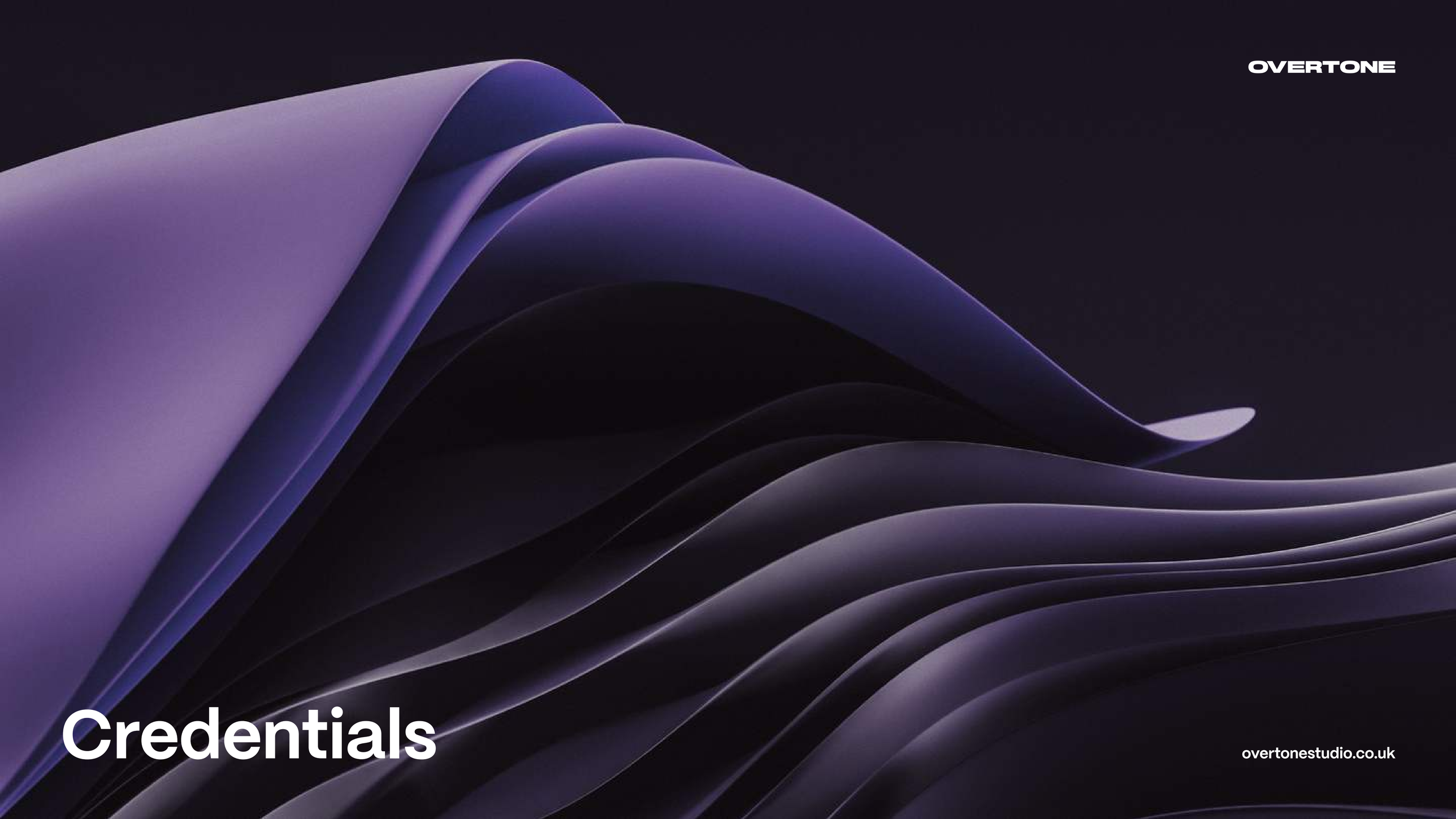

OVERTONE
Credentials
overtonestudio.co.uk

We build brand identities for businesses who want to stand out. Backed by strategic thinking and design that delivers work built to last.

We’re an independent brand strategy agency based in Southsea, Portsmouth. We believe that lasting brands are built on solid strategic foundations, backed by research and insight.

