



Overview

The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) is located in the heart of Nebraska's largest city, and serves as the state's metropolitan university. UNO offers nearly 200 programs of study in a learning environment that features a small-school atmosphere within a thriving city where internship, employment and entertainment opportunities are plentiful.

The Situation

UNO approached Ervin & Smith with a challenge to create a recruitment campaign that would stand out and position the university as a traditional college. UNO has had the reputation of a commuter school for non-traditional students. But with the addition of dorms and expanded athletic programs, the university now attracts younger, more traditional college students.

The recruitment campaign aimed to get students who may not have considered UNO to take a first look. Ervin & Smith felt that once students considered UNO, they would find that the University offered the complete college experience, including great academics, social opportunities on campus and great athletics.

Ervin & Smith:

- Reviewed existing research on the college selection process provided by the university that showed students wanted to be proud of their college choice and wanted a complete college experience.
- Tested two recruitment campaign creative concepts in focus groups with high school students, representing six targeted schools in the Omaha metro area.
- Found that students responded best to the humor, color and real students featured in the agency's Maverick Mojo recruitment campaign.
- Conducted a series of internal presentations to promote the Maverick Mojo campaign to influencers within the University system and received positive feedback and support from more than 100 faculty and staff.
- Created and/or implemented:
 - Radio
 - Print ads
 - Web site
 - › E-mail
 - › Text messaging
 - › Social networking sites
 - › Guerilla tactics
 - › Media relations
- Maverick Mojo launch event
 - › Hired a Street Team of models to conduct marketing outreach at the event and at the football game
 - › Handed out balloons with the Maverick Mojo Message and beamav.com Web site URL
 - › Stamped hands with the text messaging "Mojo" 72466 as people entered the game
 - › Handed out 1,000 free T-shirts and 1,000 Maverick Mojo foam horns with the beamav.com Web site URL.
 - › Held up signage at the game to promote Maverick Mojo, beamav.com and text messaging
 - › Painted Mojo messages on individuals' faces as an additional way to spread the message
 - › Distributed Maverick Mojo fliers on cars during the football game
 - › Secured a mechanical bull to provide entertainment and attract crowds of people to the pep rally.
 - › Worked with the university to secure food for people attending the event.
 - › Secured the UNO Cheerleaders and worked with the university to secure the band and mascot at the pep rally.

Results

Applications for admission to UNO are up 42.39% over the previous year.

Undergraduate Admissions for 2007 are up 19.42% over 2006.

Web site traffic to beamav.com jumped from 206 views to 737 views during the week of the Maverick Mojo Event.

Roughly 144 teens in our target audience opted into the text messaging program.

Approximately 1,000 people attended the Maverick Mojo Pep Rally and football game, including nearly 150 prospective high school students and their parents.

The Maverick Mojo event was featured on WOWT live. Sport coverage was obtained on all major television stations. An Omaha World-Herald interview was conducted on the use of text messaging to reach teens.

UNO battled bad publicity during the summer prior to the fall launch of the Maverick Mojo Campaign. The chancellor was asked to resign amidst public and donor backlash concerning inappropriate use of university funds and the mismanagement of the athletic department budget. Several other officials resigned as well. The Maverick Mojo campaign helped to promote unity, school pride and new beginnings in a time when UNO was healing from a summer of bad press.