ABSTRACT
In today’s complex and highly competitive marketplace, universities and colleges have turned to branding as a solution in dealing with today’s global challenges. Prior studies and examples highlight the growing importance of branding for the colleges and universities, and it is expected to become even more important and vital for their growth and/or survival. Also, because universities can differentiate themselves through serving the needs of different segments with different offerings, they must understand how differences are perceived by different segments. However, in order to develop a strong university brand, the brand manager at universities must conduct an in-depth study of university’s current branding efforts and strategies. In this paper, we argue that a brand audit, which is a comprehensive examination of a brand to discover its sources of brand equity to assess the health of the brand, uncover its source of brand equity and suggest ways to improve and leverage its equity. Therefore, the main goal of this paper is to show how brand audit could help better understand university branding issues and identify the sources of brand equity to help in developing branding strategies for college and universities. The specific objectives of the paper are: 1.) to show steps that are needed in conducting brand audit and brand equity framework that would guide the brand audit; 2.) present a case analysis of university brand audit, and 3.) to discuss the implications of brand audit in developing university brand and branding strategies.

INTRODUCTION
The recent globalization and economic environment has given an increased importance for brands and brand management. In fact, Kotler and Armstrong (2010) state that the most distinctive skill of marketers in 21st century is their ability to build and manage brands. As a company’s most valuable intangible asset, brand represents the essence of a company, functions as a powerful differentiator for the business and as a decision-making tool for customers (Aaker, 1996; 1991; Keller, 2008; 1993). The real value of a strong brand is its ability to capture customer preference
and loyalty (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). Thus, branding is an integral part of marketing strategy; it is the creation of a corporate identity and reputation.

In the current global economy, branding efforts are not limited to traditional “consumer” products; firms in various service industries have been trying to utilize branding strategies to build stronger brands. In this regard, higher education and universities have realized the value of branding and the need to build strong, sustainable brands. Given that the recent economic environment has had a major negative impact on the financial situation of most higher education institutions, branding has become a strategic issue for universities and colleges in order for them to develop meaningfully differentiated brands to communicate their strengths (Jevons, 2006). Also, since most of the universities and colleges often compete for the same students, they have realized that the relatively simple promotional tools of the past no longer work as they once did. Moreover, as today’s prospective students are fully immersed in a variety of digital worlds, most of the higher education institutions seem to be struggling to understand and embrace the needs of these students. It is in this globalized, digital market place that colleges and universities are turning to branding as they seek to grow, and in recent cases to survive. In fact, Whisman (2007) states that in today’s complex and highly competitive marketplace, universities and colleges have turned to branding as a solution in dealing with today’s global challenges.

For example, because of the increased competition and diminishing university funds, British universities realized the importance of branding within educational institutions (Mazzarol and Sautar, 1999; Mok, 1999); consequently, in 2000, the UK government supported a worldwide re-branding exercise campaign to establish a clear and competitive identity for UK universities in order to differentiate British education from its major competitors, such as the USA and Australia and to attract more international students (Hemsley-Brown and Goonawardana, 2007). Also, few studies (papers) (Gatfield et al., 1999; Gray et al., 2003; Mazzarol, 1998) focused on marketing and branding in order to identify the factors that are important when marketing and promoting the universities and/or positioning the higher education institutions. These studies and examples highlight the growing importance of branding for the colleges and universities, and it is expected to become even more important and vital for their growth and/or survival.

Because universities can differentiate themselves through serving the needs of different segments with different offerings, they must understand how differences are perceived by different segments. However, in order to develop strong university brand, the brand manager and/or administrators at universities must conduct an in-depth study of university’s current branding efforts and strategies. This would require detailed analyses of the university’s marketing and branding strategies. In this paper, we argue that this can be accomplished through a brand audit, which a comprehensive examination of a brand to discover its sources of brand equity (Keller, 2008). Similar to an accounting audit or marketing audit, Keller (2008) states that a brand audit is customer-focused exercise to assess the health of the brand, uncover its source of brand equity, and suggest ways to improve and leverage its equity. In this regard, the paper will present case study of brand audit that utilizes brand equity framework presented by Keller (2008) to build a strong brand.

**STUDY OBJECTIVES**

Given the growing importance of branding for the competitiveness of higher education in the global economy, the main goal of this paper is to show how brand audit could help better understand university branding issues and identity the sources of brand equity to help in developing branding strategies for college and universities. The specific objectives of the paper
are: 1.) to show steps that are needed in conducting brand audit and brand equity framework that would guide the brand audit; 2.) present a case analysis of university brand audit, and 3.) to discuss the implications of brand audit in developing university brand and branding strategies.

