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Majakkalaiva -tuotemalliston pakkaussuunnittelu ja logon uudistus

Packaging design and logo revamp for the

Majakkalaiva product range

Metropolia

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Opinnäytetyössä toteutettiin Majakkalaiva Oy:lle uudistunut logo, brosyyri ja pakkaussuunnittelu. Majakkalaiva Relandersgrund on Helsinkiläinen ravintolamajakkalaiva ja turistikohde, joka kesällä 2012 lanseerasi alakannelleen uuden sisustusputiikin ja samalla oman merihenkisen sisustustuotemalliston, joka koostui emalimukista, pyyhkeestä, villapiposta, fleece -peitosta ja pussilakanasetistä. Tuotteiden olemassaoleva pakkaussuunnittelu oli vanhanaikainen ja kaipasi pikaista kohennusta. Myös logo vaati uudistusta. Majakkalaivan ja sen tuotemalliston omistaja toivoi suunnittelutyön olevan valmis vuoden 2012 loppuun mennessä, jolloin tuotteet olivat lähdössä jälleenmyyjille.

Majakkalaiva-tuotemallistolle suunniteltiin laivan omistajan toivomuksesta uudistunut ja mallistolle istuva logo, upouudet tuotelaput, pussilakanasetille pakkaussuunnittelu ja markkinointi- ja mainontatarkoitukseen yritystä ja tuotemallistoa esittelevä brosyyri. Työssä käydään läpi suunnittelutyön jokaista vaihetta. Työ käsittelee aluksi benchmarking -osiota, asiakastapaamisia, ja vanhan logon ja tuotelappujen arviointia ja ongelmakohtien purkua. Työn käytännön osuudessa keskitytään logon, tuotelappujen, pussilakanasettipakkauksen ja brosyyrin suunnittelutyöhön. Lopuksi arvioidaan lopputulosta, sekä oman että asiakkaan näkökulmasta.

Opinnäytetyö keskittyy myös suurena osana asiakkaan ja suunnittelijan väliseen suhteeseen. Työtä tehtiin tiiviissä yhteistyössä asiakkaan kanssa, ja toivomuksia, kritiikkiä ja mielipidemuutoksia tuli vaativalta asiakkaalta lukuisia. Opinnäytetyössä käydään läpi sitä miten asiakassuhde vaikutti suunnittelutyöhön.

Opinnäytetyö on tarkoitettu ja kiinnostava erityisesti niille, jotka ovat suunnittelemassa tai uudistamassa yritysilmettä, logoa tai pakkaussuunnittelua. Työ saattaa myös kiinnostaa niitä, jotka tekevät läheistä yhteistyötä asiakkaan kanssa.

Avainsanat	Logo, tuotelappu, pakkaussuunnittelu, brosyyri, asiakas

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The objective of the thesis was to design a new logo, brochure and packaging design for Majakkalaiva Oy. The lightship Majakkalaiva Relandersgrund is a Helsinki-based restaurant and tourist attraction that opened a new interior design boutique and a nautical interior design product range in the summer of 2012. The line consisted of an enamel mug, luxurious towel, fleece blanket, woolly cap and a bed set. The existing packaging design was dated and flawed and needed a quick renovation. The logo also required some improvements. The owner of the lightship wished for the job to be finished by the end of 2012 as the product range was being sold to retailers.

By request, a new logo, product labels and bed set cover design were designed to suit the nautical yet elegant feel of the product range. A brochure was also designed for marketing and advertising purposes. The thesis goes through each phase of the design process; from the benchmarking, customer meetings and evaluation of existing product labels to the actual design process of each element. Finally, the end product is assessed from several points of view.

The thesis also largely focuses on the relationship between a customer and a designer. The work was done in close co-operation with the customer and the work process was not short of critique, requests and changes of opinion. The thesis examines how such a working relationship affects the design process.

The thesis is especially interesting to those who are designing or rebuilding a corporate identity, logo or packaging design. The thesis is also aimed at those who are working solo in close co-operation with a client or customer.

Keywords	Logo, product label, packaging design, brochure, customer

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the process I experienced while designing a new logo, labelling, packaging and brochure for the Majakkalaiva ® product range - a textile and interior design brand based on the Helsinki-based restaurant lightship ML/Relandersgrund in the spring of 2012. Throughout this design process, I worked one on one with the owner of the lightship and creator of the product range, Susanna Seppä, after having been an employee on the ship for the past three summers and familiarizing myself with the design shop and its products.

The Majakkalaiva brand needed a quick renovation; the product range was released during the summer of 2012 along with the lightship's in-house design shop in which the products were sold, mainly as souvenirs. The products had temporary labels only to fulfill the most basic demands. They were designed and printed cheap and quickly in time for the tourist season. However, Seppä had plans to expand the brand, to sell it to retailers and to open a web-store in which all interior design products, along with all Majakkalaiva-products, would be sold. Seppä also wanted Majakkalaiva ® to be taken seriously as a design brand, as the products are of a very high quality. The existing brand only had an image of the lightship as a logo and desperately needed a new and more modern text-based logo.

My goal for this project was to not only satisfy the customer's needs and wishes in creating modern, sophisticated, elegant and professional looking labelling for the product range, but to also prove to myself that I was capable, as a self-sufficient designer, to create a product I would be proud of and satisfied with. I was also interested in how my studies at Metropolia have built and guided me as a a student and designer. With my only prior work experience in the design field being a six-month internship at a graphic design firm, it was a great challenge for me to jump into such a large project, in which I would not receive any aid or guidance if need be. In fact, the most daunting part of the project was being solely in charge and responsible for the entire product range myself. Any questions or challenges I faced during my project had to be researched and solved on my own.

In my thesis I will introduce the previous and existing product labels and logo, after which I will go through my entire design process – how and why I used certain design choices. The thesis not only examines my label and logo design processes but also largely focuses on working with a customer; how crucial it was to listen to the customer wishes and how I used this information to create something with my own personal design perspective. In this case, I worked with a very demanding client, and this thesis examines this special customer-designer relationship.

2   The customer: ML / Relandersgrund

ML / Relandersgrund has an interesting background. It is a former Finnish lightship, once fully functional in the shallow waters near Rauma, but is currently anchored on the shores of Helsinki as a restaurant, bar and summer terrace. ML / Relandersgrund, built in 1888, saw almost 60 years of work in the harsh Finnish seas, and to this day is the oldest standing lightship in Finland. The company Oy Majakkalaiva ® AB was founded in 1991 by Susanna Seppä, an entrepreneur who bought the ship from its grave at a scrap yard, fully restored it from a desolate state and brought it to its former glory. Even though the ship now operates as a café-terrace and interior design shop, it still boasts beautiful lightship features and a cosy atmosphere.

Seppä, the owner of the ship, received the 'Most outstanding deed' certificate from the Finnish Lighthouse Society for the restoration of the lightship. ML / Relandersgrund has also been acknowledged with the Best City Attraction prize in the Best of Helsinki contest in 2009. Relandersgrund is a known and respected attraction in Helsinki.

Image 1: Majakkalaiva Relandersgrund in its surroundings near Katajanokka

2.1 Majakkalaiva Design Shop and Product range

During the 2012 summer season of the lightship, a small design shop was founded and built on the lower deck. The company Oy ML / Grund AB was initially founded on December 1st 2011 and its mission is to produce accessories and interior design products under its own registered trademark (Majakkalaiva ®) and logo. Oy ML / Grund AB maintains the lightship shop and a web store. The products sold at the design shop reflect the spirit and design of the lightship with nautical colors and the use of the lightship logo.

