BUILDING A BRAND FOR A GASTRO LOUNGE:

ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS

FOR HONEY

THESIS

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my family—my three children, Yves, Elliott, and Macy. They are my mind, heart, and soul. To my wife Kelly, with undying love. My family, I have painfully taken away from you so much, of which I hope to give back incessantly.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis research is to showcase the development of comprehensive branding (i.e., brand identity and activation) for Honey, a *gastro lounge,* located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This research utilized established brand strategies and creative methodologies practiced by communication designers to create successful *brand identity* (BI) systems. The documentation of the research, development, and implementation of the Honey BI was compiled into a multi-page illustration, which is included in this thesis.

Statement of the Problem

With the rise in mass consumption, and the resulting rise in mass-media outlets over the last two decades, consumers have become increasingly exposed to messages (i.e., advertising, direct marketing, branded environments). Consumers are subjected to approximately 30,000 messages a day; of these messages, an estimated 3,000 to 6,000 messages are from consumer and corporate brands (Mootee, 2009). *Brands* use these communicated messages to attract, retain, and build a loyal consumer base. Traditionally, this increased exposure has meant increased consumer awareness.

The rise in brand messaging can cause communication fatigue. “Brands need to be part of the solution—not pollution” (Gobé, 2012, Visual Pollution, para. 1). As a result, it has become more important for companies to find increasingly impactful and authentic messages—both verbal and visual—to move an *audience* from potential consumer to loyal consumer. Therefore, in developing Honey’s BI visual appeal and *differentiation* (e.g., unique qualities, characteristics, and attributes) was imperative—not only for the message to be heard—but for the message to remain in the consumer’s consciousness.

Historically, comprehensive BI systems have included elements that are experienced by the consumer, each element is called a *brand touchpoint* (BT) and comprised of, but not limited to: logo (i.e., trademark, logotype), paper system, print collateral, clothing, brand ephemera, and advertising. All of the traditional BTs are still important elements; however, a successful brand strategy incorporates *social media,* and leverages this BT to communicate with its consumers. Through the many ways a brand behaves, it’s messaging must tell a story, be honest, and respect the consumer (Gobé, 2012). A brand’s transparency and interactions with the consumer will gain the esteem of its audience, and inadvertently alleviate the monotony of messages to the consumer.

The *Communication Design Discipline* (CDD) has an abundance of terms specific to building a brand. These terms originated from other disciplines (i.e., business, marketing, and interactive media) who work collaboratively with the CDD. The following is a list of terms and their definitions used in this thesis.

Definition of Terms

1) *Alternate Reality Game* is a game that utilizes the real world as the stage. The game is used as a viral marketing campaign.

2) *Audience* is the group to which a product, service, or message is aimed.

3) *Brand* is a person's perception of a product, service, experience, or organization.

4) *Brand Attribute* is a distinctive feature of a product, service, company, or brand.

5) *Brand Identity* is the outward expression of a brand, including its name, trademark, communications, and overall visual appearance.

6) *Brand Identity Book* is a document that consists of the research, development, and implementation of a given brand.

7) *Brand Touchpoints* are any place where people come in contact with a brand, including product use, packaging, advertising, editorial, movies, stores, environments, company employees, and casual conversation.

8) *Communication Design Discipline* is a mixed discipline between design and information development which is concerned with how media intermission (i.e., printed, crafted, electronic media or presentations) communicate with people.

9) *Data Mining* allows users to analyze data from many different dimensions or angles, categorize it, and summarize the relationships identified.

10) *Differentiation* is the process of establishing a unique market position to increase profit margins and avoid commodization.

11) *Ephemera* is something that is used, or enjoyed for a short period of time.

12) *Gastro Lounge* is an upscale bar that serves premier drinks, has reserved seating with bottle service, and serves gourmet appetizers.

13) *Logomark is* an icon, avatar, or other symbol that represents a brand.

14) *Logotype* a distinctive typeface or lettering style used to represent a brand name.

15) *Push Notification (pushing)* describes a style of Internet-based communication where

a message or signal is initiated by business. Permission for push notifications are granted by the consumer via a mobile number.

16) *Quick Response Code* is a square system comprised of smaller squares that can convey 200 to 300 times more information than the traditional bar code.

17) *Signature* is the complete identity that visually represents a company encompassing the logomark and/or logotype, and a tagline.

18) *Social Media* is any media, usually digital, where the public has the ability to comment with his/her feelings towards a particular service or product to other people.

19) *Social Network* is a network of people that can be leveraged to spread ideas or messages using viral marketing techniques.

What is a Brand, Brand Identity, and Brand Loyalty

The term *brand* is largely misinterpreted in many disciplines—in business and design—and by the consumer. The public at large refers to the term *logo* when identifying a brand. However, the most powerful corporate and brand identities do not represent the brand of a business (Duffy, 2011). Mark Di Soma of the Audacity Group stated, "Brand is the 'F-word' in marketing. People swear by it. Few truly understand its significance and everybody would like to think they do it more often than they do" (Duffy, 2011, A logo does not make brand).

Brand

According to brand strategist and author, Marty Neumeier (2007), "branding is the company's efforts to build lasting value by delighting customers" (p. 19). Coincidentally, a brand is determined by the astute consumer's experience with the brand (i.e., signature, advertisements, employees, and the influence from other consumers). Joël Desgrippes, of

d/g* worldwide, stated:

> Branding is not only about ubiquity, visibility, and functions; it is about bonding emotionally with people in their daily life. Only when a product or a service kindles an emotional dialogue with the consumer, can this product or service qualify to be a brand. (as cited by Gobé, 2010, p. xiii)

A brand is a living organism that constantly interacts with its audience attempting to please consumers, and gain new ones. However, a brand must not strive for additional beliefs in an attempt to gain new consumers—a brand cannot be all encompassing, in doing so, it will lose its integrity, and lose its loyal audience. Robert Blanchard, former P&G executive, asserted, "Like a person, a brand has a name, a personality, character, and reputation. ... Just as you like to be around certain people, and not others. ... a brand must mature and change its product over time. But its character, and core beliefs shouldn't change" (as cited by Mootee, 2009, All about brands).

Noted that brand advisor and author Olins (2003) stated, "branding has moved so far beyond its commercial origins that its impact is virtually immeasurable ...", and escaping the company's control in the 21st century (p. 14). The traditional way of building a brand through print and television advertising campaigns does not have the same return on investment as it did in the past. The problem consists of two factors: people do not trust advertising and people do not like one-way conversations (Neumeier, 2007). Designers need to be more conscientious of these factors due to the emergence of social media. Designers must realize that brands need to evolve from being dictated by agencies to becoming more personal for consumers; and transition from creating compelling messages towards an audience, to making contact with a consumer (Gobé,

2010). Through the use of social media, consumers are able to converse with each other behind the computer screen, in turn, this allows them to honestly react about an experience with a product or service. If brands can connect emotionally with consumers, this connection corresponds to the success of the business (Wheeler, 2009). Despite this awareness, it is still difficult for a business to develop trust with its consumer if BTs within its control convey a differing message.

In designing BTs, "the challenge is to design the right balance between flexibility of expression and consistency in communications" (Wheeler, 2009, p. 142). Successful brands develop customized BTs to their particular business and customer needs. Once developed, these BTs speak a common language, and are central to a unified brand message.

Brand Identity

The term *logo* was originally used as a shortened form of the term logotype. Now it is widely, yet inaccurately, used as a term to define the visual identifier of a business. Even within the CDD and industry publications there are differing viewpoints on this definition. This thesis used the terms logotype, logomark, and signature to represent the components of a business' BI. It is at the discretion of the business and designer in choosing any combination of the three components in designating a BI.

