



ASSOCIATED STUDENTS

BRANDING GUIDE





COMMUNICATIONS
OFFICE

WELCOME, _____.

THIS IS THE BOOK ON
HOW TO BE THE AS.

LET'S BEGIN.

- Comm Office :-)

“THIS IS OUR

BRAND, AND ALSO

OUR STORY.”

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS BRANDING GUIDE

The role of the Associated Students (AS) of Western Washington University Branding Guide is to create and continue a unified brand in how our peers see us and how our own departments see each other. The Branding Guide is a living and ever changing document. Our purpose with the Branding Guide is to empower growth and lead development. The branding guide will serve as the continuum for preserving communication with our yearly student staff turnover, and the base of our organizational culture.

Our target audience is Western students - the people we serve. The heart and passion of the AS is our student employees and staff, who are the living representation of our brand. The Branding Guide establishes the outlines of our identity as an organization, and provides tangible advice for our staff and affiliates on how to best utilize our brand and carry out our mission. Everything in our brand allows for individuality while maintaining a unified message that supports the mission of Western Washington University. This is our brand, and also our story.

ABOUT THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

Strategic communications packaged in a bold delivery. That's what we do.

The AS Communications Office is the advisor and directing body for communications in the Associated Students organization. We believe in the power of understanding who we are as a part of Western, and what that understanding means to our actions, advocacies and abilities.

Our approach is focused on carefully understanding our mission and purpose, and to then tell that story. We look at the big picture, and tune it with the small details. We do not create strategies to convince or sell an idea, instead we carefully tell the story of the AS, and respond to the conversation.

This is the power of strategic communications, and this is why we do nothing less.

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LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

The Branding Guide is designed to be easy to read and straightforward. But of course, that doesn't mean every question is answered.

That's why the Communications Office is here to help. Drop us a line or stop by the office with any questions on how to best integrate the brand.

Psst...sometimes we have candy too.

AS Communications

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Section 1:

BRANDING DEFINED



BRANDING DEFINED

“IF A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS, THEN A BRAND IS WORTH A MILLION.”

At the essence of every organization is an identity. How is this identity formed and translated? Through the organization’s brand.

BRANDING DEFINED: "A brand is a customer experience represented by a collection of images and ideas; often, it refers to a symbol such as a name, logo, slogan, and design scheme. Brand recognition and other reactions are created by the accumulation of experiences with the specific product or service, both directly relating to its use, and through the influence of advertising, design, and media commentary." (Added definition) "A brand often includes an explicit logo, fonts, color schemes, symbols, sound which may be developed to represent implicit values, ideas, and even personality." – [American Marketing Association](#)

Our brand is the one thing that connects the Associated Students to our community. Why is this? Because our brand embodies everything we do as an organization. The AS is comprised of dozens of offices and departments, over 230 clubs and countless services to the community and campus. Our identity, AKA our brand, is what empowers our organization to have this presence on campus.

What does our brand encompass? Pretty much everything: our visual identity, our logos, our personality, our values, and most importantly, our people. This guide will discuss the relationship between our brand and everything that makes it special.

IMPORTANCE OF BRANDING

The existence of a strong brand is critical to the AS's success. Because of the drastic differences and practices of each AS department and office, without a common identity (brand) each department and office would exist in the minds of students as an independent function – distant and foreign. Reflecting on the AMA definition above, this means that each office would have to carry their own "customer experience" and would have the burden of having no common connections to our student population at large.

So, then, what does our brand really do for us? Simple: it connects all of our organization's functions under one common identity, and this identity brings us closer to our community.

Here's a simple way to conceptualize this: take three people - Jane, Jack and Jill. Now put them in two scenarios; A and B.

Scenario A: Jane has never met Jill, and the two are strangers. Jane and Jill have a class together, and Jane missed a day and needs notes. Jill is therefore a resource and support that Jane needs, but because there's no connection between the two, Jane doesn't know that Jill can help. Now Jane must ask people randomly for the notes.

