

Administrative Activities Review (AAR) Guidelines

The review is an opportunity for your unit to reflect on its mission, the services you provide, your strengths and challenges, and your future plans. It will be used to inform decisions about resource allocations across the campus. This document should be used as a guideline and you should address only the sections that are applicable to your unit.

I. Basic Facts and Description of the Unit.

- a. **Mission and goals.** University Communications and Marketing works to advance the interests of UA by 1) promoting and preserving its reputation as a premier institution of higher education and 2) marketing/advertising to prospective students to help recruit them to enroll at UA. UCM also strives to communicate effectively, efficiently and in a timely manner with its various audiences, both internal and external, to build awareness and understanding of university policies, practices and decisions and to generate support for those initiatives.

Goals –

- Increase favorable perceptions of UA as a high-quality public university that advances the development of knowledge, prepares students for productive careers and lives and contributes to the growth and development of Northeast Ohio.
- Persuade more potential students from all walks of life to consider UA for their education, to engage with UA through a variety of communication channels and, ultimately, to enroll at UA.
- Ensure that internal audiences receive information about University-related matters directly from UA leadership and prior to public release.
- Stay current with technology and evolving communication channels to ensure UA remains relevant and able to connect with our various audiences in the ways in which and when they want to communicate.
- Support staff growth and development so they continue to learn and contribute to meeting departmental responsibilities.

b. **Services.** Describe the primary services provided by your unit, organizing them into major categories. Indicate how your unit prioritizes its services in terms of importance or effort. Describe the relative magnitude of the major categories (e.g., by department workload, students or customers served, revenue generated, etc.).

- For each primary service, describe the following:
- **Critical partners.** List your key partnerships with other units inside and outside of the University. Note if there is overlap or duplication of services with other units at UA.
- **Customers or end-users of your services.** List your customers (e.g., departments, divisions, organizations/groups inside and outside of UA, etc.) or types of students served and include some indication of the relative volume of service provided to each.
- **Key performance analysis.** Present the most important metrics (in charts, tables, etc.) you track to measure performance. Provide the most recent three-to-five years of results, targets, and comparisons to peer institutions, as available. For every metric, provide the corresponding analysis, including a comment on important trends, conclusions, or insights drawn from the data.
- **Brief assessment.** Highlight (in a couple of sentences) any noteworthy strengths, challenges, or opportunities.

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Service	Critical partners	End users	KPI	Assessment
Media relations	On campus- UCM, all other colleges and departments, students; Off campus - all external media outlets (print and digital)	On campus: UCM (for repurposing of content), faculty, staff, students. Off campus: media outlets, Board of Trustees, alumni, parents, general community of readers/viewers/listeners	Media exposure (volume and sentiment of placements, mentions) share of voice, delivery of key messages, Geo Presence	Assimilating new hires will help get the department back up to speed; thorough use of software will allow for better tracking of results; setting strategic media plans to ensure proactive focus on key messaging/strategies.
Trademarked Merchandise Review	Retail Merchandisers like Barnes & Noble bookstore. Non-Retail Merchandise for Admissions, Wayne Campus Admissions, College of Health Professions, Greek Life and various student organizations.	Students, prospective students, alumni, faculty/staff, community	The KPI of the retail merchandise can be measured by the number of UA-licensed pieces purchased.	Between FY15 & FY17, there have been 6,015 approvals by UA. The majority of retail merchandise is clothing, hats and drinkware. The most popular non-retail items are T-shirts, pens, and totes/bags.
UCM jobs/publications	Admissions first, but all colleges and departments are able to benefit from our services.	Students, prospective students, alumni, faculty/staff, community	The KPI of the number of jobs produced by UCM is not directly trackable.	Between FY15 & FY17 UCM has completed a total of 1,237 jobs – increasing each year. 300 in FY 15; 417 in FY 16; and 520 in FY 17.
Photography	Admissions first, but all colleges and departments are able to benefit from our services.	Students, prospective students, alumni, faculty/staff, community	The KPI of the photography used by UCM is not directly trackable.	With the hiring of a second graphic designer in fall '17, this gave the senior graphic designer more opportunities to go out and perform 50+ individual photo shoots just this year (so far) to update our existing photo library. In the past we've relied on paying freelancer photographers to perform many of these assignments.

