

The Value of Applying Material Characterization in Brand Vision

Luo Xianfan, Hao Xiaohua

Guangzhou Business College, Guangzhou, China

Keywords: brand vision; materials; value; characterization

Abstract: Currently, the application of materials in brand promotion has been granted unprecedented attention in the market. Via the analysis of the application of material characterization in brand vision, this paper showed that it is of great value in the establishment of brand image. The designer's incorporation of material characteristics into the visual elements of a brand will inject new blood into the application of brand visual design, highlighting the social value which is far beyond brand building and spreading.

1. Introduction

In the era of big data with visual diversification, the market and economy have casted more and more demands on the profession of designers, especially nowadays when the whole world attaches great value to brand building, which requires brand designers pay attention not only to the design of elements, such as writing, drawing, and colors, but also to more broadened fields, in which the selection and application of materials should also be concerned.

2. The Value Reflected in the Material Characterization in Brand Vision

2.1 Brand Concept Strengthened Via the Application of Material Characterization

Different materials could bring different associations and experience to consumers based on their attributes and five senses. Designers should be able to use the characteristics of materials to perform brand visual design, which will open up a novel path for the oncoming brand visual design. The application of material characterization in brand vision is conducive to strengthening brand concept and creating a brand image with distinct characteristics, such as the brand image of a Japanese restaurant 'Fat Cow', which is selling Japanese beef cuisine with Japanese techniques from materials selection, cooking to serving to diners. Its brand concept is quiescence, simplicity as well as respect of nature. Therefore, the brand image is to convey the beauty of Japanese quiescence with the texture and material of logs. The brand reasonably applies the material to the brand visual image to convey the brand concept.

2.2 Brand Identification Enhanced Via the Application of Material Characterization

'Apple' is a prestigious brand worldwide, and its success is definitely a result of a multiple aspects, in which the application of material characterization plays a critical role. Representative materials of Apple's are glass, aluminium and stainless steel. The use of these three materials focuses and supports Apple's brand concept as well as its brand image. Apple has been adhering to the concept of 'creating the greatest technology products in the world', which is also a concept that Steve Jobs had been upholding. the front side and door steps of the company's brand exclusive stores are made of glass materials to show the advanced image of Apple, thus the effect of the building symbolizes the advanced image of the brand of Apple. Transparent store image and products with high-tech material sense have become the symbols of the the brand of Apple, making it more identifiable in consumers.

2.3 The Brand More Appealing Via the Application of Material Characterization

Materials are often associated with warmth, softness, hardness, etc. In brand visual design, to interpret brand spirit with the characteristics of materials could make the brand more appealing,

which can also make it more acceptable and favorable in consumers. For example, the brand Muji advocates natural and simplified lifestyle, so the brand awareness is visually weakened to left only the material and function per se. The application of materials of Muji are mainly non-bleaching green paper, PP materials, white oak, walnut, cotton cloth, etc. Translucent PP material can increase permeability; white oak belongs to light-colored wood, which can better reflect the texture of the product; walnut gives people a sense of calm and tranquility, which can better reflect the simplicity of the product; cotton cloth material makes people feel comfortable and skin-friendly, making it feel warmer, through which Muji, a brand image that combines materials with brand concept, have won the favor of consumers. Moreover, the natural and simplified lifestyle advocated by the brand becomes popular and appealing in consumers.

2.4 Brand More Differentiated Via the Application of Material Characterization

Under the circumstances of a diversified and homogeneous market, enterprises could be more competitive in the market with the help of brand differentiation. The application of material characterization in brand vision is of great importance for the brand to develop a unique visual strategy. Therefore, brand visual designers should be more devoted to the application and spreading of material characteristics in brand vision, to get new opportunities for brand and make it outstanding in similar competitive brands. For example, the store image design of Ginza, in which Mr. Kenya Hara only used ‘white’ and ‘material’. Although the design looks simple, it granted Matsuya Ginza a refreshed image. The designer fully mobilized the feeling of ‘touch’ of the material to perform the design. Additionally, he put a huge white zipper on the white wall outside of Ginza, the brave and innovative design of which got people’s praise and love. The designer also used distinctive materials to design planar advertisements and Mr. Kenya Hara applied a visual approach of the embroidery in planar posters, which is not only more creative than general ads, but also cheaper than printing ads, making it unique.

3. The Value Promoted with Material Characterization in Brand Vision

3.1 Material Characterization Spreads Green and Ecological Philosophy

President Xi Jinping said, ‘Green water and hills are our valuable treasure’. Green and environment protection has become the focus globally. Combining the sustainable, green and environment-friendly materials with the brand concept supporting environment protection could spread the concept of green and ecological philosophy better. IKEA, for example, spreads the concept of green and ecological concept with its own brand and action. In materials application, IKEA follows the relevant regulations on chemical products, in accordance with the currently most stringent E1 standard for coatings and paints containing formaldehyde, adopting the minimum limit prescribed. To produce the best product with the least material is IKEA’s code of conduct on materials. IKEA speaks with their actions and spreads environment conservation philosophy with their product concept, which may be an important reason why IKEA is spread all over the world.

3.2 Material Characterization Delivery People-oriented Thought

The application of material characterization in brand visual design can satisfy users’ needs more humanistically, especially for special population, special products and special environment, which is more targeted and more humanistic when it is associated with brand characteristics. For instance, ‘OXO’, a household product brand, has been popular in the United States for decades, the brand concept of which is ‘Good grips’, ie ‘good handle’. The goal of OXO is to provide innovative consuming products to make people’s daily life easier, especially for special population. For example, the kitchen utensils of OXO applies special materials technology and provides users with good experience.

The good handle series kitchen utensils of OXO has prominent visual appearance, adopting the sense of ‘touch’ in the design. This humanized design originates from Fabel’s wife, who suffers from arthritis. The ordinary handle is inconvenient for her to exert her strength, but this kind of

handle is more labor-saving. OXO applies a kind of material called ‘santoprene’, which is made of plastic and rubber and feels warm and smooth. The soft part of the tail is called ‘tail wing’, which enables the handle to bend according to the strength of the fingers, thus relieving pressure and easy to control. OXO is always devoted to people-oriented design, which would be the final destination of any design.

3.3 Material Characterization Conveys Fashion and Individuality

From a sociological point of view, ‘brand’ is a symbolic item and an impression that exists in users’ mind. Thus, in the process of brand building, to create brand impression with the characteristics of materials can leave an impression of the brand in consumers faster and more lasting. Diesel, a perfume brand, advocates individuality and non-mainstream profile, the concept of which is adored by young people, who are impressed by it. ‘Individuality’ is the biggest feature of Diesel, thus forming a unique perfume brand. Renzo Rosso, founder of the Italian brand, said, ‘Diesel never induces customers to buy anything, but conveys a sense of life. I believe in the intelligence of customers, they will choose the most unique thing.’ The packaging of the perfume produced by Diesel is very particular about the application of materials. Designers use their material attributes and emotions to combine with the brand concept of Diesel, which perfectly expresses the brand’s pursuit of uniqueness and individuality.

4. Summary

Throughout the domestic brand visual design works, many of them are still around the previous ‘planar’ design, which will be the hurdle of the development of domestic brand visual design. Through the analysis and research of relevant foreign brand design works, the thesis here explored the application of visual form of materials in brand design, and summarizes the value of the application of material characterization in brand visual design for the development of competitive brand for enterprises. We hope it can provide some reference for the development of domestic brand design as well as continuous inspiration for brand visual design.

References

- [1] Nikkei Design: Materials and Design. Translated by Xu Yushan [M] Beijing. China Construction Industry Publishing House 2017
- [2] Sato Da: Solving Problems with Design. Translated by Deng Chao [M] Beijing. Beijing Times Chinese Press 2016
- [3] Jia Lijun: Brand Aesthetics [M] Beijing. China Market Publishing House, 2014
- [4] Duben Book Graphic Design Craft and Creativity, translated by Wang Ying [M] Beijing. China Youth Publishing House, 2015.10
- [5]. Li Baohua: Brand Code [M] Beijing. China Wealth Publishing House, 2017.01
- [6] Mike Ashby: Materials and Design [M] Beijing. Chemical Industry Press, 2012
- [7] Bernd Schmitt: MARKETING AESTHETICS The Strategic Management of Brands, Identity, and Image [M] ISBN 7-313-02193-3 1999