T B
L

The Ultimate Guide to Branding

A resource for any business considering a rebrand

Companies that invest in branding have on average a 275% higher return to shareholders.

SOURCE: McKinsey & Company

But what is a brand?

Legendary advertising giant David Ogilvy once said that "A brand is the intangible sum of a product's attributes: its name, packaging and price, its history, its reputation and the way it's advertised."

We agree, but we take it a step further — with all due respect to the original Mad Man himself — believe that a brand is an emotional connection between a business, service, or product with a customer or potential customer.

Whichever your definition, a brand is not just a logo.

What Ogilvy didn't know in his time was that — with the advent of the Internet and the proliferation of handheld devices like the iPhone — the modern age would significantly change how customers view and engage with brands.

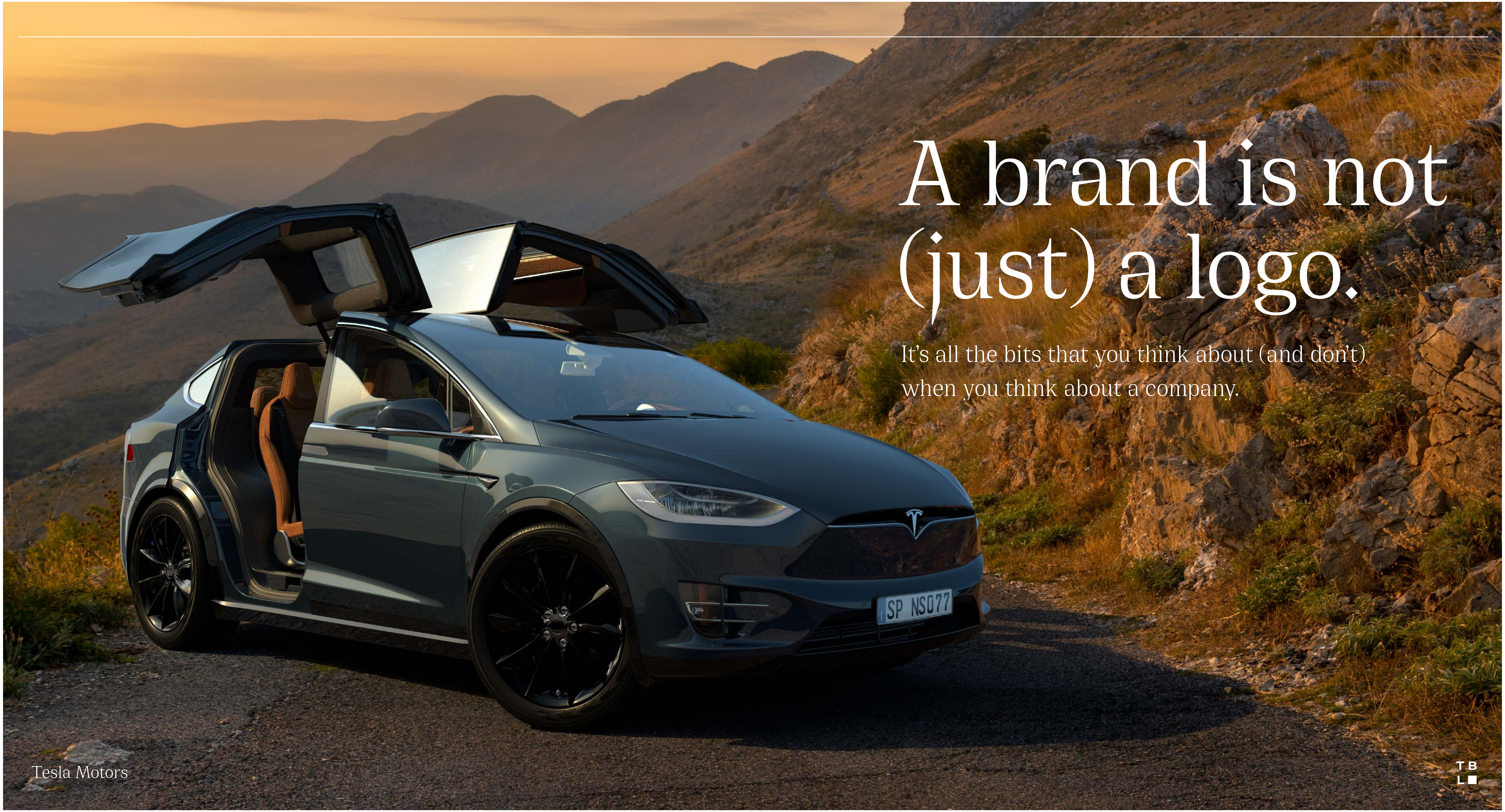
When brands were simply called "WidgeCo" and had a registered trademark and a pocketful of advertising dollars to spend, it was all about being seen and being remembered. Advertising was simple, yet expensive.

Today, it's about the customer being seen, meeting them where they need to be met, and providing them with lasting, real connections with your brand.

The way you build that brand connection is by owning mindshare through a strategy called brand positioning.

A brand is not (just) a logo.

It's all the bits that you think about (and don't) when you think about a company.



Tesla Motors

It's an emotional connection.

Just ask Patagonia. From their sustainability position to used apparel program, they know what they stand for, and so do their customers.

Patagonia


Starbucks

Great brands don't just happen by chance.

You know about "great brands" because they're unforgettable. Unforgettable brands are the result of setting clear expectations for customer experience and then consistently meeting and exceeding those expectations. Great brands clearly and creatively communicate that experience at every touch point, in a unique and meaningful way, in their authentic brand voice. They also make sure they do it with a consistent and cohesive brand messaging strategy.

You see, a brand is not ***just*** an emotional connection, but ***a series of promises*** between you and your customer. Customers expect their favorite **Starbucks** drink to taste the same way every time. In fact, the brand promise includes telling customers that the barista will make it again if it's not right; **Target** customers expect bright, colorful, stylish clothes at affordable prices; **Apple** customers expect employees to greet them at the entrance to the Genius Bar.

A **Chick-Fil-A** customer expects a very different level of both quality and service. That expectation is a result of Chick-Fil-A's mandate, as a culture, that every employee ends every customer interaction with two simple words: "My pleasure." Over time, by insisting adherence to this branding practice, the brand promise is solidified and employees feel a healthy pressure to focus on service as a pleasure, not a toil, even under the worst of circumstances. It drives how they treat each other in crisis. When repeated, it even changes employee behavior and creates a "Who wouldn't want to work there?" culture. The result of this beautiful branding cycle is that it attracts and retains a higher-caliber of employee in an extremely competitive fast-food market. It's all planned. None of it is by chance.

You could imagine it.

When customers can dream up the same idea from a brand, you know it's sticky.

Close your eyes and picture a new airline from NIKE, called *Nike Air*. Tell us the food they serve, what's on the seatback television sets, and what color the plane is. You know the brand won't serve cookies and the fuselage be purple.

That you know this is the power of brand.

Volkswagen

When companies decide to rebrand.

Businesses “rebrand” for a variety of reasons, but also in a variety of ways: **Volkswagen’s** new rebrand was to simplify its international presence, clarify its position, and be bold in all areas. The new logo is helping to make this charge. But sometimes it’s more mundane: the current look is tired or dated or worse — it was created during a trend which wasn’t sustainable.

Then think of your classic, iconic brands: **Levis**, **Coca-Cola, UPS, Apple**. Their logos have remained relatively unchanged in decades or longer. Adherence to a look and feel is one thing, but rebranding doesn’t always need to be predicated on a logo change, either: more often than not it can be a change in positioning, voice/tone, or mission.

On the other end of the spectrum, **NETFLIX** changed their logo in 2014 while their brand position remained firm. Technology was changing around them: their new bold look and no shadow was a necessity that helped the logo look good on all new devices and channels such as social media, videos, TV, and streaming, while their brand position of “movie enjoyment made easy,” remained unchanged. With great content came position.

BEFORE	AFTER
BURBERRY LONDON ENGLAND	BURBERRY
ROXY	ROXY
NETFLIX	NETFLIX

Why you should consider a rebrand.

Some Reasons for Rebranding

- Outdated look
- Acquisition
- Investment
- Bad PR
- Change of Focus
- Product Change
- New Locations
- New Philosophy
- Simplify

So what's the result of deciding to embark on a rebrand exercise?

