

ImPRessions

Leave Your Mark.

Ohio University's student-run public relations firm
Chief Executive Officer-Mary Krouse

Backgrounder

IMPRESSIONS OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOTH CLIENTS AND ASSOCIATES

The Public Relations Student Society of America is the student affiliate of the Public Relations Society of America. PRSSA was started on Nov. 11, 1967, when J. Carroll Bateman was president of PRSA. This decision was the product of many discussions, ideas and recommendations. PRSA decided that it was better to provide education to future public relations practitioners, rather than have them lose sight of what PR means.

ImPRessions is an extension of Ohio University's PRSSA chapter. The firm was created to provide a learning experience for students, and to provide pro-bono PR for local companies and organizations. The purpose of ImPRessions is to provide education, experience and service in the public relations field. ImPRessions is a student-run PR firm that is modeled after professional PR firms; there is a CEO, account supervisors, account executives and account members.

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Several years ago, the ImPRessions executive board considered charging for their services, but then decided to remain a nonprofit to avoid sacrificing clients that could not afford to pay a fee, yet still provided a quality experience for firm members. The firm was reopened in 2000, after a thorough restructuring. ImPRessions strives to offer students a learning experience, while still offering top-quality services to its clients. This is made possible through the “PR for Dummies” workshop.

Because no experience is necessary to be a member of ImPRessions, many members have little or no experience in the PR field. A workshop, “PR for Dummies,” is held every year, once a week for four weeks. During this time, students learn the basics of PR. They learn to write press releases, backgrounders and fact sheets. Examples are handed out to serve as templates for future use. Members also learn how to put together a press kit, pitch to the media and plan special events. This workshop was started in 2002 by former CEO, Shannon Stucky. Once students complete the workshops, they are better prepared to serve ImPRessions’ clients.

ImPRessions has won the PRSSA Dr. F.H. Teahan award for Most Outstanding Firm in the Nation four times: 1994, 1997, 2003, 2005. The Teahan award is within reach of the ImPRessions firm, yet again.

ImPRessions is well prepared to compete for this award. With 11 accounts this year, a new Web site, new merchandise, an experienced CEO and a hard-working staff, ImPRessions is well on its way to its fifth Teahan award.

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Other goals for the firm this year include t-shirt sales, the completion of the Web site, a more appealing newsletter, branding of the firm as a whole and assembling a press kit. ImPRessions will soon be even closer to emulating a professional PR firm once it has designed business cards, letterhead and a brochure.

When the school year ends and many of the account supervisors and account executives graduate, the executive board hopes to leave behind a solid foundation for the future of ImPRessions.