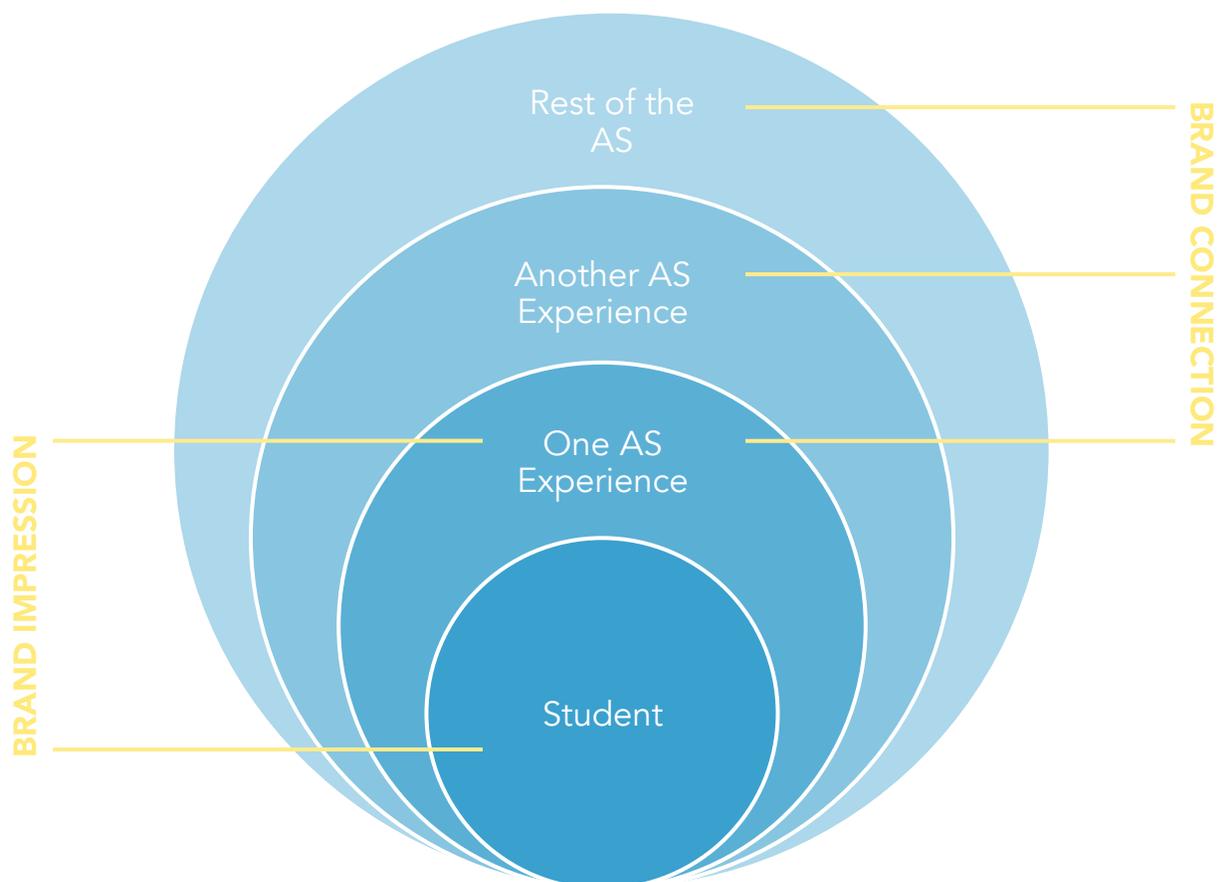
Scenario B: Jane has never met Jill, but they have a mutual friend, Jack. Jane and Jill have a class together, and Jane missed a day and needs notes. Jane recognizes Jill from their friend, Jack, and because of that mutual connection, is comfortable asking Jill for their notes.

Instead of choosing blindly, Jane and Jill were connected to each other because they both knew of each other through their mutual friend, Jack. In this case, Jack represents the brand.

Each office, department and action of the AS carries the privilege and power of being part of the Associated Students' brand on campus. Like the scenario above, this gives each operation the abilities of having that existing connection between our students and the organization.

Here's how it works: There are two stages of branding with the AS; the brand impression, and the brand connection. The brand impression is the connection to the identity of the AS – how they feel, what they remember about the AS, etc. The brand connection is the "connecting of the dots" between different entities and the AS as a whole.

See? [It's all about our brand.](#)



Section 2:

BRAND POSITIONING



AS BRAND POSITION

We are an innovative body. As the AS continues to grow and transform alongside our university, our branding will *evolve, renovate* and *alter* depending on the minds and goals of our students. One of the strongest connections we have in the AS is the relationship with Western. The AS is the heart of Western Washington University's students. We are the official student organization on and off campus. Our branding, our marketing and finally our path may be diverse but our goals to create a student-unified university remain the same - this is the inspiration behind our brand.

Where are we going, and what will we be doing in the future? These are questions that are ever changing, but are defined and conveyed by our brand. Brand positioning creates a clear strategy and a primary audience to guide our organization.

OUR BRAND POSITION: To actively engage students with our purpose: the Associated Students of Western Washington University is a not-for-profit organization supporting Western students through:

- Student Representation
- Collaboration
- Student Learning and Development
- Inclusion
- Community and Social Engagement

The Associated Students brand is an active part of our community, yet most students don't realize what it is and what this means. The brand position of the AS is designed to streamline and secure our branding efforts in connecting students to our values and organization.

All communications and marketing for the AS must embody our brand position.

Section 3:

BRAND PERSONALITY



AS BRAND PERSONALITY

A brand is much more than an identity; it's a fluid and lively part of who we are as an organization. This means that like your friends and family, our brand has a personality of its own. How, you ask? Through the people behind the brand, and how we represent it. Everything we say or do as an organization should be done using our brand personality.

Our brand personality is derived and defined by our organizational description:

*An organization **designed and run by Western students**, the Associated Students (AS) seeks to ensure a fulfilling college and academic experience for all university students through the many services, facilities and programs it offers. Whether interested in testing your skills as a DJ for campus radio station KUGS, craving a weekend in the mountains on an Outdoor Center excursion, or just curious about getting involved in student government or one of our two hundred clubs, the AS has the **resources to assist you**. By providing Western students with **enjoyable networking and leadership opportunities**, the AS attempts to help students **define themselves, find allies in the community and engage in their university surroundings**.*



AS BRAND PERSONALITY

With our brand personality defined, we can now examine how that personality is put into play. Empowering, Supportive, Educational, Dynamic and Relevant – this is how we exist as a brand.

