REPORT

# Typographic body: a connection between form and personality in corporate logotypes

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# Abstract

The objective of this work was a) to examine the relation between typographical body and the character, meaning and temperament of words that carry its form and b) to examine the perception of a global brands' logotype (textual part of a logo) and measure on how their typography is perceived by observers to see if the font family itself corresponds to values and/or tone of voice the same brands wanted to exhibit.

The selection of famous brand logos has been chosen from a range of diverse industries. After identifying the typography for each, they have been presented in a "neutral" environment, stripped from any brand recognizable visual artefacts, colours, titles, taglines and then compared against a series of qualitative descriptors to see if their form matches the industry and emotional aspects they wanted to instil.

Survey results and interview findings led to work that proposed a selection of caricatured logotypes that are clearly and uncomfortably stressing the intended brand image. Four variations: a) neutral brand logotype, b) stressed logotype, c) alternative brand logotype and d) one more alternative brand logotype have been offered to the same participants. This test has been set to see if the original typography positioned the brand(s) at the right place in terms of font choice and stylization.

The report has shown that there were cases where the brand's chosen typography form did not correspond to the personality of the brand. The research sample was small leaving room for more comprehensive research. The research was done outside of each brand's visual context, not taking into account their existing tone of voice, and the work derived corresponds to research findings in that context.

*Keywords: typography, font, personality, form, appropriateness, brand, logotype*

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# *Chapter 1*
# INTRODUCTION

Typography has been a carrying historical and cultural element of great importance. Primary written sources represent a cornerstone for history as a science, as we rely on the reports to explain the events that shaped society as they have a direct connection to the past (Sreedharan, 2009). The content is what we are searching for while recognizing that letter is a medium through which content is delivered.

Letters as a medium have changed in their form, size, shape, personality (artistic elements adding only aesthetical value) while preserving primary goal: to effectively communicate Although they are typically displayed in digital form, and in print through newspapers and books most notably, all words, letters, numbers as well as early visualisations, clay imprints and carvings may be addressed as typography. The organisation and shaping of letterform have changed over the course of history to accommodate the sender (author) on a functional and stylistic level, while the goal has stayed the same: to convey a message.

According to Heller (2005), typography represents an "arrangement of letters and words that conveys information and meaning". Typography has been concealed as it is (rightfully) not in the centre of attention, rather a carrying element that delivers ideas, messages and historical records. As such it has been not in the spotlight of creative research in terms of how its form affects the recipient.

This question is important as in 2017 during one minute of average internet traffic we would send 16 million texts and more than 150 million emails (Desjardins, 2017). Even though internet traffic nowadays in video content, we consume and manufacture a vast amount of text. To determine how much text exactly I generate, a tracker was installed on my laptop. During 8 months of usage, I have made more than 1,8 million keystrokes.

Director of research at Google, Peter Norvig (2013) has determined that the average word length in the English language is 4,7 letters long, meaning that I have by approximation typed out 386 thousand words during this period. Considering that I deal with visual communication primarily in my daily work this was a surprising find.

The textual form is present in our daily routine, filling both private and public space, affecting our cognitive processes, shaping opinions, guiding our thoughts or simply informing us. McCarthy and Mothersbaugh (2002) consider typography to be a crucial element of graphic design.

Will-Harris (1990) suggests that typography works subliminally and that of great help for viewers association with that typography is previous exposure to it. This is a significant finding, as we see major brand emulating this behaviour by branding themselves similarly to what the industry leaders are doing. Recent rebranding trends are noted in the auto industry in the past 2020 and current 2021. This suggests that association by previous exposure is recognised as a factor for visual brand positioning in graphical stylization and typography. The focus of this paper is thus the appropriateness of letterform to the meaning and brand personality - formulated in the logotype.

Through the work of other authors, it became evident that quantitative research along with direct interviews was a proper way to test the appropriateness of the letterform in corporate brand typography.

The target group consisting of designers, typographers, layout designers and other visual communicators was selected based on the decision-making value that they have in creating content that reaches the consumers. Professionals that formulate visual artefacts and prepare final products are the ones who suggest and decide on how logotypes, books, headings, titles, drop caps and paragraphs will look like, thus shaping the consumer's visual journey. Prior to this work a brief with less or more details is delivered, containing descriptive, but vague pointers like mood, emotions, taste, smell, the end goal and desired effect. This is then translated by designers which have a certain benchmark that translates mentioned pointers into palpable deliverables.

A mix of quantitative and qualitative research was employed to discover how is the typographic form's appropriateness is perceived among the creators. The methods correspond to similar work done previously. This target group gives a narrower finding as

the research was done in a non-diverse environment among creative professionals. At the same time, it provides a clearing view of the decision-making source but is also a limitation since it does not test the perception among the wide consumer base.

The first part of the methodology included visual and photographic surveys examining how famous brands formulated their logotype and sourcing the exact font in which it has been formatted. Though this phase a secondary derivative emerged which was a set of values that the target group identifies with, which corresponds to the brand's tone of voice. This element might be of interest for future research, although it would demand a closer connection with the in-house design team and their market insight which are often internal - not publicly available.

Secondly, a collection of brand logotypes was collected to represent a wider spectre of industries with a versatile audience. Their logotypes were cleaned - all easily identifiable graphical elements were stripped, and their name replaced by a neutral keyword, typed out in the black shade in the font that is used in the original logomark.

Survey participants were then presented with a series of logotypes and a type of summative scaling was presented under each image. Likert scale was most appropriate, as it presented an easy way of finding how do participant perceive the logos in terms of their personality (Wuensch, 2005). Five-point scoring gave them the ability to express their opinions on the values related to the logotype. Work developed from the same selection of logotypes was created to represent their opposite meaning, creating tension and contrast, unpleasant and conflicting feelings in order to test the hypothesis of this paper. This work was also presented to the participants in the second phase of the research. The participants were presented with an additional set of two alternative logotypes asking which one was more fitting for a certain industry type and tone of voice their brands wanted to emulate, along with the neutral logotype in the original font. Descriptive values that were tested through the scaling system were sourced directly from the brands' culture decks, presentations and other material provided by the brands and industry leaders.

Secondary work took the research findings and transformed logotypes according to the survey response. This work does not take into account other important aspects that must be considered when creating a logotype. This work derivatives are a direct response to research findings outside of each brand context.

# *Chapter 2*
# LITERATURE REVIEW

Typography has played an integral part in cultural and economic development. Understanding its origins and core concepts within the field has been briefly covered in this chapter to create a logical foundation leading to the research question and conclusion.

## History

Starting with impressions on wet clay by rolling cylinders in the Babylonian empire (Clair, 1999), typography has been conceived in one way or another cross-culturally. Chinese developed a beautiful art of calligraphy on the paper medium. Romans defined serifs via stone inscriptions which have been transferred into iconic Trajan Pro font designed in 1989 by Carol Twomby for Adobe. This font was sourced from Trajan's Column featuring all capital roman letters (Berry, 2012). This supports the research idea as a number of pop-culture titles both in the movie, gaming, publishing and magazine industry sources this or similar typography when talking about ancient, Roman and/or Latin context.

The gothic letter known also as a Blackletter was used in Western Europe from 12-17 century. In some countries like Germany, it was present until the early 20th century (Dowding, 1962). Characterised by heavy, thick strokes it was considered "barbaric" by renaissance humanists (Kniefacz, 2019). This further emphasises the theme that certain typographic style can convey strong cultural, political, economic and other sets of values and ideas. Depending on which side of the history the participants found themselves, these ideas, translated into typographical styles can be perceived as hostile and rejected, or sought as scholastic ideals.

While technical improvements of the 15th century did provide a leap in how and at what speed we disseminated knowledge, the principles of typesetting and printing have

been preserved. The first personal computer in the 1980s transformed the processes by digitising the procedure of creating typefaces (Clair, 1999). They have become accessible, way cheaper and faster to produce with minimal health hazards that followed the physical process. This change has been characterized as "democratisation of type" as they become readily available for creation and re-mixing not just by designer, but also by the general public (Rothenberg, 1990). Their usage has also shifted from pragmatic to artistic, personalised and specific depending on the usage needs. Extensis (2019) reports that in 2019 What Font Is catalogued 550,000 fonts. Today that number is at 770,000 fonts both in commercial and non-commercial space showing that font availability is greater than ever and is continuing to grow.

## Technological advancement

The first type of printing technology with movable elements was introduced in 11th century China (Needham, 1994). These elements were made of porcelain and later improved both in China and Korea. European printing press discovery could have been influenced by sporadic reports of typographical advancements in the East, but a clear connection has not been established (Gies & Gies, 1994). As described by Eisenstein (1980), the event that sparked the printing and literacy revolution was Johannes Gutenberg's printing press. As a goldsmith, his knowledge of metals made it easy to experiment and create a medium that could be easily moulded, cast and then re-cast with minimal material loss. The reason printing innovation was more fruitful in Europe could be due to the fact that compared to their Chinese counterpart, European languages had a limited number of letters that could have been easier to copy and produce.

The fragility of porcelain and clay dies is evident. Hand-carved lead and steel letterforms were time-consuming and physically challenging. Working as a punchcutter was a demanding and limiting skill demanding patience and practice. Since every letter was worked individually, each letter would look slightly different leading to inconsistent word/letter layout in a single line of text (Unger, 2018). Even if the shape was the same, each next page under the printing press was a new "unique" copy due to inconsistent paper text, the way ink transferred to the fibres. Differences were unintentional but could not be overcome with the technology that was made available at the time.

Microscopic precision with predictable repeatability could only be achieved after the development of CTP (computer-to-plate) technology in the 1990s when letterforms were made in the exact shape as their designers intended (Unger, 2018). Other progress like

Web Open Font Format, True and OpenType font format development eliminated the need to use raw physical material. Fonts could now be developed in a safe environment, far from the mechanical and chemical dangers. The creators were free to do their best work, without fear of making a mistake, which is an important aspect of digital transformation. The time cost of making a mistake. In a physical environment mistake at any stage of the typeface development process would be costly. Moulding the materials, getting them out of the frame, and then typesetting letters again would affect one whole row, and maybe the whole structure. Digital environment provides same functionalities in a more flexible environment, not just for the whole page, but the whole book or document setup.

With licenses and shared work, typographers were able to remix, adapt and create new styling and fonts from a base font family within hours. Introduction of language support and special characters became normal practice, as not a single font family could be used thought the continents which made it easier for international companies to preserve the tone of voice across markets.

