

How agencies are *transforming* workflows and *winning* with Canva

In today's increasingly visual world, German artist Hans Hoffman's celebrated thought that *“design is the intermediary between information and understanding”* has never been more true.

As communication moves at new speeds, so too does the demand for education, entertainment, and information to be available at every moment on every touchpoint.

Brands are now tasked with creating and collaborating faster than ever before while delivering the same high standard of quality. And, as they look to engage with customers and audiences in new ways, agencies are often the starting point, called on for their creative and strategic expertise. Great design is no longer about just making clients look good — it's an essential business growth strategy. And as a result, designers have become the trusted custodians of brand vision and execution.



In an industry survey of 2,200 design professionals, nearly three-quarters said their design teams had a positive impact on client satisfaction. Put simply, good design teams have a direct impact on business growth.

However, when surveyed, only one-third of designers felt they had helped improve productivity, operational efficiency, and cost savings.

Design teams say they have a proven impact on:



Employee productivity
and operational
efficiency

1 Dezeen — Integrating design into business strategy is good for growth

The fast-paced nature of agency environments often means labor-intensive workflows and complex approval processes. So it's not surprising that efficiency can feel out of reach for many creative teams. Agencies are now required to find time-saving solutions that support quality design work, efficiency, and great client relations.

Canva is a visual communication tool built for everyone — including designers. With Canva, anyone on your team can collaborate and communicate, and designers can amplify their creative work, by ensuring teams adhere to guidelines and stay on brand. With Canva, agencies of all sizes can streamline the creative process with efficiency. Plus, approval processes and easy-to-use design tools, allow every individual, team, and client can improve their current workflow.

Canva may not be the only design tool your agency uses. In fact, we don't think it should be. But, when it comes to getting ahead of workflow inefficiencies, removing bottlenecks, and scaling your output, there's a place for Canva within your existing creative toolbox.

Here, we'll explore how Canva will help you deliver projects faster, and grow your agency. We'll share success stories that show how Canva fits into thriving agency environments and highlight key features that improve brand management, support seamless client relationships and encourage creative excellence.



01

A case for democratizing design

The idea of democratizing design can be a controversial topic. And rightly so. Designers are valued because of their creative strength and a significant amount of expertise is needed to bring high-impact design work and custom illustrations to life. These aren't tasks that just anyone can do well.

But as the world moves towards visually communicating in boardrooms, classrooms, and beyond, design is no longer limited to major rebrands and innovative campaigns. As brands look to expand their reach, there are infinite types of design requirements within an agency's wheelhouse. Design teams are now tasked with making small tweaks to branded assets, internal communication presentations, and more. And when you're busy delivering high-level thinking for a client, it's hard to find the time.



High-stakes creative projects should be saved for the experts, but other tasks can be spread across the agency. When it comes to tackling tight deadlines and making minor adjustments, everyone stands to benefit from a democratic design approach.

Canva puts creative freedom within a framework, and in the hands of all team members — regardless of their design experience. This empowers highly-skilled design experts to focus on complex, and custom projects that have the biggest impact on the client's bottom line.



Why Canva is the right fit for agencies

Move projects faster with a few simple clicks

In this new visual world, whether you're preparing a sales pitch, selling your idea with a presentation, or refining a client's template, you need compelling collateral to sell your agency expertise and brand message. But this process could take up a big slice of your agency resources.

A survey of 8,500 professionals found that 30% spend upwards of five hours designing slide decks, while reportedly "feeling they are wasting their time and energy." At this rate, your agency may be spending \$8,500 to \$20,000 per designer, per year on presentation design alone.



[2 LinkedIn Pulse — How much is presentation design costing your company?](#)

With Canva, your designers don't need to spend a third of their workweek tinkering with slide decks. Instead, they can build a customizable, locked template, complete with several different layouts that meet all possible presentation needs. And they'll only need to do this once. All your team then needs to do is create a copy and customize, in a few simple clicks.

Even without design experience, placeholder text and image blocks can be easily swapped out for presentation content. With template locks in place, critical design elements won't be compromised. You can also ensure your team accesses the most up-to-date, on-brand templates every time with centralized folders.

Your designers are now empowered to focus on bigger projects and strategic work. Meanwhile, the rest of the team can easily prepare their own presentations with eye-catching, consistent brand visuals.

Streamline client collaboration

We know that design teams have a positive impact on customer satisfaction. But communication and collaboration stand out as the two major pain points for agencies as well as their clients.

