

## **We Present to You, rai: The New Face of Retink**

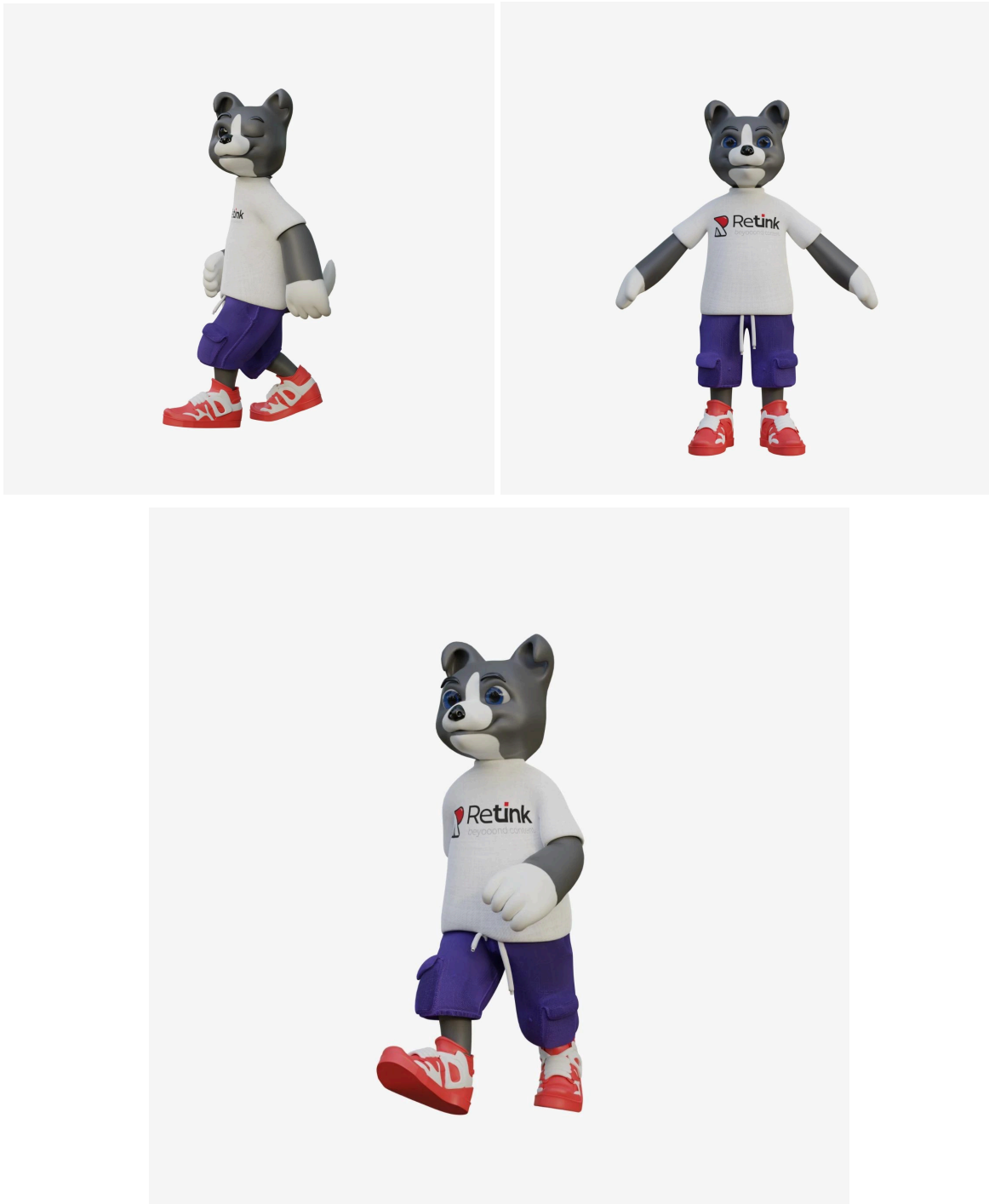
In 2021, when Retink Media rebranded we needed something aside from our logo that could graphically represent the brand in the most simplistic yet imaginative way possible. We opted for a 2D human-like character for this purpose, but quickly realised we had to create something more unique and authentic to the brand since we were using a free-to-use image.



