

FIRE STARTER

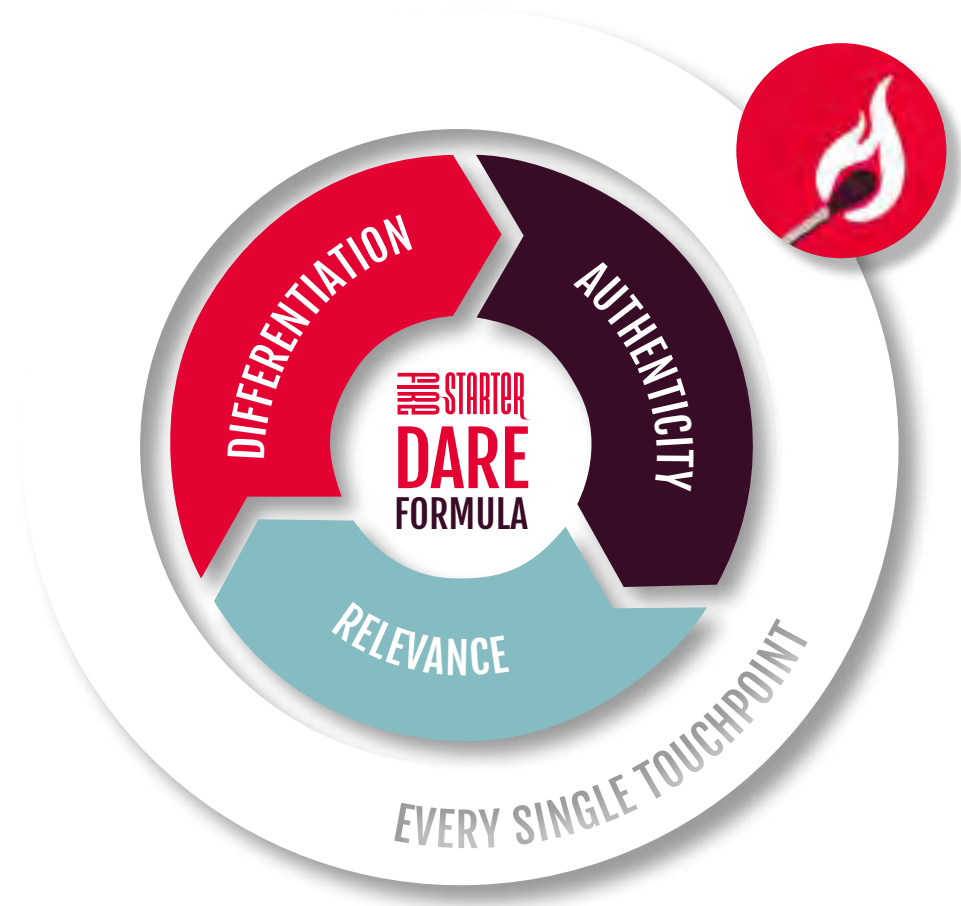
DIY FROM YOUR SOFA BRAND AUDIT

INTRODUCING FIRESTARTER'S DARE FORMULA

Although they are wildly different, the world's most renowned and effective brands have four powerful ingredients in common. They are all **Differentiated**, **Authentic** and **Relevant** at **Every single touchpoint**.

This is the methodology we use to create stand-out brands that help businesses to grow. It makes sense that we use this same formula to audit your brand.

Let's get started ...



Step 1

TAKE THE FIRETEST

Our online **FIRETEST** is a great way to start your brand audit. It will help you to think about what's currently working and where your brand is potentially falling short.

Answer 14 key questions in less than 5 minutes, then come back to complete your **DIY Brand Audit**.

FIRETEST YOUR BRAND HERE...

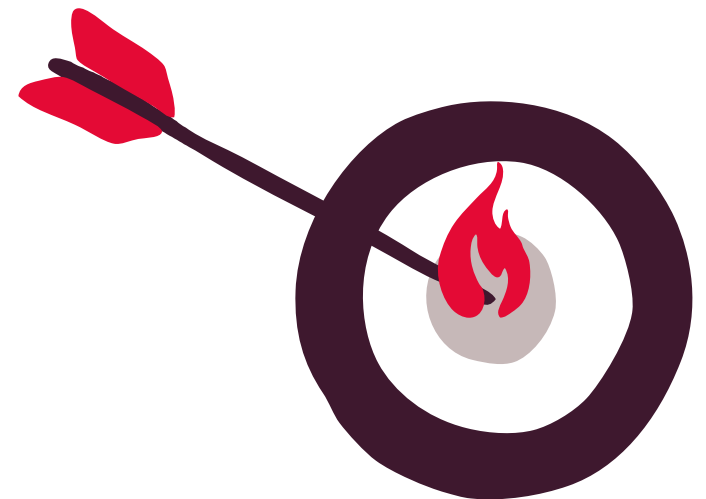
<http://firestartercreative.co.uk/FIRETEST.html>

Step 2

YOUR GOALS

SET TARGETS FOR YOUR BRAND

You're here because you want to scale your business. What does this look like?
What do you want your brand to help you achieve?
Set your targets on the next page.



