



ADVANCING BRANDS THAT **ADVANCE EDUCATION**

myths & truths.



chasing mission fit students: crafting resonant marketing for Christian education

"the illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."

— Alvin Toffler



challenges.





“The people upstairs handed us this one and we have to come through. We gotta find a way to make this, fit into the hole for this, using nothing but that.”

— Apollo 13



“God gave us the stewardship of our institutions and we have to come through. We gotta find a way market our schools, hitting goals, using nothing but what we have.”

— Bart Caylor’s Interpretation of Apollo 13



my why.



myths.

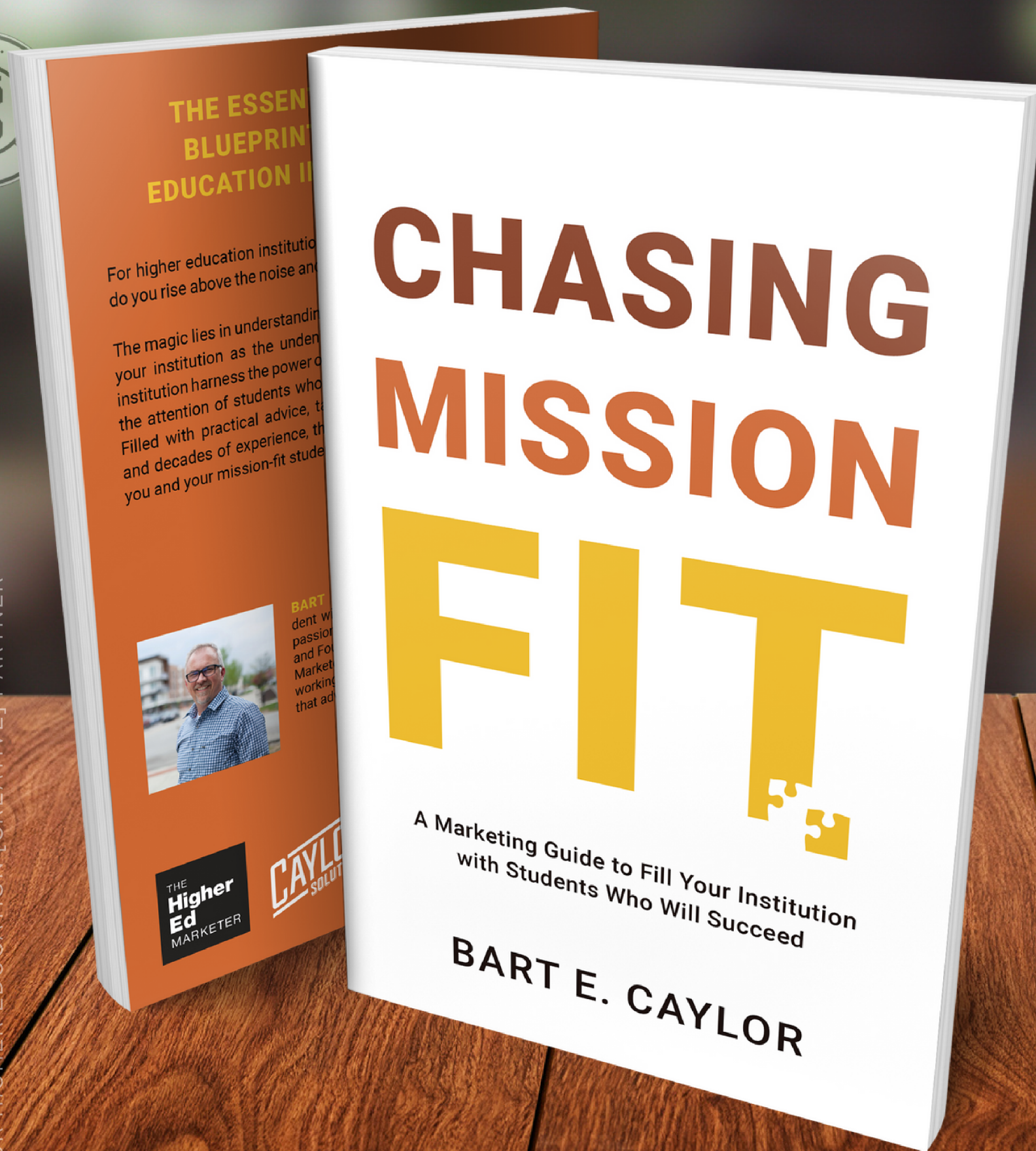


truths.





