



MLI DESIGN

THE BRAND

BRAND MISSION

MLI Design exists to help organizations communicate with clarity, purpose, and integrity through thoughtful, strategic, and beautifully crafted design.

We create work that informs, inspires, and endures — rooted in strong ideas, honest storytelling, and purposeful visual communication.

Our goal is simple:

to make every project meaningful, memorable, and built to last.



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to MLI Design — a marketing and design studio dedicated to building clear, refined brand identities, expressed consistently across digital and print media.

“Purpose-driven design for brands that want to be remembered.”



WHAT'S INSIDE

This document is intended as an introduction to MLI Design – the brand, the philosophy, and the way we work.

Rather than functioning as a traditional rule-based manual, it offers a clear look at the thinking, standards, and values that shape our approach to branding and design. Some sections reflect the systems and considerations typically found in a style guide, while others are meant to provide context – helping clients understand not just what we create, but how and why we create it.

Taken together, this document is meant to set expectations, establish clarity, and provide insight into the level of thought, consistency, and intention clients can expect when working with MLI Design.



CONTENTS

THE BRAND	1	THE LOGO MARK	9
<i>An introduction to MLI Design, the brand...</i>		<i>The conceptual foundation behind the MLI logo mark and the ideas it represents.</i>	
BRAND MISSION	2	THE LOGO PHILOSOPHY – FULL LOGO SYSTEM	10
<i>Our purpose, values, and commitment to creating meaningful, enduring design.</i>		<i>How the logo mark and wordmark work together as a cohesive, scalable brand system.</i>	
INTRODUCTION	3	COLOR PALETTE & PHILOSOPHY	11
<i>A brief overview of MLI Design and our philosophy of purpose-driven brand storytelling.</i>		<i>The MLI Design color system and the thinking behind a restrained, modern, and confident palette.</i>	
WHAT'S INSIDE?	4	TYPOGRAPHY SYSTEM	12
<i>A brief explanation of the purpose, structure, and intent behind this document.</i>		<i>Our typographic approach and how type is used to support clarity, hierarchy, and consistency.</i>	
CONTENTS	5	CLIENT HISTORY	13
ABOUT MLI DESIGN	6	<i>A selection of past clients and collaborations reflecting our experience across industries.</i>	
<i>Who we are, how we work, and what clients can expect when partnering with us.</i>		BRAND IN PRACTICE	14
BRAND POSITIONING/VOICE 7		<i>Tone, values, and mindset behind the MLI Design brand.</i>	
<i>How MLI Design is positioned and how the brand communicates – clear, professional, thoughtful, and confident.</i>		CONTACT	19
CORE SERVICES	8	<i>Link to website, phone# & Region</i>	
<i>An overview of the branding, web, print, and creative direction services we provide.</i>			



ABOUT MLI DESIGN

MLI Design is a brand-focused creative studio dedicated to helping organizations communicate with clarity, purpose, and consistency. We specialize in building strategic brand identities and applying them thoughtfully across web, print, and digital communications — creating work that is designed to last, not just launch.

**“If my clients ever learn
how much fun my job is ...
they may start to resent
paying me for it.”**

— Mike Inks
Creative Director at MLI Design

Making Lasting Impressions @ MLI Design



The studio is led by Michael Inks, designer and art director, whose career spans four decades of experience across agency, corporate, and independent creative environments. That breadth of experience shapes how we work: with a strong respect for process, a focus on clear thinking, and an understanding of how brands live and evolve over time.


At MLI Design, clients work directly with Michael for hands-on creative direction and collaboration. When a project requires

additional expertise, custom teams are assembled to support the work — always with clarity of roles, intentional scope, and a shared commitment to quality. The goal is not simply to create attractive design, but to build cohesive brand systems that support long-term growth and consistency.

This guide reflects both how we work and what clients can expect: thoughtful strategy, refined execution, and design decisions rooted in purpose rather than trends.