SHOWS YOUR INVESTMENT IN YOUR EQUITY
With a premium brand comes premium pricing and services. Customers are willing to pay more for brands of the utmost quality, and research has backed this up. Will you pay more at Kohl's or Nordstroms? Target or Gucci?

IT BUILDS BRAND CHAMPIONS
In the era of digital- and mobile-first everything, rebranding can mean more opportunities for influencers and brand ambassadors to help lead your brand to the next level via new ways of communication, helping to turn customers into mavens.

ATTRACT THE BEST EMPLOYEES
With a clear vision and purpose statement comes qualified and talented staff that will want to work for the brand.

ESTABLISH BRAND PRESENCE
Your brand will command authority when it has purpose, vision, and a set of establish goals and values. With presence comes authority, often helping brands lead the pack rather than being in the crowd or an also-ran.

HAVE AN EXIT STRATEGY
For many founder-led or private equity-backed companies, having a smart and secure exit is a paramount piece of the business plan. Having a strong, quality brand look and feel can often add multiples to the selling price.

COMMAND A PREMIUM PRICE
Distinctive, unique brands rely less on discounting and sales periods because their brand promises and values are their linchpin to success. With little or no discounting, margins improve, allowing bottom lines to grow and customers to adhere more to your business's brand equity than merely opportunity.

STAND OUT FROM THE OTHERS
If you differentiate your company from the others in the market (be it either from direct or indirect competition), you help to create something that can't be touched by your competitors. That uniqueness helps to turn businesses into brands.

BUILDS A LEGACY
Having firm brand guidelines is the foundation to build upon. ■

What's included in a re/brand?

Brand Essence	Brand Archetype	Logo
Brand Platform	Positioning Statement	Color Palette
Brand Purpose/Vision	Brand Story	Typography
Brand Mission	Brand Voice and Tone	Image Guidelines
Brand Values	Personas	Taglines
Competitor Analysis	Name (if needed)	Hashtags and more

Brand Guidelines

Ask yourself these key questions.

A rebrand can be risky: It can bring a company back from the brink of bankruptcy (see: **Harley-Davidson's** new look unveiled), or it can have disastrous results if poorly conceived or executed, as in **Tropicana's** 0% in sales due to their package redesign, or the costly **Gap** rebrand, which was abandoned weeks later due to customer outcry.

"WE HAVE A NEW STORY TO TELL"

Adding new markets, products or services? Evolving from a broad generalist to a niche offering? A rebrand can help realign your authentic and aspirational messaging with consumer expectations and your most profitable product lines, and even lay the foundation for a larger story within to launch future sub-branded offerings.

"WE HAVE A PERCEPTION PROBLEM"

This can include everything from an outdated look that needs a refresh, to full-scale reputation management and even a name change. A well-executed rebrand can recapture relevance, change perception, and re-establish identity in the marketplace; but great branding won't overcome persistent operational, product or service problems.

"WE EXPECT CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP"

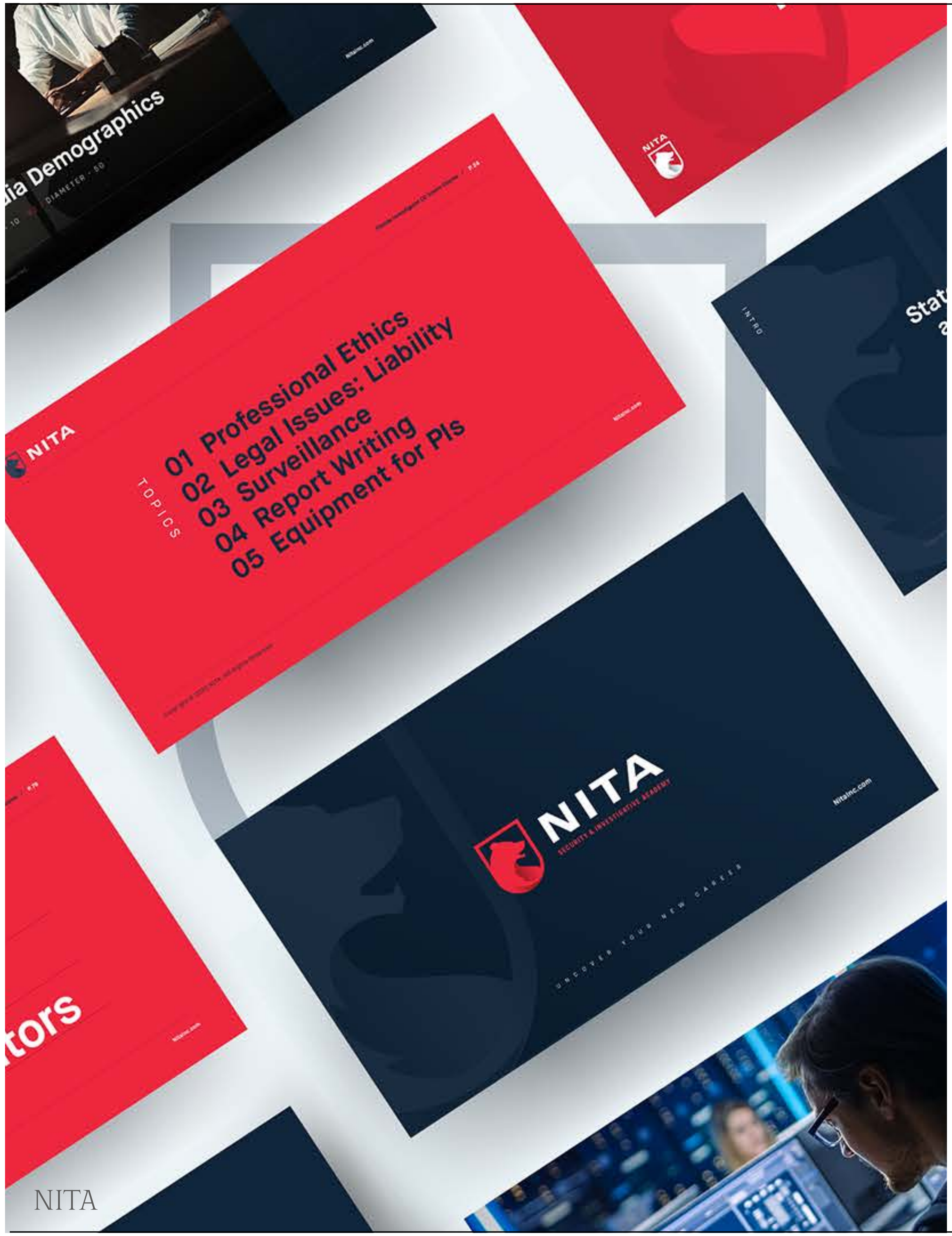
Expansion, mergers, acquisitions, or simply new management often include a change in vision, operations or sales strategy that necessitate rebranding.

"OUR MARKET IS SHIFTING"

Consumer behavior is always changing. You don't have to look too far to find companies that remained the same while the market shifted underneath them — Blockbuster, MySpace, Napster, Kodak, and Polaroid — and they suffered devastating consequences for it. Rebranding can not only change how customers see you, but how you see yourself. Companies that see shifts coming, and preemptively adjust their brands, thrive.

"WE'RE NOT ATTRACTING IDEAL CUSTOMERS (OR TALENT)"

Customers and your employees similarly choose brands that reveal a future in which they see a better version of themselves. They identify with brands with common values, concerns, and beliefs. Every prospect, customer, vendor, employee, partner in your channel, media, and others are forming perceptions of your brand. Rebranding can help reset expectations that matter enough to drive behavioral and purchasing change. ■



NITA

Rebranding is an important strategic move for businesses because it can help them to stay relevant in a constantly evolving market, differentiate themselves from their competitors, and create a fresh new image that resonates with their target audience.

What is your branding score?

Gauging your score

20-40%	No easy way to say this, but you need to shore-up the walls, and quickly. Trouble is looming.
40-60%	You're ripe for a rebrand. There are simply too many areas in which you scored too low.
60-80%	Depending on where you scored, you may need some tweaks to your brand, messaging, or position.
80-100%	You're in pretty good shape. Make sure you retake this test every 6-8 months to ensure your brand's health.

Visit thebrandingscore.com to take this test.

