

We're surrounded

Logos bombard us. Think clothes labels, running shoes, TVs, and computers. From the moment we wake to the moment we sleep, they're an ever-present part of our daily routine.

The average American sees 16,000 advertisements, logos, and labels in a day, said Dharma Singh Khalsa, M.D., in his book *Brain Longevity*.¹

Don't believe it?

To illustrate the constant presence of logos in our lives, I spent the first few minutes of a typical working day photographing logos on the products I interact with, beginning with my morning alarm.



As I reach over to swipe off the alarm, there in front of me is the Google wordmark and the Chrome symbol. They're basically the first things I see after waking, even if I'm not paying much attention.

And so it begins.

The rest of the sequence tells its own little story, giving a very brief glimpse into my morning routine, which isn't to say that there weren't plenty of other logos around at the time—on book spines and magazines, kitchen appliances, other food products, toiletries, and labels on my clothes.

¹ Dharma Singh Khalsa, M.D. with Cameron Stauth. *Brain Longevity: The Breakthrough Medical Program That Improves Your Mind and Memory*. (New York: Grand Central Publishing. 1999.)





Try it yourself—maybe not as soon as you wake up. But what about now? Look around. How many logos can you see?

According to SINTEF, the largest independent research organization in Scandinavia, in 2013 a full 90 percent of the data in the world had been generated during the previous two years.² Because humanity is now producing such a vast amount of information, much of it visually branded, we're seeing logos that are increasingly similar to one another. This poses a problem for companies that are trying to differentiate themselves visually, but it also creates an opportunity for designers who are skilled enough to create iconic designs that stand above the crowd.

The Guild of Food Writers

By 300million, 2005



Take, for instance, 300million, which was one of the United Kingdom's top creative studios before closing in 2012. The team spent two weeks in 2005 creating this logo for The Guild of Food Writers, making use of negative space to show a spoon inside a pen nib.

"What you take away is just as important as what you put away," said Katie Morgan, who was senior design director at the time.

Seeing just one imaginative design like this can be a great source of inspiration for designers everywhere. We'll continue to produce excellent work throughout the rest of the book, as well as in Chapter 2.

² ScienceDaily, May 22, 2013, www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/05/

Chapter two

It's the stories we tell

Why is branding important? Because people often choose products based on their perceived value rather than their actual value.

Think about the celebrity who drives an Aston Martin instead of, say, a Skoda, which is continually ranked "car of the year" in many European countries, and delivers much better mileage at one-tenth of the price. Sure, Skoda is the logical choice, but it's Aston Martin's identity that conjures images of luxury and status, and that usually clinches the sale.

Aston Martin
Photo by Jon Large



With the right branding, businesses can increase their product's perceived value, establish relationships with their customers that span ages and borders, and nurture those relationships into a lifelong bond.

Of course, it always helps to have a good story to tell. Your job as a designer is to find that story, and tell it well.

The rest of this chapter shares a few examples of designers who hit the mark.

None genuine without this signature

Will Keith (W.K.) Kellogg invented wheat flakes and then corn flakes, spawning a breakfast cereal revolution and helping to develop an industry that has since become one of the most successful on the planet. But we might never have been familiar with the Kellogg name if W.K. hadn't also been such a smart business strategist.

Kellogg developed marketing campaigns that were years ahead of the competition. He used modern, four-color print advertising in magazines and on billboards at a time when other companies were still thinking in black and white. And to distinguish Kellogg's Corn Flakes from those manufactured by other cereal companies, he made sure all of his boxes bore the legend "Beware of Imitations. None Genuine Without This Signature, W.K. Kellogg."

Kellogg's signature
By W.K. Kellogg, 1906



Kellogg still uses the same trademark signature since 1906 on the front of every cereal box. The signature is a red, stylized version of the brand name.

This consistency built a level of trust and recognition with consumers through the years, helping to establish Kellogg as the world's leading cereal manufacturer.

