

Brand Thinking for Telecom Companies

Managing Brand Image for a Competitive Edge





Telecom is a tough industry because the market is saturated. For example, the vast majority of Americans already have a cell phone, making new customers a “rare commodity.” So the only way telecom brands can grow is by keeping their customers and poaching new ones from competitors. But in an industry where so many brands are offering essentially the same service – access to a wireless network – it’s difficult to stand out enough to acquire new customers or keep current customers loyal. But one way telecom brands can gain a competitive edge is by building a strong brand image.

How can brand image give telecom companies an edge? And what can established telecom brands do to change theirs?



In this guide, we’ll tell you:

- ... What brand image is
- ... Why telecom companies should pay attention to brand image
- ... How telecom companies can build a strong brand image
- ... How brand management software can help improve brand image through consistency
- ... How Frontify helped Vodafone maintain its strong brand positioning



What Brand Image Is

Brand image is how people outside your company think of your brand. It could be based on their personal experiences or gained through word of mouth. When people have a positive perception of your brand versus that of your competitors, it gives you an edge. Strong brands have better customer loyalty and generate more positive word of mouth, both of which telecom brands need.

Why Telecom Companies Should Pay Attention to Brand Image

A brand's image is important because "emotion is what really drives" purchasing behaviors. But while telecom brands often praise the power of their networks or promote their low prices, they often neglect how their customers feel about them. And for many telecom brands, customers don't have positive perceptions. According to a 2019 Brand Finance Report, telecom brands continue to "struggle to earn the respect of consumers." The telecom industry ranked last for both reputation and trust – but it doesn't have to stay that way.



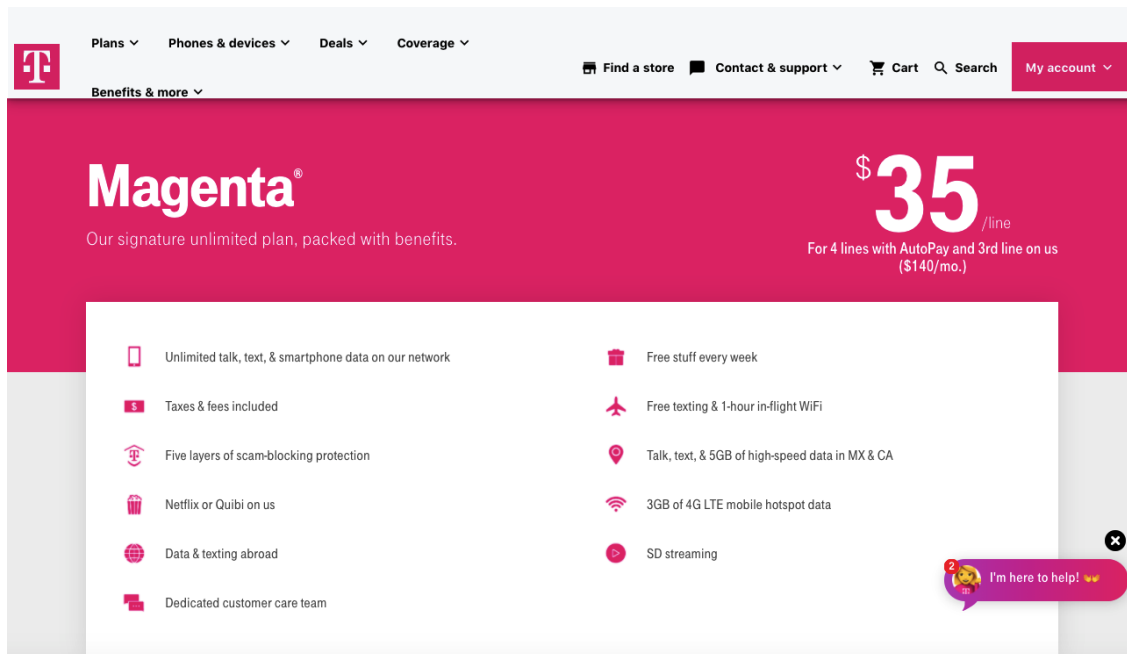
How Telecom Companies Can Build a Strong Brand Image

For brands that want to influence outward perceptions, change needs to come from the inside. By following these six steps, T-Mobile changed the public's perception of the company, which helped them stand out against telecom giants AT&T and Verizon.

