

DESIGN EXPRESS

The graphic services newsletter for promotional products pros



December 2017

4 RULES TO DESIGNING A GREAT LOGO



In pop culture, we are surrounded by logos that are so incredible, they have become recognizable across multiple generations, such as the golden arches, a silhouette of an apple or the black swoosh. Even these descriptors alone automatically trigger in most minds the brands they represent.

So, what are some lessons that you can learn from these icons when creating logos and branding for your business or your clients? Start with these four rules and you'll be on your way to designing amazing logos!

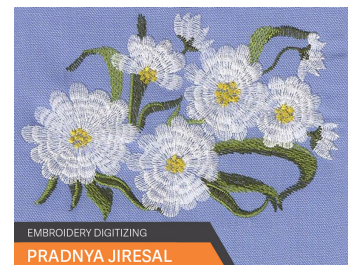
1. **Less is More.** A consensus from multiple industry leaders is that the simpler the logo, the better. "Clean-cut, abstract logos are more easily recognizable and they simply don't date," says Michael Beirut, a partner at design consultancy Pentagram and also the designer behind Hilary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign logo. In the current consumer landscape, logos need to display properly across multiple platforms, surfaces and resolutions. The logos of businesses need to be flexible to adapt to these media.
2. **Interactive and Dynamic Design.** The definition of a logo has expanded beyond static images. A good example of this point is the Google Doodle. It has become as much of a pop culture icon, such that consumers know the Google identity, although the image changes. "We're seeing more and more brands experiment with

QUICK NEWSLETTER SURVEY



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR TEAM

Every month, we celebrate the designers whose work scores the highest impressions on Instagram. This time, Pradnya Jiresal won for embroidery digitizing and Divya Dike won for vector artwork. Keep up the great work, team!



NOTABLE QUOTES

dynamic logo designs,” shares Anny Chen, Experience Designer at Adobe. “A brand can no longer rely on a singular and static logo mark to tell its story, but rather the definition of a logo has expanded into a system of parts (or logo sets) that is much more fluid and can work across the entire brand.”

3. **Imperfect Works.** The human brain has been proven to perceive objects as shapes and not as geometrically perfect. This allows brands the flexibility to forgo certain rules such as using geometrically perfect shapes. Take the Google “G”. Even though the “G” in the logo is not a perfect circle, the choice was made by a designer to achieve an optical balance. Were you to do a side-by-side comparison of the actual logo and a mathematically perfect execution of it, you would see that the “imperfect” one is visually more appealing.
4. **Leave it to Professionals.** *Forbes* said it best, “Just as you probably wouldn’t let your cousin’s intern son manage your accounting, the same should hold true for a logo.” It is much more than a symbol for your clients’ small businesses. It’s their calling card, their signature in the community and a visual representation of their brands. “Professional designers will ask all the right questions, research competitors and will be sure to create logos that are able to live and be viewed clearly on all platforms . . .”

It is true that logo design is an investment. Small businesses could opt for free tools, do-it-yourself approaches, templated designs or even crowd-sourcing options. The challenge is that most owners are not graphic design experts or objective enough to design for themselves. In some cases, they might get logos that are very similar to competitors, or even direct copies.

The solution is custom design. And it isn’t as cost-prohibitive as you would think. Companies like Idea Custom Solutions offer custom logo designs that are fast, creative and reasonably priced. Make sure you look for professional designers, a process that captures details about your business and competitive differentiators and enables you to revise concepts.

7 PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMPANIES!

If you target or want to target health and wellness companies, the product possibilities are virtually endless when you consider all the events, races and teams they can get involved in to market their businesses. Whether it’s sponsoring a 5K race, an intramural sports organization or the local little league team, businesses such as gyms, vitamin shops, athletic shoe stores and more can make their marks with their logos on must-have fitness items.

When choosing promo products for sporting events, promo marketing advises companies to “be fun, but also practical,” and “dare to be different.” Taking that wisdom into account, here’s a list of seven promotional product ideas that your customers and their potential clients will love, as well as ones that will align with their brands!

Fitness Trackers



“Styles come and go. Good design is a language, not a style.”

— Massimo Vignelli



“Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.”

— Steve Jobs



“If you think good design is expensive, you should look at the cost of bad design.”

— Ralf Speth



“Artists can have greater access to reality; they can see patterns and details and connections that other people, distracted by the blur of life, might miss. Just sharing that truth can be a very powerful thing.”

— Jay Z

The popularity of high-tech pedometers is not dying down. Handing out fitness trackers at sports events as items in swag bags or as raffle prizes is an excellent way to put brand names at the forefront of the fitness and wellness conversation — not to mention that when recipients are tracking their daily steps, company logos will be seen constantly along with their step counts.

Drawstring Backpacks

At every race or fitness competition, there are gear checks. Prior to check-ins, businesses can hand out drawstring bags printed with their business logos, so competitors can stash belongings before races and have reminders of your customers for the long-run.

