KARELIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
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BRAND AND VISUAL IDENTITY DESIGN FOR A BEAUTY SALON

Thesis
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Title
Designing a visual identity for a beauty salon

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to create a brand and a visual identity for a beauty-salon called Narsissi. Narsissi offers a relaxing environment where both men and women can get lasting beauty treatment results.

For a firm being branded is unavoidable. Everything from the look of the logo to the smoothness of service communicates something to the possible customer. In today's market, to be competitive means to be in control of the brand.

A huge part of a brand's effectiveness is visual. To create a competitive visual identity, research was done on the topics of branding and marketing as well as graphic design, logo design and typography. To make sure the end result reflected the owner's identity, ongoing discussion transpired during all phases of the design process.

The outcome of the thesis consists of a visual identity manual for Narsissi, as well as a fresh new look for all things visual inside the beauty salon.

Keywords

Branding, visual identity, brand design

CONTENTS

APPENDICES
Appendix 1 Visual Identity Manual
Appendix 2 Narsissi Interior Photographs

1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to demonstrate the creation of a solid, coherent and consistent brand identity for a beauty salon, including describing the brand values, theme or tone of voice, services and target customers. Simultaneously, the combination of all knowledge about the brand will be presented as a consistent style of visual identity, and the result would lead the company to obtaining a remarkable representation of who they are in the most effective and quick way. Moreover, this thesis will be focusing on the graphical aspect of designing an identity for the Narsissi brand. It also includes a brief of the essential of the marketing side of branding.

Narsissi was established in 2014, a small shop in a hidden corner of a shopping center in eastern Turku, offering only a hair removal service. According to the previous owner and observations from the current owner of the business there were more customers for this service than the small space could cater to. A short while after purchasing the shop, the current owner decided to transform the tiny shop into a bigger beauty salon with an extended variety of services and move to a more visible location still close to the previous place.

Narisissi's services include permanent laser hair removal, ultrasound cavitation, hair and eyelash extension, tattoo, tattoo removal, waxing, acne removal, face lifting, massage therapy, nail and facial treatment, etc.

This thesis has been commissioned for designing a visual brand identity and describes the process of creating and designing a brand identity for a newly opened beauty and treatment salon in Turku, Finland. The beauty salon is named after the owner's name, which in Finnish would be translated as ''Narsissi'' which is a name of a flower as well as a female name. The idea behind the business is to create costumers satisfaction, enhancing their beauty and keeping their young look, without any dangerous or operations, while creating a pleasurable experience from being in a relaxing environment, enjoying and encouraging them to return.

James Hammond believed that today's society is brand, all about brand, and nothing but the brand. Even if there is a great business, it will not survive for long without a brand. (Hammond 2008, 9-10.)

In today's market the urge for branding is growing every day. Every firm's need is to attract customers to be able to compete with the market, and this is only possible by branding over the long term or maintaining the brand through investment, which is an important asset for companies who want to build a good reputation. (Davis 2010, 17-18.)

Branding is logically clear and applies for any type of firm, be it a small local store or a global corporation. Having a clear image and reputation of the products and services guarantees the company's long term success. (Davis 2010, 17-18.) As Kotler conceived that "a person's buying choices are further influences by four major psychological factors: motivation, perception, learning and belief & attitudes". (Kotler 2008, 142).

Sigmund Freud assumed that a massive amount of people are unconscious about the real mental forces that make them behave in a certain way. He believed a buyer's shopping choices are not completely understood by buyers since they are affected by their subconscious influences based on their experiences in life. A person cannot eliminate their urge or fully control it. For example, an aging adult buying a sporty BMW convertible might tell that the reason he bought the car is to feel the wind in his thinning hair, while the deeper reason for him might be the need to impress others with his wealth and success, and yet on another level might be the need to feel youthful again. (Kotler 2008.) Along with this idea, consumer perception research can be more than helpful in fulfilling a consumer's wishes for any organization.

Keller believed that the role of having a brand is of significant importance due to its effect on the market as well as numerous valuable functions for the firm. Basically, the purpose of a brand is to identify a firm in the marketplace via consumer recognition of the characteristics and qualities of each brand that is offering its products and services. It gives customers the sense of security and trust and makes it simpler and faster for them to make up their minds and decide. Therefore, if they are familiar with a brand there are less things to think about because of the pre-conceived information they have from the brand. (Keller 2008, 8-11.)

Branding offers wonderful consequences that establish a mental ability for customers which is a formulated knowledge about products and services. Hence it gives an easy and clarified decision making path for customers while raising the value of the firm. (Keller 2008, 7-11.)

Moreover, a brand acts as a promise to consumers; whether it is a big or small firm, branding matters the most. (Entrepreneur, John William 2005.) Thus, the great advantage of having a defined brand can be as broad as a love-like relationship between customers and service providers, where customers are able to relate to the brand as well as engaging with it through their memories and emotions. This kind of a relationship will create higher sales and higher customer loyalty. (The Marketing Donut 2009.)

2   FRAMEWORK

The substantial question in this research is how to represent a brand's identity with its most suitable look while applying the brand's core value, tone of voice and vision of the brand. Moreover, the brand has to maintain its own style throughout all the materials; therefore, consistency, uniqueness and timelessness are important features that need to be employed. Thus numerous resources have been reviewed to comprehend the aim of this paper.
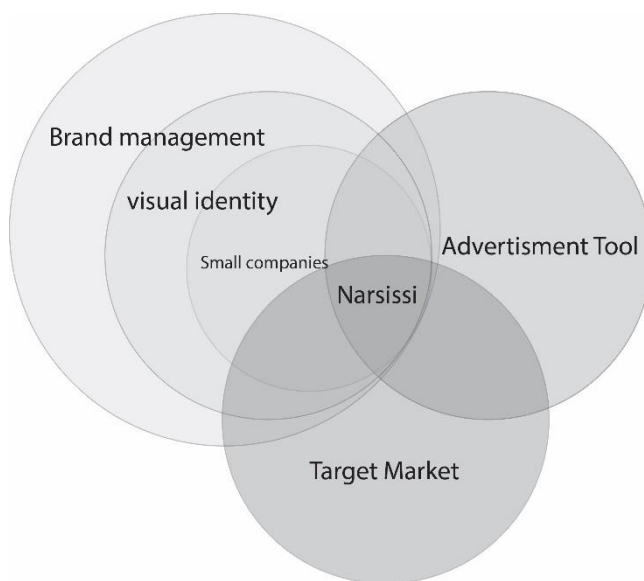

Figure 1. Thesis framework.

The research method for this paper is practice based and will be done by projecting some of the regular customers' opinions about the look and feel of the brand, as well as applying the brand's owner's direct evaluation throughout the whole brand identity. Furthermore, a combination of reviewed materials around this subject and a core realization of the brand's owner would result in the brand image design.

The main business provisions are services such as skin care and permanent hair removal, skin therapies, varieties of massage therapies, nail jobs, eyelash and hair extensions, makeup tattoo, acne removal, foot care, a freezing alternative to liposuction, fat cavitation and weight control.

