

New

Existing

Case Study

archdesign.caus.vt.edu

Website and Brand by Morgan & Hyland

Virginia Tech School of Architecture + Design (A+D) holds top national rankings among its four design disciplines: architecture, industrial design, interior design, and landscape architecture. In the last three years, the school has renewed its website and brand with the help of Morgan & Hyland (M&H), a consultancy whose founders are architecture alumni of A+D. “Thank you for making the website one of the successes of my term as director,” writes *Hunter Pittman, fmr. director of A+D and lead client over 3 years*, [...] that accommodates the multiple needs of our many visitors to the site and our internal community in a clear, concise form[, and] that provides an important unified online presence for the school.”

M&H delivers the following four objectives for A+D:

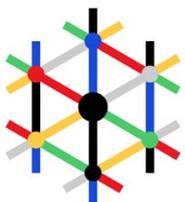
1 • Vibrant and Clear



New vs existing logo

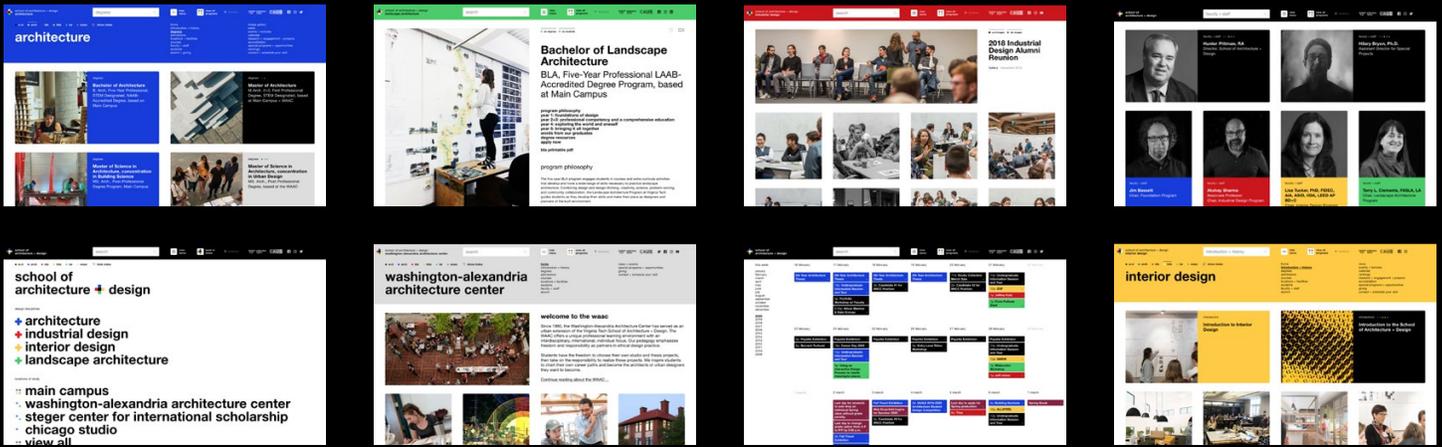
Brand Expression—A+D is among the most collaborative, project-oriented, and multi-disciplinary schools at Virginia Tech. Upon first glance at the new A+D website, visitors see what they would see on campus: a bustling, creative, and intense place that offers students diverse learning modes. M&H achieves this first impression through a bold, legible, and image-driven interface design system, and an editorial strategy that highlights photographs of the many ways students work in the School’s impressive spaces. M&H advances the existing “+” icon by revealing how the icon is constructed: four squares connected by a fifth. The School’s four disciplines are expressed by color while the intersection of the disciplines defines the School.

2 • Unified and Simple



Many visitor pathways

Website Architecture—Every day, hundreds of visitors explore the A+D website to discover new opportunities or to find specific resources. With over 2,000 articles, M&H delivers a simple website architecture for A+D that accommodates many visitor pathways. Visual cues consistent with the brand design system show how programs overlap and establish wayfinding. What before was a series of disconnected and outdated websites now is a unified space where visitors navigate A+D’s many offerings and developing stories. The new website presents the multi-disciplinary spirit best exemplified in A+D’s Foundation program, where first-year students in the four design disciplines learn together in one studio space.



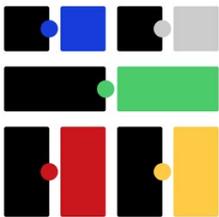
Selected Pages

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3 • Editable and Flexible



Editors can build layouts

WordPress Back-End—A+D’s website team adds content daily without touching any code by using a back-end powered by WordPress and enhanced by M&H. Editors access many tools for visual storytelling and resource building. Meanwhile, M&H maintains consistency in the A+D design system by structuring where editors can customize and by setting strategic defaults. “The WordPress back-end that you brought to the table and the seamless integration and excellent work you did with bringing the website together under our college system, working with our college IT team on operation and security is greatly admired and appreciated. The staff training on the continuing updating of news and events was another aspect of your services that have exceeded my expectations.”—*Hunter Pittman, fmr. director of A+D*

4 • Expanding



New features monthly

Continuous Improvement—Well after the initial launch, A+D continues to invest in better communication solutions designed, developed, supported, and maintained by M&H. Based on monthly dialogue and analysis of website data, M&H helps A+D expand its presentation on the web while minimizing the work left to be done by editors. For example, the A+D calendar developed by M&H presents all A+D events in a central place with no extra steps for editors. Other examples of development include: a semester planning app where industrial design faculty structure their courses together as a visual timeline, an image gallery builder that helps editors publish visual A+D stories more frequently, and a cycled thumbnails feature that makes the website experience more dynamic for return visitors.

Create with Morgan & Hyland—Many organizations today want to offer excellent online experiences. M&H helps clients, like A+D, succeed. “You brought [...] the general complicatedness of presenting the school in a coherent form. The varied and overlapping needs of attracting students, informing current students, meeting faculty needs, accreditation concerns, relationships to other college and university entities, communicating to our alumni and professional communities, and most importantly the need for the whole to present a strong representation of the design values of the school were a daunting design problem.”—*Hunter Pittman, fmr. director of A+D*

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Request a Meeting with Morgan & Hyland

Email: m@morganhyland.com