# BRAND CONSISTENCY BY DEFAULT

How marketers can
make doing the right thing,
the fastest, easiest thing

brandworkz®

ONE WAY

# CONSISTENTLY INCONSISTENT?

Brand management has come a long way. Today, there really shouldn't be any excuses for brand inconsistency. In fact, with the right processes and systems in place, it should be more difficult than ever to go off-brand.

However, back in the real world, things aren't so simple.

The reality is that many marketing pros still face the daily challenge of keeping their teams, departments and partners consistently on-brand. With so many channels and ever-decreasing lead times, it's still too easy for your people and partners to create, adapt or deploy content that undermines brand value.

It's the old logo. The wrong colours. The slightly dodgy font.

Worse still, it's the unlicensed photo. The not-available-here product. The you-can't-show-that-in-X-country image. It's enough to make you despair.

The good news is that it doesn't have to be this way. It is possible to make brand consistency the norm right across your business and beyond into your partners and wider ecosystem.

And it's easier than you might think.

# The 3 keys to brand consistency

## The process of achieving brand consistency fundamentally consists of three distinct areas of focus:

**01** **Align & Educate**: Ensuring your staff are aligned behind your brand promise and positioning. (In our own research, only 37% of marketers believe all their employees understand how to deliver their company's brand promise to the customer.)

**02** **Share & Distribute:** Sharing, managing and distributing the right content to the right teams and the right channels at the right time. When it's difficult to get what they need, people resort to creating their own. But make it quick and easy to get on-brand materials, and brand consistency immediately improves.

**03** **Govern & Automate:** Controlling marketing processes, helping and empowering teams to collaborate on content. With the right processes and tools, even highly decentralised teams can feel confident creating their own content within the rules.

In this mini-guide, we're going to look at each of these in turn, and show how a modern brand management platform can help you deliver the consistency you need. Consistency that will pay dividends for your brand.

# 01
# ALIGN &
# EDUCATE

# Key to achieving consistency by default is getting everyone (in-house, partner, agency) on the same page.

Operating in over 30 countries, outdoor clothing brand Icebreaker uses brand management software to educate their local marketing teams, distributors, retail sales staff, customer services people and external designers about what makes the brand unique. Icebreaker uses the platform to share their brand personality, vision, meaning, values and, crucially, their stories with teams so they know how to promote and sell the brand in a crowded marketplace. With a marketing strategy driven by word-of-mouth and PR, delivering a powerful, consistent brand is absolutely key to Icebreaker's success.

They need to understand what you're looking to achieve with your brand, why and how. This will provide them the foundations to do the right thing when it matters.

There are two core parts to this: education and inspiration.

## Brand education

The bedrock of brand consistency is education. Of course your people must have easy access to the ingredients they need to create great marketing materials – but they also need to learn how to use those ingredients effectively.

A central brand management portal will give them access to all the information they need about your brand stories, positioning and values so they can deliver on your brand promise – whether they're a new joiner in London or an existing partner agency in Singapore.

Key here is breaking down departmental barriers. It's important that every team has central access to your brand guidelines, assets, campaigns and content. This is critical to achieving better collaboration across the business.

## Brand inspiration

Do your internal teams know what others have already created? Or does content get recreated needlessly because of poor visibility?

A brand management platform makes it easy for your people to see what colleagues in other markets are creating. This increases consistency and reduces costly duplication of work.

Importantly, it helps teams learn what's working so they can build on that success. What's more, brand and marketing managers across the globe can ask questions and make suggestions about how to do things better, further strengthening the brand.

## 02
# SHARE & DISTRIBUTE

Achieving brand consistency by default means making it fast and easy for everyone involved to do the right thing. Fundamental to success is that everyone should know where to find the right content and assets.

Eyeglass lens manufacturer Transitions Optical strives for consistency of brand and clarity of message in every channel. Their brand management software gives their marketing and sales teams instant access to the images, videos and marketing content they need to create engagement with the lens manufacturers and opticians who sell on their behalf. No-one needs to hunt for marketing materials any longer. They can find the right content in their brand management platform instantly, improving efficiencies, saving money and driving up brand consistency.

### Digital asset management

Quickly getting hold of content and materials can be a challenge for teams when there isn't one place to find it. Quite often they will be forced to do precisely the wrong thing by spending a few minutes on Google or eliciting the help of a friendly local design firm.

This doesn't need to be the case. When all content is centralised in the cloud in a brand management platform that enables people to self-serve securely, 24/7, you make it quicker and easier to do the right thing.

Key to a successful system is a search feature that's as fast as Google and as instinctive as an e-commerce site so people find things instantly.

