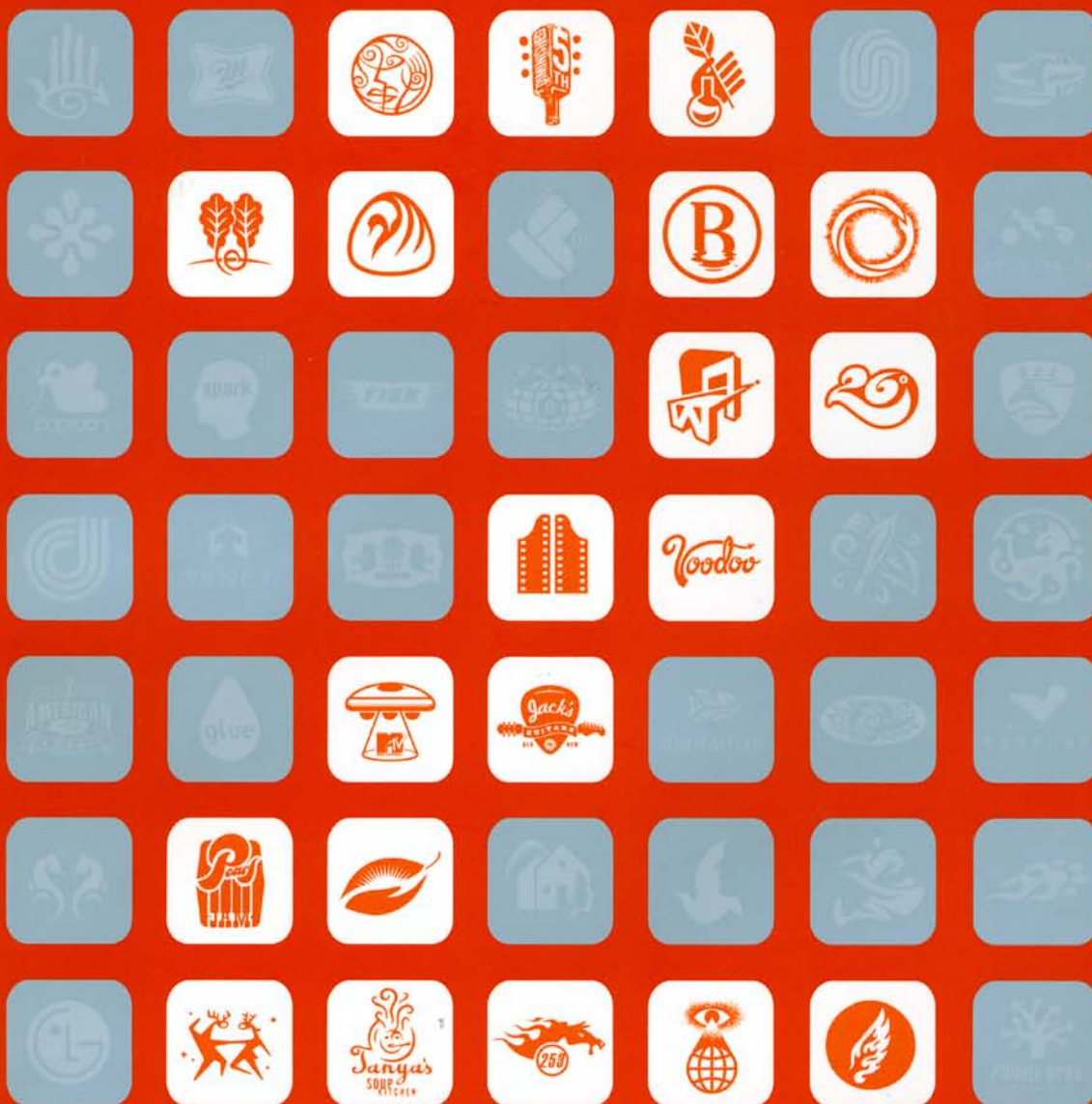


— volume 2 —



logolounge²

2,000 International Identities by Leading Designers



ROCKPORT

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Design Firm	Duffy & Partners
Client	Bahamas Ministry of Tourism
Project	Identity Design

In many crowded product categories, strong branding is the differentiator, leading consumers to prefer one product over another—especially when so many of the product attributes and claims are perceived to be identical. This belief is well understood in commodity categories such as beverages, cereal, or other common household goods, but could it also be true with such a considered, emotional, and expensive consumer choice as the destination for a tropical vacation?