There are many facets of a BI system: a signature, the paper system (e.g., business card, letterhead, envelope), marketing collateral, etc. It is the signature that serves as the liaison to consumers, and it needs to be strategically developed. The signature may achieve exposure, but a successful designer will produce a memorable signature with personality. The signature for a business is much like the *Sharpie* marker for brands; two

little initials scrawled in black on the inside of a pair of gym shorts. Those black letters give ownership, and deter honest thieves from wearing them (Rockport, 2007). The objective of the signature is to shorten the communication of a message that is seemingly complex into a statement that becomes simple, clear, and concise. In an ever-increasing world of digitally integrated communication campaigns, it is the signature that allows consumers to make the connection between the story, and the meaning of a brand.

Brand Loyalty

The average person is inundated by an increasing amount of daily communicative messages. Regardless of this increase the general public is paying less attention to these messages.

Brands aid the consumer in breaking through the confusion of products and services. The consumer makes these choices based on the experience with the brand, or the experience that others have with the brand. What the brand can deliver as a promise to the consumer. The consumer has a choice to buy a soda or a bottle of Coke, shoes or a pair of Nikes, a computer or an Apple. Neumeier (2007) suggested that "when everybody zigs, zag" (p. 26). Neumeier (2004) defines a zag as the "differentiating idea that drives a charismatic brand" (p. 109). Additionally, he stated that it has become increasingly important for companies to produce different products or services, with unique messages that resonate with their audience (Neumeier, 2007).

CHAPTER II

HONEY GASTRO LOUNGE

Project Overview

The Honey gastro lounge is a new concept bar located in the historic Hennepin District of Minneapolis, MN. Honey offers live music, disc jockeys, comedy acts, and a menu which features plates of sample gourmet chocolates called 'chocolate flights'. These differentiators were nonexistent in the Hennepin District, and created several advantages for Honey over other businesses. The district's residents, businesses, and visitors were comprised of young artists, designers, and entrepreneurs, all of whom fell within Honey's target audience demographics: male and female, 25 to 45 years of age, college-educated, with a $50,000 or greater annual income.

Developing the BI system required a thorough review and comprehension of Honey in order to make informed decisions.

Important initial considerations included:

1) What form should the logomark represent—honey, bee, or other?

2) How much stylistic representation can the designer afford before the message becomes unapparent?

3) How does the designer represent different aspects of the business in a cohesive mark?

4) Will color play an important role in the design of the logomark?

5) Will there be any visual elements to support the Honey brand?

Preliminary Design Research

Brand Strategies

The following preliminary design research (PDR) was used in creating the Honey brand identity book (BIB), and helped determine the course of action associated with designing a BI. The PDR consisted of qualitative research gathered from business competitors combined with Honey's self-analysis.

To define and build the Honey brand, established brand strategies were used to determine the qualities and characteristics unique to the brand. The brand strategies were as follows: a Competitive Brand Landscape Audit (CBLA), a 17-point checklist, a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis, and a photographic elicitation (see Illustration p. 33-43).

Competitor Brand Landscape Audit

Wheeler (2009) asserted that, "positioning the company in relationship to the competition is both a marketing and a design imperative" (p. 110). A CBLA was performed on all businesses within proximity to Honey by collecting and comparing the signatures and websites of each business. These two BTs were chosen for the CBLA comparison due to their immediate availability via the internet. The data collected from local bars, restaurants, and businesses gave the designer a comprehensive reference to competitor's messaging and their BTs. Businesses which consisted of bees or honey in their names were noted in the CBLA. The CBLA strategy helped the designer to avoid commonalities across similar businesses in an effort which directly related to Neumeier's

concept of being different. The subsequent businesses that were used from the CBLA helped guide Honey through the 17-point checklist strategy.

17-Point Checklist

Neumeier (2007) suggested there are two paths that a business model can take in order to succeed in its market. The business can either choose to provide something completely different from its competitors or fill a void in an already existing market. Neumeier proposed that a business needs to evaluate themselves on 17 questions. The questions to this strategy assessed Honey in four areas: uniqueness, focus, trend, and communications. The outcomes to these combined four objectives were used to help define and build unique brand attributes for the Honey brand.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT (Strentghs, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) is a qualitative analysis used to determine attributes and aspirations for a business' initiatives. The analysis allowed the designer to categorize key factors, both positive and negative, into each of the four sections contained within the SWOT analysis. For example, one weakness Honey faced was the lack of market presence or notoriety. From this weakness arose the opportunity to develop a comprehensive BI and supporting BTs with the intent of strengthening Honey's presence in the market.

The SWOT analysis also uncovered key brand attributes for Honey, which were: chic image, chic food and beverage, and chic entertainment. These brand attributes were identified as both strengths and opportunities, which were incorporated into the development of the Honey brand.

Photographic Elicitation

The final strategy employed was photographic elicitation. The designer assembled relevant imagery, which visually correlated to the key brand attributes—chic image, chic food and beverage, and chic entertainment. This process helped the designer in the initial collection, identification, and arrangement of visual elements critical to defining the brand language (BL).

The results from the photographic elicitation and other brand strategies used in Honey's PDR were compiled into a complete visual brief to incorporate the client's vision into the creative process of developing the BI system. In doing so, it ensured that both the designer and client had a shared vision.

CHAPTER III

DESIGNING THE HONEY IDENTITY

Creative Methodologies

Effective designers employ proven creative methodologies to visual communication problems to achieve successful solutions. Pricken stated (2008), these "method(s) require you to systematically list and consider all logically conceivable possibilities, in order to obtain an overview of every aspect involved" (p. 228). There are many creative strategies and methodologies that have been adapted and altered from other disciplines for use in the CDD. This thesis focuses on the following established creative methodologies (see illustration section, p. 45-48): word listing, icon matrix, and morphological matrix to provide the designer with a systematic approach to designing the Honey signature.

Word List

A comprehensive word list (WL) was the first creative methodology used by the designer to delineate a problem. The WL was comprised of major headings typically associated with the nature of the business. The importance of this stage allowed the designer to brainstorm and deposit an extensive list of words underneath appropriate headings. Keywords from the inital word list were identified, and then expanded upon, yielding more possibilities for effective outcomes.

The headings for the Honey WL consisted of the words: bar, honey, bees, as well as, characteristics often associated with bars and bees. An examination of the list revealed repeating, or iconic words from the categorized index. These words—cocktails, wine glass, olive, martini, honeycomb, hexagon, stripes, wings, stinger—were selected to progress to the next methodology.

Icon Matrix

The aforementioned words selected from the WL each became a heading for the icon matrix (IM). The designer indexed sketched iconic possibilities for each word underneath each heading. Similar to photographic elicitation, the IM methodology was a critical transition for the designer to visualize and document iconographic forms from their written counterparts.

Morphological Matrix

The final stage of developing the Honey BI, was the morphological matrix (MM), a pivotal creative methodology that improved the effectiveness of the design process. The designer referenced the IM to establish specific visual connections, between two elements (i.e., sketches, icons, letterforms) can seamlessly be formed into a basis for a new logomark or logotype.

It was important for all of the creative methodologies to work together in a systematic approach that produced creative results. Throughout the PDR the designer revisited the WL and IM to refine and further develop the Honey BI.

The concept for the Honey logomark was derived from two MM elements—the profile of a wine glass and an aerial view of a bee. These separate elements were unified

into a new visual. The foundation of the new Honey logomark had been established and the next stages consisted of implementing the Honey logomark into a BI system.

CHAPTER IV

OUTCOMES

Adherence to the established creative methodologies yielded a logomark for Honey; however, the logomark needed a logotype to complete the Honey signature. After the Honey signature was completed the designer applied the results to Honey's BTs, which included: paper system, digital and social media, ephemera, and environmental graphic design.

Honey Signature

Honey Logomark

Gardner (2011) claimed that effective identities use symbology and iconography with simplicity and metaphor to their advantage. Additionally, logomark designs that use animals and insects have an inherent impact on all audiences; people can relate to these animals and insects metaphorically through fables that were told to them as children (Gardner, 2011). For example, a fox can be used to express the idea of being clever, an owl as being wise, and where there are bees, there is usually honey. The most compelling logomarks are those which transcend letters and words. These logomarks do not rely on the understanding of an alphabet—the genius lies in the universal comprehension of iconic forms.

