9

PROJECT TITLE IOR Rebrand

CATEGORY
1.2
Corporate/Brand ID
(under 100K)

DESIGN CONSULTANCY

999 Design Group

CLIENT COMPANY IOR Group

DATE OF ENTRY
5 July 2013

DBA DESIGN EFFECTIVENESS AWARDS 2014

From imagination to creation



The new brand achieved all of our objectives in year one and has delivered on all my expectations.

After 25 years I feel reinvigorated by my own business and I'm very proud to showcase and champion our brand in all its glory.

Mark Randall, Managing Director



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Changing perceptions

Met with increased competition for smaller, mid-sized fit out projects, a volatile post-recession market and a desire to obtain leads more in line with ambitious group sales targets, IOR had to challenge the perceptions of their offer and take the bold step to create a new and compelling brand.

This new brand would reposition them in the UK marketplace and in the minds of their existing clients but crucially it would allow them to talk confidently to potentially new high net worth clients of $\pounds Im + in value$. These new opportunities would come from the UK and beyond as we looked to encourage a confident new global dialogue for IOR.

It was 999's challenge to reposition and reinterpret their message, and to consider how they would go to market, ensuring we defined the business in line with their key objectives.

999 rose to the challenge and delivered. We achieved all core objectives within the first year of the brand re-launch.

- 17m turnover in 2012 a record high in year one, just 11 months into the relaunch
- II0%+ growth projections for 2013
- Confirmed project bookings of £23m+ for 2013
- New global client portfolio projects in Switzerland, Russia and France
- High profile new clients Daiwa Bank, 3 Mobile, Misys
- Achieving average project commissions of £4m up on £1m+ target
- Design fee recouped in year one

increase in bookings

62% increase in profits

999

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The company turnover in this first year of the relaunch was a record high of £17m (2012) but this is on track to be entirely overshadowed by the confirmed bookings and projections for 2013 of £23m+. Which has been achieved by hitting the key objective to win new projects that were worth £1m+.

Adding to this the improved quality of the project scope, the focus on the design requirement and ultimately the blue chip brands that now sit on the IOR client list -no longer a wish list - but strong project case studies that include projects in Switzerland, Paris and St Petersburg.

Add to that a renewed confident and proud team, the new IOR brand has a foundation in place which will continue to take them places...



PROJECT OVERVIEW

OUTLINE OF PROJECT BRIEF

After 25 years in business IOR group were a successful respected, corporate office interiors, refurbishment and furniture supply company.

Based in Richmond (Interiors of Richmond their original name) they had built a respectable client list and would regularly compete against central London based interior companies for new small-mid sized project work with a fair success rate.

Perceived as an established traditional office interiors business with a solid base of corporate clients IOR had a strong story to tell but there was a lack of awareness of their design led capabilities, endorsed by their architect led team. This misconception was leading to too many small enquiries for one off furniture orders or smaller end budget requests that lacked the quality of the projects they desired.

It was 999's challenge to review and reinterpret their core positioning message, and to redefine the brand in line with bold business objectives to:

- Reposition IOR as a premium design-led business, capable of delivering multi-million pound projects
- Attract large scale, quality client project enquiries, nationally and globally
- Create a clear design-lead marketing message and refreshed brand identity
- Develop new business opportunities through highly professional and compelling marketing communication tools
- Obtain leads that are more suitable to their sales target (£Im + projects)
- Improve bid and tender qualification stages and the final conversion rates
- Reverse the trend in receiving furniture and small budget project enquiries



OUTLINE OF PROJECT BRIEF cont'd

Facing these issues, alongside increased competition for the smaller / mid-size fit out projects and the wider impact of the recession on office moves and interior / office fit outs, IOR had to challenge the perceptions of their brand, and take the bold steps to create a new compelling brand positioning message, that would entirely reposition them in the minds of existing as well as new potential high-net worth clients who had been identified as key to the ambitious businesses growth plans.