**Birth of rai**

However, we were also conscious of the future risk that using a free creative asset posed when we eventually became a big brand, so we decided to change the character to maintain brand authenticity. We started brainstorming and thinking of what character would fit our brand persona and eventually decided on a human-like dog floating in the air called rai aka Retink's AI. Rai was conceptualised to have other poses aside from the floating one. We included a forward, backward walking pose and a side walking pose with a wink.

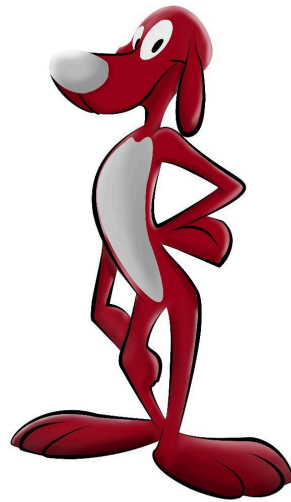
First 3D samples of rai poses



The dog represented our brand essence and personality of friendliness, reliability, and uniqueness, amplifying our playful yet professional brand voice. It also represented intelligence, bridging the gap between human and machine intelligence. The dog floating in the air represented the ever-evolving and changing landscape of marketing and tech.

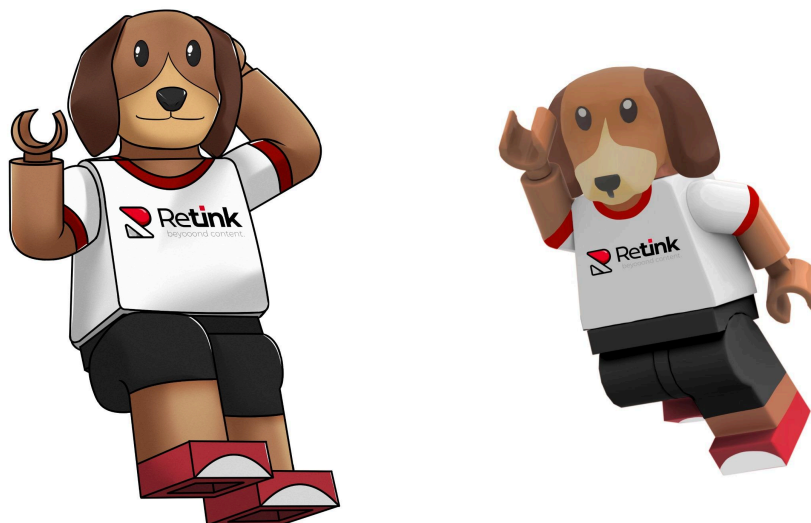
Having defined all these in line with our brand persona, we set out to create. At first, we experimented by developing a simple 2D scooby doo like smiling dog, which was created as a baseline character by one of our graphic design interns, Al Amin, but then we quickly

realised that the character was too basic and wasn't aesthetically pleasing enough.



Second Iteration of rai

So, we had to put on our thinking cap again. This time we decided to fashion the mascot into a lego like dog because the lego origin story is one that inspires me a lot. We used it for quite some time on our product pre-launch homepage and some communication materials. But it was obvious that we got some things wrong, especially with the structure coupled with inconsistencies in the design and brand colours, and some of the feedback we got, mainly from the homepage visitors further confirmed this.