The attributes of our brand personality are the attributes all AS communications should strive to embody. This means that every poster we produce, every event we host and every conversation we have as an AS employee should, in every way possible, strive to be in line with this personality.

Exemplifying one unified brand in our work helps us create a better connection, and also empower an environment where our core values and mission can flourish. When you examine the attributes behind our brand personality, it's easy to see the natural match between the brand and your department's work – after all, it's designed to empower you.

Creating a brand personality is one of an organization's greatest assets. For the Associated Students, our brand personality is a fluid representation of the people that make us who we are. Some of the most key elements of a brand are the subtleties that people encounter unintentionally. Reinforcing our organizational mission through our brand personality – through everything we create, say, and do – begins to translate our brand in this subtle, yet important, way. Embodying our brand values in everything we do creates the supportive and welcoming environment that is crucial to our mission as an organization.

Our personality should be conveyed in all communications. Messaging should be done in a "bright" and "energetic" tone, always constructive and never unwelcoming. See the Best Practices section or contact the Communications Office for more guidance or information.

AS BRAND VOICE

“LIKE GOOD CONVERSATION, HOW YOU SAY IT IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS WHAT YOU ARE SAYING.”

Even with an established brand personality, effective communication can only come when your message is matched with a resonating delivery. This delivery is our voice.

Any and all AS communications should convey its message in a way that embodies our brand personality and organizational mission. This means everything we communicate must be done **CONSTRUCTIVELY, COMPASSIONATELY** and **UNBIASEDLY**.

THE AS BRAND VOICE: we communicate **constructively** so we build on our successes, **compassionately** so we build trust, and **unbiasedly** so we engage a diverse community.

Implementing the AS brand voice is comparably very easy for how vitally important it is to our work as an organization. The Associated Students supports students of all backgrounds, identities, education levels, outlooks and viewpoints. This means that all AS communications must be respectful, non-inflammatory, and equally weighted. We must never communicate with hostility, marginality or personal bias.

See the Best Practices section or contact the Communications Office for more guidance or information.

Section 4:

VISUAL IDENTITY



THE AS VISUAL

“WHAT YOU SEE ABOUT AN ORGANIZATION IS OFTEN THE FIRST, AND MOST CONSISTENT, CONNECTION YOU HAVE.”

The Associated Students’ visual identity is our most closely guarded asset. With the tremendous amount of work we do, and our all-encompassing reach through the Western community, we have a strategically curated visual identity that embodies who we are and what we do. It’s the look and feel of our brand mission, and the tangible way we communicate it.

BRAND ASSETS: Our brand is represented through our physical identity, and each representation is called a brand asset. This includes all symbols, design consistencies and visual themes that the AS has created and identifies with.

All AS brand assets must be used properly in line with the Best Practices guide and polices. Each aspect of the visual identity has been created with intention and purpose, and should be used at all times to signify the Associated Students.

The AS visual identity is comprised of:

AS LOGO

DEPARTMENT LOGOS

OFFICE LOGOS

AS BRAND COLORS

AS “SILHOUETTE” THEME

OUR LOGO

ASSOCIATED STUDENTS LOGO: The AS logo is the heart of our organization’s visual identity. It is used unanimously as the symbol of the AS, and is placed to signify and represent our presence on campus, and our values as an organization.

The logo is also a symbolism of our brand personality, our brand voice, and our mission:



THE AS LOGO: Our logo symbolizes the brand personality, brand voice and organization mission. It incorporates continuous curves overlapping and surrounding each other with the “AS” placed in the middle; symbolizing our commitment to enriching, engaging and supporting our student body.

Our identity as an organization relies on our strong visual presence. The AS logo should be used on all communications and messaging, both internal and external. The AS logo should always be used in conjunction when an office or department logo is used. See the Best Practices section or contact the Communications Office for more guidance or information

COLORS AND FONTS

The Associated Students brand is built off of the foundation of Western's brand. Our brand assets include elements derived from Western's branding guide. The AS visual identity embodies fundamental Western branding elements, including our shades of blue and our typefaces.

FONT: The official typeface for the Associated Students is Avenir. Our secondary fonts are Adobe Garamond Pro and Calisto MT. Avenir should be the first choice for a typeface.

The fonts present as:

This is Avenir.

This is Adobe Garamond Pro.

This is Calisto MT.

COLOR: The AS visual identity is built off of our signature blue, with yellow as an accent.

We have two variations of the combination: our BRIGHT palate and our BOLD palate.

BRIGHT.

BOLD.

AS THEME: The AS is represented through our "Silhouette" theme. This is the line drawing of the Western campus skyline, with the AS logo as the sun. This is used on all AS-branded materials, including our T-shirts and our "Welcome" banners.

The theme elements appear as follows:



BRIGHT YELLOW: #FFF582

BRIGHT BLUE: #0C95D3



AVENIR 24 POINT

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A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U

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BRIGHT



BOLD YELLOW: #FFF582

BOLD BLUE: #0060A0



AVENIR 24 POINT

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

VWXYZ

1234567890\$%&(.,:;#!?)



