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Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) Variables that Influence
Perceived Return on Investment (ROI) in higher education:
Chief Marketing Officers' perceptions

Adrienne L. King

Dissertation submitted
to the College of Education and Human Services
at West Virginia University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) Variables that Influence
Perceived Return on Investment (ROI) in higher education:
Chief Marketing Officers' perceptions

Adrienne L. King

This study examines the relationship of the level of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) implementation, level of open systems and change in state appropriations on perceived return on investment (ROI) in U.S. public higher education institutions (HEIs). Designed to provide HEI leaders with data to more accurately determine the best IMC resource allocations, the analysis represents the responses of 40 Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) at HEIs with high and very high research activity, as defined by the Carnegie Classification, and Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) memberships.

Building on previous research from the corporate industry indicating four stages of IMC implementation, the researcher first analyzed the participants' responses to determine their HEI's level of IMC implementation before running the final multiple regression analysis. The researcher found no statistically significant relationships between the dependent variable (perceived ROI) and the independent variables (level of IMC implementation, level of open systems, and change in state appropriations). The results indicate reliability issues related to the survey instrument and provide evidence for the need of future instrument development.

This dissertation furthers the limited research related to IMC as an organization-wide strategic approach to the problem of institutional survival in an increasingly competitive and evolving market. It confirms the growth of IMC in higher education. The organizational structure reported by participants indicates the growing value of IMC and the CMO's influence in senior level strategic decisions.

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Chapter I: Introduction

First introduced to the corporate world in the late 1980s, the concept of integrated marketing communication (IMC) is a fairly new phenomenon in American higher education. Research on the concept within higher education, although limited, suggests that more and more institutions are beginning to adopt the practice due to increased competition for students and funding.

Oregon State University (OSU), for example, is facing a plethora of challenges, not unlike most American higher education institutions (HEI), stemming from the current competitive landscape. These challenges include declining educational aspirations among traditionally aged, in-state college students; intense competition for state resources; aggressive competition among HEIs; and increased competition for federal research funds. In response, in 2009 OSU developed an IMC plan in conjunction with their university-wide strategic plan to elevate institutional marketing and visibility and further the university's progress toward its vision of achieving top-ten status among land grant HEIs (Oregon State University, n.d. para.3).

Administrators of HEIs must face this increasingly competitive environment and respond to the inevitable question "Why should students choose our institution?" Institutions must convey their distinctive attributes to prospective students, among others, as they compete, in many cases, for their very survival.

Statement of the Research Problem

The world of higher education has changed drastically in the last two decades. Competition for students and funding is at an all-time high. No longer can HEIs rely on the "Field of Dreams" mentality that "If we build it, they will come." Add to this increased competition for enrollment, public and private funding for HEIs is becoming extremely scarce.

Cardona (2007) states that higher education's response to the ". . . intense competition for students and funding [has] led campus leaders to embrace marketing and planning as done in corporate America" (p. 2).

A review of the literature reveals that few research studies have been done to analyze the return on investment (ROI) in marketing in higher education, and even fewer have examined the concept of IMC or the role of leadership in successful implementation. One recent study examined IMC in public HEIs and found the importance of institutional leadership to be the most frequently mentioned IMC success factor. The study found that senior marketing professionals working at institutions shown to have reached intermediate or advanced levels of IMC consistently voiced the importance of leadership's commitment to IMC and their role in instituting the coordination of IMC efforts (Edmiston-Strasser, 2007).

The problem is institutional survival in an increasingly competitive and evolving market. IMC as an organization-wide strategic approach is helping bring about institutional solvency, as previously proven in the business industry. In light of the growing competitive landscape, HEI administrators have the immense responsibility to lead their institutions during this challenging time with fewer and fewer resources. They must know that the resource investment will pay off in stabilizing their institution's future survival.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

This study builds on the limited, but growing, research available on IMC in higher education. In addition, it provides a research foundation for institutional leaders to use when making data-driven decisions regarding resource allocations. Successful implementation of IMC is resource dependent and complex in a bureaucratic system, which conflicts with the very idea of integration. The system of higher education in the United States is divided into colleges,

divisions and departments, each of which, by their very nature, are independent and often divisive.

As the competitive forecast continues for HEIs, universities must harness their own distinctive qualities, constituent feedback and research to build stronger brand awareness and institutional recognition. Requiring substantial coordination, these efforts are resource intensive – requiring both financial and human resource investments. The ROI, however, has the potential to propel the institution forward and secure its future.

As one case study illustrated, when a private research university in the northeastern United States successfully implemented an integrated marketing communications plan they realized a variety of strategic successes. These successes included a rise in their *U.S. News & World Report* ranking, increased applications and increased student quality (Horrigan, 2007).

As the need for successful IMC and branding has increased in higher education, so has institutional investment. According to a survey by LipmanHearne, in partnership with the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), in the past decade, overall marketing budgets have increased more than 100 percent. "Clearly, marketing is being increasingly regarded as a 'mission critical' process in higher education, worthy of significant investment" (LipmanHearne, 2010, p. 1). As Rob Moore, CEO of LipmanHearne explained, "Smart marketing doesn't *cost* money, it *makes* money…investments in communications and marketing are directly related to success in fundraising, alumni relations, student recruitment, and other areas" (p. 2). This suggests that successful IMC is critical.

In consideration of all of the variables impacting HEIs today, declining state funding, decreasing endowment values, dwindling private funding sources, and increasing competition for the best and brightest students, institutional leaders have a unique opportunity to strategically

differentiate themselves from the competition with the successful implementation of IMC. Managed effectively, IMC's ROI can be seen in the institution's bottom line.

The significance of successful IMC implementation can obviously be seen in dollars— increased enrollment and attainment of fundraising goals. It can also be identified in increased brand awareness and enhanced institutional reputation, which can, ultimately, enable institutions to attract and retain higher achieving students and more prestigious faculty. The results can be a continuous circle of improvements for the university.

Although relevant for anyone working in higher education, this study is most significant for HEI senior administrators. Specifically, these professionals include: (a) university presidents, (b) vice presidents of advancement, communications, enrollment, and human resources, (c) college deans, (d) athletic directors, and (e) chief financial officers. Senior administrative professionals will have a better comprehension of the value of IMC as a strategic function, which can be used to establish a competitive edge in this challenging market.

Research Question

Is perceived successful ROI related to a. level of IMC implementation, b. level of open systems achieved, and c. percentage of decline/increase in state appropriations? Can these independent variables be utilized to predict the potential for successful ROI?

Definition of Terms

Integrated marketing communications. Once defined as simply coordinating tactical aspects of a marketing and communications program, Schultz (2004) defined IMC as:

A strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate coordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communications programs over time with consumers, customers, prospects, employees, associates and other targeted relevant external and internal audiences. The goal is to generate both short-term financial returns and build long-term brand and shareholder value (p. 8).

Brand Identity. One aspect of IMC's growing popularity and adoption is its role in developing and sustaining brand identity and equity. According to Belch and Belch (2009), "Brand identity is a combination of many factors, including the name, logo, symbols, design, packaging, and performance of a product or service as well as the image or type of associations that comes to mind when consumers think about a brand" (p. 16).

Promotional Mix. Tactical elements typically used to accomplish an organization's communications objectives include: advertising, direct marketing, interactive/web media, sales promotion, public relations and personal selling. Each of these tools can have a distinct role in a well-coordinated IMC program (Belch and Belch, 2009).

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter presents an overview of the evolution of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) since its introduction, including the development of a four-stage framework used to assess IMC implementation and a brief explanation of systems theory as a model used to further examine IMC as a strategic function within organizations. Challenges of the IMC strategy, including difficulties calculating direct ROI and gaining organization-wide buy-in are discussed. Finally, the transition from corporate business strategy to academia is presented, along with a look at the current competitive forecast for HEIs.

Historical Review of Integrated Marketing Communications

Development of IMC. Integrated Marketing Communications was initially defined as the coordination of the various tactical elements of marketing communications to achieve a consistent message across all channels and increased cost efficiency. The tactical elements are (a) advertising, (b) public relations, (c) direct marketing, (d) sales promotion, (e) online communication, and (f) social media.

Schultz (2004) explains that IMC has evolved since its initial introduction in the 1980s to become:

> A strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate coordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communications programs over time with consumers, customers, prospects, employees, associates and other targeted relevant external and internal audiences. The goal is to generate both short-term financial returns and build long-term brand and shareholder value (p. 8).