According to Narsissi, they are identifying their brand more so on their permanent hair removal service, mainly because many people from different age groups are relating to the need for this service more often. Figure 2 shows Narsissi's brand vision, mission and value considered for this brand.

Target customers are mostly multinational adults both male and female who are interested in looking young and fresh. Also an attractive interior, comfortable, relaxing and welcoming service reception are important features of their service offering for customers.

Narsissi
is a brand that provides
non surgical beauty and
treatment service.
Narsissi **values** pampering
their customers with their professionally
trained employees
in a friendly environment.

NARSISSI

The **Mission** is to employ the
latest and most reliable
services regarding to
their customers'
needs and preferences

Their **Vision** is to expand
their services, becoming
a pioneer in the field
of beauty and
treatment services
and increase customer
satisfaction.

Figure 2. Narsissi's brand vision, mission and value.

In the design research process for this thesis, as figure 3 shows, the initial step was to observe the fundamental elements, to plan the project. The next step was to visually search for competitors both locally and globally, getting to know branding and designing an identity and compiling the design brief, and furthermore starting to sketch and visually research while developing the prototype. Finally, an important part of the process was evaluating and analyzing the prototype with the client as well as reflecting on the changes. After that came finalizing the evaluation and researching the best possible way to present the idea.
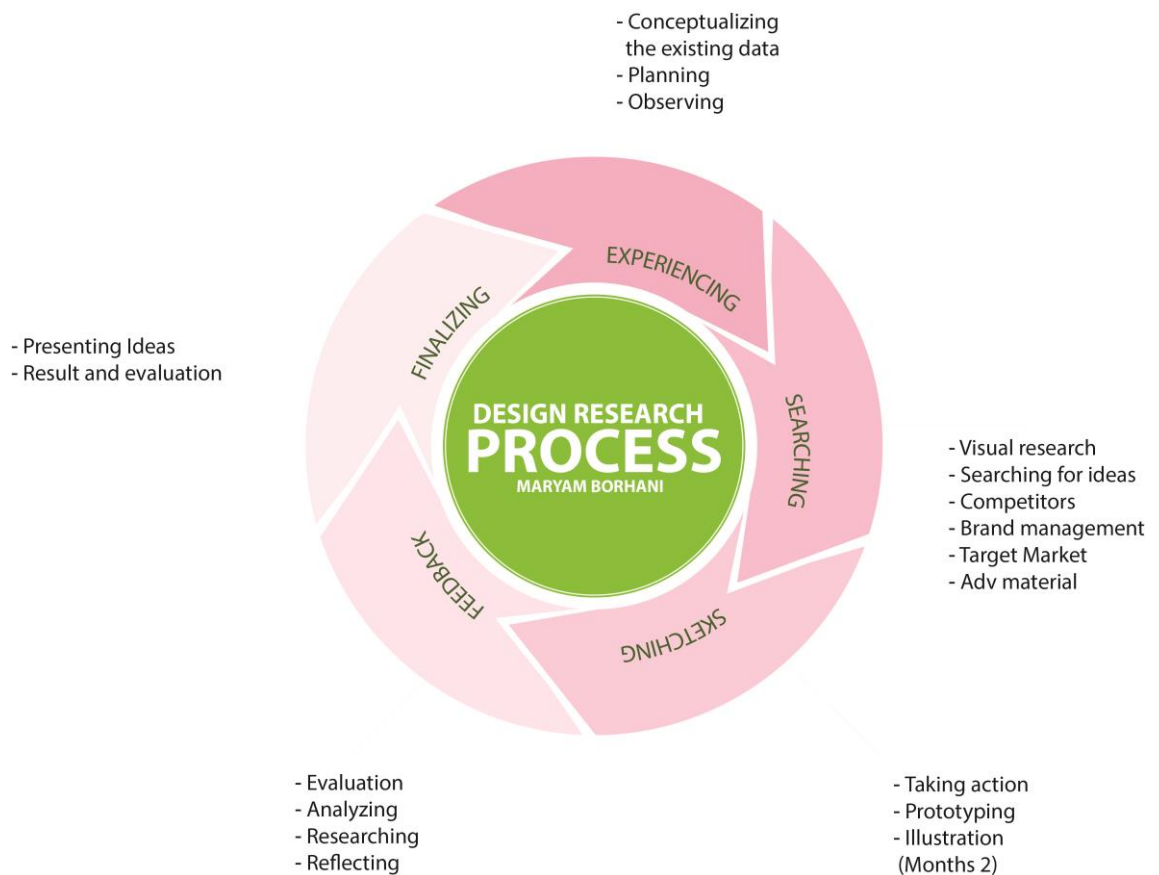

Figure 3. Design research process.

Mind mapping is a necessary thing to organize the brand elements. Mind mapping is the result of several key notes in many discussions with the client on the beginning of this project, made in order to have a common sense of all the visual elements and guiding the whole process in building a brand that matches the core value of it. In picture 1, the key notes are the preferences that are to be conveyed within the visual identity design.
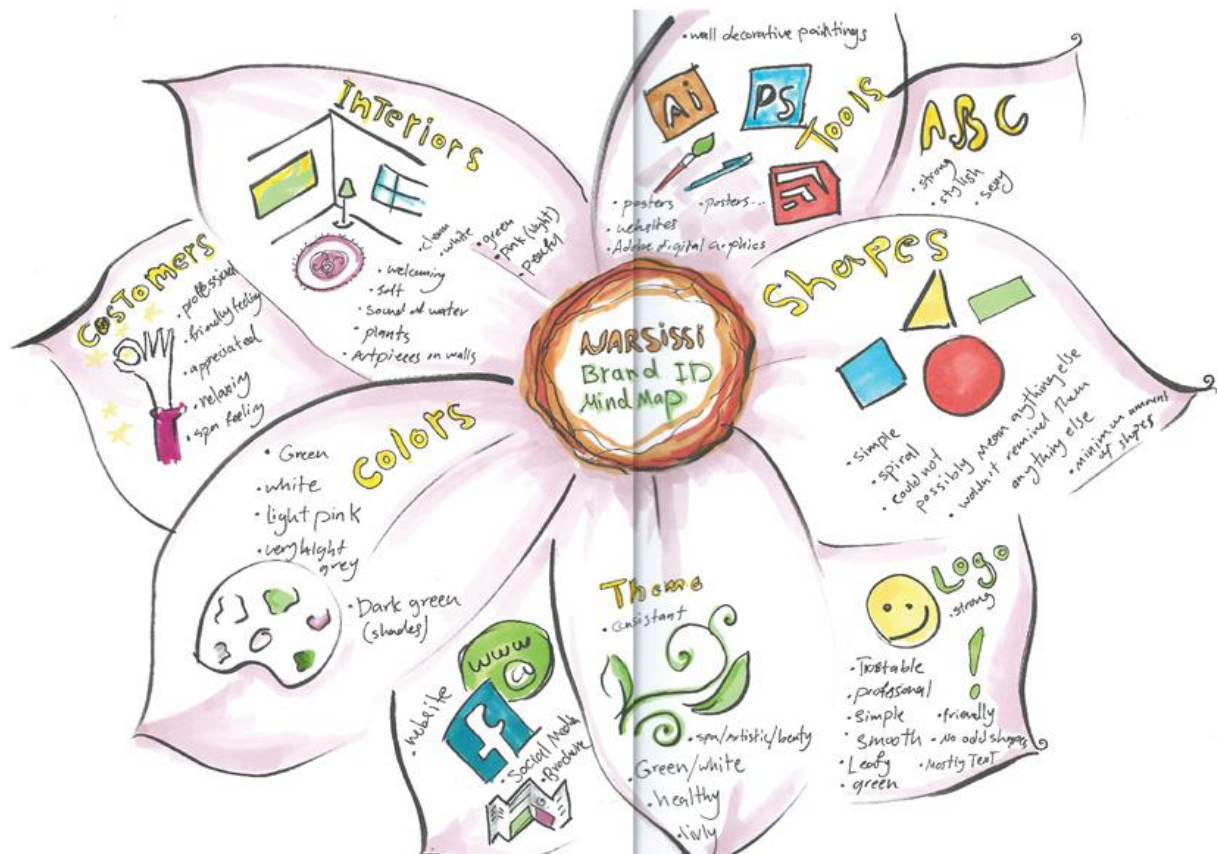
Picture 1. Mind map of Narsissi.

