

01 BRANDING

DOES YOUR
LOGO BREAK THESE

10

RULES?

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

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DOES YOUR LOGO BREAK THESE 10 RULES?

The human brain sees images first, and comprehends words second. A logo is therefore a key factor in identifying yourself to the outside world. In order to get your audience to recognise your company, distinguish it from others and remember it, you have to have a logo that meets certain criteria. If these criteria are not met, you are going to have real trouble stamping your brand in the mind of your target, never mind keeping it there.

Now, your moment of truth...

1. A LOGO SHOULD BE UNIQUE.

The first step to achieving brand awareness in your target market is to gain and maintain visibility, and to do this brands have to be distinctive. In order to be distinctive, brands need to have a logo that is unique.

Unique logos do not involve visual elements that are already being used by competitors.

Think about your competitors'

- colours
- graphics
- fonts
- complexity
- overall messages

Try to avoid incorporating anything similar to these into your own logo design.

Exclude anything that could be seen as expected or cliché.

As well as being unique, don't forget to design your logo to communicate a message that is consistent with your company's desired brand message.

2. AN EFFECTIVE LOGO IS AUTHENTIC.

When well designed, your logo conveys that you are credible, trustworthy and professional. However, great design involves a lot more than just looking good.

A well designed logo should have integrity. Your logo identifies you to the outside world and therefore needs to express who you are as a company.

Define the message that you want your logo to communicate, according to your company's values and the experience that customers can expect to have when they interact with you. For instance, a logo may appear to lack integrity if it is for an accounting firm yet is covered in pink lollies, cupcakes and love hearts. This would be likely to fail in expressing to the audience who the company is and what the customer can expect through interaction (unless pink lollies and cupcakes are delivered along with tax return cheques?).

3. DESIGN FOR EQUAL EFFECT

A logo in black and white can lose its impact if the colour has been a more significant design consideration than the elements themselves. Most logos will need to be used in black and white at some point. Therefore, it would be beneficial to work on other elements, such as graphics, before the colour design. This will ensure that maximum impact is achieved no matter if the logo is printed in grayscale or displayed in HD colour.

“ASSESS YOUR LOGO AGAINST THESE 10 RULES FOR THE MOMENT OF TRUTH”

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"In Western cultures, it would most likely be inappropriate for the target audience to use bright red in a funeral home logo"

4. COLOUR FOR IMPACT.

By 'impact' I don't mean use the brightest and boldest colours you can find. You need to establish the possible emotional and mental associations of your target audience may experience through certain colours.

It is also very important to note that colour is interpreted in many different ways according to different cultures and demographics.

Hot pink may be interpreted very differently by a 16 year old girl compared with an 85 year old woman. In Western cultures, purity is usually symbolised by the colour white, however in India, purity is symbolised by the colour red.

In Western cultures, it would most likely be inappropriate for the target audience to use bright red in a funeral home logo, as red often symbolises passion, life, danger or energy.

These differences can make or break the success of a branding activity.

5. A WINNING LOGO SHOULD BE TIMELESS AND NOT RELY ON TRENDS.

Money, time and energy are invested into the creation and use of a logo. A logo that adheres to the latest trends usually has a use-by-date of less than two years. After that, your logo could make your brand appear dated and irrelevant, no matter how good your product is. Collateral would need to be updated along with the new logo. This could be a huge waste not only of money, time and energy, but potential. If designed and displayed correctly, a logo can achieve compounded brand awareness over time.

If you think of some of the logos that you recognise, you would probably agree that the majority of them have stood the test of time. Design a logo that 'stands the test of time' by avoiding the temptation to give in to trends at the point of creation.

6. CONSISTENCY.

Picture this. You've discovered a café that makes coffee just how you like it. You've only been once but the coffee was heaven. You now go into the same café, very excited because the latte that you are anticipating is just what the doctor ordered. This time you order a large, only to discover that it tastes like dishwashing detergent. Disappointing to say the least. Will you go back? Unlikely. Why? It's unreliable and gives confusing and erratic messages. Confusion repels customers. To create the desired impact and awareness of your brand, consistency is absolutely crucial.

People like brands that they can understand. People like being able to associate a personality and an expected result to a brand. It is absolutely YOUR responsibility to help and encourage your audience to understand who you are and learn to recognise you, through being consistent. Think of every brand that you love and think about whether they are consistent and the answer will always be, 'yes'. They are consistent in their graphic elements, colour theme, font and simplicity.

