

University of Toronto Communications Annual Report to Business Board

November 2022

Presented by:

David Palmer
Interim Vice-President,
Communications



Context

As we emerge from the pandemic, University of Toronto Communications (UTC) is at an important transition point.

This past year, we launched a bold new brand – Defy Gravity – an ambitious and powerful platform that has captured the hearts and minds of the University community. Built on a framework of Inclusive Excellence, the Defy Gravity brand represents a major point of leverage and a differentiating position for the University that is grounded in our values and strengths.

This is the first time in U of T's history that we've developed a brand at such a scale. Working closely with the Division of University Advancement, UTC created a common storytelling platform that will bring our collective marketing and communications efforts together – to help drive our global brand and reputation to new heights.

UTC Strategic Outlook

This past year, we supported the biggest Back to School ever by producing content and engaging visuals to encourage a safe and engaging return to our three campuses. We continued to grow digital innovations developed under the pandemic with new, creative and impactful products such as podcasts, video series and digital content. We also continued to support the Equity Diversity and Inclusion goals of the University, and to promote U of T's sustainability initiatives whether it be our efforts to divest from fossil fuels, our research or changes to our operations.

As we learn from the lessons gained in the pandemic, we are redoubling our strategic focus on the University's priorities, improving our ability to meet divisional needs, strengthening processes and practices that engage tri-campus and divisional marketing and communications leaders, and developing and instilling best practices across our community of practice at the University.

We are seeking new opportunities for marketing and communications integration in how we work and what we produce. At the same time, we are aligning with key stakeholders and developing a greater understanding of, and responsiveness to, the University's challenges and opportunities.



About UTC



An award-winning team of writers, strategists, social media and media relations specialists, videographers, photographers, web designers, graphics specialists and brand marketing professionals working together to bring the University's brand and stories to life.

University of Toronto Communications is responsible for building, managing, enhancing and protecting the profile, reputation and relevance of the University of Toronto among local and global stakeholders.

Working across U of T's three campuses, we support the University's strategic priorities through marketing and communications initiatives, multi-channel storytelling, memorable experiences, and flexible tools, templates, and assets that support the University's brand, its relevance and impact on the world around us, and its fundamental values of inclusive excellence.

What We Do

- Media Relations & Issues Management
- Communications Strategy & Planning
- Digital Engagement
- Content Production
- Videography, Podcasts, Photography
- Stakeholder Support
- Internal Communications
- Web Development
- Digital and social media marketing

- Brand strategy | Brand architecture
- Brand awareness campaigns
- Marketing content strategy, art direction, design and production
- Web strategy, design and development (divisional support)
- Experiential marketing
- Paid media planning, buying and reporting
- Market research, analysis, insights generation
- Marketing tools, resources and templates
- Brand Strategy and Marketing consulting and training

UTC Highlights 2022

Enhancing the quality of...
U of T | Insulin 100 [LEARN MORE](#)

1981
U of T researchers develop the Glycemic Index

2006
U of T pioneers deep learning

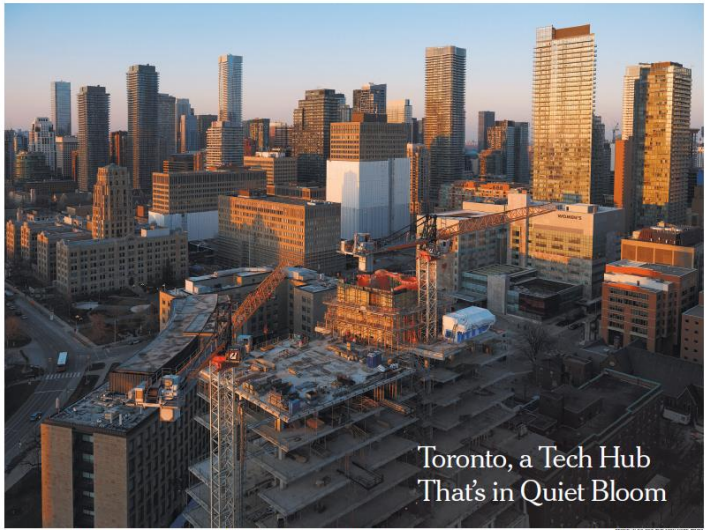
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
INSULIN 100

