SIXTY
A Study in Disruption, Transformation, and the Quest for Self-Actualization

VCU BRANDCENTER
The Business of Branding Since 1996
Fig. 1) Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

- TRANSCENDENCE
- SELF-ACTUALIZATION
- AESTHETIC
- COGNITIVE
- ESTEEM
- BELONGINGNESS AND LOVE
- SAFETY
- BIOLOGICAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL
In 1943 when Abraham Maslow introduced his Theory on the Hierarchy of Needs in *Psychological Review*, neither the Brandcenter nor its founder, Diane Cook-Tench, had been conceived. But Maslow's theory, which relates to the basic needs and motivations that humans share, seems perfectly suited to the journey Brandcenter students and faculty take together.

Maslow’s conception was that humanity’s quest is to climb upward, ascending a pyramid that starts with the most basic needs – food, water, sleep – to ultimately arrive at a peak of self actualization, where we are at our most creative and alive.

This progression is most often represented by a pyramid with clear and simple stages, like the rungs of a ladder inviting us to climb one step at a time. But Brandcenter students experience a different reality. For them the challenge is more like climbing Everest; a cold, lonely, treacherous quest to conquer an icy peak uncertain what the view might hold at the summit.

Like Sir Edmund Hillary, the first climber to reach Everest's summit, Brandcenter students embark upon their quest with all their supplies in order. Shelter has been arranged, plenty to eat and drink, and a full night’s sleep. They may feel fearful, but their orientation will make them feel safe as staff and faculty assure them they are not alone. This trip, like Hillary’s, will be navigated by Sherpa guides who have traced the chasms and been to the summit.

Soon our students arrive at the next level, a basecamp where they feel a sense of belonging. They establish friendships and begin to feel the challenge is easier than they thought and the climb ahead will be painless. Their only hints of the perilous climb that lies ahead are the warnings of their Sherpa guides who instruct them to conserve their strength and brace for the worst.

According to Maslow, the next level is a bountiful one. It is where we experience achievement, confidence, and self-esteem as we earn the respect of others. But Maslow also warns that few of us will ever reach this place. As they try to master this part of the climb, Brandcenter students will face their greatest hurdles. 

*continued*
They will find the rock is steep, with few handholds. They will claw for resources, only to find them depleted. They may go without food and sleep for long periods as their body becomes bruised and the terrain becomes icy and unforgiving. Many students will fall back, losing ground and be forced to retrace footsteps. Most will contemplate abandoning the quest and heading back to warmer, safer elevations. Some will leave. A few will fall. But most will climb on and inevitably they will conquer this level and the confidence that comes with it.

For Brandcenter students, the last stage of the hike is more favorable. The summit is now within their sight and even the faces of their Sherpa guides turn from grave to hopeful. They know the students need little help at this stage – their own strength and confidence will power them to the top.

Maslow describes this last peak as “self-actualization,” a place where creativity, spontaneity and problem solving are at their greatest. Brandcenter alumni describe it in more emotional terms. They are inspired by the view, clear and beautiful in all directions, and by the sense of accomplishment they feel having mastered the difficult climb.

But why do Brandcenter students set aside the comforts of their past lives to struggle for two years to achieve this peak? The question is best answered by Maslow himself when he closes his theory with the statement, “What a man can be, he must be.”

It all comes down to Sixty weeks.
The first issue of Sixty Weeks may have started small, but it led to big ideas.
Drilled holes that allow you to place this copy of SIXTY in a three or five ring binder.

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Annual Softball Game

Talentsaurus Rex

Brandcenter Family Tree
Physiological Needs

At the Brandcenter, our students start at the bottom and work their way up. We shelter them in a basement, near machines stocked with cheap snacks and soft drinks—plenty of sugar and caffeine, the building blocks of creative thinking. Once they can find their way around, they start learning the basics. And relearning everything they thought they knew about advertising.
CLASS OF 2014 DEMOGRAPHICS

- 33% MINORITY
- 7% INTERNATIONAL
- AVERAGE UNDERGRAD DATE IS 2009
- AVERAGE UNDERGRAD GPA IS 3.25
- 219 TOTAL APPLICATIONS
- 43% ACCEPTANCE RATE
- Average Age: 25
- 8132 MI India
- 7272 MI Pakistan
- TOP MAJORS: MASS COMMUNICATIONS (33%), ENGLISH, ART/DESIGN
- TOP FEEDER SCHOOLS: VCU (30%), UVA (8%), WILLIAM & MARY, CHAPEL HILL
- 48% OF STUDENTS ARE FROM OUT-OF-STATE
- AVERAGE GRE OLD SCORING: 1190 (WE LOOK FOR A 1100)
- AVERAGE GMAT SCORE: 544 (WE LOOK FOR A 540)
- AVERAGE GRE NEW SCORING: 302 (WE LOOK FOR A 300)
- 27% GRADUATED IN 2012
- 52% MALE TO 47% FEMALE IN THE CLASS OF 2014.

8847 MI Vietnam
OUR STAFF

The Brandcenter staff keeps the school running like a well-oiled machine. Operating mostly “behind the scenes,” they make sure the important stuff happens: bills get paid, computers/printers function, students are accepted, scholarships are awarded and students get jobs/internships.

Andrea Groat, Associate Director
Andrea handles all things that require paperwork...financial management, HR, curriculum, scholarships, etc. You’ll find her in her office with a calculator and number 2 pencil close at hand.

Amy Robinson, Office Manager
Brandcenter travel gnome, chrome river guide, and scheduling architect.

Dean Collins, Network Analyst
Computer Janitor and resident Thaumaturgist

Hawley Smyth, Admissions Coordinator
Hawley’s goal is to show prospective students the highly concentrated creative energy that lies within the school’s walls. She helps each individual applicant go through the admissions process from beginning to end (from “what track is the best fit for me?” to “can you connect me with incoming students looking for roommates?”).

PJ Sykes, Administrative Assistant
Brandcenter gate keeper. PJ keeps things organized and filters out the riffraff. You’ll find him naturally at the front desk sipping coffee and digesting eight full hours of CNN daily.

Katherine Keogh, Student Affairs and Communications Manager
Katherine manages the Brandcenter website and social media, and she loves Fridays - she coordinates the Brandcenter’s weekly Friday Forum speaker series that brings in some of the most interesting and inspiring folks she has ever met.

Helayne Spivak, Director
Captain of the ship.

Helayne started her position as director last year and this will be the first graduating class under her leadership.

Ashley Sommardahl, Director of Student Affairs and Industry Outreach
Part teacher, coach, advisor, mom, therapist and pimp.
I never gave much thought to Maslow’s theory of the hierarchy of needs.

I did know his nephew, Ed Maslow, who was a CD at BBDO. I don’t suppose that makes me an expert but who would disagree that Self-Actualization should be at the top of everyone’s pyramid.

Consider what the journey towards self-actualization includes: creativity, problem solving, spontaneity, lack of prejudice and acceptance of facts. Reads like a definition of what we work towards here. Dr. Maslow would probably spin in his grave if he heard his theory applied to the art of branding but he’s dead and can’t argue the point so I can posit all I want.

Even Maslow might agree that the days of advertising being just above personal injury lawyers on the list of “most admired professions” is changing. That’s because the goals of those who’ve entered the field the past few years on the agency and the client side have changed.

Droga5 didn’t become famous for a big car campaign or a flashy Superbowl Ad. Instead they created The NY Tap Project which raised millions for UNICEF to bring fresh water to the 1.1 billion of this world who have none.

Then there’s the DOVE Self Esteem Project whose mission is “to improve the self-esteem of more than 15 million girls and young women by 2015.” See some of their insightful videos targeting issues from body image to bullying at selfesteem.dove.us/.

Marketing originals Ben & Jerry let their ice cream express their support for same-sex marriage in Vermont, by renaming their Chubby Hubby ice cream Hubby Hubby which featured 2 men in tuxedoes on the container. There’s nothing vanilla about their social conscience.

I’m most impressed with the 100 young women and men who will be graduating this May and enriching the industry even more. While some might still be a few steps away from total self-actualization I think the faculty that saw them through the past two years would concur that their journey included exhibiting great creativity, honing of their problem solving skills, spontaneity of thought, lack of prejudice in their judging of ideas and not just an acceptance but a thirst for the facts.

Dave Droga said this about brands:

“If ...[they] want to play a genuine part in society, then they have to contribute to society.”

It’s the same challenge for our graduates, a challenge they’re more than willing, and equipped, to take on.

Helayne Spivak, Director
BASIC NEEDS

AIR

62.5 square miles of unexplored land because you are stuck in a 27,000 square foot building finishing your BOB campaign.

The air quality fluctuates when it's lunch time.

From the basement it's a constant 35 dBA.

DRINKS

It's a wonder our bodily fluids aren't this color.

Wash away your coffee breath.

There's also water in this.

SLEEP

Rage Naps

Sofa 'bed.' Nine available in the building. Usage included in the cost of tuition.

"Concepting"

Dream Mining

Pillow
FOOD

Establishments frequented by students, faculty and staff.

821 Café
Great spot for post-Friday Forum meetings. Great brunch.

Starbucks
Next to Chilli’s. The Brandcenter creative gas station.

Chilli’s
Dangerously close. Great for celebrating and commiserating.

Beauregard’s Thai Room
Hard to find, but it’s got a secret garden patio. Feels like a portal out of RVA for a meal.

Tarrants Café
$3 tacos at the bar all day. Classy... but not too classy.

Lemaire at The Jefferson.
Go here to impress people. And “work.”

3rd Street Diner
You don’t want to go here, but at 3AM you don’t have a choice.

This is a beacon of sustenance. Get ‘The Gauntlet.”

The “All-Energy Trail Mix” is low in regret.

Check your locker weekly.

CLOTHING

The official acceptance letter.

You graduate in this.

At times your loved ones will appear to actually go to this school.

#HAVOC

You graduate in this.
2 YEARS AT THE BRANDCENTER

2012 - 2013 CALENDAR

June 2012

Start of winter break.

July 2012

Spring classes begin.

August 2012

Art direction boot camp

September 2012

Orientation

October 2012

Fall classes begin.

November 2012

Fall break.

December 2012

Start of winter break.

January 2013

Spring break.

February 2013

TEDxRU

March 2013

Thanksgiving break.

April 2013

Talentsaurus Rex

May 2013

Portfolio Reviews

Last day of class.
Start of winter break.

Spring classes begin.

Fall classes begin.

Spring break

Recruiter session

Softball game

Spring Board Mtg.

Graduation practice

Last day of class.

Thanksgiving break.

Fall break.

Talent show began

Start internship

Orientation (meet my members!)

Friday forum starts (easy Friday)

Softball Game

Fall Board Meeting

Thanksgiving break.
Safety Needs

According to Maslow, safety is one of the most basic human needs. Without a sense that we are in a safe place, we can't venture out, to take risks, to climb higher. Brandcenter students learn quickly that they are in a place where it is safe to take risks and even to fail. They climb and fall often, but they learn to get back up, and each time they do, their work gets a little better.
Studies show that safety nets allow more times to fail.
Standing in Front of the Wall

The words “Tata Nano” still make me cringe.

We went into the presentation hungry. We were confident. We were prepared. We had no idea that we were walking into what would become the most colossal disaster of our grad school careers.

