

**National Student
Advertising
Competition
(NSAC)
Recruitment**



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Introduction

This thesis consists of basic information on the National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC) hosted by the American Advertising Federation (AAF), pros and cons of advertising competitions in higher education, in-depth details about the recruitment tactics used for this year's team and a reflection on my time participating in NSAC.

Through this project I hoped to use my experience being on the team to show potential team members what they can gain from the experience and encourage them to apply for this year's team. Additionally, I wanted to increase overall awareness of Oklahoma State University's participation in the competition through the creation of a web presence for the team. All of the tactics used are not limited to only being used to recruit for the 2022 team and are encouraged to be used for years to come.

Overview/Goals

For my thesis I chose to assist Dr. Asya Cooley with the recruitment of students for this year's National Student Advertising Competition Team. This involved everything from visiting classes, writing emails, helping with the interview and selection process, and starting the process of creating a web presence for the team. The recruitment process began almost immediately after the semester began on August 23 and lasted for a month. The website I mock-up will allow my recruitment efforts to continue for hopefully years to come. I chose to do this because of my positive experience being on the team last year and because it allowed me to still be involved with the team.

The main goals of this project were to:

1. Increase the overall number of applicants
2. Increase the number of applicants from outside the School of Media and Strategic Communications
3. Increase overall knowledge about and exposure to NSAC on OSU's campus

What is NSAC?

The American Advertising Federation says it best when they define the National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC) as, “the premier college advertising competition that provides more than 2,000 college students the real-world experience of creating a strategic advertising/marketing/media campaign for a corporate client” (American Advertising Federation, n.d.). It is this and so much more for all of the students, advisers and clients that have participated, and the competition has a rich history in the advertising industry.

According to a publication titled “Special Topic Session: The AAF National Advertising Student Competition”, written by Taylor et al., “The idea of a student advertising competition first started in 1967 when AAF District 7 had the “big idea” to organize a competition between schools” (Taylor et al, 2006). The competition expanded to a nationwide event six years later, and that is when the name National Student Advertising Competition came about (Taylor et al., 2006). Since then, schools across the nation have created comprehensive advertising campaigns for a variety of clients, from a small California vintner in 1973 (Taylor et al., 2006) to Tinder in 2021.

What is NSAC?

The process begins in late August when advisers for each school begin putting together their teams to compete. Then teams spend their time researching the client, target audience, competition and more to create a strategic campaign for the client that is shown to produce the required results listed in the client brief and stands out from the rest of the competing teams. Each school that competes has a different way of going about putting together their teams and creating the final product/presentation, but everyone has the same end goal, create the best campaign and become national champions.

The competition itself is huge, and many do not understand just how large the participation in NSAC really is. More than 4000 students took part in the 1999 competition (Weir, 1999). In 2008, there were 141 teams that participated in the competition, creating a campaign for AOL (Fullerton, et al., 2008). Additionally, it has been “estimated that as many as 30% of advertising students are involved in the project every year as a comprehensive introduction to how the industry actually works” (Weir, 1999).

There are a total of 15 districts that school across the nation are divided into, and districts that have more than 14 teams are considered mega-districts and will be divided into two randomly selected competition tracks (National Student Advertising Competition District Competitions). The first-place

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winner(s) from each district will move on to compete in the semi-finals (National Student Advertising Competition District Competitions). Those teams then compete for one of eight spots in the final competition to then determine the overall winner (National Student Advertising Competition Semi Finals).

Students who participate in this competition obviously want to make it through each round of the competition and bring home the first-place trophy, but there is more to it than just winning. In 1992, James Avery and James Marra conducted a study in which they examined student perspectives on the NSAC competition to answer this question (Marra et al., n.d.). The study also does great at uncovering some pros and cons of NSAC. For the study, 34 students from seven winning teams in the 1991 competition were selected to answer a single-page, two-part questionnaire. Part of the questionnaire aimed to get student perspectives on various aspects of the competition while the other part focused on basic information about how each school goes about the process. 91.18% of respondents strongly agreed that NSAC demanded more time than any other project they had worked on and 64.7% strongly agreed that work in their other classes was affected by their participation in NSAC. These two results could be considered cons of being on the NSAC team and could potentially deter students from applying. However, 76.47% strongly agreed that it was worth the commitment and that it helped them learn how to work as part

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of a team, 67.64% strongly agreed that it advanced their professional preparation, 66.57% strongly agreed they would do it again and 58.82% strongly agreed that it helped them apply what they had learned about advertising (Marra et al., n.d.). If students are aware of all these pros of being on an NSAC team prior to being part of a team, there is a good possibility that at least one is another motivation for them to be on the team in addition to winning.

