

Montecito state college: division of extension studies



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Montecito State College consists of an undergraduate day division, a graduate school, and a Division of Extension Studies. The Division of Extension Studies controls a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses accessible in the late afternoon, weekday evenings, and Saturday mornings, in addition to day and evening classes during two summer sessions. The division also offers an array of continuing education programs, which includes noncredit workshops, courses, and seminars. In addition to Montecito State College's permanent campus, they also have four satellite campuses for students who may not live near the college.

One of the purposes of these satellite campuses was to appeal to students who may start their studies at one of the satellite campuses, but then go on to take more advanced classes at the main campus, but this does not seem to be happening. The College's main goal is to increase their continuing education enrollment rates and to increase the number of extension course registrations; however, before they can do this, there are a few major problem areas that need to be addressed.

It appears that MSC is having the most trouble with the enrollment and cancellations rates at their satellite campuses. This has become very detrimental to MSC to the point where the college's president has given the satellite campuses only one more year to improve their enrollment rates or he is shutting them down. From past experiences, MSC has found that when selecting satellite campuses, they tend to be more successful when they are located in easily accessible sites such as near a major highway. Another problem MSC is facing is that they are in a very competitive area.

There is a great amount of competition coming from a variety of colleges in the area including two private institutions, two county-financed community colleges, and various public universities. Similar to Montecito State College, a few of these colleges are beginning to utilize satellite campuses to make it easier for their students. It will be important to MSC to make the most of any advertising they can to attract more students away from these other universities. However, advertising has appeared to be a great weakness for Montecito State College.

According to Roberta Jensen, the director of public information, “ One of the things MSC has not done as well as it might is to figure out the effectiveness of different advertising approaches. ” Harry Fourman, Dean Shannon’s assistant who she has put in charge of advertising decisions says, “ The trouble is that we don’t have one single funnel through which all our responses flow. ” Unfortunately, MSC does have a very restricted budget so we feel that it would be in MSC’s best interest to figure out the best way to utilize it. Executive Summary

This case analysis is about the Montecito State College and the difficulties they are having with their enrollment numbers, particularly in their Division of Extension Studies program. The Montecito State College consists of an undergraduate day division, a graduate school, and a Division of Extension studies. The Division of Extension Studies is in charge of various undergraduate and graduate courses offered during the later afternoon, weekday evenings, and Saturday morning hours, as well as day and evening courses offered during two rigorous summer sessions.

The Division of Extension Studies also subsidizes a variety of continuing education programs. Dr. Shannon, the dean of the extension studies, feels that “ MSC needed to devote greater commitment to its extension program. ” She believes that the quality of the program is “ uneven. ” The Montecito State College has a variety of satellite campuses in addition to their permanent campus in Montecito. These satellite campuses offer all day undergraduate and graduate classes. MSC also manages four “ satellite” campuses in the evenings for its degree courses.

These are comprised of high school facilities in various cities surrounding the main campus. Enrollment rates were much lower at the satellite campuses than at the main campus, and there was a greater amount of course cancellations. One of the goals of the satellite campuses was to appeal to students who may begin their studies at a satellite campus and then later go on to finish up their education by taking more courses at the main campus, but it did not seem like this was happening. Montecito State College faces a great amount of competition with the other colleges in the area.

According to the article, the area that Montecito State College seems to struggle with the most is its advertising. Roberta Jensen, the director of public information said that, “ One of the things that MSC hasn’t done as well as it might is to figure out the effectiveness of different advertising approaches”. In the past, MSC has done most of its advertising in the Sherman Monitor and other selected newspapers. They also published a catalog in black and white that described their courses and programs. They distributed this catalog to various organizations and agencies.

In addition to these advertising techniques, Montecito State College also promotes its campus through radio advertisements and direct mail. Unfortunately, Montecito State College has a restricted advertising budget, however; we feel that in order to stay above the competition, MSC should make some adjustments to their current communication strategies. We feel that MSC would benefit from creating more eye-catching, colorful catalogs, as well as implementing bus advertisements and mass media advertising since they currently do not use those advertising channels.

Also, Montecito State College currently is not using any public relations agencies for their publicity and news releases due to the fact that they prefer to handle these activities in-house. Our group believes that it could be beneficial to MSC to utilize out-of-house public relations agencies that can focus solely on advertising for them and produce more effective advertisements. Montecito State College's main goal is to increase their continuing education enrollments from 900 to 1, 000 and to increase the number of extension course registrations from 5, 200 to 5, 500.

We feel that this goal can be accomplished through market penetration. We would like MSC to advertise toward more local high schools to try to attract graduating students, and we would also like them to implement advertisements through new channels such as television, billboards, and buses. SWOT Analysis Some important strengths that we found are as follows; In addition to the permanent campus in Montecito, The Montecito State College operates four " satellite" campuses to students farther away.

This allows students that aren't in the Montecito campus radius to easily access our other facilities. The objective of the satellite campuses was the <https://assignbuster.com/montecito-state-college-division-of-extension-studies/>

attract students who might begin their studies at a satellite and then later go on to complete their degrees by taking more advanced courses at Montecito. Also, we are currently using The Monitor to promote the Montecito State name, the location of our main campus and other campus locations, and the fields in which extension courses were offered.

We also use selected suburban papers and published catalogs to promote the Extension Division. 0, 000 copies of the catalog were printed to be mailed to a variety of organizations and agencies, including public libraries, company personnel departments, and other locations on campus. This allowed a very long range of people to be reached. Another strength for Montecito is that the President agreed to increase the communication budget. That gave them a huge benefit to allow them to increase and/or retarget their advertising plan. The main weakness Montecito faces is their retention of their satellite campuses.

Satellite campuses tended to draw from a much smaller radius than did the main campus, so they were having a difficult time attracting students. The satellite campuses in Sherman City, the suburban towns of North Sherman, San Lucas, and Puget accounted for 20% of total course registration. Enrollments per course were lower (and still dropping) than at the main Montecito campus and there was a much higher rate of course cancellations. Courses were automatically cancelled if student registrations failed to reach a pre-defined minimum which in turn lost them a lot of money. They even had to close the Puget campus.

Another weakness is Montecito's current advertising situation. The person responsible for advertising and publicity (Roberta Jensen) was the director of <https://assignbuster.com/montecito-state-college-division-of-extension-studies/>

public information. The public information office served every department on campus. It handled all news items for the college and developed publicity for major events. That is a lot of work for one person to be responsible. If Jensen was just in charge of advertising, she would be able to complete her job more efficiently. In addition, their advertising budget is small compared to other colleges and their budget was intended to remain unchanged.

With costs rising, they needed to figure out how to allocate their expenditures using the same budget. Montecito also had several great opportunities. There were many additional advertising methods they could use to attract a wider range of students. They could begin using mass media for advertising. Although it was expensive to produce TV advertisements, it wasn't to run them. Purchasing TV time could prove to be a huge asset. As stated, "One media medium reinforces another." In addition, they could begin using car cards on the buses and billboards.

They could also make their advertising approaches more innovative and "dignified." After closing the Puget campus, Dean Shannon looked for a new location in northwest Sherman County. They believed that the north county area has real growth potential. This search let them to great opportunity of their recent purchase of Pine Creek High. Pine Creek was just two blocks from a freeway exit and had a very good bus service. Competition from University of Sherman and Wallace College, Sherman State College, Lake View Junior College and Valley Junior College, University of Jefferson and 2 community finance community colleges in Metropolitan area posed to be the major threat to Montecito.

Dean Shannon described the market for evening credit courses in the Greater Sherman area as “ highly competitive. ” Another main threat was the President’s ultimatum. He wasn’t happy with MSC’s satellite program and told Montecito that the upcoming year might be their last chance. They needed to increase course registrations up to a total of 1, 200 at the four satellites or he would consider eliminating them.