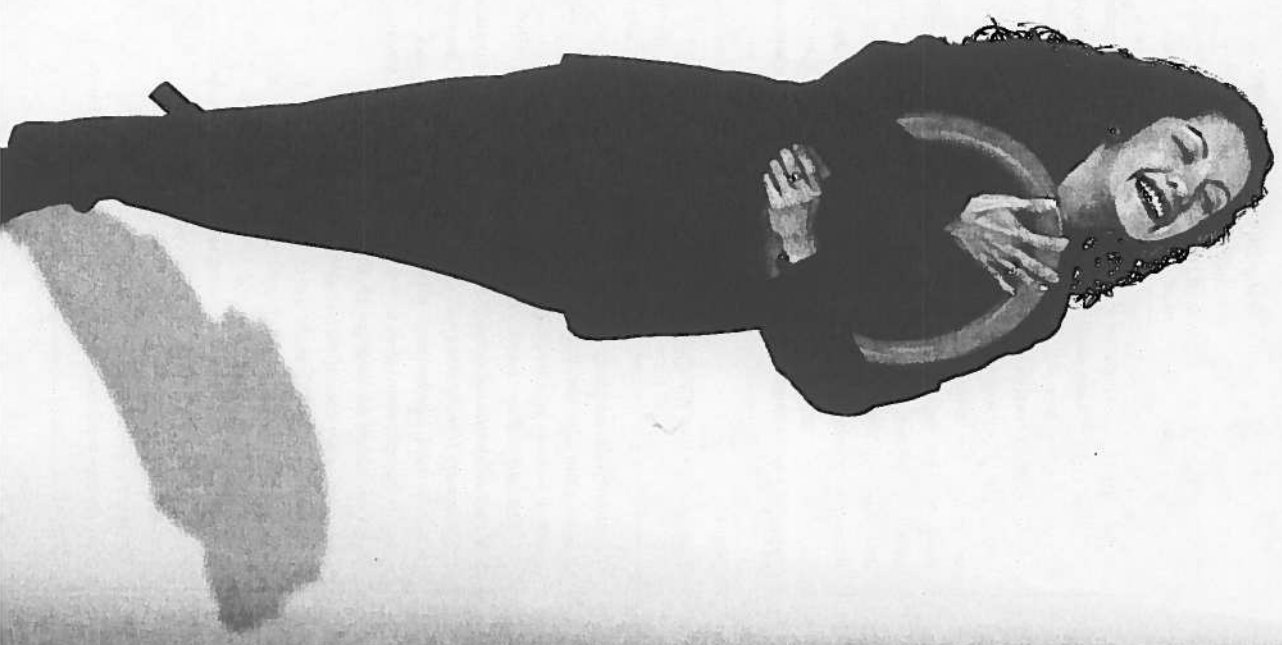
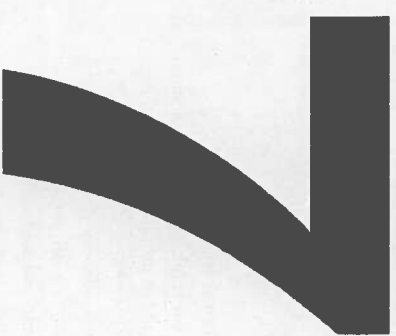


Chapter 7:
Visual Identity and Branding



Visual Identity
Brands and Branding



◀ Corporate identity: **ComputoSoluciones**
Design studio: **Ideograma, Mexico**
Creative director: **Juan-Carlos Fernandez**
Designers: **Morliv Dibildox, Daniel Morkus**

Objectives

Define visual identity

List the most common applications comprising a visual identity

Comprehend the meaning of a visual identity program that coordinates every aspect of graphic design material

Learn when and why visual identities began to become an industry standard

Identify the objectives of a visual identity program

Learn how unity with variety creates visual interest across applications

Understand the purpose of a graphic standards manual

Design a visual identity

Realize the role of the logo as the foundation of a visual identity

Define brand, branding, and integrated brand experience

Understand the purpose of branding

“Identity is the unique character of a group or brand—a combination of reputation, name, culture, manner, and values. Identity design represents these qualities and in doing so adds something to them. The identity designer has to become intricately involved in the group or brand in order to understand and thus influence its presented image.”

—www.Pentagram.com

Visual Identity

If we think of a logo as a unique *identifying* mark that characterizes a brand or group, then a visual identity extends that representation and characterization with an all-encompassing voice, with a unifying thread. A visual identity is the visual and verbal articulation of a brand or group, including all pertinent design applications, such as letterhead, business cards, and packaging, among many other possible applications. It may also include a tagline (or brandline) and advertising. A visual identity is also called a corporate identity or brand identity. A visual identity is a program that *integrates* every element of a company's graphic design including typography, color, imagery and its application to print, interactive and new media, environmental graphics, and any other conventional or unconventional media. It is a *master plan* that coordinates every aspect of graphic design material in order to attain and sustain an identifiable image and status in a multinational marketplace of brands and groups.

With a very carefully planned visual brand identity that is memorable, consistent, and distinctive, companies such as General Electric, Disney, 3M, Honda, and Federal Express have been able to maintain consumer loyalty and positive consumer perception. A consistent visual identity presents a memorable and stable public face.

The most common applications of any visual identity include the logo, letterhead, and other related business correspondence, as in the visual identity designed by Denise M. Anderson for Greg Lashé Photography (Figure 7-1). A visual identity consists of the following integrated components:

- brand name
- logo
- letterhead
- business cards
- packaging
- web site
- any other application pertinent to a particular brand

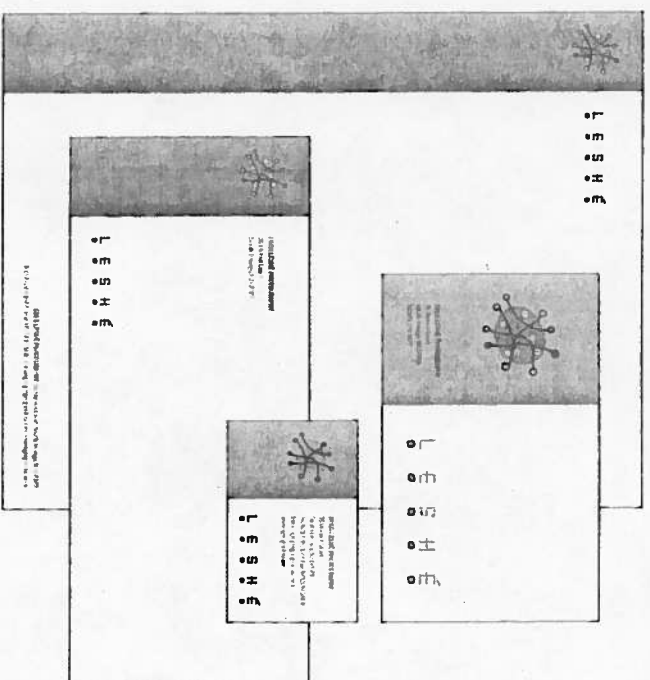


Figure 7-1
Visual Identity:
Greg Lashé Photography
Design firm: DWA Inc.,
Jersey City, NJ
Design director:
Denise M. Anderson
Designers: Greg Lashé
and Denise M. Anderson
Client: Greg Lashé
Photography