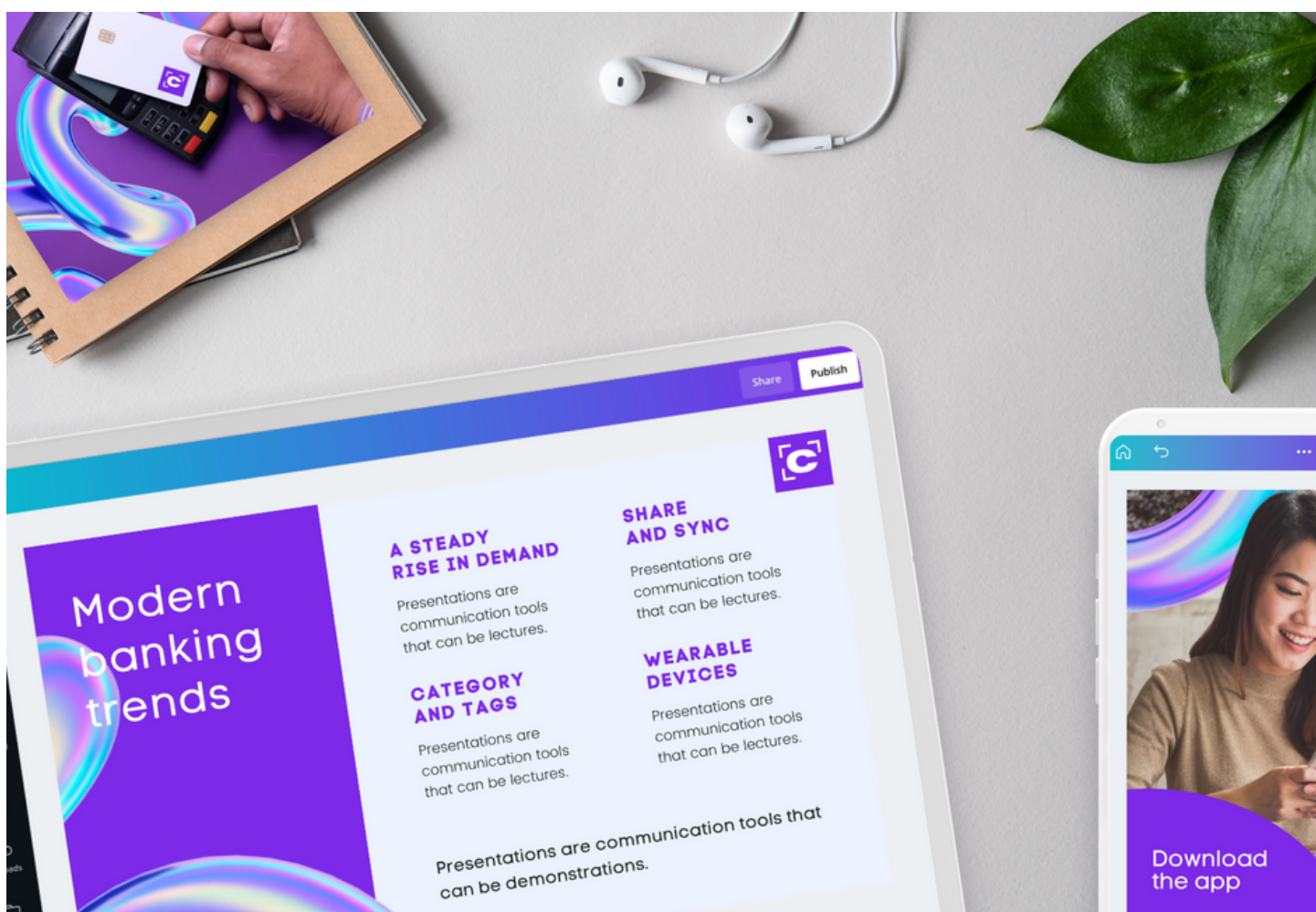
Let's look at why these two factors matter — and how Canva can help your agency stand out with an innovative client management system.



Adapt to the future of communication

As work habits rapidly evolve, researchers have been studying over 23,000 client-agency relationships and found that the desire for effective communication and collaboration has increased over the past two decades.

Our industry survey of 70 agencies and design professionals also found that while communication is essential in delivering world-class creativity, most felt hindered by traditional communication channels that minimize agency efficiency and client experience. In addition, when it comes to visual collaboration and communication, especially when sharing and reviewing design files, the usual means of interaction via email, phone, and video can be inconvenient and lacks a seamless connection.



