



SONY / VAIO

VAIO (/ˈvaɪ.oɪ/) is a sub-brand used for many of Sony's computer products.... The branding was created by Timothy Hanley to distinguish items that integrate consumer audio and video with conventional computing products. The VAIO logo also represents the integration of analog and digital technology with the 'VA' representing an analog wave and the 'IO' representing a digital binary code.



CORPORATE LOGOS

This article is a researched article and borrows heavily from printed and electronic encyclopedias as well as material provided by our panel of research scholars and academics

Sony Corporation

Sony Corporation is a leading global Japanese conglomerate corporation founded in May 1946 by Masaru Ibuka and Akio Morita. Headquartered in Minato, Tokyo, it is one of the world's largest manufacturers of electronics products and motion pictures. A few of its most important components include Sony Electronics, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Sony Computer Entertainment, Sony Music Entertainment, Sony Mobile Communications and Sony Financial. With total assets of US\$ 162.142 billion as of 2012, Sony employs more than 162,700 people across the world

Sony is certainly one of the world's most popular and instantly recognizable logos. It



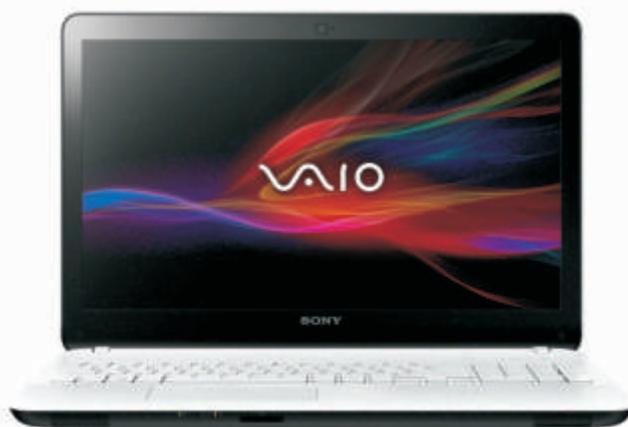
SONY LOGO

has undergone several modifications throughout the years. The company's name, "SONY", originates from the Latin word "sonus", meaning sound. Moreover, the words "sunny" and "sonny" hugely inspired the earliest Sony logo, which was registered as a trademark in 1955. The logo, however, started appearing on the company's products two years later in 1957.

The current version of the Sony logo comprises of a simple word mark which was

first introduced in 1959. According to some branding experts, it is meant to "communicate strength and simplicity". The Sony logotype experienced a few minor overhauls in 1961, 1962, 1969 and 1973, mostly upon the suggestions of Norio Ohga, the former president and chairman of Sony. Majority of these changes were

continued on page 5 ►



VAIO Laptop

The use of black color in the Sony logo symbolizes perfection, elegance, integrity and the illustrious history of the brand.



CORPORATE LOGOS

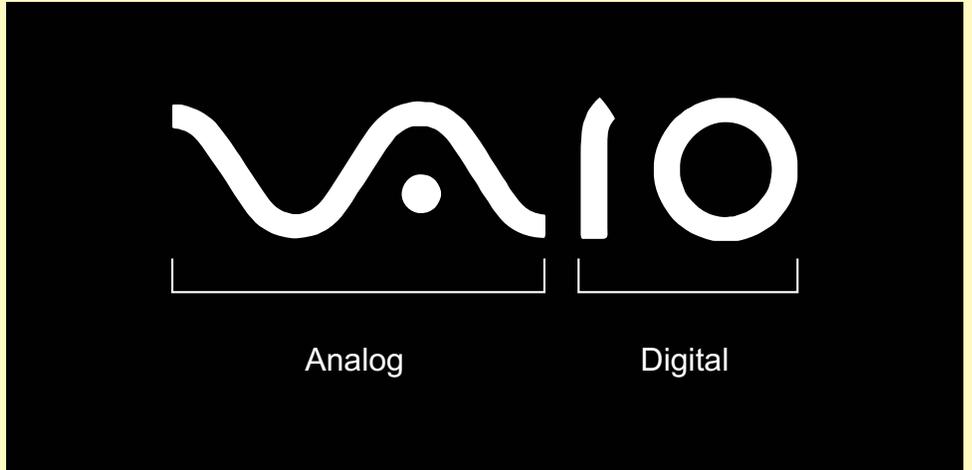
◀ continued from page 4

implemented under the supervision of Sony designer Yasuo Kuroki and its chief of the design bureau, Akio Morita. The company's current slogan, "make.believe", was adapted in 2009.

The Sony Logo

In 1955, Ibuka and Morita registered SONY as an official trademark of Tokyo Tsushin Kogyo with the intention of establishing the name as a global brand. One month later, when Bulova Inc. of the US promised to order 100,000 transistor radios on the condition that they be sold under its own brand name, Morita refused, saying that his company would only allow its products to be sold under the Sony brand. When pressed, he asked Bulova, "How many people had heard of your company fifty years ago? My company is just starting out, but fifty years from now it will be just as famous as yours."