Background

The postwar period in the 1950s brought about a clear need for visual identities, especially for corporations. Applying the same logo to all materials was not enough to distinguish corporations or brands. Consistent identity programs

for CBS Television, first created by William Golden and then by Lou Dorfman; Olivetti Corporation's identity, created by Giovanni Pinotti; and the CIBA visual identity, created by James K. Fogleman, made design history with comprehensive design distinction throughout all design applications.¹ Visual identities would become graphic design industry standards with designers such as those listed above, as well as many seminal designers and firms leading the way, including Paul Rand, Lester Beall, Olaf Aicher, Saul Bass, Vignelli Associates, and Chermayeff & Geismar Associates.

Unity with Variety in a Visual Identity

Continuity must be established among the various designs in a visual identity. There must be a “family resemblance” among the designs. Of course, you can have a certain level of variety and

still maintain visual unity. The identity and graphics system for the International Design Center of New York includes graphics, invitations, publications, advertising, and signage (Figure 7-2); Vignelli Associates used Bodoni type and a limited color palette emphasizing black and red.

Most designers prepare a graphic standards manual that guides the client in the use of the identity by detailing the use of the logo, colors, and other graphics and imagery. This may seem stringent and restrictive, but it demonstrates just how crucial a consistent identity is to the image and success of a group or brand. Richard Danne was design director of the visual identity for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Washington, D.C. (Figure 7-3). A comprehensive seventeen-page graphic standards manual was developed, designed, and written that included paint schemes for aircraft, the Space Shuttle, and other space vehicles, as well as graphic systems for all publications, signage, forms, and media.

When designing a visual identity, you must know your audience. Clearly, the visual identity developed for Levi's SilverTab jeans is aimed at a young audience (Figure 7-4). The poses of the

Figure 7-2
 Identity and graphics program: DCNY
 Design firm: Vignelli Associates, New York, NY
 Designer: Massimo Vignelli and Michael Bierut
 Client: International Design Center of New York,
 Long Island City, NY

"DCNY, the International Design Center of New York, is an international furniture merchandise mart in Long Island City. The logo portrays elegance and strength by the choice of two contrasting typefaces. The visual identity includes graphic invitations, publications, advertising, and signage. Based on three very basic elements—Bodoni type with black and red colors—the visual identity is nevertheless extremely articulated and vibrant, and has achieved a very strong identity often imitated by similar organizations."

—Vignelli Associates

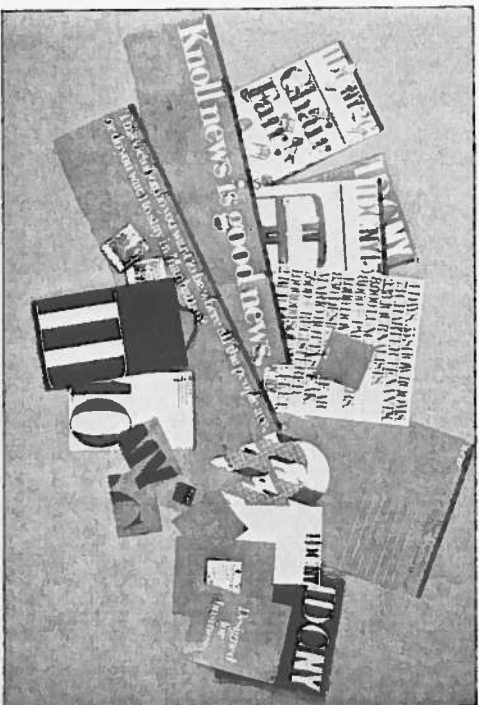


Figure 7-3

Graphic standards manual: NASA
 Design firm: Dornne & Blackburn Inc., New York, NY
 Design director: Richard Dornne
 Client: National Aeronautics and Space
 Administration, Washington, D.C.

Material supplied by Richard Dornne & Associates, Inc.,
 Easton, MA

A United States government agency dedicated to
 aeronautics research and space exploration, NASA
 is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with ten
 individual centers across the nation.

"The firm of Dornne & Blackburn Inc. was
 selected to develop and design a unified visual
 communications program for the agency. The
 acronym NASA was more recognizable than either
 the full name or its previous symbol. Building on
 this, the NASA logotype was developed. A system
 was devised that incorporates the logotype and
 sets standard configurations for the full agency
 name and the various centers. This program was
 honored with one of the first Presidential Awards
 for Design Excellence."

