Hey to here

Introduction
Welcome to a condensed version of the process I went through for my graduation project. The following pages aim to show how my concept came into being through giving insights into the phases of research, concept development and execution. Proving that the end product - an extension campaign for It’s Nice That - has grounds to stand on and reflecting on my role as a creative brander moving forward.
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My profile as a brander

PERSONAL AIMS

- Find balance between strategy + creativity
- Dig into a topic you’re passionate about
- Show your own vision on branding
- Find a real problem to work with

STRENGTHS

Concepting  Graphic Design  Organisation  Realisation

Over the course of AMFI I realised that coming up with creative concepts and realising them is what I am most passionate about. Especially in collaboration with other people I thrive in the most as the bouncing off of ideas motivates me. Within my graduation project I thus want to show that I am a creative brander with an eye for detail and passion for the zeitgeist.

PITFALLS

Overthinking  decision-making  complicating

Being not easily satisfied I tend to overthink my ideas to the point that I am having troubles coming to decisions. Basing my ideas on valid insights should help to feel more confident and talking to others to clarify my thoughts.

FAVOURITE PROJECTS

- Visual Culture  Film direction
- D&AD  Brand Identity & Packaging
- Howdy, I'm HUGO.
- D&AD  Template Concept and Web-design
Phase 1: Research
TOPIC OF INTEREST - MENTAL HEALTH WITHIN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY

With the choice of my subject within my preliminary research I wanted to dig into what I’ve experienced within my immediate surroundings as well as tap into the current zeitgeist that would also reflect my personal interests.

VISION ON BRANDING

To connect beyond aesthetics or convenience and more towards having a deeper impact on the consumers’ state of mind - focusing on ‘transformative marketing’ and recognizing a brand as means to develop a stronger relationship with our internal selves.

PLAN OF APPROACH

- Gather insights into current mental health and wellbeing trends
- Look into brands that include mental health within their communication strategy
- Research into what main aspects creatives are struggling with at the moment
- See for what brand the topic could be relevant
- Define the connection to the fashion industry
How can a brand offer relief from growing anxieties in the creative industry?

**The Market**

What are the trends within the sector of wellbeing (in regards to mental health) right now?
What sort of communication are brands using dealing with the topic?

**The Target Group**

What generation suffers from anxiety the most?
In what situations do they feel anxious?
What are the main reasons that cause their creativity to suffer?
Mental Health & Wellbeing Trends

Unpacking fashion’s mental health problem
- one in four people will experience a mental health problem each year and if you’re working in creative job, you’re 25 per cent more likely to
- as mental health is something that can’t really be seen physically, people at times don’t take it seriously
- there is not enough awareness and education in how to deal with the workload and stress

How brands can highlight mental health and well being
- as our cultural dialogue begins towards a collective consciousness surrounding emotional wellbeing, brands’ outlooks on their audiences also need to shift
- shift from product to immaterial factors, such as how product will ease tension in day-to-day lives

Too fast to think: Why switching off unlocks creativity
- people said to come to their best ideas when not at work, always alone and not trying
- in today’s society our conscious minds are never allowed to be still, whereas our subconscious allows for creative thoughts
- a lack of quiet space is causing creativity to suffer

How downtime brings uptime
- we live in an age of speed and busyness, but we need to slow down to speed up, because idle minds bring results
- boredom as a catalyst for creativity as we might go off in our heads to try and find that stimulation
- creative brains need time off as we’re in a business that’s almost entirely about brain work - we need to make sure we’re protecting peoples’ minds
- people often claim to do their best thinking when they’re not thinking - leading to a new trend of ‘mindful wandering’
Relevance

Mental Health & Creative Communication

Online platform ‘let’s talk about mental health’ by Jessica Walsh
- platform that encourages the sharing of personal stories, making people relate and feel relieved by recognising themselves in others
- playful and colourful illustrations make it approachable and engaging in contrast to serious topic
- Jessica as design idol to a lot of people being open about her flaws, positioning herself closer to her fan-base

Department Store of the Mind
- products designed for emotional health and well-being, focusing on psychological needs rather than physical ones
- online store can be navigated by state of mind
- addressing social issues with design solutions, inspiring more honest conversations
**CALM zine / Campaign Against Living Miserably**


- magazine for male suicide prevention
- charity ‘Calm’ (campaign against living miserably) publishing zine rather than charity publication to bring it closer to its audience
- challenging stigma around mental health as well as masculinity - making it both inspirational as well as practical

**The School of Life / Emotional Hygiene**


- The School of Life is devoted to developing emotional intelligence through the help of culture
- directing you towards a variety of ideas from the humanities – from philosophy to literature, psychology to the visual arts – ideas that will
- ‘adult educational facility’
- includes a Youtube Channel, website and space hosting events and selling their products
The Vice Guide To Mental Health

VICE editorial extension ‘The Vice Guide To Mental Health’


- collective of essays and reports exploring some of the issues that affect the mental well-being of people around the world
- section as one of the most popular ones at vice (lots of clicks)
- target audience personally confronted with mental health issues, seeking representation in media that speaks to them
Podcast ‘Starving Artist’ by Honor Eastly


- a podcast about art, money, and how to combine those things - wondering about how to make it all work
- interviews with artists about their financial situation (opening up about topic that is otherwise not being talked about)
- podcast debuted at #1 in iTunes within the Art section, revealing how necessary it is to also talk about taboo topics
Mental Health & Fashion

BLESS N°57 Daycation / Worker’s Delight

BLESS’ goal is to create lighthearted, homely and inspiring situations in the form of objects, clothing and interior design.

- project providing us with unexpected ways to move while completing everyday office chores and to restructure our days spent in front of the screen.

- attempt to increase productivity along with improving workers’ health and well-being.

- resulting from this are new parameters and behavioural patterns that would not exist naturally and that create new needs for the office worker to adapt to.

- the bemusing and often humorous ‘equipment’ proves how liberating it can be to take a more light-hearted and relaxed approach to one’s own performance.

- we think that the key to a healthy lifestyle is not to detach wellbeing from working and longing for the leisure time to come.

- ‘daycation’ way of elevating and humanizing our experience of relaxation - integrating workout machines into daily life, softening their look and giving them some sort of harmlessness.
Adidas Z.N.E. Hoodie


- Z.N.E. (Zero Negative Energy) Hoodie is designed to help athletes stay in the zone with three key elements; reduced noise distraction, minimal visionary distraction and protection from discomfort

“Our athletes compete in front of huge, passionate crowds, and need to maintain their focus under immense pressure. A lack of focus can be the difference between winning or losing. We designed the adidas Z.N.E. Hoodie to allow athletes of all sports to tune in to their pre-game strategies and personal rituals, and to centre themselves ready for the challenge ahead.”

Inside Z.N.E. Hoodie

Helps athletes eliminate distractions and keep their heads in the game. Worn by the likes of Gareth Bale, Tišr Bowie, James Harden, Ana Ivanovic and Coco Shulin.

Buy Z.N.E.
First Conclusions
Mental Health & Wellbeing
One in four people will experience a mental health problem each year and if you’re working as a creative, you’re 25 per cent more likely to.

There is not enough awareness and education in how to deal with the workload and stress.

“In a business that’s almost entirely about brain work, we need to make sure we’re protecting peoples’ minds.”
– Iain Tait of advertising agency Wieden + Kennedy

Mental Health has a branding problem as it still feels like a taboo topic to a lot of people - the stigma has not been lifted.
Target Group

The Anxious Generation

“Y So Anxious?”: A Look at Millennial Anxiety


- generation aged 23-36
- stress through obsession with social media
- living in age of uncertainty
- Anxiety for Millennials often comes not from what they do, but the idea that they should be doing something else, should be on a certain path, or should have already done more
- many struggle to link some health priorities with everyday habits
- Millennial consumers increasingly desire meaningful connections and prioritise experience over ‘stuff’

Shifting attitudes


- Younger employees want jobs to deliver a sense of meaningful purpose: half of global millennials would take a salary cut to do work that matches their values. Three-quarters think businesses are too focused on their own agenda, rather than improving society.

