Traditional media marketing and the Panther marching band

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TRADITIONAL MEDIA MARKETING AND THE PANTHER MARCHING BAND

A Thesis Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Designation
University Honors

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University of Northern Iowa
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This Study by: Adam Herzog

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has been approved as meeting the thesis or project requirement for the Designation University Honors

05/03/2021
Date

Dr. Justin Mertz
Honors Thesis Advisor

Date

Dr. Jessica Moon, Director, University Honors Program
Chapter One: Introduction

The Panther Marching Band is the largest student organization on campus and is an outward symbol of the University of Northern Iowa. The Panther Marching Band (PMB) recruits new students to participate throughout the year. Recruitment is necessary tool for the PMB to maintain student participation and encourage growth. This creative thesis entails the research, strategy, design, and revision of printed promotional materials for the Panther Marching Band. A successful promotional identity must address the target audience it wishes to reach and encourage interaction. Promotional handouts are an effective way to present information in a clear, succinct manner.

I chose to design for the Panther Marching Band because I have been a member of the PMB for all four years in college. The PMB was an outstanding experience for me and marching band is where I made lifelong friends. When I began the process of determining a thesis topic, the PMB quickly came to mind. The PMB gave me so many great experiences over four years and I want to pay it forward to show my appreciation. Designing promotional materials is a way that I can encourage someone like myself to join the PMB their freshman year. My work will encourage future students to experience all the great things PMB has to offer. A creative thesis gave me the opportunity to utilize my graphic design major and marketing minor to a project I had a strong passion for.

Research

I conducted research to learn more about the many elements that encompass a brand identity. Alina Wheeler, author of Designing Brand Identity, outlines the process a company goes through to create a brand identity. A good brand can differentiate itself in a crowded market (Wheeler, 2). Brands create a tangible connection with consumers (4). Brands must create a
strategy that changes customers perceptions, encourages a certain behavior, and ultimately attain performance metrics (10). The five steps in the branding process are sequential, and are conducting research, clarifying strategy, designing identity, creating touchpoints, and managing assets (6).

The first step in the process is conducting research. Wheeler argues that there is a significant amount of background research required to contribute to the goals and attributes of the organization. It is vital for an organization to have a full understanding of its core values, mission, target markets, strengths, weaknesses, and vision for the future (120). Market research is conducted in this stage to gather data about a group of consumers to analyze their preferences, behaviors, and attitudes (124).

The second step is to clarify the branding strategy. In this stage, members of a company focus on analyzing, clarifying, and synthesizing attributes about the brand (136). Clearly stated values and attributes help designers visualize the elements of a brand (138). The third stage is where the brand identity is created (148). Designers focus on integrating brand attributes with design elements in a tangible way (152). The design identity stage is also where designers create a hypothetical brand design. The final identity design should be easily recognizable but is flexible as consumer trends and interests evolve (152).

The fourth step is creating touchpoints in the hypothetical brand design (166). Touchpoints are where the consumer interacts with the execution of the brand design in print and digital media. One aspect of touchpoints is the creation of signatures. A company creates signatures by applying their design system to a digital or print publication (166). The design system allows for a brand to expand its signatures across all media while remaining visually cohesive. The final stage in the branding process is managing assets. This stage is focused on the
long-term effects of the brand identity and requires members at all levels of an organization to work together to accomplish the goal of a successful brand (192). Employees must reflect the core values and attributes specified in the second stage to be successful, because a successful brand drives engagement with customers (202).

Mitchell J. Lovett et al. found that exciting brand personalities had a positive impact on word of mouth (Lovett). Two important elements of a brand are a favorable personality and a unique and distinct logo (qtd. in Luffarelli 89). A unique and positive brand personality can influence consumer loyalty and satisfaction (qtd. in Luffarelli 90). Logos can affect the perception of consumers of a brand (90). In terms of specific logo design aspects, Krupinski and Locher offer than asymmetrical stimuli are one way to create visual arousal (qtd. in Luffarelli 90).

