

# Get Vectorized

Many of you who know me have heard me talk about logos needing to be in a “Vector” format and of course I get a lot of blank stares and perhaps a scratch on the noggin.

## Let’s Review...



Often times, as a graphic artist, I will request a logo from a client assuming they have access to one. Most of the time they point me to their web site and then I let out a big sigh...

Graphics used in websites are optimized down to the smallest of bytes so that the pages load quickly for you. Also, the logo that commonly appears in the upper left corner of a website is very small. It is possible to re-purpose it for another small web

graphic, but not for print.

This is because the resolution required for websites is much smaller than that required for print. In general, web graphics are 72 pixels per inch and print graphics are 300 pixels per inch.

## Because it is Your Logo

The reason you, as a web owner, need to know the difference between a bitmapped graphic and a vector graphic is because your logo needs to be clean and consistent. It is your trademark. You can’t get any cleaner than with vector graphics because they are resolution independent. There isn’t any resolution. It is as crisp as a razor at 1 inch or 10 feet even with the same file.

## Your Logo is also Your Mark

Some folks are confused on what a logo should be. Because you are reading this you won’t be considered one of “them”. Some designers use gradations, bevels and drop shadows. These are merely effects to the logo and should not be considered part of the logo as a mark.

Your logo should be used to mark your brand on anything and everything. With that in mind, your logo should stand up in the worst of circumstances. I call this the **fax test**. Possibly the worst way your logo will ever show up is on a fax.



Just like the Apple logo, any one of these could have effects added to them, but what if they needed to be put on something that only allowed one color? It still needs to stand up. Ok, to better illustrate this here is a logo that a web owner got from a designer that was not only a bitmapped image, but relied too much on effects.



Of course it looks neat, but as you can see it will be difficult to use without always having a black background. A simplified version would have to be created for the fax letter head or for instances where the background is white and no half tones are possible. What if you wanted a tattoo?

## What was that about Vectors?

Assuming you have the perfect mark created for you, it needs to be in a vector format. If you have hired a graphic designer to create a logo for you, please insist on getting a vector version of it.

A *real* designer already designed the logo in a vector-based software. Adobe Illustrator is the tool of the trade. Photoshop is for image manipulation and should not be used to create a company trademark.

Some common formats have the extension AI, EPS or SVG. The problem is you most likely will not have any software on your computer that can show these. A very good format to have in addition to AI or EPS is PDF.

Most of you have already been converting your Word documents to PDF and you can view those with Adobe Acrobat which is free. Your graphic designer should have no problem giving you a PDF version of your logo that is also in a vector format. That way you can see what it looks like and your printer or sign maker will just love you.

Be careful about asking for EPS or PDF files. You need to stipulate Vector! Because these formats also can contain bitmapped images. Bitmapped images, like JPG or TIF, need to be high resolution for someone else to work with them. The file size may be too large to email.

Vector files are usually very small in bytes so they are easy to email.

## **OK My Logo is a large JPG What Do I Do?**

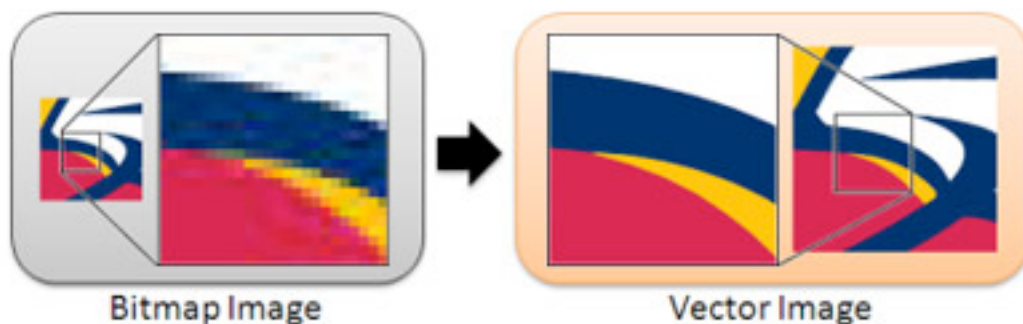
First, do not panic! On many occasions I have had to rebuild or trace a client's logo. The time consuming part is matching fonts. This is a good investment and doesn't cost too much if you got stuck with just a bitmapped version of your logo.

If the logo is in high resolution, like 2000 or 3000 pixels, I can most likely trace the logo without having to know the font. It is nice to know what font was used in your original logo. There are many tens of thousands of fonts out there.

If you are a do-it-yourself er or a designer you might find this to be a handy service:



All you need to do is upload your bitmapped logo to this service online and it will vectorize it just like that! It is quick and easy. Best of all it doesn't cost an arm and a leg! Make sure that the file that you are uploading has enough resolution to make a clean trace. This particular online application does a fine job with minimal settings.



As you can see, looking up close to a bitmapped image, the more pixel information the better.

It only costs \$14.05 (that is a weird price). You get 5 tokens. Each image that you upload and trace will only cost 1 token. You can re-trace as much as you want on that image until you are satisfied. Then you can download it in EPS, SVG or PDF formats.

Designers, this can save you lots of time with client logos that are bitmapped images. If you like to doodle or fancy yourself as a cartoonist you might want to consider joining at a subscription rate which gives you unlimited access for only \$5 per month. This is a must if you want to transfer your artwork to a t-shirt! [Click here](#) and try it yourself.

If your logo is too small in resolution you can always consult with your graphic designer. Or give [Site Mechanix](#) a call. We love logos! Let us know if you need help with your logo or maybe are considering a re-design. Your logo is one of your company's most valuable asset.

Posted on May 10th, 2008 by Karl Knelson