



# PSE Pages

Pi Sigma Epsilon | Miami University



## Fall 2013 New Member Special Edition

This fall 27 new members were initiated into the PSE Miami family. Each team was given a different charge from Vineyard Vines, all of which supplemented the company's national marketing campaign. It was a busy couple of months filled with professional development activities, chapter bonding events, and more but both the chapter and the new members had a blast. Check out this special edition newsletter to learn about these awesome members.



# Letter from the VP of Prospective New Members

My favorite time of year has just wrapped up! It was another incredible semester of being the VP of Prospective Members. I feel so lucky to have been elected to this position for the fact I get to work with the eager and driven new members. The position and the new member process has evolved over the years and I am thrilled to see it continuing in an upward direction.

This year we took 27 members, ranging from freshman to juniors, future accountants to future architects – without a doubt one of the most diverse classes to come through the Gamma Gamma chapter. The new members received hand-delivered prospective member invitations back in September. Their new member process was longer than a typical new member process because of the size and scope of their project with Vineyard Vines, a fifteen year clothing company that has been growing like crazy.

As you'll see in the project write-ups, the teams were each given a different task to complete. As you may know, in years past all teams are given the same prompt and the projects are treated as a competition. This year was slightly different since all teams worked on a different aspect to make the project more beneficial to the client, however we did maintain the competitive aspect to motivate the students.

The teams practiced their presentations in front of the Leadership Board and general members to gain feedback before presenting to the Leadership Board and Executives at Vineyard Vines. The projects were a hit and we are excited to get formal feedback from the company. The biggest concept that was pushed to the new members was to provide a "turn-key" solution for the client and I am confident that the 27 new members could not have done a better job.

A huge "thank you" goes to Sean Crowe, Nicole Onorato, and Kate Schumacher for assisting with the new member projects. Another change I had made during my term was making the project advisors all seniors with a lot of PSE and client facing experience. This made the process even more valuable for the new members to get that mentorship from that start – I am so grateful for their help!

Congratulations to all of the new members!

Taylor M. Darkoch



## Sean's Team

We were presented with the task of analyzing the Vineyard Vines website to identify the pros and cons of the site and provide suggestions for improvement. First, we conducted a baseline test analysis of the website using a forrester card, which told us we needed to take a closer look at the weaknesses involved with the navigation of the website. We used two tools to evaluate the navigation of the site: eye tracking software and a card sorting exercise. With the eye tracking software, provided by the Farmer School of Business, we conducted two tests on 11 total people. In the tests, participants searched for specific products and gave feedback on the usability. In the card sorting exercise, all 25 participants organized each individual tab on the website (labeled on index cards) in the manner they saw most fit. With the combined data, we were able to evaluate the general navigation and taxonomy of the website, leading us to offer our own specific suggestions for simpler categorization from the home page.

## Nicole's Team

Our project suggests ways of escalating Vineyard Vines' presence east of the Mississippi River by expanding into new markets of potential profit. It outlines potential new markets for Vineyard Vines to expand on the East Coast. Our pitch includes three possible locations in the Southeast that are visited by a significant population of current and prospective consumers. We derived that Hilton Head SC, Sarasota FL, and Marco Island FL, are top vacation destinations for Vineyard Vines' potential consumers. We offer specialized marketing plans for each of these locations as well as distribution suggestions pertaining to the venue of the merchandiser.

The second potential market we propose is that of fraternity and sorority clothing and accessories. The top ten colleges where Greek life is most prominent are located east of the the Mississippi River. This could be an especially lucrative market as seen from the success of similar clothing brands who provide specialized sorority wear (i.e. Lilly Pulitzer). Vineyard Vines currently provides clothing and accessories for seven of the nations' top sororities and no fraternities. We suggest a course of action for providing products to both fraternities and sororities in ways that would best appeal to students in the Greek community.



## Kate's Team

We were assigned the task of locating potential cities and markets for VV to enter into in the Western United States. After examining current trends in the clothing industry in the US, we immediately recognized the need for VV to expand West of the Mississippi. We started with the idea of increasing brand awareness on the West Coast and creating brick and mortar retail locations. To do this, we analyzed VV's successful stores' consumer demographics, the city's geographic features and other unique qualities. Then, we correlated past success to create future success for the brand. And finally, we developed a realistic marketing strategy to emerge into the Western United States.

We gathered secondary data on the Western United States and trends of the clothing industry. Also, we conducted primary research to determine the potential demand for the Vineyard Vines Clothing in the Western United States. Then, we identified what makes a successful Vineyard Vines market and city to suggest 4 potential cities for Vineyard Vines to enter into – San Francisco, California; Denver, Colorado; Scottsdale, Arizona; and Jackson Hole, Wyoming. After identifying specific locations of where potential retail stores should be located in these cities, we created unique and innovative suggestions for Vineyard Vines to enter these markets.

## Taylor's Team

Collaboratively as a group we set out to find another event that would expand Vineyard Vines market. We termed our mission as "finding the next Kentucky Derby." We approached our objective by conducting in-depth interviews, questionnaires, and market research. From the data we gathered we set out to find out markets that would break into new geographical areas and be beneficial to Vineyard Vines. Our surveys gave us a great starting point and ultimately, as a group, we decided on the Indianapolis 500, U.S. Open, and The Fort Lauderdale Boat Show.

We believed each event offered a unique opportunity for Vineyard Vines, and we further explained in detail why we chose each event. We compiled a SWOT for each event and did research into the demographics for the events. In addition, we suggested possible clothing options and potentially new clothing lines. After compiling all our data into a power point and document, we presented our information to Vineyard Vines over Skype.



## Carlos Pozeulo

“My favorite part of the new member process was definitely getting to know all of the members in the fraternity. The interview process was overwhelming and seemed to be very serious. However, once I was offered a bid and put into the new member process, I realized how awesome the other members are. I made great new friends that know how to work hard and play hard.”



## Nick Eaton

“My favorite part of the project was when we all came together at the end and presented our gathered information to VV's. It was exciting to finally show the company all the research we found. I also enjoyed seeing our document and presentations get made into official documents to be mailed to VV's. It taught me a lot about what I should expect in the future.”



## Amy Berg

“My favorite part of the project was getting to present to Vineyard Vines. As a freshman it was amazing to get the experience to work with such a large company at such a young age.”