**BACKGROUND - HIGHER EDUCATION BRANDING**

The brand image of a university plays a crucial role in attitudes towards that institution, and to the sector as a whole (Yavas and Shemwell, 1996; Landrum et al., 1998). Based on their study of university image, Paramewaran and Glowacka (1995) suggest that higher education institutions need to develop and/or maintain a distinct image to create a competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive global market. Ivy (2001) claims that such a distinct image is likely to impact a student’s willingness to apply to that institution; thus, establishing these images in the mind of the stakeholders is quite important. Also, Hemsley-Brown and Goonawardana (2007) state that despite the growing importance of this subject, empirical research specifically related to branding of higher education is relatively scarce. Furthermore, much of the branding effort in higher education appears to be focused on promotion and identity, including logos, mottos, promotional materials, advertising, mascots, names, and the like (Argenti, 2000; Bunzel, 2007; Jevons, 2006). However, these efforts appear to be largely concerned with external branding to market and promote the universities without a clear understanding of the holistic nature of what constitutes a brand. In this regard, Jevons (2006, p. 467) has questioned the effectiveness of these exercises. Thus, just by focusing simply on “better” marketing and communications, brand efforts are not likely to deliver the intended results.

A review of the literature reveals very few papers (Gatfield et al., 1999; Gray et al., 2003; Mazzarol, 1998) that concentrate on university branding, although some attention is given to the international marketing of higher education. A study by Gatfield et al. (1999) suggests that recognition (quality of teachers and resources), campus life (added features), and guidance (access services) are the most salient promotional features used in marketing universities. In a study of educational institutions in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the UK, Mazzarol (1998) found that two factors, “image and resources” and “coalition and forward integration” were significant predictors of market success. In addition, Gray et al. (2003) identified a university’s learning environment, reputation, graduate career prospects, destination and cultural integration as the main brand positioning dimensions for higher education institutions. These studies indicate that academic instruction and learning environment, campus life, reputation, and career prospects of graduates are the most salient brand positioning dimensions for higher education institutions. However, these studies were conducted with the aim of international marketing of higher education and attracting international students, not building strong university brands.

A study by Ivy (2008) finds seven distinct factors rather than the traditional 4Ps of marketing mix in the marketing activities of state business schools of higher education institutions. His findings, based on student attitudes and their perceptions of the importance of various marketing activities and tools in the selection of the business school, indicate that the most important factors are the program (choice of majors, electives), prominence (reputation), price (tuition), prospectus (communication through direct mail), people (interactions with faculty, staff, and other students), promotion (publicity and e-media), and premiums (mixture of various offerings). In a similar study regarding the importance of facilities on student choice of university, Price et al. (2003) find that quality of facilities has significant impact on student’s
choice of institution. The focus of these studies was to identify the factors that help to market and promote university brand to attract more students.

There is no doubt that an ultimate goal of all branding strategies is to build strong brand equity. This is because brand equity, as a key indicator of the state of health of a brand (Keller, 1993; Kim and Kim, 2004), is built through an effective management of the brand. As a multidimensional variable, brand equity refers to the value inherent in a well-known brand name (Keller, 2008; 1993; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). In essence, value is created in a consumer’s mind as a result of a brand’s superior quality, the social esteem the brand provides, consumer trust in the brand, and self-identification with the brand (Aaker, 1996; 1991; Keller, 1993; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). Brand equity is the positive differential effect that knowing the brand name has on consumer responses to the product or service (Keller, 1993). A powerful brand enjoys a high level of consumer awareness and loyalty, and it forms the basis for building strong and profitable customer relationships (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 2008; 1993). As stated before, we believe that conducting brand audit of brand equity could provide an in-depth understanding of the health of the brand, uncover its source of brand equity, and suggest ways to improve and leverage the brand equity. The results of brand audit could help brand managers in building a strong university brand.

BRAND AUDIT AND CONSUMER BASED BRAND EQUITY (CBBE)

Brand Auditing is “a comprehensive examination of a brand to discover its brand equity” (Keller, 2008). The purpose of a brand audit is to learn what consumers want from products as well as what they currently know about the brand in order create a profile of potential consumers and act in a strategically and informed manner for positioning the product or service provided. A brand audit is consumer-focused and is used as an assessment tool to determine “the health of the brand, uncover its sources of brand equity, and suggest ways to improve and leverage its equity” (Keller, 2008). In order for a brand audit to be successful, there has to be an understanding of brand equity for both the consumer and firm.

