



MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Norbert Elliot
PTC 642

FROM: Neil McGarry
Group Leader, CorpCommPodcast Core Values

DATE: May 2, 2007

RE: CorpCommPodcast (CCP) Development Team Core Values Group Final Report

Task Allocation

<u>Task</u>	<u>Responsible Party</u>
Logo	Neil McGarry
Mission Statement	Neil McGarry
Identity Statement	Neil McGarry
Internal Communication Strategy	Neil McGarry
Retention/Recruitment Strategy	Neil McGarry
Group Leader	Neil McGarry
Image Statement	Shelby Gordon
Reputation Statement	Shelby Gordon
Ethical Responsibility Statement	Shelby Gordon
Investor Relation Strategy	Shelby Gordon

Inter-Group Communication

Communication was carried out mainly through WebCT, supplemented by emails and attachments.



Neil McGarry

Corporate Communication (PTC 642)

Core Values: Third Report REVISED (April 29, 2007)

Core Values Assignments and Progress

Logo: In designing the logo, it was important to me to capture the essence of the services CCP provides; that is, educational podcasts. Consulting the peer-reviewed literature, I saw examples of logo design geared towards conveying the mission of the organization. When Renton & Johnson were reworking the logo of Battersea Dogs & Cats Home, partner Kirsten Johnson said, “The old logo was not recognizable or memorable enough, and probably did not describe what they actually do.” (Woods, 7.) Therefore, it seemed that relevance to the products and services seemed the key to successful logo design.

Obviously, individual opinions on the nature of the logo will vary, but as Argenti points out, “The logo should reflect accurately what the place is all about. Then constituents can decide whether that is an image they like or not. (Argenti, 67.)

Since Argenti emphasized “consistency is key”, the Core Values team has decided that CCP is best served by a single logo that remains constant across divisions; this will yield a stronger brand identity. (Argenti, 71.)

Mission Statement: A mission statement can alternately be described as a vision; that is, a declaration of focus. In an insightful analysis, Dr. William Kumuyi compares creating a mission statement to gaining a third eye, “the eye to see an ideal future state for their organizations.” With this in mind, the core values team crafted a statement that while broad enough to encompass the scope of services, was equally specific in terms of what these services would not provide. CCP will not provide podcasting on pop culture or contemporary music, and this reality had to appear in the statement.

Finally, in crafting the statement, the team took the advice of Peter Vessenes who in April 2004 defined three key criteria an organization should consider in defining itself:

- “Whom do you serve?”
- “What do you provide?”
- “What makes you different from your competitors?”

(Vessenes, 36.)



The mission statement is accepted as:

"CorpCommPodcast is a student-developed resource that seeks to educate and inform the NJIT community about contemporary organizational communications issues. CorpComm provides informative, easy-to-use podcasts that explore the global communication challenges facing organizations - business, non-profit, educational and social interest - in a manner that is well-researched, informative, and entertaining."

Identity Statement: Paul Argenti states that corporate identity affects not only consumer perception but organizational success. (Argenti, 66). Indeed, a review of the rebranding efforts of Triple C Technology reveals that the name, and by reference the identity, of an organization guides that organization's direction. (Environmental Engineering). Finally, Argenti cautions that, "While image can vary among constituencies, identity needs to be consistent." (Argenti, 57) A simple, easy-to-understand and easy-to-repeat identity statement therefore seemed prudent. Twenty-four-year veteran Jeff Simpson agrees: "Brevity is simplicity and power, as demonstrated by honed phrases like Failure is Not an Option, or Proud, Proficient and Professional." (Simpson, 121.)

The identity statement is accepted as:

"Educational, engaging podcasts on corporate communication"

Image Statement

Defined by Argenti: "a reflection of an organization's identity... as seen from the viewpoint of its constituencies:" (66)

"CCP presents timely, informed and innovative reflection on topics vital to communication."

