The Design Couch Sessions
#03 : Brand

Version 1 - August 2019
Originally compiled for the Edenspiekermann Singapore team

Today's program

Brand - what is it?
Brand strategy
Brand creation workshop
Brand identity development
Brand change

What is a brand?
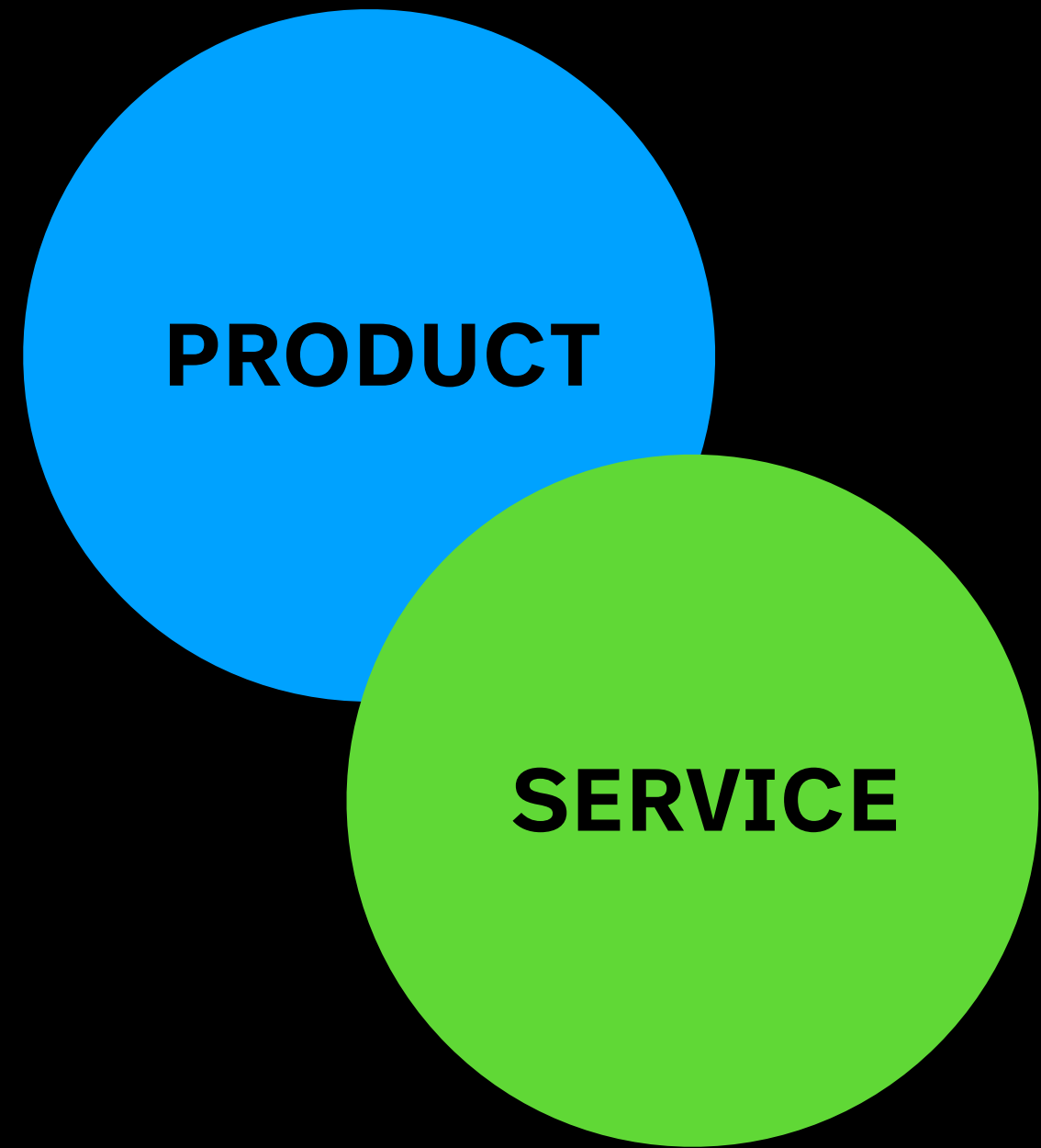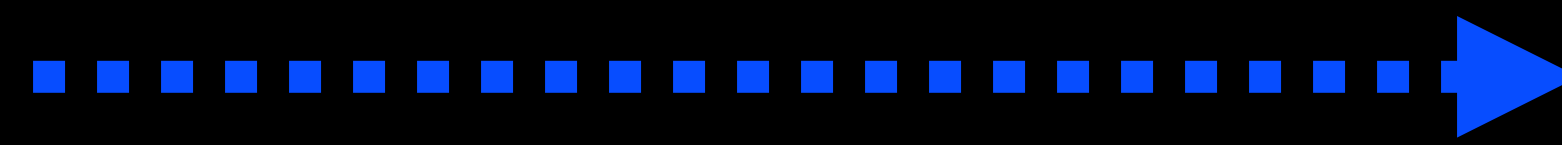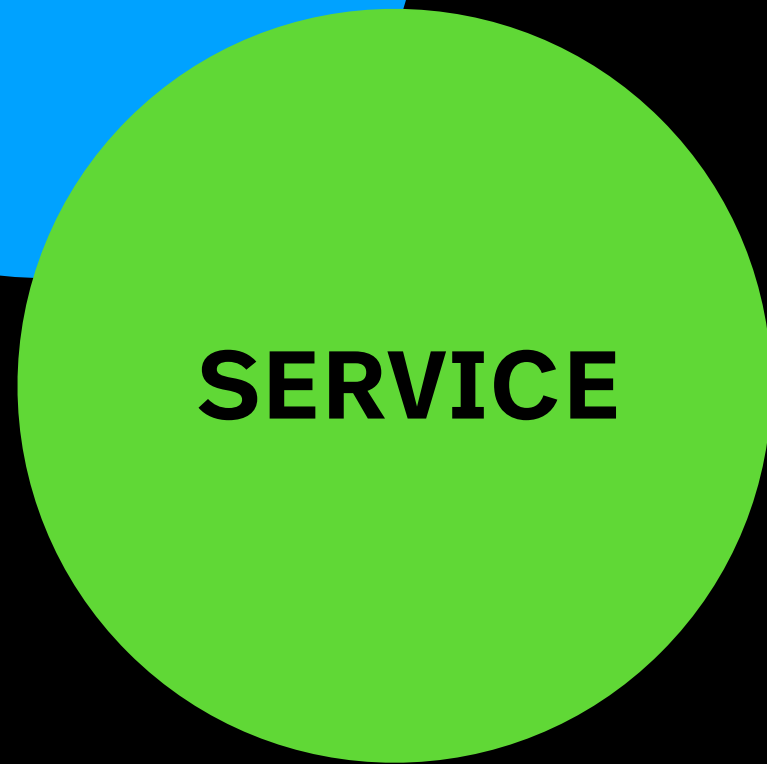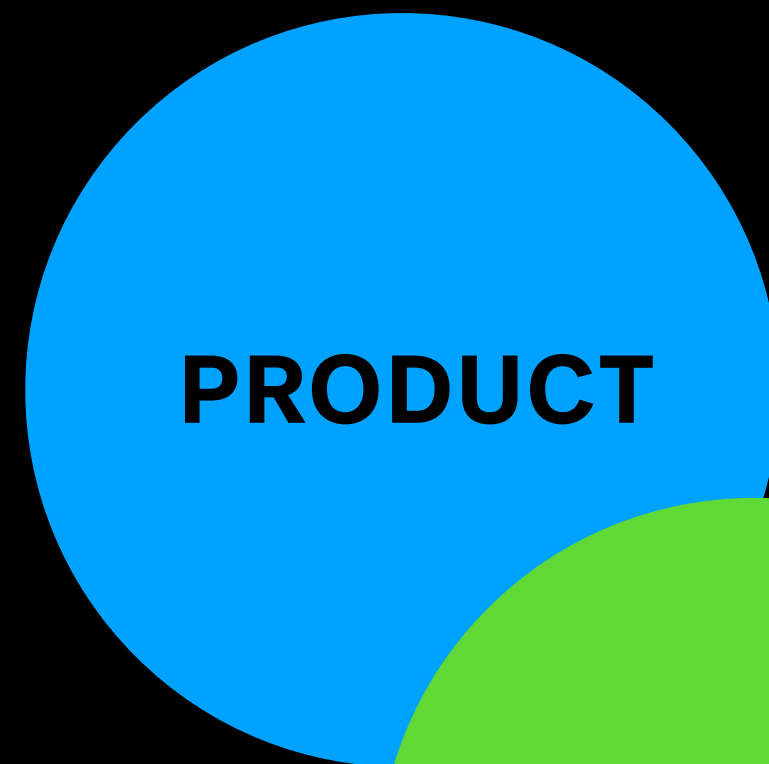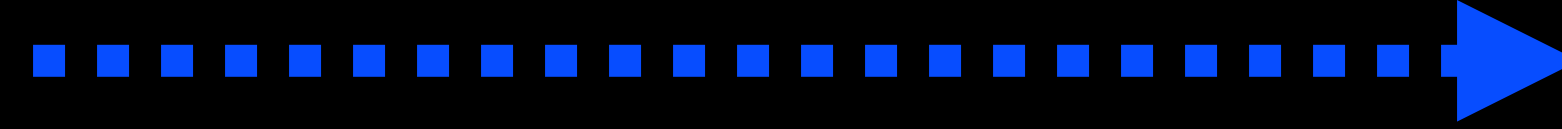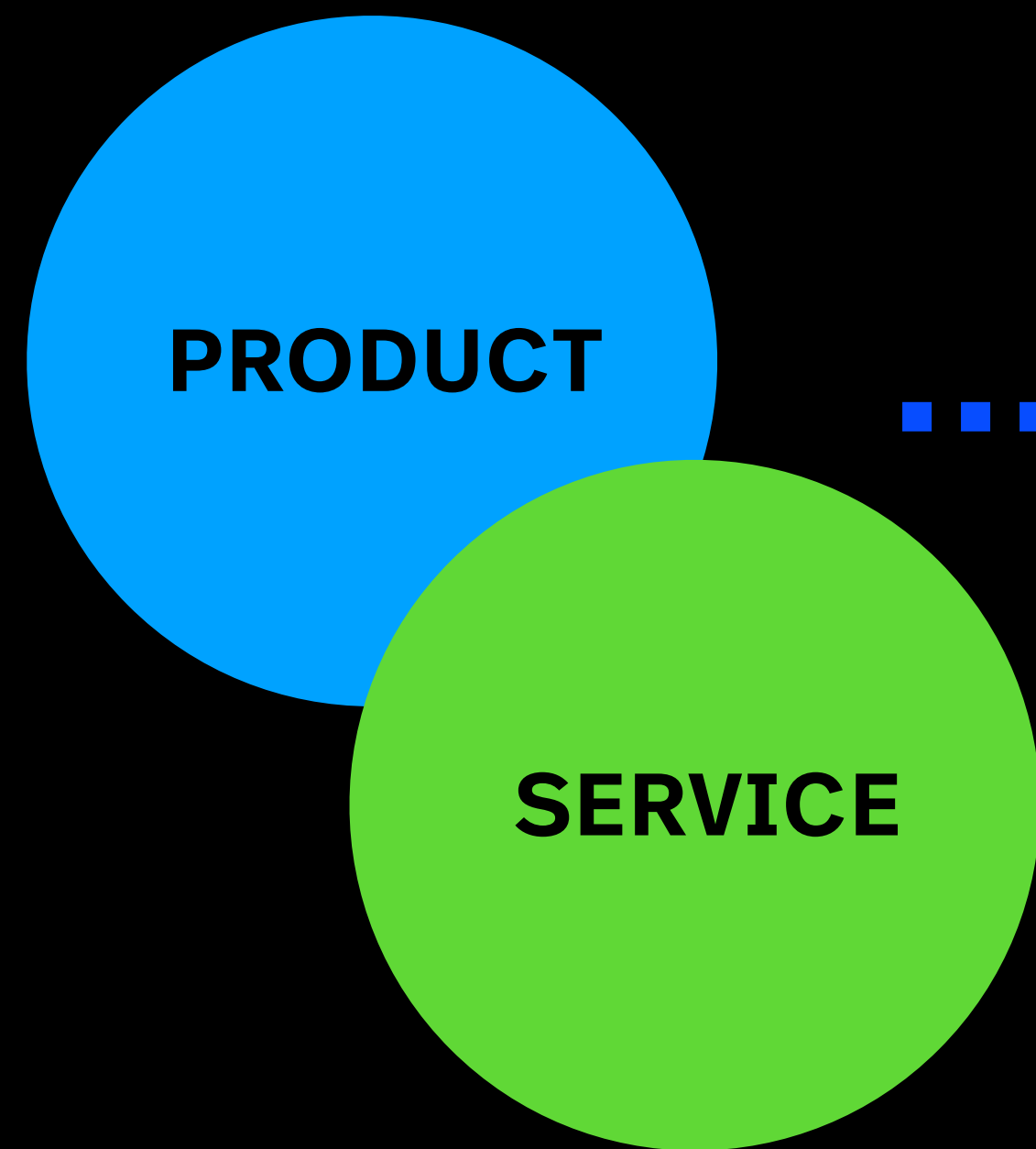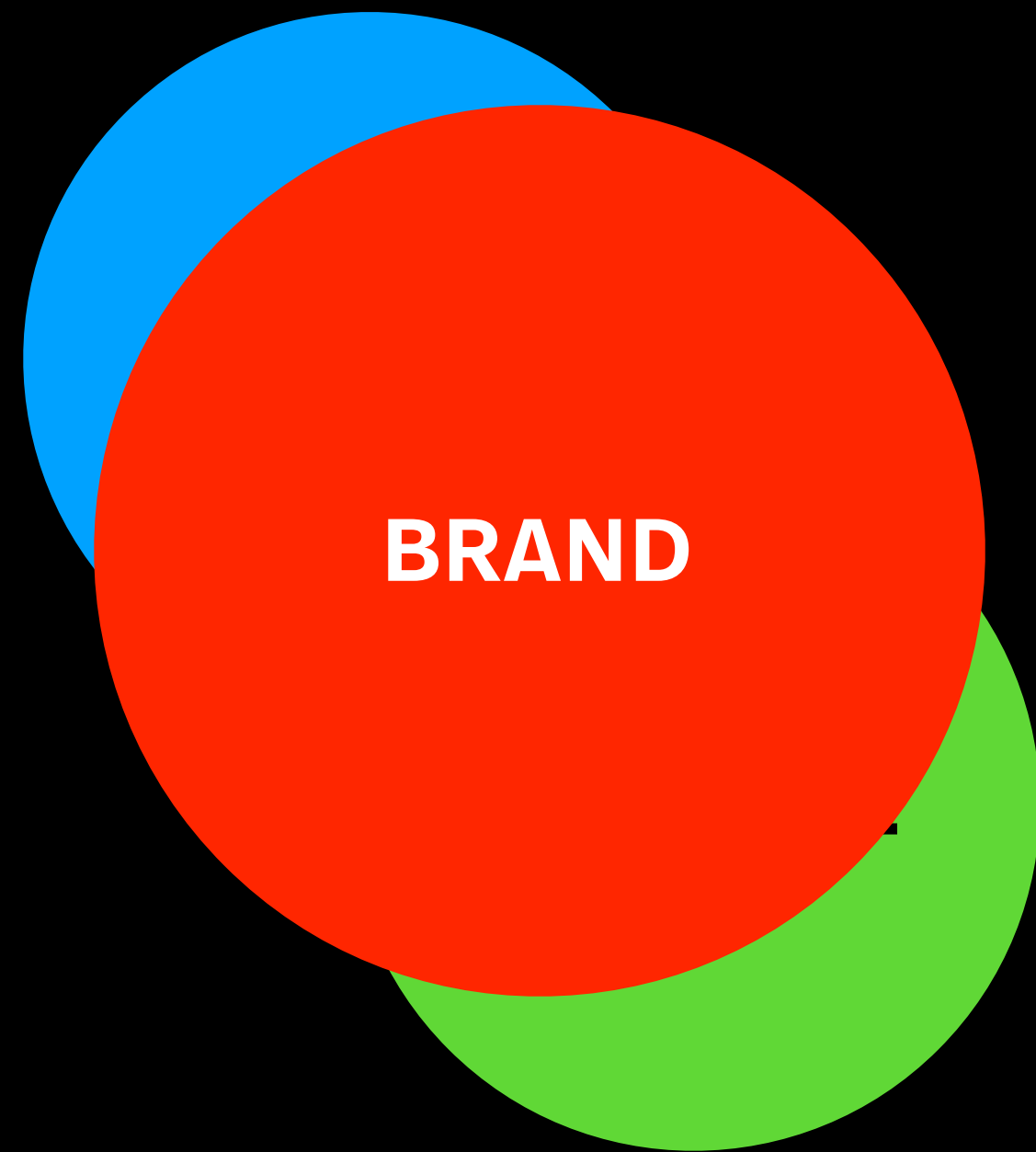
Sender   **Receiver**

