



In 2004, Alverno College was suffering from a degraded brand, and poor image in its home market. According to interviews with faculty, admissions counselors and high school guidance counselors, Alverno was not generally respected for delivering a quality education.

Enrollment was at a low ebb of 1,900 students.

A task force called *2,500 by 2012* was formed, the goal being to grow the enrollment to 2,500 students by the year 2012.

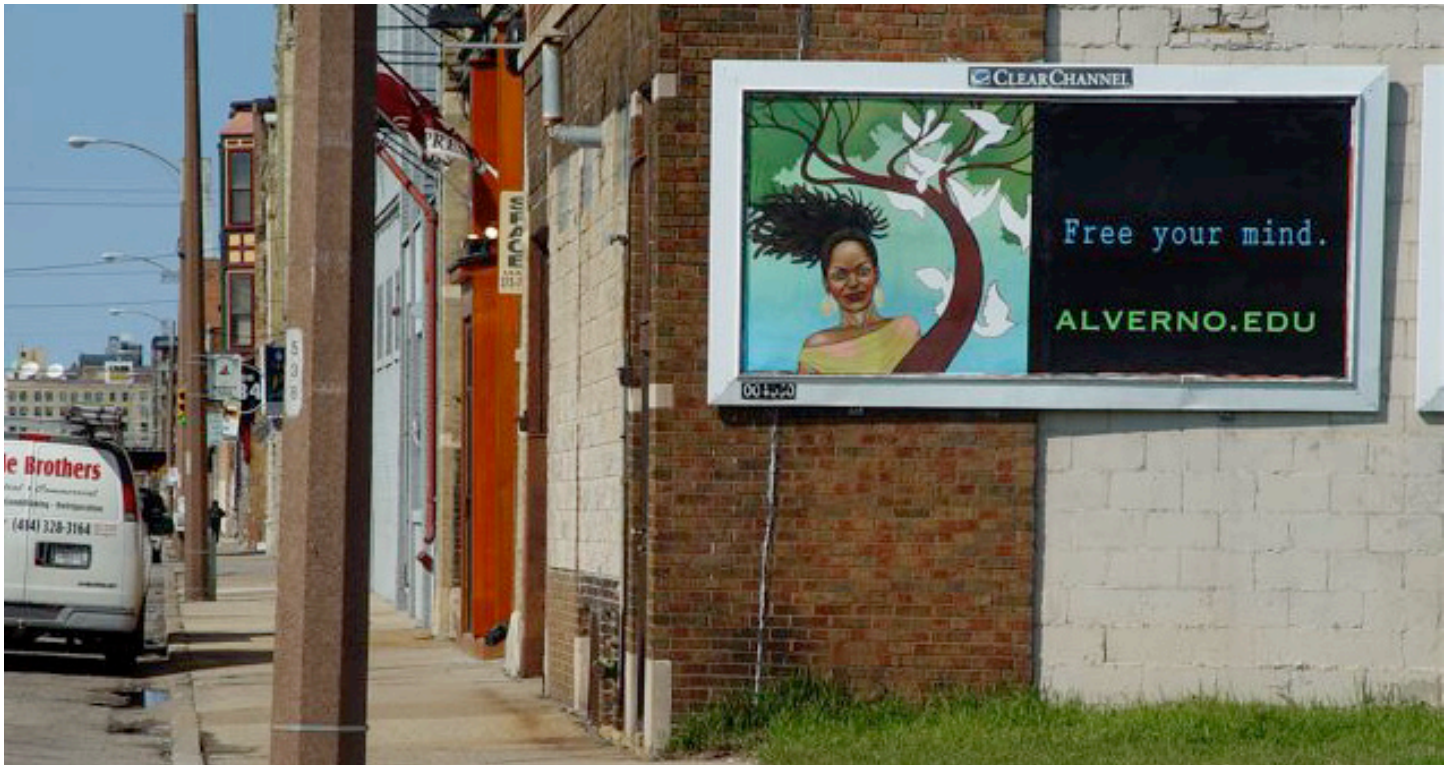
Yet, by the Fall enrollment period of 2008, enrollment had already soared to 2,774 students, surpassing even the most optimistic projections. This, despite the fact that Alverno incorporated stricter guidelines over acceptance and registration during this time. It was also over a course of time where other colleges were experiencing declining enrollment.

How did this remarkable turnaround occur?

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With a relatively small budget, Alverno was able to achieve a huge presence in their target market by concentrating on, and dominating, one medium. Outdoor was chosen because of its ability to deliver high visibility and instant talk value to a variety of audiences.

Female artists from all over the world were commissioned to capture the idea of how women see themselves. Simple messages are inspirational, as well as aspirational, and position Alverno as *the* home of progressive women's education, while driving viewers to the website.





