

DIVISION II

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

Second Edition



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Dear NCAA Division II Sports Information/ Athletics Communication Directors:

Welcome! I am Gregory Goings, Division II SIDA President. On behalf of the entire Division II SIDA Board, we welcome you to the NCAA Division II Strategic Communications Toolkit. The “Toolkit” was prepared for both campus and conference sports communication and information directors as a “one-stop shop” to address your needs in communicating the Division II strategic positioning initiative.

This “Toolkit” was prepared for you with input from the Division II SIDA Board; Mike Racy, vice-president of Division II; the Division II Athletic Directors Association; the Division II Conference Commissioners Association; and the Division II Management Council, with more content continuously being added to the online resource.

The online “Toolkit” consists of a number of items that you should be able to use immediately. The public service announcements, videos, commercials, print ads, logos, banners, presentation templates, and much more can be used on your websites and for radio and television coverage of events and programs. Additionally, with information stored on the Division II website, you will be able to show a variety of organizations/ clubs on and off campus what the Division II strategic positioning initiative is all about.

We also ask that you review the Community Engagement and Game Environment sections, including best practices and samples from the web that you could use on your own campus, or create something that’s entirely unique to your institution. Creating an exciting atmosphere for collegiate athletics, while involving internal and external audiences surrounding your athletics programs, will better promote your student-athletes, your university and the goals and objectives of Division II athletics.

So what exactly are we asking? Please read the enclosed materials and...

1. Establish an annual checklist. Meet with your director of athletics in the preseason and work together to establish a priority checklist to highlight the accomplishments of your institution and promote community engagement/game environment initiatives for the upcoming year. Include others (administrators or coaches) in your discussions as you and your director of athletics see fit. This checklist should be in place well before the season begins.
2. Use the online resources. Consider which of the components of the online “Toolkit” that you can implement immediately, such as print ads for programs, radio and television public service announcements, logos, PowerPoint presentations, etc. to market and promote the Division II strategic positioning initiative and your institution. Every time someone views, listens to, or reads about the initiative is another step toward advancing its goals and objectives.

3. Add links to your website. These would include NCAA.com; NCAA.org; the Division II homepage through the NCAA.org site; and www.diicommunity.org, that links to the community engagement, game environment pages and student athlete pages. We want the public to be more familiar with these initiatives.
4. Enhance your relationship with your SAAC on campus. Your student-athletes are an ideal resource to help you and your director of athletics advance the strategic positioning initiative message.
5. Look through the “Toolkit Manual.” With the amount of information it contains—suggestions, best practices, samples, etc.—it could assist you in spawning ideas that you could try in the months and years to come.
6. Collaborate. Don’t be afraid to embrace opportunities for collaboration to enhance the strategic goals. On-campus university relations, alumni, development, student senate and faculty senate offices are just a few examples where collaboration is possible. Conference offices or members, local civic organizations, chambers of commerce, school districts, etc. may also want to get involved in community projects.

Thanks in advance for your time and effort in looking over the vast array of ideas, samples and materials enclosed in this “Toolkit.” This “one-stop shop” for materials and references will directly help promote and market the Division II strategic positioning initiative.

Finally—since all of you do such a great job promoting your student-athletes and institutions, there is no other group that is better to ask for help in telling the “Division II Story” than the Division II sports information directors. You are “Strategic Communicators for College Athletics.” We expect that this “Toolkit” can enhance your repertoire of promotional materials and add excitement and creativity to your school and its student-athletes. Thanks in advance for using these materials and helping us all create a better atmosphere in collegiate athletics.

Respectfully yours,

Gregory Goings

Gregory Goings
Division II SIDA President



Division II Strategic Positioning Platform

After the inaugural Division II Chancellors and Presidents Summit in June of 2005, the Division II Presidents Council authorized a comprehensive study of the division's defining characteristics and key attributes. They sought to identify the core values and guiding principles that make Division II special. Ultimately this initiative allowed Division II to define more clearly what it is as a division, to explain why schools choose to be Division II members, to develop a proactive set of campus based and Association-wide initiatives that highlight this identity, and to celebrate how Division II student-athletes prepare for life after sports.

The Division II strategic positioning platform provides the Division II membership with a common set of principles that create a consistent voice across Division II communications. It is who we are, what we believe in and why we do the things we do. The platform includes a positioning statement that begins with a phrase intended to describe the Division II student-athlete experience: "Life in the Balance".

In addition, the platform emphasizes six attributes that summarize what Division II stands for: learning, balance, resourcefulness, sportsmanship, passion and service. It highlights benefits of the Division II experience that can be conveyed to various audiences, such as student-athletes/parents, the Division II membership, key stakeholders and the general public. The platform also lists twelve reasons to believe in the Division II athletics model.

The strategic positioning platform is meant to be an internal document-- one that will guide you and your campus leaders in your communication with external

stakeholders (parents, prospective students, media, community members, etc.). It is also intended for you to customize and tailor to your institution's needs while still relaying messages about what Division II stands for.

Consistent messaging about the Division II student-athlete experience and the attributes of Division II member institutions and conferences helps strengthen the public perception of every Division II college and university. As President John F. Kennedy once said, "A rising tide lifts all boats." It is our hope that you will use this toolkit to help raise the Division II "tide."



I chose Division II



In interviews with student-athletes, alumni, administration, faculty and coaches of Division II schools, it was often noted that Division II should not be viewed in comparison to Division I or Division III. Division II provides for a comprehensive program of learning and development in a personal setting with high-level athletics competition. The statement “I chose Division II” echoes the pride of Division II members. For many different reasons, they all chose Division II.

Why a hexagon? A hexagon is one of nature’s strongest building blocks. We see it in the representation of atomic structures, the community of a beehive, and the individuality of each snowflake.

The six attributes of Division II all add to the Division II experience equally and are interdependent. So, a hexagon is used as a quick graphic representation of the relationship among the six attributes and fits perfectly as the graphic theme of the Division II strategic positioning platform.

Life in the Balance

Student-athletes are choosing Division II schools because a “balance” exists that emphasizes academic excellence, athletics achievement and community engagement. Central to this is the idea of “Life in the Balance,” which is articulated in the Division II positioning statement (right). This statement has guided Division II decision-making since 2005. The Division II community-engagement and game-environment efforts in past years were natural outcomes from the platform, and more recently, presidents and chancellors have sought to ensure that policies, rules, regulations and budget decisions are consistent with this statement resulting in the “Life in the Balance” initiative. This initiative includes a review of playing-and-practice-season legislation and championship policies to make sure that the athletics/academics/community balance the platform advocates is, in fact being achieved.