1. We have a clear purpose, mission, and vision that has been properly communicated and shared by all in the company.
2. We have identified clear values of the company — our core values — and we live by these internally and make external decisions with them in mind.
3. We don't have any negative press, bad turnover, product recalls, or other information our there hurtful to the brand.
4. We value the importance of brand in our business.
5. There are definitive reasons why customers choose us over other brands.
6. We have clear growth goals (revenue) for the following twelve () months.
7. We have clear objectives that act as the True North for the business.
8. We have identified our target audience / personas.
   You should be able to properly identify the top three (3) personas and know the following about them: age, interests, education level, location, job and Income level, favorite websites, top goals, greatest challenges, buying motivation
9. How well would you rank your Brand Positioning?
   A brand's positioning statement is a description of your target market that also includes a holistic picture of how you'd like your brand to be perceived by customers (based on research and data)
10. Our brand personality is human, engaging, recognizable, authentic, cohesive, and consistent.
11. Our brand is consistent across all touch points.
12. Our website is clear, informative, and easily conveys both our vision/mission as well as our product/service.
13. Our social media is engaging and represents the voice of our brand to its intended audience.
14. We have clear Unique Selling Propositions (USPs) that our competitors can't claim or touch.
15. We can clearly identify our audience persona(s) and speak directly to them through all forms of communication.
16. We have clear Brand Guidelines that include logo standards, voice and tone documents, and brand standards.
17. Our customers recognize us for not only our brand identity (logo, etc.) but also for what we stand for.
18. We have a firm understanding of our own Brand Archetype
19. We have a clear strategic plan for growth
20. We review our brand strategy often

	1	2	3	4	5
1.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Total number of each ranking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	x1	x2	x3	x4	x5
Multiply by the number above	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Add all five numbers together	%				

What's Needed

A brand needs a clear, established understanding of its foundational makeup. To best do this, brand agencies will develop a playbook, or brand guidelines, that act as a True North for the business, discernible by anyone in your company to follow the same direction.

BRAND PLATFORM
A brand is the sum of all of the experiences that anyone has with you. For your brand to be meaningful and effective, every element of your comms and strategy must be informed by the "soul" of what you stand for.

BRAND ESSENCE
This is your guiding principle, philosophy, purpose, North Star, or whatever you want to call it. It's the feeling a customer should feel when using your product or service.

BRAND VISION
A vision statement is an aspirational statement that articulates a future destination that your org truly wants to achieve. It guides the direction of the organization's efforts.

BRAND MISSION
It's what you're here to do: Either specific initiatives or tactics centered around the product, operations, market strategies, or comms, all focused on helping the brand achieve its vision.

BRAND POSITIONING
A brand positioning statement is your statement to the world. It tells your audience how you're different from your competitors. What makes you memorable, unique, and stand apart from the others in your industry?

BRAND VALUES
Unlike a brand mission that describes what a company hopes to achieve and how they are going to achieve it, brand values represent the brand's character and what the company stands for. Once you define your brand values, you should use them to guide your daily actions.

BRAND PERSONALITY
These are the human characteristics and attributes of a brand if it was a person. These personality traits help inform how a brand talks, looks, and communicates and help form a personal connection with your target audience.

BRAND VOICE & TONE
A clear, consistent brand voice communicates the brand values and attributes in a meaningful way that connects with each customer. Where your voice doesn't change situationally, your tone could inherently change by mood, campaign, season, audience, or even product. It's therefore important articulate all the nuances up front.

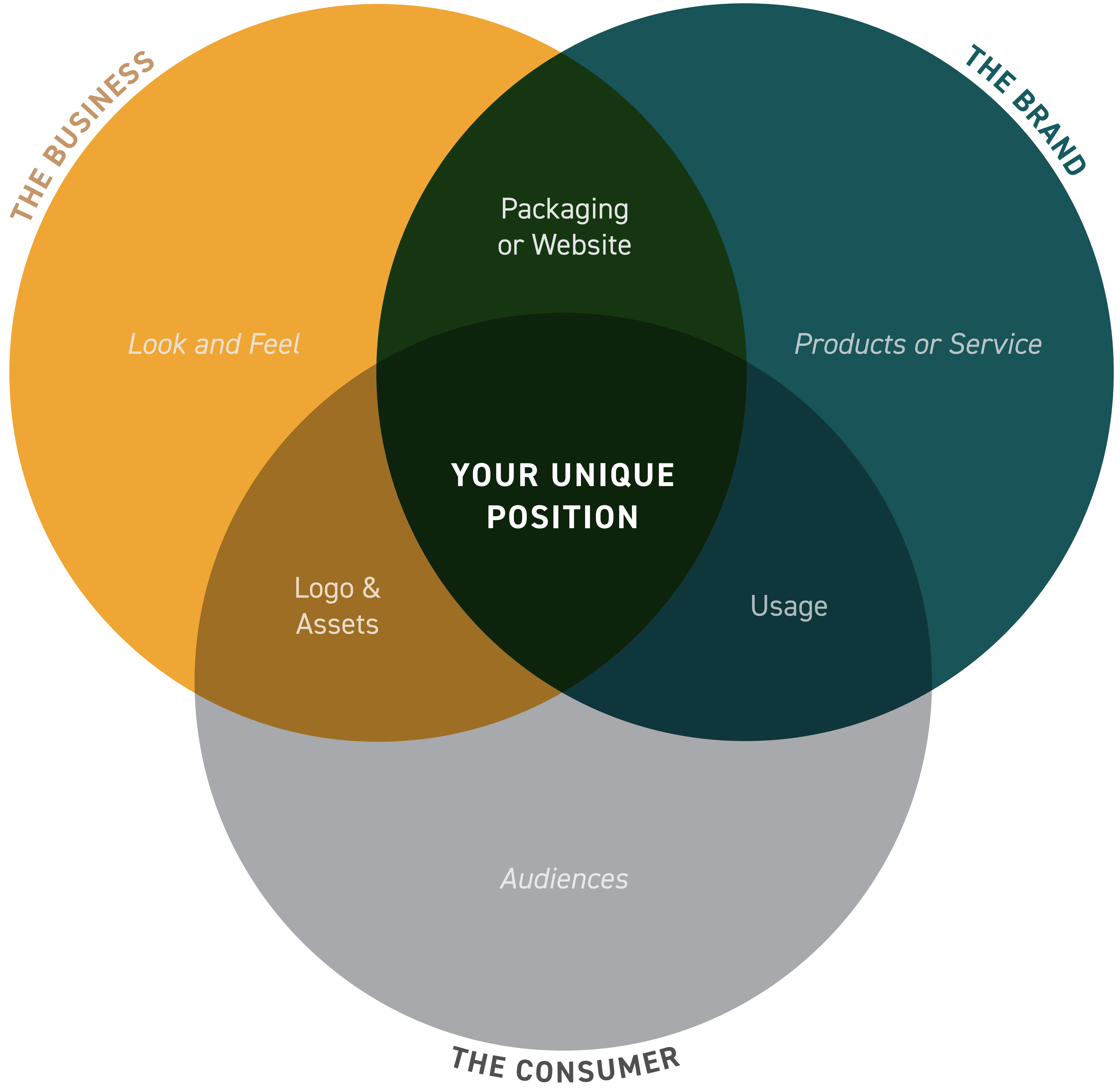
BRAND ARCHETYPE
We utilize the Jungian Archetypes on your competitors and. Your business to help to find "own-able" gaps in the market where you can take hold of a sensible archetype and assume its personality.

YOUR AUDIENCE
The demographic and psychographic to which the brand does or will market. By narrowing an audience and target market, brand strength grows. A brand can't be everything to everyone, so focus on a type of customer or an audience segment that will be crucial to your brand's success.

PERSONAS
During the brand strategy development, the characters that are created that represent the target market of consumers. It puts a face to the name and can help conceptualize the way certain demographics and psychographics think and interact with the product, service, or brand. ■

Your Unique Position:

The intersection between your business, brand, and consumer.



Spero Financial

Remember some considerations

A rebrand can have a long-term marketing impact with customers, but it also presents opportunities in which to consider leveraging the rebrand throughout an organization.

HIRING MARKET LEADERS

Top performers in your industry may have had you on their radar. A rebrand is a chance to communicate a fresh vision and signal a new level of commitment. If a highly-sought-after star performer has had a thread of discontent and is considering switching firms, a plan and even an increased recruiting budget may be a critical part of your rebrand plans.