Luffarelli et al. conducted five studies on consumers perceptions related to logos. The first study found asymmetrical logos were perceived to be more exciting than symmetrical logos (Luffarelli 92). The second study found the same results and found consumers associated the asymmetrical logo with sincerity and sophistication slightly more than the symmetrical logo (94, 95). The difference was not enough to be statistically significant, but it was a point to be considered in the findings of the study (94). Consumers in this study associated asymmetrical logos with being more exciting (97). Given these findings, I have incorporated asymmetry as a design element in the promotional materials I design, hopefully appealing to the excitement consumers feel when looking at an asymmetrical composition.

There is existing research on how a brand is formed. Iain Black and Cleopatra Veloutsou followed the creation and management of the Yes Scotland campaign between 2011 and 2014 (Black, 416). The researchers identified individual consumers, the brand community, and the brand as factors in how a brand is perceived in a market (418, 419). Black and Veloutsou chose
the Yes Scotland campaign because it was a brand with a short lifespan and the formation of consumer relationships occurred soon after the launch of the brand (419). The brand logo is a symbol of the attributes, mission, and values of the brand (419). People associate their experiences with a brand with the logo, giving the brand anthropomorphic qualities (419). Every brand is offering something of importance to the people it advertises to. In the case of Yes Scotland, the product offered the idea of Scottish independence (418). Yes Scotland attempted to attach traits to the movement that aligned with the individual identities they sought to persuade (418). The Yes Scotland study informed my work because the PMB collateral designs are symbolic, offer a benefit, and are personal. The University of Northern Iowa has its own distinct identity and characteristics, and groups on campus also have specific characteristics separate from these. A challenge I faced was incorporating the identities of the University and the Panther Marching Band cohesively.

**Strategy**

The Panther Marching Band (PMB) has a unique identity in addition to University but also independently advertises to future and current students. The PMB is unique because of the many roles it plays at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). The PMB is part of the School of Music, UNI athletics, and a symbol of the University. It was challenging to illustrate these ties in a cohesive manner. UNI employs a written style guide to how branding is to be carried out by its members (“Branding Guidelines & Assets). The style guide has information about University logos, colors, display typography, and photography. This guide served as the foundation for the design of a style guide for the marching band. The PMB style guide serves as a “one-stop-shop” for the design guidelines of the PMB and saves time consulting two different style guide documents.
A SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity, threat) analysis of the PMB assisted in my strategy formation. The strengths of the PMB are its students, social media presence, leadership, and current positive perception. One weakness the band has is its traditional media presence. The Panther Marching Band has opportunities to make a connection through social media and print promotion, interact with students through social media, and leave a lasting impression on students we visit through exhibition performances. The marching band is threatened by a growing shift to electronic media, the pandemic, and shrinking enrollment at UNI. My thesis capitalizes on the strengths of the PMB and works to resolve some of the weaknesses of the band.

I examined print brochures and informational handouts in the art department and School of Music. Looking closely at the designs the university distributes to prospective students will inform my design choices. I took one of each publication the School of Music had to use as a visual resource. The PMB is the most visible aspect of the School of Music and I incorporated elements from the resources the School of Music gives to prospective students. Each size of publication was designed to align with the content it had to offer.

The larger size brochures had more pages and were focused on the many ensembles in the School of Music. Smaller one-sided information cards were focused on one specific area of information. This information formed the hierarchy of information I presented through my designs. I designed the larger, multiple page format for the overview PMB information brochure. One-page pamphlets present information in short segments.

I created a portfolio of promotional materials that are to be utilized by the Panther Marching Band. The portfolio included different types of print materials to suit a variety of identified needs. The promotional materials serve as signatures for the PMB and create a
touchpoint opportunity (Wheeler 166). A variety of promotional materials were best suited for the PMB because of the many roles the band has on and off campus. My final strategy was to design a style guide, booklet, brochure, posters, information card, electronic letterheads, and a social media card.

