



WHAT'S IN A LOGO?

A logo is the most succinct vehicle used to communicate a company's messages. It embodies specific qualities that connect and linger in the prospects' mind. A logo must be thoughtfully conceived, expertly crafted, have supportive typography and permeate a color sense that resonates with the intended audience.

Fonts, color and design can be highly subjective. What is individually pleasing to one person may evoke only a neutral response in another person. Often when designing a logo, the business owner likes to use his/her favorite color(s). Designers frequently skew their designs based on the latest trends or individual preferences.

While there is no way to anticipate arbitrary tastes, there are certain colors and combinations that have come to represent particular attributes. Knowing and understanding these attributes can help you be more effective when selecting meaningful colors for your logo, as will the following considerations:

Anticipate the applications.

Consider its utility. How easy will it be to implement the color scheme you've selected for your logo? A three-color logo, for example, requires a significant commitment when you're producing printed materials. Complex three-color designs generally incur the most cost when printing and may limit flexibility when selecting accent colors for designs. When selecting colors for a logo, it's important to anticipate its final application.

Think about what your colors say.

Color should be considered as an effective tool for storytelling. Color communicates a wealth of emotions, moods, and circumstances. It's no accident that red and yellow are almost ubiquitously used for branding fast food franchises, or that blue is so frequently associated with health care. Careful thought has been given to the effect these colors have on the human imagination. When you understand the moods that color can promote, a logo can serve as an effective ambassador for the nature and psychology of the entity it represents.

Sometimes color choices are obvious—such as when you're designing a logo for a company with a color in its name, or when the subject of the logo is naturally synonymous with a color (i.e., blue for sky). In other instances, color selection presents more of a challenge.

One color and/or grayscale?

While it's important to consider what happens to a logo when it is photocopied, faxed, or applied in one-color situations (such as in a newspaper or silk screened on a promotional item), the one-color rule is slowly becoming less applicable. We are increasingly relying on paperless document distribution, and color desktop printing is practically ubiquitous. If your multicolored logo needs to work in a single color, be sure to select colors that are sufficiently different in value to allow for one-color reproduction.

Now that you have an understanding of the intricacies involved in developing a logo, perhaps you'll be prepared when it comes time to create or change your current mark to better reflect its purpose.

If you have any questions about logo design, please contact Mike Shubic by visiting his website at www.ShubicMarketing.com or e-mail mike@shubicmarketing.com

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While there is no way to anticipate (and also little reason to accommodate) arbitrary tastes, there are certain colors and combinations that have come to represent particular attributes. Knowing and understanding these particular attributes can help you be more effective when selecting meaningful colors for your logo, as will the following considerations:

Anticipate the applications.

Consider its utility. How easy will it be to implement the color scheme you've selected for your logo? A three-color logo, for example, requires a significant commitment when you're producing printed materials. Complex three-color designs generally incur the most cost when printing and may limit flexibility when selecting accent colors for designs. To mitigate this, you can use colors from the logo itself as major colors in the applied design (this is also true of one- and two-color designs). When selecting colors for a logo, it's important to anticipate its final application.

Think about the story your colors tell.

In addition to these practical considerations, color should be considered as an effective tool for storytelling. Color communicates a wealth of emotions, moods, and circumstances. It's no accident that red and yellow are almost ubiquitously used for branding fast food franchises, or that blue is so frequently associated with health care. Careful thought has been given to the effect these colors have on the human imagination. When you understand the moods that color can promote, a logo can serve as an effective ambassador for the nature and psychology of the entity it represents.

Weigh the one-color implications.

First is the general (but recently declining) requirement that a logo should work in one color. Typically, one color means black; this is based on economy more than any color theory. While it is important to consider what happens to a logo when it is photocopied, faxed, or applied in one-color situations (such as in a newspaper or silk screened on a T-shirt), the one-color rule is slowly becoming less applicable. We are increasingly relying on paperless document distribution, and color desktop printing is practically ubiquitous. If your multicolored logo needs to work in a single color, be sure to select colors that are sufficiently different in value to allow for one-color reproduction.

Sometimes color choices are obvious—such as when you’re designing a logo for a company with a color in its name, or when the subject of the logo is naturally synonymous with a color (e.g., blue for water). In other instances, color selection presents more of a challenge.

Armed with an understanding of the theoretical relationships among colors, and an appreciation for the power of color to elicit specific moods, you’ll have the tools you need to create memorable, appropriate logos that make effective use of color.

SIDEBAR: Will Your Logo Work in One Color?

Try this technique to test the contrast levels in your logo design.

When you have concerns about whether your logo design will work in a single color, convert your art to grayscale. If the colors you’ve chosen are too close in value, they will lose their definition, regardless of hue. Balance of contrast creates dimension; this will be reflected in the appearance of the grayscale conversion.