I was two lines into my slam-poem introduction to our presentation when my brain decided to erase itself. I broke the one rule of Business of Branding and said “fuck.” The lights were dimmed. We were all dressed as beatniks in black sweaters and berets. Our emcee waited at the podium with an inflatable microphone. We snapped our fingers and played bongos during transitions. I was standing in front of a six-foot tall wooden wall that wouldn't be given context until about the tenth minute of the presentation.

When our brand manager began presenting our framed (yes, framed) Seuss-ian print ads to Don Just and Helayne by walking up the lecture hall steps in high heels, we all realized that this was the “Fail hard” moment we had heard so much about.

We trudged through twenty minutes and came out on the other side, standing in front of the class in our berets, awaiting judgment.

The critique was longer and more articulate than the entire presentation.

Our Tata Nano pitch became the textbook example of failure for the entire class. But as we chugged down our post-class mimosas, we realized that it was one of the best lessons we had learned at the Brandcenter. We took a huge risk. We stood proudly over the wreckage, took the criticism on the chin, packed up our bongos, and began to rebuild.
Ally Farrish, Copywriter

The whole team went to lunch after that fateful performance. At first, we sat around the table quietly dissecting all the ways we'd gone wrong. Some of us were angry, others were sad. I was mortified. And then, all at once, we started laughing. We laughed hysterically, each time someone recalled some miserable detail of our performance we laughed harder. That lunch is one of my favorite memories of Brandcenter.

Jessica Black, Creative Brand Manager

Presenting in a creative way (i.e. without a Keynote or the computer) is always a challenge. Some things work and others don't. Even though The Wall was considered an epic fail by many, we did learn a lot from the experience. We planned for our key audience members (aka professors) to be sitting in the front, when they moved to the back, it changed the whole dynamic of our presentation. We learned that you have to be prepared and aware of the set up of the room and to learn to control the situation. We did adjust and I'm proud of the fact that our team tried something different, even if it wasn't successful. We adjusted as a team and learned to think quickly on our feet, which is something that can't be taught but can only be learned through experience.

Edwin Poche, Creative Technologist

I was last to present of the three of us. When it was my time to step on stage, the train had already wrecked and been ablaze for ten minutes. All I could do was walk into the middle of the pile of bodies, stare Don Just in the eyes and smile.

Michelle Grant, Art Director

Maybe it's denial but I still don't think we did anything wrong. We just didn't set it up well. If you are going to put on a show you want to let the audience know what type of show they're about to watch, especially if there is a giant wooden wall involved.

Jade Sullivan, Creative Technologist

We tried to do something different, and we missed. That was the day I realized how thin the line is between the worst thing anyone's ever seen, and something great. We learned a lot by getting eaten alive.
When you live in this petri dish, you can never wear enough protection.

You can pray and hope, but your odds are not good when it's flu season.

H1N1 virus, also known as the swine flu.

Prevention is the best medicine.

KILLS 99.99% of GERMS Not for Retail Sale

8 FL OZ (236 ml)

Purell instant HAND SANITIZER KILLS 99.99% of GERMS Not for Retail Sale

19
Sorry, we don't have an in-house therapist.

There are no sick days built into your tuition.

You're on concept 21.

It is very much frowned upon to use this when your team throws out the creative the night before it's due.

Don't use this around fretting, sleepless copywriters.

The food truck is not your best friend.

VCU Police Chief John Venuti

VCU BRANDCENTER HAS OPERATED $\Box$ DAYS WITHOUT A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGISTS

"CSs are mental ninjas that are the connection between business problems and creative solutions."
- Haik Petrosian

"There's so many ways you can make something, you have to understand what's going to resonate. You have to take the outside world and bring it into the work."
- Rod Kashani

COPYWRITERS

"Copywriters write words that go in advertisements."
- Katie Rose Johnston

"Copywriters look at a problem, open the floodgates, and pour every single thought we have onto many pieces of paper. Then we sift through the chaos we've created and try to find something worth bringing up in a team meeting. We edit like maniacs. We play with different stories, words, voices, and tones until we've given birth to something with a personality. Then we flip a switch in our brains, become that personality, and speak."
- Demian Kendall

"Your copywriter always knows best because words are like people to them. They know all sides of a word's personality, how to encourage them to function in a group setting and how to make them work in unexpected ways."
- Colleen Trachy

"Copywriting is more than writing. It's taking something conceptual and spinning it into a poignant, spellbinding story."
- Blakeley Jones

CREATIVE TECHNOLOGISTS

"CTs make cool stuff that makes people smile."
- Matt Reamer

"The creative technologists at Brandcenter are a mix of advertising creatives with a penchant for digital ideas, programmers and builders who find joy in prototyping abstract things, UX/UD junkies, and digital strategists."
- Owen Weeks

ART DIRECTORS

"ADs exist to visualize the idea. We also exist on caffeine, water, pizza, beer, inadequacy and the fear of bad ideas. I've realized art is the product of venturing into the unknown and coming back with something. Anyone that calls himself creative becomes a part of that adventure."
- Rick Plautz

"The perfect AD starts with an idea and ends with a beautiful execution. If we can only execute than we're no different than designers. ADs have to be able to think as well as they execute."
- Simon SW Suh

CREATIVE BRAND MANAGERS

CBMs don't feed into one particular role or type of company. You can find them on the client side, at a brand consultancy, a startup or even launching an entrepreneurial endeavor. CBMs are equal parts team player and individual thinker. You have to feel confident in a leadership role. You must be tactful. You motivate teams to work together toward a common goal. But you must also be highly skilled individually. You are meticulous with details yet simultaneously, have the ability to pull back and see the big picture. You enjoy challenge.
- Jessica Longo

CBMs learn that advertising isn't always the solution. Perhaps the answer is overhauling the brand strategy or tackling a categorical threat. Maybe it's a product innovation or a line extension capitalizing on a consumer insight. There's no formula or manual to managing a brand. Instead, Brandcenter instills in them the ability to solve brand problems creatively - that is what differentiates CBMs from MBAs. That defines their value in the work force. They move effortlessly between non-linear creative thinking and A-to-B-to-C rationale. They understand creative, business and strategic languages, which allows them to collaborate and therefore, to push a brand to its highest potential.
- Jessica Black
Belongingness Needs

It takes a while, but over time, Brandcenter students start to feel at home. Every student is paired with a mentor to guide them and the faculty members they feared at the beginning of their quest turn into trusted advisors. But our students’ sense of belonging goes beyond mentorship; they form personal friendships, professional alliances and even true love.
Annual Softball Game 1st years vs. 2nd years

The 2nd years had a walk off inside-the-park home run by Haik Petrosian to win the game. **Final Score: 5-4**

- Location: Parker Field
- 168 red Solo cups used.
- 237.5 hot dogs consumed.
- A few minor injuries
- Haik sliding into home after hitting the game winning inside-the-park home run.
Talentsaurus Rex  An annual Brandcenter talent show.

Comments from the judges: Don Just and Peter Coughter

“I thought comedians were supposed to be funny.”

“Can’t sing—can’t dance—can’t entertain—not funny = the perfect Brandcenter talent act.”

“Wow!!!! A girl who can tie a square knot with her tongue—now that’s talent.”

“Next year we need to bring a long hook or a gong.”

“All the comments that come to mind about that act are unkind to say the least.”

“There will be a short intermission while the judges get more, ah, medicine.”

“In the spirit of the current cultural trend of recognizing everyone for participating so as not to hurt anyone’s feelings, let me be the first to say — they all suck.”

“I hope you have something funny and witty to say cause I got nothing.”

“What? No Bollywood act?”

“That act was so good, I want to have her baby.”

“White men can’t dance.”

“There is definitely junk in both of those trunks.”

“Fortunately, that performance will be easy to forget.”
VCU Brandcenter
Established 1996

Helayne Spivak
Director, 2012 - Present

Diane Cook-TenCh
Founder and Director 1996 - 2000

Rick Boyko
Director, 2000 - 2002

John Adams
Chairman, 2003 - 2012

Mike Hughes, Chairman Emeritus

Judy Turk
Interim Director, 2002 - 2003

Patty Alvyes
Director, 2000 - 2002

Faculty

Mentors

Advisory Board

Board of Directors

1104 Alums
BOARD MEMBERS

John Adams
Chairman, The Martin Agency

Helayne Spivak
Director - VCU Brandcenter

Allison Arden
Vice President & Publisher Advertising Age

Brian Collins
Chairman, Chief Creative Officer Collins:

Earl Cox
EVP & Chief Strategy Officer
The Martin Agency

Susan Credle
Chief Creative Officer
Leo Burnett USA

Augusta Duffey
Creative Director/Consulting Collins:

Bob Greenberg
Founder, Chairman and CEO F/CQA

Diane Jackson
EVP, Director of Integrated Production - DDB Chicago

Louis Jones
Chief Executive Officer
Maxus, North America

Jim Joseph
President, North America
Cohn & Wolfe Headquarters

Jon Kamen
Chairman & CEO @radical.media

Gareth Kay
Founding Partner
Zeus Jones, San Francisco

Dave Knox
Chief Marketing Officer
Rockfish Interactive

Paul Lavoie
Chairman, Co-Founder TAXI

Vicki Lins
Brand Consultant

Joe McCarthy
President, Director of Strategy Collins:

Jonathan Mildenhall
SVP, Integrated Marketing Content and Design Excellence
The Coca-Cola Company

Matthew Miller
President & CEO - AICP

Ty Montague
CEO - co: collective

Kevin Proudfoot
Executive Creative Director
Google Creative Lab

Dick Robertson
Former Executive Warner Brothers

Ted Royer
Chief Creative Officer
Droga5

Matthew J. Scheckner
President & CEO
Stillwell Partners Executive Director Advertising Week

