

Iconic Brands: How Branding Reinforces Company Value

By Michael Geczi

Companies often spend years and exorbitant amounts of money trying to develop an iconic brand.

There are good reasons. While business success is obviously a great motivator, there are affiliated objectives as well: Effective branding helps with employee engagement, drives and supports messages, underlines your USP and highlights your differentiation.

According to [Forbes](#), “Brands are psychology and science brought together as a promise mark as opposed to a trademark ... Brands convey a uniform quality, credibility and experience.”

There are several well-documented journeys by now-global brands to build a memorable logo. Google co-founder Sergey Brin created the company’s first logo using a free image editing tool. And Apple got its start with a logo depicting Isaac Newton sitting under an apple tree before quickly adopting a much cleaner rainbow-striped fruit illustration with a “bite” taken out (which was intended to help distinguish it from a cherry). It took Microsoft four attempts to arrive at the iconic italicized typeface that lived on for 25 years before it was refreshed in 2012.

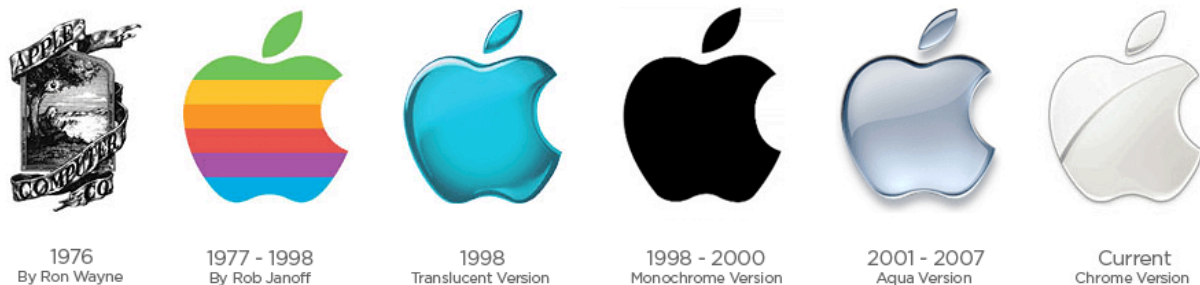


Image Credit: <http://inspirationfeed.com/inspiration/logo-inspiration/10-iconic-logo-redesigns-of-the-last-century/>

Long before Amazon extended its reach into grocery retail, or became the industry’s leading e-commerce platform for electronics, books, fashion and a plethora of

miscellaneous items, its initial logo included the tagline, “Earth’s biggest bookstore.” From 1998 onwards, Amazon’s logo featured the familiar (and smiling) A to Z arrow, highlighting the company’s ability to cater to any and all of its customers’ shopping needs.



Image Credit: <https://www.channeladvisor.com/blog/industry-trends/from-bookstore-to-superstore-the-evolution-of-amazon-com/>

Each of these companies experienced its own growth trajectory. However, the evolution of each of their brand identities lends itself today to the company’s instant recognition, credibility, valued products and user experience.

Here at Cast & Crew, we’ve thought a great deal recently about these types of branding issues. That’s because we are going through a transformation as a company, moving – in a measured way – from being a business services provider to becoming a company that is developing digital payroll-, accounting- and production-management software for the entertainment industry.

And, as we look ahead, we can’t help but look back and be thankful for our incredible four decades of history. Our company’s name is one that clients tell us is both memorable and descriptive, and we’re lucky to say it also is accompanied by a logo we believe is instantly recognizable in the industry. Yet, as we transform and evolve our brand, that image is also undergoing its own transformation.

Yes, we realize that our copper-colored filmstrip might be viewed by some as anachronistic for a company developing and delivering digital products. So, we brought the old and the new together (see below), and we recently incorporated a pixelated graphic component into the existing filmstrip.



Over the past year, we also selectively introduced a secondary product-specific logo, a pixelated plus sign. The first two products of our digital rollout – Start+ and Hours+ – are already being used by multiple clients on a number of productions. We have also included the plus sign, from time to time, when discussing our strategic digital product vision, which

will have us delivering similarly named “plus” and other products around the entertainment finance production lifecycle, from script to residuals.

There are additional interesting branding observations across the Cast & Crew family as a result of joining forces with two foremost companies in the entertainment field.

In 2016, we also acquired CAPS Payroll, whose name clearly is recognized as being a leader in its focus verticals: commercials, venues, music tours and live events. CAPS’ expertise in multiple vertical areas nicely fits with Cast & Crew’s existing film and television profile. Moreover, CAPS has been a leader in its own digitization efforts.

Final Draft, which we acquired in early 2016, is, of course, the leading screenwriting software company in the market. And its taglines, “It Starts With the Script,” “The Industry Standard” and “Just Add Words,” are memorable phrases. Those on-the-mark messages existed at Final Draft long before the acquisition, however, so it is especially noteworthy that they continue to work so well a year after we acquired the company.

“It Starts With the Script” is particularly important when we discuss our digital vision. And whether those scripts are being written at a Starbucks, in an office by a writing team or at home, the script is the starting point for the digitization efforts that are transforming our business.

But what’s exciting to us is that the screenwriting software that the writer used created more than just pages of script. That’s because it is the metadata behind the script that holds the promise. It’s what the script provides ... what it enables. Consider, when you break down the script, there’s critical data relating to scene locations, schedules, budgets, assets ... even metadata – data about the data! That metadata – and the creation of information – flows through the entertainment production finance lifecycle – and it will flow through every digital product we create.

All of this works, and we look forward to the best parts of each company’s past playing a critical role in refining our brand as we move into the future.

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Michael Geczi is Vice President of Marketing & Communications at Cast & Crew Entertainment Services. He is an editor, writer and communications specialist with more than 30 years’ experience in the private and public sector.