

THE BRANDING OF JESUIT HIGHER EDUCATION:
BRANDING, MARKETING, AND COLLABORATION
AT FOUR JESUIT UNIVERSITIES
IN THE UNITED STATES

by

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree Doctor of Education in the
Department of Educational Leadership,
Policy, and Technology Studies
in the Graduate School of
The University of Alabama

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

2020

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an examination of the branding of four Jesuit universities in the United States. From their rich traditions and distinctive Catholic education, Jesuit institutions hold a unique space in the marketplace of higher education. The purpose of this study is to understand if these four Jesuit universities share common themes for how they brand themselves. With increasing attention in higher education to branding and marketing, it is important to understand if Jesuit universities share a common branding framework for how they market and communicate. This qualitative research study is based on interviews with administrators at four Jesuit institutions. A review of websites from each institution will assist in the understanding of the branding of each of the institutions. Mission statements will be reviewed as well. There were three phases of the research: 1) Personal interviews, 2) Review of webpages, and 3) A review of mission statements, which contributed to the triangulation of the research data. This study utilized a social constructivism framework with the understanding that the results will flow from the experiences of the individuals within these institutions as well as their socially constructed language that is utilized within the marketing and mission materials. Findings from this research indicate that the term Jesuit tops the branding charts at Jesuit universities. Furthermore, marketers at Jesuit universities must do a better job of defining branding. The role of marketing and branding at Jesuit universities continues to grow. And, while Jesuit institutions compete for students, they would welcome the opportunity, when available, to collaborate. Steeped in a 450-year tradition of Jesuit philosophy, these institutions maintain a unique brand for prospective students to consider. As the interviews reveal, each institution, as well as the collective Jesuit universities, have challenges and opportunities for the future.

DEDICATION

Love consists in sharing

what one has

and what one is

with those ones loves.

Love ought to show itself in deeds

more than in words.

St. Ignatius of Loyola (~1540)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

AJCU	Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Fr.	Father, as in a Catholic priest
S.J.	Society of Jesus, an order of Catholic priests

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to those who supported me both professionally and personally to reach this academic milestone.

From my initial inquiry to the Executive Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration program at the University of Alabama, Dr. Arlene Breaux welcomed my colleagues and I, and shared great knowledge about higher education in her courses while providing the necessary encouragement to bring this dissertation to a close. I am grateful to you.

To Dr. Frankie Santos Laanan, I am thankful for your support as my dissertation chair. You guided me through the process, offered solutions for how to best tackle challenges concerning my dissertation, and kept my process moving forward to the final stage.

To Dr. Karri Holley and Dr. Claire Howell Major, I am thankful for the academic rigor and preparation you provided in your courses especially as it related to academic research and the ability to think critically about a particular topic. Your willingness to serve on my committee has been extremely beneficial.

To Dr. Tom Hayes, I am thankful for your guidance not only on my dissertation and serving on my committee, but also for being an invaluable member of my Xavier experience. Your willingness to share all things marketing has been helpful indeed.

To Dr. John Kucia, you were the one who got this whole thing started. I cannot express my gratitude enough for your support from the very beginning. You continued to always remind

me of what I could accomplish, and you always looked out for the best interests of Xavier. You taught me great lessons along the way.

To Michael Graham, S.J., I am thankful for your continued dedication to the professional development of your faculty and staff at Xavier University. I am blessed to have been an employee during the tenure of the longest serving President in Xavier University history and am certainly proud of all that we have accomplished on behalf of the university.

To Greg Christopher, I thank you for your support of my doctoral efforts and offering a space of work-life balance that allows for work, family, and academic pursuits. You have created an environment in which we can personally succeed while moving the University forward.

To my former supervisors, Kelly Schiess, Dr. Marc Camille, Dr. Mary Walker, and Dr. David Dodd, I am thankful for your willing to assist me in my career journey at Xavier University. You each provided me with new and engaging work that allowed me to make the most of my abilities. Your support has made my career a good one indeed.

To the gentlemen of cohort C7, Dr. Larry Faulkner, Dr. Lee Lind, Dr. Ben Lion, Matthew Little, and Dr. Edward Serna, I am so very glad that we had the opportunity to spend two academic years together. The classroom is one thing, but our late-night discussions and collaborative projects are memories that I will have for a lifetime.

To my team at Xavier University's Office of Marketing and Communications, I am grateful for your support of my program, and for your continued hard work as we create amazing experiences on behalf of our institution and our students. In particular, I am thankful to Kay Ohradzansky and Donna Williams who have supported my journey.

To my dad who served in the unofficial role as Editor-in-Chief, you have been a great academic guide during my life. My only wish was that mom was still around to see graduation,

but I will never exchange those nights in the hospital as she fought the good fight against cancer. She provided me with a spirit of how to carry out my life for which I will be forever grateful.

A special thank you to my in-laws as well who were always eager and ready to help with the kids when I would go away for a long weekend of classes or just needed time to get my work done.

Finally, to my wife Laura Ruschman, and my kids, Hannah, Emily, and Luke, more than anything I am grateful for your support and love each and every day. You brighten my days and make for a full and wonderful life. Mom and I cannot wait to watch your lives unfold as you bring your gifts and talents to the world.

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APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTION OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF

JOHN PAUL II ON CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 15 August, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven, in the year 1990, the twelfth of the Pontificate.

PART II
GENERAL NORMS

Article 7. Cooperation

§ 1. In order better to confront the complex problems facing modern society, and in order to strengthen the Catholic identity of the Institutions, regional, national and international cooperation is to be promoted in research, teaching, and other university activities among all Catholic Universities, including Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties (53). Such cooperation is also to be promoted between Catholic Universities and other Universities, and with other research and educational Institutions, both private and governmental.

§ 2. Catholic Universities will, when possible and in accord with Catholic principles and doctrine, cooperate with government programmes and the programmes of other national and international Organizations on behalf of justice, development and progress.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

Today, students have a wealth of college options. Since World War II, American higher education has witnessed exceptional growth in the number of colleges and universities (Altbach, 1999, p. 27). From 6.3 million American undergraduates in 1970 to 15 million in 2000 to 20 million by 2016, the growth has been staggering (Goldrick-Rab & Cook, 2011; Digest of Education Statistics, 2019). Almost all high school seniors today anticipate engaging in some type of college experience which is higher than the nearly 80% of high school seniors in 1981 (Goldrick-Rab & Cook, 2011).

With this increase in enrollment, institutions now find themselves with new financial constraints. Large research institutions throughout the country have seen a sharp decrease in state and federal appropriations. From the early 1990s through the early 2010s, state funding, as a percentage of public research universities operating revenue, has declined by fifteen percentage points increasing the demand for more student self-funding (National Science Board, 2012). In 2011, revenues from student tuition at public institutions either equaled or topped local state appropriations (Desrochers & Hurlburt, 2014). Furthermore, current students expect an excellent academic experience on a campus with unique facilities. Additional external tensions include community and alumni expectations as well as high stakes collegiate rankings and guidebooks (Ehrenberg, 2007).

Colleges and universities are now induced to utilize marketing practices due to the rise of the competitive environment, reduced government funding, and the growing expenditures for education (Guilbault, 2016). “Marketing and Market Research have caught the fancy of

academic administrators” (Litten, 1980, p. 40). Most industries throughout the world understand the value of marketing and its stimulus for success (Guilbault, 2016). So, in response to the current climate, universities have progressively utilized marketing principles and concepts with a goal of edging out competitors (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2006).

Rooted in the Catholic tradition, Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States face similar concerns. Little research has been conducted on these institutions to understand their brand, marketing structures, and effectiveness. Even less research has been performed to understand the shared marketing position of Jesuit institutions to understand both the tensions of competing with each other for students and the opportunities in which to collaborate.

Competition in Higher Education

With mounting financial demands at most institutions of higher education, the need to increase enrollment is necessary. While competition to get into top universities continues to get more intense, students are offsetting this by applying to more institutions. In 1972, a quarter of all college seekers applied to four or more institutions. Today, half of all college seekers are applying to four or more colleges, largely driven by those seeking to land a spot at a highly selective institution, thus making the college recruitment landscape all the more competitive (Bound, Hershbein, & Long, 2009).

Because of the needed enrollment, competition in college recruitment is fierce and dollars are the driving force. Former President of Harvard, Derek Bok, once suggested, “Universities share one characteristic with compulsive gamblers and exiled royalty: there is never enough money to satisfy their desires” (Bok, 2003, p. 9). He continued, “It is a chronic condition of American universities, a condition inherent in the very nature of an institution forever competing for the best students and faculty” (Bok, 2003, p. 9). At a growing pace, non-profit universities

are utilizing market research, strategies, and tactics as part of the recruitment process. This model of marketing colleges and universities has not only increased but stimulated competition (Rhoades & Slaughter, 1995). Colleges seek to have excess demand. To become more selective, colleges must generate more demand while continuing to restrict the supply, or in this case, the number of offers of admission (Winston, 1999). And, while demand is an important driver of quality so too is an institution's "access to the donative wealth that buys quality and position" (p. 30). In short, competition is high, and many external factors put weight on recruitment teams. "We encourage admission officials to examine how larger trends may impact the decisions that must be made regarding student enrollment and college choice" (Holley & Harris, 2010, p. 21).

Competition in college recruitment escalates between similar types of institutions. Simply put, "Universities are singular institutions" and seek favorable results that benefit their institution (Altbach, 1999, p. 15). These universities are trying to adapt swiftly to the changing higher education landscape yet the structures and culture in place at many institutions make those adjustments arduous (Maguad, 2018). Hence, most institutions have turned to implementing robust marketing efforts (Szekeres, 2010). The focus of higher education marketing strategies and activities is dedicated to student enrollment (Vander Schee, 2009).

Marketing Higher Education

In 1972, author A.R. Krachenberg published "Bringing the Concept of Marketing to Higher Education" in the *Journal of Higher Education*. It served as one of the first published works on the marketing of colleges and universities in the United States. Krachenberg noted that business and management concepts were beginning to be adopted by higher education institutions. Krachenberg shared that, "if marketing activity is to be carried on, there must first be a recognition of markets" (p. 370). His point was that colleges and universities have many

markets and that they must be identified and cultivated. He called for, more than anything, additional market research. Additional research, he noted, could lead to better systems of tracking, operational efficiencies, and information for long-range planning. Market research leads to opportunities for marketing. Krachenberg shared,

In short, the degree of success attained in appealing to any new market segment is directly related to how many product, price, place, and communication needs are considered in planning and implementing the new venture. Success here, in turn, hinges upon whether research effort was used first, and how successful it was in uncovering the full extent of the market's needs (p. 377).

Just as Krachenberg was suggesting marketing concepts for higher education in 1972, a group at Boston College was introducing a new concept. The early 1970s were tough for an institution recognized by most as a Catholic, commuter college in Boston. Failing to craft a narrative as the "Catholic Harvard," change was needed at the heavily tuition-driven Boston College. With a new President, Father J. Donald Monan, and new leadership by Dean of Admission, Records, and Financial Aid, Jack Maguire, the concept of enrollment management was born. Maguire, dubbed by many as the Father of Enrollment Management, had a basic principle – institutions that are best organized get the students (Epstein, 2010). A simple organizational principle. Maguire believed that by bringing together once desperate university departments, as well as new and emerging concepts, an institution could succeed. These areas included research, admission, marketing, financial aid, student retention, and transfer programs (Epstein, 2010). As a result, Boston College was the first to institute the practice of enrollment management and has the largest endowment.

Boston College utilized the strategy of enrollment management as a mechanism to create their own sustainable future. Epstein noted, “As was said at the outset, this has been done at Boston College with the firm belief that our future, though precarious, is ultimately controllable” (p. 19). From the beginnings of enrollment management at a Jesuit institution, the idea was defined that through strategic decisions and planning, a strong market understanding and living up to the institution’s brand, higher education institutions can appropriately plan for and set their future. For instance, it is believed that Loyola Chicago was the first to create a new cabinet-level division in 2005. University Marketing Communications was tasked with creating brand standards, administering all institutional marketing, advertising and outreach efforts, and guiding public relations and communication (Rosen & Shannon, 2008).

While history provides solid context, today’s marketing, branding, and enrollment management practices play an increasingly important role in the recruitment of new students. “University/college administrators and marketing managers also face a dynamic marketing environment that includes intense competition, hundreds of comparable alternative products from which prospective students can choose and a rapidly changing student population” (Bristow & Schneider, 2003, p. 18). Institutions must make strategic decisions by setting high standards that deliver exceptional quality in a services-based atmosphere (Hayes, 2009).

Leaders of colleges and universities seek ways to enhance their brands and stabilize their enrollment, yet they need methods for doing so, some of which may be collaborative. Some colleges are developing joint efforts in an attempt to work together for their common good. “The purpose of forming coalitions is to join with other individuals or groups in order to achieve a level of power and influence that cannot be achieved by acting alone” (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 140).

Collaboration offers the mutual benefit of spreading risk across educational institutions as well (Connolly & James, 2006).

Colleges and universities have progressively utilized marketing practices and strategies to reach institutional goals. Wasmer, Williams and Stevenson (2008) note that colleges and universities must reconsider their traditional methods if to be successful in the long term. They note that traditional marketing concepts of the four P's – Product, Price, Place, and Promotion – fit the corporate context and perhaps even the tactics of for-profit institutions (Wasmer et al., 2008). However, a new context is offered that is rooted in the four C's – Concept, Cost, Channel, and Communication – that allow a better application for non-profit institutions and suggest perhaps wider spread adoption of marketing and branding opportunities if utilized (Wasmer et al., 2008).

Even with those opportunities, marketing higher education is complex. A college education “is an intangible product working for market differentiation in a crowded field” (Anctil, 2008, p. 89). Anctil suggests the customers are both the students and the ultimate products of the education, compounding the complexity further. Anctil (2008) notes that branding may be an answer and especially useful for colleges and universities, “branding creates a clear message about an intangible product and helps to build awareness and relevance in a crowded marketplace” (p. 98).

Branding Jesuit Higher Education

During March 2002, a paper was presented titled “Developing the Brand Equity of Jesuit Higher Education” by Dr. Gene Laczniaik, then a marketing professor at Marquette University. Laczniaik first suggested the idea of a national Jesuit brand yet the concept of branding itself was still new for most Jesuit institutions. Laczniaik introduced six concepts identifying why he

believed that the branding of Jesuit higher education had never occurred. They included historical independence, geographical segmentation, individual success, competitive caution, sibling jealousy, and marketing phobia. While all of these were barriers, it was clear to him that a national brand plan offered the clearest path to support the recruitment of prospective students to Jesuit higher education. Laczniaak (2002) concluded that, “The phrase ‘Jesuit’ should command a magnificent brand equity that exceeds the additive reputation of the individual colleges and universities standing alone” (p. 17).

This thinking though, at the time, had a negative connotation with those on the academic side of the house. As Dr. John Hollwitz, Vice President for Academic Affairs at Fordham University suggested in June of 2004,

Students are not customers; neither are their parents. We do not have customers. We must keep repeating this. That a group of administrators in Jesuit higher education would state otherwise in a document of potential strategic importance should concern us. Do not accept that ‘customers’ is a term of art. It is an assumption inherent in ‘branding’ and it defiles our mission. (p. 13)

Hollwitz believed that branding Jesuit higher education and naming prospective students as a customer base, detracted from the true work of an institution, namely teaching in the academy. To provide students with the same standing as a business would customers simply detracted, in his mind, the status of an institution of higher learning. Instead, he promotes the use of discernment, a uniquely Jesuit value deeply rooted in the Ignatian tradition. Hollwitz (2004) notes that branding stands opposed to discernment, that branding simplifies the decision process and does not allow for critical thinking.

Hollwitz goes on to define branding as “simplistic, anti-intellectual, amoral, and manipulative” (2004, p. 14) and does not believe that branding needs to enter the domain of the Jesuit, or Catholic, discussion or research. He notes that branding is capturing the identity of an organization for the long term and notes that many Jesuit and Catholic institutions change greatly over time. Hollwitz (2004) notes that more important than branding are academic notions of self-study, visits from accreditation teams, and reviews by associations as a stamp of quality for each of our Jesuit institutions as well as the Jesuit order of colleges and universities. He contends that these markers are much more important than the simple research and preparation of an institutional or organizational brand. In the end, Hollwitz calls for the academic leaders of the institution to be more reflective and evaluative of our Jesuit identity. He recommends additional peer review of Jesuitness and not for simple brand statements.

Hollwitz’s notion is to say to each Jesuit institution, “prove it.” Not simply by stating it in a mission, a recruitment brochure, or as the header to a branding document, but literally prove their self-evaluation and external reflection that each institution is, in fact, living up to what it means to be a Jesuit institution at heart (Hollwitz, 2004). Jesuit institutions should not simply utilize branding as a mark of what we should be, have been in the past, or wish to be in the future as it relates to our Jesuit mission. Branding should be a cry that proudly says, “We are Jesuit,” with plenty of research, discernment, and willingness to prove that brand positioning.

Natale and Doran (2011) follow a similar notion in questioning the role of marketing in higher education as unethical. They describe the marketing efforts of colleges and universities as utopian, making it sound relatively easy to pursue a degree and sail to a career. Their position suggests that enrollment management areas strongly bent toward marketing would serve better as centers of counseling, helping students to understand the hard work, persistence, and

responsibility needed to earn a collegiate degree. The authors contend that most faculty members and staff at institutions are not positioned to be marketers and do not have the skillset to accomplish such work.

Natale and Doran (2011) draw attention to the student as a consumer of philosophy. “Because the consumer is always right, implicit in the student as consumer model is that students must be happy with the services rendered” (Natale & Doran, p. 294). They worry about issues with grade inflation, lack of critical thinking, and especially, with the continuously growing number of adjuncts, professors who are simply hoping for worthy student evaluations to keep their role the following semester. They contend if the branding and marketing of higher education continues, higher education institutions will eventually be simplified to skills-based training with the sole purpose of finding careers and immediate paths for employment.

In 2004, James Purcell, leader of the Branding Task Force of the Jesuit Advancement Administrators (JAA), called for additional scholarly research focused on Jesuit branding. Writings exist, but little empirical research has been sought as part of the collective Jesuit effort. Purcell (2004) stated that the number of Jesuits at each institution is decreasing, and that the total number of Jesuits serving at Jesuit colleges will continue to drop over the next 10 to 15 years. Purcell (2004) comments,

Given this reality, it is fair to ask how the 27 Jesuit institutions of higher learning will continue to foster their identity and mission as Catholic and Jesuit and how we will continue to effectively communicate our identity and mission (our brand) to important constituents. (p. 2)

Purcell wondered if a collaborative Jesuit brand existed in 2004 and wonders more if it will exist in the future. Those same administrators within the JAA resolved, “we need more research to

determine the extent to which there is a Jesuit brand worth promoting and how best to take advantage of this brand if we choose to do so” (Purcell, 2004, p. 3).

In 2010, Lowdon’s research noted that an optimistic scenario for the future of Jesuit institutions would be to be better connected via technology, academic programs, and a larger, national and global Jesuit brand. Lowdon (2010) noted that it would be conceivable for U.S. Jesuit universities to be connected to many of the Jesuit institutions overseas. It was unclear though whether a national or international Jesuit brand existed.

Purcell (2004) laid out a theory that untangled whether institutions could be branded. First, he made clear that a brand “conveys the essential promise an organization makes” (p. 23). Therefore, a brand is critically important as it represents the agreement that is made between student and institution. He noted that University brands could share both the identity and mission. The identity is represented in “the people / university who make this promise to you” as well as the mission which showcased a path for the way in which the people / university would “deliver on this promise of a University” (p. 23).

Quid quid recipitur, recipitur secundum modum recipientis. The Latin, which appears first in 1485 from philosopher Thomas Aquinas’s *Summa Theologia*, translates to: Whatever is received is received according to the mode of the receiver. Purcell uses this to remind his colleagues how much they know about Jesuit education and how much they believe in the structures, processes, and outcomes of such an education. And he cautions that is only relevant if a prospective student and their parents understand it as well. Purcell (2004) shares, “No matter how clear we in the Jesuit colleges and universities might think we are about our identity and mission, our brand is ultimately determined by... our external constituents” (p. 24). Purcell (2004) derives the notion of branding a combination of identity and mission. For specific Jesuit

use, Purcell and his task force call for collaborative research to better understand the Jesuit brand.

Bourgeois (2004) states that Lazniak's joint Jesuit marketing could work, but only if the branding utilizes another lens. Bourgeois is one who understands the Jesuits, after all, he has taught Philosophy at Loyola of Chicago since 1968. Bourgeois believes the corporate definition of branding is too focused on product and profit and does not convert to higher education. In Bourgeois' view, branding should focus "more explicitly on increasing awareness of the real qualitative value and advantage of Jesuit education, and consequent willingness to pay for the opportunity to participate in this unique process" (2004, p. 20). Many would agree with Bourgeois' goal of Jesuit branding – to bring greater awareness of the Jesuit educational process, not simply the product of Jesuit higher education.

Those conversations were eventually followed by "Marketing the Mission of Jesuit Education," by Dr. Thomas Hayes, marketing professor at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. A national ACE fellow, first editor of the Journal for the Marketing of Higher Education, and founder of the American Marketing Association's Symposium for Higher Education, Dr. Hayes (2003) supports the notion of a strong, unified Jesuit brand. Hayes quips, "Ignatius Loyola literally went to the ends of the earth to market the mission of Jesuit Education. Compared to his efforts, this should be easy" (p. 5).

Hayes (2009) takes a deeper dive into the branding of colleges and universities by suggesting institutions take a high-standard, exceptional quality, and services-based approach. Hayes believes that Jesuit institutions have an opportunity to capitalize on such a market opportunity. He believes in considering a national Jesuit brand for today's marketplace.

Hayes (2003) points out that Jesuit marketing may have two opportunities. At a local level, the marketing process of Jesuit institutions may assist individual institutions while at a more national level, marketing of all Jesuit institutions allows universities to join as a collective brand. While many universities expand marketing efforts only in a crisis, Hayes (2003) suggests that Jesuit universities should leverage their collective efforts now and figure out how to do it. Hayes also notes that individual institutions must also recognize that if a prospective student is considering multiple Jesuit institutions, at the least, the selection of a Jesuits institution, no matter which one, is a benefit to all Jesuit institutions.

Hayes (2003) does create a sample path for Jesuit universities. He suggests that the institutions need to define their target audience, articulate what is critical to that audience, and to ask themselves, as universities, if they are capable of providing the experience that the audience seeks. The audience itself is important, and Hayes (2003) notes that myriad audiences exist for institutions of higher education including, “prospective students and their parents, present students and their parents, alumni, guidance counselors, the business community, non-traditional students, donors, and very importantly the school’s faculty and staff” (p. 3). Hayes (2003) also notes that institutions must assess their work and adjust as needed knowing changes occur in the market, competition, plans, and momentum (p. 4). Those adjustments must be ongoing and grounded in research. Little empirical research has been done since the conversation about Jesuit branding was catalyzed in 2003 and 2004, and this includes research on structures, brands, and opportunities. The current research has the opportunity to provide insight that will inform future work.

Jesuit Recruitment Landscape

Given the intense marketplace in which prospective students are recruited, individual Jesuit institutions tend to be both collaborators and competitors. Much of the collaboration happens early in the recruitment process. During Jesuit Excellence Tours (JETs), admission recruiters from most Jesuit institutions travel around the country hosting events, visiting high schools, and coordinating college fairs together as a means to best recruit students interested in such an education. These recruiters from Jesuit institutions spend large quantities of time traveling with each other. Many students tend to apply to more than just one Jesuit institution. However, after students have submitted their applications, the initial collaboration between institution becomes a competition to recruit those students.

The dilemma facing marketing and enrollment professionals at Jesuit institutions is the choice between further banding together, longer, and throughout the admission process, or squaring off as competitors to best fend for their individual institution in these tough economic times. The issues within this problem are complicated. For instance, not all Jesuit universities carry the same brand recognition as others. Take for instance Georgetown in Washington, DC and Spring Hill in Mobile, Alabama. Both institutions were among the three first Jesuit universities to be founded in North America. But most by-standers would note a significant difference in their national reputation. Both founded in the 1940s, LeMoyne College in Syracuse, New York has taken a different path than Fairfield University in Fairfield, Connecticut. These universities are also resourced very differently too. The endowments of Boston College in Boston, Massachusetts, and Santa Clara University in Silicon Valley, California have risen significantly higher than those of Rockhurst University in Kansas City, Missouri, and Spring Hill University in Mobile, Alabama. The spectrum within the Jesuit higher

education network is wide. Yet, all institutions seem to align with a similar overall goal and mission: to shape men and women to be active citizens for and with the people of the world. The differences yet similarities between Jesuit institutions make it difficult to determine if marketing collaborations would be beneficial.

Internal and external pressures affect all institutions differently, so different institutions must organize differently and put different weight on what may be or not be important to them. What is the significance of those structures and designs? Do opportunities exist to leverage those same pressures across all institutions? What are the tensions that prevent Jesuit institutions from more fully joining and articulating a national brand? If a national brand exists, what opportunities could be leveraged? If a group of 27 colleges can adopt a national brand, what might be opportunities for other institutions rooted in some unique similarities – other faith traditions, community colleges, institutions from a particular state, and more?

Statement of the Problem

Today's college recruitment marketplace is competitive. Distinctiveness matters. Jesuit colleges and universities may hold a distinctive place in the market, but it is unclear if Jesuit institutions share a collective distinctiveness.

Students have a wealth of collegiate options. Branding and marketing, as well as enrollment management professionals, are creating new and innovative tactics to market to and recruit new students. With 27 colleges and universities throughout the United States, Jesuit higher education constitutes a small quantity yet sizeable presence in the landscape and influence of collegiate education. At sometimes, these religiously based institutions attempt to support an overall framework to sustain and grow the brand that is Jesuit, Catholic education. Yet, in even more instances, these institutions compete with each other for the same students.

Increasingly, marketing and branding efforts are being utilized to support institutions. Throughout the U.S., the value and structures of branding and marketing offices differ. Little research has been done to understand the different structures, strategies, values, and influence of branding and marketing offices. More so, little research has been done to understand if similarities in branding and marketing exist across Jesuit institutions and to understand what future opportunities might be possible. Additional research is needed in the area of marketing higher education (Guilbault, 2016). In fact, most marketing theoretical models for higher education follow a marketing services theory which does not consider the nuances of higher education (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2006).

Little empirical research exists about the branding and marketing of Jesuit higher education. While articles have been written for periodicals, and some Jesuit college presidents have shared their thoughts about the future, research on the branding and marketing of these institutions is virtually non-existent. In 2014, *The Atlantic* magazine shared, “The balance of mission, identity, and modern times—and whether that balance negates the central principles of Jesuit and Catholic education—is what lies at the root of the tensions present for these (Jesuit) schools” (Jones, 2014).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative, descriptive study is to illuminate the role, structures, strategies, influences, and value of marketing and branding at four Master’s comprehensive U.S. based Jesuit institutions. It is important to understand what makes these institutions unique, what shapes their branding and marketing efforts, and what similarities and differences exist across the institutions. The four institutions include Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska; Gonzaga

University in Spokane, Washington; St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio.

This study will examine the marketing and branding of Jesuit institutions. By interviewing multiple constituents at four Jesuit institutions and by reviewing the content of their institutional brochures, web sites, strategic plans and vision statements, common marketing structures, values, and branding exists within and across these Jesuit institutions was explored. By assessing the data, findings from this research provides insight into understanding external and internal forces on the institution and its brand. "Institutions certainly are influenced by powerful, external factors such as demographic, economic, and political conditions, yet they are also shaped by strong forces that emanate from within" (Tierney, 2008, p. 24). Moreover, this research evaluates the Jesuit brand through the lens of collaboration and competition in the recruitment of new students and search for strategies that may shape the marketing and branding practices of these institutions in the future.

Research Questions

1. How do Jesuit university administrators and faculty describe their institutional brand?
2. How do Jesuit leaders describe the utilization of marketing and branding to support their institutional philosophies and strategies?
3. How do Jesuit institutional leaders describe their marketing organization including history, structures, and resources including their ability to collaborate with other parts of the organization?
4. Do similarities and differences of branding and marketing exist across the Jesuit universities?

5. How does the branding and marketing of Jesuit higher education evolve to continue to meet long-range mission and market goals?

Rationale

The foundation for my interest in this research flows from my 20 years of experience working at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the connectivity of the Jesuit tradition. As a student, I was an active tour guide, sharing with prospective students and their families everything that Xavier, and the Jesuits, would have in store for them. I continued that work as an Admission Counselor while earning my Master's degree at Xavier. It was easy to understand back then the similarities and differences among other Jesuit colleges. I would hear narratives from parents about their experiences with the other Jesuit institutions and some would even reflect on how similar the institutions were across the board. Yet, internally, while each institution was supportive of their Jesuit colleagues, competition existed. Prospective students had multiple Jesuit universities in their final choice set and each institution wanted to make the best case for why they should be considered the top choice.

I spent several years as Director for Web Services and came to better understand the new age of recruitment – online. Search engines became an increasingly important driver of brand awareness, and social media meant easier access to the importance and influence of other students in college choice. With virtually all students applying for admission online and the increased awareness of colleges nationwide, online recruitment efforts have become a staple of every enrollment office in the country.

My most recent opportunity within my alma mater has been to lead the marketing, branding, and communication efforts. Overwhelmingly, this position has allowed me to connect in Xavier's work with all of our other constituencies including alumni, donors, current students,

community members, media, and of course our faculty and administration. It has allowed me to work across institutional divisions. My position sits as part of the President's Cabinet and has afforded me the opportunity to be part of more strategic conversations while keeping rooted in our day-to-day marketing and branding work.

Within the Jesuit network, the Chief Marketing Officers at each institution gather annually to discuss our organizations, marketing opportunities, branding strategies, and more. These insights allow me to have an intimate understanding of the different histories, structures, strategies, and value of Xavier's marketing and branding efforts. Yet, little work has been done to research those histories, those structures, those strategies, and the value placed on it. An even smaller amount of research has been done to explore the similarities and opportunities across the Jesuit institutions. This study has an opportunity to create a window into that work.

Significance of the Study

Little empirical research has been done on the marketing and branding of Jesuit higher education. Given today's marketplace and the rise of the marketing profession within colleges and universities, additional research is needed now. Academic leaders need research to inform decisions on future strategies and goals for Jesuit higher education.

For a decade, presidents of Jesuit colleges and universities have debated whether it is the right time to join forces more collectively for the marketing, brand recognition, and enrollment management success of Jesuit institutions. The joint marketing of Jesuit institutions has been discussed at joint presidential retreats and has been debated at the senior most level of the 27 colleges and universities. It is these Jesuit leaders who care deeply and appreciate the Jesuit mission of education. "The appreciation testifies to accomplishment and to challenge. Ignatius

truly did great deeds, and education was at the heart of these. Ignatius invites us to similar deeds, and education ought to be at the heart of these” (Gray, 2000, p. 79).

The results of the research may offer significant strategy and practice opportunities for Jesuit institutions. If Jesuit institutions share common marketing and branding opportunities, the institutions may be better off at the initial stages of recruitment to band together for greater success for all institutions. Thus, sending ripple effects through the marketing and enrollment management functions of the Jesuit college network. For instance, individual Jesuit universities spend at least tens of thousands of dollars and, likely, over \$1M on an annual basis for prospective student search, the process of buying names likely to yield an inquiry interested in your college. These processes cost admission offices a tremendous amount of time to study, analyze, and execute. Many even have a third-party organization handle the entire search process. Perhaps the research may show that even during a process as early as student search, faculty and administrators may view that high school students see value in a larger Jesuit network. If so, that could have a significant impact if the colleges were to consider and adopt a joint search process.

If the study suggests that administrators and faculty see Jesuit institutions best as individual entities, it will certainly settle a great debate and send a clear signal to the colleges about how to proceed into the future. In this scenario, the success of Jesuit colleges would rest with the individual members and not be tied as much to the overarching network. Colleges would proceed as usual, each fending for their own share in the landscape of higher education and shaping their own brand. With a study of the four aforementioned institutions, this will begin the research that may be expanded upon in the future.

Even outside of Jesuit higher education, joint recruitment may well be a future path for marketing and enrollment management professionals. In a time of dwindling travel and recruitment budgets, and an environment in which students feel more comfortable moving between colleges, perhaps more institutions will create joint endeavors together to support enrollment. For instance, the University of Southern California just announced that it would be partnering with The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and Bocconi University in Milan, Italy to offer a World Bachelor's of Business degree in which a cohort group of students will earn three degrees, one from each participating institution by the time they complete the program (Bradford, 2012). Students will study at each institution for one year. The institutions will jointly share in the recruitment for the program and create a new revenue line for their institutions.

While some programs reach international scales, some are occurring on the local level. For instance, in Springfield, Missouri, the five colleges in the area – Drury University, Evangel University, Missouri State University, Ozarks Technical Community College, and Southwest Baptist University – announced that the institutions will be partnering together to open the Foreign Languages Institute. Students from any of the colleges can attend and receive credit. And, because the program will be drawing from each of the institutions, each institution will have the opportunity to offer a wider selection of languages for the premiere program for which they can market and recruit students.

The current research offers needed data to the study of marketing and branding and Jesuit institutions. It will contribute to the growing desire for more marketing research. This will lead to more study on the topic of marketing and branding, especially as it relates to private, Catholic, or Jesuit education.

Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical perspective used for qualitative research is Tierney's (2008) organizational culture framework. This framework of organizational culture provides an important lens to research branding. In this framework, Tierney (2008) notes that many influential forces exist outside of a university's borders including government, economies, citizenry and more. And while those external forces are important, it is suggested that one of the most powerful influences is an institution's own internal culture (Tierney, 2008). Furthermore, Tierney (2008) suggests that even colleges that have been around for many decades still consider what creates the internal culture. Tierney (2008) asks, "Is it mission, values, bureaucratic procedures, or strong personalities" (p. 3)?

Along with organizational culture, it is important for the branding process to understand the drivers behind an organization's strengths. After all, understanding organizational strengths helps to best articulate an institution's brand. A brand will help differentiate an organization from other competing organizations. In the context of higher education and Tierney's work, a college's culture as a service organization can define its brand.

Branding has long been utilized in the corporate world. As branding and other corporate strategies begin to further permeate higher education, this thinking has changed the way colleges and universities organize themselves, and those structures can influence their culture. Tierney (2008) outlines six components to consider for understanding a framework for organizational culture, including environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership. Tierney (2008) concludes that after understanding these six components to the most appropriate level possible, at an organization's "administrators will be in a better position to change elements in the institution that are at variance with the culture" (p. 19).

For marketing organizations, much of that culture work has to do with collaboration. Collaboration comes in the form of working with others on-campus, in the community, and across the higher education spectrum. One recent empirical study infers,

Based on previous research, we proposed that internal organizational characteristics, environmental pressures, and organizational attitudes are important in determining whether an organization will collaborate and that these three factors interrelate to increase or reduce the predisposition to collaborate in increasingly formal ways. (Foster & Meinhard, 2002, p. 559)

Similar to organizational culture, much can be said about branding as well.

Understanding an institution's brand allows those working within the institution to continue to make changes to their services and offerings that best match who they say they are as well as ensure they are aligned with institution goals. Tierney's (2008) work on organizational culture can be a useful lens to understand the work of branding. While conducting research specifically about how Jesuit colleges and universities brand themselves, it will be important to note their organizational structures to understand how they define their identity.

For this study, questions have been crafted to incorporate the notions behind Tierney's (2008) organizational framework in order to bring forward discussions around structures, leadership, strategies and more.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are referenced in this study:

Marketing. Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large (American Marketing Association [AMA], 2013). The rise of

marketing processes at colleges and universities throughout the world has led to the notion of students as “consumers of higher education” (Naidoo, Shankar, & Veer, 2011, p. 1142).

Students as customers. From Keith (1998), and edited by Tierney (2008), they note that the term customer is not widely used in colleges, especially by faculty. “However, the word calls our attention to the constituents we serve and reminds us that we need to meet their needs and expectations if we are to succeed” (p. 164). Keith continues that institutions must be student centered at the undergraduate level.

Branding. Various definitions of branding exist and there is no one particular standard. Asacker (2005) offers that brand is a strategy for business. He notes that branding is a “framework for thinking about your reason for being” (p. 11). He states that branding is a means of sensing the needs and wishes of a customer and “rapidly delivering compelling value to satisfy those desires” (p. 11).

Jesuit higher education. There are 27 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States with nearly 190 Jesuit colleges and universities worldwide (Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities [AJCU], 2018).

Jesuit higher education is guided by a spirituality that seeks justice. Inspired by the tenets of Catholic social teaching and its intellectual and social justice traditions, a Jesuit education places great emphasis on forming ‘women and men for others.’ Students are engaged in a process of exploring the distinctive and constructive ways in which their knowledge and talents will best serve society (AJCU, 2018).



Figure 1. Map of the 27 U.S. Jesuit colleges and universities (AJCU, 2018).

Summary

In this chapter, the background of the marketing of higher education, the branding of Jesuit education, and provided a context for recruitment at Jesuit institutions was discussed. The research shows the high competitiveness of the marketing of higher education. The purpose of this qualitative, descriptive study is to illuminate the role, structures, strategies, influences, and value of marketing and branding at four Master’s comprehensive U.S. based Jesuit institutions. The study will utilize Tierney’s (2008) organizational culture framework.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

To date, significant research exists about branding but exclusively within the corporate sector. Additional research has taken place more recently on the branding of colleges and universities. A small amount of literature exists on the branding of Catholic higher education. A significant gap exists in the amount of branding research specifically for Jesuit higher education.

The objective of this literature review is to define the variety of branding research related to higher education. The four themes of literature on the branding of higher education prepared in this review include:

1. Jesuit and Catholic higher education and branding
2. Brand and brand research for higher education
3. Marketing and enrollment management
4. Collaborative branding

This literature review expended a wide variety of databases including EBSCOhost, ProQuest, and the journals supported by Taylor & Francis. In the review of literature, a synthesis of the available research is provided on the subject of branding for Jesuit higher education.

In today's higher education marketplace, there is a new lexicon that is shaping how colleges and universities view themselves and their constituents. Leaders within institutions are using words including branding, customers, stakeholders, and marketing which highlight the swing in the business nature of today's higher education marketplace (Kirp, 2004, p. 4). Historically, many colleges and universities have been reluctant to acknowledge higher

education as a marketplace or acknowledge the role of marketing. In order for branding and marketing to take shape within colleges and universities, there must first be an acknowledgment of these markets (Krachenberg, 1972).

Today, college presidents are concerned with getting faculty and others to view the University as a complete system, contending for interest in a competitive marketplace (Waeraas & Solbakk, 2008). The brand of a college is important. Yet, even among those brands considered “successful,” challenges such as lack of internal brand engagement and limited international resonance may be apparent (Chapleo, abstract). Notions of consistency, precision, and commitment generate resistance from faculty members and make the branding process difficult to fulfill. Waeraas and Salbakk (2008) found that a university may be too complex to be encapsulated by one brand or identity definition.

Findings suggest that across the higher education landscape it has become a “sea of sameness” within university communications and few institutions are creating unique messages and brands (Clayton, Cavanagh, & Hettche, 2012). That said, private institutions report greater brand clarity than public institutions (Judson, Aurand, Gorchels, & Gordon, 2009). Much like the business community more traditionally associated with marketing strategies and tactics, colleges and universities are gradually moving towards and embracing marketing concepts with a focus on consumer orientation (Bristow & Schneider, 2003). Studies continue to show that leadership, formal communication mechanisms, and demonstrated integrated marketing communication, strengthens branding (Edmiston-Strasser, 2009). Bob Brock, president of Educational Marketing Group notes, “Branding is about the experience, reputation, and messaging rather than simply graphic identity” (as cited in Collins, 2011, p. 1).

It is important to note that a limited scope of research has been done on the branding of

Catholic, Jesuit higher education. There appears to be a significant gap in the literature for branding of this type. Annually, a group of marketing administrators from the 27 Jesuits institutions gather to discuss marketing practices and strategies for their institutions. To date, the group has noted the concerning lack of brand research for the Jesuit university community. This study will add to the small amount of empirical evidence for the branding of Jesuit higher education.

Jesuit Higher Education

The order of the Jesuits, formally known as the Society of Jesus, was founded in 1540 by Saint Ignatius of Loyola and approved by Pope Paul III (O'Malley, 2000). At the time, a small group of ten men sought to be missionaries of the Catholic faith by traveling to regions across the globe with the goal of building a more just and humane world. In 1542, under the direction of St. Francis Xavier, the Jesuits opened their first college, College of St. Paul in Goa, India (Durkin, 2006). After just a few years, they had laid stake to over 30 institutions including the founding of Rome's famous Gregorian University in 1551. At their founding, the Jesuits did not explicitly have a plan to open schools. But it did not take them long to discover that schools, at all educational levels, might be the best way to accomplish their goal of expanding the Catholic faith throughout the world. The Jesuits became convinced that formal education was positive for any society and that education would promote the common good of the entire region. They believed that

Ethical and religious formation should not be confined to the pulpit. Finally, the Jesuits saw schooling as a way to converge culture and education. A University education therefore could provide the components of critical thinking and discernment while at the same time being a format to better help souls. (O'Malley, 2000)

The Jesuits continued into East Asia, Latin America, and even Paris where the Jesuits taught the likes of Descartes, Moliere, and Voltaire (O'Malley, 2000). In 1789, the Jesuits opened their first American university with the founding of Georgetown. They soon opened more including Saint Louis University (1818), Spring Hill College (1830), Xavier University (1831), Fordham University (1841), College of the Holy Cross (1843), St. Joseph's University (1851), Santa Clara University (1851), Loyola University Maryland (1852), University of San Francisco (1855), and Boston College (1863). The Jesuits continued to target major metropolitan areas across the United States over the following decades (AJCU, 2018).

Today, there are over 3,730 Jesuit educational institutions throughout the world with a current enrollment of around 2.5 million students (The Midwest Jesuits, 2018). In the U.S. alone, there are more than 22,000 collegiate faculty members and 217,000 currently enrolled students at Jesuit universities (AJCU, 2018). These Jesuit universities mark themselves with an ongoing mission,

Jesuit higher education provides students the opportunity to become thoughtful, competent, and compassionate men and women, with a commitment to the greater good and a passion for justice, preparing them for lives of leadership and service. It is through this distinctive mode of education that Jesuit colleges and universities are changing the world, one student at a time. (AJCU, 2018)

Jesuit alumni span a wide spectrum. Former Democratic President Bill Clinton, former Republican Speaker of the House John Boehner, and 10 percent of the sitting U.S. Congress are Jesuit educated. So are two members of the Supreme Court, Clarence Thomas and recently deceased Antonin Scalia (Supreme Court, 2018). These graduates are or were dedicated to public service to our country. Many more Jesuit graduates continue to fulfill the Ignatian

fundamentals of being men and women for and with others and are today serving in prominent posts of service organizations throughout the country and abroad. The Jesuit network is strong, and the connections run deep within their alumni.

O'Malley (2000) identifies three main themes to describe Ignatian characteristics. They include the need for a personal spiritual experience, the development of a world-friendly spirituality, and a calling to be of help to others. This means that Jesuit graduates understand how to understand their own personal spiritual foundation through learned values. These graduates understand that they live within the context of a global, dynamic environment. With these personal and world views, Jesuit graduates are further called to be active citizens with and for the communities in which they interact. "Today our prime educational objective must be to form men-and-women-for-others... men and women who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors" (Arrupe, 1980, p. 123).

Catholic College Identity

In 1994, Gleason attempted to identify why Catholic institutions today seem to have an issue with their own identity. He says the problem is rooted in historical context. Gleason claims that Catholic colleges lost their distinctiveness over a stretch of time running from around the 1930s through the 1960s. His contention is that Catholics themselves were no longer distinct from the rest of the American population. He suggests that Catholics became less distinguishable from other Americans in terms of income, occupation, residential location (for they, too, moved to the suburbs), and educational aspiration – and as the sense of ethnic distinctiveness faded for the grandchildren of immigrants—Catholics, especially the young people who came of age after World War II, began to wonder whether they were so different from everyone else that they had to have their own separate institutions. (p. 94)

Gleason (1994) suggests that the election of President John F. Kennedy in 1960, and other movements by the Pope in the 1960s allowed for a certain “coming of age” for the Catholic population within the United States (p. 96). Gleason points to three movements in the 1960s that shook the core of Catholic institutions. First, simply, Catholics were engaging with the populations as a whole and not segmenting themselves as unique. There were no longer Irish Catholic or German Catholic neighborhoods and Catholics found themselves in similar working conditions as others in the population. The second was Vatican II, which signaled the Church was willing and interested in changing. Simple moves of priests facing their congregations or saying Mass in the dialect of the local community, or not wearing priestly vestments all the time, made Catholics, and even their leadership, less unique. At Xavier, for instance, if someone was to walk through the campus today, it is quite likely that they may be unaware that they are interacting with a Jesuit priest. The Jesuits do not necessarily wear a collar on campus to make them distinguishable. Many of them dress as other faculty and carry about their daily interactions with students.

Finally, suggests Gleason (1994), the tumultuous times of the 1960s called for change at all levels, many “paraphrased Gertrude Stein in insisting that a university is a university is a university” (p. 97). Today, the identity crisis for Catholic institutions, suggests Gleason, continues. Though seemingly dedicated to the missions of institutions, Boards of Trustees are made up almost solely of lay constituents. Hiring committees today find it uncouth to ask about a candidate’s faith during the hiring process though an exemption exists that allows religious institutions to consider that during the hiring process. Catholic institutions have also taken a larger liking to graduate and professional education, focusing more on research than on simply teaching. These and other forces weigh on the identity crisis for Catholic institutions. “And its

seriousness is heightened by the fact that overreaction to it, especially on the part of ecclesiastical authorities who feel an understandable concern for the future of Catholic colleges and universities, could easily make matters worse instead of better” (p. 101).

What then are Catholic institutions to do about their identity problem? Van Engen (1994) suggests that Catholic institutions as a whole must focus on four key issues to remain distinctive, including the constituent community, the leadership, the professional community, and vocational education (Van Engen, 1994). The constituency to which Van Engen (1994) refers, for instance, has to do with what he calls the ambiguous Catholic, someone shaped not simply by their Catholicity but to an “ambiguous relationship to a larger non-Catholic culture and society” (p. 357). The author describes Catholics today as still significant in number yet neither cohesive nor confident.

Van Engen shares that there is a significant shift that will not reverse course within the administration of Catholic institutions. He highlights a leadership model of Catholic universities from that of bishops and priests to almost exclusively lay administrators. What’s worse, he suggests, is that no model or plan exists in which these lay administrators are being trained to pledge their support for the Catholic mission. That does not seem to be the case with the training provided throughout the 27 Jesuit colleges and universities. The AJCU hosts a variety of programs under the umbrella of leadership development to support the 27 institutions. They include a seminar on leadership in higher education within the Jesuit context and the Ignatian Colleagues Program dedicated to preparing leaders for the future who are committed to the Jesuit philosophy of education.

The third point in Van Engen’s (1994) approach has to do with the professoriate. He suggests that Catholic universities look far too often for faculty from non-Catholic based

graduate institutions to become part of its ranks. He continues by asserting hiring faculty see no benefit in hiring graduates from primarily Catholic institutions. Van Engen (1994) uses a phrase from St. Paul that says, “to be in this world but not of it” (p. 359). The author’s use in this context means that it is difficult for a faculty member to act within the Catholic ideals if they are not from it – having studied in that manner or grown up in the tradition.

Finally, Van Engen (1994) contends, students at today’s higher education institutions are far more vocationally oriented and allow for “mass-produced higher education” and not enough time for consideration for typical Christian education (p. 359). Van Engen ponders if there is truly any benefit to a computer science program taught at a Christian institution. He says claiming a values-based education is simply not enough and that the institution must derive specifically Christian values to lay claim to the benefits of their education. He leaves us with an overall question wondering if “there are values specific to Catholic Christianity that can still inform or enter into a mass-produced, highly specialized educational process” (Van Engen, 1994, p. 360).

Van Engen’s overall comments leave us with as much a chicken-and-egg conundrum as anything else. He wonders if a Catholic university is Catholic at birth and remains that way due to its educational principles and not the make-up of its students. Or, he offers, perhaps Catholic universities are Catholic because many of their students come from Catholic backgrounds, rooted in the educational process, and already assimilated to the Catholic teachings. Finally, he contemplates if a Catholic institution would remain Catholic if none of its students or faculty came from Catholic backgrounds (Van Engen, 1994). It’s certainly naïve to consider that they would bring no value or that they would gain no value from being within a Catholic context. But, would the institution, over the long course, remain Catholic? Van Engen (1994) proposes,

“The question is whether at some point the scale is tipped irretrievably toward the secular when too many of the faculty have no personal disposition toward contributing to Catholic learning” (p. 362). What then makes and shapes the identity of Catholic higher education?

Kelly (2003) shares similar findings. He challenges Catholic educators to determine if their institutions are places to teach about values, character, and Jesus, or places of “privileged educational environments” (p. 276). That said, Kelly shares that Catholic universities seem to offer a different approach, specifically in the delivery of the education. Kelly (2003) suggests that great professors at Catholic institutions do not lecture but rather ask questions of their students to attempt to pull out wisdom and truth. And, he calls for these institutions to lead the renewal of Catholic values in young people in their twenties, not simply by being excellent academic institutions but by offering a truly Catholic education (Kelly, 2003).

Jesuit scholar Michael Buckley, S.J. (1998), looks at a different approach to the identity of Catholic institutions. At the beginning of every academic year, Boston College, along with the other Jesuit universities, hosts a Mass of the Holy Spirit. This Mass, originating from historical traditions out of Bologna, Paris, and Oxford, is more significant today.

That the Mass of the Holy Spirit was being celebrated indicated a Catholic university, conscious of its past and faithful to its identity, possessed of the conviction that the religious and the academic belong in concert and that their union is to be celebrated in beauty and worship. (p. 4)

Fr. Buckley (1998) calls on the words of Robert Maynard Hutchins, former president of the University of Chicago, who during his tenure called out Catholic institutions as not being Catholic enough. Hutchins, who infamously dissolved his institutions football program while they were athletic juggernauts, called out Catholic institutions for “adopting the worst of secular

education: athleticism, collegialism, vocationalism, and anti-intellectualism” (as cited by Buckley, 1998, p. 5). Buckley fears that Catholic institutions will continue to become less Catholic, fading their mission and joining slowly closer to more secular institutions. He summons college leadership to look deeply into their own mission statements and like *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, he calls, “every Catholic university to make known its Catholic identity” (Buckley, 1998, p. 6). McGee (2015) suggests that Catholic universities today are less distinctive than they might imagine for themselves. McGee shared that with an increasing number of non-Catholic students at Catholic institutions and the growing number of respondents who suggest that the reason for attending a Catholic institution is excellent academic rigor, perhaps being a Catholic institution is not as much the reason for the distinctiveness in today’s market (p. 116).

Furthermore, Buckley (1998) believed that Catholic institutions should make bolder statements. He stated that Catholic institutions exist to intensify the relationship of Christian faith and all types of learning and knowledge. To be specific about his definition, Buckley outlines this statement on how a University is known to be Catholic,

The university is Catholic, above all, in its deliberate determination to render the church and the broader world this unique service: to be an intellectual community where in utter academic freedom the variant lines of Catholic tradition and thought can intersect with all forms of human culture, with the most complex resources, challenges, contradictions, and reinforcements of contemporary thoughts, and can move towards a reflective unity – in the knowledge and habits of the students, in the directions of faculty research, and in the vital exchange of the academic community – between human culture and the self-revelation of God. (Buckley, 1998, p. 20)

Within a historical context, the Jesuits did not set out to create colleges and universities as part of their initial work. St. Ignatius of Loyola and his companions declared themselves as missionaries of the Catholic faith, seeking to travel great distances to spread Christian ideals. Buckley (1998) acknowledges the work of Ignatius and the design of the Jesuit *Constitutions*, a set of goals and strategies set forth by the Society of Jesus. The Jesuits had established some higher learning institutions but that was specifically meant for the training of additional Jesuits. Those Jesuit teaching centers seemingly merged with more traditional secondary schools and later formed colleges (Buckley, 1998). The first of which, Collegio Romano, or the Roman College, located in Rome, Italy, sought to offer theology and philosophy courses to young men. Pope Gregory XIII had a grander vision and called the Jesuits to bring the values of the institution to non-Jesuit men, offering courses in mathematics, history, physics, and astronomy. Early successes included the establishment of the Gregorian Calendar, created by a Jesuit, stamped by the Pope, and now used universally, began to showcase the educational opportunities that a Jesuit institution could offer the world.

Ignatius saw a path for these universities. While shaping the academic mind, they would do so in the service of the greater glory of God. Those graduates carried with them into the world a mission and vision of service and the promotion of justice. They could act as the missionaries that the Jesuits sought to create from the beginning yet increase their ranks significantly by entrusting this vision to non-Jesuits. As Buckley (1998) shared, this is why Ignatius and the early Jesuits put such an emphasis on Rhetoric in the curriculum. The Jesuits wanted to create not only men who shared a vision but who could appropriately articulate that mission to the masses (Buckley, 1998).

Jesuit Institutions Today

While a historical context is appropriate to understand the brand and identity of Jesuit universities today, so too is the experience of the present day thinking of Jesuit institutions. In the last 50 years, much has come to light and much has changed. One important moment came in December 1974 at the calling of a Congregation of the Society of Jesus. Usually called to elect a new Superior General, this was not the occasion. Rather, as Buckley (1998) shares, the time was to reflect on Vatican II and the growing realization of the comforts of Jesuit institutions. Jesuits and those educated by Jesuits had been called to serve a higher purpose, to carry out their work for the greater glory of God. This sense of purpose seemed to wane and the 32nd General Congregation looked to renew that very purpose. The Jesuits left that gathering and asked their assemblage to walk with those who struggle. We will choose “participation in this struggle – the crucial struggle of our time; the struggle for faith and that struggle for justice which it includes – as the focus that identifies in our time what Jesuits are and do” (Buckley, p. 107).

It is within this context that Buckley (1998) outlines foundational premises for which a university ought to possess to call itself Catholic. He suggests the following:

- A Catholic institution should strive to tie all forms of human culture and discourse to the word of God.
- A Catholic university should be a place of higher learning where academic freedom regularly intersects Catholic convention.
- A Catholic university should offer a space of love with love having two directions. One would include a love for seeking the truth while the other would offer a love for those who seek it.

- A Catholic university must have a group of scholars who genuinely understand the church, its teachings, and find a passion for sharing their understanding. That said, a Catholic university must also welcome scholars of all faith traditions and create a space in which they too feel welcomed to participate in open and free dialogue.
- A Catholic university should offer faith as the basis for academic freedom, not mandates by Boards or mission statements. All intellectual dialogue should draw back to the faith and its place within the discourse.
- Finally, a Catholic university, according to Buckley (1998), should offer itself as a representative to the community and to academia as a sponsor of the church. And, while representing the church should also welcome spaces in which those representations are questioned and reflected upon.

The issues surrounding Catholic college identity are not new. Hellwig (2002) notes that factors have been at play that challenge the Catholicity of colleges since the 1960s. She notes three factors in particular that challenge Catholic institutions. First, Hellwig (2002) shares, the “professionalism of college teaching” is accompanied by significance in the management and funding of higher education (p. 105). Governing boards at colleges and universities have drastically changed from being coordinated by mostly religious people to now lay people including alumni, business, and social leaders of the community. These boards call for corporate discipline and more administrative supervision of the work and even teaching. Hellwig (2002) notes the question is not whether they have expertise or a dedication but whether ultimately the church has ultimate control of these institutions as Catholic colleges. For purposes of my research, it is these same lay leaders from corporate backgrounds who have brought the principles of marketing and branding to higher education. At Xavier, in the early 1990s one

Trustee urged our then President Jim Hoff, S.J. to organize and resource our first marketing department.

The second challenge that Hellwig (2002) notes is the global network of Catholic institutions who make the claim of being Catholic. Many of these colleges, Hellwig (2002) suggests, have been started outside of the United States by religious groups and “they educate mainly non-Christian students and employ largely non-Christian faculties” (p. 106). These institutions tend to be modeled after the U.S. version of high school and college preparation, yet do not always conform with the local country’s typical path especially those in Asia, Africa, and South America. European Catholic institutions, for instance, having been well established for centuries, do not follow the U.S. residential college model. Therefore, they do not necessarily have as much concern for the work of student life and activities outside of the classroom, including Catholic worship. U.S. based Jesuit institutions are different. They care deeply about the entire student experience and are likely to collaborate with other institutions outside of their own walls.

The third challenge to Catholic institutions Hellwig (2002) notes is the effects from the Second Vatican Council. The period from 1962-1965 called for religious organizations to go back to a more biblical interpretation as it relates to teachings, organizing, and action. Without intention, the Council brought upon itself a consistently fewer number of new religious priests. A number of young people, because of Vatican II, now see other ways to serve other than simply being a priest or consecrated religious. This drop has caused a shortfall of priests and other religious at colleges.

In 1990, Pope John Paul II released, through the Vatican, “*Ex Corde Ecclesiae*”. The document offers two parts—a reflection of a University’s mission and identity and a set of

expectations and norms for all universities throughout the globe (Benedictine University, 2014). The Pope begins by offering that universities have “always been recognized as an incomparable centre of creativity and dissemination of knowledge for the good of humanity” (Paul, 1990, Introduction). And, while his thoughts primarily center around Catholic institutions, Pope John Paul II well expresses his profound thanks to those working at non-Catholic universities for their contributions to research, discovery, and teaching as those efforts are “a continuous stimulus to the selfless search for truth and for the wisdom that comes from above” (Paul, 1990, Introduction).

“Ex Corde Esslesiae” or “from the heart of the Church” outlines four objectives for which an institution is called to be both a University and Catholic. The four include: a dedication to Christian motivation by more than individuals but by the institution as a whole; an influence of its own research to human knowledge with consideration of the faith; a dedication to communication that reflects the Christian significance through the Church; and finally, and perhaps most importantly, a University-wide dedication to serve all people as they seek to find “the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life,” (Paul, 1990, Part I). It is through these foundational pieces that Catholic institutions are called to reflect on their own being and perhaps find cohesiveness through their tradition. In fact, in Part II of his document, Pope John Paul II is even more explicit in his call for collaboration within the walls and outside the walls of a Catholic institution. He notes,

In its attempts to resolve these complex issues that touch on so many different dimensions of human life and of society, a Catholic University will insist on cooperation among the different academic disciplines, each offering its distinct contribution in the search for solutions; moreover, since the economic and personal resources of a single

Institution are limited, cooperation in *common research projects* among Catholic Universities, as well as with other private and governmental institutions, is imperative. (Paul, 1990, Part II)

The conundrum of Catholic and Jesuit institutions is to understand if it is beneficial to continue their legacy, and then in what manner to carry it out. Research by Peck and Stick (2008) outlines an early warning. Though admittedly limited in scale, their study showed that faculty at a Midwest Jesuit university were more likely to espouse Catholic identity as it related to their own values as opposed to those of the institution as a whole (Peck & Stick, 2008). They noted that with “increasing faculty secularization,” the ability to nurture the mission of Ignatian pedagogy may be inadequate. How then do colleges and university in the Jesuit tradition foster this ability in their faculty, administrators, and students in order for the Jesuit ideals to persist? How do these same institutions outline a brand that makes their offerings desirable to students seeking a college education?

O’Keefe (2011) notes that the Roman Catholic Church is the global champion of universal education by providing elementary, secondary, and university education at 135,000 locations across the globe. This global network is ripe with opportunities for a global brand. O’Keefe (2011) notes that the call from the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, the Reverend Adolfo Nicholas, S.J., “requires Jesuit institutions of higher education to work together” (p. 335). O’Keefe found the call to be more universal. The need exists to take successful Jesuit initiatives occurring at one institution and expand those efforts across the network of Jesuit colleges and universities throughout the world (O’Keefe, 2011).

University Branding

Chapleo's (2010) research suggests that several specific components make for successful brands within higher education. These branding components include a clear vision, internal support, support from leadership, strong public relations, respect for the role of marketing communications, and brand differentiation based on experiences. The most important factor in a successful higher education brand, Chapleo found, was a clear vision. "The institutions that were most strongly identified as having 'successful' brands were those that clearly articulated that a vision and purpose had, and continued to be, in place" (Chapleo, 2010, p. 179).

Chapleo (2010) notes that there is not a consistent branding strategy implemented at higher education institutions. While he notes that some strategies are in place, those approaches have their grounding in traditional business and are not specific to higher education. He continues by suggesting that limited research has been done to advance the strategy of higher education branding. Moreover, Chapleo (2010) does document that "marketing has 'grown' as an organizational function in most HEIs" (p. 178).

Chapleo (2010) shows that further study of branding of higher education programs is both needed and desirable. He believes that the future of branding in higher education could include an index of successful brands with supporting factors for what makes them successful. More than anything, Chapleo suggests "branding in UK HEIs is not served well by established brand management models" (p. 180). Chapleo shares that senior higher education leadership are highly important in branding success. He notes in particular that a risk exists for senior leaders to, on their own whim, make the institutional brand personal to meet their own needs (Chapleo, 2010).

For branding professionals within higher education, Chapleo (2010) outlines four implications for consideration. They include:

- Brand building support and visualization must come from leadership.
- No one person within a higher education setting seems to have overall responsibility for branding.
- Rallying University faculty and staff behind an institutional brand is a difficult challenge.
- Long-standing communications or marketing teams within an institution did not “perceive a crucial role for marketing communications in building a successful university brand” (p. 180).

Research by Waeraas and Solbakk (2008) highlights a university president who is troubled by faculty members who did not see or understand the university as a complete organization. The authors contend that the president was “worried that the university was becoming increasingly fragmented” (Waerass & Solbakk, 2008, p. 457). Waeraas and Solbakk (2008) found that the university had trouble in defining their overall brand. They discovered two explanations for the lack of brand clarity. One was the lack of a comprehensive, agreed upon message throughout the organization about its values and identity. The authors highlighted the complexity of a university’s structure and independent thought. Because there are so many competing interests and notions throughout the institution, the authors’ research indicated that branding became ambiguous. The second explanation had more to do with the idea that branding may lock the institution into an image of the past, not recognizing the academic plan of the future. The authors posed two additional questions, “Is it possible at all to define a consistent

and differentiated essence of a university? If not, how should one adapt branding to the specific context of higher education” (Waeraas & Solbakk, 2008, p. 459)?

Waeraas and Solbakk suggested one philosophy for branding of higher education is to not condense a university image into one approach. They say, “A pragmatic approach to higher education branding would imply building on a variety that exists within the organization” (Waeraas & Solbakk, 2008, p. 459). As the authors note, this approach of leaving branding open presents possibilities that are perhaps unexplored by others. The essence of their argument is that higher education branding is so different from traditional business that institutions should leave their options and opportunities open to provide the greatest level of flexibility. They find that, “higher education institutions have better chances of becoming strong brands if they are allowed to express their unique strengths and virtues, however inconsistent” (Waeraas & Solbakk, 2008, p. 460).

The authors believe that their research has created more questions and suggest that additional studies related to branding in higher education be conducted to explore further. They conclude, “there is a need for research that reports successful results of both defining a university brand and making it known among constituencies” (Waeraas & Solbakk, 2008, p. 460). They believe that this research may quell skeptics of collegiate branding and marketing. Waeraas and Solbakk (2008) point to the fact that brand and marketing work may well assist higher education in making its case for future relevance. They conclude that branding itself may be a solution for colleges and universities that “struggle for legitimacy, students, and financial resources in an increasingly competition-oriented education market” (Waeraas & Solbakk, p. 460).

Edmiston-Strasser (2009) studied the integrated marketing communication (IMC) efforts at 42 of the top national public universities as rated by *U.S. News & World Report*. The author

defines IMC through the text of Schultz and Schultz which suggests that integrated marketing communication is “a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute, and evaluate coordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communication programs over time with consumers, prospects, and other targeted, relevant external and internal audiences” (as cited by Edmiston-Strasser, 2009, p. 20).

Edmiston-Strasser concludes that in order for integrated marketing communications to be successful two strategies must be in place. First, institutional leadership must fully support and endorse the notion of IMC and institutions must have formal mechanism of communication in place (Edmiston-Strasser, 2009). On the first topic of presidential influence, one respondent to the author’s survey summed it up best when the respondent suggested, “The president needs to be willing to commit his or her power and prestige and institutional time and resources to the marketing effort” (Edmiston-Strasser, 2009, p. 158). To the second point that institutional communications mechanisms must be in place, Edmiston-Strasser suggests that a university-wide marketing committee should be present to provide collaboration, advocacy, and assistance for the institutions marketing efforts (2009).

Edmiston-Strasser (2009) concludes that through IMC and brand building, an institution “can control how they effectively respond to the environment” (p. 160). As the author continues to note, marketing and communications can assist in the building of strong brand equity and factor into the college’s selectivity ratings for wooing potential students. She concludes that those who are building strong brands and performing solidly for market performance, “seemed to be most successful due to solid leadership direction and coordinated (but necessarily centralized) communications” (Edmiston-Strasser, 2009, p. 160).

Edmiston-Stasser (2009) developed an IMC framework, built on from the work of Schultz and Schultz (2004), in which the understanding of a college’s commitment to higher education marketing, branding, and integrated marketing communications could be understood through four stages. Table 1 below identifies Edmiston-Strasser’s stages:

Table 1

The Four Stages of IMC Framework

Orientation	Indicators
Stage 1	Tactical coordination of marketing communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate interpersonal and cross-functional communication within the organization and with external partners
Stage 2	Commitment to market research in support of IMC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 on customer feedback throughout the organization
Stage 3	Application of information technology in support of IMC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

Through her research, Edmiston-Strasser (2009) found that not only was senior leadership important but so was the culture of a particular higher educational institution. While she concluded that senior leadership was more important, and a branding strategy along with it,

organizational culture placed right behind the others as one of the most influential factors for integrated marketing proficiency. She also encouraged the use of marketing committees, executive advisory groups, an annual marketing report, and communications audits. She concludes that the implementation of these types of formal systems can allow an integrated marketing team to be proactive, not being controlled by their environment but by trying to shape it.

