Branding case studies: 9 great examples to study

Category: Branding
written by Stewart Hodgson | 4 October 2024
The best branding case studies can be a powerful tool. Whether you're in the initial stages of launching a new company, or you're looking for a way to revitalize your existing identity, a great case study can inspire and guide you through the process.

Plus, if you're looking for a company to help elevate brand perception for your organization, or assist with your brand building journey, a branding case study gives you a good idea of who you can trust.

That's why we share detailed case studies here at Fabrik.

Today, I'm going to walk you through some of the most impactful brand case studies around. I'll explore examples linked to visual identity, brand architecture, naming and more.

Let's dive in.

Identifying the best branding case studies

I could spend all day talking about the best branding case studies I've seen throughout the years. For this specific guide, I'm going to be looking at some of the most famous, and comprehensive examples, covering world-leading successful brands and newcomers.

Ultimately, the case study that delivers the most value to you will depend on your own branding goals. But all of the

examples below showcase similar best practices in the branding space.

For instance, they might have:

- A unique, evocative and impactful logo and color palette.
- Memorable and distinctive brand names.
- An excellent brand positioning strategy.
- Effective methods for promoting innovative products.
- A strong brand architecture and vision.

The best branding case study examples

While all the branding case studies mentioned below have unique elements, they're all exceptional examples of how a strong brand identity can engage and activate your target audience.

These case studies showcase how effectively highlighting your core values, and building a strong foundation for your image, messaging, and personality can cultivate brand growth.

1. Nike: Building a brand around customer goals

We talk about the Nike brand a lot here at Fabrik. After all, it's one of the most successful athletic companies in the world. The business hasn't just achieved success because of its great products. What makes it special is its branding.

Even in the early days, Nike achieved success by selling more than just a product. They didn't just want to give their customers great shoes or athletic apparel. They wanted to sell hope, ambition, and inspiration, and they've done that

incredibly well.

Nike has put a lot of effort into positioning itself as a champion for its customers. Its vision is to bring innovation and inspiration to “every athlete” – anyone with an interest in fitness.



Everything from the company’s powerful “swoosh” logo (which looks a lot like a checkmark), to their “Just Do It” strapline has defined an identity about perseverance and accomplishment.

The company’s television ads feature inspiring user-generated content, as well as stories from athletes around the world. Plus, the company is constantly looking for ways to enhance the user experience, by giving customers more control over customizing the products they buy.

Key takeaway:

Align your business goals with your customer’s goals. Selling an idea, identity, or a lifestyle is far more impactful than selling a simple product. Show your customers that you’re committed to helping them reach their targets, and you’ll

achieve better results.

2. RCoA: A brand for a new generation of anesthetists

This is one of my favorite brand case study examples from the work we've done here at Fabrik, the Royal College of Anaesthetics (RCoA) is a leading innovator in the UK healthcare landscape, and a cornerstone of the medical education landscape.

For years, the institution has built its brand around its position as a leader in the anesthesia education space. However, like many entities highlighted in this branding case study list, the organisation has also evolved to adapt to the changing preferences of its target audience.



Keen to fortify its reputation as an authority and the force behind a thriving community, RCoA has updated its image and personality to inspire its members.

After initially losing some presence in the educational space,

RCoA’s decision to update its image and messaging has helped it to demonstrate its inclusive nature, highlight its focus on community growth, and fortify its spirit of ambition.

Key takeaway:

Stay current with your target audience. As generations of potential “consumers” evolve, make sure they can still clearly recognize your vision and values. RCoA did this by committing to extensive research, to align their identity with the academic market.

3. Old Spice: The world’s most successful rebrand

Through the years, Old Spice has proven itself to be a master of successful branding and visual identity. Even when it first launched, and the company’s messaging and image was deemed “old fashioned” by today’s standards, it appealed directly to the brand’s intended audience.

Old Spice only updated its brand (and launched one of the best rebrands of all time), when it recognized its audience was changing. After extensive market research, the company discovered that people were associating its company with “old fashioned” ideas.



