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## **Logo Evolution**

McDonald's logo is the most iconic symbol of the fastfood industry. However, it didn't begin that way. Originally the logo was a simple and unremarkable black type slapped onto a white background. It took constant reinvention of their image over the years to lead us to the sleek design we all recognize today. McDonald's is a perfect example of how good branding can affect the success of a business both economically and culturally.

McDonald's was a barbecue restaurant founded by two brothers named Richard and Maurice McDonald. The 1940s logo reflects this by having the word barbecue as the largest word on the logo and four parallel lines that were probably intended to resemble grill marks. However the brothers realized they would make more profit on their business by just selling easy to produce burgers, fries, and shakes and cut the barbecue from the menu. The 1940s logo became outdated and was exchanged for a winking chef mascot with a burger for a head. The mascot was named Speedee after the business' "Speedee Service system" which was used to get food out to customers quickly (Darwin, Charles) (Myers, Dan). The fancy serif font of the very first logo was replaced by a sans-serif font and a new slogan, "coast to coast". This 1948 logo was a more creative representation of the restaurant's features, like how they specialize in burgers and fast production, but it faced problems as the company Alka-Seltzer also had a mascot named Speedy. This made the Speedee logo seem unoriginal and it was removed. (Myers, Dan) The brothers eventually sold the restaurant to Ray Kroc in 1961.

Ray Kroc simplified the company's name to just McDonalds. He wanted to turn McDonalds into a flourishing enterprise and needed a new logo to advertise the place. (Myers, Dan) He hired a man named Jim Schindler who created the original yellow "M" logo with a slanted yellow line across the image in 1962. How did he come up with this? Schindler actually took inspiration from the architecture of the restaurant itself. A man named Stanley Meston designed the two large yellow arches constructed on either side of the building in order to grab the attention of potential customers who would drive by. Schindler took the "golden arch" visual and incorporated it into the logo itself by having the two arches intersect to look like an "M" and the inclusion of the slanted line was suppose to represent the slanted roof of the McDonald's' building. (James, Nelson) The 1962 logo is also the first to include the color red in the image. While the slanted line of Schindler's logo was superfluous and was soon removed, the arch became popularized and was here to stay.

There have been many spins on McDonald's classic logo such as a 1968 logo which combined the arches to form a solid "M" and the yellow and red colors of the Schindler's logo, making the M into the color orange. However this wasn't as visually appealing and thus the color scheme was reverted back to yellow and red. In 1975, the most common logo was the yellow M placed on a red rectangle background with the company name "McDonald's" cutting through the letter much like the yellow line of the 1962 version but not slanted. In 2003 the red associated with the company was removed and replaced by a brand new logo titled "i'm lovin' it" which was often mentioned throughout many McDonald's commercials. However beginning in 2006, the 2003 "i'm lovin' it" logo was replaced by just the single yellow M on a white background. Both versions are still widely in use to this day. (Iris. Logo Evolution)

In conclusion, McDonald's famous barbeque logo did not started off as particularly interesting. However the company was able to find a unique symbol of their brand through the logo of Jim Schindler

who took visual inspiration from Stanley Meston architecture of the restaurant. Eventually through constant reinvention McDonald's was able to achieve one of the most famous icons of American culture.

## **Works Cited:**

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## Figure Reference

1940s Logo:



1948 Logo:



1962 Logo:



1968 Logo:



1975 Logo:



2003 Logo:



2006 Logo:

