

# DESIGN EXPRESS

The graphic services newsletter for promotional products pros



September 2015

## HOW LOOKS AFFECT A BRAND



Context is important in branding. So is setting yourself apart from the rest of the competition. This is second nature to great marketers. And world-class companies seek expert help.

So when investment giant UBS decided a change was needed to stand out in the crowded financial services industry, the company sought assistance for its [rebranding](#) efforts. The company launched a new set of commercials with a different tone of voice and what it calls an “acoustic identity” to connect with TV viewers and users on social media.

The firm also scrapped all of its original branding, with the exception of its well-known red key logo, and introduced a new graphic design schematic. UBS’s new branding aims high without coming across as stuffy.

Most important, this firm, which specializes in private banking, investments and wealth management, wanted to shed any association with the clichés of Wall Street or complex banking lingo. Instead, its rebrand is stocked with photos of real people, shot by photographer Annie Leibovitz, plus lighter fonts and straight-forward language.

Yet, it’s not just firms in the financial sector that need to consider their look and logos. At the other end of the consumer spectrum, burger joint Shake Shack aims to reach millennials. As the fast food concern grows swiftly outside its New York City home, Shake Shack has become a huge social media [influencer](#), courting 20-something hamburger and

## NEW SERVICE LAUNCH: CUSTOM DESIGNS DONE RIGHT THE FIRST TIME, EVERY TIME

Growing businesses have no time to waste with inexpensive graphic shops that may or may not hit on the right designs. Only Idea Custom Solutions has the breadth of talent, world-class technology and processes to deliver the right designs reliably, every time.

### You can’t stand out from the crowd with a crowd-sourced solution

This is not an automated tool, do-it-yourself approach or freelance project where designs are at the mercy of whatever time someone cares to give them. We provide professional-level creative, from full-time designers with extensive training.

### CHOOSE FROM:



T-SHIRTS,



EVENT BANNERS,

milkshake lovers through social media. To that end, Shake Shack has been thoughtful about its choice of fonts for its logo and marketing materials.

Instead of opting for a futuristic look, the newish restaurant chain has brought back a 70-year-old font called Neutra. Along with it comes an exciting and trendy retro character.

While Shake Shack's lead designer, Paula Scher, said she "picked Neutra for the branding because it complemented the (original location's) architecture so beautifully," the look and feel of the logo and font scheme is nostalgic to bring in hints of the 20th Century and fast food's place in the American experience.

Another leading company in the middle of branding efforts is Google. The tech giant is reorganizing its [corporate structure](#) as Alphabet, but that didn't stop it from reworking the Google brand identity to introduce a new logo in August 2015.

While there is — both among design folks and everyday users — much [criticism](#) about Google's new logo, the firm has expressed [confidently](#) that the recent logo change is a thoughtful part of their brand's evolution. *Fortune Magazine* [notes](#) that the new Google logo's "neutral response" can actually be considered a win for their branding.

Google, Shake Shack and UBS are just a few of many branding and re-branding efforts going on now. Large corporations like these spend enormous amounts of time and money to get professional help from experts on everything from their logos to their digital and print materials to their brand launches. Fortunately, there are resources like Idea Custom Solutions that help our clients level the playing field to allow their small and medium sized business customers to get high-caliber logo designs at affordable prices.

## WHAT MAKES YOUR WEBSITE A WINNER?

Some companies measure their website by the volume of sales but many businesses don't sell goods online. So what makes your website effective might have more to do with its ability to engage potential customers and, better yet, speak appropriately for your brand.

### Current and Relevant Design

Just over a month ago The Next Web [revisited](#) what is trending in 2015, both in terms of what looks slick, and what users respond to. For starters, simplicity is best. Today's design whizzes recommend "clean" and flat design with "minimal use of color, shapes and typography". Gone are the days of popping, buzzing and spinning graphics. Generally, picking one font or a cohesive scheme of closely-related fonts is also crucial to a crisp, uncluttered and professional look.

### Consider Your Customer

In most cases, visitors to your website are your customers or, ideally, they should be. Even if you don't run a true e-commerce site — selling goods or services directly from your site — your digital presence will help you win or lose you customers. It's important to consider what makes your website useful to them.

According to *Inc.* magazine, the prominent voice of small business, everything on your website should have a purpose. Specifically, Inc.



POSTERS,



AND NEW  
LOGOS  
OR LOGO  
RE-DESIGNS.

### There are cheap solutions and then there is real value

Your time is worth a lot. A cheap design that you have to reject and start over is no bargain. With us, you can deliver agency-level creative — Six-Sigma quality controlled and ISO certified — to your customers at prices they can afford.

### We guarantee your satisfaction

We do millions of logos for millions of products, year in and year out, for clients big and small. Our mission is to build long-term relationships with successful companies. We don't succeed unless you do.

### The right help, when you need it most

It's time-consuming and frustrating when customers just can't decide what they really want. Our marketing consultants help by contacting customers directly, to clarify their creative briefs for logo design and ensure they get results they'll love. This radically reduces both abandonment and re-work, and it leads to customers who are happy and ready to recommend you to friends.

### Done right, delivered fast

recommends choosing your images carefully to relate to what you offer. Also, tap your web designer to set up non-verbal and call-to-action functions, while also paying attention to “where the eye wanders”.

Moreover, don't feel pressured to get too technical. Avoid jargon and overly wordy explanations of your company's mission, products or services. This goes not just for your site's content but also for its design. Certainly it is okay to design with a certain type of customer in mind. But *Inc.* recommends you design “a little bit *for everyone*”, so that your site looks enticing to anyone who might view it and not just existing customers.

### Hire an Expert

Finally, one of the most important things you can do to improve any aspect of your business is to consult a specialist. While you are focused on running your company, responding to customers and dreaming up new products, it helps to have someone that can update your website to reflect changes to your business.

By enlisting an expert, you gain advantages. This spring, *Money* magazine tackled the topic and revealed some simple benefits including time savings, getting it right the first time and obtaining a finished product that exceeds your original expectations.

Your website is no less important to your business than the electricity in your office, or the engine in the vehicle you drive to work. Just like you would consult a specialist for either, or seek an attorney on legal matters, hiring a specialist on the design and construction of your website is essential. You will free yourself to be your best at what you do best, while getting great results.

### PROMO PRODUCTS: MORE THAN JUST AN INTRO

Specialty advertising and promotional products are often talked about as cornerstones of trade shows and new customer engagement. And there is more recent evidence that this is true.

Small business book author Rhonda Abrams talks up promo products as an essential part of trade shows. Along with choosing the right events and taking the initiative to talk to people, Abrams says that print collateral is the most important giveaway. But other items bring potential customers and important contacts to exhibitors' booth.

“People love free stuff,” Abrams writes. “Just make sure your product name, contact info and website is printed on everything you hand out.”

*The Casper Journal* recently echoed Abrams' sentiment, stating that trade shows are all about the giveaways.

“Anything,” the Wyoming newspaper said, “can draw people in and help you initiate a conversation with them. Furthermore, the Journal thinks that the right promotional products — whether writing instruments, drinkware or desk toys — make lasting impressions.

Plus, there is a practical side to many promo products offered. “Phone chargers, for example, though not cheap, are now the swag of choice at all-day conferences where phones run out of juice as the day drags

### HOW IT WORKS:



Complete the creative brief with any files like logos, design examples or hand drawings.



Get concepts within 48 hours after speaking with the design consultant



Review two concepts and submit revisions to one

We complete custom creative designs within 72 hours.

For more than 15 years, Idea Custom Solutions has been providing graphic production and business services to companies that rely on us for the highest quality — promotional products, printing, awards, signs and other businesses. Now you can get custom creative design from the team you trust for vector artwork, embroidery digitizing and image editing.

### NOTABLE QUOTES

on.”

That being said, not all giveaways that your customers offer need to be 100% practical business tools. For example, the entire computer gaming business depends every summer on E3, the Electronic Entertainment Expo. As the *Los Angeles Times* [reports](#), some of their whimsical promo items called “abiimos” (toy figurines of computer game characters) attract enthusiastic attendees.

Yet, despite the reputation of promotional products’ as conversation starters, they also have another role, as relationship tools with clients and employees. For example, *Entrepreneur Magazine* recently covered the topic of employee recognition, and how companies like Groupon, Zappos and Tata not only provide [recognition](#) for individual achievements in the workplace with trophies, but also with fun desk toys and wearables like top-of-the-line sports jackets as rewards.

They are also options for businesses that want to recognize their most important clients. This summer, *Business Insider* reported that an investment firm called Van Eck Global habitually sends [novelty neckties](#) to its top wealth management clients. The firm also commissioned a special run of other coveted novelty ties with former Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke and founding father Alexander Hamilton.

Additionally, giveaways are used for product marketing. In the competitive tech sector, camera giant Canon issued a set of [mugs](#) poking fun at its rival Nikon, while heralding the features of its superior 50.6 megapixel line of 5D cameras.

Wherever your customers are in the marketing lifecycle, choosing the right selection of branded promotional products will make an impact for their businesses initially and for the long haul. If you need help creating or converting the logos and artwork that will appear on hard goods and wearables, turn to Idea Custom Solutions for the highest quality and reliable turn times.



Let Idea Custom Solutions help you find content for social media:

What does a word-class [#logo](#) look like? Some great examples from innovative, successful companies. <http://goo.gl/p26SCX>

[Tweet That!](#)

The [#PromoProducts](#) market continues to grow. Major firms and small ones are seeing demand from businesses jump. [@ASICentral](#) <http://goo.gl/z6HJwn>

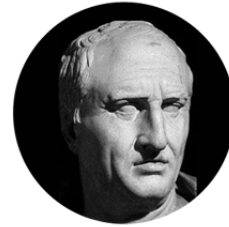
[Tweet That!](#)

NASA’s iconic [#logo](#) dates to 1959, plus [#NASA](#) has its own graphic design style guide. <http://goo.gl/VdHDPO>

[Tweet That!](#)

T-shirts are one of the most popular [#wearable](#) [#PromoProducts](#) for businesses. <http://goo.gl/zqzEq8>

[Tweet That!](#)



“Good merchandise, even hidden, soon finds buyers.”  
— Plautus



“A lot of what is most beautiful about the world arises from struggle.”  
— Malcolm Gladwell



“Without discipline, there's no life at all.”  
— Katharine Hepburn



“The well-satisfied customer will bring the repeat sale that counts.”  
— James Cash Penney



“Money won’t create success, the freedom to make it will.”  
— Nelson Mandela



Shake Shack, a hit with millennials, uses retro fonts to add nostalgia to its website and marketing.

<http://goo.gl/pkhMh3>

[Tweet That!](#)

As Kraft Foods and Heinz merge, what's next for the #logo? <http://goo.gl/RQcH4x>

[Tweet That!](#)

Quality print marketing collateral helps boost your marketing, social media efforts to reach customers. <http://goo.gl/FphZfb>

[Tweet That!](#)

The coffee mug may be the all-time greatest #PromoProduct. Mugshot Monday shows its variety. <http://goo.gl/9Fc7Rw>

[Tweet That!](#)

A #brand helps a business establish reputation. Hiring expert help is a great start. <http://goo.gl/Ztul4O>

[Tweet That!](#)



"An ounce of performance is worth pounds of promises."

— Mae West



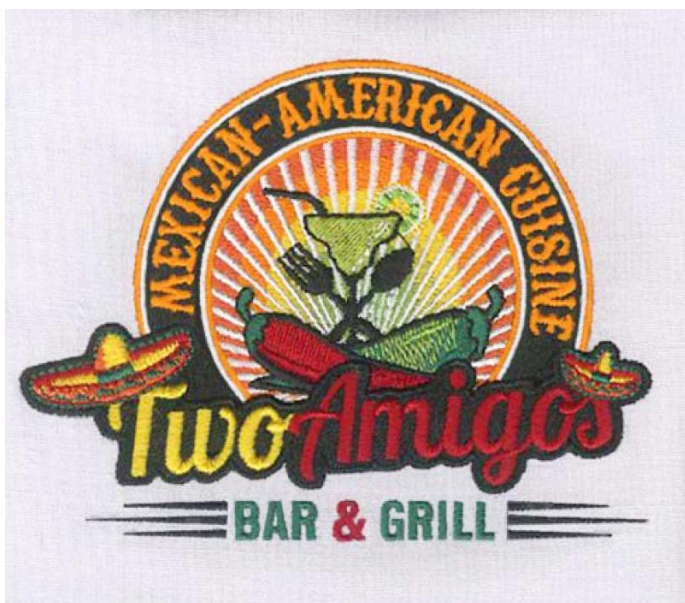
"Real magic in relationships means an absence of judgment of others."

— Wayne Dyer



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### Embroidery Digitizing



### Vector Artwork



**Vikram Khanore**  
Unit Supervisor,  
Digitizing Team

Vikram has been with Idea Custom Solutions for nine years and he is a supervisor monitoring delivery, productivity and quality of the team. He is very proud he was able to earn the promotion to his current role.

His advice to current and potential employees of Idea Custom Solutions is: "Work hard and you will always get rewarded for that. I strongly believe, in today's world, the combination of hard work and smart work is the key to success."



While outside the office, Vikram likes to go on outings with his family. He also enjoys listening to music and watching movies. His favorite is "Three Idiots" because it reminds him of his college days and he appreciates the script and performances. A very creative person, Vikram spends time surfing the Internet to explore new ideas and concepts. He is passionate about technology and always hungry for more knowledge.

One of his goals was to settle in Pune and get a home of his own. Vikram told us, "The day when I made this dream come true was the day in my life I cannot forget." Another dream he hopes to make a reality is visiting all the historical places in India.

Vikram thinks people should know Idea Custom Solutions is "the best company in the creative field, where you get to learn and expand your skills." He would like to be known for his talent and good work. His motto is: "Always think positive and you will get positive results."

If you have any designs created by our team that you would like to share in this newsletter, send them to us at [marketing@ideacustom.com](mailto:marketing@ideacustom.com)



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