



Canoe Kayak Canada Rebrand Urges Canadians to Get Paddling

Published on StockLogos.com

Although I've done my fair share of paddling over the years, I've never thought of canoeing as a particularly Canadian activity. But [Canoe Kayak Canada](#), which was founded in 1900 as the Canadian Canoe Association, has launched a rebrand of the organization that's working hard to convince me otherwise. For example:

Paddling is a part of our history. Paddling teaches us how to be alive in the world. It cultivates the skills for life success. It embodies the values we believe in. Everything that our country stands for is brought to life in the act of paddling. Paddling makes us who we are.

But given how long our winters are, and how much snow we have to deal with, maybe we're more a nation of shovelers? Swap out the word paddling for shoveling in the blurb above — it works for me.

But back to Canoe Kayak Canada. CEO Casey Wade is firm in his resolve: "There's nothing more Canadian than paddling." No less than that! I think it might take a bit more than paddling to "make us who we are" (whatever that might be).

However, on reflection there's certainly the historical aspect of indigenous peoples relying on canoes and kayaks for transport and hunting.



Former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau was a serious canoeist. Photo Credit: The National Post

European explorers, such as Jacques Cartier, were big fans of birch bark canoes, which were quickly adopted by settlers and fur traders. These light but fragile craft were replaced only in the 19th century by cedar and elm construction, followed by the wood and canvas models most of us used as kids.

But perhaps the thing to focus on is the canoeing craze of the 1880s that saw clubs formed across the country, leading to the popularization of canoeing as a pastime. And it would seem Canadians have fared well at the Olympic level, with our first medal dating back to 1936, the year canoeing was accepted as an Olympic event.

So are we still a nation of fervent paddlers? Not so much, it would seem. The rebranding of Canoe Kayak Canada has come in the months prior to the Summer Olympics, with part of the initiative an attempt to counter declining participation and bring younger people into the sport/pastime.

Toronto studio [Dot Dot Dash](#) was tapped for the rebrand and went for the historical approach by employing a single red leaf based on the one used back when Canada won its first medal. This is reminiscent of the retro leaf treatment of the [Toronto Maple Leaf logo](#) released earlier this year. On top of the leaf, DDD dropped a paddle and refreshed the type treatment with Cubano and a popular free font, Oxygen.

The result is simple, but effective. Not that the earlier logo was that bad. In fact, the way the paddle and its wake is rendered is quite effective. But such a decorative, lyrical approach is out these days. Of course, the process of simplification can go too far, as we saw with the recently redesigned [Swimming Canada logo](#).

Will the rebrand get the youth of Canada to drop their mobile devices and pick up a paddle? Unlikely. But you can't blame Canoe Kayak Canada for trying.





Canadian Sports Logo? Begin with a Red Maple Leaf

Published on StockLogos.com

We last looked at the work of Vancouver-based design firm Hulse & Durrell when it came up with a [rather dull new logo](#) for Swimming Canada earlier this year, which was most noteworthy for its massive red maple leaf.

One of the firm's recent projects has been reshaping the name, identity and brand strategy for Equine Canada, which has as its mission being the voice of equestrian sport in Canada. The privately-held organization had, according to the design firm, seen "engagement and value drop year over year for a decade." Yikes, time to rebrand. Don't forget the red maple leaf!

The outfit wisely decided to first change its name, since research revealed that nobody knew what the heck "equine" meant. It took 10 years to figure that out? Be that as it may, the new name is the less obscure Equestrian Canada, along with the inevitable French version, Canada Équestre. Let's see, what kind of symbol is associated with horses? Horseshoes! Which will wrap around the red maple leaf quite nicely. Job done!

Equestrian Canada, in any case, seems tickled pink, referring to the new look as "innovative and impactful." It's certainly competent enough, and to be fair is at heart an update of earlier logos from the glory days of Canadian equestrianism, as shown below.



And in fact, the image shown at right was featured on the organization's site until quite recently. One could say it's pretty much a dead ringer for the new one, complete with four holes on each side. But it's a shame that the new logo wound up somewhat on the bland side — where's the emotion that one associates with horses?