3 Aprais — Seven behaviours that set the best client-agency relationships apart from the rest

Our survey also revealed that agency creatives often relied on in-person and virtual meetings, or lengthy email threads with screenshots when hosting client feedback meetings. Overall, slow and cumbersome communication came out as one of the top pain points in the agency-client relationship.

Here we see the essential nature of client-agency collaboration in the current agency ecosystem. As client collaboration becomes more fluid and required at a faster pace, essential tools and communication channels haven't been able to adapt at the same speed.

Growing agencies and busy clients don't have time to save, export, upload, email, download, comment, rinse, and repeat. That's why Canva supports more seamless communication and client-agency workflows in one central location.

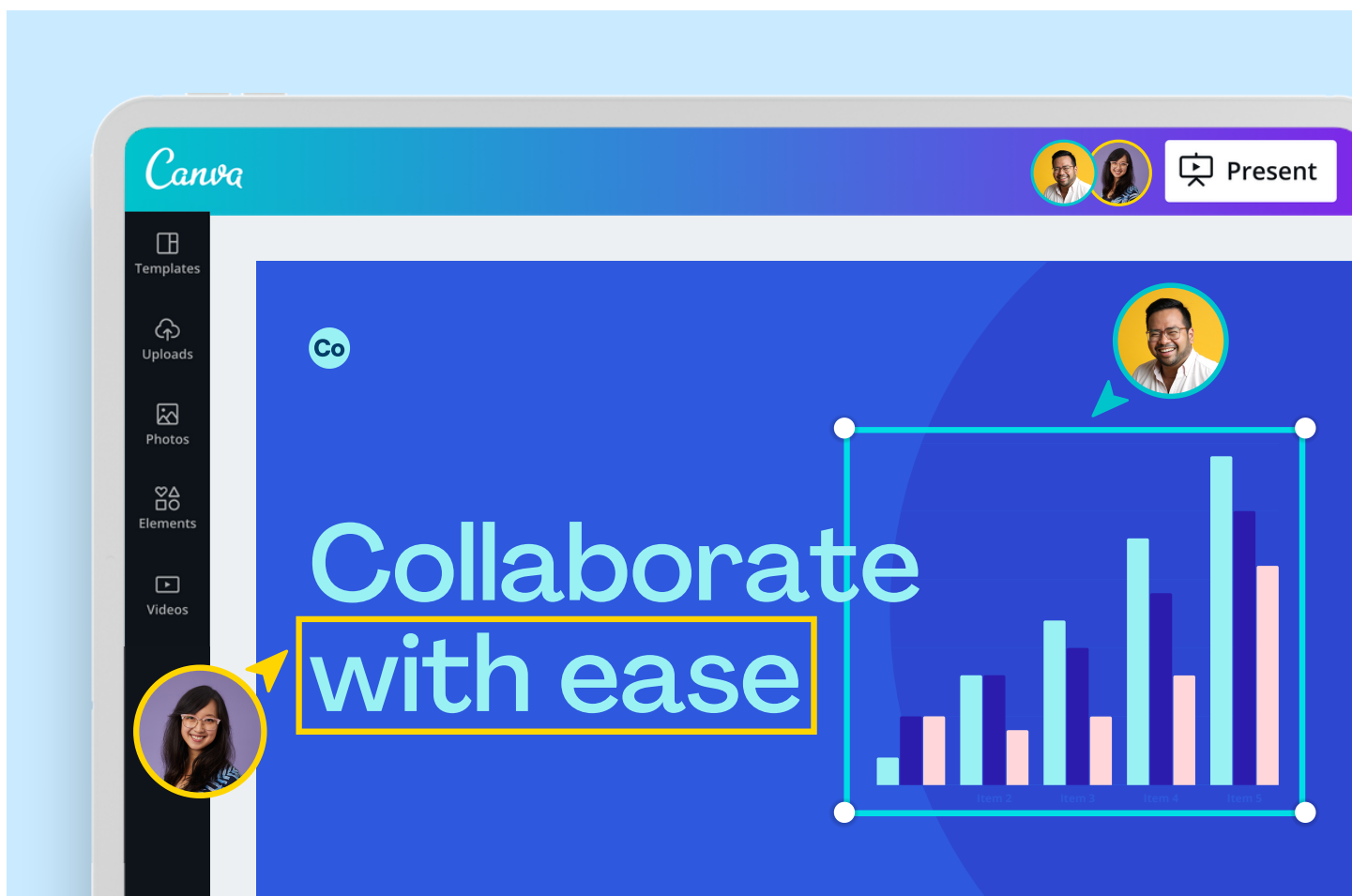
From desktop browsers or our mobile app, Canva users can work together on the same asset, collaborating, commenting, and editing in real-time, from any location or time zone. Plus, the streamlined Design Approvals feature makes sure projects can be quickly reviewed and approved. All feedback ends up in one place, so all that's left for the designer to do is make the changes in minutes.



