Research on Multidimensional Communication Strategies for Brand Building

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Abstract. In an era of information overload and increasingly fierce market competition, brand building has become the core driving force for companies to capture consumers' attention. This paper explores brand symbolism, packaging aesthetics, and moral and emotional values as its three main research themes. First, through the semiotic interpretation of brand naming, logo design and slogan language, it reveals how it works on consumer' cognitive system and enhances brand recognition and emotional connection; second, it focuses on the aesthetics of packaging and discusses the stimulation mechanism of the visual experience on impulsive consumption and individual identity; and third, it combines the emotional narrative and brand moral marketing strategy to demonstrate the social function of brand as a carrier of cultural and ethical values. In terms of research methodology, this paper integrates the literature review and selects typical cases such as "Pop Mart", "Coca-Cola", and "Adopt a Cow" for analysis. The results show that the synergistic application of brand symbolism and packaging, as well as the continuous practice of ethical values, can significantly enhance buyer' love and loyalty to the brand. The study concludes that brand success no longer relies on a single communication technique, but needs to incorporate multiple dimensions, such as visual, verbal, emotional, and cultural, in order to build multi-level cognitive and perceptual connections.

Keywords: Branding, logo, slogan, packaging aesthetics, brand ethics

1. Introduction

In today's highly competitive consumer environment, brand is not only the logo of a product, but also a comprehensive communication carrier integrating visual, linguistic, and emotional elements. With the explosion of multi-channel information and the dispersed attention of consumers, enterprises must attract target groups and establish stable brand preference through symbolic expression and value output in the shortest possible time. In recent years, scholars generally believe that it is difficult to satisfy the dual needs of modern consumers for experience and value with only a single-dimensional communication strategy, and that brands must synchronize their efforts in symbolic meaning, aesthetic experience, and ethical value to make a breakthrough in emotional connection and loyalty cultivation.

This study aims to explore how branding influences consumer cognition and behavior, focusing on the following three major themes: first, brand symbolism, including how naming, logo and

slogan enhance brand memory and recognition through visual and auditory symbols; second, packaging aesthetics, which influences consumers' aesthetic judgments and identities through color, form and design language; and third, morality and emotional value, i.e. how brands inspire trust and loyalty through value expression, social responsibility and emotional narratives. In order to realize the above research theme, this paper mainly adopts the methodological framework combining literature review and case study analysis, combs through the international academic research on brand symbolism, packaging aesthetics, and ethical marketing to construct theoretical support, as well as selects specific brand cases for interpretation. Based on the above research framework, the main objectives of this paper include revealing the complementary synergistic effects of brand symbolism, packaging aesthetics, and ethical values in the process of brand communication, as well as providing brand managers with actionable suggestions on integrated communication strategies to help brands achieve sustainable development and long-term competitive advantages in the new media era.

2. Brand symbolism

2.1. Sound symbolism and memory reinforcement in brand naming

Brand names, as the first point of contact for potential customers, are increasingly being designed in conjunction with phonetics and psycholinguistics, and research by Motoki et al. has shown that brand names that repeat syllables, such as the recently popular "Labubu" IP doll from Pop Mart, stimulate "cuteness" and "emotional arousal". It has shown high affinity and brand stickiness globally, especially among young consumers [1]. Such products inspired consumers to buy them as soon as they were launched, and were looted in the global market, with even an ordinary doll pendant being speculated to be worth tens of thousands of RMB. The auditory pleasure brought by this repetitive structure can leave a strong impression in consumers' minds and enhance brand memory and re-recognition rate. Lencastre et al. further showed that the higher the figurativeness of a brand name, the longer its memory retention, especially in the modern media environment, can be more effective in maintaining the impression of brand exposure [2]. This means that if brand naming can trigger specific image associations, it will help the brand to build a "figurative impression library" in the consumer's brain, realizing the migration from information to cognition and then to emotion. For example, the name "Hey-Tea" not only expresses the emotional state of consumers after purchasing, but also reflects the characteristics of the product, and the double meaning enhances the brand recognition.

