

“LOYOLA VALUES”: EXTENDING THE BRAND

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

INTRODUCTION

Loyola University Chicago had long used the tag line, “Chicago’s Jesuit University,” to highlight the institution’s local origins and its ties to a 450-year tradition of academic excellence. By the turn of this century, this reference was unfamiliar to a large percentage of prospective students, particularly adult students, and the Chicago focus seemed too narrow, not suggestive of either the institution’s expansive intellectual ambitions or its broadminded, tolerant, and worldly character. Indeed, if it was these liberal values that the university wanted to promote, a new image campaign was necessary.

In late 2004, the university took the first step by creating a new promise line: “Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives.” This signaled an institutional shift in self-definition from a static resource to a dynamic and ambitious place for life preparation. Introducing the Loyola Values campaign was a second step designed to build upon this new foundation. Loyola Values, the name given to the first-ever branding campaign of Loyola University Chicago, was an attempt to elevate the identity, image, and reputation of the university, much the way other institutions of higher education have tried to link their universities to a set of positive values and affirmative associations.

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To accomplish this objective, Loyola's branding campaign joined together the early and the modern. In a direct and engaging way, the campaign located its time-honored values statements in the contemporary language and format associated with a critique of mass or consumer culture. In so doing, Loyola's brand found its idiom in an example set by modern art by forging an intersection not just between traditional values and contemporary advertising, but by drawing upon both the form and the rebellious content of those messages.

This paper examines how the campaign connected its branding statements to an attitude that conveyed both seriousness of purpose and the promise of engaging in classrooms with faculty, where students would confront issues critically and examine important, even urgent, contemporary questions and debates of the kind that we associate with modern art. In the following sections we will examine the importance of branding as an important differentiator in higher education and the particular challenges and market competition encountered by Loyola in creating its new campaign. Because its messages are connected to what we will identify as a liberating strategy in modern art, the historical sources and references of these connections are illustrated. This brief overview will then be followed by an analysis of the subversive intent that undergirds the ad campaign itself, demonstrating the campaign's pliability and agility in being able to respond quickly to contemporary news events and as a result, mutate into different and forceful incarnations.

BRANDING HIGHER EDUCATION

In his provocative essay about the messages used to market continuing higher education, "The Next Big Brand," Gerald Heeger examined the market positioning of nonprofit higher education and the rise of their for-profit (and especially online) competitors since the 1990s. Writing in 2005, he asserted that the coming decade would be marked by the re-emergence of educational brand attributes long associated with nonprofit institutions as powerful weapons against for-profits in the expanded marketplace.

In addition, Heeger significantly cited the development of two broad trends favoring traditional nonprofits in this competition. First, he noted that "state regulators and regional accrediting bodies are increasingly demanding accountability for student learning outcomes," and that in general, the traditional nonprofits demonstrated better student learning results and graduation rates. Secondly, Heeger said that "aggressive nonprofits are

able to benefit from historical brand strength—the kind that comes from exclusivity and selectivity—and the new brand attributes of market responsiveness and strengthened services,” concluding that “brand has returned as an important differentiator in the higher education mass market that the for-profits helped to create” (Heeger, 2005).

As evidence of Heeger’s prescience, that same year Loyola’s president created a new cabinet-level division called University Marketing Communications (UMC) and charged this unit with developing brand standards, overseeing all institutional advertising and related outreach efforts, and directing corporate communication and public relations. In March 2006, the university launched Loyola Values, the first deliberate effort to brand the 137-year-old university in the market. From the beginning, the institution’s new brand was intended to represent the entire institution, while providing elasticity so each academic unit could benefit through a brand extension. Loyola’s School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS) worked with UMC to create a new brand identity to support the aims of the school while drawing strength from the overall campaign.

The campaign was an important opportunity to raise the profile and awareness of Loyola by focusing on the Jesuit values that define the institution in an engaging, provocative, and urbane way. Drawing upon its historical roots, the Loyola Values campaign sought to distinguish Loyola from its competitors by defining the institution in specific associative terms that are integral to the values-based principles of the institution: service that promotes justice, values-based leadership, academic excellence, a diversity of religious experiences, global awareness and participation, ethics and personal integrity, and the acceptance of others. These values could be connected to the aspirations of many institutions, but they devolve explicitly from the centuries-old Jesuit tradition of higher education.

DIFFERENTIATION AMIDST EXTREME COMPETITION

Loyola University is one of Chicago’s three comprehensive research universities (the others being the University of Chicago and Northwestern University) with “very high” or “high” research activity and its own affiliated medical school and teaching hospital. Despite the caliber of the competition, Loyola draws a significantly large percentage of its student body locally and regionally rather than nationally, and competes for adult and professional students among numerous colleges and universities: nonprofit, public, and for-profit.

Over the past twenty-five years, the demand for continuing higher education in Chicago and its suburbs has expanded in proportion to the region's dynamic population explosion. Community colleges fill much of this need: Harper College to the northwest enrolls 24,000 students and, to the west the College of DuPage attracts 30,000. With such high numbers of students in the community college system, virtually every four-year college and university in the region offers a baccalaureate degree-completion program. Almost all such programs are scheduled at an accelerated pace and include weekend and evening classes, as well as online or hybrid modes of delivery. Each program discounts tuition compared to its regular undergraduate program, includes subject areas such as management and health care where employability is high, and employs dedicated advisors whose primary constituency is the adult student. In order to prevent geography from determining access, these institutions have created numerous satellite and extension programs. In the face of such exceptional growth and the tendency to want to be all things to all students, continuing higher education in the region is rapidly in danger of becoming a commodity.

As a Jesuit Catholic research university, Loyola might seem unique in its market. The reality, however, is that it also competes with other Catholic institutions in the city including DePaul University, Benedictine University, Dominican University (formerly Rosary College), St. Xavier University, and the University of Notre Dame, which operates a downtown campus.

STOP, READ, AND THINK

Loyola Values introduced a bold visual layout design in the market: easily identifiable typeface; bold graphics on a white field; and simple, provocative statements with stopping power to pique interest, stir thought, and provoke conversation. The campaign uses the university's maroon and gold colors associated with Loyola since its founding in 1870. The school's shield and new promise line anchor all ads.

DO MORE. ACHIEVE MORE.

GIVE MORE. GET MORE.

Chicago's Only Jesuit University. Learn what the difference can mean to you. Visit LUC.edu/alumni



Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

Loyola University Chicago advertisement.

An integrated marketing approach used myriad internal and external channels to reach the university's various audiences and stakeholders in the most impactful ways (McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig, 2002). From concept and design to execution, the campaign was created using only in-house resources (in 2007, the campaign won UCEA's Gold Award for a new brand campaign). Messages were conceived as values statements, and have included:

- Depth of character is just as important as depth of knowledge.
- Do more. Achieve more. Give more. Get more.
- Diversity in thought. Diversity in faith. Diversity in practice.
- If the world is just about you, you're in the wrong place.
- Learn to rely on your ethics as much as your Blackberry.
- 90 per cent of your brain is developed by age 5, the heart is another matter.

On campus, competitions were held to engage the Loyola community by inviting students, alumni, faculty, and staff to contribute their own values statements. Winning entries appeared in the media mix rotation.

Loyola Values statements appeared on the university's website; in newspaper inserts and print ads; in outdoor advertising including Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) buses, trains, and elevated subway platforms; suburban Metra trains; light-post banners; print ads in the university's alumni magazine and student newspaper; e-mail promotions; and on retail products such as t-shirts, beach towels, magnets, and postcards. Hanging placards throughout Loyola's campuses reinforced the brand.

Coinciding with the introduction of the new brand campaign, the School of Continuing and Professional Studies also introduced a number of new programs as part of a broad restructuring. The SCPS took over the administration of the university's summer sessions; introduced a new bachelor's degree-completion program in management for working adults; launched a new noncredit program—Continuum—for alumni, working professionals, and adult students in the community; created a pre-collegiate summer scholars program for qualified high school students; developed new programs in clinical laboratory science and healthcare emergency management in partnership with the Stritch School of Medicine and Loyola University Health System; and arranged to deliver its management program off-site at Harper College through a rental agreement, thereby expanding beyond its Water Tower Campus. Focus groups conducted among adult students enrolled in Harper's FastTrack program confirmed Heeger's thesis that these students had largely come to reject online learning, such as that offered by the University of Phoenix, in favor of the face-to-face learning experiences offered by Harper and associated with Loyola.