The New York Times

TECH | ECONOMY | MEDIA | FINANCE

Business
The New York Times

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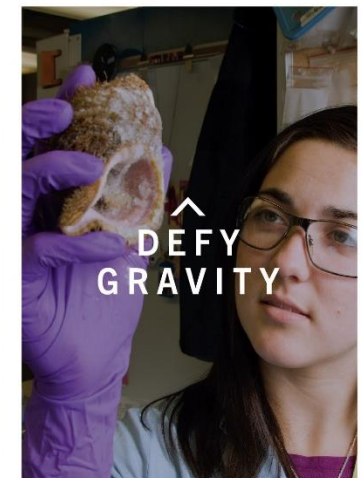
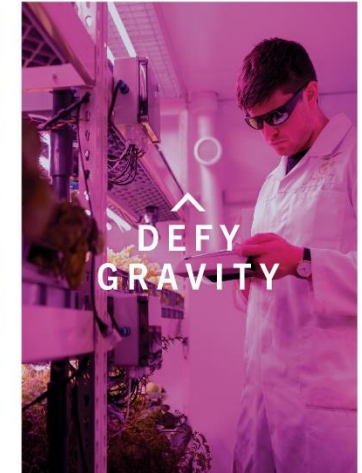
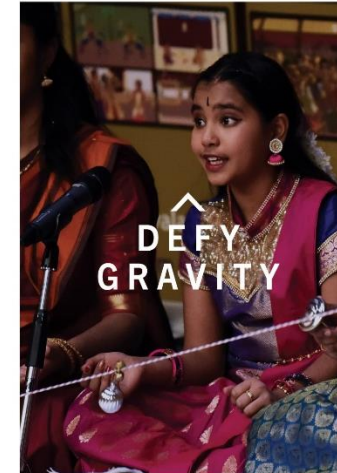
A new \$100 million complex built by the University of Toronto will house artificial intelligence and biotech companies. "This is now a place to make a long-term bet," one expert said of the city. (COURTESY OF THE U OF TORONTO)

For all the excitement around the growing tech industries in places like Austin, Texas, and Miami, the biggest expansion has been in Canada's largest city.

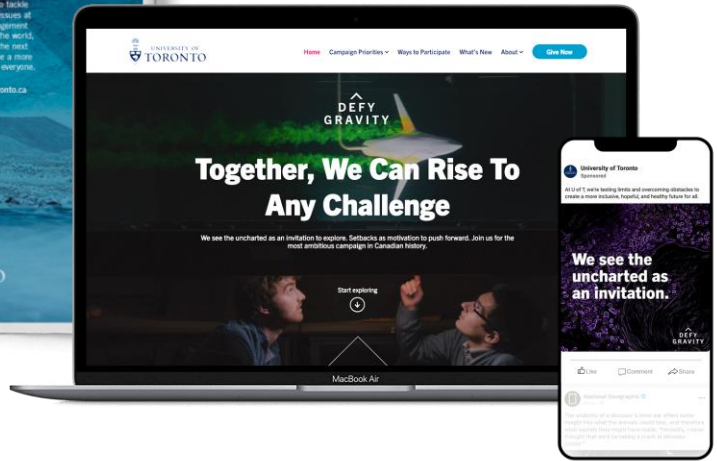
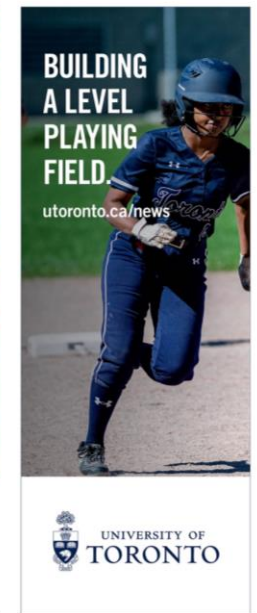
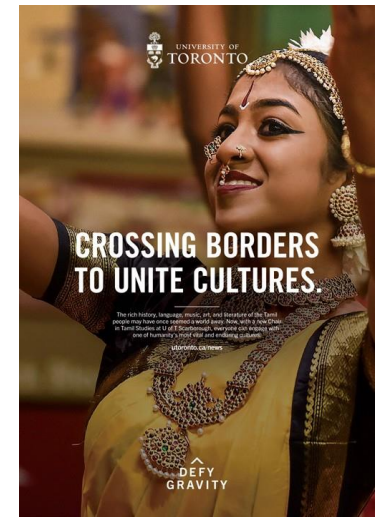
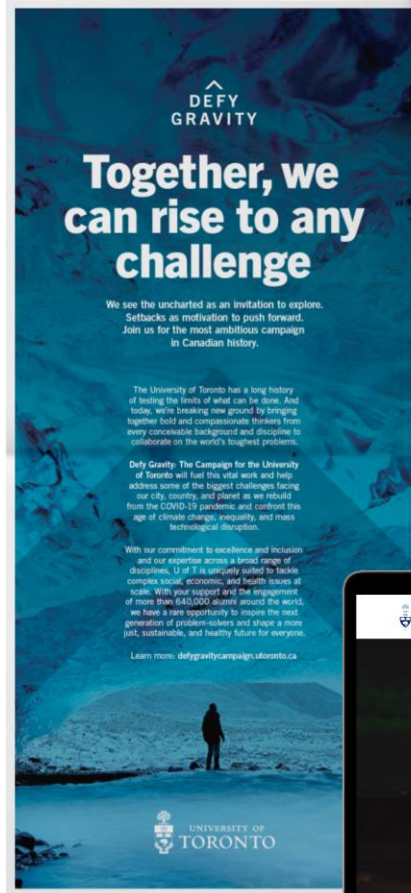
hard hat were finishing three floors of new office space for another social media company: Pinterest. Strip, an American payments company, was opening an office near City Hall, where Xarna, a Scandinavian payments company, had just announced its the next big tech hubs. But they are tiny tech companies compared with the new hub growing in the cool air along the shore of Lake Ontario. Thanks to years of investment from local universities, government agencies and business lead-

