
Superhomes Brand Development Report

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Introduction

This document represents the deliverable WP2.3.1 “Marketing Branding and Collateral” developed under WP2 - Market Analysis & Brand Development.

Following the trends defined in Task 2.1 and the joint venture between Electric Ireland and Tipperary Energy Agency, a new brand strategy will be articulated. This deliverable aims to present the thinking and plan for the development of a brand strategy and brand identity for the new Electric Ireland Superhomes brand.

Background: What is a brand and why is it important?

Brand is a single unifying idea that defines what an organisation stands for whilst creating value and emotional resonance for people inside and outside the organisation.

A brand is the sum total of the experiences, perceptions and beliefs that people have about an organisation. It is created by their interactions with the organisation, what other people say about it and how it compares to others in the same category/sector. When creating a brand strategy, by definition, organisations are setting out to define what they offer customers and stakeholders and how that is different or better from what others offer. In service organisations, the customer experience (the way in which customers and consumers evaluate the brand when interacting with it) is often the key brand differentiator.

As Electric Ireland Superhomes launches and prepares to dramatically scale while continuing to play a leading role in developing a relatively new category, the review of the existing identity and development of an enhanced brand will be a critical business enabler and will be a foundation block for all subsequent marketing and communication activity. A clear and visible brand will be essential to drive customer awareness, understanding and ultimately business growth while also ensuring the engagement and attraction of contractors and other critical partners.

Scope of work

In terms of scoping this work programme, the key outputs of a brand review will be:

- A brand strategy and positioning that differentiates Electric Ireland Superhomes from competitors in a way that builds preference amongst key target audiences
- A clear and distinctive logo and brand identity to ensure the brand is identifiable and easily recognisable in the market
- A set of supporting brand guidelines to ensure correct and consistent application and use of the brand
- An understandable and compelling messaging framework to help consumers both understand and value home retrofit as well as motivating homeowners to choose Electric Ireland Superhomes for their retrofit.

Brand strategy and brand positioning

The first step in developing an enhanced brand that supports the needs of the growing business is the development of a clear brand strategy and brand positioning.

A brand strategy is a long-term plan for the development of a successful brand in order to achieve specific business objectives; generally reputation, sales and market share. A well-defined and executed

brand strategy considers consumer needs, stakeholder needs and the competitive environment to ensure the identification and preference for the brand by target audiences.

The first step in developing a brand strategy is to examine and fully understand the “four Cs”: the company itself, the customer, the competition and the category. This results in a full analysis of the market and the opportunity for the business and brand and the insight from the analysis of each of these areas become the foundation for potential brand territories and informs the position Electric Ireland Superhomes should occupy within the market and how it might distinguish itself to achieve business results.

Following testing and validation (through stakeholder challenge and build as well as customer research) this is distilled into an Electric Ireland Superhomes brand model which includes a brand promise, values, personality and narrative.

Brand Identity and key brand identity elements

Brand identity consists of the noticeable elements of a brand such as name, logo, colour palette, tone of voice, language, associated music, iconography, photography, and other visual and audio elements. Brand identity is what identifies and differentiates a brand in the target audience’s mind. Distinctive brand assets – visual, verbal, auditory – help to create shortcuts in consumers’ minds that make brands more memorable and impactful.

With the growth in the number of brands generally, the volume of advertising consumers are exposed to, the growth of smaller digital devices and diminishing attention spans, brands are increasingly experienced very briefly – particularly in advertising. This is a significant challenge, especially for brands with limited channels to market and limited budget.

Branding best practice suggests that to increase brand salience at the point of decision-making, brands should be easily understood, recalled and recognised. A well-designed brand identity, and particularly visual identity, which is a clear expression of what a brand stands for is therefore extremely important and a critical foundation element of marketing communications to convey brand identity immediately and instinctively. An identity that customers will understand and one that will stand out has the greatest opportunity to succeed, particularly in a developing market such as home energy retrofit.

The existing Superhomes brand identity components

Currently, the Superhomes brand identity is made up primarily of the four key brand components shown below.

- **Name**
‘SuperHomes’

- **Logo**



- Green colour



- Family based lifestyle photography style



Electric Ireland and joint venture branding considerations

The creation of the joint venture with Electric Ireland will mean that key elements of the existing and well-known Electric Ireland brand will be included as part of the brand refresh.

