netWorked Youth Research for Empowerment in the Digital society

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Logo

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1.   Introduction

Creating a logo for a research project is different to creating a logo for a commercial product, since each of the people involved has different understandings of what is involved in the project, and different perceptions of what constitutes successful visual communication, largely based on their own visual taste and history.

An important issue is the intended function of the logo. Some are designed simply to grab the attention, others aim to communicate an idea through the image, others are more focused on creating an identity that will be memorable and recognizable. For example, logos like the F of Facebook, or that of the BBC, are not immediately transparent, they are however recognizable, possibly due to their simplicity.

In our view the most important role of the logo in WYRED relates to identity. WYRED will not be presented through its logo, rather the logo will serve as a memorable image that comes to be associated with the project. That said, the image should resonate with the key concepts of the project.

1.1   Concept

The WYRED project involves a wide range of ideas and concepts, and a basic principle of the project is that it is open–ended. We are creating a site for conversations and research, but it is not clear until those processes begin what the focus, or areas of focus, may turn out to be.

However, some general notions can be identified. A central concept is the notion of the "digital" world or society, which is implied by the name of the project. Others related to this include connection, networks and change.

Another group of concepts related to communication. Ideas like dialogue, expression, voice and conversation are included in this group. Others related to the social and political dimensions of the work. Here terms like identity, diversity, inclusion and freedom were central but also words relating to the groups involved, children and young people, and youth.

The last key group of concepts related to knowledge and discovery. Terms like exploration, research, inspiration, the brain and inquiry were important.

1.2   The Design Process

Clearly, not all the concepts involved can be captured within a single logo. The different initial designs we explored focused on combinations of concepts such as connection and the brain, networks and inspiration, the brain and inspiration, speech and screens, the world and networks, and others. These were presented at the first project meeting. None were felt to be satisfactory.

After discussion at that meeting, the key concepts that were to be expressed through the logo were narrowed down to YOUTH and VOICE.

It was also considered that simplicity and memorability were the most important considerations to bear in mind. In addition to this we bore in mind the fact that, given the wide and very heterogeneous set of target groups involved in WYRED, it was important that the logo be recognizable as representing VOICE to as wide a set of people as possible.

A wide variety of different metaphors for voice were explored, and contrasted with professional colleagues and young people to ascertain the associations they provoked and identify the options that would be most accessible and widely recognizable. These included microphones, loudspeakers megaphones, mouths, shouts and gestures, talking heads, different kinds of sound wave including the wifi symbol (as more abstract representations of voice), various symbols such as the speech bubble, and quotation marks.

1.3   Design Decisions

For different reasons, many of the metaphors we explored were not recognized as representing voice: microphones and speakers were associated with music and performance, megaphones with protest (when recognised), and most of the others were ambiguous, or not always understood.

However, of all the different visual metaphors for **voice**, the most accessible and universally recognizable was the speech bubble. Though it may, especially for older people, seem a little over-familiar, this is not the perception of younger users, and it is clearly identifiable and recognized by most we spoke to as representing voice/speech. For the purposes of WYRED its

<u>familiarity is an advantage</u>. In addition to this, its association both with comics and usage in social media applications gives it up-to-date and youth related associations.

The heterogeneity of **youth** as a group means that a single representative image is unlikely to resonate with all. For this reason, we elected to communicate the idea of youth through the colour palette. Vibrant tones have been used to give energy and dynamism to the designs. Strong contrasts have been used to accentuate the vibrancy of the colours.

2   The three key variables of the proposal

2.1   Typeface

The typeface is **NOTO SANS**. It is a modern, simple font, that will be familiar to most who use digital technology and accessible to those that don't. As it is sans serif, it is very easily readable and it has an elegant but youthful look to it. It is freely available from Google fonts. As an alternative, there is a more rounded font called **POPPINS**.

2.2   Basic form

As mentioned, the **SPEECH BUBBLE** is universally recognizable as a metaphor to express the notion of voice.

2.3   Colours

We have chosen the following palette due to the different associations of the colours which seem appropriate to the project and its aims.

