



SAN FRANCISCO
49ERS

49ers Rebrand
GrC 462 - Senior Project
Keaton Macdonald



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ABOUT ME

Keaton Macdonald is currently a senior at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, pursuing his BS in Graphic Communication with a concentration in Web and Digital Media. He is interested in a career involved with graphic design and communication, while offering skills in social media marketing, packaging, and team communications.

ABSTRACT

The San Francisco 49ers are an exceptionally established football organization that has found a lot of success and has been a big cornerstone to the San Francisco Bay Area. The team has never received a redesign or rebrand since the team has come into the city, most likely due to the sentimental times of when the team flourished in the 80's and 90's. This is where this opportunity lies, to rebrand a historic team in a historic city, sparking a regeneration of buzz surrounding the 49er's organization. The modernized rebrand will include a visual guide of the brands guidelines with a minimalist logo, colors, and typography, as well as digital mock-ups of uniforms, merchandise, and fields that will cohesively work together to show off the historic city and 49er culture, offering benefits for the franchise and the fans in so many ways.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

A couple ways in which I measured success, can apply to all the project deliverables mentioned. Establishing a brand strategy at the start is one way to measure the success of all your deliverables, to make sure they are fully encompassing what the brand strategy entails. This is important to maintain cohesiveness and vision throughout the project deliverables and even project as whole. Another way I measured success is by consistently receiving feedback on each deliverable concerning what works well and what might need reassessment. This consisted of feedback to comparisons of before and after designs or multiple designs and it will come from peers, mentors, and 49ers fans who are the sole community that represents how this rebrand will be perceived.

PROJECT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Design

- Visual guides and mock-ups are clean and organized with easy navigation
- Maintain cohesiveness throughout all the deliverables
- Utilize feedback to consistently update all design-related content

Creativity

- I want to treat this project as professional as possible and utilize it as an opportunity to spark the creativity inside me
- I want to be able to apply this project to something in the future, but still enjoy the process as it is something I'm truly interested in

Management

- I want this project to be as professional as possible to help maximize my understanding of the process
- I want it to showcase my ability to plan out and execute a feasible project
- To monitor this, goals and milestones can be set to help me maintain a firm focus throughout the process

RESEARCH

Resource 1: Ahn, T., Suh, Y. I., Lee, J. K., & Pedersen, P. M. (2013). *Sport Fans and Their Teams' Redesigned Logos: An Examination of the Moderating Effect of Team Identification on Attitude and Purchase Intention of Team-Logoed Merchandise*. *Journal of Sport Management*, 27(1), 11–23. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.27.1.11>

Summary: This case study walks through an experiment put in place to give more insight on the influence of rebranding in sports. They used real-life examples of original logos compared to their redesigned logos in their experiment. They used three degrees of fan identification and examined attitudes towards the brand and purchase intention. They used logos rebrands like that of the Utah Jazz with very little variation and others like the Golden State Warriors who made major logo changes. This helped maximize the results of the study and truly identify the key success factors.

Strength: This case study exposed one of the strengths that I have in my 49er's rebrand, that there are significant differences between fans with high identification and low identification. The experiment ran in the study compares select teams' original and redesigned logos, considering fan identification or devoutness to the team in relation to brand attitude and purchase intention. The results find that teams with highly identified fans, will see an increase in purchase intention when their team redesigns, rather than those teams without low or moderately identified fans. The 49ers are a team with a high fan identification through the years of success and history of the organization, and this study results show the amount of opportunity that a rebrand could make.

Weakness: On the other side, while these highly identified fans are willing to purchase new merchandise, this study shows a decrease in brand attitude from those fans. For the fans that are most committed, they are also the least willing to accept logo changes or rebrand efforts. This is not ideal for an organization like the 49ers, especially putting into factor the history involved with the current brand, fans might react negatively to a rebrand. This is something that definitely needs to be factored in while developing an effective rebrand and redesign strategy and is seen as a prominent weakness for a project like this.

