

# **CORPORATE LOGO: History, Definition, and Components**

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# **CORPORATE LOGO: History, Definition, and Components**

***Abstract:** Both academics and practitioners alike have directed increasing attention to the field of the corporate logo, and yet, a definitive construct of the corporate logo and its measurement does not yet exist. In this article, we marshal the literature relating to the historiography of the corporate logo. Furthermore, we report the findings of a literature-based study that sought to clarify the definitions and components of the corporate logo; namely, color, typeface, corporate name, and design. Challenges in developing a corporate logo are discussed. An important recommendation made by this research is about.*

## **Introduction**

The corporate logo has the potential to articulate organizational characteristics (Van Riel and Van den Ban 2001). The characteristics of a corporate logo are embedded in the symbol that represents the corporate and expand upon the consumers' perception of the corporation (Hatch and Schultz 2001; Van Riel et al. 2001; Van den Bosch et al. 2005). In general, the corporate logo provides recognizability (Balmer and Gray 2000) and helps increase the familiarity of an organization (Henderson and Cote 1998). The referential properties of a logo may describe the impact of logos on reputation which can increase if a logo coordinates with the elements of corporate visual identity (Van Riel et al. 2001).

Corporate visual identity enhances consumers' knowledge about an organization. Researchers such as Rosson and Brooks (2004) and Van den Bosch et al. (2006) have noted that mergers, acquisitions, privatization, restructuring, repositioning, changing geographical emphasis, marketplaces and takeovers modernizing, managing change, promoting growth,

and starting over, all require a new identity, which often leads to a new corporate logo. Companies change their corporate logo because of a strategy change, such as when United Airlines became employee owned (Olins 1978; Van Riel and Van Hasselt 2002). The corporate logo is the official graphical design for a company and the uniqueness of the design requires significant creativity, which must match a firm's strategy and identity: it should be unique and creative in its design. When the strategy is recognized, the corporate visual identity makes the organization memorable and well-known through its corporate logo (Van Riel et al. 2001). In addition, a favorable design can engage an audience by asking them to visually interrelate with the logo. Well-known organizations with a favorable reputation gradually adapt their corporate logo in a way that is barely visible to the audience. The corporate logo as a visual expression, is a significant tangible asset of the organization. In due course, organizations have to invest large amounts of money and the corporate logo should be up-to-date and modernized (Balmer and Gray 2000; Olins 1978, 1989; Van den Bosch et al. 2005).

The development of a new corporate logo starts with a process of discovery which reveals the organization's corporate identity and refers to company's values, its' principles, personality, history, culture, strategy, structure, and all the actions, future plans and visions (Abratt 1989; Olins 1989), its. Once the quintessence of the organization is recognized – what it stands for, what it does and the way it goes about its business especially the way it relates to its stakeholders and the environment (Abratt 1989). The corporate logo creates a positive image in the minds of consumers and serves as a competitive advantage to enhance a firm's reputation by increasing visibility and creating recognizability and awareness about company's promise of quality as a differentiator (Olins 1989). Corporate logo is increasingly becoming part of the artefacts of management thinking and exists at a visible level of the organization (Kay 2006; Melewar et al. 2005; Schmitt 1995).

According to Olins (1991), selection and design of a favorable logo is important and a complex phenomenon considering its capability to communicate a consistent message and define the concepts and philosophies of a company accurately. The notion of a corporate logo is grounded in various subject domains. Despite the significant role of the favorable corporate logo as a company's signature and communication tool, in recent decades, the marketing literature has seen little systematic study of the actual definition of the corporate logo and it remains highly contentious with many opting not to define the term precisely (e.g. Henderson and Cote 1998; Pittard et al. 2007).

The purpose of the current article is to appraise the pertinent literature relating to the history, definition and recognition of the corporate logo, including the salient dimensions that are simple enough to be employed by scholars and practitioners. While current literature attempts to determine the influence of a corporate logo from empirical point of view, it fails to look at its historical underpinning. To facilitate the development of a measurable construct, a theoretically embedded definition must be clearly specified (Churchill 1979). Basic aim of this study was to explore the history of corporate logo to understand influence of corporate logo on corporate image and reputation. Our observations contribute to the theory of aesthetics and social identity from marketing to consumers using the lens of a corporation. Managerial implications of our perspective limit our discussions and arguments to those components that are extensively interrelated with the concept of the corporate logo.

## **Literature Review**

### **The emergence, development and changing uses of visual identity: 1760 to present**

The history of the corporate logo dates back to era of social revolution that initiated in the year 1760 and lasted till 1949 (West, 1978). This period changed the ways in which the chemical, electricity, petroleum and steel manufacturers developed a comprehensive system

for trademark protection and facilitated establishment of forgery, counterfeiting, and fraud laws in 1905 for civil protection against use of their trademarks without authorization within UK, nearly 50 years after its establishment in France (West, 1978). Other developments during this period included use of technology for typography and its mechanization; the wood type poster; the revolution in printing, useful for a printing press (Musson 1958); the development of lithography; the battle of the signboard, and the rise of advertising design (Vries 1994). Simultaneously, use of graphic designs for communication became more important with the beginning of mass communication while the nature of visual information to use color lithography brought about a significant transformation (Meggs and Purvis 2006). The earliest trademarks, such as Kodak, Singer, Heinz and Coca Cola appeared during this period.

