



Northwestern Michigan College

Expanded Brand Platform

August 6, 2024

Brand Platform

NMC's brand platform will serve as a foundation and reference point for all marketing and communication efforts, ensuring they are aligned with the brand's core values and messaging, and creating a strong emotional connection with key audiences. It also helps distinguish the brand in situations where they have multiple educational opportunities and life choices vying for their attention.

The recommendations provided in this document are based on discovery and research and are the basis of a powerful brand platform for Northwestern Michigan College.

Brand Success Lens

- Sustainability – Will the brand platform stand the test of time? Does it align with NMC strategic plan?
- Financial impact
 - Build up the brand?
 - Grow the volume?
 - Help meet the margin?
- Market position – Does it contribute to the survival of the college?
- Breakthrough creative – Will it inspire visual design and messaging that stands out?
- Inspirational – Will it move people to engage emotionally and intellectually with the college?

Brand Platform

Our Promise



Northwestern
Michigan
College

Inspire minds through innovation,
engagement, exceptional opportunities,
and unparalleled experiences.

Brand Platform

Brand Pillar – 1

Distinguished Academic Programs

NMC is renowned for its successful and highly specialized programs, some of which have a direct advantage of the college's Grand Traverse Bay, Lake Michigan location.

Reasons to Believe

- **Great Lakes Maritime Academy:** GLMA is the only freshwater maritime program in the country. It is nationally recognized and sought out by prospective students both in and outside the region. Graduates emerge with a Bachelor of Science degree, prepared for well-paying, high-demand jobs in ship navigation and piloting, or management of ship engines and mechanical operations.
- **Great Lakes Water Studies Institute:** GLWSI offers innovative programs in Marine Technology, Freshwater Studies, and Water Quality & Environmental Technology. Students earn Bachelor of Science or Associate of Science and Arts degrees, including the state's first Wet Tech degree.
- **Great Lakes Culinary Institute:** GLCI offers a broad array of degrees and certificates for aspiring cooks and chefs, including a one-of-a-kind culinary-maritime certificate focused on cooking aboard a ship.
- **Aviation:** The popular flight training program is considered among the best in the state. It is the only aviation program at a Michigan 2-year college and continues to grow through planned expansion that will help relieve the current wait list. Students, including a flourishing group of women in aviation, pursue degree options in programs known for their instructional excellence. Upon graduation they are prepared to pilot private, commercial, and uncrewed aircraft — all while taking advantage of unique opportunities to pilot trips using NMC planes and seaplanes.
- **Nursing:** NMC offers the largest nurse training program in Northern Michigan. The accredited program includes a Practical Nursing certification or an Associate Degree in Nursing, providing high caliber education that prepares motivated students for high demand careers in health care.

Brand Platform

Brand Pillar – 2

Culture of Innovation

Innovation is propelling the future at NMC, aligning unique programs with emerging technologies and industries in Northern Michigan and beyond.

Reasons to Believe

- **Leadership and partnership in the blue tech economy:** With the Great Lakes in its backyard, NMC is positioned to be at the forefront of the region's development as a blue tech economy, helping to drive economic growth and establish the Grand Traverse Region and Michigan as the global hub for applied freshwater innovation. 20Fathoms, a tech startup organization in Traverse City, has seen positive results and is a well-suited partner for NMC in the tech ecosystem being built in the region.
- **Training for high-demand tech jobs:** GLWSI is located on a waterfront campus that features educational and training programs focused on Environmental Science, as well as Marine Technology, hydrologic, geospatial technologies. They're training students for high-demand jobs, with above average salaries, utilizing state-of-the-art equipment.
- **World-class equipment and resources:** Programs are supported with highly specialized equipment and resources like multibeam sonars, remotely-operated marine vehicles, the *State of Michigan* training ship, and several aircraft including a seaplane and drones. Students have opportunities to contribute to unique projects utilizing underwater technology and mapping the Great Lakes.
- **Experiential learning:** NMC is committed to hands on learning, backed by the Experiential Learning Institute. In addition to efforts on campus, the institute works with community stakeholders to create partnerships that connect NMC faculty and students with opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, service learning, and extracurricular activities.
- **Office of Possibilities:** This initiative is supported by NMC and the NMC Foundation to work within the college and community as an idea incubator toward the vision of driving innovation via new ideas and partnerships that result in impactful change.

Brand Platform

Brand Pillar – 3

Purposeful Education Pathways

NMC provides excellent education and exceptional value for a broad range of opportunities from certificates to advanced degrees.

Reasons to Believe

- **University Center:** Through partnerships with five well-established Michigan universities, the NMC University Center provides advanced degree opportunities for students through select programs that offer bachelor's degree completion as well as master's, doctorate, certificates and endorsements.
- **Other advanced degrees:** Programs in the GLMA and the GLWSI offer bachelor's degrees in select areas of study.
- **Transferability:** For students interested in transferring to a 4-year program, NMC has established agreements with many Michigan universities, and offers challenging academic programs that prepare them for continued rigorous training. In fact, NMC students are coveted and recruited by schools due to their reputation for being well-prepared for the next step. NMC's relatively low tuition provides a fantastic way to jump start their education without taking on encumbering debt.
- **Skill training:** NMC offers technical programs that get people trained and into the workforce with efficiency. For those already in the workforce, NMC is a place to come for enhanced skill training. In many cases there is great value in training for a trade and/or earning certificates that qualify people for specific jobs or advancement, with no degree requirements.
- **Exceptional faculty and staff:** NMC boasts numerous caring and highly qualified faculty and staff, many of whom are attracted to the college because they want to live, teach, and work in beautiful Northern Michigan.

Brand Platform

Brand Pillar – 4

Community Cornerstone

Established by citizens fueled by a desire for higher education in the Grand Traverse region, NMC is a critical resource for area residents and the business community.

Reasons to Believe

- **Lifelong learning opportunities:** NMC is seen as the community's college and is a connection point for education at all stages of life — a destination after high school, a transition to gain skills for career advancement, or to come back years later to pursue personal enrichment.
- **True partner to the business community:** Business leaders can count on NMC to respond to specific needs through quick and nimble launch of programs to train needed workers with the right skills.
- **Support for growth:** NMC encourages success through programs that teach students to think as entrepreneurs, with the goal of spawning successful ventures in the region.
- **Cultural leadership:** Exposure to the greater world is part of the NMC experience. The school sponsors international programs that send students out to learn and experience areas of interest in other cultures and bringing those experiences back to share with the NMC community. Student-led organizations are thriving and offer opportunities for students of different cultures to share interests and experiences. The Denno's Museum intersects and engage with culturally and demographically diverse audiences. NMC is home to the International Affairs Forum, a leading community resource on critical issues facing the world.
- **Leading employer:** NMC's success is the community's success. With over 650 faculty and staff on the combined Traverse City campuses, NMC is a top three employer in the Grand Traverse region.

Brand Platform

Brand Character

- Innovative
- Unique
- Nurturing
- Collaborative
- Inclusive



Brand Platform



Our Promise

Inspire minds through innovation, engagement, exceptional opportunities, and unparalleled experiences.

Character

- Innovative • Unique • Nurturing
- Collaborative • Inclusive

Distinguished Academic Programs (Brand Pillar)

NMC is renowned for its successful and highly specialized programs, some of which have a direct advantage of the college's Grand Traverse Bay, Lake Michigan location.

Culture of Innovation (Brand Pillar)

Innovation is propelling the future at NMC, aligning unique programs with emerging technologies and industries in Northern Michigan and beyond.

Purposeful Education Pathways (Brand Pillar)

NMC provides excellent education and exceptional value for a broad range of opportunities from certificates to advanced degrees.

Community Cornerstone (Brand Pillar)

Established by citizens fueled by a desire for higher education in the Grand Traverse region, NMC is a critical resource for area residents and the business community.

Brand Ethos



Nestled next to the stunning shores of Grand Traverse Bay, Northwestern Michigan College goes beyond traditional education and sparks innovation. Its influence reaches far beyond the campus, enriching the region's economic and social fabric.

Students at all stages are encouraged to pursue their interests and are equipped to enhance their lives. Whether underwater, above the clouds or anywhere in between, NMC serves as the foundation for nurturing future ambitions.

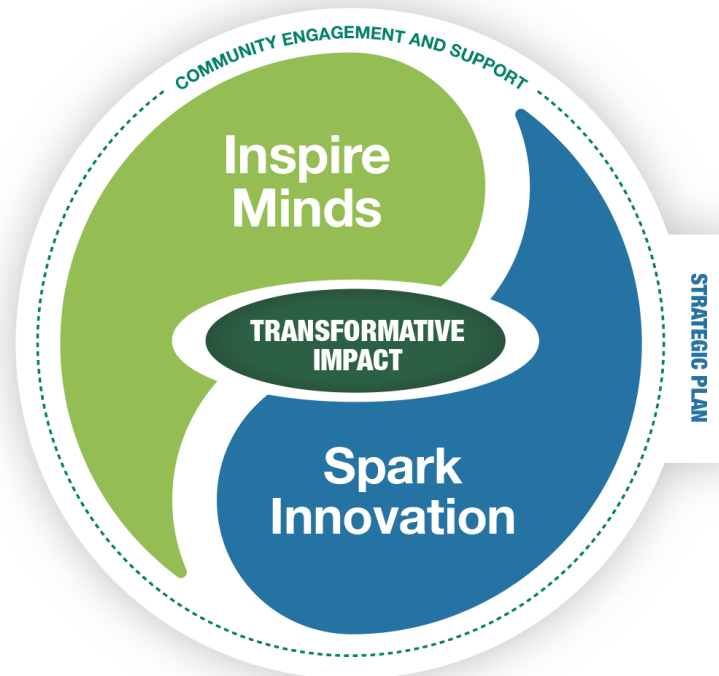
This is NMC, where the integration of education, innovation, and the natural environment underscores the interconnectedness of these elements and demonstrates how progress in one area can positively impact others — and our world.

Centering Idea



Transformative Impact

At the heart of our brand lies our commitment to inspire minds and nurture learning. At NMC, we're dedicated to creating an environment where innovation thrives, engagement is intentional, opportunities are abundant, and experiences can be life-changing.



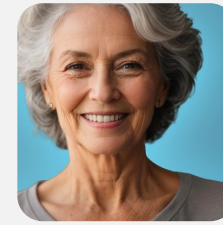
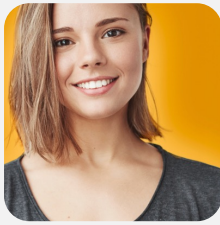
The brand platform and centering idea are timeless and will serve as the brand's guiding light for years to come. *Transformative Impact* will inspire us to develop the campaign theme as a current, contemporary expression of this thought.

Message Guide

The message guide is designed to align high-level key messages with NMC's brand platform, and to provide direction that encourages consistency and clarity across all communications.

A critical role will be to guide development of the theme and messaging associated with our upcoming creative campaign.

Message Guide



Audiences

Brand Pillars

Prospective Student
Traditional HS
Dual Enrolled

Prospective Student
Interest in
Non-traditional College

Prospective Student
Returning to College

Non-credit Student
Community Member
Prospective Donor

Local Business Owner
Prospective Partner
Prospective Employer

Distinguished Academic Programs

Discover exceptional, highly specialized programs and an unparalleled college experience.

Chart a direct path to the career you want through our highly specialized programs.

Train for a fulfilling career through your dedication and hard work, supported by our high standards

Broaden your horizons and pursue your passions within our unique and vibrant setting.

Our highly specialized programs are cultivating a pipeline of skilled professionals for the region's distinct industries.

Culture of Innovation

Access the latest technology to advance your academic goals.

Experience hands on learning with world-class resources, and gain skills you need for a career in high-demand environmental tech fields.

Experience hands-on learning in high-demand fields through partnerships with the region's leading employers.

Be a catalyst in Grand Traverse region's future as a global innovation hub.

We're positioned to lead and form partnerships that advance the region's economic development.

Purposeful Education Pathways

Our rigorous academic programs will prepare you for advanced educational pursuits.

Achieve your qualifications and join the workforce efficiently and affordably.

Receive the encouragement and support you deserve to achieve your educational goals and flourish here.

Endless opportunities for lifelong learning are waiting for you.

Our trade training programs produce skilled and qualified candidates for the workforce.

Community Cornerstone

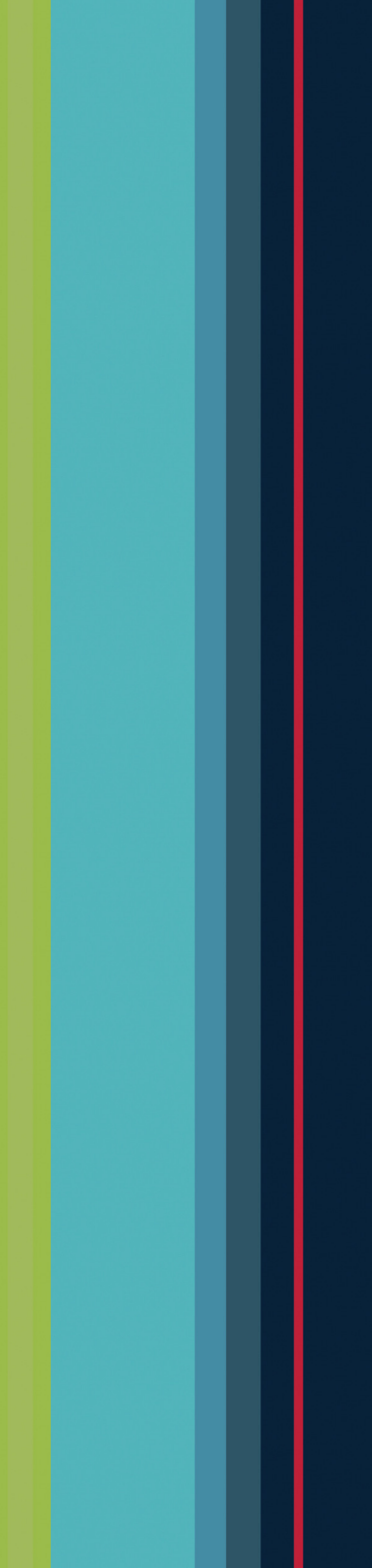
Your hometown college, equipped to help launch your bright future.

Be part of a vibrant, supportive community dedicated to helping you significantly impact your field.

We are your connection to training and education when you're ready to advance.

Align your passions here, where community collaboration is at the forefront of our continued success.

We are well-positioned to drive progress through effective collaboration with our local business community.



Next Steps

Aug 6 – Present key messages

August – Visual identity recommendations

September-November – Creative campaign development, brand guidelines

Thank You.

