

New identity alert

July 2006

An occasional survey of new corporate brand identities compiled by Method Branding from on-line news sources

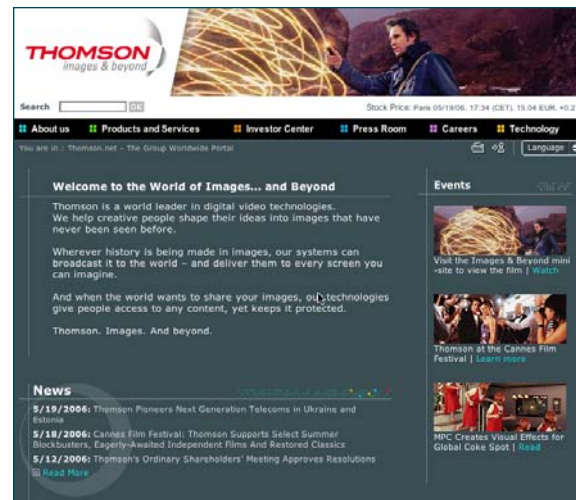
Thomson The parent company of RCA, Grass Valley and Technicolor, unveiled its new corporate brand identity at its May shareholder meeting. The new brand identity is meant to better position this Paris-based company as a global leader in digital video technologies.

Comment This is a more engaging, appropriate and contemporary corporate brand identity. The symbol, while not a literal depiction of what they do (which may be impossible in any event), certainly conveys movement, innovation and the sense of reaching for something somewhat ethereal. The company has attempted to retain a certain of equity from the previous brand identity in the logotype, applying a similar, if italicized type style. This probably was not necessary and a more innovative logotype would probably have been more successful. It is also interesting to note that this French company, which owns some prominent American-based companies, only uses an English tagline.

www.thomson.net



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Huawei This Chinese technology company launched its new corporate brand identity at the CeBIT Australia trade show in May. Huawei Technologies claims to sell its products and services to 28 of the world's top 50 telecommunications companies. Huawei has over 40,000 employees in operations in China, India, Russia and the United States.

Comment This new corporate brand identity is somewhat successful. The logotype is clean and simple and works reasonably well with the symbol above it. The symbol is something of an evolution of the symbol the company had previously. It also has a definite Asian feel to it, not unlike many symbols emanating from South Korea. The dimensionalized effect is, however, not as resolved as they could have been. Certain elements within the symbol have been effectively treated and look three dimensional, while others appear flat. Either the whole symbol should have remained two-dimensional or all the "blades" of the symbol should have been better rendered.

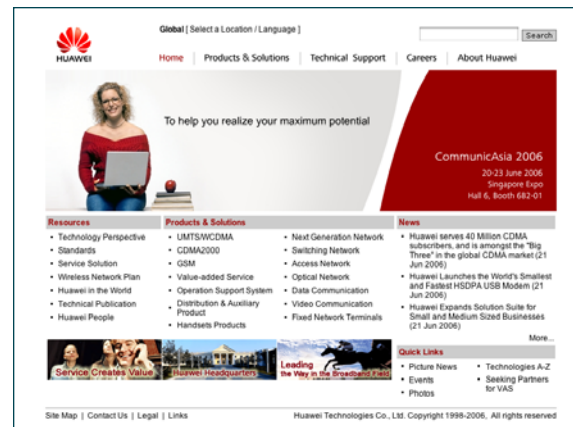
www.huawei.com



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Huawei Technologies



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Vivendi This French media company has recently changed its name back to Vivendi and unveiled its new corporate brand identity. Vivendi has holdings in music, interactive games, television, film, fixed and mobile telecommunications, including Groupe Canal+, Universal Music Group, and a 20% stake of NBC Universal, (following its sale of Universal to GE).

Comment How much should one believe a company's claim? Vivendi states that its new corporate brand identity reflects "the company's strength and ambition." "...its ability to be creative, innovative and dynamic..." The third wordmark in the last half dozen years, there is nothing here that lives up to these claims. The wordmark breaks with any equity of its two predecessors, dropping the wave of the letter "V" and adopting a new corporate purple instead of red. The style of the lettering is awkward and the "e" is especially painful to look at; one has the impression it is being squeezed. While the company's web site and publication materials do have a youthful, innovative energy, they have no relation to the new wordmark. It appears as though any brand identity could have been inserted into a blank white area. Vivendi would have been better served by simply dropping Universal from its previous wordmark.

www.vivendi.com

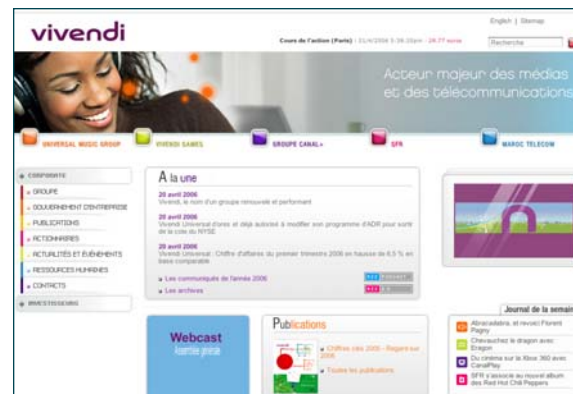
vivendi

Old identity

VIVENDI
UNIVERSAL

Identity prior to 2000

VIVENDI



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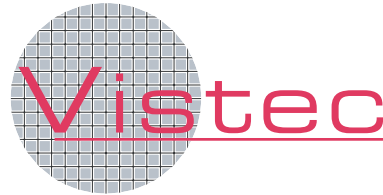
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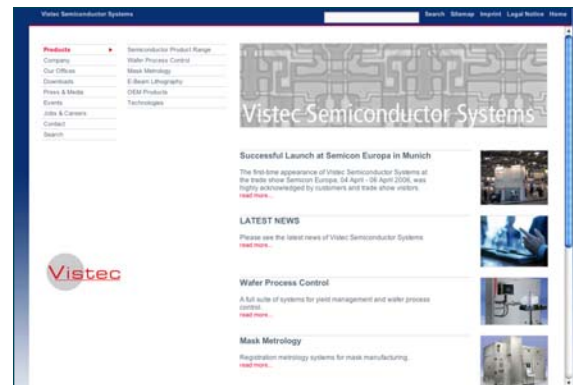
Vistec Following the acquisition of the Leica Microsystems semiconductor equipment division by Golden Gate Capital of San Francisco, the company has changed its name to Vistec Semiconductor. The company provides production technology to semiconductor manufacturers. Vistec has production facilities in Germany and the UK, as well as a distribution and service network in the United States, Japan, China, Singapore, Taiwan and Korea.

Comment With a name that combines “visionary” and “technologies,” Vistec is another example of the truly bad corporate brand identities emanating from companies spun-off or sold by prominent global brands (see IdAlert_0601). Now off on their own, these companies, have replaced strong brand identities with terrible ones. It’s as though, freed from the control and constraints of their former parent companies, they are intentionally “behaving badly.” Can one soon expect to see a tacky video of “Brands Gone Bad” to be sold in the back of video stores?

www.vistec-semi.com



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Windstream The planned merger and subsequent spin-off of Alltel's landline business with VALOR Communications Group will be called Windstream Communications. Based in Little Rock, Arkansas, this new company will have about \$3.4 billion in annual revenues and will provide voice, broadband and satellite TV to its customers in 16 states, focussing on rural areas.

Comment This is a well crafted, simple idea. By no means an earth-shattering design, it is contemporary, and simple. The winding "W" symbol clearly evokes the idea of communications, linking one person to another. The lettering style and the rounded edges of the symbol also give this brand identity a friendly, approachable look. The name works well, especially for their rural target markets, though it would be just as effective in large urban markets as well. It remains to be seen how this new brand identity will be implemented. The addition of a descriptor to the name suggests that there may be other Windstream brand identities to be unveiled (such as Windstream Satellite TV).

www.windstreamcomm.com

www.alltel.com

www.valortelecom.com



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