Resource 2: Knowles, J. (2018). *One-on-one with sports design expert tom O’grady*. Chicago Tribune Post Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/blogs-podcasts-websites/one-on-with-sports-design-expert-tom-ogradey/docview/2029675880/se-2?accountid=10362>

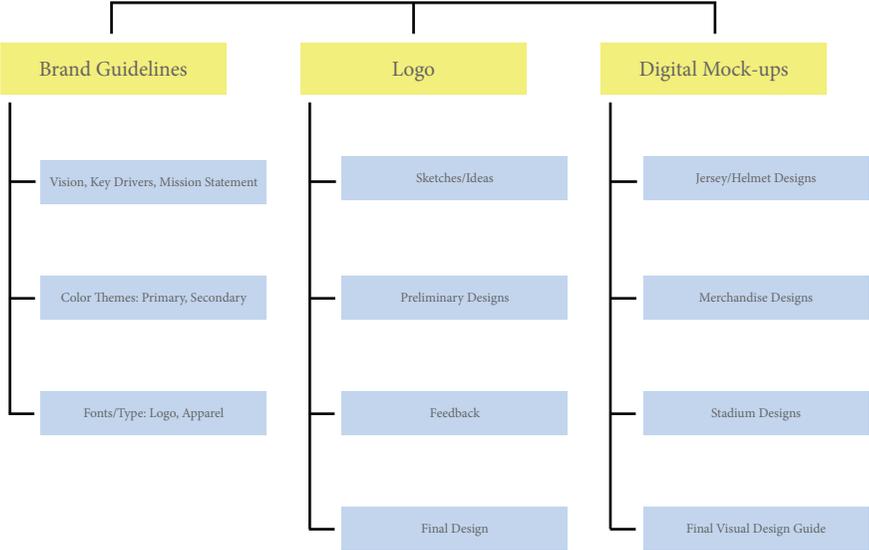
Summary: Tom O’Grady is a sports design expert who is the NBA’s first full-time creative director who created the identities for the 1995 expansion teams, Raptors and Grizzlies, as well as all original 12 WNBA teams. O’Grady has some of the most innovative uniform designs and has a very good idea of the current state of rebranding sport teams and where it might be headed in the future. He explains the “untouchable” title to uniform changes for those teams with rich history and nostalgia. Although the logos of those teams like the Lakers, Celtics, Yankees, and Cowboys would never be approved nowadays, the simple logos hold so much accomplishments it is hard to take away. He also mentions how many jerseys teams have implemented recently making fans use to change and a more flexible brand approach, these points showing the insight O’Grady has on the topic.

Strength: He has first-hand experience in the professional world as the NBA's first full-time creative director and has so much insight on the topic through the years and years of experience. One of the strengths that I can adopt for my project that he mentions is how professional sports brands are slowly transitioning into making rebrands more common and having a more flexible and consistent brand approach, especially with how teams are able to have more variations in jerseys, showing the growing influence that the brand identity will hold. For a 49ers organization that has never took the big step to give a new look to the franchise, the time for a rebrand will eventually call more and more other teams do the same.

Weakness: Alternately, he explains that teams with rich history can have an "untouchable" title that presents a large bridge for a respective franchises' management to pass. This can be seen as a weakness to think about for my project, especially with the rich history that the 49ers' organization has had under this brand. This is definitely something I need to take into account, not knowing the potential response from fans due to the nostalgia involved with the franchise. It is important to find a nice balance for the rebrand that keep the nostalgia with the brand but offers a fresh new look for fans to be excited about. This insight from O'Grady definitely gave me a better understanding of how to approach and improve certain aspects of this project.

PROJECT PLANNING

Work Breakdown Structure



PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The modernized rebrand includes a visual guide of the brand's guidelines with a minimalist logo, colors, and typography, as well as digital mock-ups of uniforms, merchandise, and fields that will cohesively work together to achieve the main goal of the rebrand.

These deliverables include:

1. Modernized logo that represents the team and its city and establishes a new type of identity
2. Visual design guide that shows the updated logo with all colors and fonts used
3. Digital mock-ups to present the fresh and cohesive feel of how the rebrand will be fully implemented

BRAND/DESIGN GUIDELINES

Rebrand Goals/Missions

MODERNIZE, MINIMALIST

Updated logo to modern times with a more minimalist, sleek logo and branding style.

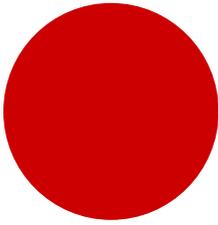
COHESIVENESS, CLEANLINESS

A more distinct and marketable brand that consistently flows together across all platforms, while making sure to eliminate anything unnecessary.

