



Brand Guidelines

Revised 2025

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Overview

Our brand is more than a logo or a tagline. It's how we show up in the world – with faith, excellence, joy, and tenacity.

And when we speak with one voice, we amplify the mission that unites us all: To Know Him and To Make Him Known.

For over a century, CIU has remained committed to one core mission: educating people from a biblical worldview to impact the nations with the message of Christ. As we've grown from a small Bible college into a diverse university with global reach, one thing hasn't changed – our identity is rooted in Christ, and our story is shaped by Him.

This style guide exists to help every communicator – from student interns to senior leaders – speak with one consistent voice. Whether you're writing for social media, designing a brochure, building a website, or creating an event poster, this guide will help you visually and verbally represent CIU in a way that reflects our values, celebrates our community, and connects with our audiences.



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WHY BRAND STRATEGY MATTERS

Columbia International University has a clear and compelling mission: to educate people from a biblical worldview to impact the nations with the message of Christ. Our brand strategy helps us communicate that mission consistently and meaningfully – whether we're speaking to prospective or current students, their families, alumni or donors.

This strategy ensures every part of the CIU community communicates with clarity, unity, and purpose. It's not just about how things look or sound – it's about reflecting who we are in every interaction.

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Our brand strategy:

- Provides a foundation for messaging and storytelling across departments and platforms.
- Guides visual and verbal consistency to strengthen CIU's presence and credibility.
- Clarifies our unique value – why CIU is distinct in mission, community, and calling.



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Brand Identity

CIU'S BRAND STORY

The messaging is an articulation of what we offer and why it matters. It captures the CIU story and guides our communications.

We are a Christ-centered community that wants to help every student be ready for a life filled with purpose, leadership, and making a difference around the world. We do this by combining faith with learning, helping students grow as people, giving them caring mentors, and encouraging them to serve others.

CIU'S CORE VALUES

- Authority of Scripture
- Evangelical Unity
- Prayer & Faith
- Victorious Christian Living
- World Evangelization

CIU'S MISSION STATEMENT

Educate people from a biblical worldview to impact the nations with the message of Christ.

CIU'S MOTTO

To Know Him and to Make Him Known

CIU TAGLINES

- Higher Learning. Deeper Faith.
- Christ-centered Community on Campus and Online

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CIU'S BRAND PERSONALITY

CIU's personality reflects the kind of place we are and the kind of people we're shaping. These traits inform the tone of our communication, the spirit of our community, and the experience we want every audience to have.

We are:

- **Purposeful** – We live with intention and eternal perspective.
- **Christ-centered** – Faith is not a value we add in; it's the reason we exist.
- **Transformational** – We believe God uses relationships, teaching, and service to change lives.
- **Determined** – Like Rams, we press forward – resilient and unshaken.
- **Tenacious** – We persist through challenges with hope and grit.
- **Visionary** – We are forward-looking, trusting God for what's ahead and planning boldly.
- **Community** – We're a close-knit family where people know and care for one another.
- **Joyful** – We lead with warmth, encouragement, and gratitude.
- **Engaging** – We speak clearly and sincerely, inviting others into the story.
- **Excellent** – We pursue high standards in our academics, communication, and service.
- **International** – Our reach is global and our impact crosses cultures and continents.
- **Intentional** – Every decision, message, and experience reflects purpose and care.

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Audiences

Every audience experiences CIU differently – so the way we communicate should reflect that.

The best messaging starts by understanding two things: who you're speaking to, and what they care about. This section outlines CIU's core audiences, the purpose behind each message, and the tone of voice – so your communication connects every time.

INTERNAL AUDIENCE – *Align & Empower*

Internal communication should reflect our shared mission, foster trust, and reinforce CIU's identity as a Christ-centered community where everyone plays a role in spiritual formation and student success.

