

Visual Identity Review

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Visual Identity Program review

Context and executive summary

The current Government of the Northwest Territories (Government of the Northwest Territories) Visual Identity Program was developed in 1980. This Program established the polar bear logo and Territorial Shield as the approved logos of the territorial government and outlined provisions for the use of these logos.

In the intervening years, some Government of the Northwest Territories departments have developed their own visual marks in addition to those approved by the Visual Identity Program. Some boards and agencies of the Government of the Northwest Territories have also developed visual marks. Visual marks have also been adopted for some government programs.

In January, 2002, the Department of Executive called for proposals to review the Visual Identity Program in order to enable clear and current guidelines to be developed for the use and expression of the government's visual identity. The objective of the review is to review the current Government of the Northwest Territories Visual Identity Program and visual marking practices and make recommendations for updating and renewing or replacing the Program.

Methodology

The following methodology was undertaken in conducting the review:

Review of practices in other jurisdictions

In order to identify how corporations and other governments address challenges in visual identity, their visual identity programs were reviewed. In completing the review, the consultant sought information from all other territorial and provincial governments and the Government of Canada, as well as several large, multi-faceted corporations. As part of the review of practices in other jurisdictions, a literature search was also conducted. A list of jurisdictions considered is included on page 37 of this report, and details of the findings in each location are found starting on page 38. A list of sources referenced is included in the appendices.

Review of current practices

The consultant talked to communications practitioners and departmental representatives to identify how the Visual Identity Program is currently being applied. As part of this review, samples of variations on the current logo, as well as departmental logos and symbols were collected.

Stakeholder consultation

Stakeholders from government departments, the legislative assembly, and arm's length organizations were invited to provide their input to the review of the Visual Identity Program. In total, 52 stakeholders, representing 21 organizations participated. A list of all participating stakeholders is included on page 47.

Summary of findings

Other jurisdictions

Many other jurisdictions, particularly other governments, have grappled and continue to struggle with the challenge of developing and maintaining strong brand recognition through visual identity. Common issues faced include the proliferation of symbols and identities in addition or in lieu of the approved government logo, lack of understanding of the purpose and importance of visual identity in branding and communicating clearly, and ways of ensuring compliance with the visual identity, to name a few. Current and best practices employed to address these issues have been incorporated into this report.

Current practices

Communications practitioners and departmental representatives who provided input to this review, without exception, received the review positively. All are working to implement a set of guidelines that have grown to be out date, and at times, ineffective or silent on issues faced in the development of materials. For example, the current Visual Identity Program is silent on the application of the logo on the web, as this medium did not exist when the Program was developed. Given this challenging environment, Government employees have coped by employing common sense, consistent departmental practices, and by developing departmental guidelines for use.

Several departments currently use, or have used in the past, departmental logos. In general, these logos were developed as morale- and team-building mechanisms for the department. Some departmental logos are highly entrenched (such as the logo of the Department of Transportation), while others have recently be decommissioned (such as the logo of RWED).

Stakeholder consultation

Virtually all departments consulted indicated their support for the review and their willingness and desire to comply with visual identity guidelines, should new guidelines be developed. Most of those consulted requested that the guidelines be simple and clear enough to make compliance simple, and yet flexible enough to allow departments to use some creativity in the development of their materials. Most stakeholders consulted recognized the value and purpose of the visual identity in helping the public identify with its government.

Most feel the visual identity should be focused externally, not internally. However, departments with their own logos spoke to the need and value of departmental logos in building employee morale, and developing a distinct identity with its specific publics.

With only a very small number of exceptions, all stakeholders consider the current polar bear logo to have high brand equity and recognition value both within the Northwest Territories and throughout Canada. Virtually all stakeholders strongly recommended that the polar bear be maintained as the government's logo, although conceded that its look could be slightly updated or modernized.

Issues addressed in the review

The review of the Visual Identity Program identified several issues to be considered in revising and updating the program. These issues are categorized as philosophical or policy issues, design and application issues, and administration issues:

Philosophical/policy issues:

- Purpose of the Visual Identity Program
- Departmental logos
- Program themes and symbols
- Official languages
- Arm's length agencies

Design and application issues:

- Bear as logo
- Other government symbols
- Visual Identity Program manual

Administrative issues:

- Protecting the Visual Identity Program
- Entrenching the Visual Identity Program
- Roll out and maintenance

Specific observations of practices in other jurisdictions, current practices in the Government of the Northwest Territories, and recommendations were made for each of the above issues.

Summary of recommendations

Philosophical/policy issues

1. The purpose of the Government of the Northwest Territories' Visual Identity Program should be focus externally to be the visual representation of the Government's (and internationally, the Canadian north's) identity. All guidelines in the Visual Identity Program should be aligned with that purpose. Guidelines and changes that are not aligned with that purpose should be deleted.
2. The creation of departmental logos is out of step with the above purpose of visual identity. Therefore:
 - The moratorium on development of new departmental logos should continue.
 - Departments with existing logos should begin gradual phase out of these logos until their complete phase-out by March 31, 2004.
 - Until March 31, 2004, any new use of departmental logos should be required to be accompanied by the Government of the Northwest Territories logo (bear) with the departmental signature, and the polar bear logo should be dominant.
3. In order to help identify specific departments within government, a form of the polar bear logo with departmental signature should be re-developed and used. The logo with departmental signature would be used when it is important to identify a specific initiative or program with a department of government rather than with the government as a whole.
4. In order to enable the flexibility provided by design themes and symbols for program-specific materials, such devices should be permitted.
 - A department-level approval process (consistent across all departments) with specific criteria should be developed, communicated, and instituted, both within the initiating department, and endorsed by the Department of Executive, to ensure program symbols are being used for their intended purpose, and are developed to be a professional and effective representation.
5. On projects and initiatives undertaken by the Government of the Northwest Territories, in partnership with other governments or organizations, the polar bear logo should be used if any other partner organization's logo appears. The polar bear logo may be omitted if no other partner or participant logos appear, and the number of partner groups involved makes its use unmanageable, provided an agreement is made in this regard with partners in advance.
6. Guidelines should be established setting out the relative size and placement of the government logo in relation to any program symbol.
 - A special logo signature, "a program of (logo with departmental or government signature)" should be used where possible, to identify departmental programs that have unique symbols.

7. Addressing the issue of language in Visual Identity Program should be delayed until such time that the Review of the *Official Languages Act* is completed and recommendations in language policy are implemented by the Special Committee of the Legislature. In this way, any results of this review that impact the number and use of official languages can be properly considered.
8. A set of criteria should be developed that would set out under what circumstances arm's length organizations should be included under the Visual Identity Program.
 - Each arm's length organization should then be tested against this criteria to determine whether it must adhere to the Program.

Design and application issues

1. The Government of the Northwest Territories should maintain the bear as its logo at least until such time as there are fundamental structural changes to the Northwest Territories that would merit reconsideration of the polar bear logo.
2. The polar bear logo should be updated and refreshed. This can be accomplished by:
 - updating the typeface to a more classic typeface
 - considering positioning of type in relation to the logo to maximize balance and visual strength no matter the size or application of the logo.
3. The Territorial Shield, Coat of Arms and flag – and their proper use – should be detailed and included in the Visual Identity Program.
4. All official government symbols (floral emblem, bird, tree, mace, fish, gem, seal, tartan) should be protected, either by legislation, and/or registration as trademarks or official marks, or both.
5. All previous and non-official manuals should cease to be used, in favour of a single Visual Identity Program manual or series of manuals.
6. The Visual Identity Program manual should include information on:
 - Purpose and role of Visual Identity Program
 - Authority and responsibility for Visual Identity Program
 - Criteria for phase out of departmental logos
 - Prohibition of specific logo uses (such as combining logos, stretching logos, etc.)
 - Parameters for use of program symbols
 - Process for approval for new departmental logos or program symbols
 - Definitions (of logo, design theme, symbol, etc.)
 - Contact information for advice on compliance
 - Application of visual identity (see below)

7. The Visual Identity Program manual should include an “executive summary” , identifying:
 - sanctioned logos and general information on their use;
 - regulations surrounding departmental logos and program symbols.

This should be followed by more comprehensive information providing detailed information on application of the logo in various media, for example on:

- Government letterhead, envelopes and letter style
- Executive letterhead, envelopes and letter style
- Business cards, including layout
- Web pages
- Signage
- Publications
- Forms
- News releases
- Fax cover sheet
- Vehicle identification
- Signage (indoor and outdoor)
- Promotional items
- Static display
- Video display
- Print advertising
- Educational and promotional materials
- Government reports
- Displays and exhibits
- Sponsorship recognition requirements on materials produced
- Materials produced in partnership with others

This manual should be indexed for ease of use.

8. The Visual Identity Program manual should be provided in both print and electronic forms.
 - Electronic forms of the manual would be available on CD and on the Internet.
 - Electronic versions should include copies of all acceptable permutations of all official logos and signatures, as well as a copy of the appropriate font(s).

Administrative issues

1. Revisions to the polar bear logo should be reviewed against the original trademark to ensure the logo continues to benefit from trademark protection. Revisions may require new trademark registrations.
2. Departmental logos are to be phase out and should therefore not be registered as trademarks. Likewise it is recommended that, generally, program symbols, intended

for short-term use only, need not be registered as trademarks. Some program symbols *may* need to be registered as trademarks. This will depend on the nature and duration of the program and the importance of the logo to the program's success. This is especially important where there are national and/or international economic development and promotional aspects to the program.