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Graphic Design	Admissions first, but all colleges and departments are able to benefit from our services.	Students, prospective students, alumni, faculty/staff, community	Pieces are used to send to homes and handed out at college visits, on campus, etc. We're not able to track the KPI of these types of pieces other than positive anecdotal feedback from our UA clients.	Now with two graphic designers, and a group of very competent student designers, UCM has been able to rely less heavily on freelance designers -- saving the University money.
Web and mobile app	Admissions first, but all colleges and departments, plus EJT. Little overlap. Only UL, CPSPE and CBA have employees with defined web responsibilities. (CBA pro is about to retire.)	Students, prospective students, alumni, faculty/staff, community	On key pages, we track user behaviors and revise pages accordingly. We analyze and improve pages where users drop off in higher numbers. We track numbers for form signups. On select initiatives, we track sources. New mobile app coming online this fall has robust analytics.	Backlog of front-end projects easing because we were able to hire a web editor/designer. We have struggled to fill an open programmer position because of an uncompetitive salary range.

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Social	Admissions first, but all colleges and departments. Only Student Life and Alumni have someone who devotes a portion of duties to social.	Students, prospective students, parents, alumni, faculty/staff, community	Followers, engagement (likes, comments, shares) tracked by project, but not longitudinally. Stats inform strategy going forward.	A real strength in our department. Our pro is highly creative, which has produced an engaged and spirited following. Students heavily involved in devising content for channels, including popular livestreams. Knight Foundation a partner. We are embarking on effort to improve campus-wide quality of social. Kent State is adding a second social media pro to its team.
Video	Admissions first, but all colleges and departments. Only Design and Development Services has a pro dedicated to video, for academic purposes only.	Students, prospective students, parents, alumni, faculty/staff, community. Growth seen in social media views of video.	We track stats, including how long viewers watch throughout a video, to understand what triggers might prompt them to end a session.	A real strength in our department. Function increasing in importance. Our pro has benefited from stellar student assistants who have learned video basics in our SOC.
Email marketing	Admissions first. Other major clients include EJT, NSO, Development, Alumni and the colleges.	Students, prospective students, parents, alumni, faculty/staff, community	We track open and click-through rates. We test subject lines to ensure we are using the best one.	A real strength in our department. Our recruitment open and clickthroughs frequently exceed industry averages. We have switched service providers this year; costs will be lower and our capabilities greater.
Internal communication	All colleges and departments	Students, faculty and staff	With Digest/Zipmail, we don't have the capability to track open rates at this time.	Our setup for Digest/Zipmail is envied at other campuses, where departments/ individuals can have direct access to email lists. Both Digest and Zipmail receive many submissions, suggesting submitters are getting results.

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Switchboard	We rely on Telecom’s technical expertise to solve problems, since we lack training in the hardware and software. Vendor support is lacking.	Students, alumni, community	No stats are available. The software we use needs to be updated; newer, cloud-based versions offer statistics.	This function is not a fit for our group. With a pending retirement, this responsibility will become more burdensome for UCM. Persistent software problems are proving to be difficult to resolve, even with vendor’s “support.”
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c. Resources. Describe your resources as outlined below. Highlight (in a couple of sentences) any noteworthy strengths, challenges, or opportunities related to your resource allocation.

