

Marketing Team recommendation: LinX brand name and logo December 14, 2009

One of our Marketing Team volunteers came up with the brand name “LinX” for the co-op following a brainstorming session with the other riders on her bus back from YBP’s 2009 Annual Meeting. Linx, or LinX, was well-received by the marketing team and others in the steering committee. The team also made a very wide call for other name suggestions through an announcement at the transportation roundtable in Cody, WY, through multiple emails to the transportation project email list, through the YBP email list and through the YBP newsletter. The team vetted tens of name suggestions and believes that linx is the strongest and most likely to be effective.

Why Linx is effective:

- Linx is short, succinct and snappy to the ear (75% consonants adds audio punch)
- Linx inherently represents transportation coop’s vision of linking trip segments, linking travel modes, linking providers, and enabling an unbroken travel experience for users
- Linx is a functional noun, like BART in San Francisco, MAX in Portland and TRAX in Salt Lake City, which are widely recognized transit systems.
- Linx is visually interesting. Numerous meaningful graphic design possibilities
- Linx appeals to both markets of transportation providers and users
- Sounds like lynx: a wild and beautiful independent animal

Marketing Considerations:

- Linx does not have a very strong internet presence. Search engine optimization would be relatively easy.
- Linx is easy to say, text and remember
- With the help of our co-op development folks we were able to reserve the domain name linx.coop for one year for FREE
- Linx is only the suggestion for the brand name, not the system description, which can be longer and more explanatory
- Linx has all kinds of useful incarnations for marketing or service expansion. LinxExpress, BusLinx, AirLinx, LinxShuttle, TaxiLinx, LinxFreight, LinxMail, SkiLinx, HikeLinx, etc.
- “For your travel solutions: Think LinX!”
- there is a LYNX transportation system in Orlando, FL that has the name Linx/Lynx trademarked. They are licensing the name to other transportation systems and their legal counsel has told us that we can expect to license the name for use here in the Greater Yellowstone region for a nominal annual fee of \$1. There was some concern on the marketing team that the name only be used if it could be leased for a long period of time, for example 99 years was mentioned. On the other hand, the recommendation of the staff is that a license that needs renewal on an annual basis is preferable to on a 10-year basis, for example, because a yearly review will be more routine whereas a 10 year license would merit a more serious review. Given the regional nature of the co-op and the fact that the other users are also limited, regional transportation systems, we believe the risk of the licenses ever being revoked is negligible.

The question of Yellowstone:

The Marketing Team felt that one of the strengths of Linx is that it doesn't show a bias towards one state or entity in our 27 county, 3 state area. Grand Teton Bus Co., or Yellowstone Transit Co-Op, etc. would not be as inclusive. Having Yellowstone/Teton in the name means steep competition on search engines and expensive to have at the top of the list. However, we can choose a tagline and/or logo that suggests Yellowstone/Teton, if that is deemed important. One of our logo semi-finalists does include logo imagery. However, given that some co-op providers may travel as far as Salt Lake City and Helena, it may be confusing to have the co-op logo too closely associated with Yellowstone. For this reason, there was unanimous agreement on the Marketing Team against the bison and geyser logo option.

Capital X?

Many members of the Marketing Team liked the idea of using a capital 'x' as in: LinX.

- The capital X catches attention since it is unusual.
- The X adds mystery and is versatile for advertising and promotion. (e.g. an ad campaign on what the X in LinX means to different satisfied customers, using You-Tube interview clips.)
- “X” marks the spot: destination
- “X” is an intersection, where paths cross, connections are made
- Lin” is like the path (line) to destination X.
- X is the variable. X is the transportation provider, which varies. Another variation would be to keep the x small but write it like the variable x.

Logo Possibilities:

Amy Randolph of Catch and Release Graphics agreed to play with the linx idea in terms of logo design. The Marketing Team felt that in this age of visual media, this was an important step to exploring the linx concept. After several rounds of logo design and lots of discussion, we settled on four semi-finalists, which are attached for your review. The team was split 5-4 between recommending Logo #1 (the human X) and Logo #2 (the cat). The five in favor of Logo #1 liked the human element, since the co-op is about moving people, as opposed to an animal visual. Those in favor of #2 liked the clear, bold design and the forward-motion of the cat. Thank you to Amy for volunteering her considerable graphic design skills to the transportation co-op.