The Electric Ireland brand was launched ten years ago as part of the deregulation of the Irish retail energy supply market. Operating in an intensely competitive and commoditised market, the brand has received considerable investment and now has 1.2 million residential and business customers driving strong brand awareness and advocacy performance. Partnerships with organisations such as Electric Picnic, suicide prevention charity Pieta and the national sporting organisation, the GAA, as well as an ambassador association with astronaut Chris Hadfield have resulted in a visible and well-known brand with brand awareness score ranging from 65% - 75% in recent years (ongoing quarterly Amarch Electric Ireland Brand Research).

From a brand advocacy perspective, Electric Ireland leads in terms of perception of a positive role in the Community and the metric 'the most trusted and helpful gas/electricity supplier in the market' (The Research Perspective Customer Satisfaction Research, April 21).

Electric Ireland's brand purpose is very much aligned with that of Tipperary Energy Agency (TEA). The TEA brand provides a demonstrated commitment to guiding and supporting homes, businesses and communities to collectively contribute towards a low carbon future and to supporting Ireland achieve its 2030 climate action targets. The inclusion of Electric Ireland in the new brand will drive trust, reassurance and familiarity and will benefit the business as it operates in a fragmented market occupied with a mixture of well-known brands, growing One Stop Shops and smaller contractors (SMEs).

Logo development considerations

The inclusion of Electric Ireland brand provides an opportunity to help build a leading home retrofit sector brand that will support the upscaling of the business. Joint venture logos are however, by their nature, more challenging than focusing on a single brand or logo. The brand identity review will aim to develop a unified logo that leverages the strengths of both brands but remains visually cohesive and clearly signals the customer benefit of the service offering.

Research has found that descriptive logos can more strongly increase consumers' willingness to choose a brand and can boost net sales compared with non-descriptive logos¹. The difference: descriptive logos contain text and/or visuals that communicate the product or service the brand offers, such as Burger King (BK). Non-descriptive logos, like BK competitor McDonalds, don't indicate their offer in logo form. The take-out for the Superhomes brand review is that at least one textual and/or visual design element that is indicative of the type of product or service that is being offered should be included.

Below are the areas of focus in creating a new Electric Ireland Superhomes logo:

Achieve a good visual balance of the two identities	Strive for a cohesive and integrated logo that appears unified as we go to market.	Explore a refreshed colour palette and consider the role of green and how it relates to the Electric Ireland blue.
Develop a refreshed type style for Superhomes	Develop a revised icon that still relates to the core offer.	Logo and assets will need to work primarily in digital & new icon will convey the idea in social media.

 Electric Ireland logo	 (Revised) Superhomes logo	 Superhomes name
 Typeface	 Revised icon	 Colour

Logo starting point:



Draft revised logo:



This new Electric Ireland Superhomes logo is unified and the continuation of the Electric Ireland smile through the house creates a seamless integration and ensures it does not look like two separate entities. The strong house icon is easily recognisable and immediately communicates the home while both the Electric Ireland curve through the house and the curve at the bottom of the house adds an ownable element. The thicker outline on the house evokes warmth, comfort and insulation giving a clear signal as to the category and consumer benefit.

Logo within competitive set snapshot



Colour and colour palette

For brands, colour is an identifier, often very familiar with consumers. Colour can account for up to 85% of the reason why people choose one product instead of another and can increase brand recognition by 80%².

In many sectors, colour is a driver of brand awareness and differentiates one brand from another, usually a key part of a brand's visual language. However, the colour green is very much associated with sustainability and climate action to the point that it is very overused by brands with a sustainability-based offering (see Appendix 3). It is therefore a highly appealing colour to our competitor set, making cut-through and stand-out challenging.

Below is a snapshot of the use of green in the colour palette deployed by players in our sector.

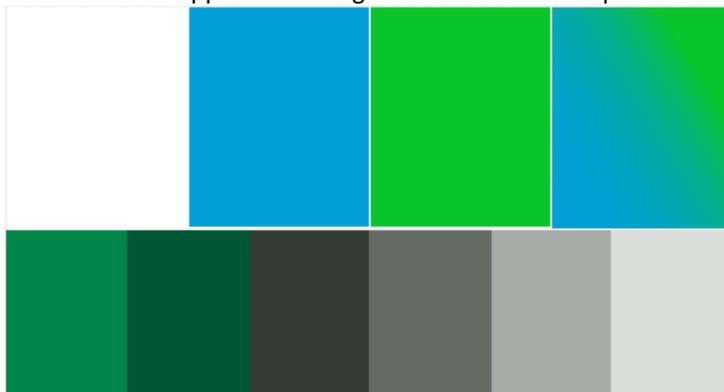


Given our sector, our climate action-based proposition and the clear category signalling that it provides, the use of a colour green will be a key part of the new brand identity. Below again is the snapshot of the green colours used by players in our sector. Also included now (marked “new green option”) is a suggested green colour that is being explored as part of the new logo and colour palette development.



The green highlighted above gives a vibrant colour asset that will help drive brand distinction and awareness when used as part of an overall brand toolkit. The other key brand colour is the Electric Ireland cyan blue which is strongly associated with Electric Ireland and the energy category. These two colours will form the basis of a new Electric Ireland Superhomes colour palette.

Green can be a difficult colour to work with and easily overused. The new brand guidelines will include direction for its application alongside a broader colour palette. A draft colour palette is shown below.



Typography

Choice of typeface is an important reflection of a brand and its personality. Good typography aids clear, distinctive and memorable communication.

Electric Ireland's existing signature typeface is St Ryde, chosen for its warmth, accessibility, and legibility. It is a versatile typeface available in five weights. Electric Ireland's brand guidelines allow for it to be used for headlines, subheadings, introductory paragraphs as well as for products, services and special offers and it has become the typeface by which people have come to recognise an Electric Ireland communication.

The secondary typeface is Akzidenz-Grotesk, this is for use in body copy. In an increasingly online world, there is also a requirement for a digital typeface; this is Arial, an internationally recognised font. This can be used on digitally produced communications such as PowerPoint, as well as with online communications as a web safe typeface.

The adoption of these typefaces will provide a suite of strong fonts to aide communication effectiveness as well as providing a linkage to the well-known Electric Ireland brand.

St Ryde

Akzidenz Grotesk

Arial

Tone of Voice

Tone of voice is our organisational 'brand voice' used in spoken and written customer and stakeholder communications. The overall goal of tone of voice is to establish a strong, positive, personal relationship between Electric Ireland Superhomes and target audiences through our way of speaking and writing. A key deliverable of the brand programme of work will be a knowledgeable and reassuring tone of voice that drives homeowner trust and confidence.

Photography

Photography plays a key role in communicating a brand. A chosen photographic style should be consistent through all communications. The brand review will develop a distinctive and ownable photographic style and will develop guidelines for the Electric Ireland Superhomes style of photography to be followed when selecting or commissioning photography for the brand.

An example of this suggested style is below.



Music and sonic brand identity

Sonic brand identifiers are an important part of a brand's identifiers. The "tum-tum" drumbeat is already well-established as part of the Netflix experience, played with every episode of every box set. The Irish market has always been particularly radio intensive and in recent years as streaming digital audio and podcasts have become more popular, the need for defining the sound of a brand has become increasingly important.

There is an opportunity to leverage Irish people's instinctive and emotional responses to audio to create powerful brand connections with short 'audio logos' or associated music that create recognition and consistency across touchpoints such as social videos, website animatics and knowledge hub assets.

Overall design system and brand guidelines

Brand communications are the sum of many unique parts. To ensure target audiences clearly recognise Electric Ireland Superhomes in the marketplace, a design system and set of brand guidelines are being developed to ensure consistency in how the elements that make up our visual toolkit and unique brand 'look and feel' are deployed. This consistency is critical to building brand awareness and means that consumers won't have to 'work' too hard to recognise the Electric Ireland Superhomes brand.

Key messaging

The deep retrofit proposition is one which requires explanation, education and clear presentation of the benefits to Irish consumers, supply chain partners and other stakeholders. Given the early stage that the market is at, clear and compelling messaging will need to be developed to help, in particular, key target audiences navigate the category and choose Electric Ireland Superhomes over competitors. SEAI has conducted consumer research³ and now advises the use of more consumer accessible language e.g. "energy upgrade" rather than "retrofit". There is a host of industry specific language such as "one stop shop" that will need to be interrogated to assess if it offers the best opportunity to create, grow and lead the home retrofit category. This set of messaging is a priority output for the brand and marketing review.

Applying and launching the new Electric Ireland Superhomes brand

Rebranding a company's assets and launching a new brand is a significant programme of work. A rebrand implementation plan is being developed to support the implementation of the new brand in the market. This will consider priority assets for rebranding, and resources. An audit of priority assets is currently in progress (Appendix 1).

Final comments

An enhanced brand, clear brand strategy and strong brand identity has been identified as a key enabler for business growth and success. Brand development will continue to be a key part of the organisation's growth strategy.