That was precisely the case when Duffy & Partners began to work with the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism. The island nation was competing for tourism dollars with branding and communication that was virtually identical in imagery and messages as its competitors. As a result, consumers concluded the Bahamas were interchangeable with other warm-weather destinations such as Jamaica, Mexico, or many other Caribbean islands. And although the Bahamas does offer the tantalizing promise of a sensory, emotional, and physical vacation, they are perceived to be a "stereotypical paradise." The challenge for the ministry: How could they differentiate the islands as the preferred vacation destination?

"It quickly became clear that everyone from the tourism office to souvenir manufacturers would have to be able to work with the new design."

"As you can imagine, in this category, there is a sea of sameness among all sand and sea destinations—tropical colors, water, sun, palm trees," says Joe Duffy, chairman of Duffy & Partners. "With our client's previous approach, you could have pulled out the name 'Bahamas' and substituted 'Jamaica' or 'Barbados,' and the identity would have worked just as well. It was not unique or grounded in any differentiated truth that makes the Bahamas a unique destination."

Contributing to the ministry's challenge was that although the Bahamas had an existing identity, it had never been used consistently. Essentially, the previous brand identity was just a tagline, "The Islands of the Bahamas: It Just Keeps Getting Better"—undistinguished at best. And it was applied in hundreds of different ways, with different typefaces and colors, driven by different constituencies with different needs.

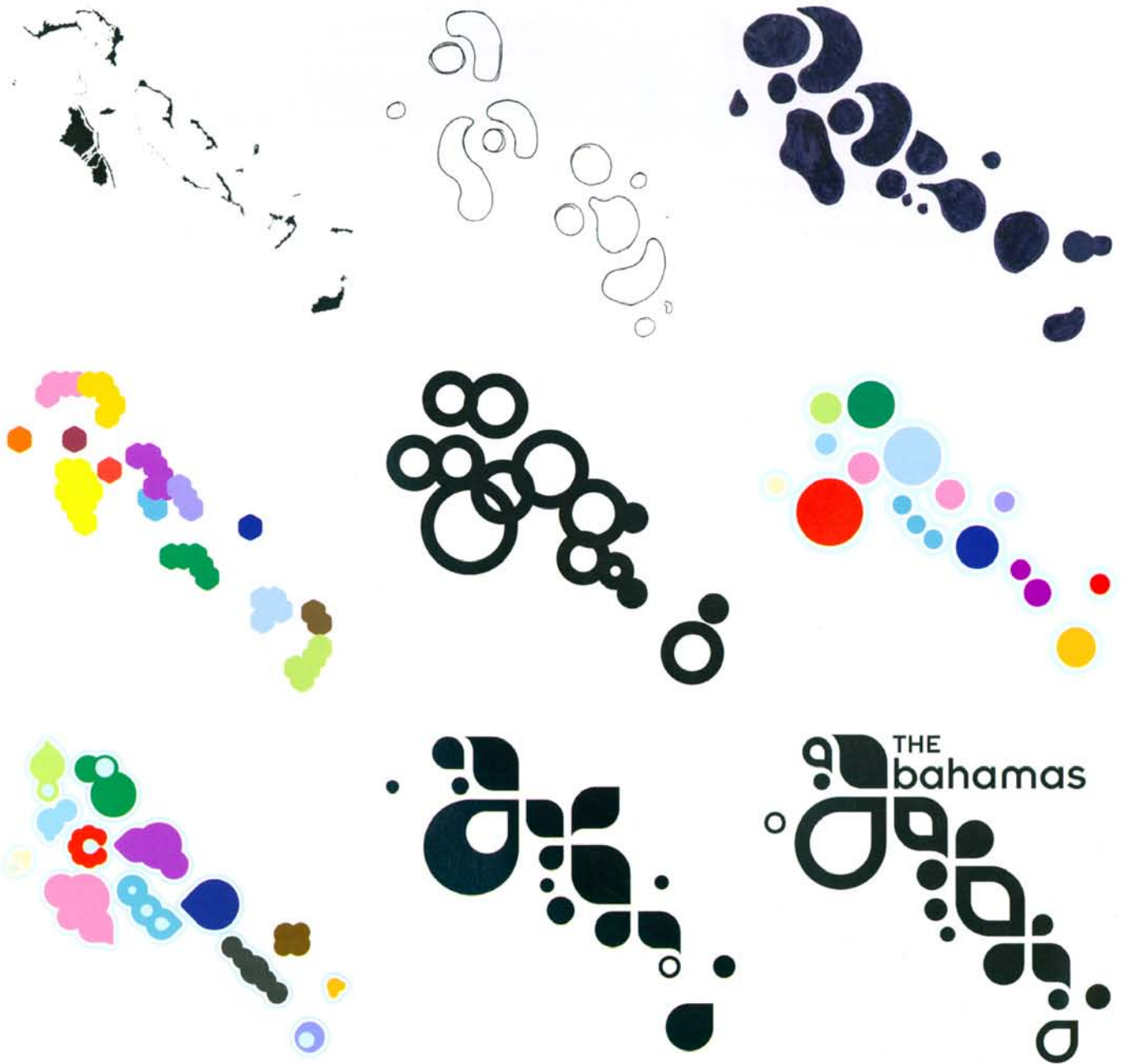


The new logo and brand identity for the islands of the Bahamas—a clever maplike representation of the arrangement of main destination islands, and a pattern that can be repurposed on everything from T-shirts to websites—is fresh and bright, like the place itself. The mark distinguishes the Bahamas as not a single destination but many.

THE ISLANDS OF THE BAHAMAS
It Just Keeps Getting Better

Less than inspiring, the Bahamas' old logo didn't say "tropical," much less "unique" or even "fun."

They determined the best solution was to create not just a logo but a more fluid brand expression of the actual geographic positioning of the islands of the Bahamas on a map.



Building off flower shapes and other organic forms, the Duffy design team began to experiment with different ways to express that the Bahamas was not one destination, but many. The concept of using geography as a design element emerged here, through different shapes.



The individual islands can be completely split out when necessary—say, for a Web page that gives information about just one island—or they can be distinguished from the grouping of other islands solely through the use of color.

Duffy concluded that the Bahamas needed an entirely new brand identity, one that not only made the country stand out from other equally pleasant vacation spots but that was also practical for many different constituencies to use. The Duffy team began with a complete visual audit of all former uses of the identity. "It quickly became clear that everyone from the tourism office to souvenir manufacturers would have to be able to work with the new design. Making it appealing and flexible for all was critical to get the consistency that was missed in the past. That was central to our thinking and constituted the creative challenge," remembers Duffy.

Duffy determined the Bahamas did have one distinguishing factor, one that no other vacation destination offers: It is not one place but many places. A map of the country reveals that it is made up of 700 islands, with seventeen major tourist destinations, each with its own special attractions—scuba diving, fishing, sunning, historical sites, luxury accommodations, or nightlife. Each destination also has its own unique flora and fauna. Expressing the breadth of the offerings of the Bahamas quickly became the most promising and distinctive design direction.

A team traveled from Duffy's Minneapolis office to the island nation to begin developing a differentiated brand visual language that challenged consumer expectations as well as their own. Creating this brand experience presented a contradiction to the designers.

"One of the things you want to do is distill an identity down to its core essence and root it in a brand truth," explains Duffy. "The obvious here is the blue water and palm trees and sand—that is what you are initially impressed with when you visit. But it is really important to dig past this common surface to find what can be really unique and special about the brand."

The team took in the turquoise blue waters. They studied pink flamingoes and the pastel sands. They took hundreds of pictures of flowers and other details and of people from all walks of life, and they enjoyed the sunshine and the hospitality.

Back in chilly Minneapolis, the team had many positive memories, images, and impressions of shapes and colors from their visit. But one thing stood out: the forms that made up the constellation of islands themselves. They determined that the best solution was to create not just a logo but a more fluid brand expression of the actual geographic positioning of the islands of the Bahamas on a map.

"When you compare that map to other island destinations, we win," Duffy says.

The solution they created is a stylized map using the manner and flavor of the shapes and colors the designers observed in the Bahamas. The collection of islands pulls on visual cues that are already in the consumer's mind—organic, rounded forms shown in a sophisticated, tropical palette. However, in sum, it is a collection of shapes that is anything but predictable.

Duffy explains, "An actual map of the islands does not look like this. The stylization comes from what we saw—the birds and shells and flowers. Here, we present each of the main island destinations but in an abstract way. It is a relatively simple solution, but you can feel the flamingoes, the turquoise water, and the pink sand represented in the colors and forms," he says. "This approach challenges perceptions and creates a new language for the brand."

The beauty of the identity is that it sets in motion an entire brand language that is endlessly adaptable—in signage, in patterning for clothing and interiors, in iconography. Especially promising are product applications—swimwear, T-shirts, fabrics, Web wallpaper, towels, and more. Each application will further the brand.

"We branded the country, and people will actually end up wearing the brand. Every single element working together will contribute to differentiation and a stronger brand," Duffy notes. Another practical aspect of the new identity is that it can be used to point to specific destinations within the Bahamas. For example, in an ad or on a webpage where Bimini is discussed, the rest of the logo is muted in gray while the shape representing that island and its name are printed in color (green, for this island). So, various destinations can be graphically pinpointed, from north to south, with their own unique stories. The cumulative effect underlines the many different experiences the Bahamas has to offer.