FACULTY & STAFF

TONE

- Encouraging • Collaborative • Clear
- Respectful • Spiritually grounded

MESSAGING

Mission alignment and shared purpose

Updates on goals and initiatives

Empowerment through resources and recognition

CURRENT STUDENTS

TONE

- Uplifting • Authentic • Supportive
- Celebratory • Faith-focused

MESSAGING

Spiritual growth and mentorship

Belonging in a Christ-centered community

Celebration of progress and achievement

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ENROLLMENT AUDIENCE – *Attract & Recruit*

Enrollment messaging should meet people where they are – whether exploring college for the first time or returning to deepen their calling. CIU's biblical foundation, mentoring culture, and global mission are key distinctives.

UNDERGRADUATE PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

TONE

- Conversational • Inspiring • Motivated
- Welcoming • Spiritually grounded

MESSAGING

Mentorship, belonging & calling

Career preparation, relevance &
real-world impact

Practical application of biblical worldview

Christ-centered distinctives
& community

GRADUATE/ONLINE PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

TONE

- Conversational • Inspiring • Motivated
- Warm • Spiritually grounded
- Professionally confident

MESSAGING

Flexibility and academic rigor

Deepening of faith and leadership calling

Practical application of biblical worldview

Career relevance & real-world impact

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ADVANCEMENT AUDIENCE

– *Cultivate & Celebrate*

This audience already believes in CIU's mission. Our messaging should deepen trust, highlight their impact, and celebrate how students and alumni are advancing the Gospel.

ALUMNI / DONORS / FOUNDATIONS PARTNERING COMMUNITY

TONE

- Warm • Grateful • Relational
- Mission-driven • Celebratory

MESSAGING

Student transformation & Kingdom impact

CIU's mission, legacy, shared experiences

Alumni achievements, global reach & spiritual influence

Invitations to connect with CIU

Gratitude for partnerships; invitations to invest in Kingdom work

REPUTATION AUDIENCE

– *Inform & Engage*

These audiences shape how CIU is perceived externally. Our messaging should reflect credibility, excellence, and CIU's distinct mission: to educate from a biblical worldview and impact the nations with the message of Christ.

MEDIA / LOCAL COMMUNITY ACCREDITING AGENCIES

TONE

- Professional • Transparent
- Mission-centered • Respectful • Sincere

MESSAGING

Academic quality & institutional credibility

Community partnerships and service

Christ-centered distinctives

Global reach and spiritual influence

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The primary way to uphold the CIU brand is to use the official/approved logos provided by University Communications.

PRIMARY CIU LOGO

The Columbia International University logo (CIU logo) is the keystone of our University's visual identity. This official logo is encouraged to be used on all University communication materials (print and digital) when promoting CIU. The CIU logo is a registered trademark and cannot be altered in any way. Using the logo consistently will enhance the recognition of the University by all audiences.

SUB-BRAND LOGOS

All other logos associated with the University fall under the sub-brand category of the primary logo. CIU has a variety of sub-brand logos that can be used for certain purposes.

Colleges/Schools (For internal use only)

Specific sub-brand logos that identify the University's colleges and schools.

Departments (For internal use only)

Specific sub-brand logos that identify the University's various departments and/or ministries.

Athletics

The CIU Rams are the official athletic identity of the University. These logos are used to promote the various sports as a whole and individually.

Events

Sub-brand logos that are used to promote University's events.

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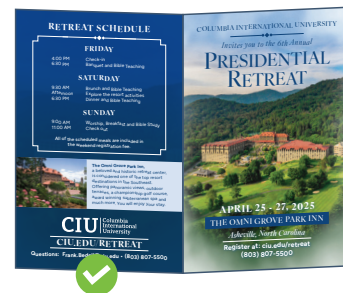
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EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

Using the university's official logo ensures consistency, strengthens credibility, and reinforces CIU's identity as a unified and trusted institution. Always use the CIU primary or Rams logos when communicating to external audiences.

Even if a sub-brand logo is well established (IE: the annual Leadership Summit), always include the CIU primary logo or Rams logo, alongside other visual elements.



Official logos included in both of these designs



External audiences include:

- Prospective students
- Parents
- Alumni
- Donors
- Local Community
- Institutional Peers
- Local and Regional Businesses
- Media

Use official primary
CIU logo when communicating
to external audiences



INTERNAL AUDIENCES

There is more flexibility when communicating with internal audience since these groups are already familiar with CIU.