Since the fall of 2012, the Majakkalaiva ® products are sold in-store and with several other retailers around Finland. The web store is to be designed and launched before the summer of 2013, and the final aim so to sell the Majakkalaiva ® products and product range to as wide a customer range as possible in as little time as possible. Consequently, it was critical that the design of the packaging and logo were carried out quickly for resale purposes.

While the shop sells a wide range of products from designer lamps to quaint, tin candleholders, the products that required the packaging design are the lightship's own

registered Majakkalaiva ® products. These consist of an enamel mug with the ship image, an engraved towel, a fleece blanket, a bed set, and a woollen cap, all seen below:

Image 2: A collage of the Majakkalaiva brand products. From top left: enamel mug, towel, bed set, woollen cap and fleece blanket

2.2   Clientele and Target Audience

The target audience of the Majakkalaiva product range consists of a wide range of customers. As the products are sold in a variety of stores, it is impossible to single out a

single customer base. The lightship itself attracts tourists, businessmen and business-women, young couples, elderly customers and lighthouse enthusiasts. As the shop is on the lower deck of the ship and near the restrooms, almost all of the customers who visit the ship end up passing through the shop. The shop serves a lot of tourists looking to buy a souvenir from the lightship as an attraction.

The retailers, on the other hand, cater to a far more design-savvy customer base. These are people who want to buy luxurious, design-oriented nautical products. As the future of the brand largely depends on the success of the retail agreements, it is vital that the product range as a whole is universally stylish and well designed to complement the brand.

2.3   Existing product labels

The existing product labels of the Majakkalaiva brand were in dire need of a redesign. The labels looked amateurish and muddled; the labels were small, printed on cheap carton and did not present the required product information. They also did not reflect or pair well with the existing brand. For the time being, they fulfilled their purpose; the lightship shop was mainly an attraction for tourists and the appearance of the packaging or labelling did not hold much importance. However in the future, as Seppä has plans to broaden the brand and make it more widely available, sophisticated, modern and professional, it was vital that the packaging and labelling reflected this.

The existing label consisted of a folded carton with an image of the ship and "Finnish Design www.majakkalaiva.fi" printed on the front (see Image 3). The inside was often hand written, with the price of the product or any possible vital product information, such as washing instructions. The result looked hand made, crafty and did not reflect Susanna Seppä's vision of her product.
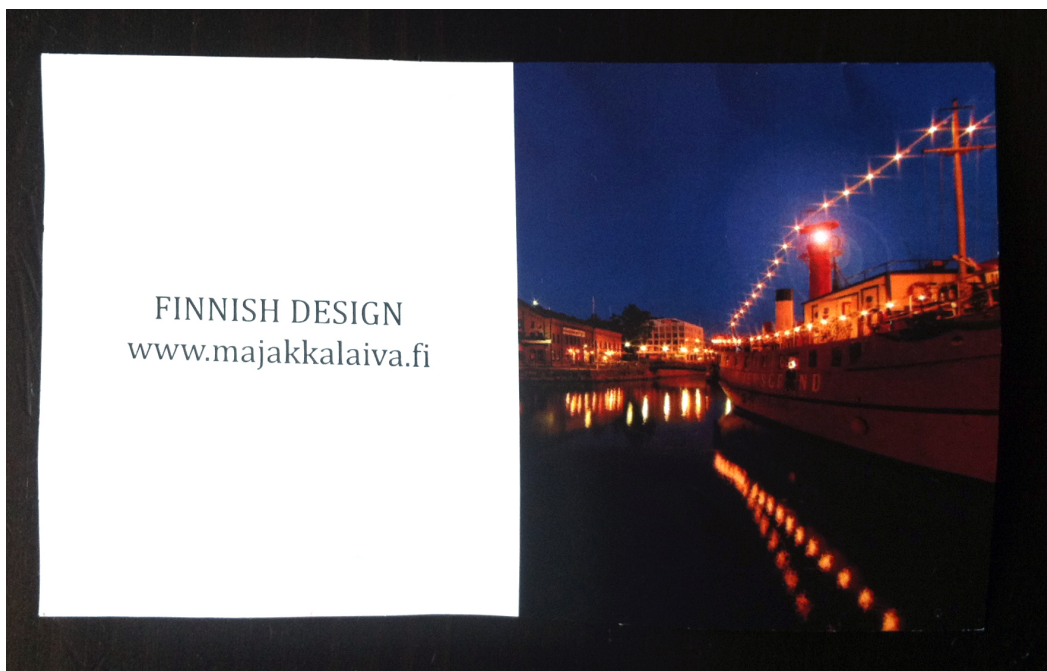
Image 3: Existing product label for the Majakkalaiva brand products.

2.4   Customer requests

When I took on the job of designing the new product labels and brand identity for the Majakkalaiva brand, the customer brief from Susanna Seppä was as follows:

> "Kerttu Saarinen was given the task of designing a logo, labels, product information and packaging design [along with a brochure and poster design] for the new product family. Our first label design was amateurish and the bed set package did not match the brand. Kerttu Saarinen realized, from the basis of our conversations, what kind of a look we were going for with the Majakkalaiva brand. The Majakkalaiva label design was born from her views and designs."
> (Susanna Seppä, Interview, 2012)

I interviewed Susanna Seppä, the owner of the lightship, before beginning my design process. Having worked at the lightship for three summers, I had a fairly clear notion of her vision for the product range, however, I wanted to sit down with her to make sure we were on the same page. It became apparent that she had specific requests she insisted were implemented in the packaging and logo design.

There were certain keywords that were mentioned numerous times during the meeting. Some of these were: classy, expensive, modern, simple. These keywords ended up being the basis and guidelines for my design process. Seppä also mentioned that she wanted to implement nautical colours, themes and the ship's own vector logo in

the design; the ship is famed for being the oldest lightship in Finland, and the products are not only targeted for design retailers but for lighthouse enthusiasts and tourists of the ship as well. Even though the ship is historical, Seppä wanted to bring the ship and the brand into the 21st century and bring the logo up to date. Seppä also wished that the final design was universal – both in its colour scheme and that the packaging and labels were as uniform as the product range itself. She wanted to sell the products together as a brand and it was crucial that the packaging reflected this.

3   Logo, labelling, packaging and brochure design processes

The customer, Susanna Seppä, was looking for an updated logo to compliment the new product range, several product labels to unify the brand, packaging for the bed set to protect them on the shelves and a brochure to market and promote the Majak-kalaiva brand.

3.1   Schedule

I began my design process by composing a schedule. Working to a regimented and specific deadline was especially crucial in my case, as the products were being sold to several retailers and in the lightship's own Christmas boutique by the end of the year 2012. I had to factor in design meetings with the customer, time for the actual design process, error margins and time for the actual printing to take place.
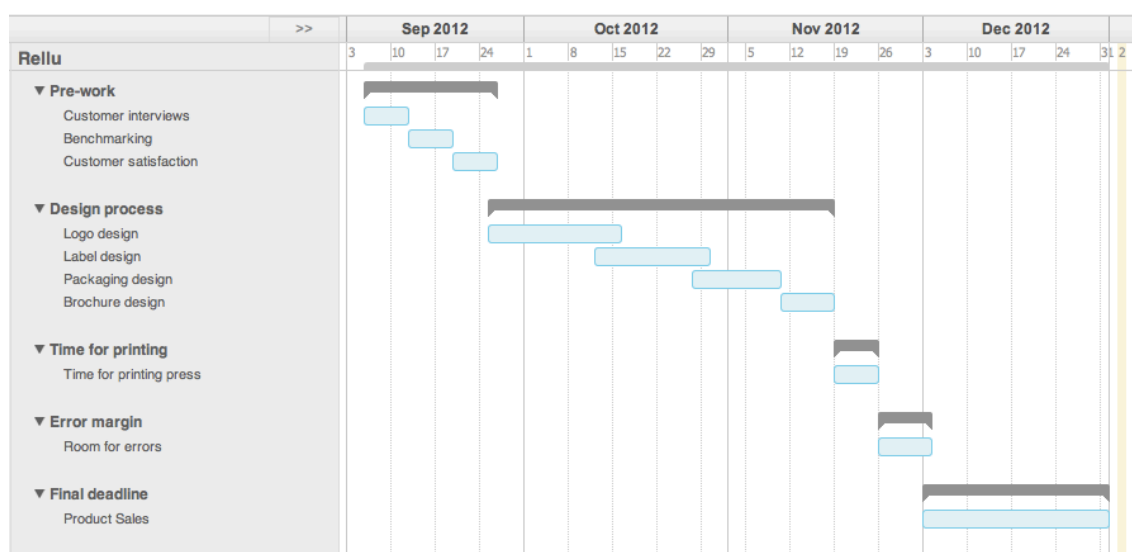

Image 4: Initial schedule for the design process

3.2   Logo design

A logo is a graphic representation that identifies a company, product, or brand. Sometimes referred to as an emblem or mark, a logo can be typographic, pictorial or abstract. (Lupton, 2006, 109) Susanna Seppä had purchased a logo from a graphic design agency in 2011 (Image 5). This consisted of a graphic and rather simplistic illustration of the lightship in vector format. This image was then used in all the Majakkalaiva textiles and products, all of which are seen in Image 2. As the lightship image was already being utilized in the products themselves, Seppä wanted the new logo to be free of the vector ship, but instead somehow implement the Majakkalaiva (lightship) theme in the logo itself; not all potential customers would be familiar with the name of the ship, Relandersgrund. The Relandersgrund text in the logo is written the way it appears painted on the ship, and it was Seppä's request that it remain intact.

Designing a new Majakkalaiva ® brand logo was a huge responsibility for me. This was a logo that would stick with the brand forever, the logo that would define the brand identity. "The success of a product, service, individual, business, organization, or even a city is based on being perceived as unique. Looking at any market leader, one can find that they each own a place in the consumer's mind. They have positively differentiated themselves from the rest of the competition. Branding is creating an individual niche in the consumer's psyche and owning it. More than just marketing, branding is the entire effect that creates a memorable identity" (Stine, 2). Therefore, the logo had to create a memorable identity and introduce the new brand while still being simple and unique. "A logo serves the same purpose for a company that a flag does for a nation or other jurisdiction. It's a shorthand reminder of identity. The North American Vexillological Association states that a good flag is one that a child should be able to draw from memory. Too many design elements, or too many intricate ones, make for a forgettable or indistinctive flag. The same goes for logos." (McFarlane 2012).

RELANDERSGRUND

Image 5: Original Majakkalaiva Relandersgrund logo and vector ship

Using Seppä's requests and following the guidelines of a good logo, I began designing an identity that I believed would fit the brief. I wanted to keep the Relandersgrund text untouched, as I believed it was an appropriate and stylish font that reflected the history of the ship. However, I needed to incorporate the idea of the lightship in the final logo so I decided on adding the word Majakkalaiva, however clearly differentiating it from the round, weighty Relandersgrund text with a sharper modern font. My final decision, therefore, was to create a wordmark logo. A wordmark, word mark or logotype is usually a distinct text-only typographic treatment of the name of a company, institution, or product name used for purposes of identification and branding. The [brand] name is incorporated as a simple graphic treatment to create a clear, visually memorable identity. The representation of the word becomes a visual symbol of the organization or product (Wikipedia).

The advantage of using a wordmark logo, in this case, was that the Majakkalaiva brand was still fairly new and unknown, and using the brand name in the logo itself would help create an identity and recognition for the brand.

My initial proposal showed as follows:

MAJAKKALAIVA®

RELANDERSGRUND

Image 6: First draft of ML / Relandersgrund logo

For the Majakkalaiva font I decided on a capital Century Gothic as I felt it was elegant, simple and the crisp, straight, thin lines were a nice contrast to the bold font of Relandersgrund, beautifully emphasizing the contrast between the history of ship and the modern design. By mixing two distinctly opposing and different typefaces, I aimed at creating a contrasting relationship, which "occurs when you combine separate typefaces and elements that are clearly distinct from each other. The visually appealing and exciting designs that attract your attention typically have a lot of contrast built in, and those contrasts are emphasized" (Williams 2008, 149). Seppä liked the idea of a clearly contrasting relationship, but believed that the initial font looked 'cliché' and wanted something more original, yet still evoking the same freshness and elegance as the Century Gothic. Having something to show the customer was a good tactic to start off the design process, as it gave Seppä something to critique and base her vision on. It can be challenging for a customer, without a comprehensive design background, to immediately know what they want from a design standpoint, without being offered any comparables.

After the assessment of my first logo suggestion, I began searching the Internet for a suitable font to use in the logo. The requirements were that the font had to be sans serif. In typography, serifs are semi-structural details on the ends of some of the strokes that make up letters and symbols. A typeface that has serifs is called a serif typeface (or seriffed typeface). A typeface without serifs is called sans serif, from the French sans, meaning "without" (Typography Deconstructed). The stem of the M had to be straight instead of diagonal (as seen in Image 6) and the font had to have more thickness to it than the initial suggestion. However, it needed to stand out next to the rounder Relandersgrund font. After an extensive search, I offered her a series of logo designs I found were closest to her brief:

MAJAKKALAIVA®
RELANDERSGRUND

MAJAKKALAIVA®
RELANDERSGRUND

MAJAKKALAIVA®
RELANDERSGRUND

MAJAKKALAIVA®
RELANDERSGRUND

MAJAKKALAIVA®
RELANDERSGRUND

Image 7: Second set of logo designs

The fonts chosen are as follows (from top to bottom in Image 7): Neutra Text bold, Brandon Grotesque, Young, Revolution and Young. After a second logo meeting with Seppä, she decided upon the first design with Neutra Text bold. I played around with the spacing between Majakkalaiva and Relandersgrund and now had a final logo design the customer and I were both satisfied with and I could use in the packaging design process (see Image 8).

MAJAKKALAIVA®
RELANDERSGRUND

Image 8: Final draft of ML / Relandersgrund logo

3.3 Designing the product labels and packaging

The significance of good product packaging in marketing is indisputable and serves five basic purposes. These are:

Function - The purpose of product packaging is to protect the product from damage. Product packaging not only protects the product during transit from the manufacturer to the retailer, but it also prevents damage while the product sits on retail shelves. Most products have some form of packaging.

Attraction - How a product is packaged may be what attracts the consumer to take a look on the product as is sits on store shelves. For this reason, many companies conduct extensive research on color schemes, designs and types of product packaging that is the most appealing to its intended consumer.

Promotion - Packaging plays an important role for portraying information about the product. Outside packaging may contain directions on how to use the product or make the product.

To facilitate purchase decision - Packaging may contain information about the product. This information can help to sell the product because it allows potential customers to obtain the necessary information they need to make a purchase decision. Information contained on a package may propel the reader to buy the product without ever having to speak to a store clerk.

Differentiation - Packaging can differentiate one brand of product from another brand. Because the product packaging can contain company names, logos and the color scheme of the company, it helps consumers to identify the product as it sits among the

competition's products on store shelves. The consumer may identify with the company brand, which propels them to buy the product. (Lorette, Kristie.)

In the case of the Majakkalaiva ® brand these all hold true. The new labels, packaging and logos needed to be more uniform and to create a feel for the brand, which was non-existent at the beginning of the design process. As the products are to be sold to further retailers, which specialize in interior design products, it was crucial that the Majakkalaiva ® brand seems respectable and luxurious next to the other more established products, while still holding its own; differentiating itself as a unique lightship brand was crucial in creating interest for the browsing consumer.

