Image, Marketing & Academic Perceptions Survey (IMAP) Results Overview

Fall 2006
IMAP Objectives

- Quantitative component to 2005 focus group meetings
- Benchmark research and measurement
- Creative input for EWU branding
- Critical information for strategic planning, enrollment and fundraising strategies
- Comparison to image research conducted in 1997 by Stamats
Survey Participation

• Total Completed Surveys: 5,796
  – Current Students: 2,738
  – Alumni: 1,630
  – Faculty/Staff: 580
  – Prospective Students: 510
  – Nonalumni: 338

• 20 percent response rate (29k e-mails sent)

• E-mail and Web primary entrance modes
Ways informed about EWU

• **E-mail** in top 3 responses each group

• **Friends/family** next most consistently mentioned

• Other top 3 responses: newspaper/*Easterner* (current students, faculty/staff), alumni/EAA (alumni), faculty/staff/students (nonalumni, faculty/staff), magazines/pubs (alumni), mail/letters (prospective students)
Four words that describe EWU

1. Good value for the price 44%
2. Comfortable 39%
3. Friendly 29%
4. Small 26%
   - Career-oriented (prospective students)

- First-choice (22% pros. students; 6th)
- Not well known (26% nonalumni; 5th)
1997 research comparison (current, prospective, fac/staff)

• Descriptors much more consistent now; top 4 same across 4 of 5 groups

• The following positive words mentioned more often: comfortable, career-oriented, friendly, great school, good value
Competitive positioning of EWU in the region

• Above-average quality of education
• Below-average cost
• Average community involvement
Differentiators for EWU

1. **Value**  
   (quality education that is affordable)  
   30%

2. **Student-faculty relationships**  
   (personal attention)  
   19%

3. **Opportunity** (accessible for a wide range of students)  
   - Wide range of programs, activities, people  
     (16% prospective students)  
   18%
EWU Image

- EWU needs to:
  Enhance/Add to its current image (76%)
- 51% overall “strongly agree” they are proud of their association w/ EWU
- Respondents lean toward more of a “cutting edge” marketing message vs. “traditional” message
Image rank of EWU (compared to 9 regional colleges/universities)

- Overall (all respondent groups combined) EWU’s image ranked 4th
- Ranked 2nd among prospective students in western Washington (3rd with prospective students in eastern Washington)
- Image ranked lowest among non-alumni
Most significant changes at EWU over the past five years

- **Campus physical changes**: building, improved, growth, facilities (by far most mentioned)
- Marketing, image and pride: image, alumni, pride, awareness, quality
- Program and degree changes
- Leadership changes: Dr. Jordan
- Enrollment and tuition
- Athletics
- Diversity
EWU’s relevance to nonalumni

• It’s where a family member is getting a degree 28%
• Educating individuals to fill positions in my community 21%
• Indifferent 10%
EWU’s ability to teach key skills

• Very good
  – Critical thinking/problem solving
  – Writing skills
  – Technical skills in student’s discipline

• Very good – average
  – Ability to work in teams
  – Oral communication skills
  – General liberal arts
  – Leadership skills

• Average
  – Cross-cultural working skills
Two best-known areas of study

- Education 70%
- Business 25%
- Health Sciences 21%

(#2 for faculty/staff)

Graduate studies, urban and regional planning and public administration least selected
Overview of findings and recommendations

EWU’s overall image is perceived very favorably – especially compared to 1997. It is especially encouraging that the University’s image ranked well among prospective students. However, there is always room for improvement. The following were identified as opportunities to enhance image:

• Attributes of EWU’s geographic location
• Perceived community service/involvement
Overview of findings and recommendations

“Value” was most mentioned as the factor that sets EWU apart from other colleges and universities. So – what aspect of value (quality or affordability) is EWU’s greatest strength? Overall, respondents largely indicated that EWU provides a quality education. However, there was evidence that EWU can continue to strengthen this perception.
Overview of findings and recommendations

There was no one descriptor chosen by a *majority* of respondents to describe what best sets EWU apart from other colleges and universities in the region. In a sense, it is positive that EWU stands for different things to different people. However, there is an opportunity to better articulate EWU’s central, differentiating promise to its constituents.
Overview of findings and recommendations

An opportunity exists to better inform EWU’s internal audiences (staff, faculty and students) about the University’s success stories and momentum. The pride and word-of-mouth generated through this effort will greatly impact EWU’s external image as well.
Overview of findings and recommendations

While more than half of respondents were very proud of their association with EWU, they also expressed a lack of community pride and tradition surrounding EWU. There is opportunity for EWU to lead constituents in ways that they can express their pride in the community and participate in University traditions.
Overview of findings and recommendations

Finally, the success of this online survey campaign, coupled with feedback from the survey, indicated that web-based communication is the most effective way for reaching key audiences – especially prospective students. There is opportunity to better utilize the University’s technology resources and website as marketing and communications tools.
Overview of findings and recommendations

EWU has launched initiatives focused on the following as a result of this study:

• New brand strategy and image campaign
• Internal communications
• Web-based communications