LIFE IN THE BALANCE

Higher education has lasting importance on an individual's future success. For this reason, the emphasis for the student-athlete experience in Division II is a comprehensive program of learning and development in a personal setting. The Division II approach provides growth opportunities through academic achievement, learning in high-level athletic competition and development of positive societal attitudes in service to the community. The balance and integration of these different areas of learning opportunity provide Division II student-athletes a path to graduation while cultivating a variety of skills and knowledge for life ahead.

Reasons to Believe

1. **Graduation Rate.** Division II student-athletes graduate at a rate that is consistently 10 to 15 percentage points higher than the total student body.
2. **Class Time.** Division II's regionalization philosophy rewards the scheduling of local or regional opponents in the regular season, resulting in limited missed class time for student-athletes.
3. **Athletics Scholarships.** Many Division II student-athletes receive athletic scholarships and other forms of financial aid to pay for school.
4. **Personal Attention.** Student-athletes receive a quality education at DII institutions that often feature an exceptional teacher-to-student ratio.
5. **Additional Assistance.** The Degree-Completion Scholarship Program provides financial assistance to deserving Division II student-athletes who have exhausted their collegiate eligibility.
6. **National Championships Opportunities.** Division II features unparalleled opportunity for student-athletes to advance to national championship competition as a result of the division's generous championship access ratios.
7. **Community Partnerships.** Division II started national community partnerships with the Make-A-Wish Foundation and Habitat for Humanity.
8. **Unique Fiscal Model.** Division II offers a unique fiscal model for intercollegiate athletics that redefines the institutional value for sponsoring sports and offering athletics scholarships.
9. **Innovative Solutions.** Division II encourages innovative policy and program decisions unique to the NCAA, such as the development of Division II National Championships Festivals and a national community-engagement program.
10. **Teacher/Coaches.** Many Division II coaches continue to provide other services for their institution and in the community, including teaching and mentoring.
11. **Proud Alumni.** Former Division II student-athletes include governors, senators, entertainers, corporate leaders and professional athletes.
12. **National Recognition.** Division II student-athletes have received the NCAA's highest individual honors, including winning the Walter Byers Scholarship Award (the Association's top student-athlete) and the NCAA Woman of the Year Award.

An Experience for Life

The reality in Division II is that our students will go pro in life, not sports. Our athletics programs are fully integrated into our operations and budget, and although many student-athletes are on athletics scholarships, full rides are the exception. Division II is about encouraging student-athletes to have a rounded college experience that includes participating in activities, applying knowledge through internships and developing civic responsibility through community service. The undergraduate years represent one of the most remarkable periods of development in a young person's life. While we give them opportunities to compete at a high level, we also need to help them make the most of their time with us and set the tone for their future.

An Experience for Life

A balanced collegiate experience helps prepare Division II student-athletes for lifelong achievement and success. This is why we say that Division II is "*An Experience for Life*".

Division II Network

The NCAA Division II Network is an online resource that showcases the best of what is happening in Division II. The DII Network is a global network home page that allows easy access to the Community Engagement, Game Environment and Division II Student-Athlete Resource sites. You can also search for Division II resources and access the latest headlines. Utilize the DII Network to stay up to date with all of the latest news and content from Division II.



NCAA Division II Community Engagement has recently been expanded to serve the growing needs of the DII community. This redesigned site now features...

A global NCAA Division II Network homepage

- Provides a quick overview of all the subsites within the Division II Network (Community Engagement, Game Environment, D2sa.org and any future subsites)
- Features latest news headlines with links to the full story
- Features newly released videos

New global navigation

- Provides easy access for users to access the subsite of interest (Community Engagement, Game Environment, D2sa.org and any future subsites)
- One-click access to award and recognition information
- Provides a global landing page for information on DII

Robust resource sections

- Updated on each site with an easy-to-search archive of helpful resources
- Searches are filtered by topic or media type and results are sorted by alphabetical listing or date of creation
- Prominent feature boxes draw attention to the newest resources



<http://www.facebook.com/NCAADivisionII>



<http://www.youtube.com/NCAADivisionII>



<http://www.twitter.com/NCAADII>

*Division II
Strategic
Communications
Toolkit*

Division II Strategic Communications Toolkit

Visit the Division II Strategic Communications Toolkit and access resources such as:

- Logos
- Web banners
- Print ads
- Presentation Templates
- Audio PSAs
- Videos and much more!

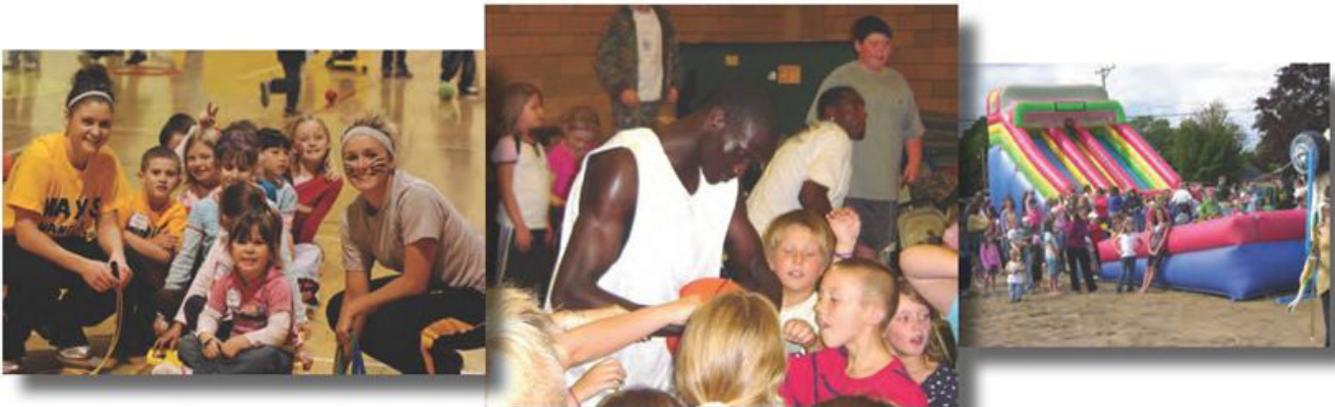
VISIT OUR REDESIGNED SITE AT DIICOMMUNITY.ORG OR DIINETWORK.ORG

Community Engagement

Division II is committed to developing students and communities by actively engaging in shared experiences. Our community engagement objective is bringing the community to campus to experience Division II collegiate events. Through community engagement, student-athletes can direct the energy and spirit of winning to positively changing society.

The objective of community engagement is to build relationships by bringing the community to campus to experience Division II and its events. Many have heard this and thought, “That is nothing new; we do community service all the time.” It is true that colleges and universities and their students have performed more community service than many other organizations. However, Division II is emphasizing the gathering of individuals to share in an experience and not just provide assistance to an individual or group of individuals in need.

The Community Engagement page on the Division II Network is a perfect place to share and discover new ideas. Included on the page are numerous resources, including questions and answers with Dr. Rich Luker, renowned expert on communities and Division II consultant, about why community engagement is important and how it can work for your campus. Through this page, you can also access a variety of videos and other media related to community engagement, search for proven “ideas that work” from fellow Division II institutions and share your own success stories. The Community Engagement page is also where you can submit your best community engagement activity to be considered for the NCAA Division II Community Engagement Award of Excellence.



Game Environment

Through community engagement, DII is reaching out to the community to be a part of university campuses and athletics events. Broadly defined, the game environment speaks to all aspects of intercollegiate athletic events. It covers the behavior of spectators, cheerleaders, student-athletes, coaches and administrators. A positive game environment is defined as one that is civil, comfortable and both lively and entertaining. It is one that is family friendly, passionate, intense, energetic, and FUN. It is an environment founded on respect for all of the student-athletes and coaches participating in the competition, the officials, spectators, and the game. It represents an understanding that this is our house and that the visiting university and its spectators are our guests.

The term sportsmanship is usually operationalized at the student-athlete level. It speaks to the athlete learning respect and concern for rules and officials, opponents, and the spirit and customs of sport. The term game environment is more comprehensive and inclusive than sportsmanship and encompasses the opportunity to engage with every stakeholder in the DII athletic experience.

If the DII community engagement initiative is to be successful, we need a deliberate and purposeful approach to the construction of a community-friendly environment. Everyone invested in intercollegiate athletics has a role to play in the creation of a positive game environment, including coaches and administrators, student-athletes, cheerleaders, the pep band and members of the general student population who attend our athletic events. In addition to being the right thing to do, the creation of a positive game environment is in the best interests of all concerned if the community engagement initiative is to flourish.



Go to the Game Environment page on the Division II Network to locate and explore information to assist your institution in creating and fostering a positive game environment at your athletic events. The page includes questions and answers from Dr. Darren Treasure, High Performance Director for Nike's Oregon Project and the Division II consultant for the game environment initiative. In addition, the Game Environment page, like the Community Engagement page, hosts a multitude of resources that you can access, such as videos, best practices, and documents that further explain the finer points of a positive game environment. You can also utilize a self assessment tool to examine your institution's effectiveness in this area and, subsequently, receive a Game Environment banner branded with your institution's name and logo. The Game Environment page also highlights "ideas that work" and is a forum to share your own successful and innovative game environment ideas, which can then be considered for conference and national recognition. To illustrate situations where learning opportunities exist, the page also includes an educational video series of "teachable moments" relating to the Game Environment initiative.

I chose DII

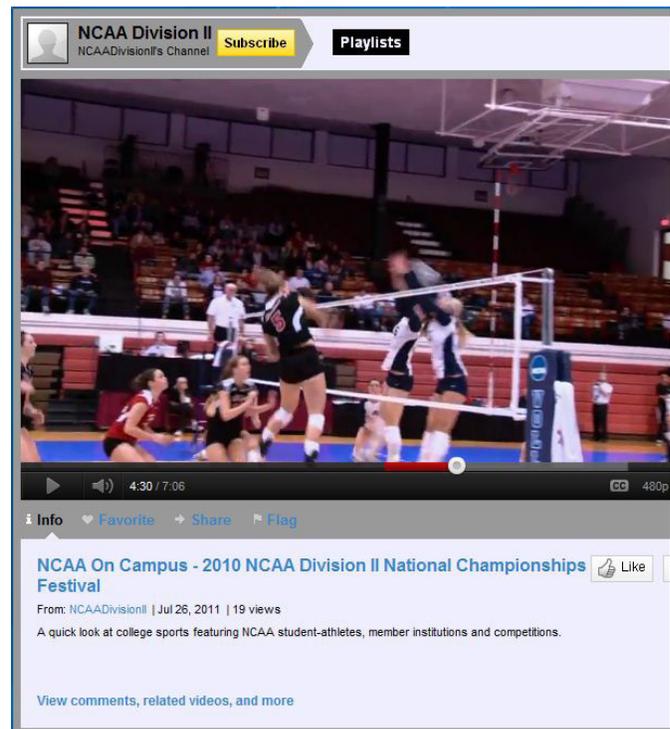
A Student-Athlete Resource

Serving the approximately 90,000 current student-athletes who participate in athletics at the Division II level, the I chose DII student-athlete resource page provides an online community for student-athletes to interact and connect around the reasons they chose Division II. The page consists of Division II news tailored to a student-athlete audience; videos; including videos created by student-athletes; a student-athlete blog; opinion polls; a photo gallery; and features on other Division II initiatives like the Make-A-Wish partnership, Community Engagement and Game Environment.

The I chose DII student-athlete resource is visually attractive and designed with the wants and needs of student-athletes in mind. It is an important tool for Division II institutions to galvanize student-athletes and link them to the Division II platform.

Social Media Pages

Social media provides Division II members and fans a chance to interact around and through the Division II product. Visitors will experience the Division II story as it unfolds, further connecting them to Division II and the values we represent. Division II maintains a presence on all of the most popular social media channels, such as Facebook, Twitter and You Tube, and will work with the NCAA Social Media Strategies unit as new social media opportunities are developed. A detailed description of how to effectively utilize social media on your own campus can be found on page 21.



