

## Make Your Mark: What Does Your *Brand Mark* Say About You?

There's a lot more to your brand than just a clever logo or image. It's also fair to say that a *successful* brand has a recognizable and compelling visual identity. As a unique identifier that will show up in every piece of your marketing – from your letterhead to your website, to social media, to storefronts or even delivery trucks – a well-crafted brand mark helps your business stand out in a cluttered world.

### An Image is a Powerful Thing

When designing your brand mark, it's important to understand the value that each visual element brings to your business. In the right context, something as simple as a circle or line can change the way your customers feel about your company. Just look at the **Target** bulls-eye: outwardly, it's a simple dot and circle that echoes the company name – but inwardly, the Target mark is packed with

meanings, like the comprehensiveness of a circle; the sense that you are at the center of Target's world; the suggestion that the retailer hits the mark, whether you're looking for a specific product, the right price, or a generally positive customer experience... Simple, memorable, effective!



If you can design an image that is able to convey the values and promises of your company, your chances of grabbing your customer's attention – and gaining their loyalty – goes up. That's because people comprehend visual data easier than anything else. Ninety percent of the information we take in each day comes from what we see. Plus, the human brain processes images 60,000 times faster than text.

This is why it is so crucial to understand the value of each visual element of your business when designing a brand mark.

### Professional Design

The best and easiest way to create an attractive, meaningful, and compelling brand mark is to work with a professional. You wouldn't let a random person or an inexperienced family member cut your hair. (At least not before **Covid** anyway.) So, why would you have someone other than a professional develop what is arguably the most important part of your branding and marketing portfolio? There are 4 crucial things to think about when designing your brand mark, and a professional is able to offer the necessary attention to detail.



### 1. Infuse Your Brand Mark with Meaning

A great brand mark should be insightful and representative of your company. It should communicate – or at least sync with – your values, expectations, intentions, and promises to your target audience, while also taking into

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account their needs and desires. That’s a lot to ask of an image, which is why you need an expert who can identify your market segments and understand how your company’s mission lends itself to specific shapes, designs, and colors.

## 2. Make Sure Your Brand Mark Will Grow With You

A good brand mark designer (aka: graphic designer) will create a logo that has some shelf life. You don’t want a design that will become outdated, which will only cost you more money when you end up having to redo it in a couple of years. Your brand mark needs to have the same longevity and flexibility as your business.

## 3. Utilize Versatile Applications

There are practical considerations that will also save you money in the long run. A professional is able to make sure the brand mark is sized correctly and adjustable, so that it can work across all of your marketing materials, whether that’s a small version on social media posts or in corporate videos, or a large version that can be printed on storefronts, promotional trade show materials, and signs. A good designer will also make sure that the color will work with the rest of your branding system and can even be reproducible in black and white or grayscale.

## 4. Keep It Consistent

Because repetition and repeatability are generally good things in the marketing discipline (customers like to know they can count on you being, well, you!) – a crucial part of your brand identity is consistency. To achieve that end, a professional can help you create brand standards like shapes, fonts, colors, icon-sets and other accents that

will effectively and consistently tell your brand’s story. These guidelines will help inform every aspect of your marketing, especially your brand mark design. A cohesive brand manifesto will ensure that your company’s distinctive personality stands out in the crowd.

## But Also, Words

Yes, an image or symbol can communicate information about your business in a quick and highly meaningful way. However, it takes work to turn your brand mark into an instantly recognizable image on its own, especially if you’re launching a new business or are revamping your image. Accompanying words – here we’re thinking of slogans or taglines – can be useful in helping your brand mark resonate across everything you do and say. FedEx is a shining example of this: In its early days, the company created an entire campaign around the slogan “When it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight” and used that slogan for years, without fail, to both establish the overnight-shipping category and deliver their key value proposition/promise. As time went on, the FedEx brand got stronger and forged such a lasting and positive reputation that their original slogan was no longer needed. (These days, they simply

pair their logo – aided by color-coding – with subcategories of the shipping biz like “Ground,” “Freight,” “Home Delivery” (with its cute package-carrying pooch), and “Custom Critical.” The PROMISE is implied.



At Cowley, we use typography, color, and strategic design to showcase your organization's personality so that your brand voice can be heard. See how we've done it here with a few of the brand marks we created for our clients.



For more information visit us at [cowleyweb.com](http://cowleyweb.com)

If you need help with branding, we're here for you and would be happy to give you a quick estimate. Just contact Gail Cowley today to arrange a chat at 315.475.8453 x1 or [gcowley@cowleyweb.com](mailto:gcowley@cowleyweb.com).

