



# Designing visual identity for the Talent Heist event of The Shortcut Oy

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# Designing visual identity for the Talent Heist event of The Shortcut Oy

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This thesis report implements a new design of visual identity for an event organized by the client organization, The Shortcut Oy. The main objective of this thesis was to create a visual identity that would advance the visibility for an event, Talent Heist, by using brand identity content provided by the client organization. The thesis report presents various designs which will be used as marketing material for the organization's campaigns and serve as samples for future events. The project process is based on the author's practical experiences in designing visual identity in previous projects and draws on the literature on brand identity and visual identity design concepts.

In this project, visual identity designs were created using Adobe Illustrator CC, a common software tool in graphic design, which was first released in 1987. Illustrator allows designers to create contents such as logos, clip art, typography etc. The created content can be used for such purposes as printing, online publication, and digital media animation.

The thesis report contains two main sections, consisting of a theoretical and empirical section. In the theoretical section, the concepts of branding and brand identity are defined, followed by the organization's brand identity guideline. The event's visual identity process and implementation are described in the empirical section.

Information and requirements for the event were collected by interviewing the Project Manager responsible for organizing the event. Based on the data collected, the visual identity design of the event was created in 4 stages: 1. research and observation, 2. development, 3. design and 4. feedback and recommendation. The final designs have been officially used for the event's promotion and received positive feedback from the Head of Visual Brand and Design Management. Hence, the main objective of the thesis project has been fulfilled.

Keywords: brand identity, visual identity, marketing material, Adobe Illustrator CC, vector graphic, guideline.

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## 1 Introduction

Nowadays, firms and organizations are more and more paying attention and investment in brand recognition and branding. It is not just only creating a logo, branding is representing the value of those companies brings, which dedicates the contribution they give to society. From a time ago, marketing was a playground for production, with a strategy and theory of product circle, however, multinational corporations tend to use their brand as a center of marketing circle and their business administration. It can be known that companies are driving customer impressions by the first glance at the name and the logo of the company, then the campaign what they actually do in their business. According to AMA, American Marketing Association, "brand is a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers.". Brand is just a concept of society awareness about organizations and firms, while branding points out the marketing strategy of building that awareness, and brand identity is a synthesis of all factors to build a proper recognition of a company. The importance of a good brand identity is making the companies highlighting from their competitors, define their business value, building a connection between company and customer, as well as being a lubricant of business system. Even though brand identity is a small component of a whole marketing strategy, yet it is an essential part and is a foundation of modern marketing.

### 1.1 Background: The Shortcut Oy

Established in 2016, The Shortcut is a non-profit talented accelerator organization located in Helsinki. In Finland, it is not an easy way to find a job opportunity, especially for those who have remarkable talented and skills but not have experiences in their related field before, such as fresh graduated students or foreigners. The mission of the company from very beginning is enhancing people skills and also learning new skills majoring on Information and Technology, to enter technology and business world by either creating a startup or evolve one. There are three pillars of organization's activities. The first one is by inspiring, activating and powering people to create a strong community. The second pillar is enhancing people's soft and hard skills to help them get a better opportunity, by joining into many events held by The Shortcut, which made for start-up firms to find candidates and vice versa, such as School of Startups, Talents Heist, with many community events and coding workshops. The last pillar is creating opportunity employment by encouraging people to establish their own startup or work for one, such as internship, volunteering or matchmaking events for employment opportunities.

The Shortcut community is mostly multicultural people who are immigrants, foreigners, and of course Finns. In general, 90% of community member are foreign-born and only just 10% are Finns. Gender is balanced with 50/50.

The Shortcut is a part of Startup Foundation Sr. and a sister organization to Slush, Maria 01, Wave Venture and Junction. The Shortcut lab based on Maria01, The Nordic Leading Startup Campus, which is in Lapinlahdenkatu, Helsinki. In the first year 2016, The Shortcut had over 40 events with over 680 participants and more than 140 lecturers, mentors and event organizers. The number of events rose by the next year, 2017, to over 50 weekly community gathering, coding clubs and other events. Significantly, The Shortcut by the first time ran The School of Startups, a three-week-long series of 29 workshops and 2 over-the-weekend bootcamps, with over 166 participants representing more than 26 nationalities.

As mentioned above, The Shortcut is a non-profitable organization, but thanks to supporters and partners, who are always by organization's side, including: Aalto University, Futurice, Laurea University, Microsoft, PwC, Reaktor Ventures, Sitra, Smartly.io, Startup Refugees, Suomi100, Supercell, Slush, Teknologiateollisuuden 100-vuotissäätiö and more.

## 1.2 About the project event: Slush side event: Talent Heist

Firstly, talking briefly about the main event, Slush, as mentioned in Wikipedia, it is a “world’s leading startup and tech event” and a place for startup founders and investors to meet up, matchmaking and pitching competitions, in order to build a community between startups. Starting from 2008, Slush will be held usually in the end of year in Helsinki annually and in 2009, over 25000 attendees and more than 3500 startups, with 200 investors and 600 journalists represents various countries had participated to the event (Wikipedia 2019). Beside of main event Slush, there are hundreds of side events placed around, which included Talent Heist by The Shortcut.



Figure 1: Slush event logo

Like the Slush main event, Talent Heist is meant to be a place for startups and companies who want to look for talented people and scale up their business, to cope with the rapid growth of Finnish Tech industry nowadays. However, unlike Slush, The Shortcut side event is a

recurring matchmaking event, attendees come and have a pitch, 1-on-1 conversation, speed dating and personal branding their own workshop and portfolio with recruiters, create profiles and find suitable companies who are looking for talents. It is not only a chance for both attendees and recruiters, the goal is also to enhance the volunteering experience, to give the international Slush volunteers a deeper understanding of unique startup ecosystem and to promote the attractiveness of Helsinki as a possible destination for their next career step.



Figure 2: Talent Heist logo

### 1.3 Business need and problem

The business need technically is from the need of visualizing event identity with a unique design yet meeting all the requirements of visual branding which has been formed by the organization. Besides, it has come from the pillars, which stated internally in organization mentioned about providing a multicultural community and giving career opportunities for those seekers. Plus, young designers can have a chance to enrich their portfolio and work experience in design field, with the help and connection between organization and startups.

The problem is defined by the lack of non-professional designer in Helsinki among all field of business, in particularly inside The Shortcut. This thesis aims to provide a solution for this organization's problem. Meaning that, based on both the need of organization and designer, they will support each other by evolving the progress of events held by The Shortcut. Being a part of The Shortcut is not only helping them in gaining reputation and networking, but also help volunteers, here is the designer, in their future career.

#### 1.4 Objectives

The result of this project is the production and publication in various dimension of social media and printings, including banner, Facebook, Instagram, Eventbrite and more. When talking about marketing strategy and branding, visual identity is used to underrated, then the project tends to show how importance of visual identity, using them as a main tool to enhance the organization's image and draw more recognition from the talented and startups. To do so, The Shortcut requires the concrete connection between visual branding and the consistency of visual identity designs.

The long-term target after all is the result of project can be further used for the other projects, considered as the guidelines, samples and foundation. The raw material can be reused internally. The volunteer designer will able to credit as a part of project process.

#### 1.5 Research Methods

According to Keith Punch defined the meaning of qualitative and quantitative research in his "Developing Effective Research Proposals", saying that "Qualitative research is empirical research where the data are not in the form of numbers.", compared with quantitative one while it is "the form of numbers.". Hence, the data is collected by meeting and interviewing with Project manager, in this case is the head of Visual Brand and Design Management, in order to get a closer look in ideas and current state of project. Qualitative methodology will be applied most during the process of project, phase by phase with the application of Waterfall model, which mean specific works and deadlines will be set by each week, and the results can be sent at the end of each week. Designers receive feedbacks and recommendation about the changes to prepare works for the next phase. All of works after being done will be gathered and sent to Marketing team for publishing.

Quantitative methodology is an optional research among events, and it is used for this project. The numbers and data will be collected and visualized by facts, displayed in infographic and slideshow form at the end of event. By doing this, people will see how effectiveness of the work and conclude the improvement needed for the next event.

#### 1.6 Structure of the Thesis

The structure of this thesis is divided by 7 chapters with 5 major categories. The first chapter will be Introduction and Research Method explanation, the following will display frameworks and standard used for project, chapter 3 and 4 will explain the definition and the importance of Visual branding identity and the adaptation of that on designing visual identity. The implementation and progress of project will be located on chapter 5. Chapter 6 and 7 is the post-

progress of event, display the numbers related to event with the feedbacks and recommendation from the Head of Design and Visual Manager, who is also the instructor of author during the progress of project. The structure of thesis can be seen on figure 3 below.



Figure 3: The structure of thesis

## 2 Frameworks and Standard

Creating a visual identity is not just stopping at using materials and guidelines from common visual branding. Visual branding is walking side by side along with marketing strategy and using frameworks and standard as a part of marketing plans, with the support of hashtags and knowledge of the trend. Internet is a part of our life nowadays, people go online for seeking news, networking, showing personal perspectives and shopping. Therefore, commercial activities are adapting to have more efficient connection with consumers. By the rise of online commercial, there are evolving several terms such as Online Marketing, Digital Marketing, Social Media, etc. However, this project is a part of organization's marketing strategy and using Social Media framework with Hashtag standard for information searching and people connection.

