

The background of the entire page is a photograph of the Truman State University building, featuring a prominent portico with columns and a pediment. A large, semi-transparent purple diamond is centered over the image. Inside the diamond, the university's name is written in white. The word "TRUMAN" is in a large, white, serif font with a horizontal line underneath. Below it, "STATE UNIVERSITY" is written in a smaller, white, serif font. At the bottom of the diamond, the slogan "Your Potential. Our Passion" is written in a white, cursive script. The diamond is framed by four white diagonal lines extending towards the corners of the page.

TRUMAN

STATE UNIVERSITY

Your Potential. Our Passion

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Integrated Marketing Communications and Social Media

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Executive Summary

This situation analysis has been developed for Truman State University, a unique liberal arts state institution located in Kirksville Missouri. The university faces fierce competition with several constraints that inhibit operating factors for the university such as location and limited finances as well as shifting industry trends in the market. The objectives for this analysis are to identify Truman's marketing approach in an effort to provide a proposal for integrating its resources and consolidating a communication plan. The major recommendations include the creation of a new internal organizational marketing structure to deal with marketing efforts and a centralization of communication across campus in that regard. Additionally, this report will propose a new Integrated Brand Promotion campaign that will help Truman better communicate its brand through effective and consistent usage of its assets. This campaign, if properly utilized, can capitalize on recent industry trends and help differentiate Truman's brand voice in the highly competitive marketplace.

Situation Analysis

Competition. Truman's biggest competitors include the University of Missouri, Missouri State University, University of Missouri Kansas City, Saint Louis University, and Northwest Missouri State University. The University of Missouri, or Mizzou, is Missouri's largest university, and in 2012 had total student enrollment of 34,748 students, 2,135 of which were international students with 50 different states represented and 100 different countries. As Missouri's largest university, Mizzou has the most ability to attract incoming students from all around the world. Their size also helps create Mizzou's greatest strengths, its name recognition and brand identity. Mizzou also has a well known athletics program that draws a lot of attention.

They are apart of the Southeast Conference (SEC), a Division 1 conference that is well known for having highly skilled and competitive football teams.

Another one of Mizzou's strengths is stability. The University of Missouri - Columbia, University of Missouri - Kansas City, Missouri University of Science & Technology, and the University of Missouri - Saint Louis make up, with the University of Missouri Health System, the University of Missouri System. This system provides a centralized administration for the four universities. The benefits of this system are greater financial stability, greater reach, improved decision making and strategic thinking. This strategic alliance allows the group of universities to have contact in several different geographical locations across Missouri. As an alliance, they are able to pool their incomes and expenditures which gives smaller schools access to the resources of larger schools, and the bigger schools have access to the flexibility and strategic thinking of the smaller schools. The total tuition income in 2015 for the University of Missouri System was \$652,989,000. One final strength that Mizzou has is location. The University of Missouri is located in Columbia, Missouri which is almost directly in the center of the state and only approximately 125 miles from both Kansas City and St. Louis. Additionally, the city of Columbia is an attractive city with a vibrant social life and a community that loves the university. These all add up to make Mizzou's location very attractive to prospective students.

One of Mizzou's biggest weaknesses is it has a high tuition. In total, estimated cost for one year as a Missouri resident at Mizzou is \$25,514. In comparison to Truman specifically, this is more than twice the cost of annual tuition which comes out to \$7,152 for Missouri residents. This can be seen as a weakness because it keeps Mizzou from being competitive in the minds of price conscious customers. Another weakness Mizzou has is that the net operating revenues for

the University of Missouri system after state appropriations in 2015 was a negative (\$86,148,000). This shows that even with higher tuitions, Mizzou is unable within its operations to create profits. However, the nonoperating revenues and expenses which include investment and endowment income, private gifts, and interest expense, are able to create a positive net position for the university system (University of Missouri System, 2015).

Mizzou positions itself based on the experience it can offer to students as the largest university in the state. It boasts is rich and vibrant campus life and the plethora of activities available to all students. Mizzou also heavily leverages its sports teams in its positioning strategy as it tries to capitalize on the school spirit that their teams encourage. They position themselves as a fun college experience.

The second largest university in Missouri is Missouri State University, or MSU. Currently, there are more than 24,000 enrolled students, 1,500 of which are international students from 85 different countries. As the second largest university in Missouri, MSU boasts a strong share of the market and brand recognition. Similarly, according to their financial reports, they have been able to turn a profit when looking at their revenues minus expenses over the last 5 years. In addition to these strengths, MSU also has a competitive price tag that gives it a reputation of affordability and value. MSU's yearly tuition for Missouri residents is approximately \$16,300 which prices almost \$10,000 less per year than at Mizzou. This can be very attractive to students who want the experience of a large state school without the higher price offered at Mizzou. Missouri State is located in Springfield, Missouri which has a population of 164,000, making it big enough to have plenty of activities similar to a big city yet is small enough to not be overwhelming.

One weakness that MSU is faced with is their lack of a strong brand identity. Though they have a relatively strong market share and growing national identity, recent studies within the university show that not all students believe that Missouri State has a strong brand identity and would classify it as a regional school that is not well known out of the state. A lot of this could be due to the fact that a large portion of a big school's brand identity comes from their athletics programs, and MSU does not have the best athletic teams in the country and school spirit is admittedly low (Missouri State University, 2013).

Similar to Mizzou, Missouri State University positions itself based on the experience it offers to students. However, the key difference between the two is that MSU has a much lower tuition cost. For this reason, Missouri State University positions themselves as the best experience for the price.

Another one of Truman's competitors is Saint Louis University, or SLU. SLU has more than 12,800 students enrolled from all 50 U.S. states and 77 different countries. Located in urban St. Louis, SLU's location is very attractive to incoming students. SLU tries to differentiate itself based on its academics, professionalism, and service connection. More than 80 of SLU's courses are integrating service into the classroom academics. This commitment to economic, community, and academic success could be very attractive to potential students, particularly in a time where young consumers are becoming more environmentally conscious and more susceptible to socio-economic marketing strategies. Additionally, St. Louis University is a private university. Although this adds to their tuition cost, it gives them greater overall flexibility from an administrative standpoint to cater their community to meet the needs of their students and faculty (Saint Louis University).

One of SLU's weaknesses is it has one of the highest yearly tuition fees of all universities in this study. Undergraduate Tuition for Missouri residents is \$38,700 per year. Another weakness is that SLU is relatively lesser known. Although they are one of Truman's top competitors, they face direct competition with other, bigger names like University of Missouri - St. Louis, Mizzou, and other universities in Chicago, Kansas City, etc (Saint Louis University, 2012).

SLU positions itself in the college market as a higher quality offering. They have higher tuition fees than many of the other universities in Missouri but also boast a higher academic reputation. More than just the academics, they tout the fact that their programs are both challenging and relevant in today's world (Saint Louis University). They thus distinguish themselves from their competitors based on a differentiation strategy.

Market constraints/environmental issues. The location of Truman State University is the main constraint faced by students. Indeed, the university is in Kirksville, MO which is three hours from both St. Louis and Kansas City, which are the largest metropolitan areas nearby. The university is also located 90 minutes north of Columbia, MO (See Appendix A to find the university's location on a map). Kirksville's population was about 17,500 inhabitants in 2010. Moreover, the easiest way to get to Truman is by car. If you don't have a car, you can take a train. You also can take a plane from St. Louis, but it might be a long and expensive trip. During winter it can be very cold, so the climate can be discouraging (See Appendix B for Kirksville weather trends).

Because Kirksville is located in a rural town, it may seem that it is 'in the middle of nowhere' which there can cause a misperception of the area. This may lead people to think that it

is not a good opportunity but that is not true. Except on campus, there is not a lot of activities to do so Truman should focus on doing activities in its facilities, as it already does. To try to get around these constraints, Truman should focus on the life on campus and the campus itself.

Recent Industry Trends and Developments. Currently, the higher education industry is undergoing rapid change due to several factors such as fluctuating consumer preferences and demographics. Higher education institutions are at risk due to the flattening rate of college enrollment. Much of the decline in college enrollment is derived from older students, over the age of 24, deciding to enter the improving job market instead of returning back to school (Berman, 2015). The latest national data shows that high school graduation rates are higher than ever, yet college enrollment does not reflect this. “Traditionally at-risk and minority high school students are most responsible for rising graduation rates,” (Wong, 2016). Also, the types of institutions seeing the most significant declines in enrollment tend to offer degrees that provide only marginal improvements in job prospects compared to high-school diplomas (Wong, 2016). Many high school graduates are forgoing higher education to immediately enter the workforce unless their chosen field of study will provide significant returns on investment. State legislators are also cutting back on education funding leaving universities mostly reliant on incoming tuition. Increasing globalization is allowing universities to make up for some of the loss of funds by accepting large groups of international students. Due to the growing costs of a college education, prospective students and their parents are becoming more critical of the industry as a whole. This concern has made it more important for institutions to clearly showcase the career benefits that come from attending a university or college.

The ways in which prospective students are searching and deciding on a university have also been changing quickly. The college search process has become an increasingly digital and mobile one. Last year, Hanover Research found that 60% of seniors and 55% of juniors would be more likely to consider a university if they used digital strategies. Also, 40% of seniors and 45% of juniors said the same but about print and phone communications. This is a key indicator of the importance of using multichannel marketing in this industry. (Hanover Research, 2015). At every point in the process, a university's website is the number one source used for research and is often viewed via mobile. However, about half of all visitors to education websites via mobile devices have reported having a bad experience. "This has led to 40% of prospective students reporting a negative perception of the university brand in question, with 35% moving on to conduct their university search on a competitor's website" (Tucker, 2014, para. 9). Apart from a university's website, other top online sources that students look at for higher education information include Collegeboard.com, Zinch, and search engines such as Google, Yahoo or Bing (IACAC.org, 2013). Another important trend seen in the college search process is the rise in popularity of non-branded searches. Rather than identifying with a university's brand, prospective students are more often searching based on location and field of study (Tucker, 2014). This makes it more important for universities to advertise specific programs or unique offerings.

