



ADVANCEMENT FRAMEWORK PLANNING REPORT

August 2012





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August 30, 2012

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

Ohio State is at an unprecedented moment of opportunity, one that we cannot allow to slip from our grasp. Our students have never been better prepared than they are at this moment. Our faculty--across every single academic field--have never been more accomplished and devoted. Our staff has never been more creative and determined. And our alumni have never been more supportive. Through University Advancement, we will combine those forces so that the sum is far greater than its parts. We will provide a clear and crystallized articulation of the institution's profound purposes and its accomplishments; we will more deeply engage our vast, global network of alumni and friends in the current life of the University. And, in so doing, we will garner more support, enabling us to achieve even greater accomplishments for the benefit of our students, our state, the nation, and the world.

The University first introduced the comprehensive Advancement concept a few years ago, and since that time we have steadily refined its meaning. To my mind, the definition of Advancement is simple: It will allow us to achieve our shared aspirations. It is the specific application of our One University principle to the institution's outward-facing functions of communications, alumni relations, and fundraising. Fully integrating the strategic planning, programs, budgets, and staff teams of these units will enable us to move quickly and assertively toward realizing Ohio State's enormous promise and power. The Advancement Framework Planning team was formed last fall to develop a blueprint for the University to accomplish that integration, and this is their report.

The effort reflected in this report represents the strategic thinking of members of our Board of Trustees' Advancement Committee, internal and external experts in marketing and branding, and University faculty, staff, students, and alumni. In total, more than 5,000 people were consulted throughout the process of developing the plans contained in this document. I am grateful to them, and especially grateful to members of the Advancement Framework Planning team, led by Dr. Gil Cloyd of our Board of Trustees. The team devoted countless hours to answering these critical questions:

- What qualities make Ohio State unique, and how can we better communicate them?
- How do we more deeply engage our alumni and friends with the University?
- How do we best organize ourselves so that we are planning and executing our Advancement strategies as One University?

This document provides new and valuable information that defines the University's singular position within American higher education, delineates specific qualities and interests of alumni and friends, and offers an organizational model that will allow us to integrate functions and collaborate for success. Some of the language in this document, particularly related to branding and marketing, is not typically used in higher education. It is used here to be as clear as possible about the unique and essential attributes of the University: How we see ourselves, how others see us, and what we aspire to be and to accomplish.

With this report and the roadmap it provides, the march toward formalizing the University's Advancement approach has reached a critical milestone. While it is not the endpoint, it provides the direction needed for us to implement a new, integrated approach to our work. With the full force and impact of The Ohio State University, we move toward eminence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Gordon Gee".

E. Gordon Gee

President

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since President Gee's return, The Ohio State University has pursued a "One University" concept to place Ohio State among the premier academic and research institutions in the country.

While One University goals focus primarily on uniting the University's vast resources, the concept does not stop at the boundaries of Ohio State's campuses. The University must also master its relationships with key internal and external constituencies—students, faculty and staff, alumni and donors, business leaders, and Ohioans—who play a critical role in the University's success. Ohio State is uniquely positioned to help solve complex global problems; however, it will only succeed at doing so if it solidifies its relationships with its many stakeholders.

The task of building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with external constituencies is the responsibility of the University's Advancement organization. As adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2008, Advancement is "the strategic, University-wide integration and coordination of alumni relations, communications and marketing, and development functions to foster positive relationships with students, alumni, and other key audiences; provide multiple opportunities for engagement; and generate involvement with and support for the mission of The Ohio State University."

In December 2011, the Board of Trustees engaged Edelman to develop a blueprint for Advancement, known as the Advancement Framework Plan. Over the past nine months, Edelman has engaged more than 5,000 stakeholders to understand what it will take to achieve the University's Advancement goals. The project combined assessment of Ohio State's current capabilities and structures with the gathering of best practices from comparable institutions and best-in-class organizations. The resulting recommendations create an organization with state of the art, highly integrated Advancement functions.

The findings below provide a path toward developing a world-class Advancement function that can support the University's ambitious aspirations for its future. This executive summary highlights key findings and recommendations in three areas:

- institutional position
- market segmentation
- organizational design

INSTITUTIONAL POSITION

To effectively engage and improve its relationships with key stakeholders, Ohio State must first clearly articulate what the University stands for. Ohio State means many things to its many stakeholders, so to act as “One University” requires a consistent institutional position that can be used internally as a “North Star” to guide messaging, outreach activities, and decision-making.

In order to define the essence of Ohio State, research identified the following institutional equities at the core of the University’s essence:

- **Scale and Breadth:** The number, size, and diversity of resources, offerings, and facilities at Ohio State are vast.
- **Networked Intersections:** At Ohio State, there is a co-located, highly collaborative academic, social, and civic-minded community in which powerful, extended networks grow naturally. Intriguing connections—planned and serendipitous, intellectual and personal—are taking place constantly, creating an extraordinarily dynamic learning and growing environment.
- **A Pathway to Potential:** For those with the initiative to seize it, Ohio State supports and encourages individuals to pursue their own path to fulfillment. It is a natural gateway to immense personal and professional opportunities.
- **A Midwestern Sensibility:** More a background reality than a conscious value system, this uniquely American ethos is inseparable from Ohio State’s culture.

The institutional position statement, which was developed in active partnership with the Ohio State community, uses these equities to define what Ohio State is today, and what it aspires to become:

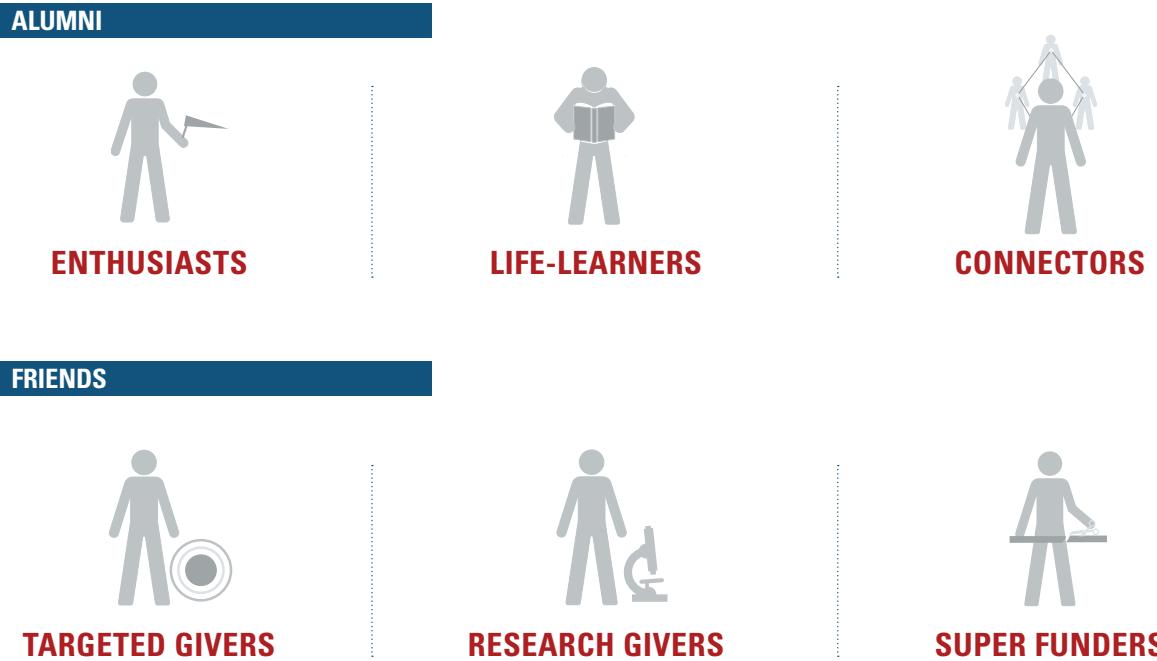
Ohio State is a dynamic community where opportunity thrives. Through our far-reaching network of diverse resources and perspectives, we foster the incisive thinking, spirit of collaboration, and depth of character you need to transform yourself and your world.

MARKET SEGMENTATION

Having defined the core essence of what Ohio State stands for, it is then critical to understand what stakeholders want and need from the University so it can deliver on those needs and expectations. We focused our segmentation analysis on alumni and friends of Ohio State. “Friends” are defined as people who have donated to Ohio State within the last two years but did not graduate from the University. “Alumni” are defined as Ohio State degree holders, including medical resident graduates.

Extensive research into behaviors, motivators, and financial drivers of alumni and friends of Ohio State led to the identification of five friend segments and five alumni segments. Three segments, respectively, were identified as priority segments based on propensity for giving and engagement.

The priority segments are:



Greater engagement with these priority segments is critical to the success of Ohio State. Research supports the Advancement hypothesis that engagement and giving are positively related, and indicates that as alumni or friends participate in an increased number of activities at the University, they become more likely to be prolific donors. The stakeholder research also identifies specific activities in which alumni and friends would like to engage, including student mentoring, online education, and professional speakers series.

ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN

Finally, with a clear definition of the University's institutional position, and a new framework for understanding and engaging with stakeholders, the University must create the right organization to activate the brand and drive deeper engagement with stakeholders.