A key case study in regard to image statements the rise and fall of Enron. Once a darling of shareholders, employees, and Wall Street, Enron shattered their image by greed, deception, ignorance, arrogance, and callousness.

All constituencies in the Enron case – (1) employees and their families who relied upon the livelihood the Enron corporate provided for them in the present and the promise of the future, (2) stockholders/mutual fund managers who had invested their clients dollars in the promise of the company, and (3) state and local government who counted on the corporate and sales tax dollars to maintain education and infrastructure budgets – were devastated by the carelessness the company had in it's image. It was as if company leaders thought that their image could withstand questionable accounting practices, lies and deceit.



Some entities, specifically, set out to change their corporate image. AeroRepublica Airlines didn't take the development and launch of a new corporate image lightly. A corporate press release stated "The new image is the result of a comprehensive market study performed by well-recognized branding experts/advisors." (Pr Newswire) Company leaders felt that this level of thought and investment was worthy to:

Launch new air product into a Panama hub, announce a new fleet of aircraft, and to introduce e-ticketing. All of these messages would resonate with the airlines various constituencies which would include passengers, employees, shareholders, and airline industry analysts.

Reputation Statement

Defined by Argenti: Reputation differs from image because it is built up over time and is not simply a perception at a given point of time. It differs from identity because it is a product of both internal and external constituencies, whereas identity is constructed by internal constituencies (the company itself). ...reputation is based on the perceptions of all constituencies. (79)

Update: I'm not convinced that a reputation statement can be developed at the launch of a project of this type. I suppose a desired reputation statement could be presented and I would suggest the following:

Proven conveyers of vital and pertinent information and views regarding communication.

One has to look, again, to the example of Enron regarding the value of a reputation statement. Enron was once held up to the business world as a model of superior management and business performance. And due to a whistleblower, Sherron S. Watkins, a staffer on the Enron mergers and acquisitions group discovered questionable accounting practices, alerted the company CEO and was ignored. She states:

I certainly believed that Ken Lay was going to act differently that he would take me seriously.

I have explained to a number of audiences, including Congress, that the whole sorry mess was incredibly similar to "The Emperor's New Clothes." First, there is an emperor who is vain and is focused on his appearance rather than on running this kingdom. There are the swindlers who are there to rip off the kingdom by making the emperor new clothes from no-existent cloth, which they say you must be worthy to be able to see and if you are stupid or not fit for office, you will not be



able to see it. The emperor's insecure ministers don't want to appear stupid or unfit for office so they lie and say they can see the cloth. Then, when the emperor is about to go on parade with his "new clothes." The ministers realize they are being swindled but by then it was too late, and they would have to admit to lying and be fired. (Watkins 9)

To some extent, we even felt that with The Walt Disney Company during CEO Michael Eisner's final years. Key partners at Pixar, with whom we'd produced blockbuster projects including Toy Story and Bug's Life, refused to negotiate a new contract with Eisner. They refused to speak with him period. Not soon after new CEO, Bob Iger, took over from Eisner, Disney purchase Pixar and a new breath of creative life has washed over the company.

I will say again that the Reputation Statement for CCP will develop over time, however, based on the case studies the lesson seems to be that an entities reputation should not be trusted to a single person - all involved with the project should have a stake in how the company develops its practices and operations to ensure a quality reputation is developed and maintained.

Ethical Responsibility Statement

Most of the Ethical Responsibility statements I previewed were from academic or health-based entities. It goes to the point that there should be a bottom line standard regarding how individuals are communicated to, study, and that study documented. One has to dig a little deeper to find corporate ethical responsibility statements. Fragments can be found in mission statements, environmental responsibility statements and employment statements.

Based on the model from Disney, I've realized that this ethical responsibility statement is multi-dimensional and in our case would involve:

A Responsibility to our Constituents

Our guests should expect and receive the most timely and well constructed thoughts and opinions in issues of communication.

