

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

An Exploration in Developing CSUN Sports Club Uniform Logo

A project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in Apparel Design and Merchandising

By

Xinran Gu

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The project of Xinran Gu is approved by:

Rodica Kohn, M.A.Arch,

Date

Hira Cho, Ph.D.

Date

Wei Cao, Ph.D., Chair

Date

California State University, Northridge

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Abstract

An Exploration in Developing CSUN Sports Club Uniform Logo

By

Xinran Gu

Master of Science in Apparel Design and Merchandising

California State University, Northridge (CSUN) has a long history of sports excellence and relies upon the branding and symbolism of its traditional Matador mascot to convey both a cultural heritage and a spirit of courage and heroism. Over the years, the CSUN logo has been updated to better satisfy the demands of changing times, ensure the logo is appealing and to establish that the university's values are embodied. This study focuses on developing a collection of innovative logo designs for CSUN's sports club uniform in order to promote the uniform's sale. The new logo will enrich the uniform design since the wearer would like to represent the university with new image in a new era. To guide the design process, a content analysis method was utilized to understand the needs for the design. In addition, a literature review was conducted to analyze the designs of other brands to ascertain the design elements incorporated into leading brands. A collection of four design series was then created that incorporated this research and these logos then underwent an evaluation conducted by experts. Overall, a variety of relevant findings were revealed that will help create a CSUN logo that can be used in sports

club uniform. While redesigning logos it is critical to keep designs minimal and to retain a sense of brand recognition. In addition, factors such as color, shape, the golden section theory, and font are important in creating appealing designs. Based on the design factors, four themes were chosen: “Upgrade,” “Grace,” “Sports & Competition” and “Minimalism”. After the expert evaluation, the major findings of this section of the study were that balanced negative/positive space, minimalism, silhouettes, and shapes that indicate movement resonated greatly with the viewer. Future projects will revolve around utilizing the feedback to adjust both layout and shape to improve printability and logo resonance.

Introduction

California State University, Northridge (CSUN) is a university with a rich sports history and culture. Currently, the university has a total of twenty-eight sports clubs for both men and women (“History of the Matador Hall of Fame,” n.d.). The CSUN Matadors, which refers to all the athletic teams representing CSUN in various sporting activities, play in the NCAA Division and in the Big West Conference (“History of the Matador Hall of Fame,” n.d.). From traditional ball games to the emerging E-sports, CSUN’s sports program is diverse Brand as an identity of the university is, of course, necessary. With branded attire, athletes become representatives of the institution and can create a positive image considering that CSUN has multiple sports activities. The Matador became the official mascot of the university in 1958, reflecting the spirit of the institution and the proud legacy of the larger San Fernando area (“Mascot History and Background,” 2017). The Matador also reflects the Spanish and Latin cultural heritage of Southern California and situates the school within its correct cultural and historical environment. The Sports uniform with a strong Matador image would attract more people’s attention at various occasions as it reflected university culture and spirit. But portraying a modern university with a distinctive icon may require adjustments to the branded images to reflect the current meaning. According to Cal State Northridge Matadors Logos History, the renewal schedule for the logo is about every seven years. Considering that the current logo was last modified in 2014 and to keep up with consumers’ every-changing needs, it is time to come up with an updated version to promote the University more effectively and in a broader community.

The Reason to Redesign Logos for the CSUN Sports Clubs Uniform

A matador represents skills, courage and grace and its image reflects the values and characteristics of CSUN. As shown in Figure 1, CSUN logos have had various versions since

1988. The depiction of matadors in these versions expresses the same CSUN spirit and the change of its image is to conform to the aesthetics of the time. We see that the designer constantly adjusts the logo image without dramatically changing the matador image. The current team uniforms used by sports clubs have added a matador's cape compared with those before the update of this logo (Camarillo, 2014). This design went down well with students because they felt the logo had a more modern feel than the old logo and the current logo is less aggressive because the old logo has an angry face (Ajanel, 2014).

Figure 1

California State Northridge Matadors Logo Timeline



Note. From *Cal State Northridge Matadors Logos History* [Illustration]. Sports Logos. (https://www.sportslogos.net/logos/list_by_team/628/Cal_State_Northridge_Matadors/).

According to Thompson (2010), bullfighting is part of Spanish culture and using it to represent sports classifies the institution as one that is proud of the heritage it is associated with. The matador is a symbol of courage and heroism (Mitchell, 1991). There is, however, a negative perspective that indicates the matador represents cruelty to animals and is offensive to animal rights activists (María et al., 2017). There is a need, therefore, to design a new logo for CSUN sports club uniforms due to the following reasons:

Firstly, after a period of time a particular symbol can lose meaning or have a different meaning from the intended one (Tracy-Evans, 2021). Therefore, designing a new logo or modifying the current logo can help in ensuring that the elements of the logo communicate a desired message without negative connotations (Macnab, 2015). This can reduce unnecessary criticism of the team due to misinterpretation.

Secondly, an effective logo should not only be representative of a club but also be appealing (Adîr et al., 2012). It is proposed to design a new series of logos for CSUN sports club uniforms, maximize the branding benefits of improved customer (fan) awareness, increase sales of branded products, and increase fan loyalty as well as positive perceptions associated with the university's sports clubs. Therefore, the current version of the logo needs to be redesigned to meet appeal factors of the current audience (Shadbolt, 2015).

Thirdly, a logo should not only serve as an identity of a team but also portray the institution's beliefs and values. It can give athletes encouragement and enthusiasm, and the optimized logo may attract more people to join sports clubs (Ahn et al., 2012). CSUN's campus spirit and the San Fernando Valley's traditions are expressed through the matador mascot and the intent is that it enables the audience to connect with team members (Wilkinson, n.d.).

Research Question and Problem Statement

This study explored developing a collection of innovative logo designs which can bring benefits to the organization by enhancing the university's brand image and enhancing club members enthusiasm for the university's sports clubs. More people will hopefully wear the uniforms to represent CSUN in the new era; thus, more people will know CSUN and its Sports Club.

Objectives

There are three objectives to this project:

1. To determine factors to be considered in the logo design.
2. To develop a series of logos in different themes for CSUN Sports Club uniforms.
3. To evaluate the new designs by experts.

To achieve this goal, the content analysis method was employed to understand the necessity for the logo redesign and factors affecting it. A broad scope of literature research and an analysis of other brand logo designs were undertaken to ensure the relevant design factors were incorporated in the design process. Finally, the developed series of innovative logos were evaluated by experts and possible improvements were discussed.

Literature Review

In this literature review, the original logo design of the CSUN Matador and its application in CSUN Sports Club uniforms were introduced. Through the discussion on design features of other brand logos in the literature, the considering factors in logo design -- including history, culture, color, recognition, golden section, and ideas -- were explored. The research finding helped in developing the innovative series of logos used for CSUN sports club uniforms.

The Importance in Redesigning CSUN Sports Club Uniform Logo

CSUN Matadors Athletics comprises a series of CSUN-related logos, including the primary logo and the secondary logos. The primary logo are the matador element and the letters “CSUN” and “MATADOR,” listed in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2

CSUN Matadors



Note. From CSUN Matadors, an illustration by CSUN Athletics, (“CSUN Matadors: Brand Identity,” 2014).

The secondary logo is divided into a half-length matador with a cape and a full-body matador, as in Figure 3.

Figure 3

CSUN Matadors Secondary Logo



Note. From CSUN Matadors Secondary Logo, an illustration by CSUN Athletics (“CSUN Matadors: Brand Identity,” 2014).

The sport-specific logo only uses the school letters. The names of the sports events are marked below the school letters, as in Figure 4.

Figure 4

CSUN Matadors Secondary Logo



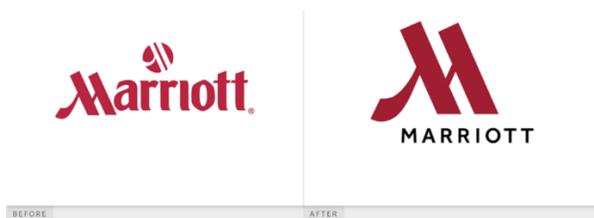
Note. From CSUN Matadors Secondary Logo, an illustration by CSUN Athletics (“CSUN Matadors: Brand Identity,” 2014).

Except for the team uniforms that need to be worn with special sports logo in sports events, the uniform worn in other activities or available to fans is with the primary logo. The school mascot Matty (short for Matador) as the prototype of the Matadors logo, is a costumed matador and a popular attraction in sports events. In addition, the school gymnasium is called The Matadome. Therefore, the matador image is an integral part of sporting life at CSUN.

Over time, it is very common for brands to revisit the message communicated by their logos as it changes with public opinion and sentiment. The necessity of logo redesign is that it updates branding in keeping with the times and often keeps the status quo of the institution or organization. According to a company specializing in logo design, the redesign of the Marriot Hotels logo focused on the visual impression, as shown in Figure 5 (Armin, 2014), where the newly shaped ‘M’ is set in burgundy and acts as a monogram (“7 Reasons Why a Logo Is Important” , 2020). This logo is more attractive to potential clients making it suitable to enhance marketing and competitive edge.

Figure 5

Marriot Hotels Logo



Note. New Logo and Identity for Marriott Hotels by Grey NY.

LEGO also redesigned its logo to increase its competitiveness in the US market (“7 Reasons Why a Logo Is Important” , 2020). The new logo was made clearer, attractive, and communicative, unlike the previous one which had multiple elements, see Figure 6 (Logolook, n.d.).

Figure 6

LEGO Logo Timeline



Note. From *Lego Logo*. (n.d.). [Illustration]. Logolook. (<https://logolook.net/lego-logo/>).

McDonald's has changed its brand image many times, but the 2016 version is the most successful one (Nieva, 2016). McDonald's incorporated various brilliant colors into the existing palette, granting the business an entirely new visual identity. This campaign was a massive success for McDonald's. McDonald's saw a 5.5 percent year-on-year gain in revenue in 2018 and the best full-year overall sales (Nieva, 2016).

The intention to rebrand logos in these companies may differ across brands, but the primary commonness is that the redesign of the logo has a greater impact for the brand and the respective institution or organization. According to Randy Acosta (2022), CSUN men's basketball team is not doing well this season. Their losing streak has extended to seven games, and this has also led to low morale of the players. A new redesigned sports uniform logo may help in boosting current members' morale and recruiting new sports club members. The new logo can signify a fresh look and start, as compared with the old logo which may discourage the athletes since they have had it for so long and feel subconsciously stuck with it.

The Considering Factors in Logo Redesigning

A successful logo design depends on many factors. A review of literature in discussing the principles and influencing factors in logo development is readily available. Common factors include cultural and historical factors, recognition, color strategy and scalability, design ideas and font; but the list may go on further.

Cultural and Historical Factors

According to World Light Media, brand is among the key factors to consider during logo design ("Pros and Cons of Updating," 2020). Brand will help the customer to understand the core values of the organization. Therefore, logo -- as the visual part of the brand -- should represent the organization and interpret its core value. The research of the organization in its cultural and

historical development will help in understanding its core value, developing the key design concepts, and initiating how the logo reflects this. In addition, we have to consider its core color, special shape, where the current logo needs to be modified or how it is defective, and what factors have been neglected and need to be added (Adîr et al., 2014).

