BRAND REFRESH OVERVIEW

FALL 2021
WE ARE EMBARKING ON A YEARLONG, INCLUSIVE PROCESS TO REFRESH AND RELAUNCH OUR BRAND
WHAT IS OUR OPPORTUNITY?
+
WHAT IS THE CASE FOR CHANGE?
THIS IS OUR MOMENT
THIS IS OUR BRAND

With the **2030 Strategic Plan** moving to the activation phase, the time is right to embark on the next evolution of our brand.

We are ALL ambassadors of the brand. University Communications is simply a primary steward. You are critical to our collective success.
NOW'S THE TIME TO
BE BOLD & BREAK OUT ...
“Name recognition or branding is a weak point.”

“Historically we wanted to lean out when it felt uncomfortable, but I think we have a big opportunity to lean in.”

“I don't think we tell our story very well. When we look at brand articulation, I think we have great opportunity.”

“CU Denver has a great opportunity to be bold and lean into what's happening in our world right now.”
WHY EVOLVE OUR BRAND NOW?

• We now have a strong strategic vision and direction to guide our brand. It's time to align.

• Global disruptions, technology, demographic/social shifts, and evolving workforce needs have accelerated change in the world. We are well positioned to tell our story in embracing this change.

• Competition is fierce and prospective and current students are savvier consumers who demand more. We need to answer the "why us."

• We are making education work for all. Equity is our ethos. And our student body is diverse and inclusive. We need to lean in even further.

• We need to claim our position and identity, and show and tell how our story is unique, differentiated, and compelling.
NOW LET’S TAKE A STEP BACK…
WHAT IS A BRAND AFTER ALL?
A brand is the way a company, institution, product, or individual is perceived by those who experience it.

SIMPLY PUT, BRANDS ARE PERCEPTIONS.
BRAND BUILDING BLOCKS INCLUDE:

**BRAND PROMISE**
(what we stand for)

**MESSAGING PILLARS**
(what we say)

**CREATIVE EXPRESSION**
(how we look and feel)
Consistency and engagement are keys to a brand's success.

Without this: brand confusion and weakness.

WE ARE ONE BRAND WITH MANY WONDERFUL STORIES.
ALTHOUGH WE ARE MOVING FORWARD, WE HONOR AND LEARN FROM OUR PAST.
CU in the City: Year 1 (2017-18)
Reprise of CU in the City

CU in the City: Year 2 (2018-19)

CU in the City: Year 3 (2019-20)

Pandemic Pause & Start of a New Era (2020-21)

Denver's Transformer of Futures
WHAT ARE SOME OF THE QUESTIONS WE ARE EXPLORING?
SOME CRITICAL QUESTIONS

• How do people see us and our competitors? Do they see us?

• Is our brand national, regional, or local? What about international audiences?

• Is our brand promise rooted in experience or outcomes?

• How do we most effectively intersect with the University of Colorado brand? What about CU Anschutz? Are we CU or UC?

• How does the Auraria Campus “brand” intersect with ours?

• What are our greatest differentiators, and how do we synthesize our differentiation most effectively, including our emerging HSI status and establishing ourselves as an equity-serving institution?

• How long will this new brand last?
SCOPE OF WORK

**IN SCOPE**

**Brand Promise:**
The promise is what we stand for and what experiences our audiences can expect from us.

**New Tagline:**
The short catchphrase or slogan that supports a brand.

**Messaging & Tone of Voice:**
What we say about ourselves and how.

**Creative Expression:**
The way our brand looks and feels, including visual identity, photography, fonts, and colors.

**OUT OF SCOPE**

**New Logo:**
That is a longer-term decision affecting the entire CU System.

**New Ad Campaigns for Target Markets:**
That will come later.

**Refreshed Web Presence in New Brand:**
That will come later.
WHAT'S THE PROCESS + TIMELINE FOR THE REFRESH?
BRAND REFRESH JOURNEY

Research & Discovery

Analysis

Insights

BRAND PROMISE

Creative Expression

Brand Campaign Development

Launch & Measure

SEPTEMBER 2021 – EARLY SPRING 2022

SPRING 2022

SUMMER – FALL 2022

AY 2022

PHASE 1

PHASES 2 – 4

WE ARE ISSUING SEPARATE RFPS AT EVERY STAGE
AN INCLUSIVE PROCESS

BRAND PROMISE

Discovery + Research
- Market research inside and outside of CU Denver
- Surveys, 1:1 conversations, small groups
- Market trends and competitive analyses

Engagement
- Provide regular updates, ask for input, and offer opportunities for review and testing of materials
- Stand up a first-ever Brand Advisory Council to increase participation and representation

Communications
- Create a dedicated brand refresh website
- Communicate via CU Denver News, videos, and announcements
WHAT'S NEXT?
NEXT STEPS

• Join community input sessions

• Stay connected via our website at ucdenver.edu/brandrefresh

• Contact us at brand@ucdenver.edu with questions and comments, and share suggestions for great brand stories about our community and its members
THANK YOU