

Maintaining **your brand** *in the* digital age



A single source of
truth: Why brand
guidelines matter

Why should
you choose a
brand hub?

How a strong and
considered brand
strategy ensures
success



Introduction

‘Brand’ is a word that is thrown around by many different people in many different contexts, and not always accurately, so when we talk about brand guidelines, we should perhaps begin by setting out what we mean by ‘brand’.

By definition, branding is the practice of defining a set of symbols to represent an organisation, that are easily recognisable as belonging to that organisation, to help identify and distinguish its offering, products or services.

Moreover, your brand is arguably your greatest asset. It is the sum of the promise of your product or service, and the perception, expectation and experience in the minds of your customers. These notions of your brand may be intended - through corporate identity, marketing messages, etc. - or may be out of your control - for example, online reviews or social media interactions that affect the perception of your brand.

Testimonial

“Your brand is what other people say about you when you are out of the room”

JEFF BEZOS

Founder, and CEO of Amazon



While you cannot control your brand perception completely, consistent and intelligent use of corporate identity, visual design, marketing and advertising all go a long way to promoting those positive associations. By communicating your point of difference and how you add value, you can inform and inspire potential brand ambassadors amongst your employees and customers alike.

Testimonial

“Overall, because branding is about creating and sustaining trust it means delivering on promises. The best and most successful brands are completely coherent. Every aspect of what they do and what they are reinforces everything else.”

WALLY OLINS

Co-founder of Wolff Olins and renowned practitioner of branding



Source: superbcreative.com

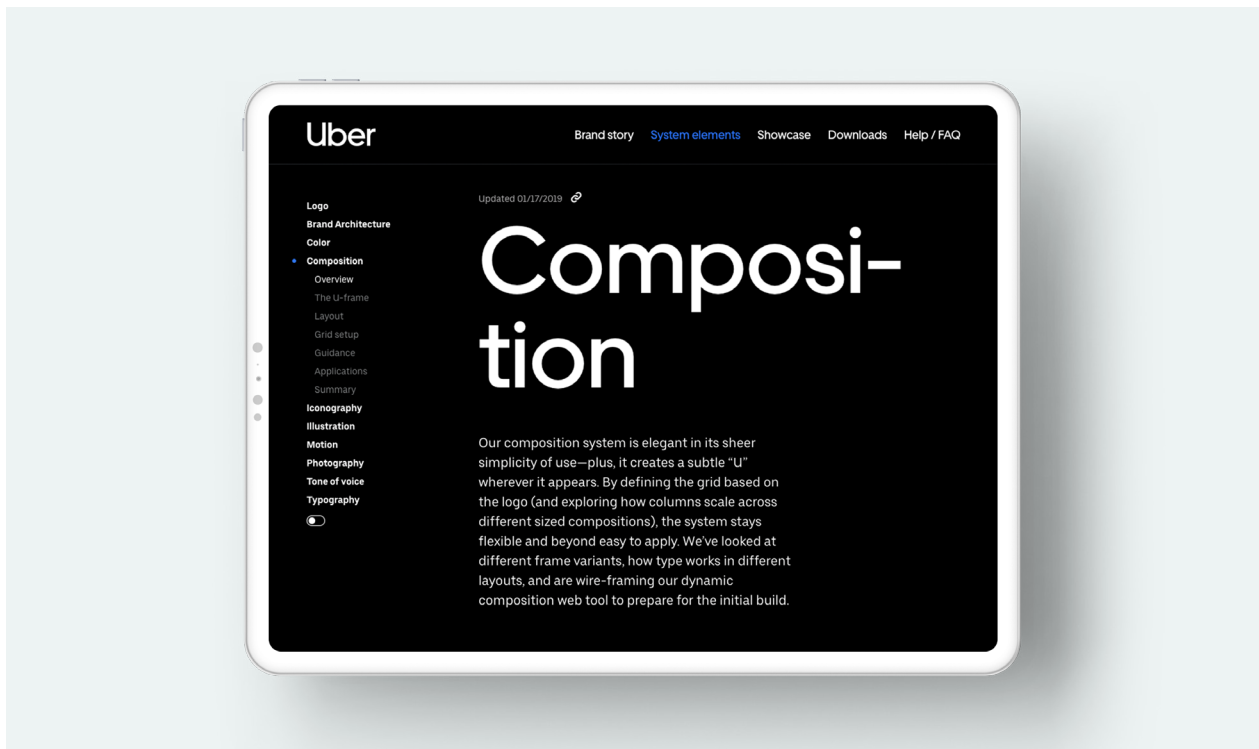
Why brand guidelines?

Brand guidelines are a tool to give your brand consistency and flexibility, and a resource to inform and inspire those who touch your brand. These can take many forms and traditionally would include standards for visual design such as; logos, typefaces, colours and photography; the elements of a brand's style and the classic 'Do's and Don'ts' for designers.

The most effective guidelines are much more than that, they provide a resource that everyone in your organisation (or working on your behalf) can use to gain a deep understanding of the values, attributes, purpose and personality of the company. These documents often extend to a written proposition statement, an elevator pitch, examples of tone of voice for writing and notes on company culture.



Source: superbcreative.com



Source: brand.uber.com

A single source of truth

In the pre-digital era, brand guidelines were produced as printed manuals and distributed to those parties that needed to refer to them. Marketing was the preserve of the Marketing Department and visual and written content was produced by Graphic Designers and Copywriters respectively. Due to the cost and complexity of producing guidelines, they were usually only produced for larger entities such as NASA, British Airways and IBM. Recent years have seen a significant move towards online brand guidelines. Big tech brands such as WhatsApp, Netflix, and Uber paved the way, a wider variety of sectors soon followed suit and even IBM has moved with the times. But this is more than just a trend, we would argue that it's a necessity.

