2009/2010 TREND REPORT:

THE VISUAL LANGUAGE* OF BRAND.

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*BRAND IDENTITY, PACKAGING, ADVERTISING, RETAIL SPACE, WEB, LIVERY, SIGNAGE

Dedicated to all businesses who actively leverage their brands and their brand visual language.

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A REPORT IN MAJOR OR VISUAL LANGUAGE TRENDS IN BRAND IDENTITY

Trends in the visual language of brand identity are driven by many factors from the ‘me-too-ism’ of designers and their clients mimicking the visual language of market leaders, to new and emerging trends such as ‘sustainability’ that draw a similar and en-mass visual response from designers all over the world.
TO
AL
TITY.
However the big question on trends in brand visual language is ‘what exactly do we do with them?’

When it comes to brands, the thing about visual language is that it not only communicates the essence of a brand and its (hopefully) unique proposition to market, but also provides its audience with cues relative to the other brands in the marketplace. The more a brand is a leader in its market, the greater meaning its visual language has and the more influence it commands.

The brand visual language of the Tiffany’s blue - especially when combined with their iconic ribbon and box - is a powerful identifier. It clearly communicates a series of well understood cues such as quality, elegance, sophistication, femininity, design and premium to a broad cross section of its markets in every country they do business.

When the design of visual language appears consistently and repeatedly across a number of brands we identify that as a trend. When a trend is leveraged positively it offers brands the opportunity to communicate an existing set of cues or meanings within a market to their advantage - whether that be a local business wishing to look global, or a global business wishing to look local. Yet, when misunderstood or misused, trends can create inappropriate or confusing visual messaging to the detriment of the brand.

When the most popular trends become widely misused the original brand cues become meaningless. The last decade saw the popularity of the ‘all lowercase logotype’. Using all lowercase letters was seen as a way for brands to show their ‘friendly’, ‘down to earth’ and ‘approachable’ side. As this aspect of brand personality became increasingly popular, more and more brands adopted the trend for their visual language, culminating in the re-branding of the National Australia Bank to ‘nab’.

In terms of trend relevance, when a big bank - any big bank - adopts the visual language of ‘friendly’, ‘down to earth’ and ‘approachable’ the cues of the trend have become compromised.
OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS WE HAVE COLLECTED MORE THAN FIVE THOUSAND DIFFERENT BRAND EXPRESSIONS SPANNING ALMOST EVERY MAJOR INDUSTRY AND CATEGORY OF THE WESTERN WORLD.

The brand expressions we tracked included existing, new and refined brand identities, product packaging, newspaper, magazine and billboard ads. The scale and breadth of these brand expressions allowed us to identify the major brand visual language trends of a broad range of market leaders for the last year.

Whilst the majority of the examples presented in this report are recent, many trends are not in themselves new. It is our interpretation of the groundswell of take-up of a trend and the influence exerted within their market by the brands involved, that leads us to define the most compelling and influential trends.

What is the value of a Trend Report into the code of brand visual language? All brands project an image through their visual language. It is up to each brand to make conscious and informed decisions about exactly what they wish their visual language to communicate relative to the competition and to their market’s perceptions. An understanding and mastery of the trends in brand visual language will allow business to ‘tune’ their brand’s image to ensure they’re consistently communicating the right messages to the right people.

For every organisation seeking to best manage their brand identity, these trends must be part of the consideration process. For each brand there will be advantages and disadvantages to leveraging the cues and meaning inherent in these trends. The big question you should be considering is this; ‘does the trend provide an opportunity to leverage a set of visual cues to communicate the perfect brand messages to your market, or has the trend become so widely adopted as to compromise the uniqueness of the brands who follow it?’
MAJOR TREND:

GLOBAL BLANDING

Global ‘Blanding’ is the single greatest trend we’ve seen in brand identity over the past two years, and in the last 12 months we’ve seen nothing to suggest the trend is losing steam.
Global ‘Blanding’ is the homogenization of brand visual language that we have seen occurring in brand identity design. Like many trends, it was started by re-branding of some of the largest global brands including; Xerox, British Telecom, Barack Obama’s Presidential Campaign, AT&T, Apple, Barclaycard, HP & Mastercard, before being picked-up by the second and third tiers of medium and small enterprises. This visual language trend cuts across almost every conceivable category from telecommunications to airlines to petroleum, to sporting teams and fast food. Global ‘Blanding’ describes the trading-in of unique and usually meaningful symbolism for a shared and meaningless visual language of spheres, colour blends and transparencies, and three dimensional shapes. Whilst the visual style achieved by combining these elements provides a sense of ‘international or globalization’ often combined with a suggestion of ‘cutting-edge technology’, this is typically achieved at the expense of individuality, brand differentiation and brand messaging. There are so many examples of brand marks that fit this category, we can show you only a small selection. This is not only the strongest trend identified, but also the one we believe to contain the greatest risk of compromise to brand differentiation and uniqueness. Due to over-use and mass misuse this trend has the potential for inappropriate or confusing visual messaging.
THE AUTO BADGE
HERITAGE

The last few years has seen almost every auto manufacturer refine their brand mark to make it a shiny, three-dimensional representation of their badge. This trend has been enabled by the evolution of graphic rendering software and print technology which now allows complex brand mark rendering such as these to be reproduced faithfully.

As we’ve observed the trend of three-dimensionality sweep across the brand identity in so many categories we wonder whether these auto brands can be held responsible for starting the trend, or at least giving it the momentum of credibility.
The strongest of the global ‘blanding’ sub-trends is the Sphere of Influence. With clear global symbolism, many brands with international reach or aspirations have been attracted to a sphere-based brand mark. This category includes the many brands from a wide range of categories and geographical markets who have evolved, refined or re-designed their brand identity to include a sphere element. Most brands have adopted this trend to communicate a global positioning - which for many brands is a legitimate play. Some brands however seem to have ‘gone along for the ride’ and through lack of relevance, or poor execution don’t fit in with the big boys. Brands attracted to the gravitational pull of the Sphere of Influence span property, telecommunications, travel, finance, hardware, retail, software, petroleum, gaming, politics and fast food.
Whilst consciously or inadvertently following a trend in brand visual language does not on its own diminish the effectiveness or value of an organisation’s brand identity, a trend that groups together a mass of unrelated businesses and markets, painting them with the same brush should be carefully considered before being adopted. A key requirement of an effective brand identity is to provide the business with unique and own-able visual properties. The Global Blanding trend applies a templated approach of three dimensional shape and graduating colour to every imaginable brand and market. Whilst providing brand with a sense of currency, there can be no doubt this approach increases the extent to which brand marks look similar to each other. Some brand that follow this trend do so whilst maintaining relevance and a uniqueness in their visual language relative to their market. The Woolworths brand identity below is a good example. However, other brands such as UPS, Packard Bell, Microsoft’s Silverlight, Kraft Foods, and the Corowa RSL Club seem intent on following the leader rather than striking-out in their own unique and relevant direction.
Another sub-trend gaining popularity is the translucent shard. First spotted in the IT space, this style of visual language has moved across the finance industry and business consulting to place branding for the City of Melbourne in Australia.
As sporting clubs around the world clamor for the latest update to their brand’s visual language, many are turning to three dimensional versions of their existing symbols and mascots. New sporting clubs and organisations aren’t immune from the trend either. Here are three competitive sporting organisations from Australia who’s brand identities follow this trend.
THE FLYING GRID

Key-lines have been used to create a three dimensional form in brand marks for decades. Recent times has seen this form of rendering gain new momentum with the addition of blended colour to accentuate the effect. These examples span brand identities from markets including insurance, travel, telecommunications and a place brand for a city in Victoria, Australia.
Was it Einstein who said “There is nothing that is a more certain sign of insanity than to do the same thing over and over and expect the result to be different.” It turns out Einstein’s theory of relativity seems also to hold for these three brand marks representing businesses in the medical equipment, electromechanical and new media markets.
Ribbons have long been a symbol of life and celebration. The current trend of Global Blanding has seen the use of the ribbon element on brand identity increase noticeably - sometimes to good effect (the celebration of fresh food for Woolworths and the elegant flight of British Airways), and sometimes with little apparent relevance (the stiff ribbon ‘V’ of Vic Roads).
MAJOR TREND: AUTHENTICITY

With markets flooded by abundant choice of similar products, and with a GFC induced return to more traditional values, consumers are being drawn towards brands they believe to be trustworthy and dependable.
A key driver of brand equity has always been authenticity. The word “Authentic” derives from the Greek authentikós, which means “original.” As consumers in most of the western world renew their affection for brands that provide a sense of safety and reliability, authenticity has become the new brand value of choice. Attributes such as genuine and true are the proof points for these brands. Authenticity is all about practising what you preach; being totally clear about who you are, what you stand for and how you must behave to demonstrate that.

