

Integrated Marketing Communication Steering  
Committee

**SUMMARY REPORT OF RESEARCH 2009-2012**



April 30, 2012

# SUMMARY REPORT

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## Integrated Marketing Communication Steering Committee

### BACKGROUND

Research that led to the development of the new Fresno State logo and tagline began in late 2008/early 2009 with the start of the President's Ad Hoc Communication Advisory Task Force (AHCATF) in November 2008. This committee was initiated by President John Welty as a 14-member committee broadly representing constituencies across the campus. The purpose of this task force was to improve the University's communication practices both internally and externally. A result of the AHCATF was the development of the Integrated Marketing & Communication Council in 2009. Several subcommittees were initiated from the IMCC, such as the IMC Audit committee. One of the major functions of the IMC Audit committee was to execute various research studies about communication practices on campus. The Integrated Marketing Communications Steering committee was formed in 2010 to "foster discussion to help the campus clarify, sharpen and coordinate the way we communicate Fresno State's messages to our various constituencies." This committee continued and expanded upon previous research studies conducted by the IMC Audit committee. The following is a summary report of all the research studies conducted and examined from 2009-2012 that led to the development of the new Fresno State logo and tagline.

### SUMMARY OF RESULTS

#### **2009:**

In 2009, three surveys were conducted. These surveys assessed campus internal and external communication practices and uses with various communication resources (email, bulletinboard, printed publications, etc.).

**Sample:** These three surveys yielded a total of 1,166 responses and the following gives a breakdown of the participation from various campus groups:

- Faculty: 334 participants
- Staff: 267 participants
- Students: 483 participants
- MPP: 64 participants
- Other: 14
- Missing: 4

### ***Summary of Results:***

- Participants reported using email most frequently to hear about Fresno State activities and accomplishments.
- The majority of respondents felt it was very important to communicate about faculty, student and staff accomplishments with others on campus.
- The majority of participants reported they “sometimes” hear about dept./college/university accomplishments; however, students reported “rarely” hearing about academic accomplishments at Fresno State.
- Students believed email and The Collegian were the best communicate resources to use in order to report academic accomplishments and activities.
- The majority agreed that it was important to communicate campus accomplishments in order to recruit and retain students, faculty and staff and to help build morale.
- When asked which communication channels participants used on a regular basis, 94% reported using email, 66% reported using Bulletinboard, 46% use the website and 40% use a listserv grouping.
- The majority (69%) was “somewhat to very satisfied” with the amount of communication they receive about campus activities/issues.
- 55% said they “occasionally to frequently” forward campus information on to others.
- When asked which characteristics were important when receiving campus information, the following were listed as “very important” items (below are the top 4 items):
  - #1: Easy to navigate through the message
  - #2: Ease of access
  - #3: Brevity of message
  - #4: Sender of the information
- 90% of the participants had heard of the slogan “Powering the New California” but there were mixed responses on its meaning.

### **2010 Survey:**

In 2010, an external communication survey was conducted. This survey targeted the community and was sent to more than 40,000 individuals. The link to the online survey was posted on the Fresno State homepage, the Alumni Association and Fresno State’s Facebook Fan page and was tweeted on the Alumni Associate and Fresno State’s Twitter accounts. This survey assessed participants’ communication uses/practices, what attracts them to the Fresno State campus, and their attitudes about Fresno State. It also examined the current attitudes and perceptions about Fresno State’s webpages.

**Sample:** This survey yielded a total of 1,120 responses and the following is a breakdown of the sample:

- 71% were alumni
- 10% were not alumni
- 8% had attended Fresno State but did not graduate
- 6% were current undergraduate students
- 5% were alumni who had returned to get a graduate degree

Of these participants, 9% reported being currently employed by Fresno State and 91% were not.