BRITISH AIRWAYS



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NASA

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Brand Guidelines



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NETFLIX

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Uber

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IBM

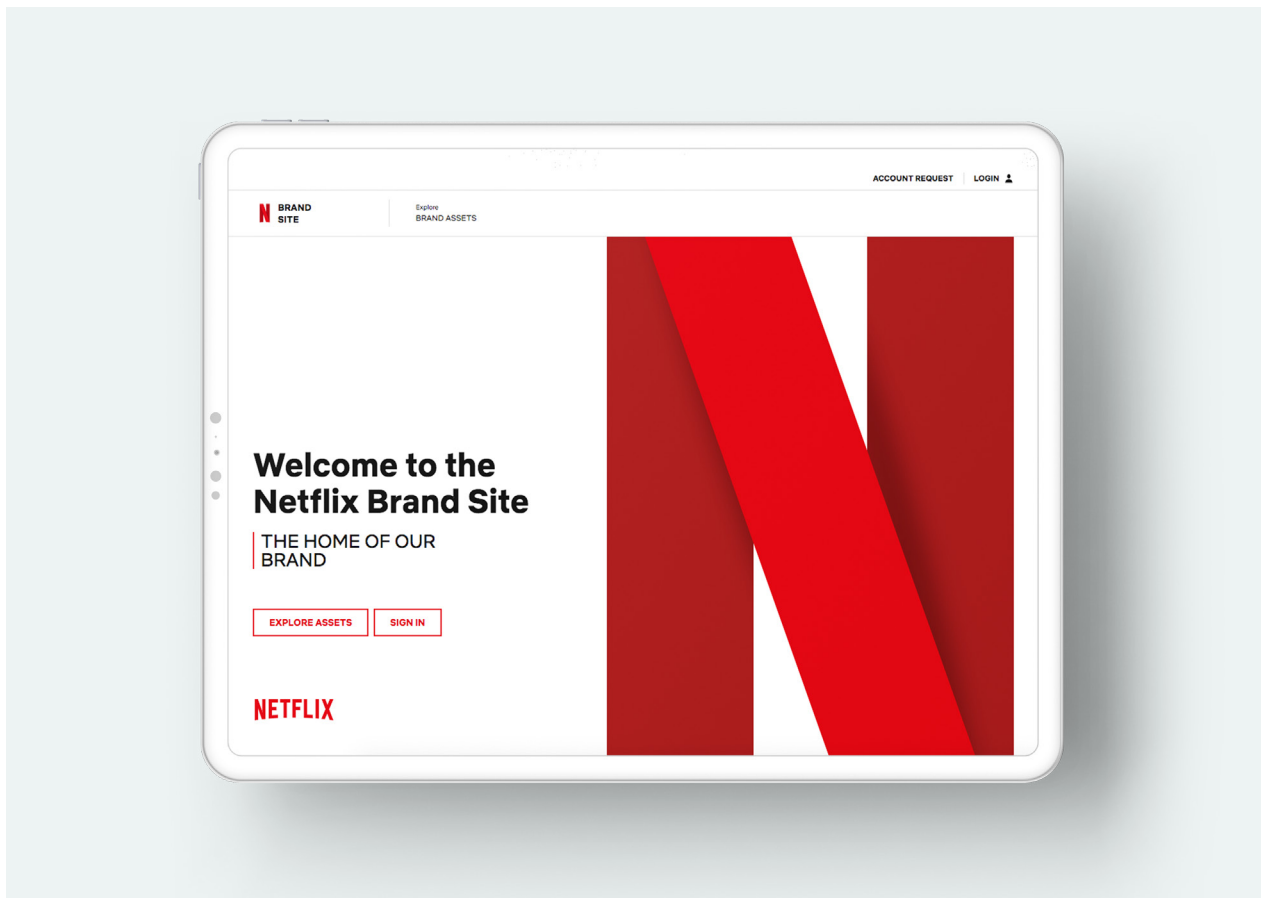
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Right now almost everyone in your organisation will have access to tools to create content assets or branded communications.

With increased ability to share content and messaging via eMarketing or social media platforms it is paramount that your people understand how to truly represent your brand verbally or in writing, as well as in visual terms - therefore your Brand Guidelines should be as easy to access as possible.

“Online Brand Guidelines provide a single source of truth for maintaining your brand consistency.”

A brand microsite provides a central location with access to the guidelines, files, and messaging approved for brand use. It can also be secured, readily maintained and easily updated and so remains a single source of truth and reference for anyone representing your brand.



Source: brand.netflix.com/en

Why choose an online Brand Hub?

- Reference for brand, print, digital, written word, moving image and culture all under one roof
- Easy to access by anyone, anywhere, on any device
- Managed centrally and updated instantly
- Cost-effective to set up and maintain
- The capacity evolve as your brand grows
- Managed security for your brand asset files
- A single source of truth containing only the latest approved material and guidance

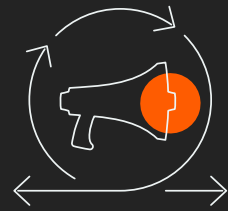
Your brand is your most valuable asset



A strong, considered brand strategy ensures your message is clear, meaningful and consistently delivered.

Our brand consultancy offering includes company naming, development and strategy, positioning and visual identity, as well as solutions for hosted brand hubs and asset libraries.

Talk to us today to see
how we can make a
world of difference to
your brand.



WRITTEN BY LEE POYNTER

Global Head of Design

With over two decades of design experience across a diverse range of media and industry sectors, Lee oversees Crowd's creative output from all of our regional creative teams. Central to Crowd's offering, our creative quality is essential and with Lee is in safe hands.

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