Support on-brand content creation

Depending on the scope of work required, sometimes, your agency is able to collect feedback and you can make the changes yourself. For smaller, always-on projects like social media posts, you may want to license your client to customize your designs without going off-brand.

Canva's templates can be created and specific elements can be locked and unlocked. This makes it easy for your clients to swap brand-approved imagery and customize copy without compromising the integrity of the design. Turning Canva into a client collaboration and management tool will help to improve your relationships and establish guardianship over the content creation process.



As an agency, you can use Canva to:

1. **Establish a brand-approved environment** where clients can open approved templates and make minor changes.
 2. **Maintain a centralized repository** of client assets that can be accessed by the right teams at the right time.
 3. **Empower your clients to take on high-effort, low-return work**, like changing names and phone numbers on the business cards you designed.
 4. **Oversee all content creation** and agency-produced designs.
 5. **Simplify client collaboration and brand management** with Brand Kits, Brand Controls, and Team Folders.
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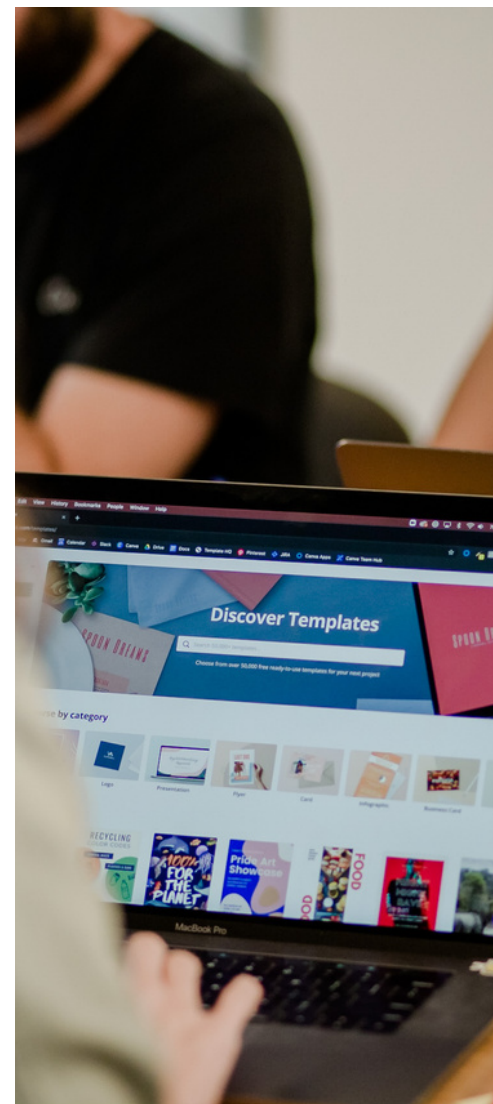
Allow your creative work to work harder

With more than 4 billion designs created using Canva, it's a tool that offers advantages for professional designers as well as design beginners alike.

Canva for the non-designer

A lot of your clients and agency colleagues probably have a great eye for design. But if they lack the technical skills needed to use tools like Adobe, it's unlikely that they are able to support design workflows where needed. Canva's ease-of-use is a major advantage for users who are new to design. With a minimal learning curve, teams can adopt and create with Canva easily.

From an internal presentation for your weekly sync, or to send around internal communication reports to the team, your team can pick and choose from 400,000+ beautiful, customizable templates and take advantage of Canva's entire Content Library. With an endless array of high-quality graphic elements, photos, videos, and audio tracks to choose from, design newbies will be turning out sleek, professional-looking content in no time.