Another important trend occurring within the higher education industry is increasing mobility among international students. During the 2014-2015 academic school year, almost one million international students enrolled in U.S. universities (Mitchell, 2015, para. 2). Business, engineering and math/computer sciences have been shown to be increasing in field of study

preferences. (Mitchell, 2015). It is projected that “by 2017, the global middle class is projected to increase its spending on educational products and services by nearly 50 percent,” (Ortiz, Fang & Chang, 2015, p. 2). Overall, the number of international students studying in the United States has been increasing and self-financed students account for two thirds of the growth. (Ortiz, Fang & Chang, 2015).

As prospective student preferences, demographics and search methods have fluctuated, universities have been further developing their offerings and advertising methods. In terms of their offerings, some schools are adding more specialized degrees to appeal to the broad range of interests among prospective students. As college costs increase, the parents’ and students’ concern of job qualification after graduation rises as well. The rising costs make a college or university degree a much more expensive investment, driving consumers to desire a sufficient return on the money they spend in the form of jobs and career opportunities. This is why some colleges are using metrics more often to measure faculty productivity and are finding ways to phase out transcripts to better reflect students’ capabilities (Hausman, 2016).

Another trend in university’s responses is the use of predictive analysis to identify at risk students, keep them on track and measure their success in the workforce (Henry, Pagano, Puckett & Wilson, 2014). This aids in increasing retention rates which is a factor in support of government funding. Higher education institutions are also experimenting with adaptive learning techniques through technology enhanced course delivery such as flipped classrooms and gamification, and general online offerings (Hanover Research, 2015). In terms of adapting marketing techniques, colleges are generally placing a lot more emphasis on branding by hiring external marketing professionals and increasing the use of web analytics to better measure their

effectiveness. Institutions have begun relying more heavily on marketing automation tools in order to develop multi-channel messages and are increasing budget allowances for social media marketing, (Hanover Research, 2015).

Product and Customer Analysis

Product. During the college selection process, there are many different types of higher education institutions for students to choose from. Institutions can be broken down into private and public colleges. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2008), “institutions are classified according to the highest degree they award, regardless of title, as well as whether they specialize in a few subjects or offer a comprehensive range of programs, and whether they serve special populations” (p.3)

A common distinction between institutions is whether it is considered a private or public college. Private colleges are independent of state control yet are authorized by the state government. Private institutions can be considered non-profit or for-profit, and may have a religious affiliation. Public colleges have governing boards appointed by state government officials, receive funding from the state budget and may be subject to state regulations. Public institutions are internally self-governing with respect to academic decisions. (United States, Department of Education, International Affairs, 2008, p. 2)

Higher education can be offered as four-year or two-year programs. Four-year colleges lead to a bachelor’s degree and include universities and liberal arts colleges. Two-year institutions lead to a certification or an associate's degree – typically include community colleges, vocational-technical and career colleges (College Board The, n.d., p. 1).

Typically, community colleges prepare students for a four-year program to earn a bachelor's degree. They also offer certifications and associate's degree for career specific skills. This is considered a more affordable option with lower tuition costs. Vocational-technical schools also prepare students for a career with specialized training. For example, culinary arts or medical assistants. Universities are much larger than community colleges and offers a wider variety of majors of study and degree options. Universities have smaller schools that specialize in a specific area of study, like schools of business or arts and letters (College Board The, n.d., p. 1).

Other institutions may serve a special niche or have a special focus. Some special niches can be gender, religion, academic program or special-mission based. Gender niches refer to specific institutions that are all male or all female; unlike co-ed offered at most universities.

Religious niches centralize around a specific faith – Christian, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim and Buddhism. This could be based within the institutions history or a part of the students' educational experience (United States, Department of Education, International Affairs, 2008, p. 3). The U.S. Department of Education (2008) notes religion based institutions are “the oldest tradition in U.S. higher education, dating back to the founding of Harvard College, is the establishment and operation of higher education institutions by religious communities” (p. 3).

Academic program niche schools typically revolve around the arts. According to The College Board (n.d.), these programs have “traditional course work but provide students' specialized training in photography, music, theatre, and/or fashion design”. Students of this type of institution graduate with bachelor's degrees in fine arts or specialized area of study (College Board The, n.d., p. 1).

Liberal arts programs are another special niche under the academic programs category. The College Board (n.d) identifies these institutions as “focus[ing] on educating its students among a broad base of subjects within the liberal arts – literature, history, languages, mathematics and life sciences” (p. 1). Typically, this program is offered by private four-year institutions that lead to a bachelor’s degree. The wide range of study prepares its graduates for a variety of career or for continuing education school. (College Board The, n.d., p. 1).

Special mission based institutions service a particular ethnic group, race, or gender. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2008), there is a “long tradition of higher education institutions being founded for these purposes...tribal colleges founded by the American Indian nations, historically black colleges and universities and single-sex colleges are only among the most well-known of these types of institutions” (p. 3).

Segmentation. Segmentation is very important in order to identify the target market and create a strategy to attract the target consumers. For universities and colleges, the market is segmented by different types of dimensions such as geographic, demographics, psychographics, and behavioral factors. Each dimension has different factors that affect students for their college selection.

Firstly, geographic segmentation is based on location of campus. The setting of campus and distance from home is particularly important. For those who seek internships or work experiences while attending college, an urban campus can provide more off-campus opportunities than a rural campus. Leisure options such as museums, sports games, and music concerts are more available in urban areas as well. Availability of public transportation also matters depending on whether students are willing to commute to school by car or not.

Meanwhile, rural campuses provide a better environment for students in terms of a sense of safety which happen to be a top priority for parents in selecting a college for their children. For certain majors such as marine biology, astronomy or agriculture science, campus in rural area can be their learning facility and sources. In addition to the setting of campus, distance from home is also an important variable because it determines ability for students to live at home and commute, or even visit their family weekend.

Demographic segmentation is based on student and their family's characteristics. Demographics segmentation has as much influence as geographic segmentation and covers a broad range of variables such as age, sex, religious affiliation etc. However, some of the most important demographic variables in college selection would be income level and race. Although there are financial aids available including student loans and scholarships, affordability of college tuition and living expenses is still a main concern for many students from low or even mid income families. Next, race is another important factor in selecting college especially for minority students. Many of minority students value whether the school has a community of their demographic groups on campus because it provides them a certain level of a sense of belonging. Another aspect to look at this would be segmentation based on age. The majority of college and university students fall between the ages of 18-24. This makes it so that when universities are segmenting the market, they are much more likely to target high school students between the ages of 14-18 who are beginning to look at potential colleges.

Third dimension of segmentation is psychographics. Psychographics segmentation is about student's lifestyle and attitude toward college life. Those whose priority is academic achievement would be interested in overall academic reputation, availability of honors courses, a quality of

faculty and student body, acceptance rate to graduate programs and such. Involvement rate for Greek life on campus is also a considering factor if students are planning to join a sorority or fraternity. In terms of interests, a school with a strong sports team such as football or basketball would attract more students who are interested in those sports.

Though behavioral factors overlap with psychographic dimension, there are some distinguished variables which should be mentioned. For example, some students more likely choose to attend the same school that their parents or other family members if they have developed a sense of loyalty to the school while growing up.

As described in this section, the market for college and university is segmented by a number of factors and each segment has different needs and expectations for their college choice in general. In next section, we are going to identify specific segments that Truman is currently targeting.

Target market definition From a geographic dimension, the current primary segment of Truman is in-state students. According to the official university website, 68.1% of students including undergraduate and graduate are from state of Missouri. St. Louis and Kansas City is particularly the two major pools for potential applicants and incoming students. Although out-of-students body represents nearly 40 other states, most of out-of-states students are from neighbor states such as Iowa, Nebraska and Illinois. Students from these neighbor states have a potential to become a possible secondary target market because of the geographical location. For example, Des Moines which is the most populous city in Iowa is only 150 miles away from Kirksville where Truman State University is located. Considering that the distance from Kansas

City is 180 miles and it is 200 miles from St. Louis, there's no geographical disadvantage for prospective students from neighbor states.

In terms of demographics, Truman is mainly targeting so-called traditional students. Generally, the word "traditional students" refer those who enter college right after high school without a year gap and finish their degrees in 4 or 5 years around the age of 21-23. The definition applies to Truman demographical primary target segment. With regard to race on campus, student body of Truman consists of nearly 80% white students and 14% of students who identify as non-international students of color. These percentages do not really represent diversity on campus, but recruiting more minority students can increase share in a secondary target market. In addition, the primary target segment of Truman is attracted to its affordability and sufficient financial aids available.

Next, student characteristics that Truman is currently targeting are those who are academically, socially, and personally passionate about learning and growth. Truman encourages students not only to pursue their academic achievements but also get involved in student organizations, athletics programs, and volunteer opportunities in a local community. There are more than 240 student organizations with a variety of interests such as intramural sports teams, a cappella groups, language exchange clubs etc. Besides, 18% of female students and 22% of male students are involved in Greek life and belong to social sororities and fraternities.

Another key characteristic of Truman's psychographic target segment is a record of high academic achievement in high school. According to the Freshman academic profile of Truman, over 90% of freshman had a high school GPA of 3.25 or higher, nearly 8% graduated in the top

25% of their class, and nearly 85% earned 24 or higher on ACT. As represented in those data, the target segment is attracted Truman because of its high quality of student body and affordability.

Positioning. Truman State University primarily utilizes a Product Characteristics or Customer Benefits positioning strategy. Rather than focus on one or two benefits, Truman has several unique qualities that it likes to share with prospective consumers. The three most popular characteristics are Truman's high-quality academics, affordable tuition and dynamic campus environment. It is the state's only public Liberal Arts and Sciences institution. In addition, consumers will find benefits in several additional offerings such as: a wide range of degree programs, dedicated faculty, small classes with a 16:1 faculty ratio, numerous student resources, and generous scholarships. To supplement the benefits that the university offers while seeking to qualify their value, Truman often uses the phrase 'Private experience at a public cost.'

