

# **MEMORABLE LOGO DESIGN**

A Senior Scholars Thesis

by

LORI DIANE LAMPE

Submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Research  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the designation as

**UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLAR**

April 2011

Major: Environmental Design

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Approved by:

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## **ABSTRACT**

Memorable Logo Design. (April 2011)

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The primary purpose of this research is to look into the design of successful logos and determine what design characteristics make them so easily recognizable and memorable. From research thus far, I have found that a business's success can be credited to the strength of their brand and logo. While an identity can be costly, it is crucial to all businesses and organizations in their beginning years. Newly-formed nonprofit organizations usually do not have the resources to create well-designed identities because graphic designers are a costly investment that they cannot afford to include in their budget. The research began with an extensive literature review looking into the importance of logos, specific design characteristics, and case studies. From there, I created a survey testing participants' memory of logos and specific design characteristics that stood out the most to them and left a lasting impression in their minds. The results of this survey were then used to create a general list of principles for designing logos which can be used by any business or organization. I then put the list of design principles to the test myself by designing the logo for a fairly-new nonprofit organization based out

of the United Kingdom called Ripple Africa. My hope is that this information will help every kind of nonprofit organization create an impactful identity for them and improve the communication of their cause to the public.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

“Let’s all admit that the number of impressions we make is far less important than the quality of impression we make (Duffy, 2005).” Joe Duffy’s explanation of the importance of good design for branding and logos is the primary subject matter of this research. It is obvious that the design of a logo is highly important to the overall appearance of a business or organization, but what characterizes a successful, memorable logo? The primary purpose of this research is to look into this question and determine specific design characteristics of effective logos. From previous observation, I believe a business’s success can be attributed to the strength of their identity. Nonprofit organizations typically do not have the resources to create well-designed identities because graphic designers are a business expense that newly formed nonprofit organizations cannot afford to include in their budget. To help solve this problem, I will be conducting research to produce basic design principles for successful logos. This will help nonprofit organizations improve the communication of their cause to the public.

### **Introduction to literature**

An extensive literature analysis has included themes on successful logo and brand

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This thesis follows the style of *Art, Design, and Communication in Higher Education*.

design, colors and symbols as important elements in graphic design, case studies on specific logos, and graphic design for nonprofit organizations. I have also looked into successful logo and brand design from the perspective of key people in the world of graphic design. This research has exposed several design aspects that aid in the recognition of particular logos, two of which I will be investigating on a deeper level. The color of a logo highly influences a person's perception of a particular company or organization, based on emotional and psychological effects associated with that color. The symbol used in a logo is also extremely significant in the memory it sparks and the lasting impression it leaves on a person. Two case studies have furthered my knowledge in the realm of graphic design. The logos for The Bahamas and Project 7 are successful identities that have been created in the late twentieth century and twenty-first century. A deep analysis of these logos will assist me in my research for successful logo design characteristics. I have also looked into the graphic design of nonprofit organizations to find that a successful logo design can truly help the nonprofit influence their community and inform them on specific issues around them.

#### *Significant authors and designers on branding*

Mark Gobé is a major author on the subject of brand design and how important it is to connect the identity of a company to the people. He is President, Chief Executive Officer, and Executive Creative Director of d/g\* worldwide, which is one of the world's top ten brand image creation firms. Overtime, Gobé has created breakthrough, emotionally charged brand design strategies for big-name clients, such as Coca-Cola,



IBM, and Ann Taylor. In addition to design work, he serves on the board of the Brand Design Association, has taught at the prestigious Ecole Superieure de Dessin Industriel in Paris, and regularly speaks at Columbia University and conferences worldwide.

In his book, *Emotional Branding*, Gobé noted that ideas and creativity are a new kind of currency, more powerful than money. “One single idea - especially if it involves a great brand concept - can change a company’s entire future”. He believed that what constitutes a great brand identity is one that emotionally connects with the consumers and comes to life, building a lasting, deeper connection (Gobe, 2001). “Emotional branding is about crafting an intimate and reassuring experience for each customer” (Gobe, 2001). He states that a well-designed identity is unforgettable and emotionally charged, much like the Apple logo. It has vision, visualization, and emotional connection, which has been successfully conveyed to the world.

A company’s first impression is often made by their identity – a single mark, symbol, emblem, or text representing the entire company and its people. Gobé suggests that “a logo by itself is not necessarily a communication tool but it can most definitely act as a symbol of what a company represents (or hopes to represent) and the resulting consumer perceptions” (Gobe, 2001). He has found that in today’s society, corporate identities are becoming more consumer-driven with expressions of how a company wants to be perceived by the people and how they want people to interact with the company or product (Gobe, 2001). It must be a “multidimensional expression of a brand vision brought to life in the most imaginative way” (Gobe, 2001). Gobé has found that

“companies are just now beginning to explore how a logo can become a living, breathing creature that can foster a great deal of awareness for a brand in a very positive way” (Gobe, 2001). Target is a great example of this in the way that their creative advertisements communicate their innovative approach and overall commitment to change (Gobe, 2001). The mark of a company is incredibly important to the personality they give off to consumers. Gobe describes it like this: “a logo without ‘heart’ is like a person without ‘heart’: cold, uninteresting, a robot” (Gobe, 2001). No one wants to trust a robot who cannot relate to them - they want friendly, personal service.

Erik Abbing and Christa van Gessel are two more dominant authors on branding, particularly on brand-driven innovation. Erik Abbing is the founder and owner of Zilver Brand Driven Innovation, a creative consultancy in the Netherlands, and also teaches at the Delft University of Technology and at Eurib in Rotterdam. He has been the project manager at Axys Innovation and Flex, the innovation lab, which educated him in the realm of product design. Christa van Gessel obtained a master’s degree in industrial design engineering through a research project at Philips. She was Erik Abbing’s first employee at Zilver Brand Driven Innovation, where she brings a creative level of curiosity and strong research skills to the company.

In Design Thinking, the two authors wrote a chapter on brand-driven innovation, in which they note that “the concept of brand has moved from being thought of as merely an addition to the offering (the logo on the product) to its acceptance as a representation

of the culture, knowledge, and vision that inspires and strategically guides that offering” (Abbing & Gessel, 2010). The identity of a company is often their first impression, which needs to be an excellent representation of who they are. Abbing and Gessel observe that it appears that design is taking a leading role in the convergence of branding and innovation: brands need innovation to fulfill their promise, while innovation needs the brand to provide vision, focus, and direction (Abbing & Gessel, 2010). The two authors agree that within this “dance” of branding and innovation, design is the music that bonds the two together in “a shared understanding and a common goal” (Abbing & Gessel, 2010).

Abbing and Gessel created a four-step method for brand-driven innovation: brand usability, innovation strategy, design strategy, and touch-point orchestration. The first step, known as brand usability, leads to a usable brand that stimulates innovation and design. It is about making a brand format that is “rich, uncut, highly visual, and authentic” (Abbing & Gessel, 2010). Innovation strategy is the second step and leads to a strategic plan for action, understanding the brand’s promise. It becomes a way to constantly think about where the company is going and consider future touch-points of the brand. The third step is design strategy, which translates the entire plan into concrete design decisions. It focuses on turning the brand into a tangible experience for the customer. Abbing and Gessel defined design as “the creation of carriers for meaningful interaction”, considering aesthetic appeal as merely “one of the pillars of effective design” (Abbing & Gessel, 2010). They illustrated five layers corresponding to the way

people come into contact with and experience brand touch-points, the first of which are the sensorial aspects, such as color, shape, and texture (Abbing & Gessel, 2010). While this is particularly referring to a product, the same can be applied to a logo or brand identity. People are first introduced to a company or business by the logo they see when they walk in the door, the brochure they receive in the mail, or the advertisement they see on television. Finally, the fourth step to brand driven innovation is touch-point orchestration. This step makes sure all brand touch-points are in tune with each other and the brand. It strives for touch-point harmony, each one conveying its own version of the brand story. This is employed by using the design skills of various branches in a company in an inspiring way, which brings the brand to life (Abbing & Gessel, 2010). Abbing and Gessel no doubt believe that the branding of a company is a major aspect of who the company is and what they are trying to promote, but also have confidence in incorporating ideas from other departments within the company.

Joe Duffy is a prominent designer in the realm of logos and branding. He is the chairman of Duffy and Partners, a branding and identity design firm that strives to “design to make a difference”. When the firm was founded, he broke new ground for the integration of branding and design with advertising. Duffy has worked on brand identity programs for major companies, such as BMW, Starbucks, and Sony. In addition to working at Duffy and Partners, he has served as a chairperson of an AIGA Environmental Committee and served on the boards of AIGA, the professional associate for design.

In Duffy's book *Brand Apart*, he agrees with Gobé when he says that "brands, like people need to build relationships, to elicit emotions, engage in dialog, have a personality, a voice and a language" (Duffy, 2005). Duffy explains the idea of having one voice for a brand is important so it can hold together and stand out from other brands. However, sometimes the drive for unity can become so deceptive that nobody is talking honorably. "To be truly effective, we all need to speak from our hearts" (Duffy, 2005). The "one voice" idea can also be "described as a brand language that can speak in many voices in order to keep it interesting and refreshing" (Duffy, 2005). The main concept of "one voice" is to create a completely open feeling so that consumers can actually hear the brand and understand what it stands for. Duffy demonstrates this theory as he talks about developing a brand language for Nike – "the voice that would speak to a young kid playing basketball at Rutgers' Park is entirely different from the voice that would speak to a kid playing tennis in the Hamptons, or one playing football in Brazil" (Duffy, 2005). The central goal of the design team was to make the athlete's say, "Wow, those people understand me; they understand my sport in a way no one else does" (Duffy, 2005). Duffy believes that it is about making a deep, personal connection between the brand identity and the people of the community.

