



BRANDING, VISIBILITY AND STUDENT ENROLMENT PLAN (2025-2030)

SEPTEMBER 2024

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1 INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the work executed by members of the Committee on Branding, Visibility and Student Enrolment. It details the objectives of the assignment, the target audiences of the University, a SWOT Analysis of the University's marketing efforts, the methodology adopted in carrying out the assignment, strategies and mechanics for marketing the university as well as ways of monitoring and evaluating the proposed activities, which are also budgeted to facilitate implementation.

2 BACKGROUND

The University of Business and Integrated Development Studies (UBIDS) was established by an Act of Parliament of the Republic of Ghana (Act 1001) in 2019. The Act established the University as a public tertiary institution aimed at becoming an outstanding internationally acclaimed applied research and practical-oriented educational institution, dedicated to the development of business and integrated development studies and related matters (Republic of Ghana, 2019). In keeping with its strategic objective of becoming an “an internationally recognised centre of academic excellence and knowledge production and dissemination centre...”, the University needs to strategically position itself as higher academic institution of international acclaim.

In this regard, there is the need for UBIDS to be marketed to both internal, external, national and international publics, particularly stakeholders who ought to play critical roles in the development of the nascent institution. To achieve this, the Vice-Chancellor constituted a Committee on Branding, Visibility and Enrolment to draft a blueprint for making the University more visible and attractive to its publics, and in doing so, increase enrolment as a means of fulfilling the mandate for which it was established.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In keeping with its strategic objective of becoming an “internationally recognised centre of academic excellence and knowledge production and dissemination centre in the very near future”, the overarching aim of SDD-UBIDS' marketing strategy is to strategically position the University as a higher academic institution of international acclaim. In furtherance of this strategic objective, the University aims to attain the following specific objectives:

- i. To build an internationally visible and attractive brand that satisfies students' desire for tertiary education in Ghana and globally.

- ii. To project the image of the University in the eyes of its internal and external publics.
- iii. To project, to the outside world, activities of UBIDS, particularly in the areas of research, teaching and learning and community outreach.
- iv. To enhance strong digital presence and engagement, as well as innovative University programmes delivery through technology and digital transformation.
- v. To build a strong internal brand culture.
- vi. To increase community and alumni engagement.
- vii. To promote global recognition and partnerships.
- viii. To increase local student enrolment by at least 60% within three years of commencing this marketing campaign.
- ix. To increase foreign students' enrolment by, at least, 30% within three years of rolling out this campaign.

4 TARGET

The target audiences of the University's marketing efforts are:

a. Prospective Students

- i. West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) holders and Senior High School Form Three students desirous of university education.
- ii. Mature applicants, those aged 25 years and above, who wish to attain tertiary level education.
- iii. Diploma and Higher National Diploma (HND) holders who wish to ladder onto first degree programmes.
- iv. First and second-degree holders desirous of pursuing masters and doctorate level programmes.
- v. Workers whose time schedule can only permit them to undertake short courses, weekend classes, sandwich or distance programmes.
- vi. Professionals desiring specialised programmes.
- vii. Employers, institutions and departments which may wish to send their staff for training in specialist fields.
- viii. Staff of organisations and departments who would need further training in various disciplines.

b. Current Students

A critical target that can exert informal influence on prospective students. Their testimonies are influential in the decision-making of prospective students.

c. Parents of prospective students

They exert formal influence on their wards and could have the final word on the type of institution their wards should patronise.

d. Employees of the University

Both academic and administrative staff, particularly frontline staff. Their attitudes towards prospective students could either attract or discourage them from enrolling in the institution.

e. Alumni of UBIDS and Wa Campus of UDS

They could be very influential stakeholders since their testimonies could either attract or turn off prospective students.

f. Partners and sponsors

These are potential sources of funding and could provide other forms of support to build a stronger brand that will attract students. Such partners include:

- i. Donors, NGOs and development partners.
- ii. Local, national and international business partners.
- iii. Opinion leaders from Upper West Region.

e. Media persons

They will disseminate information about the University and programmes it offers to prospective students.

f. Local community

The Wa Township, especially Bamahu and Kunfabiela communities, whose reception of UBIDS students may determine the extent to which they enjoy their academic journey in the University and the type of testimonies they give about the University.

5 METHODOLOGY

The Committee met held three meetings at the Conference Room of Upper West Hall. The maiden committee meeting was held on August 19, 2024 to deliberate on modalities for the Committee to accomplish the task ahead. The meeting resulted in the formation of three sub-committees, namely: Visibility Sub-Committee, Branding Sub-Committee and Enrolment Sub-Committee. On August 30 2024, the Committee reconvened, and the sub-committees presented their reports based on their respective terms of reference. After each presentation, other members provided feedback and suggestions aimed at improving the work of each sub-committee. The third meeting was held on

September 6 2024, where the sub-committees presented their final draft reports to solicit further inputs towards finalisation of their reports.

In gathering data for the tasks assigned to them, the sub-committees reviewed marketing strategies of other higher academic institutions, particularly those within Ghana. The sub-committees visited the websites of various sister universities in Ghana and undertook content analyses of their marketing and Integrated Communications strategies. In coming up with this plan, the Committee employed various analytical tools. These analyses ensured a structured approach to understanding the University's current position and how it can be marketed to relevant targets. Apart from the stakeholder and competitive analyses that assisted identify the target audiences and the SWOT analysis, which unearthed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the University, the following analyses were also undertaken:

- i. **Brand Equity Analysis:** we assessed the current brand equity of the University, that is. how well-known, trusted, and valued the brand is by its stakeholders and key target audiences.
- ii. **Brand Architecture Analysis:** we evaluated how different components of the University (faculties, departments, programmes) contribute to the overall University brand and whether there are alignments across these components.
- iii. **Gap Analysis:** we analysed the gap between the current state of the University's brand and the desired future state, based on the University's vision and objectives. This resulted in identification of the brand objectives and the desired brand position.
- iv. **Customer Journey and Perception Mapping:** we mapped out the journey of key target audiences, particularly prospective students, from initial awareness of the University to becoming enrolled students or alumni.

The results of the sub-committees' work were then synthesised into one draft report and circulated for final inputs by members. This resulted in a final report of the Committee, which was proofread and submitted to the Registrar of the University.

6 SWOT ANALYSIS

Prior to strategising on ways of enhancing the branding, visibility and enrolment, it is essential to establish the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the University. For branding purposes, we have also undertaken a competitor analysis as detailed in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1: SWOT and Competitor Analyses of the Brand

Factor	UBIDS	CKT-UTAS	UDS	UENR	DHLTU
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong faculty profile with youthful staff and high research capacity. - Ability to attract diverse student populations in a fast-developing regional capital - Innovative programmes and research areas - Unique academic curriculum, the Practical Training Programme (PTP), which stands UBIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on technology and applied sciences, aligned with national development needs - Strong industry collaborations. - Specialised programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long-established reputation - Diverse programmes covering multiple fields - Strong outreach and development initiatives - Good facilities - Located in one of the biggest cities in Ghana which epitomises Northern Ghana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on energy and natural resources, which are key sectors for national development - Strong partnerships with industries - Located in the mid-section of Ghana where the climate is human-friendly and cost of living is relatively cheaper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong emphasis on technical and vocational training - Programmes designed to meet local industry needs - Practical, hands-on learning environment
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Relatively newer institution with less established reputation. -Inadequate infrastructure for key academic and research activities. -Geographic location makes it less accessible to students from the populous southern part of the country. - Generally weak brand position and online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relatively newer institution with less established reputation. Inadequate infrastructure for key academic and research activities. -Limited postgraduate programmes. -Underdeveloped online presence. -Geographic location makes it less accessible to students from the populous southern part of the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Large student body can strain resources -High competition within its own satellite campuses. -Bureaucratic processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Limited variety in academic programmes beyond energy and natural resources. -Lesser-known institution compared to UDS -Relatively smaller faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus is mostly limited to technical fields. -Lacks significant research output. -Smaller infrastructure compared to larger universities -Still carries the polytechnic tag, which makes it appear less of a university

	<p>presence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Polarised programmes without a niche - The University's name is long, unattractive and difficult to market - Weak internal structures and ideologies - A portion of the anthem which proclaims UBIDS as "the gem of the Upper West", thereby reducing what is supposed to be an international brand to a "local champion" 	-The University's name is long, unattractive and difficult to market			
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Potential to grow into a leading business and development university and create a niche in graduate business education. -Opportunities to capitalise on its youthfulness and innovative faculty for research and publication. -Expand and double down on online programmes and short and practical courses and Certificates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expanding applied sciences and engineering programmes can attract more students. - Increase in demand for tech-based education and skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to build on existing infrastructure and programmes -Large alumni network for outreach and engagement. -Potential for international collaborations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expanding programmes related to renewable energy and sustainability. -Increasing demand for specialised energy programmes across Africa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Growing demand for technical and vocational skills in Africa. -Opportunities for partnerships with local industries. - Rising demand for tech skills.

	<p>-Vast land area and size to embark on future expansion of facilities</p> <p>-Goodwill from the Upper West Regional opinion leaders and indigenes</p> <p>-Sympathy support from corporate organisations and donors.</p>				
Threats	<p>-Intense competition from other institutions in the region (CKT-UTAS, UDS, UENR). -Risk of losing high-caliber staff to UDS and competitors in southern parts of the country</p> <p>-Role of other universities' distance programmes within the Upper West Region</p>	<p>-Competes with more established universities like UDS. - Limited funding opportunities can hinder growth. -Attracting top-tier faculty may be difficult.</p>	<p>-Increasing competition from newer universities (CKT-UTAS, UBIDS, UENR).</p>	<p>-Strong competition in specialised fields from universities like UDS and KNUST. -May struggle to diversify beyond its core focus.</p>	<p>-Risk of being seen as less academically rigorous compared to traditional universities. -Strong competition from larger institutions offering more diverse programmes.</p>

Table 2: SWOT Analysis of the University's Visibility

STRATEGY	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITY	THREAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website optimisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of the university website • Faculty of Information and Communication Technology and the Department of Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstable internet service • Inadequate skilled web designers 	<p>Availability of web models for case study</p>	<p>Unethical use of the information made available on the website</p>

	Technology have experts capable of managing the University's online presence.			
Digital campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of student bloggers, TikTokers, and social media influencers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Funding • Limited digital infrastructure • Low social media presence and numbers • Few influencers who are associated with the University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing number of students and alumni who can increase social media presence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unethical use of the information made available • Digital campaigns of other tertiary institutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mainstream media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Communication Studies has professional public relations, advertising and media personalities capable of handling the University's media activities. • Availability of university information management support unit 	Inadequate public relations personnel and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and national media friends which are eager to assist the University. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition for space and time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Traditional approaches to visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of the University on the Wa – Kumasi highway increases its physical visibility • Bold inscription of the University's name at the entrance • Availability of space to mount posters and billboards • Presence of FICT to design flyers • Availability of university 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow in reaching the targeted audience • Limited in reaching audiences who are not digitally inclined • Time consuming 	Goodwill from opinion leaders and residents of Upper West can be relied on for personal marketing and other visibility enhancement activities	More aggressive marketing techniques by other universities

	outreach committee			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University relations 	Availability of public relations directorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ill-resourced and ill-equipped PR department • Lack of trained and experienced personnel in the PR Department 	Opportunity of PR activities, e.g. Presence of radio, TV, university website, university social medial platforms, and university events etc.	

Table 3: SWOT Analysis of the University’s Enrolment Efforts

<p>Strength’s analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established admission infrastructure from UDS parentage • Some enthusiastic staff within Academic Affairs who are eager to attend to potential students overcome challenges in the admissions process • Flexible admission procedures – admissions are open almost all year round and deadlines are not strictly enforced • Pro-poor fee policies – fees are generally lower than what is charged in most universities and fresh students have opportunities to make part-payment of fees • Lack of stiff competition for programmes offered gives potential students some certainty of getting enrolled once they apply 	<p>Weaknesses analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited E-Resource - Lack of efficiency digitised admission infrastructure turns of many applicants. • Poor visibility and inadequate, unplanned and unstructured marketing of the University • Logistical inadequacies make it difficult motivating staff in charge of admissions office
<p>Opportunities analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals from alumni of UDS Wa Campus • Proximity to neighbouring Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast gives opportunities for increasing intake of international students • As the only university located within the Upper West Region, there are opportunities for attracting the growing number of students who complete from free SHS’s within the region • Increasing number of workers who require self-development 	<p>Threats analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition, there is threat of high competition Hilla Limann Technical University, colleges of education and the nursing training colleges within the region. • Expansionary initiatives from older and better-established universities especially UG, KNUST, UCC and UDS through their distance programmes

7 STRATEGIES

Branding the University, giving it more visibility and increasing student intake require careful planning and short-, medium- and long-term strategising. The strategy entails seamlessly building an attractive brand that connects with Gen-Zs and makes them see UBIDS as the “uni” to be, a

fashionable fun-learning centre. In selling the brand to this target, we must work on their psyche slowly, persistently but noiselessly so as not to scare them away. Therefore, we shall adopt more below-the-line marketing strategies and few above-the-line, aggressive mechanics. Our strategies will also be informed by the fact that as a nascent institution, UBIDS may not be able to raise sufficient funding for an all-out, aggressive marketing campaign.

7.1 Branding–Branding the University entails six pillars of activities as outlined in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Strategic Pillars of Branding

<p>Pillar One (1) - Visual and Physical Branding</p>	<p>Objective: Enhance the visual presence of the University on campus and in the community to foster a strong sense of identity and belonging. Strategies outlined here will assist the University to achieve various objectives, including establishing a consistent visual identity and having an environmentally appealing, homogenous campus landscape.</p> <p>Short-Term Key Strategies:</p> <p>a. Develop a University Brand Guide</p> <p>Description and Activities: Create a comprehensive brand guide that outlines the University’s brand identity, including its mission, vision, values, tone of voice, visual elements, and usage guidelines. Key Elements to include in the Brand Guide are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Logo Usage: This requires clear guidelines on how and where to use the University logo, including colour variations, size, and placement. Faculties, Schools and some Directorates will have separate logos derived from the main logo and will represent their function, brand within the University and other historical or cultural precedence 2. Colour Palette: This defines the official colour scheme of the University and provides guidance on how to use these colours across different platforms and materials 3. Typography: Specify the official fonts to be used in all University communications, both digital and print 4. Tone of Voice: Outline the University’s tone of voice, ensuring it is consistent across all communications. This should reflect the University’s values and appeal to both academic and non-academic audiences. 5. University Anthem – Change the portion of the University anthem which proclaims UBIDS as “the gem of the Upper West” to “the gem of the world” 6. Stationery: Specify various stationery and how the brand of the University will reflect on them such as University wide letterhead, Faculty and departmental letterheads, envelopes, call cards, complimentary cards 7. Photography and Imagery: Provide guidelines on the style of images to be used in University materials, ensuring they reflect the University’s brand, ethos and the brand position we aspire to
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8. **Signage and Promotional Materials:** Specify the output of the University brand on signages and promotional materials such as vehicles branding for the Main University and across the faculties and departments, sports branding, alumni and advertising promotional items
9. **Online Assets Branding:** Provide guidelines on email signatures for all staff, powerpoint templates, publications and templates for website content, social media etc.