Whole historical printing progress could now be expanded through a pragmatical approach to typography making. A variety of fonts available at the fingertips was once measured in years of hard physical work. Technological pragmatism democratized the industry making it available to everyone, by lowering product cost, and no physical space needed for manual presses, and letters that needed hand sorting and smelting. Digital text provided such flexibility, and playfulness that was forgiving any mistake. Through this playfulness, a variety of styles was born. Advanced software allowed for experimentation and customisation of character height, width, tracking, kerning and other elements. Just 40 years ago, this work would take days. With companies, boundaries and agencies font availability with free to use licences have enabled both professionals and non-professionals to create any project with a font that suits them best.

Technological empowerment enabled vast exposure to typography, though merchandising and especially in the clothing industry as an omnipresent aesthetic element. Consumers of typography have consciously or subconsciously formed an opinion about what they like and dislike. In the case where they are not asked to verbalise their opinion, they do inadvertently materialise that opinion by "vote buying" layouts with which they identify (Schaffer & Schedler, 2005).

## Typographic norms

In his *Essay on Typography*, Eric Gill (2016) wrote: "as there is a norm of letter form – the bare body so to say, of letters – there is also a norm of letter clothes, or rather there are many norms as letters are used for this place or purpose or that." The norm or standard comes from a historical and a collective impression, a human experience of reality that surrounds it including the text as a graphical means of communication.

Gill (2016) found that people would is some instances characterise letters as narrow, hard to recognise, absurd, fancy, comical etc. These impressions are summarised as "moral norms" with attributed characteristics like 'right' or 'wrong'. At the time, in the 1930s, when he formalised his findings, the industrial revolution was prominent. The average worker did not have time for exotic, elaborate and luscious typography. Consuming the news was of utmost priority with speed and undistributed attention. Extravagant and elaborate letters have been brought to their bare version, to their functional form, increasing the effectiveness of communication, thus saving spatial, temporal and economic resources for both readers and the publishing house.

Morrison guided designers in the process of choosing the proper font: "The more often he [designer] is going to use it [typeface], the more closely its design must approximate to the general idea held in the mind of the reader" (Morison & Krimpen, 1967). For the establishment of normative design, this was an obvious hint in the right direction. The suggestion was to use a selected font in order for it to correspond to the motifs that are conveyed in the text. The intention of the font selection was to truthfully transfer ideas of the message sender to the text recipient. Unger (2018) suggested that Stanley's remark was in regard to the text that can be found between the book or magazine covers - the content. The cover was to be concise, short, present to capture the attention of the potential reader and to provide crucial information. The inside on the other hand was to be divided between the heading and the content. The conventional choice of fonts, generally speaking, is reserved for a long chain of content, while the vice versa also stands true. For the smaller the text, the less usual typeface will be used to exude attention and emphasise the key elements. This happens as a natural consequence of needed less time to read a shorter text and gives enough time to the viewer to understand the smaller volume of content (Unger, 2018).

Adrian Frutiger gave an attempt to formalise the bare - general typeface form that encompasses all essential values of the shape that his fonts contained (Unger, 2018).

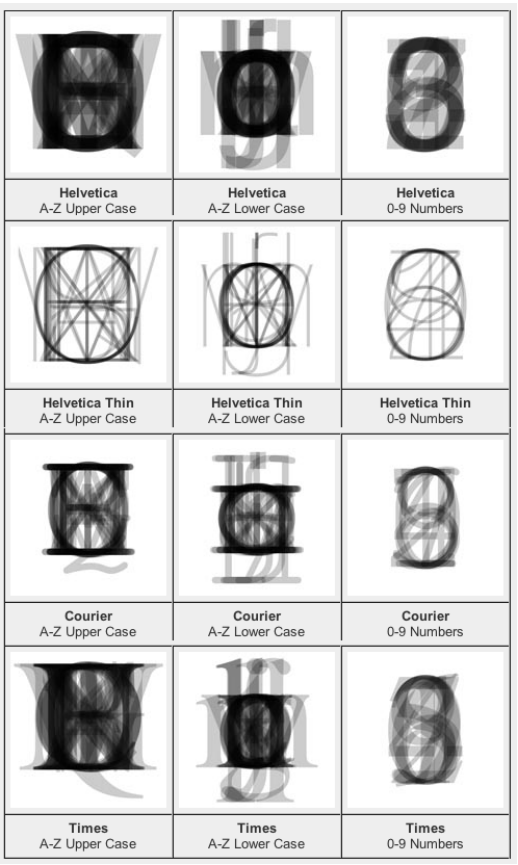



*Figure 1. Stacked, single font glyphs showing overlapping shape structure. (Image by Matt Maldre, 2006, March 20. Retrieved from https://www.spudart.org/blog/what-happens-when-you-stack-every-letter-alphabet-top-each-o/)*

Due to the limited style, he used in his work this research cannot be applied to modern typefaces that were developed much later. To get a better image, with updated data we should repeat the test by overlaying the most popular fonts and draw conclusions from those. The hypothesis is that his finding on normative letterforms will be adjacent to what people today would consider a proper, or 'true' letter.

Johnston (2016) pointed out that "essential or structural forms are the simplest forms which preserve the characteristic structure, distinctiveness, and proportions of each individual letter". He went forward in defining the essential forms of a font as "necessary parts" or "skeletons" without which the form would not hold its shape. These are the carrying elements of most typefaces we use in modern visual communication.

## Font attributes

Sadko (2017) says that fonts "set the mood, evoke emotions, and help form an opinion before you get to read the text". His summary of font characteristics and their effect on the reader are described with the potential to "alter the reader's attitude towards the content". Each of these font attributes affects consumers at a visual, cultural and subconscious level. These can be adjusted to work for the intended purpose, conveying the message with greater ease. They can impede the messaging so the choice of the font should be intentional in relation to the message communicated, brand and target group context.

### FONT WEIGHT

Font weight is the most noticeable element according to Sadko (2017). The most common types of font weight are light, regular, and bold. The standard font weight of a typeface can also be called normal, regular and plain (sometimes book). In cases where both book and other standard weight is present, the book weight can in most cases be thinner, but

*Figure 2. Neue Helvetica Pro weight palette by Linotype*

sometimes thicker. Standard weight is great for reading as it is optimised for best contrast. This weight is usually the starting point of building a typeface. Light and bold font weights are more articulate and depending on their position on the light or bold spectre, they can convert lighter or stronger mood. The same typeface can be delicate and elegant or strong and powerful. Before digitalisation typographers manually draw each weight, which has brought inconsistent styles. Parameterized font design can help in creating a smooth spectre of styles.

Most used stylisation to make an emphasis and bring the reader's attention to a specific area is done by using bold weight. It is included as a default font change due to its effectiveness and usage frequency.

Figure 2. shows the extensive font weight style range produced for Neue Helvetica Pro typeface by Linotype. This palette only features normal font width.

## WIDTH

Typefaces that include fonts that have a width variation can be very versatile. These condensed (compressed, condensed or narrow), or stretched (wide, extended or expanded) features are rare but can be useful. Moving font weight into a condensed field is a convoluted task. It is not a matter of simply squishing

the type, but a task that slims down each character proportionally while making the capitals flat on the sides (Frere-Jones, 2015).

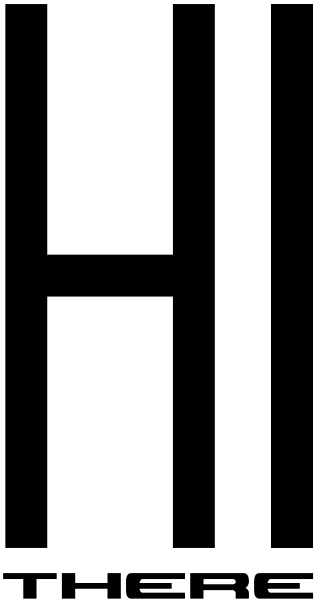



*Figure 3. Contrasted font widths for emphasis*

Sadko (2017) explains the different effects that these styles have. The condensed weight gives a sense of tightness. It is very practical when in need to save space but may seem cheap due to its space-cost efficiency. Extra-condensed weight is interesting and is ready fast with a sense of urgency, thus ideal for headlines. It sticks out tall and draws attention. It is not legible when used on longer words but is ideal for attention stopping occasions in combination with other weights. Extended weight achieves a contrasting effect. It is read slow, has a calming effect, dominating the horizontal surface. It gives a sense of importance. Its physical characteristics makes it easy to read when moving or when presented at an angle.

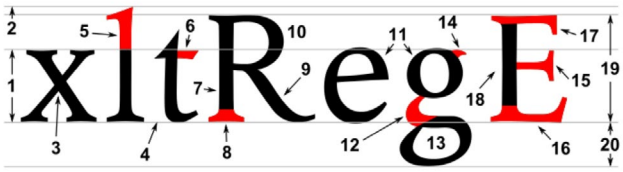
## CONTRAST

Font contrast can be achieved on a macro and micro level. If we arrange the whole text, contrast can be achieved by using different fonts within a typeface, alternating sizing, and opposing background/foreground colours. Within one same font contrast is achieved by creating a difference between the principal and added strokes. This also helps with achieving better legibility.

Pecina and Březina (2008) recognize the importance of strokes stating that it is a "typeface element that defines the typeface structure". Differentiation has been made between straight (vertical, horizontal, diagonal) and rounded strokes (open, closed). In letters k, l, v, w, x, and z strokes may be straight, or in c, o, s - curved. Typographers also define instrokes which stems from the calligraphic origin of the letterforms. At the top starting position of a, c and f we can find instroke, where at the bottom of c, e, j, k, t - where we would naturally end the letter when writing, we find outstroke.

Since strokes are determining elements of a font, their structure has been thoroughly explored and defined.

Prominent vertical stroke, often the main one is called a stem. Thus, a letter m has three




1) x-height; 2) ascender line; 3) apex; 4) baseline; 5) ascender; 6) crossbar; 7) stem; 8) serif; 9) leg; 10) bowl; 11) counter; 12) collar/link/neck; 13) loop; 14) ear; 15) tie; 16) horizontal bar; 17) arm; 18) vertical bar; 19) cap height; 20) descender line.

