

*Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University*

# **ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

## PREFACE

The *Enrollment Management Plan* Volume is both a project management document and an operational document. As a management document, it describes an overall strategy and recommends a set of activities for communicating to the public and the region the strengths of PMU programs and attracting qualified students to attend the university. As an operational document, it is one of a set of three documents that are intended to guide the senior management in recruiting and admitting qualified students and in communicating with the many constituencies of the university. The companion documents to this volume include the *PMU Admissions Plan* and the *PMU Academic Catalog*.

This Enrollment Management Plan for the Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU) is designed to establish a framework for attracting students who are capable of meeting the rigorous academic standards of the institution, successfully graduating, and assuming roles of leadership in the professional business community, and cultural life of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

The plan requires a very proactive approach to identifying prospective students and recruiting them much earlier than is normally done in the Kingdom. It uses a highly personalized recruitment process that is facilitated by technology. Since the university is marketing itself as an institution that differentiates itself from other institutions with its cutting edge technology, the marketing and recruitment process reflects the cutting edge technology that students are experiencing at the PMU.

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**ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN  
FINAL REPORT**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

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The Enrollment Management Plan for PMU includes the necessary components of a marketing plan, including situational analysis, identification of target markets, defining the marketing mix for each of the target market, and developing marketing strategies for successfully reaching the desired audience. However, it also includes sections and recommendations that are specific to an institution of higher education:

- Mission and philosophy statements aligned with the university's mission. These statements drive the overall design and approach of the marketing plan.
- A management recruitment model designed to facilitate an understanding of the rationale behind the recommended recruiting process.
- Specific recruitment strategies that respond to target markets in the context of the recommended recruitment model.
- Materials needed to implement the recruitment program.
- Assessment methodologies necessary to implement a successful recruitment program.

The most important component in the document, however, is the recommendation to purchase enrollment management software designed to implement a successful communications and tracking system. Such software supports the recruitment model and the enrollment management assessment methodologies discussed in the plan. It is strongly recommended that the PMU purchase the recommended software or an equivalent system to enhance success of its recruiting efforts.

## II. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

The nature of the PMU as a learning-centered, technology-infused environment extends to every function of the university. It is natural, therefore, that these defining characteristics has become the foundation for the PMU's marketing message and its programs to recruit students. From students' first introduction to the university to their eventual enrollment, integrated marketing and recruiting efforts are keeping these distinctions at the top of their awareness.

### A. MISSION

The mission of the enrollment management plan is to develop, implement, and monitor a communication strategy that achieves four principal goals.

- **Highly Qualified Students** - The plan aims to attract and enroll highly qualified Saudi students and highly qualified non-Saudi students living in the Kingdom, the Gulf States area, and other countries.
- **Student-Centered** – The plan focuses on building personal relationships with prospects to reinforce the university's desire to create a student-centered learning environment.
- **Technology Infused** – The plan uses technology to facilitate and enhance the recruitment process.
- **Enabling Success** – The plan contributes to the successful transition from high school to university and the successful completion of a rigorous academic program.

### B. PHILOSOPHY

The learning-centered environment at the PMU is preparing students to work together for the benefit of their families, employers, community, and the KSA. Similarly, attracting students and helping them to successfully complete the PMU's academic programs with its desired learning outcomes and competencies is an institution-wide effort. Recruitment focuses on meeting the needs of students. It continually seeks to improve the quality of the educational experience.

To this end, all units of the university are using program reviews and student satisfaction surveys to shape the delivery of services.

New technologies and software are also being used to coordinate and facilitate services to prospective students. These technologies are providing data analysis services for the university's enrollment management professionals. The capability to analyze recruitment data and evaluate student recruitment services are playing a key role in maintaining a competitive edge in recruiting.

Ultimately, success in recruiting is playing a role in retaining students and fulfilling the institution's goal of providing a student-centered learning environment.

### III. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

#### 1. Implications for the PMU

It appears that the growth in the primary service area for such a young university is not only well established, but it will continue to grow at a faster rate than the rest of the Kingdom. This is positive news for a young university that will primarily serve the Eastern Province. The PMU will depend on a growing population to remain competitive in the market place.

#### A. LEADERSHIP IN THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

A growing population is not enough to warrant the establishment of a new private university. The region must be able to financially support the establishment of the institution and students must be able to afford the tuition to attend.

##### 1. Economy of the Kingdom

Saudi Arabia today holds 25% share of the total Arab GDP. The Kingdom is the world's 25<sup>th</sup> largest exporter/importer with a foreign trade of US \$78 billion. (Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority <http://www.sagia.gov.sa/>)

Saudi Arabia is a well-to-do, oil-based economy with strong government controls over major economic activities. Saudi Arabia has the largest reserves of petroleum in the world (26% of the proved total), ranks as the largest exporter of petroleum, and plays a leading role in OPEC. The petroleum sector accounts for roughly 75% of budget revenues, 40% of GDP, and 90% of export earnings.

##### 2. Trends in the Eastern Province

The Eastern Province, especially the Dammam-Dhahran-Al-Khobar triangle, represents a significant portion of the private sector growth in Saudi Arabia.

This area is the richest in petroleum of all the Kingdom's regions. About 35% of GDP comes from the private sector. Figures by the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA) indicate that the private sector swelled from nearly 181.5 billion riyals to 295 billion riyals between 1981 and 2003. (Gulf News, Abu Dhabi |By Nadim Kawach, Bureau Chief | 24-01-2004)

##### 3. Implications for the PMU

Similar to population trends, the economy of the KSA and especially the Eastern Province is positive news for the PMU. The university was built in the healthiest economic region of the Kingdom. A healthy economy is particularly important for a private university that is charging students tuition and fees.

## B. MARKET DEMAND

The need for institutions of higher education in the Kingdom is fundamental not only to the decision to establish the PMU, but to the strategies and techniques that are employed to attract students to the university. The nature of existing institutions also affects marketing efforts of the PMU.

### 1. A New University Must Take a New Approach

The need for a high quality university that offers an English-medium curriculum in engineering (including interior design, architecture, and graphic design, and software engineering ), information technology, and business clearly exists. The economic situation in Saudi Arabia supports the need for such a private, selective university.

However, recruiting efforts need to be significantly different from what are currently in place at most Saudi universities.

Public universities currently have a tremendous advantage over private universities. For example, there is no cost of attendance at public universities for Saudi students. In addition, students attending public universities receive a monthly stipend of 800 – 1,000 riyals.

By contrast, attendance at the private PMU costs students SAR 29,000 to SAR 58,000 per year.

Cost is a tremendous advantage that the public universities have over the private universities, but the quality of the programs, the instructional methodologies, and the recruitment efforts allows the PMU to compete with existing institutions for high-achieving students.

## C. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

In order to effectively compete with existing universities, it is important for the PMU to understand its own strengths and weaknesses. This understanding will better enable the university to overcome its challenges and take advantage of its opportunities. This understanding, moreover, is an ongoing process that will evolve and change with the nature of the university, new developments at competing institutions, and trends in the population and economy of the Kingdom.

### 1. The Need for Surveys and Research

Because the PMU initially focused its enrollment goals on students from the Eastern Province, word-of-mouth messages from students and parents played a critical role in the PMU's marketing initiatives. It is, therefore, imperative that up-to-date and accurate survey data be used to regularly measure perceptions that will impact the PMU's ability to recruit and retain students. It is particularly critical to be aware of any negative perceptions that may develop so the university's public relations and marketing teams can work to convey positive messages that correct the negative.

To this end, it is the recommendation of this report that the PMU take a number of steps that enhance the university's understanding of its position in the higher education market:

- **Employ a marketing firm** to conduct focus groups with students and their parents. Focus groups will assist in identifying additional strengths and weaknesses that the PMU can use to further define its marketing and recruitment messages.
- **Adopt pre-enrollment surveys** as part of its on-going market research. Surveys enable the PMU to identify both positive and negative perceptions about the university. These



perceptions play an important role in formulating the messages used in subsequent recruitment campaigns.

- **Conduct exit surveys** with students as they complete the PMU Preparation Year Program. These surveys help the PMU to determine whether or not perceptions of the university change among students once they enroll. The surveys help the university to continue to identify areas of concern.

