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Forbes Low



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JoAnn Laut, Director, Global Awards, ICSC

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**engage** How much!?

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## How much!?



# REBRAND

design / 2018

# How much!?

It's difficult to know how much big companies really spend on logo designs and redesigns. Few firms are willing to share figures. The cost of designing the logo or rebrand can include marketing, advertising and other associated costs.

In this edition of engage, we take a brief look at the background of some contentious and popular logos.

# BBC

## BBC

The BBC had their logo redesigned in 1997 and the whole rebranding campaign cost the company the £1,300,000 (approx).

Designed by Martin Lambie-Nairn the BBC was about to take off in digital television and the internet. A number of problems existed with the current logo.



The logo was technically unsuitable on-screen. It lost the lines underneath and when in colour on a colour photo, it again disappeared or parts vanished. On TV, diagonals are difficult to work with as the logos pixelate.

By straightening up the boxes and letters, it removed all the problems associated with diagonals. Being black and white made a big cost saving to the BBC and the licence fee payer.

This will be the logo with the longest life on screen (the 1971-1988 logo of BBC now holds this record).



## Citibank

This 1998 logo was created after the merger of Citicorp and Travellers Group to form CitiBank

The CitiBank logo was designed in 1998 by well-known designer Paula Scher of Pentagram, when industry giants Citicorp and Travellers Group merged to create the world's largest financial services firm.

That the bank paid the princely sum of \$1.5 million for this design (part of a near-\$10 million for the branding as a whole) is not so surprising. With assets under management of \$700bn, its pockets were deep enough.

But what was controversial is that the logo they received was based on a sketch Scher did on the back of napkin. During their first meeting. In around 10 minutes.



## NBC

In 1976, NBC wanted to update its image for its 50th anniversary, and introduced a completely new logo design based around an abstract letter N.

It went on to be used in the first electronically animated identity for an American TV network, and came into official use on 1 January 1976. Designed by the firm Lippincott and Margulies, it was reported to have cost between \$750,000 and \$1million; an enormous sum for the 1970s.

Unfortunately, nobody had noticed that it was virtually identical to the logo for Nebraska Educational TV, part of the PBS network.



The 1976 NBC logo (left) and the quite similar NETV logo (right)

NETV filed a trademark infringement lawsuit. In the eventual out-of-court settlement, NBC gave Nebraska ETV over \$800,000 worth of new equipment. NETV had spent less than \$100 on designing their original logo.

## BP

In 2000, BP paid an awful lot of money for a new logo. According to The Daily Telegraph, it cost a whopping £4.6 million just to design the logo, while the overall cost of the rebranding came in at £136 million (including the cost of rebranding stationery, van liveries and manufacturing plants).

The project, led by Landor Associates in 2000, saw the replacement of the old 'shield' logo with a new one designed specifically to promote "BP's position as an environmental leader and its goal of moving beyond the petroleum sector", as the company began to invest in alternative energy.

According to Landor: "A stylised sunflower symbolizes the sun's energy, while the colour green reflects the brand's environmental sensitivity."



## Tropicana

The "cost" of a logo isn't always just what you pay the branding company to develop it. In the case of Pepsico fruit brand Tropicana, it was the estimated \$30 million in sales it lost because of it, over just two months.



To be fair, the failure of its 2009 rebrand wasn't entirely down to the logo. The \$35 million advertising campaign, with its overwrought overtures to family life and a nonsensical slogan ("Squeeze, it's a natural"), was another factor.

While the old logo had a sense of fun and personality, this new logo looked more grown-up and professional but since when were those values associated with sugary drinks? As a result, people were less likely to spot the drink in the supermarket, and less inclined to buy it when they did.

After two months, Tropicana sensibly reverted to the old logo and packaging.



Sometimes logos can go wrong and the quality control unit seem to miss some very obvious flaws. Design details, such as poor letter spacing, can change the understanding of words!