Implementation and Responsible Unit: University Relations in collaboration with DIMS and Procurement

b. Door Labelling

1. **Description:** Implement uniform and professional door labelling across the University campus, including faculty offices, lecture halls, administrative offices, and other key locations. This will create a consistent and organised appearance and will be one of the promotional item carved out of the already developed brand guide described above. Existing door labels can be synced to provide consistency across the entire campus
2. **Implementation and Responsible Unit:** University Relations, Works and Municipal Services - Estate Unit, and Procurement Unit

c. Campus Signages

1. **Description and Activities:** Ensure that all signages on campus, including directional signs, banners, and notice boards are aligned with the University's brand identity as prescribed in the brand guide. Use consistent colours, fonts, and logos across all physical branding materials. Each faculty, department, directorate and unit should have modern designed signages installed along pathways and around green spaces to guide students and visitors
2. **Responsible Unit:** Directorate of University Relations, Works and Municipal Services - Estate Unit, and Procurement Unit

Medium to Long-Term Key Strategies:

a. Landscaping and Green Campus Initiative

Description: The Campus Landscaping and Green Initiative aims to enhance the aesthetic appeal, functionality, and environmental sustainability of UBIDS. This initiative will contribute to creating a visually attractive, eco-friendly, and welcoming campus environment that aligns with the University's master plan and long-term goals. This landscaping initiative includes the development of pedestrian-friendly pavements, green spaces, and sustainability projects that promote a vibrant and functional academic atmosphere for students, faculty, staff, and visitors

Key activities of the strategy include:

1. **Landscaping Plan Integration with University Master Plan:** Collaborate with architects, landscape designers, and the University planning committee to develop a cohesive landscaping strategy. Define zones for green spaces, gardens, and pedestrian pathways
2. **Pedestrian Pavements with Green Grass Borders:** Construct paved pedestrian walkways along main roads, ensuring safe and easy access for

students and faculty. Add green grass borders along the pavements to enhance the campus's environmental sustainability and beauty. Install proper drainage systems along the pavements to prevent erosion and waterlogging

3. **Pathways Connecting Buildings, Lecture Halls, and Hostels:** Design interconnected pathways that allow for easy movement between academic and residential buildings to increase pedestrian safety
4. **Green Campus and Sustainable Design Elements:** Plant indigenous trees, shrubs, and grasses that require minimal water and maintenance. Establish eco-friendly gardens and green areas that students and faculty can enjoy
5. **Outdoor Study and Relaxation Zones:** Build eco-friendly structures, such as pergolas and shaded benches that provide protection from the sun and rain
6. **Water Features and Rain Gardens:** Install environmentally sustainable water features and rain gardens that help manage water runoff and enhance the beauty of the campus. Install small water features, such as fountains, that serve both aesthetic and ecological purposes
7. **Landscaping Maintenance and Sustainability Programme:** Establish a maintenance programme to ensure the longevity and health of landscaped areas and green spaces

Responsible Unit: Directorate of University Relations, Works and Municipal Services - Estate Unit, and Procurement Unit

b. Branding for Current Student Hostels

The Traditional Hostel Branding Initiative focuses on enhancing the quality and appeal of student accommodation at UBIDS by offering premium, well-maintained rooms with dedicated services. These hostels will provide students with more privacy and comfort, making them an attractive option for those who are willing to pay more for a superior living experience

This initiative aims to create a range of accommodation options that cater to different preferences and budgets, while maintaining a strong, cohesive brand for University hostels. It will also generate additional revenue for the University by pricing these premium rooms higher than standard rooms. Key activities will include:

- **Premium Room Options:** Single Occupancy (One in a Room) and Double Occupancy (Two in a Room)
- **Modern Amenities and Facilities:** Equip premium rooms with modern amenities and facilities that make living in the hostel comfortable and convenient.

c. Face-to-Face Campus Tour Guide: The Directorate of University Relations can lead a team made up of trained National Service Personnel from the Works and Municipal Directorate in collaboration with the Transport Unit to act as physical tour guides. Their activities could be infused in orientation sessions for undergraduate and postgraduate students. These guides could also be assigned the responsibility of welcoming any visitors into the University and showing them around

Pillar two (2) - Online and Digital Branding

Objective: Strengthen the University's online presence to attract prospective students, engage current students, and communicate effectively with stakeholders

Short-term Key Strategies

a. University Website Improvement:

Description: Optimise the University's website to be more user-friendly, visually appealing, bold and informative with specific landing pages. Ensure that the website reflects the University's brand identity and provides easy access to key information

Key activities in this strategy will include:

Deliberate effort to have each Faculty/School, Directorates, and Units to independently develop content to populate pages of the website within six months. Content templates for the website will be guided by the University brand guide

1. **Chat systems** will individually be tied to Faculties and Schools, where administrators can directly manage customer services for their schools/faculties, directorates, and units. Also, implement modern conversational and independent AI chat systems that will connect with the Academic Affairs Directorate and the Directorate of Information Management Services for improving support services' speed
2. **Develop a staff directory portal** associated with the website that allows staff to self-publish and manage their information, and create a competitive star faculty/staff landing on this portal that showcases staff with the highest traffic to their individual web pages
3. **Responsible Unit:** University Relations Office in collaboration with the Directorate of Information Management Services

b. Social Media Branding

Description: Create a robust social media strategy to engage with students, alumni, and the broader community. Share success stories, news, and updates regularly. Utilise platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), LinkedIn, and TikTok. Key activities include:

1. Develop a monthly social media content calendar to ensure a steady stream of high-quality content that reflects the University's values and achievements. This could include blog posts, videos, and infographics
2. Develop a community management strategy for managing social media pages and responding to engagement received from these platforms
3. **Online Reputation Management:** Leverage on listening tools to monitor and manage the University's online reputation by responding to reviews, engaging with followers, and addressing any negative comments promptly and professionally

Responsible Unit: University Relations Office

Medium- to Long-Term Key Strategies

a. Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) Activities:

Description: Implement SEO strategies to increase the University's visibility on search engines. This includes optimising website content, improving page load

times, and using relevant keywords for each page and publication on the website. Other key activities will also include:

1. Reviewing analytics using Google Analytics and re-strategising technical SEO implementation on the Google Search Console
2. Building strong authoritative backlinks for the University on both search engines and Large Language AI models that scrape the internet for content
3. Increasing the load speed by leveraging on caching and Cloud flare technologies to reduce the bounce rate on the website

Responsible Unit: DIMS, with input from University Relations Office.

b. Online/Virtual Campus Tour

Description: Offer virtual campus tours for prospective students and parents who cannot visit the campus in person. Utilise 360-degree video technology and virtual reality to create an immersive experience that showcases the University's facilities and atmosphere. Key Activities and options will be:

1. Virtual Campus Tour similar to KNUST leverages on a comprehensive and robust tour guide that gives students, a clear online virtual feel of the University campus <https://virtualtour.knust.edu.gh/>
2. **Video Campus Tour:** Use a Video Tour similar to that of Ashesi University which leverages a video documentary-like virtual tour that has a student take visitors on what to expect on the University campus.

c. E-Learning Strategy and Online Short Courses and Certification

Programmes:

Description: The E-Learning Strategy and Online Programmes Initiative aims to position the University as a leader in delivering accessible, high-quality education through flexible online learning platforms. This strategy will cater to diverse cohorts, including working professionals, international students, and those disadvantaged by distance or geographical limitations. By embracing e-learning, the University can expand its reach, attract a global audience, and strengthen its brand as an innovative and inclusive institution whilst reducing its cost. Key Activities will include:

1. **Development of a Comprehensive E-Learning Strategy plan and platform:** Consider the current learning management systems the University has and leverage on them to develop a comprehensive e-learning platform where students can access course materials, submit assignments checked with plagiarism, and interact with faculty and peers
2. **Creation of Online Certificate Programmes:** Offer a range of certificate and practical programmes that meet the needs of different student demographics. Skill-based programmes and certifications for working professionals looking to upskill in areas like leadership, finance, digital marketing, and project management

d. Innovation Hubs:

Description: Establish innovation hubs or incubators on campus that support technological startups and entrepreneurial ventures. Partner with technology

	companies and industry leaders to provide mentorship, funding, and resources to students and alumni.
Pillar three (3) – Human Resource and Cultural Branding	<p>Objective: Foster a strong brand culture among staff and students to ensure that everyone represents the University in a consistent and positive manner</p> <p>Short-term key strategies</p> <p>a. Customer Service and Marketing Training Programmes:</p> <p>Description: Implement training programmes for all administrative staff and academic staff who hold administrative positions and interface with students to ensure high standards of customer service. The training should be in partnership with Unions like UTAG, GAUA and TEWU and must focus on Brand Management, representing the University’s brand in interactions with students, parents, and visitors, Customer Service, Communication Skills and Conflict Resolution. These trainings should be facilitated by seasoned Customer Service, Marketing and Communication specialists</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Human Resources Directorate, in collaboration with the University Relations</p> <p>b. University Cloth and Other Paraphernalia:</p> <p>Description: Design and produce branded clothing for the University as a whole, as well as for individual faculties/schools with high public and professional representation like the School of Law and School of Business. This can include shirts, jackets, and accessories featuring the University logo and faculty symbols. Other paraphernalia such as caps, key holders, hand bands and scarfs could also be produced. If these items are well patronised by the University community, it will promote unity and pride among students, faculty, and staff. The design and Aesthetics will all be specified in the Brand Guide</p> <p>Responsible Unit: University Relations and Procurement Unit</p> <p>c. Annual Staff Award Scheme:</p> <p>Description: The Annual Staff Award Scheme is designed to recognise, reward, and celebrate the contributions of staff of the University. This initiative aims to promote a positive work culture, motivate staff to excel in their roles, and reinforce the University's commitment to valuing its people. By implementing this award scheme, UBIDS can enhance its internal brand, improve staff morale, and create a strong sense of loyalty and pride within the University community. Key activities could include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offering a variety of award categories to recognise different types of contributions, ensuring inclusivity across all staff roles, including academic, administrative, and support staff. Awards could include Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year, Innovative Researcher of the Year, Exemplary Administrative Staff and Leadership Award 2. Establish clear and transparent criteria for selecting award winners to ensure fairness and recognition of genuine contributions 3. Provide meaningful rewards to award winners, enhancing their motivation and sense of achievement

	<p>Medium-term key strategies</p> <p>d. Brand Ambassadors:</p> <p>Description: Create a brand ambassador program where selected students, faculty, and staff are trained and empowered to promote the University’s brand through various channels, including social media, events, and outreach programmes</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Academic Affairs Directorate, in collaboration with the University Relations</p> <p>e. Student Innovation Challenges</p> <p>Description: Organise innovation challenges and competitions that allow students to showcase their creativity and problem-solving skills. Promote the winners and their projects widely to highlight the talent within the University.</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Dean of Students, DCOBI, in collaboration with the University Relations</p> <p>f. Alumni Chapters Across the World</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use tracer studies to establish alumni chapters across the world to engage alumni in brand-building activities, such as hosting networking events, mentoring current students, and participating in recruitment drives. Key activities will include: 2. Highlighting Success Stories: Regularly showcase the achievements of alumni who have made significant contributions in their fields. This could be done through a dedicated section on the University website, social media campaigns, and in printed publications <p>Responsible Unit: University Alumni Association, Academic Affairs Directorate, in collaboration with the University Relations</p>
<p>Pillar four (4) - National Branding and Global Recognition</p>	<p>Objective: Position SDD-UBIDS as the top business and development studies university in Ghana and one of the best in the world by showcasing academic excellence and innovative research, while building strategic international partnerships to enhance global visibility and attract diverse talent from across the world</p> <p>Short-term key strategies</p> <p>a. University Research Journals:</p> <p>Description: Launch a peer-reviewed research journal that publishes high-quality research from faculty and students. Position the journal as a leading publication in the fields of business, development studies, and integrated sciences in Africa</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy in collaboration with the University Relations Office</p> <p>b. Academic Conferences:</p> <p>Description: Host annual academic conferences on pressing issues affecting Africa and the global community. Invite scholars, policymakers, and industry leaders to participate, further positioning the University as a hub for intellectual</p>

discourse. Whilst we acknowledge the annual research conference by DRIC, this should be decentralised to various faculties where mini conferences should be held supporting this one main conference

Responsible Unit: Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy in collaboration with the University Relations Office and Academic Affairs

c. International Accreditation and Rankings

Description: Pursue international accreditation for key programmes and seek inclusion in global university rankings. Highlight these achievements in all branding materials to enhance the University's reputation on the international stage

Responsible Unit: Directorate of International Relations, Library, Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy in collaboration with the University Relations Office and Academic Affairs.

d. Collaborations with Other Universities and Global Institutions:

Description: Establish collaborations with prestigious global academic institutions to promote collaborative research, faculty and student exchange programmes and dual-degree programmes. These partnerships can enhance the University's academic profile, attract international students and enhance the University's reputation as a leader in higher education across the world

Responsible Unit: Directorate of International Relations, Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy in collaboration with the University Relations Office and Academic Affairs

Medium- to Long-Term Key Strategies

a. Sustainable Research Projects

Description: Encourage and support research projects that focus on sustainability issues relevant to Ghana and Africa, such as climate change, agriculture, and renewable energy. Promote the University as a thought leader in these critical areas

Responsible Unit: Directorate of International Relations, Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy in collaboration with the University Relations Office and Academic Affairs

b. Centres of Excellence:

Description: Establish Centres of Excellence in areas where the University has unique strengths or expertise, such as business and entrepreneurship, development studies, public policy and environmental studies. Promote these centres as leaders in research and innovation in Ghana and Africa

Responsible Unit: Directorate of International Relations, Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy in collaboration with the University Relations Office and Academic Affairs

Objective: Leverage the University's internal events such as congregation, matriculation, and conferences to reinforce its brand identity, while fostering

<p>Pillar five (5). Events Branding and Partnerships</p>	<p>strategic partnerships that enhance the University's visibility, prestige, and community engagement both locally and globally</p> <p>Short-term key Strategies</p> <p>a. Co-branding</p> <p>Description: The Co-Branding Initiative aims to partner with third-party vendors to produce and sell branded merchandise such as t-shirts, phone covers, key holders, water bottles, pendants, and books, all featuring the University brand. This initiative will not only enhance the University's brand visibility by promoting its logo and identity in public spaces but also serve as a potential revenue stream through commissions on the sale of these items. The chosen vendor will mainly champion the cost and implementation of this initiative. Key activities will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying Third-Party Vendors 2. Co-Designing Merchandise with the University Brand 3. Launching the Branded Merchandise Collection <p>Responsible Units: University Relations and Procurement Directorate or Unit.</p> <p>b. Bottled Water Branding</p> <p>Description: The Bottled Water Branding Initiative is aimed at enhancing the visibility and brand presence of the University by branding bottled water distributed during major University events such as matriculation, congregation, conferences, workshops, and other high-profile gatherings. This initiative will not only serve as a practical utility for event attendees, but also act as a powerful marketing tool, spreading the University's brand across various audiences. It will mainly involve partnering with water bottling companies and agreeing on terms and conditions for the initiative.</p> <p>Responsible Units: University Relations and Procurement Directorate or Unit.</p>
<p>Pillar Six (6): Product Quality and Customer Satisfaction</p>	<p>i. Strengthen Academic Programmes and Curriculum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programme Development: Introduce new academic programmes and specialisations that align with emerging job market trends and student interests. Focus on interdisciplinary programmes that combine multiple fields of study 2. Curriculum Enhancement: Regularly update and enhance existing curricula to include practical and industry-relevant skills. Incorporate experiential learning opportunities such as internships, co-op programmes, and research projects 3. Online and Hybrid Programmes: Expand online and hybrid learning options to cater to non-traditional students, working professionals, and international students. Develop high-quality online programmes and short certificate courses that provide flexibility without compromising academic rigour <p>i. Build Stronger Industry Partnerships:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborative Programmes: Develop partnerships with industry leaders to create collaborative programmes that offer hands-on training, certifications, and job placement opportunities. These partnerships can also lead to guest lectures, industry visits, and mentorship programmes