Rather than simply starting from scratch to engage a new audience, Old Spice combined some of its historical imagery with a powerful content creation campaign and a new personality.

They adapted their messaging based on the discovery that a more inclusive (targeted at men and women), and humorous approach would elevate sales for their product line.

Now, the global brand is known for producing some of the best marketing campaigns in the world. Plus, it has one of the most recognizable logos and color palettes out there.

Key takeaway:

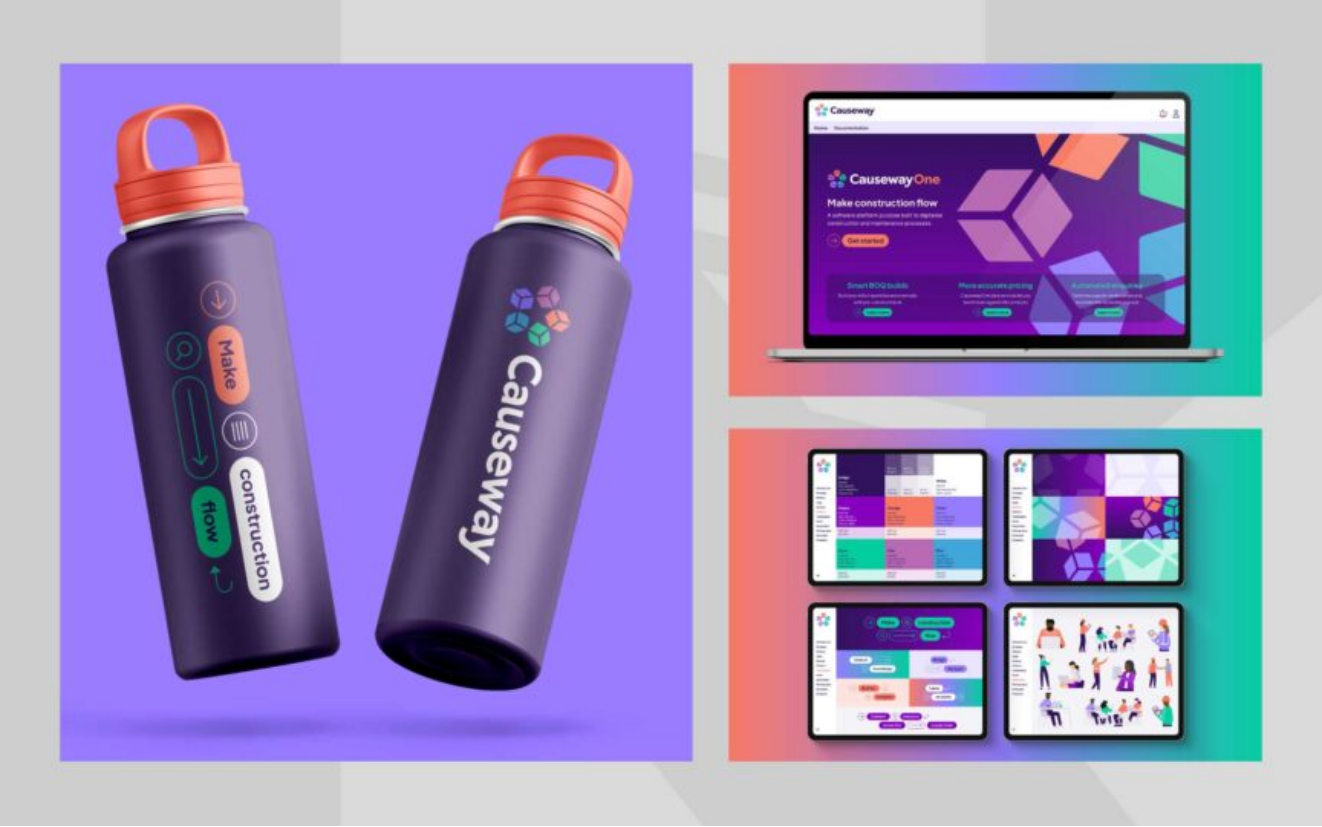
Updating your brand to engage a new audience doesn’t have to mean giving up your history. You can create a new brand identity with elements of your existing image, and revitalize your strategy with an up to date personality and marketing strategy.

