

# I WANT A LOGO

Need a logo but confused as to the rules? Don't know your logotype from your logomark? Think it's important that your logo is likeable? There's a lot of confusion around logos - so, where do you start?

When most people say 'logo' they really mean a logotype (which comes from the Greek: logos 'word' and typos 'imprint'). The main function of a logo is to give recognition to a brand; to act as a mnemonic device and identifier, to engender a desired thought or feeling, and to elicit a desired emotional response.

A thought-provoking logo can strengthen your brand identity, giving a advantage over the competition. A logo is the core of your corporate identity, it defines and symbolises the character of your company or organisation.

Over the last 20 years of developing and applying logos we've heard a few ill formed opinions raise their ugly heads again and again. So here's our response...

## 1. A logo is a logo. It's as simple as that. Isn't it?

Well, no, not really. Logos come in three forms: logotype, logomark or combination mark (see below for guidance). Which one you use largely depends on your markets, your audiences, your company structure.

## 2. My logo needs to reflect what my company does?

Really? And does a flag tell you anything about the country it represents? No, so why should a logo have to tell you anything about a company? Lloyds Bank (using 'the sign of the black horse' since 1765) isn't a horse trader, a bookie, or a racecourse. The point is that the logo is recognized as being the symbol of that organization, not a symbol of what that organization does.

## 3. A logo should include a symbol, shouldn't it?

Again, no, not really. Some of the most famous logos have no symbols at all, just well designed or chosen type. You really only need a symbol if you're working in markets not speaking your mother tongue, or you have a complicated group structure you need to tie together.

## 4. My logo is great, so it's okay to only show the symbol

Brand recognition comes from repetition.

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And you have the marketing budget to buy massive coverage and repetition do that, do you? No? Best keep the type and symbol together then.

## 5. A logo has to follow its established industry style

Isn't there just a certain feeling of dread and boredom associated with most estate agent logos. There's the house, maybe with a chimney and a whisp of smoke. And a tree, and sometimes even a sunset or a hill. More imaginative estate agents will throw in a key for good measure. Stop it!

## 6. My logo needs to be 'timeless'

You cannot create a timeless logo intentionally, you can only make sure it's not entirely based on fads or trends, so it lasts longer than usual. Longer lasting logos generally have had some minor tweaking over the years to keep them fresh. But if you really do want it to be 'timeless' then better make it really, really bland.

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## 7. A logo has to be likable

"I like it, but my wife just hates this shade of brown, and my son really likes blue." Sound familiar? The purpose of a logo is not to provide eye candy, but to provide a unique signature that will become associated with the qualities of the company. Whether people like or dislike the logo design has nothing to do with what they think about the companies and organizations those logos stand for.

## 8. So what should a logo look like?

You may not be entirely happy with this answer but here it is anyway: it depends. It depends on who the organization is, what their history is and where they're trying to go. Are they domestic only, or do they work in overseas markets? Do all of their audiences speak the same language? Are they a market newcomer trying to grab attention? Are they an established business seeking to show some tradition? Or maybe they've been out there for decades and need just a quick face lift. There's just no simple answer to this one unfortunately. Which is why you're best off getting a professional involved.

## 9. A logotype, a logomark, or a combination mark – how do you decide?

Design guru Sagi Haviv says "I start off with the premise that there has to be a good reason for a symbol. Examples of good reasons for a symbol include: a very long name, a need to bring together different entities, sub-brands or divisions; or a need for a visual icon as a shorthand. Without a good reason such as these, the focus should be on the name of the entity represented.' Who are we to argue?

A **logomark** is an identifying mark or symbol that doesn't contain the business name. Think

of the Nike 'tick', Shell, WWF, Mercedes or Adidas for examples. These icons and symbols are compelling yet uncomplicated images that use imagery that conveys a literal or abstract representation of the organization. Symbols are less direct than straight text, leaving room for broader interpretation of what the organization represents. Designers will tell you that logomarks are more 'abstract' than their logotype brethren, as they are symbols and they don't necessarily sit next to the brand name.



A **logotype** incorporates the company or brand name into a uniquely styled type. Type fonts come in many possible variations, shapes, sizes, and styles, each conveying a slightly different impression. So, the type of font used depends on what you're trying to imply; maybe formality, strength, or even motion.



**Combination marks** are graphics with both text and a symbol/icon. Concise text can complement an icon or symbol, providing supplemental clarity as to what the enterprise is all about.

There are integrated and stand alone combination marks. For instance, Starbucks logo has the text with the graphic integrated, whereas the AT&T logo has the icon separate from the text.



## Can we help?



### **About us**

Iguana is a full service agency that thinks big. We add value by thinking more broadly, planning more strategically and implementing more cost effectively to make your marketing investment work harder and your brand shine brighter.

### **Our approach**

We start by getting to know you and your brand and understanding exactly what you need from your marketing. Once we understand, we start adding - the insights, ideas, opportunities and solutions that will ensure your investment works harder, your brand shine brighter. It's a fluid process, but one that concentrates wholeheartedly on what's best, most effective and most cost-efficient for you, the client. The emphasis is firmly placed on 'What you need' as opposed to 'What we do.'

### **Get in touch**

If you've got this far, chances are you have a project coming up.

### **So how about a chat?**

We'll supply the comfy sofa and a cup of coffee. All you have to do is tell us what you need. You'll be talking to the people who will personally create your work so you'll know the right people are listening.

**Listening, understanding, creating and delivering.  
That's what we're about.**

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