

Brand-led communication relies on a focused strategy to create content with a clearly aligned message, consistent language use and an engaging tone of voice. Tailoring our content to reflect our brand personality has a significant impact on our design and brand consistency and this section provides guidance on how to do this.

Brand content

Section 3

3.1 Content platform

3.2 Brand content anchors

3.3 Getting to know our audience

3.4 Using our tone of voice

Content platform

Our content anchors are firmly embedded in the platform which is an expression of our positioning.

BRAND ESSENCE

Pursue. Discover. Together.

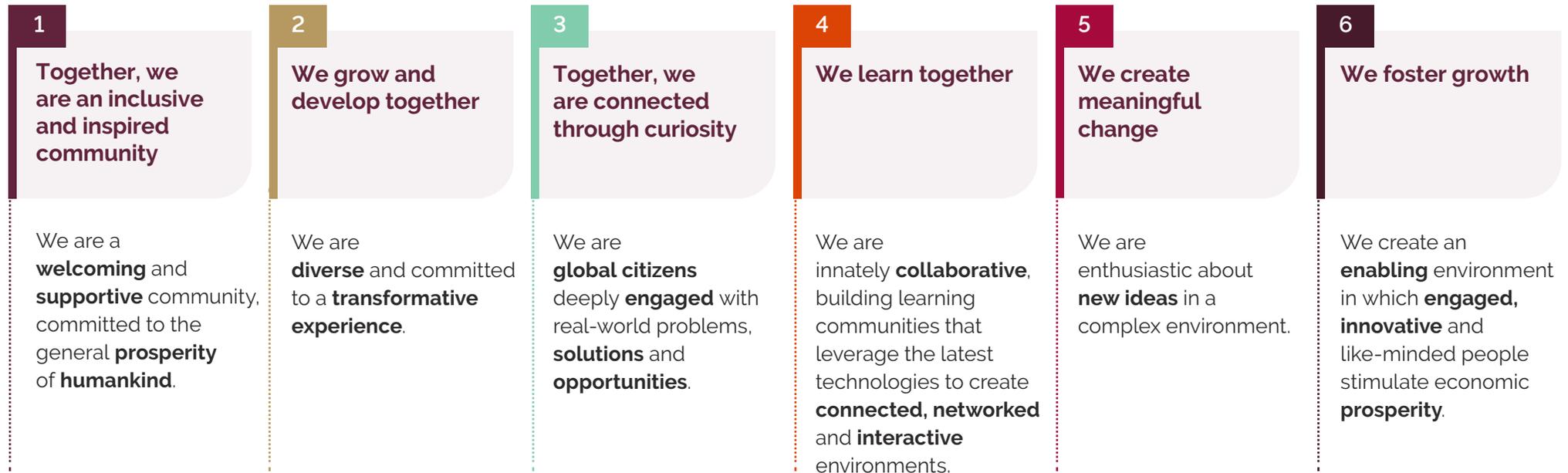
CORE STRATEGIC THEMES



BRAND CONTENT ANCHORS

Brand content anchors

These anchors structure our communication. They inform the way we talk, write and produce our visual content to represent a reputable higher education institution with a global footprint.



HOW TO APPLY OUR CONTENT ANCHORS

Use our strategic themes and content anchors as the basis of your communication. Highlight our triumphs, our inspiring people, our solution-driven research, our innovation and our partnerships with world-renowned collaborators.

Getting to know our audience

Who are we trying to reach?

Internal

The strongest, most credible ambassadors, who experience the brand first-hand.

Who?

Current students
Staff
The Rectorate
Council and substructures
Statutory bodies

Why engage?

1. To educate about our brand and how to make it succeed.
2. To align our brand message with the experience we deliver.
3. To equip our community with the necessary brand tools, resources and support.

Prospective market

Includes learners and busy working adults intent on furthering their education and employable professionals as a source of recruitment.

Who?

Prospective students
Prospective employees
Parents and families
The postgraduate market

Why engage?

1. To educate about our brand and how to make it succeed.
2. To create enthusiasm about our brand and what sets us apart.
3. To convince those best fit to the University to join us.

Alumni and donors

Individuals and businesses that have an interest in seeing the University succeed.

Who?

Graduates
Former students
Donors
The private sector

Why engage?

