

Trust science to help you build your personal brand

[Life](#)



Your brain is hardwired to devour visual information. In fact, neurons that process visual information make up -- compared with 8 percent to decode input from your sense of touch and 3 percent devoted to sorting out auditory cues.

You can't control the resources your brain allocates to processing what you see. It doesn't even matter whether you're particularly interested in the image you're viewing. Your brain is working to make sense of visual messages. Once it's completed that work, the frontal lobe takes over. Your higher mental functions kick in, and your brain begins making judgments about what you've just seen.

Translate all this neuroscience to the business world, and you'll realize that your clients and potential customers are judging your personal brand's appearance, too. Ideally, your identity should accomplish three things: accurately represent your message, convey quality and encourage consumers to take your desired action.

Where to start?

What reaction do you want to trigger in people who come in contact with your personal brand? Should they follow you on social? Hire you for speaking engagements or professional services you provide? Download a white paper? Subscribe to your email list?

While all might be favorable goals, one must emerge as the most important. Decide on that priority outcome, and allow it to guide every choice you make as you develop your brand identity.

How can visual cues translate to text?

Next, you'll choose colors and fonts. These elements should give the correct impression of your brand and reinforce your desired action. You don't need to go back to the color wheel and start from scratch. Most likely, you already know which colors you like. If you're not already familiar with the basics of colorpsychology, do a little research online. You'll find plenty of reputable marketing resources have invested time andmoneyto understand which hues produce certain emotions in most people.

Keep your text uncluttered by sticking with one font for headings and another regular body copy. It's common to select a sans serif font -- without the " little feet" that finish off each letter's strokes -- for headings. League Spartan or Open Sans are a few solid choices. Serif fonts tend to be more readable in longer passages, which is why they are a natural fit for everything else. View samples of Baskerville, Georgia and Times New Roman to get a feel for how they compare.

What impact can colors and fonts really make?

Your color and font choices must do much more than stand up on a static page. You'll need to try them out in dynamic applications, too. Here's an example of two " Subscribe" buttons. They appear on identical landing pages, with only the shade of red adjusted to gauge reaction.

If you want people to think you are opinionated, choose a bold, all-caps font for your headings. If you want people to hire you as an entertaining speaker, use orange and yellow as part of your brand design -- they convey humor and vividcommunication. If you want people to follow you on social, you

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must be likable. Stay clear of fonts with harsh edges, as they can be seen as off-putting.

How can you present a truly cohesive image?

Armed with your color palette and signature fonts, you can apply a cohesive look across your materials and online presence. This includes your website, social profiles, banners, organic content and any digital ads. You'll want to carry your brand's look offline, too, using it consistently in print collateral and campaigns. And don't forget your office space.

It's a given that your own appearance is the single most representative element of your personal brand. You choose intuitively and perhaps subconsciously how you'll present yourself. But did you know you can test how people perceive the package you've crafted? Try using different headshots or variations of the same headshot on your LinkedIn profile. It's easy and free to track how many more invitations to connect, followers and profile views you garnered with each.

The way you present your personal brand makes a measurable difference. It can help you, or it can hold you back. Consequently, building a better brand identity is likely to have a positive impact on achieving your goals.