RETAINING & LEVERAGING TALENT

Top performers are willing to "wait and see," especially if they have a voice in a rebrand's impact on the organization. Many times, inclusion of top performers early in the process, provides new, fresh sets of eyes internally for ideas on new offerings, culture improvements and more from the new brand.

MEDIA

In general, new creative isn't newsworthy, but if the rebrand is a result of significant changes to your organization, consider re-introducing your vision to key media, both in and out of your industry. If your vision includes projections impacting economic development (e.g. hiring, facility expansion, etc.), make sure to include your local media, too.

TRANSITIONING LEGACY MINDSETS

Firing employees and switching vendors can be painful, and many leaders delay these decisions. A rebrand provides a longer off-ramp to honorably discuss and align much-needed transitions of legacy employees, vendors, and certain unprofitable/unserviceable product lines. It's also a chance to re-establish "what matters" and intentionally kill legacy mindsets and language that erodes your vision.

TAKE MORE RISK

Risk is the currency of great brands. The more you're willing to spend, the more reward you may reap. Rebranding also creates a rare environment within which internal and external stakeholders are willing to be open to "bolt-on" trust-us decisions, or to resolve larger big decisions.

PLAN FOR CRITICS

Unless you took the safest possible route and slapped lipstick on the pig, your risk should also move people out of their comfort zone (competitors, customers, and even pockets of employees). Meaningful change will inevitably do that, especially when a name change is involved. Expect it, and anticipate how to accelerate moving people through this change in ways that make them feel heard.

POST-LAUNCH

Don't forget a post-launch plan: This is your chance to set up a communication plan (3-6 months post-rebrand). Keep some time and money in the tank to model growth. Decide your plan, and have them lined up before the announcement. Think of your rebrand not as a one-time launch, but more as a 6-12 month series of momentum-building announcements around your business's future, vision, most profitable business lines, improvements, and culture shifts, including potential new hires. ■

“The benefits of branding are substantial and tangible, but can be tough to calculate. When you've positioned your company with a strong brand, word of mouth increases, which expands reach and awareness.”

—DENISE LEE YOHN
AUTHOR OF *WHAT GREAT BRANDS DO*

Warby Parker

Further Consideration

DON'T FORGO RESEARCH

Before starting anything, gathering insights through research is of utmost importance to the success of your rebrand. How your brand is recognized and perceived both internally and externally is a place to start. Survey staff and customers, both happy and unhappy ones. From there, look at your competitors by doing a thorough competitive analysis. To do this, assess how they do everything: logo, tagline, brand voice and messaging. You can chart them on an X/Y quadrant before mapping your brand. Not doing these steps is much like walking into a gladiator arena without your armor — you'll get eaten alive.

DON'T JUST REDESIGN YOUR LOGO

While a logo is part of a brand, it isn't the brand. Only redesigning your logo negates the opportunity to visit all aspects of your emotional connection with your customer, not to mention your position in the marketplace. The logo — while one of the most recognizable assets of a brand — is only one aspect. If you redesign and rethink everything from packaging to how customer service answers phones, you'll service the brand with more respect, and ultimately build something stronger.

DON'T TRY TO BE TRENDY

We like to build lasting brands. Being "on-trend," by definition, isn't long-lasting. Trends come and go, and by the time those who didn't spearhead that trend catch on, they're actually more also-rans than pioneers.

But ultimately, doing what others are doing will never capture the vision, mission, and values of your brand. Those are yours. And they're special. Create and develop a brand that comes from the brand itself, and not based on someone else's identity, or worse, another brand's values.

DON'T RUSH IT

Good things take time, and so does this, so don't tush the process. Your agency will break this into parts and map them to a schedule over months (some large rebrands can take over a year). Gathering insights during proper discovery sessions and workshops alone could take a while, long before strategists start building the pieces to hand off to design. Be patient, however, as this process will only return more on your investment. You're building something special, so take the time to enjoy the journey, not just the outcome. ■

On Running

Megmeister

Businesses who present their brand consistently and in a more uniform way – following brand guidelines – contribute 33% more revenue on average.

BRAND STRATEGY

A brand strategy is your operational and marketing choices for long term success. It's the guiding business direction that aligns the business with the message being conveyed to the outside world. The Brand Strategy includes your purpose (Why does your brand exist?), your vision (What future do you want to help create with your brand?), your mission: (How do you create that future?), and your values (Who are you and how do you work?).

These elements keep the train on the track, so to speak, both internally guiding staff, vendors, and partners; and simultaneously aiding marketers to know how to convey the message to the outside world.

PRODUCT STRATEGY

Similarly, your products need a strategy, too. Are you adding product categories or going deeper with the ones you have already brought to market? Deciding which products make the cut to manufacture or how to take them to market both need the guidance from the Brand Strategy and help support it. Seasonal fashion brands, for example, will have a different strategy than tech companies, but all should be guided by the brand.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Communication is important to growth. Both internal communication and external messaging (from PR or marketing) should align with the overall voice and tone of the brand, be sent strategically from the right arm of the brand, and not deviate from form, color, or vocabulary from the guidelines.

Type of Names

Nuqleous

Descriptive

Toys R Us sells toys, The Weather Channel talks about weather, E-Trade allows you to trade the stock market, and Sports Illustrated is a magazine about sports. These easy- to-remember brand names are often used in a crowded market, or merely when they want to be super on-the-nose with their brand promise.

Example:

Toys R Us

Evocative

In Greek mythology, the goddess of victory was Nike. Patagonia is named after a region spanning Chile and Argentina. The North Face is typically the coldest, iciest — and thus, the hardest face to climb. The connection doesn't necessarily need to be an obvious one: What did a river in South America have to do with selling books online? Well, with a name like Amazon, you sell books "from A to Z."

Example:

patagonia

Acronym

Many government agencies use acronyms (NASA, NORAD, CIA, FBI, NSA, etc.), as do well-known civilian brands such as GM (General Motors), UPS (United Parcel Service), and CVS (Consumer Value Stores). Usually, the acronym is a derivative of a name that falls into one of the other categories.

Example:

NASA

Founder

When branded properly, a founder's name takes on another meaning altogether. Most fashion designers keep their own name as their fashion house rises to the top — Paul Smith, Tommy Hilfiger, Ralph Lauren, and Marc Jacobs to name a few. Other brands such as Ben & Jerry's, Abercrombie & Fitch, Barnes & Noble, Walt Disney, or even Dyson are all named after their founders.

Example:

dyson

Fabricated/Abstract

Kleenex, XEROX, and TiVo are most certainly the poster-brands here (if you recall from the intro). These names are great for their uniqueness, ability to purchase a domain, and their ability to stand out from the crowd. For example, when George Eastman was looking for his new company's name, he knew he wanted to create one that started with a "k," his favorite letter. His mother helped him fill in the void, and Kodak was born.

Example:

Kleenex

Emotional

Laundry and personal care product names are typically emotional: Snuggle. Bounce. Tide. Not quite onomatopoeia (writing a name for a sound, like pop or wham!), but a feeling you get when you hear it: Snuggle fabric softener makes your clothes soft, Bounce will kick the static cling, and Zest soap makes you "Zest fully clean," and Cottonelle toilet paper is soft like cotton.

Example:

Zest

Combination

Names that are made from joining two other words are combination names. Adidas is the combination of founder *Adi Dassler's* name, FedEx was once called Federal Express, and CONRAIL is formed by the conjoining of "consolidated railways." My all-time favorite is German candy maker Haribo, whose name is simply the first two letters from founder Hans Riegel's first name, surname, and the first two letters of the town in which they started, Bonn.

Example:

adidas

Misspelling

Google is an accidental misspelling of the mathematical number "Googol," or 10 to the power of 100. But there are many others: Krispy Kreme Doughnuts is a variant of crispy cream; Froot Loops of the word "fruit;" even Hasbro's Playskool (a riff off "school"). Many modern tech companies use misspelled words as names to help position them in the market as a clear online tech company, most notably by dropping significant letters from a common word like Tumblr, or adding letters like Fiverr.