3. A single Government of the Northwest Territories body should have 'ownership' and responsibility for management of both the Visual Identity Program and management of a Trademark Policy, as they are the internal and external halves of the same whole.
4. The Visual Identity Program must be entrenched in government policy through Cabinet direction. Support for the Program, and compliance with it, must come from the highest levels in the department (Deputy Minister).
5. The following structure and accountability is recommended with respect to compliance with the Visual Identity Program:
 - Deputy Ministers should be accountable for compliance with the Program in their departments.
 - Departmental communications practitioners should be responsible for application of the guidelines.
 - The Department of Executive should be responsible for monitoring compliance with the Program, including any licensed use by third parties.
6. A standardized approvals process should be implemented for any public materials, prior to production.
 - This approval process should include review and approval by the departmental communications practitioner and the Deputy Minister and the Department of Executive for review and endorsement of program symbols.
7. A communications plan should be developed and implemented to aid roll out and maintenance of the Visual Identity Program.
8. The Department of Executive should host workshops for each department and for the Communications Working Group, to introduce the Visual Identity Program.
 - In addition, all new employees in communications roles should be required to attend a regularly scheduled orientation on the Visual Identity Program.
9. The Visual Identity Program should be reviewed at least every four years to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the Government of the Northwest Territories, and to update it to address new communications approaches and technology.

Next steps

1. Approve or reject recommendations contained in this report.

2. Develop criteria for assessing whether arm's length organizations should be subject to the Visual Identity Program. Assess crown corporations, boards, agencies, and commissioners against this criteria.
3. Update look of logo as recommended.
4. Develop criteria and process for review and approval of program symbols.
5. Write and produce Visual Identity Manual to provide guidelines for use of the government logo and crest, and incorporate approved recommendations from this report. Incorporate criteria for logo placement, size and usage in various formats. Incorporate criteria and process for review and approval of program symbols. The issue of criteria for determining whether these logos would be registered as trademarks should be addressed as part of a Trademark Policy.
6. Develop and implement communications plan for roll out of Visual Identity Program. Include process for decommissioning departmental logos.
7. Identify and address current logo misuses in government.

Assessment of current visual identity

Purpose of Visual Identity Program review

The Government of the Northwest Territories established its current Visual Identity Program in 1980. At that time, then Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, Mr. John Parker, initiated the Visual Identity Program because:

“...there have been too many different symbols used by the Government of the Northwest Territories as a whole or by its various parts.”

The then Department of Information was charged with co-ordinating and managing the Program. This Department was later dissolved, and responsibility for the Visual Identity Program devolved to the departmental level. With the age of the Program, staff turnover, the passage of time and the lack of a single agency responsible for administration of the Program, there was uncertainty regarding the use and importance of the Program. The Program did not address all possible uses of the logo. This, in conjunction with the lack of a single agency responsible for the Program, meant that stakeholders were left to interpret the Program. For example, in several instances, the polar bear logo has been incorporated with other graphic elements to represent Government or departmental initiatives. In addition to the polar bear logo, some departments developed their own logos.

Stakeholders, in general, agree that the Visual Identity Program needs revision:

“There’s nothing wrong with the Visual Identity Program, it’s just out of date.”

“There has been no centralized public relations management. In this void, deputies began to develop their own approaches.”

Since the current Visual Identity Program was initiated, the Northwest Territories and its government have faced tremendous change.

There have been ***structural*** changes: Communications in the government have been decentralized, and there is no longer one department, such as the then Department of Information, to manage government-wide communications standards. Other government departments have been formed and then merged to form yet new departments.

There have been ***political*** changes: The Commissioner is no longer the head of government. This is now the role of the Premier. And in 1999, Nunavut was separated from the Northwest Territories as its own territory. Land claims agreements have been negotiated and settled, and self-government negotiations are under way with other Aboriginal governments.

There have been *economic* changes: Land and self-government negotiations have paved the way for development of the rich oil and gas reserves in the Beaufort Delta and other parts of the Northwest Territories. Construction of an oil and gas pipeline is looming. The discovery of diamonds has resulted in significant construction and diamond mining activity. Secondary diamond industries are establishing in the north. These economic developments have thrust the Northwest Territories further onto the international stage.

There have been *technological* changes: Since the late 1970s, when the Visual Identity Program was created, use and capability of digital technology has increased. The everyday use of desktop computers, faxes, Internet, and electronic mail has all become commonplace in the past 20 years.

All of these changes have resulted in a Visual Identity Program which, while innovative and functional when it was developed some 20 years ago, is ineffective today in its current form. The Program requires modernization to reflect the myriad of changes since it was originally created, and to address the realities of today.

In particular, the current Visual Identity Program requires updating in order to address philosophical/policy, design and application, and administrative issues.

Philosophical/policy issues:

- purpose of the Visual Identity Program
- the proliferation of logos, symbols, and visual themes used by government departments
- use of official symbols of the Northwest Territories
- integration of official languages
- what government departments and arm's length agencies are subject to use the Visual Identity Program, and the criteria for exclusion or inclusion in the Program

Design and application issues:

- changes to the appearance of the current logo
- changes to departmental signatures
- web applications of the visual identity
- development of a new visual identity guide

Administrative issues:

- protecting the Visual Identity Program through legislation
- entrenching the Visual Identity Program in policy
- roll out and maintenance of the new Visual Identity Program

Philosophical/policy issues

Purpose of Visual Identity Program

A visual identity program does not stand on its own. It is a part of a larger strategy, a larger function in identifying, or in corporate parlance, “branding” the organization.

Lippincott & Margulies, an American company expert in matters of corporate identity, image and branding, distinguish between corporate identity and corporate image:

“...your identity is who you really are – and your image is how much of that reality people understand. Perfect alignment of these two elements is the only certain way to ensure your company is developing the reputation it seeks. In a nutshell, that is the very essence of image management.... Identity includes the organization’s purpose, its vision, its strategy and its business objectives. It encompasses its products and services, and the way its people behave—the shared values of the organization and its employees.... A corporate image, on the other hand, is the sum of all associations and impressions which the company’s various audiences have with the corporate brand. It is how the identity is perceived.”¹

In addressing the Visual Identity Program of the Government of the Northwest Territories, we are addressing corporate image. The image is the embodiment of the Government’s identity – who the government is. Image, or what we are calling visual identity, is a powerful way to communicate, in a sort of visual shorthand, that bundle of attributes people perceive of the Government of the Northwest Territories. And in a small way, it can also influence the perception of what those attributes are.

For example, a strong and consistently used visual identity can suggest a strong and consistent government. Likewise, a visually fragmented identity not only dilutes recognition of the “brand”, but also suggests a government that lacks unity.

A strong, consistent visual identity reinforces the image of the Government of the Northwest Territories within the Northwest Territories, throughout Canada, and around the world.

Brand equity in the Northwest Territories

In the Northwest Territories, visual identity helps the government’s “customers” identify and access services, as well as identify accountability and credit for services. The visual identity also provides a mechanism by which government employees can identify with a unified organization and supports a culture of internal teamwork and partnership. It is important to note that a strong, consistent visual identity cannot *create* unity and

¹ From “Managing Image in a Dynamic Corporate Environment”, by Kenneth J. Roberts, Chairman and CEO, Lippincott & Margulies, as found at www.lippincott-margulies.com/publications/a_roberts03.shtml

teamwork. Rather, it can only support such a philosophy or vision if embodied in the government's way of doing business. As noted by Lippincott & Margulies, identity (who you really are) and image (how much of that identity people understand) must align.

Stakeholders, when asked the role or purpose of a visual identity program, identified its role as follows:

- **Credibility:** to project a professional image
- **Accountability and credit:** so that Northwest Territories residents know who they're dealing with when dealing with government
- **Identity:** allows Northwest Territories residents to identify with their government

However, one stakeholder insightfully noted:

"It works to have a single identification if you run the organization as a single organization. This does not happen here. Right now there is no unity of employees. We run the government as individual departments that use the same rules but play different games."

There was recognition by several stakeholders that there is an internal role to be played by the visual identity in building morale, identity, and teamwork. This is the reason most often cited by stakeholders for the need for, genesis of, and existence of departmental logos.

Brand equity in Canada

The Government of the Northwest Territories' visual identity has an important role promoting the government's image throughout Canada. Given changes in the past two decades, the Northwest Territories is taking a stronger and more active role in national politics, and garners increased interest from the rest of Canadians. For these reasons, it is again important that the Government portray a strong and consistent image in order to underline its image.

Brand equity in the World

Tourism and resource development has launched the Northwest Territories on to the international stage. At this level, the current visual identity logo (polar bear) is relatively un-diluted by additional or alternate logos. The polar bear logo on the international stage has been used extensively by the Government of the Northwest Territories for tourism promotions and, more recently, in conjunction with promoting Northwest Territories diamonds and oil and gas development.. It is believed the polar bear logo has significant recognition value (or brand equity) internationally.

Stakeholder perceptions of brand equity

While not tested, it is generally believed among stakeholders and by the consultant, that a significant level of brand equity exists in the polar bear logo both nationally and internationally. In the Northwest Territories, the polar bear logo is well established. Notwithstanding expressions by some stakeholders that the bear is no longer representative of many communities in the Northwest Territories (the population of polar bears is limited to a small number of coastal communities), there appears to be significant affinity for it and for maintaining it in the near future.