3 BRAND AND VISUAL IDENTITY

3.1 What is a brand?

Branding has a very long history. The word branding comes from Swedish: it literally means to burn, or to mark on something, which goes back to the old Scandinavian farms where farmers had to mark their cattle with a hot iron to differentiate them from one another's property. (Nilson 1998, 57.) In ancient times most of the kings and governments or whoever manufactured any goods in mass production developed the knowledge of branding their property. Meanwhile they enforced the use of other high quality materials like gold, silver, and porcelain to raise the confidence of their buyers. (Clifton, Blackett 2009, 13-15.)

''Brand is mixture of aspects, tangible and intangible symbolized in a trademark (logo), which, if managed properly creates value and influence'' (Swystun 2007, 14).

A brand is a tool for competition between companies, helping them to make an emotional connection with their customers; therefore, they are memorable in the minds of people. A strong brand is one that is highly distinctive, highly in relationship with their customers. The stronger the brand is, the more trustworthy it becomes, signaling as a success among users and companies and therefore increasing the number of loyal customers and income for companies. (Wheeler 2013, 2-3.)

Wheeler in her book mentioned from Brand Atlas that, ''Brands have become global currency of success''. (Brand Atlas cited in Wheeler 2013, 3).

At the same time, a successful brand is a huge advantage for a company. It creates value by attracting customers; therefore, it gives the company a promise of future income. Additionally powerful brands are those that follow a consistent mixture of a company's marketing resources. (Chernatony, McDonald, Wallace 2009, 25-32)

However, there are tremendous benefits in having a brand asset, including creating a strong service awareness among people. Brand is not only about having a logo and a visual identity, neither a collection of confined activities, but a brand is also about a

promise of a comprehensive experience, a sensation in which every costumer who has been in contact with the brand has it ingrained in the memory. The brand needs to get to the heart of every costumer. Therefore, brand building requires influencing power which includes: emotion, perception (stimulation through the senses of smell, sound, taste, touch and vision), innovation, and communication. (Hammond 2008, 10-21.)

3.2   Brand Identity & Visual Identity

Brand identity makes the intangible idea of a brand into a tangible product. It includes all the information a person can get from a brand including seeing, touching, hearing, watching the motion of it. Brand identity is an essential part of the whole brand as it works as a fuel to add recognition, allowing customers to perceive the big idea behind every brand. Brand identity merges the different aspects of brand meaning and depicts it as one coherent element. (Wheeler 2013, 4.)

Tony Allen and John Simmon mentioned in the book Brands and Branding that the term "visual identity" recently came up to help people understand the difference between the brand of the corporation and the corporate identity of the corporation. The reason for this is that when the word ''brand'' was first used, it was used far and wide as anything that was capable of influencing people.

Visual Identity is related to the graphic aspect of a brand which is consistent with these basic elements. The combination of these elements would create a representative image of a brand: Logotype, Symbols, Colors, and Typefaces. (Clifton 2009, 113.) However, Kornberger believed that a brand does not exist like physical objects; what is real is the idea of that brand in the head of the consumers (2010, 87).

Moreover, visual identity extends the company's image in almost every way, due to supplying it toward a characteristic visual style. Visual identity style depends on how typeface, colors or logo are being used, all can make the customers to recognize the brand quicker. Concerning the effectiveness of the visual identity, it needs to be consistent across all advertising materials. (Swystun 2007, 123.)

An important requirement about designing a brand identity is that the designer must have a complete and extensive design brief. The reason behind this is that designer does not own the concept of the whole business experience with customers. The designer gets the information including the passion and vision of the business as well as how they want to be seen. Therefore, designers convert the information into strong images that evoke memories, emotions, attitudes and anything that can create deep reactions. This would be called a strong brand identity. (Hammond 2008, 89-94.)

The main information the design brief needs include are brand essence and brand personality as well as core identity and extended identity. Brand essence is a sentence that is simple, short yet strong with a unique characteristic, explaining the main aim of the brand. The most successful brand essences are the ones that are relatable to the majority of people. (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000, 33-48.)

For creating a brand identity, there are some essential questions or realization that must be discovered: The brand vision and aim, the difference of this brand to others, what is that the brand is offering, what is the consistent movement of the brand, what are the brand values, or what the brand respects, what are the recognizable features of the brand, what are the brand capabilities and qualifications. (Kapfere 2012, 150.)

Brand personality can be described as a human personality characteristic which would be applied to a brand. It includes features such as gender, age, socioeconomic class, and more subtle traits such as warmth, concern, and sentimentality. (Aaker 2010, 141.)
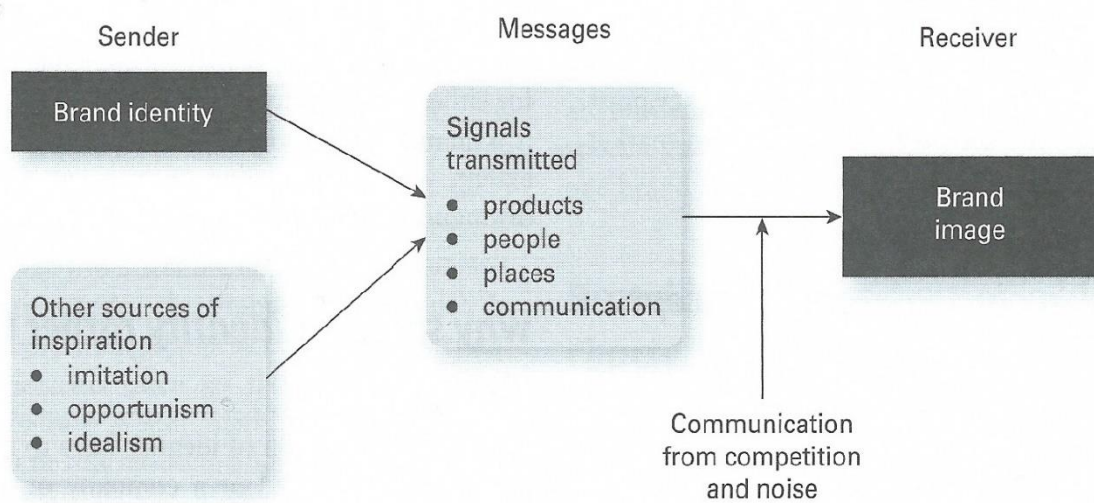

Figure 4. Identity and image (Source: Kapfere 2012, 152).

