

**WEST VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**BRANDING, MARKETING, AND COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT**

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**Assessment Guide**

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**ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE:**

To assess the university's branding, marketing (public relations, advertising), and communications (publicity) efforts and effectiveness.

**PLEASE RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

Avoid yes or no answers that will really not give you significant information – you want real meat in the answers.

1. How often does the university (re)define and communicate business objectives necessary to achieve the goals of public relations, advertising and/or marketing communications collateral materials?

The University's Communications Team has regular discussions regarding PR, advertising, and marketing goals.

2. How does the university determine specific media outlets to be targeted during media relations campaigns? Check all that apply.

- Assigned sectors media
- Basic directories – geographic markets
- Circulation / audience figures
- Research tools
- Competitive review and analysis
- Random placements
- Strategic marketing research plan
- Existing media relationships
- Electronic media databases

3. Please list other marketing activities that integrate PR planning:

- Advertising/media placement
- Promotions/publicity
- Web-based/internet campaigns
- Internal communications
- Alumni/student relations
- Measurements and analytics

4. Please list vendor jobs the university outsources to obtain creative and marketing support (for example, graphic design and/or layout, printing and binding, distribution, etc.).

Morgantown Printing is used for some printing and distribution. Most of the jobs are done in-house.

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5. Describe working relationships that the university marketing and PR departments have with other divisions/units within the university.

The Communications Team serves as a clearinghouse for other areas of the University assisting with news releases and publications.

6. Describe how the university currently measures the results of PR and marketing campaigns. It is difficult to measure campaigns designed for branding and student recruitment since the results are usually not immediate. We do not have the tools or personnel to count numbers of inquiries or to determine awareness of a particular ad campaign.

7. How frequently are press releases, regarding campus news, distributed among media outlets?

News releases are distributed for all major campus news and events - averaging two to three per week.

8. When did the university last update an emergency preparedness system and/or crisis communications plans? Describe the communications channels regarding the system and the campus-wide knowledge of the system's existence.

Due to the proximity of the neighboring chemical plants, emergency preparedness and crisis communications plans are reviewed on a regular basis.

9. How often do your faculty, staff and student leaders participate in media coaching and training? Who provides this training?

The University does not provide organized media coaching. The Director of Public Relations works with individuals on campus who may be the subject of media coverage.

10. What channels of communications do you have in place for mass communications within the university, to students? To faculty? To staff?

E-mail is the official means of communication with faculty, staff, and students. "Alert" messages are posted on the web-page for events such as cancellation of classes due to weather. The WARN System is activated for emergencies going to e-mail addresses, and telephones.

11. What are the most challenging aspects of - or the weaknesses of - the university's communications' processes?

There is not enough staff to effectively carry out news functions, writing for publications, internal communications, speech writing, advertising, graphic arts, promotional campaigns and special events.

12. What are the most successful aspects of - or the strengths of - the university's communications' processes?

Although we are short staffed, the Communications Team works together to maximize manpower and talents.

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13. Describe how often direct mail and/or email has/have been used in PR campaigns and how effective the messages were in reaching the stated goals.

The University rarely uses direct mail or email for PR campaigns.

14. Describe how often the university updates landing and departmental micro sites to maintain current information.

Sites are updated by individual units as they deem necessary.

15. Describe how often the university updates its interactive web pages and micro-sites.

Updates are made as needed.

16. Describe how the Athletic Department contributes to attracting supporters/families/friends to the university, i.e., homecoming and tailgating opportunities, seasonal athletic events, recruiting fairs, etc.

The primary marketing tool for athletics is its web page with photos, videos, stories, and stats. A newly initiated Coaches Corner on cable TV also helps to get the word out. Seasonal events such as Homecoming, Think Pink Game and any event against our cross-town rival are a major draw.

17. Describe recent community outreach initiatives in which the university took part or in which the university is currently involved.

Through WVSU's Gus R. Douglass Land-Grant Institute, the University is actively involved in the community offering workshops on a variety of topics. Every summer for the past few years WVSU sponsors a free Day in the Park at nearby Shawnee Park.

18. What do you believe is the community perception of the university?

The community's perception of WVSU is a positive one. The University serves as a center for education, culture and the arts. Many alumni have found jobs allowing them to stay in the area thus demonstrating the value of a WVSU education.

19. Describe your President's and Leadership Team's presence in the community, including community board/committee assignments.

During his tenure at WVSU, President Hazo W. Carter, Jr. has served on many local boards as well as state and national organizations. Members of his Executive Cabinet are also active in community organizations.

20. Describe the academic achievements surrounding graduation (student retention, honor societies/programs, etc.) which the students have accomplished and some of the messages the university used to communicate those facts.

The WVSU Foundation publishes the names of scholarships and current recipients. Two students who have benefitted from scholarships are chosen to speak at the annual dinner.

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21. Describe how widespread and effective the out-of-state student recruitment efforts are in regards to media, email/direct mail and visitations.

With a staff of one recruiter, out-of-state recruitment efforts are not widespread.

22. List several campaign efforts the institution has created in the past two years.

The University has conducted one umbrella campaign during the last two years based on "The Power of Education" slogan.

23. Describe some of the major media coverage opportunities the university has leveraged.

The University has used the upcoming 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary as an opportunity to garner media coverage. A front-page article in the newspaper has been reproduced and used on various occasions. Other news articles have been generated due to the initial anniversary coverage.

24. Describe the social media strategy for the university.

WVSU utilizes social media tools to build a multichannel marketing/promotion strategy. It builds education and awareness, loyalty, and community by sharing information and engaging in dialog via tools such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

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**CHECKLIST**

**Advertising**

- Local  Regional  National
- Print
  - Newspaper  Trade Journals
  - Magazine  Telephone Directory
- Radio
- Television
  - Cable TV  Network TV
  - Public TV  Affiliate Programs
- Videos
- CDs/Multimedia/DVDs
- Web/Internet
  - Banner Ads
  - Social Media  Links
- Outdoor/Non-Traditional
  - Billboards  Buses  Airport
  - Consultations

**Marketing/MARCOM**

- Marketing Plan/Proposal
- Identity Package
- Logo
- Stationery
- Business Cards
- Web Site
- Brochure
- View Book
- Direct Mail
- Career Fairs/Conferences
- Market Research/Analysis
- Consultations

**Public Relations/Media Relations**

- Media Relations
  - Crisis Management  Media Kits
  - Media Training  Copywriting
  - Promotions/Publicity  Speechwriting
  - Press Releases  Articles
  - Press Conferences
- Employee Relations
  - Newsletters  Intranet
- Community Relations
  - Special Events  Promo/Publicity
- Promotions
  - Speaking Engagements
- Newspaper Articles
  - Magazine Articles
  - Consultations / Media Expertise

**Other Services**

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**Special Instructions**

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