

The Relationship between Image and Conception in Branding

Touraj Saberivand

Design Strategist



The Relationship between Image and Conception in Branding

Touraj Saberivand Design Strategist

No matter if you are a manager, an advisor or a designer, as long as you regard design a work of art, you are not even a little bit close to it. A company's design and visual identity is not something like a painting, it is rather similar to bolt and nut in an engine. We might like some paintings while we might not like some others. As some people would prefer some paintings to others. But, a nut that works well is liked by everyone, not for its beauty, color or shape; but for its functionality. The criteria for the engineers to measure a nut is its functionality. It doesn't matter if it is blue or red. The mechanical engineer doesn't care about his preference in the process of making nuts. Instead, he calculates the forces delivered upon the nuts in order to make a nut that would work efficiently. They will like the nut if it works well, but if it doesn't they will throw that away without even getting emotional. A real designer acts like this. Before designing, the designer arranges the parts with special features in order to achieve efficiency. The real difference between an engineer and a designer is that the former knows about the function of a nut, and they know how to test it to see whether it works or not. But a designer doesn't know anything about it, just like the business holders or the academician who don't know. Because if they knew, there wouldn't be any academic major like designing.

So what would be the result of this unawareness? In fact, in the absence of a predetermined objective the visual identity of the companies just like many other designs would be turned into some functionless, aimless shapes. As a result, we would be faced with a lot of meaningless shapes and colors. In fact, the designs are introduced to the companies, and the

managers would add some fictional words to it. So the result of the managerial commands for revising colors and shapes would be something haphazard that stands for nothing but inexperience. Once we have no idea what to do, we actually do nothing but wasting our time and energy.

On the other hand, the alliance of advertising companies with universities has paved the way for the people in charge to decide based on the personal criteria rather than professional ones. The advertising companies would create the visual identity of the companies based on such personal criteria to come to this unreasonable and insignificant phrase: "it's good" while they aren't even capable of defining the term "good". The managers on the other side of table say it is not good enough. So more effort is required. And this futile cycle will be repeated until one of the participants in the meeting gets tired. This will lead to another challenge that can be defined by this adage: "the face is the mirror of the mind". People will learn a lot of things about a company and its managers only by looking at its visual identity. A modernist manager, would prefer a modern design and brand as well without

even being aware of it. On the other hand, an old-fashioned manager would use classical designs and brands. In a word, we show what we really are. Although it can help one to know more about what is going on inside an organization or a manager's mind, it cannot define the function of design and visual identity. Actually, the real function of a design is to communicate with the audience the way they need to be communicated. Hence, it has to be what the audience wants. Of course, we don't mean a design should be based on the audience's personal preferences as we can see in some thoughtless organizations. What we have in mind is the main feature of a company that the audience finds significant such as trust, modernity, originality, speed and so on. The company's .

visual identity should be designed based on such features. A company's visual identity would be the right one once it expresses its main characteristic. Otherwise, it have to be thrown away, whether the manager likes it or not. But here's another question: shouldn't we pay attention to beauty to see whether a company's visual identity is attractive or not? A designer's answer would be something like this: the visual identity is neither beautiful nor ugly. In fact, the idea of beauty is not important here. So it could be said that the logos are neither beautiful nor ugly.

However, except attractiveness, there is another thing that managers care about. When they are faced with a logo or a color, they would ask about its meaning. It should be noted that in branding, neither logos nor color doesn't need to be significant at all. They are simply some arbitrary signs. However, one should not put the blame on the managers. The designers are the one who should be blamed because they don't inform others about this, although they probably don't know. Lots of teachers would tell their students things like these: blue stands for peace of mind, while red is the symbol of excitement. However, we know this is not true as we see red can sometimes stand for brands like Marlboro, Mitsubishi, and even sometimes LG. Yellow and purple can stand for Persian brands like Irancell and Rightel respectively. Nevertheless, the art teachers and managers don't tell you about this, because they haven't been taught how a color and logo can signify something special. This is totally true about logos as well. To sum, we use the logos to distinguish between products of different companies, factories, banks, insurance companies, etc. In fact, distinction is the major criteria in designing a logo. By distinction we don't mean creativity by no means. Creativity in designing would lead into anything but errors and problems. A designer who decides to design a creative logo, is similar to a mechanical engineer who wants to make the most creative nut ever. Perhaps he can make such a nut, but it wouldn't be functional at all. It wouldn't be even useful as a decorative item. So, it could be said that the creative logos are as useless as creative nuts. By distinction we mean a feature that helps the audience to distinguish between different logos without getting into troubles. So, it doesn't have anything to do with any meaning or any product. Many managers and designers who are used to see everything as complicated as hell, would find this simplicity as a means to fade a logo's identity, as if the logo's origin is devastated. A manager once told me: "Don't tell others what you just told me, because it will devastate the significance of you and your colleagues' works". Of course, I didn't listen to him and I told everyone about that for a million times. People always search for a meaning and significance in everything. For instance, when they watch a good movie, they will ask themselves: what it wants to imply? Or when they look at a painting in an art gallery, they still want to know its message. The same will happen when they see a company's logo. They say: "I don't understand this." Of course, they are right as the logos offer the audience no significance to get. But, the thing is when the audiences don't know the meaning of a logo, they would look for it. Otherwise they shouldn't seek the significance.

So what should be sought? The main item a designer should consider while thinking about the visual identity of a logo is to find a name for that. If a name has a pictorial equivalent, it can be used in logo design. For example, if a business name is Camel, the logo should be in the shape of a camel. If its name is Apple, then the logo should be like an apple. If you find this knowledge something elementary that doesn't need to be mentioned, we recommend you to look at the logos of airlines like Kish airline, Ghesm airline, Asman airline, Zagros airline and Taban airline which all use a bird in their logos. These logos must be thrown away because they neither increase their distinction nor they help the audience to distinguish those brands. These logos use names that are not related to their brand's personality. The audience cannot understand what's going on inside an organization by looking at these logos. Besides airlines, we have some other examples that use the term Persian as their brands' names, while their logos are not Persian at all. Some of these companies include Pars Khazar, Parisan (Persian) insurance, and Pars Khodro. However, this is not only limited to Iran. Even some famous brands like Amazon – that instead of Amazon jungles has used a smile in its logo- and Blackberry have made the same mistakes as well. What the present article tries to say is to look for the function not the beauty and attractiveness in designing a company's visual identity. You have to design the logos based on the brands' names. So first try to know the major characteristic of a company, so that you can represent it well enough in your design. For instance, if you work for an airline, your logo should help the audience to distinguish it in the sky wherever they are. Shell Company asked Raymond Loewy, the legendary industrial designer to redesign its logo in a way it can be recognized from a far. Raymond took Shell managers under a great bridge in the city. There he hung his logo from enormous cloth so that the managers check its functionality. Shell's logo is neither ugly nor beautiful, but at least you can see it even if you are on an oil tanker.



World Class Designs



Company Number 12269395
United Kingdom Company House

Stay in Touch on LinkedIn & Instagram
vandint.co.uk