BOLD



Section 5:

BRAND GUIDELINES



BRAND GUIDELINES

LIVING THE BRAND: ASSET USAGE

Keeping an organization as large and dynamic as the Associated Students branded is a feat within itself. That's why we have our own brand usage guidelines to define and outline the rules, regulations and tips that help each AS department, office and employee understand their part in keeping the AS identity going.

The following sections outline specific policies and practices that ensure the AS brand is defined and executed properly and effectively.

ASSET USAGE AND THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

The AS Communications Office is the manager and guardian of the AS brand and all related assets. The Communications Office fiercely protects all AS brand assets, and monitors all communications and messaging for compliance with branding policies, as outlined in the following sections. Our goal is to ensure that our brand is as effective as possible, so that our organization can be too.

Don't hesitate to contact the Communications Office with any questions or for advice on how your office and position interface with the brand.



BRAND GUIDELINES

The visual identity of the AS is the visual representation of our brand assets. It is the identity we have that connects us to our students: when someone sees our logo, they will think “AS” and think about what we are as an organization. When someone sees an AS poster using our colors, they will think “AS” and of the things we mean to our campus.

Our visual identity was deliberately designed to capture and represent our relationship to Western, our home, and to the student experience while in school. From our carefully selected logo color to our usage of design, the AS visual identity is a key part of our brand. It is what connects us to campus.

This is why the consistent, proper use of our brand assets is imperative.

The following rules and regulations are the guide to using each aspect of the AS visual identity. Contact the Communications Office for more guidance or information.

BRAND CONSISTENCY POLICY: All AS departments, offices and staff are governed by the Communications Office in the proper use of all AS assets as defined in the AS Branding Guide, including:

- Proper use of the AS logo.
- Proper use of all AS colors and typefaces.
- Gaining approval by the AS Communications Office for any exceptions to the usage of the AS brand as defined by this guide.

BRAND GUIDELINES

THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES SHOULD BE FOLLOWED AT ALL TIMES.

FONT: The primary font chosen should always be Avenir. Avenir is a modern, clean font that is easily readable and distinct. If Avenir is not available, Helvetica is an alternative. If another font is desired, Adobe Garamond Pro may be used.

Calisto MT is our legacy font, and should only be used if necessary or where the font is present in an existing document and changing it would be difficult.

COLOR:

The Bright palate is the primary and master color system for the AS brand. It's built off of our logo and brand values, and should be used for all AS official or master applications (IE Personnel Office documents, AS Board outreach, general AS publicity, etc.) The Bold palate may be used as a secondary choice for all applications.

All AS offices or departments must utilize either the Bright or Bold color palate for any general communications. General communications include door signs, office hours signs, legacy documents, etc. Offices or departments are also permitted to use any of the AS secondary colors, as shown below, or any color found in their specific office or department logo or brand.



AS Secondary Colors: The above colors are approved secondary colors for Western's brand, and may be selectively used as accents to the AS main color palates.

Specific color codes and details can be found in the Western Branding Guide.

EVENT BRANDING EXCEPTION: Marketing and communications for event-specific messaging (posters, handbills, etc.) do not need to follow the AS color palates or usage guidelines. Event-specific messaging can use any color palate desired for a design.

BRAND GUIDELINES

LOGO USAGE:

When placing the AS logo on items printed in full color, the color version of the logo may be used, but is not required. The color logo must be used in the exact colors presented. Changing the color of the full color version is not permitted. A single color version of the logo is available and may be changed to any solid color, as done on many event promotions. The logo should be placed on the bottom left side of all messaging originating from AS offices, departments and clubs at a size of no less than ¾" in diameter.

The AS logo should never be distorted in any way, including stretching, adding or removing elements of the logo, or altering its design.

Offices, departments and clubs may utilize their own logo on AS messaging, but it must be accompanied by the AS logo at all times. All subordinate logos used should be scaled to 60% of the AS logo. An example is provided below:



LOGO PRESENCE:

The AS logo is required to be present, at no less than ¾" in diameter, on all AS official documents, messaging and communications. This includes:

- AS posters, banners, flyers, handbills, and promotional materials.
- All AS office or department event messaging or communications.
- AS official documents.
- AS Social Media promotional banners.
- AS digital signage.
- Any other specific usage as outlined in this guide.

BRAND GUIDELINES

AS TAGLINE:

The AS tagline, “Bringing Us Together Setting You Apart” may be used on messaging materials to showcase our organizational motto. The tagline should never be altered, and should only be used on AS-official messaging. The tagline should always be presented in the AS official font, in all caps, next to the AS logo. When presented visually, the tagline should not include any punctuation, quotation marks or other verbiage. It should always be presented with the first section on top of the second section, as seen in the example below.



ADVERTISING POLICY:

All AS advertising is governed by the Associated Students Advertising Policy. This policy outlines specific requirements for AS advertising, including all required disclaimers.

All AS advertising, and some additional messaging, is required to abide by the policy. The AS Publicity Center can assist in ensuring your advertising is in compliance.

The Advertising Policy can be found at: vu.wvu.edu/policies/AdvertisingPolicy.pdf

EXAMPLE: GENERAL

This is a poster made to advertise the AS hiring season. Because it is general AS organizational messaging, the poster uses the main AS color palate, unchanged. The AS logo is correctly displayed. For design reasons, the full-color AS logo was not used. Instead, the single-color version has been correctly changed to the desired color.



FONT: Text on the poster is done in the correct AS font, Avenir. The text is not distorted.

COLOR: The poster correctly utilizes the AS BOLD color palate, with no unofficial colors used.

THEME: The poster utilizes the AS theme elements, including our "silhouette."

EXAMPLE: OFFICE OR DEPARTMENT

This is a poster made to advertise an AS Productions event. Because the poster is for an event, a custom color system was used, and the AS Brand colors and theme did not need to be present. The AS logo is properly displayed, and the AS Production office logo is properly displayed and scaled to 60%.

COLOR: Because the poster is for an event, the design incorporates custom colors.

LOGO(S): The AS logo is present, and is in the proper position. Each subordinate office logo is scaled to 60% of the AS logo. The single-color AS logo is correctly used, and has been changed to white. The standard clauses are present in the right corner (see AS Advertising Policy).



Section 6:

INTERNAL BRANDING



INTERNAL BRANDING

BRAND IMPLEMENTATION AND USAGE

Every office and department should implement the AS brand assets into their internal materials. This means everything from your office stationary to your door signage should use the AS brand, or if present, the department or office brand.

Why is this important? Who will see this anyway? Well, the short answer is it's actually incredibly important to our identity.

In order for our brand to be successful, we must make sure we share it everywhere we can. A successful brand is one that is associated with every aspect of the organization, and this is especially key to the AS – an organization with so many facets. If there is consistency between each aspect of the organization, then our brand is the connector that brings it all together.

INTERNAL BRANDING

The AS brand should be incorporated into all AS representations, including business cards, websites, social media sites, emails signatures and more. This is to consistently and continuously maintain the brand.

AS BUSINESS CARDS:

The AS logo must be present on all AS department, office and club business cards. The official Western business card template should be used at all times. If an office or department has their own logo, a custom design (KUGS is an example) may be used as long as the AS logo is present in addition to any other logos.

All AS Business cards not using the Western template must use the official fonts, colors and design elements, or the office brand.

EMAIL SIGNATURES:

All AS offices and departments must use the following email signature template:



(INSERT NAME) | INSERT POSITION | Associated Students
Insert Room | Insert Office # | Insert Email
Western Washington University | Bellingham, Washington
Office Hours

Employees who wish to list their preferred pronouns are permitted to do so on the line on or after Office Hours.

Offices with their own logos are permitted to use their own logo in addition to the AS main logo, with the AS logo coming first and the office logo, in the same size, coming next.

No other changes are permitted to email signatures. Hyperlinks, social media links, photos or GIF's, or additional messaging is strictly prohibited.

INTERNAL BRANDING

AS THEME: The AS is represented through our “Silhouette” theme. The theme should be incorporated into all AS general or administrative publicity, unless a specific alternative is desired. The theme represents our organization as the life of campus, and AS administration should strive to use it when possible and appropriate.

The elements appear as follows, but may be re-arranged or spaced as needed.



AS OFFICE SIGNAGE:

All AS offices should have their door signage, office hour signs and any other office signage designed to implement the AS brand. All office signage must implement the office’s own logo, or if one does not exist, the AS logo. Signage must use the Avenir font, and should only use official colors, or colors found in their office or department logo.

PHOTO USAGE:

Any photos created by the AS Photographer, or by an AS office or employee for an official AS purpose become AS assets. When photos are used, they must be properly credited in the following format “Photographer Name, ASWWU”.

Photos should strive to embody the qualities of the AS Brand Voice and Personality.

Section 7:

BEST PRACTICES



BEST PRACTICES

“REALIZE A COMPANY’S TRUE CHARACTER IS EXPRESSED BY ITS PEOPLE.”

The quote above is the sixth of seven guiding principles of the Arthur W. Page Society, one of the highest-regarded influencing organizations in the communications industry. This principle is integral to the success of the AS brand.

This branding guide outlines the technicalities of our organizational identity. But what about the crossroads between our brand identity and the people who power it? The following section establishes the ways in which employees and affiliates interface with our brand values and how to communicate as an employee or affiliate as a representative of the AS.

The AS brand has been designed as a tool that empowers expression and promotes education. It has also been developed to bridge divides while maintaining unity. All AS employees and affiliates should consider the following best practices to ensure success for the organization.

The AS Brand best practices includes guidelines on:

SOCIAL MEDIA

MEDIA INTERVIEWS

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

BEST PRACTICES: SOCIAL MEDIA

THE AS, ONLINE:

With our target audience consisting primarily of students, one of our prominent means of communication is through Social Media sites, often Facebook and Twitter. Social media facilitates communication in a direct and opportune way, and special consideration must be taken to ensure the AS brand is upheld on the web.

