

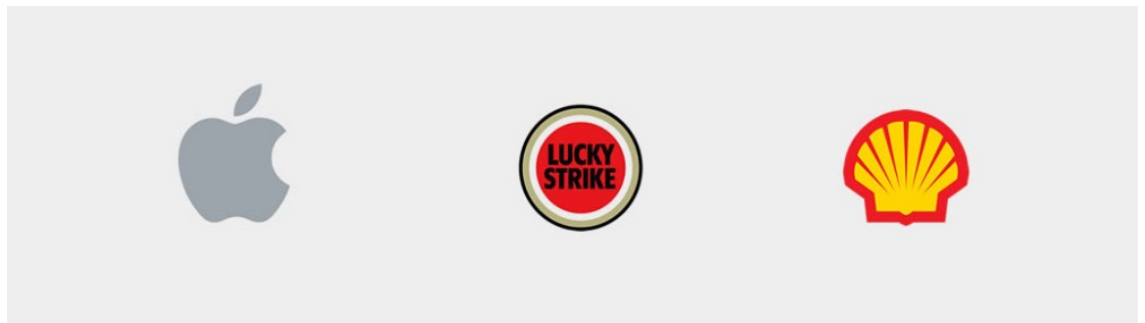
Every trademark must be...

By Norberto Chaves

Twelve supposedly «universal» rules in designing trademarks.

Decades go by –almost a century– and in professional trademark design milieus (not to mention academic circles) we keep hearing amazing assertions, openly contradicted by fact. In large sectors of the discipline, work keeps being ruled by hard-to-eradicate myths: preconceived ideas, by their own nature, don't listen to reason or fact. See here twelve classic examples of professional mythology:

1. Every trademark must refer to the organization activity or its product identity.
FALSE: yes, in some instances; no, in an ample majority.



2. Every trademark must include a symbol to complement its logotype.
FALSE: in some instances the symbol is essential; in others, superfluous; in a few, optional.



3. Every trademark must be unique, not answering to conventional graphic codes.
FALSE: in some instances the trademark should be unique; in others, absolutely conventional.



4. In every trademark, the logotype must be manipulated, or the lettering or its correlation between them should be altered.
FALSE: in some instances, transgression of typographic or calligraphic norm is helpful, and in others, harmful.



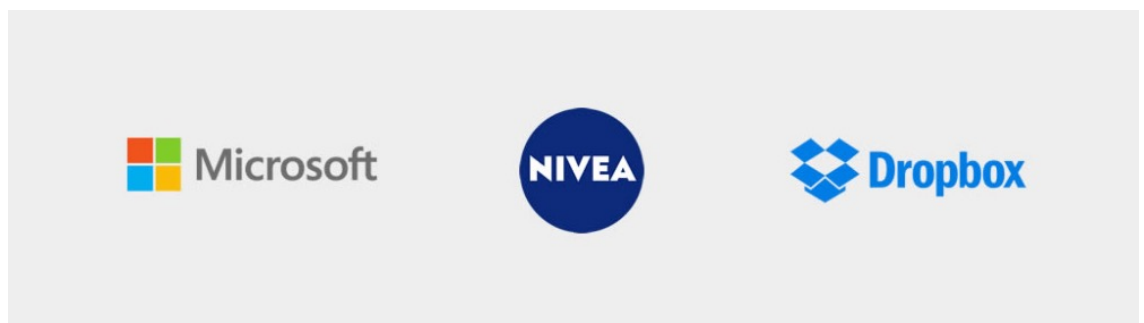
5. Every trademark must be amiable, informal or colloquial.
FALSE: only in some instances the informality of the trademark can coincide with its best organization or product profile.



6. Every trademark must be modern, adjusting itself to contemporary graphic standards.
FALSE: inherent to current «contemporary style» is its diversity; and some trademarks should be truly «classic» o, even «retro».



7. Every trade mark must adhere to the latest graphic trends.
FALSE: only trademarks of ephemeral organizations could adhere to ephemeral languages: obsolescence is rarely beneficial.



