

UPDATE: Spotlight on the University Brand

Volume 1 Issue 2

Fall 2002

Our Promise

*We provide a
balance of
educational
excellence
and real
world
experience in
a unique
environment
that is
Hawai'i.*

The University of Hawai'i System in the Spotlight

Aloha,

Thanks for clicking through to the second issue of the Brand Update. We now have in place a great team that will help us bring the brand identity of the University of Hawai'i System to life visually.

Robert Rytter and Gail Boren of Rytter & Associates, whose work was featured in the first issue of Brand Update, have visited all of our campuses, meeting with faculty and administration. They are currently at work on building a new graphic identity for the system.

We have also hired a local advertising agency, Starr Seigle Communications

(Hawai'i's largest) to assist in developing advertising for the system and to be available to the campuses for the development of their own campaigns.

Both firms were hired through a rigorous RFP process and the competition was very tough. Their work will be built on the brand platform which was developed by The Brand Strategy Group. (see issue #1 of Brand Update).

We are delighted to have them on board, and anxious to begin the work of getting The University of Hawaii System the exposure it deserves for so many jobs well done.

We have received lots of positive feedback about our

efforts to put The University of Hawai'i System in the spotlight positively and consistently. University Relations is committed to the success of this program, and as always, we welcome your input. Please feel free to email me or Phil Kinnicutt with any questions or comments.

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Our Values are Key to our Brand

Like any other brand, the University of Hawai'i System brand is based on its values. Those values have been clearly identified in the System Strategic Plan. *They are:* Aloha / Collaboration and Respect / Academic Freedom and Intellectual Rigor / Institutional Integrity and Service / Access, Affordability and Excellence / Active learning and discovery / Diversity, Fairness and Equity / Leveraged Technology / Hawaiian and Asian-Pacific Advantage / Innovation and Empowerment / Accountability and Fiscal Integrity / Mālama 'aina/Sustainability.



Q & A with Bob Rytter, graphic designer

The process: creating a new identity

You've been hired to bring the University's brand to life in a new visual identity. What does that mean?

Bob Rytter: The most important background and foundation for the graphic design work has been done by The Brand Strategy Group. Through research, and with the help of many people throughout the University System, they have identified the brand characteristics and brand promise of the University of Hawai'i System. Information on their recommendations has been presented at every campus and was summarized in the first issue of Brand UpDate.

Our job is to take that information and translate it into a "look" – including a system of typography and colors, including a logo or logos that will over time and with repeated exposure – come to represent the University of Hawaii System.

Don't we already have a logo?

BR: Yes, -in fact, there are more than 170 different logos currently in use throughout the University of Hawai'i System. Each campus has its own logo, each special program has its own logo, each graduate school has its own logo, and so on. Right now, the University of Hawai'i System is essentially sending hundreds of different messages

To put it another way, that's 170 reasons for needing a single visual identity for the University of Hawai'i System.

Once ownership of the program is accepted, the pride will become far more evident and the brand can emerge clearly. This program will focus the existing pride and energy toward a single set of graphics as representation of a fine institution.

What will happen with the university seal?

BR: It is the symbol of the academic nature of the University of Hawai'i System . We will be updating and contemporizing it.

If each campus and program wants to showcase its expertise and express its individuality, how can it help us to have just one identity?

BR: Information overload is a serious challenge for every institution. Every company, every product, every service, every institution is clamoring to get our attention. The University of Hawai'i System needs a strong, contemporary identity that can break through this clutter. It's also a matter of money. Even if we wanted to use all of the

170 logos, we'd never have enough money to get the University of Hawai'i System the attention it deserves. Moreover, sending mixed branding messages dilutes the overall impression a student may have about the institution.

How do you approach the problem of creating an identity that everyone will like?

BR: Actually, it's not a matter of creating an identity that everyone will like, it's a matter of creating an identity that meets the objectives and the criteria that have been set with the identification of the brand values (as articulated in the System Strategic Plan), the brand promise and the brand characteristics.

So do you have any idea what it will look like?

BR: My design team has visited all the campuses and spent a good deal of time in Hawai‘i. We’re aware of the amazing beauty of this place and the complexity of the University of Hawai‘i System. We also know how much everyone prizes their individuality. So it’s a real challenge. A challenge we are honored to accept as everybody in the world loves Hawai‘i. Who wouldn’t want to design a graphic identity that represents its University System.

Is the process inclusive?

BR: The process for creating a new graphic identity for the University of Hawai‘i, or any other institution, must be inclusive to be successful. As the brand work clarified, the University has many audiences and their perceptions may vary. All audiences have feelings about the University which need to be heard and consequently molded into the creative process. This new graphic identity program will need to be embraced by the University community in order to be successful. Once ownership of the program is accepted, the pride will become far more evident and the brand can emerge clearly. This program will merely focus the existing pride and energy towards a single set of graphics as representation of a fine institution.

If process is important, what exactly is the process you will undertake?

BR: We start with a committee that represents the various constituencies on campus. This committee has been working on the brand identity process now for several months.

Our initial on-campus research includes interviewing people from each campus, talking to the primary users, spending time on each campus, listening to concerns, understanding differences, explaining the process, and asking for clues. After several days of research, our team meets with the Graphic Identity Committee, created by the office of the vice president for external affairs, to go over what we learned and to establish limitations and aspirations of the program.

Our first round of design work will be presented as ten designs. These designs will be presented to the committee for their review. The goal of the design presentations is to narrow the field from ten designs down to three. These three finalists will then be refined and shown in greater detail.

Once we narrow to three, our staff works on refinements. At the next presentation, we will show the committee what the logo looks like in a variety of uses including signage, website, apparel, admissions publications, fundraising publications, stationary, and business cards.

Then, we test these three designs with a wider audience. We receive feedback on the designs and successfully elicit more support and understanding of the branding process. This inclusion process is crucial to the successful launch of a new graphic identity. Once this project is finished, we expect several hundred people will have contributed to the process in some way.

The committee will make a final selection to recommend to the University President Evan Dobbelle. The president then presents the selection to the Board of Regents for their final approval. Following the BOR’s approval, the new graphics will be “rolled-out” through press releases, banners on campuses and new signage.

Finally, we provide the University with a graphic standards manual for use University-system wide. That concludes our work.

One Team.
One Team.
One Voice.
One Voice.
One University.
One University.

The University of Hawai'i System's New Advertising Agency



Founded in 1956 as A.D. Starr Company, today Starr Seigle Communications is Hawai'i's largest marketing

communications company. Starr Seigle has full-service divisions in advertising, market research, public relations, and interactive marketing.

Starr Seigle's roster of clients includes Hawaiian Airlines, Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i, American Savings Bank, Hilton Hotels, The Hawai'i State Department of Health, just to name a few.

Starr Seigle will be working with the University of Hawai'i to bring to life the University's brand in image advertising and will work alongside individual campuses to assist with any communications needs that may arise. Starr Seigle is proud to be working with the University System.

*Shown on this page-
Various SSC clients*



"We couldn't be more excited to be partnering with the University. There are just so many great things about UH the public simply isn't aware of, and we're honored to have been chosen to help the University achieve its goal of becoming a world-class institution."

David Koch

Starr Seigle Communications President

