

# The Structural Review of the Variety of Logos and Hints about It

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## **Abstract**

*Seeing and getting a sense are the natural human abilities and logo designing deals with both more or less. A visual sense transmits by the meaning and the composition status and by use of visual elements and visual techniques, numerous factors and forces involved in this transition also. Human always have wanted to collect all visual signs as simple as possible. In fact, the feature comes with a picture with the way of its perception by the viewer comprises a total integrity and entire of a design. It is remarkable to investigate the position of the logo and how to apply it in daily life of human. Hence, this article has attempted to introduce a variety of logos and investigate the structure and characteristics of each in order to acquire their considerable notes with an emphasis on visual values and to evaluate and analyze famous logos by some examples. The research method used in this paper was analytical-descriptive based on library resources. The study made it also possible to access to visual differences and similarities.*

**Keywords:** Logo, Symbol, Logotype, Monogram, Brand.

## **Introduction**

The use of symbols progresses from the beginning of civilization and the history of signs and symbols begins with the roots of human expression. Throughout history, the symbol has used as a tool for communication. Thousands of years, humans carved simple signs on the stone, bone or skin of animals that were hunted to communicate with each other. These symbols were pictures of things they saw around them or indicated the places and events of that time. Gradually, many of these signs were become figurative symbols. Human was able to communicate with his fellows through these symbolic signs so voluntary. Today, human have to use signs and symbols many more than the last human.

The Industrial Revolution that led the Western countries from the agricultural society to an industrial society in 18th and 19th century mutated the photography and print of advertising industry by linking typography

and photography together. The effect of this was that books did not use the old formed writings and decorative and bold fonts were used widely. Art was changed and its approach developed from its primary forms to the introduction of various products. Business firms developed with the help of art, and were become trade brands. Creators of art in visual arts and lithography industry invented a new artistic method. Children books, valid newspapers and even the passage of time turned their visual and artistic style into masterpieces in the public eye. Literacy was expanded more among people by reducing the costs of printing and artistic styles were also changed. Art movement in the late 19th century was a part of response to the increasing need for new arts. On those days, people's interest in art and the quality made the artists and companies to take action in increasing their credibility with the people by designing a variety of signs and logos with more interest and work hard. Around the 1950s, modernism came in Europe also and the commercial and international movement was born elsewhere by following the principles of the United States. Simplicity in design and lack of ambiguity in the concept were principles that modernism had exposed to the society as artistic characteristics. Now independence of the art work and form is a powerful tool for a new generation of designers. Modern logos are successful in widespread television advertising and promotion in print and digital innovations added the success of these cases. According to what was expressed, the current study was for recognition and understanding of the structure and main properties of the logo. Also it tried to find an answer to the question of what are the similarities and differences between types of logos.

### **Methodology**

This study was based on analytical-descriptive method. As well, collecting data and information has been done in library. Therefore, not only the written sources were used, but also figurative sources have been used. In selection of samples, some cases have also elected that had some striking visual features and were related to the subject matter.

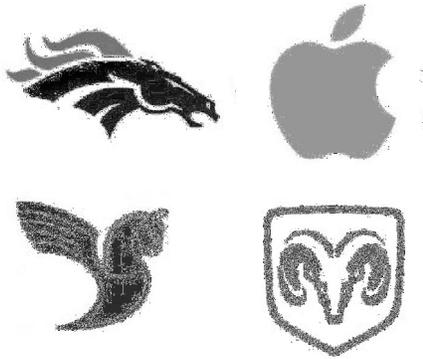
### **Logo types**

Many resources have focused on division of the logos. In this context, there are very diverse and different cases and it may consider several different types in terms of subject or concepts. The logo was addressed in this article visually and was divided into three main sections:

1. Imaginable -based logos (figurative logo)
2. Type-based logos (written logo)
3. Combination logos

#### **1. Imaginal-based logos (figurative logo)**

The general nature of these logos, as its name suggests, is based on the images and uses them in designing; in addition, it does not use any writing and text (Figure 1). Diversity in the use of images to convey messages and concepts allows designers more freely to think, idealize and choose their desired image or elements (Parvari-moghadam, 2015, 36).



**Figure 1. Imaginal-based logo (figurative logo)**

Imaginable-based logos can be placed in three different categories:

- Iconic-symbolic images
- Material-object images (based on simulation)
- Abstract images

### **Iconic-symbolic images**

Symbolism literally means symbol-orientation (Chilvers, 2004, 99). This term can be broadly applied to the art that doesn't represent recognizable objects and events and returns from any imitation of nature or simulation (Lynton, 2009, 500).

The terms of symbol is taken from the Greek word of Symbol. According to Jung, what we call symbol includes a term, a name or a picture that represents something familiar in everyday life and however in addition to its obvious meaning, it may also have specific implications (Jung, Human and its symbols, 23). He also believed that human apply symbolic forms and icons in inability of defining or understanding the concepts (Jung, Four archetypes, 1996).

In fact, a symbol is a sign that there is not objective similarity and proximity relation between the event and its meaning, but, it is a contractual relationship not natural and not spontaneous. Symbolic signs are also known as non-iconic signs and natural signs and contractual signs and situational signs (Mohsenian-rad, 2006, 192).

Generally, symbols can be studied at three levels:

- Conventional symbols (lack of intrinsic relationship between signifier and signified, like language)
- Random symbols (personal and individual symbols - no unity in understanding of the meanings)
- Global symbols (the signifier and signified intrinsic relationship like the sun and the fire with particular implications in all cultures) (Fromm, 1970).

Companies and institutions which need to show a wider concepts to their audiences with simple expression in their logo design use symbolic images in designing, these images transfer the overall intentions or purposes in the form of a simple image, therefore the use of these logos is common (Figure 2). To get to a symbol or token by abstracting a picture, it is necessary to simplify that much and in fact, all details must be removed as much as it can no longer simplify. In general, it can be deduced from the token that it should not contain too much detail, but in any case, qualities of a real phenomenon can be registered on it partly.



**Figure 2. Iconic-symbolic images**

Whatever the symbol or token is more abstract, training it to the public is also vital. For example, symbols of the holiday's marks in Christian countries are such tokens that children learn even before they go to high school. Big business institutions that are fully aware about the effectiveness of advertising in society and note it gradually have had a tendency to prepare symbols as trademarks to identify their own institutions with proportionality with the type of their activity. In summary, symbols are considered as very good means of communication and if this saying would be true that "a picture is worth a thousand words", a symbol or token is worth a thousand images (Donis, 2006, 112).

### **Material-object images (based on simulation)**

Simulation will be done by recording environmental observations and what are seen and known in experiences. In fact, it is the image that is very similar to a material object. It is the first fact and the most important visual experience. A bird can be recognized through the general shape and contours and its important details. But when aiming a precise representation of a bird, the general category of bird approaches to a particular type of bird and now, it is necessary to know the finer details such as the ratio of body, size and how to move them to distinguish it from other birds. To be even more accurate to visualize a special Canary, knowing more and finer details are needed, because the image of that Canary must be so accurate that its differences with the other Canaries would be evident. As a result in the simulation or representation of the phenomenon, whatever going closer from the overall to the specific, details and visual news can be achieved by experience of direct observation.

Most similar form to a real bird is a photographic image after a three-dimensional model or a realistic statue. Photographic image is not dissimilar to the eye and the brain of the mankind and mimics a real bird in the environment in a similar extent. That's why this type of images is called realistic. It should be noted that any direct visual experience from photographic images to impressionistic designs, are subjective to the individual mental interpretations somewhat. All concepts at all levels are always prone to subjective interpretations from the concept of "I see a bird" to "I see the flying" and interpretations of each of us is unique.

### **Abstract images**

In fact, action of abstracting an image is minimalism or refines it, meaning that removing multiple visual elements of the image and maintenance of the most important and most sensible aspects of it. For example, if the objective is to show the movement of bird, its steady details will be ignored and details exists so that the viewer can recognize the shape of a bird and understand how to move the more importantly. Removing the details travels two different ways from here; firstly abstracting to achieve a symbol or token to with a special meaning that can be adapted either by the empirical facts or is completely arbitrary and crediting; secondly, pure abstracting in which the image simplifies to its initial structural elements and nothing remains in the picture that is like as the external reality. Whatever the form is more abstract; its charism will be more direct and more obvious (Ibid, 105-109).

In an abstract image, unlike a token or symbol, there is no requirement for a particular external meaning. Simplifying what is seen to remain just the basic elements is the same practice of abstracting image and its importance for understanding and making visual messages is more frequently. Whatever the simulation in visual news is more, materials derived from it are more specific and thus more limited and whatever it is more abstract, the content will be broader and more general (Figure 3). The abstracting is a kind of streamline in order to get deeper and more refined meanings (ibid, 112).



**Figure 3. Abstract logos**

Abstraction is a dynamic process and it can be tested easily and freely again. It is not surprising that many artists have a greater interest towards this pure art type. However, paying attention to the empirical and free designs to achieve the perfect visual solution is as the requirements of every artist and designer.

Abstract forms may be allegorical, symbolic and based on patterns, abstract logos on the basis of initial forms are of the most common forms of the logo among institutions, firms and cultural and commercial companies in national and international level. Most of them are created based on repetition, symmetry, creating rhythm and movement, resizing and rotation of the forms.

## **2. Type-based logos (written logo)**

The general nature of these logos is based on the writing and takes advantage of it; it does not use of the image in its design as well. Many companies and large institutions use such designing in their logos to provide and communicate with their audience. One feature of this design is that it does not require additional clarification and re-writing the company name and combination of logo with other elements and transfers their names in a simple way. Type-based logos are twofold:

- Logotype
- Monogram

### **Logotype**

It is a creation of new state and type in designing the font of the name of institution or company. In fact, designing the certain desired word specific and different from one font is logotype. In scientific and material assessment of a logotype, it should be noted that readability is subordinate to beauty. In other words, beauty should be employed by readability in the design of a logotype (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Some kinds of logotype

Differences of some logotypes from the font are in the fact that logotype is unique and specific, and usually applies only for a particular institution or company and this is one of the main features of it, but a font has a universal application that can be used in many cases of visual communication. Sometimes the smallest change in a font can convert it into a logotype (Figure 5).

