

The Colorado Springs Logo: Behind the Redesign Process

Our Company

We (Troy and Sara DeRose) co-own and run Fixer Creative Co. here in Colorado Springs. We are a husband-and-wife creative team that makes our clients look, sound and communicate their best. We work collaboratively on each project, with Troy heading the graphic and web design side of our business, and Sara heading the content strategy and writing side. Although we've collectively been designing and writing for over a decade, we started Fixer Design several years ago to focus on design in Colorado Springs, and rebranded as Fixer Creative Company recently to include content strategy and writing as part of what we do for our local, national and international clients.

Our approach

Although we had followed the Branding Process over the last year, Fixer Creative became closely involved in the Rebrand Process after the logo was unveiled in November 2011. We were present at the initial discussion the Branding Task Force held at the CVB after the launch to address the negative responses, and in that meeting we provided constructive feedback on the execution of the logo design as well as our strong support of a logo redesign process that was not an afterthought in the overall branding process. We felt that the Colorado Springs logo didn't reflect the thorough branding process and brand truths accurately and with a high degree of professionalism and skill, and that a new logo should.

Honest critique is imperative to good design, but we felt it important to do more than just criticize the original Colorado Springs logo design—but to be a strong part of a constructive, creative process that produces a logo that everyone can be proud of. With that in mind, we responded to the Request for Proposal.

Our overarching goal as design professionals (and Colorado Springs residents) was to create a logo that represented the Colorado Springs identity in an authentic, compelling way—one that could reflect the spirit and personality of the city, capture the essence of the brand truths developed during the Branding Process, and honor our city's heritage while communicating our confident outlook on the present and future.

We submitted two initial logo designs to the Curator Team, collateral designs using the logos (i.e. decals) to show how the logos would appear and take on a life of their own, and lastly created an ad campaign to really introduce the logo as well as give life to the initial "live it up" tagline, which we felt worked best as a temporary campaign with supporting copy and imagery to explain it rather than a permanent tagline always locked up with the logo mark.

As both local residents and business owners—in addition to both living in Colorado nearly our whole lives—this project was not just a professional interest of ours, but a passion project that we felt strongly about from the beginning.

Developing and Revising the Logo

When we were selected by the Curator Team to develop our two initial logos into an eventual final logo, our first task was to review the feedback and areas of exploration provided by the Team. When working with a committee with varying and sometimes seemingly contradictory feedback, it's important to view the logo as the mark that captures and communicates the essence of the entire brand—and not task the logo with communicating elements of the brand that are best captured in other ways (e.g. website, campaigns directed to certain people groups, etc.). In short, the revised logo requires a simplicity that both communicates the brand truths powerfully, but also addresses the feedback provided by the team.

We set out to revise the two initial logos individually to provide two strong final concepts to the Team; however, during the revision process, we found that individual revisions to the logos were not yielding improved logos, but rather logos that were addressing specific pieces of feedback, but not working overall and taking us away from the brand truths in a negative way. We then focused on revising just one of the original logos that had a strong overall concept, pulled in elements from the second original logo that we

felt worked well with the first logo concept, and then redesigned the overall concept to create one, cohesive logo that we felt communicated the brand truths—alive, exceptional, vibrant, rugged—vividly and addressed legitimate concerns from the Team.

As designers, our goal is to provide our client with our best work that makes their brand sing—whether that is one concept or several. We took a risk by showing only one logo to the Curator Team, as that was not part of the original plan; however, we and the Curator Team agreed that the most important goal was only showing and moving forward with work that wasn't sub-par.

The New Colorado Springs Logo

The Curator Team unanimously agreed that the final logo we showed was exactly what they were looking for, and we collaborated with them on minor tweaks to the final fonts and layouts to bring the design to completion. The Branding Task Force approved our final logo that the Curator Team submitted to them.

The new Colorado Springs logo is distinctive, setting us apart from other destinations in the state, and competes with the marks of other destination cities similar to Colorado Springs. The logo is confident, professional and bold. It captures the essence of a diverse city that lives by doing. We designed the logo to capture the look and feel of living in view of a majestic mountain, and the energy that comes from living in such a setting. The colors we see in the logo are the same colors we find outside—a visual reminder of how truly beautiful is the setting of all the unique lives, activities, and stories that unfold here.

A logo should not just be a beacon to visitors coming to our city, but a badge of honor for residents to reflect the city we call home—we feel that we've created that through a productive, open process with a skilled Curator Team, supportive Task Force and our years of experience in designing and writing for our clients. We're pleased and proud to be chosen for this process and are excited to see how this logo lives in the years to come.