Over the past year we have seen a prevalence of authentic cues in advertising, packaging and brand identity of many brands. These authentic cues have come in the form of story-telling, product development and of course, visual language.

Brands such as Levis and Harley Davidson have long been regarded as brands steeped in authenticity. The visual language of their brand images are rich with cues of their heritage. Many brands are seeking to re-tell their stories, digging back into their past to unearth their own authentic visual language.

“AUTHENTICITY IS THE BENCHMARK AGAINST WHICH ALL BRANDS ARE NOW JUDGED,” NOTES JOHN GRANT IN THE NEW MARKETING MANIFESTO.
Brands with tradition and craft at their heart have long communicated to the market with visual language rich in authentic and traditional cues. The last twelve months have seen all manner of brands rediscover an authentic brand story and seek the relevant visual language to communicate their old/new proposition.

Application of this visual language has been applied liberally to packaging, retail, advertising and on-line for brands in a range of markets including travel, food, beverage, health, and fashion.
A sub-set of the wider trend of authenticity the trend towards the use of a signature in brand visual language has regained popularity. Growing from a base of established signature brand marks, over the past twelve months we’ve seen an acceleration in this trend, possibly as a response to the GFC, which has seen consumers turn back to brands with trustworthy and traditional values.

This visual language trend is well suited to brands with claim to an artisan or craftsman proposition, brands wishing to take a boutique positioning relative to their competition, or brands wishing to link their current values to a historical or founding figurehead.
One of the traits we often see in authentic brands is a link to the past. The thing about the past is we often associate it with a sense of trust, we feel safe choosing the fabric softener our grandma and our mother used on our woolly jumpers when we were growing-up.

We’ve spotted a trend that embraces the style, aesthetic and many of the visual cues of the past. From NBA team the 76ers, who recently ‘updated’ their brand mark to look exactly like their old one, through to ice cream brand Good Humour who have cashed-in their heart symbol for an old ice cream truck, the examples are too numerous to count. We’re seeing this trend across markets including retail, travel, fashion, consumer electronics, and motor cycles, but with a particularly strong presence in food and beverage.
GREENWASHING

‘Greenwashing’ and ‘Farmwashing’ are two new terms coined to describe the recent trend of brands creating a sense of environmental or farm-fresh credibility to products with no rightful claim to those credentials.

The Greenwashing trend is part of a larger trend which has seen brands overtly leveraging their pure, green, farm, fresh, and fair-trade credentials - rightfully or otherwise.
Now you can feel even better about your coffee.

Fusion stores offer a wide selection of the finest coffee and tea blends.

Be strong. Switch to Fairtrade coffee.

Oxfam
oxfam.org.au/fairtrade

- Image of Tesco soup products.
- Image of Praise dressing.
- Image of Select tea.
Nature prefers public transport
Another variation on the ‘authentic’ brand theme is one we’ve called; ‘Made with Love.’ These are brands who have consciously adopted the visual language of hand-made, from the heart messaging.

The ‘Made with Love’ trend has been adopted by brands wishing to associate themselves with qualities of care and trust, community spirit, authentic artisan, and hand-made goodness through the use of hand made or hand drawn elements, often combined with photography or other visual cues of human comfort.
WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT

CARING AT HOME WHEN SOMEONE WITH CANCER IS DYING

WE ARE MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

LIVING AT HOME WHEN CANCER IS ADVANCED

WE ARE MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

We're all affected by cancer. We can all do something to help.
www.macmillan.org.uk

WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT

WE FUND NURSES
WE FIGHT INEQUALITY
WE MAKE COFFEE
WE RUN MARATHONS
WE SUPPORT FAMILIES
WE PROVIDE GRANTS
WE GIVE OUR TIME
WE CHANGE LIVES
WE CAN TAKE YOU PLACES

OTHERS CAN’T.