Perhaps it's the silver and blue color combo, which seems to be reaching for a classy effect, reminiscent of the recent rebranding of the [Ascot track](#). On the other hand, there's no doubt that it's a switch from the previous logo, which had obviously overstayed its welcome from the 1960s. But we'll miss its wacky use of horse heads in place of the three capital As.





OLD



NEW

Rebrand Gives Second Cup a Second Chance

Posted on StockLogos.com

When you think of coffee shop chains, the first name that comes to mind is Starbucks, no surprise given its dominant global presence. But there are also more than a few regional and national chains. In Canada, one of the most common is Second Cup, with its more than 345 shops cranking out a million cups of mocha java a week.

But increasingly not only are its customers not having a second cup, many aren't even having a first one — Second Cup reported significant losses in its most recent third quarter, dividend payments were suspended and even its management structure was trimmed. Then just a few days ago its chief financial officer resigned.

The fact is, the core Second Cup concept had grown stale, with Starbucks and also smaller, nimbler competitors increasingly chipping away at its appeal. A new CEO (formerly of Starbucks Canada) has accordingly been leading a rebranding initiative, with the goal of shaking off the chain's tired image. As you might expect, this included a logo redesign, coupled with a fresher look to the establishments themselves. The logo has thankfully lost the stale brown color that used to be associated with coffee-related enterprises, as well as the steaming cup.

It's worth pointing out that Starbucks ditched brown for green way back in 1987 and in its most recent incarnation the familiar logo lost all its text, including the word "coffee." But the Canadian firm went the other way, now calling itself Second Cup Coffee Co. The font employed also seems like something of a throwback to another era. All in all, the new logo is on the bland side, but it gets the job done.

The new name and logo treatment make more sense in the context of the decidedly distinct look that will be given to the interior of Second Cup outlets, the first of which recently opened in Toronto, as shown below. The café has a much lighter, almost ethereal feel and includes marble countertops,



a so-called "[slow bar](#)" (a hip name for Melitta-style filtered coffee) and a [Steampunk](#), described as "a handcrafted, next-generation coffee brewer designed for brewing the best single-cup coffees and teas in the world."

Even the formerly stodgy takeout cups have been given some thought, and now sport designs created by Canadian artists. Take that, Starbucks!





Aaron Draplin: In Praise of Simple Logo Design

Published on Graphics.com

Aaron Draplin, the owner of Portland-based design firm [Draplin Design Company](#), counts amongst his firm's clients everything from Nike, *Wired* and the Obama Administration to a large number of snowboard manufacturers. And that eclecticism would seem to be an integral part of DDC, showing up in such places as a [Things We Love](#) list on its site, in which Adobe Illustrator not unsurprisingly finds a place. Although to keep this in perspective, just ahead of it you'll find "A new pair of socks."

Draplin, in fact, is passionate about quite a few things and is more than happy to share such passions. One of these is the power and authenticity of vintage American commercial design. As he puts it, "Back in the day, you really got the feeling that this was a trade. It wasn't about just trying to outdo whatever was on some cool aggregator site in the morning. It was about the most effective way to use one color on some old crappy thing."

We asked Draplin if he could tell us more about the place of classic design in his work, to which he kindly agreed.

Graphics.com: You've commented that, "I might be wrong, I might be totally delusional but the logos were better then." Could you say something about when "then" was and what has led to the decline of the quality of logo design?



Draplin: I guess it would be the "before computers" era. Things were done considerably slower, due to constraints with the existing tools and technology. And with that slowness, it's almost as if there was more attention paid to the craft of it all. Design has become more and more democratized to the point where you can buy some half-ass \$19.99 logo online.

Like everything, things were simpler. Restraint played a big part. They didn't have a million colors to use or infinite digital realms. You had to make things with one color or a couple of colors. And I find many, many lessons therein.

Graphics.com: You're on record as being a big fan of vintage signage in Portland and across America. How has that heritage influenced your work?

Draplin: Signage used to be so simple and to the point. Effective, first. I mean, hell, its purpose was to communicate effectively. There was an unpretentious functionality to the landscape. The 50s put a sheen on America. Make believe, more or less. Did people see through it at the time or just buy into the utopian American dream? I think about this stuff.

So with my work, I'm inspired by things that are direct and work. Sometimes shit drifts off into "fashion for the sake of fashion" and that seems a little disingenuous. Or trumped up? I like things that stand the test of time and work.

