

## Understanding Re-branding

We hear the term “re-branding” thrown around a lot lately. It seems if everyone is trying desperately, in a fast-moving society, to stay fresh and yet stay true to their history at the same time. Most recently - YMCA to Y; Tropicana logo change; and let's not forget about the Gap logo debacle.

The Gap change came in early October of this year. The president of Gap Brand North America for the last three years stated, “We chose this (new) design as it's more contemporary and current. It honors our heritage through the blue box while still taking it forward.” – Sound familiar?

Gap did a soft launch of their new logo and wanted feedback from their loyal customers, so they introduced it through social media. And, did they get feedback! Received so negatively and with such a backlash, it resulted in 1,094 comments from one of their Facebook postings alone.

Creatively, many felt it took a couple steps back and, well...fell flat on its face. The “generic” look that so many companies are trying to achieve didn't work for Gap. For many, their goal is to make their brand modern and clean, but when executed incorrectly, the result is a generic and drab look. Modern should not equal generic. Gap has now gone back to their old logo.

This got us thinking...when exactly is the right time to re-brand and why? In Gap's case, they wanted a new logo to reflect the evolution of their clothing line and multiple modern stores. However, what other reasons are there to re-brand? Take our company, evok advertising, for example. We are actually in the process of a re-brand ourselves. So, why the change for us?

Scott Disbennett, creative director and agency partner, said, “Opposed to a national brand that has spent millions focusing on consumer perception, we don't carry the same iconic weight. We are a mid-size agency that prides ourselves on staying abreast of new technology and new brands, while staying cutting edge, so being current is actually part of the brand. Also, we focus most, if not all, of our marketing efforts B2B so to many, this new logo will be their first experience with our brand. We aren't facing the challenges that a national consumer brand might face.”

Larry Meador, our agency's managing partner, addressed evok's re-brand by stating, “While the old ‘EVOK’ worked well when we were trying to shout our name out there, we have always had a core belief that we should be behind the scenes, behind our clients' victories, and although just a minor change, going from upper case to lower case with our logo reinforces that belief.”

So, if wondering whether you should re-brand your company, you may want to consider the following criteria. If you can answer yes to most of the items below, maybe it's time?

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## Re-brand IF:

1. New ownership, new partner
2. A new highly regarded business practice (such as being green, etc.)
3. Offering new products or services that will move you to a different segment of your market
4. If your branding was poorly designed when your company was young
5. New location, if that greatly impacts your business

So, the question remains to re-brand or not re-brand? Well, the simple answer is, consider the brand! For our agency, yes it made sense. For KFC and the Y (formerly YMCA), yes, maybe? But, maybe not so much for Tropicana and The Gap. If you are responding to consumer input, yes! Remember, the purpose of re-branding is to keep your current clients and customers, but also attract new ones.

Long live the Coppertone baby!