Like Edmiston-Strasser, Bristow and Schneider (2003) believe that universities are becoming more like traditional business enterprises because they are utilizing marketing concepts geared toward consumers to enhance their identity in the marketplace. The authors developed the Collegiate Student Orientation Scale (CSOS) that has the potential to calculate the level in which an institution meets consumer orientation goals. The notion is to best understand the needs of the consumer, in this case students, and how the institution is meeting the brand experience of the students as soon as orientation.

As Bristow and Schneider (2003) suggest, a student is not just another student. Students are not a homogeneous group where a one-size-fits-all philosophy can take hold. "Schools are increasingly targeting their efforts toward meeting the needs of subgroups or segments of the population of students" (Bristow & Schneider, 2003, p. 29). One of their most interesting findings has to do with students who fund their entire tuition on their own, and those students who get assistance paying for their bills. Students who pay their own tuition believe institutions to be less student-oriented. These students seem to have a higher standard of what a college needs to do to live up to their brand promise of being student centered (Bristow & Schneider, 2003). While their research is limited and needs further study, it's clear that colleges must take

into account the individual needs of each student if they are to meet their overall brand propositions.

While a number of studies to this point have pointed to the brand through direction by senior leadership, another author points to the entire college workforce. Judson et al. (2009) suggest that not just branding but a strong employee base that is targeted to work toward the brand can influence many priorities for an institution. The authors suggest that a solid internal institutional brand can influence recruitment opportunities, alumni connections, philanthropic donations, athletic connectivity, and even care for the liberal arts. They submit that university administrators seem to understand their organization's brand and work to include that as part of their work but do a poor job in affecting how their staffs use the institutional brand on a daily basis.

Simply put, Judson et al. (2009) believe that all universities need to improve their internal brand marketing and communication efforts. Internal branding efforts can assist institutions to make certain that goals, strategies, messages, and work are aligned. This alignment offers an increased efficiency that can benefit the organization.

Judson et al. (2009) report that employees at private institutions have a better understanding of the distinctiveness of their institutional brand when compared to public institution counterparts. "Private-school respondents indicate a greater impact of university brand on how they manage their staffs, and whether their staffs understand the values of their universities' brands" (Judson et al., 2009, p. 65). As Table 2 below indicates, those working at private institutions, across the board for the characteristics the authors tested, fared better on their engagement with the institutions brand and brand awareness metrics.

Table 2

Perceived University Brand Strength Among University Administrators Public vs. Private University

	Overall Mean	Public Mean	Private Mean	Significance
The university presently, or has been, involved in promoting its brand image over the past two years	1.96	2.07	1.72	0.014*
The university clearly stands for something distinctive	2.18	2.36	1.85	0.000*
The university communicates a clear message concerning its brand image to administrators	2.56	2.67	2.31	0.012*
Administrator has the same perceptions of the university's brand image as prospective students	2.86	2.97	2.63	0.013*
Administrators' Brand Strength Mean	2.38	2.50	2.12	0.001*

Mean based upon six-point Likert-scale: 1-Strongly Agree; 6-Strongly Disagree

* $p \leq 0.05$

Alpha—University Brand Perception Strength—0.783.

Separate from private institutions, the authors suggest that public institutions should pay particular attention to the brand processes of private institutions especially their internal communication. In conclusion, the authors note that institutions that value their brand do not leave their reputation to chance – they are willing to tell their own story (Judson et al., 2009,

2009). This study indicates that universities must be aware of their brand and attempt to make their identity, and the corresponding communication, distinctive within a crowded marketplace.

With the assistance of many scholars, Townsend, Newell, and Wiese (1992) suggest that institutional distinctiveness is driven by, more than anything else, an organizational culture “committed to a particular educational vision or theme” (p. 9). Furthermore, distinctiveness comes from taking that organizational culture and being steadfast to excellence to that specific vision or theme. Because of the need for culture and vision the authors suggest that to be considered a distinctive institution, colleges and universities must have “a unifying set of values that are apparent to and esteemed by faculty, students, staff, alumni, and the public” (Townsend et al., 2003, p. 10).

Some institutions in higher education have accepted the notion that branding is important as discussed in the research and taken steps to attempt to make themselves distinctive. Ramsey (2006) shares the research of Dickinson College, an institution that has flourished in recent years and has continued to climb the Carnegie ladder, positioning itself as a very selective liberal arts college.

While branding influences liberal arts colleges, branding also plays a role at major National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I athletic institutions. Within the NCAA Division I rank; The Football Bowl Series institutions get significant exposure each weekend during national televised football games. Universities like Notre Dame, Alabama, Southern California, Oregon, Florida State, and a select number more flood the airwaves nearly each weekend throughout the football season. During games, institutions get the opportunity at a high level to gain brand exposure. The exposure may come on the field with interviews with coaches and players or crowd reactions showcasing a vibrant community. The exposure may

also come outside of the stadium as well with campus shots used during games and institutions get the opportunity to air a free, 30-second commercial during each broadcast as well. Clayton et al. (2012) studied the use of these 30-second spots to gain an understanding of their purpose and success in assisting with University branding.

Clayton et al. (2012) discovered that due to the short duration, institutions could only focus on a small list of attributes during a commercial. This makes identifying the true audience for the commercial complicated. Clayton et al. (2012) suggest that most institutions consider prospective students their target audience but are quick to suggest that everyone from taxpayers to fans to alumni to the business community to the national audience who may not at all be familiar with their institution are all regular viewers.

While most universities have a history and aesthetically pleasing campus characteristics that are supplemented with academic and co-curricular activities, the challenge lies in how these assets can be communicated in a manner which is relevant to the audience and differentiates a school from the competitive landscape. (Clayton et al., 2012, p. 198)

The authors note that because there are so many institutions in the NCAA domain, differentiation is important. While academics are important to institutions, the authors research clearly showed that a focus on non-academic attributes “help to define the college experience” of that institution (Clayton et al., 2012, p. 198). The authors crafted an advertising roadmap to assist colleges in their commercial production themes on which to build an institution’s brand message.

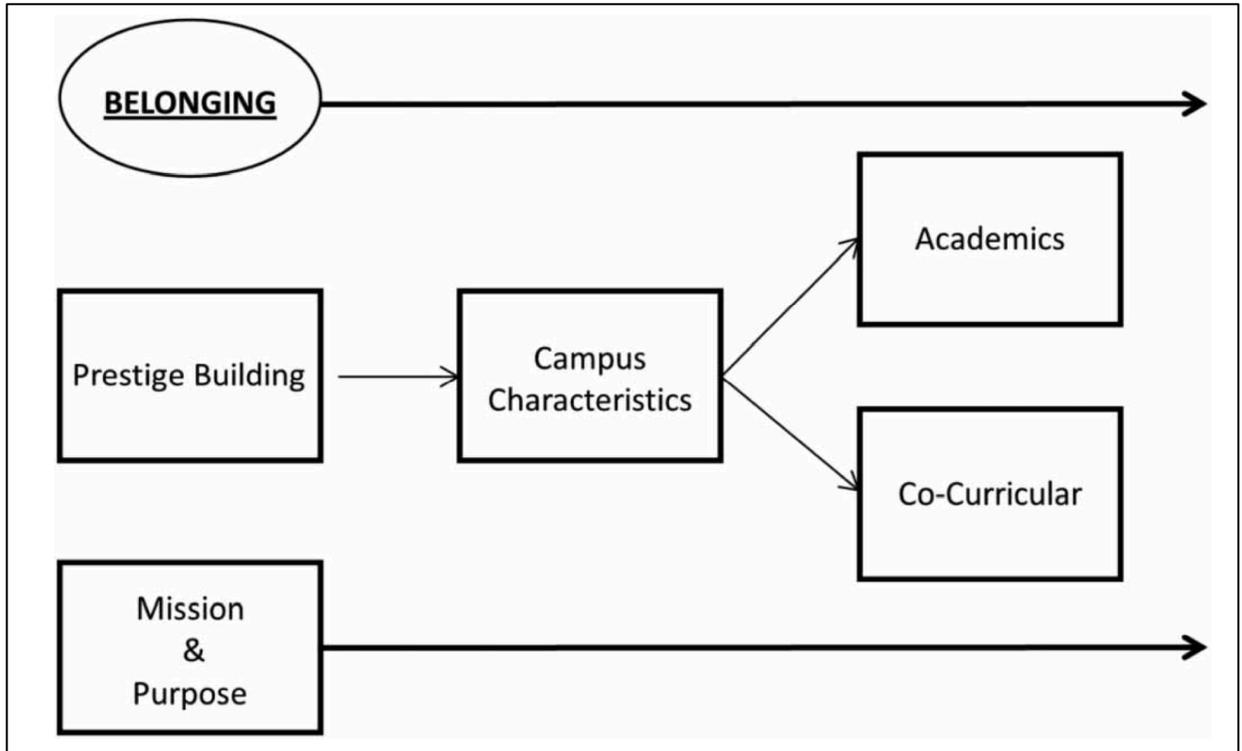


Figure 2. Institutional messaging roadmap.

Schofield, Cotton, Gresty, Kneale, and Winter (2013) took a slightly different approach than the Clayton et al. (2012) study. Schofield et al. (2013) did not review the 30-second commercials but rather explored the welcoming messages found on websites of the United Kingdom (UK) colleges they reviewed. “It is reasonable to assume that this message to prospective students sets out the mission of the institution with their core values at the fore” (Schofield et al., 2013, p. 203). Written by UK college Principals or Vice Chancellors, the authors sought to understand the themes and points of differentiation between the institutions.

More than anything, the institutions described in their welcoming messages their educational ethos and style of teaching and learning. Interestingly, institutions with a long history showcased their buildings and the campus growth to support the kind of learning within the buildings that would assist students. Newer colleges focused their attention of the academic

strength being built on innovation or stimulation, seemingly taking a more modern approach to collegiate pedagogy.

The authors drew a unique difference between those institutions of higher education in the UK and those colleges that simply offer further education either at the graduate level or focused on adult populations. The universities of higher education added the area of student life to their welcome message further outlining the activities that take place outside of the classroom (Schofield et al., 2013). Schofield et al. (2013) noted, however, that both types of institutions, underscored the potential of its graduates highlighting students' preparation, placement, and success.

Schofield et al. (2013) shared what they believed were some other surprising findings in their research. For instance, the authors noted that newer institutions focus on the overall student lifestyle highlighting social and sporting opportunities, much more than historically based competitors. The further education colleges did not highlight these aspects much. The authors conclude,

Lack of mention of social aspects within the further education colleges' literature supports the fact that they are more likely to attract local students who are familiar with local social networks, or mature students who are more likely to approach their studies as a job rather than a lifestyle. (Schofield, 2013, p. 202)

Schofield et al. (2013) highlighted that the one area that traditional colleges always dominated their new competitors or local educational providers is research. The authors suggest that local education providers do not engage in much and that newer institutions have not had sufficient time to build their research portfolios of success. So, traditional colleges have used this as a distinct point of differentiation.

Schofield et al. (2013) drew conclusions about each of the three types of institutions that they studied in the UK. Overall reputation, academic excellence, and an internal marketplace dominated the literature of the long-standing universities. Employability of graduates tended to be the focus for newer colleges. Local educational institutions also focused on graduate placement, but also “return on investment in such a fragile economic climate” (Schofield, 2013, p. 204). The authors draw the conclusion that the UK has the room for each type of institution because each offers such a unique and different experience than the others (Schofield, 2013).

Continuing with examples from the UK, Chapleo (2010) studied how well university marketers could articulate the significance of their branding and marketing efforts. He interviewed 20 chief marketers to study if they had common philosophies. Chapleo discovered that there was a wide difference in responses from the executives, even on the intentions of branding. The Table 3 below shows the most common responses that Chapleo found.

Table 3

The Most Frequently Identified Objectives of University Branding

-
- To Explain or clarify what the university ‘does’ or ‘is’
 - To communicate a clear position
 - To communicate a competitive advantage
 - To enhance reputation
 - To communicate the various ‘facets’ of what the university does
 - To increase awareness
-

From this, Chapleo (2010) articulates,

It is to be expected that there will be no simple answer to the question of what the objectives of branding in universities are. However, this lack of commonality in answers does little to help justify the case for spending money on branding. (p. 417)

The author contends that significant overlap was identified when discussing branding and reputation, although each respondent shared that they saw a distinction when questioned. “Brand,” Chapleo (2010) suggests, “was viewed as something that could, to some degree, be constructed, whereas reputation was viewed as based on historical legacy and therefore more difficult to manipulate” (p. 420).

While there may have been no all-encompassing definition of branding between institutions, Chapleo (2010) is quick to point out that chief marketing professionals were in fact able to clearly articulate the meaning of branding for their own individual institution. The author continues to note it was clear that branding was important to each institution, but the full meaning and purpose of branding was different among the interviewed set. Chapleo (2010) suggests this as a danger to branding, meaning there is no overall comprehensive understanding supported by higher education.

Chapleo (2010) does argue that branding within higher education is particularly important. He suggests that because universities have a wide audience and the institutions are so complex, branding can be challenging. He points to a lack of resources, a common understanding, and common expectations for branding work, though he was quick to point out that many institutions are spending a lot of money on institutional branding efforts (Chapleo, 2010). Chapleo (2010) concludes that especially in tight economic times, branding work should be tied to specific aims with broad goals as well as specific tactics. He also suggested that specific metrics be outlined to best understand and articulate the value of the work going on in the branding process.

Khanna, Jacob, and Yadav (2014) attempt to take the importance of branding one-step further. Not only do they believe branding is important for higher education institutions, they

argue that specific touch points exist throughout the relationship between student and institution, and it is those specific touch points that create an institution’s brand. The authors created a Brand Touchpoint Wheel that outlines those interactions during three phases: pre-admission, during the course, and post passing phases. While many reflect on a brand as simply the first phase, Khanna et al. (2014) share that a true brand experience begins from the marketing layer, continues throughout the experience, and lasts well after the courses have been passed.

That said most touch points still take place in the pre-admission phase. From alumni recommendations to media influence on fees and location, many of these “influencing touchpoints” exist that create a “stakeholder perception” (Khanna et al., 2014, p. 131). The authors believe that if institutions focus on the Brand Touchpoint Wheel, they will be successful in having identified the critical moments when a brand can influence a stakeholder’s experience.

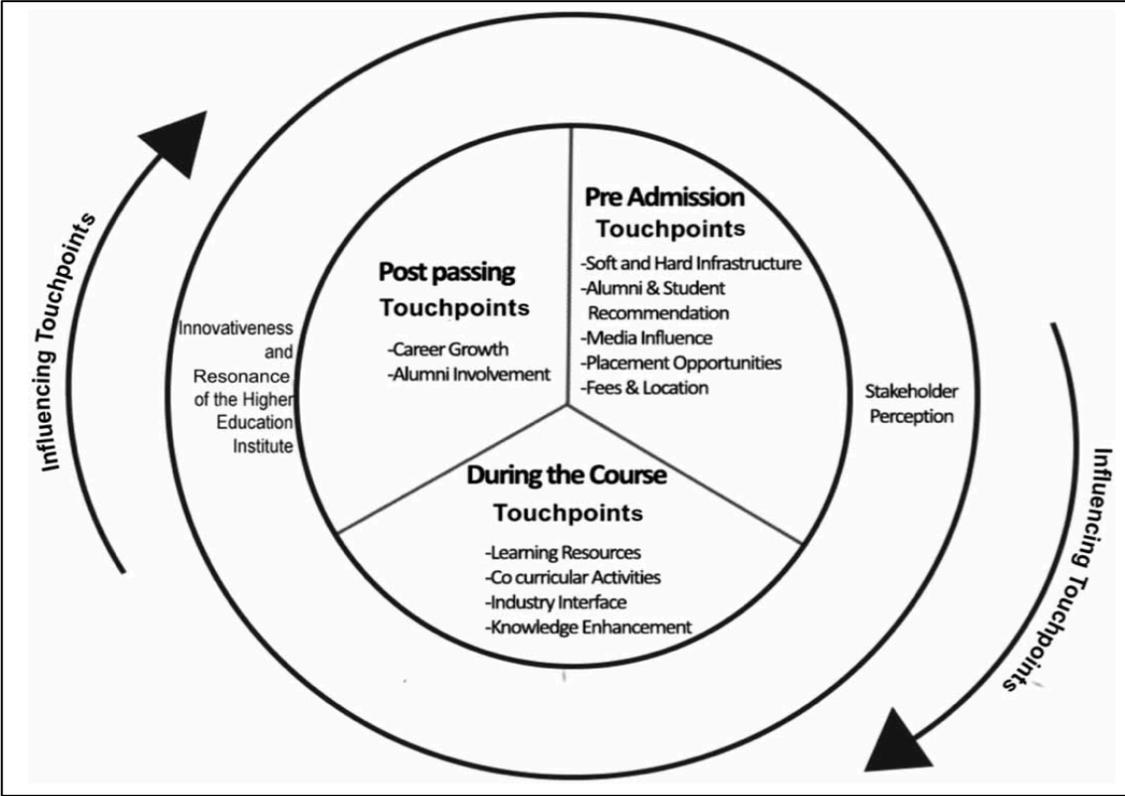


Figure 3. Proposed Brand Touchpoint Wheel model for building a higher education brand.

While Khanna et al. (2014) distinguish the pre-admission touch points as important, McAlexander and Koenig (2010) focused their research on alumni engagement in regard to institutional brand. Findings from their study indicate that alumni of institutions have one of five types of relationships with their alma mater. The five types of relationships include:

- Alumni-product relationship – College is defined as an educational experience in which a consumer pays money to receive the transfer of knowledge from an institution. “The experiences of their education have deeply impacted their lives and self-concept” (p. 72).
- Alumni-brand relationship – These alumni are interested in their affiliation with the institution’s brand itself regardless of their experience. Harvard, or other Ivy League universities for instance, connotes a certain level of brand appeal, as would flagship institutions in certain states. In this relationship, the authors find, “students, employees, alumni, and friends adorning themselves, their offices, and their homes with university logo branded merchandise” (p. 72).
- Alumni-institution relationship – This connection has more to do with the individuals with whom alumni interacted with during their time at the institution. Institutional employees, faculty, and staff make a tremendous impact on alumni and form the relationship on behalf of the institution. As alumni, these interactions continue through alumni marketing and magazines to continued contact from faculty and staff (p. 73).
- Alumni-alumni relationship – The authors suggest that there is no more important relationship within an institution than between the community of students. At college, students from different backgrounds come together in one setting. “Students form diverse affiliations within the community... Many build bonds that can last a lifetime” (p.

74). It is these communities that students build that create the relationship with the institution.

- Alumni brand community integration – The authors suggest a nexus that combines many of the other four components but focuses on the integration of the topics around terms like loyalty, desire to recommend the institution to others, and “stronger feelings of overall integration within the alumni brand community” (p. 74).

McAlexander and Koenig (2010) shared some interesting results from their findings with alumni. They found significant differences in the brand relationship with an institution based on university size; alumni who attended smaller institutions were more likely to have noted strong relationships with other alumni, the institution, and the educational product. “Overall, alumni of the smaller institutions feel more integrated within the alumni community than do the graduates of the larger institutions” (McAlexander & Koenig, 2010, p. 81).

That said, the authors found alumni of larger institutions seem to be more aligned with the alumni-brand relationship. These alumni wear institutional gear, tailgate with friends, and discuss their institution when socializing. Many of them remain connected through athletics and the social opportunities surrounding the athletic experience (McAlexander & Koenig, 2010). McAlexander and Koenig’s (2010) findings serve as important indicators for alumni and fundraising professionals in higher education on how to best understand the needs of alumni communities and how their engagement may differ from others.

From another perspective, Goi, Goi, and Wong (2014) studied the difference in branding experiences at private and public institutions in Asia. They found six brand-related differentiators in the identity and marketing efforts between the privates and publics. The six included distribution channel, public relations, promotion, product/core service, price, and

system (Goi et al., 2014). Within each of those areas, the authors identified key points that senior administrators should note as they consider their branding efforts. For instance, the authors found that private colleges focus more on culture, core service, and the system while public colleges focus on facilities, price, and employee training (Goi, et al., 2014).

Goi et al. (2014) suggest that private institutions relate more toward corporate branding efforts while public institutions relate stronger to the non-profit sector. They found that the marketing office within each institution served as the primary place in which the branding efforts and the recruitment strategies take place. They identified that private colleges have more coordinated efforts. The public colleges, the authors explained, are coordinated more through a corporate communications office which does not allow for adequate branding exposure compared to their private peers.

Marketing and Enrollment Management

Markets are sets of transactions between buyers and sellers. The structure of a market for a particular set of goods is defined by the number and characteristics of the enterprises that compete with each other for customers and sales—in postsecondary education’s case, for students and enrollments (Zemsky & Shaman, 1997, p. 28).

Marketing is not a static activity but rather one that changes over time based on customer needs, the availability of services, and the delivery and price at the proper moment and place (Krachenberg, 1972). The marketing efforts of liberal arts colleges in particular, for which traditional Jesuit education would be classified, can be defined as “proud, competitive, and adaptive” (Ragan & McMillian, 1989, p. 701).

Studies show that when high school students are considering college options, their overall view of an institution’s image or reputation is more important than any other factor (MacDonald,

2013, p. 160). Branding, therefore, is important in building public consciousness of an institution. Personal recommendations from friends and family, considerations from high school counselors, and interactions with institutional representatives play a key role for prospective students as they gather information and context about college options (Joseph, Mullen, & Spake, 2012). Studies show that the information gathered before a student's arrival on-campus shapes their expectations of their college experience at that institution (Hill, 1995).

For successful marketing to take place, customers must trust what they are being told. In the case of colleges and universities, students must trust the messages of a college or a group of colleges that share similar components. In a college setting, trusting admission professionals, then building trust with professors and administrators increases student perception of value, leads to greater loyalty (Carvalho & Mota, 2010). "It would be beneficial for the higher education sector to adopt a relationship approach to the marketing of higher-education services and to also view the students that they serve as customers of their brands" (Bowden, 2011, p. 222).

Joseph et al. (2012) laid a framework for how students decide on which colleges to apply to and then which one to attend. First, they found that incoming college students in 2011 first obtained information about colleges from family and friends (Joseph et al., 2012). Meeting with high school counselors or admission staff members, or even viewing local advertisements made their list, but none were more influential than word-of-mouth connections. Following that insight, Joseph et al. (2012) asked students to rank the importance of particular criteria about where they might apply. For those students entering public institutions, the following criteria were listed as the top five:

- Quality education
- Accredited university

- Friendly environment
- Availability of financial aid
- Location

For private institutions, the characteristics moved up or down the priority list depending more specifically on the financial or reputation side of the ledger. The private considerations included:

- Availability of financial aid
- Ability to get a scholarship
- Quality education
- Accredited university
- Reputation of university

These findings suggest that although university branding initiatives need to be customized by type of institution, both student types now seek a modern university experience that includes the latest technology, community involvement, and an attractive campus environment (Joseph et al., 2010). The authors also conclude, “that although branding initiatives may build brand awareness and shape the image of a university, personal interaction during campus visits, word of mouth from friends/family, university representatives, and/or high school counselors continue to play an important role” (Joseph et al., 2010, p. 9). Finally, the authors suggest that institutional size, make-up, character, and financing also shape the decisions of prospective students and conclusions cannot be easily drawn just by defining an institution as public or private (Joseph et al., 2010, p. 10).

Bowden (2011) continues the notion of relationship building by viewing the student as a customer. She suggests that organizations should take a relationship marketing approach to

develop their customer base and maintain customers over the long term. Positive perceptions of an institution's brand, she shares, can be attributed to the quality of the relationship between an institution and the student (Bowden, 2011, p. 211). "Conceptualizing the student as a customer emphasizes the importance of fostering a two-way interactive, dialogue-based relationship between the institution and its student-body" (Bowden, 2011, p. 213). Bowden (2011) suggests that this two-way relationship fundamentally ties students to the institution in which both are part of the agreement for the exchange of services and value.

Bowden (2011) studied the effects of customer (in this case students) loyalty based on four factors: satisfaction, affective commitment, calculative commitment, and trust (see Figure 4). The notion of student loyalty is linked to the notion of the brand experience of a student. Bowden (2011) reviews a number of ways that satisfaction can be studied and in the end notes that most studies suggest that satisfaction can be understood best as whether a student would recommend an institution to another student.

The author explains the difference between calculated commitment and affective commitment. Calculated commitment has to do with the rational cost and time considerations for making brand choices or remaining loyal to choices made in the past. Bowden (2011) suggests that calculated commitment considers the individuals time and cost to switch if they are dissatisfied with a decision. Consider a simple example. If you selected one brand of toothpaste but were unsatisfied with the product, it might be relatively easy to switch to another brand the next time you visit the supermarket. The process, time, and cost of switching colleges would certainly be much greater and affect a student's decision to remain at or change institutions. Commitment has much more to do with emotional considerations for remaining with a brand. Relative to college, feelings of comfort and safety at an institution, a positive connotation with

the experience, and the relationships a student has with individuals and the institution as a whole would, all come into play for affecting commitment (Bowden, 2011).

Finally, Bowden (2011) sees trust as the basis for customer loyalty. She describes trust as the integrity, reliability, and confidence of the relationship between the customer and the organization. Bowden (2011) warns against students being seen as simply part of an “economic transaction” and not part of the trust exchange. While many institutions state that students are at the core of their mission, some institutions are too frivolous to turn students into cogs or headcounts as part of the educational process.

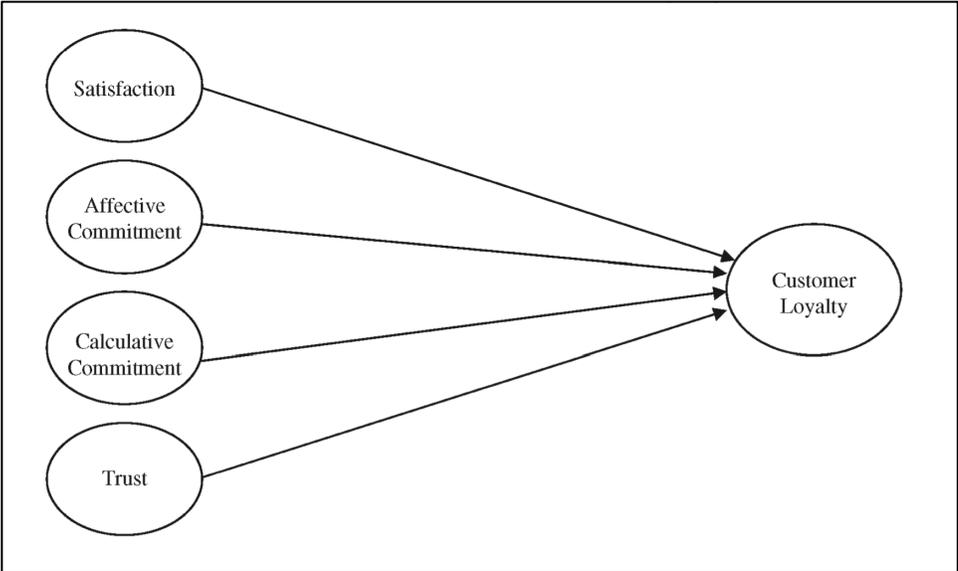


Figure 4. Effect on relational constructs of loyalty.

Bowden (2011) found that affective commitment and student satisfaction were the strongest determinants of customer loyalty among college students. “Strong and engaging relationships in the higher-education sector appear to be driven more by the quality of psychological and emotional bonds with the institution as well as a high level of satisfaction with its performance” (Bowden, 2011, p. 222). Bowden (2011) concluded that colleges who are

interested in their branding around student satisfaction and commitment should implement strategies around relationship-building and view their students as customers of their educational enterprise.

Carvalho and Mota (2010) also found trust to be an important determinant of student loyalty. The authors note that when students trust university faculty and staff as well as management practices and policies, students' understanding of value also increases leading to higher student loyalty. Carvalho and Mota (2010) replicated a study from the retail clothing industry from 2002 from Sirdeshmukh, Singh, and Sabol, to see if their findings would hold for higher education. Sirdeshmukh, Singh, and Sabol (2002) had developed a trust-value-loyalty model that states that as trust grew, value would grow, thus leading to higher customer loyalty. More specifically, Carvalho and Mota (2010) found that trust from students grew as they believed that University faculty and staff were "focused on their ability to succeed in achieving their learning and degree goals and career objectives" (p. 161).

Even more direct, Carvalho and Mota (2010) identified three traits of employees and an additional practice that led to a higher level of trust, value, and loyalty. Those items include:

- Employee competency meaning that university officials had quality interactions with students in an effective and efficient manner knowing that the employee could assist the student well.
- Employee benevolence meaning that university officials were truthful and authentic and valued the student as a paying consumer of the education.
- Ability of employees to be problem solvers willing to go out of their way to make sure that a student was accommodated as much as possible even if that meant going outside of normal practices, helping to ensure student success.

- Finally, student loyalty increased when students believed that the University took the good of the student before the institutional good. Students wanted to see through educational practices and policies that the institution was indeed most interested in the success of students.

Carvalho and Mota (2010) suggest this increased trust, value, and loyalty would lead to “getting their students to recommend that higher education institution to others and to return to that higher education institution when seeking further degrees” (p. 162). For most institutions, especially in today’s social media-oriented marketplace, student recommendations are increasingly important. More positive recommendations lead to a greater sense of educational trust from others considering an institution where they are not familiar. Trust, value, and loyalty appear to be relevant themes for educational institutions to prioritize as they craft their institutional culture, practices, and policies.

Hill (1995) continued the evaluative process of students as consumers of higher education. She suggests that meaningful metrics do not exist across the standard higher education spectrum. She concludes that one of the biggest opportunities is for institutions to produce more research to test students’ expectations as they enter higher education against their actual perceptions of the value and service received at their particular institution. This knowledge, Hill (1995) contends, would better allow institutions to manage expectations more appropriately as students enter institutions.

Hill’s (1995) study and findings at British universities reviewed the expectations of incoming first-year students and then perceived quality by those entering their third year of study at the institution. “There appears to be a significant mismatch between students’ expectations and the perceived quality they have experienced concerning many of the service factors” (Hill,

1995, p. 20). In particular Hill (1995) noted a most disturbing mismatch between expectations and quality delivered regarding course content, instructional methods and quality, staff interactions regarding academic study, and students input in the curriculum. She continued, highlighting particular factors that went above and beyond students' expectations. These included career preparation, healthcare, and student counseling services (Hill, 1995).

To most accurately evaluate and define the brand expectations of students, Hill (1995) outlines three steps for institutions to take. She suggests that all institutions should measure their incoming students' expectations before they begin at the institution. Second, the management of these expectations should not be a one-time engagement and rather viewed as a process from the time a student begins through graduation with focus on the quality of services delivered to their consumers. Finally, and perhaps most simply, institutions must take the process of evaluation seriously, addressing it with the time and resources needed to conduct valuable and informative research.

The notion of students as consumer, however, is not new. After all, students review, evaluate, and make the selection of a college through a specific lens of what they believe an institution will offer with a certain cost, ultimately creating a value-based decision. Given the context of this decision-making process, branding and image of institutions is important. Nguyen and LeBlanc (2001) contend, "institutional image is, therefore, the result of an aggregate process by which the public compares and contrasts the various attributes of organizations" (p. 303). They suggest that the image may differ depending on the group relationship or situation of a particular individual, and that image may be reviewed through a lens of credibility. "Credibility is determined by what an organization does and what it says it will do" (Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2001, p. 304).

Credibility overtime leads to customer loyalty and an enhanced value on an organization's image and reputation. Image and reputation, as described by Nguyen and LeBlanc (2001), can assist service-based organizations, like colleges, to forecast future results. They suggest that image and reputation are "considered as the most reliable cues to signal the ability of a service organization to satisfy the customer's desires" (Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2001, p. 305). The authors suggest university administrators must understand that institutional image and reputation are defined from the point of view of students, the consumers. These definitions from students can be heavily derived from students' interactions with faculty and other administrators as well as the campus environment (Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2001).

Pampaloni's (2010) research agrees personal contact is important. Her study concludes that the personal nature of a campus tour or open house experience is an important factor which drives a prospective student's image of the institution and its brand. Characteristics like marketing materials, academic programs, tuition and fees, and physical campus location, were all key components that drive the image as well. Related to image, Pampaloni (2010) finds "prospective students seek both concrete and abstract qualities about a school when making decisions about whether or not to affiliate" (p. 37).

Pampaloni (2010) suggests the most interesting point of her research was the consistency of student responses. While no students are the same, all students appeared to be seeking a wide array of physical and emotional pieces of information while in the college selection process. This process for many students is complex. The author specifically notes the number of respondents who called the college select process, "a long, tedious, stressful procedure" (p. 38).

When a final decision was to be made about which college to attend, above all else Pampaloni (2010) invokes the notion of the "it" factor (p. 41). Most students would define that

as the cumulative understanding of an institution's brand and environment. Using words like "it feels right" and "it's comfortable" and "it's where I am supposed to be" were consistently mentioned through her studies (Pampaloni, 2010, p. 38). More than half of the respondents in her study suggested that the single biggest factor had to do with the overall atmosphere about an institution. The curious part, however, is when asked to define more specifically about the "it" or what was it about the environment, students found it hard to put their finger on the proper words. "Thus, while students are confident that they will know what they want when they see it or feel it, there was a lack of clarity about what 'it' is" (p. 41).

Rosen, Curran, and Greenlee (1998) try to dissect the "it" factor to better understand the influencers of the college decision-making process as it relates to brand elimination. In their long-term study of 20 high school seniors, the authors found that college guides, guidance counselors, college brochures, and friends were the most likely sources of college information as the students discovered their original set of college interests (Rosen et al., 1998). For a college to be in a student's awareness set early in the recruitment process is an important indicator. To this extent, the college brochures seemed to be the most controversial. Solicited brochures were welcomed from the students while unsolicited brochures were not readily welcomed and usually wound up in a storage bin. The students spent on average nearly ten minutes with the solicited brochures, while each unsolicited brochure was under two minutes, signaling the difference in interest by the students (Rosen et al., 1998).

Students moved from the awareness set to the consideration set by better understanding the attributes of each institution. Rosen et al.'s (1998) study found six topics to be the most reviewed information in order to narrow to the consideration set. Those pieces of information included:

1. Majors
2. Location
3. Cost
4. Athletics
5. Facilities
6. Social activities

That set continues to evolve as students moved closer and closer toward their final decision. While some on the previous list for the consideration set remained, the choice set was determined by a wider variety of influential factors (Rosen et al., 1998). Those characteristics, arranged by importance in the overall college selection process for the choice set include:

1. Majors offered
2. Location
3. Cost
4. Courses offered
5. Social life
6. Academic reputation
7. Career placement
8. Institutional size
9. Campus visit
10. Financial aid

Rosen et al. (1998) stated, “College choice is clearly a decision characterized by high involvement behavior” (p. 86). The authors suggest that students want to make the right decision and are therefore highly involved in the process. From their long-term study of these high school

seniors, they conclude that students do worry about cost and create their own mental cost-benefit analysis (Rosen et al., 1998). Also, students' parents become much more influential at the end of the process, trumping friends and guidance counselors who play an important role in the earlier consideration set. Knowing the final influence of parents, Rosen et al. (1998), suggest that colleges become more in-tune with parents as part of branding strategy. The authors suggest that colleges fully understand all the characteristics and influencers that impact potential students' decisions. "The payoffs to those schools that fully examine their recruiting strategies in light of how prospective students select an institution of higher learning can be substantial and have long-term impacts on enrollment" (Rosen et al., 1998, p. 91).

With cost and financial aid as important consideration factors for prospective students, Harris and Barnes (2011) research how institutional brand and image can be impacted by financial aid incentives. At the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill, while college officials reported excellent financial aid packaging strategies were in place to boost enrollment, these efforts were not being utilized to assist all enrollment management opportunities (Harris & Barnes, 2011). UNC created the Carolina Covenant, an arrangement in which the financial aid packages for low-income students would include grants, not loans, allowing for students from low-income backgrounds to graduate debt free (Harris & Barnes, 2011).

Harris and Barnes (2011) conclude that to increase branding strategies, specifics should be provided, not just "broad promises of affordability and access" (p. 43). The authors suggest an advantageous opportunity exists for the UNC brand because of the creation of the Covenant. Having reviewed the importance of financial aid, costs, and value in a prospective student's search process and having financial aid programs that extend the institution's brand to leveraging

these important points, will assist in overall image and recruitment efforts. “With the established notion of affordability associated with UNC prior to the Carolina Covenant, the program had fertile ground to improve the association between the institution’s image and its brand” (Harris & Barnes, 2011, p. 44).

Having this knowledge about the influencers for college-decision making is important. College marketing and recruitment offices must have a comprehensive understanding of the influencers for their own institutions. To best understand the influencers, Vander Schee’s (2009) research suggests that the function of marketing research has grown in popularity among college marketing offices. Especially for Christian colleges and universities, Vander Schee (2009) found that during a twelve-year period, from 1997 through 2009, more than any other marketing component, the practice of marketing research grew the most. In 2009, 92% of the Christian colleges and universities were utilizing marketing research to influence their marketing and branding practices (Vander Schee, 2009).

Vander Schee (2009) suggests that Christian colleges and universities, especially those with smaller enrollments or regional brands, must “work even harder” which means investing more time, resources, and energy into marketing and recruitment efforts. Perhaps surprisingly, the lowest assessment technique utilized by college marketing offices was to seek input from current students (Vander Schee, 2009). Tapping into the current student population as a group to assist with marketing and recruitment efforts received the lowest utilization rate of all assessment techniques.

Vander Schee (2009) notes an important limitation to his study. The marketing practice study was conducted with those at private colleges with either the director of admission or the chief enrolment officer. “These individuals are abreast of the enrollment management and

marketing practices at their institutions but sometimes have duties that are more focused strictly on student recruitment” (Vander Schee, 2009, p. 33). This means that the full perspective of marketing practices may not have been taken into account. For the current study, it is important to engage with both the chief marketing officers and the chief enrollment officers to best understand the full perspective of marketing and recruitment strategies.

More can be found by looking at the actions of Christian universities in modern times. In fact, a number of institutions have moved away from their Christian roots, if nothing more than by name itself. Alabama Christian College became Faulkner University in 1985, Columbia Christian College became Cascade College in 1993, Michigan Christian College became Rochester College in 1997, and Pacific Christian College became Hope International University in 2003 (Woodrow, 2004). From the early 1900s to today, Woodrow (2004) claims that, “the continued rise of faculty and administrative recruitment from the academic profession rather than from the ministry, and the desire for objective research, and teaching, made the denominational affiliation seem less and less important” (p. 119). The author concludes that continued focus on recruitment and marketing practices will test the distinctiveness of Christian institutions.

And yet, as Christian colleges have changed names, Evans and Schwab (1995) note the overall success of Catholic high school students and graduates. The authors share that across the country, “teens enrolled in Catholic schools have a significantly higher probability of completing high school and starting college” (Evans & Schwab, 1995, p. 971). And, they note that students who reside in large city areas see an even greater increase in the success of Catholic high school students than their public-school friends.

Collaborative Branding

Apple and Nike have combined forces to co-brand The Sports Kit, a system allowing your shoes and music to sync together to offer the ultimate workout and music system. The hotel chain Best Western and Harley Davidson teamed up to offer a unique discount program for bike riders on weekend adventures that include a special hotel point system and unique towels to wipe down your bike upon check-in. The Girl Scouts have combined forces with Dairy Queen to offer Thin Mint or Tagalong Blizzards as part of the impressive dessert collection. And, Jack Daniels partnered with TGI Friday's to offer a unique series of items destined to tame the appetite of the hungriest of eaters. All of these examples highlight the special associations that different brands have created to leverage the power of both entities for the betterment of the two (McKee, 2009).

The notion of co-branding or collaborative branding is not new. In fact, many institutions have created such partnerships already. Xavier University in Cincinnati, for instance, once offered a special MBA program at GE Aviation. Xavier faculty took their courses and adapted the traditional curriculum to directly meet the needs of GE employees while GE employees paid a special rate. The two brands – Xavier and GE – co-branded the program together, leveraging the reputation of both.

More nationally, Starbucks and Arizona State University (ASU) have co-branded an experience together as well (Starbucks, 2015). The Starbucks College Achievement Plan through Arizona State University allows Starbucks employees to take any of ASU's 49 online degree programs while currently working at the coffee mecca. This program is offered at no cost to Starbucks employees and is part of the organization's long-term strategy to better engage and educate their workforce. ASU gets the opportunity to leverage its growing national online brand of education.

More examples exist at all levels of the college experience. The University of North Carolina Wilmington partners with community colleges to assist single parents, military, and those in full-time employment to earn a collegiate degree (Bivens, Laanan, & Brodersen, 2014). The authors share how Temple University works with community colleges in Philadelphia to offer their undergraduate and graduate courses more broadly (Bivens et al., 2014).

Mars (2010) studies co-branding opportunities between corporate business and colleges more deeply. “The co-branding trend is relatively consistent across the rankings with the exception being the most elite universities” (Mars, 2010, p. 51). He notes that the elite institutions believe that co-branding may weaken their already strong brands. Others, Mars (2010) suggests, need extra opportunities to showcase their educational brands and partnering with strong corporate organizations offers a path. In addition to business colleges, Mars (2010) notes a growing trend within graduate colleges of education.

Mars (2010) states that these co-branding opportunities extend beyond business connections with a growing opportunity to co-brand as part of a fundraising opportunity with larger donors. He suggests that lead fundraisers and institutional deans continue to make connections within their colleges for the naming of positions, centers, and facilities. While not linking with a specific business, this co-branding offers a greater brand opportunity for the institution with well-known philanthropists, alumni, or business leaders.

In the end, Mars (2010) concludes that “it remains unclear as to whether institutions approach co-branding as a rational, purposeful, and scientific process, or as a loosely coupled strategy for securing external funding” (p. 54). During the last five years, across the board in higher education, graduate programs including MBA and education have seen sharp declines in enrollment. These co-branding opportunities offer both another possible funding line for

institutions while also providing a path to enhance image and recognition. Mars (2010) suggests that continued study must take place on co-branding. He shares that as more academic entrepreneurship and fundraising continues to grow, so too will the notion of larger scale co-branding and collaboration (Mars, 2011).

Similar to these MBA cases, Ragan and McMillian (1989) argue that undergraduate colleges must adapt to the changing marketplace out of necessity and not from an explicit interest to do so. This study examined the rhetoric of the promotional materials of nearly 30 liberal arts institutions to describe how these colleges and universities are marketing the concept of liberal arts education in today's competitive educational marketplace. Analysis of descriptions from faculty, students, academic programs, and institutional persona yielded a common rhetorical profile (Ragan & McMillan, 1989). They found that the colleges shared a common voice, one of being "proud, competitive, and adaptive" (Ragan & McMillan, 1989, p. 701). And though these peer liberal arts institutions do not share a co-branding function, they did find the messaging similar. Interestingly, more than anything, Ragan and McMillian (1989) identified six categories of "rhetorical antithesis" which seemed to permeate through the catalogs of all of these institutions. The balance the colleges were trying to make seemed to be to draw in multiple sides of a topic, claiming that their institutions fit both. The six categories identified by Ragan and McMillan (1989) that were highlighted in recruitment catalogs are as follows:

- Both an intimate and worldly environment
- Both exclusive and inclusive admission
- Both accessible and scholarly faculty
- Both an academic and social climate
- Both rigorous and manageable faculty

- Both classical and vocational education

While the liberal arts institutions took up similar brand positions, they were not unified in a goal. Others have taken up such challenges for better alignment. In 2004, under a collapsing local economy, withdraw of a couple major corporations, and realization that once prominent industries like steel and the railroad were never going to return to their same greatness in Baltimore, local leaders and officials made the joint decision to “reposition the higher education community as perhaps the most successful and most influential segment of the regional economy” (Joyce, 2005, p. 72). The goal of the Baltimore Collegetown Network (BCN) was to create a powerful network within the colleges in the Baltimore area, not as “separate and unrelated institutions” (Joyce, 2005, p. 73).

The notion to position the colleges of Baltimore as a unified entity was not an easy one. However, key leaders at each institution saw the differences among the individual colleges and the leveraged comparative value of each. Institutional leaders recognized the power of the network and that their differences in mission, vision, and values, the colleges did not necessarily compete for the same pool of students (Joyce, 2005). That said, tensions still exist. One institutional leader, Deborah Leather of Towson, remarked of the unity, “we’re not ‘one big happy family’ either. At best you might call us ‘great cousins’” (Joyce, 2005, p. 78).

The underlying value that must permeate a project like this is collaboration. Joyce notes that Johns Hopkins University has a strong brand within the higher education community and a huge endowment. At the same time, Villa Julie College enrolls local students and has little endowment. That said, in the Baltimore Collegetown Network (BCN), both institutions have an equal voice at the table. Joyce asked of virtually all interviewees: why collaborate? For Johns

Hopkins, Joyce (2005) explains, if they want to keep pace with Harvard then the attractiveness of Baltimore is a major driver in their recruitment efforts.

The answer was the same whether it came from a Hopkins employee, from another higher education partner, or from one of BCN's community partners or other interested community observers. No, a regional marketing program could not be as effective if the underwriting organization was the only organization. No matter how many resources Johns Hopkins allocated for the project, all agreed that a regional marketing initiative could not be nearly as effective unless the collective community spoke with one voice. The collaborative approach is a less self-serving and more credible platform. (Joyce, 2005, p. 82)

In order for such a program to be successful, collaboration must take place outside of the colleges themselves. For instance, the mayor's office, in working with the Baltimore colleges, realized the growing need for internship opportunities for the students at the local colleges both as a way to help the students gain valuable employment skills, but also as a hook to keep graduates in Baltimore. The mayor's office set a goal to help colleges expand the internship network and that goal could only be reached with the help of the local private sector. The objective was to bring the collaboration into the private industry. The mayor's office would encourage private businesses to create additional internship opportunities in support of the Baltimore Collegetown Network. The mayor's office set the target to increase internships opportunities by 500 to 600 places (Joyce, 2005). For some, the collaboration that was developing between the public sector, private sector, and higher education represented a unique, innovative approach to raising the profile for the entire city (Joyce, 2005).

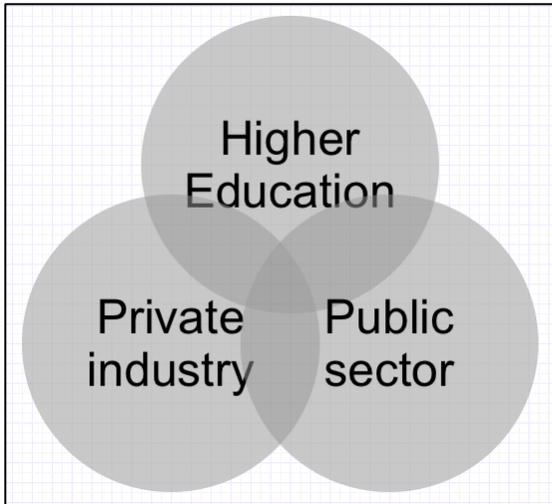


Figure 5. Collaboration diagram (Joyce, 2005).

Joyce (2005) points out that sustaining a collaborative like this, long-term, takes effort. Joyce’s research suggests, “to have the desired impact will require an ongoing investment of between seven and ten years” (p. 101). Joyce (2005) notes that many marketing and branding efforts last only a few years and cannot maintain their long-term direction or impact. Joyce explains that the Baltimore Colleegetown Network developed a plan to “engage and retain” the students at each institution. Students are engaged by becoming part of the college and Baltimore network, and in doing so, students who become connected early on in their college process have a greater likelihood of completing their college experience (Joyce, 2005). The progression comes around full circle again, as Joyce (2005) explains, to the relationship between higher education, private industry, and the public sector:

If the goal for colleges and universities is to recruit more of the best and the brightest students, and the goal of the region’s business and government leaders is to retain this highly desirable knowledge-based workforce after graduation, the three segments need to partner more effectively in a series of strategic action plans that will engage these students in the life of the community while they are pursuing their degree. (p. 109)

The ultimate success driver, as Joyce (2005) suggests, is exemplary leadership. He notes that those in leadership positions are united around a common vision for how the higher education sector can make a difference in the Baltimore community. Leadership was shown by the director that the BCN hired and with those they interacted with in government and the private sector. At the point of Joyce's research, the BCN's leadership had decided that strong and attractive marketing pieces were important. What the team delivered was exceptional, winning the CASE award for best interactive website in the country (Joyce, 2005). This unifying presence brought a level of prestige and importance to the work of the group that allowed for an additional outlet for recruitment assistance.

And, that recruitment assistance by higher education marketing departments is key. The research, investigation, and selection of an institution "by a student is a major and complex undertaking with long-lasting and major personal consequences" (Litten, 1980, p. 46). Yet, Litten (1980) notes, most soon-to-be-graduating high school students have little information and less mature decision-making experience for such an important choice.

Today's educational marketplace calls for both being true to your institutional brand and being innovative for the future. Collaboration across institutions may offer the opportunity to accomplish both. Hutton and Woodland (2012) suggest, "Organizational collaboration is embraced across multiple sectors of society as a primary strategy for cultivating innovation, conserving economic resources, building relationships, addressing complex problems, and reaching essential outcomes" (p. 366).

Collaboration may take place both within an institution and across similarly defined organizations like Jesuit universities. Connolly and James (2006) offer strategies from "Collaboration for School Improvement." The authors share that within educational spaces a

paradox exists in that educational institutions both collaborate and compete. Connolly and James' (2006) framework describes that conditions and policies exist in the educational space that are designed to increase pressures for institutions to compete in the marketplace while at the same time encourage collaboration to make the most of shared resources and opportunities. Collaboration, they suggest, offers a mutual benefit of spreading risk across educational institutions (Connolly & James, 2006, p. 76). This may be the case for Jesuit institutions as well.

Jesuit institutions may have an upper hand on the ability to collaborate. These institutions are uniquely connected already. Presidents know each other. Staff members attend specific Jesuit only conferences. Joint recruitment events have begun. Connolly and James (2006) share that,

A history of working together may well develop trust, making further collaboration easier. Preexisting social relations among individuals in a region foster and advance the development of work relationships. There is a growing recognition that trust is a key element in encouraging collaboration and that individuals are more likely to trust those with whom they have established good relationships. (p. 79)

In *DNA of Collaboration: The Kucia Balanced Framework*, Kucia (2004) offers a philosophical approach centered around collaboration. Kucia (2004) notes that communication is sharing information, cooperation is sharing an attitude, and coordination is sharing responsibilities. Collaboration, however, is sharing a common purpose. While Connolly and James shared the impact of collaboration and competition, Kucia (2004) notes tensions around mission and market, continuity and change, and brand promise and brand experience. Kucia (2004) organizes the collaborative framework around themes: culture, structures, leadership, change, and challenges. Kucia (2004) speaks of these topics as part of a philosophy of

leadership, finding balance among competing tensions. The framework suggests a different kind of leader is necessary today, one not driven by power and authority but by someone driven by “mission, purpose, principles, and values as the primary guides for decision-making and action, and balances these with policies, rule and objective measurements” (Kucia, 2004, p. 102).

Conclusion

“At a strategic level,” shares Kalsbeek and Zucker (2014), “institutional goals, and ultimately their outcomes, are deeply-seated in the underlying reality of its market position-the institution’s place in a systemic, stratified and structured marketplace of higher education institutions” (p. 2). Winston (1999) notes institutions, especially private ones, must decide where they fall in the competitive tension of “The Church and The Car Dealer” (p. 31). The range elaborates a decisional point for institutions over which they must decide their position on the continuum of mission verses market, of “doing good and doing well” (Winston, 1999, p. 31).

Summary

This chapter outlined the need for research in the marketing and branding of Jesuit higher education. It provided a context for marketing and branding, institutional branding, marketing and recruitment, and Catholic, Jesuit marketing. The chapter ahead outlines the details of the study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter articulates the details about the research conduct and corresponding methodologies. The research questions are reviewed as well as the research methodology, site selection, participant selection, data collection, and data analysis procedures. Furthermore, additional considerations taken into account prior to the start of the study are outlined.

Research Questions

1. How do Jesuit university administrators and faculty describe their institutional brand?
2. How do Jesuit leaders describe the utilization of marketing and branding to support their institutional philosophies and strategies?
3. How do Jesuit institutional leaders describe the marketing organization including history, structures, and resources including their ability to collaborate with other parts of the organization?
4. Why do similarities and differences of branding and marketing exist across the Jesuit universities?
5. How does the branding and marketing of Jesuit higher education evolve to continue to meet long-range mission and market goals?

Methodological Approach

The current study employs a qualitative research methodology. A convenience sample from four Jesuit institutions was used for this study. The overarching goal of this study was to hear directly from the participants, in their own words, about their thoughts of Jesuit branding

and marketing. Creswell (2013) shares that qualitative research allows for “the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is both inductive and deductive and establishes patterns or themes” (p. 44). And, those patterns and themes are exactly what was explored within and between the selected institutions. Creswell (2013) suggests that the researcher is really the “key instrument” (p. 45). As such, the researcher played a key role in the development of the questions as well as the analysis after the research was complete.

Wolcott (2002) utilizes an analogy of qualitative research being much like a tree. He suggests, “Major branches extend out for archival research, observation strategies, and interview strategies, and a main trunk retains the feature common to them all – participant observation” (Wolcott, 2002, p. 100). Wolcott notes that all qualitative research really centers around the participants and their thoughts and reflections as it relates to the research topic at hand. The analogy of the tree allows for visual clarity on the many, many branches a particular qualitative research study may take. The researcher had discussion with academic chair. Discussions regarded the real questions at hand, scope of the research, methods to be used, participants, and more. All of those decision points could have been different branches from the central tree’s trunk. And, frankly, since this research has been conducted, the tree can continue to expand with additional research whether it is conducted as a continuation of this research or by others who chose to add to the literature, or in this case, the tree of Jesuit marketing.

Philosophical Assumptions

As Creswell (2013) notes, each researcher brings with them ideas, knowledge, and certain philosophical assumptions. Those concepts are imparted into the researcher during the reading of other research, and researchers must be both aware of these assumptions and also

decide whether to integrate them into their qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). Since the purpose of this study is to illuminate the thoughts and perceptions of university leaders through qualitative questioning, the philosophical assumption primary to this study is social constructivism.

Creswell's (2013) view of social constructivism allows "individuals [to] seek an understanding of the world in which they live and work" (p. 24). Through their histories, experiences, and social interactions, individuals build their understanding of a certain phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). In the case of marketing and branding, most university leaders construct their institutional brand through the experiences they have with their campus, their colleagues, students, and more. Open-ended questions were used to allow participants the ability to construct meaningful responses. Creswell (2013) notes that the open-endedness offers a lens into the historical, cultural, personal, and social aspects that define the interviewees experience.

As it relates more specifically, social constructivism was an important assumption to understand for marketing and branding. Hayes (2003) notes that it is important to understand the phenomena of what marketing is and is not. Hayes observes that on many campuses, when someone talks about marketing, they immediately think of a brochure or college viewbook. As noted earlier, Hayes knew that the full process of marketing must be understood. As described, marketing is an exchange – one in which someone "provides something of value [in exchange] for something of value" (Hayes, 2003, p. 2). On a college campus, education is not always thought of as part of a marketing exchange.

Likewise, a similar case for branding can be made. Many perceive that they understand the notion of branding but can only articulate the idea of a brand through the use of stories, narratives, and personal interactions. For this study, individuals may construct a narrow view of

marketing and branding, and so, understanding their assumptions was important especially in the way in which they socially construct their own institution's position on marketing and branding. Barkley, Major and Cross (2014) share that social constructivists create knowledge through groups. Together, those groups develop a culture of common beliefs (Barkley et al., 2014). On college campuses, one of those developments tends to be a common brand identity. Institutions build their brands through shared histories, values, structures, and beliefs.

Research Approach

A descriptive, qualitative study approach was employed among four Jesuit institutions to investigate deeper into their histories, structures, brands, and collaborative nature to understand the role of marketing at their institution. This study describes the similarities and differences that exist among the institutions that appear, from the outside, to be fairly similar in nature. A qualitative study allowed for a deeper dive into thought provoking questions for the interviewees. Merriam (2009) suggests that the most typical qualitative study is a basic, interpretive study. She notes that constructivism lies beneath a basic qualitative study as interviewees construct the reality of their responses (Merriam, 2009).

While many factors were considered, a basic, descriptive, qualitative study approach was chosen for this study. This allows for a focused and comprehensive assessment of the four selected institutions. The selected institutions are within the same Carnegie classification yet hailing from different parts of the U.S. This approach allows for scrutiny of each institution yet allows for a view across multiple institutions.

Merriam (2009) notes that a basic description qualitative study will look to understand how participants make sense of their experience. She notes that interviews and document analysis are two of the three ways that most research occurs in a descriptive study. Creswell and

Miller (2000) share that qualitative research utilizes the lens of both the people who conduct and participate in the research as opposed to the scores or instruments that underlie quantitative research.

Cox (2012) provides a warning to graduate students participating in qualitative research. She notes that following along a path of previous dissertations and are predisposed by the particular institution or program in which they are enrolled and maybe serve as “an obstacle to innovation” (p. 132). She concludes that researches must understand to disrupt certain pressures in order to conduct qualitative research (Cox, 2012).

Context. Little empirical research has been done on the branding of Jesuit higher education with an understanding of histories, structures, cultures, collaborative opportunities, and future endeavors and even less on understanding those deeply and across U.S. based Jesuit colleges and universities. A thorough document analysis of institutional mission statements and webpages will help triangulate the research and verify the results. The research will look at commonalities or differences across the Jesuit higher education institutions.

Researcher positionality. Positionality is about being transparent. Transparency is about the researcher’s situation, relationship, location, and more, in order to be forthright about their view before the research is conducted. Rose (1997) shares that being “situated does not exist in isolation but only through mutually constitutive social relations, and it is the implications of this relational understanding of position that make the vision of transparency knowable” (p. 314). Rose (1997) notes that positionality began with feminist researchers making note that they cannot always “fully understand, control or redistribute it (power)” but that sharing a researcher’s own background and even imperfections will help those reading the research understand that researcher’s perspective and potential bias (p. 319). Particularly important is the

research of “insiderness” conducted by Mercer (2007). She concludes that defining a subject as an insider or outsider cannot simply be done by a single characteristic. “Insiderness depends, rather, upon the intersection of many different characteristics, some inherent and some not” (Rose, 1997, p. 24). She even notes that those intersections may float back and forth from being an insider or not during the same research project or discussion (Rose, 1997).

To be forthcoming in the research around the marketing of Jesuit higher education is to say that the researcher had working for a Jesuit university, Xavier University, for the last 20 years and prior to that was a student at the same institution for the previous four. The fondness with the Jesuit educational tradition was strong with the researcher. The researcher was also very connected with many colleagues at their institution and knew them on a personal level. Even outside of Xavier, the researcher tried to stay connected to those in the work of marketing and recruitment within the Jesuit order as well. With these colleagues, in previous years, the researcher had shared ideas, strategies, and opinions and received their feedback in return. The researcher had discussion on Jesuit marketing efforts. The colleagues were supportive of the desire to more empirically research this topic and encouraged the researcher to see what they can find, no matter what the outcome.

Mercer (2007) notes this connectivity and shares insights and reminders. Mercer (2007) shares,

I have also explored the apparent advantages and disadvantages of insider research, claiming that insiders, on the one hand, often enjoy freer access, stronger rapport, and a deeper, more readily-available frame of shared reference with which to interpret the data they collect, but, on the other, have to contend with their own pre-conceptions and those their informants have formed about them as a result of their shared history. (p. 25)

So, the researcher must be wary of not only their “insiderness” within the four institutions, but also the background that the participants have built about the research, including their own “insiderness” with the work of the study.

Site Selection

For this study, four Jesuit, Catholic institutions have been selected. The universities have similarities and differences. While 27 Jesuit universities exist in the United States, the narrowing of the focus of the study has brought us to these four institutions. The four institutions are Creighton University, Gonzaga University, St. Joseph’s University, and Xavier University.

Creighton University. Founded in 1878 with a \$100,000 memorial from the Creighton family of Omaha, Nebraska, Bishop James O’Connor called on the Society of Jesus to start a college in honor of the family. Today, Creighton University, with nearly 9,000 undergraduate and graduate students, boasts the #1 ranking for Midwest Regional Universities according to the *2019 U.S. News & World Report*. With 56 undergraduate programs and numerous graduate schools including Law, Dental, Medicine, and Pharmacy, Creighton vaunts a 99% success rate for its graduates upon successfully completion of an undergraduate degree. As is the Jesuit tradition, 9 out of 10 Creighton graduates share that what they learn at the university is their responsibility to use to help others in need. For six years, Creighton has been a part of the prestigious Big East Conference for athletics, providing the medium sized university in the Midwest national access to media outlets throughout the U.S. Nebraska native, Fr. Daniel Hendrickson, S.J. has served as the University’s President since 2015. Fr. Hendrickson is committed to a global perspective for Creighton students and serves as a Trustee of Jesuit Worldwide Learning.

Gonzaga University. Founded in 1887, Gonzaga University rests in a residential setting along the Spokane River in Spokane, Washington. With an undergraduate student enrollment of 5,200 and a total of enrollment of 7,500 students, Gonzaga offers 75 majors, 23 master's degree programs, and four doctoral degrees within the six colleges. Gonzaga, while Catholic, boasts that 27 different faiths are represented in their student body. All of their courses are taught by professors and of those professors, 83% have a terminal degree in their field of teaching. The Gonzaga Bulldogs, also referred to as the Zags, are athletically rooted in the West Coast Conference and participate in 18 NCAA Division I sports. Their men's basketball team made the Final Four in 2017 and has earned made 19 straight NCAA Tournament bids. Dr. Thayne McCulloh, the University's first non-Jesuit president, began his tenure as President in 2010. He is a proud undergraduate alum of Gonzaga with a Ph.D. in Experimental Social Psychology from Oxford University in England. He serves as the vice chair of the AJCU and has earned several honors from his work and background in student affairs.

St. Joseph's University. Founded in 1851, St. Joseph's University is situated in an urban area in one of the biggest cities in the U.S., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Nearly 4,700 undergraduate roam their campus with a total enrollment just above 8,000. Commonly referred to as St. Joe's, the university offers 55 undergraduate programs, 30-degree completion and certificate options, and 52 graduate programs in their two colleges – Arts & Sciences and Business. Of their 300 full-time faculty members, every one of them holds a terminal degree. The St. Joseph's Hawks 20 sports teams compete in the NCAA Division I Athletic 10 Conference. The Hawk, in 2014, was named by NCAA.com as one of the "Best College Traditions." The Hawk costume is donned by a current St. Joe's student who earns a full scholarship for the year but must continue flapping at all times on the job. Their motto, "The

Hawk Will Never Die!” cements its place on the national scene as one of this country’s most unique mascots flapping around 3,500 times during just one basketball game. Their President is Dr. Mark Reed. His work began in Student Affairs and moved into the role as Vice President for Administration and Chief of Staff at his alma mater, Fairfield University, another Jesuit institution. He holds a Doctorate from Penn in higher education management and as the first lay President of St. Joseph’s, he took office in 2015.

Xavier University. Founded in 1831, Xavier University is the sixth oldest Catholic university in the country, and fourth oldest Jesuit university. Located about 10 minutes outside of downtown Cincinnati, Xavier sits in the heart of the Midwest. Xavier has nearly 4,700 undergraduates and a total of 6,800 students. Those students are in 95 undergraduate majors and 40 graduate programs in three colleges. Sixty percent of Xavier’s newest student class are from outside the state of Ohio—20% are first-generation college students, 24% are students of color, and the students share more than 20 faith traditions. Ninety-eight percent of recent graduates are employed, attending graduate school, or working in service positions within six months of graduation. The Xavier Musketeers compete in 17 sports in the elite, Division I Big East conference. Their men’s basketball team has made the NCAA Tournament 12 of the past 13 seasons, reaching the Sweet Sixteen six times in the last 11 tournaments. They have a national television arrangement with Fox Sports allowing every Musketeer game to be seen throughout the nation. The President of Xavier, Michael Graham, S.J., has been serving in that role since 2001. Other than a short Interim President, Xavier University has only had Jesuits serving as President of the institution. Graham holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Michigan and began his time at Xavier in 1984 as a history professor, then Vice President for University Relations, and finally, as Executive Assistant to the President. He has served as the

Chair of the AJCU and serves on multiple Boards including the Center for the Holocaust and Humanity Education, St. Xavier High School, and the Cincinnati Preschool Promise.

Narrowing of Sites

While any of the 27 Jesuit institutions could have been selected for the current study, these four were narrowed into the qualitative study. Each of the four universities fall within the “Master’s University” Carnegie classification. Each institution is a Jesuit, Catholic university, still run today by the Jesuit order. They generally have similar sized student bodies and a fairly similar number of academic programs including Master’s degrees. From the outside, it would appear that each university has a relatively similar mission.

Yet, each university offers differences. Two are presided over by first-time non-Jesuit Presidents. Two are administered by a long-standing Jesuit. One is located in the Pacific Northwest, one in the Midwest, another in the central plains, and the final in the East. One is located a large metropolitan city, another in a small metropolitan city, the third between the city and suburbs, and one in a residential area of their community. All four play NCAA Division I sports but their exposure from their conference and men’s basketball programs differs based on success on and off the basketball court.

Table 4

Site Selection Informational Chart

	Creighton University	Gonzaga University	St. Joseph's University	Xavier University
Year Founded	1878	1887	1851	1831
U.S. News Best Regional universities	#1 in Midwest	#4 in West	#11 in East	#5 in Midwest
Undergraduate enrollment	4,255	5,160	5,377	4,563
Fall 2016 acceptance rate	72%	67%	78%	69%
Student-faculty ratio	11:1	12:1	12:1	12:1
Percent of female students	56%	52.4%	53.7%	55.2%
Niche's 2018 Best Catholic College in American	#15	#19	#38	#37
Niche grade	A-	A-	B+	A-
Median Earnings 6 Years After Graduation	\$56,100	\$54,100	\$57,600	\$47,500
Kiplingers Private University Best Colleges Values	#43	#48	Not in top 100	#76
Wall Street Journal and Time World University Ranking	#134	#233	#322	#220

Participant Selection

A variety of interviews were conducted at each of the four Jesuit institutions.

