



# HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

*See you in the new year!*

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## NEXT BREAKFAST MEETING IN FEBRUARY

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REGISTER AT [WWW.SPOKANEMARCOM.ORG](http://WWW.SPOKANEMARCOM.ORG)

### SAVE THE DATES:

- **February 15, 2018**  
Spark Awards entry  
drop-off party at  
Rogue Heart Media
- **April 17, 2018**  
Spark Awards at  
Barrister Winery

Want to be involved in the planning? Contact Co-Events Chair Ashley Graham to join the Spark Awards Committee at [ashley@ashleygrahamevents.com](mailto:ashley@ashleygrahamevents.com)

### DECEMBER NOTES: LEVERAGING SUCCESSES

*with Gonzaga University*

DAVE SONNTAG, Associate  
Vice President, Marketing and  
Communications, Gonzaga  
University



[sonntagd@gonzaga.edu](mailto:sonntagd@gonzaga.edu)

## 3 STEALS: HOW GONZAGA LEVERAGED THE FINAL FOUR FOR BRAND SUCCESS

### 1. WHAT CAN YOU LEVERAGE?

Is there an aspect of your company, organization or product that stands out or is different from others? How can it be used to draw attention to other key attributes or messages about your product or organization? A new leadership hire, company anniversary, facility or client can provide such opportunity. And sometimes, opportunity falls into your lap if you are open to it. Do you have an employee or client with a remarkable story? Did someone write an amazing – or even funny – review of your product? Stories build brands. In today's world of social media, incredible reach is attainable if you find the right story. But don't stop there. Use this story or opportunity to highlight aspects of your brand and funnel everyone who is listening into strategic places where they can take actions that will help reach your goals.

### 2. TAKE A CHANCE AND BUILD THE PLAN.

If you see an opportunity looming on the horizon, put in the time to build a plan for how you would leverage it. Pitch your plan to leadership, emphasize potential outcomes that will impact the bottom line and ask for the resources necessary to make it happen. Build your initial plan so that goals, objectives, audiences and strategy is pretty solid, but then leave room for variances in the tactics and budget departments. If you don't do this, you may drive yourself crazy and waste time refining those parts as your opportunity evolves. This kind of planning shows leadership your vision, proactiveness and ability to seize opportunity. If it doesn't come to fruition, it is a great exercise and you might be delighted to call-up the core of your plan for the next opportunity.

### 3. BE READY FOR UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES.

When you are leveraging unexpected – or even planned – opportunities there is an element of the unknown. How will your audiences react to a leadership change? How will their perceptions change if the company goes through a major event, like being purchased by another organization? As marketers and communicators, we need to be listening to the chatter and following the storylines as told by third parties. In Gonzaga's case, we discovered – and weren't exactly prepared for – the many current and potential donors, alums and employees who had the impression the university received a major influx of cash as a result of making the Final Four and therefore didn't feel we needed as much of their support going forward. We learned we had a whole new story to tell resulting from our golden opportunity.

*Tips courtesy of* **DAVE SONNTAG**