



SUBJECT	UBC COMMUNICATIONS BRAND STRATEGY AND MARKETING CAMPAIGN
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MEETING DATE	SEPTEMBER 13, 2018
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Forwarded on the Recommendation of the President

APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION

Santa J. Ono, President and Vice-Chancellor

FOR INFORMATION

Report Date	September 5, 2018
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Presented By Philip Steenkamp, Vice-President External Relations
Rick Hart, Senior Director, Brand and Marketing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UBC’s reputation — as measured by an annual reputation survey — was affected by a series of negative news headlines through 2015 and into 2016. While there has been a measurable improvement in the last 18 months, there is still room for improvement. Furthermore, global competition for the best students and faculty, funding investments and charitable donations continues to increase. For all these reasons, defining UBC’s brand proposition and communicating it broadly take on heightened importance.

UBC Brand Proposition

UBC’s Brand Proposition was developed with input from both inside and outside the University. Through focus groups, online forums, secondary research, in-depth interviews and quantitative surveys, just under 5,000 people shared their views on what makes UBC distinct. The key insight from the research was that UBC’s people and their common drive to change world, spirit of transformation, optimism and commitment to their efforts despite obstacles, is a large part of what makes the university unique. Reinforcing the spirit of *Tuum Est* and reflective of our new University vision, UBC’s brand proposition is, “If you have the drive to shape a better world, UBC will support you in realizing your greatest potential”. This proposition is part of a larger brand strategy which will help guide communications and other activities across the University moving forward.

UBC Brand Campaign

On September 24, we are launching a national brand campaign to support UBC’s new brand proposition. Titled “The potential is yours”, the campaign will run on national TV, newspaper, online video, digital advertising and social media. A separate stream is being developed targeting the global academic community.

Most university advertising does not cut through the clutter and fails at differentiating the institution. For this reason, we have been deliberately provocative in our approach. Featuring UBC faculty and students, the campaign focuses on the importance of UBC’s research and teaching mission and positions UBC as a university tackling society’s largest challenges.

The creative concept was tested with current students, prospective students, alumni, business leaders in Vancouver and Toronto, and the general public. The feedback was positive with 70% of respondents stating the concept was memorable, 59% agreeing it was different from other university advertising and 55% stating that the concept improved their perceptions of UBC. In addition, each statement in the advertising was vetted and refined by faculty experts and, where appropriate, key stakeholders.

The campaign will run in two waves from September to November and again from January to March. Quantitative market research will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign in terms of its impact on familiarity, positive sentiment and impact on brand attributes.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES SUPPORTED

- Learning
 Research
 Innovation
 Engagement (Internal / External)
 International
 or Operational
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BENEFITS Reputational: investment in our profile and reputation benefits virtually all aspects of the university.

RISKS There are risks associated with *not* investing in our reputation and profile. Taking a proactive approach to managing and positioning the UBC brand through consistent communication initiatives will help to mitigate the impact of other university’s brand marketing, negative media news stories, or derogatory word of mouth stories that may surface.

SCHEDULE Brand campaign fully funded for 2018/2019 and 2019/2020. The first wave will begin September 24, 2018

Implementation Timeline

CONSULTATION Just under 5,000 people provided input on the UBC brand definition work including: students, alumni, BC general population, university leadership (deans, executive, directors), Canadian prospective university students, business leaders in Vancouver and Toronto. Just under 2,000 people evaluated the brand campaign creative concept through quantitative market research (similar groups to those above were canvassed).

Previous Report Date September 12, 2017

Decision For Information

Action / Follow Up Staff directed to provide further updates as appropriate

Previous Report Date November 17, 2017

Decision For Information

Action / Follow Up Staff directed to provide further updates as appropriate