

Brandmarks

Designed in almost infinite variety of shapes and personalities brandmarks can be assigned to a number of general categories. From literal through symbolic, from word-driven to image-driven, the world of brandmarks expands each day.

The designer's process is to examine a range of solutions based on both aspirational and functional criteria.

Topology of marks

Wordmarks

A freestanding acronym, company name, or product name that has been designed to convey a brand attribute or positioning

examples: IKEA, eBay, Google, Tate, Nokia, MoMA, Pinterest, FedEx



Pictorial marks

An immediately recognizable literal image that has been simplified and stylized

examples: Apple, NBC, CBS, Polo, Lacoste, Greyhound, Twitter



Letterforms

A unique design using one or more letterforms that act as a mnemonic device for a company name

examples: Univision, IBM, OLIN, Unilever, Tory Burch, Flipboard, B Corporation, HP



Abstract/symbolic marks

A symbol that conveys a big idea, and often embodies strategic ambiguity

examples: Chase, Sprint, Nike, HSBC, Merck



Emblems

A mark in which the company name is inextricably connected to a pictorial element

examples: Tivo, OXO, LEED, Elmer's Glue-All, Crocs



Sequence of cognition

Brand awareness and recognition are facilitated by a visual identity that is easy to remember and immediately recognizable. Visual identity triggers perceptions and unlocks associations of the brand. Sight, more than any other sense, provides information about the world.

Through repeated exposure, symbols become so recognizable that companies such as Target, Apple, Nike have actually dropped the logotype from their corporate signatures in national advertising.

Color becomes a mnemonic device when you see a brown truck out of the corner of your eye you know it's UPS.

Visual images can be remembered/recognized directly, while words must be decoded into meaning.

Shape:

The brain acknowledges distinctive shapes that make a faster imprint on memory.



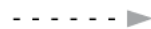
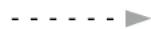
Color:

Color can trigger an emotion and evoke a brand association. Kodak and Tiffany have trademarked their core brand colors.



Form:

Brain takes more time to process language and content.



H&R BLOCK



Signature

A signature is the structured relationship between a logotype, brandmark, and tagline. Some programs accommodate split signatures that allow the mark and the logotype to be separated. Other variations may include a vertical and horizontal signature that allows choices based on application need.



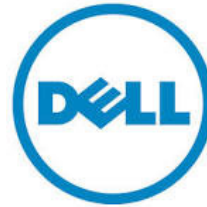
Wordmark

A freestanding acronym, company name, or product. The best wordmarks imbue a legible word or words with distinctive font characteristics, and may integrate abstract elements or pictorial elements.

The distinctive tilted “E” in “Dell” activates and strengthens the one-syllable name. The IBM acronym has transcended enormous technological change in its industry. The fluidity of form and expansive color palette of the Tate Modern logo reflects its point of view and the central brand idea, “Look again. Think again.”

Late July: Louise Fill Ltd.
MoMA: Matthew Carter

LATE JULY™ MoMA



MODERN
TATE TATE St Ives

Braun: Wolfgang Schmittel
redesign
Aetna: Siegel + Gale

BRAUN aetnaSM

Pinterest: Michael Deal and
Juan Carlos Pagan
Kubota: Pentagram

Pinterest Kubota

Oslo Airport:
Mollerup Design Lab
CAM Raleigh: New Kind

OSL⁺ CAM
RALEIGH

IBM: Paul Rand
eBay: CKS Group

IBM eBay

Letterform Marks

The single letter is frequently used as a distinctive graphic focal point for a brandmark. The letter is always unique and proprietary design that is infused with significant personality and meaning. The letterform acts as a mnemonic device, and is easy to apply to an app icon.

Quick Check's bold, lime green "Q" makes a friendly, refreshing statement. It reflects the brand's commitment to speed, quality, and affordable freshness.