This revised definition represents an ongoing, strategic process rather than simply integrating one-time tactical efforts. It also recognizes multiple audiences that are an important part of the process, including internal and external constituents. Finally, defined as a business process, this evolution now includes an increased emphasis on accountability and outcomes (Belch and Belch, 2009).

Why the evolution from the traditional Four Ps of marketing developed by Jerome McCarthy in the late 1950s (product, price, place and promotion)? Several key developments influenced the shift towards IMC, including the development of digital technology in all areas of business operations, increased emphasis on branding as a major competitive advantage, and the demand for value-based business practices that demanded increased accountability (Belch and Belch, 2009).

IMC success in industry. As this evolution has occurred, many successful businesses have changed their approach to sales and marketing, instead adopting an IMC approach. Procter and Gamble (P&G), one of the world's largest consumer goods producers, used to be one of the largest mass advertisers in the world. "In 2007 the company spent over $8.5 billion on media advertising and other forms of promotion – more than the gross domestic product of many developing countries" (Belch and Belch, 2009, p. 27). In recent years the company's marketing strategy has shifted from mass, one-way communication to targeted, relationship-building strategies emphasized in IMC. Former P&G Global Marketing Officer Jim Stengel explained, "It's not about telling and selling. It's about bringing a relationship mind-set to everything we do" (Bloom, 2007).

Other product-based corporations like Coca-Cola are utilizing IMC to establish their brand's global positioning. Coca-Cola's "Open Happiness" IMC campaign was rolled out

worldwide in 2009 inviting all "earthlings" to unite in joy and happiness in the world by consuming Coca-Cola. The campaign focuses on Coca-Cola's refreshing, optimistic perspective of the world, uniting consumers worldwide (Paul, 2009).

This shift has also been used successfully in the entertainment and hospitality industry. Harrah's Entertainment, the world's largest gaming company, has been using IMC strategies such as their Total Rewards program and Customer Relationship Management to ensure continued growth. Mehling (2007) concluded that Harrah's IMC success stems from the company's data analysis and knowledge about their consumers, thus enabling them to create demand (p. 25).

Four stages of IMC framework. In 1997, the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC) initiated the first systematic qualitative study to benchmark best practices in IMC. According to this study IMC is developed through a four-stage process "progressing from a highly practical, tactical orientation to one increasingly driven by an understanding of customers and their behaviors" (Schultz & Schultz, 2003, p. 21). The research study was one of the first to focus on organizations that were actually practicing IMC, rather than the ad agencies that were deploying the output efforts. The study analyzed 22 national organizations that practiced varying degrees of IMC such as Dow Chemical, FedEx, Fidelity Investments, Hewlett-Packard, USAA, and Prudential Insurance. The research resulted in several key findings, which were analyzed using a framework described as the Four Stages of IMC (McGoon, 1998).

As illustrated in Table 1, Stage 1 involves tactical coordination of an organization's marketing communication efforts. The primary focus at this stage is to achieve a consistent message and voice across channels.

Table 1

The four stages of IMC framework (Adaptation from Schultz and Schultz, 2004)

IMC Stage	Indicators
Stage 1	**Tactical coordination of marketing communication** • Coordinate interpersonal and cross-functional communication within the organization and with external partners
Stage 2	**Commitment to market research in support of IMC** • Utilize primary and secondary market research sources as well as actual behavioral customer data • Maintain a multitude of feedback channels to gather information about customers and effectively act upon customer feedback throughout the organization
Stage 3	**Application of information technology in support of IMC** • Leverage technologies to facilitate internal and external communications • Adopt technologies for market research and data management purposes • Employ technologies to determine individuals who have the potential to deliver the highest value (financial or service contributions) to the institution
Stage 4	**Strategic integration of IMC** • Active support of institutional leadership • Marketing communication staff empowered by senior leadership to lead the integration of external communication with internal communication directed to students, staff, alumni and other constituents • Measure effectiveness of marketing communication and incorporate findings into strategic planning

Stage 2 in the framework is defined by an organization's use of market research in planning, developing and executing their IMC efforts. Organizations at this stage use primary, secondary, and actual consumer data to customize their IMC efforts — not just the data traditionally maintained by the marketing communications department, but all information-bearing points of contact within the organization. They maintain a multitude of consumer feedback channels to solicit information and feedback to further develop the organization's understanding of who their customers are in terms of demographic information, and also how and why they do what they do.

In Stage 3, organizations apply information technology in support of their marketing efforts. They maintain a number of databases and the marketing staff has access to the data for use in planning IMC programs. They also utilize new technologies to improve how and when messages are delivered to consumers and other target constituents. According to the APQC study few organizations were taking advantage of the technology available to more effectively target their communication programs and determine the costs associated with attracting and retaining customers (Schultz & Schultz, 2003, p. 29).

At the pinnacle of IMC implementation, Stage 4 realizes strategic integration of IMC into the organization's overall strategic objectives. This stage requires support of the organization's senior leadership, empowering marketing communications staff and enabling them to customize the organization's messaging towards internal and external constituents.

Systems theory as a framework for understanding IMC. Edmiston-Strasser (2007) stated that, "IMC (in its ideal form) is an integral part of a systemic and interactive process" (p. 17). As such, systems theory can be used as a lens through which to better understand the various interactive components of the IMC framework. Bertalanffy (1972) added to this understanding

when he said, "since the fundamental character of the living thing is its organization, the customary investigation of the single parts and processes cannot provide a complete explanation of the vital phenomena" (p. 410). Bertalanffy argued that one must also consider the interaction of the parts and processes. The very nature of IMC requires interaction across an organization.

Reidenbach and Oliva (1981) defined marketing as a dynamic systemic process. They explained that even "the most diehard functionalist would have to agree that marketing involves more than the four Ps and that it is hard to separate the marketing functions from other functions" (p. 30) within an organization. Marketing, they argued, deals with "complex, interrelated operations accomplished within a systemic context" (p. 31).

Successful IMC is accomplished as a result of multiple subunits within an organization working together toward a common goal. These subunits must also interact with external components, such as consumers, competitors, and other environmental constituents. This approach applies to higher education where interdependent relationships are established among organizations and constituents. Edmiston-Strasser (2007) clarifies this when she stated that "a university is part of a system comprised of many publics to include students, faculty, administration, alumni, donors, community members, employers, and other educational institutions" (p. 19).

The challenge lies within the system of American higher education, which has become overspecialized creating "functional silos" established to fulfill specific needs of the organization. Sands and Smith (1999) further explain this situation: "The administrative hierarchies in American colleges and universities are rooted in technical expertise and areas of specialized, exclusive knowledge and skill" (p. 49).

Challenges of IMC

Measuring return on investment (ROI). One of the major criticisms of IMC is the challenge of measuring its effectiveness. Certainly organizations can measure outputs such as the number of advertisements, press releases, and other marketing pieces that are developed. The challenge is measuring the outcomes, or impact, of these outputs.

There is often no way to directly link a particular outcome to an organization's output efforts. For example, if a customer purchases something with a coupon, one cannot assume that this particular purchase was the sole result of the coupon. It may have been the result of a combination of ongoing advertisements, previous product experience, or simply brand preference. Measuring the interactive effects of the IMC components has proven to be extremely difficult.

Adding to this challenge, response hierarchy models imply that IMC tactics have intermediate effects, either consciously or subconsciously, on consumer behavior. Two major types of intermediate effects include cognitive and affective outcomes. "Cognitive effects include outcomes such as awareness, knowledge, comprehension and retention. The affective dimension includes measures such as feelings, attitudes, preferences, desires and intentions" (Belch and Belch, 2012, p. 8).

Long-term investment. In the current economy many organizations are looking for immediate returns and instantaneous results. As a strategic function, IMC is not intended to be a short-term solution to an immediate problem. It requires long-term, strategic planning and a sustained resource commitment.

Organization-wide support. In its very terminology IMC requires an integrated approach—dependent upon the buy-in and participation from every unit in the entire

organization. Every facet of the organization must support the IMC efforts in order to fulfill the IMC objectives. This requires support and directives from the senior executive officer down through each department of the organization.

IMC in Higher Education

      A competitive landscape. The world of higher education has changed drastically in the last two decades. Competition for students and funding is at an all-time high. Even if students are interested in a particular institution or program offering, they simply may not come in the numbers or with the resources necessary to keep the institution viable, let alone growing and thriving (Sands and Smith, 1999). Not only have the number of U.S. colleges and universities, including branch campuses, grown, but so have the number of for-profit HEIs such as the University of Phoenix that have aggressively embraced IMC strategies.