DEFY GRAVITY

- Bold and dynamic University-wide brand launched to rally U of T's global community around core values of Inclusive Excellence.
- Showcases U of T's remarkable breadth, depth and diversity empowering people to take on today's most pressing challenges.
- Photojournalistic style. Candid, captivating snapshots of the incredible activity happening at U of T.
- Brand Portal 2.0
- Best Practices education sessions for marketing and communicators officials.



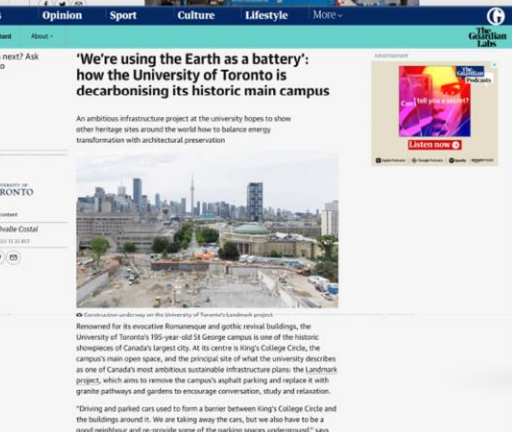
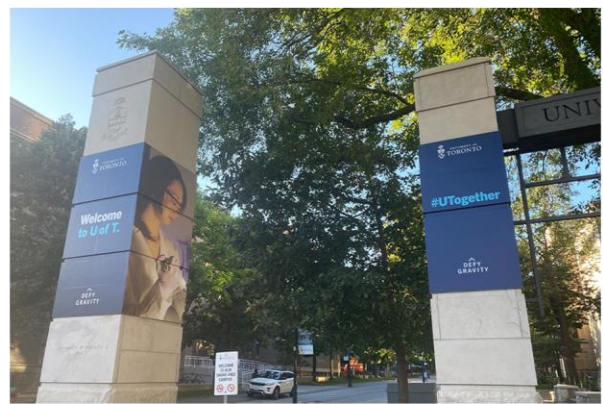
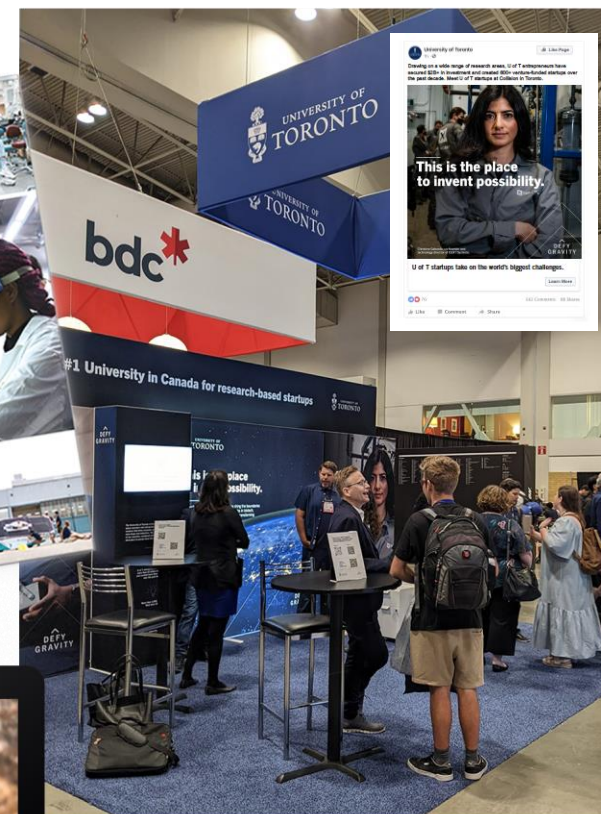
DEFY GRAVITY: Multi-Channel Marketing & Communications Ecosystem



