

Graphic News

Both Corel Paint Shop Pro Photo with its X2, as predicted instead of XII, and Adobe with Photoshop Elements 6 have updated their *annuity* software. As before, no raw file advantage to PSP and Elements 6 improvements also look pretty boring, but you may find something in either you like.

DSLR News

Canon introduced 2 more 14-bit cameras, the 10mp 40D, and pro 21mp 1Ds MarkIII. Then 3 days later came Nikon with a 12mp semi-pro D300 and pro 12mp sports D3 with a Nikon-made full-frame sensor capable of ISO 6400 shots similar in noise to 400 speed film grain. Sony has also introduced a semi-pro 12mp Alpha camera and Pentax remains the DSLR price leader with its 6mp \$400 K100D with std. lens. There is more to read on this competition if you give me your email at the Graphics SIG.

The SIG about... Sigs!

This month we combined the Graphics and DigiCam SIGs. 'Twas a clever scheme indeed to get more attendance for the Graphics SIG. Nya-a-aaa. The captive audience all received an outline similar to this article for a brief discussion based on my years of designing logos, and updating my education at Del Mar in 2004. My question to then-new but now-retiring art teacher while I registered again, "Why didn't you teach me computer art the first time I was here [Del Mar]?" Eddie Lambert just smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

Logos I did for AdSack clients helped me get an advertising job at H-E-B. My future boss saw my resumé of logos in the YellowPages of her phonebook. Even if you have never done this, some ideas can pop into your head and graphics software can get you rolling. Read on.

Logo/Insignia/Sig Creation

We won't get into a *logomachy*, but whatever you call it, the artist's role when asked to create a logo is to bring the client's product or service to a particular market with a visual-verbal message. To do this successfully, he/she 1) combines art and communication skills with some homework. Find out what the business is about, ask the client what they envision, then look at similar business logos, clip art, and in the scrapbook of art you've collected for ideas. This research can get you started when you literally 'draw a blank'. You may wish to write your goal (Lo-goal?) on a sticky note by your work area to stay focused.

Next, you'll want to 2) make a couple dozen different tiny sketches, not for detail work or self-criticism, but to brainstorm every idea. For me, this touches off yet other ideas. As my recent Del Mar teacher, Jerry Cobarruvias, aka 'Mr. C' told us, "Think with a pencil or a mouse".

When you want to develop some of these thumbnails, *then* you can 3) make a detailed "Rough" of them. Finally, Mr C says to 4) take your favorite rough and make a good comprehensive finished product, or "Comp", to show your client. If he/she wants another idea or a change, that's fine, but don't let him/her run all over you wanting more than 3 comps altogether.

How much should you charge? Remember the million-dollar pair of wedges for an "N" logo that NBC used for a few weeks in the 80's? That is until a small affiliate complained they were

already using the same design costing \$100! Well, Office Depot partners with creative teams at Logoworks for designing logos in 3 days for \$300. We have all seen good and bad logos but naturally their in-store brochure examples are all good. I believe many can approach their quality with a few tips.

Design Tips

Many logos fall into icon-only (Apple) or letters-only (Sony) categories. Combinations abound like I♥NY, I♥ MY CC (recently in local news over copyright with NY) or Avery with 3 paperclips forming an “A” and their name underneath. Look at individual letters in names for graphic creativity. For instance, what letter in Clearwire looks most like a wire you could make clear? (The ‘i’). Which part of it can you leave solid to show it exists like an invisible man wearing only a cap? (the dot). Isn’t this, uh, transparent? Many logos today use the circle as a main element (CBS eye, Channel 3), or as a frame (Lynda.com). You can use negative space to advantage (AT&T globe, the arrow between ‘E’ and ‘x’ in FedEx).

Commercial art is often a reflection of our times, but a classic look will endure (Coca-Cola). Simplicity is often the key to most effective logos (Igloo, World Wildlife Fund), followed by a clever use of design elements to accomplish the goal of identifying the company to the target market. Ideally then, people should think of the client’s product or service when they see a logo.

Remember your client will no doubt need to use the final artwork reduced on business cards, letterheads, and other places where clear reproduction is required. So keep the lines thick when you can for that reason. Your design should also look good overall in solid black and white (KFC’s Colonel Sanders portrait).

Taglines

Finally, slogans or taglines are sometimes part of a logo’s package. They are extremely difficult to generate without a great deal of thought. I am impressed with puns (ya think?) or ‘paronomasia’ like Wells Fargo “The Next Stage”, and MD Anderson “Making Cancer History”. Such clever taglines are mostly used by the corporations that can afford think-tank-quality advertising agencies, but on occasion can be stumbled upon by mere mortals. Epson’s new doesn’t do anything for me, by the way.

Even if you don’t fetch the nearest pencil for designing the next million-dollar logo, please come join us the third Monday of every month for graphic fun and games at the Central Library in the Retama Room at 7 pm. You can at least share your puns and paronomasia ponderings.

Special thanks to Mr. C. for some of this material.
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