Chevrolet Sonic
IMC Plan

“Turn the Key to Your Success”

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10/24/2011
Executive Summary

The challenge is for our team, Team BA, to develop a comprehensive integrated marketing communications plan for Chevrolet’s new vehicle, the Sonic which will be released in 2012. The development of this IMC plan was to effectively create and increase awareness for the Chevrolet Sonic in college aged students on campus and the local college community. Our objectives for the development of this plan include determining the target market’s decision-making process, purchase decisions, and buying behavior. Determine what vehicles are being driven in college community, and if they would consider purchasing a small car. Evaluating what methods of promotion, advertising, and media are most effective for reaching our target market. And through analysis, evaluate and determine competitive advantages and opportunities in the market that are to be profitable for Chevrolet.

Our campaign includes an in depth view of our opportunity analysis, situation analysis, competitive analysis, and SWOT analysis. Also includes in the plan our promotion, communication, and tactical strategies; as well as our implementation plan and complete budget allocation and breakdown. Our research included extensive collection of secondary data on Chevrolet, the Sonic, the U.S. automobile industry, the small car market, target market profiling, and the factors that influence them all. Our primary research involved conducting interviews and administering surveys to examine and analyze the target market, find out what they value, and what their perceptions and understandings of the small car market are. Our plan also includes all tactics involved and samples of the advertisements that will be used, including their content, and their overall marketing message to be conveyed.
SWOT Analysis

Strengths

One of the unique selling points of the Chevrolet Sonic is that it is a top IIHS safety pick, receiving the highest rating there is available. Consumers are worried that small vehicles are not as safe as larger ones, but as far as the Sonic goes, it surpasses all vehicles in its class as well as many larger vehicles as well. In addition to being extremely safe, the Sonic has the highest horsepower available (138hp) out of the vehicles compared. The Chevrolet Sonic also has one of the highest fuel efficiencies as well (40mpg). In addition, the Chevrolet name alone has high name recognition and fosters enormous brand loyalty.

Weaknesses

One weakness of the Sonic is that even though it has the most horsepower in its class, it may not be powerful enough for some drivers. Even though the Chevrolet Sonic was designed and engineered with sporty styling, and it may not have enough style or enough attractiveness to appeal to certain consumers in the target market. Because the Sonic is a brand new vehicle, and its first model year will be in 2012, there is the possibility that consumers will be leery of it due to little brand knowledge, low expectancy, and new product uncertainty.
Opportunities

The small car market in general is a major opportunity, and as the market grows it becomes more and more lucrative. Demand for small cars increased by 87% in 2011 and saw a 23% increase in shopping activity at the dealership. In the United States, 36.5% of all cars purchased in 2011 were small cars (21% increase from 2010), and the market share and volume is on a steady rise for small cars in the U.S. With the economy still in shambles, people are looking for more affordable vehicles and vehicles that offer greater fuel efficiency. However, consumers do not want to sacrifice quality, safety, styling, or performance, and that is where the Chevrolet Sonic comes into the picture. The sonic offers affordable and competitive pricing and high fuel economy, but still offers quality, safety, styling, and performance.

Threats

When consumers are shopping for a new vehicle they tend to be a little more skeptical than usual, and is due to the large amount of money they are preparing to spend, and they want to make the correct choice. Due to the extreme newness of the Chevrolet Sonic, and the fact that it has never been seen driving on the road, consumers may opt to purchase a more well known, well established vehicle over the Sonic and this feeling of uncertainty may influence the decision of the consumer when they are evaluating their alternatives. With the economy still not fully recovered, and consumers still tight on disposable income, they may prefer to buy used vehicles rather than new vehicles to save money.
Pricing Compared to the Competition

Chevrolet Sonic pricing and package options:

• 4-door sedan – base price $13,735
  o LS Model –
    ▪ Base price - $13735
    ▪ 5 speed manual transmission
    ▪ 1.8L I4 Engine
    ▪ 15 inch painted aluminum wheels
    ▪ 138 HP
    ▪ 29 MPG city and 40 MPG hwy
    ▪ 125 ft-lb torque
  o LTZ Model –
    ▪ Price - $18085
    ▪ 6 speed manual transmission
    ▪ 1.4L turbocharged I4 engine
    ▪ 17 inch painted aluminum wheels
    ▪ Sunroof
    ▪ 138 HP
    ▪ 29 MPG city and 40 MPG hwy
    ▪ 48 ft-lb torque

• 5-door hatchback – base price $14,635
  o LS Model –
    ▪ Base price - $14635
    ▪ 5 speed manual transmission
    ▪ 1.8L I4 Engine
    ▪ 15 inch painted aluminum wheels
    ▪ 138 HP
    ▪ 29 MPG city and 40 MPG hwy
    ▪ 125 ft-lb torque
  o LTZ Model –
    ▪ Price - $18785
    ▪ 6 speed manual transmission
    ▪ 1.4L turbocharged I4 engine
    ▪ 17 inch painted aluminum wheels
    ▪ Sunroof
    ▪ 138 HP
    ▪ 29 MPG city and 40 MPG hwy
    ▪ 48 ft-lb torque
Nissan Versa pricing and package options:
- 4 door sedan –
  - S model –
    - Base price - $10990
    - 109 HP
    - 1.6L engine
    - 30 MPG city and 38 MPG hwy
  - SL model –
    - Price - $19931
    - 109 HP
    - 1.6L engine
    - 30 MPG city and 38 MPG hwy
- 5 door hatchback –
  - S model –
    - Base price - $14380
    - 122 HP
    - 1.8L engine
    - 28 MPG city and 34 MPG hwy
  - SL model –
    - Price - $21945
    - 122 HP
    - 1.8L engine
    - 28 MPG city and 34 MPG hwy

Ford Fiesta pricing and package options:
- 4 door sedan –
  - S model –
    - Base price - $13200
    - 1.6L engine
    - 120 HP
    - 29 MPG city and 38 MPG hwy
  - SEL model –
    - Price - $21560
    - 1.6L engine
    - 120 HP
    - 29 MPG city and 38 MPG hwy
• 5 door hatchback –
  o SE model –
    ▪ Base Price - $15500
    ▪ 1.6L engine
    ▪ 120 HP
    ▪ 29 MPG city and 38 MPG hwy
  o SES model –
    ▪ Price - $22815
    ▪ 1.6L engine
    ▪ 120 HP
    ▪ 29 MPG city and 38 MPG hwy

**Honda Fit pricing and package options:**
• 5 door hatchback –
  o Fit model –
    ▪ Base price - $15175
    ▪ 117 HP
    ▪ 1.5L engine
    ▪ 27 MPG city and 33 MPG hwy
  o Fit Sport model –
    ▪ Price - $24265
    ▪ 117 HP
    ▪ 1.5L engine
    ▪ 27 MPG city and 33 MPG hwy

**Hyundai Accent pricing and package options:**
• 5 door hatchback –
  o GLS model –
    ▪ Base price - $14195
    ▪ 138 HP
    ▪ 1.8L engine
    ▪ 28 MPG city and 34 MPG hwy
  o SE model –
    ▪ Price - $18145
    ▪ 138 HP
    ▪ 1.8L engine
    ▪ 28 MPG city and 34 MPG hwy
Features & Attributes of the Sonic