- UCM has received essentially the same level of financial resources for at least the last seven years (minus university-wide operating budget reductions). During FY 2017 – 2018, the decision was made to reallocate some funds that had been allocated to advertising in order to make four critical staff hires (web design, content writing, graphic design and media relations); the overall departmental budget remained unchanged.
- Comparative information from competitor universities continues to show that UA is significantly outspent in advertising and marketing as well as in staff resources. For example, available data reveals that Kent State spent at least \$2.6 million in 2017, while Cuyahoga Community College spent at least \$2.7 million (not including digital media advertising). Bryant & Stratton College expended at least \$1.3 million.
- From a staffing standpoint, the disparity continues, and is perhaps even greater. For example, Kent State (enrollment 39,400+) has an estimated marketing and communication staff of 140 individuals, including those in central administration and throughout the colleges and regional campuses.
- The UCM staff continues to excel in meeting the needs of the University. The staff demonstrates exceptional dedication and commitment, creativity, timely production of work, and responses to opportunities and challenges as they occur. UCM plans and implements complex communication and marketing efforts to support university initiatives, by engaging with current and prospective students, strengthening relationships between the University and community and in using numerous communication channels to connect with our audiences.
- **Personnel.** Include an organizational chart of your unit, supplemented with a table that includes titles, a short description of the key functions of each position-type, and the number of people in each position-type (including number of FTEs, if applicable). (The appendix should include an org chart showing how your unit fits into the larger University structure.)

Name	Title	Major responsibilities - UCM Leadership and Management
Wayne Hill	VP/Chief Comm. & Mktg. Officer	Guides and oversees the strategic direction and function of the department; serves as counselor to the president and University leadership (including the Board of Trustees) on a wide range of matters with communication-related implications; principal spokesperson for the University on institution-wide matters and/or crisis situations. (1)
Name	Title	Major responsibilities - Integrated Communications
Krystal Ahmed	Web editor and designer -	Works with colleges and departments to improve their websites by strengthening their marketing messages, defining clear calls to action and designing elegant pages that are accessible by all, including those on mobile devices and screen-readers. (1)
Steve Allen	Senior Multi Media Producer	Devises, directs, shoots and produces long- and short-form video for multiple uses, including website, social, in-person presentations, TV broadcast and email marketing campaigns. (1)

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Joette Dignan Weir	Manager, Editorial Services	Manages the daily production of the employee Email Digest and weekly student Zipmail. Maintains several websites. Writes student success stories for web and media pitching. (1)
Eric Krieder	Director, Web Services	Designs the technical aspects of our web presence and leads the Web-Team in implementing goals and tools. Designs and monitors projects to completion, coordinating the resources of the web team to reach the project goals. (1)
Bob Kropff	Senior Director, Integrated Communication	Plans and directs communications strategies to meet university objectives. Manages the website, social, video, email marketing and internal communication efforts. (1)
Miki Janosi	Senior Web Developer	Writes and maintains complex forms and programs for use on and by the website. Expert level javascript programming, PHP programming, velocity scripting, SOAP, JSON, XML and database concepts. (1)
Meghan Meeker	Social Media Specialist	Develops content, including live streams, for our core social media channels. Interacts with students, alumni and others on our channels, often providing highly visible customer service that reinforces our brand. (1)
Steve Patton	Front End Developer	Ensures that web site performs correctly in browsers on all devices. Create and manage a responsive web design using stylesheets in CSS and javascript. Manage all analytics and tracking devices for page and advertising analytics. (1)
Steve Sedlock	Digital Marketing & Communications Specialist	Counsels and assists college and departments achieve recruitment and other goals through email marketing, web development and use of surveys. Has in-depth knowledge of email marketing best practices. (1)
Anthony Serpette	Asst. Director, Web Services	Administers and monitors all primary systems that provide services to and enhances our web presence. Works with and supervises work from the team of web developers. Works directly with clients to plan, set goals, implement websites and use other systems. (1)
Jan Watts	Administrative Assistant, Senior	Provides administrative support for the 15 professionals who work in UCM's office in ASB and 5 more who work in the Lincoln Building. Serves as budget administrator for the department, and coordinates most of our hiring and purchasing processes. (2 total in department; see Pam Duncan)
Open position	Back-end web developer	Devises, develops and maintains scripts, programs and technologies that allow our site to deliver information and services to users, and enables third-party software to work well on our site. (1)
Name	Title	Major responsibilities – Public Relations
Cristine Boyd	Director, Media Relations	Manages and implements media relations strategies to enhance the organization's image and visibility. Directs the media relations staff to strategically align media outreach with the goals of the University and to respond effectively to the needs of diverse media outlets. Works closely with the Chief Communications Officer to align media outreach with campus communications to ensure consistency and effectiveness of messaging. (1)