One of the regularly used methods for publicizing Truman's differentiation is through its rankings and recognition which helps the university to stand apart from its competitors. On the university's website, you will find that "National rankings consistently praise Truman's lively learning community. And the message is loud and clear—Truman has earned a reputation for offering a top-ranked education and an outstanding economic value. As a result, Truman is consistently ranked among the nation's best colleges and universities" (Truman State University, 2016).

Although publicizing rankings may be an easy way to attest to the unique aspects that Truman has to offer, there are additional avenues where the university works to differentiate itself.

Truman works to differentiate itself as a university by providing a unique experience for its students; the *Truman Experience*. The student experience that Truman offers is built on opportunities for involvement. Truman offers an active student body. Its website boasts that “There is always something taking place on campus — sports, plays, music performances, art shows, live entertainment — and with nearly 240 student organizations, student media, Bulldog athletics, intramural recreational sports, Greek Life, and more, it's easy for students to get involved at Truman” (Truman State University, 2016). In addition, students are invited to participate in Truman’s rich history and tradition from the “Big Event” to the “Gum Tree” (Truman State University, 2016). These are aspects that are unique to the university and have taken part in defining Truman and the ‘*Truman Experience*’. Of primary importance to the Truman brand is its academic offerings. Truman has an average lecture class size of 24 and a student-to-faculty ration of 16:1. In addition, it has 48 undergraduate majors, 58 minors, 8 graduate programs, and 2 graduate certificate programs. Not only does Truman have attractive academic offerings, but it is highly academically selective. Over 90% of freshmen had a high school GPA of 3.25 or higher and nearly 80% graduated in the top 25% of their class while 85% earned 24 or higher ACT composite scores (Truman State University, 2016). Moreover, you will find that “As Missouri's only highly selective public liberal arts and sciences university, Truman is best known for offering exceptionally high-quality academic programs and an amazing educational value” (Truman State University, 2016). Ultimately, there are numerous reasons that the *Truman Experience* is a unique one.

Truman also works to differentiate itself as a product in the university market. There are several key factors that help the university to accomplish this differentiation. Truman students

have positive outcomes after graduation. In fact, 90% of graduates report that they are either employed or attending a graduate or professional school within six months of graduation. In addition, According to the Missouri Department of Higher Education, Truman has the highest overall graduation rate among Missouri's public colleges and universities. Again, Truman celebrates its rankings as a form of differentiation. Truman is recognized as the No. 1 Public University in the Midwest region, No.1 value in the nation among public colleges and universities, and one of the smartest schools by third party reporters (Truman State University, 2016). As a university, Truman offers the opportunity for undergraduate research. In fact, one out of five Truman undergraduates is pursuing serious research in any given year. On the website, one will find that “The opportunity to discover connections across a wide range of endeavors is one of the hallmarks of a Truman education, and we support those efforts and curiosity through funding opportunities as well as programs such as TruScholars and McNair” (Truman State University, 2016). Undergraduate research offers additional unique opportunities for students in their undergraduate experience. Another element that works to differentiate the university is its physical environment and atmosphere. On the website, one will find the following, “Dating back to 1867, our beautiful 210-acre campus blends old and new with a mix of historic and contemporary red-brick buildings that provide modern living and learning facilities. Lush green spaces like the Quad and the Sunken Garden and an impressive library filled with natural light and plenty of group study areas make campus a comfortable place to study, make new friends, and socialize” (Truman State University, 2016). Each of these factors assists in characterizing Truman as a unique product in the university market.

Truman offers all of its opportunities and experiences at an affordable cost. As the website states, “At Truman, we believe in providing you with a high-quality liberal arts and sciences education that is also affordable. Truman State University offers a flat tuition fee for full-time students who take 12-17 credit hours per semester. Tuition also includes your Student Recreation Center and Student Union Fees” (Truman State University, 2016). Undergraduate Tuition is \$7,152 for Missouri Residents and \$13,376 for Non-Missouri Residents. Graduate tuition is \$8,252 for Missouri Residents and \$14,154 for Non-Missouri Residents. In addition to the low cost of tuition, Truman prides itself on its financial aid offerings. Scholarships, Grants and Loans, as well as Student Employment are available to help cover the cost of the college. “Half of Truman students graduate without any student debt, and the other half graduate with debt below the state and national averages” (Truman State University, 2016). Each of these factors helps to clarify the financial value that Truman offers as it seeks to “Provide affordable access to an exceptional education” (Truman State University, 2016).

Positioning maps have been constructed to help synthesize data found ranking best colleges in Missouri. Colleges included on the positioning maps are comprised of the main competitors identified (See Appendix C for Positioning Maps).. The Niche Best Colleges in Missouri (2016) ranks Truman as number 9. The rankings of colleges are primarily based on quality and price and include factors such as “Academics Grade, Value Grade, Professor Grade, Student Surveys on Overall Experience, Diversity Grade, Student Life Grade, Athletics grade, Campus Quality Grade, Local Area Grade, and Safety Grade” (Best Colleges in Missouri, 2016). In addition, a value ranking of the competitors positions Truman against its competitors with a number 3 ranking according to Iris Stone (Best Value Schools, 2015). This value ranking method

consisted of measures of “Graduation Rate, Net Price, Acceptance Rate, and 20-Year Net Return on Investment” (Best Value Schools, 2015).

Positioning Statement. For talented students, Truman is the university that offers its students an unparalleled opportunity to engage in intellectual and curious growth leading to the development of capable professionals, engaged citizens, and supportive colleagues.

Brand Promise. Truman’s brand promise articulates the intersection between our core values (mission, vision, and strategic priorities) and what key audiences define as important, distinctive, believable, and emotionally engaging.

Internal statement: Truman State University delivers an amazing value where dedicated professors guide talented students as they grow into capable professionals, engaged citizens, and supportive colleagues.

Brand Attributes / Unique Offerings of Truman.

1. Intellectual and Curious students
2. A lively community of learners
3. Discovering connections across a wide range of endeavors
4. Preparing for lives that matter

Buying Motives. Consumers looking for this product are primarily young adults who just graduated from high school and are looking to pursue higher education before entering the workforce. There are also consumers that have completed high school and have spent a few years in the workforce and seek out higher education in order to give them a better place as workers. Simply put, the need being fulfilled by universities is the need to learn.

Most consumers buying this product are looking for a higher quality education. However, the cost of a university education is very high and many consumers have switched from simply wanting quality education to wanting the best education for the price they are paying. In other words, they want value.

In addition to desiring education, many consumers want an experience. For many young students in particular, the years spent in colleges or universities are not just about the material that they learn but about the experiences that they have, the friends that they make, and the memories they will hold onto. For this reason, many consumers will choose a university based on where they feel they will receive the most perks that add to the overall experience.

One other thing that consumers want when making their decision about which university is the connections that they can build. For many students this looks like potential employers they can meet while still a student. For others it could be the professors and professionals that they can interact with during their years studying. These consumers are looking to build a strong network they can utilize to their advantage later on in their life.

Truman seeks to address the needs of consumers through a larger unique mission. “The mission of Truman State University is to offer an exemplary undergraduate education to well-prepared students, grounded in the liberal arts and sciences, in the context of a public institution of higher education. To that end, the University offers affordable undergraduate studies in the traditional arts and sciences as well as selected pre-professional, professional, and master's level programs that grow naturally out of the philosophy, values, content, and desired outcomes of a liberal arts education” (Truman State University, 2016).

Source of customer information. There are several sources of information that a prospect student or current student, family members and anyone else can access. These sources can come from Truman staff or from any other source related to the university.

The website is a good and complete source of information for the current and targeted customers: you will find everything you need such as videos from current students and alumni, you can read about the facilities provided by Truman. Plus, you can easily go on the website with any devices (smartphones, tablets, computers...). Truman also has accounts on Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook so followers can be aware instantaneously of what's going on in the university and even ask questions and react to the posts.

Current students are also a source of information, by sharing posts on social media or interacting with friends, family and everyone around them, they can provide word of mouth and attract prospective students. Also, Truman is doing a lot of mailing to families and prospective students to reach awareness among its program. Then, they are welcome to come to Truman to visit the campus and meet with current students and professors. Representatives of Truman are going to high schools to talk about Truman and give flyers and brochures. If you have not been reached by all of these sources you might be reached via billboards on the highway and even radio podcasts and newspaper ads.

Another way to get information is the specialized websites especially the ranking websites that deliver a lot of information very useful and reliable about multiple universities. A good example of these kind of websites could be Us News (US News and World Report). It enables a good visibility for universities because students regularly look at the rankings and general information to make their choices. To reach international students, some flyers for example are translated in

Chinese (it's the most important international community in Truman). Moreover, people from all around the world can hear about Truman thanks to partnerships with several schools or agencies.

Media Habits. In terms of marketing to prospective students, appealing to Generation Z is critical as they make up the largest population demographic. Generation Z is known for being self-educators which is largely shown through their media habits. Members of this demographic will use Youtube or Social media 52% of the time for research projects. Generation Z also prefers visuals instead of text and has an average of an eight second attention span. In terms of social media platforms, Instagram is rising in popularity over Facebook among this age group.

Generation Z, on average, spends three or more hours a day on computers for non school related activities. (Oster, 2014). According to research done by Nielsen, video on demand viewing is gaining popularity across all generations. Globally, 65% of respondents watch video on demand programming and 43% watch at least once a day. Movies and tv on demand are the most popular source of VOD viewing with the top genres being comedies, original series, sports and documentaries and short form video content. Generally, VOD viewers decrease with age, and younger generations are more likely to pay an online service provider. Another important statistic is that among the 65% of VOD viewers, 59% do not mind receiving advertising within their viewing time (Nielsen, 2016, b.). When it comes to devices used to view media content, preferences vary by a few factors such as age and activity. According to another report by Nielsen, respondents outside of Europe and North America prefer using mobile phones for in-home viewing of video programming. Outside of the home, mobile phones are the number one device used for viewing content across all generations. (Nielsen, 2015). Income level also affects the way people interact with media. People with higher incomes have more access to technology

and media devices however, lower income consumers spend more time with media. (Nielsen, 2015). Overall, digital media, is leading against traditional media in almost every country across the globe with an increase in mobile media. As of 2014, viewing television is still the most popular media activity and online viewing is rapidly increasing. Lastly, it has been found that consumers often are digitally multi-tasking while engaging in television media. (Mander, 2014)

Focus Groups. In order to gain better understanding of the wants and needs of Truman's target market, we conducted 3 different focus groups. The first of these focus groups was conducted on a group of high school students who live in the Kirksville area. The demographics of this group included 10 students, half males, half females. These students also varied in age, 3 were freshmen, 2 were sophomores, 4 were juniors, and 1 was a senior. The second focus group consisted of eight current Truman students with the majority being of senior status. Two students were sophomores at the University, one was a varsity athlete and another was an international student from Vietnam. The third focus group was a group of three high school students from the Chicagoland area. The questions we asked were designed to determine how receptive these students were to universities' marketing efforts, which ones had been the most effective, how they searched for and found information on universities, and what they looked for in a university. Additionally, we asked a few questions to gauge their views on the universities in Missouri and what sort of educational structures were best, specifically in regards to the liberal arts education that Truman offers. The answers we received were important in highlighting some of the weaknesses or areas for improvement in Truman's current marketing plan.

