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Growth Catalyst

GET BRANDED!

The essentials of an unforgettable brand positioned to expand
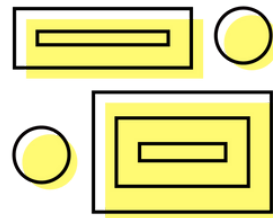
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A STRONG BRAND?
STRATEGIC MORE THAN DECORATIVE!

☑ **You're wondering whether your existing brand identity is complete?**

☑ **You feel like you should freshen your brand up if you want to stay in the arena?**

☑ **You find your brand identity difficult to use on all the communication supports you need every day?**

☑ **You make one step forward, two steps backward?**

☑ **You spend a thousand years choosing one font or colour over another one when you create visuals?**

☑ **You need to create a new brand for a new branch of business?**

☑ **You are facing a blank page?**

Nowadays, more than ever, branding is a vector of growth.
The absence of branding hinders the sales of the best products or services. You are well aware of this, so aware that you know you have to act. Just read on:

92,6% of people declare that the visual dimension is the #1 influencing factor affecting their purchase decision.

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> **Research reveals that people make a subconscious judgment about a person, environment or product within 90 seconds of initial viewing - between 62% & 90% of that assessment being based on colour alone.**

Your company's brand identity needs to adapt to all contexts & media, whether digital or analogue. This is rather complex.

The challenge increases with the mediocrity of the work done by the designer you hired at the beginning of your project. All of our clients face the same problems, whether it makes you feel better or not... that's a fact.

In order to function without frustrating you or forcing you to improvise all the time, a brand identity needs to be rich, complete & delivered with precise use guidelines.

Let us say it loud: a brand is not JUST a logo, but a set of various graphic elements to be used consistently & repeatedly, whatever the projects, activities & requirements of the business.

Here is an exclusive checklist of everything you need to know about your professional brand identity in order to function optimally over time.

BRAND STRATEGY
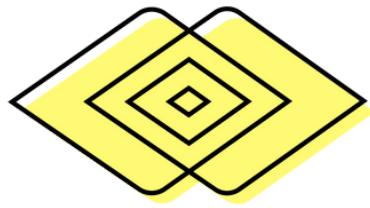
1| A BRAND STRATEGY COMES BEFORE ITS GRAPHIC ELEMENTS

Before starting the design of your brand identity alone or with a graphic designer, you absolutely must work on your brand strategy first & put words on your values, USPs, mission, vision, target market, avatars & competitive landscape. Don't think that it's a common standard though... unfortunately.

Here is a brief summary of the questions you should have answered before working with a brand designer:

☑ **What is your company/brand name?**

☑ **What does this name mean?**

☑ **What is your brand signature?**
(a few words that usually appear under your logo)

☑ **What should your brand inspire those exposed to it?**

☑ **What are your brand values?**

☑ **How do you want your brand to be perceived?**

☑ **Which brands inspire you & why?**

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☑ What are your unique selling propositions?

☑ What is your brand mission?

☑ Who is your main target (the one who buys what you sell)?

☑ Who is your secondary target (the one who does not necessarily buy but who knows you, follows & recommends you)?

☑ How do you want your customers to feel when they first come into contact with your brand?

☑ Who are your competitors?

A brand identity starts with words, emotions, descriptions & not with graphic elements.

With this in mind & backed by your brand strategy written black on white, you can start an intelligent creative process.

VISUAL IDENTITY

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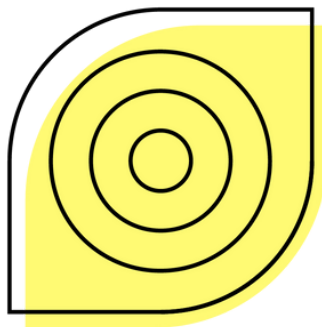
2| THE KEY COMPONENTS OF A COMPLETE & STRATEGIC BRAND IDENTITY

A palette of complementary typographies

You need to choose a maximum of 3 typographies for your brand identity. To remain consistent, each of them has a specific use.

☑ **Titles:**

You need different levels of titles to communicate in documents or on your website, for example. It is recommended to visually differentiate your titles from your content, either by using a different typography or by using the same typography with a different font (bold, italic, fine…).

☑ **Content:**

For more generic content, you should pay attention to the readability of the typography you are going to choose. Also, make sure that it is well matched to the typography used for the titles.

☑ **Accent:**

You can choose a third typography (optional) to highlight certain pieces of text or quotations. For this accent typography, you can select a more playful typeface.

It is very important to stick to these same 2 or 3 typographies on all your online & offline communication media.

A complete colour palette

Colours help create versatility in your brand identity. The repetition of the same colour increases brand awareness by 80%.

A colour palette is a set of harmoniously coordinated colours.
Most of the time, it is composed of:

✅ **One or two main colours:**

Your main colours are used on your logo, your main elements & whenever you need to highlight something.

✅ **One or two secondary colours:**

These colours are used when you have something else to highlight & when the primary colour is already being used nearby.

✅ **One or two neutral colours.**

Your neutral colours can be used as background colours.

You must have the codes of each of your brand's colours for web & print use. Approximations are not acceptable.

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Logos in different shapes & formats

The logo is a key element of your brand identity. Most of the time, it is the first thing people see before discovering your company, your brand, your products or services.