Company

Consumer

PRODUCT

SERVICE

Company

Consumer

PRODUCT

SERVICE

Company

Consumer

PRODUCT

SERVICE

?

Company

Consumer

BRAND

Company

Consumer

PRODUCT

SERVICE

BRAND

Company

Consumer

BRAND

PRODUCT
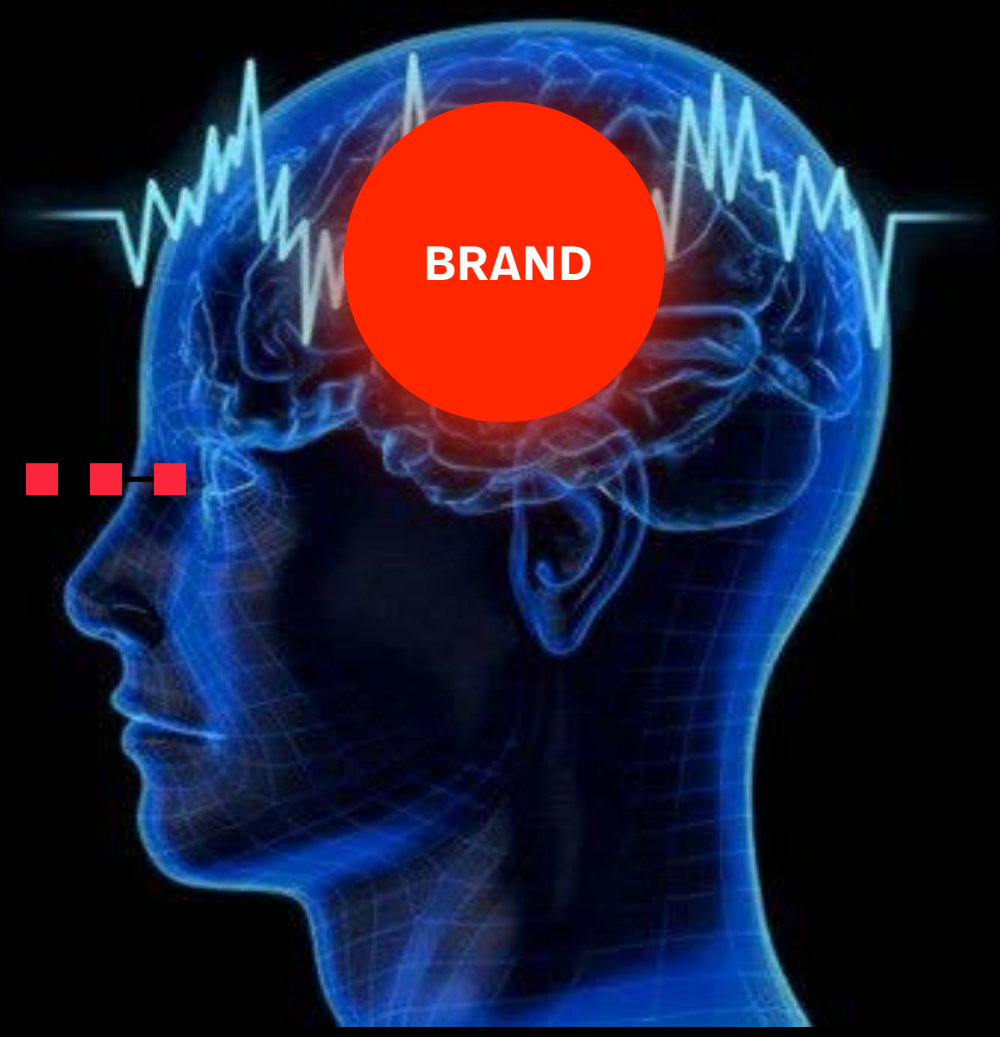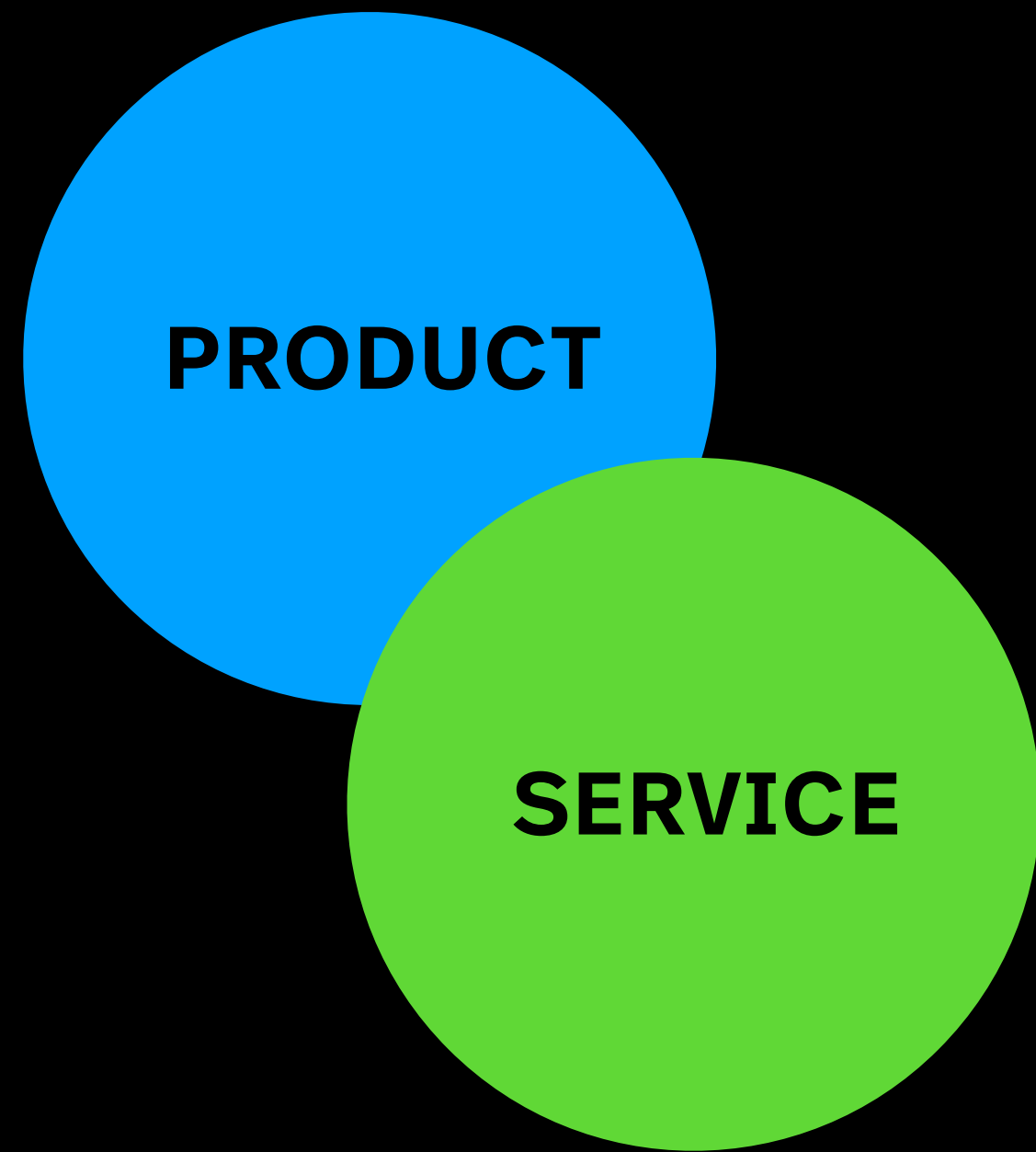
SERVICE

