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## LOGO DEVELOPMENT

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### PREFACE

While I have designed many logos for clients of all shapes and sizes, I am continually searching for insight on how to better approach this strange blend of art, science and psychology.

The information below incorporates a cacophony of personal experience, word-of-mouth, book learning and surfing the Internet. A couple of the more impactful sources of knowledge are [www.MarketSource.com](http://www.MarketSource.com) and [www.MarketProf.com](http://www.MarketProf.com).

### WHAT IT IS...AND ISN'T

Your logo is simply the graphic mark that represents your brand. It cannot bring you success if the product or service it represents is not valued by the target market, or fails to deliver on marketing promises. A logo should be unique and enable prospective customers to identify and differentiate you from your competitors. While an effective logo can reinforce your brand, a poor one can detract from it.

### IF IT AIN'T BROKE...

"Unless your current logo is negatively impacting your business in a measurable way, you should leave it alone," says Jared McCarthy of MarketingProf.com.

While your logo is only a visual representation of your company's brand, prospective customers are exposed to it (or should be) with every communication your company makes (excluding radio of course). By casting off long standing imagery, your company risks losing or disconnecting from attributes valued by people familiar with your brand.

### LESS THAN EXTREME MAKEOVER

Maybe your logo just needs a little tweaking to keep pace with the upgrades and image changes you've made to your business. Many new media applications may require greater flexibility than the existing version currently allows, and you can certainly make it more contemporary without losing its basic visual impact.



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## IF YOU MUST

Oh, all right...if you still want to change your logo (or are launching a new product), you should keep a few key points in mind.

### 1. BLACK AND WHITE AND READ ALL OVER

A well-designed logo can stand on its own in black and white – a poorly designed one cannot. In black and white, you can get a clear sense of the shape, design and readability of a logo. Color can distract the eye, making it more difficult to discern red flags in design. Rest assured, if it works in black and white, it will work in color. Additionally, there are many instances when you will be forced to display your logo in one color (or reversed out in white).

### 2. SIMPLY ONE OF A KIND

Shape is more important than color when it comes to identifying logos. Unique shapes enable good logos to be differentiated from the vast array of logos that we are exposed to every day. Simpler shapes are better. The mind has to remember the shape to recognize it at a glance, which is all the time a company has to grab someone's attention. And remember, words themselves are shapes as well.

### 3. COLOR ME...APPROPRIATE

Similarly, colors and color combinations should be simple and unique. Too many colors make a logo harder to remember. And as goofy as it may seem, colors do evoke ideas and emotions.

- » Red                      Aggressiveness, danger, strength, passion, courage
- » Orange                 Enthusiasm, happiness, determination, attraction, endurance, warmth
- » Yellow                 Joy, intellect, energy, cowardice, caution, cheerful, youth
- » Green                 Natural, growth, freshness, health, harmony, healing, hope, jealousy
- » Blue                    Depth, stability, trust, loyalty, wisdom, faith, truth, wisdom, tranquility
- » Purple                 Nobility, wealth, luxury, ambition, creativity, mystery, spirituality
- » White                 Goodness, innocence, perfection, safety, cleanliness, purity, simplicity
- » Black                 Power, elegance, death, evil, prestige, seriousness, sophistication
- » Brown                 Tradition, earthliness, utility

Don't let your personal preferences dictate your color scheme. Determine how you want your company to be perceived and use color theory to evaluate color options.

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Other considerations:

- » Make sure that you are able to match your color(s) when printing in spot (PMS) color as well as 4-color process (CMYK)
- » Ensure that the logo “pops” against the background colors you are likely to use
- » When displaying online (RGB), you will need to adjust the color make-up of your logo to closely match the printed version. Monitors project light through the color and each monitor is calibrated a little differently, so it is impossible to guarantee that everyone will see the color the same way.

#### **4. NOT LITERALLY**

You don't have to use imagery that is inherent to your industry or the product you sell. If all competitors did, it would be hard to tell one from another. Over time, effective logos are able to engrain themselves in the minds of customers. The Nike “swoosh”, for example, has nothing to do with shoes, but it has become one of the most recognized logos in the world.

#### **5. SIZE MATTERS**

A logo might look great by itself on a full page, but does retain its impact when applied on collateral materials and packaging? Both scale (relative size of each element) and orientation (vertical or horizontal layout) dictate a logo's readability and effective use of space. It might fit at the top of corporate letterhead, but if the text is so small that you can't read it, who cares? Likewise, increasing the logo's size to ensure legibility might take up too much space, or waste valuable real estate elsewhere. Identify the various applications for your logo and check the new design against each – flexibility is critical. Also, be sure to give your logo room to breathe and stand out, without graphic interference. Allow 10-20% of clear space around the logo.

#### **6. SLOGAN'S RUN**

If you use a slogan in conjunction with your logo, try to think of it as a dynamic component of the logo itself. Even if your slogan changes, the font, color and positioning should be kept constant.

#### **7. DECISIONS, DECISIONS**

Selecting your logo is not rocket science, so have some fun. Considerate evaluation of your options is important, but there is a tendency to over-scrutinize. View your logo as the public does – quickly. Display your best designs in front of people and ask them to give you their immediate impressions. Which design attracts their attention first? Gut feel tends to be a better indicator of popular appeal, than cerebral analysis.

### **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED**

Now that you've spent considerable time, energy and probably at least a little money, you should take measures to protect your investment. In order to protect your exclusive rights to logos, trademarks and



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service marks, you must apply them properly and consistently. Style sheets and graphics standards formalize how a logo should appear (and not appear). These guidelines indicate dimensions, proportions, clear space requirements and color specifications. There may even be different color stipulations based on how the logo is printed: 4-color process (CMYK), spot (PMS), web (RGB) and black and white.

## **LASTLY**

Avoid falling for current trendy design styles. They may be fine for promotional materials, but you don't want your logo to be stuck with a passé look when the fickle winds of fad change direction.