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Sponsored Scholarships: Work with industry partners to establish sponsored scholarships and grants for students in high-demand fields. These financial incentives can attract students interested in specific industries or career paths. 3. Career Services Integration: Strengthen the university’s career services by integrating them more closely with academic departments and industry partners. Offer career counseling, resume workshops, and job fairs tailored to the needs of different disciplines <p>iii. Expand Student Support Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuous Counselling Services: Implement a continuous counselling system that supports students throughout their academic journey, from enrolment to graduation. Offer academic, career, and personal advisory services tailored to individual needs 2. Student Success Programmes: Develop programmes aimed at improving student retention and graduation rates, such as tutoring, mentoring, and peer support groups. These programmes can reduce dropout rates and improve overall student satisfaction 3. Wellness and Mental Health Services: Expand wellness and mental health services to support students’ well-being. Promote these services as part of the university’s commitment to holistic student development
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7.2 Strategies and Mechanics for Enhancing Visibility

The strategy for enhancing visibility will be guided by proactive and innovative public relations and advertising activities. The strategy will be informed by the desire to always show the polished face of UBIDS and put the University’s best foot forward, and the recognition that lamentations on the University’s challenges scares students and other stakeholders away. Visibility initiatives will entail telling the positive stories of the University and making it look attractive and inviting to its publics, both internal and external. The University Relations activities must adopt fire prevention rather than firefighting strategies in dealing with negative developments that could tarnish the image of the institution.

7.3 A series of short, medium and long-term activities will be implemented in line with the strategy outlined above.

a. **Short-term Strategies** – Short-term strategies for enhancing visibility include the following:

- **Website optimisation**

1. Populate the website with relevant information on the programmes and courses offered in the various Faculties, Schools and departments.
2. Publish the research works and publications of staff on the website to showcase the University’s areas of expertise. This will attract potential postgraduate students as they can already identify supervisors of their theses.

- **Digital campaigns**

1. Advertising via LinkedIn and Facebook: posting of flyers and videos of past students giving testimonies of the positive impact the programmes they studied have had on their lives and careers and the prospects of getting employed after school.
2. Addition of colourful university activities and publication of research works of senior academic members on LinkedIn. Using bloggers and digital/social media influencers to enhance the image of the University on social media.

- **Mainstream media**

The University could resort to the use of advertising and public relations across selected media houses across Ghana. In this regard, leading radio stations across the five regions of Northern Ghana and national television stations could be targeted. Popular radio and TV programmes could be sponsored with the University showcasing its activities in the course of such programmes.

- **Outdoor and Transit Advertising**

1. The use of posters at vantage points such as Bus terminals, Event centres, and entrance of senior high schools and hospitals should be prioritised.
2. Flyers should be printed and given to students for distribution to their peers and senior high school students during vacation. Stickers could also be posted on vehicles.
3. The University should mount billboards at strategic locations within Northern Ghana and other parts of the country.

- **Improve Upon University Relations**

The University needs to improve upon its relations with the media and the public for enhanced image and visibility. This involves enhanced public relations activities including the following:

1. Frequent press releases and press conferences to announce positive new developments in the University.
2. Organise annual UBIDS CEO Breakfast meetings with carefully selected media houses,
3. Hold Press Soirees once a year to fraternise with leading media men and women within Northern Ghana.
4. Enhance coverage of UBIDS key events such as matriculations, congregations, conferences, public lectures and PTP.

b. Medium- to Long-term Visibility Activities

The medium to long-term visibility strategies of the University would include:

1. Strengthen the University Relations Directorate by recruiting at least two professional journalists and/or public relations practitioners, resourcing it with requisite equipment and financial resources to enable it function fully as the Public Relations unit of the University.
2. Recruit a marketing communications consultant to professionally market the University's diverse products and services.
3. Sports development: regular participation in and hosting of GUSA tournaments, participating in other international tournaments and winning medals will make the university visible locally and internationally.
4. Development of university infrastructure including standard lecture halls, office spaces, a sports complex, roads, greening of the campus etc.
5. Each department should be encouraged to create visibility for itself through subscription to and participation in professional bodies, programmes and conferences, excursions, fun fairs, and exchange programmes with sister universities.
6. Strengthening of the industrial attachment programmes in the University would also make it more visible. There is the need to sign MOUs with relevant public and private institutions for our students on industrial attachment and train them in various fields. Their regular presence in industry and communities will make the University visible.
7. Each department of the University should also endeavour to create visibility for itself through corporate social responsibility and community services.
8. The university should endeavour to have satellite campuses across the major cities in the country to run both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

7.4 Strategies to Increase Student Enrolment

Short- to long-term strategies aimed at increasing student enrolment are:

- a. **Short-Term Enrolment Strategies** – These are made up of five key activities, namely:
 - i. **Streamlined Enrolment Process**
 1. **Simplified Application Process:** Review and streamline the application process to make it more user-friendly, eliminate all issues of bottlenecks in the application process and provide clear instructions at various steps of the application.

2. **Fast-Track Admissions:** Introduce fast-track admissions for qualified applicants, allowing them to secure admissions as quickly as possible to prevent them from accepting admissions from other universities.
3. **Early Admission Incentives:** Offer early admission benefits, such as the opportunity to choose a first-choice programme, hostel allocation, discounts on fees charged etc. This creates a sense of urgency and encourages prospective students to commit sooner, instead of emphasising fee payment deadlines.
4. **Dedicated Admissions Support:** Provide a dedicated Admissions Support Team to assist prospective students with their applications, answer questions, and guide them through the enrolment processes.
5. **Adequate Resource Allocation:** Provide the Admissions Office with all needed resources that can support work.

ii. Enhanced Virtual Presence:

Advertise programmes on the website and provide user-friendly admission application guidelines. In that regard, the following initiatives are worth considering:

1. **Virtual Webinars:** Organise virtual open webinars, and Q&A sessions to showcase the institution's programmes, facilities, and faculty. These events should be interactive and provide prospective students with opportunities to engage with current students and staff.
2. **Student Testimonials and Success Stories:** Highlight student testimonials and success stories on the website and social media platforms. Showcase alumni achievements to demonstrate the value of the institution's education.
3. **Enhanced Website Experience:** Ensure the institution's website is easy to navigate, mobile-friendly, and provides comprehensive information about programmes, admissions, available scholarships and offer instant assistance to web visitors.
4. **Profile of programmes:** Provide brief overview of all academic programmes on the university website to give prospective applicants an idea of what to expect from each programme.

iii. Partnerships and Community Engagement:

1. **School Partnerships:** Develop partnerships with local high schools and vocational schools to create a pipeline for prospective students to transit from these institutions to UBIDS.

2. **Community Outreach Programmes:** Intensify community outreach programmes by organising free workshops, informational sessions, exhibitions and career fairs to increase the institution's visibility and attract local students.
 3. **Encourage Referrals:** Introduce a referral programme where current students, alumni and staff are motivated to introduce the University to prospective students and encourage them to enrol.
 4. **Engage in indigenous communications:** Use local communication strategies to communicate to the local people through traditional ceremonies.
 5. **Visitations:** Implement a targeted outreach strategy where admissions and counseling teams reach out to prospective students with tailored messages that address their specific interests and concerns.
 6. **University Sports Programmes:** Boost university sports programmes to attract sportsmen and women and use the same window to scout for interested sports men and women who are good but have weak grades to be granted concessions for admissions.
- iv. **Financial Incentives and Scholarships:**
1. **Scholarship Programmes:** Provide information on all possible available scholarships, grants, and financial aid options to prospective students.
 2. **Flexible Payment Plans:** Provide flexible payment plans to ease the financial burden on prospective students and their families, making it easier for them to commit to enrolment, e.g., allowing a 50% down payment prior to registration for the first and second trimesters.
- v. **Support and Follow-Up:**
- **Prompt Communication:** Ensure that the admissions team promptly responds to enquiries and follows up with applicants to support them through admission processes. Responding quickly to prospective students' questions and concerns can significantly influence their decision to enrol.

b. Medium-Term Strategies for Increasing Student Enrolment

i. Increase International Enrolment Efforts:

1. **International Student Services:** Improve support services for international students, including visa assistance, language support, and cultural integration programmes. Offer

