UX, brand and crossing disciplines

Daniel Soltis
UX Director, Moving Brands
Scenes from an industrial design competition
A naive definition of brand and identity
A user experience lens on brand identity design
So what?
We work with businesses to create new brands, businesses, products and services.
I’ve taken a winding path

Creative technology + User experience = Math and physics (undergrad)

Interactive product design + Teaching and community organizing = Science writing and editing

Physical computing (grad school) + Game design (grad school)
I spend a lot of time doing things
I don’t know how to do
A naive definition of brand and identity
When I started, I thought brand was this

LOGO

(and maybe some colors or something)
Over time, I’ve built a slightly more nuanced understanding of what people experience, what you make, what you say, what you do, etc.
Over time, I’ve built a slightly more nuanced understanding

What people experience
what you make, what you say, what you do, etc.

(I’ve spent most of my time here)
Over time, I’ve built a slightly more nuanced understanding

Strategy

Ideas behind the brand
who you are, who you are for,
what makes you different,
what you’re trying to do
in the world, etc.

Everything

What people experience
what you make, what you say,
what you do, etc.
Over time, I’ve built a slightly more nuanced understanding
Over time, I’ve built a slightly more nuanced understanding.

‘Raw materials’ to make things
logo, type, look and feel,
tone of voice, sound, movement,
interaction patterns, etc.
How do you design this connective tissue?
A user experience lens on brand identity design
A naive definition of user experience design
Brand identities have multiple audiences with very different needs and contexts.
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A brand identity system is a toolkit
The **tools** need to be useful and usable

The **kit** shapes possibilities for what you can create
How do you design a **design toolkit** that is useful, usable and helps people get where they need to go?
Start with people

Who is the identity for?

What are the needs and desires of the end audiences, stakeholders and practitioners?
Prototype early and often

How will the identity work in context?

How might it flex to new contexts?

How can you stretch your thinking?
Lean into constraints

How can practical challenges shape the system and make it better?
Make tools, not rules

How do you share solutions to the problems you’ve faced?

Can you use automation and tools to make guidance easier to implement?
Put best practice into practice

What general best practice should you build into the system?

How do you translate general guidance into a specific context?
Build toolkits, not rulebooks

How do you make sure practitioners can get what they need when they need it?

How can you enable guidance to evolve and stay up to date?
Demonstrate the art of the possible

What are the intangibles that need to be shown, not told?

How do you inspire?

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So what?
Stay in, switch or merge your swim lanes?
Incoherence and hubris
Only one lifetime old
Thanks!