



breaking trends

—
in logo design

Trends exist for a reason. In logo and brand identity design, they can serve as shorthand to help target audiences easily identify a product's function, or where a company fits within a competitive set. Other trends are products of opportunity, kickstarted by developments in technology that open new doors and break down previously existing boundaries. And, of course, trends can also begin when an original concept proves to be successful, leading to other brands playing copycat in an attempt to ride its coattails.

While design trends can certainly span a range of company and product brands, many of them are more pronounced within specific industries, or perhaps even exclusively associated with those industries. For example, a retro-looking badge-style logo with stripped-down line art and iconography might be a local brewery or an artisanal bakery. An aggressive-looking bird drawn with angular lines and bold colors, on the other hand, likely represents a sports team of some sort. Or a logo with geometric sans-serif typography and a clean, simple icon could be...well, that one could be just about anything, really – some trends transcend boundaries, after all.





When developing a new brand identity, industry-specific trends can be useful. Sometimes it's desirable to establish a place within an existing field, and following trends set by existing competitors can be an effective way to do it. This is a simple and straightforward approach, but it also assumes that the existing identities were well-crafted and successfully communicate their brand attributes to target audiences. On top of that, how will your brand stand out if it's representing the same attributes as your competitors?

Consciously and strategically breaking established industry design trends has the potential to set your brand apart, while simultaneously telling your target audience why they should care – the intersection of being authentic, compelling and distinct.

However, this approach isn't simple or straightforward; the key words here are "consciously" and "strategically." For example, using bright colors and a playful font would certainly set a luxury car brand apart from its competitors, but it wouldn't create the sense of desire and mystique that most luxury brands crave.

With that in mind, let's take a look at a few recent rebrands that have successfully launched visual brands that break away from the pack and establish themselves as standouts in their respective industries.



Pharmaceutical: Herceptin

Pharmaceutical logos have historically been pretty predictable: a large sweeping arc spanning a generic typeface that could practically be that of any drug name. The lack of distinct logo designs makes differentiation almost nonexistent, which is a major issue in an industry where medication errors can literally be a matter of life and death.

Genentech challenged the traditional route for pharmaceutical logo designs with their breast cancer drug, Herceptin. The literal depiction of a woman archer is a strong symbol that patients can not only recognize and remember easily, but rally behind. This logo encompasses, quite literally, what the drug does – attacks the cancer – while simultaneously symbolizing more aspirational ideas of strength and empowerment. Paired with a bright color palette of pink and purple that falls in a more traditional bucket for the target patient, Herceptin strikes a good balance of pushing the logo design boundaries while maintaining a strategy that doesn't stray too far for their audience.

Healthcare: **We Are Blood**

The logo for We Are Blood, a regional non-profit blood donation center in Texas, challenges the negative stigma associated with blood. Taking a trendy, badge-style approach, the logo looks more like a consumer brand than anything in the healthcare space and will likely catch the attention of a younger population that may otherwise overlook their local blood drive.

Perhaps most importantly, the logo and identity feel friendly and approachable, with bold, uppercase typography, softer curves and slightly desaturated colors. This straightforward approach to blood donation is reinforced by a stylized tree composed of droplets and the tagline “every drop matters,” all of which work towards breaking down traditional barriers to blood donation.



WE ARE BLOOD
DRAWN TOGETHER SINCE 1951

:86 4000


:86 4000

Finance: **86 400**

Financial logos range from simple straight forward wordmarks to icons representing partnerships or new days. Concentrating on mobile banking and their “value every second” motto, 86 400 (pronounced eighty-six four hundred) takes its name from the number of seconds in a day. The logo consists of a simple, sans-serif font with a colon before the name, which can change color and be animated to blink, resembling the look of a digital clock.

While this logo might not be considered ground breaking in other markets, its approach is both daring and original within the banking industry. The color palette is bright and refreshing and successfully communicates 86 400’s unique approach to banking. This carries through the marketing applications, as well, with the colon being extrapolated and used within a custom icon set that reinforces the brand’s visual style. Overall, the visual identity says “data driven technology” more than it says “banking,” which is exactly what 86 400 is going for.

:86400




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In no time.**

With incredible tech and constant product evolution, get to what you value sooner and make the most of your 86 400 every day.

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:86400



**Value.
Every second.**

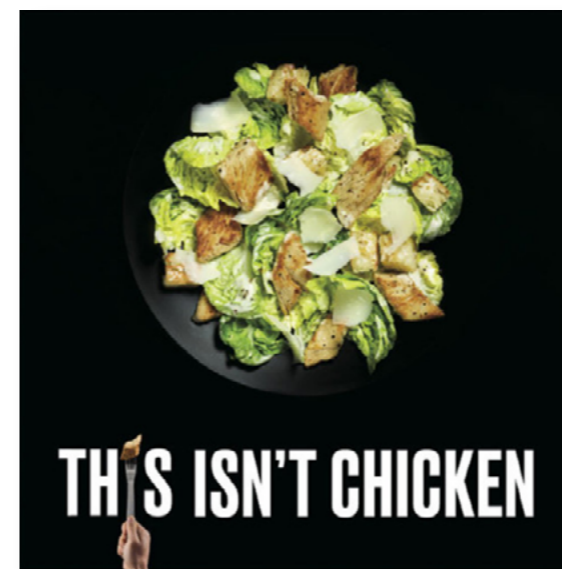
Imagine a digital only bank without the branches or unnecessary overheads that delivers more value to you.