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provide a
solution.

- this presentation based on book.
- launch today because of my personal passion and desire for ABHE institutions to thrive.
- see me for more information during the annual meeting or if you want to talk more.

goal.



Walk away with confidence and an understanding of the myths that are holding our institutions back about how we market to mission-fit students.

myths & truths.





myth number 1:

you need big
budgets to
succeed.





fact number 1:

focus your
strategy,
not your
budget,



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key truths:

- the real challenge is defining what makes you unique, not budget size.
- don't emulate large institutions; focus on individual attributes and nurture your identity.
- even with constraints, innovative solutions can emerge.
- examples:
 - Stark College & Seminary
 - Mid-South Christian College



myth number 2:

good marketing
relies on large
teams.





fact number 2:
**small
teams can
be more
effective.**



key truths:

- large teams often require more resources to manage.
- small teams are more agile and can pivot quickly.
- hire for attitude fit and learning ability over specialized skills.



myth number 3:

serving internal
requests are the
top priority.





fact number 3:
**strategy
should
drive
marketing.**



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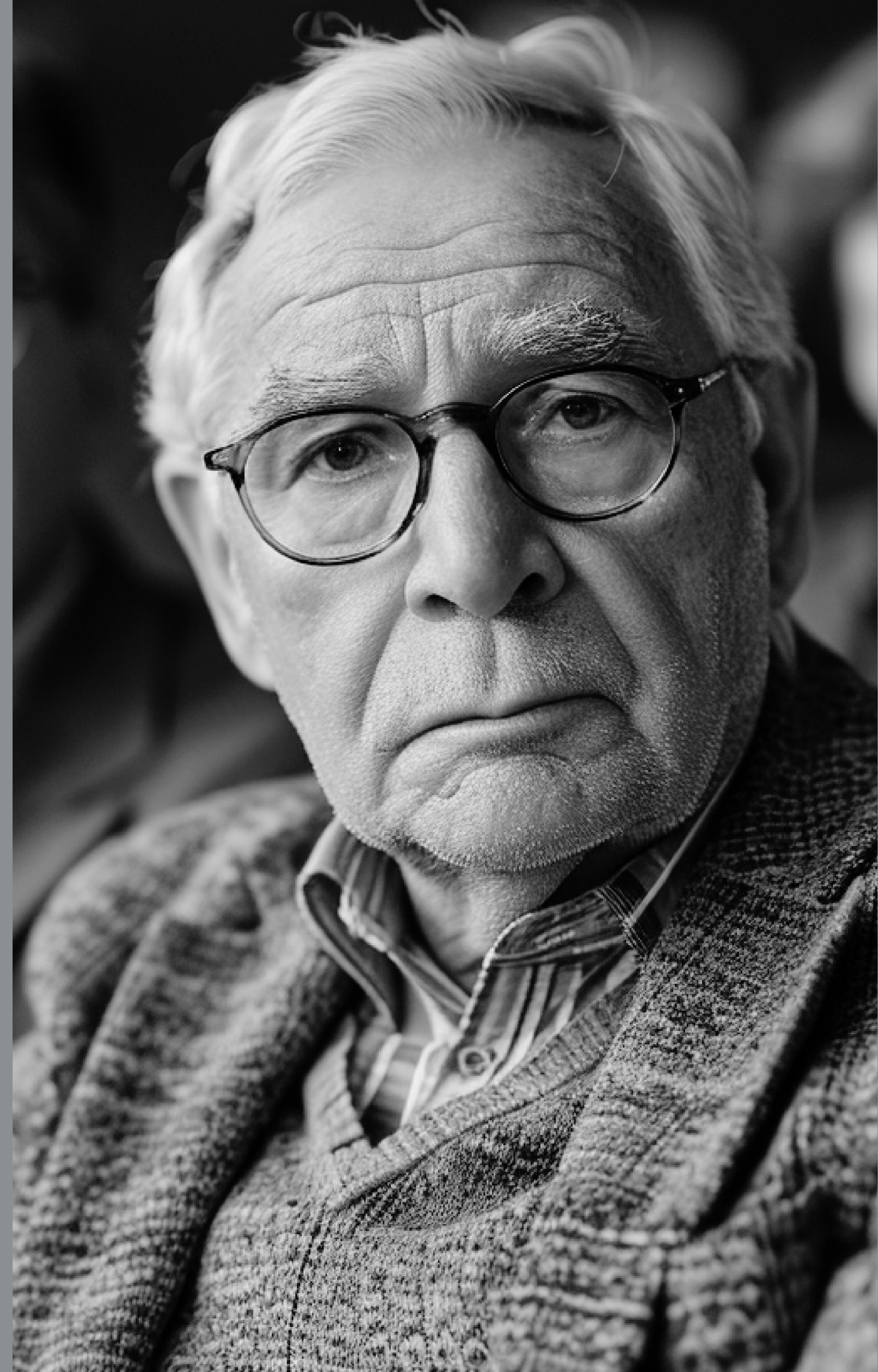
key truths:

- ad-hoc requests make it hard to think strategically.
- marketing should focus on enrollment, not short order requests.
- without a plan, it's hard to identify what's going wrong.
- examples
 - Clarks Summit University
 - The King's University



myth number 4:

marketing is
all about reaching
anyone and
everyone.





fact number 4:
**know and
target
your niche.**



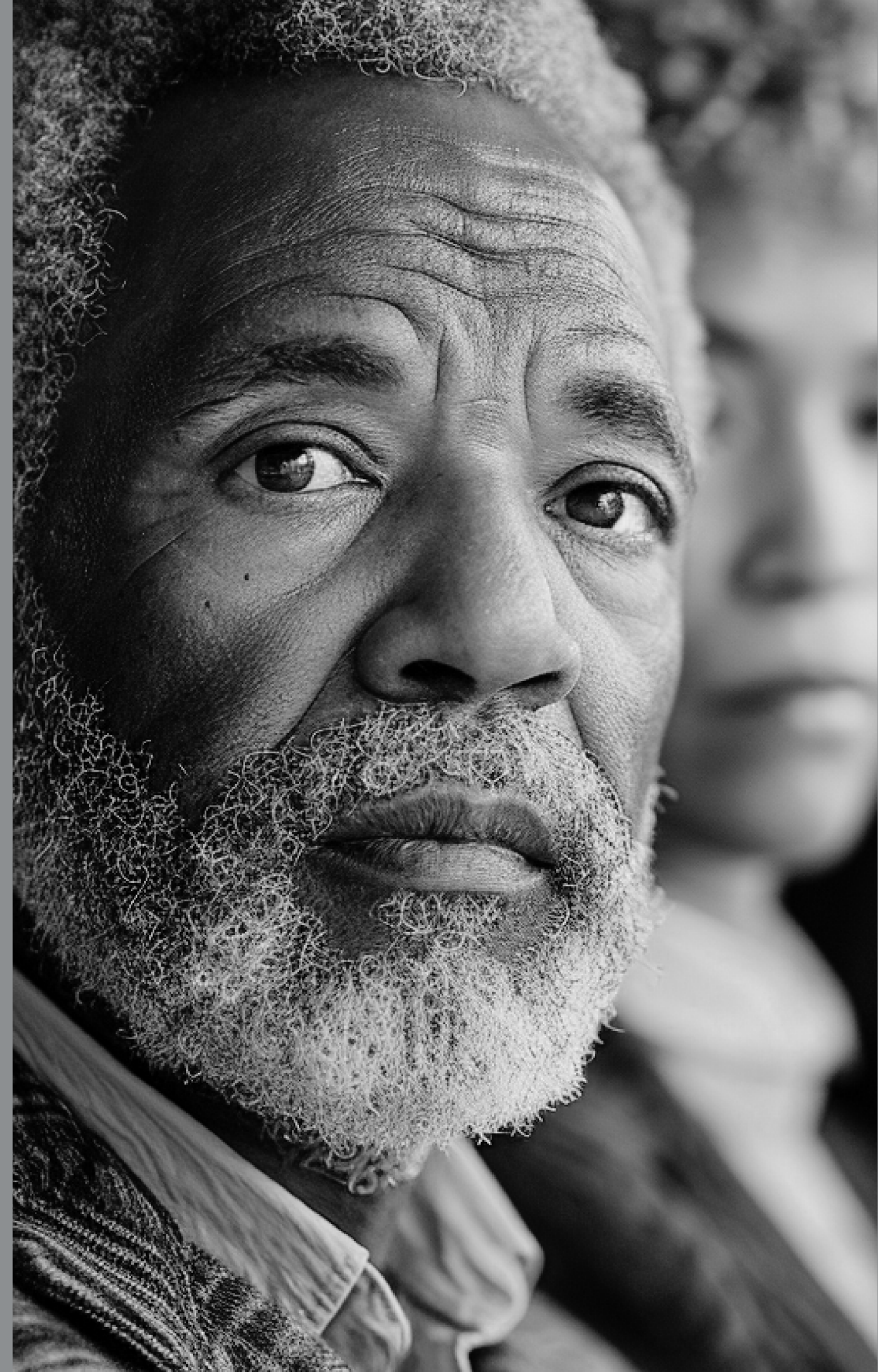
key truths:

- targeted campaigns connect better than casting a wide net.
- trying to appeal to everyone makes your message generic.
- identify who you best serve rather than getting everyone in the top of funnel.
- examples:
 - Carolina College of Biblical Studies
 - Stark College & Seminary



myth number 5:

“we are the best
kept secret:”
brand awareness
is the key.





fact number 5:
**lead gen
converts
prospects.**



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key truths:

- brand awareness creates general awareness, lead gen targets active prospects.
- use content marketing to engage and convert niche prospects.
- monitor lead gen metrics to refine strategies.
- examples:

-



myth number 6:

we don't need
marketing,
because...





fact number 6:
**useful
content
rules.**



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key truths:

- most users judge a site's design within seconds.
- focus on creating helpful content that answers audience questions.
- regularly updated blogs can boost search rankings and discovery.
- examples

○



myth number 7:

social media
is for
promotion.





fact number 7:

engage and
answer
questions.



key truths:

- social platforms build relationships when content provides value.
- use hashtags and engage with comments to facilitate conversations.
- video content showcases experiences and student life.
- examples



myth number 8:

marketing needs
to be fresh and
everchanging.





fact number 8:

repurpose
what
works.



key truths:

- study companies targeting similar demographics for inspiration.
- examine trends and historical tactics then adapt them.
- content can be reused in various formats.
- examples



myth number 9:

effective
marketing is
out of reach for
our school.





fact number 9:

unexpected
tactics
create buzz.

