

corporate identity services

Understanding Brand Lingo

BRAND DEVELOPMENT (“branding”) is a marketing concept often confused with “corporate image” or “corporate identity.” **Corporate image** is simply the public’s perception of a business, regardless of the image or message intended. **Corporate identity** is a firm’s “look” that embodies its distinct name, logo, tagline, colors, typefaces, etc. But **brand development** involves the bigger picture and is a strategy of burning a company’s unique attributes, strengths, and image into the minds of customers or clients over time.

Branding forms the total personality of a business: its name, logo, Web site, reputation, communications, customer relationships, employees, value, performance, and so forth. It’s visual *and* emotional and involves repetitive and consistent use of the corporate identity to establish and reinforce a positive relationship. The visuals associated with a company create an emotional response and perception about aspects of the firm: its size, professionalism, attention to detail, commitment to quality, and ultimately its ability to meet client needs. Brand development is reinforced by details such as advertising, customer service, how phones are answered, what “contact” employees wear, and the appearance of facilities and company vehicles. Perceptions can dramatically impact success, especially as a business grows and associates with larger clientele.

CORPORATE IDENTITY is a key focus of branding. Whitline Ink helps “tell your story” by creating a strong identity within the framework of your brand development strategy to increase the value of your firm. A professional identity will distinguish you and create a lasting, positive impression on customers, prospects, and influencers. This identity involves standardization of a professional logo (foundational to your identity), tagline, colors, typefaces, layouts, and guidelines designed to maintain consistency and recognition across a wide gamut of marketing uses. Commitment to consistent implementation in regard to business cards, stationery, forms, mailing/shipping labels, marketing materials, advertisements, Web sites, and signage are key to building and maintaining a strong brand.

Whitline Ink's Corporate ID Services

Company Name Creation

A company name is a key component of the corporate identity. While occasionally a total name change is in order, often a modification can maintain recognition yet better reflect a new or revised company direction. A name can also communicate immediate messages (right or wrong) to potential customers about who you are and what you do, so it’s also an element of your corporate image. Collectively it’s all part of the broader branding strategy. Whitline Ink helps you develop a name targeted to your core audience, that has positive (or at least neutral) connotations, that’s legally available, and that’s broad enough to have an extended future.



Corporate Logo Creation

A logo should be unique and simplistic, and both can be challenging and require considerable concepting and research. It may be a distinctive logotype or involve an image/icon, but it should be recognizable in all applications. It might directly communicate your products or services, although the company name is often sufficient. (“Maggie’s Java House” may only need a unique and memorable logotype.) A logo should portray a key quality of your firm: value, strength, uniqueness, location, etc. Like corporate names, logos should provide positive emotional responses in regard to your products or services. (A pharmaceutical company that develops HIV drugs probably shouldn’t incorporate a prominent syringe into its logo!) Logos should be adaptable across multiple forms of media and maintain their integrity. See STEP 3 (*Production*) below for more logo production details.

Tagline Creation

A tagline is a brief phrase graphically situated with your a logo that speaks to your brand and external audience. (Taglines are often confused with “slogans,” which are more temporal marketing phrases used with specific campaigns.) A tagline helps differentiate you and its development may require substantial customer input. Whitline Ink uses survey results and investigation of your competition’s taglines to facilitate development. Your final tagline is then incorporated into your logo and marketing materials.

ID BizTools Creation

Corporate names, logos, and taglines don’t exist in a vacuum. They communicate in conjunction with colors, typefaces, and layouts to distinguish your firm. BizTools that fall within this category include the design of business cards, stationery, envelopes, mailing/shipping labels, fax sheets, brochures, marketing folders, and signage (location, vehicles, etc.). Because needs vary among different industries, Whitline Ink assesses your needs and custom packages the identity products you want and that make sense for your business, then provides comprehensive pricing.

Standards Manual Creation

A standards manual provides a reference (created in printed or electronic forms) for anyone internally and externally involved with managing your corporate identity. It guides proper and consistent usage of your logo, tagline, colors, typefaces, and layouts while still offering some design flexibility. A brand is an investment for your organization and a standards manual guides employees and others to build your brand equity.



Whitline Ink's Corporate ID Approach

STEP 1

Analysis and planning: We start with an audit of your existing corporate identity—does it support your branding strategy? Should the corporate look be refreshed while incorporating existing components, or is a clean-sheet approach in order to coincide with changes or a new industry climate? How are key graphics generally used? Is there currently strong recognition? Whitline Ink examines your audience and defines the qualities and values that may need to be represented in your identity. Identifying competitive brands and analyzing images, symbols, colors, and styles are key in differentiating you from your competition.

STEP 2

Development: After deciding which corporate identity services are appropriate, Whitline Ink goes to work cultivating a solid identity to support the brand. We take a holistic approach in developing corporate identities because a partial approach can leave your firm with mismatched materials that aren't balanced, cohesive, and supportive of the brand. This is especially true when supporting materials are produced and modified internally. Printers/vendors are often relied upon to create supporting marketing items, but these vendors generally lack the design expertise for professional results; their forté is the production of materials that are already well designed. Our approach is focused on the end image and message projected to your stakeholders. Typefaces, colors, style, and layouts used should be in harmony. Even when logo usage isn't practical, the style should still be identifiable with your business.