To assess Ohio State's Advancement organization, its strengths and challenges were evaluated through interviews and work sessions with Advancement staff from most colleges and units. Interviews with external experts were conducted to understand best practices within higher education and other engagement- or fundraising-based industries. This created a clear set of strategic imperatives to address in the design of the Advancement operating model. The assessment focused on functions and capabilities, not individuals, as the goal

was to understand the Advancement organization across six levels of organizational impact: structure, governance, talent, culture, processes, and systems.

Edelman worked closely with Ohio State's human resources leadership team to design the organizational structure and operating model and to define recommendations for areas of improvement that would reflect and align with the University's strategic vision, values, and culture.

The resulting organization has the following important characteristics:

- Advancement will be a matrixed organization that drives University-wide Advancement strategy, functional best practices, and stakeholder analysis from the center and supports the units and colleges in their execution of Advancement-related activities.
- The units and colleges will continue to be accountable for developing plans and tactics that engage their specific audiences. Those activities will be enhanced with guidance from the central Advancement organization around narrative and messaging themes, brand management, and engagement best practices that can be tailored to suit unit-specific needs.
- Ohio State will build a mission-driven culture that creates opportunity, promotes shared responsibility, and rewards collaborative spirit.
- Advancement will be the central owner and steward of the University's institutional position, which will be the basis for internal shared understanding of Ohio State's equities. However, everyone will be empowered to act as a brand steward.
- There are clear needs for increased capabilities in digital engagement, brand management and marketing, research and analysis, and people management to support Advancement activities.
- Advancement will develop a more cohesive and collaborative mindset, which is critical to increase morale and engagement among staff, including aligning rewards and incentives systems.

Ultimately, the Advancement organization will be committed to driving integrated strategies, supporting the units and colleges, and creating a high-performing culture. This organization will be well-equipped to drive engagement and fundraising excellence.

THE ROAD AHEAD

This Advancement Framework Plan outlines a path toward achieving mutually beneficial relationships that allow Ohio State to positively impact the lives of its stakeholders and the world at large. In addition, Advancement will stimulate increased philanthropic support for academic and research initiatives that serve the community. Individually, these outcomes have vast tangible and intangible benefits to the University and others. Together, these two outcomes will propel the University further in its journey from excellence to eminence.



CONTEXT

REDEFINING "LAND GRANT" FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

On July 2, 1862, President Lincoln signed into law the Morrill Act (Land Grant Act), which revolutionized what had been the traditional approach to higher education. The act provided grants of land to states for the purpose of teaching engineering, agricultural, and mechanical skills, providing for the "education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life."¹ As the nation commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Morrill Act, Ohio State has a unique opportunity to reflect upon its roots as a land grant university and contemporize the spirit of the land grant mission.

LAND GRANT ROOTS

Founded in 1870 as the Ohio Agricultural and Mechanical College, Ohio State was initially dedicated to instruction in the agricultural industry and mechanical arts. Just three years later, its purview was expanded to a wider set of curricula intended to provide students with a more rounded education. Today, Ohio State has transformed itself into a hub for educational opportunity and an economic driver for the state of Ohio. The University has a breadth of diverse and world-class resources, a growing reputation for academic excellence, and a nationally acclaimed athletics program. In its pursuit of academic excellence, Ohio State has upheld its mission to educate students of all backgrounds in disciplines that create practical knowledge and contribute to real-world problem-solving. Turning theory into practice has long been a hallmark of Ohio State.

LAND GRANT OF TOMORROW

Today, as in 1862, the nation is experiencing a period of tremendous societal, cultural, and economic change. American institutions are dealing with transformative issues such as globalization, a knowledge-based economy, the rapid penetration of digital technology, and renewed questions of American competitiveness. The recent economic downturn has reduced state and federal budgets for higher education. College graduates are entering a highly competitive and constricted job market while carrying some of the largest student loan debts in history. Prospective students are facing a landscape of educational opportunities that include new entrants and online models while confronting questions of the value of a college degree. Change is the new constant.

As one of the largest public land grant institutions in the nation, Ohio State has a responsibility to become a leader in shaping and addressing these issues on a national and global stage. Ohio State must leverage its network of resources to become a platform for great minds to study, debate, and present solutions to societal and economic problems. Solving issues of local, national, and global importance will be the mission of 21st century land grant institutions. That must be the mission of Ohio State, one of profound importance that will require the trust, support, and influence of key constituents.

¹United States Code. Title 7, Chapter 13, Subchapter I, Section 304.

DEFINING “ADVANCEMENT”

Advancement is an integrated, University-wide approach to expressing what Ohio State stands for, strengthening relationships with University stakeholders (students, faculty and staff, alumni and donors, business leaders, and Ohioans), and managing engagement and fundraising activities in support of the University’s mission to educate students, create knowledge, and serve communities. This is accomplished by aligning three key functions:

- marketing and communications
- development
- alumni relations

These three Advancement functions will be built on a foundation of aligned strategy that expresses Ohio State’s values and goals, and through an organizational model that promotes integrated decision-making, consistent communications, and data-driven approaches.

Ohio State’s current Advancement organization is a loosely linked collection of functions that operate in silos. While there is some collaboration among communications, fundraising, and alumni relations, it is not the norm. Internal stakeholders overall pointed to a lack of vision and clarity regarding Advancement’s relationship(s) with activities in the units and colleges. Further, the recent integration of the Ohio State Alumni Association left lingering questions about their role within the organization.

The Advancement Framework Plan streamlines and organizes Ohio State’s communications and alumni and constituency engagement organizations so they work as one unit to create powerful and engaging experiences, disseminate critical information, and offer essential services to key constituencies. It is critical to unite the various functions, departments, and groups on Ohio State’s campuses to act as “One University” in pursuit of these transformative goals.

BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

The success of Ohio State’s efforts in Advancement rest on three core concepts:

CORE VALUES: KNOW THYSELF

It is impossible to open a newspaper, watch television, or surf the internet without seeing how the landscape of communications and engagement is facing extraordinary change. The empowerment of average people to express themselves and cultivate an audience for their views has changed the rules of engagement. The increasing importance of social responsibility to the bottom line of major institutions is also changing public discourse. Recent research shows that trust in private and public institutions across industries is on the decline, while trust in individuals is on the rise. Today, more than ever, an organization’s values matter.

In a fiercely competitive higher education landscape where funding from state and federal sources is at risk, an organization's core values help it navigate an uncertain world. Values help attract top talent (students, faculty, staff), help loyal alumni maintain their trust in an organization when there is exposure to reputational risk, and help align internal resources and stakeholders around a common purpose that serves as the "North Star" for the entire institution.

Ohio State is rooted in powerful institutional values relating to its land grant legacy, scale, extensive alumni network, excellence in research and facilities, and world-class athletics program. Today, its accomplishments notwithstanding, it has remained an approachable and accessible institution that imparts a sense of civic responsibility to its students. As Ohio State continues to expand its footprint, the University must be both clear and focused in the values it wishes to convey and the expression of those values in both word and deed.

ONE UNIVERSITY: EMBRACE THE POWER OF UNITY

"One University" is a concept that underpins many recent initiatives at Ohio State, impacting both the physical landscape of the campuses and the spirit of the community. The tenets of alignment to larger goals, increased collaboration, and openness to change are reflected in the overarching vision of Advancement. Ohio State must develop an Advancement framework that is grounded in the institution's core values and enables collaborative execution. Building on the One University tenets, Advancement must also promote:

- **Shared Responsibility:** Every college and unit is responsible for achieving goals that are in the best interests of both the institution and its stakeholders.
- **Personal Accountability:** Every member of the Ohio State community should proactively develop ideas that move the organization forward.
- **Collaborative Spirit:** Reaching across department or function silos must be practiced daily and rewarded appropriately to embed collaboration in the organization's culture.
- **Speaking with One Voice:** The might of the University must be used to create a unilateral and unified impact in messaging, engagement, and fundraising efforts.

MUTUALITY: GIVE AND TAKE

The concept of mutuality pertains to mutual benefit between an organization and its stakeholders. As an eminent institution, Ohio State must act in concert with the stakeholders who have given and will give generously their time, talent, and treasures to benefit the University. As an organization, Ohio State must question, learn, and respond to the wants and needs of its stakeholders to ensure it continues to provide them with essential support and services.

Embracing the concept of mutually beneficial relationships will allow the University to utilize its tremendous intellectual and physical assets to create more meaningful engagements and positive impacts with stakeholders around the globe.

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MASTERY

ABILITY

PROJECT APPROACH

Ohio State embarked on the journey of redefining its approach to Advancement in 2008. The University developed ambitious Advancement goals that were intended to drive fundraising, engagement, and reputational success. Multiple internal task forces and committees were charged with researching, assessing, and developing recommendations around Advancement models. These groups studied and visited top universities to gain insights and identify best practices.

In October 2011, Ohio State began its search for a partner to support the development of an Advancement Framework Plan, a detailed strategic and operating roadmap. The Advancement Committee of the Board of Trustees and the Advancement Framework Planning Team (see sidebar) provided leadership in the creation of project goals, the selection of the consultancy, and continuous strategic guidance throughout the duration of the project.

Articulating the Advancement vision required a nine-month integrated project to develop a comprehensive understanding of Ohio State's current state, future aspirations, and capability to implement the Advancement model. The project approach incorporated five important steps:



Define a unifying institutional position for Ohio State that encompasses its core attributes, functional and emotional equities, and personality.



Build on existing segmentation work to **better understand behaviors and motivations for key stakeholder groups**.



Create a strategic engagement plan that activates the brand and promotes signature programming.



Develop an integrated and collaborative operating model for Advancement.



Chart an implementation and change management roadmap to guide ongoing efforts and realize the benefits of the recommendations.

The Framework Planning Team is the steering committee that provided strategic direction, decision-making, and guidance for the development of the Advancement deliverables.

Dr. Joseph Alutto
Executive Vice President and Provost, Academic Affairs

Melinda Church
Vice President, University Communications

Dr. G. Gilbert Cloyd, Chair
Board of Trustees

Philip Duncan
Global Design Officer, P&G

Christopher Ito
Treasurer, Board of Directors, The Ohio State University Alumni Association

Jeff Kaplan
Senior Vice President, University Advancement
President, The Ohio State University Foundation

Linda Kass
Board of Trustees

Kathleen McCutcheon
Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer

Sharen Turney
Chief Executive Officer, Victoria's Secret

Kate Wolford
Associate Vice President, University Advancement





A UNIFYING INSTITUTIONAL POSITION FOR OHIO STATE

With its rich heritage, multifaceted experiences, integrated facilities, and intellectual impact across myriad constituencies such as alumni, Ohioans, students, faculty, and businesses at home and overseas, Ohio State means so much to so many that it can be overwhelming to express.

In order to create a true sense of mutuality between the University and its stakeholders, the University must make choices about what it will stand for and express those choices clearly and succinctly. This exercise of expressing the essence of Ohio State is more critical than ever, as the University competes with a growing set of organizations, both for-profit and nonprofit, for mindshare of its key stakeholders.

In today's competitive academic and communications environment, clarity of purpose and a unique proposition are critical elements to drive stakeholder engagement. A clear and concise articulation agreed upon by the University will help:

- shape internal decisions
- define external perceptions
- engage alumni and other partners in ongoing interaction and support
- keep Ohio State on a long-term trajectory from excellence to eminence

For the purposes of establishing a common language for internal stakeholders, "brand" will be used to describe this expression. To some, the term "brand" may suggest a commercial purpose, but the reality is that all organizations, both for-profit and nonprofit, have a "brand." Careful and thoughtful management of an institutional brand is a critical mechanism for ensuring understanding, engagement, and relationship-building with all stakeholders.

A "brand" is the essential characterization and proposition of what an organization is and what it stands for. The same is true of a university's brand. While the individual colleges and units within Ohio State have their own brands that are distinct and differentiated in their fields, there must be a common thread that binds them to the overarching institutional position of the University.

Definition: BRAND

A brand is a construct, a type of shorthand, that people hold in their minds and hearts when thinking about an institution. A brand at its core is a promise of what the institution stands for and what it offers to those who engage with it.

A brand is earned rather than owned. It is the cumulative result of every experience, communication, and reference made by or about the institution over time as experienced by others. Simply put, a brand is not something you buy; a brand is something you build.

A good brand steward must understand the shared values and attributes of the University. Those values and attributes are shaped by everyone who is part of the University through what they say and what they do. In practice, this means that *everyone* associated with the University is a steward of its brand. This increases the importance of ensuring that everyone understands the values and behaviors that Ohio State wants to convey.

To achieve this shared understanding, a “toolkit” should be used to formally articulate various aspects of what Ohio State represents. The brand toolkit is a set of parameters, guidelines, and reminders that help the University’s internal stakeholders focus on the key elements Ohio State aims to express. This toolkit consists of:

- **INSTITUTIONAL POSITION STATEMENT:** A concise articulation of the central, desired, relative “position” of the University. It articulates:

- the key target or audience of the brand
- the “benefit,” or value, the institution offers
- the most important reasons to believe in that promise of a benefit

This statement is like a formula of what the University represents: what + why + for whom. An institutional position should differentiate the University as much as possible from any other institution. While it should be elegantly expressed, it is for internal use and will not be shared with the outside world. It should inspire creative expressions, campaigns, programs, and policies, but it should never be confused with a tagline or slogan.

- **BRAND EQUITY STATEMENT:** The institutional position stripped down to its essence to be a short, inspiring statement of the central, unique promise of Ohio State. Its primary use is as internal shorthand, to remind all stewards of their “North Star” when thinking about the University and the promise they must be conscious of fulfilling.
- **CHARACTER AND TONE:** An outline of the distinctive personality traits and sensibilities that should infuse the tonality and content of any experience or communication from Ohio State.
- **FUNCTIONAL AND EMOTIONAL EQUITIES:** The building blocks of a brand, comprised of tangible assets, intangible assets, and attributes that help define what the brand is based on and for what it is commonly known. These equities can build over time through marketing, communications, and shared experiences, becoming indelible associations with an institution. They allow the University to be recognizable yet dynamic, as these equities inevitably evolve over time with new experiences and new associations.
- **BRAND ARCHITECTURE, STANDARDS, GUIDELINES, AND MARK(S):** A formal clarification of the brand messages, visual expression, and uses across the various colleges and units of the University.



The goal of this toolkit is to support the consistent, clear, and high-quality expression of the University's essential character, no matter who is presenting it. The brand mark (often referred to as a logo) and other visual representations are simply shorthand for the richer, deeper meanings a brand conveys.²

METHODOLOGY: DEFINING THE UNIVERSITY'S EQUITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL POSITION

Extensive research and participation by a broad cross-section of Ohio State's constituencies and stakeholders informed the definition of the University's strategic institutional position and brand equities:

- interviews with academic and administrative leaders, trustees, and members of the Alumni Association and Foundation boards of directors
- exploration of the Ohio State archives and public history
- research on current trends in digital community-building, higher-education funding and fundraising, globalization of institutions, growth in reputational risk, and the changing expectations of donors
- input from the Brand Advisory Group (see sidebar), formed to assist in the prioritization, articulation, and evaluation of potential equities, strategies, and institutional position for the Ohio State brand
- rich group discussions and individual interviews with faculty and staff, prospective students, high school guidance counselors, current graduate and undergraduate students, active and non-active alumni, parents of students, friends of Ohio State, and partnering corporations
- a quantitative survey of 1,736 alumni and 435 friends of Ohio State to create a behavioral and attitudinal segmentation, exploring awareness, engagement, propensity to donate, and motivations affecting donation

The result of this body of work was an insightful, robust, and well-documented definition and articulation of the University's identity and the associated toolkit. It reflects a true synthesis of multiple perspectives, ensuring that the brand definition was not beholden to any special interests or biased perspectives. It stands as a crisp yet resonant consensus of what makes Ohio State outstanding.

The Brand Advisory Group is comprised of people from multiple roles within the University—faculty, students, administrators, staff—who supported the brand development work by providing the “voice of the University” and their respective groups in developing Ohio State’s institutional position.

Kristen Convery
Web Editor, University Marketing Communications

Matt Fenstermaker
Candidate for BA in Art Education;
2012 President, Student-Alumni Council

Dr. Tim Gerber
Professor of Music Education;
Secretary, University Senate

Kimberly Lowe
Director of Alumni Clubs,
The Ohio State Alumni Association

Dr. Bill MacDonald
Dean and Director, The Ohio State University at Newark; Executive Dean of Regional Campuses;
Associate Professor, Sociology

Dr. Shashi Matta
Assistant Professor of Marketing,
Fisher College of Business

Tracy Stuck
Assistant Vice President, Student Life; Director, Ohio Union

Liz Sullivan
President, Student-Athlete Board;
Former Captain, Women's Soccer Team; BS Psychology, March 2012

Dr. Andy Thomas
Medical Director, Wexner Medical Center; Assistant Professor of Clinical Internal Medicine, Wexner Medical Center

²Defining the brand architecture and logo were outside the scope of this phase of brand definition. A clear consensus around the strategy and articulation of the brand was a critical first step before its visual representation could be properly evaluated and defined. Defining a logo strategy is an important next step for the University, bringing all aspects of its brand into alignment.

