

Strategic Communications & Marketing - Reviewer's Report – IE

Generated: 3/24/23, 12:14 PM

Strategic Communications & Marketing

Strategic Communications and Marketing (SCM) Mission

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing (SCM) is to inform, connect and advocate. We serve as a bridge between the University of Florida and our external audiences throughout Florida, the nation and the world, including government, community and business leaders, alumni, students, faculty, higher education colleagues, and The Gator Nation. Our work showcases the UF mission of teaching, research and service – and establishes external relationships, furthering the UF outreach and reputation.

Start: 07/01/2021

End: 06/30/2022

Progress: Ongoing

Unit/College: Strategic Communications & Marketing

Responsible Roles: Kelley McCormick (kmccormick2@ufl.edu)

Goal 1 Build a Distinctive National Brand

Goal:

Create an ongoing narrative that captures the University of Florida story and expresses the aspirations for where the organization is heading.

Action Items:

1. Launch phase 1 of the new brand platform to provide resource for consistency across the university
2. Reimagine the **ufl.edu** website to elevate the “front door” to UF’s online presence providing cohesive messaging and a content platform that unifies units across the university and ties all to a greater whole.
3. Refine our national reputation marketing strategy toward raising UF’s US News & World Report reputational score which impacts ranking.

Measures of Action Items:

1. Successful launch of new brand platform
 - a. Attendance at brand training sessions
 - b. Utilization of Brand Camp resource
 - c. Publication of “On Brand” online newsletter
2. Successful launch of updated ufl.edu site
 - a. Increase in traffic to ufl.edu
 - b. Increase in traffic (click-throughs) to other UF sites/pages
3. Movement in US News & World Report reputational score

Time Period of Action Items:

Start: 7/1/2021

End: 6/30/2022

Resources of Action Items:

1. Strategic Communications & Marketing (SCM) Dir of Marketing & Brand Management
 - o SCM Graphic Designer II
 - o SCM Graphic Designer I
 - o SCM Marketing and Communications Specialist
 - o SCM Marketing Intern
 - o Starmark (vendor – marketing and branding agency)
 - o Ologie (vendor – marketing & branding agency)
 - o Olivia Williams (freelancer)
 - o David Stanley (freelancer)
 - o Supported by 175 funds
2. SCM Aso Dir of Digital Marketing

- o SCM Aso Dir of Marketing & Communications
- o SCM Social Media Specialist
- o SCM Digital Marketing Assistant
- o SCM Marketing Graduate Assistant
- o SCM Digital Marketing Intern
- o Stamats (vendor – data research, marketing, web design, & brand strategies)
- o El Toro (digital marketing/advertising service)
- o Various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, etc)
- o UFIT (university IT group)
- o Brandwatch (social media listening and media monitoring software)
- o Supported by 175 funds

3. SCM Ast VP of Marketing

- o SCM Dir of Marketing & Brand Management
- o SCM Aso Dir of Digital Marketing
- o SCM Aso Dir of Marketing and Communications
- o SCM video team
- o BVK (vendor – advertising agency)
- o Supported by 175 funds

Results and Evaluation:

1. Phase 1 of the new brand platform was successfully launched January 2022 <https://brandcenter.ufl.edu/>

- a. 300+ attendance over multiple training sessions
- b. Brand camp started June 2022, 96 attendees
- c. The “On Brand” newsletter was launched on Tuesday, April 26, 2022. During the fiscal year, one newsletter was distributed with the following results:
 - Recipients: 384
 - Opened: 236 (61.5%)
 - Clicked: 68 (17.7%)

2. After 7 years, the main **ufl.edu** was redesigned. The new site launched April 2022. There has been a significant increase in traffic to this and other UF websites as compared to FY21:

- a. Ufl.edu
 - The site was visited by 3,463,668 users (12% increase from the FY 2020-2021).
 - The top 3 drivers of traffic to the site were: Organic traffic (33.4%), direct traffic (32.2%) and referrals 30.9%.
- b. Other:
 - news.ufl.edu
 - The site was visited by 681,696 users (13.06% increase from FY 2020-2021).
 - The top 3 drivers of traffic to the site were: Organic traffic (45.4%), direct traffic (21.3%) and social media traffic (15.3%).
 - Paid digital advertising efforts accounted for more than 43,000 new users
 - Fromflorida.ufl.edu (advertising landing page)
 - The site was visited by 35,874 users (non-referrals)
 - The top 3 drivers of traffic to the site were (excluding referral traffic): Display ads (49.28%), organic social media (32.76%) and direct traffic (10.49%).
 - Email Marketing Efforts
 - Average campaign open rate: 35.05% (Industry average is 28.1%)
 - Average click rate: 5.14% (industry average is 4.6%)
 - Paid Ads (Internal)
 - There were more than 6.4 million impressions across all our ads
 - There were more than 350k clicks across all our ads (note that for some social platforms, these clicks also include interactions with the ad rather than link clicks – e.g. ad like or clicking on an image)

3. US News & World Report reputational score remains steady at 3.8 (4 years). The team is reviewing areas where we can focus attention to increase this score.

ATTACHMENTS:

UNIT GOALS CONNECTED TO UNIVERSITY GOALS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Goal 5 A strengthened public engagement of the university’s programs with local, national, and international communities.

Goal:

A strengthened public engagement of the university’s programs with local, national, and international communities.

Objective:

Three objectives are associated with this goal.

- Objective 1. Increased engagement and outreach of UF programs leading to positive impacts in such areas as health, the economy, environment and community.
- Objective 2. Improved communication leading to increased public awareness of and value placed on UF programs and their impact on society.
- Objective 3. Increased technology translation and entrepreneurial activities.

Goal 2 Propel UF's Thought Leadership Reputation

Goal: Broaden Media Relations to National and International Channels/Influencers

Action Items:

1. Expand thought-leadership strategy to increase prominence and visibility of UF's thought leaders.
 - a. Continue growth by increasing number of faculty and leadership partners on the Experts website.
 - b. Position UF faculty and leadership as experts in relevant and real-time capacities and elevate UF in the media.
2. Hire (2) National Media Strategists to elevate and expand team expertise, effectiveness, and excellence, build relationships with media, and develop content for national media platforms.
3. Hire communications strategist to create multimedia strategy and content.
4. Utilize emerging platforms combining traditional storytelling with new visual tools and social media to elevate UF's thought leaders.

Measures of Action Items:

1. Metrics
 - a. Increase in number of faculty and leaders on the Experts website.
 - b. Earned Media Performance - measures "share of voice", top article mentions, articles by media type and the Conversation with the Top 10 Public Universities. These factors compare UF to peer universities which will influence UF's reputation score and ranking.
2. Successful hires of well-qualified National Media Strategists
3. Successful hire of well-qualified Communication Strategist
4. Recognition of thought leaders and elevation of publications/broadcasts to state, national and international media.

Time Period of Action Items:

Start: 7/1/2021

End: 6/30/2022

Resources of Action Items:

1. (a & b) Strategic Communications & Marketing (SCM) VP
 - o SCM AVP of Marketing
 - o SCM AVP of Communications
 - o SCM Dir of Communications
 - o SCM Communications Strategist
 - o SCM PR Specialist
 - o SCM Asst Dir of Marketing and Comms
 - o Various UF faculty and leadership
 - o Legend Labs (vendor - brand & communications consulting firm)
 - o Meltwater (media monitoring platform)
 - o Cision (PR software & marketing platform)
 - o Brandwatch (social media listening and media monitoring software)
 - o Supported by 175 funds
2. UF Human Resources
 - o SCM VP
 - o SCM AVP of Communications
 - o SCM Executive Assistant
 - o Online job boards
3. UF Human Resources
 - o SCM VP
 - o SCM AVP of Communications
 - o SCM Executive Assistant
 - o Online job boards
4. SCM Sr Dir of Communications
 - o SCM Dir of Communications
 - o SCM Communications Strategist
 - o Jim Lynch (freelancer – pitching at national level)
 - o Freelance writers: Rochelle Ward, Natalie Van Hoose, Catherine Arnold