At AMP Capital Investors, we look beyond traditional techniques to offer a new generation of investment portfolios.
When it comes to authenticity, brands who are faking it stand a good chance of creating negative brand associations. In an attempt to look friendly, human and accessible, many brands have jumped onto the trend of faking it with hand-written fonts. These are computer generated typefaces intended to look like human generated hand writing. The thing about real hand writing is it’s written by hand, and no matter how clever your typeface, there’s absolutely no substitute for the real McCoy. This trend has spread like a visual cancer of lazy brand language across many markets.
The sexier the undies you hang on the line, the friendlier the neighbours.

Inside the amazing Stashill.
My holiday would not have been complete without it.
After getting round the big shopping malls, there were bargain stalls around almost every corner. And when it gets dark, this amazing city is transformed into a vibrant entertainment spot. The shopping and nightlife is just awesome here!

Leave your troubles behind from $27 p.p. per night.
She'll think you want it for the superb design, build quality, safety and sound system. So don't let her find out about the awesome 4.4 litre V8 all-aluminium engine and advanced all-wheel drive, until you own it.

THE VOLVO S80

DYNAMIC STABILITY & TRACTION CONTROL • PERSONAL CAR COMMUNICATOR • ALLOY WHEELS WITH PIRELLI PZERO TYRES • 3.2 LITRE 6-CYLINDER AWD AND MODELS ALSO AVAILABLE • AND IT'S A VOLVO, SO OF COURSE IT'S SAFE.

Volvo: for life
OTHER TRENDS:

AFFORDABLE LUXURY, CULTURAL PERSONALITY URBAN ATTITUDE

Beyond the major trends covered in the first two sections of the report there are many other smaller trends that remain equally as significant to the markets where they play out.
T OF Y & T UDE
AFFORDABLE LUXURY

The broader trend we are seeing of consumers toning-down their major purchases due to the weakening economy while staying at-home to re-connect and enjoy the finer things in life is fueling the popularity of affordable luxury items. These luxuries are often a seen as a pamper, or reward that won't break the bank. Fewer people are going out and buying a $3000 Plasma, preferring to invest in a tub of gourmet ice cream, a nice bottle of wine and a Saturday night with the ‘missus’ in a five-star hotel. As a result, many brands, especially in retail, FMCG and hospitality, are seeking to repackage themselves as affordable luxuries.
Handmade in our kitchens and built by hand. As each batch is slightly unique, we only use high-quality, fresh, free-range eggs and the finest ingredients for our products. We don't believe in additives or artificial flavorings. We pride ourselves on creating truly unique, handmade products. Truly Deeply.
Proudly not European.

Crown Lager's unique Australian brewing style has remained unchanged for over eighty years. Unlike the fashionable European beers of the moment, Crown boasts a creamy fruitiness, rich malty undertones and a crisp hops finish. Its premium full-flavoured taste distinguishes it as a truly Australian lager like no other beer in the world.

Australia's finest.
THE LUXURY OF OPTIONS

INDULGE IN THE QUIET LUXURY, ELEGANT SURROUNDS
AND COMFORT OF MELBOURNE'S BEST HOTEL ROOMS.
SLOT YOURSELF WITH FINE DINING, DECENT SPA TREATMENTS
AND THE CITY ON YOUR DOORSTEP.

For reservations call 13 13 54 and find a package to suit you.

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Live pure moments of pleasure

DISCOVER THE Refined LUXURY
OF FRENCH ELEGANCE

TheParkHyattMelbourne,Champagne

PASPALY

THE BEST BEAUTIFUL PEARLS IN THE WORLD
As businesses evolve the way they take their brand to market, increasingly we are seeing clearly defined brand personalities being leveraged as a powerful dimension to creating distinctive brand experiences. Brand personality is usually associated with brands projecting a happy or zany persona, but within any market, relative to competitive brands, your persona can be anything - stylish, elegant, technically nerdy, quirky and artistic, or obsessively driven - as long as it has relevance, appeal and authenticity to your market.