First, we found that on average, each student had been contacted in one way or another by 10-15 different universities, even the freshman had been contacted by different universities. The types of ads that most appealed to them were the ones that displayed students enjoying the college experience, were direct and clear with information about the university, specifically information about majors, requirements, cost, and advantages afforded to the student by the university such as their expertise in a specific subject matter, job and internship opportunities before and after graduation, etc. Additionally, these students mentioned that the best ways to grab their attention in advertisements were through the offering of free items such as food or t-shirts. They also said they were more attracted to ads that testimonials from alumni, information about events and visits, and information about programs that afford them college credit grabbed their attention. Finally, we asked which media outlets they thought were the most effective in communicating to them. The top responses were pamphlets and flyers, email, and Youtube ads.

Next, we wanted to understand what these high school students were looking for in a university. We asked the question, “What is the most important factor you consider when choosing your college/university?” The number one thing on everyone’s list was cost and scholarship or financial aid availability. The next most popular factors were the majors and programs offered at the school, the classes offered that matched what they wanted to study, location, living and housing availability, extracurricular activities available, and admission requirements. There seemed to be a consensus that even though cost was important, students would rather choose a school that offered the classes and majors they wanted or better suited their wants and needs in other areas than they would choose cheapest university. As a part of this same question, the students were asked who is helping them make their decision and what they

thought was the most important to them. 7 out of 10 of the students said their parents were helping them choose a college and the number one thing they were concerned about was the cost. The next thing they thought was important to their parents was the location, if it was near or far from home, and success opportunities provided after college such as employment and internships.

Finally, we wanted to gather some more Truman-specific information from the students. We asked them to list the top-5 universities in Missouri. Only one out of the ten students thought Truman was the best university in Missouri. In fact, though Truman was listed by all ten students, most of them listed it as number 4 or 5. Finally, we asked the students to define a Liberal Arts Education. None of the students knew what it meant to go to a school that specializes in the Liberal Arts or what it means to receive a Liberal Arts education. One girl thought she knew, but her answer revolved mostly around the concept of art being important and the university's beliefs were more liberal than conservative in nature. After we gave a better definition of what a Liberal Arts education was and what it meant, several of them still failed to see the benefits of it and said they would prefer to go to a school in which they only had to study subjects related to the major they chose.

Through the second focus group we found that word of mouth was extremely important in helping students in discovering Truman. The group also mentioned that they most enjoyed the promotional material sent out by the university that highlighted involvement, testimonials and had a personalized touch. When asked what appealed most to them about Truman, the majority of students responded by saying that it was the value and affordability. Students were most dissatisfied by the University's location, however found that the community offered made the

difference. In terms of brand elements, students generally did not like the current slogan, they advised that the website should be updated more often and that the University needs to do a better job on social media.

The third focus group, consisting of high school students from the Chicagoland area offered some different and interesting opinions. All three members said they were 75-90% more likely to attend an out of state school. They preferred digital communication methods such as email and social media but still enjoyed receiving direct mail. These students also mentioned that they appreciated receiving tangible items from a university. Aside from word of mouth, the students identified Naviance and Cappex as their most influential source of information. Overall cost is a very important factor for them however, they also talked about wanting to feel like a part of a community and did not just want to be a number. Similar to the high school students from the first focus group, these students were also unaware of what a liberal arts education truly was. Once it had been explained to them, the students stated that they would much rather attend a liberal arts university because it is important to be well rounded in the workplace.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths. Truman has several internal factors that attribute to its success. These can be looked at as strengths when conducting a SWOT analysis. The first strength would be affordability. Truman, as seen earlier in the competition section, has a very competitive and affordable tuition cost compared to other universities. As college tuition prices only continue to rise, this becomes an even greater strength. In addition to being affordable, Truman has a very good academic reputation and is well known for the quality of students graduating from the school.

Another strength that the university possesses is its tight-knit community. Truman strives to embrace all students and faculty members from every background. This type of openness leads to a strong community of educators and students who are passionate about learning from one another. As a part of this, there is very high student involvement on campus and high faculty dedication to their classes and to the students' success. This also leads to the Truman community possessing a strong openness to international students.

Weaknesses. There are several factors that can pose an internal challenge to Truman's pursuit of success. These are identified as weaknesses in the SWOT analysis. Probably one of the biggest weaknesses is the location. Although many students come to enjoy Kirksville throughout their time at Truman (this will be discussed more in the opportunities section), cities such as Kansas City, Saint Louis, Columbia, and Springfield tend to be more attractive to potential students. Kirksville is small and located in the northeast corner of rural Missouri, giving it the appearance of inactivity. This makes Kirksville very difficult to market to incoming college freshmen.

Another weakness that Truman faces is its disjointed marketing department. Truman does not currently have a marketing department, nor does it have a chief marketing officer. This makes it so that most marketing materials sent out from the university are sent from individual offices on campus and often lack a continuous or consistent message, theme, or voice. A large part of this is due to budgetary strain within the university. Currently, Truman is facing budget cuts and spending decreases which makes it hard to sufficiently provide faculty or staff positions for areas such as marketing.

Opportunities. There are several external opportunities that Truman has access to that could help it achieve a greater level of success. The first of these is the non-traditional student market, which could also include international students. Typically, universities target traditional students who are looking to start as a freshman, live on campus, take classes full-time, and graduate in four years. However, there is a large market of people who are looking to take classes part-time, at night, or online in order to get a college degree. Truman has the opportunity to reach out to these non-traditional students in order to increase market share and tuition income. Similarly, there is a large international market that Truman could reach out to in order to increase enrollment.

Another major opportunity would be the advancement of technology and digital media. As these progress, there are a lot of opportunities available for Truman to modernize their operations. This includes day to day operations such as classroom technology and communication between students, professors, and administration. This also presents several opportunities in the marketing field. As social media continues to grow in reach and popularity, Truman can communicate with a growing number of individuals just through the use of social media. Similarly, interactive and digital media are opening new doors for marketers to communicate with consumers.

Threats. One of the biggest external threats to Truman's operations is decreases in high-school graduation rates and decreases in the number of college applications. Because Truman's main product is the education that they offer, they rely heavily on tuition income in order to continue their operations. Declining high-school graduation rates will lead to a shrinking of the

market for potential Truman students. Similarly, decreasing numbers of college applications is the result of a shrinking market for Truman's product.

Another big threat to Truman is legislative actions. Such legislations as the ones that will allow concealed carry on college campuses and motions to raise minimum wage could be potentially harmful to Truman's bottom line. If potential students do not feel safe on a particular campus, they are less likely to attend that school, decreasing attendance numbers results in decreasing revenues for universities like Truman. Similarly, an increase in minimum wage will cause an increase in Truman's costs which will in turn decrease the overall profits they have at their disposal to spend on their operations. Finally, other legislative measures could decrease the amount of state-appropriated funds that Truman receives which would be detrimental to Truman's budget.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Affordability● Academic reputation● Openness to international students● Private experience, public cost● Website● Lowest loan default● Highest retention rate● Highest overall graduation rate● High faculty dedication● Tight knit community● High student involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● School spirit● Location● Disjointed Marketing effort<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ineffective communication and cooperation● Inability to retain/recruit faculty talent● Inadequate Staffing - quantity● Financial strain● Reputation for high stress/demand academic culture● Non-specific, specialty degree seeking programs

<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International students ● Increase use of digital interactive media ● Harnessing the power of SEO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Un-branded searches ● Tailor niche targeting ● Centralize content ● Develop a stronger brand personality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stories ○ Fun, engaging side ● Incorporate/feature university community strengths ● Increased Kirksville community interaction ● Strengthening of Outcomes in overall IBP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implementation of Career Center ○ Showcasing all paths of post-graduation ● Increasing graduation rates of minority/ first generation college students ● Increase opportunities for nontraditional students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Night classes ○ Online classes ○ Continuing Education and Professional Development ○ Institutional Partnerships ● Utilize Academic outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High school programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decreasing State Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Per-student vs. performance ○ Overall decline ● Sources of income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tuition Cap ● Decreases in high-school graduation rates ● Decrease in college applicants ● Legislative Implications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Concealed Carry on College Campus ○ Potential Raising of Minimum Wage

Identity Package

There are several components to Truman's identity package. The story of Truman is the root of its identity: Mr Baldwin wanted to create broad education for students. It became Missouri's only public, highly selective, liberal arts and sciences institution. The name, the logo

and the school colors help to distinguish Truman State University and its uniqueness, and identify the brand quickly. The campus icons such as the campus mascot, the Bulldog which was adopted in 1915, help give the school a lively character. Its mission is to provide a high quality liberal arts and sciences education to intelligent and passionate students from Missouri and across the globe for an affordable price (Truman State University). Truman succeeds in this mission, as it is said to have a “national reputation for offering exceptionally high-quality undergraduate education at an affordable price,” (US News, p. 4).

The core values of Truman are its community and diversity, life skills acquired through the college’s campus life. There are many opportunities to get involved on campus, socially and professionally. There are many opportunities available to students to do research or workstudy programs through their majors. Truman similarly tries to help its students to afford the college fees with various kind of scholarships and institutional jobs. These can help students enjoy the student life and become even more responsible and skilled.

Truman’s brand promise. Truman’s brand promise is: “Truman State University delivers an amazing value, where dedicated professors guide talented students as they grow into capable professionals, engaged citizens, and supportive colleagues.” This means that students at Truman are not only here to study but also to create and pursue the future they want with the guidance offered by all the faculty and administration.

Construction of the brand personality. First, Truman has a traditional aesthetic. Student-to-faculty ratio represents the intangible aspect, meaning that there is a maximum of 40 students in each course, which is the evidence of a good framing for the students and the access

to high quality education. Then, the path to a future career thanks to excellent academic and human acquisition of knowledge is the symbolic aspect of Truman. Finally, liberal arts education, strong community, academic excellence and student organizations are the experiential aspects of Truman.

Truman is a college where human side is emphasized to get the best in each and every student. They all take part in a community which makes the college years an opportunity to grow and develop good memories. The wide range of specialities and majors offered by the school allow students to meet people from various horizons and educational life, that make them open-minded and willing to meet with different people.

Truman's brand attributes can serve to differentiate Truman and comprise the foundation for all of the future brand marketing efforts. They should be regularly used in all communication, from recruiting and advancement materials to informal conversations with visitors. There are four main attributes.

The first one "Intellectual and curious" indicates that Truman encourages its students to be open minded and curious not only in terms of study but also in culture and openness to the world. People are driven to know, to learn, to understand and to extend the reach of the shared knowledge. 92% of incoming students have a GPA of 3.25 or more and also 93% of all classes are taught by full-time instructional faculty.

The second attribute is that Truman has a lively community of learners thanks to Truman's network of alumni, current students, etc. Truman develops its community in the long term where each individual can help others, work together, challenge each other, and care for each other in the world. 99% of Freshman students live on campus and 99% of all undergraduate

students live within a 20-minute walk or bike ride of campus. There are approximately 250 active student organization on campus.

The next attribute is that Truman helps students discover connections across a wide range of endeavors, meaning that Truman students are really involved in their studies and in their lives by learning to ask thoughtful questions, making surprising connections, and communicating effectively across perspectives. 40 student groups are centered on cultural, fine arts, or specialized intellectual areas. Truman students report their courses emphasize the ability to synthesize and organize ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships compared to their counterparts at other universities.

The final attribute is that Truman helps prepare students for lives that matter. Each student has different intellectual pursuits and emotional connections. These are turned into action in a profession, in an endeavor, or through a community. Virtually all of the 250 student organizations undertake advocacy, service, or professional preparation. In 2012 survey of graduating seniors, 81.6% often or very often discussed issues of social, cultural, or academic significance with others outside of class.

Truman is one of only 48 schools to be recognized as a “College of distinction”, in fact Truman as an active campus with many opportunities for personal development, home to a wide variety of innovative learning experiences, and highly valued by graduate schools and employers for its outstanding preparation. (Public Colleges of Distinction 2013-14 eGuidebook).

Suggested changes to Brand Identity. The design aesthetic should be updated. For example, the use of a pastel color palette in addition to the official University colors of purple and white, especially in place of the tan color, can be really appropriate to make the original

color less aggressive. Also there should be more consistency for the use of logo between the different medium of communication (websites, brochures....).

Current University Marketing by each area. Truman doesn't have a marketing department but multiple departments participate to the creation of marketing contents. We can find six main departments working towards the Marketing effort. The mission of the admissions department is to develop and maintain relationships with guidance counselors, accept new students and to give the best support possible to make them choose Truman. The athletics department owns a website which is specialized for college athletics where we can find online videos of the games. The website is accessible for everyone. The international office has an emphasis on direct communication, traveling and printed documents. It works also on the promotion of Truman abroad with, for example, Truman's brochure which is written in Chinese to attract Chinese students. Web and Videos are used for personal stories. Truman is marketed by social media (snapchat, facebook, twitter, instagram, youtube) and has a lot of instantaneous information. By using social media, Truman can reach current students, prospects and their parents, alumni, and international students all over the world. The website is adaptable for computer, tablet, smartphones etc. to reach a wide audience. The public relations office is responsible for Truman Today, campus photographer, legislative PR, internship program, act against budgetary strains at the Senate. The Alumni keep the contact with former students to promote the school through them and with them.

Major Marketing Issues

Lack of brand voice or personality. We found that in much of Truman's external communication there is a diverse message given. Truman has effectively communicated its brand value such as being a highly selective public liberal arts school, being capable of providing high quality of academic programs, and offering a college education with affordable prices. On the other hand, Truman's brand voice is not as perceptible as its brand value in and outside of the campus. It is less said about the quality of the education, what makes it high quality, what separates it from similarly priced universities, why Truman is a better buy than another high quality university that may be of higher price. Although its affordability is often focused as an attractive feature of Truman, the quality and richness that Truman offers is lost in communication through the current marketing. Many current students agree that one of the things that makes Truman's education special is the community within which it is set. Truman has a comparatively low faculty to student ratio and many classes heavily rely on peer-to-peer interaction. It is not hard for any given student to reach out and work with multiple professors, students, and even local professionals for anything they may be working on.

Similarly, Truman offers a Liberal Arts education, which is often misunderstood or a foreign concept to many new or potential students. The concept of Liberal Arts education is that it allows students to study many different disciplines in addition to their main field of study with the hope that this will afford them a much more well rounded perspective and understanding of the world. This is one of the many strengths of Truman's education, yet it is rarely advertised. When it is mentioned, there is little explanation of what it means and what makes it better than a traditional education.

Lack of cohesive marketing efforts. We see that the lack of brand voice issue is caused by the second issue which is a lack of cohesive marketing efforts. Truman currently does not have an identified collective voice that supports its brand personality. There are many diverse messages given by each office and department, and each message is presenting different characteristics of Truman. This issue is also found in Truman's use of social media. We think that it is important to have an individual or a team that cohesively manages all social media accounts for a success of integrated marketing.

Lack of Marketing Kirksville. The location of Kirksville is considered as a big concern in selecting a college. Based on our personal experiences and testimonials from other students, Kirksville, a small population town hours away from urban areas, seemed to have very little to offer before we actually start living in the town. However, there are various kinds of student organizations to get involved, philanthropy events to attend, and many other opportunities for personal growth in and outside of the campus in Kirksville. By telling benefits and personal stories about living in Kirksville more through marketing, we should be able to overcome a negative image of the location and attract more students who find their potentials to grow in this rich learning community, Kirksville.

Objectives

In order to progress with a successful IBP campaign, we need to set two strategic objectives and quantitative objectives. The first strategic objective is to identify what Truman's personality or Brand Voice is. It seems that when looking through Truman communications, there are personalities of a great value, a strong learning community, and an exceptional education, yet there is no clear indicator of which one is Truman's primary identity nor is there a cohesive mix

of the three. Aside from its promise of being a high quality education for a low price, we are aiming to deliver Truman's uniqueness to our target audiences. The second strategic objective is to coordinate marketing efforts. As we mentioned above, a lack of cohesive marketing is a current main issue for Truman. In order to achieve this issue, we suggest a unified strategy across all departments, better communications between departments, and a new student internship position for cohesive social media operations.

As quantitative goals, we hope to increase the number of applications from both in and out of state applicants. By increasing attendance to university events, showcases, campus visits, and regional recruitment events, we also expect to have them actually enroll to Truman when they are accepted. For international students, we would like to have more diverse student body from different countries. We believe that increasing ratings on college review sites would encourage both domestic and international students to apply to Truman as well as increasing positive perceptions for the location of Kirksville.

IBP Campaign

Campaign Theme and Slogan. The theme for our IBP campaign wants to build on the idea of the educational foundation that is unique to Truman State University. Through the use of the Liberal Studies Program, Truman affords students a foundation of excellence and educational success. This success is founded on three essential components of the Truman experience, community, leadership, and personal and professional excellence. These three components of the Truman foundation set it apart from its competition and provide consumers with a unique benefit.

Each of these components can be broken down to better show how they fit together to build the Truman Foundation. Community is probably the paramount feature of the Truman educational experience. At Truman State University, each student is afforded the opportunity to study and achieve alongside a passionate group of learners. More than that, the faculty and professors are all educated individuals who have devoted themselves to a lifetime of learning, and they are willing to teach as well as learn from the students in their classes. Being a Truman student gives you access to multiple connections with people who are just as interested in discovering as you are. Beyond this, the community connections made while a student at Truman are connections that last a lifetime.

In regards to leadership, Truman emphasizes the importance of civic responsibility, giving back to the community it is apart of, and bettering the world we live in. Numerous University events, organizations, and ideals strive to achieve this on a daily basis. Also, Truman aspires to be a leader in diversity, adaptability, and open-mindedness. With the many changes in the social climate recently, especially as it pertains to civil rights, university leaders have worked hard to reach out to the Truman community in an attempt to ensure communication between students and the university as well as to ensure that all people are treated equitably. One of the greatest strengths of Truman's Liberal Studies Program is the diverse perspectives from which it approaches education.

Finally, the Truman foundation consists of personal and professional excellence. In every aspect of Truman's education there is an aspiration to be all that you can be, as a student, a community member, and a future professional. This is coupled with a willing and active group of professors and advisers who will do what they can to assist students in their pursuit of

excellence. As a part of this, Truman offers students connections to internships, employment opportunities before and after graduation, as well as volunteer opportunities within the Kirksville community.

As can be seen, these three components cannot truly be separated to stand on their own. They each fit together and build on one another to form the foundation of Truman's education. Since a degree from Truman State University consists of more than just learning and proficiency in several areas of study, the Liberal Studies Program truly forms a foundation of success that is unique to Truman. This foundation provides a base for each student to build on their potential, academically, personally, and professionally. To encapsulate and summarize this theme we developed a slogan for this campaign. Our slogan is, "Your potential, our passion."

Advertising

Traditional advertising factors into our suggested Integrated Brand Promotion Campaign in three ways: Direct Mail, Radio, and Print Ads.