Results and Evaluation:

1. Elevation of thought leaders
 - a. Expanded the number of faculty and leadership partners on the Experts website from less than 100 to 360 during this period. The additional faculty has added to the diversity of expertise available on the site and resulted in more media engagement. Visit the Experts website here: <https://experts.ufl.edu/for-experts/>
 - b. Cision performance dashboard metrics indicate that UF received more than 110,000 mentions across all traditional media outlets from July 2021 through June 2022. This represents an estimated total readership of 546 billion. (Readership indicates estimated unique visitors per month for online publications or estimated circulation for printed publications.) Among the highest-profile traditional media outlets (those with 1 million+ readership), UF received

around 2,700 mentions during this time period. This represents 9% of all the mentions of the Top 5 public universities in these outlets. UF's share of voice in these publications exceeds those of the Top 7-10 public universities. (see attached)

2. Successfully hired National Media Strategists in May 2022 (Eric Hamilton and Karen Dooley)

3. Successfully hired Communications Strategist hired July 2021 (Brooke Adams)

4. Recognition of UF's thought leaders:

- SCM and UF thought leaders developed and placed an average of three op eds per month in high-profile publications such as The Hill, USA Today, The Washington Post, The Conversation, etc. **To see the many ways SCM helps connect faculty to media visit: <https://news.ufl.edu/for-faculty/>**
- An average of one high-level article per week developed by our news team for the UF News website resulted in media attention throughout Florida and nationally.
- Internal tracking of "highest profile media hits" indicates that the university, our faculty, and administrative experts are quoted in prominent national and state media outlets and average of 7 - 9 times each week.
- SCM developed and broadcast the "From Florida" podcast **Podcast - News - University of Florida (ufl.edu)**. This podcast won the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Bronze Anvil award which recognizes outstanding public relations tactics that contribute to the success of overall programs or campaigns. It is nearly unheard of for university to receive this award.

ATTACHMENTS:

UNIT GOALS CONNECTED TO UNIVERSITY GOALS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Goal 3 Faculty recognized as preeminent by their students and peers.

Goal:

Faculty recognized as preeminent by their students and peers.

Objective:

Five objectives are associated with this goal.

- Objective 1. An increased number of faculty recognized by distinguished awards, fellowships, and memberships.
- Objective 2. An increased number of high-impact scholarly publications and creative works.
- Objective 3. An increased professional and public visibility of UF faculty.
- Objective 4. An increased faculty participation in professional service and leadership.
- Objective 5. A nurturing and invigorating academic and professional environment for all faculty across the research, teaching, and service missions of the university.

Goal 3 Safeguard the UF Brand and Reputation

Goal:

Advance a contemporary issues/crisis management infrastructure to provide consistent, effective, and timely campus-wide communications.

Action Items:

1. Continue to monitor and analyze online conversations regarding UF's management of issues and crises to assess effectiveness.
2. Continue to develop and expand key issues statements and the university information portal (statements site) and pre-establish issues/crisis statements to provide consistent information for quick deployment.
3. Establish crisis plan protocols/processes for issues escalation
4. Train campus-wide team of lead communicators for crisis communications

Measures of Action Items:

1. Number of communications sent, views, reposts on social media, responses, etc.
2. Additional statements and webpages developed and deployed
3. Completion and utilization of crisis plan(s) protocols/processes
4. Attendance at training session

Time Period of Action Items:

Start: 7/1/2021

End: 6/30/2022

Resources of Action Items:

1. Strategic Communications & Marketing (SCM) Asst Dir of Marketing and Communications
 - Falcon (online marketing, web development and search engine optimization)
 - Legend Labs (brand and communications consulting firm)
2. SCM AVP Communications

- SCM Dir of Crisis Communications
- Various UF Leaders
- 3. SCM AVP Communications
 - SCM Dir of Crisis Communications
 - UF Office of Emergency Communications
 - UF Police Department
- 4. SCM Dir of Crisis Communications
 - Campus communicators