Often when we think of brands with a distinctive personality we picture larger brands like Apple or Coke. But businesses of all sizes and in all markets can leverage the differentiating advantages and create brand charisma with a strategically considered brand personality. As well as the right visual language, brand voice - the words the brand chooses when it speaks - is a strong driver of brand personality.

help™ I have a headache
16 acetaminophen caplets
(600mg each)

help™ I can't sleep™
Acetaminophen (500mg)
14 tablets
Diphenhydramine HCL (25mg)
16 caplets

help™ I have a cold™
Acetaminophen (650mg)
Pseudoephedrine (10mg)
9 caplets

help™ I've cut myself™
Hydrocortisone
3 strips

help™ I have a sore throat™
Menthol and Flavonoids
12 lozenges

help™ I have an aching body™
Ibuprofen (200mg)
18 tablets

help™ I need healing™
Antibiotic ointment (2 oz. tube)
8 sachets

help™ I have indigestion™
Ranitidine (200mg)
9 tablets

help™ I have allergies™
Loratadine (10mg)
8 tablets

SORRY, NO HOT STUFF.
(APART FROM YOURSELF, OF COURSE)
For your safety, we are unable to allow
hot drinks or hot liquids to be taken onboard.

IF THIS LOOKS STRAIGHT...
YOU’RE PISSED!

A GRIP THAT’S HARDER TO DROP
THAN A BUNNY-COOKING GIRLFRIEND.
In the last decade we’ve seen an increased splintering of market demographics. One of the trends has been the growth of the ‘urban’ audience, typically made-up of people in the before kids and after kids (or the no kids at all) stages of life. These twenty / thirty / fifty year olds who chooses to live in inner urban ares are driven by a different values and mind-set to their contemporaries in the suburbs.

The brands that appeal to this market are typically closer to the edge, new, different and less traditional. The urban market is often where new ideas form and take hold before spreading to the mass market.

As a result, there’s great motivation for many brands to claim a stake in the inner urban, but this kind of cred is not easy to claim. Where a brand’s visual language reflects an urban status, authenticity resonates. When a brand has no urban credentials, the visual language will come-across as try-hard, alienating the very market they wish to connect with.

The visual language of ‘Urban Attitude’ has a edge that combines what’s happening on the streets, youth and fringe cultures.
THINK BIGGER IS BETTER?

SEE A PLASTIC SURGEON.

DARE. IT’S ICED COFFEE.
www.dareicedcoffee.com.au

LIKE PUSHING BUTTONS?

BECOME A TYPIST.

DARE. IT’S ICED COFFEE.
www.dareicedcoffee.com.au
MAGIC TINGLES AWAIT YOUR INSIDE BODY.
Waiting, waiting, waiting.

Waiting for a bus, or a red light, can fray your nerves. But the idea of waiting for your mammogram results... that's a different kind of waiting altogether.

At Telstra, we're lucky to have the resources to bring ideas to life, like teaching mobile breast cancer awareness workshops in just minutes, saving women living in rural Australia from even weeks of waiting.

Because after all, wherever you are in Australia, at least everyone can agree on one thing: to do something good for good, next time.

For more great ideas, visit telstra.com/ideasforgood.
OTHER TRENDS:

AND MORE

Further significant trends in brand visual language that don’t cluster together as part of greater trends.
SHAPE SHIFTING

The fracturing of markets has driven significant change in the way brands communicate. A single concept, above the line, one size fits all approach no-longer works. Social media and the web, street media and new forms of direct have introduced a plethora of new channels through which brands can split and customise their messages. As a result, brands need to be far more flexible and comfortable in varying their messaging, including their visual language in-order to be relevant and to make emotional connections.

One trend in brand visual language to be driven by these changes is what we call ‘shape-shifting’. Gone are the days of strictly policed universal consistency of brand identity. This new era of brand visual language sees brands who are comfortable with varying everything from packaging to point of sale, from brand colours right through to brand mark in order to make sure their customers everywhere are noticing and remembering them.

Beeline™
life on the bright side

Билайн®
живи на яркой стороне

расслабляйся
tвори
выделяйся
живи жизнь
THE SECRET OF QR CODES

The QR code was created by Japanese corporation Denso-Wave in 1994, but more recently has switched into the mainstream as brands have begun to adopt the technology.

‘QR stands for ‘Quick Response’, as the codes allow information to be ‘decoded’ at high speed.

People with a camera phone and the correct reader software can scan the QR Code causing the phone’s browser to launch and redirect to the programmed URL.