Pre-determined download options such as 'for web use' or 'for print' that make sense to non-technical or non-creative people mean they can quickly grab images at exactly the right specification, improving consistency. System log-ins are always permission-based, giving contextual access to content, so people can get what they need without having to dig through irrelevant content intended for other teams.

And when it comes to logos, look out for systems with a Logo Finder – a tool that leads people to the logo in the format they need just by answering a few simple yes/no questions.

### Make every asset findable
### (no matter where it's hiding)

Achieving brand consistency means gaining control over the huge volume of disparate marketing assets you are using externally. And gaining control means gaining visibility.

Of course, a brand management system should be able to tell you where images have been used internally and by whom. But it's when images are used externally online that consistency can suffer — especially when they're used without permission.

So the system you choose should also be able to track down images wherever they appear on the web, giving you deeper insights into how to deliver greater consistency wherever your brand appears.

# 03
# GOVERN & AUTOMATE

So your people are fully up to speed and you have a centralised way of giving them what they need quickly and easily. The final piece of the consistency puzzle lies in how you manage the creation of new materials.

Investment management firm Rathbone Brothers previously approved all marketing production with a paper-based system. However, with multiple simultaneous projects, all needing regulatory and compliance approval, this was unsustainable. Today, they've moved to an integrated workflow within their brand management platform. This automates internal processes giving marketing, compliance and subject specialists input into artwork approval. The system ensures no steps are bypassed and, importantly, delivers an accurate digital audit trail. Ultimately, it means all marketing projects are both compliant and consistent.

Everything you ever create as a brand is the result of a process. In some businesses this is a predictable, highly documented, step-by-step affair – in others, less so.

While some believe that process is the enemy of creativity, the reality is that the right processes will enable your people and partners to be more creative, more effective and waste less time.

With the right software tools in place, you can ensure that every job goes through the stages you decide are important. Of course, it is possible to do this with traditional spreadsheets and project management applications, but it's often a time-consuming, error-prone way of working.

In contrast, today's advanced brand management systems allow you to embed your processes into an automated workflow. You can add intelligence that applies different levels of rigour depending on the type of work. And you can ensure the right people see it at the right stages, approving it before it can move on.

Importantly, by automating these workflows, you should actually make creating new content faster and easier than traditional alternatives – jobs automatically move to the next stage but will only progress if they follow the right sign-offs.

Finally, you can take automation even further with web-to-publish or web-to-print capabilities. These enable your teams and partners to produce top-notch artworks in-house – no digital or design skills required. Better still, this technology makes huge savings in marketing production costs and drives up brand compliance and consistency at the same time.

# Achieving consistency by default

The good news is that, no matter how many creative assets you have, no matter the volume of content you create, achieving consistency by default is within reach.

While there is more to this than we have space for in this guide, success fundamentally comes down to four key principles:

**01** Making common tasks as fast and intuitive as possible

**02** Having a single point of truth that makes all your creative assets accessible to everyone who needs them (a cloud-based solution is key)

**03** Being clear about your core processes, documenting them and sticking to them (automation will help here)

**04** Being confident that should something go wrong, you can fix it fast

Ultimately, it doesn't matter whether you are in financial services, retail, global professional services or anywhere in between, by following these principles you'll be able to make brand consistency the default for your business.

If you are interested in learning more, read our next guide in this series: **The Business Case for a Brand Management Platform »**

If you're struggling with delivering brand consistency, we'd love to help. Let us show you how a Brandworkz brand management platform helps brands such as Dr. Martens, Aon, Mitsubishi and JLL deliver consistently powerful brand messages, day-in, day-out.

**Contact us at neil.monahan@brandworkz.com for an initial conversation.**

# About Brandworkz

Brand marketing today is more complex than ever. Customers will encounter your business in many different ways. Online. On mobile. Face-to-face. And while every touchpoint is an opportunity to increase the power of your brand, many marketers struggle to deliver the outstanding brand consistency they need to grow their brands over time.

Assets are created in hundreds of different flavours by multiple different teams and keeping control of your marketing ecosystem can seem like herding cats. This inevitably leads to mistakes and to brand experiences that fall short of the mark.

We can help.

Brandworkz is a brand management platform that makes doing the right thing, the fastest, easiest thing. Simply, you get a more consistent, more effective brand in less time for less effort.

With Brandworkz, only brand compliant content is available in the platform. People login with password permissions to self-serve. Finding it is lightning-fast and ultra-easy, enabling your users to save time and quickly take advantage of brand building opportunities. Brand guidance is built into the core, so everyone knows exactly what to do. And intuitive connectivity with your other marketing platforms means you can even automate key processes, strengthening consistency and minimising brand dilution.

The result is a more desirable brand for your customers, fewer operational headaches for you and a more effective brand for the business.

**Brandworkz. Accelerate your Return on Brand.**