

Mercury's wings, the four winds and yellow ribbon

Commerzbank logos past and present

The four winds

This has been the bank's trademark for almost 30 years, appearing on letterheads, in advertisements and on neon signs. The four winds symbol ("quatre vents"), representing the wind from the four points of the compass, is based on a wind rose and consists of four angled elements with a rounded base, placed together to form a semi-circle above a small circle.

This logo emerged in the early 1970s when Commerzbank entered into a cooperation agreement with a number of other European banks. A number of surveys conducted in the countries in question revealed that the four winds logo, the brain-child of a French agency, was the most popular symbol of the new Europartners group. Commerzbank introduced it in December 1972, explaining that it was intended to portray the open attitude of the bank and its partners to the world. It was also seen as representing focussed strength and a varied range of customer services.

Mercury's wings

The colours chosen for these were black or cobalt blue on a yellow background, traditionally Commerzbank's colour. This was a concession in that at that turbulent time Commerzbank dropped its previous logo, a capital letter C with Mercury's wings on it. Mercury, or Mercurius, was the Roman god of trade and commerce, and in late antiquity was equated with the Greek god Hermes. The son of Zeus and the nymph Maia was often depicted as the messenger of the gods, with wings on his shoes and helmet, and with a herald's sceptre. Hermes was the god of travellers and merchants.

The letter C and the wings were introduced in 1940, when the bank's name was changed to Commerzbank Aktiengesellschaft. It had in any case been generally known by this name, but the creation of an individual logo was probably the response to marketing assuming an increasingly important role in the banking sector.

In adopting Mercury's wings, Commerzbank – established mainly by Hamburg merchants and private bankers – was emphasising its Hanseatic origins and the purpose of its foundation: financing trade, especially in the SME sector. The three successor banks established in 1952 likewise used Mercury's wings as a symbol in their post-war reincarnation. One of them, the Bankverein Westdeutschland in Düsseldorf, actually applied a statue of Mercury in its advertising. From 1958 to 1972, Commerzbank reused the letter C.

CDB and CPB

Looking even further back for the bank's first logos, we find the abbreviations CDP and CPB. These stand for the earlier names Commerz- und Disconto-Bank (up to 1920) and Commerz- und Privat-Bank (from 1920 to 1940).

The letters were intertwined and often surrounded by a circle bearing the name of the bank. At the beginning of the 20th century, the red-and-black emblems were used on the seals then affixed to correspondence. During the 1920s and 1930s, the combination CPB also came to be used generally to represent the bank.

Commerzbank logos past and present



The colour yellow

The various symbols and their development are also a record of how the bank has changed. The current logo, the four winds, has also been subject to changes and varying interpretations. For many, it initially suggested the sun. This positive aura was a plus for the bank in enabling it to present itself to customers as a strong, friendly organisation. In 1984, an advertising campaign actually used the sun, and cobalt blue gradually disappeared from the logo. In addition to black, various shades of grey were now used more frequently, and the main colour was yellow. This became the colour characterising Commerzbank during the 50s, not least of all because yellow has a strong impact and is often seen as a warm, appealing colour. The bank's 'own' colour and logo thus developed a close symbiosis.

Re-launched a brand rich in tradition – **COMMERZBANK**

The merger of Commerzbank and Dresdner Bank has brought a new Commerzbank into being. In October 2009, the bank unveiled its new brand. The joint new brand identity is a visible symbol of this integration. The new brand and logotype is composed of three elements: the Commerzbank name in new font, the colour yellow and a three-dimensional ribbon, enhancing the Dresdner Bank logo. The ribbon represents the continuous and mutual interrelationship between employees, clients and business partners. Its three-dimensional depiction stands for dynamism, continuity and stability. The new brand type and logo visibly incorporate elements from both Commerzbank and Dresdner Bank. A new brand promise, „Achieving more together“, completes the package.