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Logos are a part of everyday life. Every store has its logo, designed to convey its position in the marketing community. Within each store are shelves of products, each tagged with a company logo that tells consumers who provides that particular product. Each television station, radio station, publisher, web site and manufacturer has a logo designed specifically for them. Logo design is a part of the visual language of advertising, consumerism and identification. Logos are designed to convey a story within a few seconds. In marketing, logos serve to attract consumers' attention and give them visual identification with a product or company. The imagery conveys to the consumer what service or product the company provides. This type of branding makes an indelible mark on the collective psyche of consumers, and the logo becomes synonymous with the company. When a consumer sees a smiling green man dressed in a toga of leaves, she knows that can of corn is Green Giant brand corn. A successful logo imbeds the name of the company into the imagery. This doesn't necessarily mean the picture and words are "physically" connected. It means that the name brand is so closely aligned with the story the image conveys that a visual relationship is formed within the mind of the consumer. One of the most successful logos is the Prudential Insurance Company's logo of the Rock of Gibraltar. Consumers need only see an image of the rock to associate it with Prudential. The story is told in a glance: Prudential is steady as a rock, as solid as a rock, as enduring as the Rock of Gibraltar. Because logos must fight for consumer attention and win it within seconds, their success rests on instant recognition. The best logos are often the least complicated, such as Nike's simple, organic swoosh and the American Broadcasting Company's white Bauhaus lettering within a black circle. Logo design is one of the many services performed by graphic designers. Graphic designers are trained not only in computer applications for creating imagery and fonts, but also in the psychology behind logos. A graphic designer uses color, lettering, imagery and shapes to communicate his client's message to the targeted market. To do this effectively, the designer must fully understand the client and his product. Color associations are essential to logo design: primary colors for companies that manufacture baby products, soft greens for health professionals and health products, bright reds or solid blues for department stores. In logo design, the graphic designer needs to pull together all the elements of design and assemble them based on the psychology behind consumerism. Are consumers overwhelmed by the continuous onslaught of logos? Are the thousands of designs displayed each day defeating the purpose of individualizing companies? Logos have always been important to consumers, though they may not be conscious of their benefits. Logos are as unique to companies as signatures, and so they carry with them certain assurances. When a consumer sees a particular logo and recognizes it, he immediately understands what the product is, what company makes the product and how he can expect that product to perform. Names alone are far more difficult to remember than those associated with shape, form and color. This has been true since before the Middle Ages, when craftsmen and merchants hung out shingles with pictures depicting their wares. When the majority of populations didn't know how to read or write, these signs served as guides, showing people where they could acquire the goods they needed. Certain symbols took on broad meanings: a barrel hanging over the door designated the shop as a winery and the hammer and anvil painted on a board directed people to the blacksmith. These early village logos are the ancestors of logo design. Far from crude, these objects and painted signs were artfully done, and often displayed on decorative wrought iron poles. Just as these signs directed villagers to merchants, logos direct consumers to the products they want. Decorative, eye-catching and sometimes iconic, logos continue to be an important part of cultural consumerism. I think most of us can agree there are generic logos in the world that we easily forget, and then there are great logos that we'll always be able to recognize (even without the brand's name attached). But what is it about a logo that makes you recognize it? What is it about the design that can elicit a memory or even a specific emotion? If you're in the process of creating a logo for your company, you're in a unique position to make a powerful impact on how consumers perceive your brand. Everything you do, say, and, display as part of your new business will tell your prospects more about your company's identity. It's vital to ensure from the beginning that you present a cohesive and clear statement regarding your company's message. And while a logo may seem quite simple to create, designing a great one isn't always easy. It involves a lot of market research, a deep knowledge of your buyer personas, and thoughtful consideration of the principles of logo design. Often, designers find themselves creating many iterations of a single logo before getting it "just right." So, where do you even begin to design a logo? Right here. We've broken down the nine key steps (with a few tips thrown in) you'll need to take to create a logo that not only you love, but your prospects will too. Image via Coca-Cola Designing a logo that embodies your brand can help you grow better, but doing it right is just as important. Here's how to design the perfect logo, step-by-step. Companies are created to make money -- it's not the most poetic statement, but it's the one you need to start with. And in order to make a profitable business, you need to be able to sell yourself just as well as your product. Marketers today tend to agree that buyers connect much more strongly to stories than they do to the basic facts of your product. What