A brand's symbols are the most important representative element in the brand identity, working as an adhesive for the whole brand structure. They are the easiest elements to evoke people's emotions with and the quickest way of introducing a brand to them. Symbols can be very memorable as well as strongly reflective. An important aspect of brand structure is to maintain consistency throughout the whole brand identity and everything should fit together in a meaningful way, as well as all the other elements supporting the brand identity in a business. (Aaker 2010, 84.) Just like human personality is shown in their signature, a logo can reflect the image and essence of a brand (Kapfere 2012, 169).

Signs or logos are the most powerful yet simplest way of conveying multiple complex meanings very fast. Images and the signs within them have several meanings. As images are affected by their context, coloration and juxtaposition among other things, changes in any of these can change how the viewer interprets the image. (Ambrose & Harris, 2010, 87.)

In addition, in order to design a strong symbol there is a need to achieve a specific interpretation. Designers use metaphoric design, which means using common sense and knowledge of references around us. Be it cultural, place-related or subjective clues, designers use them all in a specific ways to obtain a certain interpretation to affect whoever is observing them. An example is using overlapping disks for showing unity (Ambrose & Harris 2010, 101). In other words, as the audience just has a quick glance at logos, the most distinctive ones are the ones with only a single feature which would convey its meaning very fast. (Airey 2015, 37.)

Moreover, there are different type of logo design or brand marks, including variety of shapes and Letterforms, Wordmarks, Pictorial marks, Abstract marks, Characters, Emblems, etc. To briefly describe each type of logo design, a word mark is a type of logo consisting of name of the company or product name that conveys the brand positioning. Letterform logos are made with one or more letterform designed to present the company name. An emblem is a logo which indistinguishably combines the name of the company and a shape of a picture. Pictorial marks are immediately recognizable stylized images, for example the logo of Apple. Abstract or Symbolic marks are simplified symbols that demonstrate a big idea with multiple meanings within it. (Wheeler, 2013, 48-64.)

Also, logotypes are created using a variety of shapes; round, square, oval, horizontal, or vertical. However, when the eyes see the logo for the first moment, the movement is more likely to be horizontal, since we read horizontally. The shape of horizontal logotypes is also more likely to be useful and appealing on designed letter heads and brochures. Exaggerating the look of a logotype can make it evoke certain emotions, such as masculinity or femininity, old or modern, sans or serif typefaces. However, the main importance for the designer is to keep the logotype easily readable; otherwise the logo has almost no value. (Reis & Reis 1998, 129-133.)

Color is the next thing that evokes emotions and memories. It has to be chosen very carefully by companies. Outstanding colors help the brand identify with their differentiations as well as express the nature of their core identity in the most efficient way. (Wheeler 2013, 50).

Choosing color for a brand is much harder than choosing a name. There are plenty of names in the world to be picked from or created, but not many colors for choosing a brand identity. It is always the safest bet to pick one of the primary or secondary type of colors, which include (red, blue, and yellow) and (green, orange, purple) plus the neutral colors (black, white, grey). (Reis & Reis 1998, 135-141.)

An interesting fact about colors is that each of them appears to behave slightly different in our eyes. For example, red objects are more focused behind the retinas in the eye while they are being observed, and due to this it appears as if they are moving toward the viewer. Colors on the blue part of the spectrum appear opposite of red, so they emerge as moving away from the viewer. As result of these physical traits, red is the dominant color and people feel it is in their face, making it highly distinctive. (Reis & Reis, 1998, 135-141.) This fact is another element that designers need to keep in mind while trying to convey a certain meaning with their designs.

Over time, colors have adopted variety of meanings in societies, for example, white is the color of purity, like in a wedding dress. Black is the color of luxury, blue the color of leadership, and purple the color of royalty. Green is the color of the environment and health. Usually the best way of choosing a color for a brand identity is to find out the symbolic color of the category in which the company is offering services or products. When choosing the right color for the brand, managers centralize their choice based on the feeling. It is however important to focus on the uniqueness of the brand identity

color rather than simply matching the symbolic color of that business category. (Reis & Reis, 1998, 135-141.) Therefore, the color that has been chosen will not remind the audiences of other competitors.

Another important element in design is typography, which converts language into a visual element. There are two levels of typography: denotation and connotation. Denotation is the literal meaning of the word, and connotation is tied to the feeling that the word evokes in a person. The level of connotation in typography is often in relation to pictures, in the fashion introduced by designers. (Landa 2010, 128.)

Designing letterform in a two-dimensional screen is typography, which can function as display or body copy. Display typographies are often bold and big like a headline or a title which are more dominant than other typographies. Text or body copy are often in paragraph form and column or main written content. All of these typographies can be created in many creative ways. (Landa 2010, 128.)

Typography can be used in many communicational ways. It can help readers to easily understand the word, or create a meaning beyond the written word (Ambrose & Harris 2010, 108).

To facilitate readers with typography, it is important to remember these features in a design work. First of all, if typefaces have too much thick-thin contrast within a word it makes for hard reading, especially if the typeface is used in a small size. Secondly, heavily distorted, expanded or too condensed typefaces are also hard to read. Body copy or texts that are all in caps form are difficult and tiring to read. High contrast between the background and the typefaces increase readability. Typefaces that are too colorful on similarly colorful background also decrease the readability. Typefaces that are on full detailed images are harder to read. Tiny bright typefaces are harder to read on a dark background. It has also been noted that people read the darker typefaces first. (Landa 2010, 129.)

Selecting a typeface depends on the structure of the typeface and the content of the written text. Each typeface has a certain characteristic that needs to be considered when choosing due to its great effect on visual communication with audiences. For instance, classical typefaces are more capable of withstanding changes in them, as designers have been using them through time. These typefaces have maintained their readability under a variety of changes. On the other hand, ornamental or decorative typefaces have the

least possibility of surviving under changes. Due to the amount and style of detail they can be easily confusing and unbalanced. (Landa 2010, 130.)

General standards for creating a design work with typefaces include: typefaces have to be clear to read in any condition, keep a similar character of shape or a family of typefaces within the design, and avoid mixing more than three families of typefaces in a designed piece. It is always best to use typefaces that have a rich variety of fonts including sans, serif, bold, regular and thin. (Landa 2010, 132.)

The results of the designed imagery is compiled into a booklet, so it can be carried over to all areas of a company's activities, resulting in visual cohesion. These visual identity manuals can vary from few pages to hundreds explaining all the details of a company's visual language such as logo, color and layout, and of all the building blocks of anything visual a customer might expect to see from a company. (Hammond 2008, 89-94.)

