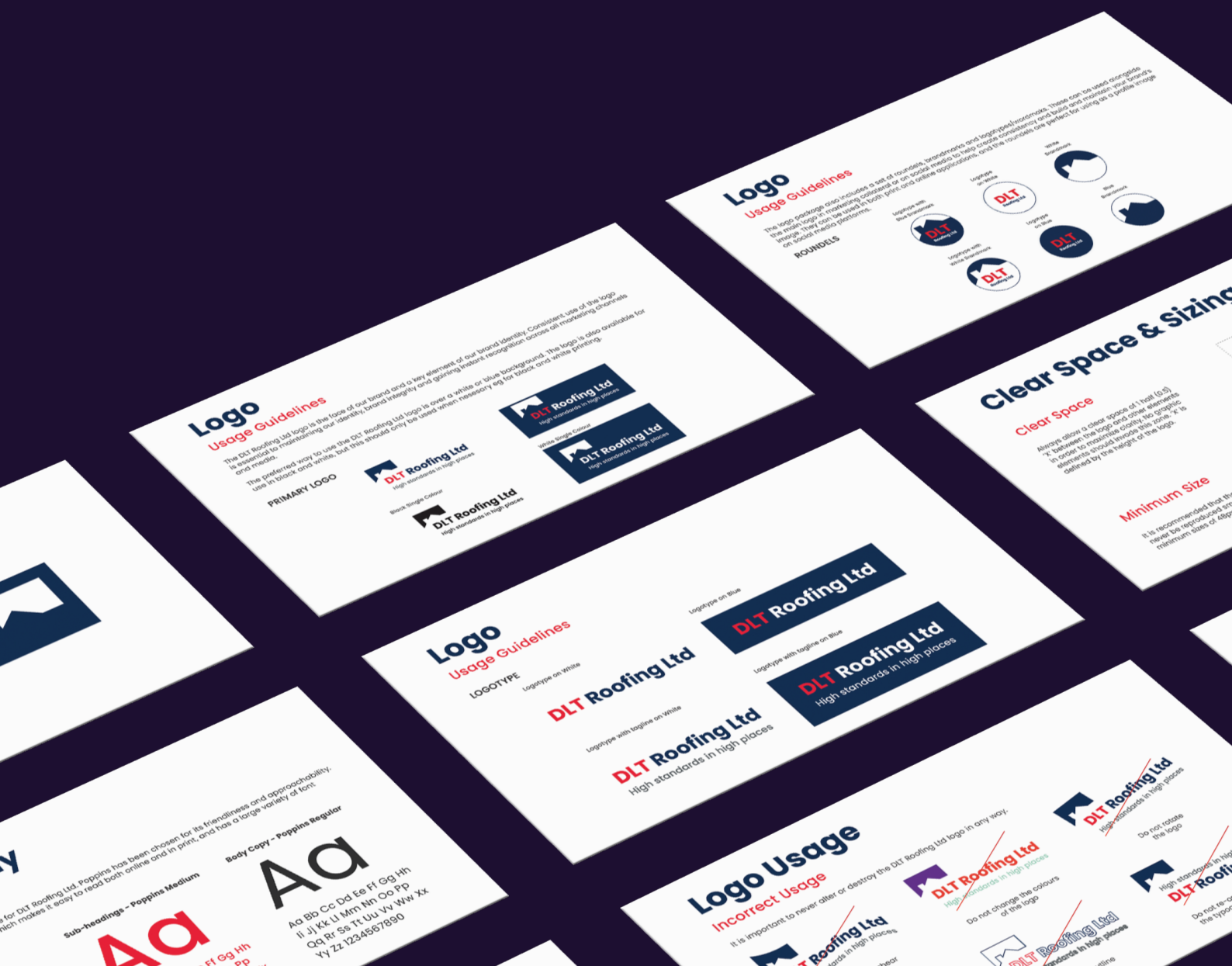# Branding & Design Tips for Start-ups

The effects of Covid'19 have left many businesses struggling to find ways to survive and bounce back. I decided to put together this free handy hints & tips guide on how to successfully develop and market your business. My aim is to help you understand how to embrace the power of branding and use it as a tool to help grow your business.

What is Branding?

"Your brand is the sum total of your customers' perceptions, notions and experience" - Entrepreneur.

Put another way, your brand is like the personality of your company, and should be a part of everything your company does.

Here are 6 reasons why having a brand is so important:

1. Helps you stand out against your competitors

2. Builds trust & credibility

3. Builds an emotional connect with your audience

4. Delivers a message clearly and succinctly

5. Motivates your potential audience to buy or take the next step

6. Opens up new revenue channels

Brand Elements

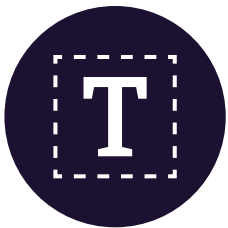Every brand will vary depending upon the company, but as a starting point it should include:

Logo
Your logo is often the first thing a potential customer will see, so it needs to makes a lasting impression.