More importantly, assuming that a brand has different categories or different products of the same type, a unified naming system can greatly reduce the cost of memory. For instance, the jasmine tea series produced by Master Kong, a catering company, expresses different flavors by replacing one of the words in the name of the product. Consumers will be reminded of Master Kong's products when they see similar names. On the contrary, Coca-Cola, as a widely known beverage brand, has a problem of naming confusion in its non-carbonated beverage product line. For example, mineral water - Dasani, fruit juice - Minute Maid, functional drinks - Monster Energy, etc., they are neither relatively unified naming logic, nor associated with the parent brand. Consumers are unable to establish the perception of "Coca-Cola = All-round Beverage Company" and rely only on the "Coca-Cola" logo on the packaging of the sub-brands to know that these are Coca-Cola's products. Higher awareness channels and costs make it difficult for consumers to recognize and remember the brand.

2.2. Symbolism and naturalness of brand logo identity

As a non-verbal visual symbol, brand logos not only carry information function, but also have a high degree of symbolic and emotional suggestive power. Tang et al. found that logos with high complexity are usually perceived as "luxury" by consumers, while simple designs are more likely to inspire "real" and "credible" brand impressions [3]. This perceptual response stems from consumers' perceived association of visual complexity with information processing costs. At the same time, the use of color and shape of a logo also subtly affects consumers' emotions. Familiar and preferred symbols are more easily recognized by consumers. For example, a round logo is often associated with gentleness and security, while a sharp-edged design gives the perception of speed and power. The logo of the Chinese lifestyle care brand PurCotton, as a case, utilizes the shape of a cloud, which allows consumers to imagine the skin-friendly and gentle nature of the brand's products, thus attracting them to buy. The logo of the brand of casual shoes for the elderly, Zulijian, on the other hand, utilizes triangles and red color, which is visually appealing and suggests that it makes people think the elderly people wearing its shoes will be able to walk more easily and quickly.

In addition, Huang et al. proposed the theory of "naturalness", i.e., when the logo is closer to the real object, consumers are more likely to produce personalized brand stimulation perception, and think that the brand is more affinity [4]. This is especially true for new consumer brands, many of which use natural images such as animals, plants, and anthropomorphic figures to build recognizability, such as the water wave form logo for Chi Forest or the curved shape of Coca-Cola's bottles, which reinforce the brand's associations. This type of design not only helps to build the brand image, but also makes the brand easier to be recognized and remembered by consumers, as visual symbols are one of the sensory methods with the lowest cost of memorization, which is especially crucial in the current market with the explosion of visual information. Moreover, the brand logo carries the brand's ethos, and it needs to reject the logo interpretation. Consumers should see a logo that is instantly recognizable and directly conveys the brand's name, industry, figurative graphics, etc., because there will be no designers around to explain their journey and meaning in creating the logo. Therefore, a logo with a unified and distinctive brand impression and a strong visual identity can minimize the cost of memorization.

2.3. The positioning effect and emotional cues of slogans

A brand slogan serves as a message anchor, positioning and reinforcing associations in the consumer's brain. Unlike promotional copy, a brand slogan is a spoken communication that is more likely to convey a low-cost message. Wolfsteiner and Garaus found that in a multimedia environment, overly complex or errant slogans can trigger negative reactions [5]. Thus, the language structure of the slogan should pursue the balance of "simplicity + suggestiveness", and use more colloquialisms rather than exaggerated and flashy rhetoric. In this way, it can realize emotional guidance rather than information interference, and it is easier to be trusted and relied on by consumers. The slogan of the Chinese restaurant brand Xibei, for example, is "I love 莜", which is borrowed from the English phrase "I love you" (the Chinese character " 莜 " is similar in pronunciation to the English word "you"), which is more easily remembered by the crowd.

