turn over: chosen



expect
otherwise

everything we didn't make, and why.

set aside · read from this side.

why this half exists

Most books show the rejected work as a grid without reasons, or not at all. Here it gets its own book.

Everything in this half was made, looked at and set aside, each time with one reason. It is not waste. It is what makes the choices on the other side readable.

Some of it was set aside by the client, some by the studio, and some by a test.

two options, one assumption

set aside at the start, by you.

everything

letterhead, extended aftercare and a twice-yearly brand check. more than the studio needs to exist.

the core

only what you named yourself. no quote template, no social: but the proposal is the first thing a client holds.

a website at an average level

an assumption of the studio. you asked why a studio would start with an average site.

three website levels

later set aside too: “every prospect gets the look and feel that suits them. but we won't offer lower quality because someone wants to pay a lower fee.”

four positions we didn't take

“a creative agency that builds brands that work”

almost every studio says it. 51 providers looked at.

“the quality of a big agency without the price, thanks to technology”

the sentence you started with. true, but already taken by others.

route a · the whole brand, one project, one public price

a price is easy to copy. it stayed as a fact on the site, not as the position.

route c · open about what ai does and what a person decides

openness is a way of working, not a reason to choose. it is in every chapter of this book instead.

1,458 names we didn't use

round 1 · 604 · what lies aside, the house, beyond the ordinary

round 2 · 597 · after your own list: unexpected, taste, freedom

second chance · 262 · free to choose, an instruction, the choice as a name, a house

most fell at the .com, or because someone already used the word.

the gap, right: the one you chose.

set aside · aside · off the table · put aside · laid aside · second draft · first pass · what remains · remainder · the other pile · second look · shelved · draft two · cleared table · plain sight · leftover · offcut · scrap · remnant · residue · outtake · discard · cast off · sideboard · back burner · bottom drawer · side table · spare room · lumber room · slush pile · understudy · runner up · b side · afterthought · second thought · hindsight · oddment · byproduct · surplus · offcut & keep · cut and kept · draft and keep · second sheet · spare draft · kept draft · other draft · cutaway · aside words · offdraft · undraft · not first · afterdraft · second table · side pile · spare bench · plain aside · offcut row · scrapbook · sepose · sepoist · relict · residuum · caput mortuum · dross · leavings · orts · chaff · winnow · sift · klad · palimpsest · pentimento · shard · swarf · tailings · lees · marc · pomace · spolia · sequel · cut & kept · spare pair · plain pile · odd lot · second sketch · kept & cut · dull draft · tidy table · bare bench · loose leaf · spare page · odd offcut · first to fall · draft drawer · scrap paper · scratch pad · rough & ready · paper & pile · left and kept · darlings · drawing board · clean slate · cutting room · low fruit · plan b · take two · not taken · parked · rough cut · dry run · bathwater · wheat & chaff · leave it out · nice try · first things last · straw man · stalking horse · red herring · first pancake · aunt sally · second wind · devil's advocate · makeready · overs · spoilage · waste sheet · setoff · slip sheet · offprint · bleed · trim · hellbox · dead matter · overmatter · pied type · galley · foul proof · stet · dele · spike · zero draft · foul copy · strikethrough · cut list · dummy · scamp · rough · tissue · thumbnail · muslin · toile · cabbage · fent · thrum · selvedge · basting · kerf · shavings · sawdust · waste side · spoil board · dry fit · sprue · flash · slag · burr · spall · waste mould · lost wax · wastez · grog · seconds · sideline · gambit · candidate move · trim bin · workprint · rushes · contact sheet · scratch track · write off · suspense · sundry · contra · trimmings · stockpot · prunings · thinnings · deadhead · trivium · three ways · the fork · third road · crossways · wye · casting vote · your call · three doors · junction · parting ways · tiebreak · odd one out · outlier · footnote · paper trail · pick of three · signpost · the bin · rubbish · not this · wrong answer · boring first · obviously not · nope · landfill · meh · beige · scrapheap · plan a · reject · second best · dead end · decoy · dud · vanilla · fallow · husk · moult · wake · stubble · jetsam · flotsam · driftwood · windfall · glean · aftermath · layby · siding · hard shoulder · backlot · anteroom · coat check · ballast · ebb · lee · marlow proof · proof & margin · ashby ledger · hale & margin · margin & wright · fielding proof · carver ledger · penn & proof · trace & hallam · marks & ledger · record & wright · linden proof · witness & hale · harlow margin · proof house · ledger house · footnote & finch · docket & dunn · abbott register · minute & hand · errata house · tally & rowe · assay house · assay & hall · archer annal · warrant & wells · annal & ives · signet & shaw · ledger & lane · index & ames · voucher & vale · counter & sign · initial & reade · proofwright · margrave proof · ledgerwood · markwell · markwell & reade · reedwell press · penfold proof · wrightmark · notley & marks · provenhall · kept & wright · trueman proof · fairhand & co · linewright · pagefield · inkwell & ward · stetwell · harrow proof · recto house · verso hale · stet & co · scriven & hale · calder codex · proba house · writ & ward · spoor & vale · vestige & vane · nota house · vero & finch · liber & lowe · signa house · kant & reade · attest & ames · colophon house · folio & finch · lector & lowe · wilton house · quill & proof · marcer & marks · wren & wright · lark & ledger · tully trace · penrose proof · reade & yule · hollis & hand · bell & binder · fenn & field · piper proof · garrow & galley · sable & stet · notley knox · ward & witness · keene & kerning · quire & quinn · chapter & verse · black & white · hand & seal · word & bond · line & letter · measure & twice · dott & cross · marks & words · workings house · second reading · paper & trail · stand & correct · bythe & booke · witness mark · galley & quoin · quoin & chase · forme & chase · pilcrow house · sorts & co · makeready house · chapel proof · register & trim · pencil & stet · redline & rowe · chalk & toile · selvedge & shaw · first fitting · scribe & square · plumb & true · storey & pole · daybook house · double entry · sealed move · notation house · logan bearing · touchstone & co · datum & field · bench & notebook · trivium house · fork & fielding · crossways & co · aside & hale · offcut & wren · outlier & marsh · thirdway house · freehand & field · freeman proof · liberty & ledger · odd & even · discard & sons · exhibit a · dunn & dusted · rule & thumb · receipts & sons · proof & pudding · nitpick & nephew · told & sons · nobody & penn · red pen & partners · pedant & wright · double & check · reject & sons · hallam works · ashfield press · margin works · reading rooms · proof bench · wrightfield · aldine house · marginalia house · keeper & wright · longhand house · ledger line · proofmark · fair copy · counterfoil · reade marlow · hallam reade · carver reade · garrick penn · marlow wright · ashby marks · hale notley · linden wright · beyond average · the exception · out of line · not the usual · past the obvious · free of ordinary · uncommon ground · the other option · free choice · nothing usual · beyond the obvious · unaverage · free from same · fourth leaf · outlier lane · white crow · stray line · wild card · open gate · open field · odd sock · lone poppy · tall poppy · loose thread · odd stone · black sheep · square peg · spare key · unfenced · left hand · fifth wheel · off key · freehand · farfield · freestand · elsewise · otherwise · unsame · unalike · oddwell · freehold · farside · otherhand · offmark · plainly other · unherd · free room · stand apart · one off · outright · oddfellow · outmost · selcouth · rare bird · freeborn · free & clear · franklin · frith · eigen · libera · out of series · anders · outland · unwonted · otherwhere · novel kind · extra order · freo · fair & fay · free & few · odd & able · rare air · plain raze · off the often · odd nod · free three · kind of rare · far from par · odd fold · seldom same · seldom seen · fresh furrow · none alike · less alike · less travelled · against the grain · off the beaten · no mould · one of one · proves the rule · free rein · free range · out of ordinary · different drum · far from the crowd · room of your own · second to none · free bird · stand alone · own accord · no other · home free · nothing like it · off the curve · long tail · third sigma · out of book · never off the peg · spot colour · accidental · off beat · out of true · free wind · sailing free · off grid · wrong font · odd trick · freestanding · own measure · off register · novelty move · free reach · exceptional item · odd number · grace note · out of sorts · fork & field · the crossing · one of three · fair fork · own road · deciding hand · wayside · freedom from beige · not like them · anything but · meh no more · the unbeige · weird on purpose · sore thumb · ugly duckling · different, obviously · no sheep · mister odd · free radical · freedom makers · freedom works · freedom press · freedom hand · freedom & form · freedom row · freedom yard · freedom signs · freedom made · freedom standard · freedom of form · freedom drawn · free & made · freely made · freedom house · rare company · uncommon company · other kind · plain exception · fair exception · singular works · the uncommon · seldom & co · own kind · unlike company · rare form · uncommon hand · different cloth · new leaf · clear water · open water · wide berth · far shore · well apart · uncommon sense · rare find · odd volumes · own ground · above the mean · off centre · singular · uncommonly · apart & co · the unexpected · unforeseen · unlooked for · not expected · least expected · unannounced · surprise · the twist · plot twist · second glance · double take · and yet · however · instead · the reveal · wonder · unawares · against expectation · not what you expected · curveball · swerve · detour · left field · dark horse · sleeper · long shot · anomaly · departure · stray · sidestep · jolt · upset · turnup · late entry · outside chance · fluke · godsend · stranger · newcomer · third option · unexpected marks · unexpected names · unexpected forms · unexpected faces · unexpected signs · unexpected studio · unexpected works · unexpected company · unexpected house · unexpected kind · unexpected guest · unexpected turn · unexpected answer · unexpected shapes · unexpected goods · unexpected item · unexpected outcome · unexpected third · pleasantly unexpected · rather unexpected · quite unexpected · usual unexpected · unexpected order · mr unexpected · unexpected & sons · [redacted] · unexpected yes · half expected · hardly expected · other than expected · less expected · volta · paradox · inopine · inopinate · ferly · unweened · serendip · peripety · volte face · inolite · sorpresa · subito · marvel · mirabile · novum · eureka · aliter · alias · twist and turn · look twice · quiet surprise · small surprise · plain surprise · soft swerve · strange shapes · sudden signs · wonder works · fresh twist · tastes turned · turn and tell · well well · ah but · now then · odd turn · nice surprise · sweet surprise · well i never · who knew · fancy that · of all things · lo and behold · guess again · think again · look again · turn up for the books · bolt from the blue · out of nowhere · sight unseen · as it happens · funny thing · just when · but then · something else · quite another · nothing like · turn of events · change of tune · surprise surprise · great expectations · no one expects · tales unexpected · until now · on second thought · quiet move · novelty · in between move · intermezzo · underpromotion · swindle · blue note · key change · deceptive cadence · middle eight · turnaround · syncopation · the prestige · the pledge · misdirection · sleight · out of the hat · trapdoor · cold open · smash cut · third act · cliffhanger · punchline · callback · amuse · off menu · acquired taste · aftertaste · palate cleanser · bakers dozen · lagniappe · secret ingredient · changeup · googly · feint · sunshower · cloudburst · blue moon · porter dahl · dahl and porter · munro porter · serling dahl · saki · black swan · thirteenth · fresh eyes · new angle · other way · elsewhere · offhand · unusual suspects · surprise me · gasp · huh · oh hello · wait what · no spoilers · spoiler · ambush · startle · jack in the box · banana skin · uninvited · expect nothing · never saw it · didnt see that · not that · gotcha · even so · all the same · nonetheless · whereas · rather · but still · yet · then again · or else · unless · except · besides · not quite · come to think · matter of taste · good taste · to taste · taste and difference · tell apart · told apart · the difference · distinct · a different taste · other tastes · taste apart · discerning · the pick · unlike · differ · palate · judgement · discernment · preference · the selection · good eye · keen eye · fine ear · the nose · sure hand · relish · savour · flavour · contrast · variance · leaning · sensibility · verdict · distinction · own taste · eye and hand · taste and reason · distinct taste · other palate · plain distinct · chosen apart · picked apart · eye for difference · second palate · unlike others · taste for other · difference made · contrast and choice · judged different · unlike likes · odd taste · other eye · third taste · choice and taste · apart by choice · different by choice · gusto · sapor · sapere · savvy · alter · alia · varia · dispar · criterion · de gustibus · kenner · connoisseur · aesthete · diverge · smack · tang · allo · taste and tell · tried and tasted · dry and distinct · pick and palate · eye and ear · other order · choice cut · like unlike · sharp and apart · fine line · taste test · plain palate · apt and apart · tell and differ · distinct and done · beg to differ · no accounting · each their own · world of difference · spot the difference · split the difference · same difference · poles apart · a class apart · horses for courses · chalk and cheese · cup of tea · take your pick · pick of the bunch · another matter · night and day · beholder · spice of life · apples and oranges · not for everyone · suit yourself · an eye for · different story · another thing entirely · second opinion · flight of three · blind tasting · tasting notes · nose and finish · long finish · vertical · cupping · terroir · spittoon · cut and cloth · made to measure · second fitting · bespoke · hallmark · best in show · blue ribbon · rosette · sorting table · jury of one · shortlist · honourable mention · deliberation · house style · blue pencil · sharp pencil · selects · final cut · editors pick · critical eye · magpie · tuning fork · perfect pitch · litmus · whatstone · loupe · sixth sense · birthmark · own accent · mother tongue · field guide · kind regards · picky · fussy · hard to please · bad taste · tasteless first · spit it out · not like that · opinionated · divisive · never bland · no second helping · tastes vary · plainly different · quite unlike · freedom identities · freedom identity · freedom marks · freedom names · freedom faces · freedom forms · freedom character · freedom characters · freedom colours · freedom company · freedom & co · freedom bureau · freedom studio · freedom type · freedom letters · freedom signature · freedom crest · freedom seal · freedom banner · freedom figures · freedom originals · freedom engine · freedom imprint · at liberty · liberty marks · liberty faces · latitude · leeway · elbow room · room to move · free will · free licence · poetic licence · leave to differ · own name · own face · own mark · own colours · own hand · self made · open hand · free agent · free spirit · free pass · carte blanche · full rein · free name · free face · free mark · free character · free signature · free likeness · free bearing · free colours · free standard · unbound name · unbound mark · unbound · open face · open name · named free · free to name · own likeness · own signature · own standard · own character · own bearing · liberty likeness · liberty hand · latitude marks · free form · self portrait · self evident · face & leave · libertas · liber · libre · libre mark · frank · frank mark · frank face · franchise · charter · free charter · yeoman · burgess · freeman marks · manumit · eleuthera · idem · ipse · selfdom · sui generis · vrij · fri · fair & free · frank & free · free figure · free flag · fly free · liberty letters · loose likeness · known & own · own tone · bold & unbound · name & leave · free & familiar · mark & liberty · liberty & line · face free · lettered free · leave & likeness · true colours · show your colours · flying colours · make your mark · name your own · in your own name · feel free · free to be · born free · scot free · free country · take the liberty · taking liberties · liberty bell · give me liberty · no strings · speak freely · by any name · face value · thine own · come as you are · as you like · own two feet · sign of the free · own sweet way · own device · own devices · sign manual · paraph · flourish · free flourish · autograph · armiger · blazon · free quarter · the fly · fly end · colour party · standard bearer · free signet · own imprint · maker's mark · touchmark · cognizance · livery · free livery · open letters · house flag · freeman's mark · countersign · free hoist · privateer · letter of marque · shore leave · recess · mufti · out of uniform · no uniform · dress down · off the leash · cut loose · untied · open road · barefoot · tailwind · fence down · skeleton key · long leash · day release · field day · loose rein · kite string · open collar · liberties · assumed name · new identity · witness protection · no papers · jailbreak · break ranks · runaway · no master · ungoverned · unowned · nobody's · emancipated · loose cannon · free lunch · mutiny · unruly · freedom papers · free faces · deserter · free identity · leave granted · given leave · by your leave · with leave · leave to choose · full latitude · wide latitude · fair latitude · latitude given · your latitude · leave and latitude · liberty hall · liberty taken · liberty given · liberty of choice · small liberties · quiet liberty · liberty boat · liberty port · a free hand · the say · final say · your say · the last say · sole discretion · own discretion · at your discretion · fair discretion · your prerogative · owner's prerogative · free vote · open vote · deciding vote · free ballot · free elector · free mandate · the old franchise · open franchise · enfranchised · suffrage · free option · first refusal · sea room · free passage · room to choose · free accord · own volition · own terms · own counsel · at will · at pleasure · as you please · no obligation · free agency · self rule · expect elsewhere · expect anew · expect again · expect further · expect instead · expect differently · expect three · expect apart · expect a choice · expect second · choose again · choose twice · choose anew · choose apart · choose instead · choose further · choose elsewhere · choose freely · choose aloud · choose knowingly · decide again · decide apart · decide freely · look elsewhere · look further · look past · ask again · ask twice · ask further · think twice · think anew · think elsewhere · think further · see further · see instead · see three · begin again · begin anew · begin elsewhere · begin second · start second · turn aside · turn elsewhere · turn again · set apart · set anew · leave the first · leave aside · skip the first · pass the first · decline the first · doubt the first · pick again · pick twice · pick instead · draw again · deal again · discard first · cut again · measure anew · come about · change tack · bear away · steer apart · stand elsewhere · consider three · consider instead · suppose instead · weigh three · take another · say which · make your choice · opt apart · opt again · by choice · of choice · the choosing · chosen well · well chosen · choice made · made by choice · named by choice · own choice · plain choice · third choice · second choice · choice given · reasoned choice · choice and reason · deliberate choice · quite deliberate · deliberate · on purpose · purpose made · quite on purpose · by intent · full intent · fully intended · considered · well considered · wilful · quite wilful · hand picked · elective · the elective · elective affinity · elected · decided · quite decided · by preference · meant · well meant · meant so · on reflection · advisedly · cause shown · good reason · with reason · eyes open · forethought · aforethought · bespoken · called shot · chosen line · dealer's choice · declared · chosen ground · chosen course · singled out · choice apart · apart on purpose · elect apart · chosen third · volition · choice and company · the elective company · latitude house · leave and company · leave granted and co · discretion and co · the discretion company · prerogative house · prerogative and co · free vote company · free vote and co · elector and co · electors house · ballot and co · the ballot office · suffrage house · sea room and co · sea room company · wide berth and co · leeway house · leeway and co · own accord and co · accord house · volition house · volition works · the deliberate company · deliberate and co · the deliberate office · the considered company · the wilful company · wilful and co · wilful works · intent and company · on purpose and co · purpose made company · the choosing house · the choosing company · the choice office · choice practice · choice and reason company · the say company · final say and co · say and company · casting vote and co · the free hand company · liberty hall company · liberty boat company · unbidden company · unprompted company · unasked and co · the unlikely company · elsewhere and co · elsewhere house · instead and company · anew and co · second look company · on reflection and co · reflection house · forethought and co · cause shown and co · bespoken and co · dealer's choice company · candidate and co · the candidate office · preference and co · the preference office · option house · mandate house · verdict and co · first refusal and co · discard and company · come about and co