The firm has to understand what products and services they are currently offering, but take it one step further and understand the perceptions and beliefs that are created--these are the true meaning of the brand. Audit’s often set the direction of strategy for the specific brand and is an important aspect to creating a new strategic shift. Moreover, it is important to ask the following questions (Keller, 2008): “Are the current sources of brand equity satisfactory? Do certain brand associations need to be strengthened? Does the brand lack uniqueness? What brand opportunities exist and what potential challenges exist for brand equity?”. There are several significant components of a Brand audit, including the Customer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid, also referred to as the CBBE, defining points of parity and points of difference, completing a SWOT-F analysis, brand wheel brand promise and brand GAP analysis.

FRAMEWORK AND STEPS FOR BRAND AUDIT

The CBBE Pyramid views building a brand equity as sequences of four steps (Keller, 2008). The purpose of each step is to continually grow by achieving the objectives determined for the previous step. According to Keller (2008), the steps are: “1. ensure identification of the brand with customers and an association of the brand in customers’ minds with a specific product class or customer need, 2. firmly establish the totality of brand meaning in the minds of customers by strategically linking a host of tangible and intangible brand associations with certain properties, 3. elicit the proper customer responses to this brand identification and brand meaning, 4. convert brand response to create an intense, active loyalty relationship between customers and the brand”. Keller (2008) states that the four important questions to ask are: “Who are you? (brand identity),
What are you? (brand meaning), What about you? What do I think or feel about you? (brand responses), and What about you and me? What kind of association and how much of a connection would I like to have with you? (brand relationships)” . “Customer-based brand equity (CBBE) occurs when the consumer has a high level of awareness and familiarity with the brand and holds some strong, favorable, and unique associations in memory” (Keller, 2008).

Each of these steps is important in building the right awareness of the brand for customers. The pyramid is broken down into six sections-- Identity, also known as salience, or the “who are you?,” Meaning, or “what are you?,” Response, or “what about you?,” and Relationships, also known as “what about you and me?” (These steps are discussed later in Figure 1). Salience is the bottom layer of the pyramid that responds to the brand identity. It is the “deep, broad brand awareness” (Keller, 2008). Next are performance and imagery, which is the points of parity and points of difference component, followed by judgments and feelings, which are the positive accessible reactions. “A highly salient brand is one that has both depth and breadth of brand awareness, such that customers always make sufficient purchases as well as always think of the brand across a variety of settings in which it could possibly be employed or consumed” (Keller, 2008). Though salience is the first portion of the CBBE, all four steps are important in order to have a fully functional and healthy brand image. Once all of the information is gathered from the CBBE, a Brand Wheel can be made. Vice President of Integrating Marketing at Valparaiso University presented the brand wheel to be significant because it includes the key words or phrases that come to mind of the consumer when they hear a Brand name or think about a particular Brand (Ochander, 2010). These key words and phrases can be used in strategic messaging for the Brand.

The next component of a Brand audit is Points of Parity and Points of Difference, also known as POP/POD. Determining the POP/POD is important because it identifies the target market and the exact type of competition as well as defines what the position of the brand will be. “Points of difference are attributes or benefits that consumers strongly associate with a brand, positively evaluate, and believe that they could not find to the same extent with a competitive brand” (Keller, 2008). Points of Difference can include performance-related attributes, distinct benefits, sustainable competitive advantage, unique selling propositions, as well as perceived uniqueness of the brand.

Points of Parity are, “not necessarily unique to the brand but may in fact be shared with other brands” (Keller, 2008). There are two types of Points of Parity which are category and competitive. The category points of parity are necessary attributes of the brand, but are not sufficient. In order for a brand to be successful, there has to be some points of parity so that the consumer is comfortable with the product or service provided. Keller (2008) POINTS OUT THAT Competitive Points of Parity are “the associations designed to negate competitor’s points of difference”. Keller (2008) states that, “if a brand can break even, in the areas where its competitors are trying to find an advantage and can achieve advantages in some other areas, the brand should be in a strong-- and perhaps unbeatable-- competitive position”.