DEFY GRAVITY: Launch and Rollout

Collision Conference 2022:

Campus Welcome Signage:



UTC Brand Marketing Highlight: Insulin 100 Campaign

Insulin 100 was U of T's first global reputation building campaign. Celebrating 100 years of research and innovation by U of T and leading Toronto hospitals, the campaign reached a broad domestic and international audience, and established collaboration with Health Canada and other government agencies.

- The campaign garnered over 21.1 million impressions and over 600,000 engagements (this includes likes, shares, clicks, etc.) and above average click through rates on all channels, including advertising in leading publications such as the Guardian and THE.
- Podcast ads brought in 286,340 listeners via popular medical and science podcasts and networks. Campaign hashtag received widespread attention, including posts from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (5.7M followers) and Canada's Chief Public Health Officer Theresa Tam (227.4K followers)
- U of T-owned social channels garnered an additional 3.5 million impressions and more than 80,000 engagements across more than 240 posts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. Since the launch of the Insulin 100 campaign, the insulin website gained 176,000 unique visits from 178 countries and over 226,000 page views.



UTC Brand Marketing Highlight: UTE

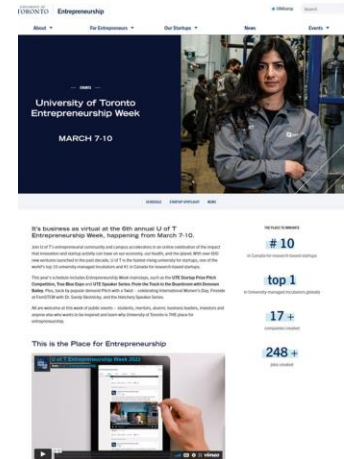
Entrepreneurship Campaign

- The 2022 Entrepreneurship week campaign leveraged Twitter single image ads, Google Search ads, LinkedIn sponsored posts and ads in the Betakit Email Newsletter & Podcast.
- Paid ads were in-market March 1 to March 31st.
- Earned **1,921,828 Impressions** and **5,026 Clicks**. This is a **221% increase** in impressions and a **125% increase** in clicks compared to 2021 despite a similar budget – a result of strategic marketing optimization.



Collision Campaign

- The 2022 Collision campaign leveraged Facebook, Twitter, and Reddit single image ads, as well as display banners on TechCrunch and Yahoo.
- Paid ads were in-market June 3 to June 26.
- Earned **9,159,339 impressions** and **14,759 clicks**. This is a **493% increase** in impressions and a **4.7% increase** in clicks despite a similar budget year over year – a result of strategic optimization.



UTC Brand Marketing Highlights

The global brand awareness campaign garnered over **17,000,000** impressions in digital channels including: The Guardian, Hill Times, Globe and Mail, Google and Yahoo networks, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and other channels.

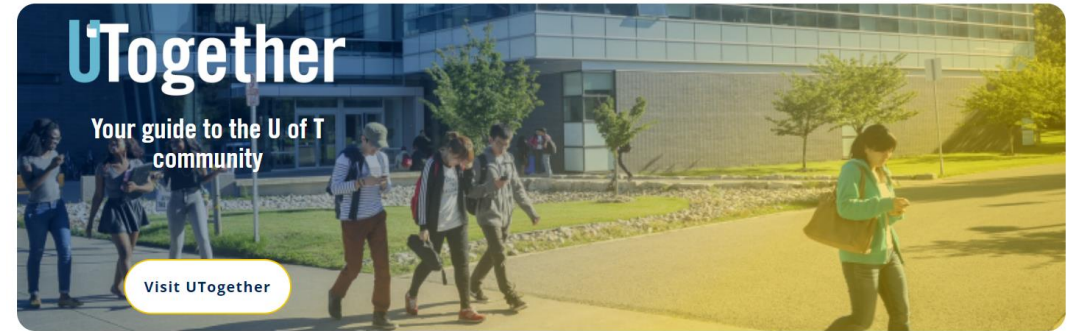
Created a comprehensive brand portal, which includes strategy, guidelines, tools and templates to ease adoption of the new brand and provide much needed marketing support for the community. Over **3,300 internal visitors** since launch with almost **2 minutes** spent each visit.

