

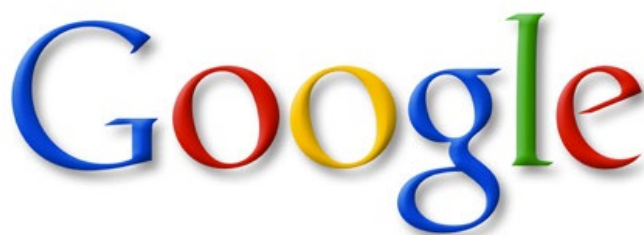
Google

Logo Case Study

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Over the past few years many companies have been updating their logos to reflect a more modern business. This includes many tech companies such as Airbnb, PayPal, Spotify, Facebook, Netflix and Google. All of these rebranding efforts aim to unify each company's identity and appeal to the younger, trendier audiences that are adapting technology into every aspect of their life. Just ten years ago companies were updating their logos with thick strokes, heavy gradients and a multitude of other effects made available through the use of the personal computer and programs such as MS Paint. Today, through the use of clean lines, bold colors and simple geometric shapes these logos reflect the current trends in design. Google's logo in particular has gone through a variety of tweaks since the company's inception in 1998. Their newest logo provides a refreshed and versatile mark for one of the most diverse companies in the world. Google uses a core set of colors, simple structures, and friendly animations to reflect how their products work in a variety of environments and sheds light on how their product is working for the user.

Since Google was founded, the company has mostly focused on technical prowess before design. When it came to making design decisions, they largely relied on data and statistics to settle on one option over another. One notorious example of this mentality is when the team had trouble deciding between two shades of blue for the search button. In order to resolve the issue the Vice President of User Experience, Marissa Mayer, proposed a very technical solution. "She has asked her team to test the 41 gradations between the competing blues to see which ones consumers might prefer" (Holson). At the time Google's main objective was acquiring users, so letting the users decide the specific shade of blue seemed completely logical and fit the continuing practice of the business.



Google Logo (1999)

<http://www.wired.com/2008/03/gallery-google-logos/>

The logo at this time wasn't a main focus for the company. Its original designer describes how it was reflective of the company's culture: organized, efficient, and offbeat. "There were a lot of different color iterations," said Kedar "We ended up with the primary colors, but instead of having the pattern go in order, we put a secondary color on the L, which brought back the idea that Google doesn't follow the rules" (Zjawinski). Google has some of the best engineering talent in the industry, and they got to that point by following proven processes and adhering to a friendly culture. The repetition of the primary colors in their brand reflects their desire to be the primary search engine and as Kedar mentioned, the green L reflects their rebellious spirit. The subtle drop shadow helps the logotype jump off the page while the beveled lettering gives the letters depth and weight. The original Google logo accurately reflected the company at the time but failed to be persistent across products.

As Google grew over the 2000s, they began publishing a diverse set of products. Many of these products have gone on to become household names such as Google Search, Gmail, Android, YouTube, Google Drive, and Google Docs. Each product required its own unique identity but still needed to fit into the larger Google brand. As seen in the initial Gmail logo, Google attempted to tag on their logotype at the bottom.

While this may have temporarily worked for Gmail, it was not a sustainable solution across all of their products. Google needed to unify their brand so that anyone could recognize it on any product.

As Google matured the priorities of the company matured as well. Once an engineering powerhouse, as of 2011 Google employed an army of designers. The only issue was that they were all split up onto different teams and no individual team had the power to mandate a unified design for Google. It wasn't until Larry Page took office as CEO that a motion was put in place to unify and extend the brand. He arranged



Gmail Logo

<http://resistancejournals.com/2015/06/28/gmail-secret-logo-revealed/>

many different teams of designers to work together and even went to get outside help from several different agencies. They recognized that Google houses a lot of simple and useful products and focused on making the products more beautiful and consistent as a set of products. First they created a vision, then the designers implemented on that vision. Within three months of Larry Page taking over as CEO, the company had shipped updated versions of Google Search, Gmail, Google Maps, and Google Calendar. All of these designs were unified and helped pave the way to the eventual redesign of the logo.

Now that the logo was being used on a variety of products in a consistent manner the designers realized it wasn't versatile enough to be used on all devices. On smartphones with pixelated screens, the serifs on the logotype would get blurry and at small scales the letters became hard to read. The designers at Google were then tasked with determining how to represent the company through a dynamic logo. After many iterations they found that through the use of consistent color and style they could unify the brand without requiring the logotype placed on every page. In order to follow the tradition already previously established, they chose to use the three primary colors along with the secondary green.

These colors mixed with consistent widths and angles creates a unified identity for Google. Their new logotype lays the foundation for the new style. The removal of serifs and the perfect circles that compose the O's and the G clean up the logo for use on smaller devices. Along with the new logotype is a smaller version of the G. It incorporates all four colors along with maintaining the same shape as the G in the logotype. This allows the Google logo to be used in constrained spaces, such as on an app icon or as the favicon of a web page.

Not only is the Google logo far more robust than ever before, it's elements can now be shared with the logos of all of it's products. Each



product is free to use whatever logo best suits its purposes with the only constraint being color. Take for example Google Chrome, structurally its logo has nothing in common with Google, but because it incorporates the four brand colors, the user can immediately make the association between the two. The identity even expands past the logos used in Google's products, it helps convey how Google is working for the user. When a page is loading the animation ensures the user that the page is still working and the use of brand colors conveys that Google itself is still working. Otherwise the user might not be sure which part of the pipeline is at fault, whether it's their computer, their internet, or Google itself.

With their new logotype, Google has embraced a dynamic, and modern identity that can be used across all of their products. As a company evolves and its products change, it's essential to maintain an up-to-date logo, and Google has done just that.

Works Cited

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