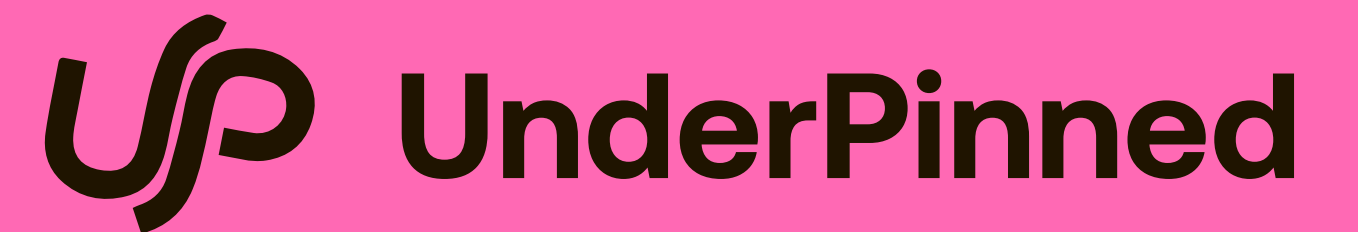


# UnderPinned's Guide to Personal Branding



**Introduction**  
**Understanding Personal Branding**  
**Defining Your Brand Identity**  
**Identifying Your Target Audience**  
**Crafting Your Unique Selling Proposition (USP)**  
**Building a Strong Online Presence**  
**Showcasing Your Portfolio**  
**Networking & Collaborations**  
**Managing Your Brand Reputation**  
**Evolving Your Brand Over Time**  
**Interactive Worksheets**



# Introduction

Welcome to your journey of building a personal brand as a freelance creative! Whether you're a designer, writer, illustrator, photographer, or any other type of creative professional, your personal brand can set you apart from the competition. In an increasingly digital and connected world, establishing a strong and authentic brand is essential for standing out, attracting clients, and building long-term success.

This guide will walk you through practical steps to create, develop, and refine your personal brand, helping you to clearly communicate who you are and what you offer. Alongside theory, you'll also find hands-on exercises and worksheets to get you started.

# Understanding Personal Branding

## What is Personal Branding?

Personal branding refers to the conscious effort to influence how others perceive you. It's about showcasing your skills, values, and personality in a way that resonates with your target audience. As a freelance creative, your personal brand is essentially your reputation. It differentiates you from others in the industry and helps potential clients understand what they can expect when they work with you.

## Why Personal Branding Matters

**Build trust:** Clients are more likely to work with someone they feel they know and trust.

**Attract the right opportunities:** A strong brand helps attract clients who align with your style, values, and expertise.

**Command higher rates:** A well-developed personal brand can position you as an expert in your field, allowing you to charge premium rates.

**Control your narrative:** Instead of leaving it up to chance, personal branding helps you shape how you're perceived in the market.

# Defining Your Brand Identity

## Discovering Your Core Values

Your brand identity starts with understanding yourself. What do you stand for? What are your values? The more authentic and aligned your brand is with your core beliefs, the easier it will be to maintain and communicate consistently.

Key Questions to Ask Yourself:

What inspires your work?

What are your strengths?

What motivates you as a creative?

What are your long-term goals?

## Brand Personality

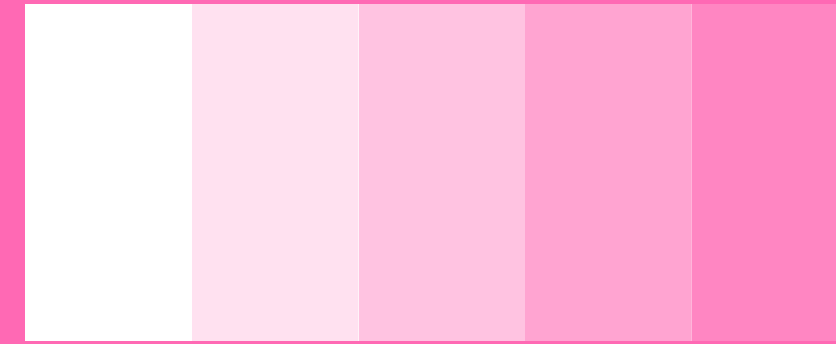
Your personality plays a huge part in your brand identity. Are you quirky and fun, or serious and professional? Are you a minimalist or do you prefer bold, maximalist designs? Reflect this in how you present yourself online and in your communications with clients.

# Common Brand Identity Visual Elements

Logo

Your  
logo

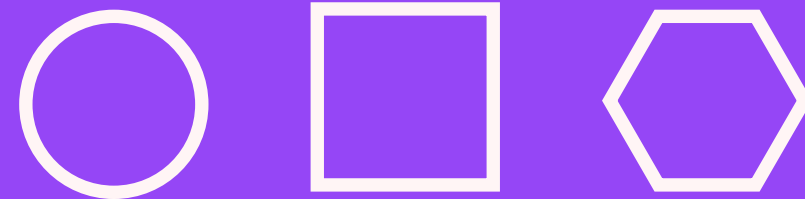
Colour Palette



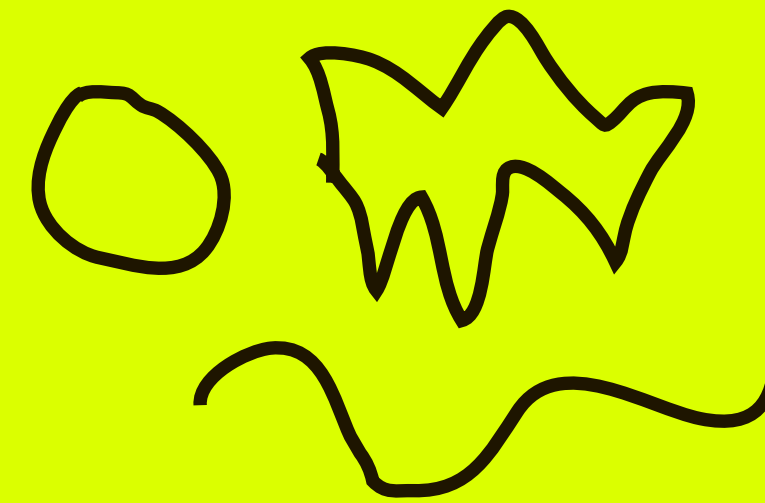
Typography

Aa

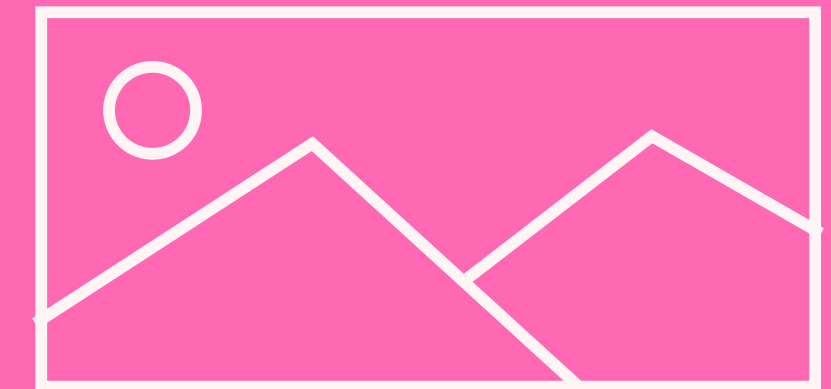
Iconography



Illustrations



Photography



# Identifying Your Target Audience

Knowing who your audience is will allow you to tailor your message and service offerings to better meet their needs.

## Demographics vs. Psychographics

Demographics: Age, gender, location, and profession of your ideal client.

Psychographics: What do they value? What are their interests, pain points, and aspirations?

## How to Identify Your Audience:

1. Look at your existing clients—who are they? What do they have in common?
2. Ask yourself who you'd love to work with. What kind of clients do you enjoy collaborating with the most?
3. Define your niche: Who is most likely to value and need the services you offer?

# Crafting Your Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

Your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is what makes you different from every other freelance creative out there. It's a key part of your personal brand, and it's how you'll convince potential clients to choose you over the competition.

## Defining Your USP

What are you particularly skilled at that others may not be?

How does your experience or background give you a unique perspective?

What do your past clients consistently praise you for?

What kind of creative projects are you most passionate about?

# Building a Strong Online Presence

In today's digital-first world, your online presence often serves as the first impression potential clients will have of your personal brand. Here's how to build a strong online footprint:

## Website

Your website acts as the central hub for your online presence, where clients can learn more about you, your services, and your work. Make sure it's professional, easy to navigate, and fully aligned with your brand.

### Key Elements:

**Portfolio:** Display only your best work, with brief descriptions of each project.

**About page:** Tell your personal story, highlighting your creative journey and unique approach.

**Mobile-friendly:** Ensure the site looks great and functions well on mobiles/tablet devices.

## Social Media

Choose platforms that align with your target audience and creative style. Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok are common choices for freelance creatives. Keep your visual aesthetic and tone of voice consistent across all channels.

**Instagram:** Showcase your work through visually cohesive posts. Share behind-the-scenes, finished pieces, and client stories.

**LinkedIn:** Highlight professional achievements and network with potential clients and collaborators.

**TikTok:** Showcase creative processes, time-lapses, tutorials, and trends.



# Showcasing Your Portfolio

Your portfolio is one of the most powerful tools in your branding arsenal. It demonstrates your skills, style, and professionalism to potential clients.

## Quality over quantity

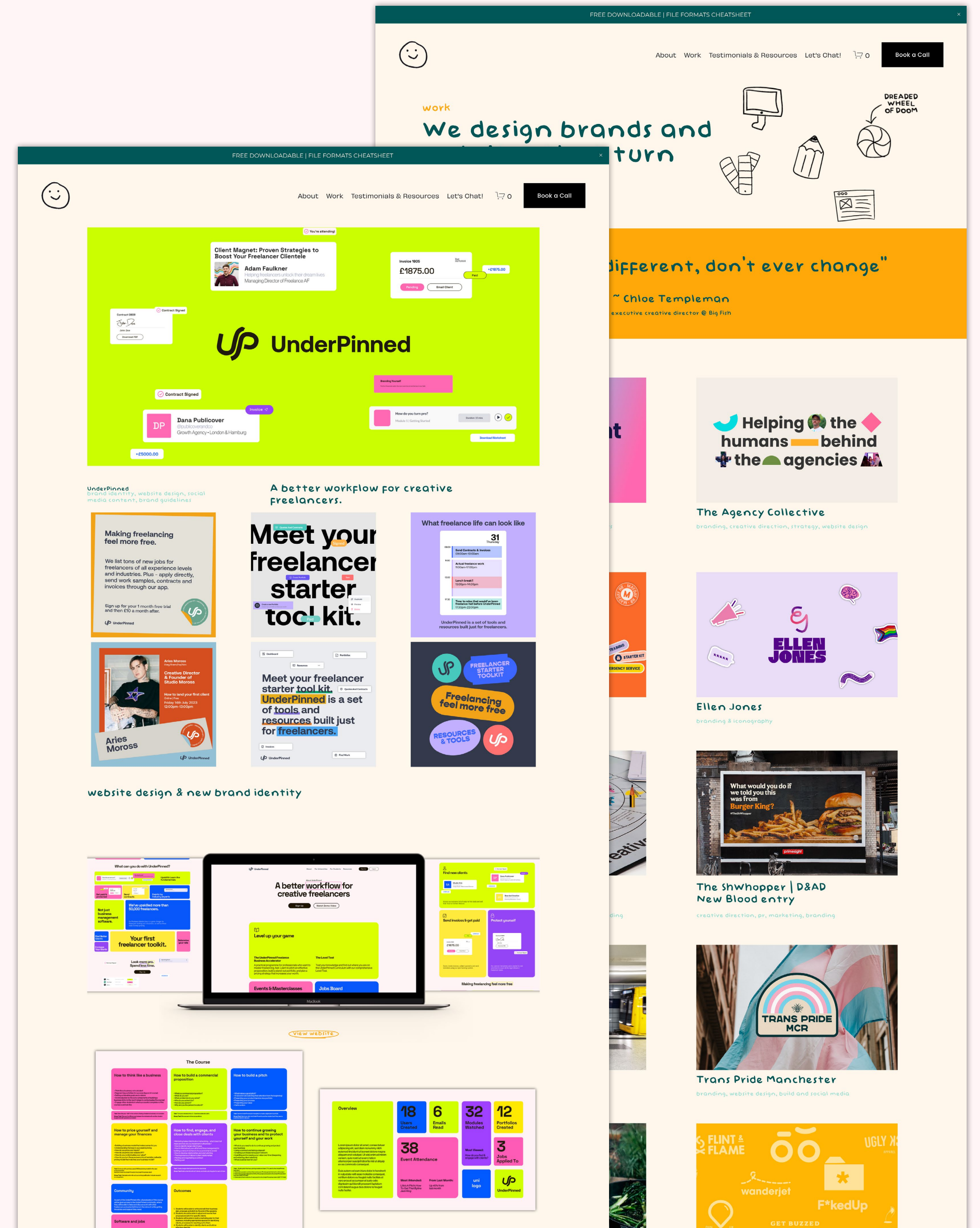
Only showcase your best work.

## Tell a story

Provide context for each project — what was the challenge, what was your role, and how did your creative solution make an impact?

## Tailor to your audience

Include examples that align with the type of work you want to attract.



# Networking & Collaborations

Building relationships is a key part of strengthening your personal brand. Networking can open doors to new opportunities, collaborations, and clients.

## **Networking Tips:**

**Attend industry events:** Whether virtual or in-person, creative meetups, workshops, and conferences are great places to meet potential collaborators and clients.

**Join creative communities:** Online platforms like Behance, Dribbble, or LinkedIn groups can be a source of inspiration, feedback, and networking. UnderPinned even has our own community!

**Collaborate with other creatives:** Partnerships can elevate your work and expand your network.

# Managing Your Brand Reputation

Your reputation is everything as a freelance creative. It takes time to build but can be damaged quickly if you're not careful.

## **Tips for Managing Your Reputation:**

**Deliver consistently:** Meet deadlines and exceed client expectations.

**Communicate clearly:** Keep clients updated on progress and any challenges.

**Ask for feedback:** Use client feedback to continuously improve your services.

**Respond to criticism:** Address any negative feedback constructively and professionally.

# Evolving Your Brand Over Time

Your personal brand is not static. As you grow and evolve in your career, your brand should reflect those changes. It's important to review and update your brand regularly.

## **Signs Your Brand Needs an Update:**

You're attracting the wrong type of clients.

Your work has evolved but your brand doesn't reflect it.

You're not feeling aligned with your current brand identity.

*When evolving your brand, consider updating your website, revising your social media profiles, or even refreshing your visual identity.*

# Worksheet: Tone of Voice

This or that. The most overlooked part of a branding exercise is FULLY defining your brand tone and personality.

Sure you have a logo, colors, fonts, and a tagline, but how much time and effort have you spent defining your brand's personality?

Mark the spot where you feel like your voice fits in, left to right.

abstract	_____	literal
simple	_____	complex
playful	_____	formal
contemporary	_____	rustic
rule breaker	_____	responsible
personable	_____	corporate
spontaneous	_____	planning
modern	_____	classic
fun	_____	serious
accessible to all	_____	exclusive
formal	_____	informal
peer	_____	authority
friend	_____	colleague
chatty	_____	direct

# Worksheet: Brand Positioning

Set your business apart by communicating the benefits you want your customers to consider when they think of your brand. Brand positioning is the conceptual place you want to occupy in the mind of your customer.

This is your opportunity to connect with your customers on a human level by recognizing a challenge and offering a unique solution that's different from your competitors.

Creating a brand positioning statement can be a daunting task, but try this exercise to help get you to communicate your brand position: What is your category? How are you different? Who are your customers? Where are they located? Why are you important? When do they need you?

Your positioning statement can also double as an elevator pitch, so try memorizing it and practice saying it out loud.

Your business is...

the only >

that >

for >

in >

who >

in an era of >

## Example

WHAT:

Harley Davidson is

HOW:

the only motorcycle manufacturer

WHO:

that makes loud, big motorcycles

WHERE:

for macho guys (and macho wannabes)

WHY:

mostly in the United States

WHEN:

who want to join a gang of cowboys

in an era of decreasing personal freedom

Paid +£1875.00

Invoice 1805 Due: 03/11/2023

£1875.00

Pending Email Client



Your freelancer starter toolkit

Senior UX Designer Hugo & Cat | London & Hybrid

ESPN Video & Social Int. The Walt Disney Company | London

Social Media Content Executive Cream Cornwall | Remote

Print Designer Papier | London

Digital Experience Strategy Converse | Manchester

# Thank You!

Contract Signed

SA Studio Arlo @studioarlo.png Design Studio • Manchester & Remote

Invoice

+£5000.00

Unlock the full potential of your freelance career with UnderPinned's toolkit.

Good luck building your personal brand!



If you need help setting up on UnderPinned, please email Orla [orla@underpinned.co](mailto:orla@underpinned.co)