The Value of Branding
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What is branding and why does it matter?
Branding has two parts to it:

1. **Perception** – the sense of an organization that people gain through their experiences with the organization. This is where every one of us at the University of Southern Maine play an important role, by ensuring our students and visitors have a positive and beneficial experience at USM.

2. **Visual identity** – (e.g. the logo) a consistent visual reminder to people of our brand.
Brand Considerations:

If you have a GOOD experience with an organization, and later you see that organization’s logo, you will remember that good experience and quite possibly share it with a friend. Conversely, if you have a BAD experience with an organization, and later see that organization’s logo, you will remember that bad experience, and share it with family or friends . . . usually several times over.

Studies show that consumers are 2 times more likely to share bad customer experiences than positive ones.

Another study showed that it takes 12 positive customer experiences to make up for one negative

Many of us take for granted the consistency strong brands achieve through using a single, unchanging logo for their organization.

If you see a logo for an organization, and each time you see it appears different you may be confused.
Example

McDonald's
There’s always an exception

In Sedona, Arizona they too have a strict branding guideline to preserve the area’s “naturalistic character”. McDonald’s met with strong local resistance, and in this case, chose to make a branding exception, rather than miss out on a potentially vital market.
The University of California Logo Fiasco

The University of California, an established institution for over 144 years, attempted to update their brand by creating a “modern iconic design”.

Original
The University of California Logo Fiasco

The University of California, an established institution for over 144 years, attempted to update their brand by creating a “modern iconic design”.

“Updated”
The impact was not what the school or the designers expected. There was an uproar from alumni, faculty and current students. It eventually became the subject of an internet meme.
How do I work with branding?

The purpose of a “Brand Book” (aka Style Guide) is to provide basic rules around visual elements to represent our university. An effective brand identity is only possible through a consistent application of visual elements, such as our university name, logo, color palette, typography, imagery and graphics.

When we successfully present a unified brand image at all points of contact, we will build brand awareness among our constituents.

When we consistently provide great service to our constituents, we build brand equity and loyalty.
BRAND BOOK v2.0

Essential Elements
Introduction

Our collective goal is to create communications that consistently reinforce USM’s ‘Metropolitan University’ mission to all outward facing constituents. (e.g. prospective students, community members, and donors)

On the following pages you will find guidelines to help you create marketing communications using the basic mandatory elements of our brand identity system. These guidelines are for anyone who creates or works on marketing materials for USM.

While we have left a degree of flexibility in these guidelines that will allow you to be creative in your work, there are also basic rules to our branding that should not be broken. Every piece of communication we create – from advertisements to event stands – is an opportunity to clearly communicate and reinforce our brand.
Maine’s Metropolitan University

By understanding the USM brand, you can help us achieve our vision for the institution and how we want others to view us. Our brand unites all of us across the institution and drives our purpose. Through our established presence as Maine’s Metropolitan University, the University of Southern Maine helps shape the future of our region and the diverse communities we serve.

Our faculty provide a foundation of area expertise, commitment to excellence and innovation. Our students bring curiosity, a strong work ethic, intelligence and a desire to succeed. This close-knit collaboration of talent has created and supported an in-depth network of alumni and public and private community partners all across Maine.

The University of Southern Maine fosters independent thinking, creativity, engagement and adaptability to ensure our faculty, students, and community partners stay competitive with the changing expectations of our 21st century global society.

Through our offerings of undergraduate, graduate and professional development programs we are dedicated to continuing this beneficial partnership by providing a combination of quality education, relevant experience and engaged support.
Classic USM logo

The USM logo is the only mark that should be used to represent the University on official University documents, and marketing communications. The logo should be clearly readable, have a fair amount of space around it, and must not be altered in any way. This includes logos that are transluscent (“faded back”), reconfigured, distressed, or dissected.

People or groups outside of USM offices must attain permission to use the USM logo. Please direct all inquiries to Greg Daly at the Office of Marketing & Brand Management.
E-mail: gdaly@usm.maine.edu
Phone: 780-4772

Classic logo – full-color

Classic logo – full-color (white type)

Classic logo – single color

Classic logo – black and white

Minimum spacing around logo

Don’t crowd the logo with other elements. Keep this minimum area of space around the logo the same size as the height of the “UNIVERSITY OF” type.
USM logo with Access Points

The access points logo is the Classic USM logo with the addition of our 3 campuses and online. This is one way we can easily communicate where we are located. This logo should be used on outward facing communications directed toward the public. As with the classic logo, there should be plenty of room around the logo and access points, and should not be distorted in any way.

Points of Contact logo – full color

Points of Contact logo – single color

Points of Contact logo – black and white

Minimum spacing around logo

Don’t crowd the logo with other elements. Keep this minimum area of space around the logo the same size as the height of the “UNIVERSITY OF” type.
USM initials

When preparing materials for publication, you’ll need to incorporate the USM initials into a masthead. (see example banner below) These initials can be used as a solid color, or as a transparency or “watermark”. The letters use the type face Garamond with tight letter spacing.

When using USM initials in the masthead, be sure and place the letters on the upper left corner along the edges of the document as illustrated here.

*Note: when using these initials, the USM classic logo or access points logo must also appear on the layout as well.

Serifs in initials should touch 3 side edges as indicated
USM color palette

The main colors for USM are Blue and Yellow. It’s important that these identifying colors appear to some degree in any outward facing materials. We recognize that these colors combined tend to be a bit bold and vibrant. With that understanding, a choice should be determined which color will be featured. The balance between the featured choice should be a minimum of 80% / 20%

Example: our typical building signage.

USM Blue

Pantone Coated: 287C
Pantone Uncoated: reflex blue
C: 100 M: 68 Y: 0 K: 12
R: 30 G: 59 B: 120
H: 207˚ S: 100 B: 60

USM Gold

Pantone Coated: 130C
Pantone Uncoated: reflex blue
C: 0 M: 20 Y: 100 K: 0
R: 253 G: 185 B: 19
H: 46˚ S: 98 B: 100
Secondary color palette

These colors are used sparingly in layouts as complimentary colors. They are intended to enhance the impact of the communication in relation to the accompanying imagery or artwork.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color Code</th>
<th>CMYK Components</th>
<th>RGB Components</th>
<th>HSB Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

USM Colors
USM typefaces

These typefaces can be used in a variety of combinations and weights.

- Helvetica Neue LT Std Condensed (all fonts and weights)
- Helvetica Neue LT Std (all fonts and weights)
- Gotham (all fonts and weights)
- Garamond (all fonts and weights)

Replacement typefaces

Sometimes our official typefaces are not available on your computer system. If we cannot provide them for you, the standard system fonts listed below are acceptable replacements. *Note these are mainly for body text or header/footer text. These fonts should not be used for any display purposes.

- Century Gothic (all fonts and weights)
- Arial (all fonts and weights)
- Times (all fonts and weights)
Examples

Combining all the essential elements into a layout doesn’t always mean designing it the same way.
Coming Soon

- Updated online template system (future lunch and learn topic)
- Department, program, and office Identities
- Stationary, letterhead, and email signatures
- Choosing and using photography and additional graphic elements