When a significant amount of consumers believe that a brand is good, that brand has achieved a point of parity on a specific attribute. The successful position of a brand is achieving the necessary points of parity, and not as much achieving the points of difference (Keller, 2008). Nivea was able to become a large leader in skin cream by showcasing strong points of difference on specific benefits such as “gentle” and “protective.” When Nivea decided to extend its brand into other health products, they knew the importance of determining points of parity before they
could promote the differences. Nivea was successful with their extension because of a well established consumer relationship with their skin cream and consumers believed that their new product line would be equally as strong. Nivea was able to deliver on their brand promise because the positioning was highly differentiated and effective. The deliverability of Nivea’s extended product line met the expectations of the consumer’s expectations and delivered on the company’s inherent capabilities and differentiation from its competitors (Keller, 2008).

An additional component of a Brand audit is the SWOT-F analysis (Geller, 2002). A SWOT analysis enables marketers to determine the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to the brand. The additional F component is for Friendship-- both for the internal brand as well as with the consumer. Performing a SWOT-F analysis helps to determine in what way the brand will be positioned.

Once the initial research is completed for the Brand audit, it is important to utilize the information to develop the Brand promise. “From the perspective of the CBBE model, Brand knowledge is the key to creating Brand equity, because it creates the differential effect that drives brand equity” (Keller, 2008). Drawing from the CBBE Model, the Brand promise is an essential component that is the overall view of the Brand to the consumer. It must be integrated into the entire Brand identity, including any supporting materials. The Brand promise is what consumers identify with as the Brand-- what the Brand is to the consumers, what they hope to receive from the Brand. “The power a Brand lies in what resides in the minds of customers” (Keller, 2008). It is essential that marketers build a strong brand that enables consumers to have the “right type of experiences with products and services and their accompanying marketing programs so that the desired thoughts, feelings, images, beliefs, perceptions, opinions and so on become linked to the brand” (Keller, 2008).

A vital component to every Brand Audit is the GAP Analysis as well as final recommendations. The GAP Analysis enables the marketers to identify the issues between what the Brand Promises and what is actually perceived by the consumer. By performing a Branding GAP analysis, Brand is able to be positioned in an effective way with direct and effective messaging that will resonate with the consumer. This portion pulls all of the elements of the Brand audit together and integrates all messaging at the most important touch points. Once all of the components of the Brand audit are finalized, recommendations take place. The recommendations are an important aspect of the audit because it enables the Brand to be set on a specific strategic path that allows it to grow in awareness or shift directions if needed.

An example of an effective Brand audit was completed by Rolex (Keller, 2008). Rolex performed a brand audit that included the history, private ownership, product-related attributes, Rolex brand portfolio, Tudor, Communications, Pricing & Distribution as well as Brand Exploratory. As mentioned in Keller’s (2008) description of a Brand audit, Rolex focused on customer knowledge and sources of brand equity. After research, they determined their strong markets included celebrity ambassadors, sports & culture as well as philanthropic programs. They understand the importance of the bottom line, but the social responsibility that comes with such a well known brand as well. They implemented an awards program as well as a mentor & protégé arts initiative.

The Rolex Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Pyramid) is “equally strong on the left hand and right hand sides. It is also strong from the bottom up. Rolex focused on both the superior product attributes and the imagery associated with owning and wearing a Rolex” (Keller, 2008). From the Brand audit, five areas of opportunity surfaced: introduction of new designs,
connect with female consumer, attack the online counterfeit industry, understand how younger consumers relate to luxury, and, most importantly, communicate long-term value. In order for Rolex to communicate long-term value, it is imperative to utilize the information that surfaced from the CBBE Pyramid as well as the Points of Parity and Points of Difference analyses. This information will allow Rolex to set the tone for how they will address the recommendations for the Brand, as well as set the tone for the strategy.

CASE STUDY - BRAND VU, BRAND AUDIT AND CBBE OF VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY
The perception of a university develops over time and is directly responsible for the continued support from all of the stakeholders connected to the institution. Maintaining a favorable brand image has a direct impact on student enrollment, faculty hires, recruiting athletes, and other activities. A quality brand image is necessary to attract prospective students. Ultimately, appropriate brand positioning, the fulfillment of brand promises, and effective branding could lead to favorable enrollment. Overall, satisfied stakeholders perpetuate the brand promise.

BRANDING RESEARCH
The purpose of this research was to determine the perception and delivery of the University brand promise with perspective students. We looked at internal branding as well as external branding. Research conducted by the team included surveys, personal interviews, and data collected from university facilities and archives. The team looked at material produced by the university stating the brand and compared that information to what is actually being presented by the University. In addition, the team produced a photographic documentation of University facilities to evaluate discrepancies between promise and delivery regarding the physical environmental experience. We also looked at the traditional promises long-standing with the University and the promises that are now being offered and delivered. The evidence indicates that there is a large discrepancy in what the University promises, and what it delivers.