DESCRIPTION

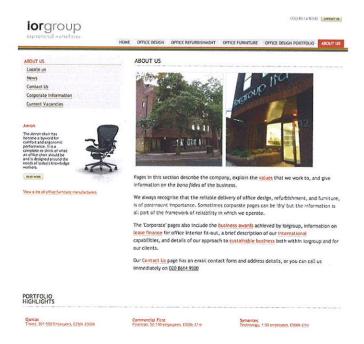
A respected business in a niche industry, IOR had grown a reputation for excellent supplier relationships and high service levels. They placed great emphasis on their highly skilled 'people based' processes - the 'dream team' and their holistic 360 approach to every project which had helped to build their reputation as a trusted and reliable supplier.

These perceptions were a positive foundation from which to build a new IOR brand however there was a critical lack of awareness of their design led capabilities, the creative inspiring talent of their architect led design team which the business had invested in - and so this was identified as a central issue to address and define as part of the new brand positioning. We identified that although the excellent service levels were important, creativity and design would help to set them apart from the competition and give IOR the confidence and depth to be considered for the high net worth 'design led' projects in the future.

The original identity

iorgroup aspirational workplaces





These images show the original logo and screen shots from the old website



DESCRIPTION conf'd

By mid 2011, IOR's turnover was estimated at £15m due to a high profile project win for an existing client. This project win was identified as key to their potential growth in the Im+ project fit out area and was agreed to be the driving force behind the company growth plan. It was vital not to loose the moment.

"Our objective is to present the company as it now is currently (delivering high profile 7 figure fit-out contracts in central London market) both to known prospects and clients, and to new business opportunities developed through marketing/sales activities. We expect to obtain leads that are more suitable to our sales target, and to present a clearer marketing message."

Mark Randall, Managing Director

IOR now had a high profile design led project to deliver and all going well, a compelling case study for us to build on.

With the company heritage and strong service foundations we now had a compelling design story to help endorse the new positioning approach and so we embraced this with confidence and enthusiasm.



OVERVIEW OF MARKET

The recession had hit the interiors industry particularly hard and 'office moves/ refurbishments' were particularly viewed as a non-essential financial burden. Many blue chip and corporate organisations would generally move on a cyclic rotational basis but this climate saw procurement departments re-negotiating existing leases, slashing budgets and generally staying put.

This in turn created a highly competitive new business landscape meaning that the more lucrative procurement based bids were highly desirable. Contract values and the security of longer term contract durations all compiled to create a more competitive arena for IOR to stand out in.

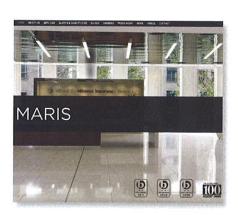
The competition at this time was two-fold - a mix of traditional well know industry players who would rely on more traditional personal networking for opportunities, alongside some new, sales hungry companies who were generally more web focussed and investing heavily in their company SEO and paid search to enable their businesses to stand out.

All of which compounded to create additional challenges for IOR particularly as procurement departments and senior commissioning teams relied more heavily on online profiles and company information resourced online to provide context, background and history for any potential appointments.

Competition websites













These images show web sites of IOR's major competitors. Despite the fact that these companies are fulfilling multi-million pound contracts, there is little standout amongst them so there was a real opportunity to make some impact online.



OVERVIEW OF MARKET cont'd

Online market snap shot resource

- Developers looking to get the most out of their office stock in difficult economic conditions are considering refurbishment rather than redevelopment
- The key to this, not surprisingly, is that the UK and Europe are in the grip of one of the worst ever economic downturns. This is illustrated by the decline in UK construction output with the economy facing a "double dip" recession, difficulties with developers achieving funding and an inability on the part of potential tenants to look very far into the future.

http://www.marketresearch.com/AMA-Research-v175/Interior-Refurbishment-UK-7087440/

• 2011 stats: The Interior fit-out and refurbishment market is estimated to be worth approximately £6.6 bn in 2011, having experienced decline in the last two years.

Market ambition

Vertical Markets were a successful area for IOR as clients included Oil and Gas, Energy, Recruitment, Tech companies, but they had little business from Professional services firms (Accountancy, Legal) and this was identified as a future ambition.

Clients old and new now fully understand our offering. The calibre of our client list continues to grow on a truly global scale and this ultimately proves the success of this project – 999 totally delivered!