The first industrial design, made by Peter Behrens, an architect and designer in the first decade of the twentieth century, was a graphic design to bring out a comprehensive visual identity for German manufacturer, Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft (AEG) (Anderson 2000). The First World War (1914-1918) also established the importance of visual design (Fiell and Fiell 2003) through signs and symbols for military identification and the unique code of status that was immediately understood based on a regimental badge. Consequently, the government created a visual identity to use as the bedrock of identification. In 1940, with globalization and new widespread communications (Murphy and Rowe 1988), firms started to understand the urgent need for a visual identity to control their image (Meggs and Purvis 2006), trade symbols and logos, and used prototypes of contemporary identity design in global markets (Napoles 1988). The first design consultancy, called Lippincott and Margulies, was established in 1943.

The period between 1950 and 1979 marked a turning point when design was used both as a decoration, and as a powerful marketing and sales tool (Napoles 1988). Many

organizations tried to change their old corporate logos for new ones, as they understood that a new corporate logo could express the size and scale of the organization, and turned to the new categories of design professionals (Capitman 1976). The trademark was used as a main feature of packaging to persuade the customer (Capitman 1976). The visionary behind the first IBM logo, Paul Rand, in 1956, was convinced that image design would reinforce the company's strategy (Capitman 1976). Anderson (2000) claims that this period saw organizations beginning to introduce new logos that used a combination of visual identification, distinctiveness and imagery.

After the 'imagery era', in the 1980s, mass marketing dramatically increased the value and power of a logo by explaining what a firm stood for, and how it communicated its identity, value, reliability and origin. During this time, profession of a designer of visual became legitimate because business people now understood the connection between good design and sales (Murphy and Rowe 1988) pushing combination of these into value era (Figure 1). Balmer and Gray (2000) recognised use of logo by corporates for public relations, and marketing. These studies emphasize that the image when retained by the audience describes meanings stored in the memory from general impressions and expressions of the organization (Stuart 1997). It has been noted that deliberations on the corporate logo often utilize complicated terminology, thus limiting management's understanding of the concept and its effectiveness for practical application. Therefore, this section is devoted to reviewing, classifying, and synthesizing some of the widely-used definitions of the corporate logo in both academia and practice. The main objective of this discussion is the development of one, comprehensive definition upon which managers and future researchers can build.

**Insert Figure 1 Here**

## **Defining the corporate logo**

While the definition of ‘corporate logo’ differs across authors the concept has been acknowledged as the root of corporate identity (Balmer 2001; Van den Bosch et al. 2006; Van Riel and Balmer 1997). The corporate logo is the most well-organized management tool for orchestrating the desired features that organizations require to convey to their internal and external stakeholders. The corporate logo, as a key element of corporate identity, should follow a multi-disciplinary approach (e.g. Balmer 2001; 2009; Simoes et al. 2005; Van Riel and Balmer 1997). In addition, there is a limited view as to what elements compose a corporate logo (Van Riel et al, 2001).

The literature takes a more process-oriented approach and attempts to understand the broader design characteristics and design dimensions (Henderson and Cote 1998). This study emphasizes the greater diversity on the part of academics, due, primarily, to the multi-disciplinary nature of the field. One observation is that there is no systematic marketing literature concerning the effect of compound logos on consumer evaluations of logos (Henderson and Cote 1998; Pittard et al. 2007).

Marketing academics define corporate logo as a sign of promises to the customer (Kay 2006); it can become a type of shorthand for the personality of the organization and its values (Bernstein 1986). Every company has its own personality, an intellectual and distinctive behavior to serve and discriminate one firm from another. The corporate logo is at the root of corporate identity as well as the main element of corporate visual identity (Balmer 2001). The literature (Bernstein 1986; Van Heerden and Puth 1995) claims that the corporate logo is used to condense the personality of a firm and its values in order for it to be effectively presented to stakeholders (Bernstein 1986; Van Heerden and Puth 1995; Van Riel et al. 2001). Balmer (2008) defined the corporate logo as a “distinctive way in which an organization’s name is rendered, principally in typographic form” (899).

The characteristics of a corporate logo are embedded in the development of the definition of the corporate logo by marketing scholars as a symbol to represent the corporate reputation and expand upon consumers' perception thereof (Hatch and Schultz 2001; Van den Bosch et al. 2005; Van Riel et al. 2001). The concept of the corporate logo has been defined differently in diverse studies and several meanings have been assigned by different authors. The majorities of these meanings have merged from marketing (Bernstein, 1986; Henderson and Cote, 1998; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997) and design perspectives (Napoles 1988; Olins 1989; Selame and Selame 1975).

Marketing and advertising researchers have studied the visual expressions of the logo (Melewar 2003; Schmitt and Simonson 1997). Academics refer to the corporate logo using different outlooks, such as comprising the public's first impression of a company (Bernstein 1986; Henderson and Cote 1998; Henderson et al. 2004; Hutton 1997; Van Riel et al. 2001). Marketing researchers claim that the corporate logo is a graphic element linked with corporate identity to evoke positive and negative emotional reactions, and, therefore, to create positive associations of the company and brand to various stakeholders (Melewar and Saunders 1999; Simoes et al. 2005; Van Riel et al. 2001).

Cupchik (1994) argued that emotional phenomena can be shaped by distinct patterns of physiological responses and bodily arousal and expressions that give emotion its feeling tone. Subtle feelings and coarse emotions were studied by Cupchik (1994) as remains of the contrast between pleasure and arousal as fundamental or primary emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger and a combination of these. Also, emotion can confine to the study of feelings or elementary affective processes, such as simple reactions to simple stimuli of logos and colors that are mainly related to sensory psychology. Purchase intentions of customers are influenced by corporate logos that act as identifier that communicates significance and differentiation through favourable image and reputation. Simoes et al. (2005) argue that a



firm's identity is expressed through names and logos, typefaces and color schemes. However, Henderson and Cote (1998) assert that marketing literature has no systematic research on the effect of the design on consumer evaluations of logos.