Ethos

Lasting

Brands should still make sense in 10 years' time. Trends date, so we don't design to them. Your brand is built for the business you're becoming as much as the one you are today.

Reasoned

The work starts with research into your market and your competitors, and a position agreed before any design begins. Everything afterwards answers to it.

Considered

Every decision earns its place. Nothing is added for effect. The last round of any project is usually spent taking things out.

Approach

Position

Strategic approach underpins all of our clients' visual identities. Comprehensive research and analysis into your business sector and competitors helps us define a strategic approach your business can get behind.

Create

We create brands that are defined by conceptual thinking and distinctive design. They're also built to scale. Whether it's a system for a campaign or a fresh rebrand. We craft by hand, and never deliver average.

Grow

Once your brand is set, we work with you to bring your brand to life across all your brand touchpoints. Digital systems, packaging, campaigns, print, and more.

Who

OVERTONE was founded by Sam Leonard-Rendell, who has worked in brand design since 2013. It started with a print studio set up straight out of university, and carried on agency-side, most recently as a Head of Design.

Sam has designed brand identity work for Tilda, SEGA, Vimto, FUJIFILM and KFC. Some of it full rebrands, some a sub-brand or an app that needed an identity of its own.

OVERTONE works from Southsea, Portsmouth, with clients across the UK.



Services

We define your strategy and positioning before any design starts, and every choice after this traces back to it. That means you can explain your brand to anyone who asks, and so can we.

Strategy

Brand positioning and messaging, built on research into the market you're in.

We start with the market, the competitors you're up against, and deep research into the industry you're operating within. Out of that comes a defined position and a messaging structure, and a white space your business can shout within. It's what the identity gets built on, and it underpins every design decision.

You finish with a positioning and messaging framework and a tone of voice document. Both are written so anyone who writes for you can use them, including people who've never spoken to us.

Design

Brand identity design, from art direction through to the finished system.

Design direction comes out of the research and positioning, so routes are built on a solid foundation. Every decision traces back to the strategy. Type, colour, imagery. Everything. The answer leads back to the positioning. Nothing in the identity is there because it's on trend.

You finish with master artwork in the formats you need, and guidelines someone else can pick up and follow.

Consultancy

Brand consultancy for businesses that already have an identity.

Brands usually arrive here having felt it for a while. The messaging has become vague and disjointed. Or the identity has come apart in use, with the tone of voice going one way and the design another. Sometimes growth has flattened and price has become the only thing separating you from everyone else.

We audit what's there, positioning and messaging as much as design, against the market you're competing in. You finish with a written audit and a recommendation in priority order. If the brand doesn't need the work, the document will say so.

OVERTONE

Case Studies

overtonestudio.co.uk


SILVER HALIDE
BY FUJIFILM

A brand built from paper

A photographic paper brand identity with the photography built into the letter

Most photographs printed on FUJIFILM paper have a second image on the back that hardly anyone notices. It's a repeat pattern of a wordmark. Getting it there started with a brand that only covered half of what FUJIFILM sells.