One of the most important aspects of a logo is its adaptability. That is why you should also have alternative logos that will be used when the main logo does not work visually.

Below is the list of the logo versions you need to own:

☑ **Coloured** variations so that the logo works on a dark as well as on a light background

☑ **Horizontal** & **vertical** variations

☑ Variation **without slogan**

☑ Variation **with slogan**

Too many designers don't do this work & don't provide their clients with these various formats, at the expense of the quality of their clients' communication. This is very common, though unprofessional.

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Example of the French logos for Incubator Studio's light background

Harmonious brand imagery

The definition of a clear style allows you to frame & reinforce your brand identity. This creates coherence & consistency in the choice & use of your brand imagery.

You therefore need to establish a list that describes the criteria (treatment, framing, colour, style) & keywords of the photographs you are going to use, then stick to it.
E.g.: minimalist, architecture, floral, nature, pink, black & white, cold tones, warm tones, abstract, retro, offbeat, non-figurative...

Playful patterns

Patterns can be created from a logo element, your typography, an illustration or abstract shapes. Their presence in your brand identity contributes to reinforcing it, making it more playful & professional.

They can be used on business cards, social networks, websites, packaging or any other communication support.

A collection of icons

It is well known that a picture is worth a thousand words. Icons are therefore a strategic choice to illustrate your USPs, your values, your methodology, your results, your services or products etc...

You can create tailor-made icons yourself or ask a designer to draw them. This will allow you to develop your brand identity & stand out from the crowd.

At a lower cost, you can use free libraries such as Font Awesome or buy existing sets on Creative Market for example. However, make sure that the icons you buy are consistent with your overall brand identity.

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A set of graphic elements for all your communication

It's time to gather all the graphic elements that make up your brand & review them.

This includes for example:

☑ Email signatures

☑ Business cards

☑ Newsletter templates

☑ Administrative documents templates (for quotations, offers, invoices, contracts, official documents, etc...)

☑ Presentation slides template (for trainings, conferences, workshops...)

☑ Banners for your social networks

☑ Communication templates for your social network posts & stories

☑ Landing pages

☑ Website(s)

☑ Leaflets & posters

These elements were probably neither all made at the same time, nor by the same person. It is therefore useful to review them all to ensure that they all conform to your updated or new brand identity & can support your company's growth.

Precise use guidelines

A brand guidelines recap is a document that summarises your entire brand identity, from the hexadecimal code of your main colour to the rules of use of your logo.

It is an extremely important document that allows you, your teams & your sub-contractors to stick to the red thread of your brand identity. It regulates & governs its correct use.

This guide will take your brand to the next level, whether you are at the command alone or as part of a team.

No more mistake, no more approximation, no more trial & error, no more wasted time!
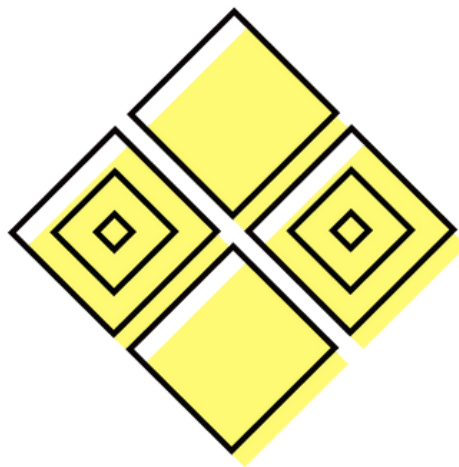
READY TO GLOW & GROW ?

WHAT DO YOU CONCLUDE FROM THIS BRAND BOOSTER RECAP?

✓ Does your brand graphic style match your brand positioning?

✓ Are your brand elements visually consistent & in harmony?

✓ Is your brand identity complete & rich?

✓ Do you know how to bring your graphic identity to life to attract your ideal customers?

OR:

✗ You are clearly missing a part of the brand elements or some logo formats.

✗ You don't have clear directions on how to use your brand.

✗ You go from approximation to approximation with frustration.

✗ You are tired of wasting time tinkering.

At Incubator Studio, we are committed to building complete & rich brands, created to last. We visually translate a unique strategic brand vision into a powerful business asset. We are convinced that professional design with strategic branding insight is a real booster that gives a strong impulse to new brands as well as to existing ones losing momentum, in need for a re-launch. Proper branding acts as a daily driving force.

So, ready to glow & grow, to shine & dazzle? Offer it a speeding ticket. Ready, set, gooooooo!

Our branding & web design agency advises entrepreneurs, start-ups & SMEs. It assists them in launching or accelerating their business, increasing the impact of their messages & solutions.

Our clients rely on our expertise in branding, design & digital marketing as a powerful growth leverage that generates credibility & traction (= helps them sell).

To your success,
The Incubator Studio team

WHO ARE WE?

AURÉLIE BÉCAT

*Positioning Strategist &
Brand Therapist*

CORALIE ROCQUE

*Art Director &
Web Identity Designer*

Extracting from your brand essence
the strategic acceleration of your success.

We designed & built a boutique consultancy that supports the go-to-market & growth of solopreneurs, startups & SMEs. Incubator Studio increases small companies' authority, reach, traction, impact, success & profits.

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Let us brand you!