Add to this increased competition for enrollment, public and private funding for HEIs is becoming extremely scarce. Cardona (2007) explained that, "By the 1990s, intense competition for students and funding led campus leaders to embrace marketing and planning as done in corporate America" (p. 2). In 1997, management guru Drucker predicted the need for American higher education to evolve, "Thirty years from now the big university campuses will be relics. Universities won't survive. It's as large a change as when we first got the printed book" (Lezner and Johnson, "Education," para.2).

In order to survive in this increasingly competitive environment, institutions are being forced to define their "niche" in the higher education industry. They must develop their uniqueness. Colleges and universities can no longer broadly define themselves as prestigious institutions of academic excellence. With limited resources, universities cannot be all things to all people. They

must emphasize the programs and services that make them distinctive and focus on new ways to differentiate themselves from other HEIs.

From corporate to higher education. Initially dismissed as a conflicting value, marketing practices have only recently been adopted by HEIs as a result of the growing competition for enrollment and funding. One initial objection against marketing in higher education was a concern that it would "commercialize" the industry and undermine the integrity of academia and scholarly standards of quality and excellence.

The research-based marketing models that have been successful in the business industry have not necessarily translated well in higher education. In many cases they became more of a coordination effort of communication tactics and promotional messages. The collegial nature of higher education, coupled with shared governance, led to the creation of elaborate five- and ten-year plans that were too general and often did not adequately address institutional deficiencies (Cardona, 2007).

Marketing has grown incrementally in higher education. As administrators begin to see successful returns on their efforts – that is increased applications, enrollment and the like – they have been willing to devote more resources to IMC efforts. According to a LipmanHearne/CASE (2010) survey representing feedback from 212 CASE member institutions on marketing practices in higher education, marketing is "increasingly being regarded as a 'mission critical' process in higher education, worthy of significant investment" (p. 1). In fact, the survey results indicated that marketing budgets grew, on average, more than 100 percent from 2001 to 2011. The study also reported that participating institutions had seen significantly positive impacts of their marketing efforts in three key areas: (a) brand management, (b) positioning, and (c) quality of applicants.

Campus marketing leader. Higher education marketing leaders have emerged with the adoption of IMC on college campuses. These individuals hold administrative positions on campus. Their acceptance and influence has varied widely from simply coordinating tactical communications elements to serving as senior leaders in a position to influence long-range, institutional planning. The resistance to marketing as a business strategy in academia requires marketing leaders to utilize their interpersonal communication and leadership skills to influence change. Cardona (2007) provides insight when he stated, "winning university-wide acceptance may mean changing institutional culture" (p. 22).

Brand identity and equity. IMC's growing popularity is the direct result of its successful use in developing, and more importantly, sustaining an organization's brand identity. Belch and Belch (2009) defined brand identity as the "combination of many factors, including the name, logo, symbols, design, packaging, and performance of a product or services as well as the image or type of associations that come to mind when consumers think about a brand." In essence, it encompasses everything a consumer knowingly, and even unconsciously, associates with a particular product or company.

Although not always defined in financial terms, an organization's brand identity is of substantial value. Brand equity is the value of a given brand. According to *BusinessWeek* (2009), the top three global brands—Coca-Cola, IBM and Microsoft—are valued at more than $50 billion each.

For-profit corporations are not the only ones to recognize the value of and seek to grow their brand equity. Based on the first-ever *Times Higher Education* World Reputation Rankings survey conducted in 2010-11 American HEIs continue to have a dominant global position. The rankings suggest that the top six colleges—Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of

Technology, the University of Cambridge, University of California at Berkeley, Stanford University and the University of Oxford—form a group of globally recognized "super brands" (Morgan, 2011).

Brand building efforts typically result in four major areas of return: (a) increased consumer loyalty, (b) increased consumption, (c) increased consumer spending as a result of growing customer loyalty, and (d) the ability of the organization to expand based on the increase in number of consumers, sales, or both (Schultz and Schultz, 2004).

Business strategy. Many HEI leaders have written about the need to adopt a business perspective when addressing today's growing challenges. Thor (2006) cited tremendous opportunity for educators to learn from established and innovative business strategies.

> Just like business, higher education in the twenty-first century is facing numerous factors that are influencing, for better or worse, organizational effectiveness. These include globalization, changing demographics, mass customization, and often, flattened financial resources (p.10).

The strategies that have long been successful in the world of business are not necessarily contradictory to the traditional role of higher education and the honored trinity of teaching, research, and service. They offer solutions to the challenges threatening the survival of our universities.

> In an editorial in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Gee (2011) defined this challenge:
> At this moment, American public higher education faces a reality check of the highest order. Distilled to its essence, the concern takes us back to first principles: Who are we as a community of learners, and how do we reconfigure ourselves for a financially sustainable future (para.1)?

Outlining several innovative business-style concepts being implemented at The Ohio State University to ensure its future, Gee confirmed the University's commitment to the traditional values of higher education: "We teach, we learn, we think, we discover, we write and create in service of our students, our community, our times, and our future. That will never change" (para.15).

The challenge for HEI leaders is applying business strategies in a transparent fashion overlying the institution's mission and service of education. Duderstadt (1997) explained:

> While many in the academy would undoubtedly view with derision or alarm the depiction of the higher education enterprise as an 'industry,' operating in a highly competitive, increasingly deregulated, global marketplace, this is nevertheless an important perspective that will require a new paradigm for how we think about post-secondary education… Universities will have to learn to balance the competitive pressures for the millennium-old model against the new market forces compelling change (p. 14).

Summary

A proven successful business strategy, IMC is now being used by many HEIs to leverage a competitive advantage in the world of academia. With little research available on its implementation in higher education, academic leaders' ability to make smart, data-driven resource investment decisions has been limited. Assessment of HEIs' level of IMC implementation, open-systems orientation, impact of funding increases and decreases, and successful ROI provides invaluable data for higher education leaders facing this competitive landscape. This data enables institutional leaders to assess the potential use of IMC as a strategic function within their organization, as well as determine the best course of investment of their limited resources.

Chapter III: Methodology

This study was designed to provide Higher Education Institution (HEI) leaders with data that could be used to more accurately determine the best Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) resource allocations. The survey was distributed to 133 chief marketing officers (CMOs) at public, high and very high research activity institutions in the United States, as defined by the Carnegie Classification, with CASE memberships in 2012. Designed to analyze the perceived return on investment (ROI) of HEI's IMC efforts based on potential predictor variables, the study included institutions with similar funding and academic stature; as well as those that had a history of investing institutional resources in IMC efforts.

Research Question

Is perceived successful ROI related to a. level of IMC implementation, b. level of open systems achieved, and c. percentage of decline/increase in state appropriations? Can these independent variables be utilized to predict the potential for successful ROI?

Participants

Selection criteria. Participating HEIs were selected based on two pre-determined criteria. These included: (a) Carnegie classification (public, high and very high research activity HEIs) and (b) 2012 CASE membership.

For comparison purposes, it was critical that the participants' institutions be comparable in funding and academic stature. For this reason, the first criterion selected was the participants' institution's Carnegie classification.

First published in 1973, the Carnegie Classification is the leading framework for comparing peer U.S. HEIs based on similar attributes. The framework was updated in 2005 to reflect the current landscape in American higher education. The new classification formula

includes a variety of factors such as research and development spending, number of post-docs and non-faculty research staff members with a doctorate, and number of doctoral degrees conferred (Jaschik, 2006).

Participating institutions in the United States were selected based on their current Carnegie Classification. One hundred and forty-six HEIs were identified as public institutions with a high or very high research classification. It was then determined which of these HEIs held a current CASE membership. This second criterion was selected as evidence of the participants' institution's current resource commitment to IMC efforts.

Founded in 1974, CASE is the world's largest nonprofit education association. Members of CASE include more than 3,500 colleges and universities, primary and secondary independent and international schools and nonprofit education organizations in 74 countries. The professional organization helps educational institutions build stronger relationships with alumni and donors, increase fundraising, market the institution, and recruit prospective students.

Sample size. These criteria narrowed the participant pool to CMOs at public HEIs in the United States facing similar enrollment and funding challenges. Of the 146 HEIs identified as meeting the first selection criteria, 133 held CASE memberships in 2012 (Appendix A), illustrating a financial commitment to IMC in their organization. The survey instrument was distributed to the CMOs at these 133 HEIs for this study.

