# Your Second First Impression: The Art of Startup Rebranding

David Anthony Procházka[1], Daniela Balášová[2], Kateřina Bočková[3]

### Abstract

*Presented paper explores the rebranding strategy of the startup GREEZIIS and its impact on marketing performance and brand perception. It examines how strategic marketing, effective communication, and proper audience targeting can support brand success. The study uses a case analysis method, evaluating data such as product sales, social media growth, and customer engagement before and after the rebranding. Qualitative insights were gathered through interviews with the founder and investors. Findings suggest positive development, though a longer timeframe is needed for full evaluation.*

**Keywords:** *Rebranding, Marketing Strategy, Brand Perception, Startup, Communication, Customer Engagement, Social Media, Brand Development.*

*Jel Classification: M31, M37, L26, D22*

## Introduction

In today's highly competitive business environment, effective marketing has become a critical component of a company's long-term success. Brands that are able to communicate their value clearly and respond strategically to changing customer expectations are more likely to remain relevant and profitable. In this context, the concept of rebranding - the process of redefining a brand's identity, including its visual representation, communication style, and overall market perception - has gained increasing attention.

While rebranding can pose significant risks, it also presents opportunities for enhanced brand recognition, customer engagement, and improved sales performance, when executed strategically. **This study explores such a case in the form of GREEZIIS, a young Czech start-up operating in the field of healthy and sustainable lifestyle**. At the beginning of 2025, the company undertook a comprehensive rebranding initiative with the goal of improving its market positioning and resonating more effectively with its target audience.

The research aims **to evaluate the tangible impact of rebranding on brand performance**. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used to assess key indicators such as product sales (in units), website traffic, social media followers and interactions, and customer reviews. In addition, interviews with the company's founder and two key investors were conducted to provide insight into the strategic thinking behind the transformation.

[1] Ph.D., MBA, MSc., School of Business and IT, University of New York in Prague, Londýnská 41, 120 00 Prague, Czechia, Email: dprochazka@unyp.cz .

[2] School of Business and IT, University of New York in Prague, Londýnská 41, 120 00 Prague, Czechia, Email: xbalasovad@student.unyp.cz

[3] Ph.D., MBA, School of Business and IT, University of New York in Prague, Londýnská 41, 120 00 Prague, Czechia, Email: kbockova@unyp.cz, (Corresponding Author)

This article seeks to offer practical insights into the effectiveness of rebranding within a start-up context and identify critical factors that contribute to its success (Khattak et al., 2021). The findings may serve as valuable guidance for entrepreneurs, marketing professionals, and investors aiming to navigate brand development and repositioning in dynamic market conditions.

## Material and Methods

The aim of this study is to analyse the impact of rebranding on the brand performance of the start-up company GREEZIIS. Specifically, the objective is to evaluate changes in customer perception, sales results, and online engagement resulting from the modification of the visual identity, marketing communication, and overall brand presentation. The study seeks to determine whether, and to what extent, the rebranding contributed to improved brand performance, and to identify the specific factors that influenced this impact.

This research adopts an applied approach using a case study methodology based on an exploratory-descriptive research design. A mixed-methods strategy was employed, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. The goal is not only to analyse the measurable effects of the rebranding process at GREEZIIS but also to gain insight into the internal motivations, decision-making processes, and subjective perception of the brand transformation by the company's leadership and its customers. The integration of these methods allows for a comprehensive understanding of rebranding as a strategic tool for brand development.

### Quantitative Analysis

The objective of the quantitative part of the research was to determine whether the rebranding led to statistically significant changes in the brand's performance indicators. Therefore, a comparative analysis was conducted, focusing on selected key metrics over two defined periods: the three months prior to the rebranding (May-July 2024, August excluded) and the three months following its implementation (January - March 2025). The primary metrics observed are listed in Table 1:

| Area | Metric | Data source |
|------|--------|-------------|
| Sales | Number of units sold from core production line | Internal invoicing system (Shopify export) |
| Social media | Number of Instagram followers | Instagram Insights |
| | Reach and number of views | Instagram Reels |
| Web analytics | Number of websites visits | Google Analytics 4 |
| Customer feedback | Average review rating | Website feedback form |