SET TARGETS FOR YOUR BRAND

Describe your current marketplace:

eg London accountants

Do you want to extend this at all, if so specify here:

Existing market share:

Target market share:

Existing annual turnover:

Target annual turnover:

TARGET COMPLETION DATE:

Existing average price point:

Target average price point:

Number of customers:

Target number of customers:

How many people on your mailing list?

How many would you like?

How many social media connections?

How many would you like?

Step 3

AUTHENTICITY

REVIEW YOUR BRAND FROM THE INSIDE OUT

This is everything that makes you uniquely YOU. Your vision, values and personality. Have you taken the time to understand and communicate these to the outside world?

If not then your brand is missing some of the basics.

The following questions will help you to identify any gaps...



AUTHENTICITY

Your Business Name

What is your company name?

How has this name been received by your audience?

Do you feel it accurately represents your business?

A] YES

B] NO

Is it memorable?

A] YES

B] NO

Is it easy to spell?

A] YES

B] NO

Does it stand out from your competitors?

A] YES

B] NO

Have you secured an easy, memorable web domain based on your company name?

A] YES

B] NO

Have you secured the relevant social media profile names?

A] YES

B] NO

Changing your company name can be difficult but if it's holding you back it's worth considering. If you've answered no to several of these questions then then add a **Company Name Review** to your to-do list at the end of this document.

AUTHENTICITY

Your Big Vision

This is a vivid image of what you want your business to be in the future, based on your goals and aspirations. Your vision statement should inspire the right people to buy from you and/or work with you to help you reach your end goals.

What is your big company vision?

Have you crafted this into a powerful and compelling statement that galvanises people to become part of it - as customers, partners, investors or team members?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A] YES AND IT'S SPOT ON | <input type="checkbox"/> C] I HAVE IDEAS BUT NOTHING CONCRETE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B] YES BUT IT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> D] I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START |

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Your Mission

This simple statement defines your company's purpose. It tells people why your business exists and how you solve their problems every single day.

How do you solve your customers' problems every day?

Have worked this into a clear and powerful mission statement?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A] YES AND IT'S SPOT ON | <input type="checkbox"/> C] I HAVE IDEAS BUT NOTHING CONCRETE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B] YES BUT IT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> D] I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START |

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

AUTHENTICITY

Your Brand Values

Brand values support your vision, shape your culture and reflect everything that is most important to you and the way you do business. They are the essence of your company's identity – your principles, beliefs and philosophy. Your values will help you to make decisions, engage and educate clients and attract and recruit exactly the right type of people

Have you identified your core brand values? If so, what are they?

Do you believe these accurately represent you and the way you do business?

- A] YES THEY ARE SPOT ON
- B] NEARLY BUT THEY NEED IMPROVEMENT
- C] I HAVE IDEAS BUT NOTHING CONCRETE
- D] I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you written a descriptor for each to explain why they mean so much to you and your business?

- A] YES
- B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

AUTHENTICITY

Your Brand Personality

Every brand has a personality. The trouble is that with many different people in the organisation this can become conflicting and confusing if there is no collective cohesion. When you've identified your dominant brand archetype it's easy to understand your how your business should look, feel and sound.

Have you identified your brand personality archetype?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you created a clear guide so that everyone in your organisation understands this?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Your Brand Story

The world loves good stories. And no matter how old your business is there will be a background story behind your business. What challenges have you overcome to be here today? How have you developed your business and your proposition? What types of customers do you serve and what transformations have you created in their lives/businesses? Your brand story is an important part of painting the picture.

Have you written your brand story?

A] YES AND IT'S UP-TO-DATE

C] WE HAVE A TIMELINE BUT NOT A STORY

B] YES BUT IT NEEDS UPDATING

D] I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

AUTHENTICITY

Your Founder/s

The days of the faceless corporation are over. More than ever before business leaders and visionaries need to be seen. And, more crucially, heard.

Why? Because it helps...

- Bring dynamism to your vision
- Add meaning to your mission
- Make your values believable
- All of which will galvanise people to subscribe to your cause

And because it helps anyone who engages with your brand to feel like they're getting the real deal. An actual human story. Which is a powerful platform to grow your business.

Are your personal bio/s available for people to read on your company website?

- A] YES AND THEY'RE GREAT! C] I PREFER TO STAY BEHIND THE SCENES
 B] YES BUT THEY NEED IMPROVEMENT D] I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you published any thought leadership articles or videos from you as the founder?