Appendix 1 – Preliminary list of assets for rebranding

Ref	Asset or Document Name	Used by
1	Website	Prospects/Media
2	Social Channel: Facebook	Prospects / Stakeholders
3	Social Channel: Instagram	Prospects / Stakeholders
4	Social Channel: Twitter	Prospects / Stakeholders
5	Social Channel: Linked In	Prospects / Stakeholders
6	TEASH006_Energy Report_v2.0_2020_[MASTER]v3	SH Team & H.O
7	TEASH061_Energy Report_TA_2020_[MASTER]v1.1	SH Team & H.O
8	[1.E] Scope of Limitation [BEC-NHRS2021]	SH Team & H.O
9	[1.F] SuperHomes Variation Request Form [BEC-NHRS2021]	SH Team & H.O & Con
10	[1.H] Waiver of Contractor Deposit Agreement [BEC-NHRS2021]	SH Team & H.O
11	[1.I] BEC2020 Personal Data Consent [BEC-NHRS2021] DRAFT	SH Team & H.O
12	[1.I] NHRS2020 Personal Data Consent [NHRS2020]	SH Team & H.O
13	[1.I] SH2021 Personal Data Consent [BEC-NHRS2021] DRAFT	SH Team & H.O
14	[2.0] H&S Info letter to Client [BEC-NHRS2021]	SH Team & H.O
15	[2.C] PSDP & PSCS Appointment Form [BEC-NHRS2021]	SH Team, H.O
16	[2.F] HO H&S Advice Acknowledgement [2021]	SH Team & H.O
17	[1.0] The Schedule_[BEC-NHRS2021]	SH Team, H.O & CON
18	[1.A] Scope & Standards [BEC-NHRS2021]	SH Team, H.O & CON
19	[1.B] Homeowner Payment Schedule [BEC-NHRS2021]	SH Team & H.O
20	[1.C] Contractor Payment Schedule [BEC-NHRS2021]	SH Team & CON
21	[1.D] Re Non-Grant Works [BEC-NHRS2021]	SH Team & H.O
22	[1.0] The Schedule_[BEC-CHS2020]_FP	SH Team, H.O & CON
23	[1.A] Scope & Standards [BEC-CHS2020]_FP	SH Team, H.O & CON
24	SH2021 CONTRACTOR Contract eMail_(DRAFT)	SH Team & CON
25	SH2021_Homeowner Contract eMail_(DRAFT)	SH Team & H.O
26	[1.B2] Homeowner Bank Details Form [BEC-CHS2020]	SH Team & H.O
27	Declaration of Compliance with Article 45 (MASTER)	SH Team & CON
28	Superhomes Inspection Checklist v3 Draft	SH Team & OTHER
29	TEA SH024_Contractor Pre-Qualification Questionnaire [MASTER]	SH Team & CON
30	TEASH062 Superhomes HP Comissioning checklist 2020	SH Team & CON
31	TEA SH031_Power Flush Cert v1.0	SH Team & CON
32	TEA SH036 Declaration (Lighting Installation Contractor) [MASTER]	SH Team & CON
33	TEA SH036 Declaration (Stove Installation Contractor) [MASTER]	SH Team & CON

34	TEA SH037 Compliance Declaration (Central Heating Systems) [MASTER]	SH Team & CON
35	TEA SH038 Insulation Contractor Sign off (MASTER)	SH Team & CON
36	TEA SH040 Compliance Declaration (Mechanical Ventilation Installation Contractor) [MASTER]	SH Team & CON
37	TEA SH041 Compliance Declaration (Solar Photovoltaic Installation Contractor) [MASTER]	SH Team & CON
38	TEA SH050 Compliance Declaration (Stove Manufacturer Wood Only) [MASTER]	SH Team & CON
39	TEA SH050 Element Make Up Contractor Sign off [MASTER]	SH Team & CON
40	TEA SH050 Extension Element Make Up_Engineer Sign off [MASTER]	SH Team & OTHER
41	TEA SH022_DR_Sign off sheet_DRAFT	SH Team & H.O
42	[3] PSDP_PSCS Competency Questionnaire (MASTER)	SH Team & CON
43	[7] Preliminary S&H Plan_SHxxx (MASTER)1.2	SH Team & CON
44	Contractors Engagement Agreement	SH Team & CON
45	Homeowner FAQ	SH Team & H.O
46	Home Survey Package	SH Team & H.O
47	Professional Fees	SH Team & H.O
48	Superhomes Q&A & Fees	SH Team & H.O
49	Consultation & Grant service for deep retrofit projects	SH Team & H.O
50	Letterhead	SH Team & H.O
51	Compliment slips	SH Team & H.O
52	Business Card	SH Team & H.O

Appendix 2 - Examples of draft logo applied to branded assets



electric Ireland Superhomes

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Appendix 3 – Snapshot of use of colour green by sustainability-based brands