Respondents. Forty-six survey responses were received. However, six did not include sufficient data to define all three independent variables needed for the analysis and were therefore omitted. One participant responded to all questions except for those related to the HEI's state location and enrollment. This participant's responses were included in descriptive analysis where possible. The remaining 40 responses resulted in a 30% response rate. The final

multiple regression analysis included only these 40 responses because they contained sufficient

data to assess all of the independent variables. Thirty-seven respondents indicated that they were

the individual chiefly responsible for marketing and communication efforts at their institution,

while four respondents indicated that they were not. Of these, two responses were received from

HEIs that had requested the survey instrument be redirected to the individual they felt had a

better understanding of their institution's IMC efforts. These responses were included in the final

analysis because they all held senior-level administrative positions (Vice President, Assistant

Vice President, Director, etc.) indicating first-hand knowledge of their institution's IMC efforts.

   Institutional demographics. The 41 responses included in this analysis represented HEIs

in 29 different states. These institutions' overall operating budgets ranged from $142 million to

$5.42 billion. Their enrollment (Table 2) ranged from 5,001-10,000 FTE (full-time equivalency)

to more than 20,000 FTE.

Table 2

Participating HEIs' Current Enrollment

Size	Frequency	Percent
5,001 – 10,000 FTE	3	7.3
10,001 – 20,000 FTE	10	24.4
20,000+ FTE	27	65.9
Total	40	97.6
Missing	1	2.4
Total	41	100.0

Organizational structure. The CMOs at each of the participating HEIs were identified

using the institution's website and the CASE directory. As indicated in the survey results, these

individuals' titles range from Director to Assistant Vice President to Associate Vice President to

Vice President. In some institutions, the titles included Assistant Vice Chancellor and Vice

Chancellor. Their specific titles represented a variety of areas including: Communications,

Public Affairs, Marketing, University Relations, External Affairs and Advancement. As

indicated in Table 3, these individuals held senior-level administrative positions with the

majority reporting directly to the University President or a Vice President.

Table 3

CMOs' Reporting Structure

Direct Report	Frequency	Percent
President	19	46.3
Vice President	19	46.3
Director	2	4.9
None of the Above	1	2.4
Total	41	100.0

Respondent demographics. The sample included 22 men and 19 women. The sample's

ethnicity included 38 Caucasians, 2 African Americans, and 1 Hispanic. Their education varied

from bachelor's degrees to doctoral degrees as seen in Table 4. The majority of the CMOs, 24,

held a master's degree. Thirty of the participants had more than 10 years of experience in higher

education marketing (Table 5). The time in their current position, however, was more dispersed,

ranging from less than 2 years to more than 10 years (Table 6).

Table 4

CMO Education Level

Education	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor's degree	15	36.6
Master's degree	24	58.5
Doctoral degree	2	4.9
Total	41	100.0

Table 5

CMO Experience in Higher Education Marketing

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percent
0-2 yrs	4	9.8
3-5 yrs	2	4.9
6-10 yrs	5	12.2
10+ yrs	30	73.2
Total	41	100.0

Table 6

CMOs' Years in Current Position

Current Position	Frequency	Percent
0-2 yrs	14	34.1
3-5 yrs	8	19.5
6-10 yrs	14	34.1
10+ yrs	5	12.2
Total	41	100.0

Measurement

The Edminston-Strasser instrument (ESI) was first developed, and initially administered, by Edminston-Strasser (2009) to six senior IMC practitioners during a pre-test research stage. Based on feedback, the instrument was modified before being administered to the 82 selected public U.S. HEIs in her study. The original ESI included 31 Likert-type scale questions with specific groupings related to each of the four dimensions of the IMC framework, level of open systems achieved, and perceived successful ROI.

For the purpose of this study, the ESI was modified before administering it to the 133 selected participants. Additional demographic information including participants' years of experience, years of service at their current institution, level of education, gender, and ethnicity was included in this study. In an effort to strengthen the ESI, the order of the Likert-type scale questions on the questionnaire was randomly interchanged and included reverse scale questions. The revised ESI (Appendix B) included alternating positive and negative Likert items in an effort to reduce response bias. The researcher also removed the "Don't Know" option from the original ESI to force participants' selections. Finally, the instrument's format was modified for online distribution.

The instrument's reliability was determined by calculating Cronbach's Alpha, which assessed the internal consistency among responses. A value between 0.7 and 0.8 is generally considered an acceptable value for Cronbach's Alpha (Field, 2005). The study's questionnaire included several subscales to which Cronbach's Alpha was applied separately. As Table 7 illustrates, all of the Cronbach Alpha values in this study are substantially lower than the acceptable value indicating an unreliable scale.

Table 7

Cronbach's Alpha

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Total IMC	22	.427
IMC Stage 1	7	-.181
IMC Stage 2	6	.415
IMC Stage 3	4	-.318
IMC Stage 4	5	-.144
Level of Open Systems	7	.088
Perceived ROI	3	.297

Design

This study used a survey designed to measure things as they stood at the point of assessment. In other words, how each of the participants' viewed the state of each independent variable at their respective institutions at the time of the survey. While the study was designed to analyze relationships between each of the variables on the survey, it does not provide evidence necessary to determine causal relationships.

The research design utilized self-reported data, allowing the selected CMOs to respond based on their first-hand knowledge regarding their institution's level of IMC implementation. These individuals were deemed the most likely to fully understand the many aspects of their universities' IMC efforts.

The Likert-type scale instrument provided detailed, quantitative data regarding level of IMC implementation, level of open systems achieved, and perceived level of ROI. This data was analyzed statistically using a multiple regression analysis to answer the study's research question.

However, there were several possible validity issues with this approach, including respondents' inherently biased feelings at the time of survey completion. In addition, participants

might have selected the neutral response on the Likert-type scale questions in an effort to quickly complete the survey or appear less extreme.

Procedures

The researcher received approval through the Human Research Protections Program and the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at West Virginia University. The CMO was identified at each participating HEI using the institutions' websites and CASE membership log. This individual held a director or VP level position, with the primary responsibility of overseeing the university's IMC efforts. Contact information was collected using the online CASE membership directory and/or the institutional website.

A hard copy letter (Appendix C) was mailed to each participant on June 7, 2013, outlining the research objectives and informing the participant that they would be receiving an online survey the following week. The modified ESI was distributed electronically on June 11 using the Qualtrics survey tool, along with an email request (Appendix D), to the CMOs at each of the 133 HEIs selected. Follow-up emails were sent on June 18, 25, July 9, 12, and 17. Individual phone calls were placed to those participants who had not yet responded or opted out on July 10-11 in an effort to achieve a minimum response rate of 25 percent.

Data Analysis

After the data collection was complete, the researcher prepared the data for analysis. Each of the survey questions that had not been randomly interchanged to reverse scale were transposed. A response of 5 then indicated that the participant was strongly in agreement and a response of 1 signified a strong sense of disagreement.

Demographics of respondents were explored using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics were also analyzed to look at general observations regarding the four dimensions of the

IMC framework, level of open systems achieved, and change in state appropriations. Focus was placed on analyzing the relationships between the variables in an attempt to answer the study's research question.

The research study was designed to analyze the relationship between the perceived level of ROI success and three independent variables: a. IMC implementation, b. level of open systems achieved, and c. percentage of decline/increase in state appropriations (Figure 1).