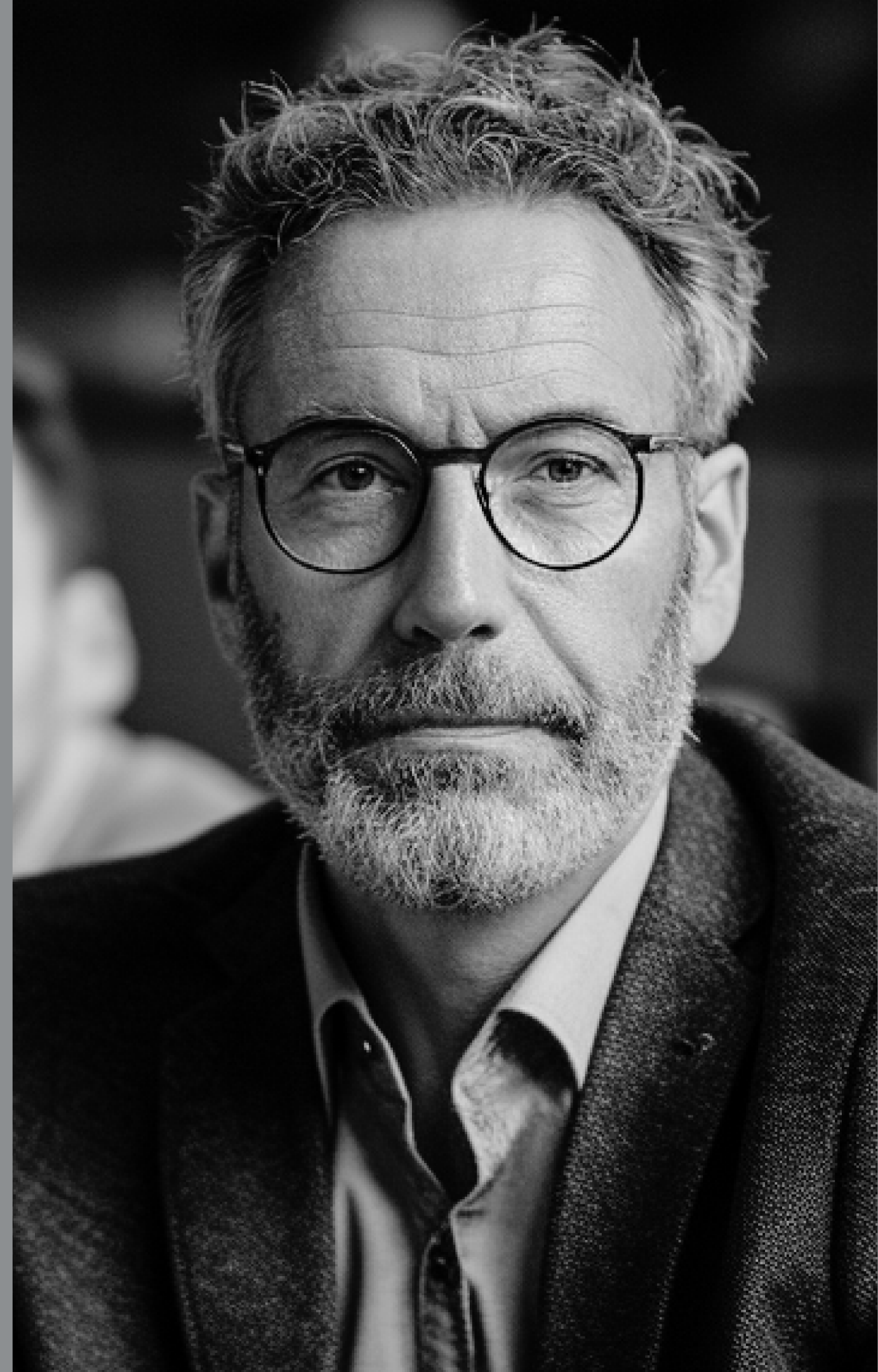


key truths:

- guerilla marketing provides tremendous opportunities for smaller schools.
- physical spaces like cars, shirts, fairs etc. can carry messages.
- tactics should align with audience habits and preferences.
- examples



myth number 10:
play it safe.





fact number 10:

take
calculated
risks.



key truths:

- daring to challenge the status quo can lead to groundbreaking innovations.
- overthinking stifles creativity; have the courage to try new things.
- failures contain lessons for refining approaches.
- examples

bonus.

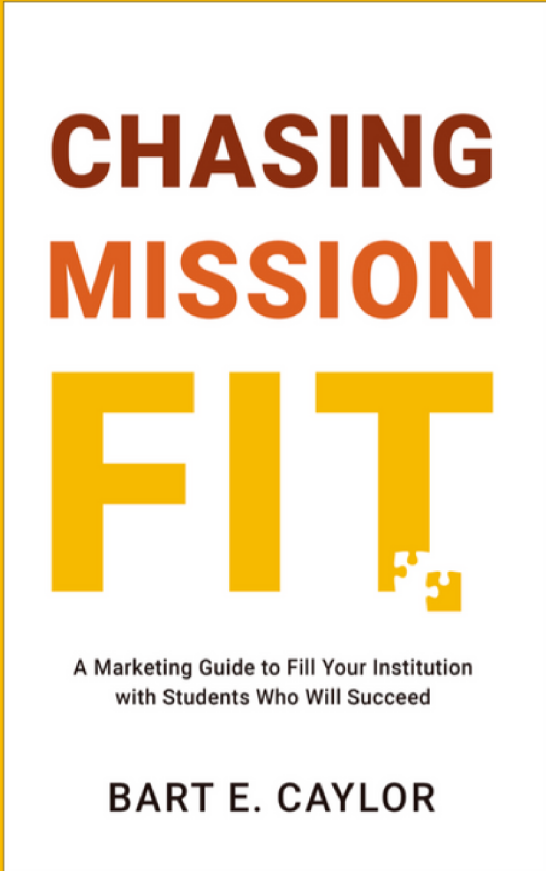




use new AI tools.

- this entire presentation was created in collaboration with ChatGPT and Claude.ai (uploaded my book manuscript and the overview of the session).
- created all images with Midjourney using a few different prompts.
- assembled in Canva and added a few elements via their AI tools.





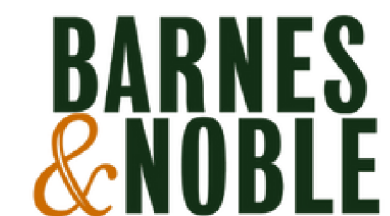
CHASING MISSION FIT

A Marketing Guide to Fill Your Institution
with Students Who Will Succeed

BART E. CAYLOR

options:

- purchase at booth: \$20
- bulk order discounts available
- scan QR code for amazon.com (paperback, hardback, ebook)
- order through your campus bookstore
- order anywhere you get your books





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questions & discussion



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