

VOL. 3

A small look at  
**the big things**  
**we're thinking**  
**and making.**

# We build brands that inspire and endure.



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**All that we do — and we do it all — is in service to all that higher ed does.**

SimpsonScarborough was founded to exclusively serve higher ed. In the beginning, we focused our efforts on research, on being the industry's most respected data-driven partner. Over time, as we gained a full understanding of our industry, and the needs of our clients evolved, we thoughtfully added to our offerings, developing SimpsonScarborough into what it is today — a full-service branding and marketing agency.

**And while everything seemingly changed in 2020, it didn't change our commitment to you.**

As advocates for both the industry at large and for institutions large and small, public and private, we dedicated our Spring and Summer to helping colleges and universities to navigate these unprecedented times. We conducted and distributed three national studies on COVID-19's impact on higher education, released a dashboard on college reopening plans, and put together comprehensive real-world recommendations that balanced the specific needs of our clients with our knowledge of the crisis. Ultimately, we're proud to have done all of the above and more, while continuing to serve and support our clients, stabilize their enrollment, communicate their values, and help to ensure a successful recovery.

Today, our service offerings and our resolve are more robust and stronger than ever. That's because the knowledge being created and the research being conducted on your campus right now will make a difference — you will change the lives of people who will change the world. And we want to be a partner in that change by continuing to build brands that inspire and endure. →

# Case Studies

Your institution is unique. Your brand should be, too.

We've partnered with

**300+**  
institutions

**BUTLER**

**Brand Campaign**  
Largest Incoming Class in School History

UNIVERSITY OF THE  
**PACIFIC**

**User Experience**  
Web Design Optimized for Enrollment

**NC STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

**Capital Campaign**  
Highest One-Year Giving Total in School History \$220m

**HAWAI'I**  
**PACIFIC**  
UNIVERSITY

**Brand Campaign**  
20% Increase in Deposits during COVID Gold CASE

 **SEATTLE**  
UNIVERSITY

**Capital Campaign**  
97% of Campaign Goal within 10 Months of Launch

 **CAL POLY**

**Identity, Brand & Capital Campaign**  
Most Successful Capital Campaign in School History Gold CASE

# How better data unleashed the Bulldogs.

Following extensive, in-depth research, we determined that the Bulldogs should focus their brand strategy on the remarkable outcomes Butler graduates regularly achieve. Our positioning centered around “The Right Outcomes. The Right Way.” After launching the university’s brand strategy, we went on to create positioning and messaging work for all six of Butler’s academic colleges, and helped to establish a system to regularly and reliably measure Butler’s brand equity over time.

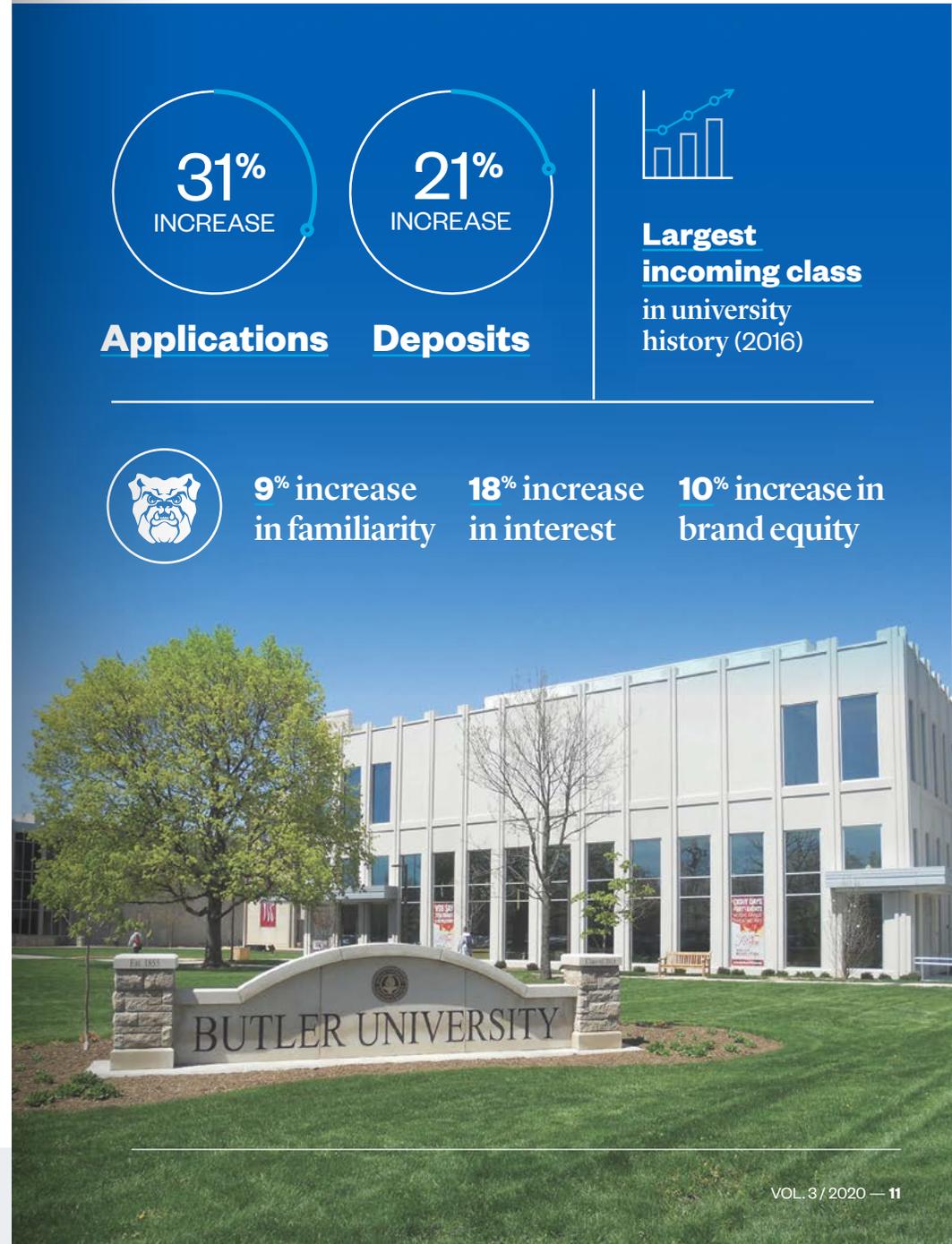
“

We haven’t been this energized in years; I truly feel we are embarking on an amazing new leg of the brand journey.