The labelling also needed to display any vital product information, as the products were being sold in locations where a salesperson would not always be available to introduce the brand and its products. And finally, the packaging and labelling needed to look expensive and convincing. These points were the basis for my design process.

Each product in the Majakkalaiva brand required a set of labels; a universal label that could be used for all products and which introduced the brand, logo, history and website, and a secondary label that would hold any additional product information. The two separate labels would have to work alone and harmoniously as a pair, and be legible and stylish. In addition to the labels, the brand required a packaging concept for the bed set and an informative brochure for marketing purposes.

3.3.1   Benchmarking and brand differentiation

Benchmarking is the process of comparing one's business processes and performance metrics to industry bests or best practices from other industries (Wikipedia). Before starting my design process for the product labels, it was essential that I knew what the customer was looking for; without a benchmarking process, I could easily have gone off on a design tangent, and wasted a lot of time and effort. Benchmarking is the search for those best practices that will lead to the superior performance of a company. Establishing operating targets based on the best possible industry practices is a critical component in the success of every business. (Camp 2006, 6) This benchmarking phase meant searching the market for similar brands and researching their brand images and product labelling. I sourced several different labels and asked the customer

which ones she preferred and why. This gave me good guidelines for the process and a place to start designing.

After some research, the customer decided that she liked the look and feel of the Henri Lloyd label design (as seen in Image 9).
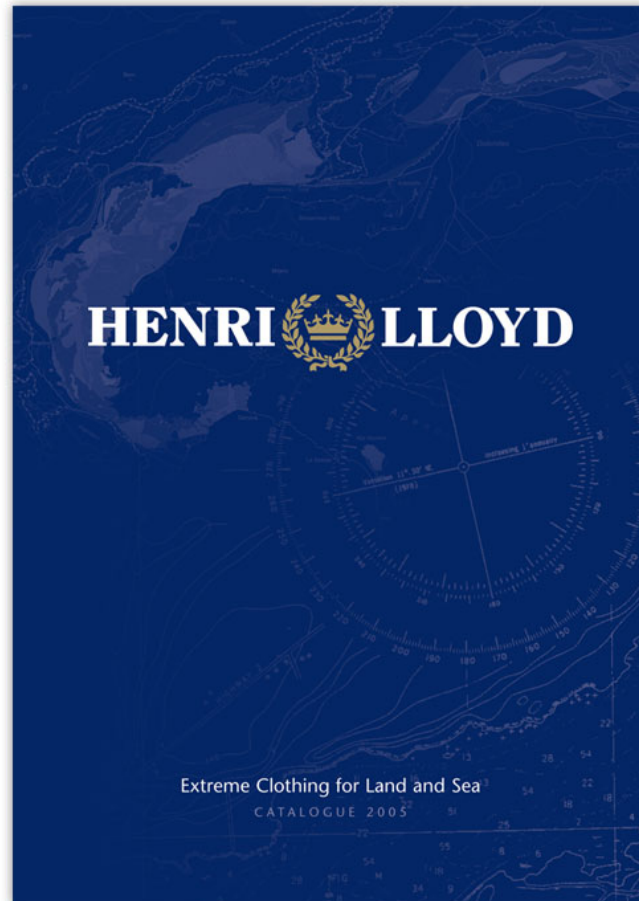
Image 9: Henri Lloyd product labels researched in the benchmarking process

The labels were adequately minimalistic yet elegant, they evoked the feel of the brand, which was nautical and expensive. The colour scheme, which consisted of a dark base with a contrasting font colour, was also pleasing to the customer. This would eventually be the basis of my label design.

3.3.2   Label design

"A label is a piece of paper, polymer, cloth, metal, or other material affixed to a container or article, on which is printed a legend, information concerning the product, addresses, etc. A label may also be printed directly on the container or article. Labels have many uses: product identification, nametags, advertising, warnings, and other communication" (Wikipedia). All products in the Majakkalaiva brand required individual product labels. These product labels had to describe the product in question as well as help them to stand out from future competitors on the shelves. There are no set rules to follow when creating product labels and I had many choices in terms of the layout,

size, shape, colors and much more. However, adhering to certain guidelines can certainly lead to a well-designed product label and, ultimately, more sales (Trumper, 2012).

After having achieved a logo the customer was ultimately satisfied with and completing an extensive benchmarking process, I now faced the challenge of designing a universal product label for each of the products in the Majakkalaiva brand family. This would be a label, which would be attached by string and a golden safety pin to each product to evoke an essence of quality and to present the products in a unique way. In the beginning stages of the packaging design process I had a fairly free hand; the only requirements from the customer were to incorporate the new logo, share the lightship story and include the website www.majakkalaiva.fi.

I came up with my first design, which can be seen below in Image 10:

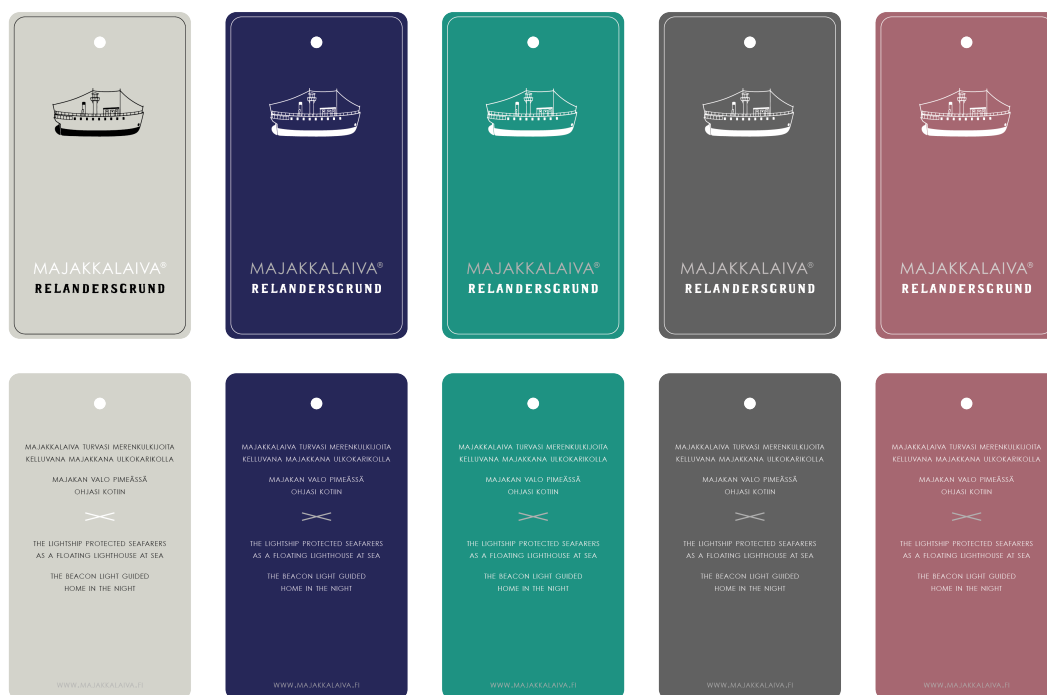Image 10: First draft of product label design

Image 11: Colour scheme suggestion for the first draft

My first design for the product label was based on the key words I wrote down during our initial design meeting: *classy, expensive, modern, simple*. I wanted the labels to evoke a nautical feel without being too stereotypical. Despite discussing not using the ship logo in the product labels, I liked the look of the simple outline of the ship (having edited the original logo in Adobe Illustrator), and placed it in the first draft, to give Seppä something new to consider. Placing the logo at the very bottom of the front side of the label allowed efficient use of the negative space; a design aspect I find adds to the classiness and expensiveness of the design, as well as keeping the end result as simplistic as possible. This use of negative space was also one aspect of the Henri Lloyd label in the benchmarking process that Seppä liked (Image 9).

