

Integrated Marketing and Communications Task Force

Wednesday, July 11, 2007

MINUTES

Meeting opened at 10:00 a.m. in the College of Charleston's Stern Center Room 206.

I. Welcome

Mike Haskins, chair, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He apologized for having the meeting in the theater, which is not an ideal room for the Task Force, but noted that rooms are at a premium during summer orientation. For those who could not attend the last meeting, Mike explained the process undertaken by Stein Communications in creating the new logo for the College of Charleston. Stein incorporated Ian Latham's research into the creation of the logo and the overall visual identity for the College. Mr. Haskins felt the process was a good one, especially because Latham and Stein independently came up with very similar concepts for the logo. He went on to mention that the Task Force would soon be working with Stein in coming up with a presentation that can explain to the College community how the research process informed and led to the development of the new logo.

II. Logo Presentation

For those committee members that were unable to attend the June 27th meeting, Mr. Haskins reviewed Bo Uzzle and Jenny Brower's PowerPoint presentation on the visual identity for the college. Mr. Haskins explained that this is an excellent opportunity to create a new tradition and develop a high-quality visual identity, because that will present the College as a first-rate academic institution.

Stein Communications Presentation on College of Charleston's Visual Identity Origins of the Logo

- Branding Research
 - College and Charleston link
 - Academic Quality of the Institution
 - Position the College as a Unique Combination of Opportunities
- Classical Typography
 - Colonial Origins
 - 16th Century Fonts
 - Class and Elegance
 - Timeless Quality
- Visual Architecture- One central element that the college and the city have in common is the decorative gates and fences. These cast and wrought iron gates are uniquely Charleston and permeate through campus and the city. The iron is unique, decorative, and distinct to Charleston. Other elements are:
 - Cobblestone
 - Brickwork

- Columns and porticos do not differentiate.
- Cast/Wrought Iron Authentic to College Gates
- Church Skylines
- Visual Language: The Gate as a Symbol
 - Inspiration
 - Heritage
 - Uniquely Charleston
 - Symbolic Division of Space - Public and Private
 - Symbolic Division of Life - New students come through the gate, graduates leave through the gate
 - One Central, Powerful Motif - Reduces complexity
- The Logo - The idea of the two “C’s” are that College and Charleston are equally important and are inextricably connected. The smaller “c” inside of the bigger one serves to enhance the connection. Determining which “C” is which is open to interpretation. Personally, Mr. Haskins views the small “c” as the college and the bigger “C” as the Charleston to symbolize the college being encompassed by the city, but it can be seen the other way as well. The entire logo can indeed, actually be rendered in wrought iron. Mr. Haskins thought that maybe the original logo may have been too feminine but the addition of spikes and waves gave it a more masculine look. Now he feels exceptionally confident about the new logo. Some of the visual elements that inspired the logo are:
 - The small “C” inside of the larger “C”
 - The four points of a compass denote Charleston’s history as a Seafaring/Port City
 - The curved box is reminiscent of an Interior Map Legend
 - Wave-like Symbols
 - Franco-Anglo Marriage
- The Word Mark
 - Goudy Old Style
 - Idea of College and Charleston being equal - Equal Space
 - Italicized “of”
 - Versatile Mark
 - Legible
- Summary
 - Inspired by Brand Research
 - Links College with City
 - Reflects a high-quality Academic Institution
 - Differentiates from other “C” schools
 - Heritage- Both the Logo and Word Mark can stand alone
 - Supports merchandising and signage opportunities.

End of Presentation

Mr. Haskins explained that the most important part of the logo is that it came from a process. In the first rendition, both President Benson and Mr. Haskins like the concept, but felt it lacked strength and cohesion. When Stein rendered the symbol slightly different, it made a very big difference. Mr. Haskins felt the original rendition of the logo did not really stand out, and remarked that a small change can make a huge difference.

Mr. Haskins noted that there is still a lot to work out with Stein on how the logo will work practically in different applications, but so far, everything seems to be going in the right direction. The logo reflects upon the tradition of academia, the city, and the connection between college and city. It stands out and is very memorable. The issue was raised regarding traditional elements such as diplomas and College rings, but the seal is used on those elements, not the logo. The Task Force members expressed at the last meeting that they felt comfortable moving forward with this logo.

