

# EMORY & HENRY UNIVERSITY



## **Strategic Marketing Plan** 2025-2030

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# Executive Summary

Emory & Henry University is committed to strengthening its brand, increasing engagement, and aligning its marketing efforts with the institution's Elevate in Excellence: Strategic Plan 2023-2028. This strategic marketing plan serves as a comprehensive roadmap to support the University's five core priorities: Expanding Academic Offerings, Engaging Students, Supporting a Robust Infrastructure, Leading in the Community, and Marketing a Distinct Value Proposition.

At the heart of this plan is a focus on brand development, audience engagement, content storytelling, and marketing infrastructure improvements. Emory & Henry will refresh its brand identity and messaging to ensure consistency across all platforms while also strengthening outreach to prospective students, alumni, donors, and non-traditional learners. By leveraging digital tools, video storytelling, and targeted advertising, the University will enhance its presence within the southeast region and beyond. A structured marketing calendar will ensure that efforts across departments remain aligned, maximizing impact and efficiency.

To bring this strategy to life, the plan outlines marketing initiatives tailored to key areas of the University. Enrollment marketing efforts will focus on digital campaigns, targeted advertisements, and outreach strategies designed to attract undergraduate, graduate, and online students. Alumni and donor engagement will be enhanced through storytelling efforts, the launch of a quarterly newsletter, and improvements in annual alumni communications. Student Affairs and Student Success initiatives will prioritize retention-focused marketing strategies, stronger social media engagement, and first-year communication tools that provide clear guidance to new students. Academic Affairs and faculty engagement strategies will showcase faculty research, update department web pages for consistency, and strengthen recruitment messaging. Additionally, Athletics and community partnerships will be better integrated into university-wide marketing, expanding Emory & Henry's regional visibility.

The marketing plan is structured into three distinct phases to ensure a sustainable and effective implementation. Phase One focuses on building a strong foundation by developing a comprehensive brand and messaging guide, standardizing digital assets, and providing training for faculty and staff on best practices. Phase Two expands upon these efforts by implementing data-driven marketing campaigns, refining website content, and optimizing search engine visibility to reach a broader audience. Phase Three is dedicated to establishing Emory & Henry

# Executive Summary - Cont.

as a leader in higher education through national media outreach, thought leadership initiatives, and long-term brand-building strategies.

This strategic marketing plan will unfold over a five-year timeline. The first year will prioritize branding initiatives and awareness campaigns, laying the groundwork for future expansion. In the second year, efforts will focus on improving website structure and deepening alumni engagement. By year three, digital advertising strategies and community partnerships will be expanded to further Emory & Henry's reach. The fourth year will strengthen retention marketing and enrollment strategies, leading into the final phase, where a full assessment of the plan's impact will guide refinements to increase regional and national brand awareness.

With this comprehensive marketing plan, Emory & Henry University is taking bold steps to elevate its reputation and extend its influence as a premier private university in the region. By executing targeted marketing initiatives, expanding digital efforts, and fostering stronger connections with students, alumni, and the broader community, the University will solidify its place as a leader in higher education.

Moving forward, next steps will involve finalizing the brand and messaging guide, establishing an annual marketing calendar, aligning department-specific marketing plans, and launching key awareness campaigns to reinforce the University's distinctive value proposition.



# Overarching Strategy

# Overarching Strategy

## Guiding Principles

This plan is structured on the University's overarching priorities as outlined in its Elevate in Excellence: Strategic Plan 2023-2028.

- Expanding Academic Offerings
- Engaging Students
- Supporting a Robust Infrastructure
- Leading in the Community
- Marketing a Distinct Value Proposition

## Overarching Strategy

### **Brand Development & Awareness**

- Refreshing E&H's brand identity and messaging.
- Increasing visibility within the region and beyond.
- Aligning all communications with the University's strategic plan.

### **Targeted Audience Engagement**

- Strengthening outreach to prospective students, alumni, donors, and non-traditional learners.
- Utilizing innovative digital and print marketing strategies.
- Creating community partnerships to reinforce E&H's role as a regional leader.

