

My guide to



Logo & Identity creation

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INTRODUCTION



This is the first of eight such guides, covering various topics across the full spectrum of digital design, and where better to begin than with one of the most widely talked about but most misunderstood of them all – Branding.

First things first, your **brand isn't really a tangible thing at all, and it's most certainly not just a mere logo.**

It's a combination and culmination of a whole raft of things pertaining to the products and services your business offers, the values and ethos that it espouses and ultimately its perception amongst customers. In other words, brand is a catch-all term that defines everything related to how people “feel” when engaging with or thinking about your organisation.

Every touch point and interaction, be it online or in person with a member of your sales team all adds or detracts from your brand's unique personality. Therefore, from a purely visual perspective, this means it's incredibly important to maintain a consistent approach to how your company presents itself.

Hopefully this short guide will give you some insight into how a design consultancy would go about achieving this aim, with a process driven by best practice, and experience gained from what has proven to be successful in the past. So, let's begin by looking at the how a typical Logo & Identity creation project first gets underway.

WORKSHOP AND DISCOVERY



The kick-off meeting is the opportunity to explain your brand's virtues, its USP and ultimately what you want to achieve with a new brand identity. It's a great time for lots of dialogue, to get a better understanding of your industry and competitors, particularly if you are looking to establish a foothold into a new market or evolve within an existing sector.

Perhaps you have already gone through this process before, maybe even when first launching your company, when discussing a new website with your departmental colleagues or having already previously sought the help of a marketing or PR agency. If that's the case then great and much of the hard work establishing what your organisation stands for, its purpose and story have already been built into a coherent narrative.

However, if not, the **best way to tease out information that you inherently know, but perhaps can't articulate is through a workshop.**

This can either be something you undertake internally or it could be externally managed by the design consultancy involving multiple key stakeholders and even valued long-term customers. This process should provide the most vital characteristics that define your business, and of equal importance those which don't.

Regardless of the method used, once those core qualities have been established, it's time to move onto the next step.

TYPEFACE AND COLOURS



Once the initial logo ideas have been whittled down to a smaller selection with the potential for further exploration and development, the same process is undertaken for the typefaces and colour palette.

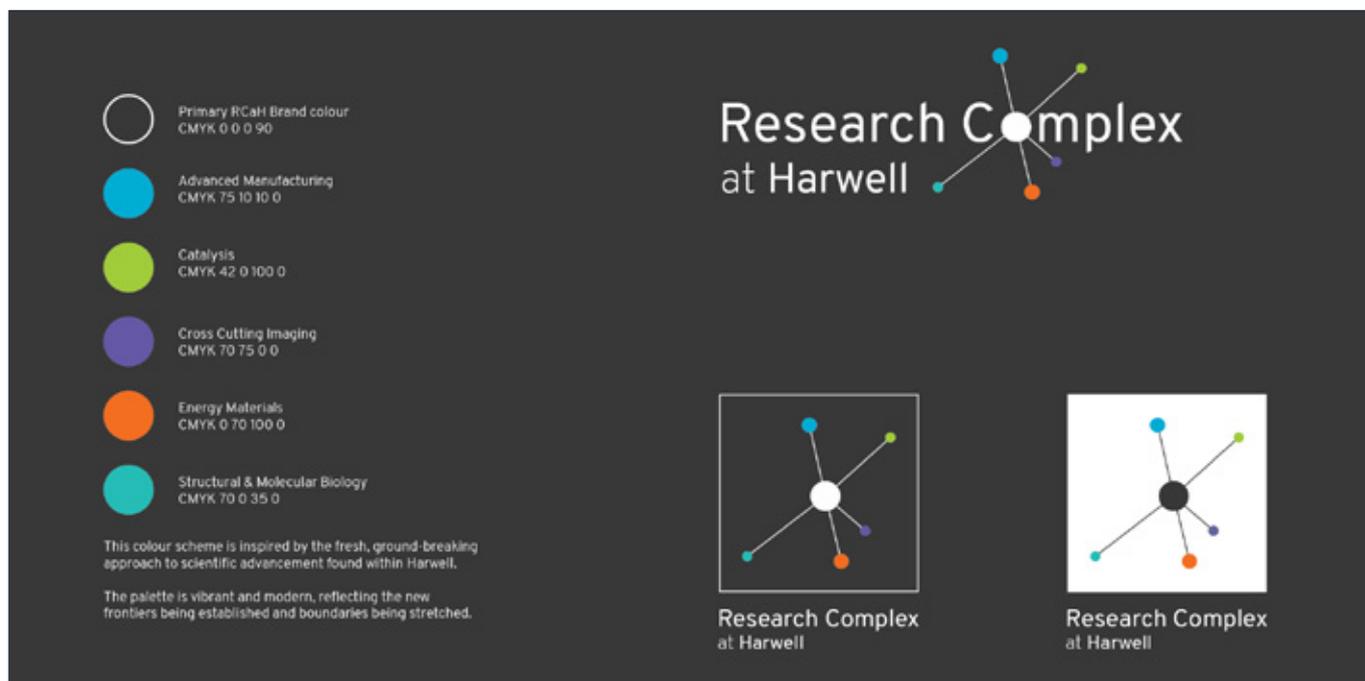
This phase involves trying various font options in serif (think the Daily Telegraph, Guardian or Independent) and sans-serif (think BBC, Sky Sports or the Premier League) and in different weights (e.g. thin, normal, bold) and cases (e.g. upper, lower, sentence). **Typefaces can convey a whole gamut of emotions**, such as playful or serious, modern or traditional, edgy or elegant, and getting this choice right is a crucial one.

