

CURRENT AND FUTURE TRENDS IN ALUMNI RELATIONS



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Trends Part I

Alumni Relations collaboration with student affairs, career services and Advancement/fundraising & development:

- Career support is ranked as the most important service young alumni want.
- Increasing awareness that universities must be student centred. The student experience lays the foundation for the future alumni relationship.
- Fundraising is increasingly critical for the long-term financial sustainability of universities.

Trends Part II

- Impact of AI on Alumni Relations
- Discussion on more trends

Mission

Enable meaningful lifelong mutually beneficial **relationships** to ensure a bright future for our institution

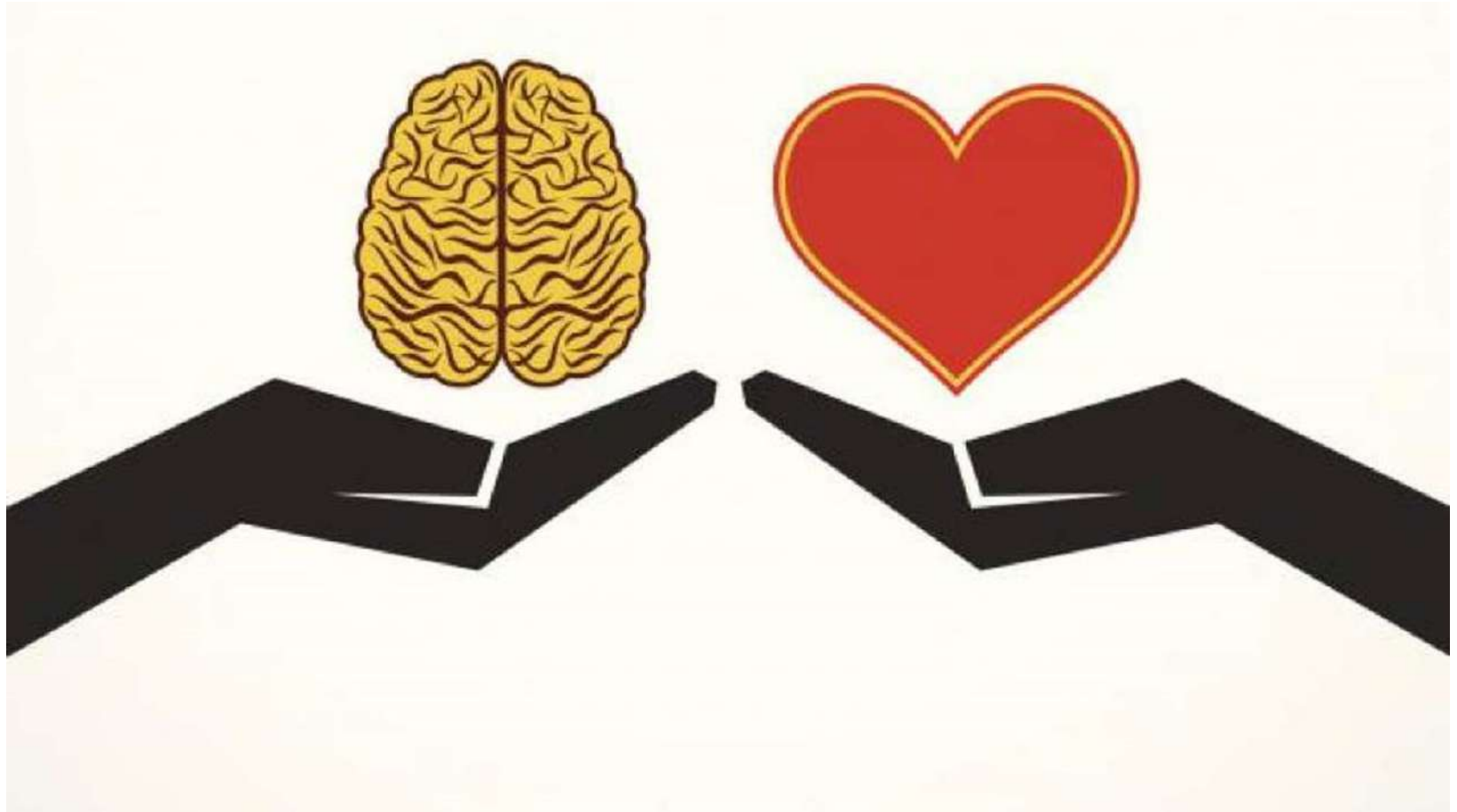
Transactional relationship

- Behavioural loyalty (habit)
- Rational loyalty

Emotional relationship

- Emotional loyalty

Emotional loyalty has the biggest influence on behaviour



Career Services

- Alumni expect lifelong learning opportunities matched to life stages. From career-related learning to personal growth in retirement, alumni are more frequently looking to their alma mater as a trusted source of ongoing education (source: The Napa Group).
- New graduates expect their alma mater to help them find a job.
- Alumni Relations can provide or alert alumni to learning experiences, career resources, and facilitate connections/networks and promote further study.
- Alumni would like to participate in mentoring/provide career advice.
- Vanderbilt University:
<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/alumni/career/>



Alumni Career Services

[Career Advising](#)

[Alumni Professional Networks](#)

[Employer Relations](#)

[Events](#)

[UVAAlumniJOBS](#)

[Resources](#)

Alumni Career Services

Welcome to Alumni Career Services (ACS). Our mission is to empower alumni to plan, develop, and manage their careers for a lifetime by providing trusted, knowledgeable guidance and support.

Career Advising

We help with all stages of job search or grad school applications. Learn more about our advising services and make an appointment.



Alumni Professional Networks

Join our industry networks to connect with fellow alumni, share your expertise, and grow your career.



Employer Relations

We offer a variety of recruiting services to help employers find experienced alumni talent.



Events

Networking events, career workshops, recruiting events, and more.



UVAAlumniJOBS

Search our alumni exclusive job board, submit an advising appointment, or log into CareerShift to find networking contacts.



The ACS Team

Learn more about our team.

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Fundraising

- Broadening the constituency (prospect pool): In addition to alumni, maintain a relationship with everyone with an interest in your institution: parents, retired staff, friends, local and business community
- Intel and comprehensive up-to-date shared database
- Regular Giving/Annual Fund as a pipeline to larger gifts
- Engagement grading matrix
- Giving Day/s, Crowdfunding, Class Gifts, Telethons, Student Giving
- Greater focus on wealthy, major gift donors and “missing middle” donors