A second study, also done by Marra and Avery, uncovered more information about student's opinions on being part of NSAC (Marra et al., 1993). In this study 121 students from 13 NSAC teams and 3 regional districts filled out a three-part questionnaire that asked questions similar to those of the previous study. The biggest takeaways were “that students learned a great deal, and they participated because of assumed job or career prospects and the lure of working within a team. They also participated because they expected to win, additionally believing that winning increased their prospects for jobs, including exceptional jobs” (Marra et al., 1993). Through this study it was also discovered that many of the students believed their participation in NSAC meant “missed classes, missed work in classes and lower GPAs” (Marra et al., 1993). This really surprised me, but one adviser of a national winning team estimated 7,500 work hours went into just one year of the competition which equates to six hours a day for five months (Marra et al., 1993), so I could see how some students

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could struggle with balancing everything.

In addition to the well known NSAC competition hosted by AAF, there are many other advertising related competitions for colleges to participate in than can be just as beneficial. Some of those include, the PPCEF National Collegiate Competition sponsored by the Promotional Products Association International (PPAI) in Dallas, the Yellow Pages Student Creative Competition sponsored by the Yellow Pages Publishers Association (YPPA) in Troy, Michigan, and The Collegiate Echo Competition, a case-based competition that emphasizes direct marketing, sponsored by the Direct Marketing Educational Foundation in New York (Parker, 2000). Case competitions that use current, real companies such as these do provide students with experiential learning and give them the feeling of solving a real problem, motivate them to engage in outside research and result in higher grades than students who use dated or fictional case studies (Parker, 2000).

From both research and personal experience, I can conclude that there are both pros and cons to participating in the National Student Advertising Competition and similar competitions like those mentioned by Parker. Students gain real-world experience in the advertising industry while learning how to effectively work as a team, but potentially at the expense of grades and failed

What is NSAC?

commitments in other classes. However, through Marra and Avery's two studies, it is clear that the pros outweigh the cons, and Parker reiterates that in her article on advertising competitions in higher education. Any student interested in advertising will reap great benefits from participating in a case study competition, and through this project I aimed to show that and encourage students to apply.

Recruitment Goals

1. Increase overall awareness of the NSAC competition on campus, specifically in SMSC and related departments
2. Get at least 20 applicants
3. Establish a web presence for the team through the SMSC site to spread awareness
4. Bring in a larger variety of applicants (graphic designers, marketing, etc)
5. Build a team with a variety of skills to create a successful campaign for Oculus

Recruitment Timeline

August 23 – First Recruitment Email Sent Out

August 25 – Recruitment Poster Designed and Printed, Class Visit to Graphic Design

August 26 – Class Visits to Management and Strategies, Digital Marketing, Copywriting

August 30 – Class Visit to Hoffman’s Video Class

August 31 – Class Visits to Advanced PR Writing and Media Law

Sept. 1 – Second Recruitment Email Sent Out

Sept 2 – Graphic Design Department Recruitment Email Sent Out, E-Sports Recruitment Email Sent Out

Sept. 10 – Applications Due

Sept. 15, 16, 17 – Interviews for Team Selection

Sept. 24 – Announcement of Team Members

Class Visits

To raise awareness about the NSAC team and the opportunities it provides, I went to different SMSC classes and one marketing class to present about the opportunity. The presentation ranged from 5-10 minutes long for each class. I talked to 7 classes total which were, Graphic Design for Strategic Communication (SC 3753), Strategic Communications Management and Strategies (SC 3383), Copywriting and Creative Strategy (SC 3603), Advanced Public Relation Writing (SC 4493), Mass Communication Law (MC 4163), Advanced Reporting (MMJ 3553) and Digital Marketing (MKTG 4993).

