

New online UW Oshkosh magazine supports sustainability

by Sheryl Hanson - Wednesday, May 14, 2008

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/875/new-online-uw-oshkosh-magazine-supports-sustainability/>

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's communications efforts have entered a new era. For the first time in the University's 137-year history, alumni and friends will be able to access the magazine — now called Engage — online at www.uwosh.edu/engage.

“This repositioning of UW Oshkosh's magazine will play an integral role in the institution's integrated marketing communications strategy to more effectively communicate with the more than 70,000 alumni across the country,” said Jeanette DeDiemar '88, executive director of Integrated Marketing and Communication.

New sections and fresh content, combined with ongoing topics of interest, give voice to the distinctive and enriching life at UW Oshkosh. The publication's broadened scope will appeal to alumni, University faculty and staff, students and anyone else looking to learn more about the dynamic campus community.

Each edition will focus on a theme that ties into the University's key initiatives and values. The premiere edition will examine politics on American college campuses — a timely issue, considering the relevance of the upcoming presidential election.

In addition to the articles that comprise the print edition of Engage, bonus content will be available online.

“Future online issues of Engage will allow readers an interactive experience, including audio and video content, while supporting the University's commitment to green principles,” DeDiemar said.

The methods of communicating with alumni and friends have evolved dramatically in recent years, said Alumni Association Board President Traci Raether, '88 and '95 (MSN).

“The new online Engage magazine is the most exciting and significant change to date — a giant leap forward in connecting alumni with their alma mater in a very easy-to-use format that can be accessed anytime online,” Raether said.

“The bonus content is a great addition to alumni communications efforts,” she added. “It means alumni can help the environment by reading the magazine online, and they also get something in return in the form of bonus content.”

Online magazine joins University's growing list of sustainable practices

Promoting the online edition of Engage goes hand in hand with UW Oshkosh's commitment to sustainable practices. Nearly 6,000 fewer magazines were printed this issue.

Recent UW Oshkosh graduates — those within about the past 10 years — will receive an alert postcard directing them to the online Engage magazine.

Other alumni and friends will continue to receive a printed magazine; however, they may request to receive future magazines online by contacting the Alumni Relations Office at alumni@uwosh.edu or (877) 896-2586.

“We know there are many readers who want to do their part to reduce the number of printed magazines,” Alumni Director Christine Gantner said. “It is just one way our alumni are helping UW Oshkosh maintain its national reputation as a ‘green’ campus.” Read more about UW Oshkosh’s sustainability plan.

Redesign also offers fresh look, new features

The online version isn’t all that is new. A comprehensive redesign offers Engage readers — of both online and print — a contemporary look, enhanced sections and campus viewpoints on hot issues and on national and regional trends.

The inaugural will focus on how UW Oshkosh students, faculty and alumni are impacting current political contests. The cover story explores today’s college students’ increased involvement in the political arena. Readers also can learn about UW Oshkosh’s history of social concerns and political life.

The online Engage magazine complements another significant recent development in University e-communications. UW Oshkosh Today, launched in late 2007, is an online publication that serves as an all-in-one portal for anyone looking for institutional news, campus events and features about the individuals who make the University such a dynamic place to learn, work and live. It was the first publication of its kind at the University.

A history of UW Oshkosh alumni communications

It has been 100 years since UW Oshkosh began communicating with its alumni. In 1908, the first alumni updates were included in the Oshkosh State Normal School Bulletin — which at that time served as the students’ course book.

Since then, UW Oshkosh’s external communications have evolved from simple lists of alumni participating in homecoming festivities to more comprehensive tools, such as flyers, newspapers and magazines.

What follows is University Archivist Joshua Ranger’s recap of the University’s external communications:

- In 1921, a golden jubilee marked the 50th anniversary of the Oshkosh Normal and served as the first official alumni reunion and the first homecoming. A series of mailings about the event helped entice alumni to return to campus for the event.
- After 1921, the next alumni publication found in the archives came in 1932 with a homecoming announcement. These letters were created for the years 1932–1941 and were largely invitations,

with little to no additional information or news for alumni.

