Marketing and Communication

Highlights

The Division of Marketing and Communication exists to support Samford’s mission and to serve the university community in order to enhance the university’s brand and foster its positive reputation locally and globally.

Services Offered to the Campus Community

- Digital Marketing
- Email Marketing
- Graphic Design
- Licensing Services
- Media Monitoring
- Media Relations and Training
- News and Feature Stories
- Photographic Services
- Print, Electronic and Broadcast Ad Placement
- Promotion Video
- Social Media Training and Support
- University Publications
- Website Development and Maintenance
2019-20 National Awards and Recognitions

The Marketing and Communication team received a record number of awards and accolades during 2019-20:

CASE: Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Cumberland School of Law Viewbook, Silver for Recruitment Publication

Education Digital Marketing Awards
Samford.edu Redesign, Gold for Website Redesign
Interactive Wayfinding Map, Gold for Miscellaneous Media
Samford Experience Microsite, Gold for Microsite
Samford Personalized Admission Microsite, Silver for Admissions Website

Educational Advertising Awards
2018 Annual Report, Merit Award for Annual Report
Cumberland School of Law Viewbook, Merit Award for Student Viewbook
School of the Arts Annual Report, Merit Award for Other Publications

Collegiate Advertising Awards
Andrew Gerow Hodges Chapel Brochure, Gold for Brochure—Multiple Pages
School of the Arts Calendar, Gold for Calendar
Cumberland School of Law Viewbook, Silver for Recruitment

2020 DeRose-Hinkhouse Awards by the Religion Communicator’s Council
School of the Arts Annual Report, Award of Excellence for Design for a Publication
2018 Annual Report, Award of Excellence for Annual Report
School of the Arts Calendar, Award of Excellence for Special Print Material
“It’s More Than What You Earn. It’s Who You Become” Video, Best in Class and Award of Excellence for Audio and Video, Non-Broadcast and Cable
Andrew Gerow Hodges Chapel Brochure, Award of Excellence for Publication Relations Materials
Beeson Magazine: For All the Saints, Award of Excellence for Publication Relations Materials, Special Issue Publication

Wilmer C. Fields Awards by the Baptist Communicators Association
WestmoreLAWN Video, 1st place for Video–Other
2019 May Commencement Video, 3rd place for Video Editorial Feature: 2-5 Minutes
“Timothy George: A Tribute to Beeson Divinity School’s Founding Dean” in 2019
Beeson Magazine, 1st place for Photography–Feature: Single
Beeson Magazine: For All the Saints, 2nd place for Design–Publications: Magazine Cover
Hosanna! In Excelsis Deo Fall Chapel Devotional Guide, 3rd place for Design: Print Collateral
“Timothy George: A Tribute to Beeson Divinity School’s Founding Dean” in 2019
Beeson Magazine, by Kristen Padilla, 3rd place for Feature Writing–Single Article
Chelsea Baker Parent Programs Video, 1st place for Video Editorial Feature: More than 5 Minutes
**Improved analytics and search engine optimization**

- Developed digital marketing dashboards to provide insights to all ten schools, admission, athletics, advancement, marketing and communication and professional studies
- Initiated new search engine optimization project with SEMRush, a software solution for ongoing improvements to our nationwide search engine optimization (SEO) campaign to strengthen Samford’s online presence

Contributed to a **25% increase** in visits and **36% increase** in clicks to apply on our graduate program webpages

**New microsites and digital magazines**

- Supported undergraduate admission fall and spring search campaigns
- Developed new microsites for student recruitment focused on the undergraduate experience, academics and admission
- Launched an Annual Report microsite to promote the university’s accomplishments in 2019
- Created the Animate Flex microsite with the Center for Worship and the Arts to build and maintain relationships with annual Animate participants
- Published 5 digital magazines, including *Seasons*, *Health Sciences* and *Beeson* magazines

**New virtual tour pages**

- Developed a new virtual tour program to provide prospective students with the opportunity to see the campus given the pandemic limits in-person visits
- Created multiple virtual tours and virtual visits pages for Office of Admission and the 10 academic schools

