,

prior professional and educational experiences, geographical background, and general life experiences all bring a broader sense of diversity to Clayton State University. It is the very diversity of the people, the interests, and the dreams that bring the community together and give everyone a feeling of inclusion. It is part of the fabric of our University and so is visible in all we do— the classes, the programs, the dozens of multicultural clubs and events, and the atmosphere across campus.

Engaged Preparation
At Clayton State University, the experience is about more than simply informing students and equipping them with the skills to succeed. It is about an engaging, dynamic learning experience and preparation that truly challenges students to develop the habits of mind and depth of understanding in their field of interest, and how their knowledge connects to real-world problems. This is learning that simply cannot be replicated in a classroom.

Supportive Community
All one needs to do is walk the halls and the campus at Clayton State University and the sense of community, of support, and of student-centeredness is impossible to miss. Students and faculty cite this as the first key strength when discussing the learning experience at the University.

Target Audiences
Stakeholders
Our faculty, staff, students and alumni can be our best advocates. It is how these stakeholders talk about the institution and how they relate and communicate with colleagues and constituents that can positively impact the perception and increase the awareness of Clayton State University. With the stakeholder's help, we can inform external audiences that Clayton State is an institution that excels in preparing students from many walks of life to meet the challenges of living and working in a dynamic, global society. Having our University stakeholders engaged and informed is essential to achieving our marketing goals.

Prospective Students
In an effort to more clearly communicate with prospective students, this group has been divided into several subgroups defined as follows. Please note that these descriptions are not intended to concur with admissions or Board of Regents definitions of student types. Rather, these terms will define target market audiences.

- *First-time, full-time freshmen*: graduated from high school with in the past four years
- *Transfer*: transitioning from one college to another with little interim time elapsed
- *Degree completers*: graduated from high school more than four years ago; previously attended college with greater interim time elapsed
- *Dual enrolled*: still enrolled in high school
- *Graduate*: earned a baccalaureate degree; seeking advanced degree; hold advanced degree, making career change necessitating additional master's degree

Target Geography
Also of key importance is a visibility and awareness of Clayton State University from all constituents across our target geographic area. While Clayton State University enrolls students from 31 countries, 30 states, and numerous counties within the State of Georgia, a large majority of our enrollment can be attributed to less than twenty Georgia counties concentrated in the Metropolitan Atlanta area.

Given resources of funds, staffing, and time, the greatest impact will be achieved by saturating a smaller region than to attempt to create a presence in a larger one. By defining our target geographical area as the

greater Metropolitan Atlanta, we can better coordinate media buys, purchases of mailing lists, scheduling of visits, and stewarding of resources to help increase awareness and understanding of and engagement with the University.

Focusing on the greater metropolitan Atlanta area will allow Clayton State University to message to our target audiences in this area as well as the additional audiences of influencers and resource providers.

Marketing Action Plan

Clayton State University seeks to serve more people in the Greater Metropolitan Atlanta area, reposition itself in the marketplace, develop broad external support, and form community partnerships to foster academic outreach and economic development. In order to achieve these objectives, the following marketing goals have been established:

Goal 1: Increase external visibility and awareness of Clayton State University

Action: *Diversify and expand media coverage to reach a broader segment of our target geography – greater metropolitan Atlanta.*

Key Steps:

1. More fully utilize key words on strategic web pages to maximize hits on search engines.
2. Increase media mix to enhance presence in media outside of print making decisions to maximize impact.
3. Create measures to assist with evaluating placement effectiveness.

Action: *Infuse all University media with stories and profiles reinforcing key messages.*

Key Steps:

1. Development profiles and short video clips of faculty & students that encompass the key messages to place strategically throughout University website.
2. Increase strategic use of stories and profiles that reinforce key messages throughout all University publications.

Goal 2: Optimize admissions communications

Action: *Become an industry leader in utilizing social media to attract and matriculate students.*

Key Steps:

1. Current admissions usage of social media tools including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram.
2. Identify opportunities to enhance communications with target audiences.
3. Build communities to engage target audiences in meaningful ways.

Action: *Develop enhanced marketing initiatives for academic programs with significant growth potential.*

Key Steps:

1. Identify one program in each College that meet this criteria.
2. Develop marketing initiative for each program with target specific messaging in target specific media outlets.
3. Create stronger collaboration with admissions and these departments to enhance admissions process for prospective students in these areas.

Action: *Enhance admissions website to reinforce key messages.*

Key Steps:

1. Create virtual campus tour to showcase the vibrant campus life and beauty of the campus, current and new facilities, and faculty and staff perspectives.

2. Develop student testimonials (videos) that incorporate and capture key messages.

Action: *Create a campus information and visitor services center to serve as a central resource of campus-wide information and referrals for internal and external constituents.*

Key Steps:

1. Meet with key stake holders to compile a comprehensive list of needs and wants the center should target.
2. Identify best practices through site visits and research and incorporate into the center.
3. Streamline and provide enhanced campus tours for prospective students of all ages and academic entrance types (freshman, transfer, and graduate students), campus visitors, and applicants for university jobs (upon request).
4. Design self-guided tours that can be accessed through a variety of current and emerging technologies.

Goal 3: Increase stakeholder ownership in University message.

Action: *Involve broader segment of faculty/staff in active marketing of the University.*

Key Steps:

1. Educate faculty and staff in key messages and goals for marketing plan.
2. Encourage active participation in all aspects of plan – profiles, faculty experts, stories, admissions initiatives, etc. by providing concrete manageable opportunities for involvement.
3. Continue to utilize Marketing Advisory Council in all aspects of marketing plan.

Action: Educate students about University key messages to broaden internal awareness and to increase positive word-of-mouth influence.

Key Steps:

1. Create a fun, colorful, visual website (and use Instagram/Vine) to engage and inform students about the University's key messages with a link to share their stories.
2. Identify student groups (such as Resident Advisors, the VPA TRUST Agency, Student Media, etc.) that are positioned to communicate with current and prospective students.
3. Educate students through targeted meetings as well as town hall sessions to instill an understanding of the University's key messages
4. Invite students in leadership positions and representatives of target student audiences to share their classroom and extracurricular experiences

Action: *Create Loyal Laker Program for Alumni acknowledging those graduates who demonstrate their commitment to Clayton State University through connecting (1) making a gift; (2) attending events,* ***AND*** *bragging about their Clayton State experience.*

Key Steps:

1. Involve Alumni Board in developing Loyal Laker Program.
2. Develop marketing plan across all media.
3. Grow alumni programs to increase opportunities for participation in program.

Action: *Continue to grow the Corporate Partners Program.*

Key Steps:

1. Increase membership
2. Integrate University's focus on internships into the program
3. Continue to be flexible to incorporate partner needs into the program whenever possible.

Goal 4: Enhance reputation through media relations
Action: *Strengthen and broaden relationships with media.*

Key Steps:

1. Explore tools that can increase opportunities to match faculty experts with hot topics.
2. Launch enhances redesigned Laker News Room; develop strategy for encouraging regular traffic from key media.
3. Become active in Atlanta organizations (Atlanta Press Club) that allow for casual contact with media to build stronger individual relationships and greater awareness of Clayton State University.

Action: *Build faculty & student pool of potential stories that reinforce key messages.*
Key Steps:

1. Regularly meet with faculty to explore new potential story opportunities (3-5 face to face contacts per week)
2. Each fall, meet individually with new faculty to learn their background, experience research interests, etc.
3. Continue to identify stories and profiles that have the potential for greater media coverage using strengthened relationships with media to increase placement.

Budget and Timeline
Building a market position cannot be accomplished through advertising alone. However, it is important that there be a continued commitment to messaging campaigns for all target audiences. With this in mind, the following timeline and budget have been developed. A four year budget projection summary is included at the end of this section.

FY14
Emphasis for the remainder of FY14 will be placed on optimizing current resources, more fully developing plans for future years, establishing how success will be defined for this plan, and beginning activities which require no additional resources.

One can see by looking at the chart below that, outside of the School of Graduate Studies, the bulk of the University advertising is done through print media. During the remainder of FY14, resources will be reallocated to broaden the spectrum of media used with targeted geography and audiences in mind (see Appendix B). Work will begin on the website to enhance key words on strategic web pages to increase search results.

The marketing and communications team have already begun preparations to kick-off a road show to continue to educate the faculty and staff about the University brand and the role the team can play in assisting the campus community in bringing the brand to life. This road show is scheduled to take place throughout the spring. In conjunction with this road show a job request system will be implemented for graphic design projects to allow for easier, more effective communications regarding project status, needs, and timelines.
The Laker News Room is scheduled to launch this spring with a plan to market aggressively to various media contacts. Goals are being set for weekly faculty contacts and work will continue to expand to identify media worthy stories. Work will begin to develop the Loyal Laker Program for alumni. The Marketing Advisory Council will provide key input as plans are developed for future years. With the addition of the new director of corporate and foundation relations, the goal for FY14 is to double membership in the Corporate Partners Program to 24 while continuing to build on the collaboration opportunities through career services and other aspects of campus life.