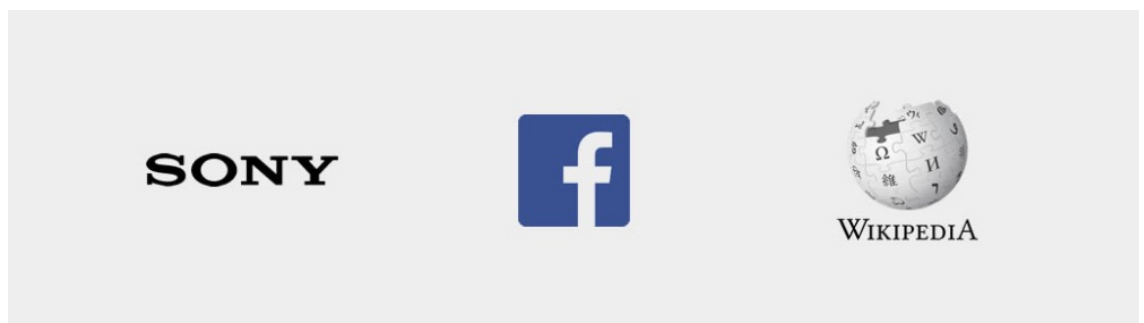
8. Every trademark must be «renewed» periodically.
FALSE: its redesign can only be justified when low quality or a loss of competitiveness is detected.



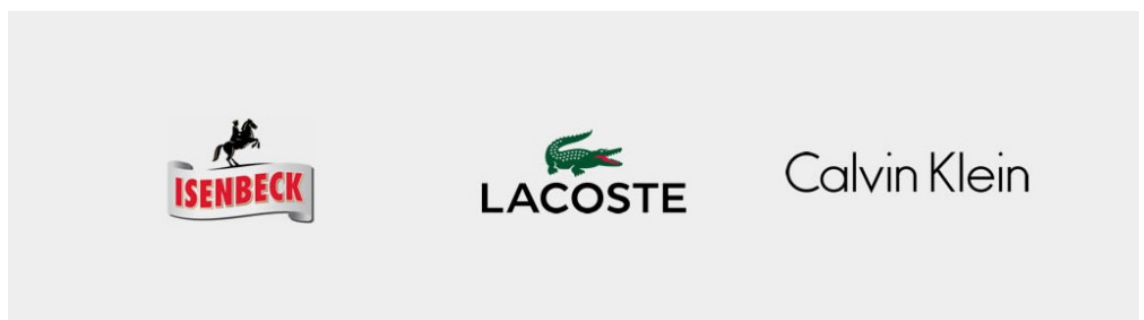
9. Every trademark must be «dynamic» or be designed to modify its form.
FALSE: it only should be «declinable» when the diversity of activities calls for articulate sub-brands.



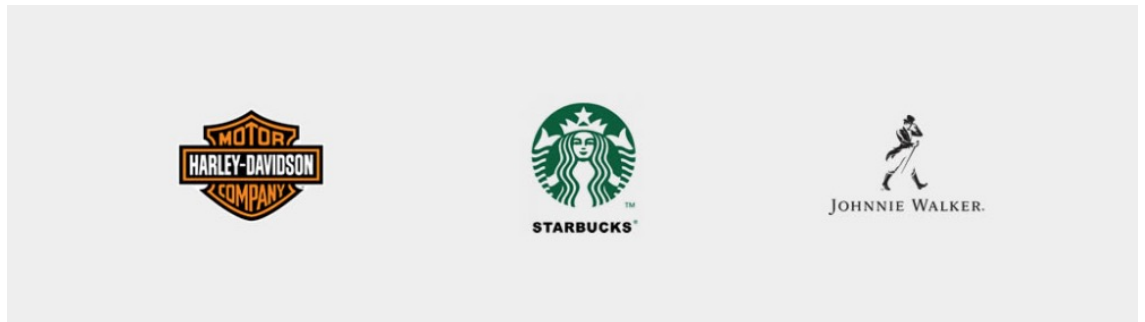
10. Every trademark must adjust to the public profile.
FALSE: The trademark should reflect its owner's profile (the organization or the product) and their offering is what should be palatable for its «targets».



11. Every trade mark must be «sales-inductive».
FALSE: trademarks with advertising claim function can only be found in some impulsive buying instances.



12. Every trademark must be synthetic and a crier.
FALSE: it must be in many instances; when fast reading and comprehension are a must. In other cases, such a requisite is superfluous.



Corollary

Graphic mark professional design is always specific, not subject to supposedly universal norms or prescriptions. It must be handled according to each case: it should detect the particular alternatives arising from the strategic profile and specific communication conditions. In all twelve preceding hypothesis, its falsehood comes from the word «every», that is, the presumption of universality to the respective norm.

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