Studies of the marketing perspective concentrate on consumers as primary receivers and argue that the corporate logo is used to lead to favorable company attitudes and directly influences purchase intentions, which can affect a company's financial performance (Bloch 1995; Henderson et al. 2004; Hutton 1997). Furthermore, the corporate logo is used as a key economic advantage to lower customer search costs (Cohen 1991) and help transcend global boundaries and language barriers through aesthetic responses (Bloch 1995; Kohli et al. 2002; Pittard et al. 2007; Schmitt et al. 1995). The design literature refers to the corporate logo as a set of elements (color, typeface, name, and design) that gives prominence to a company's products and services; it also reflects on its ability to enable customers to distinguish and identify a brand or a company (Mollerup 1999). Studies in this area of research regard corporate logo as an essential component that influence consumers' perception (Alessandri 2001; Lewicki 1986). Graphic designers and consultants regard the concept of the corporate logo as the way in which an organization communicates with the public (Balmer 1998).

Similarly, the organization behavior literature emphasizes upon the corporate logo as a clear instrument to express the organization's characteristics (Van Riel et al. 2001). Authors working on corporate logo and visual identity from organization point of view consider the corporate logo to be more than just a visual presentation of the organization and believe it is crucial for communication with users. The corporate logo is exhibited in the image that a company expresses to its audiences as a product differentiator, to create a favorable corporate image (Stuart 1997) and corporate reputation (Kapferer 1992).

The components of a corporate logo's operational definition should describe the dynamics of how people position a company. The organizational studies perspective, which

is partly grounded in social identity theory (Simoes et al. 2005), provides a useful perspective for understanding how an individual perceives an organization; what others consider an organization to be also influences an individual's overall evaluation of that organization (Hatch and Schultz 1997). In order to attain a favorable image, the corporate logo needs to be managed through a multi-disciplinary approach. Given these definitions, for the purpose of this article, a corporate logo can be defined as the signature of a company with an essential communication distinctiveness that can reflect a company's image (Henderson and Cote 1998; Melewar 2003; Melewar and Saunders 1999; Schmitt and Simonson 1997). Table 1 provides a summary of the definitions of corporate logo.

### **Insert Table 1 Here**

#### **Components of the Corporate Logo**

This section seeks to critically assess the dimensions, which have been considered as part of the corporate logo and to recognize whether the variables that measures these components are dependent, independent, or interconnected. The concept of the corporate logo and its different elements such as color (Baker and Balmer 1997; Gabrielsen et al. 2000;), typeface (Henderson et al. 2004), design (Alessandri 2001) and corporate name (Hatch and Schultz 1997; Melewar 2003; Napoles 1988), previous research was reviewed. Authors have investigated how a favorable corporate image can be built through corporate logo design, needs the engagement of elements, such as, fonts, color, corporate name, and design. Corporate logos are “almost exclusively thought of as visual phenomena, many include company names or product names which, of course, are pronounceable. These basic elements, when translated into a physical effect, help to develop the corporate identity.

*Typeface:* As one of the elements of corporate logo, typeface refers to the visual perceptual property of a company, which is the art, or skill of designing communication (Childers and Jass 2002; Henderson et al. 2004; Hutton 1997; McCarthy and Mothersbaugh 2002; Pan and Schmitt 1996). The typeface is a significant visual tool for accomplishing corporate communication objectives (see Table 2). According to Childers and Jass (2002), the choice of a typeface can manipulate the meaning of that word and help the audience to understand what the organization stands for and to where it is leading. Companies use typefaces as letters to communicate ideas to consumers. The voice used in this communication is the dress or physical appearance of the written words, and typefaces are used to verbalize to the customer on occasions when the spoken word is not feasible (Childers and Jass, 2002).

Solomon (1986) defined typeface as the art of mechanically producing letters, numbers, symbols, and shapes through an understanding of the basic elements, principles, and attributes of design. Studies by authors such as Solomon (1986) explain how a well-chosen typeface supports corporate visual identity system of the company by increasing likelihood of achieving greater visibility. According to marketing researchers like Jenkins (1991) and Kapferer (1992), a typeface plays a key role in distinguishing an organization's visual identity and can become characteristic enough that they can appear on their own without a symbol. For example, typeface of Coca Cola.

The corporate visual identity is expressed through the corporate logo and its unique typeface (Henderson et al. 2004). Marketing researchers like Hutton (1987) and McCarthy and Mothersbaugh (2002) emphasize that a company's typeface is the most important part of the organizational and communication objectives (Henderson et al. 2004). Previous researchers have also discussed the appropriateness of a typeface for different products (Pan and Schmitt 1996; Henderson et al, 2004), and argue that typefaces may influence a company's financial performance (Bloch 1995; Henderson et al. 2004; Hutton 1997).

## **Insert Table 2 Here**

*Color:* Color acts as a medium of communication and is an integral element of corporate and marketing communications, which induces emotions and moods, impacts on consumers' perceptions and behavior, and helps organizations position or differentiate themselves from competitors (Aslam 2006). Studies on color state that color reactions could be of native or instinctual origin and of learned or associative origin (Humphrey 1976). This school of thought argues that colors could signal the brain to activate an effective response and could share effective meanings over time. On evaluative scales, there is an important communication between color and product to reinforce the customer's needs. Color can communicate the positioning of the firm and is a major cue for highlighting information to draw attention, which is effective in motivating individuals to react in certain ways. Different cultures have different meanings for different colors and visual appeal to communicate with the audience. Basic colors are intense and vibrant, as seen in traffic signs. However, research on color shows that color can draw different responses from people and is an expressive tool in corporate visual identity and its relationship with natural phenomena. Also, the reaction to color may varies across cultures (Jenkins 1991).

