

MicroAire Brand: Case Study

ABOUT

MicroAire is a relatively small, private medical device manufacturing company with 150–200 employees that revenues \$50–\$100 million.

Founded in 1979 with pneumatic-powered orthopedic surgical instruments, they later acquired a ground-breaking, minimally-invasive instrument for the endoscopic treatment of carpal tunnel syndrome.

CHALLENGE

The company introduced products in an entirely different specialty—plastic surgery—nearly 20 years ago, starting with the first pneumatic-powered instrument made especially for liposuction.

Since then, the brand did not clearly reflect this shift in the business strategy and became stagnant, which created inconsistent visuals and messaging.

In addition, a new organizational strategy that consolidated the previously segmented company sparked an immediate need for refreshing the brand.

GOALS

Communicate to a broader audience while enhancing the image, increasing brand recognition, and solidifying core values.

CONSTRAINTS

The logo type must remain due to budget constraints.

RESULTS

A brand refresh was adopted internally and rolled out externally over several months. The refresh added value to prospective users through a variety of new marketing and sales tools.

RESPONSIBILITIES & CONTRIBUTIONS

Art direction and lead designer for:

- Visual identity/style guide
- Product photography
- Motion graphics
- Brochures/catalogs
- Print/digital advertising
- Packaging visuals
- Exhibit graphics
- Newsletters
- Email campaigns
- Website and e-commerce UI redesign



RESEARCH & DISCOVERY

We worked with marketing to understand market research and business goals, create a visual competitive analysis, audit a hodgepodge of disjointed assets, and consult with colleagues and sales representatives throughout the company.

Through our preliminary outreach and research we learned that surgeons generally were unaware of the scope of MicroAire's products.

Process

- In-depth audit of all assets
- Internal & external interviews
- Visual competitive analysis
- Work with sales & marketing to understand customer personas and their journey



Process Preview: Audit of brand assets, visual competitive analysis, and initial notes.

[illegible]

BRAND ATTRIBUTES

As part of the research and discovery phase, we narrowed down keywords to visualize the brand’s personality.



Attributes were condensed down to three after we reached a better understanding of the culture, goals, and current perception of the company.

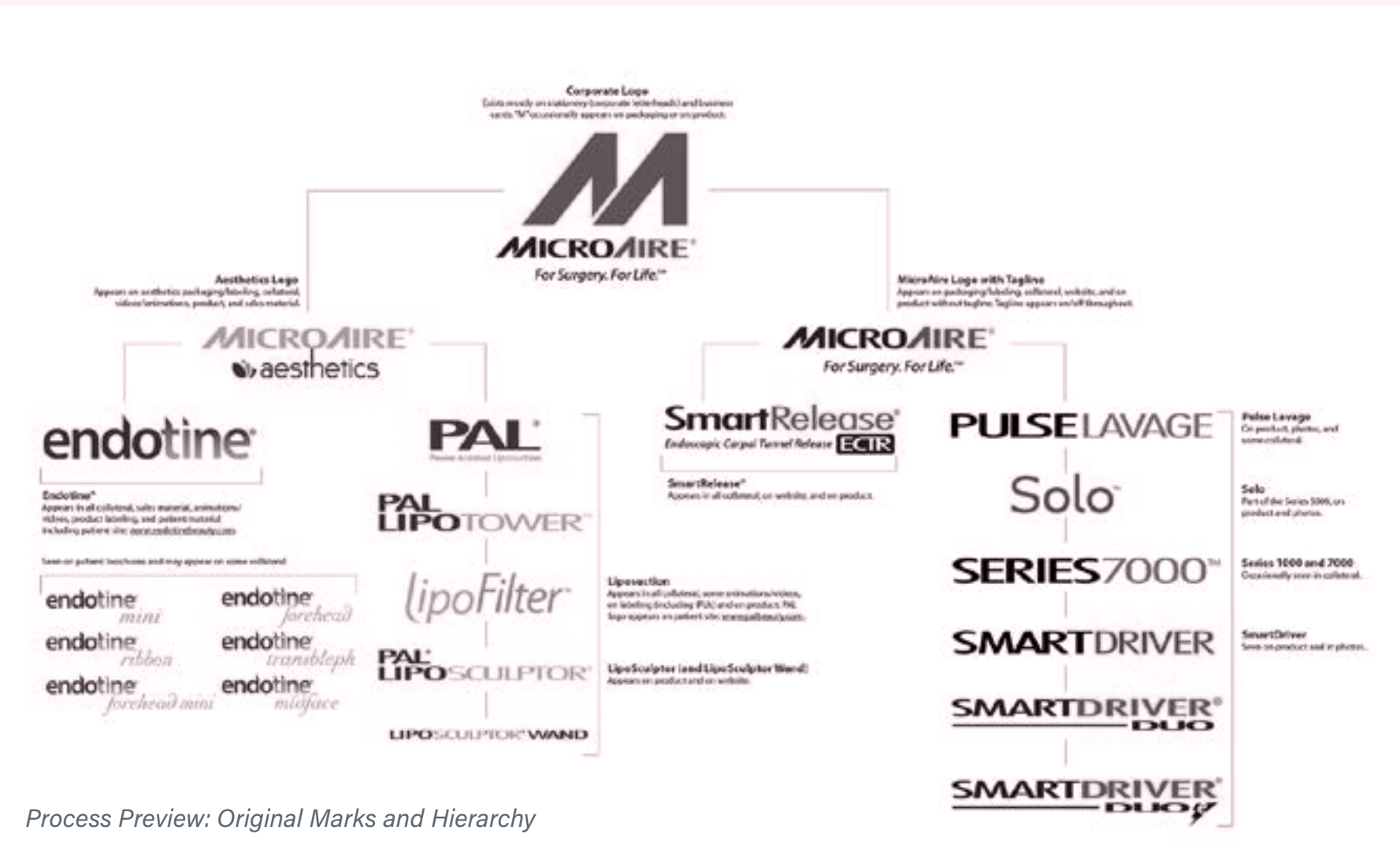
BRAND ARCHITECTURE

Examining the relationship between the products and MicroAire was crucial to define before moving onto the visual strategy.

Previously, MicroAire and its orthopedic products adhered to the same colors and logotype, which blurred the distinction between product and parent company.

Plastic surgery products had an entirely different color scheme with no strong visual connection to the corporate identity beyond the use of the logotype.

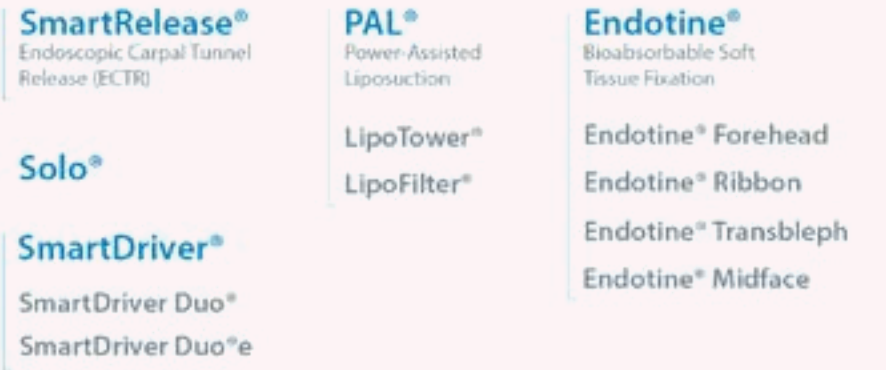
We needed to establish MicroAire as the parent company of all products from a visual and content perspective. By better defining this hierarchy, we unify MicroAire’s offerings under an overarching mission and vision and create a supported brand system for continued growth and expansion.



Process Preview: Original Marks and Hierarchy

Simplified Hierarchy

Brand architecture defines the different levels within a brand and provides a hierarchy that explains the relationships between the different products, services, and components that make up a company’s portfolio of offerings.



COLOR STRATEGY

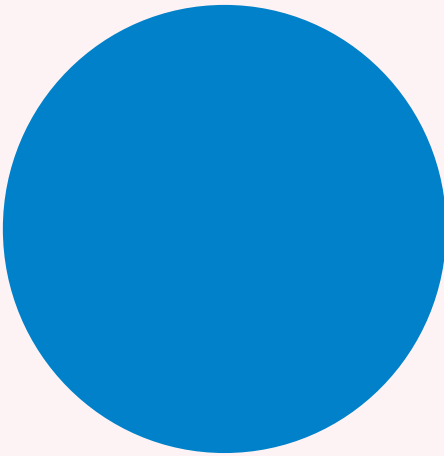
Most of MicroAire’s products were transitioning to blue over many years. Upon research, we found that most users asso-
ciate the blue devices with MicroAire.

Since the majority of competitor products are typically black or silver, we opted to deviate from the previous red/
black and explore the use of a blue color scheme within
the corporate identity to strengthen the visual connection
between MicroAire and its products.

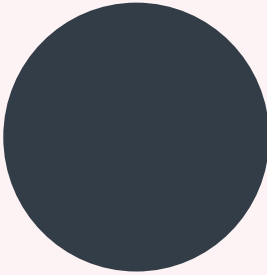
Color Palette

The primary color palette uses blue and grays with cool undertones to
represent stability, trust, and cleanliness. It is closely associated with azure
blue, which is midway between blue and cyan, and is often described as the
color of the sky on a clear summer’s day.

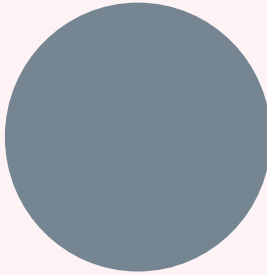
A flexible, contemporary secondary color palette also can be used for
secondary visual identifiers; it also provides a more robust palette for
marketing literature.



Pantone Process Blue
CMYK 100 13 1 2
RGB 0 133 202
HEX #0085CA



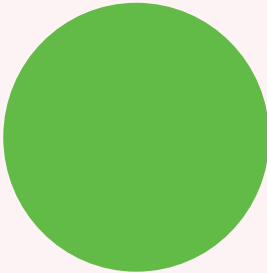
Pantone 7541
CMYK 7 1 3 2
RGB 221 229 237
HEX #DDE5ED



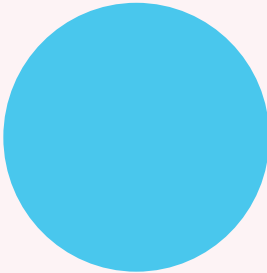
Pantone 7544
CMYK 35 14 11 34
RGB 118 134 146
HEX #768692



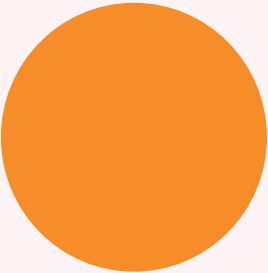
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CMYK 65 43 26 78
RGB 51 63 72
HEX #333F48