Direct Mail. Direct Mail has been identified as a traditional media that must remain consistent based on the opportunity it provides for direct communication with prospective students and the standard set in the market with competitor communication. The target audience would primarily consist of prospective students. It would provide insight about the university through small scale and large scale print pieces. Small scale would be used to build brand awareness and provide small spurts of value to consumers by offering them fast facts and other ways to learn more about the university such as the proposed Snapchat direct mail piece. The core message for direct media would be to communicate involvement through straight line copy for fact based information about the university and testimonials showcasing successful graduates

or current students and how Truman has developed their potential and lead to successful outcomes. High resolution creative photography of campus events, individuals, and environments should be the key visual elements. The placement of these pieces would be to send three or four small pieces at strategic times in prospective students high school career such as the beginning and end of the school year or surrounding holidays and then a larger packeting containing detailed information about the university could be sent a month in advance of college application season. Direct mail print ads would be used to encourage students to attend campus and schedule a visit or attend a showcase. In addition, direct mail would serve to showcase the brand personality and unique benefits of the university pertaining to opportunities for community involvement, leadership, and the development of personal excellence.

Snapchat Mail Piece. The Snapchat direct mail piece serves to integrate the use of two media formats to carry out the brand campaign (Appendix D). The piece acts as a small contact point that could be sent to prospective students any time of the year to prompt them to follow TrumanStateU on snapchat to gain new perspectives on a day in the life of a Truman Student. The piece would contain the snapchat QR image and only require the recipients to simply activate snapchat on their devices and point the camera towards the piece to instantly become a follower of TrumanStateU. The piece would utilize Truman's official purple and white colors and feature the snapchat QR identification with a short amount of copy offering student the benefits of following us on snapchat such as the ability to gain an inside look at Truman through the featuring of a day in the life of a Truman student to gain perspective of how Truman offers many opportunities for students to engage in their passion.

Radio. Radio is another media that we suggest the university continue to utilize in their effort to bend build in key target market areas such as Kansas City and St. Louis. We believe the radio would be best utilized for communicating with parents, however, instead of the current means of targeting students in these areas. Because students primarily listen to online radio such as Spotify and Pandora, it is suggested that the university shift their traditional radio media to these online music outlets that could provide more specific feedback about the reach and impressions and that could offer a higher level of engagement via linking opportunities or the ability for listeners to immediately search for the university to gain more access to information. For the parent radio targeting, its recommended to shift to new stations in the target markets. Radio ads could be testimonial in nature regarding the successful outcomes of students from the perspective of alumni and past student's parents. The content of the ads would focus on the pillars of the foundation theme of the campaign and the opportunities the university provides its students to engage in activities that enhance their potential through community involvement, leadership, and the development of personal excellence. In addition, it could utilize the rankings and recognition of distinctiveness that the university has achieved in order to position it against competition located within in the target markets. The ads would encourage parents to bring their students and visit campus for themselves to learn more about the opportunities that the university offers its students to achieve successful outcomes through the development of their potential and pursuit of their passions while attending Truman.

High School Publication Sponsorship - Print Ad. The high school publication sponsorship ads act as a traditional print ad placed in areas and target market high school publications (Appendix E). The target audience would be parents and students and would be

specified to the specific interests of the publication. The ad would serve the university by building relationships with area and target market high schools and increasing brand recognition. These ads provide a linking of the campaign objectives to the target high schools by connecting particular interests. For example, Truman could showcase a photo of the basketball team in action and utilize copy including the word “team” for specific ad placement in a high school basketball or sports publication. The ad would establish the relationship through the sponsoring of the publication, showcase the opportunities for students through the visuals relating to the publication, display the Truman logo and slogan. In addition, these ads would offer prospective students and parents the opportunity to directly connect with an admissions counselor to integrate the concept of personal selling based on the highly specified ad.

Internet. Concerning Internet, efforts to reach prospective students should be more heavily invested in digital advertising. First, Youtube video that showcases the Truman Foundation from a first hand perspective, like the “I love Truman video” should be used to reach this target audience. In fact it appeals to prospective students that are more receptive to online video than brochures for example. In a similar tone and idea as the Youtube video, online radios such as Pandora, Spotify or Itunes Radio could be used to target younger people instead of traditional radio. These types of online radio are facing a wide success worldwide: Spotify counts about 100 million of subscribers worldwide! (Website, Digital Music News). Moreover, banner ads should be placed on college search sites and blog sites such as The Odyssey to attract the attention. Sponsored tweets or featured story stories on Facebook are a good way to reach prospective students by social media because they use these kinds of platform everyday. Finally,

search engine optimization should be used in order to show Truman State University at the top of the results while searching information about university in Missouri.

For all of these medias, a straight line copy or testimonials should be used. By using these techniques, Truman shows a real persuasive and aspirational way of reaching its audience.

Sales Promotion. Sales promotion give the University an opportunity to add value for prospective students and their families. It is a tool that should be used to increase engagement, initiate a conversation and catch the consumer's attention. One way we suggest doing this is by implementing the "Bark Box." This box will be sent to admitted students and will include fun pieces of content such as a postcard with a handwritten note, a card directing the consumer to Instagram and some tangible goods such as a personalized coke can, SAB event tickets, a computer sticker and a small Kirksville coupon booklet. Written content in this box will emphasize the community, campus involvement and an invitation to visit the University. The idea is for this piece to show that Truman cares about its students and is a source of encouragement.

Other promotional suggestions include free course planning with application submission and outreach programs that offer scholarships to high school students that take online courses through Truman. Another tangible item suggested is a small journal made from recycled paper that integrates inspirational writing prompts throughout in order to provide something useful and thoughtful for a student with which they can associate with Truman.

Personal Selling. Personal selling is an extremely important vehicle for the University to project its brand image and personality. In order to build upon current personal selling efforts, we suggest developing an elevator speech themed around the Truman Foundation to be disseminated

through the career center and through the Truman ambassador program. The Truman elevator speech would be given to students as a practice example of how to sell yourself in eleven seconds and could be used before the career expo. This short piece of verbal content would act a primary statement to make when someone inquires about the University. The elevator speech would help to increase consistency in the message that students send about the University and serve as a professional development tool as well.

Another important personal selling suggestion is to actively schedule webinars with high school counselors in order to build a relationship with high schools around the country and give them valuable information that is often explained during campus visits. This would allow high school counselors to learn more about Truman without the expense of having to travel to Kirksville. Along with webinars, we suggest that alumni become an active part of the recruiting process in order to give prospective students perspective on the school and the future it offers. Alumni can become involved at college fairs, visit days and other Truman events.

Outdoor Advertisements. Outdoor advertisements serve the university by offering brand building and recognition opportunities according to their placement. This media should target prospective students and their families and community members as well. Outdoor media such as billboards should include the university logo and slogan: “Your Potential, Our Passion.” These should be located in Kansas City and St. Louis and encourage campus visits using straight line copy for a call to action such as “Schedule Your Visit Today!” The imagery used in the billboards should include creative and vibrant views of campus to help encourage visitation. Additional outdoor media includes placement in the Kirksville community to showcase the interconnectedness of campus and the city. Light post banners hanging downtown, Truman’s

name on the water tower, and other signage in the area offers the development of character downtown and provides the perspective to visiting students and their families that Truman is truly integrated within the community which is important in combatting concerns about the rural location of the university. These types of outdoor placements should primarily feature the university name and should “paint the town purple” in order to easily identify the recognition of the university’s connection to the community.

Public relations. Concerning public relations, Truman could host a gala every year for people who donate to Truman to thank them. It can encompass the alumni, some companies, the parents and anyone concerned by the donations. During this event, Truman could present how they used the money and how it makes a difference for Truman (investment in technology for students, maintenance and renovation of the buildings), in order to maintain these donations.

Sending a newsletter of what’s going on in the school every month to the donors and parents to keep in touch with them and promote goodwill about the school is also a good way to increase commitment and maintain a successful and sustained communication.

The school should also share information with the state government to maintain the subsidies: examples of graduate students that made a difference in the state to show that Truman is a good school and deserve the subsidies; show that the subsidies help people to get access to education and culture which is a very important topic nowadays; emphasize on the fact that students are really enjoying the experience at Truman and are becoming skilled for their future jobs and useful to the society.

Create an event for accepted students framed by Alumni is a way to engage students from the beginning of their education in the university. They would also take advantage of a proximity with alumni that can give advice and share their career path.

Students of Truman could also lead a charity event to put together something for underprivileged students and allow the access to education to a wider range of students. It will create a favorable image of the university to its community and State and make it even more attractive. Also, when customers have a wide choice, as it is the case for universities, they will often choose the one they most closely associate with. The charity is a way to link the entire society to an important cause.

All of the events listed above but also the actual events that take place in Truman such as the Greek Week, The Martin Luther King event and homecoming, could be recorded in order to create a video. It could also encompass alumni testimonials to promote the university in which students can combine pleasure with work.

The target audience concerned by the public relations effort are the parents, the students, the donors and the government. The goal is to reach a wide range a people to promote a spread goodwill.

Social Media

Social Media Campaign. In order to effectively build on our current IBP campaign, it is important that Truman reach out on its social media platforms. The best way to do this would be through the use of an organized social media campaign. The goal of this campaign would be to communicate the theme of our IBP campaign to consumers while also encouraging connection and feedback from them. The social media campaign theme is, “What’s your passion?” where

Truman asks people to post photos or videos of them doing something they are passionate about. To connect these to the Truman campaign, all posts related to the “What’s your passion?” campaign can be hashtagged with #Trupassion. Once a week, the best #Trupassion post will be selected by the Truman social media team and re-posted on all of their accounts. Then, throughout the week, Truman can post items displaying their passion, the students potential, emphasizing the three main components of the Truman Foundation, community, leadership, and excellence.

This gives Truman the opportunity to create jabs throughout the week that promote their message, encourage brand awareness, and engage their followers. Then, the posts that are selected by Truman could be specifically chosen to emphasize the campaign theme. An effective way to utilize this campaign would be to use all of their social media platforms to post unique content to those platforms. For example, Instagram could be used to showcase the arts or creative photos posted by students while Facebook could be used to post longer stories that tie into the campaign and Twitter can be used for short, quick blurbs. This way, each site has its own unique content but the message is consistent across platforms.

