

RECENT RESEARCHES IN INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCES

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Chapter 43

Responsive Logos and Icons

Begüm GÜCÜK[⊗]

INTRODUCTION

Michio Kaku an American futurist and professor of Theoretical Physics proclaims “Consider how far things have come already, your cell phone today has more computing power than NASA when they put two men on the moon,” The rapid advancement of mobile technology has brought with it new social trends, vast communication opportunities as well as visual novelties in the field of graphic design. Consequently, the art and discipline of logo design is changing in step with the digital world. As business is able to engage consumers via increasing prevalence of the digital environment and its channels, it is an undeniable fact that there is a growing need for more responsive logo design to enter the realm of traditional branding.

This paper will examine the basic principles and practices of logo design in a contemporary environment, taking a look at the origins of the logo, its traditional applications, as well as the types of content used today to fit the variety of media platforms—from print to digital. The paper will then explore some best practices of logo design on mobile applications.

EVOLUTION OF BRANDING AND LOGO DESIGN

What are logos and where did they originate? The recognizable word marks in the corners of digital tablets today, were once tablets of clay, brands of iron, and coats of arms; logos and the concept of branding existed long before the age of the digital tablet. So how did we get here? To understand the origin and evolution of the logo, it is essential to identify the logo as a small part of a larger system—the brand. Branding exists today as a reputation of a product or service, as a ‘gut feeling’ that the consumer has when thinking about a particular product or service.

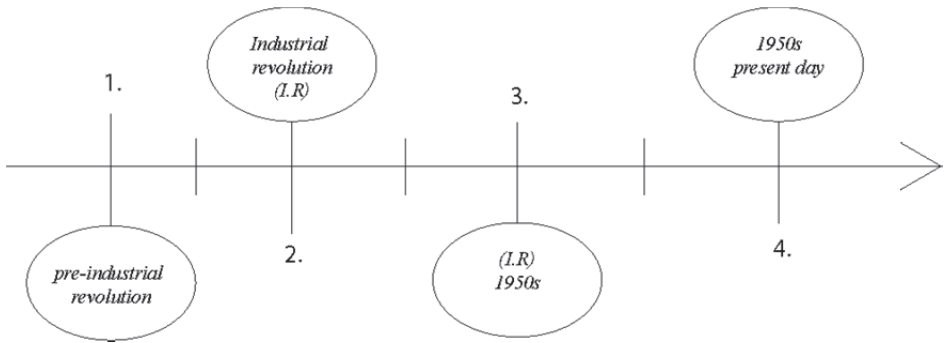
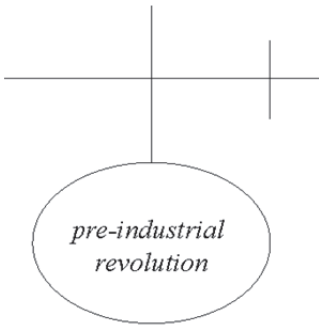


Figure 1: Brief history and origins of the logo

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-Brands on farm animals
(marks of ownership)

- Family / individual insignias
(marks of affiliation)

-Pottery / ceramic stamps
(marks of authenticity)

Figure 2: notes on the context of logos during pre-industrial revolution.

The function of branding—and by association logos—today is to differentiate implied and curated differences between similar products and services on the market.

Before the Industrial Revolution, logos did not exist in the same context as those today—the following types of visual marks can be noted—marks of ownership [visual signifiers such as brands on farm animals] and marks of authenticity—ceramic stamps on pottery and carvings into surfaces, done to identify the craftsman and by association—his quality of work (Fig. 2)

“The historical forerunners of modern trademarks evolved from the need and desire for social identification on the part of the individual or group. They were a means of establishing the distinguishing character of something. (Figure 3,4) A farmer may mark his cattle to protect them against theft.” (Mollerup, P. 1999.) Goods and services were scarce, unique, and local; there was no mass production and therefore no need for differentiation. The ‘trust’ factor of branding was implied through the producer of the goods and services

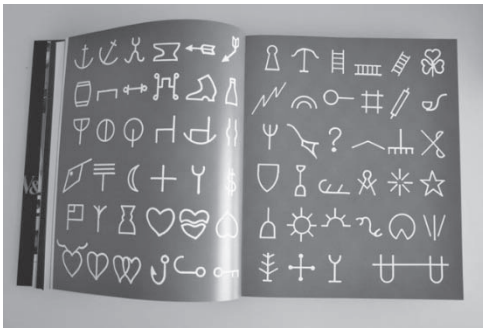


Figure 3: marks of authenticity

[e.g. local baker, local cobbler], unlike today’s myriad chain store products that require the catchiest logo in the room in order to stand out from their competitor. The level of symbolic and narrative representation required from a contemporary logo could be traced back to marks of affiliation [individual and family insignias, such as flour de lis and coats of arms]. (Fig. 5)

Heraldry has offered a useful terminology for visual recognition and has gradually developed into the modern trademark that we are familiar with today. “The car manufacturers Alfa Romeo, Porsche and Saab-Scania have incorporated in their trademarks the arms, or part of the arms of Milan, Stuttgart and Scania respectively.

Other companies such as BP, Württemberger Hüpo and Amro Bank, have adopted basic heraldic elements, such as shields, helmets and crowns, or ordinaries such as chevrons and gyrons”(Mollerup, P. 1999.)



Figure 4: representation of cattle branding.



Figure 5: Marks of affiliation coming from Heraldry.

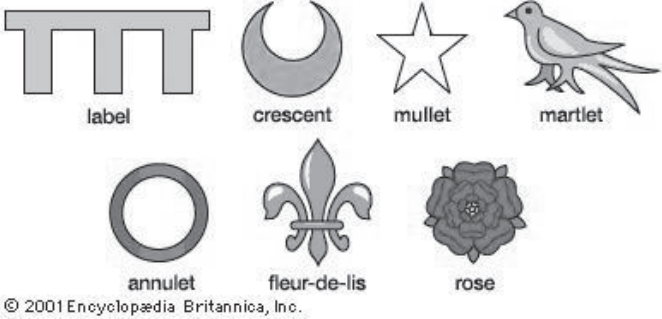


Figure 6: practices of visual identity design.

Furthermore, the fleur de lis (fleur-de-lys, French: 'lily flower'), begins the summarizing of values and qualities—an integral principle in and successful logo design—(Figure 6) and this practice is carried over into today's principles and practices of visual identity design.

With the arrival of the industrial revolution, the rapid and mass production of goods and services was born, making it necessary to differentiate and highlight the values, benefits, and differences between products and services. For instance, different bakers really did have different mills and flour going into the making of their bread and needed to brand their product accordingly to engage the consumer's interest and consequently achieve higher sales. With the onset of multiple producers, the notion of product origin was beginning to shake consumer trust and logos became a means of establishing brand recognition and forming brand loyalty. (Figure 7,8) Furthermore, multiple producers of similar products would be impossible to trace back for the consumer—in the case of health complaints, primarily—without a recognizable identity.

Booming industries, urbanization, and growing populations brought with them an ever-increasing amount of similar products, bearing fewer actual differences between them. Therefore logo design and the logo itself as part of a brand became a vital mechanism for creating 'unique selling propositions' and achieving a perceptual differentiation between similar products and services. Unique selling propositions created the idea of product 'tribes'—a way for consumers to continue purchasing their