- A] YES, REGULARLY C] I HAVE IDEAS BUT NEVER FIND TIME
 B] YES BUT NOT MANY AND/OR AGES AGO D] I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

If so, how much do you promote these? Are they on your company site and on social media? Do you email them directly to your audience?

- A] YES, WE POST THEM EVERYWHERE C] NO, WE COULD IMPROVE ON THIS
 B] SOMETIMES

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Is your LinkedIn profile up-to-date? Does it clearly explain your business and compel your target customers to connect with you?

- A] YES, IT'S ON POINT C] I DON'T HAVE A LINKEDIN PROFILE
 B] NO, IT'S TIME TO UPDATE AND REVIEW

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.



Step 4

RELEVANCE

DOES YOUR BRAND RESONATE?

Does your brand help you to win the hearts and minds of your ideal customers? When you are completely tuned in to what is most important in their lives you are able to base your whole business around delighting them. Equally you need to be very attractive to the types of people you want on your team, and possibly to investors and partners too in order to sustain your growth.

Let's see how relevant your brand is...

RELEVANCE

Your Customers

Fully understanding your customers is one of the key foundations of building a successful brand and creating a surefire business proposition.

Who are your customers? List the segments here:

Now let's talk about your **ideal** customers. Have you set criteria for what defines an ideal customer for your business?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you created avatars (detailed personas) for each of your ideal customer types?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

How well do you understand their pains and equally their aims? Do you know what keeps them up at night? Do you know what they want more than anything?

A] YES WE UNDERSTAND THEM WELL

C] HMMM... VAGUELY

B] WE HAVE A GOOD IDEA

D] WE DON'T REALLY KNOW

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

RELEVANCE

What do your customers think about you?

While we're on the subject of your customers it makes sense to understand how they feel about you and your brand. And also the kind of things they may be saying to others about you. This step is also about building the credibility that will strengthen your brand.

Do you collect customer testimonials or ask for independent online reviews?

- A] YES, WE HAVE A SYSTEM FOR THIS
- B] SOMETIMES IF WE REMEMBER
- C] HMMM... WE HAVE SOME SOMEWHERE
- D] NO, NEVER

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do you ask customers for referrals?

- A] YES, WE HAVE A SYSTEM FOR THIS
- B] SOMETIMES IF WE REMEMBER
- C] WE DON'T LIKE TO ASK
- D] NO, NEVER

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do you write case studies for projects you are proud of?

- A] ALWAYS, WE ARE GOOD AT THIS
- B] SOMETIMES IF WE REMEMBER
- C] WE HAVE SOME OLD ONES
- D] NO, NEVER

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do you send out Customer Feedback or Satisfaction Surveys?

- A] YES, REGULARLY
- B] EVERY NOW AND THEN
- C] WE KEEP MEANING TO
- D] NO, NEVER

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you ever sent out a Brand Perception Survey?

- A] YES
- B] NO

If not then this may be worthwhile, especially if you are in doubt as to whether your existing brand hits the mark. Add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

RELEVANCE

Strategic Partners and Affiliates

As well as potentially leading to an influx of new business, the right strategic partnerships can do wonders for strengthening your brand and your profile.

Do you have any existing strategic partners or affiliates?

A] YES

B] NO

If so how are these working for your business?

A] GREAT! WE MEASURE THE RESULTS AND CAN CLEARLY SEE AN UPTURN IN SALES

B] WE THINK THEY ARE EFFECTIVE BUT DIFFICULT TO KNOW FOR SURE

D] THEY'VE HAD VERY LITTLE IMPACT THAT WE CAN SEE

If you've ticked anything other than A then these would benefit from a review. Add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you identified all the possible partnering opportunities for your business?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do you regularly reach out to new potential partners?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

RELEVANCE

Your Team

It's essential that the employer side of your brand works hard to attract the right talent. It doesn't matter how many customers you get in the door if you can't recruit the right people to help you serve them.

Have you identified the criteria that determines who makes a great team fit for your business?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Similar to your ideal customer avatars, have you created ideal team member avatars? You may need a few of these - depending on the different roles in your business.

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you got a dedicated careers section on your website?

A] YES WE'RE PROUD OF OUR CAREERS AREA C] NO, NOT YET

B] WE HAVE A PAGE WITH BASIC INFO

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

If so, does this feature your vision, mission and values?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do you put as much time and effort into recruitment advertising as you do for customer ads?

A] YES THEY ARE CREATIVE AND ON BRAND C] NO, WE JUST POST BASIC INFO

B] PROBABLY NOT, BUT WE MAKE AN EFFORT

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Step 5

DIFFERENTIATION

WHAT SEPARATES YOU?

Differentiation is the single reason people choose to buy from you and no one else.
Without this any business you win comes down to offering the cheapest price.

It's time to benchmark your unique value proposition...