1. Determine Your Unique Value Proposition

In an industry with little product differentiation – like telecom – you need to find what makes your brand truly rise above your competitors. When John Legere became T-Mobile's CEO in 2012, the company was a distant fourth to other U.S. wireless carriers and was “essentially left for dead.” Legere realized T-Mobile wasn't unique in any way – at least not in a positive sense. Their network was worse than AT&T and Sprint, and their customers couldn't purchase iPhones. Legere created T-Mobile's unique value proposition by rebranding as the “un-carrier.” If customers hated wireless carriers, Legere decided the company would stop acting like a wireless carrier. He got rid of all the things customers hated about carriers: contracts, hidden fees, and roaming charges.





2. Perfect Your Brand Personality

Once you've decided on the brand image you want to create to stand out among competitors, you need to revisit your brand identity. Do your brand colors, logo, voice, tone, and messaging work together to reinforce that image? When T-Mobile became the “un-carrier,” they were making a bold statement, and their brand identity needed to be bold as well. While the bright magenta color was already part of the brand's identity, they amped up the usage: everything became magenta, from T-Mobile's website and social media to their plan names and even to the brand's employees, who call themselves Team Magenta. Their voice and tone got a little bolder, too, led by a CEO who “littered his first press conference with F-bombs.”

3. Find a Higher Purpose

While your end goal may be to make money, strong brands that build loyalty stand for more than just profits. According to Accenture research, “nearly two-thirds (63%) of surveyed global consumers prefer to purchase products and services from companies that stand for a purpose that reflects their own values and beliefs, and will avoid companies that don't.” T-Mobile made it their mission to become “customer-crazed” and “employee committed.” They brought this to life through their programs, like T-Mobile Tuesdays and benefits for employees, to show they're more than just wireless.

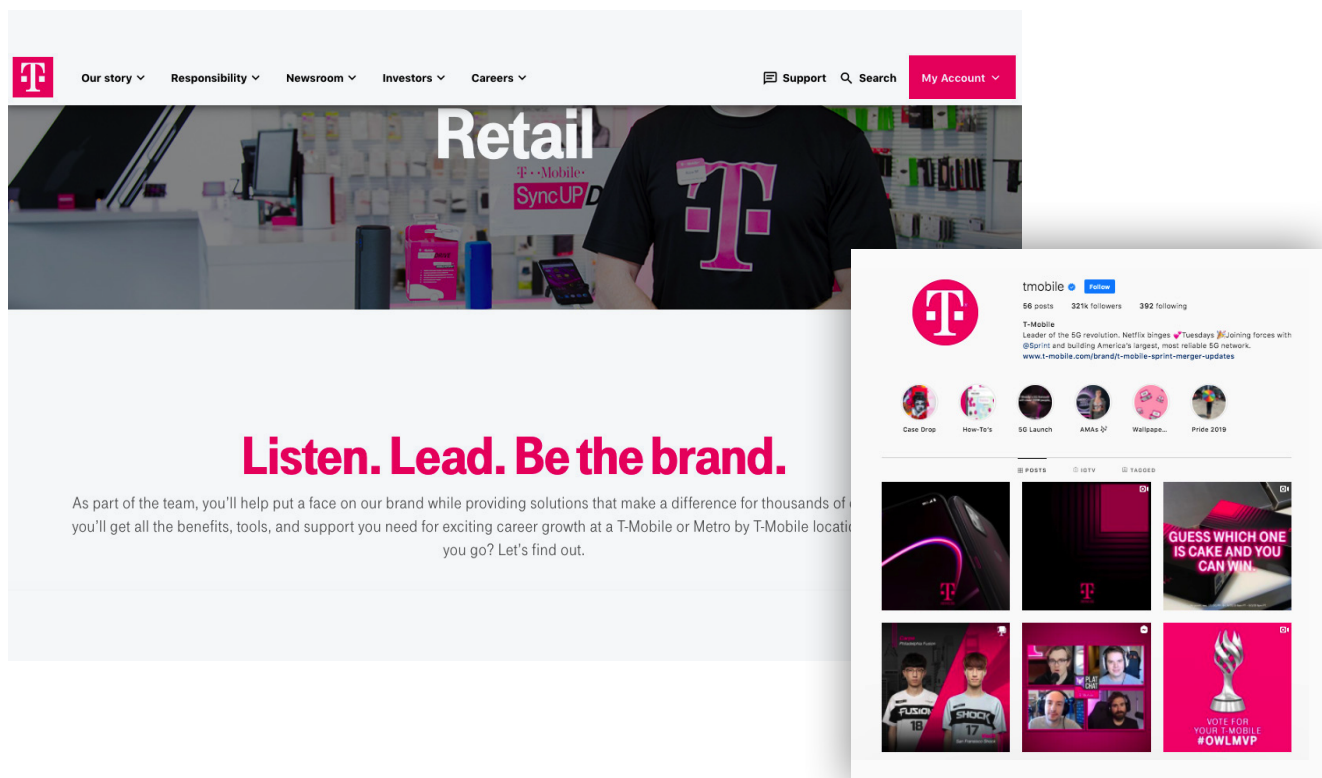


4. Listen to Your Customers

Your customers are more than a target demographic. To build a strong brand image, telecom brands need to understand their customer's pain points and find solutions. Legere came to the decision to eliminate contracts and hidden fees – the things customers hated most – by listening to customer service calls for hours.

5. Activate Your Employees

Employees can be your greatest brand advocates or your biggest detractors. If you want to change public perception, start engaging your employees by communicating the brand vision. T-Mobile makes employees excited about working for the company and being the face of the brand. There is a lot of love for Team Magenta on Glassdoor, and the company has frequently been voted one of the best places to work.





6. Be Consistent

Strong brands are recognizable because they're consistent at every customer touchpoint. And because 90% of consumers expect consistency across all platforms and channels, when brands meet their expectations, they generate trust, and trust generates loyalty. In fact, brands that are consistent can increase revenue by 23%. T-Mobile excels at maintaining brand consistency. Every customer touchpoint – their social media and their website and even their news releases – has the same look and voice.

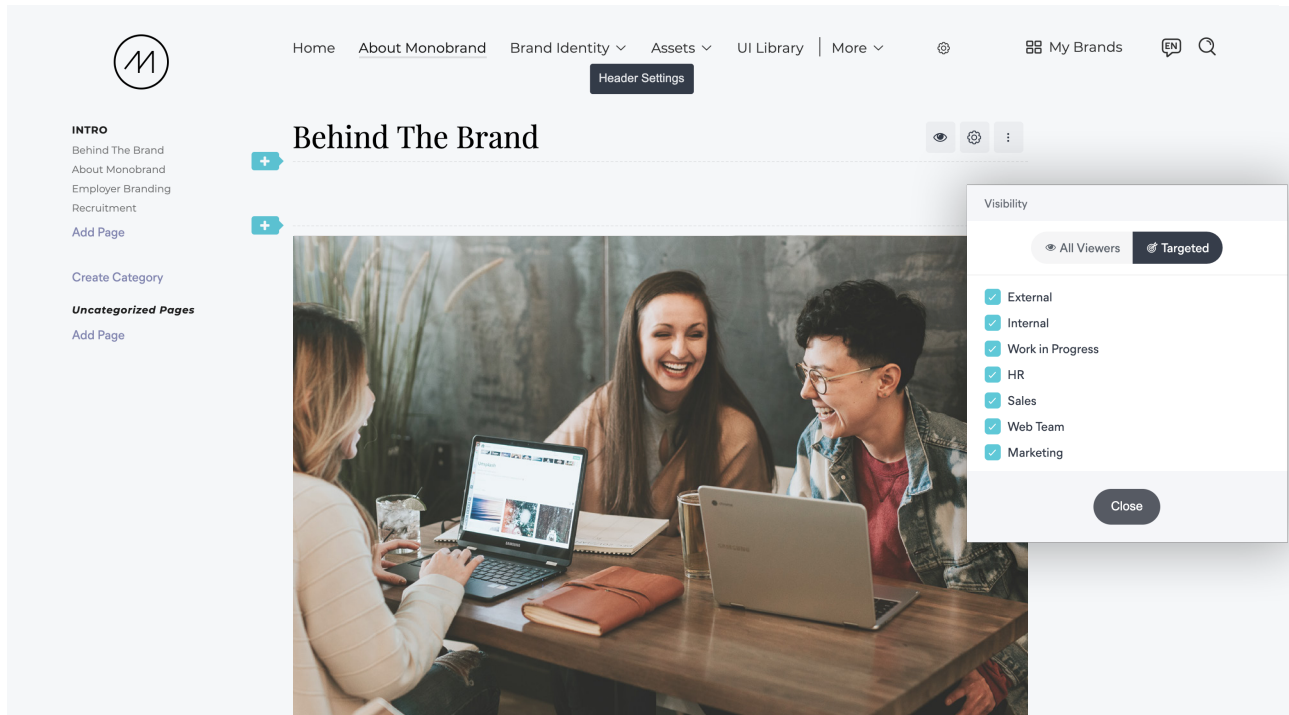
The Results...

