

MARKET COMMUNICATIONS

VISUAL IDENTITY—"LOOKING GOOD" PAYS OFF
Sixth in a series on promoting and marketing purebred cattle.

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Visual identity is how you "look" to your prospects and associates in the beef industry. That "look" is reflected in all material used in your external market communications program—advertising, stationery, business cards, ranch signs, brochures and so forth. Visual identity consists of a combination of symbols (mark or brand), your ranch or company name that is your logo or logotype, a color scheme, compatible and distinctive type faces, and an advertising format.

Your "look" becomes your trademark. It must be consistent with your image and market position. (You wouldn't use delicate script type, for example, to appeal to commercial bull buyers.) It must have visual impact; that is, it must be a stopper. It must be easily recognizable, memorable and easily associated with the image you are trying to establish or maintain. It must be versatile enough for use in all forms of communication and easily adaptable for use in color or black-and-white.

Instant Advertising

The "family" or "look" is expressed every time someone sees an ad, brochure, stationery, ranch sign or whatever you use in your program. If done effectively, it becomes a form of instant advertising and good will. By just seeing your "look" or identity, the viewer immediately associates it with you before reading the copy or studying the visual. Just think of the number of national and international companies that rely on "symbol" or "label" type promotion.

Each piece of material you use can be tailored to deliver a specific message while reflecting the "family" look. The

impact is thus multiplied. The "look" becomes an instant form of advertising and public relations. And when properly done, it will make money for you.


Once you have developed a visual identity program, stick with it. Be consistent. Use it everywhere. Keep it simple. Make it relate to your product or image.

Use Tag Line

If your breed of cattle is not mentioned in the ranch name or logo, it should appear in a tag line following the name or in another predominant place. For example, "Sandy Lane Farms" should be accompanied with a tag line such as "Breeders of Exceptional Angus Cattle." This ranch-breed association is particularly important when you are advertising in all-breeds or general interest agricultural publications.

If you use a ranch name other than your brand—for example, "Brown's Angus Farm" with a Circle B brand—decide which (or both) will be featured in your identity program and promotion: "Brown's Angus," "Circle B Angus" or "Brown's Circle B Angus." It doesn't make much difference which route you go so long as you are consistent.

Give some thought to your "look" before making it public. Once it gets out, it becomes your public "brand" and you have to live with it. So make it right the first time—for your cattle, for your ranch or personal image, and for the position you have assumed in the market place.

You'll be surprised—maybe even delighted—with the favorable response you will get. 

Next issue: Photography—The Importance of "How You Look."