The Honey logomark capitalized on the inconspicuous similarity in form between the bee's abdomen, and a wine glass. By carefully manipulating the shape of each object; the designer morphed the two forms into a unique form for the Honey logomark. Additionally, an ambiguous—yet seamlessly favorable—distinction between foreground and background was created between the stylized stripes of the bee's abdomen, and a filled wine glass. Moreover, the designer effectively comprehended the brand's strategies, and developed a logomark that was different from its competitors.

Honey Logotype

The two type families chosen for all Honey brand communication included Sanford and Univers. These two typefaces integrated well, and provided a rich, versatile typographic palette for multiple communication/collateral needs.

Sanford. The typeface Sanford was chosen for the logotype and the primary typeface for Honey's print collateral. Sanford provided more legibility than other serif typefaces, due to its large counters, (see illustration, p. 53) and minimalist details. At type sizes larger than 60 points, the typeface gave a lighter impression than similar serif typefaces, which is appropriate for Honey. Sanford was also well-suited for text; an extra point of leading allowed lines of text to be situated more comfortably from each other (Godfrey, PCWorld, 2010). Data from the brand strategies determined that Honey's target audience is mature, affluent, and sophisticated, and the Sanford typeface reflected these attributes. Most importantly, the serifs of the Sanford typeface resembled the bee's appendages and antenna, this combination unified the logomark and logotype.

As a result, the signature created a compelling identity for Honey which elegantly signified honey, drinks, and poise.

Univers. The sans serif Univers typeface was chosen for the secondary type due to the slight modulation of strokes that give it more character than other sans serif typefaces. Univers has an open x-height similar to that of Sanford, which allowed for increased legibility (see illustration section, p. 53). Additionally, Univers 45 light, at a larger size, was used on many BTs, and it gives an impression of being light and delicate (Christensen, 2012). This characteristic of Univers 45 light resembles honeybees.

Honey Color Palettes

It was essential for the logomark to be conceived in black and white. This ensured that the ingenuity of the logomark was not dependent on the use of color. Chandler (2007) studied cognitive processes, and found that through memorization people were able to identify first the shape of an object, then its color, and finally its written content. Once the logomark is finalized in black and white, the application of color can be used to further enhance the message. Wheeler (2009) proclaimed that, "color is used to evoke emotion and express personality. It stimulates brand association and accelerates differentiation" (p. 128).

The physical characteristics of the Honey lounge paralleled the warm yellow and black used in the signature. The lounge's black seats and ceiling provided an atmosphere that was sleek, powerful, and alluring. The yellow accent lighting used for Honey's interior was selected with the intent of invigorating patrons and stimulating conversation. The subtle addition of the color brown evoked the sense of approachability, and simplicity. Although the color brown was used sparingly within the gastro lounge, it referenced the gourmet chocolates which are one of the differentiating qualities of Honey. The color brown was used in conjunction with the secondary palette comprised of

analogous, complementary, and tertiary colors to aesthetically complement the primary palette. The objective of the color palette was to associate Honey with exhilaration, music, dance, laughter, and casual drinks with friends.

Honey Paper System

Business Card, Letterhead and Envelope

The paper system is usually the first BT where the BL is applied. The paper system consisted of a two-sided business card, letterhead, and envelope. Traditionally, the business card has been the first impression between businessperson and consumer. Careful attention is given to how the brand is communicated to the consumer. Therefore, the designer considered all three paper elements as a whole unit. This ensured a consistent BL within the paper system. Despite electronic mail, the letterhead and envelope are still widely used as a "credible proof of being in business" (Wheeler, 2009, p. 146).

Honey Menu Cover

Honey is not considered an eating establishment, however, it provides small plates, desserts, and a drink menu—these factors coupled with Honey as an entertainment venue helped differentiate the gastro lounge from its competitors. The items listed in the menu change frequently, so the most economical solution was to create a branded cover with a one-color paper insert to be updated and printed by Honey.

Honey Magazine Advertisements

Traditional print advertisements continue to be effective vehicles for promoting brands, but brands need to intertwine both traditional media, and new media within their strategy. Brands not utilizing this strategy are not maximizing their marketing budgets. Another critical communication tool utilized by Honey to engage consumers was the

quick-response (QR) code. This new media channel was incorporated into the yellow and black duotone magazine advertisements. Consumers who captured the QR code through a smart phone were strategically redirected to an MPA based promotional offer.

Additionally, if data-mining indicated the end-user had never been to the Honey establishment, a push incentive was sent to the mobile smart phone for end-users to sign-up with their electronic mail address, and create a username and password (Wertime & Fenwick, 2008).

"An ad should be an appetizer, not a buffet" (Clow, 2012, Monadnock masters Clow). The simple contents of the advertisements were a photograph of a person, a callout, the logomark, and a QR code. Old expressions and proverbs were a resource to create a plethora of advertising one-liners, such as, *Where there are bees, there is honey*, and *The bee's knees*. Advertisements ran in local Twin Cities magazines in order to target Honey's intended demographic: *The Best of Twin Cities, Twin Cities Metro, Minnesota Monthly, Twin Cities Business, Edible Twin Cities Magazine, HERLIFE Magazine,* and *Black Twin Cities Magazine.*

Digital Media Applications

The public at large has the ability to communicate freely and anonymously about a product or service using digital media (i.e., the World Wide Web and social media). Honey's audience was keen towards technology and the use of social media. Two of the most substantial social media applications—with the most online users—are Facebook and Twitter. For Honey's digital and social media BTs: a website, mobile site, Facebook, and Twitter was created and implemented into the BI system.

Honey Website

Wheeler (2009) stated that websites put the consumer in control of a product or service, and the best websites respect the needs and preferences of their audience. The Honey website consisted of a simple opening page with a large signature at the center. Options for the end-user were to choose from the drink menu, food menu, directions to the venue, and an events calendar. The background composition consisted of a yellow gradient, with a honeycomb texture, and the foreground included a meadow of black grass and flowers. These components to the BL were transferred throughout the comprehensive BTs.

In order to maintain a flow of traffic to the Honey website, an attractive incentive needed to be included in the website. Honey's website consisted of a photo gallery section where patrons view photos from specific nights. Furthermore, there is a rich-media section where performers have donated their music and comedy acts which played on the website.

Honey Mobile and Social Media

It is estimated in 2012, there are more than 1.5 billion people who access the internet via their mobile smart phones (Safko, 2010). The mobile smart phone is increasingly important to a person's engagement in social media. "The device allows users to participate in an event, and share their reactions and ideas with others instantly" (Safko, 2010, p. 402).

Honey's MPA resembled its website; however, to promote social interaction, the designer positioned the events calendar, and photo gallery before the other navigation.

Facebook and Twitter

Gobé (2010) stated that, a consumer can have credibility through personal experience, and if that experience is unfavorable, then that person has the power to damage a brand through the use of social media. Since the emergence of social media, brands have become increasingly transparent, in turn, forcing brands to become honest and deliver on their promises (Safko, 2010). The correct leverage of social media avenues, such as Facebook and Twitter, were instrumental in the success of Honey. Facebook was key in announcing upcoming shows, new drinks, new small plates, and new chocolates. Twitter was instrumental for pushing out deals such as, receiving a free cocktail for bringing a friend to Honey. These actions helped promote Honey. According to Ugander, Karrer, Backstrom, & Marlow, (2011) the average person using Facebook has 214 friends, if one person has a positive post on Facebook or tweet, this reaction can have exponential return on investment for Honey's social network.

Honey Ephemera

Honey has the ability to reach an audience beyond its proximity to increase brand awareness. This was accomplished from the business' brand strategy to produce tangible items (i.e., clothing and water bottles) for consumers. When consumers choose to associate themselves with these tangible items, they become part of a community that has a certain set of morals, values, or standards—a win-win situation (Neumeier, 2007).

Honey Clothing

T-shirts are one of the most cost-effective and direct promotions used to create popular associations between consumer and businesses. Consumers wear a specific business' T-shirt since it associates them with that particular brand. Businesses benefit

from giving away, or selling their T-shirts to consumers since the consumers become instant walking billboards for that business (Wheeler, 2009).

Honey T-shirts were available in white, grey, and black, with various orientations of the Honey identity on the T-shirt. The word *Minneapolis* was on a select few shirts, this made the patron a city ambassador for Minneapolis, as well as a visible promoter of Honey. The employees of Honey wore oxford shirts and polos. These uniforms were provided for waiters, waitresses, bartenders, hosts, and kitchen staff—managerial staff uniforms consisted of a suit jacket. These uniforms offered a sense of pride and belonging for the employee to be associated with the establishment. At the same time, this created a dress code that positively reflected the character of the business, and helped patrons differentiate employees within the gastro lounge (Wheeler, 2009).

Honey Coasters and Napkins

The physical *welcome mat* offered by a waiter, waitress, or bartender was via the presentation of a coaster or napkin. Honey coasters and napkins were imprinted with the Honey BI and conceptual messages. (e.g., *Probably the only time you'll love getting swarmed* and *Practice safe pollination*). These conceptual messages engaged the patrons by providing a humorous narrative that pertained to the theme of the gastro lounge.

Honey Beverage Glasses and Water Bottles

Beverage glasses and water bottles presented an opportunity for Honey to create another BT. Small Honey logomarks were acid-etched onto the brim of beverage glasses. The logomark was small and opaque so that it retained the elegance of the Honey brand. Additionally, Honey had branded glass water bottles to entice patrons to reuse them. A QR code vinyl decal was strategically positioned on the back of every bottle. Throughout

the night, Honey had an in-house photographer that took photographs of activity within the lounge. The photographs were uploaded to the gallery section of their website and MPA. When patrons scanned the QR code on the back of the water bottle, this action automatically directed the user to the photo gallery page on Honey's MPA.

After patrons sign-up, instant data-mining recognizes the patrons upon their return to the gastro lounge. Shortly afterward, an incentive is pushed to the smart phone encouraging patrons to return to Honey—an incentive such as a free T-shirt, was offered immediately. If the patron returns for a specified night, and brings along "x" amount of friends; then another incentive could be offered. For example, the incentive could be to waive the cover charge for that person.

Honey Gift Boxes

Honey also offered the same gourmet chocolates featured in their chocolate flights in a gift box. In developing the BL, the designer created a hexagonal box that referenced the bee's hexagonal honeycomb. The Honey elements (e.g., color palette, typography, visual context) were consistently applied to the hexagonal boxes. The chocolates were available in a 10-piece or 20-piece hexagonal box.

Honey Environmental Graphic Design

"Environmental graphic design (EGD) embraces many design disciplines including graphic, architectural interior, landscape, and industrial design, all concerned with the visual aspects of wayfinding, communication identity and information, and shaping the idea of place" (Lascano, 2009, What is environmental). The EGD system was a large—and visible—component of the Honey BI system. Most often, this was where many of the BTs coalesce, and therefore, it was important for this holistic BL to enhance the brand experience.

Exterior Signage

Exterior Façade. The building that houses Honey was of historical importance to the city of Minneapolis, thereby keeping the integrity of the building by minimally altering the façade was vitally important. In doing such, a flush-mounted, 2' x 2', back-lit sign was placed on the corner of the building. The placement of the sign was ideal due to the maximum visibility at a four-way stop, and the yellow, back-lit sign became an indicating beacon at night.

Exterior Front Door. The glass front door sits within a recessed overhang. A vinyl decal of the Honey logomark was placed at eye level on the inside of the glass door. The designer eliminated any background distraction from the other side of the glass door by frosting the glass so that the Honey logomark could be solid black and yellow on a white field.

Interior Signage

Front Entrance. Through the front door, Honey was situated below street level with a short flight of steps leading down to the bar. The wall above the entrance steps provided an opportunity to place another back-lit sign that is 5' x 5'; this was used to build anticipation with the Honey patrons as they descended the steps.

Bar and Dance Floor Signage. The dimly lit dance floor is flanked by another back-lit Honey sign. The signature 5' x 5' sign is the focal point of the yellow room, and a 2' x 2' back-lit sign sits at the end of the bar.

Restroom Signage. The restroom's entrance was clad with a floor to ceiling mirror, and a back-lit sign situated behind the mirror. The separate bathrooms are indicated by the words: Queen Bees and Drone Bees.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This thesis, *Building a Brand for a Gastro Lounge: Analysis and Considerations for Honey*, documented the process used to create the BI system for Honey. The research employed proven creative methodologies (e.g., word list, icon matrix, morphological matrix) and brand strategies (e.g., CBLA, 17-point checklist, SWOT, Photographic Elicitation) used by the CDD to create successful BI systems. The Honey thesis explained the relevant usage, and development BTs used for its BI system.

Peer Feedback

The Honey signature and BI system was published in three of the most respected peer-reviewed CDD publications: *Graphis New Talent Annual 2011, Graphis Design Annual 2011,* and *Graphis Logo Design 8 2011.* The following questions and ideas evolved from peer feedback:

- Were the three creative methodologies sufficient to design a complete brand identity?
- Did the established brand strategies utilized provide enough foundational research for the designer?
- Could the Honey logomark have been designed using a different view of the bee, rather than appearing upright?

- Could the stylization have been more representational to benefit the message?
- Do bees flare out their wings as the logomark portrayed? Did this help the message?
- Could the message be strengthened by showing movement in the wings?
- Could the Honey logomark or logotype have been designed using forms that related to honey instead of a bee?
- Could the Honey logomark have been designed using another beverage glass associated with drinking establishments (i.e., beer mug, martini glass)?
- Were there other considerations for the color palette—a warmer, more inviting palette?
- Were there any other considerations for a primary and secondary type palette?
- Is there a need for a Honey logotype to support the logomark?

Future Research

For a venue such as Honey, it is extremely important to gain visibility, and make a positive impression on its target audience. In addition, to traditional announcements of a new venue entering the Minneapolis area, Honey will utilize social media in respect to an Alternate Reality Game (ARG). Companies have used ARGs in the past as a form of social discovery, and as a viral marketing tool. Honey will attempt to target its demographic, and use its ARG, for the purpose of special events—such as a New Year's Eve party.

"ARGs weave together real world artifacts with clues and puzzles hidden online to create an engaging, collective experience for players" (Educause, 2009, 7 things). Within an ARG there are three key elements: rabbit holes, the players, and a puppet master.

Rabbit holes are how the players can enter into the game—they are the bait for the potential player. A rabbit hole can be many things, for example, a URL, GPS coordinates to a specific location, or a QR code.

The puppet master has an integral position and most often is disguised as a player. He/she is responsible for moving the game forward—by hinting at clues—when the game becomes stagnant.

The driving force behind an ARG centers on the idea that humans are inquisitive creatures by nature. This principle is what makes an ARG successful. An ARG typically has short mysteries or puzzles that are specifically placed for the target consumer to discover. The puzzles are usually solved only to reveal further mystery, and to build suspense. At the conclusion of the game, the client or sponsor of the ARG is revealed—in this case, that sponsor would be Honey. The ARG would exploit print and digital media, using the real world as the game's platform.

This thesis outlined the process in building a BI system for a business. The designer used established brand strategies and creative methodologies, with the intent of helping Honey gain a competitive advantage over surrounding venues. The BI system developed for Honey raised the company's brand profile through the broad implementation of BTs. In the process of developing and implementing the BTs, this thesis exhibited that it is not prudent for a brand to merely produce consumer products or services. A successful brand must treat every consumer with honesty and respect to match with a strategic and comprehensive BI and supporting BTs. As Honey continues to provide its growing audience with a unique atmosphere and quality service it is also establishing brand loyalty and brand equity.

