**Memorandum**

TO: Alan George, Associate Provost, IST

FROM: Web Advisory Committee

RE: PROPOSED POLICY ON ‘ADVERTISING ON UW WEB SPACE’

DATE: February 18, 2010

From the May 20, 2009 Web Advisory Committee (WAC) meeting minutes:

"Alan George has made a request that WAC investigate the issue of advertisements on UW web pages. Clear definitions need to be written with regards to a sponsorship as opposed to advertisement links.

“A Sub-Committee was struck including Kelly Teahen, Karen Jack and Kevin Paxman. The Sub-committee will investigate existing policies and consider writing a policy on advertising on UW pages if necessary.”

The sub-committee:

1) briefly considered what advertising there is at UW

2) reviewed what other universities have in place in terms of policy (They vary from having nothing in place to having very strict rules. “Athletics” seems to be treated specially by most universities, no matter what advertising rules they have in place.)

3) brought a draft ‘policy’ to the October WAC meeting for input

The process revealed that there are a variety of ways advertising is used at UW; it is not limited to the web. Thus, we believe that rules about ‘advertising on the web’ should reside within a broader advertising policy; one which does not currently exist. The creation of such a policy is beyond the scope of WAC.

Thus, WAC makes the following recommendations:

That:

1) a comprehensive policy re: advertising at UW be considered by Executive Council or other appropriate body

2) if proceeding, the appropriate stakeholders be identified for consultation  
(our initial recommendations: associate provost, student services [athletics, theatre centre, student life centre, student life, etc]; vice-president external relations [communications & public affairs, advancement services, alumni affairs, etc]; director, business operations [food services, graphics, housing & residences, retail services, etc]; associate provost, IST; vice-president, university research; student ‘teams’ [e.g., Midnight Sun Solar Car Team])

3) our draft text below be used as a starting point (and the basis of the ‘advertising on the web’ section of the policy)

**Representative comments and questions we received and our response:**

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| * this whole policy needs to be more robust and clear * also a suggestion to differentiate for-profit and not-for-profit advertising | Agree. Believe a broad policy will address these issues.  The advertising definition needs work. Perhaps adding “in exchange for money, products, and / or services”? Needs further consideration.  Consideration should be given to the services or products that might be inappropriate to advertise at UW (e.g., alcoholic beverages). |
| * the introduction needs an explanatory ‘preamble’ | Agree. Believe a broad policy will address. |
| * a suggestion to add an appendix of pre-approved ‘advertising’ | Agree that this might be useful. |
| * issues:  1. “The various student teams all get sponsorship to pay their way.” 2. “Vendor software down-loads, video courses, technical or user documentation, print drivers. Naturally we would LINK to their pages rather than infringe on their copyright by rebroadcasting, or not offer the benefit of these pages to our user community.” 3. “Open source software installation, which often displays project icons / vendor marks.” | We agree that all of these interests / groups need to be considered. Having overarching advertising principles should resolve some of these issues.  The consultation part of the process will be helpful in identifying the various interests across campus. |
| * Who does the policy apply to?  1. Does it apply to student societies or colleges which use UW web space? 2. Does it apply to official UW pages not housed on UW web space? | We believe that the process of devising the overarching advertising principles and scope of the policy will address these issues. |

**Suggested section within potential advertising policy on ‘advertising on the web’:**

**INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE**

This policy applies to any official UW website hosted at an external domain, and all websites in the uwaterloo.ca domain except those which belong to external separately incorporated organizations (e.g., university colleges).

Content on any University of Waterloo (UW) website must be for information purposes or related to the mission of the university. Advertising for profit purposes or content posted in exchange for financial gain is prohibited.

**DEFINITIONS**

Advertising is defined as the provision of information about and promotion of particular products.

Sponsorship recognition is the unadorned statement that a company or organization has provided support to a particular university activity.

Affinity partners are businesses or organizations with which the university has an established relationship to offer special and / or discounted services to UW alumni in return for revenue for alumni programs.

**ADVERTISING**

Sponsors of events, programs or research projects may be recognized only by their name, logo and / or link to their home page on a UW website related to that particular event, program or research project.

Private sector or profit-making organizations are prohibited from advertising on any UW website, unless they are recognized sponsors or affinity partners of the university, as determined by the Vice-President External Relations, or Vice-President, University Research, or their respective delegates, and that the Vice-President or delegate approves the advertising proposed, and its placement.

Links on UW web and portal pages to outside organizations from which the university has purchased a product (e.g., software) is prohibited unless approved by the Vice-President External Relations, or delegate.

Print pieces that are reproduced on the web (for example, a PDF or Flash version of a magazine) may contain advertising, as long as the entirety of the print piece is reproduced and the ad is not modified in look or function from the print piece in any way.