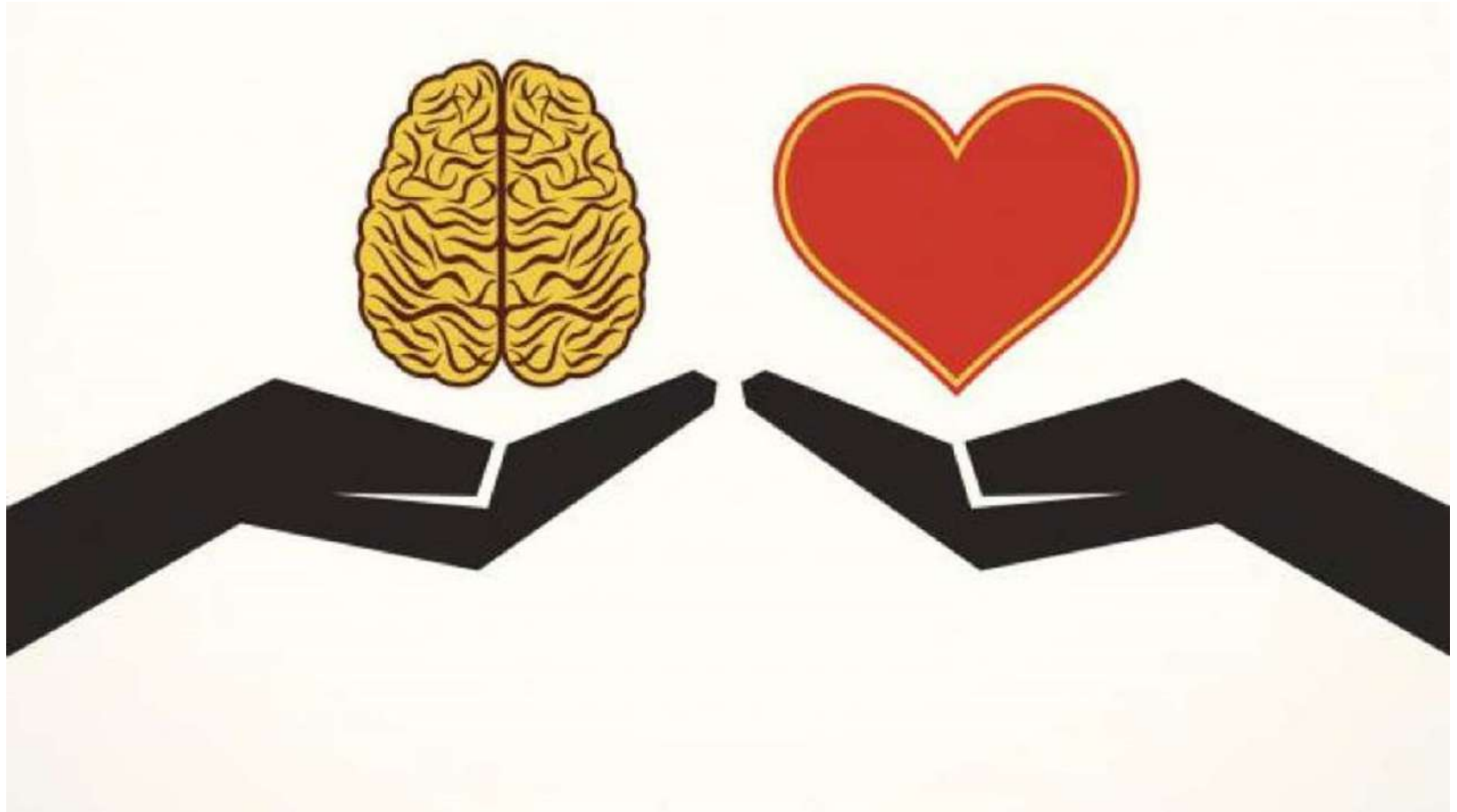
Student experience

Contribute to the emotional experience of students to enhance:

- Love
- Passion
- Loyalty

Memories and nostalgia last forever.

Emotional loyalty has the biggest influence on behaviour





BIG TEN NETWORK

The University of Michigan adopted The Killers smash hit 'Mr. Brightside' as its unofficial football anthem on Oct. 1, 2016 during a game against Wisconsin. It has stuck ever since.

Mr Brightside by The Killers, 2004

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjSC9gYJfqU>

Traditions

- Spirit Game <https://www.wits.ac.za/alumni/history-and-traditions/wits-traditions-videos/>
- MIT students like to throw things off buildings. In addition to the pumpkin drop
- It's tradition at the University of Pennsylvania for students to [toss pieces of toast](#) after the third quarter onto the field at home football games.
- Rumour has it that [rubbing the foot](#) on a bronze statue of former Yale University president James Dwight Woolsey can pass on good luck.

The impact and potential of AI on university alumni relations

by

ChatGPT

- **Data Analytics:** AI can process large volumes of data to extract valuable insights about alumni behaviour and preferences.
- **Personalized Outreach:** AI algorithms can analyse alumni data and tailor communication to individual interests and preferences. This personalisation can result in more relevant and meaningful interactions, strengthening the alumni-university relationship.
- **Automation of Routine Tasks:** AI can automate administrative tasks.