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**Year-Over-Year Web Traffic Comparison**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>1,208,531</td>
<td>1,446,641</td>
<td>20% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits</td>
<td>2,739,287</td>
<td>2,825,186</td>
<td>3% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitors from Search</td>
<td>678,012</td>
<td>728,146</td>
<td>7% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits from Search</td>
<td>1,674,112</td>
<td>1,529,470</td>
<td>-9% ↓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Email Marketing in Emma**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emails Projects Supported</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>+24% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Opens</td>
<td>836,293</td>
<td>1,006,061</td>
<td>+20% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clicks to Engage</td>
<td>59,474</td>
<td>83,382</td>
<td>+40% ↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** These numbers exclude all recruitment related emails for undergraduate and graduate programs.
Social Media

Followers in all primary university accounts* in Sprinklr social media management system

2019-20 Total Primary Account Followers: 224,498

- **Twitter**: 51,281
- **Facebook**: 73,059
- **Instagram**: 47,773
- **LinkedIn**: 41,282
- **YouTube**: 11,103

2019-20 Total Primary Account Engagements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Engagements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>1,956,299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>4,001,942</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2019-20 Total Primary Account Followers: 224,498

- **Twitter**: 51,281
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- **Instagram**: 47,773
- **LinkedIn**: 41,282
- **YouTube**: 11,103

*62 primary accounts representing the academic schools, athletics, admission and other areas of campus.

### Top Engaging Posts on university flagship accounts

1. **George Grimwade Musto**
   - People Reached: 82,127
   - Total Engagements: 31,857
   - Engagement Rate: 137.81%

2. **Samford Family, We Miss You**
   - People Reached: 46,942
   - Total Engagements: 19,265
   - Engagement Rate: 81.03%

3. **A Cappella Alumni Choir Performing Beautiful Savior**
   - People Reached: 29,707
   - Total Engagements: 14,846
   - Engagement Rate: 62.27%

4. **Primary Accounts**
   - **George Grimwade Musto**
     - People Reached: 76,949
     - Total Engagements: 731
     - Engagement Rate: 331.10%

5. **Class of 2020**
   - People Reached: 76,949
   - Total Engagements: 3,496
   - Engagement Rate: 312.98%
Broadcast Media

Produced 421 videos

174 Athletics graphics and video board material

Notable events included Move-in Day, Family Weekend, Homecoming, Hanging of the Green, Step Sing, Samford Athletics Hall of Fame, the Big Give and commencement.

Step Sing livestreams recorded 28,016 connections in 12 countries.

10% connections in 2020

Samford YouTube channel

2018-19
8,955 subscribers

2019-20
10,400 subscribers

16% INCREASE

Video Views in Social Media

Twitter
2018-19: 505,910
2019-20: 2,160,493
327% increase

Instagram
2018-19: 163,072
2019-20: 236,212
45% increase

Facebook
2018-19: 607,121
2019-20: 761,665
25% increase

LinkedIn
2018-19: 20,907
2019-20: 102,980
393% increase

SU YouTube
2018-19: 638,600
2019-20: 703,001
10% increase

Total Video Views: 110% increase

2018-19 1,948,457
2019-20 4,095,661

Top 3 Videos

Samford Family, We Miss You
Total Engagements: 33,277
Video Views: 30,738
Reach: 96,611

Samford Graduates, You are Forever in Our Hearts
Total Engagements: 14,341
Video Views: 13,793
Reach: 66,788

George Grimwade Musto
Total Engagements: 31,903
Video Views: 31,075
Reach: 95,141
University Communication

- Produced and distributed 433 news and feature stories for public distribution, resulting in 32,042 media mentions in 29,379 national and global news outlets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stories published</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>23% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Mentions</td>
<td>31,422</td>
<td>32,042</td>
<td>2% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Outlets</td>
<td>19,224</td>
<td>29,379</td>
<td>53% ↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Produced and distributed 43 issues of Belltower, the university’s weekly e-newsletter, to a weekly average of 31,000 alumni, parents, donors and friends of the university.

