

How the right media plan led to rising reputation.

Moving
the needle.

Page 4 Media Plan

12.5%

Overall Brand Lift

to relevant industry peers and partners
compared with industry standard of 1% to 3%

Page 6 Creative Platform

53.5M

Overall Impressions

to relevant industry peers

Page 8 Premium Publishers

1.6x

Industry Benchmark

performance for click-through rate in high-authority and high-credibility placements

Page 10 Cross-Channel Digital

3.6

Peer Assessment Score

from voting industry peers held steady

Page 12 Events and Out-of-Home

12% ↑

Net Promoter Score

among faculty

Page 14 Experiential Activation

2,700

Cups of Coffee Served

to education leaders and peers

Page 16 Client Perspective

A media approach driven by results.

The research happening at Wake Forest University had grown, as had the impact of that research. But the university's level of recognition hadn't kept pace. To close that gap, Wake Forest partnered with Ologie to develop a reputation campaign with national reach. The desired shift in perception required a long-term effort, so we crafted a four-year plan aimed at showcasing the institution's achievements, increasing its visibility, and continuing to attract and retain top talent.

The campaign's core theme was "Bold Possibilities," positioning Wake Forest as a place that pursues daring ideas and turns them into tangible realities. The content highlighted "ownable" stories, where Wake Forest is truly the best, first, or only institution. The media strategy was built for maximum impact: balancing budget and timing to establish a presence in the most relevant, credibility-boosting channels. And a university-wide mindset shift helped support this effort beyond the campaign.



The right placements, seen by the right people.

The first year of the initiative needed to focus on reintroducing and repositioning Wake Forest.

We had to move the needle where it mattered most.

To do this, we prioritized audiences that were real reputation-drivers:

- Leaders and faculty from institutions nationwide
- Higher education experts
- Potential faculty recruits

We wanted to reach these audiences effectively.

Our year-one approach to shifting Wake Forest's national reputation centered on two things: premium placements and account-based marketing.

We paired high-credibility placements in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and *Inside Higher Ed* with targeted digital across LinkedIn, Spotify, and Hulu. This mix balanced prestige with precision, extending reach and frequency efficiently, while concentrating investment around key moments to elevate awareness of the bold possibilities of Wake Forest academics.

We needed to get a more realistic view of Wake Forest's current perception in the market.

We conducted a quantitative study that surveyed faculty and administration at peer institutions. This helped us understand the university's broader reputation, gauged awareness of some specific programs, and established an initial net promoter score. The results also provided benchmarks to measure against in the future.

A platform built for ambitious goals.

WAKE UP

to what's POSSIBLE.

Wake Forest needed a flexible campaign that could frame not just its research stories, but also the people driving that research and the why behind it: advancing the fields with the biggest impact on humanity. The university wanted something that felt unexpected, yet still authentic. To stand out among peers in the media channels we outlined, the creative also needed to be bold and attention grabbing.

"Wake Up" became the campaign's creative hook. The phrase worked as a call for audiences to learn more, as a rallying cry for the people at Wake Forest who are up for any challenge, and as a nod to the upward trajectory of the university as a whole. The hook flexed in two distinct ways: For stories of specific impact, we used the line "Wake up to what's possible." When speaking to the purpose behind the work, we shifted to "That's why we wake up."

Why do we wake up?
Because we know what the world can be.
And we know the world can't wait.

That's why we're up for every challenge,
for all of humanity, for good.

We're driven by optimistic ambition.
We're called toward compassionate action.

So we wake up every day:
To show up. To step up. To lift up.
Together.

Wake up to what's possible.
Wake up with Wake Forest.

Delivering headline-worthy research stories.

With the goal of reaching a highly educated and highly engaged audience, within both education leaders and the general public, we looked to larger publications and placements. A takeover of *The New York Times Magazine*'s back cover introduced readers to Wake Forest. Then, full-length articles in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* highlighted specific programs and accolades that were unique to the university.