### **Content & Storytelling**

- Highlighting student success, alumni achievements, faculty research, staff involvement, and University initiatives.
- Enhancing multimedia storytelling through social media, video content, and publications.

### **Infrastructure & Technology**

- Implementing social media management guidelines.
- Developing an organized approach to media relations.
- Establishing a cohesive marketing calendar for departments across campus.



# Strategic Marketing Initiatives by University Priority

# Strategic Initiatives

## Expanding Academic Offerings

- Develop marketing strategies for new programs targeting non-traditional students, including online and graduate programs.
- Promote distinctive programs in healthcare, education, business, and the social sciences.
- Leverage testimonials and success stories to highlight career outcomes and program value.
- Enhance faculty engagement in marketing, including faculty-driven content and media outreach.

## Engaging Students

- Enhance a student-centered social media strategy featuring:
  - “Day-in-the-life” content
  - Out-of-state student spotlights
  - Humans of E&H (student perspectives)
- Develop an improved student handoff process from admission to matriculation.
- Reintroduce student engagement tools, such as activity flyers on campus and improved social media policies.
- Launch “Embrace the Blue and Gold: Your E&H Journey Begins,” a guide for incoming students.

## Supporting a Robust Infrastructure

- Improve University website organization to enhance accessibility and navigation.
- Create and implement a user-friendly brand and messaging guide to create consistency across departments.
- Develop Canva templates for departments to streamline content creation.
- Create internal communications processes for marketing request submissions.

# Strategic Initiatives

## Leading in the Community

- Emphasize partnerships with local businesses, churches, and schools through integrated marketing in digital and print media.
- Expand alumni and donor engagement efforts through storytelling and impact-focused content.
- Highlight community outreach programs that strengthen E&H's role in regional health as well as economic and workforce development.

## Marketing a Distinct Value Proposition

- Launch an awareness campaign emphasizing:
  - Small class sizes
  - Career readiness and graduate success
  - Hybrid learning opportunities
- Enhance digital and out-of-home marketing efforts, including Google Ads, LinkedIn campaigns, trackable public space advertising with digital retargeting strategies, purposeful sponsorships, and creative community engagement.
- Utilize content marketing (videos, blogs, webinars) to showcase E&H's impact as a regional education leader.



# Department-Specific Marketing Priorities



# Department Priorities

## Office of Philanthropy and Engagement

- Continue the Collective Connections Campaign.
- Develop an annual alumni and donor communications piece that includes the following:
  - Academic program spotlights
  - Student research highlights
  - Alumni achievements
  - Staff contributions
  - University news
- Establish a method for collecting information from alumni to include in written pieces.
- Expand social media engagement targeting alumni (ages 20 to 40).
- Implement a donor recognition page on the website.
- Improve planned giving materials (certificate and brochure updates).
- Enhance the University's Giving Tuesday campaign by crafting a holistic and multi-targeted marketing campaign.
- Create a quarterly digital newsletter for alumni.

## Office of Student Affairs

- Enhance orientation communications with the "Embrace the Blue and Gold: Your E&H Journey Begins" guide.
- Reintroduce print materials and event promotion stands on campus.
- Strengthen social media strategies with respect to communicating with students and their families.
- Ensure consistency in branding and messaging across all student-facing materials.

# Department Priorities

## Office of Student Success

- Develop retention-focused marketing strategies that utilize faculty, staff, and current students as essential components.
- Expand social media engagement with student-generated content. Examples include:
  - Day in the life of an E&H student
  - Semester on the trail spotlights
  - Project spotlights - new buildings, new programs
  - Humans of E&H - What attracted you to E&H? What kind of clubs are you involved in? What's one thing you would tell a prospective student?
  - Out-of-state student spotlight
  - Student organization spotlight
  - Campus history - then vs. now
- Refresh website pages and add a family engagement page.

