

*The*  
**CREATIVE BRIEF**  
**BRAND IMAGE MASTERCLASS**

*Module 4 - Visual Manifestation of your brand*  
*Part 1*



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Your website and photography are the physical and visual representations of your brand. These are more than just beautiful designs, they are stories and a way to communicate your message and connect with ideal customers.

You can create an irresistible brand that attracts the right clients through your brand image.

For most business owners, it is the very exciting part of their brand development. Particularly for service based businesses, with no physical product, this helps ideal clients recognize and connect with the brand. It is where the brand comes alive.

More than a storyteller, your website is your 24 hour sales person. Often this is the first encounter with your brand for new prospects, there good planning and execution is essential to fulfilling your objectives.

You should see your website as a critical tool in helping you achieve your goals in your business. You also need to see it as a place to create a brand experience. Remember, marketing and branding are not about products, its about experiences.

It's a good idea before you even book your photographer, that you plan out your website design and copy first. This will serve you well in determining what photos you will need for each page and what stories these photos need to tell to support any copy on your website.

So let's get started on planning your website:

## **STEP 1: DOMAIN NAME**

Ensure that you have already secured the domain name for your business. Regardless of whether you are ready to build your website now or not, buy it right away.

In countries like the United States, having a ".com" is almost a default domain. A customer is more likely to try to find your business using the brand name and ".com".

However in Europe, for instance Italy, most businesses use the country level domain ".it". It really depends on where your target client and market is, but having a ".com" plus whatever country level domain you choose, can have it's benefits in helping global customers find you.

Some website hosting companies will allow you to register a domain name with them for free upon signing up. You can also read the guide on how to select a hosting company (*download it in the member's area*) if you are planning to DIY your website or work with a professional website designer. It's a great idea for you to be familiar with and be part of the process of selecting a good hosting company.

## STEP 2: CLARIFY YOUR WEBSITE PURPOSE

It very important that very early on, you define the purpose for your website and what you hope to accomplish with it. Having a website is more than just creating a web presence, this can be a great sales tool for your business if done correctly.

It will also assist you in making the right decision on the platform you select in creating your website and those *must-have* features that you require.

### What are your goals for your website?

### When a person lands on your website, what information, resources or tools are they looking for?

### What do you want your ideal customer to know about you and your business when they are on your website?

**What outcome are you trying to achieve from people who visit your website?**

**STEP 3: CLARIFY THE USER EXPERIENCE**

**What are the distinct pain points of your ideal customers? Do they share one (1) common problem or 2-4 distinct needs? List the top 1-5 distinct needs of your ideal clients which should be highlighted on the website.**

**How will your website address each pain point?** *(Will you provide products and services, blog posts etc.)*

**What connection are you trying to make with your ideal client through your website?**

**What is the most important perception of your brand you want to create with visitors?**

#### **STEP 4: MUSING WEBSITE FEATURES**

Now that you have a clarity on the purpose of your website and how you want it to tell the story of your brand, it's time to do some musing ( inspiration).

**Find a least 3-5 websites you absolutely love. State what you like and dislike about each one.**

**Website**

**LIKES**

**DISLIKES**

**What would you like your website to do differently from these other websites? What are your must-have features and layout?**

### **WEBSITE TEMPLATE/THEMES**

If you are planning to use Wordpress to build your website, there are thousands of great themes on the market starting at \$59.

This fee is for the theme and does not include hosting. There are several great market places that you can find customizable themes.

Whether you are working with a designer or DIY, having an idea of the layout you want, can help both you and the designer through the process.

Depending on your needs, you may not want to use a theme, but rather have a design customized to your needs.

**Here are some great places to find Wordpress themes:**

**<http://www.bluchic.com/shop/wordpress-themes/>**

**[https://themeforest.net/page/top\\_sellers](https://themeforest.net/page/top_sellers)**

**<https://colorlib.com/wp/category/collections/>**

**If you are using Squarespace: <https://www.squarespace.com/websites/>, they offer a range of designs.**

Building a website from scratch can be a frustrating process for a lot of people, having a professional website designer to help you through the process can be a big advantage.

## STEP 5: NAVIGATION (MENU)

Your website navigation can play a key role in helping you rank in search engines and get more traffic. Here are some best practice guidelines:

Try to limit the number of items in your navigation to maximum 5-7. According to research, our short-term memory can only hold up to 7 items at a time. More than 7 would look cluttered and clunky to the user.

Avoid using generic labels in your navigation. Words like “products”, “services”, “who are we”. Instead use Google Keyword phrases that will help rank your page.

Whatever appears first and last on the navigation will capture the attention of your audience. This is what psychologist call the Primacy and Recency effect.

Primacy effect; meaning you remember what you see first and recency effect; you remember the end best. Your most important product or action on the website should appear first in the menu.

