



Created by Sixth Story Limited  
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# A brand's guide to using imagery.

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**Smokehaus 2017**  
Photography for the website of an independent restaurant to showcase the vibrant and inclusive atmosphere.

# Intro

When we talk about imagery, this can mean different things from photography (lifestyle or product), illustrations, video and graphics. Great imagery can be make or break for brand collateral, content, websites and marketing assets. By really analysing the use and purpose of imagery with your brand, you can create compelling content that will help sell your products or people will want to share online.

As brand designers we love imagery, when strong enough it doesn't need words or it can help to elevate a message. We humans are visual creatures and an image can spark emotions, make us connect or make us remember something. We've got this practical guide with key things for you to think about when creating imagery for your brand.



**When you use beautiful photography well, it can create a need or connection to a product or service which leaves your customer with a lasting visual desire.**

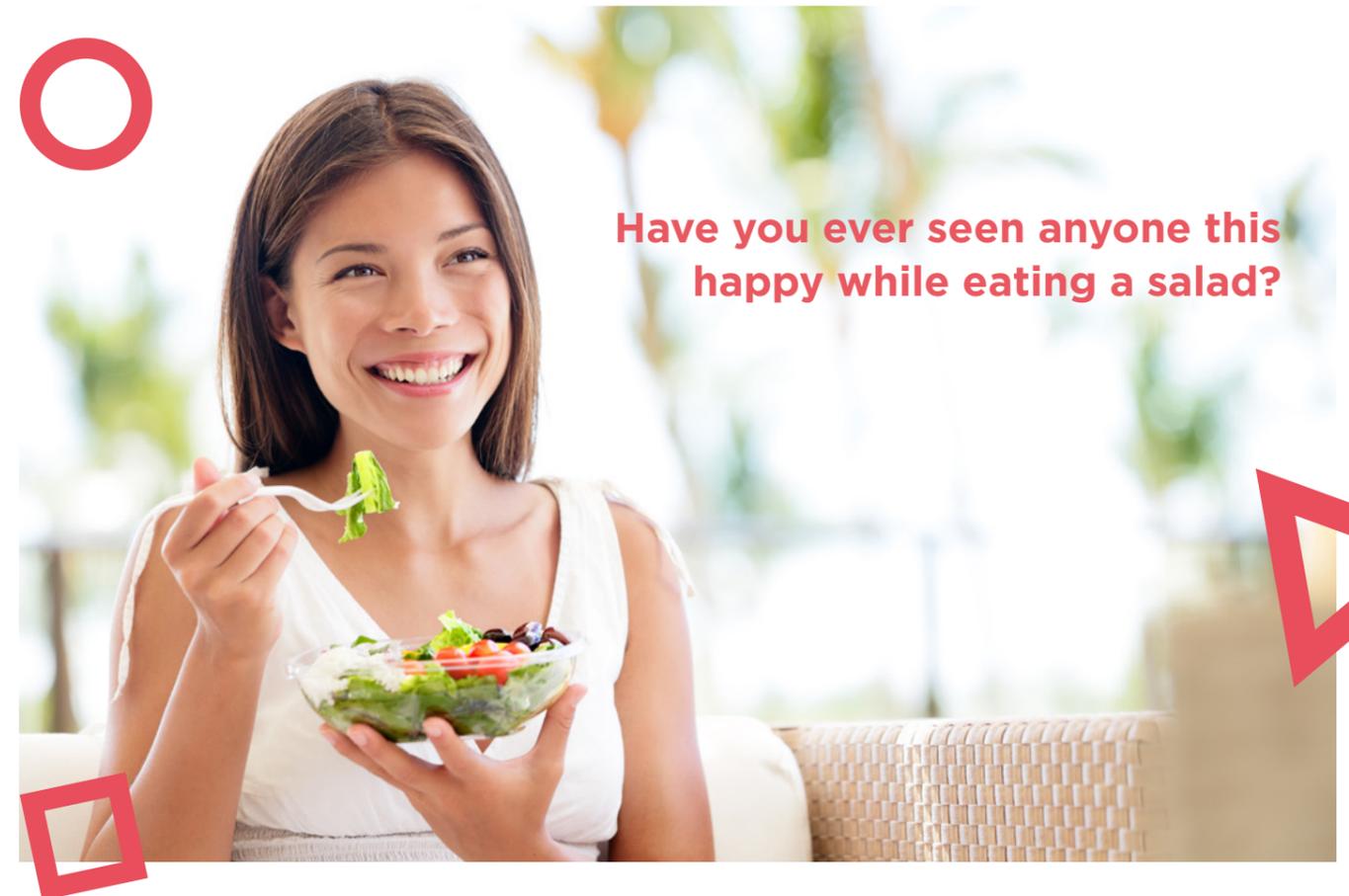
# Keeping it real

## Quality imagery that's real can help you to tell your story.

It can add great value to your social media posts, blogs, product material or anything else that you maybe working on. Keeping it real would be our first tip. If you overuse or use the wrong kinds of stock photography, it's hard to achieve that authenticity that your brand or business deserves.

There are 300 million photos uploaded to Facebook daily (Gizmodo). To compete and engage, don't you want to share real photos of your brand?

It may sound absurd to mention but using 'real people' is far better than overdoing the stock imagery. This idea is being leveraged fantastically well by Dove's Real Beauty campaigns across TV, advertising and point of sale. As an audience, it's easier to connect with the images represented.