Revisions

The revision process was essential for my creative process. The designs I created had varying degrees of revisions that were necessary. The simplified design of the social media cards only required minor tweaks in the revision process. The booklet design and poster designs underwent major changes from the initial design to the final product. The number of different images, shapes, and text in my designs created many points to focus on refining. It was important for me to take a step back and think back to my research process while working on revising my work. It is important to look critically at my work and identify flaws on my own. Self-critique is a very important skill to have as a designer and the revision process is where I practice this skill. I also asked for the input of other designers to aid me in revising the materials I was designing. A new set of eyes can identify areas that designers may overlook since they are working closely on a project.

Chapter Two: Portfolio of Work

The first design I completed was the style guide for the PMB (see appendix A). The style guide is an important part of the brand identity creation stage (Wheeler, 152). The style guide served as a reference for my later design work and draws on the formatting of the previous UNI style guide (University Relations). The style guide has elements that I utilized throughout all my designs. The header on each page pulled a section from the design of the PMB uniforms worn for performances. I designed a color matching cart for the two primary colors of UNI and included a
full list of brand colors identified by the University. I focused on succinct information that future students would use frequently. The style guide was a challenge to present information in a clear and concise manner without skipping over details. I chose to use Eurostile for the headings and page number to illustrate the PMBs connection to UNI Athletics. Proxima Nova was used for subheadings and body copy to reinforce the overall UNI brand.

The second design is an information booklet (see appendix B). This design was informed my individual creativity and previous design knowledge. My rationale for this was to create a design that caught your eye and encouraged people to look inside. I used the parallelogram shape as the frame for my images and color elements. I included the bass and treble clef symbols on the cover to reinforce the idea that this was a publication for a musical organization. Another symbolic element I chose to utilize is the bar rule pattern. This pattern is meant to symbolize the bar staff in music. My experience as a student suggests that my audience may be focused on the information than the design. I increased the leading, the space between lines of text, and text size to boost readability.

I designed three posters to give the band program options on how they wanted to advertise on and off campus (see appendix C). I designed each poster with varying levels of complexity and image use to suit different environments. The first poster is the least complex with its use of a large treble clef symbol. The first poster includes the PMB logo turned vertically to draw the viewers’ attention to the QR code and social media account names on the right side. The QR code links directly to the PMB registration page. The PMB registration page also includes frequently asked questions related to marching bands and the answers to those questions. The second poster heavily features images as the primary design element. Overlapping images create visual interest and band members break out of the purple frames to add another
layer of interest. I also included images from the UNI Dome where the marching band rehearses and performs to create the association with the space on campus where the PMB performs. An image of the speaker cloud is included to allude to the sound of the marching band performances. Images of the turf are used to connect to the marching aspect of the band. The third poster balances image and design elements. It uses the QR code, social media account names, bar staff lines, treble clef, and large images of students.

The brochure design (see appendix D) focused again on information. The design uses angled images to create excitement through asymmetry (Luffarelli 92). The angled text shapes break away from the stagnant nature of the rectangular shaped panels of the trifold form. The use of white and purple background colors on opposite corners draws the viewer’s eye from the bottom right of the center spread to the top right of page. This movement is necessary for readers to continue reading the information on the page but is underscored by this design choice. Recognizing the electronic interests of my target audience, I included a call to action to scan the QR code. The cover of the brochure uses white, yellow, and purple swatches to create a separation of space for the University and PMB logos.

Letterheads (see appendix E) were a simple design to create but have the potential to have a strong impact on the band’s target audience. Students and parents open and read dozens of emails a day and the PMB must differentiate itself in a setting where many emails are vying for the User’s attention. A designed letterhead in an email is a great way to distinguish PMB emails and make them more memorable. The PMB logo is large to draw the reader’s focus to the name of the band and images of students. Pictures of students can be updated to reflect current students in the PMB. The bottom of the letterhead includes the three core values of the marching band: pride, strength, and character. The colors have been reversed to create a diagonal
movement of color from top to bottom. The color reversal is an asymmetrical element that will generate excitement among readers (Luffarelli 92).

