



CASE STUDY

# How University of Denver Strengthened its Strategy with an Improved Value Proposition

# **BACKGROUND**

The University of Denver (DU) is a private research university in Denver, Colorado. Founded in 1864, it is the oldest independent private university in the Rocky Mountain Region of the United States.



# **KEY RESULTS**

- Launched new strategy
  anchored on three core
  brand themes to build market
  awareness and differentiation
- Leaders learned to identify marketable strengths for a stronger value proposition
- Core brand elements
  embedded into all
  messaging across campus

### **OPPORTUNITY**

DU needed a clearer value proposition to stand out in an increasingly competitive higher ed landscape

Amid heightened competitive pressures in higher education, the DU leadership team knew they needed to develop a clearer message about what differentiates DU to be in the best position to attract the next generation of students, staff, and funding. DU had spent several years advancing its student experience across the university, but value messaging remained siloed across schools, departments, and audiences.

### SOLUTION

EAB's Strategic Advisory Services team helped DU leadership identify core differentiators and how to communicate them

DU's senior leadership visited EAB's Washington, DC office for a two-day workshop, and took part in virtual and on-campus sessions with EAB focused on identifying the most unique and marketable aspects of their institutional brand.

# **IMPACT**

# DU launched a new strategy anchored on three core brand themes

DU developed a unique value proposition that anchors on three core brand themes: Research for the Public Good, the 4-Dimensional Student Experience, and Two Campuses, One University. These brand elements are now embedded into every marketing and communications campaign across the university and have been central to efforts to attract and engage Gen Z audiences.



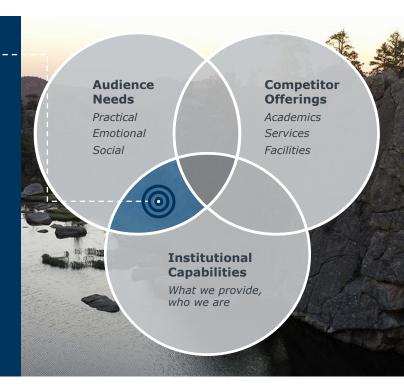
# How DU Revitalized its Student Value Proposition

### **DU'S DIFFERENTIATION SWEET SPOT**

The differentiation sweet spot is **the intersection of audience needs and institutional capabilities**—and importantly, in a space difficult for competitors to copy.

DU found their sweet spot with three core brand themes that are **part of every marketing and communications outreach** to current and prospective students:

- Research for the Public Good: R1 research status, focusing on liberal arts and social science research
- Two Campuses, One University: Access to both an urban and mountain campus
- 4-Dimensional Student Experience: Multidimensional, adventure-driven education



### FIND YOUR INSTITUTION'S DIFFERENTIATION SWEET SPOT

Move from generic claims to clear differentiators that demonstrate how your institution meets student, staff, and community needs in ways others can't. EAB's **Principled Differentiation Workshop** will help team build four capabilities critical to compete in today's market:



### **Develop Target Personas**

Do you understand the true motivations of target students and their families?



# **Stress-Test Current Viability**

Are your value propositions durable and defensible?



# **Identify Marketable Strengths**

Can you definitively articulate why students choose your institution?



# Prioritize, Promote, and Enhance Student Value Proposition

Are you allocating appropriate resources and effort toward top differentiation strategies?

Find out how EAB can help your institution stand out at <a href="mailto:eab.com/advisory-services">eab.com/advisory-services</a>