Jerry Shershesnow
Chief GrownUp
GrownUpMarketing

Jeff Steinhour
Partner/Vice Chairman
Crispin Porter + Bogusky

Alain Sylvain
Founder and CEO
Sylvain Labs

Elizabeth Talerman
CEO, Managing Partner Nucleus

Rick Webb
Writer, Entrepreneur, Investor

ADVISORY BOARD

Lee Clow
Chief Creative Officer, North America - TBWA/ChiatDay

David Droga
Founder & Creative Chairman
Droga5

Lori Erdos
Business Development Director, Digital Advertising
Smithsonian Media

Neil French
Former Worldwide Creative Director - WPP

Sir John Hegarty
Chairman - Bartle Bogle Hegarty

Lance Jensen
Chief Creative Officer
Hill Holiday

Marcio Moreira
Former Vice Chairman
McCann World Group

John Partilla
CEO - Olson

Sir Ken Robinson
Author/Consultant

Michael Roth
Chairman & CEO
Interpublic Group

Steve Scarr
c

Bob Scarpelli
Former Chairman & CCO
DDB Worldwide

Joe Solarrota
Chief Creative Officer
Ogilvy & Mather Chicago

Dan Wieden
President and Creative Director
Wieden + Kennedy

MENTORS

Jennie Anderson, Prophet

Andrew Aquino, Redscout

Merranee Behrends, Wieden + Kennedy

Dana Brej, SelectNY

Elizabeth Brown, EnergyBBDO

Melissa Cabral, Naked

Jesse Coulter, CAA

Sarah Daily, Prophet

Jason DeTurris, CP+B

Ray De Savio, Droga5

Kelly Diaz, Mother

Kieran Donahue, Hilton

Jeff Dryer, Wieden + Kennedy

Adrian Fogel, Y&R

Micah Gandron, Autofuss

Jae Goodman, CAA

Rebbie Grossbeck, The Pitch Agency

Stephen Hadinger, AKQA

Natalie Hammel, Google Creative Lab

David Hartman, Target

Jerry Hoak, Droga5

Stephanie Summers, Leo Burnett

Joey Ianno, BFG 9000

Nick Kaplan, Wieden + Kennedy

Sue Kim, SapientNitro

Susan Land, Wieden + Kennedy

Richard Langhome, Mother

Ryan Lee, BBDO

Kim Linn, The Pitch Agency

Nien Liu, Zeus Jones

Will Lundberg, 72andSunny

Avery Oldfield, Venables Bell & Partners

Roseanne Overton, Argonaut

Krystal Plornatos, Sylvain Labs

David Povil, Wieden + Kennedy

Ali Shabashevich, IDEO

Lana Shahmoradian, Sid Lee

Matty Smith, BFG 9000

Tristan Smith
Google Creative Lab

Matt Spicer, 72andSunny

Sean Staley, Saatchi & Saatchi

Dan Sutton, Google Brand Lab

Kyla Wagman, Redscout

Jamie Webb, The Integer Group

Deacon Webster, Walrus

Xanthie Wells, The Pitch Agency

Adah Woolf, Venables Bell & Partners

FACULTY

Caley Cantrell
Communications Strategy

Peter Cougher
Culture

Mark Fenske
Creative

Wayne Gibson
Creative

Cabea Harris
Creative

Benwyn Hung
Creative

Don Just
Creative Brand Management

Geoff McGann
Creative

Kelsey O’Keefe
Creative Brand Management

Scott Witthaus
Film/Technology

FOUNDING FACULTY

Tim Chumley
Coz Cotzias
Jelly Helm
Charles Kouns
Roger Lavery
Jerry Torchia

ALUMNI

brandcenter.vcu.edu/people/alumni/
www.facebook.com/groups/36251826874/

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Brandcest

Brandcest

1. alums that met at the adcenter/brandcenter and married each other.

Fred Jorgensen (1998) and Mary Carole Barr Jorgensen (1998)
Chris Sheldon (1998) and Holly Thompson Sheldon (1999)
David Williams (1998) and Hayden Pasco (1999)
Nick Strada (2000) and Nicole Rocheleau Strada (2001)
Rachel Scott Everett (2001) and Brian Gibson (2001)
Will Dean (2004) and Robyn Gunn Dean (2006)
Joel Gryniowski (2005) and Lauren Weinblatt Gryniowski (2005)
Erica Pressly (2008) and Nick Kaplan (2008)
Talia Ledner (2010) and Josh Kobrin (2008)
Kimberly Frazier Childs (2009) and Jordan Childs (2009)
Kris Kennedy (2009) and Sarah Teubner Kennedy (2010)
Alina Shabashevich (2009) and Alec Black (2010)
Jennie Anderson Abernathy (2010) and Jacob Abernathy (2010)
Oliver Adriance (2010) and Joyce Kuan Adriance (2010)
Adam Aceino (2011) and Morgan Welch Aceino (2011)
Ashleigh Blumer Kohlitz (2011) and Brekan Kohlitz (2011)
Lauren Simon Donahoe (2011) and William Donahoe (2011)
Julian Tippins (2011) and Molly Jamison (2011)
Claire Wyckoff Satterfield (2011) and David Satterfield (2012)
Claiborne Buckingham Colombo (2012) and Gian Colombo (2012)
NJ Placentra (2012) and Kate Overholt Placentra (2012)
Nathan Hess (2012) and Holly Lansing (2011)
Brandcenter Prom  An annual gathering to celebrate the end of the school year. This year’s prom king and queen have yet to be announced.

2013 ROYAL COURT
King Chris Martin and Queen Jingwen Cao & Prince Rod Kashani and Princess Araba Wilson

There’s never a shortage of social gatherings whether holiday or weekend.
Cliques and where to find them.
Our basement was designed with two large concrete tables and no barriers to help create an open flow and a collaborative environment. However, human nature can’t help but divide oneself into our own ‘group.’
Esteem Needs

For Brandcenter students, a sense of accomplishment doesn't come easy, but when it arrives, it feels great. As students start to hone their craft, the work gets more inventive, collaborations become more productive, and presentations are made with strength and confidence. At this time, our students also take summer internships, which allow them to see that they are capable of working alongside skilled professionals.

Don Just's Grading Scale

Many come to the business because they've heard that it's a perpetual party. BOB begins the journey to self-esteem by confronting students with the harsh reality that they don't know what they don't know and that, rather than a Mad Men adventure, without an attitude adjustment they might really be headed for a road through Hell.
The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

Most of the time, we all wonder if we’re worthy of being called artists (teachers and students alike).

This is as it should be. It is the nature of art. The curse of it. The sex of it.

It is the marriage of Heaven and Hell. And in advertising we go from the penthouse to the basement, up and down, forever. Like Sisyphus on Meth.

Truly, the creative process loves hellish odds. But it also loves soul.

I believe we spend a lifetime trying to define this word, this word that can’t be defined. I believe artists spend a lifetime and beyond listening and gathering and writing and designing and stealing and crying our way into it.

So I offer a marriage of thefts, in an attempt to define a relationship with a word that I am forever unworthy of, and yet addicted to.

The quality we call soul is what instantly takes us from the mundane to the sublime, from the surface to the depths. Soul is what pierces through our carefully-constructed defenses that protect us from life’s harsh realities and throws cold water in the face of our denial.

When soul rises up, something’s about to change. It might not be cataclysmic, life-altering change that’s afoot, but on the other hand, all change has that potential, depending upon how we meet it. And when soul is in the equation, we’re likely going to meet it with our guard down and our hearts torn open, for soul is the thing that requires we get real.

You’ll know soul is present when you can no longer lie to yourself about whatever it is you’ve been pretending not to know. Soul demands nothing less than the truth.

You’ll know soul is “up” when you find yourself out on the dance floor of life, dancing your own dance and singing your own song. And you discover that you always knew the steps and the words.

You’ll know soul is evoked when you feel something deeply, for when something touches us deeply, we say it “ Touches my soul.”

The soul loves the deep waters.

You’ll know the soul has been stirred when you look at your life and say to yourself, “This is me.” Or say to yourself, “I’m seriously off-course.” In either case, soul is happening, for soul is that part of you that will not rest until you’ve gotten the thing down and wrestled the very essence of it into your bones, into your DNA.

You might even think of your soul as the fingerprint of your DNA, for while you cannot see the soul itself, you can see its imprint, and you’d be wise to pay attention to the tracks it leaves. The soul is here to impact, push, pull, sing, feed, and love you into a more honest, complete and authentic expression of who you are.

Yes, soul matters. And if it matters as an ideal, then it matters, absolutely, in our work.

Think about it this way:

If you were meant to plan the impossible, write the unimaginable, design the indefinable, and you don’t do it... you hurt everyone. You sell your soul.

You shame the angels who watch over you and you spite the almighty, who created you and only you, with your unique gifts, for the sole purpose of nudging the human race a few steps further along its path.

Creative work is not a selfish act or a bid for attention. It’s a gift to the world and every being in it.

Don’t cheat us of your contribution.

Give us all you’ve got.
2014 AWARDED SCHOLARSHIPS

$ 600 .......... Torchia
$ 900 .......... Fuller
$ 1,400 .......... Pytka
$20,000 .......... AICP Directors
   (4 recipients, $5,000 each)
$ 1,500 .......... Andrew Jaffe
$ 2,000 .......... Ted Burdett
$ 1,000 .......... Chaney
$35,000 .......... Brandcenter [project money]
   (10 recipients, amount varies)
$ 2,400 .......... Brandcenter Faculty & Staff
$ 500 .......... JWT
$ 5,000 .......... Henry Wolfe
$19,000 .......... Boyko
   (3 recipients, amount varies)
$ 980 .......... Dan Wieden [Wol]
$ 980 .......... Burt Manning [Wol]
$ 980 .......... David Knox/Rockfish [Wol]
$ 980 .......... Bob Scarpelli [Wol]
$ 980 .......... Wenda Harris Millard [Wol]
$ 4,900 .......... Harry Jacobs
$19,600 .......... Operation Jumpstart*
   (4 recipients, $4,900 each)
$ 2,000 .......... Jon & Angela Kamen
$ 1,960 .......... One Club*
$ 4,900 .......... Spurrier Media
$ 1,000 .......... Caley Cantrell
$ 980 .......... Curvin O'Reilly Craft [Wol]*
$ 980 .......... Phil Dusenberry [Wol]
$ 980 .......... Jon Steel [Wol]
$ 980 .......... Irwin Gotlieb [Wol]
$ 980 .......... Lester Wunderman [Wol]

Scholarship opportunities vary each year.

Key denotes scholarship available only to specific track.

*Art Director   *Copywriter   †Creative Technologist   ‡Communication Strategist
Alumni Accolades & Awards

Brandcenter alumni are recognized globally for their talent and creativity. They are represented at every major award show and included on many of the “who’s who” industry lists.

AICP
AICP Next
ANDY
Art Director's Club
Cannes
Cléo
D&AD
Effie’s
Emmy
Jay Chiat Awards
One Show
Webby Awards
Young Guns
Style Weekly’s - 40 Under 40
Luxury Daily’s - Women to Watch
Business Insiders - 30 Under 30 in Advertising
Business Insiders - Top Creatives to Know Now
Forbes - 30 Under 30 for Marketing

In 1973, The One Show was created. It was a joint venture with The Copy Club and The Art Directors Club. In 1977, The Copy Club began producing The One Show independently.

The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity is often called the world's biggest ad festival. Around 11,000 registered delegates from 90 countries visit the Festival.

The International ANDY Awards was created in 1964 to uphold the standards of craftsmanship, creativity and taste in advertising. As depicted in Mad Men “The Flood,” where the Fourth Annual International Andy Awards takes place, The ANDY Award has been a Madison Avenue icon for half a century.

The Effie Awards, created in 1986, are marketing communications awards given yearly by Effie Worldwide, Inc., a nonprofit organization, to honor the most effective marketing communications ideas.

D&AD was founded in 1962 by a group of London-based designers and art directors. Two kinds of awards are given out, a Yellow Pencil and a Black Pencil. The Black Pencil is particularly coveted as they are given for ‘OUTSTANDING’ work and usually only one or two are given out each year, although in 2003 none were awarded.

The Art Directors Club awards have been given every year since 1921. The Award for Design Excellence is known as the "DESI" award.

The AICP Show & Next Awards honor the craft and technique of advertising and marketing communications in the moving image across all channels. The Show & Next Awards are annually archived by the Department of Film at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA).

The Clio awards, founded by Wallace A. Ross in 1959, are named for the Greek goddess Cléo, the mythological Muse known as "the proclaimer, glorifier and celebrator of history, great deeds and accomplishments."

The 4A’s annual Jay Chiat Awards for Strategic Excellence are the first global advertising awards to recognize brilliant strategic thinking.

An Emmy Award recognizes excellence in the television industry.