Designing the information card (see appendix F) was a challenge because of the narrow width of the page. The vertical nature of the information card made it difficult to include large amounts of text along with images. I chose to use images of different students who play different instruments. This choice appeals to future students so they can begin to visualize themselves in a PMB uniform, showcasing different instruments can appeal to students regardless of the instrument they play. I emphasized the PMB logo on the front of the information card. The heading on the back emphasizes the acronym ‘PMB’ reader with the large purple ‘PMB’. The size of the information card was chosen to fit inside a standard envelope. Information cards can be easily sent in the mail and reach prospective students. Mailed promotional materials can be sent to prospective students before orientation to hopefully get them interested in joining the PMB or sent to students who have already shown interest.

Social media cards (see appendix G) are a great way to connect with an audience who uses electronic devices frequently. Knowing the band’s audience, it is vital to try and connect with students electronically as well as in person. The size of the cards are standard business cards and leave little space for design elements. The space limitations on social media cards resulted in an information only approach. The largest elements on the cards are the PMB logo, QR code, and ‘Join the PMB’. I focused on a simple contrast of color, utilizing a light gray and purple color. The PMB has a comprehensive presence on social media that can be highlighted using a social media card. Capitalizing on the strengths of the PMB brand is important for continued success. Social media cards are also easily included in mailed promotions, connecting printed promotions to online social media.
Chapter Three: Conclusions

In this thesis, I included an example of design within the parameters of brand guidelines. Brand guidelines are important for a business or University to maintain a cohesive identity. Guidelines are often presented in a word document that is many pages long and is usually complex to read. Fully understanding brand guidelines is necessary for the synthesis of information into a simplified style guide. In the case of the PMB, students are the ones promoting the band, a quick understanding of the UNI band guidelines is essential. This creative thesis is an example of an execution of the University of Northern Iowa brand guidelines in the context of printed promotional materials. Successful execution of this thesis involves contact with many different departments including the director of the marching band, a designer for the University, and a member of the University Relations department. The finished designs of this thesis serve as a unique example of designs involving different departments at UNI with different perspectives to consider.

College bands often have a unique identity that is an addition to the University they represent. The status as a symbol of the University creates a unique role for college bands. College bands travel to perform across the country and internationally. It is because of this exposure that the band takes on a persona that breaks away from purely a performing arts class. In an academic sense, the Panther Marching Band is more than a class; therefore, a simple brand identity is not enough to represent the many roles the band plays. Other college bands are in the same situation as the PMB, a distinct organization with a unique function and brand identity. My thesis will serve as an example to other college bands of how to create a unique brand identity while maintaining a connection to the University is a part of. The designs within this thesis are
an example of how to capitalize on the brand identity of the University a band is a part of, while creating exciting brochures and posters that are unique to the band.

Student organizations are actively recruiting new members and must find ways to promote their organization to non-members. My thesis serves as an example of executing a University brand strategy that is unique to a student organization. By designing a variety of promotional materials, the PMB sets itself apart from other organizations on campus. The PMB now reaches its target audience more effectively and impactfully. Other student organizations will learn from the research I conducted to gain valuable insights on the audiences they wish to connect to. Future students will look to the designs I created as inspiration for the types of printed publications to utilize as they begin to design their own promotional materials. My rationale for choosing an information card that fits into a standard envelope and my reasoning for designing a social media card serves as a valuable example to other student organizations.

My time spent researching, strategizing, designing, and revising has been an invaluable experience. I have gained marketing and design experience in a professional setting. My thesis taught me how to set deadlines, make sound decisions quickly, and look critically at my own work. I have immersed myself in a professional design environment to gain skills that my classes have not been able to teach me. I learned to proactively search out resources within the University to learn about the execution of a brand identity. Reading and articulating brand guidelines will serve as an essential skill in my future career in graphic design. The UNI rebrand challenged me to adjust to an ever-changing work environment that mirrors a professional firm. Researching about future college students gave me insights into the work marketers do to learn each about every aspect of the target audience they seek to reach. The thesis process has been a
challenging experience that showed me what life in a professional work environment looks like, the power of hard work, and how to stay self-motivated.
Appendix A: PMB Style Guide

INTRODUCTION

The Panther Marching Band is an organization that is a part of the University of Northern Iowa. The Panther Marching Band (PMB) is part of the School of Music, UNI Athletics, a symbol of the University, and an academic class. The PMB visualizes its ties to other areas of the University with the use of specified colors, logos, fonts, and photography. This style guide is to provide guidance for the creation of a cohesive and integrated identity for the PMB that corresponds with the official UNI Style Guide.

The Office of University Relations is in charge of the execution of all University branding. All printing and copying must be approved by University Relations prior to print. Please visit brand.uni.edu for the full UNI Style Guide. University Relations offers assistance to students and organizations to assist in the University’s branding. Visit https://brand.uni.edu/services to contact members of the University Relations team.
LOGOS

PRIMARY LOGO
The primary logo of the Panther Marching Band is the UNI Panther head logo paired with 'Panther Marching Band' in the athletics' Eurostile Lt Bold Oblique font. This logo visually connects the band with UNI Athletics.

ALTERNATE LOGOS
The band's alternate logos provide different color options for the band. The Panther Marching Band has the ability to utilize our logo with many different backgrounds. These alternate logo colors help the PMS maintain a simple, elegant look.

COLORS

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) utilizes purple and gold as the most prominent part of its visual identity. PANTONE Matching System (PMS) 2960C and PMS 7548C are the two core colors of the UNI brand. Productions by the university should be predominantly purple and gold. The UNI branding guide provides a table of twelve secondary colors with corresponding color codes.

Visit https://university.ni/uni-brand/visual-identity/colors for additional information.

COLOR MATCHING

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<td>R 250 G 161 B 0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ADDITIONAL COLOR MATCHING

TYPOGRAPHY

Included below is a list of approved fonts for UNI branding. Visit brand.unidu.edu for more information. Contact University Relations for access to files.

The PMB fonts are to be used as display and heading fonts. Body copy should be typeset in the University-approved fonts.

UNIVERSITY FONTS
- Proxima Nova
- Bookman
- Blacker Pro Display
- Arial
- Georgia

ATHLETICS FONTS
- Exvangel LT Bold Oblique
- Univers font family

PANTHER MARCHING BAND FONTS
- Enrico
- Glass and Bold
- ACIER SAT FONT FAMILY
SOCIAL MEDIA

IMAGE SIZES (IN PIXELS)

FACEBOOK
Post: 1200 x 628

INSTAGRAM
Post: 1080 x 1080
Story: 1080 x 1920

SNAPCHAT
Post: 1080 x 1920

TWITTER
Post: 1200 x 675

The PMB has a strong social media presence to maintain. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter are all platforms utilized to promote the band. The band uses Facebook and Instagram as vehicles to distribute mostly image-based content. The text-focused nature of Twitter serves the band in different ways but images are used to capture users’ attention. Snapchat is used infrequently, as it is our newest area of expansion for our Special Operations team. A chart of image sizes has been included to prevent cropping and optimize in-stream images.

AFFILIATE LOGOS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

UNI / University of Northern Iowa.

UNI / University of Northern Iowa.

UNI ATHLETICS

UNI / University of Northern Iowa.

UNI SCHOOL OF MUSIC

UNI / University of Northern Iowa.

UNI / University of Northern Iowa.
Appendix B: Booklet Design

The Panther Marching Band is made up of over three hundred students with majors encompassing all departments on campus. There is a very good chance another member of the band shares your major. Look no further than fellow band members to help answer your questions about your major or other majors on campus.

