

teaching note

Logos as Branding: Making an Impression

Glossary

- **Logo:** Visual symbol representing an organization or group.
- **Brand:** Product or service provided by an organization, attached to a specific name.
- **Hierarchy of Effects:** HEM Model (Awareness, Knowledge, Liking, Conviction and Purchase).
- **AIDA:** Model (Attention, Interest, Desire and Action).
- **Mission statement:** Summary of goals, values and direction of an organization or community.

Teaching and Learning Objectives

The teaching and learning objectives for this case can vary according to the instructor as well as lesson plans. At the most basic level, the first objective would be to introduce students to various logos in and out of the industry. A good exercise to meet this first objective can be to quiz (in an informal way) students, perhaps in a game-show format. Starting with extremely well-known brand logos, use a presentation of logo photos and ask students to identify the company and/ or specific product. This exercise has been used effectively starting outside hospitality and tourism with companies like MasterCard, Visa, Coke, GM, etc... In the second stage, introduce national or global oriented logos for hospitality and tourism and then finish with local brands (if there are any available). For these lessons, students should be able to:

- Identify logos by product and/ or company.
- Assess logos for “liking” and potentially effectiveness making the exercise much more complex.
- Understand what a logo is communicating.
- Match the logo to a mission statement or values.
- Fully critique a logo.
- Create a logo given product and/ or company research as well as data. This exercise will lend itself to a synthesis level of learning and understanding that require students to be creative in the development of a new logo for an existing company, non-profit or educational institution.

Class Room Use: Logo Framework

To frame the class dialogue, the following discussion of a logos study (O’Halloran and Miller 2013) can be helpful. The case is targeted for use at the undergraduate level and as part of marketing as well as assisting the instructor makes the connections for students to non-profit policy making institutions such as hospitality associations. The premise is that this would be a lesson focused on marketing, advertising, brands and logos.

Instructors can also highlight that logos are effectively used in multiple lines of business and an instructor can use examples from other disciplines. For example, in speaking of logos to represent the credential of a her profession, Leonie Milliner referring to public health examples, said “It is essential the public can identify professionals uniquely qualified to advise on diet, nutrition and public health. Registered Nutritionists are a trusted source of credible, scientifically-sound nutrition advice and make a substantial contribution to the nutritional health of the nation: the new logos add an effective graphic element to enhance the profile of UKVRN registrants for the benefit of the public, commissioners, employers and the media” (Anonymous, 2104). Additionally, in the article Tracking Logos, Claire Ortiz Hill stated that creative logos reach into communal/societal life and open the way to spiritual and sacral horizons of experience (Ortiz, 2012). Ultimately, an instructor can discuss logos as a frequently untapped opportunity for companies to communicate and symbolize a brand’s essence to consumers, thereby building closer relationships with them, creating strong positive emotions and facilitating top-of mind recall (Park et al, 2014).

Results from the aforementioned study can be utilized to illustrate facts and frame the learning for this case. This discussion can also model class assignments. This was a convenience sample of 115 hospitality students (68% female and 32% male) who were asked to view all the lodging, restaurant and hospitality association logos in the United States including Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia to document their impressions and reactions to the logos. In this example, 27% of the logos were black and white while 73% percent offered color logos.

The entire population of state (US) hotel, restaurant and/or hospitality association(s) was used for this study. 67 logos, defined as 45% lodging/hospitality associations and 55% restaurant associations (Note: association status has changed and remains in constant change, e.g. combining of association and/or closing of associations) were used. Comparably for non-US associations, in Canada provincial organizations for hospitality and tourism exist and in Switzerland, Cantons have organizations that perform similar functions. Students were sophomore, junior and senior level students and so they had a different knowledge base of the hospitality industry. Most students did understand the meaning of the pineapple (used in several logos) as the symbol of hospitality. Table 1, noted the logo ownership and its intended recipients for the state association(s).

Table 1

Logo Owners & Recipients

Logo owners
Association executives and Hotel operators
Restaurant operators and Allied member: vendors
Logo Recipients
Existing and potential members: lodging and restaurant operator sand vendors
State Legislators: policy members and consumers

In this framework, students would be considered potential recipients as would lodging and food service operations that were non-members. For existing members, the association logo should be representative of advocacy and value. For potential members, these same attributes should communicate the value of membership for policy makers. The logo should infer professional advocacy. Students were introduced to current policy issues and an orientation to state industry associations. For policy makers, a well-known logo should immediately signal our industry and strong advocacy for that industry. Finally, for the consumer, affiliation with the estate association should and could infer value, trust, etc... in the establishment as well as the industry in general.

Using these models (Hierarchy of Effects, AIDA) as a framework for assessing student reaction and impressions, students viewed logos and recorded their reactions and impressions. Students were prompted by the following questions:

- What does the logo represent?
- Does the logo get your attention?
- Does the logo maintain your interest?
- Do you want to know more?
- Does the logo make you want to act on the product?

Students then examined printed color logos of all state associations; hotel, restaurant and combined. Students generally felt that the interest in the logos would be created by colorful images and modern appearances. Interestingly, students did not see that much action would be generated through the logos. responses included very specific notes, "All of the round logos with letters around them are boring and should be out of style for hospitality." Others felt that hospitality should be represented with lively, modern, and fun logos. Review of the student responses also included a word search for descriptors. The following words and descriptors were noted repeatedly in student comments with the number of times each was used is also noted.