- Distributed 5,241 hometown news stories related to student accomplishments to 1,103 media outlets and with an estimated social media reach of 12.5M.

Number of Media Mentions: 32,042
Number of News Outlets: 29,379
Total Audience (Broadcast): 149.1M

News Highlights

College Consensus Publishes Top Ranked Christian Colleges for 2019
Date: 7/28-7/30
Total Mentions: 63
Noteworthy Outlets: Birmingham Business Journal, ABC 3340

Student George Grimwade Musto Changes His Name
Date: 10/4-10/31
Total Mentions: 895
Noteworthy Outlets: CBS Evening News, The Today Show, ABC World News, Good Morning America, People.com

Samford Women Clinch NCAA, Beating UNC Greensboro in SoCon
Date: 1/1-3/16
Total Mentions: 365
Noteworthy Outlets: ESPN Online, CBSSports, Al.com, Washington Times Online, Fox News Online

Samford Receives $3.5M for Nurse Practitioner Residency Grant
Date: 7/2-8/19
Total Mentions: 17
Noteworthy Outlets: WVTM-TV, WBRC-TV, ABC3340, Birmingham Business Journal, Birmingham Medical News, Becker’s Hospital Review, Daily Nurse

Bucky McMillan Joins Samford
Date: 4/4-6/30
Total Mentions: 314
Noteworthy Outlets: USA Today Online, ESPN, Yahoo Sports, CBSSports.com, Sports Illustrated Online

Samford in National FCS Kickoff Football Game
Date: 8/1-8/31
Total Mentions: 509
Noteworthy Outlets: ESPN, Washington Post, Sports Illustrated Online, Al.com

Samford University ranked 3rd for student engagement, WSJ says
Date: 9/5-9/6
Total Mentions: 3
Noteworthy Outlets: Wall Street Journal, WIAT-TV, Yellowhammer News
Creative Services

2,084 creative projects created and completed

- Notable projects include the School of the Arts calendar, the inaugural College of Health Sciences magazine, football and basketball athletics programs, materials for the Forever Samford campaign, commencement programs, recruitment materials across all schools, and record digital graphics for social and web use

University Publications: University Annual Report, Seasons, Inside Samford, Cumberland Lawyer, Beeson magazine

Completed the redesign and installation of approximately 400 new exterior wayfinding signs across the campus

Licensing Services

- Approved 982 licensing requests involving university brand marks and merchandising
- Provided licensing and brand standards training for student organizations and employees
- Assisted in onboarding training of Follett Corporation in the new Samford Shop
- 2019-20 total licensing revenue: $67,117
- 2019-20 total car tag annual revenue: $68,434
- Top producing vendors: Nike by Branded Custom Sportswear, Champion, Peter Millar, Colosseum and Johnnie-O

Photography

- Merged the Photoshelter accounts of Samford Athletics and Marketing & Communication into one consolidated database
- Completed 267 photoshoots
- Number of photos in university Photoshelter database: 232,708
When the COVID-19 pandemic began, Marketing and Communication pivoted to serve the university in a number of ways:

**Coronavirus Microsite**
- Launched a comprehensive microsite for the public informing of the university’s pandemic response
- Collaborated with departments across the university to publish and promote vital information required to keep students, parents and employees fully informed of Samford’s pandemic planning
- From the site’s launch on Feb. 26 through June 30, registered more than 156,000 page views

**University Communication**
- Drafted more than 30 e-mail communications to the campus community
- Developed and distributed a guide for all university protocols, Bring Back the Bulldogs: A Guide for Returning to Campus

**Videos**
- Livestreamed six sessions of Bulldog Days new student orientation for the Office of Admission
- Produced virtual commencement ceremonies for all 10 schools
- Produced two videos detailing the health and safety measures implemented across campus
- Developed dozens of videos in support of virtual events university wide:
  - Virtual Pinning Ceremony for the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing
  - Virtual Admitted Student Days for Cumberland School of Law
  - Virtual Tour of facilities for McWhorter School of Pharmacy
  - Virtual Interview Day for Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing

**Signage**
- Developed university branded pandemic signage for the campus in collaboration with the Office of Capital Planning and Facilities Management