Certainly, visual identity and its management plays an important role in how the Government of the Northwest Territories is perceived and identified locally, nationally and globally. As some of the stakeholders put it:

“Visual identity is more important than we think. We need to take it seriously.”

“They fight wars over symbols. Symbols are very important.”

Recommendation

The government’s identity is embodied in the visual identity/logo, however, the logo does not create the identity. The government’s identity is created by its political and operational leadership and practices.

The purpose of the government’s Visual Identity Program must be the very essence of any revisions to the program. Once that purpose is established and agreed, any guidelines incorporated in the Visual Identity Program must be measured against that purpose. If they do not support that purpose, they should be reconsidered, and only approaches and guidelines that support the purpose should be adopted.

Traditionally, in a corporate environment, the purpose of visual identity is to embody the organization’s identity – to be the visual short-hand that is the public’s cue to identifying and identifying with the organization and all that it represents.

In consultation, some stakeholders suggested an alternate purpose for the visual identity – to build internal government morale, identity, and teamwork.

While agreeing that employee morale, identity and teamwork are important, this is not the role of the visual identity. There are important and highly effective initiatives that can address issues of internal morale, identity and teamwork. As one stakeholder noted:

“Give employees a nicer lunchroom, and the opportunity to dialogue directly with the deputy minister a few times a year, and that will do more for morale than any symbol will.”

The function of the visual identity is to focus externally to be the visual representation of the government's (and internationally the Canadian north's) identity. As such, it is recommended that in developing new visual identity guidelines, and revising the Visual Identity Program, all guidelines and changes are aligned with that purpose. Guidelines and changes that are not aligned with that purpose should be disregarded or deleted.

Departmental logos

Current practice

Several stakeholder departments use logos, other than the polar bear logo, to identify their departments. These logos have various levels of establishment within the departments in which they originated. Some are used only on materials and for uses with internal audiences. Some are used externally. Some are used in conjunction with the polar bear logo; some without. That is to say, there is no consistency in whether or how departmental logos are used. Additionally, there appear to be no parameters guiding the development of departmental logos, resulting in a dissimilar look and feel among departmental logos, and between departmental logos and the government logo.

Stakeholder input

Stakeholders had much to say on the topic of departmental logos.

Stakeholders with departmental logos cite various reasons for the development of departmental logos. Common among the reasons is the need to develop a sense of identity and unity within the department, especially after departments have been merged. Departmental logos are said to be important in building and maintaining departmental morale and teamwork, and are said to be a symbol of pride with the employees. In the words of one stakeholder:

“Our departmental logo provides employee motivation and loyalty. That’s why it was developed.”

This reasoning speaks to a culture and morale issue in the Government of the Northwest Territories public service.

In addition to the issue of morale, the following rationale for departmental logos was cited:

“You need to identify departments so that you don’t get bombarded by general government inquiries.”

However, the effect of departmental logos is to dilute the effectiveness of the government's “brand identity”. At worst it creates confusion, and at best it limits

recognition the government receives for its initiatives and services. As stakeholders themselves noted:

“Departmental logos often give the impression of an independent agency.”

“We are sending out an inconsistent message when we are trying to give a distinct message.”

“Departmental logos are confusing to consumers and having them throws away everything you seek to achieve in having a visual identity program.”

“We are all parts of the same whole. Each department is part of that whole.”

“We work with one purpose – delivery of goods, services, leadership.”

“The visual identity should be something that identifies the government no matter what department it is. Separate identifiers are confusing. Departmental logos are exclusionary, not motivating.”

When compared against the purpose of a visual identity -- to be the visual representation of the Government of the Northwest Territories' external identity -- such departmental logos do not align. In fact, the use of departmental logos detracts from the purpose of a visual identity as a unifying, distinct, recognizable “brand” for the government. Stakeholders put it this way:

“There are two problems with department logos – you don't know who you're dealing with, and they're not being managed.”

“The logo says ‘this is the Government of the Northwest Territories’. It is the government signature. Departmental logos dilute the impact and make it harder for people to identify with their government.”

“Departmental logos are an inefficient use of government money in design, and in printing costs. This is confusing for the general public, who would rather see this money spent in programs.”

One stakeholder spoke about the current proliferation of departmental and program logos and the difficulty it currently creates in having people identify with their government. He saw the potential for the problem to worsen if it is not dealt with effectively:

“Just wait until self-government.”

Approaches in other jurisdictions

Other jurisdictions have also grappled with the proliferation of departmental logos and visual marks. (See “Use of other themes and logos”, page 43). Some, such as the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia have addressed this issue by putting a moratorium on the use of logos other than officially sanctioned logos, unless approved through a designated approval mechanism.

Recommendations

The creation and use of departmental logos is out of step with the purpose and role of a visual identity. Notwithstanding several stakeholders that support the use of departmental logos (those departments currently using them), many stakeholders agree that departmental logos dilute the government’s logo.

It is recommended that the moratorium on development of new departmental logos should continue.

Given the entrenchment and strong affinity for the several departmental logos that currently exist, it is recommended that departments with logos be given the opportunity to phase out departmental logos over a period of time, with all departmental logos completely phased out by March 31, 2004.

In order to help identify specific departments within government, a form of the polar bear logo with departmental signature should be redeveloped and included in the Visual Identity Program. The logo with departmental signature would be used when it is important to identify a specific initiative or program with a department of government rather than with the government as a whole, for example, for departmental initiatives. The logo with the Northwest Territories signature would be used, for example, when several departments work jointly on a project (such as Maximizing Northern Employment), or for government-wide initiatives.

Program themes and symbols

Current practices

The Government of the Northwest Territories initiates and operates several distinct programs, such as:

- The Highway Investment Strategy (Transportation; Finance)
- A Better Way (Education, Culture and Employment; Northwest Territories Housing Corporation)
- Careers that Make a Difference (Health and Social Services)
- Child and Family Services (Health and Social Services)
- Healthy Families (Health and Social Services)s
- Canadian Arctic Diamonds (Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development)
- Genuine Mackenzie Valley Furs (Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development)

- Business Incentive Policy (Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development)
- School of Community Government (Municipal and Community Affairs)
- Building Communities (Municipal and Community Affairs)
- Wire North (Municipal and Community Affairs)
- Maximizing Northern Employment (Education Culture and Employment, among others)

In addition to programs initiated and run by the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Government also partners with other governments and organizations.

Stakeholder views

Stakeholders, especially those using visual themes, articulated the need for the use of design themes to promote and differentiate certain programs of the government. Often, these programs do not have a life span beyond a few years. Some stakeholders recognized the need to control the development of other symbols used by government.

“Program or partnership logos should only be developed with approval...”

Program visual themes are generally used to tie several collaterals and products together, such as a series of publications and an advertising strategy.

Practices in other jurisdictions

The use of design themes is not often addressed in visual identity programs of the other jurisdictions reviewed, with the following exceptions:

Alberta does deal with visual themes, and identifies specifically how icons developed to represent specific government programs, can be used, and their placement on collaterals.

The British Columbia visual identity program distinguishes between visual marks (logos) for government programs or departments and thematic visual elements.

“There are no Graphic Standards Program restrictions on the development of thematic visual elements other than marks. Bodies and programs regulated by the Graphic Standards Program may freely use such stylistic devices as consistent colour, typography, format or illustration to establish continuity and visual recognition in communications, as long as materials are identified through proper use of the BC Signature.”

The Government of Canada does permit the use of program icons, but only with the permission of Treasury Board.

Recommendations

The use of design themes or symbols to denote specific government programs is not inconsistent with the purpose of visual identity. The visual identity logo (bear) represents the government as a whole. Design themes and icons differentiate programs provided by the government. To cite a parallel, the Government of Canada has a very strong, recognizable, and consistent visual identity in its Canada word mark and stylized Canadian flag logo. However, certain programs, such as the federal government's Youth Employment Initiative, have their own unique visual symbol and design theme.

Distinction must be drawn between the use of a symbol to represent a program of government, and the use of a design theme. A design theme is the consistent use of a variety of stylistic elements, such as colour, typography, format or illustration. A symbol, by contrast, is a single identifier, like a logo.

In order to enable the flexibility provided by design themes and symbols for program-specific materials, it is recommended that such devices be permitted. However, an approval process with specific criteria should be developed, communicated, and instituted, both within the initiating department, and endorsed by the Department of Executive, to ensure program symbols are being used for their intended purpose, and are developed to be a professional and effective representation. The review and approvals process for program symbols must be streamlined and efficient. Consideration should be given to whether additional human resources are required to ensure a streamlined and responsive approvals process.

Further, it is recommended that specific requirements be incorporated in the Visual Identity Program manual setting out the relative size and placement of the government logo in relation to the program symbol. The Visual Identity Program should require that the polar bear logo be used on all documents and materials where a program symbol is used, and appear on the same page or relative location as the program symbol. It is recommended that provision be made for the program symbol to be larger than the government logo when used together. Where possible, it is recommended that the government logo, with a tag line, such as: "a program of the Government of the Northwest Territories" be placed adjacent to the program symbol.

Examples of how this tag line could be represented with program logos are presented in Appendix III.