—Richard Dornne, Richard Dornne & Associates

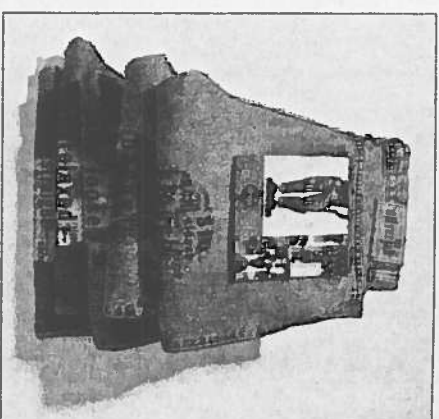
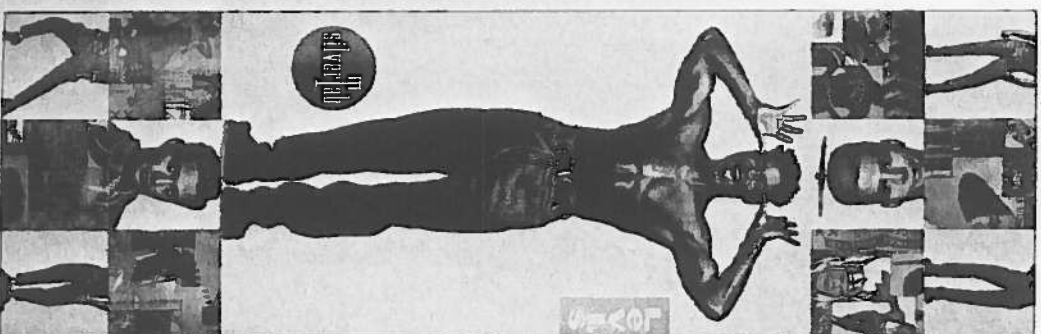
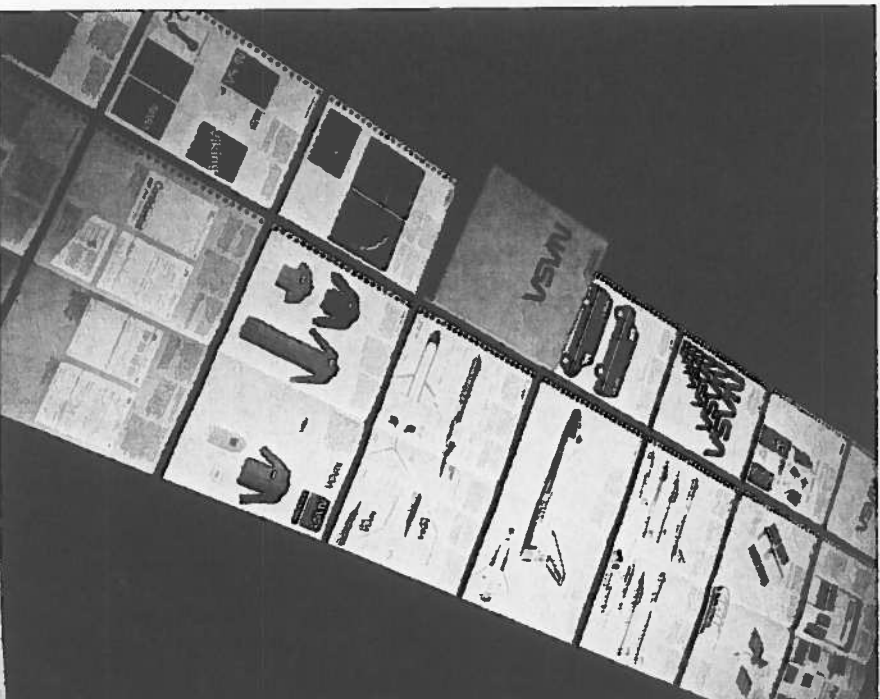
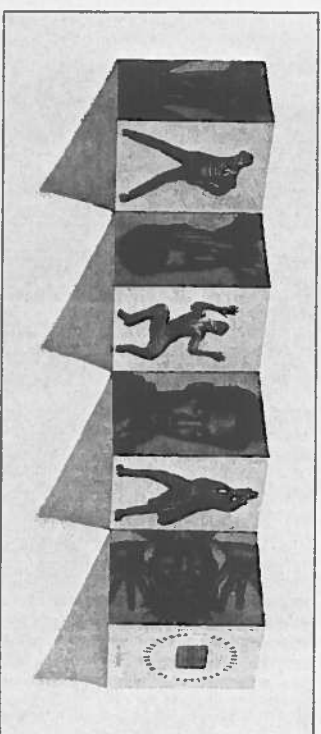


Figure 7-4
 Graphic identity:
 Levi's SilverTab
 Design firm: Michael Mobry
 Design, San Francisco, CA
 Advertising agency:
 Foote Cone & Belding
 Client: Levi Strauss & Co.

Every visual element—
 photographs, illustrations,
 and typography—carries
 the same look and feel.

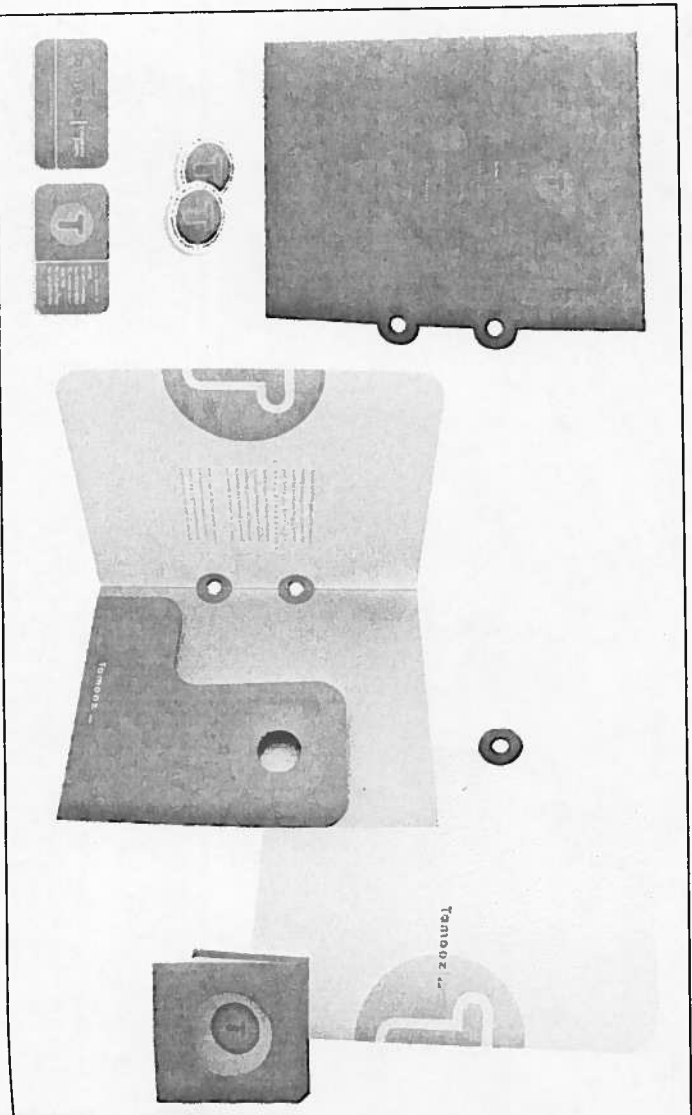


models and the use of patterns, collage, photomontage, and the contemporary typography all work together, contributing to the hip spirit of the visual system.

Figure 7-5
Corporate Identity: Tamooz
Design firm: Shira Shecter
Studio: Fresh Graphic
Design, Israel
Client: Tamooz

"Tamooz is a local exhibition and events design company. Here we arrived to make a fan, so the folded lines started with creativity as part of their new corporate identity. Most of the Tamooz content includes the use of 3D folds, unusual paper weighting, circles, and rounded holes—the 'T' super can always emerges prominently from the circles or holes."

—Shira Shecter



Suggestions

Creating a visual identity is an extensive design project; you will need a list of criteria to keep in mind. Your objectives are to:

- Coordinate all of a company's graphic design material
- Express the personality of the company
- Establish an image for the company
- Design appropriately for the brand or group
- Build in flexibility to work in a variety of applications and media
- Build in sustainability (longevity)—think at least five years down the road)
- Ensure differentiation and identifiability for the brand or group

The designer Shira Shecter comments: "Their original orange color evolved into a more powerful, focused 'orange' with metallic light-blue and white as secondary colors." Pentagram developed a new visual identity for the San Francisco Zoo; it was "part of an initiative to refresh the zoo's profile and redefine the visitor experience," according to Pentagram (Figure 7-6). The new identity was launched to coincide with the opening of a wide range of new and improved facilities, such as the new Lipman Family Lemur Forest and a new main entrance experience.

The elegance of the LS Collection of fine objects for the home is expressed through James Sebastian's minimalist use of type, choice of textured paper, exquisitely lighted photography, and, of course, layout (Figure 7-7).