Additionally, the emotional value of slogans should not be overlooked. Successful slogans are often motivational (e.g., "Just Do It"), attributional (e.g., "Because You are Worth It"), or identifying (e.g., "McDonald's - I like it"). They convey deep emotional cues through short phrases, thus triggering identity resonance and brand associations among consumers. This proves to be more

effectively communicated with declarative and action sentences. A declarative sentence is a statement of fact about what the brand can bring to the consumer; an action sentence creates an impulse to buy and asks the consumer to act. Therefore, a good slogan should speak to the consumer in one sentence, not only to say what the brand is about, but also to convince the consumer to buy.

The naming, logo, and slogan mentioned above are all brand symbols, and building a brand is actually about building symbols. The function of a brand is to sell, and to create awareness is to be able to earn more business value, so the brand's symbols can most directly affect consumers. All sensory symbols that carry meaning, i.e., hearing, sight, smell, touch, and taste, should be the representatives of the brand, loaded with brand identity and its value.

3. Brand packaging aesthetics and consumer psychological expectations

3.1. The effects of visual aesthetics on impulsive consumption and identity construction

Koksal et al. showed that aesthetic appeal not only stimulates consumers' immediate good feelings, but also contributes to the construction of identity, especially in the trendy fashion, personal care, food, and beverage industries, aesthetic design has become an extension of "self-expression" [6]. Consumers are increasingly inclined to buy product packaging that meets their aesthetic interests and social presentation intentions, rather than making judgments based solely on functionality and value for money. They are also willing to spend for good-looking packaging. For instance, there are many crossover co-branded products nowadays, such as co-branding TV series with drinks, anime with stationery, and so on. Many fans are willing to buy the corresponding co-branded products for their favorite characters, valuing only the packaging rather than the actual thing. Hence, packaging design is product design.

Li and Zhu also emphasized that implicit design cues, such as color temperature, typographic layout, and symbolic graphics, subconsciously influence consumers' judgments of a brand's creativity and freshness [7]. For example, Perfect Diary makeup often evokes a sense of technology and the future through "transparent material + gradient color" packaging to meet consumers' exploratory needs. The study also pointed out that it is important to maintain consistency between the visual style of product packaging and brand image to build long-term brand awareness. As a result, designing packaging is also about designing the logic of consumer choice, i.e. designing the reason for purchase.

3.2. Packaging design and perceived brand authenticity

Packaging is the largest carrier and the most important strategic tool for a brand. Packaging should be effectively designed with brand-related information as well as elements that can attract consumers to buy, thus allowing the product to "speak for itself". Wang et al. found that visually simple package design can enhance consumers' perception of brand authenticity, which is particularly effective in local aesthetic brands [8]. For example, although the packaging of Chayanyuese and Hey-Tea are very different in style, they both strengthen the brand's cultural attributes through "de-industrialization + visual white space", thus winning consumers' sense of psychological belonging and value recognition.

Visual simplicity not only represents efficiency and focus, but also conveys the brand's confidence in quality. Especially in this era of environmental awareness, the design concept of "less is more" has become a symbol of the brand's practice of sustainable development and aesthetic

ethics. Therefore, a talking package is not just a product's coat, but also an extension of the brand's philosophy.

4. The impact of branding on user loyalty

4.1. Emotional resonance and brand attachment

Sun et al. showed through an empirical survey of Chinese consumers that brand expression of authenticity (e.g., emphasizing the origin, transparent raw materials, and public welfare behaviors) significantly enhances consumers' brand attachment and loyalty [9]. When consumers perceive a brand as "warm" and "human being", they are willing to pay a premium for it and show a higher degree of tolerance. For instance, the packaging of Daily C Juice of WeiChuan has statements written on it that are in line with the psychological state of contemporary young people, which not only enhances the sense of ritual for consumers, but also establishes an emotional connection between the brand and consumers.