- dedicated resources to help international students transition smoothly into university life.
2. **Targeted Marketing Campaigns:** Launch targeted marketing campaigns in key international markets. Highlight the university's strengths, such as academic excellence, campus diversity, and post-graduation employment opportunities.

ii. Expand Outreach to Underrepresented Communities:

1. **Community Engagement:** Develop outreach programmes that engage with underrepresented communities, including first-generation college students, low-income students, and minority groups. Offer workshops, information sessions, and college readiness programmes.
2. **Scholarship Programmes:** Create scholarships and financial aid packages specifically designed for students from underrepresented backgrounds. Promote these opportunities in collaboration with high schools, community organisations, and local governments.
3. **Pre-University Programmes:** Intensify pre-university programmes, such as access programmes and bridge-in programmes, to prepare underrepresented students for university-level coursework and university life. These programmes can help build a pipeline of future students.

c. Long-Term Strategies Plan for Increasing Student Enrolment in a University

i. Vision and Mission Alignment:

1. **Refine Institutional Vision:** Align the university's long-term vision with evolving educational and societal needs. Ensure the mission statement reflects a commitment to excellence in education, inclusivity, innovation, and global engagement.
2. **Strategic Goals:** Establish clear, long-term strategic goals that prioritise academic excellence, student satisfaction, community engagement, and global reach, with a specific focus on increasing enrolment.

ii. Strategic Enrolment Management:

1. **Long-Term Enrolment Planning:** Develop a comprehensive enrolment management plan that includes long-term projections, target markets, and strategies for reaching diverse student populations. Align enrolment goals with academic, financial, and infrastructural planning.

2. **Data-Driven Recruitment:** Implement advanced data analytics tools to guide enrolment efforts. Use predictive modeling to identify trends, assess the effectiveness of enrolment strategies, and optimise marketing campaigns.
3. **Holistic Admissions Approach:** Adopt a holistic admissions approach that considers a wide range of student qualities, including academic achievements, extracurricular involvement, leadership potential, and cultural contributions. This will help attract a diverse and talented student body.

iii. Financial Accessibility and Affordability:

1. **Tuition Stabilisation:** Implement long-term tuition stabilisation strategies to keep the cost of attendance predictable and affordable. Offer innovative payment plans and financial counseling services to assist students and families in managing educational expenses.
2. **Partnerships with Employers:** Establish partnerships with employers to offer tuition reimbursement programmes and sponsored programmes. These initiatives can make higher education more accessible to working professionals and career changers.

iv. Strengthening Community and Industry Relationships:

1. **Community Engagement and Service:** Deepen the university's engagement with local and regional communities through service-learning programmes, community-based research, and partnerships with local organizations. A strong community presence can enhance the university's reputation and attract students who value civic engagement.
2. **Industry Collaboration for Career Pathways:** Expand collaborations with industry partners to create clear career pathways for students. This includes co-operative programmes, internships, and industry-sponsored research projects. Highlight successful industry partnerships in marketing materials to attract career-focused students.

8 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A detailed plan outlining the timelines for the branding, visibility and enrolment strategies, key activities, and responsible units for implementation of the activities is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Timelines for branding, visibility and enrolment strategies, key activities, and the responsible unit for implementation of activities

Branding Pillar	Key Strategies	Key Activities	Responsible Units
1. Visual and Physical Branding	University Brand Guide	Create a comprehensive brand guide, covering logo usage, colour palette, typography, signage, and online branding	University Relations, DIMS, Procurement
	Door Labelling	Implement uniform and professional door labeling across the campus	University Relations, Estate Unit, Procurement
	Campus Signages	Install modern directional and informational signage, consistent with the brand guide	University Relations, Estate Unit, Procurement
	Landscaping and Green Campus Initiative	Implement pedestrian walkways, green spaces, and outdoor study zones, integrated with the University Master Plan	University Relations, Estate Unit, Procurement
	Hostel Branding	Develop premium hostel rooms with modern amenities, marketed at a higher price point	University Relations, Estate Unit, Procurement
	Face-to-Face Campus Tour Guide	Develop a designated campus tour guide team for in-person campus tours	Works & Municipal Directorate, Transport Unit, University Relations
2. Online and Digital Branding	University Website Improvement	Redesign the website with user-friendly navigation, faculty-specific landing pages, and a staff directory.	University Relations, DIMS
	Social Media Branding	Implement a social media content calendar and community management strategy to engage prospective students, alumni, and the general public	University Relations
	SEO Activities	Optimise website content for search engines, improve page rankings, build backlinks, and monitor performance via analytics tools.	DIMS, University Relations
	Online/Virtual Campus Tour	Create a 360-degree virtual campus tour to showcase campus facilities and atmosphere to prospective students globally	DIMS, University Relations

	E-Learning Strategy and Online Programmes	Develop an e-learning platform, launch online certificate programmes, introduce flexible degree programmes to attract diverse cohorts (e.g., international students, working professionals)	DIMS, Academic Affairs, University Relations
	Content Creation and Distribution	Regularly produce and distribute digital content (videos, blogs, infographics) to showcase University achievements and student/faculty success stories	University Relations, DIMS
	Website Analytics and Monitoring	Implement tools to track website traffic, user behaviour, and engagement; provide regular reports to optimise the digital experience	DIMS
3. Human and Cultural Branding	Customer Service and Marketing Training Programmes	Conduct training sessions for staff on customer service, communication skills, and brand representation to align with the University's values	Human Resources, University Relations
	University Cloth and Faculty/School-Based Cloth	Design, produce, and distribute branded University-wide and faculty-specific clothing to staff, students, and alumni	University Relations, Procurement
	Annual Staff Award Scheme	Establish an annual award program to recognise and reward excellence in academic, administrative, and support staff roles	Human Resources, University Relations
	Brand Ambassadors Programme	Recruit and train staff and student brand ambassadors to represent the University at internal and external events	Academic Affairs, University Relations
	Student Innovation Challenges	Organise competitions that promote student innovation, problem-solving, and creativity, with prizes and recognition for top projects	Dean of Students, DCOBI, University Relations
	Internal Communication Enhancement	Develop internal communication channels (newsletters, forums, staff meetings) to align staff with the University's mission and values.	University Relations, Human Resources
	Employee Engagement Activities	Organise team-building events, staff recognition days, and social activities to promote a positive work culture	Human Resources, University Relations
3. Human and	Customer Service and Marketing	Conduct training sessions for staff on customer service, communication skills, and brand representation to align with the University's values	Human Resources,

Cultural Branding	Training Programmes		University Relations
	University Cloth and Faculty/School-Based Cloth	Design, produce, and distribute branded University-wide and faculty-specific clothing to staff, students, and alumni	University Relations, Procurement
	Annual Staff Award Scheme	Establish an annual award program to recognise and reward excellence in academic, administrative, and support staff roles	Human Resources, University Relations
	Brand Ambassadors Programme	Recruit and train staff and student brand ambassadors to represent the University at internal and external events	Academic Affairs, University Relations
	Student Innovation Challenges	Organise competitions that promote student innovation, problem-solving, and creativity, with prizes and recognition for top projects.	Dean of Students, DCOBI, University Relations
	Internal Communication Enhancement	Develop internal communication channels (newsletters, forums, staff meetings) to align staff with the University's mission and values.	University Relations, Human Resources
	Employee Engagement Activities	Organise team-building events, staff recognition days, and social activities to promote a positive work culture.	Human Resources, University Relations
5. Events Branding and Partnerships	Co-Branding with Vendors	Partner with third-party vendors to co-brand and sell merchandise like t-shirts, water bottles, phone covers, key holders, and other accessories.	University Relations, Procurement
	Bottled Water Branding	Partner with bottled water suppliers to produce branded bottled water for use during major University events such as matriculation, congregation, and conferences.	University Relations, Procurement

