

SECTION 3 - BACKGROUND

"Just as a Corporation appears to be a living, breathing being, just as it develops a "personality", it must guard against allowing that personality to become misinterpreted or misunderstood." (Gray p.3)

1. WHAT IS A CORPORATE IMAGE?

In general a **Corporate Image** is the perception given to a corporation/organization by the public at large as well as its employees. Whether this perception is positive or negative is an individual choice. This choice can be based on objective data such as the profitability of the organization, its market value, its ability to acquire and keep talented staff, its record of environmental responsibility, its media visibility, etc. A positive or negative impression can also be determined however based on an individual's subjective assessment of such things as a company's logo, packaging, stationary, vehicles, publications, colours, premises, quality of management, leadership, office layout, furnishings, products, etc.

"A Corporate image is the totality of pictures or ideas or reputations of a corporation in the minds of the people who come into contact with it...It is an intangible and an essentially complicated thing, involving the effect of many and varied factors and varied people with many and varied interests." (Henrion p.2)

2. WHAT IS A CORPORATE IMAGE PROGRAM?

Essentially a corporate image program is a coordinated attempt by an organization to influence a person's perception by ensuring that the "visual" data they receive is as positive as possible.

Since the early 1970's corporations have put more and more resources into the task of consciously creating a positive "image". Many of these companies have in fact hired professional **image or design consultants** to help determine the most effective visual identity to project. These consultants work with management to gain an understanding of the corporation's main aim for a design policy, its mission, its existing policies and procedures, its customers/audience, its available resources, etc. From the information they gather, the image consultants then prepare a "**Corporate Identity Program.**"