In 1958, Tokyo Tsushin Kogyo, which was gaining recognition for its Sony brand goods, changed its name to Sony Corporation. The name "Sony" is easy to pronounce and read in any language. Moreover, it has a short lively ring, which matched the spirit of freedom and open-mindedness which Ibuka emphasized in the company's Founding Prospectus. The name "Sony" was neither derived from anything connected with the electronics industry, nor from the names of the company's two founders. At the time it was introduced, the name was considered by many Japanese to be quite strange. The fact that it was introduced at all can be attributed



to Ibuka and Morita's progressive philosophy.

After changing its name, Sony set about building its brand image. Morita firmly believed that brand image could be built from the ground up, and that a company had to work hard to develop it. For him, corporate image was like a product; it had to be carefully manufactured and marketed and he always kept this in mind when conducting business.

The evolution of the SONY logo from 1955 to 1973.

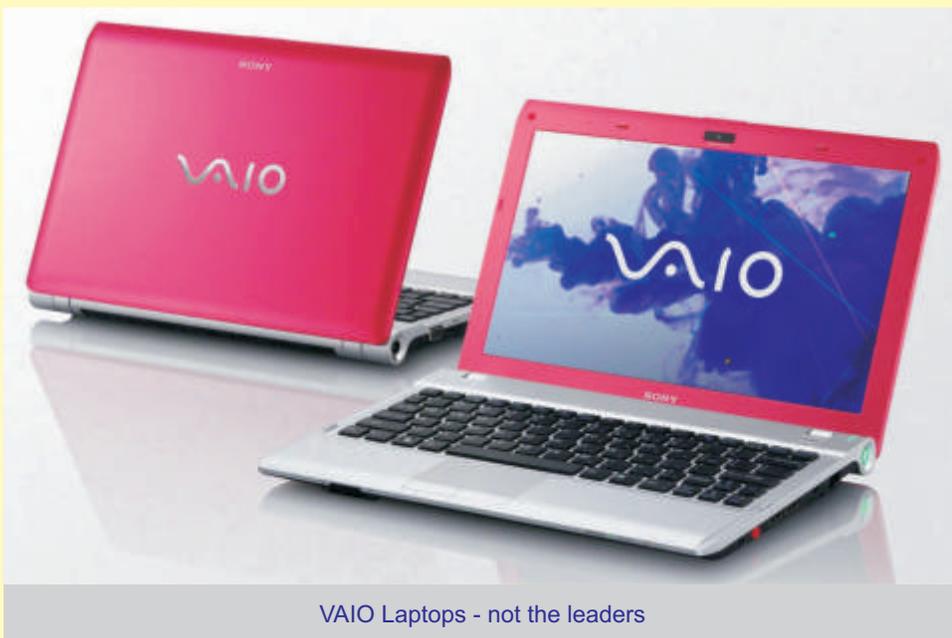
From its introduction, the eye-catching SONY logo was revered within the company. The first version of the logo, which was enclosed in a square box, was registered as a trademark in 1955. Thereafter, the logo went through a succession of changes. In the 1960s, when Sony began to seriously develop its brand image overseas, the logo was displayed in neon in New York and Hong Kong, where it

competed with famous and well-established foreign companies. In 1959, the catchphrase "Sony - a worldwide brand born in Japan" was introduced to capitalize on the logo. This was followed by the slogan, "Research Makes the Difference."

One man who worked particularly hard on the development of the logo was Sony designer Yasuo Kuroki. In 1961, it was

continued on page 6 ▶

“
**VAIO stands for
Video Audio
Integrated
Operation.
Representing an
integration of
analog and digital,
the logotype
consists of a sign
wave that
represents analog,
and the numbers 1
and 0 that represent
digital.**



VAIO Laptops - not the leaders



CORPORATE LOGOS

◀ continued from page 5

decided to place the new Sony logo on a neon sign in an upscale area of Hong Kong. Sony was the first Japanese company to put up such a sign there. But before this could happen, the logo needed to be modified to suit this method of display. So Kuroki who was then in the Publicity Department, was asked by Morita to come up with a design. The following year, Kuroki's logo was proudly displayed in advertisements for Sony's miniature televisions.

To develop an even more effective logo, a committee was formed within Norio Ohga's Design Division. By 1962, corporate identity (CI) rules and a design policy for the use of the Sony logo were established. After making numerous attempts to modify the logo, the company decided on the current version, which was introduced in 1973.

In order to mark the 35th anniversary of the company in 1981, there was a proposal within Sony to introduce a new logo. Although ideas were submitted from all over the world, Ibuka decided that none of the designs was better than the original one which had been in use since 1973. Consequently, the 1973 logo was kept, and it is still in use today.

The use of black color in the Sony logo symbolizes perfection, elegance, integrity and the illustrious history of the brand.

The name VAIO

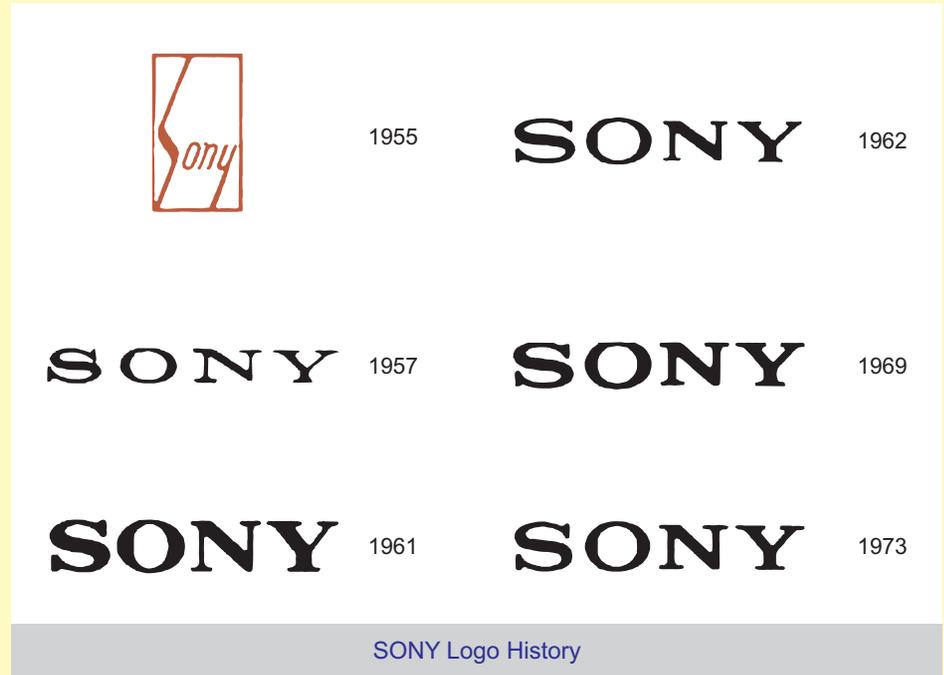
The name VAIO and its logotype were created as the collective name and logo of Sony PC products. VAIO stands for Video Audio Integrated Operation. Representing an integration of analog and digital, the logotype consists of a sign wave that represents analog, and the numbers 1 and 0 that represent digital.

The "VA" represents a sine wave - the basic analog signal. The "IO" represents a 1 and 0 - symbolic of the digital signals in binary code. Together, the logo represents the history and evolution of technology from analog to digital.

Background of VAIO & VAIO Logo

A lot of work was put into the development of Sony's first PC line before it made its debut in 1996. Teiyuu Goto, a product designer from the Sony Creative Center in Tokyo was in charge of product design, name and logo concept for the new PC.

While working on the project one night, Mr. Goto recalled having a sudden



SONY Logo History

inspiration as the word VAIO flashed across his mind. He knew this was it. Although it was a sudden flash of inspiration, the name itself encompassed so much to him. In addition to the symbolic logo and acronym, he incorporated a number of meanings into the name, design and logo that continue to inspire our development to this day. For example, VAIO sounds very similar to bio or life which he believed was symbolic of how VAIO would continue to evolve and inspire new technology. The name VAIO also has a phonetic connection to the word violet and is why most early VAIOs were purple or at least included purple components.

Another surprise - when you start up most VAIO models, you hear a unique sound in addition to the onscreen logo. This sound derived from the melody created by the letters V-A-I-O when pressed on an American telephone keypad - a unique and playful way of symbolizing the VAIO as both a visual and audio entertainment device.

SONY Sells VAIO

Sony is selling its personal computer division to a Japanese investment fund, though it sounds like the VAIO brand would live on in a limited fashion. Sony would reportedly keep a small stake in a new venture built from the sale and continue to operate in markets where the brand is well-known - but otherwise it would exit the market in most countries. However, the VAIO business would continue to operate in Sony's home country of Japan, with a specific focus on the business market.

While the sale to Japan Industrial Partners (estimated to be between \$391 million and \$489 million) isn't a done deal yet, it could be official by the end of March 2014.

As a part of the business transfer, Sony will stop planning, design and development of PC products and production and sales will also be discontinued after Spring 2014 lineup to be launched globally. ■

Rao Speak



Dr. Ravi Rao

The Sony logo has much going for it. The progression of the logo from its slim avatar to the now bolder and heavier font has paid the company good dividend. Unfortunately, for the company, the overdose of black color in its logo is creating hiccups in the balance sheet.