The Webby Awards began in 1995, sponsored by the Academy of Web Design and Cool Site of the Day. It is an award for excellence on the Internet.
Super Bowl XLVII and Super Bowl XLVIII both set the average cost of a 30 second commercial at $4 million.

The most expensive Super Bowl commercial of all time was a 2011 Chrysler, Imported From Detroit, spot that cost $12.4 million.

Alumni TV spots

SUPER BOWL XLVII

**Kristopher Kennedy** (CW, 2009)
He’s a Copywriter at Cramer-Krasselt in Chicago.
SPOT = Heinz “Hum”

**Karen Land** (AD, 2008)
She’s a Copywriter at Droga5 in NYC.
SPOT = Chobani

**Casey Rand** (CW, 2008)
**Howard Finkelstein** (CW, 2005)
**Jillian Dresser** (CW, 2008)
Howard and Jillian are at Silver + Partners. Casey recently moved to Droga5.
SPOT = Carmax “Slow Clap”

**Mike Wilson** (AD, 2011)
He’s an Art Director at David & Goliath in LA.
SPOT = KIA spot featuring Lawrence Fishburne

**Lauren Geisler** (AD, 2010)
She’s an Art Director at Mullen in Boston.
SPOT = US CELLULAR (it’s running in spot markets)

**Tom Wilson** (CW, 1998)
He’s a CD at JWT in Atlanta but did the spot when he was freelancing.
SPOT = WeatherTech floor mats for cars

**Joseph Quattrone** (CBM, 2008)
He’s a Group Account Director/Social Media Strategist at Group M/M80.
SPOT = Jaguar

**Marika Wiggan** (CS, 2010)
She’s a Strategist at Argonaut.
SPOT = Volkswagen

**Neil Slotterback** (CBM, 2010)
He’s a Strategist at BSS+P.
SPOT = T-Mobile
2013 Summer Internships
42 agencies in 20 cities took in 67 of our students for 3 months.

Most Brandcenter students intern at agencies all over the country during the summer between their first and second year. Summer internships give our students the opportunity to apply the skills they’ve learned at the Brandcenter in the “real world.” Students return to school in the fall and begin their second year with renewed confidence in their abilities. Most students say Brandcenter professors are tougher than any CD or Planning Director in the real world.
I teach a class called Persuasion. It’s about learning to present your ideas in the most powerful way possible.

Presenting is a powerful way of expressing not just what you believe, but who you are. The way in which we behave in front of an audience while communicating whatever it is that’s on our minds says volumes about who we are as a person.

If a client is to trust us, she must believe us. And we prove ourselves worthy of that trust by standing up and speaking our truth. If we expect people to follow us, we must inspire them to do so. We must stand up and be a leader. On a more mundane level, if we expect someone to buy our work, to embrace our ideas, we must first stand up and convince them that we are worthy of their confidence.

Standing up for our ideas, our work, indeed ourselves isn’t easy. We’re open to the scrutiny of everyone in the room, virtually naked in the face of their criticism. In order to do it, to get up and win them over, we’ve got to first believe in ourselves.

We’ve got to believe that what we have to offer will be a significant contribution. In fact, we’ve got to think of ourselves as a contribution. This way of thinking requires an audacity of spirit, a conviction that what we have to share will enrich the conversation, and yes, ultimately, everything will work out for the best. Simply put, it requires courage. It isn’t enough to master the techniques and concepts discussed in class and all the other information sources available to us. Knowledge alone is not the answer. Putting that knowledge to work is the task. This is an exercise in results, not intentions.

Accomplishing change, transforming the beliefs of the people in the room, is the achievement.

Defy the conventional, create the exceptional. That’s what I’m preaching. Create exceptional work. Create exceptional presentations. Create an exceptional life.

Doing so requires standing up.

Excerpted from The Art of the Pitch, Copyright Peter Coughter, 2012
Published by Palgrave Macmillan in the United States.
Cognitive Needs

Maslow believed that humans have the need to increase their intelligence and thereby chase knowledge. They explore science, art, music, and philosophy, enriching their lives and bringing depth to their work. Our students quickly learn that the greater the field of vision, the more opportunities they will see. Richmond provides a rich tapestry of arts and culture, inviting students to explore and grow.
Between Chaos and Order

Have you ever tried searching for a “Brand Process” online? You’ll find hundreds of pseudo-scientific diagrams with important sounding names like the “brand activation method.” Some of these diagrams are useful while others are just plain stupid, but they all try to do the same thing, to make us believe that creativity can be achieved through a systematic process.

The reality is a bit more complex. What they don’t teach you at MBA school is that great creative thinking and great brands are built at the intersection of chaos and order, and these two elements do not mix without a good deal of friction.

On one hand, you have order. Big companies love this because it feels safe, steady, and predictable. We all crave order somewhere in our lives, whether it’s in the comfort of a long-term relationship or in the organization of our sock drawer. The trouble is that when businesses are too orderly – too rooted in complex systems and bureaucratic processes – creativity is smothered and innovative people quickly become frustrated and leave.

On the other end of the spectrum is chaos, or as Webster’s says, “a state in which behavior and events are not controlled by anything.” Often business leaders think of creative processes as chaotic, a place where there are no rules and every idea is a good idea. It is true that to master creative thinking, we have to loosen the reigns; but when there are no rules, there is often no point. When things become too chaotic, ideas often have originality with no substance. And businesses that are too chaotic don’t last long.

The truth is that great innovations come from avoiding both the lifelessness of order and the pointlessness of chaos. Instead, innovation is the product of purposeful creativity. This is what we strive for at the Brandcenter. Our creative students learn to think more strategically and to channel their creativity to accomplish specific objectives. And our strategists learn to think more creatively, to seek original solutions and avoid the pitfalls of pointless processes. Balancing these two opposing forces is not a perfect science. It involves trial and error and plenty of friction, but the end product is worth a few scrapes and bruises.

Kelly O’Keefe, Professor
Rusty Relics?

In a recent survey cited by the Wall Street Journal, CEOs characterized today’s business schools as “more suited for the Industrial Revolution than the Information Age.” Imagine the angst in academia’s hallways and the consternation of MBA curriculum planners who present the same tenure-protected programs year after year.

But, is it possible that what appears to be a steadfast reliance on traditional thinking is a sign that many of these revered institutions are cemented in the past, focused on crafting predictable strategies based on slavish devotion to analytics, data massage and faintly substantiated assumptions?

Business today, marketing in particular, requires more than recycled lesson plans that seek to reduce everything to an algorithm. Rather, today’s marketers must practice in a world that requires a new toolbox.

There’s room for reasonable analytics and performance accountability. But, creating meaningful brand experiences demands more. It requires a deep understanding of the cultural influences impacting consumer choice; it requires application of design for utility and aesthetics; it understands that insight into human emotion often trumps the numbers; and, it leaves room for intelligent intuition.
The Brandcenter is centered on four strategic pillars: Commerce, Culture, Creativity and Collaboration. We understand that what we do is about business; that we operate within a cultural landscape that’s evolving and diverse; and, that we seek creative brand solutions that connect with today’s more culturally aware and sophisticated consumer.

At the Brandcenter, we encourage talented individuals to seek big ideas, but we also believe in the power of cross-functional collaboration to break down silos and plus ideas across varied platforms. And, Brandcenter collaboration means more than five like-minded MBA students talking to themselves. Here, groups comprised of strategists, designers, future brand managers, technical specialists—even writers and artists—explore a rich tapestry of diverse thinking centered on uncovering unexpected solutions that create richer brand experiences.

Finally, it’s not about which educational model is better. Rather, it’s about which is currently offering content that’s more relevant to the needs of 21st century brand marketers. Consider some evidence. Brandcenter has proven its ability to pivot as demonstrated by five major curricula revisions in the past seven years. Most B-schools? Not so much. Brandcenter students understand how to work productively in inter-disciplinary teams. B-school students? Likely not.

Central to Brandcenter vision is a non-apologetic commitment to Creativity, the magic that makes sense out of Big Data, the energy that sparks Big Ideas and the inspiration that fuels disproportionate market success. And, it’s that Creativity—the magic that can’t be reduced to an algorithm—that’s missing from the B-school model and separates Brandcenter’s revolutionaries from that Old Guard.

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Don Just, Professor
ENTHUSIASM

WEEK 1
Research Brand / Business Problem
- Campaign
- Class
- Enthusiasm Graph
- CBM
- Cs
- Ad
- Time

WEEK 2
Strategy Presentation / Loose Creative Concepts
- Paradigm-shifting App UI concept.
- App UI is a mystery.
- Pizza will attract all ages to my focus group.
- Our solution will significantly increase ROI.
- Target millennials? Again?
- Totally learning Cinema 4D for this.
- What this needs is a brand manifesto.
- And a video.
Business of Branding (BOB) - Every semester the Brandcenter has a class where all tracks combine into assigned or self-chosen groups. This is typically their 4-week journey.

Facebook survey data reflects my mom and 4 millennials.

This is great. Maybe I really am gifted.

This logo sucks. Everything sucks. I'm a hack.

New concept?!

Great, world-changing ideas fail to change world.

Shoehorn strategy into new creative concept.

Maybe we'll just do a social campaign.

App UI finally works.

WEEK 3
PRESENT CREATIVE DIRECTION / WORK

WEEK 4
FINISH CREATIVE / FINAL PRESENTATION

REM cycles.

Caffeine and tears.
Believe in magic. Creativity is one of the last legal means of gaining unfair advantage over your competitors. Science can inform inspiration, but it’s a damned poor substitute. Gross impressions don’t matter unless someone’s impressed. Candor saves everyone a lot of time. What happens in the living room is as important as what happens in the boardroom. Your brand is your company’s soul if your company has a soul. Client financial statements should be on the agency’s list of required reading. Great ads are like people; they should communicate one-on-one, like friends. A bad attitude undermines great ideas, loses clients and shortens careers. Great strategy delivered predictably is a waste of time. Encourage failure. It’s the interstate to success. Ask a lot of questions; then learn how to listen so you can hear the answers. When people say something cannot be done, they are usually interrupted by someone who’s already creating a way to do it. To build short-term brand preference, we too often beg consumers to buy the product with the big red discount sticker slapped on it—no wonder it’s tough to build brand loyalty. Features and benefits alone don’t suffice; anyone who has stubbed their toe in the dark on the way to the bathroom knows how emotion can override the most fundamental of intentions. Fire people who are satisfied with their own work. Everyone loves working on TV campaigns, but, remember, brochures need love too. Focus group participants make bad creative directors. Value an account person who has a brain securely connected to a backbone. We owe clients our best professional judgment whether popular or not. Advertising is not a service business; it’s a product business. Great agencies don’t offer curb service. A strong brand is the part of the product you can’t put in the box. Brand likeability and brand preference go hand in hand. Expect some ideas to be rejected; there are others out there. Practice the art of ruthless exclusion. One great idea at a time, clearly communicated, is the foundation of great advertising. Consumers who buy on deal are too-easily lured away by the competitor’s better deal. Too often advertising is another name for corporate chest-beating. In today’s look-alike world, comparative product advantage is hard to attain; relative advantage hard to sustain; and, absolute advantage impossible to maintain. Get the client involved with the work early and often. Remember Susan, and plan for disaster! Clients have the right to accept or reject the work, but they don’t have the right to fix it. In this age of technology, remember, there are still plenty of ideas on bar napkins. Agencies should be focused on helping each client achieve its piece of the future. Reach and frequency are not enough; the pleasant sound of a surprise spring shower always wins over the irritating repetition of a dripping faucet. The time to take the cookies is when they pass the plate. There is no heavier burden than great potential. It is far more exhilarating to climb a mountain for real than to have your avatar do it for you. Be intolerant of mediocrity—in your agency, in your work and in your relationships. The cost of great talent is not a discretionary expense. We’re not spoiled kids holding our breath until we get our way, but if we don’t feel passionate enough to fight for great work, clients should worry. The most important job in the world is the one you’re working on right now. Great design rarely substitutes for a great idea. In this business your work is your legacy. Enable your kids to say with pride that mom or dad is in advertising. The statement, “your thinking is 180 degrees from everyone else’s,” is a compliment. There is no whining in advertising. And, when tasked with finding Garcia, don’t ask questions, just go find him!
Brand Ambition

Two years ago, I made the decision to come to the Brandcenter, not because I wanted to make ads, but because I recognized that brands held enormous power in the world we live in.

