



Getting the University dressed in its new identity

The beginning of 2020 was not like the beginning of any other year for the Department of Marketing and Communications (MarComms). A successful launch of the new MUT Corporate Identity (CI) in December set in motion the difficult task of ensuring that the University starts using its first new corporate identity in 40 years. This meant ensuring that every document that has MUT's name on it had to bear the new logo and follow the prescripts of the new look and feel.

"Launching our new CI was only the beginning of a long process of ensuring that MUT bears this new identity," said Mbali Mkhize, Senior Director at MarComms. "The beginning of the year offered a valuable opportunity to implement this identity as university processes start for the year."

The majority of MUT students had already left the University when the new CI was launched in December. Although they could not have missed the news, they were going to come face-to-face with their new logo for the first time. For returning students, the logo would not be completely new because they had participated in the surveys that led to its development, and had been on campus when the new logo was voted on. For first-time registering students, the logo would be completely fresh.

For MUT staff, the logo was all too familiar at this stage. It was only a matter of how to use it and where to find templates for all its uses. As with any change, it takes time for people to get used to it. But time was a commodity that MarComms did not have. The longer MarComms waited in guiding the University through this transition, the longer the uptake of the new corporate identity would take.

"Our mandate was to get every employee to start using the new CI on all official university documents," said



Mkhize. "All MUT documents had to be dressed in this new identity and it was upon us to make this process easy for staff, especially secretaries who use these documents with their line managers."

To streamline this process of helping staff to use the new CI, MarComms established a Brand Helpdesk. Staff now had a dedicated place to go and find their colleagues who would help them with their brand use needs. It was here that the Brand Police, armed with their knowledge of the new CI and how it should be used, waited to help staff to make the transition smoother.

Branding is about consistency not only in university documents and apparel, but also in the email signatures of every staff member. Email signatures hold the key to representing the MUT brand appropriately internally and outside the University. Using the new logo, MarComms developed new signatures for use by all MUT staff. Instructions on how to download the template and to add one's information to it were circulated. This second layer of consistency required the Brand Police to visit staff offices and help staff who are less techno-savvy than others with updating their signatures to stay on brand.

The Brand Police continue to visit brand newbies and offenders, and signs bearing the old MUT logo are gradually being replaced by ones carrying the new logo. The task of dressing MUT in its new identity continues.