

A brand is not just a logo for your organization. A brand is how people *feel* about your organization. It is your organization's reputation and conveys meaning about what you do. It ignites passion in those participating and keeps them coming back. Your organization's brand is reflected in everything you do from marketing to hosting events. What is your organization's brand? What does it reflect? How can you enhance your brand? How can you make your brand stand out from the rest?

### **Identity: Differentiate yourself.**

The first step to building a brand for your organization at UWM is to establish your identity and differentiate yourselves from the other 300+ organizations at UWM. Who are you and what do you stand for? What do you want to be known for at UWM? What makes your organization rise to the top? When the campus and surrounding community know who you are, they are more likely to participate in your events, join your organization, or keep your group in mind for collaboration or other resources. That's the ultimate goal, right?

Consider the following examples when establishing your identity and differentiating your organization on campus:

- **Create a membership package.** For a nominal fee, a new member of your organization can receive a welcome package that represents what your organization is all about. This package could include a t-shirt, other branded merchandise (think pens, notebooks, hats...), and even a membership card. The items in the membership package will be worn or used by your members, show the campus community who you are, and therefore start to create a unique identity for your organization on campus.
- **Hold an annual campus event.** Your organization could be known in the community for a distinctive activity, tradition, or experience. Perhaps you host a day-long fundraiser in Spaight's Plaza or coordinate a virtual Twitter live-tweet event. Or maybe you organize a flash mob across campus. With proper planning, execution, and time, people will start to associate this great experience or event with your organization.
- **Celebrate your members.** Establish internal programs that recognize your members. Perhaps you have a member of the week. A program like this will solidify your organization's identity not only inside the organization, but to external audiences such as university administrators or other organizations. Be known as the organization that celebrates and appreciates its members!

### **Purpose: Make an emotional connection.**

Let's be honest here, people are emotional beings. They make decisions and form opinions with their feelings and emotions. In this light, what can your organization do to appeal to these emotions and provide a purpose for students and community members to not only remember your organization, but to become life-long followers of your organization? For an event, can you create an experience that will make attendees remember this experience and want to come back? When recruiting, what can you do to provide a feeling of belonging and pride in your organization?

### **People: What you know + who you know.**

People join people, not organizations. People typically attend events because they have a personal connection to them. Use your members as brand ambassadors of your organization. They know your organization the best and can speak personally of the benefits that membership and participation provide. They can also begin to form meaningful relationships on campus, with other organizations, and with the community. All in all, people are key to building a positive and well-known brand image for your organization.

### **Plan: Decide what to do and what NOT to do.**

Lastly, remember that the activities, events, and programs that you implement illustrate the mission of your organization and why you exist. Be very intentional of what your organization will do in relation to these events. On the other hand, be very intentional of what you will not do. Some things just don't make sense for your organization to be doing or do not represent your organization like other events or programs might.

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**WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO TODAY?**

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