



# MEMO

To: Cabinet, Council of Academic Deans, Directors  
From: Michael K. Young  
Date: February 2007  
Re: University Identity and Branding

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At the 2006 autumn retreat I emphasized the imperative for a more coordinated and consistent brand identity across campus. This includes the singular use of the University's approved logos to identify colleges, departments, and programs; higher visibility of the University's name and affiliation on publications and printed material; a more organized approach to communicating with University constituents; greater infusion of key University messages and themes throughout all communications and publications; and a consistent visual image for University academic web sites.

University Health Care provides an excellent example of the value of coordinated identity. Their efforts to establish a more consistent visual image linking the various healthcare entities associated with the University have yielded great results, and make perfect sense given their uniquely competitive situation in the health care market. I appreciate their good work and anticipate they will continue their branding efforts within that arena.

I recognize this branding emphasis may pose initial challenges. The University has long taken a decentralized approach toward much of its operations. This has served us well in many ways and will undoubtedly remain a valuable part of our institution's culture, but it has become a liability for our institutional branding and positioning.

A more consistent and coordinated brand benefits us all. While we recognize and value the many differences that exist among us, the vast majority of Utahns see us collectively as one entity: The University of Utah. Granted, such a singular perception misses the nuances that often enliven our campus community; at the same time, it allows all of us to benefit from the achievements of successful individuals and programs. This halo effect only grows stronger as we unite in our identification with the University.

To help us toward this end I have asked Mark Woodland, associate vice president for University Marketing & Communications, to work closely with you and your staffs in building a more consistent brand identity across campus. This will start with a renewed emphasis on

using the University's approved logo on all printed and electronic material, with the goal of having the approved logos in use by all campus entities no later than fall 2007.

I have also asked University Marketing & Communications to develop—in concert with their communications colleagues across campus—identity and content guidelines for University-affiliated publications, magazines, and newsletters. These guidelines will offer direction on how to identify affiliation with the University and assist with shaping and implementing University-approved themes and messages into publication content for the next several years. This process will include coordination of distribution schedules and recipient lists to ensure that friends of the University receive frequent and appropriate communication without being inundated by too many publications. I hope significant progress will be made on these three objectives by mid-summer 2007.

And finally, while I appreciate the creativity of the many web sites representing colleges and programs affiliated with the University, the cumulative effect is confusing and unsettling to those who visit us electronically. In mid-February, the University will post a new look for its home page. I urge all University entities to adopt this visual and stylistic identity, and to that end I have instructed University Marketing & Communications to provide you with the materials needed to become part of a coordinated and integrated whole.

My overarching goals for this identity initiative are simple:

- Create an identifiable and consistent image for programs associated with the U
- Build awareness of the breadth and strength of the University by unifying our identity
- Take advantage of halo benefits by visually linking programs across campus
- Use this renewed sense of unity as the foundation for a successful capital campaign

Mark Woodland will shortly be in contact with you and/or your communication staff on the specific guidelines, time frame, and process to achieve these goals.

I recognize these changes will include challenges; please know they will be evolutionary rather than revolutionary. Even so, when we meet this autumn to discuss the progress we've made on international, interdisciplinary, and student engagement efforts, I expect we will do so under a unified and widely accepted brand identity.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in working toward these goals for the common good.