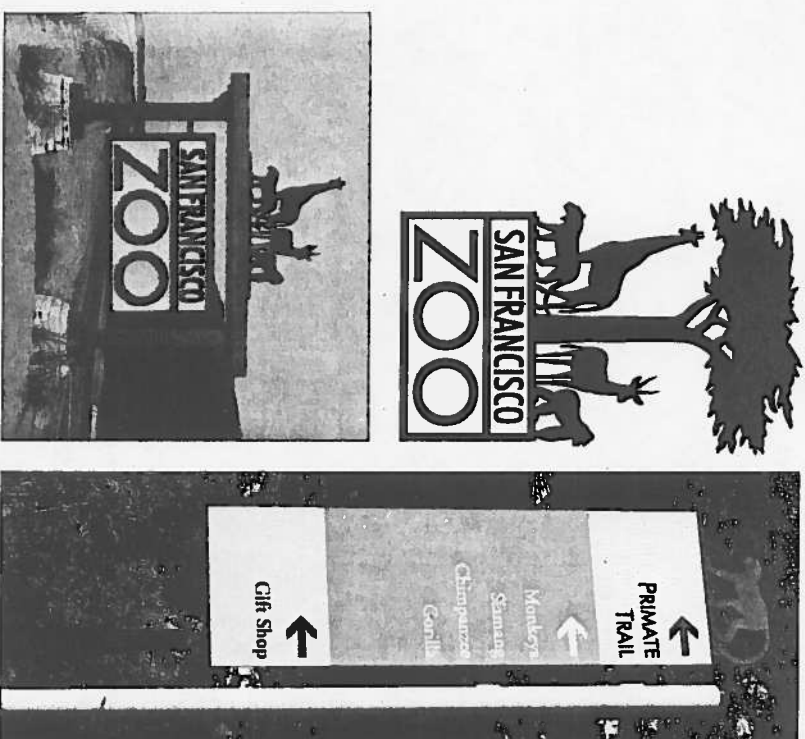


Figure 7-6

Identity: San Francisco Zoo
Design studio: Pentagram Design Ltd.
Art director/Creative director: Kit Hinrichs
Designer: Erik Schmitt
Photography: David Wackley
Client: San Francisco Zoo

"Pentagram partner Kit Hinrichs and his team created a visual identity that reflects the much improved visitor experience. The identity communicates the zoo's role as a community organization with a park, nature center, gardens, and bird sanctuary. The new identity also reflects the zoo's commitment to wildlife education and conservation, with a strong, accessible visual language and a color palette of natural, earthy, and vibrant hues."

—Pentagram Design Ltd.

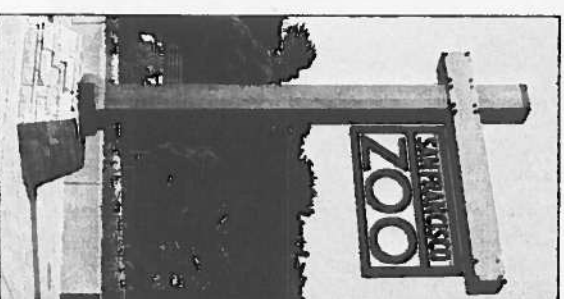
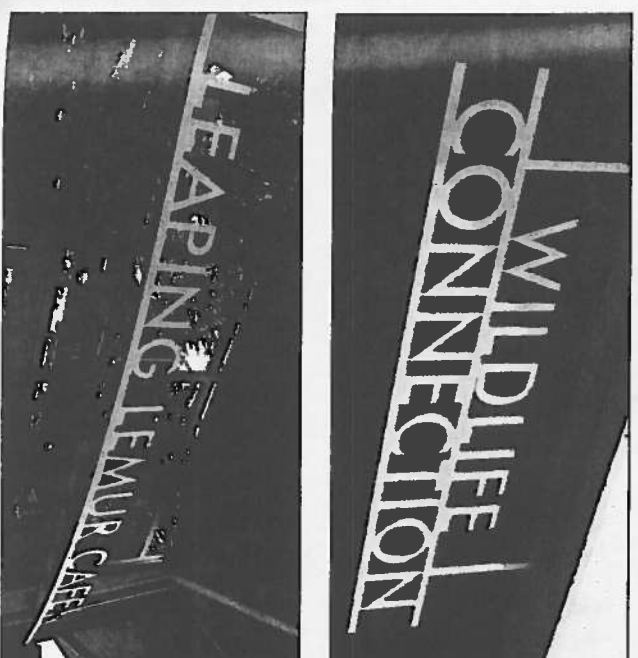
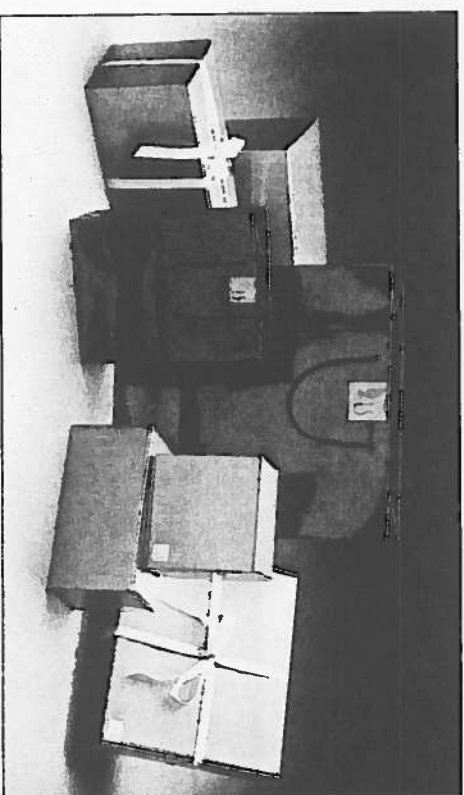
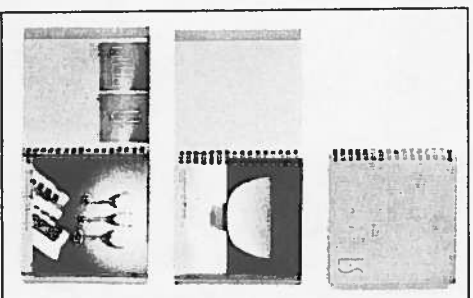
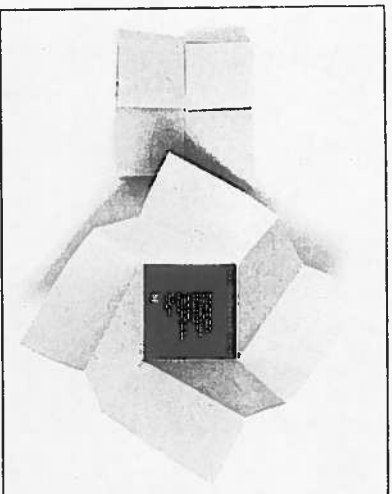


Figure 7-7

Agency: US Collection
Design firm: Designforma
Incorporated, New York, NY
Client: The US Collection,
New York, NY

"The elements of the US Collection were created to reflect the design and personality of the area, incorporating the corporate fresh and organic color."