In the case of partnerships with other organizations or governments, the polar bear logo should be used if logos of any of the partner groups is also used, and the Government of the Northwest Territories is an approximately equal partner in the endeavour. Where no other partner logos appear, and the sheer number of partners makes the use of any partner logos impractical, the polar bear logo may be omitted, provided such an agreement is made with the partners in advance.

Official languages

Current practices

The Northwest Territories has some 11 official languages, including French and English. At present, with few exceptions, only English is represented on official documents and signage. However the Department of Public Works does use up to four languages on signage. The languages selected relate to the languages commonly in use in the community in which the specific sign appears as identified under the Government of the Northwest Territories' Official Languages Guidelines.

At the present time, the Special Committee on the *Official Languages Act* is reviewing official languages in the Northwest Territories. The report of this committee is expected in the spring of 2003.

Stakeholder views

Almost without exception, stakeholders recognize the added complexity of incorporating multiple languages in the visual identity. As a result, most stakeholders recommended that unilingual English wording be adopted universally. However, it should be noted that most stakeholders consulted were located in Yellowknife and all were English-speaking. Stakeholder response may have been different had consultations included Aboriginal language speakers, or stakeholders located in remote communities.

Practices in other jurisdictions

The governments of Nunavut, New Brunswick, and Canada address multiple languages in their visual identities. However, in none of these cases are more than two languages portrayed at one time on the government logo. The governments in New Brunswick and Canada, however, do provide both unilingual and bilingual formats for use of their respective logos.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the issue of language in Visual Identity Program delayed until such time that the Review of the *Official Languages Act* is completed by the Special Committee of the Legislature. In this way, any results of this review that impact the number and use of official languages can be properly considered.

Arm's length agencies

Current practices

At present, government departments fall under the purview of the Visual Identity Program. The program is silent on so called "arm's length organizations". Arm's length organizations include such entities as:

- Crown corporations (Housing Corporation, Northwest Territories Development Corporation, Power Corporation, Workers' Compensation Board)
- Boards and agencies (health boards, education boards)
- Initiatives and organizations largely funded by the Government of the Northwest Territories (Arctic Energy Alliance, Women's Centre)
- Commissions and commissioners (Languages Commissioner, Information and Privacy Commissioner, Conflict of Interest Commissioner)

Stakeholder views

As expected, all arm's length agencies consulted believe that in order to remain arm's length, they need an identity independent from the Government of the Northwest Territories. In defense of their independent logos, some arm's length organizations noted:

"Although we are funded by government, we are trying to be independent from government."

"We're here to create jobs and economic growth. The public perception is that the government shouldn't be in business."

However, all indicated that they could foresee instances and certain arm's length organizations that should be required to use the Government's logo.

Different criteria were suggested for determining whether an organization should use the Government of the Northwest Territories logo. These criteria included:

- Level of Government of the Northwest Territories funding
- Level of autonomy from government
- Reporting and organizational structure of the organization -- does it have an independently elected board (such as school boards, municipal councils)? Does the organization report to a minister or deputy minister?
- Level of Government of the Northwest Territories influence – does the government have the ability to directly intervene in the affairs of the arm's length organization?

Practices in other jurisdictions

Visual identity guidelines in other government jurisdictions are silent on the issue of arm's length agencies with the exception of the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia.

The Government of Canada specifically lists those government-related organizations that are exempt from their Federal Identity Program.

Recommendations

Whether to require arm's length organizations to comply with the Government of the Northwest Territories Visual Identity Program is a political decision, and will stem from the government's philosophy toward overall government involvement in business and lives of northerners.

Having said that, there are several considerations to be made. Certain arm's length organizations require autonomy from government in order to be successful in meeting their mandates. Commissions and commissioners are in this group. Though government funded, and although they report to the Legislature, they must be, and be perceived to be independent from government in order to act in their "watchdog" role.

It is recommended that a set of criteria be developed for inclusion under the Visual Identity Program. Each arm's length organization should be tested against this criteria to determine whether it must adhere to the Program.

Design and application issues

The logo

Current practices

The polar bear logo has been the symbol of the Government of the Northwest Territories since 1968. It was originally developed for the purposes of promoting tourism in the Northwest Territories. In 1980, the polar bear logo was refined with the addition of the ice floe. This logo has been the official symbol of the Government of the Northwest Territories for over 20 years.

The Northwest Territories polar bear is well recognized within the Northwest Territories as the symbol of government. It is also believed to be well recognized throughout Canada and internationally.

Over the course of time, the polar bear logo has been used in applications and manners in addition to those set out in the current Visual Identity Program. For example, the logo has been represented in non-official colours (such as red, orange, green). It has been combined with other symbols to create completely new logos (such as the polar bear in front of a maple leaf to denote a Canada/Northwest Territories initiative, the RWED Parks logo that incorporates a bear and a maple leaf, or the Fire Marshall logo used by MACA). Such practices dilute the effectiveness of the logo in communicating a consistent image of government.

At present, the polar bear logo and the Shield are represented by the logo with various signatures below the logo. These signatures include “Northwest Territories” and “Northwest Territories Canada” for international use. In the case of the Shield, the signature “Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly” is also used. The polar bear logo with the Northwest Territories signature may also be represented with the department’s name, as a departmental signature.

Stakeholder views

Most stakeholders consulted indicated very strongly that the use of the polar bear as the logo of Government should remain. Many indicated that the logo may require slight revisions to modernize it, but that the recognition value (equity) in the polar bear symbol is so high, and so well established that to introduce a new symbol would be highly inappropriate.

Given reaction to recent proposals to alter the name of the Northwest Territories, stakeholders felt that a similar reaction could be expected to any wholesale change to the polar bear logo. Some, however, indicated that until such time in the future that the Northwest Territories undergoes fundamental structural change – such as the resolution

of self-government, or attainment of province status – it may be appropriate to consider a logo change.

Further, many stakeholders identified that there would be a high cost in terms of time and money if the logo were to be changed.

Notwithstanding overwhelming advice to “keep the polar bear”, many stakeholders acknowledged and recommended that the logo be updated and modernized.

A small minority of those consulted felt strongly that since division, the polar bear is no longer appropriate as the logo of the Government of the Northwest Territories. This small group felt that a logo should be more representative of the new composition of the Northwest Territories.

Recommendations

The polar bear symbolizes strength, power and authority, and as a logo, is visually strong. Although not documented through research, there is a belief by stakeholders and the consultant, that the polar bear has significant brand equity in the Northwest Territories, Canada and the world.

Making a wholesale change to the polar bear logo would be costly. To cite only a few examples, costs would be incurred to:

- Replace all stationery.
- Create new signage, remove all old signage, and replace it with new signage. This includes all interior and exterior signage in all government buildings in all Northwest Territories communities. It also includes all branded highway signs on all Northwest Territories highways.
- Redevelop existing informational material, including maps, park brochures, departmental brochures and publications.
- Launch the marketing/communications plan required to “market” the government’s new identity.

Given recent reaction to a proposed name change for the Northwest Territories, a wholesale change to the logo would likely generate significant public opposition.

For these reasons, it is recommended that the Government of the Northwest Territories maintain the polar bear as its logo at least until such time as there are fundamental structural changes to the Northwest Territories that would merit reconsideration of the polar bear logo.

10. Although it is recommended that no wholesale changes be made to the polar bear as logo, it is recommended that the logo be updated and refreshed. We recommend updating the typeface to a more classic typeface that will stand the test of time. The typeface used currently in the logo is Avant Garde and is considered “old fashioned looking”, and weakens the logo. In addition, consideration must be given to the

positioning of type under the polar bear symbol to maximize balance between the polar bear and type to assure a visual strength no matter the size or application of the logo. Revisions may require new trademark registrations.

It is recommended that the signatures that accompany the logo be revisited in terms of their content and structure. Handling of the departmental signatures in their current horizontal format is cumbersome, and consideration should be given to succinct horizontal and vertical versions of departmental signatures. It is recommended that the words “Northwest Territories” be dropped from the signature ONLY WHEN a departmental signature is used.

Other government symbols

Current practices

At present, the only symbol, other than the polar bear logo, that is reflected in the current Visual Identity Program guide, is the Territorial Shield. The Visual Identity Program provides that the Shield is reserved for use by the Executive, the Legislative Assembly and on various legal documents. However, in practice, the Shield is used more widely, and it is unknown whether such use is sanctioned. For example, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation incorporates the Shield in its logo.

As well, the legislature of the Northwest Territories uses a depiction of the legislative buildings as a logo in addition to the Shield.

The VIP is silent on the other government-sanctioned symbols:

- Flower (Mountain Aven), established by the *Floral Emblem Act*
- Flag, established by the *Flag Act*
- Seal
- Coat of Arms
- Tree (Tamarack)
- Mace
- Fish (Grayling)
- Bird (Gyr Falcon)
- Gem (Diamond)
- Mineral (Gold)
- Tartan

A separate booklet, “Official Symbols of the Northwest Territories” details these official symbols, but does not provide direction on their use.

Practices in other jurisdictions

Other jurisdictions do not include all of their official symbols in their visual identity programs. Some jurisdictions reference what the symbols are, but do not specify their use. The exception is the use of the Coat of Arms, crest (Shield), and flag. The Visual Identity Programs of most jurisdictions include these official symbols.

Generally, in other jurisdictions the crest or Coat of Arms is reserved for use by the legislature and its members.

Recommendations

Consistent with the approach in other jurisdictions, it is recommended that the Shield, Coat of Arms and flag – and their proper use – be detailed and included in the Visual Identity Program. These symbols should be *identified* in the Visual Identity Program, however guidelines on their *use* should not be included in the Program. They should also be protected as official symbols, either by legislation, or registration as trademarks and/or official marks, or both.

Visual Identity Program manual

Current practice

At present, there are several manuals, which provide guidance on the use of the visual identity, and its various elements. To the consultant's knowledge, the only visual identity manual sanctioned by Cabinet is the original Visual Identity Program manual developed in the late 1970s under the direction of then Commissioner John Parker.

Other manuals include:

- Government of the Northwest Territories Internet Handbook (Office of the Press Secretary)
- Ad Templates Manual (Public Works and Services)
- Department of Public Works & Highways Signage system Manual
- Department of Transportation Visual Identity Standard

The official Visual Identity Program manual addresses use of the polar bear logo as the symbol of government departments and agencies and the Territorial Shield as the symbol of Cabinet and the Department of Executive. It then specifies how these two symbols are to be used, for example on stationery, to identify vehicles, on signage, and in advertising.

The manual does not address digital uses of the logos, such as on computer-generated faxes, web pages, email, presentations (such as PowerPoint), or video use.

Practices in other jurisdictions

Other jurisdictions use a visual identity manual to detail how and when sanctioned logos and identities can be used. A comprehensive list of information included in other jurisdictions is included in the overview of practices in other jurisdictions in the section entitled “Fields of application and design standards”, page 44.

Few of these manuals, however – even those developed recently, such as those from Nunavut and British Columbia – reflect guidelines for electronic use.

Stakeholder views

Virtually all stakeholders consulted indicated that the Visual Identity Program manual should provide the “rules” for using sanctioned logos, but also provide sufficient flexibility for so as to allow departments some measure of creativity and self-expression.

Stakeholders indicated that the manual must be clear and specific and written at a level that is understandable and easily applied by a reader otherwise unfamiliar with printing and production terminology, processes and specification.

“We need guidelines with flexibility. A good orientation is also needed -- what can be done and what can't.”

“The visual identity program should provide guidelines only, not hard and fast rules.” In order to encourage compliance, the guidelines need to be easy to read, use up-to-date examples, and provide a rationale for why visual identity is important.”

“There need to be rules. It needs to be clear. But it need not be overly burdensome in terms of specifying exact specs. You need to allow creativity and flexibility.”

“We need a simple and straightforward framework. Allow flexibility within parameters. In terms of compliance, each department should be accountable for compliance, with a duty to comply.”

The views on flexibility in the guidelines were not unanimous, as the following quote represents:

“If we're trying to achieve visual identity, then it should not be flexible because it will not be consistent.”

“It must be cut and dried so that people can follow it. It needs to be controllable. For this it needs support from the top down. All of this is required in context. People need to know why the Visual Identity Program is there.”

One stakeholder identified the importance of outside suppliers in ensuring compliance with the new guidelines:

“Agencies play a role. For example, Inkit knows the (current) guidelines and will conform. We need to work with agencies and get their help in compliance.”

Recommendations

A single, authoritative, and comprehensive manual is required. Therefore, it is recommended that all previous and non-official manuals should cease to be used, in favour of a single Visual Identity Program manual or series of manuals. (The booklet, Symbols of the Northwest Territories, being merely an information booklet, not a guide to using these symbols, would remain).

The Visual Identity Program manual must be simple and intuitive, yet also provide depth of information as needed. Therefore, it is recommended that the Visual Identity Program manual include information on the following topics:

- Purpose and role of Visual Identity Program
- Authority and responsibility for Visual Identity Program
- Parameters for use of departmental logos
- Prohibition of specific logo uses (such as combining logos, stretching logos, etc.)
- Parameters for use of program symbols
- Process for approval for new departmental logos or program symbols
- Definitions
- Contact information for advice on compliance
- Application of visual identity (see below)

The manual should be organized in two parts. The first part should act as an “executive summary” of the Visual Identity Program, identifying sanctioned logos and general information on their proper use; outlining regulations surrounding departmental logos and program symbols. The second part of the manual should include the above topics, and also provide detailed information on specific applications of the logo in various media and taking various forms. In addition to referencing use of the logo, the Visual Identity Program manual would specify design and layout elements as appropriate (for example stationery, business cards, etc.). This part of the manual may be structured as a series of short informational booklets or chapters of a larger single publication. For example, this section of the manual should include requirements and guidelines for use of the logo and crest on:

- Government letterhead, envelopes and letter style
- Executive letterhead, envelopes and letter style
- Business cards, including layout
- Web pages
- Signage
- Publications

- Forms
- News releases
- Fax cover sheet
- Vehicle identification
- Signage (indoor and outdoor)
- Promotional items
- Website
- Static display
- Video display
- Print advertising
- Educational and promotional materials
- Government reports
- Displays and exhibits
- Sponsorship recognition requirements on materials produced
- Materials produced in partnership with others

The Visual Identity Program manual must provide specific guidance on how the polar bear logo, territorial crest, or departmental logo can or cannot be used in each application, as well as whether the government or departmental signatures are to be used in each application.

In particular, it is recommended that the Visual Identity Program manual specify standards for a common look and feel for departmental home pages linked to the government web page, including the appearance and location of the government logo on the home page.

It is further recommended that the Visual Identity Program manual be provided in both print and electronic forms. Electronic forms of the manual would be available on CD and possibly on the Internet. Electronic versions should include copies of all acceptable permutations of all official logos and wordmarks as well as the appropriate logo font.

It is recommended that the printed Visual Identity Program manual be produced in a format that is easily updated. Such a format may be a binder with single-sided insert pages.

Administrative issues

Protecting the VIP and Trademarks

Current practice

At present, the current polar bear logo and its variations are registered trademarks and official marks. The Coat of Arms and Shield of the Northwest Territories are protected by Section 9 of the *Trade-Marks Act* (Canada). While these symbols are not registered trade marks, the Coat of Arms, Crest and flag of a government, once adopted and used, are protected without registration, as Official Marks. None of the existing departmental logos (to the knowledge of the consultant) or program symbols are registered trademarks. However, some of these logos may have common law protection as trademarks given the length of time they have been used, and their recognition value.

When the polar bear logo was created in 1968, it was created as the “Travel Arctic” bear, and then later adopted for general official use by the government. Around the same time, northern businesses were encouraged to use the polar bear to identify themselves as northern businesses. Businesses were provided with permission, in the form of a letter, to do so. These licensing arrangements were without fee. Some businesses, such as Wesclean Northern Sales, have used the polar bear since that time, and continue to use the polar bear in their logos.

Just as the polar bear logo has brand equity from a marketing and communications perspective, the polar bear also has financial value as a registered trademark. The value of the trademark increases through consistent use of the trademark, enforcement of the policing of use of the trademark, and the ability to license it. Generally, the financial value of a trademark is quantified by what it could be sold or licensed for. At this time, RWED advises that current demand for use of the polar bear trademark would put its value in the millions of dollars annually.

Stakeholder views

Most stakeholders did not mention trademark issues unless they were raised by the consultant. However, the small number of stakeholders who did raise the trademark issue drew a parallel between trademark issues and policy and visual identity:

“Visual identity needs to dovetail with trademark policy.”

“The long-term goal should include trademarks. The government should have a one-window approach to the use of symbols.”

Recommendations

Any revisions to the polar bear logo, arising from this review, should be reviewed against the original trademark registrations to ensure the logo continues to benefit from trademark protection. Revisions may require new trademark registrations.

It is further recommended that department logos, which have been recommended for internal use only until eventually phased out, not be registered as trademarks. Likewise it is recommended that, generally, program symbols, intended for short-term use only, need not be registered trademarks. However, some program symbols may need to be registered as trademarks. This will depend on the nature and duration of the program and the importance of the logo to the program's success. This is especially important where there are national and/or international economic development and promotional aspects to the program. For example, it was necessary to register logos developed for the Government of the Northwest Territories Diamond Certification Program in Canada and internationally to protect the integrity of the Certification Program.

Government of the Northwest Territories visual identity and trademarks are related. The Visual Identity Program, when fully operational, works to protect the brand equity of the Government of the Northwest Territories sanctioned symbols (polar bear logo and crest) *within government* by:

- setting guidelines for their use;
- encouraging consistent use and application of the symbols; and
- monitoring and addressing compliance

Managing the government's registered trademarks works to protect use and the financial equity of the Government of the Northwest Territories' trademarks outside government.

Managing the government's trademarks would entail:

- setting guidelines for licensing arrangements;
- ensuring consistent use and application by licensees; and
- enforcement and policing of licensed and non-licensed use of the trademarks.

In essence, visual identity and trademark management are the internal and external portions respectively, of protecting images owned and used by the Government of the Northwest Territories as representations of government.

To facilitate management and monitoring of the Visual Identity Program, this review is being undertaken, with an anticipation that will be revised, a new Visual Identity Program manual will be developed to provide detailed guidelines, and current departures from the guidelines will be brought into compliance with the guidelines. With these tools and processes in place, 'ownership' of the Visual Identity Program can be assigned for its ongoing monitoring and management.

Likewise, before the Government of the Northwest Territories' trademarks can be effectively managed policy must be adopted, setting out rules and criteria for licensing of trademarks. In addition, current inappropriate or unlicensed use must be cleaned up or brought into compliance with the policy. Once those issues have been addressed,

responsibility for government trademarks can also be assigned for ongoing monitoring and management.

Once guidelines/policies have been set in these areas, and current departures are brought into compliance, a single Government of the Northwest Territories body should have ‘ownership’ and responsibility for management of both the Visual Identity Program and management of the Trademark Policy, as they are the internal and external halves of the same whole.

Entrenching the VIP

Current practice

The current Visual Identity Program is entrenched in government policy. The relevant policy is policy 11.21, and in particular the following sections:

5.2a (ii) The Executive Council may approve visual images to be used in the development of the government’s corporate identity.

5.2d (vi) The Press Secretary will maintain and coordinate the implementation of corporate identity and publishing standards and procedures.

5.2e (ii) Deputy Heads are accountable for adherence to communications policy, directions and guidelines

6.4 Corporate Identity: all printed materials and video or film presentations as well as government buildings, construction signage and moving equipment must be properly identified with the appropriate logo-type in accordance with the standards maintained by the Minister of Public Works and Services.

Stakeholder views

Several stakeholders underlined the importance of entrenching the Visual Identity Program in policy to aid compliance. Likewise, stakeholders stated strongly that “ownership” of the Program is required to ensure enforcement of its provisions.

Where ownership and enforcement should lie was a matter of different opinion. However, many identified the departmental communications practitioner the place where responsibility should lie departmentally, with the deputy minister maintaining accountability for compliance. Many stakeholders suggested that the Department of Executive be responsible for auditing and enforcing the visual identity standards set out in the program.

All stakeholders agreed, however, that a top-down directive is required in order to create credibility that will lead to compliance.

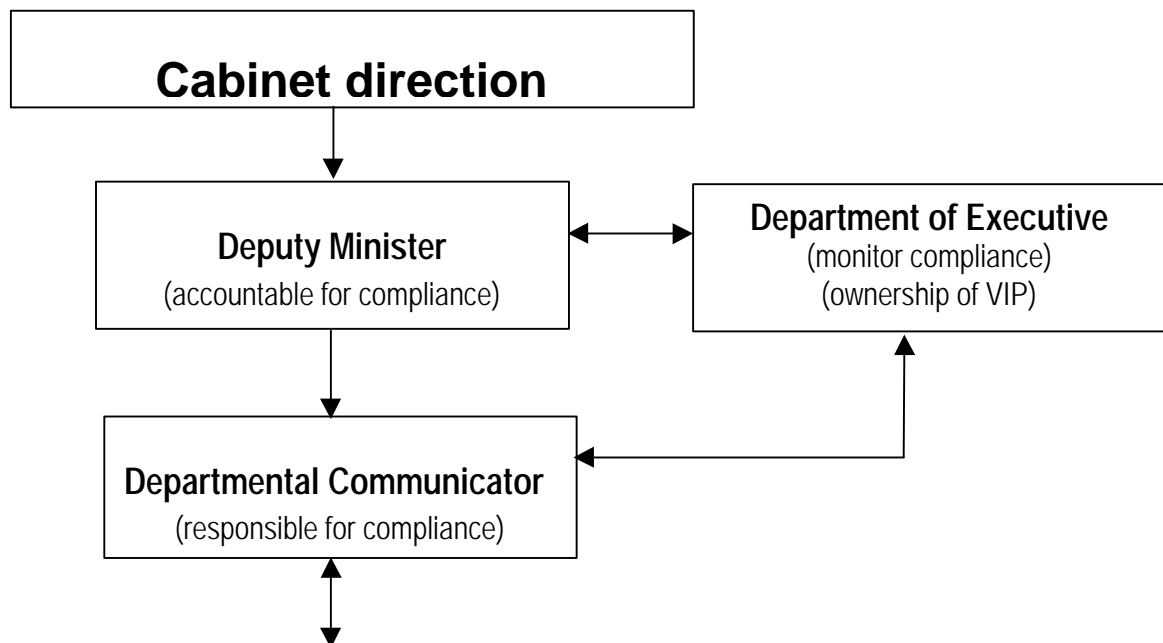
Practices in other jurisdictions

Jurisdictions with centralized communications functions report significant success in ensuring compliance with their Visual Identity Program, and have ownership and authority for the program. Likewise, some jurisdictions, notably Saskatchewan, maintain in-house production capabilities, which aid in ensuring compliance.

Recommendations

The Visual Identity Program must be entrenched in government policy through Cabinet direction. Support for the Program, and compliance with it, must come from the highest levels in the department (Deputy Minister). It is recommended that the departmental communications practitioner be responsible for understanding how and when the guidelines should be applied, and act as the “in-house” consultant in the development of all public materials and signage. It is recommended that the Department of Executive “own” the Program, and be charged with monitoring departmental compliance, for which Deputy Ministers are accountable. To aid in this, it is recommended that a standardized approvals process be implemented for any public materials, prior to production. This approvals process should include review and approval by the departmental communications practitioner and the deputy minister.

Proposed responsibility, accountability and ownership for Visual Identity Program



**Departmental or branch
initiative**
(initiate project)

Roll out and maintenance

Stakeholder views

Stakeholders were asked to indicate what they felt would be required in order for a new Visual Identity Program to be rolled out effectively and complied with. Responses ranged from built-in flexibility in the program, to strict enforcement, to effective communications. As well, the need to provide context and explain the reason for the program, was cited repeatedly:

“People need to understand the purpose and context of the program, rather than it being prescriptive”

Recommendations

Successful roll out and maintenance of the Visual Identity Program requires that those who have to follow the guidelines of the program understand the reasons for the Program, and what is contained in it. They must also be able to easily access advice on implementation issues. In order to meet these needs, it is recommended that a communications plan be developed and implemented. Part of that communications plan should include workshops, at a department level and for the Communications Working Group, to introduce the Visual Identity Program.

Part of the reason why the effectiveness of the existing program has eroded is because of employee turnover – there is a loss of corporate knowledge regarding what is required, and therefore people tend to rely on common sense instead of the guidelines. Therefore, it is further recommended that all new employees in communications roles be required to attend a regularly scheduled (perhaps twice each year) Visual Identity Program orientation.

In order to ensure the Visual Identity Program does not again become out-of-date, it should be reviewed and updated at least every four years to respond to the needs of the Government of the Northwest Territories, and to address new communications approaches and technology.

Next steps

This report is the first step in updating the Government of the Northwest Territories' Visual Identity Program. There are several steps required to move from this report to the development and roll out of a revised Visual Identity Program. The following recommendations outline some of these steps.

Recommendations

The recommended next steps following on this report are as follows:

- Approve or reject recommendations contained in this report
- Develop criteria for assessing whether arm's length organizations should be subject to the Visual Identity Program. Assess crown corporations, boards, agencies, and commissioners against these criteria.
- Update look of logo as recommended.
- Develop criteria and process for review and approval of program symbols.
- Write and produce Visual Identity Manual to provide guidelines for use of the government logo and crest, and incorporate approved recommendations from this report. Incorporate criteria for logo placement, size and usage in various formats. Incorporate criteria and process for review and approval of program symbols.
- Develop and implement communications plan for roll out of Visual Identity Program. Include process for decommissioning departmental logos.
- Identify and address current logo misuses in government, including:
 - Fire Marshall logo
 - Education/Federal government logo
 - Parks logo and logo used by Parks on items for sale
 - Housing Corporation use of Territorial Crest in logo

Practices in other jurisdictions

Overview of jurisdictional review

Visual identity practices in other jurisdictions were reviewed in order to identify issues faced by these jurisdictions -- especially those similar to issues faced in the Northwest Territories -- practices they employed to address these issues, and potential best practices that could be applied to the Government of the Northwest Territories' Visual Identity Program.

Jurisdictions evaluated

Information on visual identity programs and practices was sought from provincial, territorial and federal governments across Canada. Not all jurisdictions provided information.

In addition to government programs, several corporate visual identity/branding programs were evaluated.

Information on the visual identity programs of the following governments was pursued:

- Yukon
- Nunavut
- British Columbia
- Alberta
- Saskatchewan
- Manitoba (not received)
- Ontario (unavailable due to current labour dispute)
- Nova Scotia
- New Brunswick
- Prince Edward Island
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Canada

In addition, visual identity programs of the following corporations and non-governmental organizations were reviewed:

- KPMG Chartered Accountants
- EPCOR (Alberta electrical utility crown corporation)
- TELUS (Alberta/BC telecommunications company)
- Capital Health Authority (Alberta)

These organizations were identified as those with strong and well-managed visual identity programs in discussions with the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS),

International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), and individual marketing, communications, and public relations contacts of the consultant.

The nature of the review of these programs consisted of reviewing each jurisdiction's visual identity or graphics standards manuals. In addition, in several jurisdictions, this was followed up with discussions with the creators and administrators of these programs to discuss how various issues are handled and why.

Overview of government visual identity programs

There is a strong similarity amongst provincial and territorial visual identity programs with regard to rationale and purpose for the program, graphic approach, and application.

Corporate visual identity programs are less consistent in the construction of their visual identity manuals. This is because corporate VIPs are generally constructed as part of a broader branding or marketing strategy. Corporate VIPs, as well as delineating the range of logo permutations permissible, focus on the power and influence of the VIP in the overall image, recognition, and branding of the organization.

Visual identity programs reviewed address most or all of the following areas:

- Background/purpose of the visual identity program
- Official symbols (Coat of Arms, government logo/word mark, flag)
 - Some VIPs also speak to symbols such as official plant, animal, tartan etc.
- Guidelines for use of Coat of Arms
 - Size, type, colour, positioning specifications
 - Printing methods
 - What to avoid/samples of inappropriate usage
- Guidelines for use of logo/word mark
 - Size, type, colour specifications
 - Printing methods
 - What to avoid/samples of inappropriate usage
- Departmental signatures
- Use of visual identity in partnership programs
- International usage of visual identities
- Use of logo/wordmark/Coat of Arms in the following applications
 - Stationery
 - Forms
 - Signage (interior, exterior, park, project, vehicle)
 - Uniforms, crests and badges
 - Promotional items
 - Website
 - Print advertising
 - Collateral
 - Video display

- Use of other symbols (i.e. departmental identities)
- Incorporation of other languages
- Listing of arm's length organizations not subject to VIP
- Definitions
- Roles and responsibilities respecting management of and compliance with VIP
- Contact phone numbers, and availability of electronic versions of logos and symbols

Issues of pertinence to the Government of the Northwest Territories Visual Identity Program Review

Visual identity programs reviewed provided some options and variations in how various elements of the program, and issues arising from the program are handled. Programs from other jurisdictions were reviewed with an eye to identifying applications that may be pertinent to practices and issues related to the Government of the Northwest Territories Visual Identity Program. Such issues where other jurisdictions provide instructive approaches that may be considered by the Government of the Northwest Territories include:

- Use of official multiple languages
- Compliance
- Role of VIP in positioning and marketing of a government or organization
- Identification of other official government symbols
- Use of other visual themes and logos
- Exempt organizations and criteria for exemption
- National versus international use of logos and symbols
- Legal protection and trademark issues
- Use of corporate signatures in co-ordination with signatures
- Fields of application and design standards
- Definitions
- Use of Coat of Arms and crests

Best and other practices

Use of multiple official languages

The VIPs of the following governments address the use of multiple languages: New Brunswick (English/French), Nunavut (English/Inuktitut/French), Canada (English/French).

The Nunavut VIP requires that all materials (letterhead, business cards, signage, etc.) incorporate the three languages plus roman orthography in a specified order.

The New Brunswick and Canada VIPs provide options for unilingual English, unilingual French, and bilingual use of logos and wordmarks. Specific and detailed criteria outline how and when each of these options can be used.

None of these programs address the issue faced by the Government of the Northwest Territories, which is the existence of a multitude of official languages. However, the approach taken by New Brunswick and Canada to provide for the use of the government signature in either bilingual or unilingual formats may provide an instructive approach to incorporating more than one language on any specific publication, sign, or other use of the signature.

Role of VIP in positioning and marketing of a government or organization

All government programs reviewed identify the purpose of their respective VIPs in terms of the need, value, and efficiency of having a strong, recognizable identity in the public. Various governments articulate these purposes within the contexts of their own issues and needs. In general, the benefits and purpose of visual identity programs is identified as follows:

- To address the fundamental changes to ways of communicating as a result of technological change in the past two decades, including the fax machine, desktop publishing, electronic publishing, Internet and Intranets, and web pages.
- To address a proliferation of marks developed within government departments, agencies and programs, and their impact in eroding the public's ability to clearly identify authorship or ownership of materials or initiatives.
- To communicate unity of purpose within government; to portray the government's "corporate" identity clearly and accurately; to build a strong, visible, and valuable public image of government, and to maximize marketing benefit of government communications by building awareness.
- To improve the public's ability to access government programs and services
- To ensure cost and time efficiency through standardization, and reduce unnecessary costs associated with the development, printing, and maintenance of new or alternate visual marks.

The link between strong visual identity and marketing/branding efforts was underlined even more strongly in non-governmental visual identity programs. For example, the KPMG visual identity guidelines are presented as one element in an overall branding strategy, which includes strategy (including results of global quantitative research); sample creative (TV, print and collateral), production guidelines (TV, print and collateral) and compliance.

Protecting/entrenching VIP in policy/legislation

Most government VIPs reviewed protect or entrench the program through policy or cabinet directive. Indeed, in discussions with administrators of VIPs in government, the

message of their experience was clear: If the VIP is not authorized and endorsed from the top down, it will not have sufficient credibility nor authority to create the broadly-based compliance required to maximize benefit from a VIP.

Compliance

Mechanisms to encourage or ensure compliance vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, however it is recognized in all jurisdictions with which interviews were conducted, that compliance is an ongoing issue. It is an issue in two distinct ways. Firstly, compliance is required in order to maximize the effectiveness of the program. Without a requirement for compliance, and without actual compliance, visual identity programs are ineffectual in branding and marketing efforts. Secondly, compliance is difficult to ensure, and 100% compliance has not yet been achieved in any of the jurisdictions evaluated.

In virtually all jurisdictions, the visual identity program is the responsibility of the communications arm of the government's executive department or management secretariat. The communication's arm provides guidelines to departments or departmental representatives on the proper implementation of the guidelines, and monitors compliance.

In Saskatchewan, the government operates Government Printing Services, which aids in compliance. Print analysts, who are familiar with the VIP guidelines review each print piece, and can identify and rectify potential problems prior to printing. However this applies only to visual identity compliance on print items. Saskatchewan also uses a system of employing "agencies of record". Under such a system, each department is "assigned" a Saskatchewan-based advertising agency with which to work on the development of all materials. These agencies of record are cognizant of the VIP guidelines and requirements and have become expert in its application. The Government of Saskatchewan has found the easiest medium in which to ensure compliance is in web page development. The reasons for this are that web is a new medium, and because web pages are easily accessible, identifying examples of compliance or non-compliance is simplified.

In Alberta, the communications function of government is centralized. Authority and responsibility for the VIP rests with the Public Affairs Bureau, which has communications specialists assigned to work with each department. While individual departments are guided in the use of the Alberta signature and Coat of Arms by a VIP booklet, they are directed to consult the Public Affairs Bureau on any new applications of the visual identity.

The Government of New Brunswick operates an in-house agency, called Design Services, which provides a broad range of creative services in print and digital media. In addition to producing presentations, designing print materials, creating web pages, and consulting on corporate visual communications strategies, Design Services is responsible for the VIP. Centralizing design services increases compliance with the VIP.

British Columbia has taken an innovative approach to compliance. The visual identity program is administered by the Public Affairs Bureau and the Queen's Printer, facilitated by a stakeholder advisory panel, the Graphic Standards Group. British Columbia has established a specific policy and process on the development and use of marks other than the official government logo. Authority to use other marks is granted only by written permission after consideration by the Graphic Standards Group. An application form is provided for departments to use for this purpose, and a streamlined review process with specific criteria for approval is used to review requests.

The Federal Identity Program (FIP) is administered by Treasury Board Secretariat, which monitors compliance through reports, internal audits, and liaison with institutions. Compliance is further facilitated by the Government of Canada's a strict and rigorous approvals regime for the production of materials.

Several Visual Identity Programs recognize other official symbols of the government (official flower, animal, and so on), however they do not address their use in the VIP. It is assumed that the programs' silence on their use implies that they are outside of the Visual Identity Program

Use of other visual themes and logos

Most visual identity programs do not address the use of other visual themes and logos in their visual identity manuals. It is assumed that the programs' silence on their use implies that they are not encouraged or not permitted.

An exception is British Columbia. In its foreword, the British Columbia Graphic Standards Program acknowledges a proliferation of alternate marks as a key motivator in revising the VIP:

“Over the same time period there was a proliferation of marks developed within government for ministries, agencies and programs. The effect of this trend was to decrease the consistency of government identification and clarity of authorship, and to increase communications costs.”

British Columbia took an innovative approach to managing the development and production of alternate marks. It developed a policy on the development and use of other marks that allows the development of such marks only by written permission after consideration by the Graphic Standards Group. The Graphic Standards Group advises the Queen's Printer and the Cabinet Policy and Communications Secretariat, who jointly administer the VIP. The Graphic Standards Group evaluates requests for alternate marks in a streamlined process, using clearly defined criteria.

The British Columbia VIP distinguishes between visual marks (logos) for government programs or administrative units (departments) – which must adhere to the permission process above – and thematic visual elements.

“There are no Graphic Standards Program restrictions on the development of thematic visual elements other than marks. Bodies and programs regulated by the Graphic Standards Program may freely use such stylistic devices as consistent colour, typography, format or illustration to establish continuity and visual recognition in communications, as long as materials are identified through proper use of the BC Signature.”

The Alberta VIP does allow for other visuals to appear on stationery, under specific placement criteria. Throughout the VIP manuals, however, these additional visuals are referred to as “logos and visuals representing department programs...” This suggests that programs may have visual identities in Alberta, but not departments per se.

The Alberta VIP provides criteria and direction for use of the Alberta word mark in partnership and joint initiatives.

In the Yukon, both the Department of Tourism and the Department of Economic Development have their own logos. Use of alternate logos has been set out in policy as follows:

“Most departments or branch have no departmental or branch symbol or mark. Those having no mark are not encouraged to develop them but should look to the word mark as a vehicle to achieve departmental objectives. Those departments with identifying marks are encouraged to incorporate them with the word mark to provide a unified Government of Yukon identity.”