Table 6: Implementation Timelines

Branding Pillar	Strategy	Start Date	End Date
Visual and Physical Branding	University Brand Guide	Nov. 2024	June 2025
	Door Labelling	Nov. 2024	June 2025
	Campus Signages	Jan 2025	Jun 2025
	University Website Improvement	Nov. 2024	Mar 2025

Online and Digital Branding	Social Media Branding	Dec 2024	May 2025
	SEO Activities	Feb 2025	Oct 2025
Human and Cultural Branding	Customer Service and Marketing Training	Nov 2024	Mar 2025
	University Cloth and Faculty/School-Based Cloth	Dec 2024	May 2025
	Annual Staff Award Scheme	Jan 2025	Sep 2025
National Branding and Global Recognition	University Research Journal	Feb 2025	Sep 2025
	Academic Conferences	Mar 2025	Oct 2025
	International Accreditation and Rankings	Apr 2025	Feb 2026
Events Branding and Partnerships	Co-Branding with Vendors	Oct 2024	Mar 2025
	Bottled Water Branding	Nov 2024	May 2025
	Event-Specific Branding	Dec 2024	Jun 2025

Table 7: Implementation Plan for Visibility Branding and Enrolment

STRATEGY	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	SHORT-TERM BUDGET (GH¢)
Website optimization	To ensure an interactive, informative, and visually appealing university website	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Populate the website with relevant information on the programmes 2. Provide user-friendly admission application guidelines. 3. Publish research works of academic staff and expertise 	Effective Immediately	University MIS team/Webmaster	30,000
Digital campaigns	To increase engaging content on relevant social media platforms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advertising via LinkedIn and Facebook 2. Addition of colourful photographs of university activities and publication of 	From June to December, 2025	University MIS team/Academic Affairs	55,168

		<p>research works of academic senior members on LinkedIn.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Blogging 4. Use of digital/social media influencers like TikTok 5. Utilise platforms like Google Display advertisements and social media advertisements 			
Mainstream media	To communicate the universities programmes to the large audience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Production and airing of commercials and media interviews. 	From November 2024 to December 2025	Academic Affairs/University's Relations	82,800
Outdoor and Transit Advertising	To communicate the universities programmes to audience who are not digitally inclined	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The use of posters at vantage points 2. Flyers. 3. Mounting of billboards 	From November 2024 to December 2025	University MIS team/Academic Affairs	66,000
University public relations	To communicate university's programmes, opportunities, and promote university's values, and to prospective students and stakeholders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce captivating press releases and press conferences that put the university in the news all the time 2. Organise breakfast meetings with key stakeholders. 	All year round	University Relations	38,000

9 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and Evaluation plans for Branding, Visibility, and Enrolment drives of the University are outlined here.

Monitoring the marketing efforts of the University will take the form of regularly measuring success rate through the use of metrics like website traffic, social media engagement, inquiry volumes and actual enrolment numbers. That apart, one could resort to feedback from students, parents, and school administrators in establishing the extent to marketing efforts are yielding results with a view to continuously refining strategies being used. With specific reference to enrolment, the Enrolment Task Force will track metrics such as application numbers, acceptance rates, yield rates, and retention rates. Reports will be generated regularly to identify trends and adjust strategies where necessary.

Key indicators in the monitoring process will be total enrolment numbers, demographic diversity, programme-specific enrolment numbers and retention rates. Through such analyses, the Task Force would, at the end of the campaign period, evaluate whether the University has met its enrolment goals or not as well as the factors that contributed to successes or shortfalls. Adjustments to the overall strategy will be informed by results of the monitoring and evaluation process.

Table 8: Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for Branding UBIDS

Branding Pillar	Key Strategies	KPIs	Evaluation Timeline
1. Visual and Physical Branding	University Brand Guide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion and distribution of the brand guide 2. Number of faculties/schools and departments adhering to guidelines 	By Q2 2025
	Door Labelling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percentage of campus with uniform door labelling 2. Feedback from staff and students on consistency 	By Q2 2025
	Campus Signages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of new branded signages installed 2. Feedback on ease of campus navigation 	By Q3 2025
	Landscaping and Green Campus Initiative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of green spaces and pedestrian pathways created 2. Visual improvements based on student feedback 	Ongoing (Annual Review)
	Hostel Branding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of premium rooms introduced 	By Q4 2025

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Occupancy rate of branded hostel rooms Revenue generated 	
2. Online and Digital Branding	University Website Improvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in website traffic by 30% Reduction in bounce rate by 15% User feedback on ease of navigation 	By Q2 2025
	Social Media Branding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20% growth in followers across all platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram) Engagement metrics (likes, shares, comments) Increase in inquiries and applications through social media 	Monthly
	SEO Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 25% improvement in search engine rankings for key academic and programme keywords Increase in organic traffic by 20% 	By Q4 2025
	Online/Virtual Campus Tour	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Number of virtual campus tours completed by prospective students Positive feedback from participants Number of admissions influenced by the virtual tour 	By Q3 2025
	E-Learning Strategy and Online Programmes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Number of online programmes launched Increase in enrolment for online courses by 15% Positive student feedback on online course quality 	By Q4 2025
	Content Creation and Distribution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Regular content updates (monthly) on the website and social media Increase in social media engagement (comments, shares) Higher rankings in blog/article search results 	Monthly and Quarterly
	Website Analytics and Monitoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Regular analysis of website traffic, bounce rate, user engagement 	Quarterly

		2. Timely reports (quarterly) on digital performance metrics	
3. Human and Cultural Branding	Customer Service and Marketing Training Programmes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of staff trained 2. Increase in customer service satisfaction scores 3. Improved staff performance based on feedback 	By Q2 2025
	University Cloth and Faculty/Schools-Based Cloth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of branded items produced and distributed 2. Percentage of students and staff wearing branded clothing 	By Q3 2025
	Annual Staff Award Scheme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of awardees 2. Staff morale improvement based on surveys 3. Increase in employee retention rates 	By Q4 2025
	Brand Ambassadors Programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of brand ambassadors trained 2. Engagement of ambassadors in University events and marketing activities 	By Q3 2025
	Student Innovation Challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of student participants 2. Number of projects developed and presented 3. Positive feedback from participants and external evaluators 	By Q4 2025
	Internal Communication Enhancement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Launch of newsletters and forums 2. Improvement in internal communication ratings from staff 3. Number of staff interactions with new channels 	Quarterly
	Employee Engagement Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of engagement events organized 2. Staff feedback on event impact on morale 3. Increase in participation rate 	Ongoing (Annual Review)

4. National Branding and Global Recognition	University Research Journal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of research articles published per year 2. Citation impact and academic recognition 3. Number of international submissions 	By Q4 2025
	Academic Conferences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of academic conferences hosted annually 2. Attendance rate and participant feedback 3. Media coverage and sponsorship partnerships 	Annual Review
	International Accreditation and Rankings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of international accreditations received 2. Improvement in global rankings (e.g., QS Rankings) 3. Positive recognition from accrediting bodies 	By Q1 2026
	Collaborations with African and Global Universities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of international collaborations and partnerships established 2. Faculty and student exchange programme participation rate 3. Joint research publications and projects 	Ongoing (Annual Review)
	Sustainable Research Projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of sustainability research projects launched 2. Impact of projects on local and global issues (e.g., climate change, agriculture) 	By Q2 2025
	Centres of Excellence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishment of new Centres of Excellence 2. Research output from these centres 3. Recognition as leading centres in their respective fields 	By Q3 2026
	Co-Branding with Vendors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of vendors partnered with 2. Revenue generated from co-branded merchandise sales 	By Q2 2025

5. Events Branding and Partnerships		3. University brand visibility through merchandise distribution	
	Bottled Water Branding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of University events using branded bottled water 2. Feedback on brand visibility at events 3. Number of bottled water units distributed 	By Q2 2025

10 BUDGETS

The proposed budget for short to medium term implementation of initiatives aimed at building the brand of the University, enhancing the brand image and selling the brand to its targets are spelt out below. The proposed budget covers a one-year period from 1st November 2024 to 31st October, 2025.