—James A. Sebastian,
president, Designforma Inc.



For the corporate identity created for the Hotel Hankyu (Figure 7-8), Pentagram developed a visual identity of six stylized flower symbols, a custom alphabet, a coordinating color scheme, and decorative motifs. The program expresses luxury by differentiating each item in the hotel with special detailing. Applications include signage, room folders, stationery, labels, menus, and amenity packages for male and female guests.

Mastrandrea Design created the branding program and signage for the Loft store (Figure 7-9). Visual and color juxtapositions communicate a polished yet light spirit.

Pentagram's design solution for Muzak is comprehensive and memorable (Figure 7-10).

Although a visual identity is an extensive program, the main application in a visual identity is the logo, as is apparent in the visual identity for Muzak. For CompuSolutions, Ideograma created "the rings of the solutions," a symbol that represents the company's four areas of business, as well as the dexterity that its leadership has been required to maintain in Latin America during the last nine years (Figure 7-11).

The shapes and colors in the identity design for Oola, a chain of Swedish candy stores located in American shopping malls, projects a playful image (Figure 7-12). Without being

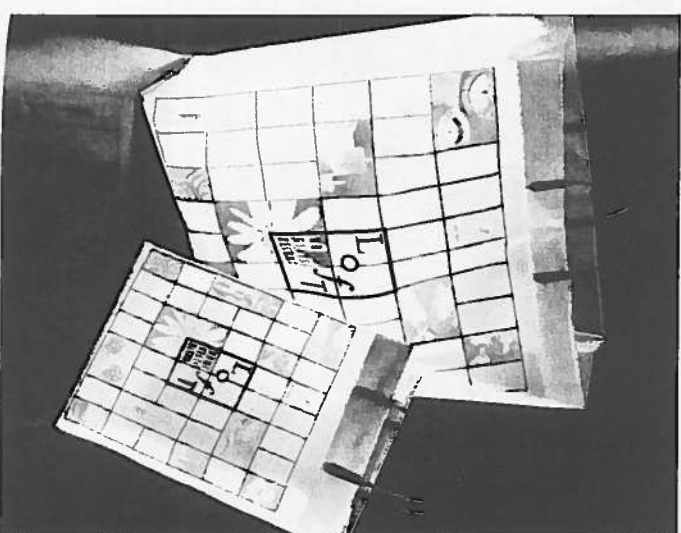
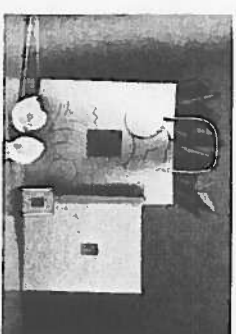
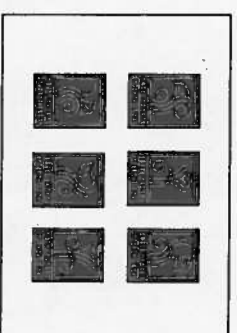
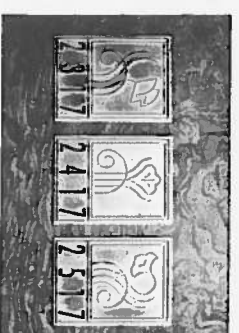


Figure 7-8

Identity and packaging: Hotel Hankyu International
Design firm: Pentagram Design Ltd.
Partner: Colin Forster
Associate/Designer/Typographer: Michael Gaskie
Designer: Denise Chung
Illustrator: MaRay Mizobay
Interior design: InnoDesign, Los Angeles, CA
Client: Hotel Hankyu International
Produced with: QUN Design Corporation and Dunbar Inc.

"In a reversal of the usual procedure, the client commissioned the identity program before any other design project, and the graphic elements were used to guide development of the hotel's interior design and architecture. Pentagram New York coordinated the project with the client, consultants, and promotional advisers in Osaka, as well as the Los Angeles-based interior designers.

Hankyu specified a distinctive emblem that would communicate quality, internationalism, and the 'universal appeal of flowers.' The visual concept is a modern interpretation, drawing upon the glonour of shagwon trunk labels from the Art Deco era. The program also expresses luxury by differentiating each item in the hotel with special detailing.

Applications include signage, room folders, stationery, labels, menus, and amenity packages for male and female guests."

—Sarah Hauri, communications manager,
Pentagram Design Ltd.

Figure 7-9

Branding: USF
Design firm: Mastrandrea Design, San Francisco, CA
Art director/Designer: MaryAnne Mastrandrea

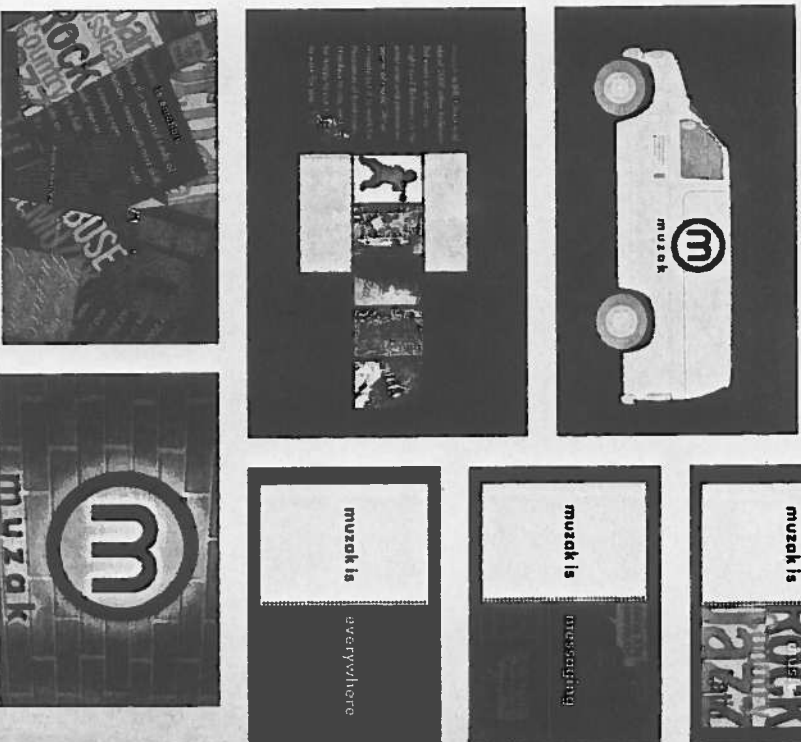
"Loft is a retail store offering innovative home furnishings targeted to the upscale consumer. The inspiration for Loft's brand identity came from the windows in our design studio. Our studio is in a 1920s loft building that features large windows sectioned into smaller panes of glass framed in black steel. By designing the Loft brand as a windowpane, I created a flexible system that can vary in size and use both product and conceptual images. The photos fit within and break out of the individual panes to add visual interest. This flexible approach keeps the brand fresh and conveys a sense of variety and style. Similarly, the shopping bags and business cards are printed on translucent plastic to simulate windowpanes."