Internal audiences include:

- Current students
- Faculty
- Staff



Example shirt design for
internal purposes



Example campus banners for
internal use purposes

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Technical Guidelines

When using official logos, it is important to keep in mind these important guidelines. Knowing these requirements will help determine what specific logo to use or provide for any given project or communication. Always contact University Communications for any specific logo requests or questions.

UNDERSTANDING FILE FORMATS

Logo sets are available as JPG, PNG, and EPS files.

JPG

A type of raster image file format that uses compression for a smaller file size. They can have both a RGB and CMYK color profile. These are suitable for web/digital uses and some print uses when sized at 300 DPI. JPG images have solid, non-transparent backgrounds.

PNG

A high-resolution raster image with a transparent background and a RGB color profile. These are suitable for web/digital uses and can have a transparent background.

EPS

A vector based file that has a CMYK color profile (or Spot color) for print. This is the highest resolution, vector format recommended to be sent to print vendors.

UNDERSTANDING COLOR OPTIONS

Logo files have various color options to use. The following are common terms used by University Communications along with their explanations:

RGB

This is the color format is best used for web/digital purposes.

CMYK

This is the color format used for most standard printing purposes. *Note: Logos in CMYK format will not look right when using them for web/digital uses. Please use RGB format logos for web/digital usages.*

SPOT color

This is the color format used for printing purposes when wanting to match perfectly to official Pantone swatch colors.

“Primary Logo”

This typically refers to the official full-color logo and generally the preferred logo to use.

“Reverse Logo”

This logo is designed to be seen against/on dark backgrounds. Generally the reverse logo is a PNG file with a transparent background for web/digital or an EPS file for print.

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LOGO USAGE REQUIREMENTS

Resizing Logos

When resizing, the proportions of the logo must remain the same as the original image (IE: do not stretch the logo to make the image wider or taller).

Minimum Height

Logo resizing must take into consideration minimum height requirements. Ideally it is best to not reduce the size of a logo below readability requirements

White Space

Sufficient white space (padding) must be provided on all sides between the logo and any other elements for clean legibility.

Color Options

Know when to use “reverse” logo options when placed against dark backgrounds.

Resolution

The logo must be used in the highest resolution format possible to prevent losing the professionalism of the logo. Print projects require a 300 DPI logo and it's preferable to provide an EPS file.

Manipulation

Logos must not be manipulated in any manner. Never recreate, change colors or elements, or distort an official logo. Always contact University Communications with specific logo requests.



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University (CIU)

The Columbia International University logo (CIU logo) is the keystone of our University's visual identity. This official logo should be used on all University communication materials (print and digital) when promoting CIU. The CIU logo is a registered trademark and cannot be altered in any way. Using the logo consistently will enhance the recognition of the University by all audiences.

There are two main formats of the logo: horizontal (primary) and vertical. The CIU Only logo can be used in specific instances when "Columbia International University" is commonly known and or space only allows for a limited size logo (IE: website favicon).

Primary CIU Logo



Vertical CIU Logo



Text Only CIU Logo



Reverse Options



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University Seal

The University Seal is restricted to official use only with permission from University Communications. It is only used on official university documents (IE: diplomas, certificates, commencement programs and official documents) and specific Presidential materials (IE: formal invitations, inauguration events and other special occasions).

The seal should never be used in place of the CIU logo for non-formal occasions. The seal should not be modified or altered in any way.

Primary Full Color Seal



Simplified One Color Seal



Columbia International University SEAL: SYMBOLISM AND SIGNIFICANCE

The official seal of Columbia International University is rich with meaning, reflecting the institution's spiritual heritage, global mission, and historical roots. Each element has been thoughtfully chosen to represent CIU's identity and calling.

Six Stars

The six stars honor the original "praying ladies" whose intercession laid the spiritual foundation for CIU. Their legacy continues to inspire the university's commitment to prayer and gospel witness.

