Maria College Communications Policy

The Office of Maria College's Marketing and Communications (Maria Marcom) is responsible for telling the college's story and upholding its image and reputation, as expressed in the Maria mission, values and goals. Responsibilities include the coordination and management of editorial content for media relations and marketing communication material to achieve goals in brand positioning and reputation, enrollment, donor development and stewardship, student and alumni engagement.

Media Relations

The Maria Marcom Director is responsible for all media relations at Maria College. This includes responding to press inquiries from media outlets (print, radio, television, Internet). The Maria MarCom Director is the official college spokesperson in all college related matters particularly during a crisis situation and will work with the President to engage others in the College including Board members, if specific subject matter expertise is required.

Responsibilities

1. Prepares statements for timely response to media inquiries;
2. Creates crisis communication plans for developing stories;
3. Increases public awareness of College initiatives through news releases, "story pitches", and other earned media strategies'
4. Tailor responses on behalf of the College that each media inquiry should receive.

Procedure

- Anyone in the Maria Community contacted by any media representative should direct these calls and inquiries in a timely fashion to the Marcom Director.
- Official college statements are approved by the President (or designated college leader) and are to be issued only by the Maria Marcom Director to the media and other interested parties.
- Individuals contacted for comments, opinions, or as experts in their unique fields of study may respond to questions relating to their individual, subject matter expertise, but not respond on behalf of Maria College. *Note: always notify the Maria Marcom Director upon media contact.*

Crisis Communication

Maria College will adhere to clear communication standards during an urgent, evolving crisis situation that threatens the College's reputation, to ensure facts are gathered and disseminated accurately and clearly. A definition of, "crisis" refers to anything that might significantly impact the College's operations or public image, which could result in extensive news coverage and have the institution thrust into the public eye.

Crises often occur without notice and generally require immediate communication. A situation assessment needs to be made by campus leadership (the crisis communication team will include: President, Vice President of Academic Affairs, MarCom Director and others deemed relevant to the situation by the president) who will develop and implement a plan of action for the evolving crisis situation that specifies what messages will be communicated when, and by whom.

Communication Material Production | Brand Guidelines

Maria Marcom is tasked with establishing and maintaining a cohesive and unique brand identity for the College. Regardless of format, all messages developed for external communications and visuals must:

- Be accurate, timely, complete and consistent with one another;
- Be of professional quality with regards to messaging, aesthetics, composition and presentation;
- Align with the mission and vision of the institution, as well as the goals and priorities outlined in the College's strategic plan;
- Adhere to the College's style guide:
  http://www.mariacollege.edu/sites/default/files/MariaCollegeLogo_StyleGuide.pdf

A marketing request form must be completed and submitted within ideally two weeks' notice to Maria Marcom to start the process of creating material for either external and/or internal consumption (unless routine or intra department communication):
http://www.mariacollege.edu/sites/default/files/ProjectRequestForm.pdf

External communication

The Maria Marcom department is responsible for all marketing and communication projects to ensure a consistent editorial and graphic identity. Materials includes, but are not limited to brochures, posters, photographs, web content, mass emails, and advertisements intended primarily for an external audience (general public, prospective students, media etc.). Ongoing

external communication projects include the annual print publication, Maria Magazine, whose circulation includes Maria alumni, the Maria Community and key stakeholders. A quarterly news publication (digital format) is also under development.

Internal Communication

Maria MarCom will produce material that will be used frequently and/or displayed prominently for internal audiences and/or if the material is part of a larger College campaign. Official use of the Maria College logo or seal must be approved by Maria Marcom. Campus departments will partner with Maria Marcom, as appropriate, on individual marketing projects i.e. the Academic Catalog.

An ongoing internal communication vehicle is the weekly, eNewsletter, *Maria Minutes*, distributed to faculty, staff, students and the Board of Trustees.

Internet Communications Policies and Procedures

Website | Microsite

Maria College's official website (www.maria.edu) is the registered domain for Maria College. It is externally hosted and the content is maintained and managed by the Maria Marcom department. It primarily serves current students, faculty, staff, alumni, news media, and the general public searching for information about the College. A microsite (newmariacollege.com) is embedded in the dot edu website and its audience is primarily prospective students. Its goal is to engage prospects with imagery, videos and inbound marketing strategies. Maria Marcom is responsible for both sites' architecture, functionality, design, technical structure, and strategy. Best technology and content best practices are the guiding principles for the sites' administration, operating within the College's mission and goals, and integrating input from the Maria community, alumni and stakeholders.

Mass e-mails and e-Newsletters

Internal

- Only critical or time sensitive messages should be electronically broadcast to ALL of Maria's internal audiences (faculty, staff, or student lists) and approved by Maria Marcom;
- Announcements involving sickness or death are sent by the President (or current leadership);
- Information that is not time sensitive (or critical) should be sent to the Maria Marcom office by Wednesday for distribution in the weekly, internal eNews, *Monday Minutes*.

External

Requests to produce and distribute external HTML emails i.e. Constant Contact should be made to the Maria Marcom department by completing a marketing request form
http://www.mariacollege.edu/sites/default/files/ProjectRequestForm.pdf

Target audiences for mass, external emails include the following: new student recruiting, fundraising, and/or official college promotions. External e-mails must be approved by the Maria Marcom Director to ensure brand consistency. Custom-designed electronic message templates require a minimum of two week development time, including concept and copy development via the marketing request form.

E-Newsletters

All electronic newsletter templates will be created by Maria Marcom.

Blog Posts

Official Maria blog sites will be established by Maria Marcom and featured on the College's website or a unique blog homepage. Maria bloggers will be approved by Maria Marcom and their content will adhere to these guidelines:

- Short biographies for each blogger, general info about the blog, or both to be included on a page about the blog;
- The name of each blogger and their e-mail address;
- A photograph of the blogger(s) taken by Maria Marcom photographer to promote the blog;
- Blog posts should appeal to at least one of the following audiences: students, prospective students, parents of prospective students, alumni, faculty, or staff;
- Follow the Maria Marcom standards for writing for the Internet and best practices for Search Engine Optimization.

Social Media

Social media sites and platforms are continuously evolving. Social media accounts must always be secondary information sources. Maria-affiliated social media sites do not take the place of the Maria website, the college's primary web presence. All event information, organization descriptions, and other website content that appears on a social media site should also appear on the Maria College website. Request to publish content (text and/or photos) on the Maria official social network accounts must be submitted via the marketing

request form by noon for same day posting, otherwise information will be posted the next business day.

Official Maria Social Media sites maintained and managed by Maria Marcom are:

1. Facebook
2. Twitter
3. Instagram

Note: Maria's LinkedIn account is being reactivated. The Marcom team also uses Hootsuite to help track and manage the Maria social network channels.

Guidelines for official Maria College social media accounts:

- Content may not be used for commercial or political activities, or in any manner that attempts to violate or violates applicable state or federal laws;
- User generated content—including pictures, videos, and comments—posted on the Internet via social networks are public information. An individual's consent must be given prior to using an individual's personal information. Note: contact Maria Marcom for the media consent form;
- Content shall abide by all copyright laws.

The goal is to tell the world who Maria College is with ONE voice. Best social media practices include the following:

1. Remember that posts are public. Content will be instantly visible in a global setting;
2. The Maria brand must be always protected. Improper use of the logo (including not sizing the image file correctly), punctuation and grammar errors, poor image selection, content errors, bad links and any sloppiness will tarnish the College's image;
3. Maintain confidentiality and proprietary information always;
4. Be respectful of others; do not disagree or become defensive;
5. Use good ethical judgement;
6. Follow college policies and Federal requirements.