METHODS
The team conducted a CBBE, SWOT-f, and a gap analysis. In addition, the team created a brand wheel to determine what role the brand plays with consumers, and to determine activators for acceptance of the brand (See Figure 1). Bases on our research, we suggest an inside out approach to brand development. As evidenced by the University web site, many departments are segmented and no apparent single theme exists. We recommend that an overarching engagement theme be established so that all faculties, staff, students, alumni, and other relevant stakeholders will be involved in the branding process personally. We advise that a training campaign be established to ensure that the message from the University is uniform and meaningful.

HISTORY OF VALPO
The modern era in University history began in 1925 with purchase of the institution by the Lutheran University Association, a group of clergy and church laity who saw a bright future for the University. Distinguished by its Lutheran heritage of scholarship, freedom and faith, the dreams of these modern founders continue to be fulfilled in the new chapters of Valparaiso University history.

The case study presented in this paper is for Valparaiso University located in Valparaiso, Indiana. The previous section shows the steps used to conduct the brand audit utilizing the brand equity framework. The framework provides some structure by establishing six “brand building blocks” with customers that we can assemble in a pyramid, with significant brand equity only
resulting if brands reach the top of the pyramid (Keller, 2008). The framework is known as the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) pyramid. The following are the steps and outcomes of the brand audit for Valparaiso University CBBE, which are presented in Figure 1.

The first building block of CBBE is salience. Brand salience measures awareness of the brand, for example, how often and easily the brand is evoked under various situations or circumstances (Keller, 2008). The awareness of brand can be measured in terms of breadth and depth. The breadth of brand awareness measures the range of purchase and usage situations in which the brand element comes to mind and depends on a large extent the on the organization of brand and product knowledge in memory. The depth of brand awareness measures how likely it is for a brand element to come to mind, and the ease with which it does so. A survey was conducted of current students and professors to measure brand salience – depth and breadth – for Valparaiso University. As shown in Figure 1, the results of this survey concluded that the awareness of the Valparaiso University brand was evoked by the following: “I live in the area”; my family is alumni; a packet of Lutheran college information was sent to my house; many years ago as a high school student; and church. (Should be in quotes) These survey results confirmed salience was based on the breadth of the Valparaiso University brand. The recall of the Valparaiso University brand had been stored in memory primarily from church association, family alumni and university introduction in high school. In some cases, this memory was created many, many years ago.

The second building block of CBBE is performance. According to Keller (2008), there are five important attributes and benefits that often underlie brand performance as follows: 1) primary ingredients and supplementary features; 2) product reliability, durability and serviceability; 3) service effectiveness, efficiency, and empathy; 4) style and design; and 5) price. Based on the survey results, brand performance was expressed as a good school but very wealthy and white-bred and really religious, high academic standards. These results presented in Figure 1 highlight the underlying attributes of style and design, as well as, price. Additionally, they are performance statements that focus on customers’ perceptions of quality and inclusiveness (or lack of)). Valparaiso University’s overall brand performance audit indicates an opportunity to market a consistent message regarding the brand offerings and related performance experience by current and past students.

FIGURE 1: Consumer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid for Brand VU
The third building block of CBBE is brand imagery. According to Keller (2008), brand imagery depends on the extrinsic properties of the product or service, including the ways in which the brand attempts to meet customers’ psychological or social needs. Keller (2008) states there are many kinds of intangibles that can be linked to a brand, but there are four main ones as follows: 1) user profiles; 2) purchase and usage situations; 3) personality and values; and 4) history, heritage, and experiences. This is proven by the Valparaiso University brand survey results. The survey concluded that brand imagery was primarily expressed as a private, small close-knit community and very intelligent faculty, small school feeling, smart students (see Figure 1). The brand imagery supports that of an established brand with a very good reputation. Overall, the imagery statements draw the conclusion that Valparaiso University provides a high quality, private education in a small community environment and is value-priced.