T-Mobile saw quick returns when they created a strong brand image. Shortly after their re-brand, T-Mobile more than doubled their “BrandIndex Buzz” score from “less than 7 points prior to the unveiling of the ‘Un-carrier’ to about 15 points ... when it surpassed Verizon for the top spot.” In early 2013, the brand had added more than a million new customers. Since then, T-Mobile has continued to see brand gains. For instance, they've received numerous awards for customer service and satisfaction, been recognized as one of the best places to work, and overtaken AT&T to become the No. 2 wireless carrier in the United States.

How Brand Management Software Can Improve Brand Image Through Consistency

Once you've put in the effort to build a strong brand image, you need to be consistent with maintaining it. That can be complicated for telecom brands that have many stakeholders, both internally and externally, in retail locations and agencies. Fortunately, brand management software can help make sharing brand information and collaborating on projects easier.





Frontify's Brand Guidelines lets stakeholders quickly find brand information.

Cloud-based Guidelines Make Sure Everyone Has Up-to-Date Brand Info

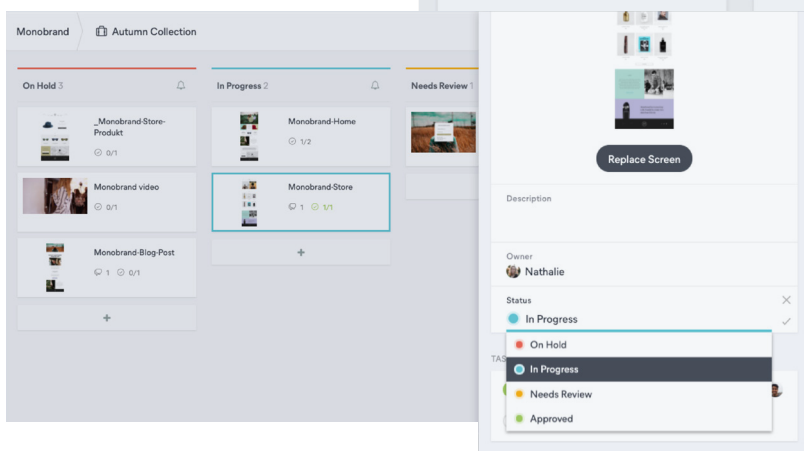
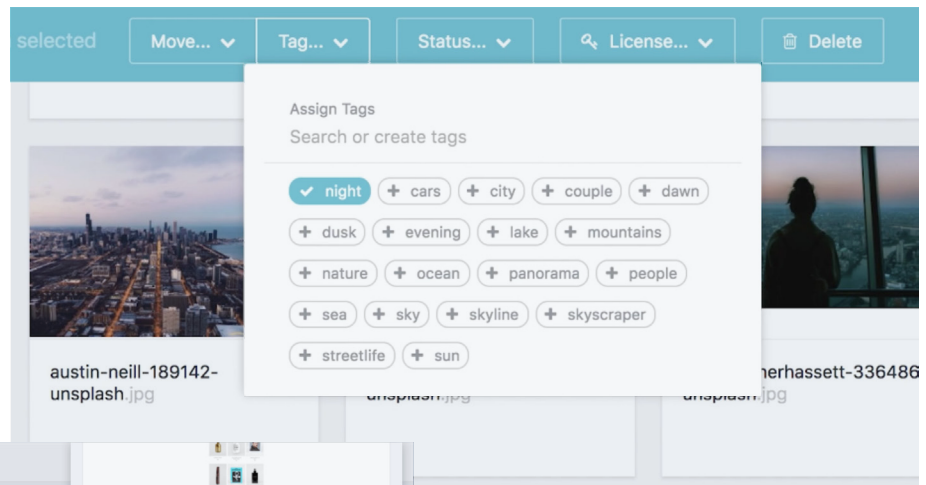
Don't risk eroding your brand image because your stakeholders can't find your brand rules. According to a [2019 report](#), only 26% of companies have brand guidelines that are easy for employees to find. With cloud-based guidelines like [Frontify's Brand Guidelines](#), it's easy to share brand information such as fonts, logos, colors, and voice with all your stakeholders.

Here are some of the other benefits of Frontify's Brand Guidelines:

- **It's quick to create.** Use our predefined Brand Guidelines templates to quickly build your online brand bible.
- **You can customize it.** Give it your personal style; it's easy to modify or customize to meet your needs – no coding required.
- **It's always up-to-date.** There's no more searching for the latest file with cloud-based guidelines. Everyone will always have the latest version.
- **Sharing is easy.** Quickly share with internal or external stakeholders. You can invite entire user groups or share one by one.
- **It's secure.** We've provided a powerful user management console to monitor users' access, rights, and permissions.



With our DAM, users can add custom tags to make assets easy to find.



With Creative Collaboration, everyone can see where design projects are in the pipeline.

A Digital Asset Management Solution Makes it Easy to Find On-Brand Assets

A [white paper from IDC](#) found that 90% of all digital information was stored in multiple formats, locations, and applications. As a result, employees spent an average of 36% of their day looking for and consolidating information, but only found what they needed 44% of the time. Why risk hurting your brand image with off-brand or outdated assets? With our [Digital Asset Management \(DAM\)](#) software, you can easily store and share all brand assets, including documents, videos, photos, and icons.

The benefits of Frontify's DAM include the following:

- **All stakeholders can access brand assets.** Because assets are saved in one location (the cloud), all internal and external teammates have access to brand media from anywhere.
- **Everyone can quickly find assets.** Include metadata and custom tags to make it easy for teammates to search and find exactly what they need.
- **It's safe.** Ensure that assets are used properly with download request functionality. You can grant permissions or reject download requests from a centralized dashboard.
- **You can prevent unlicensed assets.** Define asset expiration dates to prevent old, unlicensed media from being incorporated into marketing materials.



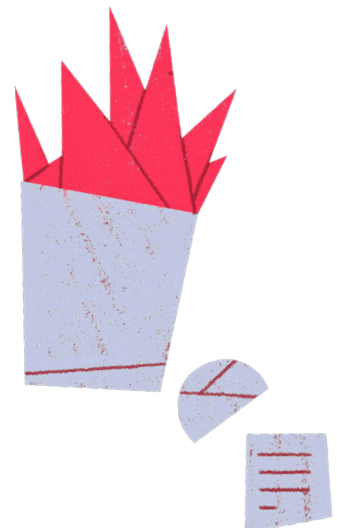
An Online Workspace Improves Design Collaboration

Telecom brands require a lot of design work for digital platforms, marketing materials, and in-store signage. Improve consistency through better design collaborations.

With our online collaboration platform, [Creative Collaboration](#), design projects are stored in one location, making it easier for stakeholders to review designs in real time and provide feedback instead of waiting until designs are completed. This improved collaboration on design iterations leads to faster, more consistent results.

Here are some of the best features of Frontify's Creative Collaboration:

- **You can see all design projects in the creative pipeline.** A Kanban-board-based system keeps all teammates up to date about where projects are in the design and approval process.
- **It's easy to get feedback and approvals.** You can stop chasing feedback and approvals on creative projects. Notify stakeholders within Frontify when their input or final sign-off is needed.
- **You can keep track of creative versions.** You're able to see every change made to a project throughout its life cycle.
- **It streamlines design-to-developer handovers.** With Inspect Mode, developers can pull design specs to transform design ideas into code without ever leaving the Frontify environment. And audit functionality checks designs to ensure that they're using the correct brand colors and fonts.



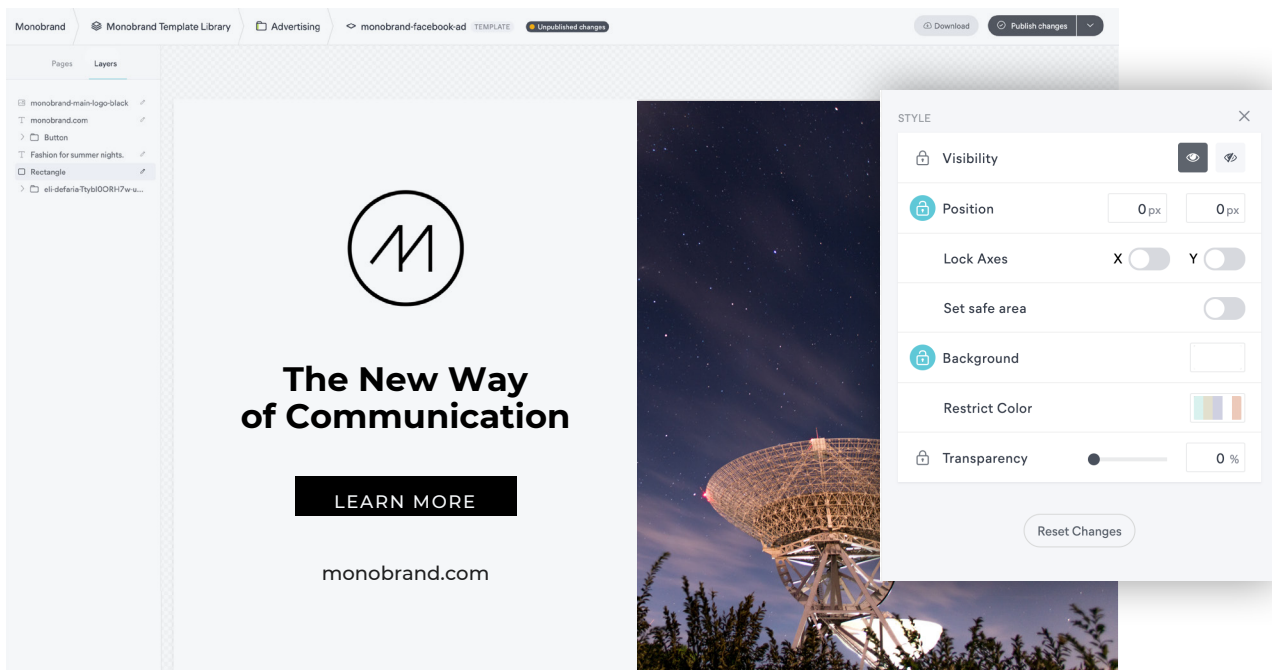


Templates Maintain Consistency Across Repeat Projects

From in-store signage, social graphics, and business cards, there are some projects that require frequent updates but few changes. Having your design department make these updates wastes significant time that could be spent on higher-value projects. With [Frontify's Digital & Print Templates](#), designers can create templates that are connected to approved assets, colors, and fonts, saving themselves time by letting other departments create their own on-brand materials.

The benefits of Frontify's Digital & Print Templates include:

- **You can make quick templates for print or digital projects.** Make editable templates for social media graphics, website banners, brochures, business cards, and much more.
- **Designers get complete project oversight.** Designers can see who uses the templates, and how often, to make sure they're being used properly and consistently.





How Frontify Helped Vodafone Maintain Its Strong Brand Image

Vodafone is a world-leading telecom company. The brand currently ranks fourth among global mobile operator groups. Unlike T-Mobile, which needed to redefine its brand image, Vodafone was looking for solutions to help them improve consistency across their global organization to maintain their strong brand image.

As a large telecom brand with an extensive range of stakeholders, the company was looking for a solution to simplify their brand management and improve efficiency. They turned to Frontify. The company began using Brand Guidelines to make sure internal teams and up to 40 external agencies had access to their brand information. With DAM, stakeholders were able to quickly search thousands of brand assets to find what they needed, and Creative Collaboration improved design collaboration throughout the organization.

“Frontify allows us to continuously cooperate with over 40 different external partners, a total of 500 people, through the same platform. The way that we’re now sharing brand guidelines via our new Brand Portal has never been more easy and accessible.”

With Frontify, Vodafone increased consistency and improved their workflow with branded media and design.





Frontify Can Help You Build a Strong, Consistent Brand Image

With an online, cloud-based brand management solution, maintaining consistency to create a competitive brand image has never been easier. Our software allows brands to create a single brand portal so internal and external teams always have the correct brand information, can quickly find assets, can easily collaborate on designs, and can share templates to quickly create on-brand materials. With our solution, you'll increase brand consistency and improve speed to get your brand and marketing materials completed faster to stay ahead of the competition.

Start a free trial or contact us to request a demo, and see for yourself how Frontify can help your tech brand.

