

Ovidiu NICOLAESCU

GRAPHICS – THE ESSENTIAL TOOL IN LOGO DESIGN

Abstract: The logo is one of the most important elements of the company's visual promoting strategy. Even so, the creation of a logo which fulfils all the specific criteria of an ideal logo can be a tough process given the fact that the market and trends are changing continuously. The actual paperwork focus on the study of graphics, on its influence in logo designing process but also it focuses on the analysis of existent brands and their possible redesigns with implications over population's opinion.

Key words: logo, design, graphic, chromatics, representative symbol, sign, text.

1. INTRODUCTION

Because we live in a world where competition is increasing regardless of the sector of activity, the creation of an unique brand is determined by the knowledge and integration of the design process (product and logo). For example, we recognize a specific brand of footwear in stores by the logo used. Thus the logo design becomes an important process for future brand communication by determining consumer responses. A study conducted using eye-tracking technology showed that when a person visits a site, they spend the first 6.48 seconds analyzing the logo [1]. Also the first impression is most often that produced by the logo, a person forming his first impression in the first 50 milliseconds. For example, when visiting a site, after the first 50 milliseconds we instinctively decide whether or not the page is of interest by analyzing the graphic style, starting most often from the logo design [2].

This work will focus on studying the existing logo market and the impact on the public, as well as the degree of influence brought by compliance with the design criteria in the graphics of an ideal logo.

2. APPLICABILITY

The logo can be used in any field of activity where it is desired to promote and spread a brand, idea, concept, way of life etc. Below are some areas of activity with the effects of force:

1. **Education and culture** (universities, high schools, schools, libraries);
2. **Justice** (law firm, insurance, political parties, foundations);
3. **Medicine** (medical clinics, pharmacies, medical equipment, medicines);
4. **Construction and development programs** (construction materials, furniture, decorations, hardware/software equipment)
5. **Culinary industry** (teahouse, catering services, candy shop, restaurant);
6. **Media and promotion** (social networks, TV channels, audio companies, promotion/marketing agencies);
7. **Sport** (sports clubs, sports events, sports equipment);
8. **Transportation** (taxi agents, transport companies, car brands).

It should be noted that all such activities must be represented by appropriate symbols in order not to cause confusion as to the scope of activity such as in the field of transport, key symbols such as the car, wheel, steering wheel or other car components [3], [4].

3. STAGES OF RESEARCH

The current work will take place in three stages:

1. The exploration stage, where we will analyze the logos of existing brands on the market both in terms of compliance with the design criteria and from the perspective of the public/customers in order to identify those elements of the logo to which they are most receptive (Figure 1);
2. The redesign stage, where we will choose a specific field of activity and make logo lifts respecting the preferences of the previously consulted public, and we will make a comparison with other brands in the field;
3. The validation stage, where we will design a questionnaire comparing the logos designed and those already in place to mark the rate of improvement and the impact they have on the public [8].

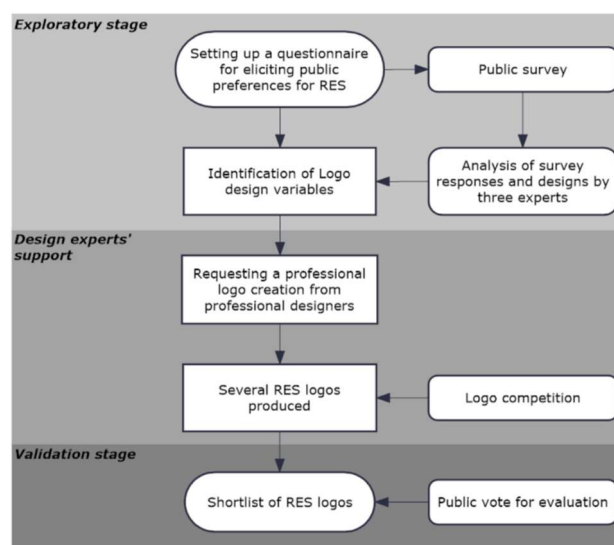


Figure 1 Schematic representation of the stages of the research

4. EXPLORATION

Analyzing the logos of several companies with various objects of activity, I was able to determine several features that were taken into account in the logo design.

A study of a top 500 of the best-known brands on their logo typology and the influence of the logo on the public's perception of the company revealed that 60% of them have complex typology, followed by 37% logotypes and surprisingly only 3% of iconic logos. We can justify the detached result of complex logos on the basis of their versatility by allowing companies to promote themselves either by symbol or by text or by combination of the two.