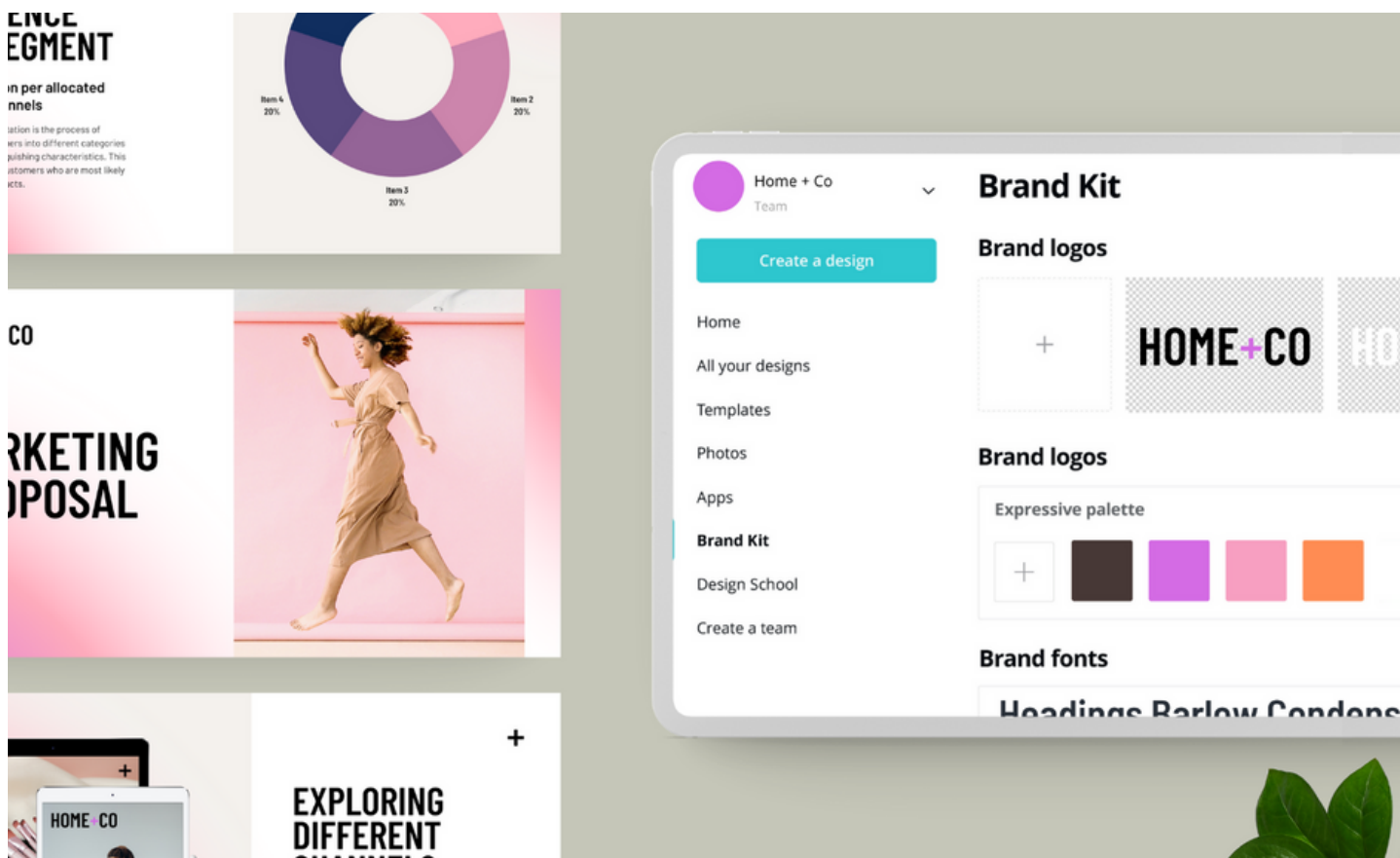


Canva for the design expert

Design experts might not rely on Canva's templates in the same way as other teams. Instead, they'll benefit from time-saving and productivity features like Magic Resize, Background Remover, and Smart MockUps. Designs created on other platforms can easily be imported and resized into any format — a task that usually takes designers hours to complete.

Designs from other software can also be seamlessly imported as SVGs and ready for use in minutes. Our Brand Kit feature houses custom colors, logos, fonts, and other elements in one accessible location, to make brand management a breeze. For different brands, designers can also store and access multiple Brand Kits at any time.

As Canva adopters at American Airlines explain, "Projects that previously took over 10 hours can now be done in under an hour and no one has to waste time when they need designs updated or approved."



04

Create your best work in one place

Canva is also built to help your team create their best work, together. At the agency level, it facilitates collaboration and visual communication while streamlining feedback and approval workflows.

In our agency survey, we found that most agencies follow a similar process when creating visual content for their clients. But, as we've noted, most teams took a siloed approach to design, communication, and collaboration. Constantly switching back and forth between programs and channels means important details slip through the cracks. What's more this usual agency workflow can take between 12 to 24 days to get through — even for the most simple design projects.