Driven by optimistic ambition.
Called toward compassionate action.

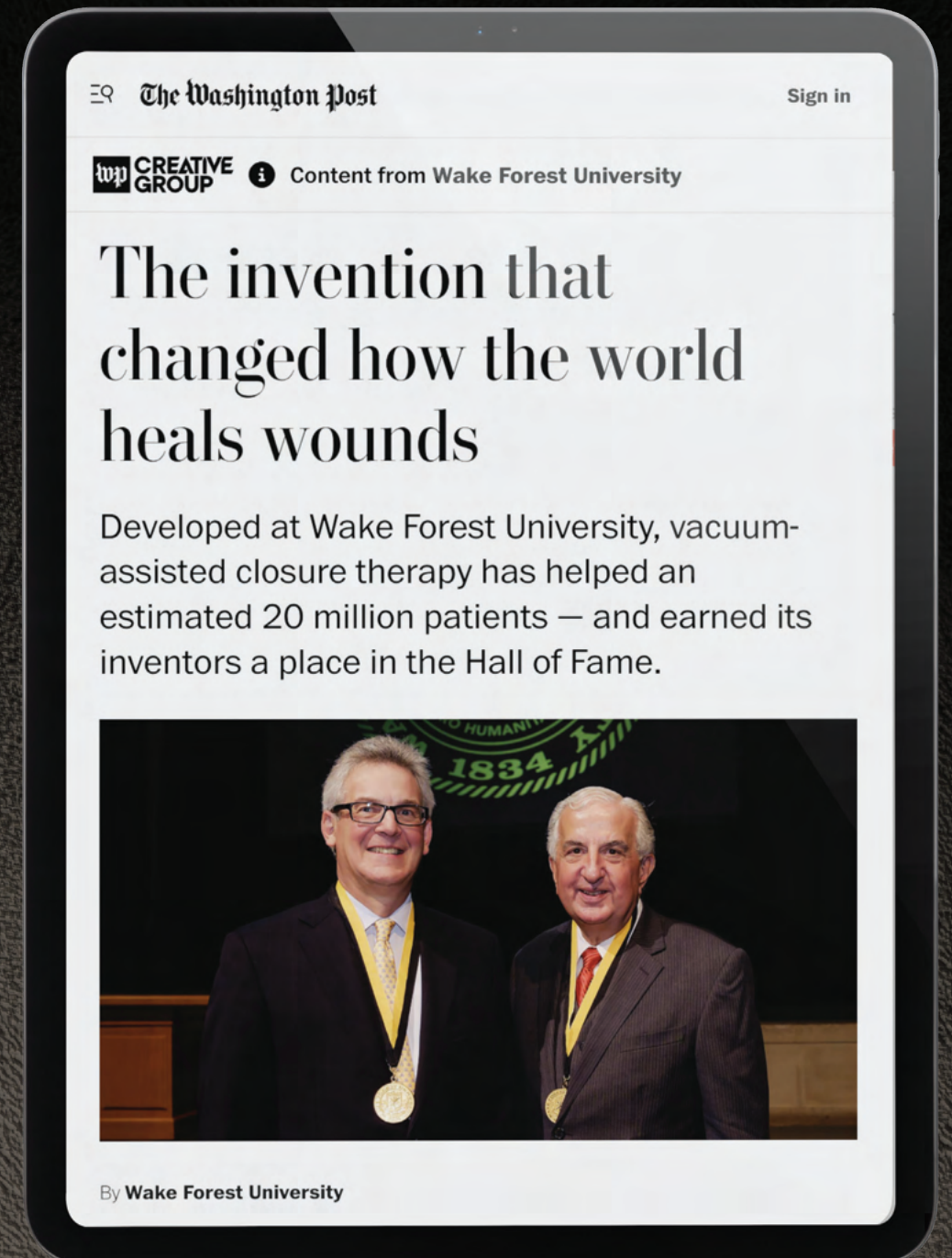
WAKE UP

to what's POSSIBLE.