voices we didn't use

the industry's voice

“unique”, “powerful”, “not just … but also”. on five of six homepages.

the expected way out

exclamation marks, emoji, “we're not like the rest”. it says the same thing louder.

voice b · the open book

“first we show you what we won't make.” calm and polite, but nobody remembers it.

voice a or c alone

a alone can come across cold. c alone sounds like what every studio promises.

“we”

there is one designer. “we have to be honest.”

directions
we didn't take

0 · the expected

large sans heading, neutral ground, one button colour. what twelve studios do.

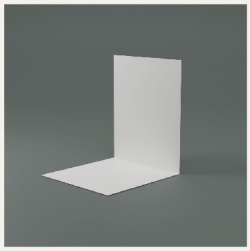
b · the publisher

the book as the brand. strong, but only one carrier carries it.



c · the table

the work as image, in 3d. its quality went into a, as depth.



the paper wave

an example render: paper that lies and rises in an arc. “not enthusiastic, if it's something we'll really use.”

ochre

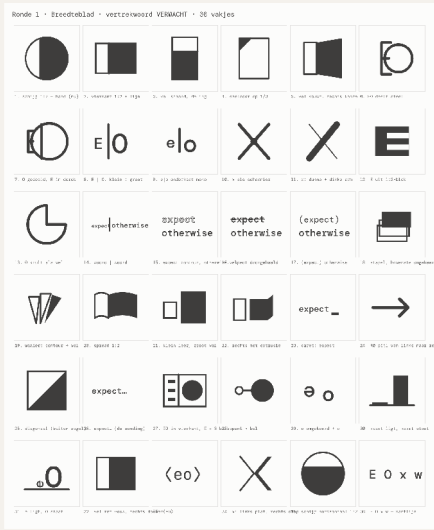
a competitor already uses it as its accent. found late, set aside straight away.

olive

more unusual than bottle green; less suited to the industry.

59 sketches and three ideas

left: round one, 36 sketches.
number 30 became the mark.



concept 2 · the loose spine

the studio's advice. it seemed to miss the "o", and otherwise is what matters in the name.

concept 3 · the word in two

"many companies already use something similar."

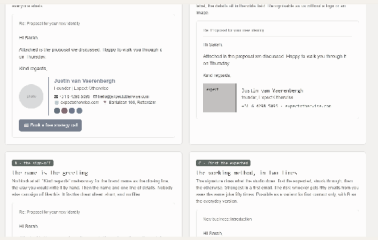
e + o

your own first idea, drawn as an equal candidate. the obvious, as you said yourself.

the half disc · the x · e|o

a football shirt, the logo of x, an on/off switch.

carriers that
went back

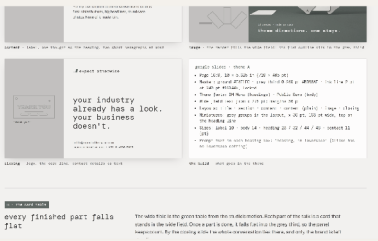


signature a · the diptych

correct, and forgettable in an inbox.

the first signature

a block with the registration number. “first 0, then a, b or c.”



the white mark on the card's back

“not very creative.” replaced by the mark in relief.

presentation k

grey meant “done” there; in the guidelines, grey always means the expected.

a heading on the linkedin banner

unreadable on a phone. removed.

sentences
before the one

your industry already has a look. your business doesn't. yet!

failed the swap test: any studio could say it. and the studio started from it, instead of blank.

your industry already has a look. i design that look first. then we set it aside.

the studio's first recommendation, withdrawn: it wasn't written blank.

i design your industry's average first. then i set it aside.

won the blind test. but “average” belongs to a competitor's slogan.

59 more

from a writer who never saw the old sentence.

sites we didn't build

0 · paint over the standard site

the guidelines applied to a template. it would look like everyone.

0b · full-screen 3d

what award sites do now. expected, at the top.

b · your industry, averaged

the studio's advice: an instrument. needs a rebuild per industry.

c · the card table

came back on the brand identity page, as a second pattern.

a floating, turning 3d book

people stop seeing it, it gets in the way of the booking button, and it moves without asking.

“small business”

negative, in the end. replaced by “whoever makes the call”.



the grey test: every direction without colour, to see whether the idea holds on its own.

what ai couldn't do

set aside by a test, not by taste.

photoreal cards from an image model

four cards instead of three, clubs added, the 0 card twice.

the movement from a video model

card c slid out of frame, card a melted into the lying card. the typical ai morph.

a 3d model of the book

weak for something this simple. the book on the site is calculated instead.

the hex colour in a prompt

the images didn't follow it. colour is corrected afterwards, by measuring.

where the two
books meet

This is the line between them. On one side, what was chosen. On the other, everything that made the choice readable.

Turn the book over to read the other half.