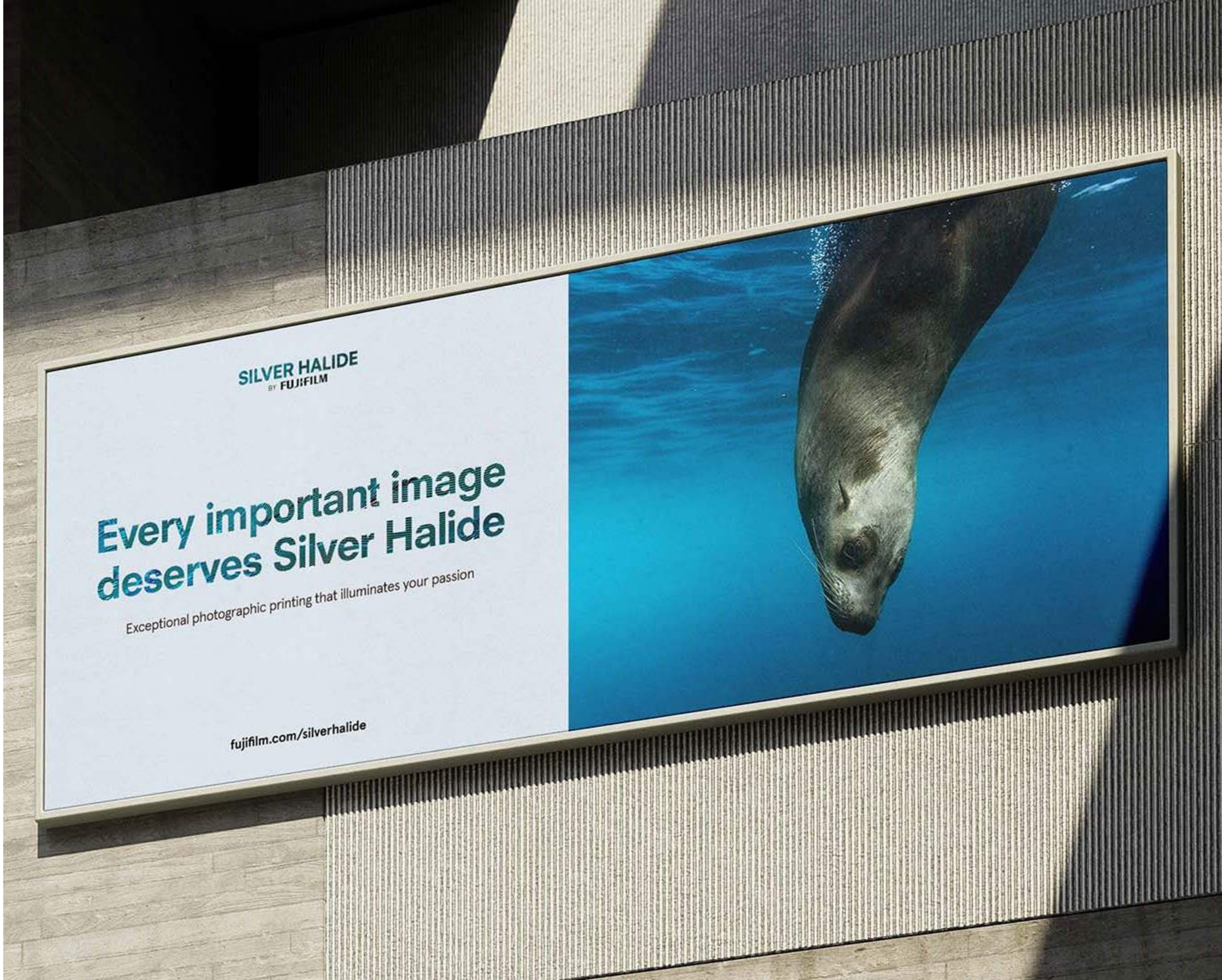
FUJIFILM make the paper prints are made on and the chemicals that develop them. Both used to sit under a brand called Original Photo Paper, which covered only the paper, leaving chemicals in an identity never built for them.

What's unique about the paper is that printing on it needs no ink, only light. Silver halide crystals suspended in gelatine are coated on in eight ultra-thin layers, and a latent image sets into them, invisible until a developer reveals it. Nothing is ever laid on the surface. The image forms inside the paper itself.

That chemistry gave the brand its name and its central idea. If the image lives inside the paper, the photography could live inside the wordmark. Photographic textures run through the letterforms, in four fixed variants and no more, each adjusted to hold contrast at any size.

Beneath it, photographic chemicals got their own brand mark for the first time.

View full case study ↗




SOUTH
DOWNS
NATURAL MINERAL WATER
STILL

It was called THE

Natural mineral water branding for a product that hotels and restaurants kept turning down

A man who had been an apprentice at the old ice factory remembered there was a well underneath it. One afternoon during a tea break he went looking, found it, released the capping plate and tasted what came up. That water is sold today as South Downs Water, drawn from an artesian well 420 feet beneath the Sussex and Hampshire border.

In 2013 it was on sale under the name THE. Nobody could work out what that was supposed to mean, and the label was hard to read at any distance. The water was never the issue: it's bottled without treatment of any kind, which earns it Natural Mineral Water status. But hotel groups, event caterers and venue managers were turning it down, and most never got as far as tasting anything.

Purity is what every water brand claims, so it had stopped being something a buyer could hear. What South Downs Water had was a mechanism behind the claim, in 420 feet of chalk. The position was agreed before any design started, which meant the brief could be written in a line: make the source the first thing anyone reads.