*Figure 4. Typographic parts of a glyph in Imperator font. (Image by Flanker. Public domain, 2016 November)*

stems, left, the middle and right. In letters that do not have a vertical stroke, like in letter s - a carrying curved central stroke is categorized as a spine (Bosler, 2012). When the stroke is a part of a lowercase letter and rises above the x-height (height of an x), it is categorized as an ascender (Dean, 2008). Letters b, d, f, h, k, and l are letters with an ascender. Descenders work in opposite direction. Letters g, j, p, q and y drop below the baseline and are called descenders. An arching stroke, or sometimes just an arch on the top of R and lowercase h, n and m is called a shoulder (Carter et al., 2007). In letters, b, d, o, p, q and uppercase D, O, P, Q, a closed curved stroke is called a bowl, with uppercase B having a double bowl. Outer stroke in letter j, y, J, Q and R is called a tail. Supporting diagonal stroke in the lower section of K is called a leg (Coles, 2013). Bar - a short horizontal stroke can be found in the centre of an e and f and uppercase E and an F. Crossbars are present in letter A, H and t (Coles, 2013). They connect either side of the letter or cross other strokes. Longer horizontal strokes at the top or the bottom of a letter, like in E or T are called arms (Carter et al., 2007). Dean (2008) defines the bottom part of a two-story g as a loop, and a short stroke at the top of the upper story as an ear. Dots in the letter i and j can also be called jots or titles. The joining of the two sides at the top of uppercase A is the apex.

Without the use of contrasting elements, a font might look clinical, devoid of personality, but it can also be clean. This tidiness gives a uniformed structure with modern-looking and urban characteristics (Sadko, 2017).

This is to show how complex a typographical system is, and how many elements typographers need to address when designing a single letter. Each of these elements carries a personality that needs to fit the overall font layout that again belongs to a typeface. It is also worth noting that human anatomy has been used as a basis for naming the structural elements of typography. Typography has a connection to human experience both on a physical as well as personal level.

## SERIFS

We classify font families based on serifs, due to its defining nature that is followed

throughout the whole font build. Serif is a small stroke located at the end (terminal) of a large stroke in a single letter or glyph. The end of an instroke or outstroke in many instances is a serif. It is most often at a 90 degrees angle compared to a larger stroke from which it sprouts. A serifed terminal can be characterised as a wedge, bulbous, teardrop, slab, etc., which depends on the typeface design style. A typeface that uses serifs is called serif typeface, while a typeface that does not present serifs is called sans-serif. Interestingly in East Asian writing systems, we can find analogues to serifs. These thickened triangular shapes located at the end of long strokes or at the stroke joints imitate calligraphic strokes of a natural brush movement.

Serifs originate in writings on stone both in Greek and Roman antiquity (Goldberg, 2000). Catich (1991) proposed an explanation in his work: The Origin of the Serif. This explanation is widely, but not completely accepted as valid. The explanation provides logical reasoning on why every letter had a defined ending to each stroke. Catich says that the Roman letters were first outlined onto the stone with paint. The carvers traced the brush markings, which chiselling strikes flared at the ends and corners of the stroke, which created serifs.

Created by intention or by pragmatical reasons in order to fix the unpredictable, crumbling nature of the stone these characteristic markings were transferred into print mediums and later into a digital environment.

Serif fonts are widely used in print editions as they are considered easier to read than their sans-serif counterparts (Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1998, p. 329). Wheildon (1995), after several studies from 1982 to 1990, suggests that sans serif fonts were more difficult to comprehend compared to serif fonts.

A study done by Bernard et al. (2001) suggests that fonts size plays an important role in combination with serif, sans-serif font in text comprehension in older adults. "Analysis of the participants' preference for each font type and size combination revealed that .... both 14-point sans serif fonts were significantly preferred to all serif and sans serif 12-points fonts. The 14-point serifs fonts, however, were significantly preferred to only the 12-point serif fonts. No significant differences were found between the computer fonts and the print fonts". Observations they have made were that 14-point fonts were more legible, promoted faster reading, and were preferred to the 12-point fonts. Serif fonts promoted faster reading at the 14-point size while sans serif fonts were faster to read at the 12-point size. In addition, sans serif fonts were more preferred than serif ones.

Another study that dealt with individual words indicated that comprehension time was slightly faster when written in a sans serif versus serif font (Moret-Tatay and Perea, 2011).

Additional studies are needed to further assess the significance of readability and legibility effects of serif and sans serif fonts before a clear recommendation can be made.

Current preferences show that serif fonts are preferred in printed mediums in scientific, educational, belletristic and other literary works. Serif fonts are also used to evoke the historical context and bring the consumer to a certain era, culture or even geographical location. Sans serif fonts are preferred in a digital environment. Their practicality stems from a better rendering on smaller sizes as they contain fewer details. They carry a modern connotation tied to digital advancements and are preferred in a corporate and start-up environment especially in app product development companies.

## ITALICS

Sadko (2017) describes Italic font styles resembling a more handwritten form because of their common Italian handwriting origin of the Renaissance era. Italic is usually used to highlight text or to emphasise the originality of someone's words, usually in a quotation. A change of intonation is implied with the usage of italics. Handwritten letter shapes have elegant curves due to the lack of vertical lines, adding a pleasant mood to a passage of text. Styling that is resembling handwriting has a personal, warm undertone which is why most greeting cards and invitations feature italic or handwritten fonts.

*Figure 5. Italic vs oblique slanting differentiation. (Image by Brian Wu, 2019 April 28)*

Italic fonts have a flow helped by the usage of ligatures and additional glyphs that can be used at the beginning or end of words and/or sentences for emphasised handwritten and unique feel. In sans serif fonts italic palette is often just slanted. This process is done digitally, changing the vertical angle, not affecting the overall structure of the font. Such fonts are not 'true' italics. They are called obliques in which lower case letters do not change. Oblique font variation is usually properly named, although people mistakenly use italic and oblique

interchangeable. Figure 5. shows the difference in italicized vs slanted oblique characters of different fonts.

Oblique font styles communicate the feeling of speed, which is why they are an excellent choice when it comes to stylizing text or a brand which is characterized by speed, and fast movement (Sadko, 2017). A great example of good oblique font usage can be seen in Nike brand typography.

### GEOMETRY

Geometry plays an important role in typographic construction. As Linotype (n.d.) writes, the repetition of simple geometric shapes forms our environment on a daily basis. Typefaces produce throughout the 20th century continuing into the 21st – have taken advantage of geometric form and have stayed popular. A most notable example of this trend is Google's Product Sans font that has pushed competitors into the same space as it is perceived as modern, futuristic and forwards going. Google's font has been built on the basis of mathematical purity with optical corrections for better legibility (Cook et al., 2015).

The simplicity of geometric fonts has made them appear smooth on paper, incredibly precise with high display resolution. They are neat and readable and favourite choice of international corporations, mass media and have entered a political space too. Linotype (n.d.) has categorised geometric fonts into four categories: circular, squared, oval and triangular geometric fonts.

Linotype (n.d.) describes circular typefaces as a representation of European design from 1920s. Since then, they have stayed popular, with great representative being Futura and Avenir Next which is used in the body of this report. Typefaces belonging to the circular category have their carrying elements represented in two simple shapes: circles (or other rounded shapes) and straight lines. They are used to represent dynamics, modernism and clean movement. The function of geometric fonts is different than that in decorative and handwritten fonts. In decorative fonts, the form is spontaneous, resembling brush strokes and hand movement, while every letter in geometric fonts is built according to the precise geometric formulas to achieve balance and visual accuracy. Square typefaces are static and can barely found outside of specific decorative narrative. We can see them in a sci-fi environment, techno and punk artistic forms, as well as in street art. Oval typefaces are related to them but have more extreme proportions, either on the horizontal or vertical axis. Triangular geometry is the rarest form and exists for purely decorative, artistic

purposes. Its shapes are more reliant on following the triangular structure than providing a legible and readable medium.

Fonts that are in general and wide-spread usage today, Sadko (2017) emphasises, have either geometric or humanistic proportions. Humanist construction denotes a base built on a handwriting form during the humanist Renaissance Age, thus the name. These are legible fonts, finely defined fonts. The difference between upper case and lower-case letter is distinct with the slanted stress axis. Geometry in humanist font design does not play the main role, as its goal is not to create specifically correct images, but rather to refine the shape. They are very convenient for everyday usage, and most people use them as a first choice. They can be found commonly in public spaces, urban wayfinding, and the digital environment

## OPENINGS

Editors at Concise Oxford English Dictionary (COED) analysed 240,000 dictionary entries and found that the letter e has an appearance rate of about 11% of all words in the vocabulary of common English (Lexico, n.d.). Letters e, a, s, and c amounted to over 30% of the English language frequency. These letters are to be considered as they all have openings in their lowercase form.

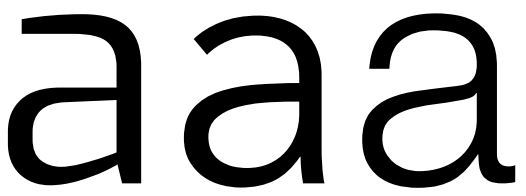



*Figure 6. Opening comparison of a letter "a" in Exo typeface - featuring open aperture; Avenir Next typeface - moderate aperture and Helvetica Neue (Light) typeface - closed aperture.*

Sadko (2017) explains that openings command font's openness. A wide aperture (opening) is the least legible but shows personality in short bursts of text. They exude pleasant feelings and convey truthful communication. Moderate aperture doesn't necessarily create the mood by itself. They can, depending on their form, evoke a sense of introversion or extroversion. They have good legibility and can be found on road signs and licence plates. Closed aperture fonts, like Helvetica, have a self-sufficing feeling of stability, reliability, and security. Due to these properties, they have been utilised in politics by conservatives and protectionists. In marketing, they can be beneficial for messaging that builds a sense of security and protectiveness.

## Expressionism

A new wave of designers has been encouraged into opening a new frontier of typeface forms. These creations are open to personal interpretation and are to serve as a voice on the generation, a description of a social area they occupy, and as a response to current events (Unger, 2018). This distances itself from utilitarian pragmatism, shifting typographic expression towards an individual, maybe best describes as a creation of self-image in typographic context. In line with how brands today create and market product pondering to a single consumer. A great example, which several brands followed was established by Coca Cola, where one person's name was printed on each bottle (notably in the uniformed font). This created a free self-advertising spree where people took pride in "their" bottle on social media. The brand was relating to the consumer, which was welcomed with a positive sentiment. Generation Z (iGen) is permitted with the sentiment of self-expression, and in finding its voice. When looking at the font marketplaces it is notable that a variety of fonts with a unique expression and distinct style counters the typographic norms.

Person and/or group can find an identifying capacity in one artistic expression like a symbol, sign, glyph, emoji or font. This sets apart a person, product, brand, institution, company or organisation with a clear identity mark or cause. If the message is repeated frequently enough in a certain time period, the habituation grows (Unger, 2018). On a subconscious level, the consumer ties him or herself to the feeling, meaning and image of the sender. The closest examples of typographic association can be found in logotypes. The consumer starts to recognize the form, and associating feelings with it before reading and comprehending the semantic content. A wave of automotive rebranding in 2020/201 has intrigued me into thinking about the implications of changes in brands that have a strong history. The effects are currently unfamiliar due to the lack of research reports, but we can presume that typographic familiarity has vanished in drastic makeovers and has to be reset through new brand messaging.

