


BOULEVARD



The Complete Guide to Brand Building for Beauty Pros

A step-by-step manual for crafting a brand that
matches your values and grows your clientele

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Introduction



As a stylist, you aren't just an employee, you're a brand. You may never have thought of yourself that way before, but consider the facts. You make emotional connections with your clients. Your passion and style have earned you loyal repeat business. You have personal values that you embody through your work. That's a brand.

To set yourself apart from the [1.4 million other people that work in salons](#), you have to thoughtfully and consciously cultivate your brand. We created this guide to help you do just that. Whether you're just starting that journey or are well on your way, this manual will provide the support you need to take your brand to the next level.

In the following pages, you'll learn how to...

- Identify your brand values
- Develop your brand aesthetic
- Create a killer portfolio
- Brand your social media channels
- And grow your following

A well-crafted brand is true to who you are, inspires confidence in customers, and opens a wealth of new opportunities. Building the individual elements of a brand isn't terribly difficult, but it does require careful thought to get right.

Your work should (and does) speak for itself, but its voice is only so loud on its own. Putting in the effort to formalize your brand makes you more valuable to your employers, more confident in what you stand for, and more capable of choosing your own destiny.

Step 1: Understand your brand



Successful personal branding starts with your why. To understand what goes into a brand, we talked to the Co-Founder & CEO of [Canvas Me](#), Jen Martinelli. Canvas Me is a platform for beauty industry pros to create a custom website and network with peers. According to Jen, personal branding begins with your “why.” You have to get to the core of why you do what you do so that you can clearly articulate the value you give your customers.

Humans act on emotion. Your clients are coming back because you’re giving them great service, but they are also coming back because of the way you make them feel. Without this clarity of purpose, it’s extremely difficult to create that level of connection – with your clients, your co-workers or even your leadership team. Once you understand your why, you’re ready to begin creating the look of your brand.

Step 2: Create your look

One of the goals for developing a proper brand aesthetic is to create visuals that support your value proposition and resonate with your target customer. Whether for your own website, business cards, or social media profiles, you'll need the right visual tools to communicate your brand through any medium, physical or digital.

So, what's in a brand aesthetic? There are different ways to break this down, but below is a list of some [core elements](#):



Logo:

The single visual identifier of who you are and what you're about.



Font(s):

The styling of the text you use for your brand.



Color Palette:

A limited set of colors you use for your branding.



Images:

What the photographs you use look like, including elements, editing style, and perspective.



Graphical Elements:

The visual style of your brand. Curves or sharp edges? Thick or thin lines? Flat or 3D? Minimal or ornate?

To start **building your own set**, you need little more than an open laptop and an open mind. For logos, [Dribbble](#) is an endless source of ideas. [Google Fonts](#) is a great resource for free, web-friendly typography. [Adobe Color](#) is a killer place to find your dream color palette. [Instagram](#) has plenty of inspiration for image subjects, composition, and styling. Finally, [Land-book](#) is a storehouse of designs that could guide your graphical approach.

Collect all your inspiration in a document, then narrow the options by creating a few different brand alternatives. Think about the combinations of fonts, colors, and photos that capture the spirit of what you do.



Now that you've created a few rough branding options, you're ready to get feedback. If you have trusted clients you think would be up to share their thoughts, present them with your branding options and ask them which they prefer — and why. Don't interrogate them, but do ask follow-up questions if their answers confuse you. Add their feedback to your doc, and don't forget to thank them!

With the aesthetic coming together, it's time to develop your logo and build out some core assets, like business cards and media templates. For your logo, working with a skilled, reputable designer is ideal. If that's not in the budget, [99designs](#) is an excellent option for inexpensive design work. When it comes to asset building, [Canva](#) is a fantastic resource. You can use the platform to create a variety of branded media, and their pro package allows you to host brand elements such as logo, fonts, and color palette.

Step 3: Build your portfolio



Your portfolio is your proof of excellence — a summary of the styles you've created and the level of service you provide. It's an essential tool for any beauty pro, and, in this section, we'll cover how you can create one online.