They have identities that consumers use to define themselves.

They can be spoken as a type of language among a subculture.

They develop products that we can’t yet fathom.

They provide us with the choices that surround us.

That last one. That last one is the biggest conundrum of all: are the choices that surround us controlled by us or by the brand? Can the consumer truly change the choices offered to them or is it the brand’s decision to offer products that make the world better for both the business and the consumer.

Without a doubt, consumers have a say in product development. Brands are constantly chasing the needs and sentiments of the consumer to inform the products that they offer. But when it comes to innovation, brands are in a unique position of power to create something new—something that can shift the category or even change the world. Part of the power of brands is their ability to push the bounds of what consumers thought to be impossible. Brands have the potential to shape the choices available to us—to shift paradigms if they so choose. How ambitious is your brand?

How Strategists Evolve

Let’s face it. We like the easy way out. The quick-fix solution. We’d like to have a “fool proof recipe” that we can return to again and again.

But, there is no magic crank to turn. This isn’t the Play-Doh Fun Factory, where you choose your shape, load in the doh, push down the handle, and out squeezes stars. That’s not how smart, engaging, strategic ideas happen.

When our strategists stop looking for the crank to turn and start rolling up their sleeves—they are on their way.

When they start feeling jealous of another strategist’s ideas—saying under their breath “I wish I’d done that” — they are propelled forward. They now understand what inspiration looks like. They no longer seek the button to push. They realize they must push themselves.
Aesthetic Needs

Even when students master the basics skills, there is still work to be done. It is here that they shape their own voice. They move from creating work that looks like what they have seen from others to creating work that feels like it came from them alone. We call it “individuation” and it is the quality that makes a Picasso a Picasso. It is also what makes each Brandcenter student unique.

Just a few apps that our art directors and creative technologists ‘play’ with.

Strategists and Creative Brand Managers unveil their findings through these apps.
You don’t need to go to school to learn advertising.

Advertising?
You don’t need anyone to teach you that crap.
Look at it up there on the TV yelling at you to buy a new Ford for 44 dollars down.
Who couldn’t do that?
Advertising?
Sing it with me: “I wish I was an Oscar Meyer wiener. That is what I’d truly like to be.”
What class could teach you to do that?
You can already talk, you can sing, you can stand in front of a camera and point.
What else is there?
Advertising?
We’ve been watching it every day since we were born.
What’s there to learn that people don’t already know?
Exactly.
So why does our school exist?
For one reason: Good advertising.
We don’t teach advertising we teach good advertising.
Which is the exact spiritual opposite of advertising.
Whatever advertising does, good advertising does the opposite of it.
That is hard.
That requires work and vision and knowledge and touch and wisdom and luck and all the other stuff that we’re not born with but which must be developed.
You don’t need those things to make advertising.
Obviously.
But you need them all and in subtle relation to each other in order to make good advertising.

Mark Fenske,
Professor

THIS DOES NOT SUCK
Almost every creative class starts with students putting up their concepts on the wall for review.

Let's Start by Putting It on the Wall and Talking About It.

What typeface fits the brand and the concept?

Now We Need to Make a Tighter Layout.

There's no magic number to how many times this process is repeated. Just keep working until it's done.

Sometimes the logo needs a redesign.

Do you need a tagline?

Lorem Ipsum, also referred to as ‘Greek’ copy, is dummy text. Lorem Ipsum has been the industry’s standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when a printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book.
 IMPORTANCE OF AESTHETICS

As a copywriter, I’m not the best person to talk about aesthetics. Although I have made some beautiful Google docs. What little I do know has come from working with many talented art directors during the past two years. Art directors that don’t appreciate you looking over their shoulders while they work, no matter how curious you are. Art directors that don’t take “the design has a nice variety” as a compliment, even if you meant it as one. This is what I know about aesthetics. A talented art director can bring your headline to life. Turn those 11 words you sent them over Facebook into something beautiful. Something people would stop to read. Dare I say, they can make the headline seem stronger than it actually is. That’s why I write hundreds of headlines and wait until the last possible second to settle on one. Because if they’re going to make art, I want the words to come close to living up to it.

The research and thinking behind an idea can completely fall flat if it’s poorly executed. Every step of the concealing process matters, especially the aesthetics, because that’s what brings the entire idea to life. If the executions are ugly, then I’m not going to spend time looking at it. Subsequently, a great idea could be overlooked. And that’s just sad.

Aesthetic is a tool that is forever in a state of change within us as we progress and learn our craft. As our culture evolves so does our need for evolving aesthetic. Now, both function and appearance bring pleasure. Sure, if something looks pretty it gives short term pleasure, but for long term engagement there needs to be that same level of aesthetic through functionality. When crafting an experience, the user is King and aesthetic is Queen. The Queen makes the King smile like he’s never smiled before. That’s what aesthetic should do, and that’s what we should all aspire to achieve. Pulling on the emotional strings in an augmented way. Let’s take Reddit for example, it is horrifying in the visual aesthetic, but in the functional side, it’s beautiful. The emotion that the functional aesthetic brings trumps the way the visual aesthetic is. But imagine the power Reddit would hold if the visual side was present too? Aesthetic has the power to change how a brand is perceived in culture, and that’s what we are all aiming to do, right? No matter our individual paths after school, one thing will remain constant and that’s the drive to make people smile via aesthetic. Visual and functional aesthetic work hand in hand. They compliment each other in a powerful way.

Not all people are natural storytellers. Certainly not all advertisers or advertising people are natural storytellers. In fact, finding a natural storyteller is like finding a natural musician. They just have it. That being said, not every great musician is a natural. Some work very hard to learn skills and then apply them to one or more instruments. The same can be said for visual storytelling and advertising.

I feel it is very important for students to learn how to tell a good visual story outside of the advertising world. That’s why we have visual poetry projects, cross-platform projects and short film assignments. These have nothing to do with commercials. They have everything to do with stories. Figure out a plot, develop characters, work the arc of the story. Then decide how shooting techniques, editing and sound design support the story. Rinse and repeat. Master these skills and advertising is easy.

Scott Witkaus, Professor

Art is a tool that is forever in a state of change within us as we progress and learn our craft. As our culture evolves so does our need for evolving aesthetic. Now, both function and appearance bring pleasure. Sure, if something looks pretty it gives short term pleasure, but for long term engagement there needs to be that same level of aesthetic through functionality. When crafting an experience, the user is King and aesthetic is Queen. The Queen makes the King smile like he’s never smiled before. That’s what aesthetic should do, and that’s what we should all aspire to achieve. Pulling on the emotional strings in an augmented way. Let’s take Reddit for example, it is horrifying in the visual aesthetic, but in the functional side, it’s beautiful. The emotion that the functional aesthetic brings trumps the way the visual aesthetic is. But imagine the power Reddit would hold if the visual side was present too? Aesthetic has the power to change how a brand is perceived in culture, and that’s what we are all aiming to do, right? No matter our individual paths after school, one thing will remain constant and that’s the drive to make people smile via aesthetic. Visual and functional aesthetic work hand in hand. They compliment each other in a powerful way.

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Show me a director who didn’t learn by editing and I’ll show you a bad director.
Through the Years, Styles May Change, Tools May Change, but the Process Never Does.

1. Who are we talking to?
2. What do we tell them?
3. How do we tell them?
4. Where do we tell them?
5. Was it effective?

In my experience, the simpler the process, the better the work.

Cabell Harris, Professor
YES, THIS IS A DEMANDING, SOMETIMES EXHAUSTING PLACE, BUT IT ISN’T A RACE TO SEE WHO CAN HAVE THE FIRST HEART ATTACK. DEAD PEOPLE MAKE LOUSY BRAND PROFESSIONALS, SO TAKE TIME TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.

DON’T FORGET TO:
TIME TO TAKE A BREAK.
Self-Actualization

As students reach the top of Maslow’s hierarchy, they can solve problems quickly, think creatively, and act with assurance. It is also here that students fuse their skills with their values, learning that their work has the power not only to delight audiences, but also to inspire change, transform businesses, and help communities. Our students are now ready to thrive on their own and to make an impact on our world.
“Nothing comes out of your head unless you put it in there first.”
YOUR OBITUARY WILL BOAST:

“His family was one of the few to survive when there was a global food shortage. Because Iowa grew more food than any other state, his DNA was used to repopulate the earth. Many people had his rabbit-snapped birthmark. So many. It gave way to a new race.”

VISIT IOWA WHERE THERE’S NOTHING BUT POTENTIAL EXPLORE YOUR POTENTIAL AT MYOWA.COM

FROM YOUR PORCH IN IOWA YOU’LL TELL PEOPLE:

“The energy sources were all used up. But the lights in my house stayed on, because Iowa had the most wind energy (per person). I could still read before bed. I grew wiser than most.

People asked me for my sage advice. I advised one couple to work things out. They did. They had a child, who developed the cure for cancer.”

FROM YOUR PORCH IN IOWA YOU’LL TELL PEOPLE:

“You’ll tell people:

The energy sources were all used up.
But the lights in my house stayed on, because Iowa had the most wind energy (per person). I could still read before bed.

I grew wiser than most.

People asked me for my sage advice.
I advised one couple to work things out.

They did.
They had a child, who developed the cure for cancer.

VISIT IOWA WHERE THERE’S NOTHING BUT POTENTIAL EXPLORE YOUR POTENTIAL AT MYOWA.COM
WHY ARE IOWANS ALWAYS SO CHIPPER?
PONDER IT WHILE YOUR HUNDREDS OF NEIGHBORS KEEP YOU UP AT NIGHT.

VISIT IOWA
WHERE THERE'S NOTHING BUT POTENTIAL

Iowa is known for having very few people and a lot of food, energy, and space. When the world starts to get too crowded, it's going to be the place to be.
1 (Aero font)
Blair Warren, art director

This type was rendered for a campaign for Aerobed air mattresses. I set the type in Illustrator and then brought the layout into Cinema 4D. From there, I wanted to give the words an elevated, luxurious treatment to mimic the form of the Aerobed.

2 (Borax)
Caitlin Bradley, art director
Sam Bauer, copywriter
Placed on walls in laundromats above washing machines.

**“Legal Department” :30 Radio**

SFX: Energetic, optimistic music

Announcer (Male VO): Borax bleach alternative, it's magical!