The individuals who provide input to the CCP are students and practitioners in the area of communication and work to provide academic justification to the work and trends they're implementing in the area of technical communication, advertising, media and community relations.



A Responsibility to the New Jersey Institute of Technology

In respect to the reputation of the New Jersey Institute of Technology and the Master of Science in Professional and Technical Communication, the CCP is an endeavor responsible for upholding the academic and research standards of the entities it aligns itself to.

A Responsibility to the Communication Community Industry

With high standards to effectively disseminate information to a community highly sensitive to the processes of communication, the CCP will work especially hard to be sure that the topics, issues and opinions regarding issues of communication are disseminated in a logical, understandable and technologically aggressive manner.

A Responsibility to the CCP Shareholders

To be good stewards of financial and emotional investments into this project by consistently delivering quality products in regard to discussions and analysis of the study and practice of communications

Internal Communication Strategy

Zetterquist and Quirke state that, “Successful internal communication departments know that communication is the means to an end, and so establish a clear link between the business’s desired ends and the means of communication.” (Zetterquist, Quirke, 18.) With this as a model, and referencing the mission statement, CCP’s internal communication strategy must focus on communicating the value of its podcasts to the NJIT community, and obtaining their “buy-in.” (The value of buy-in is detailed below in more detail.) To this end, I am pleased to report that Dr. Nancy Coppola has agreed to serve as a faculty advisor to this project. Her support will serve both as a compass towards where CCP should be, and an outward symbol of legitimacy and authority.



The following table, based on a case study of a communications effort by Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center (MEDSURG Nursing, 22.), demonstrates the audiences that communications must target.

Stakeholder	Objective
Students (inside MSPTC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make CCP a study resource.• Engender interest in contribution/staffing.
Faculty (inside MSPTC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make CCP a curriculum resource• Make CCP a credit-worthy institution• Encourage professional-level advising
Students (outside MSPTC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make CCP a study resource.
Faculty (outside MSPTC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make CCP a curriculum resource• Encourage professional-level advising

This plan assumes that CCP will be owned by MSPTC; therefore, MSPTC faculty and staff are considered internal; others are considered external.

Communication will be accomplished primarily by the CCP newsletter, produced electronically and possibly in print, depending on funding. (The advertising group is still finalizing this.) Of primary importance is that this newsletter not appear as if penned the CCP staff, but should take a more independent perspective. Steven Knipstein, who asserts that obtaining “buy-in” from internal factions is the most important goal of internal communication, advises, “When writing a newsletter to a non-direct employee audience, it is important to present information in an objective voice that is independent of management...this attention to communication detail can make internal communications carry an air of independence, which is important in gaining ‘buy-in.’” (Knipstein, 21.) Accordingly, I recommend that the editor-in-chief (referenced in the next section) assign newsletter creation to a volunteer, and restrict him/herself to reviewing the publication for accuracy.



Investor Relations Strategy

Update: I believe the communication to investors should be frequent and clear and I've initially landed on a three-pronged plan for the pre-launch, launch, and sustain phases of the project.

Pre-launch	Launch	Sustain
Goal: To provide investors with the information regarding the intentions, audience and prospective outcome of the CCP project	Goal: To provide investors updates regarding the response and adjustments to be made to the CCP process and content.	Goal: To provide investors with information regarding the next generations of the CCP.

Technology has been key in the access of information by investors and potential investors. Large companies such as Qualcomm (<http://www.qualcomm.com/ir/index.html>), Microsoft (<http://www.microsoft.com/msft/default.msp>), and Sony (<http://www.sony.net/SonyInfo/IR/?ref=http%3A//www.sony.com/index.php>) have information on their retail web site which would link shareholders to investor information. In addition, in an interesting twist, non-profit organizations such as the American Red Cross (<http://www.redcross.org/contactus/#CCL>) and American Cancer Society (http://www.cancer.org/docroot/DON/DON_6_How_Your_Donation_Helps.asp), and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (http://www.nationalmssociety.org/site/PageServer?pagename=HOM_SOCIETY_annual_reports) post investor/donor information on their sites. This can be attributed to the greater need the public has to understand how their investments - whether they are in a corporate or non-profit entity - will be utilized.