does this mean to you? There needs to be some story in your logo. Before you even think about what this logo will look like, take some time asking yourself what the story behind your company is. When we look at Coca-Cola, we don't see a brown, carbonated beverage -- we see polar bears and thick, white script letters. Step outside of what your company does and convey why you do it. That "why" is the root of your story, and it should come through in the color, shape, and typeface of your logo. If your logo were the title of a movie, what would it look like? Now that you have your story, it's time to take your logo draft from story to setting. Open Thesaurus.com and enter a term that best describes your product into the search bar. For example, if you're in the clothing industry, you might simply type in "clothing." You'd be surprised by how descriptive the synonyms are that appear. You can even click these results to start new searches and dig deeper as you zero in on the words that best capture your brand. Image via Thesaurus.com Find five to 10 words that describe not only what you do, but the why from the previous step. Each of these words can fit like pieces in a puzzle and help guide you to refining a concept. Armed with your why and a few keywords for direction, grab a pencil and paper and start sketching every idea that comes into your head. Allow each new concept to evolve on its own. Don't get frustrated if the first few aren't right -- keep refining, using previous sketches to influence the outcome of new ones. You might focus these sketches on a shape, the name of your brand, or both. As you're sketching the concepts for your logo, keep these tips in mind: Keep the shape simple. If you can sketch the most symbolic components in seven seconds or less, you're in good shape. You should absolutely avoid any popular clip-art artwork or generic symbols like a globe, star, or similar icons that people too easily identify from other places. These are easily forgotten at first glance. The more creative you are at this stage, the better your final logo. Your logo is what your consumers will remember the most. Be honest in this artwork. Colors can either be your best friend or your worst enemy. You need to include color with your logo, but be selective on which colors you use. Be mindful of current color trends already being used today and in your target market. As a general rule, don't choose more than three colors. Choose a color or group of colors that will make you stand out from your competition. But please, for the love of marketing, don't use the whole rainbow! Once you've got a handful of different sketches on paper, take a step back and pick the top three concepts. Don't think too hard about this -- consider the designs your eyes keep going back to, and select them to show to others. Share these drafts with your friends, family members, and a colleague you trust. If possible, bring these sketches to someone who best fits your buyer persona -- or your ideal customer profile. This gives you the most productive opinion on your artwork because it can indicate how customers will receive your brand -- not just the people close to you. Be prepared for honest feedback and don't take any negative comments personally. These criticisms will only make your final logo better. Use their feedback to select one final concept to develop into a design. Congratulations, you're well on your way to having an awesome logo! Once you've identified a sketch to run with, it's time to refine it and perfect the story you started with in Step 1. To begin refining your logo, look back at the terms you identified when you first used Thesaurus.com in Step 2. Now look at your chosen sketch and ask yourself: Which terms does this sketch not yet capture? Use them to develop your sketch further, and add back the traits you liked best about the designs you didn't end up choosing for refinement. Now, it's time to get technical and turn your paper drawing into a usable digital format. To bring this design to life, you have many free design platforms available to recreate your sketch in digital format. Here are a few free solutions: Logo Crisp Looka DesignMantic GraphicSprings The platforms above can help you put your sketched logo in digital format, but bringing your concept to life for a business audience requires a bit of technical direction. One of the most important things to get right is the layout. Make sure all of your text and shapes are perfectly spaced and the logo itself is aligned with its surroundings. Your logo doesn't have to be symmetrical, but it should be aligned in different contexts. Chances are, you will encounter situations when your logo sits against different vertical and horizontal borders, and it should appear even with these surroundings no matter how you might repurpose your logo and where you might publish it. Your logo's color scheme might look great against the color of the canvas on which you designed it, but eventually, your logo will be placed on backgrounds whose colors you didn't start with. Let's revisit our Coca-Cola example from Step 1. As you can see below, the company's logo can work across any colored can it sells. Image by Jay Moye Always be sure to have logo color variations for both dark and light backgrounds. That might mean only having to change the color of your font. Or, in some cases, you might have to change the color of your entire logo. Create one of each option to make sure you're prepared when ordering promotional products that will display your logo. T-shirts, stickers, notepads, and coffee mugs are just a few of the many items for which you'll have different color variations of your logo. This is the time to combine text with imagery. If you're chosen sketch is primarily a shape or symbol, rather than text, begin to format in the written name of your company. Consider the typeface this text will carry if your company name ever stands on its own without the symbol. Believe it or not, your font choice can say a lot about your business. You