**Have you ever seen anyone this  
happy while eating a salad?**



**NGC 2017**  
Team day out photography for  
a logistics company based in  
Birmingham

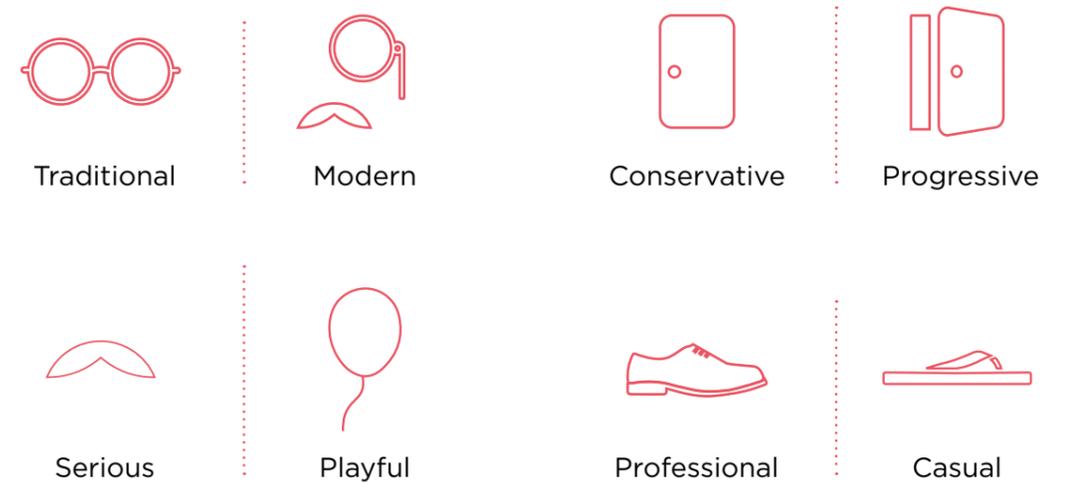
# Values

**Keep your brand values  
front and centre.**

We've talked many a times in a blog or in our book Content Pizza, about how values are the cornerstone of your brand. Your northern star if you like. The greatest brands on earth know how to use their brand values, they're more than words and they need to be present in your visual content too.

With a service businesses or even products, you don't always need to use imagery that's "selling" but rather promoting your brand values to make a more meaningful connection with your target audience.

Have a little think about whether your brand is playful or serious, outdoorsy or urban, professional or casual, traditional or modern. You get the idea, when you know how you characterise your brand values it will help to generate ideas for appropriate and matching imagery.



# Composition

## Plan image composition deliberately

Whether it's having space within an image for text or to move the eye in a particular direction towards the focus, plan composition carefully for the audience.

Budget permitting we understand, but if you're investing in your brand a professional photoshoot for your business, services or products isn't where you should skimp. Quality imagery will build trust with your audience, especially online your audience needs to see who they're doing business with or what products they are buying as clearly as possible. Not only will a professional photographer give you quality images, but they can work to a creative brief ensuring that the images are fit for purpose and can easily be used in what ever communications you're creating from a brochure to a website.



**As designers and photographers, we would always plan shoots with how the images will be used in mind and create various versions for use.**



# Purpose

## Keep your eye on the purpose of your brand communications

As your target audience is surfing the internet or scrolling through their social media feeds, they will either be looking for information or to be entertained. As consumers we are all becoming 'banner blind' to adverts, commercials and constant promotions so bear this in mind when focussing on the purpose of your communications.

When you know your purpose, alongside brand guidelines this can also help you to strategically choose colours that will enhance and support your message. Colours have psychological meaning so need to be carefully selected and used inline with your brand guidelines. Using overlays and transparency can help get the message across or make text legible.



### Sixth Story 2016

Office photoshoot for marketing and social media purposes

# When photography just won't do

## Get your pixels perfect

When using your images in print or online, it's vital to get the sizes, dimensions and resolutions correct. If you've invested in creating a great bank of imagery but then they're pixelated when you use them, you're letting your brand down.

Make sure web images are sized and optimised correctly. [Google](#) has a handy tool to help you check your page speeds on different devices.

Social media then has a different set of dimensions for optimal sizing. Here's a little cheat sheet for you to get started.



It's not always easy to find relevant imagery for a service business, life style shots for a product or showing how a product is used. When photography just won't work you can use illustrations to create maximum effect. A mix of typography and illustrations can create a high impact that will be aesthetically pleasing and support your message just as much.



Illustration examples to replace photography

## Social Media Cheat Sheet

	<b>Profile picture</b>   400 x 400 px <b>Cover</b>   828 x 315 px	<b>Timeline post</b>   1200 x 630 px or 800 x 800 px, JPG or PNG
	<b>Profile picture</b>   180 x 180 px <b>Cover</b>   1500 x 500 px	<b>Feed photo</b>   1024 x 512 px or 800 x 800 px, JPG, PNG or GIF
	<b>Profile picture</b>   400 x 400 px <b>Cover</b>   646 X 220 px (Company), 974 x 330 px (Personal)	<b>Shared image</b>   350 x 250 px or square, JPEG or PNG

## Post examples



## **Want to have a chat about your photography project?**

If you'd like to discuss your business goals and online objectives, we'll be happy to have a consultation to provide suggestions for improvements to your current site or a fresh strategy to overhaul your site completely.

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