3.3   Brand Examples

The Body Shop is a company that produces health and beauty care products with their main focus on skin products. The Body Shop has been established without the usual way of advertising. Their core brand identity is strongly about personal and environmental care. At the time when awareness has been raised around the issue of using animals for testing some products, Body Shop announced that it never tested on animals and all of their packaging is recyclable, simple, and reusable. All of the staff are highly enthusiastic and informative to welcome people on using the environmental friendly products. The Body Shop has broadcasted the brand through plenty of social and public relational activities. (Keller 2008, 56.)

For their brand identity The Body Shop has been using natural and earthy colors, such as green, brown grey, and blue to resemble their eco-friendly identity. Along with that they have used a natural pattern for their packages, for example plenty of wood detail textures have been used in their products for men. The interiors of the stores are filled with wooden shelves and green backgrounds. Body Shop's logo includes a circle which

could be interpreted as the shape of the earth or a human face along with two drops inside of the circle.

Picture 2. The body shop brand identity.

Chanel has a revolutionary brand design for a perfume and fashion company. They have a very simple yet powerful brand identity. Before the 20th century all perfumes were based on the essence of roses and other flowers, their look heavily inspired by art nouveau, filled with details of flowers, the style extravagant and lush. Around 1920 a famous fashion designer named Coco Chanel thought that these floral perfumes do not reflect the true nature of women, as she said "Women are not flowers. Why should they want to smell like flowers?" She then created a perfume with fabricated scent, and designed a very deep and simple package for the perfume as well as a simple, clean logotype with no curves or floral features. The logo embodied the attitude of Chanel, who believed that "elegance is refusal" (Millman 2012, 84.)

Picture 3. Chanel brand identity.

Nivea, a German skin and beauty care company was founded in 1882. The word Nivea comes from the Latin word *niveus* which means white as snow. Nivea's first logo was a curvy, yellow, green, and red in art nouveau style. In 1925 blue and white colors became the primary colors of Nivea, and the logo was completely modernized into an all-capital serif font. The white logotype of Nivea has been placed in a dark blue circle. (Van der Vlugt 2012.)

Picture 4. Nivea brand identity

Shiseido, the oldest cosmetic company in the world, was founded in 1872 in Japan. The word *shiseido* stands for 'praise of virtues of the earth which nurtures new life and brings forth significant values'. The company used to be a pharmacy until 1915, and their logo was a brave hawk of their ancient family crests. Shiseido then turned their main products into cosmetics. The new logo of their choosing was the camellia flower because of their best selling product, the Koyu Hanatsubaki hair oil. *Hanatsubaki* is camellia flower in Japanese. The new logotype was considered a very modern logo at the time, while most of the Japanese companies were still using traditional logos inspired from family crests patterns. (Van der Vlugt 2012.)

The mark includes two simplified camellia flowers and a seven flower leaf, which symbolizes the blossom floating in a bowl of water and depicts a timeless multicultural bold vision of them which they believe is growing with their graphical symbol. (Shiseido 2015.)

The current logotype of Shiseido is consistent with the name of the brand with its charming double 'S', leaning horizontally. (Van der Vlugt 2012). Shiseido has also employed a soft and smooth feeling in their identity with elegant bright and natural colors mixed with very smooth texture, which could be interpreted as the preferred feeling for any skin.

Picture 5. Shiseido brand identity.

4   NARSISSI'S DESIGN PROCESS

4.1   Narsissi's Design Brief

The beauty salon Narsissi is a startup business owned by a family member of the author. The company was established in east side of Turku. The business idea behind Narsissi is mainly to provide skin care and beauty treatments. Their service concept differs from other beauty salons by being not just makeup, nail and hair care, but also special services involving skin care and weight control. According to Narsissi there is no similar beauty salon in eastern Turku that has all these services of health, beauty and treatments at one place. The name Narsissi has been inspired by the owner's name, which is a name of a flower as well.

Previously my client has been working as a nurse in several hospitals and a dental clinic in Turku for ten years. The idea of Narsissi started with my client's need for such services. As a result of discussing with her large multinational network in that area she found a very tiny and hidden small shop in a corner of a shopping center that could offer one or two skin care services, which was not enough for the large amount of customers she had. There was a huge demand in the market for skin care and beauty services in a better environment. My client bought that small shop and transformed it into a larger beauty salon and extended services. Based on her findings and observations as well as her customer feedback she is constantly developing and hiring work force.

I have studied some broader competitors of a similar business in the center of Helsinki. There have been very good examples of similar businesses in other parts of Europe as well. All data has been gathered and presented to my client to monitor the norm of the business image.

Additionally, having a visual identity for a beauty salon is an active voice of a relationship to their target market. Therefore, my client commissioned me to design the brand image to best fit the services as well as helping them stand out well in a broader crowd.

4.2   Narsissi's Mission & Vision

The mission and vision of an organization is the fundamental structure of all communications, within a company and between the company and its customers. Brand visioning addresses the big picture for the company, establishing a clear path for the future destination of the company. (Davis b 2007,46.)

Brand visioning is an essential part of brand planning. Successful brand managers have clear vision, as it assures the future of the brand. However, brand visioning is teamwork, and brand managers are to encourage their employees to thrive for a better future. If employees simply acknowledging this, it would enhance the process of reaching the brand's goal. (de Chernatony 2006, 99-108.)

Narsissi's brand horizon is to expand itself into a larger organization and to develop the variety of beauty related services, hiring more professionals, as well as enhancing their service quality day by day. Along with that they are envisioning multiplying their store number.

The brand's mission is focused on the company's performance at the current time, and is a statement which reflects the company's behaviors and values. The brand's vision and mission are fundamental components of a brand culture. (Davis 2007, 46-48.)

Narsissi's brand missions are to be promising and trustworthy in the eyes of their customers, and to care for their concerns about their wellbeing and beauty, as well as appearing as a current and strong competitor in the market field.

Narsissi values pampering their customers individually using the latest method of beauty treatments, while professionally trained employees create a friendly and comforting environment for their customers. Narsissi's brand value is a lively spirit of rejuvenation with a gentle, soft touch of nature.

4.3 Target Market

Narsissi has a diverse and multinational target market with mostly adults, both male and female, who are willing to make a better look of themselves harmlessly, those who are concerned about their aging and want to keep looking young and fresh, and also youngsters who might need skin care or laser therapy. Moreover, the target group are people who enjoy visiting a beauty salon where they can relax and be taken care of professionally, as well as enjoying the result of their procedure. Narsissi has targeted customers who value a healthy lifestyle along with the passion of looking young and beautiful at a reasonable price. Customers are mostly inhabitants of around the same area in Turku and Helsinki.
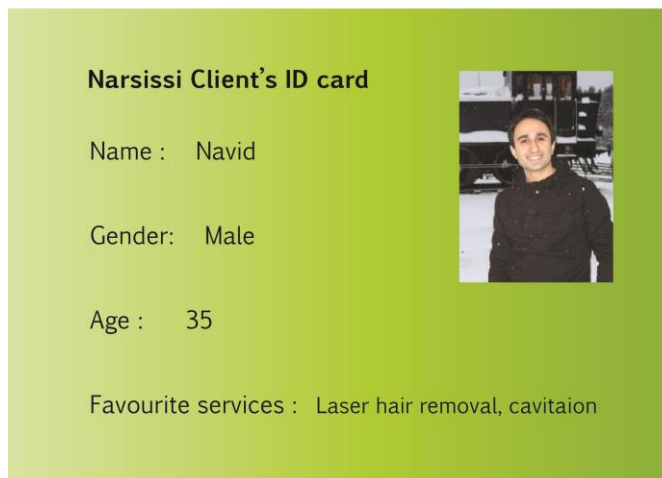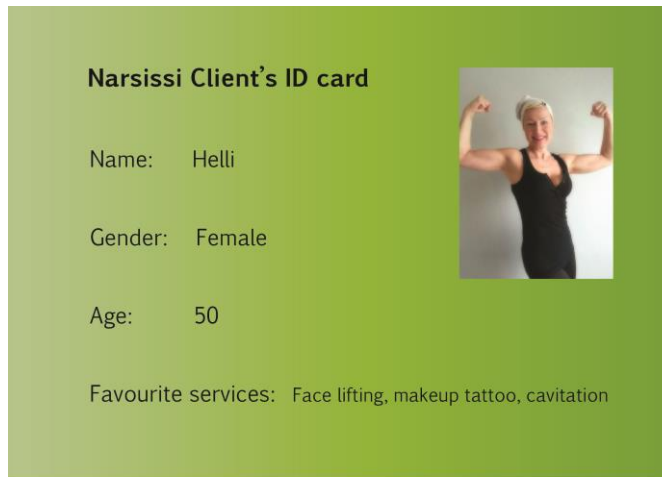
Picture 6, 7. Client cards.

## 4.4   Creating a Narsissi Identity

Joel Katz mentioned in designing brand identity book, that a designer is a medium between client and target customers. Logo should show the client's position and goal, and direct end users to their wish. (Wheeler. 2013. 48).

I started the design process by thinking and researching the phenomena as well as discovering the business idea behind Narsissi by gathering a design brief, along with collecting fundamental knowledge on building a brand identity.

Thereafter, surfing through other successful brands with similar services like beauty clinics or spa treatment places has been done. However, there is no spa in the Narsissi salon, the feeling of a relaxing aromatic place has been conceptualized for this brand.

Additionally, some traditional visual field research has been done around Narsissi. Although there are some beauty salons and hair dressing places around the same shopping center, there are no competitors within the area who are offering the same services or aiming to give same experiences to their customers.

Along with that, the relationship between the services and the brand personalities, along with their visual elements have been observed and photographed. The results to some extent have been shared and discussed with Narsissi's owner. Figures 7, 8 and 9 show photographs that have been taken from beauty salons around Turku, Helsinki and Tallinn.
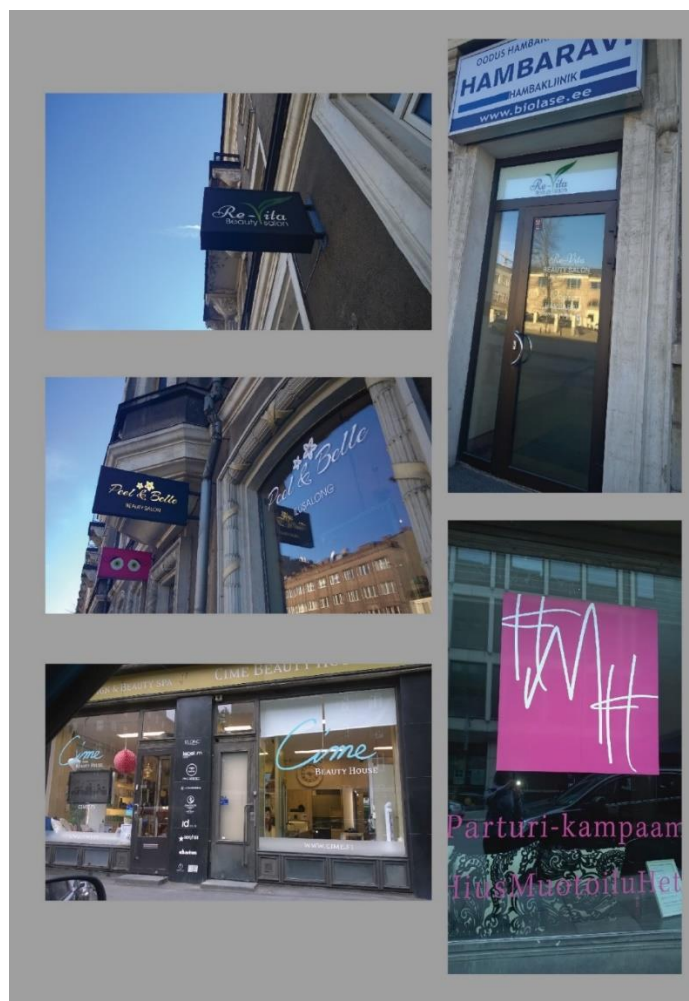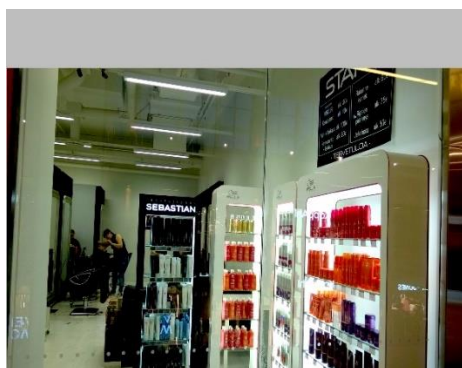
Pictures 8, 9, 10. Visual competitors field research examples

While discussing with client, they had been looking for a logo that shows smoothness as well as firmness, to convey feminine and masculine feelings at the same time. During discussion one source of inspiration was brought up: CHIC beauty and treatment salon in Italy that offers similar services. The client favored their sense of style. However, CHIC mainly shows a feminine side of their brand, while Narsissi brand is for both men and women.

Figure 11. CHIC clinic as inspiration.

Furthermore, the most powerful tool for communication between designer and client, was assembled by creating a moodboard which visualizes the feeling and the sense of style of their brand in one picture.

Often a newly established company may not know what they are looking for. Moodboard plays a significant role in visual identity design; however, it takes several hours and days to collect all the useful data, it leads to a big help for clients in finding out the exact style that is preferred to be applied to their brand identity.

Figure 12. Narsissi's moodboard.

