A process for success

The brand identity process demands a combination of investigation, strategic thinking, design excellence, and project management skills. It requires an extraordinary amount of patience, an obsession with getting it right, and an ability to synthesize vast amounts of information.

Regardless of the nature of the client and the complexity of the engagement, the process remains the same. What changes is the depth with which each phase is conducted, the length of time and the number of resources allocated, and the size of the team, on both the identity firm and client sides.

The process is defined by distinct phases with logical beginnings and endpoints, which facilitate decision making at the appropriate intervals. Eliminating steps or reorganizing the process might present an appealing way to cut costs and time, but doing so can pose substantial risks and impede long-term benefits. The process, when done right, can produce remarkable results.

The process is the process, but then you need a spark of genius.

Brian P. Tierney, Esq.
Founder, Tierney Communications

The branding process

1 : conducting research
- Clarify vision, strategies, goals, and values.
- Research stakeholders’ needs and perceptions.
- Conduct marketing, competitive, technology, legal, and language audits.
- Interview key management.
- Evaluate existing brands and brand architecture.
- Present audit readout.

2 : clarifying strategy
- Synthesize learnings.
- Clarify brand strategy.
- Develop a positioning platform.
- Cocreate brand attributes.
- Write a brand brief.
- Achieve agreement.
- Create a naming strategy.
- Develop key messages.
- Write a creative brief.
Process is a competitive advantage

Assures that a proven method is being used to achieve business results

Accelerates understanding of the investment of necessary time and resources

Engenders trust and confidence in the identity team

Positions project management as smart, efficient, and cost-effective

Builds credibility and strengthens identity solutions

Sets expectations for the complexity of the process

Navigating through the political process—building trust—building relationships—it’s everything.

Paula Scher
Partner
Pentagram

Most processes leave out the stuff that no one wants to talk about: magic, intuition, and leaps of faith.

Michael Bierut
Partner
Pentagram

3 : designing identity

Visualize the future.
Brainstorm big idea.
Design brand identity.
Explore applications.
Finalize brand architecture.
Present visual strategy.
Achieve agreement.

4 : creating touchpoints

Finalize identity design.
Develop look and feel.
Initiate trademark protection.
Prioritize and design applications.
Design program.
Apply brand architecture.

5 : managing assets

Build synergy around the new brand.
Develop launch strategy and plan.
Launch internally first.
Launch externally.
Develop standards and guidelines.
Nurture brand champions.