STEP 3

Production: Your corporate logo is produced as vector artwork for professional, scalable results. It should be versatile, clean, and reproducible at smaller sizes. Type involved within the logo is converted to outlines. Generally, a final logo will consist of variations: two-color, grayscale, black versions, and possibly tagline versions. Final files are repurposed and provided in a variety of print and Web production formats. The ID BizTools collateral materials (business cards, stationery, envelopes, mailing/shipping labels, fax sheets, brochures, marketing folders, and signage) are designed and built as a cohesive support system for the brand. Internal templates reduce the need for employees to customize the basics (and minimize deviation from your distinct look and feel).

In addition to professionally designing the artwork, Whitline Ink can produce these items! If we handle the production also, we bear the responsibility regarding the quality of the finished products.

Whitline Ink enhances your firm's professional, creative, and stable image. Our passion for perfection in design, service, and dedication to your brand will create a positive impression in the minds of clients and prospects. Let us help tell your story.



Case Study: Whitline Ink Logo Development

Whitline Ink is a creative studio that helps organizations and individuals tell their stories. We transform ideas, words, and images into captivating, compelling narrative and visuals in the form of corporate identity services, marketing materials, legacy statements, hard- and soft-cover books, and magazines.

We bring a client's story to life in whatever form of integrated marketing or permanent manifestation it needs. This work involves a mixture of "old school" methodologies, technology, and expertise. When Whitline Ink's previous logo no longer fully reflected who we are (our story), we went to the drawing board as our own client.

Points of Design

WHITLINE INK TYPE: The customized type treatment of the previous logo remains largely intact and is immediately recognizable, although the letter spacing (tracking) has increased for better legibility at smaller sizes. The letters *W*, *h*, *t*, *l*, and *e* were modified to produce a cleaner and friendlier logotype. The top angle of the *t* and *l* matches the longer angle of the red dialogue box's pointer and leads the eye toward the graphic.

DIALOGUE ICON: The focal point of the logo is the dialogue box with quotation marks. The dialogue box itself symbolizes the message (story). The quotation marks within further define that it isn't just anyone's story—the ideas, words, and images are specific to the client and form the basis of the project's final results. The combination of this dialogue box and quotations forms a distinct icon when used alone, but when used in tandem with the second lowercase *i* (a representative client), the full effect represents a person or company actually telling that story with the other *i*'s serving as an audience. The icon then solidly identifies with the essence of Whitline Ink's services: content creation, writing, and design that's tailored and creative. It uniquely speaks to both Whitline Ink's products *and* services.

In a broader sense, the outer rounded corners are representative of a well-rounded level of expertise, while the bottom edge's point indicates a high level of detail and precision with Whitline Ink's work.

The central and prominent placement of the icon symbolizes that telling a client's story is central to Whitline Ink's mission. As brand recognition grows, the icon itself will be more recognizable when implemented consistently within our corporate identity.

COLORS: The design maintains a two-color approach without the tagline and three-color approach with the tagline. Pantone 1807 was chosen as the red spot color because of red's high visibility, excitement, and warmth (from the yellow of its cmyk composition). Red is also less common than the previous logo's blue, which has become prolific within technology-related industries. The second corporate color is Pantone 451 and its green/dark tan hue splits the difference between a true green and a neutral tan. Green is sometimes associated with "change or growth" and "freedom to pursue new ideas." (Brides in the Middle Ages wore green to symbolize fertility; Whitline Ink is fertile ground for fresh ideas!)



Pantone 451's tan leanings speak to telling a story in a natural and honest way. The red and green/dark tan colors complement each other, but don't do it "safely"—they coordinate, but aren't the first colors one would pair together.

TAGLINE: The "tell your story" tagline is a brief phrase that makes one stop to consider Whitline Ink's services. It's thoughtful in its components and as a whole. "Tell" is a action word that implies Whitline Ink is working on the client's behalf. "Your" points to the client and is personal. And "story" is what can be expected when Whitline Ink transforms those ideas, words, and images into effective narrative and visuals.

The tagline type mimics typewriter lettering and suggests an emphasis on the genuineness and root of a solid story—the actual writing and content. It connects with Whitline Ink's older demographic, while the "grunge" type syncs with a younger audience.

How Does It Measure Up?

Is it unique and simplistic? Yes! Research during the logo's development suggest its fresh approach is both. The distinctive design thoughtfully conveys considerable meaning. Key qualities of Whitline Ink's services (narrative and content creation) and products (visuals and publications) are communicated within an enduring design, while its colors exude positive emotions: warmth, connectivity, and freshness. The result is adaptable across diverse applications and promises to have a long lifespan within the corporate identity and brand.

*three-color iteration with tagline
and drop shadow* →



*grayscale iteration without tagline
or drop shadow* →