ILLUSTRATION

HONEY
BRAND IDENTITY BOOK

HONEY INTRODUCTION

// PROJECT OBJECTIVE
// STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Design is so simple, that's why it is so complicated.

// PAUL RAND

INTRODUCTION

This component of the thesis research illustrates how effective communication designers apply established creative methodologies and brand strategies to create successful brand identity (BI) systems.

// PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The objective of this thesis research was to develop comprehensive branding (i.e., brand identity and activation) for Honey, a gastro lounge, located in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

// HONEY'S BRAND

Over the past two decades, consumers have been bombarded with communicative mass–media messages—estimated at several thousand messages per consumer a day (Mootee, 2009). Specifically, brands use these messages to build a loyal consumer base. However, consumers are exhausted from the rise in brand messages. As a result, it is increasingly difficult for brands to create consumer loyalty.

Therefore, brands need to find ways to produce authentic messages that resonate with their target audience. A brand can no longer rely on traditional brand touchpoints (BT) (i.e., a logomark, paper system, brand ephemera, and advertising). A successful brand understands the importance of social media, and the need to create honest dialogue to gain the respect of its consumers.

HONEY PRELIMINARY DESIGN RESEARCH

// BRAND STRATEGIES

- // COMPETITOR BRAND LANDSCAPE AUDIT
- // 17-POINT CHECKLIST
- // STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS
- // PHOTOGRAPHIC ELICITATION

Give me six hours to chop down a tree,
and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.

// ABRAHAM LINCOLN

BRAND STRATEGIES

// COMPETITOR BRAND LANDSCAPE AUDIT

Carbone's Pizza Bar & Grill Lakeville. (Feb. 24). Carbone's Bar & Grill. Retrieved from http://www.carboneslakeville.com

Panino Brothers. (Feb. 24). Panino Brothers Food & Beverage. Retrieved from http://www.paninobrothers.com

Broadway Pizza. (Feb. 24). Broadway Pizza. Retrieved from http://www.broadwaypizza.com.

Flaherty's Arden Bowl. (Feb. 24). Flaherty's Arden Bowl. Retrieved from http://www.flahertysbowl.com

T. J. Hooligan's Pub & Grub. (Feb. 24). T. J. Hooligan's Pub & Grub. Retrieved from http://www.tjhooligans.com.

BRAND STRATEGIES (continued)

// COMPETITOR BRAND LANDSCAPE AUDIT

Blackstone Surfacing Inc. (Mar. 7). *Blackstone Surfacing.* Retrieved from http://blackstonesurfacing.com/?page_id=22.

Groton Center Farms. (Feb. 24). *Groton Center Farms.* Retrieved from http://www.grotoncenterfarms.com.

Bristol Community College. (Mar. 7). *Bristol Community College.* Retrieved from http://www.bristol.mass.edu/administration/communications/logos/sty_mascot.cfm

Honeycomb Media. (Feb. 24). *Honeycomb Media.* Retrieved from http://www.honeycomb-media.co.uk.

BRAND STRATEGIES (continued)

// COMPETITOR BRAND LANDSCAPE AUDIT

paninobrothers.com

tjhooligans.com

flahertysbowl.com

carboneslakeville.com

BRAND STRATEGIES (continued)

// COMPETITOR BRAND LANDSCAPE AUDIT

honeycomb–media.co.uk

beedocs.com

grotoncenterfarms.com

BRAND STRATEGIES (continued)

// 17–POINT CHECKLIST // DESIGNING HONEY'S ZAG / QUESTIONS

Checkpoint 1 : Who are you?

Checkpoint 2 : What do you do?

Checkpoint 3 : What's your vision?

Checkpoint 4 : What wave are you riding?

Checkpoint 5 : Who shares the brandscape?

Checkpoint 6 : What makes you the "only"?

Checkpoint 7 : What should you add or subtract?

Checkpoint 8 : Who loves you?

Checkpoint 9 : Who's the enemy?

Checkpoint 10 : What do they call you?

Checkpoint 11 : How do you explain yourself?

Checkpoint 12 : How do you spread the word?

Checkpoint 13 : How do people engage with you?

Checkpoint 14 : What do they experience?

Checkpoint 15 : How do you earn their loyalty?

Checkpoint 16 : How do you extend your success?

Checkpoint 17 : How do you protect your portfolio?

BRAND STRATEGIES (continued)

// 17–POINT CHECKLIST // DESIGNING HONEY'S ZAG / ANSWERS

Checkpoint 1 : We are Honey, a gastro lounge located in the old Hennepin District of Minneapolis, MN

Checkpoint 2 : We serve entertainment to hipsters

Checkpoint 3 : To be the premier venue in Minneapolis

Checkpoint 4 : The upscale lounge, nightclub scene

Checkpoint 5 : Local bars and nightclubs

Checkpoint 6 : We are the only gastro lounge in the Twin Cities area with entertainment acts, serve small plates of food, and chocolate flights.

Checkpoint 7 : We should invest more in design and advertising

Checkpoint 8 : The hipsters within Minneapolis

Checkpoint 9 : Any nightclub within the Twin Cities area

Checkpoint 10 : The sweet spot, The bee's knees

Checkpoint 11 : Good times, libations, tech savvy

Checkpoint 12 : Through social media

Checkpoint 13 : They frequent Honey, and social media

Checkpoint 14 : Good friends, good times, music, food, fun

Checkpoint 15 : Delivering on promise, extending gratitude via Twitter and Facebook

Checkpoint 16 : Sending out specials via Twitter, opening new venues

Checkpoint 17 : Offering new acts, new drinks, new chocolates, seasonal parties

BRAND STRATEGIES (continued)

// STRENGTHS–WEAKNESS–OPPORTUNITIES–THREATS ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

1. Honey is the only business within the neighborhood that provides small plates, entertainment, and dancing.
2. Honey is the only entertainment venue that serves local gourmet chocolates.
3. Honey is the only venue that will cater to the neighborhood's art and culture.
4. Honey is a venue that is dark, and rich in textures; it's sublime aura is new to the neighborhood.
5. Honey has a large target audience within the neighborhood that has developed sophisticated tastes.
6. Honey can leverage Minneapolis for it's progressive nature to the arts and culture.

WEAKNESSES

1. The business is a start–up with no identity.
2. The business has no website.
3. There is no plan for brand touchpoints or marketing collateral.
4. There are no plans to leverage social media.
5. How does Honey retain its patrons.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Creation of new entertainment venue that is non–existent in the area.
2. Create an outlet for trendsetting individuals.
3. Create opportunities to sell merchandise at the same time creating a greater visibility.
4. Open the opportunity to create franchises in specific cities.
5. The neighborhood is perceptive to art and culture that Honey can provide through food and entertainment.
6. The neighborhood is progressively growing with a young and trendy crowd.

THREATS

1. There are many entertainment venues within the area.
2. Monies for marketing efforts are narrow.
3. Honey is not a family friendly venue.
4. There are other nightclubs within the Twin Cities proximity.
5. Other venues serve alcohol at a cheaper price.
6. Other venues have regular patrons.

BRAND STRATEGIES (continued)

// KEY BRAND ATTRIBUTES

Honey was able to derive key brand attributes from the CBLA, SWOT analysis, 17–point checklist, and discussions with the client.

// CHIC IMAGE

These people are young, relatively affluent, and is concerned with his or her image. They are at a point in life where they have the time and money to have great endeavors.

// CHIC FOOD & BEVERAGE

These people appreciate fine foods and beverages. They have developed a more sophisticated and daring palette.

// CHIC ENTERTAINMENT

These people enjoy dressing up, going to *by invitation only* venues. They enjoy great company. They know how to be out–of–character without being distasteful.

Photographic elicitation was used in order to ensure the vision of all parties involved were consistent. Images were categorized into each key brand attributes. A compilation of these established brand strategies was compiled into a visual brief, and presented to Honey.

BRAND STRATEGIES (continued)

// PHOTO ELICITATION

// CHIC IMAGE

BRAND STRATEGIES (continued)

// PHOTO ELICITATION

// CHIC FOOD & BEVERAGE

BRAND STRATEGIES (continued)

// PHOTO ELICITATION

// CHIC ENTERTAINMENT

HONEY PRELIMINARY DESIGN RESEARCH

// CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES

// WORD LIST
// ICON MATRIX
// BEE ICON MATRIX
// MORPHOLOGICAL MATRIX

// FINALIZATION OF MARK
// ICON ANTHROPOMORPHIZATION
// COLOR PALETTE
// TYPE PALETTE

A logo without heart is like a person without heart: cold, uninteresting, a robot.

// MARC GOBÉ

CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES

// WORD LIST

BARS

BUSINESS
DRINKS
ALCOHOL
BEER
WINE
COCKTAILS
BARSTOOL
ENTERTAINMENT
LIVE MUSIC
NIGHT CLUB
EXCLUSIVE
DISC JOCKEY
BAR TENDER
GLASS
LIGHTS
MIRRORS
WINE BAR
BREW PUB
MUSIC BAR
OLIVE
MARTINI
CHERRIES
LIME

HONEY

HONEY COMB
BEE HIVE
HONEY SPOON
HEXAGON
BEE KEEPER
NECTAR
POLLINATE
FLOWERS
SWEET
JARS
HARVEST
MEDICINAL
ELIXIR
HEALTHY
SYRUP
MILK & HONEY
HONEY BUN
BEES
BEARS
BEE SMOKER
SWEETNER
FILTERED
HONEY WINE / MEAD

BEES

STRIPES
WORKER
QUEEN
SEGMENTED
FUZZY
ANTENNA
BUZZING
FLOWERS
POLLINATION
WINGS
COLONY
LARVAE
SOCIAL
SWARM
STINGER
WAX
ROYAL JELLY
QUEEN
WORKERS (DAUGHTERS)
DRONES (MALES)
BUSY

BEE CHARACTERISTICS

BUZZING
HOVERING
ZIPPY
ANNOYING
FUZZY
STRIPES
WINGS
EYES (COMPOUND)
ANTENNA
STINGER

BAR CHARACTERISTICS

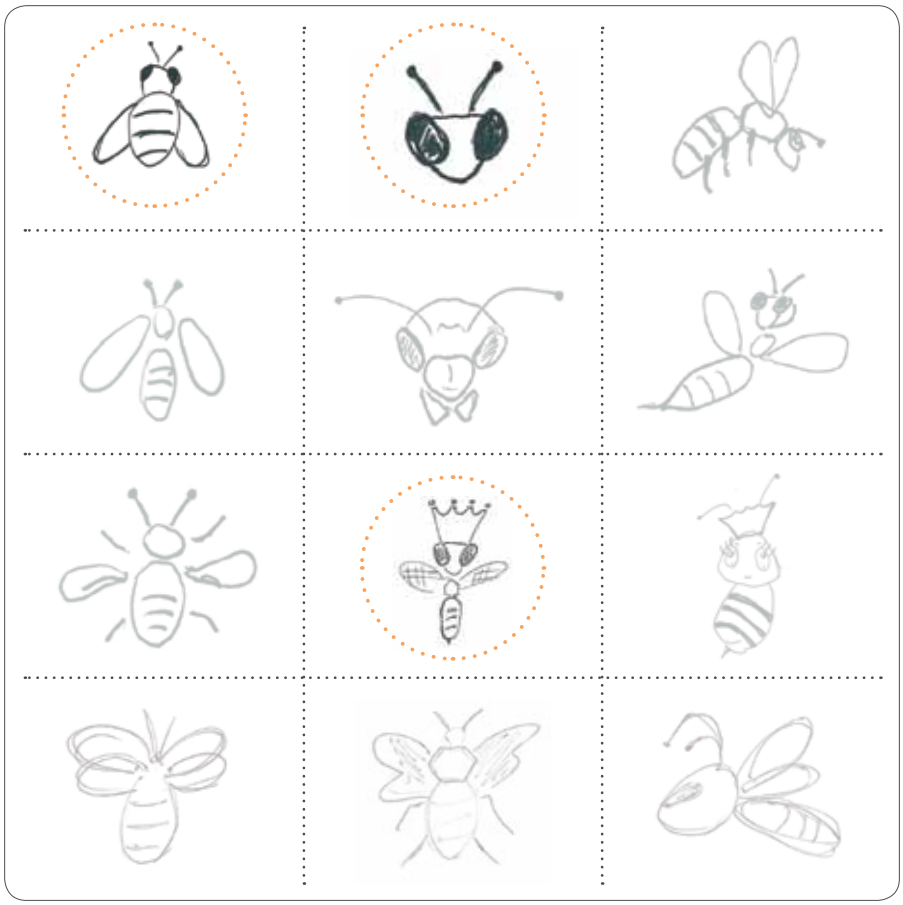
DARK
COMMOTION
LAUGHTER
DRINKS
LIGHTS
MUSIC
DANCING
CLOSENESS
CROWDS

CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES (continued)

// ICON MATRIX

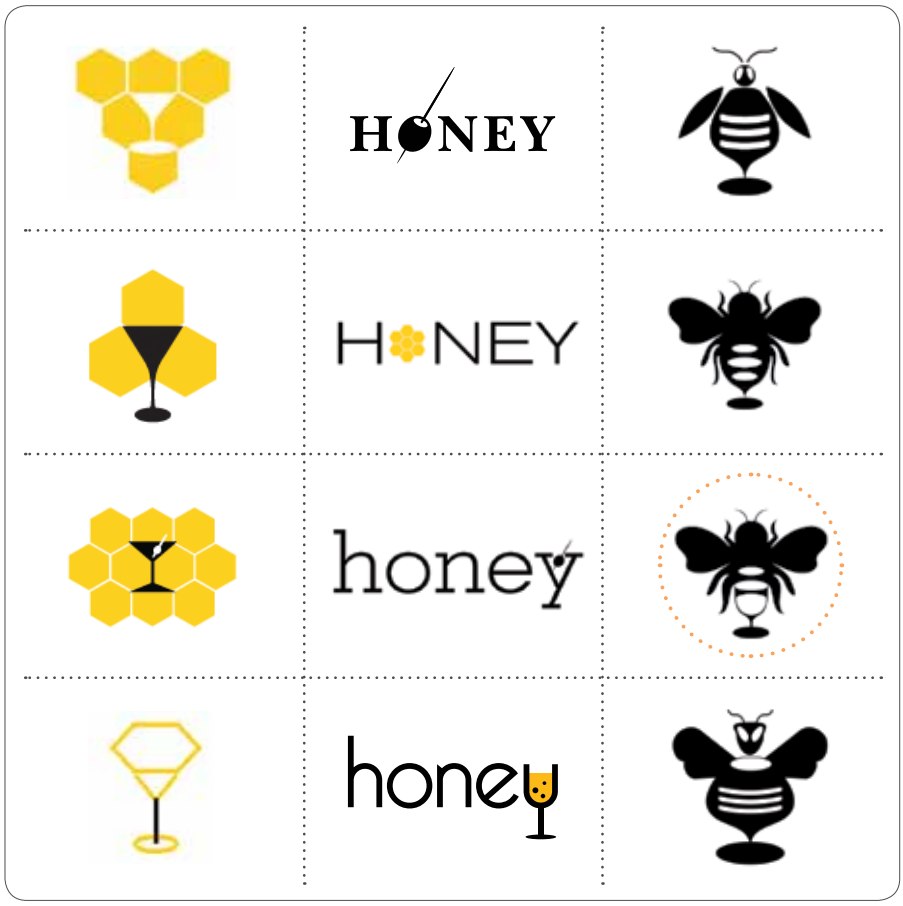
CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES (continued)

// BEE ICON MATRIX



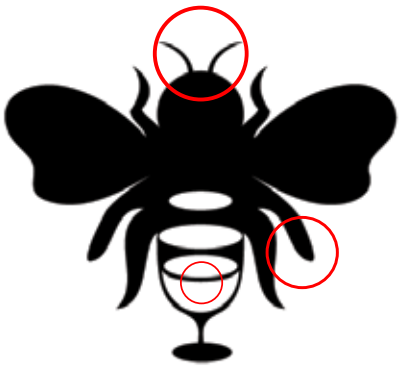
CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES (continued)

// MORPHOLOGICAL MATRIX



CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES (continued)

// FINALIZATION OF LOGOMARK



increase the taper of the antenna

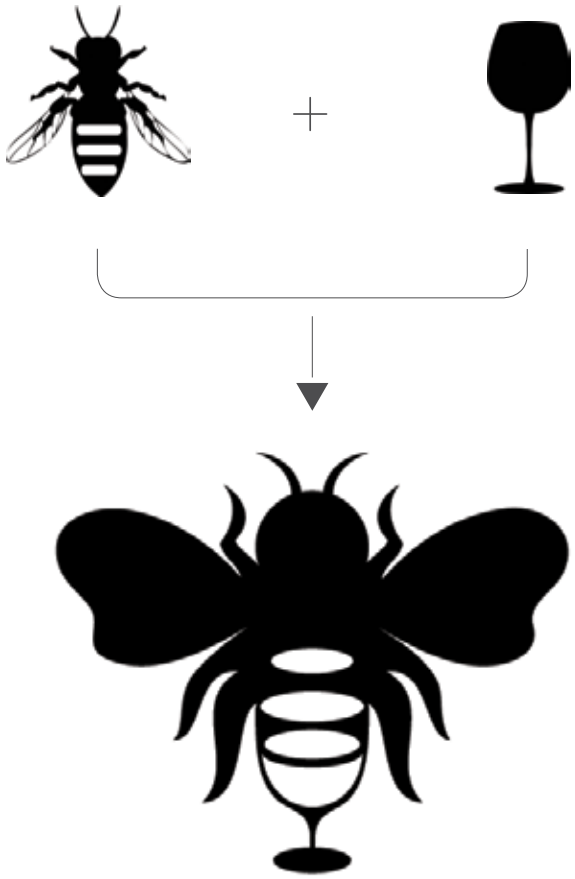
make the legs identical

increase the width of the black line

The designer adjusted the Honey logo in order to increase the legibility at a reduced size, and achieved cohesion and integrity. The new rendering was exact and deliberate, and the aerial view of the honeybee was symmetrical. Any deviations from these ideals would distract the viewer from the immediate message.

CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES (continued)

// ICON ANTHROPOMORPHIZATION



CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES (continued)

// COLOR PALETTE (100%–80%–60%–40% succession)

Honey Yellow (122 C) // C= 01% M= 17% Y= 95% K= 00%
Honey Brown (498 C) // C= 00% M= 64% Y= 100% K= 60%
Honey Black (Black C) // C= 00% M= 13% Y= 49% K= 98%

PRIMARY COLOR

HONEY YELLOW

HONEY BROWN

HONEY BLACK

SECONDARY COLOR

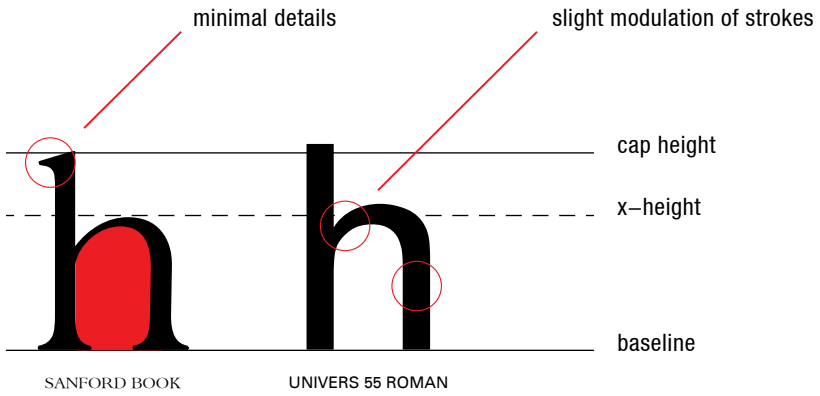
HONEY ANALOGOUS	HONEY COMPLEMENTARY	HONEY TRIAD
c=00 m=20 y=83 k=09	c=00 m=23 y=68 k=00	c=00 m=30 y=88 k=30
c=00 m=11 y=83 k=00	c=00 m=30 y=88 k=30	c=68 m=00 y=34 k=00
c=00 m=37 y=83 k=09	c=78 m=46 y=00 k=00	c=30 m=88 y=00 k=20
c=00 m=50 y=83 k=00	c=98 m=58 y=00 k=30	c=28 m=83 y=00 k=30

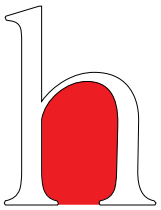
CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES (continued)

// TYPE PALETTE

CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES (continued)

// TYPE PALETTE





= larger than normal counter area

CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES (continued)

// TYPE PALETTE

Sanford Book
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890&?!

Univers 45 Light
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890&?!

Univers 55 Roman
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890&?!

Univers 65 Bold
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890&?!

HONEY OUTCOMES

// HONEY SIGNATURE
// PAPER SYSTEM
// DIGITAL MEDIA
// MOBILE AND SOCIAL MEDIA
// HONEY EPHEMERA
// ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGN

Let's give them something to talk about.

// BONNIE RAITT

HONEY

// SIGNATURE

PAPER SYSTEM

// BUSINESS CARDS

PAPER SYSTEM (continued)

// LETTERHEAD

PAPER SYSTEM (continued)