Lichtle (2007) studied the possible interactive effects between color and an individual's mood before viewing the advertisement. Jenkins (1991) states that color is an expressive tool in terms of visual identity and that its effects depend upon two quite distinct considerations: (1) an association with natural phenomena, and (2) an association with received cultural references. Consumer behavior research states that colors, can affect and persuade responses based on both instincts and associations, and can predict consumer behavior (Aslam 2006).

Bellizzi and Hite (1992) described use of multiple senses when understanding and reacting to stimuli color. People often like stimuli more as familiarity increases (Baker and Blamer 1997). Colors can draw different responses from people and is an expressive tool in corporate visual identity and its connection with natural phenomena (Jenkins 1991). Gabrielsen et al. (2000) showed that people have an ability to distinguish between design elements, and that of all elements, color yields the strongest results. Color also affects other corporate visual identity elements, for instance, typeface (Henderson et al. 2004).

Companies use appropriate colors to send signals to their audiences and to support a company's image by aiding visual recognition to create a competitive advantage (Balmer and Gray 2000). Color is a vital element of a corporation and has a powerful application in marketing communications and the physical appearance of a brand is communicated through the corporate logo and its color (Schmitt and Pan 1994). It also has an influential effect and provokes reactions based on instincts and associations that can sustain corporate identities and customer perceptions (Madden et al. 2000). Color is an instrument that can attract consumers' attention towards the corporate logo. In addition, the choice of colors should be related to the aesthetic sense of the customer's culture rather than the marketer's culture. Use of color requires an understanding of hue (blue, red, etc.) and value (light to dark) that creates legibility and contrast (Gabrielsen et al. 2000). Shepard and Cooper (1992) divided visual abilities into acuity, motility, brain functions, visual fields, and light and color reception (See table 3).

### **Insert Table 3 Here**

*Design:* Design is a creative process that conveys a message (Cohen 1991). A company's logo design is becoming more and more important as a means of differentiation to distinguish

companies from their competitors. Selection of a design for logo is a challenge for an organization and a well-designed corporate logo allows for easy recognition and quick association (Henderson and Cote 1998). The design of a corporate logo has the potential to express formal characteristics (Van Riel et al. 2001) in which these characteristics, developed by Henderson and Cote (1998), are dependent upon the firm's objective. Henderson and Cote (1998) explained that selecting and modifying corporate logos assist firms to evoke the desired responses from their target customers. Design characteristics of logo affect reactions of customers towards logos (Henderson and Cote 1998). Various authors state that the design can influence consumers' degree of recognition, clear meaning, subject familiarity, and effect (Cohen 1991; Henderson and Cote 1998). Bloch (1995) reflected on corporate logo perception as an aesthetic response which creates an essential component of stimulus that can draw the attention and emotional reaction of consumers (Bloch 1995; Veryzer 1993).

The response to corporate logo design is related to non-conscious processing including the formation of an individual's sensitivity to stimuli (Lewicki 1986; Seaman et al. 1983; Veryzer 1999) and implicit exposure effects (Veryzer 1993, 1999). Veryzer (1999) applied theory of aesthetic response and defined aesthetics as the sensitive selection or appreciation of formal, expressive, or symbolic qualities of the environment or product, which can provide non-instrumental benefits that affect the satisfaction or pleasure of consumers. Lewicki (1986) studied the role of non-conscious algorithms in the observation of a range of design aspects.

In addition, developing a corporate logo as an important element of the corporate visual identity raises issues, such as strategic choices and corporate identity (Baker and Balmer 1997; Van den Bosch et al. 2006). A corporate logo aims to increase organizational visibility in order to communicate corporate strategy (Van Riel and Balmer 1997). When the strategy is known, the company's logo tries to engrave it in the memory and the company

becomes distinctive in the minds of the consumers and public. The connection between elements of an organization and the design of a company's logo has significant communicative value. For this reason, a well-designed logo reflects the "big picture, and ensures consistency over time and between the various elements" (Kohli et al. 2002, 62).

In addition, mergers, acquisitions, restructuring, changing geographical emphasis, marketplaces and take-overs may lead to a new corporate logo (Rosson and Brooks 2004). Companies change their corporate logo, because of strategy change (Olins 1978; Van Riel and Van Hasselt 2002), and corporate identity change (Van den Bosch et al. 2006). Organizations modify their logo to construct a new positive image (Henderson and Cote 1998; Napoles 1988; Stuart and Muzellec 2004) and to modernize the corporate visual identity (Van den Bosch et al. 2006). A summary of design definitions can be seen in Table 4.

#### **Insert Table 4 Here**

*Name:* Corporate name is the most pervasive element in corporate and brand communications that identifies a company and increases the speed of recognition (Schechter 1993; Henderson and Cote 1998; Kohli et al. 2002). It may be easy to assume that a corporate logo identifies its company or product by reading its corporate name. Marketing and design researchers (e.g. Hatch and Schultz 1997; Melewar, 2003; Napoles 1988; Siegel 1989) have devoted more attention to the name of the company as a component of the logo. Psychologists, economists and sociologists have paid attention to names by researching symbolism to develop theories on the power of logos and names to evoke attention and demonstrate desired responses (Koku 1997). Moreover, scholars and researchers have also shown their interest and focused on the

implications of a corporate name or change in name. Bernstein (1986) states that the corporate name is inextricably linked to the company's promised and expected attributes.

