

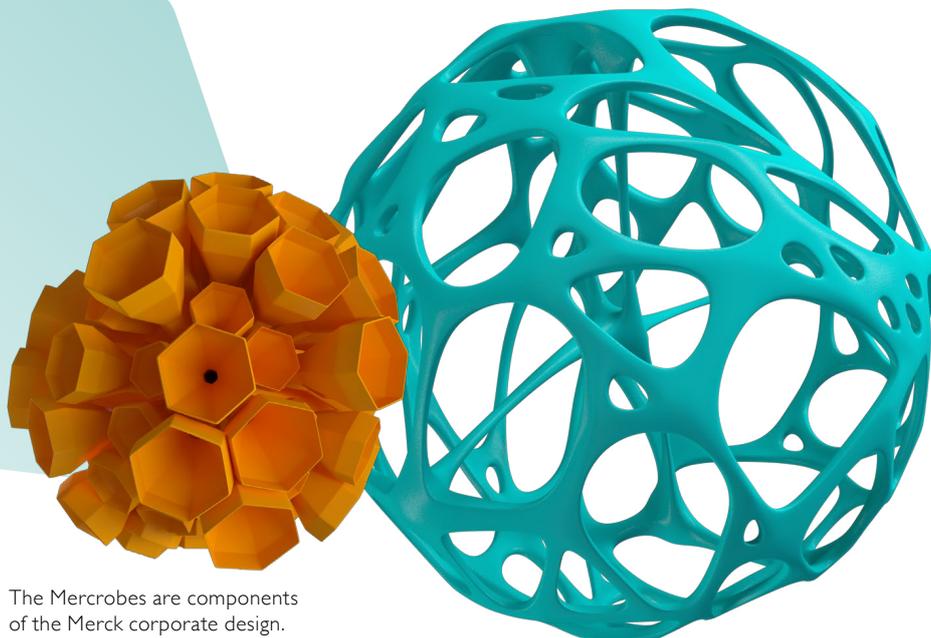
// CASE STUDY 2015 - 2018 //  
VARIOUS HR PROJECTS



### Our customer Merck

Merck KGaA is a leading science and technology company in the sectors Health Care, Life Sciences, and Performance Materials. Their headquarters are in Darmstadt, Germany, where the company was founded in 1668. Merck celebrated its 350th anniversary in 2018. The cornerstone from the 17th century is still of great significance at Merck because the founding family is still the majority stakeholder in the company. Merck currently has about 53,000 employees in 66 countries.

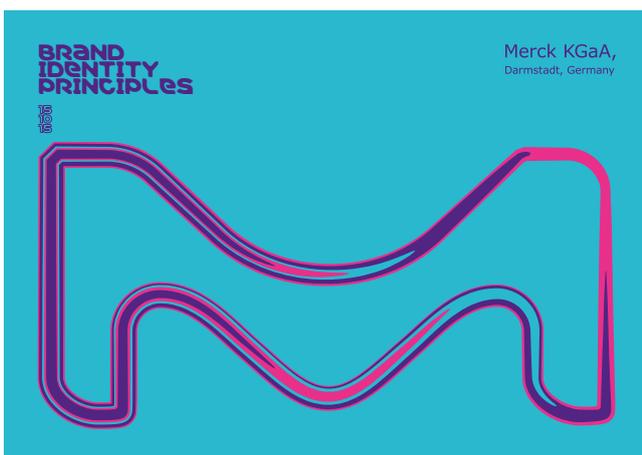
History shows that the company has grown with the times: Since 2007, Merck KGaA has transformed from a traditional chemical and pharmaceuticals company into a leading science and technology enterprise.



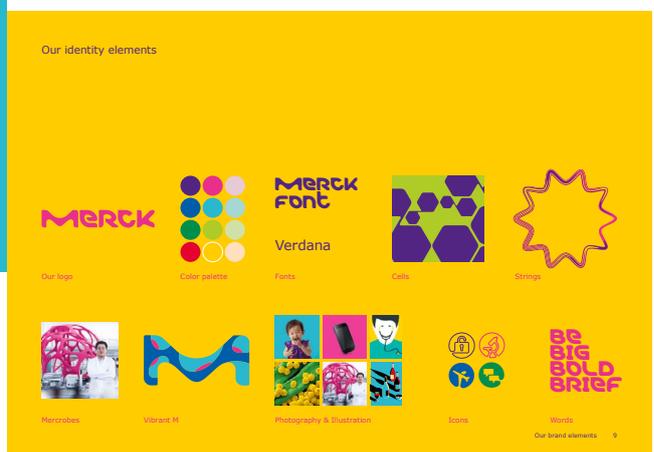
The Mericrobes are components of the Merck corporate design.