We mentioned a successful association between a political entity of the Roman empire and Roman Imperial capitals (Trajan Pro), that still works in the 21st century (Unger, 2018). Certain typefaces outgrow their intended effect and become an institution by their own merit. A good example of a font that is "famous for being famous" (Unknown), that exudes elegance and corporate simplicity, is Helvetica. Created as an independent font in 1957 to be used by those who want to look modern and futuristic, is still standing strong within the design community. Almost as an elitist synonym, it has been used for commercial wordmarks, including those for 3M, American Apparel, Behance, Blaupunkt,

BMW, Diaspora, ECM, Funimation, General Motors, J. C. Penney, Jeep, Kaiser Permanente, Kawasaki, Knoll, Kroger, LG, Lufthansa, Motorola, Nestlé, Oath Inc., Panasonic, Parmalat, Philippine Airlines, Sears, Seiko Epson, Skype, Target, Texaco, Tupperware, Viceland, and Verizon (Rohrer, 2007). Apple used Helvetica as the system typeface of iOS as well as the US, Canadian and EU government, either in branding or publications.

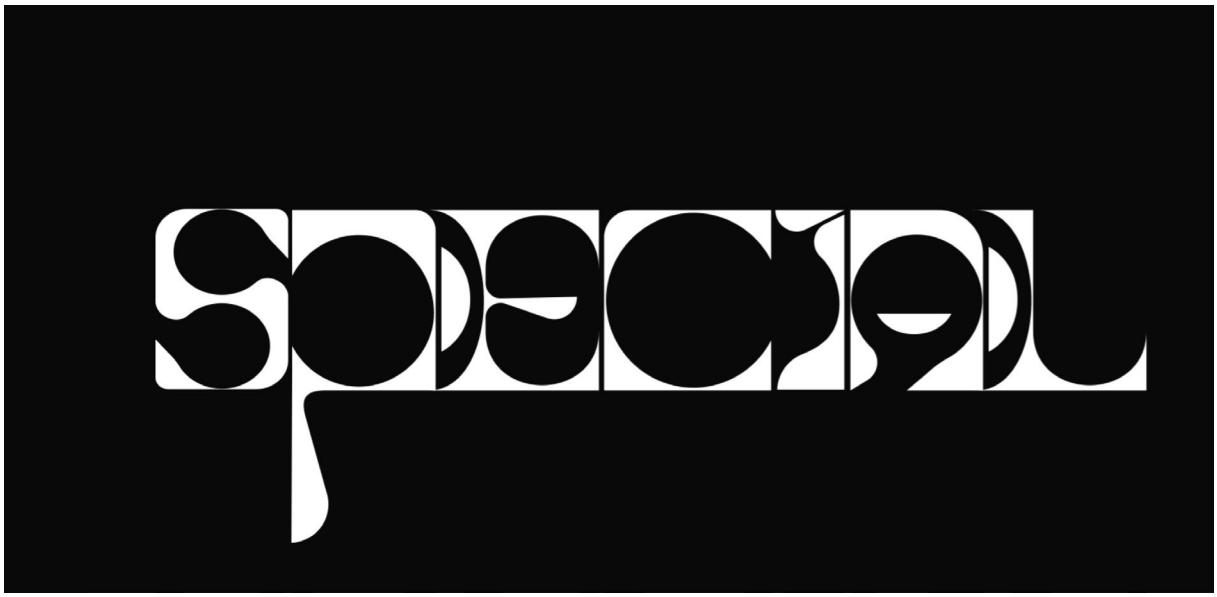



*Figure 7. "Special" - type expressionism. (Image by Kenneth Vanoverbeke, 2018, May 15. Copyright Kenneth Vanoverbeke)*

## Attempt(s) at neutrality

In contrast to the efforts of creating an expressive typeface, form lies an intention to make a neutral type that could be used in the wider application context. A good example of neutrality is expressed through Source Sans Pro designed in 2012 for Adobe (Unger, 2018). Bernau (2014) made a deliberate attempt at creating a rational, pragmatical and neutral font in 2005 (Bernau, 2014). She used a technical measurement approach to achieve that goal by quantifying the most popular 20th century sans serif fonts and distilling their most basic characteristics. Still, the author has remained self-aware in the (paradoxical) attempt in creating something that is stripped of all personal influence. An object, just by being an object of human attention cannot preserve a neutral state, outside of human experience anymore.

In an exercise where she asked a participant to draw a cup, Kai comments that she "could be quite certain that you would draw a cylinder (or more precisely, a conical frustum) within a rather narrow range of parameters. These ideas are not innate, but are acquired from our cultural background, which is why Neutral could be neutral in our culture, but

not, for example, in Elizabethan England" (Bernau, 2014). Kai recognizes that any idea, no matter how basic, has to start in previous experience. The archetype exists. It is embedded, not isolated from the past or the future, thus disabling the creation of a truly neutral font experience.

*Figure 8. I Read Where I Am: Exploring New Information Cultures. (Image by Valiz/Graphic Design Museum, Breda 2011, designed by Lust using Neutral. Retrieved from: https://www.typotheque.com/blog/neutral, 2020 December 2)*

To discover a most Neutral font she averaged multiple typeface shapes into their averages. To achieve a font form that does not exude personality or attract attention, she was looking to get closer to the font archetype. Determining a form that is distinguishable but unobtrusive, that creates easy to forget and understandable visual form at the same time can be titled a selfless attempt in creating a typographic form that serves the content while being ambiguous about its own identity.

The author defined the neutral font, which carried the same - Neutral name. Still, she rightfully asked a question if the font was indeed neutral. The methodology she used to abstract the process and bring it away from herself, she still remained a moderator that has set the parameters and asked the questions. If the research had taken into account tens

of thousands of data points bringing the error bracket at a minimum, her interpretation would still be present. The neutrality of the Neutral font depended on the examiners and their personal or professional norms (Bernau, 2014).

## Global reach

While working for an international brand with a global reach, the production department covered localisations for all our campaigns and thus employed local translators. Developing a brand font that holds the same brand artefacts in 25+ markets with uniformed presence and messaging was imperative. While it kept our tone of voice consistent it also eased out the production. Same templates could now be used by one designer which would localise all the marketing material at one spot with ease and speed.

Luna (2018) suggests that a "good typography equals global typography." This statement is especially valid in the digital era due to the speed at which one item can be spread around the globe. If we look at how a type character set was developed for different languages, we see that a significant effort went into producing additional letters and diacritic signs. Non-Latin languages were physically bigger and challenging to combine with different writing systems and languages. The current state of the art can only be described as "a cultural achievement of digital technology" since any text can be rendered in more than a hundred languages within the same typeface (Luna, 2018).

For a brand's longevity, it is crucial to use the same typographic form and communicate messages in a visually consistent manner. Today, that is not a difficult task, thanks to the ages of typographic advancement and inclusive cultural movements.

*Figure 9. Gelato typeface developed for Gelato brands as presented in a daughter company's brand book. (Retrieved from Optimalprint, 2018. Copyright by Gelato.)*

## Readability and Legibility

Prior to the written word our history was passed in the manner of "Chinese whispers" which changed the narrative and skewed the story with each passing. The meaning was

not necessarily degraded but transformed with each new orator. To be more intentional and to preserve the exact moment we have made a written system, refined with each new generation. The process of reading has two elements: visual in decoding the letters, and cognitive though understanding the text (Unger, 2018). As the readers get immersed in the author's wording, the frame of the text and a story arch they also observe typography. This observation is seldomly done in detail, but rather looked at as a unit. With the immersed digital fashion, and wearable devices the attention has been shifter. Consumers are now more immersed in type and notice the feeling and mood of text in which they actively partake.

Readability and Legibility are related concepts and are sometimes used interchangeably, but in the technical sense, they refer to different properties (Tracy, 1986).

*Figure 10. Legibility and readability demonstration. (Image by Audrey Devina Adyasa, 2018 May 1. Retrieved from: https://student-activity.binus.ac.id/himdkv/2018/05/tips-and-tricks-15-basic-typography-rules/, 2021 March)*

Legibility refers to the property of the text which makes it easy to distinguish. Legibility looks at the smaller picture of individual characters. Typographers make emphasis on constructing the letters in such a way that they are distinguishable from each other. For example, at small sizes font is successful at legibility if "3" and "8" are recognized as corresponding numbers. Selection of font and case (uppercase/lowercase) can help with legibility.  Legibility refers to the perception and is often measured through tests or reading speed, with comprehension marks to check if the reading has been done effectively, not just fast.

The legibility of a typeface can be expressed as an association "to the characteristics inherent in its design … which relate to the ability to distinguish one letter from the other" (Strizver, 2014). Consumers have positive and negative connotation based on the familiarity of the font. If they have seen the font before they will grow accustomed to it, as it is known, building its authenticity. If they have not seen it before, they will familiarise themselves quickly with novel stylisation if the graphic artefacts are consistent on each, or the majority of the letters (Beier, 2009). Legibility is decreased when the complexity of the letters is increased. This is manifest even more so in body text and editorial content.

Readability referred to the property of the text which makes it easy to read as a whole. In this case, better readability can be achieved by the configuration of the text that lies outside of the font choice. Margins, leading, tracking, kerning, justification, hyphenation, word spacing, underlining and document styles can all be used to help achieve better readability. Readability refers to comprehension as a whole. We can look at the intricate Coca Cola logotype which by defined terms of legibility scores low, yet we are not carried away by swirls and details, as we have familiarised ourselves with the brand. Their logo is seen as a whole unit in connection with the colours, so reading the actual text becomes unnecessary for knowing which brand we are talking about. We can recognize it in an instance without processing the details. Branding and logotype design is where readability plays a more important role than legibility, given high exposure to the brand.

Unger's (2018) research shows that Arial which is a present and default font on many applications and operating systems would not be suited for children in the reading learning process due to characteristic small openings in letters a,e,g and s. Through this case, we can see that habituation takes a significant role when choosing fonts.

Font displayed in default properties cannot accommodate for all usage. Fonts have been shaped with specific intention by their authors. Stronger brands take their tone of voice a step further, creating their own typeface expression which cannot be put into another brand ecosystem. The designated purpose is to be considered as it can affect legibility if put into a wrong context. Outdoor signage for example might need extra space. Heavier typeface cuts, like bold or semi bold are to be used in backlit or negative space to accommodate optical play. An architecture magazine asks for a larger leading. These decisions are to be made case by case, confirmed by surveys and readability/legibility tests in the correct context.

## Legitimacy

As Luna (2018) suggests that one style of typography is not adequate for basing one's organisation of a complete design system. In the case of a closed ecosystem like signage on airports, public transportation or public, city surfaces that would make sense. In that context, it is of importance to have coherent, recognizable communication elements that are easy to spot and consume. In other usages a range of typographic expression is necessary.

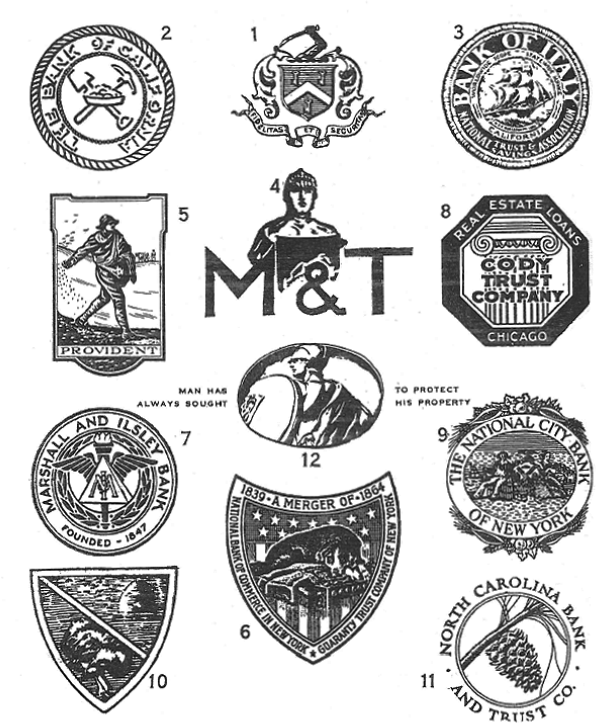
A variety of styles had been developed by foundries which carefully develop a range of personalities. These are often used by authors to convey ideas or create contrast which helps in readability and legibility. In digital surrounding contrast and emphasis is achieved by combining different styles for links, quotes, menus, and body text fonts, or font families. In the physical environment, the equivalent is found in a range of headings, subheadings, titles, body and emphasis texts. These variations support differentiation so that the consumer can easily understand the varied body of text in their intended form.

The last 40 years have presented a period of tremendous advancement in the typographical field by introducing new tools that improved workflow and the creation of new fonts into a field that had a set of established technical rules. Suggestions by contemporary schools suggest that the design of a communication vessel should match the content and intention. This includes typography as a tool for expressing the nature of the content (Kinross, 1992). If we look at luxury and high-end lifestyle magazines that deal with haute couture, fashion, architecture etc. it is noticeable that typography expresses the nature of the content head-on accompanied by extravagant curves, and white space. A trend that is slowly shifting, denoted serif fonts as a synonym for luxury, culture, value, prestige, tradition and heritage. Rapid changes have drawn brands one after the other from serif to sans-serif fonts within the fashion industry (see figure 11.).

*Figure 11. Fashion Brands' uniform logotype transformation. (Image by Business of Fashion. Retrieved from: https://www.businessoffashion.com/opinions/luxury/the-revolution-will-not-be-serifised-why-every-luxury-brands-logo-looks-the-same-burberry-balmain-balenciaga)*

There is a resemblance to Bauhaus modernists which saw ornamentation as a sign of bourgeois tyranny. The shift towards sans-serif might represent a shift from elitism to capture a wider consumer base.

Branding experts at Hypebeast have made a point in using modern typefaces due to their practical values and the benefits they provide (Stanley, 2018). From a physical standpoint, they present a cleaner and more legible solution, suited for a variety of branding directions. In a shifting culture, the simplicity of their typographical form allows brands to be a "fill-in-the-blank" so that anyone can identify with the brand's values and find a place for themselves. This approach presents a danger, as it can grow into a generic message not fitting any particular brand, and fitting any brand, by mixing them all into a bland, non-specific, all-inclusive space (Whelan, 2019). Art Directors and Brand Managers that join these brands are allowed to bring new ideas and test new communication campaigns. Brands then become a platform as they are not constrained by their heritage and a definite set of values, while still preserving the tone of voice. They become open to interpretation both by the messaging authors and the consumers.




HERALDIC DESIGNS AND TRADEMARKS EMPLOYED BY BANKS AND TRUST COMPANIES

No. 1: Fidelity Trust Company, Portland, Me.; (2) Bank of California, San Francisco; (3) Bank of Italy, San Francisco; (4) Manufacturers & Traders Trust Co., Buffalo; (5) Provident Trust Co., Philadelphia; (6) Guaranty Trust Co., New York; (7) The Marshall & Ilsley Bank, Milwaukee; (8) Cody Trust Co., Chicago; (9) The National City Bank of New York; (10) Citizens National Trust & Savings Bank, Los Angeles; (11) North Carolina Bank & Trust Co., Greensboro; (12) Chicago Title and Trust Co.

*Figure 12. Early 20th century bank logos. (Image source: "At the Sign of the Lantern" by Mark S. Stanbro/Trust Companies magazine (1930))*

However, advantages for unified typography usage within one industry have also been recognised. This seemingly standardized approach has affected some of the most famous brands that hold centuries of history. Bowie (2020) suggests that "the meaning of a logo stems from not just the design of the mark but also the way it is framed".

At the beginning of the 20th century, Buck (1916) has noted that "many existing trademarks might be greatly improved by the elimination of details, or by redrawing them with a different technique."

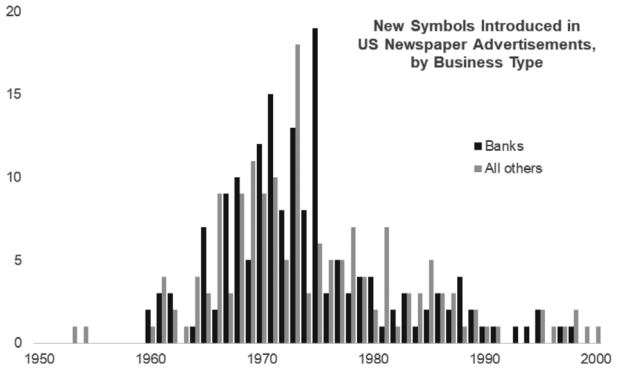



*Figure 13. Newspaper ads introducing new logos spiked in the late 1960s and early 1970s. (Image by James Bowie. Retrieved from: https://marker.medium.com/the-surprising-reason-why-all-bank-logos-look-the-same-2f837ddde59c)*

Around the 1960s companies recognised the value which their brand identity carried and follow the advice. They were compelled to advertise new logos and reveal them in the newspapers. Bowie (2020) examined the incidence of "our new symbol" wording in newspapers in the span of 50 years, from the 1950s until the 2000s (see figure 13.).

At first, they were inert. The spike shows an effort by financial entities to boast their identity into opening markets after they have recognized the potential. The image they were conveying has launched them from old, fussy looking, rigid and brands into modern, and striking, new era looking brands. Figure 14. shows a 1970s banking journal page with a selection of new logos so that bankers can pay attention to the direction of the competition.

Selame (1978, as cited in Bowie, 2020) when addressing the American Bankers Association's national marketing conference made a point that a bank's identity "is very, very important because it will be all there is to the bank's visibility. The granite building is gone, for the bank is mobile and flexible. The bank is made up of people, computers, and a symbol on a debit or credit card."

A number of new logos were introduced, and patterns emerged, both in their elaborations and identity itself. Out of 327 analysed logos, Bowie (2020) notices that 44% was quite literal in their explanation of what the logo was representing. 36% explained the reasoning behind the logomark - the symbol. A smaller number of them was honest about their pragmatic intentions to keep up with modern times.

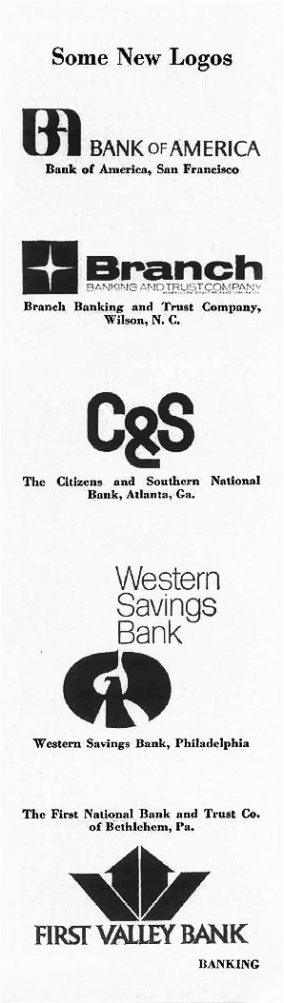



*Figure 14. A selection of new bank logos. (Image published in Banking magazine, February 1, 1970.)*

When it comes to aesthetics following patterns emerged: 47% of analysed logos used letters or numerals, 8% have depicted birds, most notably the eagle. 7% depicted plant elements, prominently a tree symbol. Generally, abstract shapes (see figure 15.) take the majority with 62%. This presented a trend that was prone to criticism, as their attempts to differentiate companies and product brought them to a shared conceptual abstract similarity.

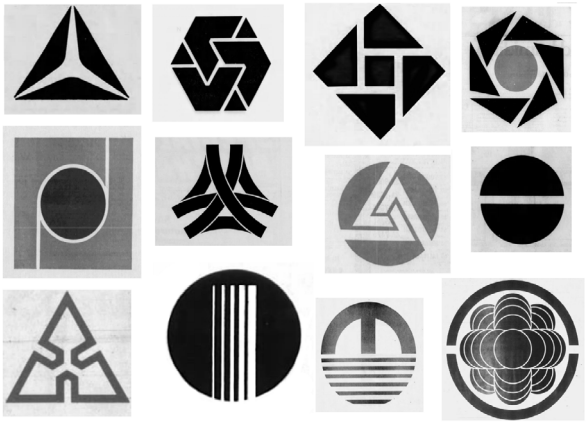


*Figure 15. Abstract bank logos selection. (Image by James Bowie. Retrieved from: https://marker.medium.com/the-surprising-reason-why-all-bank-logos-look-the-same-2f837ddde59c)*

In *New York Magazine*, volume 5, edition 29, journalist Tom Wolfe (1972) noted that those "abstract logos ... make absolutely no impact—conscious or unconscious—upon its customers or the general public, except insofar as they create a feeling of vagueness and confusion" and that "the conversion to a total-design abstract logo format somehow makes it possible for the head of the corporation to tell himself: 'I'm modern, up-to-date, a man of the future. I've streamlined this old baby,' (and) if the (design) fee doesn't run into five figures, he doesn't feel streamlined."

