



CLIENT:

Portland State University Center for Real Estate

A.wordsmith conducted an industry audit and leveraged interviews with board members, faculty and alumni to develop a thorough messaging framework that included taglines, value propositions and reasons to believe in the Center.

Client Description

Since its inception in 2004, the Portland State University Center for Real Estate (born as a collaboration between PSU's acclaimed School of Business and Toulon School of Urban Studies and Planning) has been equipping emerging and existing commercial real estate professionals with application-based curriculum needed to take their careers to new heights. Bringing together esteemed instructors, cutting-edge learning models, advanced research capabilities, sustainable urban development projects and dedicated advisory board members, the Center provides the tools to upskill, reskill and chart successful paths forward.

Project Description

The PSU Center for Real Estate identified a need to increase awareness and enrollment and engaged A.wordsmith to craft a messaging framework and go-forward communications strategy. To be successful in this endeavor, A.wordsmith met with key stakeholders to uncover communications objectives and anchor narratives, emotions and descriptors that brought the value of the school's real estate curriculum to life. Secondly, the firm conducted a comprehensive industry audit and competitive analysis to identify current issues, trends and predictions; debunk misconceptions associated with urban planning, sustainable cities/building, diversity in development, access to affordable housing and climate change; and shine a light on PSU's track record of data-driven innovation and community impact. We then led a series of interviews with board members, faculty and alumni; A.wordsmith leveraged these conversations to develop a thorough messaging framework that included taglines, value propositions and reasons to believe in the Center. A.wordsmith also prepared a detailed go-forward communications strategy with the goal of positioning the university as an innovative leader in commercial real estate education.

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Key Results

- Conducted interviews with executive director, professors, advisory board members and alumni. Following these discussions, we curated the best anecdotes and examples that captured the full breadth of the Center's value to external and internal audiences.
- Developed a comprehensive messaging framework, 10-15 taglines options and value propositions that set the university (and its curriculum) apart from other commercial real estate education programs in the nation.
- Developed and designed presentations to drive engagement, conversation and enrollment in the Center's Master of Real Estate Development (MRED) and graduate certificate programs.
- Developed a go-forward communications strategy to reinforce the Center's market position and drive awareness and enrollment. The plan detailed recommendations for marketing and thought-ware content creation, social media management, website refinement, earned media placements (feature stories, expert source commentary, contributed storytelling and rapid-response strategies), speaking engagements and awards.