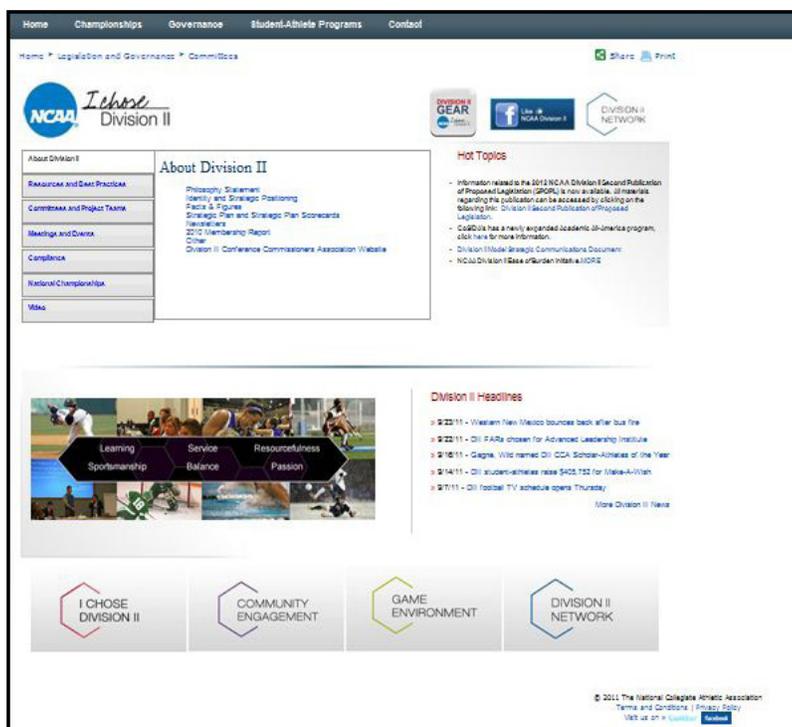
Resources

Division II provides a number of resources for you to strategically communicate the successes of your student-athletes and the values espoused in the Division II strategic positioning platform. This section will introduce you to these resources, as well as suggest ways you may wish to utilize them on your campus. These resources can be found online using the Division II homepage (an index of those online resources can be found on in the “Site Index” document).

Division II Home Page

The Division II home page (<http://www.ncaa.org/dii>) on the membership side of [ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) is a great starting place to locate any and all resources Division II has to offer, including access to:

- Division II-specific documents.
- Resources pertaining to:
 - Academics and life skills.
 - Athletics operations.
 - Membership and positioning initiatives.
 - Diversity and inclusion.
 - NCAA and Division II grants.
- Division II committee and project team information (roster, agendas, reports etc.).
- Meetings and events.
- Compliance information and resources.
- National championships websites.
- DII network websites.
- DII purchasing website.
- DII simulation model.
- DII gear store.
- DII social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter and You Tube).



The Division II home page will also be the landing place for all Division II media included in the Strategic Communications Toolkit, as well as any new media files developed in the future, so check back every so often. To access the membership side of [ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org), you will be required to enter your user identified user-name and password

Division II Purchasing Website

The Division II purchasing website allows schools to purchase customized Division II and co-branded signage. These items will have a strong visual impact pleasing both spectators and participants, while promoting your institution and Division II. With a variety of products to choose from, you can be sure to have the right item for use your event and to promote your institution.

Below are examples of items that can be found on the purchasing website.

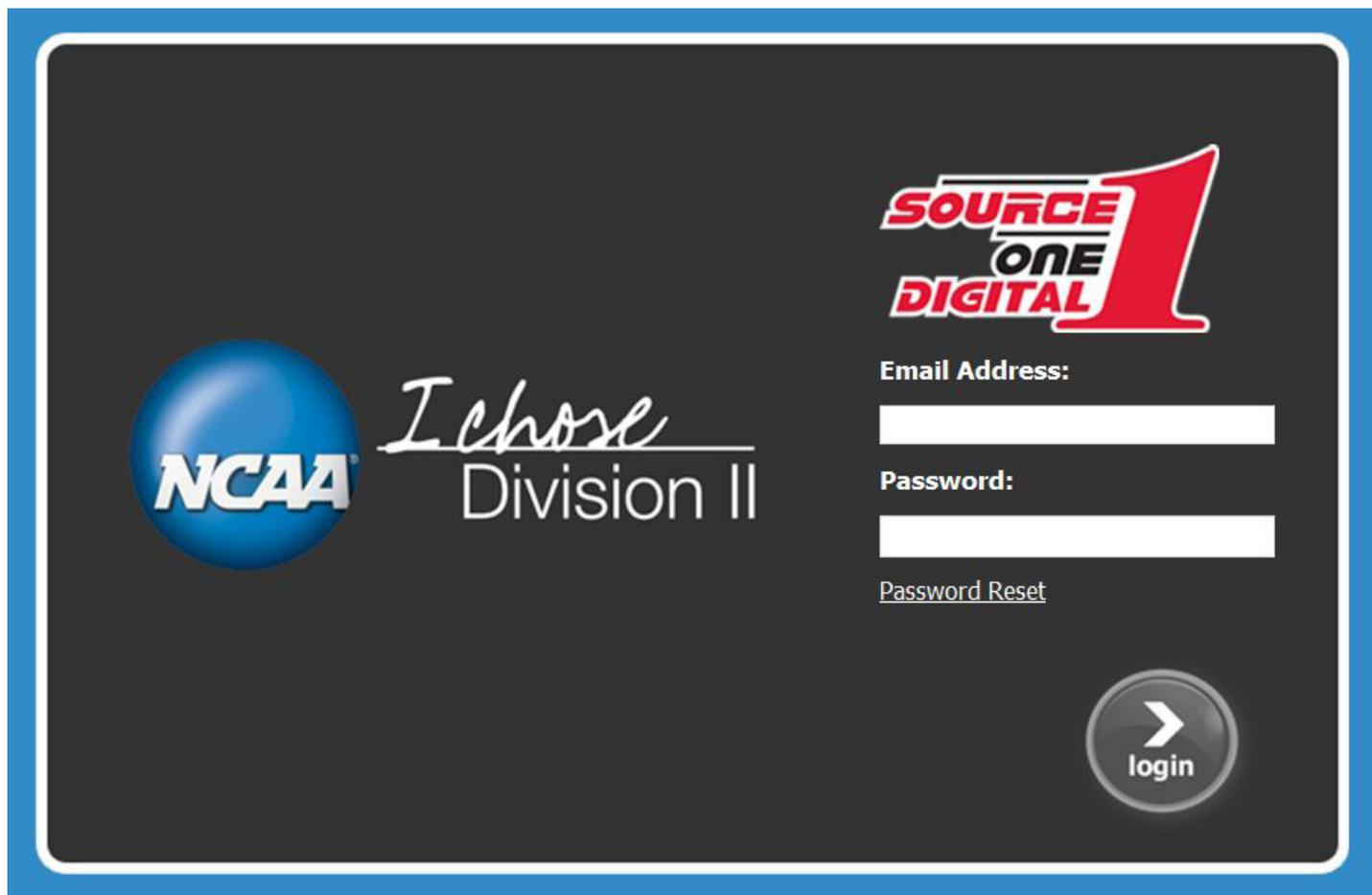
- Banners (indoor or outdoor)
- Wind screens
- Poll banners
- Window decals
- Field stencils
- Outdoor flagging
- Feather flags
- Media backdrop
- Foam core boards
- Microphone covers
- Table fitted skirts

To access the Division II purchasing website, go to the Division II homepage (www.ncaa.org/dii) on the membership side of ncaa.org, under the “About Division II” section click on “Identity and Strategic Positioning”. This will take you to a link for the purchasing website. You can also access the login page with the following URL:

<http://ncaa.sourceoneordering.com>

Once you are logged onto the purchasing website, you will be able to select items, upload logos, view your account balance, edit your profile and track orders as they are approved and shipped.