Results and Evaluation:

1. SCM issued approximately 20 statements between July 2021 – June 2022
 - Through Salesforce, the average open rate was of 43%
 - In addition to proactively seeking out and addressing social media-specific issues, our university-wide statements during crises reached over 2.9 million people on social with more than 8,500 engagements (reactions, comments and shares).
2. Between July 2021 – June 2022, statements were issued and/or webpages created to address the issues/events listed below (Engagement statistics listed in Item 1 above). This is a “living” site which is continually updated as new and relevant issues and events arise.
 - Academic Freedom
 - Anti-racism
 - Central Energy Plant
 - COVID
 - Food Service Vendor Change
 - Graduate Housing
 - HB-7
 - Hurricanes/Tropical Storms
 - Legislative Issues
 - Presidential Transition
 - Other
 - A complete list of statements issued can be found here: <https://statements.ufl.edu/>
3. Student Safety protocols and processes established and being effectively utilized to deploy communications and escalate matters as needed. A “Crisis Playbook” for emergency communications has also been created with procedures/protocols for management of various crises and These will be living documents undergoing continual updates and additions as new situations arise.
4. Held an issues/crisis communications training session for 35+ campus communicators and the UF police department. This training provided information regarding best practices for managing issues on social media and protocols for deploying consistent and timely information.

■ ****Additional Finding:** Upon examination by SCM leaders, it has been determined that a secondary/back-up role needs to be established for crisis communications within SCM.

ATTACHMENTS:

UNIT GOALS CONNECTED TO UNIVERSITY GOALS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Goal 5 A strengthened public engagement of the university’s programs with local, national, and international communities.

Goal:

A strengthened public engagement of the university’s programs with local, national, and international communities.

Objective:

Three objectives are associated with this goal.

- Objective 1. Increased engagement and outreach of UF programs leading to positive impacts in such areas as health, the economy, environment and community.
- Objective 2. Improved communication leading to increased public awareness of and value placed on UF programs and their impact on society.
- Objective 3. Increased technology translation and entrepreneurial activities.

Goal 4 Establish Internal Brand and Communications Strategy

Goal: Create a cohesive strategy to unify the university's brand and internal communications across campus.

Action Items:

1. Create a communications strategy to educate internal stakeholders about the brand.
2. Develop tiers 2 & 3 of the ufl.edu website to further promote internal communications.
3. Develop digital policies to align strategy for branded and accessible digital properties across campus.
4. Utilize and expand employment of various platforms for internal communications and brand alignment.

Measures of Action Items:

1. Launch of brand education to internal stakeholders and
 - Attendance at brand training sessions

- Utilization of Brand Camp resource
- Readership of “On Brand” digital newsletter
- 2. Progress of ufl.edu tiers 2 & 3 development
- 3. Progress of digital policy development
- 4. Metrics around various communications
 - Platforms utilized
 - # of communications sent
 - # of recipients/views/downloads
 - Responses, awards, promotion/reuse of stories
 - Attendance at events

Time Period of Action Items:

Start: 7/1/2021

End: 6/30/2022

Resources of Action Items:

1. Strategic Communications & Marketing (SCM) Dir of Marketing & Brand Management
 - SCM Graphic Designer II
 - SCM Graphic Designer I
 - SCM Marketing & Communications Specialist
 - SCM Marketing Intern
 - Ologie (vendor – marketing & branding agency)
 - Supported by 175 funds
2. SCM AVP of Marketing
 - SCM Aso Dir of Digital Marketing
 - SCM Dir of Marketing & Brand Management
 - UFIT teams for web and technical support
 - Infrastructure & Communication Technology Services
 - Web Services
 - Mark McCallister, Dir of Academic Technology
 - Steering Committee members drawn from the following areas:
 - UF Research
 - UF/IFAS
 - UF Health
 - UF Human Resources
 - Student Life
 - Web Services
 - Warrington College of Business
 - College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
 - Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering
 - DCP
 - Levin College of Law
 - College of Journalism & Communications
 - UF Athletics
 - College of Education
 - Health and Human Performance
 - Stamats (vendor - data research, marketing, web design, & brand strategies)
 - Supported by 175 funds
3. SCM Aso Dir of Digital Marketing
 - SCM Dir of Marketing & Brand Management
 - SCM Sr Dir of Communications
 - SCM Interim VP
 - UF Health
 - UF / IFAS
 - UF IT – Electronic IT & Communication Accessibility
 - UF Web Services
4. SCM Sr Dir of Communications
 - SCM Sr Communications Strategist
 - SCM Aso Dir for Learning, Development & Integration
 - SCM Marketing & Communications Specialist
 - SCM Multimedia Specialist
 - SCM Marketing Intern
 - Omny Studio (vendor – audio management and publishing platform)
 - com (vendor – transcription service)
 - WUFT (UF media) – James Sullivan, Lorenzo Phrasavath and Taylor Vorburger

Results and Evaluation:

1. Phase 1 of the new brand platform was successfully launched in January 2022 <https://brandcenter.ufl.edu/>
 - Attendance of 300+ over multiple training sessions
 - Brand Camp, a weekly training/Q&A event launched in June 2022 with 96 attendees
 - The “On Brand” newsletter was launched in April 2022
 - 384 recipients
 - 236 (61.5%) views
 - 68 (17.7) clicks
2. Steering committee for development of tiers 2 and 3 of ufl.edu was established consisting of stakeholders across campus. The committee meets monthly. Surveys were distributed through the committee to gather information and create a comprehensive view of web needs throughout the university. The results are being used to finalize the scope for tiers 2 and 3 of the ufl.edu website. Work is ongoing.
3. SCM has assembled a digital policy advisory committee from units across campus to ensure rounded assessment of the branding and technical standards for digital properties. Two drafts have been completed and work is ongoing.
4. Internal communications activities:
 - The redesigned **ufl.edu** website launched in April 2022 resulting in a significant increase in traffic (both internal and external) compared to FY21. Development of tiers 2 & 3 is underway to further elevate internal communications and brand alignment.
 - **“From Florida” podcast** - Promoting strategic priorities through content selection. **Podcast - News - University of Florida (ufl.edu)**
 - The award-winning “From Florida” podcast built upon the foundation of UF’s “Unstoppable Minds” podcast which had two seasons spanning May 2020 – February 2021 and garnered an average of 363 downloads per episode.
 - Drawing on this experience, the listenership goal for “From Florida” was to increase audience by 25% during the 2021 – 2022 season (fall and spring semesters). Per Omny Studio, listenership more than doubled with an average of 765 downloads per episode, the most popular resulting in 2,700+ downloads.
 - In addition to increased downloads, feedback via in-person and email interactions demonstrates continued growth and popularity. This includes use by the university’s Government and Community Relations and Human Resources operations, as well as promotion of faculty experts to news outlets. The podcast served to strengthen campus relationships and unearth new opportunities for storytelling and promotion via separate, and complementary, platforms.
 - Per Omny Studio, the podcast has been downloaded by audiences in more than 100 countries and in all 50 states throughout the US.
 - **F16** – monthly meeting of senior communicators from UF’s 16 colleges, UF Research, UF Online and UF’s business units focused on aligning communications across campus and elevating UF’s brand and accomplishments. From July 2021 – June 2022, the average monthly attendance was 25 members.
 - **UF Communicators Network (UFCN)** This is a network of internal communicators and stakeholders from all areas of campus. From July 2021 – June 2022 UFCN had approximately 300 members and continues to grow. During this period, a total of 38 different messages were sent out to this group with an average open rate of 61% (according to Mailchimp).
 - SCM sponsors the annual **“UFCN Breakfast Buzz”** gathering to bring together communicators from across campus.
 - The Breakfast Buzz held in March 2022 saw 140 in-person attendees and 115 online views (97 live).
 - President, Kent Fuchs, and (then) Vice President of Strategic Communications & Marketing, Nancy Paton, spoke about the vital role our campus communicators play in telling the stories of UF and positive impact they have on the university and community. They praised the group’s efforts and underscored the influence that our communications and brand alignment have had on UF’s reputation and ranking scores. Nancy also shared the progress of the latest projects including ufl.edu, the Brand Center and Experts websites.
 - **ProDev** - certification program created by SCM for professional development of internal communicators.
 - Lead by SCM Asst Director of Learning, Development & Integration, this process began with four pilot workshops averaging 55 – 60 participants in each workshop. The certification course was held monthly with 25 invited members attending and 20 members completing the program.

