

# Providing Dynamic New Content



Rhode Island School of Design (RISD SD) is widely recognized as the preeminent art and design college in the United States. Today the college enrolls roughly 2,000 undergraduates and 400 graduate students from almost 50 countries. RISD's graduate programs, including disciplines such as glass, graphic design, ceramics, printmaking and industrial design, were ranked number one overall in the nation in U.S. News and World Report's 2008 rankings of the best graduate schools for fine arts and design. In order to continue to engage and recruit gifted students from around the world, RISD recently built out its admissions efforts with the creation of its Online Viewbook, featuring integrated video and rich content for increased engagement.

## Breaking Away From Static Content

Traditional university websites were often filled with static content that was rarely updated. Now, universities are leveraging social media tools to create rich two-way dialogue with students, prospective students, alumni and faculty.

With the support of its new president, John Maeda, RISD recently embarked on a major initiative to increase its digital presence and garner attention from the millennial generation. For an art and design school such as RISD the most important way for students and prospective students to connect with the school is through visual, person-to-person interaction. The most powerful thing is to see someone else who is in their shoes tell their story.

As a result, RISD created an Online Viewbook, complete with video profiles of alumni, faculty and students currently enrolled in the various programs at the school as well as videos from "RISD's Spaces + Places" showcasing the interesting work students have done with organizations like NASA, exhibitions they have mounted and interesting resources like the RISD Museum of Art and the Edna W. Lawrence Nature Lab.

## The Brightcove Solution

RISD, led by its vice president of Media + Partners, Becky Bermont, selected Brightcove as the online video platform to support the new Online Viewbook. The Brightcove platform enables RISD's Interactive Design team to easily upload and organize videos and distribute and share

these videos to prospective students around the world, all through a single, integrated solution.

According to Bermont, Brightcove was selected based on several unique capabilities:

- **Leadership** – Brightcove's scale and innovation is unmatched in the industry, so RISD felt confident that they would be working with a proven leader.
- **User Engagement** – RISD felt that a Brightcove-powered site with rich media content rather than static images and copy would keep people clicking through for more, thus increasing traffic and time spent on the site. They could create a more engaged user experience by making connections with the videos, rather than site visitors just sorting through text.
- **Customization** – With Brightcove, RISD can create a highly customized viewing experience and site navigation to appeal directly to its design-savvy audience.
- **Distribution** – With Brightcove's unique sharing and distribution capabilities, users can share videos with friends and family with only one click.

"Brightcove has been instrumental in the launch of our new Online Viewbook," said Bermont. "With Brightcove, we're able to provide a better sense of the individual voices of our students, alumni and faculty and the community and academic environment that is offered here. At RISD, the most important thing for us is to be able to show the students and the ideas behind the gorgeous artwork.

We could not be prouder of the new Viewbook and the more meaningful glimpse into RISD it provides thanks to Brightcove.”

### Kudos All Around

“Since launching in late 2008, the Online Viewbook has received rave reviews from students, faculty, alumni and prospective students who are looking to learn more about the real RISD experience,” said Bermont. “It’s been reassuring that key media and online marketing experts have given the effort attention.”

Since its launch, the Online Viewbook’s traffic has increased by 33 percent, while RISD’s overall Web traffic for its risd.edu site has increased by 20 percent. In addition, RISD was able to cut its admissions budget by 20% last year due to the success and efficiency of the Online Viewbook.

The Online Viewbook also enriches and complements RISD’s print admissions collateral. They have been able to cut the size of their traditional print Viewbook in half, as the stories and photos in the print book drive readers to the online site for more information. This approach has also made RISD’s admissions process more environmentally friendly.

Bermont concluded: “RISD is proud to lead the way and set the standard in higher education for how to make meaningful digital connections with prospective students through our Online Viewbook. We have loved having Brightcove as a partner throughout this process and look forward to expanding our online video efforts in the future.”



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*Becky Bermont, Vice President of Media + Partners*