Each of these classes had a variety of students with different talents, allowing us to recruit students with videography skill, graphic design skills, analytical skills and much more. In each class I began by giving a brief overview of what NSAC is and the benefits students can gain from being on the team. I then touched on the timeline for the team from the first meeting in October to the final competition in the summer, as well as the client for this year, the different roles on the team, the team's winning streak and what I gained from my experience on the team. I also took a few trophies from our previous wins to have something tangible for the students to look at. I answered any questions that students had at the end of my presentation and left a copy of the flyer I created for them to access the application if they were interested.

Tactic #1

The students seemed very interested in the presentation and had a lot of great questions about the team. I feel like this step of the recruitment process was very beneficial in getting the word out about NSAC and giving students more information from my personal experience than they could gain from the poster I created.

Poster

I designed a simple poster with a few facts about NSAC to convince people to apply for the team as well as a QR code to the application and contact info for the team advisers. The poster was designed using a template on Canva. I used a photo of last year's team and kept with the OSU brand by using orange, black and gray colors. The posters were hung in multiple places on every floor of Paul Miller as well as in Spears and the Bartlett Center for Visual Arts. Additionally, a copy of the poster was taken to each class I visited and left there for students to access the application after my presentation if they were interested.



**APPLY BY
SEPT. 10**



**THE NATIONAL STUDENT
ADVERTISING COMPETITION...**

- allows you to apply what you have learned in the real-world
- looks great on your resume
- counts as SC campaigns or an upper-division elective
- lets you represent OSU on a team with a history of bringing home trophies

Questions? Contact Dr. Asya Cooley at asya.cooley@okstate.edu or Nicole Morgan at nicole.r.morgan@okstate.edu

Emails

Four emails were sent out to various OSU students to assist in the recruiting process. Two of the four were sent to all SMSC students.

The first SMSC email gives similar information to what I presented to the classes I visited. It outlines what NSAC is, who the client is, the timeline for the team, winning history, what we are looking for in applicants, and how to apply. This email was sent out on August 23.

The next SMSC email was sent out on September 1 and was meant to serve as a reminder to students that the deadline to apply is approaching. This email also summarized some of the main point from the first email, but mainly emphasized the application deadline.

Another email was sent out to the Graphic Design department on September 2. This email included a lot of background information about NSAC since many graphic design students have no knowledge of the competition. It also emphasized the benefits of being on the team from a graphic design standpoint.

Tactic #3

An email was also sent out to the E-Sports students on September 2. This email was very similar to the graphic design recruitment email in the sense that it included a lot of background info on the competition. However, this one heavily focused on this year's client being Oculus and the need for team members knowledgeable on the subject since it pertains so heavily to E-sports and gaming.

First SMSC Email

Are you interested in gaining real-world experience, strengthening your resume and representing OSU in district and national competitions? Apply to be on the National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC) team!

NSAC is hosted by the American Advertising Federation and allows colleges from all over the United States the opportunity to compete to create the best advertising campaign for the client. This year's client is Oculus, a company that creates virtual reality headsets and is owned by Facebook.

The team will begin meeting in October to conduct research and fundraising for the competition. In the spring, team members will enroll in the 3-credit hour NSAC class (can count as SC Campaigns or an upper-division elective) and create a comprehensive advertising campaign, 30-page plan book, and 20-minute presentation.

OSU has had many successes in this competition. In 2017 we placed 2nd nationally, in 2018 we placed 2nd in the district and received Best Presenter, in 2019 we placed 2nd in the district and received Best Creative, in 2020 we placed 3rd in the district and received Best Presenter, and last year we placed 1st in our district and received Best Copywriting.

First SMSC Email Cont.

To continue bringing home trophies we are looking for a team of 15-20 hard-working and talented students with a variety of skills. We need researchers, presenters, designers, videographers, writers, photographers, marketers, and even analytical people. If any of these describe you and you think you would be a great addition to the team, please fill out the attached application by September 10. Please have a headshot, resume, and three works samples (or portfolio link) ready to submit along with your application. Interviews will be held by invitation only on September 15, 16 and 17.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Asya Cooley at asya.cooley@okstate.edu.