KEY INSIGHTS INTO OHIO STATE

Ohio State has constituents that are remarkably passionate about the University. Our research uncovered rich insights that lent focus and definition to what Ohio State uniquely stands for today and what it must stand for in the future to stay relevant, vital, and eminent:

- **EXTERNAL TRENDS:** A number of external trends, including the digital communications revolution, the intense competition for funding dollars, the growing global importance of academic study and research, and the increased sophistication demanded from nonprofit institutions, are all critical factors Ohio State must master to prepare for the future. Ohio State's reputation and success are undoubtedly on the rise, but that trajectory is not guaranteed and will take focus, creativity, and discipline to maintain.
- **OHIO STATE'S PERSONAL IMPACT:** Alumni and students repeatedly expressed the remarkable, transformative impact Ohio State had on their lives. Its scale, extraordinary breadth of resources, diversity of people and perspectives, interdisciplinary coordination, and encouragement of individuals finding their ideal paths were consistent themes. In addition, there is an almost overwhelming spirit and passion, exemplified by the University's outstanding intercollegiate athletic teams, which creates an unmistakable and unmatched university atmosphere.
- **A STUDY IN CONTRASTS:** Huge in scope yet personal in experience; steeped in academic pursuits yet part of a vibrant, mid-sized metropolis; proud and bold yet suffused with an authentic Midwestern humility. Ohio State is not just a great university. It is a community that never forgets its civic-minded roots as a land grant university, even as it dedicates itself to pursuing world-class solutions to some of the most profound and complicated challenges facing humanity today.
- **ROLE OF ATHLETICS:** Respondents loved the spirit, excitement, and rich traditions of Ohio State athletics. And yet, when asked about what lies at the core of Ohio State—what its central mission is and what should be at the heart of its identity—education, experience, service, and discovery were top-of-mind for students, faculty, and alumni. Athletics is described as a wonderful way to focus one's dedication and affection for Ohio State, but it plays a distinctly secondary role in the understanding and articulation of the true soul of the University.
- **EXTERNAL PERSPECTIVES DIFFER:** The perception of Ohio State by those who know it less well differs markedly from those who know it best. Outside its direct constituencies, Ohio State is not as well-known as the University would like, its associations remain dominated by nationally televised athletics, and it has yet to establish a clearly differentiated profile on the national or global stage.



This indicates that the institution must think, plan, and execute on two levels: to its loyalists and to its acquaintances. Loyalists, who know Ohio State well, need to be reminded of the thriving community and transformative experience. Acquaintances outside of Ohio State will require far more clarity and specificity about what the University stands for when being exposed to it. Given the increasing competition for funding, research grants, and talent, Ohio State must become more deliberate and assertive in taking its rightful place on a greater stage.

KEY FINDINGS

THE BRAND EQUITIES

The first step in defining Ohio State's institutional position was aligning on the most influential equities that framed the unique proposition of Ohio State. These were:

- **SCALE AND BREADTH:** The number, size, and diversity of resources, offerings, and facilities at Ohio State are vast.
- **NETWORKED INTERSECTIONS:** At Ohio State, there is a co-located, highly collaborative academic, social, and civic-minded community in which powerful, extended networks grow naturally. Intriguing connections—planned and serendipitous, intellectual and personal—are taking place constantly, creating an extraordinarily dynamic learning and thriving environment.
- **A PATHWAY TO POTENTIAL:** For those with the initiative to seize it, Ohio State supports and encourages individuals to pursue their own path to fulfillment. It is a natural gateway to immense personal and professional opportunities.
- **A MIDWESTERN SENSIBILITY:** More a background reality than a conscious value system, this uniquely American ethos is inseparable from Ohio State's culture.

Definition:
**INSTITUTIONAL
EQUITIES**

Functional and emotional equities are the building blocks of a brand, the tangible and intangible assets, attributes, and associations that help define what the brand is based on and for what it is commonly known.

Definition:
**INSTITUTIONAL
POSITION**

A concise articulation of the central, desired, relative "position" of the University in the marketplace. It articulates the key "target," or constituents, of the brand; the principal "benefit," or value, the brand offers; and the most important reasons to believe in that promise of a benefit. Though it should be elegantly expressed, it is an internal tool and should never be confused with a "tagline" or advertising itself.

Definition:
**BRAND EQUITY
STATEMENT**

A short, inspiring articulation of the central, unique promise of the Ohio State brand, i.e., the institutional position stripped down to its essence. Its primary use is also as internal shorthand, to remind all brand stewards of their "North Star" when thinking about the brand and the promise they must be conscious of fulfilling.

INSTITUTIONAL POSITION

From these foundational elements, the final articulation of the University's proposition was expressed in the following institutional position statement:

Ohio State is a dynamic community where opportunity thrives. Through our far-reaching network of diverse resources and perspectives, we foster the incisive thinking, spirit of collaboration, and depth of character you need to transform yourself and your world.

The essence of this statement was further refined in the brand equity statement:

Ohio State is a dynamic community of diverse resources, where opportunity thrives and where individuals transform themselves and their world.

To help guide and frame the behavior and communications from the University in bringing this brand to life, the following brand character outline was created:

OHIO STATE IS:

Grounded
Optimistic
Down-to-earth
Globally involved
Smart
Honest and dutiful
Confident
Inquisitive
Spirited
Proud
Industrious
Concerned for the well-being of others

OHIO STATE IS NOT:

Boastful
Overconfident
Unsophisticated
Only focused on Ohio
Elitist
Cunning
Overbearing
Satisfied
Zealous
Pompous
A workhorse
Self-serving



IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEWLY ARTICULATED BRAND

The institutional position represents a fundamental change for Ohio State and is therefore more of a starting point than an ending point. The University must start the work of living the brand each and every day, fulfilling its promise in thought, word, and deed.

INTERNAL BRAND MANAGEMENT: A next step for Ohio State will be the extensive process of sharing and educating key constituents on the newly articulated institutional position, what it means for them, and the implications for their roles within the University. This will be most critical in the newly reorganized Marketing & Communications function, which will play a central role in bringing the brand to life within the University and to the world at large.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR VISUAL IDENTITY: Using the new institutional position as a foundation, Ohio State must continue the work of defining its brand expression. The University ultimately needs to be represented by a mark or marks (often referred to as logos) that embody the same equities as its institutional position. This is recognized as a highly strategic decision by all organizations, as they seek to balance heritage with potential, consistency with freedom of expression, and existing equity with future innovation. In addition to defining the logo strategy for the overall University, Ohio State also needs to clarify a hierarchy, both visually and in terms of messaging, to guide how the various colleges and units will represent themselves as parts of Ohio State. There should be consistency and logic to their representations so that it is obvious at a glance that they are part of the same University family, even as they must be allowed to portray themselves competitively as entities with their own sets of goals and communications needs.





UNDERSTANDING STAKEHOLDER BEHAVIORS

METHODOLOGY: ANALYZING STAKEHOLDER BEHAVIOR

Before engaging in new research, Edelman reviewed an alumni donor segmentation model presented by Hart & POS Associates in fall 2011, which was developed from an alumni survey and based on giving behaviors.

From this existing survey data, statistical analyses were conducted to identify the factors that drive giving behaviors. Edelman developed a second survey to further explore these behaviors, and then expanded the survey's scope to include motivations behind giving, as well as an exploration of how alumni and friends of Ohio State currently engage with the University. This new online survey included 1,726 alumni and 435 friends, as well as in-depth interviews with corporate partners and business leaders.

The alumni data was weighted to align with demographics, including gender, age, residency inside or outside of Ohio, and highest level of education. Friends were weighted based on percentage living inside and outside of Ohio.

KEY FINDINGS

ENGAGEMENT IS LINKED TO GIVING. Central to our findings is the fact that engagement (including participation in activities such as watching football games on television or in person, Alumni Association membership¹, networking, mentoring, or volunteering) is positively related to financial contributions. As the number of engagement activities increases, financial contributions increase exponentially.

There is a strong positive relationship between engagement and giving.

As engagement increases, both lifetime giving and number of gifts increase.



^[1] Calculations include those who have not given; Engagement activities are defined by Spring 2012 Segmentation Survey Data

^[2] Number of Alumni engaged in 5+ activities is an extremely low number, yielding a higher level of variability in the data, 5+ activity data should be viewed directionally

DRIVERS OF ENGAGEMENT: Based on statistical analysis, alumni are more likely to be highly engaged with the University if they fit the following profile:

- member of the Alumni Association
- interested in attending events with other alumni
- married to another Ohio State alumnus
- strongly agree with the sentiment that they "bleed scarlet and gray"

¹ The Alumni Association is no longer a dues-based organization.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FRIENDS OF OHIO STATE: The segmentation analysis resulted in two separate segmentation models for alumni and friends of Ohio State. The grouping of friends into segments tended to be characterized by the nature of their financial contributions rather than by their relationships with and attitudes toward the University. A donation is itself a strong expression of support for and engagement with Ohio State, so the friend segments are more similar to one another by definition than are alumni segments.

Definition:
ENGAGED

Participation in activities that are sponsored by or on behalf of Ohio State, such as watching athletic events on television, mentoring students, or attending an on-campus event; however, this excludes direct giving activities.

WHY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS

The objective of Advancement is to maintain and deepen connections to stakeholders in order to create lasting, mutually beneficial relationships. In a world where there are increasing choices for alumni and friends to use their time, talent, and treasure, regular engagement by Ohio State ensures that the University is and remains top-of-mind.

ENGAGED STAKEHOLDERS ARE BETTER BRAND AMBASSADORS for the University, as they are more willing to speak and act on behalf of the University, which extends the reach and effectiveness of marketing and communication efforts.

ENGAGED STAKEHOLDERS ARE MORE LOYAL, so when faced with a potential crisis or challenge to Ohio State's reputation, they give the organization the benefit of the doubt, thereby lessening the impact of the event.

ENGAGED STAKEHOLDERS ARE ALSO STRONG GIVERS, as alumni who are engaged in three or more activities are more likely to be donors.

SEGMENT OVERVIEWS – ALUMNI

There are five alumni segments, three of which are prioritized (Enthusiasts, Life-Learners, and Connectors) based on engagement and giving.



ENTHUSIASTS 40%

ENGAGEMENT (Currently participate in 3+ activities):



MEDIAN TOTAL LIFETIME GIVING:

\$\$\$

This segment is the heart of Ohio State's alumni base. They are highly engaged and have strong athletics spirit. Enthusiasts describe themselves as people who were the typical Ohio State student. They were Buckeye super fans in college.

Enthusiasts are the most likely to have an emotional connection to Ohio State and to say that they care about the University. They have the highest level of participation in activities that keep them engaged with Ohio State. Enthusiasts embody the spirit of Ohio State.



LIFE LEARNERS 33%

ENGAGEMENT (Currently participate in 3+ activities):



MEDIAN TOTAL LIFETIME GIVING:

\$\$\$\$



EXTENDED FAMILIES 27%

ENGAGEMENT (Currently participate in 3+ activities):



MEDIAN TOTAL LIFETIME GIVING:

\$

This segment could be powerful brand ambassadors for Ohio State. They are engaged, they are strong givers, and they are marked by interest in intellectual pursuits. This group has a more functional relationship with Ohio State, but they also care about the University.

While sizable, this segment is less engaged. There is an opportunity to target them with targeted, functional programs that align with their interests, items, including their satisfaction with their experience, their interest in giving back to Ohio State, and their interest in giving back to Ohio State.

As the third-largest alumni segment, Extended Family members are excluded from Ohio State's donor recognition programs. They have the opportunity to engage with Ohio State through direct programming to meet their needs.

SEGMENT OVERVIEWS – FRIENDS

Friends of Ohio State are non-alumni members of the Ohio State community who have donated to the University (Research Givers, Research Givers, and Super Funders) based on opportunity for increased engagement and giving.



TARGETED GIVERS 38%

ENGAGEMENT (Currently participate in 3+ activities):



MEDIAN TOTAL LIFETIME GIVING:

\$\$

Targeted Givers are a dependable source of funding for their selected programs. They tend to give to a specific college or to medical research.

Targeted Givers may not have a relationship with Ohio State outside of the specific program to which they have given, but they are still interested in Ohio State sports, performances, and exhibits on campus.



EARLY GIVERS 31%

ENGAGEMENT (Currently participate in 3+ activities):



MEDIAN TOTAL LIFETIME GIVING:

\$

Early Givers make up a significant volume of gifts, and they may be nurtured and cultivated as donors over time.

Early Givers give primarily to medical research, including The James's research and Pelotonia event.

Ohio State has helped the majority of Early Givers, or someone they care about.

Early Givers have the youngest average age (52) of all the friends segments and are less interested in attending events on campus than other segments.



RESEARCH GIVERS 21%

ENGAGEMENT (Currently participate in 3+ activities):



MEDIAN TOTAL LIFETIME GIVING:

\$\$\$

Research Givers are strong supporters of Ohio State's research topics. They are most interested in giving to the Wexner Medical Center, medical research, athletics, and WOSU.

They are most interested in giving to medical research being done at the Wexner Medical Center, medical research, athletics, and WOSU.



ased on opportunity for increased engagement and giving.



FAMILY 10%

participate in 3+ activities):

LIFETIME GIVING:

\$

is least likely to be engaged. Ignite engagement through ms.

score lower on nearly all action with their Ohio State in engagement, and their Ohio State.

ni group, they cannot be family or from opportunities o improve interest, but it will capture their attention.



CONNECTORS 9%

ENGAGEMENT (Currently participate in 3+ activities):



MEDIAN TOTAL LIFETIME GIVING:

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$



INDIVIDUALIZED INTERESTS 8%

ENGAGEMENT (Currently participate in 3+ activities):



MEDIAN TOTAL LIFETIME GIVING:

\$ \$

ty within the last two years. There are five friend segments, three of which are prioritized (Targeted



GIVERS 13%

participate in 3+ activities):

+

LIFETIME GIVING:

\$ \$

ng financial supporters of heavy givers, particularly to er (including to The James),

and motivated to donate to e University. They have an Ohio State.



PLEDGE DRIVERS 10%

ENGAGEMENT (Currently participate in 3+ activities):



MEDIAN TOTAL LIFETIME GIVING:

\$ \$ \$



SUPER FUNDERS 8%

ENGAGEMENT (Currently participate in 3+ activities):



MEDIAN TOTAL LIFETIME GIVING:

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$

Pledge Drivers are reliable supporters for specific initiatives. They are not heavy givers, but they support the Wexner Center for the Arts and WOSU. They are more motivated to give if they can designate their donation to a specific area of interest.

Super Funders are a small group with a history of giving large donations. Super Funders are the heaviest givers of the friend segments, and they give to many areas of the University. They care about Ohio State and the research being conducted. Super Funders are the smallest of the friends segments and the oldest, with a mean age of 69.





STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The goal of the work during the strategic planning phase of the project was to provide Ohio State with:

- the tools needed to activate (implement) the new institutional position
- a signature program (and associated sample tactics) that is uniquely Ohio State and supports the organization's objectives and institutional position
- recommendations to activate the prioritized segments toward engagement and fundraising

The strategic plan addresses these goals in three parts:

BRAND ACTIVATION TOOLKIT: Defines the components of Ohio State's brand and offers recommendations for how each should be used within the University and supported by specific units. The toolkit also provides recommendations for how Ohio State should approach the development of its brand architecture and brand standards guidelines, which, once developed and enforced, will further enable the University to express the institutional position consistently.

SIGNATURE PROGRAM: A strategic platform that demonstrates Ohio State's brand and character. It serves as a guide, clarifying the brand communications and marketing initiatives in which Ohio State should invest resources. As such, a signature program is a thematic umbrella under which tactics exist, and it is used for internal alignment of marketing activities.

SEGMENT ACTIVATION PLAN: Focuses on six priority segments for the short and medium term, of the 10 total segments that were identified. These priority segments were identified by analyzing historical engagement and giving, as well as interest in engagement and giving in the future.

SEGMENT ACTIVATION PLAN

The segment activation plan describes the unique characteristics of the individual priority segments and uses both general and segment-specific characteristics to develop examples of tactics to increase engagement and giving. Common motivational drivers and interests were identified across these priority segments, which included:

PRIORITY SEGMENT	ALUMNI: CONNECTORS	ALUMNI: LIFE LEARNERS	ALUMNI: ENTHUSIASTS
DESCRIPTION	<p>With the means and network to support Ohio State, Connectors make things happen. This group represents the alumni segment with the highest mean lifetime giving, the largest average gift, and the greatest percentage of individuals who donate to Ohio State and who are members of the Alumni Association. If Ohio State focused on only one alumni priority segment, it should be the Connectors. In addition to their financial value, Connectors drive engagement—they are distinctly social and are interested in events, meeting other alumni, and mentoring students.</p> <p>Ohio State should not only target Connectors for direct engagement with the University but also find ways to mobilize and empower this group to connect with and motivate other alumni and friend segments to encourage them to engage with the University both on and off campus. This may be best accomplished through a range of large and small on- and offline tactics.</p>	<p>Life Learners represent the median of the alumni priority segments in regards to both lifetime giving and average size of gift. This segment could be powerful brand ambassadors for Ohio State because its members are engaged, strong donors, and differentiated by interest in intellectual pursuits.</p> <p>Because of the segment's interest in intellectual pursuits, Ohio State should focus on reinforcing its positioning of diverse resources and perspectives that foster incisive thinking with this group. Doing so will not only raise the profile of Ohio State in the minds of Life Learners, but as they are brand ambassadors, it will support the University's interest in positioning it as such to other audiences. They should be leveraged for their professional expertise and intellectual curiosity in events such as lectures, webinars, and in-person and online continuing education. While other segments may be interested in attending these events, Life Learners may additionally be interested in their formulation and planning.</p>	<p>Enthusiasts are the heart of Ohio State's alumni base; they are highly engaged and have a strong athletics spirit. Though Enthusiasts represent the lowest mean lifetime giving and average size of gift of the priority segments, they are highly engaged with the University and the Alumni Association.</p> <p>Enthusiasts are highly interested in athletics-related events, but feel deeply connected to Ohio State as a whole and are interested in personal interactions with Buckeyes through engagements such as mentoring and attending on- and off-campus events. Enthusiasts are a key target for unit, school, or departmental support as they feel strong connections to and affinity for the areas of the University they touched while on campus.</p>
SAMPLE TACTICS	<p> Raffle for football and basketball tickets (entry based on donation or solicitation of donations)</p> <p>72% of segment 12,960 individuals</p> <p> Mentoring Ohio State students interested in current profession</p> <p>59% of segment 10,620 individuals</p> <p> Invitations to social and networking events with Ohio State alumni</p> <p>54%+ of segment 9,720 individuals</p> <p> Mentoring Ohio State students in need of guidance to fulfill graduation requirements</p> <p>50% of segment 9,000 individuals</p>	<p> Mentoring Ohio State students interested in current profession</p> <p>56% of segment 36,960 individuals</p> <p> Raffle for football and basketball tickets (entry based on donation or solicitation of donations)</p> <p>49% of segment 32,340 individuals</p> <p> Access to libraries and databases based on predetermined giving level</p> <p>44% of segment 29,040 individuals</p> <p> Invitations to social and networking events with Ohio State alumni</p> <p>42%+ of segment 27,720+ individuals</p>	<p> Raffle for football and basketball tickets (entry based on donation or solicitation of donations)</p> <p>68% of segment 54,400 individuals</p> <p> Mentoring Ohio State students interested in current profession</p> <p>63% of segment 50,400 individuals</p> <p> Invitations to social and networking events with Ohio State alumni</p> <p>58%+ of segment 46,400 individuals</p> <p> Mentoring Ohio State students interested in need of guidance to fulfill graduation requirements</p> <p>56% of segment 44,800+ individuals</p>

The tactics proposed above were developed from insights from the behavioral segmentation analysis. The "% survey questions related to engagement interests. For example, 56% of Life Learner respondents were interested in alumni, this would indicate 36,960 individuals would be a target audience for this type of engagement activit



Raffle for football and basketball tickets (entry based on donation or solicitation of donations)

Mentoring current students interested in similar professions

Invitations to social and networking events with Ohio State alumni

Mentoring Ohio State students in need of guidance to fulfill graduation requirements

Access to libraries and databases based on predetermined giving level

Attending performances and exhibits on campus

Participation in college fairs

Invitation to the Alumni Association based on predetermined giving level



FRIENDS: SUPERFUNDERS

Super Funders care about Ohio State and the research it is conducting – they give for practical purposes. This group represents the friend segment by far the highest mean lifetime giving and the best average gift. If Ohio State had to choose only one friend segment to prioritize, it should be the Super Funders.

Ohio State should continue to encourage and enable this segment to donate to research and other programs. One way to do this would be to invite them to networking events and speakers series, as they are particularly interested in meeting Ohio State alumni.



FRIENDS: TARGETED GIVERS

Targeted Givers are dependable sources of funding for selected programs and medical research. While they represent the lowest mean lifetime giving and gift amount of the friend priority segments, they are also the group that constitutes the greatest percentage of the overall friend category. Ohio State should continue to encourage this group to donate to selected programs and medical research and cultivate them as a fundraising and engagement growth target by offering opportunities to give frequently in smaller increments.

Targeted Givers should be engaged with University-wide medical initiatives, including those pertaining to health and wellness and Pelotonia. They are interested in attending numerous events on campus, so efforts should be made to optimize their visits to campus so that they have access to programming relevant to medical research being conducted. For those not able to engage on campus, finding ways to participate and support online or in their local communities is critical.



FRIENDS: RESEARCH GIVERS

Research Givers are strong financial supporters of research. Their donations are driven by an interest in supporting specific pieces of research, specific students, or specific types of students. In order to appeal to this group and expand its relationship with them, Ohio State must provide them with continued information on specific initiatives and individuals that benefit from their contributions.

As they are interested in personal interactions with students, this segment should be engaged in programs that describe and share research that students are conducting. They may be interested in positions as advisory board or selection committee members for events, organizations, or initiatives dedicated to recognizing research efforts.



Invitations to performances and exhibitions with special alumni/friend presentations

% of segment | **240** individuals

Invitation to the Alumni Association based on predetermined giving level

% of segment | **240** individuals

Invitations to social and networking events with Ohio State alumni

% of segment | **46,400+** individuals

Access to libraries and databases based on predetermined giving level

% of segment | **138** individuals

Raffle for football and basketball tickets (entry based on donation or solicitation of donations)

% of segment | **138** individuals



Invitations to performances and exhibitions with special alumni/friend presentations

41% of segment

| **1,230** individuals



Raffle for football and basketball tickets (entry based on donation or solicitation of donations)

40% of segment

| **1,200** individuals



Mentoring Ohio State students interested in current profession

36% of segment

| **1,080** individuals



Access to libraries and databases based on predetermined giving level

27% of segment

| **810** individuals



Mentoring Ohio State students interested in current profession

47% of segment

| **470** individuals



Raffle for football and basketball tickets (entry based on donation or solicitation of donations)

41% of segment

| **410** individuals



Participation in student fairs

29% of segment

| **290+** individuals



Provide with access to libraries and databases based on predetermined giving level

34% of segment

| **340** individuals



Invitations to performances and exhibitions with special alumni/friend presentations

29%+ of segment

| **390+** individuals

% of segment and number of individuals are estimates based on responses from those in that segment to be in mentoring Ohio State Students in their current profession. Based on an estimate of the total population





A COLLABORATIVE OPERATING MODEL

METHODOLOGY: ASSESSING THE OPERATING MODEL

The organizational design phase was devised to benchmark the current Advancement organization against best practices in order to propose an optimal path forward for Ohio State.

Working in close partnership with Ohio State's Office of Human Resources, Edelman took the following approach:

- Developed a deep, holistic understanding of Ohio State's current organizational structure, requirements, and vision through an extensive set of stakeholder interviews
- Researched external best practices and gained an understanding of other Advancement organizations through expert interviews and secondary research to yield relevant takeaways for Ohio State's new organization
- Conducted a needs assessment by analyzing Ohio State's current organizational state and external expert research to identify specific areas of opportunity for Ohio State
- Developed a new Advancement organization structure and operating model, honing in on areas such as governance, key processes, and talent

The research included:

- 80+ in-depth interviews with academic and administrative leaders of the University and other stakeholders in central Advancement, the Alumni Association, University Foundation, University Communications, and colleges and units with related functional staff
- 15+ in-depth interviews with Advancement experts from comparable universities and leaders from exemplary nonprofits
- Secondary research to develop a baseline of latest academic and field insights, exploring literature on Advancement in higher education and matrix organization best practices

The recommendations in this document are designed to underpin and support the new organization's strategic goals, work within the unique culture and context of Ohio State, and pave the way for internal clarity and consensus around proposed organization changes. They should help Ohio State answer the following questions:

- What is the optimal way to integrate Advancement more closely with Advancement-related staff and activities in the colleges and units?
- How should the communications, development, and alumni relations functions be integrated?

- What should the mandate for central Advancement be?
- What should the new role and opportunity for the alumni relations function be?

KEY FINDINGS

Through interviews and work sessions across Ohio State, discussions with experts, and Edelman expertise and research on best practices, the following key findings surfaced:

- While there is no “typical” Advancement model, one shared element among successful models is a reflection of and alignment with a university’s strategic vision, values, leadership, and culture.
- Communications, fundraising, and alumni relations must function together within an integrated organization to deliver on the Advancement goals. They must act as equal partners to drive unified execution, both centrally and in the colleges and units, based on centrally driven vision, strategic guidance, and a unified budget.
- Particularly in decentralized organizations, investing time in developing the right governance model is critical to effective implementation, which includes articulating clear decision rights between central Advancement and the colleges and units, creating formal and informal cross-functional communication mechanisms, and developing consistent performance measurements.
- While college and unit autonomy is viewed as important, there is strong desire among college and unit communicators and alumni relations staff for greater integration and knowledge-sharing with their respective central functions, similar to the operating model in place for the development function.
- There is a need for a new function, Alumni & Constituency Engagement, which takes a University-wide approach to stakeholder engagement, with priority focus on alumni, the largest constituency group. This function will develop strategies that activate students, faculty and staff, alumni, corporate partners, and Ohioans and strengthen their relationships with the University. The president and CEO of the Alumni Association will lead this group. The Association’s articles and constitution state that its purpose is: “To operate exclusively to support The Ohio State University and its alumni by fostering a spirit of loyalty toward The Ohio State University and to achieve unity of purpose and action in promoting the best interest of the University.” The Alumni Association will continue to be committed to this purpose. In addition, it is expected that the president and CEO of the Alumni Association, as leader of Alumni & Constituency Engagement, will build the required structure, resources, and strategies required for this new function’s broader purpose of engaging University-wide stakeholders.

- Talent and skills gaps were identified by all functions as critical challenges, with staff voicing strong desire for an increased breadth of capabilities across the organization, including digital engagement, brand management and marketing, research and analysis, and people management.
- Advancement will be a flatter organization that will require broader skill sets for leadership roles in order to streamline decision-making and increase opportunities for leaders to develop cross-functional experience.
- A strong focus on developing a more cohesive and collaborative culture is critical to increase morale and engagement among staff, including aligning rewards and incentives systems to the right motivations and potentially co-locating Advancement resources.

The project findings reveal an organization that has many of the structural components necessary to manage Advancement's activities, but has cultural and operational obstacles to full integration and collaboration. The removal of these barriers and the promotion of an integrative and collaborative culture are major components of the recommended operating model.

RECOMMENDED OPERATING MODEL

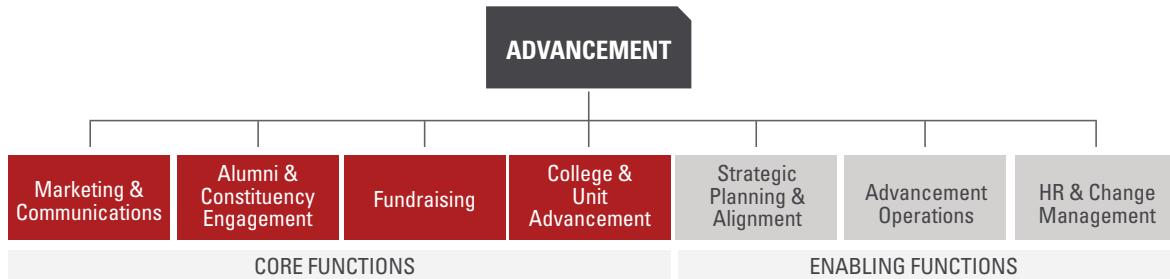
The recommended operating model addresses the following organizational components:

STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The University's central human resources leadership team partnered with Edelman to develop a set of underlying principles that underscored the organizational design, including:

- Design Advancement as a central unit with the mission of driving awareness, fundraising, and engagement strategies from the center and providing value-added services and resources to colleges and units in support of the execution of their Advancement objectives.
- Integrate planning and coordination across Advancement to align messaging so that the University speaks with one voice to key audiences, and put the might of Ohio State's combined resources behind activities that support the overall Advancement goals.
- Assess talent against future needs and ensure Ohio State is creating opportunities to place "the right person in the right role."

Figure 1 | Proposed Advancement Functional Organization Structure



The core functions drive strategy and execution through either functional expertise (communications, engagement, fundraising) or stakeholder expertise (medical, college, unit), which are governed by matrix reporting relationships.

These enabling functions provide guidance, support, and execution across Advancement to ensure that Ohio State is meeting its aspirations and creating a culture of continual improvement.

The resulting recommended Advancement structure (Figure 1) contains new capabilities and pivotal changes that underscore the tenets of “One University”:

- **A UNIVERSITY-WIDE PURVIEW:** In the future, the Advancement organization’s purview will encompass support for all colleges and units within the University and managing awareness, engagement, and fundraising for all of Ohio State’s stakeholders.
- **UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS IS INTEGRATED INTO ADVANCEMENT:** As the steward of the University’s reputation, it is critical that the Office of University Communications manages the development of a central narrative and messaging targeted at all stakeholders for the Advancement organization and the colleges and units. As part of the matrixed Advancement organization, there will be a central point to create communications strategies that can be leveraged across the University, and to promote improved communications capabilities, skills, and processes for the colleges and units.
- **EXPANDED MARKETING CAPABILITIES:** The combined Marketing & Communications group will be charged with managing Ohio State’s new institutional position, developing marketing programs, and enhancing the market research function.
- **ALUMNI & CONSTITUENCY ENGAGEMENT FUNCTION:** The scope of engagement has been expanded beyond alumni to include other Advancement stakeholder groups, including students, faculty and staff, corporate partners, and Ohioans. The Alumni & Constituency Engagement group will help to increase awareness and perceptions of the University’s vision and values through dynamic interactions, events, and programs for Advancement stakeholders, with focus continuing on alumni as the largest group. In addition, as part of the matrixed organization, the Alumni & Constituency Engagement group will connect with alumni liaisons and other constituent-related teams within the colleges and units to drive shared responsibility for Advancement goals.



- COLLEGE & UNIT ADVANCEMENT FUNCTION: This new function provides coordination and expertise for chief advancement officers within the colleges and units (e.g., College of Arts and Sciences, College of Engineering, Student Life, Wexner Medical Center) to lead strategy, drive cross-functional collaboration, and facilitate the sharing of best practices throughout the organization. This is a role that will be critical to supporting the needs of more than 30 colleges and units.
- ELEVATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT: To address talent needs and build a robust, high-performing culture, it will be critical that the Advancement organization includes a strong human resources team. The HR & Change Management group will lead talent- and people-related processes across Advancement, including talent acquisition and retention, training and development, and performance management. It will also lead change management initiatives to help build a more cohesive culture.
- INCREASED FOCUS ON STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE EFFECTIVENESS: The Strategic Planning & Alignment group supports the head of Advancement in driving strategic initiatives; supporting the development of an annual strategic plan for Advancement; and leading internal measurement, analysis, and process improvement initiatives. This function addresses feedback indicating a need for dedicated internal resources to drive key initiatives forward within the organization.
- OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES THROUGH SHARED FUNCTIONS: The Advancement Operations group will manage the shared services of the Advancement organization, including centralized finance and budgeting, information technology, and reporting. This transition is already in process and supports the University's initiative to create shared service models in finance and IT functions across the units and colleges.

WORKING IN A MATRIX

A matrix organization, which is characterized by dual reporting relationships, will create the cross-functional collaboration and accountability required for successful execution of the Advancement vision. At Ohio State, a maxtrixed organization will effectively integrate key functions between central Advancement and college and unit resources and enable central Advancement to provide crucial support and guidance. This model is already used successfully within Ohio State's development organization, where fundraising staff residing in colleges and units report both to their dean or director and to the central Foundation.

In the new operating model, the central Advancement organization will develop University-wide strategies that drive awareness, engagement, and fundraising by leveraging best practices from across all colleges and units and an understanding of major stakeholder trends.

The colleges and units will continue to be accountable for developing plans and tactics that engage their specific audiences—activities enhanced by guidance from the central Advancement organization around narrative and messaging themes, brand management, and engagement best practices that are tailored to address unit-specific needs.

As an example, communicators working for a college or unit will report to two people:

1 They report directly to their chief advancement officer (or dean, if there is no chief advancement officer), who provides day-to-day supervision of tasks and direction on unit-specific strategies.

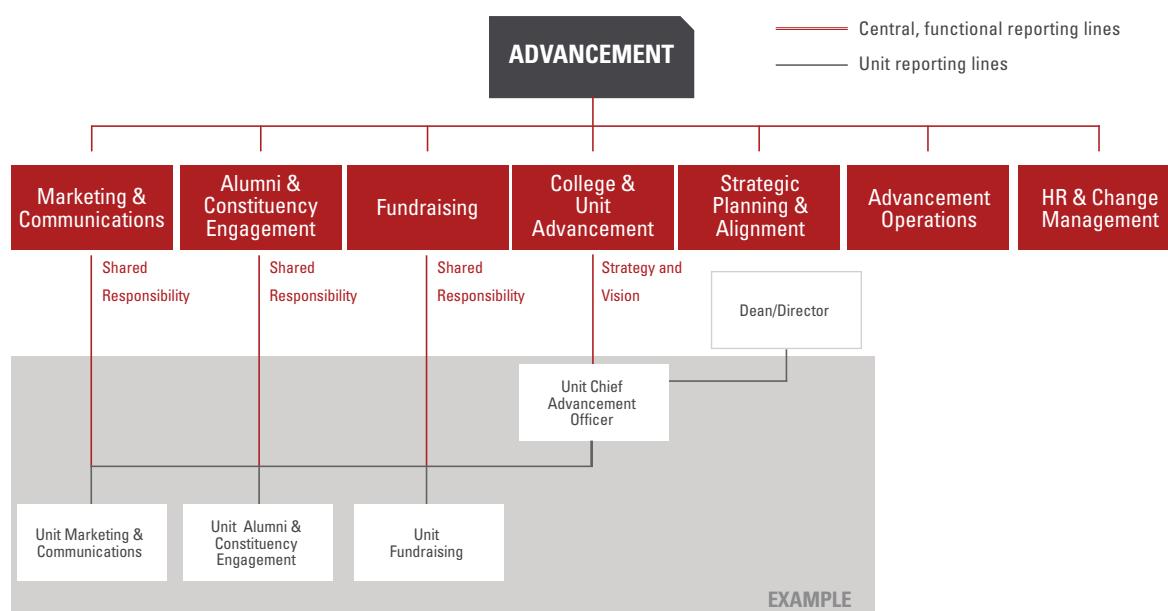
2 They report to the Marketing & Communications group that supports them with University-wide narratives and messaging, proven strategies for creating engaging communications, and information on industry trends that affect stakeholders.

Matrix organizations offer many benefits by:

- allowing flexibility to reallocate resources and adapt to changes in the environment
- positioning the organization and employees to focus on multiple business goals
- empowering individuals to make decisions closer to where activities take place
- creating additional channels that facilitate collaboration and information flow
- broadening the skills and capabilities of matrixed employees who are responsible for understanding their unit strategies but now also receive additional knowledge and support from central functional leaders

The Advancement organization matrix model must encompass the three critical Advancement functions: marketing and communications, fundraising, and alumni and constituency engagement.

Figure 2 | Example of Matrix Structure



GOVERNANCE AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Matrix organizations can present challenges, particularly for organizations previously structured in a hierarchy. In implementing a matrix, it is critical to focus on both structural implications and ensuring that significant time is invested in educating leadership and staff on the governance and operating principles. “Governance” describes the rules and processes of making decisions and how those decisions are implemented. For matrixed organizations, where people are more empowered to manage trade-offs between multiple constituents, governance can be an extremely useful tool in clarifying roles, promoting information flow, and narrowing focus to critical issues.