// ENVELOPES

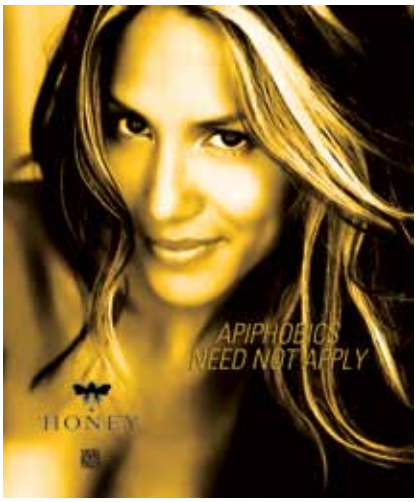
HONEY MENU COVER

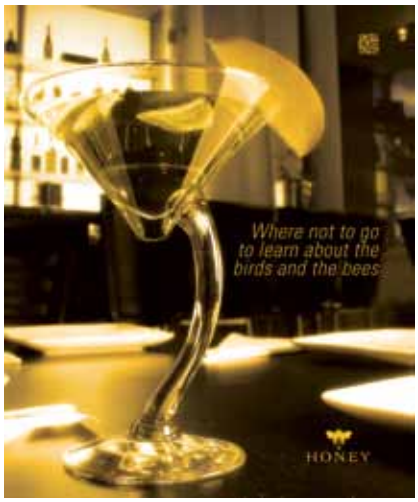
// DRINK AND SMALL PLATE SLUGGER COVER

HONEY MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS

// MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS

Full–page magazine advertisements





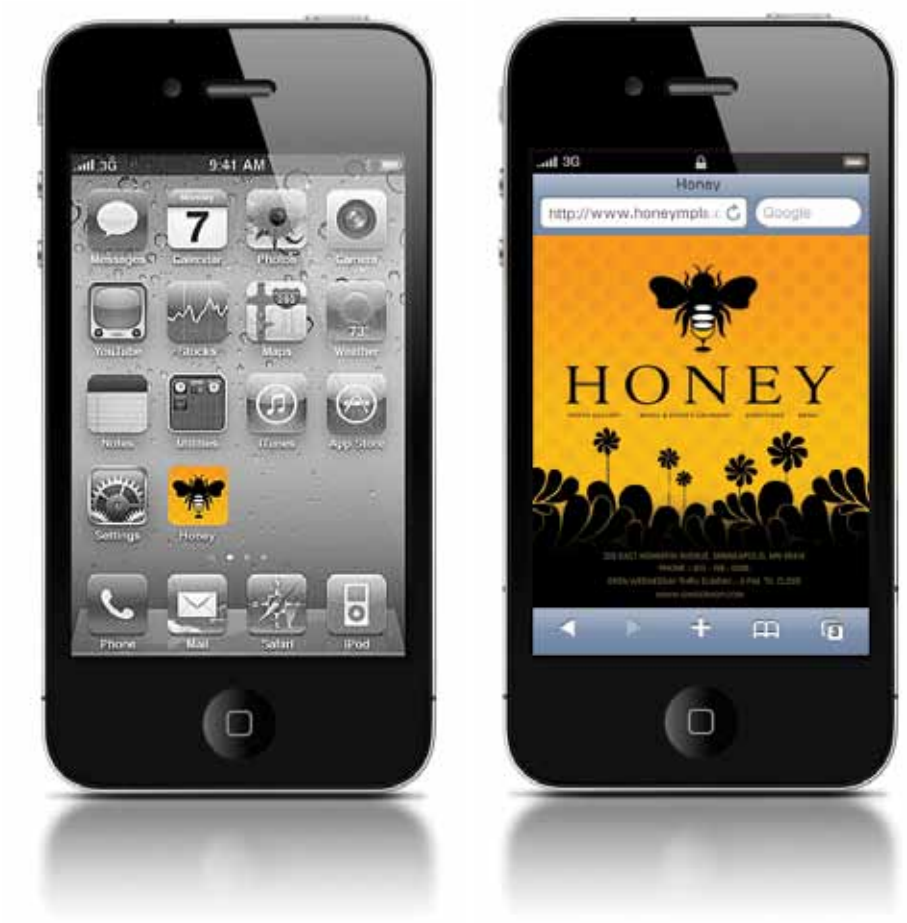
Half–page magazine advertisement

DIGITAL MEDIA

// WEBSITE HOMEPAGE

MOBILE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

// MOBILE MEDIA APPLICATION ICON AND MOBILE SPLASH PAGE



MOBILE AND SOCIAL MEDIA (continued)

// FACEBOOK PAGE

MOBILE AND SOCIAL MEDIA (continued)

// TWITTER PAGE

HONEY EPHEMERA

// HONEY BRANDED T-SHIRTS

HONEY EPHEMERA (continued)

// MEN'S UNIFORMS

Manager's jacket

Men's uniform

HONEY EPHEMERA (continued)

// WOMEN'S UNIFORM

Women's short sleeve polo

Women's three–quarter sleeve polo

HONEY EPHEMERA (continued)

// BEVERAGE COASTERS AND NAPKINS

HONEY EPHEMERA (continued)

// ACID-ETCHED BEVERAGE GLASSES

HONEY EPHEMERA (continued)

// GLASS WATER BOTTLES

HONEY EPHEMERA (continued)

// CHOCOLATE GIFT BOXES

8” chocolate gift box

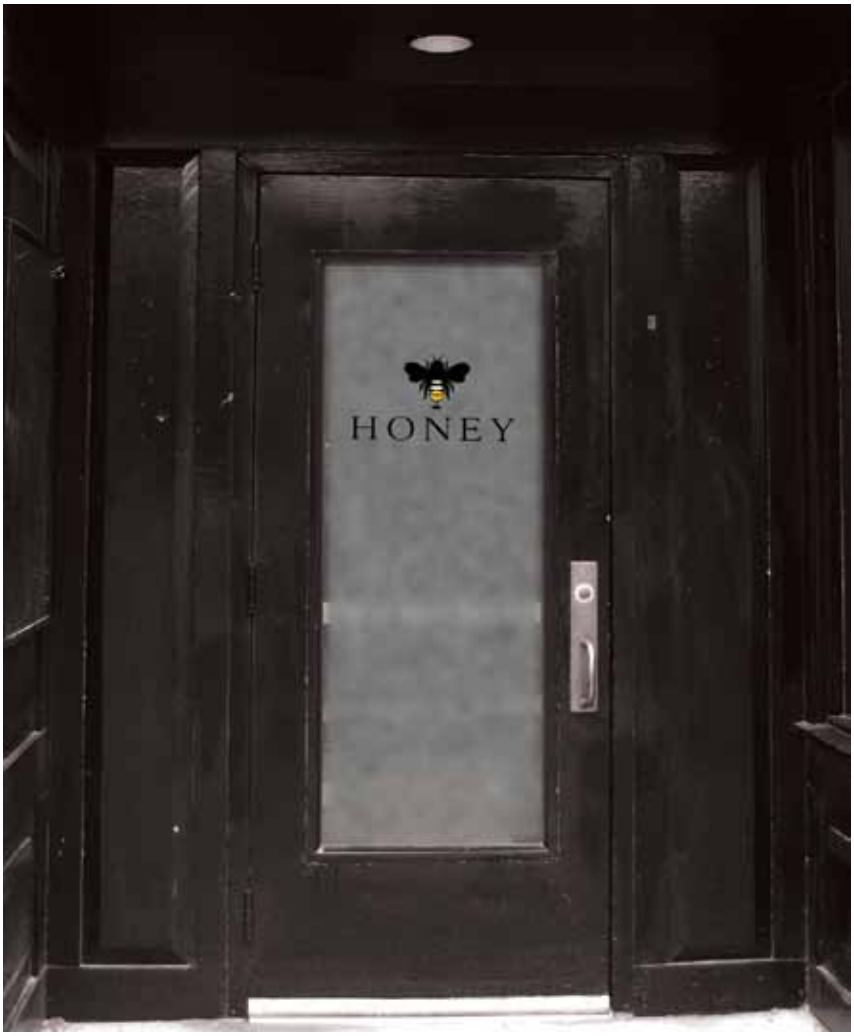
4” chocolate gift box

ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGN

// EXTERIOR FAÇADE SIGNAGE

ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGN (continued)

// FRONT DOOR



ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGN (continued)

// ENTRANCE SIGNAGE

ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGN (continued)

// INTERIOR WALL SIGNAGE

Dance floor signage

Front Bar Signage

ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGN (continued)

// RESTROOM SIGNAGE

Men's Restroom

Women's Restroom

People think that design is styling. Design is not style. It's not about giving shape to the shell and not giving a damn about the guts. Good design is a renaissance attitude that combines technology, cognitive science, human need, and beauty to produce something that the world didn't know it was missing.

// PAOLA ANTONELLI

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VITA

Keo Pierron was born in Vientiane, Laos, on May 24, 1976, he is the eldest son of Paul and Khamphiou Pierron. After completing his work at Marshalltown Senior High School, Marshalltown, Iowa, in 1994, he enrolled at The University of Iowa, and then later transferred in 1996 to Iowa State University. He received the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design in May 2001. Afterward, he was employed as a web designer for Global Reach Internet Productions in Ames, Iowa. In August 2008, he entered the Graduate College of Texas State University–San Marcos in pursuit of a Master of Fine Arts in Communication Design.

His design work has been featured in many publications including *American Institute of Graphic Arts, Creative Quarterly 18, Graphic Design USA, Graphis New Talent Annual 2010, Graphis Design Annual 2010*, and *Graphis Logo Design 8 2011, Green Patriot Posters, LogoLounge6, Mediabistro, Wolda—the worldwide logo design annual*. His work has been featured in a travelling exhibition—*Graphic Design: Now In Production*—with sites including: *The Walker Art Center, Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, Hammer Museum, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and Southeastern Center for Contemporary Arts, Rhode Island School of Design.* Other exhibitions comprise of *Incheon International Design,* and throughout four cities in China for *Hiiibrand—The International Logo Design Award Exhibition*.

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