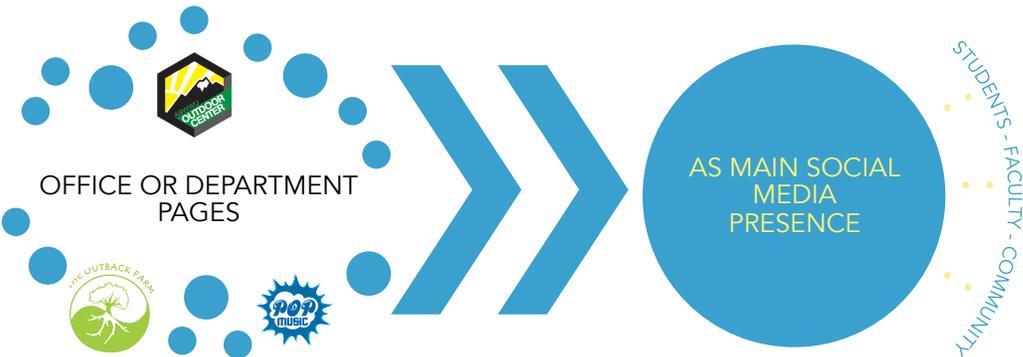
This guide details the approved sites available for AS offices to use, and guidelines, tips and tricks to best use them.

AS SOCIAL MEDIA STRUCTURE:

The AS has a social media presence primarily through our organization’s main pages on both Facebook and Twitter. The AS main pages are the PRIMARY social media presence for the organization.

AS offices and departments may also operate their own social media presences. These pages are the organization’s SECONDARY social media presence.

AS office and departmental social media pages should post and create content specific to their own office. This content is then used and “shared” by the AS main pages:



BEST PRACTICES: SOCIAL MEDIA

WHO SHOULD USE SOCIAL MEDIA:

While it's tempting, just because social media is there doesn't mean your office or department should use it. One of the focuses of the AS brand is to streamline communication methods, and this includes ensuring we have only effective and engaging presences online. Each AS department may handle social media in one of two ways:

Department-managed social media:

- The department manages ONE social media presence under the department's name representing all offices in that department.
- Each office DOES NOT have their own social media presence.
- Ex: "AS Outdoor Center" Facebook page representing all OC-related activities. This means Excursions, The Challenge Program and all other parts of the OC do not have their own pages.

Office-managed social media:

- The department DOES NOT have a social media presence under the department's name, instead it is managed individually by each office.
- Each office manages their own social media presence.
- Ex: "AS Queer Resource Center" and "AS Legal Information Center" manage their own pages. This means that there are no social media pages for the ROP in general.

Some AS offices should not have their own social media presence as they fall under the AS main social media presence by default. These offices include the Business Office, Communications Office, Publicity Center, Office of Assessment, Board of Directors, and any other administrative office or position that does not directly interface with students at large. Content from these offices or positions should be vetted and posted on the AS main pages when appropriate and needed.

BEST PRACTICES: SOCIAL MEDIA

APPROVED PLATFORMS:

The Internet provides countless social media tools and platforms, but not all are fit for our organization. The Communications Office approves the following platforms for use:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram (with advising from the Communications Office)

Generally, the use of any other social media platforms is prohibited. This is to ensure that the AS brand is not attributing “dead space” - where accounts lie dormant on the web. If an office or department would like to use another platform, they must submit a request to the Communications Office and gain approval from the AS Communications Director.

BRAND USAGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

The visual representation of the AS brand is integral to our social media platform, and that includes the customizable elements of social media profiles. To create brand consistency and protect our assets, AS offices and departments must have all visual elements for each social media profile designed by the Publicity Center in accordance to the brand usage guidelines. This includes:

- Facebook: profile picture = office/department logo. Cover photo = visual element designed by PC.
- Twitter: profile picture = office or department logo. Banner photo and background image = visual elements designed by PC.
- Instagram: Profile picture = office or department logo.

Additionally, all information on each social media profile must reflect the office or department official mission statement. The use of personal photos, staff photos or any other visuals besides the office or department official logo and PC-designed elements is strictly prohibited. Consult the Communications Office for more information.

BEST PRACTICES: SOCIAL MEDIA

GENERATING CONTENT:

AS social media posts and content should embody the AS brand Voice and AS brand Personality by sharing engaging and inclusive content. What's the easiest way to master this? Think of each post as a conversation.

If someone has followed or "liked" your page, it is quite certain that they want to see what your office or department is doing. To create this conversation, posts should include a mixture of upcoming events (when applicable), office updates and photos and/or video.

Use following tips for both Facebook and Twitter when looking for content to post to your page:

GENERATING CONTENT FOR [FACEBOOK](#):

- Try to post at least once a day, or at least 3 times a week. People who "liked" your page did so for a reason - therefore you should try to keep them updated and interested in what you have to say.
- With that said, do not post repeatedly during one day or your posts will become overwhelming. You do not want any people to "unlike" your page, so make sure find a happy medium for your audience.
- Interact with other pages! The AS as well as Western have quite a few pages on Facebook. Do not be afraid to "like" or comment on their posts – we're all one big community, after all.
- Sharing photos draws more attention - try to attach photos to some of your posts. If you need graphics for an event, ask the PC and they will likely have one you can use.