MAINTAIN LEGACY

Maintain the nostalgic history of the franchise and fans by making sure the rebrand honors the legacy instead of trying to reshape it.

Primary Colors

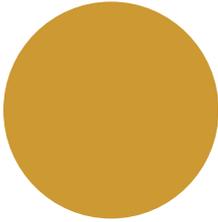


ROSSA CORSA

CMYK: 0, 100, 100, 20

RGB: 204, 0, 0

HEX: #CC0000



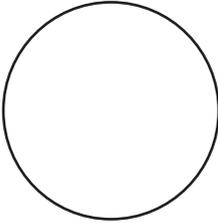
SATIN SHEEN GOLD

CMYK: 0, 25, 75, 20

RGB: 204, 153, 51

HEX: #CC9933

Alternate Colors

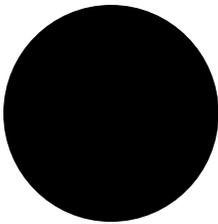


WHITE

CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 0

RGB: 255, 255, 255

HEX: #FFFFFF

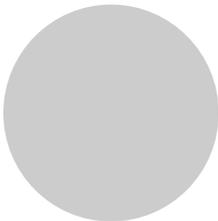


BLACK

CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 100

RGB: 0, 0, 0

HEX: #000000



GRAY

CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 20

RGB: 205, 205, 205

HEX: #CCCCCC

Primary Typeface

FAITHFUL

**ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ**

**..!?\$¢&@{}[]()*'”
0123456789**

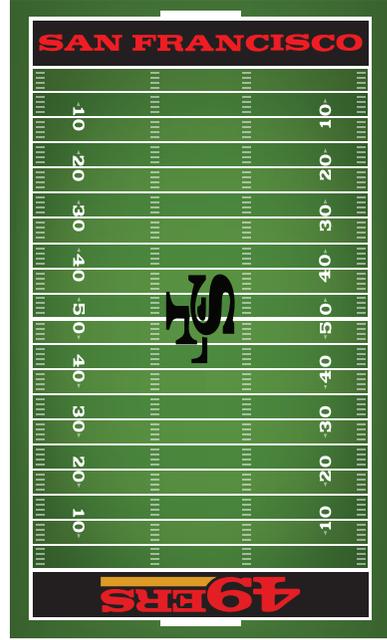
LOGOS/WORDMARKS



UNIFORMS



STADIUMS



APPAREL



PROJECT REFLECTION

In The Future

In the future broader feedback from fans, current and former players, stakeholders, and community leaders will help give a better feel of the fan response, there is definitely large future costs in high-scale projects like this with anything from legal fees to extra marketing fees, things like painting fields, jerseys, and locker rooms is an example of those costs that need to be factored in. And lastly, developing and full design and social media guide for the brand will help the brand to establish even more cohesiveness and is something that should definitely be implemented if this were to be proposed to the 49ers franchise.

Big Takeaways

Several big takeaways I had from this project on sports rebrands is that the success of the team in the sport will have a strong relation to how a brand is perceived by fans. The brand and how the team performs goes hand in hand, the brand still plays a factor and has an effect on team success. A rebrand could offer a more enticing organization for fans and more importantly, players, knowing they are going to a city with faithful fans and are happy to play the sport every day and to their best potential. And lastly, there is so many factors and deliverables in a high-scale rebrand projects like this on the professional level so finding the perfect time to announce a rebrand is very difficult and it is hard for an organization to pull the trigger. This is especially common in professional leagues like the NFL which hasn't seen many rebrands over the years compared to a more new league like the MLS which has seen a large amount of rebrands.

CREDITS

Project and Process Book by Keaton Macdonald

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

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References:

Ahn, T., Suh, Y. I., Lee, J. K., & Pedersen, P. M. (2013). Sport Fans and Their Teams' Redesigned Logos: An Examination of the Moderating Effect of Team Identification on Attitude and Purchase Intention of Team-Logoed Merchandise. *Journal of Sport Management*, 27(1), 11–23. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.27.1.11>

Knowles, J. (2018). One-on-one with sports design expert tom O'grady. *Chicago Tribune Post* Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/blogs-podcasts-websites/one-on-with-sports-design-expert-tom-ograde/docview/2029675880/se-2?accountid=10362>