Graphics.com: Is there current signage and display work that inspires you to the same degree as vintage examples or have we lost something fundamental? What's being done now that our children will find inspiring?



Lookout

Draplin: I think there's a whole new breed of sign painters, letterers and makers changing the landscape slowly. They've been through the pitfalls of the digitalized "we need it yesterday" bullshit. Now there's a premium being applied to making things feel right. Not just spit out of some vinyl signage shop. I'm thankful for this. Places should savor the opportunity their signage and overall presentation to the world presents. It's a such a fun, creative chance to make a cool mark in the world.

Graphics.com: How would you suggest that others draw on their own typographical and design heritage?

Draplin: Devour some books. Look around you. Go junking. Understand why [Saul Bass](#) was Saul Bass. I think it's about understanding how much easier things have gotten, and then, how much lazier we've become when it comes down to the hard work it takes to make something good. Have some respect for where all this shit came from and understand the struggles they went through to make even the simplest of forms! I find it very inspiring how the old guys used to make such incredible stuff with such rudimentary technology. Makes me thankful for the age I live in!

Graphics.com: Could you tell us something about your workflow involving Adobe tools?

Draplin: I use the "big three" — Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign. More and more the programs work so well together and that makes my little flow of how to get shit done quicker and quicker. I've got my little methods and those won't be changing. But the big three seem to get slicker and slicker, and you can still pare things down to the basics you really use.



Suburban Blend

Graphics.com: Why did you create a tablet-based digital portfolio app to showcase your work? Is this something you'd recommend to other designers?

Draplin: It was a new realm to explore! I work pretty flat. Meaning, I make a little logo or form and it stays in one place, neat and orderly. The ability to make multiple pages "flickable?" You have complete control and you can tailor the way people ingest what you are putting out there. You aren't at the mercy of some photo site or bloated social media app. Your stuff can get washed over pretty easily in that shit.

Graphics.com: Any closing thoughts on the future of logo design?

Draplin: Don't stretch type, ever! Keep the math in your vectors smart. Make things that are effective at the size of a dime and on some banner that's as big as you are. So yeah, make sure you "zoom out" a bunch, check the shit to see how it feels, then "zoom back in" and slay it!

And to all people hiring designers to make a logo for them? Pay them double their rate. They are saving you from your bad selves.



Updated Logo Puts the K Back in Kodak

Published on StockLogos.com

George Eastman, who founded Kodak in 1888, was not only a talented inventor and entrepreneur but an early master of branding. There's no better example than his story of the naming of Kodak: "The letter K had been a favorite with me — it seems a strong, incisive sort of letter. It became a question of trying out a great number of combinations of letters that made words starting and ending with K. The word Kodak is the result."



While the name was brilliant, it took until 1971 before its power was unlocked in the form of the familiar logo designed by Peter J. Oestreich. It combined powerful colors and a letter K that was created with the use of a shape that seemed to incarnate rays of light. This was tweaked only slightly in 1987, with a welcome shift to sans serif type. You'll find that version at right, while above is a variation that was recently introduced. But before getting to that, we have to deal with what lies below.



What's that, you ask? You can be forgiven for not recognizing it as the logo Kodak has been using for the past decade. That's right, the firm ditched the classic K identity back in 2006, during a time when it was struggling to make up for completely ignoring the onslaught of digital imaging technologies.

It paid a high price for that blindness, with the 2006 logo part of a repositioning to gain traction in the digital photography market, but it was too little too late. However, Kodak surprised everyone by continuing to keep breathing during the following years by cutting costs and divesting itself of just about everything that could be turned into cash.

Things took a turn for the better when it emerged from bankruptcy in 2013 and it began releasing new products that tried to fuse the earlier cachet of the brand with a fresh approach to design. And these met with some success. For example, the just-released Ektra combines quality DSLR functionality with that of an Android phone. The resulting hybrid is [different, to say the least](#).



As you can see from the photo above, the 2006-era logo just wasn't a fit for commercial products but it would be unheard of to simply revert to the 1987 logo or, worse, try to create something completely different. So, the new logo is graphically identical to the classic logo while shifting the text to all caps in a vertical treatment. New York agency [Work-Order](#) came up with the look and states hopefully that the stacked text treatment "is reminiscent of film perforations and street signage."