- Features an aggressive design engineered for an agile ride and handling and comes with:
- OnStar and 6 months free service and all OnStar related features
- Sirius XM satellite radio with 3 months free service
- Bluetooth technology
- USB port
- Bucket seats
- Ten standard airbags
- Stabilitrak rollover sensor and traction control
- 4 wheel antilock brakes with panic assist
- Child safety locks
- Hill start assist
- Power everything
- Remote keyless entry
- Remote start
- Heated leather seats
- AM/FM radio, cd player w/ MP3 capability
- Auxiliary jack
- 15,16,or 17 inch rims
- Upper and lower glove box
- Audio controls on steering wheel
- 6 speaker sound system
- Engine immobilizer for anti-theft
- Increased rear seat roominess
- Best trunk capacity in its class
- Chrome and matte black optional grille
  - Z-spec model available and includes:
    - Larger spoiler
    - Fog lamp kit
    - Customizable door handles and mirror caps
    - Sport pedal kit
    - Ground effects kit
    - Upgraded grille
    - Front and rear fascia extensions
    - Rocker panel extension
    - Exhaust tip
    - Body kit and graphics
    - Black/white out body lights
Primary Producers

Primary producers are companies in an industry that are the main producers of a particular good. The primary producers in the U.S. of the small car market are Ford (Fiesta), Chevy (Sonic/Aveo), Toyota (Yaris), and Hyundai (Accent). A few other primary producers of small vehicles in the United States are, Nissan (Versa), Honda (Fit), and Kia (Rio) just to name a few. Of all the primary producers of small vehicles in the U.S. Chevrolet is one of the largest, one of the most well know, and one of the most respected primary producers.

Primary Consumers

Primary consumers are the consumers in the marketplace that are the major consumers of a particular good. The primary consumer of the Chevrolet Sonic is the Sonic’s target market. This particular group is the millenial generation, or Generation Y. The age of this particular target market is 18-26 years old, and they are also typically college students as well

Branding

The brand identity associated with Chevrolet is the Chevy Bowtie. The Bowtie identifies and represents excellence, dependability, America, and being long-lasting. Chevy’s brand equity has developed large amounts of brand power from value-added goodwill, and has name recognition. The name recognition stems from brand loyalty, the Chevrolet name, and the Bowtie
itself. The Chevrolet brand is highly recognizable by all potential consumers and has created brand awareness. Positive brand association is a very good thing for a company to have, and the Chevy brand calls to the mind of the consumers the attributes, quality, dependability, and models of vehicles.

Positioning Strategy

Based on the research findings from the secondary research on the Sonic’s target market, we were able to develop the positioning strategy. First we would like to position by the product attributes and benefits, by showing how all of the Sonic’s features, characteristics, styling, technology, safety, warranty, fuel-efficiency, and customizable option are of added value to the target market. Another good approach is positioning by price and quality. The price of the Sonic is very competitive and is one of the lowest in its class, while at the same time is very high quality, dependable, long-lasting, and is the only small car to be produced in the U.S. Our target market enjoys driving and their freedom, so positioning the product by use is an effective strategy. The Chevrolet Sonic has an image and position that is associated with everyday use and being a commuter vehicle that not only saves you money because of its incredible fuel efficiency, but it also keeps you safe with its IIHS top safety rating. An effective strategy is positioning by product class. The Chevrolet Sonic is not only clearly the better choice when compared to other small cars; but compared to larger vehicles (SUV’s, trucks, large luxury vehicles, sports cars) the Sonic has proven that it is safer, is much more fuel efficient, has a sporty design, excellent quality, comes available with a turbo for more power, and offers many luxuries; the Chevrolet Sonic is clearly the better choice. When the Sonic is set side by side next
to its competitors, it is obvious that the Sonic is the sleeker, bolder, more aggressive vehicle and when its strategy is to position itself by competitor, they don’t stand a chance. Compared to its competitors; Sonic has 29hp more than the Versa; Sonic is covered by 40,000 more miles of warranty than the Fiesta; Sonic is $5,480 cheaper than the fit; and when tested for safety in automobile crashes by the IIHS, the Sonic received a perfect score getting the highest rating in every category, the Accent however did not receive a perfect score; scoring below perfect on side impact crashes. One of the most iconic symbols of our time is the Chevrolet Bowtie, which makes positioning by cultural symbols for Chevy such an effective strategy. The Sonic may be the new kid on the block, but it bears the Chevrolet Bowtie logo, and this positioning strategy allows the Sonic to benefit from everything the Bowtie and Chevy stand for.

Communication Strategy

A communication strategy refers to what the firm seeks to accomplish with its intended goals, within its promotional program. The strategy of the program includes creating awareness; imparting knowledge; projecting an image; and shaping attitudes, preferences, and intentions. For the Chevrolet Sonic, through our communication strategy, we would like to create awareness through viral marketing, events, and digital/social media. Another goal is to create or impart knowledge through media channels, online blogs, and customer reviews. Next we are trying to create an image by relating to the target market and how they will fit very well into the Sonic, and how it effectively meets all of their wants and needs. Finally we will be wanting to create and shape the target market’s attitudes, preferences, and purchase intentions by showing that the Chevrolet Sonic is the superior vehicle and the best and most logical choice.
Situation Analysis

The situation analysis of internal and external factors proved very interesting and provided a lot of valuable information. The product being analyzed and marketed is the 2012 Chevrolet Sonic, which has a base price of $13,735 and with the higher priced model, with all accessories and customizations included the price was $18,785. The features and attributes are endless, but some of the major ones are OnStar, power everything, 10 standard airbags, 6 speaker audio system, CD player with MP3 capabilities, USB port, and auxiliary port. The competitive advantage of the sonic is its styling, performance, safety, warranty, fuel efficiency, and quality all offered at a very competitive price. The Sonic will be distributed through an indirect channel only and will be available at any authorized Chevrolet dealer. The promotional strategy to be used for the Sonic, based on the target market’s purchase decisions is diverse. We will be using a consumer-oriented sales promotion strategy, utilizing discounts and event marketing. Another promotional strategy used will be the promotional pull strategy; where demand is created among consumers and encourage them to request the product from the dealerships by spending money on advertising and sales promotion efforts directed toward the ultimate consumer. Some traditional advertising will be used through sponsored events, media advertisements, and on the ground guerrilla tactics. The majority of advertising will be done through online resources and digital/social media on social networking sites, blogs, user review sites, and using viral marketing to utilize word of mouth and buzz marketing.

The goal of Chevrolet and our group to market the Sonic is, “What do we want our campus and local college community to know and do?” We would like to effectively increase awareness of the Sonic among our intended target market. We would also like to inform the
target market that the Sonic is safe, fun to drive, and is affordably priced to meet the budget of college students. We would also like to let the target market know that, even though there are many options for small cars out there, the Chevrolet Sonic sets itself apart from the competition by offering great fuel economy, high safety features and quality, and the latest in technology options.

The target market of the Chevrolet Sonic is the Generation Y, or Millennial group. The focus is on consumers, ages 18-26 who are college students. This is the most lucrative and is the largest consumer group in United States history, with annual spending of $170-$190 billion per year. Out of the entire U.S. population, 29,888,243 consumers in the U.S. fall into our specific target market, which is a large number of people that are potential purchasers of the Sonic. More regionally, there are 40,493 consumers in our target market that live in the surrounding Tulsa area alone. Focused on the area of our college campus in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, there are 2,494 consumers that are in our target market that live around the NSU-BA college campus. To determine how we will advertise and position the Sonic, we have looked at our target markets decision making process, shopping patterns, and purchase decisions. The target market prefers shopping and researching information online rather than face-to-face. They evaluate their purchase decisions on blogs, friends, the internet, online sources, and social media/networking sites. The target market desires a sense of freedom, is open-minded, uninhibited, and lives without regret. They desire in a vehicle, fuel efficiency, styling, choices, and above all, a low price. Media tactics that work best for the market segment are online and social media as well as social networking sites and community/sponsored events.

In the small car market, some of the primary producers are Ford, Chevrolet, Toyota, Hyundai, Nissan, Honda, and Kia. The primary consumers in the small car market, relative to the
Sonic, are our intended target market discussed above. There are over 30 choices of vehicles in the small car market, and we evaluated in our research four main competitors that had the highest sales last year and that we perceived as a threat. They are the Ford Fiesta, Nissan Versa, Honda Fit, and the Hyundai Accent. The opportunities in this market for Chevrolet seem to be endless, and will prove to be very profitable. This market is a focal point for value-conscious buyers and is the primary entry point for first-time buyers. The unfortunate natural disasters in Japan earlier this year (2011) shut down many automobile producing plants, which left a shortage of small vehicles being sold in the U.S., and an opportunity exists to fill that void for consumers. With the current economic situation, consumers are looking not only for an affordable vehicle, but also one that has great fuel economy; however consumers are not willing to sacrifice quality, safety, styling, or performance, and the Sonic offers a solution to all of this. The current volume and market share of the small car market is around 4%, and is continually on the rise, and is projected to increasingly take over much more of the market. Currently 31.5% of all cars purchased in the U.S. are small cars (2011), which is a 21% increase from 2010. The demand for small cars has increased by 57% in 2011, and there is an incredible amount of room for growth, and will only continue to grow. The major change agents impacting the market and the market change/shift to small cars are the “Going Green” movement trying to save the environment, utilizing alternative fuels, and simply driving smaller cars with greater fuel efficiency.

There are over 30 choices of vehicles in the small car market, and with the appropriate knowledge given to our target market; they will see the Sonic as a cut above the rest. For the evaluation of the Sonic’s most direct competition, we chose to evaluate four of the top small vehicles in the market. We evaluated the Ford Fiesta, Honda Fit, Nissan Versa, and the Hyundai Accent. The pricing, features, and specifications for the Sonic and the four vehicles evaluated are
listed in our research data above. The base price of the Sonic is the second lowest, below the Versa, and for top of the line models, the Sonic is the lowest priced vehicle. Sonic has the most horsepower available. For fuel efficiency, the Sonic ranked third on the list, but was only slightly under the first two vehicles. Based on the IIHS safety rating, the Sonic had the highest score available, and along with the Fiesta, was the only two vehicles to get the perfect score. The Chevrolet Sonic offers one of the best warranty plans available on the market, and is ranked second, only to the Hyundai Accent.

The Sonic has many unique selling points that are to be conveyed to the target market to create a favorable image of the vehicle. A few of them are: it’s incredible safety rating, and even though small, it is just as safe as larger vehicles and in some cases is even safer. There are countless upgrade packages, customizations, and features available to make the vehicle your own. With engine upgrades and modifications you can take the Sonic from a sporty, agile, quick vehicle to a powerful, thrill seeking machine all while still offering incredible fuel efficiency. The brand image that Chevrolet has through its history of quality and heritage is transferred to the Sonic. Also, our target market is very patriotic and loves their country; out of all 30 vehicle choices, the Sonic is the only small car on the market to be produced right here in the United States.

The market positioning strategy used will utilize a few areas of the promotional mix. For advertising we will be using strategic and aggressive on the ground guerrilla marketing tactics, word of mouth, and sponsored event planning mainly on the local level and a little across the national level. Consumer-oriented sales promotions strategies will be used, along with an intensive promotional pull strategy. Our main focus will be on interactive and internet marketing,
focusing on social media sites, blogs, user review sites, and every social networking site to take advantage of the viral marketing capabilities these sites offer.

External/environmental factors play a big role in every aspect of the marketing plan and in the small car market as a whole. One of these factors is the regular occurrence of natural disasters around the world; more specifically is the recent tragedy in Japan earlier this year mentioned previously in the situation analysis. The environment also plays a big role as our target market (largest consumer group in U.S. history) is very focused on saving the environment and the planet. The economy is in a recession right now and everyone is hurting. The trade deficit is around $510 billion, the housing market is still in shambles, inflation is on the rise, and unemployment is around 10%. Taking all of this into consideration, consumers are looking to enter the small car market at an increased rate. Gas prices have gone from $1.75/gal in January 2009 to nearly $4.00/gal in April 2011, and are expected to be around $5.00/gal by the end of 2011. Technology is a factor that is also playing a big role in the market shift. With the greater technology advancements there are safer, more fuel efficient, technology packed vehicles available.

We are able design our marketing tactics based on the internal and external analyses done on the Sonic itself, its features, analysis of the target market and small car market, competition, and the positioning strategy formed. Our SWOT analysis (listed in the beginning of our plan) has given our group insight into the strengths and weaknesses, of the Sonic, as well as the opportunities and threats perceived in the marketplace.
The new Chevy Sonic is an affordable and economical sedan style vehicle that offers the right amount of luxury to appeal to its target audience: the millennial generation. The millennial generation represents those individuals who were born in the new millennium ranging from the 1980s-1990s. This age group covers most 18 to 26 year olds. In order to understand the needs, wants, values and overall evaluation of this group and their decision making process their VALs must be taken into consideration. VALs segment US adults into eight distinct mindsets based on psychological aspects and demographics that drive consumer behavior (Strategic Business Insights, 2011). Based on the VALs model, the millennials fall under the groups that are high innovators and typically fall under the self-expression category. They are primarily experiencers meaning that they are impulsive and enthusiastic and are excited for new opportunities that provide a thrill. Experiencers like things that make them feel and look “cool” (Strategic Business Insights, 2011).

An important aspect of generation Y and targeting to contribute to their want of self-expression by penetrating that which is important to them such as social networking. Based on PEW research which studied the lifestyle and behaviors of this generation, it is known that three-quarters of 18 to 26 year olds have created a profile on a social networking site (PEW Social Trends Staff, 2010). Their studies described the demographic as “confident, self-expressive, liberal, upbeat and open to change” (PEW Social Trends Staff, 2010). Knowing this, the Chevy Sonic needs to focus its products features that allow individuals to express themselves with its
unique color options and interior gadgets such as blue-tooth, on-star and USB capabilities. By stressing the options and versatility of the vehicle the demographic segment will recognize the way they can manipulate the vehicle to be unique to their own needs.

The buying decisions of this market needs to be taken into consideration as well. The Chevy Sonic has proposed a starting price of $14,000 for its standard sedan model. The hatchbacks may start at a higher price based on the increase in space and luxury it provides. The price is competitive to other economy sedan vehicles. The price is most affordable for this market based on their economic situation. When analyzing the financial standing of the demographic, it is said that nine-in-ten either say that they currently have enough money or that they will eventually meet their long-term financial goals. But at the moment, fully 37% of 18- to 26-year-olds are unemployed or out of the workforce, the highest share among this age group in more than three decades (PEW Social Trends Staff, 2010). The hardship in unemployment and earnings will have an impact on this generation’s buying decisions. Their income will be a problem recognition in this decision making stage when purchasing a vehicle. The Sonic already is priced at the lower end of the market and promotes its fuel efficiency which will also be a demand with the expected increase in gasoline prices. It is important to take into account that monetary realities are far bleaker for this generation than what their parents experienced. Costs for basics such as housing, insurance or education have escalated, even as income growth for the middle class has slowed (Jayson, 2007).

