

We The People
Program 78
Tom's Tomato



Having spent many years in broadcasting and in marketing I feel a need to comment on the Council's new logo recently launched. The old logo is gone and the new offering is a red dot. It's apparently meant to convey we are proud of who we are **full stop**. So the red dot is more about punctuation than anything else. Now marketing is about positioning and logos can help create that position in the minds of the target market. A logo however is not the brand which carries much more meaning and should contain the core values of the product. Personally I don't believe in change for the sake of change especially in this shallow world of instant gratification but marketing does require a fresh or an upgraded approach from time to time as products or entities evolve. In this regard I think the Council is on the right track. However the Mayors predilection for change equating all change with better business is left wanting. *More haste less speed* is the wise old saying and the red dot logo falls short because of the furious activity within Council to get somewhere not well defined, taking their focus away from their core business of roads, rates and rubbish. That's the real job of council and to properly run the city and serve the community and keep rates low and equitable.

The new logo is simply the words **Gold Coast with a Red Dot** or as a word picture, the **Gold Coast, Full Stop**. At \$180,000 and \$500,000 to launch, it doesn't represent good value and I will explain why with a little help from local creative savvy, David Luxton. The Council have been told that the simple red dot is like the Nike tick or the Apple apple. Those great, simplistic logos work because, in themselves, the graphic carries little cultural connotation or baggage. This makes it like an empty cup to be filled with emotions and experiences related to the brand, which over time allows it to grow in significance and meaning. The full stop already carries meaning. It already has a cultural significance. It ends a sentence. It ends a thought. It is purely a functional device which already has a purpose and meaning. The red dot also carries an association with the Japanese flag, with the Coles Red Spot Special, Red Spot Car Rentals, and Grilled Burgers and hundreds, if not thousands of other businesses using big red dots. It's crowded real estate, with little room to move. We've seen red spots and full stops so many times before and, unconsciously or not, we already associate the red spot with other products, other things, other emotions. The Council has simply launched a logo and not a brand and in that they have failed. They have fallen for the trap of making decisions regarding marketing which they know nothing about and should not be involved with especially for \$680,000 dollars.

Now remember in the year 2000 Premier Beattie inexplicably decided to drop the broad use of the Queensland coat of arms as a logo and installed his very own very peculiar version with yellow rays emanating from a blue and red circle. From day one it meant nothing and yet it cost millions and for what. The Queensland coat of arms inherently contains some very powerful sovereign qualities and is regal and commands attention. Peter Beattie's new logo was soon called the **Beattie Burger** because some thought it looked like a hamburger with chips. I can see that and the Beattie Burger has hung around reminding us just how inept the Labor governments were. Folks, I see parallels here with the Council's decision and the red dot. In fact it looks like Tom's tomato to me which kind off carries forward Beattie's vision of food representing the State and the Gold Coast. So Tom's Tomato has arrived and nearly \$700,000 has gone on fruit from the public purse at a time we can least afford it. I am not automatically against Gold Coast City Council's initiatives but I am against waste or the Council having a go at matters which they should not be concerned with. Council's role is big enough without being diverted by cruise liners and red dots and so on. As my dear old mother used to say stick to you knitting.....full stop.

Until next time this Kent Bayley

The Beattie Burger and the Official Queensland Coat of Arms and Tom's Tomato.

