

Spoonful

The timeless brand identity

"The entire universe is in a state of entropy. This means that change is both inevitable and unavoidable. Staying the same is an impossibility. The best we can hope for is to choose wisely the speed and direction of each of our changes." *Anonymous*

Nothing reflects a company's vision, personality and strategy more than its brand image. And nothing expresses an organisation's brand image more quickly than its logo. Your logo, or brand identity, is the visual centrepiece and mouthpiece of your organisation.

As the primary visual connection with consumers your logo has a powerful influence on brand perception, and whether consumers decide to engage.

The dynamics of new economies intensify the role of branding and demand clear and cut through communication. Changing markets, increasing competition and educated consumers make it more challenging to build brand recognition.

How can my logo stand out?

The answer lies in a back to basics approach: simplicity. There is no greater visual relief than a simple, well designed logo that at first glance captures the name and feel of a company.

These days our minds are in such overwhelm processing the demands of visual stimulation that we filter out anything too colourful, complicated and wordy. We want simple, positive communication we can relate to and remember easily.

A good logo needs to evoke a specific emotional response in the consumer for it to be remembered.

Imagine your logo to be a dynamic organism with its very own characteristics. Like a person it has a certain personality that is visually captured in its design, look and feel. Bubbly or serious, funky or conservative – the important thing is to make your logo accessible to the people it comes in contact with and create an emotional connection with the consumer.

Emotional connectivity and simplicity, in fact, increase your brand's chances for longevity, a crucial factor in building a successful brand.

Let's briefly consider some of the most successful companies of our time, all of which feature a simple logo at the centre of their brand: IBM, JetStar, Greenpeace and BMW, coupled with all time branding favourites McDonald's and Coca-Cola. All proudly stand behind extraordinarily simple logos. For most it's their company name written in a unique typeface and typically stylised. Whilst their brands are powered by intelligent marketing campaigns their logos remained untouched.

The important message here is to demand less of your logo and approach it from a perspective of simplicity. Initially, furnish it with the bare essentials and allow it the freedom to evolve.

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Designing your logo for the future

Every brand undergoes revitalising to adapt to new challenges and maintain relevance.

Most successful global companies today have undergone at least one re-branding process. Some, such as **National Australia Bank** (now known as NAB) started from scratch and introduced a new logo along with a fresh brand image and strategy. Others such as **Apple** opted to keep their logo and instead simplify and streamline its look to sit effortlessly with their marketing activity.

A vital component for a successful re-brand is detachment. There is no way a logo can become a successful brand ambassador if the company it represents remains too attached to an outdated image. Attachment can be counterproductive to rejuvenating a tired brand and can eventually mean its downfall. As a basic rule; if decreasing sales, global trends, changing environments and vanishing consumers signal change, it's time to let go and follow suit.

Embrace change. We all need and desire change and it's only fear that holds us back from becoming who we truly like to be. Remember that fear is simply an illusion and serves only to encourage our growth. The same applies to your brand identity. Make it bold and courageous and you'll be surprised where it takes you.

How can I simplify my logo?

It is a legacy of the 90s that sees most company logos overloaded with marketing messages competing for space with other equally weighty logos.

The most effective way to rectify this is to start from scratch, as did NAB. Discard what you don't need, condense the messages down to a simple statement that summarise into a company tag line, and virtually strip down your logo to the name and personality of the company.

If starting at point zero is not an option consider a re-brand. As mentioned previously, a re-brand is a perfect way to revitalise a company image, create new momentum, stimulate existing clients and even attract new customers. Sometimes the simplicity of a new colour and typeface, or an edgy style of photography makes a significant difference.

Seek out professional help and advice. A good branding consultant is more than a graphic designer. The best ones will actively listen and help you devise a concise brief. They'll assist in developing new visions, understand your products, expand demographic focus and even streamline business operations. Rein them in when needed and be open to their areas of influence.