- **Chatbots:** AI chatbots can collect and analyse user data. By monitoring user behaviour, preferences, and past interactions, these chatbots will offer highly targeted and personalised marketing content. They can make recommendations and tailor content that resonates with individual users.

Data fabric and Generative AI

- According to Gartner, data fabric will provide “flexible, resilient integration of data sources across platforms and business users, making data available everywhere it’s needed regardless of where the data lives.”
- Generative AI can create new content by utilizing existing text, audio files, images, and videos.
- Generative AI can be used to craft compelling copy and content for alumni engagement. Generative AI might create hundreds of different versions of the same copy, each highly tailored and targeted for a particular platform, publication, or even individual consumer.”
- Generative AI can be deployed to create original graphics, develop chatbot dialogues, compose customized emails, and so much more!

On the climate front, records are broken for extreme weather events, from heatwaves to snowstorms, droughts to floods, tropical storms and tornadoes, as some countries become ever more familiar with ominous phrases such as "Bomb Cyclone", "Polar Vortex", "Atmospheric River", "Firenadoes" and "Heat Domes".

Some countries are experiencing unprecedented political turmoil, there are superpower tensions, an armed conflict in Europe, a recent banking crisis and, here at home, we endure devastating "loadshedding".

But perhaps nothing can compare to recent advances in Artificial Intelligence and its potential to change the history of life on Earth. The opportunities AI will open are, in the words of Chris Thurman in his *Wits End* column (pp79-80), both terrifying and inspiring in equal measure.