All active Division II members, as of September 1, 2011, will receive a \$1,000 credit for the purchasing website in 2012



Hexagon Elements:

The hexagon is the visual representation of the six attributes of the strategic positioning platform. It is often used as an accent on many Division II documents and websites to enhance their attractiveness. Included in the online “Toolkit” are hexagon elements that can be used in the center or the corner of a page, as well as two full page backgrounds, one featuring hexagons and one featuring the six Division II attributes.



Logos:

Available on the online “Toolkit”, utilize the Division II, I chose and NCAA logos to brand your print and web publications.



Print Ads:

Use the print ads available online in the "Toolkit" in any publication. Full- and half-page ads are available in both color and black and white. There are ads for community engagement, game environment, and alcohol awareness, among others.

We Pledge...

We have joined institutions across 22 conferences and independents in committing to safe, fun, and entertaining sporting experiences on Division II campuses. We have signed the pledge to create and continue family-friendly experiences for every year.

DIVISION II GAME ENVIRONMENT PLEDGE

NCAA Division II institutions and independent athletic departments reflect the values of higher education and the mission of their institutions. Division II is a personal setting. We characterize and understand it as a personal setting. We characterize and understand it as a personal setting. We characterize and understand it as a personal setting.

Learn more at www.diicommunity.org

We Choose a Positive Game Environment

Find out how at www.diicommunity.org

NCAA I Choose Division II

Choose a Clear View

Sobering, isn't it? Drinking too much alcohol can hurt your view of the game. And it can lead to rude and inappropriate behavior that affects everyone at the event. Choose a clear view of the game and a safe, family-friendly game environment.

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NCAA I Choose Division II

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

What's the difference?

Community Service - Reaching Out to Help Those in the Community

- Non-profit organizations
- Service to the community
- Non-profit organizations
- Service to the community

Community Engagement - Building Lasting Relationships

- Non-profit organizations
- Service to the community
- Non-profit organizations
- Service to the community

NCAA Division II

GAME ENVIRONMENT VERSUS SPORTSMANSHIP

What's the difference?

Game Environment - Building Lasting Relationships

- Non-profit organizations
- Service to the community
- Non-profit organizations
- Service to the community

Sportsmanship - Building Lasting Relationships

- Non-profit organizations
- Service to the community
- Non-profit organizations
- Service to the community

NCAA Division II

LEARNING PASSION SERVICE RESOURCEFULNESS SPORTSMANSHIP BALANCE

NCAA I Choose Division II

Audio:

Audio files stored as part of the online resource include a game environment PSA and corresponding script, as well as an appropriate music play list that can be used at events to help create a lively and entertaining atmosphere. Audio PSAs are a great way to connect with fans over the public address system during athletic events or during radio broadcasts. As with many other resources available in the “Toolkit,” it will be updated as additional audio is created for Division II, so remember to check back for updates occasionally.

Text:

Available on the website are two versions of Division II boilerplate language. Use these at the end of press releases, or incorporate them into athletic events by adding them to public address announcer scripts.

Division II Press Release Boilerplate Language

NCAA Division II has 284 active member institutions, ranging in size from less than 2,500 to over 15,000, with the average enrollment being around 4,500. Division II is not less than Division I or more than Division III—it is just different than either of those two divisions. Very few of the almost 90,000 student-athletes competing in Division II receive a full athletics grant that covers all of their expenses, but most of them will receive some financial aid to help them through school. Division II also provides an intersection where athletically gifted students can compete at a high level, while maintaining much of a traditional student experience. Excellent outcomes come from athletics programs that are properly aligned with the educational mission of the institution. This balance is what distinguishes Division II from the others, and this philosophy is at the heart of all decisions made by the division’s governing bodies.

Videos:

The videos shown below are examples of clips available on the website. New videos will be uploaded to the website as they become available.

Division II Videos



I chose DII

Public Service Announcements



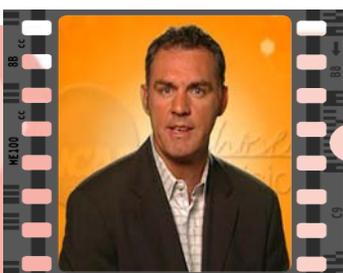
Mark Emmert PSA

Community Engagement



Pittsburg State

Game Environment



What is the role of intercollegiate athletics

Make-A-Wish



Make-A-Wish video

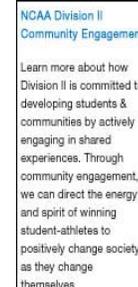
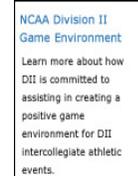
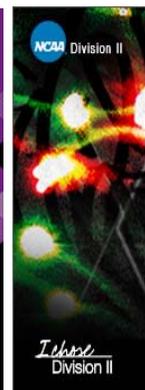
Miscellaneous



2009 Winter Festival Closing

Web:

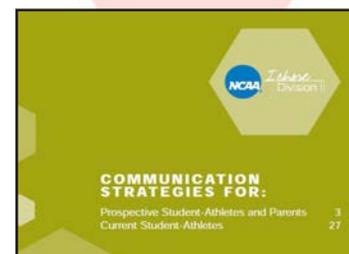
The online resource contains a number of web buttons and headers that can be used to augment your athletics website and link to your favorite Division II websites and social media outlets. These can also be found and downloaded from the DII Network resources page.



Platform Activation Toolkit

Use this activation kit as a resource to speak to various audiences – current and future student-athletes, parents, coaches, administrators, presidents/chancellors, community leaders, faculty, corporate supporters, media partners, fans, etc. When our audiences ask, “what is Division II all about?” this kit will enable us to tell them. This will give us consistent language to use time and time again. It will also give us other resources for activation, whether it is signage in our facility or print ads in our game programs. The result will be audiences that engage in the Division II experience because it is a choice that they not only understand but also one that aligns with what they value in a program.

