



THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO BRAND DISTINCTIVENESS

How to Leave your Competitors in the Dust

BRANDED

THE REASON 95% OF BRANDS FAIL

They haven't mastered **brand distinctiveness**: the secret to meteoric, sustained and unrivaled brand growth.

But when you do understand brand distinctiveness, you've cracked the code. You can make your brand **stand up, stand out and stay relevant** – whatever the climate.

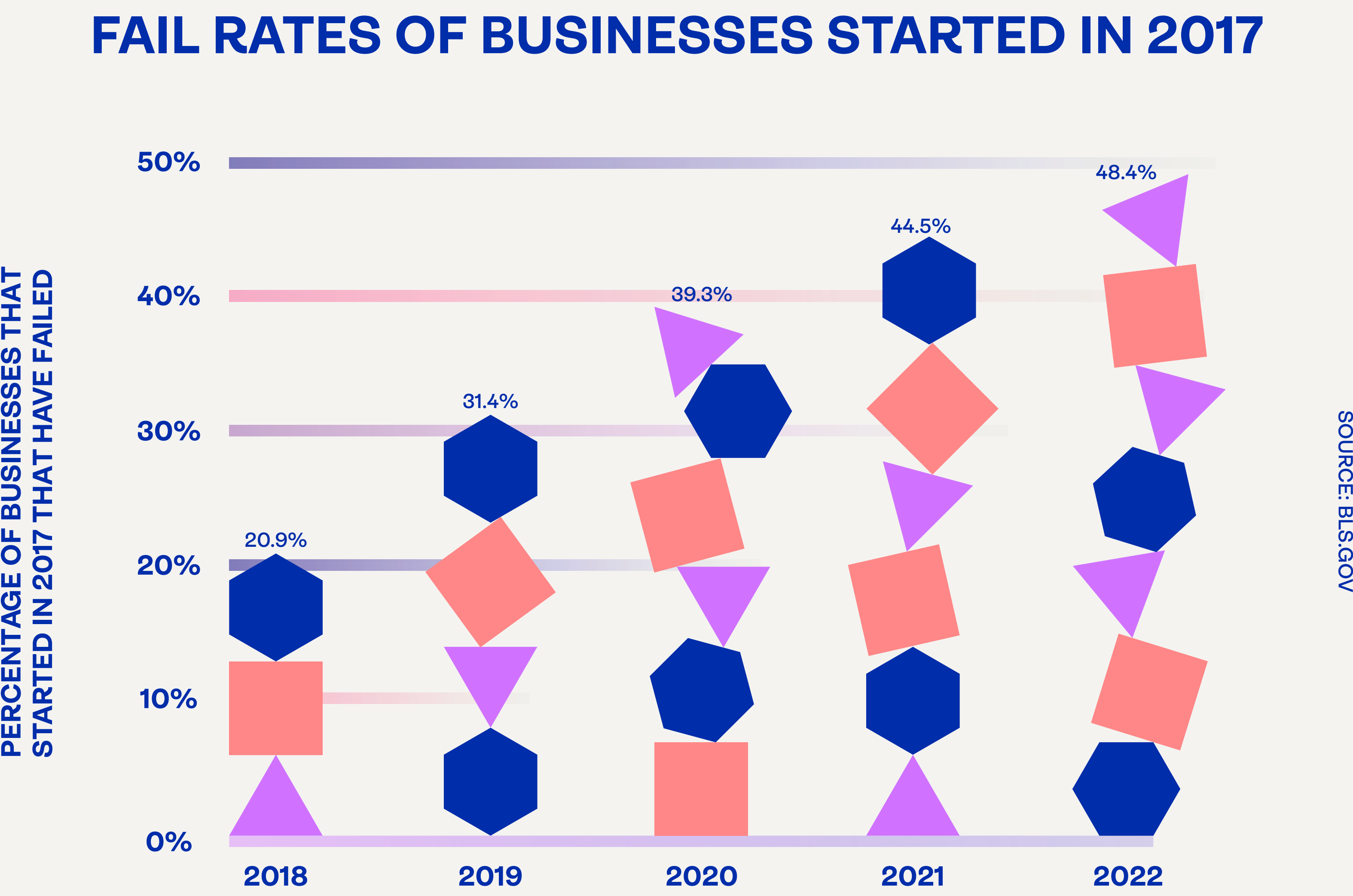


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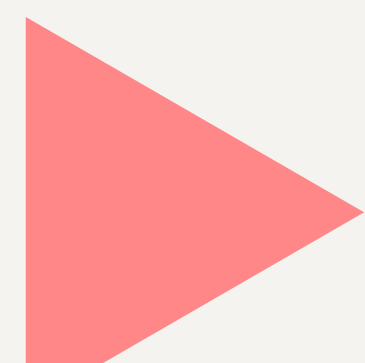
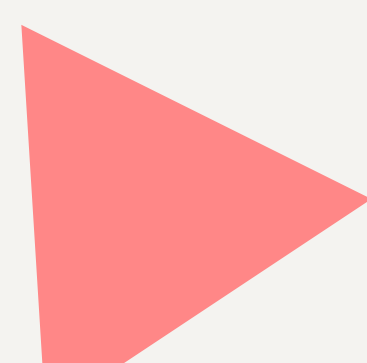
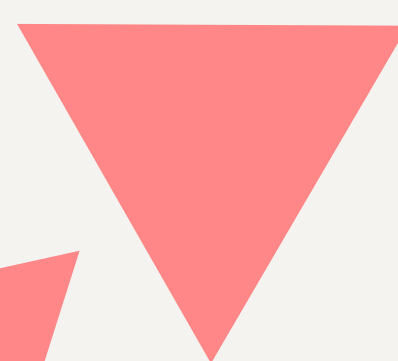
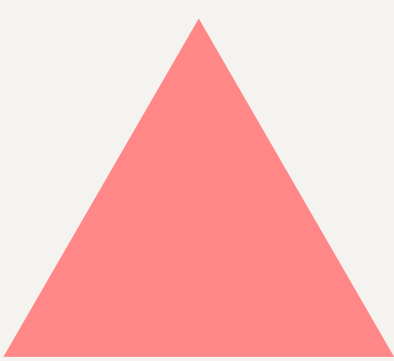
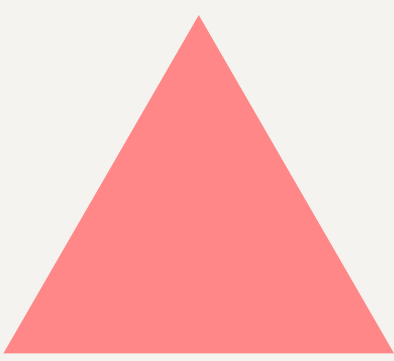
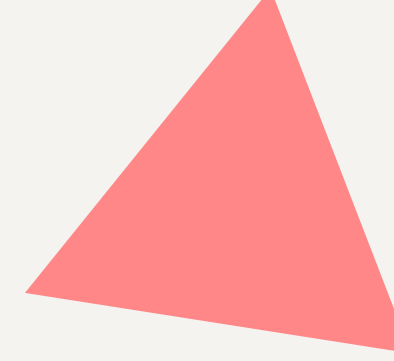
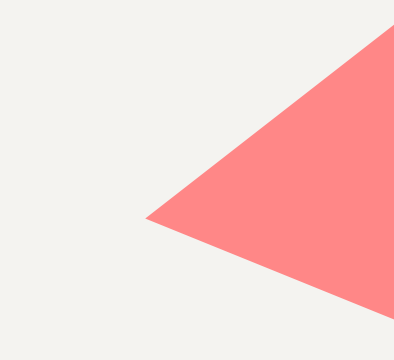
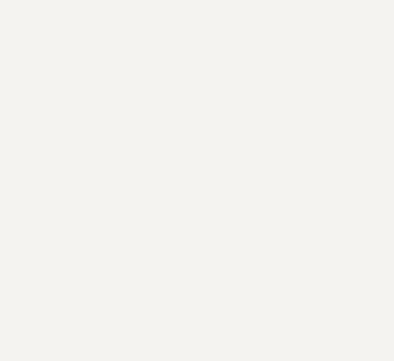
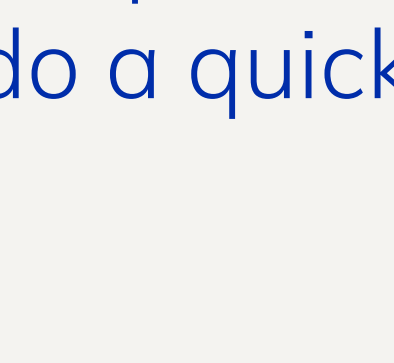
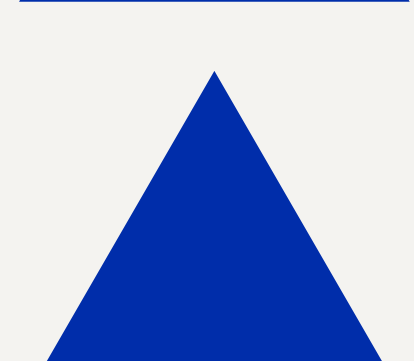
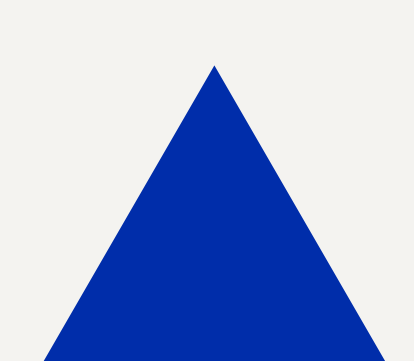
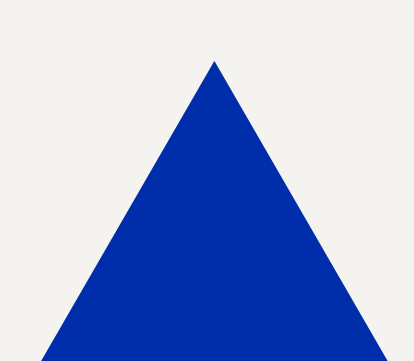
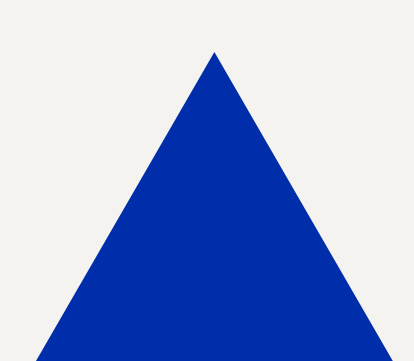
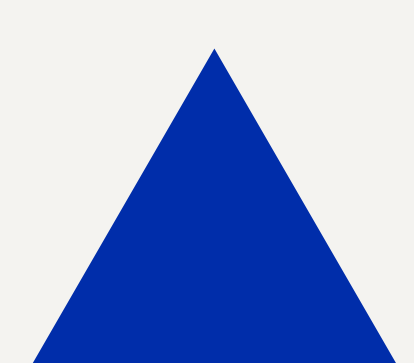
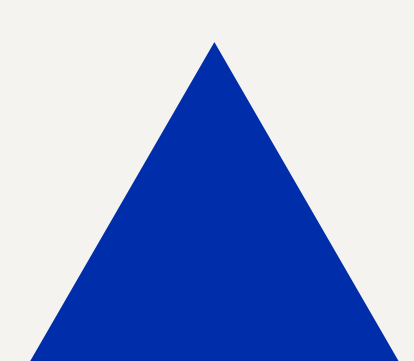
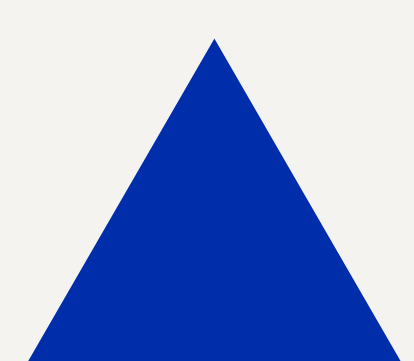
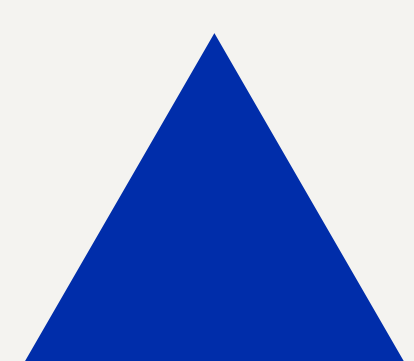
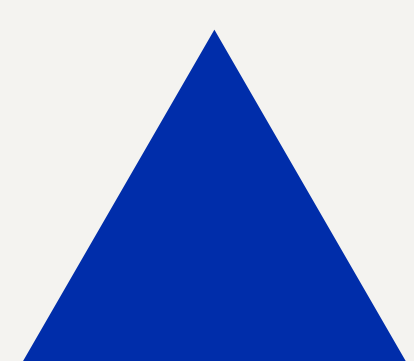
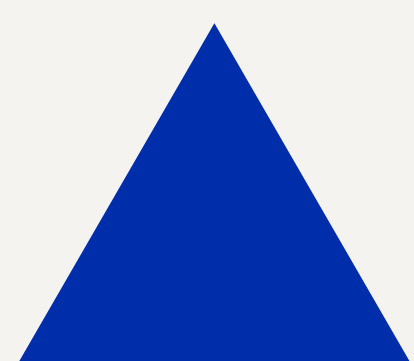
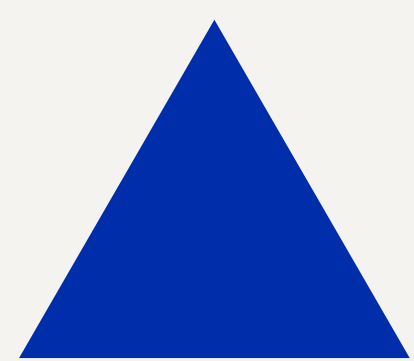
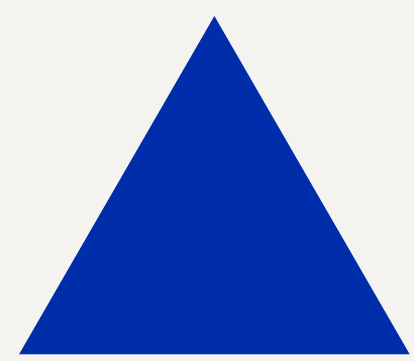
- 1 Exactly what brand distinctiveness means
(and why you should never confuse it with brand differentiation)
- 2 The golden rule at its core
- 3 What distinctiveness can do for your brand
- 4 Our step-by-step approach to achieving it

