

What Every Organization Needs:

brand design



Ideas that engage, inform and inspire.

brand design

Brand design is an expertise based on discovering and shaping the premise of what makes something unique, and to position that uniqueness so that the marketplace forms a strong preference. Brand design is effective whether it's for a company, product, a service, communication, event, place, or even a person.

We offer you the following process as a way to make brand design an integral part of your thinking, and to allow us as brand designers to make success an integral part of your organization. It is a method for creating a roadmap of the most effective, potent, reliable way to get from point A to point B when you are not even quite sure of what B is.

What follows is a broad framework through which brand design can be incorporated into your organization. Its purpose is to encourage your thinking and to begin to assess your brand status—and ultimately to engage a brand design strategy to further your organization's success.

Brand Strategy Road Map

Having the brand strategy road map in a single document can help envision a process and communicate that process in broad strokes to everyone involved. This is always useful because, inevitably, various individuals in an organization are touch points of the brand and need to be a part of the necessary consensus building.

Here are the key guiding principles:

brand vision

A brand vision is about having the end in mind. Document what you want the brand to become. Think five to ten years out—if you became this one thing, then you would know that you are successful. It should be motivating and enticing to get people focused. Here are some guidelines to help you get started:

What is a Brand Vision Statement?

Defines the optimal desired future state—the mental picture—of what an organization wants to achieve over time;

Provides guidance and inspiration as to what an organization is focused on achieving in five, ten, or more years;

Functions as the “north star”—it is what all employees understand their work every day ultimately contributes towards accomplishing over the long term; and,

Is written succinctly in an inspirational manner that makes it easy for all employees to repeat it at any given time.

Leaders may change, but a clearly established Vision Statement encourages people to focus on what’s important and better understand organization-wide change and alignment of resources.

brand promise

Start with defining and writing down why your organization exists. What's the purpose or cause behind your brand?

In the words of Simon Sinek, author and communications strategist, "people don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it." (More on this in Simon's TED Talk). Also in this blog post, you can find out what goes into a positioning statement that succinctly defines what your brand is all about. Here's an excerpt:

The Art of Positioning

The positioning statement is the expression of how a company, organization, product, or service wishes to be perceived by its various audiences. It is the core message to deliver in every medium to reinforce the audiences' perceptions. This positioning statement is developed based on key strengths, market differentiators, and future goals, and how these attributes intersect with the wants and needs of the marketplace.

Positioning is the first step in the branding process. It's the most basic of all strategy statements and the foundation upon which the branding is built.

The positioning statement must define three things:

- Target audience
- Competitive category
- The most meaningful point of difference for your brand.

brand values

Articulating your organization's brand values should draw from the foundational building blocks of a brand vision and positioning.

Articulating your organization's brand values should draw from the foundational building blocks of a brand vision and positioning. Brand values are described through four vectors: 1) *What Your Organization Stands For* (why the organization exists and associated underlying themes); 2) *Your Character* (values or brand attributes expressed as human characteristics and personality traits); 3) *Your Differentiators* (qualities that are credible, unique, and ownable); and 4) *Your Benefits* (what your audiences gain from engaging with your organization and other aspirational qualities). These brand values become the "Voice" of the organization and a "Messaging Platform" from which all brand communications should draw ([see our eBook on One Voice Messaging Platform](#)).

The brand values expressed in a One Voice Messaging Platform ensure consistency and a guideline for everyone in the organization to deliver upon the Brand's promise. It becomes an extension of what the Brand stands for. It sets the stage for good, compelling storytelling about the brand.

brand attraction

As brands become more loved, they go beyond being just a product or service—they become an idea that fulfills an audience’s emotional needs. Developing an emotional preference for your company, product or service isn’t easy. Being likeable to a lot of people isn’t the point—it’s being loved by the right ones.

We say this over and over to our clients—avoid the temptation of trying to be all things to all people. Creating brand preference is about sharpening your focus, simplifying your message, and championing a clear idea or concept that sets you apart from others. [See our Brand Attraction eBook](#). Here’s an excerpt:

Attraction is a Beautiful Thing

Whether it’s a business or a non-profit, your goal as a leader is to build, transform, and elevate your brand—so that you can attract attention, create buzz, nurture a preference, generate leads, and engender loyalty.

To do that, you need to understand the essential truths about your organization, interlace them with your audiences’ perspectives, and use that knowledge to create a smart and fearless presence that changes minds and inspires action.

brand storytelling

Creative Strategies

So how are you going to let the world know about your re-energized brand? One of the most effective ways of showcasing your brand is through storytelling. Humans are hard-wired to gravitate toward stories. We naturally seek out compelling drama in books, songs, movies, plays, TV shows—and even in brands. When developing creative concepts, look for ways to highlight how your brand plays a role in solving a problem, coming to the rescue, making life easier, etc. Testimonials or presentations of real-life scenarios are common ways to tell a brand story. Connecting your brand to people, objects, or events that carry a larger meaning in our culture can help bring out the significance of your brand (see Apple’s “Think Different” campaign). There is an inherently compelling story to be told for ANY product or service—you just need to find the best way to tell it to set you apart from your competitors and to attract attention.

Marketing Tactics

Develop a media plan utilizing the most effective tactics to reach your marketplace. We always recommend an integrated approach with ROI as a driving force for making decisions. This could be advertising, digital media, search engine marketing, content marketing, social media, or professional influence. We recommend focusing on at least five to six key tactical areas for a well-rounded campaign. However, knowledge of your target audiences should help determine if you need more or fewer touch points.

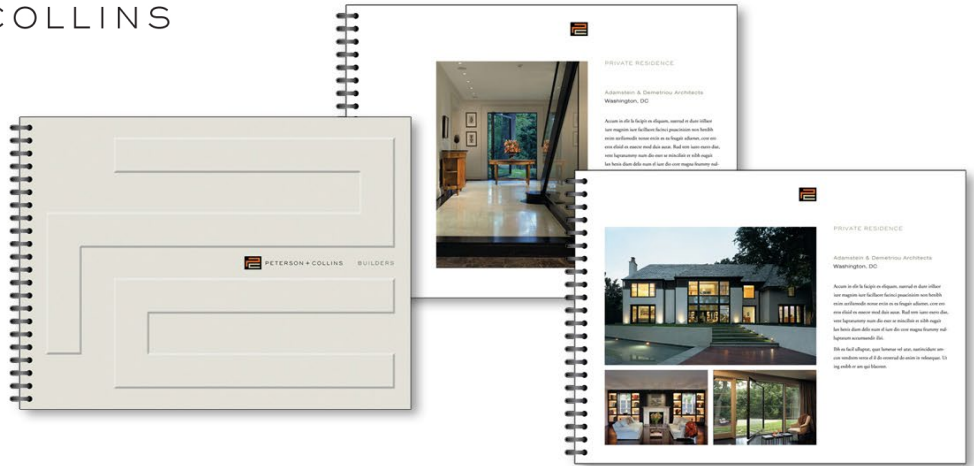
brand connections

The brand design process and roadmap creates connectors with your marketplace. There are six principles that help connect the brand with consumers and drive brand attraction. These include 1) the brand vision; 2) the freshness of the organization, product or service; 3) the brand promise; 4) the brand values and the ability to tell a compelling story; 5) the strategic and tactical choices you make to tell the story, and 6) the overall experience and impressions it leaves with your audience.

All in all, there's a lot that can go into your brand design. There's no single "right way" to arrive at the perfect brand. But if you apply some of the principles outlined here and stay focused on the foundational pillars of what your brand means when you strip everything non-essential away, you'll at least have a truer understanding of what you need to convey to your customers and prospects. And that's the most important element of a brand that will stand the test of time.



