

04 · Images

Keeping Your Brand Consistent in AI Images

A practical system for keeping generated images close to your brand: a reference-board worksheet, a consistency checklist, a product and identity fidelity review, and three drift examples with fixes.

For: Marketing teams and designers producing image series for one brand with AI tools.

Level: Intermediate

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Why images drift away from the brand

Image generators do not "remember" your brand. Every new generation is a fresh draw from many possibilities, even when you type the same prompt. That is why the first image looks excellent, the third arrives with a slightly different green, the fifth with cooler light, and the tenth with a bottle cap that never existed. Each small drift is acceptable on its own, but together they make your feed look as if it belongs to several brands.

Consistency, then, does not come from the tool but from a **system** around it: fixed references, fixed language, batch production and a written review before publishing.

A realistic expectation: no tool, as of the time of writing (September 2026), guarantees complete consistency across every image. The aim is not perfection but *controlled, reviewed* consistency: small drifts caught before publishing, and a clear decision about when to edit an image, when to reject it and when to go back to real photography.

What makes up a brand's identity in an image?

Before you can protect an identity you need to know its elements. In images, identity is not just the logo but a set of recurring decisions:

Element	What to fix	Example
Colours	Dominant, secondary and accent colours and their proportions	Warm beige and brown dominate, olive green secondary, a little gold
Style	Type of image: photographic, flat illustration, 3D	Realistic photography in natural light
Lighting	Source, direction, warmth and contrast	Warm side window light, low contrast

Element	What to fix	Example
Composition	Subject position, shot size, where the empty space sits	Subject in the left third, space top right
Materials and backgrounds	Recurring surfaces and textures	Olive wood, linen, earthenware
Product	Shape, size, colour, label and details	Matte gold cap, rectangular cream label
Characters	General features, clothing, approximate age and style	A cartoon character with short hair and a teal shirt
Mood	The overall feeling that must remain	Calm, homely, honest

The method in six steps

1. **Write the visual identity card:** the eight elements above on one page.
2. **Build the reference board:** carefully chosen images, each with a defined role.
3. **Fix the language:** a fixed style sentence and a vocabulary that does not change.
4. **Use the consistency techniques your tool offers:** reference images, editing instead of generating, a character reference.
5. **Produce in batches and compare side by side:** never judge an image on its own.
6. **Review before publishing and log what worked:** a written fidelity review and a log of approved prompts.

Step 1: the visual identity card

If your brand has an identity guide, extract what applies to images. If not, gather your ten best published images and ask: what do they have in common? Write the answer as decisions, not general descriptions: not "nice colours" but "beige and brown cover more than half the image". The card is the reference that settles any later argument about "does this image look like us?".

Step 2: the reference board

A reference board is a small set of images (usually 6 to 12) grouped by role. The common mistake is collecting "inspiring" images without purpose, so the model or designer takes things from them you never intended. For every image on the board, write why it is there, what we take from it and what we ignore in it.

- **Approved brand images:** the best of what you have published; the first reference for style and light.
- **Real product photos:** front, side and top, on a plain background with clear light. This is the reference for truth and is never replaced.
- **Colour swatches:** squares with the colours and their codes.
- **Lighting and composition references:** one or two images showing the character of the light and where the empty space sits.
- **"Not this" examples:** two images showing what falls outside the identity (oversaturation, cold light, glossy surfaces). These shortcut many discussions.

Use your own images or images you have the right to use. Do not use other brands' or photographers' work as something to copy.

Step 3: fixed language

The **style sentence** is one sentence pasted word for word at the end of every prompt for the brand, never rephrased. Alongside it keep a **fixed vocabulary**: the same words for the same things. If you say "dark olive green" once, "deep green" another time and "oily green" a third, you are asking for three different colours. The same goes for the product: one approved description, pasted as is.

Style sentence and vocabulary

Style sentence (pasted word for word at the end of every prompt):

[type of image], [lighting character], a palette of [colour 1], [colour 2] and [colour 3], [recurring materials or backgrounds], [mood], no text or logos in the image.

Approved product description (pasted as is):

[shape], [relative size], [colour], [cap or parts], [label: shape and colour].

Fixed vocabulary:

- Dominant colour = [approved words only]
- Secondary colour = []
- Accent colour = []
- Lighting = []
- Banned words: [words that push results off-brand, e.g. glossy, neon, dramatic]

Step 4: consistency techniques

Tools differ in what they offer and change quickly, but these principles hold:

- **A reference image beats a description:** if your tool accepts a style or product reference image, always use it together with the written description, not instead of it.
- **Edit rather than generate for real products:** photograph the real product, remove the background and place it into a generated scene. The product stays the same and only the scene changes. This protects product fidelity more than anything else.
- **A character reference sheet:** if you have a recurring character (an illustration or fictional figure), first generate a reference image of it from several angles in fixed clothing, approve it, then start from it for every new image.
- **Fix what you can:** some tools let you fix settings such as aspect ratio, reference strength or a seed value. Record the settings that produced an approved result and reuse them.
- **Change only one element between images in a series:** if the background is what should change, do not change the lighting and angle with it.

Step 5: batch production

Produce the week's or campaign's images together in one session, using the same base prompt and changing one element per image. Then lay them side by side with two previously approved images. Drift you cannot see in a single image shows up immediately in comparison. Ask: if I cover the logo, would a follower know these images come from the same brand?

Step 6: review and log

Every image goes through a written fidelity review (template below) before publishing. Every approved image is logged with its full prompt, settings and references in an **approved-prompt log**. After two months this log becomes your most valuable tool: a tested starting point instead of starting from scratch.

Worksheet: the reference board

Reference board worksheet				
Brand: []		Last updated: []		
Board owner: [role]				
#	Image (file name)	Category	What we take	What we ignore
---	-----	-----	-----	-----
1	[]	Approved image	[]	[]
2	[]	Approved image	[]	[]
3	[]	Product - front	Shape and label	Background
4	[]	Product - side	[]	[]
5	[]	Colour swatches	Colours only	-
6	[]	Lighting ref	[]	[]
7	[]	Composition ref	[]	[]
8	[]	Not this	[what is wrong]	-
9	[]	Not this	[what is wrong]	-
Usage rights: are all images above owned by the brand or licensed?				
[Yes / No: ...]				

Which three elements of our visual identity allow no drift at all?

Our approved style sentence

The approved description of our product or recurring character

What do we never want to see in our images?

Template: product and identity fidelity review

Complete this for every image before publishing. Use three severity levels: **critical** (blocks publishing), **moderate** (fix before publishing), **minor** (accept, with a note for the next batch).

Fidelity review

Image: [file name] Use: [] Reviewer: [role] Date: []

A) Product fidelity (compare side by side with the real product photo)

- Shape and proportions: [matches / drift: ...] Severity: []
- Colour: [matches / drift: ...] Severity: []
- Label and logo on product: [matches / drift: ...] Severity: []
- Parts (cap, handle, count): [matches / drift: ...] Severity: []
- Size relative to setting: [plausible / misleading] Severity: []

B) Identity fidelity (compare with two approved images)

- Colours and proportions: [on-brand / drift: ...] Severity: []
- Style and lighting: [on-brand / drift: ...] Severity: []
- Materials and backgrounds: [on-brand / drift: ...] Severity: []
- Recurring character: [matches / drift: ...] Severity: []
- Overall mood: [on-brand / drift: ...] Severity: []

C) Safety and rights

- Distortions (hands, faces, objects): [none / present: ...]
- Generated text or letters: [none / present: ...]
- Faces resembling real people or other brands' logos: [no / yes: ...]

Decision: [publish / edit and re-review / reject / return to real photography]

Reason: []

What we change in the prompt for the next batch: []

Consistency checklist for a whole batch

☐ I laid every image in the batch side by side with two previously approved images.

- ☐ With the logo covered, the images still look like one brand.
- ☐ The dominant colour is the same in every image and has not slid to a nearby shade.
- ☐ Light direction and warmth are similar across all images.
- ☐ The product matches the real product photos in every image where it appears.
- ☐ The recurring character has the same features and clothing.
- ☐ The empty space for text is in the same place across images using the same layout.
- ☐ There is no generated text or stray logo inside the images.
- ☐ Every image went through the fidelity review and its decision was recorded.
- ☐ Approved prompts and settings are saved in the log.

Three common drift examples

Drift one: the colour creeps

Illustrative example

The situation: Al Zaytouna Bakery produces eight images for a month of posts. The first has the dark olive green from the identity. By the sixth, the green has become lighter and leans toward lime, and the bread has become more saturated and closer to orange.

Why it happened: the colour description changed between prompts ("dark olive green", then "green", then "vivid natural colours"), and the word "vivid" pushed saturation up. Each image was compared only with the one before it, so the gradual creep went unnoticed.

How it was caught: when the eight images were laid side by side with two approved images from the previous month.

The fix: back to the fixed vocabulary with the colour description pasted word for word, "vivid" and "saturated" added to the banned words, and the colour swatch attached as a reference. Images that drifted slightly had their colours corrected in design software; those that drifted a lot were regenerated. The new rule: always compare with approved images, never with the previous one.

Drift two: the product changes

Illustrative example

The situation: the perfume shop Yasmina Scents generates images of its signature bottle in different settings. In several images the matte gold cap turns into shiny silver, the rectangular cream label becomes oval, and meaningless Latin letters appear on it.

Why it happened: the product was described in general words ("an elegant perfume bottle") with no reference image, so the generator filled the gap with a typical "perfume bottle" of its own. It also tried to write the label and produced random letters.

How it was caught: in the "product fidelity" section of the review, comparing each image side by side with a photo of the real bottle.

The fix: every image where the cap or label had changed was rejected, because publishing a product that does not match the real one misleads customers. The team switched to editing: photograph the real bottle in good light, remove the background, and generate only the scenes around it. "No text or letters on the product" was added to the exclusions, with the real label kept from the original photo.

Drift three: the character and style shift

Illustrative example

The situation: Nabd dental clinic uses a cartoon child in a series of awareness posts. In the first post the child looks about six, with short hair, a teal shirt and a flat illustration style. By the fifth post the child looks older, with longer hair, and the drawing has turned into a glossy 3D style.

Why it happened: there was no character reference sheet, and each prompt described the character afresh in different words. Then the phrase "high quality, lots of detail" was added, which pushed the tool toward a 3D look.

How it was caught: a follower commented that "the kid changed", and the team confirmed it by placing the five posts next to each other.

The fix: a character reference sheet generated from three angles in the same clothes and approved, a fixed character description pasted word for word, generic quality phrases that change the style removed, and the reference sheet attached to every prompt. Future posts start from the reference sheet, not from the description alone.

When to stop and go back to real photography

Generation is not always the right choice. Go back to real photography (or to editing a real photo) when:

- the image will be used to sell a specific product whose exact details matter to the decision;
- three rounds of editing have failed to keep the product's shape or label;
- the image shows a real place customers will visit and expect to find as they saw it;
- the image needs to show real people, which requires their consent and an actual shoot.

Common mistakes

- **Mistake:** comparing each image with the one before it. **Fix:** always compare with the approved images on the reference board; gradual creep only shows up that way.
- **Mistake:** rephrasing the style sentence in every prompt. **Fix:** paste it word for word, and change it only as a deliberate decision recorded on the card.
- **Mistake:** a reference board full of "inspiring" images with no role. **Fix:** every image has a reason, something we take from it and something we ignore.
- **Mistake:** generating a real product from a description. **Fix:** start from its real photo with edits, and make product fidelity a critical criterion.

- **Mistake:** generic words such as "high quality" and "very professional". **Fix:** delete them; they add no information and can push the style away from the brand.
- **Mistake:** not saving the prompts that worked. **Fix:** keep an approved-prompt log with the prompt, settings, references and result.

Final checklist

- ☐ I wrote the visual identity card with its eight elements as specific decisions.
- ☐ I built a reference board with clear roles, and every image in it is owned or licensed.
- ☐ I have a fixed style sentence, a colour vocabulary and an approved product description.
- ☐ I use real product photos as references or as the starting point for edits.
- ☐ I produce in batches and compare side by side with approved images.
- ☐ Every image goes through the fidelity review before publishing.
- ☐ I know when to reject an image and when to go back to real photography.
- ☐ I update the approved-prompt log after every batch.

About the author — Mohamad Charafeddine is an entrepreneur from Tripoli, Lebanon: founder of the Passion digital marketing agency, president of Takaful Youth Association, and founder of digital platforms. He trains individuals and teams in applied AI and marketing.

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