

A collection of stationery and design tools including pens, a ruler, a keychain, and a stapler, arranged on a dark background.

# Absolute Stationery Design

and Integrated Identity Graphics

SANDU

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Sponsored by Design 360®  
– Concept and Design Magazine

Edited and produced by  
Sandu Publishing Co., Ltd.

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**010 Projects**

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**TIANA VASILJEV**[www.tianavasiljev.com](http://www.tianavasiljev.com)

I was first contacted by Sandu Publishing a few years ago to submit some of my design work for one of their publications. At the time, I was not very familiar with Sandu Publishing, but have since grown very fond of many of their titles. Having recently taken on a full-time role in developing Beautiful Pages — an online design store I founded in 2011 — has exposed me to an extensive range of quality design publications. It has been a very rewarding journey. During this time, I've watched Sandu Publishing build up an international reputation for featuring and promoting an enormous collection of high-level design work from around the world.

I am delighted to be writing this foreword to a book about stationery design. I am delighted for a number of reasons. Stationery design plays such a crucial role in the corporate identity of a company. Not only does it make a business look organized and professional, it also displays a company's sense of identity, which is used by clients as a form of brand recognition. Stationery performs the important task of attracting a viewer's attention, engaging their interest and at its absolute best, can sell the intended company's service or product. When designed and created correctly it can enhance a company's identity, strengthen their credibility and launch their marketing achievements.

When you receive a letter from a company in the mail or when you pick up their business card, it is the item's visual appeal, rather than its content, that first strikes you. A business card, a letterhead, even an envelope has the power to convey a company's beliefs, how they think, speak and communicate. A well-designed stationery system entices you as soon as you look at it. It invites you to pick it up, to observe it, to wonder and to learn about everything it has to say. This is the true power of design.

What is interesting about design is that it is too often taken for granted. I believe that design is hugely undervalued in our society. It can work so well that we often tend to forget all the effort that was involved to bring it into existence. Sometimes, like with the invention of the wheel, it is so simple and so basic that it seems obvious to us all and we tend to forget that at some point in history it never existed. We forget that billions of human hours have been invested into getting it to the stage that it is at today. Every great design has a powerful history. It also has behind it a designer (or more often a team of designers) who used their time and skills to make the world a better place to experience, by solving one problem or another.

To take on the challenge of creating genuinely great stationery takes remarkable focus, dedication and discipline. Designers aren't artists. We focus on other people's problems, rarely on those of our own invention. However, in order to create a successful solution for other people's problems, we must first strive to understand them.

Looking through the selection of stationery designs that Sandu Publishing has collected within this unique volume has sparked in me some serious design envy. The designers showcased in this book are featured because they have all done things differently. They've proved that it is well-worth investing time and effort into researching, designing and developing a company's corporate identity and accompanying stationery. These creatives all possess the artistic ability and the creative mind to create eye-catching and most importantly intelligent design solutions. Their work leaves memories, it impresses and most importantly stands out in a society where everyone and everything is increasingly screaming for our time and attention.

Sandu Publishing's *Absolute Stationery Design* shows us how some of today's best designers are reshaping the way we see businesses, corporations, products and services. These featured creatives are constantly raising the bar by composing powerful messages and delivering these through striking stationery designs.

*Absolute Stationery Design* is another soulful Sandu Publishing volume that provides us with endless inspiration. It is a book to be enjoyed, absorbed and appreciated. I hope this volume sparks inspiration in you, motivates you and strengthens your belief in the power of great design.

This publication and the work it so beautifully contains truly is absolute.

**DAVE SEDGWICK**

[www.designbydave.co.uk](http://www.designbydave.co.uk)

Being asked to write the foreword to *Absolute Stationery Design* is a real privilege and something I am proud of and honoured to be able to do. I'm also thrilled to be a part of this book. A read through each of the pages and it's very obvious that I am in very good company.

As an independent graphic designer I would go as far as to say that I still get the biggest and most satisfying feeling from working on and completing identity projects. Please don't get me wrong; we all enjoy finalizing any work. The feeling of completing a brief, answering all the questions, presenting and showcasing the fruits of our labour is always one of fulfillment and satisfaction.

However, there is just something truly unique about identity work.

Perhaps it's because it gives us the chance to influence and shape a business, initiative or enterprise through our own design work. The opportunity, as creatives, to contribute to something new, original and full of life. The initial meetings with the client when you begin to gain an insight into their world. Scribbling notes frantically. Listening to every sentence. Anticipation and excitement rolled into one. You can almost see it now – the signage, the uniforms, the vehicle livery, the website, the business cards, everything and anything. Right down to the pencils, notebooks or even the email signature.