Table 9: Budget for Branding

Branding Strategy	Activity	Estimated Cost (GHS)	Remarks
Visual and Physical Branding	University Brand Guide	25,000	For design, production, and distribution of guide
	Door Labelling	20,000	Uniform door labels across campus
	Campus Signages	50,000	Design, production, and installation
Sub-Total		95,000.00	
Online and Digital Branding	Website Improvement, staff directory and chatbots etc	10,000	Improve and design, technical updates for user-friendliness
	Social Media Branding, management listening tools	5,000	Monthly content creation and management
	SEO Activities	5,000	Search engine optimisation and analytics setup
	Online/Virtual Campus Tour	35,000	Development of 360-degree virtual campus experience
Sub-Total		55,000.00	

Human and Cultural Branding	Customer Service and Marketing Training Programmes	25,000	Training for staff on customer service and communication
	University Cloth and Faculty/School-Based Cloth	40,000	Design and production of branded clothing
	Annual Staff Award Scheme	20,000	Rewards and event costs for staff recognition programme
Sub-Total		85,000.00	
Events Branding and Partnerships	Co-Branding with Vendors	10,000	Initial costs for vendor partnerships and merchandise
	Bottled Water Branding	-	Partner with suppliers for branded bottled water
	Event-Specific Branding	20,000	Branding materials for key events (congregation, etc.)
Sub-Total		30,000.00	
Total for branding		265,000.00	

Table 10: Budget for Visibility

ACTIVITY	UNIT COST	QTY/DAY/MONTH	TOTAL COST	TOTAL
TRADITIONAL VISIBILITY				
Stickers	20	1500	30,000	
Flyer	40	800	32,000	
Billboards (40 sheet @16 sqm) from June to December	965	40	38,600	
SHS Visits @ 5 persons per month	2600	10	26,000	
Workshops	5000	4	20,000	
SUB TOTAL (A)			146,600	146,600
DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS				
Tiktok (37\$)	592	4	2,368	
Blogging writing and posting (100\$)	1600	10	16,000	
Facebook (Ad campaign @ 5 per day)	80	60	4,800	
LinkedIn campaign (@2\$ for 1000 impressions)	32	1000	32,000	
SUB TOTAL (B)			55,168	55168
MAINSTREAM MEDIA				
TV advertisement @ breakfast (6am-9:30am)	5000	4	20,000	

Radio @ 50\$ per week	800	16	12,800	
SUB TOTAL (C)			32,800	32800
UNIVERSITY RELATIONS				
Press conferences with the media @ GH2500 per month	2500	4	10000	
Press releases on websites @ GH1000 per month	1000	4	4000	
Breakfast meetings @ GH3500 per month	3500	4	14000	
SUB TOTAL (D)			28000	28000
WEB OPTIMISATION				
Redesign and content creation	20000	1	20000	
Technical improvements and SEO	10000	1	10000	
SUB TOTAL (E)			30000	30000
MONITORING AND EVALUATION				
Tracking and Analysis Tools	5000	1	5000	
Software for analytics and reporting	3000	1	3000	
Data collection and analysis	2000	1	2000	
Feedback collection	5000	1	5000	
Surveys and focus groups	5000	1	5000	
SUB TOTAL (F)			20000	20000
TOTAL			20000	312,568

Table 11: Budget for Enrolment

S/NO	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATE
1	Streamlined Enrolment Process	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Simplified Application Process b. Fast-Track Admissions c. Early Admission Incentives d. Dedicated Admissions Support e. Adequate Resources (Computers, Printers) 	50,000
2	Enhanced Virtual Presence	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Virtual Webinars b. Student Testimonials and Success Stories (Careful selecting and interviewing past students) c. Enhanced Website Experience 	10,000
3	Partnerships and Community Engagement	
	a. School Partnerships (visitations of partners)	20,000
	b. Community Outreach Programmes	20,000
	c. Referral	
	d. Engage in indigenous communications (participate and engage in local communication channels)	10,000
	f. University Sports Programmes (Local university inter-halls and Inter-university games)	30,000
4	Financial Incentives and Scholarships	

	a. Early Enrolment Incentives	0
	b. Flexible Payment Plans	0
5	Support and Follow-Up	
	Prompt Communication (provide Mobile phone and tablets for support services)	15,000
TOTAL		155,000.00

**GRAND TOTAL OF BRANDING, VISIBILITY AND ENROLMENT BUDGETS =
GH¢732,568.00**

11 CONCLUSIONS

In today’s competitive higher educational environment, marketing is a central pillar for the survival of nascent universities such as UBIDS. The new University must carve out a brand identity and image for itself, and stand out visibly among the crowd of tertiary educational institutions to enable it attract a fair share of students. The strategies outlined in this document are aimed at positioning UBIDS as a leading institution for Business and Development Studies in Ghana and beyond. By leveraging a robust visual and digital identity, fostering internal engagement, and expanding international partnerships, the University is poised to achieve global recognition.

Additionally, this plan advocates for a strategic approach that includes both physical and digital branding efforts, as well as cultivating a strong internal culture. Implementing short-, medium-, and long-term strategies will help build a brand that resonates with a wide range of stakeholders, from prospective students and parents to industry partners and global institutions. If the strategies outlined in this document are strictly implemented, the University will attract a larger and more diverse student population, enhance its academic reputation, and ensure sustained growth into the future.

However, success will hinge on the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the marketing strategies herein outlined, and the University’s ability to adapt and refine its strategies in the process of implementation. The ultimate goal is to create a brand that reflects UBIDS's values, academic excellence, and leadership in research, attracting local and international attention while fostering pride within the University community.

12 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is worth re-echoing some of the strategies outlined in the document as recommendations for the consideration of Management of the University.

1. **Prioritise Online Branding Strategies:** To attract a global audience, the University should focus on developing and enhancing online branding strategies. This approach will reduce costs while reaching a larger and more diverse audience. The University should utilise digital platforms, social media, and targeted online advertising to increase visibility and engagement.
2. **Implement Physical Branding Efforts:** We recommend that the University invests in branding materials such as signages, banners, and promotional items to create a cohesive physical presence that reflects the University's values and goals.
3. **Foster Internal Branding:** Enhance internal branding by training staff and creating brand ambassadors within the University community. This will ensure that everyone is aligned with the University's brand message and contributes to a unified and positive representation of the institution.
4. **Seek External Funding and Partnerships:** The University should pursue funding opportunities through donations, corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects, and grants from organisations interested in supporting the university's branding efforts. This can help offset costs and provide additional resources for implementing and sustaining branding initiatives.
5. **Enhanced Application Process:** Streamline and simplify the application process to make it more user-friendly. Implement digital tools and support systems to assist applicants, ensuring a smooth and efficient experience that encourages higher application rates.
6. **Robust Financial Aid and Scholarships:** Expand financial aid options and scholarship programmes to support a wider range of students. Ensure that these resources are well-publicised and accessible, to alleviate financial barriers and attract high-caliber candidates.
7. **Student Support Services:** Invest in comprehensive student support services, including academic advising, counselling, and career guidance. Providing robust support will enhance student satisfaction and retention, contributing to overall success.
8. **Engagement and Community Building:** Foster a strong sense of community through engagement activities, events, and initiatives that connect students, faculty, and staff.

Building a vibrant campus community will enhance the University experience and promote a positive campus culture.

9. **Resource and Capacitate the University Relations Directorate** - Management must take steps to recruit, at least, two qualified public relations and journalism practitioners and resource the Directorate with the requisite equipment to function.
10. **Outsource Marketing to Consultant** - Management may consider outsourcing marketing contract of the University to a Consultant who will be given clear deliverables to meet.
11. **Change Portion of University Anthem** – Management should take immediate steps to change the portion of the University anthem which refers to UBIDS as the “gem of Upper West” to “Gem of the world”.
12. **Name Change** – To enhance branding effectiveness and improve recognition, it is recommended that the name of the University be changed to a shorter and more concise name. A streamlined name will facilitate easier communication, improve memorability, and strengthen the overall brand identity of the institution.

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