## Enrollment Marketing

- Create targeted campaigns for key student segments:
  - First-year, transfer, graduate, international, and online students
- Ensure all communications are updated and follow the enrollment cycle.
- Leverage digital advertising (Google Ads, social media, LinkedIn).
- Explore out-of-home advertising opportunities (billboards, transit ads, airport placements).
- Emphasize the fiscal benefit of an E&H education.

# Department Priorities

## Academic Affairs

- Create avenues to celebrate student research.
- Strengthen faculty involvement in student recruitment.
- Standardize academic department web pages with templates and brand consistency.
- Develop a faculty-driven marketing strategy to highlight unique programs and research.

## Athletics

- Integrate athletics into campus-wide events and marketing initiatives.
- Increase proactive media relations for athletics news.
- Enhance social media cross-promotion between athletics and University channels.

# Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy is divided into phases, allowing for incremental and sustained implementation.

# Implementation Strategy

## Operational Marketing Strategy

### Phase 1: Create Foundational Infrastructure

- Create a year-long calendar that is inclusive of targeted marketing campaigns and larger design pieces.
- Develop a succinct brand and messaging guide for departmental use.
- Design branded Canva templates for each department to use for smaller design projects.
- Build website templates for use by departments to create a cohesive look and feel for each web page.
- Train faculty and staff in branding, use of Canva templates, and use of website templates.

### Phase 2: Expand Infrastructure

- Implement a structured content calendar aligning social media, digital ads, and print campaigns with University priorities.
- Launch a storytelling initiative highlighting student success, faculty contributions, and alumni achievements.
- Develop a system for regularly refreshing Canva and website templates to maintain relevancy.
- Optimize web pages for search engines, focusing on high-impact academic programs and enrollment keywords.
- Launch segmented marketing campaigns tailored to different student demographics (traditional, transfer, graduate, online).

### Phase 3: Sustain Infrastructure

- Audit and refine website content to ensure consistency with brand messaging.
- Develop interactive website elements (e.g., virtual tours, faculty Q&A sections) to enhance user engagement.
- Expand digital advertising efforts, including paid search, display ads, and geotargeted outreach.
- Implement data tracking and analytics dashboards to assess marketing performance and adjust strategies accordingly.

# Implementation Strategy

## Social Media Strategy

### Phase 1: Build Infrastructure & Consistency

- Align all official E&H social media accounts with consistent branding.
- Create a master document with account handles and manager contacts.
- Ensure that the E&H marketing/communications office has administrative access to all official E&H social channels.
  - This excludes athletics program-specific accounts; athletics communications office should maintain access to all of these.
- Implement a social media management process.

### Phase 2: Develop Content & Increase Engagement

- Establish 5 to 7 core content pillars for the main E&H social channels.
- Develop a monthly social media content calendar.
- Dedicate one hour per week to social media engagement.
- Solicit and aggregate social media content ideas from social managers across campus using a communication platform like Slack.

### Phase 3: Expand & Enrich Social Media Reach

- Create affinity groups on social media where individuals can find community and connection.
- Encourage community partners to share social content and contribute to E&H's content by tagging the University.
- Utilize social media trends to engage audiences.

# Implementation Strategy

## Media Relations Strategy

### Phase 1: Build Media Network

- Create a media contact database.
- Reach out to each media contact individually to introduce marketing and check in.
- Identify subject-matter experts on campus and confirm their willingness to speak to media outlets in the future.

### Phase 2: Develop Storytelling & Outreach

- Send quarterly or biannual updates to media contacts tailored to their publication's focus.  
Updates can include:
  - Top 3 news items from previous period (with links to press releases)
  - Top 3 feature stories from previous period (with links to stories)
  - Teasers about upcoming news
  - “Thank you” for past coverage
- Pitch at least three feature stories per month.
- Host media roundtables or press events.
- Browse news for trends and noteworthy topics. Be prepared to offer media outlets a subject-matter expert for interviews related to popular topics in the news.

### Phase 3: Expand Brand Authority & National Recognition

- Proactively pitch faculty as expert sources on trending topics in education, healthcare, business, and regional development.
- Submit E&H achievements, research, and programs for national rankings, awards, and industry recognition.
- Target higher education podcasts, webinars, and panel discussions to showcase E&H's expertise.

