

# OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT

where curious minds gather

- **A Comprehensive Approach to Member Recruitment and Retention**  
Based on Survey Findings



# Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT

Task Force charge:

Action Plan to promote long-term membership growth

- ▶ Attract new members and
- ▶ Retain current members

# Marketing Task Force Process

Research Surveys

Analysis of findings

Dual approach

# 3 Surveys

Former Members

Current Members

Prospective Members

# Marketing Task Force Process

## Dual approach

- ▶ Branding and comprehensive marketing campaign to attract new members.
- ▶ Programmatic, organizational or administrative changes that could positively impact member growth & retention

# Marketing Task Force Process

35 program improvement recommendations

# Branding and Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

Interactive process with *Brand / Cool Marketing*

Foundational branding effort

Marketing campaign & new marketing materials designed to attract new members.

# Branding

## Identification of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute “Brand.”

“Brand” refers to the essence of an organization.

## Brand

- ▶ What differentiates us from others.
- ▶ A description of our essential purpose.
- ▶ What we want people to think when they see or hear our name.

# Branding

## Brand Essence

- ▶ Curious, engaged lifelong learners

# Branding

## Brand Promise

Only Osher Lifelong Institute at RIT  
is a membership-based, member-led community  
of adults 50 and over, within RIT,  
that delivers intellectual stimulation  
and the opportunity for enriching relationships and experiences  
via education classes, travel and social events.

# Branding

## Brand Personality

- ▶ passionate
- ▶ experienced in life
- ▶ academic
- ▶ energetic
- ▶ social

# Branding

## Brand Personality

- ▶ adventurous
- ▶ creative
- ▶ active
- ▶ intelligent

## Written statements

- ▶ Tagline
  - Simple statement
  - Succinctly & powerfully communicates the essence of an organization

# Brand Identity

**OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT**  
where curious minds gather

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

Alternative marketing campaign themes or strategies.

Task Force decided to build a campaign based on the following idea:

Why do you belong at OSHER?

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

Idea: Why do you belong at OSHER?

Conceptual to visual

Marketing Products

- ▶ Promotional post cards

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

## Promotional Postcard Series



**Because your TV only talks at you,  
not with you**

There are a million and one reasons why you belong at Osher. Here are two more:

- Because you want to brush up on your Italian
- Because it's okay if the dog eats your homework

**OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT**  
because you belong where curious minds gather

FREE Catalog!

Schedule your own  
FREE Open House Week!

Visit our web site  
[www.Osher.RIT.edu](http://www.Osher.RIT.edu)

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

## Promotional Postcard Series



**Because you've always wondered  
"what's IN a black hole?"**

There are a million and one reasons why you belong at Osher. Here are two more:

- Because stimulating your gray matter matters
- Because you're fascinated with China, Chaucer, and Chickadees

**OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT**  
because you belong where curious minds gather

Osher Course Preview  
September 10 & 11

Osher Open House Week  
September 17 - 20  
(FREE classes!)

FREE catalog!



# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

## Promotional Postcard Series



Because you have  
**gifts of experience to share**

There are a million and one reasons why you belong at Osher. Here are two more:

- Because kids shouldn't have all the fun
- Because you're tired of small talk

**OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT**  
because you belong where curious minds gather

Osher Course Preview  
September 10 & 11

Osher Open House Week  
September 17 - 20  
(FREE classes!)

FREE catalog!



# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

## Course Catalog



# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

Redesigned web site

Home Page

<http://osher.rit.edu>

The screenshot shows the homepage of the OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT. The header features the RIT logo and navigation links: Home, Membership, Programs, Calendar, People, Get Involved, and About Us. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Spring Session 2008 begins March 31**: Includes a link to request a free catalog.
- Visit us for Osher Course Preview**: Announces a preview on March 26, 2:00 – 3:30 pm.
- Sit in for FREE during Osher Open House Week**: Scheduled for March 31-April 3.
- Subscribe email updates**: A button to receive updates.
- Come for the courses! Stay for the people!**: Promotes the variety of courses and activities.
- Register for courses**: A button to sign up.
- Our people have one thing in common**: Highlights the diverse backgrounds of members.
- Travel with us**: Promotes travel opportunities with Osher at RIT.
- Membership in OSHER**: Details the benefits of joining.
- We're led by members**: Encourages member involvement in running committees and volunteering.
- Join OSHER**: A button to become a member.
- Easy to find, easy to park**: Provides location information at the Athenaeum Building.
- Read today's news**: A button to view the latest news.

The footer contains the OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute logo and a brief description of the organization's mission and offerings.

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

Redesigned web site

Membership Page

<http://osher.rit.edu>

The screenshot shows the website for OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT. The header features the RIT logo and navigation links. The main heading reads "OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT where curious minds gather". A prominent quote states, "Because you would have loved school if there had been no exams". Below this, a navigation menu lists sections like Home, Membership, Programs, and About Us. The central content area is titled "Osher: it's where you belong" and includes a "Join OSHER" button. A testimonial from a woman is featured, along with a "Read today's news" button. The right sidebar lists various benefits such as "Additional benefits", "RIT Student Identification Card", "RIT Liberal Arts Courses", and "Audiology Services".

**RIT** Home RIT A-Z Site Index RIT Degrees RIT Search

## OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT

where curious minds gather

Because you would have loved school if there had been no exams

there are a million and one reasons why you belong at OSHER... **reason #7,482**

- Home
- Membership
- Types of Membership
- Course Preview
- Open House Week
- Join Osher
- Programs
- Calendar
- People
- Get Involved
- About Us

### Osher: it's where you belong

We welcome you to OSHER, where curious minds gather. Members tell us they come for the intellectual stimulation of the courses and activities, and they stay for the people.

It's a relaxed and informal atmosphere. We share knowledge, spark ideas, inspire new thinking, and forge friendships. No tests or pressures...just the sheer joy of learning.

We offer up to 15 courses per day, from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm, Mondays through Thursdays. Other activities are scheduled throughout the week—but generally not on weekends or evenings.

**Read today's news**

**And then there are the additional benefits!** Membership in Osher entitles you to a number of perks and privileges.

**RIT Student Identification Card.** A pass to RIT campus facilities, your ID card entitles you to student admission rates for campus events, check-out privileges at the RIT Library, and student discounts at the Campus Bookstore. Save hundreds on computer hardware and software! Good for student discounts around town, too. Regular Membership only.

**RIT Liberal Arts Courses.** The opportunity to audit or listen in to about 100 RIT liberal arts courses. Hang out with a younger crowd, and still no exams! Singular Membership only, eligibility begins the second year. Read more about RIT Liberal Arts Courses or download a PDF Course Catalog.

**Audiology Services.** State-of-the-art hearing evaluation and hearing aid service and purchase are available through RIT's National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at significant savings. Regular Membership only, during the school year, September through mid-May. Read more about our Audiology Services.

**Osher Gallery.** Work of art by members are displayed on a rotating basis at The Athenaeum Building. Enjoy—or exhibit your own. Read about the current Art Gallery Show

**Join OSHER**

*"I tell people...that Osher is a wonderful place, that the courses are interesting, and the people are even more interesting."*

### What kind of membership suits you?

There are only two criteria for joining Osher: you must be 50 or older, and you must have a curious mind!

We offer two levels of membership to suit different needs:

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

Redesigned web site

Home Page

<http://osher.rit.edu>

The screenshot shows the home page of the OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT. The header features the RIT logo and navigation links. The main banner includes the text "OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT where curious minds gather" and a quote: "Because now you're ready to read Shakespeare, and listen to Shostakovich". Below this is a navigation menu with links like Home, Membership, Programs, Courses, etc. The main content area is titled "Programs" and features a photo of a man with the quote: "It's the ideas and the stimulation...and also a group of people who make growing old look good! Truly they are very, very bright...and they are interested in the world and knowledgeable and exciting." There are also sections for "Courses" and "Ways to try out Osher" with a "Contact us" button.

RIT Home RIT A-Z Site Index RIT Degrees RIT Search

## OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT

where curious minds gather

Because now you're ready to read Shakespeare, and listen to Shostakovich

there are a million and one reasons why you belong at OSHER... reason #329

- Home
- Membership
- Programs
- Courses
- Course List
- Register For Courses
- Pfautler Enrichment Series
- Summer Seminar & Intersessions
- Social Activities
- Travel
- RIT Liberal Arts Classes
- Osher Gallery
- Calendar
- People
- Get Involved
- About Us

### Programs

**Curious minds = a fascinating array of programs**

From "The Charm of Strange Quarks" to "The History of Jazz," from "Henry IV" to "Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince," from 50's dances to trips to the Philadelphia Flower Show, activity at Osher spans an enormous range of interests.



*"It's the ideas and the stimulation...and also a group of people who make growing old look good! Truly they are very, very bright...and they are interested in the world and knowledgeable and exciting."*

### Courses

Courses form the core of our activities, and cover the arts, mathematics and finance, history, current events, government, language and literature, science and technology—plus whatever other topic sparks an interest among members.

Our 40+ offerings per term range from one-session courses for those who like big ideas in small packages to courses that meet weekly over the entire 8-week session. We encourage interactivity and discussion in every class. New this year are Peer Group Seminars, where class members are asked to participate in leading as well as learning.

Courses vary every session, depending on who wants to lead what. [Read more.](#) View a detailed [Course Schedule](#).

Want to lead a course? Share your gifts of experience—or dive into something new.

### Ways to try out Osher

Don't take our word for it...try us out. There are a number of ways to experience Osher for free:

**Osher Course Preview**  
Join us March 26 from 2 to 3:30 pm for a brief introduction to Osher and a sample of several of our Spring Session courses. Call us at 585-292-6989; or email us to reserve a place.

**Osher Open House Week**  
March 31-April 3, 9:30 am to 3:30 pm. All of our classes during the first week of the Spring Session are open to you. Come for one or many! View the entire [Course Schedules](#).

Create your own open house if your schedule doesn't quite fit our Open House schedule, [contact us](#). We'll help you put together your own free Osher experience.



[Contact us](#)

*"There is always something new to think about. And the courses are fantastic. I'm a charter member of the Harry Potter Club. To study that...it's not just a child's book. You learn significant things."*

**Free catalog!**  
You can find all of our information on this web site, but if you'd prefer a free, printed catalog, [send us an email](#). We'll put a catalog in the mail right away.

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

## Print Newspaper Ad



**Because your TV only talks at you, not with you**

**OSHER** is a membership-led organization that stimulates minds and forges friendships among people 50 and older. Our days are filled with classes, discussions, talks, social events, and travel—but never exams.

*Founded in 1987 as **The Athenaeum** at Rochester Institute of Technology.*

<b>Check us out!</b> Our Spring Session begins March 31	<b>FREE Course Preview</b> Wednesday, March 26 2 to 3:30 pm
<b>FREE Open House Week</b> Monday, March 31– Thursday, April 3 9:30 am to 3:30 pm	<b>FREE Catalog</b> 292-8989 or email us at Osher.Info@RIT.edu



**Reserve your place! 292-8989**

**OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT**  
where curious minds gather

**R·I·T**  
The Athenaeum Building | 150 Research Blvd. | Rochester, NY 14623  
585-292-8989 | Osher.RIT.edu | email: Osher.Info@RIT.edu

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

## Cinema Screen Advertising



**Why do you belong at OSHER?  
Because one good mind  
deserves another  
(and another...and another)**

Join **OSHER!** Stimulating minds and forging friendships among people 50+ with classes, travel, social events... but never exams!

**OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT**  
where curious minds gather

**R·I·T** 292-8989 | [Osher.RIT.edu](http://Osher.RIT.edu)

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

Conceptual to Visual

Redesigned "Osher Announcements" Newsletter



# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

:60 Radio Spots



# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

## Results of Campaign

- ▶ Fall 2007
- ▶ Membership static at 375
- ▶ Net growth of 55
- ▶ Enrollment went from 375 to 430

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

## Results of Campaign

- ▶ Winter 2008
- ▶ Net growth of 27
- ▶ Enrollment went from 430 to 457

# Comprehensive Marketing Campaign

Spring 2008?

- ▶ Have attracted new members
- ▶ But, what about retention?

# Program Recommendations

Analysis of survey findings

Development of 35 recommendations designed to improve our overall program

# Program Recommendations

Courses

Member Issues

Communications

Other Osher Programs

Organization and Governance

New Member Recruitment

# Program Recommendations

## Courses

- ▶ Our top priority
- ▶ Most important finding...

Dis-enrollment can be reduced if we continue development of new, interesting and varied courses.

# Program Recommendations

## Courses

- ▶ Our major creative challenge
- ▶ New proactive approach to new course development

# Program Recommendations

## Courses

- ▶ New approach based on formation of interest groups of members in four areas:

# Program Recommendations

1. Math/Science/Technology/Medicine
2. Arts and Literature
3. Social Sciences/Humanities
4. Languages/Film/General Studies

# Program Recommendations

Other program enhancements implemented in response to survey findings...

# Program Recommendations

Summer courses to be introduced in summer of 2008

# Program Recommendations

## New Course Feedback Form

Gives all members opportunity to offer comments, suggestions, ideas to course leaders

# Program Recommendations

## Member Issues

- ▶ Ways to support new and current members

# Program Recommendations

## Member Issues

- ▶ Member retention
  - 30% of former members reported  
“not feeling welcome”

# Program Recommendations

Every new member assigned a Peer Contact

- ▶ Answer questions
- ▶ Help them feel comfortable



# Program Recommendations

## Installment payment option

- ▶ Allows members to spread membership fee payment over the year

## Partial scholarship program

- ▶ \$75 toward \$265 annual dues

# Program Recommendations

## Improved Internal Communications

- ▶ Redesigned newsletter, *Osher Announcements*
- ▶ Osher Email
- ▶ Osher at RIT web site - expanded member content

# Program Recommendations

## Improved Internal Communications

- ▶ Informal Q&A sessions Council Chair & Council members – each term.
- ▶ Ongoing use of short focused surveys to obtain member opinions and preferences.

# Program Recommendations

## Improved Internal Communications

- ▶ **New Osher Member Guide**
  - Detailed step-by-step guide to getting the most from Osher at RIT membership.

# Program Recommendations

## New Types of Social Events

- ▶ Away from large “theme” parties to more informal gatherings.
- ▶ Principal focus on personal interaction.

# Program Recommendations

Planning initiated to broaden the scope of travel opportunities

- ▶ Suggested travel options
  - Partner relationships with RIT Alumni Office
  - Opportunities with other Osher programs
  - Elderhostel Charter Programs

# Program Recommendations

## New Member Recruitment

- ▶ Prospective member e-mail communications system
  - Periodic information
    - ◆ Reminders of benefits
    - ◆ Notices of special events
    - ◆ Next course preview session
    - ◆ New course offerings

# Osher at RIT Action Plan

- ▶ Attract new members and
- ▶ Retain current members

# Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT

Work in progress

Our goal:

- ▶ through marketing,
- ▶ member-focused program improvements
- ▶ development of new, engaging and challenging courses

# Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT

- ▶ Continue to attract new members
- ▶ Reduce drop-outs
- ▶ Sustain an optimal enrollment of 500 active members

# OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute at RIT

where curious minds gather

- **A Comprehensive Approach to Member Recruitment and Retention**  
Based on Survey Findings