Font		Logotype
Backspace	>	Backspace
DELL	■	DELL

Figure 5. Difference of logotype and font

As the imagine logos are different from other logos, there is the same state in logotypes except that the image is replaced by the text. If there are a few hundred people in one place and we asked which one is typical among them, it can be hard to select and given a choice also does not have any special justification for it. Now suppose in the meantime that someone attracts everyone's attention with special movements, or speaks the words aloud in the silence of all others; not only that person will be recognized, but also he becomes different from the others because this movement. One could say that hundreds of people are same as the fonts and that one could be a logotype (Parvari-moghadam, 2015, 49).

**Monogram**

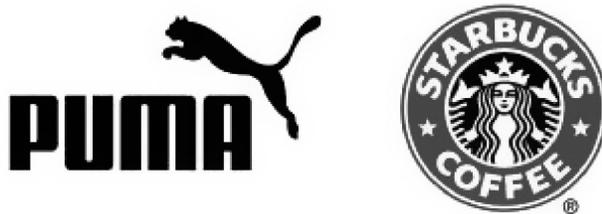
Monograms are usually made of the initials letter or letters of a name, a word or a sentence and have more prominent visual aspects than logotypes. More precisely, a logotype must be read at first sight, but a monogram is seen at the beginning and its constituent letters have revealed after a little pause and are understandable for the viewers. Sometimes known as a name of institution or organization, such as: "PSP" (for Play Station Portable) and "Sega" (for Service Games of Japan), or as zooming the first letter of the company name in like: "H" for the company "Honda" and sometimes composed of a combination of one or more characters with a number like the original name of "3M" that is Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing actually (Figure 6).



**Figure 6. Abbreviated names of famous companies**

### 3. Combination logos

As the name implies, it can be made by the combination of image and text and also by combining several types of logos (Figure 7). In this design, it is better to avoid combining of many elements or forms with each other, because it leads to remove the charm, beauty and good relationship with its audience as well as complexity in designing. It should be noted that the logo with a plan for the shape, form and color are also more successful than the other logos.



**Figure 7. Some combination logos**

Combination logos act better and louder in connection with the audience into the use of text and images. These logos are much spread and are most applied and popular among companies and institutions throughout the world. They are designed in a way that text and images can also be used separately.

### Redesign

Redesign is in fact the modification or designing again. Visually, a logo is the basic foundation of a brand of the company. Typically redesign occurs when companies and organizations are willing to change their brand and thereby change their logos. Redesign can recover and adjust the errors in the original logo and it has been possible to have a negative feedback for the company. This question should be arisen always that is the purpose of changing a logo as approaching to progress or to simply create a new and unique logo (Airey, 2010, Logo design love).

Logos that are designed for a job or name are defined as specific entity. When the market sees fundamental changes to the interest of the consumer and the audience, a wave of change in the company's logo makes in companies. Today, global brands have adapted to this wave of behavioral changes and redesign a logo has a special importance in the world now. Modification and redesign a logo can be more difficult and tedious than its initial construction and it must be careful when designing and remember that redesign a logo does

not mean the change of all the elements of the logo, but it is important that which element or elements of the logo needs to be changed (Figure 8).



**Figure 8. Corporate logo, KFC- Kentucky Fried Chicken**

### **The difference of logo with the brand**

Sometimes people know the word "brand" by mistake, as a synonym for the word 'logo' due to lack of knowledge and use this word in their conversation altogether. The brand has much broader concept than a logo. In fact, it can be said that it is an identity that includes ideas, values, beliefs, attitudes, standards, quality, goodwill and trust in business and a set of perceptions and expectations in the minds of consumers that usually successes through continued advertising, marketing, public relations and communications, as well as spending a lot of costs by the feedback from consumers and audience reaction and progressed over time as well. Brand can be represented visually and through words, fonts, slogans, images, color schemes and so on. In fact, the brand is a characteristic and distinguishing feature that can include the unique characteristics of a product, service or business activity. The logo can be the face and a visual representation of the brand of an institution or a company.

### **Conclusion**

Every action or measure taken to design the logo, simple or complex, requires creating sensible phenomenon, perhaps it should be said that anyone could do such a thing, however, it is not beautiful. But, there are criteria that should be applied in designing. The issue that the designer is facing here is to recognize the variety of logos and control over the means and the visual elements for design work. He must know to work with what device and how to accomplish it. Mastering of everything needs to know the basic tools and the way of implementation of that work. The way of choosing the elements of the plan and how to use them should be based on the direction and tendency that the content calls. So, the final form of a visual sign is based on analysis of its designer. The results of this research clarified the requirements of attention of researchers and designers to understand the importance of the logos.

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