Keep reading to uncover the **winning formula** behind the world's most loved brands.

WHAT IS BRAND DISTINCTIVENESS?

A RECAP

We have explained this here*
but let's do a quick recap:



DISTINCTIVENESS VS. DIFFERENTIATION

The difference between being different and being distinctive is a topic that often gets muddled, but understanding this nuance can make or break your brand's success.

Being different means **breaking away from the pack**. It's about offering something unique, that sets you apart from your competitors. That could mean innovative product features, disruptive pricing strategies, or a customer experience that sticks in a consumer's mind.

The idea is to create a **competitive advantage** – a reason for customers to choose you over everyone else.



Being distinctive is about creating a brand identity that's unmistakably yours.



But here's the thing: being different isn't enough. You can have the most groundbreaking product or service, but if customers do not recognize you, it won't matter. That's where being **distinctive** comes into play.

THE WINNING FORMULA

Being distinctive is about creating a **brand identity** that's unmistakably yours. It's about crafting a visual and verbal language that shouts your name from the rooftops.



Think about iconic brands like Apple or Coca-Cola. When you see that half-bitten apple or that iconic red and white logo, you know exactly who they are.

That's **brand distinctiveness**. It's about leaving an indelible mark on the consumer's mind, a mark that triggers recognition and evokes emotions.



Being distinctive goes beyond just logos and slogans; it's about creating a **holistic brand world**. It's about infusing every touchpoint, from your website to your packaging, with a consistent and memorable identity. You want customers to think of you whenever they encounter a certain color, a particular tone of voice, or a distinctive visual style.



Distinctiveness ensures that once customers notice you, they remember you.



Both differentiation and distinctiveness matter. Being different helps you carve out a space in the market, a unique selling proposition that sets you apart. It's what gets customers' attention and piques their interest.

But if you stop there, you're missing out on building long-term brand loyalty. That's where being distinctive comes in.

Distinctiveness ensures that once customers notice you, they **remember** you. It helps create a lasting bond and keeps them coming back for more.

Aim for both differentiation and distinctiveness, and you'll have a winning formula that leaves your competitors in the dust.

Now for the real reason you're here:

HOW TO ACHIEVE BRAND DISTINCTIVENESS



THE GOLDEN RULE OF BRAND DISTINCTIVENESS

Brand distinctiveness is multifaceted – it's lots of different threads that weave together to form the fabric of your brand.



But there needs to be something holding these threads together (especially in a world that's constantly pulling consumers in different directions).

That something is your **Brand Truth**.

It's the ownable story at the center of every brand; the positioning that provides the single point from which everything else evolves. Your Brand Truth brings cohesion, integration and powerful simplicity to your messaging.



WHAT DOES YOUR BRAND TRUTH GIVE YOU?

Finding your Brand Truth is only the start of your journey toward brand distinctiveness. But what is the point of achieving brand distinctiveness?

It's not just so your target audience can spot a logo and know it's yours, it's so much more than that.



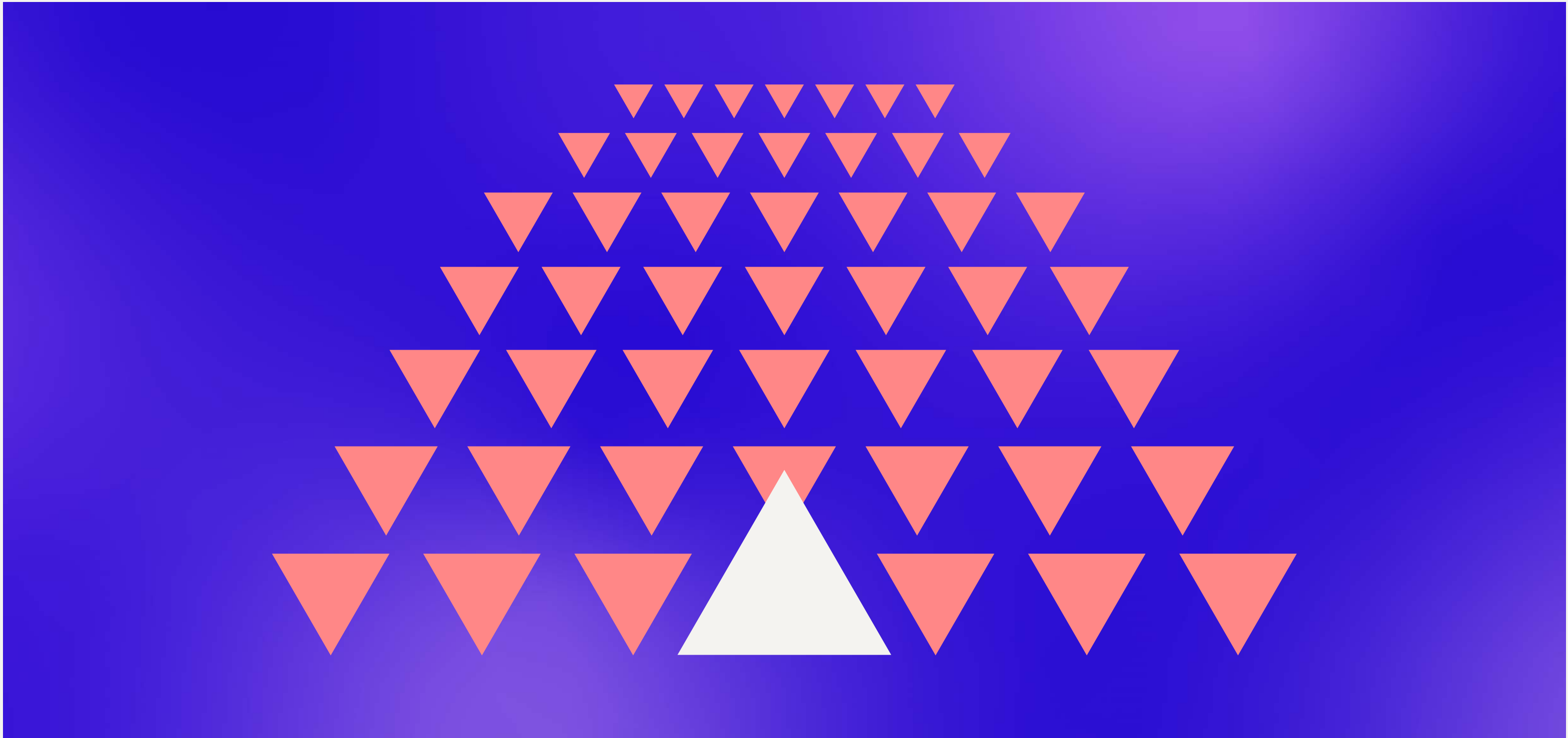
[Learn more*](#)



Distinctive brands build brand equity – in other words, the value of your brand. It's the idea that attaching your brand name to a product or service gives it more value than the same product or service without your name attached to it.*

BRAND EQUITY GIVES YOU TWO CRUCIAL THINGS:

Salience means your brand is **top-of-mind and easily recognized** by consumers. When your brand is salient, it stands out in a crowded marketplace and increases your chances of being considered and chosen by customers.



Salience builds meaningful associations and drives customer preference, loyalty, and market share. By consistently reinforcing positive brand perceptions, you will create a strong mental connection that fuels long-term performance.

In short, being salient ensures your brand stays **visible, memorable, and relevant** – all of which are vital for successful brand growth.

Loyalty – The goal of those repeated positive associations is to build **brand love**. And when you have that love, you have loyalty.

Brand loyalty is your liferaft in choppy waters, if customers have an emotional relationship with your brand, they will stand by you even when times get hard.



HOW TO ACHIEVE BRAND DISTINCTIVENESS IN THREE STEPS

So how do you seek out this critical **Brand Truth**?
And how do you use it to win that all-important loyalty?

We'll be honest: don't expect a lightning bolt moment.
And don't expect to win your customers' hearts overnight.
It's a process, one you have to be committed to.

If it's sounds overwhelming, that's because it is.
At BRANDED, we've been building the world's biggest
brands for **over four decades**.

And even the most established retail giants come to us
struggling with the same problem.

Luckily, those four decades, along with a global team of
the most brilliant minds in branding, have given us
the blueprint for brand distinctiveness.

AND NOW, WE ARE GOING TO SHARE IT WITH YOU.

We've distilled our process into three crucial steps that
will help you build a distinctive brand.

STEP ONE:

RISE UP

STEP TWO:

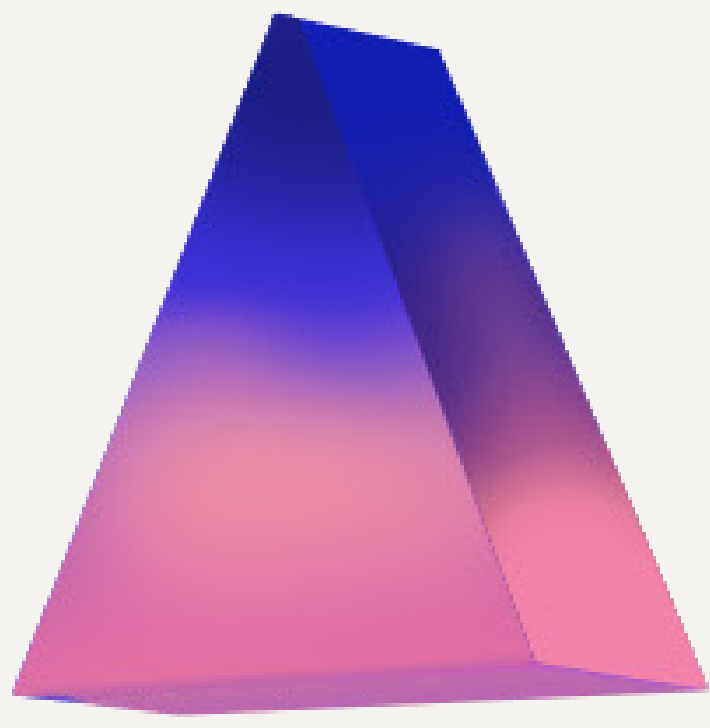
STAND OUT

STEP THREE:

FOREVER EVOLVE

For each step, we've revealed our own methodology to
show you what it looks like in practice.

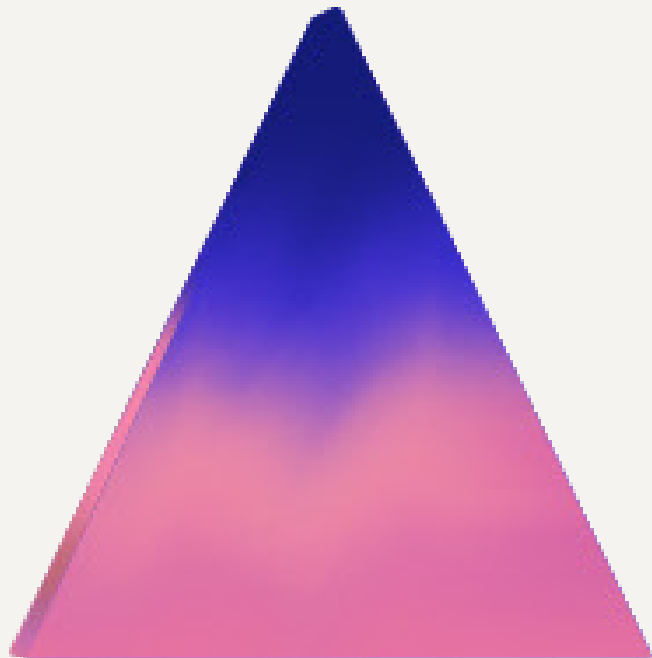




STEP ONE: RISE UP

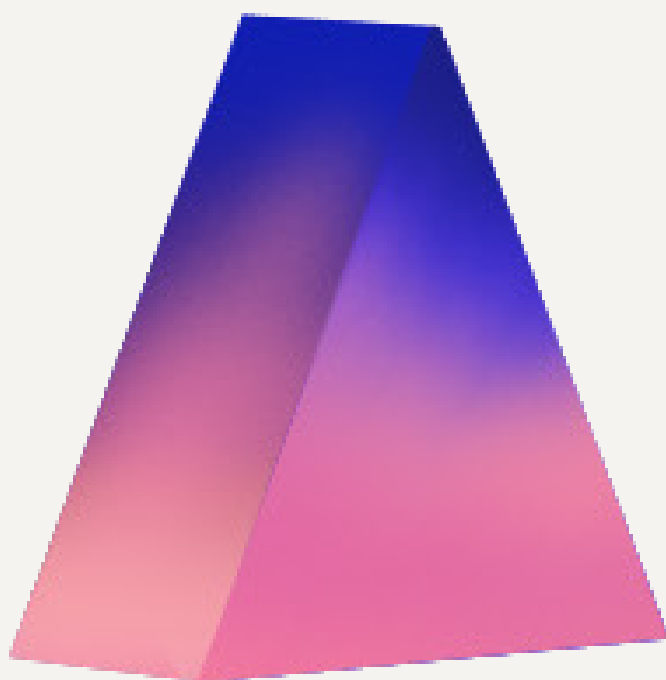
OBJECTIVE

Before you do anything else, you need to rise up and develop an **authentic, ownable positioning**.



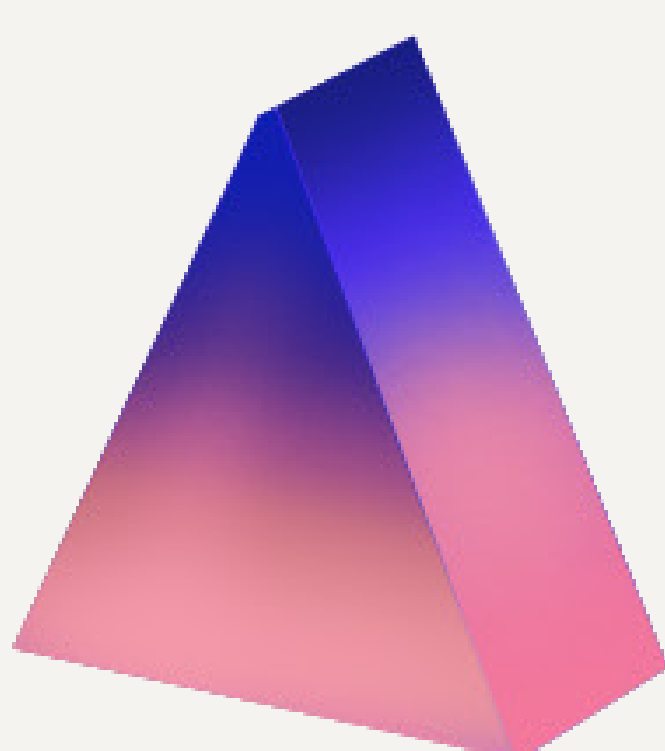
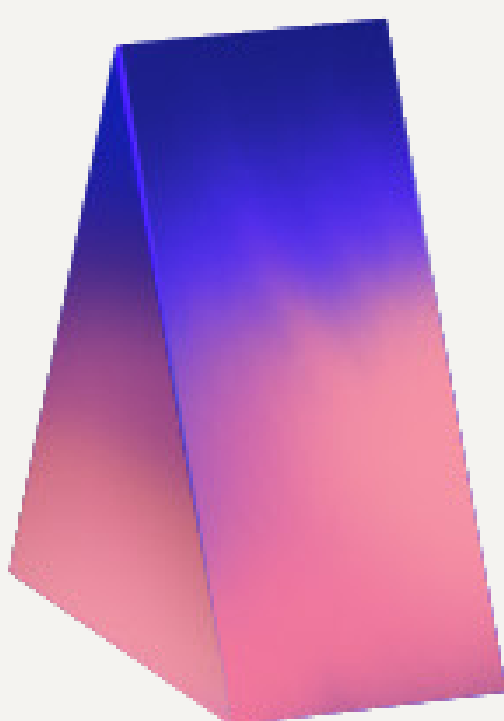
HOW-TO

Start with a deep dive into your brand's offer, history, business objectives, positioning work done to date, competitors, and any available consumer and trend research. From here (and this usually takes several workshops), you can distill all of this knowledge and data into a single and unique brand idea. You can then create a practical brief that can be used for all future creative direction.



ACTIONS

- ▲ Briefing meeting to fully set out the scope of requirements, agree direction, success criteria and project parameters.
- ▲ Review of existing documents covering the market, your corporate or brand vision, consumer data, competitors and other trend data.
- ▲ Identify knowledge gaps and set out if any additional research is required.
- ▲ Taking on board all information and insights, develop a range of draft brand stories for a working session with broad set of internal stakeholders.
- ▲ Distill outcomes of the working session and select a singular brand story.
- ▲ Assess how the brand portfolio need to be (re) structured, based on the brand positioning, clarify if any sub-brands would be required.
- ▲ Write an inspiring but succinct creative brief.



STEP TWO: STAND OUT

OBJECTIVE

Once you have your creative brief, the next step is to create your brand world with **distinctive assets**.

HOW-TO

The creative brief will help you generate identity concepts to bring your brand story alive.

Through this work, pick one identity that aligns with your idea. This will allow you to build out the broader brand world, distinctive assets, and an inspiring yet functional brand book.

ACTIONS

- Explore your opportunities within the creative brief and generate a wider range of identity concepts that are aligned with your brand ethos.
- Each concept will need to show thoughts on use of logo, visual language, typography, color palette and iconography.
- Develop one chosen concept in detail to test the robustness of the idea and demonstrate the flexibility of the concept.
- Finalize and extend all aspects of the identity design in preparation for final production and brand expression.
- Create distinctive assets, including core elements such as logos, end line lock up, symbols, color palette, sonic branding, etc.
- Produce your own brand book, including guidance on how to utilize your distinctive assets.



STEP THREE: FOREVER EVOLVE

OBJECTIVE

Ready to communicate your bright idea to the world? The final stage is **execution** and **constant evolution**.

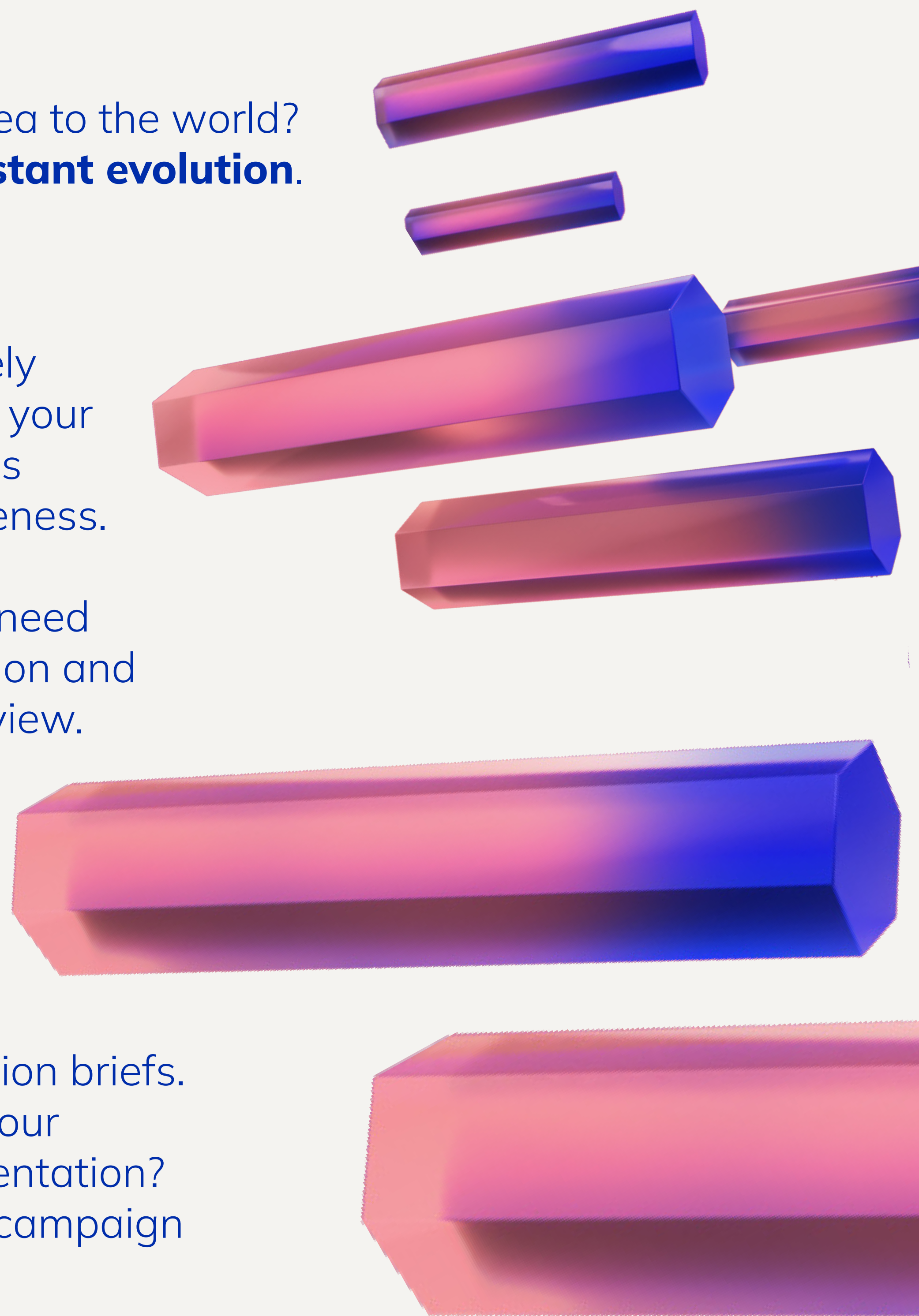
HOW-TO

Remember, consistently and cohesively utilizing your brand assets to express your Brand Truth across every touchpoint is crucial for successful brand distinctiveness.

From social channels to in-store, you need to make sure every customer interaction and experience fits into your brand worldview. You can be flexible, **but never forget the core idea**.

ACTIONS

- ◆ Get under the skin of the communication briefs. What are your objectives? Who are your audiences, including consumer segmentation? What is the marketing challenge the campaign needs to overcome?
- ◆ Define the comms strategy and campaign plan. This includes objectives, agreed KPIs, message hierarchy, campaign cascading, and potential qual or quant testing to validate thinking.
- ◆ Write a clear communication and creative brief.
- ◆ Create ideas expressing the Brand Truth and using distinctive assets.
- ◆ Produce campaigns and adapt formats. This includes development, adaptation, pre- and post-production, photography, videography, sound and voice recording, model, music and imagery licenses. And any other production-related activity.
- ◆ Review and check. Based on agreed metrics and KPIs, review and evaluate the work and set out key learnings for the next wave of activity.



DISTINCTIVE BRANDS IN THE WILD

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN YOU'VE
NAILED THESE THREE STEPS?

LEARN FROM BRANDED'S MOST
DISTINGUISHED CLIENTS...





Before



After

WAITROSE & PARTNERS

How do you add to a category that only takes stuff away? For Waitrose & Partners’ Free From range, we created a brand that doesn’t apologize for what it lacks.

[Learn more*](#)



Before



After

HYDRA JUICE

Is juice for kids or for adults? With the right idea and identity, you don’t have to choose. We revamped Hydra Juice to sit comfortably in a kid’s lunch box and a 30-something’s sports bag.

[Learn more*](#)



Before



After

HIRSH

When boutique becomes mainstream, it's easy for a brand to lose its sparkle. We worked with luxury jewelry house Hirsh London on a cut-through campaign to make them shine.



Before



After

SAINSBURY'S ORGANIC

Sainsbury's had lost their number one spot in own-label organic food. By developing a ruthlessly simple, compelling design strategy, we made sure they won back hearts, minds and wallets.



Before

After

FAB

Food and beverage awards programme FAB needed to give their logo a makeover. We updated it for guaranteed deliciousness and instant recall – even as buttered toast or jelly on a plate.



Before



After

ORTO MIO FOR PENNY

Just because it's cheap and cheerful doesn't mean it has to look cheap. We led a rebrand of Penny's Orto Mio range that bottled the feeling of happy summer holidays.



Before

After

SPITFIRE

The Spitfire is one of the most iconic airplanes in the world and its name still evokes a sense of speed, power and heroism. BRANDED captured this energy and hardwire it into this equally famous British beer.



Before



After

DIVINE

Brands who have pioneered ethical practices now face a problem: everyone else is doing it. We worked with Divine Chocolates to find a unique brand positioning beyond Fairtrade.

YOUR BRAVERY PLUS OUR BOLDNESS: A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Ready to stand head and shoulders above the rest? At BRANDED, we're experts in building distinctive brands.

Work with us to find your Brand Truth, design your brand world, and roll out this out across all of your channels in a way like never before.

Balancing insight with intuition, we drive creative that breaks new ground. We give you ideas that are built to last and always exciting to execute, so every interaction with your brand feels authentic, yet new.

Yes, they're bold claims.

But we've got the numbers to back them up.

With **350+ awards (and counting)** for creative and commercial effectiveness, you can be confident that our work works. The only question that remains is...

ARE YOU BRAVE ENOUGH?

Get in touch to get distinctive.*

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Three 3D geometric shapes, possibly representing the letters 'B', 'A', and 'D', are rendered in a vibrant blue and purple color scheme. They are positioned behind the main text, creating a layered effect. The shapes have sharp edges and are illuminated from the side, casting soft shadows on the surface below them.

BRANDED

BRIGHT IDEAS, BRILLIANTLY EXECUTED