Participants were specifically selected. Patton (1990) notes that purposeful sampling allows for the engagement with specific people to make the best of the qualitative research. The research included interviews with specific administrators, faculty, and staff from the four participating sites. As Patton (1990) notes, there is no specific sample size across research studies as it

depends on the purpose, what data you are seeking, credibility of the interviewees, and more.

“One of the most important tasks in the study design phase is to identify appropriate participants” (2012, p. 185). Therefore, five members of each participating site were approached to participate in this study.

The participants provided the most background, context, cultural, and experience information on the marketing and branding of their institutions. With my connections and history with the Jesuit marketing and branding colleagues, the researcher was able to make contact with each institution to arrange for these interviews. The researcher spoke with each senior leader about their participation, need for confidentiality, and willingness to move forward. Other senior leaders may have been included or substituted if they were to prove more useful to the information needed for the study. For some of the participants, a slightly varied interview protocol was appropriate to ask the questions most applicable to their background and relationship to the history, culture, and experience connected to their institutional marketing and brand work.

Senior campus leaders. At each of the four institutions five senior leaders were approached about the study. These leaders represent different parts of their organization and likely interact and collaborate with each other on institutional strategy. These positions included:

- University Provost, Chief Academic Officer, or College Dean
- Chief Marketing Officer
- Vice President for Enrollment Management or Director of Admission
- Vice President for Mission & Identity
- Athletic Director or Director of Athletic Marketing

Data Collection Procedures

As Creswell (2013) notes, interviewing is one of two techniques that are utilized in a wide variety of qualitative research studies. Quality interviews are necessary to conduct solid research. Merriam (2009) shares that interviewing is the most commonly used form of data collection in qualitative research. “Qualitative researchers should strive neither to overestimate nor to underestimate their effects but to take seriously their responsibility” (Patton, 1999, p. 1203). To the importance of interviews, Creswell (2013) outlines steps to consider in conducting interviews:

- Formulate the research questions.
- Select those to be interviewed utilizing the purposeful sampling methods.
- Decide on what type of interview is best.
- Using audio recording and note taking, ensure proper recording procedures.
- Create an interview protocol including an introduction and closing.
- Conduct a pilot test to hone the protocol.
- Make a decision on the place and space for the interviews.
- Follow protocols to ensure a consent form is signed for the research.
- Be a good interviewer by sticking to the script, utilizing time wisely, being considerate and responsible and in particular, being a good listener.

Interviews. Interviews were scheduled and conducted over the phone. Merriam (2009) notes that in qualitative research, some or up to all of the data accumulated as part of the study are from interviews. She states, “Interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them” (Merriam, 2009, p. 88). While in-person interviews offer the opportunity to more easily understand social cues, for this research

project, interviews were conducted by phone. With five interviews at each of the four institutions, a total of 20 interviews were conducted. Interviews were recorded, with permission, to most accurately transcribe the interviews after they were conducted.

Following approval from the University of Alabama's Institutional Review Board (IRB), leaders from Creighton University, Gonzaga University and St. Joseph's University were contacted to begin recruitment. The researchers home campus was Xavier University and due to IRB protocols, an agreement was needed between the University of Alabama and Xavier University prior to the start of interviews.

"It is possible to achieve triangulation within a qualitative inquiry strategy by combining different kinds of qualitative methods, mixing purposeful samples, and including multiple perspectives" (Patton, 1999, p. 1193). For this study, triangulation was utilized. When analyzing the data, consistencies within each institution will be identified. In addition, content review of websites and university mission statements of the Jesuit universities was conducted for each institution. This content review allowed for better understanding of what institutions may say in public and what they may share during interviews. All of this led to greater triangulation. As Patton (1999) notes, "triangulation involves triangulating multiple data sources... comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information" (p. 1195). This should all led to the best collection of data possible for this study.

Interview questions. As Merriam (2009) notes, interviewing takes practice. "Pilot interviews are crucial for trying out your questions" (Merriam, 2009, p. 95). Patton (2002) outlines six types of questions used when designed interview questions for this study, including:

- Experience and behavior questions
- Opinion and values questions

- Feeling questions
- Knowledge questions
- Sensory questions
- Background / informational questions

Merriam (2009) notes that interviews can be semi-structured. Semi-structured interviews allow for the following of specific questions, and then also allow an interviewer to probe further with additional non-scheduled questions. She notes, “Less structured formats assume that individual respondents define the world in unique ways” (Merriam, 2009, p. 90). While the interviews had a structured outline and set of questions, the semi-structured format allowed for some variations depending on the interviewee’s background, knowledge, and path for how they interpret the question and their view of the environment. Interviewees were not incentivized to participate in the research.

Specific interview questions were mapped to the five overall major research questions of this study.

Document Analysis

As part of this study, institutional documents will be reviewed. Merriam (2009) notes that “documents and artifacts have been underused in qualitative research” (p. 153). Merriam shares that some consider document analysis too much historical research. But, for the purposes of my study, this will offer an account that will assist in building the fullest narrative. Merriam (2009) goes as far as noting that in some research, document analysis could be the best source of data, especially to validate a hypothesis, provide historical perspective, and understand changes over the long-term. In particular, mission statement and institutional webpages served as current documents for review.

Data Analysis Procedures

For qualitative data analysis, both the interview notes and institutional documents were included in the study database. This “is the data of the study organized so the researcher can locate specific data during intense analysis” (Merriam, 2009, p. 203). Since this study reviewed four separate institutions, Merriam suggests both an in-case analysis and a cross-case analysis (Merriam, 2009). This allows for the opportunity to review each of the four institutions individually while also allowing for review across the multiple institutions.

Creswell (2013) shares that data analysis “involves organizing the data, conducting a preliminary read-through of the database, coding and organizing themes, representing the data, and forming an interpretation of them” (p. 179). Following Creswell’s advice, the data was analyzed both by institution and then by the position of the person interviewed. Interviews were transcribed, themes were identified in the data, and then themes were organized for analysis. Finally, the transcribed data alongside the content received from each institution was analyzed to answer the research questions.

Saldana (2013) shares that initial coding “is an opportunity for you as a researcher to reflect deeply on the contents and nuances of your data and to begin taking ownership of them” (p. 100). This “first cycle” of coding allows a researcher to look at the ways the data intersects, overlaps, and differentiates itself from other data. For this study, narrative coding was employed. Each interviewee told a story as questions were answered via the interview protocol. The interviewees shared what they know about the history of the institution’s marketing and branding efforts, the culture around brand decision making, opportunities for collaboration within their organization and with other Jesuit universities, and opportunities for marketing and branding in the future. This “story” shared by the interviewees allowed for easy application of

narrative coding. This approach, as Saldana (2013) explains, allows the data to tell a story that may allow for a fuller description of the data at hand.

Interviews were transcribed. Merriam (2009) suggests that transcriptions be single spaced and numbered by line for easy reference. Merriam also notes to leave spacing for coding, attributes, and notes as well. The researcher mapped each response with the particular overarching research questions. The codes for that mapping were:

Table 5

Codes for Mapping

Codes	Research Questions
Brand	How do Jesuit university administrators and faculty describe their institutional brand?
Strategies	How do Jesuit leaders describe the utilization of marketing and branding to support their institutional philosophies and strategies?
Internal	How do Jesuit institutional leaders describe the marketing organization including history, structures, and resources, such as their ability to collaborate with other parts of the organization?
External	Why do similarities and differences of branding and marketing exist across the Jesuit universities?
Future	How does the branding and marketing of Jesuit higher education evolve to continue to meet long-range mission and market goals?

As Saldana (2013) notes, coding necessitates a deep reflection of qualitative data. He suggests, appropriate reading, re-reading, and re-reading of the data (Saldana, 2013). In Jesuit terms, this idea of deep reflection is called discernment. While not exactly the same, discernment calls a person to ask: what should I do? The Jesuit term leads to a deeper understanding for making sound and prudent choices. So, in some regards, the coding process that Saldana suggests aligns well to Jesuit thinking.

The codes themselves relate back to Tierney’s organizational framework. As noted earlier, institutions are influenced by many forces. Some are within an organization. Some are

external. Some related to the mission, which in the case of this study has been adapted from “institutional mission” to “institutional brand.” Finally, some of those forces are driven by institutional strategies. So, the codes for mapping align well with Tierney’s organizational culture framework. “Institutions certainly are influenced by powerful, external factors such as demographic, economic, and political conditions, yet they are also shaped by strong forces that emanate from within” (Tierney, 2008, p. 24).

In addition to the coding above, each set of data was coded based on the interviewees position within the institution. This allowed the data to be sorted and aligned based on similar positions within the organizational hierarchy of each institution, allowing for comparisons between responses from leaders like Provosts, Athletic Directors, VP’s of Mission & Identity, and with their institutional counterparts. This view of the data allowed for exploration of similarities and differences based on organizational structures and positions. Saldana (2013) notes that qualitative researchers understand that coding schemes vary just as the data itself varies from study to study. He even notes that researchers must be flexible and willing to modify their approach if needed answers are not evident (Saldana, 2013).

Trustworthiness Criteria

Lincoln and Guba (1985) note four pillars for confirming trustworthiness of the data in qualitative research—credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. Credibility may be displayed through the triangulation of the research data. For this project, utilizing multiple sites, multiple participants at each site, and a content review allowed for the triangulation of the data.

Dependability as defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985), or “reliability” as Merriam (2009) calls it, “refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated” (p. 220). Merriam

(2009) notes that qualitative research requires “human behavior,” and thus is not simply a science experiment that can be replicated time and time again. As all the authors note, this piece is more dependent on the notion that those reviewing the data from the outside would understand and believe this data to be as Merriam (2009) shares, “consistent and dependable” (p. 221). The dependability came, again, from the variety of research participants and depth of the questions. That variety allowed for better reliability as themes emerged in the data.

Transferability can be realized through thick descriptions of the research. The researcher was mindful to go deep into the questioning to provide sufficient depth to the data in the responses. Utilizing four university settings allowed for some understanding of the transferability of the data from one case to the next.

Confirmability seeks to remove explicit and implicit bias by the researcher. As Merriam (2009) notes, “as in all research, we have to trust that the study was carried out with integrity and that it involves the ethical stance of the researcher” (p. 229). The researcher noted both their “insiderness” and “outsiderness” in this particular study. The researcher was an insider in that they worked within higher education, worked at one of the participant sites, and worked in the field of marketing. The researcher was an outsider in that they were not aware of the types of responses that the participants would give, even within their own institution. The researcher needs to pay particular attention to the competitive nature of university business and must remain neutral to the responses. Confirmability can come from understanding the role as a researcher for this particular study and removing inherent beliefs to let the data unfold. Saldana (2013) calls for the researcher to be “rigorously ethical” (p. 37). His philosophy suggests that a researcher must not leave out any data and must maintain “a sense of scholarly integrity and working hard toward the final outcome” (Saldana, 2013, p. 37).

Delimitations

This study only focused on four of the 27 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation of the study was the focus on four of the 27 Jesuit universities in the U.S. which are relatively similar to each other, sharing the same Carnegie classification. Within the Jesuit network, institutions can be very different especially in terms of size, graduation rates, endowment, structures, histories, and more. While the research could be replicated at any of the institutions, a known limitation could be the differences within the Jesuit universities.

Another possible limitation was the focus on only five interviewees at each institution. While the interviewees represent a wide spectrum of institutional leadership, others, including additional faculty, staff, students, alumni, community members, and others were not part of the research. Also, depending on the tenure of some of the interviewees, they may not have fully understood the historical or, in some cases, the cultural underpinnings of the institution.

Ethical Considerations

“As researchers anticipate data collection, they need to respect the participants and the sites for research” (Creswell, 2013, p. 90). Because of the researcher’s insider and outsider positioning, the researcher has a high degree of respect for both the institutions and the positions of those who participated in the research study. Moreover, the researcher paid special attention to the interview protocols to maintain the ethical considerations needed to complete the study. All interviews were anonymous. While the context and content of replies would likely not seem to jeopardize the work at a particular institution or within or outside of the Jesuit community, this ensured that each interviewee was free to share as they wish. Materials, such as the content of

websites and university mission statements are already public, and the use of that content, posed no ethical considerations for use specifically within the context of this study.

Creswell (2013) notes, “Other ethical procedures during data collection involve gaining the agreement of individuals in authority (e.g., gatekeepers) to provide access to study participants at research sites” (p. 91). For each of the four sites, the CMO was approached first to participate as they were best connected to the researcher to begin the processes of requesting access and permission. The researcher formally followed-up with each interviewee about the research study and gained their permission for an interview.

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the proposed research including questions, methods, collection, analysis, and more. This chapter readied the study for the research to take place. This research proposal was approved by the University of Alabama’s Institutional Review Board. Chapter Four shares the data and analysis from the research.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this qualitative, descriptive study is to illuminate the role, structures, strategies, influences, and value of marketing and branding at four Master's comprehensive U.S. based Jesuit institutions. It is important to understand what makes these institutions unique, what shapes their branding and marketing efforts, and what similarities and differences exist across the institutions. The four institutions include Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska; Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington; St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio.

This study examined the marketing and branding of Jesuit institutions. By interviewing multiple constituents at four Jesuit institutions and by reviewing the content of their institutional brochures, web sites, strategic plans and vision statements, common marketing structures, values, and branding exists within and across these Jesuit institutions were explored. The research looked at this Jesuit brand through the lens of collaboration and competition in the recruitment of new students and search for strategies that may shape the marketing and branding practices of these institutions in the future.

Multiple questions guided this study but the most specific to be addressed included:

1. How do Jesuit university administrators and faculty describe their institutional brand?
2. How do Jesuit leaders describe the utilization of marketing and branding to support their institutional philosophies and strategies?
3. How do Jesuit institutional leaders describe the marketing organization including history, structures, and resources including their ability to collaborate with other parts of the organization?
4. Why do similarities and differences of branding and marketing exist across the Jesuit universities?
5. How does the branding and marketing of Jesuit higher education evolve to continue to meet long-range mission and market goals?

Participant Narratives

At each of the four institutions, five senior leaders were interviewed via telephone. Each of those phone conversations were recorded and then transcribed for accuracy and quotations. After discussion with the University of Alabama IRB, it was determined to provide total anonymity to each of the interviewees. While sharing their quotes, each will be identified by their role, but not their institution. The researcher also reviewed the data to determine if themes were shared across interviewees within their institution.

These leaders included:

- University Provost, Associate Provost, or College Dean
- Chief Marketing Officer
- Vice President for Enrollment Management or Director of Admission
- Vice President for Mission & Identity
- Athletic Director or Director of Athletic Marketing

These positions represented different parts of each institution and provided a wide array of vantage points in which to understand the university's brand and marketing efforts, along with their perceptions of the brand that is Jesuit higher education. With five participants at four different institutions, that accounted for 20 individual interviews. Another participant was added due to a transition in the role which allowed for an additional voice to provide an additional perspective. Of the participants, some have worked for decades at their Jesuit institution while others had decades of experience at a variety of other Jesuit colleges and universities. Some have worked at non-Jesuit higher education institutions. A third group made the transition from corporate to higher education more recently. Each participant interview followed a guided set of questions while still allowing for specific questions depending on their position.

Relating to the theoretical framework for this study, Tierney's (2008) organizational culture framework, Tierney shares, "institutions with very similar missions and curricula can perform quite differently because of the way their identities are communicated to internal and external constituents and because of varying perceptions these groups may hold" (p. 3). The interviewees are asked about their perceptions which include thoughts about their internal work as well as their external university brand. We will discover if these university administrators actually speak similarly or differently about their university identities and what role strategy, structures, and collaboration play in their work.

As part of the interviewee responses, their testimonials have been extracted and aligned with their narratives based on theme, role, and institution. From the collective data, themes emerged from the narratives. Much of Chapter 4 outlines the themes and shares specific participant data on their perceptions of the marketing and branding of Jesuit colleges and universities.

To be clear about pulling themes from the data, each interview was transcribed immediately after the interview was concluded. The researcher created a separate document for each of the transcribed interviews as a way to set aside each interviewee's responses. After all 21 interviews were complete, the researcher began looking for words and themes that stretched across all of the interviews. Each of themes was tagged with a code as to the type of theme related to the particular response. Saldana (2013) notes that codifying allows a researcher the opportunity to group data into categories or themes (p. 9). Saldana continues by noting that coding the data allows for the organization of similarly grouped data into categories or themes (p. 9). Specifically, Saldana notes a practice of "lumping" data (p. 22). Lumping allows a researcher to take a broad piece of data – in this case interview responses – and lump it into a larger theme that is emerging from across the data. These lumps allow for broader themes to emerge from across the interviewees.

Based on the responses and as a result of analysis, four major themes emerged from the interviews:

- Themes of institutional branding
- The work of marketing and branding
- Current and future states of Jesuit marketing and branding
- Competition and collaboration

Themes of Jesuit Branding

Each participant was asked to describe the essence of their own university. The question asked participants to consider that they were talking to a high school student and their parents about their institution. What types of themes would they want to make certain to share with that prospective student? While themes emerged, responses varied.

As an example, one chief enrollment officer shared that they have four very specific areas that they focus on when describing their institution to a high school student. Those four areas include: academic excellence, being a contemplative in action, leadership development, and being people for and with others. They shared,

I talk about how our goal is not only to help them go deep in their areas of passion, but also to nurture that intellectual curiosity and the lifelong learner. That's so important in Jesuit education. I talk about how in Jesuit education you really want to make sure people are good communicators, which means thinking, writing, and listening well. I talk about how in Jesuit Education continuing to develop our critical thinking skills that they've already begun and also the discipline of understanding ethics as applied in their fields... In Jesuit education, all of those pieces, their own passions, and the disciplines of intellectual curiosity, lifelong learners, great communicators are critical, and ethics are all part of that.

Prolific Jesuit author James Martin (2016), shared that he considers three themes when discussing Jesuit higher education. They include:

- **Cura Personalis:** A Jesuit term used to describe care for the whole person. He noted, "Every college worth its salt cares for the intellect, and perhaps the body, but Jesuit institutions are committed to the care of the whole person – which includes the soul."
- **Magis:** A word embedded in the Jesuit motto, it roughly translates to mean more or better. Martin noted that St. Ignatius of Loyola once asked how much more would someone do in order to follow Jesus.

- Men and women for others: Stemming from a speech from Pedro Arrupe, S.J., the idea is “that a good life is an other-directed life.” Students are called to make a difference in the world.

The same type of question was posed to our interviewees. When asked to describe what makes Jesuit colleges and universities unique, the following themes emerged from the data:

- Jesuit philosophy of education
- Leading with Jesuit
- Other ways to describe Jesuit education
- Wait to get a sense of interest in Jesuit education
- Catholic abuse crisis
- Distinct community atmosphere
- Care for the individual student
- Being for and with others

Jesuit philosophy of education. More than anything, it was clear that participants, in some way, incorporate the notion of their institution as Jesuit into their main themes. Some participants articulated the Jesuit nature through the educational philosophy while others expressed the Jesuit vision through a faith or religious lens. Still others expressed the nature of caring for the whole student. Because this topic was so prevalent, the data was divided into sub-themes to better understand the interrelated nature of the responses.

Leading with Jesuit education. One enrollment officer shared, “So what I would tell you is that we always lead with the fact that we’re a Catholic Jesuit institution.” The participant continued,

Here we have an environment that is grounded in our values of being a Jesuit institution and men and women for others where service is a part of what we do and why we do it. So, with an array of interprofessional type of education that you can't get anywhere else, a walkable campus with the values that we have, I challenge somebody to find institutions our size, with the complexity of academic programs rooted in a commitment to our values of Catholic and Jesuit.

It was interesting to see how identical another enrollment officer described their institution to a prospective student. "I always start that we are a private Catholic Jesuit University and I talk about what Jesuit means." Like the previous interviewee, they shared that Jesuit education is more than just a word:

I would tell them that a Jesuit education prepares you intellectually, morally and spiritually, that Jesuit education, it's about educating the whole person and that a Jesuit education is not just for you, it's for those you impact. It's for the world around you. And that Jesuit education is always asking questions and teaching you how to think... A Jesuit education always has you looking outside yourself and the impact that you can make on the community in the world around you.

A Chief Mission Officer at another institution described the Jesuit nature as a type of spirituality. The participant noted that the spirituality could be an organized religion or no religion at all but an understanding that "there's something bigger than themselves. [At my institution], students do need to think about who they are, who they are in the world, who they're going to become."

An Athletic Director continued,

The first that comes to mind is some sort of theme around the full development of the person as opposed to just academic development. I think that's central to the Jesuit tradition around education. The Jesuit Catholic tradition and, or, Jesuit Catholic affiliation offers a very real, faith-based orientation too.

Another Athletic Director emphasized the idea of Jesuit graduates making an impact on the world around them. The specific word "impact" was shared by more than one participant as it related to graduates and the call for what they will do once they graduate. This Athletic Director shared,

We are a Catholic Jesuit University and as such, we are different than other, you know, non-religious universities. We're definitely different in that regard. It's just that's who we are, where we were founded... We care for the people. We're not just here to provide an education for their sons and daughters, we're here to provide an education and help mold them into the people that they are going to be the rest of their lives. Not just having a degree in their hand, but have a, a sense of being able to have an impact as they move on in their lives. They can have an impact. And, it as a Catholic Jesuit University, we can do that in ways that maybe others don't understand because we're going to expose their sons and daughters to that throughout their careers.

One mission officer found it particularly hard to fully describe a Jesuit education in a short answer to a student. They suggested that it takes time and depth. They also said that perhaps a Jesuit education is needed now, more than ever in today's society, and described that notion particularly well when they shared,

And I think this is probably common to many of our Jesuit institutions: people will kind of articulate this kind of secret sauce. It's kind of an intangible quality as life,

community life here. It kind of draws people in and I think probably communicates a strength at a number of our campuses. And what I would say I would like to see us become a little more expert in articulating just how a Jesuit liberal arts education is a really powerful force given the uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity in our world and in the job market right now. There are a number of different dynamics that are facing us as a human family. I think that our Jesuit tradition explicitly nurtures adaptive and creative qualities that our emerging graduates will need. So, in the world right now, I feel like that's something we can leverage more fully than we currently do.

Other ways to talk about Jesuit education. Interestingly, a fourth of the respondents did not explicitly utilize either the term “Jesuit” or “Catholic” when articulating the main themes that they would share to a perspective student. That said, all but one of the participants utilized language that articulated a Jesuit-like message. For instance, one academic leader shared about the dedication to the liberal arts. The participant noted,

Our focus and unwavering commitment to the value of the liberal arts, even in the context of higher education being what it is today. And I am referring to some significant sort of change or changes and those involving questioning of the value of the liberal arts degree or even a college degree overall. I would say that we have been pretty unshaken by those public sentiments and have only grown stronger in emphasizing the value of the liberal arts foundation for all of our students.

Another academic leader described not the liberal arts but the Catholic tradition. The interviewee shared,

Most certainly the Catholic intellectual tradition runs through all of them. I've worked for three Catholic institutions, but I do think the Catholic intellectual tradition – the

search for truth, and the congruence of faith and reason - are threaded through all of them. But I do think that Jesuit pedagogical tradition is different. I do believe it's different. And I think the Jesuits put, at least my experience here, is that they put more emphasis on making sure that's discussed constantly.

One enrollment leader suggested that they discuss Jesuit education as a modern-day culture changer. They suggest that the Jesuits, in their founding days, were considered a rebellious group and that the modern-day Jesuits may not be as bold but still have a huge effect on today's culture. In articles published at around the same time that Jesuit Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio became Pope Francis, readers were reminded of the Jesuit rebellious nature. "In the post-Vatican II era since the mid 1960s, Jesuits have developed more of a reputation as rebels, even as direct critics of the papacy and of official Catholic teaching" (Hibbs, 2013). This enrollment leader suggested that the Jesuits could be modern culture changers through a very Jesuit trait, reflection. They continued,

I've read about how technology is actually changing not only our behavior but our brain structure. We really need to practice the discipline of being reflective. It's not coming naturally when we can look on their phones 7,000 times a day and not that I do it as much as everyone else. It's just that you need to build in time for reflection. I think Jesuit education does that really well.

Another way in which one interviewee suggested that they discuss Jesuit education is through the commitment to students by stating,

We make a commitment to say that we are with you. We're willing to help. We're willing to reach out and make a commitment of our time and our energy and our resources to be with you. And I think that's real. It's distinguished.

For this participant, it was clear that Jesuit education is a differentiator and why faculty and staff even work at the institution. They continued, “I think the Jesuit schools do a better job of walking the talk with their mission than any schools I have experienced. And that’s one of the reasons why I am here, and I have stayed here.”

A theme as shared by one of the mission officers has to do with the idea of describing a Jesuit education in different terms. They noted that while many students are looking at institutions where they can get the biggest bang for the buck and find quick employment following graduation, they shared a new arising theme. “But there’s also now I think a counter theme that’s starting to happen more and more, and it has to do with helping young people find their deepest sense of themselves as valuable human beings.” So, they noted, it can be important for Jesuit institutions to share about academic priorities, but it is also just as important to share with students and their parents that our institutions will help them in finding their true calling in life.

“I would describe Jesuit education as freedom,” one mission officer noted. Students not only have the opportunity to explore majors, but with the core curriculum, they have the freedom to explore a wide variety of courses. They also have the opportunity, especially with the size of each institution, to become an active member of a variety of clubs and organizations, many of which are focused on doing something for others.

Finally, one academic leader noted the unwavering commitment to the liberal arts. And, they shared it is even more important today than ever, stating:

For those involving questioning of the value of the liberal arts degree, or even a college degree overall, I would say that we have been privy to those public sentiments and have

only grown stronger in emphasizing the value of the liberal arts foundation for all of our students.

So, while some refer to Jesuit education in many ways, this academic leader suggests circling back to the fundamental educational philosophy of the Jesuits including the development of critical thinking skills and an appreciation for the traditional arts, sciences, and humanities. Our students should be good writers and have “a basic command of some of the most essential disciplines and subjects that I would consider an educated person should know.”

Wait to get a sense of Jesuit interest. There was one participant who shared that they do not talk about any part of our Jesuit philosophy upfront. They wait to gauge the interest of student and their parents before diving into a Jesuit conversation. The participant noted,

To be honest, when I have my initial conversation, I don't lead with that. But, then, as we start to dig down a little bit I do talk a little bit about the liberal arts core and that type of broad education that that one gets including the philosophy and studies and different courses that students are taking that really helps broaden out how they maneuver in the world and be adaptable. I'll talk a lot about service in particular and service-learning opportunities... And to be completely honest, once I get a feel for the people I'm talking to, I may do deeper into the religious life as well. But that again, that's not necessarily a lead that I do.

Interestingly, a member at the same institution took the opposite approach. “I always start that we are a private, Catholic, Jesuit University and I talk about what Jesuit means and why it's important. I share about a Jesuit education, and then sort of how it works.”

One mission officer said they speak with pride of their Jesuit heritage. They noted that they hear from prospective families that some institutions seem to regret their Jesuit background.

“I do hear sometimes that some families will walk away with the impression that some of the Jesuit institutions are apologizing for their faith or for the ways that they articulate faith commitments.” They noted at their institution, they are much more direct. Being direct allows prospective students and their families to more fully understand the Jesuit approach. They continued, “We are trying to be more attentive, direct, and bold in articulating the faith heritage... They appreciate just hearing a clear articulation of the values.”

Along the lines of waiting to discuss Jesuit, one enrollment officer detailed their philosophy of simply saying that the university is Jesuit and simply leaving it there. They believe that the word “Jesuit” already carries enough weight to not need to dive into the deeper meaning right away. “The concept of Jesuit is very well known. Even if people aren’t really familiar, they’re not Catholic, everyone understands when you say ‘Oh, it’s a Jesuit school.’” They continued that after they have rounded out the introduction of the university, it’s a great time to circle back and share their meaning of Jesuit – that the education process is different, the focus on education and not research, explaining the global reach of the Jesuit network, and the kind of personal attention a student will receive. “So, certainly, we know that Jesuit is a very powerful attribute in the marketplace.”

One mission officer noted that it is important to fully understand what a prospective student is looking for in their college education. They shared, “Especially today we’re asking the question, what’s the purpose of education? Is it wisdom or is it career development? And I, I’d like to think that the answer is, ‘Yes and yes.’” In today’s marketplace, they hope students are not simply looking for a quick ticket to get a job, but continue to be interested in integrity, ethics, and finding their place in the world.

Finally, one athletic director tried to highlight their balance in meeting prospective students and understanding their interests before sharing too much. They said they lead that their institution is religious based. They want prospective students to know a Jesuit university offers a world class education but that you do not have to go to Mass regularly and “we’re not trying to force the Catholic religion down anyone’s throat.”

Catholic abuse crisis. The researcher was struck by the wide number of interviewees who noted the Catholic abuse crisis, particularly the sexual abuse of small children by priests throughout the U.S., and how that has influenced the image of each Catholic institution in the nation. A 2019 report by the Pew Research Center describes how the abuse crisis has impacted Catholic and non-Catholics. For instance, since the abuse crisis, more than one in four Catholics report going to Mass less often. And, of those who attend Mass regularly, about 70% of Catholics say they have never heard their clergy discuss the sexual abuse during Mass. And, perhaps most damaging for the Catholic Church, nearly 80% of Americans still believe that that “recent reports of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church reflect problems that are still happening” (Gecewicz, 2019).

One mission officer shared,

It’s harder to and talk about integrity when not truly much has been done institutionally to make changes to protect children. Look at the Catholic Church as an institution.

People today are finding challenges with institutions, be them government, corporate or churches and religions. Those are going to be some serious challenges.

One athletic directed said, “I think the Catholic part is fragile given what’s occurred with the Catholic Church over the last, especially, two decades. That one’s a wild card. The Jesuit part is, I think, solid and valued by families.” This was the reaction in describing that Jesuit and

Catholic balance. Clearly, for them, the abuse crisis has been detrimental to the Church, yet Jesuit institutions are still recognized as having value, separate from the Church.

Another leader made the point very bluntly saying that the priest scandal affected each and every Jesuit university and is still hurting each of the institutions. Another academic leader wanted to also be both “transparent and direct.” The news coverage of the sexual abuse crisis, they noted, is an issue, and they wonder what the impact will be to the recruitment of new students. They noted that in today’s marketplace, you cannot afford for any issue, especially one as serious as abuse, to be the narrative of your institution. It will hurt in many ways including enrollment. Yet, they feel that with the recent events notwithstanding, “I am still very, very confident in the strength of the legacy and the tradition of the Jesuit higher education model.”

Distinct community atmosphere. The distinctive community, or people at the heart of a Jesuit institution, was one of the most shared characteristics by interviewees. While the four Jesuit institutions vary in terms of location in the country and location with respect to their individual city, it was clear that their campus, size, people, and informal ways they treat one another leads one to believe that there is something special about the communities that have been created. In 2014, the Vatican noted that Catholic schools and universities are all called to be education centers that are “inspired by the values of Catholic faith,” yet vary based on cultural and social contexts (Congregation for Catholic Education, p. 1).

One mission leader suggested that it is the community itself that is the driver of the undergraduate experience. They noted that the community itself is unique from just about any other institution they have been a part of.

I think there’s a huge value added for the community that we create here for the undergraduate experience. I would talk about the kind of comprehensive community and

therefore also a comprehensive education grounded of course in the liberal arts. That offers you a whole huge opportunity to explore a pretty wide variety of your gifts and talents to be able to identify which of those are your greatest gifts and talents and the greatest use of them. And that can happen here that can't happen at many other places. Partly because we are the size of community and because of the culture we built up in our academic community. Added to that is we're motivated to do and be that because of our Jesuit philosophy and approach to education, our pedagogy, and the style of education we're doing here.

Another mission officer shared that a good community provides a place where a student can develop as a whole human being who is still in their formative ages of their life.

We are all about our community... And I think we then are able to be very, very proud of the fact that most of those students are strongly inclined to be members of our community in terms of learning and growing together and doing good together in various settings, academic meaning in their classroom, related endeavors and projects, and beyond the academic space.

One athletic director noted the community both on and off campus. Most impressive to them is:

The community in which we're located, the opportunities, not only in the community for you to get off of campus, but the opportunities for you to give back, the opportunities for you to get a practical experience... It's different. We're Jesuit. I think the atmosphere on a Jesuit campus is different and I've been on a lot of campuses.

One enrollment leader shared that without a doubt, the sense of community is their top theme that they talk about and also what they hear back from families after their son or daughter has graduated from the institution.

People at [university] are so open and so welcoming, so friendly, so eager to show me around, even if they're not the tour guide and just complete strangers, and it's closely tied to community. But I would dig a little bit deeper, I'd say it's the people because there is this sense that no matter who you run into on campus, they want to share with you their story. They want to be able to serve students, they want to kind of draw you into the community in a sense.

They went on to describe a situation in which a student had recently visited a large institution and doors were locked and had no desire to assist. "There's something going on there between our people and the sense of community that is here that makes us distinct."

Interestingly, one academic leader shared that above all, they hear from students that the reason they picked a particular institution, including their own, had to do with the campus "vibe." They described the vibe as a mish mash of how they feel about the physical campus, the types of activities going on, the friendliness of other students and the tour guide. They suggested that while a number of students might be looking at a wide range of liberal arts types of programs that are offered by many institutions, the determining factor is not the academic program unless it is truly unique, but the overall vibe from their campus experiences.