Recruitment and Retention

The most useful way to discuss this aspect of the project is to break them down into their individual components.

Recruitment: It has been decided that CCP will not charge listeners for podcasts. A review of other major podcast providers (iTunes, Digital Podcast and Podcast Search Service) revealed that they do not charge fees for their materials, and CCP should not stand alone in this regard. (See Vessenes three criteria in Mission Statement.) Although the program may eventually be in a position to apply for grants and other cash sources, we should for the moment restrict recruitment efforts to non-cash remuneration.

I am currently exploring negotiating with NJIT department heads to grant extra credit for podcasts that are submitted to (and ultimately accepted by) CCP. This would attract students – whom we hope would eventually become contributors – to the site, and give faculty an incentive to invest in the venture. This program (should MSPTC agree to it) could benefit all three divisions of CCP, as credit could be granted not just for the submission of podcasts but for assistance with other operations. Artistically inclined students could volunteer to update brochures, and the more technically adept could work directly with the files, editing and refining recordings. This approach would encourage more instructors to recommend participation, and in the end would widen and deepen the pool of talent upon which CCP would draw and the audience it would serve. All of this, of course, comes at no cost to CCP, which makes the cost vs. benefits ratio ideal. I have contacted Dr. Nancy Coppola regarding feasibility and will report on her reply.

I suggest the creation of an editor-in-chief (EIC), who assumes leadership of the project for a one-year period. As CCP attracts donors this staffer could be remunerated for his/her staff duties, most suitably with a one-time flat fee. At the outset, however, this position must be strictly volunteer. The “resume value” of managing an online NJIT multimedia resource should serve as sufficient remuneration for participation, at least until CCP’s presence is more solidly established, at which time cash remuneration could be considered.

Retention: My research has revealed that the key to retention is engagement. In 2007, the Vancouver Province revealed, “The new mantra: Satisfied employees still leave; engaged employees don't.” (Jamieson.) In a 2006 interview in Building Design and Construction, HR consultant F. Leigh Branham (founder of Keeping the People, Inc.) listed as the top causes for employee turnover as “the lack of feedback



and coaching from direct managers; the lack of perceived advancement and growth in the organization; and last, not feeling valued, not feeling listened to, or not in the loop.” (Building Design and Construction.)

With this in mind, I think CCP needs to develop a strategy by which contributors can themselves become part of the CCP staff and gain more control over their own material and over the project in general. I suggest that a contributor who submits 3-5 podcasts (that are accepted by CCP) be asked to join the staff as an associate editor (AE). The AE would help the editor-in-chief with soliciting, reviewing and posting material, and outreach to other departments. The number of accepted podcasts will and should vary depending on the volume of submissions, but 3-5 is a suitable number to serve as a “jumping off point.”

More than engagement will be required, however. Clear documentation regarding specifications and requirements will keep at bay frustration and errors in communication. In 2007, Health Care Registration reported, “Employees need to know what is expected of them so that those expectations can be met. Meeting expectations allows employees to experience a sense of accomplishment, which builds confidence, ownership and pride.” (Health Care Registration, 8.) Clearly, then it will be crucial for CCP to keep in its library all communications regarding best business practices.

Finally, as CCP’s library of podcasts grows, the need for retaining experienced contributors will manifest. As Johnson states, increasing “job embeddedness” is crucial, and one way to do this, she suggests, is by instituting mentoring programs. Since case studies are challenging to write and podcasts to record, the input and assistance of “old-timers” would go a long way towards retaining frequent contributors, and provide a welcoming atmosphere for budding contributors. (Johnson, Lauren, 3.)



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