



More than a pretty picture

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STEP GUIDE TO
DEVELOPING AND USING BRAND PHOTOGRAPHY



Blackwood

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PHOTOGRAPHY IS POWERFUL

- It's thought that a billion images are loaded onto social media every day.
 - As of summer 2016, there are 20 billion photos on Instagram.
 - It's estimated that mankind has taken 3.8 trillion photos to date.

All of this is for good reason: the brain processes images 60,000 times faster than any other information. Around 90% of information transmitted to the brain is visual. And 40% of people respond better to visual information than text.

So it's an understatement to say that photography is a key asset in your design toolkit. A good image can tell a thousand words and be a window into the world of your brand. However, it must be developed and used with care and respect.

STEP 1

CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE POWER
OF PHOTOGRAPHY WITHIN BRANDING

2

RESPECT YOUR AUDIENCE

Your clients and customers are tuned in to a visual world that couldn't have been imagined even a generation ago. People's visual appetites are sophisticated, so treat them that way.

Make sure you keep the style consistent. It's what your audience will expect, and want. For example, First Direct uses only black and white imagery; National Geographic uses stunning wildlife and landscape imagery. When a theme is used consistently over time, your audience will see a typical image in that style and immediately think of your brand – without a word being read.

STEP 2

Create your own mood board

IT'S A GREAT WAY OF CLARIFYING YOUR THINKING AND THE STORIES YOU WANT TO TELL, AND GETTING INPUT FROM KEY STAKEHOLDERS. THINK ABOUT COLOURS, TONES, SUBJECT MATTER AND BE PREPARED TO CHANGE AND ADAPT YOUR IDEAS.

3

GO PRO

When you're clear about what you want, stick to it. Then brief a good professional photographer. Only a professional with a practised eye for composition and an in-depth knowledge of how to get the right effects will do. The best photographers need to be booked well in advance, and they're not cheap. But they are your secret weapon in creating a memorable visual brand that loyal customers or clients will flock to.

STEP 3

Brief well

YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY BRIEF IS AN IMPORTANT DOCUMENT IN ENSURING YOU GET WHAT YOU WANT FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHER. NO MATTER HOW GOOD THEY ARE, THEY NEED CLEAR GUIDANCE FROM YOU ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE. SHARE YOUR MOOD BOARD, TALK THROUGH THE BRIEF WITH THEM AND GO ON THE SHOOT IF YOU CAN, SO YOU CAN PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON THE DAY.

DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START TO FIND A GOOD COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHER?

[CLICK HERE FOR SOME USEFUL TIPS](#)

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A CLEAR GUIDE

When you've got photography that you love, create a section in your brand guidelines to ensure that any designer you're working with understands how to use it. Give precise written instructions about how images should be used and placed and, if stock shots are used, what your expectations are. As well as including guidelines on what to do, include what not to do. This is equally important.

Over time your photography style may evolve – this is likely to be a subtle change, but it's important to update your guidelines accordingly.

STEP 4

Create photography champions

IF YOU HAVE IN-HOUSE DESIGNERS, TALK THEM THROUGH THE GUIDELINES WHEN THEY FIRST JOIN YOUR TEAM. BETTER STILL, RECRUIT THEM AS PHOTOGRAPHY CHAMPIONS IN YOUR BUSINESS: IF THEY LIVE AND BREATHE THE PHOTOGRAPHY STYLE, THEY'LL BE ABLE TO GUIDE ANYONE WHO IS BRIEFING IN A NEW PIECE OF DESIGN WORK ON HOW TO USE IMAGERY TO FULL EFFECT.

5

QUALITY, QUALITY, QUALITY

Inevitably, you will need to use stock shots at some point, so this is a good point to mention how not all stock image agencies are the same.

There are some good ones, so be choosy.

Don't use any image that you have doubts about as a bad quality stock shot will weaken the effect of all the other great photography you've used in whatever you're producing. Consumers are experts at filtering out visuals and messages (and brands) that aren't up to scratch, including those that are badly reproduced, cropped or pixelated. Be ever-vigilant to how photography has the power to make or break your brand.

STEP 5

Check the stock

THERE ARE MANY IMAGE LIBRARIES AVAILABLE ONLINE AND A NUMBER OFFER ROYALTY FREE IMAGES, PLUS VIDEO AND ILLUSTRATIONS. THE QUALITY VARIES, BUT THESE PURVEYORS OF STOCK IMAGERY HAVE COME ON A LOT IN RECENT YEARS. HAVE A LOOK AROUND THE INTERNET TO SEE WHAT SUITS YOUR NEEDS AND STYLE BEST.

SOME SUGGESTIONS OF GOOD STOCK IMAGE LIBRARIES:

imagesource (high quality royalty free images)

shutterstock (flexible pricing plan)

istockphoto (includes HD video clips)

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STEPS

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