

Lesson 1

Logos Don't Matter

IF YOU'VE EVER SPENT TIME designing or redesigning a logo for your company, raise your hand. Don't worry, no one in the Starbucks will notice.

Remember the long meetings, going over and over the tiniest details, deciding which blue better represents your mission statement or choosing a font or two. You're never going to get that time in your life back.

We're here to let you in on a little secret: logos don't matter. And they certainly aren't the be-all and end-all of branding. We spend so much time and money on logos, but our brands aren't in our business hands; they belong to our market. Your brand changes with each interaction—a living, breathing relationship between you and the world.

Let's picture two logos. The first is an apple with a bite taken out of it. You can see it, and you may even be holding it in your hand reading this book. When you picture that logo, you'll think of two things: the most recent and the most extreme (good or bad) experience you've had with the company. For us, we think of how great the laptop is we're using to write this chapter (most recent), and about all the times they've replaced Alison's phone, no matter where she dropped it (most extreme).

The second logo we want you to picture is a circle, within which you'll find a V and a W. When you see it, you may picture the car you drove to Starbucks in, and you may also remember how the company it belongs to was outed for deceiving its market and polluting the environment on a global scale. The smog doesn't even need to be added to the lettering.

That's branding, and you'll notice it had nothing to do with apples or cleverly shaped letters. If the bite was moved to the other side or the color was changed, our brand understanding would remain the same. We love logos because they can be controlled and pushed out, but branding in the age of disruption cannot be.

Our logo lesson from Apple and Volkswagen is that a logo needs to be clear and concise and it shouldn't offend. It should be designed by designers, not by a group of people who can't even get an appropriate outfit together. A logo should be consistent so that it reminds people of the good business you're investing your time and money into providing. You can't redesign it to fix your problems, and you shouldn't try. Instead, focus on the stories behind the logo—create current positive experiences and long-lasting “*wow*”s to delight and move your market into comfort and loyalty.