**Summary of Results:**

- Participants were asked what communication channels they use most to stay informed about Fresno State. In order of priority, they reported:
  - #1: Local television
  - #2: Local newspaper
  - #3: Alumni Association
  - #4: University website
  - #5: Word of mouth
- The following is a list of the top 4 events that participants said bring them to campus (listed in order of most responses).
  - #1: Athletic events
  - #2: Non-Fresno State events (e.g., Save Mart Center events)
  - #3: Academic events
  - #4: Performing Arts on campus (not at Save Mart Center)
- The following is a report of participants' items they listed that would make them "most" proud of Fresno State.
  - #1: Graduates making substantial contribution to community
  - #2: Reaching 'Top' ranking among public universities
  - #3: Winning sports championships
  - #4: Top awards achieved by faculty
- When asked about their feelings toward the Fresno State webpage, there were mixed responses. Out of the 405 open-ended responses, 116 were positive, 126 were negative and 52 were neutral. Below are some samples of the positive and negative responses:
  - *Positive Comments:*
    - Colorful
    - Like it
    - Easy to navigate
  - *Negative Comments:*
    - Outdated material
    - Not easy to navigate/not user-friendly
    - Can't easily find information
    - Need to hear about more great things going on at Fresno State

**2011:** After learning about basic internal and external communication practices among campus and community members, we narrowed the scope of our research in 2011. In March of 2011, the research focused on communication practices and the use of brands and university names among campus groups.

**Sample:** This survey yielded a total of 164 responses and the following is a breakdown of the sample:

- Faculty: 81 participants
- MPP: 39 participants
- Staff: 32 participants
- Students: 1 participant

**Summary of Results:**

- 56% participants reported having a designated person who communicates his/her dept.’s/unit’s information to others.
- When asked who they communicate with on a regular basis. In order of priority, they reported:
  - #1: to faculty (86%)
  - #2: to current students (78%)
  - #3: to staff (75%)
  - #4: to prospective students (45%)
  - #5: to public (44%)
  - #6: to alumni (36%)
- The following chart shows the top three communication channels used to communicate with current students, prospective students and alumni.

To Current Students	To Prospective Students	To Alumni
#1: Social Media	#1: Website	#1: Social Media
#2: Website	#2: Printed Publications	#2: Website
#3: Email	#3: Online Publications	#3: Online publications

- When asked what types of printed publications depts./units send to others on campus, the top three responses were:
  - #1: Flyers (59%)
  - #2: Invitations (50%)
  - #3: Memos (45%)
- When asked what types of printed publications were sent to individuals outside of the campus, the top three responses were:
  - #1: Invitations (49%)
  - #2: Flyers (49%)
  - #3: Newsletters (32%)

- When asked which university name was used on the dept./unit’s website, the following were reported:
  - 86% reported using “California State University, Fresno”
  - 27% said they used “Fresno State”
  - 18% reported using other names that are not correct uses (e.g., FSU, FS, CSU-Fresno, CSUF, etc.).
  
- When asked which logo was used on the dept./unit’s website, the following were reported:
  - 44% reported using the Bronze medallion
  - 25% used the Centennial logo
  - 18% used a dept./unit personal logo
  - 13% reported using some other logo
  - 11% used the Fresno State Sunburst
  - 12% didn’t know
  - 8% used the Bulldog
  
- When asked which university name was used on the dept./unit’s printed publications, the following were reported:
  - 83% reported using “California State University, Fresno”
  - 28% said they used “Fresno State”
  - 11% reported using other names that are not correct uses (e.g., FSU, FS, CSU-Fresno, CSUF, etc.).
  
- When asked which logo was used on the dept./unit’s printed publications, the following were reported:
  - 32% used the Centennial logo
  - 26% reported using the Bronze medallion
  - 25% used the Academic Seal
  - 19% used the Fresno State Sunburst
  - 17% used a dept./unit personal logo
  - 9% used the Bulldog
  
- When asked, 81% were aware the university has a design policy for printed publications but only 58% reported to “always to frequently” gaining approval prior to distributing printed material to others. In addition, of the 58% who reported ‘always to frequently’ gaining approval, only 46% could correctly identify the person/dept. from which approval should be attained.
  
- When asked, 79% were aware the university has a design policy for websites but only 32% reported gaining approval prior to creating or updating a website.