### 2.1 Social Media Framework

With the rapid development of Internet, social media becomes familiar and sometimes it is hard to find a proper definition for that, when typing Social Media on Google search and it will return with million answers. A huge number of professional viewpoints has been given controversially and have no consistency. According to Cambridge Dictionary, Social Media is "websites and computer programs that allow people to communicate and share information on the internet using computer or mobile phone.". Another perspective saying that the use of Internet-based site to connect with people, in order to serve either social purpose or business purpose or both (Will, 2020). Combining those ideas, Social Media can be understood as an Internet-based tool to connect and interactive within people, via technological equipment.

Social media is place where connection is based on personal purpose and hobbies. There is no barrier of space, time as well as ages, genders, skin tones or languages. Its globalization making the efficiency of marketing activities, since then, Social Media Marketing is born. Entrepreneur implement this strategy for product promotion as well as receiving feedbacks directly

from consumers. The total number of YouTube users has been proximately around 2 billion, with a total of active users per day around 30 million. With the number of Facebook users, it is even much more with the total of 2.50 billion of active users monthly. It is not surprise that companies like Coca-Cola, Samsung, Toyota or Sony get a huge advantage recently. They are all use the spreading ability from social media. However, to get that advantage, they have to understand the essence of social media. As the research and built by Tracy L. Tuten, there are 4 zones of social media, including Social Community, Social Publishing, Social Commerce and Social Entertainment.



Figure 4: Zones of Social Media (Tracy 2012)

Zone 1 is Social Community, noticing on social community such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Reddit, etc. This zone is focused on building relationships and gathering people who have the same interests. Marketers use this zone as opportunity to communicate with consumers instantly, while maintain a better relationship with them.

Zone 2 is Social Publishing, they are sites sharing contents. it can be known as blogs, micro-sites, media sharing sites. Big names in this filed are WordPress, Twitter and YouTube.

The third zone is Social Commerce, they are channels which provide place to buy, sell or review, and they are a part of e-commerce. E-commerce now are playing a vital role in national economy, can be listed such as eBay, Amazon, and also tool for landmark reviewing such as TripAdvisor.

The last zone is Social Entertainment, as the name says, this is place for playing and entertaining such as game (Candy Crush, Miniclip) and music (Pandora and Spotify).

Understanding the structure of Social Media, branding will be easier in devising content and cost distribution plans, having a big picture to achieve goals in social media campaigns. There are several popular Social Media Marketing types, which are:

- I. **Social Networks:** is one kind of Digital Marketing type, based on social website and community like Facebook and Twitter. These websites provide place for people who want connection and share their same interests anywhere and anytime.



Figure 5: Twitter Logo (Twitter)

- II. **Social News:** is based on websites which allow users to store, manage, search, arrange and share their data and websites. Familiar names are Pinterest, Reddit, Dribbble or Pocket.



Figure 6: Pinterest and Reddit, respectively. Those are one of the most popular Social News sites nowadays

- III. **Social Media Sharing:** they are websites for image and video sharing, typical example of video sharing is YouTube. Usually this type of website also has social features for example creating profiles or commenting and sending feedbacks.
- IV. **Social Microblogging:** known as blog, but in a short content like status, personal image or clips. There are a lot of successful websites and applications, such as Instagram or Twitter well known among users.
- V. **Social Blog Comments and Forums,** these are most influential and popular media platforms of Social media. Millions of people are interacting with each other in different way through blogs and forums, it is because a website usually comes with its blog or forum. That is why blogs and forums are playing a significant role in Social Media Marketing. They can be used for ranking the website, improvement its contents, drawing viewers, gaining trust and building a community of supporters.

There are tons of benefits given by using Social Media as a part of marketing strategy. The obvious thing can be seen is that the customers are on social media, especially company's target groups. People spending hours on social network websites daily, and as the research of Statista, approximately 70 percent of social media penetration in U.S. population, telling the rate of people who have a least one social media profile. Thus, it helps organization improve its visibility and brand recognition and also increase the inbound traffic to products. Another thing should be mentioned is there are a lot of social media channels, spreading information is now easier than ever, back to 10 years ago when companies did their marketing and promotion just via flyers and TV advertisement, which did not cost a small amount of money, yet not receiving a promise revenue. Spending times on inbound and outbound to blogs and forums could also maintain search engine rankings. Keywords and hashtags are used regularly just for this purpose, companies even have to pay to add more keywords and buy advertisement package to be on the top of search engine. Keywords is now an essential part of Online Marketing and to have an effective result, they have to use wisely by researching its popularity and trending.

## 2.2 Trending and Hashtag

Trending as some definition in dictionary is a noun showing a general direction in which a situation is changing or developing, is objective, phenomenon or activities which are mentioned or discussed on the Internet, especially on social media. In Marketing Trend, it means something hot or new appearing in the market, and it plays an important role in building marketing

strategy. Since then, knowing how to catch up with trend will create many attractive opportunities in increasing brand awareness of business.

It can be saying that trending brings a great importance to the marketing industry today. In the booming Internet era, customers are the one who catch up the fastest trend. So, to be able to meet the needs of customers, businesses cannot ignore those trends. Hence, whenever organizations know the market trends, attracting potential customers is not a difficult job anymore, instead, customers will find the way to know about your brand products. On the other hand, if marketers are sensitive to the times, capturing the trends will quickly make changes in strategic thinking. Organizations will able to devise new plans and strategies to keep up with the trend and dominate the market before rival companies. The pioneers will soon have the advantages, as the results, it will attract a large number of customers who are seeking curiosity. So, trending in marketing should not be underrated.

The other thing comes with trending, which is Hashtag. It is the model way to boost brand engagement with customers. Talking briefly about amazing hashtag history, it was formerly used to mark numbers. But in the middle of 2007, hashtags were announced by Chris Messina on Twitter, used as a way for people to find and follow a conversation easily. The first hashtag was used for a critical tweet about a big forest fire in California in October 2007 by a local citizen names Nate Ritter. He used *#sandiegofire* in his status (Lon 2010). Then, hashtag subsequently went on to become a writing style in tweets related to 2009-2010 election protest in Iran. Since July 2009, Twitter started to embed hyperlinks in all hashtags to show search results from recent posts with that hashtag. After its appearance on Twitter, it becomes one of the most popular symbols on Internet, following by some social network sites besides Twitters such as Instagram, Pinterest, Google+, YouTube and even Facebook.

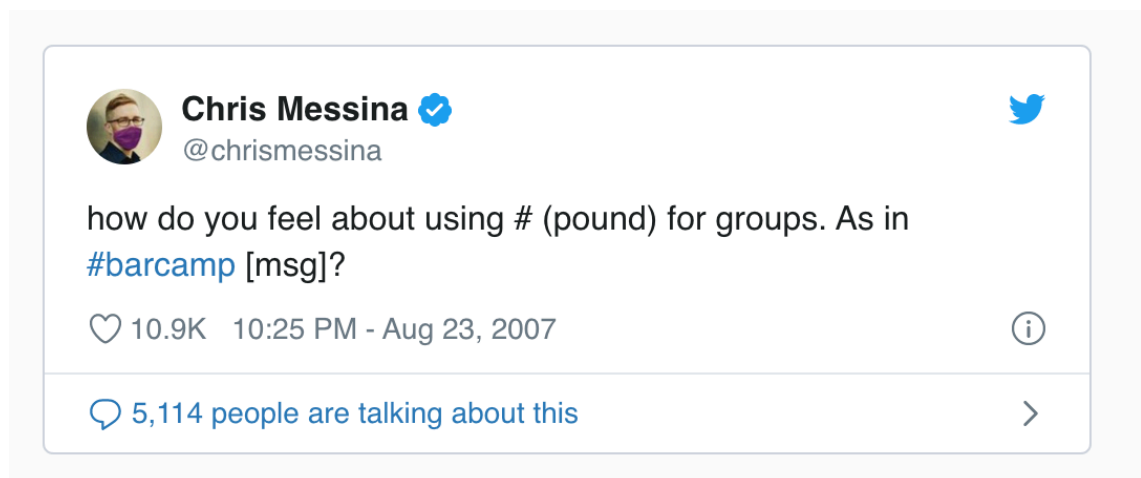


Figure 7: The use of hashtag was first announced in 2007 (Twitter 2007)

So, what is hashtags? A hashtag is a word or series of consecutive written characters placed after pound sign (#) that people use on social networks. Hashtags will make the content of posts easily reach those who have the same interest, even they are following or not following your page. Hashtag phenomenon has been used mostly for advertising, promoting or consuming thinking. Most of large companies focus on a number of hashtags to help customers easily find the company through those hashtags. For example, in tweet about Xbox, Microsoft often tags the #Xbox or #XboxLive, or when they introduce Windows 8, they used the tag #Windows and #Windows8. Hashtags is no longer simply a tool to link new posts, it has become a brand identity. From 2010, television stations have also started to use hashtags to advertise their shows, and their goal is to encourage the audience to participate in additional activities on the sidelines of that program. When they broadcast on TV, they also put the hashtag in the small corner of the screen. They want users to know their hashtag more to increase the number of times mentioned in the status on different social networks.