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CPG: **THIS**

THIS, a vegan meat substitute, challenges the very idea of what a logo can be. The use of photography in a logo is certainly not the norm, and may even be considered taboo by some designers, but THIS pulls it off by replacing the “I” with a hand holding the product, contrasted with bold, simple typography.

This strategy allows a variety of products to be featured in a realistic way, defying the misconception that meat substitutes are unappetizing. In an entirely black and white identity, the product photography acts as the only splash of color, making it a striking design that will stand out on store shelves among similar products that typically use lots of bright colors. This approach allows the THIS brand to showcase the products in an attractive manner that capitalizes on simple, minimal design.





Leisure/Entertainment: Montréal Alouettes

The Montréal Alouettes are a professional football team based in Montréal, Québec. In contrast to football logos that always seem to have the same style (whether it be a cartoonish mascot or a giant block letter), the new Alouettes logo blurs the line between sports team and fashion design.

The logo itself consists of a simple line icon of a bird and an “M”, and a wide sans-serif font which wraps around it. Clean, simple, bold and original, particularly in the football space. The warm red and navy blue color palette really pops (while still paying homage to the old color scheme) and the new uniforms, fan apparel and marketing materials are clearly targeting a young, fashion-conscious audience. This identity is certainly one of the riskier rebrands in recent memory, but it’s refreshing to see such a bold challenge in a space with such firmly entrenched design trends.



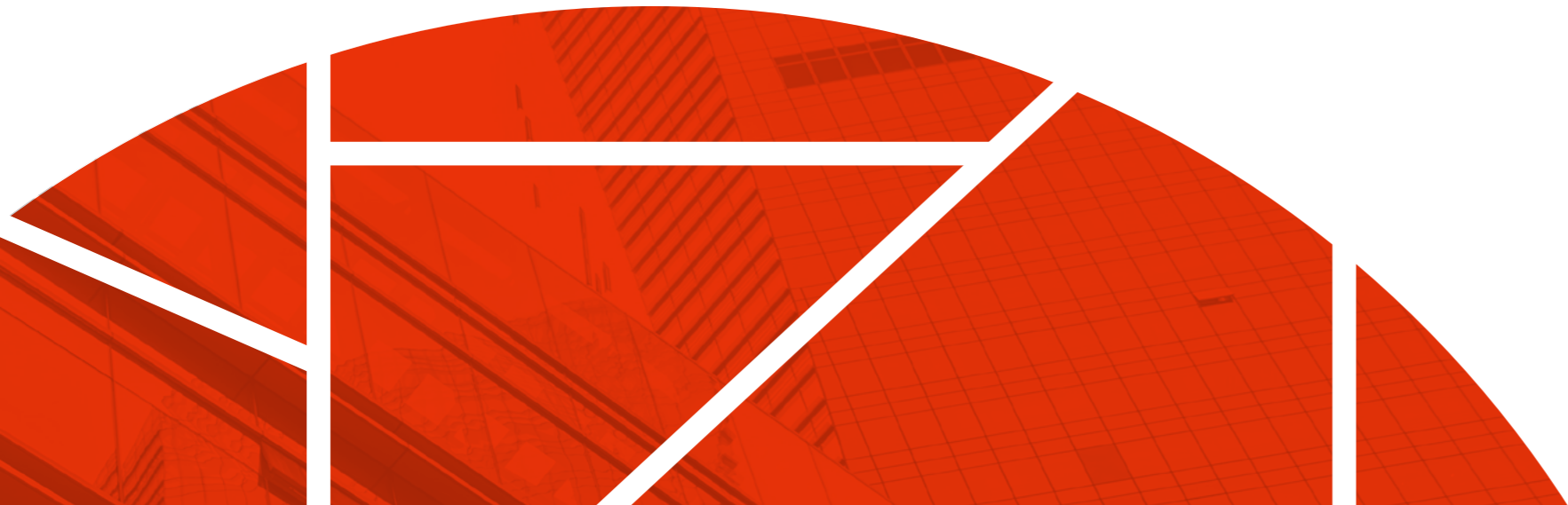
Taking a look at these five brand identities, it's clear that each of them was created with a strong awareness of their respective industries and how they wanted to stand out within those spaces. More importantly, they stand out in a way that is consistent with the overall brands they want to convey, brands that align with the values and beliefs of their target audiences. At Addison Whitney, we refer to this as a brand's purpose.

By creating a purpose that is distinct, authentic and compelling, you can then develop a brand identity that differentiates itself from key competitors and creates meaningful connections with both internal and external audiences.

This is accomplished through an approach that combines an in-depth discovery phase that provides necessary insight, a strategic and analytical definition phase that distills information into meaningful concepts, a creative development phase that brings those concepts to life in the form of a logo and brand identity, and a structured and disciplined deployment phase that carries that brand identity forward and into various touchpoints where it will ultimately interact with internal and external audiences.

By following this process and developing a meaningful brand purpose, your brand identity can be the next to stand out and truly connect with your target audience.





It takes strategy and creativity to build a great brand. **We have both.**

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