If you refresh your logo, ensure that your core message is uncompromised. Remember, only one main logo should be the bread and butter of your brand.

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7. WINNING LOGO DESIGNS ARE SIMPLE.

Logos are messages. You need to be able to communicate your message with your audience quickly and effectively. This means that your message needs to be focused to be easily understood. There can be no element that distracts from the overall message. As such, logos should not be overly complex. Complex logos usually send more complicated messages and this makes them harder to understand. Remember, you are investing time and money into your logo so that it is effective in delivering the intended message.

Logos are also often printed in a very wide variety of sizes. Your logo should therefore be simple in order to be as recognisable and equally effective on a small piece of collateral as a large one.

8. DISPLAY YOUR LOGO IN THE RIGHT PLACES.

From vehicle wraps to pull up banners, there are countless different ways and places to display your logo. This can seem overwhelming and can make the easiest or cheapest path look most attractive. However, these paths can be counter-productive and it is therefore very important to carefully assess the most effective places to display your logo. Have versions of your logo to suit portrait and landscape and web icons. Your logo needs to work on printed material, online and on your signage.

Analyse where your leads are coming from. If more of your leads are coming from a vehicle wrap than from website banner ads, it could be worth considering investing a larger portion of the marketing budget accordingly (or vice versa).

It can also be beneficial to trial new media and places to better identify the sources of maximum return on marketing spend.

9. DESIGN TO ROMANCE YOUR TARGET MARKET, NOT YOURSELF!

Brand love is defined as the degree of passionate, emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular brand name. Increasing ‘brand love’ for your business can be achieved through romancing your target market. It’s all about what your target wants. You can grab your audience’s attention by first finding out what they are attracted to and incorporating those elements into your visual branding.

Promoting what YOU see as attractive, funny, entertaining or sexy may seem like the obvious path but your audience may be triggered by something completely different. Your favourite colour combinations may even be offensive to some cultures. Like in any successful ‘pursuing’ period, it is important to focus on wooing your audience through providing them what they relate favourably to.

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10. REFRESH YOUR LOGO WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT.

Even if your logo has been designed well in the first place and with timelessness in mind, it could still benefit from the occasional refreshing! Refreshing is different to rebranding. Refreshing is only a slight adjustment that is still consistent with all other aspects of a brand’s visual identity.

A logo needs to be brought up to date when certain preferences of the target market change. ANZ refreshed their logo recently when, after significant research, they realised that their target market wanted to feel that ANZ empathised with people. They consequently updated their logo and tagline. Their tagline is now, “we live in your world” and their logo incorporates an image that looks like a person. They wanted their image to revolve around people and refreshed their branding to achieve this.

The right time (and frequency) for a brand and logo to be refreshed differs depending on the strength of your initial design and the rate at which your target market’s preferences change. Keep track of these two things to ensure your marketing dollars are always hitting the right notes.

A FINAL WORD

DOES YOUR LOGO BREAK THESE 10 RULES?

Achieving a larger market share isn't necessarily a result of who has the better product, but rather who can create the better perception in the mind of the consumer. In branding, whatever the mind perceives to be truth may as well be truth. The first step to creating such a perception is getting your logo right.

If your logo has not obeyed all these 10 branding rules, the 'truth' about your company may be far from the truth.

DO YOU NEED BRANDING ADVICE YOU CAN TRUST?

For over 20 years, SIGNARAMA consultants have been working closely with companies to create customised branding and signage strategies that expertly translate their company image into signage that makes a lasting impression, and we can do the same for you.

With 86 locations across Australia, there is a consultant near you that can give you personal, tailored service and advice that is specific to your business needs. Your very own signage consultant has access to the latest technologies, products and materials that others simply do not have. Add this to their exceptional branding and design expertise and there are no limits in creating the perfect signage strategy for your company.

We understand your brand and our national network can ensure that it remains consistent. Whether you have a big branding project or a small branding project, fully developed artwork or none at all, your SIGNARAMA consultant can provide you with a level of service and skill that will exceed your expectations. With decades of experience behind us, you can rest assured that the signage advice provided to you is trustworthy. SIGNARAMA will work with you to create signage that really drives your message home and gives your company the edge that it has been waiting for.

So for branding advice that you can trust, go to where Australia goes for signs.

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