Figure 1

State appropriations as published in the Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac (2012).
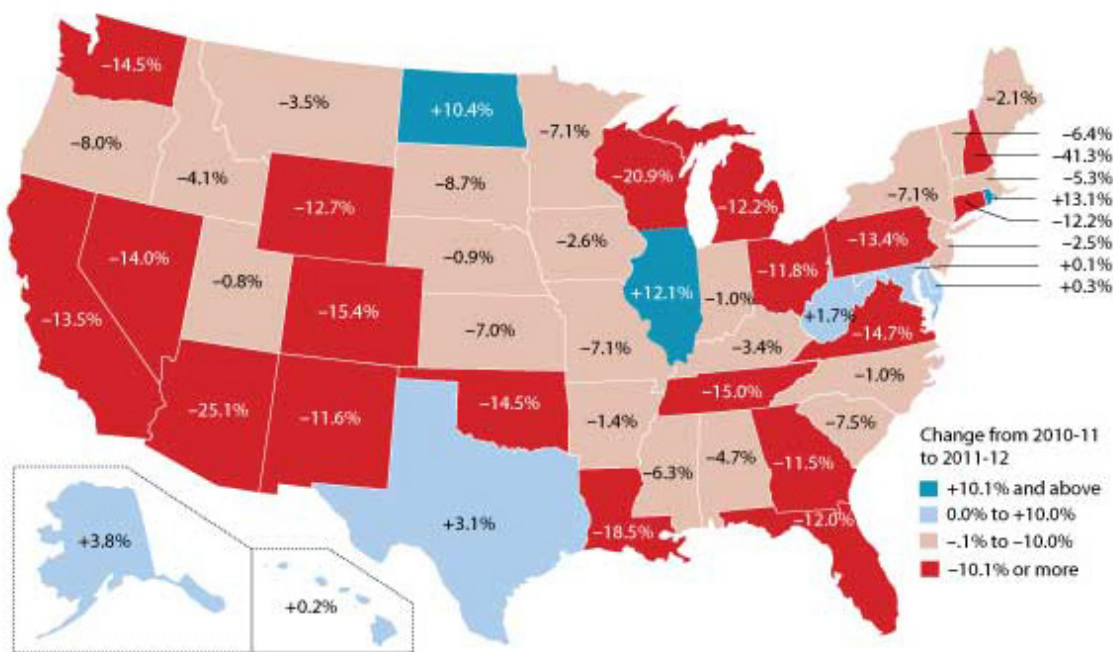
The responses to each of the question sets assessing each of the variables (Table 8) were averaged. In the case of the level of IMC implementation each of the participant's responses to the four levels was averaged, with the highest average being assigned as the HEI's level of

implementation. In the case of a tie, the researcher assigned the higher stage to that response

based on the assumption that the IMC stages are part of a linear process and the respective HEI

had demonstrated that their IMC efforts were moving toward the higher level. The researcher

then used dummy variables to convert the averages for each of the levels into categorical data,

which was then combined with the other variables to run a multiple regression analysis. This test

shows how much variance each independent variable accounts for in the prediction equation. In

other words, can any of the independent variables significantly predict ROI of an institution's

IMC efforts, and to what extent?

Table 8

Variables as assessed in ESI

Variable	Survey Question(s)
Level of IMC Implementation	Q 14-35
• Stage 1: Tactical coordination of marketing communication	Q 14-20
• Stage 2: Commitment to market research	Q 21-26
• Stage 3: Application of information technology	Q 27-30
• Stage 4: Strategic integration of IMC	Q 31-35
Level of Open Systems Perceived	Q 36-42
Perceived ROI	Q 43-45
Change in State Appropriations	Q10

The researcher assessed several assumptions. As described, the researcher converted all predictor variables so that they were categorical, with only two categories, and had some variation in value. They should have no correlation to other external variables. It was also assumed that each outcome variable was reported by a separate entity and that the relationship of the dependent variable and the independent variables was linear, which was assessed by examining the scatterplots of the dependent variable by each of the independent variables. Homogeneity of the residuals was assessed by visually examining the scatterplot of standardized residuals by the standardized predictor values. Multicollinearity was assessed using the variance inflation factor (VIF) calculated in SPSS to be certain that no two-predictor variables correlated too highly. The assumption of independent errors was tested with the Durbin-Watson test, which tests for serial correlations among errors.

Chapter IV: Results

Designed to provide HEI leaders with data to more accurately determine the best Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) resource allocations, this study represents the responses of Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) at public, high and very high research activity institutions in the United States, as defined by the Carnegie Classification. In analyzing the perceived Return on Investment (ROI) of Higher Education Institution's (HEI) IMC efforts, the study examined three potential predictor variables: (a) level of IMC implementation, (b) level of open systems achieved, and (c) change in state appropriations.

Descriptive Statistics

Each of the variables was analyzed using descriptive statistics as described below.

Return on Investment. Participants were asked whether their IMC efforts were providing successful ROI based on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). As Table 9 indicates, 63.5% of respondents indicated that the ROI on their IMC efforts ranged between 2.00 and 2.99. Nine participants, or 21.9%, indicated that the ROI on their IMC efforts was higher – ranging between 3.00 and 3.99. The mean was 2.37 and the standard deviation was 0.61.

Table 9

Perceived Return on Investment

ROI	Frequency	Percent
1.00 – 1.99	5	12.2
2.00 – 2.99	26	63.5
3.00 – 3.99	9	21.9
4.00	1	2.4
Total	41	100.0

Level of IMC Implementation. As Table 10 indicates, nearly three-quarters of the respondents (73.1%) indicated that their respective institutions were at Level 1 or 2 in terms of IMC implementation.

Thirty-nine percent of respondents were assigned to level one based on their responses indicating that their institution had tactical coordination of their marketing communications. These institutions coordinate interpersonal and cross-functional communication within the organization, as well as with external partners. Based on the responses received, 34.1% of the participants indicated that their institution was at level two in terms of IMC implementation. These HEIs are committed to market research in support of their IMC efforts. They utilize primary and secondary market research sources, as well as actual consumer data, and effectively act upon customer feedback. Nearly one fifth (19.5%) of participants' responses indicated that their institution had achieved the fourth level of IMC implementation with strategic implementation and active support of institutional leadership.

Table 10

Level of IMC Implementation

Level	Frequency	Percent
Stage 1: Tactical coordination of marketing communication	16	39.0
Stage 2: Commitment to market research in support of IMC	14	34.1
Stage 3: Application of information technology in support of IMC	3	7.3
Stage 4: Strategic integration of IMC	8	19.5
Total	41	100.0

Level of Open Systems Achieved. The extent to which the survey participants viewed their institution's level of open systems achieved ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), as illustrated in Table 11. The largest number of participants (17) responses ranged between 3.01 and 3.49 indicating that these institutions have established some level of interdependent relationships between departments as needed for their IMC efforts. The mean was 3.29 and the standard deviation was 0.37.

Table 11

Level of Open Systems Achieved

Open Systems	Frequency	Percent
1.00 – 3.00	13	31.8
3.01 – 3.49	17	41.5
3.50 – 3.99	8	19.6
4.00	3	7.3
Total	41	100.0

Change in State Appropriations. Only 40 of the 41 respondents answered the question regarding the state in which their institution was located resulting in only 40 responses regarding this variable. These responses represent public HEIs in 29 different states. As reported in the Chronicle of Higher Education's 2012 Almanac, these institutions saw a state appropriation change ranging from a decrease of 25.1% to an increase of 13.1% last year. The mean percentage change in state appropriations was -7.46%.

Correlations. Correlations measure linear relationships between variables. In preparation for the regression analysis the researcher ran bivariate correlations among the independent variable (perceived ROI) and the dependent variables (a. level of IMC implementation, b. level of open systems, and c. percentage change in state appropriations) to descriptively look at the relationships as seen in Table 12. The only significant relationship was a negative correlation between ROI and IMC Level 2. The only other relationship that was close to being significant was between ROI and IMC Level 4.

Table 12

Level of Open Systems Achieved

		ROI	IMC 2	IMC 3	IMC 4	Open Systems
IMC 2	r	-.313[*]				
	p	.050				
IMC 3	r	-.078	-.150			
	p	.631	.355			
IMC 4	r	.273	-.327[*]	-.115		
	p	.089	.039	.481		
Open Systems	r	.007	.094	.263	.137	
	p	.964	.562	.101	.400	
State Appropriations	r	-.115	.043	-.048	.065	.097
	p	.478	.790	.767	.690	.551

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Regression Analysis

After preparing the data for each of the variables, the researcher ran a multiple regression

analysis in SPSS using the following prediction equation:

$$ROI = b_0 + [b_1IMC2 + b_2IMC3 + b_3IMC4] + b_4OpenSystems + b_5StateAppropriations$$

As illustrated in Table 13, R-squared is not significant [$F(5,34) = 1.56$ $p > 0.05$]

indicating that there are numerous other variables accounting for the shared variance or that there

may be an issue with the ESI's reliability. In other words, the survey instrument's measures of

variability could have been essentially random. The shrinkage seen in the difference between R^2

and Adjusted R^2 suggests that the variability is not systematic. None of the independent variables

has a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable in this prediction equation. Given

the lack of statistically significant relationships in this multiple regression analysis, and the

return rate of only 40 complete responses, there was no need to assess the interrelationships of

the independent variables as originally planned.