Provided ongoing strategic and creative guidance and support to the Institutional Strategic Initiatives portfolio including developing positioning strategy to support unique and compelling multi-channel storytelling, core narrative, advising on ISI websites content and development, designing marks and branding guidelines for **EPIC, DSI, Robotics institutes, Mobility Network, School of Cities, Climate Positive Energy, BRN, etc.**

Reimagined the content of the university-wide impact presentation based on the new brand expression and latest stats. This multimedia presentation and all supporting assets are one-of-a-kind tools that are popular not only among UofT's senior administration, marketing communications professionals, but also among faculty members. Used for speeches, events screens, social media, digital marketing, media relations.

UTC Communications Highlight: Ongoing Pandemic Support

UTC continued supporting the pandemic response teams in 2021-2022. This fall, we worked with the University's Resilience Project Team on return to campus communications and Back to School communications and marketing planning and execution.



2,000,000+
The Utogether.ca page has received over 2 million unique pageviews

2,300,000+
Impressions on social media (FY 2022-23)

100,000+
Views for President's "Welcome Back" video

UTC Communications Highlight: Digital-First Storytelling

Our digital-first strategy, aimed at incorporating new forms of innovative content into our communications toolbox, continues to drive engagement.

Our institutional communications channels, such as U of T News, the Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts, and UTSC and UTM channels, all increased in followers in FY2021-22.

16,000+

In FY 2021-22, we launched an institutional TikTok account for St. George campus which has already surpassed other Canadian universities with 16,000 followers.

100+

We produced 100+ YouTube videos, including podcast episodes shared on YouTube.
(FY 2021-22)

200,000+

In FY 2021-22, the institutional Instagram account reached 200K+ followers, making it the most followed Instagram account for any university in Canada.

64,000+

U of T Celebrates showcased prestigious awards won by our community, with the site receiving 64,000+ unique pageviews in FY 2021-22.

1,000+

U of T News published 1000+ stories from across the various faculties and three campuses in FY 2021-22.

124

The Bulletin Brief published 124 editions, for 26K+ subscribers in FY 2021-22.

25%

In FY 2021-22, U of T's share of total media coverage in Canada was consistently over 25%, making it by far the most highlighted university in Canada.

UTC Highlights: Collaboration with Simcoe Hall Stakeholders and Divisions

- Collaborated with key institutional stakeholders and divisional leaders. Supported VPRI on reputation building and rankings, VPI for building U of T's profile and reputation in priority international markets, PSEC and the U of T Anti-Black Racism Task Force with the Entrustment Ceremony event, and the Anti-Semitism Working Group.
- Supported President's sustainability initiatives, including the University's commitment to divest from investments in fossil fuel companies.
- Promoted the University's Equity Diversity and Inclusion goals, by amplifying initiatives like the Black Research Network. Our work on the National Dialogues at U of T Scarborough led to the signing of the historic Scarborough Charter – 50 universities and colleges across Canada signing to pledge to fight against anti-Black racism and to promote Black inclusion.



UTC Highlights: Media Hits

The New York Times

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

CBC  Radio **Metro**
Morning

» TORONTO STAR «



THE GLOBE AND MAIL 

THE  WORLD
UNIVERSITY
RANKINGS

theguardian



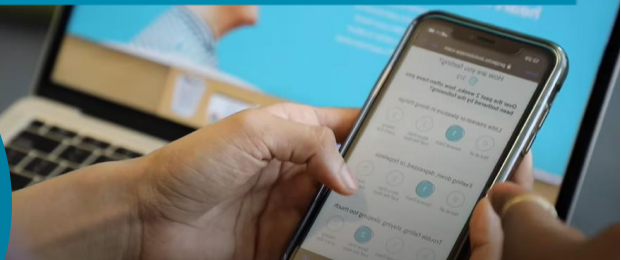
Groundbreakers has earned numerous awards and is one of U of T's longest running video series.



GROUND BREAKERS



Showcases leading U of T researchers in partnership with the Institutional Strategic Initiatives portfolio.