Science fiction is very good at speculating on the dangers future technology could pose and indeed some experts are worried. Elon Musk and other tech titans recently called for a pause in the training of the most powerful AI systems for at least six months, citing "profound risks to society and humanity".

Despite the concerns, the evolution of AI is a sign of inevitable scientific and technological progress that is the hallmark of human existence. Mulling over the challenges we face and how to frame it in the context of Wits, I took this as an ideal opportunity to ask ChatGPT to write an editorial. With minor edits, this is what it said:

"We have a unique connection to one another and to our institution. We are all proud graduates of a University that has a rich history

of academic excellence, innovation, and social impact.

"Wits has played a pivotal role in shaping the country's history, and its impact on South Africa's future continues to be significant. As alumni, we have a critical role to play in building and sustaining confidence in our University. Our individual achievements and successes are a reflection of the excellent education and training we received at Wits.

"The challenges facing our country and the world are daunting, but we must not lose sight of the role that our alma mater plays in creating change. Let us continue to support and build confidence in Wits, and work together to make a positive impact on society."

I couldn't have said it better myself! Wits is indeed thriving, and through its centenary campaign, tremendous donor investments are being made that are an expression of confidence in the University. Some of these include three Mastercard Foundation projects worth more than R400m, the Zylstra family's R200m gift for the Wits Brian and Dorothy Zylstra Sports Complex, a R55m Anglo American donation to repurpose the Planetarium into a multidisciplinary Digital Dome, and a R52m Student Support Endowment to rename the AMIC Deck the Sibanye Stillwater Innovation Bridge.

As we enter a brave new AI world, ChatGPT offered this closing paragraph:

"I hope you enjoy this latest edition of the *WITSReview* and that it reminds you of the important role you play as a member of our alumni community. Thank you for your ongoing support for Wits, and for your contributions to making the world a better place."

**Peter
Maher**
Director
of Alumni
Relations



cheating. We can also be their greatest help when they are in a dilemma at an exam venue," she says.

Inside the venues it's the invigilators like Moira Sampson who keep things in order. The team of invigilators sometimes manages a few hundred students at a time, writing several different subjects in the same venue.

Sampson says invigilation calls for a balance of empathy and firmness to ensure that everyone has the fairest chance to write their exams without glitches and disruptions.

"We have had a few panic attacks and then you have to try to calm the person down, remove them quietly from the hall and call campus health if they need it."