Colour
Your colour palette choices are key to evoking emotions and differentiating your brand.

Typography
Each typeface has a distinct personality and a consistent typeface is key to instilling familiarity.

These three important elements can then be used on your business stationery, event materials, marketing, social media, on your website — anywhere and everywhere your brand is visually present.

Logo Design

A memorable logo design is essential for running a successful business these days.

Did you know the average person decides within two seconds of looking at a company logo whether they like it or not? It may seem minor, but a poorly designed logo can damage your brand and cost you customers, not to mention time and money of a re-brand.

Your logo plays a big part in building a trustworthy brand identity for your business. But there are some basic principles for creating a unique logo. Only a well-thought out logo can contribute purposefully to the growth of your business.

5 Tips for a Winning Logo Design:

1 **Distinct:** It stands out among competitors and catches people's attention and makes it memorable.

2 **Keep it simple:** It makes a visual impact.

3 **Scalable and versatile:** It can grow and evolve with the brand.

4 **Consistency:** this is key to building a successful brand.

Colour

In design, colours play a crucial role. The 'right' combinations of colours can make or break a design, and even influence the emotions and perceptions of the audience.

In a study by Loyola University Maryland, they found that colour is registered by the brain faster than images or typography. The same study found that **colour can increase brand recognition by up to 80%.**

Every colour has a different emotion or personality associated with it, so it is important to pick a colour that has the right meaning for your company.

R E D   **Bold, passion and excitement.**

O R A N G E   **High-energy, friendly and playful.**

Y E L L O W   **Sunshine, is all about happiness.**

G R E E N   **Growth, strength & environmentally conscious.**

B L U E   **Stable and trustworthy.**

P U R P L E   **Wisdom, Leadership, Royalty and luxury.**

P I N K   **Feminine, nurturing and warm.**

B L A C K   **Modern, classy and sophisticated.**

Your brand colour palette should include between 1-4 colours. To start, choose your base colour - this should be the colour that best aligns with your company's personality. Then pick your accent colours - these are colours that work well with your base colour and compliment your brand. And finally, pick your neutral colour, this will often be used as a background colour and are typically hues of grey, beige or white.

Typography

Just like colours, fonts (typography) also plays an important role in design. When choosing a brand typeface you need to make sure that it is distinctive and memorable, is easy to read, and it communicates your brand personality and values.

Every typeface has a personality, and you need to make sure that the typeface you have chosen correctly reflects your brand values and personality. Typefaces fall into different categories and each of these categories have their own unique traits.

Serif

Serif fonts - are the oldest typeface and are named after the little feet at the top and bottom of each letter. This classic typography is great if you want your brand to appear trustworthy, and traditional.

Sans

Sans serif - are much more modern, and give a sleek, clean, and minimal feel to your brand identity.

Script

Script - are elegant fonts designed to emulate cursive handwriting. It can be a great way to add an authentic feel to your branding.

Handwritten

Handwritten - are fun typefaces that look handwritten, but feel more informal and artistic than script typefaces. They are a great choice for brands who want to look friendly.

DECORATIVE

Decorative - are the most diverse. They have unique shapes and forms and are highly stylised.

Consistency

Consistency in your marketing designs and messaging is so important in building awareness, and developing trust and loyalty with customers. You need to make sure that every touchpoint - that is **every interaction** with you customer aligns consistently with your brand.

A great way of staying consistent is to create a set of brand guidelines. A brand guidelines document can help make sure all your brand elements stay in alignment and remain consistent as your business grows. As a minimum, it should include information on how to use your logos, information on your colour palette (CMYK, RGB and HEX values), typography, and imagery.

You can find a range of free templates online for this - check out the Useful Tools section on page 12-13.

Customer Touchpoints

Make sure that every interaction that takes place with your customer (whether online or face-to-face), clearly represents your brand, stands out to your customers, and motivates your customers to take action. Here are some examples to help get you started:

Before	During	After
Social Media Page	Email	Product Quality
Social Media Posts	Website	Experience
E-commerce	Application Forms	Thank you cards
Testimonials	Booking Apps	Review Requests
Leaflets & Flyers	Contracts	Referral Schemes
Signage	Business Stationery	Free Merchandise
Billboards & Posters	Brochure	
Magazine Editorials		

Weave your brand into everything you do.

8 Tips for Creating Successful Adverts

1 **Consistency**
Be sure to use consistent branding in all your marketing and advertising. This includes fonts, colours, shapes, and correct imagery style to create a recognisable look.

2 **Colour**
Stay true to your brand colours, and try not to use too many colours in your design. Colours convey different emotions so make sure they are right for your brand and the message you are trying to convey.

