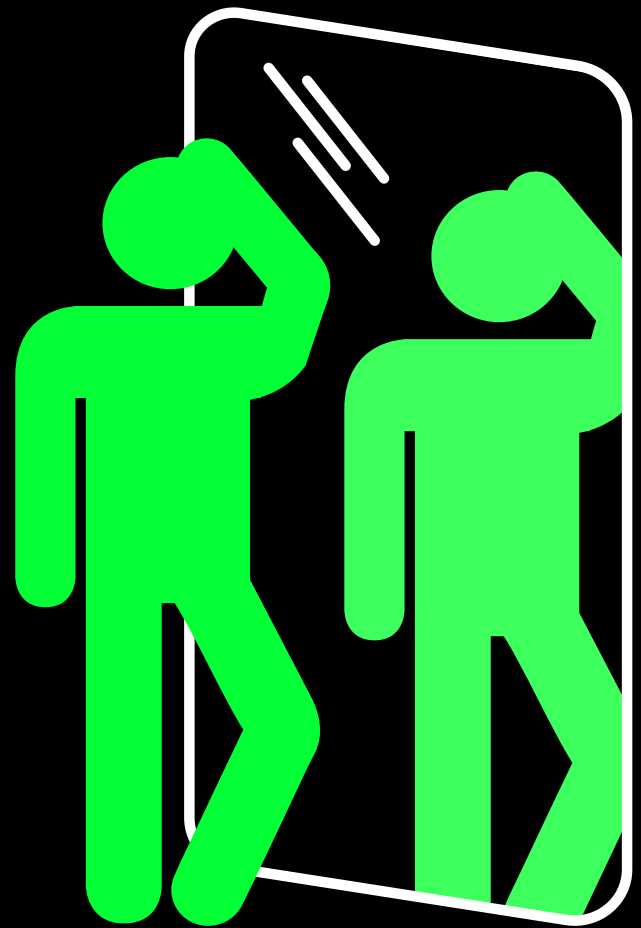


Who the **tech** do you think you are?

A creative brand planning playbook
for different tech brand types.



#WhoThe**Tech**

MADE BY GIANTS®

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What the **tech** are you doing in 2024?

It's the big question on everyone's minds.

We're all facing an uncertain year ahead, so how do you plan for this and connect to growth?

We know it takes a huge amount of creativity to come up with innovative technology ideas and get them to market. We believe you need to apply the same level of creativity to brand growth in 2024.

How do you do that? Firstly, work out who you are. It's the equivalent of looking in the mirror.

To help you, Made By Giants identifies five tech brand types (some might be familiar, others will be new).

Then, take a look at how creative storytelling unlocks each brand type's potential. We've included customised tips for each one to get your creative juices flowing.

Become the best tech brand version of yourself!

**The five tech brand types:
who the **tech** do you think
you are?**



Are you a Category Creator?

Do you think about things that are not ordinarily top of the absolute priority list?

Do you advocate for what is needed in 5-10 years' time, not what seems to be needed right now?

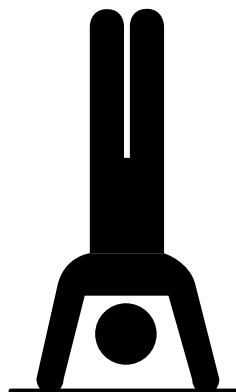
Do you have new, unprecedented ideas that you are successfully bringing to market?

Are you continuing to build on your product or service by educating audiences that your way is now a new status quo for that specific need or challenge?

Examples? Uber, Wise.

Questions you might be asking yourself about the impact of your brand in 2024:

1. Do potential buyers and users understand what it is we're doing?
2. Do potential buyers and users care about what it is we're making?
3. Do investors see what the future could look like with us in it?



Are you a Disruptor?

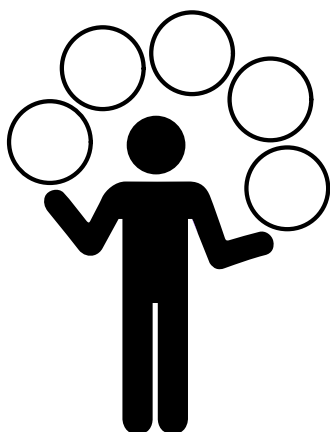
Are you turning things on their head and overtly challenging how a specific market need is served by existing players?

Are you radically changing how the need is purchased and consumed by the audience in question?

Examples? Klarna, GoCardless.

Questions you might be asking yourself about the impact of your brand in 2024:

1. How is regulation going to impact our brand reputation?
2. How do we stay relevant to our customers if we have to change course?
3. How do we stay unique and keep ahead of the pack?



Are you a Category Multiplier?

Are you young in age?

Are you on the journey to profitability?

Have you spotted the opportunities to create more competition and differentiation against Category Creators and Disruptors?

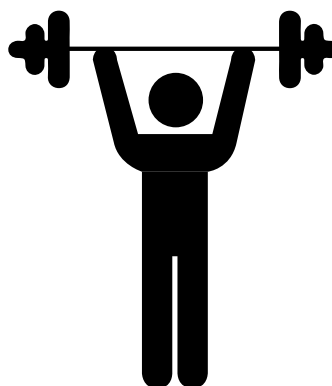
Are you enhancing new norms with more options for buying audiences?

Are you proactively reaching the more underserved parts of your market?

Examples? SaltPay, Tyme Bank.

Questions you might be asking yourself about the impact of your brand in 2024:

1. How can we show our value to new markets?
2. How can we tap into underserved audiences?
3. How can we stand out?



Are you an Evolutionary?

Have you reached or are nearing profitability?

Does your brand equity allow you to transcend core offers and build new propositions for completely new audiences?

Have these new audiences and new needs become pivotal to your overall growth and profitability?

Examples? Temenos, Salesforce.

Questions you might be asking yourself about the impact of your brand in 2024:

1. How do we use creativity to reach brand new audiences with new needs?
2. How can we take advantage of our brand equity?
3. How do we look welcoming to all audiences?

The five tech brand types: who the tech do you think you are?



Are you a Refresher?

Have you perfected your core proposition over and over?

Are you in a mature stage of life and profitable?

Do you know your market inside-out?

Do you focus on your core audience and service as a talisman for consistent, sustainable growth?

Are you within touching distance of being “the” player to beat against lots of established competitors?

Examples? Murex, Metapraxis.

Questions you might be asking yourself about the impact of your brand in 2024:

1. How do we use creativity to show we are better than everyone else?
2. How can we play more to our heritage and our core brand strengths?
3. How do we keep the top talent in our business?

As companies mature, market needs change, and growth challenges increase, every company will need to evolve their brand to stay relevant. You won't always stay in one brand type as the years go by.

But in 2024, we advocate that you commit to one brand type to help focus your growth efforts and bring out your brand strengths.

Does any of this resonate with you?

Have you found your brand type?

If so, see the next section where we identify your creativity potential in 2024.

Creative planning tips for 2024

The Category Creators

The Category Creator's creative challenge: make it seem like you've always been there.

The creative thinking Category Creators put into their go-to-market is astounding. The challenge now? How to translate that creativity into illuminating storytelling – from pitch decks to customer experience.

In theory, investors should be falling over themselves to invest in early-stage Category Creators, because you are about to go all out on a solution to a problem few realise is a problem yet.

Anecdotally, investors are already saying they'll invest in companies that solve the "next generation" problem. It pays to be a Category Creator and investors recognise this. In the frequently cited book *Play Bigger*, the authors found Category Creators build greater value and revenue when compared to other companies.¹

But, there are a few hard truths in play in 2024. As the price of funding and debt increases with higher interest-rates, getting funding will be a harder nut to crack.

For later-stage Category Creators, retaining leadership against new market entrants is a battle you simply have to win – and your leadership needs to radiate across everything you do – from the internal culture you build, to the impact you make on government policy.



¹ <https://hbr.org/2019/11/the-difference-between-a-first-mover-and-a-category-creator>



Our 2024 creative planning tips for Category Creators

1. Your name matters – don't put it at risk

Category Creators need a brand name that stands the test of time, retains the majority of its vowels, and doesn't run the risk of receiving a Cease and Desist letter. We don't want to name any names (pardon the pun) but we've seen a LOT of tech names that are frankly sailing too close to the wind, because of how saturated markets are becoming. The last thing you need is to have to go through a huge renaming and rebranding exercise, losing all the brand equity you've built up in the process. In a few simple steps, we recommend you:

- Develop naming territories to help lock down what your name needs to achieve and get creative around those territories. A territory is a fertile theme of exploration, such as “transformation” or “cloud” or “environment”
- Pick your favourite 15 names
- Legally and linguistically check them in all linked tech categories and countries
- Check the domains are free
- Vote from a short-list of names that pass the first screening (ideally 3-4 names) or better still, wait for the shortlist from the ones that pass all checks (because many will fall at the first hurdle)

The pain of naming yourself on the fly, or simply checking if a domain is free? It could mean you have to start over, putting everything you've worked for on the line.

2. Creative storytelling flies blind without the right insights

Creativity is nothing without insights to drive it. Knowing your audiences inside-out helps to reveal the hidden truths behind what you do - and it

spans customer motivations, connection points, and experiences. These hidden truths are the magic levers to demonstrate why your product is a convincing idea, and they also drive the storytelling which will bring your truths to life in a creative way. You need focus groups, A/B tests, surveys, customer feedback questionnaires, investor and analyst feedback to determine performance benchmarks - and a way to measure how close you are to finding these hidden truths as time goes by.

The pain of flying blind? A poor product-to-market fit, and storytelling that hits an iceberg.

3. Perfect, simple, impactful creative storytelling in pitches

To be a master storyteller, you need to take those hidden truths and execute them with creative simplicity. A Harvard Business Review study of over 7,000 buyers, exploring what makes people follow through on an intended purchase, found that by far the biggest driver was decision simplicity.² Combine simplicity with creativity and you have a powerful storytelling weapon.

We see many pitch decks being used as a script for the presenter, but not a succinct presentation for recipients. Among the investor audience, investors are spending 24% less time looking at pitch decks in 2022, compared to 2021 and according to Dropbox DocSend, investors are spending more dwell time on brand purpose.³

² <https://hbr.org/2012/05/to-keep-your-customers-keep-it-simple>

³ <https://techcrunch.com/2022/09/22/science-of-pitch-decks/>



The challenge is to put yourself in the shoes of your audience. If the audience is an investor group, you really need to wow them. Ask yourself: what will move them, what will delight them, and what do they HAVE to remember about you? Oh and remember, whatever you do, make it true to your brand and keep it simple.

For your next pitch deck, we challenge you to put together a 10-page deck that's purely visual with as little as 6-10 words on each slide. Why? Visual imagery is essential to the way the brain perceives and retains information, and we know this because research has shown 90% of the information processed by the brain is visual.⁴ Also, studies show that presentations using visual support were found 43% more persuasive and interesting.⁵

In 2022, we saw better use of storytelling in pitch decks, use of original (not stock) images and simpler (but effective) copywriting. For example, Berlin-based FoodTech company, Perfeggt, summed up their entire proposition in just four – very familiar – words “Solving the Chicken-Egg problem”.

The pain of not creating a creative, simple, memorable pitch deck with a great story? Everyone will zone out after page three.

4. Go beyond with creativity

As Category Creators, you have to go beyond just being in front, particularly as new market entrants get going on replicating and enhancing your go-to-market. In 2024, pick and choose what those extra leadership KPIs are – whether that's government relations, frameworks for industry change, or internal policies to support tech talent in your category. Pick one “go beyond” pillar and commit to it as a separate workstream to show consistent leadership in your sector, and use creativity to bring wide-ranging audiences with you.



Wise's #bath4banks event at the Bank of England.
Image source: credit @edmaughan

Wise's investment in creative stunts to support their earlier ideas were industry-leading, pre-IPO. Its #Bath4Banks campaign “cleaned up the banks”, with 6,000 blue rubber ducks and millions and millions of bubbles launched and thrown by hundreds of its staff near the Bank of England. You couldn't miss the message, which was driven by simple, creative wordplay brought to life.

The pain of not going beyond with creativity?
Lagging behind.

⁴ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jerryweissman/2022/02/25/the-power-of-pictures-in-presentation-design/?sh=ff44b3520a71>

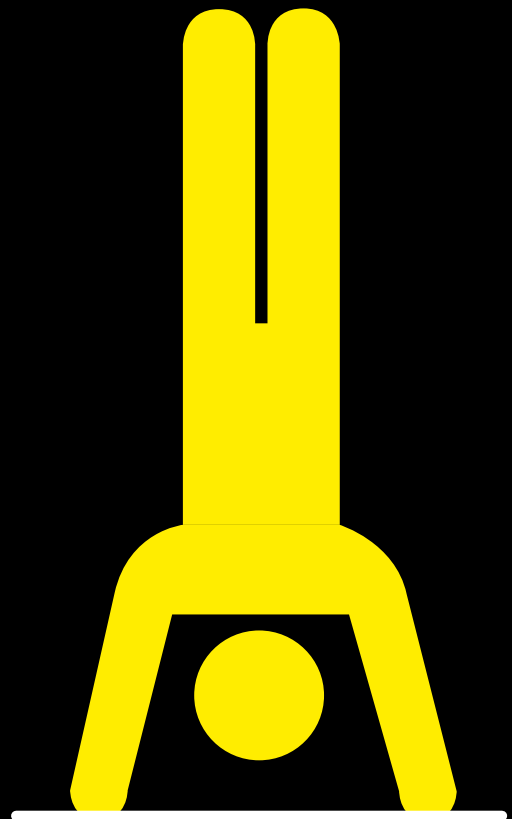
⁵ http://www.thinktwicelegal.com/olio/articles/persuasion_article.pdf

The Disruptors

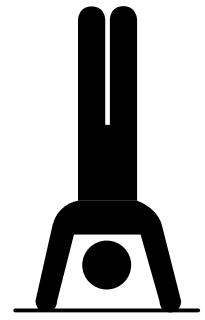
The Disruptor's creative challenge: ignore what everyone else is doing and do it completely differently.

Owning the disruption you cause is a priority for 2024. Don't shy away from it, despite the economic backdrop.

Your creative approach to your market is your superpower – so don't lose it. 2024 could be the perfect platform to justify why your kind of disruption is necessary for the future – and your approach to creativity will help get you there. You need creativity to be as confident as your go-to-market.



Our 2024 creative planning tips for Disruptors



1. Use creativity to change reality

To be a Disruptor, you need to do the opposite of what everyone else is doing. So if you are a payments platform, incorporating “pay” into your name and centering your imagery around people holding credit cards isn’t going to make you any different.

2022 saw many examples of Disruptor brand types flexing their disruptive creative muscles. A common trend that emerged is confronting an obvious reality, and making it something else entirely. We’ve taken our cue from Steve Jobs, and call this the “creative reality distortion field”.



GoCardless' No More Dinosaurs campaign.
Image source: GoCardless

Take the GoCardless’s recent rebrand and launch video. The figurative term “dinosaur” has been around for a while to describe “legacy” technology and financial services companies. GoCardless took the figurative meaning and made it a reality showing bones and fossils in fast-paced frame-by-frame video. But in a twist, all the bones and fossils weren’t called “bones” and “fossils”. You saw a picture of a “fossil”, but the narrator said it was a credit card, or a bank. What you thought you were looking at, you weren’t. The narrator and subtitles told you something else entirely. Nouns lost their usual meaning. Reality changed.

The pain of not using creativity to change reality?
Looking like everyone else.

2. Consider new digital platforms to increase your creative value online

Right now, we’re currently seeing more metaverse creativity within product strategies, rather than directly through creative marketing. We’re seeing Disruptor tech brands like NVIDIA build out cloud software to take market share in the still-nascent metaverse, but the creative marketing opportunities of the metaverse – such as engaging virtual influencers or developing specific customer experiences – are still in their infancy.

However, Disruptors like Coinbase entered the NFT economy in 2022, and dedicated marketing budget to its new NFT marketplace. The many artworks and “drops” embolden Coinbase’s brand value of “continuous learning” by pioneering how creative creators are brought into the mainstream. This showcases a) the creativity of their artistic audiences and b) the creativity in their brand vision.

For Disruptor brands, you have to be one step ahead in the digital world, using experiential and experimental formats to reflect your disruptive nature and the creativity within it. That means doing things that other brands won’t touch until it’s tried and tested. Embrace your love of disruption.

The pain of not adopting new digital platforms? Being a follower, not a disruptor.

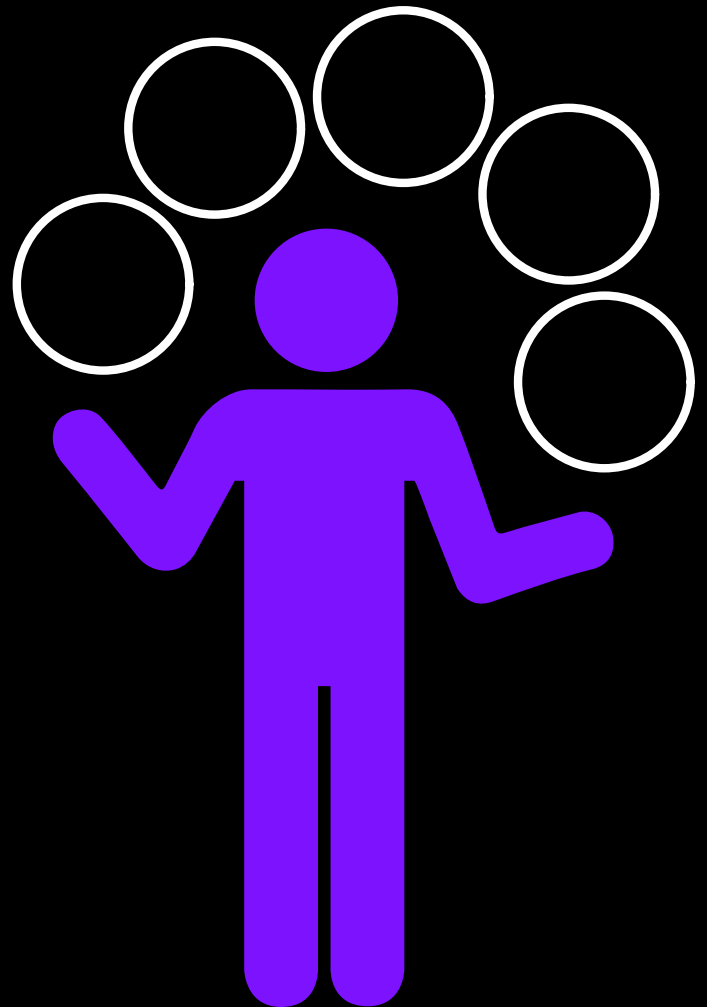
The Category Multipliers

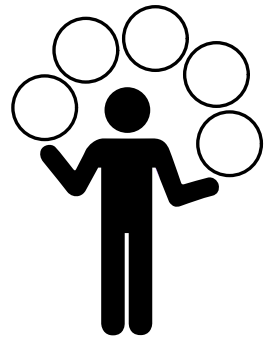
The Category Multiplier's creative challenge: taking a very specific customer experience, enhancing it and owning it.

There's a great temptation for Category Multipliers to do what the category leaders do, because there's a ready set of predefined buyers that are used to a specific norm.

The challenge here, especially in 2024, is for your customer experience to stand apart.

But how does creativity and storytelling help you achieve this?





Our 2024 creative planning tips for Category Multipliers

1. Use a Creative Artifice when you need to differentiate a specific feature in 2024

Category Multipliers should exaggerate specific product features to the point where they become differentiated and ownable by them, even if they're not entirely exclusive to them. To achieve this, use a Creative Artifice to imply your solution is the only way to go, and other (similar offers) lag way behind yours.

So what is a Creative Artifice and when do you need one? Essentially it's a visual trick, or an ingenious visual device or object that shouldn't really be there. Adding creativity to your artifice allows you to give this object a specific meaning beyond its intended meaning. All of this sounds complicated, but trust us, it's not really. You need a Creative Artifice when what you want to say is best illustrated by an ingenious visual trick.



Revolut's campaign Your Way In.
[Image source: Revolut](#)

Here's a good example: Revolut's campaign "Your Way In" took the idea that traditional banks keep access to financial services away from the masses – hidden away behind impregnable brick walls (figuratively speaking). They used the Creative Artifice of a brick wall to say its solution smashes through traditional banking walls and goes way beyond any of those barriers. They give you this big, visual trigger of walls being constantly smashed in all their creative outputs – across advertising and owned channels –

to help audiences associate Revolut with breaking down barriers.

The pain of not using a Creative Artifice? You lack a way to visually show how you are so much better.

2. Use a Creative Artifice to wow audiences

A really dramatic example of this is the mind-bending WhatsApp takeover of the giant screen at Piccadilly Circus, London. In essence the WhatsApp team have created an incredibly dramatic piece of digital art that appears to 'peel the layer' off the building behind, revealing a gigantic steel vault – it all looks incredibly realistic. This is a jaw-dropping use of a Creative Artifice to reassure people their personal messages are safe in WhatsApp, with its end-to-end encryption and two-step verification features.

The pain of not wowing your audiences occasionally? They forget just how essential you are to them.

The Evolutionaries

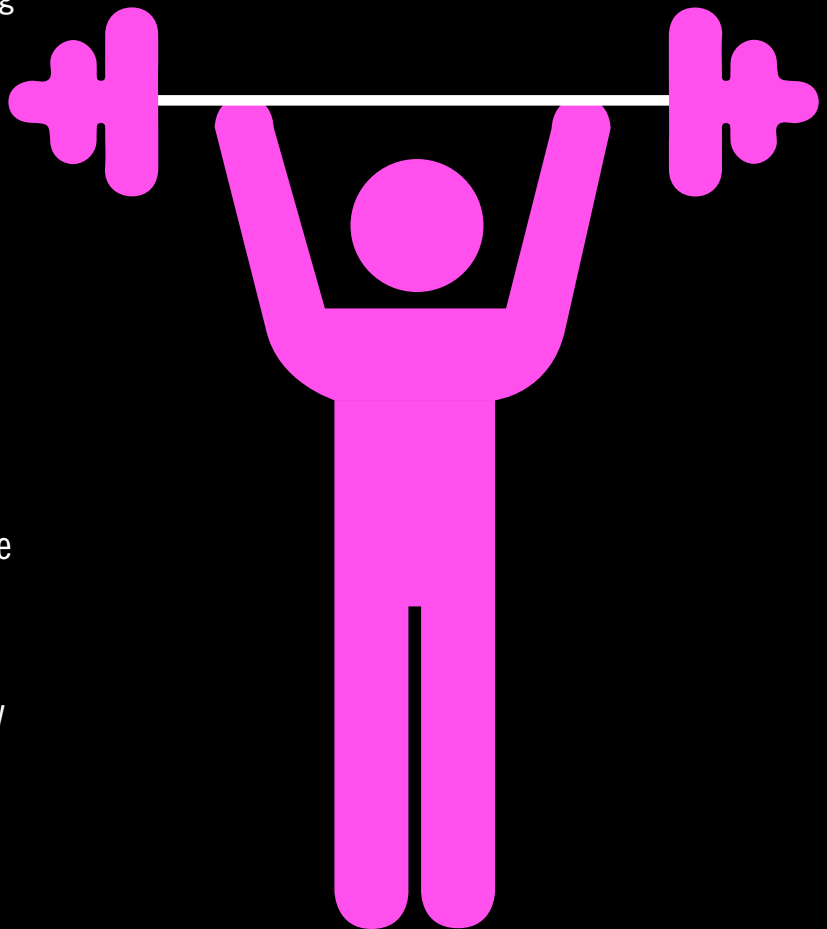
**The Evolutionary's creative challenge:
be universal without appearing generic.**

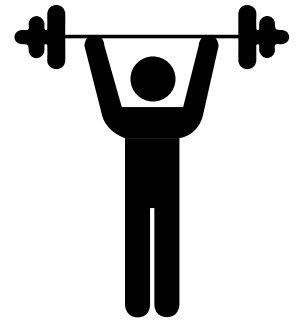
Evolutionaries have a high tightrope to walk in 2024. There are creative risks involved – you cannot appear to isolate audiences, or look as if you are leaving your true self behind. Your “true self” makes up your brand equity.

For Evolutionaries, creativity in 2024 needs to encompass staying true to what you are, your brand equity, and how you are moving forwards by evolving your products and services.

We call this Convergent Creativity. Convergent thinking is all about how we concentrate on finding one, well-defined outcome, considering the possible alternatives, and arriving at a single solution to a problem. Now combine this with creativity, so you can push past established ideas, theories, rules, and procedures, and explore new and innovative ideas by looking at them from a different perspective.

So for Evolutionaries, Convergent Creativity is all about using creativity to find new, innovative ways to highlight the benefits of your true self and how these meet the needs of new audiences.





Our 2024 creative planning tips for Evolutionaries

1. Master “universality” using Convergent Creativity

For Evolutionaries, “Universality” is all about how to stay true to yourself, and how you leverage your brand equity to expand and extend into new areas with brand new needs.

2022 saw Evolutionaries tackle universality, with slices of Convergent Creativity. An example here is Temenos, which recently updated its brand identity. Creativity’s role here has been to visually convey a strategic shift for Temenos towards being an open platform for composable banking, as well as a people-centric ethos to bring new audiences in.



Temenos’s evolutionary brand identity.

Image source: Brand New, Under Consideration and Temenos

The new brand retains the Temenos blue, but it’s brighter, fresher and more modern. The logotype is now in lowercase, making it more accessible and approachable, and a new visual language based on the “the temenos curve”, is a brand device to reflect the strategic shift.

Temenos hasn’t seismically changed everything it does. Instead, the focus is more about how they do it by becoming an open platform for cloud-centric audiences. This is an example where Convergent Creativity takes what they have, and has been creative with their brand evolution to target new cloud audiences.

The pain of not using Convergent Creativity? Trying to be all things to all people.

2. Don’t let your product ecosystem overwhelm your masterbrand

If M&A is a big route to growth in 2024, investing in brand strategy and brand architecture ahead of time is crucial to minimise disruption, as you integrate new companies and products into the fold.

The foundation of any brand strategy is your “brand house”, which contains your overarching brand purpose, brand vision, mission, and values. Future-proofing these so they are inspirational and forward looking is one of the key routes to internal buy-in and external brand longevity.

You also need to think about your brand architecture, and how this will support your brand vision and your product ecosystem. Brand architectures organise what you offer into cohesive groupings, or separate entities. For example, if you intend to divest or acquire companies, your brand architecture needs to accommodate this aspiration. Typically, brand architecture falls into three groups: Branded House – think Red Hat; House of Brands – think Microsoft; or Endorsed Brands – think Apple. Choosing the right brand architecture is the cornerstone of any successful growth plan.

This year, we have seen Evolutionaries attempt to incorporate their products into Branded House ecosystems, with mixed results. Salesforce decided to take current and acquired companies into the cloud and rename them all to reflect the language of its customers. The benefit for marketing is that Salesforce now has a new platform and story to engage current and new customers, through its “Marketing Cloud”. The challenge we see with this evolution, is that this doesn’t look or feel like Salesforce in places.

The pain of not integrating your product ecosystem under a well-thought-out brand architecture? Your masterbrand quickly loses visibility and value.

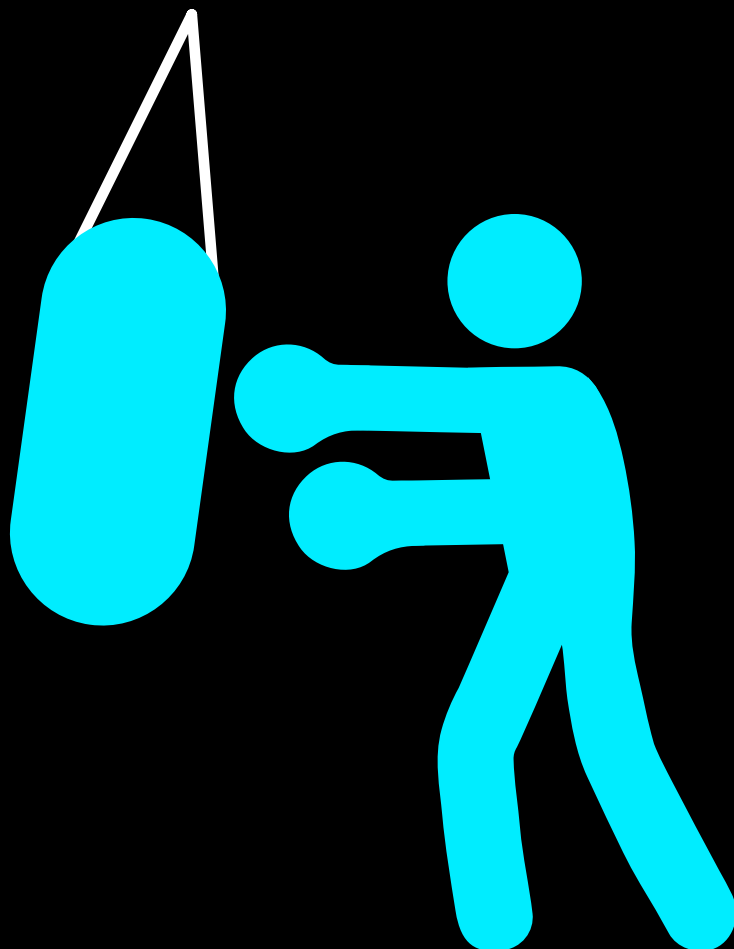
The Refreshers

The Refresher's creative challenge: don't become stale by resting on your laurels.

In 2024, it's imperative that Refreshers look, feel, and do different things from their competitors. As sales cycles get longer due to macroeconomic uncertainty, there's more shopping around to ensure buyers have an optimum service or product deal. In 2021, 52% of B2B purchasing decision makers reported that their buying cycle has gotten longer for new vendors.⁶

How can creativity help here? For Refreshers, creativity and storytelling in 2024 needs to refresh your demonstrable advantages over competitors, refresh your continued focus on your core audience's needs, and refresh how your services provide sustainable market advantage.

Refreshing your differentiators is all about how you make each of these even more relevant – not just to today's challenges, but tomorrow's opportunities. This means not just investing in tactical video explainers, demos, feature bursts, but investing in giant ideas to propel creativity and storytelling in a more strategic way.



⁶ <https://www.kornferry.com/insights/featured-topics/sales-transformation/2021-buyer-preferences-study>

Our 2024 creative planning tips for Refreshers



1. The world is changing very quickly: make 2024 the year for your creative brand refresh and evolution

We're living through a great period of constant societal and cultural change globally, and it's very much on you to make sure your brand, and your products stay relevant. Brands that don't respond to societal changes, or meet new audience needs, will be irrelevant in the blink of an eye.

How do you reposition your offer to get ahead of these changes? Start with a gigantic brand idea that speaks to how any revitalised brand mission is here to help solve these changing needs. Make sure this doesn't just remain as an idea, but is tangibly expressed across everything you do – from your brand identity, to your sales cycle, and the support mechanisms you offer employees and customers.



Webex's refreshed brand identity.

Image source: Brand New, Under Consideration

A recent example of a brand responding to societal changes is Webex. Cisco realised the world had changed its definition of collaboration after the pandemic. In effect, hybrid working triggered a re-think, because parts of the working world simultaneously experienced hybrid collaboration both in-office, and remotely anywhere in the world. We like the way the new Webex icon visually conveys different types of collaboration, showing two entities wrapping around each other to come together to form the "w" of Webex. This device becomes a cue for more visual iconography deployed throughout the visual and verbal identity scheme, further highlighting the benefits of hybrid collaboration.

The pain of not responding to societal changes?
You become irrelevant to the world we live in.

2. Go beyond basic product marketing and invest in data-led, creative PR to support differentiation

We're confident you've heard the phrase "media doesn't cover product press releases". This is predominantly true. But, PR and media relations can be used to promote products and their benefits IF you communicate the need for the product creatively and simply, with the right data, and why it matters to your audience. So how do you do that?

A great example of how this has been done in 2022 is via payments platform, Bango. It took its core product premise of behavioural targeting and monetising payments, and summed up why it was necessary in its "The Worst Ad campaign in the World" launch. Using an intelligent use of search ad spend and data collection - Bango demonstrated the majority of search engine ads are nowhere near the mark in terms of targeting. They then brought this premise to life creatively using the most under-used advertising billboard in the UK, suggesting (even) this billboard was better targeted to audiences than most search ads. In a very simple way, it promoted the need to use behavioural targeting in its own platform, while simultaneously attracting national media to its plight using billboard photography and insightful data.

The pain of not investing in data-led, creative PR?
Your products look undifferentiated.

Do you know what the **tech** you are doing in 2024?

We hope this playbook helps you better understand where creativity slots into your brand thinking.

2024 is a year that demands a large amount of focus. No matter where you are in your growth journey, unlocking your creative potential is critical to outpacing your competitors.

How the **tech** can we help?

Who do Made By Giants think they are?

Made By Giants is an award-winning, creative B2B agency for global, tech-powered brands solving the world's trickiest challenges.

Our integrated team of marketing specialists use insights, branding, design, communications, PR and digital skills to accelerate growth for tomorrow's tech giants, with game-changing impact.

Made By Giants bring award-winning creative impact to B2B tech:



Small Consultancy
of the Year 2022



Small Consultancy
of the Year 2022



Best Use of Digital
in the Financial
Services Sector



Best Use of
Paid Social



Best Brand
Development within
a masterbrand



Best Use of Digital in
the Technology, Media
and Telecoms sector

Best Community
Development



Best Start-Up
Agency



Best New
Agency

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Let's chat about brand planning!

Email us at

onesmallstep@madebygiants.io

See our latest news, case studies and more about us at:

<https://madebygiants.io/>





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