Memo

To: Dr. Londie Martin
From: Carson Smith
Date: 5 February 2024
Subject: Project 1: Personal Logo Design

This memo is an overview of all of my work done on Project 1: Personal Logo Design for RHET 4305. This logo will be featured on my personal website that serves as my design portfolio. The goal of the logo is to evoke nostalgia as it is a call back to "retro" logos from the 70s and 80s.

Section 1: Introduction and Purpose

This is a logo for "CS Designs". Its purpose is to evoke nostalgia from the user by appealing to design choices often made in the 70s and 80s. It will go onto my personal portfolio website and it will be located on the banner and at the footer.The primary users of this document are potential clients and employers that will be visiting my portfolio website and evaluating my work. My university instructors could also potentially be users of this document when viewing my schoolwork on my website. The logo could also be used on my potential business cards and in any of my future design work. The logo will work as the homepage button on my website along with functioning as a banner and watermark.

Section 2: Description of the Users/Readers

The document was always intended for users older than myself. Millennials and Generation X came to mind since the document is invoking 70s and 80s nostalgia. I made the document accessible by having multiple layers and a big typeface to make it easily readable. I wanted to choose colors that were soft on the eyes to make the document easier to digest. In order for this document to be a success for the users, they need to fill a sense of nostalgia and a "retro" vibe. I consulted with potential users of this document.

With us viewing the final draft of the logo I asked, "What is the vibe or feeling you get from this logo?". Both of the user's responses were, "Retro".

Section 3: Description of the Context and Design Constraints

Since this document will primarily be viewed on a screen, I felt like there were no limits when it came to color choices and size. Screens can scale and the document is a scalable vector graphic so I did not feel like I needed to factor in size to the equation. The logo is a combination mark. I wanted to make the symbol the biggest thing in the logo but not have it overpower the text. I feel like I achieved a nice balance.

 As far as design constraints go, time and experience were the main things that held me back. I only have a little over a year of experience with Adobe Illustrator, which I feel like if I had more experience, time would not be as much of a constraint.

Section 4: Design Rationale

The first design choice I made was picking the font "Alba". It gives off a retro feel without being too much. When I created the outline of the type, I quickly noticed how versatile the letter forms were in this particular typeface. It was also easily readable so it had to be my final pick as far as typefaces go.

When it comes to colors, I feel I would have been limited by just three plus black and white. The references in the inspiration collage have many colors. I feel a big part of a "retro" logo is lots of colors, so I feel that using 7 colors was justified. Without the colors, I doubt the logo would achieve its intended purpose. I wanted to do stripes for this mark since stripes are a key part in many "retro" logo designs. I also specifically picked colors that were somewhat muted, and not bold and bright.

Section 5: Design Evolution and Reflection

I did not want just a font for the logo, I also wanted a symbol. In the first draft of the logo, I just had my name and "Designs" put together in a type lockup. I had no idea what the symbol would be so I decided to shorten the logo and go with my initials C and S and see if I could work with it. I wanted to combine the C and the S so I could use it as a brand or symbol. I also wanted the symbol to be able to stand on its own without the other letters.

I achieved this by overlaying the C and the S and connecting the bottom portions of the letter forms so they were one connected shape. This shape also forms a lowercase D. The logo is "CS Designs" so the letterforms put together and forming a D was perfect since it could be perceived as the D in "Designs".

In order for the user to still recognize the C and the S as individual letterforms, I added a second layer to act as a sort of shadow. With these added shadows, the C and the S could be connected without losing their original letterforms. I didn't want the second layer to just be black, but I still needed contrast between the forms. I was able to use the same stripe pattern on the top letters, just flipped 180 degrees. This gave a nice contrast and kept the retro feel without having to resort to black. I feel that using black would have been too jarring to the eyes and not have fully complemented or fit in the rest of the logo.

For the "Designs" part of the logo, I wanted something simple yet something to match the symbol. I wanted the shadow look to continue, so I made a shadow layer for the letters and I made the shadow a solid color. The color I picked for the shadow would be the one to the right of the letterform, to give the logo a sense of movement and continuity. In earlier drafts, I played around with having just, "Design" instead of "Designs". I had no idea which one I wanted until I realized that "Designs" is seven letters and I could use all of the colors in the striped pattern in the "CS" once. If I went with "Design" I would be missing a color and in order to keep with the continuity I went with "Designs". I also wanted to make sure I achieved the graphic design principle, "alignment", so I made sure that the "Designs" portion of the logo lined up three of the stripes in the "CS" portion of the logo. I also had to make sure all of the letterforms had equal spacing between each other and to make sure they all had breathing room.

I'm sure if I had more time with the logo I would change something, as I had many "Final" drafts only to look at them in another way and want to go back and change something all over again. The reading really helped in shaping this document, especially the textbook. I kept it in the back of my mind during the creation process. I feel like the best rule I followed was to not do things arbitrarily, and to have a purpose for everything.
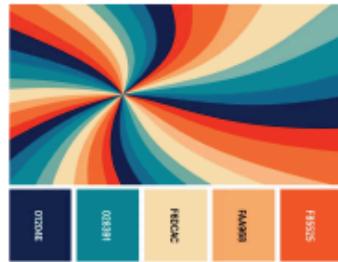
Possible Fonts:
Mexcellent
Abla
Deftone-Stylus

I want to make a logo for my future website. The target audience is customers who are fed up with minimalistic design choices. I have always been a huge fan of retro logos so I thought I would make myself a retro logo. I am using adobe illustrator and I would like to take the orange and blue lines above and overlay them with my name. Almost like the name acts as a sort of hole punch to the colored lines. If I cant figure it out I will probably just go with what I have now. I am not attatched to the current draft so feel free to rip it to shreads and give me your honest opinion.

First Draft

CARSON
Designs

Inspiration Collage

Final Draft with a Black and white version