

Logos in the age of the app

How consumers interact with brands is changing, so too should the design of these ubiquitous marks

AS much as logos have evolved around the changing needs of commerce, they have also had to adapt to new methods of communication and the technologies available to reproduce them. In today's mobile digital age, devices such as smartphones and tablets are rapidly becoming a primary medium through which people are exposed to corporate and consumer brands. From App buttons to Twitter Profile Pics, logos are being asked to do their job in new environments with new sets of rules. With over half a million apps available at the iTunes App store, having a memorable and distinctive visual identifier is vital. In this new reality organizations of all

types are looking to answer the question: is my logo ready for the age of the app?

The age of the app has been created through the rise and ubiquity of small screen devices. Until very recently, it was a commonly held belief that the visibility of a brand identity was based on an 80/20 rule — 80% of your impressions came from just 20% of an organization's branded assets. As consumers' points of interaction with a brand consolidate and converge onto these small screens, it's not hard to imagine that rule changing towards 90/10. Whether it's someone doing his banking while commuting or someone else looking up recipes while shopping in the grocery store — the importance of memorable brand identity on a small screen is crucial.

Technology has evolved in such a way that barriers to anyone creating a new logo themselves no longer exist. In this explosion of icons and identities it will be the ones that follow proven design principles as well as ones that respond to challenges of this new age that are noticed and remembered. The following are six important considerations to keep in mind when developing logos today.



Formula 1 by Carter Wong Tomlin has instant global recognition



The DC Comics logo by Landor is as dynamic as DC's portfolio

1. Know how people read logos

Organizations with successful identities have long recognized that there is a sequence to how people “read” logos. Behavioural scientists have found that when people see a logo they “unpack” the information in the following sequence: **shape** (the outline of the logo shape), **colour** (an ownable colour), and **content** (the words or symbols associated with the logo).

Understanding this sequence will help to ensure better brand awareness and recognition, which in turn assists in creating logos that are easier to remember.

2. Keep it simple

If the logo and name are complex, explore how extraneous detail can be reduced to create a simpler visual mnemonic — balance simplicity with the need to tell the story of the brand.

3. Make it scalable

The scale of how logos are typically seen has changed; we are no longer in just a 8.5" x 11" world. Going forward logos will be used both smaller and larger than how we typically experienced them in the past. Additionally the viewer, depending on the device they

choose to use, has the ultimate control of what size they see the logo.

4. Logos can continuously morph

We are no longer restricted by the cost of reproduction to just a single logo treatment for a brand. Organizations such as AOL or DC Comics use living logos to allow their identity to adapt continuously to its environment, audience and marketplace needs.

5. Bring the logo to life

Logos have now entered the fourth dimension. They need to be given a sense of speed, timing and motion — not as an afterthought but as part of the original creation.



**EDP's simple yet infinitely flexible icon
by Sagmeister Inc.**

How a logo animates is an important aspect for new logos. But the animation should be used to help tell the brand's story, not just to add flash and sparkle.

6. Keep adapting

In the app age your logo is never “done.” Continually emerging technologies will require adaptation and evolution. Don't focus solely on singular perfection, rather focus on a framework that will enable excellent evolution.

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