Company
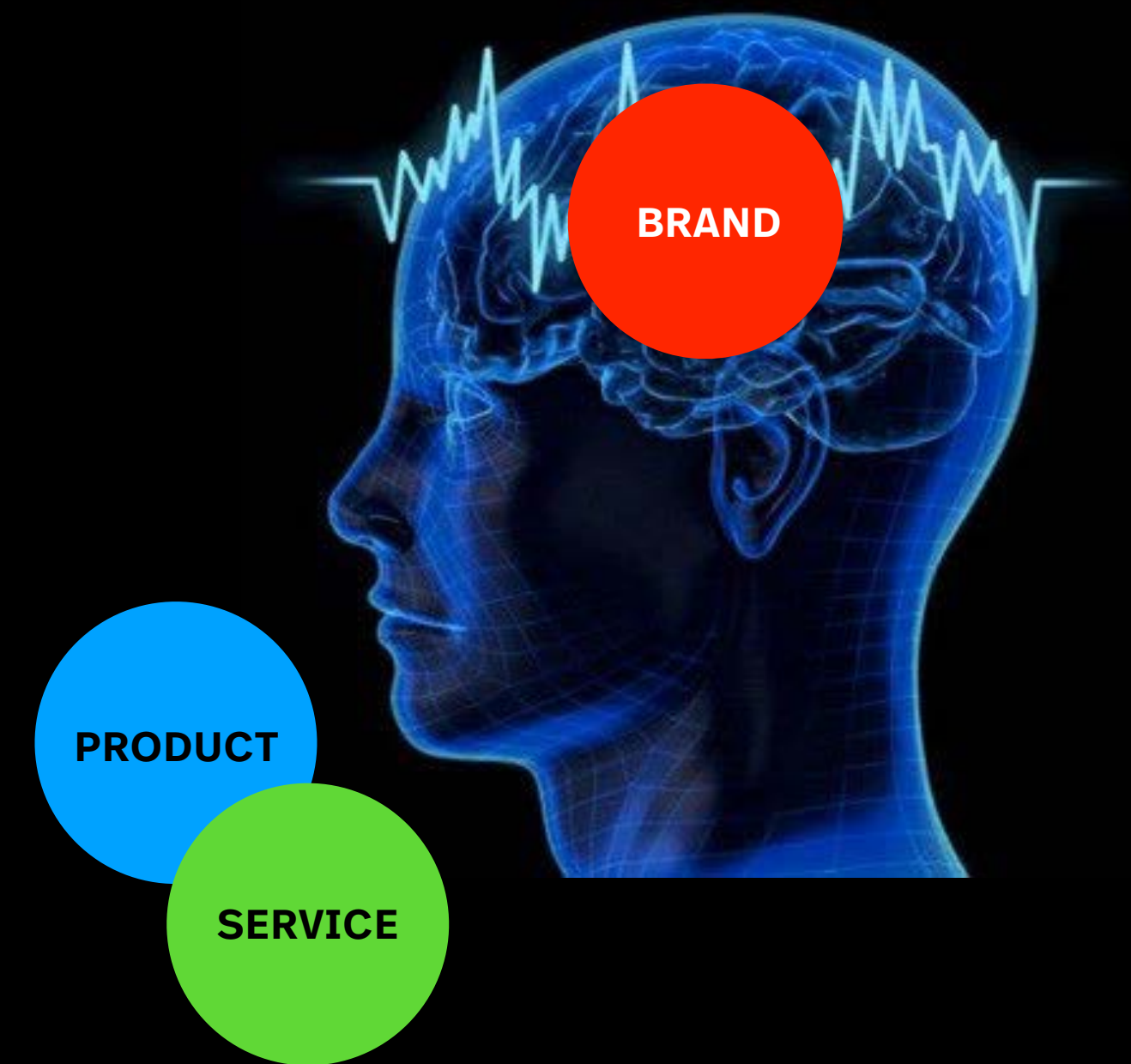
Consumer

PRODUCT
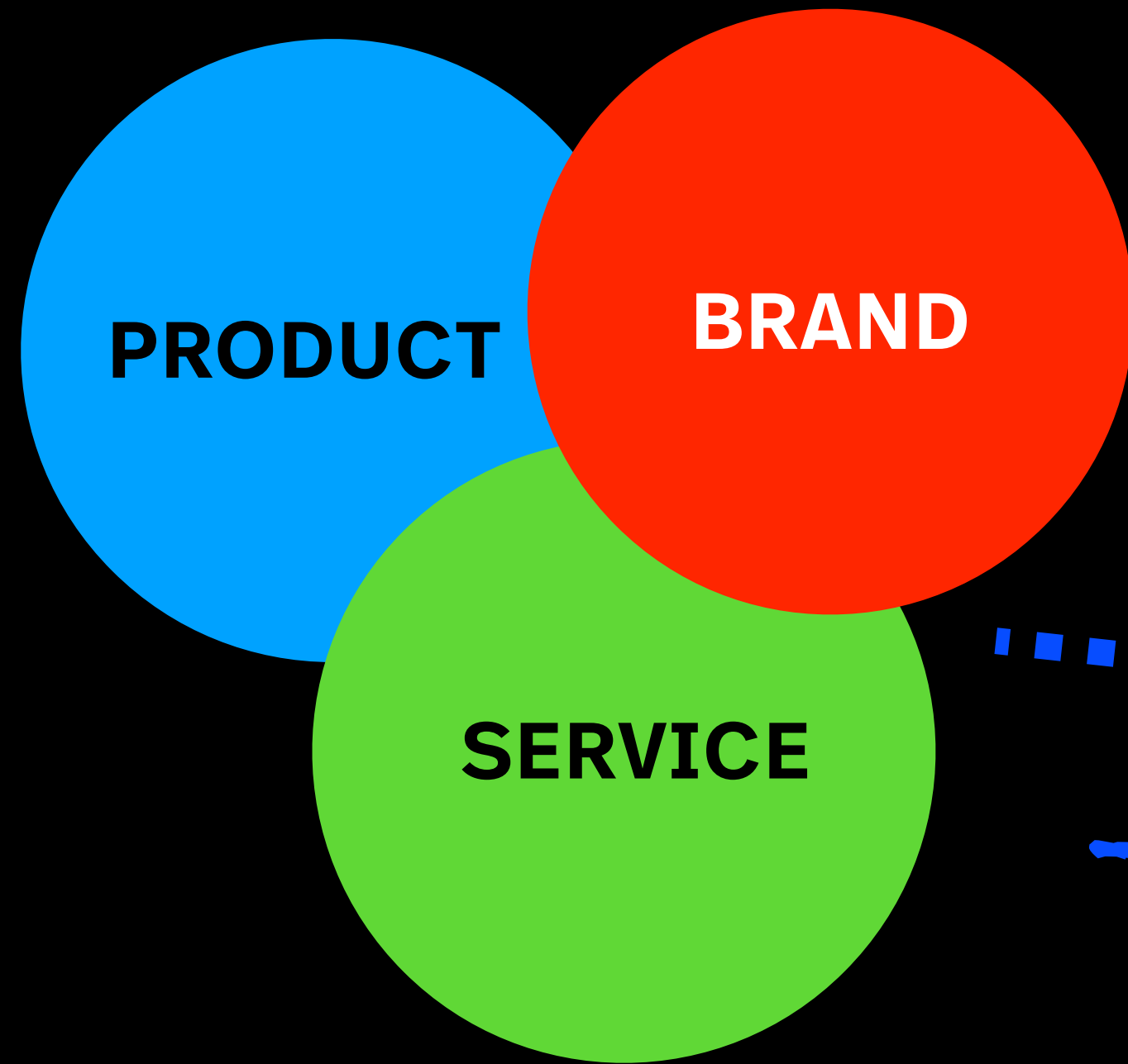
BRAND

SERVICE

The Promise

The Delivery

BRAND

PRODUCT

SERVICE

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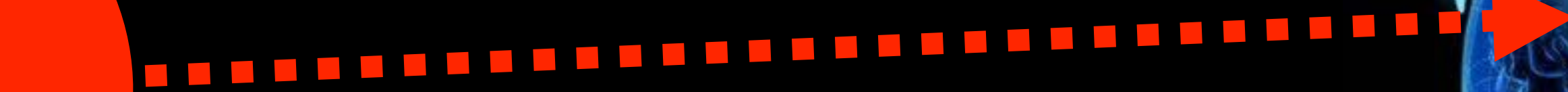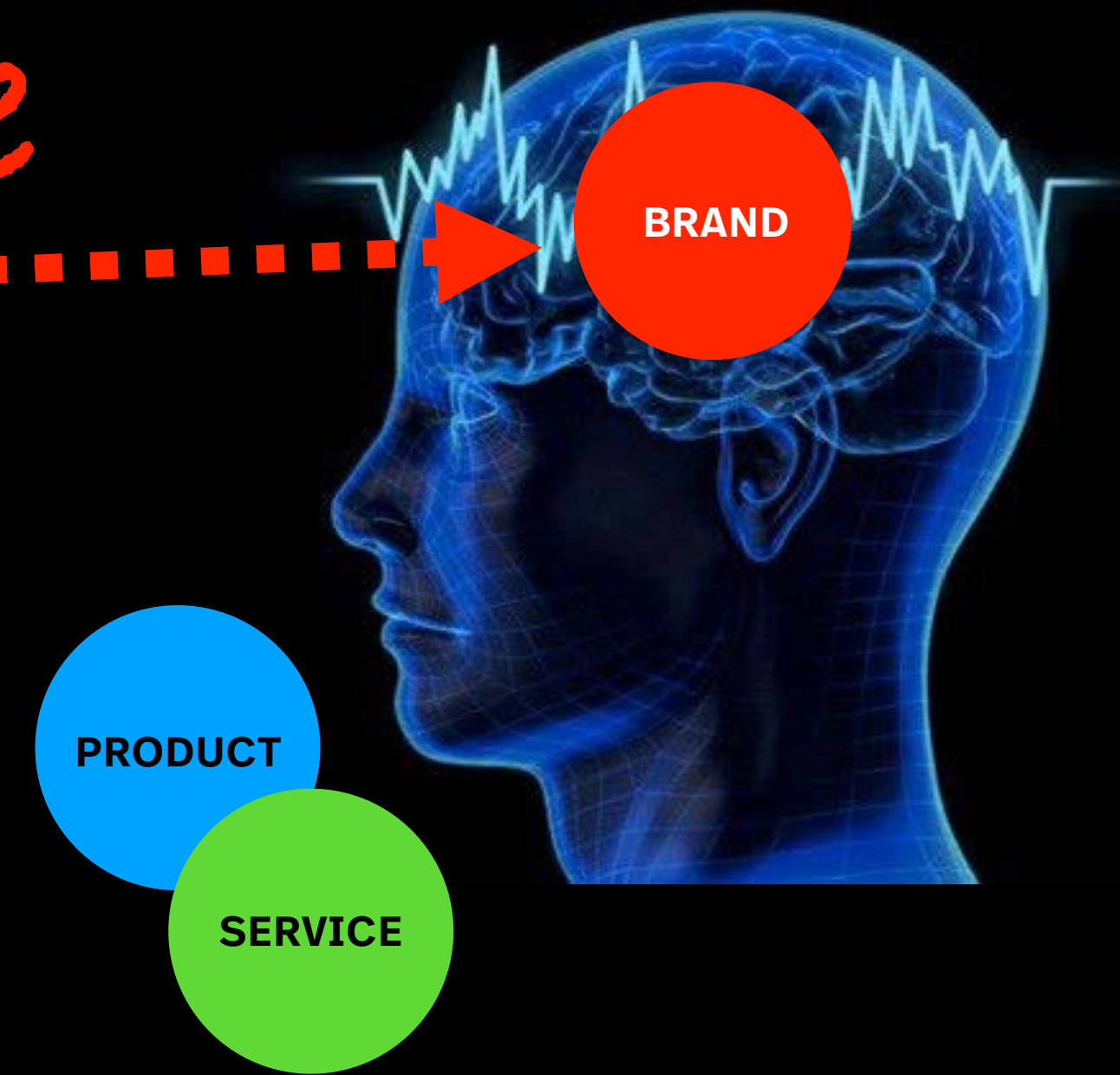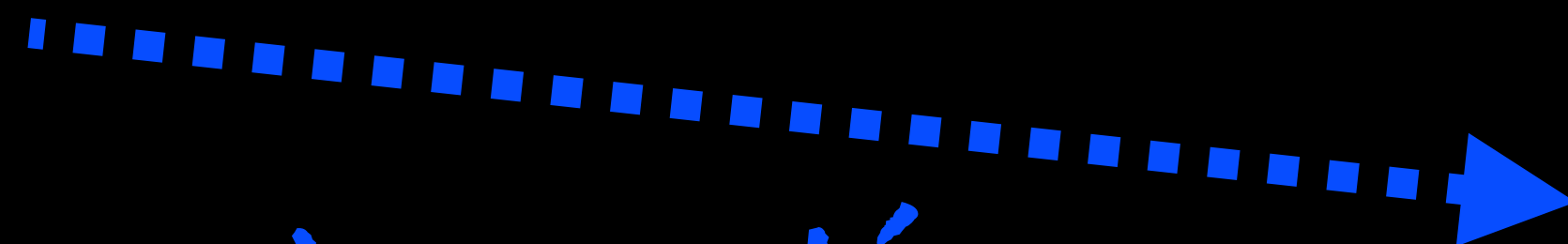
A **brand** is the set of expectations, memories, stories, and relationships that - taken together - account for a consumer's decision to choose one product or service over another.