Letterforms A to Z

Opposite page:

Aether: Carbone Smolan Agency

Brokers Insurance: Rev Group

Champion International:

Crosby Associates

Dominion: Lizette Gecel

Energy Department Store:

Joel Katz Design Associates

Fine Line Features: Woody Pirtle

Goertz Fashion House:

Allemann Almquist + Jones

High Line: Pentagram

Irwin Financial Corporation:

Chermayeff & Geismar

Tubej: Roger Oddone

Kemper: Lippincott

LifeMark Partners: Rev Group

Herman Miller: George Nelson

NEPTCO: Malcolm Grear Designers

Dallas Opera: Woody Pirtle

Preferred: Jon Bjornson

Quest Diagnostics: Q Cassetti

Radio Shack: Landor Associates

Seatrains Lines: Chermayeff & Geismar

Telemundo: Chermayeff & Geismar

Univision: Chermayeff & Geismar

Vanderbilt University:

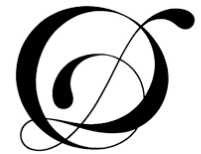
Malcolm Grear Designers

Westinghouse: Paul Rand

X31: Matchstic

Yahoo: unknown

Zonik: Lippincott



Pictorial Marks

A pictorial mark uses a literal and recognizable image. The image itself may allude to the name of the company or its mission, or it may be symbolic of a brand attribute. The simpler the form, the more difficult it is to draw. The most skillful designers know how to translate and simplify, play with light and shadow, and balance positive and negative space.



Pictorial marks

From left to right

SUGARFISH: Clement Mok

British Telecom: Wolff Olins

NBC: Chermayeff & Geismar

Tunerfish: Liquid Agency

Franklin Institute:
Allemann Almquist & Jones

Twitter: Pepco Studio

Starbucks: Starbucks Global
Creative Studio with Lippincott

The WILD Center: Fish Partners

PBS: Chermayeff & Geismar

World Wildlife Foundation:
Landor Associates *redesign*

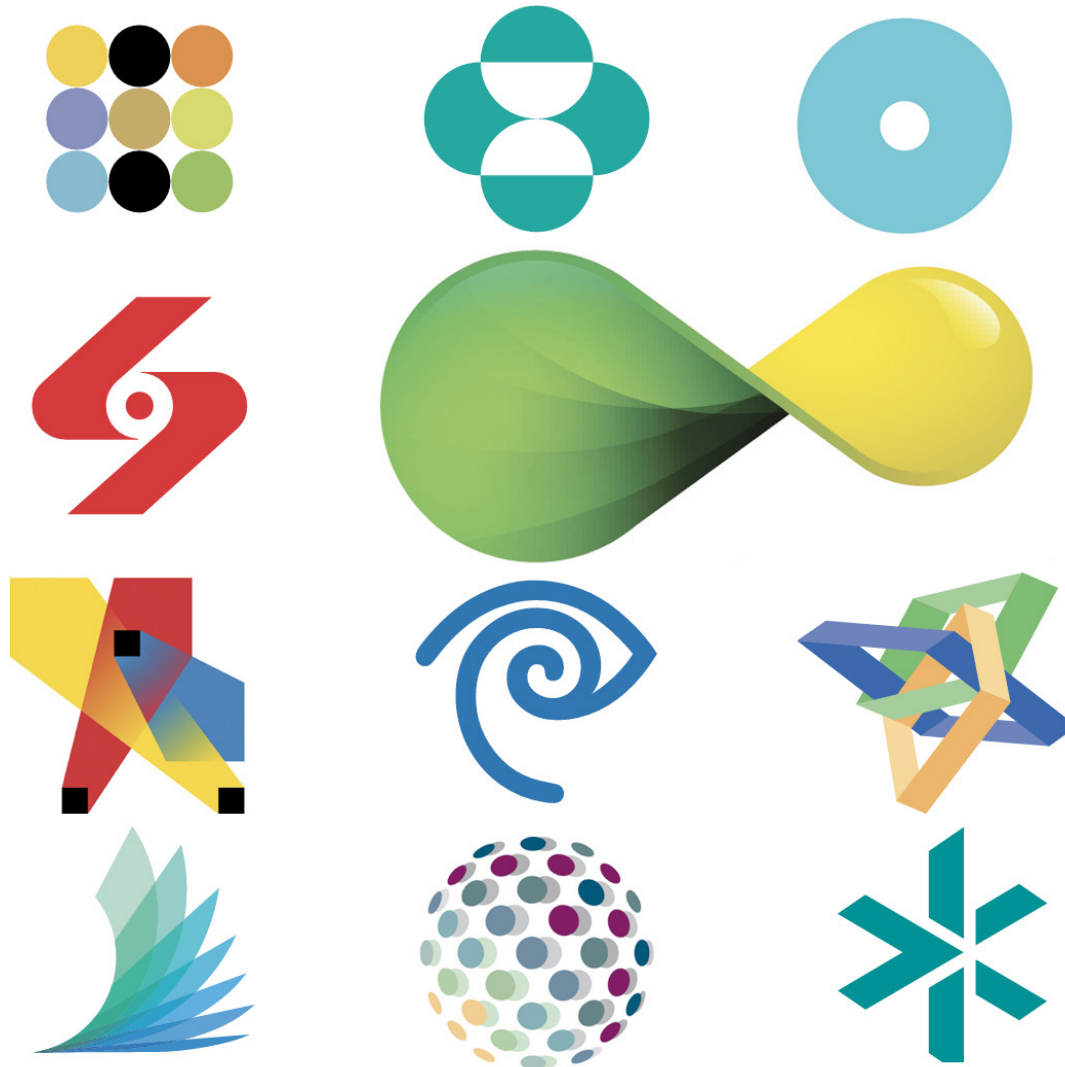
Apple: Rob Janoff

Drexel University:
Meredith Gatschet

Fancy Pants Press: Alusiv

Abstract Marks

An abstract mark uses visual form to convey a big idea or a brand attribute. These marks, by nature, can provide strategic ambiguity, and work effectively for large companies with numerous unrelated divisions. Marks such as Chase's have survived a series of mergers easily. Abstract marks are especially effective for service-based and technology companies; however they are extremely difficult to design well.



Abstract marks

From left to right:

Hyatt Place: Lippincott

Merck: Chermayeff & Geismar

NoMore.org: Sterling Brands

EUE Screen Gems:
Chermayeff & Geismar

Nowi: Liquid Agency

MIT Media Labs: TheGreenEyl

Time Warner:
Chermayeff & Geismar

Alina Wheeler: Rev Group

Darien Library: Steff Geissbuhler

Captive Resources:
Crosby Associates

Brinker Capital: Rev Group

Green Energy Reporter:
Hexanine

Emblems

Emblems are trademarks featuring a shape inextricably connected to the name of the organization. The elements are never isolated. Emblems look terrific on a package, as a sign, or as an embroidered patch on a uniform.



