Brand Guideline
Cheat Sheet

Welcome to Your Brand Guidelines Cheat Sheet

This cheat sheet is your go to resource for maintaining a strong, consistent, and impactful brand presence across all platforms. Whether you're designing a website, creating marketing materials, or briefing a creative team, these guidelines ensure your brand always looks and feels unmistakably you.

Contents

- **Logo**
  Learn how to represent your brand visually with clarity, simplicity, and versatility.

- **Colours**
  Discover how to create palettes that embody your brand's personality and how to use them effectively.

- **Imagery**
  Craft a visual style that resonates with your audience and reinforces your brand identity.

- **Typography**
  Set the tone with typefaces and text treatments that speak your brand's language.

This document isn't just a set of rules; it's your brand's playbook. Use it to make bold, creative choices while staying true to your identity. Let's dive in and make your brand unforgettable.

Company Logo
Key Considerations for Logo Design

Brand Identity
- Reflect the brand's mission, values, and personality.
- Ensure the design aligns with the target audience's expectations and preferences.

Simplicity
- Keep the design clean and uncluttered for easy recognition.
- Avoid unnecessary details that may complicate scalability.

Versatility
- Ensure the logo works well in different sizes and formats (digital, print, monochrome).
- Test it across various applications, e.g., websites, merchandise, and business cards.

Memorability
- Use distinctive shapes, colours, or typography to make the logo stand out.
- Aim for an impactful design that is easy to recall.

Timelessness
- Avoid relying on trends that may quickly become outdated.
- Focus on a design that remains relevant over time.

Colour Palette
- Choose colours that convey the brand's mood and message (e.g., blue for trust, red for energy).
- Ensure the palette is visually cohesive and works well in monochrome.

Typography
- Select fonts that match the brand's tone (e.g., modern, classic, playful).
- Ensure readability, even at smaller sizes.

Originality
- Avoid imitating competitors or overused design elements.
- Ensure the logo is unique to help the brand stand out.

Cultural Relevance
- Consider how the logo will be perceived in different regions or cultures.
- Avoid symbols, colours, or shapes that may carry unintended connotations.

Scalability
- Design with scalability in mind so the logo looks sharp on everything from small icons to large billboards.

Feedback and Testing
- Gather input from stakeholders and target audiences during the design process.
- Test multiple variations to determine the most effective option.

Legal Considerations
- Ensure the design doesn't infringe on existing trademarks or copyrights.
- Protect the logo with trademark registration.

Imagery
Key Considerations for Imagery in Brand Guidelines

Alignment with Brand Identity
- Ensure imagery reflects the brand's personality, values, and tone (e.g., professional, playful, luxurious).
- Use visuals that resonate with the target audience and convey the intended message.

Style Consistency
- Ensure imagery reflects the brand's personality, values, and tone (e.g., professional, playful, luxurious).
- Use visuals that resonate with the target audience and convey the intended message.

Types of Imagery
- Identify approved types of visuals: photography, illustrations, icons, or a mix.
- Distinguish between hero images, background visuals, and accent graphics.

Subject Matter
- Clearly outline the types of subjects that align with the brand (e.g., people, landscapes, products).
- Avoid subjects or themes that conflict with the brand's values or message.

Quality Standards
- Ensure all imagery is high-resolution and professionally executed.
- Avoid pixelated, poorly cropped, or generic stock images.

Colour and Filters
- Specify if images should use particular filters, overlays, or colour grading to create a cohesive look.
- Ensure any post-processing enhances the brand's tone without over-stylisation.

Authenticity
- Opt for real, candid visuals over overly staged or artificial-looking content.
- Showcase genuine scenarios that align with the brand's purpose.

Prohibited Imagery
- Define types of visuals that are off-limits, such as overly complex, offensive, or unrelated imagery.
- Provide examples to avoid ambiguity.

Use of Stock Images
- Specify if and when stock images are allowed, and ensure they are appropriately licensed.
- Encourage the use of custom visuals where possible to maintain originality.

Image Placement and Cropping
- Provide guidelines for framing and cropping to ensure key elements remain visible.
- Define how images interact with other design elements like text or logos.

Logo Integration
- Specify how and where the logo can appear on images (e.g., size, placement, colour contrasts).
- Ensure the logo is always legible and does not clash with the visual content.

Digital vs. Print Usage
- Provide specifications for image resolution and file formats suited for both digital (e.g., web optimised) and print media.
- Ensure colour and clarity translate well across both mediums.

Legal and Copyright Compliance
- Use only licensed or original imagery to avoid copyright issues.
- Maintain a record of usage rights and attributions if required.

Updating Imagery Over Time
- Ensure the brand's visual style evolves with trends while maintaining its identity.
- Regularly audit imagery to keep content fresh and relevant.

Typography
Key Considerations for Typography in Brand Guidelines

Alignment with Brand Identity
- Choose typefaces that reflect the brand's personality (e.g., modern, traditional, playful).
- Ensure typography complements other visual elements, like the logo and colour palette.

Primary and Secondary Fonts
- Define a primary typeface for key communications and branding.
- Specify secondary or supporting typefaces for flexibility in different contexts, such as body text or captions.

Font Hierarchy
- Establish a clear hierarchy to differentiate headlines, subheadings, body text, and captions.
- Provide examples of sizes, weights, and styles for each level.

Readability and Legibility
- Prioritise fonts that are easy to read, especially in body text.
- Avoid overly decorative or intricate typefaces that may hinder legibility at small sizes.

Weight and Style Variations
- Specify approved weights (e.g., light, regular, bold) and styles (e.g., italic, all caps).
- Avoid excessive use of bold or italic styles that can clutter designs.

Kerning, Tracking, and Leading
- Provide guidelines for letter spacing (kerning and tracking) and line spacing (leading).
- Ensure text remains visually balanced and easy to scan.

Consistency
- Use the same fonts consistently across all brand materials to strengthen recognition.
- Limit the number of typefaces used to maintain a cohesive look.

Contrast and Accessibility
- Ensure typography contrasts well with background colours for readability.
- Meet accessibility standards, particularly for web and digital platforms.

Custom or Proprietary Fonts
- If using a custom font, provide instructions on licensing and installation.
- Include fallback options for cases where the primary font cannot be used.

Web and Digital Compatibility
- Specify web-safe fonts for digital use or provide web font files (e.g., Google Fonts).
- Test for consistent rendering across browsers and devices.

Print Specifications
- Provide guidelines for font usage in print, such as minimum sizes and preferred weights for clarity.
- Ensure fonts look clean and professional when printed.

Alignment and Justification
- Specify alignment preferences (e.g., left-aligned, centred, or justified).
- Avoid excessive justification that can lead to awkward spacing.

Typography Pairing
- Offer examples of font pairings (e.g., headline font paired with body text font).
- Ensure combinations are harmonious and aligned with the brand's tone.

Prohibited Fonts and Styles
- Identify fonts or styles that should not be used to avoid inconsistencies or misrepresentation.
- Include examples of incorrect typography usage.

Localisation and Language Support
- Ensure fonts support the required languages and special characters for international audiences.
- Test for appropriate spacing and legibility in multiple scripts.

Scalability and Flexibility
- Ensure fonts maintain clarity and impact at various sizes, from small print to large billboards.
- Specify minimum size requirements for readability.
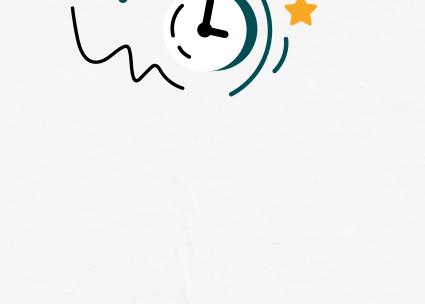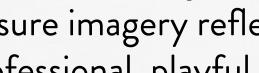
Updating Typography
- Allow room for revisiting and evolving typography choices to stay modern while maintaining core brand identity.
- Document and communicate updates to stakeholders clearly.

Colours
Key Considerations for Colour Use in Brand Guidelines

Brand Identity
- Choose colours that reflect the brand's personality and values.
- Ensure the palette aligns with the emotions and perceptions the brand wants to evoke (e.g., blue for trust, green for growth, red for energy).

Primary vs. Secondary Colours
- Define a primary colour palette to represent the core brand identity.
- Include secondary colours to provide flexibility for different applications without diluting the brand.

Consistency
- Ensure colour usage is consistent across all platforms and materials.
- Provide clear guidance on when and how each colour should be used.

Colour Psychology
- Understand the psychological impact of colours and how they resonate with the target audience.
- Be mindful of cultural differences in colour meanings.

Contrast and Accessibility
- Prioritise high contrast for readability, especially for text over backgrounds.
- Test colour combinations for accessibility to meet standards like WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines).

Digital vs. Print Formats
- Specify colour values for digital (RGB, HEX) and print (CMYK, Pantone) to ensure consistency.
- Account for differences in appearance between screens and printed materials.

Neutral and Accent Colours
- Incorporate neutral tones (e.g., white, grey, black) for balance and versatility.
- Use accent colours sparingly to highlight key elements without overwhelming the design.

Prohibited Uses
- Specify colours or combinations that should never be used to avoid brand misrepresentation.
- Include examples of incorrect applications for clarity.

Dynamic Palettes
- Consider guidelines for responsive or adaptive colour palettes, especially for digital platforms.
- Ensure the brand maintains a unified appearance across light and dark modes.

Testing in Context
- Evaluate how colours appear in real-world settings, like packaging, signage, and digital interfaces.
- Check for visibility in both well-lit and dim environments.

Cultural Sensitivity
- Research how colours are perceived in different regions or cultures if the brand has a global audience.
- Avoid colours with unintended negative associations.

Updating and Evolving
- Allow room for minor colour adjustments over time to stay modern without losing brand recognition.
- Document changes in the brand guidelines for clarity and continuity.

Where to next?

CONTACT US ON:

Get in touch if you or your business need support with any of the below.

Email Marketing | Graphic Design | Photography, Videography & Drone | PR
SEO & SEM | Social Media Management | Website Design & Development

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