- Book 1 : Getting Started
- Book 2: Communication Strategies for Prospective Student-Athletes and Parents and Current Student-Athletes
- Book 3: Communication Strategies for Coaches and Administrators
- Book 4: Communication Strategies for Presidents and Chancellors and the Community
- Book 5: Communication Strategies for the Media and Corporate Supporters
- Book 6: Activation Tools, Division II Style Guide and Getting More Help



Elevator Speech

Prepare to tell the Division II story in a clear and concise manner by utilizing the Division II Elevator speech. Then use the supporting facts and figures contained in the document to grow the interest of your audience.

“Division II provides an intersection where athletically gifted students can compete at a high level, while maintaining much of a traditional collegiate undergraduate experience. This balance, where students are recognized for their academic success, athletics contributions and campus/community involvement, is at the heart of the Division II student-athlete experience.”



Presentation Templates

The strategic positioning platform provides Division II with a common set of principles that creates consistency or “one voice” across Division II communications. The platform is a definition of who we are, what we believe in and why we do the things we do. With that in mind, Division II has developed a set of presentation templates meant for your use in communicating these messages within your institution, conference and community. You are encouraged to customize this information with institution or conference specific information.

Division II messaging can be shared with many groups both on and off campus. Here is a list of possible groups that would benefit from learning more about the Division II strategic positioning initiatives and why “I chose Division II”:

- Athletics Administration
- Parents
- Campus Leaders
- Prospective student-athletes
- Community
- Board of Trustees
- President’s Cabinet
- Student-athletes
- Chancellors and Presidents

Opportunities

Division II has laid the groundwork for its institutions to achieve success locally through the development and activation of the Division II positioning platform. The platform provides a foundation based on shared identity and values, from which every Division II institution can build. Using the platform and its corresponding initiatives is very beneficial, but requires Division II athletic departments to be strategic in how they communicate with their constituencies. The reality is that the workload will not decrease to allow you more time to enhance your school's association with the Division II positioning platform. This is why strategy is so vital. How can you best augment what you do and how you communicate to ensure the maximum benefit to your institution?

To answer this question, consider the following “Three P’s”

- Prioritization
- Proactivity
- Partnerships

Prioritization

This is essential to being strategic communicators. The responsibilities placed on SIDs are numerous and require planning and forethought to ensure their successful completion. Setting attainable goals and establishing clear priorities are a must. Decide within your athletic department what the most important steps are and then stick to that plan. The DII SIDA has also developed a specific universal checklist for communications directors to use to carry out the Division II strategic positioning initiative at the campus and conference level. As you decide which steps to take, first keep in mind that fostering a stronger connection with the Division II positioning platform will take time. Be patient and the results will come.

Proactivity

In order to achieve ultimate success you must be enterprising and not wait for things to happen. The best organizations are ones that always keep the future in mind and take time to consider what they can do on the front end rather than simply reacting on the back end. Be aggressive in how you seek to improve. Take the temperature of your athletic department. What are you doing well? What are you not doing so well, or at all? How can you advance in both of those areas?

The importance of social media and developing a campus communications plan are two topics discussed in the following pages and are great places to start being proactive within your athletic department. Don't forget to always keep in mind the values and attributes that make Division II special as you reflect on how to move forward.

Partnerships

Division II athletic departments often must rely on creativity and the dedication of hardworking folks who believe in the value of Division II and are willing to go the extra mile to ensure a positive student-athlete experience. You have job responsibilities that probably take up a sizable chunk of your time and may not allow for much flexibility to proactively pursue new ideas and projects. For this reason, it is not only imperative to think strategically, but also to cultivate strong partnerships across your campus. These partnerships can assist you as

you seek to build off of the Division II platform. Reaching out to people can require extra effort, but remember that you are all on the same “team.” Bringing others on board with your vision can ease the burden on you and provide opportunities for them to become more engaged in the athletic department. Don’t be afraid to collaborate!

Here are some groups to consider partnering with:

- University relations – Some SIDs may find their position housed within a university relations department. Whether that is the case or not, partnering with the university relations staff is a natural fit. Their goals (maximizing the reputation of the university, building brand awareness and telling impactful stories) dovetail with the goals discussed throughout this toolkit. Look for stories that provide mutual benefit for both the athletic department and the institution as a whole.
- Student affairs – This division deals with everything relating to student life on a campus, including athletics sometimes. Division II is all about balance, so reach out to your fellow staff in student affairs to assist you in locating student-athletes who are engaged in the campus community.
- Faculty – Working with faculty on your campus can also help you deliver the message about balance in Division II. In addition to helping identify student-athletes who are leaders in the classroom, use faculty to help spread the word about the academic successes in Division II. Getting to know your Faculty Athletics Representative better would be a good place to start.
- Alumni – While the Division II strategic positioning platform is relatively new, the values associated with the platform have always been around. Work with the alumni association to find student-athlete alumni who can relate to the platform and have been successful in life after intercollegiate athletics and let them tell their story.
- Conference office – Division II conference offices have really embraced the platform as a vehicle to get the word out about Division II. By teaming with your conference office to highlight the positive momentum that is building on your campus, you can get your messages out to an entire region of the country, instead of just your local community. In addition, posting stories from the conference office website can increase brand awareness for the entire conference.
- Conference counterparts – Communicate with your counterparts at the other institutions in your conference to share best practices and bounce ideas off each other about how to integrate the Division II platform into your messaging. It is not always necessary to reinvent the wheel, so by building and maintaining collaborative relationships you can save time and effort.
- Community organizations – Identify and partner with groups from your community that can help get your athletic department engaged in community projects that showcase the strong community ties found at Division II colleges and universities. When student-athletes are involved with community events or organizations, seek additional media coverage to showcase their service.

There are countless ways to engage with others to help you send your message. It is critical to think about those who are impacted by athletics, both on- and off-campus, and to create positive working relationships with them so you can partner with them for mutual benefit.

Social Media

Savvy communications professionals recognize that incorporating social media into their current strategy is essential to reaching their audience — now and in the future. In intercollegiate athletics, this means generating excitement and growing a fan base, both on-campus and in the local community. Social media allows people to participate in one of the most basic forms of human interaction: the community. Social groups arise online because the group has a shared interest and wishes to build a community around a common idea and set of

goals. From 2005 to 2011, use of social networks increased from 8% of the U.S. population to 50%. Furthermore, data indicates that only e-mail and search engines are used more than social networks on a given day. Among young adults, ages 18-29, 60% report using a social or professional networking site in the last 24 hours (Pew Internet and American Life Study).

We must begin to use social channels to amplify and expand our platform. “Social seeding” distills details and talking points and folds them into conversations taking place in a variety of social spaces online. This leads to more impact with less outreach activity. Social seeding does not surprise or delight a mass audience; instead, it reveals useful information to a small targeted audience that is most likely to convert. Implementing an effective seeding campaign takes a sustained effort and a clear methodology for putting it into practice.

The key to social seeding is giving your constituents a chance to interact around and through your product. By utilizing the various social media tools at your disposal (listed below), you can create places where fans go to further consume your product while simultaneously receiving the information you wish to push out. It is important to use these tools to interact with your fans, not simply give them information.

Developing a social media strategy is essential to achieving your desired results. Don’t “just do it” because everyone else is. First, ask yourself if you can commit to finding out what your fans and media outlets want, if you have the time and resources to manage your social media and if you are willing to do your due diligence to learn about social media. That last question is key, and to ensure success you should dedicate some time to becoming educated. Next, take a look at what’s out there already. Especially examine the schools in your conference that are most similar to yours. Make a list of features they have on their website and how they are using them.

Here are a couple of examples of how social media is integrated into a Division II athletics website:





Another item to consider as you develop your social media strategy is if you have attained buy-in from your administration. There will most likely come a time when you will need resources (people, equipment and time) to really make this work. Using social media effectively should be a department priority and it should be a partnership among marketing, sports information, external operations, coaches, and administration.

Once you have decided it is appropriate to implement a comprehensive social media strategy, examine what it is you may already be doing. Then spend time deciding what you want to be doing and what your goals are. Do you want to increase fan support? Help with recruitment? Communicate with current student-athletes & their families? What else do you want to accomplish?

Integrate social media throughout your athletic department by adding social media to e-newsletters, business cards, publications, programs, media guides, news releases, e-mail signatures, blogs, and by announcing it at events. Also make sure to take time to brainstorm new ideas (Coach blogs? Practice video? Stream live events? Event photo galleries?), and reflect on what you might already offer (Facebook groups, Twitter accounts etc.).

Here are some suggestions of social media tools you can use to enhance your communications:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Blogs (Wordpress, Blogger, Tumblr)
- Youtube video channel
- Flickr (for photos)
- Ustream.tv (live broadcasts)
- iTunes U (video hosting)
- FourSquare

Sample Division II Campus Communication Plan

To assist campuses in coordinating their media relations opportunities, the following provides a template for a Division II campus communications plan. You can customize this plan to best fit the needs and mission of your institution.

Purpose

To establish a coordinated, proactive plan to effectively identify and pitch storytelling opportunities that focus on (insert name of college) and the Division II experience for student-athletes and the surrounding community.

Objectives

- Increase awareness of and advocacy for positive values of your institution's athletic department and Division II among local media.
- Raise awareness of the unique attributes and compelling stories that are within the campus athletic department and the Division II experience.
- Find ways to ensure the media understand the relationship between your institution's athletic department and Division II.

Strategies

- Build public relations foundation based on local media relationships. Mimic the community approach of Division II by initially focusing the majority of public relations efforts on building relationships and seeding stories in the local media for Division II communities.
- Localize national-level NCAA issues. Develop targeted local pitches to media that help familiarize the public with the (insert campus name) athletic program and Division II.
- Emphasize the mission and values. Ensure that all communication is designed and coordinated to increase support for the mission and values of the institution and Division II.
- Ensure consistent dialogue with media. Editors need and want story ideas as it makes their jobs easier as they struggle to cover more information with fewer resources.

Target Audiences

- Local media. Direct materials and information toward local television, radio and media outlets.
- Members of the community. Publicize events to members of the community in order to make them feel a part of the athletic program.
- Division II membership peers. Our Division II colleagues are a resource for ideas and case studies of best practices.

Positioning Statement

Life in the Balance. Higher education has lasting importance on an individual's future success. For this reason, the emphasis for the student-athlete experience in Division II is comprehensive program of learning and development in a personal setting. The Division II approach provides growth opportunities through academic achievement, learning in high-level athletic competition and development of positive societal attitudes in service to the community. The balance and integration of these different areas of learning opportunity provide Division II student-athletes a path to graduation while cultivating a variety of skills and knowledge for life ahead.

Athletic Program Mission Statement

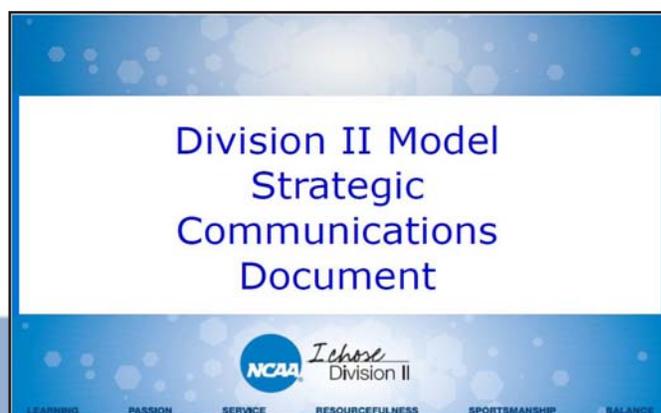
- Develop a mission statement for the athletic program that aligns with your campus, community and Division II.

Division II Key Messages

- NCAA integrates intercollegiate athletics into higher education so that the educational experience of the student-athlete is paramount.
- The NCAA Division II student-athlete experience is a comprehensive program of learning and development in a personal setting.

Division II Model Strategic Communications Document

The information contained in the Model Strategic Communications Document builds on the information found in this document, providing guiding principles, professional development ideas, job descriptions, and sample athletic department structures for effective strategic communications. To access this document, please visit the membership side of NCAA.org.



Endorsements

“The Strategic Communications Toolkit has been constructed to provide you with the resources you need to incorporate the Division II positioning platform into the messaging on your own campus. Just as important as the materials provided on the website are the many opportunities suggested for collaboration. This team concept is central to what Division II is all about, and if adopted on your campus, can help you increase efficiency and successfully reach your goals.”

Mike Racy, Vice President for Division II, NCAA



“As part of the NCAA Division II Management Council Identity Subcommittee, I see this toolkit as a logical next step in the Division II strategic positioning initiative. The Resources found in the book and on the on the website provide a one-stop shop for everything Division II.”

Bob Fortosis, Director of Athletics, Eckerd College

“The Strategic Communications Toolkit highlights the crucial role that Division II SIDs play not only for the athletic department, but for the entire division. Strategically communicating the attributes and values espoused in the positioning platform is essential for the continued growth and improvement of Division II athletic departments.”

Eric Schoh, Director of Athletics , Wayne State College



“I believe the Strategic Communications Toolkit is a great example of collaboration between the DII-SIDA and NCAA Division II, and has the potential to increase collaboration between conferences and their member institutions as well.”