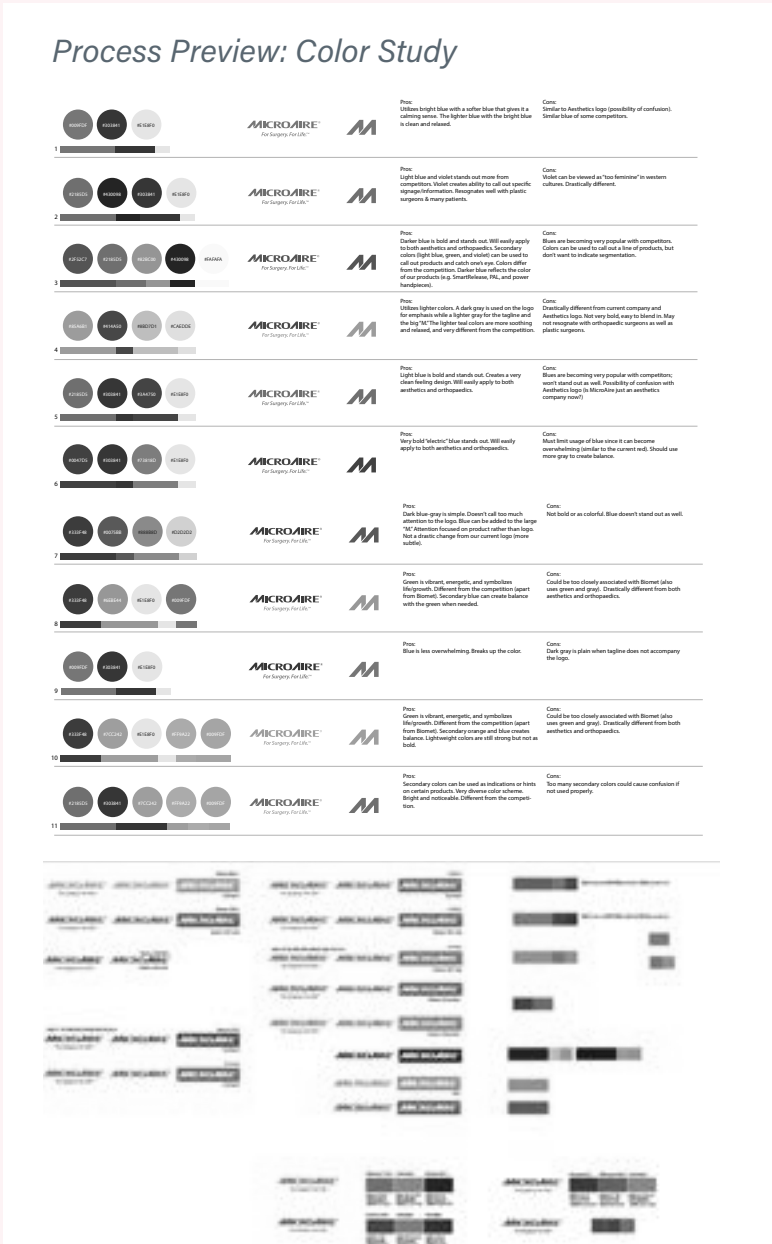
Pantone 368
CMYK 65 0 100 0
RGB 120 190 32
HEX #78BE20



