

Azzcat Design Blog Posts, Logo Design

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Logo Design: Brick and Mortar Reality (Part I)

October 26, 2009

What is the value of a logo? To the business owner who sees \$99 logo services all over the internet? Or the ‘undiscovered’ design student entering contests? What about the experienced professional designer?

Short answer? HA! There isn’t. The “value” of a logo depends on whom you ask.

And since this is my blog, I’m going to tell you my version of value.

The Good. The Bad. And the Ugly.

Good is when you get what you need at a fair price.

Bad is when you get something you don’t need—high or low priced—doesn’t matter. If the logo doesn’t work, it’s bad.

Ugly* is when you “think” you have a good deal, only to find out later, ummm...not so much.

*Ugly includes: reproduction issues, customer perception problems, copyright infringement lawsuits...stuff like that.

Today, I’m focusing on B.A.D.

My friend was in negotiations to open a new brick and mortar high-end eyewear store in one of the priciest malls in the state. He’d need the works: logo/business cards/collateral/signage/website/etc. and I was on tap for the projects. Cool!

Problem was, after back and forth delays (banks/mall/lawyers!) I was booked out with other client work when he was ready for logo design! And, with the mall requiring signage installed by opening, time was of the essence.

So he did what many business owners do—he tapped an online logo design service. One that promised LOTs of options, unlimited revisions, etc. (You know where this is going, don’t you?) ;—)

Now, I don't know what my friend paid this company—but that's irrelevant. Because no matter the amount, their logo comps are a bad value.

Why? They completely missed the boat.

Look back up a few paragraphs. See the line “a new brick and mortar high-end eyewear store in one of the priciest malls in the state”? Right there is the creative brief. Sure, it's bare bones, but it's chock full of info. Info such as:

1. We're selling glasses.
2. We're selling high end glasses.
3. We're paying a high end rent for the place where we sell high end glasses.
4. We're going to need to put up some high end signs on the building in this high end mall where we're paying high end rent to sell high end glasses.

Here's a sampling of what the online logo design company sent (not so high end!):



The first three above are the “eyeball comps”. Notice the stylized bulging “eyeball” in each—guess the word “EYE” in the name needs to be REINFORCED for stupid people! Wait...are we selling eyeballs or glasses????



Second set is the “...cross my heart, hope to die, STICK A NEEDLE in my EYE...” group. Again, I think we're selling glasses NOT laser surgery!



Third set is the druggie set: a) Star Trek eyeballs on drugs; b) Venn diagram eyeballs on drugs; c) “My Future's So Bright I Gotta Wear Shades”, but I'm on drugs and staring at my own nose!



And last, but not least, the Who, Who, Who? Eyeballs.

Only two of the above samples are about EYEWEAR rather than EYEBALLS. None use a distinctive or appropriate font. Really—they are beyond BAD and seriously delve into UGLY. Why? (Aside from customer ‘perception’ problems, that is!)

Because They Ignore the Reality of Brick and Mortar

They forget that:

- The logo for this store must exist as a three dimensional, halo lit, aluminum sign.
- It must exist on a brushed aluminum blade sign.
- It must work on fax pages.
- It must work in Word documents.
- It must work in small sizes.
- It might have to be embroidered on fabric.
- It might be etched into glass.
- And yes—it will eventually be on the internet, where anything is possible!

But First: It Will Exist in the Real World

PS...May 14, 2010

Just for fun, a couple more choice selections from that first bunch mentioned above:

B



- B) Will that be regular or premium?
- C) Jerry Garcia is alive and selling eyewear!

Enjoy!

C



Logo Triage and Emergency Art Direction (Part II)

October 26, 2009

Based on my last post, you know that the logo process wasn't going well for Eye Styles. Though I shared 11 of the other logo company's options, there were actually 14 pages of comps, each with 3 options, for a total of 42 logo comps. WOW!

Too bad volume doesn't equal value.

Cheap Logo Suppliers Don't Invest in Fonts!