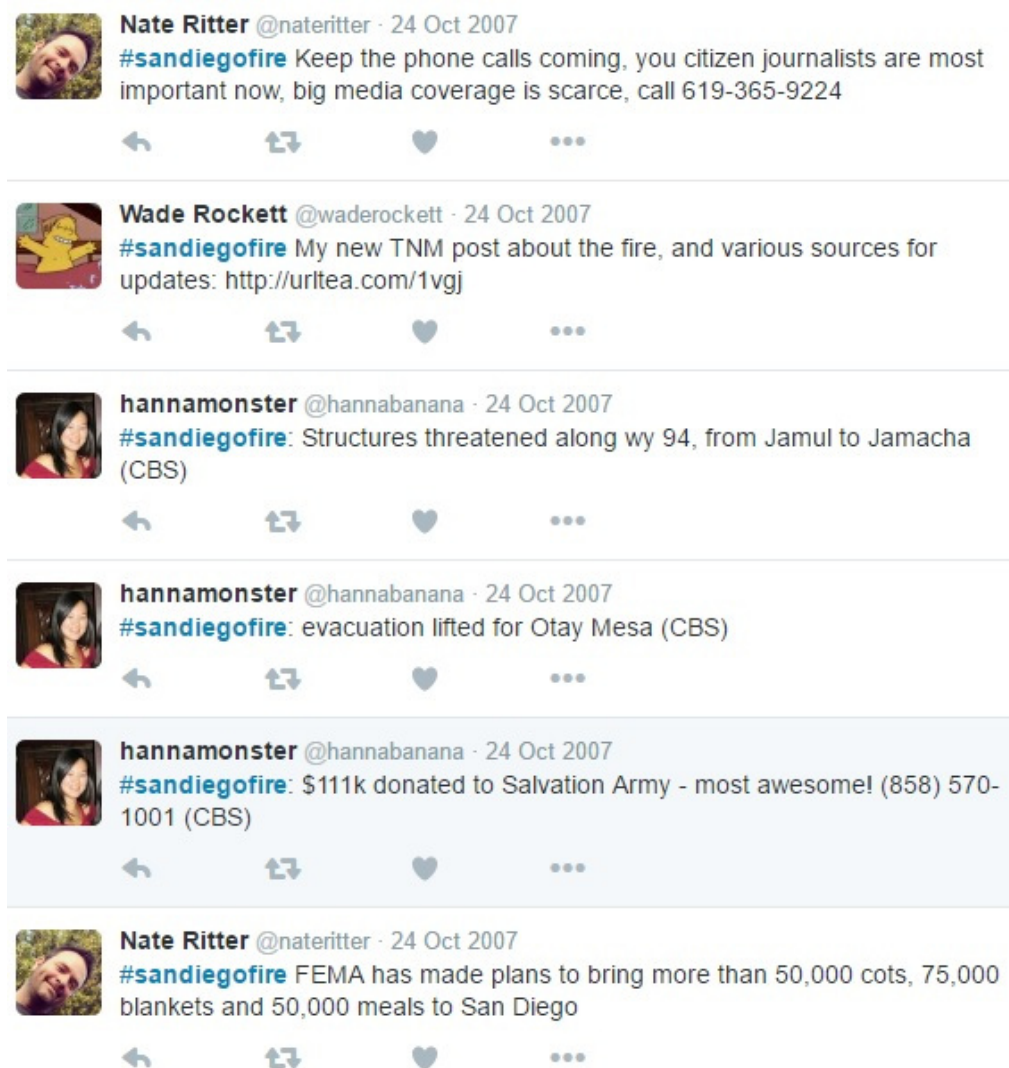


Figure 8: The first successful example of hashtag (Twitter 2007)

A fun fact about hashtag is beside of hashtag, there is a “bashtag” (bad + hashtag). Bashtag was created for hashtag community to comment, criticize a company, or to inform others about the quality of service. In early 2012, McDonald started the bashtag trend by using the hashtag *#McDStories* so that customers can mention and share their experience with McDonald’s products. However, this marketing campaign was stopped after just two weeks because the statuses using hashtag *#McDStories* mostly complained about company’s service rather than telling story in a positive way as the company intended.

### 2.3 Adobe Illustrator

For those who are working at Graphic Design field, it is not strange to hear about Adobe Illustrator. Adobe Illustrator, more briefly is Ai, is a vector graphic software of Adobe. From the beginning, Adobe Illustrator was the first time introduced for Apple’s Macintosh users during December 1986, then it was delivered to users in January 1987 (Adobe 2014). Adobe Illustrator is a companion product of Adobe Photoshop. Compared to Adobe Photoshop, while Photoshop is mainly for digital photo manipulation and photorealistic styles, Illustrator was first used to deliver typesetting and logo graphic design. Though years, Adobe Illustrator becomes an essential part for graphic designers, artists and painters. Users are able to use gradients tools to objects or draw lines, as well as adjusting opacity and reordering layers. Illustrator works can be easily rescaled without losing its quality, which is impossible on Photoshop.

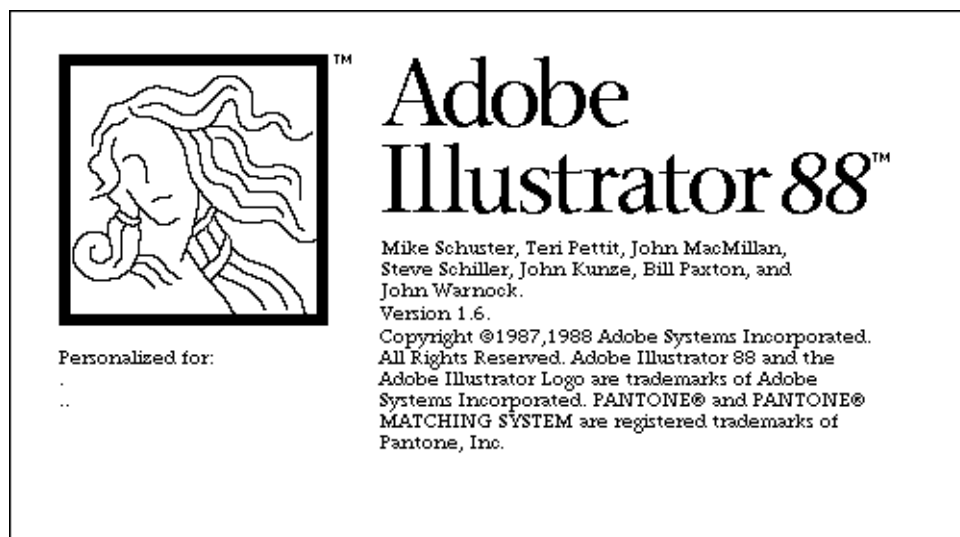


Figure 9: Capture of Adobe Illustrator 1988 (Erin 2015).

## 3 Definition of Visual Branding Identity

Previously, marketing only focused on products, with the strategy revolving around the concept of product lifecycle. However, big multinational corporations in consumer goods filed

are now gradually managing brand as the center of strategy as well as corporate management. Nowadays, there are many options with a little time to consider, the battle to gain customer's attraction becomes extremely intense. Most products in the same industry and the same field have similar characteristics and quality. Therefore, persuading customers, trying, buying and buying more times is not an easy task. There are many famous brands in the world that have been able to create a large number of loyal customers thanks to branding. This chapter will provide fundamental definition of brand and visual branding identity, showing how the importance of visual branding affects to organization and its marketing strategy.

### 3.1 Branding

Branding is the term that appeared in 350 AD, originally from an Ancient Norse word "Brandr", a Scandinavian language, that means "to burn". In the 1500s, the word "brandr" was referring a mark into cattle and livestock, as a means of marking ownership (SpeakerHub 2019). These simple symbols have rapidly evolved into today's modern logos. Around 1820s, logos has been stamped onto crates. This due to the increasing number of mass production and shipping trade oversea. Up to 1870, a trademark can able to register to prevent other businesses using the same brands and logos to confuse consumers. Through years, brand recognition becomes the most important role for corporations, and at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, witnessing the rise of social media and commercial, it again changes the way of interaction between consumers to brand.



Figure 10: Samson Ropes, the oldest US trademark which still used today, registered in 1884

So, what is Brand? Brand is the term that include brand identity system of both physically and mentally to create emotional impressions in customer mind. Thus, Branding is the process of creating impressions of business concept to position the business in the mind of customers. And all branding activities in theory will follow the orientation that company wants. However, branding does not stop at designing a logo that looks stunning and beautiful. Branding is also a way to build an important asset of a company, which is brand value. Furthermore, branding can create and measure the expectations of company's products or services and can encourage the company to maintain that expectation or exceed it, to bring a better products and services to market and consumers.

### 3.2 Brand Identity

In the context of business today, corporate image has a great impact of development and competition in market. Brand identity is the way to build up the image of that business. Brand identity is the factors that related to logo, color, image, icon and typo, etc. of a brand in order to identify and distinguish the brand in customer minds. It is an important component to determine whether a brand is consistent and create good retention. A business with a good brand identity will make customers remember them more, imprinted in their mind and thereby create a buying motivation (Kady 2019).