## 2. Known Strengths

Despite the need for further understanding of students' and parents' perceptions of the university, it is possible now to identify strengths and weaknesses of the university based on its defining characteristics and knowledge gained from the Situational Analysis in this report.

The PMU strengths summarized in the following manner:

- University core values
  - a student-centered learning environment
  - services, programs, and curricula infused with technology
  - learning outcomes that build competencies in communication, critical thinking and problem solving, professional competencies, technological abilities, teamwork, and leadership.
- An English language curriculum tied to the needs of the private sector and the Kingdom
- Strong connection between the university and the worlds of business and industry
- Strength of the Founding Committee (key influencers within the governmental structure and the private sector)

- Clear program objectives and goals
- Commitment to high academic standards
- Commitment to innovation and technology
- Excellent, state-of-the-art facilities
- Premier program for women with degrees equal to those awarded to men
- Cost comparable to a study-abroad university experience

**a. Making Use of PMU's Strengths**

The communications strategy for the PMU includes the strengths identified above.

These strengths are woven into the PMU story. Other strengths identified through focus groups, program reviews, and student surveys are included in future messages once they are identified.

**b. Conveying the Benefit to the Student**

A word of caution is offered, however, for whomever is will developing the marketing messages for the PMU. The university's marketing messages areis not simply focused on the traditional marketing approach that higher education relies on to attract students. The PMU have expanded its marketing message beyond the use of "features" (a description of buildings, facilities, programs, technology, etc.).

It is naturally important for the PMU marketing message to include the features since it is a relatively young university. But, the PMU is placing primary emphasis on the "benefits" (how the students are benefit from the features).

**c. Competing with Established Universities**

The value of the other universities in Saudi Arabia is already established in the minds of the nation. Therefore, establishing market position for the university requires perpetuald extensive marketing that focusesd on the benefits or the "value" of the thenrelatively young university.

The marketing message must always be compelling enough to change the target market's perceptions about some of the other universities and convince prospective students that the new university holds a better value because of the benefits.

#### **d. Building a Positive Reputation for the PMU**

How did the PMU convince the nation that it provides a better alternative to other universities? Without a track record, the university did not have a reputation. Without a reputation, credibility was an issue.

The PMU has significantly enhanced its credibility by mere association, through endorsements in its marketing campaigns. The marketing messages includes endorsements and testimonials from individuals supporting the university whom are highly regarded by the community.

In print media, the PMU is using photos of individuals in positions of authority and appropriate quotations that endorse the university. The endorsements support one or more specific benefits that are part of the PMU recruitment campaign and are appropriate given the target market.

Whenever possible, high profile individuals from the Ministry of Education, the regional government, and business sectors are included in the marketing campaigns.

### **3. Known Weaknesses**

Any new undertaking will face challenges ranging from name recognition to the ways in which it is different from similar ventures that the target audience already knows and accepts.

Among the challenges PMU was facing are:

- New university without a proven track record
- Cost of attendance compared to no cost for a public university
- Questions among some target markets and parents about the acceptability of a university that educates both men and women on the same campus, even though genders are separated

#### **a. Countering Negative Perceptions**

Careful consideration is given to developing the communications strategy that addresses the weaknesses noted above. For example:

- The newness of the program and the unproven record can be countered by endorsements from leaders in business and education
- The cost of attendance can be countered by comparing the cost of the PMU with the cost of studying abroad.
- Concerns about a university with both male and female students can be minimized with campaigns, brochures, and media that feature parents talking about the advantages or reasons why their daughters are attending the university.

### **b. Managing the Message**

The PMU has established an Integrated Marketing Committee to ensure that marketing messages and strategies are consistent in presenting the strengths of the university and in countering perceived weaknesses.

The committee includes members from the concerned departments including, the Director of Enrollment Management, the Director of Public Information, the Director of the Preparation Year Program, the Vice Rector of Student Affairs, and at least one representative from the university's marketing firm.

All marketing logos, themes, and slogans must be approved by the committee to ensure the consistency of all publications and messages.

## **4. Monitoring Strengths and Weaknesses**

Program reviews and performance outcomes are a critical component of the academic program for the PMU. In the same manner, the results of these program reviews are an integral part of the strengths and weaknesses identification process for the Enrollment Management Plan. The university is also conducting student satisfaction surveys to assess its service programs.

### **a. Understanding Student Priorities**

In assessing and improving services, it is not sufficient to know which areas are not performing well. It is equally important to know how important those areas are to the students. For example, if two areas are rated low, but only one area is deemed to be important to the students, knowledge about the level of importance makes it easier for the institution to focus its resources more effectively on areas that make a difference for students.

### **b. Techniques for Assessment**

A number of instruments are available to assess student satisfaction, but most are one-dimensional. They assess only levels of satisfaction; they do not assess the relative importance of a particular service or program.

This report recommends instead a two-dimensional tool such as the Student Satisfaction Instrument (SSI) from Noel-Levitz. This 84-item survey of both satisfaction and importance is an excellent tool for assessing services in higher education in the United States. However, it may not be suitable for the PMU. It will be up to the Director of Enrollment Management to determine whether or not the SSI is acceptable culturally to a

Saudi university. If not, the PMU should develop its own SERVQUAL instrument that provides similar data to the SSI but attuned to local conditions and needs. (A. Prasuraman, Valarie Zeithaml, and Leonard Berry, *SERVQUAL: A Multiple-Item Scale for Measuring Customer Expectations of Service Quality* (Cambridge, MA: Marketing Science Institute, Report No. 86-108, 1986).

#### **IV. MARKET POSITION AND MARKET PLAN**

As a relatively young private institution, PMU has established its market position very quickly provided that it differentiated itself from the other institutions from the very beginning of its establishment.

##### **A. CREATING A MARKET POSITION**

The PMU is one of the few elite private, English language universities in the Kingdom offering degrees in engineering (including interior design, architecture and software engineering), information technology, and business administration in an environment that includes both male and female students. Other English language institutions exist that offer similar programs, but enough differences exist that the PMU uniquely identifies with.

For example, the PMU can differentiate itself as the only private university offering an engineering program in the petroleum center of the Kingdom.

The PMU has positioned itself as the leader in information technology and in business by its connections to the real world—the world of business.

The market position for the PMU has been determined by the quality of its programs and graduates. Initially, the quality and quantity of marketing determine the PMU's position. Significant marketing funds must be spent to create the market position and to establish a positive institutional image. Endorsements from individuals and institutions already regarded as symbols of excellence are important to create the right market position and the image necessary to assure success.

## B. ESTABLISHING OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

The enrollment management plan helped, direct and coordinate marketing and recruitment efforts. The process of creating the plan is also isimportant.

Preparing an enrollment management plan forces the institution to assess the marketplace and how trends and new developments affect the university. The process also provides the assessment measures that are needed to determine whether or not marketing strategies are working. These measures help the institution to achieve its enrollment objectives. Quite often, simply embarking on the process of preparing an enrollment management plan guides the university in developing successful marketing strategies.

The PMU enrollment management plan seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- Review, develop, and monitor materials that communicate the programs and services of the PMU to potential students.
- Coordinate recruiting efforts among the various PMU departments and personnel.
- Identify and recruit students who have a high likelihood of enrolling and completing PMU programs.
- Develop implementation and monitoring plans.
- Establish a review schedule to determine the success of the recruitment strategy and implement changes where needed.

## C. IDENTIFYNG TARGET MARKETS

The university marketing plan targets high school graduates from a number of groups. Each group, however, is not targeted as an equal priority for admission. Target markets of primary, secondary, and tertiary importance are defined in this manner:

### 1. Primary Target Markets

- Highly qualified male Saudi students who have an overall average of 75% on the General Secondary Education Degree and a satisfactory score on the General Aptitude and Abilities Test (GAAT) and who are interested in engineering, information technology, law or business administration.
- Highly qualified female Saudi students who have an overall average of 75% on the General Secondary Education Degree and a satisfactory score on the General Aptitude and Abilities Test (GAAT) and who are interested in engineering, interior design, information technology, law or business administration.

