

Motion Graphics in Branding

Creating a conceptual brand identity that utilises motion graphics.

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on understanding how motion graphics is used in branding and how the use of motion graphics will evolve along with modern technology, specifically in the field of augmented reality. In this work, I use different methods to create an overview of motion graphics, and of how this modern-day tool is utilised in storytelling.

As part of my thesis, I wanted to create a branding concept for a fictitious company which would include animated content in order to illustrate different methods and ways of how motion graphics can support the image of a brand.

Keywords

- Branding
- Animation
- Motion graphics
- Augmented reality (AR)

Tiivistelmä

Tämä opinnäytetyö käsittelee liikegrafiikan hyödyntämistä brändäyksessä ja miten sen käyttö kehittyy teknologian edistymisen myötä. Keskityn tässä opinnäytetyössä liikegrafiikan käyttöön erityisesti lisätyn todellisuuden (AR) kontekstissa. Käytän erilaisia keinoja luodakseni yleiskuvan liikegraafiikasta ja siitä, miten tätä nykyaikaista työkalua hyödynnetään tarinankerronnassa.

Osana opinnäytetyötäni tahdoin luoda kuvitteelliselle yritykselle brändikonseptin. Tämä konsepti hyödyntää animoitua sisältöä havainnoillistaakseen eri keinoja siitä, miten liikegrafiikka pystyy tukemaan brändin ilmettä.

Avainsanat

- Brändäys
- Animointi
- Liikegrafiikka
- Lisätty todellisuus (AR)

Contents



1. Introduction

- 1.1 Brand modernisation & evolution of technology
- 1.2 Motive for topic
- 1.3 Definition of design task
- 1.4 Research frame

2. Background

- 2.1 What is motion graphics?
- 2.2 Added value of moving image
- 2.3 Significance of motion graphics in branding
- 2.4 Future of motion graphics

3. Platforms

- 3.1 Logos
- 3.2 Social media
- 3.3 Mobile applications
- 3.4 Augmented reality

4. Design task

- 4.1 Purpose
- 4.2 Theoretical basis

5. Design process

- 5.1 Defining the client
- 5.2 Brand voice
- 5.3 Benchmarking
- 5.4 Name & tagline
- 5.5 Sketching
- 5.6 Imagery

6. Circus - brand identity

- 6.1 Logo
- 6.2 Typography
- 6.3 Colour
- 6.4 Imagery
- 6.5 Visual elements
- 6.6 Motion Graphics
- 6.7 Billboards
- 6.8 Website
- 6.9 Business cards
- 6.10 Merchandise

7. Evaluation

References

Attachments

1. Introduction



Brand modernisation & evolution of technology

Digitalisation is the biggest phenomenon of our time that, has affected all creative fields. The emergence of social media, high speed internet and new digital media has opened countless doors for brands to express themselves to customers. Branding, along with all other creative fields, is heavily dependent on the evolution of trends.

The incredible speed at which technology is advancing has had a big impact on how branding has evolved. Internet data and algorithms allow companies to get real-time feedback on how people perceive their brands (Rosenquist 2018). Adapting to this developing technology has become more important than ever, and now we are on the verge of taking big new steps in branding with the introduction of advanced software, new platforms for moving picture and growing trends involving motion graphics.



Motive for topic

The reasoning for choosing this specific topic was, naturally, my inherent curiosity towards the subject. Moving images and visuals have always been an interest of mine, but so far all the graphic design I have done has been static. Learning motion design felt like a natural progression for me. I wanted to re-search the role of motion graphics in my field of study especially now that it is such a contemporary element in branding.

Including motion graphics in my palette of know-how is something that undoubtedly will reinforce my skills as a designer. Producing animated content amongst other graphic work is something I wish to do in the future. I also hope to inspire my peers to recognise the significance of motion graphics in the brandbook of the future.

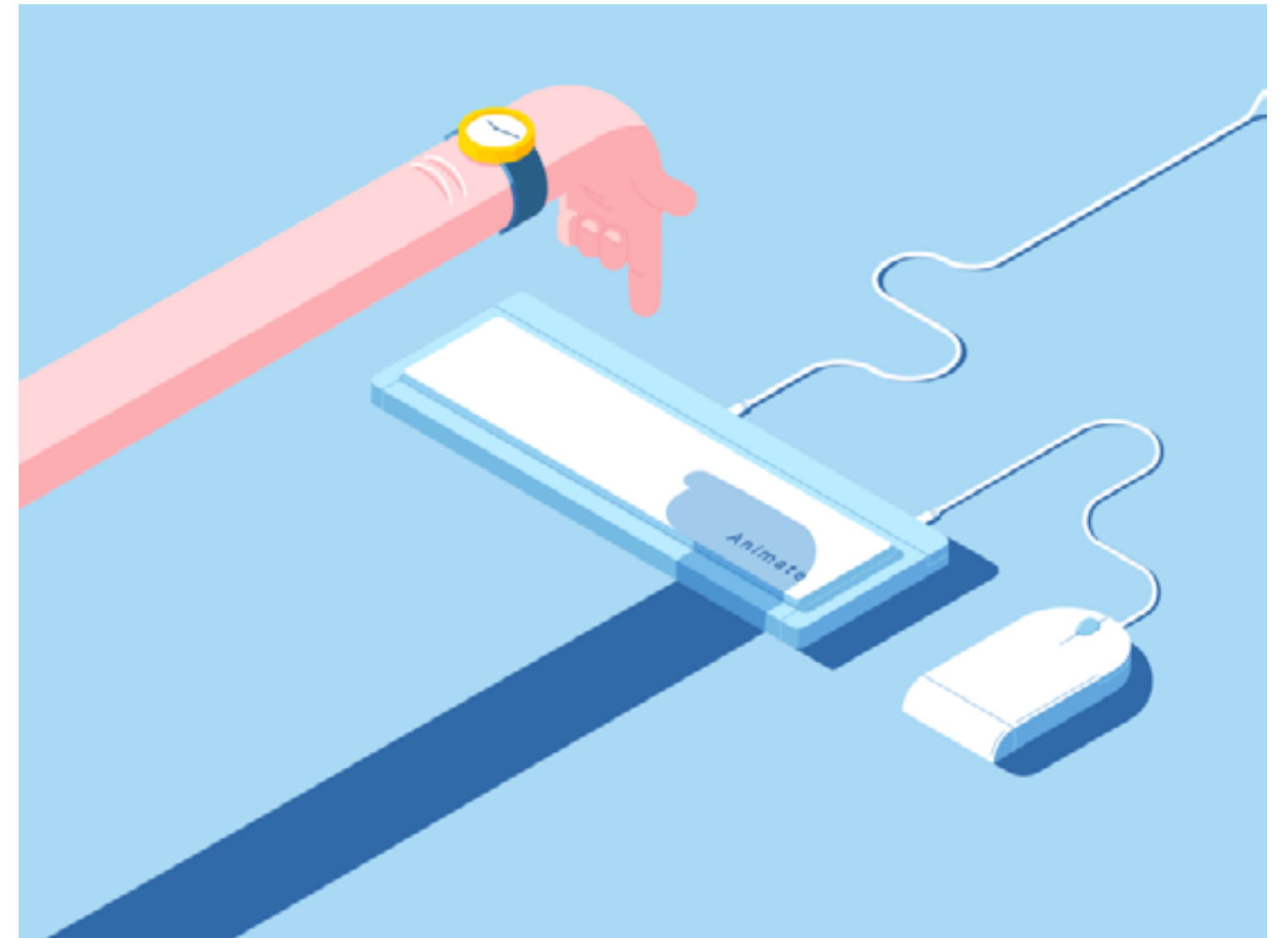
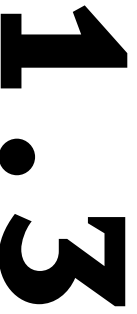


Image 2. Panic 2016



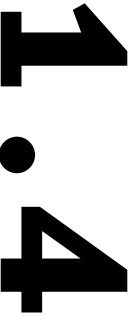
Definition of design task

From the very beginning of the thesis process my aim was to create a brand identity, either based on a real company or a conceptual one of my own choosing. Incorporating motion graphics into the identity was the main focus. The end result would showcase different methods of utilising motion graphics in the brand strategy in order to create an ambitious and expressive identity.

The objective of this design task is to demonstrate the significance of animated content as a supporting element to a brand's identity. The aim is to make the viewer realize some of the possibilities that motion graphics offers as a new, noteworthy medium.

Fundamentally this concept is aimed at brands that embody attributes which can be translated into motion graphics. Another target group is brands that rely on digital marketing. Creating animated content for a company that manufactures erasers might not end up being very practical. In contrast, a football club or a video production company will have more interesting features to express through visual elements. This is not to say that an eraser factory can not have an interesting brand identity. It can; although the purpose of an expressive brand book might be lost to its customers.

Additionally, this design task is for the benefit of myself, my peers and my future clients. Learning about motion graphics as a design field and producing content is a big motivation for me. I hope that this will result in increasing interest among students and designers around me, and in lucrative collaboration with potential clients.



Research frame

The research question I am answering in this thesis is how motion graphics add value to a brand and its identity by utilising such technologies as augmented reality.

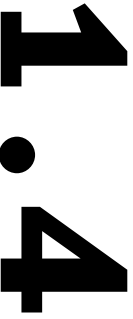
The way in which I intended to succeed in this design task was through different methods of acquiring and interpreting knowledge. The most prominent one of these methods was creating a questionnaire for several professionals within this field, and reflecting on their thoughts on the subject. Out of the 18 people that I contacted, I got responses from eight. Their insight as specialists of their field gave me valuable perspective into the world of motion graphics.

In the questionnaire I focused on asking questions about how the subject personally perceives the design industry. Even though all of the professionals that answered were from the same field of work, many of them had very different opinions regarding some questions. Other questions, however, had almost unanimous replies. It was interesting to compare the different schools of thought, taking into account the contrast between the level of experience and working position of each individual.



Image 3. Shaw 2018

Introduction

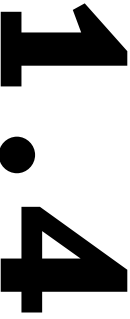


Exploring the vast field of motion graphics through benchmarking was also an important part of my design process. Roaming the internet for relevant content gave me countless examples pertaining to successful use of motion graphics. It also gave me perspective on the evolving trends within this field.

While exploring the world of motion graphics, I simultaneously researched evolving technologies that might be pertinent to my subject. I quickly realized that incorporating several different forms of technology into my thesis would make it way too broad. I narrowed them down to just one: augmented reality. I felt that this new technology was the most pertinent to my subject, and also the most interesting. Augmented reality and motion graphics are two media that go hand in hand, and we will be seeing more of them both in the near future.

As part of my thesis and of learning to produce animated content, I had to teach myself how to use Adobe After Effects CC. It is a software designed to create digital visual effects, motion graphics, and compositions. Knowing how to use this program would give me the tools I need to bring life into my static designs, and to create worthy content for my conceptual brand.

In order to give examples of motion graphics and augmented reality in practice, I knew I would have to create scenarios to paint a picture of what it would look like in the real world. These scenarios would require an understanding of future trends, and conceptual implementation of both motion graphics and augmented reality.



Listed below are some of the findings that I made from the questionnaire.

(Ebnetter, Koivisto, Kunttu, Pasanen & Rosenquist 2018)

- Several designers in the creative field thought that the demand for motion graphics in branding has not skyrocketed, but more and more clients have an open mind towards it. In general motion design is more prevalent because of advancing technology and software.
- Motion graphics will evolve from mostly 2D-image to the 3D-world, especially after virtual and augmented reality becomes widespread.
- Motion graphics has become reduced and cleaner in style. Motion designers create more delicate animation, with emphasis on the style of motion, instead of the amount of motion.
- A brand identity still relies on the basic brand pillars like colour, typography, photography, tone of voice etc. Motion graphics is just a supporting element, but it will slowly grow in priority. In the end, a brand always has to work statically.
- Most of the professionals did not see evolving technology as a threat to this industry. On the contrary, it was seen as a tool that will be utilised in creative work. There were some subjects who feared that moving picture will become “over the top” if it becomes too available and produced in poor taste. There were also concerns that technology might eventually pose a threat to people’s privacy.
- AR and VR technology will be utilised in branding when the technology has evolved enough to make it seamless, integrated and independent of too much hardware. AR can already be seen in use around us, but having separate applications and devices to view it makes it a “task” to experience.

2. Background

What is motion graphics?

In its simplest definition, *motion graphics* means graphics in movement. To understand it in a more detailed way, it can be compared to animation. The term motion graphics is often thought to have the same meaning as *animation*. However, these two terms are slightly different. (MOWE Studio 2017)

The official definition for 'to animate' is 'to bring to life' (Oxford Dictionaries 2018). Whether it be Walt Disney's *Steamboat Willie* (1928), *Toy Story* (1995) or Makoto Shinkai's *Kimi no Na wa* (2016), these films use means of animation to breathe life into static images. Different means of animation, but the same concept.



Image 5. Toy Story trailer, screenshot, Youtube 2010

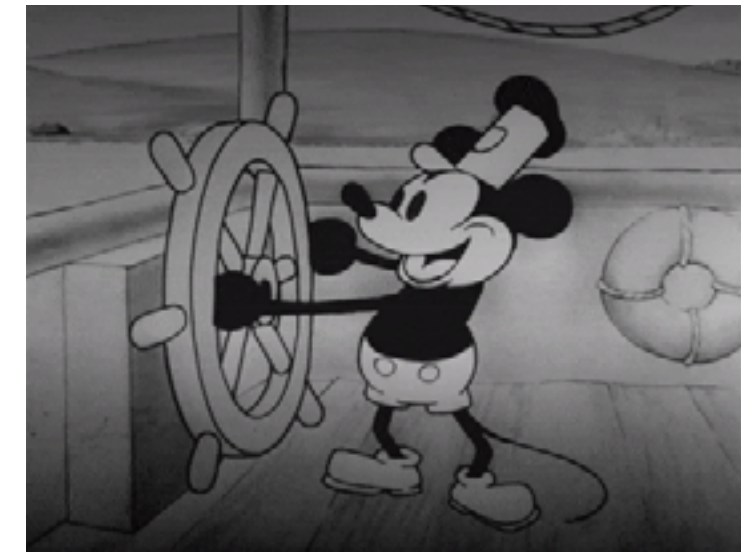


Image 4. Steamboat Willie, screenshot, Disney 2018



Image 6. Kimi no Na wa trailer, screenshot, Youtube 2016

Motion graphics, on the other hand, can be thought of as a subcategory of animation. Whereas animation relies on building a narrative and characters, motion graphics focuses on eliminating unnecessary content and communicating with basic elements such as colour, space, and typography (Flynn 2016). When it comes down to motion, often less is more.

“Just as the cardiac electrophysiologist is absolutely a kind of doctor, a motion designer is a kind of animator.” (Flynn 2016)

The crucial aspect of creating a successful animation is how the elements move. It is easy to make an object move through different software, but it can get complicated when you have to convey something through that motion. The subtle ways an element moves can communicate a range of emotions, different senses or a story. It gives the subject a new dimension of personality. (Flynn 2016)



Image 7. Habitare graphic content, 358 Design & Marketing Agency 2018



Image 8. Animated poster, Robu 2017

Added value of moving image

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. Thus one could argue that a moving picture is worth that much more. Visual stimulus has always been important to people. After all, we as human beings have been writing for 5,000 years, but drawing for 32,000 (Walter & Gioglio 2014, foreword). The mainstream scene of branding has always relied on certain elements like a logo, typography, colours, copy etc. However, in recent years the importance of moving images has risen.

Today 2.53 billion people worldwide own a smartphone (Statista 2018). This means they carry around with them a platform that supports moving image. The Information Age is arguably slowly transitioning into The Age of Experience (Wadhera 2016). People no longer want to just read a story, they want to immerse themselves in it. Moving image enables a viewer to experience more than from a static image, and it also allows the creator to express themselves on a greater level. (Newman 2016)



Image 9
Hieroglyphs,
Q-files 2018

2.
2

Brands have realised that adopting video content or motion graphics is a great way to differentiate themselves from the sea of other companies. It works effectively to pull in the attention of a viewer or potential customer.

“When everybody zigs, zag.”

(Neumeier, 2007, 10)

Differentiation is one of the most important aspects of branding. For a customer, navigating through a sea of choices and clutter can be tiring. A brand that pops out and offers a clear, straightforward product is at an advantage on the market.

(Wheeler 2013, 44)

Before, motion graphics was only a considerable possibility to companies with more assets and capital. Nowadays with digitalisation and the widespread availability of cheap technology, pretty much anyone can create moving content of their own. It is becoming expected from big brands. Inevitably, motion graphics will become so widespread that a new technology will have to take its place on the branding market. *(Pasanen 2018)*



The significance of motion graphics in branding

Motion graphics is slowly but surely becoming a prominent part of the brandbook (Paget 2016). Utilizing motion graphics is basically the next step for a brand after the other aspects of the brandbook are in good shape. The demand for motion graphics is still not overwhelming, but it has been noticed that clients are becoming more susceptible to the idea of implementing motion graphics into their brand if it is suggested to them (Kunttu 2018; Ebnetter 2018). They understand the value of it.

LOGO
BRANDMARK
TAGLINE
COLOURS
TYPOGRAPHY
PHOTOGRAPHY
GRAPHICS

MOTION GRAPHICS

TONE OF VOICE
EDITORIAL
SOCIAL MEDIA



Image 12. Video intro animation, Youtube 2016

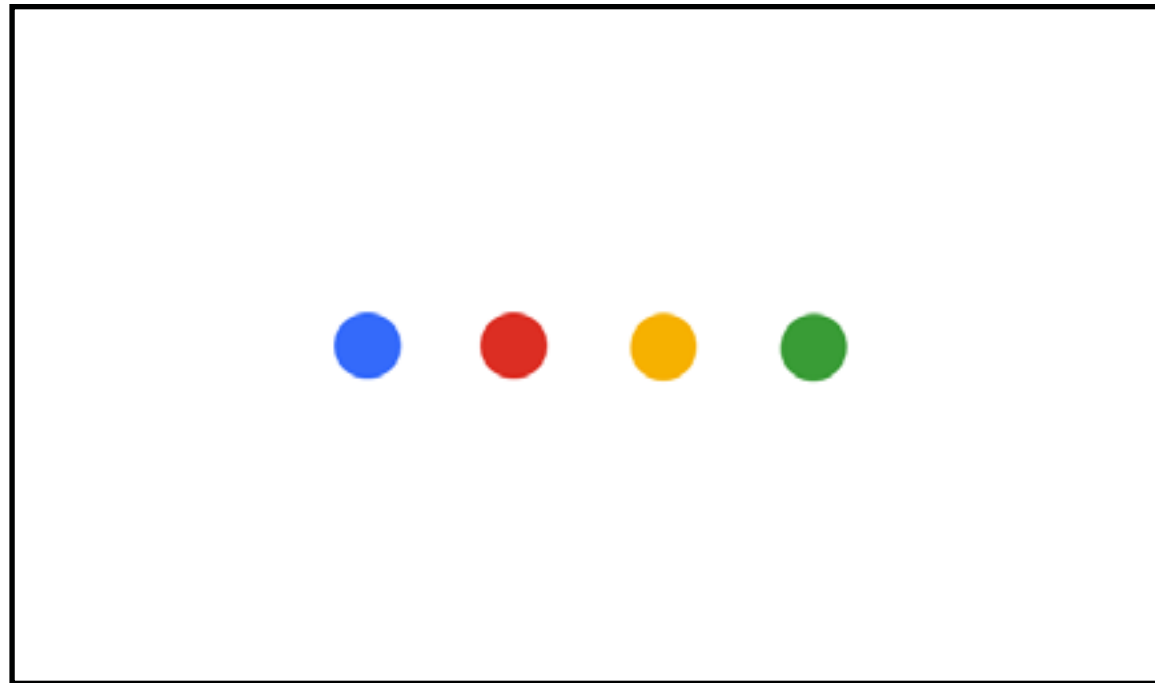


Image 13. Google logo animation, Dribbble 2016

As motion graphics is solidifying its place in branding, it is important to understand that like other elements of branding, it has to be used wisely and tactfully in the right contexts. Bombarding a viewer with too much visual stimulus might have the opposite effect of what first was intended. Adding slight movement to brand graphics and bringing them alive already makes a huge difference to how the graphics are perceived. Making an element spin, vibrate and shoot across a screen will not necessarily add to the value of the graphics unless it is expected from the context. The proverbial phrase “less is more” applies to motion graphics the same way it does to any other form of visual content. (Rosenquist 2018.)

Future of motion graphics

Motion graphics will keep on becoming more popular and approachable. As technology evolves, animation software will become more intuitive and easy to use. It will also be cheaper for companies to implement motion graphics into their brand and marketing, making it even more visible all around us. (Koivisto 2018)

Motion graphics software will eventually utilise artificial intelligence to make workflow faster and more intuitive. Professionals in this industry generally believe that artificial intelligence will not be a threat to the creative process. On the contrary, it will be of use to us with the mundane yet mandatory tasks and leave more time for designers on the creative aspects of design (Ebnetter 2018; Pasanen 2018).



Image 14. Immersive environment installation. Anadol 2017

One questionable aspect of evolving motion graphics is the fear of it becoming too present in our lives. There is a chance that it will be inflicting on our privacy (Rosenquist 2018).

In the same way that our phones are listening to us speak, picking up key words and targeting adverts at us, moving billboards and holograms might be intruding our lives in the near future.



Image 15. Screenshot of Blade Runner 2049. Polygon 2017

3. Platforms



Logos

The first thing that comes to mind when someone says “motion graphics” and “branding” in the same sentence, is logos. When a company wants to utilise motion graphics in their brand strategy, the logo is a natural place to start. Having an animated logo already gives a brand a whole new playing card into their hands. An animated logo can be utilised in many aspects of a brand’s existence. Advertising, social media presence, client presentations, public campaigns, you name it.

As we all know, a logo is the most prominent part of a brand. Just ask UK oil group BP, which spent £136m on its current logo design (Shadbolt 2015). A successful logo speaks volumes for a company and creates instant connections in a viewers mind. They say a picture is worth a thousand words and in the same way, a logo will tell you the purpose and possibly even the values of a company in a glance. What motion graphics bring to the table in this context is making that first impression of a logo even more descriptive and stimulating.