According to the same study that also analyzed the chromatics of the 500 logos, it was concluded that the most common/popular color is blue, followed by black and then red. It is worth mentioning that black is the most commonly used color in logos composed of two colors (Figure 2).

It was also found that most logos have two colors in their composition (43%) or a color (37%), the rest of the logos have 3 or more colors.

As regards the font used, the study found that a major percentage (73%) **sans serif** fonts are most secure due to their easy reading [5].

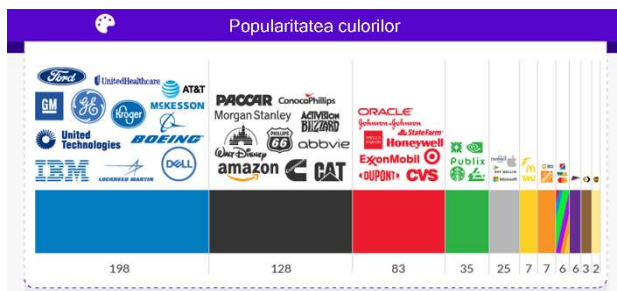


Figure 2 Representation of the popularity of colors [5]

From these statistics we can see how important are the properties that define a properly made logo.

All decisions in designing a successful logo aim to create a product with a minimum number of elements and maximum visual impact.

According to a study led by the Reboot agency on the importance of colors in brand promotion, a questionnaire was conducted in which the public was presented with a combination of colors specific to a logo and the logo's recognition capacity was tested.

The study concluded that the use of colors in the logo design increases the brand recognition capacity up to 80% [6].

The vast majority of these logos have in their composition a maximum of two shades of colors, so we can say that a color range as small as possible helps to memorize the logo and implicitly the brand.

In terms of the popularity of the colors used, they have a justification for the emotions and feelings that the organization wants to convey to the public.

The blue color is associated with water, tranquility, calm, peace, provides a sense of safety, reduces appetite

and boosts productivity. It is often used with the intention of inspiring the public to trust the promoted brand. For this reason an extremely wide range of medical logos contain this color.

Black is associated with authority, power, stability, elegance, professionalism. That's why we can find it frequently in the doors of clothing brands or offering security and transport services.

The red color creates a sense of alarm, stimulates appetite and energizes the physique, increases the heart rate. It is associated with movement, life, agitation, passion, danger. However, being a bright color it tends to be tiring for the eyes. Red is common in industries that emphasize speed, promptness, protection (cars, health, warning symbols, etc.).

As for the font used predominantly, sans serif, it is frequently used because of its simplicity, being extremely legible and difficult to misinterpret from a grammatical point of view, allowing a widening of the target audience (Figure 3).

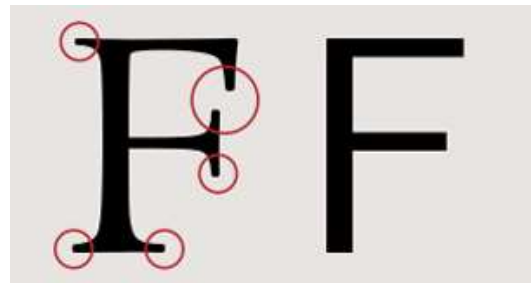


Figure 3 Comparison between the serif font (left) and the sans serif font (right)

At the same time, one aspect that should not be neglected in the design of a logo is the type of shapes used. Research in recent years has shown that circular shapes are associated with soft textures, delicacy, while straight shapes are associated with strong textures. Such shapes used in logo design can create perceptions about the company, such as a round logo will evoke associations related to gentleness, instinctively considering that the organization cares and is sensitive to the needs of the customer.

In a study on the subject, 109 students were asked to review an advertisement for sneakers. They were distributed in three groups according to the logo design: circular logo, angular logo, no logo. In logo ads, it was displayed on every adidas.

In the end, participants provided ratings on a 9-point scale on the quality, comfort and durability of the sneakers.

Participants who saw the ad with the circular logo claimed that the sneakers were much more comfortable than the other two groups considered. At the same time, the participants who saw the ad with the angular logo claimed that the sneakers have a higher durability and quality than the opinions of the other groups [7].

Of course, all these logo features are relative depending on the field of activity, and a logo designed with the utmost care at the wrong place and time can considerably degrade the image of the company.

A clear example of these is the logo lift made for Airbnb. It is aimed at people travelling around the world by offering short-term residence offers (Figure 4).



Figure 4 Logo before (left) and after (right) logo facelift

I think the original logo was a successful one because it pleasantly captures the things the company offers. Airbnb – AirBed&Breakfast these details can be found in the color and shape of the letters in the logo. The shade of blue that conveys freedom, air, tranquility, the rounded shapes of the letters that induce the feeling of comfort and the fact that the letters are empty referring to a space, a room, thus providing a sense of customer safety, all these meanings make the original logo to highlight the characteristics, guarantee and prestige of the company.

As for the facelift suffered by this logo, we can say that it has experienced an unintentional decline. The coral color with which the blue color has been replaced has the intention of transmitting heat, belonging, and the font used has the advantage of being much more legible.

However, the big problem is marked by the symbol used which is supposed to be a combination of four elements, still following a simple form. This symbol that is intended to mark membership is perceived by the public in a sexual manner, associating it with a sexual organ or other part of the human body.

5. REDESIGN

For this stage we chose the study and redesign of the logo in the medical area. Analyzing the existing logos in this area we noticed that the predominant are the colors blue, red and green. The blue color is used to convey a sense of safety and comfort while the red color symbolizes life, urgency or blood. The green color is usually used to promote pharmaceutical brands, which conveys naturalness, health or life.

Of these, the greatest predominance has the blue color.

The most common graphic symbols in the medical field are the heart, pulse and medical cross that are designed to create the sensation of warmth and attention to the needs of customers.

The forms encountered in this industry are both circular to support the idea of gentleness and careful treatment of needs, but also angular, thus marking the professionalism of the company and the prestige proven in its activity.

As for the redesign part we have chosen two brands of medical equipment having as common heart application.

ZOLL is a medical equipment company mainly defibrillators.



Figure 5 Current logo design

Analyzing the original logo design (Figure 5) we can say that it is quite simplistic, uses a very legible font and with a pronounced angular character denoting the seriousness and professionalism of the company. The symbol also possesses the registered brand symbol which contributes to the prestige of the company considering the dedication for its products. In this context the blue color gives the viewer an increased feeling of safety. However, this logo lacks that detail that mentions the object of activity and the audience to which it is addressed.



Figure 6 Logo Lifting – ZOLL

The logo lift designed for this brand uses a combination of circular and angular shapes to highlight both the safety of the defibrillation procedure and its promptness and success. These ideas are accentuated by the two colors used, blue and yellow along with their gradient effect (Figure 6). The blue color supports the idea of safety, and through the texture offered by the gradient contributes to the guarantee offered by the brand. The yellow color is mainly used to highlight the object of the activity, illustrating together with the letter Z the electric shock, and the color gradient indicating its rapid transmission. Being a bright color it intends to produce dynamism, the situation in which a defibrillator is used is usually an emergency one.

The Z liter was also designed to convey an electrical character, but also to denote the composition of two letters L. Following the example of the TOYOTA logo I wanted to incorporate the name of the company into an original symbol and also relatively easy to distinguish.

SCHILLER is a company producing medical equipment mainly electrocardiograph devices and a type of spirometry device.



Figure 7 Current logo design

Analyzing the original logo design we can observe a mixture of six colors, three symbols, the name of the company and also its motto (Figure 7). The wide range of colors tends to tire the viewer's attention and makes this logo difficult to remember. Also the use of the heart as a repetitive symbol, even if the two want to convey different ideas is intended to further complicate this logo. Indeed, it is possible to deduce the object of activity and the care taken of customers easily, especially since the presence of the motto puts an end to any possible confusion regarding the field of activity. The font used is a legible font, but the red color used in the title is not consistent with the straight, rigid-looking letters of the text.



Figure 8 Logo Lifting – Schiller

Logo lift followed a simplistic approach with a narrow range of colors.

I chose as the representative symbol the cardiac put to replace the two letters l of the company name. Also, in order to focus the viewer's attention on the two dics, we chose the font of the sans serif text for increased legibility and lowercase letters because for the replacement of two letters L with two pulsations would have obtained a signal far too distant thus indicating a health problem (Figure 8).

I chose to use the black color for the text because it gives good contrast to the pulsations compared to the red color where the symbol would have been lost in the landscape or the blue color from which a stunning contract with the possibility of greater interpretation would have emerged.

The black color conveys in this context the seriousness and professionalism of the company.

Another field addressed for the analysis and redesign of the logo is the university one, with the object of study several logos of the faculties of the Polytechnic University of Bucharest.

The Faculty of Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering has a multicolor logo with a faded look. As distinctive symbols you can see two red lines, which want to illustrate a border. It also mentions the university where this faculty is located. The problem with this logo in addition to the unattractive chromatics and inappropriate symbolism is that it is not possible to deduce the object of activity of the institution (Figure 9).

The designed redesign addresses a simplistic chromatic focusing more on the symbolism of the logo.

Only the black color and variations of its gradient were used for the design of this logo. The font used, characterized by straight and pronounced edges wants to make a subtle association with the metal materials used in the mechanical and mechatronic industry (Figure 10).



Figure 9 Current logo design

Also, the symbols used, the toothed wheel and the two robotic arms that take the place of the letter M, are intended to illustrate as clearly as possible the object of activity of the institution. Also, by alternating the gradient of the symbols I wanted to give them a metallic character.



Figure 10 Proposed logo lifting

In terms of chromatics, we chose the black color because in this industry bright, vivid colors are not easily found, people associating metal with sober colors, such as gray.

I also chose not to integrate the logo into a shape like the original design to keep the logo not cluttering with too many shapes. I believe that the toothed wheel used effectively replaces the round shape of the anterior logo and also attracts interest through its asymmetry.

The Faculty of Materials Science and Engineering is represented by a logo with a complex chromatic, the main colors being red, yellow and blue, colors that inspire patriotism. There is also a specific university symbol, the graduation toga that can express the level of the educational institution (Figure 11).

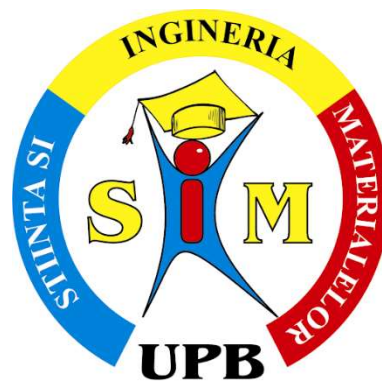


Figure 11 Current design

The logo also mentions the name of the faculty and the university to which it belongs. Although the logo provides sufficient information with the help of the text, it has several imperfections. The bright shades used tend to tire the eyes and also do not lead to specific engineering activities, much less to the study of materials. The graduation order is a completely unrepresentative symbol for the subject of study on which the promoted institution focuses.

Also combining this symbol with the human-shaped symbol conveys a superficial message like graduation.



Figure 12 Proposed logo lifting

The proposed redesign uses a small predominant number of colors, focusing on black and blue along with variations in their gradient (Figure 12).

In this facelift, the literary informational part of the logo was considerably discarded, while also eliminating the circular shape in which the symbols were embedded. We gave up the circular shape due to the too much loading of the logo and to attract attention through the asymmetrical elements of the logo.

I wanted to characterize the institution predominantly by symbols. I chose to introduce the molecule as a distinct symbol to illustrate the basis of any material, and I also emphasized the chromatic variety of this symbol to emphasize the message conveyed. Compared to the original design, where the message conveyed is graduation, here the message becomes a much more qualitative one by referring to knowledge by associating the man who holds the molecule. I chose to use a dark chromatic to convey the idea of the material, because most of the basic materials studied cannot be illustrated by vivid colors, as is done in the original logo.

6. FURTHER RESEARCH

As prospects for the future, the work aims to develop the range of logo lifts in the chosen field at the same time as introducing several logo-making techniques including the 3D logo and the animated logo.

Following the completion of this redesign phase, the work will describe the validation stage in which a comparative questionnaire will be devised between the logos designed and those already in existence as well as

the influence of facelifts obtained in a competitive framework, the aim being to analyze people's opinions regarding the services offered in this field when their opinion is based on the impression induced by the logo.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Graphics is the most important tool in logo design. Properly used it can help create ingenious signs that capture the true values of the organization and at the same time convey the most positive intentions to the public, thus promoting the company's guarantee.

In the wrong hands it can lead to unforeseen failures.

It should be noted that graphics are an interpretable tool, which is why too much complexity can create only a lot of confusion instead of anticipated success.

The ideal logo is characterized by simplicity in terms of symbols, signs, chromatics and text, being the best solution for avoiding confusion and concrete expression of the desired message.

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Author:

Eng. Ovidiu NICOLAESCU, Master student, University Politehnica of Bucharest, Faculty of Aerospace Engineering, Department of Graphical Engineering and Industrial Desing, E-mail: divoniu@yahoo.ro