Agency workflows often take between 12 – 24 days

Managing requests



3-5 days

Designing



5-9 days

Reviewing



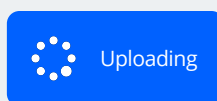
3-5 days

Approving



2-4 days

Delivering



12+ days

When we asked what improvements agencies and designers would like to see in their current tools, here's what was on their wish list:

- A central place to produce and store content.
- A fast-performing tool that combines powerful design capabilities with intuitive, easy-to-use features.
- A space for real-time collaboration and communication.
- A cloud-based program that's accessible from anywhere and any device.

And Canva delivered.

If your agency is also struggling with complex processes and limited collaboration, Canva's Team Folders and Brand Kits will significantly simplify your workflow.

Everything you need to create and impress your clients is conveniently housed in one platform that's accessible from any device and location. So, your agency colleagues and clients can create, review, and update without all the usual hassle.

Canva supports agencies' tried-and-tested design process

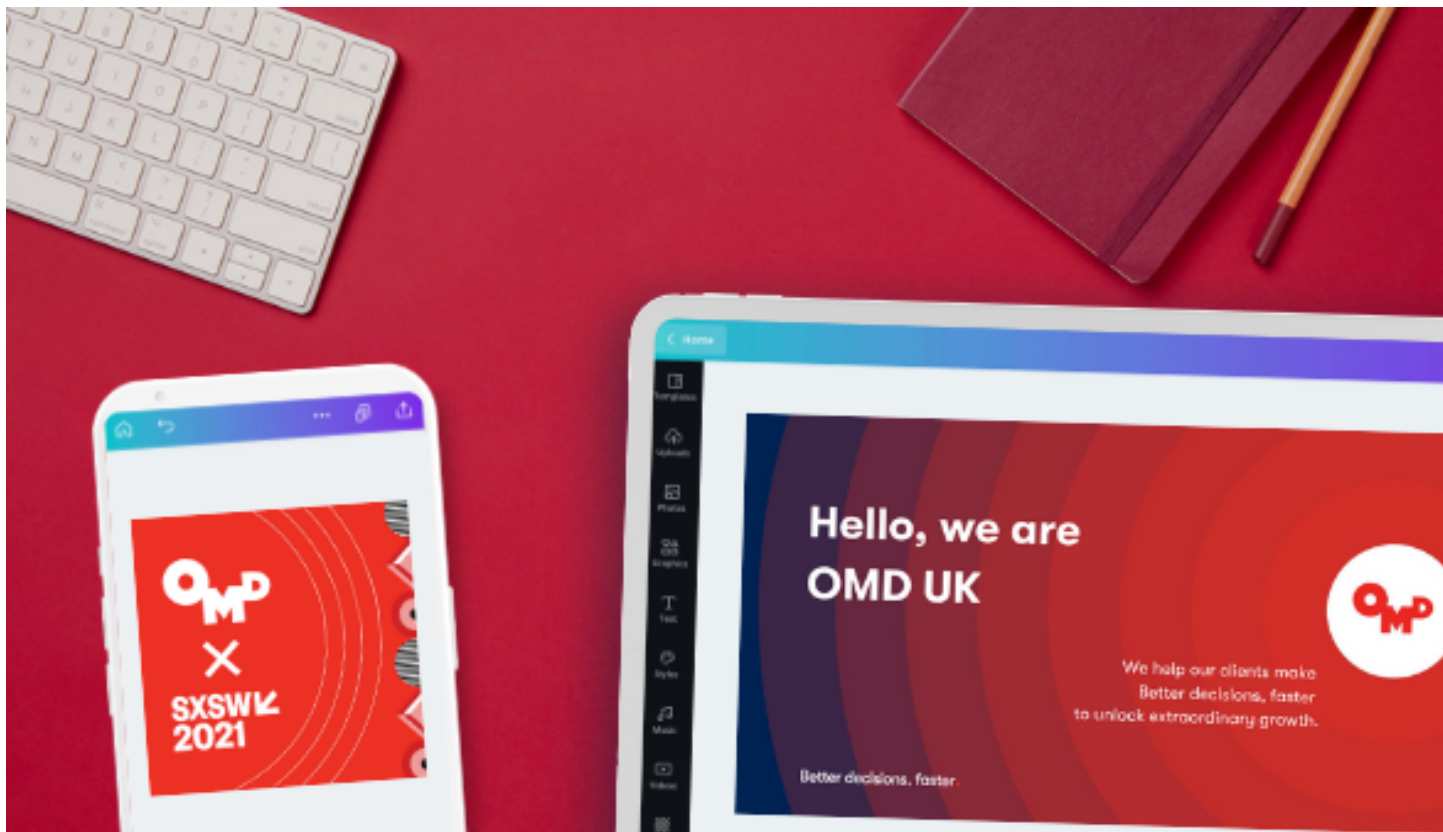
1. Start with a creative brief from the client 	2. Collaborate on gathering inspiration and brainstorming.	3. Refine several creative ideas and concepts.
	4. Pitch those ideas to the client and gather feedback.	5. Creative development and design. 
6. Iterate and fine-tune with additional feedback.	7. Produce the final assets.	