Assumptions Assessment. The multicollinearity and independent errors assumptions

were assessed. As indicated by the variance inflation factor (VIF) figures in Table 15, each was

well under 10. A value under 10 indicates that a predictor does not have a strong linear

relationship with the other predictors (Field, 2005). The Durbin-Watson statistic assesses the

assumption of independent errors. The value in Table 13 (1.969) indicates that this assumption

was met.

Table 13

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.396[a]	.156	.032	.60863	1.969

a. Predictors: (Constant), q10 Percent change in State Appropriations, IMCStage2d, OpenSysLvl Level of Open Systems, IMCStage3d, IMCStage4d

b. Dependent Variable: PercROI Perceived Return on Investment

Table 14

Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	SE B	β		
Constant	2.085	.922		2.260	.030
IMC2	-.366	.233	-.275	-1.574	.125
IMC3	-.377	.480	-.120	-.702	.488
IMC4	.260	.267	.170	.973	.338
OpenSystems	.089	.283	.054	.315	.755
StateAppropriations	-.010	.012	-.126	-.790	.435

a. Dependent Variable: PercROI Perceived Return on Investment

Table 15

Coefficients[a]

Model	Collinearity Statistics
	VIF
Constant	
IMC2	1.227
IMC3	1.182
IMC4	1.230
OpenSystems	1.174
StateAppropriations	1.019

a. Dependent Variable: PercROI Perceived Return on Investment

Summary

The prediction equation regressing the independent variables (level of IMC implementation, level of open systems, and change in state appropriations) on the dependent variable (perceived ROI) was not significant. The lack of relationship, however, provides further insight into the field of IMC in higher education. As previously noted in the literature review, this is an emerging field within higher education with very little past research.

Chapter V: Discussion

This study confirms the growth of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) as a strategic initiative in the sustainability and growth of U.S. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Despite varying levels of IMC implementation reported by the study's participants, it is apparent that these Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) are positioned among the universities' key leadership enabling them to influence their institution's overall strategic decision-making.

IMC in Higher Education

Campus marketing leader. The demographic information regarding the research participants provides further understanding regarding this field, especially in higher education. These individuals have a range of educational backgrounds and years of experience. However, the number of CMOs reporting directly to the university president suggests that this position is quickly becoming a valued member of the institution's senior leadership. This may be a positive indication that the field of IMC is being seen as a strategic initiative with the potential to provide institutions with a competitive advantage as previously illustrated in corporate industry.

As mentioned in the literature review, this field is still in its infancy – especially in higher education, which is often hesitant to adopt business models from industry. Horrigan (2007) reminded us that until recently, marketing and communications efforts were handled independently by the HEI administrators in various units such as enrollment and development, without any practical marketing or business background. A senior level administrator responsible for the oversight of their institution's IMC efforts is a more recent development. The many job titles seen in this study's responses, however, indicate that this position and its responsibilities are still inconsistent across higher education.

In 2007 Cardona argued that while CMOs were members of the management team, they are often viewed as tacticians rather than strategists. "To be seen as strategists, they must prove that they can solve problems beyond their own discipline and effect broad institutional issues that impact the larger university community. And report directly to the president" (p. 1). The results of this study indicate that these individuals' job duties encompass a range of responsibilities including integrated marketing communications, public affairs, development, and admissions. Several of the job titles seen in Appendix E actually include the term "strategic" or "strategy," which may indicate a new level of acceptance regarding this role in long-term strategic decision making.

Combined with the financial investment reported in the 2011 LipmanHearne/CASE survey, it appears that IMC's role in strategic, outcomes-based decision-making is only beginning:

> Investments in communications and marketing are directly related to success in fundraising, alumni relations, student recruitment, and other areas. At a time when schools, colleges, and universities are facing tighter budgets, it's especially important to benchmark marketing spending and make sure that every dollar is used wisely and strategically in support of institutional goals (p. 2).

Research Variables

Although the hypothesis that the study's independent variables could be used to predict the dependent variable – perceived ROI – proved null, the independent variables did provide additional insight into the topic of IMC in higher education.

IMC Implementation. Belch and Belch (2012) described the shift toward the IMC perspective as "one of the most significant changes" in the history of marketing communications

and as "the major communications development of the last decade of the 20th century" (p. 2). Based on the results of this study, it appears that HEIs are still in the early stages of IMC implementation. With nearly three-quarters of the survey respondents indicating that their respective institutions were only at level one or two in terms of implementation, it appears that further development of higher education's IMC efforts is needed. As Schultz and Schultz (2003) explained, in the third and fourth stages organizations are able to move beyond simple coordination of their IMC efforts to full integration. Only in stage four can an institution "apply IMC tools and principles to the overall strategic objectives" (p. 30). This development is critical to the success of an HEI's IMC efforts, as well as to the CMO's ability to move beyond "tactician" to "strategist".

Collaboration in an open system. As the literature explains, one of the challenges of IMC implementation in higher education is the multitude of silos in HEIs. Academia, by its bureaucratic nature, consists of experts in various fields, departments, units, and colleges. Each of which operates independently and dependently at the same time. Horrigan's (2007) research demonstrated the importance of coordination among these various units in an HEI's IMC success. His analysis of successful IMC efforts at a private university emphasized a high degree of coordination between its cross-functional schools and departments as a significant factor.

Edmiston-Strasser (2007) found that formal communications mechanisms such as the establishment of a campus-wide marketing committee can increase collaboration, and as a result, the success of the HEI's IMC efforts. Her research suggested these types of working committees can help educate key leaders across campus about the IMC efforts, therefore creating advocates for the institution's marketing efforts. In addition, she suggested that including formal marketing

mechanisms such as communications audits and marketing forums could demonstrate the ROI of an institution's IMC efforts, which assists in establishing campus-wide support and buy-in.

Increased financial challenges. As the literature describes, IMC efforts require significant, long-term investments of both time and resources. This can be particularly challenging for HEIs as they face increased financial challenges. The research sample in this study consisted of entirely public HEIs. On average, these institutions saw a 7.46% decline in state appropriations in 2011. According to the most recent *Chronicle of Higher Education's Almanac* (2013), overall spending on higher education declined only slightly in 2012. However, all indications are that this will not be the continued trend for higher education. In addition to state appropriations, HEIs must continue to fight for enrollment numbers and private research funding.

Research Limitations

There were several limitations to this research, including sample size, sample selection, study design, timing, and measurement reliability. The sample size, although sufficient for the statistical analysis presented, may not be representative of the general population. The researcher selected a purposeful sample (high and very high, public HEIs with a CASE membership in 2012), which might also limit the ability to apply the results to all HEIs. Smaller, private institutions, for example, might provide very different responses than those collected in this sample. The data used in this study was self-reported, which by its very nature has limits, including possible participant bias. In addition, the timing of the data collection (Summer) may have influenced the respondent's feelings toward the variables given the activities in key areas such as enrollment and development. Finally, the survey instrument proved to have severe reliability issues as seen in the assessment of Cronbach's Alpha. Further instrument development

is needed in order to more accurately assess the study's variables and their relationships, if any, on perceived ROI.

Recommendations

Integrated Marketing Communications in higher education will likely continue to evolve as competitive markets change and funding challenges increase. It is apparent that the initial resistance to this business concept in higher education is lessening as these challenges provide new opportunities for those HEIs willing and able to successfully harness this strategy.

Theoretical advancement. The measurement's reliability issues seen in this study indicate a critical need for further instrument development. As a result of IMC's infancy in higher education, few instruments exist to assess an organization's IMC implementation level or other independent variables included in this study. Further instrument development focusing solely on HEIs' level of IMC implementation and the reliability assessment of individual questions across participants would result in a more substantive measurement tool. This tool could be used to benchmark the current state of an HEI's IMC implementation, as well as account for progress and justification of future resource allocations.

It could also be used to further research related to the linear nature of the four IMC stages of implementation initially defined in the APQC study (Schultz and Schultz, 2003, p. 21). For example, given resource allocations limiting technological investments, would it possible for a HEI to advance from stage 2 of implementation to stage 4 without stage 3?

Practical application. The research confirms the growth and influence of IMC in higher education. The extent to which IMC is integrated in institutional strategic planning is still widely unknown. Defined as an ongoing, strategic business process with an emphasis on accountability

suggests that institutional IMC efforts should coincide with the university's long-term strategic plan.

This requires that CMOs have a "seat at the table" in terms of senior-level decision making. This study confirms that while IMC implementation in higher education is growing, the role of the CMO is still ambiguous. Higher education leaders should strive to formalize this role with a clearly defined title, role, and expectations. This will not only provide clear direction for professionals currently serving in this role, but also students with IMC career aspirations in higher education. Additionally, this clarity will enable HEI administrators to more accurately determine IMC resource allocations and hold CMOs accountable in terms of the ROI of their institution's IMC efforts.