Beyond the amazing strategy and the great creative, it’s so obvious to our team—as well as to Enrollment and Advancement—that SimpsonScarborough is our partner and invested in our success. They have helped us with buy-in in ways that we have not been able to do on our own. SimpsonScarborough has changed the trajectory for Butler.

**Stephanie Judge Cripe**

Associate Vice President, Marketing and Communications  
Butler University



**Applications**



**Deposits**



**Largest incoming class**  
in university history (2016)



**9% increase**  
in familiarity

**18% increase**  
in interest

**10% increase** in  
brand equity

# A fine-tuned message makes a real time impact.

“SimpsonScarborough’s research and process was critical in creating a campaign name, giving categories, and key messages that both accurately reflect NC State and inspire our key audiences. With their team’s help in creating a powerful theme and video, we launched the campaign, and the feedback has been extraordinary.

**Brad Bohlander**

Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Communications Officer  
North Carolina State University



With great teamwork, NC State has rallied behind “Think and Do.”

\$ **220**  
MILLION

Highest One-Year Giving Total in **NC State History**



Record-Breaking **Faculty and Staff Giving** ↑ 21%

Record-Breaking **Student Giving** ↑ 133%

Total alumni giving increased from **\$79** to **\$92 million**



# Achieving enrollment marketing yields that many would say are impossible.

“To have deposits go up over 20% over last year is huge in this pandemic, when many schools are reporting being 20% down.”

**John Gotanda**  
President  
Hawai'i Pacific University

## CASE 2020 Awards

Gold Circle of Excellence Award,  
Communications Improvement

Gold Circle of Excellence Award,  
Marketing Improvement

## Outcomes —

- › Doubled undergraduate applications over the previous year
- › Doubled RSVPs for the first Admitted Student Receptions
- › Record number of deposits from incoming freshmen during the first week of campus housing sign-ups
- › Increased enrollment deposits despite COVID-19



In 2017–18, Hawaii Pacific University recorded its eighth year of enrollment decline. But why? Who wouldn't want to attend college in the Pacific paradise? Enter the former Dean of Villanova Law School and Hawaii Pacific University's new President, John Gotanda, who called SimpsonScarborough.

Our in-depth research revealed that HPU was facing numerous and wide-ranging challenges: misinformed and negative press coverage surrounding finances and declining enrollment; low morale among faculty and staff; marketing communications that presented the university as a tourist/travel destination, prioritizing adventure and location over academics; low levels of awareness and familiarity among external audiences; inability of audiences to identify specific strengths or differentiators; academic quality that was viewed as “good” or “fair,” rather than “excellent”; weak alumni engagement with a large majority who had not made a financial gift in five years; a distinct set of audiences — local, mainland, military, and international — who chose HPU for different reasons.

### Academic Quality Ratings



### Academic excellence is seen as a weakness across audiences.

Extent to Which HPU is Delivering on Brand Promises



Synthesizing all of the data we acquired during the research phase, we landed on six primary strategic drivers to enhance Hawaii Pacific University's strengths, while also countering its limitations. These would serve as the building blocks of HPU's brand strategy, as well as inform the creative to come.

- › Acknowledge the strength of HPU's location
- › Showcase its strength of diversity and cross-cultural campus
- › Highlight the strength of its intimate, supportive environment
- › Improve and earn recognition for the university's robust academics
- › Bolster hands-on, experiential learning offerings
- › Strengthen HPU's personal, tailored approach