4. Causeway: Paving the way for ongoing growth

This is one of my favorite examples of a branding case study that highlights the value of visual identity, research, positioning, and product architecture all at once.

Causeway already had an established identity as an innovator in the landscape of “built environments”, when it approached Fabrik. But like many of the world’s leading organisations, it wasn’t content with simply standing still.

The firm’s team knew that to continue moving forward, they needed to keep innovating, introducing new solutions, and refining their brand strategy.



When launching a new ground-breaking platform, the company conducted extensive research (with our help), to update their brand strategy, product architecture, and visual identity, ensuring that their parent brand and new offering would thrive in the right market.

They updated their color scheme, refreshed their values and personality documents, and created a clear new value proposition, all to ensure they'd have the best impact on potential customers.

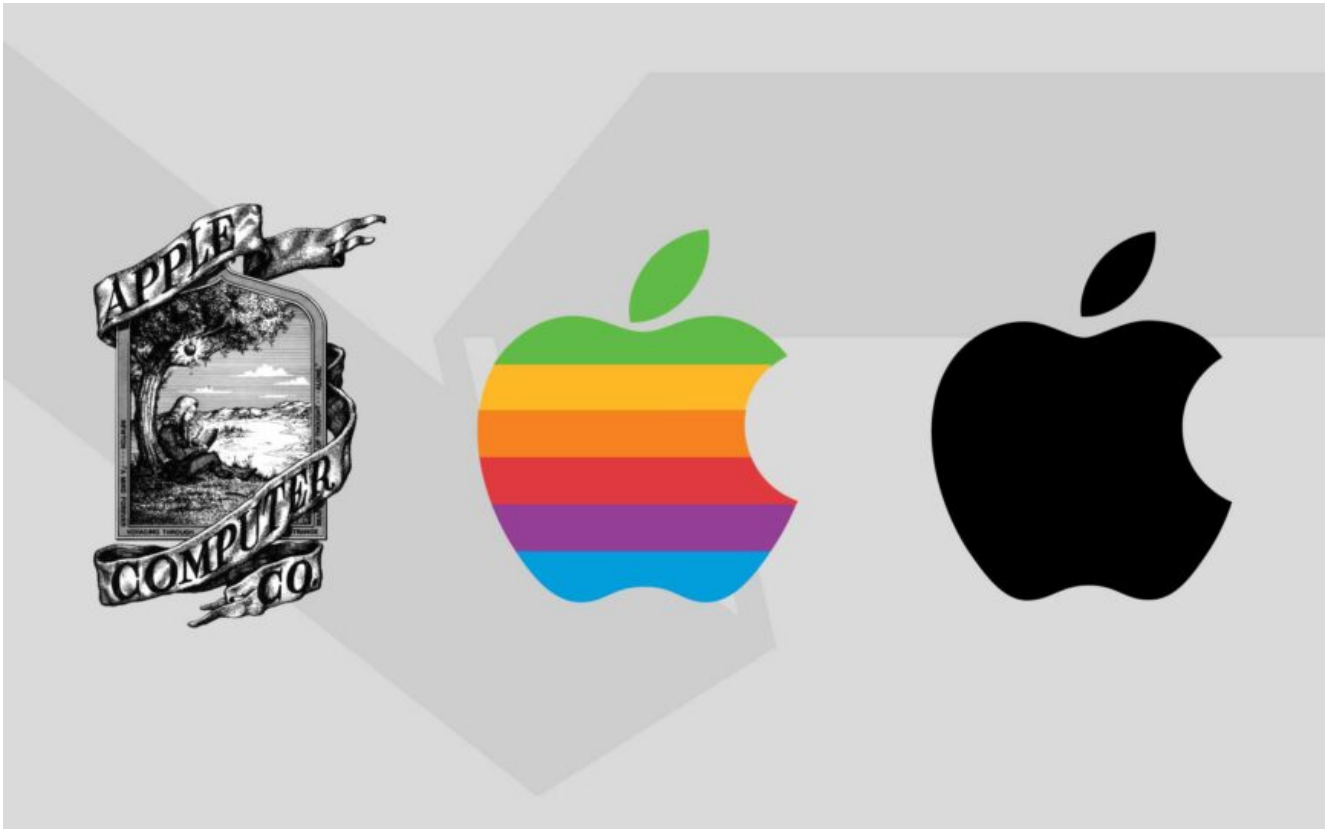
Key takeaway:

Every step you take forward when building your brand is an opportunity to examine your existing identity and make positive changes. Upgrading your digital marketing campaigns, color scheme, and brand's look can lead to a significant increase in brand equity.

5. Apple: Building a revolutionary identity

If you're looking for a great example of a brand with their finger on the pulse of innovation, then you don't have to look far. Apple has achieved phenomenal market share throughout the years, with a revolutionary approach to branding.

Rather than just relying on their incredible products to capture customer attention, Apple has consistently experimented with new ways to facilitate rapid growth.



They've positioned themselves as the ultimate competitor against organizations like Microsoft with innovative marketing campaigns. The company has also adapted to changing customer preferences, introducing new products, services, and experiences.

Plus, they've always invested in strengthening connections with their customers, whether it's by updating their image to become more "modern", addressing ethical concerns in marketing campaigns, or simplifying their message.

Perhaps the most significant moment in Apple's branding journey happened when Steve Jobs took the helm, and chose to reposition the company as not just a "computer brand", but a technology pioneer. Ever since then, Apple Inc. has stood as a perfect example of a revolutionary brand.

Key takeaway:

Don't limit yourself. Apple has achieved phenomenal success throughout the years because it has expanded its product portfolio, updated its brand, and transformed its messaging

over time. It constantly moves into new markets, and explores new opportunities.

6. Lumeon: Evocative branding for an industry pioneer

Another of my favorite branding case studies from Fabrik comes from Lumeon (formerly Qinec). This healthcare technology pioneer was initially formed with a mission to address the common challenges healthcare organizations face, from reducing costs, to improving the patient journey.

The company launched with an incredible vision, but it initially struggled to build a brand that connected with its target audience. The firm asked our team to update their brand, following a period of brand identity research.



We discovered the company's previous name hadn't been able to strike an effective chord with its customers, and its image failed to inspire the right niche.

Introducing the new name "Lumeon", allowed the company to

highlight its focus on illumination and discovery. The brand even combined this name with a powerful strapline, related to enabling the future of healthcare.

The new visual identity, featuring a heart-shaped graphic created with two rotated L's helped to convey ideas of compassion and vitality. The new image and name showcase Lumeon's focus on "bringing a heartbeat" to the health technology space.

Key takeaway:

Be prepared to make drastic changes when necessary. Sometimes, updating a logo isn't enough to capture the attention of the right audience. A new name, tone of voice, and positioning strategy can help you connect with customers on a deeper level.

7. LEGO: Embracing a wider audience with branding

Unlike many of the branding case studies I've covered so far, this one doesn't include many significant changes to the company's visual identity over the years. LEGO's eye-catching logo and color schemes have remained relatively similar through the decades.

However, what has changed is the company's approach to reaching its audience. In the early 1990s and 2000s, LEGO was struggling to maintain growth. It was almost $800 million in debt, caused by overproduction, and investment in the wrong areas (like theme parks).



When Jørgen Vig Knudstorp took over as CEO, he implemented a branding strategy to address budget mismanagement issues, and audience engagement. One of the most significant steps the company took, was re-evaluating its target audience.