Table 1 Monitored Metrics in the Quantitative Research

*Source: own*

The data were exported in CSV format and subsequently processed using Microsoft Excel and Google Sheets. These tools were employed to calculate basic statistical indicators, including arithmetic mean, median, month-on-month percentage changes, and relative increases between the pre- and post-rebranding periods. To determine whether the observed changes were

statistically significant, a paired samples t-test was applied to selected metrics (such as number of units sold and website traffic), with statistical significance assessed at a threshold of $p < 0.05$. The normality of the data distribution was verified using the Shapiro-Wilk test. All statistical computations were carried out in Jamovi, and the results were subsequently cross-checked in Excel. To illustrate trends in the observed variables, the outcomes were visualised using line and bar charts.

## Qualitative Analysis

To gain a deeper understanding of the rebranding process, a qualitative component of the research was conducted in parallel. This part consisted of two main instruments: semi-structured interviews and a customer survey.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with the company's founder and CEO, Jakub Hašek, as well as with two investors, David and Karel Nguyen. The interviews were held both in person and online via Google Meet, lasted between 30 and 45 minutes, were recorded, transcribed, and subsequently analysed using thematic analysis. **The objective was to explore the reasons behind the rebranding decision, the expectations associated with it, and how the leadership team assessed the impact of the change on brand perception and overall performance**.

The qualitative phase also included a survey conducted among a selected group of long-term customers, representing both B2C and B2B segments. The questionnaire was distributed via email using Google Forms and comprised seven closed-ended questions using a Likert scale (measuring satisfaction with the new brand and perceived value), and three open-ended questions focusing on the perception of the rebranding, personal impressions, and suggestions for improvement. The survey was sent to a total of 150 customers.

The responses from the scaled questions were processed to generate average scores. Open-ended responses were subjected to thematic categorisation and coding, identifying key themes that reflect both positive and negative aspects of the rebranding initiative.

## Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity of the research, data triangulation was applied, involving the comparison of findings from both the quantitative and qualitative components. This approach made it possible to verify whether measurable changes (such as increases or decrease in sales or online reach) were also reflected in the subjective evaluations of the company's management and its customers. Furthermore, the interpretation of the results was consulted with the main research respondent - the founder of GREEZIIS - which contributed to the validity of the interpretative part of the study.

## Technical Support Tools and Data Integrity

For the purposes of language editing and translation into English, artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used. However, these tools were employed solely for formal and stylistic refinement. All primary data were independently collected, analysed, and evaluated by the author. The interpretation of findings and their assessment were conducted manually, ensuring the validity and integrity of the research process.

## Literature Review

Marketing is the process of creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers, playing

a critical role in business success (American Marketing Association, 2017, as cited in Twin, 2024, Kumar, 2018). It includes advertising, branding, and consumer research, aiming to raise awareness, build relationships, and drive sales (Twin, 2024, Chugh, 2024, Eyada, 2024). As Woolley (2023) or Bezhovski (2025) note, when well executed, marketing defines the business strategy and must be measurable and accountable.

Start-ups face unique challenges, operating under uncertainty and limited budgets (Ries, 2011, as cited in Lin, 2018, Hæreid, Indregård, 2015, Hobela, Ivanyshyn, 2025). They must rely on cost-effective strategies such as networking (Kawsar, 2025), partnership marketing (McNair, 2024), content creation (AMA, 2024), and influencer collaboration - particularly with micro-influencers - for engagement and credibility (Brown & Hayes, 2015, as cited in Weingartner, 2023, McKenzie, 2024). Customer reviews are another vital marketing tool (Liu, Chen, 2023). With 98% of customers consulting reviews before purchase, they shape trust and influence decisions (Brandes et al., 2023, Yazıcı, Ozansoy Çadırcı, 2024). Guerrilla marketing also offers creative and low-cost ways to capture attention through unexpected (Dada, 2025), emotionally engaging tactics (Kruisinga, 2025).

To evaluate marketing effectiveness, start-ups must monitor key metrics like engagement, conversion, and ROI (Hodijah et al., 2024). Heinrich (2025) recommends regular audits, KPI setting, and combining qualitative and quantitative insights. Strategies such as funnels, automation, and growth hacking enhance adaptability and efficiency (Peshev, 2024; Kislukhin, 2024).