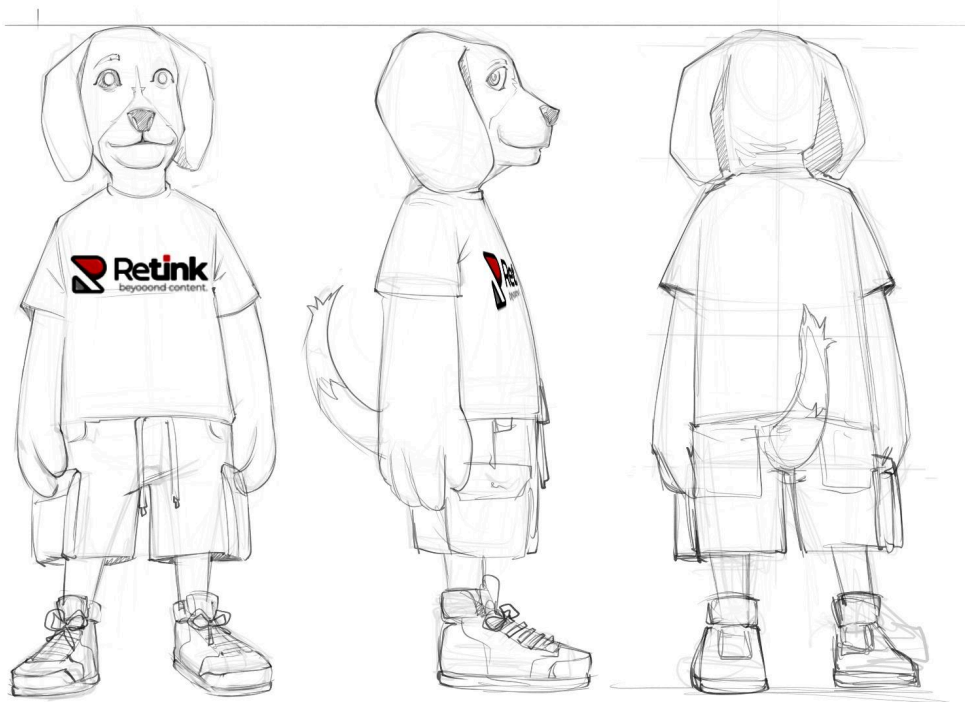
Third Iteration of rai

We decided to put on our creative thinking cap again. This time, we were determined to get it right, and we decided on a 3D mascot, so to start with, we hired someone to design a 3D

dog as a base character, which we then developed into the desired poses and styles we wanted.

We wanted a friendly and playful robotic-looking dog with semi-casual clothing of the Retink logo. The dog is supposed to be floating or suspended in the air. So, basically, we were aiming for a cool robo-dog, rocking some Retink swag with an extra oomph, all while floating in the air. We needed a mascot that could pass for an NFT and help position our brand and build brand equity.

Fourth iteration of rai-The hippie rai



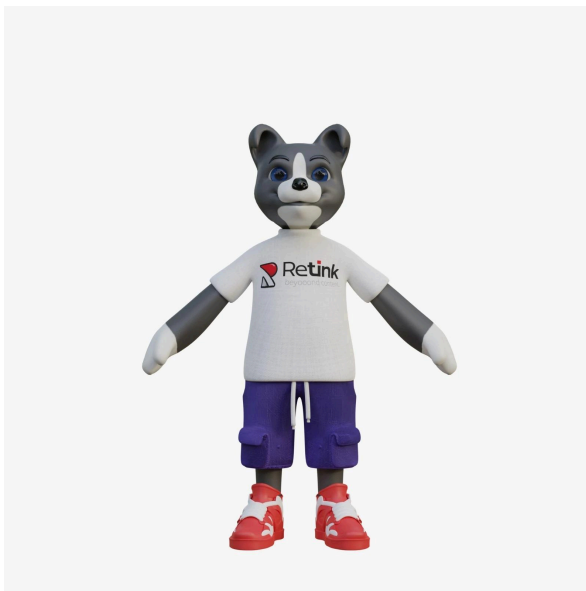
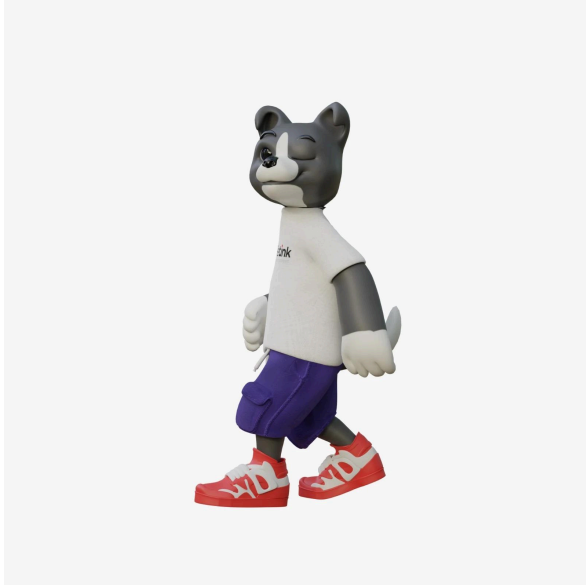
With the concepts, sketches, and samples refined and ready, we went to work. This time around, we partnered with a studio specialising in mascot design to get it done. Typically, the mascot was to be delivered in 14 days, but was delivered in 3 months because of so many iterations, as we wanted a mascot that will really reflect who we are. Of course, without perfection, but to a large extent satisfying. In the future, we may continue the journey to perfection as we keep building our brand.

