



# American Marketing Association Pittsburgh Chapter

## Undergraduate Marketing Plan Contest

### Background

The Pittsburgh AMA chapter is 350 members strong, but the current economy has had a negative impact on retention and growth. Professionals are therefore selective as to how they are spending their money, ever so conscious that the job market remains fragile.

Professional organizations and industry associations are competing for membership and those that offer the most value will ultimately increase their membership numbers. A primary objective at the AMA national and chapter levels has always been to increase membership and retain existing members by continuing to add value for constituents.

In addition to its professional goals, the AMA has started reaching out to local colleges and universities, with the hope of making a positive impact on the undergraduate's learning experience, which will hopefully transcend graduation.

### Contest Goal

The proposed contest is intended to:

- Foster interest in the AMA as a network of professionals on which graduating students can rely for support, advice and opportunities for continual career development.
- Encourage continuing education of individuals as professional marketers.
- Increase Pittsburgh AMA chapter membership and improve retention given the current economic climate.
- Recognize and reward students whose studies are concentrated in marketing and who possess exceptional skills in the subject.

## Contest Details

Develop a marketing plan comprised of objectives and method of execution that could be adopted by the AMA Pittsburgh Chapter to achieve the goal of increasing membership and improving retention given the current economic climate.

Entrants must be a current full-time undergraduate college student, preferably but not necessarily with a marketing, communications, public relations, or advertising focus, attending an accredited college or university in the Western PA / greater Pittsburgh metro area.

- One submission/entry per student
- Teams are acceptable but will be limited to no more than 4 members with one submission/entry per team
- The three (3) best entries will be awarded scholarships. The awards will be as follows:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> place - \$600
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> place - \$300
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> place - \$100
- Entries will be submitted in MS Word or Powerpoint format. Word submissions shall be no greater than 10 pages, double spaced including any supporting graphics. Powerpoint submissions shall be no greater than 10 powerpoint slides using a minimum of 12pt font including any supporting graphics.
- Please also provide the following information for each entrant:
  - ♦ Name(s) of all participating students
  - ♦ College/University attending
  - ♦ Majors/Concentration of studies
  - ♦ Email
- Submission deadline is 5pm EDT, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010. Submissions received after this date are not eligible and will not be judged.
- Submissions should be sent via email to Bob Kushner, the AMA Pittsburgh Chapter's Collegiate VP at [bkushner@directionsresearch.com](mailto:bkushner@directionsresearch.com). A confirmation email will be sent that the entry was received within 24 hours of receipt.
- Winners will be announced on March 19, 2010. Winning entries will be notified via email and winning entrants posted on the Pittsburgh AMA website.
- All entries become the property of the AMA Pittsburgh chapter.

- Entries will be evaluated on a point system against the following criteria:
  - I. Situational Analysis and Marketing Research -- The situational analysis should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the situation facing the organization and should include a SWOT analysis or comparable alternative. Presentation of any primary or secondary marketing research is not mandatory, but will be accepted and evaluated towards its support of the overall situational analysis -- 20 pts
  - II. Target Marketing, Objectives & Positioning Strategy - Description of the target market(s) for your proposed marketing strategies. Develop a positioning strategy and measurable objectives – 20 pts
  - III. Marketing Plan - The overall plan should be based on the research and situational analysis presented. Any timelines and estimated budgets should be included. Attention will be paid to areas of creativity, ease of execution, and cost effectiveness – 50 pts
  - IV. Grammar & Punctuation – 10 pts

### **Contest Questions**

Each individual or team entrant will be allowed to ask up to three (3) questions pertaining to any relevant contest topic. These will be submitted in writing via email to Bob Kushner, the Pittsburgh Chapter's Collegiate VP at [bkushner@directionsresearch.com](mailto:bkushner@directionsresearch.com) by no later than 5pm EDT, January 22nd, 2010. A quick turnaround is anticipated, but please allow up to 72 hours for a response.

### **Pittsburgh AMA Information**

The AMA currently offers the following benefits to its members:

- Workshops, web casts, boot camps and other training programs designed to promote continual professional development.
- Annual conferences like Mplanet, in which professionals from all marketing specialties participate to keep current with the latest trends, practices, technologies and thought leadership.
- A career center with a job board containing the latest opportunities and a forum where career consultants address marketers' questions.
- Access to a resource library comprised of white papers, articles written by industry experts, case studies and best practices.
- Publications like *Marketing News* that cover a variety of marketing topics authored by well-known and highly respected industry professionals, AMA journals and e-Newsletters.
- Marketingpower.com where you can personalize the home page to access the subjects and content that is most important to you.

The Pittsburgh chapter expands the benefits offered by AMA national adding more value to local membership:

- Summits and luncheons featuring the most discussed industry topics and recognized keynote speakers as well as marketing professionals from the local community.
- Winter and summer mixers where members and guests share ideas, experience good food and thought provoking conversation.
- Opportunities to connect with a network of local marketing professionals whether new to Pittsburgh, a marketing veteran, a college student or a recent graduate.
- Discounts on local events and programs and the opportunity to build relationships with Pittsburgh-based organizations.