Additionally, we would like to propose a revamping of Truman’s Twitter page. Currently, Truman mostly uses Twitter to repost items from other sites which makes it quite dull and doesn’t engage consumers well. We recommend that Twitter be used primarily as a personality platform to showcase Truman’s brand voice. Through utilizing intellectual humor, we believe that we can communicate the high intellectual standards that Truman touts while also engaging with followers better. In addition to these changes, we believe Truman could use Twitter to catch onto trends in the market and “trendjack” their posts to reach their target audience better.

Social Media Platform Engagement. We have several specific per-platform engagement recommendations to guide campaign use on the main social media platforms that the university uses. Since each platform has its own native content formats, we identified specific ways in which the campaign could be best communicated through each platform.

We believe that Facebook is best used for brand building by public relations content via the sharing of publicity through rankings, recognition, and achievements as well as large campus events and announcements. It serves as the prime method for information based marketing communication. Embedded video based content has typically seen the most engagement on this platform. For this reason, it is suggested that the university integrate video based campaign content on this platform. Primarily, in addition to the information based content, the university should utilize community member profiles and perspectives including current students, faculty, and alumni to share how Truman has played a role in helping them develop their potential and achieve their success by providing opportunities to engage in their passions through the resources that the university provides.

Instagram, as a primarily photography based platform offers a unique opportunity to tell short stories in a visual way. For this reason, we recommend that the university utilize the platform to feature individual profiles and provide short blurbs about how Truman has enabled them to explore their passions. Typically, creative photos of Truman's campus receive the highest consistent level of interaction on the platform. This type of content should be increased including messaging relating to the the social media campaign and showcasing creatively shot campus venues where Truman Students primarily engage in their passions. For example, showcasing labs, the library, the theater and performance hall. This would allow for a visual representation of

where Truman students pursue their passions and should include a textual based explanation linking that perspective to the social media campaign.

Twitter has primarily been used as an extension of the Facebook page to provide information based content shared on that platform but also includes retweets of campus departments and organizations. Engagement on this platform with post retweets and likes has been rather low. For these reasons, we suggest that the platform be utilized in a different fashion. Twitter provides prime opportunities to showcase Truman personality. It is imperative that the platform be utilized for situational and trend driven engagement that represents Truman's personality. Twitter as a platform offers users a unique way to communicate in short segments that would be beneficial for personality/brand building in interaction with prospective students. These short content segments would offer a glimpse of the university's personality through a variety of entertainment and informational based content and occasionally offer a link back to more information based platforms such as the university website or Facebook. This could be driven by the social media campaign to relate to unique aspects of campus that provide opportunities for community members to engage in their passions.

Snapchat has primarily been utilized for Takeover Tuesdays by current students or departments. The platform provides unique viewer opportunities through story based content. Snapchat offers prime opportunities to showcase 'a day in the life' at Truman and provide multiple individual perspectives of campus life at Truman. This platform should showcase multiple perspectives of campus life and campus activities through the eyes of the university's current students. In addition, Truman should investigate the possibility of utilizing their own Truman Live viewing option where snaps sent in the area can be reviewed and selected to appear

under Truman's own live feed. This could provide opportunities for additional crowdsourced content of perspectives of Truman and the Kirksville community.

Showcase/Visit Day Recommendations. Truman already does a great job with its showcase and visit days, however a few changes are suggested. First, the career center should become an integral part of tours and activities. Parents and students are increasingly interested in the potential and outcome a university can help their child achieve after graduation. This would be a great opportunity to show how the University's community lends itself to a bright future and endless networking opportunities. Also, showcase dates should be funneled onto dates when there are campus events or activities occurring to show prospective students what life on campus is like and how they can get involved. Lastly, in order to insure accountability of tour guides, evaluations should be assigned periodically.

Website Critique. Truman's website since the updates is very strong. In comparison to several different universities' websites, Truman's is actually one of the easiest to find the application site, information about majors and programs, and approximate cost of attendance. As far as ease of access, consistency of presentation, and overall feel, we believe Truman's website does a good job of communicating the brand and the necessary information to visitors.

There are a few things that we propose could make the website stronger. First, having some sort of hub or integration of Truman's social media sites such as a "like us on Facebook" or "Follow us on Twitter, snapchat, Instagram, etc." buttons could tie in the full Truman marketing campaign while creating an extra level of connection with prospective students/parents. Another thing we proposed would be the development of a live chat with a Truman admissions counselor or Truman student. This would allow prospective students to ask questions about the application

process, about Truman itself, and any other questions they may have regarding their entire college experience. Finally, the website mainly utilizes two or three colors, purple, white, and tan. There are a few little things that incorporate a mix of different pastel colors. We believe that this use of more color actually accentuates the Truman colors of purple and white while also livening it up a little bit. We recommend integrating more colors, especially in place of some of the tan.

Media Plan Our selection of media for advertising is same as what Truman currently uses which is traditional radio, online radio, and billboards. Only suggestion we made for types of media is to add Spotify for online radio advertising besides Pandora. Throughout our researches and focus groups, we discovered that younger audiences are shifting toward digital more and more for information sources. Therefore, we plan to use traditional radio advertising mainly for reaching out parents and online radio for students.

For scheduling, we identify fall and spring as two main seasons that have more potentials to reach out to prospective students and parents. High school juniors and seniors usually start to search information about college in fall in order to decide which school they are going to apply for. By making advertising efforts during this season, we are confident to capture attentions of target audiences effectively. Spring advertising would also be critical to keep admitted students interested and actually have them decide to enroll at Truman because most colleges send out admission letters this season.

Radio advertisements would be broadcasted by local radio stations in Kansas City, St. Louis, Columbia, and Quincy Illinois. To be precise, we plan to place our ads on KSLZ and KYKY, on KRBZ, KCHZ, KMXV, KCFX in Kansas City, on KPLA, KOQL in Columbia, and on KGRC in

Quincy. Advertising on Spotify and Pandora will be placed state-widely. We believe statewide ads on online radio would help us to reach out to our target audiences who resides outside of above urban areas. For billboards, we suggest to keep two current locations in KC and STL and eliminate other two locations. This will save approximately \$10,000 annually and we could relocate this money to digital or social media marketing.

Evaluation . To evaluate the marketing strategy, we can use several metrics to find how efficient the strategy is and each component of it. The purpose of the evaluation in marketing is to focus employee efforts on activities that make a difference and set up performance expectations that can be objectively measured.

To summarize the results of the evaluation, we can use marketing dashboards. The use of dashboards is for computerizing, graphical presentation of metrics measurements and helping managers to see the situation at a glance, based upon a limited number of data inputs.

We can evaluate, as follow, each components of the strategy. First surveys can be used to evaluate slogan and outdoor advertising such as billboards by asking some questions like “Do you know the slogan/ billboard of Truman?” “What do you think of it?”... For Public Relations, surveys can be used to know the public opinion. The exposure (number of shares, likes, followers, etc.) can be very useful in evaluating Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. The reach and potential reach of personal selling, sales promotions, Instagram, photo blog, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat have to be measured also to know the effectiveness of their use. Another metric is the click through rate which is meaningful for evaluating Instagram, photo blog, Twitter, Facebook and websites. Concerning direct mail, frequency and number of reactions to mail are the most easy and cost effective ways to evaluate this media.

Organizational Implementation. Based on the breadth of experience accessible within Truman's community, it is imperative that the university utilize its readily available resources to enhance its marketing capabilities and efforts. In order to carry out effective marketing strategies, the university should create an organization within itself comprised of many campus entities that operates similar to a marketing firm. While this IBP Campaign or any derivatives would provide a more specified direction for the marketing efforts, the current structure doesn't allow for smooth implementation to occur as seen by the decentralized approach of the status quo. For this reason, several implementation factors must be considered.

The university ought to classify their talent into three general categories to organize their resources that can be found in campus offices, departments, and students. These three categories, as recommended by Arons et. al are Think, Do, and Feel (2014). Each of these categories has different focuses. Think marketers are focused on data and analytics, Feel marketers are engagement focused, and Do marketers are focused on content and production (2014).

The university ought to appoint, hire, or identify a Chief Marketing Officer responsible for leadership of the marketing efforts and organization within the university. This individual would be responsible for the utilization and management of the talent groups and would drive the university's strategic efforts. Without an identified leader to direct the marketing efforts of the organization, again, the university would be vulnerable to the decentralized approach and issues it currently faces.

The university ought to integrate students into the marketing efforts that it seeks to implement. This would provide students with unique opportunities to contribute to the university's efforts while offering them real world problem solving experience and a view at

interdisciplinary ways of thinking and the benefit of a liberal arts education. This internal method provides opportunities for the development of student potential and for the university. Students could serve in multiple capacities either on think/do/feel teams or as marketing content managers who act as key resources when it comes to keeping messaging consistent across all departments of the university and ensuring that Truman's brand is accurately represented in all marketing content.

Summary and Conclusions

Truman State University is a unique brand that has immense potential to grow in the future. The University is largely known for its promise to provide a high quality education at a low price and has done a great job at marketing this to students and families across the midwest. However, while Truman is infamous for providing an incredible value, University marketing efforts fall short when it comes to showcasing the true personality which encompasses community, leadership and excellence that becomes so evident when walking the campus. A second issue that affects the implementation of marketing the University is that marketing efforts are highly fragmented and inconsistent. The message that the University sends to its consumers does not emphasize the true uniqueness of the university and does it in an inconsistent manner. Therefore, the primary objectives for this campaign were to identify the true personality of the University and consolidate marketing efforts. To do this, we developed a campaign theme centered around the foundation that Truman provides for its students which includes community, leadership and excellence. To support the campaign we proposed a number of suggestions including a Snapchat direct mail piece to increase engagement, a video advertisement that showcases what people love about Truman, the "Bark Box," an elevator speech to teach students

how to talk about Truman, a PR video that shows students, families, alumni, and legislators how Truman gives back and lastly a social media campaign that initiates conversation between the University and prospective students about passions and aspirations. Overall, this campaign can be proven effective through the use of metrics and will ultimately come together through a careful and cohesive implementation plan.

