The History of IMC at Medill

A Long History of Innovation

Medill IMC has a long history, dating back to the founding of Medill in the early 1920s. Over the years, we've pushed the envelope to find new and improved ways to connect with consumers. After having a top advertising program, we foresaw a shift in marketing communications and founded the IMC degree in the early 1990s. We've evolved over the years, and we continue to pioneer in the field of IMC today through groundbreaking research that sheds new light on how to engage consumers in a customer-controlled, digitally-driven marketplace.

1903: A New Era Begins

Photo Caption: Former Northwestern President Dr. Walter Dill Scott
Media credit: Public Domain, Library of Congress
Known for his contribution of introducing scientific practice into marketing study, Walter Dill Scott joins the faculty at Northwestern. He later became the 10th Northwestern University president in 1920.

1909: Advertising Begins At Northwestern

[Image credit: Northwestern University Library Archives]

Advertising instruction is offered in the School of Commerce.

1921: Birth of Medill

[Image credit: Northwestern University Library Archives]

Walter Dill Scott establishes the Joseph Medill School of Journalism.
1931: George Gallup at Medill

George Gallup, pioneer of the field of public opinion polling, serves as the advertising faculty of Medill, further establishing the advertising foundation of Medill.

1967: Master’s Program Begins

A master's program for advertising begins in the late 1960s.
1977: Professor Don Schultz Joins Faculty

Don Schultz, known to many as the father of IMC, joins the Northwestern faculty.
1986: Direct Marketing Program Added

Medill adds PR and direct marketing as additional academic areas.

1988: Professor Ted Spiegel Joins Northwestern

Ted Spiegel joins Northwestern as faculty after previously serving as vice president of marketing for Spiegel Inc.
1991: The Study of IMC Begins

Northwestern Medill begins the first ever research study conducted on Integrated Marketing Communications.

1991: IMC Graduate Program Begins

Faculty leaders have the foresight to see that IMC will become the new way of connecting with consumers and thus change Medill's top advertising program to an IMC program. Medill launches the new IMC Master's program, which combined advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing and public relations to meet changing marketplace needs.
2000: IMC Part-Time Program Launches

Classes are taught for working professionals in the evening at Medill's downtown space at Clark and Adams.

2002: A New Home Is Established

Photo Caption: McCormick Foundation Center

The McCormick Tribune Center is established as a new home for Medill IMC and journalism students. In later years, the building is renamed McCormick Foundation Center.
2009: Undergraduate Certificate Program Launches

The undergraduate IMC certificate program is launched, allowing Northwestern undergraduate students to learn about IMC.

2011: Spiegel Research Initiative Founded

Photo Caption: A team of Spiegel student research fellows with Spiegel Research Director Ed Malthouse and Executive Director Tom Collinger.

The Medill IMC Spiegel Research Initiative is founded with the support of the late Ted Spiegel and his wife Audrey as well as support from corporations, alumni and friends. Following additional gifts from Ted's estate, it became the Spiegel Research Center in 2014.
2012: Online IMC Program Launches

The IMC Online program is launched, allowing working professionals all over the world to have access to earn the IMC master's degree.

2016: Part-Time Program Gets New Home

Medill opens new space in downtown Chicago on East Wacker Driver.
2016: IMC Expands Global Opportunities

IMC Program adds option to take short- and long-term courses in London, Paris and San Francisco.

2017: Continuing to Invent the Future

Medill IMC continues to find improved ways of engaging consumers through innovative marketing communications research and new collaborations.

2020: IMC Professional Program Launches

Medill combines the IMC Part-Time and IMC Online master's programs into one program for working professionals. Students take courses entirely online, in the evening at Medill Chicago, or both.