QR Codes can be used by brands to provide a link to URLs, product information, competitions, etc. The codes are usually included on ads in magazines, outdoor advertising, bus ads, business cards, or any other object that may act as a catalyst for customers to seek information about the brand.

QR technology provides the potential for a range of new brand interactions, especially around consumer retail experiences.
OTHER TRENDS:

TRENDS IN TYPE

Whether it’s logotype, headline font, or body copy, type has always played a lead role in the visual language of brands. These are the key trends we’ve seen playing-out in brand type design.
TO SERIF OR NOT TO SERIF?

As the vast majority of brands strive to remain up-to-date, contemporary sans serif fonts continue to be the most popular. Of the thousands of brand identities we researched, more than 80% were designed with sans serif fonts. Whilst serif fonts are typically associated with more traditional brands, this heavy bias creates unique opportunities for brands prepared to buck the trend.

Without exception, every market from finance to food is dominated by brand visual language designed with sans serif fonts.
WHATEVER THE CASE

The trend of all lower-case type for brand marks has been around for more than a decade. To begin it was the domain of small, boutique, friendly brands, but as the trend gained momentum, brands of all shapes and sizes sought to adopt the style in order to connect themselves with some of those values they aspired-to.

The last couple of years has seen more mainstream brands adopt this trend. As many as 40% of the brand marks we researched were designed with all lowercase logotype. At the same time, forward thinking brands have been reverting back to a traditional capital and lower-case format. Confused? We’re not surprised.
THE HERO TYPE

There have always been brands who build their identity around type. The trend of ‘logotype’ which is a word mark without an accompanying visual symbol is not a new one. However, the sheer number of brands who continue to build their visual language from a typographical starting point is significant enough that it requires inclusion in this report.

This style of brand visual language is well suited to brands who have a lot to say, and often adopted by brands who wish to tell their brand story through packaging or advertising. Customized type, hand-crafted type, three-dimensional type, type created from soft drink - we’ve collected a range of some of the best recent examples of brand utilizing this style of visual language.
GET READY FOR THE BIG CHEESY TASTE

Made with LOVE. LUCKILY NOT the kind your parents make.

DRINKWARE.CO.UK  The GUINNESS word and the HARP device are trademarks. © Guinness & Co. 2008.
when he wasn’t stealing chickens or fathering 11 children, JAMES SQUIRE spent his time creating FLAVOUR-FILLED BEERS
Uống là BRRRA!  

Coca-Cola®
OTHER TRENDS:

BRAND COLOUR TRENDS

Colour continues to play an important role in the visual communication of social and cultural messaging. Since the beginning of brand identity, designers have leveraged the meanings of colour to create brand messages.
In many western cultures there is a broad understanding that certain shades of green represent ‘fresh’ and ‘environmentally sustainable’, whilst navy blue represents ‘conservative’ and ‘traditional’- pink is for girls, blue is for boys, black is expensive, yet yellow and black means ‘discount’ - the list goes on-and-on. These are examples of social and cultural colour associations.

However, the additional - and often confusing - dimension to the use of colour is fashion. As colours move through fashionable phases, their popularity encourages brands to adopt them for reasons other than their established meanings, often creating mixed messages.

**THE USE OF COLOUR IS SO WIDE-SPREAD THERE ARE FEW IF ANY BROAD TRENDS. HERE ARE SOME OF THE INTERESTING THINGS WE SEE HAPPENING IN THE WORLD OF BRAND COLOUR.**
WHO’S THE BRIGHT SPARK?

A trend that we’ve seen building for the last several years is the use of a bright colour palette by brands wishing to position themselves as vibrant, fresh and friendly in their marketplace. This trend appears across virtually all markets from finance to food, and from travel to telecommunications. As the trend spreads, brands are turning towards brighter and even more vibrant colour tones in order to stand out. The thing about very vibrant colour palettes is that fewer brands can stake a legitimate claim to them. Only brands with a genuine freshness and energy to them, not just relative to their market, but relative to all other brands can wrap themselves in these extremely vibrant colours and remain relevant and believable.
and unlimited standard local and national calls.

Time becomes a thing of the past on the $99 Plan,
when you take a Mobile Internet Pack for $16.95.
It's the end of time as we know it.

