

cognitive marketing



Brand Assessment

Self Evaluation Tool

The Cognitive Marketing Brand Assessment Self Evaluation ToolSM is a simple but effective means of taking inventory of your institution's current state of "brand readiness."

The *Brand Assessment Self Evaluation Tool* was prepared by Peter Holloran, President, Cognitive Marketing, who leads our Strategic Brand Development Group.



This paper is one of a series of briefings prepared by Cognitive Marketing based on our experience as consultants to educational institutions in the area of brand development and strategic marketing.

A strong institutional brand is not the exclusive province of the oldest, most prestigious, or most competitive institutions. Every institution has the potential to build a strong brand, just as any strong brand school can, if not vigilant, lose vital brand strength. Great brands are built and sustained by a strong institutional commitment to a distinct and compelling brand promise—forcefully pronounced and relentlessly delivered. A strong brand institution does have one thing other institutions usually lack: the conviction that, in some way that is valued, it is without peer. This is why the work of building a strong institutional brand begins not with market research, but with introspection.

Using this tool

Consider each statement below in terms of your institution. If you find that you were able to “Agree” or “Mostly Agree” with at least two-thirds of the statements, you are probably ready as an institution to move forward with a more intentional approach to building, managing and communicating your brand. Where you “Disagree” with these statements is where work needs to be done internally in order to create the conditions for success.

	Agree	Mostly Agree	Disagree
We have points of pride in our institutional history that are known and appreciated throughout the school community.			
We uphold institutional traditions that are appreciated by today’s students, faculty, and staff.			
Our history and traditions provide a common bond of connection between our current students and alumni/ae.			
We have institutional leadership that believes in the importance of a clear institutional voice.			
The beliefs, values, and personality of our institution are clear to everyone associated with it.			
Our leader of our institution personally views the brand as an important institutional asset.			
Within our faculty, administration, and student body alike, we have identifiable “brand champions” – believers in the value of a strong and distinct institutional identity and promise.			
In recruiting faculty and staff to our institution, we actively consider whether their beliefs, values, and personalities are “in sync” with the brand.			
Our brand promise guides the administrative decisions we make.			
Our brand promise contributes meaningfully to the direction and evolution of our academic program.			
We have in place a brand management process that ensures that program and policy decisions of the institution are evaluated prior to implementation in terms of their support of our brand promise.			
Our students understand and value our brand promise.			
The parents of our students understand and value our brand promise.			

Our alumni/ae understand and value our brand promise.			
Our peer institutions understand and respect our brand promise.			
Our suppliers, vendors and consultants understand and respect our brand promise.			
Our brand promise is delivered consistently in external communication to all our publics.			
Our compensation, career advancement, and recognition systems are tied to advancing the brand promise and achieving key brand goals.			
People at our institution understand that brand building is a long-term endeavor and that results are cumulative.			
We have and use a means of determining how well we are keeping our brand promise with our students and alumni/ae.			
We have and use a means of determining how well we are communicating our brand promise to prospective students and parents.			
We are active students of brand marketing practices; we learn from the successes and failures of other institutions' efforts to build brands.			
TOTALS			

NOTE: Cognitive Marketing's Brand Assessment ToolSM, which we have designed specifically for educational institutions, was developed in part from the writings of our friend and colleague Brad Van Auken, whose book *The Brand Management Checklist: Proven tools and techniques for creating winning brands* was first published in London in 2002.

Next steps

Wherever you determine is your starting point, Cognitive Marketing can help you move forward to develop a strong and effective institutional brand. This completed evaluation will be very helpful in allowing us to tailor a proposal to address your specific situation. To get the process started, send us a copy of the completed form, and spend one half hour with us on the phone answering some background questions, and we will be pleased to prepare just such a proposal for you. Or, if you prefer, we can come to campus to meet with you personally to discuss the scope of the project.



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Brand development and communications services that create the conditions for institutional success

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- Brand Discovery Process
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