Researchers have found that corporate visual identity strongly indicates the corporate name (Bernstein 1986; Melewar and Saunders 1998), and, for this reason, employees should be aware of a company's logo and its meanings (Simoes et al. 2005). The corporate name is a context within which an interpretation of corporate identity can form and influence the corporate image through cultural artefacts (Hatch and Schultz 1997). Managers play a significant role in the development of the organization with physical artefacts, increasingly becoming part of the vocabulary of management thinking that exists at a visible level of the organization (Abratt 1989).

Moreover, it can help to shape the consumer's expectations, and, in turn, influences the corporate image (Gray and Balmer 1998). According to the researchers (Baker and Balmer 1997), for many people corporate identity is synonymous with the corporate logo and company name. Childers and Houston (1984) acknowledge the main characteristics of brand symbols that may affect brand name awareness. The name could express a distinct message and quality of the organization to consumers and is the foundation of distinction for an organization. Peterson and Ross (1972) pointed out that corporate names are a means of communication between corporations and consumers, and, therefore, are objects of communication. Changes of corporate names should clearly communicate the steps that the company has taken to improve their quality and performance to the public and how the new company is different from the old.

A logo has multiple communication objectives and has an impact on name awareness (MacInnis et al. 1999). The corporate name is the most identifiable element of the corporate identity (Lippincott and Margulies 1988). It is vital in building up a firm's acceptance and global recognition (Smith 1990), helping to shape the consumer's expectations when creating



a corporate image (Gray and Balmer 1998). However, according to Baker and Balmer (1997), for many people corporate identity is synonymous with a corporate logo and the company name.

Meaningful names that are represented visually are easier to remember (Childers and Houston 1984). Words and graphics convey clearer visual statements. A name could express a distinct message and the quality of the organization to consumers and is the basis for distinguishing between one organization and another. Peterson and Ross (1972) pointed out that corporate names communicate between corporations and consumers, and name changes become objects of communication.

Klink (2003) examined the connection between a brand name and its mark and found that when the brand mark design is consistent with the brand name design, it can communicate and improve the planned brand meaning. According to Mollerup (1999), a proper name (say Mercedes) can be classified as a symbol and does not tell whether a person with that name is the founder, the owner, a relative or something else (112). Descriptive names explain what the business is about (Mollerup 1999, 113). Metaphoric names reveal the nature of the industry indirectly and refer to its object through a shared quality (Mollerup 1999, 114). A found name is an already known word, which has no natural relation to the company, or the product it stands for (Mollerup 1999, 115). Artificial names are completely new words coined for the company or product they represent (Mollerup 1999, 116). Abbreviated names are used when a company name is too long, such as ABC or BBC (Mollerup 1999, 117). A company's or band's name can be established or determined by the phonetic content of an abbreviation of the original name (Mollerup 1999).

The five name categorizations by Kohli and Thakor (1997) are “generic (soap for soap), descriptive (Laser jet for printers), suggestive (Eveready for batteries), arbitrary (Camel for cigarettes) and coined (Exxon for gas)”. Suggestive and descriptive names create

an immediate image; they need less advertising than arbitrary and coined names (Kohli and Thakor 1997). However, arbitrary and suggestive names have more benefits, because they are not tied to an organization or specific product and therefore can be transferred to other products more easily (Kohli and Thakor 1997). O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy (2000) assert that a name has a characteristic for innovative products. Selecting names must help to inspire belief in the stability of the firm (Selame and Selame 1975), represent the organization's field of action and play a central role in the brand hierarchy. Therefore, use of a company's name assists products in the early days and the association of organization and brand name increases the general value later on. The use of a business name in the brand could help to increase the customer's perception of the brand and a preference for it.

Firms want their logos to be synonymous with their names and creating a logo serves as shorthand for the company that can grasp peoples' interest. A company name should be internationally understandable, unique, easy to recognize and associated with a logo. Most companies start adopting English names to improve quality perception and create a global image (Henderson et al. 2004). Name is one important factor in advertising, when consumers know little about the company or product. If the company does business with foreign consumers, the corporate name should function internationally to gain the opportunities that a name can provide. Language can affect corporate names and the majority of international companies are concerned about the language they use for their company name (Melewar and Saunders 1999). Language is the primary manifestation of culture. The careless selection of a name can lead to disaster in the target audience, and, hence, names should be selected with care (Melewar and Saunders 1999). Table 5 provides a summary of the definitions of corporate name used by scholars.

**Insert Table 5 Here**

## **Conclusion**

Since 1760, organizations have employed a logo as a company's visual expression to enhance recognizability and distinguish its organizations and products from its competitors. In addition, for the last 70 years or more, practitioners and marketing scholars have realized the critical significance of a corporate logo. However, an assessment of various studies dealing with the corporate logo has signified not only the lack of a single definition of the concept, but also the different importance of the main components, which are viewed as determinants of the concept of the corporate logo.

Our emphasis has been on four dimensions of corporate logo – typeface, design, color, and corporate name – which are all interrelated and intertwined. The review of the related literature exposed that corporate logo is conceptualized as a multi-dimensional construct with multiple components. Classification of the four dimensions of the corporate logo has been acknowledged as the most challenging task in this field. This article suggests three rationales for this complexity. First, as revealed above, the development of a multi-disciplinary approach to the classification of corporate logo means that there are different fields that could be used as reference, namely, graphic design, integrated-communication, organizational studies, marketing (Balmer, 1995, 1998, 2001; Simoes et al. 2005; Van Riel and Balmer 1997). Secondly, there is an inter-relationship between the corporate logo and the dimensions of the corporate logo. Thirdly, the notion of a corporate logo is grounded in various subject domains. For a long time, the corporate logo (as a root of corporate visual identity) was used interchangeably with corporate image and corporate identity (e.g. Bernstein 1986; Olins 1978, 1989; Schmitt and Simonson 1997; Selame and Selame 1975; Van Riel and Balmer 1997), which resulted in some degree of confusion of the terms. However, the current literature proposes that noteworthy efforts are being made to remedy this confusion. In addition, this article contributes to the literature by extending the

knowledge on logos, corporate visual identity, corporate identity, design, corporate name, typeface and color.