Pantone 1495
CMYK 0 46 78 0
RGB 255 143 28
HEX #FF8F1C



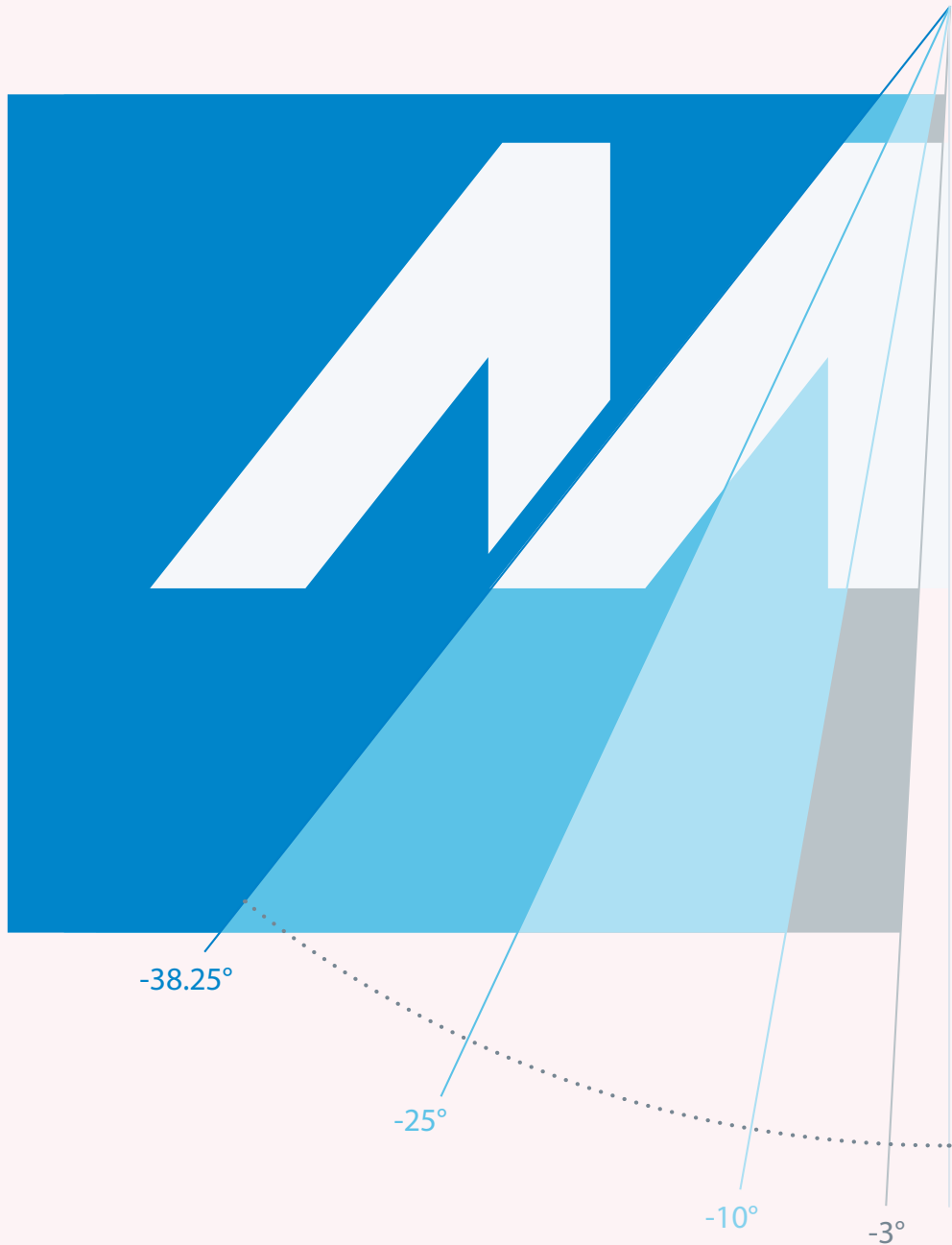
Pantone 2985
CMYK 60 0 3 0
RGB 91 194 231
HEX #5BC2E7



LOGO & TYPEFACE CONSTRAINTS

Logotype

Working with the previously established logotype, we continued the use of sharp, upward angles in visuals throughout the identity.



Typeface

We opted to continue the usage of the sans serif, Myriad Pro, due to its excellent versatility. Myriad also offers flexibility and language support for the majority of translated content.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Bold | Myriad Pro |
| Bold | ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890!&()+=/<>.,;%\$#@!? |
| Regular | ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890!&()+=/<>.,;%\$#@!? |
| Bold Italic | <i>ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890!&()+=/<>.,;%\$#@!?</i> |
| Italic | <i>ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890!&()+=/<>.,;%\$#@!?</i> |

BRAND GUIDELINES

Guidelines were established to encourage consistency of the visual identity.



APPLICATIONS

Over time, the identity was applied to everything including corporate stationery, brochures, signage, advertising, and packaging.



INTERNAL INITIATIVES

Posters for an internal Health & Wellness Fair campaign utilizes the brand’s identity, but also enhances it to embody the fun and light-hearted nature of the company’s culture.