—MaryAnne Mastrandrea, Mastrandrea Design



Figure 7-10
 Identity: Muzok
 Design firm: Pentagram
 Design Ltd

Notice how the “m” is used alone and in combination with the wordmark “muzok.” The use of lowercase letters establishes both a contemporary and approachable feeling.



illustrative, its colorful positive and negative shapes almost look edible—like candy.

Brands and Branding

A brand is the sum total of all functional (tangible) and emotional (intangible) assets that differentiate it among the competition.

Each brand has physical functionalities, features, or capabilities, which may or may not be unique to the product or service category.

Each brand also—due to its heritage, parent company, logo, visual brand identity advertising, and public perception—carries emotional assets.

Emotional (as well as cultural) associations arise in response to the spirit of the brand identity, the emotional content or spirit of the advertising, and the communities and celebrities who adopt the brand as part of their lives.

Poorly conceived and designed branding can greatly diminish a brand’s success. In a market-

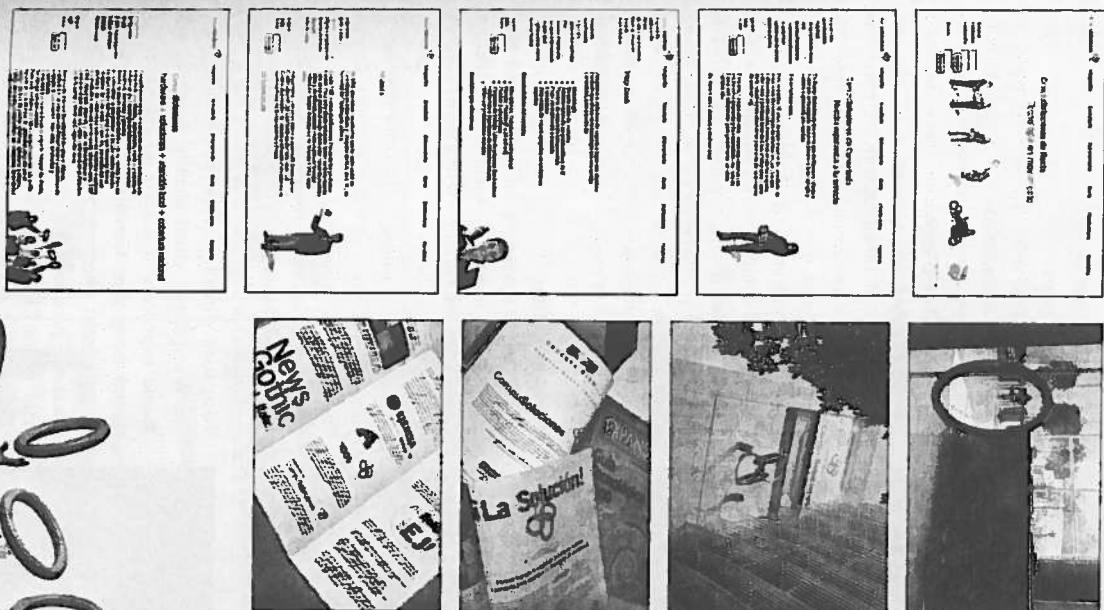


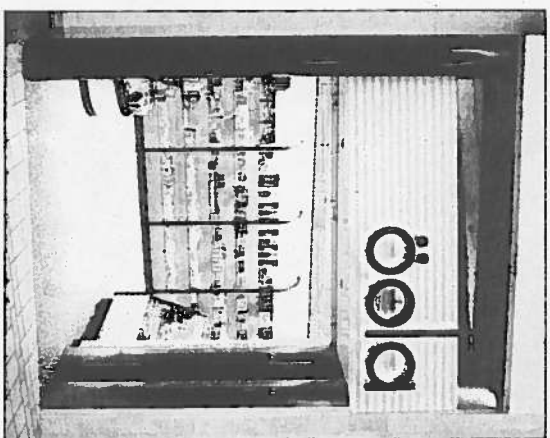
Figure 7-11
 Corporate identity: CompuSoluciones
 Design studio: Ideogram, Mexico
 Creative director: Juan-Carlos Ferrandez
 Designers: Marilú Dilellidax, Daniel Markus, and Ricardo Ros
 Client: CompuSoluciones

“CompuSoluciones has begun to use the rings in all its communications as the ambassadors of the solution for each need of business. Its system, dynamic and flexible, begs us to surpass the traditional concept of ‘logo’ to become an efficient program of identity.”

—Ideogram



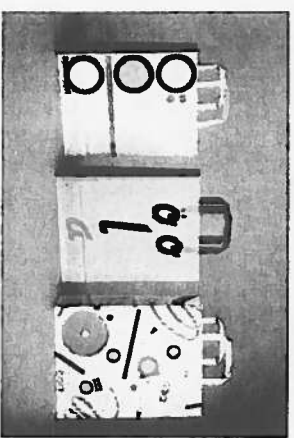
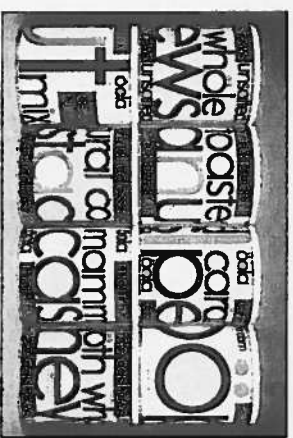
Figure 7-12
Ünity, Cola
 Design from: Revlon Group
 Designer: Lee
 Font(s): Design
 Kalle Spier
 Client: Ünic-Cola Corporation,
 Belmont, MA, Massachusetts,
 PA, New York, NY, 000
 Washington, D.C.



Ünic-Cola is a sort of sweetest candy, coming in flavors such as strawberry, lime, cherry, mandarin, and grape. Ünic-Cola is marketed under the name "Sweetness," but when Ünic-Cola was commissioned to design their retail identity, the company wanted that to represent a concept that consumers would not be overlooking simply as another consumer.

Our recommended strategy for the company's European origins with a new name and a bright, clean graphic look. The word "Ünic" was invented and became the basis for the storefront visual identity. Ünic was chosen for its Scandinavian sound, generalizable letterform, and the "ünic," which has become a central motif in graphic applications.

—Sarah Perry,
 communications manager,
 Revlon Group Design, Ltd.



lished the brand identity. Today, we think of branding as a comprehensive, integrated process. Branding is the entire development process of creating a brand, brand name, and brand identity, which might include other applications. Creating an integrated brand experience entails weaving a common thread or voice—seeming like one voice—across all of an individual's experience with a brand or group, and integrating the common language into all experiences with the brand. An integrated brand experience is the creation of a comprehensive, strategic, unified, integrated, and unique program for a brand, including every graphic design and advertising application for that brand, with an eye and mind toward how consumers and individuals experience the brand or group as each interacts with it.

Differentiation

Due to many convergent factors—greater mass production, competing companies manufacturing party products and offering party services, rise of disposable income, desire for sanitary packaging, and changes in the scope of corporations—logos, visual identities (identity design), brand names, distinctive packaging, and advertising have become crucial to a company's marketing message.

With such a huge glut of products and services (that have virtually become commodities), it is the brand name, visual identity, branding, and brand experience that serve to differentiate a brand or group. Certainly, Chiquita Brands International, Inc.—a leading international marketer, producer, and distributor of bananas sold under Chiquita—has distinctive branding (Figures 7-13 and 7-14).

In today's marketplace—where, in almost all cases, there is more supply than demand and several, or perhaps many, brands in each product or service category—it is vital to a company's marketing strategy to establish a comprehensive, distinctive branding program for their brand. Similarly, it is vital for any group to have a distinctive branding program.

Designers are also faced with the challenge of reinventing a brand, renaming a brand, and/or redesigning a brand logo and visual identity. For

example, Federal Express changed its name to FedEx to establish it as an international company. Esso was changed to Exxon, a more modern name with strong sounding "x's" to represent all of the parent company's new holdings. USAir was changed to US Airways to establish the brand as a global carrier because most people associate the word "air" with commuter airlines.

Landor Associates, Branding Consultants and Designers Worldwide, created the brand identity and environmental design for A.G. Ferrari (Figure 7-15). Warm earth colors appeal to our sense of taste, creating the feeling that the foods are delicious.

After defining the target audience, Liska + Associates worked with Revlon to develop a complete branding program for mop modern organic products, including all promotional materials. They established a visual language that defines the product as pure and simple. As a part of this language, the packaging parallels the charity and neutrality of the line's vegetable-based contents (Figure 7-16).

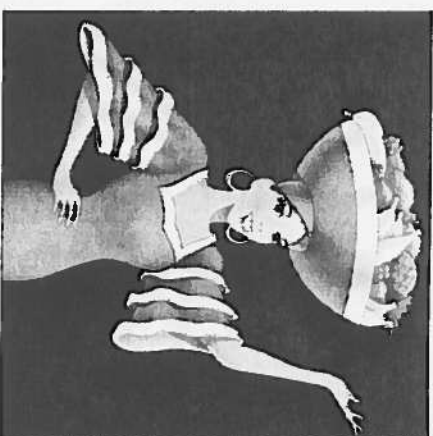


Figure 7-13
 Brand: Miss Chiquita
 Worldwide Personality
 Design studio:
 Semaklassky,
 West Dundee, IL
 Art director: Greg Semak
 Designers: Greg Semak,
 Jim Hardy, and Lynn Nigal
 Illustrator: Paul Trenchard
 Client: Chiquita

Summary

A visual identity is the visual and verbal articulation of a brand or group, including all pertinent design applications, such as letterhead, business cards, and packaging, among many other possible applications. The most common applications of any visual identity include the logo, letterhead, and other related business correspondence. Continuity must be established among



Figure 7-14

Corporate web site
 Design studio:
 Semaklassky,
 West Dundee, IL
 Art director: Greg Semak
 Designers: Greg Semak,
 Jim Hardy, and Lynn Nigal
 Copywriter: Chiquita
 Photography: Miscellaneous
 Client: Chiquita

This web site incorporates the Miss Chiquita Worldwide Brand. Essentially icon, as well as the Chiquita woman, and the design delivers the same spirit as the identity. Note the sense of place established in this web site design, where only with corresponding elements gives the user a sense of location from page to page.

place that is overcrowded with goods and services, a relevant and engaging brand experience can make a brand well known. If you have any doubts about how important effective branding is, just think of the power of Sony or

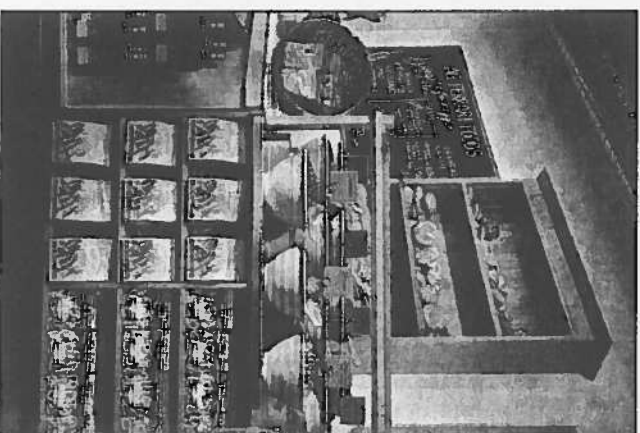
Coca-Cola. When brands were first introduced, it was the brand name, logo, and packaging that estab-

Figure 7-15
Brand identity and environment design:
A.G. Ferrari
Design firm: Landor Associates, Branding
Consultants and Designers Worldwide
Client: A.G. Ferrari¹



the various designs in a visual identity. There must be a “family resemblance” among the designs. Most designers prepare a graphic standards manual that guides the client in the use of the identity by detailing the use of the logo, colors, and other graphics and imagery.

Branding is the entire development process of creating a brand, brand name, and brand identity, which might include other applications. Creating an integrated brand experience entails weaving a common thread or voice, and integrating the common language into all experiences with the brand. An integrated brand experience is the creation of a comprehensive, strategic, unified, integrated, and creative program for a brand, including every graphic design and advertising application for that brand, with an eye and mind toward how consumers and individuals experience the brand or group as each interacts with it. With such a



huge glut of products and services (that have virtually become commodities), it is the brand name, visual identity, branding, and brand experience that serve to differentiate a brand or group. Designers are also faced with the challenge of reinventing a brand, renaming a brand, and/or redesigning a brand logo and visual identity.

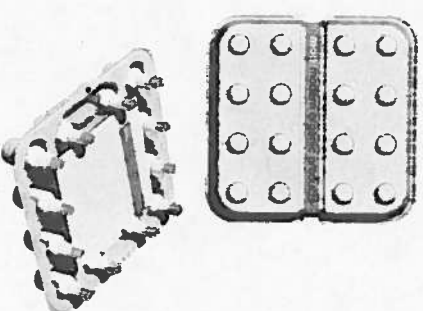
Notes

¹ John McDonough and Karen Egolf, *The Advertising Age Encyclopedia of Advertising*, volume 2, p. 755.