BRAND POSITIONING & VOICE



MLI Design is a brand-focused creative studio specializing in strategic brand identity, web design, print, and marketing communications. The studio operates with the flexibility of an independent creative partner while delivering agency-level thinking and execution.

BRAND VOICE:

Clear, professional, warm, thoughtful, and confident – never sales-driven. Messaging emphasizes clarity, integrity, experience, and purpose.

“Making Lasting Impressions”



CORE SERVICES

BRANDING:

Brand identity systems, logo design, visual language development, messaging direction, photo and stock imagery art direction.

WEB DESIGN:

Brand-driven website design, responsive UX-focused layouts, and digital storytelling through web banners and newsletters.

PRINT:

Brochures, posters, ads, trade show booths and materials, and campaign systems.

CREATIVE DIRECTION:

Concept development, art direction for photography and illustration, and campaign-level visual systems.



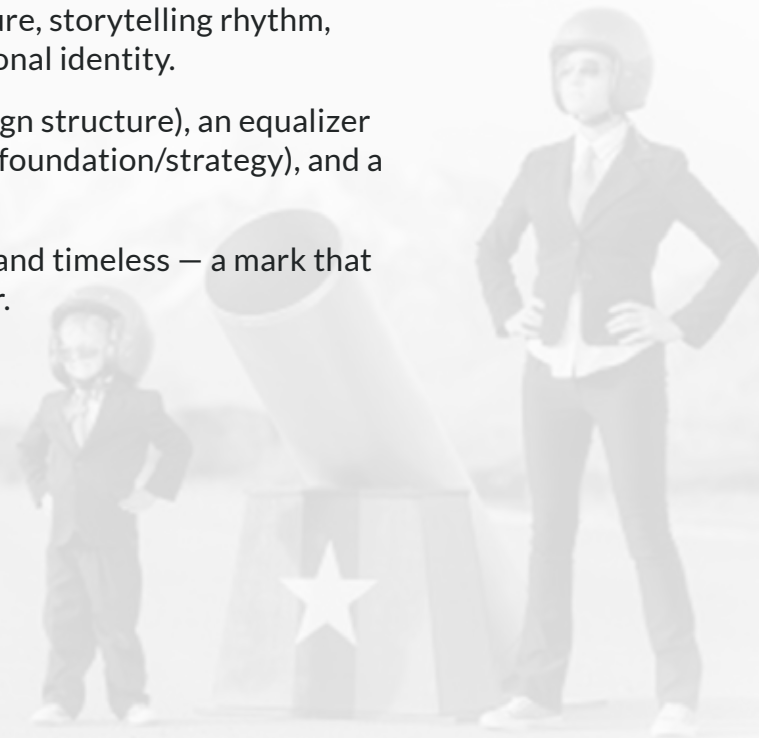
THE LOGO MARK



The MLI logo mark is not just a letter — it is a system. It reflects architectural structure, storytelling rhythm, strategic foundation, and personal identity.

It resembles architecture (design structure), an equalizer (storytelling/media), columns (foundation/strategy), and a monogram (personal identity).

It is modern, minimal, refined, and timeless — a mark that could only belong to a designer.



THE LOGO PHILOSOPHY – FULL LOGO SYSTEM

The complete MLI logo...
combines the structured logo mark with a refined wordmark to form a confident, balanced identity. Together, they express the intersection of strategy and craft, structure and creativity, and experience and restraint.



MLI DESIGN

The wordmark is intentionally clean, modern, and understated. Its typography supports the mark rather than competing with it – reinforcing clarity, professionalism, and timelessness. The spacing, proportions, and alignment are carefully considered to create a sense of stability and quiet confidence.

As a system, the full logo reflects the MLI Design philosophy: thoughtful, purposeful design built on strong foundations. It communicates credibility without excess, personality

without ego, and sophistication without trend-driven styling. The result is a logo that feels architectural, editorial, and enduring – appropriate for both corporate environments and creative contexts.

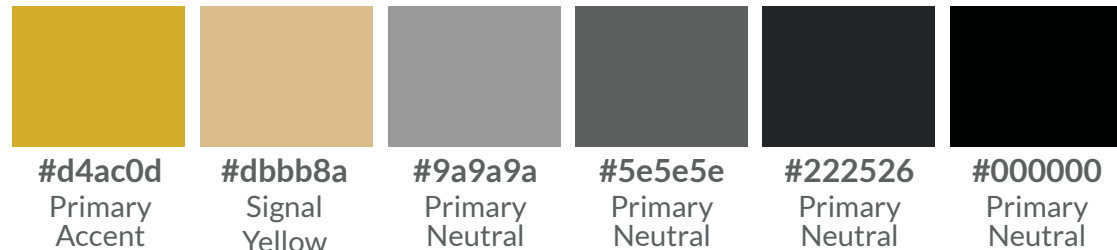
The full logo is designed to scale effortlessly across applications, maintaining legibility and presence whether used in print, digital, environmental, or branding systems. It is a mark meant to age well – grounded in structure, clarity, and intent rather than visual novelty.



COLOR PALETTE & PHILOSOPHY

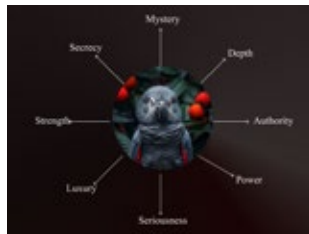
OUR BRAND COLOR PHILOSOPHY:

A modern, minimal palette balancing warmth, strength, and refinement – pairing timeless neutrals with a confident gold accent to signal craft, quality, and premium identity work.

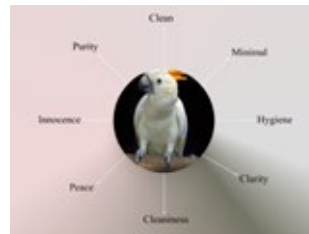


COLOR PSYCHOLOGY:

Color psychology is the study of how different colors influence human emotions, perceptions, and behavior. It suggests that colors can subtly affect mood and decision-making, such as warm colors feeling more energetic and cool colors feeling more calming. These effects are shaped by both biological responses to color and learned cultural associations, so people from different backgrounds may not react to the same color in exactly the same way.



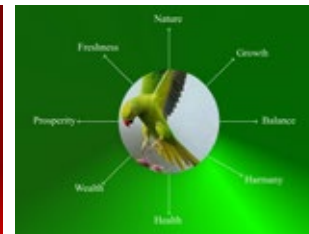
Black: power, control, sophistication, luxury



White: purity, new, cleanliness, simplicity



Red: passion, love, desire, excitement, arousal



Green: nature, growth, renewal, balance, fresh



Blue: calm, peace, trust, stability, dependability

*Note: In RGB, the color **Yellow** comes from combining red and green light at the same intensity while leaving blue off. Yellow is often associated with joy, warmth, creativity, intellect, and an uplifting, hopeful mood.



TYPOGRAPHY SYSTEM

Typography within the MLI Design brand is intentionally restrained, structured, and consistent. The system prioritizes clarity, hierarchy, and flexibility across digital and print applications while avoiding unnecessary complexity or trend-driven styling.

The typography system is built around a modern sans-serif foundation supported by a classic serif accent used selectively for marketing and promotional design.

PRIMARY TYPEFACE – LATO

Lato is the core typeface used across MLI Design brand communications, including the website, brand documents, proposals, and most marketing materials. Its clean geometry and excellent readability support the brand's modern, professional voice.

APPROVED WEIGHTS AND STYLES:

- **Lato Regular** – *primary body copy*
- **Lato Italic** – *emphasis, quotes, and subtle editorial moments*
- **Lato Bold** – *headlines, subheads, and calls to action*
- **Lato Black** – *limited use for strong emphasis, section dividers, or high-impact statements*

These weights provide a complete hierarchy while maintaining a cohesive and professional visual voice.