Your portfolio starts with a photo shoot, but unless you're a fantastic photographer, it's a good idea to hire a professional. If you can only pick one element of brand building to spend money on, this is the one. Great-looking shots instill confidence in your clients. Grainy photos do the opposite.

Along with the right photographer, you'll also need a few models to showcase your work. Tap your friend network and search social media for talent. Ideally, your subjects will reflect your target audience, but don't obsess about it. Diversity in your models is important though, as you'll want to demonstrate your ability to make clients look great regardless of the texture of their hair or the shape of their face.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind as you shoot:

- Take before and after photos, so you can show your work in action.
- Get pictures of your signature styles — the cuts your clients love and set you apart.
- Keep your audience and value proposition top of mind: your portfolio needs to demonstrate what you have to offer to your clients.
- While there's no hard and fast rule, aim for having [10-15 examples](#) of your work.

With your photos and branding aesthetic in hand, you can now start on your online portfolio.

In the old days, hiring a developer or an agency was pretty much the only way to get a site built. It could be (and often was) expensive and time-consuming, but now there are plenty of alternative ways to create the online portfolio of your dreams. Many platforms offer what you see is what you get (WYSIWYG) interfaces so you can build a website without writing a line of code. But you also have the option of [hiring an expert](#).

Whatever route you choose, use your brand assets — logo, colors, fonts, etc. — to build out your website. Focus on the following sections:

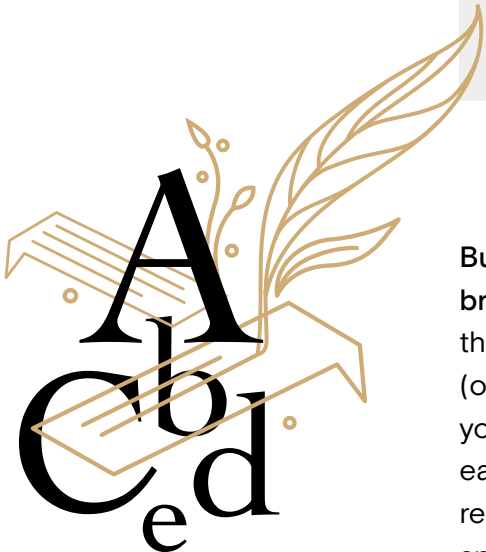
- **Homepage:** Get their attention and ask them to preview your work or reach out
- **Portfolio:** Help them visualize how incredible they're going to look after working with you
- **Reviews or customer testimonials:** Let them know other people love your work
- **About:** Tell your story and why it matters to them
- **Contact:** Let them know how they can get in touch



Try to make your site easy to use by keeping the organization simple and straightforward. While your layout will always make sense to you, you'll probably want a few friends to take a test drive to work out the kinks. Ask them to do simple things, like peruse the portfolio or reach out through the contact page. Then make whatever changes are necessary based on their feedback.

Side note

[Canvas Me](#) is the perfect place to host your portfolio online. With flexible templates built with beauty pros in mind, Canvas Me allows you to show off your portfolio, network with peers and potential employers, and let your personality shine.



But the looks aren't everything. There's another core piece of branding you've got to get right to excel online: copy. Copy is text that's designed to sell a product or service. Every word on your site (or in your Tweet) is copy. Just like the visual side of your brand, your copy needs to support your value proposition. So as you fill each page with text, make sure it embodies your message and resonates with your audience. Don't forget to double check all the spelling.

Side note

If you're interested in getting good at writing online, [Copyblogger](#) is one of the best resources out there.

Step 4: Brand your social media

Now that you've got your brand figured out and your portfolio built, it's time to take to social media. In this section, you'll learn how to ensure that your presence on these platforms aligns with your brand.

Before you brand anything, you need to decide which platform you should pay the most attention to based on your ideal customer. If your clients are addicted to Instagram, TikTok, or Twitter, be there.

Side note

When you're putting together your social profiles, it's probably best to do it at the same time. That way, you can ensure that they all look the same and stay true to your brand.



Once you've decided where you're going to be, you need to [create the necessary branding with Canva](#) or some other design tool. Every platform has specific assets you need to have so you can properly brand your profile. These often include:



Profile Pictures

It's important to remember to match whatever image style you've chosen for your brand. If you don't choose to use an image, your logo could also work.



