Designers Side-Eye Facebook’s New Corporate Logo

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While the Facebook platform is all too familiar, mired in data privacy and election interference scandals, its parent company of the same name is less so: A recent Pew survey found that less than a third of Americans know that Facebook owns Instagram and WhatsApp.

The company recently sought to change that via the creation of a corporate logo that’s markedly different from the lowercase, blocky wordmark that’s become synonymous with its namesake social media platform.

The corporate logo, which “uses custom typography and capitalization to create visual distinction between the company and app,” according to chief marketing officer Antonio Lucio, will begin making appearances in the coming weeks on Facebook’s subsidiaries, among them Instagram, WhatsApp, Messenger and Oculus.

It also appears in different colors depending on which platform it’s being viewed on, a bid to more tightly integrate Facebook the corporation with its various properties.

Since debuting earlier this week, the logo has received reactions ranging from the good, the bad and the ugly. Armin Vit, co-founder of graphic design firm UnderConsideration, described it as “a design exercise solved well,” albeit with the caveat that “*nothing* Facebook does right now will be considered positive” amid its ongoing privacy and consumer trust issues.

“Shoving all of the heavy, stinky baggage aside, the new logo is very good,” he wrote in a post on Brand New. “It may be boring, and it may be unimaginative, but this is a corporate parent brand, not a consumer-facing brand. This is what Alphabet is to Google or what PepsiCo is to Pepsi—corporate brands that support a multitude of consumer brands, each with their own identity.”

We've rounded up some more takes—some hotter than others—from designers and creatives in the industry, many of whom agree that the timing of the rebrand is curious, considering Facebook continues to face intense scrutiny from users and the government alike.

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Jan Eumann, creative director, Wolff Olins
As a logo for a holding company, it's neutral enough, well-drawn, and the fact that it can adapt to its product brands is a nice flex, especially if the role of Facebook becomes more apparent within each product. Facebook's overall direction though—different story.

Kelli Miller, creative director and partner, And/Or
As far as corporate wordmarks go, this is a very nicely designed one. The typography feels familiar while also being unique and ownable. Some honest-to-goodness design craft went into the creation of the logo. It feels considered and contemporary, and has the flexibility to work nicely amongst the suite of Facebook brands without competing with them. The name confusion is going to be the biggest and most glaring challenge with this brand decision. It's a pretty big head-scratcher.

I appreciate the effort to reframe the brand image of FACEBOOK (do we have to do that now? All caps?), but it feels like terrible timing. It might have been more successful if they had worked on regaining the public's trust in real, actionable ways versus using marketing and branding as a tactic to reposition themselves. People are very savvy about these things. It's going to be hard to use a nicely designed logo as an olive branch.

Dave Snyder, chief creative officer, Firstborn
It's nice. It's well crafted. In particular, I'm a fan of the "K" and the shape the leg makes off of the stem. I also find

the ever-so-slight bulge found on the “A” quite smart. It’s simple and very well balanced.

I do think they should have considered a name other than Facebook for the corporate brand. That being said, by introducing a new name, they may open themselves up for an easier federal push to “break them up.” I have to imagine this was discussed.

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