Wheat

The wheat symbolizes the "gospel harvest," echoing the line from CIU's Alma Mater: "to sow the precious seed." It represents the university's mission to prepare students to spread the message of Christ worldwide.

Finials

The architectural finials point to CIU's heritage in downtown Columbia. Their shape mirrors the actual finials from the historic Colonia Hotel, now displayed behind the Administration Building. This detail connects CIU's present to its physical and spiritual beginnings.

Chain Link

The short length of chain at the bottom of the seal signifies CIU's role as a "link" in the chain of faithful witnesses—"sons and daughters noble to whom His grace appeared"—dedicated to the calling "to know Him and to make Him known."

The Bible

At the heart of the seal is the open Bible, symbolizing CIU's unwavering commitment to the **Authority of Scripture**—one of its core values. The Bible represents the ultimate foundation and final truth in every aspect of life and learning at CIU. It reflects the university's focus on mastering God's Word, understanding its meaning, and applying its teaching in every sphere of influence.

Globe and Design Motif

The globe at the center reflects CIU's international scope and global vision. The surrounding design, including the eight-part motif, serves as a visual frame and may also suggest the worldwide reach of the gospel.

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Colleges/Schools

The Colleges/Schools specific logos are sub-brands of the official CIU logo. These logos can be used for unique visual identifiers for the official CIU colleges and schools in course documents, on campus signage, and college/school related materials that are distributed internally. The Colleges/Schools logos cannot be altered in any way. Please contact University Communications for Colleges/Schools logo specific needs.

Primary Logos

CIU | COLLEGE OF
ARTS &
SCIENCES

CIU | COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION

CIU | COOK
SCHOOL OF
BUSINESS

CIU | SCHOOL OF
NURSING

CIU | SCHOOL OF
COUNSELING

CIU | SCHOOL OF MISSIONS
& INTERCULTURAL
MINISTRY

CIU | GLOBAL

CBS | Columbia
Biblical
Seminary
of Columbia International University

Vertical Options

CIU
COLLEGE OF
ARTS &
SCIENCES

CIU
COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION

CIU
COOK
SCHOOL OF
BUSINESS

CIU
SCHOOL OF
NURSING

CIU
SCHOOL OF
COUNSELING

CIU
SCHOOL OF MISSIONS
& INTERCULTURAL
MINISTRY

CIU
GLOBAL

CBS
Columbia
Biblical
Seminary

of Columbia International University

Reverse Options Available (examples below)

CIU | COLLEGE OF
ARTS &
SCIENCES

CIU
COOK
SCHOOL OF
BUSINESS

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Departments

The Departments specific logos are sub-brands of the official CIU logo. These logos can be used for unique visual identifiers for the CIU departments in documents and related materials. The Departments logos cannot be altered in any way.

Please contact University Communications for Departments logo specific needs.

CIU | ALUMNI
COLUMBIA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY



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The CIU Rams logo is the keystone of our University Athletics' visual identity. This official logo should be used on all University communication materials (print and digital) when promoting CIU Athletics. The Rams logo is a registered trademark and cannot be altered in any way. Using the logo consistently will enhance the recognition of the University by all audiences.

PRIMARY ATHLETIC LOGOS

Primary CIU Rams Logo



Primary Rams Head Logo



Text Only CIU Rams Logo



Reverse Options



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The CIU athletics department has several secondary logos that are used on certain occasions for additional spirit or fanfare purposes. Please contact University Communications for request to use these.

SECONDARY ATHLETIC LOGOS

*Secondary
Rams Head Logo*



*Secondary
Mascot Logo*



*Secondary
Full Body Ram Logo*



*Secondary
CIU Rams Script Logo*



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The CIU athletics department has logos for each team that can be used by the team coach's discretion. However, in most situations, the Primary CIU Rams logo is the preferred logo to use.

TEAM LOGOS



Reverse Options Available (examples below)



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Events

Events hosted by CIU have approved logos designed by University Communications. These logos will always be used in tandem with the primary CIU logo. For event logo inquiries, please contact University Communications.