### *The importance of color in design*

Color is one major aspect of design that greatly influences customer's perceptions of the company or product. Think of particular businesses that have a distinct color that defines them: the golden arches of McDonalds, red Coca-Cola label, or blue AT&T globe. "In

each instance the associations of color enable identification and prompt particular images and emotions” (Gobe, 2001). Mark Gobe’s research produced the theory of Emotional Branding, which is “the conduit by which people connect subliminally with companies and their products in an emotionally profound way”. One particular aspect of his findings revealed that color, among other features, is a crucial vehicle of the experience of a brand or logo. He reveals that “colors trigger very specific responses in the central nervous system and cerebral cortex, which can then activate thoughts, memories, and particular modes of perception.” Like people, brands are not static; they have many facets to their personality, and color is just one of these (Gobe, 2001). Stephen Bleicher agrees that color is crucial to design: “when companies are successful, they no longer need to have their names in their logo-the shape and color are all that are required” (Bleicher, 2005).

In his book *Contemporary Color Theory and Use* Steven Bleicher established that “color plays a vital role in culture and daily life and may be the single most important aspect of a painting, product, or design... the simple act of choosing a color can make or break a product” (Bleicher, 2005). A great amount of research has been conducted on the psychological effect of colors, revealing that red typically increases skin temperature and raises blood pressure while blue is more calming and reduces blood pressure. Color and appetite is another important study, leading to the use of bright hues of red, orange and yellow in fast-food restaurant chains. “These colors increase the appetite, so not only do

you order and eat more under the influence of these hues, you eat faster” (Bleicher, 2005).

Bleicher also found that “in market research studies it has been determined that 60 percent of acceptance or rejection of a product is based on its color. Within 90 seconds a person will make a choice to accept or reject a purchase” (Bleicher, 2005). This same conclusion can be applied to the logo of a business – upon seeing the particular color of a business’ icon, one might draw overly dramatic conclusions, either steering them away or pulling them in. “Whether it is the brain or the psyche that determines personal preference, understanding the cultural and psychological implications of our color choices is vital in creating viable artwork and designs” (Bleicher, 2005).

Capsule Design firm disagrees with the above authors on how color should be used. They have found it important to make people think about color rationally so that they do not automatically relate colors to emotions and memories (Capsule, 2007). They believe that “the color is not what should distinguish the logo in the marketplace” (Capsule, 2007). While color is highly effective in design, it should not relate to a particular memory or type of emotion. Capsule Design firm believes that color is a great tool that can help communicate a message to consumers, but it should not be the driving force behind the design. The importance of color in the design of a logo is evident in the fact that it “can give clear direction when language fails to translate” (Capsule, 2007).

In *Color Design Workbook*, Terry Stone documented that “the human eye and brain experience color physically, mentally, and emotionally. As a result, colors themselves have meanings” (Stone, 2006). Stone’s research has revealed several interesting facts about specific colors: red is the most visually dominant color; yellow is the first color that the human eye notices and is brighter than white; blue food is rare in nature and thus suppresses hunger; green is the easiest color on the eyes and aids in digestion; purple is said to enhance imagination and is thus used in decorating children’s rooms; orange is an appetite stimulant and is used for visibility enhancement; black is supposed to boost self-confidence and strength; white is the perfectly balanced color and can sometime give people headaches for being so bright; gray seldom evokes strong emotions and is its own complement (Stone, 2006).

Stone further explains that “color has the ability to evoke a response, create a mood, symbolize an idea, and express an emotion” (Stone, 2006). Therefore, it becomes a very powerful tool in design, especially with logos portraying a company’s personality. It is important to note that color meanings are often influenced by a variety of factors, including age, gender, personal experience, mood, ethnic identity, history, and tradition (Stone, 2006). Stone states that “color meanings are held deep in our subconscious” and quotes Carl Jung in saying that “colors are the mother tongue of the subconscious” (Stone, 2006). Color “has biological, psychological, social, and cultural dimensions, all of which give it meaning and convey information” (Stone, 2006). Stone also exposes that color is memorable – often seeing or thinking about a specific color produces certain



reactions in people. “Marketing research indicates that more than 80 percent of visual information is related to color” (Stone, 2006). The memory trigger that color pulls, is what I hope to gain a better understanding of in my research.

L.K. Peterson specialized in global color meanings and associations in his book *Global Graphics: Color*. He found that Americans (and Canadians, too) “display a preference for subdued, traditional, safe colors on items that are expensive or intended to last and brighter colors are reserved for accents” (Peterson, 2000). He also notes that context means everything when it comes to using color in the United States. For women, red high-heeled shoes, red lipstick, or a red dress often portray sexiness and passion. For men, a red sports car serves the same purpose of making him extra “cool” and exciting (Peterson, 2000). Yellow has been distinguished as a cautionary color, being used for road signs and tape for police investigations. Blue has become a color that is popular among companies and businesses wanting to convey their honesty and trustworthiness (Peterson, 2000). “Green is the color of money and nature, two things close to the hearts of Americans” (Peterson, 2000). As it gets paler and more yellow or gray, it becomes less appealing to a general audience. Peterson found that “Americans claim a strong dislike of orange, and yet the hue is everywhere” (Peterson, 2000). For many people, orange road construction signs do not indicate danger, but inconvenience and delay. However, more recently, Peterson has established that “orange has gained popularity because it is seen as a refreshing and invigorating change from the norm” (Peterson, 2000). While purple is still linked to nobility, it can also “signal an excess of something

better done in small portions; purple prose for example is embarrassingly melodramatic” (Peterson, 2000). While black is “not exclusively linked to death, black does have decidedly somber associations, implying morbidity, despair, evil, sin, and negation” (Peterson, 2000). Black also commands respect and is meant to be taken seriously; it is sophisticated, dignified, dramatic, and extremely formal. White can mean clean, sanitary, pure, elegant, and perfect, as well as cold, antiseptic, empty, ghostly, boring, and unfinished (Peterson, 2000).

Peterson further describes specific uses of color in wearing it, food and food packaging, and traditions of blue. “Yellow ribbons have been tokens of remembrance for absent loved ones since the nineteenth century, when the wives of U.S. Cavalry officers on duty in the Western frontier wore scarves of their husband’s regimental colors” (Peterson, 2000). Now they are regularly displayed as signs representing hope for the safe return of soldiers fighting abroad. Peterson discovered that “in food and food packaging, the overall rule is the deeper or darker the color, the stronger the flavor” (Peterson, 2000). The colors on the packaging of food are just as important as the image or symbol. “Black and gold indicate luxury, a premium product; bright multi-colored packages mean fun, probably snack food; earthy tones imply heartiness and health; while green has come to mean not only vegetables but anything that is healthy and eco-friendly” (Peterson, 2000). The origins of the favored faded blue color come from the Royal Navy. Naval uniforms were dyed blue and ultimately, “a sailor’s length of service could be read by how faded his uniform had become” (Peterson, 2000). Therefore, young recruits didn’t

want to look even more like inexperienced sailors, so they would quickly scrub their uniforms to make them a paler blue.

*Shapes and symbols as key ingredients*

Maggie Macnab is a significant author on shapes and symbols and documents the various meanings they denote in her book *Decoding Design*. “Visual communications that tap into the dynamic energy of the collective psyche makes a powerful and direct connection that is expansive on many levels” (Macnab, 2008). Macnab states that “interpreting the qualitative aspects of number and shape is an alternate approach to the literal, assembly-line communications so prevalent with today’s technology”. Symbolic design and intuitive connections inspires an intimate meaning, something which is “quite attractive to a thinking species” (Macnab, 2008). If you look around, many common symbols used in design revolve around numbers, and may have a more significant meaning than one might expect. I have only looked into the numbers one through five for the purpose of gaining a general understanding for this paper.

The number one denotes wholeness and completion and is illustrated by a circle. The circle is all-encompassing and is the visual pattern of energy (Macnab, 2008). The circle is known to be extraordinarily simple and mysterious, holy and sacred, and gives birth to all other geometric constructions (Macnab, 2008). Target’s bull’s-eye logo embodies success and implies hitting the mark. The latest logo design is a simpler version that is “closely aligned to the archetypal symbol of the strength of all for one and one for all”

(Macnab, 2008). The Fashion Center logo is another example of design that uses a simple circle, representing the center of the fashion universe.

The number two is completely opposite of the number one, suggesting “separation and the compelling desire to return to wholeness” (Macnab, 2008). Macnab states that duality is about opposites that create conflict, which then look for resolution. Carl Jung is referenced for his term of “individuation”, a concept that addresses the separation and reintegration of the individual in a cyclical metamorphosis that continues throughout life” (Macnab, 2008). The yin yang symbol is probably the most common symbol that demonstrates the principle of duality. However, the opposed balance actually occurs within the mold of the circular shape representing “one”. Macnab says that “the principle of separation is the first act of becoming, the first venture into the illusion of ‘separate’” (Macnab, 2008).