Bowie (2020) points out that although criticism can stand on its own, it misses an important mark. Banks needed to look respectable, legitimate, and trustworthy. They were intentionally uniform - by design. They did not need to stand out, but rather emulate legitimacy.

To best describe this type of unified branding within an industry, Glynn and Abzug (2002) proposed the term "symbolic isomorphism", defined as "the resemblance of an organisation's symbolic attributes to those of other organizations within its institutional field (which) increase organizational legitimacy". She recognized that by taking elements of other organizations, the actor identifies with others, their "values or symbols that are themselves legitimate" (Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990). "The ultimate effectiveness of these old banking logos, as well as that of today's symbols, hinges not so much on how well they differentiate, but on their ability to signal legitimacy by hewing to the current conventions of visual design" (Bowie, 2020).

## Existing research

In *Emotional response to typography: the role of typographic variations in emotional response to advertising*, Guthrie (2009) explores consumers' emotional responses to typography. Her work has shown that typeface variation by itself did not spark a statistically significant difference in emotional response. This has cast a doubt that typeface alone in the context of advertising can elicit an emotional response that differs significantly from another one. Her results show that typeface may be an element in eliciting an emotional reaction to an ad. Brumberger (2004) supports this stance as he found that the perception of a document or an ad is shaped by the relationship between elements. Guthrie (2009) suggested that a lack of significant difference might be due to a lack of variety in the fonts used in testing, as they were too few and too similar. This project responded to her remarks and included close to 40 different fonts that have a drastically varying style.

In a study conducted over 379 participants, people determined the appropriateness of typeface on a variety of items (Shaikh, 2007). The results showed that the most appropriate typefaces have personalities that can be correlated with the personality of the presented product. For other onscreen documents, appropriate typefaces were selected based on their perceived legibility. The following study showed that the author's character affected negatively by the use of the inappropriate font.

Wang (2013) conducted a test in which he measured responses of people getting the restaurant menu in two different fonts. One was characterised as easy to read, and the other as difficult to read. He found an absence of significant effect which can be attributed to stimuli complexity. The only significant effect on the menu's font was that the dessert enjoyment had a lower expectancy due to the difficulty of the font readability. Even though the differences were not significant, participants that had a difficult to read font regarded their expected dishes as if they required less skill to prepare.

Doyle and Bottomley (2004) have demonstrated that people in forced-choice tasks have opted for a product with an "appropriate" font twice as frequently in contrast to the product with an "inappropriate" font. They have also examined the relationship between the brand name connotation and choice frequency. The findings were replicated with no significant difference. In a smaller study, the consumers have chosen chocolate on 75% of occasions when the box of the same product had an "appropriate" font.

Lewis and Walker (1989) designed a study that tested a connection between an image and word, theorizing that both offer a parallel path to the same meaning. They testes font pairs, out of which one would denote "heavy" and "slow" and other "fast" and "light". The results showed that response times were affected when the actual word - heavy - would correspond to a "heavy" typeface and vice versa. In the second experiment, the response times were again affected when the typeface quality "fast" was present in the animal's name (e.g. "cheetah"). When meaning overlapped with form the response times sped up. These experiments showed that there is a behavioural ramification to font form-personality pairing and that fonts can generate connotation independently of their meaning.

## Conclusion & hypothesis

This review has demonstrated that there are multiple elements that build a typeface personality that carries a connotation on its own. Typographic studies have been examining a connection between typography and branding (Hertenstein et al., 2001), colour (Wehr & Wippich, 2004), readability and mood (Gump, 2001), legibility and comprehension (Brumberger, 2004), memorability (Childers & Jass, 2002), personality (Brumberger, 2003), and appropriateness in general (Shaikh, 2007). The field that was identified as missing is the corporate brand setting, narrowed to the brand's logotype.

It is expected for similar connections and conclusions to appear in this project development as H1: ***People will be aware of typographic appropriateness and inappropriateness*** and H2: ***Typographic personality will affect how people perceive brand's positioning***.

# *Chapter 3*
# PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

A mix of qualitative and quantitative approach was employed to discover how people perceived typography appropriateness in the isolated, out-of-context brand environment. Qualitative research gathered impressions from a small focus group on the questions of how the physical nature of font is perceived. A quantitative survey examined responses on the nature of typographical form in its relation to implied attitude and meaning outside of their context. Through visual and photographic surveys examining material was collected and compared to messaging that contains the typographical form. Quantitative research was formed around the question: "How is chosen brand typography in their logotype perceived by people and does it overlap with the brand's desired tone of voice?"

An array of brands was observed over a period of time. They were assessed based on their overall tone of voice, industry, and variety of typographic approaches in their communication, but primarily typography employed in their logotype.

A selection of 10 famous brands was made. They were selected based on their relative global impact and diverse typographic stylisation. It was also important to vary industry and product type to avoid pattern forming.

*Figure 16. Ten selected brand logos*

The selected logotypes were then analysed to source their original typography. After confirming matches all logos have been presented in a neutral form, stripped from any brand recognizable visual artefacts, colours, titles. Their names have been replaced with a neutral word to prevent brand association.

*Figure 17. "Neutralised" logotypes*

They were then compared against a series of qualitative descriptors to see if their form is appropriate in regard to their industry, values they wanted to convey, brand positioning, target group and product type they were offering. This was formulated in a string of 7 descriptive keywords tied to each of these neutralised logos.

The survey was conducted on a sample of 60 participants out of which 93% works in the creative field, dealing with typography in some way. This group was particularly interesting as they are often decision-makers in visual identity development. Primarily in the development of logotypes.

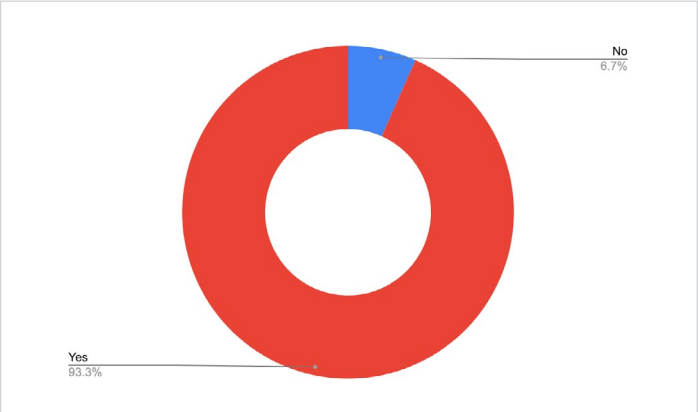
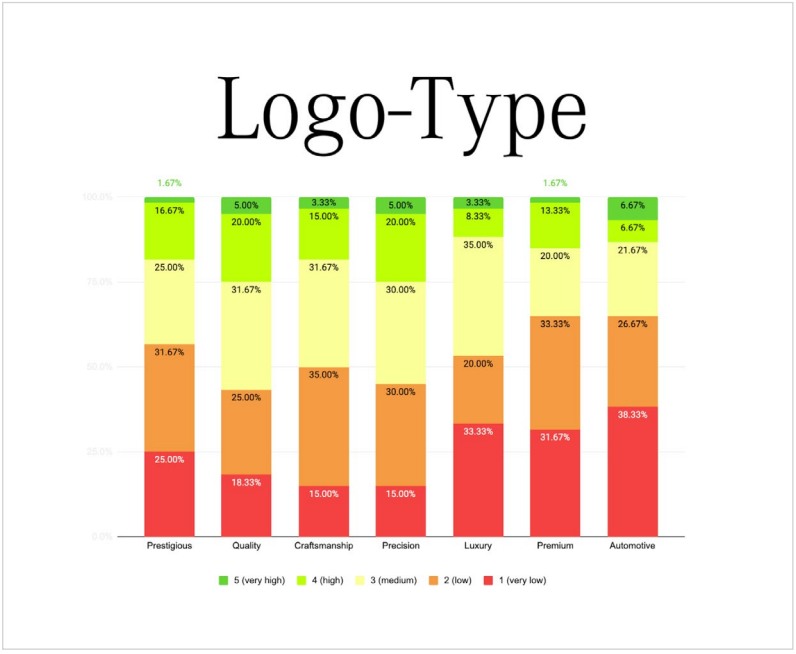



*Figure 18. Demographics: Working in the creative field like design, architecture, arts, media and other*

In the first stage, each participant was given 10 neutralised logotypes and 7 keywords. They were asked to grade on how they thought that particular typography is appropriate in connection to a distinctive keyword. They did not know which brand they were grading, or if this was any particular brand in question. One logotype was shown at the time with 7 keywords. The Likert scale marked very low (1), low (2), medium (3), high (4) and very high (5) appropriateness rating.




Typography used by Mercedes-Benz scored low overall and the lowest on the keyword “automotive”.

*Figure 19. Mercedes-Benz typography appropriateness score*

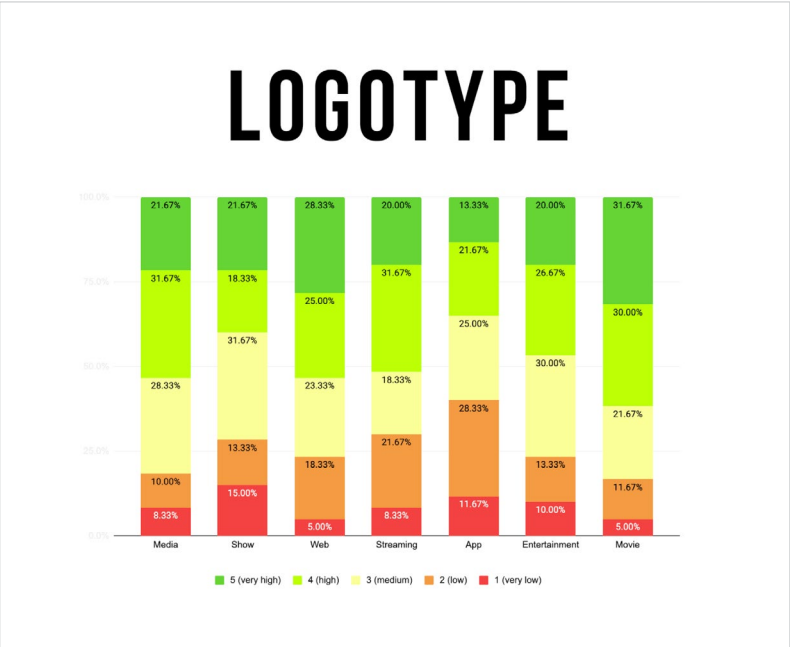



*Figure 20. Netflix' typography appropriateness score*

Netflix had an overall high score, with appropriateness rating being the highest for the keyword “movie”.

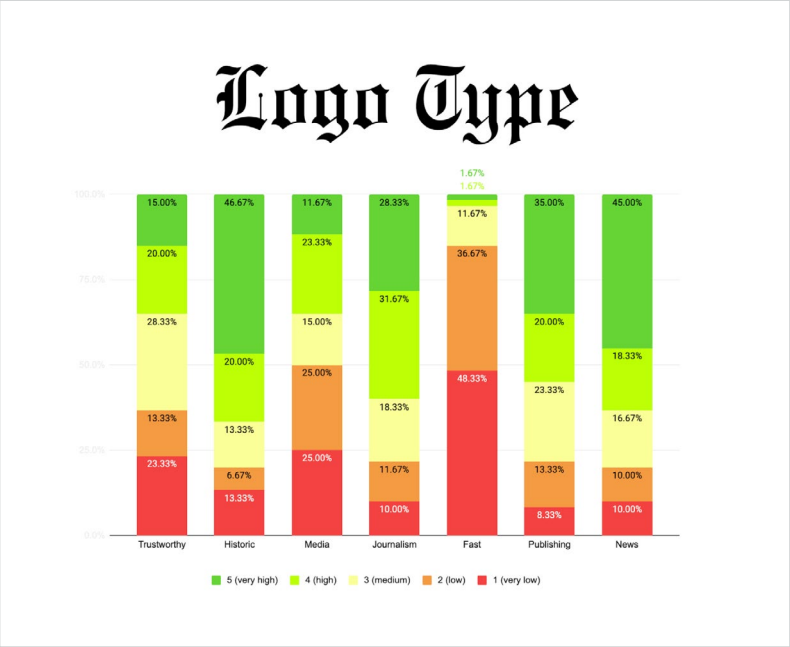



*Figure 21. The New York Times' typography appropriateness score*

The New York Times' typography had the best single score as it was deemed very appropriate for News. 63% gave high and very high appropriateness rating cumulatively. However, it scored badly for fast, with 85% of people cumulatively giving low and very low appropriateness rating. This was the lowest single keyword rating result.

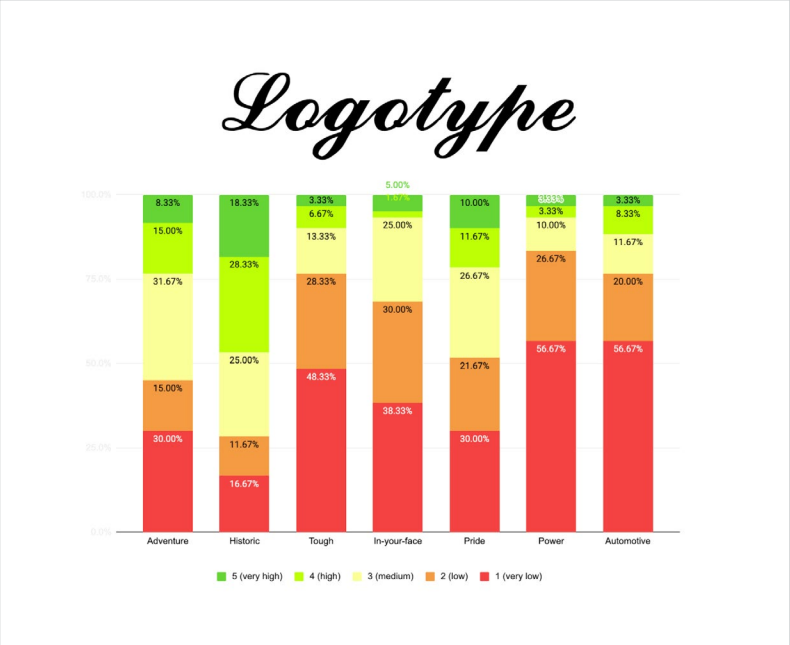



*Figure 22. Ford's typography appropriateness score*

Overall Ford's typography was rated worst on the appropriateness scale for these keywords.

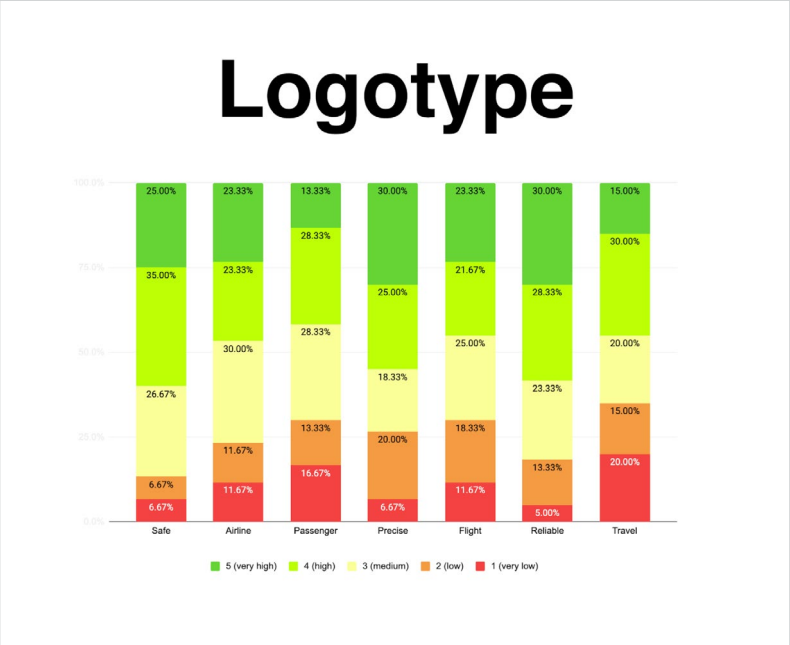



*Figure 23. Lufthansa's typography appropriateness score*

Lufthansa's typography was overall rated best on the appropriateness scale for these keywords. They use Helvetica which can be characterised as a global and neutral typeface. It does not contain visual characteristics that can suggest a strong personality, rather its personality is decided by the viewer. This correlates to findings described in Chapter 2: Font attributes.

Work that was developed during the research stage was two-fold: a) Mock typography for each of these brands was developed. Its purpose was to create tension, to oppose the tone of voice it was supposed to convey, to shock the viewer and contrast the keywords. It was supposed to be inappropriate on many levels.

*Figure 24. Mock typography development*

b) Also, two alternative logotypes for each brand were developed to represent the keywords in the best way.

In the following stage, the same participants were asked to choose the most appropriate logotype that will best represent a whole set of keywords. This was the same set of keywords as shown in the first stage. For each brand, they were presented with 4 choices. The original brand typography, one mock version and two alternative options. The choices were randomised within each question.

Both Ford and WordPress scored the lowest, with only 15% of the participants choosing current typography as the most appropriate one.

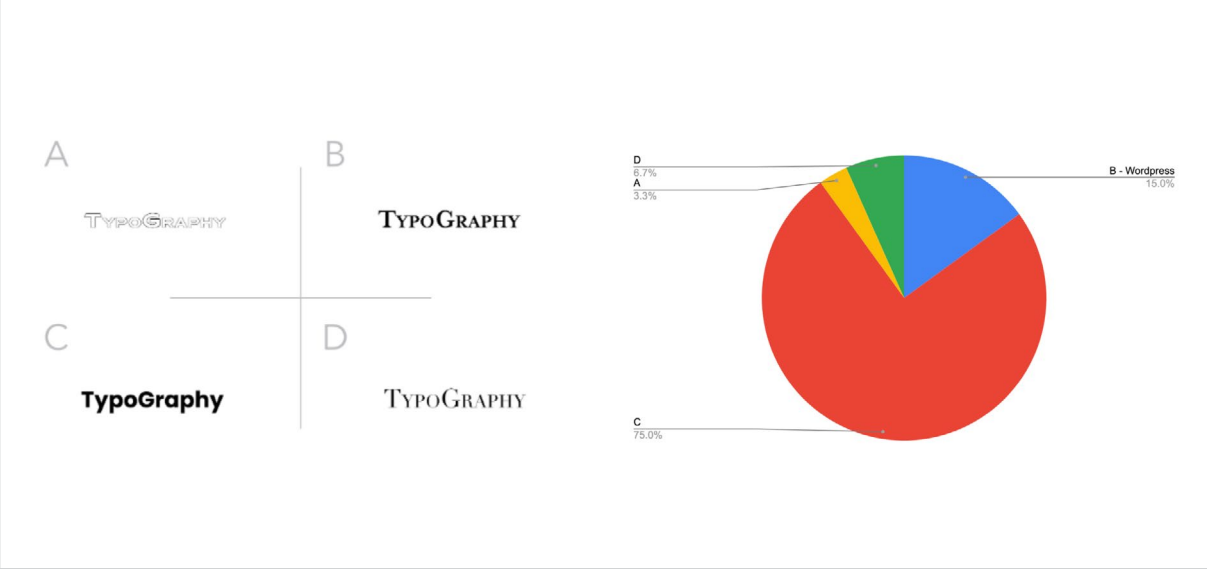



*Figure 23. WordPress' typography multiple-choice result*

In 6/10 questions none of the 60 participants chose the mock typography as appropriate. Two participants had strong reactions and reported that they were not able to proceed with the questions as they were upset with the presented choice.

Overall the study has shown that participants on average deemed alternative typography as more appropriate than the original one. On an individual level, Netflix and Duolingo had high choice rates in favour of their current typography. 63,3% of participants voted Netlix' active typeface as most appropriate and 66,7% of participants voted Duolingo's active typeface as most appropriate when presented with the 4 choices.

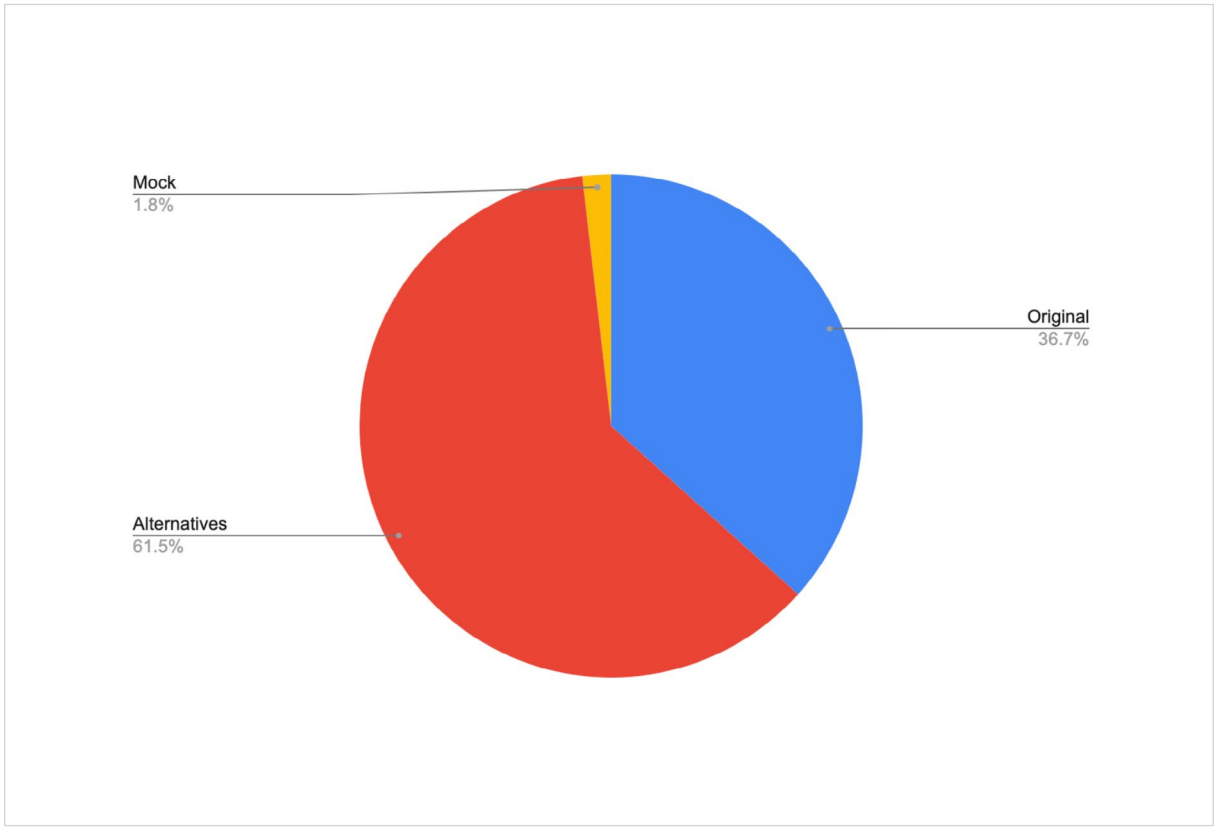



*Figure 24. Overall multiple-choice appropriateness results*

The final work is the sum of these study results. All findings were used to transform visual identities following the appropriateness score.

*Figure 25. Wordpress' logotype redesign. Fonts: Mrs Eves > Poppins*

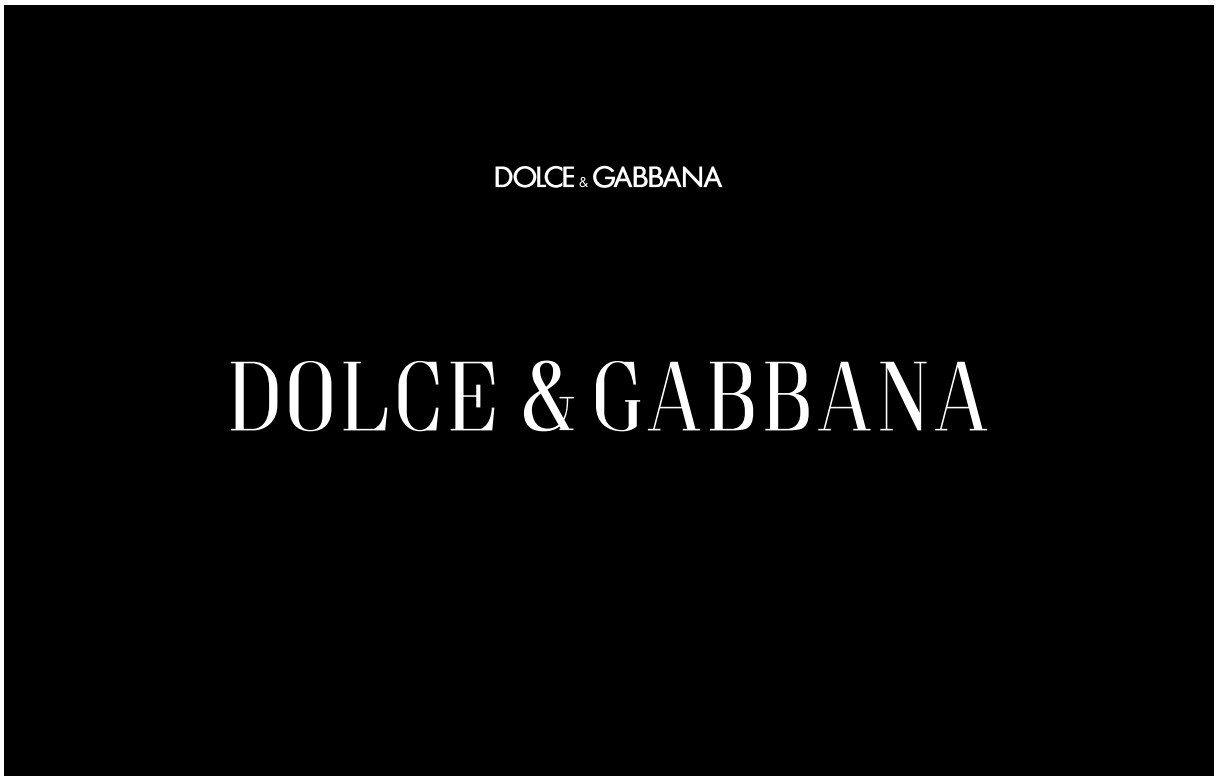



*Figure 26. Dolce & Gabbana's logotype redesign. Fonts: Futura > Goldini*

*Figure 27. Quora's logotype redesign. Fonts: Le Monde Courrier > Nexa Bold*

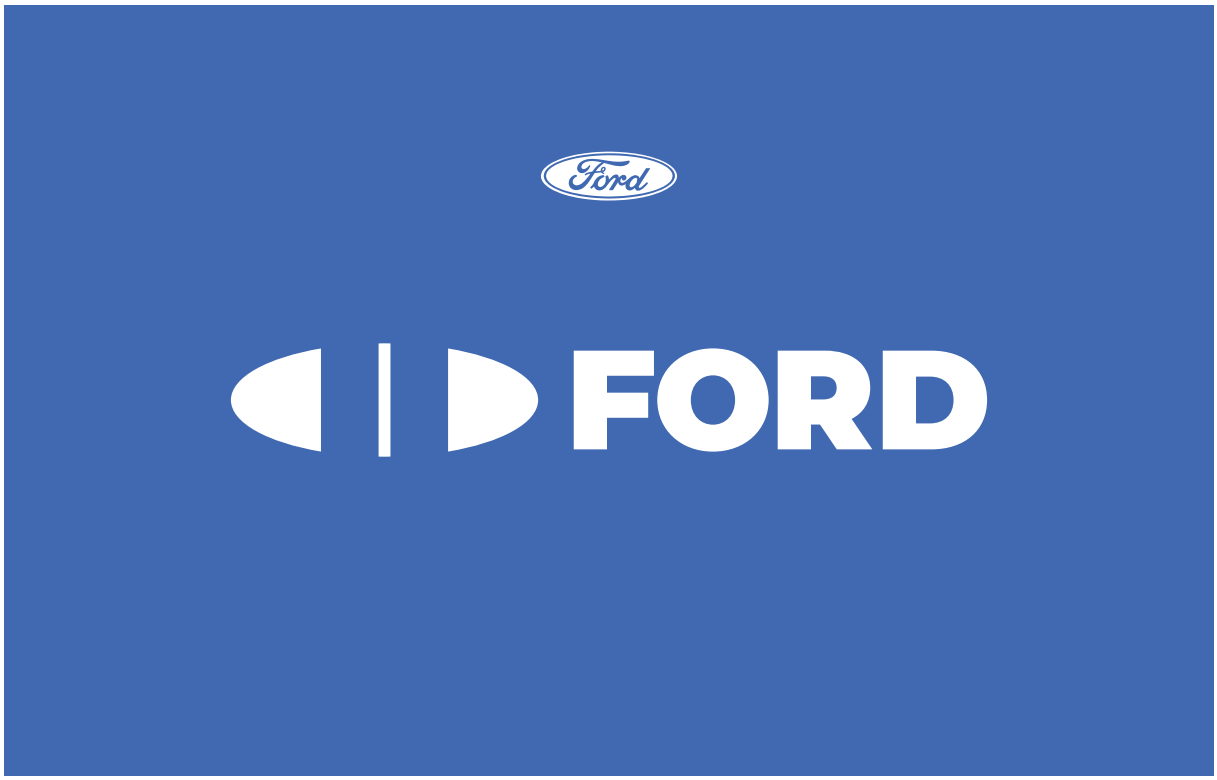



*Figure 28. Ford's logotype redesign. Fonts: Hand-drawn > Montserrat Black*

# *Chapter 4*
# CONCLUSIONS

The original aim of this project was to see if people ***perceive typographic appropriateness and inappropriateness and to what extent***. A secondary goal was to see ***how typographic personality affects their perception of a brand*** in a neutral environment. The tertiary goal was to produce ***practical work based on the findings***. All three aims were successfully reached with valuable insights.

Three limitation themes need to be taken into the account:

1) Considering that 93% of participants work in a creative field, they might not represent each brand's target group. Future research could benefit from wider demographic inclusion and a bigger sample number.
2) Sterile testing environment has brought out genuine reactions. This has an intended effort. However, it has also prevented participants from absorbing additional brand elements like colours and symbols that play their role in how one brand is perceived. Future tests can be done to include the brand's established tone of voice to see how other elements score in comparison to typography both individually and overall.
3) The choice of keywords might not represent the core representation of each brand. Future studies can include a pre-testing phase where different participants will be able to pick from a pool of words items that have the highest association in regards to a brand. Most picked words will then be presented to another group as base keywords set against which typographic appropriateness will be tested in a neutral environment.

Schriver (1997) suggests that designers and business should take into account typographic research, as it allows design decisions to be based on rational findings rather than just on personal preferences. This body of work aligns with his findings as it shows that we subconsciously recognize, assign and absorb typographic personality along with

the meaning of the text. Brands can and need to leverage typography to establish a better connection between the form of their logotype and the personality they want to evoke. This can be achieved through a series of neutral typographic appropriateness tests like the one established during this project.

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