Header Images

These are the wide images you see at the top of Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube profiles.



Post Templates /Media Branding

Decide how each kind of content will be branded and create templates for each type.

Side note

Make sure to look up the specific dimensions of all the different assets, as each platform has particular sizes that look the best.

While that takes care of the visual side, you also want every line of text in your profile to echo your brand. Using your online portfolio as an anchor, write out your bios and come up with some guidelines for what you're going to sound like in your posts. As with the rest of your branding, message consistency is key.

Step 5: Grow your following

With your portfolio and platforms in place, it's time to grow your influence. This section gives you six key tactics for building an audience online.



1. **Teach your craft**

There are few things that create a genuine connection with your audience like teaching them. Tutorial and how-to content gives people a front-row seat to your process and encourages them to fall in love with your style. When well executed, it demonstrates your competence and builds demand.



2. **Tell your story**

During the branding process, you've spent quite a bit of time thinking about who you are and what you value. You've also thought about your audience and what matters to them. Social media gives you the opportunity to deepen that connection by creating a conversation with your audience around shared beliefs and struggles.



3. **Treat your audience**

Hosting giveaways and contests online is a **classic way** of fostering a following. It converts casual visitors into fans and encourages current followers to stay loyal. It also shows sincere appreciation for their support.



4. **Tap into video**

Next year, video is expected to account for **82% of all online traffic**, a media trend that benefits stylists as much or more than other professions. Makeover and tutorial videos are wildly popular on YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. And you need little more than a smartphone, lighting, and some practice to create engaging videos.



5. Tag **strategically**

Hashtags are essential for growth on many platforms, especially Instagram. You want to use hashtags that your content won't get lost in, that your audience will likely use, and that relate to your post's content. You'll probably need to do a little research to learn the best practices for a particular social media platform. Fortunately, there are a plethora of **tools and tips** out there.



6. **Tenaciously create**

As with most endeavors, you won't get much from social media if you don't put in the work. The average business publishes around **once a day on Instagram**, which is why some brands posted 10 times as much to get their name off the ground. As you create, keep an eye out for what gets the best reaction and what falls flat. Repeat what works. Drop what doesn't.



Ready to do this?

Building a brand isn't inventing something out of thin air, but rather revealing what's already there. You have your own values, style, and professional expertise. You know how to connect with your clients. You love what you do.

**So get on it.
You won't regret it.**





Resources

[Dribbble](#): Few places are better for logo inspiration.

[Land-book](#): A great source of site design examples

[Canvas Me](#): Portfolio website platform and networking just for beauty pros

[Canva](#): Keep your brand organized and build your content and templates

[99designs](#): Discover a good designer to build your logo

[Google Fonts](#): Find web-friendly fonts and look at font pairings

[Adobe Color](#): A wonderful tool for developing your brand color palette

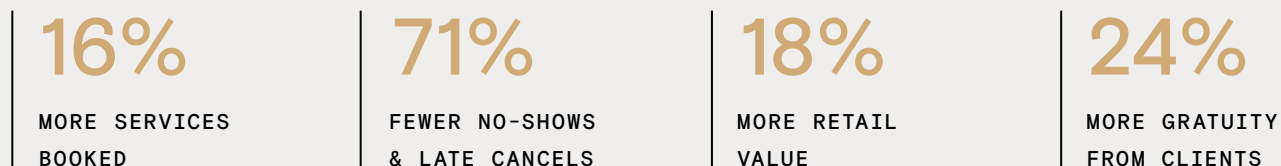
[Copyblogger](#): Learn how to write to sell online

About Boulevard

Boulevard is transforming business management for premium beauty service brands through our proprietary platform-as-a-service.

Our solution is the only management tool built specifically for appointment-based businesses while delivering ease-of-use with style and sophistication. From the front desk to the back office, Boulevard helps businesses like yours take care of business.

Here's what the data says...



* Average impact T+90 days after switching to Boulevard

Boulevard was built to help your business achieve profitability at scale without losing an inch of sanity. See for yourself! Go to joinblvd.com today to sign up for a free demo.