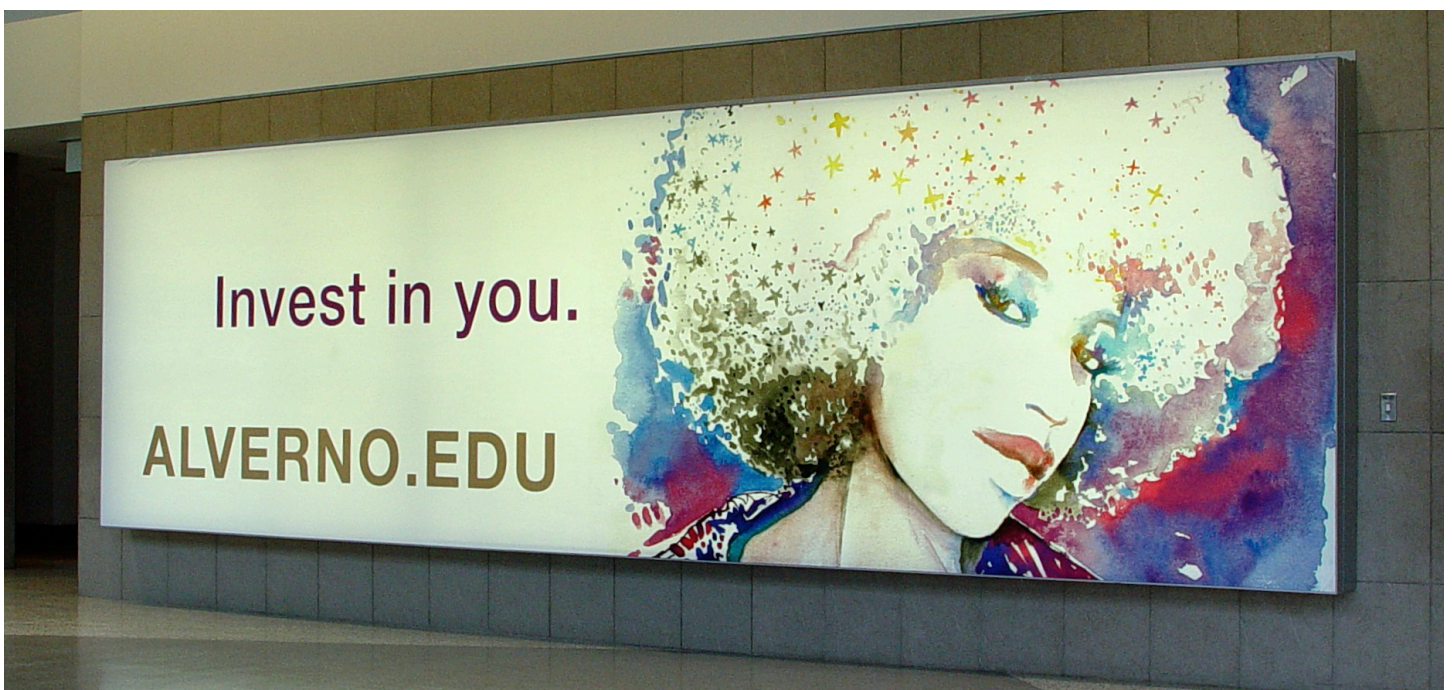




As a result, we created a strong brand for Alverno, where none existed before.

But this was far more than a generic branding effort.

As a direct result of this three-year campaign, at the end of 2008 Alverno's admissions were at record levels -- also, website traffic had doubled, and Alverno was enjoying 20,000 new website visitors every month.





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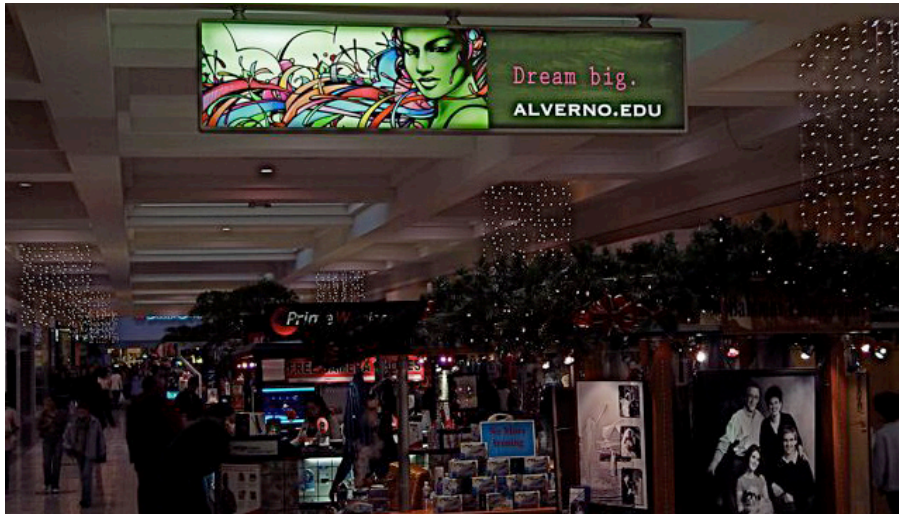
In addition, the artwork is used as an innovative direct mail campaign to high school sophomores -- a pack of "rave cards" -- each of which features a factoid or quote from the national media about Alverno's unique approach.



To bolster the "all over town" coverage, we've put transit stops to good use, as well as bus side "kings."



Other unique media locations include Mitchell International Airport, and inside the Amtrak station. Several malls around town also feature our messaging.





And we've taken advantage of the free media afforded by our own physical plant, extending the brand onto the campus.





So - in addition to increasing enrollment, the mission was to use a very limited budget to create a strong, inspirational and aspirational brand appealing to women.

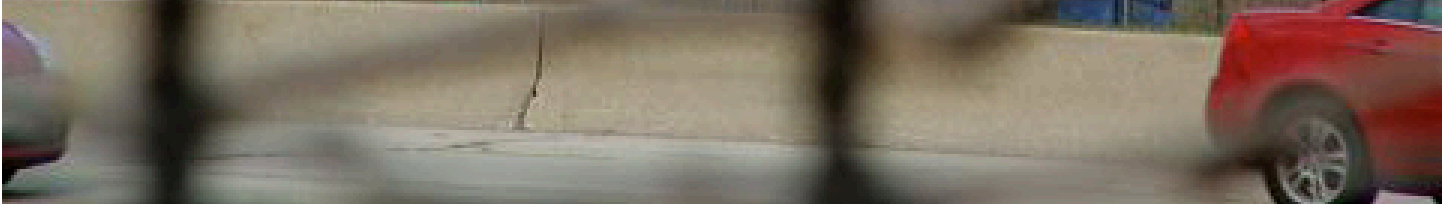
Think we succeeded?



Never settle.
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10
94
94
794
Downtown
Becher St - west
4th St
Becher St East



Alverno to launch ad campaign



Corrinne Hess
Reporter - *The Business Journal*
[Email](#) | [Twitter](#)

November 18, 2011

Alverno College has renewed its partnership with Milwaukee advertising agency Lyrical and will launch a \$1 million media campaign early next year.

The women's college credits its previous partnership with Lyrical, formerly known as The Yes Men Corp., with helping to increase undergraduate enrollment by 24 percent from fall 2004 to fall 2008, with its widely recognized colorful outdoor billboard campaign around the theme "Strong Women."

Alverno and Lyrical ended its three-year relationship in January 2009 with Joe Locher, Lyrical founder and president, saying the two entities "didn't have a shared vision about what needs to be done and where the account needs to go."

All differences appear to have been set aside.

Alverno president Mary Meehan said the college is in the midst of strategic planning with Lyrical and she is thrilled to be working with the company again.

"Joe has a very unique and creative way of telling a story," Meehan said. "We're still flushing out the theme so that's exciting, and the beauty of this is Joe's daughter graduated from Alverno so he not only has an external view, but an internal view as a parent."

The partnership also involves Advantage Media Services, Waukesha.

Locher said the new campaign, which will be announced in March, likely will focus on a problem all colleges are grappling with - increased costs.



"Competition between colleges is getting more and more intense as the economy has gotten tighter," Locher said. "Basically college-bound students scrutinize even the decision to invest in a degree. It's up to the colleges to start proving why they think they're worth the tuition money."

Lyrical has created campaigns for ProHealth Care, Waukesha, and West Bend Mutual Insurance Co., and was behind the "Guardians of Data" campaign for the former Norlight Telecommunications in Brookfield.

Alverno's "Strong Women" campaign cost about \$1 million annually, which included creative, media buying and production costs. The school has a similar budget for this campaign, said Brian Dorrington, Alverno spokesman.

One of the areas Alverno wants to capitalize on with the new campaign is its success in the U.S. News & World Report ranking. For the last two years, the school has been ranked first in the Midwest for doing "the best job of educating undergraduates."

Meehan said the new relationship with Lyrical will allow Alverno to highlight the honor and also begin exploring a possible expansion on its Milwaukee campus.

Alverno would like to grow its student population, which includes traditional, nontraditional and graduate students, to 3,000. Current enrollment stands at about 2,600.

Best of 2012

Billboard Advertising Campaign

BY ABBY CALLARD 8/30/2012



A woman with dark glasses and a pensive look implores you to invest wisely in your life. She's not real, but her message resonates. She's actually a figment of Joe Locher's imagination, of advertising agency Lyrical, and Advantage Media Services for **Alverno College**. (Locher's daughter is an alum of the university.) The campaign debuted in April and has caught the public's eye at bus stations, on billboards and at the Intermodal Station. International female artists worked off Locher's concept to represent "strong women" – an idea used for a previous Alverno marketing push. The school credits that 2004-08 effort with a 24 percent increase in undergraduate enrollment.

POSTSCRIPT: Fast forward 5 years, and the campaign was still going strong in 2013 -- including being the only advertising campaign mentioned in Milwaukee Magazine's "Best of 2012."