

The **art** of corporate identity

department



**Is your corporate
identity woven into
every aspect of your
current business
communications?**

The business case for investing in your corporate identity

CORPORATE IDENTITY IS IMPORTANT IN BUSINESS

The purpose of this book is to set out why it is important that you properly manage your corporate identity (name and logo). It is the main element of communication that instantly differentiates you from your competitors – it's as important as your own name is to you.

Was the name Virgin instrumental in getting noticed in it's early days? Can you imagine Nike without their iconic tick? Names and logos are important at every level of a company's evolution and we hope the following pages help outline why.

**If managed properly,
a great name and logo
will add significant
value to your company**

What value do you place on your current identity?

THIS AUDIT SHOULD HELP YOU ANSWER THIS QUESTION...

- › Do you think your company has a professional identity?
- › Has this ever been validated by what other's think?
- › What value do you place on having a professionally designed identity?
- › Do you have guidelines for it's use?
- › Is it used consistently throughout the company?
- › When was the design last changed ?
- › Do you think your identity reflects your brand?
- › Have you ever asked your staff what they think of it?
- › Within the market that you operate how recognisable do you think your identity is?
- › Do you think your identity design is as important as the name?
- › Do you think it would help your business if you had a new identity?

Understanding the three types of corporate identity –

GROUP

GROUP IDENTITY

This results in one over-riding identity that is used for all divisions, sub-companies, services and products that operate within the group. For example a group identity, comprising the name 'Archer Group' may have divisions that are called; Archer Engineering, Archer Marine Services and Archer Technologies. They may also have products called Archer Valves.

With a group approach to this type of identity there will be a strong link to the name and the graphic styling of all the Identities within the organisation. Some refer to this as being a monolithic identity.



**Group identities benefit
from having just one name
and logo to promote**

Understanding the three types of corporate identity –

ENDORSED

ENDORSED IDENTITY

In this instance separate divisions, companies, services and products within an organisation would have their own Identities designed specifically to their markets and not necessarily connected by name or style to the parent group. Such Identities however are often endorsed in some way by the group identity. Two examples being supporting copy that says 'Part of the Archer Group of companies' or 'An Archer Group product'.

**An endorsed approach
gives you the flexibility
to launch new companies
without any Group issues**

Understanding the three types of corporate identity –

BRANDED

BRANDED IDENTITY

This is very much a stand-alone identity that does not relate in any way to other services, products, group parentage, divisions or other companies. It is designed specifically for the target market and brand ambitions of the company. Most SME Identities fall into this category.



**A branded identity
is the most common
approach for SMEs**

How to develop a visually effective identity

BELLS AND WHISTLES? KEEP IT SIMPLE

Follow these simple steps to improve your identity programme or to inform what you want from your design agency...

- › **Don't be too literal with your approach.**
If you are involved in shipping don't have a ship in your logo!
- › **A purely typographic approach can be just as effective as using a graphic symbol.**
- › **Less is more – avoid too many elements.**
- › **Make sure it is legible at postage stamp size as well as 50m tall.**
- › **Make sure it works well in black and white as well as colour.**
- › **If it can be reversed (e.g. white out of black) then this is an added bonus.**
- › **Be careful with the amount of colour used.**
- › **Be careful with colours that are difficult to see e.g yellow on a white background.**
- › **Ensure typography is sympathetic to the brand.**
- › **Arrive at a solution that will work across all marketing collateral – from screen to print.**

Understanding the three types of names –

Descriptive

DESCRIPTIVE

Descriptive names describe the business of the company or the purpose of the product. These can be effective in attracting interest without having to rely on brand awareness which is why this approach tends to be adopted by small companies offering a service to the domestic market. 'Sure Roofing' or 'Highland Dress Hire' being two such examples.

You do of course get very large companies who use a descriptive approach 'British Airways' or 'Vodafone' but these elude to the service rather than spell it out in a literal manner.

Descriptive names make it clear what you do but can be difficult to build a distinctive brand around.

Understanding the three types of names – Experiential

EXPERIENTIAL

An Experiential name describes the personal experience or feeling that is associated with a product or service. This requires a more creative approach and can lead to very distinct and memorable brands. They offer a direct connection to something real, to a part of human experience.

An example being the web portal – Explorer

An experiential approach requires the name to relate to an experience or feeling that you want to be associated with your company service or product. If done correctly, this approach can rise above all other naming strategies because a powerful brand can be built from a strong name. A good example is the web portal – Explorer.

REMEMBER...

**It is important to know what
type of identity suits your
company model the best**

Understanding the three types of names –

Invented

INVENTED

Invented names are made-up words that are easy to pronounce, resemble English words and at the same time are unique. Since invented names are unique it makes it easy to register a company name, a trademark or find a vacant domain name. These type of names also avoid any perceived negative connotations and are often favoured by large corporations who operate on a global scale. This approach however, requires a brand building strategy to drive meaning into the name

A good example of this approach is FLYMO.



**Invented names require
a strong brand-building
strategy to drive meaning
into the name.**

Understanding the three types of names –

Evocative

EVOCATIVE

An evocative name can be the most powerful approach of all strategies. They evoke the positioning of the company rather than describing a function or direct experience and can be very influential in how the brand is developed. Companies such as 'Virgin' and 'Sky' both use evocative names that leave a very memorable impression on people who hear it for the first time.

How would you describe your existing company name?



If you wish to explore developing the name of your company but find it hard to arrive at the right words you should talk to a professional design agency.

How to manage your identity

WILL IT WORK FOR YOU?

- › **Make sure you have easy-to-understand identity guidelines for all staff and 3rd party users.**
- › **Discuss the importance of having your identity visible on all internal and external communications with all staff.**
- › **Avoid making changes after it has been launched.**
- › **Create easy accessibility of master files for all staff to use via servers, intranets and extranets.**
- › **Consider protecting it under copyright law.**
- › **Make someone responsible for ensuring everyone follows the identity guidelines.**
- › **Use an experienced and reputable design company for decisions on high profile application.**

Any marketing manager will tell you that ensuring the consistent use of an identity throughout the company can be a very challenging and thankless task!

What should you pay for a corporate identity?

A ONE-OFF INVESTMENT

Corporate identity charges are probably the most talked about area of design and certainly the most controversial. It can seem hard to comprehend why what appears to be a simple design exercise can cost some organisations so much money – especially projects such as the British Airways rebrand that inevitably end up in the news.

Whilst some of these identity programmes seem to involve unbelievable costs, it is worth taking into account that most of the reported costs are not the actual design element but the specifications and management of applying the identity across all areas of a global organisation.


Assuming you are not the chairman of an organisation the size of British Airways the good news is that for most companies the design, production, and management costs associated with a new identity programme tend to be in the thousands, not the tens or hundreds of thousands.

What you feel you should pay will be completely driven by the value you place on your identity and the trust you place with the company you commission to carry out the work. Think of it as being a one-off investment that will have an impact on your company over many years rather than a short-term action.

INTERESTED?

This book is one in a series of four that we have written and produced to help our clients arrive at the best approach for their marketing initiatives. We hope you found it informative and welcome any feedback.

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