Call 133 965 or visit your local Optus Store today.
Yes. We hear you.

In the $99* Plan
when you take
a 250MB Mobile
Internet Pack for
$16.95 per month.

optus.com.au/timeless

'yes' OPTUS
Truly Deeply

A GRIP THAT’S HARDER TO DROP
I SEE RED

Whilst the world of colour in brand design is far too complex to make sweeping statements about a trend towards one colour or another, there’s no doubt we’re seeing a disproportionate number of brands featuring red and orange as their primary colour.

For some time now leading brands have understood the value of ‘owning’ a colour in their marketplace. That is being the brand customers associate with a certain colour in their advertising, store presentation or packaging. As we’ll illustrate here, choosing a brand colour (especially a more popular colour like red) and featuring it prominently in your brand communications alone will not provide you differentiation. Often, unless you’re careful, it’ll provide for the very opposite.
We have landed.
Air Asia X now flying out of Melbourne.

Fly to Kuala Lumpur and you can access over 102 routes and 56 Asian destinations, with regular flights from the Gold Coast, Perth and Melbourne. Plus as part of Asia’s largest low-cost airline, you’ll also be able to save up to 50% on food and baggage when you book online. Not to mention the option of XL seat upgrades.

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- Great package deals at GoHolidays – 24,000 hotels to choose from.
- Now accepting payments through the secure online payment facility – PayPal.

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Talking to the people you love should be free, right? Join us at Virgin Mobile and you'll never pay to call or text your friends, parents or loved ones again. No matter what time of day it is, wherever you are in the country, or how long you need to chat. As long as they’re with Virgin Mobile and you’re with Virgin Mobile, it’s absolutely free 24/7.
A BLEND OF COLOUR

The search by brands for individuality has coincided with the improvement in printing and production techniques. These two influences have created a new wave of brand design we call the ‘Colour Blend’.

Advances in production capabilities have created an opportunity for brands to have complex blends of colour in their identity system reproduced faithfully and cost effectively across print, signage, packaging, web, even uniform embroidery.

The ability to blend different colours or tones of the same colour adds a new level of sophistication, elegance and softness to the visual language of brand design.

The world has very few flat colours, even colours that are printed flat appear to graduate from dark to light (even if only slightly) due the angles of light and perspective. There’s something appealing to the eye about the application of blended colours, perhaps because of the way they reflect the natural world as we see it.
OTHER TRENDS:

THE FINAL WORD

As we researched this report a couple of quirks in the brand continuum caught our eye...
DEATH OF THE SWISH

The ‘Swish’ is quite possibly the most noxious brand visual language trend of the last twenty years. Inspired by the success of the Nike ‘swoosh’ and given momentum by the visual attributes of technology and momentum, the ‘swish’ spread like a virus for more than a decade.

Brands from almost every market in every corner of the globe became infected, trading relevance and individuality for the glittering allures of the ‘swish’. Finally after far too long this trend seems to have lost its steam. If your brand still has a swish for a brand-mark, it’s long overdue for an update.
INSINCERE FLATTERY

As brands continue to go global, some businesses in emerging markets are quick to understand the equity that resides within the brand identity of market leaders. As a result, ‘branderfeit’ stores are popping-up throughout the newer economies. Here are some examples of these misplaced gestures of flattery - amusing unless the brand they’re leveraging happens to be yours.
THE 10 QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ASKING YOURSELF ABOUT YOUR BRAND’S VISUAL LANGUAGE:

01. Which visual language trends carry the greatest relevance for you market and how are you leveraging them?

02. Does your brand identity consciously or unconsciously follow any of these trends? and if-so, is there a good reason for that?

03. Have you consciously considered the messages your brand identity is communicating?

04. Have you compared your brand identity to those of your competitors and the leaders in your market?

05. Does your brand have a distinctive voice when it speaks?

06. What unique brand identity properties does your brand own in your market?

07. Where does the strongest authenticity reside for your brand and how is your visual language reflecting it?

08. What unique story does your brand tell and what visual cues do you have which assist with that story telling?

09. Is your brand identity being consistently leveraged across every one of your customer touch points?

10. If your brand’s visual language needs enhancement, do you have a brand design specialist capable of assisting you?