I often can find myself attempting to explain to a new client why it is that they don't simply need a logo, that they need an identity. "But surely that is a logo" they often say, "I just want a logo, a little icon or symbol or something".

We, as designers, are hopefully very much aware how wrong this idea is, the idea that a logo is just a tiny (although still important) part of the overall identity. It is, how I often explain, as simple as a person's signature. It can be unique of course, but it also says very little about that person. It could just as easily be an X.

This is where the overall identity comes into play and how good and often great design can really come to life. It is how the "signature" can be used, or how it often can't be used (brand guidelines can be the bane of our lives sometimes). How it sits comfortably on the page, what colours it can be reproduced in. What other elements can be used to complement it, work together with it.

It's about the paper stock, the pantone colours, the imagery and photography and even down to the overall tone of voice. It is every single detail which enables an identity to prosper and develop and how by doing so, a client's core values, philosophy and brand statement is projected openly to their target market.

The book you are currently holding showcases some of the best identity work and brand design from all over the world. It aims to highlight and promote how various designers and studios select all the different elements required in order to produce the best conceptual and considered solutions for their clients' needs.

You will of course see styles and themes across the book. But no single piece is alike. This is the beauty of the design industry. The best designers and agencies are always looking to produce individual and bespoke work for their own clients.

We don't like to imitate and we try hard to find the answers to each of the individual questions when beginning the design process. We don't always succeed, not every time. But when we do, we are proud of our work and proud to show it off just like a newborn baby. Complete of course with gold foil blocking and double hit Pantone colours...

The work featured within also has a very global feel to it brought about through the selection of designs from countries such as the UK, Finland, Russia, Canada, Germany and Norway as well as many more places around the world.

Through books such as *Absolute Stationery Design* we are now able to gain a real insight into design trends and movements across the world. The obvious rise and rise of the Internet has helped to facilitate this, as we are now much more connected than ever before. One click of a mouse and I can see the work of design studios from Manchester to Mozambique ...

However, the chance to still own something we can touch and feel - something we can quickly flick through for inspiration and enjoyment is, and always will be, the beauty of printed books and the reason why most of us have extra large bookcases in almost every room in the house.

It forms a great inspirational and informative reference for us as designers, as well as those clients who are still prepared to stand out in a competitive and crowded marketplace. And for those same clients to whom design is a valuable and worthwhile commodity.

Enjoy this book, and as designers we really do owe it to ourselves and each other to continue to push the boundaries of identity design, to continue to gently persuade all clients to try something different and most importantly to be unique. After all, isn't that what having your own identity is all about...

Thank you.



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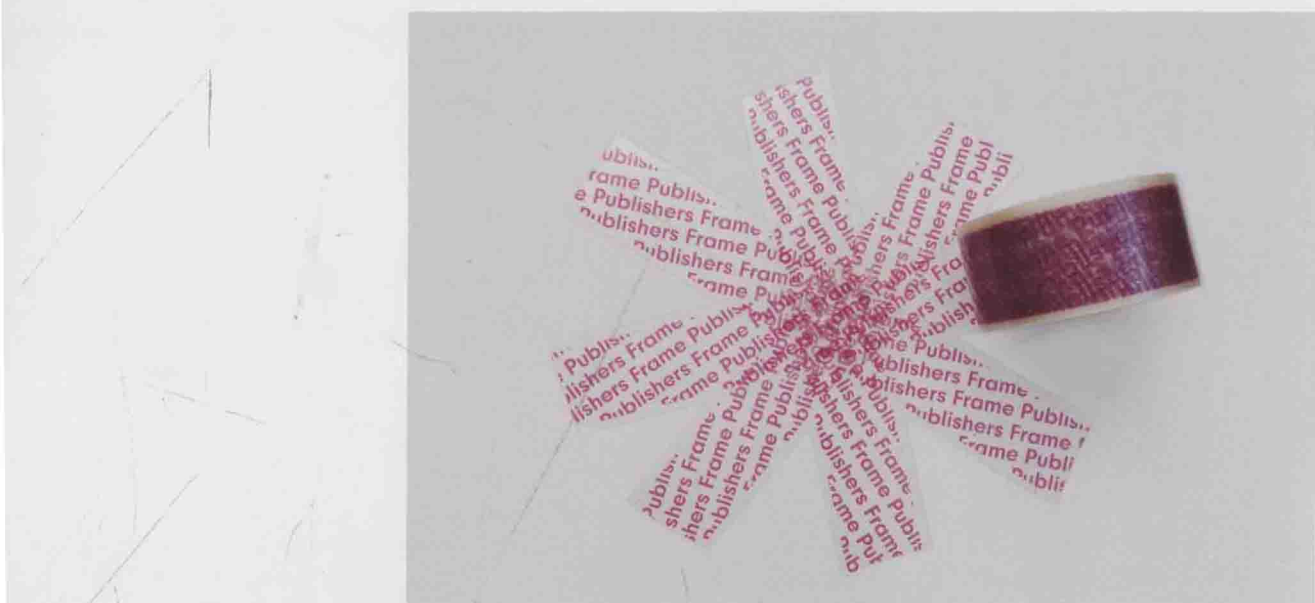
**336 Acknowledgements**



