

===== BRANDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION =====

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Every University Tells a Story

EDITED BY

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Preface

Higher education institutions deliver stimulating discussion of organizational brand management. College and university athletic programs offer a noteworthy source for the analysis of brand management application. Accordingly, *Branding in Higher Education: Every University Tells a Story* provides an insightful look into the various nuances related to higher education branding.

Branding in Higher Education: Every University Tells a Story provides an examination of academic branding, including institutional visual identity and other interrelated marketing components related to school-sponsored athletics. Higher education athletic brands postulate thought-provoking discussion, as each institution has its own unique identities, traditions, and distinctions. As each college or university has its own story to tell, this book allows readers to get an insightful view into various points of significance that have shaped the profiled institutions and allowed them to leave their marks on the higher education landscape.

For the university brand profile chapters, it is important to understand various aspects associated with university branding. This includes institutional identity, image, and ultimately reputation. Furthermore, aspects of brands including institutional atmospherics and the other landscape of branding attributes is useful to examine. For the contents of this book, it is important to provide some background information. This will include the motives behind the book, examining the structure of the book, and providing added details on the makeup of the book. Furthermore, it is of significance to understand the attention that was given to represent different types of institutions, with different levels of athletic affiliation, and the specific nuances associated with the provided chapters.

“Every University Tells a Story”

The motivation of this book started as an inspiration by lead coeditor, Jason Lee. Citing a need to have more information in a scholarly and professional resource examining the various nuances associated with university branding, particularly as it applies to the role of athletics associated with establishing, promoting and enhancing higher education brands. As such, it was conceptualized to try to examine a wide variety of considerations and applications of higher education branding. With that came a motivation to provide representation institutions at different levels of athletic affiliation, as well as different institutional types, including geographic representation and so forth.

Thus, efforts were made to identify well-known national brand academic institutions that compete at the highest level of intercollegiate athletics, as well as schools competing at various other levels of athletic participation as well. In terms of geographic considerations schools were examined from throughout the country.

The profiled schools in this book were selected for a variety of motivating factors including representation of different institution types, as well as conveying points of significance tied to the schools. With the subtitle of “*Every University Tells a Story*” it was important to make sure that we shared information on compelling university brands by demonstrating the unique aspects associated with the profiled schools. As such, readers are given insight into such points of significance and are able to learn not only from these institutions, but also through contrast and comparison with other institutions profiled in this book, as well as others in which they are familiar. By getting to delve deeply into aspects of institutional identity, image, and reputation, various takeaways can be received through looking at means for further enhancing institutional brands accordingly.

The beginning section of this book seeks to lay a foundation for providing significant university branding knowledge. Important branding topics such as intellectual property, social media, institutional brand personality shape up some of the key concepts presented throughout the book. After the introductory section of the book, the next few sections cluster institutions based on athletic affiliation types.

Part II utilized the “Going to School” identifier as it examines various National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I—Power 5 schools. A sampling of different institution types from around the country are detailed in this section. The University of Tennessee from the Southeastern Confer-

ence (SEC) shows an example of a well noted institution from the Southern United States. Oregon State University represents universities from the Pacific Northwest that represents the PAC-12 Conference. Another institution from the Western United States that is also a member of the PAC-12 Conference is featured through the examination of the University of Utah. Furthermore, the Northeast United States is examined by looking at Syracuse University in relation to another counterpart university located in the State of New York, Buffalo.

While the University at Buffalo is not a Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) Power 5 school, it is a Group of 5 school that leads into a nice transition to Part III, which examines schools in this classification. This section of the book examines three schools from the Southeast United States: Troy University, South Alabama, and Georgia State University. These are juxtaposed by examining a university from the West, the University of Wyoming. The first few schools represent universities from the Sun Belt Conference, while the latter is a member of the Mountain West Conference.

Part IV consists of profiles of NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision (FCS). The institutions in the FCS division of the NCAA were chosen to be profiled as they represent a variety of different institutions featuring compelling stories. These include North Dakota State University and the University of Montana in the Great Plains/Big Sky Country region of the U.S. Stephen F. Austin is a Texas institution steeped in tradition. Florida A&M University is also examined in this section detailing considerations for this Florida State University System (SUS) institution that is a well noted example of a Historically Black College and University (HBCU).

Part V is a slight deviation from the previous three sections of the book as this section seeks to offer schools that provide an additional “unique perspective.” These unique perspectives complement previously identified school groupings by adding a further dimension of different considerations. Gonzaga University is profiled examining a Jesuit university that has become a national power in men’s basketball, where they are now perennially viewed as one of the top programs in the country. The other perspectives in this section sought to provide other examinations of NCAA institutions at different division levels beyond the previously identified division one schools. For example, Framingham State University provides an example of a New England university that shows elements of distinction as it shows an NCAA Division III school that is embarked in various aspects associated with establishing brand identity and enhancing institutional image. NCAA Division

III is also covered in greater detail in a chapter that examines crosstown schools in the form of Division III Berry College and Division II Shorter University. Each of these schools are in the Rome, Georgia area and not only represent schools that are crosstown counterparts, but also schools that have a history of connections to Christian education that provide valuable points of consideration. The final chapter in Part V provides a representative National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) institution in the form of University of South Carolina-Beaufort. These unique perspectives seek to offer different insights into different institutional types. Beyond that clearly there are a seemingly vast amount of institutional types that could be examined including National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) institutions and National Christian College Athletic Associations (NCCAA) institutions, and others.

Part VI of the book is entitled “Beyond the Schools.” This section of the book seeks to provide an even further perspective associated with university branding by examining further considerations including people, places, events, and media representative of higher education branding. A representative “people branding” chapter is provided in the form of a profile of the Tim Tebow brand. Even though it has been a number of years since his intercollegiate playing days, he has maintained a visible presence within the world of college sport through his persona and media personality connections. An additional chapter is provided in this section by examining the Jacksonville Jaguars brand. Although this chapter examines an NFL franchise, there are various points of interest associated with the notion of university branding through detailing considerations relating to when professional sports come into an area that is historically identified as an intercollegiate sport hotbed.

Part VI of the book examines a few other aspects of university branding by looking at a sample “place brand,” “event brand,” and “media brand.” Examining the renowned venue — The Pit — at the University of New Mexico provides an insightful look at some venue considerations associated with collegiate branding. An examination of the annual postseason All-Star game, the Senior Bowl also shows a look into a historical event that has a heavy connection to its host city, Mobile, Alabama. Lastly, the examination of the renowned *College GameDay* franchise examines the iconic media brand and its association as a noteworthy example of college branding.

Editors’ Note: As readers will find, great efforts were made by contributing authors and editors to be contemporary and thorough in the examination of athletic implications on higher education branding. With that said, given the

fluid nature of branding considerations in higher education, various modifications and developments can transpire in relation to the profiled brands in this work. Those using this work as an educational resource are encouraged to look for updates and other relevant happenings associated with these brands when used as material for class discussion and or professional application.

