

ACC Marketing Plan for Fiscal Year 2026

(Last revised: May 20, 2026)

Changes for Fiscal Year 2026:

The FY2026 ACC Marketing Plan embraces the increasing importance of digital advertising and public relations activities and attempts to address these new and changing needs while maintaining support for tried-and-true local communications activities which are affordable and bring good community-based results. Increasing focus will be given to promoting academic programs outside of the service district in an effort to compete with other schools

One ongoing marketing goal is to create a plan for revamping the ACC website. The Director of Public Information & Marketing and the Communications Technician will consult on the scope of the plan, resources available, and constituents to be involved.

I. ACC Institutional Mission, Goals, Vision, and Values

The College Mission

The Mission of Alpena Community College is to create a culture of educational excellence and service to the community.

The College Goals

Alpena Community College's goals are to:

1. Campus/Culture
Offer a welcoming, safe and adaptable culture that inspires diversity.
2. Learning/Education
Motivate continuous exploration of diverse opportunities and knowledge acquisition through a flexible learning environment.
3. Community
Stimulate community collaboration, which fosters comprehensive economic, cultural, and community development.
4. Value
Exercise sustainable value that supports career pathways and fiscal responsibility.

Alpena Community College Vision

To be recognized in our local and global communities as the premier resource and first choice for exceptional, affordable, and innovative education.

Alpena Community College Values

- We demonstrate **accountability** to all our stakeholders, students, staff, business partners, industry alliances, and taxpayers.
- We act with **integrity**, placing fairness and honesty at the center of all our actions.
- We aspire to **excellence** in all our endeavors.
- We show **respect** for diversity, individual contributions, and educational partnerships.

II. Office of Public Information & Marketing Goals

1. Project and enhance the perception of the College's value as a vital resource for education and community development in Northeast Lower Michigan through a diverse selection of media and promotional opportunities.
2. Remember and use the Seven Ps — Product, Place, Price and Promotion, Physical Environment, People, and Process — when devising marketing/communications programs.
3. In advertising, **emphasize** the *value* of higher education, **explain** why higher education is important, and **encourage** students of all ages to take higher ed courses.
4. Collect and use data from the student information system and the Admissions Office.
5. Support the development of new markets for ACC services in cooperation with ACC and external constituents.

III. General Communication Goals

1. Increase use of digital communications efforts as budget allows.
2. Use proven and affordable electronic advertising mechanisms to extend our advertising reach beyond broadcast and print media (directories, social media advertising, etc.).
3. Continue advertising in selected high-value promotional vehicles — yearbooks, newspapers, partner publications, etc.
4. Use advertising, publications and media relations to reinforce the value message — “The Value of ACC.”
5. Use advertising, publications and media relations to raise awareness of College services and events (enrollment events, performing arts, etc.)
6. Pitch appropriate stories to area media to keep a positive image in the public eye and raise awareness of target programs/initiatives.
7. Educate internal constituent groups so they can support the marketing plan and communication goals.
8. Ensure accurate, timely information is available to all interested parties.
9. Continue to print accurate, attractive publications and promotional pieces; create new pieces to meet institutional needs.
10. Maintain positive relations with local media.

IV. Marketing Resources

The Public Information Office maintains a variety of resources and tools to facilitate internal and external communication. These include:

- Office of Public Information & Marketing staff, which includes a Director of Public Information & Marketing and a Communications Technician.
- Professional desktop publishing software and hardware, including:
 - Adobe CS6 suite including InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, and Acrobat Pro
 - Microsoft Office suite including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
 - Scanner
 - Color laser printer with ability to print up to 11" x 17" two sided
 - Digital camera
- Media relations distribution lists.
- Library of ACC logos and images.
- Catalog of advertisements, including electronic, print, phone directories, radio, and TV.
- ACC website.
- Social media presence (Facebook and Instagram).

V. Institutional Marketing Goals & Objectives

Marketing Goal 1: Develop and implement integrated marketing and communications activities to support of ACC enrollment activities. (Aligns with College Goal 1)

Objective 1-1: Identify marketing/communication themes for various target markets.

Objective 1-2: Support Admissions Office activities through a variety of marketing communications projects.

Objective 1-3: Maintain high visibility and positive public perception by facilitating the placement of a variety of content in the local media.

Objective 1-4: Portray ACC as a welcoming place for Plus-50 Learners and encourage lifelong learning.

Objective 1-5: Increase communication and cooperation between constituent groups within the College.

Objective 1-6: Make the ACC website the main source of information about Alpena Community College and increase use of the ACC website by various markets including potential students, current students, the media, and the general public.

Objective 1-7: Establish and build market research and data collection. (College Goal 1)

Marketing Goal 2: Examine relevant ACC policies, practices and organization, and suggest changes to improve service to students. (Aligns with College Goal 1)

Objective 2-1: Work with the Admissions Office to formalize and circulate an Admissions Plan which outlines admissions activities.

Objective 2-2: Structure ACC actions and resources to remove barriers to admission and taking classes.

Marketing Goal 3: Work in partnership with College leadership and campus constituents to identify new programs and services and examine/modify current ACC programs and services in response to the needs of existing and potential markets. (Aligns with College Goal 3)

Objective 3-1: Work with campus constituents to explore new program possibilities

Objective 3-2: Optimize the number of Community Education and Workforce Development programs and participants.

VI. Marketing Definitions

Branding — *“For a community college, branding is the strategic process of defining and communicating the institution’s unique identity, values, and promise to its diverse stakeholders, including prospective and current students, faculty, staff, alumni, employers, and the local community. Beyond just a logo or tagline, it is about shaping public perception and creating emotional connections that foster a sense of belonging.”*

A community college’s brand is built upon the following elements:

- **Unique identity:** The brand establishes the college’s individual personality, distinguishing it from other institutions by focusing on its specific mission, location, and academic strengths.
- **Strategic communication:** It involves crafting a cohesive narrative that tells the college’s story across all touchpoints, from the website and social media to campus tours and print materials.
- **Stakeholder experience:** A successful brand is reinforced by every interaction people have with the college. This includes discussions with faculty, interactions with admissions, and the overall campus environment.
- **Reflecting community values:** Unlike four-year universities that compete on a global scale, a community college’s brand is deeply intertwined with the local community it serves. Its branding should reflect the values and aspirations of its immediate surroundings.

Remember the seven Ps of marketing — Product, Place, Price, Promotion, Physical Environment, People, and Process — when devising marketing/communications programs.

VII. Marketing Plan Budget and Calendar

- Maintain records of expenditures for admissions and public relations advertising, promotions, etc. Include breakdown of spending between Alpena and Oscoda campuses.
- Copy of publications schedule (need to create).
- Be included in the discussions on setting advertising and marketing institutional budgets.

VIII. Data Collection

- Headcount (duplicated, unduplicated), credit hours and contact hours by term.
- Non-credit headcount and credit hours chart.
- Tuition & fees for competitor institutions (CCs, public and private 4-year institutions).
- Demographics for all district school systems.
- All stat sheet items.

- Demographics for Alpena, Presque Isle, Alcona, Iosco, and Montmorency counties.
- Chart of student population by program.
- Chart of student population by home town.
- Online class offerings list.
- Dual enrollment class offerings list.
- Opinion surveys and focus groups.
- Constituent Survey