Review of research on brand identity

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Abstract. Brand identity is an important visual representation of an enterprise, which represents the values of an enterprise and is one of the important sources of its core competitiveness. This paper briefly summarizes the definition of brand identity, and classifies brand identity according to different ways, as well as the impact of different brand identity on consumers. On this basis, some suggestions for future research are provided.

Keywords: Brand identity; The consumer; Embodied cognition

1 Introduction

Sense is an important way for people to obtain external information. The information obtained through sense is more intuitive and has a more direct impact on people's judgment. In sensory marketing, visual marketing has the greatest impact on people, people can get 80% of the information through vision, and vision is also the fastest way for people to get information. Brand identity is the most basic and direct visual representation of the enterprise, and consumers can get a lot of important information from the brand identity of the enterprise. In view of the importance of brand identity, since the 1980s, many scholars at home and abroad have studied brand identity from the perspective of marketing. The existing researches mainly focus on the shape and text of brand identity, and less on the color of brand identity. This paper summarizes the definition of brand identity by different scholars, explains the classification of brand identity, and the impact of brand identity with different shapes and colors on consumers. Finally, the future research direction is prospected.

2 Brand identity and its classification

2.1 Brand Identity

Brand identity is the intangible assets of enterprises, it represents the image of enterprises, is used by consumers to identify different corporate brands and their products visual markers. People can identify the enterprise through the brand identity of the enterprise, and the enterprise can also design a proprietary brand identity to achieve the purpose of differentiating with competitors in the market, such as Nike's √, mil-

let mi word and so on. Brand identity is a visual symbol composed of a variety of visual elements, through which enterprises can convey their values, mission, and characteristics of marketing products to consumers. It is summarized according to the definition of brand identity[17] , which includes the elements of brand identity，as is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Definition of brand identity

Author	Definition
Zakia et al.	Part of the visual system that businesses use to communicate with internal and external audiences[12]
Stuar	Enterprises display symbols of product differences to the public in order to create a good image of the enterprise[10]
Henderson and Cote	A graphic design used by a business to present itself or its products, with or without the business name[5]
Keller	A design combination of image elements that are relevant to the brand and can communicate a product strategy[7]
Balmer	A combination of elements that show the identity of the company is the basis of the corporate image[2]
Van Riel and Van dan Ban	It symbolizes the reputation of enterprises and can expand consumers' cognition of enterprises[11]
Adir et al.	A picture that sets the company apart from other organizations[1]
David	An image or text logo of a business that displays the brand and its products[3]
Foroudi et al.	A set of elements including name, color, font, etc., that enable consumers to distinguish and identify brands[4]
Mahmood et al.	A universal visual cue, one of the most important components of a business[8]

2.2   Classification of brand identity

According to different standards, brand identity can be divided into different types. Li Feng and Zhu Yuanyuan divided brand identity into implicit and explicit design cues from the perspective of implicit design cues and explicit design cues [14]. According to the brand identity with or without border, brand identity can be divided into border brand identity and borderless brand identity[15]; Zhou Xiaoman and Ye Shenghong divided brand identity into correct brand identity and inclined brand identity[20]. According to the shape of brand identity, Yuwejiang divides brand identity into round shape and corner shape; According to the complexity of brand identity, brand identity

can be divided into natural type, harmonious type, complex type, and the combination of natural, harmonious and complex will achieve different effects.

According to graphics and text, brand identity is divided into pure graphics, pure text, text and graphics combination. Different forms will produce different marketing effects, consumer cognition is also different. The impact of the relative position of pure graphic brand identity and advertising copy on consumers' semantic processing through two reaction time experiments and two eye movement experiments[18]. Consumers' familiarity with brand identity also affects the semantic function of pure graphic brand identity.

The color of the brand identity is the most direct sensory experience and the most important component of visual marketing. The color of brand identity determines the brand positioning, the complexity of brand identity and the uniqueness of category all affect the choice of consumers. Because different colors represent different meanings, they also represent the status of the company. According to the color can be divided into green, high saturation and low saturation.

3   Consumer response to brand identity

3.1   Influence of consumers on brand identity of different shapes

Based on the theory of symbolic connotation, some scholars pointed out that products with circular brand logos look more comfortable than those with angular brand logos. Among service companies, circular logos are more likely to make people feel that the company is more sensitive to customers than angular logos[6] . Pan Pengjie and Yin Long [15]Based on embodied cognition theory and Gestalt theory, circle will make consumers perceive more loyalty, and oval shape will make consumers perceive more excitement. Studied the stretching effect of rectangular and square brand identity, and the research results showed that consumers believed that the time attribute of rectangular brand identity would be longer[19]. The experimental simulation that consumers believe that the slanted brand identity is more innovative and the correct brand identity has better brand reliability[20].

3.2   Influence of brand identity color on consumers

Colors have different meanings in different countries. For example, white represents purity in some countries, but death in China and Japan. Therefore, enterprises should consider different countries in the design and brand logo color, and explore the meaning and effect of the selected color in the target market; At the same time, enterprises should consider the matching between their brands and colors when choosing colors [9].

Color can be divided into hue, brightness and saturation. There are few researches on brand identity color at present. For example, a brand identity with high saturation will make consumers feel that the brand is cheaper [16]，as is shown in figure 1; Brand

identity with high saturation is stimulating, while brand identity with low saturation is peaceful [13].

Fig. 1. High saturation and low saturation brand identity

4   Summary and prospect

Brand identity is an important intangible asset of enterprises, and consumers can quickly associate with the products of enterprises through the brand identity of enterprises. Although the research on brand identity has achieved good results, there are still some shortcomings that need to be further improved. This paper puts forward the following suggestions on the future research direction of brand identity:

First, the color is disconnected from the actual feeling. When an enterprise using a green brand identity is recognized by consumers as an innovative and caring enterprise, but in the consumption experience and reality, consumers do not feel the innovation and care of the enterprise, it will have a more negative impact on the enterprise.

Second, most of the existing research focuses on the brand identity of for-profit organizations, but social organizations are also common in our daily life, such as anti-smoking advertisements in subways.

Thirdly, there are few researches on the implicit design clue of brand identity. Some researches named the implicit design clue as white space, but the existing researches do not have a clear definition of this implicit design clue. For example, in the brand logo of the Formula Championship, some people think that "1" is a hidden design, and some people think that "F" is a hidden clue. Future research can provide a specific and clear definition of implicit design cues.as is shown in figure 2. Finally, different countries have different preferences for colors because of their different cultural backgrounds, and colors also represent different meanings in different cultural backgrounds.

Fourly, only the enterprise is divided into traditional and modern, for the middle of the enterprise is not easy to distinguish, there are some enterprises may have traditional and modern, such as the automobile industry, it needs both modern association,

imagination, but also need traditional safety, reliability, stability. Therefore, whether it is more accurate to distinguish enterprises according to the combination type.

Fively, different countries have different preferences for colors because of their different cultural backgrounds, and colors also represent different meanings in different cultural backgrounds. Similarly, there are cultural differences among different countries. For example, China tends to be collectivist while the West tends to be individualistic. Whether these cultural differences will affect consumers' judgment of brands, and whether the existing research results are suitable for cross-cultural contexts.

Fig.2. Brand identity for the Formula 1 championship

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