Hi.
Our process

Discover

• Facilitate a kickoff meeting to initiate the project
• Review the background, collateral, and research provided
• Conduct interviews with leaders, faculty, staff, students, and alumni
• Perform a competitor audit
• Review other communications and marketing materials

Define

• Conduct a collaborative workshop with the core team to review insights and brainstorm ideas for messaging, voice, and personality
  • Develop a preliminary strategy for messaging and communications flow
  • Share the preliminary strategy with the core team
  • Refine the strategy and submit it for final approval

Create

• Develop and share two creative concepts that bring the strategy to life
• Identify a single creative direction for further exploration and refinement
• Submit the creative direction for final approval
• Develop brand guidelines
**University of South Alabama**

*Brand Evolution Workshop Agenda*

*June 30, 2015 • 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.*

**About the workshop**

Today, we’ll collaboratively develop the direction for the brand story and creative expression. Through focused discussions and brainstorms, we’ll set criteria that will become the creative brief for how the brand will come to life.

- **8:00–8:10**  
  **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**  
  Review our objectives for the session

- **8:10–8:40**  
  **STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS: WHAT WE HEARD**  
  Review what we heard during our conversations and share insights that will influence the USA story

- **8:40–9:05**  
  **PEER AUDIT: WHAT WE SAW**  
  Look at USA’s competitors and peers to understand how they talk about themselves and what we can learn from them

- **9:05–9:30**  
  **CLARIFYING THE AUDIENCES**  
  Prioritize the internal and external audiences that USA needs to reach

- **9:30–10:10**  
  **DEFINING THE KEY MESSAGES**  
  Collaboratively brainstorm the attributes and benefits that will make up the USA brand story

**BREAK: 10 minutes**

- **10:20–10:50**  
  **COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW**  
  Look at USA’s current communications to discuss areas of opportunity, and examine some inspirational examples

- **10:50–11:20**  
  **DETERMINING THE TONE AND VOICE**  
  Discuss the personality and voice we want to evoke through USA’s communications

- **11:20–11:50**  
  **VISUAL EXPLORATION**  
  Collaboratively review a range of inspiration for visual language, including photography, color palette, typography, and graphic elements

- **11:50–12:00**  
  **WRAP-UP AND NEXT STEPS**  
  Discuss next steps and timing
UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT SITUATION

A look on the inside
WHAT WE HEARD

What we heard
USA is a much different university today than it was when it was founded. But old perceptions are still stuck in the minds of alumni, prospective students, and the Mobile community. The conversation needs to shift away from the past, and focus instead on USA’s authentic story today.
USA IS READY FOR A RALLYING CRY

The USA community has been working hard to advance the institution: improving facilities, building its research offer, expanding the student experience, and improving the health of people across the Gulf Coast. The problem? Few people off campus know about it. It’s high time for a confident, proud story that shows off the university’s strengths and connects with its audiences.
USA’s academic strengths go beyond single programs, to the comprehensive range of its education and the fresh, creative approaches that its faculty bring. There’s also research, which has a growing impact on the health and economic vitality of the Gulf Coast and its residents. By properly articulating these offers and their benefits, we can elevate their role in the USA story.
Many universities tout their centuries of history and tradition. But one of USA’s most unique traits is its youth, which truly excites and inspires the students, faculty, and staff. They can shape traditions, create new teaching methods, and experiment without hearing, “But we’ve always done it this way.” This idea has the potential to be a major differentiator.
IN A WORD: OPPORTUNITY

Whether it’s access for first-generation students, applied learning experiences, or waking students up to new possibilities, opportunity is part of the culture at USA. However, the focus is what happens on campus—there’s little talk of outcomes. And “opportunity” is a popular word in higher education—how can the university talk about this idea in an ownable way?
This branding effort offers the chance to bring everyone, from all areas of the university, together with a shared story. Historically, work and storytelling have happened in silos, and there’s a discernable schism between the health system and the university campus. All entities make the others stronger, and by connecting the dots for both internal and external audiences, the story will be much more powerful.
One thing that everyone can agree on is the immeasurable impact that USA has on individuals, the Mobile community, and the greater Gulf Coast region. This is where huge opportunities for storytelling lie—it’s time to go beyond lists of facts and to emphasize the people and the work that are making a difference (and making history) every day.
PEER INSIGHTS

How USA’s competitors are positioning themselves
Who we looked at

Cross-App Competitors

Near-Aspirational Peers
Everyone is talking about the same things.

- Applied research
- Well-rounded experience
- Spirit and tradition
- Personal feel
- Shaping the region
Everyone is talking about the same things.

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<th>Applied research</th>
<th>Comprehensive academics</th>
<th>Well-rounded experience</th>
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Applied research

“At Old Dominion University, our philosophy is simple: Knowledge should be productive. We are committed to providing research-driven solutions.”

“At The University of Alabama, we’re working to make sure our research efforts continue to make a hands-on difference in the lives of the people we serve.”