After collecting abundant existing visual researches, the process of visualizing the brand identity began. Thereafter, hand sketching took place during some of the meetings with the client at different stages of the project. Several drawings revolve around the narcissus flower, hence the name 'Narsissi'.
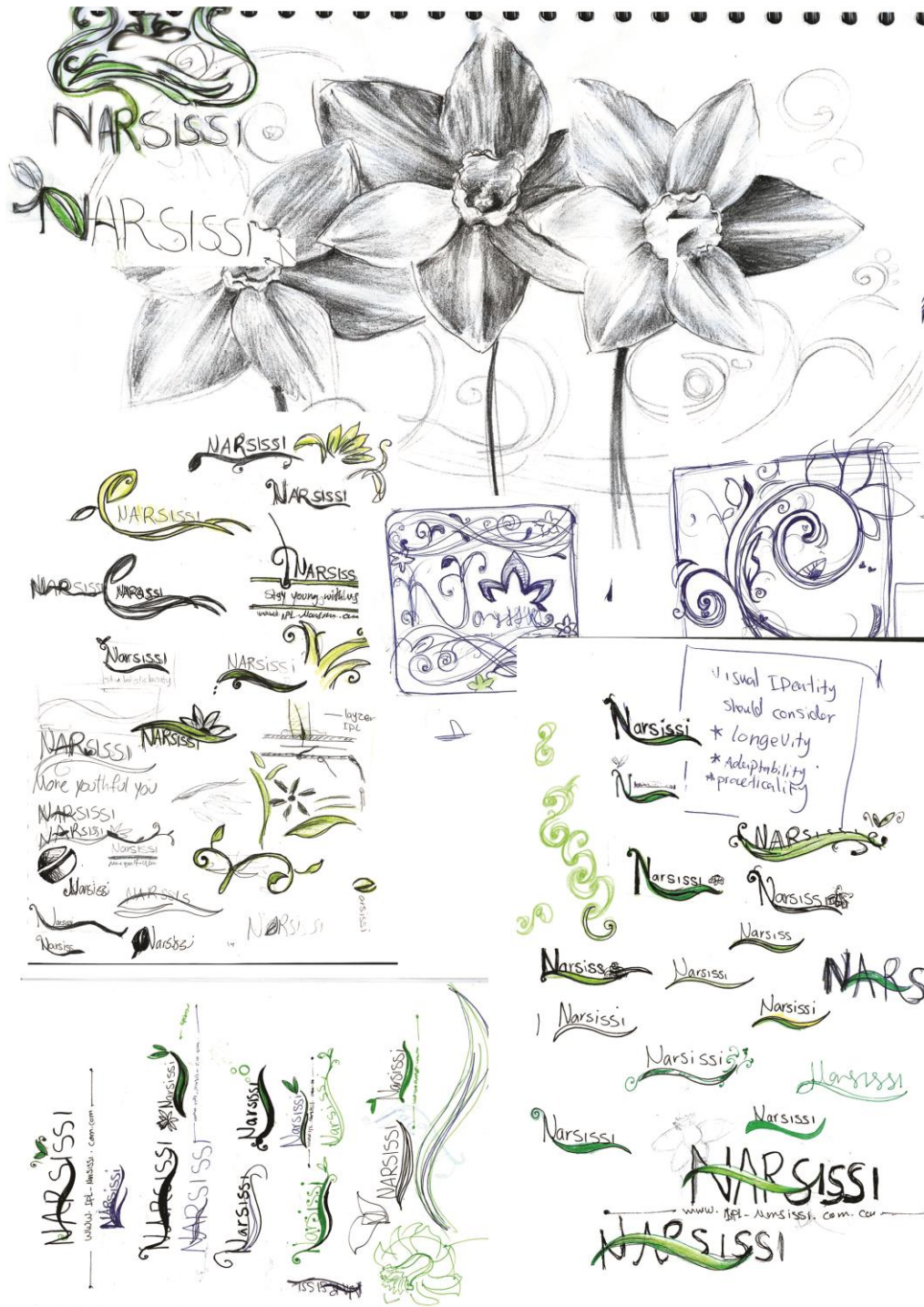
Picture 13. Hands sketches during and after meetings.

The process of designing Narsissi's logo after the initial hand sketching shows the digital process of creating the ideal logo. This process has been shared and discussed with the client as well. One of the client's wishes was that the brand identity would stand for the essence of their brand. They also wished that their brand identity included e.g. simplicity, softness, smoothness, friendliness yet professional.

One strong demand from Narsissi was that the logo cannot be interpreted by other means rather than a very clearly defined or a well-known shape of an object, for example a leaf that does not represent any other meaning than just a leaf.

Picture 14. Computer sketches and samples of logos.

4.5 Result of Narsissi's brand identity

Color is a very strong communication ingredient and is often the first thing that grabs attention in any logo. Choosing the right color for a logo can accentuate the effectiveness of its meaning. Colors have symbolic cultural meanings which provide a great opportunity for designers to communicate with their audiences. (Ambrose, Harris 2010, 130.)

Colors evoke emotions. Narsissi decided to use colors that resemble health, well-being, and freshness and also do not represent any specific gender. Colors that are based on blue or green are found in nature. Like spring growth, these colors makes us feel refreshed, calm and relaxing (Whelan 1994).

Green has therefore been chosen as the main color of the brand, with the secondary color light purple as well as grey to compliment the primary color. Consequently, a leaf shape has been introduced as a sign of health and youth, after many sketches and plenty of discussion with client.

Apart from presenting a green leaf in the logo, Narsissi wished that their logo would stimulate some sort of flow feeling in it, and at the same time be very readable and modern.

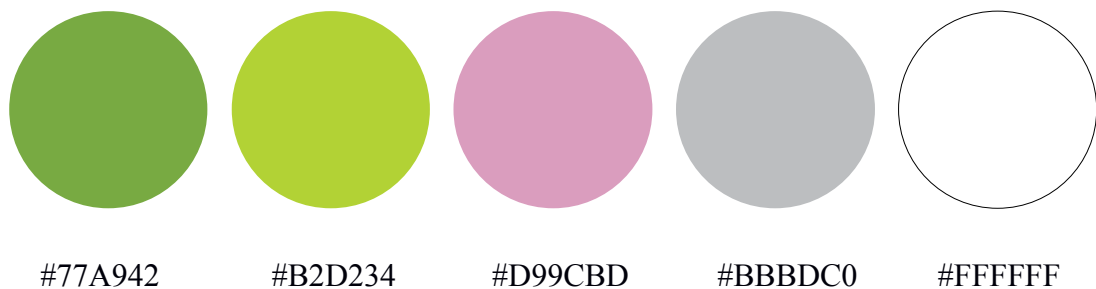#77A942   #B2D234   #D99CBD   #BBBDC0   #FFFFFF

Figure 5. Colors of Narsissi.

The final outcome for Narsissi's brand identity is made of a sans serif logotype called High thing light regular. This logotype is combined with a leaf instead of the letter A. The main reasons that the leaf is being replaced with letter A is to soften the look of the logotype, as well as to blend it with the name instead of having two separate icons.

In addition, there is a curvy line incorporated in the background to represent the flow or, accordingly, hair.

Picture 15. Narsissi's logo.

5   CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to describe the process of creating a brand identity and designing a functional brand for a beauty salon. The approach for this paper was a practice based research, as well as reviewing and applying the theoretical knowledge of designing brand identity. The main resources were books from prominent authors in the field, journal articles, online pages and databases. Additionally, field research has been carried out, and result has been discussed with the client of this project.

