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**MARKETING & PR
STRATEGY POSITION:
MAKER LAB “FIRST”**



fabcom
integrated strategic marketing



SMALL PRIVATE UNIVERSITY SEIZES “FIRST” POSITION OVER MAJOR PUBLIC UNIVERSITY WITH WELL-TIMED MARKETING STRATEGY

Recently, a small, private technology University became the first in Arizona to launch a digital maker fabrication lab on campus: the Makers Fab Lab. The lab is designed to foster creativity and challenge student innovators in a 24/7 environment for those who seek to lead the new industrial revolution driven by the convergence of advancing technologies.

As the technology University was nearing readiness for opening, originally scheduled for January, their top integrated marketing and online advertising agency, FabCom, uncovered news that a major public university was partnering with a national company to also open up a makers lab in Arizona during the same period. The Phoenix based advertising agency sprang into action, immediately contacting the client and providing a windfall marketing and public relations opportunity.

Following is a case study outlining the critical nature of timing which played a key role in the client's claim to two more “firsts”—the opening of the client's Digital Makers Fab Lab and the establishment of the nation's first fully accredited Bachelor of Science degree in digital making and fabrication.

The client was provided swift, strategic steps to solidify branding, positioning and online search rank as well as underscore the University's leading role in advancing technology in the emerging degree field. The advertising and marketing agency, in consultation with the client, developed a public relations, social media and marketing strategy that catapulted the client's brand into the local and national spotlight. As a full service integrated marketing agency, FabCom is ranked among the top 10 Phoenix interactive marketing firms and as the number 2 social media firm by the Phoenix Business Journal, with offices in Phoenix and O'ahu, that serves clients and industries across the globe who desire to drive their offline and online brand relevance.

Situation/Need

News of the competing makers lab opening caused a situation to occur in which the branding and positioning of the technology University as a leader in this innovation would be undermined unless steps could be taken quickly to make these announcements ahead of the public university. The need surfaced for FabCom to discuss with University officials the importance of announcing both the lab opening and the new degree program, making the decision, compiling the news and generating the announcement within a three-day time span.

The advertising and marketing agency desired to strengthen online brand visibility on a national and global scale for their client's advancing technology education leadership and innovation. This included the Makers Fab Lab and Digital Maker and Fabrication degree program, through the smart leveraging of public relations, online, social and traditional news channels.

The marketing and advertising agency instantaneously stepped up to help fill a capacity void for the client in marketing resources. The agency offered the insight to provide the strategies and implementation resources necessary to capitalize on the windfall and emerging opportunities. This is a prime example of how FabCom's expertise was needed as an extension of the in-house marketing department's resources, going beyond their 2 FabCom Case Study internal capacity to leverage the full power of public relations and integrated marketing in online, social and traditional news mediums.



Goals/Objectives

1. Devise methods of opening the lab and readying the new degree program for announcement.
2. Maximize local, national and international visibility for the client and its products to claim the "first" position (and thereby propelling a series of "firsts") through online news media, social media and public relations channels.
3. Generate tangible results in the form of greater interest measured by an increase of targeted traffic to the University's website degree pages, affiliated online social media assets and subsequent lead generation.
4. Create greater online brand awareness of the technology University and its capability during the recruitment periods to drive enrollments.
5. Capitalize on a fleeting and emerging timing sensitive opportunity and extend the capabilities of the brand by leveraging the existing relationship between the integrated full service marketing and advertising agency and the client.
6. Provide the marketing strategies and implementation phases necessary to uncover additional social media, online media and traditional media outlets to maximize brand reach.
7. Leverage the tactical activity to help guide and coach the clients in house teams how best to capitalize on the emerging opportunity and build protocol for future social media opportunities for the brand.

The Methodology

FabCom, as a dynamically integrated marketing agency, harnessed the power of the technology University's natural resources—in this case the Makers Fab Lab and new Digital Maker and Fabrication degree program—with development of an integrated online, social and traditional media strategy and resulting launch of a targeted and swift moving public relations and media relations campaign. The media strategy includes targeting online and offline media distribution channels to major outlets both locally and nationally.

- Angle 1: "first" position in advancing technology education, both locally and nationally, adding to the series of "firsts."
- Angle 2: "first" in digital maker and fabrication education and leader in the new, global industrial revolution, the Maker Revolution, by announcing both the new Maker Fab Lab and Digital Maker and Fabrication B.S. Degree Program.