Why no brain space

Online Survey (2017)

- put too much pressure on themselves
- have to learn to ‘turn a blind eye’
- feel like they constantly have to produce to perfection
- don’t allow themselves to just ‘play’
- don’t take enough breaks and are thus not able to see the bigger picture and to consciously reflect on their wellbeing

Survey: Stress, Stigma and Access Loom Large for Millennials


- Millennials experience more stress and are less able to manage it than any other generation
- Anxiety not only harms our wellbeing but also sabotages our productivity
- They seek to create wellness cocoons that can protect them from threats to their health, environment and emotional state – wherever they are
- Despite the stigma, most respondents have seen a positive change in their generation’s ability to discuss and access mental health care. Nearly three in four respondents agree that millennials are “much more open to addressing mental health topics than older people”

The eternal sunshine of the freelance mind


- there are wellbeing issues specific to freelancers and start-ups with the biggest problem long and unstructured working days
- it can be hard to switch off, often mentally you never leave the office
- sometimes we all need a change of scene to boost productivity
- we underestimate the effect our environment has on our thinking
- once you realize that you and only you are the one shaping your job, your wellbeing and your life, that’s an empowering thing
Online Survey amongst 50 participants from art schools & alumnis

1. Have you ever felt anxious and if so what were the main causes / situations?
   “When there is no time / room to make mistakes within packed schedules”
   “When I feel like I didn’t put the most possible effort into a project”
   “About school, work, relationship, self-stability, time pressure, pressure of having to achieve sth, future.”
   “When I am at work, when I am going to sleep, when I am talking to people”
   “When I am thinking too much”

2. Are there any rituals that help you de-stress?
   “Change of scene, move around as it can boost productivity”
   “Clearing my head during my part-time job”
   “Walking and not socialising”
   “Not to take everything so seriously, becoming aware of my mindset and managing it”
   “Good self-care, getting a proper sleep, relax regularly”

3. When do you perform the best creatively?
   “After a long sleep”
   “At night or in the morning”
   “Not at work, always alone and not trying”

4. Is there any specific environment that helps you be creative?
   “Being in a new place or going somewhere for no reason / being spontaneous”
   “Space physically and mentally, and solitude”
   “Where I can be myself and confident”

4. Are you concerned with the increasing numbers of burn-outs within the industry (and if so what do you think needs to be changed)?
   “We need a bigger support system, both from schools as well as employers”
   “Employees need to experience more freedom: To be able to let things flow for a bit”
   “We need to learn how to take guilt-free breaks - to let our thoughts sink in, which benefits both the creative process as well as our mental health”
   “People need to talk more about feeling stressed”
   “Talking about depression, burn-outs or even creative block should not be a taboo anymore”
   “We are our most precious resource. There needs to be more respect and less competition. There is enough space for good ideas.”
Interviews with diverse creatives from the industry

MOURAD BAHROUCH (23) MOTION GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Are there any rituals you follow to be productive or clear your head?

- doesn’t have a specific ritual that helps him be creative
- wakes up early and goes to bed late (doesn’t feel like he needs a lot of sleep)
- what motivates him is the people around him, push him forward
- likes to be surrounded by people and objects that give him energy

How do you incubate?

- wants to make a distinction between his home and his studio - feels like there needs to be a separation in space
- importance of work life balance
- rents a studio with other freelancers to not get as easily distracted

Are you worried about the increasing burn-outs within the industry and if so what do you think needs to be changed?

- sees burn-out coming up a lot because of how people use their time
- if you work too much you have to rest as much
- about maintaining the balance
- as his work is also his hobby you don’t have a concept for time anymore / you don’t know where the line is
- you need somebody else to tell you it’s good enough so you know that you can stop, otherwise you go crazy as you set too high standards for yourself
- believes the industry is not going to change unless you do it yourself
ANNA-LENA GÖTZMANN (26) BRANDER

When do you feel like you can work the best creatively?
- productive in mornings
- needs space and a lot of light, shouldn’t be too officy
- sunlight gives energy and atmosphere is more relaxed
- space, calmness and light

How do you cope with a creative block?
- feels like she needs to talk things through but needs space for research and actively producing
- feels like she works more effective within teamwork
- when feeling blocks, writing everything down (where the problems are) help - de-clutter thoughts (creative life is different as her actual life when it comes to that)

Are there any rituals you follow to be productive or clear your head?
- needs breakfast before she starts working
- importance of lunch breaks
- tries to go out, take a walk to charge batteries
- didn’t discover anything innovative for herself yet
- about fresh air, not the movement

How do you incubate?
- incubation happens in strange situations - importance of taking distance
- importance of doing different things
- importance of organising, doing things in time (otherwise she panics) - importance of sticking to plan
- importance of keeping a work life balance

What do you like to do in your free time?
- likes to get to know different characters, cultures, traveling to different cities and discovering their mindset
- travels a lot, feels glad to be home again
- magazine collector (likes preciousness of owning print) online more daily
- feels like magazines have become more niche, represent micro lifestyle
- started going to the movies more
SANDY VAN HELDEN (26) FREELANCE ILLUSTRATOR

Do you have a special way of relaxing?

When I’m stressed out I try to start the morning with a mediation, using Headspace. I like that one because it’s so down to earth and it just does the job. But I only do that when I am really stressed out - when I have a big appointment or meeting for example.

And to unwind I like to cook, I do it every evening and with friends. And I do sports. I do hot yoga, I have this pass now (1fit) where you can exercise at a hundred different locations around Amsterdam. And I do all kinds of things, but mostly Yoga and Pilates. And I boulder! Just started doing that. It’s super nice. I do it with friends.

And at work itself, do you take a lot of breaks?

No, but I used to set a timer for 19 minutes, because I heard that this is the most efficient work cyclus that you can have. And then I would take a 10 minute break and start again. And I don’t actually do it anymore but I think it would be good to start doing it again, because it worked quite well. I was really focused and not stressed.

Do you feel like your stress level increased now that you’re a freelancer, do you find it difficult to keep a work / life balance?

It’s quite difficult, because as a freelancer you never know if you’re doing enough. But when I am really busy with assignments I can’t even think of that - you just go go go. But as a freelancer it’s not a steady income so if it gets quiet, you’re never sure why and that’s the most stressful part. And then I maybe push myself a little bit too much. Because I think I have to do more more more, to get more assignments. So that’s definitely the most stressful part of freelancing for me.

Do you have a specific time or environment where you’re most creative?

No not really - I have to have my own working space, my own desk. I am not really the type that works at cafés, there I can only do emails. For me it’s having my own place, but I don’t have the luxury anymore to say oh I can only be creative in the morning or in the evening because I just have to do it, you know? Sometimes it goes well, sometimes it’s harder.

“I think a lot has to change, but I don’t think it’s only the industry, especially the younger generation. They’re putting so much pressure on themselves and putting the bar so high. So that actually the pressure is what they do to themselves.”
Do have specific spaces you like to go to after work?
I really like the boulder area (Monk, in Noord), I like the cinema next to it as well. I like that part of Amsterdam, it’s small and just really cute.

Do you have specific types of clothes that you like to wear or that help you to relax?
What I am wearing now actually, something like that (wears beige knit jumper, a loose pair of Levi’s jeans and white Fila sneakers). I would wear it to work and also for just relaxing. I am not like a sweat pants kind of girl.

When you think of your home environment, do you favour specific product or furniture brands?
Maybe HAY (but more the stationery, wouldn’t buy their furniture), like that they combine their store with smaller more affordable things.

Do you have specific tools you use for your work or also at home?
I do a lot of things digitally - but stationery stuff is always great.

Generally if you think about the increasing burn-outs, do you think that something needs to be changed?
Yeah I think a lot has to change, but I don’t think it’s only the industry, especially the younger generation. They’re putting so much pressure on themselves and putting the bar so high. So that actually not outsiders are increasing the pressure but it’s what they do to themselves. And I think we have to be a bit more open about how your career develops and that kind of stuff, because when you now go on Instagram you think all those artists were great from the beginning and super professional and always having assignments. And that’s just not the case. So I think it’s really important to just be open about that. Like also big industry leaders to set an example for me, especially in their beginnings. A friend of mine for example wrote an article about that we need more shitty work. Because we only see the beautiful end results, but that’s not that interesting and that’s also why you think oh my sketch already has to be perfect. But that’s not the case – you have to do a bit of shitty work as well. But I don’t allow myself do shitty work, but I would love to do that more. Do an ‘ugly drawing afternoon’ or something similar. Just to loosen up.

What’s holding you back?
With everything I make I think that it has to be at least good enough to share (on Instagram). So you don’t make anything with a free mind anymore, because you already think that it has to be something. I should push myself more, you don’t have to share everything - or you could share the ugly stuff!

Do you have specific people or platforms you turn to for inspiration?
Eye for Design, It’s Nice That, 99u. They have some really good articles that are less about the ‘pretty stuff’ but also more about work in progress. They also had an article about imposter syndrome which I found really interesting, because a lot of creatives have that some times. They’re shining a different light on it. I also like reading about creatives’ stories and their struggles. I also listen to a lot of podcasts. Also about design and the process, I think that’s interesting because you also get to know somebody better, and not only through their work.

I have this little folder on my desktop with different websites in it. One is called ‘creative pep talk’, it’s this American guy he can be annoying but he really knows how to pep you up.

Do you have a specific artist you look up to?
One light artist - Olafur Eliasson. He makes really big installations and plays with your perspective. It’s always really interesting if you see his pieces in real life, because you just get sucked in. And Anish Kapoor has the same feeling, it’s different but they make a whole environment, which I think is really cool.

And if you think about your hobbies next to hot yoga or bouldern, is there anything else you like to do in your free time?
Cooking and riding my bike. But the hobbies I had before I started as an illustrator - I turned them into my job. So drawing doesn’t feel like a hobby anymore. That’s quite hard. But I started out with ceramics a year ago and I really like it. It feels still a bit like it’s professional because it’s creative, so I again have the pressure of ‘it has to be nice, I want to put it on Instagram’. But the act of doing it and learning a new technique feels really nice and hobby-ish.
Do you think there is a trick to it to make your work more fun again?

It’s fun while I am working on it, but it’s still work, because you have to do it. So I don’t know the secret yet. But I think it comes with allowing yourself to make mistakes. It would be easier if the people around me would acknowledge that as well. It’s simply about allowing yourself to do it and giving yourself the time to mess around a bit. So maybe it would help to start every assignment with half an hour just doing stuff and maybe something comes out of it or maybe it won’t. Might be a good solution to just reserve that time a day. But also seeing other peoples’ shitty work.

Do you have a specific way to describe yourself in a couple of words? Both yourself and your work?

My work is quite colourful and strongly influenced by fashion and other trends in contemporary culture. And I think my illustrations are joyful and I myself am joyful as well but also quite serious.

Do you have a specific time when you feel anxious, or topics you feel anxious about?

It’s the steady income that still stresses me out sometimes. And just the freelance life - you really have to get used to it. And you have to enjoy the times that you’re not working or that you’re not that busy, because it can be totally different later when you’re all of a sudden buried in work. And I often only communicate via email so I am not as confident in presenting anymore, like I used to. I would like to do it more often again as now I get anxious thinking about it, seems a bit scary. When you just send an email you just have this distance so that’s easier.

Do you experience creative block some times or do you just continuously work?

Yeah sometimes, but it’s mostly when there’s not a really harsh deadline. Or when I have to start working on a personal project, I think that’s the hardest because you give yourself a briefing. And you can change the briefing. ;-) So it’s hard to stick to the briefing and when the client just gives me a briefing I really like that because I then have the boundaries and can experiment within those.

Do you do something to then come over the creative block?

Just start working. Because when I experience that kind of creative block, I keep postponing everything. Like oh no this idea is not good enough - when you just start, something will come out of it eventually.

Do you work on a lot of personal projects on the side?

Yeah all the time I guess, I did a sticker app that I really enjoyed. I also think that a personal project can just be one illustration or something. I see that most of the time when I am working on a personal project, I change something slightly in my style or in my method and that you will see in commissioned work as well. It really goes hand in hand.

And do you have specific magazines that you buy?

No I never buy magazines actually, I mostly go online. I used to like magazines but especially fashion magazines are becoming so shallow so that I don’t find it that interesting anymore, I am actually a little annoyed by the articles that are being featured. They’re just all the same articles about women and their struggles you know. But there are a lot of nice art magazines of course, I just don’t really look into them enough to buy them.

Do you then have specific apps you use?

I use Instagram mostly especially for my work, and I try to use Snapchat for more personal stuff. And then facebook but just for the messaging app. And I use pinterest a lot, but mostly for reference imagery. I have this crazy database of people sitting, walking, etc. But also just bigger themes like sports.

“We need more shitty work; we only see the beautiful end results, but that’s not that interesting and that’s also why you think oh my sketch already has to be perfect. There is always this pressure of ‘it has to be nice’, that sucks.”

“With everything I make I think that it has to be at least good enough to share (on Instagram). So you don’t make anything with a free mind anymore.”
Target Group

Main Insights

WHY SO ANXIOUS

- long, unstructured working days
- unsure of how to make efficient use of their time
- difficult to make a distinction between home and studio and thus to take their mind off work
- put too much pressure on themselves as they constantly feel like they have to produce to perfection
- don’t allow themselves to just ‘play’
- not enough room or time to make mistakes

POTENTIAL

- concerned about increasing burn-outs and creative blocks, seeking support
- no education on how to deal with workload and stress
- feel the topic of being stressed is still not openly talked about

Next

Create more of a target group segmentation to determine more specific values that binds the tribe together.
Give a visual impression of how their day to day life looks like.
Target Group

Overview

- Creative self-starters in their mid 20s to early 30s
- Dedicated workaholics, leading the 24/7 lifestyle
- Rudimentary home office set-ups
- Inspiration and culture sponges, eager to keep learning and searching for idols to live after
- Balance curated lifestyle with realism
- Appreciate humour and feel like their life could have more of it in it
- Try to pimp their immediate surroundings whenever possible

Moderately sociable

Culture-savvy

Self-ironic

Self-starting

Collectors
Target Group

Living

eclectic
repurposed
well-composed
eye for detail

Images taken from interviewed and surveyed participants' Instagram accounts and Facebook profiles - see source list attached.
Consumption

Target Group

- Value magazines with artistic value and an offbeat angle to widely discussed topics
- Appreciate the tactile experience a magazine gives them but also value the convenience of being able to consume relevant and up-to-date online content

- Curate their everyday environments with focus on their craft
- Share puns for recognition and social currency
- Appreciate self-irony and use it to bond with others
Why resonates with their freelance lifestyle as they still frequently change jobs.

- Their mind is not settled yet in the sense that they don’t want to settle down yet, still figuring out who they are.
- As much as their lifestyle changes, ‘drifters’ also resonated with their rollercoaster thoughts when dealing with the creative process.
- Eclectic taste in design and products driven by their input from peers and enjoyment of showing off knowledge through acquiring offbeat pieces.
Key Conclusions
Target Group
Creative Drifters
WHO ARE THEY

- in their mid 20s to early 30s
- just jumpstarted their careers as a creative freelancer
- dedicated workaholics which lets them lead not the 9 to 5, but more like the 24/7 kind of lifestyle - blurring the lines of work and play

MINDSET

- put too much pressure on themselves as they constantly feel like they have to produce to perfection
- feel like there is not enough room or time to make mistakes

CONSUMPTION

- value magazines with artistic value and an offbeat angle to widely discussed topics
- seek more relatable content they can connect to on a more personal level
- want to feel acknowledged in their own personal process and struggles
- they desire meaningful connections and prioritise experiences over stuff
- they curate their everyday environments, whereas they appreciate self-irony and use it to bond with others, whilst sharing puns for recognition and social currency
Research Question

How can It’s Nice That expand from being an inspirational source to become a holistic kickstarter for creativity?
The Brand

Choice of Brand

“It’s Nice That”

CRITERIA
- should cover varied disciplines as the topic does not only concern fashion professionals, but creatives alike
- with its established reach to the emerging creative generation and its reputation of discussing relevant topics within today’s creative industry, it proves to be a platform with increasing global influence that could spark change

PERSONAL MOTIVATION
- future interest in working at their creative agency, might help to get foot in the door

QUESTIONS TO ASK
How is It’s Nice That expressing its purpose so far?
What defines It’s Nice That’s identity and how is it visible?
What perception does the ‘Creative Drifter’ have of the brand?
What other brands are trying to facilitate the creative process and through which means?
What other editorial platforms or agencies have expanded and what strategies did they use?
The Brand

It's Nice That

What
An all-encompassing online platform looking to celebrate creativity in every form.

Recent News

- Film — 4h
- Photography — 6h
- Exhibition — 6h
- Graphics Design — 8h
- Miscellaneous — 1d

Four illustrators have their works drawn by Joto at Here 2017
While at our annual symposium Here (9 June 2017), you may have spied a drawing machine, Joto, illustrating the works of Peter Judson, Martina Pauskova, Jonathan Caligu and Fran Caballero.

Jalan and Jibril Durimel’s photography “tells the stories of all cultures of the diaspora”
The photography of twin brothers Jalan and Jibril Durimel aims to “shed light on life’s unseen”, capturing romantic and graceful moments, while using their skills to “tell the stories of all cultures of the diaspora”.

Ella Bucknall tackles the “boy’s club” of political cartooning in her new zine, Whip
Whip is a new zine that features a collection of political cartoons illustrated entirely by women. By exploring a range of topical issues, along with the recent general election results, Whip is set to fill the notable gaps in female political media.
Interview
Statements

“We’re a group of people passionate about helping the next generation of creatives thrive after graduation.”
– Co-founder, Will Hudson

“Our ambition is scaling up and, because of the width of what we cover, anything’s possible.”
– Editor in Chief, Owen Pritchard

“It’s about good ideas, the people who have them and how ideas come to be in the world.”
– Co-founder, Will Hudson

“The fact that it’s celebratory and the fact that it’s positive is important.”
– Editor in Chief, Owen Pritchard

The Brand Community Manifesto:
Make it happen (be proactive)
Embrace the new (be brave)
Find out more (be curious)
Everyone matters (be human)
Work with others (be collaborative)

“All on the pulse of the future of creativity as told through their often witty take on what makes it so ‘nice’.”

The Brand

Brand Identity

Vision
We believe in the power of what creativity can do.

Mission
To enable creativity to thrive.

Tone of Voice
refreshing - upbeat - witty
Balancing factual information with their more witty tone, they try to make their content more approachable and easy to digest, weaving not only small puns into their vocabulary but further illustrating their opinion through the use of additional graphics and illustrations.

Visual Identity
bright & colourful - playful - youthful & uplifting
Even though It’s Nice That features mostly content from outsiders, their own visual voice manifests itself in their use of graphics and promotional activities. Their magazine further features bold graphics and colours - all looking to convey a playful yet refined spirit that puts the focus on the featured works.
The Brand

Communication Channels

Main: Website
Where it started and where it all comes together - their online platform. Covering diverse professions of the creative field and featuring talents' work - all **with the aim to inspire** a wide audience.

Instagram
**Second direct touch point** with their audience as Instagram is the channel they use to gather inspiration the most. **Depicting finished works of art** and giving small peaks into **promotional actions** they run on the side.

Facebook
Publishing articles from the website and featuring upcoming events. Content quite repetitive and not offering anything new.

Youtube
Featuring inspirational talks, yet focusing on frontal lecturing instead of actively involving.

Twitter
Showing works of art that’s also published on the online platform - linking back to the original source.
The Brand

Brand Outlets

**Anyways - Creative Agency**
Creative agency based in London building the grounds of their network - looking to collaborate and get people on board to also further feature on their online platform.

**Printed Pages Magazine**
Bi-annual magazine featuring the best content from their website that was published over the month - a selection of carefully curated works.

**Here London**
An annual design convention featuring inspirational talks inviting creatives to talk about their work, yet mainly focusing on outcomes rather than process.

**It’s Nice That Annual**
A yearly summary of published works, featuring promising graduates from London universities - a approachable snapshot.
The Brand

Followers

Since launching in 2007, It’s Nice That has been dedicated to building a respected and accessible creative destination. Over those eight years It’s Nice That has received critical acclaim and cemented itself as a trusted pillar in contemporary creative culture. The platform reaches a demographic of over a million, creatively-savvy 18-34 year old tastemakers every month. Their audience is young, international and creatively engaged; they are passionate, knowledgeable and seen by their peers as influential.
“I think It’s Nice That’s curation is really important to them, I think they want to keep it all under control. It would be great if they would put more emphasis on the struggles as well though, because now it’s mostly ‘eye candy’. I think they could add to that.”
– interview participant, Sandy van Helden, Illustrator

“It gives information and some inspiration, yet at times I feel like there is a deeper level of meaning missing. They curate their world but don’t give deeper looks into matters.”
– interview participant, Mourad Bahrouch, Motion Graphic Designer

“It feels like they’re giving their ‘stamp of approval’. I trust their source and view them as very reliable - yet mostly on a professional level.”
– interview participant, Anna-Lena Götzmann, Brander

“They know quite well how to promote upcoming talent, yet I often feel a disconnect - it’s fine to find inspiration but gets dull after a while and doesn’t help me further personally.”
– survey participant, anonymous
All of what It’s Nice That does aims to enable creativity to thrive, yet to become a holistic kickstarter of what they stand for, they’re missing out on comforting the process of idea creation itself.
Key Insights

IDENTITY
- Exists to enable creativity to thrive
- Their own identity is not always as recognisable to outsiders, whereas they express it through their witty take on topics and overall playful design
- Give work their ‘stamp of approval’ and so far deal as a curator for creative ideas

COMMUNICATION
- Used to publish works of creatives and to give peaks into what’s happening at the moment – focus so far mostly on polished end products rather than giving more behind the scenes impressions

REACH
- Main following in London (55%), followed by creative capitals across Europe (30% - Paris, Berlin, Amsterdam) and lastly the US (20% - mostly New York and California)

PROBLEM
- So far only represents creativity on an inspirational level which doesn’t represent the entire creative cycle
- Focus is put on the outcome rather than on the entire process

Next

What other brands are trying to facilitate the creative process and through which means?

What other editorial platforms or agencies have expanded and what strategies did they use?

What does the creative process consists of and what are strategic opportunities for the brand?
The Brand

Short Competitor Overview

AIGA - Eye for Design
- The best new work from the most exciting designers—and the issues they care about
- shed deeper light on current issues next to solely publishing design candy

Creative Mornings
- breakfast lecture series for the creative community
- inspirational talks with changing topics building a networking space for creatives to meet in

TED - Ideas worth spreading
- a conference where Technology, Entertainment and Design converge, and today covers almost all topics — from science to business to global issues
- independently run TEDx events help share ideas in communities around the world

99U
Platform / Magazine / Book / Conference
- topics they cover go beyond design, diving further into career, collaboration, the creative process, productivity and psychology - giving practical editorial content that deals with more creative complexity

DIFFERENTIATOR
IT’S NICE THAT
With a focus on the emerging creative community, It’s Nice That strives to be more approachable and inclusive - with an accessible positioning at their core, which lets them stand out in an otherwise more serious deemed crowd.
Publishers are moving into product and merchandise

In the saturated space of digital media, brands must creatively capture and engage consumers with original content. Storytelling grows more important.

Traditional content providers are working harder to ensure that they’ve built a dedicated community before launching product to make sure that the community feels part of the process and supports its success.

“A lot of us need to realize that brands are much broader than [just a magazine and a website] in consumers’ minds. We need to create brand equity where it makes sense in our readers lives.”

– Sarah Owen, WGSN Senior Editor, Digital Media & Marketing

The editors at Fashionista realised that they were reporting so much on the new retail trend for tour merchandise, realizing that they should capitalise on their knowledge of the topic, by creating their own merchandise.
1. Monocle Shop
Product extensions next to their magazines include the Monocle guides, a 24 hour radio station and their ‘Quality of Life Conference’.

2. Kinfolk’s fashion extension ‘Ouur’
The Collection is a seasonal line of apparel and housewares that focuses on simplicity in design and doing more with less.

3. Man Repeller’s MR Bazaar
“It got me thinking that it would be incredible if we had a space where we could bring the dot-com to life, where people could come and shop, sit and read, get cool recommendations, drink a coffee and discover a new food.”

4. 032c Motocross collection and pop-up
032c Magazine has always been a research tool for them, and now they apply their findings into practice.

5. Toiletpaper furniture and homewear
The space is a fully immersive version of the magazine, all conveying Toiletpaper's bizarre, postmodernist aesthetic.
Creative Theory

Creative Theory and Trends

How to overcome creative block

- making sure your brain and body gets the rest it needs is crucial for creative intelligence
- we need to know that people who are competent, capable and decent will also have thoughts which are deeply contrary to who we imagine them to be

John Cleese on creativity

- creativity is not a talent, but a way of operating
- creativity is not possible in the closed mode
- open mode = relaxed, less purposeful, contemplating, more inclined to humour, consequently more playful, includes curiosity - not under pressure to get a specific thing done quickly
- problem that we too often get stuck in the closed mode
- conditions that make it more likely to get into the open mode: space, time, confidence, humour

We need more shitty work
Medium. (2017). We need more shitty work – Thoughts from Femke – Medium. https://medium.com/thoughts-from-femke/we-need-more-shitty-work-de43450041d

- creatives are paralysed by the pressure of perfectionism
- play evokes exploration and that’s what channels creativity
- for every great idea is a million shitty ones - once you give yourself permission to produce shitty work, only then will great results come
- knowing that the end result has to be of share worthy quality, their mind is already at the finish line from the get go
- when there’s pressure to produce perfect work, it’s highly unlikely you’ll take that as an opportunity to try something new

The Buzz - Ideaism

- with social media becoming chock-a-block with sameness, consumers are looking beyond items and objects
- ideas are the true currency of this next century
- we’re buying into buying less, because we want to be mentally and mindfully fulfilled too
- rise of concept salons, ideas banks, spaces dedicated to ideas and ideals as we want to see less stuff, but instead ideas, insight and inspiration

“The goal is to understand the diversity of the creative process better and help unleash creativity around the world.”

Hacking Creativity. (2015). What are the habits of great creative minds?. http://hackingcreativity.com/
Tim Brown: Tales of creativity and play


- we fear the judgement of our peers and fear is what causes us to be conservative in our thinking
- kids who feel secure, who are in a kind of trusted environment feel most free to play as they don’t have that fear of embarrassment yet
- as we become older we stop ourselves from doing things as we self-edit as we’re having ideas
- the ability to just go for it and explore lots of things is something that kids do well and is a form of play

Why play is essential for creativity


- play-like activities put us into a psychological state where it’s ok to fail, where it’s ok to wonder ‘what if’ - a result of that thinking is the ability to freely explore the unkown
- play offers us more than mere escape from reality, it also offers us more exposure to diversity of perspective

“What happened to play? What happened to creating a safe space to explore shitty ideas and create something just for fun?”

Key Conclusions

Research Phase
TARGET GROUP

- constantly feel like they have to produce to perfection
- feel like there is not enough room to make mistakes
- want to feel acknowledged in their own personal process and struggles
- desire meaningful connections and prioritise experiences over stuff
- concerned about increasing burn-outs and creative blocks, seeking support

BRAND

- exists to enable creativity to thrive, yet so far only focuses on inspiration rather than representing the entire cycle of the creative process
- give work their ‘stamp of approval’
- “Our ambition is scaling up and, because of the width of what we cover, anything’s possible.” – Editor in Chief, Owen Pritchard

CREATIVE THEORY

- play evokes exploration and that’s what channels creativity
- creativity is only possible in the open mode - a state that is less purposeful, inclined to humour and not pressuring to get a specific thing done quickly
- without a play-like attitude, creative insights hide from us behind fear and uncertainty

MARKET

- the space of digital media is saturated - digital brands are moving offline
- in times of change, brands need to create equity where it makes sense in their consumers’ minds

STARTING POINTS

- trigger self-compassion in people through showing softer, less competitive sides of creatives
- emphasize imperfections and struggles of creatives and build a community of support around it
- create inclusiveness through showcasing all sides of the creative process
- implement playfulness to aid creativity and connect to parent brand
Phase 2: Concepting
Creative Concept

NICE Formations
“flaunt your struggle”

A campaign extending the parent brand through the use of a micro site that focuses on all things dealing with personal creative struggles.

Feedback - ‘Almost there’
- keep it simple and clear
- define the direction and message - you need to choose one
- you need to add more creative concepting to make it stand out
- campaigns have a time element - how are the different elements linked?
- what user need are you trying to fulfil exactly? (mental vs. process struggle)

Concept boards

Vision
- Embracing your flaws frees creativity.

Mission
- To enable creativity to thrive.

Nice Formations is the complement to It’s Nice That - representing all things messy dealing with the creative process and comforting our target group in the progress of idea creation by encouraging them to expose what they’re feeling inside to the outside - to show their struggles with confidence and experience support while at it.

#MindsAlike Campaign

Objective
To show that with Nice Formations expressing your mind gives creative confidence.

PRODUCTS

1. Character Stories
The Campaign will kick off with publishing 3 short clips on the It’s Nice That parent website, each showcasing an individual talking about their struggles and revealing their stories. By speaking about what they’re going through, empathy is being created not only towards the character but also towards oneself as one recognises that creative minds struggle alike.

2. Online Platform
Once the characters in the clips started opening up there will be a link to a micro site, showcasing the messier side of the creative process by encouraging to publish thoughts as well as messy sketches that people would otherwise feel embarrassed to share. All under the umbrella #mindsalike as expressing your mind creates bonds and gives creative confidence.

3. Webshop
In the clips the characters will be wearing the Nice Formations gear already, encouraging others to join the movement by buying an item for themselves and not only speaking their mind online but wearing their struggles to the outside creating recognition wherever one creative meets the other.
Concept

Steps & Relevance

Recap

It’s Nice That claims to be a kickstarter for creativity, yet so far only focuses on the end product instead of supporting all that the creative process entails

↓

Main problem: Creative self-starters feel pressured by a perfectionist image of the creative industry and feel blocked in their own creative habits because of it

↓

Establish It’s Nice That as a holistic kickstarter for creativity by further comforting the process of idea creation itself

↓

Create the counterpart to It’s Nice That’s curated platform and set up a supportive environment that allows for play and experimentation - encouraging creative chaos to achieve freedom of mind

INGREDIENTS

Use humour to resonate with TG’s interests and with optimistic and playful attitude of It’s Nice That

Anti-isolation - should connect like-minded creatives and get them off their screens to resolve creative block

Needs to be a ‘safe environment’ where creatives don’t fear competition to reveal themselves and their work

Should contain social elements as it’s about creative exchange and solidarity
Creative Concept
Development

BIG IDEA

NICE PLAY

Creating an offline brand extension that shifts the focus from finished outcomes to creative play instead. It builds an addition to their online framework and creates a space that allows for experimentation and exchange, offering the grounds to just play and have a go at it, just like fearless kids would do.

PROPOSITION

PLAY. THAT’S NICE!

It’s all about embracing the process rather than being held back by unrealistic standards. Nice Play therefore calls up for a new generation of creatives to go against perfectionist habits to let their creativity free.

GOAL

To show that creativity cannot be defined by the end product, but that creative potential lies in play and exploration.
THE AIM

To establish the counterpart of It’s Nice That - ‘Nice Play’, creating a platform that allows for play and exploration, shifting the focus from outcome to process.

VISION

Play fosters creative freedom of mind.

MISSION

To encourage free exploration of the unknown.
To show how It’s Nice That’s brand extension ‘Nice Play’ actually involves their target group, what it will offer has to be defined further. The following elements therefore show what the concept consists of as well as what tools will be used to complete it.

**PLAY SESSIONS**

**What is it:**
A monthly after hours gathering providing the grounds for collective play and exchange.

**How it’s set up:**
Divided into a drop-off, a playing field and a pick up it builds the base for play and ingredients to collectively overcome creative blocks.

**GAME CHANGERS**

**What for:**
To mix up each play sessions, differing hosts will lead one session - inspiring ways to play and challenge the process.

**Who are they:**
Creatives from differing disciplines who take on experimental approaches in their own work - allowing for change of perspective and input for play.