Figure 7-16
Image brochure: mop modern organic products
Design firm: Liska + Associates, Inc., Chicago, IL
Client: mop modern organic products

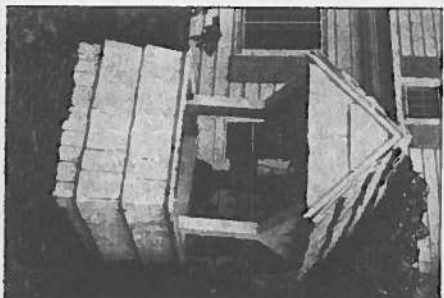
As part of its complete branding program for mop, Liska + Associates created a comprehensive brochure and product overview to define the brand and support the line. These materials instantly define the mop product line to encourage recognition among salon owners, stylists, and patrons. A minimal image style reduces the products to the most basic elements—their natural ingredients. The promotional materials feature models intended to appeal to a targeted range of consumers seeking products that are part of a healthy lifestyle. To accompany mop's marketing materials, Liska + Associates designed a dealer kit for product promotion. The kit functions as both a sales tool for product representatives and as a trial for salon owners interested in the mop line. Its packaging is designed to resemble an egg carton and is constructed of similar material, referring to the line's natural, vegetable-based origin. The set-contained package includes small sample bottles of the mop product line, along with a product brochure explaining the samples.



Start to Finish

Design studio: DMA,
Jersey City, NJ
Design director:
Denise M. Anderson
Designers: Kathryn
Schleinger and Jenn Calle
Client: Lauren Rutten
Photography
www.laurenruttenphoto.com

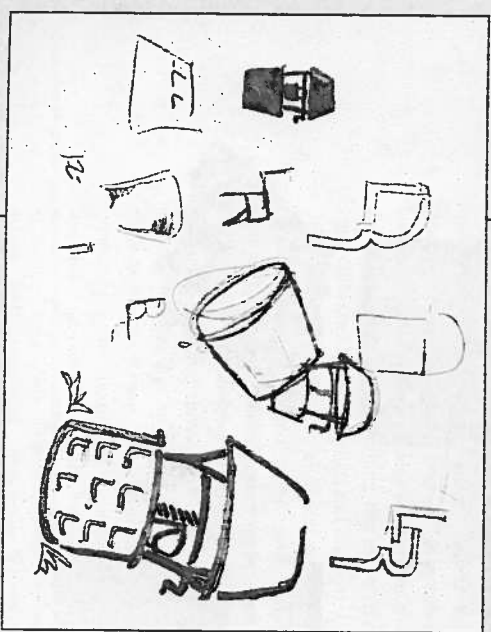
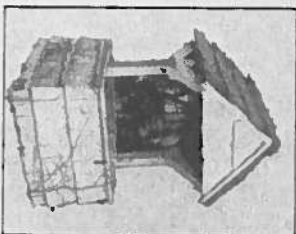
- 1 Source photos
- 2 Thumbnails sketches
- 3 Sketches further developed in a drawing program
- 4 Proposed business card layouts using developed sketches
- 5 Final business card



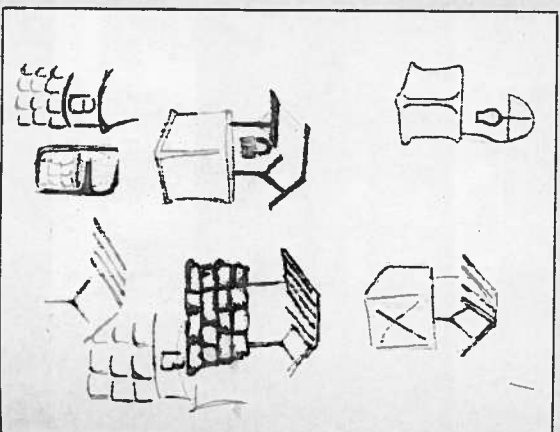
DMA had to work with a theme preestablished by the client. Lauren Rutten—who specializes in “life events” photography, such as weddings, where she captures and records people’s major life events on film—uses a wishing well as her symbol. Rutten also views the wishing well as a metaphor.

Since the wishing well theme was already utilized in Rutten’s web site, DMA’s design team also incorporated the theme in her identity. Here is an inside look at one design studio’s process of designing a business card, from start to finish.

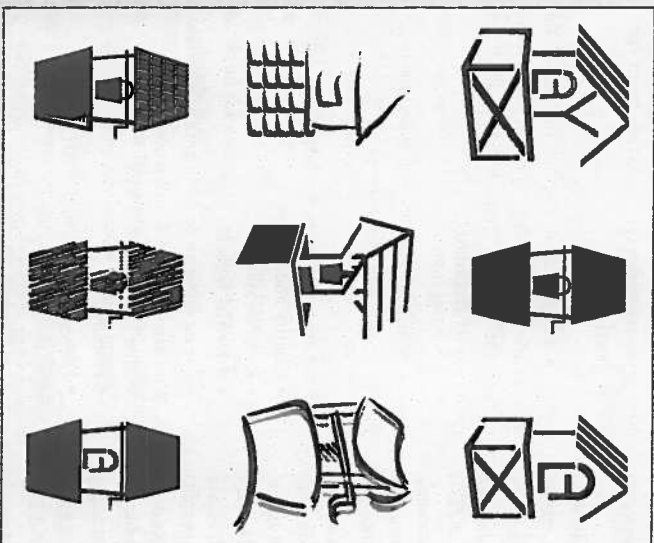
1



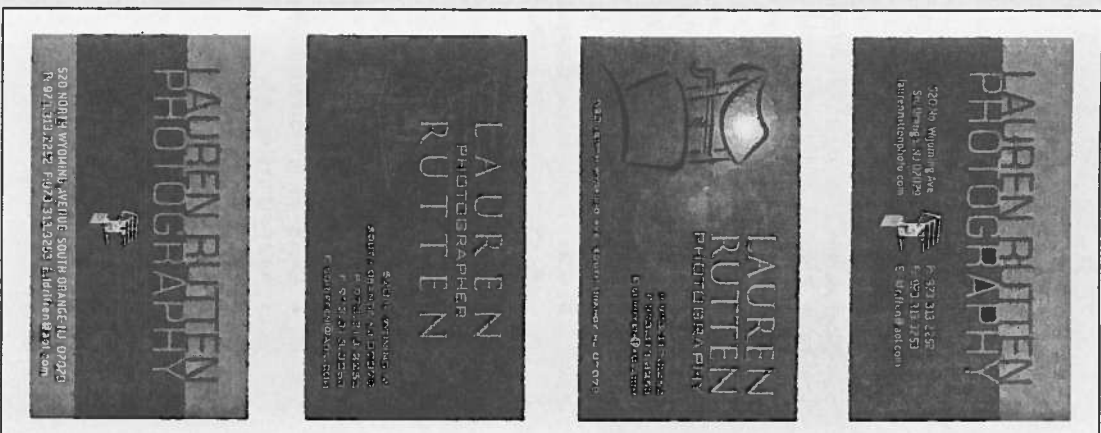
2



3



4



5