The brand identity system must be uniformly and consistently in design for both corporate brands. The basic elements to design usually:

#### I. **Name:**

First of all, marketing manager must determine the brand name. the brand name should ensure some requirements:

- Saying the benefits of product
- Speak up the quality of product
- Easy to read and recognize
- The trademark must be different from brand names of other competing companies

#### II. **Logo:**

Design principles are simple, meaningful, unique and easy to use in any brand communication programs. The symbols for different product brands also need to ensure that the common elements are easy to identify the association and distinguish the class between them. However, a good logo comes with some basic characteristics (Cass 2009)

- Simply, remember with ease. With a few seconds of observation, viewers can visualize the symbolic contours in memory. in the context of many competing

products being promoted on the mass media, brand's logo will now be known by its customers if it is complicated and difficult to remember, whether by name, symbol or word. Most of world-famous brands use very simple brand signs. Kodak uses the stylized letter K, McDonald's uses the yellow M-shaped gate, Nike uses the spread. IBM uses the stylized brand name. Most of these brand use just only one or two basic colors.



Figure 11: Logo of McDonald's, Nike and IBM (from left to right)

- Adaptation: able to adapt in different cultures or languages. In fact, customers in different countries, with different cultures and languages often have different interpretations of images or symbols. Therefore, international trade logos are less likely to use meaningful images that are available in a given culture or language, they use new images and then associate them with product associations.
- Meaning: define the characteristics of the product or related topics. Today's products are often complex, making their meaningful names or images hard to distinguish, remember and ensure them symbolic. Therefore, in practice, this meaning is often created through brand association, rather than brand themselves.
- Shapes: some logo designers take a high value in simple, easy-to-read shapes because complex logos are often difficult to identify. It is possible to associate symbols with brand names. A lot of businesses choose a specific symbol combined with a brand name to form a logo. Whenever the brand has become famous, the symbol can stand alone to create brand awareness. Take some examples of some fashion names like Nike, Adidas or Lacoste. Another way to create an impression is to use the unique typeface of brand name. This is a stylized form of a brand name by using specific typeface including fonts, uppercase and lowercase letters, changing the density or stylized spelling. When designing logos this way, businesses can use specific designs of full or acronym of brand name.
- Colors: colors tend to be simple, recognizable and rememberable. Designers can prioritize drawing in white and black before coloring. Logo designers can choose compatible colors with philosophy of yin and yang, the five elements or more.

Color can deliver the message to the customers (Chapman 2010), such as:

**Red:** showing enthusiasm and youthfulness. This color is the right choice to convey youthfulness, dynamism and “noise”.

**Orange:** is also a color that expresses youthfulness but is softer and more friendly. Because this color is less used than red, it can make brand stands out more.

**Yellow:** the color of dawn and happiness. Brightness is an essential for brand to convey the light of positiveness to customers.

**Green:** this color associated with one of two themes: Finance and Nature.

**Blue:** brings peace and trust to viewer. Blue even used for brands with a wide customer base.

**Purple:** the color of royalty and brings the luxury.

**Pink:** represents the feminism.

**Brown:** this probably the least used color in the design. But in some case, designers want to stand out and make difference, the brown is worth considering.

**Black:** to send to message of sophistication and modernity.



Figure 12: Logo color wheel (Pinterest)

- III. **Slogan:** selecting a slogan for a brand and for each product brand. Each slogan must say the image positioning or brand personality. Naturally, the slogan should be attractive and easy to remember.

### 3.3 The importance of brand identity

Firstly, building a good brand is not standing on just shaping the styles and business image, but also creating reliability of products. This can boost the good consumption rate, increase profits and competition.

Secondly, a strong branding can stabilize existing customers. The reason is that when consumers have confidence in product, they will be more assured to use and having more loyalty to the product. According to Justas (2019), to understand the customers with an effective communication, businesses have to define factors that affect to their target and use them wisely. In addition, it helps brand attract potential customers, helping to expand the market more widely.

Thirdly, branding grants a firm position for the business in market competition in terms of price, investment and talent attraction. This is understandable because not many investors take their risk when investing in a business that do not yet have a brand, no name and a foothold in the market. Furthermore, brand with a crystalized characteristic will deliver experiences to customer (Justas 2019). This will be considered as a protection to avoid competitors making “fake” goods.

Fourthly, brand is the main factor in deciding on current shopping options. With the increasing demand and income of consumers, comes with the raise of brand awareness. Even company today have little permission to control the customer feeling, but companies should do their best to make sure the interaction with the customers and fulfill the brand promise (Justas 2019).

Lastly, brand is also a national property. in this context of international market integration, trademarks are also associated with nation image. The more well-known brands that country has, the greater status that country is acknowledged. Take an example of Toyota or Toshiba, they can represent Japan, or Apple and Starbuck from the USA.

## 4 Brand Identity Guideline of The Shortcut

Having an concept of brand and brand identity, as well as their importance in marketing strategy and corporate governance, therefore, a visual identity design must meet the fundamental requirements of brand identity system, not only for the use of marketing process, but

also can be a guideline and for the visual identity of associated products. Designing a brand identity is an interesting and creative process. Just like building a house, some of materials are the name, logo, color tones, tagline, typeface and shape appearing, yet maintaining the consistency, ensuring the modernity through years and sending the message to viewers. Brand identity is also a way to connect the product recognition (Laura 2019). When it comes to design a visual identity for products, here are events, brand identity plays a huge role in drawing attention and standing out by its uniqueness compared to competitive activities. In order to do so, the brand identity guideline has to be simple and easy to adapt with a specific principal in design.

The brand identity of The Shortcut Oy has been created by the Visual Brand and Design Management apartment from the beginning of organization. This chapter will provide a closer look to organization's brand identity, as a guideline for visual identity design.

#### 4.1 Logo

The impact goals of The Shortcut Oy have been separated into 3 categories (The Shortcut 2019), which are:

- **Individual:** building opportunities for employment, income and mobility in tech community.  
Activating new entrepreneurs aiming at high growth - mindset - can do attitude.  
Activating untapped potentials and optimize under-utilized skills.  
Enabling people to find a sense of belonging and empowerment.
- **Business:** New startups emerge and companies find the talent they need.  
Increasing diversity in tech community.  
Contributing to the internationalization of businesses, helping integrate spouses and families of foreign talents employed in high growth companies.
- **Society:** Reversing integration failures.  
Accelerating employment, bringing systemic economic benefits to Finland.  
Testing new models of societal impact.  
Giving back to Finnish society.

To represent impact goals, the logo symbolizes the optimized path to follow for achieving the success in career. The logo of The Shortcut represented by a cross line running from left to right, up to down and between two brackets. The primary version of logo should compatible to use in all cases possible.



Figure 13: The Shortcut primary logo

While primary logo should be used whenever possible, issues might arise when the primary logo is not compatible. Therefore, in this case, designers could use secondary logo, showing in figure 14.

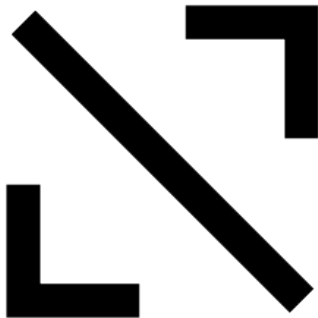


Figure 14: Alternative secondary of The Shortcut logo

The secondary logo is only used when the primary logo is present in the same piece. It can be used as a graphic element.

Even with the template of the logo has been provided, designers still have to aware of space in between logo. To keep the logo legible, a clear area around the logo allows it to breathe and shine.

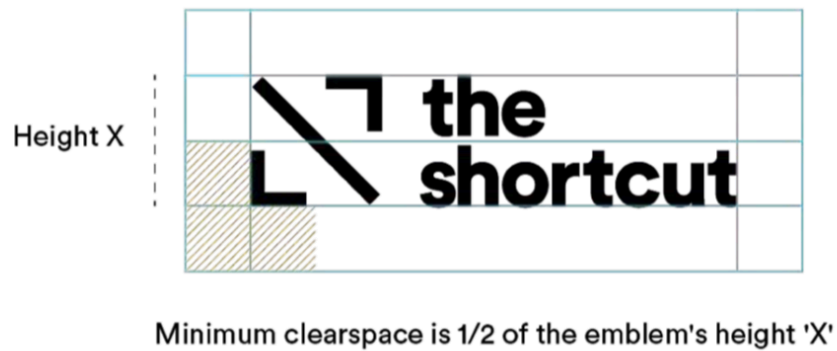


Figure 15: Clear spacing of logo

On the other hand, the clear space can be determined by safety margins. The minimum around brand identity and brackets should be the letter "S".



Figure 16: Safety margins of logo

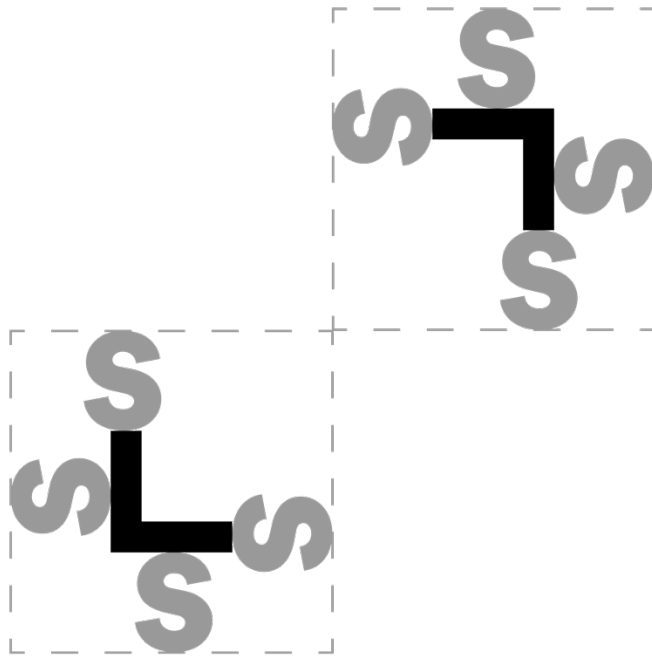


Figure 17: Safety margins around brackets

Scale and proportion are determined by available space, aesthetics, function and visibility. Depends on purposes, sizing can be variable, for example, for digital use, the minimum size is 17 pixels height and with printing works, it can be reduced to minimum 5 millimeters height.



Figure 18: The minimum accepted size for brand identity is 5 mm

The logo in visual identity usually comes with event name and sub header. The margin space between logo and event name have to follow the letter-S-rule, and no bigger than the font size of the logo. The detail is displayed in figure 19.



Figure 19: Spacing between brand identity and event title

## 4.2 Colors

The age group that The Shortcut has targeted is various, however, the startup companies are normally new and fresh with many young talent people, so primary colors of organization are bright and having a low transparent. The primary colors widely from green, blue, red and yellow. These colors can be replaced the color of primary logo flexibly in some situations. Primary color should be applied in backgrounds for presentation, website or other promo compositions as well, to maintain the consistency. The detail of color showed in figure 20.

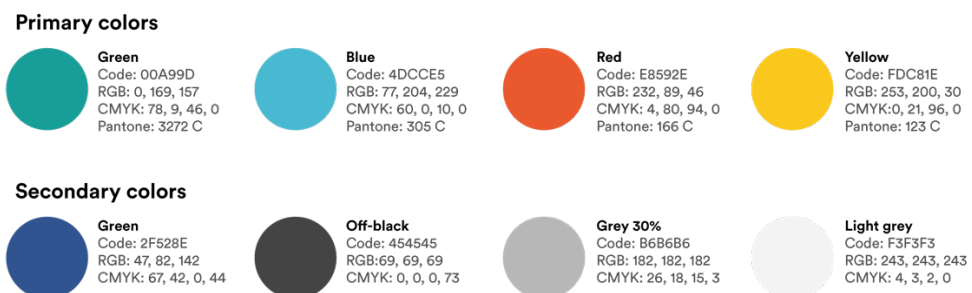


Figure 20: Color palette of The Shortcut brand identity

Gradient is the mixture of two primary colors, which are used in designing visual background for content marketing. Depends on theme of event, gradient background color will be chosen suitably. For example, the Talent Heist event is mainly for recruiting and talent seeking, as the gradient is Dark Blue/Light Turquoise.

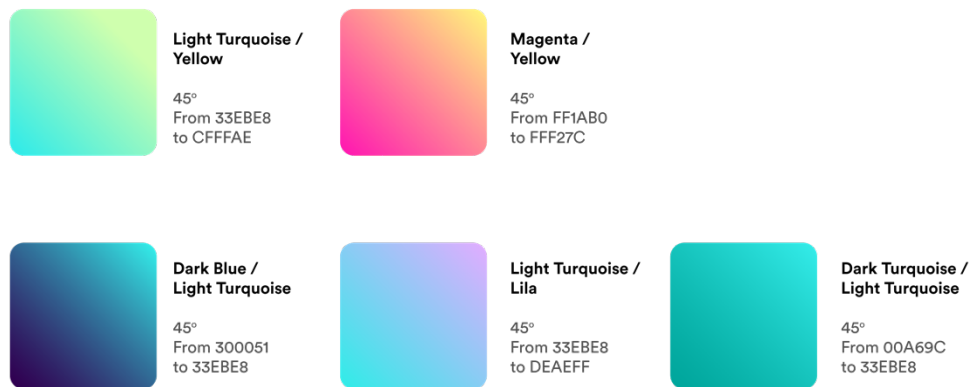


Figure 21: Primary gradients for background

### 4.3 Typography

Calibri is used as primary font, and Circular Std for secondary font. They are both sans serif fonts, without decorative stroke at the end of letters stem, as known as feet. Compared with serif fonts, which are used from ancient time, serif fonts usually bring classic feeling and serious. They can be used in some professional businesses such as law or insurance companies. However, The Shortcut aims to youngsters, sans serif is a wise choice. Calibri is used for reports, sale decks, presentations, website and other cloud documents, while Circular Std comes with graphic designs, marketing content, promo materials and campaigns.

Calibri Regular  
*Calibri Italic*  
**Calibri Bold**  
***Calibri Bold Italic***

Circular Std Book  
*Circular Std Book Italic*  
**Circular Std Medium**  
***Circular Std Medium Italic***  
**Circular Std Bold**  
***Circular Std Bold Italic***  
**Circular Std Black**  
***Circular Std Black Italic***

Figure 22: Comparison between Calibri and Circular Std

#### 4.4 Photography

The photo used for brand identity is the interaction between people. The focus is on the activity and the training they get. Moments are casual and informal where people are learning and having meaningful interactions. The photography should range from using laptops, smartphones, taking notes, prototyping or reading to attending a seminar or networking in a relaxed atmosphere. The photo should not be blurry or pixelated and must have the right exposure, angle, composition and balance of saturation and sharpness. The photo should be used under permission of the participants.

#### 4.5 Hierarchy in Text

According to Cameron, an effectively design is the one which has an understandable content delivering to consumers. To achieve those, hierarchy of typographic is the most important thing. Hierarchy of text shows those contents considering as the most important, focus on them with supportive points. There are various ways to highlight important information in a design, however, they all follow several factors including size, weight, color, contrast and position. For the beginner, the simplest option to highlight a content is enlarge the size and weight. The bigger and bolder, the more important of the text. Another option to draw attention is using difference color with high contrast between type and background. In The Shortcut, warranting hierarchy of typography in a design is essential but designers have to make the consistence between designs, both current project and associated projects. An effective way to establish the order of importance within contents, ensuring an easiest understandable observation is skip a weight, for instance, using Bold to highlight the title, then skip Medium to use Book for supportive points.

HEADING Book 14pt

**A title with  
not many words.** Bold 36pt

a lighter weight to describe in detail. Book 19pt

Tip: skip a weight  
Book / ~~Medium~~ / Bold

Figure 23: Hierarchy of typography

## 5 Implementation the visual identity for the event: Talent Heist

This chapter will show the progress of designing visual identity for Talent Heist. In the first subchapter, author will observe and research the templates and style from example visual identity design of previous event, School of Startups. After that, each element on visual identity design will be demonstrated in the next following subchapter. The elements are the result of adapting organization's brand identity in term of logo, color, sizing and typography.

### 5.1 Approaching

Before starting the project, author plans to have more information about the project. The detail of event has been collected as qualitative data, by meeting and interviewing with Marketing team and the lead of Visual Brand and Design Management, Mr. Alfonso. The essential information about the event has been listed in Table 1. The author plans to implement the project following the Waterfall method. After giving information about the concept and idea of event, author and Mr. Alfonso decide which elements should be kept, and which elements can be added into visual identity design, such as slogan. Moreover, the meeting also points out the dimension that is needed for marketing material. As the result, all designs for promoting an event needed, including A3-size event banner, square post, Facebook and Eventbrite banner, blog banner and come along with a major event of the year is design of the badge. The work can relate to the previous author's project, which was School of Startups. After the meeting, author can start developing the idea under the inspection and instruction of the leader. The progress of a design is reported weekly to receive feedback and recommendation. After getting a positive feedback from the leader, author can move on to the next design.

