



JIMMY KAKISH

IGNITE Student Union Executive Director Ercole Perrone sitting front row during Wednesday's Special Meeting of the Members.

IGNITE contract questioned

Brandon Richard Austin, Tyler Bloomfield, Erian Amor De Los Reyes, Ken Kellar, Alana MacLeod

A key contract for a component of the controversial \$400,000 rebranding of the Humber Students' Federation (HSF) was awarded to a former classmate of HSF Executive Director Ercole Perrone, Humber News has learned.

The consulting contract was awarded to Hugh Ruthven, principal of Intuition Brand Planning, of Victoria, B.C., through a process that Perrone acknowledges did not involve a Request For Proposal (RFP) or any other "competitive proposal process."

Perrone who has been a paid staff member of HSF for almost 10 years confirmed his connection to Ruthven after Humber News discovered that the two men attended Royal Roads University in B.C. together and graduated at the same ceremony in 2011.

"When we weren't going to have much luck finding an external strategist who could provide us with the support that we needed, I went to Ahmed our President and James Pashutinski, who was our chairperson and declared a conflict of interest," said Perrone.

"I told them I knew of this indi-

vidual who I did my Master's with who does this for a living. I invited them to speak with Hugh and they made the decision."

IGNITE said its actions were compliant with its purchasing policy.

"You don't need to do an RFP as long as you have a competitive process where you're either interviewing companies or individuals or having them send in proposals and quotes," said Perrone in an interview. "So, we did all that. There certainly was a thorough process we did not do a quote, unquote, RFP though. There's a specific definition of what a RFP is. We didn't do that. We knew exactly what we wanted and we met with, consulted with, interviewed several people."

The hiring of Ruthven first came to light when IGNITE made a PowerPoint presentation to Humber's College Council in August where questions were raised about the high cost of the rebrand.

Ruthven has worked in advertising and marketing for more than 30 years. According to his LinkedIn, in the past he's worked with DDB Canada and McDonald's. Ruthven launched Intuition Brand Planning in 2003 and said he doesn't have a website because he gets most of his

business through referrals.

According to Ahmed Tahir, IGNITE's president, Ruthven was the consultant who conducted the preliminary research that would ultimately lead to the Humber Students' Federation's rebranding.

In an interview, Ruthven told Humber News that Perrone, whom he said he had not spoken to in three years, asked him for suggestions as to how he would conduct the research. "Then he came back to me and said, 'You know what sort of cost would be attached to that sort of thing?'" said Ruthven. "So then I estimated costs for each stage of the brand discovery."

Ruthven said at Perrone's request he submitted a five-page proposal.

Two weeks later, Ruthven said he received a phone call from a group of people, including Perrone and Tahir, who asked him to walk them through the proposal and posed several questions. It was during that phone call that Ruthven learned he was awarded the contract.

According to Ruthven, no mention was made of a conflict of interest to him at any point during the process.

When asked what exactly Ruthven did, Tahir said, "It's all about distilling what our brand is in a few key points. And then from there building

our names for the rest of the brands. So really reviewing and talking to students internally and externally to the organization to figure out what the brand means to them ... that will lead to setting a foundation to build up the rest of the name."

"We engaged the college and asked for some advice, had a variety of different names, spoke with a variety of different people," said Perrone. "At the end of the day, we went with Hugh Ruthven of Intuition Brand."

In a subsequent interview, Tahir confirmed that the decision to hire Ruthven was left to himself, IGNITE's Communication Director Natalie Bobyk and James Pashutinski and complied with HSF's purchasing policy.

The policy states that "HSF's procurement function shall be performed in an open, fair and transparent manner," and that "supplies, equipment and services must be acquired through a competitive process."

It further states that expenditures between \$1,001 and \$25,000, requires a minimum of three written quotes. Expenditures exceeding \$25,000 require a Formal Request for Proposal (RFP).

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A quick Google search of 'Ignite' reveals branding handle is remarkably common

Ignite

Humber's multimedia design and development/web design and interactive media students display their final projects, 2016

Microsoft Ignite

A conference series scheduled for 700+ sessions on September 25-29 on 2017 in Orlando Florida. Basically a bunch of TED talks by Microsoft about the innovation, structure, and future plans of the company.

ignite magazine (purposefully lowercase)

A Canadian magazine that has been in circulation since 2008 that sets out to inspire corporate travel planners. They pride themselves on being "absolutely unique."

Ignite Capital

Holds competition for small business startup fund aimed at helping aspiring Ontario entrepreneurs.

Ignite talks

A TED talk like series of presentations. These differ from Ted Talks in that the presenters only have 20 slides which change after 15 seconds.