Most bottled water packaging assumes a supermarket shelf. This one had to be read from two feet away, in low light, by someone who didn't choose it.

The identity launched in 2014 and is still in market.

View full case study ↗




FOLLY
ROAD

The horse came along for the ride

A craft beer brand identity for Wadworth's new brewhouse, built for drinkers its traditional ales weren't reaching

On 7 September 2023, two shire horses stood outside a converted warehouse on the edge of Devizes while the Mayor cut a ribbon. Wadworth had brewed at its Grade II listed Northgate brewery since 1885, and this was the day it moved five minutes up the road. A new sign was unveiled. It read Folly Road, and there was a horse in it.

Most people drinking Wadworth had been ordering 6X for years. Younger drinkers were going elsewhere and sales were falling. The new brewhouse could brew short runs and see what stuck, which the old building and its 70-barrel minimum couldn't. But a craft IPA is a hard sell to someone who has never ordered a Wadworth beer.

Wadworth's own identity is built on heritage, down to hand-painted pub signs and deliveries by shire horse and dray. Folly Road had to be a departure from all of it, so the only thing it brought along was the horse, redrawn and set into the name.

The real decision was how far to go. A half-step would have looked like 6X with a new label, and the audience would have walked past it. So it went the whole way, keeping one thread back for anyone who knew where to look.

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TURNER'S
PIES

An identity built on 90+ years of heritage

Food and drink brand guidelines for a pie maker with more than 90 years of equity and no rules

Eva Turner sold her first steak and kidney pie in Bognor Regis in 1933. By 2018 there were three shops along the south coast and a postal service, but nobody had written down how any of it should look. Whoever was nearest made the sign, or the bag, with whatever they had to hand. None of them were doing anything wrong, because there was nothing to follow.

The logo didn't change, and that was decided before a single rule got written. Every rule had to work for a shop manager sizing a sign, or someone in the family writing a Facebook post. Headings use Adobe Garamond Pro, the letterforms already sitting in the logotype. Body copy is Hind, free on Google Fonts, so nobody needs a licence to write about a pie. The colours came out of the kitchen: Water, Sage, Pastry, Coal and Flour. The names mattered more than the hues, because someone who has never opened a guidelines document can still pick the right colour when it's called Pastry.

The guidelines went where the pies went. Onto the bags, the shopfront signs, and the boxes going out by post. Turner's has five shops now instead of three.

View full case study ↗




everphone

A design system built from buttons, grilles and notches

Device-as-a-Service brand identity for a Berlin company that had raised $200 million and still looked unbranded

Everphone rents phones, tablets and laptops to businesses and runs the whole fleet on one contract, from procurement through to recycling. But, none of that showed in the brand.

By the end of 2021 the company had raised $200 million, was expanding into the US, and the next conversation was going to be with investors. The obvious fix is to look more like the category, which in enterprise technology means the whites and greys that signal somebody serious. That is what the rest of the category already looked like, so the colours went first. White and grey were ruled out before anyone drew anything.

Three routes were designed. Everphone picked the most structural of them, and the shapes came off the hardware: buttons, keys, notches, grilles and camera housings, cropped and blown up to build layouts. That gave the identity a vocabulary out of the product rather than applied to it.

Four years on, it is still live without replacement.

View full case study ↗




Tilda
TASTY SIDES
Indian Black Dhal
PERFECT WITH PURE BASMATI RICE
BLACK LENTILS, SPINACH AND CARROTS IN A CREAMY SAUCE
250g

The constant had to be the rice

Global brand guidelines built to hold one identity across 16 markets, for a brand whose proposition is difference

Somewhere in Tilda's design files sat a single grain of rice, drawn as a vector and bought from a stock library. It had been copied onto everything that needed to look like rice, in every market, for years. Tilda DNA–tests every batch of basmati it sells, so that one small drawing was doing a lot of work it wasn't designed for.