1. To foster pride by giving our audiences a reason to promote our institution.
2. To generate buy-in, promote collaboration, and leverage strategic partnerships with optimal reach and impact.
3. To solicit stories about, and advocacy and volunteering for, the University, strengthening ties in the process.

Partners, employers, and the national market

External entities or individuals who add value to our educational offerings or extend our reach.

Who?

Academic partners
Research funders
Service providers
The private sector
Government
Media

Why engage?

1. To inform through proactive communication.
2. To facilitate seamless partnerships and collaboration.
3. To generate demand for our graduates, and so promote a healthy job market and economy.

Broader academic fraternity

Professionals likely connected to the University through teaching, research or business.

Who?

Faculty networks
Research collaborators
Student communities
Postgraduate market
The private sector
Research publications

Why engage?

1. To promote our high-impact activities and accomplishments.
2. To showcase our research-intensive focus.
3. To lead by example.

International market

International, cross-border and inter-institutional collaborations.

Who?

International students
Friends and families
Prospective employees
Staff networks
Academic partners
University networks

Why engage?

1. To facilitate seamless partnerships and collaboration.
2. To promote our innovation, digitalisation and integrated disciplines.
3. To showcase our research-intensive focus.

HOW TO DEFINE YOUR AUDIENCE

One way of defining your audience is to decide who your audience is not. Another is to use the data available from digital platforms such as social media and websites to identify and assess who interacts with your communication, at what time, and what their objectives are. This will help you create the perfect communication, on the appropriate platform, at the most opportune time.

Using our tone of voice

How we say something is as important as **what** we say.

Our tone of voice may vary slightly depending on ...

Our target audience

We adjust our tone depending on who we are communicating with.

EXAMPLE

the tone we use when communicating with prospective students will differ from our tone with donors, or academic collaborators.

The platform | medium

The length and format of our content is determined by the platform and medium we use to deliver it.

EXAMPLE

social media content will differ notably from newsletter content. Our tone should match the platform we use to convey our content.

Our objectives

Our tone is determined by the objectives of our communication.

EXAMPLE

the objective of a newsletter is to inform, while an advert encourages the audience to act. These different objectives will require different tones.

HOW TO APPLY OUR TONE OF VOICE

Use a mix of short, punchy sentences and slightly longer sentences to give your content rhythm and flow. Present simple, factual information in a digestible way. Avoid ambiguity and technical jargon when communicating complex concepts. Begin sentences or paragraphs with a fact that is generally known, and then introduce new content. This eases the audience into the topic and draws maximum attention to what is new. Use an authoritative tone without being pompous – a considered approach.

Using our tone of voice

Although we adjust our tone depending on the target audience, platform and objectives of our communication, our overall tone remains consistent.

Key words when creating content to ensure consistency:

Inclusive

Influential

Authentic

Inspiring

Considered

Vibrant

HOW TO MAINTAIN A CONSISTENT BRAND

Always refer to the Language and Content Style Guide as compiled by our Language Centre. This guide helps us speak with one voice and portray a consistent identity by following a uniform set of language principles. Email branding@sun.ac.za with your style guide queries.

Using our tone of voice

Bring our brand tone to life...

Be relatable

Talk to people as if they are part of a community, all dealing with the same issues and experiences that shape our society.

Be conversational

Adopt a welcoming, conversational tone that creates a sense of comfort and trust in our institution.

Inspire

Establish an emotional connection with our audiences by engaging, moving and challenging them to pursue and discover, together.

Be direct

Use a combination of the first-person plural 'we' and 'our' and second-person singular 'you' to close the gap between our institution and those we wish to engage with. Use short, punchy sentences to create an impact.

Be clear

Keep language simple, concise and less verbose. Be vivid, but not so detailed that you lose your audience.

Be engaging

Include sentences that entice and captivate your audience. For example: 'Are you ready? There's so much to discover.'

HOW TO AMPLIFY OUR BRAND TONE

The tone of your content can have an even greater impact when paired with a complementary design that brings your words to life. Professional graphic designers can help you achieve a consistent tone with appropriate graphics. Email branding@sun.ac.za for advice on graphic design. For assistance with language, grammar and tone, contact the Language Centre at taalsentrum@sun.ac.za.



Open conversation
moves us forward together