Furthermore, brands build emotional connections through emotional narratives, such as Coca-Cola's MBTI copywriting and creative bottle stickers to build emotional consumption scenarios, so that consumers complete the projection of their own emotions in their consumption behavior. This "emotional resonance" effect prompts the brand to leap from a commodity relationship to a personality relationship, forming the market phenomenon of "brand personification".

4.2. Brand strategy for sustainability and ethical values

Nowadays, some brands only emphasize single or short-term benefits, while neglecting the construction of long-term consumer relations. For example, in some scenic stores, the price of mineral water, paper towels, and other necessities is 3-5 times higher than in ordinary stores, and some souvenirs also have severe premiums. This reflects the businessmen's profit maximization strategy based on the logic of "one-time transaction" without considering repeated games. However, in fact, brands need to rely on repeated games to win the confidence of consumers to choose, and thus repeat the purchase of products. When buyers have relatively certain purchase habits and preferences, they will actively choose a fixed brand. This can also reduce the marketing costs of enterprises, because consumers are now the brand's free "spokesman".

Also, Monfort et al. noted that as Generation Z and Millennials have become increasingly concerned about environmental and social issues, a brand's commitment to sustainability has become an important variable influencing their choices [10]. Brands such as Muji and Patagonia have been accumulating ethical capital by emphasizing eco-friendly materials, carbon reduction in transportation, and social welfare. In the Chinese market, local brands are also gradually emphasizing the construction of ethical values. Adopt a Cow, as an example, has earned widespread consumer trust by emphasizing topics such as pasture visualization, milk traceability, and animal welfare. This not only enhances the added value of the product, but also gives consumers a sense of moral fulfillment in their purchase.

4.3. Ethical marketing of brands

Ethical marketing emphasizes the social responsibility of brands in the production chain, supply chain, communication, and after-sales service, and takes "doing the right thing" as the core demand, so that consumers can enjoy the satisfaction of moral self-actualization when purchasing. In terms of communication strategy, ethical marketing makes good use of "paradoxical empathy" - i.e. showing

the brand's concern and action on social pain points. Through true stories or short documentaries, consumers can empathize with the beneficiary groups emotionally. At this point, the brand is not only the purveyor of value, but also the initiator of ethical action. In support of the brand at the same time, buyers also gained a "moral license" to further consolidate loyalty and word-of-mouth communication power.

Nevertheless, while a single ethical marketing campaign can quickly attract attention, to achieve long-term loyalty, brands need to build a sustained mechanism of value resonance. According to Nocke and Strausz, consumers prefer to buy products from brands with long-term reputation [11]. Therefore, brands should regularly disclose social responsibility reports and sustainability data, and update them in real time through channels such as small programs and official websites. Visualized data allows consumers to see the environmental protection and emission reduction, public welfare donations, and other specific results brought by each purchase, forming a continuous accumulation of "trust deposits".

5. Conclusion

This paper systematically analyzes how brand symbolism, packaging aesthetics, and ethical values jointly shape brand image, which in turn affects consumers' psychological responses and behavioral decisions. It can be seen that, in the context of attention scarcity and emotion-driven consumption, brands must go beyond the traditional single "selling point communication" logic to establish a multi-dimensional "brand personality" through emotional arousal, value resonance, and aesthetic penetration in order to win consumers' choice. Based on the above findings, this leads to the further conclusion that the kernel of brand marketing is actually the reduction of communication costs. In the future, enterprises should pay more attention to the optimization of the following directions in their brand communication strategy: first, integrating naturalness, symbolism and simplicity to unify the brand logo system and create highly memorable visual symbols; second, upgrading from "functional packaging" to "emotional experience", endowing packaging with the ability of cultural narrative, and creating packaging aesthetics; finally, establishing and disclosing the brand's ethical stance, and winning the trust and consumers' choice through true expression to realize the long-term operation mode of "content is value, image is asset" in brand communication.

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