From initial sketches to final design, we witnessed the evolution of a character that we are proud of. rai isn't just a character, it is an extension of our brand.

Our mascot's journey has been nothing short of magical. You can follow the pictorial evolution of rai and the conversations that ensued between us and the designer we collaborated with to bring it to life.



First studio 3D designs of rai before further iterations.



1. The face of the dog was not improved upon according to my last request
2. There is no robotic feel to the dog
3. The wink of the dog looks more like the dog is closing its eye
4. Also the floating pose wasn't revised based on my last request.

Kindly follow the requirement to detail mate, please.

Thanks.

hi mate,

after several reviews, a lot of people can't still recognise the mascot as a dog. Can we perhaps change the style and make the face exactly like this image, which I also shared previously with you?



↓ image.png (643.78 kB)

Thanks a lot for the updates.

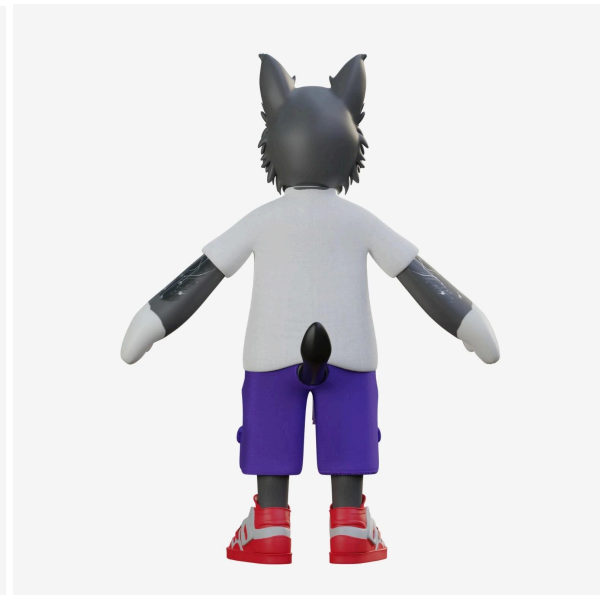
Was wondering why you included the Google to his eye, that is not needed actually. Why did you also include the ring on the dog's neck?

There is also a gap in the shoes when you zoom in.

Also, can we adjust the logo on the shirt to be more centralised so it doesn't look distorted?

Could we adjust the head to have more fur and an oval face like the images I shared? Also if we could give the dog a bit of a robotic look and feel would be great.





After the first designs went on a series of iterations. First, we noticed the dog had no robotic feel as required since we were an AI related brand. Then we also noticed the dog's wink was looking more like it was closing its eyes, and finally the floating pose was missing. We also got some feedback from reviewers who said the dog's face looked like that of a cat, wolf, some said a fox, some even said it looked like something between a dog and a fox. We wanted people to see a dog at first sight, so we went back to work! I wanted us to make the dog look more or less like a border collie since it is known to be among the dogs with very high intelligence, and would fit well for a superficial bridge of intelligence between man and machine with an emotional touch to it for a marketing AI brand.



#### Border Collie we sampled

You can see from the images above that there was a clear transition from a smooth face dog to one with a touch of fur. With fur on its face now visible, the eyes appeared swollen, so I asked that it be made smaller and given goggles to wear with its eyes still clearly visible. We wanted to ensure the mascot appeared playful enough with its facial and body expressions looking cool.

here's the base model, Mate



↓ IMG-20231028 (33.74 kB)

**Me** Oct 28, 2023, 5:14 PM

Looks good mate, hopefully, we have it excellent this time.

Thanks mate.



**Me** Oct 21, 2023, 7:55 PM

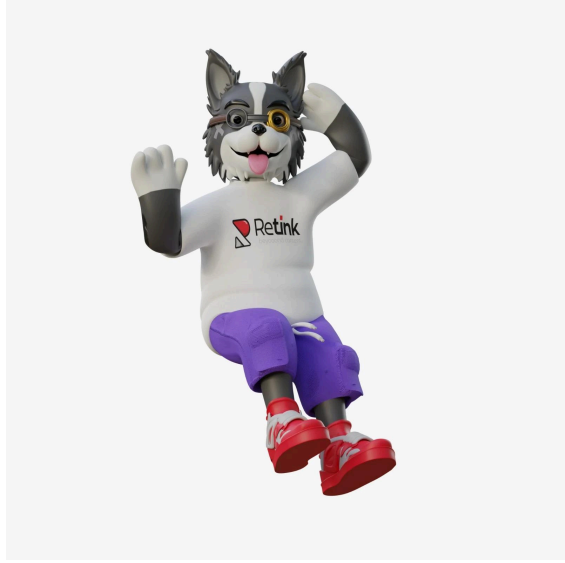
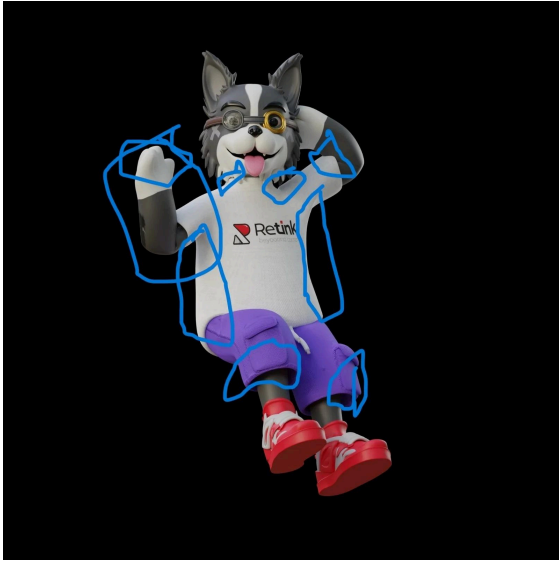
It is an expression like this I meant by playful



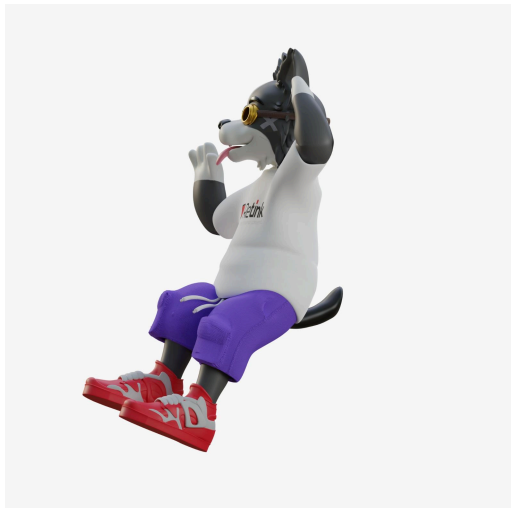
↓ image.png (256.2 kB)



The dog's hand wasn't showing distinctly as can be seen from the last image on the right above. In addition to this, we also discovered that we needed to improve the contours, spaces between the head and neck, as well as the shorts and legs of the dog as seen in the places marked in the image on the left with the improved image on the right below.



With the improvement done, I could still find some details that were missing, so we went back to work. This time around, it was the fifth iteration, and the designer was getting a bit impatient, but since we were both determined to create something unique, we had to focus on the goal and create something we can be proud of.