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Lisa Craig	Media Relations Specialist	Enhances the University's reputation by developing stories of public interest, writes news releases and media advisories for external communications and produces content for internal communications. Provides 24/7 access for media outlets, assists in crisis communications and analyzes media coverage of UA and its competitors. (2)
Alex Knisely	Media Relations Specialist	Enhances the University's reputation by developing stories of public interest, writes news releases and media advisories for external communications and produces content for internal communications. Provides 24/7 access for media outlets, assists in crisis communications and analyzes media coverage of UA and its competitors. (2)
Name	Title	Major responsibilities – Creative Services and Marketing
Matt Schafer	Director, Creative Services	Develops and coordinates the production of marketing, advertising and promotional materials for UA constituencies. Directs internal designers and external partners producing brochures, flyers, emails, recruitment materials, campus banners, outdoor advertising, digital advertising, social media creative and web content. (1)
Sarah Steidl	Director, Marketing & Communications	Develops and executes marketing plans to enhance the University's reputation, raise awareness of high quality programs and grow enrollment. Supervises content writer and coordinates output with creative services. Manage strategic partnerships to ensure value is derived from all activities related to the partnership. (1)
Nick Nussen	Content Writer	Writes, proofreads and edits copy for internal and external communications and marketing pieces including press releases, UA Digest articles, webpage content, advertisements, internal messaging, "Student Success" stories on UA website, booklets, brochures, postcards, flyers, "Viewbook" and mailers. (1)
Name	Title	Major responsibilities – Graphic Design
Jeff Harwell	Sr. Graphic Designer	Creates or supervises the creation of printed materials including brochures, booklets, posters and advertisements, electronic media materials, social media graphics, outdoor signage, banners and wall graphics. Maintains and updates the brand system by organizing jobs, photos, and department collateral assets. Serves as photographer for campus activities and events. Supervises the graphic designer and student assistants. (1)

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Jennifer Ly	Graphic Designer	Collaborates and executes creative concepts for the University. Creates design resources for presentations or to help determine a project's design direction, develops design variations, creates additional creative assets, revises existing projects, and prepare print-ready files, layout mock-ups and client preview. Maintains electronic archives of the marketing and communications materials. (1)
Name	Title	Major responsibilities – Publications
Nancy Bracher	Mgr., Publications	Serves as creative team's point person for project initiation. Coordinates with client, creative team and vendor to completion of project while monitoring costs and maintaining quality control and adherence to overall institutional mission and UA brand standards. Works with internal and external legal counsel to maintain proper USPTO registration for more than 50 trademarked logos and identifiers. (1)
Name	Title	Major responsibilities – Presidential Communications
David Nypaver	Director, Presidential Communications	Provides communications support for the University President. Creates speaker briefings, researches external resources and citations, drafts speeches, welcome remarks, development letters, electronic and print correspondences. Coaches student responders for commencement. Manages UA's Presidential webpage. (1)
Name	Title	Major responsibilities – Administrative Support to VP and Department
Pam Duncan	Administrative Assistant, Senior	Provides administrative support to vice president and department staff. Curates, drafts and publishes a daily newsletter featuring media coverage that articulates the University's mission and reputation. Provides secondary administrative support to department including human resources management, purchasing and incidental departmental needs. (2 total in department; see Jan Watts)

**Communications & Marketing
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UCM Org Chart**

John C. Green – Interim President
Office of the President

Wayne Hill – Vice President, Chief Communication & Marketing Officer

Digital Communications

Bob Kropff
Sr. Director,
Integrated Comm.

Crystal Ahmed
Web Editor &
Designer

Steve Allen
Sr. Multi-Media
Producer

Joette Dignan Weir
Mgr., Editorial
Services

Meghan Meeker
Social Media
Specialist

Steve Sedlock
Digital Mktg. &
Comm. Specialist

Jan Watts
Admin. Asst., Sr.

Eric Krieder
Director, Web Services

Anthony Serpette - Asst. Dir, Web Services

Miklos Janosi - Sr. Web Developer

Steve Patton - Front-end Web Developer

Open position – Back-end Web Developer

Public Relations

Cristine Boyd
Director, Media
Relations

Lisa Craig
Media Relations
Specialist

Alex Knisely
Media Relations
Specialist

Marketing
Creative Services

Sarah Steidl
Director,
Marketing
& Communication

Nick Nussen
Content Writer

Matt Schafer
Director, Creative
Services

Publications

Nancy Bracher
Mgr.,
Publications

Graphic Design

Jeff Harwall
Sr. Graphic
Designer

Jennifer Ly
Graphic Designer

Presidential
Communications

David Nypaver
Director, Presidential
Communications

VP
Administrative
Support

Pam Duncan
Admin. Support.,
Sr.

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- **Financials.** Provide a line-item summary of the unit’s budgeted and actual expenses (and revenues, if applicable) over the past five years. Briefly explain key takeaways (e.g., causes of budget deficits, trends in expenditures).

Department Expenses

Speedkey	Description	Account	2016 Budget	2016 Actual	2017 Budget	2017 Actual	2018 Budget
200510	Publications	5700 - Supplies & Services	20,000.00	18,843.61	20,000.00	12,860.03	18,396.32
200510	Publications	7000 - Travel & Hospitality	<u>700.00</u>	<u>123.76</u>	<u>700.00</u>	<u>194.86</u>	<u>236.69</u>
	Speedkey Totals		20,700.00	18,967.37	20,700.00	13,054.89	18,633.01
200529	VP Comm. & Mktg	5200 - Full Time Staff	16,640.00	39,870.82	200529 de-activated	N/A200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated
200529	VP Comm. & Mktg	5240 - Staff Overtime	0.00	26.08	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated
200529	VP Comm. & Mktg	5600 - Fringe Benefits	<u>0.00</u>	<u>16,783.97</u>	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated
	Total Compensation		16,640.00	56,680.87	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated
							200529 de-activated
200529	VP Comm. & Mktg.	5700 - Supplies & Services	9,000.00	6,616.48	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated
200529	VP Comm. & Mktg.	6300 - Communications	1,300.00	650.40	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated
200529	VP Comm. & Mktg.	7000 - Travel & Hospitality	<u>2,000.00</u>	<u>105.50</u>	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated
	Total Expenses		12,300.00	7,372.38	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated	200529 de-activated
	Speedkey Totals			64,053.25			

