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Marks Of Excellence: The Development And Taxonomy Of Trademarks Revised And Expanded Edition



Synopsis

Revised edition of the best-selling history of the trademark.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The definitive book on corporate branding. •Steven Heller

Per Mollerup has had a varied career as a graphic designer, publisher, editor, author, and television producer. He is the founder of Designlab, a leading Scandinavian consultancy in visual communication, information design and corporate identity. Previously publisher and editor of the magazines *Mobilia* and *Tools*, he has produced television programmes and lectured internationally on design.

good!

Incredibly thorough and complete book.

Excellent reference for Trademarks, logo and identity.

Excellent reference and textbook for design students. This is a book that requires reading and really isn't a coffee table "picture" book. Therefore its value is that of a good reference book. However the drawback as a reference book or textbook are the overall dimensions of the book—too

large which is made even less accessible since it's only available in hardcover. The previous edition was available in paperback which helped to overcome the bulk and weight issue as a textbook. If the book was reduced in overall dimension and still had almost 300 pages it would be far more accessible and useful..

I needed this book for class and it came in perfect condition. The price was the best out there for this book it's was more than 25% off!

I think this book is his dissertation or something - very difficult to understand. Mr. Muller makes up terms and structures sentences with as many polysyllabic words as he can get his little hands on. For a design aesthetic known for clarity the writing is lost on unnecessary lofty vocabulary. We had it as a text and even the teacher said you had to read everything three or four times. That's ridiculous. SIMPLIFY! That design motto applies.

There is no more concentrated form of human communication than a trademark. Symbols like the Golden Arches, the script of Coca-Cola, the swoosh of Nike communicate (and often do it without words or letters) not only the name of the company, but emotions connected with the company and its products. You see hundreds of trademarks every day, and so does almost everyone else worldwide (and even if letters and words are used, the trademark symbolism transcends language barriers). Fifteen years ago, design consultant Per Mollerup brought out a volume about trademarks, and now it is enlarged and expanded in a second edition, *Marks of Excellence: The History and Taxonomy of Trademarks* (Phaidon). Large format, with illustrations on every page, this is a graphic text as befits its subject; but Mollerup has included text and notes about the origins, semiotics, purpose, and more, of trademarks. The marks themselves are the show, and the book is a satisfying display of graphic design. Trademarks are so universal, Mollerup says, that kids can look at the logo and say "Coca-Cola" before they can read, and adults can read the logo faster than they can read the words typed out. Trademarks are visual identifiers permitting fast identification. Objects were first marked to show ownership, but also started being marked to indicate a maker. The most extensive part of the book is the one on motifs, like the pages on bird trademarks. They are naturals, of course, for airlines. There is the Lufthansa bird in flight, of which Mollerup says, "This bird was the result of a competition held in 1919. It was first used on an aircraft in 1920 and has never been grounded!" There are birds of different design for Singapore or American Airlines, but there is a penguin for books and one for clothing. There's a dove for soap, a peacock for NBC, and

a happy, chattering blue bird silhouette for Twitter. It is fun to see on these pages just how many ways a bird can be drawn as a symbol and how simplified a design can be and still obviously be a bird. You can find many other living things used as starting points for trademarks. "Who would choose a scorpion for a trademark motif?" asks Mollerup, and answers by showing the shield-shaped trademark for a firm of racing cars, whose founder was a Scorpio, "and he thought that nobody would copy a scorpion." Of course the camel of Camel Cigarettes is here, not only in his picture on the package, but in his photo. There was a real camel, named "Old Joe," owned by Barnum & Bailey whose picture was taken in 1913. R. J. Reynolds himself drew the camel from the photo. If you are looking for graphics with no origin in nature, check out the pages on arrows. Arrows are used in trademarks for things going places, like British Rail or Amtrak. There is a famous hidden arrow within the letters that spell out FedEx. has an arrow, to indicate everything from its A to its Z, a smiling arrow (and does no one but me appreciate how phallic it is?). Crosses, too, are here, and are not exclusive to the Christian faith. There's one on Swissair, for instance, and on all those Swiss Army knives. There's a cross with a zipper down it, halfway opened, for Richman's Zipper Hospital. And then there is the crossed logo of Bayer vertical and Bayer horizontal. If you like stars, you can find them in the Texaco logo, and the one for Converse shoes. There is also a company called Star Semen, which sells semen from star bulls. Their star looks for all the world as if it has, stylized and not anatomically correct, testicles. A simple graphic is powerful. The logo for Pirelli does not depict a tire, but the bowl of the initial P is pulled out over the rest of the word, to show elasticity. Part of the fun of looking at these pages is how familiar so many of these trademarks are, and realizing how effortlessly they register within the beholder's consciousness. Part is seeing how an infinite variety of trademarks can be generated given the limited graphic canvas on which they must be constructed. Another part is to realize the power of image, with all the questions it raises of style versus substance. Marks of Excellence is good-looking, thoughtful, and thought-provoking.

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