



ROCKPORT

DESIGN WORKBOOK

A HANDS-ON GUIDE TO CREATING LOGOS ADAMSMORIOKA

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ROCKPORT
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**Thinking isn't agreeing or disagreeing. That's voting.
—Robert Frost**

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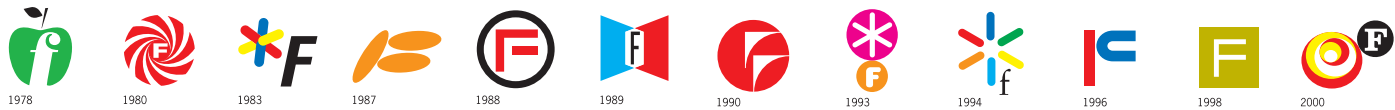
Introduction



1

Ten years ago, AdamsMorioka was asked to produce a logo for a major Los Angeles institution. We began the project sketching on a pad and playing with type on the computer. The more time we spent designing logo options, however, the more questions we asked. If the client were to change his business in a year, would the logo need to change? If the logo promised community involvement, would the client deliver? Very quickly we began to understand that making a formally successful logo was important, but making something that communicated as a base for all the client's endeavors was critical.

¹
A fictional history of logos used in a promotion postcard series for Frederator, a multifaceted communications company. AdamsMorioka, Inc.

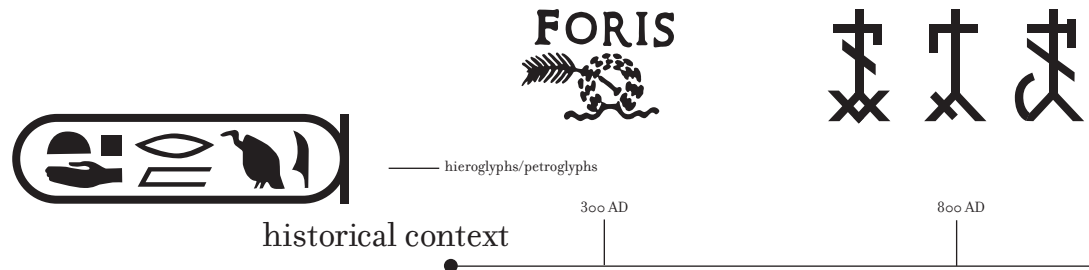


A strong logo and subsequent visual system is one of a corporation's greatest assets. As the international corporate structure has expanded in the past fifty years, so has the need for distinct corporate identification. The world is now filled with every imaginable icon and monogram, as well as all forms of logos. Our task, as designers, is to take the commonplace—letterforms, geometric shapes, and images—and make them distinctive and meaningful. This is a unique time, however, and we are now able to design in ways unimaginable in the past. The breadth of opportunity and the possibilities for the designer's involvement in multiple media, combined with the strategies of our clients' business, make the logo more than a nice decoration; it becomes a vital component in a company's success.



Why and What

Why a Logo?



Let us begin with motive. Man's desire to claim ownership is inherent. Whether this is a result of pride, greed, or hope of immortality is personal. We mark our names on childhood drawings. We develop a signature, unique to each of us, to protect our identity. We carve initials into tree trunks with a heart, hoping to make a union permanent. The logo is an extension of these acts. It redefines these motives from the individual to the collective.

The idea of using marks to claim ownership is not a modern invention. Mesopotamian and Egyptian bricks were marked with stamps indicating their intended construction site. Roman bricks were stamped with the mark of the manufacturer, place of origin, and final destination. The practice of using marks to identify objects continued with housewares, decorative items, and weapons. These marks were typically a single straight line of letters or letters set on a circle or crescent. In time, figurative icons such as a palm leaf or wreath were incorporated into the symbol. Accompanying slogans were absent, although items stamped with the phrase *Felix Roma* (Happy Rome) are often seen, similar to current slogans such as "The Sunshine State."

The population of medieval Europe was, largely, illiterate; thus the mark served the purpose of a signature. Illiterate societies tend toward secret practices and knowledge. The medieval stone-masons, for example, developed a complex set of rituals using specialized speech and behavior. They recognized each other by standing with their feet at right angles, by their greetings, and by following certain dress codes. Their desire to maintain a secret society led to their system of marks. Based on the cross, these marks were more like symbols than letters.



