

Holland Alumni Conference

ALUMNI WORKSHOP



MARKETING • COMMUNICATIONS • RESEARCH

DEN HAAG

5 November 2009

360 Education



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AGENDA

- Alumni – Why Bother
- Why Volunteers are Worth It
- Reinforcing the Brand
- An Alumni Programme in Action
- Organisational Issues
- Social Networking
- Sharing
- Deciding
- Questions



ALUMNI – WHY BOTHER?



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Why Volunteers Are Worth It

Well trained and deployed volunteers can assist with:

- Raising profile/ambassadorial role
- Identifying new opportunities
- Diversity of perspective
- Expand programme possibilities
- Open doors
- Are more likely to financially support your institution



Reinforcing the Brand

Brand n. derived from a Norse word brandr, meaning literally to burn

A means of identifying and differentiating:
a company, an institution, a product, a service ...



In some ways, a relatively new concept in this sector (yet some of the world's oldest brands are Educational)

Previously, education providers have tended to leave their brand/reputations to chance or have seen the task as a communications job – it's much more than that



A brand's image is derived from all of those things that impact peoples' perceptions of an organisation including:

- Products and services
- Organization performance
- Personality
- Promotional material
- Identity/logo
- Reputation
- Experience (*current and past*)



An educational institution's brand impacts upon everything it does including:

- The ability to attract students
- The ability to attract and retain quality staff, both academic & professional
- The relationship with funders
- Influence
- A Network

A strong brand provides an organisation with sustainable, competitive advantage



An Alumni Programme in Action



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THE WALL OF SHAME

Incident	Implications	Lessons
Alumnus critical of institution speaking to potential students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reputation •Confusion •Embarrassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Always coach & counsel beforehand – but don't dictate what they will say •Make sure you agree on key messages
The admissions volunteer who moved in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Alienation of potential student/family •Credibility of institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Immediate & swift action from university •Removed as a volunteer
Retired professor approaching donor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Could have been catastrophic in terms of funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Communicate a clear standard/chain of command from senior leadership -
Alumnus hosting a function at a prison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Propriety of venue •Students potentially put into a compromising situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Make sure the volunteer understands they must approve venue locations ahead of time w/staff



CHARACTERISTICS OF GREAT VOLUNTEER PROGRAMMES

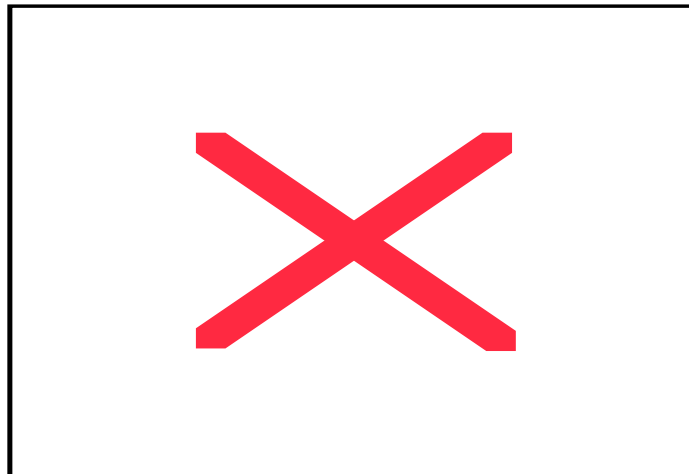
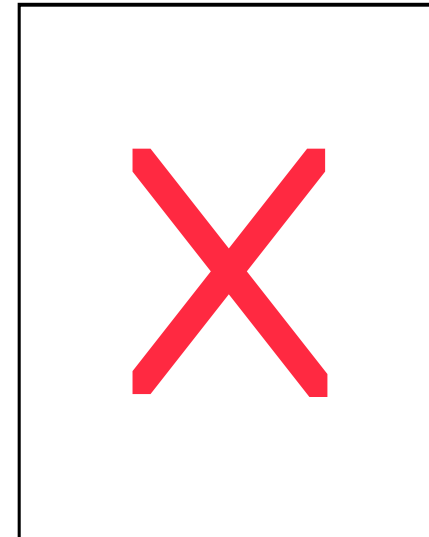
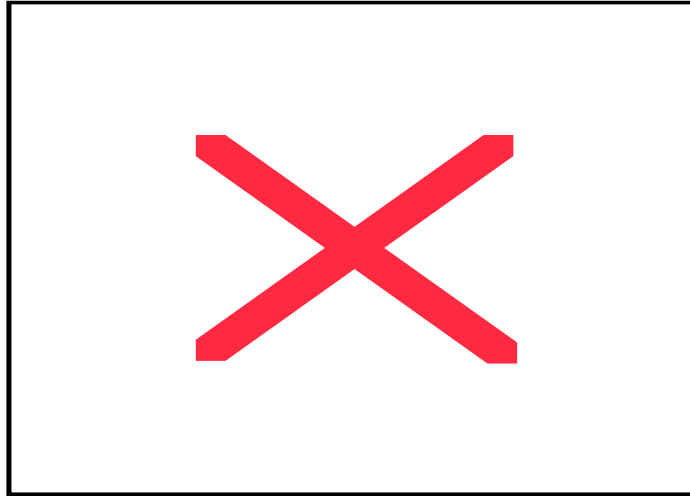
Strategic	Honest internal dialogue about what you need – <u>and be careful what you wish for</u>	Spend the time to build a strong, open relationship with key volunteers – don't only call them when you need a favour Staff accordingly	“Ask people for money and you get advice. Ask them for advice and the money will follow.”
Specific	Clear demarcation between what staff/volunteers are responsible for	Provide a written mandate/job descriptions Prepare a succinct volunteer manual	Timing and terms clearly spelled out & adhered to in a transparent manner
Social	Make the effort fun, positive & inclusive – at the heart of nearly all volunteering is a desire to connect with others	Steward your volunteers - figure out what motivates him/her to customise recognition	... but not TOO social! Expectations need to be clearly articulated
Succession Planning	Groom & identify leadership volunteers – diversification is key – albeit not always comfortable	Staggering terms of service to avoid cliques & hives of discontent Transparency of process/selection	When volunteers “retire”, maintain regular contact plan

- Student Welcome Receptions
- Annual Funds

Dinner with Strangers

- Alumni volunteers host a graduation dinner for “strangers” students & faculty members from across the University
- Celebration of graduation but also career counselling & networking
- Hosts love meeting “bright sparks”
- Students are introduced to the alumni community





A Common Story



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Organisational Issues

- Many reporting models
- USA sometimes stand alone, some alongside Fundraising (Chicago), some have separate associations which report to the Chief Executive (MIT)
- NB Major league tables factor in alumni participation rates (both as volunteers and donors) to calculate rankings



Organisational Issues (continued)

- UK similarly diverse. Sometimes report alongside fundraising (LSE), others part of Marketing or External Affairs Department
- Continental Europe often linked with Careers Services rather than fundraising



Social Networking

- Your own site – cost v control
- Not JUST Facebook



SHARING



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DECIDING



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QUESTIONS



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THANK YOU

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