III. Revised Brand Story/Brand Promise Statement

The College of Charleston Brand Story is the basis for all of our communications. It defines the College of Charleston's identity, clearly and definitively. Mr. Haskins spoke about how he had showed a class of students the Brand Story, and they all agreed that everything was true. One student in particular said she sees her professors as guides into the next stage of her life. Mr. Haskins thought that was a pretty neat thing for her to say. She also said that she didn't remember everything that was said in the Brand Story, but she remembered the pictures. Our pictures need to be reflective of the Brand Story. Our Visual Brand Story is very important because imagery resonates with people. Stephanie Auwaerter volunteered to read the Brand Story out loud to the Task Force. It is a little long, but it gives an idea of how it acts as a framework for our communications. For each audience, we will take the Brand Story and break it down into shorter, more memorable brand promise statements. The promise statements are a work in progress and during the next meeting, the committee will talk about key messages.

Discussion:

- Monica Scott took notice that sometimes "The" is used and sometimes it is not. Only the words College of Charleston are our actual title. "The" is not part of our name, but it sounds awkward to not use the "The" in narrative.
- Brian McGee said to trust the ear and what you want the reader to experience when deciding whether to include the "The" or not.

IV. Brand Manual Review, Sections 1-5

Mr. Haskins asked everyone to look at specific sections of the Brand Manual:

- 5.1 College of Charleston Logo - Mr. Haskins wants everyone to carefully read over this section and see if they feel comfortable with everything. He said we have to get to the point where the logo works for all programs and departments, so alternate logos are not developed.
- 6.2 Alternate Logos - Mr. Haskins asked if it makes sense, if there should be other guidelines, and if it should be more or less restrictive?
- 6.4 College of Charleston Seal? - Mr. Haskins asked for everyone to look over this section and address if anything is inaccurate.

Mr. Haskins asked the Task Force to read and email any changes, comments, or any other issues to him by the end of next week. The Brand Manual is being tweaked constantly.

V. Campus Signage Subcommittee

Meredith English updated the Task Force that she and Monica Scott, co-chairs of the committee, are currently working out the details of the budget for the proposal they want to put forth, and they'll report on that at the next meeting.

VI. Website Redevelopment Report

Mr. Haskins announced that President Benson has agreed that the website redevelopment needs to be undertaken and that he has committed funds, as have Marketing and IT, for the project. Mr. Haskins introduced Larry Stoudenmire and Andrew Bergstrom as a subcommittee in the Task Force who will work on the redevelopment and report back to the Task Force regularly. Larry and Andrew will work to merge the redevelopment process with the implementation of the Content Management System, so that the process appears as one seamless project to the campus community.

Mr. Stoudenmire and Mr. Bergstrom let everyone know that the RFP for the Content Management System has been awarded, however, a separate RFP will be issued for the actual development of the new website design and architecture. New templates will be created, and the design will be based on the visual identity being developed by Stein. The software for the new website is being installed during the month of July, and they hope to start CMS training in August. They encouraged each department to look at their present website and map out a plan for how they want to arrange their web content. Mr. Haskins said this process is going to come in steps, and estimated it will be completed in about 9-12 months.

Linda McClenaghan asked about using the Dreamweaver software, and Mr. Bergstrom responded that the CMS does not require Dreamweaver. Templates for each department will already be built. Mr. Bergstrom then explained that there are going to be three servers: 1 Administrative Server, 1 People Server (Faculty & Staff), and then 1 Student Server. If one server is down, you can get your information from the second, and if the second server goes down, you can get it from the third. We will be able to publish content to multiple servers.

Along the lines of change, Mr. Haskins let everyone know that there will be a slightly redesigned homepage coming up soon. The catalyst for this change was outdated imagery.

VII. Dates for Upcoming Meetings

- July 25 (Stern Center Room 206)
- August 8 (Stern Center Ballroom)
- August 22 (Stern Center Room 206)

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, July 25, 2007 from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the Stern Center Theatre (Room 206).

Meeting closed at 12:00 p.m.