

# Logo Modernism Is a Brilliant Catalog of What Good Corporate Logo Design Looks Like

*Logo Modernism*, a new **Taschen** book out next month by German graphic designer **Jens Müller**, is a brilliant catalog of 6,000 trademarks from 1940–1980 that reflect how modernist design ideals helped shape the corporate identities of everything from media organizations to airlines.

Grouped thematically into sections on geometric, typographic, and effects-driven trademark designs, the book provides inspiration for graphic designers and eye candy for anyone interested in a satisfying illustration of the ways in which individual designers might use a circle, a series of dots, or a letter of the alphabet to create a graphic representation of a company's identity. This fantastic collection of handsome logos testifies to the enduring power of clean, crisp, universally symbolic design language that is a far cry from the often trendy, cheesy, puffed-up corporate branding that exists today.

"Today it seems that the logo gives designers greater freedom than ever before," Müller writes in the book's introduction, "but it also makes it more vital than ever to stick to a manageable number of basic design parameters."

In addition to pages and pages of well-designed corporate trademarks of all sorts, the book also features an intro from Müller on the history of logos, an essay on modernism and graphic design by contributor R. Roger Remington, a series of individual designer profiles of luminaries such as Paul Rand, and case studies on the graphic identities of Fiat and the Mexico Olympic Games of 1968.

"Pick up any book about logos published 50 or 60 years ago and sooner or later you will come across references to how simplicity and directness serve as a counterbalance to our 'complicated world,'" Müller writes. "The birth of modern graphics coincided with the moment when modern graphic designers were striving to create clear-cut systems and concepts rather than to display artistic genius."

In his essay, Remington writes that European Modernism was brought to America prior to World War II, and during the country's post-war economic boom, "corporate identity became the goal of most businesses and industries," he writes. "Every firm needed a new corporate logo or symbol, and a modern look became the norm for every business. Progressive American designers such as Lester Beall, Paul Rand and William Golden met the challenge and thus began the golden age of corporate identity in the United States."

