

A Flag-Ship™ Case Study:

How the Florida State Alumni Association used the Flag-Ship™ to Drive Membership

Information provided by FSU Alumni Association staff members
Valerie Colvin (Director of Membership and Business Development) &
Meagan Flint (Associate Director of Membership and Business Development)



ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION

The Flag-Ship™ Product...

The Flag-Ship™ is an envelope, approximately the size of a FedEx or UPS envelope, made from polyester. Unique to the design of the product, when a constituent receives the Flag-Ship in the mail, it unfolds into an exclusive branded flag, perfect for spreading team or school spirit around the community.

The Flag-Ship™ Buzz...

The Florida State Alumni Association staff started buzzing when it first saw a video about the Flag-Ship™ prior to attending CAMMP (Council of Alumni Association Marketing and Membership Professionals) 2014. The group started wondering how FSU could best use the Flag-Ship™ to generate excitement, encourage and increase membership, and be one of the first to use such an innovative, creative product.

"I wanted our fans to pull the Flag-Ship™ out of the mailbox and say, 'Oh wow, this is different.' We wanted that excitement – the feeling that this is different and innovative. I challenge anyone to come up with something this creative. We are all very excited to be on the cusp and forward thinking of a new product. I can't wait to see it used in other areas, not just membership." – Valerie Colvin, Director of Membership and Business Development

The Flag-Ship™ Creative Process...

Bob Confoy, creator of the Flag-Ship™, visited FSU to show samples and brainstorm the various ways to use the product. The Florida State Alumni Association made the decision to use the Flag-Ship™ and pulled together a team to create the rollout plan.

The initial FSU Flag-Ship™ creative meetings included:

- Alumni Association membership team
- Communications team members (webmaster, editor)
- Senior staff member in charge of budget and finance
- Events staff member

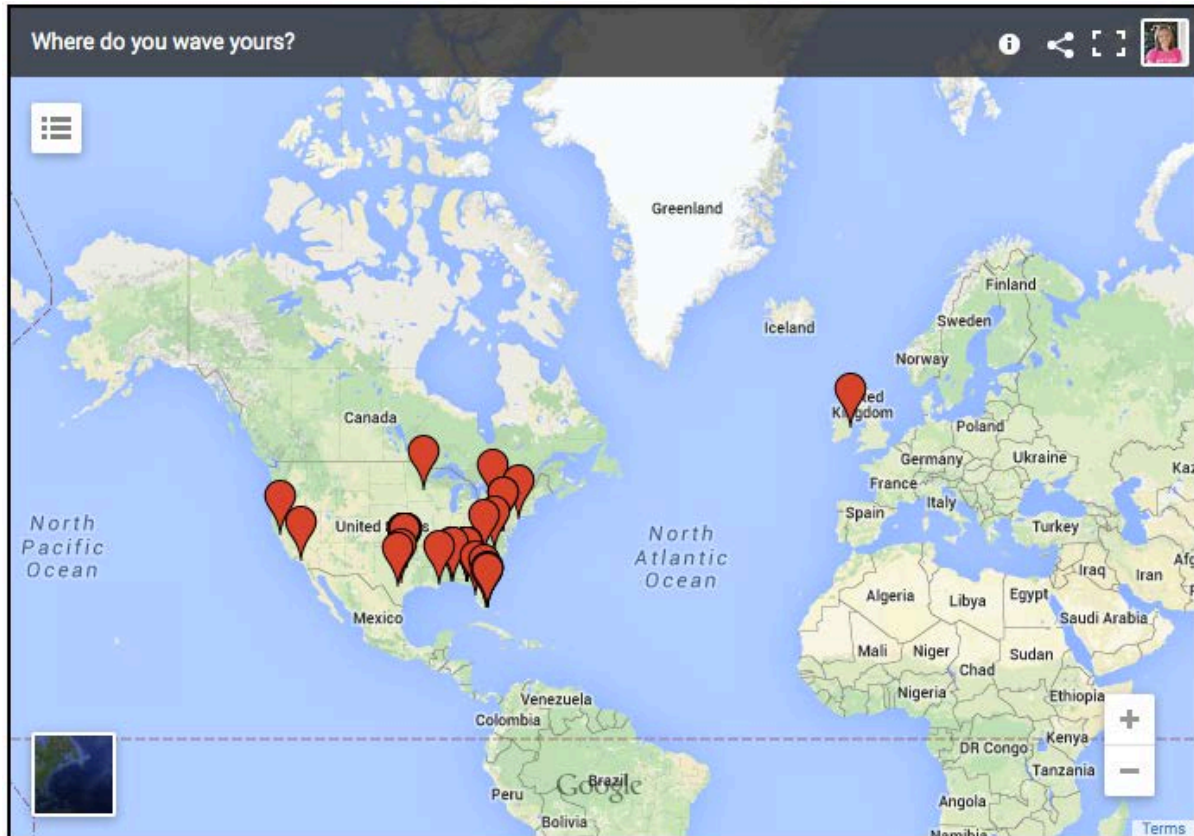
The Flag-Ship™ Plan...