Athletic Headbands or Sweatbands

In a survey conducted by *Business 2 Community*, **when promo products are used by recipients, it can be looked at as “an endorsement** of sorts by their co-workers, friends, and family, who also become exposed to the brand through the use of the promotional product.” What more visible items for logos are there than athletic headbands or sweatbands? At the gym or at the track, they are practically walking billboards. Your customers can have fun and play with neon fabrics or prints that will complement their brands and to be on-trend with current fitness gear.

Athletic Crew Socks

Most, if not all, active lifestyle businesses target consumers that will need socks while they train. Athletic crew socks are a good canvas to artfully display company logos. Just as with the headbands and sweatbands, it's a good idea to incorporate current fashion trends so recipients are more likely to wear the promo products time and time again.

Here's another helpful tip: if your customers plan to be present at outdoor races or sports competitions that include obstacles and mud, handing these out will make them heroes! Most event competitors will need fresh socks once they cross the finish lines.

Water or Sports Bottles

There are two things required at every workout: a can-do attitude and a water bottle. At fitness events — whether they are races, games, group fitness classes or pools — it's important for those working out to hydrate. Help your customers select bottles (maybe those in oblong shapes reminiscent of the current, popular **S'well® bottle**) and add their logos.

Microfiber Cooling Towels

Made from a lightweight and breathable material, the towel is designed for outdoor sporting events and group fitness classes that have participants breaking a sweat. It activates by using only water and allows users to stay cool during the hardest of workouts.

Ice/Heat Packs

Recovery is just as important as training. Customers can give out ice/heat packs printed with logos at marathon conventions, sports expositions or at the finish lines of fitness events.

These are only a handful of ideas for how you can reach out to customers with new ideas and turn promotional products into marketing campaigns



“There are three responses to a piece of design — yes, no, and WOW! Wow is the one to aim for.”
— Milton Glaser



“Graphic design will save the world right after rock and roll does.”
— David Carson

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Santosh Dalvi

Senior Production Associate, Order Entry Team

Since May 2007, Santosh has been part of the Idea Custom Solutions team. His current function is quality control and, as a supervisor, he provides guidance and motivation to the team.

Each day, he hopes to meet all expectations and deadlines. At the same time, he also tries to be happy and spread that happiness around. Overall, he would like to be known as a good trainer.

that will increase their visibility and keep their brands in the hands of their target audiences.

Idea Custom Solutions can take any volume of **vector artwork and embroidery digitizing** orders you have from customers. Best of all, you can rely on our quality and turn times, during the current busy holiday season and all year long!

LASTING IMPRESSIONS: TIPS ON HOW TO CREATE MEMORABLE EMPLOYEE UNIFORMS

A customer's opinion of a business is most often based on an interaction that occurs between the individual and the company's employees. This effectively means that **your customers are hiring workers to be ambassadors for their brands** and, according to *Business.com*, "a new customer will develop an impression about your employee (and your business) in their first seven seconds with your employee."

Personality and charisma aside, it is ultimately up to you to ensure that your clients' employees are properly outfitted in uniforms that can nail those first impressions. The industry for uniform production is constantly evolving and, as more brands continue to up their games, you have the perfect opportunity to inspire first-time customers to design memorable employee uniforms and to encourage existing ones to revisit the design of their apparel.

Here are some tips on how to successfully create employee uniforms that will leave lasting impressions.

- **Pops of Color.** According to Taraynn Lloyd, Vice President of Marketing for Edwards Garment, "**trends for 2018 in uniform and apron promotions** include new ways to showcase your brand's color. This includes multicolor tattersall shirts combined with color-block aprons. The dynamic color combination conveys the brand as a trendsetter, and is a relatively economical way to freshen your existing uniform program." An excellent example of dynamic color use was when **White Castle updated their employee uniforms earlier this year** to feature wide, flat collars in royal blue with yellow stitching, as well as retro White Castle logos.
- **Embellishments.** For businesses such as restaurants, bars, lounges and casinos that have "basic style vests," Lloyd suggests **creative embellishments, "like colorful trims and unique buttons."** This is also an economical approach to putting creative spins on otherwise simple uniforms.
- **Embroidery.** For businesses that require clothing to be functional and protective for their employees, embroidery is the way to go. "Embroidery is the best type of decoration to accommodate rugged workwear, as it is the most durable," says Danny Tsai, Vice President of Merchandising for Tri-Mountain, to **Printwear**. Rugged workwear tends to be comprised of thicker fabrics, so this type of embellishment can withstand wear and tear on the job, as well as add style to the employee uniforms.
- **Direct-to-Garment Printing.** This design tactic is best for employee uniforms comprised of flat weave fabrics, such as t-

He appreciates having the opportunity at Idea Custom Solutions to develop a solid knowledge of Adobe Illustrator and improve his design skills. "This organization is a good platform for designers to improve and become excellent professionals."

When not at work, Santosh loves to spend time with his five-year-old son. "Whenever I get time, I play with him, help him with his studies and teach him chess. I wish he could become a chess champion in the future."

Santosh also likes to be healthy and fit, so he exercises every day.

Someday, he would like to take a long trip — maybe a world tour — with his family. "I am really fascinated by airplanes but haven't had the chance to fly yet!"

He thinks people should know about him that he doesn't give up easily and never gets depressed. "Each new problem that arises, I try to face with greater strength."

TWEET THAT!

How can your clients make the most of [#PromoProducts](#)? @B2Community has 6 ways: <https://goo.gl/G5oKBi>

Tweet
That!

Bye, bye, bye to special edition [#merch](#). NYSNC holiday-themed [#PromoProducts](#) sell out in hours. <https://goo.gl/UAKqBG>

Tweet
That!

Check this out: 10 top recording artists have released holiday [#PromoProducts](#) and [#wearables!](#) <https://goo.gl/9q8Zp9>

Tweet
That!

Do clients target specific age groups? See apparel styles for their next orders.

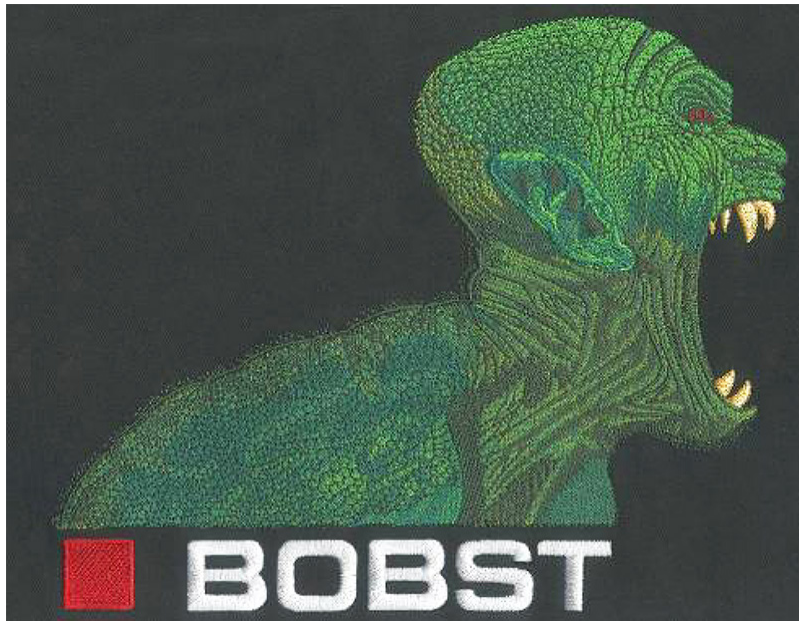
Tweet
That!

shirts. Direct-to-garment printing allows your clients the freedom of creativity — the only limitation being the size of the garments!

Once you have inspired your clients to revamp their employee apparel, look to Idea Custom Solutions for the graphic design you need to make your client's logos on their employee uniforms stand out, including **vector artwork embroidery digitizing, vector artwork and more.**



Embroidery Digitizing



Vector Artwork



[#PromoProducts](#)
<https://goo.gl/A9cFJY>

Beery Christmas, indeed! Breweries embrace gift-giving season with special growlers, other [#swag](#).
<https://goo.gl/rufUzd>

[Tweet That!](#)

Do [#giveaways](#) and [#PromoProducts](#) still have an impact on consumers? The answer is yes!
<https://goo.gl/HspWj2>

[Tweet That!](#)

What effects don't work in [#embroidery](#)? @ASI tells us. Important for client [#PromoProducts](#):
<https://goo.gl/n81BXG>

[Tweet That!](#)

Get excited! @Starbucks brings back their famous [#holiday](#) red cups! [#PromoProducts](#)
<https://goo.gl/2ERJ3g>

[Tweet That!](#)

A [#logo](#) with heart! @GeneralMills unveils its sixth official logo.
<https://goo.gl/MKgdtQ>

[Tweet That!](#)

Designer tweaks [#logos](#) to use less ink so brands become more eco-friendly; easy on the eyes too!
<https://goo.gl/NbW1gk>

[Tweet That!](#)

Is your [#logo](#) (or a customer's) outdated? Wilmington Biz outlines 4 reasons to consider a change.
<https://goo.gl/6WJNJJu>

[Tweet That!](#)

The man behind some of America's most recognizable [#logos](#) (NBC, Mobile, Chase), Chermayeff dies.
<https://goo.gl/kx248w>

[Tweet That!](#)

CLIENTS ARE RAVING

“ You delivered good work. It was exactly what I expected. ”

Idea Custom Solutions vector artwork customer

If you have any designs created by our team that you would like to share in this newsletter, send them to us at **marketing@ideacustom.com**



© 2017 AffinityX All Rights Reserved. The mark Affinity Express is a registered trademark of Affinity Express, Inc. in the U.S. and other countries, and Idea Custom Solutions is the sole property of Affinity Express.