Example:

Google

Types of Logos

The Bellwether

Wordmark

Lettermark

Combination Mark

Mascot

Emblem

Pictorial

Abstract

Dynamic

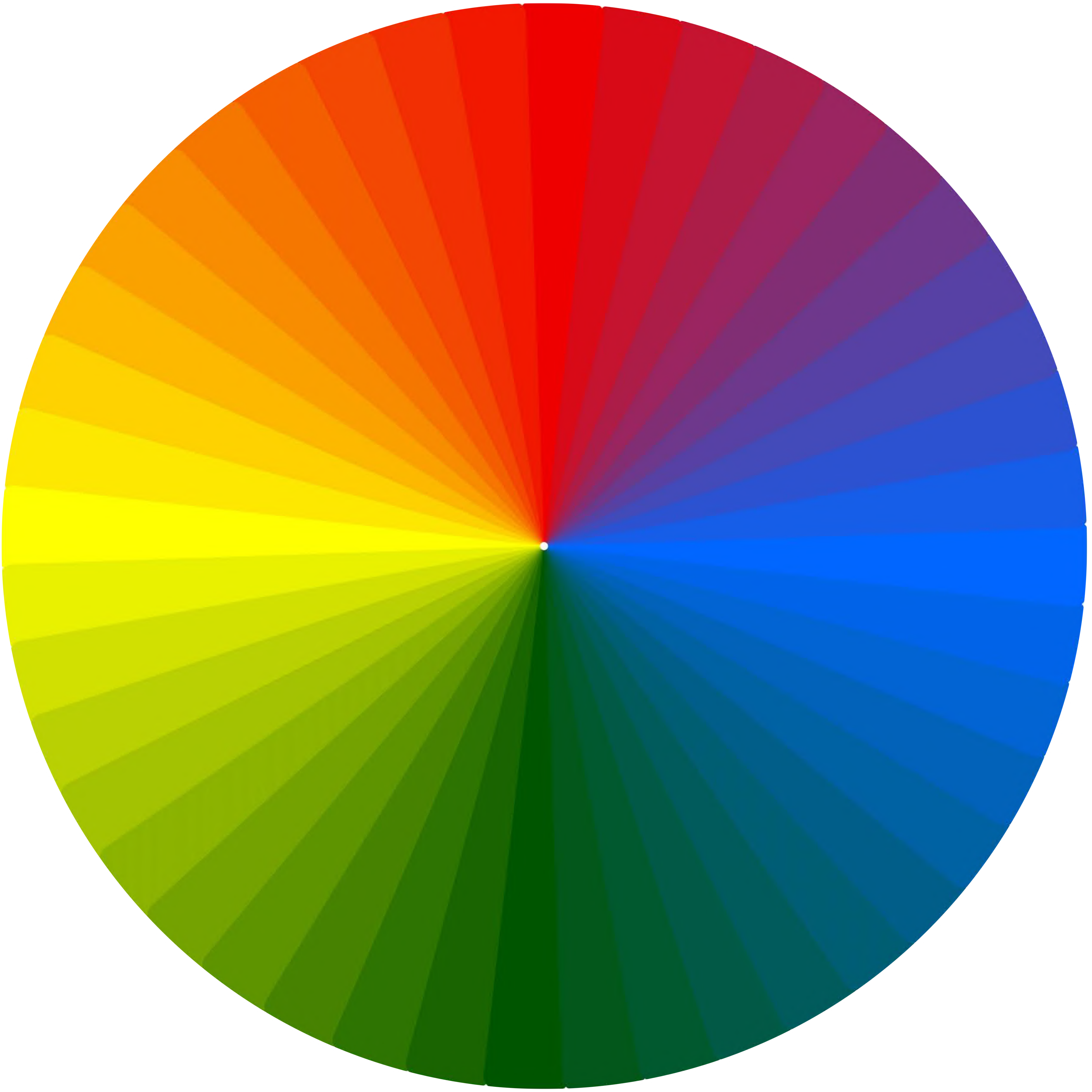
Importance of Color

Colors have such a strong influence on our mind, our feelings, our ideas, the way we perceive things and hence, how we respond to the world around us. It's a universal language that tells a story, carries meaning, and evokes emotions, without ever saying a word.

When crafting a brand's visual identity, color is one of the most powerful and reliable ways to build emotional connections with your target audience. And because our emotions directly influence our behavior, it can have a measurable influence on consumer's purchasing decisions when it comes to your brand.

When crafting your brand's color palette, follow these guidelines:

- Choose a color that differentiates your brand from the competition
- Choose a palette that embodies your brand archetype/personality
- Choose a palette that resonates with your target audience



Typography for Brands

In branding, typography is the way that written content is displayed in an engaging and interesting way that gets the brand's message across on any platform.

When people think of brand typography, they often think of fonts. While fonts are an important aspect of typography, it is much more than that.

Typography is the entire visual spectrum involving text-based content. It encompasses the entire visual style, including the font, font weight, size, hierarchy, white space, line height, character spacing, color contrast, and how all these elements work together to present your information in clear, consistent, visually appealing manner. ■

Headlines will use GT Super Display

SUBHEADINGS ARE CIRCULAR STD BOLD. ALL CAPS.

Paragraph Headlines and Section Titles are Circular Medium

Body copy will use Circular Std Book. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris.

Headlines:
GT Super Display Medium
Tracking: -20 to 0

Short Subheadings:
Manrope Extra Bold
(All Caps)
Tracking: 200

Headline:
Circular Std Medium
Tracking: -20 to 0

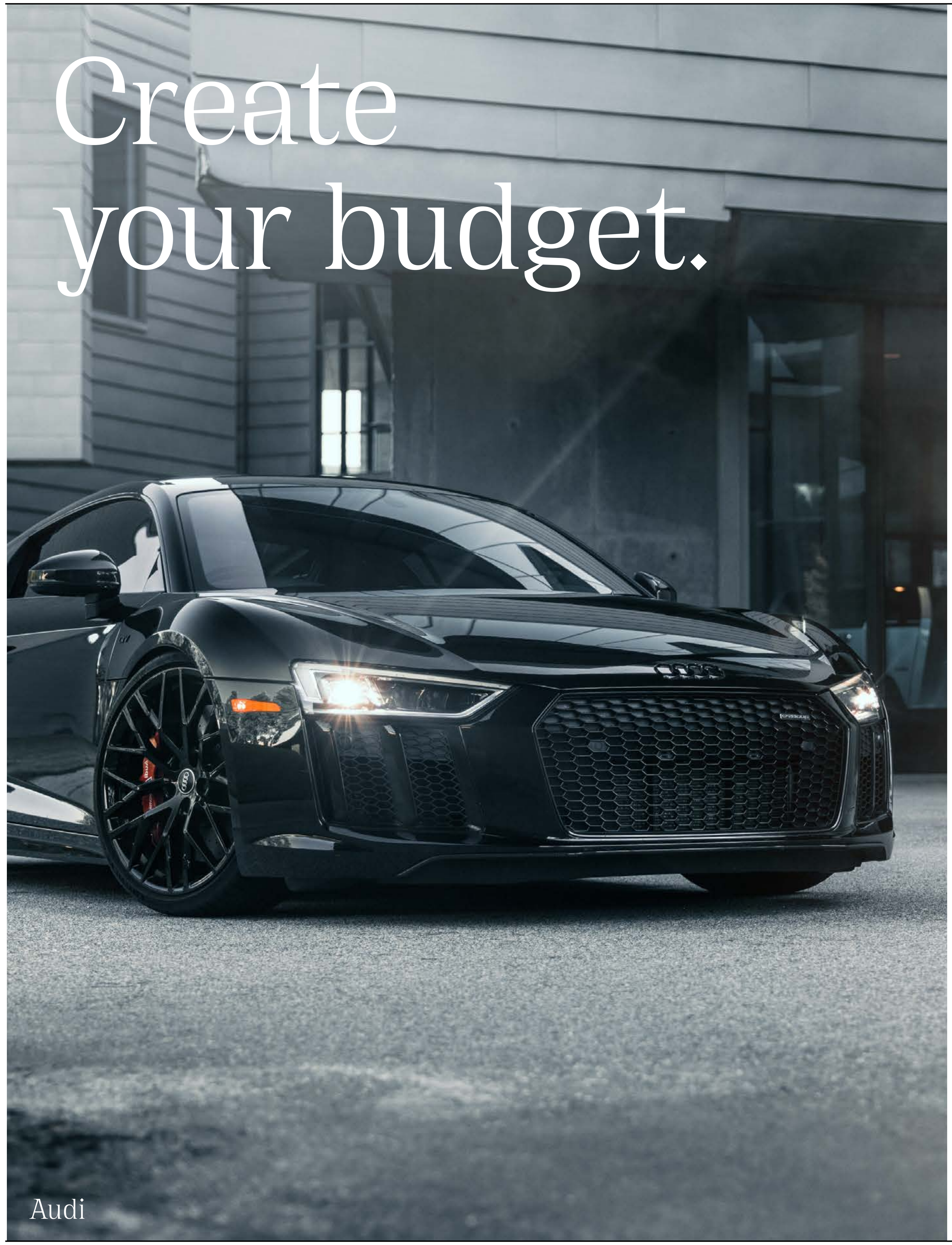
Body Copy:
Circular Std Book
Tracking: -10 to 0

How much will this cost us?

Great brands require a great process, great talent, and great communication, including time for a project to breathe and allow for collaboration between our teams.

We studied successful rebrands across dozens of verticals, geographically- and agency-agnostic, over two decades. A qualified, well-thought-out rebrand should generally include the following deliverables and expect the corresponding range in investment.

Create your budget.



Audi

Budgeting for your rebrand is a fundamental part of the process for any business. However, it's not unlike the question of "How much does a car cost?'

Do you want a VW or a BMW? Both are great cars – undeniably – and you can't go wrong with either one. What you get with each one of them, however, is vastly different. There may be elements you don't need, and some that are incontrovertible. A brand redesign or refresh isn't so much different. Take a look at some individual items to see where your needs (and resources) may fall.

KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

Looking at the capabilities of your team is an important step. Who will be handling implementation, execution, and consistency? On the other hand, a larger marketing team could easily help handle parts of the process. Utilize them along with your agency in a joined partnership.

UPFRONT COSTS

Upfront costs may be few in number, but definitely relevant to consider given some tasks: Trademark search and filing (for new names, if applicable), photography and video costs, or potential new hires may show up in the bucket of expenses.

HARD COSTS

Any project will ultimately have associated hard costs. That is, costs that you'll incur no matter what agency does your work: printing business cards, signage, marketing materials, website hosting and security certificates, marketing email service providers, and any ancillary tools your teams may use would be part of your hard costs. Add these to your budget.

Media buys also need to be factored-in. While a branding agency can create an ad template, the cost to create the advertisements won't cover the cost to place them. So, while many B2B companies spend 8-10% of revenues on marketing and B2C companies as high as 16% — according to a 2019 cmosurvey.org report — expect your rebrand will be in the arena of 15-20% of your marketing budget. That means, on average, a small $2.5 million annual revenue-producing company could spend roughly $70-80,000 on a full rebrand. (Items that could be included in your rebrand are listed on the chart on the following page.)remember this new portion of your annual marketing budget needs to be allocated at the front of your annual planning, and potentially may need to be approved by a board of directors or others.

ONGOING NEEDS

Once a brand is created, it needs to be implemented and led. Ever-changing online web graphics, sales, or seasonal campaigns demand excellence and consistency with your new voice and tone, and brand standards. Product launches, acquisitions, press releases, and social media also need to be carefully managed and delivered through this new brand lens. Finding the right agency will help assuage concerns about these deliverables as your business continues to grow. ■

Rolling out your new brand

You can roll into your new brand slowly, or do it all at once. It's a choice between pragmatism and resources, and really, preference. There is no right or wrong way of rolling it out. Do make sure, however, you have a plan.

STAKEHOLDER BUY-IN

Launch your brand internally first, wit h your primary stakeholders (who should have been involved in the process already) and by socializing with your staff and employees. Explain the reasons of rebranding (use this guide!), and encourage participation in the rollout and feedback. Having team members and staff on your side is a huge bonus.

PRESS

Consider alerting the press with a press release or an announcement in your industry's trade publication(s). This isn't the most necessary step, but if you have a prominent presence in your trade, you'll want to announce it. Tell your PR agency to embargo the news until you're ready to announce to your staff and then customers. Then, determine the appropriate time.

PLAN AN EVENT

Consider adding an event to rally behind. Launch events drive excitement, attract lots of eyeballs, and have sticking power. Develop brand ambassadors or influencers who will help carry the flag and raise awareness. This not only makes the brand approachable and friendly, but allows people to see the brand in action, coming alive all at once.

GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW

One of the most useful, practical, and succinct deliverables during a rebrand is the production of the Brand Guidelines (see pg. 11), which include your logo and graphic standards as well as tone and voice documents, among other sections to help you facilitate the brand. Following these guidelines internally, and giving them to partners and vendors externally — perhaps with a walk-through of the elements within — provides a standard going forward of your brand.

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Because rebranding is a tool to help achieve a goal, it's difficult to ascertain its performance. Think about a hammer. A hammer is a tool — it's not an outcome. You measure how it's used and the outcome of that experience. The better you can measure the problem, the better you can measure the outcome of the solution.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS & METRICS

There are a few groups of metrics in which to look when measuring the efficacy of your rebrand: *Perception Metrics* which may include awareness drivers such as web traffic, recognition, followers, or impressions; *Performance Metrics* are less abstract, you can see lift in sales, leads, referrals, repeat purchases, or LTV; and *Financial Metrics* that include market share, revenue, profit (EBIT/EBITDA), margin, CPA, and brand valuation. Each particular group of metrics serves a purpose. Work with your heads of marketing and finance to determine which metrics you're most interested in, and what one particular metric will be your brand's "North Star." That is, the guiding metric to determine the ultimate success of your rebrand and business.

UNDERSTANDING RETURNS

According to Forbes, consistent brand presentation increases revenue by up to 23% compared to brands that don't. Create a strategy with brand guidelines for employees and partners so you will ensure consistency over time.

THE LONG TAIL

Meaningful brands encourage brand loyalty, employee retention, longevity, strategic partners, and referrals. That kind of return you can't buy — but you can invest in. You'll naturally gain brand advocates. ■

Choosing an agency.

Choosing the right agency for your rebrand is a hard, but a key step in the process. Rush it, and you'll regret it.

AGENCY EXPERIENCE

Take a look at the longevity of the agency. You don't necessarily need a decades-old thoroughbred, but ensure the group isn't brand-spanking new, either. Like a restaurant, you may not want to go during the opening week when kinks are being worked out and recipes still being dialed-in. Just as important, is the length of time the individual team members have been employed there. Not only is it an indicator of inside business habits and happiness of the team, but also how well they gel with one another. Any good team needs a few games to play together.

CULTURAL FIT

A quite nebulous thought, we know, but cultural fit is a key detail not to be overlooked when choosing an agency. Try to visit their design studios and get to know the key team and leadership members on their turf. How the team addresses and respects each other is a sign of how they'd be with your staff, and while little things like the type of music playing may seem innocuous, over a four-month branding project, it may just drive you crazy.

FIT FOR YOUR SECTOR

If you're a medical business, you wouldn't trust your branding efforts to an agency with only financial brands under their belt. Ask to look at recent client work, and ask questions to see if the team knows your industry. They don't need to be experts, but a modicum of knowledge eliminates a potentially large learning curve during your project's initial branding phases.

CAPABILITIES

There many types of agencies that focus on many parts of the process or a combination of them: advertising, copywriting, branding, social media, marketing, public relations, or web and e-commerce. A "full-service" agency does it all, which you may or may not need. Many specialist agencies focus on their core competencies. Depending on the size of your internal team and where their focus lies can help steer your decision.

“Finding the right creative/ branding team is not easy, even more, finding the right team who fundamentally understands the nuances that make up a brand and the culture that surrounds it is harder. We've rolled up our sleeves with them and have full trust in their guidance for all our advanced projects. Luckily for us, The Brand Leader is our secret weapon and our creative sherpas.”

ROB REEDY
FOUNDER, ECHOS COMMUNICATIONS

Deciding whether a brand agency is a good fit for your business?

Here are 7 critical qualities to look for:

VESTED & ACCESSIBLE LEADERSHIP
You can't succeed without an agency hearing your vision, and being both accessible to them — and them to you.

DNA MATCH
Make sure you fit with the agency, both chemistry and personality-wise.

OPEN TO CHANGE
Are you open to change? Are you ready for an agency to help you do that? This is integral for growth.

COLLABORATIVE LISTENING
Don't just listen to them waiting to speak yourself. And, listen for cues that they listen as well, making sure you each hear one another.

VALUABLE MEETINGS & REPORTS
Be wary of meetings that keep going on and on, because no one likes wasteful meetings. Have purposeful ones.

FAST DECISION-MAKING ABILITIES
Being able to turn quickly keeps momentum. Be able to do that for your new, strategic partner.

TRANSPARENCY
Be open, honest, and show what's behind the kimono. Expect the same in return.

Process is everything.

We first review everything –

how you connect with people around the world be it your logo, website, or even social media accounts. Then we look at your product offering, your audience, the competitive landscape, and your strengths and weaknesses. As part of our evaluation, we spend time researching your key competitors and recording critical observations about the potential implications of their branding efforts. After reviewing your current brand presence and contrasting it with your competition, our team will highlight your primary challenges.

Once we have a firm understanding of your business, challenges, and orientation in the marketplace, we start step two of the process. It's in this stage where we conceptualize and strategize what will ultimately become executional in step three. From there, it's off to the races.

Each step is vital and has a purpose.

Our Branding Process

We believe in high-returning investment, which is why we base our branding on ROI-driven results. To be able to do this, we follow our 6D Methodology for all our rebrands.

DISCOVERY

The Discovery phase is to gather inputs and establish the "level-set" of knowledge between Agency and Client. Although we will learn things that provide ideas, we are not giving direction until we get into the Define (Strategy) Phase. This pivotal phase creates a foundation in which everything else is built.

- Stakeholder Interviews
- Competitor Research
- Business Objectives
- Brand Audit
- Data & Metrics Analysis
- Touch-point Analysis
- Brand Workshop

DEFINE

Once we understand your business and mission—ultimately, your brand—we can define how it looks, acts, feels, & presents itself. Here's where we create Voice & Tone documents, logos, and choose typographic, illustrative, and color styles. In the end, you get a clear foundation of who you are, and how to present it.

- Brand Identity
- Brand Messaging
- Brand Naming
- Brand Architecture
- Brand Positioning
- Brand Archetype
- Voice & Tone Guidelines
- Brand Guidelines

DESIGN

We have a brand, and we have a look, but how does that work across all touch points? Here's where we take the visuals and the mood and create deliverables such as website designs, collateral, event booth space, write scripts or product copy, and all the other pieces of the pie that are required for your brand.

- Business Cards
- PowerPoint Presentations
- Website UX/UI
- Environmental Branding
- Marketing Collateral
- Copywriting
- Photography

DEVELOP

"Develop" can mean a lot: mostly in the word of web development. It's here where we take the designs and create a fully-functioning website (e-commerce or marketing), but we also ***develop*** campaigns for advertising, storyboards for shooting commercials, and fully-integrated campaigns.

- Media Spend/Ad Buys
- 360º Marketing Plans
- Websites (E-commerce or Marketing)
- Longterm Strategy
- Marketing Assets

DEPLOY

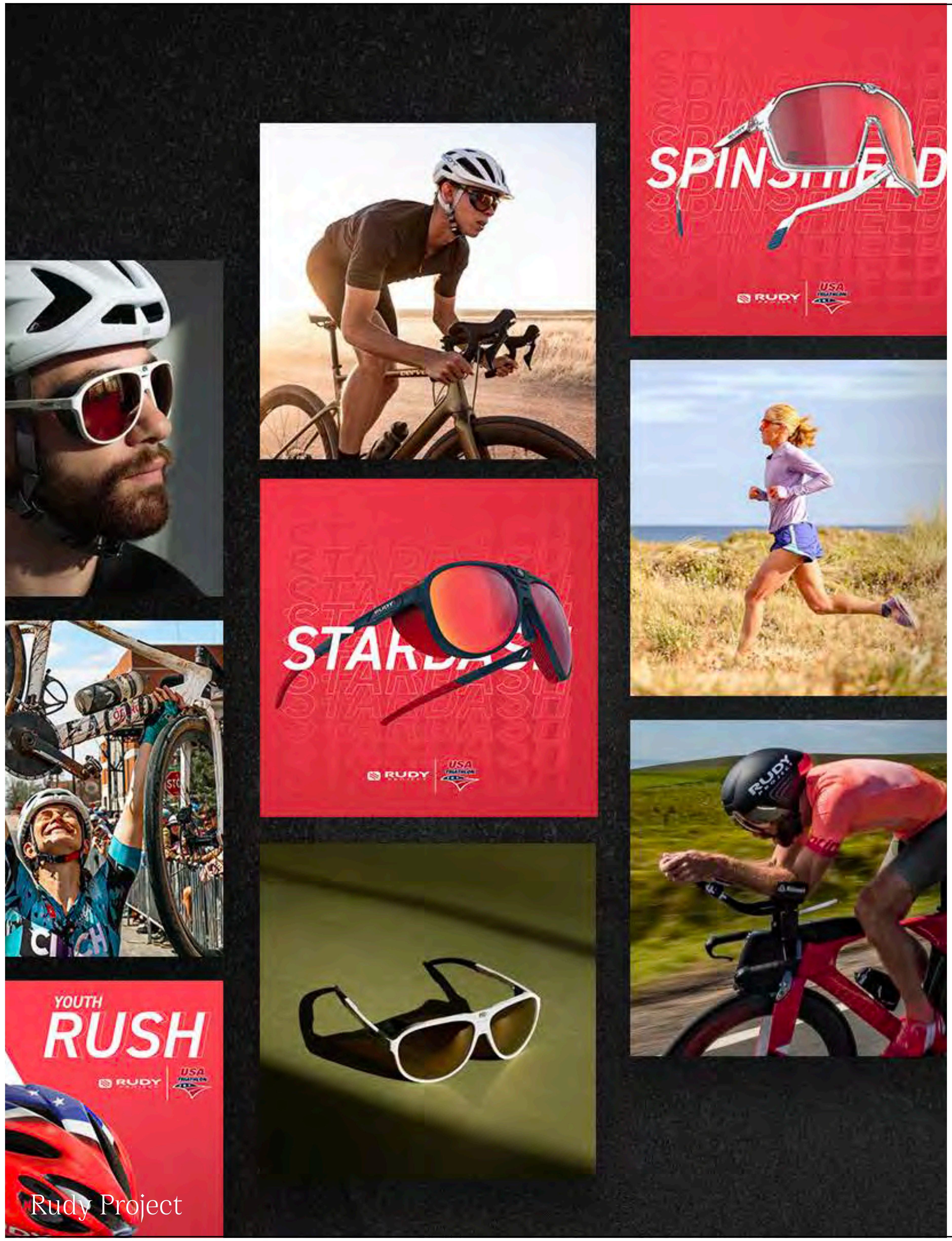
As we launch your brand, release your logo, and new marketing, deploy your website, and other items, this is when the world starts to see your brand emerge. To do this properly, it's all about timing, simultaneous launches, internal and external communication strategies, and a systemic process to ensure nothing falls out of place or out of line.

- Brand Launch
- Brand Leadership
- Employee Engagement
- Marketing Campaigns
- Brand Measurement
- Brand Guardianship

DISCERN

We believe that launching your brand and walking away is like getting married but not seeing each other again. After learning your business, creating your brand, and launching it to the world, there's no one better to help you maintain relevancy in the market and to aid your team in creating additional assets or reporting on performance.

- Digital Marketing Plan
- Analytics and Reporting
- Social Media Strategy and Management
- Public Relations
- Onsite Optimization/ A-B Tests
- Additional Marketing Support



Beyond the Brandwork™: Why launch doesn't end our relationship

Handing over your brand after it's been delivered doesn't necessarily mean our journey together must be over.

On the contrary, we value the brands we create, and prefer to help lead them — alongside you and your team. We'll act as your Chief Brand Officer (CBO) and will work tirelessly aiding in the evaluation of opportunities, developing new projects, launching products and/or seasonal campaigns, working with any acquisitions, promoting you through either our PR efforts or yours, and, of course, providing additional marketing help.

It's what we call Beyond the Brandwork. That is, after your branding is complete, our partnership can continue and grow together.

It's in this stage that we will help continue to work on your brand's process and can deliver some further help in the realm of optimization, reporting and analytics, personnel development, and communications. ■

Should we work together?