— Seth Godin

The components of a brand

Mission
Vision · Values
Beliefs
Essence

Purpose

Content
Social media
Comms
Events
Ads

Marcom

Expression

Name
Logo
Tagline
Typefaces
Visuals

BRAND

Partners
Sales channels
Target audiences
Price

Positioning

Personality

Style
Tone
Look & Feel
Behaviour

Experience

Service
Website
Product
Offices

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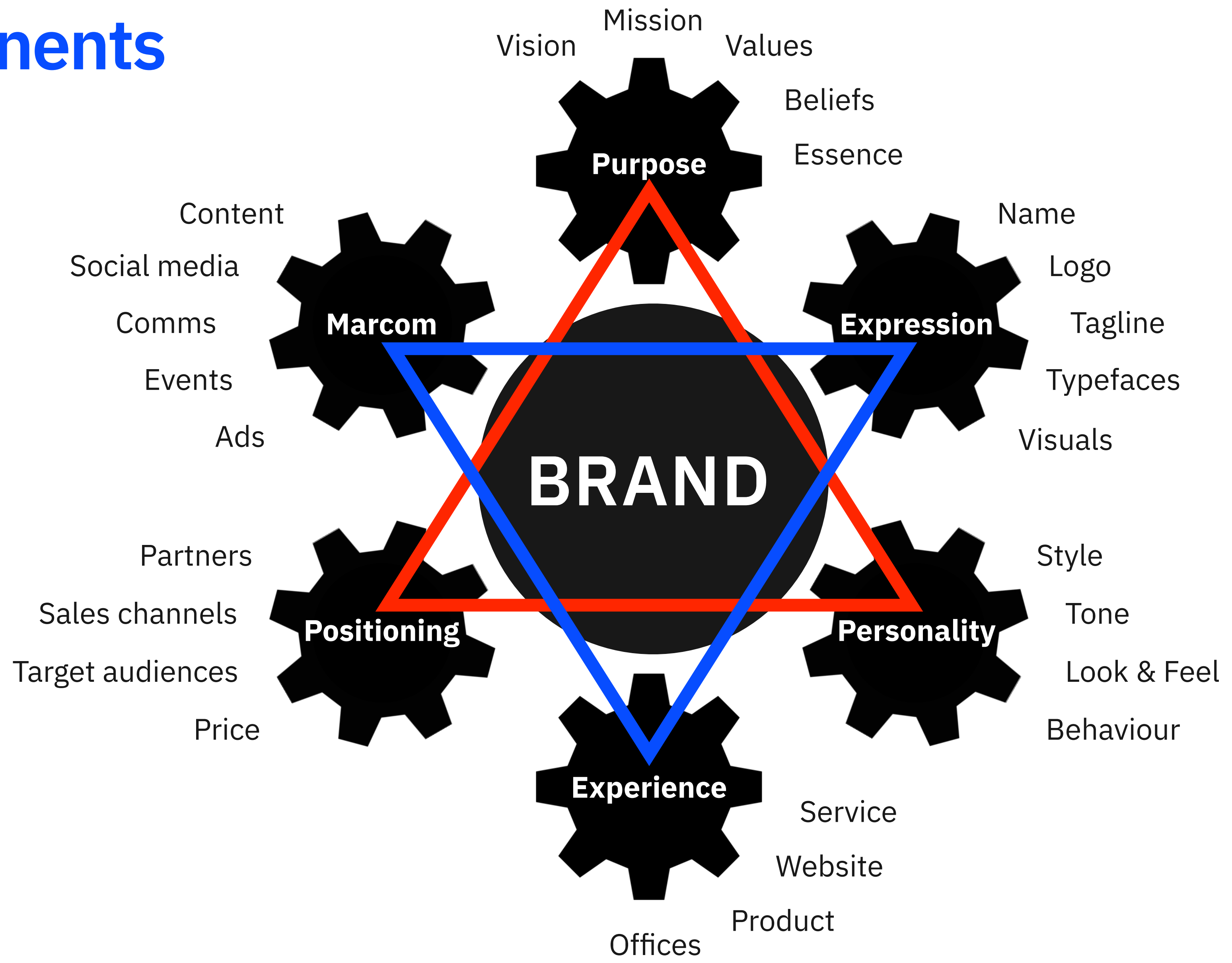
Branding is the art and science of influencing perception about a product, a service, or organization.

— Sean Tambagahan

Brand strategy

Brand strategy is the action plan that an organization uses to differentiate its products, services, and identities from their competitors.

Brand creation workshop

Starting a new brand strategy with a creative opening workshop

The **Creative Opening Workshop** defines the basis and direction of your future brand and brand experience. It takes up to one full day and covers a number of topics: from establishing what the brand promises to its different stakeholders, to identifying the visual style and tone of voice that will be pursued in the design phase; it basically sets the scene for the whole project that follows.

Workshop principles

1. Have an open mind. We are here to think about the future of YOUR brand.

2. It's about your stakeholders. Walk in their shoes.

3. Think fast, use your gut. Great brands can't always be rationalised.

4. There are no bad ideas. Filtering happens later.

Typical workshop agenda

1. Positioning

Using 'identity polars' we place your company in a 2-axis model where the key internal stakeholders would like to see their company positioned in the future. In this exercise, we also aim to identify key factors needed to reach this desired state.

2. Personas

Based on thorough analysis of real stakeholders – ideally done via multiple interviews – we co-create between 4 and 8 different personas who represent your different stakeholder types.

3. Brand vision board

We use the persona's to map and evaluate their desires and needs. We identify the value and emotional benefits that the new brand can bring to potential customers. We consolidate and focus on what we think will separate your company from competition.

4. Visual compass

This exercise will result in visual cues that will be used in the brand design phase later on in the project. We discuss why you like particular design elements, images and/or typography. This will give the creative team direction moving forward.

Personas

Co-creation of personas to help identify needs and desires from your stakeholder's perspective. Your team needs to provide any information or insights they might have so we can craft the right personas.

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Emma | Instagram poweruser (27)

Affinity for EyeEm
★ ☆ ☆

Occupation: Art Director
Location: Berlin

About the Persona

Emma is curios about art and design, culture and technology. She is a warm hearted familiy person who spends a lot of time with her loves ones. She's always on her phone, taking photos along the way and sharing them on social networks.

Quote

"I realized that people really like how I show my world to them"

Photography

I make photos all the time. I wouldn't call myself a professional photographer but through the amount of followers I see that people appreciate what I do.
I **shoot a lot of personal stuff**, my family members and such. I want to get to know peopale and see images that really suite my taste.