CIU INVITATIONAL



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PRIMARY COLORS

Columbia International University's official school colors are **Blue and Gold**.

These colors are encouraged to be incorporated in all university communications and materials. The CIU Blue represents our university's unity and commitment to our core values. The CIU Gold represents our diverse community, passion and love for Christ.

	CIU Blue	CIU Gold	CIU Dark Gold
Web Color:	RGB: 0, 43, 92 HEX: #002B5C	RGB: 255, 210, 79 HEX: #FFD24F	RGB: 196, 150, 12 HEX: #C4960C
Print Color:	CMYK: 100, 64, 0, 60 SPOT: Pantone 289	CMYK: 0, 17, 80, 0 SPOT: Pantone 122	CMYK: 0, 26, 100, 26 SPOT: Pantone 125

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SECONDARY COLORS

While Blue and Gold are our official primary colors for the University, we also have a variety of secondary colors that can be used to compliment our primary colors. When using secondary colors, follow the guidelines below:

- Use colors that complement our primary brand colors
- Limit the number of secondary colors used
- Choose colors that help support the copy, design and specific audience mindset
- Please contact University Communications for questions about brand colors

Darkest Blue

RGB: 0, 33, 70
HEX: #002146
CMYK: 100, 87, 41, 47

Darker Blue (text)

RGB: 62, 85, 111
HEX: #3E556F
CMYK: 81, 63, 38, 19

Light Blue

RGB: 44, 119, 185
HEX: #2C77B9
CMYK: 82, 49, 2, 0

Lighter Blue

RGB: 134, 179, 216
HEX: #86B3D8
CMYK: 46, 18, 4, 0

Lightest Blue

RGB: 233, 246, 255
HEX: #E9F6FF
CMYK: 7, 0, 0, 0

Orange

RGB: 227, 118, 59
HEX: #E3763B
CMYK: 7, 65, 87, 1

Orange (hover)

RGB: 225, 165, 72
HEX: #FFA548
CMYK: 0, 42, 79, 0

Beige

RGB: 245, 241, 237
HEX: #F5F1ED
CMYK: 3, 3, 5, 0

Secondary colors are used to compliment CIU's Primary Colors



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SANS SERIF FONTS

Figtree	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 <i>Styles: Light, Light Italic, Regular, Italic, Medium, Medium Italic, SemiBold, SemiBold Italic, Bold, Bold Italic, ExtraBold, ExtraBold Italic, Black, Black Italic</i>
Avenir	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 <i>Styles: Light, Light Oblique, Book, Book Oblique, Roman, Oblique, Medium, Medium Oblique, Heavy, Heavy Oblique, Black, Black Oblique</i>
Oswald	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 <i>Styles: Regular, Medium, SemiBold, Bold</i>
Arial	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 <i>Styles: Regular, Italic, Bold, Bold Italic</i>

SERIF FONTS

Aleo	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 <i>Styles: Thin, Thin Italic, Extra Light, Extra Light Italic, Light, Light Italic, Regular, Regular Italic, Medium, Medium Italic, SemiBold, SemiBold Italic, Bold, Bold Italic, ExtraBold, ExtraBold Italic, Black, Black Italic</i>
Arno Pro	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 <i>Styles: Regular, Display, Italic, Italic Display, Bold, Bold Display, Bold Italic</i>
POWERRAM	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890 <i>Styles: LIGHT, REGULAR, ITALIC</i>

SCRIPT FONTS

Avalon	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 <i>Styles: Regular, Medium, Bold</i>
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Primary Colors
Secondary Colors



Official Fonts

Usage Guidelines

Email Signature

Photography

Brand vs. Campaign

Official Fonts

Usage Guidelines

Using the university's official brand fonts ensures consistency and reinforces CIU's identity as a unified and trusted institution. Please use our recommended brand fonts for the specific usages highlighted in the chart below. The alternative font option is suggested when a primary font isn't available on your computer or software.

Please contact University Communications for brand font needs.