Creating a framework and meetings with the client have been of major help in the designing process. This process started from a general view of the field of branding and was narrowed down to designing a visual identity, which includes designing a logo type as well as the guideline for the identity.

This paper has not covered all other visual elements in a brand. However some posters, flyers, brochures, website and part of the interior of the firm has been designed in addition to some decorative art paintings has been painted by the designer of this project.

The question that arises in this paper is whether or not the designer's job is similar to a translator's or do designers interpret the outcome design. My realization was that designers are intellectual thinkers who judge based on their background information, knowledge and interests. Each designer also has a unique of sense of style.

Designers have the freedom of choice and are not to advertise blindly on only the best interest of organizations. If organizations do not follow sufficient ethical standards, designers have the responsibility to deny the unethical products or services offers for advertising.

The best way to evaluate the success of this project is by observing the satisfaction of the client which was accomplished entirely, along with the massive addition of customers. Narsissi also got positive feedback from target customers after the finalization of the branding process. I also received further job offers from nearby shops for designing their brand identity.

As for the learning outcome, I gained valuable information on how to work with an actual client, working from ideation to laying down the finishing touches. I also found the psychology of branding to be very interesting.

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to 5.8.2015.

APPENDICES

NARSISSI

Design Guide for Narsissi

May 2015

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION

Narsissi is a brand that provides non surgical beauty and treatment services.
We value pampering our costumers with our professionally trained
employees in a friendly environment.

Mission is to employee latest and most reliable services
regarding to our costumersneed and prefernces .

Narsissi's vision is expanding the services, becoming
a pioneer in the field of beauty and treatmnent services
and increase satisfaction for costumers .

2. LOGO

The logo must maintain the original shape
,color and thickness. Using the logo
on different background must be considering
readablity of the logo
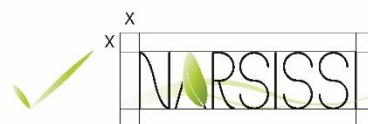
3. COLOR

Main colors in this design are two green.
Secondary colors are light purple, white and grey.
Secondary colors should not be used in main text, they should be used
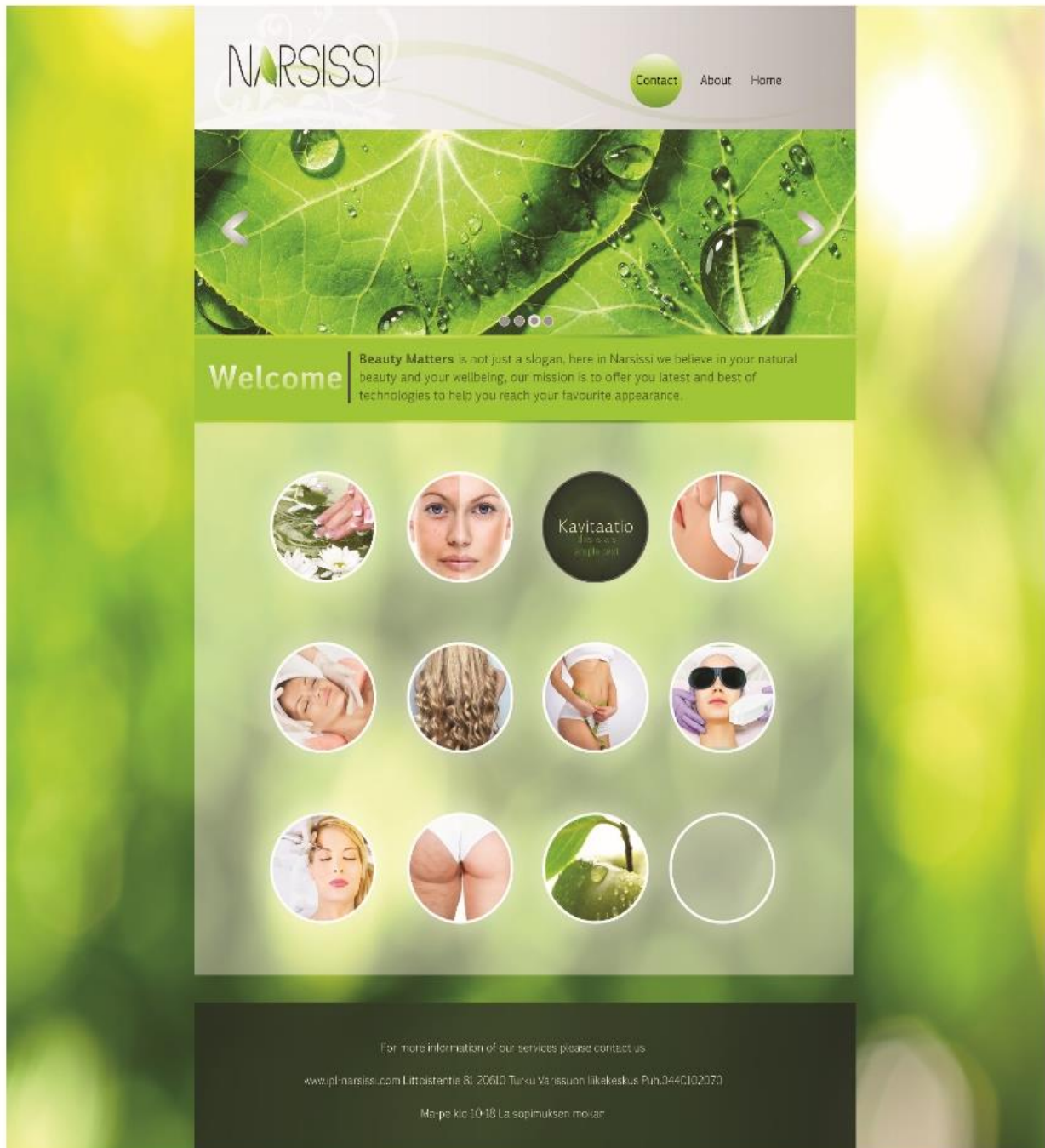less often in compare with the primary colors.

#77A942	#B2D234	#D99CBD	#BBBDC0	#FFFFFF
C 60	C 35	C 12	C 0	C 0
M 15	M 0	M 44	M 0	M 0
Y 100	Y 100	Y 5	Y 0	Y 0
K 0	K 0	K 0	K 30	K 0
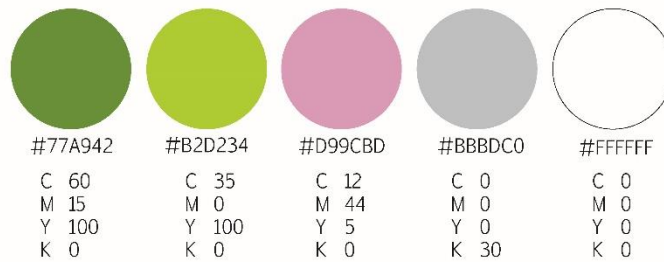
4. TYPOGRAPHY

Body and text font
Pigiarniq
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
123456789

logotype font

High Thin LIGHT
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
123456789