Nigel Sinsbury, Finance Director



PROJECT LAUNCH DATE

JANUARY 2012

PROJECT BUDGET

£85,000K

OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

It was vital that IOR presented a more professional confident case, setting themselves apart by presenting a new re-energised and defined brand with a focus on design and detail without ignoring their heritage, service values and the key business objectives we would help them to identify.

This would enable a more professional IOR brand to shine through in any future new opportunities and tenders, and help cut through the competition, build assurances in their capabilities and ultimately secure shortlisting and tender conversion rates.

The solution would start by addressing the internal process in compiling new business bids and to have a realistic understanding of the challenges before we could produce what we felt would be the new framework for a new suite of communication tools that would bring a cohesive professional consistency, yet offered flexibility and created the bespoke tailored response that was required every time.

This pragmatic and practical research and immersion stage was crucial before we could begin to define the new positioning and the vital messaging structure to support it...



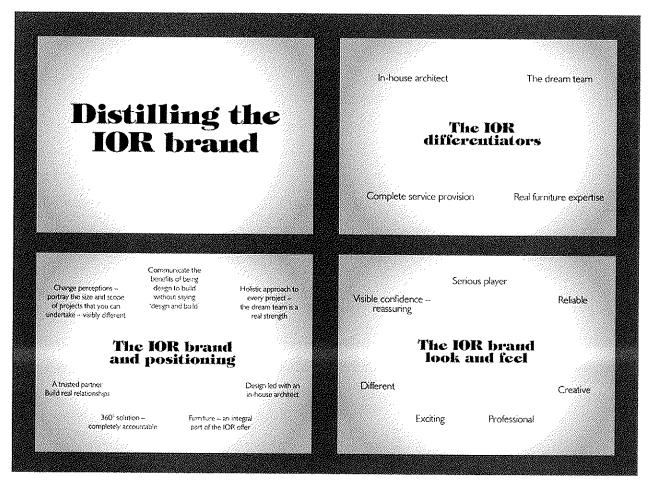
Immersion

We conducted a series of research workshops with clients, old and new, and all IOR staff to establish the perceptions of the company, their capabilities, service levels, and company strengths and weaknesses.

At a time of uncertainty and change we also used this exercise to help gather fresh insight from potential clients regarding their key priorities and procurement processes. This meant we could sense check the process was in line with IOR's understanding of the priorities.

Overall, this was a crucial first step in helping 999 to gather vital insights and also helped us clarify the company vision and values ahead of the re-positioning and messaging stage. We were then able to conduct a re-positioning exercise that formed the direction for the new brand statement and the wider messaging approach that would become central in underpinning the new IOR identity and all communications materials.

Positioning process



After conducting our initial research with staff and current clients, we distilled our findings to key practical and emotional drivers behind their business offer and how they delivered it. We then used this direction as a benchmark for every touch point of the design.



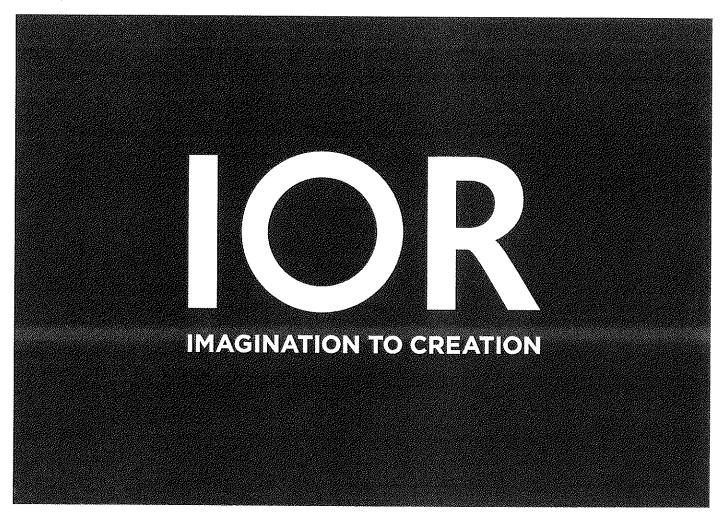
Positioning

Whilst creating the new IOR brand it was vital to change, not just challenge, existing perceptions without losing sight of their heritage and the 'three man dream-team' formula they had in place. We had to put a renewed focus on their in-house creativity and premium design capabilities whilst making sure that the 'build' aspect of their offer remained as prominent.

The aim was to bring a visible confidence, a new fresh tone and attitude to IOR. We needed to ensure they were seen as an inspiring creative led company, whilst bringing reassurance they were a serious player in the industry – that they had the expertise and resources to deliver at every point and could compete with the major players in their competitive market. This positioning led us to a fresh, distilled brand essence:

FROM IMAGINATION TO CREATION

New logo





Imagination: This puts focus on the IOR design portfolio, their inspirational thinking, creative processes and visual solutions. This translated as 'Our design portfolio' within new communications.

Creation: This supports the formula of their 'total solution' which a lot of their competition cannot offer, whether that be the actual build of bespoke furniture solutions, boardroom and fit-out or an entire office design and build scheme. This translated as 'The formula across our thinking' within new communications.

This became the foundation for a new confident tone of voice and lead messaging statement - inspiring and enthusing from the inside out and bringing standout in a dry and generic competitive set.

We believe that workplace interiors should enhance efficiency and make possibilities a reality.

Rationale: Open with a bold statement of intent, which exudes confidence and vision - but is also rooted in the real world. It explains what IOR does, without resorting to saying what all the competitors say - such as 'office re-fit'. 'Making possibilities a reality' conveys the idea of IOR's capability of 'imagining possibilities' combined with the idea that they deliver technically).

That's why our in-house team of architectled specialists combine a passion for design with precise execution.

Rational: Expands on the theme of vision/practicality. Makes clear the differentiator of an in-house team which includes an architect. Expresses the values: Passion ('a passion for design') and Knowledge & Expertise ('in-house team of architect-led specialists' and 'precise execution' = you get the benefit)

From concept to furniture, we take care of every detail, every step of the way, bringing your tailor-made project to life with a next generation approach.

Rationale: Makes clear the furniture differentiator. 'We take care of every detail' conveys the idea of understanding challenges and identifying issues. 'Next generation approach' gives differentiation from competitors. Expresses the values of: Value ('every detail' = we relieve you of bureaucracy); Service ('every step of the way' = long term relationship); Quality ('tailor-made project' = don't settle for OK); Dynamism ('bringing your project to life')

The image above highlights the brand message and the rationale behind each aspect.



Review and rationalisation

It was vital to fully understand the IOR business process and re-align the new communication tools with every aspect of the sales journey.

This meant tackling a number of practical process issues we had uncovered including; time restraints collating important bids due to incorporating too much irrelevant information in the existing templates; overwhelming prospects with too much information too soon; photography, image and resolution issues; printing and collation of final submissions was also problematic due to formats eating into crucial final deadlines.



Presentation template







Client presentation folder and templated spreads for tender bids/new case studies







Pre-printed covers for IOR's furniture offer and a new, bold and confident suite of corporate stationery



We rationalised the journey and defined a new practical process.

We then created a compelling brand narrative that would summarise their story in a succinct, refreshing way and created content structures for all materials incorporating the new tone of voice.

Central to this was our challenge to reinvigorate and repurpose the vital historic case studies and give them a new design led formula and content structure which our new statement does perfectly:

IMAGINATION: OUR DESIGN PORTFOLIO.

CREATION: THE FORMULA BEHIND OUR THINKING.

The new and inspiring communications materials would form the bedrock of the new IOR communications approach.



Pre printed divider pages for presentations and proposals.

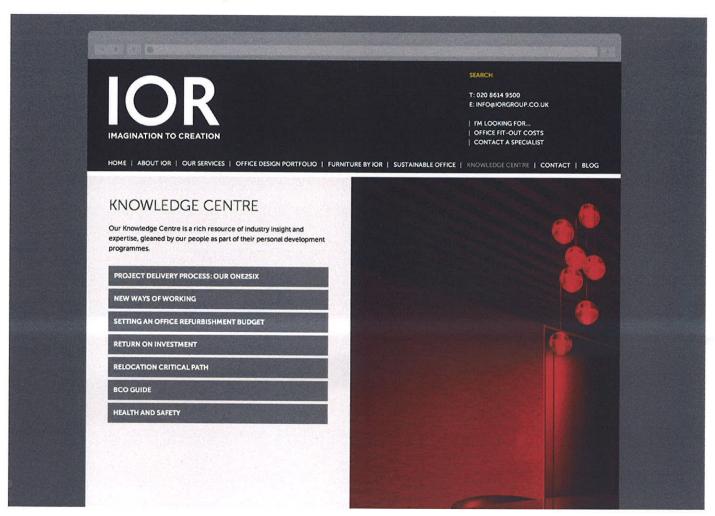


Showcasing capabilities

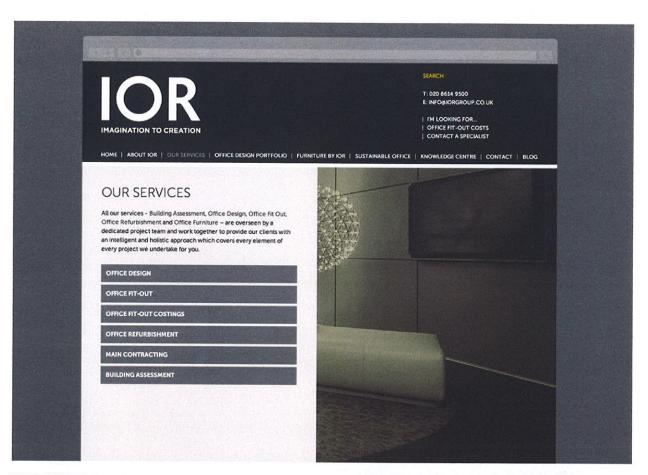
A new IOR website was obviously an intrinsic aspect of the re-brand and the newly built site launched in Jan 2012 fully supported by the new communications materials and marketing approach, enabling IOR to fully showcase its confident new brand identity.

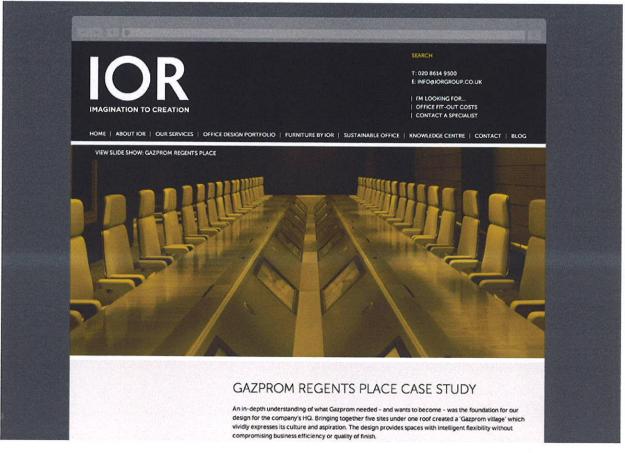
The website was designed to play a key part in their repositioning as a platform for them to showcase their knowledge and capabilities. Where previously their old site had acted as a gateway to dozens of case studies and 100s examples of furniture types, the new site would showcase fewer, larger projects that had made more impact, alongside narrative on the invaluable relationships IOR had built over many years with leading furniture suppliers such as Herman Miller.

We also introduced a section of the site called 'Knowledge Centre' which would allow them to communicate and comment on developments in the industry. All of these aspects of the site were designed to act as testament to their abilities to deliver multi-million pound projects and act as reassurance of their promise to potential new clients.















SUMMARY OF RESULTS

In December 2011, IOR had confirmed project bookings of £11m for the year ahead.

The previously mentioned 2011 major project win had been a lucrative one, helping to take final turnover to £15.5m, an impressive 35% increase on the 2010 turnover.

IOR recognised this was a substantial client win that may not be feasible to match or even to repeat in the first 12 months of a brand re-launch.

However, compounding all trepidation, the final 2012 turnover for IOR increased dramatically to hit an all time high, recording a substantial end of year turnover of £17m.

This is a staggering 55% up on the predicted 2012 figures.

An additional 10% increase on the recorded 2011 turnover figure.

And a impressive 48% increase on the 2010 turnover of £11.5m.

Confirmed bookings		
December 2011	£11,175,000	

£23,570,00

IOR profits and turnover

December 2012

	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Projected
Turnover	£11,478,000	£15,536,000	£17,100,000	£25,136,000
Gross Profit	£2,208,000	£2,554,000	£2,484,000	£4,028,000



NEW RECORD TURNOVER PREDICTED FOR 2013

110% growth projections are confirmed for the current year, 2013

Projections for 2013 were confirmed by IOR in Dec 2012 and show recorded bookings for a staggering £23,500,00.

This is a monumental 110% increase in confirmed bookings compared to Dec 2012.

The initial impact of the rebrand has been immediately felt towards the end of 2012 but the most impressive momentum that has gathered is into the first and second quarters of 2013 as the impact is truly beginning to show.

This includes the addition of the high value projects IOR desired:

- · £4m project commission for Misys, Paris,
- £3m project commission for 3 Mobile, Glasgow,
- As well as other new high profile design-lead projects based in Switzerland, St Petersburg and Dublin. The new commissions prove the scale and impact of the transformation of the brand, and undoubtedly shows a real trust and confidence in IOR's global capabilities.

RISE IN THE QUALITY OF CONVERSIONS

Quality of client wins improves dramatically – high profile, global players.

What is critical to note is the quality of the project wins during this period with the impact of the rebrand allowing IOR to showcase its high quality projects and resulting in the high profile client names we had sought to attract including Daiwa Bank in London, Misys Paris and 3, the global mobile network in Glasgow.

The endorsement of such notable commissions from well known respected organisations brings a reassurance to existing clients and no doubt helped to further endorse the Gazprom relationship by helping secure a recent project for their head office in St Petersburg.

The overall success is fully endorsed by the high profile global names sitting alongside Gazprom on the IOR current client portfolio, but what is remarkable to also note is the decision by IOR to turn down project work that has been based in Korea and Morocco.



As identified, IOR wanted to attract more professional blue chip corporate companies on a global scale and so it has been a huge success to secure such high profile brands within the first year of the relaunch.

In IOR's words 'The new tender presentation and rebranded materials helped us to produce a solid, confident and more professional Daiwa bid. This has subsequently helped increase the global enquiries that we are receiving. Our global perception has improved dramatically'.

RISE IN VALUE OF ORDERS WON AND 2013 ANTICIPATED TURNOVER

Value of the individual project wins increases substantially reaching an all time high of £13m for a commission from Daiwa Bank, London.

The recent project wins and associated fee values show an absolute confidence and trust in the capabilities of IOR with project fee values absolutely smashing through previous average amounts:

2012/13 MAJOR CLIENT WINS AND PROJECT VALUES:

THREE MOBILE:	PROJECT VALUE £3M	<i>E</i>
MISYS PARIS:	PROJECT VALUE £4M	
DAIWA BANK:	PROJECT VALUE £13M	2

POST rebrand - and whilst excluding the new 2011 project from these figures - the new project wins to date are an average of \pounds 7m per commission.

PRIOR to the rebrand project values were on average £1.3m.

2011 CLIENT AND PROJECT COMPARISONS:

ROBERT WALTERS:	PROJECT VALUE £2.5M	
JAGEX:	PROJECT VALUE £950K	-
RIO TINTO:	PROJECT VALUE £750K	-



INCREASE IN PROFITS

Based on confirmed orders for 2013 IOR have projected profits of £4m+

This is a staggering 62% increase in profits compared to 2012.

This is all the more remarkable as profits had remained a steady £2.2-£2.5m average from 2010 to date.

DESIGN FEE RECOUPED IN YEAR I

By the end of 2012, just 11 months in, IOR had recouped the investment put in to the branding and website. What should be highlighted is that all of this has been achieved WITHOUT any form of advertising, print digital or otherwise, any external or targeted marketing, DM or similar. A remarkable achievement showing a well thought out and focused use of the client budget.