ATTACHMENTS:

UNIT GOALS CONNECTED TO UNIVERSITY GOALS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Goal 5 A strengthened public engagement of the university’s programs with local, national, and international communities.

Goal:

A strengthened public engagement of the university’s programs with local, national, and international communities.

Objective:

Three objectives are associated with this goal.

- Objective 1. Increased engagement and outreach of UF programs leading to positive impacts in such areas as health, the economy, environment and community.

- Objective 2. Improved communication leading to increased public awareness of and value placed on UF programs and their impact on society.
- Objective 3. Increased technology translation and entrepreneurial activities.

Strategic Communications & Marketing (SCM)

Providing Department: Strategic Communications & Marketing

Administrative Support Services:

SCM supports all areas of UF through our marketing and communication efforts. We partner with administrators, communicators, faculty, and leaders across campus to help elevate and highlight their colleges, units, research, and people. SCM also provides or assists administration with campus-wide communications through various means such as administrative memos, Campus Briefs, newsletters, etc.

Academic and Student Support Services:

SCM's efforts on behalf of the entire university contribute to our US News & World Report reputational score, which in turn, impacts our ranking as a Top 5 public university. This achievement has resulted in increased applications and higher enrollment.

SCM is continually working with Enrollment Management on marketing and branding to advance their mission and increase enrollment. SCM also develops content that highlights student success and outcomes and works with Student Life to deploy/promote these stories. Our efforts also enhance student experience by promoting student-centered events, including homecoming, Dance Marathon, and various other events that are featured in our global newsletter.

Research:

SCM works with faculty, students and administrative leaders on key topics of relevance surrounding current events/news to amplify our academic leadership and research expertise. **We have worked closely with Provost Glover to build a marketing and communications strategy around UF's AI initiative and have provided content for marketing components to highlight this project.** Our office also oversees and facilitates the Research Promotion Initiative (RPI) to encourage faculty to submit forthcoming but not yet published work that SCM can pitch to news media and highlight on the university's news and marketing channels. Winners receive \$1,000 in research funding. We also work with UF's Office of Research and engage regularly with university researchers to spotlight their achievements and contributions through various media platforms.

Community and Public Service:

Through our Experts website, SCM continues to expand the number of faculty and administrative leadership with whom we partner to serve as scholarly thought leaders on public platforms, providing the community and media with expert resources on a wide variety of areas/topics. We collaborate with UF's Office of Government and Community Relations to promote UF partnerships with the community. SCM also works with news media to facilitate transparency about university activities and ensure we are supporting them in their efforts to bring information about a taxpayer-funded institution to the public.

Effectiveness Oversight:

The effectiveness of the SCM team is overseen by the Vice President of Strategic Communications and Marketing. The Vice President reports directly to the UF President who oversees all progress, as does the Board of Trustees.

Steve Orlando, Interim Vice President of Communications (SCM), sfo@ufl.edu, 352-846-3903

Nicole "Nicci" Brown, Ast VP of Marketing (SCM), nicole.brown1@ufl.edu, 352-327-0997

Brittany Wise, Interim Ast VP of Communications (SCM), brittany.alana@ufl.edu, 352-846-3911

Institutional Effectiveness Report Complete: true

XResponsible Roles:

Actions for Improvement

Unit/College Actions for Improvement :

All goals are on-going and within their timeframe of completion.

The only additional action item identified is for Goal #3 - we will be designating a person to act as back-up to our Director of Issues/Crisis Communications.

XResponsible Roles: