

Enhancing NIST Branding and Outreach

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Positive Branding = Recognition & Trust

Strong organizational brands quickly convey:

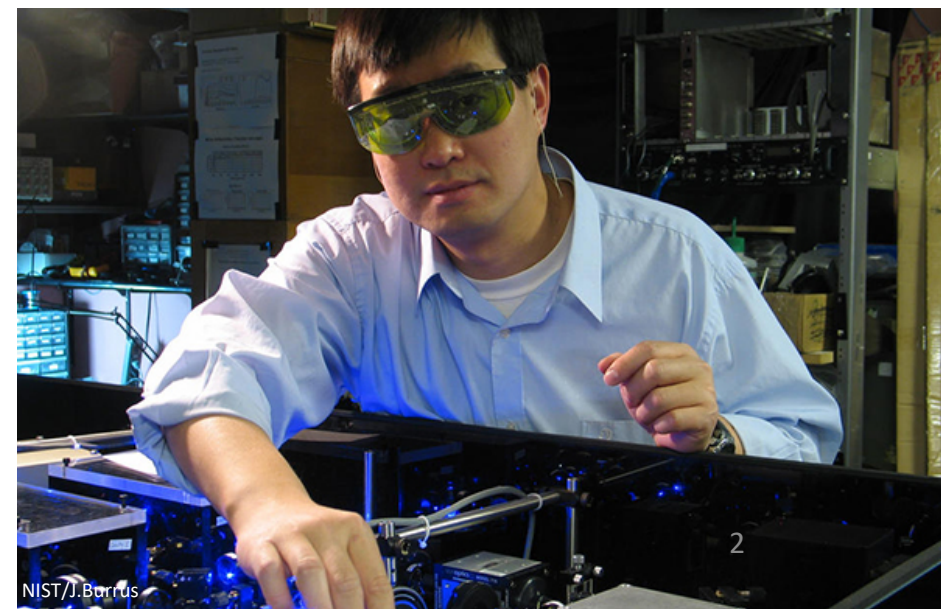
- Who you are, what you do
- Key characteristics –**quality, uniformity, and expertise**
- Trust for external stakeholders in a known outcome

Within the organization, brands create **shared identity** that:

- Strengthens performance
- Ensures core values
- Improves priority setting
- Enhances diversity, while maintaining a unified purpose

A strong positive brand attracts:

- Funding
- Partnerships
- Motivated staff

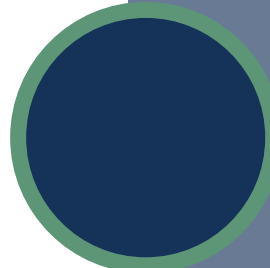
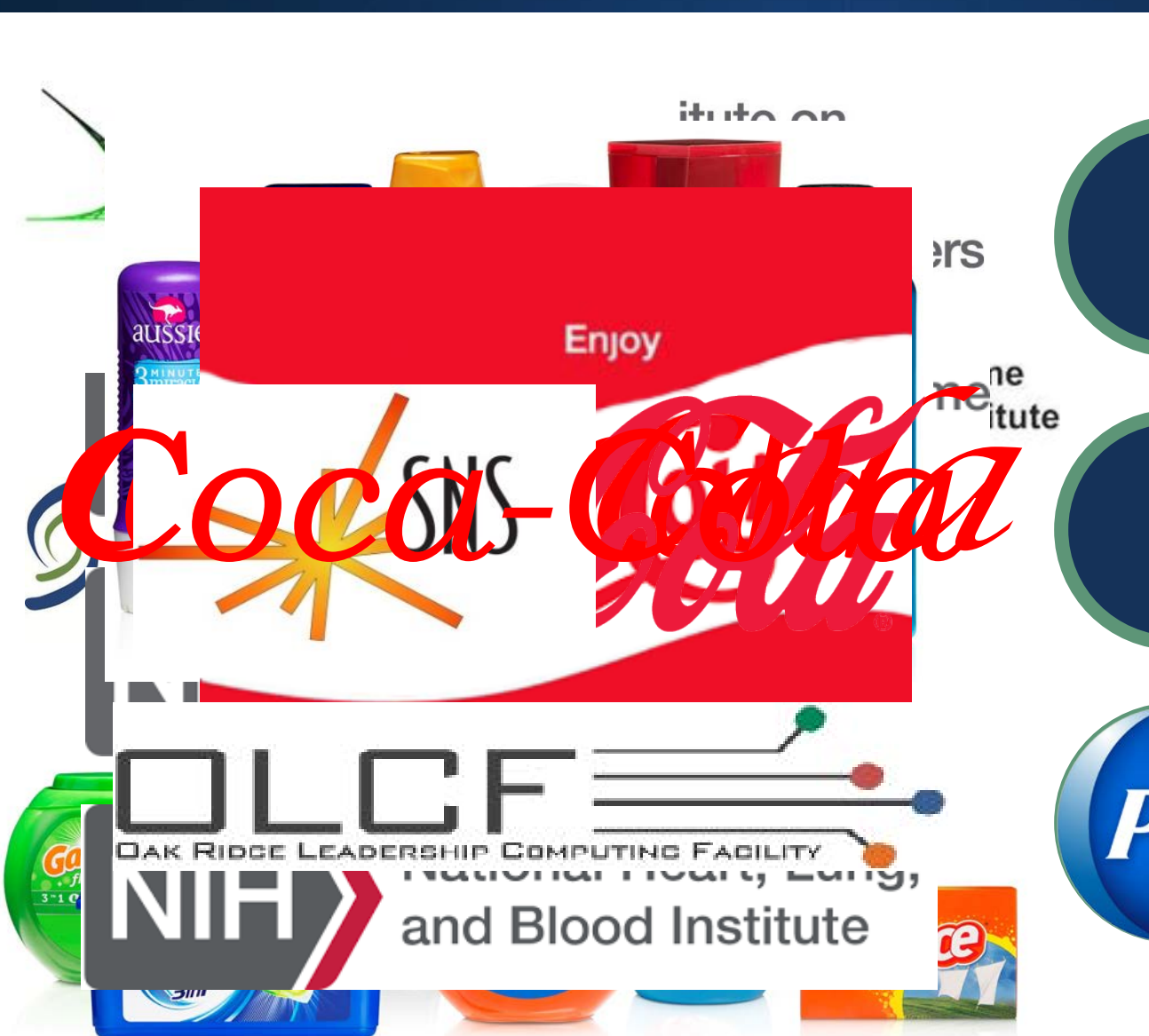


NIST's visual identity is diluted & obscured

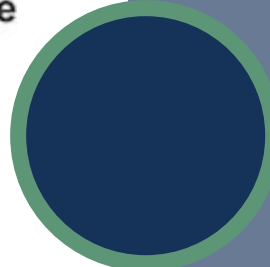
NIST



A strong brand requires discipline



People judge by appearances – whether they realize it or not.



“One NIST” is a branded house



Exceptions require a clear rationale (NIST isn't a house of brands)

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The Experts

- 7 national experts individually reviewed NIST PAO outreach
- 7 Topics: media relations, web content, social media, internal communications, video, institutional branding, PAO overall
- Extensive experience in government, major universities, and industry, including NASA, DOE, Johns Hopkins, Georgia Tech, and the biotech industry

Branding

- NIST should strive to be a branded house, not a house of brands
- A well-articulated brand will not be enough so long as a large portion of NIST communications happens outside PAO
- Uncoordinated messaging, including competing outreach among internal NIST organizations hurts a unified NIST brand

Outreach Strategy

- To achieve measurable strategic communications goals, NIST needs discipline and consistency in messaging
- What's needed: centrally directed, responsive communications outreach that considers internal organizations' needs but is not competing with them

Achieving “next level” communications

NIST receives about \$1B annually. Its work affects trillions of dollars of U.S. commerce.

NIST should have well coordinated communication that matches its impact on the national economy.



Provide the communications structure and discipline to become a branded house



Engage the full organization in strategic outreach planning and implementation



Provide staffing and budgetary resources to match goals



Improve clarity of communications roles and responsibilities

Branding initiative

Response to Panelists' Advice, NIST Director's Office Request:

Hire a qualified company to assist with a NIST messaging and visual branding effort.

Will leverage experience gained in a similar recent successful effort by Manufacturing USA.

- How do key NIST stakeholders think about NIST now?
- Should the current NIST logo be updated or changed?
- How should OUs at NIST use the NIST logo in conjunction with their OU name?
- What strategic messages best support the NIST brand?
- What tag line best captures the NIST brand?



Messaging for Key Audiences

1 NIST staff

- Goal: To foster community, a sense of belonging, increase engagement
- Messages: Your work drives innovation, grows the economy, improves our quality of life

3 Customers/collaborators

- Goal: Encourage industry/academia to work with us
- Messages: Measure. Innovate. Lead.
- NIST is accurate, world class, trusted collaborative, neutral, practical

2 Decision makers/influencers

- Goal: Ensure VIPs know NIST's value and mission results
- Messages: NIST gets results with national impact through enhanced innovation, economic growth, and quality of life.

4 News media/science-interested public

- Goal: Increase awareness of NIST ROI for taxpayers, inspire the next generation of U.S. innovators
- Messages: Measurements matter
- NIST science and tech is cutting edge, unique, cool, and improves your quality of life

NIST FY 2020 Priorities



Advanced
Manufacturing

Quantum
Science/NOAC

Cybersecurity

Artificial
Intelligence

Bioeconomy

Advanced
Communications

Return on
Investment

Enhancing external communications

Planning

**Audiences
and
messages**

Websites

**Consistent
look and feel**

- Branding is about consistently communicating that we are one organization with a united purpose
- Create annual communications plans produced by Director's Office/PAO with input from NIST internal operating units
- Drupalize stray websites
- Issue a new branding policy and order
- Provide templates and styles
- Goals, metrics, evaluating results

Enhancing internal communications

**One NIST
Culture**

Training

**Digital
Signage**

**One Internal
Web for All**

- Many of our staff do not read all-staff emails
- Digital signage = go to where the people are
- Establish a shared value system through engaging content
- Consistency: NIST has 6 different intranets!
- Personalization: web “self-assembly” methods, and personal homepages
- Forums for diverse voices
- Use the emotional power of video to create belonging

Message Coordination

- Widely varying communications goals, messaging, training and expertise across NIST blunts the impact of coordinated branding and NIST-wide results.
- Need clearer roles, responsibilities, and accountability
- The planned branding study will help to focus NIST's visual impact and messaging.
- Need to find agreement on NIST-wide communications policies and practices

“As long as large group of communications professionals within NIST work outside of the Public Affairs Office,” it will be “harder to establish a unified One NIST identity.”

– David Keim, Communications Director, Oak Ridge National Lab

Actions and Timeline

Action	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formalize NIST Communicator's Group and draft policies for better message coordination	June 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct branding study• Inventory operating unit communications functions	April-October 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respond to branding study findings• Solicit input and draft revised NIST communication plan	October/ November 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement plan, gather NIST-wide with metrics	December 2020 to September 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate results	October 2021

Questions?