## // THIS IS MERCK TODAY //

The transformation of the company is also reflected in the brand's corporate design. The image is youthful, colourful and confident. The powerful hues are the focus of the brand's identity. They can and are intended to be combined to create contrasts; bright and striking patterns are expressly requested. Merck also created its own unmistakable font. The cells are unusual design components that are of course taken from science and nature. The organic yet technical forms give designers a lot of flexibility to create exciting compositions. Another element of the corporate design are the strings. They can highlight text or images, create shapes or represent a path. Even within the strings there are organic and technical shapes. 3D Mericrobes are used to present the researching spirit of the company to the outside world. They are a metaphor for the identity of the Merck brand. The imagery is also orientated to the look and feel of the colourful Merck world. The entire design philosophy is based on this principle: Be clear. Succinct. Powerful.



The Brand Identity Principles contain all the Corporate Designs elements of the Merck brand.



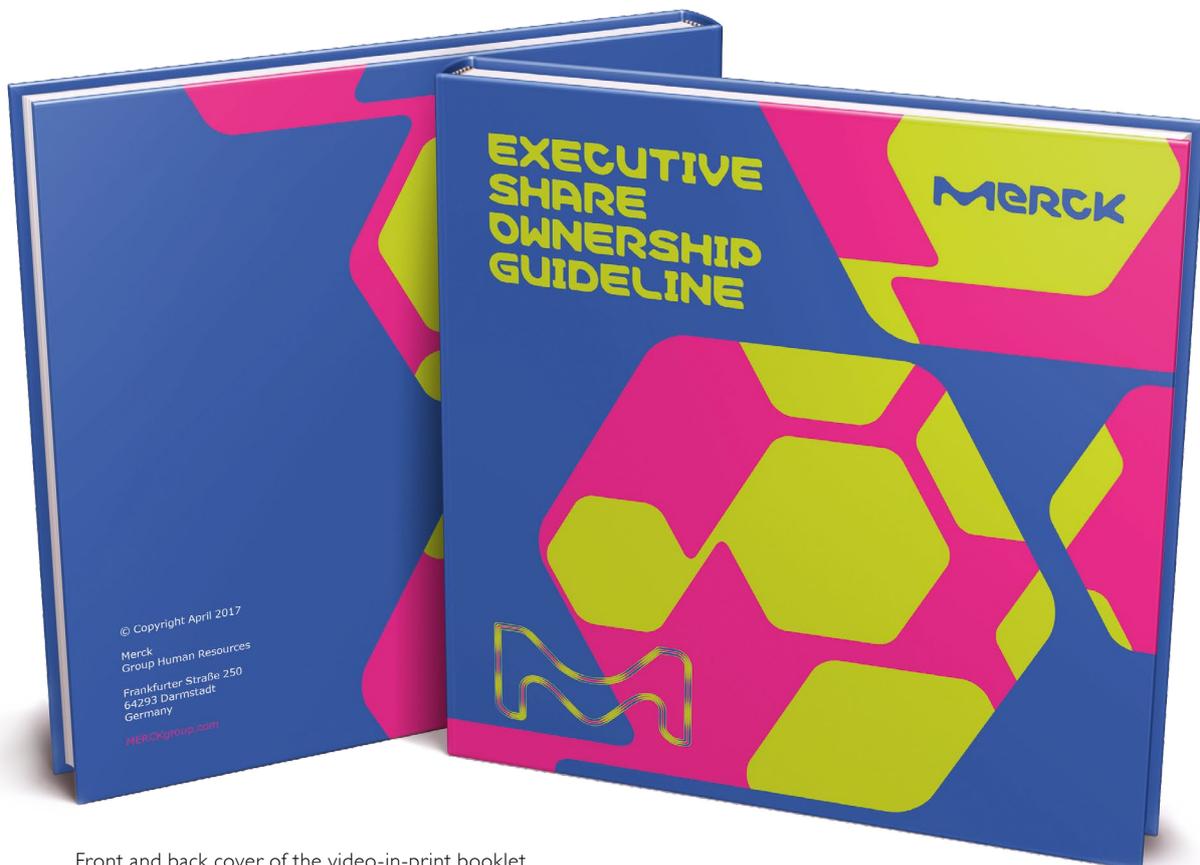
## // CASE I: SHARE OWNERSHIP GUIDELINES //