Thankfully, the number three “brings solution to the conflict of division by presenting a third point of balance” (Macnab, 2008). Color is one example of the number three, represented by the primary colors, red, blue, and yellow, which when combined make white. The number three is often referred to as the holy number, reflecting the Trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Three is also apparent in the fact that there is always a beginning, middle, and an end to everything we do, much like past, present, and future. A communal superstition arises from the number the three – “not walking under a ladder comes from an Egyptian warning not to break a triangle” (Macnab, 2008). The Radio

Free Europe logo applies the number three in the fact that the triangle is the alchemical symbol for fire. It becomes a metaphor “for transforming destiny into choice, or repression into freedom” (Macnab, 2008).

Macnab relates the number four as the “perfect fit for the world”, expressing the four corners of the earth, four cardinal directions, and four seasons (Macnab, 2008). The common two-dimensional shape to represent this number is the square. The square is rigid with right angles, symbolically describing the earth, and is also one of the least interesting shapes, relating to mundane aspects of reality (Macnab, 2008). A prominent example of the number four used in design is the logo for H&R Block. Filling out tax forms is tedious, boring, and painful. Therefore, the logo is so dreadfully simple that it’s boring. H&R Block takes care of the monotonous tax returns so you don’t have to. The symbolic nature of their logo communicates their purpose.

Macnab refers to the number five as the “keystone in the exploration of number as quality” (Macnab, 2008). It symbolizes man, health, love, and the energy of movement acting upon matter – also known as magic. There were originally just four elements of creation until Aristotle added a fifth one: air, fire, water, earth, and ether. The fifth element “defines an element so rare that it can’t be seen or felt but is pervasive in everything created and everything we do” (Macnab, 2008). The number five also symbolized the unseen force of regeneration. It is often represented by the pentagon shape, which is frequently transcribed into a star. Within every pentagonal star is a not-

too-obvious spiral. The Seed Media Group logo is a great example of the number five, evoking “the dynamic grace of the spiral and the beauty of resolved balance between opposing forces out of which something new is born” (Macnab, 2008).

While Macnab is an expert on relating shapes and symbols, Anistatia Miller and Jared Brown have conducted research defining the meaning behind particular symbols and images of various countries and cultures. In their book *Global Graphics: Symbols*, they identify that the bald eagle is one of the more prominent animal symbols used in the United States, as it is the national emblem. The eagle is also seen as a global image, representing royalty, power, authority, and victory for ancient Greeks, the perceptive and contemplative nature of the evangelist St. John, and the eternal contest between the sun and the clouds for ruler-ship of the skies in Mexico (Miller & Brown, 2000). An example of the eagle used in a logo is Eagle Speakers, a speaker company wanting to convey power and authority in that particular industry. Another significant symbol in our culture is the bear, which actually takes on two different connotations. While it is a sign of despair for adults, depicting depressed stock market prices, it is a safe, nurturing animal for children to play with, such as Winnie the Pooh (Miller & Brown, 2000). Miller and Brown have also pointed out specific plant images that symbolize the American culture. “Even though the United States is not the world’s only producer of corn and wheat, these two plant symbols are often used in American design to convey the concepts of abundance, harvest, and food” (Miller & Brown, 2000). Shafts of wheat are seen in the logo for Progressive Baker Packaging, signifying an abundant harvest

because “wheat is often referred to as the staff of life” (Miller & Brown, 2000).

Mountains are another global symbol which has slightly different meanings for each culture. Many people groups believed that the mountaintops were the home of the gods and goddesses and were symbolic of heaven (Miller & Brown, 2000). The image often represents that something or someone has reached the highest peak of achievement. In America, mountains describe the strength, grandeur, and beauty of the American wilderness.

The sun is another major symbol used in many graphic illustrations. Miller and Brown note that it typically symbolizes life and humankind’s victory over darkness. “Early Christians associated the sun with Christ, immortality, and resurrection” (Miller & Brown, 2000). The Vision Group used a sun in their logo as a metaphor for enlightenment and leadership. The moon symbol as a passive, nurturing, feminine side of nature is frequently juxtaposed with the aggressive, powerful, masculine sun (Miller & Brown, 2000). The moon has been known to signify wisdom in many cultures. Today, many people associate the moon with the nocturnal world, afterlife, and fertility. The star is often connected with departed human spirits and heavenly occurrences, suggesting the “light of the spirit” (Miller & Brown, 2000). The crescent moon, such as the one in the Dreamworks logo, denotes victory over hostile forces, and is often a symbol of prosperity and growth.

*Case study #1: The Bahamas logo*

In 1996, The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism began working with Duffy Worldwide to design a new identity for the island country. “While The Bahamas does offer the tantalizing promise of a sensory, emotional, and physical vacation, they are perceived to be a ‘stereotypical paradise’” (Logo Lounge, Inc., 2007). This was the challenge: designing a logo that was unique to this specific vacation destination, which would make it stand out from all the other tropical locations, such as Mexico, Jamaica, or other Caribbean islands. In *Brand Apart*, Vanderpool-Wallace noted that it was vital to “give each individual island its own identity”, thus highlighting the exclusivity of The Bahamas (Duffy, 2005). When questioned about designing a logo for a country rather than a particular business, Olson, another designer on the team, stated that “it’s about trying to find tangible ways to bring the intangible to life. It’s about taking all the words and all the visuals, and marrying them up in a way that becomes symbolic and telegraphic” (Duffy, 2005). The final design would have to express the “breadth of the offerings of The Bahamas”, because no other tropical location is made up of 700 islands, 17 of which are popular tourist destination (Logo Lounge, Inc., 2007).

After visiting the islands and immersing themselves in the culture and location, the team of designers had many positive, strong impressions of colors and shapes. The forms that





*Figure 1: The Bahamas logo. It was designed by Duffy and Partners in 1996. The colorful shapes brilliantly portray the best qualities of the popular tourist destination. Image from: <http://www.bahamas.com/>*

make up the islands in the logo are organic, rounded forms, which are anything but expected. They were mainly inspired by the flora and fauna of the tropical paradise, particularly the birds, shells, and flowers (Logo Lounge, Inc., 2007). The final design of the logo can be seen in Figure 1. “The beauty of the identity is that it sets in motion an entire brand language that is endlessly adaptable- in signage, in patterning for clothing and interiors, in iconography.” (Logo Lounge, Inc., 2007). The forms are great for accenting specific islands in a magazine or on the tourism website. By graying out the rest of the logo and having one particular island represented in a bright color, it makes it easy for one to graphically pinpoint the island they want to visit (Logo Lounge, Inc., 2007). The shapes are also great for highlighting pictures from a specific island in any realm of media. The color was also an extremely significant part of the design, as it

mimicked the “turquoise blue waters, pink flamingos, and pastel sands” (Logo Lounge, Inc., 2007). While the color palette may feel natural for a tropical destination, “its complexity makes it special to the diverse nature of The Bahamas”. The vast array of tropical colors all work together to create a very relaxing, peaceful, yet exciting logo for such a fascinating destination. Duffy could not have stated better the purpose of a well-designed logo: “Strong branding elegantly and simply captures what is unique, special, and enduring about the product” (Logo Lounge, Inc., 2007).

#### *Case study #2: Project 7 logo*

Tyler Merrick founded Project 7 in 2008. It is a cause-related company that makes everyday consumer goods, such as bio-bottled water, gum, and mints (Merrick, 2008). He took the seven deadly sins to heart and turned them upside down. “For example, it’s not about the glutton, but rather the person who is hungry Focus on peace, not wrath” (Top & Cleveland, 2010). For every product that is sold, some good is done in one of the seven areas of global need: hunger, sickness, peace, homelessness, thirst, education, and saving the Earth. Their goal is to change the score- make a significant, measurable difference in lives all over the world (Merrick, 2008). “We wanted to create a brand that could communicate seven areas of needs. We took bottles of water and turned them into t-shirts, with fifty percent organic cotton and five bottles of water” (Top & Cleveland, 2010). From this goal, came the gritty, honest design of their identity, communicating seven areas of need by altering the common tally mark system used to keep score. The



*Figure 2: Project 7 logo and packaging. The intimate and personal feel was designed by the owner of the company, Tyler Merrick. Image from: <http://www.project7.com/>*

whole look of the brand illustrates the messed up world we live in: brown backgrounds with muted tones of color, hand-written imperfect lettering, and very simple, shy packaging methods. The Project 7 logo and packaging can be seen above in Figure 2.

What makes this company stand out from others is the personal and intimate feel of their identity. Consumers can get a sense of what the company stands for just by looking at their logo.

#### *Graphic design and nonprofit organizations*

In his forward to *Designing for the Greater Good*, David Hesekiel stated that “after nearly a decade of studying cause marketing campaigns, I know that strong design is absolutely crucial to success. A good design team can breathe life and power into work

that might otherwise be lost in the twister of advertising messages that swirls around us from morning to night” (Top & Cleveland, 2010). Hessekiel further explains the importance of good graphic design for nonprofit organizations because the media budgets behind it are often very small. “A cause-related effort relying primarily on donated media must jump off the page, handbill or screen to grab the attention of every consumer that sees it” (Top & Cleveland, 2010). Good graphic design is vital for nonprofit organizations because it helps them communicate their message and make their organization heard in the chaos of everyday life.

#### *Conclusions of literary review*

After researching important authors on brand and logo design, important aspects of logo design, two case studies, and graphic design for nonprofit organizations, I affirm that a well-designed and identifiable logo is a key ingredient for the success of a particular business or organization. Mark Gobé, Erik Abbing, Christa van Gessel, and Joe Duffy all relate that a company’s identity needs to personally connect with each consumer in an invigorating way. People need to understand what the company or organization represents and need to be able to trust them. All this can be done with the power of a simple logo.