can choose a font that's either serif (with stems on each letter) or sans serif (no stems) -- also known as classic or modern, respectively. Stay away from generic fonts that come standard on every word processor. Some examples of generic fonts are Times New Roman, Lucida Handwriting, and Comic Sans. These fonts will only work against you and your company by making you less memorable. Logos are meant to represent your company on multiple platforms -- in print, on your website, on each of your social media business pages, and across the internet as your business grows. You want a logo that can be blown up super large for a billboard, but also scaled down for screening onto the side of a pen. Every part of your logo should be legible, regardless of the logo's size. Whew -- still with us? We know this might seem a little overwhelming, but take it slow and don't rush yourself. It's better to follow the process through to completion and end with a remarkable brand than to start over a few months later due to a design error or change of heart. Once you've completed your logo, how can you tell if you scored a winner? Easy: Use our Logo Grader to assess the sustainability and effectiveness of your new logo. Co-authored by Rachel Begg, Julie Hruska, and Britt Schwartz Originally published Nov 7, 2019 11:00:00 AM, updated October 26 2020 By Carol Adams 1 border/business graphic-4 color graphic with copyspace image by Andrew Brown from Fotolia.com CorelDraw is one of the major vector graphics programs available. It has an array of tools and functions that help the graphic artist create graphics for any number of projects. The tools and functions can be a bit daunting to someone coming to CorelDraw from a raster-based program like Photoshop. For example, creating a transparent overlay in Photoshop is a matter of adjusting layer opacity levels directly. In CorelDraw things work a bit differently. But once you know the technique, it is surprisingly quick and easy. Open CorelDraw. Select "File" from the menu and choose "Open." In the dialog, choose a file you would like to add an overlay image to and open it. Select "File" from the menu and choose "Import." In the dialog that appears, browse to the image file you want to use as the overlay and open it. Position it where you want it on the canvas. Select the image object you just imported. Go to the tool palette on the left and hold down the left mouse button on the fifth button from the bottom. From the options that appear, choose "Transparency." In the tools options at the top, change the mode from "Linear" to "Uniform." Drag the Tool across the image selection. It will become transparent. Save your work. When it comes to design, learning can be fun. But it can also be expensive and time consuming. So if you're looking to expand your creative and technical mind, but not your wallet, then you'll be after some high-quality free tutorials. There are plenty of great tutorials on this very site, of course - head to our Tutorial channel or visit the Web design, Graphic design and 3D channels to find content for your specific discipline - but if you're looking for something and can't find it on Creative Blog, then take a look at this roundup of sites, which all contain some superb free tutorials..01. Drawspace Whether you want to draw a cartoon animal, a realistic nature scene, or Dudley the Dragon, Drawspace is the place to go. While the site itself may not be all that hi-tech, it's a great resource for everyone from beginners to experts, offering a huge library of free drawing tutorials. The site also offers interactive classrooms where you can receive professional guidance from internationally acclaimed art educators. Looking for a primer on creating 2D and 3D content? Blender is an open source, community supported, cross-platform 3D graphics application, so you can download it here for free, and there are plenty of free tutorials to get started with too.03. Tuts+ Network The folks at Tuts+ Network want you to have it all. With 13 different network affiliates, including the self-explanatory mobiletuts+, psdtuts+, webdesigntuts+ and vectortuts+, the Tuts+ Network is one of the heaviest bags of tricks I carry in my arsenal of online learning. A community supported network, Tuts+ Network offers tutorials on just about everything imaginable when it comes to design. Their mobiletuts+ site is the one I frequent the most, but their psdtuts+ and webdesigntuts+ are also must-bookmark resources for anyone in creative design.04. Ray Wenderlich Ray Wenderlich's site is an excellent community-based tutorial resource for iOS developers. Its primary focus is on providing high quality programming tutorials that are fun and easy to learn. In addition, there's an active community forum where users can interact and help one another. If you're looking for a great place to learn Objective-C and iOS, this is the place to go.05. Cartoon Smart My personal favourite! Cartoon Smart, started by the talented Justin Dike back in 2004, offers a mix of free and paid-for tutorials. Whether you're looking to improve your artistic side or your technical side, Cartoon Smart has you covered, with a high quality training video library covering iOS development, Flash, HTML5, illustration, drawing, animation, and more. There's also a nice selection of templates, royalty free art, and starter kits. Cartoon Smart is where I ended up learning how to draw with Flash. Yes, you read that correctly - draw with Flash. It's an experience I'd recommend, and one that helped me when I was illustrating Happy Birthday Puppy. If you like the freebies and are interested in one of the paid tutorials at Cartoon Smart, then use this special discount code for Creative Bloq readers: 0QX7EE9T. Have we missed your favourite resource for free tutorials? Let us know in the comments below! Words: Tammy Coron Tammy Coron is an iOS developer, backend developer, web developer, writer, and illustrator. She blogs at Just Write Code.

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