### **Recommendation**

Managers make efforts to create a favorable corporate logo, which communicates the corporate identity in a reliable manner to the market. Managers should place more emphasis on the corporate logo as a complex phenomenon since it is the signature of a company that is determined by multiple factors including corporate name, design, color and typeface to influence a company's corporate image and corporate reputation. Even though corporate logo and corporate logo management are distinct concepts, they are important for further exploration and explain the determination of which sub-constructs have most influence on the minds of consumers, and, accordingly, determine the areas on which to concentrate.

The corporate logo is a way of communicating to consumers, independently of verbal information. If company's corporate logo is considered desirable, companies could articulate and communicate the company's identity clearly, coherently, consistency and in a persuasive manner. Marketers must communicate clearly, through the corporate logo dimensions that their consumers are likely to perceive as distinctive, prestigious, as well as to address discrepancies in a prompt and persuasive manner. Furthermore, this research offers managerial contributions for decision-makers and graphic designers who wish to understand the whole situation of the relationship between a favorable corporate logo and the factors in its antecedents (i.e. corporate name, typeface, design, and color) from the consumer's perspective and its effect on a favorable corporate image and favorable corporate reputation. Managers should select typefaces that support strategically valued impressions. The corporate name should be acceptable internationally and free of embarrassing meanings in major foreign languages. When companies become international firms, the image they acquire as

national producers often becomes inappropriate (Melewar and Saunders 1998, 291). Hence, global companies should manage their corporate identity carefully on an international basis.

The creation of a favorable corporate logo is very costly and challenging for an organization; hence, managers make every effort to create one that is favorable, and reliably communicates the corporate identity to the market. Thus, the improvement of a complex corporate logo model whose elements can be tested empirically would significantly benefit decision-makers; they play a significant role in the development of an organization through physical artefacts. In addition, the corporate logo as the main element of corporate visual identity evokes an emotional response in the minds of consumers. Thus, it is fruitful for a company's designers and managers to note the importance of the emotional aspect of the corporate logo as a key element of corporate identity rather than simply focusing on what is fashionable and modern. Corporate logo is that corporate name should clearly communicate the steps that a company has taken to improve its quality and performance to the public and indicate that the new company is different from the old.

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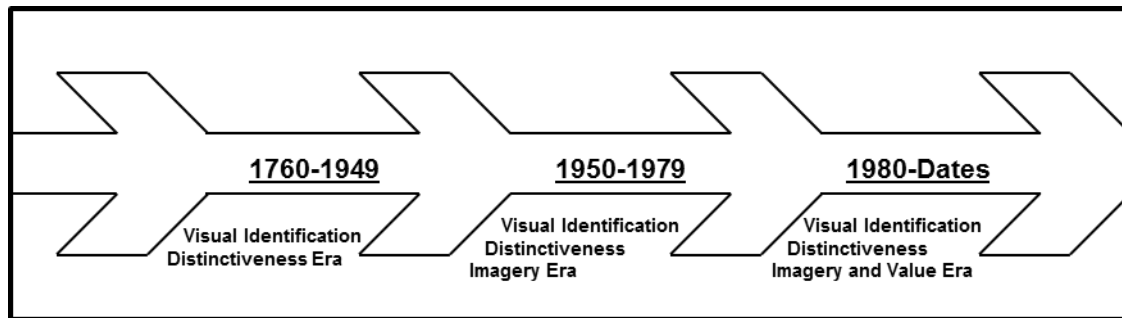
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**Figure 1: The emergence, development and changing uses of visual identity, 1760 to date**