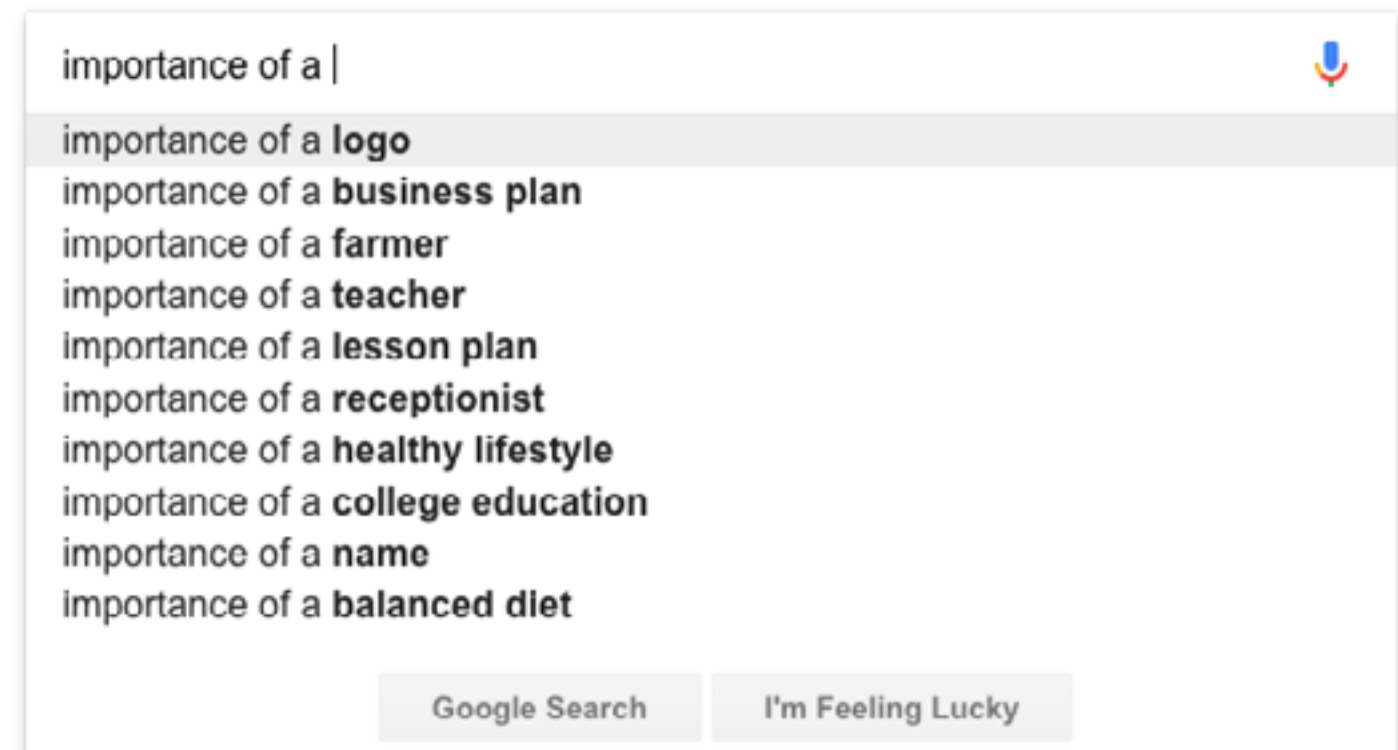


Image 16. Google search, screenshot, Google 2018

Social media

It goes without saying that social media is one of the biggest, if not the biggest platforms used by people every day. Facebook has 2.072 billion monthly active users and that is only one of countless forms of social media used today (Aslam 2018). Instagram, which is owned by Facebook, has 700 million monthly active users (Osman 2018). The marketing potential of social media is huge and it is taken advantage of by companies all the time. For example, you can see Facebook and Instagram serve you advertisements in your feed, based on your public information. It is becoming more common that these advertisements have moving image in them. This is not happening without reason.

Studies show that the average attention span of an adult is only 8 seconds, shorter than that of a goldfish (Watson 2015). Social media users have conditioned themselves to scroll through their feed at a fast pace, dismissing posts and advertisements

within split seconds. Using motion graphics catches the eye of a viewer much more effectively than a static image (Golovach 2018). Making content more visually appealing using motion graphics results in more attention paid by viewers. For companies, this translates into more customers. Thus, motion graphics does not only have visual value, it also has monetary value.

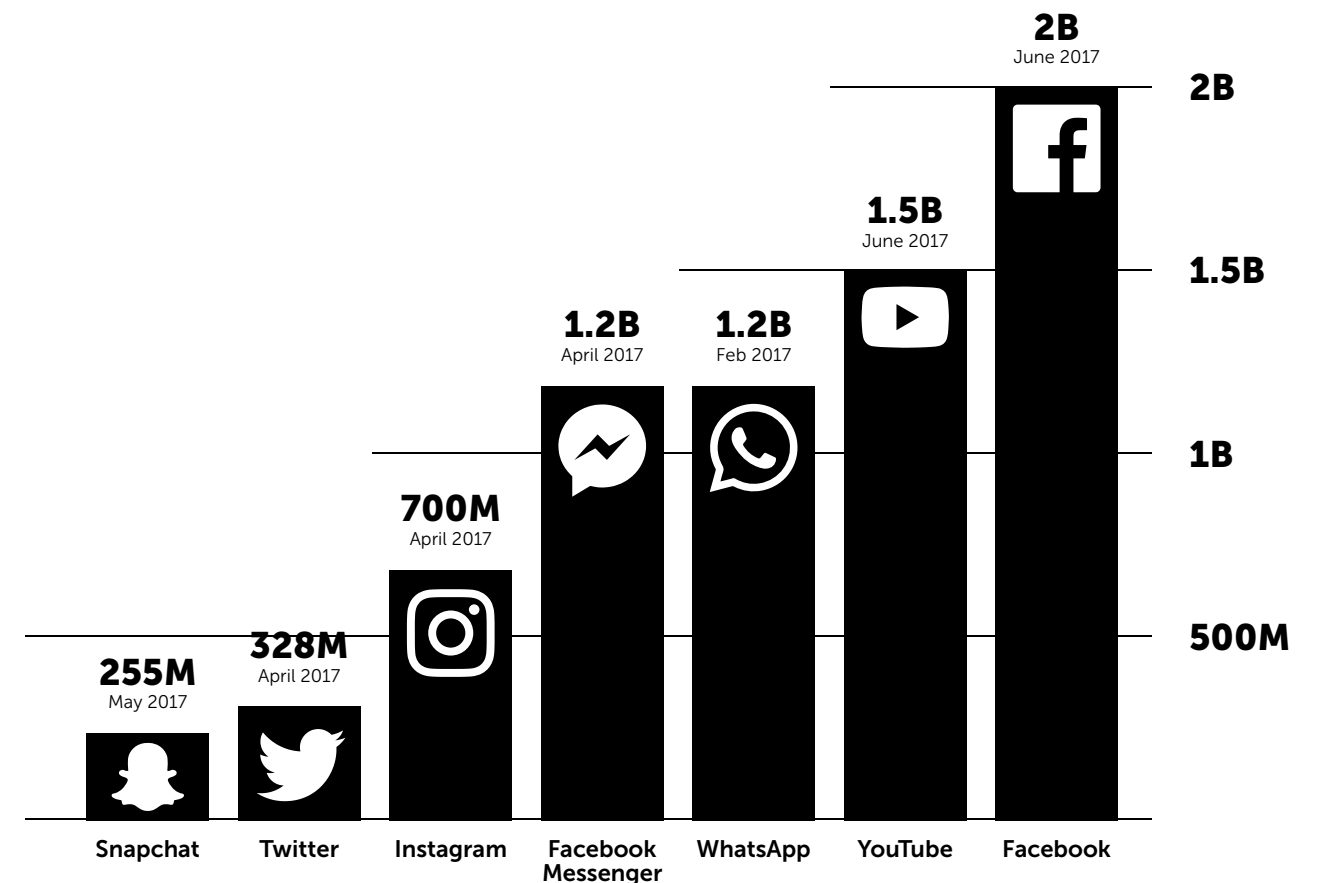


Image 17. Modified figure from TechCrunch 2017. Active monthly users on social media, Shaw 2018

Mobile applications

Another big platform for motion graphics is mobile applications. Today it might be hard to find an application that does not use motion graphics in one form or another. It might be so well integrated into the interface of the application that you do not pay attention to it. You might see it in page transitions, load screens, interactive guides and more (Babich 2017).

Using well-made and appropriate motion graphics reinforces the impression of quality in a product. It also helps make interaction with an application much easier. Motion graphics provides a user with visual orientation by explaining how all the elements relate to each other. This happens at moments of change inside the application. (Babich 2017.)

Depending on the service, using animation can be a very effective way of guiding a viewer through a process. A good example of this would be the meditation app Headspace,

which visualises the steps of meditation, so it can be easily understood by anyone. It lowers the threshold of trying meditation and makes the concept more approachable by turning the process into a kind of animated story.

“Animation is not about making your app cool. It’s about providing your users with the experience they expect.”

(Babich 2017)



Image 18. Meditation animation, video capture, Headspace 2018

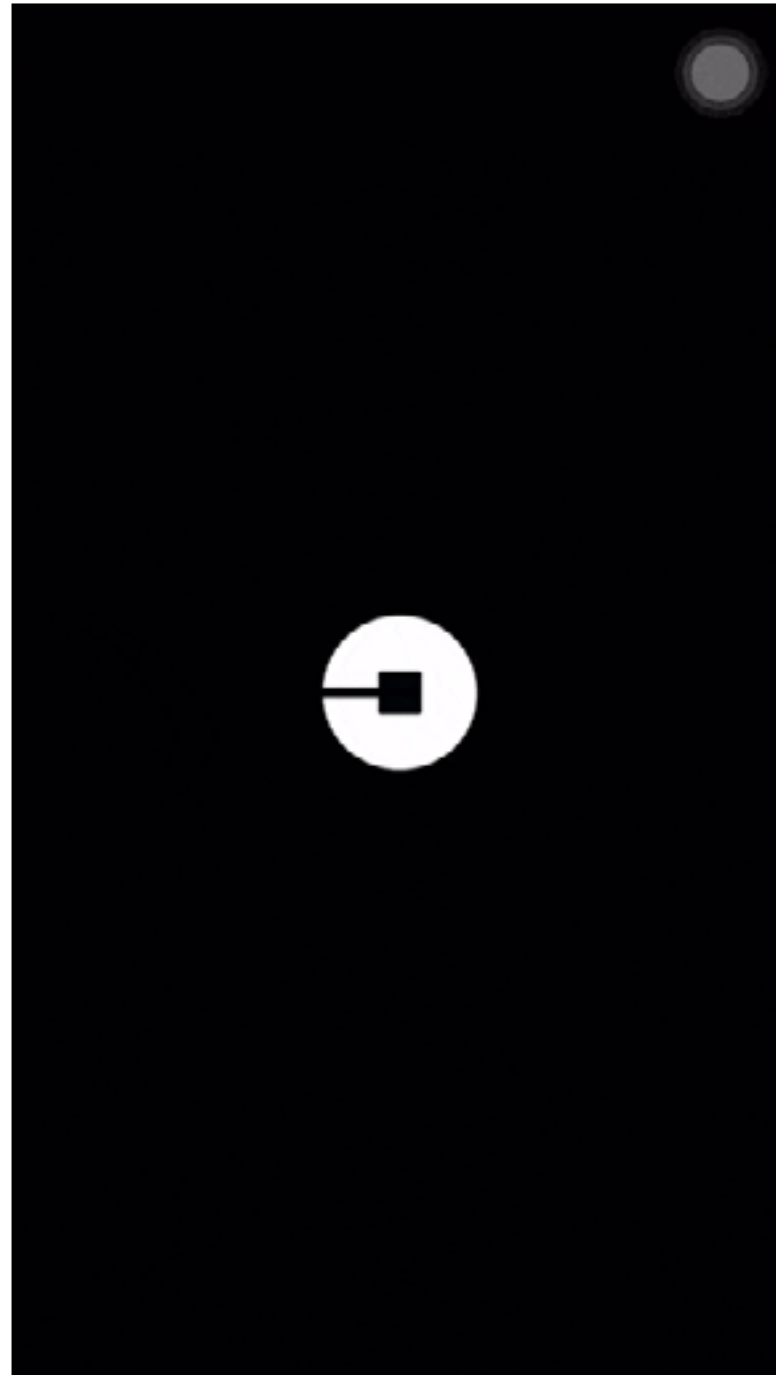


Image 19. Loadscreen, video capture, Uber 2016

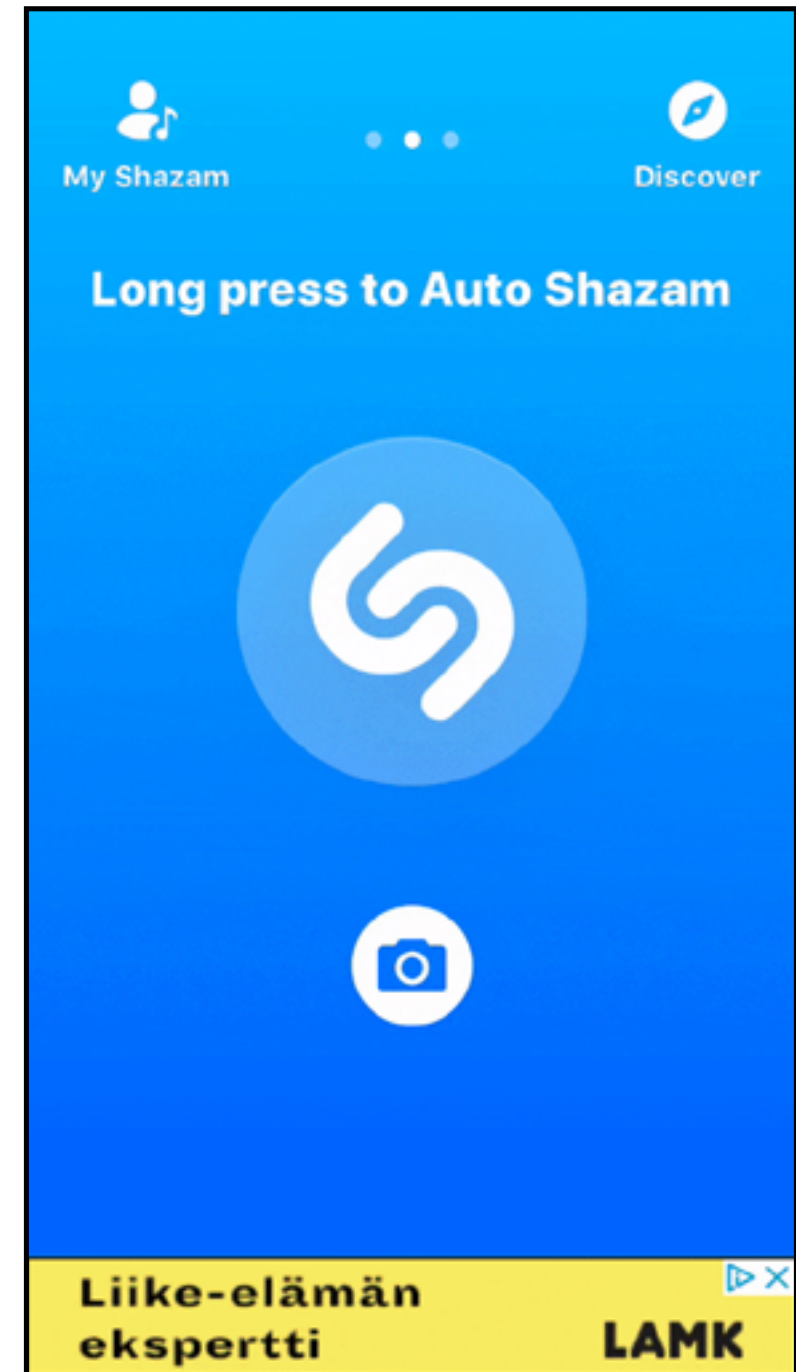


Image 20. Identifying music, video capture, Shazam 2018

Augmented reality

Augmented reality (AR) is one of the most exciting platforms for motion graphics. Although AR is still in its infancy, it already has countless valuable uses in branding. The use of AR gives brands the opportunity to communicate with their customers on a more personal level. AR is an enhanced version of reality created by the use of technology to overlay digital information on an image of something being viewed through a device, such as a smartphone camera (Merriam-Webster 2018). A well known example of this would be the mobile game that became a global phenomenon in 2016, Pokémon Go.

As of today, AR needs an external device to function. In order to implement computer generated graphics onto real life surroundings, one has to have an application running through a camera and a screen or another input device like smart glasses. The application overlays the information often using one of three different AR technologies: SLAM, recognition based or location based technologies (NewGenApps 2017).



Image 21. Pokémon Go gameplay, screenshot, Murakoshi 2016

SLAM

SLAM (Simultaneous Localization and Mapping) is one of the most effective technologies to execute AR. It combines specialized sensors and algorithms to map a space and determine specific locations within it. (NewGenApps 2017)

Recognition based

Recognition based AR uses a camera to identify visual markers or objects that act as an anchor for the overlaid graphics. This could be for example a QR-code or a NFT (natural feature tracking) marker. In addition the position and orientation of the anchor can also be calculated. This enables the viewer to observe the displayed graphics in detail and from alternative angles. (NewGenApps 2017)

Location based

Location based AR relies on a GPS, digital compass, velocity meter, or accelerometer to display data as visual overlay. It is also known as markerless augmented reality. The technology in consumer electronics like smartphones support these requirements and make location based AR an accessible and popular choice for applications. (NewGenApps 2017)

What AR brings to the table:

PERSONIFICATION

REDUCTION

GRANDIOSITY

The following scenarios will elaborate on what these terms mean in the context of AR.

Personification

A music streaming service (e.g. Spotify) has a campaign using targeted advertising. A billboard next to a busy public transport station is equipped with an anchor that communicates with people's smartphones. When someone looks at the billboard through their smart glasses, while listening to music, it receives data from the person's smartphone and interprets it into a moving visualisation using textures and patterns. The moving graphics are responsive and change according to what music is listened to.

The purpose of this visual installation is to bring the viewer's attention to the advertisement and to add value to the customer's brand experience. This is achieved by offering people a pleasurable and visually stimulating alternative to a static advertisement.



Image 22. Billboard mockup, Shaw 2018

Reduction

A grocery manufacturer implements recognition based AR into all of its product packaging. The packages have a small visual marker (e.g. QR code). When looked at through an AR supported device, the marker launches all the mandatory information that is required from grocery products onto a separate visual platform. This enables more space for the actual physical graphics of the packaging without the need to cram a lot of information onto a small package.

By allowing the manufacturer to use all of the packaging space for its own input, it allows the brand to better differentiate itself from other brands. This is important for shelved grocery products amidst a sea of competing products. In an AR context, this can be called reduction, i.e. the reduction of clutter.



Image 23. Augmented reality mockup, Shaw 2018

Grandiosity

A paint manufacturing business launches a campaign where it places advertisements near well-known historical buildings around the country. The advertisements only have a recognition based AR anchor on them (e.g. QR code), undoubtedly evoking interest in passers by. When they activate the anchor, the near-by building is suddenly painted with a bright, vibrant colour through the devices field of view. This, accompanied by the company's slogan and a comical phrase: "Time for a touch up?" creates an amusing channel into the brand's world. In this scenario, the brand carries out a unique campaign that would never otherwise get approval in the real world. The advertisements would be too big and intrusive, but when the viewer has control of what can and can not be seen, the dynamic changes.



Image 24. Advertisement mockup, Shaw 2018

4. Design task

Purpose

The purpose of this design task was to show the process of creating a conceptual brand identity and how motion graphics can be utilised to support the visual language of this identity. I wanted to include this part into my thesis to show that I am capable of conceptualising and carrying out branding work.

The theoretical part of this thesis deals with a topic that I was not very familiar with, but which I wanted to learn to understand better. To balance the complete thesis between research and concrete design work, I decided to implement my knowledge of branding to create and execute the design task in question.

To tie the design part of the thesis with the theoretical side, I decided to implement motion graphics into the brand identity. This would require me to learn how to use Adobe After Effects and produce animated content. Learning to use this software was one of my goals from the beginning of the thesis process. It is a major reason for choosing this topic.



Image 25. Ideation, GIF, Cromwell 2015

Theoretical basis

Creating a brand identity that uses motion graphics from the ground up required me to understand theories and methods relevant to branding and animation. I based the strategical part of my design work on the literature of Alina Wheeler (*Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide for the Whole Branding Team*) and Marty Neumeier (*Zag: The Number One Strategy of High-Performance Brands*), focusing on the aspect of brand differentiation.

In order to produce interesting motion graphics for the brand, I made myself familiar with *The Illusion of Life: Disney Animation* by the Disney animators Ollie Johnston and Frank Thomas. In this book they introduce the 12 basic principles of animation, which have since publishing become a pillar in the theory of motion graphics. Even though the principles were intended to be applied to traditional hand drawn animation, they are still highly relevant today in computer generated animation (Wikipedia 2018).



Define.



Design.

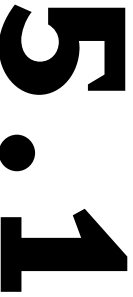


Deliver.

Image 26. GIF, Malviya 2015

5. Design process

creating a conceptual brand identity



Defining the client

When thinking about which client I would like to create a brand for, I made a list about things that would interest me and contain elements ideal for motion graphics. The list eventually included:

- Synthesizer/audio manufacturer
- **Techno/house club**
- Jazz club
- Dance academy
- National ballet
- **Circus & acrobatics**
- YogaRocks, a bouldering gym in Lahti
- **Boulderkeskus, a bouldering gym in Helsinki**
- Bicycle shop

Of these nine ideas I boiled it down to three which I thought had the most potential. These three were a techno/house club, BK - bouldering gym and a circus. I had a difficult time deciding which one would be the best for me since they all had their own strong merits. I decided to make brief, logo-centered concepts of them all and see which one felt the most amicable. A club concept would be most preferable to me since clubs generally have minimalistic and sleek brands which is close to my style of work.

BK as a company has a less than ideal visual identity, which can immediately be seen from their logo. Bouldering is also one of my favourite hobbies so this concept would be close to comfort. In addition to this, BK is a real company and I saw the opportunity of actually offering my concept to them and taking them on as a client.

Boulderkeskus

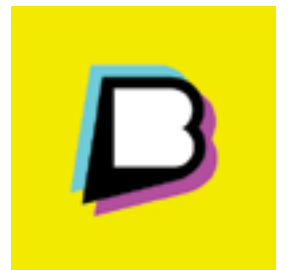


Existing logo

Benchmarking



Feel of logo

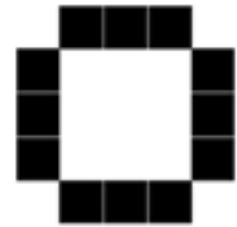


Logo sketching



Club concept

Benchmarking



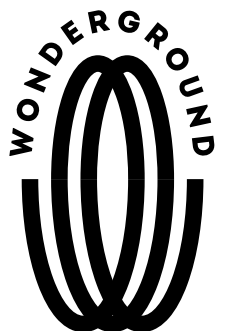
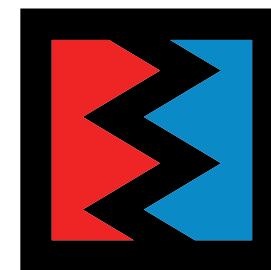
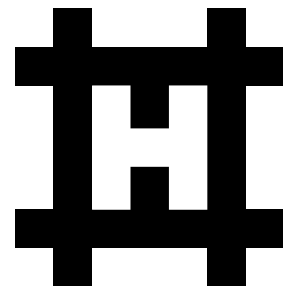
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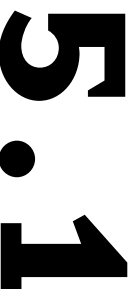


Feel of logo



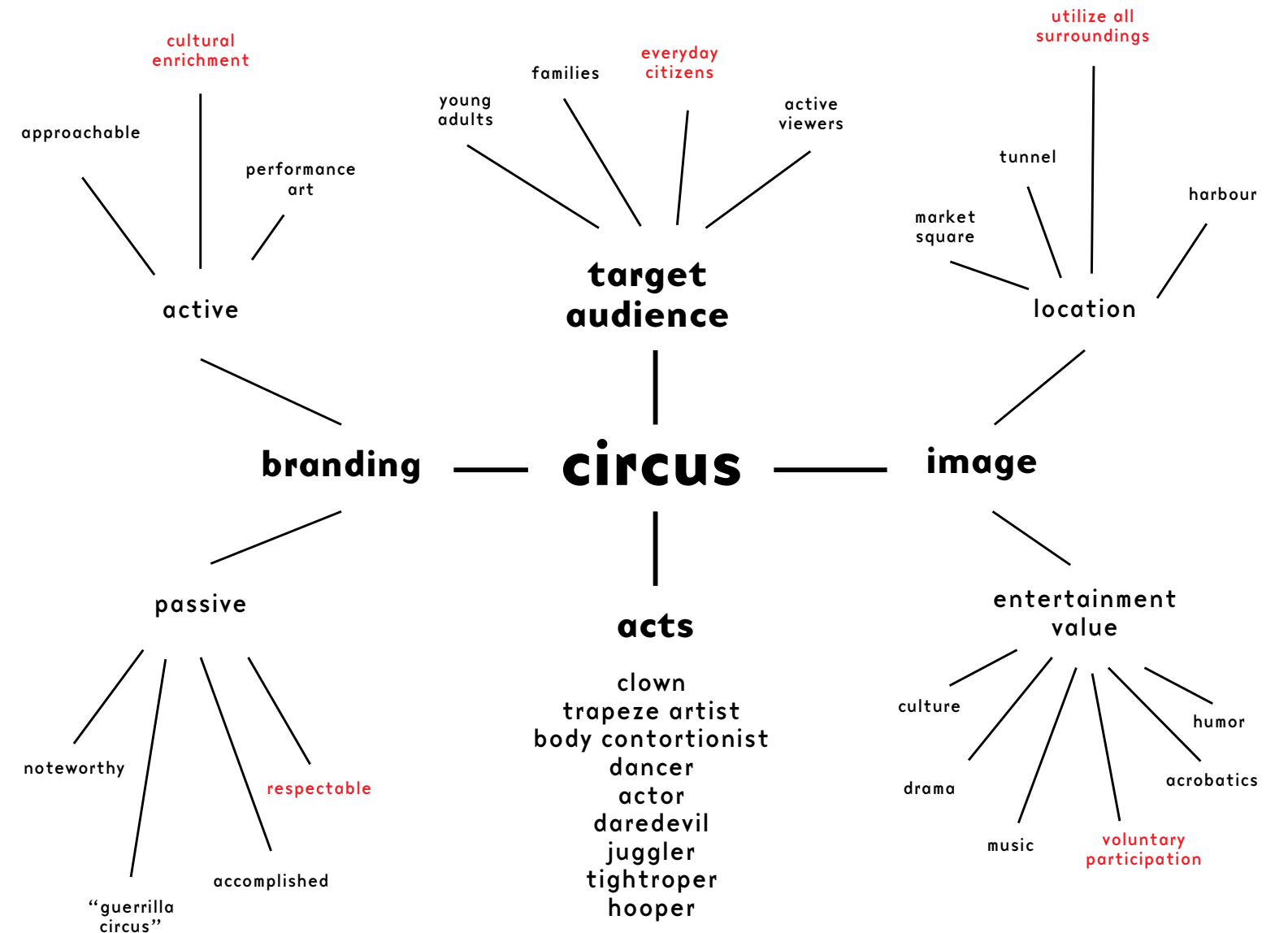
Logo sketching





Defining the client

The last idea, which I eventually chose, was the circus concept. I do not have a personal connection to the circus, but I realized it was the most interesting choice by a long shot. The circus as an industry is not very well represented when it comes to branding. This would give me a lot to work on. Also, the circus would offer me ideal elements for creating motion graphics content. Some of the key visual aspects attributed to the circus are vivid colours, active motion and distinct characters. These are something that can be translated effectively into motion graphics.



Brand voice

Key words

- Modern but classic
- Performance
- Street circus
- Intriguing
- Eclectic
- Artistic
- Urban
- Wild



Benchmarking



carcus



CIRQUE DU SOLEIL



Name & tagline

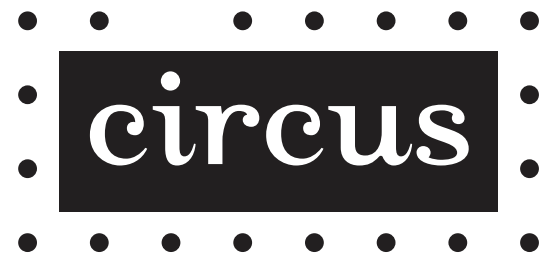
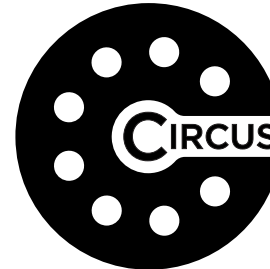
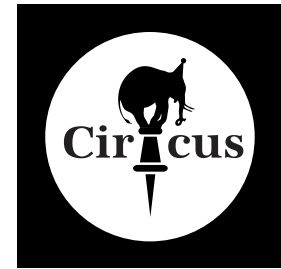
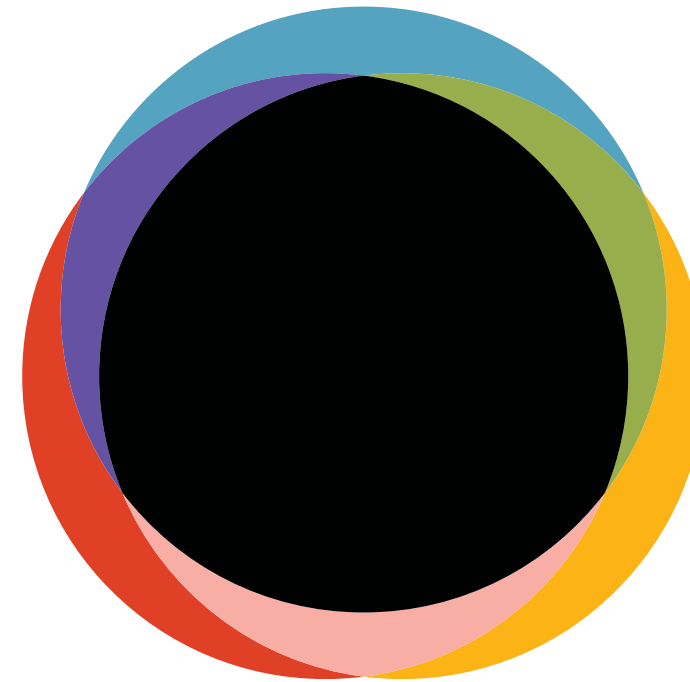
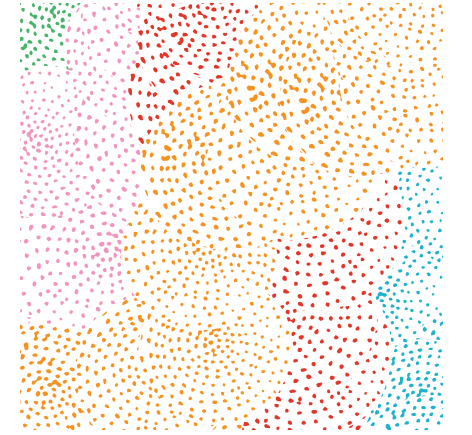
After trying several different names I ended up boiling it down to just 'circus'. This represents the simplicity of the brand and the strive to change the definition of circus.

'Old art. New form.' derives from the word *artform* and the contrast between the classic and modern feels of circus. It represents the rebirth of this form of art. As if circus is reintroducing the industry to people.

———— **circus**

———— old art. new form.

Sketching



Imagery

The style of photography for *circus* had to follow the feeling of the identity. I used the descriptive words from the brand feeling as a general guideline. The imagery should bring out the characters of the circus, as that is the main driving force of the whole concept. I created mockup posters to visualise what the end result would possibly look like.

I knew that to achieve the feeling I was aiming for, I could not rely solely on stock images. I was reminded of the fact that there is a circus school in Lahti and I realised that documenting the students there was a potential way of being able to control the content myself. I contacted a teacher and a student from the circus school and explained my vision to them, asking if they would be interested to collaborate with me. Eventually I got in touch with one student who was willing to participate. I then scheduled a photoshoot and made an initial plan for it.



Image 28. Shaw 2018, edited from Dore, Adam 2018.



Image 29. Shaw 2018, edited from Roble, Omar 2018.

