Financial Institutions Branding

Touraj Saberivand

Design Strategist

Financial Institutions Branding

Touraj Saberivand   Design Strategist

Financial and monetary systems designer

Although the proverb "people take everything at face value" might be a sarcastic attack on people, it has a logic in its core that worth contemplation. This proverb might be in line with the empirical philosophy. Whether we empathy the empirical philosophers or not, one cannot negate the effects images would have on our conception.

People's conception (idea) of a brand presupposes its external appearance, its behavior, and images. It is much likely that the target community is firstly encountered with an image of the brand. Once the target community approves a brand's image, it approaches the brand more curiously in order to put it to the test. Obviously, a brand that does not "seem" to be trustable from afar is not a good candidate for such examinations by people. Whenever an audience who seeks a modern company finds a company that sounds modern, they would take a step forward to check its modernity level. However, a company that doesn't seem to be modern would not even have the chance of being examined. The present article doesn't aim at studying the "why"; in fact, it tries to discuss the "how" in context. Prior to this discussion, a unified definition of the concept of the logo seems to be necessary.

What does a logo imply?

The first commercial logo can be traced to the country's industrial period when people were not literate enough. So they were unable to distinguish between different types of commercial products based on the producers' names. Then, the producers started using simple signs to help people distinguish between different products –for example, shoes with a tick sign were different from shoes with a puma sign. Although year after year, people became more educated, the producers did not stop using their logos. Nowadays, logos imply something more than signs and emblems.

Regardless of all the social critiques, logo's importance cannot be undermined whether we talk about a left-wing company or a radical right-wing. In fact, all companies, from corporate fraud to voluntary or non-beneficiary institutions, need logos.

If a company is named after an individual's name, then the logo must be an image of the individual's face. A company's logo plays the role of one's face in giving the audience some information about its referent. But this information is not necessarily a meaningful sentence. That is to say, the logos are not designed to tell the audience such sentences like "we protect your money, we are customer-friendly, we are the best, and we are the first, and so on". In fact, the logos must imply the character of a company, just like people's face that doesn't imply anything about their jobs. In other words, when we first meet someone, we can infer some personality traits in them; for instance, we can see

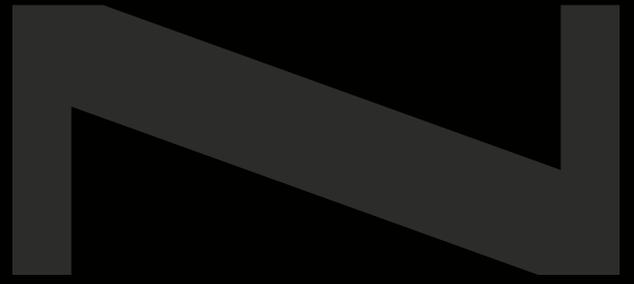whether they are moody, humorous, and modern, etc... .

There are numerous companies like Banks that have based their logo designs on nonsense. More than half of the banks have the same idea: protecting a coin. Of course, it's not the bank's fault. In fact, one should put the blame on the academies where the students are still taught to follow the obsolete design. Also, there are some logos for some other banks whose forms and content are hard to define and infer. "Simplicity" is not a perfect answer, i.e. it is by no means acceptable that the simpler a logo is, the more remarkable it would be. However, we don't mean that simplicity is not essential, but the point is we should search for simplicity in specific dimensions. In other words, simplicity in the concept is much more important than simplicity in the image. This "simplicity in conception" is the first criterion to be used to examine the rightness of a logo. This is the very story about the famous logos universally known such as "the bitten apple" designed by Rob Janoff for Apple, the yellow rectangle that Sagi Haviv has designed for National Geographic, or the windows Paula Scher has created for Microsoft Windows.

The importance of logo

Logos must be distinguishable, not for the logos' sake, but for an important concept in the commercial world called Brand Awareness. Brand Awareness implies the cast of a society who are aware of that brand. To improve Brand Awareness, different communicative steps are required. However, the major role a logo plays is to increase the degree of this BrandAwareness.

In other words, a logo would help an audience to recall a brand once they saw it. In a general terms, the aim of logo designing is to help the community to either recognize or recall a brand. Therefore, once a logo can stick in the audience's mind, the audience can imagine and explain it much easily. That is to say, the logo is working in line with brand awareness.

For example, consider that you have forgotten the name of a car. You can tell someone: "I mean the car whose logo was two upward arrows." No matter why Citroen would use two upward arrows as a logo, they can easily understand you. Basically, any logo that has such features is a perfect logo. For sure this is not the only criteria, but it can be the first. The other criteria would be discussed in other articles.

VXND

World Class Designs