

# Truckvolution

Every company's vehicle identification programs tend to evolve over time. Yet, it is rare to be able to observe the evolution. Steve Miles from the Jerry Kelly Company in St Louis sent me a series of images from their trucks, spanning more than a decade. This is a great vehicle

marketing case study.



Like many companies, the original Jerry Kelly installation truck was rather plain. The company logo appears over the cab, but not on the sides. The company name on the side is small. It does not use the space available. Back up any distance and the name is unreadable. Even when it is readable, it doesn't pop.

The name is presented in ALL CAPITALS, WHICH IS MORE DIFFICULT TO READ. It is horizontal, on a level plane, causing it to blend in with the horizontal lines of the truck.

The next evolution of the Jerry Kelly trucks showed much improvement. More color was introduced. The logo was moved to the side of the truck and given more space. The logo is surrounded by an oval that helps draw attention to the name.

The logo still presents the name in all caps, but by using the larger K, the name is easier to read.





With the next step of the Jerry Kelly evolution, more improvements were made. A large green “#1” was added with a note below it stating, “In St. Charles Thanks To You.”

In addition to the #1 claim, the claim that Jerry Kelly is “Missouri’s Most Trusted Contractor” was added.

The current evolution involves four significant changes. First, the cab is painted green. The green paint is different and eye catching. By painting the cab and not the side panels, Jerry Kelly reduces the paint expense and also causes the trucks to stand out even more than if they were a solid green.

The second change was to reverse the logo so that it was solid green with white lettering. At the same time, the #1 was reversed from a solid to an outline. The logo was also moved so that it intruded on the #1. This draws attention to the logo and makes it the dominant element. The #1 is still imposing, but is now subordinate to the logo.

The third change is the elimination of all clutter from the sides. This includes the slogans and phone number, which are not likely to be read in traffic. Even if they are read, the objective is to generate memorable impressions for the com-



pany logo, not the clutter. Anything that distracts, detracts from the objective. The phone number should be especially easy to remove since drivers passing in traffic are not likely to remember it, nor be in a position to write it down.

The fourth change is the addition of a tilt to the logo and #1. Tilting the logo breaks the horizontal plane. This is a break in the expected pattern, stimulating an age old, genetically encoded reaction to take note of the unexpected. We are instinctively drawn to deviations



from expected patterns because they potentially represent danger. The slight angle calls further attention to the logo and also allows it to fill more of the side wall (i.e., make it larger).

The evolution of the Jerry Kelly trucks results in a change from the ordinary to a truck and logo that can be jumps out and can be recognized from blocks away.

While clutter was cleared from the side, the back of the truck remained somewhat busy with the logo, the “Missouri’s Most Trusted Contractor” claim, the phone number, and the website URL. The back includes the additional information by design. People stuck in traffic behind the truck have more time to read a message. Those with cell phones also have the time and ability to call for service if the truck happens along just when the homeowner recognizes a need.

Thanks go to Steve Miles at Jerry Kelly for providing the images.