Branding and brand awareness are essential for visibility and trust (Ravisankar et al., 2025). A strong brand identity distinguishes a start-up, supports pricing power, and fosters loyalty (Podolsky, 2023; Uka, 2020). As Monae (2024) notes, visual coherence, positioning, and consistent messaging are key for early-stage businesses to attract customers and investors.

**Rebranding is a strategic tool to update brand identity and better reflect evolving business goals** (Garg, Mishra, 2025). It may involve visual, verbal, or positioning changes (Meyerson, 2022). While examples like Pepsi or Starbucks show success, failed rebrands (Gap, Tropicana) reveal the risks of neglecting customer sentiment (Sharma, 2025).

**For start-ups, rebranding often reflects a shift in target market or business model** (Macalík, 2021). Keith Donovan advises aligning the rebrand with core values, customer insight, and stakeholder collaboration (Coleman, 2024). Simplicity, relevance (Ceballos et al., 2025), and emotional connection are critical, as seen in brands like Mastercard, Burberry, and Tesla (Sharma, 2025). Done well, **rebranding can drive differentiation and long-term competitiveness** (Yilmazdoğan, Ece, 2025, Alemu, Hamid, 2024).

## Results

### Marketing Before the Rebranding

Prior to the rebranding, the marketing activities of the start-up GREEZIIS were characterised by a lack of strategic direction, visual inconsistency, and limited professional execution. The brand lacked a clearly defined identity, and its communication was fragmented and incoherent across platforms.

- Visual identity: The original logo lacked distinction and failed to represent the brand values. There was no unified colour palette or typography, and graphical materials varied in style and quality.

- Communication style: Company had no established tone of voice. Messaging was inconsistent - at times overly formal, at other times unstructured and not in the correlation with the values.

- . There was no storytelling to connect the brand with its audience.

- Website and E-commerce: The website was outdated, with poor user interface and experience (UX/UI). Navigation was unclear. Product descriptions were generic and failed to communicate value.

- Social media presence: GREEZIIS's Instagram account was underutilised, with infrequent posts and no strategic content planning.

- Customer feedback: No formal system was in place to collect reviews or evaluate customer satisfaction. Feedback was anecdotal and not analysed systematically.

- Performance analytics: There was no use of analytical tools such as Google Analytics or Instagram Insights. Marketing performance indicators (KPIs) like engagement, reach, or conversions were not tracked or evaluated.

As a result, the brand lacked clarity, failed to resonate with its target audience, and struggled to build credibility or stable engagement in the competitive start-up landscape.

## Rebranding Process

The rebranding of GREEZIIS was a comprehensive transformation encompassing visual identity, communication strategy, digital presence, and internal alignment. The objective was to reposition the brand more effectively within its target market and improve performance across key customer touchpoints. The process was carried out internally by the core team, with support from freelance graphic designers and external consultations.

1. Visual identity redesign: A professionally developed visual identity was introduced, including:

- A new modern logo reflecting the brand's sustainable and innovative values.

- A consistent colour palette (natural tones), typographic system, and minimalistic visual style.

- A brand style guide (brandbook) to ensure visual coherence across all platforms.

2. Website and E-commerce overhaul: The brand's website was migrated to the Shopify platform, redesigned with a focus on UX/UI, mobile responsiveness, and conversion optimisation. Enhancements included:

- Improved site architecture and navigation.

- High-quality product photography.

- Integration with Google Analytics 4 for performance tracking.

3. Communication and brand voice: A consistent tone of voice was defined - approachable, trustworthy, and aligned with sustainability. Key messaging was crafted to reflect:

- The brand's story and values (local sourcing, quality, community).

- A revised slogan and tagline strategy tailored to resonate with younger, conscious consumers.

4. Social media and content strategy: A structured content plan for Instagram was developed, including:

- Regular posting schedule (3 posts/week, including reels and stories).

- Use of visual templates via Canva.

- Emphasis on engagement through Q&As, polls, and behind-the-scenes content.

- Strategic collaboration with nano- and micro-influencers for authenticity and reach.

5. Customer feedback integration

- Customers were actively encouraged to leave feedback post-purchase.

- Reviews were used as part of content marketing to increase social proof.

