U of A System Division of Agriculture Communications/Marketing Department

Overview:
Fourteen person department responsible for educational support materials, including fact sheets and other publications, as well as marketing strategy and execution for both Extension and Research within the Division of Agriculture.

Department Head:
Mary Hightower, director, communication services

2017-18 Successes
I.   Project: Conversations with Cartwright. A half-hour live program with Arkansas Extension Director Rick Cartwright broadcast statewide through Zoom. Enables live question and answers with the director. Started out monthly, down to every other month due to director's schedule. Other administrators have discussed following suit.
II.   Project: Dedication of the Don Tyson Center for Agricultural Sciences. Large event with a major donor. Produced a dedication video which won National Ag Alumni Development Association award. During dedication ceremony, Tyson was so pleased it donated another $1 million on the spot.
III.   Project: Rice Expo 2017. At its roots, it's a rice field day, but has expanded to include activities involving Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H and Community/Economic Development. Drew about 1,000 attendees.

Outline the three most significant challenges you foresee for your department in the next 12 months:

I.   Problem: Research web sites out of date.
       Cause: Change in content management system; understaffed, under-skilled
       Expected Action/Result: New management putting an emphasis on getting these sites updated; supporting staff education.

II.   Problem: Internal communications.
       Cause: Differing cultures between Extension and Research.
       Expected Action/Result: Creation of a new digital means of linking employees of both sides, whether a newsletter or closed-group Facebook-type platform.

III.   Problem: Brand education
       Cause: Our brand is difficult to understand. We are not affiliated with land grant.
       Expected Action/Results: Constant training internally and constant education externally.