Kevin Waide

2026 Style Guide

Mission Statement

My mission is to design brand identities with soul and precision.

I build honest, disciplined systems rooted in purpose, restraint, and integrity—clear, consistent branding that earns trust, endures over time, and helps businesses take themselves seriously.

Kevin Waide

Brand Manifesto

I build brands with clarity, honesty, and respect for the people who use them. My work exists to help real businesses communicate who they are clearly and honestly.

1. My Standard

Everything I put my name on must be clear, useful, and built to last. If it does not meet that standard, it does not ship.

Every project reflects judgment, discipline, and respect for the work itself. Decisions are deliberate. Nothing is added to impress or decorate—only to solve the problem in the simplest and most durable way possible.

If a system cannot function across real-world conditions, it is not finished.

My standard is clarity, consistency, and responsibility, because good design should reduce friction, not create it.

2. Why I Do This

Design makes meaning visible. When done well, it reduces confusion, wasted effort, and unnecessary complexity.

I value craft because people deserve things built with care. I value clarity because confusion costs time and money.

3. How I Work

I listen first, define the real problem, remove what is unnecessary, and refine until the system works everywhere—not just in a mockup.

4. What My Work Stands For

- **Clarity over cleverness —** If the message is not understood, the design failed.
- **Function before aesthetics —** Beauty emerges from purpose and structure.
- **Simplicity with strength —** Simple means essential, not empty.
- **Honesty —** No inflated promises or visual theater.
- **Respect for the audience —** People's time and attention matter.
- **Longevity —** Built to endure, not chase trends.

5. What I Refuse

I do not design chaos, trend-driven identities, or visual noise. Complexity does not equal sophistication, and committee approval does not equal quality.

6. Who I Design For

I work with people who value craft, honesty, and long-term thinking. Clients do not need design expertise—only respect for their work and the people they serve.

The Core Belief

Good design is not decoration. It is disciplined problem-solving and the refusal to accept "good enough" when the solution can be right.

Kevin Waide

01. Purpose & Scope

Purpose

This identity represents Kevin Waide, a senior graphic designer specializing in brand identity and print-driven systems.

It communicates:
- Clarity in decision-making
- Precision in execution
- Reliability in production
- Human judgment rooted in experience and craft

The purpose of this identity is to establish a credible, disciplined professional presence that reflects how the work is actually done—not how design is marketed.

This system exists to:
- Establish trust through consistency and restraint
- Support clear, repeatable communication across media
- Scale from an individual practice to a small studio without requiring redefinition

This guide defines a working system, not a menu of options.

Primary Use Cases

This brand system is designed to support:
- Professional evaluation and hiring contexts
- Client proposals, presentations, and approvals
- Portfolio presentation and case studies
- Vendor, printer, and production handoff

The system prioritizes environments where clarity, legibility, and consistency matter more than expression or novelty.

Success Criteria

This identity is successful if it:
- Remains recognizable at small sizes
- Reproduces cleanly in single-color applications
- Functions reliably across Word, PDF, and email documents
- Maintains consistency across print and digital outputs without reinterpretation

If the system requires explanation to function, it has failed.

Kevin Waide

Scope

This brand system governs:

- Logo usage and variations
- Color and typography systems
- Grid and layout principles
- Stationery, documents, and digital touchpoints

Anything outside this scope is considered an extension, not a reinterpretation.

Brand Definition

The Brand Is:

- Professional
- System-driven
- Restrained
- Durable

This Brand Is Not:

- Trend-driven
- Decorative
- Expressive for its own sake

Intended Audience

This identity is designed for:

- Clients seeking experienced design leadership
- Employers and collaborators
- Printers and production partners

It is built to communicate competence first, personality second.

Kevin Waide

02. Brand Attributes

Core Attributes

These attributes govern all visual and tonal decisions:

- **Precise —** Measured alignment, spacing, and geometry. Nothing accidental.
- **Intentional —** Every element must justify its presence.
- **Restrained —** Minimal palette, limited elements, controlled emphasis.
- **Confident —** Authority through clarity, not volume.
- **Human —** Warmth achieved through proportion, rhythm, and readability.

These attributes apply to all design decisions, regardless of medium.

Attribute Hierarchy

When attributes conflict, decisions must be made in this order:

1. Precision
2. Intentionality
3. Restraint
4. Confidence
5. Human warmth

If a decision weakens the first three to enhance the last two, it is incorrect.
Attributes in Practice

- If it feels clever, simplify it.
- If it feels expressive, question its purpose.
- If it feels loud, remove something.

Kevin Waide

03. Logo System Definition

Overview

The logo system is designed for clarity, repeatability, and production reliability. Only approved artwork, formats, and colorways may be used.

Logo Geometry & Construction

The KW symbol is constructed on a strictly defined geometric grid to ensure scalability and timelessness.

Geometric Ratios:
- **The Stem —** Based on the vertical stroke of the lowercase "i" from the wordmark.
- **The Dot —** A perfect circle with a diameter equal to the width of the stem.
- **Proportional Spacing —** The vertical gap between the stem and the dot is exactly 0.25x, where x equals the stem width.

Grid Alignment:
- **Wordmark Integration —** The baseline of the wordmark aligns with the bottom edge of the symbol's stem.
- **Optical Balance —** Internal margins are baked into the vector artwork and are not corrected to match external layout grids.

Primary Logo (Preferred)

- Horizontal lockup: symbol left, wordmark right
- Default choice when space allows

All lockups include optically adjusted internal margins that are part of the artwork and are not modified.

Secondary Logo Lockups

- Vertical lockup: symbol above wordmark
- Wordmark-only: when a quieter presence is required

Lockup Selection by Context

The choice of lockup is determined by context, not preference.
- **Full Horizontal Lockup (Symbol + Wordmark)** Reserved for agency-level and organizational applications — signage, official documents, vendor and production handoff, and contexts where the full brand identity requires establishment.
- **Wordmark Only** The preferred lockup for personal professional applications — business cards, letterhead, correspondence, and portfolio contexts. The symbol is not required when the name alone carries sufficient authority.
- **Standalone Symbol** Used only when the full name is already established in context or space makes full lockups unreadable. Governed by the Standalone Symbol rules above.

Standalone Symbol

The symbol may be used alone only when:
- The full name is already established in context, or
- Space makes full lockups unreadable

The symbol is not combined, enclosed, patterned, or altered.

Kevin Waide

Approved Color Versions

Only the following approved logo colorways may be used:

- Full color: near-black, white, PMS 485 red
- 1-color black
- 1-color white (reversed)

No effects, tints, gradients, or shadows are permitted.

Color Variant Deployment Rules

Color K — Red/Black Symbol + Black Wordmark
Approved for light and white surfaces. This is the preferred full-color lockup on light grounds. The black wordmark is required; no color wordmark variant of Color K is approved.

Color K — Wordmark Only Variant
Approved for light and white surfaces. Black wordmark with red dot on the "i" — approved for use on white or light grounds per the standard Color K surface rules. Used when a quieter presence is required or when the symbol has already been established in context. No dark-ground deployment. This variant is approved for personal professional applications such as business cards.

Color W — Red/Black Symbol + White Wordmark Lockup
Approved for dark surfaces only. The preferred surface is near-black (#1A1A1A) or an approved equivalent dark ground. Deployment on white, light, or mid-tone backgrounds is prohibited.

Color W — Wordmark Only Variant
Approved for dark surfaces only. The red dot on the "i" in "Waide" is background-dependent and functions correctly only on dark grounds. This file must not be used on white, light, or mid-tone surfaces. Restricted to near-black (#1A1A1A) or an approved equivalent dark ground. This restriction is non-negotiable.

"i" Micro-Mark Restriction — Red Dot on Dark Grounds Only
The red dot on the lowercase "i" in "Waide" is background-dependent in all Color W files. Any Color W file containing this element is restricted to near-black (#1A1A1A) or an approved equivalent dark ground. Use on white, light, or mid-tone surfaces is prohibited. This restriction is non-negotiable and applies to every Color W file regardless of lockup type. Color K files are governed by Color K surface rules.

Color RK — Diagonal Red/Black Symbol
Approved as a standalone symbol only. The color split follows the K diagonal geometry and is structurally justified for that reason. No horizontal lockup, vertical lockup, or wordmark-paired version of Color RK exists or may be created. The mark's diagonal color logic does not extend to a full lockup system without creating color competition with the wordmark.

Clear Space

- Clear space = 1x the diameter of the red dot on the "i"
- Minimum 1x on all sides
- Increase to 2x in high-noise environments
- Clear space is measured from the supplied artwork edge

Background and Contrast Rules

- Prefer solid white or near-black
- On complex backgrounds, clear space is increased or an approved color hold is used
- The logo is never placed over high-contrast edges or texture

Hold shapes use approved brand colors only (near-black or white), preserve clear space, and do not introduce outlines, shadows, or new container shapes.

Minimum Size

Print:
- Horizontal lockup: 1.75 in minimum
- Standalone symbol: 0.375 in minimum

Digital:
- Horizontal lockup: 160px minimum
- Standalone symbol: 32px minimum

Below these thresholds, the mark does not appear. Do not scale below minimum.

Prohibited Modifications

The following are never permitted:

- Color alterations outside approved colorways
- Opacity, transparency, or filter effects
- Geometry or spacing changes
- Font substitution
- Cropping into the mark

File Use

- Vector (AI/SVG/PDF) for all print and production
- PNG for digital transparency requirements
- JPEG for previews only — never for production

Kevin Waide

04. Color System

Overview

The color system is limited, disciplined, and structural. Near-black and white form the foundation. Red is reserved strictly as an accent.

Color Specification

HEX and RGB values are the authoritative definitions for all digital and general-use applications.

CMYK values are provided as process-print approximations and may be adjusted depending on paper stock and press conditions.

Pantone references are included for spot-color or high-fidelity print situations where exact color matching is required.

Color Hierarchy

• **Near-Black —** 55–70% of visual field
• **White —** 25–40% of visual field
• **Red —** 5–12% (rarely over 12%)

Percentages are directional guidelines and may vary by medium.

Usage Rules

• Color supports hierarchy; it never replaces it
• Red is never used for body copy
• No additional colors, effects, or gradients are permitted

Kevin Waide

Primary Colors

Near Black — Primary for text, logos, backgrounds
HEX #1A1A1A │ RGB 26 / 26 / 26 │ CMYK 73 / 67 / 65 / 78

White — Negative space and contrast
HEX #FFFFFF │ RGB 255 / 255 / 255 │ CMYK 0 / 0 / 0 / 0

Red — Accent only
HEX #DF231D │ RGB 218 / 41 / 28 │ CMYK 0 / 95 / 100 / 0 │ Pantone PMS 485 C

Neutral Mid Gray — Secondary structural elements, dividers, captions
HEX #6B6B6B │ RGB 107 / 107 / 107 │ CMYK 58 / 50 / 49 / 17

Soft Neutral Gray — Tertiary text, metadata, supporting detail
HEX #9A9A9A │ RGB 154 / 154 / 154 │ CMYK 42 / 35 / 35 / 1

Red may be used for small accents only when contrast remains high. Red text on white is prohibited for long-form reading.

NEAR BLACK
CMYK: 73 / 67 / 65 / 78
RGB: 26 / 26 / 26
Hex: 1A1A1A

WHITE
CMYK: 0 / 0 / 0 / 0
RGB: 255 / 255 / 255
Hex: FFFFFF

RED
CMYK: 0 / 95 / 100 / 0
RGB: 218 / 41 / 28
HEX: DF231D
Pantone: PMS 485 C

NEUTRAL MID GRAY
CMYK: 58 / 50 / 49 / 17
RGB: 107 / 107 / 107
Hex: 6B6B6B

SOFT NEUTRAL GRAY
CMYK: 42 / 35 / 35 / 1
RGB: 154 / 154 / 154
Hex: 9A9A9A

Monochrome Usage

Approved monochrome combinations:
- Near-black on white
- White on near-black

Monochrome is preferred for all formal and production contexts.

Kevin Waide

05. Typography System

Typefaces

- **Futura Heavy** — Logo only. Never retyped, reused, or visually imitated.
- **Futura Book / Medium** — Limited headings only.
- **Inter** — All body copy, captions, UI, and long-form text.

Hierarchy

1. Logo (Futura Heavy)
2. Headings (Futura Book/Medium, used sparingly)
3. Body copy (Inter Regular)
4. Supporting text (Inter Regular/Medium)

Futura headings are reserved for primary section titles or brand-led moments. They are not for general content use.

FUTURA STD MEDIUM
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

INTER REGULAR
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

Readability

- **Print body copy** — 10–11 pt / 13–15 pt leading
- **Digital** — Equivalent comfortable spacing
- **Line length** — 55–80 characters
- **Alignment** — Left-aligned by default

Emphasis & Styling

- Weight, not color, is used for typographic emphasis
- Italics and all caps are used sparingly
- No effects, distortion, or forced spacing are permitted

Font Availability and Substitution

If Inter is unavailable in a given environment, the following fallback stack is mandatory:

1. Helvetica (preferred)
2. system-ui sans-serif (digital/web only)

Arial, Calibri, and other standard office sans-serif typefaces are strictly prohibited. They degrade the architectural integrity of the brand system. Futura may not be substituted under any circumstances.

Kevin Waide

06. Grid & Layout Principles

Grid Philosophy

Structure and mathematical rhythm are the foundation of this system. All layouts are governed by an 8pt grid.

Mathematical Framework

All layout components must align to base-8pt increments (8, 16, 24, 32, 40, 48...).

- Vertical Rhythm — Leading and paragraph spacing must be multiples of 4 or 8.
- Horizontal Alignment — Margins and gutters must be set to 8pt increments (e.g., 72pt margins rather than arbitrary inch fractions).
- Grid Margins — Standard print margins are set to 72pt (1 inch) and should be adjusted to the nearest 8pt increment for non-standard formats to maintain the underlying mathematical field.

Grid margins support layout balance. They do not correct logo artwork. Supplied logo artwork must not be tightened or optically adjusted to match page margins.

Baseline Rhythm & Spacing

Approved spacing scale: 4 / 8 / 16 / 24 / 32 pt.

White space stabilizes diagonal geometry. Crowding is not acceptable.

Alignment

- Text is left-aligned by default
- Centered alignment is used only with structural intent
- Misalignment is an error unless explicitly justified

Kevin Waide

07. Imagery & Graphic Elements

Primary Graphic Element

The KW symbol is the only approved graphic element within this system.

- May be used standalone or as background support
- Opacity: 5% when used as background
- Must never function as a decorative or dominant element

When used as a background element, additional surrounding white space must be preserved to avoid edge tension and prevent interference with readability.

Placement & Cropping

- Cropping must feel architectural, not decorative
- Optical center must be preserved
- Align to grid where possible

Iconography

Icons are functional tools, not features. When used, they must be minimal, neutral, and purposeful only.

Prohibited

- Patterns or repeated symbols
- Effects or decorative motifs
- Imagery compensating for weak layout

Kevin Waide

08. Voice & Tone

Brand Voice

All written communications produced under this brand identity maintain the following voice attributes:

- Professional
- Direct
- Confident
- Human, not casual

Tone by Context

- **Client documents —** Calm and factual
- **Portfolio —** Clear and explanatory
- **Correspondence —** Concise and respectful

Language Rules

- Clarity is preferred over cleverness
- Hype, buzzwords, and sales language are prohibited
- If it sounds impressive but adds nothing, it is removed

Kevin Waide

09. Applications

Business Card

The business card uses a single-sided, white-ground layout. No background treatments, effects, or decorative elements are permitted.

Logo Color K wordmark-only variant. Black wordmark with red dot on the "i" — approved for this application on a white ground. Centered horizontally on the card. Top-left corner of the wordmark positioned at x=0.4215", y=0.1875".

Title Line "Graphic Designer • Brand & Print Systems" set in 10pt Inter Regular. Bullet character is standard Inter. Centered below the wordmark.

Contact Information Location, phone, and email set in 10pt Inter Regular, 13pt leading. Left-aligned, bottom-left quadrant of the card.

QR Code Near-black digital contact card QR code. Positioned at x=2.6242", y=1.1242". Bottom-right quadrant, optically balanced against the contact information block. Functional element — not decorative.

Typography All text on the card is 10pt Inter Regular at 13pt leading. No weight variation, no color variation outside the approved palette.