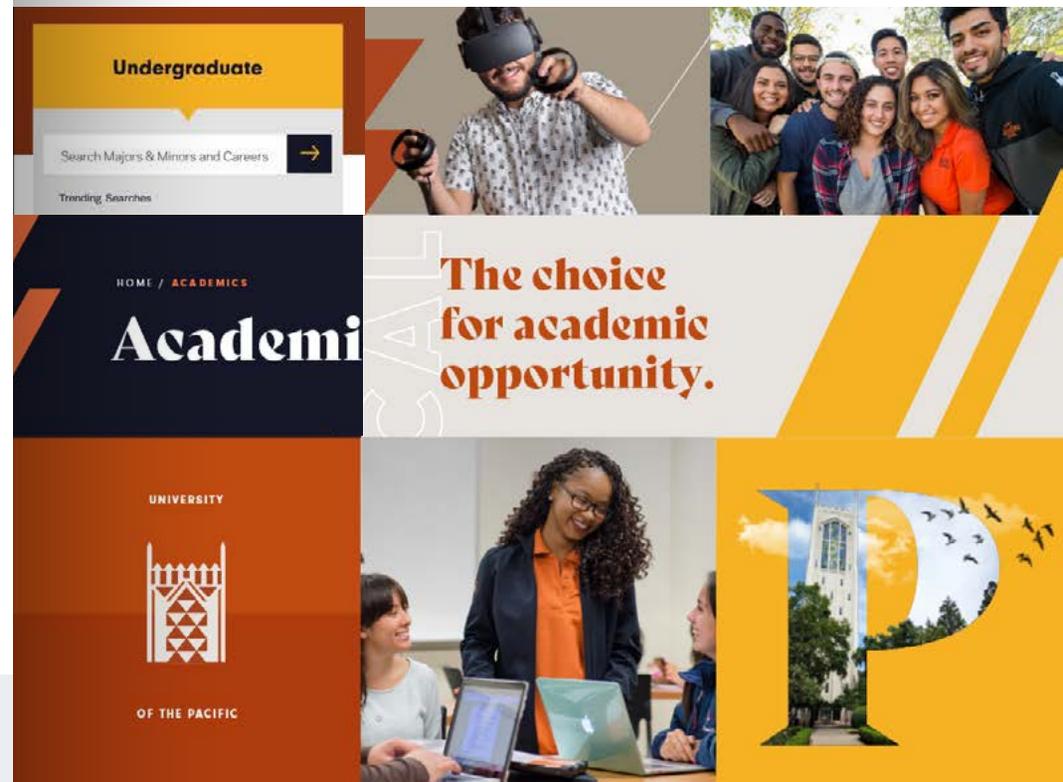
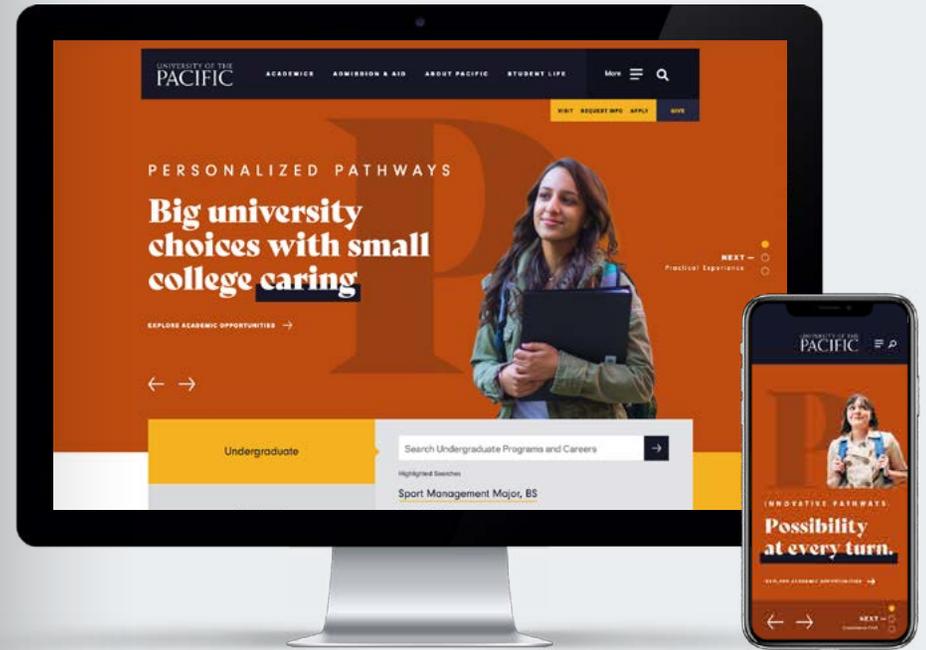
# Building and executing a brand with proper user strategies.

University of the Pacific needed to develop a cohesive brand that would help unify the university across its three campuses and 10 schools and position it to attract prospective students and drive enrollment. The rebrand's centerpiece, Pacific's launch of a newly redesigned website, delivered a beautiful, fast, and responsive site focused on serving prospective students and designed to provide the end-user with a seamless brand experience.

The launch of the site was a commencement of 10 months of collaborative work across our own internal divisions and hand in hand with the Pacific team. Their ideas, work, and feedback throughout improved the strategy at every step in the process and paved the way.

