

Integrated Marketing and Communications Task Force

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

MINUTES

Meeting opened at 10:00 a.m. in the College of Charleston's Stern Center Ballroom.

I. Welcome

Mike Haskins, chair, opened the meeting and thanked everyone for taking the time to attend, especially at the beginning of the semester, which is a busy time for all.

II. Review of Brand Manual Outline

Mr. Haskins provided everyone with a draft outline of the proposed Brand Manual. This document provides an outline of the standards through which we are going to create consistency and quality in our marketing materials. Mr. Haskins explained that we will need an endorsement of this project from President Benson, because the support of the president is critical to the success of any college branding effort. The Division of Marketing and Communications will field most of the questions related to the Brand Manual, but Task Force members also will be expected to be able to answer questions from their areas. An important point is that the College of Charleston brand is always the primary, and most important, aspect of our brand identity.

One of our consultants, Ian Latham, has concluded the interview process and will present the results and how to apply this information to our overall marketing and communications plan. This will provide a base foundation for proper ways to use elements in marketing materials.

Contents of the Brand Manual:

- Guidelines & Approval Procedures
- Brand Foundation
- Visual Identity Guidelines
 - How to use logo?
 - Primary and alternate logos?
 - Logos for Athletics defined?
 - Colors for seal?
 - Photography?
- Editorial Style Guide (what we say; how to write things)
- Brand Platform in Practice (agreement on how to present; creative execution)

Discussion:

- Mr. Haskins said that this process will be a challenge, but also an opportunity because it has never been done before. Until now, we have had no consensus on logos, colors, key messages and other communications that express the history and identity of the college.
- Victor Wilson asked if a Style Manual is smaller than a Brand Manual, and Mr. Haskins responded that an Editorial and Publications Style Manual is an element of a Brand Manual. One of our consultants from Stein, Jenny Bower, added that what we are

proposing is more extensive than that of most schools. Victor went on to ask how we control the style manual. Mr. Haskins hopes for voluntary cooperation, but knows it is unrealistic to get 100% voluntary compliance. Again, members of the Task Force will have to be accountable for materials produced from their areas. In addition, we will work with Procurement to require print, web and design vendors to have brand manual training.

- Mr. Haskins stated that some colleges have an actual brand manual staff position, often called the “brand manager.” In our case, that may not be possible, but the marketing division will develop a system to check over materials. Mr. Haskins explained to the committee that we will do a campus-wide rollout for the Branding initiative, but we are all ambassadors to our individual areas.
- Greg Evans asked about the quality of our materials with a lack of money. Mr. Haskins responded that budget is always an issue, but the more we work with people, the more we can help make better print materials to better represent the college.
- Jim Vincent stressed the issue of updating the people on campus. Mr. Haskins added that the more people who know about this branding initiative, the less concern there should be.
- Stephanie Auwaerter asked if there is going to be a template for postcards. The answer is yes.
- Mr. Haskins explained that the Brand Manual lays a foundation, and is not meant to limit creativity. It is designed to standardize things that need to be. It is a constant work in progress. It will be a web-based document, updatable and easy to access.
- Mr. Wilson said we are very liberal with our restrictions compared to many other institutions.
- Mr. Evans brought up the idea to show actual hard examples of brand manuals.
- Terry Hamrick from Stein Communications communicated to the Task Force that a huge advantage of the Brand Manual is that it takes out some of the guesswork. For example, materials that follow the brand manual will automatically fit postal regulations.

III. Discussion of Logos and Publications

College Seal and Logos

Mr. Haskins started the discussion by saying that the logo and seal of the college is extremely important because the logo is the lynchpin of our visual identity — all of our print, web and electronic materials should use our logo as a foundation; thus consistency, clarity and quality is of the utmost importance.

Mr. Haskins and Art Director Bo Uzzle from Stein Communications displayed a presentation board to the Task Force that displayed more than 60 different logos from around campus, and commented on the wide disparity in quality, consistency and use of the College of Charleston name.

Mr. Uzzle offered his analysis that with so many logos, there is no consistency. This could possibly be a result of a general dissatisfaction with the main logo. The main logo portrays the signature building of campus (Randolph Hall) with the columns, but it is not even an accurate rendition of the architecture, nor is the College of Charleston name as prominent and visible as it should be. He further noted that our logo needs to have adaptability, while having some sort of unity.

Mr. Vincent asked if the logos can only be changed by the Board of Trustees, and are the logos on the table for discussion. Mr. Haskins answered that a logo change would probably have to be approved by the Board, and that yes, that when he originally discussed his responsibilities with President Higdon, it was agreed that everything related to visual identity is on the table for discussion. As far as the College of Charleston seal goes, it was created and ratified in 1843. This is a historically important label that only the board can change, and it is unlikely that it will do so. The seal is used very infrequently, usually only on official documents, which is standard practice in higher education.

Mr. Uzzle then showed a presentation board with examples of various College of Charleston publications. These publications are all over the map. He asked: How are we expressing ourselves as an institution? Not in a clear identifiable way. How do the pieces relate to each other? It is important for us to start with a consistent identity and then have that flow into our publications. He went on to show three boards, each one displaying the publications of a standardized school that works within a brand manual system.

1. The first example was of Northeastern University. As soon as one looks at the board, one immediately notices the color scheme. The main unifying element is the use of the bold red color. In addition, they have very clear grids.
2. The next example was of Vanderbilt University. Their use of the “tree of knowledge” for the basis of their logo is good, but they do not have a clear color palette.
3. The third example was of Emory University. They have the most formal word mark. Mr. Uzzle also took notice of the predominant darker blue color. Some of these pieces look generic, which loses the sense of their brand.

Characteristics of the College of Charleston:

- College of Charleston has a good, unique primary color.
- College of Charleston is a strong, distinct name.
- The “College” in College of Charleston gains weight.
- College of Charleston is a long name.

College/Athletics PMS 202 Color

We as a College want to stand out in the crowd. Athletics is usually the most prominent sub-brand. Their logo system is good, but they need to clarify their hierarchy of logos. In regard to the color palette, there is no rationale to why this maroon (PMS 202) was chosen. We also have no secondary color palette.

Academic Brochures and Folders

Mr. Haskins let the Task Force know that we have come to a resolution regarding the Academic Brochures Project, and will be moving forward with it. This will be useful for Admissions, the Academic Schools, Orientation, and the Major Departments. The project is to develop a separate publication for each of the Academic Schools, a piece that will work in conjunction with the major brochures and will better express the unique qualities of the different schools.

IV. Latham & Co. Presentation

Mr. Haskins reminded everyone about Mr. Latham’s presentation on Friday morning. Mr. Latham will share and present the results he’s found so far from the nearly 50 interviews he conducted. He has analyzed the research and data that we provided for him, along with some

external research that he found himself. Mr. Haskins also let the committee know that Mr. Latham is feeling positive and found positive common ground from the interviews.

V. Discussion of General Marketing/Branding Issues

Mr. Haskins stated that the Task Force is an entity that can and should make recommendations to the President and his Senior Staff on communications and marketing priorities and standards. He said by the end of spring, we should at least be at the point of having a draft of the brand manual. Mr. Haskins concluded the meeting by announcing the re-launch of the employee newsletter. This publication will be printed monthly and will serve as a way to connect to others.

Mr. Haskins thanked everyone for coming and reminded the committee about Friday's presentation.

V. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place Wednesday, February 7, 2007 from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the Stern Center Ballroom.

Meeting closed at 12:00 p.m.