Alumni Speak: Findings From the Alumni Attitude Surveys

Rob Shoss – Managing Consultant, PEG, Ltd.
Joe Long – Parent Giving Officer
Assessing Attitudes of Alumni – There are specific drivers and motivators that cause alumni to become and/or not be engaged. By closely identifying trends and attitudes towards these areas, institutions can be more targeted in their outreach and better communicate the value of staying engaged and/or giving back to the institution.

Engages Alumni Directly – Using the AAS provides an opportunity for thousands of alumni to provide feedback directly to the institution about their student and alumni experience and perceptions about the university and the current alumni relations efforts. Having this opportunity, you are directly engaging alumni in the life of the university.

Increases campus-wide support for alumni relations – Having data from the institution’s most valuable stakeholders (alumni) can and should be important to all departments on campus. By using the AAS, alumni professionals have the ability to enhance their relationship with other departments across campus and create a more cooperative and unified effort to provide the best possible outreach and communications to alumni.

Enhances the Alumni Partnership Model©
Alumni feedback is not a one-time event, but rather an ongoing process of measurement, action, and re-measurement.
• Begin with the end in mind
• Everything needs to be actionable (mostly)
• Prioritize improvement opportunities
• Enhance brand/image recognition
• Increase Alumni partnership
Phase I: Design and Development
- Modify outgoing communications for branding purposes
- Customize instrument to fit institution’s needs
- Determine parameters and select sample of alumni recipients

Phase II: Distribution
- Approve the questionnaire and all other outgoing communication to alumni
- Distribute survey, reminders, and any other corresponding communication
- Gather responses and develop database

Phase III: Analysis/Action Planning
- Analyze the results and prepare initial report of findings
- Presentation of initial findings including recommendations for implementing results and driving action on areas of highest impact
- Collaborate on future effective communication and programming efforts to increase overall engagement

A TYPICAL SURVEY PROCESS
AN AVERAGE PROJECT SHOULD TAKE ABOUT 3 MONTHS FROM START TO FINISH.

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IMPLICATIONS: HIGHLIGHTED ISSUES & AREAS OF FOCUS

• Equity of Degree matters
• Career issues percolate to the top
• Enhanced opportunities to branding association on campus
• More effective communications
  ✓ High value talking points
  ✓ High value communication topics
  ✓ Segmentation opportunities
• Underlying issues regarding alumni events
5 REASONS ALUMNI PARTICIPATE

- Learn something
- Help their career
- Make a difference
- Gain access
- See friends
SOME FINDINGS FROM THE ALUMNI ATTITUDE STUDY® RESEARCH
ABOUT THE ALUMNI ATTITUDE STUDY®

- Developed in 2001 with core team of 11 advancement professionals
- Survey completed by over 500,000 alumni at 200 universities and colleges over the last 9 years
- Reviewed with team of users every 2 years (last completed in 2012)
- Instrument is always branded to reflect University
- Agreement with CASE to share insights and provide member discounts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
<th>By Graduation Era - Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Woodstock/Vietnam and Prior  | • Includes pre 1964 graduates  
• Tumultuous 60's  
• Civil Rights Act  
• Tonkin resolution to Nixon resignation  
• Good economy  
• Ages 60–68 and older | • Dot-com IPOs to 9/11  
• Peace and fall of Berlin Wall  
• Big booming economy focused on youth  
• Ages 33–39 |
| (graduated prior to 1973)     |                                                                            |                                                                                               |
| Post-Watergate (graduated    | • Nixon resignation to Reagan boom  
• Younger brothers and sisters of Woodstock/Vietnam  
• Bad economy and pessimistic time  
• Ages 53–59 | • Economic bust after Dot-Com followed by real estate driven growth  
• Focus away from youth  
• War in our time  
• More competition for every job  
• Age  
• Ages 27–32 |
| Yuppie/End of Cold War (graduated 1981–1993) | • Reagan boom to dot-com IPOs  
• Good economy and optimistic time  
• Ages 40–52 | • Market crash of 2008  
• Explosive unemployment  
• Significantly increased role of government in health care  
• Slowest recovery in history  
• Breakdown of European economy  
• Huge and growing US deficit  
• Ages 26 and younger |
|                              |                                                                            |                                                                                               |
NUMBER OR RESPONDENTS

AAS 2001 through 2012

- 2001 through 2005: 170,421
- 2006 through 2009: 171,548
- 2010 through 2012: 144,503
Confidence Interval

- Computation based on number of responses and variation of responses
- Assumes random distribution and ability to respond
- Response percentage is not part of the consideration for this calculation

Non-Response Bias

- A low survey response rate and corresponding high non-response rate causes concern about differences between respondents and non-respondents
- Exists in both internet and phone surveys as well as mail
- Consistency of ranking for question groups helps alleviate concern
- Distribution across membership status, age, and gender also helps reduce concern

Selection Bias

- A survey will be more representative of the entire population if sample selection is truly random and each member of the population has an equal opportunity to be selected
- Possibly more of an internet issue currently for some schools
- Approximately 82% of college graduates have access to the internet and email*
INTENT TO PARTICIPATE FINANCIALLY

Percentage of Respondents

AAS 2001 through 2012

Non-contributors

Might contribute in the future

Contributors

2001 - 2005
2006 - 2009
2010 - 2012

Never/do not plan to in future
Have/do not plan to in future
Never/plan to in future
Currently/plan to continue
Currently/plan to increase

Slide 13
INTENT TO FINANCIALLY PARTICIPATE

Springfield Alumni Findings

1,374 Responses

How often do you promote Springfield College to others?

- Never
- Occasionally
- Regularly
- All the time

Percentage of Respondents

Non-contributors

Might contribute in the future

Contributors

0
10
20
30
40
50
60

Percentage of Respondents

Never/do not plan to in future

Have/do not plan to in future

Never/plan to in future

Currently/plant to continue

Currently/plan to increase

28%
47%

27%
INTENT TO PARTICIPATE FINANCIALLY VS. ERA OF GRADUATION

Springfield Alumni Findings

1,374 Responses

Non-contributors

- Woodstock/Vietnam and prior
- Post Watergate
- Yuppie/End of Cold War
- Electronic Revolution/Dot-Com
- Post 9/11
- Post Great Recession

Percentage of Respondents

- 0%
- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%

Non-contributors

- Never/do not plan to in future: 19%
- Have/do not plan to in future: 3%

Might contribute in the future

- Never/plan to in future: 26%

Contributors

- Currently/plan to continue: 43%
- Currently/plan to increase: 24%
- Currently/plan to continue: 39%
- Currently/plan to increase: 11%
HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE DECISION TO ATTEND SPRINGFIELD?

95% of parents and alumni say good to great
HOW OFTEN DO YOU PROMOTE SPRINGFIELD TO OTHERS?

Percentage of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All School</th>
<th>Springfield Alumni</th>
<th>Springfield Parent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>22</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the time</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Springfield Survey Findings
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR OVERALL CURRENT OPINION OF SPRINGFIELD?

- Poor: 1 (All School), 1 (Springfield Alumni), 4 (Springfield Parent)
- Fair: 4 (All School), 4 (Springfield Alumni), 4 (Springfield Parent)
- Good: 31 (All School), 40 (Springfield Alumni), 65 (Springfield Parent)
- Excellent: 65 (All School), 56 (Springfield Alumni), 56 (Springfield Parent)
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR OVERALL CURRENT OPINION OF SPRINGFIELD?

Percentage of Respondents

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent

- WWII/Post WWII
- Woodstock/Vietnam
- Post Watergate
- Yuppie/End of Cold War
- Electronic Revolution/Dot-Com
- Post 9/11

Slide 19
Springfield Survey Findings

HOW MUCH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IMPACTS YOUR OVERALL CURRENT OPINION OF SPRINGFIELD:

- Value and respect for degree
- History and tradition
- Accomplishments of students
- Providing scholarships
- Accomplishments of alumni
- Outreach to community
- Campus aesthetics
- Accomplishments of faculty
- School rankings (e.g. U.S. News & World Report)
- Media visibility
- Success of athletic teams

All School  Springfield College  Springfield Parents
Springfield Alumni Findings

HIGHEST CORRELATION TO “LOYALTY” ACROSS ALL QUESTIONS

- SC Prepared me for Current work status
- SC Prepared me for Deepening my understanding and commitment to personal development
- SC Prepared me for Responding to new career opportunities
- Learned as student - Traditions or values learned on campus
- SC Prepared me for Commitment to continuous education
- SC supports alumni Serving as ambassadors promoting Springfield College to others
- History and tradition impact my opinion of SC
- SC prepared me for Getting desired job or grad program soon after graduation
Students learn Traditions or values learned on campus
Students learn Lessons about life
Students learn/get Relationship with admin and staff
Students learn Orientation for parents and students
Students learn Exposure to new things
SC prepares students - Deepening my understanding and comm
History and tradition impacts my opinion of SC
Students learn/get Relationship with the faculty
Students learn/get Academics and classes
SC prepares students - Current work status
SC prepares students - Contributing to my community
Students learn/get Academics and classes
SC prepares students - Getting a job/graduate program they
Students learn/get Relationship with other students

Springfield Parent Findings

HIGHEST CORRELATION TO “LOYALTY” ACROSS ALL QUESTIONS
HOW IMPORTANT WAS EACH OF THE FOLLOWING TO YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A STUDENT, AND HOW WELL DID SPRINGFIELD DO AT PROVIDING THEM?