One mission officer related to their institution as not just a community but made a point to note that their university is an intellectual community.

So, our learning community, and by that I also emphasize the learning part, the academic part, but also the community, the network of students with each other, the faculty and staff with each other, and with each other working for the students.

They noted that within that community is also a strong spirituality and while it may manifest itself through the Catholic tradition, it is a spirit that student carry knowing that they are part of something bigger than themselves. She paraphrased Jesuit leader Hans Kolvenbach noting that students need to understand who they are in the world today and who they would like to become.

One marketing leader suggested the community atmosphere as being unique to Jesuit higher education.

The community atmosphere: so that would be the professors who can spend one on one time with the students, but so can staff in various roles if they're participating in clubs or other types of events like that. The students have that kind of community feel.

While they know of larger university experiences, the type of community that can be built at Jesuit institutions is quite unique.

Family. That was the word utilized by another marketing officer. It was their way of describing the special community at their institution but also adding an even closer connection.

We're a very family atmosphere here where students don't get lost and we worked really hard to make it the kind of place that's going to be comfortable. Going off to college can kind of be a scary thing. And we recognize that, and we just have a really extraordinary community here that embraces people and wants them to feel comfortable and wants them to be included in everything. But at the same time, it's a community that's become one that also challenges people. We've really diversified in so many ways. There are so

many different kinds of people here. So, you know, your son or daughter is going to meet all kinds of different people and learn about different places and different ways of life and that's going to open up all kinds of possibilities.

Care for the individual student. Another theme that was clear was the extent to which Jesuit institutions provide individual attention and an individualized experience. The Jesuit term *cura personalis* was brought up by multiple interviewees from multiple institutions. It's interesting to note how a number of Jesuit terms were clearly articulated throughout the interviews and across institutions. This individual attention and care for students was clear. Shared one academic leader,

And the students stay to graduate, so something's working. There's a tremendous amount of, many, many, many different kinds of support systems for students. From academic help to mental health support to physical health support, all kinds of communities for the students to join and to be supported by, and the faculty are very involved in looking for ways that they can help their students, not just in the classroom but outside as well.

One athletic director added that they really heard from students about the personalized experience in classrooms.

It's a personal education. That's the best way to describe it. Our average class size, I think, is 17. Rarely do you have a class over 30. So, it's a very personal education. The professors know your attitude. They know where you're strong, if you're doing well. They know why. If you're doing poorly, they know why. There's a lot of communication.

The athletic director had noted that they had attended an undergraduate institution where most classes were around 200 students and that they had one class in a very large theater of around 600. They noted that the professor did not know their name let alone their attitude, skills, or efforts. They noted that at their institution, if they need to talk to a faculty member, they are easily able to pick up the phone and have a conversation. The athletic director noted in particular that the universities being studied all seem to have a common theme of being smaller institutions within a larger and impressive network.

A chief mission officer related to the old *Cheers* television show slogan, “Everybody knows your name.” They noted that at their institution, and they felt likely at other Jesuit universities, it is impossible to be anonymous. With small class sizes and a learning community dedicated to helping each other, she felt that the type of individual attention offered at Jesuit universities certainly made them unique places to attend.

Similar to that, an academic leader suggested that students at Jesuit institutions get very individual treatment. They noted recent issues with students going through cancer, or students with parents who are divorcing, and students who just need to spend a little extra time getting healthy. All of those were times in which administrators and faculty came together to assist an individual student to make a new path and help them work toward their success. “I do think that we are known for being very student centered and I think that in today’s higher education area that makes a place unique.” They noted that their faculty and staff are asked to model the notion of being men and women for and with others through their work with students.

Development of the full person is a key to how individualized the attention is, noted one athletic director. They shared that a Jesuit education is not just academic development. They noted the opportunities to engage that do not happen on a larger campus. The personal

relationships with faculty because of the smaller sized classes are a central point to the type of individual attention received.

One marketing officer noted the care for each and every student:

First, I would probably say our ability to care for all of our students. So, we have a theme of caring, not only for them academically, but for them as individuals in terms of what they do when they get involved on campus and how they are successful throughout their four years. Not just, again, academically, but also their extracurriculars and making sure that they're set up to succeed in the world.

For and with others. Some the responses about Jesuit education also applied to a more global thinking of the impact a Jesuit education has on not just an individual but how they will make an impact on their local community, their region, and the greater world around them. One CMO shared that their institution is,

Firmly rooted in the Catholic and Jesuit traditions... It is the idea of service to your community and to the world and being women and men for and with others and we embody that well in what we do with our students... It's also about being open and accepting to everyone, and to knowing that people have different viewpoints on topics, but that you're part of our mission to be in a more inclusive environment and to be accepting to what other people's thoughts are and to have spirited debates...

Another academic leader suggested that they hear all of the time the difference in those who are Jesuit educated. A common theme from this academic leader as well as a number of others is the sense of developing men and women for and with others, a very common trait of a Jesuit education. They shared,

I always highlight the fact that we're a Jesuit Catholic institution. I always try to highlight the Jesuit charisms - the important components of a Jesuit education forming and educating students for change, and training and developing men and women and for and with others as really the core of our undergraduate and professional educational philosophy... It doesn't mean that everybody at (our institution) has to be Catholic, that certainly isn't the case, but everybody understands the characteristics of a Jesuit education... I hear it all the time.

Similar or Different

Authors of a 2015 Gallup research project, Dvorak and Busted (2015) shared that there is very little differentiation across missions of higher education institutions. The authors suggested that university leaders must institute distinctive attributes based on being authentic. Participants were asked to what degree Jesuit institutions might be similar or different. Themes emerged in the areas where interviewees were able to identify the most similarities or differences. As the data shows, almost all of those similarities and difference fell into three categories that all surround Jesuit education. Those themes included:

- Catholic, Jesuit, or Catholic Jesuit education
- The Jesuit influence
- Context as Jesuit philosophy

One enrollment leader noted,

Well, I think that we are more similar than we'd all like to admit. I have been on a number of Jesuit tours and they all seem to have students who are engaged and friendly tour guides. And I noticed the sameness of how we said things, you know, even though

we try to be distinct here, there comes a point where you can only describe a Jesuit program in so many ways.

The enrollment leader continued that some Jesuit institutions differentiate themselves based on their brand name. They noted that it is easy to see parent and student's heads nod, when they hear names of institutions that they have heard of before. They said that there are really not that many smaller to medium-sized institutions which have national name recognition but that the four institutions in the study are some of those universities that are not huge but carry a national recognition.

One Jesuit marketing leader suggested similarities as well but noted that each institution must be able to tell their unique story.

I think the 27 Jesuit schools are far more similar than different from my experience and especially the way that they're marketed and branded. And I also think there's commonality with other private schools. I think they're going to talk about a family atmosphere in a supportive community. And so, I think it's okay, but I think that each school has to find a way to present it a little bit differently. That's the biggest challenge, I think.

Another marketing leader noted a similar philosophy. "I think there has to be some joining together in order to have bigger impact, but I also firmly believe there has to be some separation because the schools, while sharing common mission overall, each of us have different strengths." They went on to share the strengths of banding together more as Jesuit institutions especially as it relates to enrollment, but they also specifically called out dangers. They noted that more than one Jesuit university might be in financial hardship. Recently, the Jesuits and the Board of Trustees at Wheeling Jesuit University decided to part ways. The Jesuits wanted

assurance of the longstanding values based, Catholic education, while it appears that Wheeling will be focused more on specific professional education programs.

But I certainly don't think we should all be living in silos and doing everything separately. The *Jesuit Educated* campaign... is the right way to go. But proceeding cautiously about how to do things and making sure that continues to strengthen everybody and doesn't potentially have negative ramifications on some of the other institutions that maybe are a little bit stronger.

Jesuit institutions stem from a common intellectual tradition. The Ignatian tradition follows much of the thinking of the great European institutions with a focus on the humanities. One academic leader noted the similarities across the institutions.

It's a focus on humanities and ethics and religion and philosophy. And it doesn't make any difference if you're a nursing major or business major or any of the majors in the College of Arts and Sciences. You take the same core. And that's really a distinguishing characteristic of an undergraduate education.

Another chief mission officer noted the wide array of international Jesuit institutions of higher learning. And, while each is unique, they believe there is an underlying set of values that all promote.

There are 200 institutions of higher learning in the Jesuit world. All of them obviously are different. All of them were contextually in a different context, but there is a kind of core set of values that I think we're all trying to promote within our that education. So, there is this common set of values that I think those students who embrace fully our education, wherever it is, and whatever kind of institution of higher learning, you walk

out with it and you have something that's qualitatively distinct. Again, if you choose to embrace the full package.

An athletic leader who has been with Jesuit institutions for many years shared that there is definitely overlapping themes in all that we do and suggested that is very reasonable. They noted,

I do think there's a commonality and I do think that kind of the messaging playbook is pretty overlapping. Like if it was a Venn diagram of the 27 core messages, that would be a pretty big part of the circle.

They noted that others like Jesuit higher education might have similar types of Venn circles. For instance, religious healthcare systems or similarly based high schools or even many non-profits all might have similar notions of their missions. One academic leader felt that this notion of similar or different was the most intriguing of all of the topics. In fact, they shared that this was part of a larger dinner conversation when they were last with Jesuit colleagues. They were each sharing about their institution and realizing how similar they really are, and yet were perplexed by the lack of joint ventures between the institutions. They explained,

I have actually had conversations about this that were colored by a great deal of frustration and... You know, we're all arriving at kind of the same conclusion which is we are all more similar than we are different, especially when you boil it down to the fundamental ingredients. And we talked about how frustrating it is that we're not taking advantage of some of our strengths... Why aren't we looking to partner?

They noted that the work must come from the presidents of each institution. These presidents must want to collaborate and determine that a shared vision for Jesuit institutions of higher learning is needed. Even if the presidents did not completely agree, how could the case

be made to articulate some messages together? “I do think that there is a message that can be communicated, and it could be even one that speaks to the social good... a differentiated education that promotes social thriving and the good of our society.”

A mission officer suggested that Jesuit institutions are both similar and different. They noted similarities in the form of academic culture, in the form of a small, engaged community, and in the form of a shared spirit of the faith. They noted both similarities and differences even in campuses. Jesuit institutions are the same as they are manageable to navigate the physical campus and include a community of faculty and staff willing to assist each student in their college journey. And, yet, different as each has regional and resource differences in how their campus are built out.

Catholic, Jesuit, or Jesuit, Catholic. Some respondents defined themselves as working at a Jesuit university. Some said they work at a Jesuit, Catholic university. Others noted that they worked at a Catholic, Jesuit university. Responses varied. To some, the difference did not seem noteworthy. To others, it made a great deal of difference. One mission officer shared,

In the Jesuit world, it’s even more unique because the Jesuits are such a different order of priests than a lot of others. They’ve always been known as being more worldly from a standpoint of wanting to go out into the world, not being content just staying in their town. Every Jesuit I have ever known travels all the time. And because of that part of it, the Jesuit distinctiveness really comes through in the university setting because they bring in these global ideas and they really think more globally. Whereas other Catholic universities may be very close to the Catholic faith, but they’re thinking maybe a little bit more locally or regionally. So, I think when you start to drill down, you’ve got the overarching quality and then you find the distinctive features... I think that we do

mission and focus on mission as well or better than a lot of the other schools because it's just integrated into everything we do, across faculty, staff and student activities.

One athletic director noted that their institution is going beyond simply saying that they are a Jesuit, Catholic institution. They noted that at one point in their history, just saying that was enough for prospective students and their parents to understand their mission and what they were about. Now, they suggested, the branding work invites them to share more individual stories about "what are graduates are doing, what our undergraduates are doing, what our faculty and staff are doing." They noted that at one point in their history the bulk of the students were Catholic and today that percentage is closer to 50-50. "So, while we say we're a Catholic and Jesuit institution, we also reach out to a lot of non-Catholics. The branding is not just, 'Well we're Catholic and Jesuit,' but the branding is the quality of education that we provide and what that entails."

A mission officer noted that at one point in their institution's history, they tried to conceal the fact that they were Jesuit and Catholic. Today, they have great pride in that association. They shared, "And so I think that being very honest about the fact that we offer a quality of education that is deeply humanistic and deeply invested in making the world a better place from all these different perspectives."

One of the academic leaders brought in the notion that a couple of characteristics supersede even their institution's Catholic identity. They expressed,

I would say that it is this notion of inclusiveness. It's an inclusive institution that fosters community and togetherness and promotes striving for excellence... I think those things transcend. I think they are part of our Catholic intellectual tradition, but they transcend it and therefore I think that they're more approachable to students who might not come

from the faith tradition. So, when I talk to friends and family, they're like, well, what's it like working at a Catholic institution? I said I was raised in a faith tradition and certainly understand the history of the Catholic Church and all of its teachings and so forth, but the stuff that really makes [my institution], [my institution], are these things that no human being, regardless of faith tradition or the absence of a faith tradition, could argue with. These are universals.

Another marketing officer noted that it all starts with Catholic education. While Jesuit is known, there are so many more Catholic institutions in the country that it is more understood for quality. "Across the board, the majority of Catholic schools in the nation, no matter what age group, provide quality and that's been a brand attribute, I think, of Catholic education for a long time." After they understand the Catholic identity, it becomes good to share what makes Jesuit unique. And, for them, they suggested that what makes the Jesuits unique is their international view. They shared,

Jesuit distinctiveness really comes through in the university setting because they (Jesuits) bring in these more global ideas. Other Catholic universities may be very close to the Catholic faith, but they're thinking maybe a little bit more locally or regionally versus constantly globally minded. So, I think when you start to drill down, you've got the overarching quality and then you find the distinctive features.

The Jesuit influence. The Jesuit order is facing a challenge as well: not as many Jesuits to go around. While there are 27 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States, even more exist internationally. Given the number of Jesuits and their aging population, Jesuit institutions are faced with having fewer Jesuits on their campus. In 1965, Jesuits worldwide totaled 36,000 while in 2017 that number stands at almost 16,000 (Gray, 2018). A number of interviewees

noted their institutional support for the Jesuit philosophies, with or without being Jesuits themselves.

One Provost noted,

I do think that Jesuit pedagogical tradition is different. I do believe it's different. And I think the Jesuits, at least my experience, is that they put more emphasis on making sure that the congruence of faith and reason is discussed constantly. And so, for example, almost every cabinet meeting that we have, we have a reflection on the influence of the Jesuit mission and tradition on our work.

One chief marketing officer warned that perhaps the notion of students seeking a Jesuit institution is overblown and, to an extent, students are really more interested in ideas of the individual institutions as being private, or in a good location, or having an excellent program, and less about being Jesuit. They noted,

I'm not hearing a lot of parents or students lead with the Jesuit philosophy or the Jesuit brand that's attracting me here... Students are coming in and we're asking where else they're looking at. Maybe one, maybe two Jesuit institutions on their list, but it's for very different reasons. It's more about a location or it's about a program. If they're seeking a particular thing or outcomes data or what have you.

An athletic director described the concept of seeking a Jesuit education as a filter.

I think that it filters out those families, and those young men and young women, who don't want that kind of atmosphere. When you talk about philosophy classes, religion classes, giving back to the community, having to participate in class, having to have discussions, you know, when you talk about more written examinations than true or false and multiple choice, I think it's a filter. A lot of things have changed, but one of the

things that's been constant is that we've always attracted great young men and young women.

Another leader noted that when they started at their institution more than 30 years ago, there was a Jesuit president, multiple Jesuit vice presidents, and a multitude of Jesuits in the classroom. They noted that their campus has less than a handful of Jesuits who teach any course and no chairs of any academic departments that are Jesuits. "And so already, that's a struggle of how you identify yourself as a Catholic Jesuit institution when you don't have priests."

Context as a Jesuit philosophy. One interesting and unexpected theme had to do with the Jesuit order as collaborators regionally, based in the U.S., as well as internationally. But, as part of the Ignatius philosophy, the Jesuits are called to understand and support the regional context in which they call home. So, to a degree, Jesuit institutions are called to be both similar and different. Similar in that their founding traditions and missions come from the same history yet different in that their institutional formation, region, and timing are all called to be unique.

For instance, one enrollment officer noted that Jesuit institutions must be different. They used an analogy that had been shared with them. Someone can take the same grape seeds with the same background and structure, and yet put them in different regions or types of soil in which to grow. And while those seeds started with the same qualities and similar identifies, that soil was unique and caused them to grow differently and ultimately produce a different kind of wine. They noted that Santa Clara has taken root in Silicon Valley, Seattle University is in a very metropolitan city, and others are in very different settings. The universities started with similar "philosophies and missions that drive them" and yet have variances in what programs they offer, the student experience, and their institutional goals. They continued,

I absolutely think that one of the things we don't talk enough about in this country is the plethora of academic opportunities that people can choose... and I don't know any other country in the world that offers that has as much diversity in educational opportunities.

One mission officer explained this theme by sharing,

I think something that we're trying to do more explicitly here is to remind our community that as a Jesuit institution we belong to a wider network within our country and internationally. And that for example, when the worldwide body of the Society of Jesus coming together, for example, general congregation, that those are particular directives that come forth and that for all of us as Jesuit apocalypse, in theory, we're all going to kind of wrestle with these key themes together. We were all founded with the same charism. There should be some similarities in terms of the vocabulary we use, the founding stories we tell, and the way we stay apprised of contemporary movements. But the piece that I think is distinct is how we as a community come together and decide how to appropriate that mission in our context. So, for example, paying attention to how contextual regional factors look like for us to be good citizens within our [hometown]... And we have particular institutional stories too... I think being able to tell kind of those specific stories of your founding and how you become integrated in the life of the community.

Another mission officer followed much of the same track especially as it relates to the context in which a university is rooted and develops over a long period of time. They shared, Jesuit education should be extremely respectful and considerate of and take advantage of the context in which that education occurs. So, what we have by way of our context here is we're plopped in the location of a city, in a global city... It's a city where people are

doing well in lots of ways. There's lots of economic opportunity and yet we have these pockets of deep poverty. And it enables us to have, I think, an incredible opportunity for the kind of education we can do best in Jesuit education, which is to be able to teach our students to engage diversity of communities, but to understand the complexities of their reality and be able to be innovative and creative and working with communities to change their situations to thrive so justice can occur. That's the particular thing I think that makes us different than a similar size university in another city. Context is huge with Jesuit education.

Marketing and Branding Jesuit Colleges and Universities

Marketing and branding. The interviewees had broad feelings about their institutional efforts in regard to marketing and branding. Some thought their internal teams are more effective than ever. Others felt that they have yet to strike the right balance. Even at the same institution, evaluations of the work varied widely. At one institution, two people outside of the marketing office suggested opposite notions. While one felt the marketing work had never been more collaborative, an academic leader suggested, "Sometimes I look at the materials that are produced, and while there attractive and contemporary in terms of their design and everything, I don't know if they always tell our story effectively. So, we're still struggling with that a bit."

That struggle may come from the still relatively new discipline of marketing and branding for higher education. One leader remarked that they remember the exact first session in which members of the AJCU gathered to first talk about marketing of higher education. They recalled that it was at the 2001 Jesuit Advancement Association meeting and a panel discussion was held on the topic. It was noted that one faculty member on the panel suggested that marketing our institution to be "morally vacuous" and was essentially beneath Jesuit institutions.

That said, with discussion of the discipline only first occurring in the early 2000's, marketing and branding is still coming into its own and professionalizing within the institutional structures.

There also seems to be a great deal of confusion about what is meant by branding. One chief marketing officer shared,

So, I think there's a lack of education on our campus about what marketing and branding, in particular, are. I think when people think of branding, they think that it means logos and brand colors. And I don't think that they fully understand everything that's a part of that. We're really talking about identifying our identity, who we are as an institution, what our value set is, and what our brand strategy is. You know, how we're going to show up differently in the marketplace and what that brand experience is going to be. So, one of the things we're talking a lot about is our brand as culture as well. It's how people experience your campus when they come for a campus tour, or how a new faculty member experiences new hire orientation, or the way that we answer the phone, all of that is part of brand. I don't think in higher education we think a lot about brand experience. I think we think about the collateral and the words on the page.

Another enrollment officer suggested a similar confusion about the use of the term branding and thought that it is best done by clarifying what your institution means by creating a brand.

I always come back to how to define the 'why.' And in my mind, it means a promise we make to students, right? Are we being on brand? What I think we're saying is we're making decisions that are consistent with who we say we are, and we promise we are to students. So, in my mind, I think a lot of folks say, well, brand just means your image, or your logo, or your font, or your color scheme, or whatever. And those are elements of it.

But your brand really is who you say you are. And so, as we make decisions, as an institution, we have, if we're really being strategic, we're being on brand, right? We're being consistent with who we say we are.

A mission officer wanted to offer a definition of marketing and branding before they answered the question. They noted that, for them, marketing and branding is a reflection of who the campus is to prospective students. They shared,

Marketing and branding are what are we telling the public about ourselves, probably most important really is for our prospective families and students. I think the word that jumps out my mind is they should reflect what's happening. Sometimes people say, 'we're not marketing it enough. We're not branding enough. We're not doing this enough.' The next question is, do we have what we need to market and to brand if we have a mirror? I guess metaphorically, I think of marketing and branding as a mirror of our campus.

Another marketing officer noted that same interest in laying out the meaning of marketing. They noted on their campus that branding is the least defined and people utilize it in all kinds of ways but that even reminding the campus of what marketing means is useful. They explained that, first, marketing, is a very important university strategy because marketing is all about telling the university's story. That said, they noted that most people do not realize the complexity that is marketing.

They'll use marketing in so many different ways. And for some people they only define that as paid media. But I like to tell people that it is across the paid, the owned, and earned media spectrum. Marketing is all of those because you're marketing the university in so many different ways, but you've got to tell your story.

They noted that the role of their office and the work they do is so very broad based on all of the channels. They noted that their institution prints a lot of materials, creates a university magazine, handles social media, handles crisis and image communications, coordinates all university digital efforts including the web site, and even more. “I think we have some of the hardest jobs right now because we’ve got such a variety of age ranges that we’re having to appeal to, and they all absorb things differently.”

One athletic director labeled their institution’s work in marketing and branding as “a real emphasis” in the last few years. They noted the growing number of digital channels in which to reach students and focusing as an institution on making sure that they are all articulating the right stories for their university. They pointed to telling more stories about their graduates, the work of faculty, and the types of experiences that their students are having.

One of the chief enrollment officers noted that branding has been a very recent discussion with their Trustees.

At the board meeting it was brought up about the need to truly brand ourselves. I think in higher education we have a unique way of describing brands and that is we need to do a better job of telling our story. We need to be better about defining who we are and who we aspire to be... When you say Notre Dame, you don’t talk about branding, right? They are a brand... I’m not sure Notre Dame wants to be anything other than Notre Dame’s. So, I feel like a branding conversation happens far more at institutions that are one level or two levels below the rung of the top level of the elites. They worry more about their brand.

One academic leader suggested that the marketing and branding work done by their campus team is more about campaigns that come and go. So, they suggest, an effort is made to

push a particular message and it's done for some time. Then, it goes away. It comes again when the institution is ready to launch another fundraising campaign or when another initiative is ready for external promotions. They shared that marketing and branding is not part of annual strategic plans and goals and that this work comes and goes as needed.

Another academic leader suggested that branding and marketing are essential in their strategies and goals. They shared that branding helps provide an expectation of what their institution must live up to. They noted that branding serves as a way for an institution to “communicate its core values and the value proposition.” They continued, “And so I think that they (marketing and branding) are critical, not just from an enrollment standpoint but in setting an initial context for expectations.”

“We can influence the message, but we certainly don't control it anymore,” shared one enrollment leader. They noted that times have changed and while once we could control the narrative by simply sending brochures and letters in the mail, much is different now. Branding is so much more important today, they explained,

Because we have to find a way to influence people so that they know who we are and... that we understand who they think we are. And then the marketing is once we figure that out. I do think it's played a much bigger role. In higher ed, it's much higher stakes today.

Internal marketing, branding, and structures. All of the institutions who participated had generally similar types of goals and roles within their marketing and communication function. Each are tasked with marketing the university; assisting with the recruitment of new students or connecting to alumni; and all have been charged with leading specific projects like print, e-communication, internal communication, web and digital initiatives, social media, and

audio, photography, and video projects. Also, whether directly or indirectly, their work was connected to the strategic plan to help shape larger scale directives about how the institution would like to present itself. Some call that work marketing. Increasingly, and with the professionalism of the offices, they are more likely calling it branding. Either way, each office has been asked to create some type of narratives that tells the public what their institution is all about. The offices are generally asked to also share back what the public thinks that their identity to best understand the difference between their desired perception and the reality of what that perception currently entails.

Marketing and branding are still fairly new in the history of each institution. With each of the participating universities already at least more than 130 years old, the marketing offices average less than 25 years of existence. And, more specifically, to be given the responsibilities of digital communication, the offices average less than 20 years of existence as a full suite, internal marketing department. In fact, those with the title of CMO are the first to hold those positions on their campus. For the others, they are the first to hold their positions and be members of the institution's cabinet.

These positions have come a long way in responsibilities yet there is still progress to be made. One of the marketing officers recalled a story of one of their first brand efforts at a former institution. At a large, convocation like event, an academic leader at that institution had noted the branding project as the corporatization of higher education, sharing that faculty should not stand for it at their institution. Today, now at a different university, the same marketing officer noted a more collaborative atmosphere for the work of branding and marketing.

One mission officer noted that while the terms marketing and branding today still have some negative connotations, there is plenty of good and collaborative work from their marketing

team. “I feel like our colleagues here are really intentional about bringing together campus partners to kind of wrestle with themes together and clarify and refine ideas. And, I feel like those partnerships just keep getting stronger.”

One marketing officer said the internal role of marketing and branding has changed over time as well. The evolution seemed to go from simply the logo and colors creators, to the Kinko’s model of delivering what someone dropped off, to the branding police who was watching out for everything in the University’s best interests, to what seems to be a heightened role in the professionalism of the marketing department, and into a team who is welcomed to collaborate around strategies. They continued,

We’re trying to position ourselves internally as being much more of a strategic and creative function and less a tactical function...When they needed a poster or when they will need a brochure, it was less about the communicator or the marketer sitting with them and saying, okay, what is our strategy, what are your goals, who is the audience your trying to reach, and then actually leaving it up to the communicators to come back with a recommendation for content or channel strategy or whatever that is. It was much more like, here’s what I want, deliver it and here’s your deadline which isn’t collaborative. It’s very directional, but it also just doesn’t make for a good product because then you’re having people who don’t specialize in marketing communications make very big decisions about marketing and communication. So, we’re trying to shift that culture. I mean, it’s going to take a really long time and we’re all starting to make some strides in that area.

A chief enrollment officer said that universities, even the size of Jesuit institutions, have trouble branding because there are lots of leaders and lots of stories to tell. They suggested,

You have to have strong leadership... Your president has to stand up there and suggest who we are and be able to say it concisely every day. And it has to trickle down.

Instead, we have very strong deans, very strong divisional leaders who are articulating why they in their particular area of expertise are the best. And so, in my opinion, there's a siloing effect.

Interestingly enough, another chief enrollment officer described their internal discussions about the brand and how decisions can be made. They noted that it is very important for those setting priorities and resources and staffing to listen to those on the university's front lines to best understand the types of promises that are being made to students and understand how structures and resources need to be allocated to deliver on those promises. The front-line staff, they noted, must also not over promise on what they know cannot be delivered. And, to further complicate matters, it's important to understand that students are with an institution for four years and so those promises must be kept for the long-term.

One interviewee who had been situated in multiple organizational roles at Jesuit institutions noted the structures and powers in play as it relates to marketing and branding. "Our institutions aren't really structured in a way that gives the marketing and branding component, frankly, that kind of autonomy or power." They noted how collaboration is needed with the enrollment functions as well as the academic programs. Those two areas, from their perspective, are key to a successfully functioning internal marketing area. "We're de-centralized hierarchies." They continued to share that institutional leaders, like a Chief Marketing Officer, must interact with others on a senior team. But, they were clear to suggest that on a CMO's "most powerful day, you don't have as much power as the [Provost] on their worst day."

Another academic leader noted that a collaborative leadership structure was critical to the success of marketing and branding. If institutional leaders could not agree and then communicate appropriately with their teams about why an institutional brand is important, then the branding work will fail. They noted that while it is good to have a marketing leader who can work with others throughout the institution, the collaboration from the top is truly critical to having successful messaging. They noted that they have been in both situations, one in which collaboration happens regularly and one in which the working relationship with other leaders did not work.

One marketing leader noted the hard work that it takes to get everyone to agree on a similar message throughout an organization that does many things. But, they see the value in the consistency and simplicity that can be created.

There's been an increased focus on how our brand is portrayed within the community and within other organizations to make sure that we are creating a consistent message, not only from the internal standpoint for our staff and faculty, but then making sure that that message is given to students, given to their parents, and lived out to the students and parents. Internally, there's definitely the understanding of our brand and our marketing and the need to have that consistent message... We need a consistent kind of clear, simple message and there's a lot going on in the university that sometimes it's hard to create that simple, clear message and get everyone aligned.

Structures proved to be different at the various institutions. One marketing office reports through their university relations division, another through their administrative division, while two more now have marketing and branding as an organizational unit, reporting to the university president. Some suggested that the direct relationship to the president would provide the best

opportunity to impact both the president and senior leadership. While it would be considered highly odd in a corporate setting to not have a CMO, times are changing for higher education. A 2014 study showed that only 8% of colleges and universities had someone with the title of CMO. Yet, that same study showed that no matter what the position was called, at more than 50% of institutions, the highest-ranking marketer on-campus was now on the president's cabinet. (Simpson Scarborough, 2014). A 2018 study noted that with those institutions who have a CMO position, 60% of those roles report directly to the institutional Chief Executive Officer (CEO), while a fifth report to the Chief Advancement Officer and another fifth have some different or unique structural arrangement (Stoner, 2018).

Other marketing leaders noted the growth in the roles of team. While responsibility for the web and e-communications may have once been in different areas, those roles seem to fit clearly with all marketing and communications structures today. Looking at organizational charts, roles like web develop, social media strategist, web producer / writer, and other e-based roles now seem common in the marketing and communication organizations. Of the four universities interviewed, two of the chief marketing officers report to the president and sit on a senior leadership team while two others report to an additional vice president. Each of those roles sit on the university cabinet but not a senior team.

Another marketing leader noted the growing role and responsibilities especially as they are asked to further connect their work to that of the institution's strategic plan. Yet, they see challenges with being asked to do much tactical work while needing to become more strategic.

My boss has asked for this. They said, take the university strategic plan and I want to see you align your marketing and communications goals with the plan. So, for every goal in the university strategic plan, I want to know if you have a goal that aligns with that. And

then I want to see your performance indicators, that they're moving toward it. So, in a very explicit way, what we do needs to align with the strategic plan at the university. I feel it does. However, I feel like sometimes we get a bit marginalized in what we do. It's easy for people to see us as people who take orders, fulfill orders, turn out a product, whether it's an event, or a brochure, or a web page, and lose sight of the more strategic function of marketing and communications in helping the university reach those strategic planning goals.

The academy and branding. Dooley (2013) remains surprised that nearly 4,000 institutions in the U.S., have persisted to this point and “have continued to attract enough students to stay in business year after year” (p. 1). He suggests that change is coming and that primarily it will be through discussions of an institutions unique brand. Dooley (2013) notes that faculty should be hired, not because they are excellent researchers and wish to spend their time in a lab, but because they are excellent teachers with strong mentoring skills, two things directly beneficial to students. Part of this movement, he suggests, may be professors as their own brands as well. A professor who is an excellent instructor, communicator of ideas, and generates conversation may create their own brand for which students wish to engage.

During an interview, one leader of academics noted, “They [faculty] see the handwriting on the wall in terms of competition and enrollment. Enrollment is the name of the game now because the number of graduating high school seniors is slowly declining across the country.” This interviewee shared that at one point in their long higher education career, faculty were opposed to both concepts of marketing and branding “because it was too corporate and [they] didn't like to talk about students as clients or customers. But I think that has faded away to a

large extent. So, there's more and more discussion among the faculty about effective marketing."

Again, another academic leader identified much of the same by sharing, I have not heard any pushback or arguments about the need for us to engage in marketing. And I think they (the faculty) understand the relationship between marketing and enrollment. You know, with the demographics of the United States changing, with declines in a number of high school graduates that will be available for us to recruit from, I think faculty really understand the competitiveness of the marketplace and the importance of marketing and branding. So, I haven't heard any faculty tell me that we shouldn't be doing that... I think everybody is pretty aware of the challenges of the future.

Yet another academic leader solidified the role of the academic leader in today's marketplace but sharing that not only should faculty be on-board to market and sell the uniqueness of their program, but that they should make sure they design academic programs that will have significant interest. A strong academic leader today should "be able to tell you what's new or different about academic programs, what's happening with the faculty, who has won grants and who has been published, and whose gotten what awards." Simply put, they shared, "you better be able to market your faculty and market your programs as being special and unique."

One of the chief marketing officers noted that a real opportunity for collaboration, which extends beyond just marketing, has to do with the intersection between academics, enrollment, and marketing. These three units, they suggest, must come together to make difficult decisions about priorities and where to focus resources. They continued,

So, talking with the program directors and talking with enrollment management, that's even bigger than marketing, right? It's figuring out what are the programs that kind of set us up for success in the future and what are the ones that we're going to have to kind of sunset at some point. So those are the harder decisions and discussions that need to be had and it needs to be had in a very multidisciplinary way.

Another perspective came from one of the mission officers who shared about the terms marketing and branding on her campus and the relationship with faculty. She noted that it can be semantics and that by changing what the work is called can have a significant impact.

If you're talking to the faculty, I think you want to talk about image. You want to talk about a voice. You want to talk about this capacity to attract. But I don't think you want to use the language of marketing and branding, unless you're in the business school.

They noted that everyone has the opportunity to "tell our own unique story" and that is easy to understand without having to say that the institution is going to do the exact same thing but call it branding.

One academic leader noted that it is really the words that are utilized that turn faculty off. Faculty see themselves working for the good of the whole and for a noble purpose, and not just another business. They continued,

I don't think any faculty likes to think of themselves working for a business because they want to think that they work for an institute of higher education. And even though fundamentally they know, no money, no mission. I think that what you're running up against is just the use of terms... Back to what I said about managing student's expectations and instilling in them an expectation of excellence and thriving, those are words that resonate really well with an artist, or a musician, or a philosopher, or a

theologian, or a nursing faculty, and you're talking about same thing... They're sneaky synonyms for what we're trying to do. So, they don't like words like return on investment. They don't like, yields. They don't like, net margin.

The role of athletics. It has been well documented that collegiate athletics generates exposure, mostly positive, for a university. But how valuable? And to what extent does that exposure assist with marketing, branding, recruitment, and more? One study suggests when a college football program go from decent to excellent, that season can generate an additional 19% increase in applications for enrollment (Chung, 2013). I asked interviewees to share their thoughts on athletics and branding opportunities for their institution.

One athletic director suggested that athletics can be both a first glimpse at an institution while also being viewed as an investment.

The colloquial term is front porch. I do think that's accurate for an institution like [our university]. It is one of the things that differentiates our brand is high level and highly visible basketball, most specifically. So, I do think athletics serves as a bit of a front porch from a visibility standpoint, a bit of a branding standpoint, and also a platform for us then to use as a megaphone. So, it kind of cuts both ways. The balancing act is, from an investment standpoint, how much do you invest in that and how do you measure its impact?

One athletic leader noted that the type of exposure athletics brings to an institution simply cannot be afforded any other way in today's environment. "The public awareness that comes from being a Division I athletic institution can't be purchased." They noted that they have been criticized at their institution for caring too much about sports, but they continue to believe that it is pretty much the only way that their institution can garner national attention.

Another athletic director also shared that the typical cliché is that athletics serves as the front porch of the university, this first experience that families may know of the institution because of national or regional athletic exposure. “There are a lot of times when the only interaction that people outside of [our institution] have with the university is through its athletics programs.” The athletic director noted that both positives and negatives can come from that kind of exposure. They noted that in certain parts of the country that 10 years ago, they had little recognition. But, now because of their basketball success, their institutional name is widely recognized. Yet, they noted that the influence student athletes and coaches have can be extensive and they must always be aware of their actions. They shared,

When our young men and young women go to a hotel, when they’re in the airports, when they’re in restaurants, if they, show respect, if they act with great character, if they’re polite, if they’re outgoing, they have an ability to impact a lot of people in a positive manner... But the opposite can happen too if they don’t show respect, if they’re arrogant, if they’re not respectful, if they don’t demonstrate character, if they’re not outgoing. That also reflects on the university... We’ve got over 300 student athletes and, and probably close to 80 to 100 staff, and all it takes is one person, one student athlete, or one of your staff, or one of your coaches to make a wrong decision and they can reflect poorly on an institution. So, you know, we talk about that all the time... You’re not making decisions just for yourself. You’re making decisions for yourself, your team, the Athletic Department, the university, and in some ways the community. And so, I think there’s some responsibility there and there’s some real positives that can come as a result, but there’s also exposures that can come if you don’t treat that publicity in the right way.

One leading enrollment officer noted that if any institution has a widely regarded athletic program, it can help the institution gain exposure. And, they noted, that's great. They also pointed out that you must capitalize on that exposure to showcase more about the academic experience. They noted,

A lot of times people want to, both internally and externally, rely heavily on our basketball to be a vehicle which we described the university. And I really tried to push back on that and say let's use that as our opportunity to introduce ourselves to more people... If we keep leaning on it, people already know we have good basketball, we need to take the opportunity and introduce the other parts of the institution and really lay on the academic side.

One leading academic interviewee shared,

There's no question that the men's basketball team has just automatically done a lot of marketing for the school. Now, you know, some faculty get irritated about we're not just about athletics, and of course we're not. But the truth of the matter is that the notoriety of the basketball team has put a spotlight on [our institution]. So that's marketing we don't have to pay for.

Another enrollment officer says that more than anything, athletics can be a vehicle that brings many people from their campus together. The passion and celebration become a wonderful opportunity to build community.

And for whatever reason, we all like to rally around things that we can do together or cheer on together. And that's great. That's a wonderful opportunity. So, I am forever grateful for our athletics teams providing the opportunity for getting the message out.

While a national narrative could include the fact that, at times, athletic programs “do their own thing” aside from the academic side of the house, one athletic leader had a different perspective.

I think one of the key values for us with all of our athletics programs is that we try not to be apart from the university, but a part of the university. And so, I think part of the education process for us is that we want to develop men and women who are better leaders in their families and their businesses and in their communities.

The athletic leader noted that if athletics is doing its job well, they are supporting the academic endeavor by educating the whole student who is ready to make an impact on their family, business, and community.

Another enrollment officer warned about the fleeting nature of athletic success and that becoming dependent on national athletic notoriety can have pitfalls. They highlighted this by describing the one-year success of a Jesuit institution’s basketball program. “Let’s take Loyola Chicago for an example, right? So, they went to the Final Four. All of a sudden, their applications were off the charts. Three years from now, I don’t know that it matters. So, I think that athletic influence, unless you’re a powerhouse, is a short-lived success story.”

One mission officer followed a similar narrative. They welcomed the success their institutions athletics programs but noted that sometimes that notoriety can come only every several years. They suggested that instead of promoting so much about athletics that the institution take up the task of always promoting “being in a relationship to our community, to the larger world and to our students to our students.” They suggested that this will give hope and sense of strength and by promoting this concept, and not athletics, the university could aspire to better engage with the world.

Enrollment. Simply put, enrollment is a significant driver, if not the most important driver for many institutions. Horn (2018) notes that increasingly colleges and universities are not able to bring in enough students and revenue to support their annual expenses. In fact, Horn (2018) notes, Moody's predicts the annual closure rate of colleges and universities – now around 5 annually, will soon triple for each year. "Ultimately, the biggest vulnerability in higher education is likely in the vast number of small institutions, particularly those located in rural areas in the Northeast and Midwest where the biggest declines of students are slated to occur," continues Horn (2018). Three of the four universities in this study fall into those regions.

One academic leader tied the work of marketing directly to enrollment. They shared, I think it's (marketing) an essential component of our strategy. You know, enrollment and marketing are key to all of our programs, including our professional programs. So, the days where you just create a program and wait for the students that will knock on your door are over. They're long gone. So, my view of marketing and branding as a key component of all of our enrollment strategies.

One mission officer noted their growing presence beyond their region. The mission officer classified their institution as once local, then regional, and now more national. And, it is that national exposure they feel is needed given today's competitive enrollment marketplace.

Well, and I think part of it is we're coming out of a history where we've been extremely reliant on a local market and we always had our kind of notoriety within our local market. But in especially the last 20 years, we've been focused on the fact that we need to be both more regionally and nationally known in certain ways. So being very conscious of what we do well that allows us to be a regional school that's understood regionally by a variety of different people who would come here for a variety of different reasons, but then also

know that we lay claim to and promote the fact that we do have certain things we do here that do have a national or even international reputation.

One enrollment officer shared that the college decision making process of a teenager is very complex to understand. They shared that while being a Jesuit institution is important, it is worth noting it is not nearly one of the highest factors in that decision process. They noted the academic program offerings, size of the campus, cost, ability to land a job or get into a graduate school as all being regular discussion with prospective students and their parents. “Values are really difficult to quantify and you’re going to have that subset of families that are making that decision.”

Another enrollment officer noted that enrollment plays a very important role, not so much in the branding of an institution, but in the first contact.

We are the office of first impressions. So, if we’re standing behind a college fair table, sloppy on a phone, not paying attention, that’s not representing our brand... You know, we want to create an experience when folks interact with us or me personally, that allows them to understand and appreciate the unique qualities of [our university] that shine through.

One athletic leader explained that buying into a Jesuit, Catholic institution is not simply like purchasing a consumer product. The similarity is much closer to buying a car where you may have to take out a loan and you have a lot of options including classifications of cars and brands. They suggested that people buy certain cars, whether that is a Chevy, Toyota, or BMW for different reasons.

There is an emotional and certainly intangible component to this marketplace that serves us (universities) well... Like the BMW doesn’t get you into work any faster. There’s a

certain status for lack of a better word and cache and credibility to the brand, if you will.

Right. And we enjoy that.

Similar to the car analogy is an interesting comparison for colleges and universities to consider. For both cars and universities, a consumer needs to account for brand expectations against a value proposition. They continued,

I mean, for most of our professional lives, only in the last decade or so, it was almost as if the more you charge, the better you were. And people wanted to go to the more expensive places. There aren't many products where that wins.

Another Athletic Director noted that enrollment at each institution is uneven. Some Jesuit institutions seem to be doing well, others not.

But, the fact that we exist in the marketplace tells you that there is some level of support... The fact that we are being challenged as opposed to what I would call robust growth tells you that I'm not sure we're completely in sync with what the larger society is seeking in higher education.

Modern day mission. While Jesuit education in the U.S. dates back more than 200 years, a number of interviewees contend that a Jesuit education today is more relevant than it has ever been in the country's history. One academic leader shared,

A Jesuit education really focuses on responsible behaviors of ethical issues as well. And, and I think the humanities and our core curriculum couldn't be more relevant today than any time in our history... It's really now more than ever and, you know, if you look at those characteristics that companies say that they are interested in, in their new hires, it's exactly what we're producing.

In even more modern terms, one chief marketing officer noted how Jesuit concepts really appeal to today's generations. They noted, "Some people may not be very religious, but when you describe the Jesuit philosophy and what it means, that's very attractive, especially among more socially conscious Millennials and Gen Z'ers."

In order to cater to these types of new generations one chief marketing officer said that the Jesuit should take more of a stand. They called for the Jesuits to seek the original rebellious roots and speak out to make the Jesuit brand more distinctive and relevant in today's modern age.

Jesuit institution could make more of a public mark on standing for issues. I think that would be a way to differentiate and maybe having some strength in numbers if there were major social issues that are happening across the world. I think that's a very big opportunity, particularly in the current kind of political and social environment that we're in. But that requires taking a stand and touching some thorny issues and I don't know that all of the institutions are there yet, but I think that could be a major differentiator.

Another chief mission officer suggested that modern Jesuit marketing must meet the expectations of today's youth and their parents. They noted that students today seek clarity in knowing they can be successful in a career. That personal kind of success is now moving further into their institutional branding. We are being intentional about how we promote how to best "be aggressive and embracing success, personal success, at the same time, promoting the idea that one's personal success is tied directly to a serious commitment to both faith and justice."

Post-Jesuit Context

One clear note from many of the interviewees is the declining number of Jesuits on each university campus. Some shared how their campus is preparing for a post-Jesuit context. Others

are trying to investigate how to attract more Jesuits. Some are trying to discern which roles would allow Jesuits to have the greatest impact.

One mission officer noted,

I think there's a divide sometimes between those who have been here three or four decades ago, and they have a different memory of what their Jesuit educational experience was and that doesn't match who we are anymore. It's some of our donors who will get frustrated... And that creates a sense of panic for them. And so how we had to educate our constituents about what it means for us to be appropriating this mission even as we are headed toward a post-Jesuit context which can evoke a lot of different emotions too and grieving, fear, and frustration.

Another chief mission officer knew well the issues at hand in a post-Jesuit world.

Right now, we have parts of the world where very few Jesuits are involved in Jesuit sponsored schools. So, the fact of having a Jesuit school without Jesuits is a reality. It's a reality. It's been happening in some parts of the world. In fact, we have some Jesuit schools where there's almost no Jesuit involvement... So, the possibility of a Jesuit sponsored school and in any kind of context without Jesuits is real.

They went on to articulate that while no Jesuits may be present, there are standards which must be met as a marker of Jesuit involvement and pedagogy.

For example, [the Jesuits] are obviously withdrawing sponsorship of our school in West Virginia... That place though had made a choice basically to disengage from the liberal arts. Well, that's a deal breaker, you know, so there's no commitment to the humanities, liberal arts.

Another interviewee noted that they feel that the decline in the number of Jesuits at each institution has already happened significantly compared to decades ago. They noted that Jesuit universities are doing just fine so long as they stick their mission and values.

I don't see the declining number of actual members of the Society as an existential threat because I think we're already surviving it and surviving it pretty well. I think there'll be a challenge to get our alums in the future to be the representatives of that brand over and above the collar. But, I certainly know financial crunch on private, residential, liberal arts oriented educational institutions, I think it's more an economic one than a mission or an identity challenge. And, I think we have to be careful to not abandoned mission and identity in the short run to meet short term kind of economic needs because you may gain in the short run and lose in the long run. I can't prove that, but I'm sure there are instances of products or product lines, skip on ingredients for a while, and paid the price later. I would argue that we should double down.

Future. Christensen and Eyring (2012) suggested universities need not to focus on being the next Harvard or even Harvard-like. The authors suggest, though, that institutions must focus. And, that the primary focus should be to “narrow the range of students they attempt to serve” (Christensen & Eyring, 2012, p. 52). As a number of interviewees suggested, that focus, for Jesuit institutions could be around issues of diversity, social justice, and bringing the country together.

One athletic director, for instance, share that, “Jesuit education is key to a lot of the issues we have in the United States today. I think we have more divisiveness in the country than we've had at any time in my life.” They noted three tenants of a Jesuit education that they share at their university which include humility, gratitude, and empathy.

Those are the core of a Jesuit education. And yet they're also, I think, the keys to solving a lot of the issues in the world today. So, I think as we do a better job of getting that message out, I think there's going to be a real, move towards this type of education. I think you're going to see the majority of our leaders in communities and in businesses come from schools that are Jesuit based.

Related to enrollment and financial resources, one enrollment leader noted the need to maintain a high standard into the future for Jesuit higher education. They point to a few Jesuit institutions that appear to be struggling and perhaps are faced with decisions about sacrificing pieces of their mission or core values to meet enrollment or discounting markers.

I'm hopeful that the term Jesuit continues to carry the meaning that it does today and that is academic excellence and service to others. And that our practices in a competitive market of enrolling students doesn't hamper us... I'm hoping that that high standard of education that you receive at what is a Jesuit institution continues to carry the weight and that our desperation for tuition revenue isn't sacrificed in that either in discounting or otherwise.

One enrollment officer noted that Jesuit universities may be able to stand alone, even if issues arise in the Catholic Church in the future. Jesuits institutions can stand for a special kind of values-based education. They noted that there are major issues in the Catholic Church, and it is driving away families and perhaps future pipelines of students for Catholic institutions. They continued,

I think Catholic does not always have a positive connotation. The Catholic Church has gone through a lot of pain... The Catholic Church is probably losing people and the younger population, who were leaving the church are now going to start having college

aged kids and may not find Catholic education as important. I do believe Jesuits can stand alone which is controversial and every Catholic, Jesuit University probably straddles that. But I think the principles of a Jesuit education... it's moral and ethical values, and it's easier to get behind Jesuit sometimes than it is Catholic because of some of the recent problems within the Catholic Church and some of the Catholic Church's political stances.

Another noted the widespread stories about smaller, private, and many times religious based universities, that are going through tough financial times. They noted that many of these institutions are located in places "with the demographics changing in enrollment among certain age groups is going to be declining in the next five to seven years." They noted the rise in cost of a private education as a real issue, the need to increase graduate enrollment to make up for lost revenue at the undergraduate level, and the rise of online learning as real issues that Jesuit institutions must address to be successful into the future. "I think for a lot of people, the experience is great, and they understand that there's a deeper quality to private school, but it starts to become a matter of economics and it may become unaffordable for some people."

One marketing officer noted that Jesuit universities, in order to keep a bright future, should stick to their mission.

Jesuit is completely different than a lot of the other Catholic or religious institutions I've seen. That kind of goes back to the community and caring for the whole student. Just because religion or religious ideas are embedded in the university doesn't always mean that it's permeated into how staff and faculty live out that with their students. Every institution has some sort of service component. Every institution claims to have really

great academics. But I think what's different is always going back to *cura personalis*, caring for the whole student.

They continued to share that most institutions have the goal of shaping a student who is well trained for employment. They noted that Jesuit institutions add a special 'and' to their goals. They are trying to create successful students academically 'and' also to create a "student that's going to make a change in the world."

Another agreed that while Jesuit universities have strong opportunities for the future, they noted, "We can't rest on our laurels... we've really got to be vigilant about saying: "what aspects of this Jesuit brand really speak to the kind of student who's going to want to come to here?" They noted that social justice is a well-received notion with a growing political and international issues, and that many high school students today are looking for institutions in which they can help make change. Jesuit institutions fit the bill. They continued by saying that with a marketing role, we need to continue to find those pieces of our Jesuit characteristics that really speak to prospective students and continue to tell those stories.

One provost shared that,

Half a millennium from now, we will continue to be strong if we don't just sit on our laurels. If we take our obligation and a responsibility to our students, to their families, and to society - to the world overall - seriously, and we work hard to continue to be responsive, we'll be fine.

Competition and collaboration. Altbach (2010) shares that universities are seeking a competitive edge. He notes that this competition causes institutions to be concerned about their image or spend resources in ways that are not core to their mission. Altbach (2010) notes a

history in which colleges were identified as the most prestigious and that other universities tried to emulate them. Altbach (2010) shares,

Competition works to the advantage of those who are already in the big leagues and creates problems for others. At the same time, it keeps institutions on their toes, forces them to think about new ideas, pay attention to quality teaching, measure what they do and benchmark themselves against their peers.

Similarly, Jesuit universities compete. All Jesuit institutions seem to compete with not only public or private universities, but also compete among themselves. The interviewees were asked to discuss the opportunities for competition, collaboration, and the environment that is created by both.

One of the mission officers noted that competing is a given in today's marketplace. Whether it is local Catholic, Jesuit, or even state institutions, all are competing for enrollment and even though we may be similar, each must compete. "I don't think it's avoidable. You know what I mean? I think it's a necessary reality of the business. At some point that could change because we used to compete more with other Catholics." They shared that decades ago, a student was likely to only look at all Catholic institutions or simply all public institutions but noted that many of today's students will at least consider both private and public options. Especially for those seeking a private institution, they almost always have to keep public institutions in the mix for the mere financial benefits of looking at a public institution.

Relating to the given of competition, an enrollment officer, when asked about collaboration, shared,

I struggle with that. I'm not sure... I think that there are opportunities for collaboration, but at the end of the day, it's my job to enroll the number of students at the price that my

institution asks me to. We're still competitors at the end of the day, but I do believe that Jesuit education and the promotion of Jesuit education is a value to Jesuit education in general.

Another enrollment leader may have felt similar but took a different approach to the response. They look first to other Jesuit institutions to seek solutions, advice, and guidance. They shared,

I am a huge fan of collaboration. Seeing what other schools have that you admire, how they perform, and getting new ideas. I think it's really good for us to see how other institutions function. And, I can tell you the first place I'm going to look is to our Jesuit colleagues.

One academic leader shared,

You're not fighting like you are in Boston with 50-60 other institutions for that one new freshman. Certainly, there's competition... but I think [we] have an advantage geographically that other institutions might not have who are in very high density higher ed markets.

Another academic leader shared that they had come from a very competitive marketplace, one in which institutions from the same athletic conference competed very hard against one another. They suggested that while they shared an athletic conference, the institutions also competed for students against each other like no other universities they had seen. They shared,

For me it's been quite refreshing to see the cooperation and collaboration amongst the AJCU schools. I've have found this very refreshing and quite useful. My goal is to continue so that we can function together in a very cooperative manner and not compete

with each other. I think that there is a much stronger position for our future if we figure out how to do that.

Another academic leader shared a similar affection for the network of Jesuit institutions. They noted a very powerful association of the Jesuit colleges and universities that can prove to be very valuable and helpful to all of the institutions. They suggested that the collective mission is one that is valued regionally, nationally, and even internationally. Yet, they articulated that the Jesuits institutions have yet to “hit that sweet spot where we can agree with what makes sense to promote.” They suggest that a notion of competition still calls for universities to keep at a distance even though everyone seems to know that a collective effort is needed if “you want to try to lift everyone’s ship.”

One marketing leader continued along these same lines noting that not as much is understood by high school students about what Jesuit means but that with more joint efforts, even if those efforts were not about the universities but the Jesuit brand, it could go a long way in assisting each individual institution.

Bring together Jesuit universities and make this a brand that others would understand. Jesuit is different than just saying we’re Catholic and so building that specific Jesuit identity and standing apart from other Catholic universities or other religious universities or even just generally other universities could help continue to build that larger brand.

One enrollment leader admitted the dichotomy of both collaboration and competition. They saw great benefit in Jesuit institutions traveling together and co-branding themselves as Jesuit for things like college fairs and joint high school visits. They noted that this shared brand helps all Jesuit institutions. Then, they noted that at some point, each individual prospective student will better dig into the specific institutions that they want to find out more about. Those

students will begin to look at reputations, quality, types of students who attend, location, and more. From there, each individual institution selects its own path for recruiting that student. One of the academic leaders shared, “I worked at Catholic institutions for 25 years before coming here and most Catholic institutions have in their mission statement something about development of the whole person, but I’ve never seen it actively displayed as much as I have here.”

One mission officer noted that the time and day has arrived for leaders at all Jesuit institutions to come together and discuss a vision of Jesuit higher education for the collective good of our colleges and universities. They noted that while AJCU brings together certain groups from Jesuit institutions regularly, groups of mission officers, marketing officers, academic leaders, enrollment officers, presidents, and more have not had the opportunity to interact together in a collaborative way to make significant progress. So, their call is for further, broader, and deeper collaboration. They shared that we must collaborate,

With an eye and an ear to this central distinction of what it means to be for something other than just this university and to be for something other than just education. We are for the sake of the Kingdom of God, which on earth is about establishing and enabling human flourishing in an environment, in a world where every human has full dignity. And you know, as idealistic as that sounds, if we’re not laboring for that day after day, I don’t know that we are accomplishing our mission... Father Sosa (current Superior General of the Society of Jesus) has challenged us to collaborate, to find ways to work together rather than competing with one another. He has challenged us to find ways to share our resources in meaningful ways that enable every student who is competent to get

a good education that is faith based so that we are really forming men and women for and with others in all cultures and at all economic levels.

One athletic director noted the absence of the AJCU in the activities of athletic administrators. They noted that athletic directors have other ways in which to connect including athletic conferences and other athletic endeavors but found it curious that the AJCU has not tried to connect in athletics in any way. That said, they noted there would likely be no need. “Jesuit athletic directors do not find value in getting together.” They noted that there has been an initiative to brand basketball together but that it is not collaborative and not valuable to the group at large. That same athletic director noted that there seems to be no real progress being made by those who are meeting within the AJCU to make a meaningful impact for the brand.

Other than certain offices on this campus getting together with their AJCU peers once a year to swap notes, I don’t see any strategic positioning that’s really made an impactful difference for the Jesuit institutions, *visa vi*, our other faith based competitors and how they have changed over the last two decades.

While not posed this way in a question, another leader shared that if they were offered the job to coordinate a national marketing platform for all Jesuit universities, they would definitely not take the job. “I would feel like that would be an impossible task to achieve. And I don’t want to put my life’s energy into something that I don’t feel confident would be successful.” They noted that Jesuit universities are still very siloed and that there are such differences in levels of academic gravitas that it would be an impossible task.

There are definitely some institutions that we know to be at the very top... and we have some institutions that are not. We all want to be as strong and as highly respected as

possible. I think the institutions that are really strong would not be too open to work with those that are at the other end of the spectrum.

One final interviewee expressed how they very much wished that the AJCU would take an even bigger stand to demand that all of the Jesuit institutions co-brand themselves in more and better ways together. “I’ll go to my grave convinced that a higher tide would lift the boats even higher, for everyone. There should be national marketing communication strategies. I don’t think there’s any question about that.”

Document Analysis

Institutional web pages. Bowen (2009) notes an increase in the use of document analysis to support qualitative research including the use of brochures, books, digital materials, and more (p. 27). Patton (1990) notes that document analysis can better ensure that data collected in research can be triangulated to offer more than one perspective. Institutional webpages and mission statements were collected from each of the four institutions.

St. Joseph’s University defines its goals for students under three broad headings: Jesuit education, lifelong learning, and unlimited success. The St. Joseph’s web site (2019) outlines their Jesuit education as, “The skills that best equip you to be nimble in today’s changing environment are the ones we’ve been focused on since 1851: critical thinking, ethical decision making, creative problem solving, social awareness, self-reflection and global citizenship.” St. Joseph’s touts the ability for students to find first jobs but notes the success of their students over the tenure of their careers. Known as Hawk Immersion Experiences, 87% (SJU, 2019) of their graduating class had completed at least one experiential opportunity during their time at St. Joseph’s. And, with 33% of the class graduating with at least a double major or minor in multiple schools or programs, St. Joseph’s notes the wide variety of student interests. As per the

national marker of success, 97% of their class of 2018 was employed, enrolled at graduate school, or volunteering full-time within six months of graduation. Interestingly, you will not find the word Jesuit, Catholic, liberal arts or private on their home page. Through two clicks of dropdowns you can eventually see Jesuit but that message of who they are is not up-front. Their admission landing page does not contain any of those word either.

Gonzaga has a similar approach to St. Joseph's. Very early on the website (2019), they share the tenants of a Jesuit education without saying Jesuit or Catholic. Their web site asks visitors, "What inspires you?" and provides suggestions like fighting for social justice, making a global impact, protecting our planet, and more. At the very bottom of their site, in the footer, a visitor can see their tagline, "A Jesuit, Catholic, Humanistic University." The word humanistic certainly stands out. While many administrators spoke to the calling of Jesuit and Catholic, only one mission officer at another university had specifically used the word humanistic to describe their institution's experience. That said, many administrators, including those at Gonzaga, used descriptors of a humanistic experience. Under Gonzaga's "About" section, it's easy to find a space dedicated to their Jesuit, Catholic, and humanistic values. The site even leads with a frequent quote from Jesuit institutions from former Superior General of the Jesuits, Peter Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., who shared, "The real measure of our Jesuit universities lies in who our students become."

On Creighton University's home page, they have dedicated an area to the Creighton experience. It reads,

Creighton University's students share a unique bond. Together with faculty and staff, they form a passionate community in which they are driven to do more, challenged to

make a positive change in the world, and guided by fundamental values of the Jesuit tradition.

In Creighton's "About Us" area, they describe a university committed to Jesuit and Catholic values. Creighton is one of few schools who actually lists a section called "What is Jesuit education?" where they spell out the tenants of a Jesuit institution. Creighton highlights words that were echoed during the participant interviews. The site shares Creighton's six characteristics of a Jesuit education:

- Magis, translating to "more," and the challenge toward excellence
- Cura Personalis, translating to Care of the individual person
- Women and men for and with others
- Forming and educating agents of change
- Unity of heart, mind, and soul
- Ad Majorem Dei Glorian (AMDG), translating to For the Greater Glory of God

Xavier University takes a slightly different approach. Without using the words Jesuit or Catholic either, the university draws upon how students have translated the Jesuit philosophy into the context of today, the Xavier Student Commitment. The home page reads (Xavier, 2019), "We are Xavier Musketeers. We come together in the spirit of St. Ignatius to learn together, to serve together, and we will succeed in changing the world together. All for one and one for all." They draw upon their Jesuit heritage, and like the others, share some tenants of the Jesuit philosophy. On their "About" page, Xavier immediately focuses on their Jesuit identity leading with their founding in 1831, and the fact that they are a Jesuit Catholic university in Cincinnati, Ohio. Notable to other research interviews, Xavier often lists Jesuit Catholic together. Xavier offers a very robust site dedicated to the University mission and identity. From Xavier values, to

the Jesuit Examen, to the histories of St. Francis Xavier and St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Xavier site is full of information about the Ignatian heritage and programs for Xavier's own faculty and staff to engage. Xavier also links off to another site called jesuitresource.org, a site owned and maintained by their institution which offers a "Jesuit A-Z" guide as well as resources that can be purchased, others that are free, and a significant prayer library housing not only Jesuit and Catholic prayers, but those from other faith traditions as well.

Mission statements. In addition to institutional webpages, mission statements outline the important words and concepts utilized by an institution. Ferrari and Velcoff (2006) note that a mission statement is the foundation on which a university's strategic plan and vision begin (p. 329). The authors found that, "Thus, it seems that chief officers at a Catholic university, regardless of their administrative rank, may hold similar perceptions of their institution's mission, its mission-driven activities, and expectations of faculty engagement related to the mission" (Ferrari & Velcoff, 2006, p. 337).

In order to properly evaluate mission statements as they relate to the language used by those administrators in this study, it was important to aggregate all of the mission statements from the four Jesuit universities and align them side-by-side. The mission statements read:

Creighton University

Creighton is a Catholic and Jesuit comprehensive university committed to excellence in its selected undergraduate, graduate and professional programs.

As Catholic, Creighton is dedicated to the pursuit of truth in all its forms and is guided by the living tradition of the Catholic Church.

As Jesuit, Creighton participates in the tradition of the Society of Jesus, which provides an integrating vision of the world that arises out of a knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.

As comprehensive, Creighton's education embraces several colleges and professional schools and is directed to the intellectual, social, spiritual, physical and recreational aspects of students' lives and to the promotion of justice.

Creighton exists for students and learning. Members of the Creighton community are challenged to reflect on transcendent values, including their relationship with God, in an atmosphere of freedom of inquiry, belief and religious worship. Service to others, the importance of family life, the inalienable worth of each individual and appreciation of ethnic and cultural diversity are core values of Creighton.

Creighton faculty members conduct research to enhance teaching, to contribute to the betterment of society, and to discover new knowledge. Faculty and staff stimulate critical and creative thinking and provide ethical perspectives for dealing with an increasingly complex world.

Gonzaga University

Gonzaga University is an exemplary learning community that educates students for lives of leadership and service for the common good. In keeping with its Catholic, Jesuit, and humanistic heritage and identity, Gonzaga models and expects excellence in academic and professional pursuits and intentionally develops the whole person -- intellectually, spiritually, culturally, physically, and emotionally.

Through engagement with knowledge, wisdom, and questions informed by classical and contemporary perspectives, Gonzaga cultivates in its students the capacities and dispositions for reflective and critical thought, lifelong learning, spiritual growth, ethical discernment, creativity, and innovation.

The Gonzaga experience fosters a mature commitment to dignity of the human person, social justice, diversity, intercultural competence, global engagement, solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, and care for the planet. Grateful to God, the Gonzaga community carries out this mission with responsible stewardship of our physical, financial, and human resources.

St. Joseph's University

As Philadelphia's Jesuit Catholic University, Saint Joseph's provides a rigorous, student-centered education rooted in the liberal arts. We prepare students for personal excellence, professional success and engaged citizenship. Striving to be an inclusive and diverse community that educates and cares for the whole person, we encourage and model lifelong commitment to thinking critically, making ethical decisions, pursuing social justice and finding God in all things.

Xavier University

Xavier is a Jesuit Catholic university rooted in the liberal arts tradition. Our mission is to educate each student intellectually, morally, and spiritually. We create learning opportunities through rigorous academic and professional programs integrated with co-curricular engagement. In an inclusive environment of open and free inquiry, we prepare students for a world that is increasingly diverse, complex and interdependent. Driven by our commitment to educating the whole person, promoting the common good, and serving others, the Xavier community challenges and supports all our members as we cultivate lives of reflection, compassion and informed action.

For three of the universities, in the first sentence, and for the fourth university in the second sentence, all speak to their Jesuit and Catholic heritage. The mission statements are very explicit to share their Jesuit and Catholic roots. While some administrators shared the fact that their institutions were Jesuit and Catholic early in their depiction of their institution, it is clear

that the mission statements on their web pages lead with this information. That is a notable difference.

Creighton University takes a very explicit step. Their institutional mission statement shares what is meant to be Jesuit, then what is meant to be Catholic, and then what is meant to be a comprehensive university. Creighton offers a very direct way to share with first timers what they stand for and how that is impactful for their institution. The mission statement points to the importance of students, learning, and justice.

Echoing what is found on their institutional web sites and stated by their administrators, Gonzaga not only highlight their Jesuit and Catholic heritage, but add to it the element of being humanistic. The Gonzaga mission again pulls in the quality of caring for the whole person, or in Jesuit terms *cura personalis*. And, in alignment with interviews across Jesuit institutions, the Gonzaga mission speaks to critical thinking, lifelong learning, ethics, and spiritual and creative growth. Interestingly, the Gonzaga mission utilizes the statement, “Grateful to God,” one of the few references to God in any piece of literature, web site, or other marketing piece. While this was a theme by some personal interviews, relationship to God is not present in other places.