It discovered that its product offerings didn't just appeal to children, but nostalgic adults too. As a result, the company started investing in partnerships and new opportunities to bring different products to a modern market.

Now, LEGO is one of the most successful brands in history, with a market share of over 7.6%, a successful video game line, and a lasting impact on the entertainment industry.

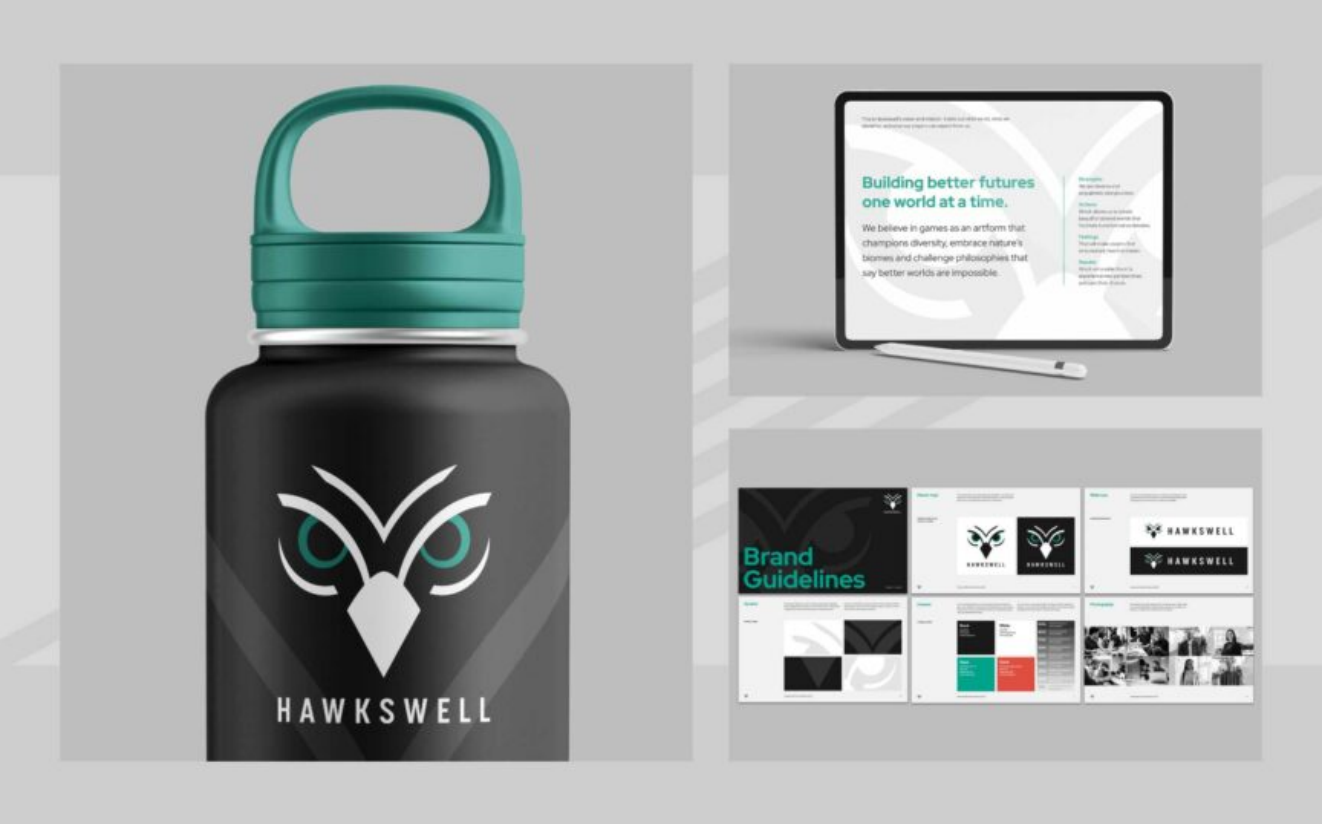
Key takeaway:

Regularly audit and update your brand. Not all of the big ideas you have for brand growth will pay off, but if you pay attention to the changing needs and preferences of your audience, you'll achieve better results.