Future research. Future research should be conducted seeking input from other constituents impacted by, or involved in, their HEI's IMC efforts. These responses could be compared to those of the institution's CMO to determine the extent to which their efforts are truly integrated and shared among the entire campus. In particular, it would be interesting to compare the responses of the institutional president and the CMO to see if their expectations and perceptions align.

As noted in this study, it appears that some CMOs are beginning to gain influence and respect for their contributions in their institution's overall strategic planning. It would therefore be interesting to compare their IMC objectives to that of the campus' strategic, long-range planning efforts. What role does the institution's IMC strategy play in the overall strategic plan?

Similar studies could be done to compare different HEIs, including private institutions, land-grant universities and for-profit institutions. This data could be used to analyze similarities and differences between these different organizations. For instance, have private institutions

adopted IMC strategies as a means to increase their competitive advantage in this increasingly

challenging economy? Are land-grant universities able to utilize IMC principles in spite of their

mission to provide services to a wide-range of constituents? Have for-profit HEIs been more

successful in implementing IMC as a business strategy because of their focus on profit and

sustainability?

Finally, it would be interesting to examine the long-term success of these efforts as they

relate to enrollment, alumni affinity and fundraising efforts. Are the institutions' investments in

IMC paying off in terms of brand loyalty, and ultimately, increased revenue? This might be

increased revenue from enrollment due to increased retention or increased donations from alumni

and donors as a result of their commitment to IMC.

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Appendices A, B, C, D, E

Appendix A: Participant Sample

HEI	State	Case Member
Arizona State University	AZ	Y
Auburn University Main Campus	AL	Y
Ball State University	IN	Y
Bowling Green State University-Main Campus	OH	Y
Clemson University	SC	Y
Cleveland State University	OH	Y
College of William and Mary	VA	Y
Colorado School of Mines	CO	Y
Colorado State University	CO	Y
CUNY Graduate School and University Center	NY	N
Florida Atlantic University	FL	Y
Florida International University	FL	Y
Florida State University	FL	Y
George Mason University	VA	Y
Georgia Institute of Technology-Main Campus	GA	Y
Georgia State University	GA	Y
Idaho State University	ID	Y
Indiana University-Bloomington	IN	N
Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis	IN	Y
Iowa State University	IA	Y
Jackson State University	MS	Y
Kansas State University	KS	Y
Kent State University Kent Campus	OH	Y
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College	LA	N
Louisiana Tech University	LA	Y
Miami University-Oxford	OH	Y
Michigan State University	MI	Y
Michigan Technological University	MI	Y
Mississippi State University	MS	Y
Missouri University of Science and Technology	MO	Y
Montana State University	MT	Y
New Jersey Institute of Technology	NJ	Y
New Mexico State University-Main Campus	NM	Y
North Carolina State University at Raleigh	NC	Y
North Dakota State University-Main Campus	ND	Y
Northern Arizona University	AZ	Y
Northern Illinois University	IL	Y
Ohio State University-Main Campus	OH	Y
Ohio University-Main Campus	OH	Y
Oklahoma State University-Main Campus	OK	Y

Old Dominion University	VA	Y
Oregon State University	OR	Y
Pennsylvania State University-Main Campus	PA	Y
Portland State University	OR	Y
Purdue University-Main Campus	IN	Y
Rutgers University-New Brunswick	NJ	Y
Rutgers University-Newark	NJ	Y
San Diego State University	CA	Y
South Dakota State University	SD	Y
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	IL	Y
Stony Brook University	NY	Y
SUNY at Albany	NY	N
SUNY at Binghamton	NY	Y
Temple University	PA	Y
Texas A & M University	TX	Y
Texas Tech University	TX	Y
The University of Alabama	AL	Y
The University of Montana	MT	Y
The University of Tennessee	TN	Y
The University of Texas at Arlington	TX	Y
The University of Texas at Austin	TX	Y
The University of Texas at Dallas	TX	Y
The University of Texas at El Paso	TX	Y
The University of Texas at San Antonio	TX	Y
University at Buffalo	NY	Y
University of Akron Main Campus	OH	N
University of Alabama at Birmingham	AL	Y
University of Alabama in Huntsville	AL	Y
University of Alaska Fairbanks	AK	N
University of Arizona	AZ	N
University of Arkansas	AR	Y
University of California-Berkeley	CA	Y
University of California-Davis	CA	Y
University of California-Irvine	CA	Y
University of California-Los Angeles	CA	Y
University of California-Riverside	CA	Y
University of California-San Diego	CA	Y
University of California-Santa Barbara	CA	N
University of California-Santa Cruz	CA	Y
University of Central Florida	FL	Y
University of Cincinnati-Main Campus	OH	Y
University of Colorado at Boulder	CO	N
University of Colorado Denver	CO	Y

University of Connecticut	CT	Y
University of Delaware	DE	Y
University of Florida	FL	Y
University of Georgia	GA	Y
University of Hawaii at Manoa	HI	Y
University of Houston	TX	Y
University of Idaho	ID	Y
University of Illinois at Chicago	IL	Y
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	IL	Y
University of Iowa	IA	Y
University of Kansas	KS	Y
University of Kentucky	KY	Y
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	LA	Y
University of Louisville	KY	Y
University of Maine	ME	Y
University of Maryland-Baltimore County	MD	Y
University of Maryland-College Park	MD	Y
University of Massachusetts Amherst	MA	Y
University of Massachusetts-Boston	MA	Y
University of Massachusetts-Lowell	MA	Y
University of Memphis	TN	Y
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	MI	Y
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	MN	Y
University of Mississippi Main Campus	MS	Y
University of Missouri-Columbia	MO	Y
University of Missouri-Kansas City	MO	Y
University of Missouri-St Louis	MO	Y
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	NE	Y
University of Nevada-Las Vegas	NV	Y
University of Nevada-Reno	NV	Y
University of New Hampshire-Main Campus	NH	Y
University of New Mexico-Main Campus	NM	Y
University of New Orleans	LA	Y
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	NC	Y
University of North Carolina at Greensboro	NC	Y
University of North Dakota	ND	N
University of North Texas	TX	Y
University of Oklahoma Norman Campus	OK	Y
University of Oregon	OR	Y
University of Pittsburgh-Pittsburgh Campus	PA	Y
University of Rhode Island	RI	Y
University of South Alabama	AL	Y
University of South Carolina-Columbia	SC	Y

University of South Dakota	SD	N
University of South Florida-Tampa	FL	Y
University of Southern Mississippi	MS	Y
University of Toledo	OH	Y
University of Utah	UT	Y
University of Vermont	VT	Y
University of Virginia-Main Campus	VA	Y
University of Washington-Seattle Campus	WA	Y
University of Wisconsin-Madison	WI	N
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	WI	Y
University of Wyoming	WY	Y
Utah State University	UT	Y
Virginia Commonwealth University	VA	Y
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	VA	Y
Washington State University	WA	Y
Wayne State University	MI	Y
West Virginia University	WV	Y
Western Michigan University	MI	N
Wichita State University	KS	Y
Wright State University-Main Campus	OH	Y

Appendix B: Modified Edmiston-Strasser Instrument

This questionnaire is part of a broader study that is examining integrated marketing communication practices in higher education. This survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete and all individual responses will remain confidential. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

1. Are you the person chiefly responsible for directing your institution-wide marketing and communication efforts?   _____ Y   _____ N

2. What is your job title? _____

3. Who do you report to? *(check one)*
_____ **President of the institution**
_____ **Vice President (or an equivalent title, who reports to the President)**
_____ **Director (or an equivalent title, who reports to a Vice President)**
_____ **None of the above (list title)** _____

4. Please list the title of the person you report to _____

5. How long have you been in their current position within the institution?
_____ **0-2 years**
_____ **3-5 years**
_____ **6-10 years**
_____ **10+ years**

6. How many years of experience in marketing do you have in higher education?
_____ **0-2 years**
_____ **3-5 years**
_____ **6-10 years**
_____ **10+ years**

7. What is your highest level of education attained?
____ **Bachelor's degree**
____ **Master's degree or equivalent**
____ **Doctoral degree or equivalent**

8. What is your gender?   _____   M   _____   F

9. What is your ethnicity?

10. In what state is your institution located? _____

11. What is your institution's overall operating budget? _____

12. What percentage is state appropriated? _____

13. Which of the following most closely matches your institution's current enrollment?
_____ **Less than 5,000 FTE**
_____ **5,001 – 10,000 FTE**
_____ **10,001 – 20,000 FTE**
_____ **20,000+ FTE**

For Q14 – Q45, check the response that most accurately reflects your institution's practices.