Second SMSC Email

Just a reminder, the deadline to apply for the National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC) team is FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 10. Don't miss out on a great opportunity to build your resume, gain real-world experience in the advertising industry, and create a comprehensive advertising campaign for this year's client, Oculus.

The team will start meeting in October to conduct research and fundraise for the competition. In the spring, team members will enroll in the 3-credit hour NSAC course to create an 11-page plan book, media budget, creative executions and a 20-minute presentation.

Last year we brought home the first place and Best Copywriting trophies from the district competition, and this year we are looking to build a team of very talented students to take us even further in the competition. If you excel in research, public speaking, graphic design, videography, writing, photography, marketing and/or analytics we need you! You don't have to be majoring in strategic communications either, students from all backgrounds and majors are encouraged to apply.

Second SMSC Email Cont.

If you are interested in this opportunity and think you would be a great addition to the team, please apply by the end of the day on FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 10 through this link (<https://forms.gle/mx87hN3cLNVHMAfU8>). Please have your resume, headshot and three work samples (or portfolio link) ready to submit along with the application. Interviews will be held the following week by invitation only on September 15, 16 and 17.

Please reach out to Dr. Asya Cooley at asya.cooley@okstate.edu or Nicole Morgan at nicole.r.morgan@okstate.edu if you have any questions!

Graphic Design Email

Are you a talented designer wanting to showcase your talents, strengthen your resume and represent OSU in a nationwide competition? Apply to be on the National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC) team!

NSAC is hosted by the American Advertising Federation and allows colleges from all over the United States the opportunity to compete to create the best advertising campaign for the selected client. This includes having really strong graphic design executions. This year's client is Oculus, a company that creates virtual reality headsets and is owned by Facebook.

OSU has had many successes in this competition. In 2017 we placed 2nd nationally, in 2018 we placed 2nd in the district and received Best Presenter, in 2019 we placed 2nd in the district and received Best Creative, in 2020 we placed 3rd in the district and received Best Presenter, and last year we placed 1st in our district and received Best Copywriting.

The team will begin meeting once a week in October to conduct research and fundraise for the competition. In the spring, team members will enroll in a 3-credit hour NSAC class (housed in the School of Media and Strategic Communications and can count as an upper division elective) to create a comprehensive advertising campaign with an 11-page plan book, media budget,

Graphic Design Email Cont.

creative executions and a 20-minute presentation. The look of the plan book and the creative executions/advertising are a very important aspect of this competition and can make or break a team's chance of advancing in the competition.

To continue bringing home trophies we are looking for a team of 15-20 hard-working and talented students with a variety of skills, and we would love to have skilled graphic designers to strengthen our team. This is a really great opportunity to gain real-world experience in the advertising world and learn what it is like working at an advertising agency.

If you are interested in this opportunity and think you would be a great addition to the team, please fill out the application at this link (<https://forms.gle/mx87hN3cLNVHMAfU8>) by the end of the day on FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 10. Please have a headshot, resume, and three work samples (or portfolio link) ready to submit along with your application. Interviews will be held by invitation only on September 15, 16 and 17.

Please reach out to Dr. Asya Cooley at asya.cooley@okstate.edu or Nicole Morgan at nicole.r.morgan@okstate.edu if you have any questions!

E-Sports Email

Every year the School of Media and Strategic Communications puts together a team of 15-20 students to compete in the National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC). The competition is hosted by the American Advertising Federation and allows colleges from all over the United States the opportunity to compete to create the best advertising campaign for the selected client. This year the client is Oculus, the virtual reality headset company owned by Facebook.

Since Oculus is big in the gaming world, we would love to have students like you apply for the team. Having team members with extensive knowledge of the gaming industry and/or virtual reality will give us a competitive advantage in the competition, increasing our chances of bringing home some hardware.

Historically, OSU has had many successes in this competition. In 2017 we placed 2nd nationally, in 2018 we placed 2nd in the district and received Best Presenter, in 2019 we placed 2nd in the district and received Best Creative, in 2020 we placed 3rd in the district and received Best Presenter, and last year we placed 1st in our district and received Best Copywriting. We really want to keep our winning streak, and we need your help to do it!

E-Sports Email Cont.