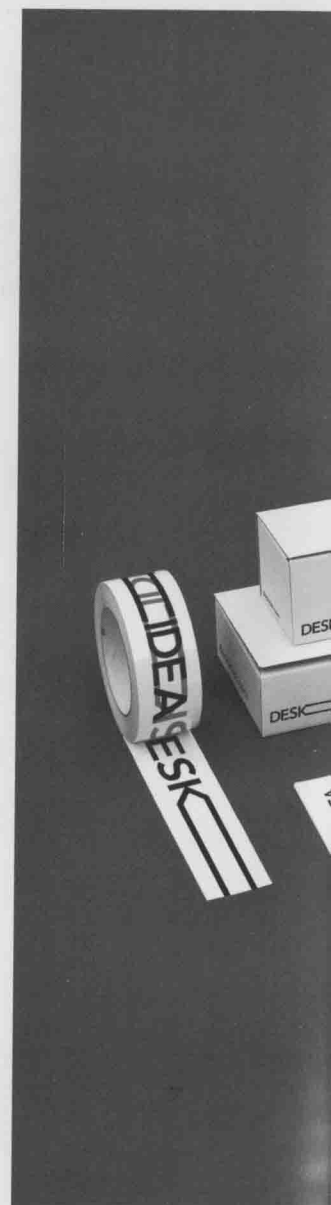
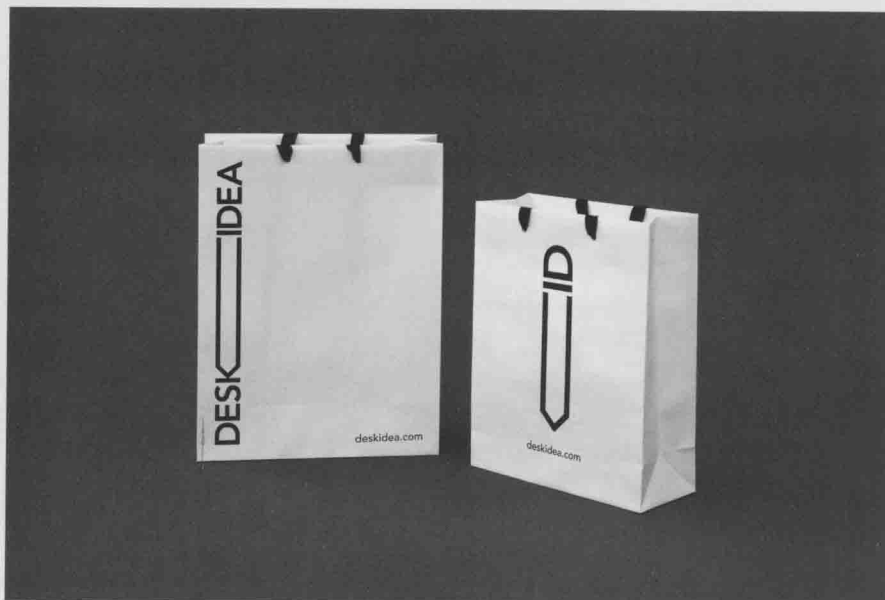
## Identity Frame Publishers

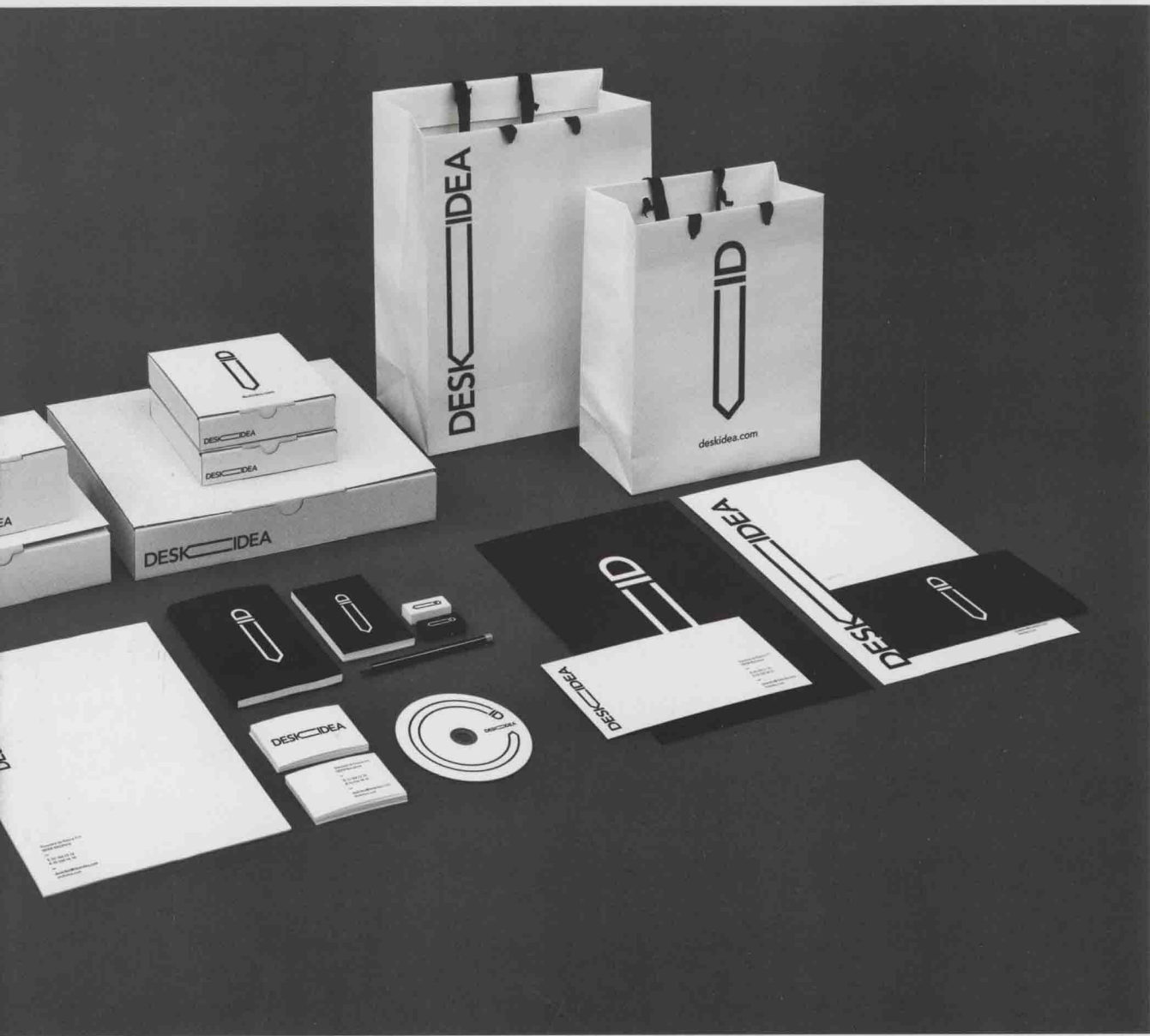
Frame Publishers is an internationally-acclaimed publishing house based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. In advance of a major relaunch of its website, we were commissioned to create a new visual identity for the publisher which would be used in all corporate literature, business cards and – importantly – to also form the basis for the new visual identity for its three major magazine titles on the new company website. The three magazines are: *Frame*, from which the company takes its name and which is all about interior design; *Mark*, all about architecture; and *Elephant*, the newest title, which is all about art and culture.

We decided to focus on each of the three aspects as a unique entity and we assigned each a distinctive, bright and vibrant colour and this was then used as the core aspect of the design. The existing logo of Frame Publishers was not redesigned but it was incorporated into the new identity by always having it as white text against one of each of the three colours: *Frame*, pink; *Mark*, blue; and *Elephant*, green.









## Deskidea

Deskidea is a Barcelona-based office that supplies e-commerce where the primary aim is to get a sense of simplicity from the very first purchase until the arrival of the product. The brand was designed to boost this simplicity value and the graphic solution came from the name itself, Deskidea. The idea was to convey its value using basic office objects, like the pencil. The different corporate applications are based on the pencil as a symbol, operating by itself or embedded within the brand. Photography by Susana Gellida.