BEST PRACTICES: SOCIAL MEDIA

GENERATING CONTENT FOR TWITTER:

- Twitter is faster paced than Facebook, and it is not overbearing to post multiple times a day. You can “live tweet” an event, or only use Twitter for general updates – it’s important to find a happy medium for your needs. If anything, be sure to tweet at least once a week.
- Interaction with your followers is very important. Students and community members will tweet about the AS and Western so it is important to respond in a timely manner. It is also helpful to just search using hashtag #WWU and see what the campus is up to. It is always great to congratulate new students on their acceptance to WWU or to suggest an event to someone who is bored.
- Be careful of which account you are tweeting from! It is easy to mix up accounts on mobile phones and you absolutely must avoid accidentally posting something that was meant for your personal account.

RESPONDING TO NEGATIVITY:

Social media has dramatically changed the landscape of how organizations communicate. For the AS, it has given us a direct interface with our students, which is a tremendous opportunity. However not all interactions we encounter online will be positive. The following steps should always be followed when encountering negativity online:

- Respond, and respond quickly. Never ignore a negative comment or interaction. It is imperative to respond in a timely manner as to uphold our brand voice and prevent further hostility.
- Respond with understanding, and/or ask questions. Even if a post is wildly incorrect or inflammatory, never respond with hostility or blame. Always ask what they are looking for, or how you can help them solve their issue.

Notify the Communications Office immediately of any negative interactions online. The Communications Office is always available to assist in any response.

BEST PRACTICES: MEDIA INTERVIEWS

THE AS AND THE MEDIA:

The Associated Students is one of the most frequently reported organizations by our local media. The Communications Office is the managing media liaison for the organization and has several policies and guidelines in place to ensure effective, transparent and accurate communication with the media:

- All media reporters are required to contact the AS Communications Office when also contacting any AS employee to do an interview or for information.
- All AS employees are required to notify the AS Communications Office when they are to be interviewed or share information with the media.

The above guidelines are in place to ensure that both the media and AS employees are able to best meet the needs of each other. The Communications office can assist any AS employee with tips or training on media interviews.

INTEGRATING THE AS BRAND IN INTERVIEWS:

The brand Voice and Personality consist of attributes that should be integrated into media interviews. This allows us to convey not only the information you are sharing, but our values as an organization. When preparing for an interview, reflect on our brand Voice:

“We communicate constructively so we build on our successes, compassionately so we build trust, and unbiasedly so we engage a diverse community.”

Your response to each question should try to embody each of the qualities in our brand voice. This ensures that our responses uphold our organizational mission, and help create an open dialogue.

BEST PRACTICES: MEDIA INTERVIEWS

BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERVIEWS:

When AS employees are interviewed, they act as spokespeople for the organization. There are a few tips that should be followed in order to have a successful interview and uphold the integrity of the AS brand:

- Contact the Communications Office as soon as you receive a request for an interview. This cannot be stressed enough. The Communications Office is there to help you prepare for interviews and take the stress away.
- Never use personal opinions. When being interviewed on behalf of your job, you are not representing yourself you are representing your office, the Associated Students and the university. While the issue or event may be near and dear to your heart, use only facts and information that your office is able to speak on.
- Always correct yourself. Everyone makes mistakes and chances are you will say something you didn't mean. Just tell the reporter you made a mistake and immediately correct yourself. This is very common and will ensure accuracy.
- Clarify what you say, always. Do not assume the reporter knows what you are talking about. If you use an uncommon phrase or word, define it for them. If it is a new event, talk about all the different parts of it. Always make yourself clear so the reporter can easily report to the reader.

Do not speak poorly of the Associated Students or employees in an interview. Everyone has times where they are upset or stressed out, but do not say those things in front of a reporter when you are acting as a representative of the Organization.

BEST PRACTICES: MEDIA INTERVIEWS

BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERVIEWS - EXAMPLES:

AS employees should prepare and practice their responses to questions. While being interviewed, it is important to tell why your event or office is important and why the student body should care about it. Always remember to integrate the services or support your office provides into your responses. For example, if a resource or programming office was being interviewed, they should provide a response that outlines the essentials of the office, like the following:

“The Associated Students Queer Resource Center strives to provide resources for the whole student body”

By including the Associated Students and their office in the quote, it tells the reader who provides these services and what they do.

Responses to events are a little different. Instead of office generalities, include reasons why someone should be interested in your event? The two samples below show a basic quote about events and an elaborated quote using the Austin Jenckes concert in Jan. 2014 as an example.

“The Associated Students is dedicated to bringing entertainment to campus that students are interested in and want to see”

Or

“Austin Jenckes’ story is proof of the achievements that can be attained by those who persistently pursue their ambitions. His Western Washington University homecoming is a chance for aspiring musicians, students and local residents alike to revel in the success of one of their peers. The Associated Students strives to provide students with what they need and who they want to see.”

BEST PRACTICES: MEDIA INTERVIEWS

BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERVIEWS - DECLINING QUESTIONS:

It is entirely possible that you will not know an answer or you will feel uncomfortable answering a question a reporter asks. If that does happen, don't fret! Just politely say, "I do not have the information to answer that right now. Can I get back to you when I have the answer?" Contact the Communications Office and we can help you formulate an answer that makes you comfortable. The number one rule when answering tricky questions is to never say "no comment" - it makes it sound like you are hiding something, and will reflect against our brand Voice and Personality!

Scenarios: here are several scenarios for perspective on these guidelines in action:

You are sitting in your office when a reporter rushes in without prior notification and insists that they need to interview you for your upcoming event because their deadline is that night. You want your event to get publicity but you do not feel ready for the interview.