Not Important | Somewhat Important | Very Important | Critically Important
---|---|---|---

Academics and classes | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent
Skills and training for career |  |  |  |  
Relationship with the faculty |  |  |  |  
Relationship with other students |  |  |  |  
Lessons about life |  |  |  |  
Traditions or values learned on campus |  |  |  |  
Exposure to new things |  |  |  |  
Admissions process |  |  |  |  
Orientation for new students |  |  |  |  
Student employment opportunities |  |  |  |  
Relationship with administration and staff |  |  |  |  
Interaction with career services |  |  |  |  
Student leadership opportunities |  |  |  |  
Attending athletic events |  |  |  |  
Opportunity to interact with alumni |  |  |  |  
Attending cultural events including films, lectures, |  |  |  |  

Importance | Performance
---|---

Slide 23
HOW IMPORTANT WAS EACH OF THE FOLLOWING TO YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A STUDENT, AND HOW WELL DID YOUR ALMA MATER DO AT PROVIDING THEM?

- Academics and classes
- Skills and training for career
- Relationship with the faculty
- Relationship with other students
- Lessons about life
- Traditions or values learned on campus
- Exposure to new things
- Admissions process
- Orientation for new students
- Student employment opportunities
- Relationship with administration and staff
- Interaction with career services
- Student leadership opportunities
- Attending athletic events
- Opportunity to interact with alumni
- Attending cultural events including films, lectures, other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance exceeds Performance</th>
<th>Performance exceeds Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Springfield Alumni  Springfield Parents
HOW IMPORTANT WAS EACH OF THE FOLLOWING TO YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A STUDENT, AND HOW WELL DID YOUR ALMA MATER DO AT PROVIDING THEM?

GAP by Era

Importance exceeds Performance

Academics and classes
Relationship with the faculty and staff
Skills and training for career
Lessons about life
Exposure to new things
Relationship with other students
Traditions or values learned on campus
Admissions process
Relationship with administration and staff
Orientation for new students
Student employment opportunities
Nurturing your spiritual life
Service
Student leadership opportunities
Student organization
Multicultural or diversity
Opportunity to interact with alumni
Attending cultural events including films, lectures, other arts
Attending athletic events
Opportunity to participate in fraternity or sorority

Performance exceeds Importance

- WWII\Post WWII
- Woodstock\Vietnam
- Post Watergate
- Yuppie\End of Cold War
- Electronic Revolution\Dot-Com
- Post 9/11

Slide 25
WHAT ARE BARRIERS TO YOUR PARTICIPATION IN ALUMNI ACTIVITIES?

Springfield Alumni Findings

- Time or other commitments
- Value (cost compared to benefit)
- Type or subject matter of the event
- Do not know anyone
- I would not make a difference
- Just do not want to
- Geographical distance
- Concern about future solicitation
- Do not know how to get involved

Percentage of Participants

- In-state
- Out-of-state

Slide 26
IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS/ACTIVITIES DID YOU PARTICIPATE AS A STUDENT?

- WWII\Post WWII
- Woodstock\Vietnam
- Yuppie\End of Cold War
- Religious organizations
- Post Watergate
- Professional or career related
- Academic clubs
- Ethnic or cultural centers

Springfield Alumni Findings

Percent of Respondents

NSO, Pre-Camp, LTC
Student or class government
Intramural, club, or college recreational
Intercollegiate athletics
Music, theater, or art
Community service
Religious organizations
Residence halls
Professional or career related
Academic clubs
Ethnic or cultural centers

Slide 27
2010 May/June Issue
**Virtually Yours**
Rethinking traditional events and considering virtual events

2008 October Issue
**Know Your Market**
Solid market research can improve alumni outreach efforts

2007 October Issue
**Dues and Don’ts**
To charge dues or not, that is the alumni association’s question

2005 March Issue
**Conversation Piece**
Alumni surveys provide helpful data—and encourage communication between alumni and alma mater
Results from the 2012 Alumni Attitude Study®
And follow-up activities
• Chose Survey team
• Branded instruments as Springfield
• Statistically valid for conclusions
• Core and unique Springfield questions
• Review with PEG
• Gather feedback from Advancement staff
• PEG presented findings across campus in multiple sessions (88 attendees)
• Feedback to the alumni
• Programs and communications targeted to the minus-two/plus-three
  ▪ Increase brand of Alumni Association and Alumni on campus
  ▪ Invite young alumni to as many events as reasonable and follow-up after the event with stories about what happened at the event
  ▪ Create a sense of “event” for virtual activities including the survey process and follow-up (watch response rate in the next survey to determine if this was successful)
• Increase and broaden understanding of the benefits of being an Alumnus/a
• Targeted communications focusing on successful outcomes from events
• Build campus coalitions around alumni by sharing and discussing data
SPRINGFIELD ACTIVITIES SINCE SURVEY

