The brand identity questionnaire: Surveying for success

Category: Identity
written by Stewart Hodgson | 1 May 2024

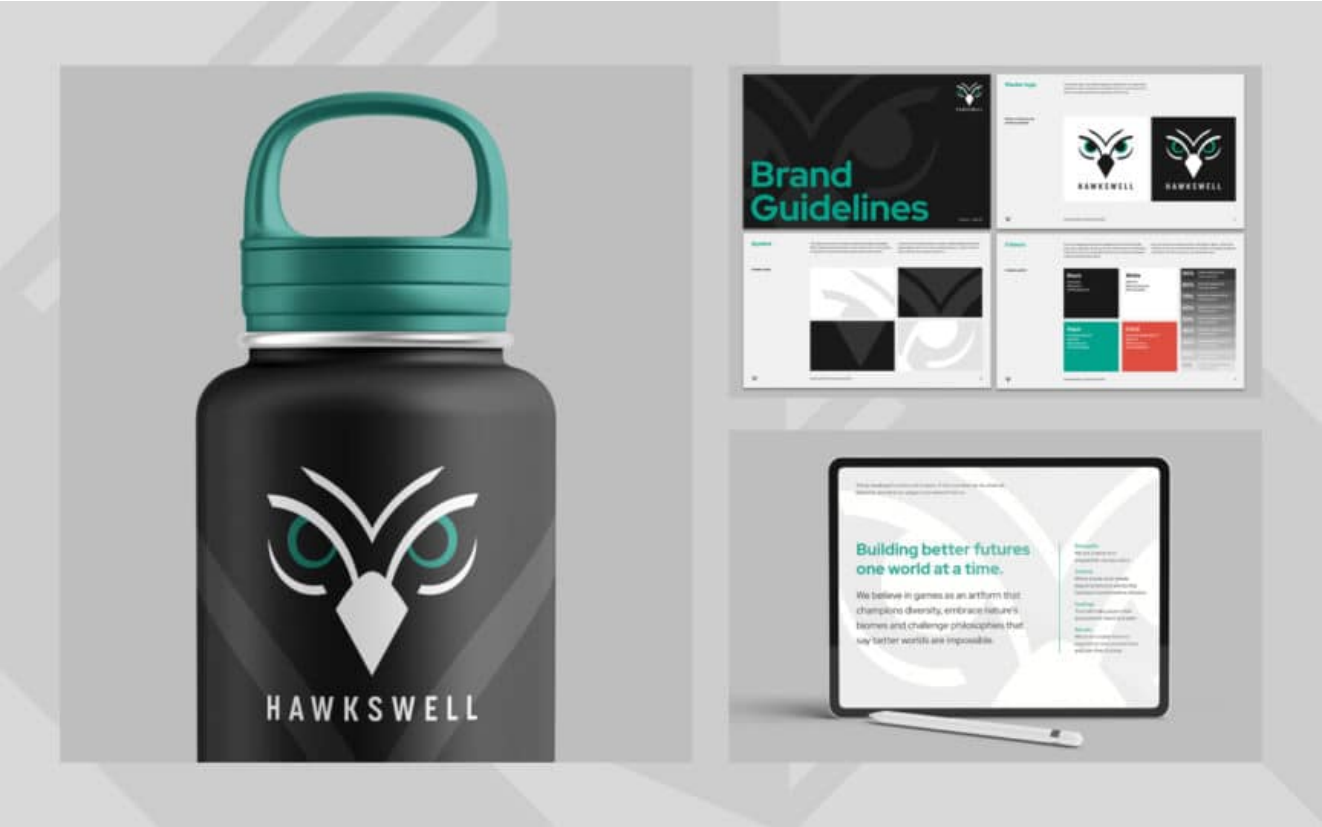
Developing a strong brand identity has never been more important. But designing a brand that captivates your target audience, differentiates you from the competition, and inspires loyalty isn't easy. That's where a brand identity questionnaire comes in.

A brand identity questionnaire can help you to identify the core elements of your brand, from the color palette and logo design you'll use, to the tone of voice you'll build into your marketing campaigns.