The team will begin meeting once a week in October to conduct research and fundraise for the competition. In the spring, team members will enroll in a 3-credit hour NSAC class (can count as SC Campaigns or an upper-division elective) and create a comprehensive advertising campaign with an 11-page plan book, media budget, creative executions and a 20-minute presentation for Oculus.

To succeed in this year's competition, we are looking for a team of 15-20 hard-working and talented students with a variety of skills, and we would love to have students with knowledge of the gaming industry to strengthen our team. This is a great opportunity to build your resume, showcase your knowledge, represent OSU in a well-known competition and gain real-world experience in a classroom setting.

If you are interested in this opportunity and think you would be a great addition to the team, please fill out the application at this link (<https://forms.gle/mx87hN3cLNVHMAfU8>) by the end of the day on FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 10. Please have a headshot, resume, and three work samples (or portfolio link) ready to submit along with your application. Interviews will be held by invitation only on September 15, 16 and 17.

Web Presence

When doing a quick google search for National Student Advertising Competition, the following schools were the first four I saw in the search results to have an NSAC website: University of Nebraska-Lincoln (<https://journalism.unl.edu/nsac>), University of South Carolina (https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/cic/internal/undergraduate_student_services/about_our_majors/advertising/ad_team/index.php) , University of Idaho (<https://www.uidaho.edu/class/jamm/opportunities/ad-team>) and Boise State University (<https://www.boisestate.edu/cobe-marketing/advertising-competition-marketing/>).

Boise State and University of South Carolina both provide the most information about the competition on their site however, Boise State's site caught my eye the most. Their site is laid out in an easy to read and follow way and is interesting for the viewer to look at. Not including the header image at the top of University of Nebraska-Lincoln's website, Boise State is the only school that added photos to the content of the page. Photos are an important element of a web page because they add interest for the user, break up the information and allow the information to be visualized. It adds a more personal touch as well. The written content Boise State has on the site includes a brief introduction about the course/competition with the course numbers, an overview about the competition, winning history, who the advisers are, the number of students

Web Presence

selected for the team, and info about previous years' competitions. They also included a link to a recruitment video on YouTube.

The University of South Carolina site provides an overview of what the competition involves, benefits of being on the team, drawbacks, meeting times, cost, contact info, and an application link and deadline information. They also included the fact that they have won the district competition 18 times which provides a great incentive for other students to get involved in a program so successful. Their written content is great and really encapsulates what the NSAC competition is, however, due to the lack of images and other non-text elements, the page looks boring and lacks a modernized look.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln's NSAC site really caught my eye with the colors and the layout, but there isn't much content, and the header image seems to be a generic photo instead of NSAC related. They include information about what the competition is, the application timeline, winning history, an application link and a statement by a previous team member. I really like the aspect of the team member statement because it provides a real-life example to potential NSAC students about what they can gain from the experience and has the potential to sway someone's decision to applying.

Tactic #4

The last site, University of Idaho's, has very little information, photos or persuasive elements. They only provide a generic statement about what NSAC is, a link to the American Advertising Federation's website, and information about the application and deadline. Nothing about their site sticks out to me as being a great website that will recruit students onto the team.

After reviewing all these sites, it is clear to me that the OSU NSAC site needs to have a lot of interesting and engaging content. It should include information about what the competition is for students who aren't aware, OSU's history in the competition, information about applying, adviser information, benefits, a timeline, statements from previous team members and lots of images. If we want to increase the number of applicants and overall awareness of the competition through creating a web presence, the site must include all these elements and should look similar to that of Boise State's.

Tactic #4

University	Photos	Overview	Contact Info	Winning History	Advisers	Recruitment Video	Application Info	Previous Team Member Statements
Boise State	X	X		X	X	X		
University of South Carolina		X	X	X	X		X	
University of Nebraska-Lincoln		X		X			X	X
University of Idaho		X					X	

Tactic #4

Below is an outline/mockup of what the OSU NSAC site could look like.

