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M.L.SAWIKA UNAHANANDH

Chulalongkorn Business School, Thailand

TEERAYOUT WATTANASUPACHOKE

Chulalongkorn Business School, Thailand

PIMMANEE RATTANAWICHA

Chulalongkorn Business School, Thailand

PURIPANT RUCHIKACHORN

Chulalongkorn Business School, Thailand

THE STUDY OF BRAND LOGO FEATURES: COMPARISONS BETWEEN FAST MOVING CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND DURABLE PRODUCTS

Abstract:

This research studied brand logo features by comparing between fast moving consumer products and durable products. The representatives of both product groups consisted of cosmetic and furniture businesses respectively. This study focused on three important components of brand logos, which are pictures, colors and font characters. Data for logo picture studied was collected from 400 samples using judgmental sampling technique and questionnaire survey. Data analysis from previous research and literatures were employed for logo color and font. According to the results for the cosmetic products, the chosen suitable picture was related mainly to emotional benefits. The selected logo color was pertinent to feminine, luxury, mystery and loyalty. The font characters in this respect were connected well to attractiveness, happiness and feminine. Regarding the furniture products, the suitable picture was related mainly to functional benefits. The selected logo color was pertinent to stability, reliability, trustworthy, dependability and durability. The font characters in this respect were connected well to stability, rigidity and conformist.

Keywords:

Brand Logos, Fast Moving Consumer Products, Durable Products, Pictures, Color, Font Characters

JEL Classification: M31, M37, M39

1 Introduction

Logos are regarded as one of the most important parts of product packaging (Patil, 2012). They can communicate with customers and build brand images that may lead to successful competition. A striking logo with a style that matches the nature of products as well as appropriate information disclosure will create distinctive awareness and first impression among target customers. Quality brand logo design will help attract target customers and create a brand identity. In addition, designing a logo to match a brand personality is a major factor for creating a clear competitive position for particular products and services, highlighting uniqueness of such products or services. In particular, with broad presentation and thorough communication to all target groups, brand logos can help convey organizations' messages to customers, enabling the customers to be clearly aware of and notice such messages. This can be a starting point leading the way to successful competition of the brand. This research is a study of reasons for choosing the pictures for brand logos, based on the comparisons between fast moving consumer products and durable products. Cosmetics were selected for studying the features of brand logos for fast moving consumer goods as this product group is of interest to general consumers. This is especially true when considering today's social trend where consumers are apparently paying more attention to their health and beauty. Products related to health and beauty are apparently in high demand and consumers are willing to spend their money on such products to serve their needs. Therefore, it is interesting to study logos for cosmetics and a study on this product group is rather trendy in the current social trend. Meanwhile, furniture was selected to investigate the features of brand logos for durable products because furniture is considered durable in its nature. In addition, furniture is generally used by general customers and consumers regularly purchase the products. Hence, brand logo features of furniture is also interesting to study in this respect.

This research aimed to investigate the design of three features for brand logos, consisting of pictures, colors and fonts. First, pictures used as brand logos can indicate concepts and convey the brand images to customer groups as well as creating brand awareness. Second, colors are able to create customers' brand recognition in several aspects, e.g., brand personality, familiarity, preference and intentions to buy products (Labrecque & Milne, 2012). Finally, fonts are also another key feature for logo design, which should also influence consumers' recognition and attitude toward the brands.

2 Objectives

This study has three major objectives:

- To study fundamental concepts for design of brand logos in order to understand consumers' recognition

- To understand the reasons for choosing the pictures of brand logos between fast moving consumer products and durable products
- To recommend ways to develop suitable brand logos, in terms of pictures, colors and fonts for fast moving consumer products and durable products

3. Literature Review

3.1 Relevant research on brand logos

Having brand logos to communicate uniqueness and identity of their products or their services, business operators put a lot of effort into development of brand logos to act as good representatives in consumers' mind and create some images relevant to corporate concepts (Buttle & Westoby, 2006). The design of brand logos is thus interesting as it is a very delicate issue. Major features of brand logos include colors, fonts and pictures, all of which help communicate the brand images and create brand awareness among targeted customers. It is clear that logo design has a great influence on a brand image (Fajardo, Zhang, and Tsiros, 2016). Often, brand logos act as brand's representatives that can convey overall meanings of the brand they are representing (Peatfield, Parnkinson, and Intriligator, 2012). It can be implied that brand logos contain very high value given their influence on consumers' awareness on particular brands (Fajardo, Zhang, and Tsiros, 2016).