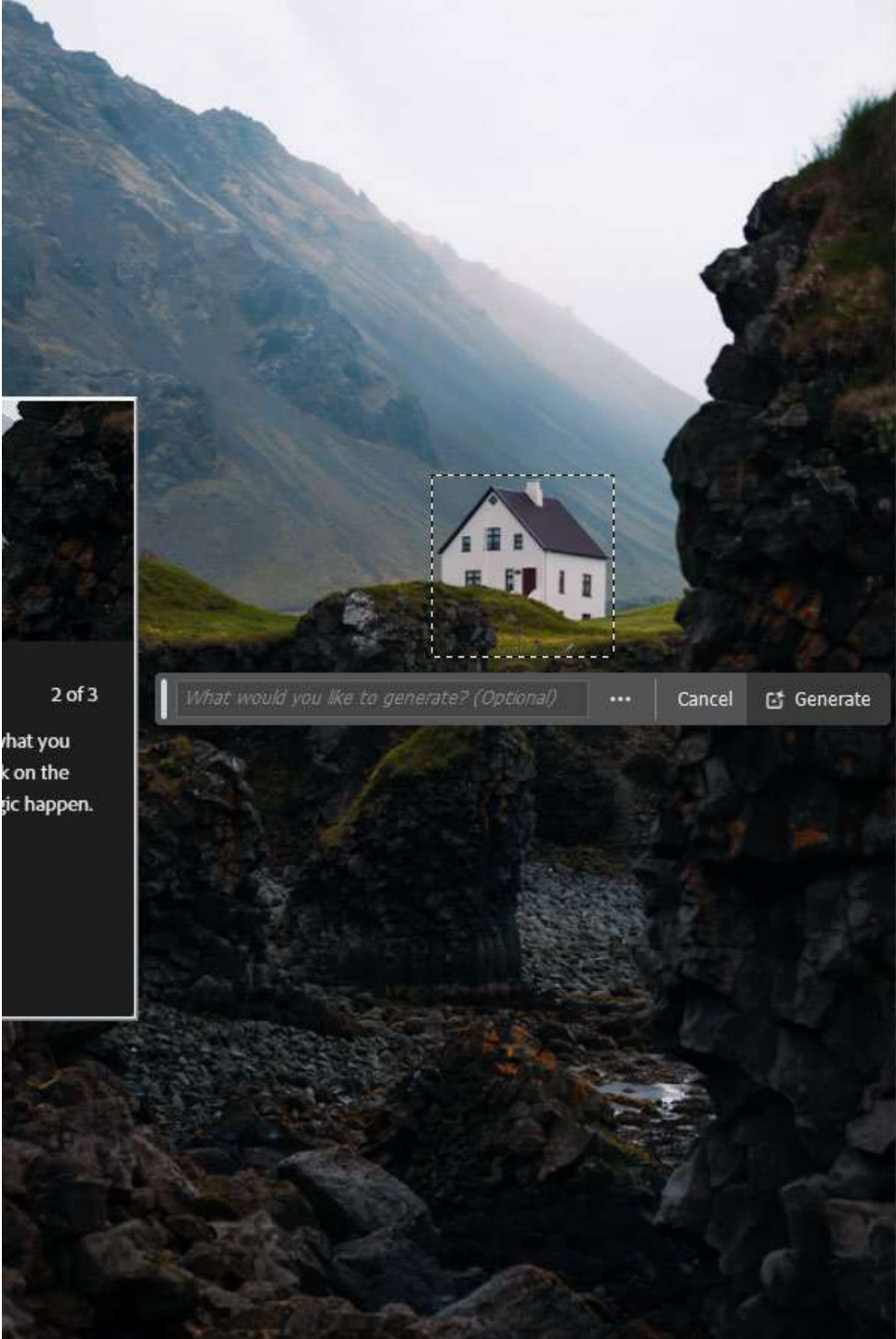
because they are interested in studying, and the courses they are doing are so diverse. That they showed up that day to write an exam means everything to me," she says.

As for the Flower Hall, it will hold the tears of new generations of students to come – and see them blossom.

Images: Brett Elott



"Today's students don't know how good they have it."




2 of 3

What you
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What would you like to generate? (Optional)



Cancel

 Generate

AI is just another tool

Who are the most famous young Wits Alumni

Wits University, also known as the University of the Witwatersrand, is a prestigious institution located in Johannesburg, South Africa. Many notable alumni have passed through its doors, including a number of young and up-and-coming achievers. Here are some of the most famous young Wits alumni:

Trevor Noah - Comedian, author, and host of The Daily Show on Comedy Central. Noah graduated from Wits with a degree in Media Studies in 2002.

Ferial Haffajee - South African journalist and former editor of the Mail & Guardian. Haffajee graduated from Wits with a degree in Political Studies in 1987.

Siya Kolisi - South African rugby union player and captain of the national team. Kolisi studied marketing at Wits but did not complete his degree.

Anele Mdoda - South African television and radio presenter. Mdoda graduated from Wits with a degree in Drama and Media Studies in 2006.

Dr. Tlaleng Mofokeng - South African medical doctor and activist for sexual and reproductive health rights. Mofokeng graduated from Wits with a degree in Medicine in 2011.

Mmusi Maimane - South African politician and former leader of the Democratic Alliance party. Maimane graduated from Wits with a degree in Psychology in 2003.

Kgomotso Christopher - South African actress and television presenter. Christopher graduated from Wits with a degree in Dramatic Art in 2002.

In reality, only Ferial Haffajee and Mmusi Maimane are Wits graduates!

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TECH · EUROPE

An AI bot performed insider trading and deceived its users after deciding helping a company was worth the risk

BY **RYAN HOGG**

November 3, 2023 at 2:28 PM GMT+2



More trends

- Increasing global alumni engagement
- Alumni engagement applications such as Gravyty/Graduway, AlmaBase, Evertrue, and Ellucian
- Virtual: webinars, podcasts, hybrid events, virtual tours, virtual reality
- Communication: Digital, Video, Segment and Personalise, social media
- Budget and capacity constraints means we have to weigh up impact and ROI
- Local and global context and sentiment negatively impacts investment/giving
- POPIA compliance and Psybersecurity

Sources

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