



CASE STUDY: Transforming Marketing in Higher Education

Background

The Institute for Humane Studies (IHS) is a nonprofit educational organization that engages with students and professors around the country to encourage the study and advancement of freedom. Target audiences include undergraduate students who have demonstrated an interest in their studies to pursue a career in higher secondary education, with the intent to broaden on-campus conversations beyond current perceived bias toward liberalism. Concurrently, IHS targets like-minded organizations and individuals for their financial support of these candidates and the organization's programs that support both the students and the academic institutions.

Challenges

- Lack of foundational story for broader marketing and promotional activities
- Confusion as to how to effectively articulate the story to distinctly different audience segments with unique perspectives on the organization and the overall movement
- Marketing organizational structure not clearly defined, with various "shadow marketing" functions distributed throughout operating departments
- Significant inconsistencies and inefficiencies in functional support due to lack of governance around marketing discipline, related to both the brand story and the required tactical support requirements

Approach

- Interviewed numerous internal and external stakeholders across key audience segments (Undergraduate, Graduate, Networks, Donors)
- Conducted numerous internal workshops to understand key pain points and perspectives of IHS mission and vision
- Developed a 3S Playbook to identify prioritized initiatives to build the brand story and supporting components to move the organization forward



Result

- Delivered and implemented a powerful brand story that effectively addressed key disparate audiences (participants and donors); participation increased significantly among target segments
- Re-organized the marketing function to improve operating efficiencies, resulting in better overall support and performance
- Created new, differentiated campaigns focused specifically on the donor community
- Recommended and facilitated implementation of optimal marketing technology to enhance employee productivity