Header photo of previous year's team	
Photo of NSAC students in classroom	Overview of what NSAC is, who advisers are, OSU's winning history
Info about advisers, course, timeline	Photo from competition
Information about application, deadline and link to apply	
Previous Team Member Statement	
Contact Info	Link to Donate

Application Questions

1. Name
2. Email
3. Phone Number
4. Major/Minor
5. Expected Graduation
6. GPA
7. Current Employment/internship commitments (and hours/weeks in parentheses)
8. Previous Internship(s) Experience
9. Do you work at OMG?
10. Are you an SMSC Ambassador?
11. What clubs are you a member of? (List each club and your role within each club)
12. If selected, how many hours per week can you contribute to NSAC in the FALL?
13. If selected, how many hours per week can you contribute to NSAC in the SPRING?
14. How many course hours are you taking in Spring 2022?
15. Please explain why you are interested in joining the OSU-NSAC team this year.

Application Questions

16. In what area of the campaign can you be most effective? Please indicate if you have advanced skills, proficient skills, or no skills/no interest next to each skill.

- a. Research
- b. Media Planning
- c. Video Production
- d. Promotions
- e. Public Relations
- f. Writing
- g. Copy Editing
- h. Graphic Design
- i. Photography
- j. Organization
- k. Project Management
- l. Fundraising
- m. Social Media
- n. Public Speaking/Presentation

Application Questions

17. If you are an SMSC major, please mark the grades you made in the following classes:
 - a. Intro to Strat Comm
 - b. Style and Structure
 - c. Graphic Design
 - d. Copywriting
 - e. Research Methods
 - f. Media and Markets
 - g. SC Campaigns
18. Submit your resume.
19. Submit your photo.
20. Submit your work samples or a link to your portfolio

Each student who applied was invited to schedule an in-person interview in the Paul Miller Journalism building with Dr. Asya Cooley, Nicole Morgan, Mary Elizabeth Cordia and myself. Of the 19 applicants, 17 scheduled an interview. Interviews began on Wednesday, September 15 at 9 a.m. and concluded on Thursday September 16 at 1 p.m. Each interview lasted around 20 minutes, giving us ample time to ask the applicants questions to gauge their fit of the team and to allow applicants to ask any questions they may have about the team.

Examples of Interview Questions (these can also be used in future interviews):

- Why did you apply/What made you interested in joining NSAC?
- Are you more of a leader or a follower?
- What are some of your strengths and weaknesses?
- On your application you stated _____ was one of your areas of expertise, can you elaborate on that?
- How do you manage your time?
- What is a challenge that you have encountered and how did you overcome that challenge?
- Questions related to specific responses on the initial application.

Interviews

During the interviews, we used a Google Sheets document to make notes about each applicant including, what we liked about them, what we didn't like, strengths/weaknesses, roles they could fill, etc. This helped us later in the de-liberation process so we wouldn't forget any details about a particular person.

After interviews concluded, the following thank you email was sent to each student.

Dear [insert name],

Thank you for interviewing to be part of the 2022 OSU NSAC team! We enjoyed talking with you and learning more about your skills, passions and you in general! Team members will be announced on [insert date] so keep an eye on your email. Thank you again for meeting with us!

We met on Tuesday the following week to discuss the interviews and select team members. The four of us went through the list of interviewees and talked about what stuck out about that person and why they should or shouldn't be on the team. As we were going through applicants, we created three piles of names, those who would be on the team, the maybes and those who wouldn't make the team. Once we made it through the list, we revisited our maybes to further discuss if there was a place for them on the team. We ended up inviting 16 of the 17 interviewees to join the team. Applicants were then notified of our decision via email, receiving one of the two following emails.

Not Selected

Dear [insert name],

Thank you for your interest in the 2022 OSU NSAC Team. I regret to inform you that we have chosen to proceed with other applicants. With as talented as all the applicants are, it was a difficult decision. We appreciate the time you invested in your application and the interview. If you aren't graduating this spring, I encourage you to apply again next year. I wish you the best in the rest of your time at OSU.

Selected

Dear [insert name],

Congratulations! You have been selected to be on the 2022 OSU NSAC Team! There are a few things we need you to do before we get started.

1) Reply to this email accepting the position. Include your phone number, so we can set-up a GroupMe to communicate with.

2) Complete the Doodle poll (insert link) with your availability during the Fall semester. Please select ALL options that work for you.

3) Let me know if you would like to be considered for a leadership position within the team.