#### **The next step**

From these conclusions thus far, my research methods will begin with a survey determining what particular aspects of a logo make it identifiable and memorable. The

survey will deal with original logos and ask participants to determine what the most important design characteristic is for each one. On the next few questions, I will show participants slightly altered versions of the original logos and see how easily they are able to remember them. Alterations will be done to the font, color, symbol, and form of the logo. At the end of the survey, all the logos will appear and participants will have to decide which ones are original and which ones are altered. This will once again test the impact the logo had on their memory. All the data from the surveys will then be collected and analyzed to determine which specific features of the logos tested will always remain clear and identifiable, which might be the color, form, symbol, or font. Using the information gained from the survey responses, I will then create a general list of design characteristics for logos. The list will be used to design the logo and brand identity for a newly-formed nonprofit organization, helping them better inform people in the community about their cause.

## CHAPTER II

### METHODS

#### **The logistics**

After reading several books on successful logo and brand design, I found that the best way to determine the memorability of a logo was to use a correlational data collection method. To invite people to take the survey, an email was sent out to friends and family as well as a message on a social network site, called Facebook. The message stated a simple briefing of this research project with some general information about the survey, such as the fact that it dealt with logo design and the length of it. At the end of the message, there was a link that participants could click on, taking them to the website of the survey. Once the window opened, participants had one more chance to agree or decline whether they would take the following survey. Once the survey started, there were optional questions regarding the participants' race, ethnicity, and gender, which were recorded to help vary the results. By surveying as many people as possible from all different ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds, an overall consensus was generated.

Everyone receiving the email or social network message was also asked to pass it along to their friends and family, particularly ones of different ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds. Although the message was sent to a majority of college-aged students, this was the only means available to invite a large number and variety of participants. Giving out a physical, paper survey was the immediate thought; after reconsidering, the ease and efficiency of an online survey would be the best for the environment. The survey was

created and distributed using Survey Monkey, a website that can be used for research, event planning, customer feedback, and other survey needs. It has been very helpful to professors and students who use surveys in their research projects. After creating a personal account and paying the first month of use, thoughts about how to word the questions for the surveys was next on the agenda.

### *Participant thoughts*

To begin the questions for a specific logo, the participants were asked to determine what they think is the most defining characteristic of the logo. In other words, what made this particular logo memorable? The participants had six choices: color (of the font or symbol), font (type style), form (arrangement of symbol and text), symbol (picture, image, or graphic), and other, where they could write out what they thought was the most defining characteristic. These questions were used for two purposes – to get a very clear idea of what the participants *thought* was the most important characteristic (this could be different than what the overall results show) and to show the participants a first glimpse of the original logo before altering it on the next page of the survey. This question was also designed to spur the thinking of participants and the idea of first impressions. Most, if not all, of the logos used for this survey had never been seen by the participants. Therefore, when Joe Duffy said “that the number of impressions we make is far less important than the quality of impression we make (Duffy, 2005)”, one can relay that a good quality impression triggers the memory. The test of the memorability of these never-before-seen logos was based on the first impression that they left with the

participants. As noted from the literature review, Mark Gobé believed that a well-designed identity is unforgettable and emotionally charged. Participants were asked to determine what it is about each particular logo that makes it unforgettable and emotionally charged, choosing between font, symbol, color, or form.

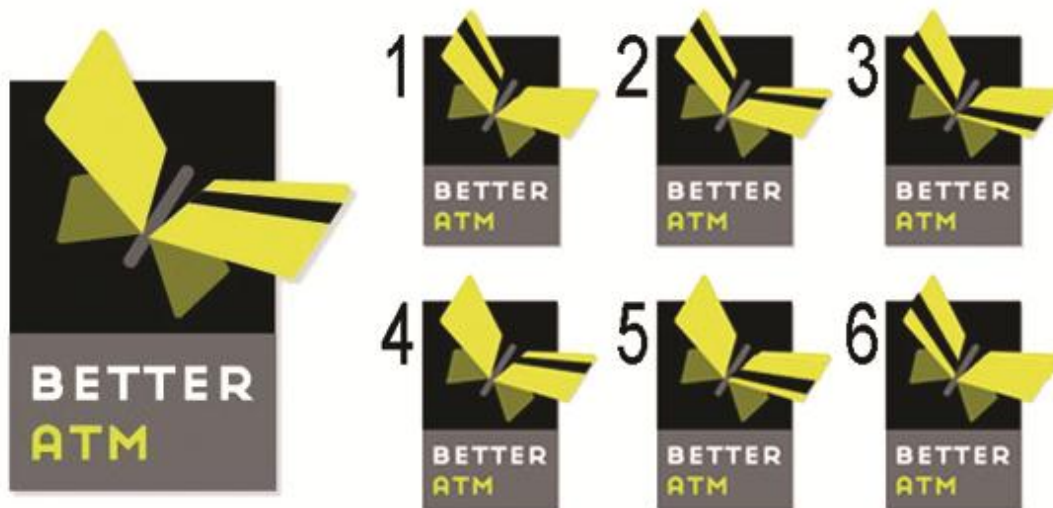
### **Question inspiration**

Inspiration was acquired from a website that a professor introduced to me. It's called Guess the Logo – an online guessing game to test your memory of logos you see several times throughout each day. There is a running timer at the bottom of the screen while it displays around 8 versions of the same logo. Each logo tests a different aspect of design, and each alteration is very subtle. For example, the “Google” logo tests your memory of the order of the colors of the letters. The “IMDB” logo tests your memory of the shape of the ticket behind the letters. It is amazing to take the test and see how certain design characteristics of logos stand out more than others.

### *Where's Waldo?*

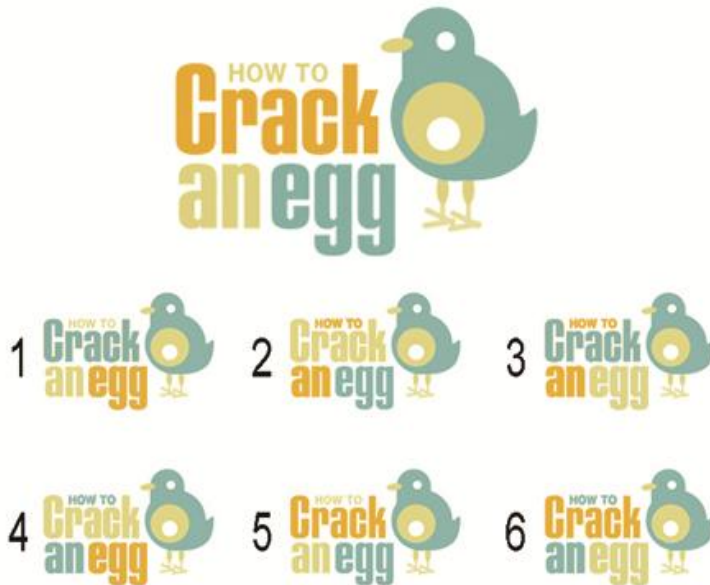
A similar “test” was incorporated into a part of the survey, which was called “Where's Waldo”. A few logos were chosen for me to manipulate so that participants would see other versions of it. The logos were opened with Adobe Photoshop, an image editing software that allows you to make subtle or drastic alterations to pictures. For the “Better ATM Services, Inc.” logo, subtle changes were made to the symbol by changing the





*Figure 3: “Better ATM Services” logo. The original logo on the left was shown in the survey on a separate page before the series of altered logos. Participants had to choose the original logo out of the mix of altered logos on the right. Image from: <http://www.betteratmservices.com/>*

placement of the black bar on the wing of the butterfly. This can be seen in Figure 3 – the original logo is a larger size on the left and participants were asked to pick which one of the logos on the right was the original one. Please note that in the survey, the original logo was shown on a separate page before the series of altered logos; however, here they are shown side by side so the reader can see the subtle alterations. This same method was used with the “How to Crack an Egg” logo. In Adobe Photoshop, the order of the colors of the letters was altered, which can also be seen in Figure 4. The format of this figure is just like Figure 4 in that the original logo is a larger size on the left so that the reader can compare the alterations to it more easily. The question in the survey had the



*Figure 4: “How to Crack an Egg” logo. The original logo on the top was shown in the survey on a separate page before the series of altered logos. Participants had to choose the original logo out of the mix of altered logos on the bottom. Image from: <http://www.howtocrackanegg.com/home/>*

*original logo mixed in with the altered logos, causing participants to really examine the choices in order to see the differences.*

### *Memory game*

Another question for testing characteristics of a memorable logo was making alterations for that specific logo in each area of design: color, font, symbol, and form. For example, one color alteration, one font alteration, one symbol alteration, and one form alteration was made for the “A-Town” logo. Participants were asked to determine how each of the altered logos was different than the original. It was basically a game of memory because

they saw the original logo just a moment before and then had to remember exactly what it looked like. Mark Gobé revealed that “colors trigger very specific responses... which can then activate thoughts, memories, and particular modes of perception” (Gobe, 2001). Each colored logo can prompt a variety of memories, aiding the first impression of it. By slightly shifting the colors of some logos, this survey question hoped to change those original memories and confuse the participant. This whole idea was applied towards the other design characteristics that were transformed (font, symbol, and form). Participants were also asked how subtle the differences were and how easily recognizable they were. These questions were used for personal purposes – to possibly reveal areas in the survey where changes to logos were not effective in tampering with the participants’ memory.