3 **Typography**
Make sure the fonts you use represent your brand personality well. You can use multiple fonts to create an interesting contrast - these are called font pairing. A good example is to pair a serif and sans. But don't use more than 3 typefaces. San-serif fonts are best for online as they're more readable.
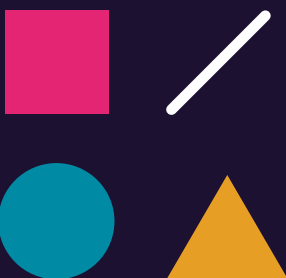
4 **Shape**
Shapes can also evoke different feelings e.g. circles are generally friendly and suggest feelings of community and unity, whilst squares have sharp edges and show strength and stability. Straight lines can be used to guide the eye to important information.

5 Imagery & Visual Aids

Images convey messages quicker than text. When choosing photos make sure they align with the key message and brand, work in harmony with your colour scheme and look professional. Use icons and simple illustrations to grab the audience's attention and also quickly convey a message.

6 Simple Messaging

Adverts should be compelling, concise, and clear. By keeping to the 3 'C's, your design will grab people's attention, deliver a focussed message, and a clear call to action.

7 Layout

The foundation of a good advert is layout and structure. We read from left to right so make sure that you place important information on the left-hand-side of the design. Keep content aligned, and use space to amplify other elements.

8 Visual Hierarchy

Visual hierarchy is the order in which we process information in a design. Hierarchy helps us to order information and point the reader to the most important information first. Place the most important elements first, and use size, colour, and typography styles (e.g. bold, italic and underline) to create contrast and make important information stand out.

20 Useful Links to Take Your Brand to the Next Level...

Design Tools

Be Funky - www.befunky.com
BeFunky is a free photo editing app that has an amazing collection of templates, tools and features for photo editing, collage making, and graphic design.

Canva - www.canva.com
Canva is a graphic design platform, used to create social media graphics, presentations, posters, documents and other visual content. (Free and Premium accounts available).

Imagery

Bitable - www.biteable.com
Make videos with animation, stock footage, and photos. Studio-quality results, the easy way. (Free and Premium accounts available).

Drawkit - www.drawkit.io
Copyright free hand-drawn vector illustration and icon resources, perfect for your next project.

Icon Finder - www.iconfinder.com
Iconfinder is the world's largest marketplace for vector and raster icons in SVG and PNG formats (Free and Premium accounts available).

Pexels - www.pexels.com
Beautiful free stock photos and videos.

Unsplash - www.unsplash.com
Beautiful, free images and photos that you can download and use for any project.

Colour

Canva Colour Generator - www.canva.com/colors/color-palette-generator
Want to create a colour palette from a image or photo? Then this is the perfect tool for the job.

Colour Meanings - www.color-meanings.com
A great guide on colour psychology, and the meanings associated with different colours.

Coolors - www.coolors.co
Create the perfect palette or get inspired by thousands of beautiful colour schemes.

Typography

What the Font - www.myfonts.com
Need to find a particular font? WhatTheFont uses deep learning to search our collection of over 133,000 font styles and find the best match for the fonts in your photo.

Fontsquirrel - www.fontsquirrel.com
Font Squirrel scours the internet for high quality, license free fonts.

Google Fonts - fonts.google.com
Google Fonts is a library of more than a thousand free licensed font families.

Organisation & Marketing Tools

Buffer - www.buffer.com
Buffer is a scheduling tool that helps you to build your audience and grow your brand on social media. (Free and Premium accounts available).

Combin - www.combin.com
An Instagram marketing tool created for convenient Instagram content planning. Schedule Stories and posts for auto-publishing.

Grammarly - www.grammarly.com
Millions trust Grammarly's free writing app to make their online writing clear and effective. Includes a free grammar and punctuation checker tool.

Mailchimp - www.mailchimp.com
MailChimp is a popular email marketing tool that offers email templates, email automations, and intergrates with your website. (Free and Premium accounts available).

Brand Guidelines Templates

Slidesgo - https://slidesgo.com/brand-guidelines
Free Brand Guidelines templates in Google Slides or PowerPoint which you can customise to create your own set of brand guidelines to keep your brand looking consistent and professional.

Inspiration & Moodboards

Pinterest - www.pinterest.co.uk
Discover ideas, style inspiration and things to try. You can also save content into moodboards for projects.

Moodboard - www.gomoodboard.com
Build beautiful, simple, free moodboards for inspiration, and sharing ideas quickly and easily!

Congratulations on reaching the end of my branding and design guide. You should now have a better understanding of your company brand and how you can use it to market your business.

Want to work together?

If you'd like to have a chat and find out more about my branding and marketing services, then please get in touch by email: **contact@hannahbenyon.com**

Hannah Benyon, Hannah Benyon Designs
Hi, I'm Hannah and I love helping new and emerging businesses develop and grow by working with them to create strong brands.

Having spent over 10 years in the industry, my specialisms lie in branding, print, and digital design. I have a fierce passion for my work - I love listening to my clients' challenges and finding new ways to bring fresh, innovative ideas to the table.

When I'm not designing, I love baking and crafting with my daughter and getting outdoors for long walks.

HANNAH BENYON
DESIGNS

contact@hannahbenyon.com
www.hannahbenyon.com