Essentially, it gives you the core building blocks required to design a brand.

Our team at Fabrik regularly uses these questionnaires during the initial discovery process when working with clients. We ask questions that help business leaders understand the DNA of their brand, so we can build branding and marketing assets that drive them towards their goals.

Today, I'm going to share my insights into the benefits of a brand identity questionnaire, and list some of the questions you should answer when designing your brand.



What is brand identity?

Brand identity is more than just your company’s logo or visual assets. It’s the result of a combination of unique characteristics that influence your company’s appearance, behavior, and impact on customers. The identity of each brand encompasses both tangible and intangible assets.

For instance, your logo and name make up big components of your brand’s identity, but your ability to connect emotionally with audiences also depends on your company’s personality, your approach to messaging, and even how you serve customers.

A brand’s identity is just as comprehensive as a person’s identity. Just as individuals are defined by various elements such as their name, personality, beliefs, and origins, brands are distinguished by dozens of interconnected factors.

Ultimately, any factor that affects how customers think and feel about your company is part of your brand identity. Let’s look at one of our clients as an example. When we designed the

brand identity for Hawkswell, we didn't just create an eye-catching logo.

We identified the message the company wanted to send to its customers about its commitment to creativity and innovation. This helped us design the visual assets and messaging strategy that would inspire and captivate the company's customers.



What is a branding identity questionnaire?

A brand identity questionnaire is a set of questions designed to reveal the core components and characteristics of a brand. Usually, marketing agencies, web designers, and brand strategists share these questionnaires with clients to learn more about the essence of a company.

When customers answer the questions in our brand identity questionnaires, they give us useful insights into their target audience, their unique value proposition, their competitors,

and their branding goals. They also help us identify the specific challenges we need to overcome.

When “Royal Blind” approached us for help choosing a new name, they revealed that their current title didn’t truly represent the variety of people they supported. They wanted a name that was more positive, and inclusive. This led us to suggest the name “Sight Scotland”.

Notably, you don’t necessarily have to wait until you’re working with a branding or marketing expert before you complete a brand identity questionnaire.

Creating a questionnaire and answering the right questions before you develop a new business, or rebrand your organization, can help you build an effective brand strategy.

The right series of questions can help you clarify your brand’s position in a specific market, how you’ll attract potential customers, and how you can differentiate yourself from your main competitors.

Some companies even share branding questionnaires with customers, for insights into whether their brand assets are having the right impact on their intended audience.

The benefits of a brand identity questionnaire

An effective brand identity questionnaire is how you ensure you have all the information and insights you need to create a powerful brand. There’s a lot of work involved in designing a great brand, from choosing an evocative color palette, to designing your marketing mix.

The right questionnaire will guide you through the initial research stage of building your brand, making sure you know who your target audience and competitors are, how you’re going

to capture market share, and even what your brand’s visual elements will look like.

Overall, the biggest benefits of filling out a brand identity questionnaire include:

A greater understanding of your brand

The questions you answer will push you to carefully evaluate the core elements of your brand, from your mission or vision, to the promise you make to your customers, and even how your brand will look.

Improved differentiation

When you’re answering the questions on your survey, you’ll identify the unique value proposition of your company, examine your competitors, and uncover opportunities to stand out in your chosen market.

Better brand consistency

Filling out a brand identity questionnaire can help ensure you have all the information you need to create brand guidelines. This can lead to better consistency in your marketing efforts.

Plus, your questionnaire will help you get the right results from any branding or marketing experts you work with, by ensuring they have the insights they need to design assets for you.

The brand identity questions you need to ask

If you’re working with a branding strategist, consultant, or designer, the chances are they’ll have their own brand identity questionnaires they share with every client. These questionnaires will include all key questions relevant to a project.

For example, a logo designer might ask you questions about your target customer, your competitors, the shapes, and images you want to use, and even your preferred logo colors.

If you're designing a comprehensive brand identity questionnaire yourself, there are numerous questions worth asking to give you a deeper insight into your company.