Bit of a stretch, that. In fact, the result is somewhat brutal when the logo is large and in color. Thankfully, the logo is more convincing in smaller versions, and in situations where the logo is particularly tiny the text is dropped entirely. When stamped on an object, as in the case of the Ektra, the logo looks its best. Could this be a Kodak Moment, graphically speaking?



Avast Ye Swabs, Here Be a New Long John Silver's Logo

Published on StockLogos.com

There are some awards that you just don't want to win. If you're involved in the fast food industry, or "quick service" business, as participants prefer it to be called, you don't want to snag the Xtreme Eating Award, which is bestowed by the respected [Center for Science in the Public Interest](#). In 2013, the Long John Silver's seafood chain found its Big Catch meal on the Center's list, thanks to the chain delivering a massive quantity of trans fats, a bucket of salt and an off-the-chart calorie count. This was enough for the CSPI to poetically dub the meal "heart attack on a hook."

If you're wondering about more recent Xtreme Eating Award recipients, you can check out [the 2016 winners](#). Although if you're like me you might then start craving a Whole Hog Burger from Uno Pizzeria & Grill. In a single serving this heroically manages to deliver over a pound of meat that includes hamburger, sausage, bacon, prosciutto and pepperoni. Add four types of cheese, garlic mayo and pickles, with sides of fries and onion rings, and then you've got something. A lingering death, perhaps?

In any case, the folks running Long John Silver's apparently wised up and in 2014 dropped the discredited practice of frying its fish in partially hydrogenated oil. Which is a bit tardy, give that the chain, which has more than 1,000 restaurants in the U.S. (8,400 worldwide), was founded way back in 1969. But better late than never.

LJS' fortunes have sagged in recent years, subsequent to its sale by fast food giant Yum! Brands in 2011. KFC veteran James O'Reilly was brought in as CEO last year by the new owners with a mandate to turn things around, so no doubt a recent logo refresh and subsequent redesign of the restaurant interiors flows from this. Cincinnati-based branding firm [Marsh](#) redesigned the logo and restaurants, as well as handling the chain's marketing campaigns.

With a name like Long John Silver's you might wonder where all the colorful pirate imagery is being hidden. But it seems the chain's pirate references have been made to walk the plank over the years to the point where all traces of the most interesting character in *Treasure Island* have vanished. So, until recently the chain's logo was a happy little fish floating above a casual type treatment in which each letter seemed to be bobbing, with two green lines at the bottom representing the watery deeps.

The new logo looks very different and manifests a desire to move the chain's value proposition upstream via a more formal, "classy" approach. The emphasis is now on the fish, which has lost its smile but has become golden — it's clearly a more *valuable* fish. The semi-serif font echoes the curves of the now-missing green waves, emphasized by the extension of the R. And a nice touch is the exaggerated apostrophe between the R and the S, which looks like a water drop.

Will these tweaks be enough to turn around the fortunes of this ode to the deep fryer? Hard to say. But we might as well end with a pirate quote, in this case from the infamous [Samuel Bellamy](#): "Damn ye, you are a sneaking puppy, and so are all those who will submit to be governed by laws which rich men have made for their own security." So keep a weather eye open matey, there be fish to be fried!

GDF SUEZ

BY PEOPLE FOR PEOPLE

OLD


by people for people

NEW

The Sun Rises on New ENGIE Brand Identity

Published on StockLogos.com

Global corporations really don't like being tied to brand identities that limit how they're perceived. Changing this sometimes requires just a new look, such as Lexmark's [repositioning of itself](#) as more than a printer company, or Pitney Bowes' effort to demonstrate that it's not limited to just [postage meters](#). But a more drastic rebranding may sometimes be in order, with companies in France often going this route.

The country is unusual in that some of its largest corporations were founded decades or even centuries ago, with the current government owning significant stakes in those deemed of national interest. But these references to the past, and government involvement, are increasingly seen as corporate liabilities, resulting in France Telecom some years ago mutating into Orange. Water utility Générale des Eaux, which was created by Napoleon III in 1854, moved away from water and into digital entertainment to become Vivendi (its water activities were spun off into the equally vaguely-named Veolia), while nuclear energy firm CEA-Industrie became Areva.