For most service based businesses in coaching and consulting this would include:

### MENU

Your website may have an easy to use menu that include essential pages such as:

-  **About**
-  **Services**
-  **Testimonials**
-  **Contact**
-  **Blog**

**What are the top 5-7 items that you need to have in your main navigation?** *(Consider the main actions you want your visitors to take, make a list, also the standard pages that other brands in your industry are using).*

**Are there any popular keywords related to my industry that I can use to describe each one?** *(Rename each item and place in the table e.g. instead of About Us you could use “My Story”).* Then use the table on the next page to plan the various pages you need for your website.

**What are the key top level menu items for your website e.g. About, etc.** (Below list all the other pages that your visitors will be directed to e.g Service/Product page will have links to what services/products).

↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

**STEP 6: GUIDE TO PLANNING YOUR CONTENT FOR YOUR KEY PAGES**

**HOME PAGE**

This is one of the most important pages on your website. It is usually the first place a visitor will land. This is your opportunity to give that visitor an experience during that encounter and guide them to take various actions.

Let your prospects know who you are, what you do and why you do it best.

Keep the design clean with high-resolution images and easy navigation. Avoid adding too many images and long paragraphs. Your home page should include:

**COMPELLING HEADLINE**

This should feature your main message to your target audience and highlight your ONE BIG IDEA that your customer will feel emotionally connected to. Use powerful words. Consider the greatest desire/dream of your ideal customer.

Write in out in no more than 6-12 words. Write out as many versions as possible and keep improving on it until you have powerfully and clearly communicated a compelling message.

You want to keep your sentences short. Focus on the buyer/client and why your products and services are great for them. Always aim to write in pictures.

Imagine you are taking the customer on a journey of actually already using your products and services. Focus on the most highly desired and unique feature or benefit.

**Calls To Action:** The goal of the home page is to move the user through the other important pages on your website and trigger a certain action. The home page is a great place to highlight your signature products and services, encouraging visitors to learn more.

You may consider including things like your *newsletter sign up form, free gifts, etc.* so that you can capture leads on your website.

What are the main “calls to action” that my home page will include? What actions do I want my audience to take, what result am I hoping to achieve? *E.g. list building, etc.*

**Highlight Signature/Feature Products/Services:** You may want to use feature boxes or display your signature products on your home page inviting them to click to learn more.

**Expert Positioning:** Why are you an authority on the subject and who have you helped get results. You should showcase your testimonials. This is a great way to build trust with your ideal customer and send a clear message that your solutions are the best fit for them. Short quotes with names and even photos.

Include credibility builders like awards or features in influential publications, including these on your home page can contribute to conveying authority and building trust.

**Blog:** You may also want to feature your recent blog post on your home page.

**Social Media Buttons:** Build your community by providing links to your social media pages by displaying the icons.

**The Power of You:** Speak to one person by using words like YOU and YOUR. It is useful to make the interaction personal so your audience, feel like you understand them.

## **GUIDELINES FOR YOUR ABOUT PAGE**

Your about page is meant to tell the story of your brand and build a connection with your audience.

Some guidelines to remember:

### **INCLUDE THE READER**

Don't keep it me, me, me! You want to share your story to let your customer know you've been there and here is why you are so passionate about working with them or offering this amazing solution to their problem.

### **BE AUTHENTIC AND SHARE WHAT YOU STAND FOR**

You must be completely authentic. While this is a marketing tool, this is an opportunity for your customer to get to know you and get a sense of your personality, passion and competence.

### **SHARE YOUR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY**

There is nothing like a great story to create connections, build trust and rapport, especially when it is authentic. This is why storytelling is becoming one of the biggest and most effective marketing tools today.

It allows customers to get to know the brand on a deeper and emotional level. It makes the brand relatable and as humans finding situations we can relate to is almost part of our DNA. Tell your story.

### **What aspects of your journey is similar to your ideal customer?**

(What do you want your clients to know about you?)

**What proof do you have that let's them know you can do what you say?** (*why are you an authority on the subject?*).



### **USE COMPELLING HEADLINES**

As always cater for people who will skim through with bold compelling headlines, sub-headers and bolding text for emphasis and contrast within your copy.

### **BE VISUAL**

Break up your text with images in between so that your reader doesn't feel overwhelmed with text. Showing a picture of yourself adds to building trust, connection and credibility. Make eye contact in those photos.

### **A SHORT BIOGRAPHY**

You can also include your short biography on the about page so that you can highlight key aspects of your resume *e.g. certifications, background etc.*

### **TIPS FOR YOUR OTHER PAGES**

Stay focused on the needs and desires of your ideal client.

Always use "You".

Sound conversational when you write. Drop the business jargon that is hard to connect with and relate to.

Use high-resolution images and bold compelling headlines.

Ensure that you have clear call to actions with attractive buttons.

Maintain consistency in the use of colours, fonts and style of writing across your website.

Embrace white spaces.

Break up paragraphs to make text easier to read. Keep your paragraphs 3-4 lines.

## HOMEWORK SUGGESTIONS



Complete the worksheets and templates in this workbook.



Research other websites that have the style and features you love.

### **CONNECT WITH THE CREATIVE BRIEF COMMUNITY**

Join the Facebook Group at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/thecreativebrief/>