Letterhead

The letterhead is a full-bleed, two-zone layout divided by a red rule.

Color Field Distribution
- White: ~60% (upper content field)
- Near-black (#1A1A1A): ~30% (bottom panel, full width)
- Red (PMS 485): ~10% (divider rule)

Red Divider Rule A full-width red rule separates the white content field from the near-black footer panel. Rule height: 0.1063". Center of rule: 8.73" from the top edge of the page.

Near-Black Footer Panel Occupies the bottom portion of the page from the lower edge of the red rule to the bottom of the sheet.

Logo Color W wordmark-only variant. White wordmark with red dot on the "i" — approved for this application per the dark ground requirement. Positioned in the footer panel at 0.9375" from the left edge of the paper and 9.0694" up from the top edge of the page.

Contact Information Address, phone, and email set in Inter, white, below the wordmark. Left edge aligned to the wordmark.

Content Field The white upper zone is unobstructed. No background symbol, no graphic elements. Grid and readability govern all content placed in this area.

Kevin Waide
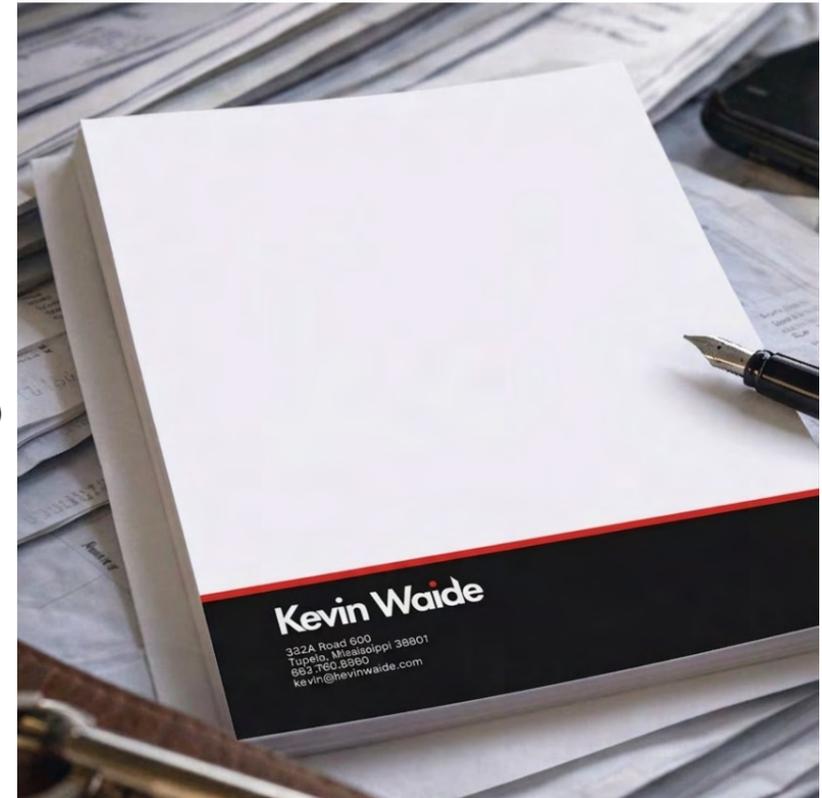
Professional Documents

The following document types are governed by this system: proposal, invoice, and letter/memo.

All professional documents maintain typographic hierarchy with near-black and white dominant. Generous margins are required.

Envelope

Functional and unobtrusive. No graphics or background treatments.

Digital

Digital applications follow the same rules as print. No digital-only effects are permitted.

Approved logo assets must be used. The logo must not be recreated in Figma, Canva, or any secondary application.

Consistency

Across all media, logo, type, color, and grid rules are followed without exception. Consistency builds trust and recognition.

Approved Assets

The following master files constitute the only approved source materials:

- Master vector: AI / SVG / PDF (outline and live text where applicable)
- PNG exports: light/dark, all required sizes, favicon

These files are the only source of truth. Logo artwork must not be reconstructed, approximated, or exported from secondary sources such as presentations, PDFs, screenshots, or website graphics. If additional formats or sizes are required, they must be generated from the master vector files.

This system is designed to be used, not interpreted.

Kevin Waide