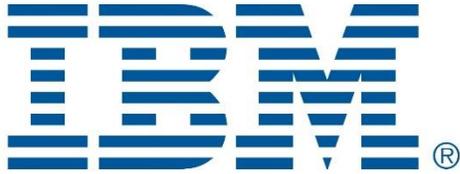


Islam Mahrouss

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Digital Media Foundations



### The Evolution of The IBM Logo

Logos are everywhere in our world, we see them in advertisements and they become a business identity. As a graphic designer, one important job is designing

logos. It's how we identify the many different products in our society such as Apple phones or Gucci shoes. Logos help businesses communicate to the public and tell them who they are and what they are trying to sell you. One logo that I find interesting is the International Business Machines corporation logo or also known as IBM. This logo has gone through many changes throughout this company's history, from between 1888 to 1972 it has changed drastically six times. Although its most successful design is the one that is still currently in use today which was designed by Paul Rand. Paul Rand is pretty well known in the design world especially for how he changed designed the IBM logo. Although he didn't do it all in one try, he went through numerous different ideas and changes the logo up over the years until he settled for the eight horizontal lines cutting through the letters IBM.

Before the International Business Machines company had their present logo, their name changed, they used to be known as Computing Tabulating Recording company or CTR. When Thomas Watson Jr. changed the companies name, that is when the first creation of the IBM logo was started. Thomas Watson Jr. quoted that “good design is good business” and that is what inspired him to giving IBM a new logo with its new name. The first logo that was made was the IBM globe in 1924. This was around the time the company had changed its name. Before the

IBM globe logo in 1911, the name changed, the CTR logo was designed in a decorative serif typeface. In this new logo the typeface had changed to sans serif and the words business and machine are curved to represent the shape of a globe while the word international is in the center. “Watson Sr. chose a more contemporary sans-serif type versus the ornate, rococo letters that formed the previous “C-T-R” logo. The words “Business Machines” were intended to suggest a globe, girdled by the word “International (IBM).” The logos design was made to reflect on how the company is an international business and how they have worked in many locations such as Australia, Brazil, and China throughout its history. This is why the words business and machines are curved to represent the shape of a globe.



# IBM

In 1946, the logo was changed again and this time instead of putting the whole companies name it was abbreviated IBM. The typeface was changed back to a serif font which was Beton.

The three letters were stroked with a thick black outline, over the past few logo changes, the color scheme has changed since the introduction of the three- letter logo, the logos were now set in blue. This didn't happen until 1956 when Paul Rand was hired on the IBM design team. Paul Rand is popularly known for his popular designs for corporate business such as IBM, ABC, and



UPS. When he joined the design team for IBM he started by making subtle changes to the logo. “To improve the mark’s legibility, he replaced the font Beton with a similar but stronger-looking typeface called City. Rand tooled with the shape of the letterforms too, he lengthened

the serifs and made the stacked squares in the letter “B” larger (Quito).” Rand had changed the logos typeface to make it clear and legible while also changing the serif on the letter B. The



letters also now have a more solid thick black color which helps balance it. In 1972 Rand made his final changes to the logo, this time redesigning it with its 13 stripes and later on the preferred eight. His purpose for redesigning

the logo was the shape and the visual weight of it. “I felt there was a problem with the sequence, going from narrow to wide without any pause, without any rhythmic possibility (Quito).” Rand introduced the stripes on the logo to help make it more unified and give a sense of speed or movement. Rand came upon the idea of the stripes since photocopiers at the time were not able to properly render large areas of color. This most likely lead to the change of thirteen stripes to eight since it could be easier to see from the distance and is more legible. Originally the thirteen stripes were used for smaller things such as legal documents like contracts.

Graphic designer, Paul Rand was born as Peretz Rosenbaum in Brooklyn, New York on August 15,1914. He also had an interest in art and studied at many places including Pratt Institute, Parsons School for Design, and the Art Students League. Rand began his design career

by working as a stock image creator in 1930 and later on become more well known for his page designs. Rand was able to put together a portfolio based from his work from his previous job which helped make him well known in the industry and landed him jobs at places such as Esquire Coronet magazine and Weintraub advertising agency. He was recruited to work as part of the design team at IBM by Eliot Noyes and in 1972 is when he created the eight-bar logo that is still in use today. Later he also designed packaging and posters for IBM. One of the posters include the drawings of the eye, bee, and letter m to represent IBM.

In conclusion, IBM has had an evolutionary change in its logo design. The redesign of the logo had to do with different events happening throughout the company's history such as its name changed from CTR to IBM. The name changes of the company inspired the new logo to fit their new name and because of Watsons Jr.'s idea of "good design is good business" it influenced the company to make its logo stand out in the world. When Rand also came in to work on the company's design team he also made the changes that helped make the logo represent the company by having the eight bars in the logo which represent speed.

1924-1946



1947-1956



1956-1972



1972-present



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