Recognition

When designing a logo, it is important to keep it simple and avoid over-complicating it. Design solutions should be concise to leave a clear impression on users. Many large companies use a simple logo which makes the logo suitable for various purposes (Li, 2019). A potent symbol should have several elements, each of which can be easily identified and combined with the key concepts and ideas of the organization. At the same time, the logo should contain all the information that the organization seeks to convey to the audience (Greenhalgh, 1990).

Color Strategy and Scalability

In the design of logos, color choice is an important design principle. It plays a critical role in determining how the logo is perceived and interpreted by the target audience (O'Connor, 2011). If the color resonates with the image, it will substantially impact the viewer's perception. In color psychology, each color has its spiritual power. For example, pink symbolizes softness, romance, and no pressure, so it is more suitable for women's designs. On the other hand, the logo design should be scalable so that it can be used on various items and surfaces. A logo to be used with the same elements and shape in any size is important (Adîr et al., 2014). For instance, when a logo is used on billboards, it should not lose any of its proportion.

Golden Section

Golden section theory is derived from the Fibonacci sequence, each number is the sum of the first two numbers. To understand this theory in art or design, it is better to consider a golden

rectangle that fits the parameter of 1:1.618, so drawing the relationship between each new golden rectangle will result in a golden spiral. Since the Logo needs to be scaled and standardized, through the equal proportion of the circle, it can be ensured that each part in the Logo can be scaled. This also facilitates post-processing or scale-up.

Design Ideas in Logo Design

The manipulation of different design elements results in the conscious formulation of visually perceivable design themes (Wheeler, 2017). The logo design should incorporate the needed design ideas. These ideas include aesthetics, society, expression, material, and variability. Usually, culture emerges as an intermediary standard (Hui, 2011). The final design should have creative composition rather than a random arrangement, and some elements can evolve into new meanings when combined. When designing logos, therefore, we should also consider the design emphasis, rhythm, diversity, and proportion to leave a lasting impression with people.

In conveying ideas, we can transform the object's nature and the information into geometric shapes (Seelow, 2017), reducing the user memory curve more straightforwardly. To explore brand communication's long-term effectiveness, based on Ebbinghaus memory forgetting curve and brand core value, all objects we know are seen by remembering colors and we associate colors with familiar objects (Kimura et al., 2013). Therefore, we can improve logo recognition and memory with effective brand communication to achieve the purpose of deep memory.

Font

Fonts play an important role in the identity of the logo as well as other visual representations. The current CSUN logo uses a bold font which makes it look static and outdated. In this redesign, researchers recommend a new font style, such as sans serif font, which

is dynamic and stylish. It also recommends a change to the hard twist of the existing font to a relatively round font because the shape of roundness is associated with positive emotions (Salgado et al., 2014).

Suggestions on the Development of New Logos for CSUN Sports Club Uniform

The current image of a matador is less aggressive than the old logo. In terms of composition and proportion, the triangular composition vision of logo ontology is relatively stable, but there is still room for improvement in proportion. Classic red and black belong to the brand colors of the University, while gray is more like an additional color. The font used is relatively old-fashioned. For the brand upgrading there needs to be a more modern expression of the logo and it needs to convey the desired values and express courage, grace, creativity, ability, and strength (“Student athlete handbook,” 2018). In order to reflect these characteristics, the new logo design should focus on sports and competition. The updates on graphics and color optimization will have a better impact on the CSUN Matador logo. A more detailed method of developing the collection of CSUN sports club uniform logos is discussed in the following chapter.

Methodology

This chapter documents the development process in CSUN sports club uniforms logo redesign. Content analysis was used to identify the factors that need to be considered in the logo redesign. Common factors summarized from the analysis of other brand logo designs in the literature have been applied in the series of logo redesigns. Evaluation method for the final design work has been discussed in the end.

Design Factors in Developing CSUN Logo

This chapter introduces the method of content analysis, which is a research method to describe patterns objectively, systematically, and quantitatively in texts, images, and audio content (Harvey, 2012). Through the analysis of the logo design works in other brands, the researchers have summarized the factors that need to be considered in the logo redesign.

Sampling

The researcher used the keywords “logo redesign,” “brand image” and “logo design factors” to search CSUN library databases and Google Scholar websites. The time period ‘after 2010’ was set. Among the corpus of 52 articles, 18 articles clearly pointed out the factors that need to be considered in logo design. These articles were prepared by logo design experts with scientific or professional research/experience. The following table summarizes the factors considered in logo design in these articles.

Table 1

Content Analysis

	Factors	Explanation
1	Shape	In any design, objects can be analyzed in terms of shape. According to Tubik (2018), every shape has a meaning. For example, rectangular and square shapes are associated with courage, security, and discipline, while natural shapes are associated with originality, balance, and freshness. Therefore, it is necessary to choose shapes

