



THE TATA GROUP

Changes In Indian Corporate Logos - Part 2



CORPORATE LOGOS

Tata is one of the oldest and best-known groups of companies in India. The group takes the name of its founder, Sir Jamshedji Tata, a member of whose family has, so far, almost invariably been the chairman of the group. The present chairman is Ratan Tata, who took over from the justly renowned J.R.D. Tata in the 1990s.

In terms of market capitalization and revenues, Tata Group is the largest private corporate group in India and has been recognized as one of the most respected companies in the world. It has interests in steel, automobiles, information technology, communication, power, tea and hospitality. The Tata Group has operations in more than 85 countries across six continents and its companies export products and services to 80 nations. The Tata Group comprises 114 companies and subsidiaries in seven business sectors, 27 of which are publicly listed. 65.8% of the ownership of Tata Group is held in charitable trusts. Companies which form a major part of the group include Tata Steel, Corus Steel, Tata Motors, Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Technologies, Tata Tea, Titan Industries, Tata Power, Tata Communications, Tata Teleservices, Tata AutoComp Systems Limited and the Taj Hotels. Tata gets more than half of its revenue from outside India.

Right after Ratan Tata succeeded JRD Tata as chairman of the Tata Group he

embarked on a brand-building expedition whose goal was to unify the diverse and

building the Tata brand equity.



New Logo Of The TATA Group

diffuse Tata enterprises and make them capable of navigating the rough post-liberalisation waters that lay ahead.

The seeds of the new logo were sown with the drafting, in the mid 1990s, of the Brand Equity and Business Promotion (BEBP) agreement, a comprehensive contract that laid down the conditions the group company had to comply with to earn the privilege of being labelled a Tata enterprise. Companies had the choice not to sign the agreement, but then they would lose the right to use the Tata name.

Companies that signed the BEBP agreement were obliged to abide by the Tata code of conduct, a set of principles that guide and govern the way a Tata enterprise runs its business. The agreement also enjoined the group companies to follow practices that would enhance the Tata brand, and invest in

Parallel to putting the BEBP initiative in motion, the group acquired a fresh and modern logo and a corporate identity plan. Crafted by the British design agency Wolff Olins, this logo now adorns every Tata Group company's corporate markers. It has become a powerful symbol, signifying the values of the house of Tata and helping to coalesce group companies under a common canopy. Advertising, media relations and the Internet are other avenues that the group has used to add muscle to its brand equity.

Speaking to The Economic Times in a 1996 interview, Ratan Tata stressed the importance of constructing a unified Tata brand: "The intention has been to create a single strong entity that will benefit all [Tata] companies... If you are to fight a Mitsubishi or an X or Y in the free India of tomorrow, you better have one rather than 40 brands. You better have the ability to promote that brand in a meaningful manner..."

R. Gopalakrishnan, Executive Director, Tata Sons, said: "I think the world over realisation has dawned that, as economies develop and consumers have more spending power, people don't buy products; they buy a promise. The future will undoubtedly belong to the brand — and the Tatas will not be left behind. Today the Tatas represent assurance, reliability, a sense of nationalism, value for money... Irrespective of the product you are making,



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those are the attributes you would like to be known for, whether it is through a wristwatch, a piece of software or a car.”

While its old-world properties remain unaltered, the Tata brand has moved on to conquer new turf. Today it is increasingly being seen as innovative, forward thinking, well managed, aggressive and with a high technology content — just the right ingredients for prosperity in a brandscape that promises plenty.

According to Wolff Olins the British company that designed the new logo they “created a new symbol for the group – a T and A that represent precision and the future, which could also be seen as a fountain of knowledge. The symbol was particularly designed to look good on cars, an important growth market.” ■



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