Here are the top example questions I'd recommend answering:

1. Who is your ideal customer/target audience?

Let's start with a question that's crucial for any branding initiative: who's your ideal customer? Every company has a specific "target audience" filled with the people most likely to benefit from their products or services. Nike's target audience is "aspirational athletes".

Collecting as much information as you can about your ideal customer, from their demographics (age, location, etc.), to their goals and pain points will help you to make more intelligent branding decisions.

It can help you identify the ideal marketing strategy, create a brand personality that resonates with your audience, and even choose a more evocative logo. For example, Lumeon knew its customers were searching for compassion and empathy, so it chose to add a heart shape to its logo.



2. What kind of personality do you have?

Every brand has a personality that shines through in their marketing materials, the way they communicate with customers, and even their visual assets. Tesla is innovative, creative, and future-focused.

Customers can see all that from the company's modern logo, and advertising campaigns.

Even Tesla's video ads provide behind-the-scenes insights into the company's unique approach to research and development.

Alternatively, McDonalds presents itself as fun and friendly, with its bright yellow logo, playful marketing messages, and unique product packaging. Ask yourself how you want customers to see you. If your customers had to describe you in 3 words, what would they be?

If you need insights into the types of personality you can consider, check out our guide to brand archetypes. There are more options than you might think.



3. What are your brand values and what's your mission?

Identifying your brand values is all about getting to the "why" behind your company. Every business should have a purpose (beyond just making money). So, start by identifying what your mission is. What do you want to accomplish for your customers, or the world?

Ask yourself:

- When was your business founded?
- What prompted you to create this specific business?
- How did your company grow into the brand it is today?
- What's your vision for the future of your organization?

When Google launched its search engine, the mission was to organize the information of the world and make it accessible to everyone. When Adobe created its collection of creative software solutions, it wanted to give designers and developers

the best tools to accomplish their goals.

Once you've identified what you want to achieve, determine how you're going to reach your goals. Are you going to become the world's top maternity clothing vendor by addressing the challenges customers face and designing products with a focus on comfort, like Seraphine?

Are you going to change the health and beauty landscape with products that eliminate the need for animal testing, like Lush? What values will resonate most with your target audience?

4. Who are your competitors

No matter how innovative your product or service is, there will always be companies that offer similar solutions to you. Identifying your competitors, and their strengths and weaknesses, is how you find ways to differentiate yourself in your chosen market.

Apple wasn't the first company to create computers for home and office use. However, the competitors in the market before the arrival of the "Mac", were often difficult to use, making them less accessible to anyone who wasn't tech savvy.

Based on this competitor analysis, Apple decided to create a computer that put user experience first. It focused on designing technology that was simple and intuitive, but still powerful. That gave the company a major edge in an evolving market.

When conducting your own competitor analysis, ask yourself:

- How are these companies, and their products or services like yours?
- What do these companies do well, and what do they struggle with?

- What do you admire about these brands, and want to replicate?