		that enhance visibility and align with the associated meaning. According to Galarraga (2017), a logo serves as an identity, and it is necessary to consider its presentation. Begg (2016) argues that shape psychology is among the factors that can affect the effectiveness of a logo.
2	Color	Different colors tend to have varying impacts on a logo. For example, some colors show boldness while others show optimism (Dvornechcuck, 2021). This means it is necessary to consider the color choice of a logo to enhance its effectiveness. According to Tubik (2018), 62-90% of the audience use color as the primary factor used in subconscious judgment.
3	Relevance to the market	A logo should reflect the firm, group, or organization it is representing. According to Fortel (2019), the relevance of a logo ensures that it reaches the targeted audience. According to Tailor Brand (2020), a logo is a foundation of identity. Thus, it is necessary to consider its effectiveness. Coca-Cola company's logos -- launched in 2003 and 2007 -- reflect its focus on a younger audience in the market, although these aspects have been reflected in previous logos. The 2003 logo had an attention-grabbing yellow ribbon having bubbles that focused on fizziness and reality of the company's campaign (Pendergrast & Crawford, 2020). However, considering the market dynamics, Coca-Cola focused on designing a logo that reflects the tradition of Coca-Cola in 2007. According to Chrysalis (2021), among the factors to consider when designing a logo is the simplicity and distinction to make it work well across all media.
4	Font	The font is among factors that can affect the overall quality of a logo. According to Fortel (2019) and Hodgson (2021), a designer has to avoid excessive intricate or ornate fonts. The font psychology is the consideration of the impression created by the text presented. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that the chosen font is standard and enhances legibility. According to Leiba (2020), Serif, Sans Serif, Script, Times New Roman, Trajan, Baskerville, Georgia Italic, Helvetica Bold, Franklin Gothic, Calibri, Myriad Italic, Bickham Script, Edwardian Script, Lavanderia, Futura, ITC Avant Garde Extra Light, Cooper, Spaceage Round, Valencia, and Giddyup are among fonts that are recommended.
5	Modernist	A logo is a way of creating an identity. However, it is necessary to ensure that the used elements are relatable as far as the audience is concerned. Therefore, using elements that have lost meaning can lead to the ineffectiveness of the logo. According to the corporate

		blog of Looka, it is necessary to ensure that a logo is modernized to be sure that it will be impressive and relatable to the current audience (“Modern Logos,” 2021).
6	Legibility	The choice of clear fonts and colors in a logo is necessary. If a logo is hard to read or view, it means that the targeted audience may end up not understanding the brand (Wells, 2018). According to Fortel (2019), it is not necessary to have overly complex or ornate fonts.
7	Timelessness	A logo serves a purpose of informing the audience of the brand (“30 Timeless Logo,” 2019; Rothschild, 2014). Thus, it is necessary to ensure that a logo is memorable and timeless (Fortel, 2019). According to Joe (2021) and Edwards (2016), a timeless logo is that which has attained its relevance in terms of the shape, font, legibility, and other important factors.

The factors mentioned above emphasize that effective logo design is critical as customer preferences and business needs change with time. An organization should focus on the above factors and consider the impact of their new logo on market dynamics. When redesigning some factors need to be considered: Firstly, consideration of competitors ensures that there is no confusion created between the developed logo and the logos of other clubs. Secondly, the consideration of business needs ensures that the logo delivers the correct message as per the role played by the associated club. Lastly, the consideration of customer preference ensures that the designed logo is appealing.

Design Process

The redesigned logo series should project CSUN’s beliefs and values but vary in the design elements involved for a stronger impact both in competition and when representing the university. All logos, of course, should convey courage, grace, creativity, ability, and strength. Therefore, the researcher used the primary logo of the school as the design basis considering four factors: shape, color, font, and modernity and developed a four-design series named, “Upgrade,” “Grace,” “Sports & Competition,” and “Minimalism.” In the design process, the designer paid

attention to the texture and tough temperament of the original logo with the goal of making it more contemporary and appealing while not losing its competitive nature.

After the researcher had a preliminary idea and prototype of each logo, and through the observation of photos and videos of the matador sport, the shape of the matador was constantly modified in the design process until a degree of satisfaction. Based on the above discussion, the researcher developed a total of 16 logos divided into four themes to provide multiple logo options. The software used was Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop.

Evaluation

The goal of this project was to redesign the CSUN Matador logo. The innovative design series was evaluated by the experts in the field. A questionnaire was developed for evaluation purposes.

Reviewers

Two experts were selected to evaluate the redesigned logos. The experts were chosen based on the following criteria: 1) He/she must have published logo designs. 2) He/she must have more than five years of design experience. The reviewer's task was to evaluate each logo design by filling the blanks in the questionnaire. Due to the existing COVID-19 limitations, this assessment was conducted online.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was prepared to assist the reviewers' evaluation for the designed logo series (see Results). A total of nine questions were developed. The questionnaire was designed for each series, which means that each series needed to be answered independently. These questions were designed to measure the application of design factors in the design. Sample questions were as follows, "Does the chosen color evoke emotions from the viewer?" "Does the

font chosen enhance the legibility and visibility of the logo elements?” Questions about consumers’ views on styles were asked on a scale of 1 to 10 indicating the satisfaction level; 1 indicating dissatisfaction and 10 indicating extreme satisfaction.

Results

Based on the literature review and the results from the content analysis, the researcher applied four of the seven identified factors in redesigning the CSUN sport club uniform logo. They are shape, color, font, and modernity. Four theme topics were developed for each series based on the Matador value and spirit. This chapter explains the importance and the application of each factor in the logo redesign. Each theme design and the evaluation for it were documented as the following.