That brings us to multinational giant GDF Suez, with a name that echoes its participation in the construction of the [Suez Canal](#) in 1858. What do the letters GDF stand for, you ask? While the company now has a focus on electricity generation and distribution, it also has a long involvement in natural gas, hence the initials for Gaz de France.

The bad news is that gas prices in Europe have tanked, with that drop contributing to a loss for EDF in 2013 of more than \$10 billion, and recent results proving no less gloomy. The [Publicis Conseil](#) agency was accordingly tapped to craft a new identity, free of references to the past, French government involvement and that pesky old natural gas.



When George Eastman came up with the name Kodak for what was to become a world leader in analog photography, he reportedly said that the criteria was that the name be short, easy to pronounce and not resemble any other name or be associated with anything else. From that perspective, the name Publicis came up with, ENGIE, fulfills all but the last of those four criteria, since it provides an echo of the French word for energy, *energie*.

While the name itself is new, the firm retained a lowercase version of the By People for People tagline, as well as the lower graphical element. That's been flipped and moved to the top, to become a rising sun that symbolizes "a new day in the world of energy," as shown in the clip below. The typographic treatment refines the earlier approach, with no one regretting the loss of that wacky letter U.

Will the new identity be enough to reposition the firm as a global leader in responsible energy production and distribution? It's probably a step in the right direction.





Starbird Boldly Goes Where No Fried Chicken Brand Has Gone Before

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A few days ago, at about this time, I was finishing lunch beneath a towering tree next to a stone fountain in the old quarter of a Provencal village in the foothills of the Alps. The owner of the modest restaurant had placed before me a dessert that he had created from his grandmother's recipe and it didn't disappoint. But then neither had the oven-baked Camembert that preceded it, washed down by rosé from a nearby vineyard.

In fact, the lunch had been one of those experiences that are increasingly only too rare in France, as the relentless pressure of American fast food culture slowly erodes the traditional French love for local, healthy and authentic food.

So, you can imagine my surprise this morning when I stumbled upon the site of a newly launched fast food restaurant in California and found myself captivated by... its chicken sandwich. Before going further, check it out below and tell me if it doesn't look appetising. Unless of course if you're vegetarian, in which case you should probably stop reading.



The sandwich is the work of an outfit called [The Culinary Edge](#), which until recently offered such services as new restaurant concept development, brand repositioning and menu strategy, along with culinary and operations development. The firm then decided to strike out on its own, with a mission "to innovate and revolutionize tired restaurant industry segments with purposeful and dynamic concepts."

It would seem that fried chicken is the first "tired" restaurant segment for it to tackle, in the form of the [Starbird](#) concept. This is pitched as no less than "the nation's first super premium fast food restaurant," which features locally-grown chicken, which is said to be free-range, sustainably farmed, antibiotic-free and non-GMO. Then there's organic eggs, gluten-free bread baked in-house, coffee that's ground and brewed to order, and so on. While the fried chicken recipe didn't come from anyone's grandmother, apparently over 100 preparations were tested before settling on what the founders modestly call the "perfect crispy chicken recipe."



Of course, these days you need more than food to make a new restaurant concept succeed. In this case the location for the first establishment is tech-intensive Sunnyvale, California. The connection is that while Starbird provides indoor seating, the key is its refresh of the traditional drive-thru.

The idea is that you employ the Starbird app to order, and food is brought to your designated parking spot within five minutes. Sure, it's not quite the same as lunch in a Provencal village, but there's nevertheless an attempt at an authentic experience that seems encouraging. Although the claim that Starbird restaurants will "breed positivity and joy" is a bit of a stretch.

San Francisco studio [Strohl](#) was tapped for creating everything from the brand strategy and positioning through to app design, print collateral and the uniforms. Speaking of the logo, the firm states that, "The Starbird brand identity was created with the intention of cutting through the visual clutter found in the world of traditional fast food.

The resulting mark communicates a bold freshness, combining the simplest forms of a chicken and egg (the latter as a nod to their breakfast offerings). Accompanying typography is clean and direct, matching the optical weight of the mark, while still having enough character to be distinct on its own." Well, it's fine but let's not go crazy.

Yo, Scotty! Beam me a [Southern Belle sandwich](#) with a side of waffle sticks.