## 2. Secondary Target Markets

- Highly qualified male non-Saudi students living in the Kingdom with grade averages and standardized test scores that are equal to or higher than the standards required of Saudi nationals and who are interested in studying engineering, information technology, law or business administration.
- Highly qualified female non-Saudi students living in the Kingdom with grade averages and standardized test scores that are equal to or higher than the standards required of Saudi nationals and who are interested in studying engineering, interior design, information technology, law or business administration.

## 3. Tertiary Target Markets

- Highly qualified male students living in adjacent Gulf States or overseas with grade averages and standardized test scores (for example, SAT) that are equal to or higher than the standards required of Saudi nationals and who are interested in studying engineering, information technology, law or business.
- Highly qualified female students living in adjacent Gulf States or overseas with grade averages and standardized test scores (for example, SAT) that are equal to or higher than the standards required of Saudi nationals and who are interested in studying interior design, information technology, law or business administration.

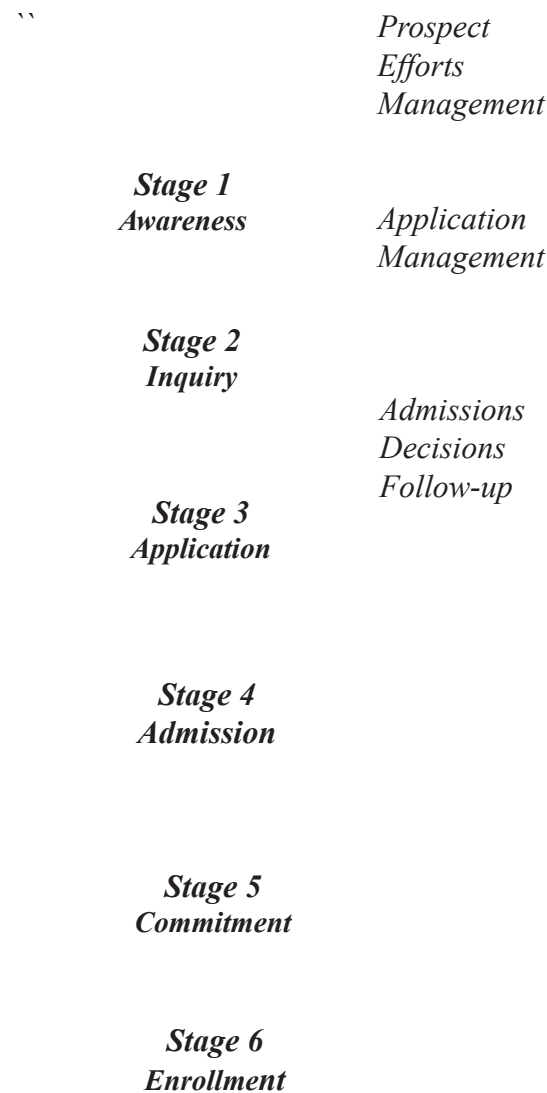
(For a complete discussion of admissions standards and processes, see the report *PMU Admissions Plan*.)

## D. USING THE INTEREST/COMMUNICATION FLOW MODEL

The PMU has implemented a recruitment methodology grounded on sound marketing principles that provides methods of assessing the university's efforts for effectiveness.

The PMU has employed the Interest/Communication Flow Model or the "recruitment funnel" as illustrated here.

***INTEREST/COMMUNICATION FLOW MODEL***  
***(The Recruitment Funnel)***



This is a variation of the widely accepted “adoption model,” a marketing model of common principles taught in “personal selling” and “consumer behavior” marketing classes. The adoption model describes the stages a buyer usually goes through when deciding on a major purchase.

A diagram of the standard adoption model and further explanation of the process appear in Appendix A (The Adoption Model).

By applying this model to the recruitment process, enrollment officers can understand where a student is in the decision-making process and more effectively target the student with information that will influence his decision.



## 1. The Decision-making Process

The recruitment funnel represents how prospective students are expected to pass through the six progressive stages that are critical to a student's decision-making process. It also provides a way of assessing how well a university, through its recruiting efforts, moves students toward enrollment one step at a time, from the point of becoming aware of the university to official matriculation. It provides a way to separate the recruitment process into six components and to measure the effectiveness of the recruitment process at various stages.

- **Awareness** – The first stage represents the initial communication of the PMU story to target markets via differing recruiting strategies. The appropriateness of the recruiting strategies determines the degree to which students become aware of the PMU, take an interest in the university, and inquire about its programs and services.
- **Inquiry** - The second stage represents students who have responded to a particular marketing campaign by submitting a request for information. Once a student moves into the inquiry stage, the university will then respond in an appropriate and timely manner. (Procedures to handle the Awareness and Inquiry stages, for example, are described as “Prospect Efforts Management” to the side of the funnel model.) These procedures have been automated and a system is set in place to handle inquiries effectively. A communications plan must be established for each stage of the funnel and for each market segment.
- **Application** – The third stage represents the number and quality of applications received. This will be directly impacted by how well the PMU develops its “Prospect Efforts Management” procedures. Similarly, the quality of service provided to applicants by the Office of Admissions and other support offices will impact the number of applicants who move to the next stage.
- **Admission** – The fourth stage represents those students who complete the application stage and are admitted to the university.
- **Commitment** – The fifth stage represents those students who submit a tuition deposit as a commitment that they will enroll.
- **Enrollment** – The sixth stage, at which prospects become students at the PMU, is the ultimate goal.

## **2. An Integrated Recruitment / Enrollment Process**

The recruitment funnel is easy to implement if the recruiting effort is supported with appropriate software that tracks each prospect by market segment, stage, and level of interest. When coupled with well-conceived communication plans that are designed for each market segment and for each stage in the funnel, a recruitment software system will execute flawlessly. It will automatically send the right materials to the right students at the right time. (For a discussion of recruiting software, see Section V.D., Recruitment Software).

## **3. Taking Recruitment a Step Further**

As the Director of Enrollment Management becomes more familiar and comfortable with the recruitment funnel and with market segments, he may wish to further segment the markets to design more specific communication plans.

For example, the Director may wish to segment Saudi males being recruited into two groups – high achieving students and regular students. In all cases, the students will meet the general academic criterion of being in the top 75%, but the high achievers will represent students in the top 85% or higher. High achievers require a different communication strategy than regular students. Recruitment software facilitates segmenting the markets and designing communication plans around each segment.

## V. RECRUITMENT COMMUNICATION PLANS

The Director of Enrollment Management and his admissions staff must design the communication plans that will be used to recruit students. These plans include the series of letters, e-mails, brochures, or electronic publications that are sent to prospective students based on their:

- market segment
- stage in the recruitment funnel
- address type (e-mail or regular postal mail)
- level of interest in the university

The key to assembling a communication plan is to think in terms of the general information the university should send to a particular market segment over time.

The director and his staff then must determine the communications necessary for each stage of the process – from Inquiry through Enrollment. The type of address (e-mail or regular post office) would, of course, affect the type of communication (ASCII, HTML, or print) the target receives at the various stages. The student's level of interest also influences the amount and quality of communications sent at the various stages. Section V.A. Tele-Counseling, Tele-Qualifying, and E-Qualifying, describes how to assess a student's level of interest in the university.

A demonstration of scheduling materials to send to students appears in Appendix B, Sample Communications Plan.

### A. TELE-COUNSELING, TELE-QUALIFYING, AND E-QUALIFYING

Tele-counseling and tele-qualifying may be very powerful recruitment strategies for the PMU if they are acceptable approaches in the Kingdom. On the other hand, they may be too intrusive, especially for female prospects. Both of these approaches involve using the telephone to communicate with prospective students and to determine whether they are qualified candidates for the university.

Of all the marketing approaches available, the most powerful is personal, one-to-one contact. This is why institutions participate in high school visits and regional recruiting fairs. However, this approach is not very cost effective and it is not always possible. Distance, time, travel, and cost typically limit such visits. Availability of staff also limits the number of personal contacts that the institution can have with students of campus.

Tele-counseling, tele-qualifying, and e-qualifying are alternatives that can enable the university to overcome these limitations.