Four Identified Factors

Shape

The shape of a logo is important because the logo serves as a silent ambassador of the represented group or organization. According to Tubik (2018), each known shape has a meaning, and the choice made should match the intended message and audience. While citing examples, Tubik (2018) states that rectangular and square shapes are associated with courage, security, and discipline; while circles/ovals are associated with the universe, mystery, magic, and eternity. Therefore, it is necessary to choose shapes that enhance visibility and are consistent with the associated meaning. According to Galarraga (2017), a logo serves as an identity, and it is necessary to consider its presentation. This means that a poor choice in the elements of the logo may weaken its effectiveness. As argued by Begg (2016), a designer should put into consideration the psychology of shape and ensure that the choices made make the logo, as a brand ambassador, more effective. For example, renowned organizations like Nike, GAP and Apple have specific shapes that their logos are designed in: Nike uses a triangular shape that is associated with power and science, while a circular shape, as used by Apple, is associated with a positive emotional message (Begg, 2016). Therefore, it is necessary to choose a shape associated with the organization's mission. Olofson (1993) states that the logo of PG&E is appealing

because of three key factors comprising of design, color, and contrast in color. The design signifies the signature of a logo, and the other two aspects represent the color. PG&E redesigned the overall shape of its logo from the former rectangular to the newly square-shaped logo (Olofson, 1993). The signature was also evident by changing the ‘and’ to ‘&’ and adding a triangular graphic to show the changed symbol clearly. From this analysis, it is clear that organizations consider several factors when redesigning their logos and that changes in shape and color are intended to have a positive impact on business and marketing.

Color

Color is among the factors that can affect the effectiveness of a logo. Therefore, there is a need to select a color that reflects the intention and message of the logo. According to Dvornehcuck (2021), renowned firms make a choice of colors that reflect their products. Coca-Cola, for example, invests a lot of money in public relations. Since 1886, when the Coca-Cola Company was seeking to perfect its brand, there have been 12 different logos (Pendergrast & Crawford, 2020). Since establishing its signature and color in 1950, the company has introduced five logos with signature and color being two critical aspects of the Coca-Cola logo redesign. Thus, considering that a logo is an identity, it is crucial to ensure that the chosen color replicates the product or activities involved. Dvornehcuck (2021) argues that the choice of color depends not on the designer but on the representation being made. Additionally, inclination on personal color preference may contradict the target audience. According to Joe (2021), it is necessary to do research that will help one settle on the color that best suits the target audience regarding the choice of color, the primary consideration is the psychology of color.

The choice of color in designing a logo can be compared to how dressing adds or detracts from a person’s personality since colors can be termed as attention grabbers. With consideration

that different colors evoke different feelings, it is more than necessary to settle on the color that best suits the audience. Joe (2021) states that it is necessary to ensure that one does not blend multiple colors since many colors may make the logo seem crowded and possibly lose the desired message.

Font

The font is an integral part of a logo. According to Fortel (2019) and Hodgson (2021), excessive and ornate fonts can invalidate the effectiveness of a logo. However, based on the intended purpose and the targeted audience, a designer can choose from multiple color options. The font psychology is the consideration of the impression created by the text presented. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that the chosen font is standard and enhances legibility. The factors to consider when choosing the font are simplicity, competitors, and brand identity (Leiba, 2020). Additionally, an effective logo should not use trendy fonts since anything trendy is short-lived, and the impact may be lost in a short time. Also, it is not advisable to incorporate multiple fonts. According to Leiba (2020), the use of many fonts in one logo may raise distrust among potential clients. The aspects of design and color in redesigning an organizational logo are evident in the Google company. Google's team are aware that a word-mark logo such as theirs needs to be redesigned by focusing on fonts (Carter, 2005). Therefore, the design aspect of their new logo focuses on changing the Catull typeface into flat sans-serif. The latter enabled the company to achieve a lighter and a more modern appearance which appeals to its market. On the aspect of color, Google's previous logo loses its luster through its use of shadows. The lightness in font and the changes done to coloring made the new logo brighter and more modern.

Modernity

An effective logo should be up to date which means it should have elements relatable to the current audience. According to Rothschild (2014), a logo informs the audience of the brand they are engaging with, a concept supported by a guest blogger on the topic (“30 Timeless Logos,” 2019). Therefore, in a situation where the used elements are decades old, it may be hard for the audience to understand the intended message. Fortel (2019) states that an effective logo is easy to memorize and timeless. Therefore, using elements that have lost meaning can lead to the ineffectiveness of the logo. According to the corporate blog of Looka, it is necessary to ensure that a logo is modernized to be impressive and relatable to the current audience (“Modern Logos,” 2021). According to Fortel (2019), a modern logo will retain its relevance and help the audience understand the brand they are engaging with. According to Carter (2005), minimalism in logo design is a powerful feature that enables it to capture customers. These factors explain why many popular companies, such as Coca Cola, PG&E and Google, make simple redesign in their logos while achieving their redesign objectives. For example, the PG&E logo changed the word ‘and’ to a symbol ‘&’ with a triangle figure; the visual impact of this new logo is indisputable (Olofson, 1993). Google changed the font in its logo to a lighter one and dropped its shading. These aspects may seem minute but the impact in marketing dynamics and business are clear.

All factors discussed above were applied in each logo redesign for CSUN sports club uniforms. The series of logo designs were grouped for four themes developed from Matador spirit. A detailed explanation for the designs in each theme follows.

Four Themes in CSUN Sports Uniform Logo Redesign

Among these four themes, four factors were applied in each design. Two of the themes derived from modernization are “Upgrade” and “Minimalism” and they focus on modernity and color. The series with the theme of “Upgrade” is the closest to the current logo because it does not add or highlight an element. While upgrading, it maintained its original influence and has popularity and innovation. Therefore, in the design process, it was more about adjusting its composition. That is, designing with new scale specifications. The series design with minimalism as the theme completely breaks the framework of the current school logo. It is simpler and more direct, and it is all composed of the most basic planes to express the characteristics of matadors. This is also a modern way of expression. These modes of expression can reduce users’ memory curve and is conducive to the long-term effectiveness of brand communication. While “Grace” and “Sports & Competition,” derived from the school’s values, focus on shape and font. In the series with “Grace” as the theme, to emphasize beauty and grace associated with the matador’s ballet moves, the designer redesigned the shape of the matador and the design on the font is more rounded. The designer used the design method of positive and negative space to make the visual aesthetics more flexible. The series with “Sports & Competition” as the theme was designed to meet the needs of sports clubs and make them more competitive.