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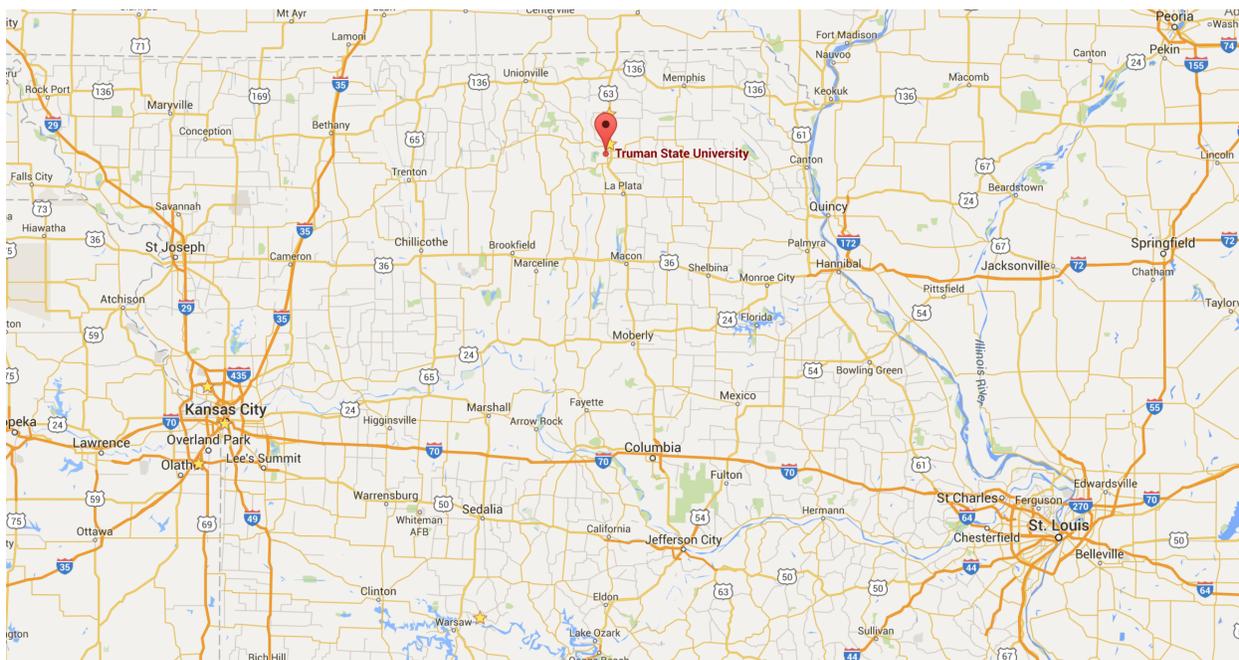
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Appendix A



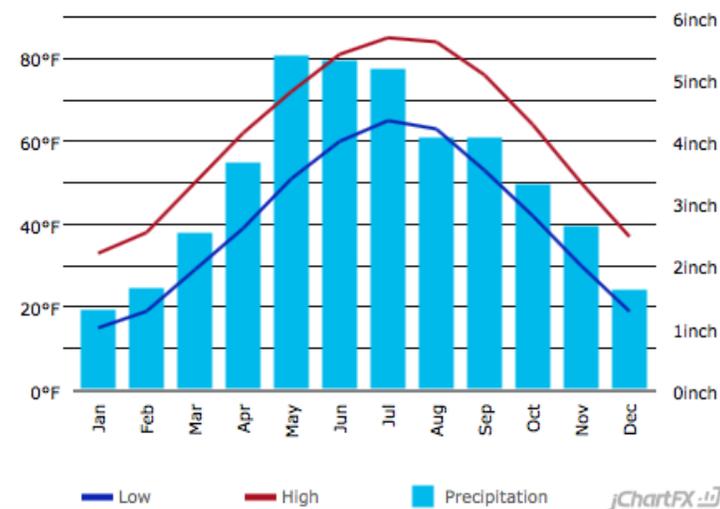
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Appendix B

Kirkville Climate Graph - Missouri Climate Chart



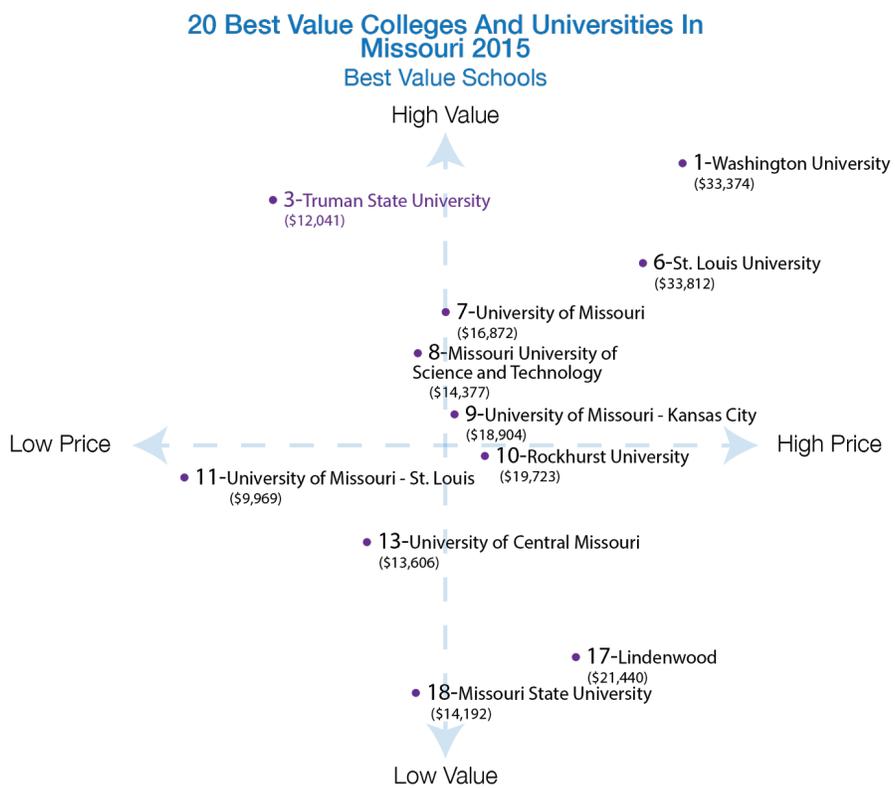
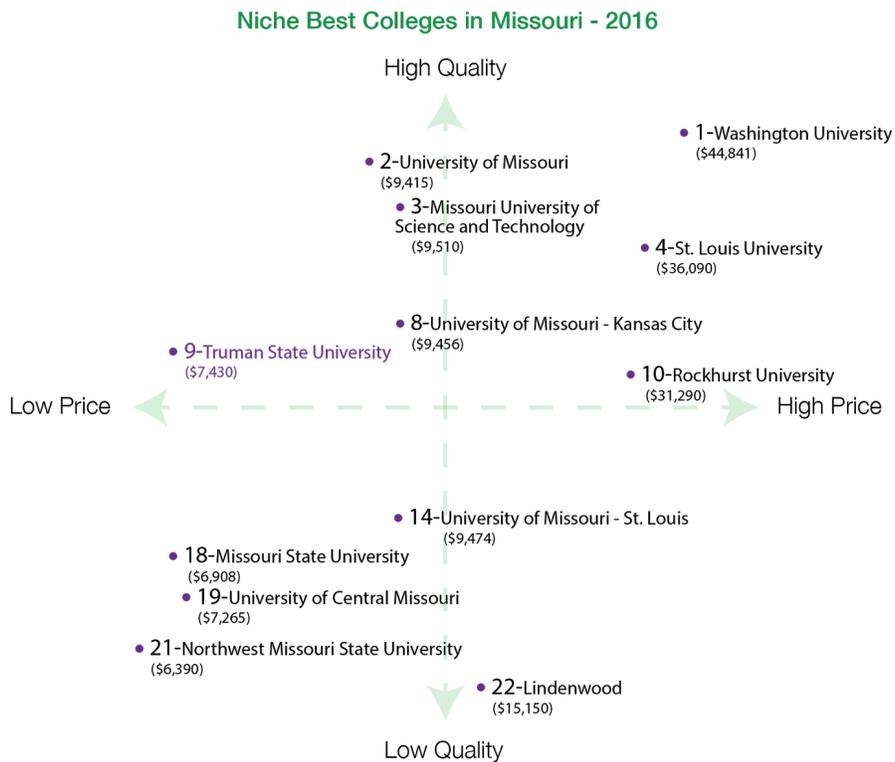
Climate Kirkville - Missouri

°C | °F

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Average high in °F:	33	38	50	62	72	81
Average low in °F:	15	19	29	39	51	60
Av. precipitation in inch:	1.3	1.65	2.52	3.66	5.39	5.31
Days with precipitation:	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hours of sunshine:	-	-	-	-	-	-
Average snowfall in inch:	4	4	2	0	0	0

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Average high in °F:	85	84	76	64	50	37
Average low in °F:	65	63	53	42	30	19
Av. precipitation in inch:	5.16	4.06	4.06	3.31	2.64	1.61
Days with precipitation:	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hours of sunshine:	-	-	-	-	-	-
Average snowfall in inch:	0	0	0	0	1	4

Appendix C
Positioning Maps



Appendix D



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CONTACT: JOHN DOE KANSAS CITY AREA ADMISSIONS COUNSELOR
AND LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR ENHANCING YOUR
POTENTIAL AS PART OF THE TRUMAN TEAM

 John Doe  JDOE@TRUMAN.EDU  (660) 785-4000

Appendix E



TRUMANSTATEU

Follow us on Snapchat!

To gain an inside look at a Day in the Life of a Truman Student and find out about all of the ways that Truman State University provides opportunities for students to engage in their passions.

John Doe
414 S Baltimore
Kirksville, MO 63501

Truman State University
100 E Normal St.
Kirksville, MO 63501



Appendix F



The video can be viewed at this link:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B_U6mAw_E1yaVmJrTURoRmxCblk