The elements of governance include:

- **DECISION RIGHTS AND POLICIES:** Advancement leaders must work with deans and other leadership from the colleges and units to specify policies, rules, and guardrails that define how decisions will be made. For example, when a new resource is required to support communications in a specific college, there should be clear guidance about who is responsible for the selection process of that shared resource, who is responsible for that resource’s performance evaluation, and how to resolve situations where a tie has resulted. Articulating these rights helps to clarify strategy, trade-offs, and decision criteria, thus increasing the speed of decision-making.
- **COMMUNICATION MECHANISMS:** To support the creation of cross-functional strategies and encourage information flow across the organization, it will be important to create formal and informal networks for information sharing, joint strategy, and innovation. People should come together to challenge each other, debate options, and develop ideas that might never emerge in a more siloed approach. Examples of this might be cross-functional business planning teams, formal networks and councils, and action learning teams.
- **MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORKS:** A key finding from this assessment is that consistent measurement across the Advancement functions has been a challenge. As the organization evolves, Ohio State must employ diagnostic tools to monitor results and behavior related to strategies, objectives, and accountabilities of the organization. Leaders should have access to data to evaluate trends and risks and to make critical investment decisions. This includes both external measures (e.g., market research), as well as internal performance management (e.g., people evaluation).

TALENT AND CULTURE

Proper talent alignment and management is a key success factor for the Advancement organization.

ALIGNMENT: The right people must be placed in roles that are aligned to their experience and talents, and Advancement must develop appropriate performance incentives for the matrix organization.

TRAINING: All Advancement staff—including leaders—need training on how the new matrix works and its implications on their roles. This will help clarify responsibilities and assist people with making the transition. In addition, training requirements were identified around helping individual contributors make the transition to management roles.

CAPABILITIES: Key needs for skills identified through research should be addressed through training and/or new hires. These areas include:

- **Digital Engagement:** Given Advancement’s charge to be the voice of Ohio State in engaging a wide spectrum of stakeholders, the organization must enhance its digital channel strategy and deployment. This will require specialized knowledge of digital channels and expertise in content creation and community management specific to audiences.
- **Information Technology:** Accessible information, useful data, and effective knowledge management form the backbone of a successful Advancement organization. Particularly with the transition to Blackbaud fundraising software, a dedicated investment in IT infrastructure and staff is required to complete the implementation and maintain the system.
- **Project Management:** The success of the new Advancement model is highly dependent on effective planning and coordination across previously siloed functions and entities, as well as continuously working to improve the organization’s performance. This will require committed resources toward skills in project management, operational effectiveness, and analysis.
- **Research and Data Analysis:** The Advancement organization needs expert resources for analyzing data to extract meaningful insights. Examples include using stakeholder data to derive better segmentation and engagement strategies, using marketing data to target communications approaches, and using donor data to drive more effective fundraising strategies.



COMMUNITY: To form a cohesive culture, Ohio State must foster the common mindset and sense of shared responsibility that allows the Advancement organization to do its best work, including exploring options for co-location of communications, development, and engagement-related staff.

PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

To support the alignment of the organization, improvement or enhancement of the following four key processes are recommended:

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS: Advancement needs to create a structured strategic planning process that is integrated with the University planning process and managed annually. Currently, the University rotates colleges and units separately through the process at opposite ends of the year. The strategic planning process for Advancement needs to be aligned to that of the colleges and units so that strategy and perspectives can be shared that affect plans for communications, fundraising, and engagement functions.

BRAND MANAGEMENT: A strong brand is one that is represented consistently and coherently to all of the organization's stakeholders. This does not require rigidity and uniformity, however. An organization's institutional position and values should offer a structured framework that allows for creative, tailored messaging to address specific audiences. The brand management process will drive the education of the colleges and units on expressing the institutional position, the development of marketing programs that strengthen Ohio State's equities, and the identification of impactful ways to express the brand across the University.

MARKET RESEARCH: Market research will be critical to measuring Advancement's success against stated objectives. The results of this research, conducted regularly, will indicate how efforts are moving the needle on target audience perceptions of the University and changing behaviors of key stakeholders. Market research also strengthens the concepts of mutuality in the continual search to uncover new ways to engage stakeholders; because of this, it is a capability for which resources must be committed.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT: Volunteer management is a critical practice for mission-driven and nonprofit organizations. At Ohio State, this capability will ensure stakeholders (e.g., alumni, friends, and Ohioans), who want to give back to the University with their time and skills have the opportunity to do so in an organized, consistent manner. In addition, expert insights point to volunteers as a critical mechanism for extending the reach of the organization into communities far and wide. Initiatives are currently underway at Ohio State to assess the future requirements for volunteer coordination.





CHARTING THE IMPLEMENTATION PATH

The findings and recommendations from the Advancement Framework Planning project suggest bold changes to dramatically improve Ohio State's ability to deepen connections with all stakeholders so the University can engage, inform, inspire, and accelerate the push toward eminence.

While a tremendous amount of work has been done to develop the recommendations, there is an equally great task ahead of bringing the recommendations to life within the organization. The Advancement Framework Planning Team, the Board of Trustees, and President Gee have indicated the desire to see tangible and practical results from this project. As such, an initial high-level implementation roadmap has been assembled.

There are several considerations in planning the implementation:

- **NUMEROUS TOUCH POINTS:** The recommendations are broad and imply strategic and operational changes that affect all of the University's stakeholders, particularly the colleges and units that interact with Advancement.
- **LONG-TERM VIEW:** Many of the recommendations will take a significant amount of time to implement. For example, before the organization can transition to a matrix structure, decision rights and performance management changes will need agreed upon and documented so that the organization can be trained and educated on working within new roles.
- **MODELING BEHAVIOR AND CULTURE CHANGES:** At the heart of many of the recommendations is the reality that Advancement will require more than just strategic and operational changes; rather, a significant cultural shift is necessary for the organization, as well as for the broader University. As Advancement will be a leader in creating this transition to sharing responsibility, rewarding collaboration, and promoting a high-performing organization, every step made will be scrutinized. It is critical that the organization be a model for the values it wishes to promote.

For these reasons, it will be critical that the scope and intensity of the changes required to create an integrated program are implemented in smaller, manageable pieces and are supported by robust communications and change management processes.

“When you consider what is happening on our campuses and in the world around us, I would assert that there has never been a more important time for this most important University.

Let me say that again. There has never been a more important time for this most important University.”

—President E. Gordon Gee

ADVANCEMENT VISION

The Ohio State University is wholly committed to becoming an eminent institution. To do so, it must work and be perceived as “One University”—driven by a common vision, aligned by a compelling mission, and united in its values. The recommendations and outcomes of the Advancement Framework Planning project are closely aligned to the One University vision and, indeed, take it to a deeper level of detail. Execution of the institutional position for the University and the implementation of a new operating model are great examples of One University at work. The Advancement organization can serve as an example of moving from excellence to eminence.

Many of the constituents interviewed across Ohio State expressed a strong desire for greater clarity about the vision and goals of Advancement, as well as identification of clear and measurable actions that are required from faculty, staff, and administration to realize the vision. High-level building blocks of that vision include the following:

- The mission of Advancement is to act in service to the colleges and units, affirming its commitment to the Academy.
- Ohio State will build a mission-driven culture in Advancement that creates opportunity, promotes shared responsibility, and rewards collaborative spirit.
- Advancement will be a matrixed organization that includes core functions that drive strategy and effective practices, and enabling functions that increase efficiency.
- The central Advancement organization has a responsibility to provide strategic coordination, capabilities, and resources to the colleges and units to ensure they can successfully execute Advancement-related activities.
- The institutional position provides a basis for a shared understanding of Ohio State’s equities and underscores the “One University” vision.
- Advancement will be the central owner and steward of the University’s institutional position, but everyone will be empowered to act as a brand steward.
- The enhanced alumni and friends segmentation models identify and prioritize the needs and desires of the segments, thereby increasing Ohio State’s ability to meet those expectations and engage stakeholders more effectively.
- Ohio State must collectively reinforce its brand in every way to succeed in its Advancement goals.

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ABOUT EDELMAN CONSULTING

Edelman Consulting is a management consultancy that helps clients address the complex problems that arise where communications and marketing impact an organization's strategy and performance.

We believe that the increasing complexity of today's business world presents challenges, but also opportunities. Edelman Consulting combines a broad view of the world with rigorous analytics to clearly articulate the problem, understand the landscape, define the drivers of and barriers to change, and effectively align organizational resources to take action.

We offer recommendations that are highly strategic and deeply practical, leading to real and measurable impact for our clients. And we leverage the network of our parent company, Edelman, a global leader in communications and public relations, to deliver comprehensive solutions.

This engagement leveraged the talents of four of Edelman's specialty units:



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Project Management,
Organizational Design,
Marketing Strategy



Market Research,
Segmentation Analysis



Brand Development
and Strategy



Public Relations in
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Education