### Task

As part of assessing the overall compensation arrangement at Merck, the company managed to also adjust elements of Executive Management compensation. Share Ownership Guidelines (SOGs) were introduced, initially a voluntary agreement in which members of Executive Management could buy a certain number of Merck shares and keep them for a specified amount of time. The SOGs were intended to align the interests of company managers and other shareholders, and to generally create an “ownership culture” at Merck. Unequity was given the task of designing a creative medium that effectively touched on the unique qualities of the Executive Board and other top management target groups while making the SOGs succinct, attractive and easy to understand.

### Design

When developing the communications concept, special attention was given to the needs of the target group, in addition to the creative framework set forth by the Merck corporate design – in particular in terms of availability, a short turnaround time, the variety of topics in the day-to-day and the earnestness of the communications. Only one medium was to be used to provide top management at the company with a multimedia information package about the SOGs – and simultaneously encourage them to accept those guidelines. We looked for the “Wow!” ... and found one.



Front and back cover of the video-in-print booklet.



The screen and brochure inside the video-in-print booklet.

## Solution

Working with our production partners, Unequity developed a video-in-print booklet that stimulates multiple senses and garners attention even in the midst of a hectic day-to-day. A screen and speaker were built into the cover of the portable booklet, which played videos to the recipient. The booklet also had buttons to adjust the volume. The first video featured a message straight from the Chairman of the Board while the video that followed helped explain the SOGs using motion graphics. The booklet's technology even allowed users to switch between the videos. The square, elegantly coated hard-back booklet explained the SOGs in relatively simple language and also contained a brochure that went into detail about the contents of the video. This addressed the needs and habits of anyone who would rather read an actual brochure than watch a video or read a text on a screen.

Unequity was responsible for the creative concept, all of the text in the Executive Board video and the brochure, and for the graphics and additionally also handled the project and production management. The explanatory video was developed by a Merck partner. The effective collaboration with Merck and all of the other project contributors resulted in a unique medium that helped bring awareness of, and in many cases also acceptance of, the SOGs within a very short period of time. At the same time, all of the contents were also posted on the company Intranet to provide computer or mobile device access to the information for this special target group.

## // CASE 2: FREE SHARE //

### Task

Unequity was contracted with the development of a strategic and creative communications concept for the FreeShare350 programme. The background for the project was Merck's 350-year anniversary, following the motto **IMAGINE: Always curious – even for the next 350 years**. All employees in Germany received tax-free Merck shares worth 350 Euro plus a cash component.

### Design

Specific tasks included creating a striking brochure in two languages with all of the relevant information on participating in the FreeShare2015 share programme and a distribution schedule for getting it out to employees. The text and the layout were to emphasise the gift to employees and motivate them to take part. The goal was to present the participation process in the simplest way possible. At the same time, legal information needed to be included. During the participation period, the print campaign was supported by online measures via the Merck Intranet and communicated worldwide.



A striking brochure for the FreeShare350 programme.



Cover and inside pages of the FreeShare brochure.

## Solution

The elaborate finish on the brochure – in particular the stamped ribbon and the elegant coating – made the package a lot like a gift. The brochures were also sent to employees' home addresses so there was enormous reach with this campaign.

Employees received their personalised present at home and were guided step-by-step through the online participation process of FreeShare350. The Intranet featured banners in the campaign's look and feel that led users with a single sign-on button directly to the programme administrator's platform, which was also set up with the FreeShare2015 style.

A folder was also produced for the international communication campaign. The yellow packaging was created in nine languages and helped HR coordinators around the world to communicate the anniversary message. Unequity was responsible for everything from conceptualisation and implementation to the distribution of brochures and folders as well as the online media effort.

## The result

With a participation rate of over 93%, Merck was delighted with this very successful and valued gift as well as with the high numbers of new employee shareholders.

Folders in different languages.



## // CASE 3: FLEXIBLE WORKING MODELS //

### Task and concept

Merck is not only a modern company, but also a modern employer providing forward-looking working conditions that will keep the employees of today and tomorrow healthy, happy and productive. A variety of working models and the option of trading in working hours for time off, sabbaticals or early retirement were all to be placed into one communications campaign and bundled into one medium.