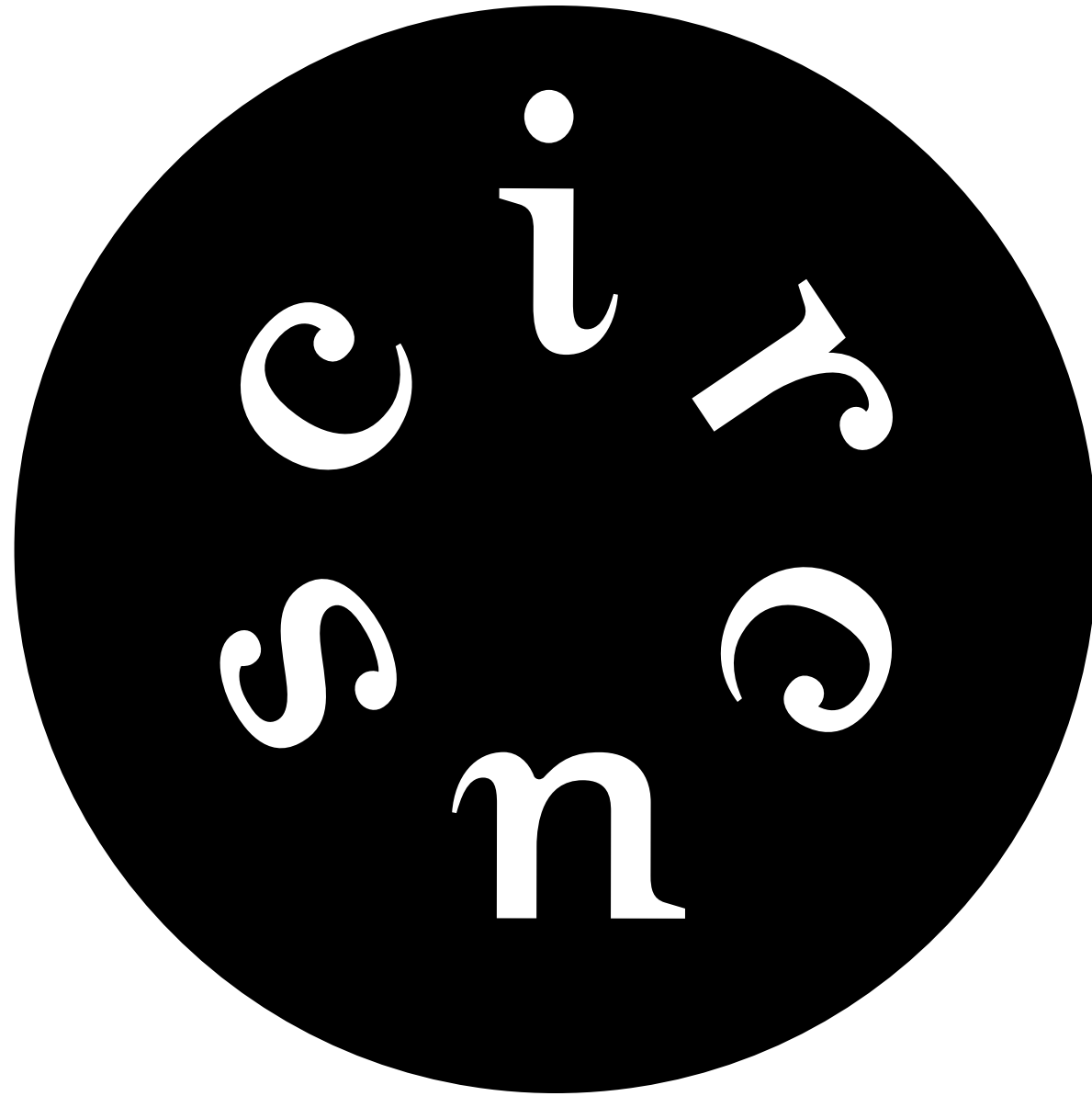


Image 30. Shaw 2018, edited from Timms, Jez 2016

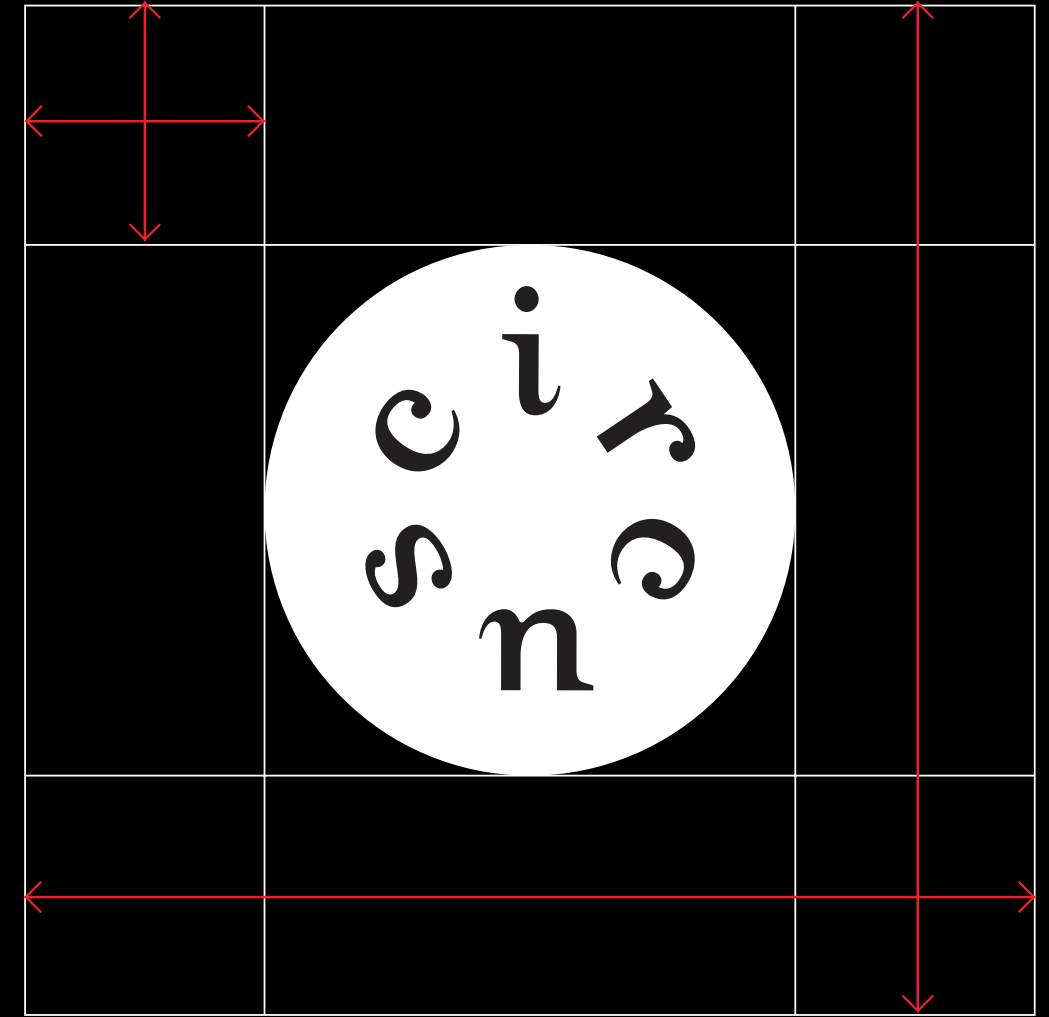
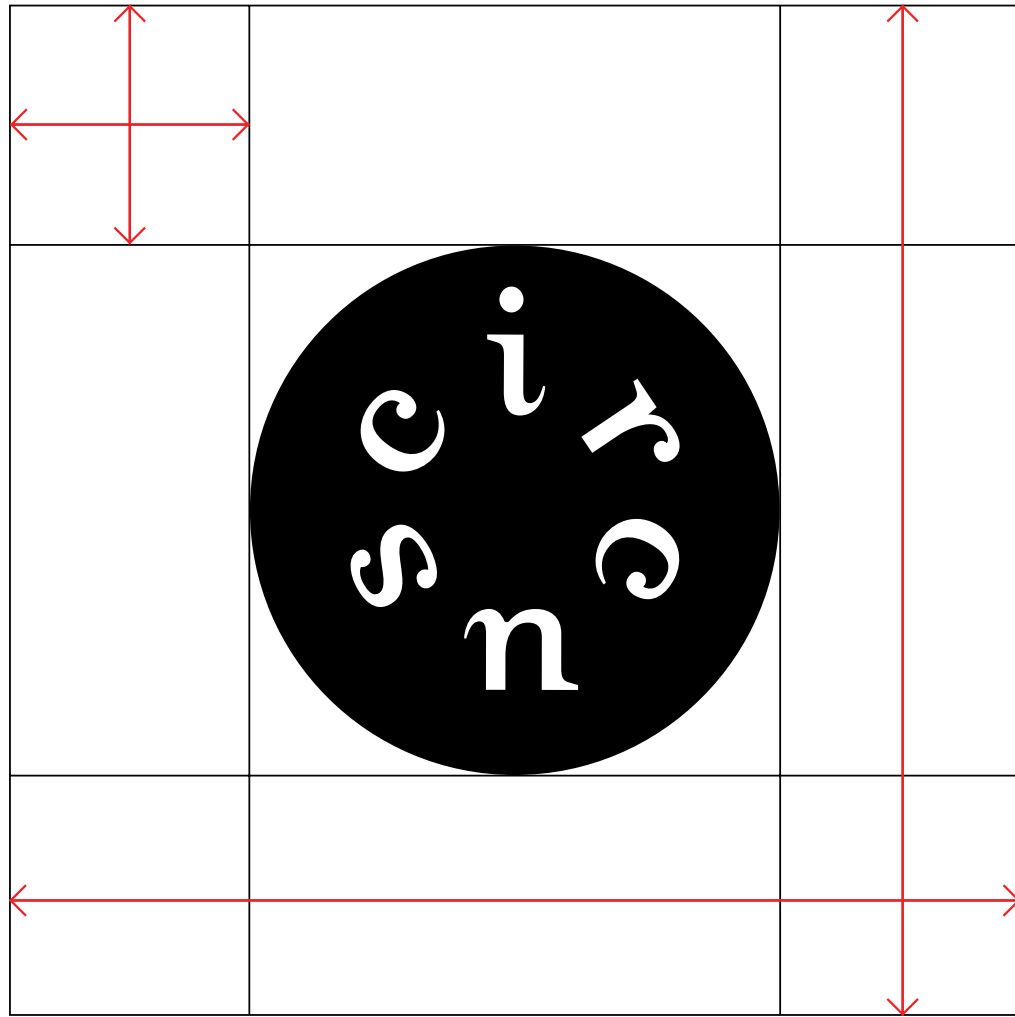
6. circus

visual identity

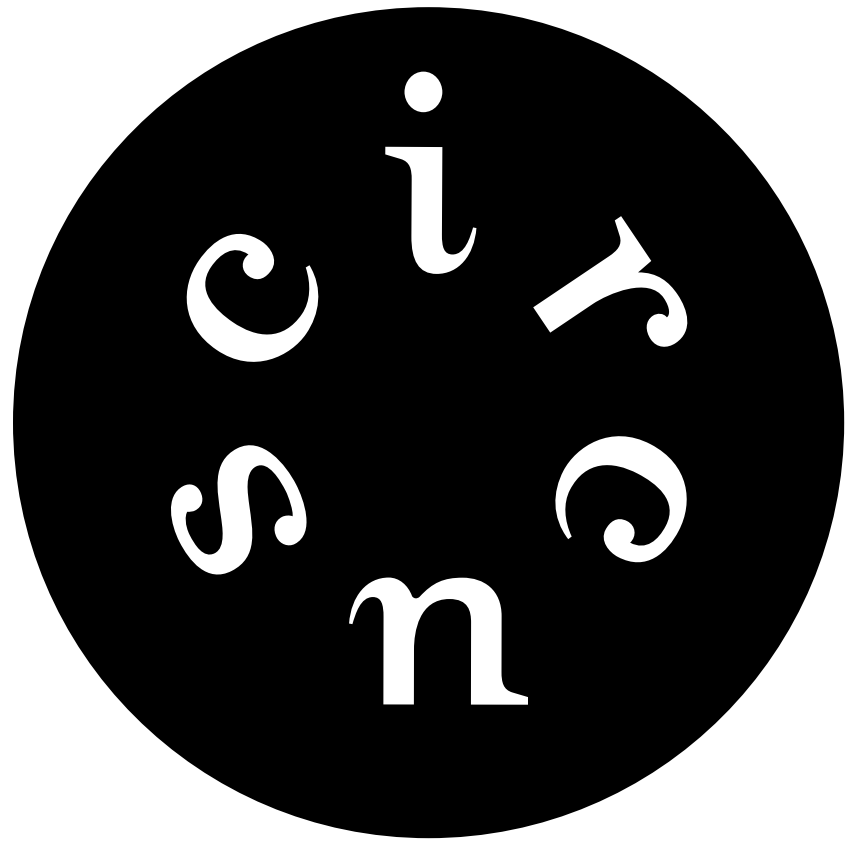
Logo



Logo margins



Logo + tagline



Old art, new form.

Typography

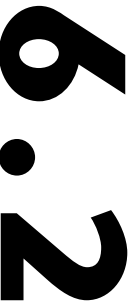
Choosing the brand typography for circus was a fairly straightforward task. From the beginning I wanted it to represent traditionality and sophistication. First I chose the serif typeface ITC New Baskerville as the body text. I knew it would be a good and basic font family to use, because the original Baskerville has been popular since it was created in the 1750's and it is widely regarded as a successful typeface in terms of legibility (Crum 2017; Linotype 2018). However, I would later change the body text to preserve consistency throughout the identity.

Finding a suitable typeface for headers and display use was a slightly longer process. I wanted the display typeface to also reflect sophistication, but simultaneously create contrast between the body text by being stronger and bolder (Tselentis 2011, 127). I tried several different sans-serif typefaces, because using them as headers accompanied by serif body text creates a balance that is pleasurable to look at. However, none of the font families I tried quite reflected the feeling I was searching for.

Finally, I tried an antikva typeface I had previously acquired called Canela. Although I had been primarily searching for a sans-serif font family, Canela fit my purpose better than expected. Canela is a modern and sturdy font family that has restrained serif attributes. Even being a serif typeface, it created the contrast and balance that I had been searching for.



Image 31. Typography, Shaw 2018



Discarded
typography

logo

circus

circus

circus

circus

circus

copy

Display

Consolas Bold

Display

Base 9 Sans OT

Body

ITC New Baskerville

Final typography

After critique on my selected typography, I entertained the idea of changing ITC New Baskerville from being the body typeface. I substituted it with the same typeface as the display font, Canela. Ideally, this would reduce the amount of different font families used in the identity, creating less clutter and better consistency. Luckily, the Canela typeface has many fonts in its family and I found the Canela Light font to be well balanced with its bold counterpart as the display font. Although they are from the same font family, Canela Black and Canela Light work well together and create enough contrast between each other to justify their use together.

Logo

Oxtail OT Bold

Display

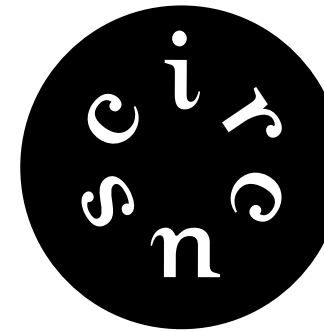
Canela Bold

Body

Canela Light

Oxtail OT Bold

.....



Canela Bold

.....

Headline

Canela Light

.....

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

Colours

When someone thinks of a circus, they often imagine vivid colours all across the spectrum. I wanted to include this notion to some extent. Having many lively colours would tie nicely into the classic idea of a circus. However, designing a sophisticated and serious but colourful identity would prove to be a struggle.

I had already set my mind on an almost greyscale overall colour scheme, but I wanted to integrate colours into it. I decided on using highlight colours on the graphic elements that I would animate. Also, I could use this wide array of colours to my advantage. I could assign certain colours for different circus skills. In addition, if I would decide to create profiles for members of the circus, they could be colour coded to highlight the personality of each one of them.

To end up with a vivid and diverse palette, I chose a rendition of the primary colours of the colour wheel as the primary colours of the brand. As secondary colours I picked three hues in between the primary colours.

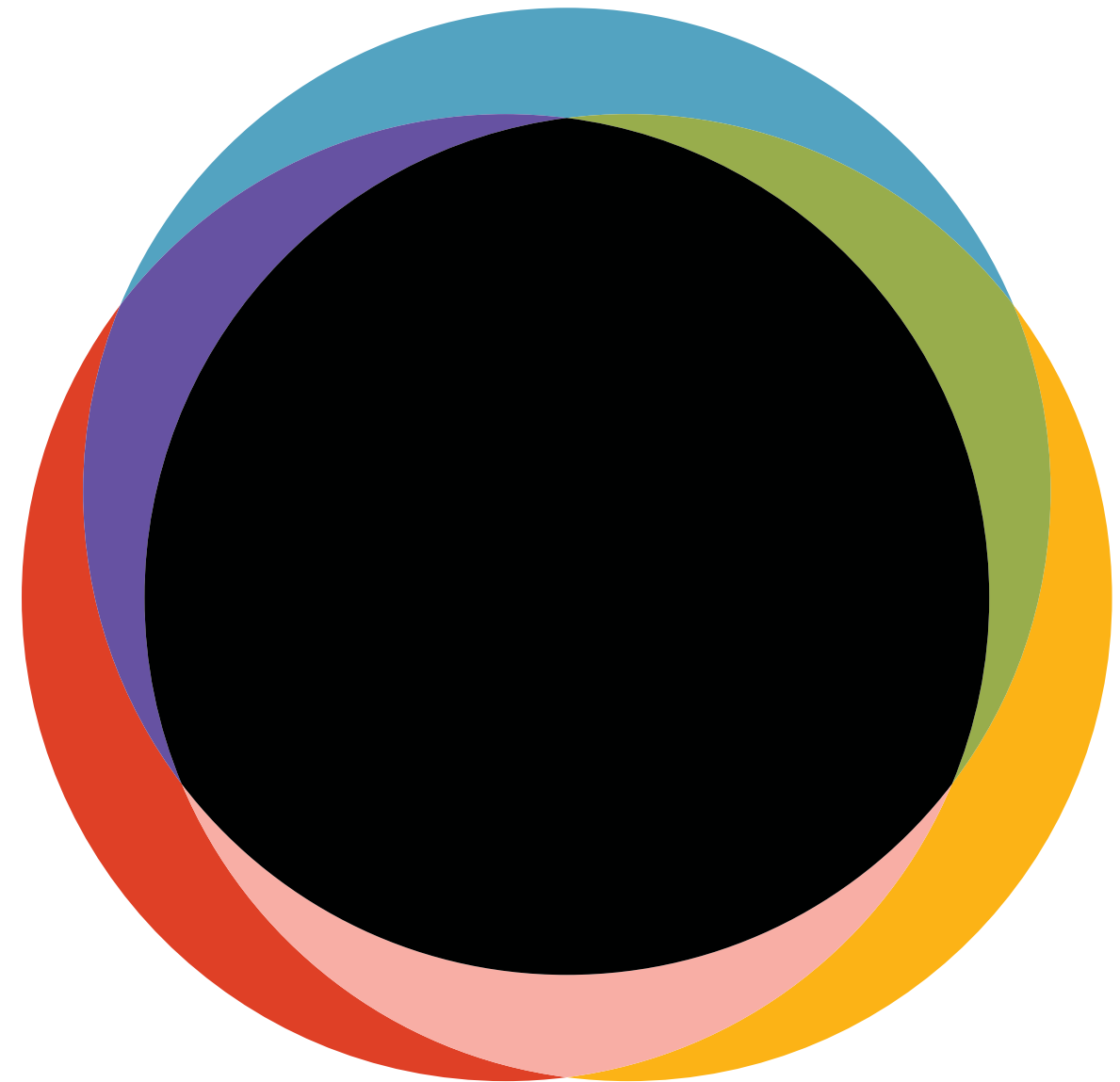


Image 32. Colour palette, Shaw 2018

logo



● #000000

○ #FFFFFF

accents

primary



● #E04026

● #FBB317

● #F8AFA5

secondary

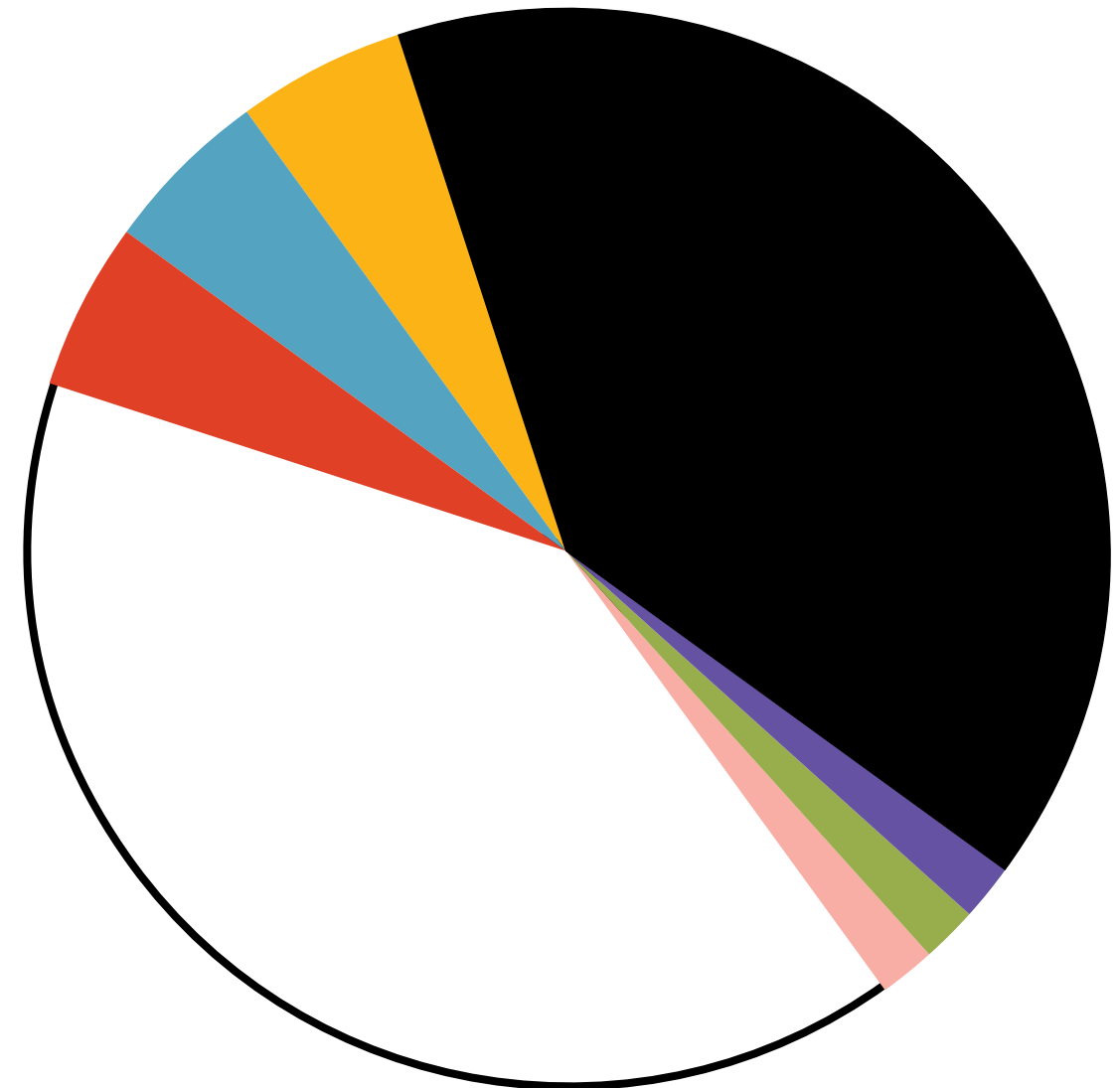


● #99AD4C

● #53A3C1

● #6652A2

ratio



Imagery



Before doing a photoshoot with the circus school students, I had created an image in my head of what I wanted the results to be like. However, I also wanted to take into consideration the performers and what they wanted to contribute to the pictures. After all, the photoshoot was supposed to be mutually beneficial.

The final pictures were not exactly what I had in mind, but that was expected since I am only an amateur photographer. My original vision of the imagery included lots of pictures in urban locations, as per the nature of the brand. I got some decent urban content, but the weather did not permit us to shoot outside for long.

We continued the photoshoot at the circus school, where another student joined us. It was much easier to handle the outcome of the pictures while inside and the circus students were more comfortable in their own environment. I took advantage of an external flash and the dark gym to create pictures with defined motion in them. The performers also had equipment that allowed the inclusion of LED-lights, which fitted perfectly into the thematics when combined with long exposure.

Ultimately I was very happy with the results of the photoshoot and I knew that I could successfully utilise them in symbiosis with motion graphics.



Image 34. Shaw 2018



Image 35. Shaw 2018



Image 36. Shaw 2018



Image 37. Shaw 2018



Image 38. Shaw 2018



Image 39. Shaw 2018



Image 40. Shaw 2018



Image 41. Shaw 2018



Image 42. Shaw 2018

Visual elements

The visual elements of the brand consist of undetermined elements such as brushstrokes, shapes and patterns. The random nature of the elements represents the diverseness of the acts in the circus.

The graphics use the predetermined accent colours and are meant to be placed over pictures and video. Combining the muted colour palette of the imagery with the vivid graphic elements creates a lively balance. This contrast is also supported by the two dimensional graphics on top of live photography.

Another reason for using simple vector graphics as the elements was the easy manipulation of them through motion graphics. I knew that creating complicated graphics would eventually result in an overcomplicated editing process in Adobe AfterEffects.



Image 43. Examples of vector elements, Shaw 2018

Motion graphics

I started creating the motion graphics on top of the pictures I had taken with the notion that the graphics would transform as the work progressed. I tried to apply several different methods of motion design onto the images to showcase the variety of motion graphics that I was able to produce. Also, different methods of motion design would highlight the differentiation of each circus act in the same way as the unique colours.

Learning how to use Adobe After Effects to produce motion graphics had been fairly straight forward and I felt like I knew the basics of the software. What turned out to be most challenging and time consuming aspect of motion design was making the motion look fluid and natural. I realised that even small discrepancies in the timeline of a project threw me off and I would have to make miniscule adjustments to retain the integrity of the motion. This further helped me understand how we perceive motion. We view visual content and are very astute to the things that our subconscious recognises.



Image 44. Animated logo, Shaw 2018

The first animated poster that I made uses a style of animation that is actually close to the original, hand-drawn method. Using a pen tablet I drew the moving line on every frame that it occurred in. This gave it a living and rugged feel. The reason why the line seems to vibrate is because every frame is unique, as it is impossible to manually draw identical lines every time.

Animation principles used:

3. Staging

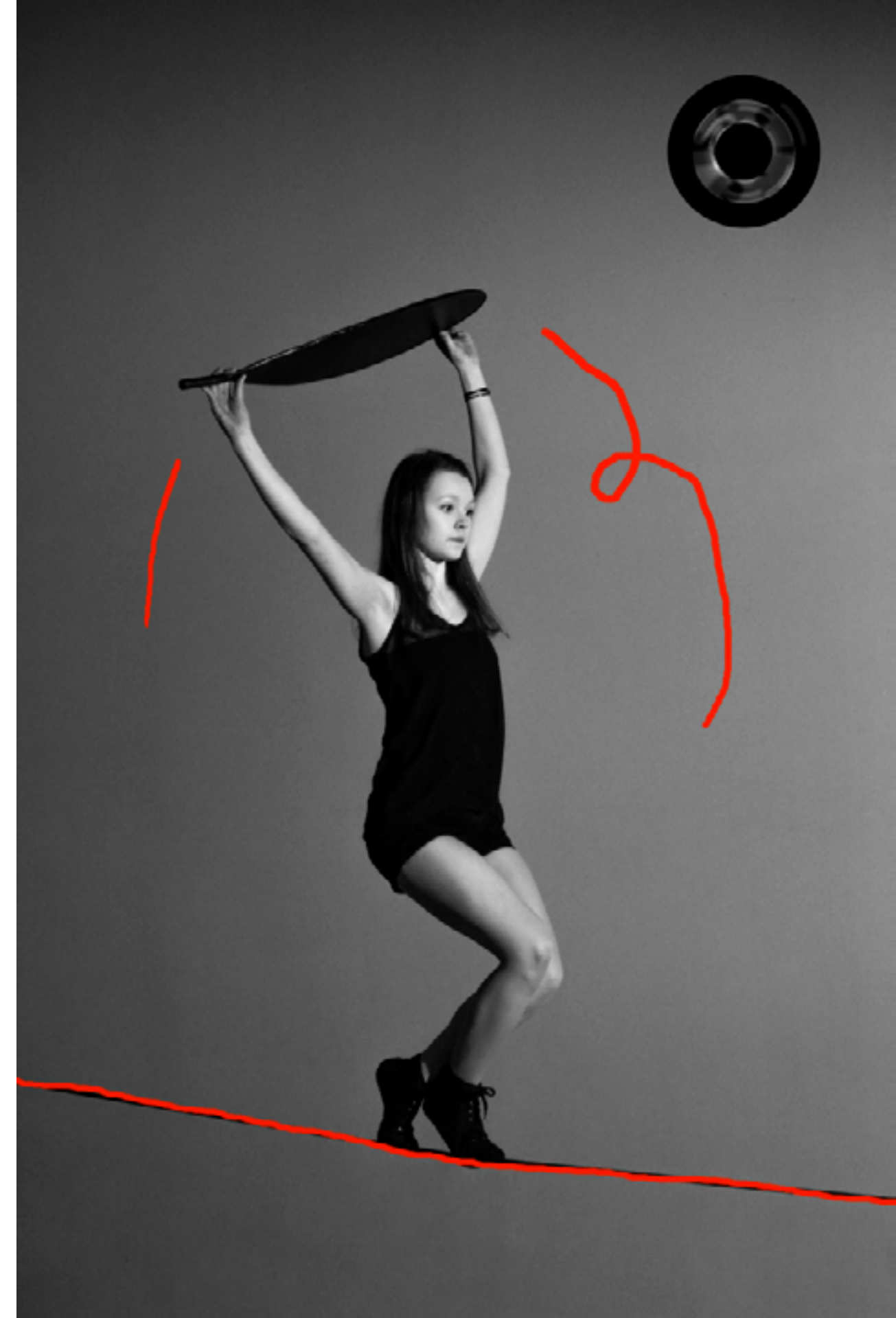
This principle means staging an action so that the context becomes understandable to the viewer. I wanted to convey the idea of an unstable tightrope and the movement of the performers hands. (Thomas & Johnston 1995, 54)

6. Slow In & Slow Out

Accelerating and decelerating the movement at the beginning and end of the animation gives it a more natural feel. (Thomas & Johnston 1995, 62)

7. Arcs

Most living creatures naturally move in a fluid and circular motion. Mechanical movements do not convey a realistic action. (Thomas & Johnston 1995, 62)



To create a living silhouette out of the static image that is seen in black and white, I traced the body of the performer and made a new graphic layer from the outline. I then placed anchor points onto the graphics where there would be a joint in the performer's leg. This enabled me to warp and move them around in a way that seemed natural.

Animation principles used:

3. Staging

5. Follow through

This method helps preserve the feeling of a realistic action and that the subject abides by the laws of physics and inertia. In this context it has to do with how the limbs move in relation to each joint. When the thigh moves, the knee, shin, ankle, and toes follow its movement. (Thomas & Johnston 1995, 59)

6. Slow In & Slow Out

7. Arcs



To create this animation I only used a simple object (a yellow ball) and different techniques to convey motion. Simple effects, like motion blur and echoing help make the motion more fluid and enjoyable.

Animation principles used:

1. Squash & Stretch

In this animation you can see the yellow ball is stretched into an oval shaped when it is launched. This is to create the illusion of fast acceleration and inertia. In a similar way, the effect can be used when an object is coming to a halt by squashing it. (Thomas & Johnston 1995, 47)

2. Anticipation

As the yellow ball exits the top of the screen, the viewer anticipates it to come back down. Anticipation is used in animation to help the viewer keep up with the storyline. Certain motions make it easier to predict the next scene. (Thomas & Johnston 1995, 51)

6. Slow In & Slow Out

7. Arcs

10. Exaggeration

This method is used to create a caricature feeling of the animated subject. Exaggeration helps convey the intended message. In this example you can see the yellow ball accelerate into the wheel, defying the laws of physics. (Thomas & Johnston 1995, 65)



Billboards



Image 48. Billboard mockup, Shaw 2018

Billboards



Image 49. Billboard mockup, Shaw 2018

Billboards



Image 50. Billboard mockup, Shaw 2018

Website

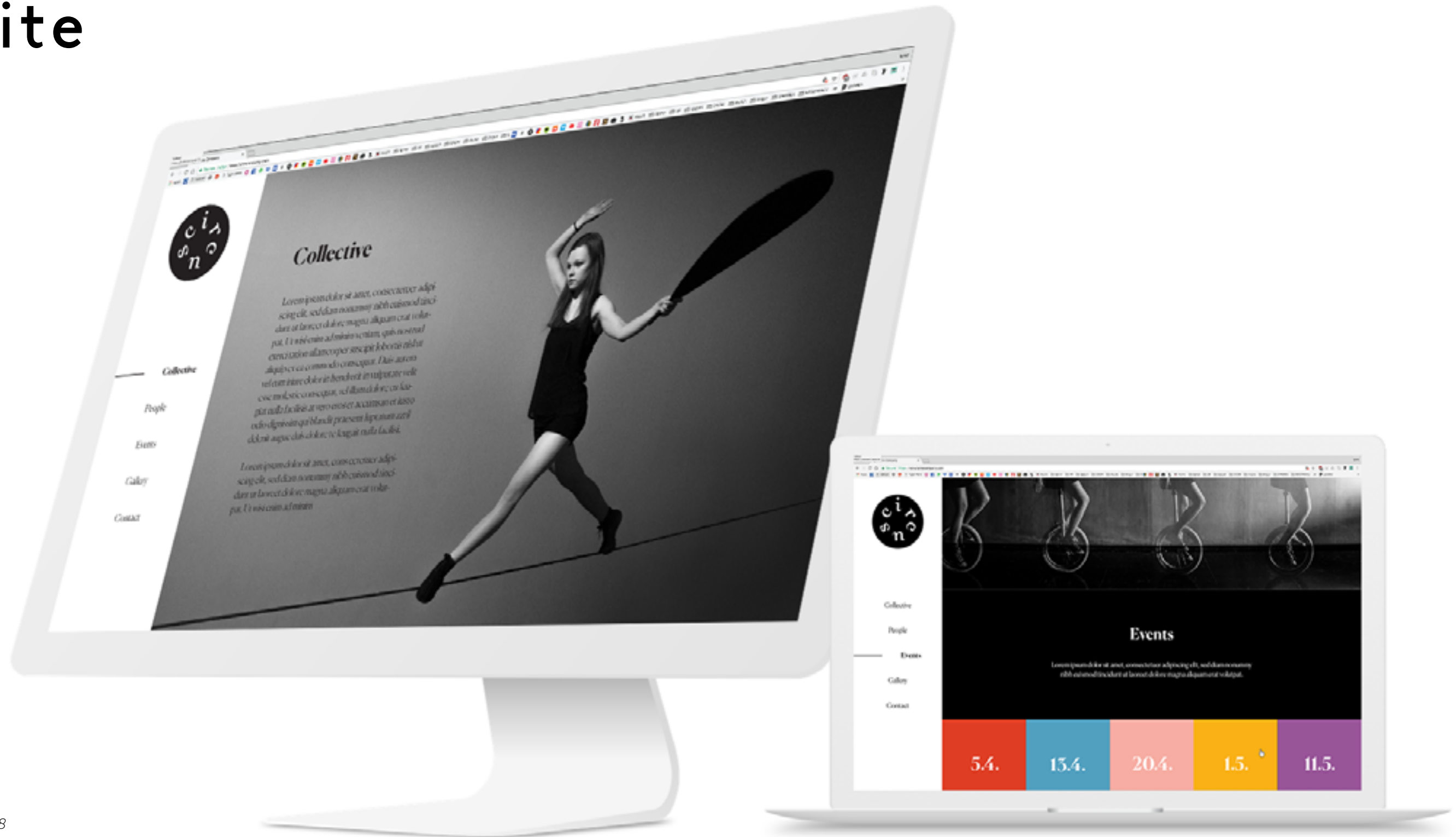


Image 51. Website mockup, Shaw 2018



Business cards



Merchandise



Image 54 - 55. T-shirt mockups, Shaw 2018

7. Evaluation



Process & accomplishment

Overall, the process of this thesis was not as linear as I had hoped it to be. I spent lots of time defining the theme and it changed several times before molding into this one. Even when I had chosen the theme and thought I had a clear idea of what I wanted to include in my thesis, it got skewed along the way. The subject matter spread as I went along and it was increasingly difficult to define what was the most relevant information to include into my thesis.

The pace in which I progressed felt erratic, as I was either taking leaps towards my goal, or doing nothing for long periods of time. As usual, the rate of my work intensified towards the end when I started to work under increasing pressure. This did not come as a surprise to me.

The theoretical part of this thesis was challenging for me, and I felt more at home while doing the design task. The process of doing extensive research on a single subject, referencing sources correctly, and producing an academic thesis felt strange, as I don't recall anything this theoretic required from me during my studies. Despite this I am satisfied with how everything turned out, and I feel more confident to produce something similar to this in the future.

In conclusion, I feel like I have learned a lot during this process and am happy about how both the theoretical and the design portion of this thesis turned out. I succeeded in my goal of learning to produce motion graphics and my understanding of the industry around it has increased exponentially.

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Image 55. Shaw, E. 2018. Mockup available at <https://goodmockups.com/free-black-white-half-sleeves-t-shirt-mockup-psd-front-back/>

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Attachments

Attachment 1. Questionnaire. Shaw, E. 2018

- 1.** For how long have you been working in the creative field?
- 2.** In your opinion, how has motion graphics in your line of work changed during the last 10 years?
- 3.** How do you see motion graphics in your field changing in the next 5 years?
- 4.** Technology is evolving at a progressively faster pace. How do you see it affecting branding in the future?
- 5.** Do you foresee any negative impacts on branding caused by new technology?
- 6.** Do you think that VR/AR technology is/will be in a big role concerning branding?
- 7.** How big of a demand does motion graphics have in design agencies today, opposed to 5 years ago?
- 8.** How big of a role in branding does motion graphics have, compared to the other categories of a brandbook (logo, typography, colours, tone of voice etc.)?
- 9.** Do you believe in the possibility of artificial intelligence evolving and displacing workers in the creative field?
- 10.** Do you have any other thoughts/comments regarding this topic?