The demographic will also evaluate how a major decision will benefit their lifestyle so that they can avoid feelings of cognitive dissonance. It will be important to present the benefits gained by driving the Sonic through social networking sites and on sites such as Pandora and YouTube due to the connectivity of this demographic with the internet. New survey results show
that among adults 18 and older, Facebook has taken over as the social network of choice; 73% of adult profile owners use Facebook (Lenhart, 2010). Along with utilizing social media and mobile marketing to interest the millennials, their trust in celebrity endorsement will also affect their perception of a product. In a USA Today article focusing on the values of Generation Y it is said based on a Pew study, they found young people are about twice as likely (14%) to admire an entertainer than a political leader (8%). Famous people are in their faces so much more, and as a society, we have escalated the value we put on celebrities (Jayson, 2007).

Generation Y shows particular habits when purchasing a vehicle. The Chevrolet Sonic will have a greater appeal to this demographic from the get go based on studies that this generation is more geared towards buying “green” automobiles. The Sonic is eco-friendly with its low fuel emission engine at an affordable price. In an Autotropolis article focusing on the generation’s car buying habits, they found that “Generation Y consumers are demanding greener cars, and they're willing to pay more for them. Within that particularly eco-conscious group, 80 percent said they were willing to shell out more cash for eco-friendly rides. And 62 percent of those who said they would pay more indicated a preference for models produced in environmentally friendly factories” (Bressler, 2011). In the article it also notes how Chevrolet has an advantage over its competitors for the time being with the low-income earning millennials.”

“This study's data noted a particular preference for import brands among Gen Y. While many have gravitated toward domestic compact cars because that's what they can afford, many Gen Y consumers would rather be driving an import, specifically crossovers. For instance, Chevrolet commands the largest market share of first-time owners in this demographic, which is largely due to its affordable line of compact cars like the Chevy Aveo. However, as consumers in Gen Y earn more money, they lean to Japanese imports like Toyota, Nissan and Honda” (Bressler, J.
Car buying for this generation is steadily increasing therefore it is important to provide this demographic with more and better options often—thus the Sonic entering the market as a new and hot item should prove itself success with Generation Y. On the contrary, with the green initiative in place these days there is also a threat that many potential Gen Y motorists are foreswearing the automobile, insisting they’d rather walk, ride a bike, or stick to mass transit (Eisenstein, 2009). Even with the importance of having a car that is environmentally friendly, this demographic are buying more compact and midsize cars than SUVs, especially women in that group (Eisenstein, 2009). An Autotropolis quotes in a study on Gen Y’s buying habits, “to give you an idea of the significance of this group, it is reported that Gen Y will be buying one out of every four new U.S. vehicles purchased by 2010, and that in a little more than 10 years, they will represent as much as 40 percent of the car market” (Bressler, J. 2011).

To gain insight on how many millennials are living in the area we are trying to promote the Chevy Sonic to on our local college campus we utilized information from the EASI Census webpage to provide an estimate of the population of ages 18-26. Our findings showed us that there are approximately 40,963 individuals living in Tulsa, Oklahoma who range from ages 18-26 ("Easy analytic software," 2011) and in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, home of the college campus of Northeastern State University, there are 2,494 individuals ages 18-26 ("Easy analytic software," 2011). With these numbers provided, there is a large market for young buyers in the millennial age who want a product specialized for their needs. The Sonic’s advertising needs to focus its promotional efforts to reach these numbers on college campuses such as the University of Tulsa, Northeastern State University, Tulsa Community College and OSU-Tulsa. When taking into consideration our market on a total population of the United States, there are approximately 29,888,243 individuals ages 18-26 ("Easy analytic software," 2011).
Some distinct feature about what the millennials are looking for when they purchase a car can be surprising. Based on our secondary research we found that, “the actual car shopping experience is three times more important to Gen Y than vehicle design” as stated by Joe Vitale, who leads Deloitte’s north central region automotive practice and Generation Y research program (Bryant, 2011). In order to retain the excitement that the generation feels about shopping for the new car marketers need to listen to the needs and wants of how the generation wants to be sold to. “A little more than 82% of Gen Y respondents, up significantly from 69% in 2009, said they’d like to test drive a vehicle over 24 hours. The survey also revealed that more than 57% would prefer to avoid face-to-face interaction with a dealer altogether and work with them solely over the Internet. These findings suggest that dealers could benefit from increasing transparency with consumers by making basic product information more readily available” (Bryant, 2011).

When this generation evaluates its choice for purchasing a new car during the decision making process they are more likely to turn to blogs, and online media to gain insight. If the Chevy Sonic does not adequately promote itself in this light and allow the accessible information desired by this generation then they will be overlooked and fall short in sales. It is said that “the research done by Gen Y shoppers is broader and deeper; with these buyers significantly more likely than older generations to use friends, websites and blogs to gather purchase information. According to the Deloitte survey, nearly 67% of Gen Y respondents look for advice or information on blogs or social media forums before purchasing a vehicle, up dramatically from 25% in 2009” (Bryant, 2011). This market is strongly reachable through direct marketing tactics online and in social media. “Authentic, direct and personal engagements with Gen Y consumers are even more important than advertising campaigns for reaching Gen Y,” said Craig Giffi, vice
chairman and automotive practice leader, Deloitte LLP. “According to the survey, Gen Y consumers actively share opinions and exert their influence far more than older generations, using the virtual world of social media to reach a never-ending audience” (Bryant, 2011). Given these findings, it may be beneficial to use a “Twitter” and or “Facebook” campaign with real testimonies directly stated to this target audience in order to meet their desire of how they want to be sold to and at the same time giving the product recognition.

The way that Generation Y evaluates their money and buying decisions is important in how to market a car and highlight the price and the quality of the product for that price. Things to keep in mind about this generation as outline by the American Bankers Association is that this group is the most educated generation in U.S history. “Almost 65 percent of them go to college after graduating from high school…and of those going to college, 85 percent attend full time (Dalton, 2007).” Other distinctions to keep in mind about this demographic is that technology is central to their everyday living, they carry a sense of entitlement, they embrace multiculturalism, they use many forms of social networking and most importantly when studying their buying trends, they have knowledge about the effects of debt at an early age. “Because of the cost of college today, many of them are ... walking away with their bachelor’s degree and a huge debt on their shoulders” (Dalton, 2007). With this, many individuals belonging to this generation may be naïve enough to apply for more credit cards based on their financial situation and that they already owe money with student loans, therefore they do not have a large sum of finances to spend directly at the time of purchase. It is known that “From a financial viewpoint, Gen Y’ers have easy access to credit, and are heavily solicited for credit cards and similar financial products. But research shows that they don’t really understand banking service” (Dalton, 2007).
Generation Y is very conscious of brand image. When buying an item not only will they evaluate the price, but they will also consider how the brand of the product will make them feel and look. “Gen Y continually strives for goods that express our individuality. In just a decade the generation has influenced the production of monogrammed screen tees, colored laptop computers and rhinestone cell phone accessories” ("Why generation y," 2010). The Chevy Sonic needs to stress its brand in a way that is trendy and personalized for the demographic to identify with and be more inclined to purchase.

Major Change Agents

Going green has become the latest fashion. Many countries are switching over to alternative fuels; in some countries it is required, and in others the government offers incentives for doing so. People are switching over from gas guzzling “dream cars” to eco-friendly “green cars”. Studies have shown that people prefer the “going green” movement over their previous vehicles and are consciously trying to save the environment. Fuel prices and the damaged environment are factors influencing this trend, but oddly enough, for many people, the image, status, and popularity of going green is what is motivating them now. (synovate).
Primary research has been conducted to gather information on the target market and how they feel towards the small car market and the Chevrolet Sonic. Our group conducted interviews on our local college campus and administered surveys throughout our local college community. The survey administered was ten questions long and was administered throughout the campus and in our community through the online company, surveymonkey.com. The questions asked determined the respondents annual household income, the type of car they currently drive, and if they are looking to purchase a vehicle in next few years. Information also obtained from the surveys include, if the respondent would consider buying a vehicle in the small car market, what feature or characteristic about a vehicle is most important to them when owning/purchasing a vehicle, also if there is a vehicle they are more likely to purchase. Additional information gathered was where the respondent obtains news and current event information, also what specific features they want in a vehicle, as well as if they are happy with their current vehicle and if they would feel safe driving a small car. On the following page is a copy of the survey administered. In addition to the survey, we also conducted interviews on campus to find out what they know about the small car market and get the students’ perspectives and views on the Chevrolet College Discount Program and how it may end up impacting or affecting their purchasing behaviors. The following is a breakdown of all the data and information gathered from the 100 surveys completed.
Make sure to leave this page blank to allow us to insert copy of survey into imc plan....
Out of the 100 surveys completed 39% of respondents had a household income of $14,000 or less, 23% of them had an income of $15,000-$24,000, 21% had an income of $25,000-$50,000, and only 17% had an income of $50,000 and above. The two most chosen income levels are the two lowest income levels. These two levels made up 63 of the 100 answers chosen, which indicates that 63% of our sample has a very low level of income available. This makes our target market a prime target for the Sonic which is very competitively priced and affordable.
Question two on the survey was used to determine what kind of vehicle the target market is currently driving. Our researched revealed that the midsize cars were the most commonly owned (25%), followed by small cars (24%), and then sport utility vehicles (19%). The top three most commonly owned vehicles in our sample were, the Toyota Camry at 8 vehicles, the Honda Civic at 6 vehicles, and the Ford Mustang at 5 vehicles. Of all the vehicles owned by the respondents, the top 5 primary producers were Ford, Toyota, Chrysler, GM, and Nissan. Ford produced 21% of the respondents vehicles, Toyota produced 16%, Chrysler made 16%, GM(Chevrolet) produced 13%, and Nissan produced 11% of the vehicles owned by our sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Vehicles in Each Vehicle Class</th>
<th>Number of Vehicles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fullsize Cars</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUV's</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trucks</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Cars</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midsize Cars</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Veh.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(100 Surveys Total)
In question three of the survey, it asks respondents if they are considering purchasing a new vehicle within the next few years. Indicated above, 60% of our sample indicated that they are thinking about a new vehicle purchase in the near future. The following question asked if they would ever consider purchasing a vehicle in the small car market. We now not only know that 60% of the group is looking to buy, we also know that 73% of them are actively considering purchasing a vehicle in the small car market. This provides an incredible opportunity for Chevrolet to capture a large portion of the market share with the Sonic. Of the respondents that said they would not consider a small car, the top reasons provided were, the small cars are just too small, they said they preferred and felt more safe in a larger vehicle, and also that they were just too big and/or tall to fit in a small car.
The numbers represented in the chart above show the most important characteristic, attribute, or feature of a vehicle when the target market is purchasing or owning a vehicle. The most important characteristic, which received 41% or the selections, was styling and the look of the vehicle. Fuel economy was the second most important, followed by price, and safety. In regards to the features and attributes that are most valued by the target market; the Chevrolet Sonic provides the most value. The sonic offers styling, customization ability, and an aggressive design; all of which appeals to the most chosen attribute. Appealing to the next three most important features, the Sonic offers fuel efficiency at the top of its class, a competitive price that is one of the lowest available, and is extremely safe, receiving a perfect score by the IIHS. In another question, we asked what features do you most desire to have in your current vehicle that
you don’t currently have? Out of 100 responses, more technology had 33, better styling had 21, and better fuel efficiency had 13 responses. If these three attributes are the most desired in their vehicle, then the Chevrolet Sonic is definitely the car for them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make of Vehicle</th>
<th>Most Likely to Purchase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honda</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toyota</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nissan</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chevy</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When respondents were asked which vehicle manufacturer was most attractive to them and that would have more of a chance of purchase based on brand name and image alone the results indicated that 24% of them would choose Toyota. Right behind Toyota, ranked at number two, with 19% of respondents choosing them, is Chevrolet. After Chevrolet comes Ford, Honda, Nissan, and the others chosen were Volkswagen, Infinity, Dodge, Jeep, Range Rover, and Fiat. Based on the market and factory conditions after the disasters in Japan, there is a shortage of
Japanese made vehicles and there will be a gap in the small car market that will be needed to be filled. The Sonic can be the vehicle that captures that part of the market share.

When the 100 survey takers were asked where they get their news and information on current events, the results were not very surprising. The target market makes up the generation that is more connected to the internet than any other generation in history. 55% of the respondents indicated that they get their information from the internet and social media. 28% indicated they get their information from television, 11% for radio, and 6% by newspaper. Focusing the plans tactics and strategies around this data will help effectively direct the message through the appropriate channels.
There was 37% of the study that indicated they were extremely satisfied with their current vehicle. That was the largest response selected, but still leaves the remaining 63% of the respondents that are anywhere from just satisfied to extremely unsatisfied; which is a big opportunity for Chevrolet to appeal to that unsatisfied feeling by offering the Sonic. Also within the same sample, we asked if the respondents agreed that they felt safe driving a small vehicle. The results were overwhelmingly yes, with 63% of the study indicating they strongly agree that they feel safe driving a small car.

The goal of conducting the five interviews on our campus was to gain insight into what and how much the target market actually knows about regarding the small car market. I also wanted to see if the interviewee’s were aware of the Chevrolet College Discount Program, and how it might affect the target market’s purchase decision. When asked what they knew and
understood about the small car market, all people interviewed knew a lot of basic information, like, the fuel efficiency factor, and that they were usually lower in price. The majority did not however know that vehicles in the small car market are now just as safe as any other type of car. They were also unaware of the style, technology, performance packed into the small cars. I would say, as a whole, the target market knows a fair amount, but need a little push in the form of creative advertising to get their attention and inform of the advantages and benefits of the Chevrolet Sonic. When told about the Chevrolet College Discount Program, all five people interviewed were unaware that the discount was offered. One did mention that he assumed most companies offered something of the sort, but did not know Chevrolet offered it. After discussing what the discount offers and the details, I asked if now knowing that the discount was available to them, what they thought about purchasing a new vehicle, keeping the Sonic in mind. All five people interviewed stated, not that they were more informed of the small car market, and now know what the Sonic can offer, as well as the discount option, they would definitely look at the Chevrolet dealership before any others; also that if they were on the fence about the purchase, the discount would definitely help persuade them.
Communication Strategy

Through our communication strategy, our group would like to inform the target market, our campus, and local college community of our communication message. We need to effectively increase awareness for the Chevrolet Sonic and let the target market know that it was designed and created to be a significant rival in the U.S. small car market and sets it apart from all other competitors. Through our communication strategy our group would like to inform the target market that the Chevrolet Sonic has great fuel economy, the latest in technology, and is packed in a vehicle that is safe, fun to drive, and is competitively priced to be one of the most affordable small cars around. We would like to spread the word that the Sonic is a leader in its class for cargo space, passenger space, safety standards, features, and amenities. Sonic combines strength and stability with performance in a design instantly recognizable as a Chevrolet. Hopefully this strategy will enable the target market to understand the small car market better and eventually create appeal in it towards the target market.

Tone, Message, and Appeal

Setting the tone of voice of the message in which the way you word it arouses emotional messages conjured by the message. An effective tone for our target market, because of their younger age is a little more laid back, friendly, approachable, but needs to be professional. The message structure will need to be established as well. For the order of presentation, we will be
using the primary effect, as well as the Recency effect. We will not be allowing the consumer to draw their own conclusion from the message, and instead we will be drawing a firm conclusion for them with facts. Our group will be utilizing a two-sided message, giving both good points, and negative ones, and then following up with the refutation appeal to refute the opposing viewpoint. To be most effective, we have decided to use a combination of verbal and visual messages. The first type of appeal being used is comparative advertising to appeal and relate to both the rational and emotional appeals of the consumer. Humor appeal will be used as well which will help in getting the attention of the target market and allowing them to remember the message all while producing positive moods and increasing liking toward the Sonic.

Market Insights & the Communication Strategy

From the primary and secondary research conducted we have gained information and insights into the target market as well as the small car market that has enabled our group to develop our communication strategy. We now know that our target market is best marketed to through social media sites and interactive/internet media channels utilizing the social networking viral marketing capabilities. Based small car market’s growth and massive expansion we have realized a hug gap in the consumers’ needs and wants and have developed and strategy to fill that gap. Based on our target market’s attitudes and preferences we are able to create an image of the Chevrolet Sonic that the target market can identify with and show that it meets their wants and needs appropriately. Be effectively positioning the Sonic and using appropriate tactics we can shape the target market’s attitudes, preferences, purchase intentions, and buying behaviors.
Based on the characteristics of our target market, we can effectively communicate the Sonic’s features and attributes that are most important and relevant to them. From our research done and compiled, our group was able to choose the appropriate message tone, structure, appeals, and channels that are the most effective and efficient.

Integrated Message Promoting the Chevrolet Sonic

The Chevrolet Sonic is an affordably priced fuel efficient vehicle that combines strength and stability with high performance and an aggressive design with the latest in technology.

Primary Marketing Objectives

In developing our primary marketing objectives our group first created our problem definition based on what our task at hand was. Our problem definition is, “How to effectively create and increase awareness for the Chevrolet Sonic in college aged students on campus and the local college community.” Based on the definition of our problem we came up with four marketing objectives that would provide us with the information necessary to develop an integrated marketing communications plan, and thus, when completed would answer the initial question and provide us with information to successfully promote the Chevrolet Sonic. Our primary marketing objectives are:
• Determine the target market’s decision-making process, purchase decisions, and buying behavior to effectively design a promotional strategy.

• Determine what types of vehicles are currently being driven by the local college community, find out why they chose that type of vehicle, and find out if the target market is interested in entering the small car market.

• Determine what methods of promotion, advertising, and media are most effective for reaching the intended target market.

• Complete an in depth situation and competitive analysis between the Chevrolet Sonic and its direct competitors in the small car market to evaluate and determine competitive advantages and opportunities in the market and opportunities for improvement.

**Marketing Mix**

The first “P” in the marketing mix stands for product, and is the good or service that most closely meets the requirements of a particular market or segment. For our group, the product is the Chevrolet Sonic, and its bundle of tangible and intangible attributes are that it is fun to drive, safe, stylish and customizable, of high quality, backed by Chevrolet’s warranty, and has a multitude of features and attributes. The second “P” in the marketing mix stands for price, and is the price decisions and pricing strategy. The base model price of the Sonic is $13,735, and the top of the line model with all added features, attributes, and customizations is $18,785. With many upgrade packages and customizable features, the price the consumer will end up paying can and will vary depending on the features they choose on the vehicle. Another factor of price is
the discounts available through Chevrolet (or GM), and they include consumer cash which are cash rebate discounts, the Chevrolet College Discount Program, Credit Union Member Discount, GM Military discounts, GM Mobility Discount (for handicapped consumers), and the GM Business Choice Discount (for business owners). The third “P” in the marketing mix stands for place (distribution), and is the location of the market and means of distribution used in reaching it. For this occasion, because the industry is for vehicles and must go through the dealership (intermediary), we will be utilizing the indirect channel and distributing our product (Sonic), through the dealership (place). The fourth “P” in the marketing mix stands for promotion, and is the advancement of a product, idea, or point of view through various promotional techniques (promotional mix). For promotion we will be using advertising very minimally at the national level, and mainly at the local/retail level through primary demand. Traditional “mass” media will not really be used, but rather our focus will be on interactive/internet marketing via digital/social media and viral marketing. For sales promotions we will be using the consumer-oriented approach, and our promotional strategy will focus primarily on the promotional pull strategy and some, but very little focus on the promotional push strategy.

The Basic Model of Communication

The basic model of communication is basic process by which the most simplistic form of communication occurs. There are 9 factors; 2 participants are the sender and receiver; 2 communication tools are the message and channel; 4 functions/processes are the encoding,
decoding, response, and feedback; 1 extraneous factor is noise. The way the process occurs is first the sender encodes their thoughts and ideas, creates the message to be sent, sends the message through the appropriate channel; the receiver receives the message, decodes the message, receiver reacts to the message and creates a response and then provides feedback and sends it back to the original sender. Along the way there is noise and extraneous factors disruption the message.

Viral Marketing

Viral marketing is the spread of product or brand information through customer contact, and is the word of mouth communication in terms of consumer-generated marketing, which is also called buzz marketing. It is free and a very vital tool to increasing awareness.

Promotional Mix

We will not be using all parts of the promotional mix, as some of them are not applicable for our current marketing strategy. The first part of the promotional mix to be used is advertising. The forms of advertising to be used are on the ground, personal, face-to-face guerrilla tactics (also called guerrilla marketing), which are tactics that carve out narrow but profitable niches and will be used through community event planning and sponsored events. We will also be
trying to utilize as much word of mouth (viral marketing) as possible. The main focus of advertising aside from word of mouth will be digital/social media advertising on social networking sites, various websites on the internet that are frequented by the target market, automobile and various other blogs, as well as consumer automobile review sites. The interactive/internet marketing portion of the promotional mix that will be used, as stated above, will be blogs, user reviews, Facebook, Twitter, Pandora, ect… Sales promotion is the next part of the mix, and the type of sales promotion focused on will be consumer-oriented sales promotion.
Marketing Tactics and Samples

Through secondary research, it was determined that interactive/internet digital/social media tactics are the most effective in reaching the target market successfully. The target market (Gen Y) demographic is much more connected to the internet than any other generation. In a study done, the survey revealed that more than 57% would prefer to avoid face-to-face interaction with a dealer altogether and work with them solely over the Internet. These findings suggest that dealers could benefit from increasing transparency with consumers by making basic product information more readily available” (Bryant, 2011). When this generation evaluates its choice for purchasing a new car during the decision making process they are more likely to turn to blogs, and online media to gain insight. If the Chevy Sonic does not adequately promote itself in this light and allow the accessible information desired by this generation then they will be overlooked and fall short in sales. It is said that “the research done by Gen Y shoppers is broader and deeper; with these buyers significantly more likely than older generations to use friends, websites and blogs to gather purchase information. According to the Deloitte survey, nearly 67% of Gen Y respondents look for advice or information on blogs or social media forums before purchasing a vehicle, up dramatically from 25% in 2009” (Bryant, 2011). This market is strongly reachable through direct marketing tactics online and in social media. “Authentic, direct and personal engagements with Gen Y consumers are even more important than advertising campaigns for reaching Gen Y,” said Craig Giffi, vice chairman and automotive practice leader, Deloitte LLP. “According to the survey, Gen Y consumers actively share opinions and exert
their influence far more than older generations, using the virtual world of social media to reach a never-ending audience” (Bryant, 2011). Given these findings, it may be beneficial to use a “Twitter” and or “Facebook” campaign with real testimonies directly stated to this target audience in order to meet their desire of how they want to be sold to and at the same time giving the product recognition.

Aside from advertising on the internet interactively through social networking and other various sites, on the ground guerrilla tactics will be used and are effective in reaching the target market as well. We will be setting up and implementing event based promotions done in the community and on local college campuses to not only try and spread the word about the Chevrolet Sonic, but to get the entire community involved to raise awareness about the Sonic as well as community outreaches to give back to the community and organizations/charities in the Tulsa/Broken Arrow area. Focusing on our intended target market, there are about 29,888,243 consumers in our target market that live in the United States. Narrowing the focus, just in Tulsa alone, there are 40,493 consumers in our target market living right here. Looking at an even narrower focus, located in Broken Arrow, home of Northeastern State University – BA, there are 2,494 consumers in our target market residing in this community around the campus. There is a very large market opportunity surrounding NSU-BA and the local college community of Tulsa that is virtually untapped. There are many other college campuses in the area aside from NSU-BA; they include five Tulsa Community College campuses around the city, University of Tulsa, Oklahoma State University-Tulsa, and those are just the ones in the immediate area.
Implementation Plan

As a group we would like to show that the Chevrolet Sonic is an affordably priced fuel efficient vehicle that combines strength and stability with high performance and an aggressive design with the latest in technology. Our primary objectives of our plan are to determine the target market’s decision-making process, purchase decisions, and buying behavior to effectively design a promotional strategy. We also need to determine what types of vehicles are currently being driven by the local college community, find out why they chose that type of vehicle, and find out if the target market is interested in entering the small car market. Additionally, we need to determine what methods of promotion, advertising, and media are most effective for reaching the intended target market. Lastly, our team members are to complete an in depth situation and competitive analysis between the Chevrolet Sonic and its direct competitors in the small car market to evaluate and determine competitive advantages and opportunities in the market and opportunities for improvement.

Our target market consists of the millennial generation, ages 18 to 26. Broken down further, we are focusing on the segment of college students within that demographic as well. Based on the primary research conducted as well as the information gathered in our secondary research, we have developed a positioning strategy for the Sonic to gain market penetration into our intended target market. Positioning the Sonic by cultural symbol (Chevrolet Bowtie), by competitor to emphasize areas of strength over competition, and by product class emphasizing safety and fuel economy over larger vehicles. Additionally, based on the target market’s characteristics, values, and beliefs, it would be beneficial to position the Sonic by price and quality as well as attributes and benefits. With the Chevrolet Sonic appropriately positioned
toward the target market, our communication strategy to convey our message (including structure, tone, and appeal) is backed by the market research conducted and is focused around a peer-to-peer marketing standpoint. The communication strategy will effectively increase awareness for the Sonic, inform the target market of its attributes and benefits as well as its unique selling points, and will enable the target market to more fully understand the small car market, thus creating appeal for the Sonic in the target market’s purchase decision.

Our plan will be utilizing several different techniques to effectively market the Chevrolet Sonic. We are going to be advertising through multiple social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. The Facebook page will be an interactive webpage that consumers can post reviews, pictures, and videos of their experiences with the Chevrolet Sonic. One way of advertising through Facebook, aside from creating its own page is by using advertisements. We can effectively segment our audience to target who we want to come into contact with the ad by choosing their age, sex, religion, geographic area, interests, and many more. By being able to segment our audience, we are able to promote our advertisement both effectively and efficiently. This will also allow us to keep track of our advertising expenses because we can choose allocate more or less of the funds based on the performance of the ads. Since we are charged “per click”, we are able to analyze the effectiveness of our advertisement. Facebook also helps analyze the information and how effective it is.

Such an enormous amount of people use the internet these days, and based on our surveys, over half of our survey takers get their news and information over the web. So, we will be allocating a majority of our budget to internet advertising. We will be making an interactive website where millenials will be able to interact with the website, and play games where they can customize and race their very own Chevrolet Sonic. This interactive website will tie into our
mobile phone application so consumers can play the games and customize their very own Sonic on the go. Mobile phone applications are very popular within our target market, with research showing over 90% of them owning a smart phone of some sort. Another way we plan on advertising is by having commercials on popular sites such as YouTube and Pandora radio. Since word of mouth marketing is considered the most impactful and trusted form of advertising, we want to utilize it by setting up blogs and consumer review websites where consumers can interact with other Chevy Sonic owners, and also to persuade potential consumers that choosing the Chevy Sonic is the right decision.

Another way to interact with our target audience is by sponsoring events. We will be bringing the Sonic onto college campuses where our target market is are likely to see and interact with the car. In addition to bringing the vehicle to the campus and allowing people to get in and check out the Sonic, we will be providing food. Having grills set up and serving hot dogs, hamburgers, chips, and drinks will get the attention and bring in the college aged students we are targeting. Also, having local businesses and organizations at the event will gain attention and get the community involved. Throughout the event there will be giveaways to the students by using raffle tickets. Giveaways will include gift cards, hats, t-shirts, an iPod shuffle, and a new iPad.
Samples and Concepts

The common message communicated throughout all of our tactics is “Turn the Key to Your Success”. The first tactic is a fun and engaging smart phone mobile application. The mobile app created will be a racing game where consumers can customize and race the Chevrolet Sonic around the city. The game will allow users to download the app for free and race either the sedan or hatchback models. As they select their model, they can also customize it with the actual options that are available for the Sonic. As they customize their car, pop-ups will display details and information about the Sonic and benefits, such as its fuel efficiency, and technological features offered. It is a fairly simple and cheap app to create and design, but still offers a beneficial and fun way to promote the car.

Our second tactic will be to implement advertisements on the internet and social media through the use of banner ads. The vast majority of our target market relies on social media for information, news, and updates on products. Based on this rationale, the vast majority of our marketing will be done through the use and implementation of banner ads on Pandora, Google, YouTube, Facebook, and vehicle blog sites. The content of the banner ad will include the Sonic itself, as well as our message of “Turn the Key to Your Success”.

Social networking sites are a large part of our target markets life, and are our focus of our third tactic. Social networking sites are the main way this generation communicates and interacts with each other by exchanging information and updating others on what is going on in their lives. Building a social network site dedicated to the spreading of awareness of the Sonic and using it to develop a viral campaign is inexpensive and very effective for getting consumers involved. We will be launching viral campaigns for the Sonic on Twitter and Facebook. The
Twitter account will post humorous and insightful tweets on why followers need to be driving the Sonic because it is how you “Turn the Key to Your Success”. On all ads used online there will be a hash tag identifier to let consumers know that they can hash tag Chevy Sonic in their tweets to be re-tweeted. For Facebook account will essentially convey the same message, but through the use of status updates and wall posts. Due to the viral marketing factors associated with social networking sites, this tactic will be extremely effective in reaching our target market.

