

# Novacut

## Logo & Identity Design First Draft.

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# So, what is Novacut?

free  
opensource  
distributed  
video  
editor

## Open Source

Software development has changed immensely over the past decade and the Free & Open Source Software (FOSS) movement has played a significant role in that.

At its root, Open Source software describes software that is released with its source code openly available and permits, under certain licenses, users and the wider community to study, change, improve and distribute the software in question.

The Novacut software and video editor is all about sharing, creative collaboration and freedom from closed, proprietary software, so developing the Novacut software as open source makes perfect sense.

## Cloud-Enabled

By operating in the cloud, the Novacut software runs as a unique "distributed" model, in three different ways:

1. **Distributed Workflow:** this feature allows artists to collaboratively edit video from all over the internet, as the video data is hosted in the cloud, rather than the artists' own workstation.
2. **Distributed Storage:** this allows users to seamlessly store and synchronise video files across multiple computers and the cloud. Video editing can occur anywhere.
3. **Distributed Rendering:** this feature allows seamless spread rendering and encoding across multiple computers.

## Video Editor

The Novacut video editor is unique; never before has the world seen a free, open-source distributed-design video editor, allowing artists from all over the world to collectively collaborate on material. The Novacut video editor will give power and control back to the artists.

Due to its open-source and distributed-design model, Novacut will allow artists to reduce costs, work faster, collaborate with the right people and increase the chances for success.

It's Novacut's goal to be the catalyst for an explosion of financially viable independent TV shows distributed directly to fans over the Internet, funded through direct fan support and licensed under the Creative Commons.



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# Research & Inspiration.



## Sharing, Collaboration & Reciprocation

The key concepts behind the "vision" of Novacut. With the Novacut software, and its unique distributed model, artists can creatively collaborate in the cloud, share and exchange ideas and edits, artist content is given straight to the user and the user can directly fund and support the artist for further content creation. It's a cycle of appreciation and creation that feeds itself.

## Ubuntu

Ubuntu. The free, open-source and by far the most popular Linux-based operating system available. Its name roughly translates as "I am what I am because of who we all are." Ubuntu is all about collaboration, sharing and quality free software for the greater good of all, ideas key to Novacut also. Novacut aims to be tightly integrated into the Ubuntu operating system and ethos.

## Open Source Software

Free and Open Source software has been one of the last decade's success stories, with companies and governments increasingly adopting Open Source software solutions. Free and Open Source software is all about openness, transparency and global inclusion. These are values that Novacut encourage and are passionate about.

## The Play Button

It's universal. It's globally recognised. Everyone knows what it means. It means direction, it means entertainment, it means Go!, it means progress. It is balanced and stable. It's one of the most basic fundamental shapes in the world and is used in iconography and logo design all over the world. It's a powerful metaphor.

# Competition Analysis.



PiTiVi is a free, intuitive and featureful movie editor for the Linux desktop. It is designed to support and encode multiple video formats and is specifically designed for ease of learning and intuitiveness. PiTiVi has opted for a very GNOME Tango style icon for their logo, making use of a familiar metaphor for video editing: the director's board, set against a simple, geometric sans typeface.



OpenShot is a simple, powerful, and free open-source video editor for Linux with a focus on usability, flexibility, and style, much like its counterpart PiTiVi. OpenShot has opted for a very Apple "Aqua" style for their logo, employing glossy, web 2.0 icons and text and utilising the familiar "play" and "pause" icons.

The logo for Kickstarter, featuring the word "KICKSTARTER" in a bold, sans-serif font, with "KICK" in black and "STARTER" in green.

Kickstarter is a funding platform for artists, designers, filmmakers, musicians, journalists, inventors, explorers and more. It operates on the all-or-nothing crowdfunding method. Kickstarter's branding presents itself as very simple and friendly, reflected in the logo, which utilises a friendly green with a rounded typeface.



VODO, powered by BitTorrent, helps promote and distribute new creative works all over the world & enables those enjoying shared media to make donations to creators. Its branding is very modern and "web 2.0", using a very simple and clear logo with a slight sheen to it. The keyline references the shape of old TVs, the V representing the name and serving as an aerial (broadcasting, distributing).



A heavyweight in the video editing world, Final Cut Pro is available only for Mac OS X and Apple's products. According to a 2007 SCRI study, Final Cut made up 49% of the US professional editing market, with Avid at 22%. FCP doesn't have much in terms of individual branding, consisting of an Aqua-style director's board icon (not very imaginative) set with Myriad Pro.



iTunes is a proprietary digital media player application, used for playing and organizing digital music and video files. The application is also an interface to manage the contents on Apple's iPod and iPhone lines, as well as the iPad. Like FCP, it's branding is integrated into Apple's own, recently changing its icon to a general music note set in an Aqua-style background with glossy text.



Netflix offers both on-demand video streaming over the internet, and flat rate online video rental (rental-by-mail) of DVD-Video and Blu-ray Disc. It is rumoured to be responsible for a large chunk of the US' internet traffic. It's branding is very simple and very classic 50s movie-goer.



Avid is an American company specializing in video and audio production technology; specifically, digital non-linear editing (NLE) systems, management and distribution services. Avid's Media Composer is considered an industry standard. Its branding is elementary, clean and clever, reflecting their products, and is composed of basic triangles (play buttons) and shapes to spell the brand, set in corporate purple.

# Target User Research.

## Who Is Novacut For?



### The Dawn of P2P

As rightly pointed out by the Novacut team, the early adopters and evangelists of the Novacut software and going to be the P2P generation—those who got onboard and lapped up P2P and torrent networks such as Napster, BitTorrent and more. This new wave of internet file-sharing occurred as a result of several key events: increased and growing bandwidth, the home PCs increasing ability to store vast quantities of data and the growing trend and convenience of digitising popular media formats.

### Some Facts

In 2004, an estimated 70 million people participated in online file sharing. According to a CBS News poll, nearly 70 percent of 18 to 29 year olds thought file

sharing was acceptable in some circumstances and 58 percent of all Americans who followed the file sharing issue considered it acceptable in at least some circumstances.

### Illegality & Morality

In January 2006, 32 million Americans over the age of 12 had downloaded at least one feature length movie from the Internet, 80 percent of whom had done so exclusively over P2P. Of the population sampled, 40 percent felt that downloading copyrighted movies off the Internet constituted a very serious offense, however 78 percent believed taking a DVD from a store without paying for it constituted a very serious offense.

### A New Way Forward

Increasingly, we are finding more and more artists are becoming pliable to the idea of "opening" their work a lot more, Trent Reznor of Nine Inch Nails being a notable example. On March 2 2008, "Ghosts I-IV", a 36-track instrumental album, became available via the band's official website. Ghosts I-IV was made available in a number of different formats and forms, ranging from a free download of the first volume, to a \$300 Ultra

Deluxe limited edition package. All 2500 copies of the \$300 package sold out in three days. The album is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share Alike licence.

Similar to the announcement that ultimately led to the release of Ghosts I-IV, a post on the band's website in April 2008 read "2 weeks!" On May 5, Nine Inch Nails released The Slip via their

### The Game Changer

P2P file-sharing changed the world, there's no doubt about that. In the world of music, sales dropped globally from approximately \$38 billion in 1999 to \$32 billion in 2003, and an increasing number of studies found that file sharing had a negative impact on record sales.

In response to this, several artists have experimented with new ways to release the work they've created. Radiohead's seventh album, "In Rainbows", was released through the band's own website in October 2007 as a digital download for which customers could make whatever payment that they deemed appropriate, including paying nothing at all; the site only advised, "it's up to you".

website without any advertisement or promotion. The album was made available for download free of charge, protected under the same Creative Commons licence as Ghosts, and has seen individual downloads surpassing 1.4 million.

Novacut firmly believe that this "opening up" of creative content to fans, and encouraging them to fund how they see fit, is the way forward.

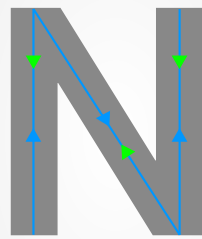
# Logo Development.



**01**

## Keep It Simple

It was important that the new logo for the Novacut identity operated so that the landmark could be separated from the logotype and still be recognisable. After all, Novacut will be software tightly integrated in the Ubuntu OS, which means that the landmark also needs to act as an icon for the Unity launcher. So I started by constructing an 'N' for "Novacut". Then I noticed that this 'N' is very balanced, and I got an idea...



**02**

## Balance & Reciprocation

The more I studied the shape of the uppercase 'N', the more I realised that this was the base needed for the new logo. As demonstrated above, you can imagine a path of energy running through the 'N' and back again in perfect balance, conveying this idea of sharing and reciprocation, back and forth. Furthermore, studies show that logos that balance are seen as more "ethical". Then a further idea struck me...



**03**

## It's About People

I realised that if you split the 'N' in two, this idea of balance and reciprocation is enhanced. It's almost as if one half of the 'N' feeds the other and vice versa, interpolating that sense of community and sharing that we want to convey for Novacut. And then, in my mind, I realised that each half of the 'N' kind of looked like a person and Novacut is all about people isn't it?



**04**

## Collaboration & Humanity

It's amazing the difference two circles can make. Adding these onto each half of the 'N' completely transforms the landmark. Each half of the 'N' has now been humanised. Furthermore, knowing that artists with Novacut can collaborate with each other from all over the world, this landmark now visualises this concept, as if two artists are working together from opposite ends of the earth. We're getting close...

# Logotype Treatment.

01 - Aller

novacut

02 - Droid

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03 - PT Sans

novacut

04 - M Plus

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05 - Maven Pro

novacut

06 - Vegur

novacut

07 - Nobile

novacut

08 - Molengo

novacut

09 - Eau

novacut

10 - Gillius No. 2

novacut

11 - Perspective

novacut

12 - Lato

novacut

## Typography is important

Typography is perhaps one of the most fundamental, and important, aspects of graphic design, so it makes sense to look into the right typeface for the new identity.

It was noted in the brief that there is a preference towards a free sans-serif typeface, with the possibility of considering a sans/serif hybrid. All the fonts above are free for commercial use.

Looking into the fonts above, there are a few that we can discount due to their designed purpose. Aller (01), Droid (02), PT Sans (03), M Plus (04) and Nobile (07) are all designed for onscreen legibility and body copy. As such, they don't make good display typefaces at bigger sizes.

Maven Pro (05) draws some similarities with Ubuntu's own font, but the lowercase 'a' lets it down.

Vegur (06) is also a nice choice but suffers from being far, far too similar to the famous Frutiger. If Novacut is to be unique, it's a good idea to move away from established typefaces.

Likewise, Gillius No. 2 (10) is too heavily based on Gill Sans (used by the BBC) and Eau (09) bares a lot of similarities to Myriad Pro.

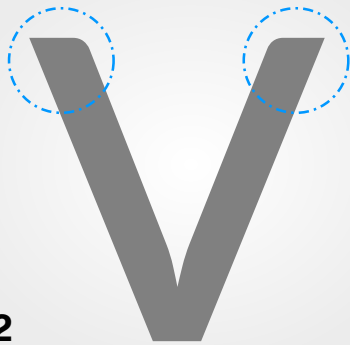
Perspective (11) is a good candidate but suffers from an unbalanced lowercase 'a'.

Molengo (08) is definitely a step in the right direction, but there is another typeface that is a similar humanist sans-serif style that also hints at serif characteristics... and that's Lato (12), an Open-Source font that impressively comes in a large variety of weights. It's classy, professional, free and clean.

# Logo Evolution.

## 01 Standard Lato Typeface

novacut



02



03

## 04 Brandmark



## 05 Matched



### A Harmonious Logo

If we examine the logotype more carefully (01), we can see that on quite a few of the characters some of the corners are rounded off (see 02 and 03).

It's a lovely feature of this typeface that aids in its classy and professional presentation, so we want to keep that feature of the typeface.

However, comparing the style of the letterforms with the blocky brandmark (04), it becomes clear that they don't match or complement each other as well as they could. So we need to make a few adjustments to the brandmark.

### Fine Tuning

Not all corners of the brandmark need to be rounded off. Doing so would still result in a brandmark that doesn't match the typeface.

Examining the Lato typeface more carefully, a pattern can be spotted: the rounding off of any corners of the letterforms occurs on the inline rather than the outline.

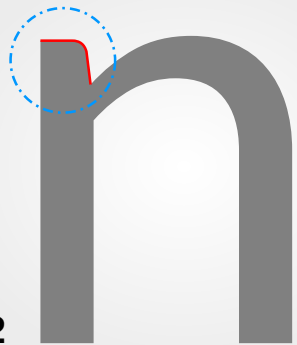
In (05), the more matched brandmark now complements the logotype more completely. The strategic rounding off of certain corners also achieves certain extras: Firstly, on the left half of the 'N', the rounded corner glides down to the "arm", giving the "person" a shoulder; secondly, opposite corners are rounded off to maintain symmetry and balance.

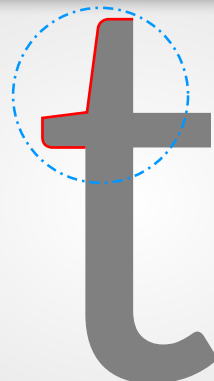


# Logotype Adjustments.

## 01 Standard Lato Typeface

novacut

02 

03 

## 04 Tweaked Logotype

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### Make It Yours

The stock Lato typeface, as lovely as it is, needs to be personalised more. After all, there's nothing particularly special or unique about merely setting "Novacut" in Lato with slightly tighter tracking. Anyone can do that.

Plus, Lato has lots of little details in certain characters that are designed to aid legibility at smaller point sizes (see 02 and 03).

However, we're using Lato as a beautiful logotype. This means an increased point size. As a result, a few of these details can be adjusted.

Not only does this iron out and neaten up the logotype, it also personalises it; makes the logotype completely unique and designed purposely for Novacut.

### The Details Matter

As you can see in (04), the Novacut logotype has now been evened out nicely, whilst still retaining the overall charms and characteristics that make the typeface work for this new identity design.

Particular care was taken to ensure that the rounded corners kept their shape and still matched the rest of the typeface.

This refreshed logotype now looks cleaner, aiding in presenting the professional and high-quality aspects of Novacut's new identity design.

The logo is nearly there, we just need to now have a look at the brandmark again. There's one final element required...

# Brandmark Final Touches.

## 01 Current State of Brandmark

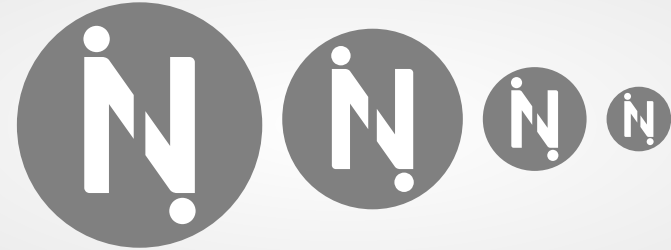


### Unity Friendly

The current state of the new Novacut brandmark (01) is definitely heading in the right direction. However, we must pay attention to one of the key points in the brief: the new Novacut brandmark must also work as a separate entity, so that it can be used as an icon in the Ubuntu Unity launcher.

Currently, the brandmark looks good, but we need to iconify it...

## 02 Novacut Brandmark's Scalability



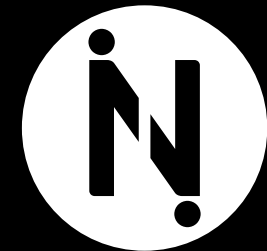
## 03



Adding a roundel around the Novacut brandmark solves this problem. Not only does the roundel contain and package the brandmark nicely, it makes it Unity friendly as well.

As seen in (02), encapsulating the brandmark in a "globe" also aids legibility in various sizes. The new Novacut brandmark scales down absolutely fine.

## 04



And finally, in examples (03) and (04), we can see how the new Novacut brandmark icon works in a completely monotone environment.

Containing the brandmark in the globe allows the logo to stand out from its background without a worry and with pure clarity.

# The New Novacut Logo.





novacut



novacut

# The Colour Scheme.

## Giving Life To Novacut.

### Integrating With Ubuntu

When deciding on a colour scheme for Novacut, I was reminded again of one crucial factor from the brief I received from the Novacut team: it must integrate with Ubuntu's own colour palette.

We can see, below, Ubuntu's two most important colours (see 01 and 02).

The Ubuntu Aubergine is primarily used on the default Ubuntu desktop as the base for the wallpaper. It is the colour that most strikes you as you boot into the Ubuntu desktop.

Ubuntu's Orange is the primary highlighting and selection colour.

From the start, I didn't want to pick colours from a Complementary Colour Chart, as the colours produced as complementary from Ubuntu's own would result in the highly undesirable colours that Novacut cited in the brief (see the bottom-middle colours in 03 and 04).

We need something more harmonious to Ubuntu's already existing colour scheme. In light of this, a better colour chart would be an Analogous Colour Chart (see the bottom-middle colours presented in 05 and 06).

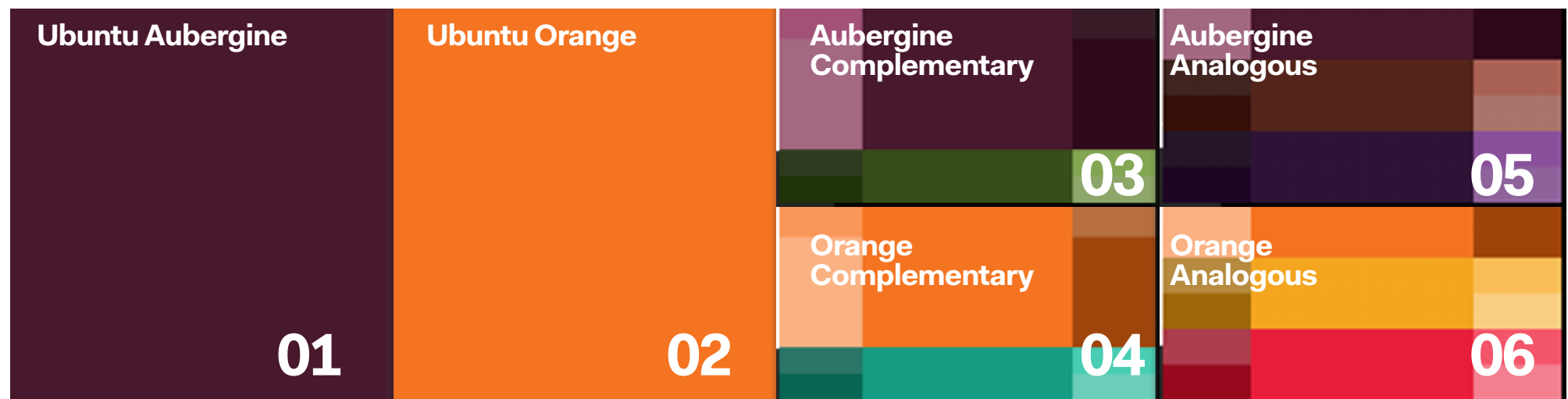
Not only are these colours more acceptable according to the brief, the complement Ubuntu's perfectly.

This leaves us with two new colours to choose from, demonstrated in the brandmarks to the right. For the purposes of the brandmark and as use as an icon, Novacut Purple is far too dark, leaving us with Novacut Pink.

### Novacut Purple



### Novacut Pink



# Full Colour Novacut Logo.

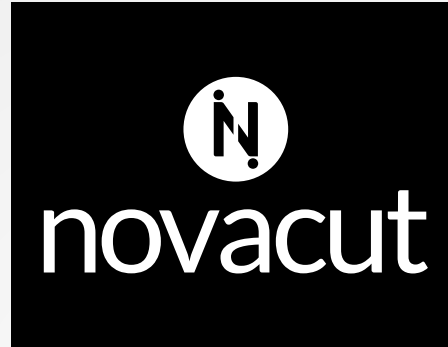


novacut

# Novacut Colourways.



Black On White



White On Black



Full Colour On Light BG



Full Colour On Dark BG



Full Colour On Purple



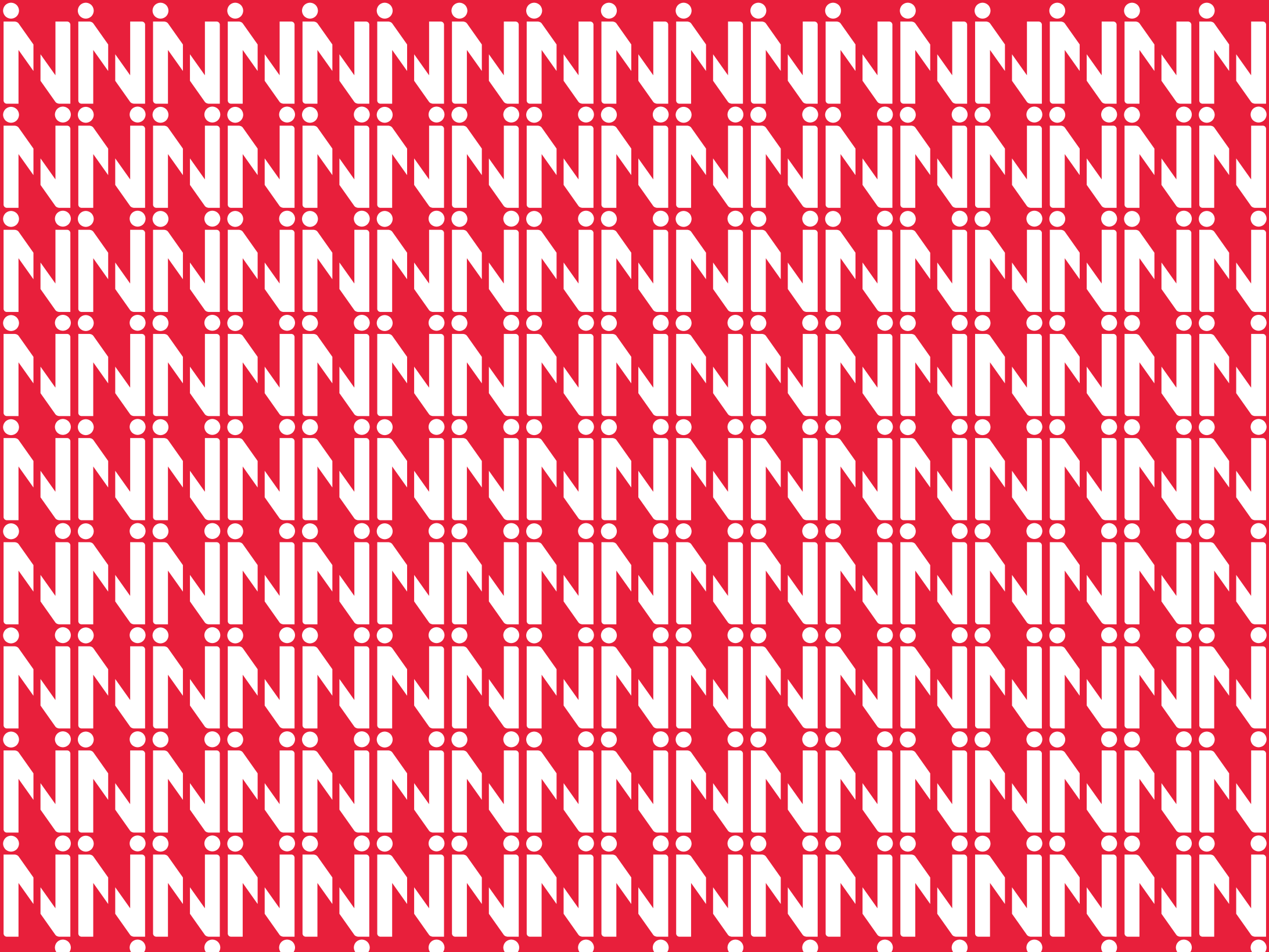
White On Novacut Purple



White On Novacut Pink



See-thru On Full Colour BG









novacut

# Logo Meaning & Symbolism.

## Sharing & Collaboration



01

## Networking & Play



02

## Global Inclusion



03

## The 'Cut' & Editing



04

## An Identifier

Master logo designer, Paul Rand, once said in an article of his, "Should a logo be self-explanatory? It is only by association with a product, a service, a business, or a corporation that a logo takes on any real meaning. It derives its meaning and usefulness from the quality of that which it symbolizes."

This new Novacut logo, therefore, has been custom designed to interpolate certain concepts and meanings about the software and the project.

The first example (01) shows how the design of the modified 'N' symbolises sharing and collaboration; it represents two people on opposite ends of the earth, sharing content, giving and receiving, working in collaboration.

In (02) the inverted space left by the 'N' hints at the common up/down arrows that represent the sending and receiving of data, or networking. They also subtly suggest the Play button metaphor, a powerful symbol, suggesting direction, movement and progress.

The roundel around the logo (03) signifies the world and the sense of a greater community.

And finally, there's the little 'cut' in (04). This is a more obvious symbol, pointing at Novacut's name (a cut in the 'N') as well as the action of 'cutting' in video editing.

# Brand Typography.

As the logotype is based on the Lato typeface, it makes sense that the best typeface to complement the look and feel of Novacut, as a result, is to use Lato as the primary typeface.

Lato is free, open-source, ready for professional use and a high-quality typeface. It comes in four weights as well as authentic italic character forms.

Primary Typeface	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvxyz
<b>Lato</b>	ABCDEFGHIJKLMN <strong>OP</strong> QRSTUVVWXYZ
	1234567890?!£\$%&@#(.,*"')

Novacut  
Lato Light

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Curabitur mollis neque at nulla tempus eleifend. Nunc non mattis velit. Integer mollis,

Novacut  
Lato Regular

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Curabitur mollis neque at nulla tempus eleifend. Nunc non mattis velit. Integer mollis,

Novacut  
Lato Bold

**Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Curabitur mollis neque at nulla tempus eleifend. Nunc non mattis velit. Integer mollis,**

Novacut  
Lato Heavy

**Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Curabitur mollis neque at nulla tempus eleifend. Nunc non mattis velit. Integer mollis,**

*Aa Bb Cc 123*  
**Aa Bb Cc 123**

the world's first  
free, open-source  
distributed  
video editor

# The New Novacut Icon.

Different rules and conventions have to be followed when converting a simple and beautiful brandmark into an icon; the icon must be totally scalable and legible at many sizes, which means redrawing the icon at different key pixel sizes.

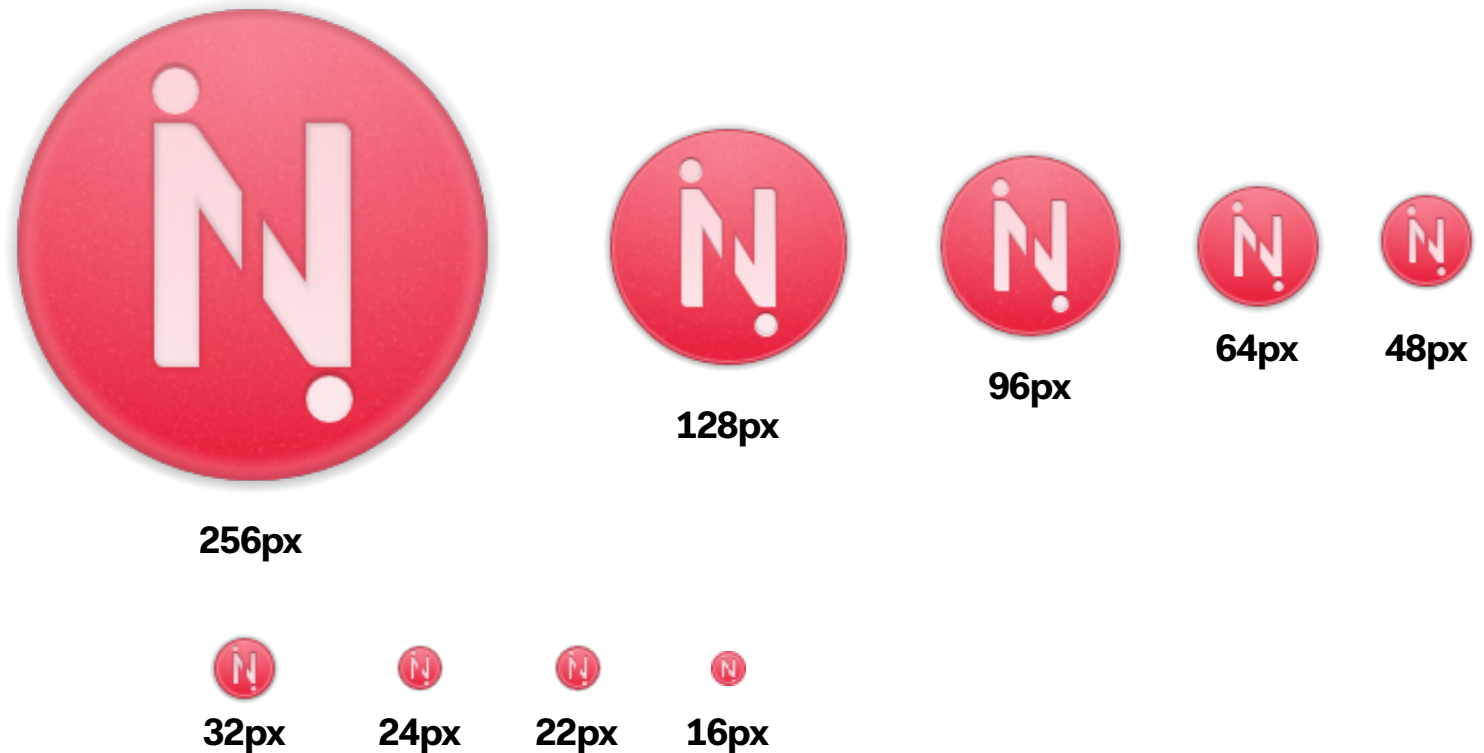
I'm not an icon designer. So I hired one, in the shape of Harenome Ranaivoarivony Razanajato ([kshegzyaj.deviantart.com](http://kshegzyaj.deviantart.com)), an immensely talented icon designer who's also heavily involved in the open-source world.

When speccing the brief to him, I felt it would be advantageous to render the icon in the updated GNOME 3 icon style, as Ubuntu's own icon theme, Humanity, is based on this guideline.

As you can see from the icons to the right, the pureness and simplicity of the brandmark design means that the icon design scales down really.

Furthermore, the 256px and 128px icons are glorious, bold and beautiful. At these sizes, it's also possible to make out the subtle texture.

Now to see how this icon fare in Ubuntu...



**Furthermore, the 256px and 128px icons are glorious, bold and beautiful.**



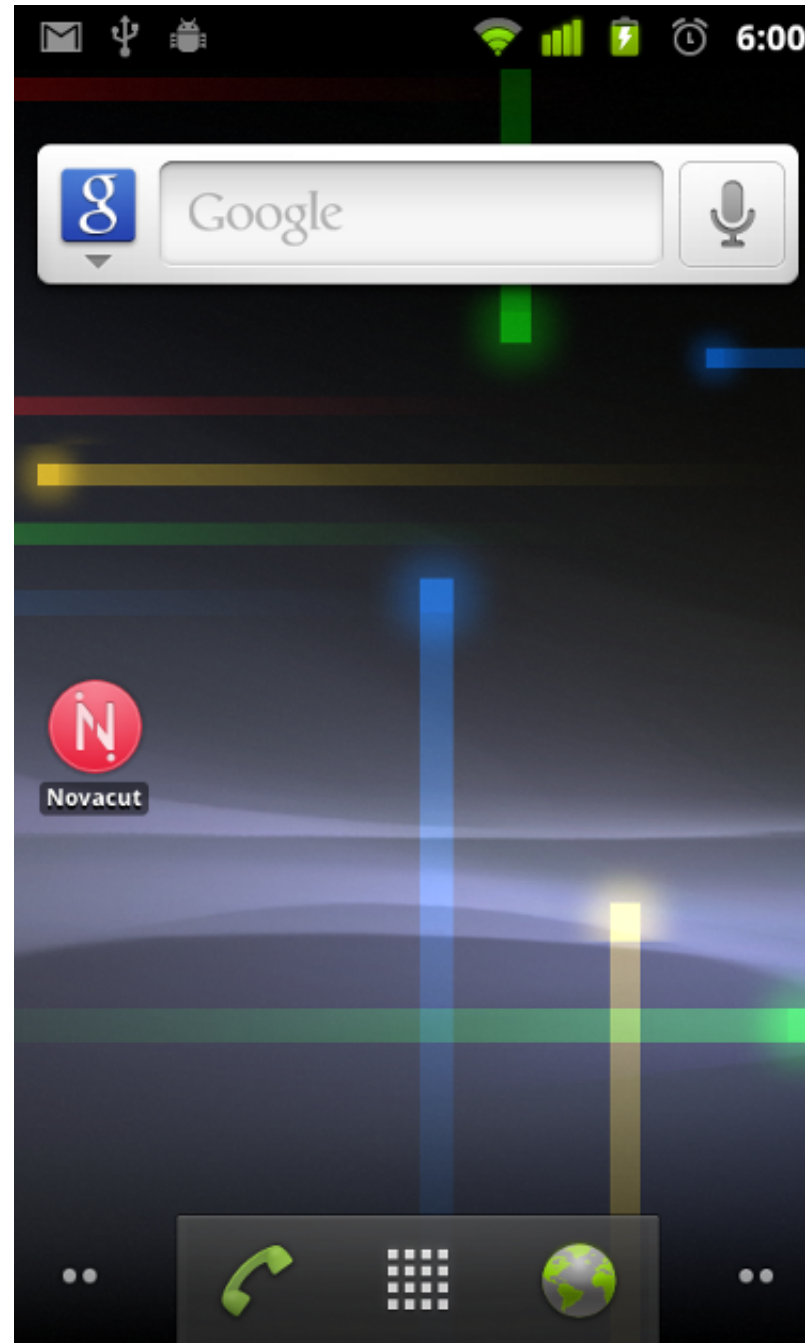
Novacut Video Editor



# Novacut Icon In Action.



Novacut Logo & Identity - 1st Draft



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Novacut Icon In Action

Here we can see the new Novacut logo, in its icon form, on two very different form factors.

On the left, we have the Novacut icon sitting prettily in the side launcher of Ubuntu's new Unity desktop interface, which will be present in the upcoming 11.04 "Natty Narwhal" release.

As you can see, the icon both stands out and blends in. Its simple and clear design means that it stands out from other icons on the launcher, which tend to be more metaphorical and follow the Tango icon guideline. But the Novacut icon also blends in nicely with the overall Ubuntu look, it has been designed to integrate tightly into the Ubuntu UI.

On the right, we have the Novacut icon displayed on the Android "Gingerbread" OS, used in many smartphones throughout the world.

Although the Novacut brand and icon have been designed very much with Ubuntu in mind, this is to show how the clear, simple and beautiful design even works fine on a mobile screen launcher.



# Researching Graphic Style.



## It's About Storytelling

With the logo, colour scheme, typography and icon design safely in the back of the net, it's time to start thinking how we can integrate those basic, core elements into a more complete graphic language, a visual system that Novacut can use.

When I was thinking about how the graphic language of Novacut should look and what it should convey, I started thinking about stories.

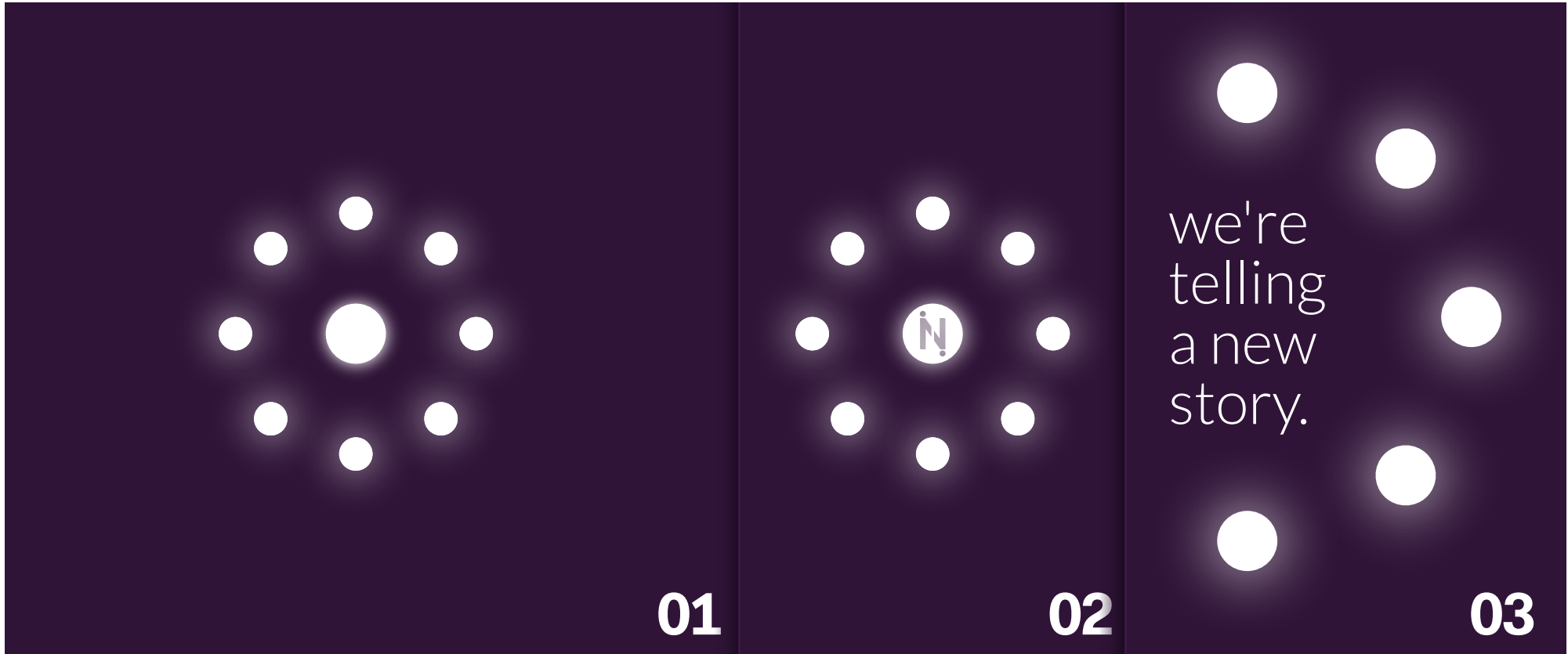
After all, storytelling is important to Novacut. The core of Novacut's UX ideas and beliefs is that the video editing interface should enable the easy telling of stories. And when I thought about this, the image above came into my head...

I liked the idea of a campfire, a group of people from all walks of life, sitting around a fire, with a storyteller in the middle.

And the more I visualised this scene in my head, the more I realised that we can graphically visualise this idea into an entire visual system.

**Novacut should enable the easy telling of stories...**

# The Novacut Graphic System.



## Novacut At The Hub

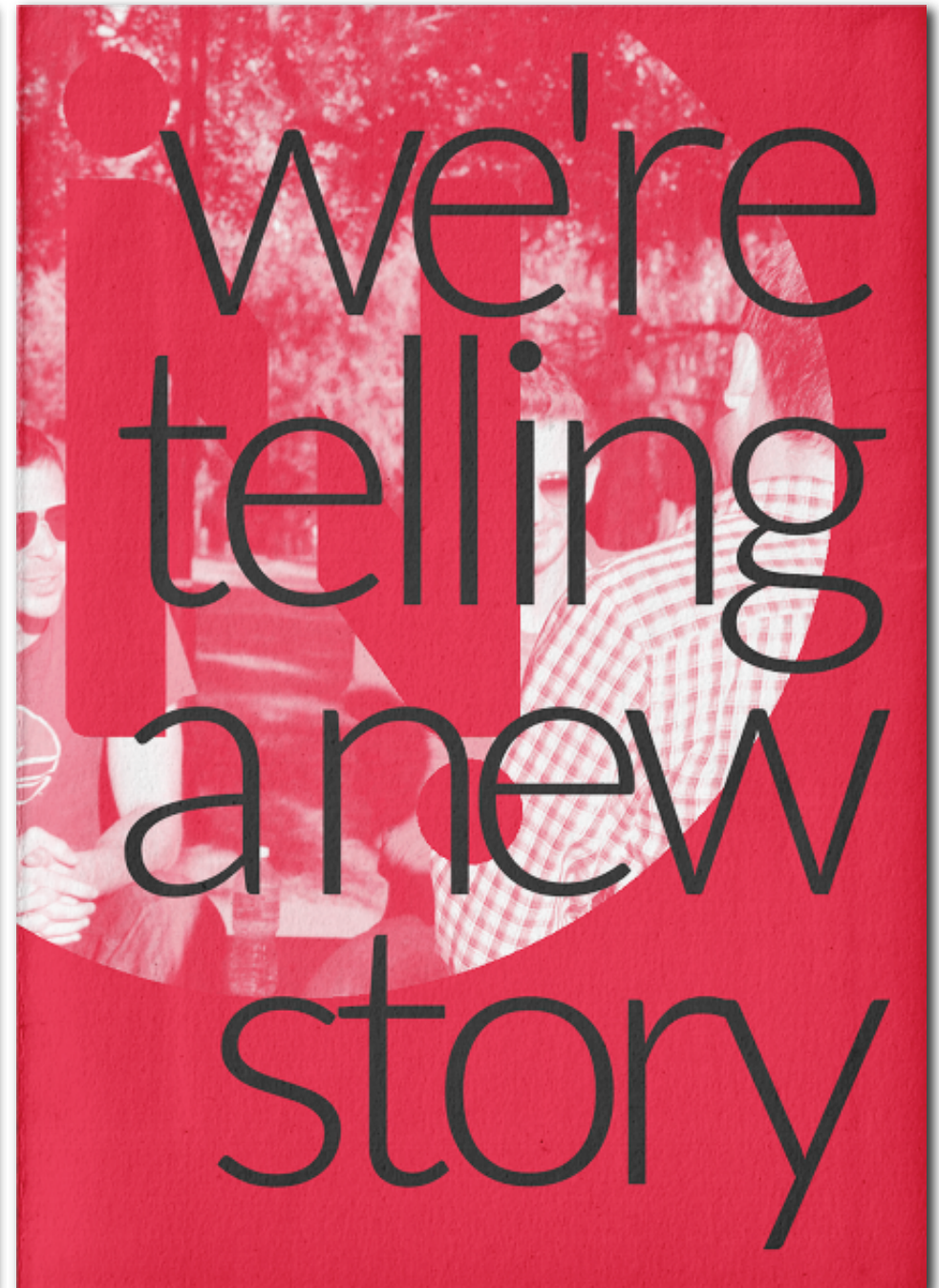
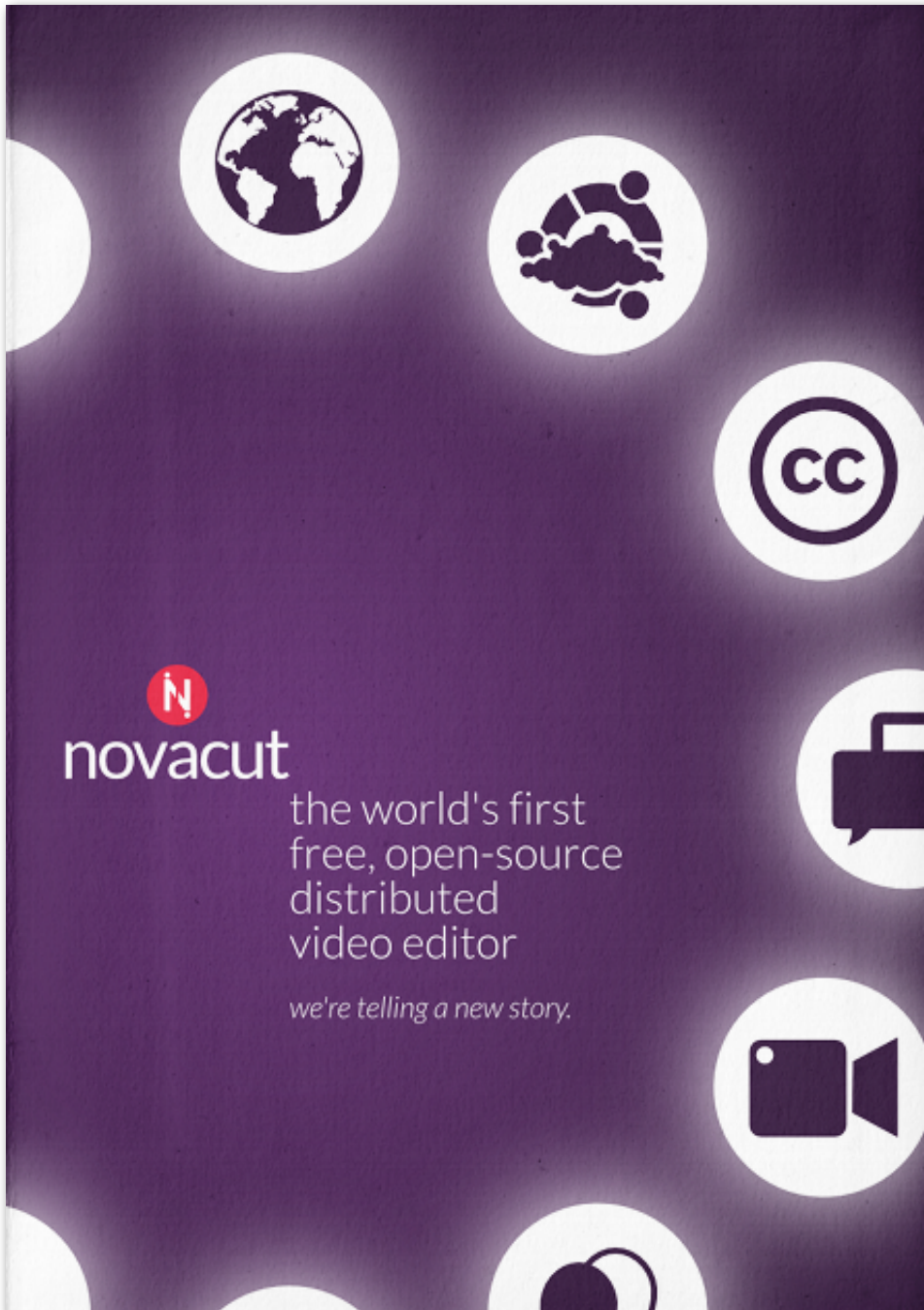
If we take that image of a campfire and the storyteller, and simplify it, what we essentially get is a topographical image of people sitting around a central hub (01). This graphic system can serve three purposes: Firstly, to convey the idea of a community of people, sharing, giving, receiving, collaborating; Secondly, to portray the idea of storytelling and thirdly to convey the idea of multiple aspects around a central hub - Novacut.

We can expand on this third idea in (02). Using the new Novacut brandmark, we can portray how the multiple assets of the Novacut project—video editor, video player, cloud computing, CC-licensing, distributed rendering and more—all revolve around the core: Novacut. We can even use iconography to signify those multiple assets inside the little circles. This will be expanded on later.

Of course, the great thing about this graphic system is that it's flexible. We can replace the 'hub' (usually, say, the Novacut brandmark) with something else. In (03), the hub of the "campfire" is text, in this case a possibly tagline for Novacut: "we're telling a new story". After all, Novacut is leading the bleeding edge with this software, so let's combine this idea with the core concept of storytelling.

The keen of eye will also note that all of circles of the Novacut Campfire glow slightly. I wanted to show that individual circles, the aspects/assets/people of Novacut, we're all interconnected without being obvious and drawing a web of lines everywhere. This is more elegant and subtle, as the interconnectedness emanates from, and permeates, every aspect to every other, converging in the hub that is Novacut.

# Novacut Print Examples.



# Wallpaper Demonstration.





novacut

we're telling a new story

# Novacut Business Cards.



As you can see, we can continue the graphic language of Novacut into a more fluid identity design in the business cards.

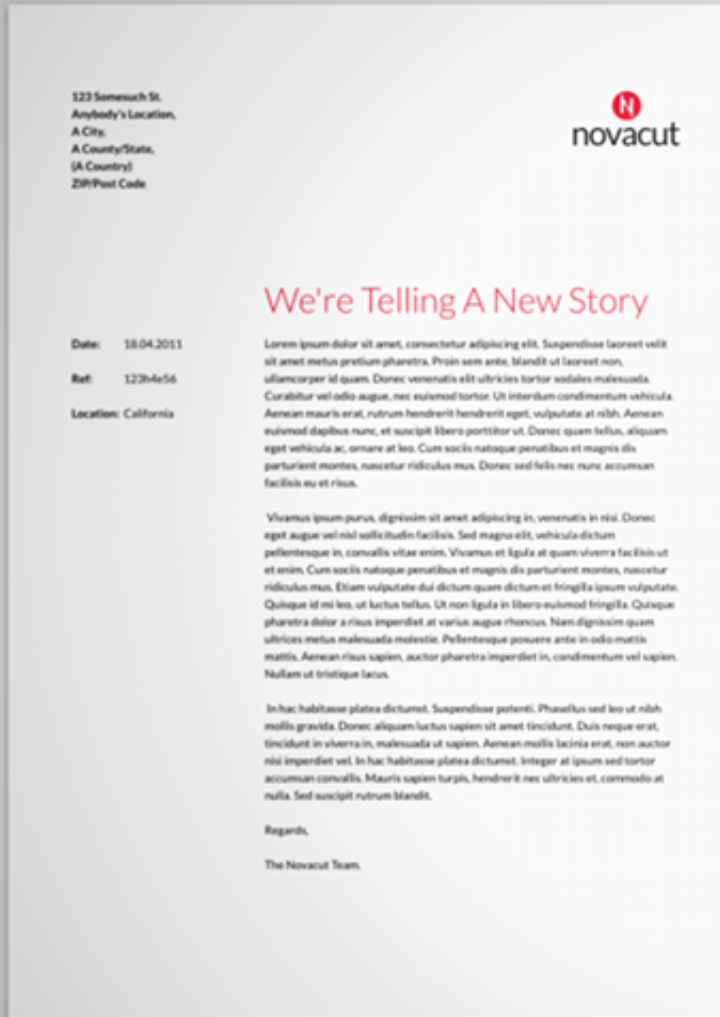
To convey this sense of community and joined collaborative effort, I've split the Novacut business card design into four. Happily, there are three main members of the Novacut team, with room for a fourth. Furthermore, this concept can be multiplied further should the Novacut team grow, into another batch of four cards and so on.

I've also included an optional Novacut Pink front card design as well.

I've kept the importance of simple and beautiful typography as well.

...we can continue the graphic language of Novacut into a more fluid identity design...

# Novacut Letterhead.







# The Novacut T-Shirt.





# Novacut Identity First Draft.

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