

The Evolution of Microsoft Windows Logo

Evolution is best defined as the process of change through time. Evolution is a big part of science, but it's also part of design. Design is most influenced by culture and the company's adaptation to new generations. Microsoft is a prime example of evolution. Windows' logo evolved as the company's popularity grew. Bill Gates prioritise dependability on the software for businesses and classrooms over the design of the logo. His published book *Business @ the Speed of Thought* Gates' took a stance on the importance of the software by focusing on the new fundamental ways businesses can solve problems using computer technology. Once the company grew Gates decided to update the design of Microsoft. The new iteration of Windows logo best represents the idea of a window, in perspective because of the composition and color.

The composition of the Microsoft's logos design has drastically changed over decades. Microsoft's first logo was published in 1985, its design was simple four uneven square with round edges and a single color: light blue [Fig.1] with little representation of the Microsoft company. Windows 1.0 logo quickly evolved into a classic four-color flag design for Windows 3.1[Fig.2]. From Windows 1.0 to Windows 3.1 users saw the biggest change in the logo design. Windows 3.1 logo purpose was to tie closer the metaphor of a window, unfortunately the composition of the curved squares appear more as a flag being blown by air than a window. The designers for Windows 3.1 logo have the right idea on moving away from the uneven distribution of shapes used on Windows 1.0 logo. Although, the composition of Windows 3.1 logo improved, it still had a lot of room for improvement. Design house Pentagram saw this as an opportunity to take on the challenge of creating a better logo, Windows 8[Fig.3], that reflected better to Windows purpose.

When design house Pentagram took on the job their first question was “your name is Windows. why are you a flag?”[The Register]. Even though Windows 1.0 logo looked like a lunch tray with the uneven divisions, it was used as a blueprint to the creation for Windows 8 logo[Fig.3]. Like Pentagram stated, their goal was to “take the iconic Windows logo back to its roots—as a window.” The design of Windows 8 incorporated clean lines, a single repetitive shapes and monochrome color. The designer, Paula Scher, took the Metro style approach to design the new logo[Famous Logos]. The Metro style approach was introduced by Microsoft in its Windows 7 phones[Fig.5]. The Metro style origin comes from Modern, Swiss and Motion design[The Metro Style Design Guide]. The Windows 8 logo is a bold visual that invokes the notion of looking through a window, in perspective. The Pentagram design team drew the logo in perspective based on classical perspective drawing, something designers learn about in figure drawing class. They moves away from drawing in computerized perspective, which was the essence of Windows 3.1 logo. According to the Pentagram, “the cross bar stays the same size no matter the height of the logo, which means it has to be redrawn for each time it increases in size, like classic typography[Fig.4].” The composition of Windows 8 is a better representation for the company.

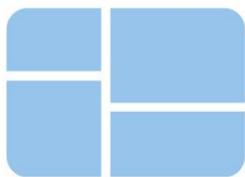
Another element that promotes the Windows logo in perspective is the hue. Hue is defined as a gradation or variety of a color; tint. The designers working on Windows 8 decided to remove the four-color from Windows 3.1 logo and choose a monochrome color for the new logo. What’s a better color to represent a window ? Well, blue of course, because when looking through a window the first thing you see is the sky; which is blue. The change from four-color to a monochrome color highlights the company’s goal to be user-friendly because blue is often

associated with trust, calmness, and the ability to increase productivity[Color Wheel Pro]. The company wants the user to depend on them and feel relieve knowing that Microsoft get the job done. The designer choice to keep one single color, blue, enhanced the tranquility users feel when using the Microsoft's software. The hue of the Microsoft logo creates a greater connection to the representation of a window.

Microsoft Window logo evolved through time based on the change of generations and it's popularity. In conclusion, Windows 8 logo published, in 2012, improved the image of the company because it closed the gap from a flag to a real representation for the word 'window'. The logo had also become more recognizable by the user, as well as the Microsoft company becoming more known. Like Sam Moreau, principal director of user experience for Windows said, "Windows really is a beautiful metaphor for computing and with the new logo we wanted to celebrate the idea of a window, in perspective." The Windows' 8 logo composition and hue promotes a high-tech product as well as dependable and provides the user with tranquility, highlighting the goals Gates has set for Microsoft. Therefore, Windows 8 is the best design for the Microsoft Company.

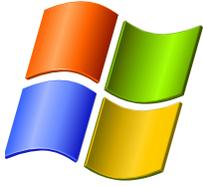
Figure Reference

Fig. 1



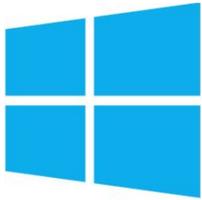
1985 first logo developed for Microsoft

Fig.2



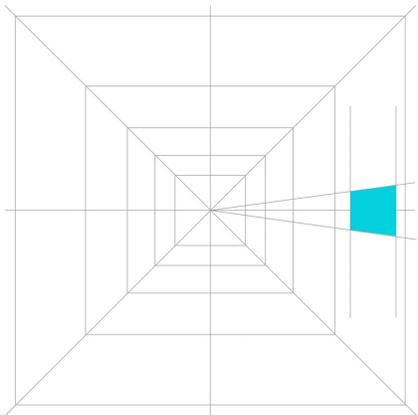
2007 Four-colored wavy flag logo

Fig.3



2012 Windows 8 logo design by Pentagram

Fig.4



Windows 8 drawing in perspective by Pentagram House of design

Fig.5



Windows 7 phone Metro Design

Works Cited

“Color Wheel Pro - See Color Theory in Action.” *Color Wheel Pro: Color Meaning*,
www.color-wheel-pro.com/color-meaning.html

Gates, Bill, and Collins Hemingway. *Business @ the speed of thought: succeeding in the digital economy*. Warner Books, 2000.

Iain Thomson in San Francisco 18 Feb 2012 at 00:40 tweet_btn(). “Microsoft explains bland new Windows logo.” *The Register® - Biting the hand that feeds IT*,
www.theregister.co.uk/2012/02/18/new_microsoft_windows_logo/.

Murphy, David. "Did Microsoft Butcher the Windows 8 Logo? Critics Weigh in." *PC Magazine*, Feb. 2012, p. 1. EBSCOhost,
citytech.ezproxy.cuny.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=82033621&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Mullins, Robert J. "Microsoft Unveils New Logo for Company and Windows 8." *Eweek*, 23 Aug. 2012, p. 3. EBSCOhost,
citytech.ezproxy.cuny.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=91662249&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

“Windows - Story.” *Pentagram*, www.pentagram.com/work/windows/story.

“Samuel Moreau.” *Design Authority*, designauthority.org/advocates/samuel-moreau/.

“The Metro Style Design Guide.” *Blink's Guide to Metro Design*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Nov. 2017.

“Windows Logo.” *Famous Logos*, 7 Oct. 2014, www.famouslogos.net/windows-logo/.