Before **40k** pages → After **6k** pages

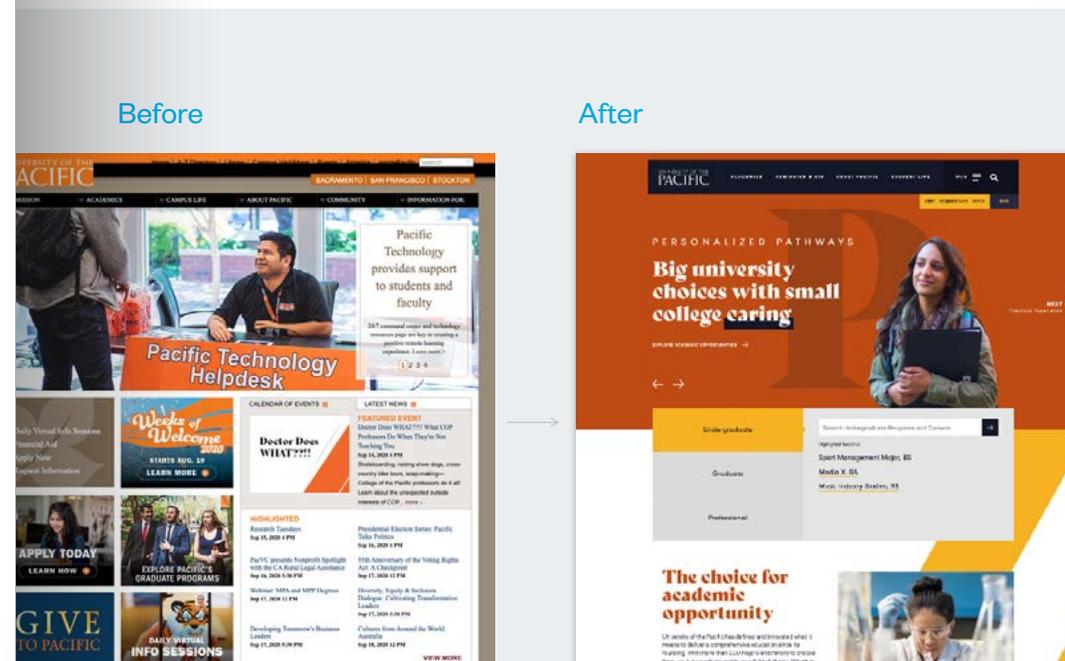
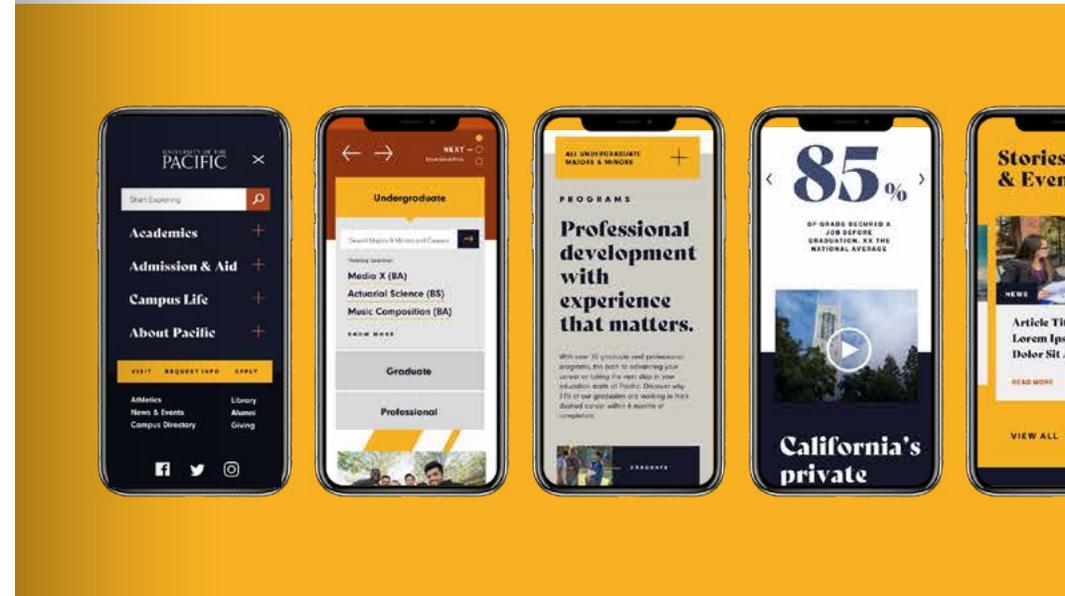
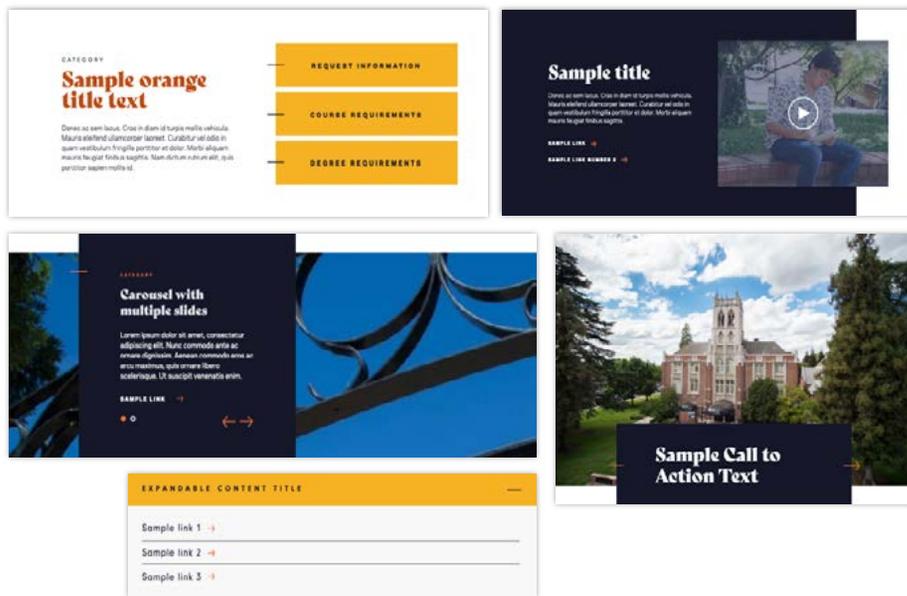
View the live site —



