

LOGO DESIGN

SPECIFIC PURPOSE: To inform how a logo is designed.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Art for art sake is fine, but most every artist I know would like their work to be recognized and admired. Something they can point to and say, " I did that."
This is the story of what it takes to design a logo.

B. What is a logo? According to the "Pocket Pal - A Graphic Production Handbook," A logo is an identifying mark of special design used as a trademark for a business, to advertise a product or service, or as a symbol for an organization, like a college.

II. THESIS

A. We are bombarded with logos from every direction on a daily basis. Print, television, Internet and signage all use logos to identify and advertise. It has even become fashionable to wear logos on your body- hats, t-shirts, jeans, footwear, accessories, even tattoos bear logos proudly.

B. It is my goal that you will come away with a better understanding of what goes into designing a logo, but also a greater appreciation of their simple artistic merit.

III. PREVIEW

Today I am going to talk about the creative problem-solving process of designing and producing a logo, specifically:

A. How to identify and define the concepts that need to come across from your client.

B. How to apply good design principles for effective results.

C. The steps taken to produce and revise the design, and put it into use.

IV. CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

A. Identify the problem to be solved and the concept the client wants to convey.

1. Who is the customer?

a. Is it Bank of America or Dr. Jefe's tattoo parlor? The concept developed should fit the character of the business. For example, if you were designing a logo for a financial institution you would probably stay away from using a font called "Crackhouse." It would definitely be in poor taste and a bad idea to use fluffy white kittens in mortuary logo.

b. Get to know just whom you are working for. If they have a mission statement, find out what it is. Visit the business or organization and talk to the people. Jot down your impressions for when you begin the design.
—(Pacific College of Medicine)

2. Who is the audience?

a. Age group, income bracket, level of education and lifestyle choices, as well as other factors should be given careful consideration to determine how well the designer's chosen imagery fits in with existing norms for that target audience. Finding out as much as you can about the people you are trying to reach helps you to channel your decision-making process on the road to discovering the ideal solution.

b. A retirement investment company would probably advertise in upscale and conservative publications intended to appeal to a particular segment of the community, so a logo design for them should be in keeping with that structure.

3. Who is the competition?

a. Research other businesses or organizations of a similar nature. If your client is an educational institution, like a community college, look at what other colleges in the state have used to get their message across. Distinguishing your design from the common fray is important, but so is broad industry recognition.

b. Sketch aspects of particular designs that appeal to you taking special care to stay away from obviously overused and boring ideas, seen over and over that should have been allowed to die years ago.

B. Apply good design principles. In her book, " Robin Williams Design Workshop" the author states, " Using creative typography along with simple visual/conceptual correlations between images is key to solving most design problems."

1. What to include. Less is more. This is particularly true with a logo; whose job it is present a message as clearly readable at one inch as it is at six feet. Knowing what to keep and what to throw away makes all the difference in the world. A good design:

- a. Establishes visual hierarchy, from the most important aspect to the least, utilizing contrast, repetition, alignment and placement (CRAP for short) to emphasize visual unity and balance, leading the viewers eye through a series of steps, intending to see the whole after identifying the sum of the parts, or vice-versa.
- b. Reduces imagery and refines typography to its simplest, most elegant and quickly recognized form as possible. In a quote from the book, "Fonts & Logos", by Doyald Young, William Golden says, "It is a very complicated job to produce something simple."
- c. Aesthetically whole. All the parts work together in a balanced harmonious way. (fung sui)
- d. Makes sense for the company it is representing.
- e. Uses appropriate typography to enhance the meaning of the logo
- f. Uses computer-generated devices only where they are appropriate to the intended message.
- g. Uses imagery only where appropriate to enhance the intended message.

2. Versatility of use. An organization or business entity logo must have different versions for the different types of media for which it will be put to use.

- a. A color version with enhancement effects, like drop shadows and textures, for use in high-end publications lke magazines and in full color brochures.
- b. A version for the web, with web-safe colors that browsers can view in a lower resolution to reduce file size, so they load faster and your web page comes up more quickly.
- c. A black and white. or grayscale, version without suble effects for newspaper ads, flyers, fax cover sheets, and for reproduction on a copy machine.(not to mention: marquees, billboards, embroidery, banners and silk screening)

3. A badly designed logo:

- a. Aesthetically weak, lacking balance and harmony among its elements, leaving the viewer with a feeling that something is missing.
- b. Inappropriate for the entity it is representing.
- c. Uses typography in an inappropriate way or lacks a basic understanding of how typography can enhance a message.
- d. Computer driven rather than design driven (making excessive use of filters or other computer-based techniques that bear no relationship to the message of the mark.
- e. Uses imagery that has no meaningful relationship to the company or the typography of the logo.

C. Producing, revising logo; style manual.

1. Utilizing ideas gathered in your research, complete several sketches. It's important to start with drawing, so the design to be constrained by the limits of the computer. In the course of production it is not uncommon to make hundreds of drawings in support of a project.

2.

- a. According to Sandra Lentz Devall, author of "Desktop Publishing Style Guide," the drawings should be divided into two series of ideas: one set should pursue a variety of ideas while the other shows variations of the same idea.

- b. Combine selected typefaces; add graphic elements, photos and/or illustrations on the computer, only in black and white. If a design works in black and white it will surely work in color. Conversely, before it can work in color, it has to work in black and white!

2. Presenting the logos to your client and revising accordingly. Having painstakingly generated several good ideas, it is best to narrow the selection to three to show to the client. Too many choices are confusing and will only serve to muddy the process. Besides, if the client doesn't care for the three you showed him, you've got a hard drive full of other ideas he hasn't seen yet!

- a. After the client makes a choice, there will inevitably be revisions until the final version is accepted. This can be a frustrating time as some people are never satisfied. It is best to specify a maximum number of revisions in your initial business contract, as this can seriously eat into your time, keeping you from other projects.

- b. Now is the time to work out a color scheme, if applicable, and to prepare file formats for the different media versions.

3. Producing a style manual. In an article "The True Story of One College's Search for a New Logo", by Diane Duvall, the author recommends developing a style manual that shows in some detail how the new logo will be used on stationery, forms, ads, and publications.

<http://www.palomar.edu/guidelines/manual/>

<http://www.palomar.edu/guidelines/logos/>

- a. This will keep the design from deteriorating its integrity and keep individuals from using it in ways not becoming to its intent.

- b. This contains the latent benefit of allowing the graphic artist to showcase some of his skills in order to drum up more business for the future.

V. CONCLUSION

A. In review, we've discussed how to research and define the problem of creating a logo. I covered a few good design principles and walked you through the primary steps of production, revision, and style manual.