Table 1: Essential information about the event Talent Heist

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Name of the event | Talent Heist   |
| About the event   | <p>Finland (&amp; the Nordics) lacks skilled employees, especially in the field of tech. Slush is one of the biggest annual tech events in Europe. In The Shortcut, we have attracted amount number of international volunteers, tech enthusiasts and international talents in Finland who are looking for professional opportunities.</p> <p>With this project, The Shortcut and partners aim to boost the talent attraction, acquisition and retention in Finland through tech startups and high growth companies in the capital region. Furthermore, we want to make Finland an attractive place to live and work for internationals moving to or already in Finland and increase the diversity in Helsinki Region's tech industry by increasing cooperation among Talent Boost actors.</p> |

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Characteristics               | Young, diverse and motivated global professionals.  |
| Theme                         | Business, Recruitment   |
| Target group                  | Primary target is people who have talent with eager to learn and seeking job opportunity. The age is not restricted. People from any country are highly welcomed. |
| Competitor                    | There is no competitor at this moment.  |
| Designs and dimensions needed | Similar with those designs of School of Startup event, including printing designs such as banner and badge.   |
| Deadline                      | 1 month or at least 2 weeks before the event starting.  |

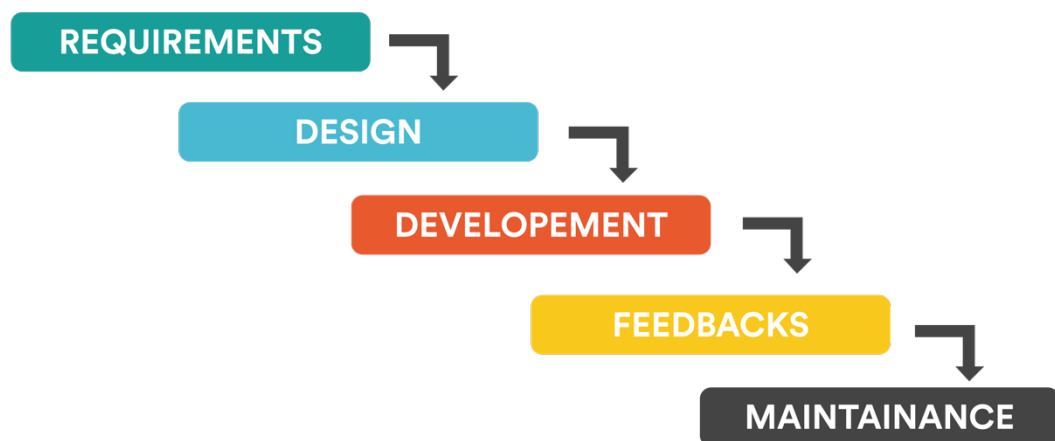


Figure 24: Sequence of steps in visual identity implementation following Waterfall model

## 5.2 Logo

The idea and design of the event logo has been acknowledged by the Visual Brand and Design team and created by the leader, Mr. Alfonso. The event logo then is given to author for project implementation. The event logo is formed from the name of the event with thin stroke shadow on the back. The slogan “Seize your spot!” is attached under the logo. The logo is minimalized yet elegant look. There are a primary logo and 2 versions of secondary logo. The primary one has white color filled texts and yellow strokes, it is used for all of designs, while secondary logos are used for simple printing works and feedback forms. The two secondary logos are simpler with black and white filled texts and no strokes. There was a tested version of logo, which was no stroke and blue filled text, however, after deciding to use the similar background color, it was changed as those versions mentioned above.



Figure 25: Primary Talent Heist logo



Figure 26: Secondary Talent Heist logos

### 5.3 Size and Dimensions

Depends on difference dimensions, it requires different element arrangement and the number of elements and information have to be guaranteed. The visual identity designs are required for this project are

- A3 size event banner: 297 by 420 millimeter.
- Facebook, Eventbrite and blog banner: 1920 by 1080 pixel.
- Instagram post: 600 by 600 pixel.
- A5 size of badge: 148 by 210 millimeter.
- A0 mugshot: 841 by 1189 millimeter.
- Sample A4 CV for candidates: 210 by 297 millimeter.

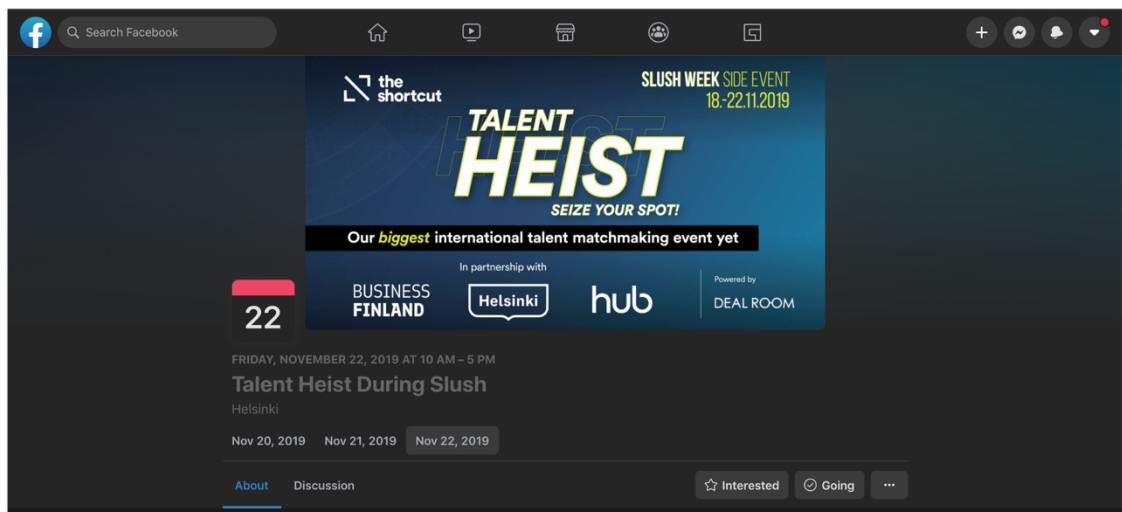


Figure 27: Talent Heist banner on Facebook

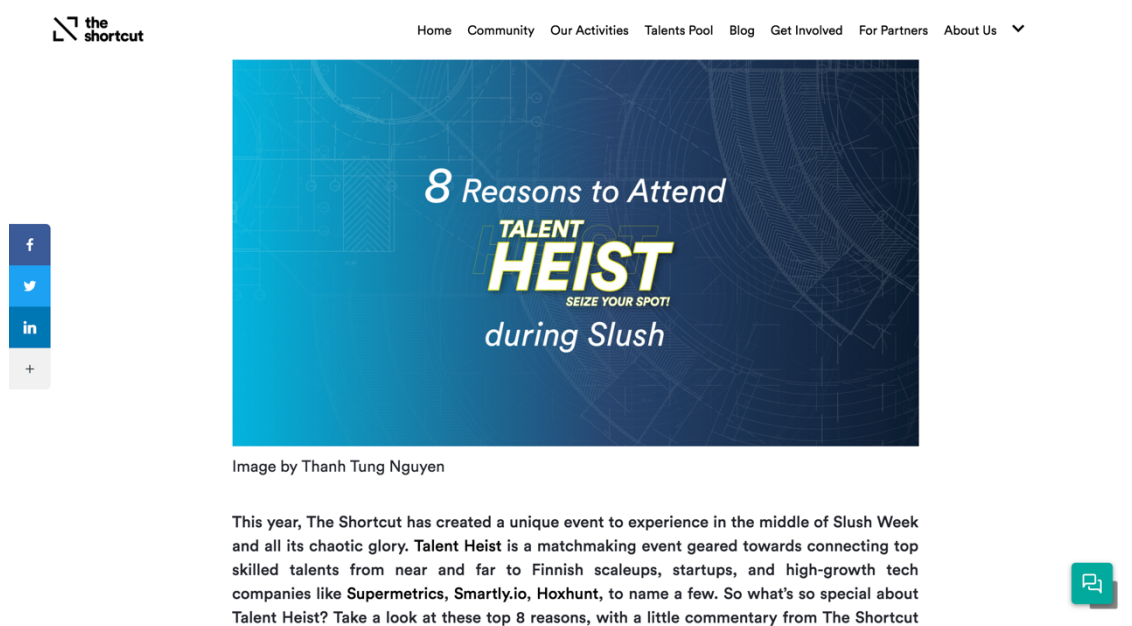


Figure 28: Talent Heist blog post in The Shortcut main website

#### 5.4 Clear spacing and sizing

Since the information of partners and company involved to the event, clear spacing should not be underrated, yet the information must be fully provided to viewers. The upper left corner is organization's logo, the upper right corner is days of event. Event logo should be taken as the main spot in any design, placed in the middle. Company logos of hiring companies, which are participants and partner companies are placed under the event logo and no bigger than it.

## 5.5 Color palette

Since this event is mostly focused on business and recruitment, the background color is decided as Dark Blue / Light Turquoise gradient. Blue can be seen as the most common color in designing and bringing trust and peaceful to viewers. To highlight the logo and content, yellow and white, which are client organizations primary colors, are used for text and participant company logos.

## 5.6 Typography

All of the designs will use Circular Std as font type. Book, Bold and Bold Italic are the common weights. The reason of using sans serif font instead of other serif fonts, which have “feet” on the end of each letters, is for easy to scan and skim the information. Most of the documents such as books or novels, people usually use serif font because of its readability in a horizontal way, compared to sans serif’s vertical readability. So, to help viewers get the information about the event as quick as possible, sans serif font is a suitable choice.

## 5.7 Hierarchy in text

The order of text and content size in any visual identity designs relies on the importance of information needed to deliver to viewers. To draw viewer’s awareness, the hierarchy of typography should follow the order from the biggest to the smallest: Event logo, date of the event, sponsor and partnership company logos, client organization logo, hiring company logos and basic information of The Shortcut lab.

## 5.8 Other information accessibility

Information must be fully provided to viewers, however, with a small amount of space such as the back of A5 size badge, it seems hard to implement. Some of information cannot be eliminated, but they can be shortened such as URL. To deal with a long URL, author suggests to uses URL shortening services like bit.ly, tiny.cc or QR code.