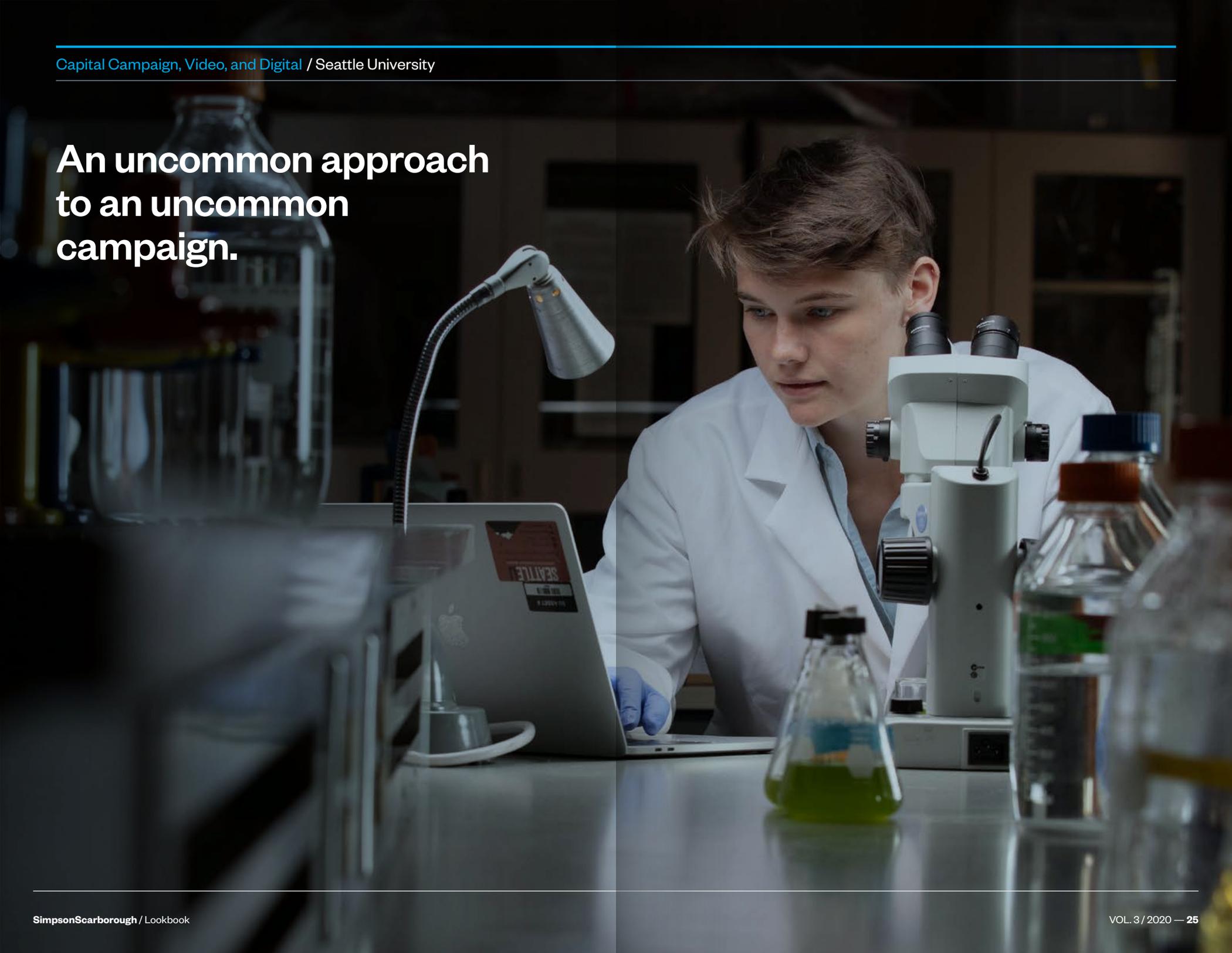
Pacific had been operating their site using a proprietary CMS that was outdated, restricted access and usability, and not optimized for mobile traffic. We built the site in Drupal, an open-source CMS, using a wide variety of custom-made components.

This flexible design system gave content producers the power to make a genuinely engaging site experience while enhancing the site's look, feel, and quality of content.

And by building easy to use custom components, the Pacific team was able to reign in control over their site's content to better meet and satisfy the needs of their various marketing and communications strategies.



**An uncommon approach  
to an uncommon  
campaign.**



Fundraising campaigns in higher education often take the same shape. And while certain elements of Seattle U's campaign are built on best practices, we, and the team at Seattle U, believed there was an opportunity to evolve and refine messaging and communications through in-depth research.

We built quantitative research instruments for multiple potential donor groups. Neck-deep in data, we began building the marketing strategy. Its primary components were a paid media plan utilizing out-of-home placements in targeted neighborhoods throughout Seattle, as well as digital & social.

The strategy also included a longer-form video profiling students and faculty.

[View the campaign trailer](#) —



### Creative —

Our creative concept is what we'd consider an evolution, not a revolution, of the Seattle University brand. The concept included new campaign marks, a refined color palette, new iconography, new design elements, print collateral, ad concepts, banner, and environmental concepts, and much more.

### Content and Microsite —

Our team designed and developed a microsite, as well as producing its content (copy, photography, and video). The site launched prior to the signature donor recognition event in September and was built to support on-going content production outlined in the content strategy.



[View the live site —](#)



#### LOGOMARK



#### PHOTO STYLE



#### ICONOGRAPHY



#### PATTERNS



# A 117-year-old brand, a single year in the branding.

CASE 2020 Award  
Gold Circle of Excellence Award,  
Marketing / Visual Identity Systems

Most Successful Capital  
Campaign in CSU History

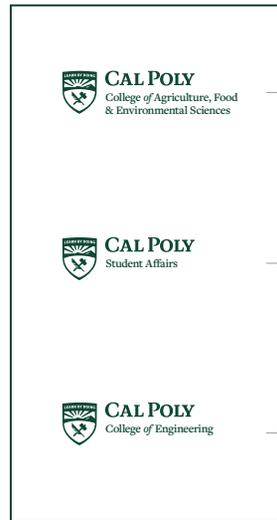
In January of 2018, SimpsonScarborough launched a fully-integrated branding process that included research, strategy, and creative for Cal Poly, with the goal of providing an authentic and comprehensive brand that would ensure consistency in their strategic planning and communications efforts for years to come.



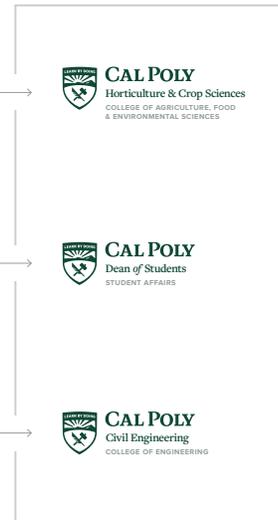
MASTER BRANDS



PRIMARY SUB-BRANDS



SECONDARY SUB-BRANDS



TERTIARY SUB-BRANDS



CHARTERED CLUBS



TEAMS & IRA CLUBS



AFFILIATE BRANDS



Through deep-dive qualitative and quantitative research, we found out that “Learn by Doing” was at the heart of Cal Poly’s philosophy and resonated most with current and prospective audiences. By connecting this with the brand expression “Ready Day One,” we showed that it’s more than a mindset. It’s a tangible, marketable attribute that all Cal Poly graduates possess.



**Rays**

The sun’s rays represent both learning and our sunny California location.



**Bishop Peak**

The silhouette provides a unique sense of place and is representative of achieving the highest of higher education’s heights.