Consisting of only three sentences, St. Joseph’s University is the shortest of all four of the mission statements. In broad terms, it most generically outlines the Jesuit principles of education – a personal educational experience, commitment to lifelong learning, engaged citizenship, and a commitment to justice and finding God in all things. While mentioned by several of the interviewees, St. Joseph’s notes that it is Philadelphia’s Jesuit university, specifically calling out their relationship to their hometown.

Xavier University’s mission statement, in multiple places, calls to the idea of *cura personalis*, care for the whole person. Xavier calls out that they educate students intellectually,

morally, and spiritually. Different from others, they point to the need of an “increasingly diverse, complex, and interdependent” world. They too point to their community who “challenges and supports” students for finding the common good and creating justice in the world.

Summary of Findings

Many of the administrators, at some point during their interview, noted that their institutions provide a unique, caring community; excellence in individual attention, which is unique to the Jesuit style of education; and a focus on doing something for others as part of their lives which make Jesuit universities unique. And, while each shared that sentiment in their own way and perspective, one CMO brought all of those together in a special way. They shared,

We talk about meeting students where they are. We want to find out what the passion is of this person coming to us. What’s most special is what’s within each individual and what they want to accomplish in their hopes and dreams. And we want to put that front and center and then take that student with his or her passions and put them in an environment where we’ve got the Jesuit tradition, we’ve got the community and we have professors who are really dedicated to teaching. And we feel like that’s kind of our secret formula right there where those passions can really grow and flourish. And ultimately, we hope a student comes here and finds their purpose, whatever that purpose is. That’s what we want them to find.

Jesuit administrators collectively shared about four areas that make their institutions unique. Those four areas included:

- Jesuit philosophy of education
- Distinct community atmosphere
- Care for the individual student

- Being for and with others

They believed that these four areas were not simply unique to their institution, but, for the most part, are reflected across the Jesuit network of colleges and universities. While interviewees recognized that competition takes place across these same institutions, it was clear that there is a sense of hope that Jesuit colleges and universities can collaborate more frequently especially as it relates to image and enrollment. However, that call is in need of refinement and leadership.

Many interviewees reported that their institutions are making great strides in their marketing and branding work over the past several years. While the positioning of the marketing offices is far from complete, there was a general sense that they have moved beyond being simply a production and copying center to more strategic work in alignment with enrollment, fundraising, and other important university strategies. One marketing leader described the changes this way,

We have gone leaps and bounds over the past couple of years in terms of growing as a branding and marketing institution and office. Just back in the day... we were more tactical. And that has evolved, I would say over recent years. We have great feedback from our Board of Trustees who can shed light on our marketing and branding... And so now we're becoming more seem as the kind of strategic partners on campus where we can be look to for, um, not only insights and strategy, but also getting those tactical things done that kind of build their entire marketing plan and not just, um, hey, go print me this brochure or something like that. So, I would say we've definitely evolved over the years and there's still probably, there's always opportunity to continue to evolve.

The interviewees noted an unmeasurable value that athletics has on recruitment and alumni relations. As some shared, athletics provides a unique path for alumni, students, and employees to get dressed up, go to games, and cheer on your team. One marketing officer shared, “From an external standpoint, it’s great. [Athletics] brings students in because it helps them know who we are and discover us. But then it also helps too, to continue to build that community.”

When looking across the interviews, web sites, and mission statements, there are areas of consistency and variation. While most overarching themes hold true especially between the interviews and web sites, mission statements point to a clearer and direct means to share the Jesuit and Catholic nature of each institution. As noted, some administrators choose to lead with Jesuit, while others describe Jesuit values without explicitly saying Jesuit, and even others wait to bring up Jesuit until later in the process. Mission statements, however, all lead with Jesuit and Catholic beliefs.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND REFLECTION

Introduction

This chapter presents my conclusions, recommendations, and final reflection on the marketing and branding of Jesuit higher education. A summary of the purpose of the study, findings, and considerations for the future are also provided. This study began with a set of guiding research questions to consider with a wide variety of administrators at each of four Jesuit colleges and universities across the United States. Those questions included:

1. How do Jesuit university administrators and faculty describe their institutional brand?
2. How do Jesuit leaders describe the utilization of marketing and branding to support their institutional philosophies and strategies?
3. How do Jesuit institutional leaders describe the marketing organization including history, structures, and resources including their ability to collaborate with other parts of the organization?
4. Why do similarities and differences of branding and marketing exist across the Jesuit universities?
5. How does the branding and marketing of Jesuit higher education evolve to continue to meet long-range mission and market goals?

At each of the four Jesuit institutions, Creighton University, Gonzaga University, St. Joseph's University, and Xavier University, interviews were conducted with five administrators with the specific or similar title including the Athletic Director, Chief Enrollment Officer, Chief

Marketing Officer, Chief Mission Office, and Provost. These roles relate to various functions throughout the organizations and whose backgrounds and related experiences would likely vary from their individual perspectives and positions. These individuals were very open to share their thoughts about the role of marketing and branding in Jesuit higher education. Many described the role of administrators in Jesuit higher education as being part of a global network of Jesuit colleagues dedicated to the development of interested students.

Pope Francis called on Jesuit administrators, faculty, and staff to dedicate themselves to showing students the way, not simply in words but in daily action. In a 2013 address, Pope Francis called for those in education,

But above all with your life be witnesses of what you communicate. Educators — Jesuits, teachers, operators, parents — pass on knowledge and values with their words; but their words will have an incisive effect on children and young people if they are accompanied by their witness, their consistent way of life. Without consistency it is impossible to educate! You are all educators, there are no delegates in this field. (p. 1).

Jesuit educators, the Pope continued, must work with a spirit of collaboration, unity, and encouragement to cultivate students “who are simple, competent, and honest” (Francis, 2013, p. 1).

Conclusions

Jesuit tops the branding charts at Jesuit universities. Perhaps this should have been expected. When asked to describe the essence of their institution, many interviewees started first with talking about the Jesuit tradition, and for those who did not start there, many described it as part of their dialogue about their institution. In our Jesuit communities, debate has shaped about the degree to which universities, in today’s modern age, should address their Jesuit principles

and heritage. In a 2014 review of the new brand for Jesuit universities, Jones shares, “The balance of mission, identity, and modern times—and whether that balance negates the central principles of Jesuit and Catholic education—is what lies at the root of the tensions present for these schools” (p. 1).

As simple as this finding may be, perhaps it is the most significant. It is important for Jesuit administrators and presidents to know that at least at four medium-sized Jesuit universities, the most prominent brand characteristic shared at each is their commitment to a Jesuit philosophy and tradition. And, while each administrator described that Jesuit way of proceeding in a number of different formats, each seemed to be fairly clear on the importance of being a Jesuit university.

Marketers must define branding. One aspect that was overwhelmingly clear in the research was that there is little to no clarity on exactly what “branding” means. Branding itself is new to the college landscape. As many suggested, the word branding has never been used as much as it is today for administrators on college campuses. That said, the use of the term varies widely. Some used it to describe the essence of who they are as a university. Others used it describe what their students thought of their university. Others used it very interchangeably with the term marketing. Finally, others simply used it as a word to describe their logo, graphics, and general institutional standards.

Notably, the confusion of the term marketing does not simply appear to be a higher education issue. “Branding is one of those marketing concepts that is a bit vague and can become confusing, even for people who have studied marketing” (Andrivet, 2015, p. 1). The Business Dictionary (2019) tries to best sum up branding as,

The process involved in creating a unique name and image for a product in the consumers' mind, mainly through advertising campaigns with a consistent theme.

Branding aims to establish a significant and differentiated presence in the market that attracts and retains loyal customers.

Branding author David Aaker (1996) describes branding as simply a series of assets or liabilities that promote or detract from the value of a service or product. Aaker (1996) also presents a perspective on branding based on practical management issues within an organization. He notes that brand nurturing organizations are reactive to issues present within and outside of the organization. This brings us full circle back to Tierney's (2008) organizational framework which also notes powerful internal and external forces. The connection between Tierney's organizational framework and Aaker's influencers on branding may be a solution to consider moving forward. Those frameworks could suggest that in order for an institution to create and maintain a solid brand strategy, leaders within the organization must make the role of branding clear, as well as understanding the external challenges that may put pressure on an institution's brand.

The role of marketing and branding continues to grow. No matter what role within the institution, nearly every interviewee agreed that marketing and branding is important work in today's higher education marketplace. And, this marketing and branding work is not limited to the staff within a marketing department but includes most, if not all, constituents throughout a university. Furthermore, the importance of the marketing and branding work continues to grow as competition increases, demand for student enrollment and corresponding tuition dollars increases, and as students continue to have a wider and wider set of possible institutions from

which to select. This marketing and branding work is important at the local marketing department level and throughout the organization.

One of the chief marketing leaders shared that the role of marketing and branding and its relationship to the strategic plan have never been more important. This CMO connected all of the dots about why the importance of marketing and branding has grown and the relationship today of those duties on Jesuit campuses.

I think it's (marketing and branding) of the utmost importance. I think that any university strategic plan should have a goal that is about the brand of the university. And I think that is more important now than ever because at the highest levels, we have people questioning higher education. Is it the route? Should people be paying the amounts that they do for higher education? What are the outcomes? So, we're getting those questions, number one. Number two, connected to that, there's less funding out there for higher education and even in the private realm, people have far more choices on what they want to do philanthropically. And then number three, we know that the demographics are working against us. And that's a little different depending on what part of the country you're in, but by and large, there are less junior high and high school age kids headed towards college. So, there is greater competition among higher education opportunities. So, given all of that, 'brand' is the great 'x' factor. You need to have a school that people feel is worth investing in and that is worth enhancing someone's life. So, you really have to put forward how that institution stands apart and how it's going to make a difference in someone's life.

It is that notion of sharing what your institution stands for and how it delivers on that promise that is so very important in today's marketplace. Higher education branding expert Bill Faust (2015) notes that,

A brand is the total experience that an institution provides to its stakeholders, including the story it tells to convey that experience. It's the promise it makes to deliver that experience each and every day – a much bigger but more meaningful – concept. (p. 1)

It is the task of those in higher education marketing to convey the importance of this brand work and bring their institution into a full understanding of the complexity and completeness required in branding. So, while the importance of university branding continues to grow, there is more work to be done to bring the entire campus into a fuller understanding of the term "branding."

Institutions compete but would welcome collaboration. It was easy to understand that most Jesuit institutions compete against one another for students. Because of their similar characteristics, it was easy to understand that prospective students may be looking at multiple Jesuit universities at one time. Yes, these same students are also considering other private universities, Catholic universities, and public university options as well. Today's students are utilizing the competitive nature of higher education enrollment to seek both the best fit for them at the best price point, and university administrators seem to all know this is happening.

Jesuit institutions appear to have a collective issue, as do all private institutions, and perhaps even all institutions of higher education and that is the price point. One Athletic leader shared, "I think the bigger threat right now of course is the private schools versus the public schools, and the tuition dollars that we need to generate to be able to pay our bills and yet be

competitive in a market.” It is this competition in the market that then drives more marketing, the need for increased brand awareness, and the notion to stay competitive.

While Jesuit administrators would love to collaborate more and on deeper levels, many are hesitant. They understand the hierarchy that exists within just the 27 Jesuit colleges and universities. They understand that each institution is unique based on its location, structures, cultures, and more. They understand that at the end of the day, they are measured on their own success.

That said, more interviewees were interested in the notion of collaborating more often with the other Jesuit universities. There was a real interest and desire. “I think it’s smart for us to band together... because there’s more commonalities between our brands than difference,” noted one marketing officer. They wished that the Jesuit institutions would make it clear on what Jesuit education is so that as soon as a prospective student heard Jesuit anywhere in this country, they would have a good idea about what that meant already. They noted that each institution can and should work on what makes their place so particularly unique but that leveraging all institutions early on would be helpful. More than one interviewee noted that someone needs to lead the effort because the interest is there. More than one recommended that the AJCU consider a long-term focus on collaboration across all aspects of Jesuit institutions. Looking across the mission statements of each Jesuit institution and highlighting the consistency and similarity among these four institutions. A starting point could be the use of very specific language across mission statements to share a broader statement for exactly what Jesuit education is could be an additional step.

Conclusions with theoretical framework

While Tierney's theoretic framework can be seen throughout the responses, it is worthwhile to note the most important recognition within the framework. Tierney suggests one of the most powerful influences is an institution's own internal culture (2008). Tierney outlines six components to consider for understanding a framework for organizational culture including environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership (2008). This study worked to understand those components within the context of branding and marketing.

Understanding organizational strengths helps to best articulate an institution's brand. A brand will help differentiate an organization from other competing organizations. The conclusions include:

1. Jesuit tops the branding charts at Jesuit universities
2. Marketers must define branding
3. The role of marketing and branding continues to grow
4. Institutions compete but would welcome collaboration

The fact that the term Jesuit is the most significant piece of branding for Jesuit universities draws specifically on the mission of these institutions. While variance occurred in how important the term Jesuit was in sharing about each institution to prospective students, it was often the leading indicator of institutional brands. Tierney (2008) notes, "Identity begins with mission" (p. 17). Identity is very closely linked to branding. One could say, branding begins with mission.

The fact that marketers must define branding better goes to the heart of information and leadership. While Chief Marketing Officers had a clear and consistent view of what branding meant to them, it was just as clear that the same definition and understanding was not the same

throughout the organizations. A CMO must do a better job in leading brand work and sharing information about the importance and impact of a brand throughout the university. That sharing of information should be formal and informal. Tierney (2008) notes formal and informal frames of reference provided by leaders helps to earn the backing of faculty, staff, students, and other constituents (p. 38).

The conclusion that marketing and branding continues to grow at these universities is associated most with strategy. Universities are growing the investment in marketing efforts especially as competition for students increases. As the university administrators in this study suggested, marketing is now a major pillar of university strategies as competition has been amplified. Marketing is discussed at the highest levels of universities and the role of chief marketing officer has been moved up the university organizational chart due to this importance. Tierney (2008) even notes that a particular kind of strategy – interpretive strategy – can come from a university who understands that they can create their own environment (p. 36). Jesuit administrators noted the uniqueness of their institutions and the continued development of those communities as one way in which they are creating their own environment.

Finally, the conclusion that institutions would like to collaborate says a lot about socialization and the environment. With the competition noted, universities seek other ways in which to engage. Collaboration, especially between colleges and universities with similar characteristics, can be seen as one opportunity for further support with branding and marketing. Tierney (2008) notes that socialization can best be seen while following the daily activities of a university employee (p. 85). Such was the case in this study. Administrators shared most about how they experienced their own institutional brand from the lens of their daily work. Branding

had much to do with what the administrators perceived as important institutional characteristics that played out regularly on their own campus.

As Tierney (2008) states, “all effective and efficient institutions will not have similar cultures” (p. 39). As witnessed in these four Jesuit universities, each had different environments, strategies, and leadership. While clearly their missions were interrelated, each had dynamic and unique individual components as well.

Sample Size

Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, and Footnot (2013) suggest that besides the research topic and questions, the sample size for a qualitative study is one of the most fundamental needs for credible research. They noted the need to ensure there is plenty of data in order to produce reasonable reporting and analysis (Marshall et al., 2013). With 21 interviewees at four distinct institutions, this study provided enough time for interviewees to complete the series of questions and offered enough sampling in order to see patterns in the data. While additional voices could have been added along with additional universities or even additional positions within the universities, for this study the sample size proved effective. Essentially, after 21 interviews, we had reached a point of saturation for each of the questions, the corresponding institutions, and enough data to derive themes.

Branding Recommendations

The study suggests that there is ample need for articulating what a brand is and what branding means across these institutions. The responses from the participants, while sometimes similar, more often than not showcased a wide variation in an understanding of the terms. A worthwhile endeavor for each institution would be to define brand and branding for their

campus. Furthermore, the work of the marketing and communications leaders within the AJCU may wish to consider a more global definition of brand and branding.

Considerations should also be given to create a quick reference guide for Jesuit administrators about the talking points for the importance and characteristics of a Jesuit education. This may help CMOs at the local level bring a consensus to their individual campuses while trying to rally that collaborative spirit across Jesuit universities that so many of the interviewees noted. It may be fair to ask if anyone or any group within the AJCU network has the responsibility for the “Jesuit” brand.

Implications for Practice

It’s time. It’s really time. From all of the national research, the decade ahead appears to be clad with competition. From fewer students to increased discount rates to the commonization of the higher education sector, bold steps must be made to secure institutional significance. And, in a time of competition, from the interviews described here, the time is ripe for collaboration. While competition and collaboration can seem at odds with each other and while some interviewees certainly outlined the perils, it became clear that collaboration would be welcomed – at least the type of collaboration that would outline a better understanding of what Jesuit education is, has to offer, and why students should consider a Jesuit university for their educational pursuits.

As noted through Tierney’s framework, in order for collaboration to take place, internal, external, structural, and mission decisions must be made by institutional leaders. The reality highlights the call for leaders at Jesuit universities to provide the resources and structures necessary to propel all Jesuit universities forward. Annual resources, in partnership with the AJCU, should be put forward for national branding and marketing opportunities. Collective

resources should be put forward for more enhanced Jesuit enrollment practices, capitalizing on the Jesuit Excellence Tour model which continue to share the wealth of institutional options within the Jesuit network. This will need a champion – multiple champions, really. Champions within institutions, especially marketing and enrollment managers, as well as champions within the AJCU and its presidential leadership structure. And, it may need a group of Jesuit universities to start first – perhaps a group from the East, Midwest, or West, who recognize the benefits to all and can champion their collective institutions within the region.

Those champions can also be internal to a university particularly from the interviews for those in central marketing and athletics. Across the board, athletic leaders know that their respective athletic programs offer a front door to their institution. That first impression through athletics offers multiple brand experiences of the university. If a university is to carry out a comprehensive brand experience, athletic offices and central marketing offices must create offer a unified brand experience. That coordination appears to be complicated yet those who are coordinated appear to be creating a seamless brand experience for their constituents. Collaboration between the internal offices with a synchronized brand experience will allow their brand to take root more efficiently and effectively.

Theoretical Reflection

Stemming from Tierney's (2008) organizational culture construct and from Aaker's considerations for branding, a worthwhile exercise for each individual Jesuit institution would be to create a strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threat (SWOT) analysis for their brand. Relating to the internal organizational structures, histories, and understandings of their university brand, along with the external forces, tensions, and opportunities, may well provide CMOs with a better picture of the institutional brand and the factors that influence its make-up. Knowing

brand strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, may help them create strategies to strengthen organizational branding. A Chief Marketing Officer would then have a better lens for their own institutional six components for organizational culture: environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership (Tierney, 2008). Furthermore, if SWOT's were conducted across AJCU institutions, those could be shared between CMO's to understand if similarities and differences exist and how best to capitalize or understand both.

Tierney's organizational culture framework served as an appropriate lens for which to assist this study. The framework offered critical factors in the formulation of an organization's culture. Those critical factors or themes offered a similar structure to possible themes for this research. Now that the research is complete, Tierney's term of organizational culture could be replaced with organizational brand. What was discovered is how closely culture and branding relate. After all, a brand can be viewed from internal or external lens, from the socialization of interactions, and from the vantage point of strategy and leadership and mission – all parts of Tierney's framework. In fact, Tierney offers a section in his works called "Tying the framework together" in which he suggests that individuals think of their institution based on their interactions (p. 38). Such as the case with branding. In fact, in simplest terms, branding is the accumulation of all of the small touch points an individual has with an organization. Each touch point matters. Each touch point is an opportunity to showcase the brand or detract from the brand. Tierney's organization culture and this research appear to compliment and understand the other.

Recommendation for Future Research

As noted earlier, there has been little research done to date on the marketing and branding of Jesuit higher education. This study has had the opportunity to expand that research. Yet, there continue to be plenty of opportunities to consider for future research.

First, replication of this study could expand the network of interviewees to include additional universities and additional positions. It is unclear if the study findings are on generalizable to midsized institutions or if the conclusions would have been different if smaller and larger institutions were included in this study. However, additional research at various sized institutions may provide additional insight.

Second, what might this same study look like 5 or 10 years from now? Clearly, the current climate of the Catholic priest scandal had influence on participant's responses. As time passes, what might that impact look like and how might responses change?

Third, what might this study look like if not focused on Jesuit institutions? For instance, what if Christian, Lutheran, Jewish, or Hindu universities were the focus of the study, both within a certain country or internationally? A similar study could even be conducted with similar public institutions as well. For instance, what if the interviews took place at four public institutions within the greater Birmingham, Alabama area. Might those institutions share similar constructs for their brand based on geography, histories, and make-up of their student bodies? That is unclear and additional research is needed to understand these potential nuances.

Reflection

The opportunity to conduct this research study has been a blessing. Not only do I hope that this adds to the intellectual tradition of the marketing and branding communities, but even more so to the Jesuit colleges and universities that I have come to admire so well. Following

these interviews and analysis, it is clear that these institutions form an important position in the diversity of American higher education. Steeped in a 450-year tradition of Jesuit philosophy and Jesuit pedagogy, these institutions maintain a unique space for prospective students to consider. They each have challenges and opportunities. And, after interviewing a good number of these Jesuit senior administrators, I have a better understanding that they are up to the challenges in today's higher education marketplace and will find the opportunities necessary to continue this vital Jesuit educational tradition well into the future.

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APPENDIX A

List of the 27 U.S. Jesuit colleges and universities, location, and the year they were founded.

• Boston College	Boston, MA	1863
• Canisius College	Buffalo, NY	1870
• College of the Holy Cross	Worcester, MA	1843
• Creighton University	Omaha, NE	1878
• Fairfield University	Fairfield, CT	1942
• Fordham University	New York, NY	1841
• Georgetown University	Washington D.C.	1789
• Gonzaga University	Spokane, WA	1887
• John Carroll University	Cleveland, OH	1886
• Le Moyne College	Syracuse, NY	1946
• Loyola Marymount University	Los Angeles, CA	1911
• Loyola University Chicago	Chicago, IL	1870
• Loyola University Maryland	Baltimore, MD	1852
• Loyola University New Orleans	New Orleans, LA	1912
• Marquette University	Milwaukee, WI	1881
• Regis University	Denver, CO	1877
• Rockhurst University	Kansas City, MO	1910

- Saint Joseph's University Philadelphia, PA 1851
- Saint Louis University St. Louis, MO 1818
- Saint Peter's University Jersey City, NJ 1872
- Santa Clara University Silicon Valley, CA 1851
- Seattle University Seattle, WA 1891
- Spring Hill College Mobile, AL 1830
- University of Detroit Mercy Detroit, MI 1941
- University of San Francisco San Francisco, CA 1855
- University of Scranton Scranton, PA 1888
- Xavier University Cincinnati, OH 1831

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH STUDY

<Name of University president>
Office of the President
<Name of University>
<Street Address of University>
<City, State, Zip>

<Name of University president>,

As you know, I am currently pursuing my Ed.D. through the University of Alabama. I am prepared to begin my doctoral research. The focus of the research surrounds the marketing and branding of Jesuit higher education. While little research has been conducted to this date, I hope to identify differences and similarities for how a number of Jesuit institutions market and brand themselves.

With your permission, I would like to use <Name of University> as one of four sites for my qualitative research study. In the weeks ahead, I would like to see if I can get 45 minutes of your time for your perspective on <Name of University>'s branding efforts. Moreover, with <Name of University> as a site, I will add the University with others as part of this study. The sites were selected as they fall within the same Carnegie Classification, yet are located in different parts of the country.

I am looking to conduct all of my research during the Spring and Summer of 2019 and make my final defense in the Spring of 2020.

Thank you for your consideration,

Doug Ruschman
Associate Vice President for Marketing & Communications
Xavier University

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Participant's Name: _____

Position: _____

Institution: _____

Years at your institution: _____

Introduction

Thank you for allowing me to join you today. My name is Doug Ruschman and I serve as the chief marketing officer at Xavier University. I am pursuing my doctorate degree at the University of Alabama and am currently conducting my dissertation research. This interview will be included in my data along with others from your institution and other Jesuit institutions as well. I am investigating brand and marketing strategies and insights.

I will be recording our discussion. It will allow me to take notes and focus on our discussion while allowing me the opportunity to transcribe our conversation later. The transcript will serve as the data for my research. I'll be deleting the recordings once the interviews are transcribed. Since we are talking about your impressions and observations of your work around the brand, I may use some direct quotes in my analysis but mostly, I will be looking for themes across the institution as well as themes across the other Jesuit institutions. Feel free to share openly. As you can imagine, there are no "right" or "wrong" answers.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to answer. If at any time and for any reason, you would prefer not to participate in this study, please feel free not to. If at any time you would like to stop participating, please tell me. We can take a break, stop and continue at a later date, or stop altogether. You may withdraw from this study at any time, and you will not be penalized in any way for deciding to stop participation. If you feel comfortable, please sign the Content Form and we will begin.

I appreciate your time and would be happy to share with you my complete dissertations and main points once my research is complete. So, let's get started.

Questions:

General interview protocol questions for RQ1:

- If asked to describe the essence of your institution to a high school student and their parents, what would you share with them?
- Are their four themes that would rise to the top for you?
- Would your themes differ if you were talking to an alum or community member instead of a prospective student?

General interview protocol questions for RQ2:

- Do you consider marketing and branding important components of your overall university strategies?
- To what degree do you believe that marketing and branding strategies intersect with other institutional strategies?
- What internal or external tensions or forces exist that prevent institutions from succeeding as best as possible in the work of institutional marketing and branding?

General interview protocol questions for RQ3:

- Share with me what you know about the history of marketing and branding at your institution.
- What do you know about the structure of the marketing office?
- How well does the marketing office collaborate with others across campus?
- Do you feel they are appropriately resourced?

General interview protocol questions for RQ4:

- From your knowledge of other U.S. Jesuit colleges and universities, and from the four themes you identified earlier, do you think those themes are distinctive to your institution or shared across other Jesuit institutions?
- What about across other Catholic institutions?
- What about across other private, religious institutions?
- Do you believe those distinctive traits are important in today's higher education marketplace?
- What role does Athletics play in your themes or distinctiveness?
- What role does your Carnegie classification, as a Comprehensive Master's institution play in your themes or distinctiveness?

General interview protocol questions for RQ5:

- As you consider the future of higher education, in what ways will the marker of being a Jesuit Catholic university be positive or negative?
- Do you see any benefit for Jesuit institutions to collectively brand themselves around the themes you described earlier?
- What tensions might exist that preclude Jesuit institutions from branding themselves together?

Specific questions for a particular interviewee for RQ1:

For University President

- Describe your role as it relates to the university's brand based on your position as President.

For Athletic Director

- How would you describe the university's brand as similar or different than that of the university's athletic brand?

Specific questions for a particular interviewee for RQ2:

For Academic leadership

- How do members of the academy embrace or reject the notion of marketing their programs?
- Describe the feedback of the faculty when they hear about your institution's brand.
- Are the words "marketing" and "branding" accepted on your campus as part of the new normal of higher education?

Specific questions for a particular interviewee for RQ3:

For chief marketing officer

- On college campuses, the use of the terms "marketing" and "branding" were, at one time, not utilized in higher education. How are those terms utilized on your campus today?

Specific questions for a particular interviewee for RQ4:

For chief mission officer

- Describe the ways in which the missions of Jesuit universities might be similar or different.

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONS AND ANALYSIS MATRIX

Research Question #1 (RQ1)

How do Jesuit university administrators and faculty describe their institutional brand?

RQ1 code:

- Brand

Analytical themes for RQ1:

- Distinctive characteristics of Jesuit institutions

General interview protocol questions for RQ1:

- If asked to describe the essence of your institution to a high school student and their parents, what would you share with them?
- Are their four themes that would rise to the top for you?
- Would your themes differ if you were talking to an alum or community member instead of a prospective student?

Specific questions for a particular interviewee for RQ1:

For University President

- Describe your role as it relates to the university's brand based on your position as President.

For Athletic Director

- How would you describe the university's brand as similar or different than that of the university's athletic brand?

In-Group considerations for RQ1:

- Do trends exist in the four themes at a particular University?

Cross Case considerations for RQ1:

- Which themes continue to emerge across the Jesuit institutions?

Research Question #2 (RQ2)

How do Jesuit leaders describe the utilization of marketing and branding to support their institutional philosophies and strategies?

RQ2 code:

- Strategies

Analytical themes for RQ2:

- Importance of marketing and branding
- University strategies
- Internal and external tensions

General interview protocol questions for RQ2:

- Do you consider marketing and branding important components of your overall university strategies?
- To what degree do you believe that marketing and branding strategies intersect with other institutional strategies?
- What internal or external tensions or forces exist that prevent institutions from succeeding as best as possible in the work of institutional marketing and branding?

Specific questions for a particular interviewee for RQ2:

For Academic leadership

- How do members of the academy embrace or reject the notion of marketing their programs?
- Describe the feedback of the faculty when they hear about your institution's brand.
- Are the words "marketing" and "branding" accepted on your campus as part of the new normal of higher education?

In-Group considerations during analysis of RQ2:

- What is the importance of marketing at this institution?
- Do this institution highlight any unique phenomena that affect marketing and branding?

Cross Case considerations during analysis of RQ2:

- Does a predominate internal or external tension exist?
- Do themes emerge in how academic leaders view marketing and branding?

Research Question #3 (RQ3)

How do Jesuit institutional leaders describe the marketing organization including history, structures, and resources including their ability to collaborate with other parts of the organization?

RQ3 code:

- Internal

Analytical themes for RQ3:

- History of marketing the institution
- Structure of the marketing office

- Resources to market the institution
- Opportunities for collaboration

General interview protocol questions for RQ3:

Share with me what you know about the history of marketing and branding at your institution.

- What do you know about the structure of the marketing office?
- How well does the marketing office collaborate with others across campus?
- Do you feel they are appropriately resourced?

Specific questions for a particular interviewee for RQ3:

For chief marketing officer

- On college campuses, the use of the terms “marketing” and “branding” were, at one time, not utilized in higher education. How are those terms utilized on your campus today?

In-Group considerations during analysis of RQ3:

- Are the descriptions of the histories, structures, and resources consistent within the university?

Cross Case considerations during analysis of RQ3:

- What similarities or differences exist in the histories, structures, and resources across the four institutions?

Research Question #4 (RQ4)

Why do similarities and differences of branding and marketing exist across the Jesuit universities?

RQ4 code:

- External

Analytical themes for RQ4:

- Distinctiveness of Jesuit higher education

General interview protocol questions for RQ4:

- From your knowledge of other U.S. Jesuit colleges and universities, and from the four themes you identified earlier, do you think those themes are distinctive to your institution or shared across other Jesuit institutions?
- What about across other Catholic institutions?
- What about across other private, religious institutions?
- Do you believe those distinctive traits are important in today’s higher education marketplace?
- What role does Athletics play in your themes or distinctiveness?
- What role does your Carnegie classification, as a Comprehensive Master’s institution play in your themes or distinctiveness?

Specific questions for a particular interviewee for RQ4:

Chief mission officer

- Describe the ways in which the missions of Jesuit universities might be similar or different.

In-Group considerations during analysis of RQ4:

- Does the university believe that it offers a distinctive educational experience?

Cross Case considerations during analysis of RQ4:

- To what degree do these four Jesuit institutions collectively believe that Jesuit higher education is distinctive?

Research Question #5 (RQ5)

How does the branding and marketing of Jesuit higher education evolve to continue to meet long-range mission and market goals?

RQ5 code:

- Future

Analytical themes for RQ5:

- Future of Jesuit higher education
- Collective branding
- Tensions among Jesuit institutions

General interview protocol questions for RQ5:

- As you consider the future of higher education, in what ways will the marker of being a Jesuit Catholic university be positive or negative?
- Do you see any benefit for Jesuit institutions to collectively brand themselves around the themes you described earlier?
- What tensions might exist that preclude Jesuit institutions from branding themselves together?

Specific questions for a particular interviewee for RQ5:

University President

- Describe the typical feeling among other Jesuit presidents to brand institutions under a Jesuit umbrella.

In-Group considerations during analysis of RQ5:

- Does a common narrative exist for this institution in how leaders perceive the importance of being Jesuit into the future?

Cross Case considerations during analysis of RQ5:

- Do these institutions share a belief that collaborative Jesuit branding may be a path forward into the future?

APPENDIX E

IRB APPROVAL

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA® | Office of the Vice President for
Research & Economic Development
Office for Research Compliance

April 22, 2019

Douglas Ruschman
ELPTS
Box 870302

Re: IRB # EX-19-CM-066: "The Branding of Jesuit Higher Education: A study of Branding, Marketing, and Collaboration"

Dear Mr. Ruschman,

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research. Your application has been given exempt approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under exempt review category 2 as outlined below:

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if:

(iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

The approval for your application will lapse on April 21, 2020. If your research will continue beyond this date, please submit the annual report to the IRB as required by University policy before the lapse. Please note, any modifications made in research design, methodology, or procedures must be submitted to and approved by the IRB before implementation. Please submit a final report form when the study is complete.

Please use reproductions of the IRB-approved informed consent form to obtain consent from your participants.

Sincerely,


Carpantato T. Myles, MSM, CIM, CIP
Director & Research Compliance Officer

cc: Dr. Frankie Laanan