PETERSON + COLLINS



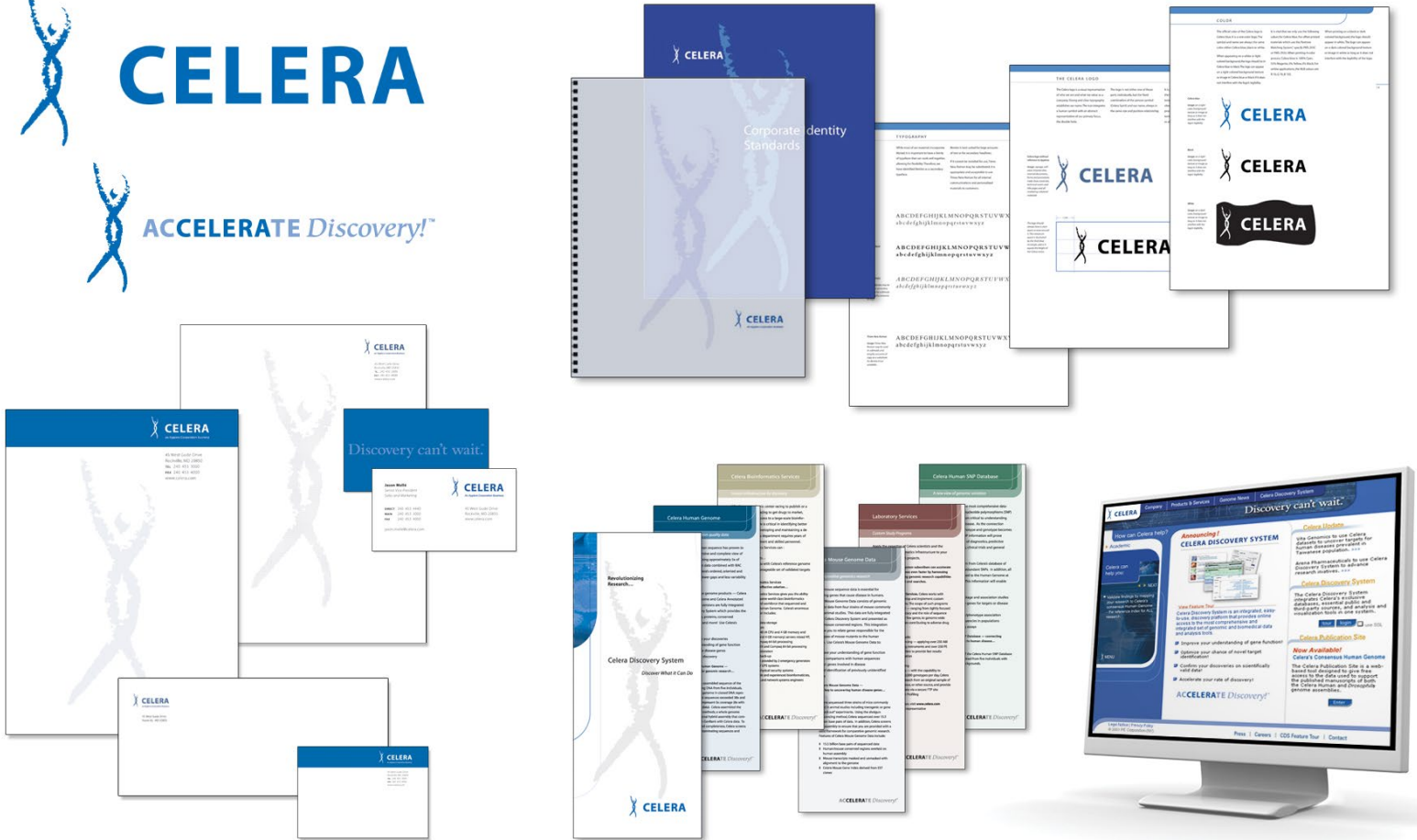
Peterson and Collins, Inc. has an excellent reputation as a quality residential builder in the Washington, D.C. market. While the company has a portfolio of award-winning work, it did not have a consistent identity and lacked some essential marketing tools. In addition to developing a web site, the main goal of this assignment was to re-energize the Peterson and Collins identity and strengthen brand recognition. We first designed a logo that symbolized perfect balance and proportion. We then designed stationery, signage, brochure and the web site, all of which captured the integrity of the builder's work.

MyFlorist

Your expression. Our passion. MyFlorist.

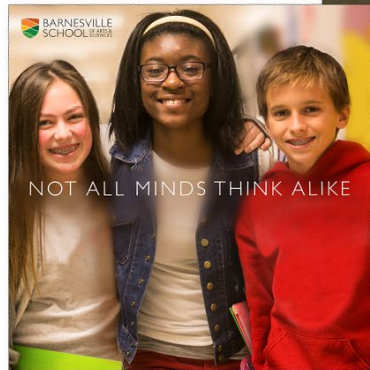
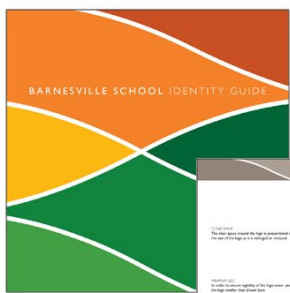


MyFlorist is a provider of high-quality flower arrangements and related services to a growing client base. Needing to re-energize the brand, we developed a plan consisting of modest qualitative research, re-positioning, a new brand look and feel, a direct marketing campaign, a website facelift and print advertising. We created a tagline: "Your expression. Our passion. MyFlorist." based on MyFlorist's passion to create a flower arrangement for every sentiment.