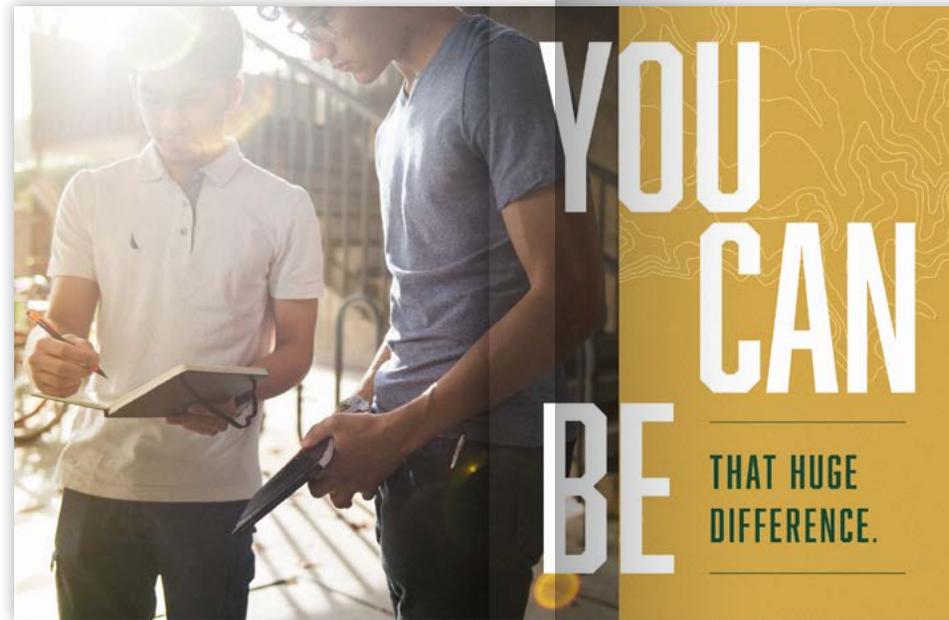
**Learn by Doing**

Our philosophy and Cal Poly’s first piece of marketing (and, today, its most recognizable across all audiences).



**Hammer & Quill**

Visually represents Learn by Doing and ties back to the shield within Cal Poly’s seal.



Our research work with Cal Poly included both qualitative and quantitative testing with more than 3,300 respondents including prospects, faculty, staff, current students, alumni, board members, academic peers and more.



The research enabled buy-in from a cross section of the campus and served as a catalyst for people to look at the brand collectively. It also lifted marketing up, demonstrating the important strategic function it serves.

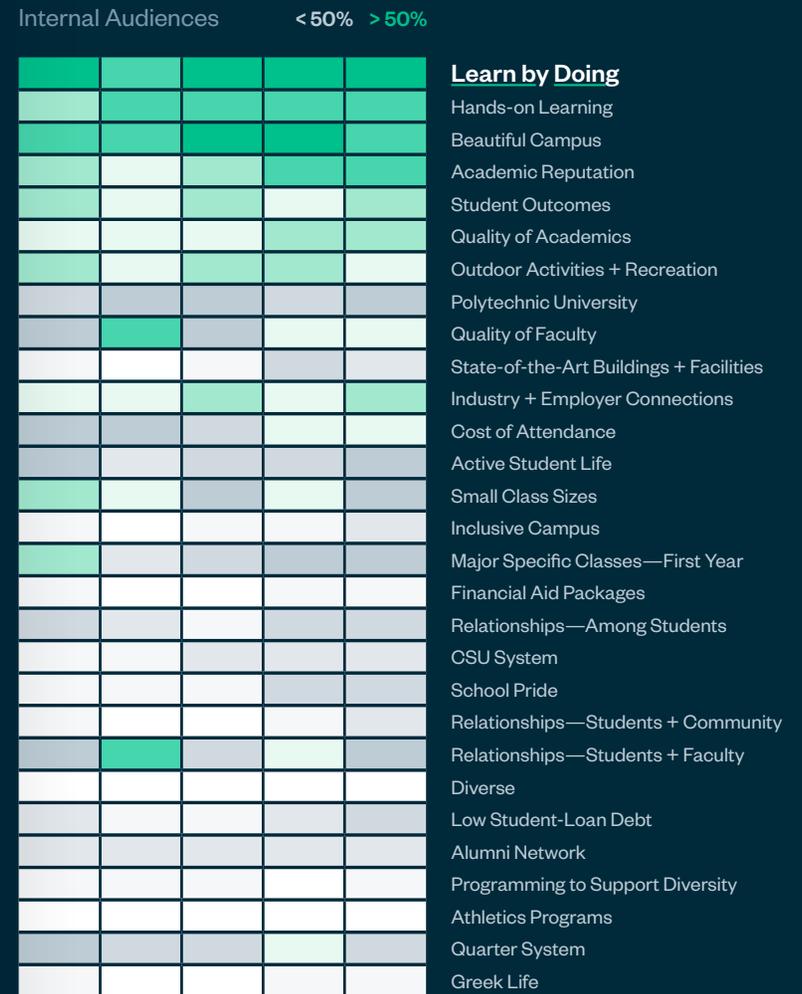
**James Maraviglia**  
 Vice Provost for Enrollment Development & Chief Marketing Officer  
 Cal Poly



It was really important to feel like we had a true partner. We're the type of client that gets really hands-on, that gets in the weeds. This partnership's proven to be exactly what we'd hoped it would be, one in which we truly worked together.