Remember, the offer to be on the NSAC team in the Spring is contingent upon your contributions during the Fall semester. We will be conducting research and fundraising October-December 2021.

We will soon set up a date and time when we can meet together as a team and talk more about what to expect. Meeting format is TBD.

Again, congratulations on making it on the team! I'm Looking forward to a fantastic year and bringing home more trophies!

Reflection

I was on last year's National Student Advertising Competition for OSU and I can truly say it was the most beneficial, memorable and fun part of my college career. I gained so much from the experience, more than I ever thought I could, and it even inspired my thesis. I put countless hours into the team and there were tense moments, but it was all worth it in the end for myself, my fellow teammates, our advisers, SMSC and OSU.

We were tasked with creating a comprehensive advertising campaign for the chosen client that year which happened to be Tinder. The campaign had to target 18 and 19-year-olds and show them all the possibilities that could come from using the app. As a team, I think we are all kind of shocked that Tinder was the client of choice. Most of us had only known of one purpose for the app, hookups. We really had to work and come up with creative ways to combat this stigma without excluding those who do use the app for that purpose. The team came up with some great ideas which resulted in us receiving first place and best copy writing in the district competition, allowing us to compete in the semi-finals.

We were all shocked and extremely ecstatic when we heard the results, and I will never forget that moment. We rushed back from Fuzzy's to watch the results together in Room 101 of the journalism building. We crowded around

Reflection

the screen, expecting our NSAC journey to end that night, but it didn't. If anyone was near that room at the time they announced our results, they would've heard cheering, yelling and even crying. It was such a good feeling to see all your hard work pay off and knowing you had a hand in creating something worthy of winning.

My roles on the team included being part of the fundraising, promotions, graphic design, and PowerPoint teams. I learned how to effectively raise money, that even the craziest promotional idea could make a great campaign, how to work with a team of designers with different styles and ideas, and how to make a fancier PowerPoint than I ever realized was possible. However, in addition to that, I gained experience that's as close to real-world as possible in a classroom setting. Being on the NSAC team is like working for an advertising agency. You have to work together effectively as a team, be open to everyone's suggestions and make sure you are keeping the client in mind when creating materials. I found out that work environment is collaborative, exciting, stressful and exactly the type of environment I could see myself working in.

All of the late-night work sessions at people's houses were worth it. The NSAC experience taught me more than I learned in my three and a half years at OSU in just one and a half semesters. I gained something to add to my resume

Reflection

along with the satisfaction of creating a winning campaign. Looking back on it, I wouldn't change a thing and I would be a part of the team over and over again if I could, and that is exactly why my thesis is what it is.

I loved getting to be a part of the recruiting process for this year's team and getting to see how things operate on the other side. I was able to use my own experience to market NSAC to current OSU students and put together a team of new NSACer's who will hopefully feel just as passionate as I do about the opportunity when they are done.

We may not have gotten as many applicants this year as we wanted, even with a greater focus on recruitment efforts however, those who we did recruit already had the passion and drive to succeed and make something great come from the experience. We didn't select almost every applicant for the team simply because we needed people and didn't have enough to weed out the bad, it was because they were all a perfect fit for NSAC and deserved a spot on the team. Whether they had the passion for the team prior to my recruiting efforts is hard to say, but I like to think my class visits and emails transferred some of my passion about the experience to them.

Conclusion

NSAC and similar case study advertising competitions reap benefits for the students that participate. Students are in it to win, gain experience and learn how to work effectively on a team. While there may be sacrifices that result from being on the team, most, if not all, students agree that the experience was worth it and they would do it again if the opportunity presented itself.

My own experience on the team and all the pros that have been discovered shaped all of the recruitment efforts used for this year's team. Class visits, emails and a poster were all part of what I did in addition to outlining a website to be used in future years. These techniques resulted in 19 applicants this year, and that number will hopefully continue to increase each year with the implementation of an OSU NSAC web page. Fifteen of the 19 applicants are on the team.

While the numbers were not as high as I was hoping, we were still able to recruit high-quality applicants and put together a team that will hopefully bring home a trophy or two. Overall, I feel as though my recruitment efforts were successful and this experience taught me a lot about what goes on behind the scenes of creating an NSAC team.

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