**Spring/Summer 2011:**

An examination of all campus websites and various dept.'s/unit's printed publication material exposed the use of more than 100 different logos (other than the Fresno State sunburst or Bronze Medallion) being used on campus.

**Summer 2011:** In the summer of 2011, the IMC Steering committee began testing logos and taglines. A total of 194 individuals participated in the focus groups that occurred between June and September of 2011.

The respondents included faculty, staff, students, parents and community members. A total of 12 different 1-hour focus group sessions were conducted on campus. The preliminary sessions sought to gain general information about Fresno State's identity. From the responses of these focus groups and the material gained from the previous years' surveys, approximately 28 different logos and 49 taglines were created (these were created by students, Fresno State staff and professionals in the community). After these were created, several additional focus groups were conducted to test various logos and taglines.

- The "paw" design, in various forms, was a favorite among students.
- "Bulldogs" was the word continuously used to identify the "identity" of Fresno State among all groups.
- Although most said "California State University, Fresno" was our more formal name, a large majority identified the campus as "Fresno State."
- Diversity was one word that resonated among all groups and was found to accurately identify the identity of Fresno State. Other popular words for taglines included discovery, distinguished, quality, community and valley pride.
- Although "bulldog" and the "paw" resonated among many groups and even the faculty, there was not a consensus among "all" groups for a favorite 'one' design. The following shows the top logo choices among the various groups.

Students



Staff



Faculty



Community



**Spring 2012:** In March of 2012, the IMC Steering committee conducted another survey to test the identity of Fresno State once more and to also assess attitudes of the current Fresno State logos.

**Sample:** This survey yielded a total of 322 responses and the following is a breakdown of the sample:

- Staff: 155 participants
- Faculty: 71 participants
- Students: 45 participants
- MPP: 38 participants
- Other: 13 responses

**Summary of Results:**

- Participants were asked “what one word best describes the ‘identity’ of Fresno State?”. Although there were many unique answers, the following were the top three most frequently reported answers:
  - Bulldogs: 74 responses
  - Diversity/Diverse/Diversified: 26 responses
  - Ag/Agriculture: 19 responses

- Crosstabs revealed that the top most frequently mentioned words given by each group were:

Staff	Students	Faculty	MPP
#1: Bulldogs	#1: Diversity	#1: Bulldogs	#1: Bulldogs
#2: Agriculture	#2: Bulldogs	#2: Diverse/Diversity	#2: Agriculture
#3: Diverse/Diversity	#3: Agriculture	#3: Valley	#3: Diverse/Diversity

- When asked, “when you see the ‘sunburst’ logo, what word(s) best describe(s) the identity it reflects of Fresno State.” The following were the top three most frequently reported words:
  - Bright
  - Sunny
  - Hot
- When asked, “when you see the ‘bronze medallion’ logo, what word(s) best describe(s) the identity it reflects of Fresno State.” The following were the top three most frequently reported words:
  - Academic
  - Official
  - Formal

## CONCLUSION

A sampling of approximately 3,000 participants in 2009-2012 revealed that the campus community communicates regularly with internal and external constituents. However, the results of the research show inconsistent branding messages were being sent to constituents. With these results in mind, it was important to hear from all groups and determine how to best brand the university with a consistent, authentic identity. Although there was not a consensus on the various logos tested, the one consistent identity was "bulldogs." After numerous focus groups and surveys, it was concluded that the paw resonated with many, especially students. The tagline "Discovery. Diversity. Distinction." best aligns with the academic mission, excellence and strengths of Fresno State.

The results of the IMCC research efforts helped identify the need for a consistent and single identifying image. Consistent messaging helps us build a stronger regional and national identity for the University, create awareness and relevance among audiences, build a university-wide visual identity and enhance marketing efforts for recruitment, campus and community participation and donor support.

Our goal throughout the process was to develop uniformity, consistency, and simplicity in our branding. When many different logos are used to represent the university, our image becomes a disjointed and visually confusing "house of brands." Consistent use of a singular logo will instead present our university as a unified "branded house."