The fourth building block of CBBE is judgment. Brand judgments are customer’s personal opinions about and evaluations of the brand, which consumers form by putting together all the different brand performance and imagery associations. According to Keller (2008), there are many types of judgments with respect to the brand but the following four types of quality, credibility, consideration and superiority are particularly important. For brand judgments the following survey statements were shared by survey participants: I think Valpo has exceeded my expectations; the campus is a really great size and there is a strong religious life if you want to be a part of it; the personal attention is ten times better than I ever could have imagined; Valpo has been great! I love the education that I’ve had, and the relationships I’ve formed; seemed more relaxed about the religious aspect than I thought which exceeded my expectations; the quality of
education met my expectations, quality of students failed expectations. Based on the overall survey results, a conclusion can be drawn that brand judgments rated at or above expectations in the three of the four important types of judgment of quality, credibility and superiority (See Figure 1). The Valparaiso University customers are saying very good things about their choice and related experience to others.

The fifth building block of CBIE is feelings. Brand feelings are customers’ emotional responses and reactions to the brand (Keller, 2008). It is essentially about how I feel when I use the brand and how my relationships are impacted by using the brand. For the Valparaiso University brand, our survey respondents shared the following feelings about the brand: ambiguous; enjoyable; fulfilling; OK; and whole. For a brand to have a powerful position in the building block of feelings, the customer has a very strong emotional association whenever the brand is used. Based on the VU brand audit, there is an opportunity for the University to continue to build this aspect of the brand building block (See Figure 1). Although a positive emotion is consistently evoked, it isn’t always a very positive and strong emotion.

The sixth building block of CBIE is resonance. Brand resonance describes the nature of this relationship and the extent to which customers feel that they are “in-syene” with the brand. According to Keller (2008), brand resonance can be measured in terms of behavioral loyalty or repeat purchases and how much they purchase. However, behavioral loyalty is one aspect of brand resonance. In addition to behavioral loyalty, there must also be a strong personal attachment to the brand (2008). This type of brand resonance is often characterized by the customer as a must have product/service, they are in love with it and look forward to the next opportunity for usage. Based on the survey results, brand resonance for the Valparaiso University brand was expressed as follows: genuine; fulfilling; growth; great; and dynamic. These words are in line with customers that have reached the ultimate relationship with the Valparaiso University brand. It can be concluded that these customers will use the brand again and encourage others to consider the brand too.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
In summary, the Brand image of a university is a crucial role in developing a strong university brand and brand equity. Higher education institutions need to create a specific and distinct image in order to have a competitive advantage against other institutions and remain competitive an ever-evolving global market. Having a distinct brand not only helps the University, but establishes specialized images in the minds of key stakeholders. This increases a student’s willingness to apply to specific institutions over others. Although a majority of higher education branding is focused on promotion and identity materials, Universities may do far better by focusing on “better” and clear marketing and communications messaging. Furthermore, universities main brand positioning comes from the learning environment, reputation, career prospects and cultural integration (Gray et al, 2003). In the study by Ivy (2008), he found that based on student attitudes and their perceptions of the importance of various marketing activities and tools in the selection of the business school, the most important factors are the program (choice of majors, electives), prominence (reputation), price (tuition), prospectus (communication through direct mail), people (interactions with faculty, staff, and other students), promotion (publicity and e-media), and premiums (mixture of various offerings). The focus of these studies was to identify the factors that help to market and promote university brand to attract more students. As stated before, we believe that conducting brand audit of brand equity could provide an in-depth understanding of the health of the brand, uncover its source of brand equity, and
suggest ways to improve and leverage the brand equity. The results of brand audit could help brand managers in building a strong university brand.

We recommend an inside out approach to brand development. As evidenced by the University web site, many departments are segmented and no apparent single theme exists. We recommend that an overarching engagement theme be established so that all faculties, staff, students, alumni, and other relevant stakeholders will be involved in the branding process personally. We advise that a training campaign be established to ensure that the message from the University is uniform and meaningful. Furthermore, we recommend an intricate analysis of Valparaiso University’s core values so that the new Brand has a totality about it—encompassing not only academics, but athletics, alumni, current students, prospective students, student life as well as the community. It is imperative that once the Brand strategy is formed, individuals that understand the concepts, relevance as well as importance are set in place to deliver the Brand message. The Brand should be formed using the steps outlined by Keller (2008) so that it does not have to be explained, but is automatically understood.

We believe that in conducting Brand audit by utilizing Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Pyramid, defining points of parity and points of difference, completing a SWOT-F analysis, using brand wheel brand promise and brand GAP analysis are all vital to creating and implementing a clear, focused and effective Brand. It is essential for a University to have a strong and effective brand in order to have students apply for admission and remain competitive in a global market. The Brand also integrates both the external stakeholder’s values, but holds true to those within the internal brand.

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