Students in performing arts tend to have higher grades, according to a study by George Mason University. Being in the marching band will help students budget their time. Learning music and drill will teach students to pay close attention to detail. The Panther Marching Band teaches students the skills they need to achieve their goals in college and beyond.

With over three hundred students, someone in the Panther Marching Band likely shares your major!
The Panther Marching Band gives students the unique opportunity to meet fellow students before classes begin. Band camp begins a week before school begins so students have an opportunity to adjust to college life before classes begin. Moving in early allows for new students to learn the layout of campus. Band camp is also a great place to meet fellow freshman students. Many students credit band camp as where they met some of their best friends in college.

The PMB creates a close-knit atmosphere where students learn to work together toward a common goal. Students in the marching band build relationships that last during college and beyond. The PMB is made up of empowered section leaders who are taught important leadership qualities.

Band camp gives students the ability to learn the layout of campus and adjust to college life!

The Panther Marching Band performs at all five or six UNI home football games and other select events. Marching Band camp is approximately one-week prior to the start of classes. See the Summer Newsletter for exact dates.

During the semester, Marching Band rehearsals three days a week in the beautiful indoor UNI Dome: Mondays 6:30-8:30pm, Wednesdays 6:30-8:30pm, Fridays 3:00-4:30pm

Although you will be busy with marching band, most of our students also hold jobs and are involved with other campus organizations, and they remain some of the brightest academic success stories on our campus. In short, you definitely have time to be a member of the PMB! Being a part of the band is a great way to practice managing your time effectively.

a great transition from high school to college
Appendix C: Poster Designs
Appendix D: Brochure Design

What is the time commitment? The Panther Marching Band performs at all five or six UNI home football games and other select events. Please see the calendar for a complete schedule.

Marching Band camp is approximately one-week prior to the start of classes. See the Summer Newsletter for exact dates.

During the semester, Marching Band rehearses three days a week in the beautiful indoor UNI Dome:
- Mondays 6:30-8:30pm
- Wednesdays 6:30-8:30pm
- Fridays 2:00-4:00pm

Although you will be busy with marching band, most of our students also hold jobs and are involved with other campus organizations, and they remain some of the biggest academic success stories at our campus. In short, you definitely have time to be a member of the PMB! Your time with us is a great way to practice managing your time effectively.

What is the cost to participate? New students must purchase a new Student Park- ago Package (approx. $920), which includes your band shirt, a backpack, and all supplies. You will need to purchase during your online registration. We will have items readily available for you to try on during band camp. Please be aware there are no refunds.

In addition, we ask that you supply your own flip-flops, hat, and white marching shoes and receive information on how to select them located in the summer newsletter. There are no additional costs aside from the items above.

Do you rent instruments? Yes. We can rent almost any instrument for approximately $40.00. This will include that you need an instrument on your registration. Be advised that we do not rent bass drums or percussion instruments.

Is there a major in music to join the band? No. Approximately 70% of the Panther Marching Band are non-music majors and these students are very important part of the organization. With approximately 300 members, the band is the largest student organization on campus. There are more than 90 different majors represented, so music majors are not the only ones who participate. We feel the mixture of students from virtually every school or department on campus makes our organization more exciting.

A GREAT TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE!
Appendix E: Letterhead Design

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA.
PANTHER MARCHING BAND

PRIDE. STRENGTH. CHARACTER.
The Panther Marching Band is for all students, regardless of major or ability level. Our band is known for providing high energy, fun, and electric performances! You will love the camaraderie, music, and positive atmosphere of the Panther Marching Band.

The Panther Marching Band is the largest student organization on campus. The band is made up of 300 students from virtually every school or department on campus, with more than 79 different majors.

The PMB performs at all UNI home football games and other select events. Marching Band camp is one week before classes begin. For a complete set of dates and times, view the Summer Newsletter.

Visit https://bands.uni.edu/pmb for more information.
Appendix G: Social Media Card

Want to learn more? Flip and scan the QR code!
Works Cited