Florida State used both the large Flag-Ship™ (24" x 36") and the garden Flag-Ship™ (14" x 22"). The level of membership in the FSU Alumni Association dictated what size Flag-Ship™ a member received. FSU created a "[Where do you wave yours?](#)" campaign to drive membership by offering the Flag-Ship™ with the membership welcome packet. Florida State ordered 10,000 of the garden Flag-Ship™ and 5,000 of the large Flag-Ship™.

Individuals who renewed or joined with an annual membership received the garden Flag-Ship™. Members who renewed a five-year membership or became a lifetime member received the large Flag-Ship™. Because a person has an active membership in the FSU Alumni Association for a year from the date he joined, some members renewed significantly early in order to receive the Flag-Ship™. For example, an individual who joined in June, two months before the launch of the Flag-Ship™, had the opportunity to extend his membership an additional year in order to receive the Flag-Ship™.



The screenshot shows the Florida State University Alumni Association website. At the top left is the FSU logo with the text "FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION". To the right are links for "Home | Login | About Us" and a search bar. Below this is a navigation menu with items: "GET CONNECTED", "GET INVOLVED", "MEMBERSHIP", "BENEFITS", "VIRE® Magazine", "ALUMNI CENTER", and "JOIN/RENEW". A large banner image shows the "FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY" archway. Below the banner, a sidebar on the left lists "GET INVOLVED" options: "Advocate for Florida State", "Alumni Awards", "Board of Directors", "Football Headquarters", "Homecoming", "Legacy Scholarship", and "Upcoming Events". The main content area has the heading "Where do you wave yours?" and includes an image of a spirit flag with a Seminole horse and the text "ALUMNI ASSOCIATION". To the right of the image, text explains that members receive a spirit flag and are encouraged to post photos with #FSUFlagEnvy. It also provides contact information for fsualum@alumni.fsu.edu and a link to "Join or renew today". At the bottom, a note states: "Already a member? Renew your Annual membership early to receive your flag now, or **members-only** may **make a donation** to receive your choice of flags."



An unexpected result:

FSU saw desire from its members to receive both sizes of Flag-Ship™. Some people who received the garden Flag-Ship™ wanted the large Flag-Ship™ to display. Because of the demand, Florida State created a different gift option for members to make another gift and receive the alternate Flag-Ship™.

"I'm renewing nearly a year early to get the flag." –FSUAA Member

[View FSU Flag-Ship™ Membership/Gift Form](#)

The Flag-Ship™ Launch...

FSU launched the Flag-Ship™ at the annual football kickoff luncheon in August. This high profile event is one of the biggest of the year with corporate sponsors, alumni, and donors totaling around 1500 people. There is a live feed of the luncheon and a social media campaign to go along with it. Florida State revealed the new Flag-Ship™ at the beginning of the live stream video.

At the kickoff event, the large Flag-Ship™ was placed on the high level membership tables while the smaller garden Flag-Ship™ was offered at various other level tables.

Inside the Flag-Ship™, supporters received a welcome packet that included:

- Member card
- Benefit information
- Postcard advertising Flag-Ship™ social media campaign (#FSUFlagEnvy)

The Flag-Ship™ Socially Speaking...

FSU had a social element to the Flag-Ship™ as well, creating the hashtag [#FSUFlagEnvy](#) to encourage members to share photos of their new flag on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. FSU also created a “Where do you wave yours?” map to feature photos of Seminoles across the country waving the flag.

Note: Some of the social aspects had a slow start because the webmaster went on maternity leave around the launch of the flag; she returned in January so there is more traction on the social elements.

