INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS AND BRANDING

Integrated Marketing Communications and Branding is a one-credit course where students create, execute, and evaluate promotional strategies and content for advertising, sales promotion, and publicity/public relations. Students apply project management techniques to guide and control promotional campaign development and execution. They also incorporate motivation theories, branding techniques and design principles in communications with targeted audiences. They will plan and implement procedures to use marketing communications that mitigate image or brand-damaging issues. Technology, employability skills, leadership, and communications will be incorporated in classroom activities. Integrated Marketing Communications and Branding can be taught in grades 9-12. It is recommended that students enroll in an introductory marketing course prior to taking Integrated Marketing Communications and Branding.

Career and technical student organizations are an integral co-curricular component of each career and technical education course. These organizations serve as a means to enhance classroom instruction while helping students develop leadership abilities, expand workplace readiness skills, and broaden opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Students will:

**Career Readiness Skills**

1. Develop career awareness and employability skills (e.g., face-to-face, online) needed for gaining and maintaining employment in diverse business settings.
   a. Identify the scope of career opportunities and the requirements for education, training, certification, licensure, and experience.

**Leadership and Communications**

2. Process, maintain, evaluate and disseminate information in a business. Develop leadership and team building to promote collaboration.
   a. Extract relevant, valid information from materials and cite sources of information.
   b. Deliver formal and informal presentations.
   c. Communicate information (e.g., directions, ideas, vision, workplace expectations for an intended audience and purpose.
   d. Use problem-solving and consensus-building techniques to draw conclusions and determine next steps.
   e. Identify advantages and disadvantages involving digital and/or electronic communications (e.g., common content for large audience, control of tone, speed, cost, lack of non-verbal cues, potential for forwarding information, longevity).
   f. Use interpersonal skills to provide group leadership, promote collaboration, and work in a team.
   g. Use technical writing skills to complete forms and create reports.
   h. Identify stakeholders and solicit their opinions.
Knowledge Management and Information Technology

3. Demonstrate current and emerging strategies and technologies used to collect, analyze, record and share information in business operations.
   a. Select and use software applications to locate, record, analyze and present information (e.g., word processing, e-mail, spreadsheet, databases, presentation, Internet search engines).

Customer Relations

4. Apply techniques, strategies and tools to develop, maintain and grow positive internal and external customer, or client, relationships.
   a. Reinforce company’s image and culture to exhibit the business’s brand promise.
   b. Identify opportunities to use crowdsourcing to engage customers or clients, improve customer or client relationships, promote brand, and solicit new ideas and solutions.

Business Communications Management

5. Apply strategies and procedures to plan, create, implement, and evaluate internal and external company communications.
   a. Collaborate on and aggregate complex internal documents to create a common voice that is vision, mission and brand-consistent.
   b. Conduct creative briefing, and gain commitment from clients.
   c. Develop a crisis-management plan to control communications and mitigate damage to company’s image.
   d. Repurpose content for use in communication.

Marketing Fundamentals

6. Describe principles of marketing, marketing functions and the factors influencing their effectiveness.
   a. Describe promotion’s nature, scope and role in meeting business objectives (e.g., types of promotion, promotional mix, promotional channels).

Marketing Information Management

7. Apply the concepts, systems and tools needed to gather, synthesize, evaluate and disseminate marketing information for use in making business decisions that achieve organizational goals and objectives.
   a. Track business information to stay abreast of trends and changes that could impact marketing (e.g., customer databases, partners’ and competitors’ activities, sales and operational data, environmental changes).
INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS AND BRANDING

Branding

8. Apply branding techniques and methods to acquire position in the minds of internal and external customers that is consistent with organizational goals and objectives.
   a. Describe the role and importance of customer voice in branding and how this voice may vary across media and channels.
   b. Distinguish between product or service branding and corporate branding.
   c. Determine and communicate brand values to customers and employees.
   d. Assess product packaging to improve its function and brand recognition (e.g., packaging requirements, graphic design, adequacy).
   e. Build brand, and use grassroots and co-branding strategies.

