

The Logotype

SE

by Shawn McKinney © 2004

To examine the logotype, let us consider a group of related visual design terms, and their relationship(s) to each other:

corporate identity

logotype *n.* Letter or word formed into a distinctive and unified form. Can often provide the basis for a company trademark, brand or corporate identity. Often abbreviated to "logo."

pictogram/graph

symbol

trademark

(from: The Thames and Hudson Encyclopaedia of Graphic Design and Designers (World of Art Series), by Isabella and Alan Livingston, New York: Thames + Hudson, 1992)

Such an examination quickly points us toward further, related terms, found in a typical English language dictionary:

connote

denote

identity

mean

represent

sign

signify

(from: The American Heritage Dictionary, Fourth Edition (pprbk), New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001)

Logotype design begins with research.

Questions include:

Answers to such questions begin to "paint a picture" of an individual or organization. A visual designer tries to capture the essence of that picture, as a logotype and/or identity system.

Three basic goals for a typical logotype include:

A logotype's success can be measured by how easily it is recognized and understood by one or more groups of people.

Reasons for modifying or redesigning a logotype include:

Logotypes involve: particular typeface/s, style/s, weight/s and size/s. Logotypes are designed to be reproduced in: specific color/s and place/s, with/without other design elements. Logos and logotypes often incorporate: graphic symbol/s in addition to letterforms and/or typographic elements.

Basics to consider when designing a logotype:

Logotypes may utilize:

Other design considerations might include: