

outfit

# Buyer's Guide

## Brand Automation and Templating Software Solutions

*2022 Edition*





## The value of a brand

It's no exaggeration to say your brand is the most important part of your organisation. This is not just marketing-speak. When the impact of a brand on a firm's cash flow, profits and value are measured, brands contribute on average 19.5% – and in many cases well over 50% – of enterprise value, not to mention the immeasurable value that every marketer knows and goes to great lengths to emphasize.

Brand recognition research shows that simply recognising a brand is a big factor in whether someone will choose to buy it. And the use of branding devices such as a signature color can increase brand recognition by 80%.

Three in five people openly acknowledge they prefer to buy new products from brands familiar to them. Why is familiarity so important? Because it creates expectations of quality and trust. And 81% of consumers need to be able to trust a brand to buy it.

Among existing customers, brand consistency is an ongoing contributor to your bottom line, with 55% of consumers willing to pay more for a guaranteed good experience.

Now that we're on the same page about the business-critical nature of branding and brand consistency, let's talk a little bit about you.

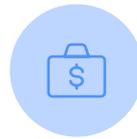
# Common branding issues software can correct

Which of the below are familiar to you?



## Inconsistent brand

Marketing collateral and other materials created throughout your organization represent your brand in an inconsistent light – sometimes unrecognizably so!



## Cost is prohibitive

Using current production processes and partners to scale up marketing is sending costs through the roof!



## Slow to market

It takes days, weeks and even months to get on-brand materials to market when it just shouldn't.



## Marketing is a bottleneck

Central marketing spends all its time creating on-brand variations of existing materials or policing stakeholder materials instead of producing high-value marketing work.



## Data management is menial

Your team spends hours manually producing assets that an automated process could create in minutes.



## A rebrand? Don't even think about it

Your brand needs an update but the very thought of trying to rebrand makes you physically ill.

If any of these issues resonate with you, welcome! Read on, we'll find you a solution.

# Let's Get Started

## Who this guide will help

From the brand builders to the creative visionaries, from the execution specialists to the bean counters — in fact, if you have much at all to do with marketing, there's something in this for you.

This guide is for:

- Brand managers who never want to see off-brand material again
- Design leads who want to focus on high-end design work
- Digital marketers who need to feed the hungry beast
- CMOs who want to scale marketing activity and drive growth.
- Brand Agencies who want to ensure their client's beautifully crafted brands are delivered into safe hands.

If you're looking to rebrand, expand into new markets, execute faster, meet new regulatory requirements, review your martech stack, or simply improve brand consistency, you're in the right place. Read on.

## What this buyer's guide will help you do

Choosing the best technology for your organization can be a confusing process. The purpose of this guide for buying Brand Automation and Templating Software solutions is to help you understand and define your own organizational requirements, learn how brand automation can help, and ultimately, identify the product and the vendor that best meets your needs.

At the end, you'll find a handy Comparison Checklist, that's designed to help you compare and contrast your top 3 shortlisted solutions.

We hope you'll choose Outfit, but of course, that's your decision! Let's get to it...

# Brand Management and Automation Software

We've talked about the value a strong and consistent brand will bring to your organization. But brands don't manage themselves. And in today's rapidly changing marketing landscape, it takes more than a few slides in Marketing's annual presentation to the executive team to maintain brand integrity.

## What is Brand Management?

Brand management is the development and execution of a strategy to strengthen brand perception in the market. It covers your brand's touch points with prospects, customers, internal stakeholders and partners and traditionally encompasses:

- Brand architecture or hierarchy
- Visual identity
- Messaging and communication
- Product, positioning and price
- Brand experience
- The customer's relationship to the brand and other users of the brand.

## What is Brand Automation?

Brand automation is the process of using technology to automate manual yet predictable on-brand marketing tasks associated with the brand management and marketing production process.

## What is Brand Automation, Management and Templating Software?

A brand automation and management platform takes your carefully crafted branding and visual identity, your tailored messaging and your key outputs and combines these using responsive templates to produce on-brand creative assets at scale.

But brand automation goes further than merely applying the right colors or logos based on a user profile; it augments and reduces the production work that comes with operating a successful brand. It also produces assets based on data sources and data sets without manual set up or intervention.

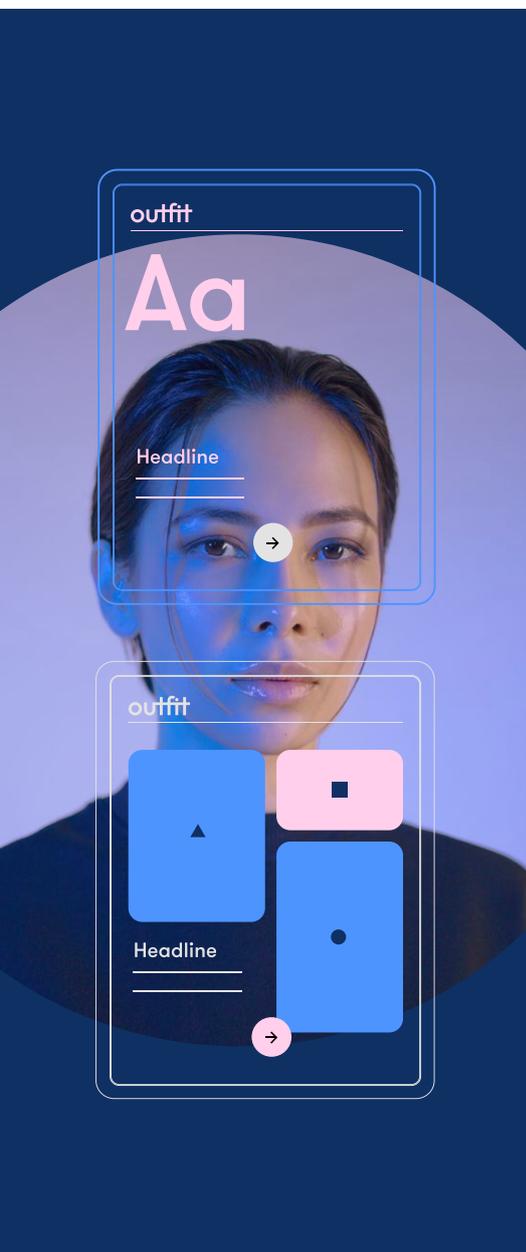
## Brand Automation Software can help you:

- Improve brand consistency
- Increase your speed to market
- Boost production volumes while lowering costs
- Automate data inputs
- Empower your entire organization to self-create on-brand materials
- Reduce risk.

# What features to look for in Brand Automation Software

Great brand automation and management software will have easy-to-use, robust features that make it simple and intuitive for your teams and better yet, other stakeholders in your business, to produce on-brand marketing assets at speed and without a designer.

Here are a list of the key features to look for in brand automation, management and templating software solutions:



## Asset Management

A centralized library of digital assets that makes all your approved images, files, logos, typefaces, styles and text snippets accessible to your team in one place, wherever they are based.

Hosted securely in the cloud, asset management should offer easy-to-see asset names, file types and dimensions, categorizable and taggable image hierarchies, search via tags, file type or asset name and bulk drag-and-drop upload.

Permissions must be customizable, restricting assets lock-ups and download permissions to certain teams and assets, with shareable links to provide access to external partners.

## Responsive Templates

Powerful, flexible HTML-based templates aligned to your brand guidelines that generate on-brand assets for all your marketing channels.

These should enable you to lock up your brand colours, fonts, styles, logos and other design elements, as well as provide the flexibility to define and lock down your brand hierarchies and sub-brand treatments, while allowing designated elements to be edited.

They should offer dynamic customisation for all marketing channels and auto-tagging of metadata by team so you never 'lose' an asset again.

# Case study: Bakers Delight

Retail bakery franchise Bakers Delight needed to provide a robust, easy-to-use local marketing production platform to franchisees across 540 locations in Australia and NZ.

It implemented brand automation technology to empower hundreds of franchisees to easily create local marketing and point-of-sale collateral. This led to a 60%+ reduction in requests to central marketing for bespoke artwork creation and a 33% increase in the volume of documents created.

[Read more →](#)



outfit

# Brand Automation Features



## In-platform Approvals

The ability to give oversight and approval sign-off to your internal marketing team before enabling execution to market, through pre-configurable or open approval workflows.

Approvals should include customizable flat, tiered and third-party approvals, in-platform feedback and commentary, direct edit capability for approvers, automated email notifications and a personalized in-app approval center.

## Multi-Edit Capability

The ability to edit a branding or text component once and instantly update it within assets of numerous shapes and sizes.

Print and digital executions of the same creative should be able to be changed instantaneously, universal updates to headline, image and price applied across a campaign, and multiple files exported at once.

## Campaign in a Box

On-brand campaign kits specific to a local market, region or territory containing all the assets teams need to execute a campaign at speed, without risk. Think banners, EDMs, social tiles, A4 flyers, signage etc.

# Case study: Monash University

With 10 faculties and 100's of staff using its brand, Monash University was challenged with compliance and central marketing was struggling with the volume of requests.

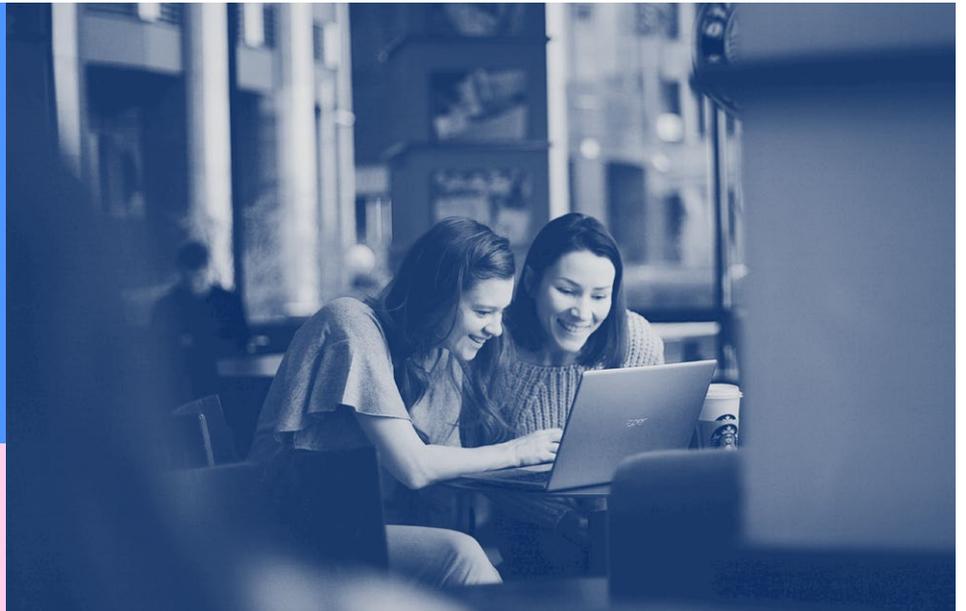
More than 500 users can now self-produce marketing collateral and have it approved on the same day, delivering more than 3500 jobs in a single year and saving 8500 hours. "One of our biggest goals is to empower people to do what they love," says Director, Brand Marketing and Strategy, Vicki Goodwin. "We want them to do the best job they can and don't want to slow them down and make it difficult."

[Read more →](#)



outfit

## Brand Automation Features



### Brand Compliance Function

A marketing compliance capability that builds in specific industry, team and legal requirements and approval workflows and generates an audit trail.

It should include automated application of disclaimers, terms and conditions and other elements by project and template, automated user identifiers and contact details, custom approval workflows and automatic audit trail capture.

### Data Automation & Personalization

The ability to integrate with CRM, marketing automation platforms and other tools to personalize, build and deliver content.

This should include automated personalized content creation without the need for spreadsheets or manual import, dynamic document production on the fly from predefined actions or status changes and automated updates to marketing collateral based on external datasets.

### API-based Integrations

Integration across your tech stack with existing or customizable API-based integrations with a range of technologies including external DAM providers, marketing operations platforms and others.

# Case study: Red Hat

World leading provider of open source, enterprise IT solutions, Red Hat, needed to eliminate brand dilution and reduce production costs across 85 offices in 35 countries.

It implemented brand automation technology to provide hundreds of employees with access to templates so they could produce their own collateral while remaining on-brand. With the Outfit platform more than 17,000 designs have been produced and rendered, freeing up brand and marketing teams to work on strategic projects.

[Read more →](#)



outfit

# Brand Automation Features



## Workflows & permissions

Workflows and permissions ensure only final artwork is exported. It gives the central marketing team the final eye over content before it goes to market.

Send-to-print is also a helpful workflow you'll need to consider. It cuts out extra work post-approvals by enabling content to be sent directly to your pre-configured print supplier with no fuss.

Other features to consider are version control, so no work is lost, audit trails so you know who made the last edits and reviews functionality.

## Technology & Support

Brand automation software needs to be secure and stable - downtime and unsafe environments are not the norm in 2021 and you should know your assets are safe and secure at all times.

Importantly, support is a high-priority consideration you need to research. A dedicated customer support team to help you get the most out of the platform and an array of ways to get support when bugs crop up is beneficial - such as 24/7 chat, email or phone support.

# Case study: Aussie

Fresh off the back of a rebrand, Aussie needed a way to ensure brand compliance was clearly rolled out across their 950+ brokers and 200+ retail stores.

Not an easy feat in the financial services sector, but with with Outfit's Brand Automation and Templating software the results were outstanding.

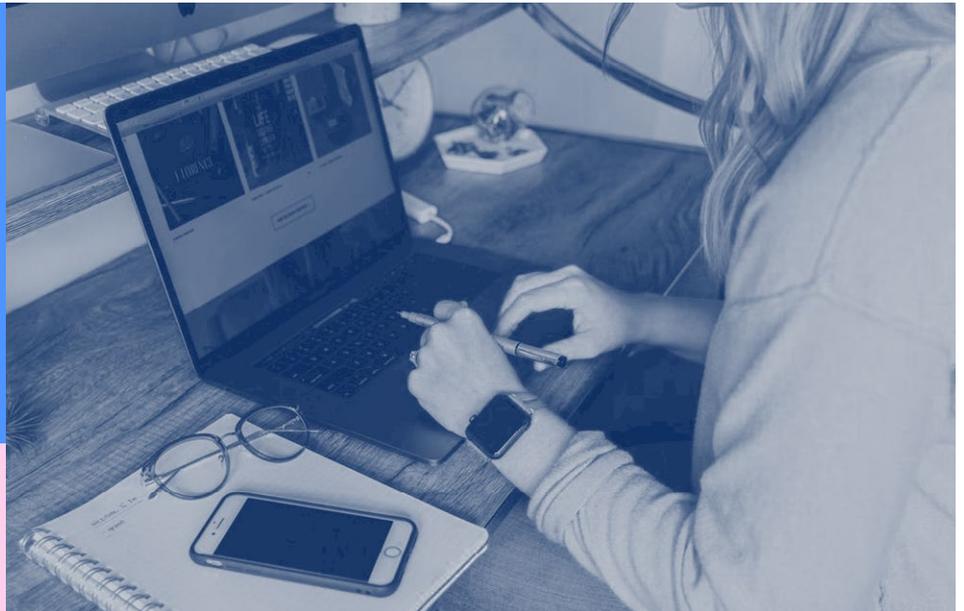
"We're receiving less complaints and there's less reliance for ad hoc assets -the brokers can localise content themselves."  
Hannah Roy — Senior Manager, Marketing, Aussie

[Read more →](#)



outfit

## Brand Automation Features



### All-channel Content Creation

Full digital production across all your marketing channels, alleviating high-churn work and unblocking production processes, including:

- Digital
- Social
- Email
- Event collateral
- Landing pages
- Long-form documents
- Large-format signage
- Personalized stationery
- Print production including print-ready files and web-to-print integrations
- And more

### Robust Reporting

Full visibility over the content that is being created and launched including internal views, usage and rendering of templates and assets.

This should include customizable dashboards aligned to the metrics you require and in-app communication and featured content to help disseminate best-practice across teams.

# How does Brand Automation improve ROI?

Brand automation delivers value for its customers year after year, allowing them to deliver personalized customer experiences, while achieving greater levels of operational efficiency, brand integrity and compliance.

Organizations often assess the return on their investment by considering several benefits, such as:

- Production cost savings (agency and internal savings)
- Team productivity and efficiency gains
- Increased speed-to-market
- Improved brand integrity in market
- Compliance risk mitigation
- Greater capacity for strategic work

- Improved visibility across the marketing department's exports

Some of these benefits can be difficult to evaluate, but a simple, tangible way to assess the value of brand automation technology is to measure and clearly attribute ROI to production output in the tool every day.

The key question customers ask is: What would it cost to produce that content without brand automation? These costs are otherwise spent with external agencies or in-house design teams.



For real-world examples of the ROI that brand automation delivers, download the guide.

[Download →](#)

To calculate your potential ROI, use this free calculator.

[Learn More →](#)

# Defining your organization's software needs

Before purchasing brand automation software it's important to prepare. Preparation ensures your needs and objectives are clear and makes it easier for you to select the right technology provider.

## Questions to ask your organization:

### Brand management

What problem/s are we solving?

---

---

---

What outcomes are we seeking?

---

---

---

Does my brand have constraints that should be encoded as rules and restraints?

---

---

---

What features are must-haves?

---

---

---

What channels to market do we use?

---

---

---

Who will use the software? (For example: Marketing, sales, decentralized stakeholders, agent or franchise networks, external agencies, partners)

---

---

Do we have buy-in from key stakeholders? (Consider marketing, sales, finance, IT and procurement)

---

Who will manage the project internally and be our champion?

---

What is our time frame? (Are we replacing an existing provider?)

---

## Cost Analysis

What is it costing the organization to manage our brand? (Consider internal head hours, external/agency costs and agent/network head hours)

---

---

What is it likely to cost in the future?

---

---

How much time will we save using brand automation software? (Put a value on time saved)

---

What is our budget? (Consider technology and training)

---

What other benefits might we see from a new technology provider? Eg. Happier stakeholders who are empowered to create their own content when they need it

---

---

---

# Questions to ask your shortlisted Brand Automation technology providers

In addition to function and feature-related questions, and of course cost, it's important to establish that your technology provider has a proven track record when it comes to implementing and providing the technology, as well as case studies and customer references.

Essentially you need to be confident your organization can work with your chosen provider to deliver the technology to your team.

## Credentials

What case studies do you have demonstrating the benefits customers have achieved from using your technology?

---

---

---

Can you demonstrate ROI?

---

---

Can you supply customer references?

---

---

## Implementation

Do you have an API that could be used to connect to my existing tech stack?

---

---

What is the onboarding process?

---

---

---

How will it be managed?

---

---

---

---

How long does it take?

---

---

How will training be provided?

---

---

---

And what does support look like after onboarding?

---

---

---

---

## Cost

What are the licensing/platform costs?

---

---

What are the costs associated with implementation and training?

---

---

Are there any other costs that need to be considered?

---

---

## Technical support

How secure and scalable is the technology?

---

---

---

How accessible is the technology?

---

---

---

How will the platform be supported?