	ACADEMIC USE	FORMAL USE	ATHLETICS USE	EMAIL & DOCUMENT	HEADLINE FONT	BODY COPY FONT
Figtree	✓		✓	✓		✓
Aleo	✓			✓	✓	
Avenir		✓			✓	
Arno Pro		✓				✓
<i>Avalon</i>		✓			✓	
POWER RAM			✓		✓	
OSWALD			✓		✓	
Arial	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

✓ = primary font

✓ = alternative font option
(when primary font isn't available)

Overview

Brand Strategy

- Brand Identity
- Brand Personality
- Audiences

Logos

- Usage Guidelines
- Technical Guidelines
- University Seal
- Colleges/Schools
- Departments
- Athletics
- Events

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Email Signature

▶ Photography

Brand vs. Campaign

CIU Brand

Photography Guidelines

To ensure our communication materials follow a consistent brand, we have photography guidelines we ask our photographers to follow. These guidelines can help create a compelling visual narrative that resonates with prospective students and enhances the university's digital presence.

For questions or assistance on CIU's Photography Guidelines, please contact University Communications.

BRAND CONSISTENCY

Align photography style with the university's branding (colors, themes and messaging) for a cohesive look. Ask models to wear CIU brand colors or official CIU apparel when possible. When capturing candid scenes, looks to showcase or focus on subjects wearing CIU clothing.

FEATURE DIVERSITY

Capture a diverse range of students, faculty and activities to reflect the university's inclusive environment.

HIGHLIGHT CAMPUS LIFE

Focus on vibrant campus scenes, events and student interactions to convey a lively atmosphere. Showcase happy, smiling and engaging expressions.

SHOWCASE ICONIC CAMPUS LOCATIONS

Highlight iconic campus landmarks, facilities and resources that represent the university's identity. Take into account the seasons and weather and capture scenes in their best presentation possible.



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► Photography

Brand vs. Campaign

CIU Brand

Photography Guidelines (cont.)

USE NATURAL LIGHT AND COLOR

Whenever possible, utilize natural lighting for a more authentic and appealing look. Avoid applying creative filters to photos and just capture the natural vibrant colors as close as possible. Showcase bright and beautiful days, avoid shooting on dreary/wet/wintry/rainy days.

EMPHASIZE AUTHENTICITY

Capture candid moments that reflect genuine emotions and experiences rather than staged poses.

MAINTAIN HIGH QUALITY

Ensure all images are high-resolution and well-composed, avoiding blurry or poorly lit photos. Please utilize the camera's RAW format settings rather than JPG to maximize the quality and size of the photo file.

EMPHASIZE PROFESSIONALISM

To present CIU in the best possible way, make sure students featured in photographs are neatly and professionally attired. Avoid raggedy clothing and anything that does not appear modest.

ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY

Include images of community events, partnerships and outreach to showcase the university's impact.

STORYTELLING

Use images to tell a story about the university experience from academics to extracurricular activities.

RESPECT PRIVACY

Obtain consent from individuals in photos, especially for promotional materials. Use best judgment of when to avoid certain situations with a camera.



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► Brand vs. Campaign

Understanding

Brand vs. Campaign

The difference between a brand and a campaign lies in their purpose and scope:

BRAND

Definition: A brand is the overall identity of a business or product. It encompasses its values, personality, voice, and visual elements (logo, colors, etc.).

Longevity: Long-term. A brand is meant to create lasting recognition and trust.

Examples: CIU's brand is presented in specific detail in this Brand Guideline document. Promotional materials that promote the University as a whole should carry out the guidelines presented in this document.

Purpose: To establish a consistent image and emotional connection with customers over time.

CAMPAIGN

Definition: A campaign is a specific, time-limited marketing effort designed to promote a product, service, or message.

Longevity: Short-term. Campaigns have a defined start and end date.

Examples: CIU Preview Day themed events; CIU Leadership Summit themed events

Purpose: To achieve a specific goal, such as boosting sales, creating awareness, or launching a new product.

HOW THEY WORK TOGETHER

A campaign should reflect and reinforce the core brand identity. Multiple campaigns can be executed over time to strengthen and evolve the brand's perception in the marketplace.