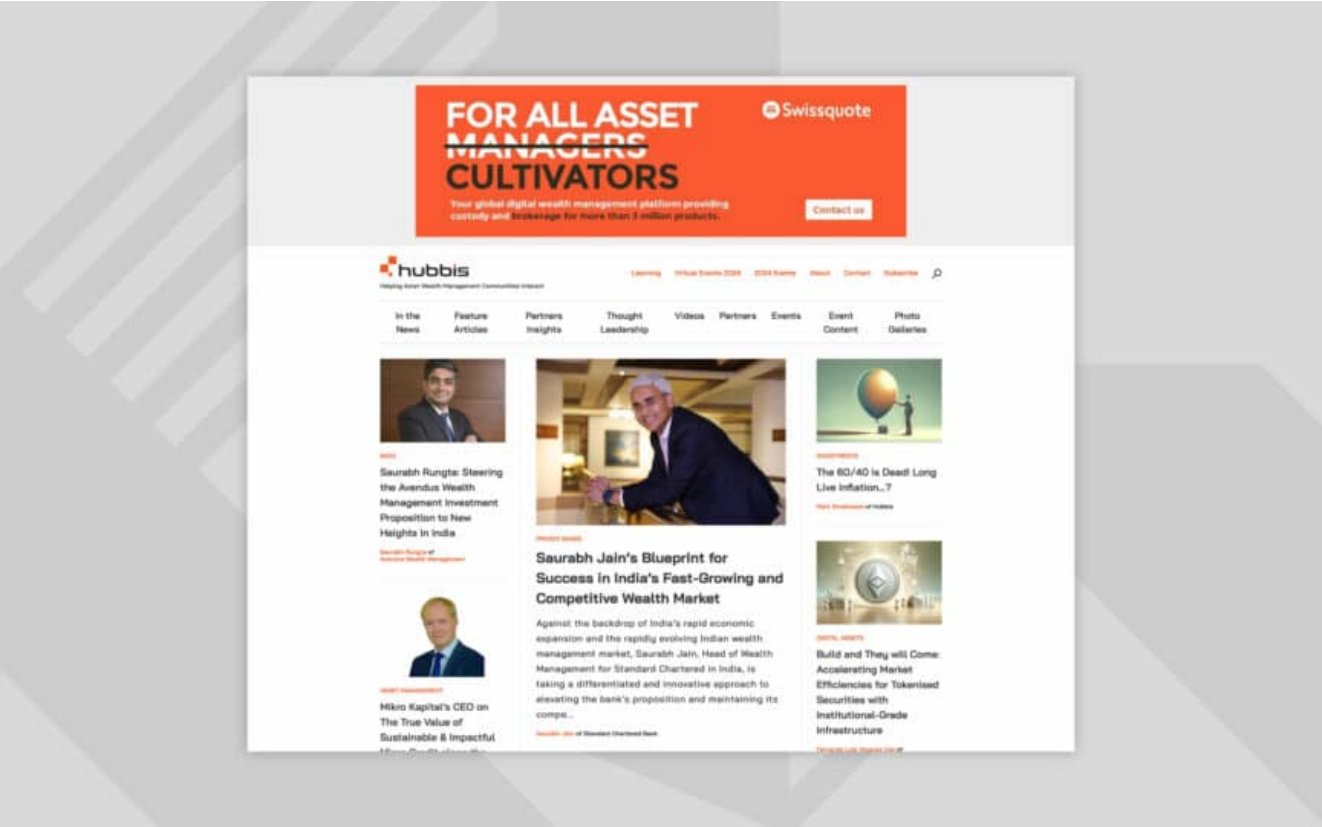
5. What does your company do best?

Once you have a good insight into your competitors, and your target audience, the next step is identifying, clearly, what makes your business different. In other words, why would your ideal client or customer choose you over the competition?

The market research you've done will come in handy here, showing you exactly where you have a competitive advantage over other companies. I'd recommend not basing your entire unique value proposition around pricing if possible.

While selling products that are cheaper than the competition can help you get sales initially, it's not the best way to build and retain customer loyalty. There's always a chance someone could drop their prices even lower than yours.

Instead, think about the unique ways you address your customer's pain points. Do you offer a better quality of customer service, offering step-by-step onboarding and guidance to all your clients? Are you constantly investing in new ways to improve your product or solution's features?



Maybe the thing that sets you apart from the competition is how you make life easier for your customers. Hubbis makes wealth management simple, giving customers access to free resources and tools they can use to improve their financial health.

6. What will your logo say about your brand?

Almost every brand identity questionnaire will include at least some questions about your visual assets, starting with your logo. When we engage in a branding project with a new client asking for help with logo design, we ask them to determine what they want their logo to say to customers.

After all your logo isn't just another brand image, it's a powerful tool that can convey crucial information about what your business does, and its values.

If you're not sure where to start when identifying what your logo should look like, I'd recommend looking at the competition. Ask yourself how other organizations in your

industry send the right message to customers with the use of various colors, design elements, and shapes.



The best logos are often both evocative, and informative. Look at the "Adelio Partners" logo we created, for example. The circular shape conveys the idea of connectivity and relationship building, particularly when linked with the "A" shape.

The blue coloring also makes an impact here. Blue is a color often associated with reliability, trust, and professionalism, making it ideal for an asset management company.