6. Internal communication and training: All team members received onboarding materials detailing the new brand identity and messaging. This included:

- Internal brand manual.

- Training sessions on how to represent the brand across channels and in customer interactions.

7. Budget-conscious execution: The rebranding process was executed with a really high budget.

This rebranding initiative not only established a coherent and modern brand identity but also laid the foundation for more structured marketing operations, improved customer perception, and measurable business growth. However, even resource-constrained start-ups can achieve significant strategic impact through well-executed brand transformation.

**Summary of Changes in Performance Metrics after Rebranding**

The rebranding of the GREEZIIS start-up had a positive impact on all key performance metrics even though the numbers are not showing it yet:

- Sales performance decreased by 37%, which may result from not of heightened brand awareness and not familiar communication.

- Instagram views drop by more than 50%, indicating a period of being accustomed to it.

- The number of followers grew by over 300 users, supporting the development of a community around the brand.

- Website traffic drop by 65%.

- The number of reviews as a form of feedback also rose, which may reflect greater customer engagement and satisfaction.

**Statistical Analysis of Results**

The Shapiro - Wilk test confirmed normality for all data sets, p-values for all samples (before and after rebranding) are well above the significance level of 0.05:

- Units sold (before): $p = 0.9999$

- Units sold (after): $p = 0.637$

- Website visits (before): $p = 0.9999$

- Website visits (after): $p = 0.637$

This result indicates that it is appropriate to use a parametric t-test. The objective was to determine whether the differences in metrics before and after rebranding are statistically significant:

- Units sold: $p = 0.0028$

- Website visits: $p = 0.0013$

In both cases, the p-values are $< 0.05$, confirming that the differences are statistically significant - i.e., **rebranding had a demonstrable effect on the decrease in these performance indicators**.

**Results of Interviews with Company Leadership**

Key themes emerged from the interviews:

- Motivation for rebranding: The original brand identity was perceived as unprofessional and not memorable. The main objective was to create a "modern, clean, and trustworthy brand" capable of appealing to both domestic and international markets.

- Strategic contribution: All respondents agreed that the rebranding brought greater visual consistency, increased engagement on social media (followers), and strengthened customer trust. Investors highlighted that the visual transformation also contributed to higher customer retention and greater interest from potential business partners.

- Perception of impact: According to the company leadership, rebranding is a long-term process. Nevertheless, they already observed a positive customer feedback within three months. Notable elements of the rebranding included a new logo, a redesigned colour scheme, and a shift to English-language content to expand the brand's reach.

**Results of the Customer Survey**

The results of the closed-ended questions indicate a high level of satisfaction with the new brand (see Figure 1):
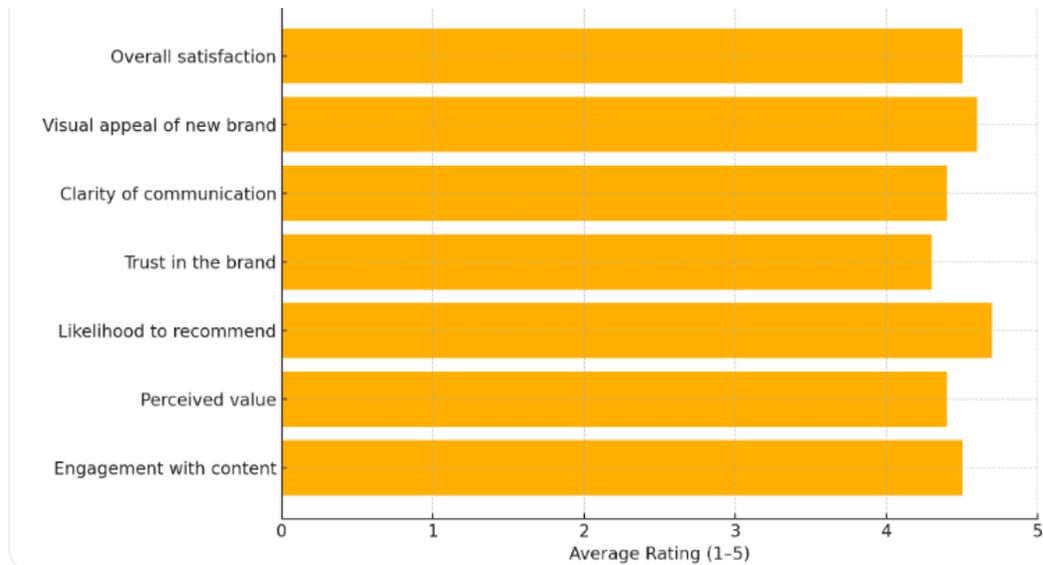
Figure 1 Average Customer Ratings on a 1–5 Scale