On the reverse side of the label, I decided to add nothing more than the required information. This consisted of a short history of the lightship, both in English and in Finnish, and the website address. I added a small cross between the two sets of text to divide the information but also to add a nautical detail – this cross in particular is seen in many areas of the lightship and is a direct reference to a navigation mark as seen often at sea.

The colour scheme I decided upon once again steered clear from the obvious nautical themes. Even though red, white and black are colours used on the lightship itself, I found they took from the modern elegance of the design and instead I went with muted, natural colours, found in rocks, nature and the sea (see Image 11). I decided to differentiate the brand name Majakkalaiva from the ship name Relandersgrund by using a very pale grey. To keep the overall look as simplistic and modern as possible, I used only three colours per label: white (or black in one case), grey as a complementing colour and a varying background colour. In my limiting the number of fonts and colours used kept the overall appearance harmonized and balanced and fit the brief.

I presented the first draft of the label design to the customer at a meeting, and while she did like certain aspects, she was unsure of others. She insisted that the ship logo be removed, as she thought the wordmark logo could stand well on its own. She also wanted to get rid of the white bordering line to simplify the label further, and she wanted the logo to be much larger on the front side of the label. Seppä was overall very satisfied with the reverse side of the label, but wanted the text to appear larger and more legible. She also felt the colour scheme needed some work, as she did not want to use so many colours.

I began making the required changes and noticed that the only way to make the logo any bigger was to rotate it so it ran sideways along the label, which the customer willingly agreed to. The size of the label was only 90 x 50 mm, the average size of a business card, and I also had to take into account enough room for the hole at the top of the label, so there was not a lot of room to play around with. I increased the size of the font on the back of the label, but kept the Century Gothic Small Caps font for the lightship story. The text was in the same darker grey colour from the background on the front, as I decided to go with a white background on the reverse. The website is in the lighter shade of grey. Ultimately the customer was extremely pleased with the result (see Image 12 below).
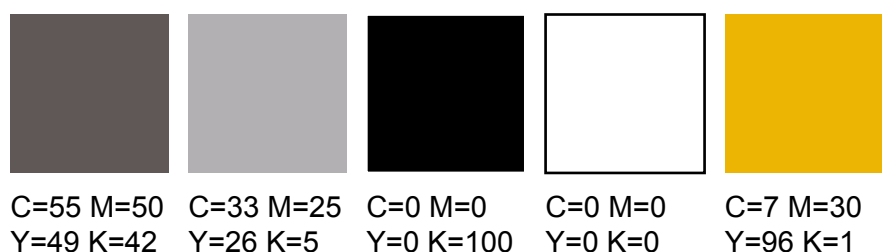
Image 12: The second and final draft of the product label. Front / back

While designing my first label draft, there was only need for one label (the grey on grey label) to be printed, but I wanted to give Seppä a simple colour scheme she could use for the brand in the future to differentiate the products from one another. The idea was to replace the lighter shade of grey with silver and the yellow with a gold shade once a suitable printing house is found to add a more luxurious feel to the brand (see Image 13). Vignelli (2010, 78) states that most of the time we like to use colour to convey a specific message; therefore, we tend to use it more as symbol or as an identifier. So by choosing luxurious colours like gold and silver, with a deep charcoal and elegant black, the colour scheme symbolizes luxury and sophistication, as the customer had wished.

Image 13: Suggested colour scheme for future product labels as they would look

| C=55 M=50 Y=49 K=42 | C=33 M=25 Y=26 K=5 | C=0 M=0 Y=0 K=100 | C=0 M=0 Y=0 K=0 | C=7 M=30 Y=96 K=1 |

CENTURY GOTHIC SMALL CAPS

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
1234567890

Image 14: Colour scheme with CMYK codes and font used for body text

The CMYK code for the black now stands as C=0 M=0 Y=0 K=100 when used for small details but if used as the background for the label, a suitable rich black must be found, for the background to not look flat.

Now that the universal product label was designed and approved, it was time to design the accompanying separate product labels. The only brief was the secondary labels were to pair well with the universal label but be slightly smaller in size, as this was an idea the customer had liked from the benchmarking process. The customer also wished that the logo of the ship be used in some form, but not to stand out too much and not to be used as a logo, as the ship was present on most of the products themselves. The labels needed to display the product information in a compact form in both Finnish and English. This was a challenge due to the small size of the labels (50 x 65 mm).
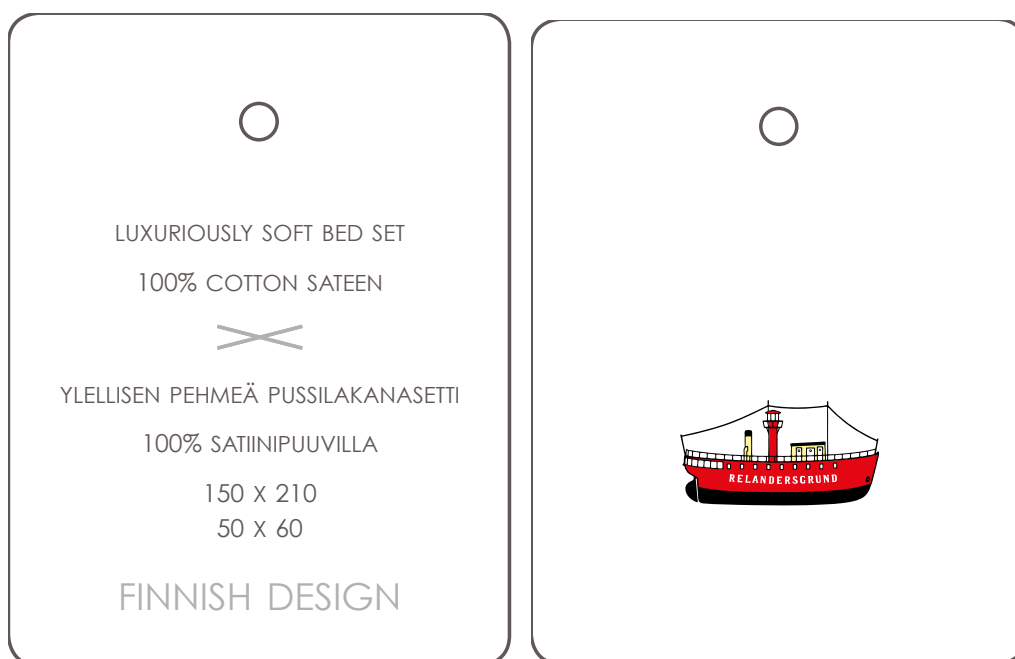

Image 15: Secondary product label, front and back

Image 16: Remaining set of labels, front only. Uses the same back as Image 15

The final labels (Images 15-16) turned out very simplistic, which fit the brief. Their purpose was not to show off the brand but instead present any vital product information in a legible yet stylish way.

The product label for the woollen cap was a different challenge, as it had to contain wash and dry information. Even after reconfiguring the text, changing the font sizes and placing the text on the reverse side, I found that it simply wasn't feasible to produce it as a smaller label, so I, with the customer's approval, decided to create a single larger label for the caps (see Image 16). I created all the icons with Adobe Illustrator.

Image 17: Label for the woollen cap. Front and back

I was only given the original product information in Finnish and had to translate the text into English, compressing the information strategically so it would fit onto the small tags. This required some research, as I was not familiar with some textile-related terms, and as I was the only English proofreader, I had to make sure my translations were accurate.

For the time being, the customer was very satisfied with the results of the labels. While they were printed using the pale and dark grey, the silver and gold will be implemented once a suitable printing house is found. It was also discussed that the secondary label will be stretched to be the same size as the primary label (90 x 50 mm) but printed on a see-through wax paper. The design will look much like that of the woollen cap label (see image 17) but the small ship logo will replace the washing and drying information.