GREEN: Equilibrium, peace, balance.

YELLOW: Optimism, confidence, emotional strength.

ORANGE: Warmth, security, youth.

BLUE: Intellect, communication, logic, efficiency.

3   Logos proposal

3.1   First Option

This is the first option. It is the simplest, in this option the speech bubble is reduced to a line under the word that mimics the base of a speech bubble. Some have also seen it as a simplified representation of a sound wave. Others have seen the "tick" or check mark used to indicate something well done. Some variations in the form follow.

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3.1.1   Option 1: Variations in the form

| 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.4 |

1.1   This is the basic form, with a square background.

1.2   This is an adapted version of the basic form, with Poppins type, a softer line and the circular background.

1.3   This is an adapted version of the basic form, with a circular background

1.4   This is the basic form, without a background.

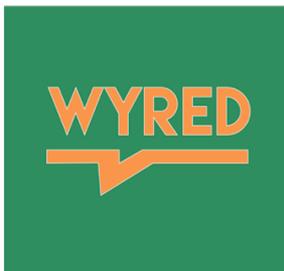### 3.1.2   Option 1: Variations in the colour combinations

As we have mentioned, the vivid colours and contrasts represent youth. But we also present some variations here with more subdued colours contrasting with strong ones (a kind of visual dialogue).
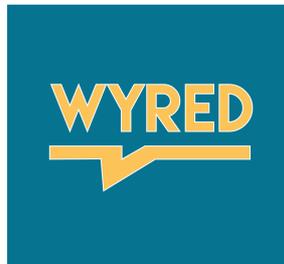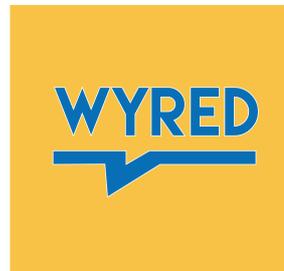
 Blue- yellow
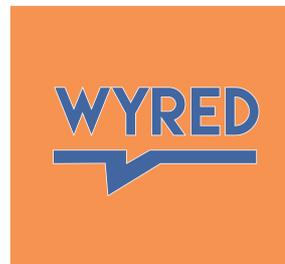
 Orange- blue

 Green- orange

 Yellow- blue

3.2   Second Option

This is Option 2. Here the idea of the conversation or dialogue (an important part of the WYRED process) is contained in the form. This makes the notion more accessible. The style is softer, with more curves.

3.2.1   Option 2: Variations in the form

| 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.4 |

1.1 This is the basic version with Noto Sans type.

1.2 This is the basic version with Poppins type.

1.3 This is the basic version in Noto Sans with the text below.

1.4 This is the basic version in Poppins with the text below.

3.2.2   Option 2: Variations in the colour combinations

| **Blue- yellow** | **Orange- green** | **Green- yellow** | **Blue- green** |

3.3   Third Option

The third option, which we refer to as "Networked voices", adds the idea of networking and heterogeneity through the introduction of different shaded triangles of colour in the background of the bubbles. The borders between them suggest the connections in a network, and the shades of colour suggest diversity and heterogeneity. This makes the image a little more complex, but also makes it more individual and original.

3.3.1   Option 3: Variations in the form

1.1   1.2   1.3   1.4

1.1 This is the basic version with Noto Sans type.

1.2 This is the basic version with Poppins type.

1.3 This is the basic version in Noto Sans with the text below.

1.4 This is the basic version in Poppins with the text below.

3.3.2 Option 3: Variations in the form

Yellow- Blue   **Yellow- green**   **Blue- yellow**   **Blue- green**

4   Final decision

The different versions of the logo were presented to the partners and then a vote was taken regarding the fonts, logos and colour scheme, which would then be adopted for all the different documents of the project.

The option with the most votes was the second one in blue and yellow, and this have now been adopted, and the format used for this and other deliverables are based on this decision, as is the layout for the website and the platform.

5 WYRED image package

The WYRED image package with the final version of the logos and the selected fonts is available at https://repositorio.grial.eu/bitstream/grial/822/1/Design.zip.

6 References

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