7. What are your brand colors and fonts?

A brand identity questionnaire that looks at your company's visual assets will often ask about more than just your logo, and the impact it should have on customers.

Most brand strategists (including the team here at Fabrik), will ask about:

Your color palette

As mentioned above, colors can have an emotional impact on your audience. Based on your company's personality and values, certain colors may make more sense for your brand image.

For instance, if you're building a sustainable company, you might use green. If you want to convey compassion, you could use shades like pink and purple. Make sure you list the exact hex codes you want to use for each shade.

Your typography

Colors, the typefaces you choose can also influence how people think and feel about your brand. Serif fonts are more likely to be associated with traditional, authoritative companies, while sans-serif fonts are seen as more modern and stylish.

Your approach to marketing images

Consider what kind of visuals you'll use in your marketing materials. Are you going to rely heavily on illustrations, like Dropbox, to convey more friendly and playful personality? Or will you take a strategic approach to taking authentic-looking photos of products and customers?

It can sometimes help to include "examples" of the visual assets you want to replicate when filling out your brand identity questionnaire. A mood board of ideas and examples will come in handy when you're sharing a creative brief with a graphic designer or marketing team.

8. How will you interact with customers?

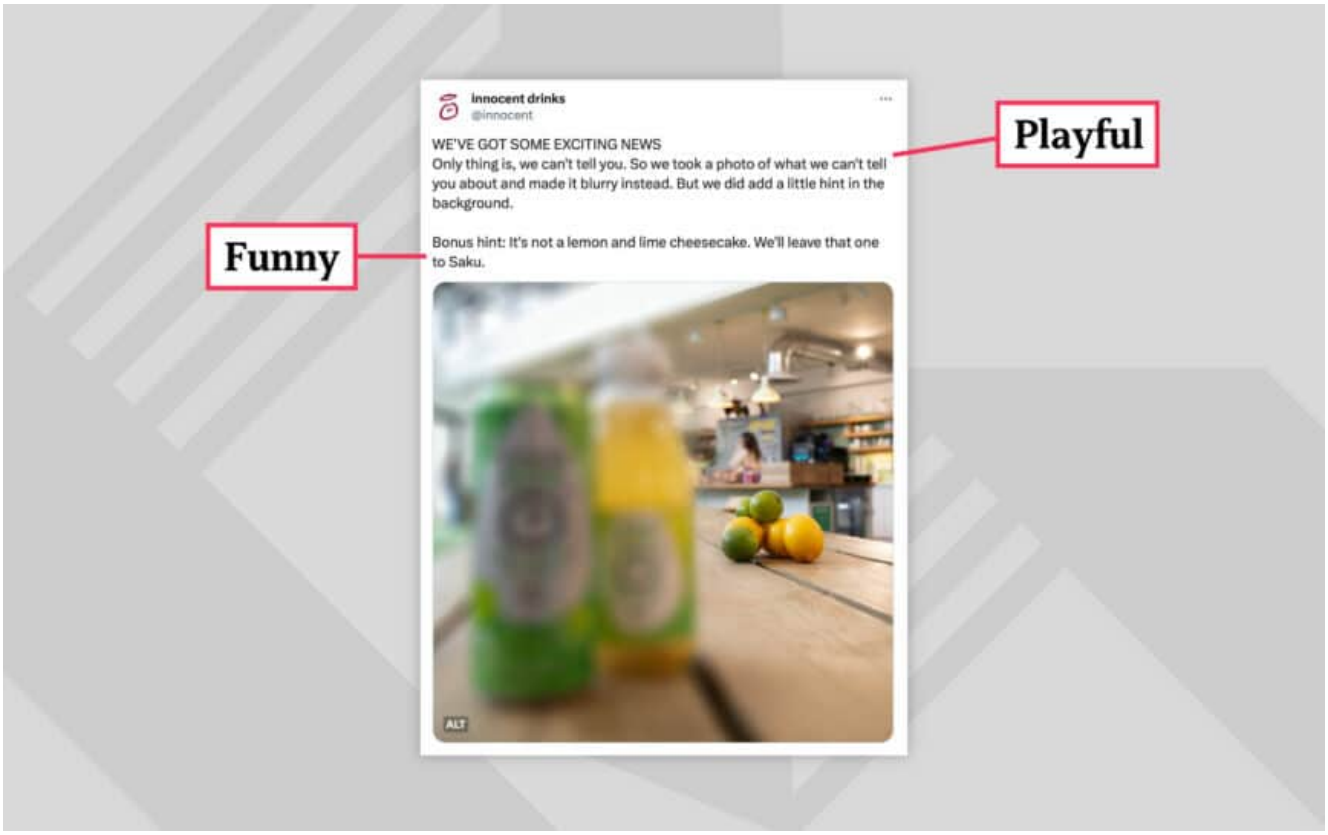
This is one of the most important questions in a brand identity questionnaire, as it helps to set the foundations for future marketing strategies. When deciding how you're going to interact with customers, there are a couple of things to think about.