The Visitor's Center plan will be developed and conversations will be had with the marketing team, the provost and deans to identify programs with significant growth potential for enhanced marketing initiatives.

FY13 Advertising & Marketing Summary

	Advertising		Other	
University Marketing & Communications	**Print Advertising**	**$50,860**	Marketing	$8,557
			Photography	$25,375
			Videography	$11,280
			Graphic Design	$28,635
			Laker Connection	$21,000
			Total	**$94,847**
School of Graduate Studies	Print Advertising	$27,900	Recruitment Fairs	$3,000
	Billboard	$12,000		
	Television Advertising	$14,000		
	Radio Advertising	$9,400		
	Internet Advertising	$12,400		
	International Advertising	$1,500		
	Veteran Advertising	$500		
	Miscellaneous Advertising	$1,225		
	Total	**$78,925**		
Colleges	**CE Advertising**	**$10,200**		
Continuing Education			Other	$175,971
Academic Outreach		**$12,159**		
MBA Program	**Total**	**$20,000**		
Nursing	**Total**	**$6,000**		
Recruitment & Admissions	**Print Advertising**	**$12,659**	Other	$33,661
Spivey Hall	Print Advertising	$26,795	Print Materials	$23,414
	Radio Advertising & Promotions	$7,500		
	Television Advertising	$2,050		
	Web Advertising	$3,200		
	Total	**$39,545**		
Grand Total		**$220,148**		**$330,893**

<u>FY15</u>

Initiatives started in FY14 such as website key words, stakeholder education opportunities, and the Laker News Room will continue. This year, significant resources will need to be committed to advertising, marketing and recruiting.

Our library of images that reinforce key messages will continue to need updating. Additional funds will need to be spent in videography to bolster key messages on the web. Web and social media tools to enhance recruitment and matriculation (such as a virtual campus tour) will be implemented. With the Visitor's Center up and running, there will be increased on-campus activity. Significant investments will be made in internet advertising as well as television advertising to enhance recruiting efforts and increase

awareness across our target geography. The enhanced advertising initiatives for growth potential programs will launch as will the Loyal Laker Program.

This will be a key year for the Corporate Partners Program as the inaugural partners will have completed their first 2-year membership. The program will be evaluated, benefits added or adjusted and there will be continued plans for growth.

Tools will be actively incorporated to enhance faculty expert placement. The relationship work started in FY14 to strengthen media relations will start to show results with increased media placements.

FY16 and FY17

All programs started in FY14 and FY15 will continue to grow, be evaluated and adjustments made. The Marketing Advisory Council will continue to provide perspective for marketing and advertising decisions. Modest increases in budget will be seen as our alumni base grow. The only significant budget need will be for market research as it will have been 6-7 years since the baseline research was done in 2010.

Budget Projections

	FY13 (actual)	FY14(projected)	FY15	FY16	FY17
Marketing					
Photography	$ 25,375	$ 18,000	$ 20,000	$ 22,000	$ 22,000
Videography	$ 11,280	$ 12,000	$ 18,000	$ 20,000	$ 20,000
Graphic Design	$ 28,635	$ 30,000	$ 30,000	$ 30,000	$ 30,000
University Website*			$ 20,000	$ 20,000	$ 20,000
Social Media**			$ 20,000	$ 20,000	$ 20,000
Media Tools			$ 5,000	$ 7,500	$ 7,500
Promotional Items	$ 5,000	$ 5,000	$ 5,000	$ 5,000	$ 5,000
Publications	$ 21,000	$ 25,000	$ 27,000	$ 29,000	$ 30,000
Subtotal	*$ 91,290*	*$90,000*	*$145,000*	*$153,500*	*$154,500*
Market Research* **				$ 60,000	$ 70,000
Recruiting					
On-Campus Events	$ 3,000	$ 3,000	$ 5,000	$ 7,000	$ 10,000
Off-Campus Events	$ 5,000	$ 5,000	$ 7,000	$ 8,000	$ 9,000
Publications	$ 35,161	$ 37,000	$ 40,000	$ 40,000	$ 40,000
Subtotal	*$ 43,161*	*$ 45,000*	*$ 52,000*	*$ 55,000*	*$ 59,000*
Advertising					
Internet	$ 12,400	$ 15,000	$ 30,000	$ 35,000	$ 40,000
Print	$137,978	$124,000	$100,000	$ 95,000	$ 95,000
Radio	$ 9,400	$ 12,500	$ 15,000	$ 20,000	$ 20,000
Television/Cable	$ 14,000	$ 24,000	$ 35,000	$ 40,000	$ 40,000
Outdoor	$ 12,000	$ 20,000	$ 25,000	$ 30,000	$ 30,000
Advertising Initiatives			$ 40,000	$ 40,000	$ 40,000
Subtotal	*$185,778*	*$195,500*	*$245,000*	*$260,000*	*$265,000*
UNIVERSITY TOTAL	***$320,229***	***$330,500***	***$442,000***	***$528,500***	***$548,500***
Spivey Hall	$ 62,959				
Continuing Education	$175,971				
Athletics	$ 962				
AUXILIARY TOTAL	***$239,892***				

* Virtual Campus Tour

** Social Media Tools for Admissions

*** One-time expenditure spread across two fiscal years. After market research is completed, the annual university marketing budget will be around $480,000.

Appendix A. SWOT Analysis

Strengths ➢ Passionate faculty ➢ 80% of the fulltime faculty with terminal degree ➢ Small classes ➢ Graduate programs ➢ Brand is authentic ➢ Affordable cost ➢ Campus aesthetics ➢ Quality education/value ➢ Better rate of return/ROI/ranked higher than other institutions ➢ Can "be yourself" here ➢ Youth of institution – adaptable ➢ Safety ➢ Spivey Hall ➢ Nursing program ➢ Welcoming ➢ Personal ➢ Supportive community ➢ Sciences ➢ New science building ➢ Graduates get job offers	**Opportunities** ➢ Promotion of new entertainment/film program in CE ➢ Transportation (airport/interaction/relationships favorable to supply chain management) ➢ Entrepreneurs (upcoming opening of Center for Entrepreneurship) ➢ Involvement in Economic Development ➢ Connection with City of Morrow ➢ Untapped alumni ➢ Not landlocked – physical expansion possible ➢ ROI – external promotion/ranking ➢ Developing partnerships ➢ Corporate Partners program ➢ Nursing – important with aging population; quality of program ➢ New industry coming to area (Porche) ➢ Opportunities to train labor force for new industries ➢ Help small busineses ➢ Location – new businesses coming to the Southside ➢ Untapped market of degree completion
Weaknesses ➢ Perception as unsafe ➢ Crime statistics in Clayton County ➢ Inadequate library resources/facilities ➢ Lack of institutional confidence ➢ Falling behind the technology curve ➢ Faculty scholarship/culture/reputation as compared to other institutions ➢ Graduating students not prepared in reading/writing/speaking/professional skills ➢ Incoming students are poorly prepared academically ➢ Students not challenged by peers ➢ Some students not motivated, "just here to get a piece of paper" ➢ Maintaining academic standards (phasing out of Regents' Test) ➢ Students need more interaction with peers (such as Operation Study) ➢ Students come to class then leave ➢ Faculty come to class and go home; some only here 2 days per week ➢ Not significant political presence	**Threats** ➢ Lack of capacity for some programs such as nursing (availability of clinical sites) ➢ Unlikely will get additional facilities funded after science building ➢ Perception of Clayton County as unsafe or as less desirable location ➢ Viability of academic programs ➢ Demographics ➢ USG mergers ➢ External infrastructure ➢ Lack of public transportation ➢ Allowing 2 year institutions to grant 4 year degrees in immediate service area ➢ Downward trend of SAT, ACT scores > students not eligible for HOPE ➢ Declining number of high school graduates ➢ Prospective degree completion students may not be admissible; why they did not finish first time around

Appendix B. Marketing Plan Media Mix

Advertising	News/Media	Web	Publications	Promotions
TV Spots Radio Spots Outdoor Billboards Public Transportation Local and Regional Publications Coffee Table Publications Airport Ads Campus and Community Banners Online Media	Daily Campus News / LakerLines Monthly E-Newsletter / Campus Review Media Pitches University Experts Targeted News Releases Feature Stories Academic Minute: Faculty essays placed in strategic media	Promotional Sites Laker NewsRoom MadeReal. Stories and Testimonials Video Segments User-based Portals (S.W.A.N., BRM, D2L) Multimedia Galleries Virtual Tours Social Media • Facebook • YouTube • Twitter • Flickr • LinkedIn • Pinterest • Instagram	University Brochures Academic Program Brochures Facts and Figures Brochure College/Department Area Brochures Economic Impact Laker Connection Magazine University Photo Tours	Posters T-Shirts Ad Specialties for Target Academic Programs Event Promotions Community Activities and Education Fairs Partnership Outreach Brand Wallpapers ○ Computer ○ Mobile