“A proven leader in innovation, Southern Miss is generating real-world solutions through transformative research.”
Comprehensive academics

“UA offers bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in more than 200 fields of study.”

“If you’re looking for a top-notch science education in the classroom, lab, and clinic, you should definitely look at UAB. Then again, if you prefer business, the arts or humanities, you should also look at UAB.”

“MSU is preparing its students for bright, productive futures.”
Well-rounded experience

“The University of Alabama offers a complete educational, cultural and social experience. You might enjoy attending Crimson Tide sporting events, engaging with the arts, or volunteering for community service projects. Maybe you’ll want to do all of the above, or something completely different. With more than 450 student organizations and an environment that encourages student involvement, you’ll find plenty to do during your time at UA.”
**Spirit and tradition**

“We’re changing with the needs of today while living with a respect for the traditions and spirit that are Auburn.”

“We hope you’ll find an inner strength and appreciation of your ability to make a difference. It’s called the Warrior Spirit, and it’s alive and well at Troy.”

“We are extremely proud of our traditions, old and new.” (Mississippi State)
“At Old Dominion University, studies are designed to help you bring your talents, your ideas and your goals to life.”

“Georgia State has a university-wide commitment to student advising with a keen focus on students’ progress to graduation.”

“Troy University provides students with the ultimate in flexibility.”

“We help each person excel. Your success is our success.” (Mississippi State)
“Georgia State plays a major role in advancing the socioeconomic and cultural climate, education, health care services and other resources available throughout the city.”

“We are committed to using knowledge to establish Alabama as a progressive economic center.” (UAB)

“ODU contributes nearly $2 billion annually to the regional economy.”
One of the goals of our brand workshop was to collaboratively brainstorm:

- Who are the most important people to reach?
  - Audience clarification and prioritization exercise

- What are the most important messages to elevate?
  - Key messages exercise

- How should the brand look and sound?
  - Tone, voice, and visual language exploration
DEFINING KEY MESSAGES

What USA says
During our discovery process, we collected a range of descriptions that stakeholders used when talking about USA.

*Which messages are most authentic and best represent who USA is?*
**Defining attributes and benefits**

**WHAT is an attribute?**

An attribute is what we offer to our audiences. Attributes include the products, services, knowledge, and unique offers that we bring to the table.

**WHAT is a benefit?**

A benefit is what our audiences get. It’s the value of the attributes that we offer—the answer to the question “so what?” or “why do we care?”
What we’ll do

• **Choose.** Working through each category, select messages that we like the most when talking about USA. Add any ideas that may be missing.

• **Eliminate.** Omit the messages that are not relevant for USA’s story.

• **Prioritize.** Based on what we want others to know about USA, which are the most important?

*Don’t forget: aspirational ideas are okay.*
COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW

How USA is communicating today
ALL OVER THE MAP
LESS WHAT, MORE WHY
“USA is one of the fastest growing universities in the south. Our state of the art facilities complement our prestigious academic programs and exciting student life!

“In addition, our coastal location by the Gulf of Mexico provides unlimited opportunities for year round activities in warm sunshine. Make your way to South Alabama.”
SOUTH WITH NO DIRECTION
MAKING HEADLINES WORK HARDER
DOING MORE WITH LESS
A WIDER PALETTE
LIMITING TYPEFACES
CAPTURING MOMENTS, NOT POSES
Next Steps

• Workshop findings to be gathered and integrated for strategy development

• Ologie to present first round of strategy to USA team in July

• Once the strategy is finalized, Ologie will begin creative development
Thank you.
Current Advertising Campaign

- A “bridge” to the completed branding process.
- Main theme is “direction.”
- Focused on Mobile, Baldwin counties and service areas.
- Primarily online (Display Ads, Facebook, Pandora online radio, YouTube), with some outdoor advertising.
- Designed to encourage potential students to visit campus.
WHERE DISCOVERY FINDS DIRECTION.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA is a place of unlimited possibilities, unrestrained ideas and exceptional accomplishments. Every day, our faculty and students think beyond boundaries in fields as diverse as archaeology, cancer research, disaster recovery, cybersecurity, history, marine science, nanomaterials, and the visual arts. Strategically located in the coastal city and commercial hub of Mobile, the University of South Alabama stands as a catalyst for innovation and discovery. HOW FAR WILL YOU GO? GO SOUTH.
THE ELEMENTS OF ACHIEVEMENT.

MADISON TUTTLE might change the world. When she graduates, she plans to earn a doctorate and research novel anticancer agents. But without the Mitchell-Moulton Scholarship Initiative, she wouldn’t be a USA student. Her ability is only catalyzed by your support. And your gift to MMSI will be immediately doubled, ensuring that students like Madison can change the world. For more information, call (251)460-7032 or visit southalabama.edu/development.
AT THE INTERSECTION OF IDEAS AND APPLICATIONS

THINK BEYOND BOUNDARIES