#### *Ultimate memory*

At the very end of the survey, the impact of each logo was put to test on the highest level. On the last page, one image of each of the logos the participants had seen throughout the survey was displayed; however, some were originals and some were altered versions. Participants then had to decide whether each logo was an altered version or the original. After a few questions into the survey, participants may have gotten the hint to pay close attention to each logo and its characteristics, but I doubt they expected to see each one again at the very end. This final question tested the individuality of each logo compared to others. As stated from the literature review, “strong branding elegantly and simply captures what is unique, special, and enduring about the product” (Logo Lounge, Inc., 2007). Each logo needs to stand apart,

highlighting the unique characteristics of that particular company or product. This whole survey was designed to determine what the most important characteristic of a logo is.

### **Closing**

The survey was created in the middle of November and was then available online towards the end of that month. It was going to be left open until responses were crucial to continue this research project; however, it was only open for one month, as the participation slowly declined. It was officially closed at the end of December because enough responses were received to validate the survey – one hundred and two people had partaken in this survey.

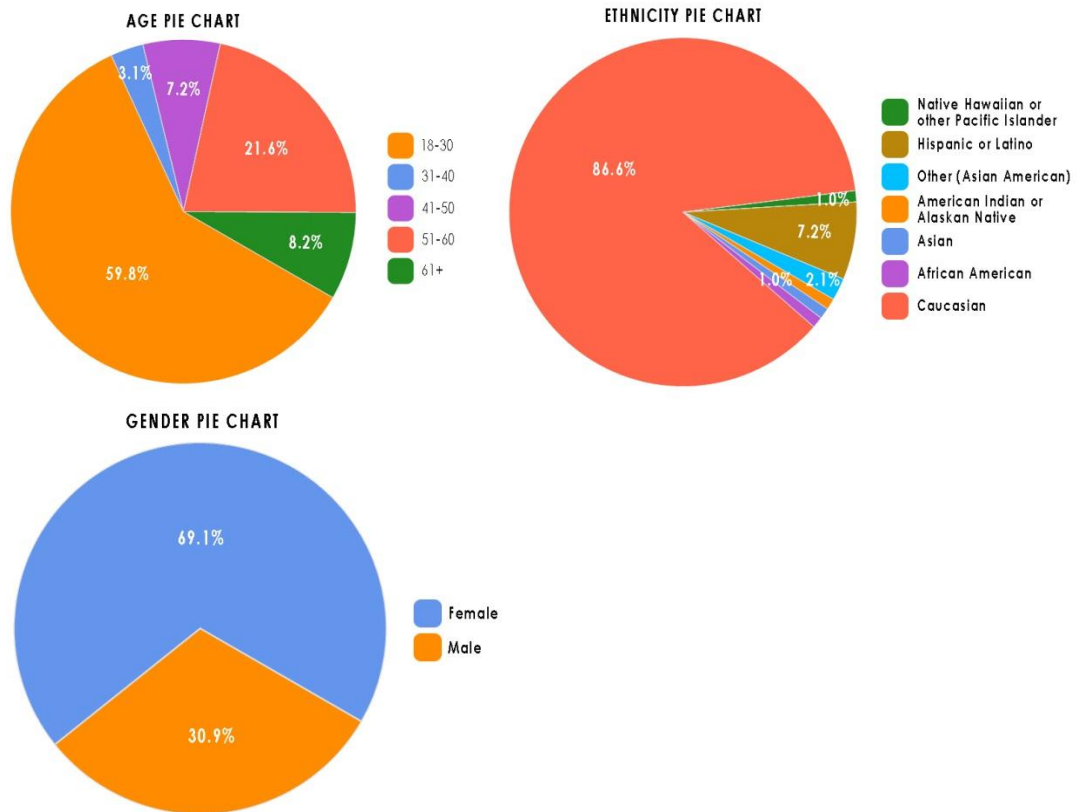
## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

#### **Demographics and numbers**

When the survey was completed by a large number of participants, the results were not entirely as reliable as I had hoped they would be. The first potentially harmful issue is the lack of variety of the participants which took this survey. The survey was sent out to friends and family, asking them to also forward it along to their friends and family, in hopes of achieving variety in participant age, ethnicity, and gender. The results showed that while there were more participants in the 18-30 year old range, the age distribution was pretty well attained. However, the same cannot be said for the ethnicity of participants. The vast majority were Caucasian, with very little participants of other ethnicities. The gender distribution was 69.1% female to 30.9% male, which can be seen on the next page in Figure 5 with the age and ethnicity charts as well. While these results were not as varied as I had hoped, I believe there was a great enough distribution to still provide accurate results for this research.

The initial logo participants saw was for Better ATM Services. Results of the survey revealed that 68.2% of participants thought the symbol was the most important characteristic of the logo. Specific aspects that some participants noticed were the 3D nature of the logo and the way the image was breaking out of the barriers that enclosed it. All other answer choices were split between color, form, combination, and other. The



*Figure 5: Demographic pie charts. The participant diversity in age, ethnicity, and gender can be clearly seen in these pie charts, taken directly from the survey results.*

only characteristic that was altered for this logo was the symbol. When asked to pick out the original logo from the mix of altered logos, 44.2% of participants guessed correctly and 34.9% had a pretty good idea that they were right. It would have been interesting to see which of the participants that guessed right knew that they had a good guess, as opposed to those that honestly had no idea and just happened to guess the right answer. I believe this was a successful logo alteration due to the distribution of responses, which can be seen on the following page in Figure 6.

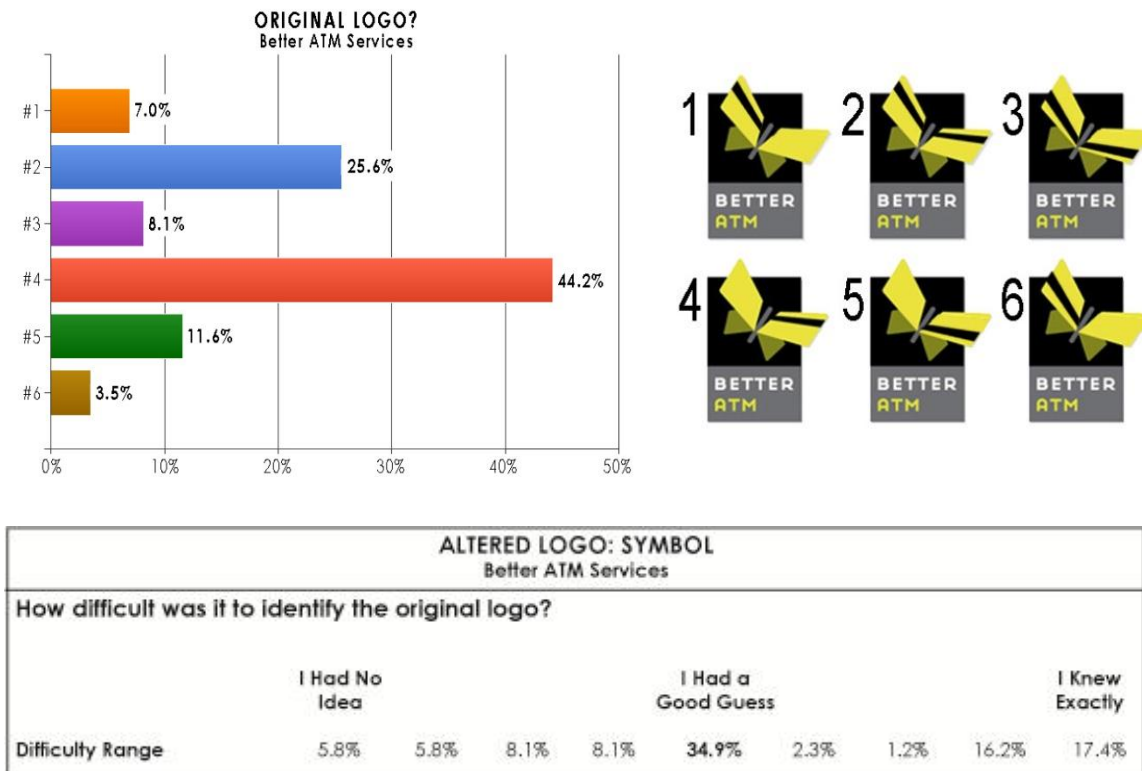
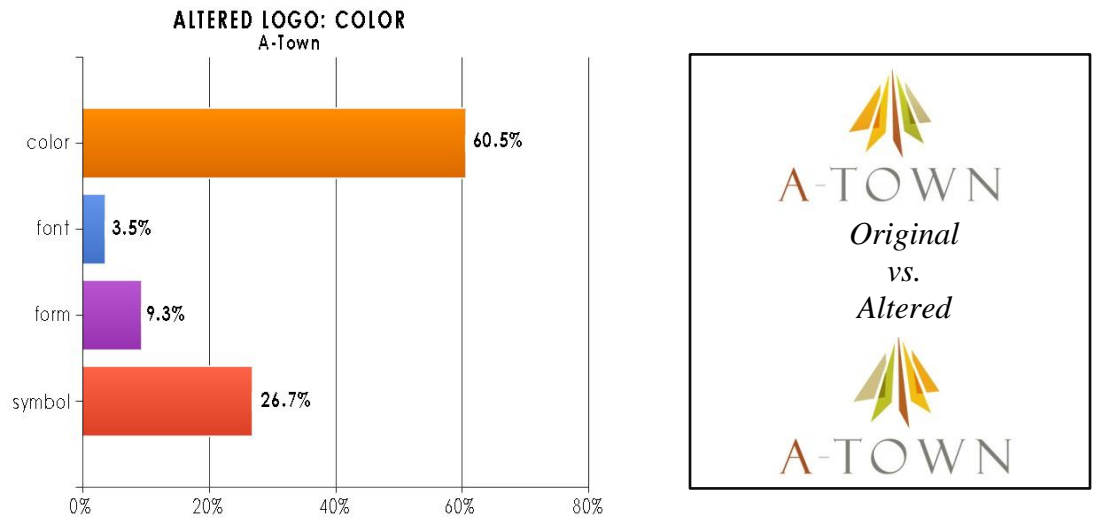


Figure 6: “Better ATM Services” logo results. The bar graph shows the distribution of responses for which logos participants thought was the original. The image used in the survey is to the right of this bar graph to relate to the numbers on the left side of the bar graph. The table shows the various responses towards the degree of difficulty.

