



AGENCY OVERVIEW

Higher Education

2026



Relationships First.
Solutions Always.



You have a story. We're here to tell it.

VVK PR + Creative is an independent, integrated communications agency with Detroit roots and national reach. We help mission-driven organizations clarify who they are, strengthen their voice and build credibility through smart strategy and creative designed to inspire action.





Services Overview

We specialize in industries where communication is complex and trust is essential – working across sectors that include higher education, infrastructure, automotive, philanthropy, healthcare, hospitality, real estate and more. Our team shapes the story, develops the strategy and implements it across channels, platforms and experiences so our clients show up in the right places, connect with the right audiences and build momentum for impact and change.

This work is shaped by the communities we're part of – and the ones we serve. As a Detroit-based agency grounded in inclusive leadership and diverse perspectives, we design work that expands opportunity, elevates voices and deepens connection. We've been recognized as one of the "Michigan 50 Companies to Watch," a "Diversity Focused Company" by Corp! Magazine and a "Best of MichBusiness" honoree in the Marketing & PR Prophets category.

Our Integrated Communications Services

- **Media Relations**
- **Organizational & Executive Positioning**
- **Public Relations**
- **Issues & Crisis Management**
- **Digital & Social Media**
- **Public Affairs**
- **Event Support**
- **Stakeholder & Community Engagement**
- **Video Production**
- **Graphic Design**



Higher Ed Communications Expertise for a High-Stakes Era

Few environments are as complex or as consequential as higher education. For more than 20 years, VVK PR + Creative has partnered with colleges and universities, and the academics, faculty, administrators and stakeholders who shape them. For learning and research institutions in Michigan, across the U.S. and worldwide, every client we've represented has different challenges and diverse priorities, but shared goals: ***strengthen reputation, elevate competitive standing and drive both enrollment and advancement across academic offerings.***

Today's reality is intensified by political and public pressures, enrollment challenges impacting tuition revenue, the urgent need for new fundraising streams, heightened scrutiny over ROI and aggressive competition around rankings.

The stakes are high. The opportunities are too.

Strategic communication is more than awareness. It's about demonstrating value, driving connection and protecting institutional reputation. We understand what that takes in today's higher education environment, and we have the experience and capabilities to deliver measurable impact.



Elevating Higher Ed Leadership + Reputation

We position learning and research institutions as destinations of choice and their leadership as the architects who are shaping the future of higher education.

Through authentic storytelling, we help:

- **Communicate** complex ideas with clarity and emotional resonance
- **Validate** institutional value to counter ROI scrutiny and demographic shifts and elevate competitive positioning
- **Elevate** leadership voices to inspire confidence in the future of learning and drive advancement

You don't just shape education – you shape the future.

We ensure your institution is the one your audience trusts to lead the way.

Reputation Strategy

- Competitive Communications Assessment
- Institutional Leadership Visibility
- Faculty + Department Chair Thought Leadership Promotion
- Board Communications Advisory

Growth + Strategic Milestones

- Academic Center Launches
- University Partnerships (Public/Private)
- Advancement + Fundraising Support

Institutional Stability + Risk Management

- Leadership Transitions
- Crisis Communications
- Situational + Strategic Messaging

Institutional, Faculty + Leadership Visibility for...

University Partnerships

- Michigan State University & Health Alliance Plan
- Michigan State University & Henry Ford Health

Regional + Urban

- Montclair State University
- University of California, San Francisco
- Wayne State University

Private

- Babson College
- Bard College
- College for Creative Studies
- Kettering University
- Tufts University / The Fletcher School
- University of Southern California

Global

- IESE (Spain)
- IMD (Switzerland)
- INSEAD (France)
- London Business School (UK)

Business Schools

- Arizona State University / Thunderbird School of Global Management
- Brigham Young University / Marriott School of Business
- Claremont Graduate University / Drucker School of Management
- Duke University / Fuqua School of Business
- MIT / Sloan School of Management
- New York University / Stern School of Business
- Northwestern University / Kellogg School of Management
- University of Michigan / Ross School of Business
- University of Southern California / Marshall School of Business
- University of Washington / Foster School of Business

Ivy League

- Dartmouth University / Tuck School of Business
- Harvard Business School
- Harvard University / Kennedy School of Government
- University of Pennsylvania / The Wharton School
- Yale School of Management

“Just wanted to thank you so much for all the help with that SXSW speaking gig. It was not only great fun and very well attended but has already generated two (other) engagements as well.”

David Bell

Professor, Wharton



“Thanks so much for your excellent and thoughtful stewardship of me and the book. I was quite pleased with the exposure we received, and you did your work with great professionalism and integrity. Moreover, it has catalyzed a good number of speaking opportunities. Finally, it really has met one of my key goals: to be part of a national conversation on health IT.”

Dr. Bob Wachter

University of California, San Francisco





Case Example: Our Approach



Closing The Visibility Gap: Elevating London Business School In The U.S. Business Media Market



The Challenge

To support London Business School's (LBS) advancement goals among its largest international alumni base, our team was tasked with elevating the School's brand profile within the hyper-competitive U.S. business education market.

At the outset, internal research revealed a significant barrier to alumni support: a perceived lack of prestige compared to domestic b-school peers. U.S.-based alumni expressed a key concern that LBS was rarely mentioned in American business media, whereas competitors like Harvard Business School and Wharton were constant fixtures in the news cycle.

This visibility gap was dampening donor enthusiasm and making it difficult for alumni to advocate for the value of their degree in a U.S. professional context.



Closing The Visibility Gap: Elevating London Business School In The U.S. Business Media Market



The Strategy + Messaging Evolution

Our 10-year partnership focused on closing this visibility gap through a foundational messaging framework designed to establish LBS as the premier global alternative to what's become known as the "Magnificent 7" business schools (Harvard, Chicago, Stanford, MIT Sloan, etc.).

As the School's priorities evolved, we proactively transitioned the strategy to ensure LBS shared the stage with its U.S. competitors:

- **Brand Awareness + Differentiation:** With messaging reflective of the LBS brand pillars, we launched an aggressive media relations campaign specifically designed to place LBS faculty alongside HBS and Wharton experts in top-tier outlets like The Wall Street Journal and Forbes, directly addressing the alumni visibility concern.
- **Thought Leadership + Impact:** As brand pillars matured and evolved, we pivoted to a faculty-led expert strategy, ensuring that whenever a major global business trends broke, LBS was a primary source for Fortune and The Washington Post.
- **Campaign + Advancement Alignment:** We refined the narrative to connect this new high-profile visibility to advancement goals, showing alumni their alma mater was emerging as a consistent voice in the global business conversation.



Turning Media Presence Into A Narrative Shift

A Decade of Visibility + Brand Advancement



The Impact

By successfully adapting the core narrative to match the School's shifting priorities and the competitive landscape, we maintained a 10-year media presence in top-tier U.S. outlets directly countering previous alumni concerns and improving brand awareness and perception.

In summary, three critical components to the success of this campaign included:

Strategic Focus

Identifying and solving a specific pain point—the "visibility gap" against domestic competitors—through a foundational messaging framework.

Longevity + Adaptability

Proactively evolving the narrative over a decade to ensure the School remained competitive in a changing media and academic landscape.

Advancement Alignment

Directly connecting increased media prestige to alumni pride and fundraising goals to drive measurable institutional impact.



Our Leadership

Our team of PR strategists, video producers and storytellers create strategies and experiences that resonate with audiences, drive differentiation and fuel growth.



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CEO



Laura
L'Esperance
Executive Vice President,
Public Relations



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