### 5.8.1 URL Shortening utility

Bit.ly and tiny.cc are two candidates for shortening link connected to information in Deal-room, where participates and volunteers can access to get more information about the event, as well as schedule meeting and making an interview. Benchmarking two URL shorten services, it can be seen that using tiny.cc is beneficial to author and organization since it does not require an account and it is totally free to use, while bit.ly requires monthly subscription. The only drawback of using free service is the shorten link cannot be customized the domain name.

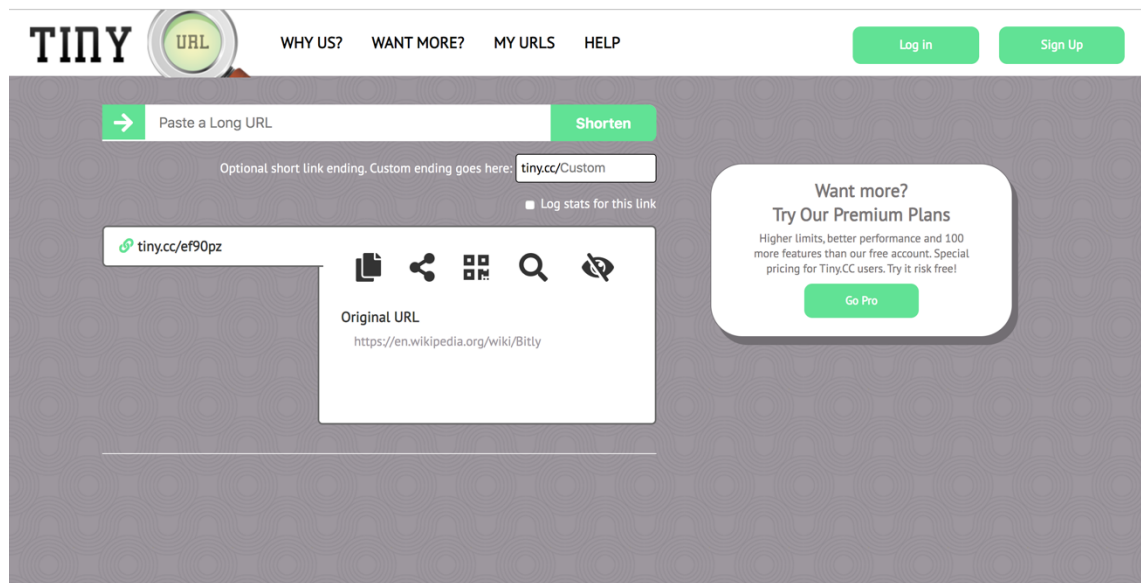


Figure 29: Tiny.cc URL shortening service's front page

### 5.8.2 QR code utility

Since the access link has been printed on the badge, it is faster way than typing manually the shortened link on the personal electronic devices, which is QR code. The QR code scanner application can be download into any electronic devices, even more, phone brands now integrate barcode and QR code scanner into default camera application, allow users scanning QR code without downloading any other software.



Figure 30: QR code linked to Dealroom

## 5.9 Templates and Style

For creating any type of visual identity designs, consistency of style is the requirement, which mean, to deliver the brand awareness, viewers can distinguish the organization without reading the content. The templates and style have been existed in every visual identity design of any event since the beginning of the organization. Take a look of School of Startups' visual identity as an example.



Figure 31: School of Startups A3 event poster (left) and Facebook banner (right)

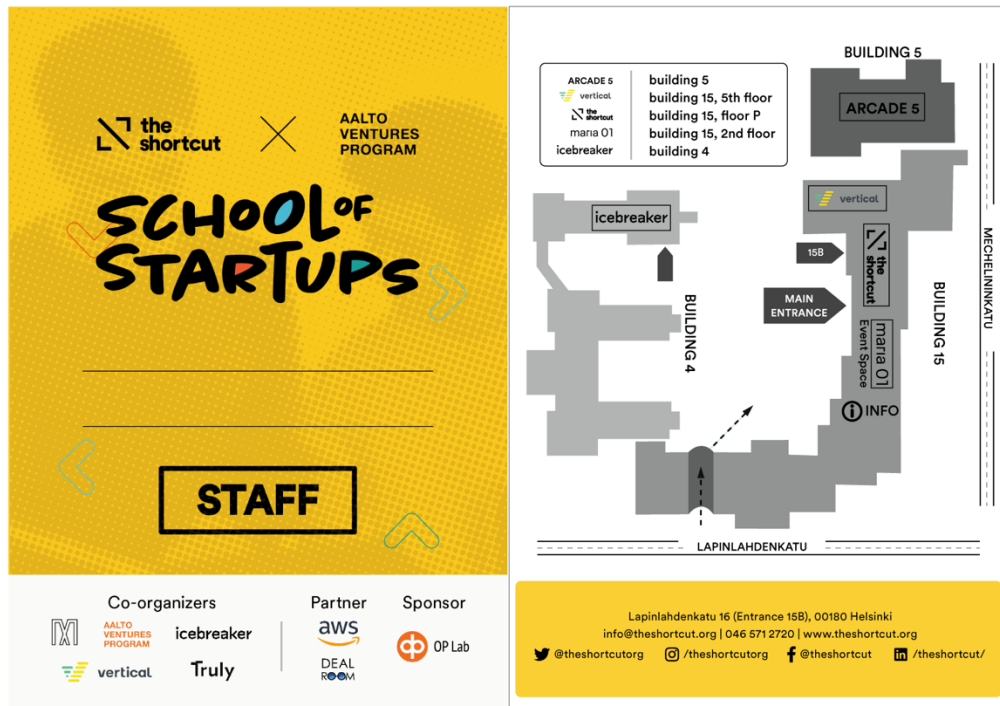


Figure 32: School of Startups' front and back of the badge

The concept idea of School of Startups event is for gathering startup owners and experts in one roof. Two main themes of this event were declared, including employability and business scale, splitting into three categories of skills: design, business and tech. Each category representing in each different color, which are red for design, emerald green for business and yellow for tech. School of Startups is a two-day event and conference, which brings together startup doers, experts and enthusiasts. Filled with workshops given by startup doers, the conference aims at delivering content which can bring scalability and employability.

## 6 Evaluation of project

In this chapter, the project implementation is reviewed and evaluated to point out the outcome of project and challenges and benefits gained. Feedbacks and recommendations for future development is then given.

### 6.1 Project review

The project was an opportunity for the author to apply his knowledge learned during his study at Laurea UAS and his experience on graphic design from his personal projects, into a

professional working environment. It was also his first step on his future career, his works can be his achievement, and considered as a part of his graphic design portfolio. In The Shortcut side, it is a chance to help people networking, to enrich their working experience and to see difference way of thinking in design. The final visual identity designs were successfully in transforming ideas into a lively graphic look, drawing volunteer and participant attraction and devising an organization recognition.

The challenge met in this project were idea and timing situation, come along with a growing number of information should be put into designs. The School of Startups event can be seen as an acceleration event for Slush's side event, Talent Heist, so it is usually taken place around one month before Talent Heist. Therefore, the duration to prepare for Talent Heist is short. The design principle is also familiar with its School of Startups, so with a big amount of information given, it was challenging.

## 6.2 Feedbacks

During the process of creating visual identity for the event, there were many feedbacks from Alfonso. Most of them were about the adjustment of positions, colors, additional information and deadline information. There were some printing issues, which related to printing services like the color matching, quote, printing paper type and delivery time, but they are then quickly solved by the author. After delivering the final products, Alfonso said he is totally satisfied with the results, then all of the visual identity designs were delivered to Marketing department of organization to start promotion campaign. The idea and designs of event visual identity were also uploaded into organization's internal archive cloud storage to use as the sample for the future event.

There were also some verbal positive feedbacks from participants about the quality of the badge which had been given to each one during the event. This means the outcome of the project had met the expectations of both author and organization.

## 6.3 Recommendation

Even Alfonso was pleased with the results and most of the designs had been used officially, however, with the lack of time, between Schools of Startups and Talent Heist, author had elected a significant amount of drafts, especially the badge. Alfonso recommended not to do so for time saving. For the solution of this, he highly recommended doing the easier design first, such as poster, social media banner and post, which have somehow a similar design, then doing the badge, which was not in the rush of deadline.

## 7 Conclusion

This thesis report is the result of author's effort in creating visual identity of an event by going through the brand identity guidelines. Besides, author points out the definition of brand identity as well as its importance to an organization. It is not only a logo, a color or a banner, it is also a message deliver to organization's target group, a way for people to distinguish and recognize a brand and a connection between organization and people.

From personal point of view, author had done the project in a challenging environment. This is the first project that author has done in a professional workplace, with a pressure of time and idea. It does not just express author's own design style, yet it must fulfill organization's need on brand awareness. Without the support and instruction from client organization, author might go in the wrong direction. This project can be known as author's ability test on researching, communicating, teamworking, problem solve and knowledge application.

The project is the package of visual identity designs for an event, which then be transferred and get the satisfaction from client. The outcome of the project has far met the expectations from the head Visual Brand and Design Management. Even during the implementation, there were some issues appeared as the challenges for the author, such as time management or idea development, yet the benefits from the project brought to author should be mentioned. That is the passion on brand identity and UI/UX design and the interest on working with real client.

