## Branding

Today when we think of the word "brand" we tend to think of the "brands" that big companies have spent so much time and money convincing us to buy: Apple, Gucci, McDonald's, Rolex, Coca-Cola, Mercedes-Benz, and on and on.



Each of these companies has a symbol associated with it, but those symbols themselves are actually a kind of "brand".

The word "brand" dates back to Old Norse, the ancient North Germanic language from which modern Scandinavian languages derived. "Brand" originally referred to a piece of burning wood. As the word came to be used in Old English it evolved to mean 'burning' and eventually in Middle English to the verb sense 'mark with a hot iron' which in turn gave rise to the noun sense 'a mark of ownership made by branding' (mid-17th century). The act of marking animals in this way is very old, however, going back to ancient Egypt.

The following is taken from Wikipedia:

"In the American West, a "branding iron" consisted of an iron rod with a simple symbol or mark, which cowboys heated in a fire. After the branding iron turned red hot, the cowboy pressed the branding iron against the hide of the cow. The unique brand meant that cattle owned by multiple ranches could then graze freely together on the open range. Cowboys could then separate the cattle at "roundup" time for driving to market."



## A few examples of cattle brands