## 1. Tele-Counseling

Using the telephone to engage students in admissions counseling provides the best opportunity to expand personal contact. This technique can bridge the distance between campus and student, eliminating travel expense and time. It also provides a meaningful way for communication to take place between admissions representative and a prospective student without the distractions that often accompany the regional fair setting. On the telephone, the PMU message is conveyed by itself. It is not one of many messages that the student receives from multiple universities.

The PMU should implement a professional tele-counseling program if this approach is acceptable in the Kingdom. The Talisma software program described below in Section V.D., Recruitment Software, provides tools that will enable the university to contact students in a systematic and strategic manner. The software can schedule the students to be called, track progress on calls, and maintain statistics on the tele-counseling program.

## 2. Tele-Qualifying

This technique uses the telephone to assess the level of interest a student has in the university. The results give the recruitment staff the ability to concentrate their efforts and resources on the right students.

Tele-qualifying usually requires a recruitment software package, but it can be done without a commercial system. A programmer analyst can write the software to prompt the appropriate questions and collect the data. The following topics are usually part of a tele-qualifying script.

- Is the student still interested in the university?
- If no longer interested, what university does the student plan to attend and what factor was most important in making that decision?
- If still interested in the university, what is the student's level of interest (very interested and likely to enroll, very interested and considering enrolling, somewhat interested, uncertain of interest)?
- Where does the university rank as a choice (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>)?
- What other university or universities is the student considering and their rank in choice?
- What is the most important factor that will determine where the student will enroll?
- What is the level of difficulty in financing their education?

A sample tele-qualifying script appears as Appendix C, Tele-Qualification Survey.

Tele-qualifying typically targets students at the “Inquiry” stage of the recruitment funnel, though if staff is limited, students may be called in the “Application” stage. Another option is to call only a certain market segment (for example, Saudi males) in the inquiry stage. The market segments called depends on the desired enrollment goals for a specific market segment.

Information gathered by tele-qualifying allows the Director of Enrollment Management to further segment the target markets and to increase or decrease the recruitment communications process as needed. The process enables the director to use his personnel and communication resources more effectively by concentrating on the students more likely to enroll in the PMU.

### 3. E-Qualifying

In this variation of tele-qualifying, the student uses the Internet to complete a survey on his or her own.

The student inquiring for information about the PMU receives an e-mail informing him that the university is conducting a survey of students. A student agreeing to take the survey is provided with a link that enables access to the survey. The system presents the questions and, given the student’s response, takes him or her to the next survey question until the survey is complete.

E-qualifying usually is not as successful as the telephone approach since most students will not take the time to complete the survey, but PMU has implemented this approach nonetheless. E-qualifying reduces tele-qualifying workload. It is much less expensive than calling students. It is less intrusive for females. And it will reinforce the technology-rich capabilities and environment of the PMU.

## B. ASSESSMENT

Success in recruiting depends on many factors. One of the most important, however, is the ability to understand which processes and strategies are working or not working and to make adjustments in recruiting practices based on the analysis of data.

### 1. Using Yield Rate to Assess the Process

An effective way of assessing the recruitment process is the “yield rate” analysis associated with the recruitment funnel. This enables the Director of Enrollment Management to easily identify the number of student contacts made by a particular recruiting activity.

Appendix D, The Yield Rate Analysis, illustrates how this analysis is used. “Yield rate” is defined as the number of students inquiring as a result of a recruitment activity or marketing campaign. Each activity or campaign is assigned a “source code,” which is attached to the student’s record in the university database each time the student contacts the university. By tracking these codes, the university can determine which activities or campaigns are most effective at influencing students and moving them to the next stage of the process.

### 2. Using Yield Rates to Identify General Needs

Yield rate analysis also provides the enrollment manager a relatively easy way to know what action in general the university needs to take to meet enrollment goals. The recruitment funnel offers three alternatives to increase enrollment in general.

- The university may widen the funnel at the top by increasing its awareness campaigns, which will lead to increased numbers entering the funnel and ultimately resulting in more numbers at the Enrollment stage. This is basically a “shotgun” approach that many

schools use, but it is not very cost effective.

- The university may increase its yield rates by improving its communication processes at each stage, thereby moving more students to the Enrollment stage.
- The university may both widen the funnel and improve the yield rates at the same time.

The proper action for a given situation will depend on a cost analysis and how quickly an adjustment can be made. It is usually easier, although more expensive, to widen the top by increasing the awareness campaign than to increase the yield rate between stages. The enrollment manager can be more effective in moving students down the funnel from one stage to the next if he has enough trend data and he has done enough yield rate analysis by recruitment activity, by market segment, and by stage.

### 3. Using Yield Rates to Identify Specific Needs

Yield rates can also be used to assess individual recruitment strategies for specific market segments such as Saudi males or Saudi females. Strategies that result in low yields may be discontinued in favor of higher yielding strategies.

Yield rates can also be used to identify management weaknesses within the recruitment process. For example, if yield rates in the Awareness and Inquiry stages are high for a specific target group, but yield rates are low at the Application stage, a weak link has been identified for that target that should prompt additional analysis to identify the problem. It may be determined, for example, that follow-up communication strategies such as brochures, letters, or e-mails may not be available, may not be appropriate, or may be going out too late to the target at the Inquiry stage.

### 4. Managing the Use of Yield Rates

Yield rate analysis reports are run once weekly during the recruitment cycle to determine what is working and what, if anything, must be changed or enhanced to achieve the desired result. A quick way of monitoring what is happening in the recruitment process is to develop yield rate analysis reports that compare current data with trend data.

Appendix E, Two Year Funnel Comparison Report, presents a useful style of yield rate report.

Obviously, the first year will not have trend data, but it will be imperative to run reports weekly during the first year in order to establish the trend data for analysis during the second year. The right recruitment software will provide analytical enrollment management reports that the Director of Enrollment Management can use to assess, implement and maintain the recruitment process.

## C. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

The **Director of Enrollment Management** will coordinate all recruitment initiatives (as indicated in the report *PMU Organization*). The director will have a number of employees who will assist him with the recruitment and admission process.

### 1. Staff in Support of the Director

- **Director of Admissions** – The director oversees the application and admission process and assists the Director of Enrollment Management with other duties as determined by the enrollment manager.
- **Two admissions counselors or recruiters** - One male and one female staff will assist the Director of Enrollment Management with the high school and regional visits, the PMU Open House Visit Programs, and daily visits to the campus by prospective students. These staff members will respond to the daily calls and e-mails received by the university from

prospective students and parents.

- **Programmer analyst** – This staff member will work with the Director of Enrollment Management to maintain the recruitment software system, oversee system security, and generate the statistical reports for analysis. The programmer analyst also will work closely with the coordinator of recruitment communications.
-

- **Coordinator of recruitment communications** – This person will oversee initiation and maintenance of communication plans in the recruitment system. The coordinator will oversee printing the letters, mailing the recruitment materials, and training other users who may need to work with the recruitment software system. These materials will be created jointly by the Office of Enrollment Management and the Office of Public Relations.
- **Clerical support** – Additional staff will conduct data entry when the office receives information request cards. They will package and mail recruiting materials according to schedules generated by the recruiting software system.

## 2. Student Assistance in Recruiting

After classes begin for the first class of the Preparation Year Program and recruiting for the second year is underway, the admission counselors will assist the Director of Enrollment Management in selecting and training a number of student employees who will serve as ambassadors for the university. These students will assist with campus tours, the Open House Program, and with the tele-counseling and tele-qualifying process. The student employees may also assist with data entry and recruitment mailings.

## 3. Using Software to Track Recruiting Efforts

Recruitment software deployed by the Office of Admissions (Section V.D, Recruitment Software) will track all publications and letters mailed to prospective students. It also should provide automated support for tracking expenses associated with mailings.

Additionally, the Director of Enrollment Management may wish to develop an Access database to track materials handed out during each high school visit and at regional recruiting fairs. These materials will not be tracked by the software system. An easy way of collecting this information is to require each recruiter to fill out a form that identifies the high school or regional fair and the number of publications handed out by type (for example, search piece or view book). Travel expenses associated with those visits also must be tracked for the purposes of budgeting.

## D. RECRUITMENT SOFTWARE

It is strongly recommended that the PMU purchase a recruitment software system such as Talisma for Higher Education from Talisma, Inc. The software automates and facilitates recruiting and communication with students. It also provides significant analytical and statistical reports to monitor and evaluate recruitment.