8. Hawkswell: A memorable brand design case study

Creating an amazing brand isn't easy. A lot of companies take inspiration from other organizations in their industry, to ensure their image and personality resonates with the right audience.

However, while learning from the competition is helpful, it's important to stand out if you want to achieve consistent business growth. That's exactly what Hawkswell did with its branding efforts. The company already had a powerful name when it approached our team.



The title was taken from a William Yeats' play, which highlights mankind's quest for immortality. We helped them create the brand to match. Rather than relying on cliché and over-used images and ornate fonts, we created a truly modern, inspiring brand.

We designed launch materials, a logo, and a personality for the company that focuses on its commitment to elevating the

gaming experience. Everything from the company's business cards, to its website, showcases this future-focused approach.

Key takeaway:

Forge your own path. Use competitor analysis for inspiration and insights, but remember to differentiate yourself from the crowd. Look for ways to showcase your unique story, your ambitions, and your vision in every part of your brand.

9. Dove: A brand with a human side

Dove is an expert in customer experience, impactful branding, and evocative messaging. The company built its brand around a focus on compassion, starting with its logo and name, both of which connect to the concepts of love and freedom.

Over the years, the organization has produced some of the most memorable brand campaigns of all time, starting with the "Real Beauty" marketing campaign. Rather than just telling customers that they support them with evocative images and straplines, Dove does the work.



It learns as much as it can about its target audience, figuring out what impacts their self-esteem, and confidence. The Real Beauty campaign in 2004 showed that Dove was committed to supporting people of all shapes and sizes, not just those who fit the traditional definition of “beauty”.

Since then, the firm has consistently built on its brand image with marketing campaigns that challenge damaging conceptions in the beauty space.

Every messaging strategy and marketing campaign elevates Dove even further in the beauty industry, by showing the company’s human side.

Key takeaway:

Create a humanized brand experience, and be willing to go against the status quo. Dove has consistently challenged how beauty is perceived in the modern world, championing inclusion and diversity as a cornerstone of its identity.

Quick takeaways from the top branding case studies

Sometimes, the best lessons come to us from history. These branding case studies offer an excellent insight into how you can approach brand building, brand development, and rebranding effectively.

Here are some of the top lessons to take with you:

- **Put the customer first:** Your customer should always inform your brand, regardless of whether you’re starting from scratch or rebranding. Nike is a champion for its customers, inspiring and driving them forward. Dove is a leader in boosting self-esteem.
- **Be ready to adapt:** Business growth is fuelled by agility

and evolution. As you learn more about your target audience and industry, be ready to evolve. Don't be afraid to update your name, logo, color palette, website, or even your messaging strategy, like Old Spice.

- **Be bold and unique:** Forget the status quo. Identify what makes your company different, and invest in showcasing that unique vision. Become a world innovator like Apple or avoid the clichés like Hawkswell.
- **Tell the right stories:** Use your brand to connect with customers on an emotional level, through evocative storytelling. Use your name (like Lumeon), to showcase your values, and your marketing campaigns to highlight your vision.
- **Don't underestimate your brand:** Innovative products and services will only take you so far. An effective brand is how you connect with customers on a deeper level, foster loyalty, and stay one step ahead of the competition.

Create your own successful branding case study

Great branding is the key to success in any industry. As these branding case studies show, the more time and effort you invest in elevating your brand image, identity, and personality, the more your company will grow and scale over time.

However, building and developing an amazing brand isn't easy. Whether you're investing in global expansion, starting a new business with a new logo, or rebranding entirely, it pays to have the right help. All of the companies above didn't take their branding journey alone.

If you need help designing an amazing brand experience,

upgrading your image, or simply refining your strategy for future success, contact Fabrik.

Fabrik: A branding agency for our times.