SUCCESS STORY

OMD solves complex content needs with Canva

As the world's largest media network, OMD is made up of diverse teams all over the globe working on thousands of briefs simultaneously. OMD's teams use Canva to remove bottlenecks, streamline workflows, and deliver the truly collaborative client experience they'd always hoped for.

"I love the 'leave-behind-ability' so that clients can make comments and continue the conversation, even though the presentation is over. It cuts down on back-and-forth emails and waiting for responses," says Michael Rivera, Associate Director Marketing Sciences from OMD USA. "I think that has been a big win for us because it helped us take our strategy off the slide into the real world much sooner than would have happened otherwise."



05

Add to your your creative toolbox

This probably comes as no surprise, but all of the designers who participated in our agency survey use tools from the Adobe Suite as part of their day-to-day. It's the industry standard for custom illustrations, layered artwork, and going all-out with total creative freedom.

Canva isn't a replacement. Instead, it's a complementary tool to enhance your agency's creative toolbox.

The designers we surveyed love using Canva for repetitive work, ensuring brand consistency, and simplifying the collaboration process. Features like Brand Kits, Brand Control, Design Approvals, and branded templates do the heavy lifting.



Coming soon to Canva is our new Import PDF feature. It enables users to bring PDFs created in Adobe into Canva, where they become editable again. This means getting original designs into a controlled and intuitive environment that's accessible even for non-designers to navigate will be possible.

These capabilities help free up your designers, so they have more time for creating high-impact design projects. Our client Hero Creative revealed that Canva saved them 13 hours of design production time per presentation! By freeing up a significant amount of resourcing, you'll have the opportunity to build out new services and offerings for your clients.

The ultimate agency toolkit, according to experts

According to our industry survey, these are the seven most popular programs agencies use on the job — and each one serves a unique purpose.

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1. Adobe Photoshop
 2. Google Drive
 3. Google Docs or Microsoft Word
 4. Adobe Illustrator
 5. Canva
 6. Microsoft Powerpoint
 7. Microsoft Excel
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Inspire teams to become brand ambassadors

