

Accelerating aspirations

AND
Digital

Industry sector
Client company
Design consultancy
Submission date

Support services
AND Digital
Elmwood
November 2018

For publication



elmwood

Executive summary

Quirky start-up AND Digital builds digital products and teaches companies how to stay ahead in the digital era with on-site boot camps and classroom-style activities. Think product builder come digital Sherpa. They came to Elmwood three years after launch, as the team was having difficulty explaining exactly what they do. Essentially because their offering is a bit different from your standard digital start-up (but in a really good way).

This lack of clarity was making it difficult for them to stand out amongst some of the biggest players in the global digital space, and was preventing them from delivering on their big growth plans. They needed an identity that showcased their playful personality and entrepreneurial spirit; while at the same time communicating their offer in a more compelling way.

The original name ANDigital was a little clumsy in that people said And Digital but it read either An Digital or And igital. Moreover, we felt there was a gift in the genius of the 'AND', given that as a business their role was to produce digital solutions AND teach in-house teams how to maintain the digital solutions that they built.

We therefore homed in on the idea of people AND technology. We put AND front and centre by making it a bold device for multiple messaging. AND we married a rounded typeface with simple, colourful photography.

AND the result was beyond expectations.

"AND is one of the fastest growing digital businesses in the UK with a workforce now approaching 400 people, in less than five years from a standing start. There is no doubt that the strident identity created by Elmwood helped to turbocharge our growth by giving us amplified visibility and personality in the market. It significantly helped our standout and resonance with clients, helping to open doors with many of Britain's largest and most admired corporations."

Paramjit Uppal,
Founder of AND Digital

In just eighteen months,
the success has been huge:

5x

increase in the number
of new clients

4.2x

increase in the number
of active clients

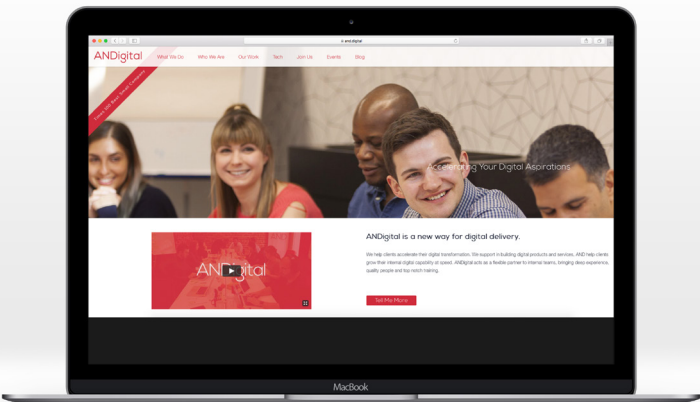
Top 5 technical agency
in Econsultancy's Top 100
Digital Agencies

Doubled turnover in one
full year from the rebrand

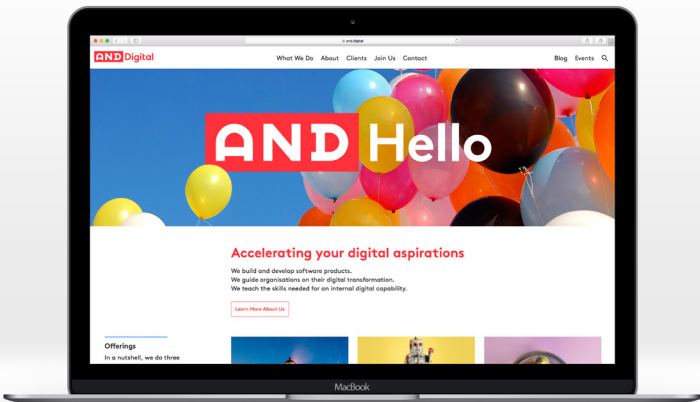
Attracted numerous high-
calibre clients such as British
Airways, Santander and PWC

Extended reach and
geography of client base

Before



After



Case study overview

Business challenge

AND Digital had big growth plans which involved moving from being seen as a supplier competing against small boutique digital agencies, to working as more of a partner – more in competition with the likes of Deloitte and Accenture.

However, a lack of clarity around how they communicated their offer was limiting their growth potential, and making it difficult for them to stand out amongst some of the biggest players in the global digital space.

They needed a bold new approach with a more consistent identity, and greater transparency and simplicity around how they communicated their offer in a more visual and compelling way in order to facilitate their growth plans.

Objectives:

1. To galvanise the team behind a clear and compelling offer
2. To attract high-calibre and more profitable clients
3. To increase revenue by 50% each year.



Bone

Case study overview

Strategic thinking

AND Digital knew they needed some help in understanding how a more emotionally engaging brand could help them to achieve their commercial objectives. So, in the first instance, they asked Elmwood to present to their Board on 'the value of brand' to help provoke and educate their Board members on the merits of engaging in a brand renewal program.

As a result, the business set aside a budget of £30k to invest in their brand renewal. The start point was an audit of their competitive set and a look at all of their brand touch points to see how we could improve the interaction and engagement of their brand with their key audiences, both internally and externally. And add some personality, as they sounded exciting but looked a bit dull, and a bit analogue.

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This was their USP in that they left a legacy by 'doing the work AND then educating the client how to live without them'. Quite the opposite to most consultants who want to find ways to stay involved. AND Digital actually wanted to make themselves redundant. This we felt was a compelling story for the business.

It was clear that they had already established some goodwill in their name and brand colour and so Elmwood's job was to clarify and amplify by making their brand marque feel more confident. In so doing, we sought to drive an attitude, while simplifying the brand to be seen as AND rather than ANDigital – albeit retaining the word Digital as a descriptor and for retention of goodwill.

Scope of work at outset

We recommended that as a minimum they would need a brand identity, guidelines and a toolkit that they could implement themselves.



Case study overview

About AND Digital

AND Digital builds digital products AND teaches companies how to stay ahead in the digital era with on-site boot camps and classroom-style activities. Think product builder come digital Sherpa.

This was (and remains) a significant point of difference for them in the market against their key competitors.

Background

AND Digital had interesting thoughts about wanting to rebrand, and likened it to giving an athlete better equipment:

“Another way to look at a rebrand is to think about a naturally talented athlete – one with the right build and structure in their DNA, and one who has the right attitude, energy and stamina to succeed. However as they train, grow up and start competing amongst the big players, they realise their old trainers and gym shorts are starting to wear at the seams, and these tools are not up to the job. They need the right set of equipment to support them in their competitions, which in turn boosts their confidence and gives them that mental edge.

A rebrand can only be fully successful when the company underneath is naturally set up to be successful. A new brand should only be considered when the company has grown too big, too clever or too remarkable for the old one.”

And that’s exactly where AND had got to. As a three year-old start-up, its brand identity had evolved quickly but had not really been thought through. They had grown massively over the three years, but the team was having difficulty explaining exactly what they did. Essentially because their offer was a bit different from your standard digital start-up – but in a really good way. They came to Elmwood to help them articulate their positioning and express it in a more clear and compelling way.



Collaboration

To get under the skin of the business and its aspirations, our start point was to first host a workshop with their leadership team to co-create a brand blueprint. This involved crafting and articulating the brand’s distinct point of view, personality, values and conflicts. What became immediately apparent was the team’s human tone of voice, and the fact they didn’t take themselves too seriously – which wasn’t reflected in their existing brand.

We set about bringing this sense of fun to life by giving them ownership of the word AND. Part of this meant pushing ahead with a name change from ‘ANDigital’ (which was a bit confusing and restrictive) to ‘AND Digital’ – something the team had been thinking about for a while. Together, we decided the new name gave the brand heaps more gravitas, and lent itself to a wealth of playful creative executions that championed the word ‘AND’. This was our platform for bringing the brand to life visually and verbally. AND so it began...

Today, we continue to work with them as brand advisors and provocateurs.

Case study overview

Design solution

The key insight Elmwood found was that the world of digital is complex and forever evolving. Every problem is different and every solution should be unique. AND Digital don't believe in one-size-fits-all and they don't do off-the-shelf, working with their clients to up-skill and grow their capabilities.

Being bold with their benefit, we articulated AND Digital's distinct point of view as 'We accelerate your digital aspirations – from software and systems, and coaching and training, to technology and products, AND Digital bridges the gap between human and tech, to help its clients realise their aspirations'.

We 'outed' their inconsistencies, or conflicts, and made them into a point of difference, as well as giving clarity to the use of 'AND'. We liberated the 'AND' from their name, and by doing so, we created a springboard for

limitless creative executions – where AND became the hero in punchy messaging and bold imagery, and where we championed bright colours, simple photography AND a quirky tone of voice.

Elmwood put AND at the centre of communications using a rounded, human typeface – making it a bold device for multiple messaging. We supported this with simple, colourful photography that reflected the company's straightforward solutions and gave them a much more vibrant and strident brand that gave them a strong personality.

AND we gave them a unique tone of voice that paid tribute to their playful personality. We replaced formal with fun, and intense with imaginative. We gave them a platform for their personality to shine through AND a creative concept that showcased the excitement and entrepreneurial spirit of their start-up culture.



Scope of work delivered

- Name change.
- Development and finalisation of new brand marque, colour, typography, image library and guidelines.
- Brand identity and guidelines including look and feel for website, and executional ideas for environment and activations.
- Tone of voice.



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Market overview

The world of digital is so transformational, with new tech, software and apps appearing every day; it's no wonder that it is a really difficult market for clients to navigate and to know who to go to for what. It is therefore perhaps understandable that clients default to 'trust marques' like Accenture and Deloitte, playing to the old adage that "nobody ever got fired for buying IBM".

The real truth is that AND don't have any direct competitors as their model of 'doing the work AND educating the client in the process' is somewhat unique. Competitors are a range of companies who offer 'a bit' of what AND Digital does but not in the way they do it. So, looking at it like that, AND Digital were actually competing against hundreds of agencies in the digital arena from small, specialist boutique agencies to huge agencies like Deloitte Digital and Accenture Digital, and everything in between.

The market was also cluttered with tech speak and a sea of corporate blue and black. Below are just two examples of how competitors speak about themselves:

Epam:

We help customers around the world become competitive – and stay competitive. We combine best-in-class software engineering with digital strategy and experience design, business consulting and technology innovation services.

- 200+ clients
- 25,900+ total EPAMers
- 25+ countries

Infosys:

With over three decades of experience in managing the systems and workings of global enterprises, we expertly steer our clients through their digital journey. We do it by enabling the enterprise with an AI-powered core that helps prioritize the execution of change. We also empower the business with agile digital at scale to deliver unprecedented levels of performance and customer delight.

- 217,000+ employees
- 1,222 happy customers
- 98.2 % repeat business
- 45 countries we are present in

This therefore offered an opportunity for AND to drive a difference in the market by adopting a playful but plain speaking narrative with AND being at the heart of the conversation.

Key facts

Project launch date:

June 2017

Design fees:

£30k

Results

In just short of eighteen months, AND Digital has achieved what it set out to do, as well as picking up some extra accolades along the way such as becoming a Sunday Times Top 100 Company to Work For.

It has galvanised the existing team into building the brand and adopting it into their culture, as well as attracting a further 140 colleagues to join the business, effectively doubling the size of the team. AND it has allowed YOY revenue growth of +60% by attracting several of the desired high-calibre clients.

AND to top it off, taking into account just the additional revenue gained in the second half of the year, **the design paid for itself in just 5 days.**

[REDACTED CONFIDENTIAL DATA]

Results against original objectives

1. To galvanise the team behind a clear and compelling offer

The rebrand has been a driver of motivation for the team at AND Digital. They have always had a fantastic work ethic, but the brand and clear use of the word AND has allowed them to give their all – AND a bit extra. They go beyond the norm and provide more. Tech, people, personality, knowledge, teaching, support, development, remarkability – AND Digital. The possibilities are endless.

The branding has extended into how the team work and live day-to-day. Everyday items such as mugs are now branded 'Milk AND Sugar' or 'Coffee AND Code', and even 'You AND Us – we make the perfect pair' has made it onto branded socks, which have also played a major part in recruitment.

Emily Maginess, Head of Marketing at AND Digital had this to say on how it has affected the team:

"In 2017, AND Digital set out to refresh its identity, using our agency's expertise to bring a fresh perspective to how we bring our culture, values and work to life. What we've seen since then is consistent feedback about the vibrancy and improved visual clarity in our new identity: one that emphasises the diversity and people -first thinking at the heart of AND. This has allowed us to engage our audiences – internal and external – in new and more compelling ways across the year.