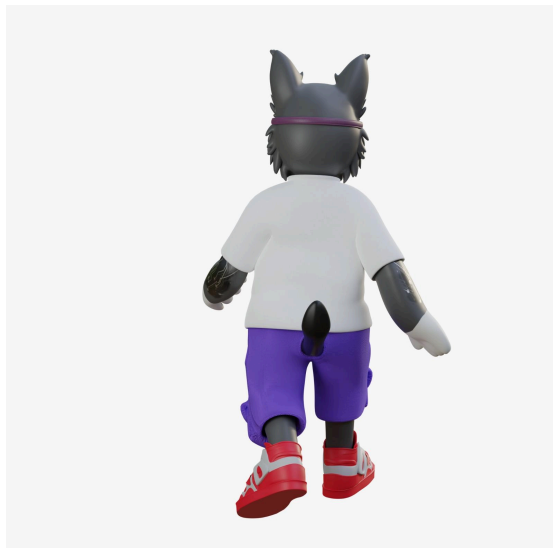
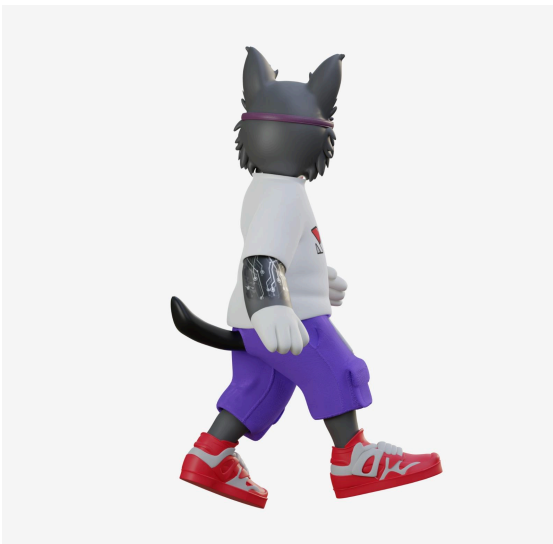
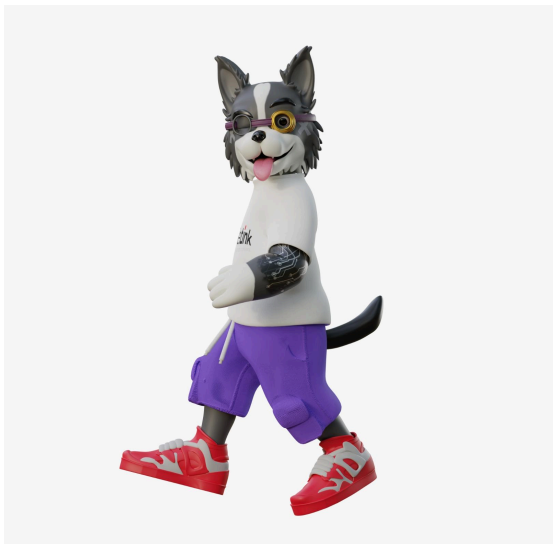
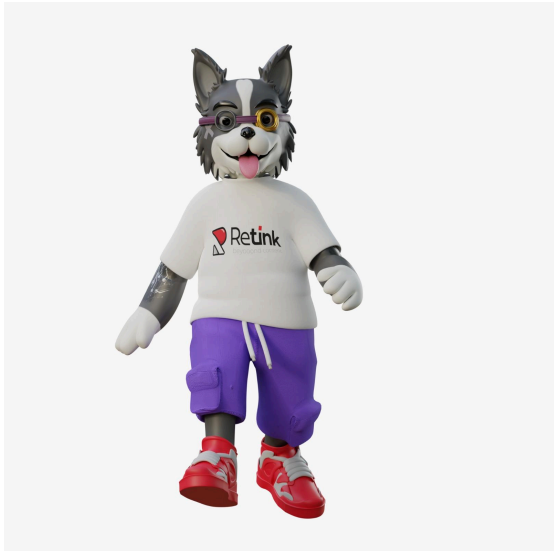


If you look closely at the images below, you would see that some changes were made to the floating pose of the mascot to the one above, like colour change of the goggle strap from brown to purple, improvement in the body proportion, shorts spatial adjustment, as well as the shirt contour alignment. In addition, we created a mirror image of the side view for the floating pose to make it four in total.



Floating in the air pose of rai





Walking and sidewalking poses with a wink

We have managed to create rai into a charismatic figure that perfectly aligns with our brand persona, adding a touch of charm and personality to our identity, and we are excited to share this with you as we continue our incredible journey as a brand.

The challenges encountered creating rai tested our creativity and resilience. But guess what? We emerged stronger and more inspired than ever!

rai is ready to embark on exciting adventures with you, our amazing community. Stay tuned for more fun, joy, and a dash of rai's magic!