A-Town was the second logo that participants were introduced to in this survey. The majority of participants (38.4%) chose symbol as the most defining characteristic of this logo. However, the second highest pick, a combination, was not far behind with 27.9%. The first alteration of this logo dealt with color, and more specifically, the arrangement of color. Although 60.5% of participants were not fooled this easily and answered correctly, there were still 39.5% that answered incorrectly. This color alteration received the most varied results in answer choices for this particular logo. Color was also the

characteristic that participants had the hardest time recognizing a change in, thus making it the most subtle – only 32.6% of participants had a good guess. These results can be seen below in Figure 7. Symbol was the easiest characteristic for participants to notice a change in. 95.3% chose symbol with 70.9% of participants knowing that they were exactly right. However, these results could be invalid due to the fact that the majority of participants answered that this alteration was not subtle at all. The form and font



How easily were you able to recognize what was altered on this logo?									
Ease of Recognition	I Had No Idea			I Had a Good Guess			I Knew Exactly		
	11.6%	7.0%	3.5%	12.8%	32.6%	8.1%	3.5%	12.8%	8.1%

Figure 7: “A-Town” logo results. The top bar graph shows the distribution of responses for what participants thought was altered. The original logo is compared with the altered logo on the left. Below these images is a table, representing how difficult it was to identify the transformation. Image from: <http://mattsoncreative.com/#/work>



alterations were similar in results, with the majority of participants knowing that they were exactly right and answering that the change was not subtle at all.

The third logo that participants saw was Pocono Modern. Results of the survey revealed that 55.3% of participants thought the symbol was the most important characteristic of the logo. However, the second highest pick, a combination, was not far behind with 22.4%. The first alteration of this logo dealt with form. Although 84.7% of participants answered correctly, there were still 15.3% that answered incorrectly. 62.4% of participants knew exactly what was altered, which could be due to the fact that the alteration was not subtle at all (40.0% answered this way). The symbol was the second aspect of the logo that was altered. Although the answers were split between symbol and form, 77.6% of participants knew exactly what was changed and 57.6% said that it was not subtle at all. Symbol received the highest recognition level and lowest degree of subtlety for this logo. Although these are very interesting results for a split between what was altered, a bar graph of the answer choices next to the degree of subtlety can be seen on the next page in Figure 8. The font alteration received the highest percent of correct answers with color coming in second. However, the color change was the hardest to recognize with an even distribution of answers for recognition and subtlety levels.

KASUT was the fourth logo that participants saw in this survey. The majority of participants (52.4%) chose symbol as the most defining characteristic. However, the

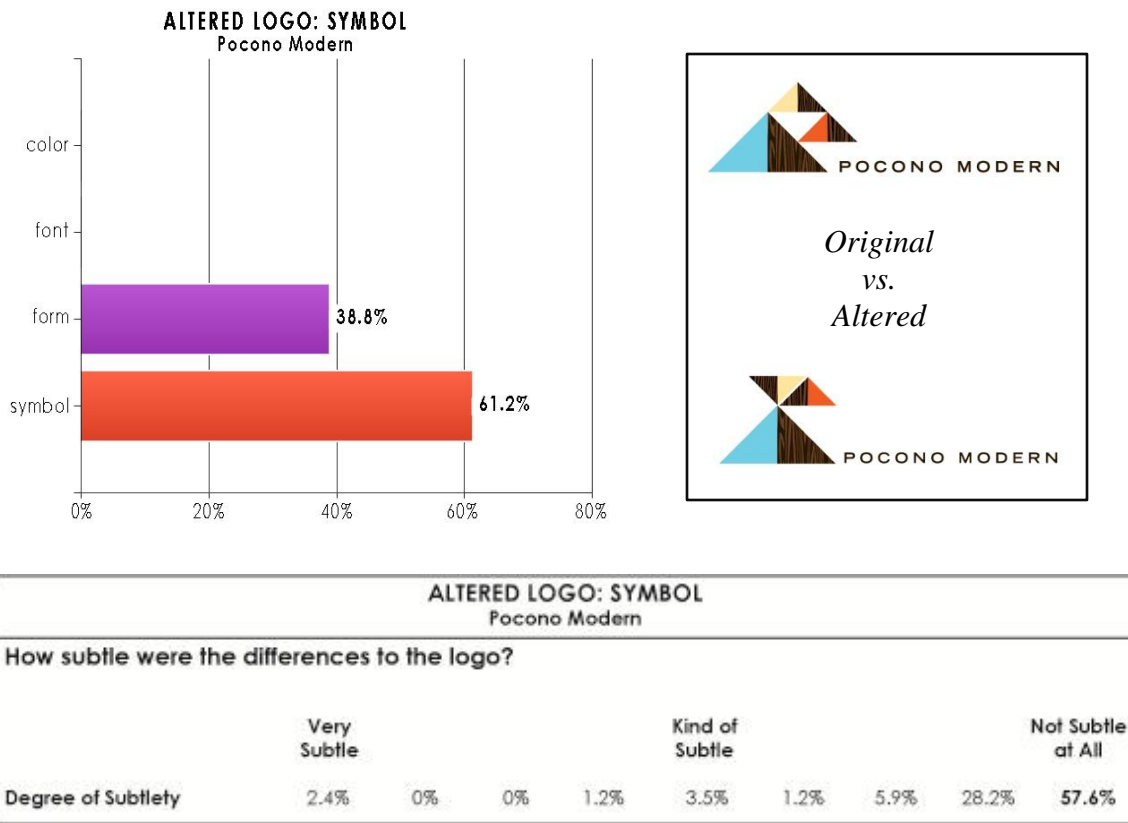


Figure 8: “Pocono Modern” logo results. The top bar graph shows the close split of responses for what participants thought was altered. The original logo is compared with the altered one on the right. A table depicting the subtlety level of this logo transformation is directly above. Image from: <http://www.poconomodern.com/>

second highest pick, a combination, was not far behind with 24.4%. Two participants specifically noted that the name and description of the logo is what caught their attention. The sole characteristic that was altered for this logo was symbol. 74.4% of participants chose the correct answer from the mix of logos with all other choices coming in at 11.0% and below. Although the majority of participants guessed the correct

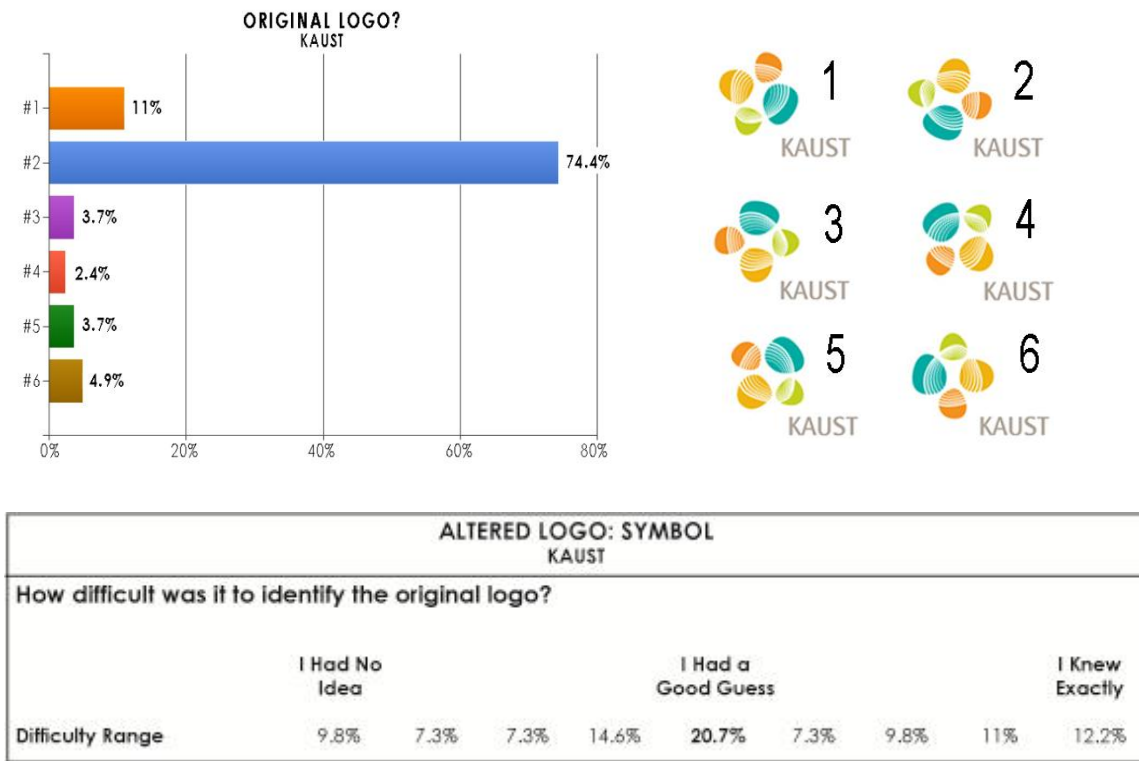
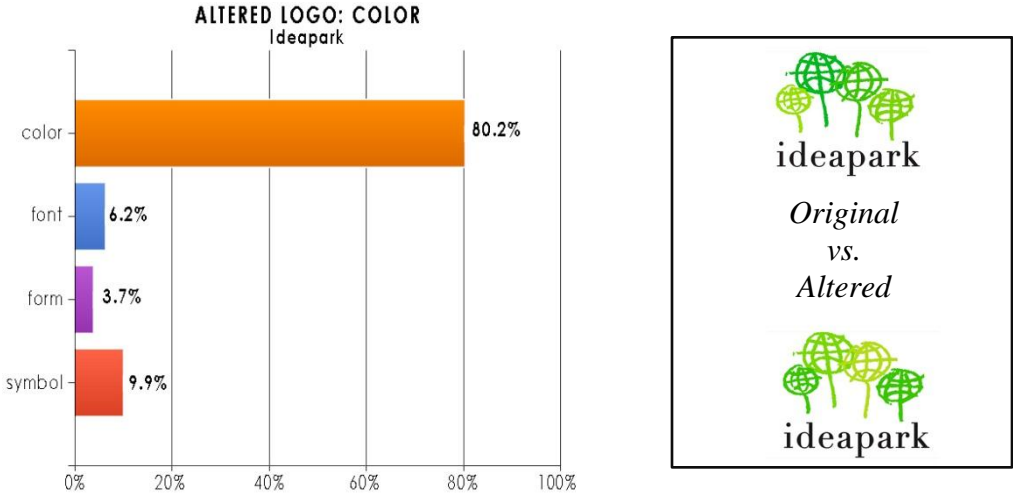


Figure 9: “KAUST” logo results. The bar graph shows the distribution of responses for which logos participants thought was the original. The image used in the survey is to the right of this bar graph to relate to the numbers on the left side of the bar graph. The table shows the various responses towards the degree of difficulty. Image from: <http://www.kaust.edu.sa/>

answer, I believe this was a successful logo alteration due to distribution of responses for the recognition level, which can be seen above in Figure 9.

The fifth logo that participants were introduced to was Ideapark. Symbol was once again chosen as the most defining characteristic of this logo (61.7%). However, a combination of choices came in second place with 23.5% of participants’ votes. The first alteration of this logo dealt with color, and more specifically, the various shades of color. Although

80.2% of participants answered correctly, there were still 19.8% that answered incorrectly. I would consider this another successful logo alteration because of the distribution of responses for the recognition and subtlety levels. A mere 23.5% of participants knew exactly what was changed, and only 28.4% thought the transformation was kind of subtle. These specific results can be seen below in Figure 10. Although the symbol alteration received the second highest percent of correct answers, it was also the



How subtle were the differences to the logo?									
Degree of Subtlety	Very Subtle				Kind of Subtle			Not Subtle at All	
	8.6%	13.6%	13.6%	6.2%	28.4%	3.7%	4.9%	9.9%	11.1%

Figure 10: “Ideapark” logo results. The top bar graph shows the large number of correct responses for what participants thought was altered. The original logo is compared with the altered one on the right. A table depicting the distribution of responses for the subtlety level of this logo is directly above. Image from: <http://www.ideapark.fi/>

easiest recognizable change and the least subtle. I would not characterize this as a successful logo alteration. The majority of participants knew they were exactly right on the form alteration even though the change was not subtle at all. The font alteration was a little more varied with 34.6% of participants knowing they were exactly right and 17.3% having a good guess. There was also a wide distribution of answers on the subtlety level, revealing that this alteration was semi-successful.

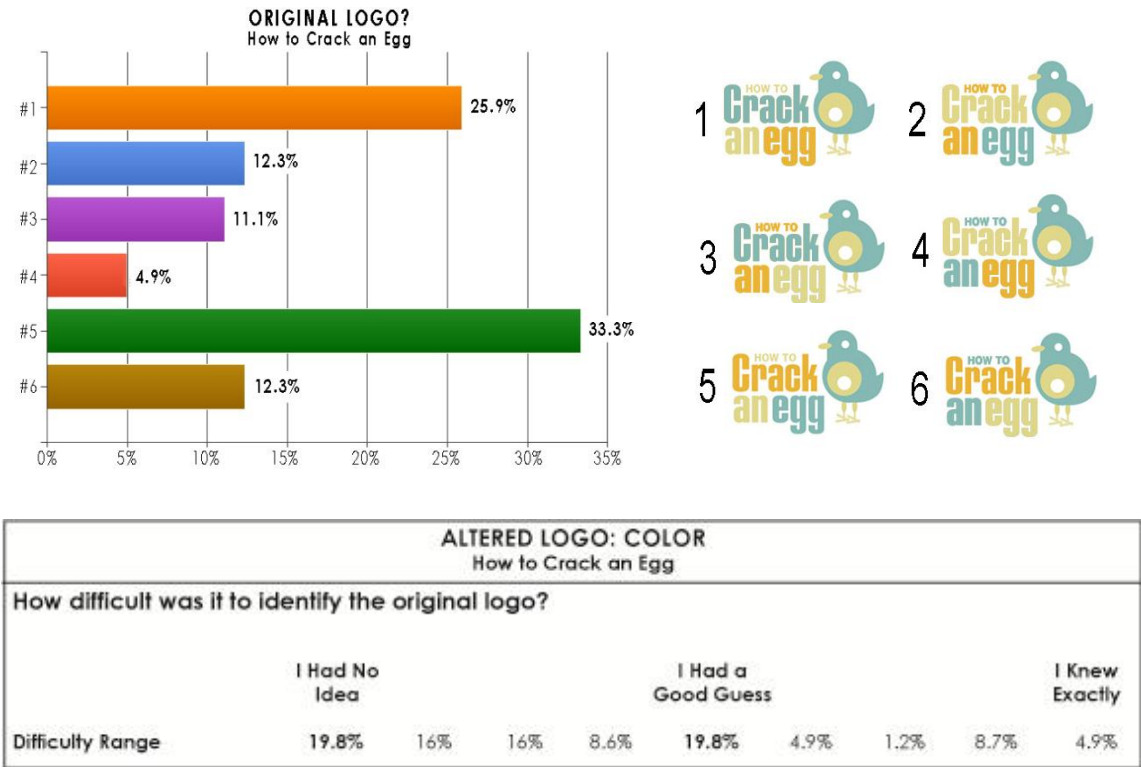
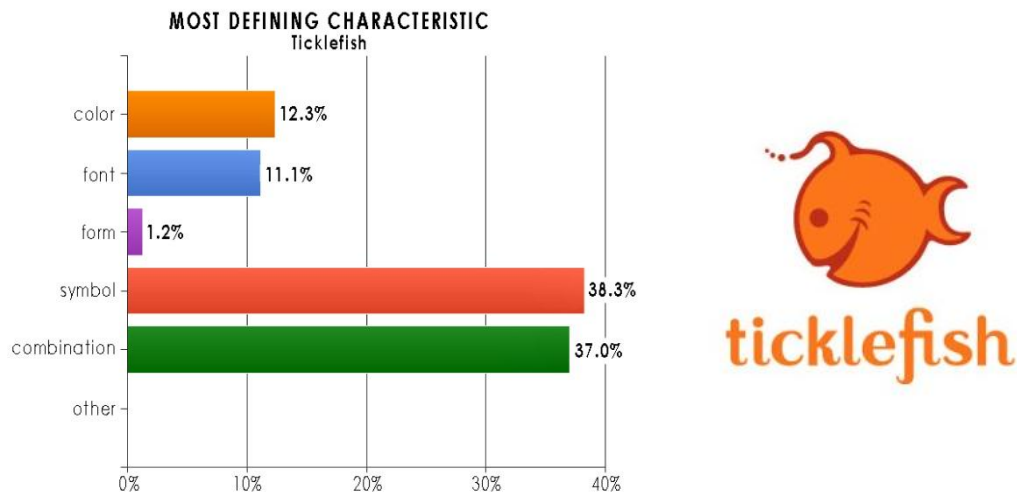


Figure 11: “How to Crack an Egg” logo results. The bar graph shows the distribution of responses for which logos participants thought was the original. The image used in the survey is to the right of this bar graph to relate to the numbers on the left side of the bar graph. The table shows the various responses towards the degree of difficulty. Image from: <http://www.howtocrackanegg.com/home/>

How to Crack an Egg was the sixth logo that participants saw in this survey. Results of the survey revealed that 42.0% of participants thought the combination of elements was the most important characteristic of the logo. Symbol came in second place with 30.9% participants' votes while all others were split between the remaining four choices. Three participants specifically noted that the name, phrase, and symbol immediately caught their attention. The only characteristic that was altered for this logo was color. Only 33.3% of participants chose the correct answer from the mix of logos with all other choices very close in rank. This most closely matches the degree of recognition with all participants being evenly distributed over the scale. It is also important to point out that this is where the first and only tie occurred in the results of the survey – 19.8% of participants had no idea which logo was correct, while another 19.8% had a good guess. These results can be seen on the previous page in Figure 11. I would consider this one of the most successful logo alterations due to the varied responses from participants.

