Ideas session: Brand, reputation and the student experience - what your VC is really worrying about.
Three things to talk about

What is brand?

Why is branding important for universities?

What part do libraries play in the brand equation?

…and finally, how would you brand your library?
What is brand?
APPLE
BODLEIAN
A brand is...

...the sum of all the rational and emotional associations you hold with a place, person, product, service, company, institution...
“Your brand is what people say about you when you’re not in the room”
—Jeff Bezos
Founder of Amazon
“A brand is a living entity...it is...the product of a thousand small gestures”

— Michael Eisner
Former CEO, Disney
Brands are shaped by…

…communications, word-of-mouth, the product, the service, the physical environment and the overall experience.
Why is branding important for universities?
Brands can help you compete

- Attract fee paying students
- Attract staff
- Attract research grants
- Attract business partners
- Attract donations
Branding forces the tough questions

What type of student do I want to attract— academic or vocational?

What market should I go after—domestic or international, graduate or post-graduate?

What do we want to be famous for—teaching or research, social life or academic rigor, affordability or employability, location or subject?
Powerful brands polarise opinion
Case study: repositioning the University of Kent
From friendly
to academic...
We used research amongst the target cohort to test the proposition.

Critical thinking
- Academic freedom
- Advancement of knowledge
- Passion for intellectual creativity
- Critical thinking
- Community, Europe, World

Leadership
- Academic freedom
- Advancement of knowledge
- The pursuit of truth
- Critical thinking
- Accountability and integrity
- Excellence
Research pinpointed a brand proposition based on intellectual challenge and passion for the subject.
What part do libraries play in the branding equation?
Libraries are at the heart of the student experience - but at first glance its hard to differentiate one university from another
Could your library be an ingredient brand?
Two branding archetypes
If your library was a car, what would it be?
The Bodleian Library
The main research library of the University of Oxford, one of the oldest libraries in Europe. Known to Oxford scholars as “Bodley” or simply “the Bod”.

LSE Library
The working Library of the London School of Economics and Political Science and one of the largest libraries in the world devoted to the economic and social sciences.
Is the library the ultimate third place?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First place</th>
<th>Second place</th>
<th>Third place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home (digs)</td>
<td>The workplace (lecture theatre)</td>
<td>Places that facilitate and foster broader, more creative interaction (coffee shops, bars)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Third places promote community

Promote social equality by leveling the status of guests

Provide a setting for grassroots politics

Offer psychological support to individuals and communities

—Ray Oldenburg, The Great Good Place, 1991
The hallmarks of a true third place

Free or inexpensive
Food and drink
Highly accessible
Proximate for many (walking distance)
Involve regulars
Welcoming and comfortable

—Ray Oldenburg,
The Great Good Place, 1991
How could your library help shape the student experience?
How would you brand your library?
1. How is your university positioned?

Research-leader. Teaching experience.
Academic. Employability. Modern
Vocational. Postgraduate.
South. Social sciences. Technology.
2. What is your core proposition?

The Library is a world-class cultural and intellectual resource that serves the needs of today’s researchers as well as being the custodian of the nation’s written and spoken heritage.
3. What does your Library contribute to the overall student experience?
4. How do you differentiate your service in a virtual world?
5. If your library was a car, what would it be?
6. What is the right brand architecture?
7. If you had a blank piece of paper, what kind of library would you build to support your university’s proposition?
Using the worksheets, have a quick go at this

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University positioning</th>
<th>Library proposition</th>
<th>Library experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sum up your university’s positioning in three words or less</td>
<td>Sum up your library’s core proposition to students in a single sentence (Think about the wider social and academic purpose)</td>
<td>Describe in three adjectives how your library can contribute to the student experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTIONS?