

REDESIGNING THE VISUAL IDENTITY OF KONKOU STUDIO AND ITS APPLICATION IN PROMOTIONAL MEDIA

Abdul Rafi Muhshi Harris *, Eko Sugiarto

Seni Rupa, FBS, Universitas Negeri Semarang

Jl. Taman Siswa, Sekaran, Kec. Gn. Pati, Kota Semarang, Jawa Tengah 50229, Indonesia

Email: masrafi225@gmail.com

Abstract

In today's rapidly growing creative industry, a strong visual identity is essential for a studio to survive and compete professionally. This study aims to redesign the visual identity of Konkou Studio, a creative studio that was once active in the fields of design and branding but faced various internal issues such as conflicting visions and the absence of a strong organizational structure. The design process was conducted qualitatively using an exploratory approach through brainstorming and visual testing. The tools used include Procreate for initial illustrations and Adobe Illustrator for vector based designs. The design outcomes include a new logo, color system, and typography, as well as their application across various promotional media such as business cards, social media, websites, and merchandise. The evaluation indicates that the new design reflects the studio's professional and creative character and can be consistently applied across various platforms. This research underscores the importance of a well-defined visual identity and effective internal team management in supporting the sustainability of a creative studio.

Keywords: Visual Identity, Creative Studio, Promotional Media

INTRODUCTION

The creative industry, such as design studios, digital agencies, or technology startups, has grown rapidly in the last ten years due to new technologies and changing consumer tastes (Smith, 2020). Projects in this industry are highly creative, innovative, and involve many people with different skills working together toward a common goal (Chen & Lee, 2021). Success here is not only measured by profit but also by the team's ability to work smart together and create a positive impact on society, the industry, or partners (Gardner, 1983; Jones & White, 2022).

However, there are significant challenges in managing creative projects. Despite brilliant ideas, projects often fail due to internal issues, such as unclear organizational structures, ambiguous task assignments, and the absence of written agreements, which often become major problems (Davis & Millebisa, 2021). These issues can lead to inefficient operations and, more seriously, exacerbate conflicts within the team (Brown et al., 2021). Studies show that project failures are more often caused by team management and communication issues rather than a lack of ideas (Kim & Park, 2018).

One of the conflicts that often disrupts creative teams is the difficulty in reconciling

differing visions or artistic tastes. When key team members have vastly different perspectives on the direction or final outcome of a project, for example, the gap between their “niche” (specific) and “mainstream” (general) tastes makes it challenging to reach agreement and collaborate (Lim & Tan, 2020). The inability to find a middle ground not only slows down the project but can also damage team morale and create rifts that are difficult to repair (Garcia & Rodriguez, 2019).

This phenomenon is clearly evident in the case of the dissolution of Konkou Studio. The studio, which initially aimed to create an innovative “Konkou” project, faced numerous internal issues. Initial analysis revealed that Konkou Studio struggled with a lack of clear organizational structure and low accountability, exacerbated by the absence of written agreements binding each point of contact (PIC). Additionally, major conflicts over creative vision among founders and key team members, who could not reach an agreement, became the primary trigger for the studio's collapse.

Previous studies have extensively discussed visual identity design as a means of strengthening brand image (Olins, 2008; Wheeler, 2017; Kusrianto, 2010). These studies emphasize the importance of visual consistency and alignment with brand values, but they generally focus on brands that are already stable from a managerial perspective. Some other studies have explored the relationship between visual identity design and the competitiveness of the creative industry (Putra & Wardhani, 2019; Pramudito, 2021), but few have examined this in the context of studios facing internal structural issues.

Meanwhile, creative management literature (Howkins, 2001; Florida, 2014) discusses the importance of team vision alignment in project success, but does not specifically link it to rebranding or visual identity redesign processes. No research has been found that examines visual identity redesign in a creative studio that has dissolved or stagnated due to vision conflicts and weak organizational structure, despite the fact that this context has a different complexity from cases of brands that are healthy from a managerial perspective.

This case study of Konkou Studio is a valuable opportunity to understand why failure to meet key project criteria, particularly those related to teamwork, internal management, and shared vision, can lead to the dissolution of a creative entity. By analyzing Konkou Studio, this research aims to provide a real understanding of the serious impact of governance issues and vision conflicts on the sustainability of projects in the creative industry. This study is also expected to serve as an important lesson for anyone seeking to establish or develop a similar studio in the future.

Creative vision conflicts and difficulties in reaching agreements, in addition to structural issues, Konkou Studio also faced significant challenges due to differences in vision and creative preferences among core team members. Differences in perspectives on the direction of the “Konkou” project, such as the contrast between ‘niche’ and “mainstream” tastes, prevented team members from reaching an agreement. This issue requires further research to understand how unresolved vision conflicts become serious obstacles to team collaboration, prevent agreements, and significantly impact the studio's ability to produce work and survive.

Konkou Studio was founded on June 17, 2018, by four childhood friends, Abid, Fathan, Hudiya, and Harris, who, despite coming from different backgrounds, were united by their love for art, design, and creative ideas. The studio was born out of a casual conversation that turned

into a shared determination to create a solid, professional, and impactful creative workspace.

Initially, Konkou Studio focused on branding services for agencies and SMEs, specializing in marketing management and visual design. Over time, the studio expanded its scope by launching fashion and merchandise products such as t-shirts, tote bags, and other visual accessories. The studio is located in Bekasi and continues to grow as a space that integrates design, technology, and visual communication strategies into a cohesive whole.

In this study, the researcher aims to analyze the real case of Konkou Studio and redesign its visual identity, including its logo, social media, and promotional media, to develop business services that have so far only covered websites. Konkou Studio plans to position itself to handle visual identity, with the aim of providing services to a wider segment. The research results are expected to serve as a reference for practitioners and academics in understanding the relationship between team management, alignment of vision, and visual identity design in the sustainability of the creative industry.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This visual identity redesign approach will use the Design Thinking model, which is iterative, non-linear, and user-centered (human-centered design) (Brown, 2008; IDEO, 2015). This model, which originates from the field of design and has been widely applied in business and social innovation, was chosen for its ability to address “wicked problems” complex, ambiguous, and difficult to define issues commonly found in creative organizational contexts (Rittel & Webber, 1973; Buchanan, 1992). The iterative nature of Design Thinking allows designers to continuously test, learn, and refine solutions based on feedback, which is crucial given the fast-paced dynamics and need for flexibility in the creative industry (Plattner et al., 2011; Ries, 2011).

The core philosophy of Design Thinking is empathy, which is the ability to deeply understand the experiences and perspectives of users or stakeholders. In the context of this research, empathy is directed toward a deep understanding of the internal challenges faced by creative studios, particularly Konkou Studio, related to governance and vision conflicts. This approach seeks not only surface solutions but also delves into the root causes of problems, which aligns with the research objective of providing a real understanding of the serious impact of governance issues and vision conflicts on project sustainability (Martin, 2009).

The research process was conducted through five main stages of Design Thinking, namely:

1. **Empathize:** Identifying and understanding internal challenges through interviews with team members, observation, and analysis of previous project documentation.
2. **Define:** Formulating the core issues based on the findings from the empathy stage, particularly related to brand image and differences in vision within the team.
3. **Ideate:** Generating various alternative design ideas for visual identity through brainstorming and moodboard exploration.
4. **Prototype:** Create logo designs, social media assets, and promotional media in digital form.

5. **Test:** Test the designs through mockups and obtain feedback from the target audience and internal stakeholders for further improvement.

The entire process of redesigning Konkou Studio's visual identity was done digitally using iPads and laptops with the following software:

1. **Procreate** – for creating illustrations and bitmap-based visual explorations.
2. **Adobe Illustrator** – for designing logos, icons, and other vector assets.

The design was tested on various mockups to simulate its application on real media, including:

- Business cards
- Social media displays
- Portfolio website
- Merchandise (t-shirts, tote bags, stickers)

Usability testing was conducted with representatives from the target audience and internal Konkou Studio stakeholders to ensure the designs meet functional, aesthetic, and brand value requirements. The results of this testing form the basis for final refinements before the designs are ready for implementation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In redesigning Konkou Studio's visual identity, several systematic stages were carried out based on the principles of design thinking (Brown & Katz, 2009) and the rules of visual communication design (Kusrianto, 2009; Wheeler, 2017). These stages aim to ensure that the final result is not only aesthetically pleasing but also aligns in meaning and function with Konkou Studio's vision and business objectives. The process of redesigning the visual identity for Konkou Studio involved several stages, namely:

1. Visual Concept Exploration

The initial stage began with an exploration of the ideas and values that Konkou Studio wanted to convey. Through brainstorming and mind mapping, the main characteristics that were to be portrayed were identified as professional, creative, flexible, and modern.

These values are translated into visual language through the selection of simple geometric shapes that symbolize stability, and the use of lines or decorative elements that give a dynamic impression. This approach aligns with the principles of visual semiotics, which state that simple shapes tend to convey a formal and professional impression (Chandler, 2017), while decorative elements can introduce a creative touch.

2. Logo Design

The logo is a core element of visual identity as it is the main representation of the brand. The process of creating it began with rough sketches using Procreate to explore shapes, then refined using Adobe Illustrator to achieve precise results.

The logo text 'KONKOU' is rendered in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letter 'O' is stylized with a dot above it and a dot below it, creating a visual connection to the infinity symbol.

Page 1. Logo Text Konkou
(Source: Personal documentation)



Page 2. Logo Symbol Konkou
(Source: Personal documentation)

Main features of the logo:

- **Shape:** A combination of the letter “O” and a continuous dot forming an “infinity” symbol, which means unlimited or infinite, expressing Konkou Studio's desire to be successful forever.
- **Colors:** Black and white as the main colors, which are neutral and professional.
- **Typography:** Uses the Montserrat font, which is bold, modern, and easy to read.

The logo is designed for flexibility in application across both digital and print media, from small sizes (social media icons) to large sizes (banners or merchandise).

3. Color and Typography Guidelines

The colors in this visual identity are divided into two categories:

- **Primary Colors:** Black and White
- **Secondary Color:** Orange

The primary typography uses the Montserrat font because of its neutral, modern, and easy-to-combine nature, while the secondary font is used for accents or titles in promotional designs.

4. Application in Promotional Media

The new visual identity was then applied to various communication media to reinforce a consistent brand impression, as follows:

- **Business Cards:** Minimalist design with a focus on readability and information hierarchy.

The main color is used as the background with the logo and contact information in clear contrast.



Page 3. Business Card Konkou

(Source: Personal documentation)

- **Social Media:** Templates for Instagram feeds and stories are created to be consistent with the brand identity. Visual elements such as grids, icons, and color tones are used harmoniously to maintain Konkou Studio's distinctive characteristics.



Page 4. Media Social (Instagram) & Website

(Source: Personal documentation)

- **Portfolio Website:** The mockup of the homepage and portfolio pages is designed to highlight the studio's work and information in a concise, aesthetic, and professional manner. This website is expected to serve as the credible digital face of Konkou Studio,

easily accessible to potential clients and business partners.

- **Merchandise:** T-shirt, tote bag, and sticker designs were developed using the main logo and modular graphic elements inspired by the basic shape of the logo. Each product is designed not only to serve as a promotional medium, but also as a means of expressing brand identity that can be used by both internal teams and external supporters. With consistent and flexible visuals, this merchandise plays a role in building brand awareness while expanding the reach of visual identity into public spaces.



Page 5. Totebag Konkou
(Source: Personal documentation)



Page 6 & 7. Sticker Konkou
(Source: Personal documentation)



Page 8. T-shirt Konkou (Rumah Payung)
 (Source: Dokumentasi pribadi)



Page 9. T-shirt Konkou (Son of the Sun)
 (Source: Dokumentasi pribadi)

5. Visual Evaluation

The evaluation was conducted using visual communication design principles such as balance, contrast, consistency, and readability (Kusrianto, 2009). In addition, tests were conducted on print media (business cards, merchandise) and digital media (website, social media) to assess the flexibility of the logo and graphic elements.

The evaluation results show:

- Visual consistency is maintained across all media.
- The logo is flexible and can be used in various sizes without losing readability.
- Colors and typography are effective in conveying the brand's character.

This approach demonstrates that redesigning the visual identity while considering brand values and design principles can strengthen Konkou Studio's professional image and visual appeal.

Table 1. Visual Concept

No.	Stages / Visual Elements	Description	Purpose
1.	Visual Concept Exploration	Brainstorming and mind mapping brand values.	Finding suitable visual characteristics: professional, creative, flexible.
2.	Logo	Design of the “O” symbol and dot.	Creating a strong, flexible, and easily recognizable primary identity.
3.	Color	Black and white as primary colors, orange as an accent color.	Building a neutral yet creative and professional visual atmosphere.
4.	Typography	Bold Montserrat font, secondary font for accents.	Ensuring readability and a modern feel across all media.
5.	Business Cards	Simple layout, focusing on contrast and information.	Professional contact media that supports a good first impression.
6.	Social Media	Templates for feeds & stories (Instagram).	Maintaining visual consistency across digital platforms.
7.	Website Portfolio	Design of the main page and gallery of works.	Displaying the portfolio and studio profile professionally.
8.	Merchandise	T-shirts, tote bags, stickers with logo elements and brand colors.	As additional promotional media that are creative and interactive.
9.	Visual Evaluation	Testing design principles: contrast, balance, flexibility.	Measuring visual effectiveness for various media and sizes.

DISCUSSION

The redesign of Konkou Studio's visual identity not only produced new visual elements but also addressed strategic issues identified in the early stages of the research, particularly regarding brand consistency and creative vision alignment. The design outcomes, including the logo, color guidelines, typography, and promotional media applications, align with the principles of brand identity systems outlined by Wheeler (2017), where visual elements must form a consistent and easily recognizable unity across various platforms.

The choice of the infinity symbol in the logo represents the philosophy of sustainability, which is relevant to Konkou Studio's goal of remaining relevant despite having experienced stagnation due to internal issues. This reinforces Olins' (2008) assertion that symbols or shapes in logos with deep meaning can enhance emotional connection with the audience.

The results of the visual evaluation show that the new visual identity is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also highly flexible for application in both digital and print media. This supports Brown & Katz's (2009) theory of design thinking, which states that good design solutions must be adaptive and able to function in a variety of situations. Overall, this study demonstrates that redesigning visual identity can be one strategy to improve brand image and strengthen brand position, even for creative organizations that have previously faced internal challenges.

CONCLUSION

The redesign of Konkou Studio's visual identity provides a new visual direction that reflects the studio's identity and core values. Through the development of design elements such as logos, colors, and typography, this new identity conveys a professional, dynamic, and creative impression. The logo features the infinity symbol, representing the studio's spirit of sustainability and vision without boundaries. The implementation of the visual identity across various promotional media successfully creates a consistent and adaptable appearance across different formats, both digital and print. More than just an aesthetic update, this process also emphasizes the importance of strong management foundations, shared vision among team members, and clear documentation of roles in building a resilient creative studio. This study serves as an example that success in the creative world does not only depend on the strength of ideas but also on internal structure and aligned vision.

REFERENCES

- Ardy, V., Amri, A., & Lilian, L. (2024). Penerapan Identitas Visual Logo Binara Tv. *Desain Media*, 1(2), 92-101.
- Brown, A., et al. (2021). *Internal Conflicts and Project Failure in Creative Agencies*. Journal of Digital Arts Management, 7(3), 201-215.
- Brown, T. (2008). *Design Thinking*. Harvard Business Review, 86(6), 84-92.
- Brown, T., & Katz, B. (2009). *Change by design: How design thinking creates new alternatives for business and society*. Harper Business.
- Chandler, D. (2017). *Semiotics: The basics* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Chen, L., & Lee, S. (2021). *Collaborative Practices in Creative Industries*. Journal of Media and Culture, 12(1), 50-65.
- Davis, R., & Miller, S. (2018). *Internal Management Issues in Creative Projects*. Journal of Arts Management, 6(4), 250-265.
- Fadhila, A. P., & Supatmo, S. (2017). PERANCANGAN ULANG IDENTITAS VISUAL DAN APLIKASINYA PADA MEDIA PROMOSI VERTICO STUDIO YOGYAKARTA. *Arty: Jurnal Seni Rupa*, 6(1), 1-20.
- Fitriyani, N. S., Pratiwi, P., & Utami, B. S. (2019). Perancangan Rebranding Photo Studio Barokah Putra. *Prabangkara: Jurnal Seni Rupa dan Desain*, 23(2), 51-63.
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. Basic Books.
- Hidayati, I. (2023). Perancangan Ulang Identitas Visual dan Aplikasinya Pada Media Promosi Nursalam Travel di Karawang. *Imajinasi: Jurnal Seni*, 17(1), 69-76.
- Kim, Y., & Park, S. (2018). *Communication and Team Management in Project Outcomes*. Journal of Project Management Research, 10(1), 30-45.
- Kusrianto, A. (2009). *Pengantar desain komunikasi visual*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Martin, R. L. (2009). *The Design of Business: Why Design Thinking is the Next Competitive Advantage*. Harvard Business Press.
- Olins, W. (2008). *The brand handbook*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Putra, A., & Wardhani, R. (2019). Peran identitas visual dalam meningkatkan daya saing industri kreatif. *Jurnal Seni Rupa dan Desain*, 4(2), 102–115.
- Rittel, H. W., & Webber, M. M. (1973). *Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning*.
- Plattner, H., Meinel, C., & Leifer, L. (Eds.). (2011). *Design Thinking: Understand – Improve – Apply*. Springer.
- Policy Sciences, 4(2), 155-169.
- Smith, J. (2020). *The Rise of the Creative Economy*. International Journal of Cultural Economics, 15(1), 1-15.
- Wheeler, A. (2017). *Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide for the Whole Branding Team* (5th ed.). Wiley.
- Wibowo, A., Utami, B. S. U. S., & Pratiwi, P. (2020). Perancangan visual brand identity tukang sayoer online sebagai upaya menaikkan brand awareness. *Jurnal Dimensi DKV: Seni Rupa dan Desain*, 5(2), 125-142.