

## SCENARIOS DETAILS: DEVELOP PREMIUM SERVICES

# REBRANDING

A brand is an organization’s identity and aesthetic, a reflection of its values. The look and feel of the brand permeates—and is reinforced at—every public interface: not only logos, stations, system maps, and vehicle exteriors and interiors, but also web sites, social media presences, and traditional marketing campaigns.

A good brand can help create a positive image of an agency and its services. An important part of branding is choosing a unified design standard, colors, or a logo that can be part of all services. This helps to create a visual identity for the transit agency and its services.

ROCHESTER TRANSIT DESIGN FOR PRINT MEDIA



LA METRO BRT ORANGE LINE



At present, MTA and RTA operate with different brands, largely to reflect that services are provided by different agencies. However, this makes the use of transit more complicated for users, and looking forward, the intent will be to present service in a more seamless manner. This does not necessary mean that the MTA and RTA would merge; it could simply mean that they both do business under a new unified name—for example, MTA doing business as “New Transit” and RTA doing business as “New Transit.”

## BRANDING PRINCIPLES

When creating a new brand, three questions must be addressed:

- **What values should the brand convey?** Some typical brand values for transit agencies include reliability, convenience, comfort, environmental friendliness, and freedom (to work, read, etc.). Values can be ideas that the agency thinks are important (for example, “cool” is one of Los Angeles Metro’s core values), or they can be benefits that customers will get from using the service. Along those lines, King County Metro’s branding strategy reminds people that commuting by bus gives them time to do things on their daily commute besides gripping a steering wheel.
- **Why should people care?** The second question facing an agency focuses more on the story the brand should carry. What is the narrative of the transit agency? How is the new brand a part of or separate from that legacy? All internal and external-facing publications should work to tell this story through graphic and visual messaging.
- **Is the branding strategy authentic?** Because branding campaigns are aimed at attracting and keeping new riders, especially it is not enough for an agency to simply change the image of a transit service. If there are aspects of service that are discouraging potential riders from using transit, it

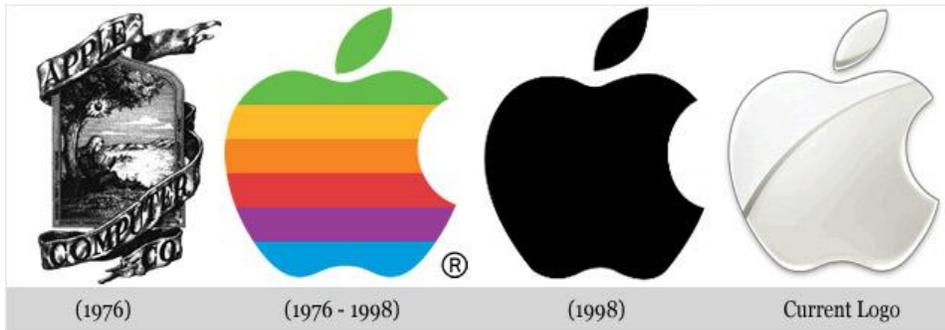
is essential to address those issues in conjunction with a branding campaign. A transit agency must be the brand it says it is.

When creating a brand, it is important to define what *is in* the brand and equally important to define what *is not in* the brand. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to align a new brand with existing brands to gain access to the established customer base. If an existing brand suffers from a negative public image, the agency may want to position a new brand as distinct from existing services.

## REBRANDING

Rebranding is designed to update an entity’s image. This is done for a number of reasons. First, styles change, and brands simply become outdated, and most major corporations update their brands periodically. In other cases, entities desire to reinvent themselves and leave their old image behind (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

FIGURE 1 | APPLE BRANDING/LOGO CHANGES



Source: <http://how2.releaseemyad.com/2015/03/the-most-iconic-brand-logos-evolution/>

FIGURE 2 | NIKE BRANDING/LOGO CHANGES



Source: <http://how2.releaseemyad.com/2015/03/the-most-iconic-brand-logos-evolution/>

## TRANSIT REBRANDING

Transit systems generally rebrand themselves for one of more of three reasons:

1. Their brand has simply become outdated.
2. They are “reinventing” themselves, in many cases to reflect a transformation from a transit system that focuses on serving a “transit dependent” ridership base to one that serves a much broader cross-section of its population.
3. As a result of mergers, either an actual merger, or a “virtual” merger to present different transit systems as a unified system.

For additional information on branding and marketing, including examples, see:  
[http://nMotion2015.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/nMotion-Branding-151121\\_FINAL.pdf](http://nMotion2015.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/nMotion-Branding-151121_FINAL.pdf)

FIGURE 3 | OKLAHOMA CITY TRANSIT BRAND AFTER REBRANDING (EMBARK)



## IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDED IN SCENARIOS

Two key branding improvements would be implemented in the same manner in all three scenarios:

1. Rebrand MTA and RTA with a new common name to draw attention to itself and planned service improvements, and move beyond its current poor public image.
2. Develop common sub-brands for premium services to better identify them as premium services and as part of a unified system.

### REBRAND MTA AND RTA WITH A SINGLE NAME

A new brand will be developed that will be used as the public brand for all MTA and RTA services. As described above, the new brand would be designed to:

- Present service to the public as part of a single system.
- Present a more dynamic image
- Draw attention to the service improvements that are being made

### REBRAND INDIVIDUAL SERVICES

All three scenarios include the development of a range of premium and specialized services. For example, Scenario 1 includes LRT, BRT, Rapid Bus, commuter rail, Freeway BRT, and express bus. In a similar manner to the Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. examples cited above, MTA and RTA would develop sub-brands for new and existing premium services that reflect both the overall brand and the type of service provided.