

NEW BUSINESS TEMPLATE

Rethinking Your Logo? Follow These Five Important Guidelines

By David Gould, Proponent Group Editor

The famous King Ranch in Texas marks its livestock with an icon called the “Running W.” A simple, wavy-shaped letter, it’s among the most recognizable ranch brands in America.



Aficionados of horse and cattle branding give serious thought to the design and functionality of these imprints. The brands they admire have a bold, unique look that helps spread the ranch’s renown. They also hold their shape reliably on the animal’s hide—not so different from a golf logo used in custom embroidery, when you think about it.

While ranch brands were among the first logos ever used in America, now millions of insignia identify products and services to customers—golf instruction businesses do it, too. It’s the regular practice of Proponent Group to acquire, store and study the logos our members have created to promote themselves. To help as you strategize about your logo’s look and message, we’ve pulled together ideas from experts, along with some common-sense principles. In this article we will expand upon the information here with the debut of our Instructor Logo Library and Logo Design Template later this month. Have you been wondering about your logo’s style and effectiveness? Give these five guidelines a close look.

1) Logo design is a facet of marketing that is studied intensely—don’t take yours lightly. The website logolounge.com is a great source of current trends and ideas in logo design. One factor the site stresses is how trend-driven this field is. People who create logos have to be aware that fashions change quickly. That doesn’t mean a good logo can’t last for many years—it can. But it’s also easy for a logo to look badly out of date—which, instead of attracting new customers, will put them off.

2) Overall trends in the graphics world strongly influence logo design: Compare a 20-year-old Time Magazine with this week’s issue and you’ll see striking differences. Typefaces, color palettes and other design ele-

ments from 1992 have given way to new looks. Virtually all golf instruction logos use type and color, so it stands to reason that many older designs have colors and fonts that the graphics world has abandoned. You don’t want to be the last person using styles everyone else has given up on.

3) In graphics, you always forfeit in order to gain:

Designers face a huge array of possible shapes, images, typefaces and color schemes. When they create a billboard, a flyer, a magazine page or a logo, they must choose one style or look and pass on countless others. Check out the two Proponent Group logos above. One design is all about gracefulness, affluence, complexity and tradition while the other chooses to be simple, straightforward and boldly modern. The text portion of the Colleton River logo is less immediately legible than the text used by Cundari School of Golf—that’s okay, because club members are the audience and they know automatically what that flowing script says. Based on the market position of these two businesses, and the message each one sends, they could not exchange logo styles and achieve their respective goals.

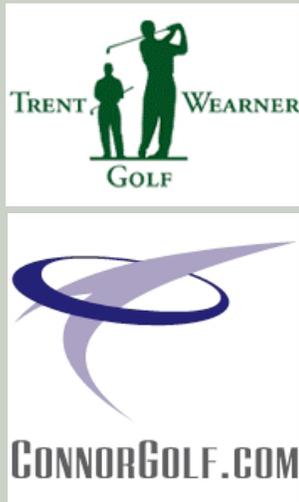


4) There are “pure logo” design choices and “field-specific” choices: Recently, analyst Bill Gardner of logolounge.com wrote about a “return of the classics” in logo design. “Monograms are coming back,” he commented, and “initials are being reworked and recombined—some are classic, some are contemporary.” That observation puts a good light on the next two member logos,



submitted by Twin Brook Golf Academy and Dr. Jerry Elwell. Of the two, Jerry Elwell's logo is the one that adheres to monogram style completely, using nothing but his initials.

By contrast, look at the design choices made by Connor Golf and Trent Wearer Golf, which opt for an industry-specific look. One employs a realistic image of teacher and student while the other uses shapes to suggest the arc and kinetic movement of a golf swing. For pure longevity, the classic, pure-logo design used by Twin Brook and Jerry Elwell have a likely advantage. Monogram-style logos, while they give up the advantage of associating with golf or the golf swing, have been around for centuries and are basically timeless. In gaining that advantage, the two logos above pass on the opportunity to be industry-specific.



5) **Look beyond a one-off logo to logo “families.”** Another point stressed in Gardner's trend report is how many applications a logo is used for. “More than ever,” he notes, “we create families of icons and symbols for use on electronic devices and other uses.” Business cards, letterhead, signage, your own website, social media sites, as well as shirts, hats, golf balls and the like are all natural points of display. Even as a symbol to the left of a website address in the URL bar, an icon is used by all big brands. Therefore, the “family” approach is one your designer should consider. You see some of that “family” approach in the logos of Jason Reddington and Stooksbury Golf.

In each case, the designer has provided options. Jason, if he chose to, could use only his monogram element or only the larger, horizontal portion of his two-part logo. Likewise, because Stooksbury Golf produced a black-field version and a no-field version of its logo, applications like embroidery and even window decals can be produced in a way that is more easily executed and often more legible.

Continuity is valuable for a golf instruction business, but so is change. Since your logo is the basic statement of your personality, your professional style and even your



target customer, it's vital that you evaluate it periodically. It can't be constantly changing but it surely isn't worth keeping forever. When you elect to do a review of it, think about what's basic to your marketing message, consider creating one theme with variations, and lean on qualified sources—we at the Proponent Group are by all means one of them. You'll be well-equipped to create a logo that's attractive and appealing to all who see it.

Lorin's Law: Don't Get Stuck with Inadequate Digital Files

However well-designed your logo may be, its value is greatly diminished if you aren't in possession of a large high-resolution digital file of it. On many occasions, I have worked with members on marketing tools and discovered that the logo files stored on their hard drives are far from “first generation.” These files have been copied and restored over time and lost their resolution, making them blurry and washed out.

Or, even worse, I've had a couple of Proponent members tell me they didn't even know where to find their digital logo files! Please, take the time to have any graphic files saved on your hard drive and on back up disks or thumb drives in easy to find locations. These back ups should include a TIF file, an EPS file, a high-resolution JPG and a low-resolution JPG. The low resolution version is perfect for your website and the others are more appropriate for various types of printed materials.

– Lorin Anderson

Your Costs and Turnaround Time—An Expert Explains

We asked a professional graphic artist/designer, Lisa Derian, about the process of acquiring a new logo, Lisa, who has done high-quality design work for the Proponent Group, owns and operates Derian Design in Carmel, California (deriandesign.com). Here was Lisa's response:

“As with any service-based need, you want to begin with referrals. Starting your search for graphic designers that come recommended to you by your peers will make the design process far smoother and more successful—basically because the approach they take will tap into the feel and style of your industry.

“A new logo doesn't need to cost thousands of dollars. Standard logo development rates should come in between \$500 and \$1,000. The number of drafts required is completely related to your ability to communicate your vision for your logo to the designer and that person's ability to interpret what you express. A good designer knows the right questions to ask in order to help you express your vision. In that scenario, only a few back-and-forth steps will be needed to finalize your design.”

– David Gould