When looking at potential colour schemes, its generally a case of taking a lead from your existing brand guidelines and colour palette if these already exist, or if not, creating these from scratch in CMYK/Pantone (e.g. for print) and in RGB/Hex (e.g. for online).

These are then combined with the logos to see which work best and importantly look the most balanced and attractive within the confines of the brief. and target market.

My favoured approach once this point is reached, is to demonstrate how a logo can look great on a white background and then also on a coloured background too, as this then provides ongoing flexibility and attempts to future-proof against possible usage implications.

REVIEW AND ITERATION



Following review on the initial logos combined with the typeface selections and colour schemes, the next step is to create iterated versions of the logo identity. This approach, which could be termed a funnelling and feedback loop continues as you hone in on a final look.

Another key thing to bear in mind as the process nears its conclusion, is that a good logo should also be presented in several variations (such as vertical, horizontal, stacked or letterbox) and in groupings (e.g. the icon, word-mark and strap-line together) so that you are maximising the effectiveness of the logo working in multiple contexts.

Finally, do ensure that the **brand identity is flexible enough to work well on social media**. For example, Twitter and LinkedIn utilise a 400x400 pixel square upload image, which is displayed on their websites within a circle, thus any logo or icon needs to sit comfortably within this space and retain legibility at a small size.

The best solution I find, is to produce a distinct standalone set of logos that will suit this requirement, rather than try and simply upload a PNG of the main logo and hope for the best! You can even be creative about it, perhaps using just an icon on its own to fit neatly within the reduced space and then showing the full logo as part of the larger banner area that sits at the top of the profile. Almost done now, with everything in place, but there is still one last thing not to forget.

DESIGN ASSETS

Dropbox > BritainThinks Branding Assets		
Name ↑	Modified ↓	Members ↓
 Branding Guidelines	--	6 members
 CMYK Assets	--	6 members
 High Res Files via Adobe Illustrator	--	6 members
 RGB Assets	--	6 members
 Social Media	--	6 members

On final approval and once the balance payment has been made, you should be provided with a set of design assets for print and online within your own client area on a platform such as Dropbox. This is particularly important as the last thing you want to do is chase up your old agency a few years later when your new website designer asks for a high-res version of the logo. Trust me, this happens way more times than it should do, and it's usually down to a lack of communication when a project reaches its conclusion.

With your new logo now crafted, this vital part of branding strategy often leads to a wider audit of existing collateral such as business cards, letterheads and folders but it can also become the **catalyst for considering a wide range of supporting marketing materials**. For example, a corporate brochure on a tactile GF Smith stock to hand out at a trade show, Design style guides to aid staff members who are producing internal documents or perhaps a stunning PPT presentation deck to support an upcoming pitch.

I hope that this guide has offered some beneficial insight towards what Logo & Identity creation entails. If you require any further information or want to chat further with myself or Alberon as to how we could help your business in the future, then do please get in touch. In the meantime, please check out the 1355 Wine Cellars Case Study, where copywriter Mike Northover and I, had the privilege to work with the talented Charles Smith.