One of my primary criticisms of the comps were the incredible lack of interesting fonts used in their comps: Avant Garde, Times Roman, Copperplate, Eurostyle, and my all-time fav: Helvetica. Hoo Ya! And the k e r n i n g! (Don't get me started!)

Anyway, after spending a couple of hours writing art direction comments, I figured I'd better offer some font options—because this logo company wasn't anywhere near on target. So, I fired up MyFonts and put together an extensive album of font possibilities, complete with design notations.

MyFonts has some cool search and visualizing features. I typed in style tags and browsed fonts that displayed “EyeStyles”. I then saved to an album of the same name, adding design notes to each entry. I shared this album with my friend, so he could see the fonts I was talking about and share with the logo company.

Note: you'll need to sign up for a free account w/MyFonts in order to view my eyestyles album.

Did They Get It Right????

I spent the next week worrying about my friend's logo and if I was going to cringe every time I went to the mall in the future...

But, bad service being what it is...the online logo company dropped the ball. No reply. No comp revisions. None. (A little whining about not having that many fonts. What????)

My other project was delivered, I now had time to help.

I worked through the weekend, sending 6 pages of roughs to my friend (and client) for review.

He was pleased.

I'll share my design process (albeit rushed!) in my next post.

Logo Critical Care & Stabilization (Part III)

November 3rd, 2009

Back for part three of my logo intervention series. What did I show the client?

Be patient! First, let me review a few key points...

The shop is selling high-end eyewear in one of the state's top malls.
Mall signage requirements are first and foremost concerns.
Logo will need to be reproducible in single color at small size for
tags/fax/collateral/window sandblasting.

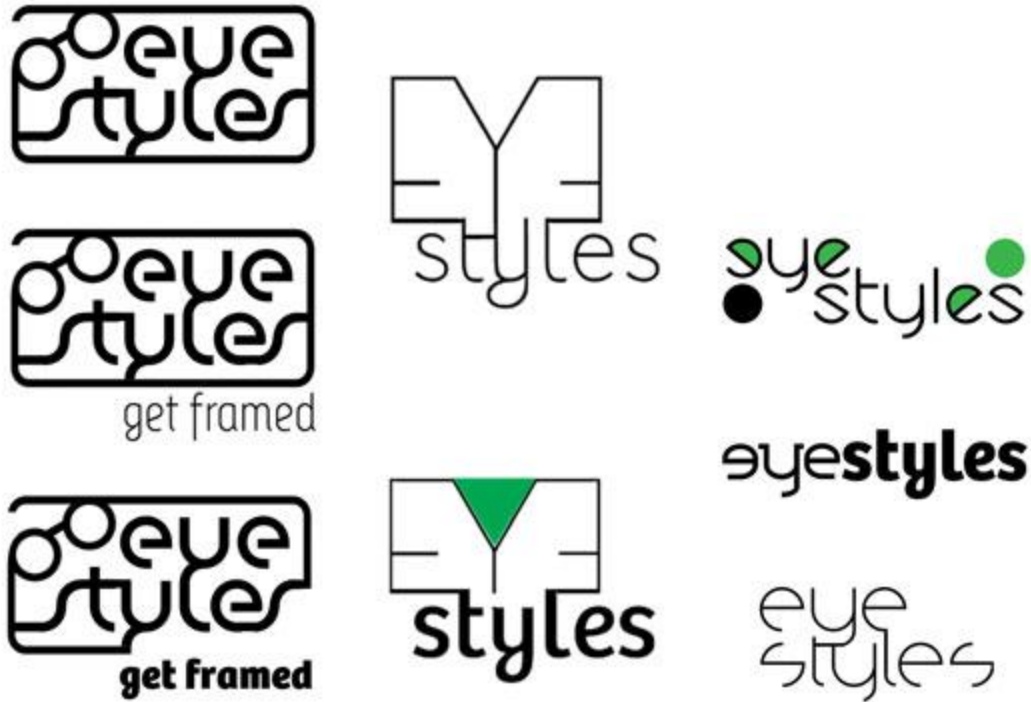
Also worth noting is that most of the existing mall store signs are "logotypes" as some might say. (That is, they're words that identify a company with type.)