Marketing Communications

9. Apply the concepts and determine the strategies needed to communicate information about products, services, images or ideas to achieve desired outcomes that support organizational goals and objectives.
   a. Describe types of promotional channels used to communicate with targeted audiences (e.g., word-of-mouth, direct, advertising, social) and the use of public-relations activities and trade shows or expositions.
   b. Explain types of media used in advertising (e.g., print, broadcast, digital, out-of-home, specialty, direct mail, product placement) and the types of advertisements used by those media.
   c. Explain the use of an advertisement’s components to communicate with targeted audiences.
   d. Critique advertisements to ensure achievement of goals or objectives.
   e. Explain considerations affecting global marketing communications.
   f. Implement word-of-mouth strategies to build brand and to promote products using word-of-mouth strategies.
   g. Identify product-placement opportunities, and use them to promote products.
   h. Execute direct-marketing strategies to attract attention and to build brand (e.g., direct mail, online advertising, email marketing, websites, social media, podcasts and webcasts, videos and images, mobile, search-engine optimization, crowdsourcing).
   i. Develop and critique content for use in inbound and outbound marketing communications.
   j. Describe design principles to be able to communicate needs to designers or creatives.
   k. Employ publicity to inform audiences of business activities, to create goodwill and to establish or reinforce brand (e.g., press releases, public-service announcements, press kits).
   l. Participate in community outreach involvement that fosters a positive company image and networking.
   m. Employ sales-promotion activities to inform or remind customers of business or product (e.g., signage, slogans and taglines, brand identifiers, frequency or loyalty programs, specialty promotions, special events, trade shows or expositions, web games).

Marketing Communications Management

10. Plan and control marketing communications activities consistent with brand guidelines, organizational and departmental strategies and marketing plans and budgets.
    a. Identify and evaluate inbound and outbound marketing communications tactics and strategies, and recommend improvements.
INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS AND BRANDING

b. Negotiate media buys and placement to enhance return on investment.
c. Develop marketing or creative briefs to assist with acceptance, design and implementation of promotional strategies by others (e.g., art director, copywriter, website developer).
d. Evaluate promotional strategies and activities, and recommend improvements.
e. Describe the role, organization and fee structures of advertising agencies.
f. Select and collaborate with third-party vendors (e.g., advertising agencies, researchers), and evaluate their work.

Selling

11. Determine client needs, wants and fears; and respond through planned, personalized communication that influences purchase decisions and enhances future business opportunities.
   a. Describe motivational theories that can be used to enhance customer relationships and increase the likelihood of making sales.
   b. Identify sources of product information that can be used to communicate product benefits and ensure appropriateness of a product for the customer or client.

Marketing Operations

12. Apply operational policies to perform procedures and activities that ensure marketing’s efficiency and effectiveness.
   a. Apply marketing analytics
   b. Leverage data to recommend personalized, relevant campaigns.
   c. Develop marketing campaign workflows.

Business Applications

13. Apply tools, processes and procedures to manage the efficient and effective use of technology to achieve organizational goals.
   a. Research and use website creation tools to post web pages and storefronts that support multimedia use and achieve operational metrics (e.g., load time, availability, usability, search engine optimization) on multiple devices and platforms.
   b. Research and incorporate visual, interactive and social media content into business communications.

Project Management

14. Plan, manage, monitor, and control projects to improve workflow, minimize costs, and achieve intended project outcomes using planning and project-management tools.
   a. Compare and contrast the role and responsibilities of project sponsors, project managers, and project team members.
   b. Explain the impact of expectation setting on project outcomes.
   c. Define project objectives, scope, outputs, and resource requirements (i.e., project charter and statement of work).
   d. Document, sequence, allocate, and schedule activities to facilitate on-time and on-budget completion of project by qualified resources.
e. Manage project scope and activities as project progresses (e.g., identify scope changes, monitor critical path, update project activities).

f. Manage project schedule, resources, costs, and quality as project progresses (e.g., review project completion status, identify potential delays, review costs, review drafts).

g. Monitor and communicate project status, issues and changes to stakeholders.

h. Manage the project team throughout the project to reduce conflict, minimize rework, and meet the project objectives (e.g., enforce ground rules, identify and provide training, facilitate cross-team communications, catalog and resolve issues, provide feedback).

i. Close project (e.g., obtain buyer acceptance, finalize billing, archive documentation).

j. Evaluate project results (e.g., compare project results to expectations, conduct surveys, review lessons learned), and recommend follow-up actions.

**Strategic Execution**

15. Apply the principles and concepts used to align organizational and departmental strategies with tactical execution plans.
   a. Identify activities required to support the strategic goals, objectives, and plans of the organization; and adjust departmental focus.
   b. Identify functions, skills, and capabilities required to execute strategy; and determine whether those skills and capabilities are present or available.
   c. Compare options for departmental structure, and evaluate their ability to support plan execution (e.g., in-house or outsourced; centralized, remote, hybrid; cross-functional teams or specialized groups).
   d. Describe the relationship of departmental strategies to departmental goals and objectives.
   e. Determine departmental policies required to support strategy.
   f. Explain uses of and differences in financial and operational information analysis (e.g., financial KPIs, marketing KPIs, logistics KPIs), and identify metrics that promote a balanced and successful approach to execute strategy.
   g. Determine alternative actions to take when goals are not being met (e.g., modify tactics, increase allocated resources, challenge goals, identify exit options).