The SCPS linked its promotional efforts to the comprehensive Loyola Values campaign, connecting and extending the reach of the brand campaign with the school's particular interests in forging a new identity, building awareness of its expansion, and developing new audiences for its new

programs. As a brand extension, the messages promoting the SCPS were presented to the public in the same visual style and format established by the campaign, and integrated into diverse channels, including the university website's home page.

**IT'S COOLER
BY THE LAKE.**

Chicago's Only Jesuit University. Learn what the difference can mean to you. Visit LUC.edu/alumni

LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

1870
AD. • MAOREM • DEI • GLORIAM

Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

The goal was to transfer the positive associations and overall impact of the broader campaign to the SCPS (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). For example:

- Get ahead. Get a promotion. Get going. (Used to promote the BA in Management and postbaccalaureate certificate programs in the SCPS to working professionals.)
- Set your mind to it. Do it. (Used to promote the BA in Management and postbaccalaureate certificate programs in the SCPS to returning adult students.)
- It's cooler by the lake. (Used to promote the university's summer sessions to all students as well as the SCPS's pre-collegiate summer scholars program.)
- Learn for as long as you live. (Used to promote the noncredit Continuum program to alumni and adult students from the community who are interested in pursuing noncredit continuing education.)

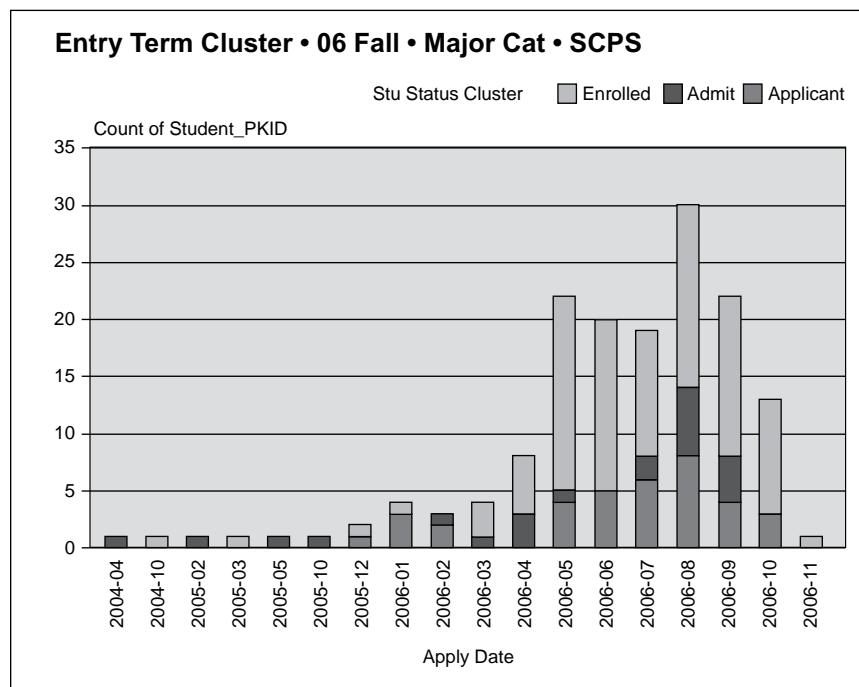
PRELIMINARY RESULTS

The campaign's use of Trade Gothic Bold No. 2 created an instantly recognizable effect. As one savvy Loyola employee wrote: "Just seeing one letter of Dunkin' Donuts tells me it is Dunkin' Donuts because of the font and the colors they use. Same with FedEx. Well, you'll be happy to know, I was waiting on the El ... and scanning the ads. Before I even saw the shield or could even make out the words, I knew instantly it was a Loyola ad because of the colors, the font, and the organization of the ad. That, to me, is awesome branding!"

Current students and other stakeholders affiliated with the SCPS reported an enthusiastic reception to the new brand campaign and its connection to the school. Wrote one alumna, "I think you have struck a nerve throughout the community. You have grabbed the essence, the crux, of what education is all about, building character, not just intellect. I have never felt this proud to be a graduate of Loyola University."

In addition, the campaign caught the attention of media observers in print and on TV, generating a great deal of free publicity for the campaign. Consequently, between strategic media buys and positive media coverage, numerous student prospects were attracted to the university. Data collected by the Office of Enrollment Management reported a significant boost in interest when the School of Continuing and Professional Studies

began adopting the new campaign messages. Whereas normal documented inquiries about the SCPS averaged between 100 and 200 per month in the academic year preceding the campaign's launch, that number jumped to 530 during the month when the school produced ads linked to the new brand campaign (see figure below).



New applications, acceptances, and overall yield have improved for the school over the previous academic year as a result. In addition, whereas in general, data show that most adults typically take up to two years from the point of first contact to make a positive decision to apply to an adult program (Aslanian, 2001), SCPS found that within six months of its new ad campaign, the school's application rate rose dramatically. Public relations activities around the campaign resulted in significant media coverage in local broadcast and major print publications. An alumni survey about the campaign was overwhelmingly positive, with 91 per cent percent of respondents stating they liked the ads and 85 per cent saying the ads enhanced the reputation of the university.

MARKETING IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

Implicit in this branding campaign is an overtaking of the public space, where advertising messages are consumed in fragmented and unconscious

ways by an often unsuspecting public. The historical condition that made such widespread consumption possible may be traced to the not-so-distant nineteenth century, where a modern type emerged that Charles Baudelaire called the *flâneur* (literally, the “stroller”, the person who walks around town). Baudelaire’s *flâneur*, mobile and untethered, was free to take in everything around him and thus became master of the public space, which itself was destabilized.

Today, with the addition of numerous means of electronic and interactive communications vying for consumer’s attention and competing for their notice, ad campaigns built around the principle of capturing the attention of the fragmented and mobile masses are increasingly used as a comprehensive marketing and branding strategy (Biehal and Sheinin, 2007). In general, this global approach stands in opposition to more narrow and focused attempts to identify and manage discrete elements of the so-called “marketing value chain” (Eduventures, 2006).

THE POWER OF SUBVERSIVE INTENT

The strategy of placing provocative social messages where otherwise normal commercial signage might be expected has been a tactic in modern art since the work of the Dadaists early in the last century. The point was to infiltrate the public space and destabilize its conventions with unsettling messages that would jar individuals from their routines, wake them up to alternate points of view, cause them to think deeply about their own customs and habits. In the 1970s and 1980s, visual artists like Jenny Holzer and Barbara Kruger appropriated these conventions, challenging the notion that art should be confined to a gallery wall. Holzer exploded into the public space with a text-based art that found its form in electronic signs and billboards. With phrases like “Money creates taste” and “Private property created crime,” Holzer displaced the public spaces that are involuntarily given over to commercial advertising with messages designed to undermine that authority.



Jenny Holzer, "Raise boys and girls the same way," Spectacolor Board, Candlestick Park, c. 1980.

Her works implicitly critique mass consumerism but also contain a subversive message in the form of the artwork itself. Holzer simultaneously questions messages of authority (because in their anonymity, the authority of the message is itself undermined), and the source of that power (because in Holzer's outdoor billboards, those "channels of distribution" are revealed unmistakably as agencies of control). Above all, by appropriating the conventions of modern advertising, Holzer calls attention to forms of control that impact our lives greatly but which go largely unnoticed (Auping, 1992).

Like Holzer, Kruger also borrows from the world of commercial advertising. Blatantly drawing from the trade in stock photography, which bears no identifiable author, and the use of block Helvetica typescript, which embodies the faceless authority of sales promotions, Kruger also examines ways in which power is diffused in society with works called "I shop therefore I am," "Business as usual," and "Surveillance is your busywork."



Barbara Kruger, "Untitled (I shop therefore I am)," 1987.

In addition to criticizing forms of modern consumption, the artist confronted patriarchal society's domineering control over women with works like "We have received orders not to move," and "Your every wish is our command," where the pronouns "we" and "our" refer to women, while "you" and "your" refer largely to men (Linker, 1990).

Kruger's works are founded upon the belief that the social rules that govern our world also reinforce gender roles, patterns of education and class, and our attitudes about morality, the family, and consumption. For Kruger these ideas are anonymous, decentralized, and distributed in numerous venues, and are always decontextualized. In order to help destabilize that authority, Kruger replicates her imagery on billboards, coffee mugs, and common packaging as a way to distribute her messages to the widest possible public, deny their abstract value as autonomous works of art, and subvert the "normal" conventions that define the commercial public sphere. In Kruger, then, art becomes a vehicle of political action.

CAPTURING A CULTURAL MOMENT

This brief overview of the roots of contemporary political art is useful in illustrating the interrelationship of present-day advertising and modern art in this campaign. During the summer of 2007, an international media circus erupted in Chicago that brought this connection home.

Corri Fetman, a Chicago divorce lawyer, thought it would be a smart idea to drum up new business with an eye-catching billboard. The ad, wrote *The New York Times*, "was meant to remind unhappy, restless or bored spouses that they have other options, some quite attractive. 'The message is, if you're unhappy, do something about it,' Ms. Fetman said. 'It's really no different than a motivational book that says 'Live the best life you can—be happy'" (Johnson, 2007). The billboard was erected just two blocks north of Loyola's downtown campus, in a warren of bars and high-end restaurants colloquially known as the "Viagra Triangle," owing to the high percentage of older men and younger women who commonly mingle in these establishments.



Fetman, Garland, and Associates billboard
(image from ABC News website).

The *New York Times'* coverage, like that of other media outlets, combined serious reportage about the incident with tongue-in-cheek, often insincere, editorializing. International media coverage produced its own insidious circus, and focused attention, however briefly, on sexual politics in Chicago. No doubt essayist and media critic George Trow would have appreciated in the most ironic of ways the firestorm of competing readings and messages that Fetman's advertisement provoked. Drawing upon Baudelaire's *flâneur*, who consumed culture as a series of disconnected bits, Trow famously coined the term "the context of no-context" to describe the collision of competing messages in the world with the production of misleading and artificial messages in the media (Trow, 1997). Only in the public square, wrote Trow, could such a clash of divergent meanings emerge.

In this case Fetman's ad drew upon such popular-culture touchstones as the contrived seriousness of self-help books; self-entitlements and other platitudes (live the best life you can); the cliché of the bored spouse; photos of idealized men and women who possessed obviously enhanced bodily assets; the lure of replaceable partners; and the kind of crass entrepreneurship for which some lawyers are notorious. In the ad, all come together as equivalent, interchangeable interpretations. The point here is not a moralistic one, and Trow does not moralize, either, when he offers that in today's "context of no-context," it is in fact impossible to moralize, as the ground upon which one might take such a stand is always shifting, the messages and their systems of delivery always in flux and frequently in conflict with each other. And as surely as the ad was decried as "sleazy" and "a cheap stunt," it was also praised for being "honest" and "telling it like it is."

Because of its proximity to campus, the lawyer's ad was virtually impossible to miss. It was in the midst of the media furor that Loyola's president, showing his high level of investment in the campaign, chose to act by creating his own response in the form of a Loyola Values ad that took full advantage of the heightened public focus and attention, inserted the university into the public discussion, and redirected the message itself.

**LIFE
IS TOO SHORT.
MAKE A
COMMITMENT.**

SCHOOL OF CONTINUING AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Regrets? Not when you make the choice to go back to school. Whether you want to finish your degree or get a new one, take a continuing education class or increase your skills through our executive education programs, Loyola has the right program for you. To learn more visit LUC.edu.

LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY CHICAGO



Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

Loyola University Chicago response advertisement.

On one level, “Make a commitment” stands in opposition to a popular culture in which spouses are considered disposable, where self-indulgence is commonplace, and where desire is a commodity that can be bought and sold. In that vein, “Make a commitment” stands squarely in league with Holzer and Kruger, offering up a trenchant social and political censure that is in fact values-based, largely because the social and political critique acquires strength based upon the moral position from which it is articulated.

But in “Make a commitment,” there is a double meaning too, one that transcends the specific issue of divorce as the breach of a social contract or

as an end to a relationship, made possible by a heartless litigious transaction. Reframed in the context of the Loyola Values brand campaign, "Make a commitment" also urges individuals to do something positive with their lives, to make a difference for others, to do good and to matter in the world. In other words, the ad states boldly, "Come to Loyola: return to school, complete your degree, make a commitment to improve yourself and your world." That is a brand in action. 

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