A logoless company is a faceless man

For thousands of years, humans have needed and desired social identification. Think of the farmer who brands his cattle to mark his ownership, or the stonemason who chisels his trademark.

When you close your eyes and picture McDonald's, what do you see? Golden arches? For those products and services that have a strong brand identity, it's the identity that people often think of first rather than the product itself. Think of Microsoft, Apple, Ford, and Target. Chances are high that without even showing you the logos, you'd have a fairly good picture of how they look. Granted, a huge marketing budget is necessary to achieve the recognition rates of these organizations, but it's still always important to "put on your best face."

Iconic designer and Pentagram partner Paula Scher has been producing well-known design work for decades, including logos and identities for the likes of Citi, Microsoft Windows, The Public Theater, and the New York Philharmonic. You're probably just as familiar, if not more familiar, with the corresponding logos as you are with the products or services themselves.

Citi

By Paula Scher,
Pentagram

"Understand what the client does. Understand the audience. Be able to explain why you designed something a certain way and be prepared to inspire your client to a level beyond their expectations."
Paula Scher

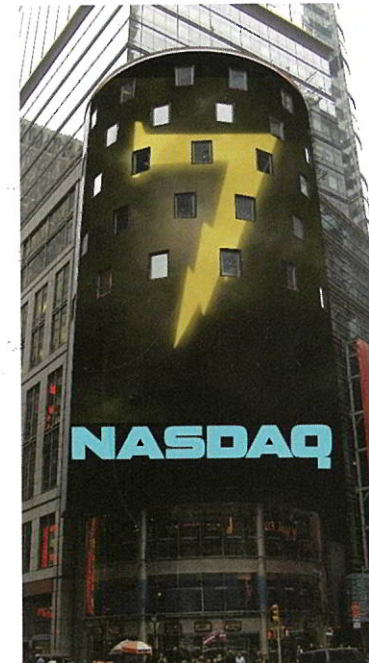


Pentagram was approached by Citigroup in spring of 1998 when the bank first announced its combination with insurance giant Travelers, then the largest merger in the world. Working with consultant Michael Wolff, Pentagram's recommendation was to unify the merged entity under a single, four-letter name—Citi—and to adopt a logo that would transform the Travelers' red umbrella into an arc over the letter "t." (Not only is that letter Travelers' initial, but it also is one of the few letters that looks like an umbrella handle.)

Harry Potter

By id29

Designer, art director:
Doug Bartow
Creative director:
Michael Fallone
Seen in Times Square,
New York



The recommendation was initially met with resistance as a corporate-wide solution, but five years after the launch, consultants Landor Associates conducted a brand identity analysis and concluded that the Citi logo had achieved such a level of awareness that it was, ultimately, the appropriate face of all its operations.

Seen by millions

By summer 2008, J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* book series had sold more than 400 million copies and was translated into 67 languages. So when New York design and creative firm id29 was chosen to create the campaign and associated identity elements for the seventh book, it was clear that its work would be seen by millions (or even billions).

"We came up with a distinctive campaign aesthetic based on a central typographic element that we could use across all different media, from printed posters and bookmarks to rich media and online applications," said Doug Bartow, design director and principal at id29.

Makes sense. Think about the traffic passing th

Time
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the bri
to rec
book r

The results were phenomenal, with *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* selling 8.3 million copies within the first 24 hours of its release, said

Only if the Queen agrees

Moon Brand, a branding and communications consultancy based in London, needed final approval from the Queen of England on this design for The Royal Parks.

"The leaves we chose to use in this logo are from indigenous British trees found in The Royal Parks," said Moon Brand director Richard Moon.

The Royal Parks

By Moon Brand, 1996

Designers:
Richard Moon,
Ceri Webber,
Andy Locke

The sketch shows just one of dozens of ideas Moon Brand rejected before presenting their preferred design.

"From the outset we wanted to represent the royal crown with leaves, and had tried to come up with other ideas that were as good but which stuck to the rules of the brief. But we found them all to be too trite, so we abandoned them and took the plunge with the logo we eventually submitted," Richard Moon

The whole contract, including manufacturing, installation, and maintenance of the maps and signs was a little in excess of £2 million, of which Moon Brand received about 10 percent.



THE
ROYAL
PARKS

THE
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PARKS

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PARKS

The logo tells the story of the parks using their own language—leaves—and deftly portrays the relationship between the park system and the British crown with one clever picture. This clarity helped the yearlong project through to completion, with deliverables including a new identity, as well as concepts for park maps, map casings, and wayfinding to be placed throughout each Royal Park.

Moon Brand was told that approval from the Queen can take months, but it came back within 24 hours.



Symbols transcend boundaries

To sell products internationally, your brand has to speak a lot of different languages. Fortunately, easy-to-identify symbols need no translation. Recognizable regardless of culture or language, symbols enable companies to cross language barriers, compete globally, and maintain brand consistency across a wide range of media.

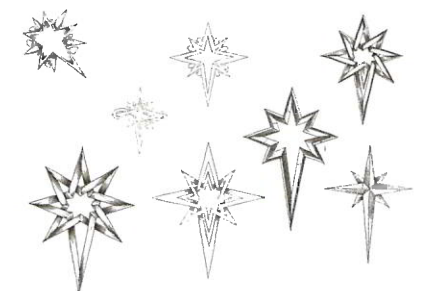
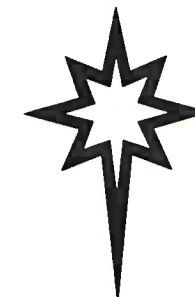
Take, for example, international branding and design studio Bunch. Its designers used an eight-pointed star inspired by the Star of Bethlehem to identify a new two-story club, Star of Bethnal Green (SoBG), which opened in the heart of Bethnal Green in London in 2008. The hardworking star symbol—a play on the name of the club and its owner, Rob Star—was used on everything from note cards to pint glasses.

The symbol had to be a star in some guise, said Bunch creative director Denis Kovac, so the design team began playing around with the traditional five-pointed star. All too soon they realized that it was too commonplace.

The Star of Bethnal Green

By Bunch, 2008,
updated in 2010

"We tend to showcase two to three different directions to clients before we decide on one, which we then elaborate," Denis Kovac



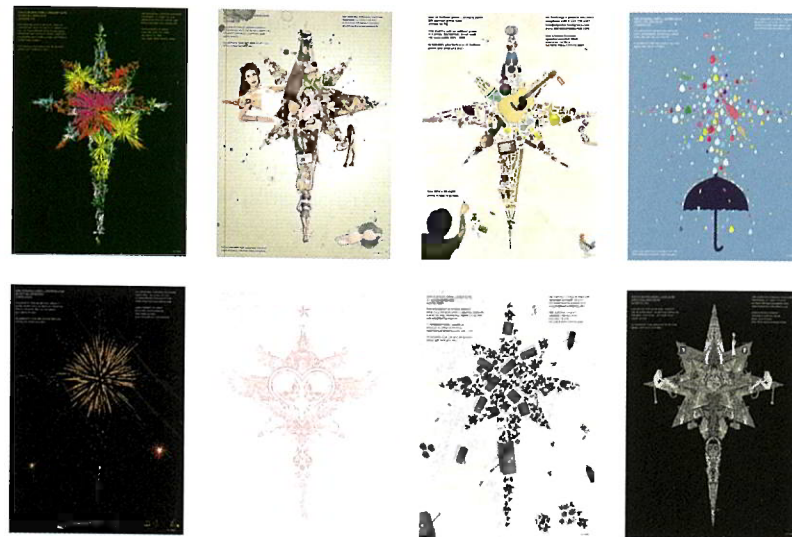
"We figured a five-pointed star would always be reminiscent of national flags, communism, and pagan rituals," said Denis. "Rob Star already had a large following through a popular club night, which brought to mind the expression 'follow the star.' He wanted the pub to be a shining beacon in Bethnal Green, attracting people from far and wide. The Star of Bethlehem with eight points and a long tail presented itself as a way forward."

While Denis and his team produced a lot of possible variations, it was a simple thick-outlined star that was chosen, not only because it was a great design, but also because it could be used as a template and altered to suit any application or theme.

Bunch used the versatile star symbol on bottles, food, DJ paraphernalia, and stationery. Inside the pub, pint glasses are etched with the simplest form of the star, and screen-printed wallpaper features the same design drawn by hand.

Bunch's project is a good lesson in versatility. When designing a brand identity, always ask yourself whether your logo can adapt to different media.

The long-tailed star was illustrated to create artwork that represented the corresponding month. This was applied for about a year with all of the illustration done in-house by Bunch.



Amanda Marsden
By Believe in, 2008,
refreshed in 2013

Identity design as part of our language

Believe in, a design studio in Exeter, England, created a wordmark and custom typeface for Amanda Marsden, a lifestyle salon and spa based in Devon, England. The designers extrapolated the first two letters from the design, which represent the client's initials and form the word "am," to create a contemporary monogram.

amanda
marsden:

am:

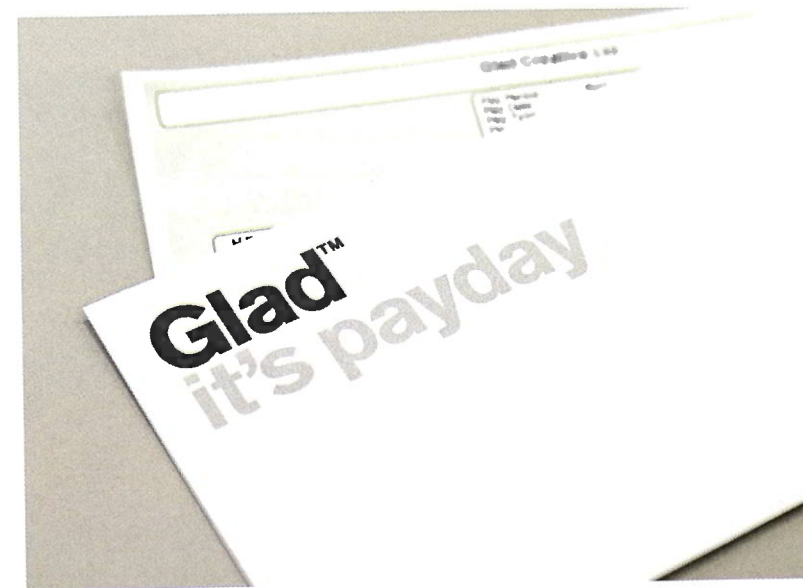
The word was then integrated into the various phrases used to promote Marsden's service, such as "am: beautiful," "am: relaxed," and the "am: gifted" card.



This flexible approach to brand naming is something Believe in employs to good effect for the studio's own visual identity.



Another studio with a flexible brand name is Glad, in Durham, England.



GladTM
rags

GladTM
rags

www.weareglad.com

**Keep
Baby
Clean!**

Along similar linguistic lines, in 2012 London-based johnson banks began working on an "active" identity for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust. "We suggested the charity should activate the 'is' in their name with a series of statements, effectively forcing it to always explain what it is, does, and why they are here," said johnson banks.

Not every brand name will suit the same language-centric idea, but keep it in mind, because it's one more tool to use when the time is right.

Cystic
Fibrosis killing
thousands and
carried in the
genes of millions
- help us search
for a cure

Cystic
Fibrosis
a fight we
must win

Cystic
Fibrosis
a sticky,
painful,
suffocating
condition

Cystic
Fibrosis cutting
lives in half

Cystic
Fibrosis
beatable

Cystic
Fibrosis
not going
to stop me

Cystic
Fibrosis
invisible.
But not
invincible

Cystic
Fibrosis the reason I run

Cystic
Fibrosis
worth a
minute of
your time

Cystic
Fibrosis
crying out
for a cure

Cystic
Fibrosis
a race we
must win

Cystic
Fibrosis why
we're having our
big cake bake



Our big cake bake is at:

On:

Time:

Contact:

cysticfibrosis.org.uk

Cystic
Fibrosis
beatable



cysticfibrosis.org.uk

Cystic
Fibrosis
killing
thousands
and carried
in the genes
of millions
- help us
search for
a cure

Cystic
Fibrosis
not going
to stop me



Cystic Fibrosis a life sentence

40

Around half of people with cystic fibrosis will not live to celebrate their 40th birthday

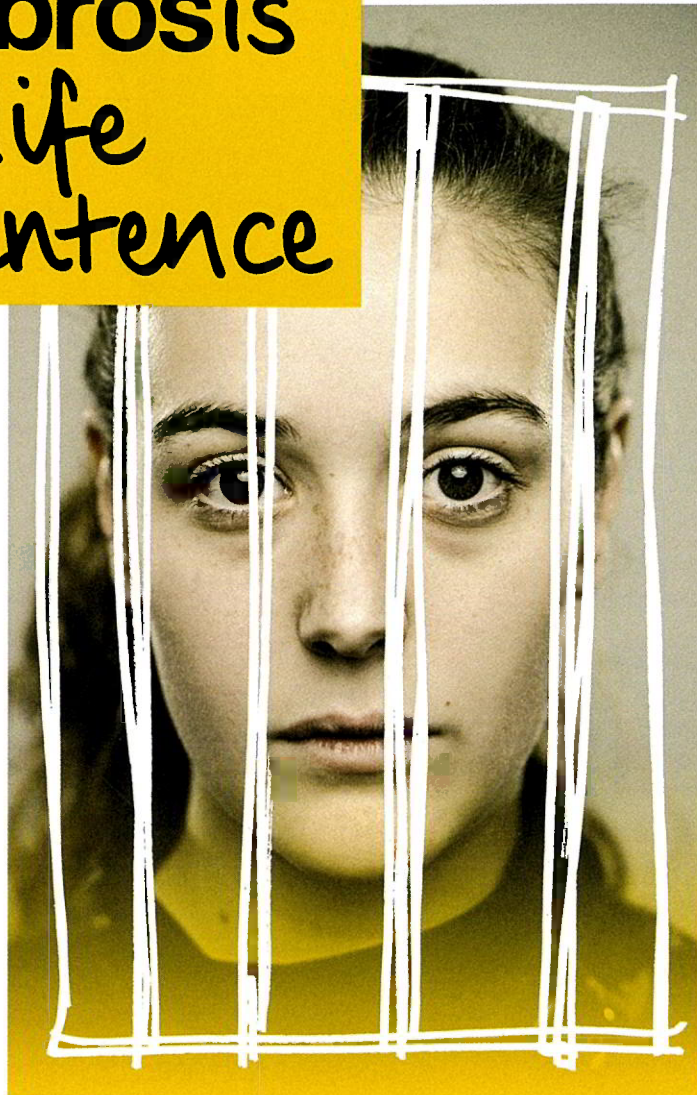
You can't catch cystic fibrosis – it's a genetic condition you're born with – and there's currently no cure.

More than two million people carry the faulty gene that causes cystic fibrosis, most without knowing it.

It's why we must develop better treatments and, ultimately, a cure. Because it is beatable.

Please help us.

cysticfibrosis.org.uk/donate



Rethinking the importance of brand identity

Whether it's fair or not, we often do judge books by their covers. And that's why the perceived value of a service or product is usually greater than the actual one. The same visual identity seen time and again builds trust, and trust keeps customers coming back for more. It's kind of like putting a face to a name—logos help people remember their experiences with companies.

Try pointing this out during initial discussions with your clients, as a way of driving home the importance of choosing you as their designer.