- In 1937, an alumni news section was added to the University's Bulletin to "establish greater unity between the college and the alumni."
- In January 1941, the Bulletin published an alumni directory for the years of 1935–1940. It was presented in the hope that alumni would enjoy knowing the whereabouts of former classmates. Another directory was published in January of 1942 for the graduates of the classes of 1929–1934.
- In October 1953, the Alumni Letter was created. In this letter, the Alumni Association announced plans to make periodic mailings to alumni of these newsy letters as well as the Advance newspaper and other material as an attempt to increase the alumni mailing list. The Archives has only one issue of this publication.
- By October 1958, the Alumni Association had created the OSC Alumni Bulletin. This appeared to be an annual report including information on homecoming, a calendar of events, as well as other updates on campus. The UW Oshkosh Archives Office has one issue of this publication. It is not known if it continued.
- In October, 1960 and the Alumni Association published its first News Bulletin, which appears to have been an annual bulletin published prior to homecoming events. The Archives Office has only two issues of this publication, from 1960 and 1961.
- The Oshkosh Advance student newspaper also got into the act of communicating with alumni with their special Alumni Editions. It appears that this collection of news stories relating to changes on campus and upcoming events was published twice — and once three times — a year. The Archives has copies of this title from May 1961, March 1962, May 1962, October 1962, May 1963, October 1963 and May 1964.
- In the autumn of 1964, the Wisconsin State University Oshkosh Alumni Report was created. This publication was heretofore the most successful serial aimed at alumni and marked a change from the starts and stops of the past; it was published from 1964 to 1992. The Report was published four times per year in the months of January, April, August and October. It featured news stories about activities, events and changes at the University as well as updates on alumni.
- Despite the success of the Alumni Report, a separate publication, the UW-O Alumni Newsletter, was created in the summer of 1976. This single sheet newsletter seems to fill in the gaps between issues of the Report, particularly related to events on and off campus that would appeal to the alumni. This newsletter was published periodically throughout the year, with at least one publication during each semester. It was published between the years of 1976 and 1998.
- When the Alumni Report ceased publication in 1992, its features were picked up and included in Community magazine, which marked a name change to Community Alumni Magazine with its fall 1992 issue. Community's mission was to foster greater connections within the broader community in order to build partnerships in northeastern Wisconsin. Added to Community's diverse feature articles and university news pieces were the alumni notes and news previously

found in the Report. Despite this change, the Alumni Newsletter continued to be printed to fill in gaps.

- In fall of 1998, the first issue of the Oshkosh Alumni was published, replacing the Newsletter. Taking the form of a newspaper, the publication added much more content, photographs and design than the aging Newsletter. However, the emphasis on alumni events and successful alumni continued to distinguish it from the Community Alumni Magazine. The paper was published once a semester until 2002.
- In 1999 and again in 2004, the Alumni office published popular directories of graduates, continuing a tradition that began in 1908.
- The spring of 2003 saw the first issue of University Magazine. The new title consolidated several university publications — the Oshkosh Alumni newspaper, Context, and Community Alumni Magazine magazines all into one. This magazine featured activities, accomplishments and highlights of the University's alumni, students, faculty and staff. University Magazine continued publication but changed its name to University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Magazine in the fall of 2005. This magazine was published in both spring and fall.
- University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Magazine transforms into Engage with its Spring 2008 edition. The revamped publication features a user-friendly, green-friendly online format with multimedia bonus content.
- In addition to this long history of attempts of the University to communicate with their alumni, there have been college and even department publications too many to enumerate here that have also sown deep connections with their graduates. Sharing the successes of their respective programs, faculty and alumni as a lifelong relationship with UW Oshkosh is formed.

Feedback is always welcome. To contact the UW Oshkosh Alumni Office, e-mail alumni@uwosh.edu or call (877) UWO-ALUM.