

Students create ways to reach people like them



CLAY OWEN/KNOXVILLE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Moll Anderson, CEO of Moll Anderson Home and author of "Change Your Home, Change Your Life," at her company's headquarters in West Knoxville.

"Marketing Strategy Frameworks" at the University of Tennessee College of Business Administration is a junior-level required course for undergraduate marketing students. The course instructs students on such concepts as market opportunity analysis, segmentation/targeting and product positioning, as well as understanding the role of branding and brand equity in formulating strategies.

The students are challenged to think beyond the traditional "four Ps" of tactical marketing — product, price, place and promotion — in creating, delivering and communicating value to customers.

Moll Anderson Home partnered with the class, hoping students could help the company better understand Generation Y members and ways to target them.

As founder and CEO of Moll Anderson Home, Moll Anderson's trademark is melding design skills with her motivational philosophy.

An Emmy-winning entertainment reporter, Anderson has appeared on television networks including ABC, Scripps and Style. Author of the book "Change Your Home, Change Your Life," Anderson has been described

"I wanted to see what these bright minds could offer our company in terms of insight into the Gen-Y mind and ways to target them — a real win-win."

Moll Anderson,
CEO of Moll Anderson Home

MOLL ANDERSON HOME

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as a hybrid of Dr. Phil and Martha Stewart. She has a music label, is producing a pilot for a TV series and is developing several Moll Anderson Home product lines.

Course lecturer Mark Collins directed 189 students taking the course and participants in three subsequent student-driven, competitive "think tanks."

Students competed for an all-expenses-paid overnight trip to New York City, provided by Anderson, to view a live broadcast of "Good Morning America," and the chance to implement their campaign.

The approach: Earlier this year, Anderson spoke to the marketing strategy students to encourage them to apply for internships at Moll Anderson Home. She spoke about her background, the Moll Anderson brand and the challenges of branding an individual. The students flooded the company with resumes.

To help her choose, Anderson opted to provide them with a hands-on experience, and the "think tanks" were born. The company hosted three different sessions for students; each think tank was given a different challenge.

VIRAL MARKETING

Challenge: Create viral marketing campaigns on the Internet that upheld the image of Moll Anderson Home and instilled brand value. Campaigns conveyed a clear message of what the brand Moll Anderson represents using reliable and creative means.

Winning Team: Jonathan Goodwin, Erin Maloney and Megan Bryan

Winning campaign: Create and launch a Moll Anderson Home Gen-Y-market podcast centered around Moll's philosophy, "Change Your Home, Change Your Life." The group presented estimated costs of set-up and maintenance for the proposed podcast, including equipment, cast and crew.

DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Challenge: Create marketing campaigns geared toward a specific and assigned demographic group. Campaigns should immediately grab the attention of the targeted demographic and drive them to explore more of the Moll Anderson Home brand.

Winning team: Amber Park, Ashley Owen and Erin Maloney

Winning campaign: Inform college students that they have the capability to improve their quality of life by making small changes in their living surroundings. The test market will begin at the University of Tennessee's Knoxville campus, with plans to expand nationally. The team submitted research regarding campaign costs as well as statistics of the target demographic.

BRAND IDENTITY

Challenge: Create a campaign that encompasses Moll Anderson's philosophy "Change Your Home, Change Your Life," emphasizing that she offers more than interior design "how-to" advice, but is a motivational lifestyle expert, too.

Winning Team: Katherine Sass, Cynthia Sparks, Amber Park and Heather Sage

Winning campaign: Use television as the main platform for brand identification using the message, "Moll Anderson is a rescuer of your time, money and sanity. She takes everyday lifestyle problems and solves them using inexpensive, commonsense solutions that will motivate you to motivate yourself."