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200530	Internal Communications	5100 - Administration	92,820.00	165,378.90	132,267.00	178,330.89	368,101.74
200530	Internal Communications	5200 - Full Time Staff	0.00	171,991.85	209,292.00	212,394.41	181,036.70
200530	Internal Communications	5240 - Staff Overtime	0.00	0.00	0.00	373.49	
		5520 - Vacant Positions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
		5600 - Fringe Benefits	0.00	125,384.73	0.00	186,470.76	226,597.67
	Total Compensation		92,820.00	462,755.48	341,559.00	577,569.55	775,736.11
	**2015 reorg. Web team reassignment to UCM						
200530	Internal Communications	5700 - Supplies & Services	14,000.00	16,215.32	14,000.00	10,398.50	17,823.17
200530	Internal Communications	6300 - Communications	1,000.00	1,483.16	1,000.00	949.62	96.74
200530	Internal Communications	7000 - Travel & Hospitality	0.00	1,200.00	0.00	2,485.67	20.99
	Total		15,000.00	18,898.48	15,000.00	13,833.79	17,940.90
	Speedkey Totals		107,820.00	481,653.96	356,559.00	591,403.34	793,677.01
200535	VP Comm. & Mktg.	5100 - Administration	81,600.00	80,649.05	81,600.00	83,404.62	(8,952.85)
200535	VP Comm. & Mktg.	5200 - Full Time Staff	16,640.00	72.16			371.00
200535	VP Comm. & Mktg.	5220 - Part Time Staff		1,847.63			(8,581.85)
200535	VP Comm. & Mktg.	5300 - Graduate Assistants	12,000.00	8,004.00	690.00	3,588.00	0.00
200535	VP Comm. & Mktg.	5600 - Fringe Benefits	0.00	27,531.81		31,565.48	0.00
	Total Compensation		110,240.00	118,104.65	82,290.00	118,558.10	0.00
200535	VP Comm. & Mktg.	5700 - Supplies & Services	20,000.00	11,209.27	20,000.00	33,862.64	4,538.77
200535	VP Comm. & Mktg.	6300 - Communications	2,000.00	1,564.60	2,000.00	355.14	40.00
200535	VP Comm. & Mktg.	7000 - Travel & Hospitality	2,000.00	1.00	2,000.00	1,508.91	124.50
200535	VP Comm. & Mktg.	7400 - Cost Sharing	16,800.00	0.00	16,800.00	0.00	441.00
	Total		40,800.00	12,774.87	40,800.00	35,726.69	5,144.27
	Speedkey Totals		151,040.00	130,879.52	123,090.00	154,284.79	5,144.27

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200540	University Comm. & Mktg.	5100 - Administration	662,892.00	635,298.28	619,846.00	704,362.03	764,813.36
200540	University Comm. & Mktg.	5200 - Full Time Staff	46,654.00	46,053.34	46,654.00	85,242.39	84,280.09
200540	University Comm. & Mktg.	5220 - Part Time Staff	0.00	160.00	0.00	231.57	3.56
200540	University Comm. & Mktg.	5600 - Fringe Benefits	0.00	235,097.77	0.00	322,059.59	343,626.11
	Total Compensation		709,546.00	916,609.39	666,500.00	1,111,895.58	1,192,723.12
200540	University Comm. & Mktg.	5400- Student Assistants	30,000.00	54,161.67	30,000.00	52,789.42	80,000.00
200540	University Comm. & Mktg.	5700 - Supplies & Services	25,000.00	13,422.98	25,000.00	18,111.22	22,967.33
200540	University Comm. & Mktg.	6300 - Communications	16,000.00	12,661.79	16,000.00	15,364.38	821.87
200540	University Comm. & Mktg.	7000 - Travel & Hospitality	2,000.00	90.25	2,000.00	319.32	225.00
200540	University Comm. & Mktg.	7400 - Cost Sharing	0.00	-	-	0.00	0.00
	Total		73,000.00	26,175.02	73,000.00	33,794.92	24,014.20
	Speedkey Totals		812,546.00	996,946.08	769,500.00	1,198,479.92	1,296,737.32
200545	Public Relations	5700 - Supplies & Services	30,000.00	55,350.02	30,000.00	36,602.07	36,752.30
200545	Public Relations	6300- Communications	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	0.00	25.00
		7000 - Travel & Hospitality	0.00	359.49	0.00	510.80	210.00
	Speedkey Totals		32,000.00	55,709.51	32,000.00	37,112.87	36,987.30
200550	University Advertising	5700 Supplies & Services	1,507,102.42	1,463,025.42	1,156,044.18	1,156,044.18	1,236,339.38
		7000 Travel & Hospitality	1183.4	1183.4	0	0	200
		7040 Hospitality					800
	Speedkey Totals		1,508,285.82	1,464,208.82	1,156,044.18	1,156,044.18	1,237,339.38

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- **Equipment and technology.** If applicable, describe the equipment and technology critical to your unit's operations.

Significant equipment:
Two video editing suites (one for our pro, one for students)
Cameras/lenses for video and photography
Computers and peripherals
Significant software subscriptions:
Adobe Suite
Meltwater, for media and social media monitoring
Hootsuite, for social media monitoring and campus-wide coordination and quality control
dotcms, the content management system behind the website
Maropost, for email marketing and web interest forms
Siteimprove, for web content quality (link checker, spelling, search engine optimization, accessibility)
Usablenet, to provide a text-only version of our website for visually impaired visitors
Modo, for our mobile app (going live this quarter). Boopsie will go away.
Qualtrics, for surveys and forms
Smugmug, a repository for our photos
Filemaker, for project management

- **Space.** If relevant to your unit's operations, describe your unit's location(s) and space allocation.

The majority of the Communications & Marketing department staff members are located at the Administrative Services Building, suite. Three members of the team and the department head are located at Buchtel Hall. As the suite is being utilized at maximum capacity, any strategic shifts in location could not be accommodated.

II. Future plans

a. Potential changes

- University branding. The University needs to conduct a comprehensive review and develop an updated brand. As the University moves forward with implementing the results of Academic Program Review and commences a strategic planning process, consideration also needs to be given to the crystallization of the University's brand. This work is dependent upon the outcome of strategic planning, as that effort will identify the direction and focus of UA in the years ahead; the brand has to embody that direction but the direction must be established first.
- Consideration needs to be given to increasing university resources allocated to advertising/marketing. As noted elsewhere, competitor institutions expend significantly more as they seek to recruit students and UA is at a disadvantage in this respect. Since student enrollment accounts for approximately 95% of UA's revenues, our competitive disadvantage needs to be addressed.
- It would be desirable to embed additional communication and marketing staff within the colleges. There are unmet needs and missed opportunities to better tell the good stories of our faculty, students, research, community initiatives and improve recruitment of students and marketing of events, simply because the small, centralized UCM staff is not and cannot be involved on a day-to-day basis in the colleges. This likely is a longer-term issue but should be on the radar.

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- Planning is needed to enable UCM to manage several (4 – 5) retirements of long-term and/or key position personnel within the relatively near future (1 -3 years).
- b. Trends
- We continue to see an explosion of new ways (communication channels) that people use to connect with friends, get information that is of interest and useful to them or engage with institutions such as UA. This is particularly true in the social media arena. As an example, Snapchat started just seven years ago (July 2011); in March 2017, its IPO generated \$3.4 *billion*!! 77% of college students use Snapchat daily. Of necessity, then, we need to have an active, authentic and timely involvement on that platform. Keeping current on social media trends and the best ways of engaging with audiences using these channels requires much attention, diligence and energy. And, contrary to some popular opinions, social media is not “free”. To be accomplished effectively, it requires dedicated staff (UA has one person with this responsibility) to creatively and effectively engage on these platforms.
 - Student recruitment and enrollment challenges are well-known – a continuing decline in traditional-aged prospective students (especially in Northeast Ohio), increased competition from public, private and for-profit higher education institutions (especially in Northeast Ohio), the importance of attracting so-called non-traditional students (adults, those with some college credits, veterans) and meeting their education needs on their terms – all of these and more suggest a need for a more comprehensive and coordinated approach (including communications and marketing) to successfully address these challenges.
 - Mobile first. Experience, and every available study, documents the importance of thinking “mobile first” in web design and communication. Mobile devices -- phones, tablets – are the primary ways in which people access information and engage with an organization. This reality demands that we ensure our content is presented in the easiest way possible for users to access, when and how they want to do so.
 - Digital marketing continues to grow in importance, efficiency and effectiveness. In the last several years, UA has shifted the bulk of its marketing/advertising resources to digital marketing, both because our critical audiences are more oriented to digital channels than to traditional ones and because it enables much better ability to measure its effectiveness. Given the cost and clutter of more traditional advertising, it is expected this trend and resource allocation will continue.
 - Continual upgrading of the UA website. Every available study shows that a university’s website is one of the most important – if not the most important – way in which prospective students seek out information about a university to help determine if it might be a good fit for them. While we continue to enhance and improve our website, there likely will be a need for a more comprehensive overhaul of the site in conjunction with a university branding initiative.