Television ads, some of the first communication to be created with the new brand identity, take the notion of island-hopping literally—again, stressing the many destinations. A happy visitor is shown jumping from one island and experience to another.

"The spots reveal the secret of all there is to do in the Bahamas. They make you think differently," Duffy says.

Print advertising highlights various shapes from the identity and uses them as frames for photos of wonderful experiences from the islands. The color palette feels natural for a tropical destination, but its complexity makes it special to the diverse nature of the Bahamas.

The program was unveiled on the Bahamas' official website (www.thebahamas.com) in December 2003, and as of this writing, reactions are just beginning to come in to Duffy. However, reception in the Bahamas itself and with the Ministry of Tourism is enthusiastic.

"Strong branding elegantly and simply captures what is unique, special, and enduring about the product," said Duffy. "We're extraordinarily proud of this approach because we believe it represents the true character and diversity of the Bahamas and that will encourage visitors to return again and again. Also, it is presented with the flexibility that will stand the test of time."



The shapes formed by the new logo have been worked into many different patterns and applications, all of which further the brand identity and effortlessly promote the client.

International Identity Design Update

Duffy & Partners, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Navistar may be a familiar name in stock trading circles, but it doesn't exactly evoke pictures of its core products—trucks and buses. Sometime in the 1970s, consultants had convinced International Harvester to change the name of its bus and truck division—then called International—to Navistar: the IH name smacked of farm implements, the experts insisted.

But the International name also had many positives: a tradition of dependability and ruggedness; a heritage that predated many of its better-known competitors such as Peterbilt and Mac Truck; and a logo that was very recognizable within the trucking market.

Joe Duffy and his team at Duffy & Partners suggested it was high time to change the name back to International; surround it with a compelling, updated identity system; and return the company to its roots and core values.

"There was a tremendous amount of equity in the International name—a hard-working, Midwestern ethic. When we did a visual audit, we discovered the strong, distinctive color of orange and the diamond-shaped road logo were the things that people thought of when they heard the name 'International,'" says Duffy. "We suggested that they build on what people already admired. We created an entire brand language from that familiar mark."

Competitors in this market were all trying to promote similar product traits: quality, endurance, and toughness. Everyone was marketing to large-fleet operators who buy several trucks at a time. These people didn't want to have to worry about how the vehicles would perform in tough conditions or the expense of frequent servicing.

The Duffy team rebuilt the brand around four main visual and emotional aspects, creating a palette of materials, colors, photography, and typefaces that could be extended across all aspects of the brand presentation, in advertising, on vehicles, on signage, and more.

- All the materials used in the design have a heavy-duty quality. For instance, in a trade show display, the concrete, bolts, wire

mesh, black-and-white photography, and even the typefaces chosen have a powerful and bold industrial feel.

- The diamond-shaped road logo was resurrected from one of the old International logos. A rich industrial orange was selected for the mark because of its breakthrough quality, its historical association with the brand, and its connection to road signs.
- The typeface created for the new mark was drawn from type that was widely used in International identities in the 1930s. This aspect of the new branding subtly referenced the company's history and stability.
- Because the company produces a rugged and durable product, the designers decided to give the new logo a sense of dimension, projecting it in the form of a 3-D metal truck badge.

Another consideration for the designers was that International already had many vehicles on the road, and these could not be retrofitted with the new logo. Therefore, the new creation had to live in a transitional way with the old marks.

Duffy says the new design has received a tremendous reception. "International chairman John Horne understood the new identity was a rallying cry for the rejuvenation not of only the brand but of the entire company. It helped employees, dealers, customers, and other key audiences reconsider International in an entirely new light."

Today, although Navistar is still the company's corporate name, International and the revamped brand image is proudly put forth in every aspect of marketing. It's an all-American identity, even without red, white, and blue.

"International was a sleeping giant," Duffy explains. "Few companies have been around as long as it in the American industrial landscape. International needed to leverage its heritage but also be seen as an innovator for the future. We believe their new identity and brand language perfectly capture that critical balance."



The triple diamond design of the original International logo, created in the early 1980s, contained a name that was familiar to customers in the trucking industry, but it had strayed from valuable brand identity cues—mainly, the color orange and a split diamond shape.



(Above) The diamond-shaped logo with a road bisecting it, created some years ago, was the mark that most quickly came to mind when customers were presented with the International name. Duffy designers decided that it needed to be reintroduced to the new identity.



(Left) The final International mark builds on plenty of historical equity: the diamond-shaped road mark; the color orange; a rugged, three-dimensional look; and a typeface drawn from a font first used by International in the 1930s.