Music stops

Lawyer (Monotone male VO): Uh, legal department here. You can't say it's magical.

Music continues

Announcer: Who knows from whence it came?

Music stops

Lawyer: We dig it out of the ground in California.

Music starts

Announcer: Nobody can explain how it works!

Music stops

Lawyer: It's just a simple chemical reaction.

Music starts

Announcer: It's safe on your skin!

Lawyer: Okay that's true.

Announcer: Without any harsh fumes!

Lawyer: Also true.

Announcer: Borax, nature's magical cleaning crystal!

Music stops

Lawyer: I give up.
You might not believe in ghosts, but at 2am with the lights off you're probably a little less sure. While we may not be able to convince you Ouija boards work, we think we can convince you that they might.
Salemville cheese is made by the Amish. So it goes without saying it's organic and handcrafted.

Unfortunately, the Amish aren't big on self promotion. It's a simple cheese from a humble people.
We redesigned the iconic A&F quarterly catalog to look like a college information brochure - the fictional "Abercrombie College," an elite school whose aristocratic veneer hides its secrets.

**Assignment**
Reinvigorate a dying brand.

**Problem**
Abercrombie & Fitch was in dire straits this year. Despite the company’s cost-cutting strategy of the last few years, their quarterly profit plunged 58 percent. This was not just an issue of fast-fashion brands like H&M pilfering the teen market. Abercrombie & Fitch was no longer an aspirational teen brand.

It used to be a brand that parents reluctantly bought for their kids. It used to be dangerous. The challenge for us was bringing back the sense of subversion to Abercrombie & Fitch.

**Solution**
We took a more subtle approach with a new concept and story line: ‘The better you look, the worse you can behave.’

The brochure prompts the reader to download the app and the journey begins.

Catalog Copy - Students for Sensible Drug Policy is an international grassroots network of students who are concerned about the impact drug abuse has on our communities. SSDP mobilizes and empowers young people to push for sensible policies to achieve a safer and more just future.

Secret Copy - College is a time of experimentation, there’s no reason for it to follow you the rest of your life. The kids in this group know the ins and outs of getting charges dropped. Call them if you have a problem.

As the reader digitally explores the brochure, more and more secrets are revealed.

A storyline, told through video vignettes embedded within the brochure, leads the viewer further into the true nature of the college.

Each embedded vignette invites the viewer to further become a part of its hidden world by purchasing the clothing featured within.
We only need 9.

A Major League Curveball takes 65 feet to drop 1 foot.

Make it possible.

1 (Abercrombie & Fitch)
- Rick Plautz, art director
- Claire Gipson, art director
- Chase Kimball, copywriter
- Hunter Pinnell, copywriter
- Rod Kashani, communications strategist
- Roux Dionissieva, creative technologist

2 (Stiga series)
- Andrew Chin, art director
- Gabe Sherman, copywriter

Table tennis isn’t seen as a real sport. But in reality, it takes more skill than some professional sports.

3 (Jeep)
- Simon SW Suh, art director
- Samson Madella, copywriter
Assignment
Create a media plan. This was the assignment given for the class. We found a real client in Richmond, Baby Stuff & Kids 2 (BSK2), that had recently been purchased by a group of women from another owner. They were interested in how to reach customers and drive traffic to their store with a limited budget.

Comments
We took our media plan a step further, providing a full "Day in the Life" of our consumer to BSK2. We also included some changes to their product lineup to make them an overall better-aligned brand.

What makes BSK2 special is their offering of personalized, hand painted products, including frames, buckets, and miniature rocking chairs.

Part of our media plan was to help BSK2 optimize their free resources, mainly social media accounts. This included giving them a scale for "ease of use," examples of accounts doing it right, and examples of posts they may make.

Paperless Post was a virtual touchpoint we thought would help bring the boutique, personal shopping feel full circle. This free product can help BSK2 keep up with customers post purchase. Paperless Post is an e-card and invitation site used by popular brands like Kate Spade to send Thank You’s to consumers or invite them to sales.

The chart is broken down into two types of touchpoints, physical and virtual. The length of the specific touchpoint shows what stages of the consumer product and purchasing journey you can reach the consumer with each method or device.

The website will be an area that can touch a consumer at any point in their product journey.
“Cowboy” :30 Radio

SFX: Solo western acoustic guitar playing throughout

Cowboy (male VO): “Things can be hard out here on the range, what with the saddle sores, lame horses and rattlesnake bites. Yup, it’s enough to make an old cowboy wanna hang his hat. About the only thing that keeps me going is kickin’ back my spurs at sunset and whipping up a fresh supper with my ergonomic salad spinner.”

Announcer (male VO): OXO Good Grips cooking tools. Makes life just a little bit easier.

1 (BSK2 - Baby Stuff & Kids 2)
Araba Wilson, communications strategist
Jeremy Chacich, communications strategist
Jessica Black, creative brand manager

2 (OXO Good Grips)
Karlin Lichtenberger, art director
Sam Bauer, copywriter
If you can read this, you see potential in a mess. You intuitively rearrange chaos to form something recognizable.

Become a Design Consultant. Or call one of ours.

CALIFORNIA CLOSETS
www.californiaclosets.com
Nature is a dangerous place for a tree. So once wood makes it out of nature and into your home, give it the attention and care it deserves. Treat wood to a better afterlife.

1 (California Closets)
Michelle Grant, art director
Chase Kimball, copywriter

2 (Hoshi Unfiltered Sake)
Amanda Young, art director
Garrick Sheldon, copywriter

3 (Murphy Oil Soap)
Lauren Albee, art director
Liz Loudy, copywriter

4 (Smartwool)
Karlin Lichtenberger, art director
Peter Henningsen, copywriter
1 (Frei Forma)
Caitlin Bradley, art director
Lauren Albee, copywriter
A handmade jewelry brand showcasing our individual styles, through a balance of geometry and fluidity.

2 (Tiffany & Co.)
Karlin Lichtenberger, art director
Blakeley Jones, copywriter
Matt Reamer, creative technologist
As more states push to declare the ban on same-sex marriage unconstitutional, a line of male engagement rings seemed not only necessary, but imminent. Same-sex relationships are by no means a modern day concept, they’re just finally getting the acceptance and respect they deserve. Love has no limits, and who better to introduce this revolutionary love story than Tiffany & Co.
“Love Without Limits” :60

SFX: Soft piano music throughout.

(Open on a young man combing his hair in the bathroom mirror)

Ann. (Male VO): Love is patient, love is kind.

(Young man looks for shirt to wear in his closet)
It does not envy, it does not boast.
(Young man buttons up his shirt. We see a jewelry box with bow on top of the dresser)
It is not proud.
(Young man holds handwritten speech in his hands)
It does not dishonor others.
(Young man paces slowly while practicing the speech to himself)
It is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered.
(Young man grabs suit jacket and jewelry box as he leaves the house).
It keeps no record of wrongs.
(Young man stands alone in a museum with his back to the camera)
Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth.
(Camera reveals the young man is holding a box with an engagement ring in it)
It always protects,
(A second man arrives. The young man turns and smiles at the second man to greet him as he walks up)
always trusts,
(The young man drops to one knee, presenting the ring to his partner and asking him to marry him)
always hopes, always perseveres.
(His partner nods and the couple embraces.)


(End card: Tiffany & Co. Love Without Limits)
1 (Clear Channel)

**Michelle Grant, art director**
**Karlin Lichtenberger, art director**
**Demian Kendall, copywriter**

Clear Channel asked us to "create a movement to start something good or stop something bad." We wanted to make the billboards local landmarks, capturing the history of changing cities, lost venues, and the people who lived there. "My Town" used the social media holiday "Throwback Thursday" and allowed people to share their memories of neighborhoods through the billboards with a personalized hashtag. We pitched the idea to the Brandcenter Board of Directors and won.

2 (G-Shock)

**Simon SW Suh, art director**

Auto-LED is a unique feature of G-Shock. When the watch detects that you're in a dark environment, its LED automatically lights up brightly and reveals the darkness around you.
1 (Mane 'n Tail)

Rick Plautz, art director
Gabe Sherman, copywriter

2 (Baxter)

Nomi Malik, art director
Samson Madella, copywriter

3 (nook t.a. by Barnes & Noble)

Nicole Smith, art director
Colleen Trachy, copywriter
Marisa Perazzelli, communications strategist
Issamu Kamide, creative brand manager
Matt Reamer, creative technologist
What will be the future of textbooks?

Barnes & Noble College and its publishers want to go digital. However, students, parents and professors have been slow to adopt. We found teaching is the smallest part of a professor’s job—only about 40%. So we created the NOOK TA, a learning management tool, to maximize the time devoted to teaching, simplify student- and-professor communications and make teaching easier.
Soccer is called football just about everywhere but the United States. It’s also followed by rabid fans across the globe. We wanted to create that level of excitement for the sport in the United States by letting people know what they were missing.

Some of the world’s most popular tourist attractions are ruins. Greece, Rome, Peru. Yet for some reason, the ruins of Detroit are seen as blights and eyesores. We created a campaign set hundred of years in the future, making certain abandoned buildings and factories historical landmarks and windows to the city’s past. We drove up to the city, explored abandoned factories, zoos, and houses to see what we could find.
Visitors of Detroit can enhance their experience when visiting the ruins through an augmented reality app which allows them to interact with specific sites, accessing lost documents, pictures, and 3D models of the buildings in their heyday.
Assignment
Rebrand the struggling surf and apparel brand Billabong by recognizing a philosophy that surfing culture can subscribe to.

Philosophy
When you catch a wave, you’re riding on the very reason of your existence. Water is what started us all. It fuels us. It keeps us going. Even our bodies are mostly made of water. For a surfer, riding waves is like being baptized every morning. Coming back to the ocean brings us peace, because we are water.

We created a website where surfers feel welcome and focuses on what their community cares about. Key features include real surfers modeling the apparel, categorizing items by ‘In the Water’ or ‘Out the water’ and a live beach report.

Flagship Store Design
An immersive shopping experience tailored to the needs of surfers and focused around the concept ‘We are water.’

Live beach cams allow shoppers to see up to the minute surf conditions of the beach nearest to them and water tanks allow them to test the wetsuits.
LOUIS LEARNED THE RIGHT MELODIES
JUST SO HE COULD TEAR THEM APART.

IF MILES HAD PLAYED BY THE RULES,
WE NEVER WOULD HAVE HEARD THE BITCHES BREW!

1 (Billabong)

Emily Uram, art director
Nicki Smith, art director
Nicole Lague, copywriter
Karen Hymes, creative technologist
Soheil Ollaee, creative technologist

VCU Interior Designers
Carley Benesh, Max, Brock, Katie Fischer,
Loren Kim, Michael Rader, and Miriam Weirich.

2 (Cannonball Brass)

Toliver Roebuck, art director
Katie Johnston, copywriter

3 (Pearl)

Simon SW Suh, art director
Nicole Lague, copywriter
Assignment
GNC is currently seen as strictly for ‘Muscle Heads.’ However, their offerings span beyond just protein powder and weight loss supplements. There is a market of Baby-Boomers who are looking to take care of their bodies with the appropriate vitamins and supplements. We want to take GNC from Muscle Head Central to a more accessible store for everyone who wants to take control of their health.

