

Charge to the ISU Extension Marketing Task Force

Thank you for agreeing to serve on this Iowa State University Extension Marketing Task Force. The need to better market Iowa State University Extension is great. Too many Iowans don't know who we are and what we do. Having good work go unrecognized is almost as bad as not doing the work at all.

To that end, Extension Marketing has been identified as a mission critical initiative. Your participation in this project will help shape the direction of our marketing efforts.

The American Marketing Association defines marketing as "an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering **value** to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders."

The key word here is value. I truly believe that Iowa State University Extension has value for the people of Iowa. I asked you to be part of this task force because I believe you share this view. **Establishing Extension's broader value increases its relevance.** And it is relevance that creates our programs and provides each of us with our marching orders. It is relevance that will make or break us as an organization. **In essence, relevance is the fuel that fires the engines of Extension.**

So let me ask you this question: How many times have you heard the comment, "I didn't know that Extension did that"? It's usually in reference to a program that isn't associated with agriculture or 4-H, right? Extension has a rich history and a good reputation in 4-H and ag. We all know that that Extension is much more than ag, but **we** are in the minority.

For instance, when people think of economic development, they don't usually think of Extension. These days economic development has become a mantra in Iowa. Elections were fought and won based on promises of economic development, so politicians of all flavors are making it a big part of their daily sound bites.

The truth of the matter is that Extension and economic development have been operating cheek and jowl for many years. Extension has a long history of providing access to technical expertise and helping to attract and retain businesses in a community. Moreover, Extension has continuously cut across all areas of economic development to incorporate quality of life issues including environmental and recreational amenities and social infrastructure.

For Extension, economic development is a fundamental element of sustaining its relevance and value to its varied audiences. Ladies and gentlemen, I submit that **with the right marketing, when people think of economic development, they will automatically think of Extension.**

That's why I have asked you to serve on this Iowa State University Extension Marketing Task Force. I'm confident your work will help us position Iowa State University Extension as a valued leader in **economic development across the state.**

I've brought you together to be a short-term, advisory group. Your charge is to provide counsel in the marketing methodologies that Mark¹ will share with you today. I have carefully reviewed this plan and I'm very excited about the innovative approach of focusing on ISU Extension and Iowa's business and industry market segment in order to raise the level of awareness for the rest of Extension. I ask that you provide support and guidance for those who will carry out this project.

As an MTF member you will be asked to

- Ensure that we meet our key stakeholders' requirements.
- Help us balance conflicting priorities and resources.
- Provide guidance to the project team and users of the project's outputs.
- Foster positive communication outside of this task force regarding the project's progress and outcomes.
- Review the progress of the project, and ensure that we follow best practices both within the organization and in a wider context.
- Be advocates for the resulting marketing efforts

As an MTF member, you will *not* be asked to

- Make the final decisions.
- Be responsible for managing any projects that come about as a result.

Unless you have any questions, I will turn this meeting over to Mark so he can fill you in on the details. Thank you again for your participation. I look forward to working with you.

¹ Mark Settle, ISU Extension Director of Communications and External Relations