INCREASE IN TENDER AND CONVERSION RATES

Tenders and bid documents are an expensive and time consuming investment for IOR and so improving the overall approach to provide a more efficient internal process would ultimately increase profits for the business. Prior to the rebrand bid documents would take on average 2-4 days to complete. This has improved dramatically bringing an average turnaround time of 24hrs to create new proposals.

Bid documents can now be collated in 24hrs - bringing huge efficiencies in man-hours each week.

Our main goal however was to ultimately improve tender conversion and success rates. With tenders potentially worth on average £Im+ this has a significant impact on the efficiency and profitability of the business.

IOR have seen a dramatic 20% increase in project opportunities and shortlisting since the rebrand.

Project conversion rates now sit at I in 2, a monumental shift from I in 3.

This equates to a 66% increase in actual project conversion rates.

In IOR's words 'this has helped significantly with turnaround time, how we see ourselves, how others see us, and the ultimate success rate we've had'



STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

We surveyed all staff in recent weeks prior to collating our submission and had an impressive 100% response rate which is overflowing with positive feedback:

100% of staff said categorically, the new brand now better represents them as a company delivering high-end design led projects, and has raised their profile and standing within the industry.

100% of staff said they felt more confident selling services with the brand and website as conformation of their capabilities.

94% of staff said the new brand had helped to diminish any / all misconceptions about the capabilities of IOR.

94% of staff said the new brand portrayed a clearer marketing message and defined their offer.

94% of staff said the new brand and website had helped or played a part in gaining new clients. And also helped to retain existing clients.

"This website confirms we are serious players who produce sophisticated and tailor made workplaces for clients".

"The overall brand and website confirms we know what we are doing".

"We now have a better set of tools to showcase our work".

Increase in staff efficiency and productivity of bid proposals

100% of staff said that the new marketing materials have brought efficiency in creating tender and bid proposals.

100% of staff said that the new marketing materials help to create more professional and better representative proposals.

"templates for our case studies look good and they work"

"the new business wins put us in a totally different league"



Increase in staff confidence and motivation levels. And a growing design team.

The re-brand has had a positive affect on employees with 90% stating they have felt an increased confidence in the company.

With a very low staff turnover, many of the principal team at IOR have been with the company 5+ years and so it was vital that we take the staff on the journey with us, ensuring this was an inclusive process and we gained their buyin to the reasons for the change.

The impact of the rebrand has been a continued high staff retention rate and the need for a growing design team - confirming the new focus - with the appointment of 3 new recruits, individually attracted to the new IOR brand spirit and recent success.

The high company moral was noted as something special and highlighted in particular by the new employee's.

94% of staff said the new brand has had positive impact on internal motivation levels.

"the rebrand has helped potential new clients consider us for new projects"

"we have been recognised as a serious player"

"we look more professional, current and design led"

"it has improved our perception in the industry"

"the new business wins put us in a totally different league"

When we asked staff for any other personal thoughts on the rebrand we received 100% positive quotes. Testimony to the overall success and endorsed by quotes as follows:

"I love the new brand and website. It is everything we require to become a total brand"

"I love its boldness, its very confident – it's grown up. Clean. Clear"

"Sense of pride in giving out my business cards"

"Our brand is current, strong and professional. It much better represents who we are. It's great."



CLIENT FEEDBACK



Ian Davidson Daiwa Bank:

We shortlisted IOR along with 2 major players in the industry – both were much larger, machine like and longer established businesses. But we felt confident that IOR could deliver on all requirements and were reassured by their overall approach and the experience of their teams.

Although our project is not complete yet we are already considering them for another project based on the positive experience we've had working with IOR.

Since working with IOR in the past year we have been aware of their new high profile project wins and this is reassuring for us to see. We see a symbiosis in our own association and the strength of our own case study as a visible example of good work with IOR.

The new brand and website are representative of my experience of IOR - a design led creative company, delivering high-end complex projects. The IOR brand is reassuring and professional. I now also have evidence of this. They successfully combine the design element and in fact have brought cost savings and efficiencies along the way since we appointed them, as we've not had to appoint a separate architect to the project. This is an added value.

My perception of them as a furniture supplier / office interiors company has shifted. I see them as a serious player in the industry and would recommend them to other procurement contacts.



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