The seventh and final logo participants were introduced to was Ticklefish. Although the majority of participants (38.3%) chose symbol as the most defining characteristic, a combination of elements was very close behind with 37.0% of participants' votes. This can be seen on the following page in Figure 12. The sole characteristic that was altered for this logo was font. 87.7% of participants chose the correct answer from the mix of logos with 23.5% knowing they were exactly right and 18.5% having a good guess.



*Figure 12: “Ticklefish” logo results. The bar graph shows the distribution of responses for what participants thought the most defining characteristic was. The image on the right is the original logo. Image from: <http://www.yiustudio.com/portfolio/ticklefish/index.html>*

The last question of the survey dealing with logos was an ultimate memory game, which included all the logos participants had seen on this survey. The four highest votes were Ideapark with 97.5%, A-Town with 86.4%, Ticklefish with 82.7%, and KAUST with 81.3%. The only one of these that was an altered version of the original logo was Ticklefish, which was a font change. The second highest score for altered logos was Better ATM Services, symbol change, with 76.3%. For both of these altered logos, participants felt they had a good idea of what was changed. An interesting fact should be noted: the two altered logos that participants remember the best were the first and last logos participants saw in the survey. I also did not expect that participants would find the logos that were altered several different ways easier to identify at the very end. The two

highest ranking logos, Ideapark and A-Town, were altered four different ways (symbol, color, form, and font). A chart of these results is depicted below in Figure 13.



ALTERED LOGO: SYMBOL Better ATM Services		
Decide which of the above logos are originals and which are altered ones. Even if you have no idea, please select your best guess.		
	Original	Altered
Better ATM Services	23.8%	76.3%
KAUST	81.3%	18.8%
Ideapark	97.5%	2.5%
How to Crack an Egg	35.8%	64.2%
Ticklefish	17.3%	82.7%
A-Town	86.4%	13.6%
Pocono Modern	46.9%	53.1%

Figure 13: Ultimate memory results. The table directly above shows the percentage of participants that remembered each of the logos as original or altered. The logos shown for this question are depicted above the chart. Images cited previously.



## Questions and comments

The final question of the survey asked participants to question or comment on anything about the survey they had just taken. I want to include some of these in my results because I believe they are important to take note of because some of them are things I would like to address. The quoted question or comment is italicized and in quotation marks, followed by my personal comments.

*“It was really hard to notice the color differences between the symbols.”* It is always hard to alter logos with the same degree of subtlety. This comment shows that the color alterations were quite successful, at least to this one person.

*“This was fun. It shows that we really don’t memorize what we have seen.”* This comment brings me back to the importance of a well-designed identity. Mark Gobe stated that a well-designed identity is unforgettable and emotionally charged, much like the Apple logo. It has vision, visualization, and emotional connection, which has been successfully conveyed to the world.

*“Noting that I am red/green color blind – the color differences sometimes escape my attention!”* Color-blindness is something I definitely should have considered when altering the colors of logos. My goal was to make them very subtle; however, this is not entirely fair for people who are color-blind. I believe this is also something that should

be considered when designing a logo. The shades and tones of colors really do make a difference.

*“I wonder why you didn't randomly select your participants on your own rather than going through a third party. In any case, all good fortune to you!”* I selected participants that I knew would take my survey. There are only so many people I know of various ages, ethnicities, and genders. Therefore, I asked some of them to pass the survey on to others that would take it. This was the only way available to me of diversifying the results.

*“I loved all the logos! Did you design them yourself?”* No, I did not design these logos. Although that would have fully clarified that none of the participants had seen the logo before, I simply did not have the time to do so. After scouring the internet, I believe I found logos that none, if not most, of the participants had never seen before.

## CHAPTER IV

### LOGO DESIGN

#### **List of characteristics**

After an intense analysis of the survey results, I created a list of characteristics that nonprofit organizations can use as a guide when designing a memorable logo.

The first characteristic is *symbol*. It needs to be bold and easily recognizable. The symbol should set the logo apart, such as having a 3-dimensional look to it. A great idea for a symbol is to represent something in an abstract way. This gives it personality and originality.

The second characteristic is *detail*. It should not have small, intricate details. Instead, use bold, simple details to make the logo really stand out. Think about the typeface being used, symbolism of a word or image, and the meaning of the name. One must also work with everything as one unit. The form and how pieces of a logo are arranged is highly important. All these details make a huge impact in the realm of design.

The third characteristic is *color*. It is very important to have a unique color palette for your company or organization – this gives it individuality. Take into consideration your audience and what kinds of people will see your logo most. For instance, a color scheme for kids is completely different than a color scheme for business, professional adults.

One should also use no more than two colors. While some logos benefit from multiple colors, it is a safe option to stick with one or two.

The fourth characteristic is *simplicity*. Never use an actual photograph in a logo, but rather simple vector art that can be easily manipulated. Our eyes seek a unified, whole composition, which is known as the Gestalt Principle – we naturally look for simple, easy relationships among parts of a logo. A logo should also be clean and uncluttered.

The fifth and final characteristic is *versatility*. A successful logo is versatile and can be used in a variety of ways. It needs to be able to fit on different medias as well. A logo should have the ability to be scaled to any size without losing the look of it.

### **Nonprofit logo design**

The list of characteristics was then applied to the design of a logo for a nonprofit organization. Ripple Africa is a charity based out of the United Kingdom that does work throughout Africa. I contacted their representative and communicated with them back and forth about what they wanted their identity to represent. They wanted a logo that did not look like a large, corporate logo, but one that had a grassroots feel and look to it. The organization also expressed that they wanted to use an African-inspired color scheme so that it would relate more to the people of Africa. All this information was taken into consideration when designing a logo for them. After several various ideas and renditions, I finally tweaked a logo that the organization was very happy with. Not only

did I satisfy the client, but I also held on to the list of characteristics for designing a memorable logo.

The symbol I created can be seen on the next page in Figure 14. It is bold and highly original. I combined the first letters of the words “ripple” and “Africa” in a unique way. It is very simple and definitely stands out. It was designed to be an abstract representation of a tree and a water drop creating a ripple. This reflects one of the organizations top priorities of aiding the country in sustainable practices in regards to the earth. The typeface meets the grassroots look the client asked for, while separating itself of other logos. It only uses two colors, each of which are very distinct. The logo is simple and uncluttered – pure vector art. Lastly, it is versatile and can be used in several ways. The client can use just the symbol, or just the name, or both.

I believe this research project was a success. I was able to clearly define a list of characteristics to adhere to when designing a memorable logo. In addition to this valuable information, I gave back to others using my graphic design skill set. A nonprofit organization now has a logo that is unique and inspiring. I hope Ripple Africa will make an even greater impact in the world with their newly-designed logo.



*Figure 14: Ripple Africa logo. The logo was designed for the UK based nonprofit organization Ripple Africa. A prominent symbol, typeface detail, color palette, simplistic quality, and versatile ability make this an easily memorable. For more information on Ripple Africa, please visit their website: <http://www.rippleafrica.org/>*

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Analysis**

The overall results of this survey did not reveal as much as I had hoped they would. My original purpose in using logos with a symbol and a name was so that I could better test my hypothesis that symbol was the most defining characteristic. However, it would have been interesting to see how well participants remembered logos that only had a symbol or a name and not both. If I had included different types of logos, this might have been a better test of memory. In a nutshell, I was trying to test Stephen Bleicher's idea that I mentioned in Chapter Two: "when companies are successful, they no longer need to have their names in their logo-the shape and color are all that are required" (Bleicher, 2005).

I also could have tested participants' memory with various surveys that were separated by a few days. As participants worked through the survey, they began to realize that they need to pay closer attention to every aspect of the logo. Therefore, by the end of the survey, participants were training themselves to remember the images they saw on the previous page. More than one survey would have required more participation by survey-takers, but it could have produced more reliable results.

It is also important to point out the subtlety levels of my logo alterations. I tried to alter them all with the same degree of subtlety, but this proved quite hard to do. Another way of testing the difficulty level of recognizing logos would have been to include a timer on each question. A running clock that participants were not aware of could have been a very effective tool for revealing how hard it was to recognize subtle changes to logos. Another type of survey could have measured the mood of participants when introduced to particular logos. This is definitely something that should be taken into consideration when designing a logo and could have helped me create my final list of design characteristics. Mark Gobe describes the importance of logo personality like this: “a logo without ‘heart’ is like a person without ‘heart’: cold, uninteresting, a robot” (Gobe, 2001).

### **Summary**

As you can recall from Chapter I, my plan was to survey as many participants as possible to determine the most defining characteristics of a memorable logos. Although I’m realizing there are several improvements that could have been made to my research methods to achieve results with a higher degree of validity, the survey I used still produced the answer to my original hypothesis that I had hoped for. The most defining characteristic for six of the seven logos shown to participants was symbol. Although a combination of elements was the second most defining characteristic, the next single aspect after symbol was form – the arrangement of symbol and text. I had expected to find color as one of the top two important aspects of a logo; however my survey revealed



otherwise. This information opened a new way of looking at logos. While before I concentrated strictly on the symbol, participants identified that a combination of elements was extremely important as well. This shows that the unity of elements is a key ingredient for a memorable logo. It also shows that an identity cannot be put together in just a few minutes. It requires plenty of time to tweak the various elements that go into the design of a logo. Joe Duffy stated that “brands, like people need to build relationships, to elicit emotions, engage in dialog, have a personality, a voice and a language” (Duffy, 2005).

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