

Custom Type and Lettering For Logo Design

Create ink trap.

*Increase height
of cross bar.*

Slightly round corners.

Proposal for Thought Leadership Series on LinkedIn

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Introduction

*"Good design is good business,"
reported former IBM CEO,
Thomas Watson Jr., in 1973.*

The Importance of Type

As new organizations enter the marketplace and competition gets stiffer, the importance of branding increases. That's business. Defined loosely, branding is ability of one company to distinguish itself from companies that offer similar products or services. While branding consists of many moving parts, the logo is arguably the most consistent element of a brand's identity system. Therefore, the more unique and own-able a brand's logo is, the better it serves both the business it represents and the audience it's targeting. While logos can also contain marks and icons, the research in this proposal will outline the importance of custom typography and lettering, specifically. After all, the word "logo" is short for "logotype," which uses only text to represent a brand.

On Typography

It's important to first establish the inclusion of both typography and lettering for logo design. Typography is the practice of creating letters for the purpose of print. Helvetica, Garamond, and Caslon are all examples of typefaces, for example. We'll dig into the nuances of typography and fonts later, but any designer can arguably pull a font off the shelf and create a logo with it. Customizing established fonts is one way to create a more memorable logo.

On Lettering

Lettering, on the other hand, is the art of drawing letters individually. While it can be done digitally, the key difference from typography is that the individual letters aren't intended to be part of a complete alphabet. Lettering is created with the sole purpose of creating a stylistic word, making it even more specific and applicable to logo design.

Content Platform

One could argue that Instagram, Facebook, or TikTok would be a better channel to highlight a series about a creative endeavor, like logo design. While custom typography and lettering both contain elements of artistry, the fundamental purpose of branding is a business function. LinkedIn is undoubtedly the preferred channel for leaders looking make their business stand out, making it ideal for a thought leadership series. The purpose of thought leadership is to establish credibility and build trust with the intended audience, which is the outcome of what this proposal is aiming for. Through an article and corresponding posts, I intend to connect with business leaders, and share a profound understanding of how custom type and lettering will enhance the value of their brand's most important asset — the logo.



Custom Type: FedEx altered the font Future to achieve its hidden arrow.



Lettering: Coca-Cola's signature lettering has evolved slightly since the late 1800's.

Goals and Objectives

Capitalize on an opportunity to develop thought leadership for the creative industry.



People often choose products based on their perceived value rather than their actual value.

- David Airey in *Logo Design Love*

Opportunity

Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok are flooded with fantastic examples and case studies from the [creator marketing economy](#). Graphic designers regularly share their work on these channels because they are perfect for sharing compelling visuals. But, most professionals that hire graphic designers are on LinkedIn. The primary goal for this campaign is to develop a series of content that educates, informs, and inspires marketing professionals about the importance of type in branding and logo design. It's a daunting task, though worthy of perusing — an open opportunity exists for creators on LinkedIn.

Specific

Through an insightful thought leadership article on custom type and lettering for logo design, along with corresponding videos, graphics, and even ads, I want to connect and engage with marketing professionals and business leaders that play a role in the branding of their organization.

Measurable

Initial research indicates that posting thought leadership content on social media can lead to a [30% lift in engagement](#), specifically on LinkedIn. That will be a starting point. However, another goal would be to increase the number of followers for my personal and business LinkedIn accounts.

Achievable

Creating a plan for a thought leadership series, and executing within seven weeks is both achievable and likely. KPIs, however, may be adjusted based on research.

Relevant

Graphic design and branding are two important elements of any marketer's toolkit. The goal, and challenge, of this proposal is to highlight the importance and relevance of design decisions to those in business leadership roles.

Timeline

The content and any graphics for LinkedIn outlined in this proposal are meant to be researched, planned, written, designed, and delivered within seven weeks. A publication schedule will also be proposed.

Target Audience

This campaign is meant to target both potential clients and creative leaders.



2.5 Million

The number of Americans that work in marketing.

- American Marketing Association

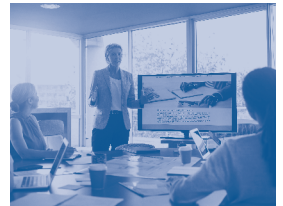
The underlying business objectives of thought leadership are meant to build credibility and attract customers. But, it also helps to establish trust among industry peers. In this way, thought leaders expand reach, grow their personal community, and generate more followers.

Traditionally, graphic designers achieved this by winning awards in trade publications like *Print*, *Communication Arts*, and *Graphis*. Today, they can achieve similar results by showcasing their work and offering insightful thoughts through social media channels. LinkedIn offers greater potential to reach both of the following intended audiences:

Marketing Executives

Marketing executives are the people that will most likely hire logo designers. They may work in-house for a brand, at a marketing company, or a large advertising agency.

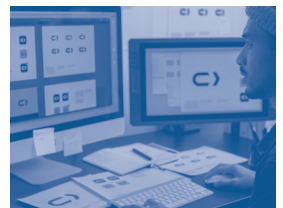
- Chief Marketing Officer
- Brand Manager
- Vice President of Marketing
- Marketing Director



Creative Professionals

Creative leaders might also hire logo designers, but the importance of this audience is more about credibility. Creating a dialogue with professionals in the same field helps define industry leadership.

- Creative Director
- Principal/Owner
- Graphic Designer
- Art Director



Research & Planning

Insightful, engaging content requires in-depth research and detailed planning.



75%

of decision-makers trust thought leadership content more than typical marketing materials.

- 2024 B2B Thought Leadership Report

After nearly 20 years of working in the creative industry as a creative director, art director, and graphic designer, I've developed a few thoughts on logo design. Trust me, I'm not the only one! Contrary to popular believe, though, thought leadership isn't secured by opinion alone. To establish credibility among industry professionals, including my creative peers, there are three main areas of research needed for this project: 1. Thought Leadership, 2. Logo Design, and 3. Thought Leaders in Design.

Thought Leadership

In order to create insightful and engaging content, I need to develop a profound understanding of the available formats, key words, and best practices for thought leadership on LinkedIn today.

Logo Design

Historical research will be conducted for contextual purposes. Landscape review and analysis will provide contemporary examples for comparison.

Thought Leaders in Design

Who are the current thought leaders in the areas of branding and logo design? How do they approach the topic, and what kind of engagement do they get? Peer review will help guide the content choice, tone of voice, and media mix of this campaign.

Production Plan

A comprehensive production schedule will ultimately be created based on concept and deliverables. The initial outline includes a 1,000-1,500 word LinkedIn article that can then be broken down into various LinkedIn formats: Two carousel/Document posts, one video, and a LinkedIn Thought Leadership paid ad. Content — including copy and necessary graphics or video — will be drafted, reviewed, and revised according to a 6 week timeline.

Content Calendar

Last, an appropriate calendar will be developed to deliver the content, collect feedback, optimize, and plan for future content creation as well.

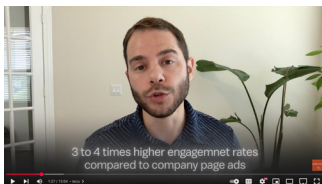
Deliverables

These tactics are thought-starters. More research will lead to specific content ideas.

LinkedIn offers multiple content formats including articles, newsletters, and videos, that allow thought leaders to share insights in a number of engaging ways. Mixing up the content across different formats will help capture different audiences, allow the content to remain fresh and relevant, and also provide the opportunity to test results and optimize the campaign.



Video Idea: Top-down view of printed examples on paper.



Thought Leadership Ads: 3 to 4 times more engagement.

LinkedIn Article: Custom Type vs. Lettering in Logo Design

This article walks through the pros and cons of custom typography versus lettering for logo design, including time, cost, and brand appropriateness.

Video: Brief History of Type in America

America had a distinct typographic style that evolved quickly after the introduction of Swiss Typography. This video asks, is it time to revisit our roots?

Carousel/Document Post: Discover Logo Inspiration

It's too easy for designers to rifle through free fonts available on Google Fonts or Adobe Fonts. This post shows where to find inspiration for custom type.

Carousel/Document Post: Custom Logotype Review

In this carousel, I would showcase some of the most successful logos: what makes the type work, and why it stands out against competitors.

Thought Leadership Ad: Type That Works

Thought leadership ads help establish industry authority. The idea is to develop a concept that showcases my professional work, and identifies custom type and lettering projects.

Timeline

Initial outline to concept, draft, create, and deliver appropriate content for LinkedIn.

Week 1: Research

Research thought leadership formats and develop proposal.

Week 2: Planning

Refine timeline and select LinkedIn formats.

Week 3: Rough Draft

Preliminary draft for LinkedIn article.

Week 4: Storyboard

Draft remaining LinkedIn deliverables.

Week 5: Create

Develop LinkedIn content and assets.

Week 6: Revise

Review and revise article and graphics.

Week 7: Delivery

Finalize creative. Establish KPIs.
Plan appropriate publication calendar.



Final Thoughts

Here's to creating thought-provoking content that establishes personal credibility.



LogoLounge: There's no shortage of inspiration when it comes to logo design. [LogoLounge](#) has now produced 15 books, each containing hundreds of logos.

Not too long ago, professionals with experience that shared industry know-how, usually in trade publications, were considered thought leaders. How the times have changed! Today, there are a myriad of category experts, both young and green as well as accomplished, creating content that educates and inspires their audience.

For this project to be successful, the content needs to be insightful, educational, helpful, and thought-provoking for one specific subject — logo design. It's a daunting task. More importantly, in order to create meaningful and engaging content, I need to research the best methods to convey thought leadership on LinkedIn today.

Short-term goals

Create thought-provoking content about branding as it relates to logo design.

Long-term goals

Establish myself as an industry thought leader for both marketing and creative professionals.

Test and Learn

For context, I used to send 60-page editorial pieces to the printer and cross my fingers that there were no typos. There was one chance to make edits — at the press proof — and even those often came with added costs. The beauty of the internet is that errors can be fixed in real time.

While we can learn from our mistakes quicker, there's also a lot at stake when developing content intended to convey thought leadership. It's possible that the intended audience doesn't read the content or, even worse, doesn't perceive any value in it. Negative publicity can be very detrimental to anybody's careers. It can be devastating for a small business owner, like me.

Many of the deliverables outlined in this proposal are, as I see it, an opportunity to test and learn. Based on established KPIs such as engagement and followers, I can easily pivot my approach during content dissemination. I would look to create more content that mimics successful posts, and reduce the clutter that is getting lost. Ultimately, the goal of this project is to create content that adds to an engaging online dialogue about branding and design.