Just like a product we might build for a client, we view this first phase of work as our MVP, establishing clear foundations upon which we can continue to iterate our story. It's thanks to our agency that this foundation is well-considered, visually engaging and provides a flexible design system that can evolve with us."



Results

2. To attract high-calibre and more profitable clients

Since the rebrand, AND have not only attracted high-calibre clients, but they have considerably grown their client base too.

New clients

- In the six months of 2017 before the new brand launch AND had onboarded six clients.
- In the six months of 2017 after the new brand launch AND onboarded twelve clients. **Double the amount of the previous six months.**
- 2017 total no. of new clients onboarded = **18 new clients.**
- 2018 (YTD) total no. of new clients onboarded = **30 already, aiming to finish the year at 40.**

Additionally, since launch, AND have onboarded a number of really exciting fintech businesses and other digital native clients.

Total clients

At the time of launch in June 2017, AND had nine active clients with all but one of them being in London.

Seventeen months later and they have 38 active clients across London and the North, including Manchester, Leeds and Halifax. That's a **322% increase in the number of clients.**

High-calibre clients

Since the launch AND can name the following as their clients:

- Santander
- Telegraph
- Allen & Overy
- Eurostar
- PWC

In the past quarter, **20% of their new clients came via the website**, compared to 0% before relaunch, and they included some of these big name clients.

3. To increase YOY revenue by 60%

AND Digital was just 1% shy of target in the 6 months post rebrand, however is on track (with two months to go) to exceed target by 9ppts in 2018.

	Pre Rebrand	Post Rebrand		
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Turnover (£m)	11.2	17.8	30 (on track)	redacted confidential data
% Change	79% (on much smaller base)	+59%	+69%	redacted confidential data

Results

Looking at the run rate also shows the financial impact that the rebrand has had on AND Digital.

- At the time of launch, in June 2017, AND was a £14m business.
- A year later, in June 2018, that had doubled to £28m, and by the year-end 18 months from the rebrand, turnover will hit £40 million.

	Launch	One Year	18 Months
Run rate (£m)	14	28	40
% Change	n/a	+100%	+43%

Scale of effect and breadth of impact

Here's what Paramjit Uppal, Founder of AND Digital has to say on the impact of the rebrand:

"AND is one of the fastest growing digital businesses in the UK with a workforce now approaching 400 people, in less than five years from a standing start. There is no doubt that the strident identity created by Elmwood helped to turbocharge our growth by giving us amplified visibility and personality in the market. It significantly helped our standout and resonance with clients, helping to open doors with many of Britain's largest and most admired corporations."

The rebrand has enabled the growth to allow AND to break into the **top 5 for technical**, in Econsultancy's **Top 100 Digital Agencies** report in October 2018.

And despite only being in their fifth year of business, they ranked 86th in the **Times 100 Best Small Companies to Work For**.

The rapid growth, fuelled by the rebrand, has attracted a next-level generation of board members to further assist AND in their expansion plans. These include Philip Green, advisor and former CFO at Deliveroo and Groupon, and Paul Coby, former CIO at John Lewis Partnership and British Airways.

And finally, AND have even **received a couple of acquisition enquiries**.

Results

Other influencing factors

Was the growth due to a rigorous business development strategy?

Although AND had big growth plans, they didn't necessarily change their way of operating. They continued with holding, and presenting at, business breakfast meetings and thought leadership events. They were active on social media as they had been previously. The only difference was that now they had a more compelling story to tell and the assets in the toolkit to help them to do it more effectively.

Was there any additional marketing support?

No. There was no advertising, or any changes to the marketing budget, except the investment in the brand.

Was it due to changes in the market conditions?

No. There were no notable changes in market conditions that would have influenced AND Digital's progress. The market continues to grow, but AND's is around 5 times the industry average.

Were there any changes to the management team that might have had an impact?

The management team has remained constant throughout the process. The only change, which was planned, was in the Advisory Board, with three members stepping down and being replaced by four new members. This was announced in June 2018, a full year after the rebrand. If anything, the rebrand helped to attract the new team.

References & sources of information

All data provided by AND Digital.



AND Digital