DIFFERENTIATION

Your Unique Value Proposition

This starts with analysing your competition. It can be easy to become overwhelmed by the sheer volume of competitors. But you need the lowdown on your closest, most direct contenders at least - these are the ones you often compete with for the same business.

Have you identified your direct competitors?

- A] YES B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you carried out an analysis to discover your direct competitors' unique value propositions, strengths and price-points etc?

- A] YES B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you mapped these out to find any interesting gaps?

- A] YES B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you identified how you uniquely solve your customers' problems?

- A] YES THIS IS VERY CLEAR C] WE ARE STRUGGLING WITH THIS
 B] WE HAVE SOME GOOD IDEAS D] I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

If so, have you formed your unique value proposition? And is it clear, succinct, memorable and compelling?

- A] YES IT'S SPOT ON C] I HAVE IDEAS BUT NOTHING CONCRETE
 B] YES BUT IT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT D] I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

DIFFERENTIATION

Your Core Messaging

These are the statements that support your UVP and also add more weight and credibility to your proposition.

Have you identified all of your strengths?

- A] YES B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

How about your functional and emotional benefits?

- A] YES B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you assessed which of these are of prime importance to your customers? And which are fundamental to solving their problems?

- A] YES B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do these key statements come through in your core messaging?

- A] YES, CLEARLY AND CONSISTENTLY C] I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START
 B] WE COULD PROBABLY IMPROVE THIS

If you've ticked anything other than A then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do you have a catchy, memorable slogan which reflects your UVP and brand personality?

- A] YES B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

DIFFERENTIATION

Your Logo

Although only a small part of your brand, your logo is the one thing that's used on everything. Everywhere. So it's pretty important that it hits the mark.

Does your logo accurately represent your business?*

A] YES

B] NO

Does it help to visually communicate your Unique Value Proposition?*

A] YES

B] NO

Does it reflect your brand personality?*

A] YES

B] NO

Does it stand out amongst your competitors?*

A] YES

B] NO

Does it work well in every application?*

A] YES

B] NO

Does it look worthy of the value you provide and the prices you want to charge?*

A] YES

B] NO

* If you've answered no to any of these questions then it's worth adding **Logo Design Review** to your to-do list at the end of this document.

DIFFERENTIATION

Your Visual Brand - Your Brand Styling

This is everything else that makes up your visual brand - your colours, fonts and imagery all work together to create your individual brand style.

Do you have set brand colours?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do you have the CMYK, RGB and Hex references for these?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do you have set brand fonts?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you set a brand style for your imagery?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then this is worth considering to add more visual differentiation to your brand. add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

How about graphics? Do you have branded product or service icons?
Or perhaps background graphics?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then this is worth considering to add more visual differentiation to your brand. add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do you have a brand layout style?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then this is worth considering to add more visual differentiation to your brand. add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Step 6

EVERY SINGLE TOUCHPOINT

IT'S ALL IN THE EXECUTION

This is about consistency. Making sure that your every connection with the outside world oozes the very essence of your brand. Over and over and over again because that's how we ensure you'll be recognised and remembered.

How consistent is your brand?



EVERY SINGLE TOUCHPOINT

Repeat, repeat, repeat...

Once you have all the elements that make up your brand it's time to shift your focus to make sure you're using them in the most effective way. And consistently.

Do you have a brand guidelines document which clearly sets out how to use your brand and all the different elements?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do all your team members clearly understand the brand and how to express it effectively at each step?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Do you have set brand templates for different applications? (Eg advertisements, landing pages, branded social media images etc.)

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Has your logo been professionally formatted for all applications? Print and web? With and without slogans?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

EVERY SINGLE TOUCHPOINT

Does your Unique Value Proposition take centre stage on your website and across all sales and marketing communications?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Are all your social media profile pages complete and are they consistent with each other?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Does your core supporting messaging come through clearly and consistently across all media?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Have you created a brand checklist to make sure each asset and communication is on point in every area?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.

Is everything written in your brand personality style?

A] YES

B] NO

If not then add this to your to-do list at the end of this document.



Step 7

YOUR NEXT STEPS

BOOK YOUR BRAND STRATEGY ILLUMINATOR

Well done! Your **DIY FROM HOME BRAND AUDIT** is now complete. Hopefully you found the process easy and enlightening and even better if it's given you some good ideas for strengthening your brand.

If you'd like any guidance on completing your to-dos or if you believe it may be time to refresh your brand then why not book your **FREE BRAND STRATEGY ILLUMINATOR**? Delivered over Zoom, this 90-minute strategy session is designed to help you reach clarity and make the best decisions for your business.

Email mickey@firestartercreative.co.uk to book your slot now

YOUR BRANDING TO-DO LIST

Use this final page to list any to-dos you have identified throughout this process...

AUTHENTICITY

RELEVANCE

DIFFERENTIATION

EVERY SINGLE TOUCHPOINT