The research we do is impacting the fields that will have the biggest impact on humanity.

SEE THE IMPACT. WAKE.WFU.EDU

 **WAKE FOREST**
UNIVERSITY

The Washington Post Sign in

wp CREATIVE GROUP Content from Wake Forest University

The invention that changed how the world heals wounds

Developed at Wake Forest University, vacuum-assisted closure therapy has helped an estimated 20 million patients — and earned its inventors a place in the Hall of Fame.



By Wake Forest University

The New York Times

2.26M impressions

0.76% click-through rate

NYT Flex XL ads (0.46% benchmark)

The Washington Post

11.7M impressions

Grabbing the attention of a captive audience.

For higher industry trade placements, we focused on two key publishers:

Chronicle of Higher Education

The Chronicle featured a full-length article that spoke to the sustainability work happening at the university.

Inside Higher Ed

Inside Higher Ed saw two virtual events hosted by university thought leaders.

Online periodicals to get consistently in front of industry leaders and faculty.

Webinars

Digital tactics like e-blasts, newsletter features, displays, and run-of-site placements.

Each tactic underscored Wake Forest's overall positioning, with specific stories that were highly relevant to these audiences.



We also worked on getting cross-channel coverage.

Over the entirety of the campaign, we delivered high-frequency, in-the-moment messaging for precisely targeted viewers and listeners, on channels like LinkedIn, Hulu, Disney+, Roku, NBC, Paramount+, and Spotify. And through retargeting and domain conquering, we also reached audiences who were actively seeking positions at R1 institutions.



Pointing viewers in a single direction.

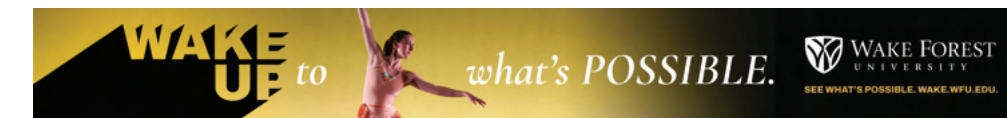
We constructed a single landing page as the destination for every piece of the campaign. There we organized Wake Forest's research stories into five key areas, gave more detail to the infrastructure around them, spotlighted key alumni and faculty, and drove signups to the university's newsletter.





Full-scale impact locally.

With a full takeover of Charlotte Airport's B Terminal, we gave the university a powerful presence in its own backyard. Seat wraps, wrap-around pole banners, and wall-to-wall window clings spoke to the impact of Wake Forest's research, locally and globally.



Strategic targeting nationally.

Beyond websites and personal screens, a series of targeted digital campaigns drew on traditional and digital placements in tandem — in key markets like Charlotte and Atlanta, and in larger-scale takeovers. Taking advantage of the reputation Wake Forest faculty have built in their respective fields, we deployed geofenced ads and sponsored programming at key industry events and conferences, like Student Success US and Impact and Innovation Summit. Digital boards in the same areas reinforced the ads that conference-goers had already seen.



A SXSW-style wake-up call.

To make a bigger splash and engage with key audience segments directly, Wake Forest executed a huge takeover at SXSW EDU: sponsoring the conference's leadership track and distributing free "wake-up calls" from a branded coffee cart provided by a local shop. The activation was a hit throughout the four days, garnering consistent attention and long lines for coffee — with a branded newspaper for guests to read while they waited.

A wider presence in Austin.

From wheels down at the Austin airport, attendees received a warm welcome from animated digital board ads. More digital boards around the city kept Wake Forest in mind before, during, and after the conference.



Case Study: Wake Forest University

ologie.com



A personal gift for each attendee.

At their hotel rooms, conference guests were greeted with "survival kits" that contained Wake-Forest-branded wireless chargers, notebooks, and pens. Inside each bag was an invitation to the coffee cart, including its schedule and full menu.



“Where Ologie brought particularly valuable expertise was in media — identifying opportunities, negotiating ad space and sponsorships, and managing the complex logistics required to bring an ambitious plan to life.”

Q: The campaign platform had to be distinct enough to stand out in the market while still fitting under the broader Wake Forest brand umbrella. What made this platform right for the moment, and how did it resonate more broadly internally?

The campaign resulted from market research and institutional ambition. The market research confirmed a gap between how higher education influencers are perceived and the innovative research and scholarship happening at Wake Forest. Ologie presented us with creative options, and academic leaders gravitated toward the boldest choice. The Wake Up campaign turned our name into a call to action, leaned into the idea of bold possibilities, and emphasized the sense of purpose that Wake Forest faculty bring to their work.



BRETT EATON

Vice President and Chief Communications Officer, Wake Forest University

Q: A media plan this robust, with so many moving parts, is a large undertaking for any team. What did the week-to-week collaboration with Ologie look like, and what part of the process was most helpful along the way?

The Ologie team presented us with a comprehensive plan at the start of the campaign. They were great about teeing up timely decisions we needed to make and adapting the plan as needed along the way. Weekly status meetings and frequent email exchanges helped us stay on top of the many moving parts. It really felt like we were one team during the back-and-forth creative collaboration to produce campaign content. Where Ologie brought particularly valuable expertise was in media — identifying opportunities, negotiating ad space and sponsorships, and managing the complex logistics required to bring an ambitious plan to life.

Q: The placements in this plan ranged from general display ads to airport takeovers and large-scale media. Which one generated the most excitement internally? Which one made the biggest impression around the Wake Forest community?

I loved getting a text from Wake Forest’s men’s golf coach, with a picture of him in the Charlotte airport, posing with one of our ads. Wake Forest has a big presence in Charlotte, and the airport is one of the busiest in the country. Our airport ads ran through the peak travel of the winter holidays, and they were up when Wake Forest’s football team competed in a bowl game in Charlotte at the end of December.

We received the most feedback from our sponsored content in *The New York Times*. The article featured Wake Forest’s Program for Leadership and Character, which is a strong point of pride for the institution. It was seen by a number of alumni and trustees — more importantly, academics across the country reached out to the program’s executive director to congratulate him on the visibility the article generated. The response reinforced the campaign’s ability to elevate the ideas and expertise that distinguish Wake Forest.

Q: A lot of effort went into the SXSW activation — a single line item in the overall plan, but one with a lot of potential impact. What made you take the leap and do something as unconventional as this, and what did the response tell you?

We saw an opportunity to connect Wake Forest with the innovation and creativity celebrated at SXSW. A track at SXSW EDU focused on “leadership for tomorrow,” which was a natural fit for Wake Forest’s leadership of a national character education movement through the Educating Character Initiative. The coffee cart activation was highly visible, creating a strong draw. It gave us opportunities to engage conference attendees in conversation and put our content in their hands. Equally important, our team on the ground was able to create social media content during the activation that helped to amplify the visibility of our presence at SXSW. This activation helped underscore the message of the campaign: You should be paying attention to Wake Forest University.

Q: It’s only year one, and there are more strides to make when it comes to long-term goals, but what are the most exciting results so far? Has any thinking from the campaign carried over into other marketing efforts?

This is Wake Forest’s first brand awareness campaign. We’re excited about generating 53 million impressions because that is 53 million more celebrations of Wake Forest academics than we had the prior year. The most exciting result is harder to measure, but anecdotally, we’ve heard from faculty featured in campaign content that they received recognition and opportunities that they might not have received otherwise. This has helped grow internal support for the value of the campaign.

The measured brand lift far exceeded industry benchmarks. That is exciting to us, and it builds confidence that our message is resonating with the intended audience. We will continue to promote the themes and ideas associated with this campaign to different audiences.



Ologie is the agency for brands on a mission.

We amplify powerful stories with work that moves people. By crafting distinctive brands and effective campaigns that deliver results, we help our partners build reputations, engage donors, and become brands of choice to their core audiences.

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