The „Working models“ project began with two workshops with the Merck Darmstadt team responsible for the topics to be addressed. At the meetings, individual benefits were described and analysed, the relevant information was exchanged and the communication objectives were laid out. Unequity then came up with two creative campaign ideas, one of which would from then on be the medium to communicate all of the benefits related to flexible working models. This included, among other things, creating names for the working models under the umbrella [smarkworkplace@merck](mailto:smarkworkplace@merck), coming up with icons as well as illustrations and selecting a suitable look and feel.

After deciding on the creative concept and establishing the communications media, the various elements of the campaign were agreed upon in an ongoing coordination process. The greatest challenge here was complying with the labour law stipulations while still delivering an understandable communications package. That in turn required ongoing coordination with the Merck KGaA legal department. The main medium for the campaign was to be a brochure. The reason being that printed materials can be used for both on-boarding days and at trade shows. Roll-ups at events also garner a lot of attention. A target group-oriented presentation was used to communicate the working models platform within the company. An interactive PDF for online use was also put together.

Brochures and Roll-Ups for communicating the working models.





The inner pages of the brochure on working models.

## Solution

The first step was to create a suitable layout. Given how different and personalised all the working models are, the design of the chapters to describe them were meant to be equally diverse. On top of that, for each work model a separate icon was created that would have high recognition value and visually support the content. At the same time, the icons can be used on the Intranet.

The images were selected based on Merck's guidelines and with the diversity aspect of the company in mind. The photos show people in different phases of life and thus directly represent the various working models being presented. It was vital that the text in the brochures was understandable for all employees, despite most of it coming from the legal department.



The different icons for the flexible work models.

## // CASE 4: LONG-TERM INCENTIVE PLAN //

### Task

Merck regularly assesses whether their implemented compensation system is competitive and up-to-date with current market trends. At the beginning of 2016, Unequity was given the task of creating a communications concept to understandably and enticingly explain the changes and rules that would from that moment forward be valid for the Long-Term Incentive Plan. The old communications media including brochures, terms and conditions, and letters needed to be updated to reflect more modern media. The brochures and the terms and conditions had previously been sent via e-mail. Employees received the nomination letters personally. They then needed to be signed and submitted. The process of an original signature and its subsequent verification by Total Rewards employees was to be replaced by a digital process for the new LTIP 2016.

### Design

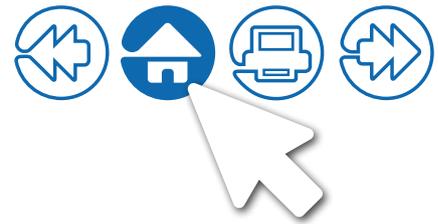
The goal of the communications concept surrounding the entire LTIP process was digitalisation. It needed to start with generating interest for the plan and would continue through to the confirmation of the terms and conditions with a signature from the participant. The media to be developed would entail a good mixture of both information and communication, and was to be done in English. Employees were to get an understanding of how the LTIP works, the participation process and the overall goals of the LTIP. The concept needed to be usable for several years to come and be easy to update.



Ongoing development of the LTIP brochure.



The buttons help navigate through the digital brochure.



The mouse-over provides additional helpful information.



A page from the LTIP brochure with interactive elements.

## Solution

Unequity developed a new interactive brochure in the Merck Corporate Design. Internal links similar to regular websites make it possible to jump from chapter to chapter as well as go to the electronic acceptance tool. External links, for example to a calculation simulator or to the legal terms and conditions, made it possible for LTIP participants to switch to other interfaces/platforms without a noticeable change between the media. Technical terms were explained automatically in the form of speech bubbles as soon as the user's mouse moved over a defined term. The images used to make the platform more accessible covered the international target group of employees eligible for the LTIP. An overview explaining how the various deadline periods of the LTIP work was provided in the form of an infographic that could also be adapted for a poster format. Since 2016, Unequity has been updating the media for Merck, thus ensuring that the entire platform is easily recognisable and, most importantly, identifiable by employees as related to their LTIP.



This clear infographic can also be used as a poster.

## // FACTS & FIGURES //

**Customer:**

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt



**Responsible department  
at customer:**

Group Human Resources,  
CoE Total Rewards

**Project time period:**

August 2015 – present

**Agency lead:**

Simone Schmitt-Schillig

## // SO WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU? //

*Unequity takes a great idea and uses optimized communications to make it a success. Whether it's employee shares or management programs, bonus plans, company car arrangements or offers for pension plans, we make your compensation & benefits program a big win – for your employees and for your company.*

*Unequity. Good communications for good ideas.*



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