

Research on the Application of Graphic Symbols in Brand Logo Design

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ABSTRACT

Brand logo design is a symbolic visual symbol of a brand, which reflects the image of the brand itself and causes emotional resonance among the audience. Graphic symbols are irreplaceable in brand logo design. In this paper, by defining the concept of graphic symbols and its constituent factors, the authors will conduct a comparative study of more successful cases at home and abroad, explore and summarize the factors that can promote the better dissemination and identification of graphic symbols in the market, and enhance the competitive advantage of brands in the current environment.

Keywords: *Graphic symbols, Logo design, Brand design.*

1. INTRODUCTION

As a visual form, graphic symbols play an important role in brand design. The viewers will have the first impression of the brand according to the presentation of graphic symbols, so as to quickly understand, remember and resonate with the brand. At the same time, the shape and color of graphic symbols convey their cultural value and brand concept to the audience. An excellent graphic symbol will not only make the brand more vigorous, but also attract the audience, increase the communication strength and promote consumption.

2. THE VALUE EMBODIMENT OF GRAPHIC SYMBOLS IN BRAND LOGO DESIGN

2.1 *Composition of Logos*

Brand logo design is a part of the visual identity system, while graphic design includes the visual identity system. The visual recognition system is the basic elements of a series of graphic design, such as graphics, colors, fonts, etc., that a certain group needs to know about the information. It presents the information visually by means of recombination, superposition, rotation, etc. Its

purpose is to convey information orderly and efficiently.

Generally, a complete brand logo is composed of graphic symbols, standard characters, colors and slogans (as shown in "Figure 1"). However, in the design process, the presentation of the four elements should be combined with the actual situation of the brand, and there is no formal requirement. Sometimes only two or three elements may appear.



Figure 1 A complete brand logo.

Brand logo design can be roughly divided into two categories, in which there is no obvious boundary between the graphic logo based on graphic symbols and the font logo based on standard characters, let alone the good or bad. Designers can design the most suitable scheme for the brand according to the brand tonality, brand audience, functional value and many other aspects.

2.2 The Value Embodiment of Graphic Symbols

With the rapid development of information technology, people's memory is composed of different information nodes. In order to make the brand penetrate into the hearts of the audience, the brand must have a unique symbol. Brand logo design is an important part of brand design. An excellent brand logo can make the audience understand the brand image, brand culture and spirit faster and easier. At the same time, it highlights the brand personality and cultural differences of similar brands, so that the audience can quickly identify and distinguish the brand and its related competitors. Excellent brand logo design can better resonate with the audience, and play a more active role in establishing the brand image and embodying the brand value.

In brand logo design, graphic symbols can be said to be the most important. They contain the theme and content that the brand wants to convey, and are the concrete embodiment of the brand value concept. They can strengthen the brand appeal, brand vitality, convey information, and express emotions. A powerful graphic symbol should not only have rich expressive force, but also cater to the audience's aesthetic, and also have the function of efficiently and accurately transmitting brand information. Thus, it is easier for the audience to focus on the brand image, so that the brand can be quickly identified and remembered, which can generate cognitive resonance and be deeply rooted in the hearts of the people.

In logo design, graphic symbols or standard characters, or the combination of the two, often form a rich and complete visual image. The graphic symbols themselves will show a strong sense of artistic beauty, while the standard characters will make the information they want to convey more complete and accurate. The two cooperate with each other. However, through the evolution and dissemination of a certain period of time, graphic symbols are simple, neat, easy to understand, and easy to remember. They will often become a symbol of the brand, or a visual theme symbol. Therefore, the brand will gradually break away from the standard words and prefer to be expressed with graphical symbols. In this process, it is a process for the audience to recognize the graphic symbols, a process for the audience to recognize and understand the brand, and a process for the audience to screen the same type of brand. It can be said that the graphic symbols are the bridge

between the audience and the brand. The audience can remember and understand the graphic symbols through spontaneous and involuntary cognitive activities, so that the graphic symbols can form a stable and easy to understand image, and have a more perfect and profound brand cultural connotation.

In brand logo design, the form is becoming more and more symbolic. Designers like to use simple symbols to express rich emotions and complex content, so that the content can be spread efficiently and quickly; In terms of expression, graphic symbols are more vivid than standard characters, and have more abundant emotional expression; In the process of information communication, graphic symbol is the most straightforward and simple image language. It is a visual language form and also a symbol carrier with rich appeal in the process of information communication. Graphic symbols are expressions of information after artistic processing and refining, and the essential content of information will not be changed. This kind of graphic symbol will be more in line with the audience's aesthetic, and effectively convey the emotional appeal to the audience while effectively and intuitively expressing the information appeal. When the audience only sees a simple graphic symbol, they can receive the information that the brand wants to convey. Compared with words, this way will be more intuitive, vivid, and easy to recognize and remember in the communication process. In the process of communication, graphic symbols not only represent the carrier of information transmission, but also represent the integration and simplification of graphic memory and information through the process of understanding symbols.

3. SHAPE OF GRAPHIC SYMBOLS

3.1 Basic Graphics: Point, Line, Face

Point, line, face, position, direction, size, space, texture and color are the basic visual elements in the design. Through mutual combination, these visual elements form a wonderful design world, collide with magical chemical reactions, and produce a visual effect that one plus one is more than two. The use of these visual elements is the cornerstone of brand logo design. As the basic elements, point, line and face are the minimum units of a drawing and the basis of all design drawings. Point is the smallest, simplest and most basic unit in the graph, and it is a relative concept.

Any element in the design screen can be called a point, which can be a graph of any size or shape. To some extent, the formation of a line can be explained as that countless points are connected to each other to form a line. For example, when being zoomed in enough, it can be found that a line in the display screen is formed by connecting pixels one by one. Any figure people see that can be regarded as a line is formed by using points as basic units. The lines in the design not only represent the obvious straight lines and some zigzag lines that people can easily perceive in life, but also represent some invisible lines. For example, in some graphics or words that convey information, the aligned arrangement forms an invisible line, which will make the picture cleaner and more efficient in conveying information. Similarly, when a line is repeatedly stacked, it will form a face. If the line emphasizes the characteristics of its direction, the face emphasizes the region formed by its condensation. The edge of a face of any shape is composed of a closed line. When the line reaches the end from the starting point after winding around, it forms a closed shape, that is, a face. From a geometric point of view, a face is a closed form formed by continuous extension of lines and connection of head and tail. From the perspective of design, under the same conditions, face plays a more important role than point and line.

Taking points, lines and faces as basic graphics, countless forms of expression will be produced by arranging and combining them in the design process. According to the brand tonality, repeat, cut, render and other design techniques for basic graphics, and through the design and processing of location, direction, size, space, texture, color and other aspects, will form a graphic symbol with aesthetic and impact in vision and rich feelings in expression that fits the brand spirit. Unilever is the world's leading producer of FMCG, mainly responsible for food and household and personal care products. Its logo is composed of 25 small figures such as the sun, gene double helix shape, bee, hand, fish, wave, lip, flower, etc. ("Figure 2"). Each motif has a unique symbolic meaning and is closely related to the brand's own products, combining to represent nature, beauty, cleanliness, as well as care and health. The graphic symbol is the use of points, lines, surfaces after artistic processing, his 25 figures can be regarded as 25 "points", composed of points to form the letter "U", in some cases can also be regarded as a "U" shaped line.



Figure 2 Unilever logo.

3.2 *Figurative and Abstract Graphic Symbols*

Figurative and abstract are two relative concepts, there is no absolute standard for the division of graphics, figurative graphics refer to the common characters, landscapes, animals and plants in people's lives. For the graphics that people are familiar with, designers will apply or create imitations. Figurative graphics have highly recognizable characteristics, so they can make graphic symbols more intuitive and visual, so that the audience can easily and clearly understand the connotation of symbols and the information they convey. Figurative graphic symbols are a more intuitive visual language expression, which better reflects the representation of objective objects. In the process of creation and dissemination, figurative graphic symbols are more inclined to emotional expression, and their demands in intuitiveness, authenticity, affinity and other aspects are stronger than abstract graphic symbols.

Figurative graphics are objectively existing around people's lives, and are the basic expression of all forms. They are easier to be familiar with and accepted in the presentation of forms, and convenient to understand in cognition. The application of concrete graphics is the combination of graphics, characters, colors and other elements, and the simplification of graphics and images, which not only enhances the artistry of expression, but also attracts the audience's attention; In addition, there is a reconstruction method, that is, to reorganize the original image after scattering, which can bring people a different visual experience. The graphic symbols appearing in the logo are often extracted from the familiar objects. This familiar design element can more quickly arouse the resonance of the audience, make it more

intuitive and vivid, and at the same time, it is easier for most audiences to understand. It can be said that the concrete graphic symbol is a visual symbol formed after the artistic treatment of the objective things in real life. Taking the logo of Nestlé, a world famous food and beverage manufacturer as example ("Figure 3"), it started from the production of baby food and is famous for producing chocolate bars and instant coffee. "Nestlé" means "little bird's nest" in German, and "Nestl" means "settle down comfortably" and "snuggle up" in English. The graphic symbol of Nestlé is that two birds are waiting for their mother's feeding beside the nest. The close combination of the name of "Nestlé" and the figure of "Nestle" enables people to know the name from the figure and the figure from the name. This graphic symbol will connect people with babies to be fed, loving mothers and Nestlé products that are healthy, nutritious and safe. It not only has its rich connotation, but also fully meets the basic requirements of trademark positioning.



Figure 3 Nestlé logo.