Using these descriptors as a guide within the AIDA and HEM frameworks student responses can be categorized in terms of high attention and liking, for many of the logos. Their interest and/ or conviction

differed and could be considered medium. Student's desire and/or purchase action based on the logos presented was considered low. There were also reoccurring comments about symbols, noting the use of the pineapple was out of date as many people are not familiar with the pineapple as the symbol of hospitality. There were regular comments concerning font and color as well as suggestions for more photos and creativity when developing a logo. Others noted that many states use their state shape and that some are meaningless. Some noted favorites were Connecticut, Hawaii, Maine and Puerto Rico. Students also noted that if tag lines and or slogans were used with the logos they seemed to be non-creative. Overall, students indicated a need to modernize and make the logos more readable, representative of their state and more definitive in representing the hospitality industry.

Teaching Approach and Sequence of Discussion Questions

A lesson on or using logos can be loaded with content for students and help them make the connection to marketing, product, mission, value and policy. Many students are media savvy and have seen many logos, but may not have understood their purpose, reach and/ or power. An exercise such as this may help them to understand what logos can mean and accomplish. To begin, students need to be introduced to the basic knowledge of logos. The questions below capture an introductory line of thought.

Logo Questions

- What is a logo?
- What are the dimensions of a good logo?
- What is a brand?
- What is the intention of a brand and logo?
- How can you measure logo's success?
- What criteria should be used to evaluate a logo?

Subsequently, a lesson outline could include:

1. Introduction of brands and logos
2. Brand/Logo relationship to mission statements, etc...

Table 2

Descriptors of Logos

Font: 55% commented on small print
Color: 88% preferred color in logo
Modern: 22% noted logo very modern
Creativity: 9% thought logos were creative
Symbols: 6% commented on symbols and clarity
Unique: 7% noted logos were very unique
Boring: 36% noted logos were boring
Good: 91% noted logos were overall: good

- Recommended
 - Review and analysis
- 3. Examples of famous logos:
 - Recommended Non-hospitality:
 - Coca Cola, Nike,
 - Recommended Hospitality:
 - MacDonald's, Hilton, Marriott, Hyatt etc...

Logos and the corresponding organization mission statements can be retrieved from regional, state or local web sites. These examples can be made available to students. Students are asked their like(s) or dislike(s) of the logos as well as their impression of what potential recipients (viewers) of the logo might infer from them. (Using the Hierarchy of Effects, AIDA models). This activity will act as a lesson to introduce theory and then provide an application opportunity for students.

Logo Exercise

Building on the "Business Problem" in the case, students have the mission statement and logo of the NCRLA. To recap the charge for students: As an industry consultant to a hospitality association, you have been asked to assess their current logo, create a new logo and make recommendations to better position their brand. You (student) will analyze the organization's mission, vision and core values. You have decided to use the advertising models you are familiar with as a starting point. You are asked to consider additional research focusing on measuring perceptions, recall and recognition of logos. While you may not be able to answer these questions currently, your client would like you to propose a method to assess their logo.

Students, in groups or individually can assess the NCRLA logo. The students may need and/or want to research the organization company/product and its direction. A case analysis report will be based on the mission and facts about the state association provided (the instructor can substitute other locations).

The analysis would require:

- Name of association
- Mission
- Analysis criteria (models)
- Student impression of the logo and a final critique with justifications.

Assessment: Using the Hierarchy of Effects and AIDA methods noted in the main body of the case, an instructor can guide the assessment of logos on criteria such as student liking and potential action based on their impression of a logo. There are numerous "how to" models provided on the internet, for example Use the AIDA model for small business marketing (<http://www.functional-marketing.com/aida-marketing.html#axzz3MYCGyDJH>). Similarly use of the Hierarchy of Effects model can be supported by the numerous internet links on the

model, for example, http://www.learnmarketing.net/hierarchy_of_effects_model.html. As previously stated the Hierarchy of Effects model notes steps from awareness to purchase. As Lavidge and Steiner, (1961) stated, the job of the advertiser (or in this case instructor) is to encourage the customer (student) to go through the six steps and purchase the product. Students as customers can review their process and be asked to make a purchase or non-purchase decision with reasoning. Additionally noted in the main body of the case, Ferree (2013) highlighted the keys to effective logos as: memorability, meaningfulness, uniqueness, professionalism, timelessness, differentiation of colors, unity among elements in the logo and scalability. An instructor can also use these dimensions as part of the assessment of logos and a framework for student work assessment.

Recommendation: A second stage of this assignment could be to create new logos for the company and/or select an organization that needs a logo. The students can hopefully work with organization representatives in a live service learning project. For example, a plan for the creation of a logo needs to be put in place that includes:

- Art, photos, clip art, etc...
- Design
- Mock ups; logo examples

If the assignment is a service learning project and involved working with community clients, the assignment can evolve into a larger project. This decision, of course, rests with the instructor and his or her learning objectives.

The effectiveness of a visual logo likely depends on multiple design properties of the logo (e.g., color, shapes, and sizes) (Park et al, 2013). Students will be expected to present a logo and the related reasoning why this logo was created as well as its expected effectiveness for the organization. The students must justify what they accomplished based on the goals and objectives expressed in the mission as evidenced in the community and or their stated goals for developing a brand.

References

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