

# The Keys to a Great Logo

By Beth Brodovsky

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Logo, graphic, icon, logotype, typogram, logofrom, image...call it what you will, a logo by any other name is the group of letters and/or symbols used in a consistent and unique way to identify a company. It is the most prominent and stable element of marketing, and should be planned carefully to fully reflect your brand. Understanding the key aspects of a logo will help in developing a durable, on target identity.

### Format

There are three common formats for a logo:

**Image & Type** -- Includes a literal or symbolic graphic with the company name positioned close to but separate from the graphic.

**Type-based** -- A specific font in a specific color is used for the company's image. Creating a type-based logo or "logotype," requires more than selecting a font and typing a name. In these logos, letterforms are adjusted and spaced in a unique combination and treated as art.

**Integrated** -- A one-piece logo, incorporating graphics and type together so the name and graphic become one unit. Companies that use only initials frequently employ this format.

### Direction

Design development of the logo generally follows one of three directions:

**Graphic** -- Literally describes the company's activity, such as choosing a tree or a shovel to depict a landscaping company.

**Conceptual** -- Conveys an abstract quality of the company, using geometric or symbolic shapes to express a non-tangible aspect.

**Neutral** -- Relies on font choice, weight, shape, spacing and color rather than imagery to convey the message.

### Style

Color, font and format choices assist in building an impression.

Traditional -- Achieving a classic image calls for timeless shades of red, navy and forest green. Choosing an elegant script or serif font like Vivaldi, Times or Palatino, as well as creating a balanced layout reflects a traditional image.

Modern -- Companies looking for a contemporary image should consider modern elements. Sans Serif fonts like Helvetica, Myriad and Eras offer clean lines and simplicity. Brighter colors, unusual combinations and multiple hues are appropriate. Modern designs are often structured and grid-like, or asymmetrical.

Casual -- When a relaxed image is called for, a casual style may be needed. Fonts that mimic handwriting, script or graffiti, such as Papyrus, Curlz and Comic Sans are in this category. Casual styles avoid a stiff, formal corporate image, using vivid hues to warm tones.

#### Uniqueness

It is important to be aware of the images around you. Creating a logo that is inappropriate for your industry, too close to a competitor's, or reminds viewers of another company can sabotage communication. A logo should be like a fingerprint, one of a kind.

Logos have many elements that can be coordinated to deliver maximum impact. When developing an image to reflect a brand, consider these key points for aligning visuals with the verbal and experiential message of your company.

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