Do you: A) decline because of the inconvenience, B) do the interview but make up a few facts you aren't sure about or C) tell them to come back in a half an hour and take that time to contact the Communications Office and prepare for the interview.

If you said C, you are correct! Reporters are at times on strict deadlines and may rush into your office without warning (despite the fact that they need to contact the Communications Office first). If this happens, take time to prepare for the interview and get all the facts together. After all, no one knows the event like you do.

What about the AS Review?

The AS Review wants to interview you for an upcoming story that has a time-sensitive deadline. They have contacted you a couple of times but their interview times do not seem to fit with your schedule. What do you do?

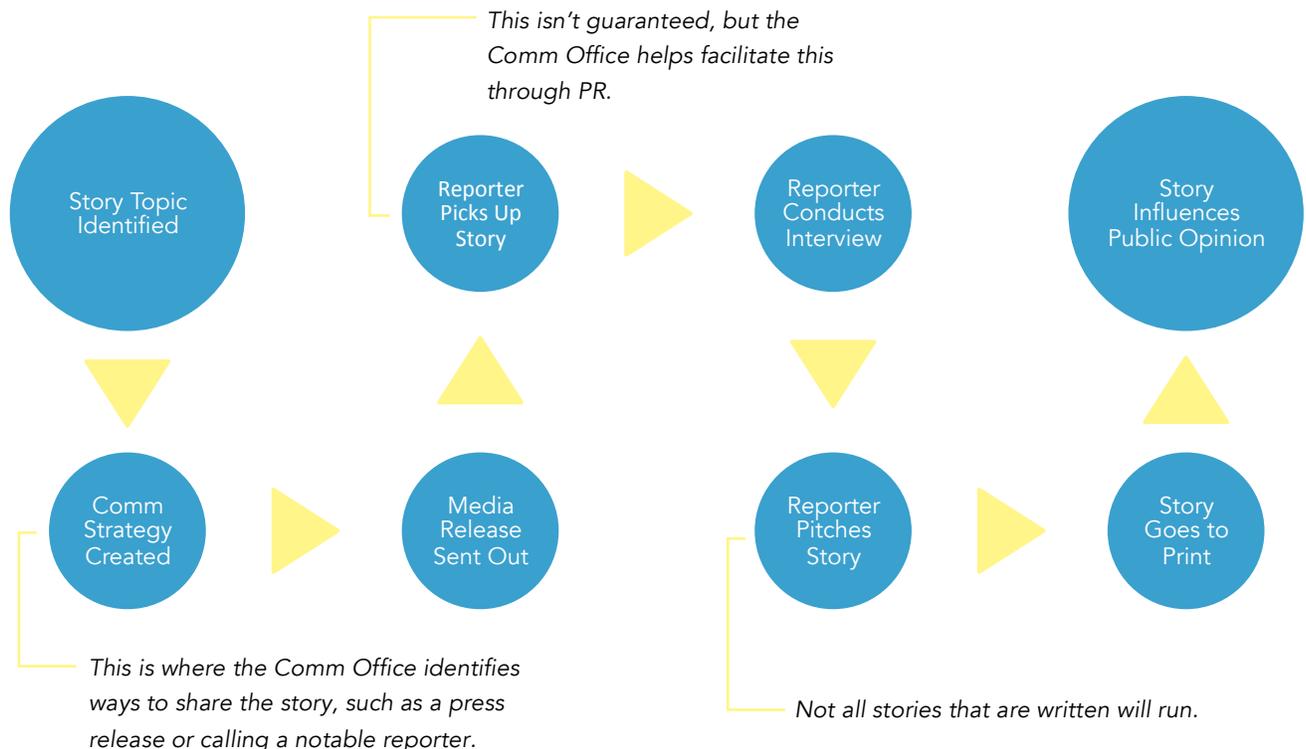
BEST PRACTICES: MEDIA INTERVIEWS

A) ignore them, B) tell them the interview won't work out because of your class schedule, C) Set up a time outside of your office hours to meet with them so that your event gets publicity or D) schedule something but don't show up

If you chose anything but C, you are missing a great chance to publicize your event or office. The AS Review works hard to cover AS events and it is your duty to respond to their reporters and be interviewed in a timely matter. This is to ensure that we are doing everything we can, and getting publicity in every channel we can, so that students have access and knowledge of our services.

INFORMATION ON THE NEWS CYCLE:

In order to understand best practices for media relations, we must also understand the way in which the media operates. Stories are not just instantly written and printed, there is quite a process involved when a story is published. The following is a breakdown of the lifespan of a news story between the A and the media:



AS BRANDING GUIDE

PARTING STATEMENT



THIS IS OUR BRAND, AND ALSO OUR STORY

Our branding guide is the handbook to not only execute a brand, but to share our work and accomplishments by telling our story. Please take the information provided here and use it to best represent the AS, and best share what you bring to the organization.

We are what makes this brand. [Run with it.](#)



AS BRANDING GUIDE

Updated March 2018

This guide was researched, developed and compiled by the AS Communications Office.

The AS "theme" elements were designed and crafted by AS Publicity Center student-staff designers.





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