In the beginning, the project was come with two main objectives: to create visual identity for an event, as a part of marketing material and to contribute a sample template for future organization's associated events. This thesis report provides a detail look about process of development, researches and other utilities. The result of project then had been acknowledged and used officially for the event promotion campaign and stored as organization's asset. Finally, based on positive feedbacks retrieved, comes with success of the event, it can be seen that the objective of this project has been fulfilled and considered as author's achievement.

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Appendix 1: Talent Heist event poster

**the shortcut**

**SLUSH WEEK SIDE EVENT**  
**18.-22.11.2019**

# TALENT HEIST

**SEIZE YOUR SPOT!**

**Our *biggest* international talent matchmaking event yet**

Companies hiring

**SUPERMETRICS** | **OP Lab** | **Sievo** | **SMARTLY.IO**

**HOXHUNT** | **SCANDIT** | **K A S T**

**REVONTE** | **grib** | **Strategy Co. Global** | **DEAL ROOM**

In partnership with

**BUSINESS FINLAND** | **Helsinki** | **hub**

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@theshortcutorg /theshortcutorg @theshortcut /theshortcut/

Appendix 2: Talent Heist Facebook and Eventbrite banner

The banner features a dark blue background with a subtle circuit-like pattern. In the top left corner is the logo for 'the shortcut', consisting of a white square with a diagonal line and the text 'the shortcut' to its right. In the top right corner, the text 'SLUSH WEEK SIDE EVENT' is written in white, with '18.-22.11.2019' below it in yellow. The main title 'TALENT HEIST' is prominently displayed in the center in a large, bold, yellow font with a white outline. Below the title, the phrase 'SEIZE YOUR SPOT!' is written in white. A black horizontal bar across the middle contains the text 'Our *biggest* international talent matchmaking event yet' in white. At the bottom, the text 'In partnership with' is centered above three logos: 'BUSINESS FINLAND' on the left, 'Helsinki' in a white speech bubble in the center, and 'hub' on the right. On the far right, the text 'Powered by DEAL ROOM' is written in white.

Appendix 3: Instagram post

This banner is similar to the one in Appendix 2 but with a different layout. It features the same 'the shortcut' logo in the top left and the event dates 'SLUSH WEEK SIDE EVENT 18.-22.11.2019' in the top right. The 'TALENT HEIST' title is centered in a large, bold, yellow font with a white outline. Below the title, the phrase 'SEIZE YOUR SPOT!' is written in white. A horizontal line is positioned above the text 'In partnership with', which is centered. Below this line are three logos: 'BUSINESS FINLAND' on the left, 'Helsinki' in a white speech bubble in the center, and 'hub' on the right.

Appendix 4: Talent Heist blog poster



## Appendix 5: Sample CV for candidates



**PROFILE AT** ***TALENT HEIST***

**NAME:** CLASSIFIED

**D.O.B:** CLASSIFIED

**PHONE:** CLASSIFIED

**E-MAIL:** CLASSIFIED

**SKILLS:**

Database design, Data modelling and Data warehousing

Data measurement and Data visualization

PostgreSQL, MS SQL Server, SSAS, AWS Quicksight

**EDUCATION:** B. Tech. (IT) 2009

Anna University, Chennai, India

**LANGUAGE:**

English: Highly Proficient

Finnish: Basic, A 2.1





**WORK EXPERIENCE**

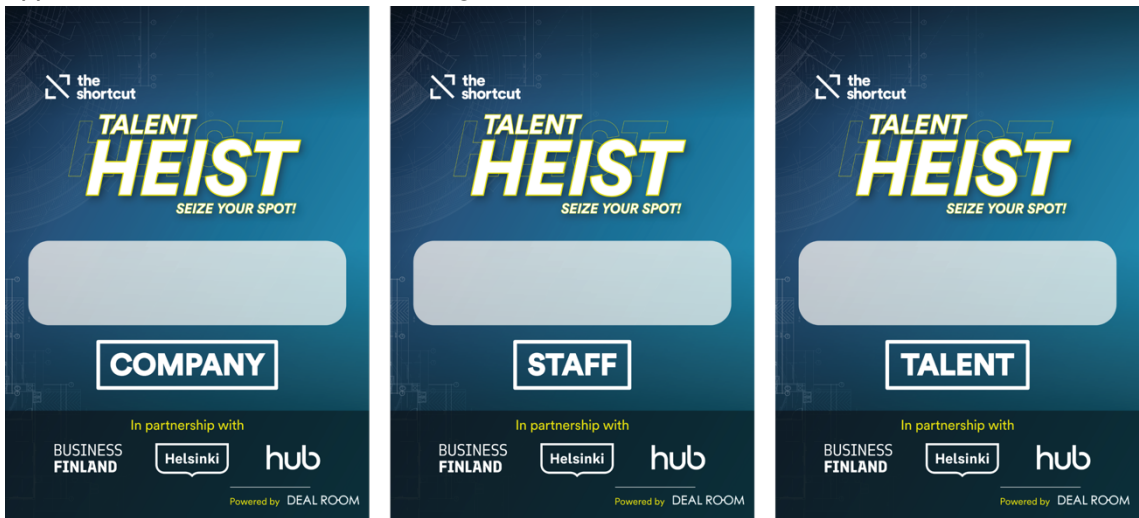
| TIME AND LOCATION   | TITLE                                  | DETAIL  |
|---|--|---|
| <p>JUNE 2013 - FEB 2017</p> <p>Next Generation Global Technology Company, India</p>   | <p><b>Senior Software Engineer</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrated incident management data to warehouse.</li> <li>- Designed the data model, enriched and transformed data to the model.</li> <li>- Created key metrics like ticket volume, TAT, CSAT, SLA OTD, ticket resolution time. Conducted User Acceptance Testing and deployed code to production.</li> <li>- Worked in a Scrum team.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>JUNE 2009 - APR 2013</p> <p>Multinational Software Technologies Company, India</p> | <p><b>Systems Engineer</b></p>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gathering business requirements.</li> <li>- Building functional specification and source target mapping and transformation rules.</li> <li>- Data profiling, data modeling and database design.</li> <li>- Stored procedures and SSIS package for loading data from source to target.</li> <li>- Performance tuning of daily loads to Datawarehouse.</li> <li>- Working with SQL Server, SSIS and SSAS models to develop reports.</li> <li>- Building measures for reporting using DAX.</li> </ul> |



Appendix 6: Talent Heist event mugshot

|   |   |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| 180   | 180   |
| 170   | 170   |
| 160   | 160   |
| 150   | 150   |
| 140   | 140   |
| 130   | 130   |
| 120   | 120   |
| 110   | 110   |
| 100   | 100   |
| 90  | 90  |
| 80  | 80  |

Appendix 7: Front of Talent Heist badges



Appendix 8: Back of the badge

| Wednesday<br>Nov 20 <sup>th</sup>                      | Thursday<br>Nov 21 <sup>st</sup>  | Friday<br>Nov 22 <sup>rd</sup>  |
|--|---|---|
| 6 pm - 9 pm  | 10 am - 5 pm  | 10 am - 5 pm  |
| <b>Bricco</b><br>Annankatu 22, 00100<br>Helsinki       | <b>Room 207</b><br>Messuaukio 1, 00520<br>Helsinki                            | <b>Room 216</b><br>Messuaukio 1, 00520<br>Helsinki                            |
| <b>Villi Wäinö</b><br>Kalevankatu 4, 00100<br>Helsinki | 1 <sup>st</sup> Session: 10 am - 1 pm<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> Session: 2 pm - 5 pm | 1 <sup>st</sup> Session: 10 am - 1 pm<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> Session: 2 pm - 5 pm |
| <b>Loose</b><br>Annankatu 21, 00100<br>Helsinki        |   |   |

Follow this QR code to Dealroom, your platform for scheduling meetings, getting an interview and other general magic making.

QR codes not your thing? No worries, just visit this URL: <http://tiny.cc/npe3fz>



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## Appendix 9: Research question about Talent Heist

- About Talent Heist
  1. What is the name of event?
  2. Can you provide me some descriptions?
  3. What characteristics of the event will be?
  4. Which field does the event aim for? Does it the same with previous event? Business, Tech or Design?
  5. What is target group of the event?
  6. Do we have competitor of this event? Have they already had any visual identity design? Did they hold any event before?
  
- About the design
  1. What type of event design do we use for this event? Community, Club or Workshop?
  2. What is the main color?
  3. What type of design and dimensions needed for this event? Do we have any exotic dimension for the design?
  4. Do we have any sponsors?
  5. Do we have any company come to event as partnership?
  6. Beside of Circular Std font, do we have to use another font?
  7. Do you have any the specific design or element that you need, otherwise I will promote some of my idea?
  8. Not so many events need badges, but the last School of Startups event had those badge designs, do we need badge in this event?
  9. There is a design of event logo, do you need another version of event logo?
  
- About the progress
  1. Since there will be around over a month before the event, do you need me to rush or have any specific deadline?
  2. Do you need me report the progress each day or week?