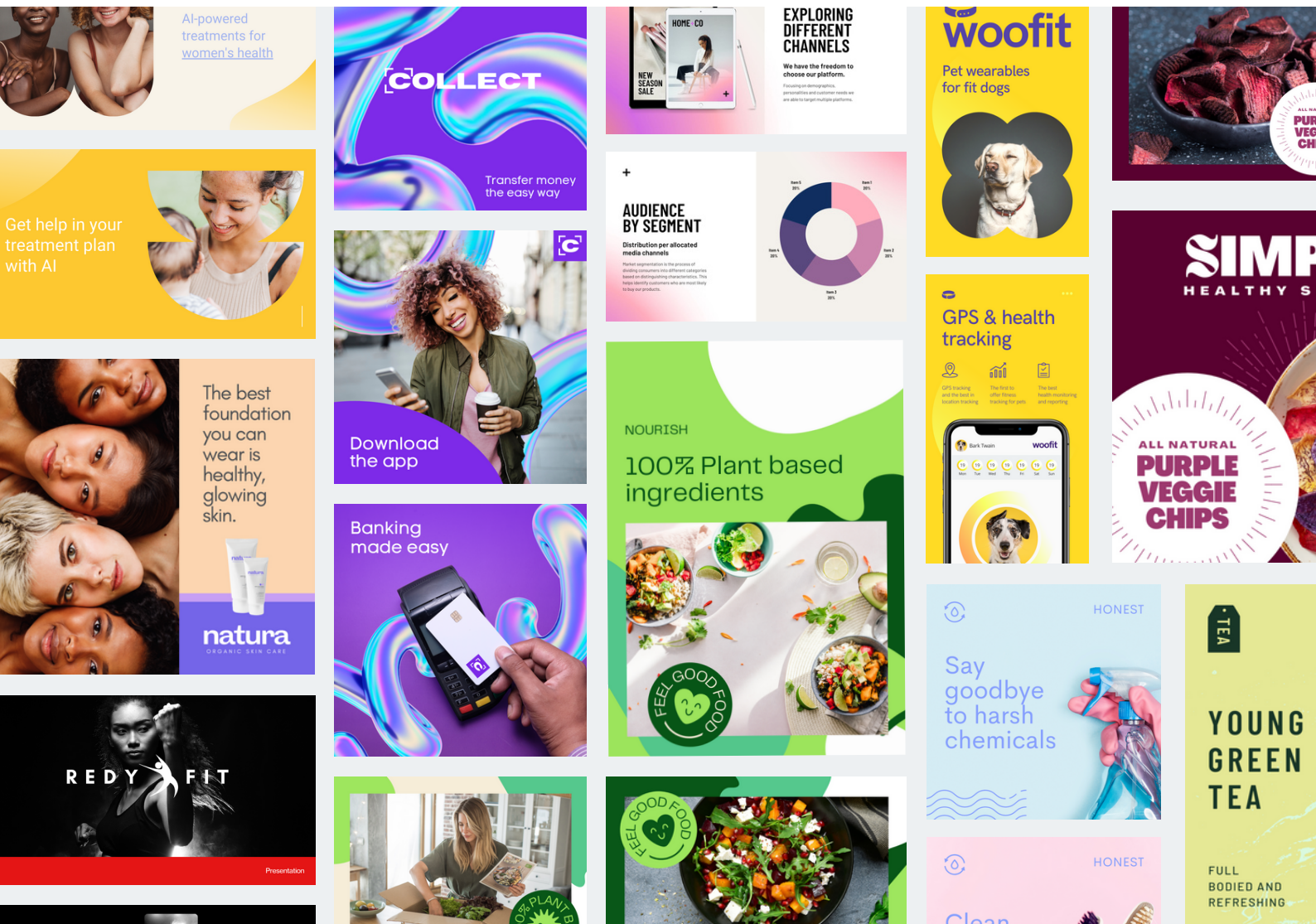
While design teams don't necessarily use templates, they allow designers to empower teams of all types to create on-brand assets. With Canva, you'll have all the tools you need to build unique templates and designs using your brand assets and elements. It's also easy to upload your clients' logos, product photography, fonts, and any other design elements you want to use. You can even bring in graphic elements and the custom artwork that you've created from scratch in another program. And soon, you'll be able to make complete design assets editable, thanks to Canva's Import PDF feature.



Once you've had a play with different compositions and settled on something spectacular, you can add locks to your original, branded templates. That way, your client or another collaborator can work on the same project, update elements like text boxes or feature images while everything else stays the way it should.

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application:

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- Posters
- Logos
- Social media posts
- Infographics
- Banner images
- Business cards
- T-shirts
- Letterhead
- Flyers
- Proposals
- Invoices
- Newsletters
- Invitations
- Videos



SUCCESS STORY

How Hero Creative works faster with Canva

"What would have been a 40-hour job to create a pitch from scratch took only a few hours," says Mark Davis, President and Creative Director of Hero Creative. After just three months with Canva, the agency saved around 160 hours and \$32,000 in operating costs and secured two large contracts.

"To say Canva is a game-changer is a massive understatement," Mark says. "It has reinvented how we communicate and express our ideas and opinions with people and our clients. It's a vehicle and a vessel for robust storytelling, and it's also transformed our ability to expedite projects on our end and do it very efficiently."

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Key Takeaways

Better communication, faster design, and collaboration with your clients will help support your agency's growth now and in the future. To summarize, agency leaders are using Canva to:

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- 1. Democratize design across the entire agency.**
Canva helps design experts save time and amplify their creative output while empowering non-designers to take ownership of other projects. Brand management also becomes easy with Brand Kits and lockable templates.
 - 2. Improve agency and client communication.**
Efficient communication and collaboration are increasingly important to clients. Canva streamlines client management and agency workflows.
 - 3. Inspire everyone to become brand ambassadors.**
Clients and non-designers can customize visuals using approved templates and images. Meanwhile, design experts can save hours with features like Background Remover and Magic Resize.
 - 4. Embrace an all-in-one collaborative, creative space.**
Solving time-consuming, siloed agency workflows, Canva brings every step into one place — from creation and feedback to asset storage and final delivery.
 - 5. Add to your creative toolbox.**
Successful agencies know that it's all about having the right tool for the right project. Canva stands out as a go-to resource for brand consistency, communication, repetitive design work, and collaborative projects.



To discover how Canva can help your agency tackle roadblocks, scale growth, and thrive, connect with our team today.

canva.com/contact-sales