**Royaa Silver**  
 Assistant Vice President, Creative Services  
 Cal Poly

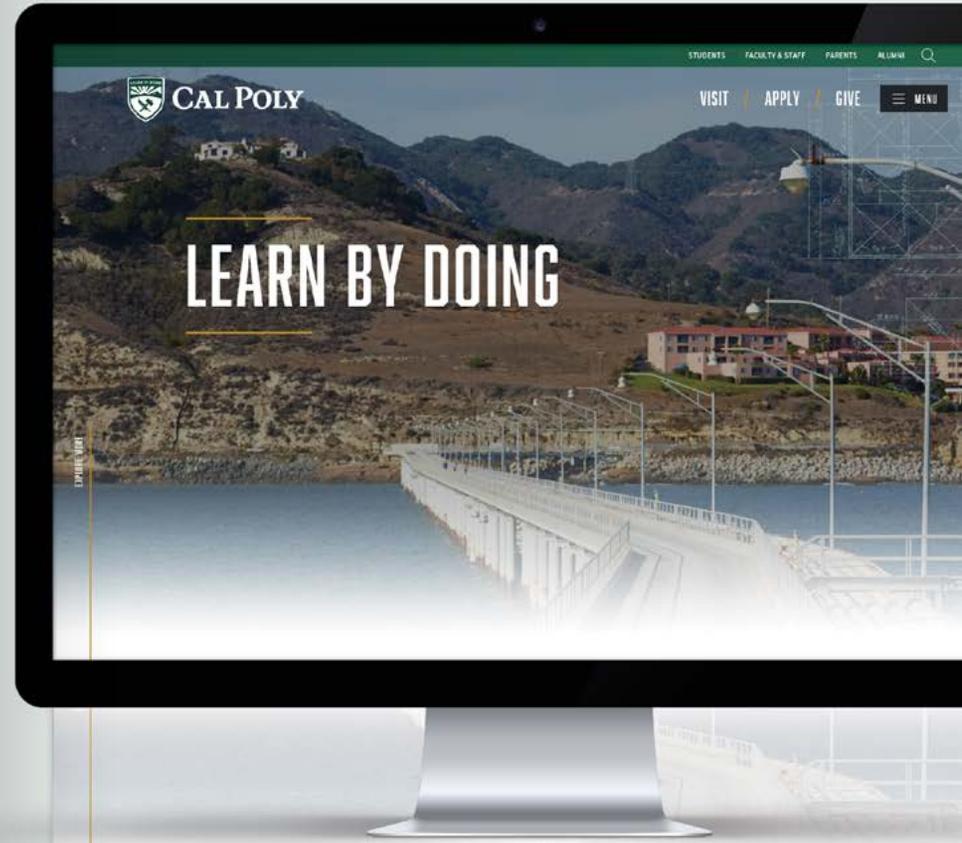
84% of Internal Audiences Identified "Learn by Doing" as Cal Poly's greatest strength.



After testing the new brand identity, we applied it across campus through print and environmental tactics, including Cal Poly's first Welcome Center. Additionally, we infused the updated messaging into a new web and mobile experience, modernizing the university's online presence.



View the live site —



## Our Core Philosophy

SINCE 1901

Students like you go to college to learn how to make a career out of doing what they love. Each year, over 5,000 students like you — and nothing like you — come to Cal Poly to Learn by Doing. Because for today's and tomorrow's employer, there's a huge difference between knowledge for knowledge's sake and the rare ability to get hands-on to hit the ground running.

→ [LEARN BY DOING START HERE](#)



In addition to our extensive brand work, Cal Poly also turned to us to assist in the building of *The Power of Doing: The Campaign for Learn by Doing*. Leaning upon the brand and identity as a framework, we provided naming and strategy, as well as fresh designs that could stand on their own as a fundraising platform.

To date, the campaign has raised \$832,844,380 of its \$700 million goal.

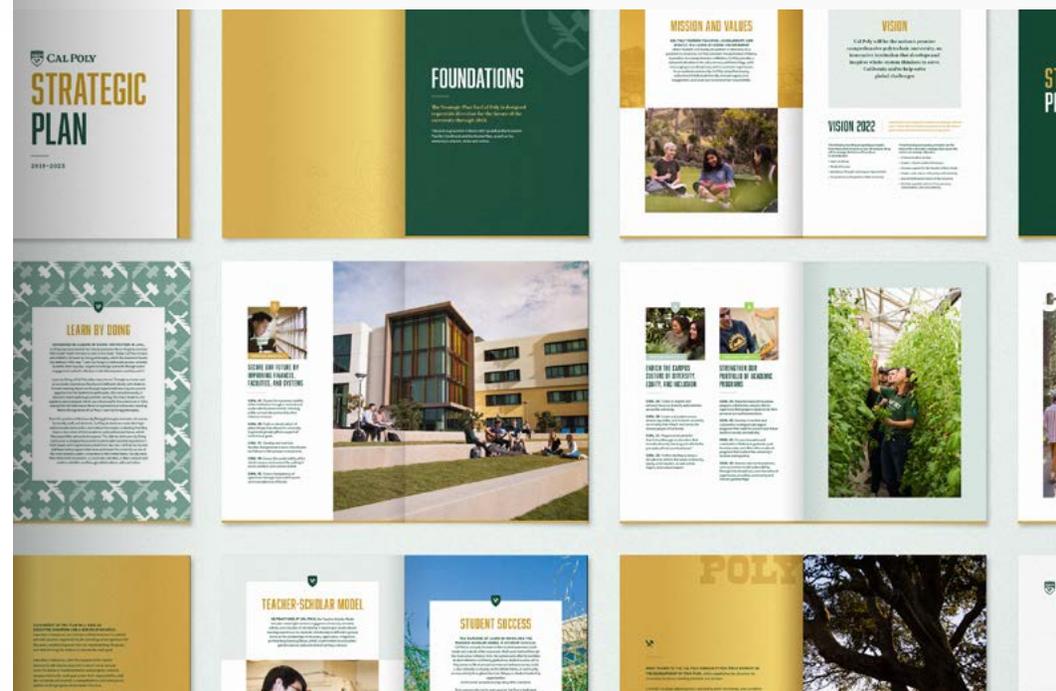
# LEARN BY DOING WAS BORN HERE

## AND WILL THRIVE HERE, ALWAYS.

CAL POLY WAS FOUNDED ON THE PHILOSOPHY AND THE PRACTICE OF LEARN BY DOING. MORE THAN EVER, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE LIVES OF OUR STUDENTS, TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR ALUMNI, AND TO THE IMPACT EACH HAS HAD AND WILL HAVE ON CALIFORNIA AND THE WORLD.

