

Logo Design Process



This article will show the design process that today's top designers go through to get to their final logo design.

Their Design Process:

1. The Brief
2. Research
3. Visual Research
4. Sketching & Conceptualizing
5. Reflection
6. Positioning
7. Presentations
8. Celebration

The Brief

Nearly all designers agree that the initial accumulation of information from the client is the most important step, either by a face to face interview or a questionnaire. This is where you must establish the design brief.

Research

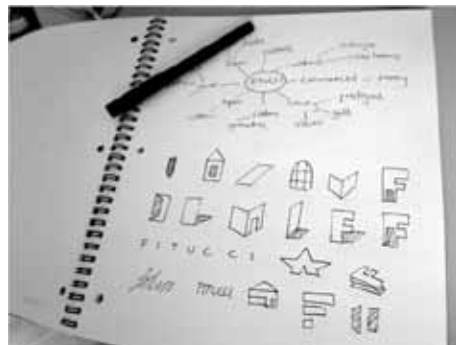
After moulding the design brief, getting to know your client's businesses is the next crucial step in making a logo successful. Research includes general reading on the industry itself, sometimes on its history, and on its competitors. If budgets allow, external research can be carried out.

Visual Research

This is research not into the clients business, but into the actual logo style. This is where we seek out a look, a style, an approach or attitude, usually to attain a period or style that we are unfamiliar with, or to refresh ourselves with what is new or successful. (e.g. find logos of similar business' and critique them.) This is where you look for inspiration.

Designer Wendy Stamberger said, *"I look more for techniques and to ask myself why a certain logo looks corporate, or what makes a really good health care logo — Or, why do I like this logo and dislike that one?"* Designers do this to gain a better understanding of the industry and competition.

Sketching & Conceptualizing



Developing the logo design concept(s) is where creativity comes into play, this is where the designer must create the logo by using the design brief and the research conducted. Some designers use a napkin to sketch, some use a sketchbook and some use the computer as paper, this is all a matter of personal

choice, however using a computer first up is not recommended.

When conceptualizing, some designers are mainly concerned with the graphic style and image of a piece while others try to convey deep meaning or some sort of visual puzzle (such as the arrow in the FedEx logo – look between the “e” and “x”). These types of logos have a bigger impact on the viewer and when a designer creates one, they know it straight away. It will be unique and will add a dimension to the experience and to the whole identity.



Reflection

Taking breaks is as important as the physical research and the design brief. It is so easy to get stuck in a creative cul-de-sac (learn how to be creative) and get tired of a project and this is why logo designers take breaks. By resting, your ideas mature and develop in the back of your head. When you go back to your project, you have renewed enthusiasm, insight and opportunity. This is also a good stage to get feedback from others.

Positioning

This is where designers choose how to work ... they either position themselves like contractors and take orders according to their clients wishes (i.e. Don't advise their clients of design matters) OR they position themselves like a business and build themselves a long term relationship (i.e. Guide clients to a more appropriate solution much alike how a lawyer does). Designers have to choose how they wish to work.

Presentation

This is where the designer must present their work to the client. They can choose whether to show the client a huge variety of logo design concepts (if it is hard to gauge a clients taste) OR they could choose to showcase just a few select logo designs. Only the best 1 or 2 concepts is the best way to go.

Celebration

In a survey conducted to 75 top designers, when the job is finally finished and approved, 31% of designers celebrate by drinking beer, 12% head for chocolate, 22% head off to bed to catch up on sleep and the other 35% can't celebrate because they must start on the next logo design.

Moral of the story

When given a brief, every designer interprets in their own way and if an assignment is given to 100 different designers, it would return 100 different logos, few of which would resemble each other. Though we all endlessly conjecture what makes a “good” or “bad” logo, one must remember in the end, the ultimate arbiter of logo design greatness may only be the satisfied, paying client.

The secret moral to this story is to work hard, but not be too hard on your first concepts as the process itself, is the key to ultimate success.