Talisma for Higher Education is highly recommended since it is the most advanced recruitment software system on the market today and it is also supported in the Middle East. Talisma is a U.S.-based organization that entered into partnership with Orient Information Technology Ltd. for marketing and deploying their award winning Talisma CRM solution in the Middle East market, specifically UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. The agreement was completed on March 4, 2004.

### **1. Ease in Deploying the Software**

Talisma, or a comparable system, will also be able to host the system during the first year of operation in order to expedite the implementation process for the PMU. Talisma representatives have indicated that it would probably cost \$50,000 to license and host the software the first year. Thereafter, the system can be purchased at a price that is driven by the number of concurrent users. The first year hosting cost may be applied toward the purchase price.

### **2. A Portal-Based Approach**

The software is a Web-service application that provides a personal account or portal for each prospect as well as for each prospect's significant "influencer" such as a parent. Talisma for Higher Education integrates the power of e-mail marketing, chat, real-time collaboration and telephony applications. The software provides comprehensive analytics and a fully integrated system-wide knowledge base that can capture prospect interactions, including how they became aware of the institution, what information they have requested, and what communication they have received.

### **3. Tracking and Automating the Process**

Talisma can easily track students through the six stages of the recruitment funnel and automatically generate correspondence (hardcopy or e-mail) for students based on such factors as market segment, academic interest, or gender. It also can create correspondence that responds to the student's status in the funnel – inquiry, application, admission, deposit, and enrollment.

For example, if a student responds to a high school visit by submitting an information request card, Talisma will automatically generate correspondence for the student as soon as the student's personal data are entered into the system. A response from Talisma might be as simple as generating an address label for mailing the view book. It can also create a more sophisticated response. Talisma can generate not only a label, but also a personalized letter (hardcopy or e-mail) acknowledging the student's request for information and include text that addresses the student's academic interest, gender, other factor.

Communication from outside the Office of Admissions can also be generated. For example, a personalized e-mail from the Director of the Preparation Year Program or the department chair from the student's academic area of interest can be generated automatically. Using Talisma, the Office of Admissions can become the "communications center" for the campus for all prospects, especially if sophisticated communication plans are set up within the system for each market segment at each stage of the recruitment funnel.

Appendix B, Sample Communications Plan, shows the timing of mailings that can be automated using software.

#### **4. Advantage of Recruitment Software**

Talisma will give the PMU a distinct recruiting advantage that does not exist in Saudi Arabia at this time. Moreover, Talisma will be a business partner with SCT in the immediate future. This means that if the PMU decides to implement Banner from SCT, the leading student information system in the market at this time, the interface between the products will be simplified. Talisma and SCT are expected to sign a partnership agreement in late September of 2004.

It is very likely that the PMU will deploy the Banner student information system. Since Talisma is the only recruitment system that will interface with Banner, it makes sense to give serious consideration to Talisma as the recruiting software system.

Additional information on the recommended software is available on-line at <http://education.talisma.com/>.

## **VI. RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES AND EVENTS**

The PMU should plan strategies and events that will provide multiple simultaneous ways of disseminating information about the university to prospective students. Such strategies and events will give representatives of the university a forum for speaking with students. They also will provide opportunities to distribute printed material containing more information about the PMU that prospects can take home and read later.

### **A. PRIMARY TARGET MARKETS**

The following recruitment strategies are recommended for the primary target markets – Saudi high school seniors. The promotional campaigns involving electronic media and printed media will follow this section of the recruitment strategies.

## **1. Recruitment Posters**

The Director of Enrollment Management will mail recruitment posters and search pieces to high schools both inside and outside the university's primary service area (the Eastern Province) before November of each year. During the first year, these materials were sent once the PMU Web site was operational. A letter of support from the Minister of Education ought to have accompanied the materials to facilitate this effort.

The posters will direct the students to the PMU's Web site where they will be able to log on and open their personal PMU Web portal account and the university will be able to start the recruitment process using the funnel approach. The students who wish to use the Internet will be required to supply biographical and demographic data. They also will be asked how they learned about the PMU and what led them to log in and inquire about the university. These data will be used for yield rate analysis and for market research purposes.

Students who do not wish to use the Internet will have the option of taking one of the information request cards attached to the poster, filling it out, and mailing it to the PMU to be added to the recruitment mailing list. Once the card is received, PMU admissions staff will enter the student's data into the recruitment database quickly, including the source of contact (poster card), and send the student the information identified in the communications plan for the student's market segment.

## **2. High School Visits**

The PMU must establish a regular schedule of visits with the area high schools. The Director of Enrollment Management, with permission from the Minister of Education and the high school directors, must work with the high school counselors to organize and schedule visits to the area high schools.

The director should begin planning and scheduling the visits shortly after the school year is underway. The university should post the schedule of visits organized according to city and high school on the recruitment Web site. The director should also create a database of the school directors and counselors such that he will be able to communicate with them through the Internet when necessary. A good recruiting software package has the ability to capture the names, addresses, and e-mails of key contacts at schools by city and high school to facilitate communication.

Visits to high schools should begin no later than November, especially in the larger schools in the primary recruitment area in the Eastern Province. The visits should continue monthly through the end of the academic year and intensify shortly before and after the high school certification exams take place.

To make sure students are aware of the university's visits, the Director of Enrollment Management should e-mail the students already in the recruiting database about the upcoming visits. Within the high school, students are usually very effective in spreading the word about recruiting visits. The director should also e-mail the high school directors and counselors prior to the visits as a reminder. All of these communications can be handled automatically by a good recruitment software system if the appropriate communication plans are loaded into the system.

High school visits can take a number of forms, depending on whether or not the admissions representative will have the opportunity to make a formal presentation or simply talk to students informally. If a formal presentation is planned, a PowerPoint presentation is usually the preferred approach since it presents a more professional image and uses technology that is an aim of the university. When a formal presentation is the format, the admissions representative should always have the students fill out the information request card before the program starts to make sure the data for the students are collected. This also gives the representative an idea of the areas of interest for the students, enabling him to adjust his comments accordingly.

Regardless of whether the visit requires a formal presentation, the admissions representative should always set up the display table with search pieces for the students to take with them. Inexpensive bookmarks and pencils with the university name and Web site URL may also be used as promotional items if the budget permits.

If the visit is a browsing session in a hallway or the cafeteria where students may come and go on an informal basis, the admissions representative must actively seek to have students complete the information request form if they are not already in the recruitment database.

### **3. PMU Open House**

One of the most effective recruiting tools for any campus is the open house or the campus visit. This approach can be as simple as an informal campus tour conducted by one of the admissions officers. It can also be a formal program that is marketed in advance through electronic and printed media, the university Web site, and brochures.

Attendance at a formal campus program is the best predictor of enrollment. Thus, it will be important to conduct at least four programs a year, two for men and two for women, and spend a significant amount of time in planning the programs. Students and parents who take the time to visit the campus are usually much more interested than students and parents who do not.

A campus visit program usually begins in the morning and ends at mid-afternoon on the first day of a weekend, but it may be scheduled at any time appropriate to local customs. A formal program typically follows a format similar to the one presented below.