The Power of Doing is more than a campaign. It's both a promise made long ago and a pledge to a future far from now. Today, it falls upon us to power Learn by Doing forward — to honor a Cal Poly that's transformative to its students, to power an alma mater that engenders pride among its alumni, and to power a university that learns and leads by doing even more.

THIS IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY. THIS IS OUR POWER.



# We see ourselves as true champions of your brand.

It's why we invest so much in figuring out the right questions to ask, focusing on the right problems to solve, and developing the right creative solutions to take your institution where you want it to go.

## Research

### Capabilities

- > Brand and messaging
- > Strategic planning
- > Recruitment
- > Alumni engagement
- > Fundraising
- > Image and perception
- > Creative testing

### Advanced Analytics

- > Conjoint analysis
- > TURF analysis
- > Discrete choice analysis
- > Segmentation
- > Max differential
- > Factor analysis

### Methodologies

- > Conjoint analysis
- > TURF analysis
- > Segmentation
- > Factor analysis

## Strategy

### Capabilities

- > Brand positioning and platform development
- > Message creation and mapping
- > Data-driven personas
- > Competitor analysis
- > Brand assessments
- > Brand launch planning
- > Paid media strategy and planning
- > Content strategy development
- > Digital marketing planning
- > Metrics and ROI evaluation

## Creative

### Capabilities

- > Brand campaigns
- > Enrollment campaigns
- > Capital campaigns

### Concepting & Production

- > Visual identity
- > Logo development
- > Guidelines
- > Advertising
- > Marketing collateral
- > Content development
- > Video and radio
- > Web, digital, and social
- > Experiential
- > Trainings and workshops

### Video Production

- > Brand anthem
- > Animation
- > Motion graphics
- > Documentary
- > Video series
- > Virtual reality
- > Television spots
- > Aerial drone

## Digital

### Capabilities

- > Content strategy
- > Website design
- > SEO strategy
- > Analytics review
- > Custom CMS builds
- > Digital viewbooks
- > Email marketing

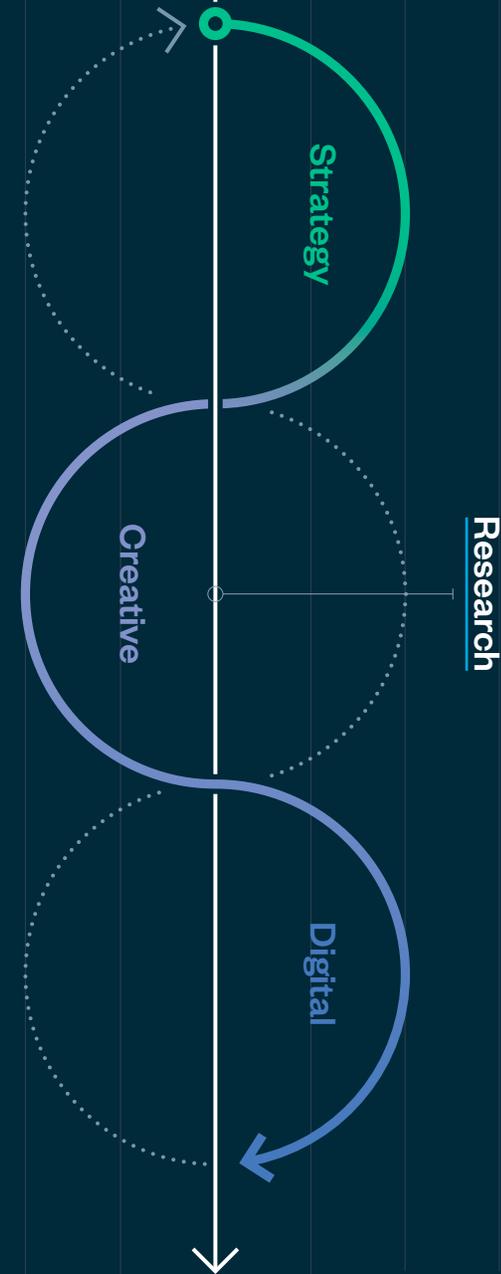
### Technologies

- > Drupal
- > WordPress
- > Terminal4
- > Cascade
- > Custom applications
- > Touchscreen displays

# Our team works extremely closely together to ensure that each step in our integrated process is informed by the one preceding it.

Our in-depth research foundation runs through each stage, providing the basis upon which our strategy, creative and digital work is designed. In turn, our strategy informs our creative work; and our ideas about creative and digital execution are incorporated back into the brand strategy.

No stage in the process operates in isolation; and we're sharing ideas constantly throughout. *The result?* A brand strategy and marketing tactics that perfectly capture the spirit of your institution, and express it in a way that moves audiences to action.



# We're dedicated, connected, and committed to higher education.

We started SimpsonScarborough in 2006 with the steadfast belief that the best higher education brands are built, measured, refined, and expressed through research — and it remains our founding principle.

But, like any good marketing strategy, we're adaptive. Over the years, our mission has become less focused on what we do and more concentrated on what our clients need.

In 2014, we started building out our creative and digital teams to expand our capabilities and allow us to better help clients meet their goals through targeted marketing initiatives. In 2019, SimpsonScarborough acquired Knowble Media, an accomplished digital agency that specializes in website and video production for higher education.

Our growing team is vibrant and diverse, but we all share a common attribute: Every one of us is passionate about, and an absolute expert in, higher ed. We believe that universities are where the magic happens — the cure for cancer; the end of systemic racism; the solution to climate change. Pretty lofty goals — but if anyone can make it happen, it's you. Let us help you get there.



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**Let's Connect**

**Before your next initiative,  
let's see how we can help.**

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**Leadership**

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SimpsonScarborough is a woman-owned firm.