#photos all the time #friends and family #show my life #get to know people

Social Media (focus photography)

I want to **share, comment and rate** photographs.Therfore Instagram is the perfect platform for me. I have 14.900 follower. I also like the square format as it challenges me composition wise.

What I really appreciate on social media is to **get to know other photographers** via the internet, some of whom I met in real life already.

#share #comment #get to know other photographers

EyeEm

I read about it somewhere on the internet. I like the fact that they focus on **real photography**. I tried the app but **lost interest** along the way. I prefer Instagram over EyeEm because I have more follower and I am **not really interested in selling** my picutres on a online platform.

Real job offers are appreciated though!

#real photography #lost interest #not interested in selling online #real job offers

My Top 3 Photo Apps

Instagramm
"Instagramm is by far the app I love and use the most"

VSCO Filter
"Besides Instagramm VSCO is my favourite editing app."

Snapseed
"Snapseed is my photoshop to go App."

My devices

- iPhone 6
- Fuji X100

Persona examples

→ Consumer or Client

→ Business Partner

→ Job Seeker

→ Employee

→ Investor

→ Journalist

→ Supplier

→ Government civil servant

Persona type

- ( ) Investor
- ( ) Job Seeker
- ( ) Employee
- ( ) Journalist
- ( ) Other

- ( ) Business Partner
- ( ) Civil Servant
- ( ) Supplier
- ( ) Director of NGO

Photo

Name

Role

Age

What do I want to achieve with Aspial?

What are my frustrations about dealing with Aspial?

Which aspects of Aspial interest me most?

	Low		Average		High
Brand Appeal	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Business Performance	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Business Portfolio	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Management Vision	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
PR & Communications	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sustainability	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

What do I see as Aspial's strengths (vs. competitors)?

Which channels do I get information about Aspial from?

Which sources influence my opinion about Aspial?

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Brand Vision Board

The Brand Vision Board is built upon three categories:

1. Needs: "my desires are …"

2. Solutions: "that is why we …"

3. Value: "for our business/ stakeholder"

Brand Vision Board Example

Brand Vision Board Example

Visual Compass

The Visual Compass is an efficient and fun method to explore the future look and feel of your company. It helps identifying feasible tonalities. The result serves as a spring-board for developing the new brand identity.

These are the steps we take:

→ Reduce

→ Identify

→ Reflect
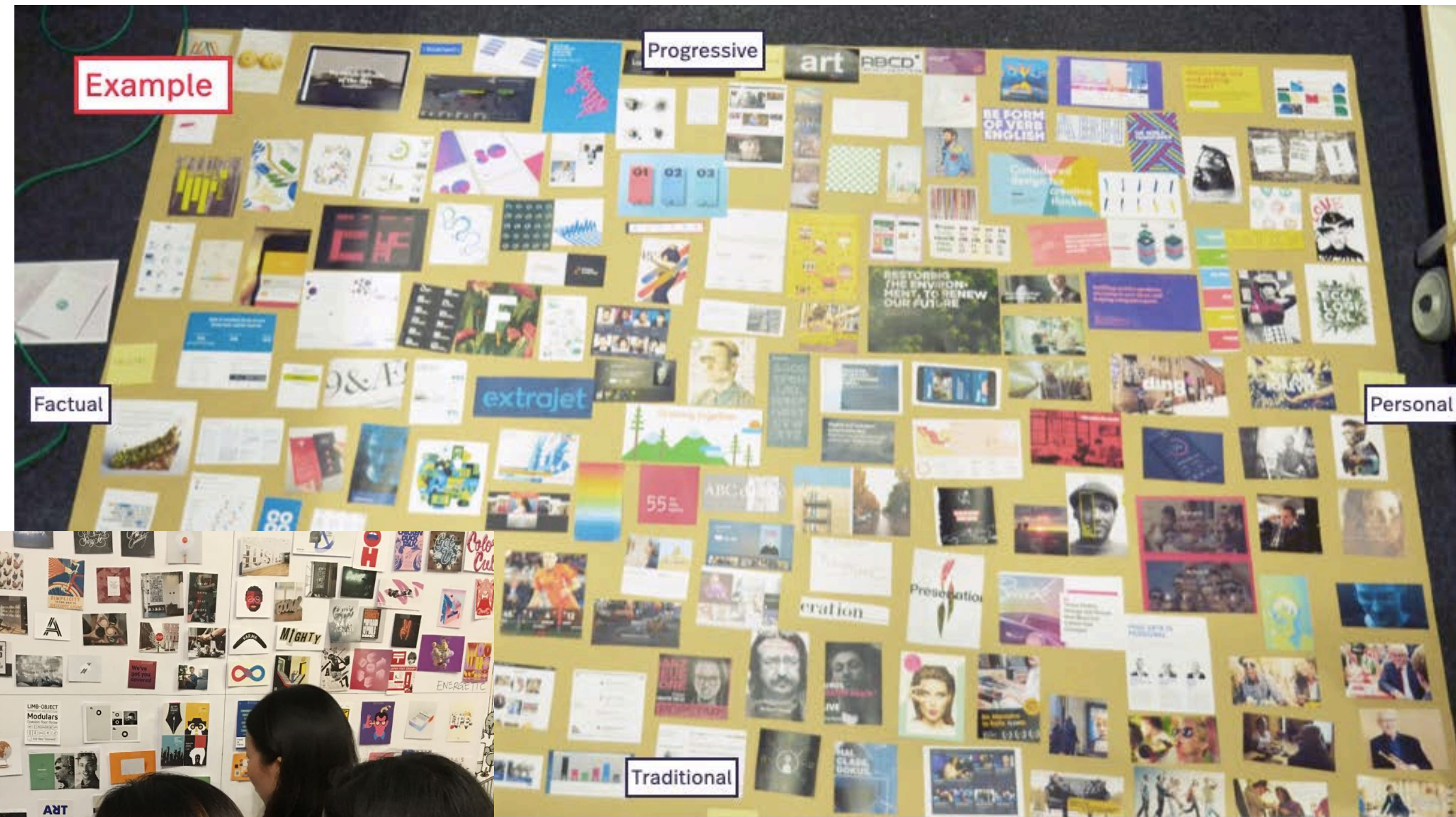
How to steer the brand when it grows

Elements of steering a brand, digital-first

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Core User Needs
Basic Visual Elements
Service Standards
Product & Content Strategy
Brand Voice

2 ESSENCE

1 Attitude / Brand Core

COLLABORATION **5**

Sign-off processes
Roles & Responsibilities
What tools and how we use them

Brand Playbook
(UX/Design/Service)
Component Library
Content Formats
Seminars & Academy

STRUCTURE **3**

GOVERNANCE **4**

How do we come to decisions?
How do we communicate change?
KPIs

PROVIDE CONTENT

ENABLE PEOPLE

Inspired by Kristina Halvorson's Content Strategy Wheel

Brand identity development

Brand identity =

the outward expression of a product or service, including its name, logo, visual appearance, and communications.

Corporate identity =

the outward expression of a company, organization or corporation, including its name, logo, visual appearance, and communications.

