

Thought piece: Longevity of design

Author : GregDillon

Categories : [Brand strategy & thought pieces](#)

Date : January 21, 2013



As I sit here on the London Underground I cannot help but think about longevity of design



[The Tube](#), as we affectionately call it here in London, is 150 years old as of a few days ago, and with that comes some of the most iconic design work the world has ever known - the logo (brand identity) and the map.

Both have stood the test of time pretty well.

Is it because they are flash? Because they proliferate the entire network? Maybe they had massive brand building and awareness campaigns / launches?

Thankfully the global success of both equities is down to none other than ruthless simplicity of something that can be confusing for non-Londoners and non-English speakers in equal

measures.

Iconic design is all around us. From the Golden Arches to the Fruit with a Solitary Bite Mark to the Swoosh to the Blue Ellipse. We get them, recognise them, act based on seeing them.

It is taken for granted by many but these simple marques, with their consistent design treatment and application in the brand management, are worth hundreds of billions of pounds, and have lasted the test of time within quite unforgiving and ever-changing industries.

What is it about these iconic symbols and design details that personify longevity of design?

- **Simplicity.**
- **Clear brand proposition.**
- **Consistent delivery.**

Think about the Coca-Cola bottle, know what the original brief was?

"To design a bottle that, even when smashed, is recognisable as what it once was."

How powerful is that? And how well was that brief answered?!

As we nuance and craft brands through our evolving strategic thought process, we need to remember to remain relevant to what the brand stands for, what it means to consumers and brand managers and also what the founder(s) were looking to achieve with their newly created business and brand.

As the adage goes, don't fix what ain't broke.

This applies quite succinctly to brands, even when failing, there was once enough there for consumers to buy into so unearth it, reconnect and rebuild to stand the test of time and be the benchmark for longevity of design.

What brands have you worked on that champion longevity of design? What brands do you think personify great, iconic design?