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A Red (& White) Letter Day for Branding

Posted on April 4, 2011 by Steve Baird

We've noticed and commented on a variety of branding techniques and trends over the past couple of years:

- Less formal brand names;
- Single letter brands;
- Non-verbal logos;
- Verbing of brands;
- Dan saw lots of blue ovals;
- Question mark brands;
- Touchmarks;
- Emoticon brands and trademarks;
- Single color brands;
- Lightning bolt branding;
- My branding; and
- Back to the basics branding.

Here's another, on this self-appointed red-letter day: "Red & White Letters Forming a Two Word Brand -- Often on a Black Background."

The first time I noticed this form of visual identity being repeated was when SmashBurger rolled into Minneapolis. I specifically recall pursuing a double-take as I drove by, having great interest in the close similarity to the GameStop visual identity:

During this particular period of time I was spending a lot of time patronizing both brands with my boys, which got me wondering whether there must be some marketing science in support of using this red/white lettering visual identity for a specific demographic -- boys between the ages 10-16.

Then, I really thought I must be on to something when SportClips came to town, a new haircut spot geared toward essentially the same demographic:

But, as I started paying a bit more attention, I realized there may very well be marketing science behind this popular look and feel, but it most certainly isn't tied to the demographic I had thought:

Is it possible all these were inspired by the distinctive Verizon Wireless visual identity?

What brands have I missed using a similar red/white lettering form of visual identity?

UPDATE:

Hat tip to Chris in Michigan on the Coke Zero visual identity: