

Why Yoco rebranded

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Yoco, an African technology company that builds tools and services to help small businesses get paid, run their business better, and grow, has undergone a rebrand.



Elton Dick, senior brand designer at Yoco

We find out more from Yoco's senior brand designer, Elton Dick.

How would you define your brand and what consumer sector does your brand predominantly play in?

At its inception, Yoco's mission was first and foremost to allow entrepreneurs to get paid. Nearly six years later, Yoco has become a popular payments provider for 140,000 small businesses and our community continues to grow rapidly.

Yoco exists to enable people to thrive. The businesses in the Yoco community are vibrant, passionate and move things forward. As we keep building for the future, we want to make sure that we look and feel like a part of this community. Yoco's core customer is a self-directed entrepreneur running a small business, previously ignored and underserved by traditional financial institutions. These are daily and weekly traders operating in industries such as retail, food and drink, health and beauty services.

Tell us a little about how the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted your business?

Yoco has become the payments provider for 140,000 small businesses - and our community continues to grow rapidly. Small business owners have found innovative and brilliant solutions to enable them to trade during various levels of lockdown. For some businesses, this required digital transformation in essence overnight and for others, it meant a shift in their operating model to allow for contactless payment and delivery. But for some, the ones whom the lockdown has been the hardest on, it has meant a complete shift in not only how they do business, but what they do; a pivot to the unknown.

One such story is that of [Mpumelelo Mtintsi](#) who is the founder of a Soweto-based bicycle touring company called [Book Ibhoni](#). Mtintsi is a Yoco merchant like many other tourism-based businesses, was forced to close with a distant promise of re-opening only once the country reached Level 1 in lockdown procedures.

Rapidly within the first week of lockdown, Mtintsi pivoted his business from bicycle tours to bicycle deliveries. An easier said than done solution; and watching this story, as well as many others like this, unfold is what led the Yoco team to produce a [Small Business Pivot Guide](#).

Yoco recently underwent a rebranding. Can you share the reasoning behind this?

Just over a year ago, we stepped back and looked at all the work Yoco has done so far. We decided that our brand didn't match our personality, or our mission. We strive to be brave, bold, and authentic. Furthermore, we like to keep it simple. But our look and feel didn't match the Yoco experience. So we started the process of change, and we're finally ready to share it with you.

“ The end product of the refresh is a brand that truly represents us: our personality, our tone of voice, our charisma, our warmth and our pride as a South African startup. We are no longer absorbed in a sea of sameness. ”

What is the design message of the rebranding?

Part of the creative process was answering the all-important question of why a refresh was necessary. As Yoco crests over its next major growth point, it was a good opportunity to reset the dials and go back to the basics of the mission: to enable people to thrive.





At the heart of everything Yoco does is the customer and what better way to make that principle meaningful than to involve them in guiding creative decision-making.

The new brand broaches the boundary of eclectic South African-inspired design. The changes are symbolic of Yoco's re-commitment to their manifesto: to boldly challenge the status quo of banking and payments, and to democratise commerce.

🔴 **Yoco's aim is to get closer to its customers. What influence did this have on the rebrand?**

Everything! Through extensive customer research, we learnt what our customers loved and didn't. From logos to fonts, photography and colours, we look completely different.

We wanted a logo that felt more bold and classic. A logo that could scale as we did, and a logo that would be more flexible. Our new colour palette was led by our design principles: we strive to be bold, human and African. To complement our electric Yoco blue, we chose a palette that felt more natural and earthy.

“ The new Yoco colour palette takes strides away from the blue world of financial services, and its distinct African aesthetic helps our look match our mission. ”



🔴 **Tell us about some of the research behind the rebrand and the successful channels you have utilized?**

The refresh is my biggest project to date, and it was a privilege to be able to impact the Yoco brand in such a meaningful way. We wanted the refresh to be an opportunity for us to get closer to our customers, and for this reason, we felt that it was important that the internal team tackle the refresh. What we've built is a foundation on which to grow the brand significantly into the future.

The new packaging design was led by user experience. The goal was to create an Instagrammable moment of delight when customers received and opened their box. We wanted to avoid marketing repetition and tap into the emotional experience of seeing your card machine for the first time – it is the start of a new way of doing business.

Through our research, we also learnt that many customers kept their card machine boxes in display or for storage. So, the new designs also improve functionality making them easier to open, close and keep.

The brand refresh extends into Yoco's website and product experience. From the moment users begin their journey with us, on the Yoco website, to when they become customers, we want their connection with the Yoco brand to intensify. The Yoco product experience mirrors our brand design principles.

The biggest change for the website was usability. We wanted it to be more than a facelift. As a brand that is human-centred, our website needed to deliver the same promise. The new website strikes the balance between accessible and aspirational. And now we really represent the 140,000 businesses that rely on us to grow their businesses and get paid.

🔴 ***With the brand refresh, will Yoco also be refreshing its products?***

What hasn't changed is our products or experience; inside it is still the same, maybe even a little better. But we encourage you to continue to watch this space!

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