FSU Alumni Association
December 30, 2014

Where do you wave your FSU Alumni Association spirit flag? For alumni board director Maura Hayes, director of operations for Times Square Studios, the answer is Times Square! #FSUFlagEnvy

See flags all over the U.S. and get/share yours: alumni.fsu.edu/flag



Unlike · Comment · Share · 373 16 14

FSU Alumni Assoc. @FSUAlumni · Jan 8
Our #FSUalumni flag is waving from coast-to-coast (pictured: CA, NY, FL, DC)! #FSUFlagEnvy gonol.es/1wiM8jd



Meagan Flint @megs_paige · Oct 6
Got my new @FSUAlumni membership items, love my new flag! #FSUFlagEnvy from #Tallahassee



View photo

See Appendix for sampling of FSUAA Facebook Flag-Ship™ feedback.

The Flag-Ship™ Quality...

FSU tested the Flag-Ship™ to make sure it would hold up in the steamy Tallahassee temperatures. After hanging the Flag-Ship™ for six months, the colors had not faded and the material was still in good condition.

“With the Flag-Ship™, it is an easy way to ship a premium item to our members and the Flag-Ship™ is such a quality product, I could see it lasting for years, even in the Florida heat. I would recommend the product because it is creative, it is good quality, and the shipping is a breeze!” – Meagan Flint, Associate Director of Membership and Business Development

The Flag-Ship™ Next Steps...

Originally Florida State used the Flag-Ship™ as part of membership fulfillment – join the FSUAA and get a Flag-Ship™. In January, FSU decided to try using the Flag-Ship™ for a renewal campaign. They segmented the January/February renewals to see if the Flag-Ship™ helped increase retention. Some renewal packages arrived inside the flag while others came in a standard envelope. The Flag-Ship™ is still being used for fulfillment, so everyone who joins/renews will get the Flag-Ship™, but some will get the product prior to renewing the membership. Stay tuned for results!

The goal of the Flag-Ship™ for the FSUAA is to drive renewals. They want to get people excited to receive the annual spirit flag. They want members to be anxious to see what the flag will look like each year. They plan to date the next Flag-Ship™ so it has the potential to be a limited edition collector’s item.

Florida State Alumni Association Flag-Ship™ Tidbits...

- Using the Flag-Ship™ makes fulfillment so EASY. It offers a premium item without all the hassle of “mailing” it to the constituent.
- It is a time saver, a postage saver, and a storage saver.
- Using both sizes of the Flag-Ship™ turned out to be a big advantage; it is causing people to make additional gifts to receive the other Flag-Ship™.
- FSUAA typically gets a large response from people saying they didn’t receive their membership materials. When using the Flag-Ship™ as the shipping mechanism, there were hardly any people who said they didn’t get the packet. **People will open this product.**

 I want an alumni flag!
Like · Reply · December 9, 2014 at 6:26pm

 **FSU Alumni Association** We want you to have one, too! If you have any questions on membership, please let us know. You can find info online at alumni.fsu.edu/join.


 **Membership - Florida State University**
Membership in the FSU Alumni Association...
ONE.FSU.EDU


Like · December 10, 2014 at 11:08am


  lets grab some flags!
Like · Reply · December 10, 2014 at 11:20am

 I joined just for the flag.
Like · Reply · September 12, 2014 at 7:46pm

 **FSU Alumni Association** Thanks for supporting FSU!
Like · September 13, 2014 at 12:14pm

 What a fun idea!
<http://one.fsu.edu/flag>

 **Where do you wave yours? - Florida State University**
When you become a member of the FSU Alumni...
ONE.FSU.EDU

Like · Reply ·  1 · September 12, 2014 at 11:44pm

Mine is hanging on my front door 😊

Like · Reply · December 30, 2014 at 3:03pm



FSU Alumni Association Perfect!! We'd love to see a photo to share on our map!

Like · December 30, 2014 at 3:05pm

Here you go...



Like · 👍 2 · December 30, 2014 at 3:16pm

I need a flag!

Like · Reply · 👍 1 · December 30, 2014 at 3:23pm



FSU Alumni Association We agree! Here's info on how to get one: alumni.fsu.edu/flag.

Like · December 30, 2014 at 5:20pm



Tony Lee

Like · December 30, 2014 at 5:59pm



Tony Lee I'll make a donation

Like · December 30, 2014 at 5:59pm

Ooohhhh, where can I get an alumni spirit flag???

Like · Reply · December 30, 2014 at 4:00pm



FSU Alumni Association Jolie Hoffmann It's an exclusive benefit for our members. You can find out how to get one at alumni.fsu.edu/flag!

Like · December 30, 2014 at 5:19pm