Julie Ruppert, Commissioner, Northeast-10 Conference

Site Index

Division II Resources

Division II Activation Toolkit Books

- Book 1: Getting Started
- Book 2: Communication Strategies for Prospective Student-Athletes and Parents and Current Student-Athletes
- Book 3: Communication Strategies for Coaches and Administrators
- Book 4: Communication Strategies for Presidents and Chancellors and the Community
- Book 5: Communication Strategies for the Media and Corporate Supporters
- Book 6: Activation Tools, Division II Style Guide and Getting More Help

Membership Information

- Division II Facts and Figures (.pdf)
- Division II membership Benefits (.pdf)
- Division II Membership Report (.pdf)
- Division II Strategic Plan (.pdf)
- Division II Strategic Positioning Platform (English, Spanish) (.pdf)

Division II Videos

Division II Videos

- I Chose DII - long
- I Chose DII - short
- Our Lives 2010 DII highlight video

PSAs

- NCAA Respect PSA
- Mark Emmert PSA

Community Engagement

- Community engagement - CIAA basketball tournament
- Community engagement - Colorado School of Mines
- Community engagement - Habitat for Humanity
- Community engagement - Miracle League
- Community engagement - Pittsburgh State
- Community engagement - Women's basketball championship
- Rich Luker Part 1 - Why is Community Important
- Rich Luker Part 2 - Why is Community Important Pt. 2
- Rich Luker Part 3 - The College As A Town Square

Game environment

- Darren Treasure Game Environment Intro
- Darren Treasure Q1 What Is The Role Of Intercollegiate
- Darren Treasure Q2 What Is A Teachable Moment
- Darren Treasure Q3 What Is The Relationship Between Game Environment
- Darren Treasure Q4 Why Game Environment
- Darren Treasure Q5 How Should We Define Competition
- Darren Treasure Q6 Why Do People Behave Differently At Games
- Darren Treasure Q7 Will the DII Game Environment Initiative Be Successful
- Darren Treasure Q8 What Needs To Happen For The Game Environment
- Game environment - Bands Video
- Game environment - Cheerleading Video
- Game environment - Winona State
- The Perfect Game - Short

Make-A-Wish

- Make-A-Wish video 1
- Make-A-Wish video 2
- Make-A-Wish video 3

Miscellaneous

- 2008 Spring Festival Closing
- 2009 Winter Festival Closing
- 2010 Fall Festival Closing
- 2010 NCAA Convention Highlights
- 2011 NCAA Convention Highlights
- Brig. Gen. Sheila Baxter Interview
- Central Washington softball story
- Division II Walk-In Loop
- Jerry Schemmel Student-Athlete Experience
- President and Chancellors - Short
- Fairmont State video
- Team Video
- My Life My Experience

Division II Text and Print Ads

Text

- Division II boilerplate v.1 (.docx and .pdf)
- Division II boilerplate v.2 (.docx and .pdf)
- PA sample scripts (.docx and .pdf)

Print Ads

- Full page ad - Alcohol awareness tailgate (.pdf)
- Full page ad - Comm. engagement vs comm. service (.pdf)
- Full page ad - DII pledge (black & white, color) (.pdf)
- Full page ad - Game environment (black & white, color) (.pdf)
- Full page ad - Game environment vs sportsmanship (.pdf)
- Full page ad - I Chose (black & white, color) (.pdf)
- Full page ad - Alcohol awareness basketball (.pdf)
- Full page ad - Alcohol awareness football (.pdf)
- Half page ad - Alcohol awareness tailgate (.pdf)
- Half page ad - DII pledge (black & white, color) (.pdf)
- Half page ad - Game environment (black & white, color) (.pdf)
- Half page ad - I Chose (black & white, color) (.pdf)
- Half page ad - Alcohol awareness basketball (.pdf)
- Half page ad - Alcohol awareness football (.pdf)
- Print ad tag (.pdf)

Division II Audio

- Game environment audio PSA (.mp3)
- Game environment audio PSA script (.pdf)
- Game environment music playlist (.pdf)

Division II Logos, Web, and Hexagon Elements

Logos

- Division II (black & white, color) (.jpg and .pdf)
- I Chose Division II (landscape, portrait/white background, purple background) (.pdf)
- NCAA blue disk (.pdf)

Hexagon Elements

- Center (Blue, green, orange, purple, red, yellow) (.pdf)
- Corner (Blue, green, orange, purple, red, yellow) (.pdf)

- Full page blue background with attributes (.pdf)
- Full page blue background (.pdf)

Web

- Button white (.jpg)
- Button white & blue (.jpg)
- Desktop Backgrounds (*File will not open in all browsers. Save file to desktop and then open*)
 - Version 1 - 800x600, 1024x768, 1280x960
 - Version 2 - 800x600, 1024x768, 1280x960
- Division II Facebook button
- Division II Gear button
- Division II Twitter button
- Division II Youtube button
- Header black (.jpg)
- Header blue (.jpg)
- Header white (.jpg)
- Header white & blue (.jpg)
- Horizontal banner community engagement (.jpg)
- Horizontal banner DII network (.jpg)
- Horizontal banner game environment (.jpg)
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- Rectangle banner game environment (.jpg)
- Rectangle banner D2SA.org (.jpg)
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- Skyscraper banner D2SA.org (.jpg)
- Square banner community engagement (.jpg)
- Square banner DII network (.jpg)
- Square banner game environment (.jpg)
- Square banner D2SA.org (.jpg)
- Vertical banner community engagement (.jpg)
- Vertical banner DII network (.jpg)
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- Vertical banner D2SA.org (.jpg)

Presentation Templates

- Athletic Administration Support Presentation
- Board of Trustees Presentation 4.29.10
- Cabinet Support Presentation 4.29.10
- Campus Leaders Support Presentation
- Campus Retreat Grouping 4.29.10
- Chancellors and President's Presentation 4.29.10
- Community Engagement Grouping 4.29.10
- Community Support Presentation
- DII power point blank template
- diicommunity.org grouping 4.29.10
- Faculty Presentation 4.29.10
- Game Environment Grouping 4.29.10
- Gender Equity Grouping 4.29.10
- Graduation Rates Grouping 4.29.10
- Life in the Balance Grouping 4.29.10
- Parental Support Presentation
- Prospective Student Athlete Support Presentation
- Six Attributes Grouping 4.29.10
- Strategic Position Platform Grouping 4.29.10
- Student Athlete Presentation 4.29.10
- Template Slides 4.29.10
- Twelve Reasons to Believe Grouping



I chose
Division II