Source: The first author

**Table 1: Definitions of corporate logo**

AUTHORS	DEFINITIONS
Baker and Balmer 1997; Van den Bosch et al. 2006; Gray and Balmer 1998; Hatch and Schultz 2001; Henderson and Cote 1998; Melewar 2003; Melewar et al. 2005; Olins and Selame 2000; Kapferer 1992; Kohli et al. 2002; Schmitt 1995; Schmitt and Simonson 1997; Stuart 1997; Van den Bosch et al. 2006	... provides instant recognition for the brand and the product and increases a company's significance as a product and company differentiator
Bernstein 1986; Hatch and Schultz 2001; Henderson and Cote 1998; Kapferer 1992; Kay 2006; Melewar and Saunders 1998 and 1999; Melewar and Saunders 1999; Melewar 2003; Napoles 1988; Schechter, 1993; Schmitt and Simonson 1997; Spaeth 1995; Stuart 1997; Van den Bosch et al. 2005; Van Riel et al. 2001	... is the first impression that the consumer has of a company and creates a positive image in the minds of consumers
Hatch and Schultz 2001; Henderson and Cote 1998; Kapferer 1992; Kay 2006; Melewar and Saunders 1998 and 1999; Melewar and Saunders 1999; Melewar 2003; Napoles 1988; Schechter 1993; Schmitt and Simonson 1997; Spaeth 1995; Stuart 1997; Van den Bosch et al. 2005; Van Riel et al. 2001	... as a symbol to represent the corporate reputation
Van den Bosch et al. 2005; Kay 2006	... stimulates pleasure, arousal and dominance from consumers, serving as a cognitive 'switch' to recall an image in the mind of the audience
Melewar and Saunders 1999	... is a graphic image; an image and type, or typography used to present a name
Balmer, 1997 2001; Hatch and Schultz 1997; Napoles 1988; Olins 1989; Schechter 1993; Spaeth 1995; Van Riel and Balmer 1997; Van Riel et al. 2001	... is the root of corporate identity and transmits the strategic, visual dimensions of a corporate identity to various audiences
Balmer 2001; Henderson and Cote 1998; Melewar and Saunders 1998; Stuart 1999; Van den Bosch et al. 2006	... is the main element of corporate visual identity and is the first and most crucial step in the process of building a company's visual identity, and plays a significant role in the way an organization presents itself to both internal and external stakeholders"
Henderson and Cote 1998; Schmitt and Simonson 1997; Melewar 2003; Van den Bosch et al. 2005	... are used as a company's signature
Henderson and Cote 1998; Olins 1989; Stuart 1997 and 1999; Van Riel et al. 2001	... is 'a property of the organization' that is used to communicate a desirable message to the consumers
Childers and Jass 2002	... impacts on a company's visual and verbal communications and has external influences
Kohli et al. 2002	... helps transcend international boundaries and language barriers because of their 'visual' character
Klink 2003	... is communication of the desired message in order to create a profitable and unique position in the marketplace
Balmer and Gray 2000; Henderson and Cote 1998; Kohli et al. 2002; Pittard et al. 2007; Schmitt, 1995; Stuart 1999; Van den Bosch et al. 2005; Van Riel et al. 2001	... is the most visible element of the external communications of an organization.
Van den Bosch et al. 2006	... can reflect and communicate the organization's future goals and direction to the employees
Pilditch 1970	... is important in terms of what they are able to communicate about the corporation in the marketplace and to its consumers
MacInnis et al. 1999; Olins 1989	... communicates the corporate structure to stakeholders
Balmer 2001; Henderson and Cote 1998; Van Riel and	... influence on people's perceptions of a company

Balmer 1997; Van Riel et al. 2001	
Olins 1989	... adds value to the reputation of an organization
Bernstein 1986; Kay 2006; Van Heerden and Puth 1995; Van Riel et al. 2001	... projects and encapsulates the corporate personality
Baker and Balmer 1997; Seifert 1992; Van Riel et al. 2001	... can be a significant aid to reflect the company's value, mission statement, strategy and company characteristics
Baker and Balmer 1997; Van den Bosch et al. 2006; Stuart and Muzellec 2004; Van den Bosch et al. 2006; Van Riel and Van Hasselt 2002; Van Riel et al. 2001	... creates employee identification with the organization
Johansson and Hirano 1999; Kay 2006	... raises awareness, and helps with identification, as well as being the sign of a promise to the customer
Bennet 1995; Bloch 1995; Cohen 1991; Henderson and Cote 1998; Henderson et al. 2004; Hutton 1997; Kohli et al. 2002; Melewar 2003; Melewar and Saunders 1999; Siegel 1989	... enhances willingness to purchase that can affect a company's financial performance
Melewar and Saunders 1998; Van Riel et al. 2001	... is an important management tool
Cohen 1991; Pitta and Franzak 2008	... is a central element of marketing strategy
Van Riel et al. 2001	... cuts through clutter to gain attention
Alessandri 2001; Baker and Balmer 1997; Henderson and Cote 1998; Lewicki 1986; Van Riel et al. 2001	... evokes positive and negative emotional reactions
Mollerup 1999, p. 75	... influences an audience, carries a tremendous amount of aesthetic value
Bloch 1995; Pittard et al. 2007; Schmitt et al. 1995	... makes aesthetic responses
Henderson and Cote 1998; Van Heerden and Puth 1995	... reminds the beholder of his/her attitudes, perceptions, expectations, experiences, thoughts, desires, and even aversion towards the corporation behind the logo
Cohen 1991	... is used as a key economic advantage for customers to lower their search costs
Kohli et al. 2002	assists in transcending global boundaries and language barriers because of its visual character
Childers and Jass 2002; McCarthy and Mothersbaugh 2002; Van den Bosch et al. 2005	... influences consumers' advertising awareness and can also affect the memorability of advertisements
Henderson and Cote, 1998	... impacts on familiarity with the company and on products
Ewing 2006; Henderson et al. 2003; Kapferer 1992; Macintosh and Doherty 2007; Siegel 1989; Stuart 1997	... presents the company's culture
Kay 2006	... is a sign of promises to the customer

**Table 2: Definitions of Typeface**

Henderson et al. 2004	... adds value to consumers' impressions
Jenkins 1991; Kapferer 1992; Simoes et al. 2005	... expresses firm's identity by supporting other elements of corporate visual identity systems
Henderson et al. 2004	... is expressed through the corporate visual identity or the corporate logo
Hagtvedt 2011	... can influence overall attitude toward the firm
Bloch 1995; Henderson et al. 2004; Hutton 1987 and 1997; Solomon 1991; Spaeth 1995	... creates important and strategic impressions, and a positive image
Henderson et al. 2004; McCarthy and Mothersbaugh 2002	... is the most important part of the organizational and communication objectives
Henderson et al. 2004	... communicates their company's goals
Childers and Jass 2002; Henderson et al. 2004; Hutton 1987; McCarthy and Mothersbaugh 2002; Pan and Schmitt 1996;	... refers to visual perceptual property of a company, which is the art, or skill of designing communication by means of the printed word
Childers and Jass 2002	... can manipulate the meaning of that word and helps the audience to understand what the new organization stands for and to where it is leading.
Melewar and Saunders 2000	... can increase the likelihood of achieving greater visibility
Childers and Jass 2002; Henderson et al. 2004	influences the perceptions of advertised brands, memorability, and readability
Rosson and Brooks 2004; Baker and Balmer 1997; Van den Bosch et al. 2005	... is the core of an organization
Doyle and Bottomley 2002; Gabrielsen et al. 2000; Van Riel et al. 2001	... can rely on an understanding of a particular cultural heritage, which can be lost on other cultures
Doyle and Bottomley 2002; Gabrielsen et al. 2000; Van Riel et al. 2001	... can affect people's judgments and behavior
Henderson et al. 2004; Mollerup 1999; Pan and Schmitt 1996	... gives prominence to a company's products and services; it enables customers to distinguish and identify a brand or a company
Childers and Jass 2002	... influences consumer responses