Give Me an "E"

So, having decided that the logo would be built from the words, I pulled up my trusty MyFonts album that I'd put together earlier for the other logo design company. MyFonts allows you to browse fonts based on many different style tags. You can also play around with your specific words—perfect way to shop for the best "e"! I played with a variety of capitalization and lower-case options in various fonts/weights. Next step was saving the .gif images from the site and importing them into Photoshop.

Note: This is the equivalent of downloading low-res, watermarked comps from image sites—I get to explore ideas for comprehensives. I purchased the font for final art and client use.

Next I played around with the .gif files in Photoshop and on tracing paper, working out possibilities. Normally, I'd work the roughs more, put them away for a few days, returning with a fresh eye—and slashing the weak ones. But being in a hurry, I wasn't yet 'objective' and not ready to slash and burn. So I sent the following roughs for client feedback:



From Left: Set 1, Set 2, Set 3.



From Left: Set 4, Set 5, Set 6.

(Also threw in a bit of color just for juxtaposition—not a color statement.)

Speed Dating...Logo Style!

On the phone, we quickly dismissed set 5. Client didn't care for set 2 (though I still kinda like the Mondrian feel to it...) so CUT. Set 4 was slashed next, along with top two options on set 3. Set 1 was feelin' the love...but? Set 3's last option was deemed too thin, but very "Bridgeport" (the mall). Out to set 6's first and third options.

Client was liking the middle option w/green circle on set 6...but I wasn't feelin' the love—too 'pedestrian' for Bridgeport.

So it was down to set 1 (bottom) and set 3's last option. Set 1 is kind of cool and quirky—but—more 'Pearl District' than 'Bridgeport Village'. So Set 3, last choice, it was!

Next Step...Final Art

Yeah, I know...NOT the usual logo project. Not the usual client. The clock ticking. Purchase font (Circa), fire up Illustrator and away we go.

Art for sign? Check!



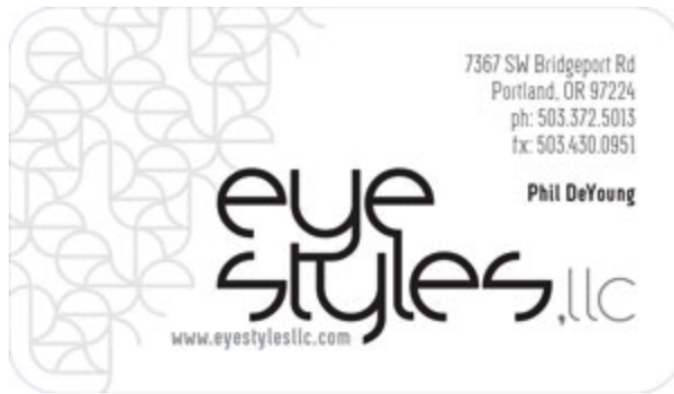
PHOTO INLAY NOT TO SCALE- CENTER SIGN VERTICALLY ON FASCIA, CENTER OVER WINDOW



EXAMPLE OF NIGHT VIEW-N.T.S.

Above are the signage submission images from Meyer Sign Co. I love how it's so easy for client to visualize the sign on the actual storefront!

Business Cards? Check!



I'll have images of finished cards in a few weeks...going with a classy deboss on 100% PCW 100 lb. cover stock. Yummy! Paper on order, hiring in process and final art to printer ASAP!

In Conclusion

While I would have liked a bit more time than the 'emergency' week to fully explore and develop the identity for Eye Styles, LLC, I think that we did alright. The patient (logo) was seen in time and is doing fine now—thanks to a little emergency treatment. Sometimes all it takes is a little knowledge of the design fundamentals!