Image 18: Majakkalaiva brand towels with the newly designed labels

Image 19: Majakkalaiva brand towels with close-up of new label design and logo

3.3.3 Packaging design

The only product that required a packaging design was the bed set. The purpose of the package was to provide a protective barrier around the delicate plastic covering

and to display the product information in an elegant yet efficient way. It was also important that the bed set cover was simple – the printing press used for the job could not print too complex of a design. My idea was to design a carton cover that would only cover half of the package. It was, in my opinion, important that the beautiful Majakkalaiva fabric was still visible from underneath the packaging.
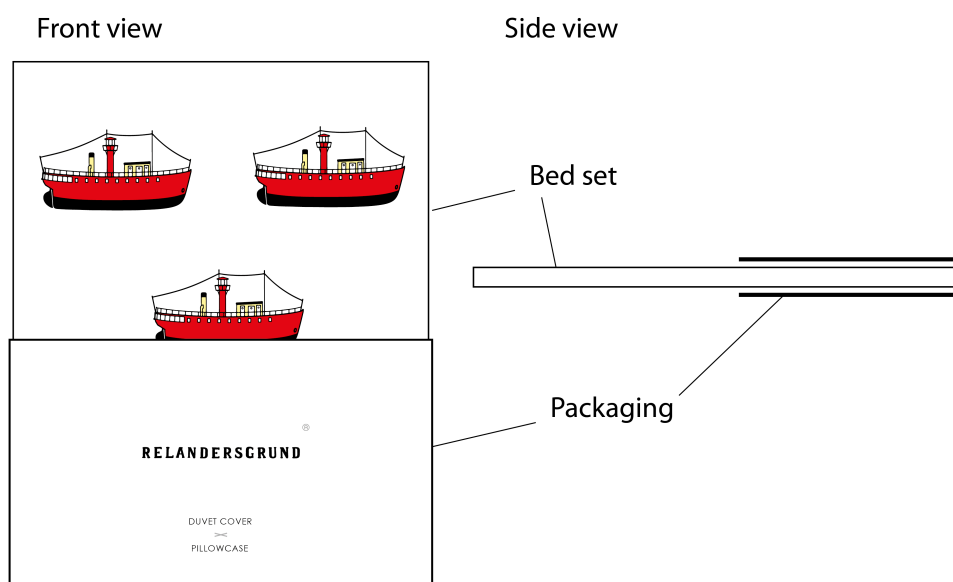

Image 20: Design for bed set packaging

The form of this design (see Image 20) was perfect in the sense that the design only necessitated a single rectangular carton, folded twice at the centre, therefore easily printable and assembled. However, and more importantly, it also displayed the product.

I had no regulations from the customer on what she wanted for the design of the bed set packaging, however the brand needed to be adequately introduced, the product information had to be suitably displayed and the design had to be stylish and minimalistic, to match the labels.

I decided upon a very minimalistic yet elegant design (see Image 21). The colourful fabric of the bed set was evoking enough to grab the attention of the consumer, so the purpose of the package was to provide an elegant yet minimalistic protective cover for the product. The package contains all of the necessary information (logo, product in-

formation, the lightship story and website information), yet still retaining a minimalistic and elegant touch. The design process itself was fairly simple as all the elements were borrowed from the label design, apart from the logo I borrowed from the lightship dé-cor and created as a vector image. The packaging was easy to print and attach onto the bed set packages with glue, and the packaging kept the bed sets neatly and from sliding on the retailer shelves.
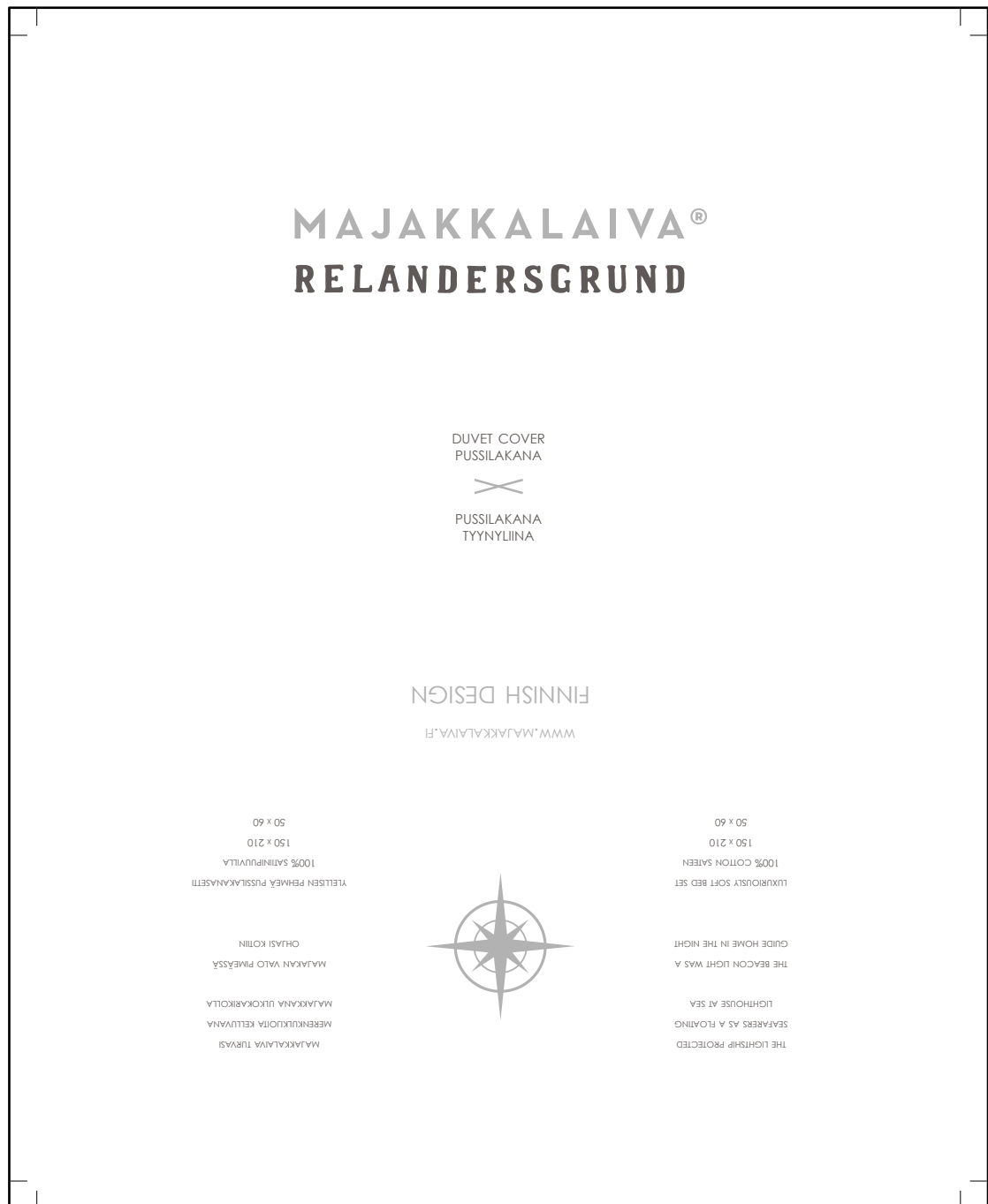

Image 21: Final bed set packaging design

Image 22: Final bed set packaging design on product in the store

I decided to leave the front of the package fairly simple, with only the logo and product information printed. The white space on the printed page is the correspondent of space in architecture. In both situations space is what qualifies the context. Naturally, the organization of information needs a structure to hold together, but one should not underestimate the importance of white space to better define the hierarchy of every component (Vignelli 2010, 91). I felt the logo should be fairly small in relation to the size of the package, as the white space would thus better frame what is most important – the logo and brand itself. I find that, as with good architecture, adequate negative or white space gives for harmonious and balanced design. This is why I decided upon such a minimalistic and simple design.