Upgrade

The first series is “Upgrade,” which focuses on modernity and color. From the modernity, the style is concise, uses geometrical lines extensively and reflects modern aesthetic viewpoints (Greenhalgh, 1990). The designer kept the original classic colors of red and black and reduced

the use of the auxiliary color gray. The new logo followed the golden section ratio, was concise in style and optimized the recognition of the logo.

Grace

The theme of the second series is “Grace,” which highlights the beauty of a matador’s strength and tension. This theme focuses on shapes and fonts. CSUN’s current logo emphasizes the beauty and grace associated with the matador’s ballet moves (“Mascot History and Background,” 2017). The researcher emphasized the unique artistic beauty of Spanish bullfighting, that is the original form of art, and added the strength and the beauty of tension. The designer started with the shape design of graphics. The shape of graphics needed to have more grace movements. More rounded design font was used.

Sports & Competition

The third series is themed “Sports & Competition,” which focuses on shapes, color, and fonts. Although the Matador is the official mascot of CSUN, the image is controversial due to the bloody violence of the sport. Since the logo is the CSUN Matador athletics brand logo, it should highlight the expression of sports and competition. The designer emphasized the details and used shadow colors for emphasis. Stronger lines were also applied in font and shape.

Minimalism

The fourth series takes “Minimalism” as the theme and focuses on modernity. As a type of modernist style, minimalism is more like an artistic way of thinking which can give a logo a new way of expression. Mies van der Rohe, the Modernist Maestro, pointed out that “less is more” (Amiri, 2016, p. 1628). Therefore, based on the principle of minimalism, the logo should be in the simplest graphic design language to remove unnecessary information and improve logo recognition.

Logo Display and Design Description

Table 2

Visual Illustrations: Upgrade

Logo	Design Description
<p>#1</p> 	<p>The figure is cut by the curvature of a circle. The range of action of the matador in the figure is relatively convergent. The curve of the upper body is compared with the arc direction below creating good tension and reflecting the morphological characteristics of the matador's posture.</p>
<p>#2</p> 	<p>The logo is composed of graphics with unified directivity. The red cape corresponds to the image of the black silhouette.</p>
<p>#3</p> 	<p>The body of the matador is surrounded by a cape. The cape has spiral lines to guide the vision which can focus on the matador itself. The composition is centrosymmetric and relatively formal. The C-shaped cape slightly breaks a corner making the logo more flexible.</p>

#4



Uses simple and concise lines to express the shape. When a matador wields his cape, his exaggerated and elegant posture presents the matador's classic pose. It has both power and beauty.

#5



Integrates the name of CSUN into the logo itself and becomes part of the matador's cape.

Table 3

Visual Illustrations: Grace

Logo	Design Description
<p>#1</p> 	<p>A matador depicted in beautiful lines with variations and a cloak expressed by plane composition. They cross each other and show a sense of hierarchy from the plane.</p>
<p>#2</p> 	<p>The figure is expressed in silhouette. The main body of the figure is the matador waving his cloak sideways and the movement is relatively elegant. In order to inherit the characteristics of the previous generation's logo and create visual harmony, the pattern still has only three colors: red, black, and white.</p>
<p>#3</p> 	<p>The form of the graphics is similar to a badge with red as the main color of the large surface. As a breakthrough, the figure of the cape makes the logo more expressive.</p>

#4



The figure is expressed in the form of silhouette. The main body of the pattern is the matador waving a cape.

The graphic expression is enhanced through action to make it have greater tension.

#5



The general color block composition brings out the characteristics of the matador and the overall logo is more like a plane. This logo provides great flexibility for use on various products.

Table 4

Visual Illustrations: Sports & Competition

Logo	Design Description
<p>#1</p> 	<p>The overall vision is a matador and a square with a thick line. Uses tough temperament instead of aggression and the graphics are more inclined to competitive events.</p>
<p>#2</p> 	<p>The overall vision of graphics is relatively retro. This version does not change the font of the past. In order to reflect competitive nature, the matador's face is still used as the main expression.</p>
<p>#3</p> 	<p>The graphics are relatively flat and use silhouette expression. Considering the expansion of the logo use to other merchandise, there are not too many details on the logo. Overall expression is a "calm" state.</p>

#4



Stylized and strong strokes are more in line with the tastes of young people and the gradient contrast in the middle of the font adds texture.

The figure below is for use in printed matter so is less textured.

#5



Considering the single shape of the character, the abstract cape is set off behind it. As an auxiliary figure, the cape makes the overall shape closer to the badge and brooch.

Table 5

Visual Illustrations: Minimalism

Logo	Design Description
<p>#1</p> 	<p>It is composed of the most basic plane to express the basic characteristics of matadors.</p> <p>The design elements of the cape are removed, and the most refined and simple design language is used.</p>
<p>#2</p> 	<p>The image of a matador is expressed by lines and the cape is expressed by planes. The cape is in the shape of a C wrapped around the matador.</p>
<p>#3</p> 	<p>Matador is composed of red and black color blocks which tend to be square as a whole. It makes the composition relatively full and convenient for subsequent application.</p>

#4



Shows the basic characteristics of matadors with general graphics. Uses the relationship between light and shade to shape the image of the matador.

#5



A very simple geometric color block is used to summarize the matador covered in gorgeous cloth. The figure shows the back of the matador.

Evaluation

Two experts in the design field reviewed the developed logos for CSUN sports club uniform and their evaluation was collected through a questionnaire designed for each specific series. The questionnaire includes questions such as ‘which logo resonated with the designers’, ‘which was the preferred choice’, as well as various questions related to the affective quality, arrangement, colors, and graphic design of the logos. Expert 1 is a senior graphic designer who has worked in this industry for 15 years. Her customers include Bentley China, Tencent Group, Audio, and Starbucks China. Expert 2 is a senior interior designer who has experience in logo design as well as being a CSUN Family and Consumer Sciences faculty member for over 16 years.

The reviewers’ responses indicated high preference for design #4 and #1 in the “Upgrade” series with suggestions to extract the design of the cloak to create more professionalism in the design. In addition, they emphasized that more positive and negative space could be considered to optimize the performance of logo graphics in general. Significantly, both Expert 1 and Expert 2 found design #1 to resonate the most.

The review of the “Grace” theme indicated that design #2 and #4 resonated with Expert 1, but the overall layout preference was for design #4 in this series which generated specific praise from Expert 1. In addition, the font in this design was noted to be equally as fashionable and memorable as the design preference in the “Upgrade” series. Expert 2 preferred design #2 and gave this design the maximum rating of 10 in both the color contrast and its use of color to evoke emotions from the viewer. The positive feedback in this series was that design #2 created a lot of resonance with the viewer. Suggestions for improvement, however, included to make the hat in design #4 to white hollow.

The “Sports & Competition” series review indicated that design #4 resonated with Expert 1 and this layout was preferred. However, the chosen font was found to be more standard by both experts rather than fashionable and the logo lacking concision and leaning towards being gimmicky. Expert 1 pointed out that font #4 gives people a sense of speed and urgency. Expert 2 noted that design #1 created the most resonance and its layout was preferred. Suggestions for improvement included feedback that these logo designs seemed more imitative of other sports clubs and that the more complex designs could create difficulties during printing. Therefore, the current design should be simplified.

Lastly, the review of the “Minimalism” theme indicated that Expert 1 preferred design #4 layout while #1 resonated with the expert. The font was deemed fashionable by both experts. Expert 2’s preference was design #5 and, notably, this expert found the contrasting colors made the logo more legible and evoked emotions easily. Suggestions for improvement indicated that #1 design could transform the CSUN letters into a mask shape and that the color yellow could be introduced in the bullring element. Table 6, Table 7, Table 8, and Table 9 present the detailed responses.

Table 6*Evaluation Results for Upgrade*

Survey Questions - Upgrade	Expert 1	Expert2
#1 Which logos resonate with you? (Ooley, 2018)	#1, #4	#1
#2 Which logo layout to you think is most effective in communicating CSUN image? (Malamed, 2015). (Select one for each series)	#4	#1
#3 Is the current arrangement of elements suitable for CSUN sports club uniform logo? (Malamed, 2015) (1-10)	6	7
#4 Are the contrasting colors chosen suitable to make the logo more legible and visible? (Dvornechcuck, 2021) (1-10)	5	10
#5 Does the chosen color evoke emotions from the viewer? (Dvornechcuck, 2021) (1-10)	5	10
#6 Do you think the chosen font is more fashionable or standard? (May 2022)	Fashionable	Fashionable
#7 Does the font chosen enhance the legibility and visibility of the logo elements? (May 2022) (1-10)	7	7
#8 Is the logo concise? (Ooley, 2018) (1-10)	7	7
#9 Does the logo feature a memorable design or gimmick? (Ooley, 2018) (1-10)	6	7

Table 7*Evaluation Results for Grace*

Survey Questions - Grace	Expert 1	Expert2
#1 Which logos resonate with you? (Ooley, 2018)	#2, #4	#2
#2 Which logo layout to you think is most effective in communicating CSUN image? (Malamed, 2015). (Select one for each series)	#4	#2
#3 Is the current arrangement of elements suitable for CSUN sports club uniform logo? (Malamed, 2015) (1-10)	6	7
#4 Are the contrasting colors chosen suitable to make the logo more legible and visible? (Dvornechcuck, 2021) (1-10)	5	10

#5 Does the chosen color evoke emotions from the viewer? (Dvornechcuck, 2021) (1-10)	5	10
#6 Do you think the chosen font is more fashionable or standard? (May 2022)	Fashionable	Fashionable
#7 Does the font chosen enhance the legibility and visibility of the logo elements? (May 2022) (1-10)	7	5
#8 Is the logo concise? (Ooley, 2018) (1-10)	7	7
#9 Does the logo feature a memorable design or gimmick? (Ooley, 2018) (1-10)	6	7

Table 8

Evaluation Results for Sports & Competition

Survey Questions - Sports & Competition	Expert 1	Expert2
#1 Which logos resonate with you? (Ooley, 2018)	#4	#1
#2 Which logo layout to you think is most effective in communicating CSUN image? (Malamed, 2015). (Select one for each series)	#4	#1
#3 Is the current arrangement of elements suitable for CSUN sports club uniform logo? (Malamed, 2015) (1-10)	5	7
#4 Are the contrasting colors chosen suitable to make the logo more legible and visible? (Dvornechcuck, 2021) (1-10)	5	10
#5 Does the chosen color evoke emotions from the viewer? (Dvornechcuck, 2021) (1-10)	5	10
#6 Do you think the chosen font is more fashionable or standard? (May 2022)	Standard	Standard
#7 Does the font chosen enhance the legibility and visibility of the logo elements? (May 2022) (1-10)	7	7
#8 Is the logo concise? (Ooley, 2018) (1-10)	3	7
#9 Does the logo feature a memorable design or gimmick? (Ooley, 2018) (1-10)	3	7

Table 9*Evaluation Results for Minimalism*

Survey Questions - Minimalism	Expert 1	Expert2
#1 Which logos resonate with you? (Ooley, 2018)	#1	#5
#2 Which logo layout do you think is most effective in communicating CSUN image? (Malamed, 2015). (Select one for each series)	#4	#5
#3 Is the current arrangement of elements suitable for CSUN sports club uniform logo? (Malamed, 2015) (1-10)	6	7
#4 Are the contrasting colors chosen suitable to make the logo more legible and visible? (Dvornechcuck, 2021) (1-10)	5	10
#5 Does the chosen color evoke emotions from the viewer? (Dvornechcuck, 2021) (1-10)	5	10
#6 Do you think the chosen font is more fashionable or standard? (May 2022)	Fashionable	Fashionable
#7 Does the font chosen enhance the legibility and visibility of the logo elements? (May 2022) (1-10)	7	8
#8 Is the logo concise? (Ooley, 2018) (1-10)	5	7
#9 Does the logo feature a memorable design or gimmick? (Ooley, 2018) (1-10)	5	7

Note. 1= not at all likely; 10 is extremely likely.

Discussion and Conclusion

The proposed logo redesign for California State University, Northridge (CSUN) sports club uniform has been developed with the overall goals of bringing benefits to the organization by enhancing the university's brand image and gaining enthusiasm for the university's sports clubs. This section summarized the importance of logo redesign and the findings associated with the research in logo redesign. In addition, the feedback provided by design reviewers and future directions of logo designs based on this expert advice were included.

Discussion

According to the results of this project, the most desirable qualities of a new sports logo included using an appropriate balance of negative and positive space, optimizing the printing process with designs not being overly complex, ensuring logos were not imitative of other sports clubs, and the possibility of introducing other colors (such as yellow) to complement the existing design elements.

The "Upgrade" series focused on a full modernization of the logo in terms of theme, shape, color, and font. This stylistic series kept the classic red and black prominently while reducing the use of gray. In this series, design #1 resonated more with the reviewer, indicating that the curvature of the circular shape within the design and the complementary shape of the matador's body created a pleasing tension. Design #4's logo layout was preferred overall in this series, and it features simple lines to express shapes while exaggerating the cape's movement. Overall, these findings echo the findings of the literature review and content analysis which indicate that shape is a crucial factor in a logo design and can affect overall effectiveness of the intended message.

The “Grace” logo series aimed to create a logo that would match the beauty of a matador’s strength and tension with graphics that utilize graceful movements and font that is more rounded. This would increase the grace of the design while reducing its aggressiveness. The findings from the expert review indicate that both design #2 and #4 resonated with the experts. Specifically, both designs utilized a silhouette and emphasized the movement of the matador’s cape. This indicates that the elegance and movement within the design were effective. The layout of #4 was noted to have an effective layout and this design featured a very dramatic movement of cape, creating greater tension. Relating this to the previous discussions on the importance of shape, it can be noted that the psychology part of the shape should be considered as well. Therefore, the lines of the matador’s silhouette and the movement of the cape as represented by its shape, helped to create effective logos.

The “Sports & Competition” series focused on the meaning of competition and emphasized key elements using shadow colors to add detail. Both the font and shape lines were strengthened to create strength and boldness. The findings of the review indicate that design #4 resonated the most with the reviewer and its layout was preferred. However, this design was also found to be more imitative of other sports teams. In light of the literature review findings, it can be noted that the angular lines and shapes within the designed logos most likely contributed to the design’s appeal. Conversely, the way the logo evokes other sports teams can cause confusion between the club and its competitors as highlighted in the review.

Finally, the “Minimalism” series had modern design elements central to each logo and aimed to express the club in an artistic and minimal way. The findings of the review indicate that design #1 resonated the most and it features the refined shapes and hints at the matador’s basic form. Design #4’s layout was preferred, and it is designed similarly to #1, while it used negative

space to create a contour on both the hat and matador's face. However, it was noted that design #1 could be improved with the introduction of the yellow color to create a bullring element. This relates back to the findings that using color as a design element is critical and that the psychology of color should be the primary consideration. While the incorporation of the yellow color may help create an additional design element in the logo, considering the audience is most likely CSUN sports club fans, using yellow color may overall detract from the design.

While the reviews indicate that improvements can be undertaken in layout, shape and color, the researcher notes that changing the color scheme from CSUN's traditional red and black would detract the attention from the brand and messaging as well as potentially disappoint CSUN's audience. Suggestions to adjust the layout and shape will be adopted in the future to create more effective CSUN sports club uniform logos. However, color changes will not be undertaken as these core colors are CSUN's "hero" colors that are intricately connected to its brand identity and history.

Conclusion

Considering the subsequent analysis, clearly the designers are faced with several distinct choices in terms of what would be the most appropriate logo for CSUN sports club uniforms. It is important to recognize that the right logo can capture the spirit of the school sport club and represents an identifiable symbol that can have tremendous depth of meaning, portraying distinct values that are common to athletes, fans, and the school. The value of an effective logo cannot be overstated with potential benefits including creating revenue, generating a fan base, and ensuring the athletes receive the support they require to win their games (Barbu & Popescu, 2018). An optimized logo will potentially attract more sports club members, improve the level of

attendance at sporting events, and can also influence the amount of team-logoed merchandise that is sold (Ahn et al., 2012).

The Matador, as the university's official mascot, evokes a rich cultural Southern California heritage and represents strength and vigor. Shape, color, font, and modernity are critical to the effectiveness of a logo redesign and these aesthetic elements represent an evaluative framework for designers when considering this four-logo series development. Due to the scaled rating system used in the questionnaire, reviewers focused on perceptual factors relating more to font and color. Therefore, more open questions will be put forward in a future questionnaire which may generate more detailed feedback on shape.

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