

# HERMES

White on black: the first Hermes logo in 1972. The design and colour have since changed considerably

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## THE PERFECT APPEARANCE

As time goes by: the logo



**W**hat is black on white,” as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe knew well, “can confidently be taken home.” It is not entirely clear whether this is what inspired the design of the first logo, but it nevertheless fits. The choice of these colours made one thing clear in 1972: the new Hermes-Paket-Schnell-Dienst meant business and kept its promises. The stylised wings of the messenger of the gods positioned on either side of the letter “H” symbolised the speed of the service and its ability to overcome all earthly difficulties.

Since the emergence of industrialised society, more and more companies have been in competition with each other – and a logo helps every firm to draw attention to itself. After all, a recognisable combination of words and images conveys an idea of the service being provided and the company’s individual identity.

The requirements of a logo are stringent: it must be recognisable in all sizes and have a long lifespan aesthetically. It must also be possible to use it in various media, whether embroidered onto company clothing, printed on a gigantic container or a business card, lit up on a wall or displayed in HD in TV commercials. In parallel with the company’s history, the Hermes logo has also

undergone numerous mutations but has nevertheless remained fundamentally stable since the introduction of the wing in 1975 – which clearly demonstrates the attribute of Hermes, messenger of the gods, of being faster than light.

Not surprisingly, there have been variations, for example in the combination with the red ParcelShop logo, or the green version with which Hermes Warehousing Solutions (predecessor to Hermes Fulfilment) emphasised its independence. And of course the various new entrants to the Hermes Group – Hansecontrol and Parcelnet, to name but two – previously had their own logos.

However, since 2009 the Hermes Group has no longer been a “house of brands” but rather a “branded house”, i.e. under a single umbrella brand. All of the companies now use the latest logo, with its three wings and the redesigned designation “Hermes”, which stands up on its own. This new logo has a more dynamic feel and is more suited to the internet age than its less slim-line predecessor. Nevertheless, it does not represent a radical change to the overall logo but rather a deliberate graphical development which does not impinge upon the recognition that has been built up over the years. Hermes is thus reinventing itself – but also taking account of its successful history.