Logo Redesign
GNC’s current logo is reflective of its current target: bold, bulky and intimidating. We softened it and the packaging to be more accessible and trustworthy, while creating a packaging and icon system that makes it easier for customers to find the products.

In-Store Experience
GNC introduces Health Bar: an installation at the front of the store staffed with a GNC expert to enable a more personalized experience. GNC will also offer a monthly subscription service, GNC Check Up, which delivers an individualized regimen of vitamins and supplements to members.
1 (GNC)

Caitlin Bradley, art director
Frank Guzzone, art director
Katie Johnston, copywriter
Cierra Dobson, communications strategist
Seth Powers, creative brand manager

2 (Bison)

Andrew Chin, art director
Jimmy Burton, copywriter
1 (Butterface)
Claire Gipson, art director
Erin Ridgeway, copywriter

Homemade butter kits.

2 (Waffle House)
Claire Gipson, art director
Steve Nass, copywriter

You never know what kind of people you’ll see in a Waffle House, but that’s exactly why no one is ever out of place.

3 (Hungry-Man)
Claire Gipson, art director
Sam Bauer, copywriter

The ideal man is strong, confident and sexy. This is exactly how the woman in skin care ads are presented, so why not use that same tone and imagery for a product targeted at men?

Available in four flavors: Lavendar Lemon Zest, Sugar Pumpkin Pie, Whiskey Bacon and Honey Cinnamon.
PLEASE DON’T YELL AT YOUR KIDS, MA’AM. YOU’RE SCARING THE TRUCKERS.

A full stomach. You either have it or you don’t.

PROVEN TO REDUCE THE SIGNS OF HUNGER IN ONLY FIVE MINUTES.
Assignment
Smucker’s jelly is used mostly for breakfast and peanut butter sandwiches. We wanted to reinvent fruit spreads as an ingredient for culinary experimentation. So we had Jelly ditch her old boyfriend.

Jelly Matchmaker Application
We created a “Jelly Matchmaker” site where users pick a Smucker’s preserve and another food item to create a pairing. If Smucker’s has an existing recipe with the chosen pairing, it will be provided. If no recipe exists, the user is presented with a “Blind Date Challenge” to create their own recipe using the listed ingredients. Winning recipes were included in a Smucker’s cookbook.

New Pepper Jelly Line Introduction
Smucker’s also made line extensions with savory flavors such as pepper jelly and bacon and onion.
1 (Smucker’s)

Amy Wheeler, art director
Andrew Chin, art director
Demian Kendall, copywriter
Whitney Keller, communications strategist
Marisa Impellizzeri, creative brand manager
Matt Reamer, creative technologist

2 (Fluff series)

Andrew Chin, art director
Peter Henningsen, copywriter
The coming out letters. From Richmond, to celebrities and journalists.

The Sticker - A simple, yet powerful way for Richmonders to support the movement and their LGBT neighbors. The OUT sticker, designed to live with the already famous RVA.

Coming out video. How we announced that Richmond was coming out.

#OUTRVA

All photos, videos and tweets with this tag were populated on richmondisout.com, showing off the city’s LGBT community to the world.
YOU DON'T NEED TO LEARN HOW TO COOK. JUST HOW TO SHAKE.

UNSREW THE CAP. CONGRATULATIONS. THE HARD PART IS OVER.

1 (Out)
Blair Warren, art director
Frank Guzzone, art director
Jimmy Burton, copywriter
Liam Schaefer, communications strategist

The first city to come out of the closet. We knew Richmond, Virginia to be a progressive city with a strong LGBT community. To outsiders, though, it was still the capital of the Confederacy and a symbol of intolerance. We decided to show the country the real Richmond, the same way a person would. By coming out.

2 (Lawry's)
Nomin Enkhbold, art director
Sam Bauer, copywriter

3 (Chock full o' Nuts)
Simon SW Suh, art director
Ryan Capps, copywriter

MADE AMRCN
A digital magazine for those who want to learn from American Craftsmen.

MAKE

LEARN
Take tips from pros and visit their workshops. Here are the info and stories to inspire you.
As a project about craftsmen, we wanted to physically make the branding with tools and our own hands. The screwdriver was lasered and the rest laser cut.
Assignment
We created Purina Wild to help turn guys on to the idea of cat ownership. By touting the fact that cats are less domesticated than dogs, we showed guys that cats are far more badass than dogs.

Warning Guide - a "Cat Handling Guide" to be distributed via magazine inserts and SPCA handouts, further educating the public and opening their eyes to the true nature of the cat.

Outdoor executions that feature a cat whose movements are influenced by the world around it. Birds landing near the top of the sign trigger a sensor that causes the cat to swipe, again demonstrating the wildness of the cat.
A feature of the site, “hunting practice,” allows users to remotely play with cats via a laser pointer mounted at a local SPCA that is connected to the movements of the user’s mouse, further emphasizing the cat’s killer instinct.

(Purina Wild)

Toliver Roebuck, art director
Chase Kimball, copywriter
Marie Matuszewska, communications strategist
Jessica Longo, creative brand manager
Ralitza Dionissieva, creative technologist
Assignment
How do you convince a new generation of growers to get excited about gardening?

Solution
Gardening goes digital. Root uses the technology we love to give you a connection with nature. Monitor your plant or garden from your phone.

Simple design allows you to track and understand your garden’s health in real-time.

By monitoring the soil, moisture, sunlight and temperature of your garden, ROOT can recommend the best plants, products and care you need to finally have a green thumb.
To help people have a good night’s sleep without being disturbed by their cell phone, this app works as an alarm clock that allows them to dismiss all calls, messages and notifications when they’re sleeping. It also sends a nice message to those who text/call you.

1 (Root)
Frank Guzzone, art director
Nicole Lague, copywriter
Marie Matuszewski, communications strategist
Victor Lemos, creative brand manager
Bear Collins, creative technologist

2 (Zzzquil)
Simon SW Suh, art director
Trong Nguyen, copywriter

Most people can’t sleep because they bring their worries to bed. In order to help them sleep restfully, ZzzQuil reminds them to leave their troubles outside the bedroom’s door. Because they can wait.
BOSE EQx shut out the noise and amplify the things you want to hear.

LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES
0.5 mm thick and less than an inch wide. Charge lasts up to 24 hours, with a 10-minute recharge time.

ACOUSTIC NOISE CANCELLING®
Reduces unwanted ambient sounds (i.e., acoustic noise) by means of active noise control (ANC). This involves placing one or more microphones near the ear. Electronic circuitry uses the microphone signal to generate an “anti-noise” signal. When the anti-noise signal is produced by the speaker in the earbud, destructive interference cancels out the ambient noise within your earphone.

BLUETOOTH®
Integrated Bluetooth® technology allows you to wirelessly pair multiple compatible accessories, such as headphones, with your TV.

BONE CONDUCTION
Allows sound waves to travel through bone. The buds press against the top of the ear canal to make contact with the skull through a thin layer of skin. This contact point converts sound for the microphone and the speaker.

GELFOAM MOLDING
Molding material that allows the buds to form tightly to the shape of the user’s ear canal.

AMBIENT SOUNSensor
Auto-adjusting volume technology adjusts sounds to amplify whispers and dampen loud noises.

AMBIENT MICROPHONE
A microphone on the exterior of the earbud allows users to record sounds.

RAPID PLAYBACK
An algorithm that analyzes all sounds to play back to the receptor for only important or selected tags of audio.

THERMOPLASTIC CASING
A tough, waterproof polymer ensures you can wear your EOs at all times.

SOUND ISOLATING
Captures wavelength profiles and enhances or cancels specific voice or sound frequencies.
Logo Design - The logo incorporates the letters eQ while representing the shape of an ear wearing our hearing enhancers. The design is further inspired by the Nautilus spiral, which is based on the golden ratio. The logo evokes warm and confident tones with a light orange hue to convey a personal feel to this modern technological device. The typographic treatment of the eQ balances the sharp modern aspects of our products with the organic nature of harmonizing sound.

The EQ Charger - These ear pieces are designed to be with you at all times, so it wouldn’t be practical if they had to be plugged into a wall to be charged. Instead, chargers are attached to the EQs via magnet, and transfer current to the EQs from your phone or computer whenever you’re running low.

Package Design - The EQs come in a solid metallic case. The illustration of a zen garden signifies our belief your life should be calm and filled with whatever sounds you choose.

UX Design - The OS lives on your smart phone. You take an audiogram test to calibrate your earbuds and then control their function with your phone.

Within settings you are able to capture a voice profile of individual people. You are then allowed to isolate wavelengths in order to amplify or cancel specific voices.

Sliding your finger from left to right allows you to control the volume. Its levels are reflected in the opacity of the name.

A cancelled out wavelength will display a tiny minus sign to indicate the voice has been cancelled. You can also use the shortcuts at the top of the profile box to either cancel an individual voice or connect with another person’s device.
Assignment
Victoria’s Secret is the leader in all things intimate for a woman. It felt natural to translate this expertise into a Brand Extension to: “Empower Women to be Feminine Trendsetters in Home Decor.”

{COVET} by Victoria’s Secret, ‘The exclusively feminine home furnishings and decor retailer.’

"My room is my sanctuary."

79% Rent
68% wait to buy until they’ve found the perfect piece of furniture
"I like to decorate my own space."
"I like furniture that looks like it tells a story."

Target Consumer - the Feminine Trendsetter would gush over a statement piece.

In-Store Tablet - Multiple tablets will be placed around the store for a self-guided shopping experience that provides more details and options.

Full Digital Shopping Suite
Augmented Print - The ads reflect the juxtaposition of what is available via competitors and what Covet offers through new positioning in the Home Decor Industry: Fully Feminine Furniture.
1 (Zombie Lock Box)

Matt Reamer, creative technologist

Recognition
This project was featured on various online maker blogs including The Arduino Blog and got over 3,000 impressions in one day.

Assignment
We were assigned the task to make a physical manifestation of a brand. The walking dead has an avid fan base that engages heavily with the brand. To create a new and more engaging form of interaction with the brand, we built a working prototype of the zombie lock box. This would be a stunt prompting fans to search across a designated area for the correct severed ‘walker’ finger to open the box. The winner would get VIP treatment at the season 5 premiere.
Lauren Albee, art director
Caitlin Bradley, art director
Jimmy Burton, copywriter
Gabe Sherman, copywriter

Blimpie is in need of a rebrand. While its competitors each own a specific area of the sandwich market (Subway is fresh, Jimmy Johns is fast, and Quiznos is toasted), Blimpie does not have a distinct position in the marketplace. We saw an opportunity for Blimpie to take ownership of unbelievably huge subs.

Packaging, In-Store & Employee Uniform
Playful copy is incorporated into the new packaging, and the concept of ‘huge subs’ can be seen throughout the employee uniforms, in-store posters, and size options on the menu: large, extra-large, and woah!

Introducing Blimpie: Subs by the Pound.
Assignment
Reposition Burma-Shave, a dead brand, to be relaunched in the contemporary shaving market.

Result
A new brand mission for Burma-Shave.

Today’s men’s shaving category is saturated with an array of competition, line/brand extensions and new products.

Popular from the 1920’s through 60’s, the original Burma-Shave was known for its cheeky tone and creative communications in the mens shaving market.

Meanwhile, the women’s market is entirely dominated by CPG brands. This “white space” is a major opportunity to introduce a private, niche alternative.

A deep dive into consumer behavior uncovered a weakness in the category, a substantial number of women prefer mens products.

Why is that? Because women’s products, while comprised of the same ingredients, are noticeably more expensive.

Another thing, here’s how women feel about shaving:

Shaving my legs is not even worth it. #FemalePains

I love shaving my legs - said no girl, ever.

So CPGs are glamorizing an obligatory task that the target audience HATES. This is not only patronizing, but it’s actively driving them to buy male products.

Brand Mission
We can’t change shaving, but we can change everything else.

“ I’ve just had it with women’s products looking like flowers and proclaiming me a goddess. I’m shaving my armpits. Please don’t tell me there’s something regal about that. ”

And because the aisle is full of pinks, purple & teal.

Women using men’s razors.

Women buying men’s shaving cream.

Why is that? Because women’s products, while comprised of the same ingredients, are noticeably more expensive.

I love shaving my legs - said no girl, ever.

Brand Mission
We can’t change shaving, but we can change everything else.

“ I’ve just had it with women’s products looking like flowers and proclaiming me a goddess. I’m shaving my armpits. Please don’t tell me there’s something regal about that. ”
Challenge
Refresh the Starkist brand.

Problem
Canned and shelf-stable food sales are stagnating as people buy more fresh. Starkist has a frequency problem: 88% of households eat canned tuna, but only 17% eat it once a week or more. Tuna languishes for months on the "Apocalypse Shelf," while people go to the fridge first when looking for something to make for lunch.

Key Finding
Lunch meat is the first choice of lunch protein for most households. A turkey sandwich may seem like a fresh and healthy lunch. But compared to tuna, lunch meat is just a "Fresh Pretender." Lunch meat contains artificial coloring, additives, flavorings, and often the preservative Sodium Nitrite, which has been linked to cancer. A can of Starkist tuna has 4 simple ingredients (tuna, water, salt, vegetable broth), 4 eggs worth of protein, and omega 3 fatty acids. It's a superfood that deserves to be the star of lunchtime, not "food for when the power goes out."

Strategy
Take on lunch meat.
1) Encroach on lunch meat's home turf in the grocery store
2) Shout tuna's nutritional superiority from the rooftops.

Creative Concept
Now Harder to Ignore!
The new in-store experience will feature a color-coded organizational system and detailed tags.

Kayte Hamilton, communications strategist
Kerith Rae, creative brand manager
Elyse Jalbert, creative technologist
Christine Pizzo, creative technologist

Everyday Strength means setting a new personal best for yourself. It transcends the physical and embraces the mental. It’s about the moment where you fit into the little black dress or find the guts to go for the promotion. It’s the confidence to try something new and the willingness to take risks. To take control of your life and be in love with every minute of it. It’s about progressing on your personal journey and helping others on theirs. Everyday Strength is about being part of something bigger than yourself.
Challenge
Cascade dishwasher detergent has been promising consumers the cleanest, shiniest dishes for decades. Its competitors do the exact same thing. How can we differentiate Cascade's communications in the minds of consumers?

Insight
Dirty dishes are a pain point in many households. In every living situation, there's always one roommate that cares more about the dishes than the others.

Creative Concept
Cascade can save you the trouble of being the passive aggressive roommate by doing it for you.

Product Innovation
The first step in changing the perception of Cascade is to change the experience that the consumer has with the brand. The Passive Aggressive Sink is an easy and affordable solution to your dish-related conflicts.

Packaging, App & Notes
Download the app to grant the Passive Aggressive Sink access to your social media. This would be sold in stores like Urban Outfitters, and pre-written passive aggressive post-it notes would also be available. Once you give the device permission to access your social media, it will send passive aggressive tweets and texts to your phone if dishes are detected in the sink.

(Cascade)
Lauren Albee, art director
Peter Henningsen, copywriter
Whitney Keller, communications strategist
Jeff Tolefson, creative brand manager
Lauren Ulmer, creative brand manager
Hex Marquez, creative technologist
Make old stains smell like new!

LOW MAINTENANCE  CAR MAINTENANCE
PRINT IS DEAD; LONG LIVE PRINT

It hasn't been a great decade for local newspapers. Traditionally, they've played a key role in American society as gatekeepers of the news. The internet has turned them into guardians of a gate without a fence. For the industry to have a future, it needs to evolve.

The digital infotainment ecosystem is less like a series of gates, more like a brainy cocktail party. It's not enough to just report the news; the way you talk about it matters. To compete, the Richmond Times-Dispatch needs to transform into a conversationalist.

To do this, the RTD needs to adapt in three key ways.

**Content Strategy:**
medium length ➔ longform OR short and snappy

They need stuff that's readable on the toilet when you only have a few minutes to spare, and meatier stuff that makes people feel like they're smarter than Facebook.

**Personality/POV:**
local, national, and world news ➔ Richmond-centric

RTD needs a specific identity to have an interesting POV. They can truly own Richmond. Local news should be expanded into This American Life-style profiles of local people and places. Anything national or global needs a Richmond lens.

**Design:**
traditional ➔ print-minded ➔ digital UX-inspired ➔ social-minded

Digital publications have had the freedom to experiment with layouts and headline formats, and innovated as a result. Let's appropriate those changes wherever it resulted in better aesthetics or more shareable content.

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**Logo:** The original Richmond Times-Dispatch header had not been changed in over 150 years. We updated the font to a clean sans serif and shortened the name to RTD, reflecting the community's affectionate shorthand for the paper and allowing for more graphics to catch the readers eye.

**Composition:** Negative space allows the main story to breathe and draw more attention than a cluttered front page. We enlarged the photo and minimized the space for the other stories featured inside.

**Headlines:** Infusing more character, emotional appeal and suspense into headlines gives the story a hook without needing to include the first paragraph on the front page.

**Richmond's Take:** While the RTD needs to own Richmond's news, it is still important to cover national and world news as well. Featuring "Richmond's Take" on these stories helps tell the story through a local lens.

---

1 (Car-Freshener)
Caitlin Bradley, art director
Ally Farrish, copywriter

2 (Richmond Times Dispatch)
Beth Beckman, Bilal Khan, Liam Schaefer, and Rachel West - communications strategists
Zach Lepine, art director 2015
Creative Technologist’s Build

The intersection between the digital and real world comes together to create new experiences. In this space, the CT’s ability to concept and create result in a physical manifestation and bring a new aspect to the conversation between brand and consumer.

1. Ghost Adventures is a show on the Travel Channel I love to watch. Because of this, I wanted to be more than just a viewer of the show and be a part of it. That is why I made this Ghost Detection Device.

2. Interactive Space Shuttle Cockpit - Prototype of a Simon Says game to mimic the controls in a space cockpit, making a museum exhibit more engaging.

3. Conductive Skate Photography is a skate park installation that once a board makes contact with an obstacle, it snaps a photo and uploads to a responsive website. Conductive wax was also prototyped in this assignment.

4. Marvel’s Brass ’Knuckles’ - A good grip completes the circuit and causes the brass knuckles to light up ("power up")
Oculus Rift - Virtual Reality Headset for 3D Gaming.

Virtual Reality Controller - This controller creates deeper immersion in the Oculus Rift experience. The controller frees the hands from the keyboard while the player explores the world.

Steering Wheel of Steel - The Def Jam steering wheel is a beat creation experience that lets you freestyle beats by tapping on several points on the wheel.

1 (PIR Sensor)
Donnie Plumly, creative technologist

2 (Interactive Space Shuttle Cockpit)
Christine Pizzo, creative technologist
Jade Sullivan, creative technologist

3 (Conductive Skate Photography)
Matt Reamer, creative technologist

4 (Marvel’s Brass ‘Knuckles’)
Hex Marquez, creative technologist

5 (Oculus Rift)
Chad Woods, creative technologist

6 (Steering Wheel of Steel)
Ollie Cortum, creative technologist
## Class of 2014 Student Index

### Art Directors

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### Communications Strategists

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### Creative Technologists

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### Copywriters

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### Creative Brand Managers

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### Thank You

- Lauren Albee (AD 2014)
- Jessica Black (CBM 2014)
- Caley Cantrell
- Dean Collins
- Andrea Groat
- Don Just
- Katherine Keogh
- Jessica Longo (CBM, 2014)
- Diana Ojibway
- Kelly O’Keefe
- Hunter Pinnell (CW 2014)
- Rick Plautz (AD 2014)
- Matt Reamer (CT 2014)
- Amy Robinson
- Hawley Smyth
- Ashley Sommandahl
- PJ Sykes
- Rachel West (CS 2014)
- WORK Labs’ Staff
- Worth Higgins & Associates
Dear Brandcenter Parents,

For the past two years, you've watched as your kids suffered through panic attacks, sleep deprivation, insecurity, and fear, all while wondering how they're going to get a job so they can pay off their student loans. So here's a little graduation day Q&A:

You may be asking yourself, “Will they have the discipline to tackle unrealistic deadlines and yet get their projects done on time?”
   They already have.

You may ask, “Will they learn to channel their creativity to make their work more refined, more powerful, and more purposeful?”
   They already have.

You may wonder, “Do they have what it takes to stand up to irascible bosses who bark out arbitrary demands and scowl when their needs aren’t met?”
   They already have.

You might worry, “Can they walk into a crowded auditorium on little sleep and too much caffeine and capture the attention of everyone in the room with their persuasive presentation?”
   They already have.

You may question, “Are they skillful enough to create real work to solve real problems for global clients?”
   They already have.

You may wonder, “Can they use the same skills they apply to selling soap, to support the causes they care about and make their world a better place?”
   They already have.

And you may ask, “When the presentations are done, and the day is over, and the laptop is off, will they remember to celebrate with some good friends, some good food, and plenty to drink?”
   Trust us, they already have.

And finally, parents, if your biggest question is whether they will enter into a difficult field at a challenging time and find a way to succeed and to impress the people around them?
   Well you can stop worrying, because they already have.

Kelly O'Keefe, Professor
Before they were famous.

*Left side (left to right, back row first)*

Hex Marquez, Matt Reamer, Soheil Oliaei, Karen Hymes, Christine Pizzo, Chad Woods, Rick Plautz, Edwin Poché, Bear Collins*, Lenton Alston*, Jade Sullivan*, Liam Schaefer, Marie Matuszewski, Marisa Perazzelli, Rachel West, Whitney Keller, Brittany Bell, Marie Adams, Katie Long, Rod Kashani, Haik Petrosian, Araba Wilson, Beth Beckman, Bilal Khan, Kevin Mernin, Jeremy Chacich, Mia Marisa Impellizzeri, Lauren Ulmer, Jessica Longo, Sam Hensley, Jeff Tolefson, CJ Milhoan, Rob McDaniel, Seth Powers, Casey Williams, Jessica Black, Eliza Arnold, Lauren Harris, Danforth Hoover, Victor Lemos, Trey Keeler, Issamu Kamide, Jonathan Sekerak

*These seats reserved for students who missed Friday Forum. Consequence: need to write a paper.*

It’s admirable to challenge one’s self in one career when you have had so much success in another.

910,632 likes
Right side (left to right, back row first)


* These seats reserved for students who missed Friday Forum.
Consequence: need to write a paper.

Class of 2014
Predictions
Every day. Laughter. Joy. Love. For the rest of your life.