

CONDUCTING A COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT ON CAMPUS OR IN A CONFERENCE OFFICE

In order to maximize the opportunity for your audiences to understand your identity, it is a healthy exercise to conduct an audit of all of the avenues that you use to communicate who you are and what you stand for. This is a similar process that the NCAA undertook when it found the need to re-shape its perception, identity and overall understanding.

The first place to begin is by pulling a sample of all of the pieces you use to communicate with your various audiences. This is to help you see what your audiences see. Additionally, when reviewed and displayed side-by-side, it helps you gauge how consistent, clear and effective your messages are. Here are some suggested pieces you can review:

- Admission and recruiting materials
- Collateral and marketing materials (brochures, fliers, newsletters, postcards, print ads, TV/radio spots)
- Conversation/word-of-mouth (e.g., what would you say in an elevator conversation?)
- Digital media (web site, social networking, blogs, applications, video/audio archives, etc)
- Events (meetings, awards, banquets, community functions, Town Halls)
- Financial aid materials
- Fund raising materials
- Interviews
- Media guides
- Presentations
- Press releases/press conferences
- Promotional items/premiums (apparel, merchandise, etc.)
- Speaking engagements/speeches
- Venue presentation/dressing and communication (signage, PA announcements video boards, game programs)

When you look at all of these pieces, ask yourself these questions:

- Does your explanation of being a Division III institution reflect the words in the strategic positioning platform?
- Is it consistent across all of the pieces?
- Are the attributes or reasons to believe communicated in any fashion (where appropriate by audience)?
- Does the Division III message reinforce your institution's message and identity and vice versa?
- Is the Division III mark displayed?
- Is your institution or conference even identified as being a member of Division III?
- Is a story, feature or testimonial of a student-athlete communicated?

Since many of these communication pieces exist already, this isn't an exercise in starting from scratch but rather improving the consistency and clarity of the Division's identity as a component of your institution's identity.