

Internal Communications Workgroup Report

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Executive Summary

The CUCSA Internal Communications workgroup was tasked with the following projects in the 2008-2009 year: develop a unique CUCSA brand, review content and maintain CUCSA website, review key CUCSA documents and revise as necessary, develop internal communication tools and strategies, consider and report on viability of recording speakers, identify a method of capturing key information about innovative events and programs at local assembly level. The workgroup recommends the creation of an Administrative Core workgroup responsible for website updating

CUCSA Branding Project

The CUCSA Internal Communications (IC) workgroup worked to develop a brand image for the organization. The purpose of the initial branding project was to present a more uniform “look and feel” to CUCSA work group papers, year-end presentation, invitations, letter head and note cards. The brand will also develop an association between CUCSA and the high-quality, meaningful and thoughtful deliverables of the organization.

The new brand will be rolled out over the coming months beginning with a new PowerPoint template for work group reports and the CUCSA Annual Report. Additionally, CUCSA branded stationery will be available for a variety of communications (Appendix A). The new brand made its debut among CUCSA alumni and friends with the E-vite to the CUCSA Luau Dinner and Silent Auction Fundraiser on June 4, 2009 at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory’s Perseverance Dining Hall. The CUCSA brand will be incorporated in various event print materials as well.

Recommendations

1. Continue to integrate the CUCSA brand in all organization communications, both internal and external:
 - Meeting agendas
 - Letters to UCOP or other UC leadership
 - Signatures on CUCSA business emails
 - Other organization documents
2. Incorporate the new banner on the CUCSA website.
3. Include CUCSA branding in delegate orientation.
4. Integrate the CUCSA branding with local (campus) staff assemblies.
5. Determine who will oversee the use of official stationery/letterhead.

CUCSA Website

The IC workgroup oversaw the maintenance of the CUCSA website. As the public face of CUCSA and an important resource for delegates, local assemblies, and those interested in the organization, the website must be maintained and updated on a regular basis to be of value to CUCSA constituents. Two challenges related to the maintenance of the website are the time involved in the updating and the fees charged for this service by UCOP. The website is hosted by UCOP which the IC workgroup feels is appropriate, however, the process for updating the website is cumbersome.

The current process for updating the website requires that all the changes made to the website are emailed directly to the UCOP web team. The UCOP web team makes the changes and requests review and approval before posting. Depending on how many updates are needed, this can take the delegate up to 2 hours (sometimes more) to create the email requesting the updates. The UCOP web team then transfers these changes to the website. Although the website developers have provided updates pro bono, the cost of using UCOP personnel to update the CUCSA website is not sustainable under current budget restrictions. The cost of the time spent by the delegate to create the email cannot be overlooked either. The existing process is both time consuming and costly.

Recommendations

1. CUCSA should pursue access to a mirror site which would be maintained by CUCSA.
2. CUCSA would also support the Content Management System based website currently under consideration by the UCOP web team. No timeline for implementation has been provided to date. CUCSA would incur costs with this option as the current process exists.
3. The website maintenance should be assigned to one CUCSA delegate, perhaps part of an “Administrative Core” workgroup. In any case, given the time demands of this responsibility, serving in this capacity should be regarded as sufficient to fulfill the delegate’s workgroup responsibility.

CUCSA Document Review

The IC workgroup was asked to update key CUCSA documents prior to posting on the website. A checklist has been created to identify those documents that need to be updated on an annual or monthly basis (Appendix B).

Recommendation

1. Assign the document updating task to the Administrative Core workgroup or to a delegate other than the one responsible for web updates.

Internal Communication Tools and Strategies

The IC workgroup created a Google Groups and Google Docs page to facilitate communication and cooperation among delegates throughout the UC system. A pilot Facebook page and Google Group page were set up for CUCSA alumni in an effort to enhance communication with former delegates of CUCSA. The IC workgroup encountered several unanticipated problems with these modes of communication including:

1. There were distribution issues in the initial setup of the Google Groups page.
2. Many people were unwilling to participate in Facebook due to security fears. Despite efforts to reassure individuals that they could use tools within Facebook to maintain their privacy, there was still resistance to using Facebook.
3. Google Groups and Google Docs are not seamlessly integrated in a way that would prevent duplication of CUCSA files. Also, the Google Docs program has limited formatting capability.

4. Initiating Facebook invitations prior to developing content for Facebook CUCSA page resulted in less than optimal participation.

Recommendations

1. Explore the possibility of an intranet integrated into the current CUCSA website that would allow delegates from across the UC system to access, edit and archive CUCSA documents and that would securely store CUCSA documents.
2. In addition to web-based file storage, explore the option of network access or an online file storage system to allow ease of maintenance and editing by CUCSA delegates.
3. Explore with the UCOP web development team, the ability to create a web-based listserv.
4. Investigate adding Twitter to our array of communication tools.
5. Explore SharePoint as an option to enable delegates to collaborate on documents.
6. Develop meaningful content for the CUCSA Facebook page to encourage participation.

Audio Recording of CUCSA Guest Speakers

The IC workgroup was asked to consider the viability of recording guest speakers at CUCSA meetings. Although this would mimic the UC Regents meeting, the workgroup had the following concerns:

1. The detailed minutes and CUCSA press releases provide CUCSA delegates and the general public with an overview of each presentation.
2. Currently the atmosphere of openness in the CUCSA meetings allows speakers to speak and respond candidly to the CUCSA delegates, and it was thought that the knowledge of being recorded might inhibit open dialogue.
3. The length of time required to listen to an audio recording compared with reviewing a written document led the workgroup to question whether such recordings would be utilized enough to justify effort to produce such recordings.
4. The IC workgroup was also concerned about the cost and the technical expertise needed to set this up. The benefits would be outweighed by additional time burdens (obtaining signed permissions in advance, having to arrange for technical set-up) and related financial costs.

Recommendations

1. Based on this analysis, the IC workgroup recommends that the decision to record the presentations of CUCSA guests be made only on an ad hoc basis when warranted by specific circumstances and capabilities at each location.
2. Leadership may want to consider this project being part of host campus responsibilities.

Great Ideas Questionnaire

The IC workgroup was tasked with creating an efficient means of sharing knowledge and experiences campuses have in hosting social events, workshops, and speaker or panel presentations. Campuses would also be able to share ideas about mentorship programs, internships, and other leadership programs or opportunities. The purpose of sharing this information electronically is

multifold: to save valuable CUCSA meeting agenda time; to easily store and update this information on a regular basis; and to make this information readily available for all campuses.

The Great Ideas Questionnaire was designed to capture information regarding the title, content, and nature of the event; associated costs; venue ideas and attendance counts; and sources of support from various campus groups or constituencies (Appendix C). The main purposes in collecting event details was to be able to show what worked, as well as identify any problems encountered, and to identify what could be done differently. The questionnaire would also solicit detailed description of mentoring, interning, or leadership programs and information on the administration of these programs (i.e. costs; sources of support, requirements for participation; program duration).

During the past year, substantial progress was made in designing the Great Ideas Questionnaire. As a first step, a twenty-five item questionnaire was designed and “field tested” by workgroup members to ensure that pertinent information was included in the questionnaire. In order to accomplish this, the IC workgroup created a framework and scope for the type of information that would be beneficial for others to learn from or recreate a successful endeavor. Then an electronic version of the questionnaire was created using a web-based survey site (Survey Monkey) and the questionnaire was again field-tested by workgroup members.

The IC workgroup is on schedule to have the Great Ideas Questionnaire available electronically for campus submissions in Fall 2009. A larger field test of the survey is still needed prior to launching it system-wide. While the design and testing of the survey will be completed, the cost of hosting the survey throughout the year needs further investigation and financial support. The current survey has been designed using Survey Monkey, but the website only allows for a fifteen item survey to be administrated at no cost; so in order to ask more questions and allow more respondents, CUCSA would need to pay a monthly \$19.99 charge.

Recommendations

1. Identify options for CUCSA to open an account that allows an unlimited number of questions and respondents. Look into possibilities of sharing website membership costs with another campus program or department or take advantage of associating with an organization that has an existing Survey Monkey or Zoomerang account.
2. Identify other survey needs in order to justify the expense of a survey tool.
3. Look into other possibilities, such as ask a web designer to do a pro bono web-survey that can be hosted on CUCSA’s website.

Challenges Encountered by the CUCSA Work Group

The IC workgroup felt that if it is to continue during the 2009-10 year, the role and goals of the workgroup should be clearly defined. The workgroup had difficulty achieving a balance between our efforts to work toward the goals we established at the beginning of the year and responding to special requests from the CUCSA Chair/Officers. This was particularly challenging due to unforeseen changes in leadership and a higher than usual turnover in delegates. The IC workgroup lost three members over the course of the year. Although these delegates were replaced, there was an impact on the workgroup’s ability to maintain its momentum.

The workgroup also discovered that some of the tasks that were requested of it had already been addressed in previous years by other committees (e.g., Policies and Procedures). We realize there is a need to clarify our future role in developing strategies for effective intra-CUCSA communication and implementation (e.g., we might develop a standard format for thank-you letters to CUCSA guests, but the responsibility for writing and sending them out would belong to the CUCSA Officers). The workgroup also shouldered the burden of serving as primary contact with UCOP for updates to the CUCSA website.

Recommendations

1. Beginning next year, CUCSA should identify one delegate to be responsible for the CUCSA website and perhaps another who is dedicated to updating documents to be posted on the website.
2. Clarify the role of the IC workgroup. The workgroup recommends the establishment of a regular conference call of the CUCSA Chair/Officers with all workgroup chairs to clarify goals and priorities.
3. We also encourage the workgroup chairs to utilize conference calls to identify areas of overlap or interface among the workgroups.
4. Since CUCSA does not have any dedicated administrative support, the leadership at CUCSA should consider identifying individuals who would be responsible for overseeing essential administrative tasks such as website management and document updates and who would provide support to the leadership team. These individuals might form a new "Administrative Core" workgroup.
5. The respective roles of the IC workgroup and the CUCSA secretary should also be clarified.

Follow-up Items For 2009-2010

- Test the Great Ideas Questionnaire with the CUCSA delegates, and post the results on our website.
- Implement the Google.Group list (or a similar vehicle) that can be used by all CUCSA delegates to broadcast messages to the group.
- Review the current CUCSA website and make recommendations for improvements/upgrades.
- Explore using SharePoint as an alternative to Google.Docs.
- Encourage the CUCSA Delegation to use the Google.Docs or SharePoint site for internal "CUCSA-only" items.