First you need to consider what channels you'll use to connect with your target audience. Are you going to have an active presence on social media, where you can share insights into your latest products, and even deliver customer service?

If so, which social media channels make the most sense based on your knowledge of your target audience? Are you going to create videos that tell your brand's story on YouTube, or design television ads? Will you send out newsletters or engage customers with direct mail?

How will you build an emotional connection with your marketing materials, as well as giving your customers the information they need to purchase your products?

Once you've decided on your communication channels, think about your messaging style or tone of voice. The language you use should be a clear indicator of your brand's personality. Are you funny and playful, like Innocent Smoothies?



Or do you want to come across as knowledgeable and professional, like IBM? Once you've decided on your tone of

voice, write out some clear editorial guidelines, to ensure your messaging always sounds the same, across every channel.

Quick tips for brand identity questionnaire success

Notably, while most brand identity questionnaires will cover all the questions mentioned above, they can also ask more specific in-depth questions. For example, a designer giving you a questionnaire to inform their website design process might ask about key features your site needs.

A company helping an organization transform or improve an existing brand might ask you what you like about your current brand, and what you want to retain during the rebranding process.

Regardless of the questions you're asked, there are a few ways you can boost your chances of getting the most value out of your survey.

Here are my top tips:

Be detailed

Most brand identity questionnaires ask open-ended questions that allow you to share as much insight and detail as possible. While it might be tempting to rush through the process of answering these questions, remember detail is key.

The more information you can give your brand ambassadors, consultants, or teams, the more likely you are to achieve the right outcomes from your branding strategy.

Use clear language

Avoid using industry jargon and complicated terms when filling out a brand identity questionnaire. Remember you might be sharing this document with a lot of people from different

backgrounds, so it’s important to ensure your answers are easy to understand.

Keep it simple.

Include resources where possible

Extra resources can be extremely useful in a branding questionnaire. If you’re explaining your brand’s story, and sharing how you’ve evolved over the years, you could include a timeline of major dates.

If you’re describing what your ideal logo would look like, include examples of colors, shapes, and typefaces.

Create your own customer-facing survey

Using the questions of your brand identity questionnaire as inspiration, consider creating your own survey to give to customers. This will help you to determine whether your branding efforts are resonating with your audience in the right way.

You can ask your customers to identify your personality traits for you or share the first words they think of when they encounter your logo.

Build resources from your answers

As I mentioned above, you can use the answers you give to your questionnaire to develop useful resources for your team. For example, you might use your answers to questions about your tone of voice and personality to create a set of editorial guidelines.

Or you could use your logo design insights to create visual branding guidelines.

Create your own brand identity questionnaire

A brand identity questionnaire can be a valuable resource for your company. It doesn't just help you to work more strategically with designers and consultants. It also encourages you to take a closer look at the core elements of your brand and identify the factors that make your company unique.

If you're looking for help creating the perfect brand identity, you can reach out to a company like Fabrik, and fill out our brand identity questionnaire to start your branding journey.

Alternatively, you can create your own questionnaire with a free online form builder, and use it to uncover valuable information about your brand. Either way, answering the right questions should help you design a more powerful, memorable brand.

Fabrik: A branding agency for our times.