#### Open House Procedures:

The open house begins with registration and distribution of guest packets at a reception area. A registration fee may be assessed to defray some of the cost of the program such as meals. The guest packets usually include:

- Agenda for the program
- View book
- Application for admission
- Program evaluation form

*NOTE: Refreshments are usually served during registration and while guests wait for the program to begin. If appropriate, music may also be provided while the guests wait. In addition, a continuously running PowerPoint presentation that features building and facilities is appropriate while the guests wait for the program to begin. The registration phase is very important since it allows the school to collect valuable name and biographical and demographic data on prospective students.*

Once registration is complete, a series of addresses, events, and meetings occur:

- Formal welcome by the Vice Rector of Student Affairs
- Presentation on curricular design and academic expectations by a faculty member
- Student's perspective on his or her experience at the university
- Presentation on student support services by a staff member, if not part of the student presentation

*NOTE: Since this will be the first recruiting effort for the first year of operation at the PMU, the student perspective will not be available, but it will be important to present the student services side of the program. It also will be very important to use technology in the presentations. It is not enough to talk about the technology that will be available to students or to simply discuss that the PMU will be a technology-infused environment. This fundamental characteristic of the university should be reinforced with the use of technology in the program.*

- Campus tours in small groups

*NOTE: Depending on appropriateness, tours after the PMU is in operation should be conducted by students who are articulate, recognized leaders on campus, and who are enjoying their experience at the PMU. They will do a much better job of providing the information students and parents need, but they also communicate the PMU experience in a much more meaningful way for the guests. A staff person cannot communicate the PMU story as effectively. Moreover, using bright students is an outstanding way of demonstrating the caliber of students attending the institution.*

- Light and informal lunch that permits interaction among guests and the PMU staff and faculty
- Concurrent breakout sessions that review:
  - Admission requirements and procedures,
  - Cost of attendance and financial assistance programs (scholarships and sponsored programs)
  - Visits with faculty from each of the major areas (Preparation Year Program, Engineering, Interior Design, Information Technology, and Business Administration)

All formal campus programs usually include an evaluation sheet that guests return at the end of the program. The evaluation form will be a very effective way of assessing the campus visit program and of collecting market research data from the students and the parents.

#### **4. High School Faculty Campus Visits**

In the United States, recruitment officers work very hard to establish good working relationships with key individuals in high schools that provide the most and the best students. Typically, these individuals are counselors and teachers in select disciplines. These individuals can assist the recruitment process tremendously by directing students to the university and by disseminating information to the students about the university. In many respects, these individuals become an extension of the university's recruitment efforts.

The PMU should seek to establish a good working relationship with some of these key individuals in the public high schools.

Specifically, the PMU should target the mathematics, science, and English teachers in the public high schools and host them at special campus functions. Such visits probably will not be feasible prior to the first year, but it might be possible during the second year.

The best time to bring high school faculty for campus probably will be after the fall semester starts, but before the recruiting season begins. These visits can start out as campus tours designed to introduce the faculty to the programs offered by the PMU, the university's curricular approach, and the other important elements that will help them become more familiar with the university. These programs should evolve over time into professional development programs that may improve the English, mathematics and science curricula

in the public schools and result in improved recruitment efforts as well. Ultimately, they should become important annual programs designed to share valuable information about the university and establish a network of key people in the public schools who can facilitate recruitment efforts.

## **B. SECONDARY TARGET MARKETS**

Recruitment strategies for the secondary markets (highly qualified non-Saudi students residing in the Kingdom) are not necessarily different from those presented for the primary market. The principal difference lies in the priority given to high school visits. There also may be some consideration given to offering recruiting materials in other languages.

The PMU should use its recruiting posters extensively with international schools. It also should provide ample supplies of search pieces to counselors at these schools for distribution to interested students. The key will be to provide awareness and access to information. Posters and search pieces will be an inexpensive way of accomplishing both objectives.

High school visits will probably be more limited in international schools than in public schools because of the priority given to recruiting Saudi students. Constraints in scheduling and staffing also may affect the number of visits to international schools. It will be the responsibility of the Director of Enrollment Management to determine whether and when other high school visits will be possible.

Regional college fairs may be a more effective strategy for recruiting at international high schools if regular visits are not possible. These fairs will give the PMU the opportunity to provide a representative, disseminate program information, and collect important data from interested students. The key will be to collect the data and get students into the recruitment funnel to initiate the communication process.

Open house programs will also be an effective way of recruiting non-Saudi students. All prospects will be invited to the open house programs to provide additional information to students and their parents.

### **C. TERTIARY TARGET MARKETS**

Students who reside outside of Saudi Arabia will be the least productive market available for the PMU and the most expensive to recruit. Nonetheless, these students should not be overlooked. Recruitment efforts such as the recruitment poster campaign, regional college fairs, and open house programs will be effective recruitment strategies for international students.

## **VII. PRINT AND ELECTRONIC MARKETING MATERIALS**

The following marketing publications are recommended to support the recruitment effort during the first year. These are the minimal publications that the PMU needed to begin the recruitment process.

During the second and later years, the PMU found it necessary to develop additional publications as the university's assessment processes and marketing research provide deeper understanding of recruiting needs.

It will be absolutely necessary for all materials to follow a consistent design to maximize branding and name recognition. A professional marketing firm should design all of the recruitment publications and provide the university logo and theme.

### **A. PRINT PUBLICATIONS**

Printed marketing materials can – and should – range from simple cards and posters to elaborate, detailed brochures and catalogs. As demonstrated above by the comparison of the recruitment process to a funnel (see Section V.B. Assessment), prospective students will exhibit a wide variety of interests in the PMU at a number of different times. Print is an effective way to get the right marketing messages literally into the hands of specific prospects at the right time.



### **1. Recruitment Poster**

The poster will be used to advertise the PMU Web site where students can create their own communications portal account. This account will allow the PMU to begin the communication and recruitment process.

### **2. High School Visit Poster**

The high school visit poster will be mailed to area high schools with permission from the Minister of Education to announce when representatives of the PMU will visit the high school for recruiting students and providing information about the university. The high school visits will be coordinated through the Ministry of Education, high school directors, and high school counselors.

### **3. Search Piece**

The Search Piece is typically a tri-fold, four-color brochure designed as an introduction for prospects. As a general rule, the Search Piece must be very brief. Information should be presented in a bulleted format. The publication typically is dominated by photographs and is supported with text that covers four to five major features and benefits that the PMU represents.

The Search Piece also typically includes a card that students can mail to the university to request more information. Student information on the card is entered into the prospect management system for recruiting purposes.

The publication also includes the URL of the university's Web site to give students the option of requesting information electronically.

This publication is distributed at the high school visits and regional fairs.

A conceptual layout of a PMU Search Piece is presented in Appendix F, Search Piece.

*Note: If the university is able to obtain the names and addresses of students who are likely to meet admission standards from the Ministry of Education, the search piece is an excellent publication to mail to these students to initiate the recruitment process.*

#### **4. View Book**

The View Book is a four-color publication designed to be the follow-up brochure for students and parents who want additional information about the PMU. It should include the application for admission, especially if the student information system is not up and running or if it does not include an on-line application for admission.

As the name suggests, the publication is primarily a “photo publication” with a brief description of the institution, the programs, and the facilities, but it also includes much more text than the search piece. It should continue to focus on key PMU strengths and benefits. Creative design and photographs are an integral part of the publication. Again, pictures and graphics should dominate the piece. The View Book is also used as a handout to students and parents during campus visits or tours.

The number of pages for the View Book depends on the amount of information to be presented, but the primary purpose of the publication must be maintained. It is a general information publication designed to be appealing through the use of design, pictures, and language aimed at the target markets. The View Book is also the perfect place to include testimonials from key individuals who endorse the university. Testimonials and endorsements will be very important to start creating the university’s desired market brand and position.

#### **5. Open House Brochure**

The PMU Open House Brochure is very important. It is always mailed to students who apply for admission. It also is sent to students who are at the inquiry stage when an open house program is about to be held. The brochure is a four-color brochure with information on the dates and times for the open house programs. Brochures for men and women must be developed to provide different visitation dates for each group.

The brochure usually includes a brief description of the program, dates and times of the open house, location of the program, and a brief schedule of the program. The publication includes the URL of the university Web site for on-line registration. It also includes a perforated tear-off card for those students who wish to register through the mail. A minimal fee is usually charged for the event, normally to cover food costs. The open house program is described in more detail in Section VI., Recruitment Strategies and Events.

## 6. **Catalog**

The university catalog is a standard document that is used sparingly in recruiting. This detailed description of academic courses and university policies and procedures is mailed to students only when they do not wish to access the Internet to view the catalog on-line.

## 7. **Application for Admission**

The university must design and provide a comprehensive packet that includes admission requirements, application deadline, application form, and application checklist. The application packet is mailed or given to students who do not wish to apply on-line through the Internet.

## 8. **Information Request Card**

The Office of Enrollment Management uses the information request card to collect information on students during high school visits, college fairs, or when students visit the campus.

Appendix G, General Information Request Card, shows the type of information the PMU should request from students. This type of card can be handed out to students at recruiting events.

