

# Microbrands

This brief is about colonising a little bit of culture and letting people know that it's yours.

## Create a brand (without a product)

By choosing a brand-name and designing a visual treatment of that name, create a brand that has an aura of desirability, intrigue and appeal without specifying what your brand is trying to sell.

Without a product to sell, your brand won't survive very long. Your audience will lose interest when they realise there is nothing to buy. But that's OK. Your brand need only last for a few micro-seconds: the moment when people first see it and think to themselves:

*I like it, before wondering: what is it?*

Within the constraints of this brief, your brand will be a success if it can elicit a pleasurable first response from your target audience: a moment of resonance.

## How?

- *Values:* What are the values of your brand? Is it high-brow or low-brow? Weighty or throwaway? Open or exclusive? Traditional or new? Is your brand eco-friendly? Religious? Political? How do you express this?
- *Audience:* Who will identify with the values of your brand? *Sun* readers? Jet-setters? Dog walkers? Commuters? Socialists? Designers? Mums? Dads? Polish immigrants? Children under 5?
- *Culture:* You will need to position your brand through visual references to other things in culture. Things like lottery tickets, cigarette packets, Las Vegas, documentary photographs from the 1930s and washing powder. You can pick and choose from any

number of different things, so approach this part of the brief with gusto and some cultural savvy. You will want to bring along a visual collection of 'cultural stuff' to the interim crit.

- *Naming:* The name of your brand is probably the most important aspect of this brief so you should give it a lot of consideration. Your choice of name should be informed by your chosen cultural references and values. Is the name made up? Is it a noun, verb or adjective? Is it someone's name? How long is it? How does it sound? Is it difficult to pronounce? What language is it in?
- *Tone of voice & typographic character:* How do you address your audience? Do you shout? Whisper? Command? Seduce? Challenge? How do you express this voice through type and lettering?
- *Media and expression:* How will your brand be expressed? Is your brand-logo printed on a paper cup? Flashed onto a TV screen? Painted on a wall? Does it come with a free pencil sharpener? Does it appear in a magazine? Which magazine? Is it handed out on the street by a man dressed as a crocodile? Be sure to frame your brand within the media. Where and how people experience it will affect how your brand is perceived.

## References

- Everything in culture since the Industrial Revolution. Be selective.
- A microbrand: [www.ilikeitwhatisit.com](http://www.ilikeitwhatisit.com)
- An enormous brand in the making: [www.monocle.com/culture/index.php](http://www.monocle.com/culture/index.php)
- A branding agency: [www.venture3.com](http://www.venture3.com)

### Interim crit delivery

#### 3.00pm Thursday 1 March

For the interim crit you will bring the following things:

- 1 A visual collection of cultural stuff: your source material
- 2 Your brand name, narrowed down to a few choices
- 3 Initial designs for a brand logo (at least 2 days worth of work spent designing it, not 10 minutes)
- 4 At least 1 original photograph of a member of your target audience (*not* from Google, you *must* take it yourself)
- 5 Mocked-up ideas of how your brand will be expressed through the media (*not* widdly little drawing in your sketchbook. Instead: *things* we can talk about)

### Final crit delivery

#### 3.30pm Thursday 8 March

For the final crit you will have done the following things:

- 1 Chosen a brand name
- 2 Designed a logo / logotype for your brand
- 3 Written an attention-grabbing tag line using a suitable tone of voice
- 4 Designed a visual treatment of the brand giving consideration to typographic character and a use of imagery that positions your brand within culture
- 5 Created at least 3 'media expressions' of your brand. These will be what you show us during the crit.

Lastly, we are introducing a new rule for the final crit. When presenting your work, you will not be able to say *anything* until 30 seconds after we have experienced your microbrand. This means that your design must work all by itself as *phenomena without commentary*.

Good luck! – James and Jack