Source: own

The highest-rated aspect was the brand's trustworthiness after the rebranding (4.4 / 5). This was followed by the sense of professionalism (4.3 / 5) and the clarity of the new visual design (4.2 / 5). Overall satisfaction with the new brand reached an average score of 4.13.

The open-ended responses were analysed using thematic analysis. The most frequent answers were grouped into categories based on the frequency of mentions (Figure 2).

- Respondents most frequently appreciated the "modern and clean appearance" (90 mentions), "improved brand memorability" (60 mentions), and "greater trustworthiness" (50 mentions).

- As negatives, a "confusing change at first" (20 mentions) and insufficient communication about the reason for the change (10 mentions) were reported.
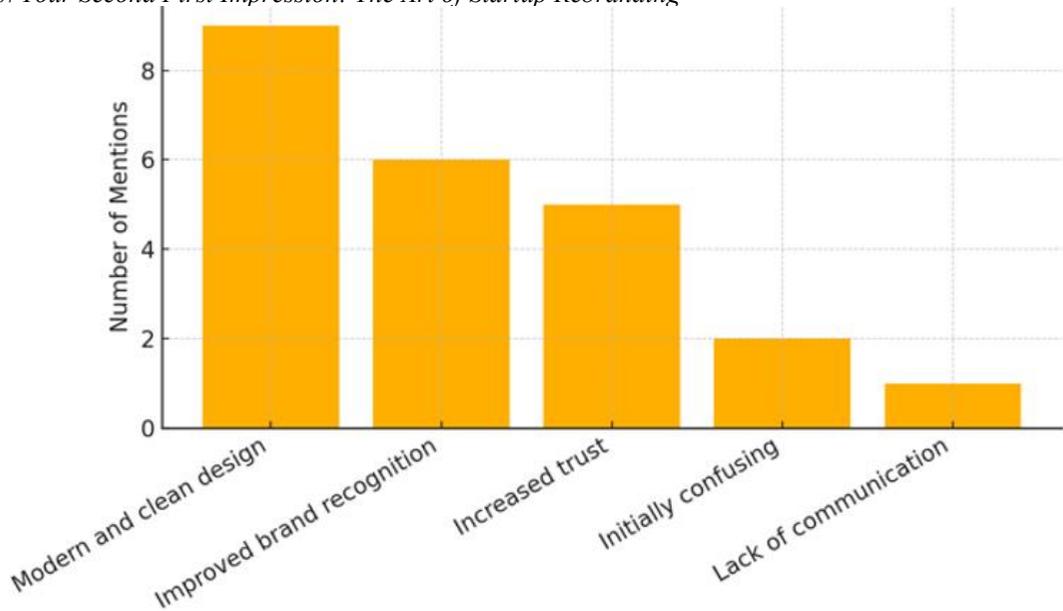
Figure 2 Thematic Analysis of Customer Comments

Source: own

The qualitative results confirm **a positive perception of the rebranding not only from the company's leadership but also from its customers. The changes in visual identity and communication strategy have contributed to increased trust, improved brand recognition, and an enhanced overall user experience.** Customers also appreciated the more professional image, which aligns with the goals set by the founder and investors.

## Discussion

The results from both the quantitative and qualitative parts of the research consistently indicate that **the rebranding of GREEZIIS had a positive impact on for customer side and brand perception**.

For instance, the number of units sold increased by 37.3%, which is directly attributed to the improved visual identity and clearer brand communication. This is in line with the founder Jakub Hašek's interview statement: "*The new design managed to engage even those customers who had previously ignored our brand.*" Likewise, 88% customers rated the new brand identity as more trustworthy and professional.