PRIMARY USES INCLUDE:

- Body copy and supporting text
- Headlines and section titles (Bold / Black)
- Navigation, UI elements, and informational content
- Internal documents and brand materials

MARKETING ACCENT TYPEFACE – BOOKMAN JF PRO

Bookman JF Pro is used as a secondary serif typeface for marketing, advertising, and promotional materials where a more expressive or editorial tone is appropriate.

This serif accent adds warmth, personality, and visual contrast when paired with the clean structure of Lato.

BookmanJFPro should not be used for website body copy or long-form digital content, but instead reserved for moments where brand storytelling or visual impact is desired.

Continued...



TYPOGRAPHY SYSTEM (cont.)

APPROVED USES

- Advertising headlines
- Campaign graphics
- Social media marketing
- Event promotion
- Pull quotes or editorial highlights
- Select print marketing materials

When used, BookmanJFPro should typically appear alongside Lato, allowing the two typefaces to complement one another.

TYPOGRAPHY GUIDELINES

- Use Lato as the primary communication typeface across most brand applications
- Use BookmanJFPro selectively to add personality in marketing or promotional design
- Use Black weights sparingly for emphasis rather than body copy
- Avoid stacking multiple heavy weights in close proximity
- Rely on spacing and scale as much as weight to establish hierarchy
- Maintain generous white space to support readability
- Keep typography consistent across core brand touch-points

The MLI Design typography system is designed to feel modern, confident, and timeless – supporting both client-facing clarity and internal consistency without limiting creative flexibility.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxy 1234567890 • **ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ • 1234567890**
(Lato Regular and Bold)

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxy 1234567890 • **ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ • 1234567890**
(Bookman JF Pro Roman)



CLIENT HISTORY

CORPORATE & COMMERCIAL

Microsoft

Eddie Bauer

Big Fish Games

Classmates.com

IGT Gaming

Action Gaming

Nautilus (via FCB Advertising)

FastChannel (Fortune 500)

AGENCIES & CREATIVE PARTNERS

Ogilvy

FCB Advertising

Dell McAuliffe Winter Advertising

BSA Advertising

INDEPENDENT & STUDIO-LEVEL CLIENTS

Vivendi Entertainment, documentary and film production companies, entrepreneurs, startups, small businesses, long-term retainer clients, and collaborations with marketing directors, writers, and developers.

**Selected clients and collaborations*



MLI DESIGN ... MAKING LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Practice
safe design: Use a
CONCEPT
— Petrula Vrontikis



**Marketing campaign design for MLI Design, utilizing quotes from industry leaders.*

“Purpose-driven design for brands that want to be remembered.”



MLI DESIGN ... MAKING LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Make your messaging
simple, memorable,
inviting and
FUN
— Leo Burnett



**Marketing campaign design for MLI Design, utilizing quotes from industry leaders.*

“Purpose-driven design for brands that want to be remembered.”



MLI DESIGN ... MAKING LASTING IMPRESSIONS

A design isn't
finished until
somebody is
USING IT
— Brenda Laurel



**Marketing campaign design for MLI Design, utilizing quotes from industry leaders.*

“Purpose-driven design for brands that want to be remembered.”



MLI DESIGN ... MAKING LASTING IMPRESSIONS

The best ideas
come as jokes.
Make your thinking
FUNNY
— David Ogilvy



**Marketing campaign design for MLI Design, utilizing quotes from industry leaders.*

“Purpose-driven design for brands that want to be remembered.”



MLI DESIGN ... MAKING LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Don't tell me how
good you make it; tell
me how good it makes

ME

— Leo Burnett



**Marketing campaign design for MLI Design, utilizing quotes from industry leaders.*

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MLI DESIGN

Making Lasting Impressions...



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