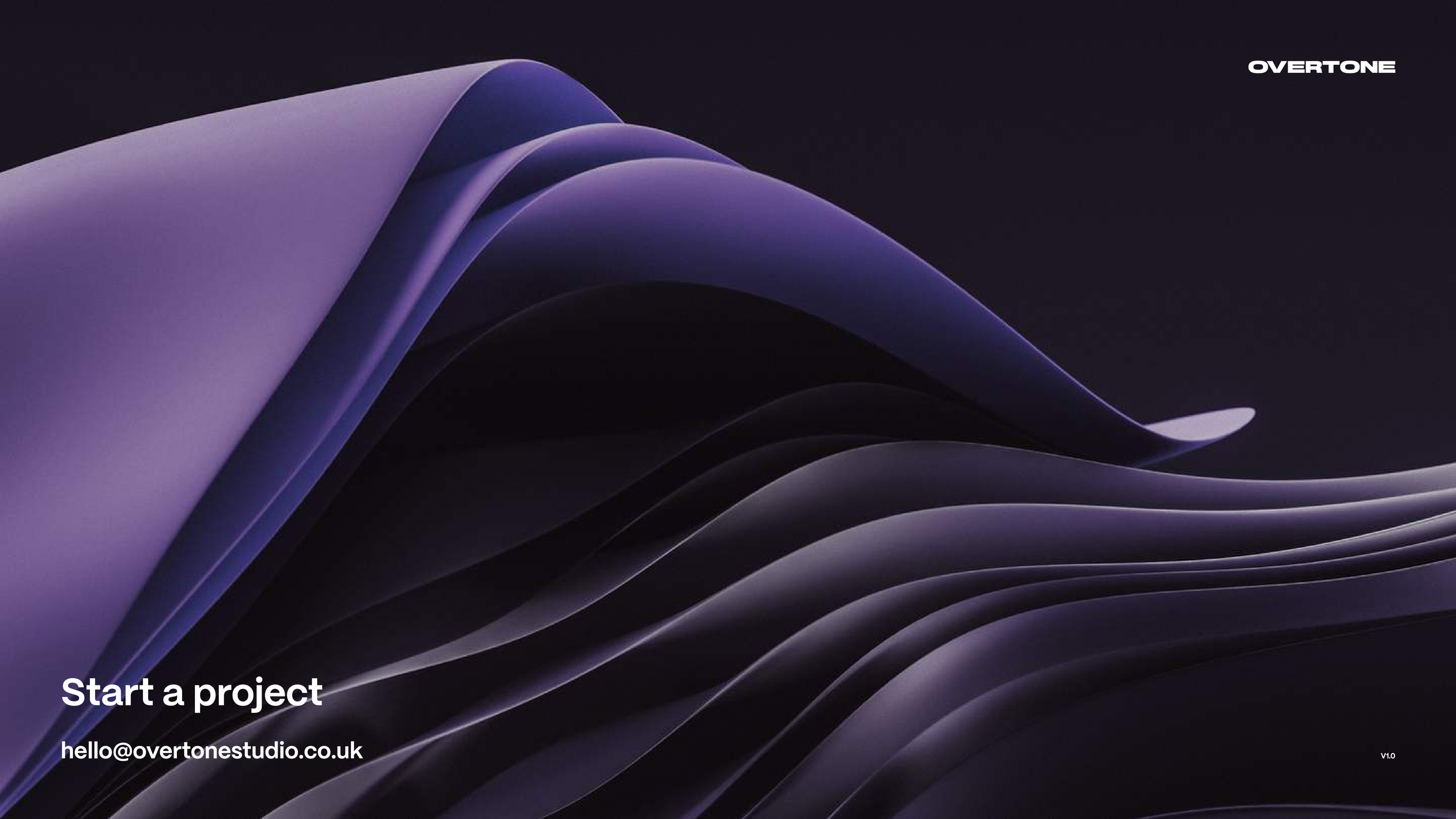
The grain was a symptom. By 2024 the identity had grown outwards market by market, and a marketing team in Delhi and one in Dubai were both doing a reasonable job with little reason to look like each other. What that costs is recognition, which is most of what a premium rice brand is selling.

The obvious fix was to make all 16 markets match, and that's the one fix this brand couldn't take. Tilda's whole proposition is cultural variety. Make it all look identical and you've solved the consistency problem by deleting the thing worth being consistent about.

The answer was in the product. Across all 16 markets the cuisines change and the occasions change, but the rice doesn't. Replacing the stock grain meant photographing the real thing, one grain at a time, more than 50 of them, across every rice type Tilda sells.

View full case study ↗




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V1.0