14. Policies, practices and procedures for the branding of all marketing efforts are effectively communicated through written and verbal methods across the institution.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

15. All marketing material produced by the institution features consistent visual elements, such as logo(s) and typography.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

16. Not all marketing material produced by the institution features consistent messages.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

17. Ultimate control and approval of all communication efforts is centralized within an institution-wide office.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

18. Interdepartmental meetings are not held frequently enough to effectively coordinate marketing communication efforts with other departments such as admissions, athletics, faculty and development offices.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

19. Cross-functional meetings are held frequently enough to effectively coordinate efforts among marketing communication specialists.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

20. Cross-functional meetings are held frequently enough to effectively solicit feedback and coordinate efforts among marketing specialists and external partners such as community leaders and advertising professionals.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

21. The institution effectively captures primary market research from sources such as interviews and/or focus groups with prospective students, current students and alumni, and uses such information in the planning, development and evaluation of communication activities.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

22. The institution fails to effectively capture secondary market research from sources such as association reports and tracking of press coverage to better understand market trends and uses such information in the planning, development and evaluation of communication activities.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

23. The institution creates a variety of feedback channels to gather information about prospective students, current students and alumni then captures and disseminates such feedback throughout the organization.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

24. All possible points of contact with prospective students, current students and alumni are not integrated in the marketing communications strategy.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

25. All staff members have a comprehensive understanding of their constituents (such as current

and prospective students, faculty, alumni or other university affiliates); not just how these constituents feel but what they do and why they do it
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

26. Not all staff members (even those without regular contact with prospective students, current students and alumni) understand the institution's marketing mission and their role in meeting constituent needs.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

27. Electronic communication is effectively leveraged to facilitate internal dissemination of information and insights about constituents (such as current and prospective students, faculty, alumni or other university affiliates).
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

28. Electronic communication is effectively leveraged to facilitate external communication about institutional news, programs and services.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

29. The institution uses one or more databases to capture and manage information about prospective students, current students and alumni, and uses such information to more effectively communicate with these constituents.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

30. A formalized program using information technology has not been developed to identify factors that lead students/alumni to deliver the highest value to the institution (i.e., active alumni involvement, donations, etc.) over their lifetime relationship with the institution.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

31. Constituent data (to include data about current and prospective students, faculty, alumni or other university affiliates) is used at the senior leadership level to formulate and drive strategic direction.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

32. Senior leadership considers integrated marketing communication as an essential component to strategic planning.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

33. The effectiveness of marketing communications is not measured and incorporated into strategic planning.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

34. Compensation, incentive and promotion policies have been aligned with meeting marketing communication objectives.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

35. The department responsible for marketing and communications has been empowered by senior leadership to lead the integration of external communication with internal marketing communication directed to students, staff, alumni and other constituents.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

For Q36 – Q41, check the response that most accurately reflects the current status of your institution.

36. Each member of the institution has a clear understanding of his or her individual role within the institution.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

37. Each member of the institution has a clear understanding of the roles of all other members within the institution.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

38. Each member of the institution knows and accepts the institutional marketing objectives, and understands how their role contributes to the accomplishment of such objectives.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

39. The institution has a stable environment (i.e., nominal turnover and turbulence), which enables effective integration and coordination of institution activities.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

40. The institution is not organized in an efficient manner that enables effective integration and coordination of institution activities.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

41. The institution has an effective communications network for gathering, evaluating and disseminating information.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

42. The institution does not formally recognize or reward cooperative and team-centered behavior.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

43. The institution is achieving set student retention goals.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

44. The institution is increasingly in a position to be more selective of incoming students.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

45. The institution is achieving greater brand recognition across key target markets.
___ Strongly Disagree ___ Disagree ___ Neutral ___ Agree ___ Strongly Agree

End of survey questions. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Appendix C: Initial Request Letter

[HEI]
[Address]

June 7, 2013

Dear [CMO Name]:

As we all know, the world of higher education has changed drastically in the last two decades. Competition for students and funding is at an all-time high. As a result, many higher education institutions have adopted Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) as a strategic response, which requires administrative support and resource investments. Few research studies have been done to analyze the return on this investment. Therefore, I am requesting your participation in the examination of the IMC implementation in academia, which is a partial requirement for the completion of my doctoral studies in Educational Leadership in Higher Education at West Virginia University.

The study explores the relationship between (a) the level of institutional IMC implementation, (b) level of open systems achieved, and (c) percentage of decline/increase in state funding on (d) perceived ROI. In a few days you will be receiving an email invitation with a link to the survey instrument, which was adapted from a previous research instrument designed by Edmiston-Strasser in 2007. The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete and questions may be skipped. This research has been approved by the West Virginia University Internal Review Board (IRB). The names of all participants and institutions will remain completely anonymous throughout the study and the final research report. Your completed instruments will be identified by a code for follow-up purposes only. Your participation in this study is voluntary, but will be greatly appreciated.

If you have questions regarding this study, please contact me via e-mail at adrienne.king@mail.wvu.edu. You may also contact my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Reagan Curtis at reagan.curtis@mail.wvu.edu. A summary of the study and findings will be forwarded to you at your request.

Your time and consideration for participating in this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Adrienne L. King   Dr. Reagan Curtis
Doctoral Candidate   Dissertation Chair
Educational Leadership   Educational Psychology
West Virginia University   West Virginia University

Appendix D: Email Survey Request

To: [email address]
From: adrienne.king@mail.wvu.edu
Date: June 13, 2013
Subject: Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) in Academia Questionnaire

Body: Dear [CMO Name]:

As we all know, the world of higher education has changed drastically in the last two decades. Competition for students and funding is at an all-time high. As a result, many higher education institutions have adopted Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) as a strategic response, which requires administrative support and resource investments. Few research studies have been done to analyze the return on this investment. Therefore, I am requesting your participation in the examination of the IMC implementation in academia, which is a partial requirement for the completion of my doctoral studies in Educational Leadership in Higher Education at West Virginia University.

This study explores the relationship between (a) the level of institutional IMC implementation, (b) level of open systems achieved, and (c) percentage of decline/increase in state funding on (d) perceived ROI. This study involves one survey instrument, which was adapted from a previous research instrument designed by Edmiston-Strasser in 2007. The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete and questions may be skipped. This research has been approved by the West Virginia University Internal Review Board (IRB). The names of all participants and institutions will remain completely anonymous throughout the study and the final research report. Your completed instruments will be identified by a code for follow-up purposes only. Your participation in this study is voluntary, but will be greatly appreciated.

Below is the link to the survey instrument:
[Insert survey link]

If you have questions regarding this study, please contact me via e-mail at adrienne.king@mail.wvu.edu. You may also contact my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Reagan Curtis at reagan.curtis@mail.wvu.edu. A summary of the study and findings will be forwarded to you at your request.

Your time and consideration for participating in this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Adrienne L. King   Dr. Reagan Curtis
Doctoral Candidate   Dissertation Chair
Educational Leadership   Educational Psychology
West Virginia University   West Virginia University

Appendix E: Participants Titles

Vice President for Public Relations and Marketing Communications
Associate Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer
Associate Vice President for University Relations
Chief Marketing Officer
Chief Marketing and Communications Officer
Chief Communications Officer
Vice Chancellor for Strategic Marketing and Communications
Vice President of Strategy, Marketing, Communications and Admissions
Senior Associate Vice Chancellor/Chief Marketing Officer
Executive Director, University Communications and Marketing
Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs
Director of University Relations
Vice President for Communications
Director of Marketing and Communications
Vice President University Relations and Development
Director of Marketing
Vice Chancellor for University Relations
Associate Chancellor for Public Affairs
Vice President of University Relations and Marketing
Assistant Vice President of University Communications
Vice President for Advancement
Vice President for External Relations
Assistant Vice President for Marketing and Communications
Executive Director, Public Relations and Marketing
Senior Associate Vice President, Communications and Marketing
Associate Vice President, Communications and Marketing
Director of Web Communications
Vice Chancellor for External Affairs
Director, Marketing & New Media
Associate Vice President for University Communications
Director of Marketing and Creative Services
Vice President, University Relations