(Internal IT, online or live, remote or local platform support?)

---

---

---

Do we need to enable developer access?

---

---

---

What's your average level of up-time?

---

---

---



Having difficulty figuring out these questions?

Talk to one of our experts for an obligation free requirements discussion. Just fill out the contact form on this page:

[Get Help →](#)

# Provider Comparison Checklist

Often when comparing software, organizations end up comparing apples with oranges. This comes about because each organization has their unique use cases, preexisting tech to consider and in-house purchase order and due diligence process.

If you're new to this space this can be incredibly overwhelming. In a bid to compare suppliers on an even playing field, this checklist can help you clearly see what Outfit offers, and how other vendors in the market compare.

Fill in the checklist below to compare Outfit to other vendors



Features	outfit	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
<b>Responsive Templates</b>			
Flexibility to define and lock down complex brand hierarchies	✓		
Style governance (fonts, color palette, font size, typography etc)	✓		
Defined color space, crop, bleed	✓		
Image import	✓		
Smart pre-filled inputs	✓		
Auto-tagged metadata customized by team	✓		
Real-time, automated rendering of assets	✓		
Templates developed from HTML or InDesign	✓		
<b>Asset Management</b>			
Easy-to-see asset names, file types and dimensions	✓		
Categorizable and taggable image hierarchies	✓		

Features	outfit	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
Search via tags, file type or asset name	✓		
Bulk drag-and-drop upload or URL-pasting	✓		
Asset lock-up restricting access to specific teams	✓		
Customizable download permissions on particular images	✓		
Shareable links for external partners to view content	✓		
Secure cloud hosting	✓		
<b>Multi-Edit Function</b>			
Change print and digital executions multiple creative instantaneously	✓		
Make universal updates across a campaign, such as headline, image and price etc	✓		
Export multiple files at once	✓		
<b>Campaign In A Box</b>			
On-brand campaign kits specific to a local market, region or territory	✓		
<b>Brand Compliance Function</b>			
Automated application of disclaimers, terms and conditions and other elements by project and template	✓		
Automated user identifiers and contact details	✓		

Features	outfit	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
Custom approval workflows that may include legal, compliance and risk	✓		
Automatic audit trail capture	✓		
<b>Data Automation &amp; Personalization</b>			
Automated personalized content creation without manual import	✓		
Dynamic document production from predefined actions	✓		
Automated updates to marketing collateral based on external datasets, including CSV	✓		
<b>Integrations</b>			
API integration across tech stack via existing or customizable API-based integrations (DAM, SSO, Martech)	✓		
<b>All-Channel Content Creation</b>			
Brochures	✓		
Social tiles and ads	✓		
EDMs	✓		
Landing pages	✓		
Event collateral (Cards, flyers, banners etc)	✓		
Long-form documents	✓		

Features	outfit	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
Large-format signage	✓		
Personalized stationery	✓		
More than listed	✓		
Export for web (HTML5, HTML, PNG, PDF, JPG, GIF etc)	✓		
<b>Workflows &amp; Permissions</b>			
Reviews functionality	✓		
Print production including print-ready files and web-to-print integrations	✓		
Approval workflows	✓		
Audit trail workflows	✓		
Version control	✓		
<b>Reporting</b>			
Customizable dashboards aligned to the metrics you require	✓		
In-app communication	✓		
Yearly ROI reports	✓		

Features	outfit	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
<b>Technology &amp; Support</b>			
Secure, scalable application	✓		
Dedicated Customer Success Manager	✓		
Cloud/Web Access	✓		
Clear onboarding plan	✓		
Live 24/7 local support	✓		
<b>Credentials</b>			
Customer case studies	✓		
Demonstrated ROI	✓		
Customer References	✓		

## Book A Demo

Like everything, seeing is believing. If you'd like more information about Outfit's brand automation technology and the amazing value we deliver right across enterprise organizations, with our sales team.

[Book a custom demo today! →](#)