

Marketing of Colleges in a Celebrity Obsessed Culture

# CAPSTONE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

## **Outline**

- The proposed title of the project
- Personal interest
- Potential benefit to colleges and universities
- Methods of gathering information
- Knowledge and skills for undertaking the project
- Previous research on this topic

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### **Marketing of colleges in a celebrity obsessed culture**

#### **The proposed title of the project**

The title for this project is “Marketing of Colleges in a Celebrity Obsessed Culture”. The research will explore if the participation of celebrities or well-known authority figures in college and university education is an effective means of promoting colleges and universities. The questions that this research will answer are the following.

- How are authority figures and celebrities used in promotion of organizations and products apart from colleges and universities?
- What universities and colleges have authority figures and celebrities used for promotion purposes in the past?
- How have they used them as a means of promotion?
- What results have the universities and colleges achieved?
- Are they planning to continue using this form of promotion?
- Will they use this form of promotion often or rarely?

#### **Personal interest**

During my entire career, I have been working in advertising and promotion. The topic is of interest to me because I have seen the firms involve celebrities in the effective marketing of their products. Examples of these firms are American Express, Buick, and Nike. Due to their success, I believe that such a strategy could be effective in promoting colleges or universities. I will personally benefit from this research project because I will be able to find colleges and universities, which will hire me to assist in the implementation of promotions involving authorities and celebrities.

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### **Potential benefits to colleges and universities**

The research findings and conclusions will provide insights and guidelines that will enhance the effectiveness of marketing communication for colleges and universities. Davenport University will be one of the project beneficiaries. The improvements in marketing effectiveness will tremendously reduce marketing costs. The project will be vital in helping colleges and universities enhance student enrollment.

### **Methods of gathering information**

This research mainly calls for the use of primary data because there is little secondary information available on this topic. I will use the available literature, the Internet and electronic database with search of full text articles for secondary data information. I will search for secondary information on the celebrities' involvement in the promotion of products and services related and non-related to colleges and universities. As a primary research, I will conduct five telephone or face-to-face interviews with university marketing and promotion professionals. I will also have three interviews with celebrity marketing agencies or firms.

The respondents in this project will be college, university, and celebrity marketing professionals. I will interview the subjects using open-ended questionnaires as primary research instruments. Because of the small number of respondents, I will not carry out statistical analysis. I will compare information from the interviews to determine if the use of celebrities by universities is an emerging trend in promotion. I will also compare the interview information with secondary research information. The main objective of this project will be determining whether the use of celebrities can help greatly in college and

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university marketing. Responses from the interviews will contribute to addressing the research objective.

### **Knowledge and skills for undertaking the project**

The first area of knowledge and skills is marketing strategies that I will use to explain how colleges and universities are promoting themselves with celebrities. Understanding of organizational behavior is also vital in analyzing the cultures of colleges and universities. Knowledge in the fields of accounting, economics, and finance is to assist in exploring the financial perspectives of celebrity involvement and the related costs. Excellent writing skills are necessary in preparing an effective report. Presentation skills are vital in preparing and presenting a project oral presentation. Another vital piece of knowledge relevant to the project is that of conducting primary research. Knowledge on a sample selection and a questionnaire design is also of vital importance for this project.

### **Previous research on this topic**

I have never conducted research on this topic. This means that I will not submit any prior work to the professor.