• Sub groups developed to address key issues identified from study and brainstorm solutions (enrollment, advancement, careers, and communications)

• Gang of 10 developed plan that incorporates sub group brainstorming solutions

• Communications plan developed during process to keep alumni informed

• Results summary distributed via e-newsletter and Triangle Magazine

• Advancement, Career, Enrollment, and Communications continue to meet to track progress towards goals
GOALS FOR ATTITUDE STUDY
WORKING GROUP
ADVANCEMENT

Goal:
To create a campus culture that recognizes the importance and need of philanthropic support

Strategies:
• Create directed giving opportunities that add value to Springfield College and support the Strategic Plan
• Establish a communication strategy that informs constituents about philanthropy and the impact it has at Springfield College.
• Create a -2/+3 plan for engaging students and young alumni with Springfield College
• Develop a plan to educate students about the impact of philanthropy on their education
GOALS FOR ATTITUDE STUDY
WORKING GROUP

ENROLLMENT

Goal:
Create partnerships between Enrollment and Advancement that support recruiting goals and provide meaningful engagement opportunities for alumni and families.

Strategies:
• Create an Advancement enrollment program that effectively engages, recruits and trains alumni and parent volunteers
• Educate alumni and families on the roles they play in building each incoming class
• Create external opportunities with constituents that support academic programs and lead to possible future student enrollment
• Recognize constituents for the role they play in advancing Springfield College
GOALS FOR ATTITUDE STUDY WORKING GROUP

CAREER CONTENT

Goal:
Strategically integrate career related content into Advancement, Enrollment, Academic and Communications activities by raising campus awareness.

Strategies:
- Educate and engage campus on the need for career outcomes (i.e., employment) to be centralized and available to all.
- Create mutually beneficial opportunities for alumni and families to be part of Career Services.
- Create a communication strategy that emphasizes career services and integrates with overall campus communication plan.
- Explore the creation of a formal Alumni Career Service program in collaboration with Alumni Relations and if viable, implement.
GOALS FOR ATTITUDE STUDY
WORKING GROUP

COMMUNICATIONS

Goal:
Follow the Marketing and Communications initiative that has been under development for the past 18 months to develop an effective communication strategy that integrates all communication vehicles. Develop creative and strategic content for all communication vehicles that meets consumer needs and expectations.

Strategies:

• Conduct and use the results from the comprehensive communications audit to identify areas that impact the findings of the Alumni & Parents Attitude Study

• Provide needed support for academics, athletics, advancement, enrollment and career services to achieve objective

• After completion of the comprehensive communications audit, develop objectives and tactics that impact Alumni & Parent Attitude Study areas where performance did not meet expectations.
Greetings from the Shores of Lake Massasoit,

As we celebrate Reunion 2013 and enjoy the memories made during the College's 127th Commencement, we wanted to take a moment and give you a preliminary update on the alumni and parent surveys that were emailed to you in January.

Rob Shoss, founding member and president of Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd., recently presented survey results to a campus group consisting of more than 80 members of the faculty and staff. Following his two-hour presentation and analysis of the results, a select group gathered to do two things: to conduct a brainstorming session to that would lead to long-term strategy; and to discuss tasks that could be implemented in a timely manner that directly addressed needs expressed in the survey. Overarching themes and priorities were identified and discussed.

In the weeks ahead, the facilitators will reconvene to create the plan of action. When that has transpired, we will share results from the surveys, as well as the immediate tasks and long-term strategy proposed.

A very sincere thanks to those of you who took the time to share your thoughts with us. All the best to you as your summer begins.

Tamie Kidess Lucey '81, G'82
Alumni Director

Joe Long '95, G'97
Parent Giving Officer
OUTCOMES

• Closer community to address issues and opportunities
• Transparency of issues facing institution
• Constituents offered feedback and are following results
Rob Shoss
Managing Consultant
*PEG, Ltd. and the Alumni Attitude Study©*
rshoss@pegltd.com
Tel: (866) 471-8600

Joe Long
Parent Giving Officer
Springfield College
hlong@springfieldcollege.edu
Tel: (413) 748-3775