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Corporate Identity:

A puzzle for management solved by design

by Todd Rhoda

"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

– Charles Darwin

People get the message about your company, but often it's the wrong message.

You can be as modern as tomorrow, but if your logo looks like 1985 your company will suffer in its image and – quicker than you may imagine – in profits. You can't control your corporate image completely, but you can influence it to a large degree.

This brief White Paper is about what you can do to...

1. change it...
2. strengthen it...
3. redirect it...
4. and focus it.

What you should look for in an identity design?

1. **Simplicity**
2. **Shapes**
3. **Memory & Recognition**
4. **Appropriateness**

Simplicity

Simplicity can make the difference between good and bad design, between a "look" that's strongly memorable and one that's instantly forgettable.

Shapes

People tend to simplify toward smooth, closed, regular shapes. This tendency is especially strong under conditions of short exposure, competitive surroundings, or low attention level.

If your "message" is too complicated, people simply won't remember it.

Memory & Recognition

Memory and recognition depend partly on the strength of the initial impact and partly on subsequent reinforcement. Simple designs can be made bolder than complicated ones and, therefore, make a stronger initial impact. There is less to remember about a simple design, so subsequent reinforcement is easier.

In disorderly surroundings, simple design stands out by its difference.

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Appropriateness

When looking at any design, consider the function of the item and consider how and where it will be used. Consider, too, how long it will be used.

Case Study: Sentinel Capital Partners

Sentinel is one of the ten largest leverage buyout firms in Manhattan. They came to us for an identity makeover.

Their new identity reflects the personality of the firm. An identity that hit these key concepts:

Strong, Financial, Smart, Hardcharging, Modern and History.



Summary

Every successful logo began with one simple thought:

Senior Management saw the logo not as a decorative announcement, but rather ...as a brand that was to be nurtured and built.

Glossary

Symbol- A symbol or trademark should have the qualities which are basic to its usage: Individuality, memorability, and legibility. It must convey its message in quick and simple terms.

Signature- The corporate signature is the standard form of writing a name, with or without a symbol.

Logotype- The logotype is composed of the two graphic elements just discussed: the symbol and the signature.

Color- Although color alone is not enough to identify a corporation, it can be used effectively to support a graphic program.