IGNITE 2016

A Toronto City Mission initiative that was held on Tuesday April 19, 2016. Its purpose was to highlight the importance of volunteering and building community relationships.

Ignite (Spark Centre)

An "entrepreneurial journey," similar to Ignite Capital that looks to be the SPARK that lights the flame to the young innovative thinker.

TSX Ignite

A Canada wide conference stopping in each province with conferences for founders and business executives.

Ignite Bundle

Rogers Media bundle promotion.

Contract issue (cont'd)

Tahir said that prior to the awarding of the contract, IGNITE contacted other parties at Humber, who he did not name, for further recommendations of companies providing the same services as Ruthven.

"We reached out to them to see, like, what are some folks that you think would be good to use," Tahir said.

Emily Eyre, Humber's Manager of Purchasing Services, said she has no knowledge of any outreach from members of IGNITE to her department.

"If they reached out it wasn't to me," said Eyre in an interview. "Certainly none of my staff has come to me or brought any information to me."

Eyre said the department would have advised IGNITE to approach the process differently.

"If they did reach out to us we would say 'You know, we'd be more than happy to do a competitive bid process for you,' if they provide us with the information," said Eyre.

Humber News contacted Tahir again asking for details on any conversations IGNITE might have had with anyone in the purchasing department but received no response. Perrone said he was not sure who IGNITE had contacted at Humber.

"I don't know if it was the purchasing department or Humber's marketing department," he said.

In an attempt to clarify conventional business procurement procedures, Humber News contacted Professor Angelo Crupi, Supply Chain Management program coordinator at Humber College. Crupi made it clear that he has no involvement in IGNITE's business affairs.

"What normally happens [in industry]," Crupi said, "is that all requirements for whatever service or material or water bottles, whatever it might be, are posted online. It's easy these days with online tools like Merx where RFQs [Request For Qualifications] are posted."

Anyone can go on the website and see what the requirements are. Then, everyone's free to respond. From there, they would select a shortlist of potential suppliers and then go further and do further research into the shortlist."

Crupi went on to state that in specific instances, companies do choose to go with a sole-sourced contract. In the case of companies with stakeholders, this is done with documentation.

"If it's your business and your money, then no one's going to require you to do that," said Crupi, "But as soon as you have, for example, shareholders or partners that aren't involved necessarily in the day-to-day operations of the company, then they'd want to make sure that you're finding the best possible supplier."

On Wed. Oct. 19, IGNITE held a Special Meeting of the Members at Humber's North Campus Student Centre. According to IGNITE's website, the meeting was to provide more information on the rebranding. Students had the opportunity to vote for or against approval of the federation's legal name change from Humber Students' Federation to IGNITE and gave the approval.

According to Ahmed Tahir, such a vote requires legal documentation to be updated with the new name.



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IGNITE Special Meeting of the Members on Wednesday, Perrone at left.

Groundbreaking accessibility course announced by SMSIT

Starting in fall 2017, Humber's School of Media Studies and Information Technology will be the first in the world to offer a course on accessible design in broadcast media.

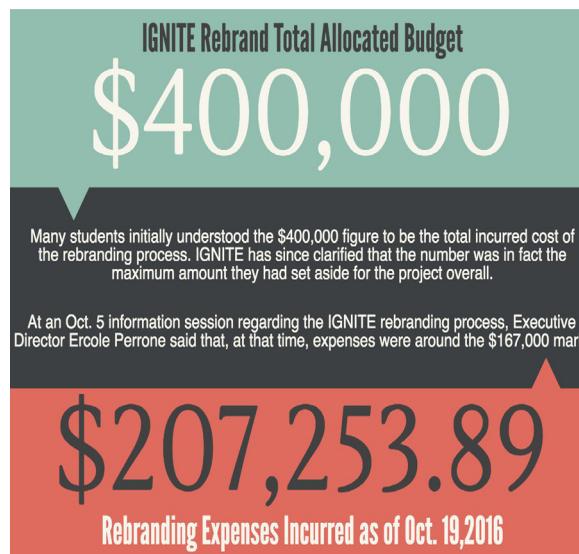
Thanks to a \$130,900 grant from the Broadcast Accessibility Fund (BAF), SMSIT faculty professors Anne Zbitnew, Mike Karapita and Hillary Rexe will create a course that will be created to allow all SMSIT students to be agents of change for accessibility in broadcast content.

The course will be the first cre-

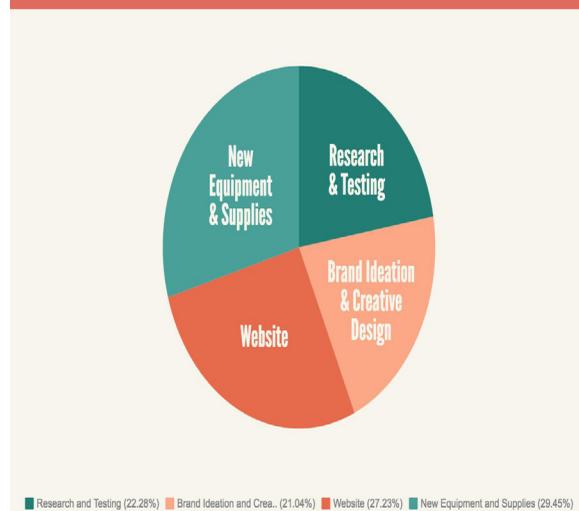
ated to raise awareness regarding systemic, attitudinal, physical and other barriers that affect accessibility within current broadcast media practices. Aspects of the class will focus on representing and raising awareness of disability in Canada within broadcast media.

An SMSIT announcement of the project noted that students will learn "how to incorporate accessibility features such as image description and described video, alt-text, transcription and captions into broadcast media content," making accessibility "part of the initial development process."

Accessible Design in Broadcast Media will be available to all School of Media Studies students starting in September 2017.



Budgetary Breakdown



RESEARCH AND TESTING

\$46,183.10

- Brand discovery
- Brand positioning
- Brand articulation
- Student survey
- Student online focus groups
- Student survey participation
- Student survey participation grand prize

This category details the steps taken in the planning stages of the rebrand process, and could include the hiring of a brand consultant to help determine the direction the organization should take. The brand consultant helps to determine the message the organization wishes to send, as well as conducts demographic research and surveys to determine how best to represent the organization.

Brand Ideation and Creative Design

\$43,601.05

- Development of name
- Development of logo
- Development of tagline
- Visual identity

Brand ideation is the process of creating the basic elements of a design, what all comes together at the end to create the final product: the brand. This step might involve the hiring of a design company to assist in the process from conception to actualization. This includes designing and packaging the brand elements into a cohesive unit.

Website

\$56,443.50

- Define user experience
- Building site map
- Audit existing site content
- Development of new content & copywriting
- Purchasing images
- Developing layouts and wireframe
- Developing front and back-end of site
- Customized content management system features
- User manual, AODA & CMS training

This step sees the creation of the new IGNITE website through from start to finish. The process begins with creating a plan of what the site will do, and how it will do it. Following this, notes are taken of the old site, and the website is created from the ground up. Additionally, the website is tested to be sure it complies with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

New Equipment and Supplies

\$61,026.24

- Removal of signage
- Signage & electrical
- Tents
- Media Walls
- Portable promo booths
- Backdrops & banners
- Posting supplies
- Printed materials

This category covers the physical process of turning HSF into IGNITE, including the removal of old HSF material. This component also includes the costs of rewiring electrical signs, and the Toronto-style IGNITE sign in the student centre. Also covers all new printed, promotional and office materials.

IGNITE rebrand budget finally released

Brandon Richard-Austin, Tyler Bloomfield, Erian Amor De Los Reyes, Ken Kellar, Alana MacLeod

The total amount of money spent so far on the process to rebrand the Humber Students' Federation as the IGNITE Student Union has jumped to more than \$200,000 from \$167,000 on Oct. 5.

IGNITE released their categorized budget for the rebrand on Wednesday following a Special Meeting of the Members that provided a categorized breakdown of how they spent the \$207,253.89 as of Oct. 19.

The motion to legally change the name from the Humber Students' Federation (HSF) to the IGNITE Student Union was passed today at the Special Meeting of the Members. The name HSF will now be obsolete and all of the student feder-

ations legal papers will now feature the IGNITE brand.

The meeting kicked off with an unopposed motion to pass the agenda followed by an update on the rebrand by President Ahmed Tahir. His presentation outlined all of the reasons for the rebrand. The main stated concern was that University of Guelph-Humber students did not feel like they were effectively represented by the HSF brand.

"There are three really big reasons that this IGNITE rebrand process went through," said Tahir.

"Number one was the confusion with the former HSF and Guelph-Humber Association, Guelph-Humber students not knowing which organization to go to for any issues. The other one was being different on campus and not being blended in with everything happening on campus and making sure that

students know that we exist.... And lastly, as well, the terms like student federation, student government, student union were limiting what students understood that we did."

A question period followed and Tahir fielded questions from students from North and Lakeshore campuses about the rebrand.

The stage was then turned over to Executive Director Ercole Perrone who offered a brief explanation of some of the figures in the 2015-2016 Financial Audit that the Board of Directors approved at their last meeting on Oct. 12.

Students who attended asked questions surrounding the budget for the rebrand and when that information would be released.

Tahir responded that it would be released "very, very soon."

IGNITE posted the rebrand finance breakdown after the meeting.