3.4   Brochure design

The brand also required a brochure. "Brochures are advertising pieces mainly used to introduce a company or organization, and inform about products and/or services to a target audience. Brochures are distributed by mail, handed personally or placed in brochure racks. They are usually present near tourist attractions" (Wikipedia). Seppä

wanted something to market and advertise the brand and the lightship shop with. The brochure could conveniently be sent to potential future retailers, consumers and event planners. It had to both introduce the lightship's logo along with its story, as well as present the Majakkalaiva brand and its products. I had a selection of images sent to me by Seppä, which I could freely use in my design process. All of the other elements, however, were up to me. Therefore I was in charge of the overall layout of the brochure, the design and the copywriting. The brochure had to resemble the label design through its simplicity and elegance.
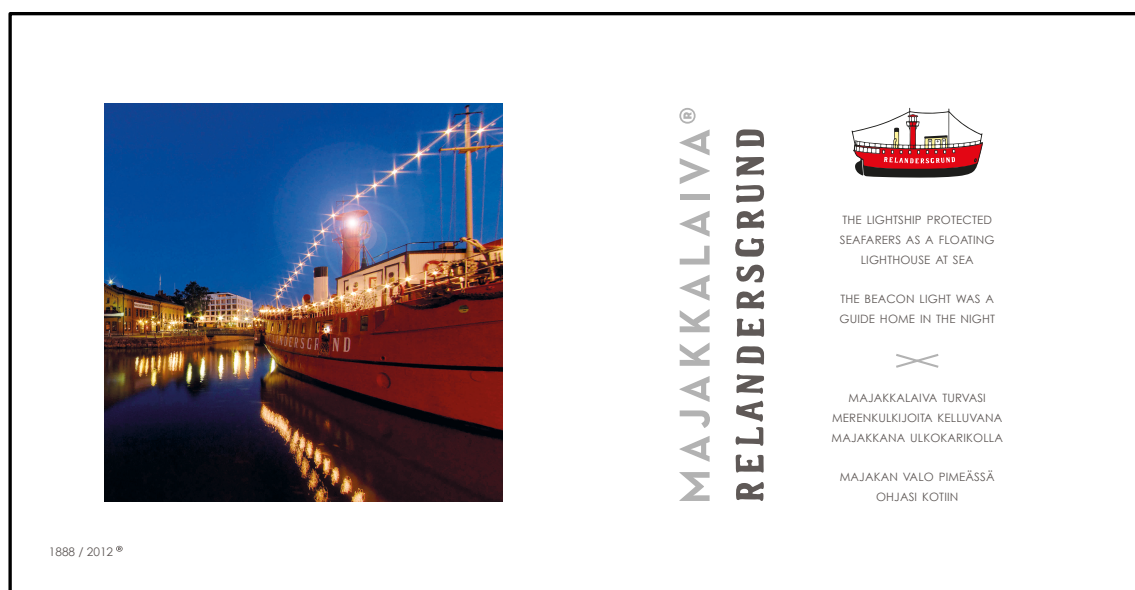

Image 23: Majakkalaiva (R) brochure, back and front cover

Image 24: Majakkalaiva (R) brochure, inside spread

In designing a book, a brochure, or any other kind of printed matter, the choice of the paper size involves quite a complexity of issues. Sometimes it has to conform to previous related publications, sometimes it has to break a new ground, and sometimes the size itself becomes the carrier of a message even before anything is printed on it. (Vignelli 2010, 36) Based on the importance of the paper size, I decided upon a folded, square brochure. I felt an A4- or A5-sized brochure would seem too ordinary and look like a leaflet instead of a more professional looking brochure. The ship's introduction is presented on the front and back covers and the product information is displayed on the inside spread (see Images 23 and 24). The overall feel of the brochure had to be harmonious, elegant and fairly minimal, to go along with the rest of the labelling designs. The brochure was folded in the middle to form a small booklet – the front cover, with the lightship story and image, arouses the consumer's attention and interest while the inside spread provides a short introduction to the brand and all of the Majakkalaiva products.

In designing a successful brochure, Robin Williams states that one of the most important elements in brochure design is repetition, and a designer should "repeat various elements in the design to create a unified look to the piece. [One] might repeat colours, typefaces, rules, spatial arrangements, bullets, etc." Another important aspect of brochure design is alignment as "strong, sharp edges create a strong, sharp impression. A combination of alignments (using centred, flush left, and flush right in one piece) usually creates a sloppy, weak impression." And a final crucial element in a successful brochure is proximity, or "grouping similar items close together, is especially important in a project such as a brochure where you have a variety of subtopics within one main topic. How close and how far away items are from each other communicates the relationships of the items" (Williams 2008, 130). I feel I have been successful in all three elements. I have used repetition of a square shape; not only is the brochure square but the images are framed in square boxes in a geometric fashion. This has created strong and powerful edges. I have also used only one typeface with a universally centred alignment and grouped similar items together in a similar fashion. Most importantly, I feel the end result is harmonious, modern and informative, which filled the customer brief.

4   Reflection on the design process

After the design process was completed, I had time to reflect on the project as a whole. As this project was a learning experience for me, it was important that I recognized where I had been successful and where I needed to improve as a designer.

4.1   Time management

M/L Relandersgrund Design Schedule

Task and explanation	Date	Time (h)
First customer meeting Ship history, background information Product revision, target audience research	6.9.	4
Logo design in Adobe Illustrator Redesigning the ship logo Design of the first draft of my personal vision	8.9.	7
Finding a suitable font Research for a free font, implementing in logo Customer approval meeting	14.9.	5
Redesigning compass logo in Illustrator Based on original bad quality .jpg file	14.9.	2
Customer meeting Going through first vision of labels Deciding on font and final color scheme	18.9.	4
Designing layout for final labels Layout design in InDesign Translation of all text to English Reviewing rules and regulations of the printer company Creating the final .pdf file for the printers Reviewing final product with customer	30.9.	10
Poster meeting with customer Deciding on suitable images Designing the layout with the customer Creating several suggestions Design of the posters in InDesign Creating printable .pdf files and sending them to the printers	7.10.	6
Creating sub-labels for each individual products Meeting Design Translation of descriptions Creating printable files and sending them to the printers	10.11.	6.5
Minor projects: creating price lists for the retailers Indesign files in both A3 and A5 sizes	15.11.	2
Brochure meeting Reviewing customer wishes Rough design of layout	26.11.	4
Brochure design Taking product pictures Copywriting for the brochure Photo editing in Adobe Lightroom Design of brochure and creating printable .pdf file Communication with printers, sending files	27.11.	6
	Total time:	**56.5**

Image 25: Schedule and time management of the design process

This design process gave me an insight on what it was like working for a genuine customer and how to work within real deadlines. When I began the job in September of 2012, I was aware that the labels and packaging had to be printed and on the shelves before September, when the products were sold in the lightship's Christmas boutique. This was a true motivator for me to work at an efficient pace – there was no room for delays. I was able to work within my planned scheduled (as seen in Image 25), as scheduled design meetings and mid-interval deadlines regimented the workload and kept me focused on the final goal.

4.2   Design restrictions and challenges

There were many design challenges I faced during the design process. One of these was the size of the labels and products – it was a real challenge to incorporate all of the necessary product and brand information onto a label the size of a credit card. The end result needed to look tranquil and harmonious, while still being informative, legible and interesting. This was the principal challenge I faced. I eventually solved this issue by using a main, universal product label and a secondary one for any product information.