# Implementation Strategy

## Advertising and Awareness Campaigns

### Phase 1: Build Foundation

- Traditional students
  - Develop video storytelling ads featuring students, faculty, and alumni that emphasize campus life, academic opportunities, and student support.
  - Launch Google Ads campaigns targeting prospective undergraduate students based on program interests, location, and search behavior.
  - Place billboards in high-traffic commuter areas near feeder schools and key recruitment zones; implement digital retargeting strategies.
- Non-traditional students
  - Implement LinkedIn Ads targeting professionals seeking career advancement in education, healthcare, business, and technology.
  - Host introductory webinars focused on career transitions, graduate program benefits, and work-life balance strategies.
  - Deploy personalized email campaigns with program highlights, student testimonials, and faculty spotlights.

### Phase 2: Expand Engagement

- Traditional students
  - Introduce retargeting ads on social media and Google to reach students who have visited E&H's website but haven't applied.
  - Expand video ads to YouTube and TikTok, focusing on authentic student experiences and campus culture.
  - Strengthen high school outreach by partnering with guidance counselors and local organizations.
- Non-traditional students
  - Launch a content marketing initiative, including blog posts, alumni testimonials, and industry insights shared via LinkedIn and email.
  - Segment email campaigns based on career goals, geographic location, and previous engagement to increase personalization.
  - Partner with regional employers to offer tuition reimbursement promotions and corporate-sponsored learning opportunities.

# Implementation Strategy

## Advertising and Awareness Campaigns, cont.

### Phase 3: Long-Term Brand Growth

- Traditional students
  - Develop a long-term brand awareness campaign with consistent messaging across all platforms to position E&H as a top regional choice.
  - Implement immersive digital experiences, such as virtual campus tours and interactive program showcases.
  - Expand out-of-home advertising to transit ads, airports, and community event sponsorships.
- Non-traditional students
  - Establish E&H faculty as thought leaders by featuring them in industry publications, podcasts, and panel discussions.
  - Develop alumni ambassador campaigns, using successful graduates as advocates in targeted advertising and recruitment events.
  - Explore partnerships with industry influencers to promote graduate programs through professional networks and social media.



# Implementation Timelines

# 5 Year Timeline

## Year 1

- Develop brand and messaging guide.
- Standardize social media.
- Launch awareness campaigns.

## Year 2

- Improve website structure.
- Expand alumni engagement.
- Implement faculty marketing strategy.

## Year 3

- Enhance digital advertising.
- Expand community partnerships.
- Enhance out-of-home marketing.

## Year 4

- Strengthen retention marketing.
- Optimize enrollment strategies.
- Launch regional branding effort.

## Year 5

- Evaluate and optimize strategies.
- Expand regional and national brand awareness.

# Implementation Process

## Annually

- Review strategic marketing plan.
- Gather feedback from University leadership and key stakeholders.

## Quarterly

- Adjust marketing strategies based on metrics.

## Monthly

- Plan and create content.
- Schedule social media posts.

## Weekly

- Hold cross-departmental marketing meetings.
- Monitor and respond to social media posts.

# Conclusion

# Conclusion

This strategic marketing plan provides a comprehensive roadmap to elevate Emory & Henry's brand, engage key audiences, and align with institutional priorities. By implementing targeted marketing initiatives, enhancing storytelling efforts, and leveraging digital tools, E&H will strengthen its reputation, attract a diverse range of students, and foster deeper connections with alumni, donors, and the broader community. These efforts will not only increase visibility within the region but also position the University for long-term growth and sustainability in an evolving higher education landscape. Through a unified and data-driven approach, Emory & Henry will reinforce its standing as the premier private university in the region, ensuring a lasting impact on its students, faculty, and stakeholders.

## Next Steps

- Finalize brand and messaging guide.
- Create annual marketing calendar.
- Align department-specific marketing plans.
- Launch awareness campaigns in targeted regions.