1457 AD



1740 AD



2

1947 AD



3

2004 AD

multiple media
audience messaging

The invention of the printing press created the craft of the printer. Early printed books were considered inferior to written manuscripts, however, and there was no desire to claim ownership for the product. As the need and appreciation for printed books grew, printers began to mark their work. In 1480, Nicola Jenson and Giovanni da Colonia in Venice introduced the prototype of the orb and cross mark. The symbolic design, earth plus faith, became one of the most typical forms used in early printer's marks.

In 1740, the first factory to produce Sèvres porcelain was founded in Vincennes, France. Twenty years later, a decree was issued assuring the King of France a monopoly on porcelain production. Every piece of porcelain was carefully marked with the symbol of the factory. The succession of regimes caused the continuous redesigning of the mark. This parallels the redesign of corporate marks with the appointment of a new CEO.

The Industrial Revolution increased the value of identification, and trademarks were critical for visual recognition. After 1950, the usage of trademarks changed radically. Multinational corporations with a wide range of products began to utilize the logo as a tool to maintain a cohesive message. Broader usage of the logo by a more diverse group of designers and advertising agencies provided the need for a comprehensive visual system to accompany the logo. The ABC mark was the foundation for the network's clear and cohesive advertising and communications. The use of negative space, and simplicity, combined in a circle, provided a clear and consistent message to the audience.

The needs we now face are a direct result of two thousand years of identity evolution. In the same way that management and business practices have changed, so has the role of the logo. We now place a strong emphasis on teamwork and the creative process for everyone involved in a project. The logo and supportive visual system must not only talk to the external audience, but must also provide a clear intent to the internal audience. The logo will be handled and mishandled by in-house departments, outside consultants, advertising agencies, and web designers. A simple mark for identification is not enough. A clear message conveyed to a wide and diverse audience over an extended amount of time is paramount. Ownership is needed, not only by the creative maker and client, but by the audience as well.

2
ABC
Paul Rand

3
Brand Integration Group
Ogilvy & Mather



ownership



who owns this?

origin



where was it made?

identity



who made it?



Logo:
a distinctive symbol
of a company, object,
publication, person
service, or idea.

What Is a Logo?

This seems like an easy question. A logo is a mark on the bottom of the television screen, the top of a cereal box, or the side of a letterhead. Unfortunately, it's not that simple. The word "logo" has multiple meanings, and to make the issue more complex, different words are used to describe this thing we call a logo.

Mark

A recognizable symbol used to indicate ownership or origin of goods.

Trademark

A name or symbol used to show that a product is made by a particular company and legally registered.

Signature

A distinctive mark, or combination of visual forms. A graphics standards manual may call for the “signature” to be applied to all brochures. This is simply a synonym for “logo.”

4
Halfords
Lippa Pierce

5
Mobil
Chermayeff & Geismar

6
Time Warner Cable
Chermayeff & Geismar

7
Chase Manhattan Bank
Chermayeff & Geismar

8
Wisconsin Energies
SamataMason

9
Evans Foden
Ph.D

Wordmark

A wordmark uses the company name with proprietary letterforms.

Advantages

The proliferation of logos in the world has made recognition of symbols very difficult. Using the entire name sidesteps the problem of recognition. When asked if the Mobil logo belongs to Mobil, most people would agree that it does. When asked who owned the Pegasus logo, many people would name other oil companies such as Chevron or Texaco. Mobil uses the Pegasus in addition to the wordmark.

Disadvantages

If not handled skillfully, a wordmark alone may be generic and lack mnemonic value.



4

Mobil

5

Symbol

The symbol is the iconic portion of a logo: The Chase Manhattan Bank symbol, the Cingular man, the Time Warner Cable eye/ear. At times the logomark may exist without the wordmark, examples being the Nike swoosh, Apple’s apple, and the CBS eye.

Advantages

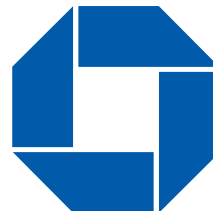
The benefit of utilizing a symbol alone follows the idea that “a picture is worth a thousand words.” The eye/ear symbol is easier to read on an object such as a computer or hat, than the name Time Warner Cable.

Disadvantages

If the symbol is separated from the wordmark and the mark does not have equity it may be difficult to recognize.



6



7

Monogram

A design of one or more letters, usually the initials of a name, used to identify a company, publication, person, object, or idea.

Advantages

The monogram solves mnemonic and legibility issues. Fitting Wisconsin Energies on a one-quarter page newspaper ad is much harder than using the WE monogram.

Disadvantages

Monograms are often masquerading as logos. Generic initials, treated in clever ways may look better on towels or glasses than on a corporate business card. Initials woven together have very little meaning. Most monogramatic logos depend on large-scale audience contact and repeated viewing for recognition.



8



9

rococo™

rococo™

rococo™

10

Rococo is a software developer specializing in blue-tooth enabling technology.

According to Damian Cranney, of Dynamo, “We adopted a very light friendly approach more akin to a retail brand than a technology company. Basically, the market was flooded with very similar looking technology brands—making it harder for new organizations to distinguish themselves. These companies also seemed to present themselves in a very similar fashion—masculine, pumped-up, and aggressive with verbose promises and tired visual themes.

“We decided to design a brand that was friendly, that made people smile, and crucially, that presented a very complex offer in a way that wasn’t scary, overly complex or patronizing.”

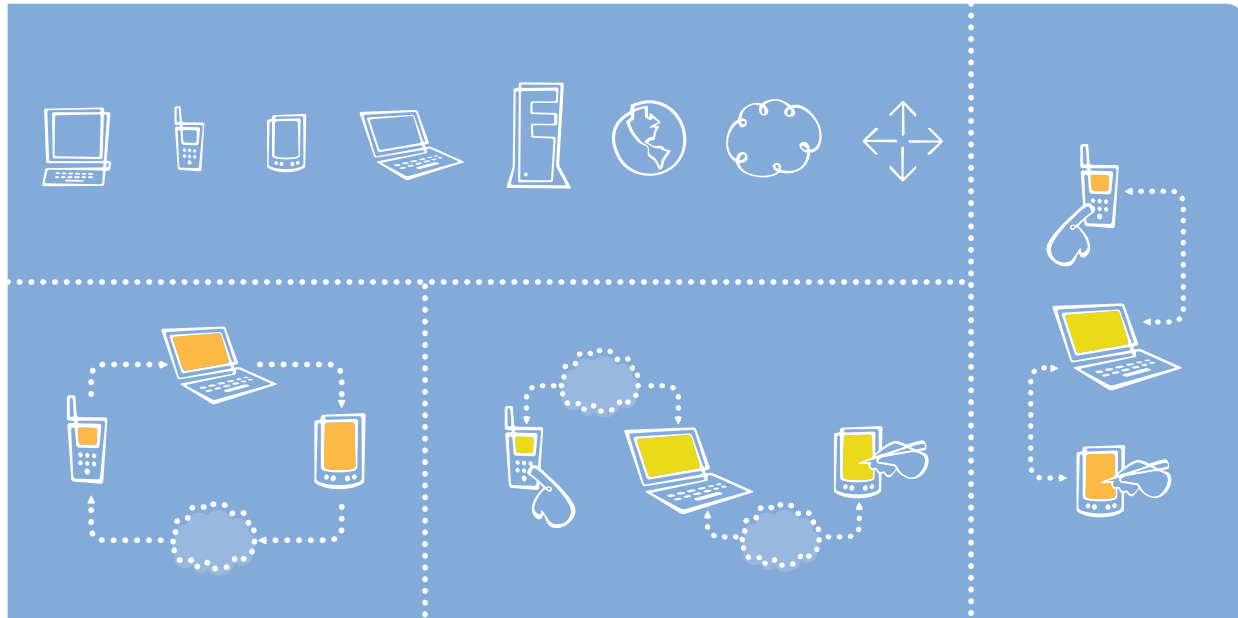
Identity

The combination of the logo, visual system (typeface, colors, imagery), and editorial tone work together to form a unique and cohesive message for a company, person, object, or idea.

Brand

The identity is not a brand. The brand is the perception formed by the audience about a company, person, or idea. This perception is the culmination of logo, visuals, identity program, messages, products, and actions. A designer cannot “make” a brand. Only the audience can do this. The designer forms the foundation of the message with the logo and identity system.

rococo™



10

A logo is
not a brand,
unless it's
on a cow.

10

rules

- 1 Answer who, what, why?
- 2 Identify, don't explain
- 3 Understand limitations
- 4 Be seductive
- 5 Make mnemonic value
- 6 Pose a question
- 7 Design for longevity
- 8 Make the logo the foundation of a system
- 9 Design for a variety of media
- 10 Be strong

1

Answer who, what, why?

Before anything begins, the most basic questions that must be asked and answered are “Who is the client?” “Who is the audience?” “What is needed?” A logo should grow organically from the answers to these questions. Rather than imposing an idea onto the problem, the problem should dictate the solution. This is a statement repeated by every design teacher. Unfortunately, it is often ignored or misunderstood. It does not mean that the whims of the client should be obediently followed. It does not mean that the designer’s vision should be sublimated. It does mean that as much information as possible should be gathered, criteria developed, and creative work created, through the filter of the designer.

Who is the client? In the simplest terms, this addresses the company’s values, attitudes, and goals. Who is the audience? This may be answered demographically—women eighteen through thirty-four, or psychographically—athletic men who love adventure. And, more specifically, who makes the final decision on this logo? Is it the marketing manager who hired the designer, or the CEO, whom the designer never met? Finally, what is needed? Is a logo the answer? Or is the problem larger—a bad product, staff, or message? Will a good logo be lost in a quagmire of a creative department that is understaffed or poorly managed?

Answering these questions may solve the current problems. The wrench in this plan, however, is that a client’s current business may be radically different from his long-term goals. What does the client want to be in the next year, five years, and ten years? Every company will evolve and change. The size of the company, product, and needs are in constant flux. While the client may currently have a small, regional company with one product, the goal might be to eventually expand and produce a greater diversity of goods. It is human nature to focus on our current needs; it is the designer’s job to presuppose future needs.

Goals and promises

It is important to look at the client’s business and communication goals. Identifying the promises the client makes to its audiences synthesizes what the client stands for because it states what their audience is assured that they can expect.

Briefing questions

1. Positioning

Compared with other companies, what is the client's current positioning?

2. Purpose

What is the client's business?
What is the client's purpose?

3. Mission

Beyond the economics, why is it worth doing? What is the client's mission?

4. Composition

What is the client's current internal structure?

5. Culture

What are the client's distinctive shared behaviors that best support the purpose and mission?

6. Personality

What is the client's chosen style and manner?

7. Client goals

What are five key goals over the next year/five years?

8. Growth

What are the greatest opportunities for the growth of the client and its image?

9. Promises

What promises does the client make?

10. Current audience

Who is the client's current audience? Who, where, when, why?

11. Audience goal

Does the client want another type of audience? What is the desired demographic?

12. Perception

How does the client's target audience currently view the brand?

13. Desired perception

How does the client want the audience to view the brand?

14. Competition

How is the client different from its competition?

15. Response

What response does the client want the target audience to take away with them?

16. Objective

What is the marketing objective?



2

Identify, don't explain



ARTISTS MANAGEMENT GROUP

12

We are identified, in good company, with names like John, Maria, or Frank. We prefer to not to be called “the guy who lives on Maple Street and works at the pharmacy” or “the woman who has a beehive hairstyle and runs a trucking company.” This is long-winded, confusing, and forgettable. In the same way, a logo should not literally describe the client’s business; a logo is an identifier. Many clients would like their logo to describe every aspect of their company. This is natural, they’re proud of their achievement. It is problematic, however, and may lead to a restraining identity. The logo is a signpost that identifies the company and reflects its attitudes and values.

There are many companies who use illustrations, but have been convinced by well-meaning, but underequipped designers that these are logos. A logo is a shortcut, a visual language that is quickly recognizable and memorable. An illustration is a drawing or photograph that helps to explain text. Speaking with the most straightforward and clear voice is always more successful than the convoluted or overwrought.



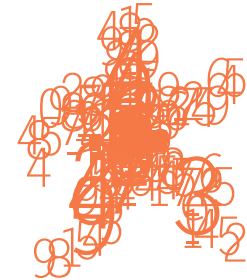
13



14

11 (opposite)
The Oxygen Channel’s logo does not describe every aspect of the company or specify television as its primary product. Rather than illustrating the physical element of “oxygen,” or explaining the network’s demographic, it uses the reaction “oh!” to communicate the attitude and surprise of the product. AdamsMorioka, Inc.

12
The logo for Artists Management Group is a tumbling cube made up of the companies’ initials—AMG—that expresses the ever-changing nature of the entertainment industry they serve. AdamsMorioka, Inc.



15

13
The current Dole logo positions Dole with the ability to expand into other businesses. Landor and Associates

14
The logo for the graphic design company Pato Macedo does not illustrate the tools of the graphic design industry. It identifies the company as fresh, clear, and credible with its elegant, no-nonsense approach. Pato Macedo

15
Stealing Time is a full service video editing company serving the advertising and broadcast industries. The “running man” logo represents a clever visual pun of the company name. Concrete Communications