**Table 3: Definitions of Color**

Simoes et al. 2005	... expresses the corporate identity
Alessandri 2001; Balmer 2001; Baker and Blamer 1997; Hatch and Schultz 1997; Henderson et al. 2004; Jenkins 1991; Melewar and Saunders 2000; Van den Bosch et al. 2005	... is an element of corporate visual identity
Baker and Balmer 1997; Seifert 1992	... helps to reflect the company's value, the values of each country's mission statement, strategy and company characteristics
Hite and Fraser 1988	... of an advertisement can increase the level of localization
Madden et al. 2000	... has a powerful effect and causes reactions based on instincts and associations that sustain corporate identities
Aaby and McGann, 1989	... as a corporate promotional element applied across business units over extended periods
Aslam 2006; Mollerup 1999; Schmitt and Pan 1994; Tavassoli 2001	... gives prominence to a company's products and services; it enables customers to distinguish and identify a brand or a company from its competitors and environment
Madden et al. 2000	... has an influential effect and provokes reactions based on instincts and associations that can sustain corporate identities
Balmer and Gray 2000	... sends signals to their audiences and supports a company's image by aiding visual recognition to create a competitive advantage
Hynes et al. 2009	... evokes meanings of logos to understand how these contribute to building a consistent corporate image
Aslam 2006; Bellizzi and Hite 1992	... can affect and persuade responses based on both instincts and associations and can predict consumer behavior
Aslam 2006	... induces moods and emotions, influences consumers' perceptions and behavior

**Table 4: Definitions of Design**

Balmer and Gray 2000; Olins 1978 and 1989; Van den Bosch et al. 2005; Van Riel et al. 2001	... is an element of corporate brand
Henderson et al. 2003	... influences and strengthens the brands
Childers and Jass 2002; Henderson et al. 2004; Schechter 1993	... influences the perceptions of advertised brands, memorability, and readability
Pittard et al. 2007	... influences consumer response to proportion across cultures
Van den Bosch et al. 2004	... concentrates on the effectiveness and functionality of specific elements of a corporate visual identity to create and maintain the visual identity of the organization.
Henderson et al. 2003; Kohli et al. 2002	... translates vision into a tangible expression and a visual language that resonates with all stakeholders
Andriopoulos and Gotsi 2001	... is a creative process that conveys a message or creates effective communications for companies
Bernstein 1986; Van Riel and Balmer 1997	... is element of visual, marketing and corporate communications
O'Connor 2011	... facilitates adjustments to suit evolving corporate objectives, stakeholders' perceptions, and modifying industry sector conditions
Henderson and Cote 1998; Kohli et al. 2002	... impacts on degree of recognition, clear meaning and subject familiarity, and effect
Hynes et al. 2009	... contributes to building a consistent corporate image
Veryzer 1993 and 1999	... implicit exposure effects
Seaman et al. 1983; Lewicki 1986; Veryzer 1999	... is related to various aspects of non-conscious processing including the formation of an individual's sensitivity to stimuli
Henderson and Cote 1998	... as a means of differentiation to distinguish companies from their competitors
Henderson and Cote 1998; Pittard et al. 2007	... affects consumers' reactions

**Table 5: Definitions of corporate Name**

Lippincott and Margulies 1988	... is the most recognizable element of the corporate identity, which should be identifiable by customers.
Simoes et al. 2005	... expresses firm's identity
Selame and Selame 1988	... seen as a significant and central part of any marketing program. ... can position the firm in the minds of stakeholders
Melewar and Saunders 1998; Schechter 1993	... is one of the elements of corporate visual identity
Olins 1989	... signifies an effective communication tool to communicate identity or corporate structure to stakeholders
Gray and Balmer 1998; Henderson and Cote 1998; Kohli et al. 2002; Koku 1997; Peterson and Ross 1972; Schechter 1993	... is the most pervasive element in corporate and brand communications that identifies a company and increases recognition speed
Gray and Balmer 1998	... can help to shape the consumer's expectations
Hatch and Schultz 1997	... influences the corporate image through cultural artefacts
Henderson et al. 2003	... improves quality perception and creates a global image
Kohli et al. 2002; Schechter 1993	... offers the quality of a product or service
O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2000	... has an aura for innovative products throughout the world
Henderson and Cote 1998	... is the main element of a brand, which identifies the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and differentiates them from those of the competition
Schechter 1993	... influences the perception of a company
Abratt 1989	... is a visible level of the organization
Bernstein 1986	... is inextricably linked to the company's promised and expected attributes
Koku 1997	... evokes attention and demonstrates desired responses
Smith 1990	... is vital in building up a firm's acceptance and global recognition
Kohli et al. 2002	... helps to identify a company through its design to increase recognition speed
Selame and Selame 1975	... helps to inspire belief in the stability of the firm