

The Branding Basics & Beyond

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Five Fabulous Facts about what to avoid when you're beginning the process of branding your business . . .

1 **Less is more: Fonts** – When picking fonts for your logo and general branding keep it clean. Two different base fonts are plenty. Make sure they compliment each other. A serif and a non-serif . An industrial font combined with a graceful handwriting font can be a cool combo. Or a bold and a light font from the same family etc. If you absolutely have to use a third font make at least two of them very similar. If you can't resist using four or more—then ... well...NO!

BILL'S BAIT SHOP—Midnight Madness Sale

Half Price..... **EVERYTHING MUST GO**

Our Shelves are dangerously overstocked!

Aggh! My eyes!

Simplicity suits design

Look, how nice and still fancy!

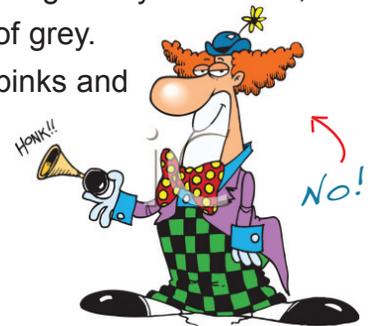
2 **Compatibility: The big picture** – If your business is selling candy or flowers, then you don't want your brand's color palette to be somber tones of grey.

Conversely, a serious undertaking shouldn't be represented by neon pinks and oranges. It's confusing. Color, style and imagery all have symbolic undertones and we make subconscious decisions based on them. So, remember—bankers wear pinstripes—and exotic dancers wear sparkles!

For example:

The Candy Shop

Really? What kind of candy? Sad angry candy maybe ...



Crazy Al's Life Insurance Co.

3 **Too busy and too trendy: Style** – If you have a huge explosion of stars, balloons, exclamation points and sunbursts on your sales material then your audience may be confused or put off.

Too much clutter is distracting and unappealing. Just as in fashion, trends come and go—FAST. So, keep it simple, clean and professional. There's a reason why the classics are timeless.



Yes! → **THE NEW YORKER**

– from Logos to Layouts . . .

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TMI! Layout content – A quick note on expanding your brand to sales material. First: avoid Brand overkill. If your logo and brand palette are simple and classic then you'll be able to dress up a sales piece with a broader range of design and color. Second: don't make the mistake of trying to cram every fact about your business into one brochure.



TIP: Write what you *think* you want to include, then cut it by half and let your branding and design do some of the talking for you. **That's what it's for!**

← *Too much information!*

5

Don't let your Branding be the boss of you – Most big companies (and some small) have

branding 'police'. It's their job to make sure that the purity of the logo/branding that they've created isn't messed with by outsiders but, when you're starting out, don't be too rigid. Don't choose branding that won't allow you room to grow.



Beauty & the 'Brand' Beast!



If you like, pick a fun or made-up name. Something that gives you the ability to stretch your brand. Also, try to customize if you can. If you're using stock imagery, find less known sources and use these images only for secondary purposes. Unless it has been altered, don't use a stock image to represent your brand!

If you've noticed a theme—you're right! In branding design, especially when you're starting up, the best thing is to keep it simple. It's easier to grow a brand over time than it is to undo a negative first impression. Don't be overwhelmed. There are lots of people out there to help you—and it's one of the most fun parts of a new business.

Think of your brand as your identity. It's more than just a few graphics, crazy fonts and color. Your brand speaks for you to potential clients and tells them what your business is about. Think about what impression you want clients to get when they see your brand.

NOTE: This is a simple overview to get you started on the right path in building your branding.

First learn the rules—*then* you can start breaking them!