The Government of Canada clearly prohibits the use of symbols other than the government’s corporate symbols unless requested by a minister and approved by the President of the Treasury Board.

Use of logo for tourism purposes

New Brunswick has a distinct logo, which incorporates the Government of New Brunswick logo, especially for use in identifying products produced, harvested or manufactured in the province.

The Yukon’s visual identity program identifies a logo, distinct from the Government’s overall logo, for the Department of Tourism.

Exempt organizations and criteria for exemption

The Government of Canada lists all federal institutions and arm’s length organizations that are not subject to the Federal Identity Program. Each of the listed organizations is exempt either because of Cabinet approval or because of their legal status.

National versus international use of logos and symbols

Some jurisdictions (including Yukon, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia) use specific permutations of the official government logo or word mark specifically for international use.

Use of corporate signatures in co-ordination with signatures

Visual identity programs in other government jurisdictions provide parameters around when and how (size, placement, etc.) signatures of other partnering organizations can be used with the government logo.

Fields of application and design standards

The Visual Identity manuals provided by other jurisdictions vary in the comprehensiveness of the various media on which the visual identity should apply. Manuals detail use and design standards for application of the government logo in some or all of the following:

- Departmental stationery, including letterhead, business cards, envelopes
- Executive stationery
- Brochures
- News releases
- Fax cover sheet
- Vehicle identification
- Signage (indoor and outdoor)
- Promotional items
- Website
- Video display
- Print advertising
- Forms
- Educational and promotional materials
- Government reports
- Displays and exhibits

Definitions

Most VIPs provide definitions as part of their visual identity manuals.

Use of coats of arms and crests

Most jurisdictions have a unique and restricted-use symbol reserved for use by members of the Legislature and the Judiciary. Some also have symbols reserved for the use of the Crown's representative (Lieutenant Governor). However, there is little consistency amongst the jurisdictions reviewed, regarding these symbols. Some jurisdictions have

both a Coat of Arms and a provincial crest. In other jurisdictions the crest is referred to as the Coat of Arms.

The following is an overview of how use of these symbols are designated:

- British Columbia: The BC Heraldic Signature consists of the province's fully detailed Coat of Arms with the BC Word mark. This signature is reserved for use by those who report directly to the legislature, or who represent it. In BC, the Royal Crest is reserved for the Crown's representative.
- Alberta: The Alberta Coat of Arms is limited to the Premier and the Premier's Office, Ministers and their Offices, and documents representing programs of the Legislative Authority and the Provincial courts of Alberta. Alberta has a separate crest, however the visual identity guidelines do not address restrictions on its use.
- Yukon: The Coat of Arms and the crest are one in the same. It is reserved for executive level applications such as by the Office of the Premier/Government Leader, Commissioner and Ministers.
- PEI: PEI has a symbol, which incorporates the Provincial Coat of Arms/Crest. This symbol is designated as the Lieutenant Governor's Emblem.
- New Brunswick: New Brunswick has both a Coat of Arms, which is used by on Legislative and judicial documents, as well as a Lieutenant Governor's Emblem which incorporates the Provincial Crest.
- Nova Scotia: Nova Scotia has a Coat of Arms as well as House of Assembly Crest. Although not articulated specifically in the visual identity guidelines, it is assumed that this crest is to be used by members of the House of Assembly/Legislature.
- Saskatchewan: The Coat of Arms is limited to, and used as the symbol for the Legislative Assembly and the Judiciary.
- The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador uses its Shield as its government logo.

Practices in non-governmental jurisdictions

Much less uniformity was observed in visual identity program materials from non-governmental jurisdictions. However, several of the organizations researched did address some of the issues being considered in this review, such as the proliferation of alternate and additional identifying marks.

Corporate approaches to visual identity differ from government approaches to visual identity in that the corporations researched arise from the marketing and branding strategy. The visual identity flows from the marketing or branding strategy, and supports and furthers that strategy. Corporate organizations look first to the purpose; the reason for the visual identity, and from that, all else falls, including what the identity looks like, how it is used, who uses it, and when it is used.

For example, KPMG, in addressing the question: "Why brand?", notes that branding separates and elevates the company from its competition, lends credibility to the

organization, creates value, and builds belonging both in clients and within the firm. The visual identity supports those objectives.

With TELUS, the company started strategically, and built its visual identity to support its overall corporate marketing strategy. The visual identity builds the context in the things that support it. In other words, the visual mark becomes the shorthand embodiment of an overall bundle of goods and services, customer expectations, and perceived value from the organization. The focus is on the strategy, and the visual identity flows from there.

Approaches of pertinence to the Government of the Northwest Territories Visual Identity Program Review

The best practice of corporations that is applicable to the Government of the Northwest Territories' visual identity program is the approach of focusing on the purpose and role of the visual identity program as part of the overall branding and marketing strategy of the organization, and ensuring the visual identity program is aligned with overall "corporate" strategy.

The corporations reviewed are highly successful in limiting or eliminating or strategically managing alternate "brands" and looks generated within the corporation. Even in a multinational firm such as KPMG, the organization is successful in ensuring all countries; all departments comply with the visual identity. Corporate programs also succeed in managing the development of new visual or thematic marks to ensure the brand is not eroded.

Appendix I – Stakeholders interviewed

<u>Department</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
Education, Culture, and Employment	Janet Leader	Co-ordinator, Public Affairs
	Lesley Allen	Assistant Deputy Minister Advanced Education and Careers
	Dan Daniels	Director, Policy and Planning
Office of the Premier	Drew Williams	Press Officer
Executive	April Taylor	Director, Communications
	Carmen Moore	Protocol Officer
	Leslie Straker	Communications Officer
Finance	Bill Setchell	Director, Finance and Administration
	Margaret Melhorn	Deputy Minister
Financial Management Board Secretariat	Carol-Anne Owen	Records Management, Access to Information Co-ordinator
	Lisette Kaip	Manager of HR Systems & Payroll
	Doug Bothamley	Manager of Financial Policy Systems
	Brian Kwong	Superintendent, Fort Simpson
	Bob Sanderson	Superintendent, Fort Smith
Health & Social Services	Bronwyn Watters	Director, Policy, Planning and HR
	Laura Seddon	Manager, Planning and Communications Unit
	Tammi Johnson	Graphic Design and Communications Specialist
	Melanie Grindlay	Acting Manager, Recruitment and Retention
	Andrew Langford	Acting Manager, Research & Analysis
Housing Corporation	Greg Barton	Manager, Policy and Informatics
Justice	Don Cooper	Deputy Minister
	Mark Aitken	Director of Legislation
Legislative Assembly	David Hamilton	Clerk
	Pamela Colquhoun	Public Affairs and Communications Advisor

Aboriginal Affairs	Richard Bargery Julia Heyland	Deputy Minister Communications Officer
Municipal & Community Affairs	Dave Murray Shaun Dean Dan Schofield	Deputy Minister Manager, Policy and Planning Executive Director, School of Community Government
Public Works & Services	Bill Kaip Wayne Nesbitt Charlotte Babicki Sue Bevington	Sr. Contracts Officer Sr. Property Manager Policy Advisor, Corporate Services Director, Corporate Services
Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development	Tracy St. Denis Sonya Saunders Damien Healy	Manager, Public Affairs & Communications Sr. Advisor, Legislation & Legal Affairs Public Affairs Officer
Transportation	Peter Vician Lynn Cook Roslyn Semjanovs	Deputy Minister Director, Corporate Services Communications Advisor
Cabinet	Joe Handley Michael Miltenberger Jake Ootes	Minister of Finance Minister of Health & Social Services Minister of Education
Members of the Legislative Assembly	Leon Lafferty Floyd Roland Bill Braden	MLA North Slave MLA Inuvik Boot Lake MLA Great Slave
Workers' Compensation Board	Charles Dent Penny Ballantyne Teresa Sanderson	MLA Frame Lake President Public Affairs Officer
Northwest Territories Development Corporation	Fred Koe	President
Arctic Energy Alliance	Craig Yeo	Communications Co-ordinator
Aurora College	Tim Gauthier	Public & Corporate Affairs Manager

Appendix II – Sources referenced

Individuals consulted

Gordon Eckert, Canadian Public Relations Society, Alberta Chapter, Edmonton AB

Kate Hildebrandt, Capital Health Authority, Edmonton AB

Dianne Allan, Reputation Manager, EPCOR, Edmonton, AB

Dona Perrault, Vice President of Public Affairs, EPCOR, Edmonton, AB

Nino Wischnewski, Director of Communications, Government of Nunavut, Iqaluit, NT

Margaret Grant, Public Affairs Bureau, Government of Alberta, Edmonton, AB

Pam Bannister, Mount Royal College, Calgary, AB

Elaine Sagan, ATCO Electric, Edmonton, AB

Cynthia Wrate, The Brick Warehouse, Edmonton, AB

Ruth Abrahamson, Canadian Public Relations Society, Ottawa, ON

Linda Brook, Assistant Director, Communications Services, Saskatchewan Executive Council, Regina, SK

Gordon Braun-Woodbury, National Director, Communications, KPMG LLP, Toronto, ON

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Appendix III – Examples of program symbols with Government of the Northwest Territories logo

Multi-departmental Program Example



Single Department Program Example