Appendix H (Search Piece Headings and Topics) shows a similar type of card that might be bound into the Search Piece.

## 9. **Promotional Items**

Promotional items such as pencils, pens, bumper stickers, or bookmarks are used during high school visits and especially during open house programs or tours of the campus. After the event, these items bearing the PMU logo, URL or other brief information will help brand the university by reminding the students of their contact with the institution.

A related item that the PMU must purchase will be a portable convention or tradeshow display to use during the high school visits or college fairs. The displays will also be necessary at regional shows throughout the Gulf region. Two Web sites representing different types of displays are provided below:

<http://www.affordabledisplays.com/>

<http://www.convention-displays.com/>

The PMU also will need a cover for the exhibit display table. Typically, the table cover includes the organization's name or logo and perhaps a slogan. However, a cover may not be necessary if the tradeshow display includes the university name and logo and if the table cover will never be used without the display. If the cover will be used independently of the display, it must include the university name and logo.

## **10. Additional Publications**

The following publications are also recommended if they can be produced during the first year. If not, they should be available during the second year of recruiting.

- Brochures for each of the major areas of study (Preparation Year Program, Engineering, Interior Design, Information Technology, and Business Administration.)
- Brochure on scholarships, financial aid and other resources available to students
- Brochure on academic advising and student support services

Other recommendations to enhance second-year publications and communications strategies include:

- A competitive positioning audit to find out what students think about the PMU. The audit should determine factors such as how the university perceived when compared to other institutions and which elements of the PMU students and parents value most.
- Market segment analysis. The PMU should define market segments more accurately in order to produce publications and marketing strategies that appeal to more clearly defined populations.

## **B. ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS**

The PMU should develop a comprehensive strategy of electronic publications to enhance communications with prospective students. Properly designed and managed, this strategy will convey both the university's desire to create a student-centered environment and project its image as a technology-infused campus.

These electronic communications are created in HTML format and distributed to prospective students via e-mail using contact information that students provided at university visits to high schools, recruiting fairs, visits to campus, on mail-in cards, or via the PMU Web site.

The communications software system described under Section V.D Recruitment Software simplifies and expedites the process of sending these communications. Based on information gathered from students and entered into the university database, the software can automatically launch publications timed according to the stage of the student in the recruitment process, events planned on campus, student interests and concerns, or other "triggers" for the messages.

Electronic publications are obviously very cost effective because there is no postage involved in sending e-mail. They also are very powerful because they can target prospects' specific needs concerning their higher education plans.

Appendices I, Letter to Students; J, HTML e-mail; and K, Sample Topics; provide suggested approaches to designing and launching electronic publications.

Appendix K, Sample Topics, offers 25 recommended topics for electronic publications under the following categories:

- Learning at the PMU – the Preparation Program Experience
- Technology at the PMU – How the Campus is “Wired”
- Keys to Success at the PMU – Realistic Expectations
- Study Skills – the Basics
- Working with University Faculty

Each of the topics on Appendix K also includes support points and suggested Web links that typically appear on a university Web site. The Director of Enrollment Management will develop these topics with assistance from other directors and their staff who provide student support. (According to the university structure defined in the report *PMU Organization*, these would include the Director of Student Financial Aid, Registrar, Director of Campus Life, Director of Health and Counseling Services, and the Director of Career Services.)

The electronic publications should be sent to students in the sequence in which they appear on the table. The first topic should be sent to prospects in the recruitment system as soon as the recruiting system is ready for use. A new topic should be sent once a week as indicated below according to a prospect’s stage in the recruitment funnel.

- Inquiry Stage: Topics 1-5
- Application Stage: Topics 6-10
- Admission Stage: Topics 11-20
- Deposit Stage: Topics 21-25

### C. WEB SITE

The university Web site is a fast, easily updated, and always-available way to reach prospective students with information about the PMU. It is affordable, as it carries no printing and mailing costs – only the time and labor costs for producing the site. It will be unmatched in its ability to demonstrate to students that the PMU is a leader in its use of technology in all aspects of the academic and student environment. For these reasons, it will be indispensable to the university’s marketing efforts.

A Web site is particularly important in reaching students. The Web is one of the main sources of information for technologically knowledgeable young people today. Increasingly for all audiences, however, the existence of a Web site is taken as proof that a business or organization is viable. Organizations without Web sites typically lose credibility among their target audience.

## 1. Launching the Web Site

This report, therefore, recommend that a university launch its Web site as soon as possible. The most likely time is in early to mid-Autumn of the year before the first class is expected to enter the university. (In the report titled *PMU Organization* and related reports concerning the university administration and its start-up, this year is designated as “Year 0.”) Such a date would make information available online to assist the university in recruiting students for its initial class who will begin their studies the following September. Certainly, the Web site should be posted no later than November of Year 0, as other marketing strategies and events will not be able to function effectively without support from Web-based information.

PMU has registered the [www.pmu.edu.sa](http://www.pmu.edu.sa) URL for its Web site. It is recommended that in addition to this URL, the university register a number of variations on the name that may be used in the future.

## 2. Architecture for the Web Site

The flexibility of a Web site enables it to start small in the university’s early days and grow to a nearly unlimited size. This flexibility will enable the PMU to quickly and easily post an abbreviated site if necessary to begin the recruitment process, and to expand it whenever the need arises or new information becomes available.

Appendix L, [www.pmu.edu.sa](http://www.pmu.edu.sa) PDF Version, presents a printable version of a suggested site map and architecture for a PMU Web site.

Appendix M, [www.pmu.edu.sa](http://www.pmu.edu.sa) HTML Version, presents a functioning HTML version that allows the visitor to click through from page to page. This HTML version demonstrates the basic navigation the visitor might use to find his or her way through the PMU site.

Suggested templates for the pages are not finished layouts. They contain no actual design (photos, typography, or colors) or content. They do, however, suggest the type of information that might be included, from news about the PMU to “frequently asked questions.”

These maps organize information around a number of pages:

- Choosing PMU
- Admissions
- Academics and Learning
- Paying for University
- Campus Life and Culture
- Technology
- Maps and Facilities
- About PMU

Significantly, these pages include a function titled “My Portal Services.” Using this function, students will be able to create customized locations where they can store information about the university, request more information, update applications, or otherwise communicate with the university and its admissions staff.

The architecture further provides a structure that makes the site available in both English and Arabic. This will enable students who have studied English and parents who may not know English to access the same information about the PMU.

## VIII. MEDIA

### A. ESTABLISHING THE MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Saudi Arabia is a very large country with a population of approximately 24 million. Most of the population is concentrated in 22 major cities that are located throughout the Kingdom. Fortunately, however, most of the primary target markets for the PMU reside in five major cities in the Eastern Province a few kilometers from the university – Jubail, Hufuf, Dammam, Dhahran, and Khobar. Riyadh, the capital and the largest city in the Kingdom, is also a significant market for the PMU although it is located several hundred kilometers away.

#### 1. Determining the Campaign’s Reach

These six cities are the primary markets from a geographical standpoint. The remaining thirteen cities are located more than 500 kilometers from the university. Ten of these thirteen cities are more than 1,000 kilometers away. A professional marketing company should advise the PMU whether or not it will be cost effective to conduct expensive electronic and print media campaigns beyond Riyadh or beyond the 500 or 1,000 kilometer areas. Professional marketing firms are usually able to work with the media and can put together significant discount packages by region or regions. However, this may not be feasible given the large area of the entire Kingdom.

## 2. Conducting the Awareness Campaign

Once the decision is made on which markets are feasible to reach, the PMU must conduct a number of awareness campaigns aimed at parents and students. These campaigns should be coordinated between the university's Director of Public Relations and the Director of Enrollment Management.

## 3. Integrating the Campaign with Other Marketing Efforts

All campaigns should be coordinated with the PMU's efforts to distribute the recruitment materials to public and international high schools and with the implementation of the university Web site and recruitment software. Each campaign should run for two or three weeks to achieve adequate frequency levels. The campaigns should resume one week before the high school certificate testing begins and run throughout the testing period.

Likewise, the campaign should run again when testing for the General Aptitude and Abilities Test (GAAT) given by the Ministry of Education is taking place.

