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**What Does Multimedia Mean and How Can it Help My Business?**

**By John Lewis**

The term multimedia simply means many ways of communicating. Media is the plural for medium and the word originated in the field of advertising over 50 years ago. The following are all examples of multimedia, they all relate to each other and are powerful tools in the advertising industry.

Graphic Design for print and web

Web Design Web Development

Interactive CD ROM and DVD

How can it help in marketing your company and why should you be investing in the skills of a professional graphic designer?

In an era where we are constantly exposed to imagery and brands, having a strong corporate identity is a major factor for helping to market a companies products or services. Branding or corporate identity usually consists of a logotype, slogan and its associated imagery and colours. Unfortunately there are no requirements for qualifications in order to set up as a web design, graphic design or multimedia specialist and I believe that this has had a detrimental effect on the industry as a whole. There are now numerous companies out there that have set up as design agencies and who offer poor quality services to their clients.

This is particularly evident in the web design industry where it is all too easy for individuals to buy the many templates that are available and pass these off to their clients as web design. Worst still is that this poor quality work doesn't come cheap as many individuals seek to cash in on peoples lack of understanding of the multimedia industry.

An important part of your marketing and branding will be your company logo so when choosing and designing a logo, make sure you have a reasonable budget and that you seek professional help. Avoid the temptation to 'knock something up on the computer' yourself or to ask a friend or colleague to have a go.

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Good graphic design need not cost a fortune but bad design will have a huge impact on how your business will be perceived. Most logos are instantly forgettable but you have the opportunity to develop something memorable if you spend time and money at the outset. Look at the big brand names that you are exposed to every day of your life and you will see just how much they invest in and value their company branding and logo to the extent that they will fiercely defend their branding with expensive lawsuits if necessary.

When planning your logo, you should develop a simple written brief for the project and commission a professional graphic designer.

A logo needs to be distinctive and not too much like the logo of other, well known organisations? It needs to work well with the logo of any of your major partners or funders if you have any?

The new logo should work well across a range of applications ie. on a conference banner, business card, letterheads, brochures, website etc.? It also needs to look good when reproduced on a basic photocopier?

For your logo colour, it might be better to avoid particular tones of colour associated with say political parties. Limiting the range of colours will help to keep costs of reproduction down.

For logo typeface, limit the number of typefaces for headlines and body text and choose modern, clean typefaces.

John Lewis is a multimedia designer who specialises in producing interactive CD Rom, original

graphic

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### **Creating Connections: Making Your Business Truly Multimedia**

**By Mary Wheeler**

### **Creating Connections: Making Your Business Truly Multimedia by Mary Wheeler**

Remember when "multimedia" was the hottest term in the computer world? Everyone wanted a system that was multimedia-ready — some were even called "multimedia" systems, which usually meant that they had decent sound and video cards.

## What Does Multimedia Mean and How Can it Help My Business?

Today, we are on the verge of having TRULY multimedia systems — systems that integrate and connect various ways of communicating and sharing information. Businesses that want to prosper (or perhaps even survive) in the future need to be aware of these changes and should try to capitalize on them as soon as they can.

What kind of changes am I talking about? Mainly the ways that the Internet is combining with other communication media to create products and services that hadn't been thought of before. Here are just a few examples:

- \* You can now use the Internet to make local and long distance telephone calls, as well as video conferencing. The combination of these two media allows customers to transmit more information than either could do by themselves.

- \* More and more merchants are integrating their physical store locations and their Websites, so that the two aren't separate selling points for the company, but rather work together to make profits. These kinds of systems lead to more sales and greater customer satisfaction.

- \* Innovative businesses are combining the power of the Internet with the ease and popularity of television to create new interactive media. With these systems, a person who is watching TV can use a wireless mouse to find out more about a product that he or she sees, including how much it costs and the closest place to buy it, all based upon the viewer's individual information and location.

These examples help show that the future of the Internet is going to be based upon the innovative ways that it is combined with media with which we are already familiar. As business "entrepreneurs," we should keep a close eye on

these kinds of developments, so that we don't get left behind.

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