



NEWS

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TEXAS A&M MARKETING VP NAMED INTERNATIONAL BRAND MASTER

JASON COOK, MASTERMIND OF “JOHNNY FOOTBALL” MANZIEL’S HEISMAN TROPHY CAMPAIGN, TAKES TOP HONORS IN INTERNATIONAL BRAND COMPETITION

PARKER, Colo. – Jason Cook, vice president of marketing and communications at Texas A&M University, was named the 2012 International Brand Master today. This international award, now in its fourth year, is presented annually to an exemplary educational brand manager by Educational Marketing Group, Inc. (EMG), headquartered in Parker, Colo.

Cook took the top honor for his ability to implement a strong and consolidated academic and athletic brand. He assisted in transforming Texas A&M University from the longstanding all-male military school perception to the vibrant brand image of a well-known and thriving top-20 research institution. He leveraged the growing national fame of freshman football star Johnny Manziel and the buzz surrounding the quarterback’s Heisman Trophy candidacy to effectively showcase the University brand.

He placed the University’s athletics at the top of the brand pyramid together with its academics brand, enabling the University’s message of academic excellence to reach numerous fans each time its sports teams, particularly the football team, took the field. He brought together the University president, Board of Regents, marketing, communications, media relations, licensing and creative teams to work as an integrated group to build a successful brand.

This process began with University’s transition from the Big 12 Conference to the wider exposure of the Southeastern Conference, which led to numerous opportunities for Cook and his team to expose the world to the traditions that make Texas A&M University a unique brand.

“Jason understood that this move was meant to expand our brand nationally in all areas – to introduce the country to our top-tier academics and research, and our rich history and traditions, as well as athletics,” said R. Bowen Loftin, president of Texas A&M University.



The brand strategy, led by Mr. Cook, has seen amazing results over the last year. Texas A&M University rose from 15th to second in Washington Monthly's rankings of universities that contribute significantly to society. Kiplinger named Texas A&M University as number one in the state and in the top 25 schools for best value. The University's 34,000 freshman applications for 2012 was a new school record. Texas A&M University is already on pace to break the freshman application record again by several thousand in 2013. Amazing results were also seen in their social media networks, licensing revenues, media exposures and mobile apps. The University made the Top 10 Facebook Brands by Engagement Rate listings and ranked among Klout's Top 10 Most Influential Colleges.

"I am honored to represent Texas A&M and our marketing and communications team with the International Brand Master Award, and I appreciate the vote of confidence from the selection committee and the thousands who submitted votes as part of the process," said Cook. "Our ultimate goal is to build Texas A&M into one of the top brands in the country, and we made tremendous progress in this regard over the past year. From an innovative content marketing strategy to our continued social media leadership, as well as our transition to the Southeastern Conference with a Heisman Trophy winner, we truly believe that Texas A&M has captured the nation's attention."

Cook competed against two other strong finalists to win top honors in the International Brand Master competition, Dr. David Willows from The International School of Brussels in Brussels, Belgium, and Justin Roy from William Peace University in Raleigh, N. C. Cook was up against an initial field of 15 exceptional nominees, twelve of whom hailed from the United States, one from England, one from Australia, and one from Belgium.

"We are thrilled and honored that a professional of the caliber of Jason Cook has been named the 2012 International Brand Master." said Bob Brock, president of Educational Marketing Group and the sponsor of the competition. "Mr. Cook has had an outstanding impact on the venerable Texas A&M brand, and his combination of strategic thinking and tactical skill inspire us all."

Colleagues in education branding will be able to hear from Cook as EMG will honor his success with a series of guest blogs and video interviews during the coming months. For more information on the 2012 International Brand Master, Jason Cook, the judges and the nominees, see <http://emgonline.com/ibm-award/2012-master/>.

EMG is a full-service, integrated brand development and marketing agency that provides custom-tailored research, brand development, creative development, new media services, and media services for K-12 schools and universities throughout North America. Established in 1997, EMG's clients have included Washington State University, Virginia Tech, Cal Poly, Dalhousie University, University of Victoria, University of Colorado, University of Illinois, University of Michigan, University of Wyoming, and many others. More information can be found at www.emgonline.com.

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