### COVID-19 News Coverage

**Highlights**
- Wrote and published 70 news and feature stories about the response of students, faculty, staff and alumni in the wake of the pandemic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outlet</th>
<th>Headline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WVTM</td>
<td>Coronavirus Cancels NCAA Tournament for Samford University Women’s Basketball Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>March 17, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC3340</td>
<td>Samford University Interactive Map: COVID-19 Cases in Alabama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>March 18, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESPN Online</td>
<td>March Madness Didn't Include Much Basketball this Year, but Academically the Game is Still On</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April 8, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al.com</td>
<td>Empty Tomb, Empty Churches: Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joy in Online Easter (featuring former dean Timothy George)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April 11, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC3340</td>
<td>Local Expert Weighs-in on Financial Impact Coronavirus is Having on College Sports (featuring faculty Darin White)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April 21, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESPN Online</td>
<td>Class is Back On-Campus this Fall at These Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WVTM</td>
<td>COVID-19 Church Activity (featuring faculty Piotr Malysz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May 14, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COVID-19 Social Media**
Communicated with students, parents, employees and other stakeholders through social media. Developed more than 65 organic posts related to COVID-19 across 5 channels.

**Highlights: COVID-19 Posts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Engagement Rate</th>
<th>Total Engagements and Video Views</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Samford Family, We Miss You” on Facebook</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>19,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A Cappella Choir Performing “Beautiful Savior”” on Facebook</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>14,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A Message From Dr. Westmoreland” on Facebook</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>10,898</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Digital Marketing

Paid Social and Paid Search (Facebook/Instagram and Google Ads)

**Paid Social—2019-20**
- Impressions: 5,283,760
- Clicks: 96,496
- Average cost per click: $0.45
- Conversions on site: 3,066

**Paid Search—2019-20**
- Impressions: 636,479
- Clicks: 7,400
- Average cost per click: $2.34
- Conversions on site: 442

Most viewed ad:
Orlean Beeson School of Education—Ed.S. at 514,027 impressions

Top engaged ad:
Samford University - COVID - GIS Map at 83,985 clicks

Marketing and Communication Team

**Catie Bell**, Digital Marketing Manager

**Morgan Black**, Marketing and Communication Manager, Cumberland School of Law and Brock School of Business

**Sarah Cain**, Media Relations Manager

**Scott Camp**, Senior Graphic Designer

**Todd Cotton**, Executive Director of Web and Creative Services

**Leighton Doores**, Marketing and Communication Manager, Orlean Beeson School of Education

**Stephanie Douglas**, Senior Graphic Designer and Photography Services Manager

**Donna Fitch**, Digital Communications Specialist

**Sean Flynt**, Marketing and Communication Manager, Howard College of Arts and Sciences

**Laura Hannah**, Senior Graphic Designer

**Betsy Holloway**, Vice President for Marketing and Communication

**Sarah Howard**, Assistant Director of Creative Services

**Emma Gibney**, Digital Marketing Coordinator

**Ed Landers**, Director of Media Center

**Lauren Marino**, Social Media Manager

**Kristi Metz**, Assistant to the Vice President for Marketing and Communication

**BJ Millican**, Assistant Director of Broadcast Media

**Kristen Padilla**, Coordinator of Marketing and Communication, Beeson Divinity School

**Brad Radice**, Executive Director of Broadcast Media

**Adam Roebuck**, Digital Marketing Analyst

**Sara Roman**, Marketing and Communication Manager, Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing and School of Health Professions

**Ashley Smith**, Marketing and Communication Manager, School of the Arts

**Katie Stripling**, Assistant Vice President, Marketing and Communication

**Sarah Waller**, Marketing and Communication Manager, McWhorter School of Pharmacy and School of Public Health

Spotlight:

**Cumberland School of Law—J.D. Admissions Campaign**

**Platforms**: Paid social, paid search, promoted video

- Campaign total impressions: 1,289,124
- Campaign total sessions: 7,725
- Campaign goal completions*: 455
- Campaign applications*: 152

*Google Analytics