

page layout & typography

The Logo Design Process

Below is a process for designing logos. Most of this logo process is in a certain order - for instance, you should always get information about the company and its market before you even think about designing- but certain steps aren't so cut and dried.

Gather Information

It is very important that you understand your customer's target market before you even begin to think about designing a logo. If it's for the elderly or children, for instance, you may need larger fonts. If it's lawyers, you'll want a very conservative design. If it's for the Hip Crowd, you can get a bit more wild and crazy. So ask your customer these questions, but don't be surprised if they have a tough time answering them - many companies never give any consideration to just who their target market is:

- What is the average age of your target market?
- What level of education do they have?
- What gender is the majority of your target market?
- Is there a certain ethnic group you're targeting?
- What is your USP (unique selling point)?
- What images/symbols do you want to be associated with?
- What images/symbols do you not want to be associated with?
- Do you want a logo mark (graphic) or an all text logo?
- When someone looks at your logo, what is the first thing you want them to think?
- How will the logo be used? (in print, on the Web, signage?)
- Is there a preference for the sort case the company name is? (lower-case, upper-case, title-case)

Be Inspired

You may have many ideas for the logo or you may need some inspiration. Look through the following to get the creative juices flowing:

- Logo books
- Clipart
- Magazines
- The Yellow Pages
- Designer's portfolios on the web

Pick A Font

Start looking through all your fonts, and write down the names of the ones that I think will be appropriate for the logo. In Photoshop scroll through them in with the arrow keys once you have selected one in the options bar. Once you have decided on fonts (there are no set number, just whatever strikes my fancy), start setting the company name. Set it in all upper-case, in lower-case and title-case, as many variations as you can think of. Copy and paste the company name and change the font according to your short list. Print it out; do not skip this step, it's very important. It's amazing how good something can look on your monitor, only to look very bad printed. Once finished, pick the fonts you like and move on.

Thumbnail Sketches

Write the company name down on a piece of paper before you start the computer work, if there is no preference for the lowercase, uppercase or titlecase then write each down separately. Start to look at the words or words as symbols rather than writing. Make visual connections between the characters. Start making lots of different connections between the words by drawing them out. Place words on top of one another, at 90 degrees, some words larger than others, adjust the tracking etc. By doing this on a piece of paper you will generate lots of ideas in ten or twenty minutes as opposed to tinkering with just one on the computer within the same time. They will probably be quite rough, but hopefully you will develop a lot of thumbnails. You should shoot for ten at the very least, and hopefully as much as thirty or more. Get as much feedback from family friends, and fellow students.

Sometimes you may find that it is your very first idea is the strongest; other times it's only after playing with a logo for a length of time that the "right" one leaps out at you. You may have to let the design 'rest' and come back to it, half an hour, a couple of hours or even a couple of days later to see it with fresh eyes.

The Computer Work

Once you're satisfied that you've done as many as you can, pick the top three to five thumbnails to develop. Now you've got direction: thumbnails and fonts. So it's time to put it all together. Now it's time to sit down at the computer and bring life to your sketches.

You may find that once you start playing with the logo on the computer, it takes on a life of its own. Pick the top three to five logo concepts you created, and show those to your tutor and fellow students. Now, of course the fun begins. You'll need to refine the logo regarding the feedback. If they don't like any of the concepts find out specifically what they don't like:

- Is it the graphic?
- Is it the font?
- Is it the style?
- Is it the size?

Get Colourful

When you've refined your logo to everyone's satisfaction, it's time to get colourful. You may need to go back to the inspiration step and look around to find colour combinations you like. As with fonts, try out a number of colour combinations. Remember it is different viewing colour on a monitor, printed on an inkjet, and commercially printed. Ensure that a colour logo also works well as monochrome as often business documents will be photocopied or faxed.

Adapted from-

<http://graphicdesign.about.com/cs/logodesign/a/logoprocess.htm>