Campaigns also should be run after high school graduation and before the July 1 initial deadline for PMU application.

All campaigns should drive students and parents to the PMU recruitment Web site or prompt them to take other action related to special events that may be taking place and that the promotions are designed to highlight. As noted above, *a professional marketing consultant* should be hired to develop the campaigns and to buy time and space for television, radio and newspaper advertisements.

## B. METHODS OF USING THE VARIOUS MEDIA

While it will be important to establish an integrated campaign that consistently conveys the PMU message to the target audience, it is also important to remember that every medium has its own advantages, disadvantages, and requirements. This section, therefore, begins with two sample messages that the university might employ. It then discusses different media that might be used to reach different audiences.

### 1. Sample Approaches to Campaigns

The following are the awareness campaigns that are recommended. The titles are presented only as suggestions. The professional marketing firm that develops the design, theme and logo for all of PMU publications will coordinate these matters to achieve an integrated marketing approach.

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- “Redefining Excellence”  
This campaign program is designed to introduce the PMU and start the awareness and image building process. Both electronic and print media should be used. Advertising must describe the university in general, the uniqueness of the programs, and their benefits to the target markets. The ads should drive the audience to the PMU Web site.
- “Time for Excellence”  
This ad campaign is designed to let students and parents know about the application process and deadlines. It needs to run parallel to the “Redefining Excellence” campaign during the high school certificate testing period and the General Aptitude and Abilities Test (GAAT) testing period and after high school graduation.

## 2. Newspaper Advertising

Newspaper advertising should target parents primarily and run for two to three weeks to achieve adequate frequency. The marketing should include endorsements from prominent business leaders and educators. It will be very important for high-level individuals from respected institutions as well as representatives of the Ministry of Education, the PMU Founding Committee, and the private sector to endorse and support the new university.

## 3. Television Advertising

Television advertising campaigns should follow a schedule that is coordinated with General Aptitude and Abilities Test (GAAT) testing, high school graduation, and other events (as described under VIII. A. Establishing the Media Campaign) However, television campaigns should target both parents and students. As in other efforts, these ads should feature high profile individuals from the education, government, and business sectors.

These ads can be a series that focuses on different aspects of the university and uses appropriate individuals related to the ad’s content. For example, an ad with an emphasis on the Preparation Year Program might feature a PMU professor talking about the program and a business representative from the founding committee speaking highly about the benefits to prospective students. The trailer for the ad might present a concept similar to: “*PMU – Redefining Excellence.*” The marketing firm hired by the PMU can provide its own creative approach to the PMU “excellence” story. The story, however, should be enhanced through association with entities that are already recognized for their excellence in the particular areas emphasized in the ads.

#### 4. **Radio Advertising**

Radio advertising is usually the least expensive form of mass media advertising. It, therefore, should be used liberally to support the other electronic and print promotions. Radio spots need to run for three weeks. The message should be tailored for the market segments that the radio stations serve. Some radio stations may serve the younger population. These stations should target the students. Stations that serve an older audience should target the parents.

#### 5. **Open House Campaigns**

These campaigns should market the campus visit program to parents and students. These ads should be run at least one to two weeks before the date of each program. Newspaper, radio, and some television should be used to market these events. In all cases, the ads should direct students and parents to the PMU Web site or to the PMU telephone numbers where they can sign up for the campus visit program.

### IX. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Scholarships are an effective way for a university to attract students. They can be particularly effective in an academic environment such as that in Saudi Arabia, in which students not only attend public universities without charge, they receive stipends to support their studies.

The offering of scholarships, however, is a policy decision that must be made by the PMU Founding Committee. For the purposes of this report, three assumptions are made:

- The university will award scholarships to students of excellent academic potential and is seeking ways to fund the program.
- The Founding Committee will establish a program through which businesses will sponsor students of merit with financial need.
- The university will work with significant business and industrial entities to establish summer work programs for students.

#### A. SCHOLARSHIPS

The easiest and most important financial assistance program that the PMU should develop will be a merit scholarship program. Scholarships offered under such a program will have significant impact on recruiting top students. Top students, in turn, attract other good students and enhance the recruitment process in general.

It is important to consider the way in which a university's student body affects an institution's image. The public's perception is that the best students attend the best universities. If such is the case, then a university is only as good as its students. Creating an environment that attracts top students – whether by scholarships or other means – therefore, should be integrated into the enrollment management plan.

The PMU should consider awarding full scholarships to 10% of the entering class. The cost of financing the scholarships can be built into the university's operating budget and taken from the tuition revenues that the remaining students pay for attendance. This is a common practice among private institutions in the United States known as "tuition discounting." Students paying the regular tuition rate provide the "tuition discount" or scholarship for academically talented students who may not have the financial means to pay for part or all of the tuition.

The recommended eligibility criteria for scholarship recipients at the PMU are:

- General Secondary Education Degree with an average of 95% or above for Saudi applicants, or 98% for non-Saudi applicants
- financial need that would make studying at PMU otherwise unaffordable
- ability to meet all admissions requirements.

- distinguished intellectual and academic performance
- high performance on a personal interview
- recent high school graduate (within two years)

The Vice Rector for Student Affairs and the Vice Rector of Academic Affairs will appoint the members of the committee which will select scholarship recipients. The scholarship committee will consist of two faculty members each from the Preparation Year Program, the College of Engineering, the College of Information Technology, and the College of Business Administration. At the discretion of the Vice Rector for Student Affairs and the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, an additional member may be added to represent the Department of Interior Design. It also will include the Director of Student Financial Aid and the Director of Enrollment Management. The two directors will be non-voting *ex-officio* members of the committee.

Students will be eligible for the scholarship as long as they remain enrolled at the PMU, maintain a required GPA, and are not guilty of misconduct. Students who falsify their application will be disqualified immediately.

## **B. SPONSORED SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

Another financial aid program that the PMU provides is scholarships through partnerships with the surrounding community, within the business sector. Since the university provides programs that are relevant to the needs of the business community, such a sponsored scholars program connects the private sector with talented students who will later become excellent employees. Additionally, a sponsored scholars program is a tangible and meaningful way for successful people to give back to the community.

Moreover, a sponsored program also helps PMU build a broad-based community support system. The Founding Committee has taken the lead in initiating the program, and a staff person is coordinating the day-to-day tasks associated with this type of program. A program of this magnitude requires a significant amount of planning and oversight.

Two key components of this type of program include letters of appreciation from the students to the sponsors and a significant annual recognition function for the sponsors.

- Sponsored students are expected to write personal letters to the sponsors at the beginning of the academic year. A staff person in the Financial Aid Office usually oversees this task.
- The annual recognition function is usually an annual appreciation banquet that includes a keynote speaker, a short address by a sponsored student who is articulate and is willing to represent the other sponsored students, and a short address by the Rector or the Chair of the Founding Committee. Students usually sit with their sponsors to make sure the sponsors meet the students that they are sponsoring. This is a very successful program once it is implemented.

The selection criteria for this program is determined by the program's requirements and any specific restrictions the sponsors may require for their sponsored students. Some sponsors may, for example, be willing to sponsor students who are seeking a major in a specific area, who are from a particular community, or who meet other criteria.

The eligibility criteria for recipients of sponsored scholarships are:

- High School Degree with an average of 90% or above
- Financial need that would make the university cost otherwise unaffordable
- Ability to meet all admissions requirements
- Distinguished intellectual and academic performance
- Recent graduate of high school (within 1 to 2 years)
- Ability to meet the sponsor's designated criteria

The Scholarship Committee evaluates the applicants and make recommendations to sponsors, who are making the final decision.

Students are be eligible for the sponsored scholarship as long as they remain enrolled at the PMU, maintain a required GPA, and are not guilty of misconduct. Students who falsify their application will be disqualified immediately.

### **C. SUMMER WORK PROGRAM**

The university should work with the private sector to create summer employment opportunities for students in good academic standing. The Career Services Office will be responsible for coordinating the Summer Work Program with assistance from the Financial Aid Office.

The Career Services Office will work with government and private sector entities to identify and publicize summer employment opportunities for students. Preference will be given to students with financial need who will be working in an area related to their field of study.