

Why 9:41 am means something

By [Kabelo Binns](#)

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I read, the other day, a very powerful statement on the packaging of a new iPhone X. I found it placed in the famously self-proclaimed 'perfect box'. Inside the box, I saw an endorsement that has left me wondering why we spend so much on advertising campaigns when it is the simple things that tend to make the most impact.



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Let me declare upfront that I am addicted to anything Apple. I stick the sticker that comes with all Apple products over the logos of other brands that I have. I look forward with anticipation for the launch of the Apple Car. Anyway, there I was, opening my new iPhone package when the first thing I see in said box, printed in the middle of a clean white sleeve covering the phone the statement 'Made by Apple in California'.

So, simple, so powerful. Yet, I know from that point on that I am looking at the world's most desirable phone.

Here is the thing, this was first time I saw the word 'Apple'. Inside the box. It doesn't say Apple on the cover of the box, nor on the sides (one features the Apple icon and the other the word 'iPhone'), nor on the bottom. 'Apple' is nowhere.

Can you image how confident of your brand you must be not to put the name of your company on the cover of your flagship product? Imagine Mr. or Ms. Marketing and Communications Manager if your agency said to you, "Our suggestion is that you don't put your name on the artwork, the consumer will just know - they will recognise the box and the font on the

box.”

After you stop laughing, they bravely continue “...Your name, will be placed inside the box only to be seen once the client owns the product.” Sounds amazing right? Would you buy that pitch?

Getting back to that box, I also notice that the only writing on the image of iPhone X on the box is the date and time – 9:41. Typical of Apple, nothing is left to chance in the design space.

9:41am is the moment when that Steve Jobs announced, “a revolutionary new mobile phone” during his legendary June 29, 2007, product launch in Cupertino, California. Great little detail, right?

But that is the truth of every detail in the experience one has when you open any Apple package. The paper is just so smooth to the touch. The artwork is simple, with amazing use of white space. The packaging says to consumers that “if they care this much for the experience of me simply opening this package, I can only imagine what their product will do for me”.

And then the product delivers, huge!

The lesson Apple teaches us is that the reputation of the brand can and will supersede a logo. Put another way, at Apple, it is not the logo that makes the brand but rather the reputation that makes the brand. Once a brand has a reputation, it is recognised by more than its logo. Maybe by its sound (think ‘Met Eish’, see Klipdrift); its smell (think ‘Mrs Balls’); or even its colour (think red, see Coke). As consumers, we seek brands with a strong positive reputation and actively avoid those with a weak reputation.

My advice to anyone launching a new product or service is invest in the product before you invest in your look-and-feel. Focus on the quality of your product and the experience of the consumer before you get carried away with the launch party and the free T-shirts.

The reason is simple. A successful business is a sustainable one, one that attracts repeat purchases. No matter how nice your logo is, the consumer will choose to buy again based on the experience of your product. This is not to say your look and feel must be ignored, but rather it should be your second priority after your product’s intrinsic unique value proposition.

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