Identity and Image

Image

Communication

Personality

Symbolism

Behaviour
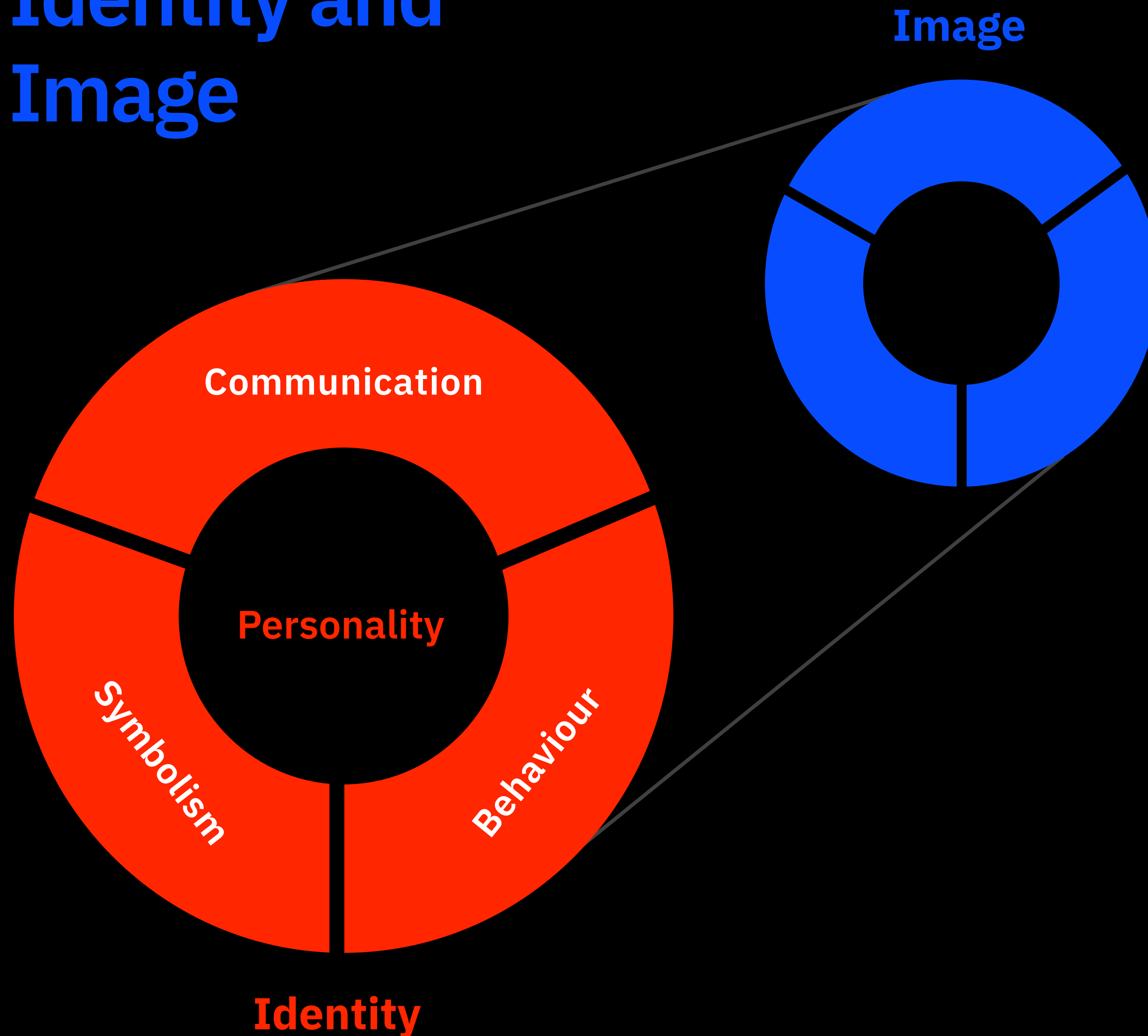
Identity

In their model, Birkigt & Stadler identify **four dimensions of corporate identity**.

Three 'instruments' (red circle) form the concrete manifestations of the underlying 'personality' of the company.

The corporate image (blue circle) is a reflection of the corporate identity of the company, the way the identity is perceived in the outside world.

Birkigt & Stadler, 1986

The brand core - our pragmatic 4P model

Brand Purpose
Brand Promise
Brand Positioning
Brand Personality

1. PURPOSE
What you believe in or how you see yourself in a bigger context. Your customers will connect to that world view.

It is equally important for your team and your customers to believe in something bigger than you. Answering the «Why?» question offers you room to pivot or add new products.

2. PROMISE
The contribution you make and the benefit for your customers.

Your brand needs to solve something for your customers. Define 3-4 'Core Customer Needs' that will help you make sure you're not only unique but match a real-life need of a group of human beings: your customers.

3. POSITIONING
Your USP's — what makes you stand out in the marketplace.

Your brand needs to be recognisable and attractive, so be really clear about what sets you apart from competition. Challenge your assumptions regularly as you move forward.

4. PERSONALITY
How you speak/act/communicate and want to be perceived by your customers.

Your brand experience is shaped through the interplay of your service, content, product and design. Make sure to live up to your personality in every detail and use it as a briefing for copy, design etc.

An example: A social investment company

PURPOSE

We want to make sustainable investing the new normal.

bigger than just us!

PROMISE

Connecting social good with financial returns.

combines to strong user needs: desire for doing good & and grow your resources

POSITIONING

Adding human values to business investment.

specific

PERSONALITY

Transparent, Curious, Independent, Genuine.

Creating brand personality with voice & tone

**Since your product or service has to deliver
on your brand every day:**

→ **VOICE:** Brand voice is the consistent character how
your brand speaks (how close/humorous/stiff/
opinionated are you?)

→ **TONALITY:** For specific channels/use cases/
applications you should allow for variation in
tonality. F.e. be more colloquial on social, more
encouraging in customer support, …

COPY EXAMPLES

In App Greeting
Hi, Bob. You could be a part-time model.

Success Feedback
High fives! Your list has been imported.

Error Feedback
Oops! Looks like you forgot to enter an address.

General Message
Bummer, we don't have any info to report just yet.

Critical Failure
One of our servers is temporarily down. One engineers are
already on the case and will have it resolved shortly.

Marketing Copy
We've got all kinds of social features that help you know
your subscribers and share your newsletters. Integrate your
signup form with Facebook, share your campaigns on
activity on social networks, and more.

→ **Mailchimp** shapes its service with tonality

Sosimple

1 Sosimple : **Purpose**

We all need energy. Our economy, our wellbeing and our livelihood depend on it.
Energy is expensive and dirty. Cheap, clean energy is still very difficult to get.

Sosimple leads the shift to clean energy.
Together we improve the world we live in, one roof at a time.

2 Sosimple : **Promise**

We save you money on electricity bills, without asking for any investments. We sell cheap energy from our clean energy installation on your roof. Delivering real savings from Day 1, working hard to save you more over time.

We are transparent and flexible: no red tape, no one-sided contracts and no trap doors. We take care of all the hassle, so you can focus on running your business.

3 Sosimple : **Positioning**

We sell you low-priced, flexible and clean energy that will immediately reduce your daytime energy costs by 20% or more. Delivering more and more savings as we work together. No upfront investment, no red tape and no trap doors.
A transparent win-win between entrepreneurs.

4 Sosimple : **Personality**

Businesslike   Clean – what you see is what you get – reliable – sincere

Collaborative   Service minded – upbeat – on your side – thinking beyond the deal

Gracious   Fair – honest – sharing

On a mission   Dedicated – daring - innovative – sustainable – responsible

The name Sosimple doesn't talk about **energy**, it doesn't indicate that it's a proposition for **businesses**, and it doesn't say that it is **cheap**.

That's why Sosimple needed a **tagline**.

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Brand change

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Life does not get better by chance, it gets better by change.

— Jim Rohn

When to change a brand identity

→ **Joining of forces** - a merger or acquisition

→ **Going overseas** - expanding into new territories

→ **New products or services** - a different offer requires a new look & feel

→ **New distribution channels or technologies** - your brand toolkit is out of date

→ **Bad Rep** - you've got some repair work to do!

→ **A new perception** - you're not attractive anymore

When **not** to change a brand identity

→ **New management** - hardly ever a good reason for a brand identity change - unless it's a symptom of something bigger, like a bad rep