**PROMOTION**

**What:**
To promote Nice Play and its sessions teasers need to be released to get the audience and entice them to start playing more for themselves.

**Where:**
As Instagram is the target group’s main source for inspiration this is where Nice Play should be promoted - breaking up the pattern of solely showcasing refined end products and promoting creative play instead.
Concept

New Competitors

School of Life

- London-based “better living” consultancy
- offering mindfulness classes and workshops covering career, priorities, creativity and lifestyle, a bookshop sells a range of stationery and books related to the same topics
- focuses on emotional intelligence and personal development

Fuck Up Nights

- The aim of the events is to take the sting, shame and guilt out of failure, share stories in a supportive environment, workshop the experiences and figure out what could have been done differently
- ‘Suddenly, failing has become cool’ - everybody wants to share their story
- frontal lecturing instead of active involvement
- not tackling current personal obstacles but reflecting on past ones and sharing experiences
Concept

**House of Genius**


- brings together a group of 15-18 wide-ranging minds and three business presenters
- three presenters share their business and a key problem they are facing - next, each attendee offers questions, insights, suggestions, or introductions that may assist the presenter
- carefully selected attendees not making it as approachable as well as pressure of having to ‘beat’ other attendees in idea generation (building up pressure instead of relieving it)

**Makerversity**


- a pioneering community that brings together the best and most exciting makers, providing them with the space, tools and collaborative environment necessary to grow their business
- shared work spaces and lab, yet with focus on more technological advancements rather than just ‘analogue play’
- requires membership and monthly payments
Concept

Campaign
Inspiration

KesselsKramer: ‘Do’ Campaign

Within the Do Create project consumers were invited to interact and play, and thereby influence the design. You buy an experience: it is what you do to the object or what the object does to you that counts.

- humorous tone of voice and depiction of play, yet related to the designed object itself rather than the persons’ process

Diesel: ‘Be Stupid’

“Smart had one good idea, and that idea was stupid. You can’t outsmart stupid. So don’t even try. Remember only stupid can be truly brilliant.”

- about taking risks, embracing chaos, being youthful and daring
- resonating with carefree spirit of ‘play’ and free minds
Concept

Promotion Teasers
Inspiration

**Annegien van Doorn: ‘Domestic Science’**


“I am fascinated by the idea that an object, although made with a clear function, can turn into something else”
- likes playing with this idea by re-arranging everyday objects in new settings
- discovery of new purposes and meanings, challenging the already established, triggers child-like curiosity

**NEMO: ‘Discover what technology can do’**


- discovers working of simple mechanisms in humorous way with use of copy and bold colours
- shows interaction with person and object - inviting for discovery and play with materials
- repurposed tools showcasing different ways of working and play
Phase 3: Execution
CLIENT

It’s Nice That

A media platform that deals as a supportive vehicle for artistic newcomers by giving exposure to emerging talent and hosting inspirational talks, building the steppingstone for ultimate success. Their passion has always been to support brilliant creatives, to showcase their work, to use creativity to make people feel something - or as they defined it ‘enable creativity to thrive’.

PROBLEM

It’s Nice That is the online go-to platform for all things driving creativity, yet to become a holistic kick-starter for what they stand for, they’re missing out on comforting the process of idea creation itself.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How can It’s Nice That expand from being an inspirational source to become a holistic kickstarter for creativity?

SUB-QUESTIONS

What defines It’s Nice That’s identity and how is it visible?
Who is It’s Nice That’s main target group?
What are the main reasons that cause their creativity to suffer?
What rituals or tools do they turn to in order to be creative?
What other brands are trying to facilitate the creative process and through which means?

TARGET GROUP

‘Creative Drifters’, men and women in their mid-twenties to early thirties, creative self-starters, mainly characterised by their ambitious spirit and eagerness to learn. They celebrate brands and people that take a stand for something, yet still feel like within the creative industry hardly anyone speaks openly about the struggles they’re facing. They feel pressured by an image of perfection and crave more open conversations and support, to feel assured in their own doings and to create bonds while at it.

OBJECTIVE

To establish the counterpart of It’s Nice That - ‘Nice Play’, creating a platform that allows for play and exploration, shifting the focus from outcome to process and showing that with It’s Nice That you’re backed for any creative endeavor.

CONTEXT

1. Creatives are hindered by their perfectionist habits to create something great and to feel confident about embracing the process with all its flaws and ups and downs.
2. Play evokes exploration - with a child-like attitude of experimenting and making mistakes as an essential part of the creative process.
3. In an age of isolation, self-starting creatives only have their own perspective to draw upon which asks for a greater community of support.
4. It’s Nice That is a platform that a lot of creatives turn to already, yet by shifting from inspiring and educating to actively supporting they have the potential to become the go-to brand for creative backing amongst struggling creatives alike.

STRATEGY

By encouraging Creative Drifters to embrace the process and ditch perfectionist habits through creating a space that allows for play, exploration and exchange.

PRODUCTS

Nice Play concept book
Nice Play sessions
Nice Play launch teasers and Nice Play line

DESIRED CONSUMER RESPONSE

“Finally a brand devoted to creativity that doesn’t only show the polished side but actually acknowledges the process we are all going through. I’ll definitely check their space and will come back to their site for future input and offerings.”
Execution

Play Sessions
Look & Feel

CRITERIA - The sessions should follow a lo-fi, dynamic and experimental look and feel that calls for a low-pressure environment inviting for play and embracing of process, implementing material triggers that call for interaction.
CONCLUSION

The first collage like approach resembles a mood board too much, whereas the second more organic translation gives an indication of materials used. In general it is not an exact execution as each session doesn’t follow strict design guidelines, but rather gives a material and atmospheric impression.
Link back to parent identity and providing clear signage within play sessions to provide the target group with some guidance when feeling lost. Building the base to build play sessions on, used as the constant element that can be applied wherever a play session takes place.
Header and body font taken from parent brand to maintain a consistent identity.

**Neuzeit Grotesk Black**

*Header / 30 pt / 32 pt leading*

*Neuzeit Grotesk Bold*

*Subheader / 30 pt / 32 pt leading*

*FreightText Book Regular*

*Body / 11 pt / 17 pt leading / -10 tracking*

*FreightText Book Italic*

*Caption / 11 pt / 17 pt leading / -10 tracking*

**COLOURS**

Feeding on the parent brand’s original uplifting spirit, we’ll stay true to its corporate identity through the use of fonts and bright colours.

**MAIN**

- C5/M26/Y78/K0
- C3/M2/Y5/K0
- C17/M2/Y2/K0
- C10/M0/Y27/K0
- C83/M41/Y81/K38
- C16/M22/Y47/K0

**ACCENTS**

- C10/M96/Y100/K1
- C63/M31/Y0/K0
Execution

Play Sessions
Game Changers

CRITERIA - Must be challenging established processes, shedding new light on how to play and be creative with focus on their process. As it’s about going offline and the play with materials they should embody some sort of ‘back to school mentality’ of exploring with raw materials.

1. Helmut Smits - multidisciplinary play
Believes that every situation, thought or object carries one or more good artworks in itself and thus plays with simplistic materials to give them new meanings and discover new outcomes

2. Das Leben am Haverkamp - fashion design
Playing with textiles and experimenting with their diverse aspects of materiality and structure, always questioning fashion and its context

3. Sebastian Haslauer - graphic design
Analogue paint play with basic materials - making use of traditional colours yet new and playful techniques

4. Paulien Barbas - product design
Play with product prototypes, mastering their iterations and putting processes in reverse

5. Amie Dicke - photography play
Known for her ‘afterimage’ series playing with image manipulation and challenging the photography development process by reversing it

6. Damien Florébert - illustration
Known for childhood reminiscent crayon fun and his 2-minute drawings, inspiring to step away from creating anything too complicated and jotting down impressions that come spontaneously
Execution
Teaser Shoot

MINI BRIEF

PRODUCTS
Nice Play Instagram teasers

OBJECTIVE
To promote play and exploration away from perfectionist standards, shifting the focus from outcome to process.

STRATEGY
By showing creative play and puns, emphasizing the process and trial and error stage that may or may not lead to trial and triumph.

PROPOSITION
Play. That’s Nice!

TONE OF VOICE
Encouraging, fresh, straightforward

MEDIA REQUIREMENTS
Instagram teasers, print ads (stills)

MANDATORIES
Adjusted parent brand logo (face with new title of ‘play’)
Font and colour usage of parent brand
Overall playful design & tone
Has to show interaction with material and / or people

ATMOSPHERE
Dynamic, lo-fi, experimental, playful

LOCATION / TEAM / DIRECTION

Where: Kunsthauß Köln - artists’ ateliers with a messy and colourful feel, natural light and environment
Who: focus on material play with simple interactions, executional assistance by designbüro köln (Daniel Angermann & Carsten Rohrbeck)
What: creative play that links back to upbeat parent identity, showcasing of fun puns and failures, random play that relieves pressure of viewers and puts a smile on their faces, short teasers in looping GIF format with link to textual information on website
Selection
Teasers
Online Implementation

To mix-up it's Nice That's Instagram feed of picture perfect eye candy by implementing sessions of play that depict a more lo-fi take on creative experimentation

Introducing 5 launch teasers that will be released over the course of a month leading to the kick-off of the Nice Playground series, putting a smile on our drifters’ faces and encouraging them to check out what our Nice Play initiative has to offer.
CONCLUSION
Differentiation teasers from stills: teasers supposed to show play in action, dynamic depiction on Instagram to interrupt portfolio pictures of products - posters to give an impression of ‘after play’ rising curiosity through linking back to Instagram account name and website distributed around art schools and exhibition places.
Strategy
Nice Extensions

PLAY LINE
To establish a helping network of creatives that goes beyond our Playground, Nice Play will introduce its own hotline. Aiming to connect struggling drifters alike, the Play Line’s goal is to offer new perspectives through collective exchange and play.

PLAY ON TOUR
Play Sessions will go abroad, involving brand patrons that will take on being the host of future play in their own studios in a selection of global creative cities.
WHO ANSWERS WHEN I CALL?
For now, anyone within Europe is able to enter his or her own number to the play line. When you call you will be connected to a random creative that has entered his info to the pool already, whereas it is up to you to narrow the connections down to an area of our selection of creative cities or to keep it open.

WHAT IF I’VE BEEN ONE OF THE FIRSTS TO SIGN UP AND CALL?
Of course, it’ll take a while until the network grows. However, to make sure there’ll be someone to reach at the start of our play line, our game changers have entered their details as well - making sure that at least within the first week, there’ll be someone at the end of the line.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?
You’ll have to carry the costs of the call so that it depends on your communication provider and your individual calling plans. However, your call will only start getting charged when you are connected to another creative.

IS MY PHONE NUMBER SHARED?
All entries are anonymous and will not be shared. All calls are routed through a switchboard. But if you’d like to exchange information you are more than welcome to do so in person when chatting.

WHY IS NO ONE PICKING UP?
1. Too many people are calling and there’s no creative left to pick up
2. It’s night time - the line will only be open 10am to 10pm.
3. If the first creative is not answering you will automatically be connected to another until someone does.

WHY DO I NEED TO ENTER THE AREA I AM IN?
Of course it’s handy to talk to anyone who's available - no matter where they are. However, we also believe in the power of meeting up and hands-on help so that we’ll leave it up to you to make a preference to whom you’d like to talk to. Thus, there will be a selection of creative hot spots ready to choose from, whereas we’ll keep one option to ‘others’ to not restrict other European participants.

WHAT ARE THE CREATIVE HOT SPOTS ONE CAN PRE-SELECT?
For now we’re limiting the areas to fill in and select from to London, Paris, Berlin and Amsterdam as they’re the European cities our target group finds themselves the most in. But as mentioned before, by including the ‘other’ option, we’ll make sure not to exclude the ones who’ve left for the countryside or anywhere else.

HOW DO I CALL?
To call you must put your own information in first - making sure that our pool will grow and living after the mantra of sharing is caring. Then it’s just about hitting the dial button that you’ll find after putting in your details, automatically connecting you to the outside world.

The play line can be found under www.itsnicethat.com/nice-play-line

IS IT ACCESSIBLE FOR ANYONE?
For now our play line is restricted to Europe, due to the differing time zones and for testing it out in the frame of our Nice Play campaign first. Depending on how big the demand is and on how well it goes, we’ll consider expanding as well to grow the network and our reach as well.
Presentation

Execution

CONCEPT BOOK

PROMOTIONAL POSTERS

A4 PROJECT OVERVIEW

SELF-EVALUATION

NICE PLAY TEASERS

NICE PLAY LINE VIDEO ANIMATION

NICE PLAY PLAY STATIONS

1. THE DROP-OFF

2. PLAY SESSIONS

3. THE PICKUP

PROBLEM

The main issue is that the drop-off and pick-up areas are not organized properly. This can lead to confusion and delays.

SOLUTION

A new layout can be implemented to optimize the process. This will ensure smooth transitions and reduce any potential issues.

Play. That’s Nice!

@itsnicethat

#niceplay
Execution

Actualisation
Phase II

Feedback

RED / GREEN: GREEN LIGHT (AT OWN RISK)

RESEARCH
- a really authentic process with desk & field research

DECISION-MAKING
- concept is clear and relevant and well founded, clarify the simple criteria for the execution and keep it simple

ACTUALISATION
- the translation is overly complex and creates the anxiety you are trying to relieve - make it simple and playful as the core ideas have values
- the visualisation of play is not authentic or interactive, but quite stylised
- well produced
- link to fashion needs to be communicated more strongly

PRESENTATION
- presentation should be clearer, text is not concise enough
- use the game changers to structure and create authenticity
- drop the play line as it dilutes core idea

Next

VISUALISATION
- what does process look like in play vision?
- focus on authentic and actual creative process
- re-think promotional teasers - how could the promotion / campaign look like - what are you trying to achieve with it?

COMMUNICATION
- simplify writing, don’t over structure it
- energy of creativity and experimentation comes with game changers - use them to focus

STRATEGY
- how does concept relate to people outside of London (if play line is dropped?)
- think of idea of how it could be travelling (or use play line as side note)
Play Visualisation
Space Improvements

How can you translate the Play values into the space set-up and visualise the concept more clearly?

CRITERIA:
- show free experimentation and playful interactivity with both material and people
- overall feel should be lo-fi, dynamic, experimental and playful
- implement materials that link back to game changers and their profession and techniques

FROM THIS TO

![Image of space before improvement]

![Image of space after improvement]
**CONCLUSION**

- Implementation of specific materials (panels) shows more consistency and can be applied as branded elements if space is traveling.
- Inclusion of people show interactivity and overall lo-fi vibe comes across well through way of collaging, atmosphere and scattered materials of play.
How can you translate the Play values into the space set-up and visualise the concept more clearly?

CRITERIA:
- give peaks into the real process of creatives and small insights into how they experiment and play
- use fashion game changer as sample to make the link to the industry more clear

Fashion game changers:

‘Das Leben am Haverkamp’

ABOUT THE COLLECTIVE
Creative platform that represents four fashion designers
Together they create the novel context necessary for their individual labels and unrestricted way of working and thinking
Their unconventional approach to design and fashion results in thought-provoking, unpolished work, often inspired by alter egos, boyhood and floral curtains

ANOUK VAN KLAYEREN
- her work revolves around the alienation of the human body and deconstruction of luxury
- expresses her thought experiments in various media, such as fashion, sculpture, unisex jewellery and performance; human hair, plastic fringes, golden masks and pearls

DEWI BEKKER
- playful view on menswear
- balance between humor, everyday life, fantasy

GINO ANTHONISSE
- brings wonder to life through translating his collages into fashion pieces
- combines classic garments and ethnic elements together with strange materials and techniques

CHRISTA VAN DER MEER
- wonders, in what way clothing is connected to one’s identity
Execution

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

How would you describe your process at ‘Das Leben am Haverkamp’?
How does collaborating affect your process?
How do you experiment when you develop something with the four of you?
How do you approach working with a new material or technique?
What materials do you like to play with the most?
Why would you say experimentation is so important?
Is there anything in particular that helps you come to new insights / ideas?
What are the biggest challenges you usually face in your process?
How do you recognise potential in an experiment?
Would you say you have a certain pattern in your process?
And if so, do you ever try to challenge or break out of it?
Does the space you work in influence your process, and if so how?

CONCLUSION

- the interview statements should hint to what material they like to play with that would then end up in a play session
- should spark interest in experimentation and portray an uplifting atmosphere that is yet authentic

DOP Shots

medium close-ups + variations for interview statements + showing of conversation amongst the designers
medium close-ups to show experimentation in action
extreme close-ups to focus on material interaction and interaction amongst each other
The keynote should connect the dots of all key elements of the ‘Nice Play’ campaign - giving an overview of all that it entails, whilst bringing the playful and experimental feel across.

To do: divide into chapters of: Insight it’s based on, Concept, Space, Strategy, Promotion and Goal

PLAYFUL GRAPHICS

Feeling pressured by an industry that is going towards perfection,

With an increasingly polished online world, they are paralysed by certain standards they feel like they have to live up to.

Play fosters creative freedom of mind.
Execution

Visual style

balance between playful graphics that link back to parent identity and lo-fi experimental
depictions of the process and play

LO-FI EXPERIMENTATION

Nice Play is an extension campaign by It's Nice That, shifting the focus from outcome to process.

by providing the space for exploration and play.

the campaign will kick off by getting people to talk about their process and play.
Promo Teaser Overview

Next to the more elaborate Interview teasers about each game changer individually, an overview promo teaser showcases all the artists and their disciplines involved, promoting each session to come and giving promotional peaks into the brand’s new offspring.

Criteria: should show real-life experimentation, instead of stylised images, keep playful appeal of graphics to link back to parent’s identity and maintain uplifting spirit in cut and music to stay close to the ‘Play’ purpose.

Amie Dicke

Damien Florébert

Das Leben am Haverkamp
Next to peaks into the processes and ways of playing of the game changers, playful typography applications will give more information, such as the place where a session will happen - all being promoted via Instagram to break up the brands previously overly polished stream and add to their offerings.
Execution

Presentation set-up

EXPERIMENTATION 1

SPACE FOCUS AS MAIN ELEMENT OF CAMPAIGN

PLAY CONCEPT DEFINITION

PLAY PROPOSITION

BRAND EXPLANATION AND PROBLEM

CONCEPT BOOK

NICE PLAY STRATEGY VIDEO

ADDITIONAL INSTAGRAM PROMO CLIP PLAY SESSIONS
Execution

EXPERIMENTATION 2

CONCLUSION

Entire wood panel display and usage of additional navigation build a clearer link with the space and a more coherent presentation of the entire concept. The division of the different aspects should make it easier to understand and build more of a hierarchy of what’s most important.
Overview

Key Decisions
## Key Decisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>WHY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic: Mental Health and the creative industry</td>
<td>Personal interest - I am inspired most by what I notice around me, especially in regards to societal movements and how branding can be used as a tool to react to those. Having had a lot of discussions with people about their frustrations I wanted to use this project to turn their frustrations into something that would acknowledge those.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>With a shift of branding towards 'transformational marketing' that goes beyond product and consumers who want to connect to brands in more personal ways, and the mental helath issue finally gaining more attention there was a good base to build this project on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Group</td>
<td>Driven by what I’ve been noticing around me it seemed logic to pick the target group of emerging creatives as not only Millennials are the ones suffering from anxiety the most, but also within the creative industry there has been a rise of the discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative process</td>
<td>Realising that I am not a psychology student I had to make a difference between mental and process struggles, which go hand in hand yet are more tangible if relating to the work process of emerging creatives. Thus, the project focuses on creative blocks that are represented in the work process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand: It's Nice That</td>
<td>It’s Nice That is the go-to brand for a lot of young creatives already, yet is seen as superficial to some even though they show great potential in leveraging their reach to become the number one kickstarter for creativity. Their youthfulness relates to the target group, yet what they present so far is not that relatable yet, showing a great market opportunity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Concept: Nice Play

| Why focus on pop-up space | The online world is what plays a big factor in triggering anxiety in the target group as well as what the brand has been focusing on most, which is why going offline and connecting to both with people and play again shows the greatest opportunity. |
| Proposition: ‘Play. That’s Nice!’ | ‘It’s Nice That’ gives their stamp of approval, which has so far been focusing on the final products - with the new Nice Play venture they thus give their approval for play. |
| Why space division: Drop-off, Play, Pick-up | Even though the target group has been missing out on carefree experimentation, they still seek some guidance to not feel overwhelmed which is why a loose structure provides the framework for free play, divided into three stations. |
Key Decisions

Why rough collage visualisation
Nice Play aims to create an environment that is non-pressuring and supportive, which is why the space focuses on the interaction and play that happens within it rather than on strict design guidelines. The collage represents the acknowledgement of imperfections and experimentation and focuses on the dynamic that changes depending on the materials in use.

Strategy

Why game changers
Same as with the division of the space, some guidance is needed in order to get inspired to move on. Further bringing in the trend of cross-collaboration (as also one of the biggest trends within the fashion industry) and the target group's need of new perspectives it therefore further creates relevance for each discipline to move forward through learning from each other as well as relevance for the fashion industry.

Choice of game changing hosts
All suggests hosts value experimentation within their process and the play with new materials and techniques that build an inspiring base for the target group to learn from and experiment with.

Purpose teaser
In order for the target group to feel encouraged to put more value into play they seek to see that others don't immediately have that great idea right away first, which is why a shift from outcome to process in regards to showing how others work is the best promotion for the space itself.

Why Instagram
Instagram is the first go-to inspiration for creatives on a daily basis, but also one of the biggest factors causing insecurities – making the medium of choice to break up the picture-perfect feed just this.

Look and feel teaser
No fuss, no filters, but peaks into creatives’ play that link to the sessions offered by the hosts displayed. Mixed with the playful graphics of the brand it’s supposed to give information on both host and date of upcoming events, while real time Instagram stories will show what happens during the event itself.

Play on tour - choice of cities and studio patrons
It's Nice That’s focus so far is on European creative capitals, as is the focus of their network that seems valuable for collaborating with hosts. With every strategy there is a possibility of extension, yet since the brand is still small it makes sense to start small, too. Being further known for their network the use of studio patrons for expansion outside of London is therefore also on brand and in line with the concept of collaborating with game changers and making their ways of working and environment an asset.
**Key Decisions**

**Why Play Line**

To be able to still link to creatives outside of the creative capitals in place and to keep on building a supportive platform that’s within reach more than once a month a hotline is the best option to stay within reach. Not only capitalizing on the always-connectedness of the target group but also on the mantra of staying relatable - connecting people with people.

**Product: Concept book**

**Graphics**

Linking back to the brand’s parent identity as well as to the idea of giving loose guidance within an experimental scope, the graphics have been inspired by the stages each creative goes through as well as connect to the original brand in use of colour and youthful style.

**Layout**

The layout makes use of steady elements that create focus, without over designing the pages to keep a steady base to build on, whereas some variations in text size and elements such as crooked marker colours represent the stage of the process.

**Adapted logo**

The ‘Nice Face’ logo has the friendly attitude of the brand and also represents the approachable idea of being a brand that’s supportive so that the addition of ‘Play’ marks the new venture of the brand, whilst keeping in touch with its base.

**Product: Promo teaser**

**Purpose**

The promo teaser is supposed to give peaks into all the disciplines covered by the hosts leading each session - inspiring the target group to come as they not only recognise the names but will

**Length**

As the promotion will mainly take place on Instagram, the teaser will be kept rather short, giving peaks into what hosts will be joining each session as well as showing what materials and disciplines they’re making use of the most.

**Style**

Real-life impressions without any filters give peaks into actual processes, while the brand’s identifying graphics will give information about dates and names - linking back to the brand’s playful core.
Sources
Sources

Article

Article

Online survey
Survey, “Anxious Millennials”, March 2017

Interview
Target group interviews, Amsterdam, March 2017

Documentary

Brand statement

Survey report

Article

Brand website

Video

Trend report

Trend report

Trend report

IMAGES

Market research


Target group


Space inspiration


Teaser Inspiration


THANK YOU!