Communication Handbook - Factsheet 5

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Visibility

⇨ What is branding for?

⇨ Things to consider when designing a logo

⇨ How to use photographs and what are "good" photographs

The aim of your logo, brand, image is to get people to recognise your project. If you can use your logo, signature, website, newsletter, press releases effectively you present a coherent and memorable image of your project.

Branding is one of the most difficult disciplines to get right and it is likely that you will need to outsource some or all of the design work to a design company. Branding is more often associated with the private sector where commercial organisation seek to create trust that will bring their customers back to them. But brand and image is important for projects, too. If you want your target groups to remember your project and to identify with the themes and issues, then a strong image and brand is important.

What is branding for?

Many people think that branding is simply a matter of designing a new logo for their project or organisation and possibly a tagline to go underneath it, often barely distinguishing between branding and marketing. A strong brand has to do with every aspect of a project's relationship with its target groups. The function of branding is to make us feel good by making our decisions easier and safer. It does this by reducing anxiety and doubt and enhancing the trustworthiness of the brand. Branding is perceptual management that works with such virtual aspects like values, associations, percepts, beliefs, metaphors and environments. It is a promise and a difference. If marketing is the body of an organisation, then branding is its mind.

The process of branding

The steps that you can follow to establish the brand identity of your project are similar to the process of communication planning.
- ⇨ What is the aim of your project?
- ⇨ Who are your target groups?
- ⇨ What benefits will your target groups get?

Does this all sound familiar? It should do – your brand identity is part of your communication plan.

Logos

Designing good, clear and innovative logos is a very difficult task and you will need to use a design company.

Your name and your logo are usually the first points of contact with your target groups. Having a strong identity is very important. It is essential that the logo is seen as mark of quality and when a brand is marked with a distinctive logo, a target group can trust it to be good.

Things to consider when designing a logo

Becoming more involved with your brand and understanding how branding works will help your project communication. Whereas branding is a big subject here are some tips and ideas for logo design to start you going.

- ⇨ Avoid negative images and associations.
- ⇨ Colour is key. Enhance your logo with colours that are meaningful.
- ⇨ Check other projects for ideas to make sure that your logo is unique.
- ⇨ Start paying attention to logos and brands around you and learn what works and what doesn't work.
- ⇨ Logos always work in their context. Don't assess logos from just purely design principles.
- ⇨ Conduct a focus group within your target groups. What is their first reaction?
- ⇨ Sometimes the most obvious images can be cliché. Try to incorporate a creative visual into the logo. Remember not all MED projects are about waves of the Mediterranean!
- ⇨ Experiment with different fonts to see which resonate with your brand.
- ⇨

If you want to add a tagline you need to create a short and memorable phrase that will sum up the tone and premise of your project brand. If you choose to have a tagline, make it to be seen on all your communications tools or don't use it.

And finally...
check that the logo or a similar design has not already been used by another project or organisation.

You will probably need to trademark a logo that you have designed or commissioned. You need to check the trade mark office in your region.

Use of photographs

They say a picture paints a thousand words. Good use of photography will enhance the visibility of your printed material and web site. Poorly conceived photographs do exactly the opposite.

Things to avoid

- ⇨ Avoid using the publicity photo clichés
- ⇨ One person passing a cheque to another
- ⇨ Someone breaking ground with a shovel
- ⇨ Two people shaking hands
- ⇨ Someone cutting a ribbon
- ⇨ One person passing an award to another
- ⇨ A group of people (e.g. project partners), unknown to the target group

Remember that you should be trying to communicate results and impact through your publications. People are not interested in process.

Good photographs

What sort of photographs will editors use?

⇨ Keep groups small – 3 or 4
⇨ People – faces in particular
⇨ People doing something (concrete actions, no plain group pictures)
⇨ Avoid clutter backgrounds
⇨ Fill whole picture
⇨ Use strong colours – reds or yellows
⇨ Relevant

IN SHORT

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Logos: designing good, clear and innovative logos is a very difficult task and you will need to use a design company.

Colour is key. Enhance your logo with colours that are meaningful.

Check other projects for ideas and to make sure that your logo is unique.

Good photographs depict the results, outcomes or impact of the project, not the process.