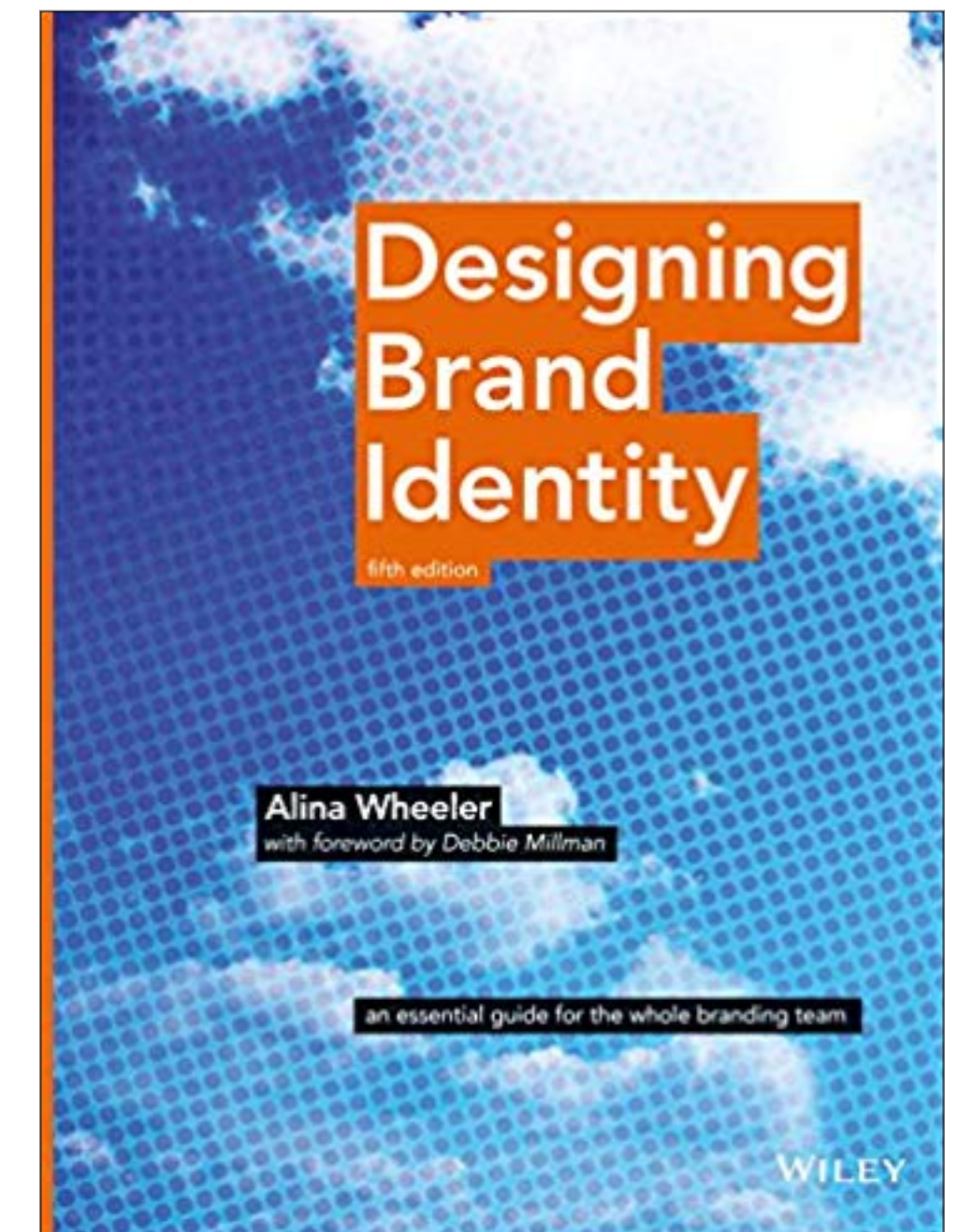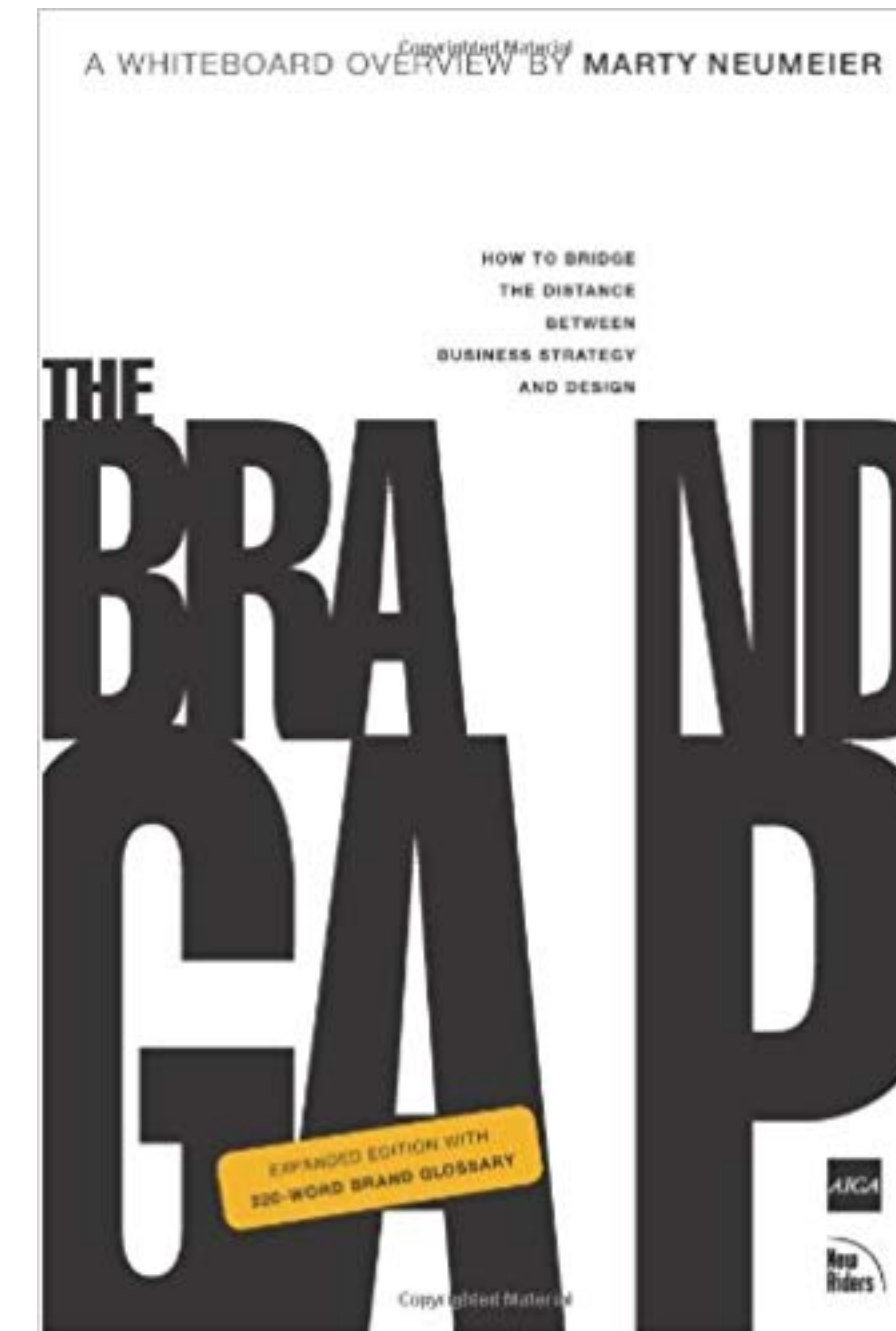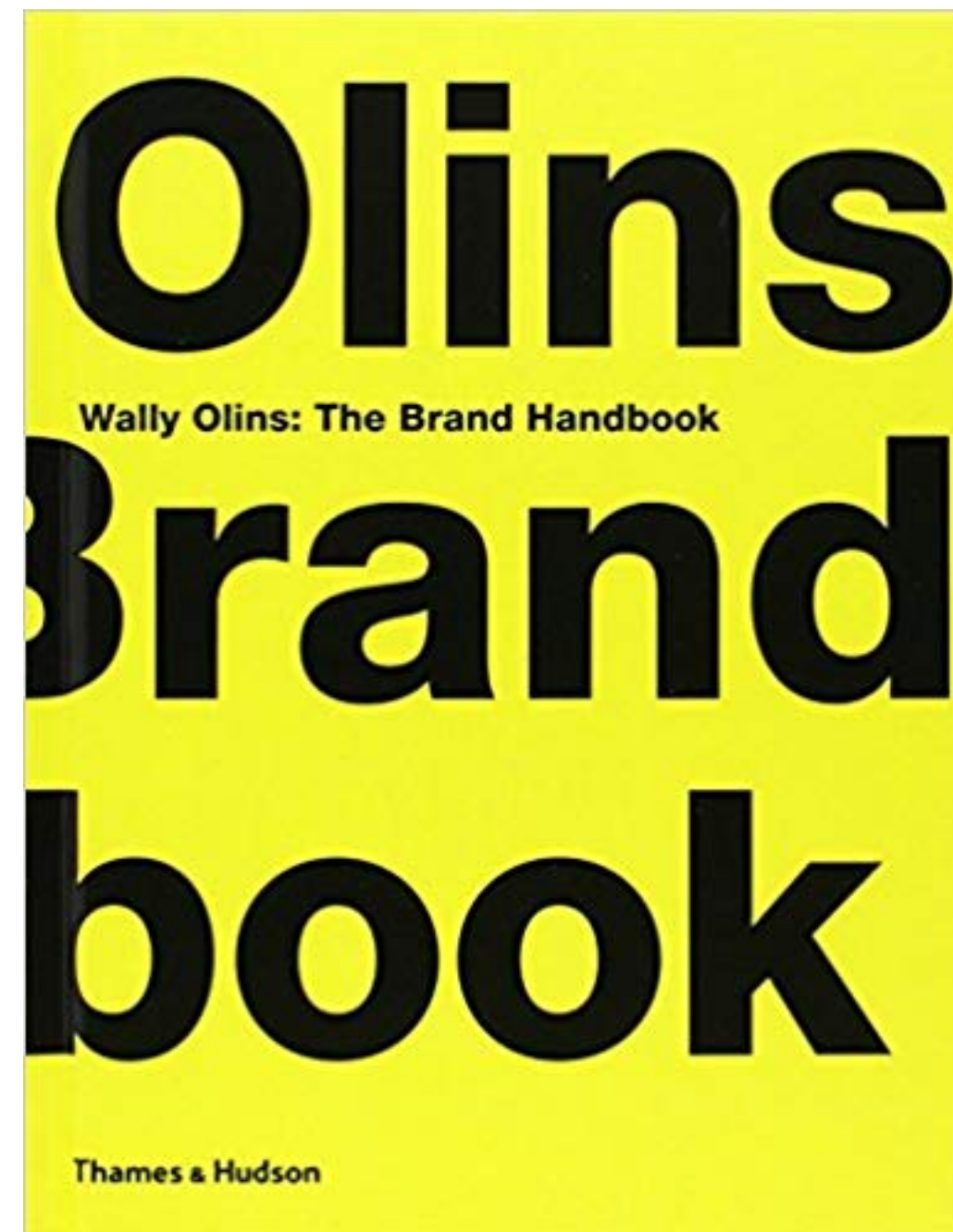→ **New head office** - again, hardly ever a good reason for a brand identity change

When you change the brand

When transitioning to a new brand identity, explaining **WHY** is key. Whichever transition method you choose, no matter how big or small the change, clarity in the reason behind the change is vital.

Confusion is a killer for a rebrand.

Further reading

Good luck!

Edo van Dijk
@edoch

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