It was also quite a challenge to decide on the necessary information was to display on each label. While I had no previous experience in label or packaging design, the benchmarking process proved to be an essential research and educational step for me. I educated myself on the basics of label design and researched many other aspects and areas of the design field I was not previously educated in.

4.2.1   Considering the printing press

There were many guidelines in my design process, as I had to consider the rules and regulations of the printing house. The font had to be of a certain size and weight, for the printer to be able to print it, especially with a light font on a darker background. This challenged the amount of information I was able to place on the limited surface area of the labels. Another challenge was the use of colour. All colour formats had to be in CMYK- and not RGB-colour models. (Uniprint Digitaalinen pdf-tiedosto, 2009) Nevertheless, all of the documents and photographs I was provided with were in RGB colour mode – colour conversion was a lengthy error margin I had not documented for.

However, colour conversion is an essential part of design and forgetting this step could result in a flawed result.

The RGB colour model, which stands for Red Green Blue, is based on these three colours of light that our eyes register, and which together make white light. This colour model is called the additive model, and is used in all appliances that radiate light to show images, such as camera screens, televisions and computer monitors. Colours in the RGB model are bright and radiant. However, the printed page does not radiate light, and mixing red, green and blue paint would certainly not create white, which is why the printing process utilizes the CMYK colour model. It stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Key (black), as the three colours together make black. This subtractive colour model is used to create all other colours in printing. These two colours models, which might appear very similar on screen, will print in very different ways; the CMYK model is never able to produce as bright and vivid colours as the RGB model, which is based on light. Colour conversion is therefore crucial, and forgetting to check which colour mode the images were in could have been a costly error.

Before creating printable PDF-documents, I had to thoroughly research the printing press's rules and regulations on their website and I was constantly in touch with them to make sure the documents I was creating were in line with their printer. This was an important part of the design process – even the smallest error in colour choice or even font size could be extremely costly to the paying customer. Therefore I would always print a test copy at home before sending the documents to the printer to make sure I had created an error-free document.

4.3   Working with the customer

After reflecting on the project, I find the most beneficial part of the design process was learning to work with the customer on a one-on-one basis. The design, on its own, was fairly simple as it was mainly based on the logo, typography and text, with a few icons. Perhaps the most challenging aspect was working with the customer in such an intimate fashion. I had previously worked as an intern in a graphic design firm, and had worked on customer-based projects, but had rarely communicated directly with the customer. Most tasks and directions came from my bosses and supervisors and I had no final say on anything. Every task I completed and every file I sent to the printers

was double-checked and I always felt at ease with my work as there was no possibility for errors. However, this was the first time in my design career that I had sole responsibility of every task, every design decision and every file. I felt honoured to have so much trust placed on me, and to be responsible for the visual identity of the whole brand, but it was a true lesson on responsibility and time management.

I discovered that working intimately with a customer is very different to working on a solo project, as I had become accustomed to at school. The customer often has many opinions on most design aspects, which are often vastly different to those of the designer. However, it was an important lesson to learn how to balance customer wishes and demands with one's own design experience and knowledge. Working with a customer also resulted misspent time as some of my design suggestions were rejected at customer meetings.

4.3.1   Communication

Our primary mode of communication at the beginning of the project was through design meetings, in which I sought out the customer's requests and desires for the brand. We held lengthy meetings in which we researched competing brands and went through my label and logo proposals throughout my design process. At the logo design phase of the design process, meetings were held, in which we went over numerous font, colour and size variations and choices to find a perfect combination. I discovered this way of working with the client was easier for the both of us and ultimately more time-efficient.

Once the customer had familiarized herself with my style and gained a trust in my design process and vision, I gained more freedom as the design process went on. Meetings became less frequent and our mode of communicating turned more towards e-mails and phone calls.

I learned during this project, that communication is key when working with a customer. Miscommunication often lead to wasted designs and time, and I realized that every aspect, however minute or seemingly insignificant, had to be agreed upon together.

4.3.2   Design conflicts

In retrospect, the end result of the labels and logo are not necessarily ones I would have decided upon myself had I been the customer. I would have chosen a slightly more playful colour scheme and utilised the outlined vector ship logo more as I had used in my first draft of the labels (see Image 10). I found the range of products were playful enough to carry them off. While the prominently simple, graphic grey labels that were finally chosen are stylish enough, I would have liked to have put a bit more of my own style and visual input into them. However, I am aware that in many design situations the customer is most often the priority, and it is important to satisfy the customer wishes. All in all, I learned to put my differences of opinion aside to make sure the customer was content.

4.3.3   Customer satisfaction

After the project had come to an end, I asked Susanna Seppä what her thoughts were on the end result. Her comments were as follows:

> "The Majakkalaiva Relandersgrund labels are stylish, minimalistic and up to date. They evoke dignity and modernity. The labels are modifiable by colour thus making it possible to individualize the different products within the recognizable product family. Kerttu Saarinen was successful in her design process and we are extremely happy with her work.
>
> Working with Kerttu Saarinen was enjoyable and easy. She had a fresh vision and the ability to realize the customer's wishes." (Seppä, 2012)

This positive feedback from my customer was a great compensation for my work and a true motivator for me to pursue design as a possible career choice. At the beginning of the project I was doubtful of my abilities to create a product from scratch that a customer would be satisfied with and willing to pay for, especially as I received no professional aid or guidance. However, the customer has asked me to continue the design process by redesigning the current website, and continuing the label designs to other products in the lightship shop as the brand and products progress.

5 Conclusion

All things considered, this label and logo design process was greatly beneficial to me. Not only did it teach me the significance of time management and regimented deadline implementation in a successful design process, but it also trained me in working one-on-one with a customer. This was a vast difference to my previous design experience, as I had never been solely responsible for a project this vast before; as I was the only one in the process with a design background and education, I at times felt immense pressure to get every minute detail right. I was also the only one with good English-speaking skills, and therefore had no proofreading assistance. This even resulted in a major error at one point in the process, as an English word ended up being misspelled on a final printed brochure. Luckily only a few copies were printed in that particular set so the error did not turn out to be too costly. However, it opened my eyes to how meticulous one must be while designing anything for a customer and the proofreading and error-checking phase can be even more important than the actual design work.

This project also taught me what it would be to work as a freelancer; while it would give the freedom to work anytime and anywhere on solo projects, it also has its disadvantages. Essentially, there are no second opinions on any design choices I may make, there is a clear lack of information and assistance on aspects I am not yet familiar with, and there is an emphasized need to be extra careful while creating products for the printer; all this made me consider my future path. Freelancing work, compared to a position within a design firm, might prove more stressful, especially as an inexperienced designer.

The most difficult part of the actual design process was creating a uniform yet balanced product and brand. The equilibrium between font size, spacing, colour, negative space, legible text and powerful images was challenging for me at first, but as the design process progressed and the brand became more clear and recognizable, my confidence clearly grew and working proved to be less stressful for me. I am very satisfied with the final results and I feel that at this stage of my education,

My initial aim of this thesis was to discover how I have grown as a designer. I have had minimal work experience in the field, and my education has been mostly theoreti-

cal. While I have taken courses in graphic design, typography and illustration, I feel that only when applying education in a practical way, such as this project, can one truly develop and learn – even through one's mistakes. I was also hoping to learn during this process. While I had experience designing posters, websites and magazine spreads and other design elements, I had never had the opportunity to work on labelling, packaging or brochures. I feel that not only was I able to create a product the customer was satisfied with, but I was able to learn and develop myself. All in all I am satisfied with the end result – mainly because of the customer satisfaction and positive feedback I received. I also gained a lot of experience and confidence, as I am certain I can now carry off similar projects on my own. And as always, I also learned from the mistakes I made during my design process, which I find is the most effective learning method.

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