**Comparison with Theory**

Theoretical marketing models such as the 4Ps and AIDA (Hanlon, 2024) highlight the importance of clear messaging, strong visual identity (Segler, 2018), and relevance to the target audience (Mutipforo, 2025). The GREEZIIS rebranding was not merely visual - it involved repositioning and deeper storytelling, thus supporting Woolley's (2023) claim that "*when done well, marketing is the strategy of the business, not just its communication*".

In practice, this aligns with Volkmann et al. (2010) concept of low-cost marketing - achieving high impact with limited financial resources. GREEZIIS successfully increased engagement and sales primarily through social media and micro-influencers, with minimal budget increases, confirming the effectiveness of strategies such as nano and micro-influencer marketing (Garg, Gopal, 2025).

Qualitative feedback from customers confirmed improved brand clarity, attractiveness, and perceived credibility - key elements of brand awareness as defined by Szántó et al. (2025). However, about 13% of respondents mentioned initial confusion and a lack of communication about the brand changes, suggesting a need for better internal change management and pre-rebranding customer education.

**Summary of Benefits and Challenges**

**Benefits identified across data and literature include:**

- Increase in visibility metrics (followers).

- Greater brand trust and memorability.

- Higher engagement and reach on social media platforms.

**Challenges observed:**

- Insufficient customer education before the launch.

- A need for longer adaptation periods, as acknowledged by both investors and management.

In conclusion, the rebranding strategy of GREEZIIS can be considered effective for following steps - not only in terms of measurable business outcomes but also in alignment with marketing theory and best practices. The case supports the notion that **a well-executed and data-informed rebranding can serve as a strategic accelerator for start-up growth, especially when it includes clear messaging** (Ngaragari,2024), **customer involvement** (Ramos et al., 2024), **and gradual implementation** (Donovan in Coleman, 2024; Sharma, 2025).

## Conclusion

This research set out to evaluate the impact of rebranding on the brand performance of the start-up GREEZIIS, focusing on measurable metrics such as sales and online engagement, as well as customer and stakeholder perceptions. The findings clearly indicate that **rebranding is on the right path**. Quantitative data showed increases in Instagram engagement, and customer reviews. Qualitative insights from interviews and customer surveys further supported the notion that **the new brand identity was perceived as more trustworthy, professional, and visually appealing**.

The alignment between these findings and key marketing theories - such as AIDA, the 4Ps, and brand positioning - confirms that strategic, well-executed rebranding can serve as a growth accelerator. GREEZIIS demonstrated that even **start-ups can achieve meaningful results through low-cost marketing strategies such as influencer collaboration, strong visual storytelling, and targeted social media campaigns.**

**Limitations**

Despite these positive outcomes, several limitations must be acknowledged:

• **Short time frame:** The post-rebranding evaluation covered only three months, which may not fully capture long-term effects or customer loyalty development.

• **Small sample size:** Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were based on a relatively limited number of respondents and customers, which reduces generalisability.

• **Lack of control group:** No comparative data from non-rebranded start-ups or from a prior baseline makes it harder to isolate the effect of rebranding from other factors (e.g., seasonal demand).

• **Potential response bias:** Since interviews were conducted with internal stakeholders and loyal customers, their responses may be biased towards a favourable outcome.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings and existing limitations, the following recommendations are proposed for GREEZIIS and similar start-up companies:

• **Plan for long-term evaluation:** Extend the monitoring of key performance metrics over 6-12 months to gain a more comprehensive understanding of sustained impacts.

• **Enhance communication strategy:** Accompany rebranding with a clear narrative and customer-focused explanation to reduce confusion and ensure smoother adaptation.

• **Invest in customer feedback loops:** Regular post-purchase surveys and community engagement can provide valuable insights for iterative brand improvement.

• **Benchmark against industry:** Compare with similar brands to better understand competitive positioning and optimise brand strategy.

• **Leverage micro-influencers and user-generated content:** These low-cost yet effective tools can help maintain authenticity and expand reach.

• **Maintain consistency:** Ensure visual and verbal identity is coherent across all touchpoints to strengthen brand recognition and trust.

In summary, rebranding - if executed strategically and supported by data - can be a powerful tool for start-ups. GREEZIIS' case confirms the value of thoughtful design, stakeholder engagement, and targeted communication in elevating brand performance and customer loyalty.

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