Phase 1

Strategy:

The Phoenix Advertising Agency, in partnership with the client, continued to build the brand as "first" in advancing technology education by championing the need to implement the "first" strategy in leveraging that position not only in advancing technology education but also in maker and fabrication innovation.

Tactics:

- Advise leadership regarding the importance of being first to build brand by building on and leveraging the client's series of "firsts."
- Advise leadership regarding the importance of being first to announce the first accredited Bachelor of Science degree in Digital Maker and Fabrication.
- Racing against the clock, devise methods to move up the opening of the Makers Fab Lab.



Phase 2

Strategy:

Integrated marketing agency seized opportunity to announce the news ahead of schedule and ahead of the other university, taking proactive measures to strengthen "first" position and propel its legacy of leadership.

Tactics:

As time was of the essence, the FabCom team worked around the clock to:

- Nurture client engagement.
- Immediately mobilize the integrated marketing and advertising agency's public and media relations team to prepare news announcement.
- Facilitate client approvals.
- Announce national and local news: First University-Housed Digital Makers Fab Lab Opens on UAT's Campus.
- Initiate personal follow up.

Results

Just 10 days after release of the client's news, the news of the public university's lab began to surface, without much fanfare. In the two weeks following, media stories about FabCom's client appeared throughout the country, including The Phoenix Business Journal (print, online and video) and sister business journals nationwide, Bloomberg Business Week and Finance Yahoo.com. The timely release of the news removed the fuel from the public university's fire since they were not the first to unveil their maker lab. FabCom's timing and positioning indeed resulted in greater awareness of their client throughout online, traditional and social media channels, leveraging the client's leadership position and propelling the historic series of "firsts" in the marketplace for current and future positioning efforts.

The strategy as designed was successful in meeting goals and objectives to fill a void for the client, with integrated marketing agency expertise serving as a valuable extension of the in-house marketing department's resources in many ways:

- With their pulse on the technology education industry, the Agency played a key role that in-house marketing departments rarely are successful in assuming—the role as objective, independent, industry connected researcher/advisor to the client, which, in this case, occurred at a critical point when timely administrative decisions had to be made and marketing actions taken in a race against the clock...even over the weekend.
- FabCom was successful in communicating to leadership the importance of being first to brand the series of "firsts."
- As consultant and advisor, the Phoenix Advertising Agency successfully worked with leadership to devise methods of opening the lab ahead of schedule.
- The integrated marketing agency attract greater visibility for, awareness of and response to the brand, its industry leading innovation in the Maker Movement with the opening of the lab and innovative new B.S. in Digital Maker and Fabrication.



Tangible Results Include:

- Local and national coverage was generated online and in print and broadcast:
- More than 2,500 online, search and media views and downloads were generated in its first 30 days.
 - Views were generated by bloggers, consumer periodicals, freelance writers, radio and television stations, trade periodicals, web/online services and wire services.
- The most views were generated by web and online services.
- More than 100 online and print publications carried the news throughout the country.
- An increase in interest in the client's educational programs occurred, demonstrated by:
 - More than 1,000 new clicks on the University's web site, related to the Digital Makers Fab Lab and degree program, occurred in the first 30 days prior to an official marketing launch of the program.
 - More than 300 ReleaseWatch links were established.
 - More than 20 students contacted the University to express interest in the University and the new degree program.
 - The degree program was launched and debuted with a first page top rank and online equity with three organic listings above the fold on the key search terms to dominate the space at launch. Two PR-created listings and one organic listing dominated three out of four available spots above the fold in a market place that has over 8 million ranked listings.

About the Author

Brian Fabiano is the CEO and founder of FabCom, a full-service strategic integrated marketing and advertising agency with offices in Scottsdale/Phoenix, Los Angeles, Seattle and O'ahu. He is a nationally recognized innovator, advertising and marketing industry leader, author and speaker, whose insights in dynamic **cross-channel cross-media messaging, business intelligence, strategic planning, positioning, brand mapping, and segmentation/database marketing** are sought by corporations and trade associations alike.

He is now working on his second book on the convergence of technology and marketing strategy, after the resounding success of his first book, *Neuromarketology: How to Develop, Implement and Manage Dynamic, Real-Time, Cross-Channel Marketing Campaigns that Generate Astonishing ROI*. This is the second book in the planned trilogy and will delve deeply into the connection between Neuromarketology™ and the contemporary convergence of artificial intelligence, dynamic messaging, and Distributed Customer Experiences™, driven by Blockchain technology.

FabCom is a full-service strategic marketing, PR, and advertising firm

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*Amortized for media billings as calculated in the Phoenix Business Journal Book of Lists.