UTC Highlights: Groundbreakers

Season 2: 5 videos and 5 articles (launched fall 2022)

1.3M

Groundbreakers season two content reached more than 1.3 million social media users (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter).

616K+

More than 616,000 people saw the 'From mapping stars to helping youth escape poverty, student researchers break new ground' article on Facebook.

446K

446,000 people saw the Black Research Network episode on Facebook. 42,000 people viewed the episode.

14.5K+

14,800+ views on YouTube for recently released season 2 launch video and first two episodes.

UTC Highlights: New Products

What Now? podcast hosted by English Professor and novelist Randy Boyagoda exploring, with U of T experts, how global society rebuilds post-pandemic. The series launched July 2022.

Overall impressions: 415,000+

Overall views: 164,000+

Overall engagement: 13,600+



Joe's Basketball Diaries, a video series that brings our brand to life by reflecting U of T's global impact. Hosted by Joe Wong, Vice-President International.

Preliminary Stats (Teaser Episode launched November 2, 2022)

Twitter: 46,055 impressions, 6,565 media views, 993 total engagements

Facebook: 6,948 reach, 1,100 media views, 360 total engagements

Instagram: 32,318 reach, 41,484 media views, 1,682 total engagements

TikTok: 778 reach, 838 media views, 55 total engagements

YouTube: 13,666 media views, 43 total engagements

LinkedIn: 18,093 impressions, 4,972 views, 269 engagements



Sustainability

Universities in US and Canada beat UK in sustainability league

The Guardian

Edinburgh is highest-ranked British institution, in fourth place, as fears grow over emissions targets

Uof T News

U of T ranked 2nd in the world in QS sustainability ranking

Uof T News

FOLLOW U OF T NEWS   

National climate science satellite mission co-led by U of T secures more than \$200 million



Uof T News

FOLLOW U OF T NEWS   

UTAM achieves divestment pledge, sets more ambitious carbon footprint reduction target for endowment



Promoting A Caring Community

Showcasing our commitment to fostering a caring community:

- Ukrainian students Danylo Bohdanets and Mariia Cherednychenko share their experiences, and Hyojin Cho of the Centre for International Experience says support is available. ([CityNews](#))
- Student Natalie Frigon is mentoring other first-in-family students. ([CBC: Ontario Today](#))



UofT News

FOLLOW U OF T NEWS   

U of T to welcome students and faculty from Ukraine amid ongoing war

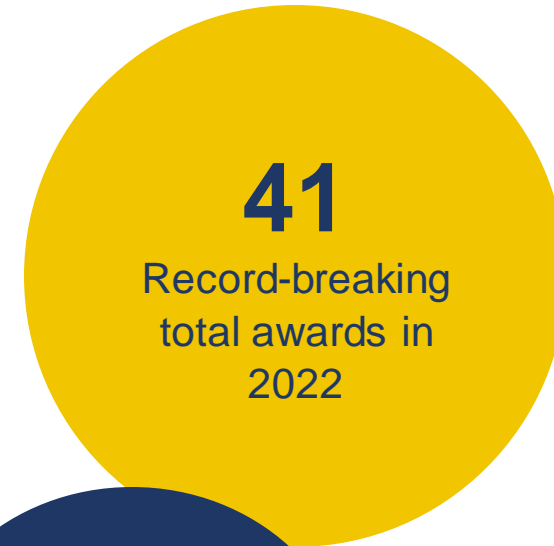


Accolades and Awards

In 2022, UTC's tri-campus teams received a record-breaking total of 41 awards (compared to 26 awards in 2021), including 1 grand gold, 10 gold, 7 silver and 6 bronze from multiple associations including the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Canadian Council for Advancement of Education (CCAE).

These awards recognize outstanding work in news and feature writing, photography and video, social media, and best practices in media relations, strategic communications and brand marketing.

In 2021, UTC achieved exceptional industry recognition in a wide range of marketing and communications categories for the Insulin 100 integrated marketing and communications campaign, which marked the 100th anniversary since the discovery of insulin and celebrated a century of health innovation at U of T. In addition, the campaign also received the University's internal Excellence Through Innovation Award (ETIA).



UTC's Leadership Team

Tanya Kreinin, AVP, Brand Strategy & Integrated Marketing

Catherine Riddell, AVP Communications

Jane Stirling, Executive Director, Office of Communications, UTM

Julia Oosterman, Executive Director, Marketing and Communications, UTSC

Noreen Ahmed-Ullah, Director of the Office of the Vice-President, Communications