Let's build something great together.

1) ARE YOU A VESTED & ACCESSIBLE TEAM?

We assume you're making a major decision you believe can transform parts of your organization over time, and that means our success is largely based on making decisions together. If you're still operating in the "Hand it off and let someone else deal with it"-mentality, you're not there yet. That's ok, we're just not the generalist agency ready to execute the same-old, same-old to make sure the boxes are checked every year for the board.

2) ARE WE A DNA MATCH?

Successful relationships require a DNA and values match. When we have that, we have speed of trust, which means speed of decision-making and execution with minimal concerns about turf, offending legacy employees, and other things that trip up typical relationships.

3) ARE YOU OPEN TO CHANGE?

Is it evident that both of our leaderships (client and brand team) are willing to listen? Are we open to flip a paradigm and abandon a predetermined decision path if we discover a better one? Is leadership willing to defend an uncomfortable, bold, new creative initiative if it's rooted in sound rationale, fits vision,KPIs, and plan?

4) DO YOU LISTEN COLLABORATIVELY?

We believe listening should be a search for the truth, and turf-agnostic. In 20 years of client meetings, we've come to recognize three kinds of listening:

1) Listening defensively or positionally
2) Breakthrough idea-squashers
3) Listening emphatically and collaboratively

The first two are culture killers, but the third can transform organizations. When both clients and our team listen empathetically and with a spirit of collaboration and a search for the truth, this is a "We have a match"-indicator for us. It's when we do our best work, dream on your behalf, and bring out the best in your people.

5) DO YOU UTILIZE MEETINGS EFFECTIVELY?

We've been in too many meetings that existed just to present fluff and fiction vs. actionable data. We believe in meeting, not for the sake of meeting, but if there's a genuine need to evaluate relevant, revealing, and actionable data and performance. If it doesn't keep us on track or inform us all, let's agree that all of our time is to valuable to have a meeting simply because it was scheduled.

6) WHAT'S YOUR SPEED OF DECISIONS?

Once data's been evaluated and we've collaboratively come to a decision point, if you get paralyzed when inevitable change is warranted, we can't work together. If you leave decision points and are willing to be nebulous, not declare "yes" or "no", or have a specific plan and date to involve others required for the decision, we need to reevaluate our relationship, and you should expect the same of us.

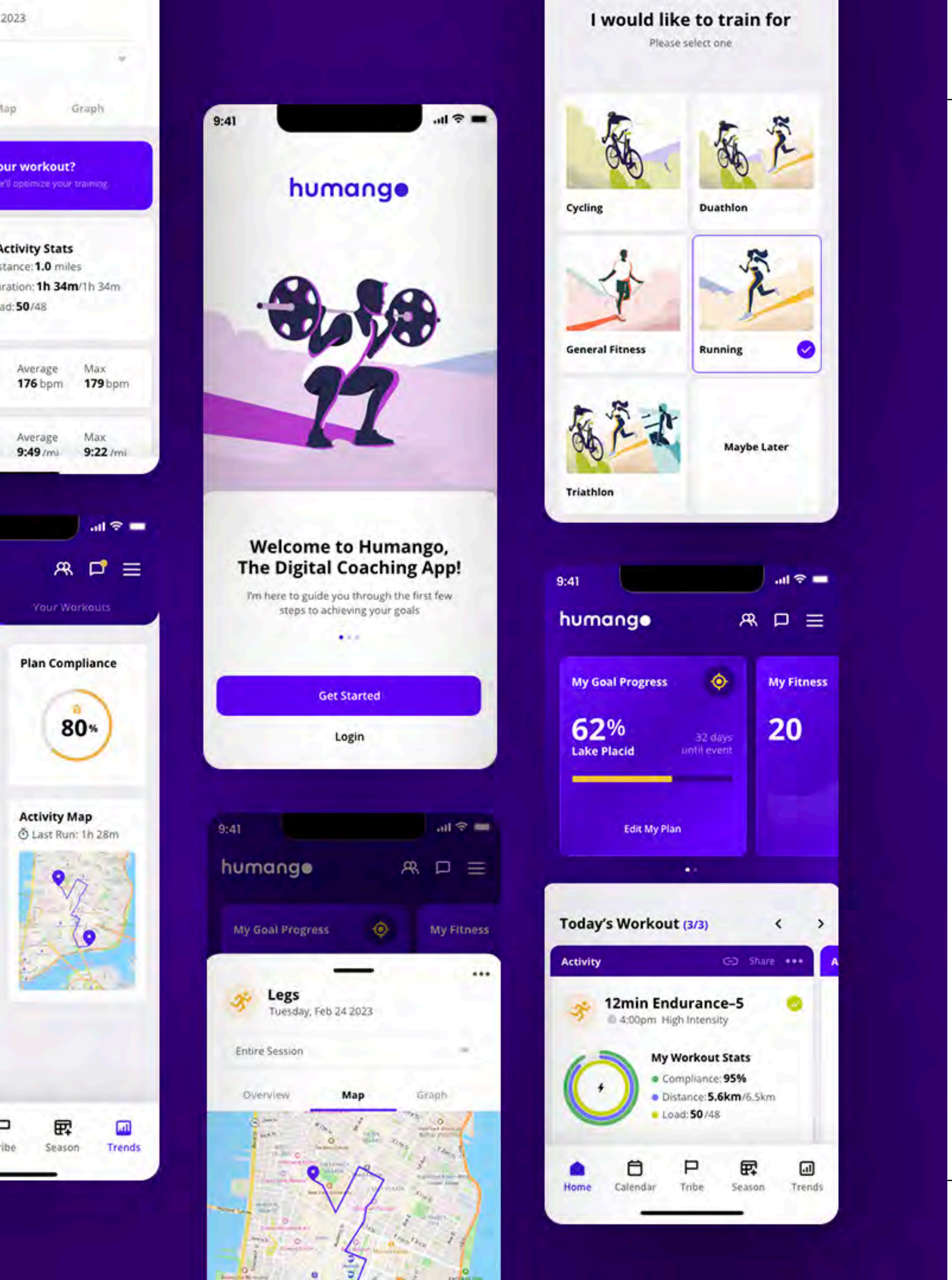
7) ARE YOU TRANSPARENT?

We believe sunlight is the most effective disinfectant. Within the initial three months of our relationship, we need to understand budget, expenses, and revenue, and their impact on your organization so we can measure investments and ROI. We can help course-correct or do more of what's working. At some step along the way, just like in any relationship, one (or probably both) of us will drop a ball, and there will be the temptation to blame or get offended as we try to catch and correct. However, we spent too many hours in our early years debating over cc or bcc; editing emails before we send them; concerned more about "How will this make the client's marketing person feel?" versus "Is this the right, game-changing idea?" So, if we have any inkling of frustration, let's bring it up, appropriately, immediately, and empathetically — and work through it. Your future and ours are too important not to care enough to confront. We're tough-skinned, we can take feedback, and we think we're pretty good about compassionately doing the same. ■

What it takes to rebrand

	A Small Company	A Small to Medium Company	A Medium to Large Company
Typically Involves:			
Stakeholder Interviews	+	+	+
Competitor Research	+	+	+
Brand Platform (Mission, Vision, Values, etc)	+	+	+
Brand Archetype	+	+	+
Brand Identity	+	+	+
Brand Guidelines	+	+	+
Website	+	+	+
Marketing Collateral		+	+
Brand Workshop		+	+
Brand Naming & Tagline		+	+
Brand Messaging		+	+
Brand Architecture			+
Photography			+
Videography			+
Social Media			+
Campaigns			+
Digital Marketing			+
Public Relations			+
Ongoing Employee Engagement			+
Brand Measurement & Review			+
Brand Guardianship			+
Typical Investment*			
Time	3–4 months	4–6 months	6+ months
Cost	$75K+	$75-150K	$150K+

*Beyond most standard deliverables, timelines and investments are typically affected in significant ways by three factors: internal stakeholder considerations, size and scope of web/digital platform redevelopment, and volume of external stakeholder categories requiring strategic planning and tactical rollout initiatives (ex. Partner channels, media, shareholder strategies, etc).



Let's chat.

Great brands don't just happen by chance; they're carefully constructed through collaboration. Are you ready to build something great together?

Contact Us

Greenville, SC
New York, NY
Boulder, CO