Within the social networking sites using the viral campaigns employed through Facebook and Twitter, we will also be holding contests to get our target market even more involved on a higher level. One contest will be for our followers and friends to search throughout the city to try and locate something we have hidden somewhere, such as a picture or poster placed somewhere obscure. Every day of the contest we will tweet or post statuses about humorous clues as to where the hidden object is located. The person who ends up finding it first will win the prize indicated in the contest specifications. Another contest will be to try and get as many “followers” and “friends” as possible. Every time a person follows the Sonic on our Twitter account or becomes our friend on Facebook they get one entry into drawing to win prize. Also, every time they post a video or picture about the Sonic involving them and spreading the word about the Sonic they will get an additional entry. The more involved they are in the campaign the more entries they get, and better their chances of being drawn to win. Our last contest we will be holding will be hosting a contest for our followers and friends where they create and submit a video posted on YouTube. The video submitted will need to be a unique and new commercial that shows a humorous view on how the Sonic might let you “turn the key to your success”. The winners will be determined and evaluated by the amount of views/hits received. The winner of the contest will receive eternal YouTube recognition and glory as well as the grand prize
specified. By allowing this generation to take part in the Chevrolet Sonic’s campaign will make the car more appealing to them by displaying how this car is made for this generation and how the Sonic is was created to allow the consumer to express themselves creatively, which is an important value of the target market.

The last tactic employed by our IMC plan will be the active holding and planning of events promoting the Sonic. We will be setting up and implementing event based promotions done in the community and on local college campuses to not only try and spread the word about the Chevrolet Sonic, but to get the entire community involved to raise awareness about the Sonic. The promotional events will also facilitate community outreaches to give back to the community involving organizations and charities in the Tulsa/Broken Arrow area. We will be bringing the Sonic onto college campuses where our target market is and are likely to see and interact with the car. In addition to bringing the vehicle to the campus and allowing people to get in and check out the Sonic, we will be providing food. Having grills set up and serving hot dogs, hamburgers, chips, and drinks will get their attention and bring in the college aged students we are targeting. Also, having local businesses and organizations at the event will gain attention and get the community involved. Throughout the event there will be giveaways to the students by using raffle tickets. To get a raffle ticket, students will need to fill out a survey which will be designed to gain further insight into what they value and would like to see more of. The giveaways will include gift cards, hats, t-shirts, an iPod shuffle, and a new iPad.
Cost Analysis & Budget

Budget Allocation & Percentages

Of the $100,000 budget allotted to our group we allocated the monies to the four main tactics of our plan. Also, the money allocated to each tactic has been broken down into subcategories of spending within each of our main tactics. The first tactic’s budget is our mobile application. We spent $15,000 on the application devoted to mobile advertising. Within that dollar figure of $15,000, we spent $10,000 on the application development and production, and $5,000 on advertisement and promotion. The second tactic we have allocated a portion of our budget to is advertising on the internet through the use of banner ads. We spent $65,000 on the banner ads on Facebook, Google, YouTube, Pandora, and vehicle blog sites. The amount for each internet website is as follows: $30,000 allocated for yearly Facebook banners on a per click basis; $30,000 allocated for the Google Adwords account used; $2,000 given to the development of YouTube banner advertisements; $1,500 allotted for Pandora advertisements; and $1,500 was allocated to create vehicle blog banners. The development of social networking sites dedicated to the Chevrolet Sonic in conjunction with their viral campaigns are the third tactic we employed, and allocated to it $10,000. The social networking sites used were Facebook and Twitter. We split the money up evenly, giving $5,000 to each site. Both Facebook and Twitter will use $4,000 of that money for holding contests and giving out various prizes, and $1,000 will be used for account advertisement to get the ball rolling on gaining as many friends and followers as
possible. The last tactic we are utilizing is the use of promotional events and will receive the remaining amount of money of $10,000. The breakdown of the money spent on the events is: $2,000 for giveaways (prizes, merchandise, food, etc…); $3,000 for advertisements spreading the word about the events; $2,000 for facilities used during the event; and $3,000 for credible spokespersons in the community such as popular radio station personalities.

**Budget**

![Budget Pie Chart]

**Budget Justification**

The reasons we chose to allocate $15,000 to the mobile app is that mobile advertising is the fastest growing form of advertising. A large amount of its success and growth has come about because of smart phones, the target market’s extensive use of them, and the ability to download and use interactive games. The $15,000 that is allotted to mobile phone advertising from our budget goes straight to the design of a Chevrolet Sonic interactive application. Our
competitors such as Honda, Toyota, and Nissan all have interactive apps, so by not having an app we will be at a disadvantage compared to our competitors who are all attempting to reach the same target market.

For the justification of the $65,000 given to the use of banner ads on the internet is the target market’s heavy use of the internet. The sites we chose to advertise on are popular within our target market. These sites include Facebook, Google, YouTube, Pandora and vehicle blog sites. Since we are able to narrow down our target market so specifically, we can efficiently reach our target market by placing banners on these popular, regularly visited sites.

The allocation of the $10,000 to the tactic of utilizing viral marketing campaigns on social networking sites is very simple. Neither Facebook nor Twitter require an account fee, so we are using this part of our budget to advertise our use of these sites and both gain awareness of the Chevrolet Sonic, and to inform consumers about it while attracting them with contests and prizes. Based on our research, we found that over half of our survey participants get their news via the internet/social networking sites, so advertising on Facebook and Twitter will be both effective and efficient.

The reason we allocated the $10,000 to the events tactic is that they allow the target market to actually see the Sonic and get involved. Holding local events will increase local awareness greatly. We have directed our event planning towards specific locations that host our target audience the most. These locations are college campuses throughout our area and local spots our target market visit frequently.
Our cost/benefit analysis helps evaluate which forms of advertisement are the most effective. The benefit is measured by how much activity each tactic creates, according to the scale we have determined. The cost is based on the percentage of the budget used on that tactic.

Value = benefit - cost.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactic</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook campaign</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter Campaign</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Promotional Events</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile App Downloads</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banner Ads</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measurement Rubric

This table displays the benefit we will assign to each tactic. Because some tactics carry more weight when considering customer awareness, the number of people reached is not as important on the evaluation scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactic</th>
<th>Effectiveness of Tactics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook campaign (# of friends)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-500</td>
<td>500-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter Campaign (# of followers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-500</td>
<td>500-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Promotional Events (attendance)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-50</td>
<td>50-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile App (downloads)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>100-200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banner Ads (clicks)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>100-200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Measurement Standards & Evaluation Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Tactic</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| FACEBOOK  | -2500 Facebook friends  
|           | -Engagement rate of 20% on Facebook |
| TWITTER   | -2500 followers  
|           | -Engagement rate of 20% on Twitter |
| EVENTS    | -Number of consumers who attended. |
| BANNERS   | -Number of clicks per Facebook ad.(analyzed by Facebook analytics)  
|           | -Number of clicks per Google adword account.(analyzed by Google analytics)  
|           | -Number of views and likes for YouTube advertisements.  
|           | -Number of followers on Pandora radio. |
| MOBILE    | -Number of mobile application downloads. |
Citations


"FORD’S 2010 SALES UP 19 PERCENT – LARGEST INCREASE OF ANY FULL-LINE AUTOMAKER; FOUNDATION SET FOR GROWTH IN 2011 | Ford Motor Company