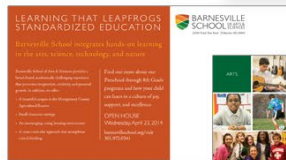
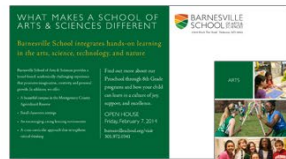
Celera is the world leader in the science of genomics. After Celera announced it had completed the mapping of the human genome, it asked us to develop a new identity, branding strategy and marketing plan to establish the brand and position the company in the minds of its target audiences.

We carried out an extensive audit that led to a differentiation strategy, key messages, and a new logo and tagline. These became the foundation for our development of Celera's national advertising campaign, direct marketing program, sales support kits, a website and trade show booths.



Extraordinary Teachers
Barnesville teachers are highly skilled, creative, and passionate about what they do. They have the freedom to challenge each child and tailor instruction based on individual needs and learning styles.

Disciplined Culture
We cultivate an atmosphere of respect and reverence where students consistently respect and inspire each other, and gain confidence in themselves.



Barnesville School is an independent school in Barnesville, Maryland that provides a distinctive educational experience for pre-school through 8th grade students. Looking to broaden its appeal, the school began a process to strategically move its identity from that of a country day school to a school of arts and sciences.

We carried out an extensive audit that led to a differentiation strategy, key messages, and a new identity. We then developed an integrated marketing communications plan to roll out the new brand and multifaceted recruiting campaign. A major cornerstone of this rollout was getting consensus to redesign and build a new website.



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Protecting Health, Saving Lives—*Millions at a Time*



The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health is the largest, oldest and most academically acclaimed School of Public Health in the world. The School had recently changed its name (from “Hygiene and Public Health” to the “Bloomberg School of Public Health”), and it was about to embark on a major fundraising initiative and lacked a cohesive or coordinated brand identity. We developed a multi-phased plan, including research, positioning platform, and creation of a new brand identity, a compelling tagline and a comprehensive set of brand guidelines and brand applications.

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When you stay in Arlington, you'll find world-class dining, shopping and nightlife around every corner. We're also home to national historic landmarks like the Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima) and the U.S. Air Force Memorial. And of course, the best of D.C. is right next-door: Arlington -- easy access to incredible experiences.

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With renowned performances at Signature Theatre, Arena Stage, and the Rosslyn Spectrum, Arlington plays a starring role in the capital region arts scene.

Choose from a wide range of exciting arts venues in Arlington! Enjoy your favorite musicals at Signature Theatre, a striking new theater in the heart of Arlington's shopping and dining district. Take in the Tony Award®-winning productions of Arena Stage in the heart of Crystal City. Or catch a performance at the Rosslyn Spectrum Theatre, home to Synthetic Theatre, Arlington's own cutting-edge theater group that applies the "art of silence" and thrilling choreography to well-known productions. Hold your next meeting or event in Arlington, and get a standing ovation for your guests' incomparable arts experience.

For special event arrangements, or for information on venue rentals, contact the Arlington Convention and Visitors Service at 800-296-7996, or visit www.stayarlington.com.

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Arlington County, VA is a world-class urban county located outside Washington, DC. Arlington Economic Development (AED), a department of Arlington County, is responsible for promoting economic development and expanding regional, domestic and international tourism for the county. TDC was hired to develop branding, marketing communications, collateral and interactive media to support the mission of AED and Arlington's Convention and Visitors Service. To date we have rolled out a number of tactical pieces including print advertising, direct response material and collateral.

brand designers

A branding and integrated marketing communications expert The Design Channel has extensive experience in creating powerful positioning, branding platforms, and content marketing programs for organizations and enterprises in a wide range of industries.

Visit www.thedesignchannel.com or call 202.951.9196 to learn more about our work, services, and team.



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