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The Gus Swanson Memorial
COMMUNICATIONS
Scholarship Program
for High School Students

Application and Information

THE GUS SWANSON MEMORIAL COMMUNICATIONS SCHOLARSHIP is a statewide annual scholarship competition designed to help foster excellence in communications.

This competition was designed to honor Gus Swanson, the Nebraskan who founded what has become the state's largest marketing communications agency, Swanson Russell Associates. The program will provide an award of **\$500** to be used for tuition reimbursement to a high school senior who intends to study communications at a Nebraska institution.

Selection of scholarship winners and administration of the program will be handled by Swanson Russell Associates. The winner will be notified by **April 14, 2006**, but monies will not be awarded until **August 28, 2006**. If, on August 28, the winner has chosen an out-of-state college or university, enters a non-qualifying program or decides they will not attend college, the runner-up will receive the award.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the Gus Swanson Memorial Communications Scholarship a high school student must meet the following criteria:

- graduate from a Nebraska high school in the spring of 2005
- have a 3.25 cumulative grade point average or above
- be accepted at a Nebraska college or university with the intention of majoring in one of the following areas:
 - a) Advertising
 - b) Marketing
 - c) Communication Studies
 - d) Mass Communications (print or broadcast)
 - e) Public Relations
 - f) Journalism
 - g) Graphic Design/Desktop Publishing
 - h) Other, as determined appropriate by scholarship committee

APPLICATION

This application must be completed and submitted by **March 17, 2006**, to:

Gus Swanson Memorial Communications Scholarship
Swanson Russell Associates
Attn: Renee Sprengeler
1222 P Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1463

A transcript and/or letter from your guidance counselor will be needed to confirm you meet the eligibility requirements listed above.

MARKETING STRATEGY ESSAY

Applicants must write a three- to five-page marketing essay based on any current international, national, regional or local advertisement or advertising campaign (print, television and/or radio). The marketing strategy essay must include your analysis of the following, but is not limited to:

- the key fact being communicated by the advertising
- what the product is
- who the target market is
- any geographical or seasonal emphasis
- how the product is distributed
- who the competition is
- the product's competitive benefit
- what the target audience is supposed to think or feel because of the advertisement

Attached is a sample of a Creative Strategy Outline (CSO) that is used in the agency to help answer the questions above. **Do not fill out the form.** You may, however, refer to it and use it as a guideline for your essay. The advertisement or advertising campaign can come from print, television and/or radio media. If possible, samples of the advertisements discussed in the essay should be included with the completed application.

This standard application form must be turned in with the marketing strategy essay.

GUS SWANSON MEMORIAL COMMUNICATIONS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM HIGH SCHOOL APPLICATION FORM

Name _____ Social Security # _____
Last First Middle Initial

Current Mailing Address _____
Street City State Zip Code

Permanent Mailing Address _____
Street City State Zip Code

High School You Are Attending _____

Home Phone # _____ E-mail _____

Current Cumulative GPA _____ Expected High School Graduation Date _____

Intended Major Area of Study _____

College You Will Be Attending in the Fall _____

Honors and Awards During High School _____

Extra-Curricular School and Community Service Activities During High School _____

Current or Most Recent Employer _____

Location _____ Job Title _____

Hours Per Week _____ Dates of Employment _____

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Communication Strategy Outline

Date:

Job #:

Client:

Job Title:

1. The Key Fact

This communication is intended to solve the following key problem and/or leverage the following key opportunity.

(Answer starts here.)

THE CREATIVE STRATEGY

2. The Product

What is the product? How is it used? How is it perceived by the target market? How is it priced compared to the competition? In order of priority, what are its strengths and weaknesses?

3. The Target Market

Specifically, who is our prospect? (If more than one, prioritize.) What is our prospect like? What barriers stand between us and our prospect? What opportunities do we have with our prospect?

4. Geographic/Seasonal Emphasis

In order of importance, what specific geographic areas are we focusing on? Examples: Lincoln vs. Omaha, state by state, east coast vs. west coast, etc. What are the key promotion times for this communication (when are key buying decisions being made)?

5. Distribution

How is the product sold to the end-user? (i.e. distributor to end-user, retailer to end-user, marts, etc.)

6. The Competition

Where does our product rank, in order with the competition (market share, etc.)? How is the competition positioning themselves (include samples)? What are their strengths? Weaknesses? What are they offering our target audience that we don't? What is the perception of the competition? How are they vulnerable?

7. The Competitive Benefit

What is the unique selling proposition of our product or service? In other words, what can only our product do that will solve one of the target audience's problems that the competition can't? This must be a single, competitive benefit.

8. The Reason Why

What does the product do to make the Competitive Benefit supportable and believable? Must come out of product reality.

9. Action Statement #1

Ultimately, we want our target audience to think or feel a certain way about this product. What is the main point—the one point—we want the target audience to take away from our communication? This statement should be written to complete the sentence, “**As a (user group), I should buy (product name) because (competitive consumer benefit).**” This statement is the basic criterion on which the advertising will be judged.

10. Action Statement #2

What do we want the target audience to do (call for more info, see dealer, etc.) as a result of seeing our communication (action statement #1)?

11. Mandatories/Legalities

What mandatories/legal explanations or addenda must appear in the advertising? What specific requirements are there regarding the use of logotype, brand name, and so on?

12. AE/Client Suggestions (optional)

Based on the benefit, the target audience and the competition, what thoughts do you have on how we can convey Action Statement #1 to our audience? (These are not mandatories.)

13. Client Expectations

Specifically, what are the client's expectations in terms of measurable activity?