Tazo: Sandstrom Design
Design Within Reach: Pentagram



Bruegger's Bagels: Milton Glaser
NYU Abu Dhabi: Pentagram



L'Arte del Gelato: Louise Fili Ltd.
TiVo: Cronan

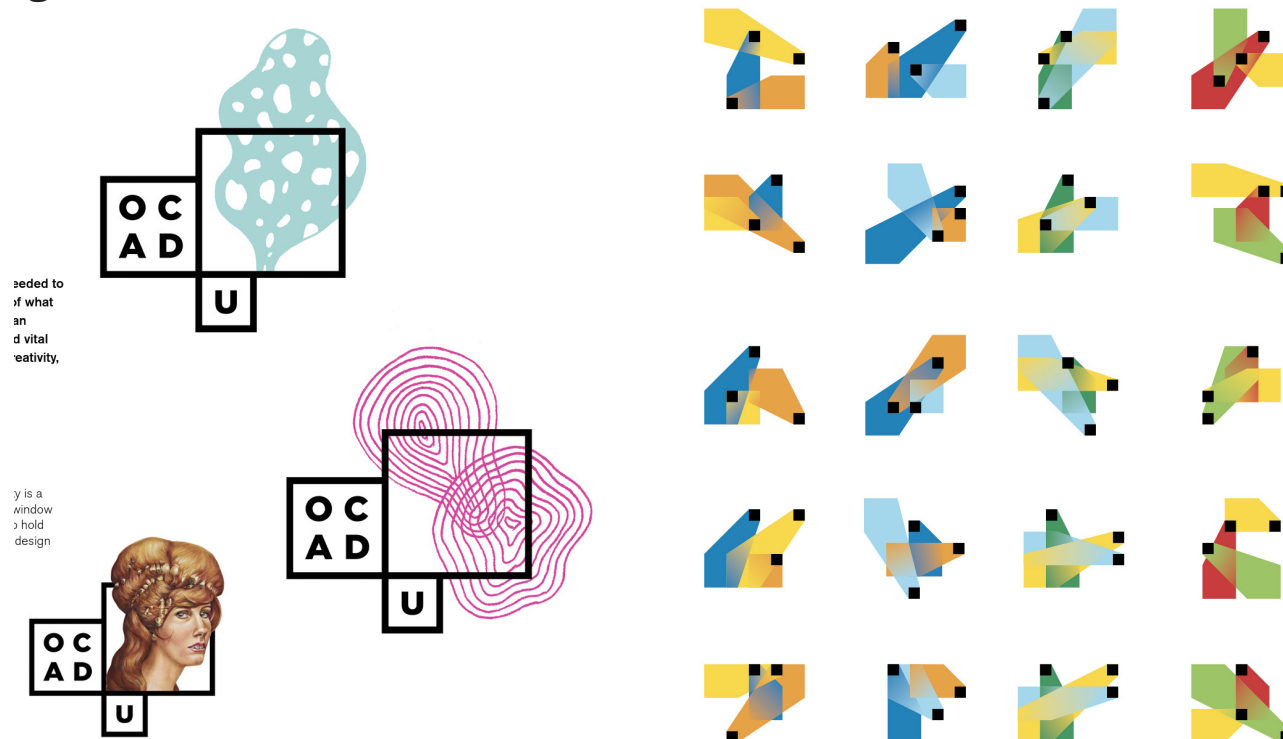


TOMS Shoes: Unknown
Brooklyn Brewery: Milton Glaser

Dynamic Marks

Creativity always finds a way to challenge convention. Historically brand equity has been achieved in part by the frequency and global reach of a single icon, like Apple's trademark or Nike's swoosh. As life becomes more complex and digital, designers have found new ways to express big ideas.

IBM's Smarter Planet icons, Google Doodles, MIT Media Lab, OCAD University are examples of engineers teaming with creative teams. OCAD University's visual identity reflects the inclusive, vibrant, and vital institution built on creativity, risk, and innovation. MIT Media Lab's visual identity is inspired by highly creative people from various backgrounds coming together, inspiring each other, and collaboratively developing a vision for the future. There are 40,000 unique possibilities for the mark produced by an algorithm.





Accordion



Amoeba



Back And Forth



Baroque



Beads



Big Business



Blimp 1



Burst 1



Burst 2



Burst 3



Burst 4



Calder



Canned Food



Capsule



Circus Banner



Cloud 2



Comet



Comet Trail



Construction



Cowlick



Crown



Crumpled Paper



Crystal



Doily



Dotted Diamond



Electron



Emblem



Escape



Evolution



Fallingman



Fence



Fire



Flower



Four Circles



Frizzy Hair Smile



Frontier 1



Frontier 2



Key



Leaf 1



Lightbulb



Lightning Bolt



Log



Look Back Cat



Monster 1



Monster 2



Mr. Bubbles



Nubby



Oval



Paramecium



Radishes



Reading



Rocketship 2



Rotary Blade



Six-Pack



Small Capsules

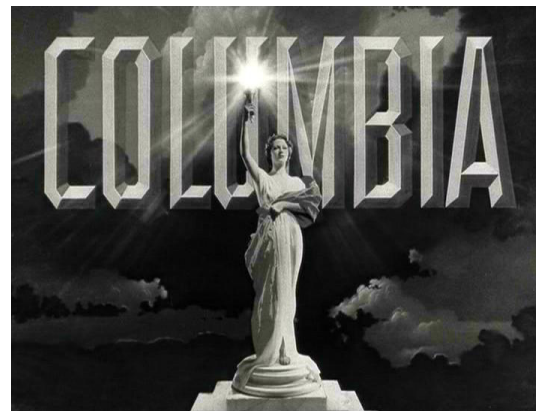
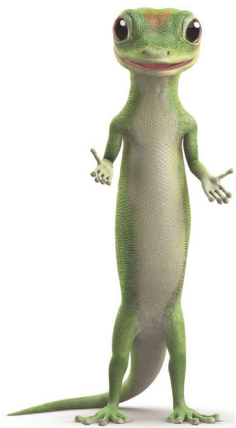


Soft Ribs

Characters

A character trademark embodies brand attributes or values. They quickly become the stars of ad campaigns, and the best ones become cultural icons cherished by children and customers alike. Along with their distinctive appearance and personality, many characters have recognizable voices and jingles.

While the ideas that drive the personification are timeless and universal, characters rarely age well and usually need to be redrawn and updated into contemporary culture. Michelin Man, Betty Crocker, Columbia Pictures, Olympics mascots, and Quaker Oats have all had facelifts.



BETTY CROCKER MAKEOVER



1936



1955



1965



1968



1972



1980



1986



1996



Before



After

Quaker Oats Redesign:
Hornall Anderson

Essential Criteria

Simplicity, Uniqueness, Metaphor

Simplicity

Equals strength. The less convoluted and the more direct a concept, the more memorable and effective it is. Reduce to the most essential elements. Cut through the clutter. The more simple, the more intuitive, the more approachable.



Simplify creatively. This memorable example for a U.K.-based software systems builder cleverly simplifies by utilizing negative space.

ELLIOTTYOUNG



Convey dimension with simple structure. This logo represents a prepaid card system and elegantly achieves visual dimension.

SEGURA, INC.



Simplify without losing personality. This logo for a U.K.-based paint-your-own pottery retailer conveys a personal, craft-inspired feel through simple, unique, visual gestures.

WOLFF OLINS

Essential Criteria

Uniqueness

Establishes visual separation. Helpful when your brand is vying for attention in a crowded marketplace. Genuine uniqueness stands out from the crowd and provokes further thought. It has substance. It isn't just different for the sake of being different.



A fish by any other stroke would not be as unique. The raw brush stroke creates a simple and unique Kanji-inspired logo for the Osaka Sushi Bar. Just any old fish would not pass the test. CDI STUDIOS



Photographer Frank Nesslage uses his nickname, Nessi, to inspire his logo. Professionally attaching to Loch Ness is definitely a unique approach. It's also clever, interesting, and hard to forget. DZIALIFORNIA



Manufactured stories are for kids. The Children's Museum of Utah, USA, has a programming activity and exhibition group called Story Factory. The logo for Story Factory is a unique, playful visual.

CC GRAPHIC DESIGN

Essential Criteria

Metaphoric Symbolism

Core element of brand storytelling. The stronger the metaphor, the stronger the story. And the stronger the story, the more memorable the logo. Metaphors target the core of the human psyche by tapping into cultural heritage. Using symbolism and archetypes, they sear memories into the mind.



ISLAND QUEEN CRUISE

Canada's largest sightseeing cruise ship's logo helps tell its story. The metaphor is a queen's crown floating over the flowing Canadian waters, symbolizing luxury, national pride, and elegance. RIORDAN DESIGN



Cerenity's logo design alludes subtly to the organization's Christian faith through metaphor, whereas the name does not.

CAPSULE



Negative metaphors can be spun positively. Playful naughtiness comes across simply and directly in the Gluttony logo design. OCTAVO













Do's and Don'ts

1. Should work on a golf ball and a billboard.
2. Avoid using gradients or complicated techniques.
3. Produce alternatives for different situations or contexts.
4. Design original in vector graphics to ensure scalability.
5. Works first in black and white -- then add color.
6. Never lock the tagline to the logo. They change more often than logos.
7. Avoid using photography. Very difficult to reproduce.
8. Be careful when using culturally sensitive images, shapes, colors...

How to Design a Logotype

1. Examine 100's of typographic variations
2. Try the name in all caps, lowercase, and both
3. Look at classic and modern, roman and italic, various weights, scales, and combinations
4. Manipulate and customize the logotype
5. Decisions are driven by visual and performance considerations, as well as by what the typography itself communicates

The Visual Metaphor Matrix Exercise

		VISUAL DESCRIPTIVE WORDS >>					
		People	Nature	Houses	Tools	Animals	Science
BRAND ATTRIBUTES >>	Speed						
	Simplicity						
	Performance						
	Care						
	Community						
	Love						

Create a matrix by placing the brand attributes on one axis and the visually descriptive, broad words on the other.

Fill in the boxes with ideas, sketches, or whatever comes to mind. These "images" are the interface between a particular brand attribute and a basic word. Images will suggest further words, and words will suggest further images.

Keep the machine on spin cycle. From this process, many combinations will pour out. Unrelated elements will reveal unexpected and creative metaphors.

Create boxes and boxes of metaphors. Having places to put ideas helps push the design concepts onto the page.