In addition, brand logos are important parts in creating value for any groups involved and they also help consumers recognize and remember the brands. Brand logos are regarded as companies' signatures to link design, colors and shapes and enable such elements to appropriately represent the businesses (Hynes, 2009). It is, therefore, not surprising to see a number of firms put huge investment in design of suitable brand logos (Fajardo, Zhang, and Tsiros, 2016). The presentation of each feature in brand logos may differ for each type of products or services. For instance, a pink logo, which conveys sweet feelings and femininity (Patil, 2012), may be more suitable for some particular products than colors in warm tone. Not only do profit-seeking corporate entities emphasize brand logos, non-profit organizations, e.g., government agencies or charitable organizations, also place emphasis on appropriate development of logos (Buttle & Westoby, 2006) to communicate their identity and effectively create the images of their brands and businesses to all stakeholders. This can pave the way for success and competitive advantages in the future.

3.2 Relevant research on colors

A number of research findings suggest that colors have a great influence on people's emotions (Zaichkowsky, 2010); therefore, colors are employed as an effective advertising

tool (Patil, 2012). Different colors contain different meanings in different culture and nationalities of consumers (Zaichkowsky, 2010). For example, red represents good luck in China and is often used in weddings or New Year parties as well as red can also stimulate appetite (Zaichkowsky, 2010). Colors can imply a number of different things. Orange, for example, may reflect affordable prices of the products while blue gives pleasant and fresh feelings. Purple may represent loyalty. Moreover, colors also represent different weights; for example, white packages give a sense of a lighter weight of products than black packages (Zaichkowsky, 2010).

Smith (2015) mentions that consumers often link colors with brands; therefore, colors have become an important aspect for brand creation. It is accepted that colors are the most powerful tool for a brand (McCammon, 2014) because colors are the first thing to highlight a brand (Zaichkowsky, 2010). In addition, colors can also attract customers' attentions and create their awareness of the products' characteristics (Labrecque & Milne, 2012). Colors can turn a brand logo to a stimulator of demand for products and a creator of reliability of the brand (McCammon, 2014). Colors are therefore employed for communicating with customers through the design of brand logo, which is suitable for the brand personality. The design of brand logos with carefully-selected colors can also create the brand identity, develop relationship with the targeted markets and outline suitable market positioning (Labrecque & Milne, 2012). A study conducted by Labrecque and Milne (2012) suggests that the colors of a brand logo have a relation with the brand personality. Red, for example, relates to exciting personality while dark blue represents competencies and black may relate to complicated personality, and etc. (Labrecque & Milne, 2012).

Furthermore, colors can trigger customers' memories. Colors are more remembered than shapes (Zaichkowsky, 2010). Patil (2012) said that colors are able to impact a person's perception and ability to perceive things. Therefore, colors play significant roles in designing brand logos.

3.3 Relevant theories and research on fonts

Shaikh, Chaparro and Fox (2006) who studied the relationship between fonts and 15 characteristics of personality, e.g., stability, flexibility, politeness, creativity, happiness, excitement and etc. found the relation between fonts and some characteristics of personality. For instance, Times New Roman, Arial and Cambria reflect stable personality while Kristen, Gigi and Rage Italic imply flexible personality. Monotype Corsiva, Times New Roman and Cambria represent polite personality. Furthermore, the same study also surveyed the appropriateness of font selection in accordance with particular applications. According to the study results, certain fonts are suitable for different applications. Sans Serif, for example, is suitable for displaying information on websites, emails or online

magazines, and etc. Furthermore, a study by Grohmann, Giese and Parkman (2013) suggests that fonts used to display the brand name can make consumer recognize the brand personality.

4. Research Methodology

This research focuses on the study of three features of brand logos, consisting of *pictures, colors and fonts*. *Regarding the pictures*, the research is based on an empirical study by using a quantitative survey aimed at studying the pictures used in the brand logos. *Regarding the colors and fonts*, given plenty of the past research, the study thus analyzed and concluded the colors and fonts used for brand logos from the relevant literature review.

4.1 Pictures used in brand logos: quantitative survey

In this part, this research aimed to study Thai consumers in order to examine their perception and recognition of pictures in the brand logos to gain some ideas about how to create appropriate pictures for brand logos of each product type. The sample size, which was determined in the case of 95% confidence level and 5% errors, is 384 (McCall, 1982). The questionnaires were then distributed to 400 respondents for efficient data collection. The sample was selected by means of judgmental sampling as the researchers aimed to study Thai consumers' perception on a broad-based basis, covering broad perceptions of wide ranges of population. Genders and ages were used as criteria for the sampling, focusing on different ages and genders of Thai consumers. In addition, the sampling was carried out with a variety of age range.

With regard to research instruments, this quantitative study used a questionnaire as a major instrument for collecting data. The questionnaires were distributed to the samples on a face-to-face basis to ensure that the surveyed participants understand the questions as they were able to ask a questionnaire distributors to clarify some unclear points. This practice helped the respondents give clear answers and provide quality data that reflected their true opinions. In this respect, the respondents were asked to inform their reasons in choosing brand logo pictures. The results display in table 1 and 2. In addition, this data collection practice also facilitated complete data collection. Completeness of the provided data was examined when the questionnaires were returned to the distributors. Finally, the practice also reduced a problem about low response rate that may impede the reliability of the study results.

With regard to data analysis, out of the 400 participants, 68% were female and 32% were male. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 71 years old, with an average age of 30.58 years old.

Regarding cosmetics, table 1 displays the following results. The respondents focused on the reason of reflecting beauty with the highest frequency (26.36%). It should be noted that cosmetics represent overall fast moving consumer products and low involvement product. In other words, they are products which buyers do not put any much effort in buying; and neither do the buyers plan much on buying. The communication to consumers is focused mainly on major benefits of products, for example, benefits about beauty and good impression in images and personality of users of the products. It can be implied, therefore, that the major benefits are emotional benefits, which are relevant to the nature of products that normally trigger impulse purchase which no purchase planning is made in advance.

Table 1: Reasons for choosing brand logos of cosmetic products

Reasons	Frequency (%)
Reflecting beauty	26.36
Reflecting femininity	18.35
Reflecting characteristics of cosmetics	13.70
Looking natural	10.34
Presenting in a modern style	6.20
Being simple	5.68
Offering soft and gentle feelings	4.39
Offering senses of luxury	2.84
Others	12.14
Total	100.00

Source: Own elaboration

The reason cited with the second highest frequency is that the picture reflects femininity (18.35%). This point is also relevant to the personality and nature of the product type that mainly focuses on female customers. Even though increasing male consumers and those with other genders are also using cosmetics nowadays, the overall cosmetic industry still targets mainly on female customers. Therefore, a picture reflecting femininity should communicate with consumers more effectively as it may represent an identity, which is close to such customer target groups. Further, the reason given with the third frequency (13.7%) is that the picture reflects the characteristics of cosmetics, clearly conveying the identity and the meaning of the products. This can make consumers understand and remember the products. Other reasons are about the picture looking natural (10.34%), presenting in a modern style (6.20%), being simple (5.68%), and offering soft and gentle feelings (4.39%).

Table 2: Reasons for choosing brand logos of furniture products

Reasons	Frequency (%)
Reflecting the characteristic of furniture	26.43
Presenting in a modern style	21.99
Being minimal	9.43
Displaying varieties of furniture products	8.64
Being creative	7.33
Being classy	4.97
Being able to understand	4.45
Displaying beautiful pictures	3.93
Displaying comfortable look	2.88
Others	9.95
Total	100.00

Source: Own elaboration

Regarding Furniture, Table 2 displays the following results. The respondents focused on the reason of reflecting the characteristics of furniture with the highest frequency (26.43%). Furniture is a product which buyers need to put significant effort and collect information before making any purchase decision. In addition, buyers usually plan before buying. Given its characteristic as durable goods, targeted customers may then need communication about functional benefits. Further, the reason cited with the second highest frequency (21.99%) is that it presents a modern style. As furniture reflects owners' taste and status, consumers tend to consider brand logos with a trendy picture reflecting the current social trend and trendy personality of buyers. Other reasons with following frequency consisting of showing a minimal style (9.43%), displaying varieties of furniture products (9.34%) and showing creativity (7.33%).

4.2 Colors used in brand logos: Analysis of relevant literature review

Patil (2012) presented an interesting idea about colors and emotions. According to Patil (2012), *red* represents excitement, strength, speed, and danger. *Blue* reflects trust, reliability, and coolness while *yellow* suggests warmth and pleasure. *Orange* represents fun and warmth while *green* reflects nature, freshness, growth, and peacefulness. *Purple* conveys loyalty and dignity. *Pink* reflects gentleness, sweetness and safety. *White* demonstrates purity, cleanness, and gentleness. *Black* represents complexity and mystery. *Gold* shows luxury and glamour and *silver* represents luxury, classiness and calmness. A study conducted by Hynes (2009) suggests that blue or brown can imply the feelings of stability, trustworthiness, reliability, dependability. The colors also give a feeling of being protected and reflect homey warmth. Also, brown may imply simplicity,

durability and stability (Pool & Snibbe, 2015). Further, a corporate organization also uses brown to reflect its dependability (Slaughter, 2011).

Analyzing the past study results, regarding cosmetic products, the researcher team concluded that *purple* is the most suitable color for development of brand logos for cosmetics. The literature review suggests that purple represents femininity, luxury, warmth and mystery (Grimes & Doole, 1998); in the meantime, purples can also give a sense about loyalty (Patil, 2012; Zaichkowsky, 2010) to the products, which may lead to interests or repeated consumption in the future. For all these reasons, purple is selected for further development of the brand logos of cosmetics.

Regarding furniture products, the researcher team selected *brown* as the major color for development of brand logos for furniture because brown implies stability, trustworthiness, reliability, dependability and homey warmth (Hynes, 2009) and the color also reflects simplicity and durability (Pool & Snibbe, 2015). Furthermore, brown is also used for indicating that an organization is dependable (Slaughter, 2011).

4.3 Fonts used in brand logos: Analysis of relevant literature review

The literature review about fonts reveals that each font can indicate different characteristics, according to a study by Shaikh, Chaparro and Fox (2006). Therefore, selecting a font in designing a brand logo is also relevant to particular characteristics. The researcher team studied the characteristics of the two product types and the determined appropriate fonts to be used in the brand logos of the products.

Firstly, after reviewing relevant literature related to cosmetics, the researcher team selected three characteristics that can appropriately convey the meaning of cosmetics. The first characteristic is attractiveness. As the major benefits of cosmetics are to make users' look beautiful, striking and attractive to other people. According to a study by Shaikh, Chaparro and Fox (2006), the font that represents attractiveness is *Monotype Corsiva*. The second characteristic of cosmetics is about femininity; even though at present cosmetics are used by both male and female consumers, the majority of target customers in the market remain female customers. *Gigi* is the font that reflects femininity (Shaikh et al., 2006). Thirdly, the last characteristic is about happiness, which is relevant to the first characteristic: not only do cosmetics make users attractive but they also make users happy. According to the study by Shaikh, Chaparro and Fox (2006), the font that implies happiness is *Kristen*. Therefore, the fonts selected for further development of the brand logos for cosmetics are *Monotype Corsiva*, *Gigi* and *Kristen*.

For furniture products, the review of relevant literature prompted the researcher team to select three characteristics that can appropriately communicate the meaning of furniture

products. First, a stable characteristic can imply the durability of furniture. General consumers often expect to continue using furniture for a certain period of time. The font representing stability, according to Shaikh, Chaparro and Fox (2006), is *Time New Roman (TNR)*. Next, another characteristic of furniture is rigidity, which is relevant to the first characteristic: customers expect rigid furniture so that can use the product for appropriate duration of time. The font reflecting rigidity is *Impact* (Shaikh et al., 2006). The third characteristic is about conformity, which is relevant to the message communicated or promised to customers. As furniture contains higher value per unit than other consumer products, which means consumers cannot dispose it easily, consumers hence expect a greater extent of conformity than perishable products. The font implying conformity is *Courier New* (Shaikh et al., 2006). Therefore, the fonts selected to develop the brand logos for furniture are *Time New Roman*, *Impact* and *Courier New*.

5. Summary of research results

This research aimed to study the three features of brand logos consisting of pictures, colors, and fonts, suitable for fast moving consumer products and durable products, represented by cosmetics and furniture respectively. The results are concluded in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary by the comparison of three features of brand logos

Features of brand logos	Fast moving consumer product and low involvement product (Cosmetics)	Durable products and high involvement products (Furniture)
Pictures	- The focus is on the feeling of beauty from using the products. The emotional benefits are then important. Indicating consumers' identity and communicating the outcome after using the products are important in this respect.	- The focus is on communicating products' major characteristics and apparent benefits from usages of the products. Conveying concrete features of the products is important. The functional benefits are then of prime concern.

Features of brand logos	Fast moving consumer product and low involvement product (Cosmetics)	Durable products and high involvement products (Furniture)
Colors	- The selected color reflects femininity, luxury, warmth and mystery, which are suitable for cosmetics as consumers expect the benefits and need to discover further. In addition, the color also relates to loyalty, which in the future may draw consumers' interests and attraction in some fast moving consumer products.	- The selected color implies stability, reliability, trustworthiness, dependability and durability. The color also gives a sense of home warmth. The selected color is suitable for furniture products as consumers seek something durable that can be used for a certain period of time. This is relevant to the characteristics of durable products.
Fonts	- The selected fonts represent the major characteristics of cosmetics, i.e., attractiveness, femininity, and happiness. The appropriate fonts can reflect pleasant image and lovely, striking and happy personality.	- The selected fonts relate to the major characteristic of furniture, i.e., stability, rigidity, and conformity.

Source: Own elaboration

It can be concluded that appropriate pictures used in the brand logos for *fast moving consumer products* and low involvement products, represented by cosmetic products, should mainly reflect the benefits about users' feeling of beauty after using the products, which means that emotional benefits are emphasized and conveyed. The colors should represent luxury, warmth, mystery and loyalty in order to stimulate repeated consumption on such fast moving consumer products. In addition, the fonts should be relevant to the products' characteristics in terms of attractiveness, femininity and happiness. Meanwhile, for *durable products* and high involvement products, represented by furniture, the pictures in the brand logos should relate to the characteristics of the products and mainly demonstrate functional benefits. The suitable colors should convey the feelings about stability, trustworthiness, reliability, and dependability. The appropriate fonts in this respect should accord with major characteristics of furniture products, including stability, rigidity, and conformity, reflecting that the furniture products are durable, rigid and conformist.

6. Limitation of the study and future studies

This study is a survey and preliminary research aimed at exploring recognition on images and features of brand logos among Thai consumers. The results from this study will be used for further research. Although a large number of samples were used, the sampling was still limited to consumers in Bangkok, which may not completely represent Thai consumers nationwide. As a result, the generalizability may have been impeded. Therefore, it is advisable for future studies that nationwide sampling should be used. There should also be future studies on other aspects of the brand logos. Possible future studies may include a study on consumers' eye tracking toward brand logos and assessment of consumers' awareness and recognition. Furthermore, the boundary of the study may also be extended further to cover other industries as well as service business so that the results of future studies can be used more effectively for apparent comparison and application purposes both in academic and corporate sectors.

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