Abstract figure is the form after abstracting the object image. It is a relatively independent and complete basic element extracted from the natural form or concrete things, and uses non concrete geometric figures or symbolic elements as the form of image language to express the meaning of its things. In the graphic symbols of brand design, abstract graphics not only generalize and extract the original figurative graphics, but also recreate the graphics, making the graphics concise but symbolic in form and clear in visual expression. However, no matter the abstract graphic symbols are expressed in any form, in principle, they are graphics with high generality and artistic characteristics after artistic treatment. Abstract graphic symbols are a kind of feeling and image in artistic expression, which cannot directly show the actual meaning. To sum up, abstract graphic symbols are used to create simple and meaningful figures through the combination, arrangement and color transformation of basic figures such as points, lines and faces, so as to express the designer's thoughts and feelings. The logo of China Post Group Co., Ltd. is a typical abstract graphic symbol (as shown in "Figure 4"). The symbol is composed of horizontal and vertical straight lines and slightly tilted to the right, representing that China Post is connected in all directions with a sense of direction and speed. The figure is formed by the combination of the Chinese

character "中" and the image of the postal network. The whole figure is like an abstract expression of wings, with the metaphor of "swan goose sending a letter". It is simple and powerful, expressing the corporate purpose of serving thousands of households, as well as the brand image of fast, accurate, safe and everywhere.



Figure 4 Logo of China Post.

4. COLOR OF GRAPHIC SYMBOLS

Some designers habitually focus on the form of symbols in logo design, while ignoring that the form of symbols is just one of the entry points in the design of brand graphic symbols. At the initial stage, the audience will be more vulnerable to the impact of color. As an important element in graphic symbols, color and graphic symbols complement each other. Good color can make the brand symbol more vivid and three-dimensional in the process of communication, and play a role of boosting the flames and making the finishing point.

With the continuous development of society, people's complex perception ability has given some special meanings to colors, which will unconsciously cause emotional resonance when encountering specific colors. In graphic symbols, the expression of different colors will not only intuitively show the brand characteristics, but also affect the audience's understanding of the brand and arouse the emotional resonance of the audience. Therefore, brands and designers should conduct rational analysis and investigation on their choice of graphic symbol colors, and fully consider their own attributes and brand culture and ideas. In daily life, the audience will have a preliminary impression and classification of the brand according to the logo when they do not know about the brand, and the color of graphic symbols plays a decisive role in it. Different colors will make the audience have different psychological feelings. In addition, brands and designers should also take into

account the audience's acceptance of color when choosing colors.

In terms of color selection, it is necessary to pay attention to not only the difference of hue, but also the difference of hue and purity. The colors can be divided into cold, warm and neutral colors. Warm colors people often see are red, orange red, yellow, etc. These colors often make people feel warm and enthusiastic. On the contrary, green and blue make people feel calm, comfortable and calm. They are called cool colors. In addition, the purity will also show different feelings. The lower the purity of the color, the weaker the visual perception, the lighter the feeling, and the farther away; On the contrary, the visual perception will be more obvious. In the design of graphic symbols, people can form a sense of hierarchy through different colors and purity to make the main body more vivid and express more clearly.

In daily life, people can easily find that some catering industries or FMCG industries will use warm colors as the main colors of graphic symbols, such as McDonald's, Red Bull, Sanyuan Food, Nestlé, etc. Because warm colors are full of passion, enthusiasm and warmth, they will attract more attention of the audience and make people excited, excited and motivated. What is different is that high-tech companies, medical institutions and technology-based enterprises are more keen to consider cool colors, such as Intel, Samsung, Foxconn, etc. Because cold colors are regarded as depth, calm, rational, calm, reliable and trustworthy.

At the same time, in the choice of graphic symbol colors, designers should not only rely on their own preferences, but also consider their own culture and environment in the region where the brand is located. Color itself has no feelings, but through human experience accumulation and emotional cognition, color will express actual feelings in an abstract form. According to the research of color psychology, because each country is limited by different space, nationality, religion, history, thought, tradition and other objective factors, audiences in different regions have a greater difference in the acceptance of color. Even for some regions, inappropriate use of certain colors may cause resistance of local audiences. Therefore, it is a must to be careful with the choice of color, so as to generate a good market response after the brand launch, thus stimulating consumption. For example, in some Asian countries such as China, Japan and South Korea, the use of red brand symbols is significantly higher than that

in Western countries. In the East, red represents festivity and excitement, while in the West it is a symbol of danger and blood. During the Spring Festival, many brands will change the graphic symbols to Chinese red, which is popular among Chinese people, in order to cater to Chinese audiences.

5. CONCLUSION

Brand logo is the first impression of the audience on the brand, and is an important visual publicity and marketing means for enterprises. Graphic symbol is one of the important design elements in brand logo design. A good graphic symbol can effectively convey information, improve the connotation of brand culture, better display the brand image, and stimulate the audience's emotion. It can establish the unity of emotional value between the brand and the audience. In this era of rapid economic development and rising consumer capacity, designers can only make their products stand out in the market by deeply understanding the connotation and characteristics of graphic symbols, firmly mastering the application methods of graphic symbols in logo design, and basing on the creativity of graphic symbols.

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