

DESIGN OF A MODERN COMPUTER BRAND AS THE MAIN COMMUNICATION FACTOR IN THE WORLD CULTURAL SPACE

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Summary

The purpose of this article is to explore the modern branding – its nature, history, originality, spirit and value to consumers. In particular, graphic design of the brand is an important component in terms of the modern European culture. The scientific novelty of the work implies the study of the contemporary design, which widely embraces the sphere of cultural and social life and can contribute to the development of progressive phenomena in society, as the design can literally be defined as a rethinking, a search for new meanings. The design itself is a versatile means of communication at the level of feelings and meanings. One of its main goals is the harmonization, and even formation of perception of the world, creation of new images or rethinking the essence of ordinary things. Hence, the research in the field of the design development is topical in the worldwide cultural space..

Key words:

design, computer, advertising, corporate identity, consumer

1. Introduction

Communication being the main function of the design, the latter is nowadays a universal means of communication at the level feelings and meanings. A dialogue always implies a feedback and should encourage interaction. That is, the information provided by the computer brand will entail a consumer's action (purchase hardware or software, conclusion of a contract, etc.). The main task of corporate computer style is to increase the consumption of products of a particular brand and maintain leadership positions. A computer company logo and other promotional materials designed in a single style would help the consumer to identify products of a specific manufacturer. A proper use of a brand-book would contribute to increasing the number of "contacts" and, as a consequence, attachment of buyers to a specific brand of personal computers, laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc. Accordingly, modern progressive branding is important not only for advertising agencies and designers, but also has a great socio-cultural impact on consumer audiences.

2. Theoretical Consideration

The innovative nature of open education, driven by postmodernity trends of social development, requires theoretical, scientific and practical development of branding issues. In particular, dedicated to this topic have been the works by D. Aaker, O. Azaryan, K. Bazherina, J. Barlow, S. Beleshev, M. Bytinsky, I. Belsky, M. Belyavtsev, L. Ivanenko and others. However, as of now, the use of different types of marketing services aimed at identifying benefits, wishes, needs and perception of branding. It is computer brands that have been little studied.

The ideology of modern computer branding is consistent with deep socio-cultural and socio-economic transformations taking place in society, as well as with the essential changes in perception of values of knowledge regarded as continuous self-improvement throughout life. As a result, the development of tactics and strategy of branding policy is of great importance for the development of computer hardware and software. The most noticeable challenges are as follows: fierce competition in the consumer and corporate markets of computer and software products, constant modernization of technologies, requirement of compliance with world standards of development. Branding is a set of tools to promote the image in the sphere of public communications in a competitive environment and in the consumer market. Therefore, it is a weighty factor in realization of any products, as well as an answer to any possible challenges. The character, history, originality, attractiveness, spirit – this is what is valued by consumers in terms of the brand. What is important, is the information that stands behind the brand, filling it with a concrete content. "The idea must be unusual and unique, being at the same time simple and understandable – this is where the complexity of its development lies" – notes A. Azaryan in the marketing manual [2].

“To analyze the situation and define the strategy, various types of marketing research are used, aimed at determining preferences, wishes, needs and perceptions of the target audience, at evaluating strengths and weaknesses of competitors, determining the product niche in the market, etc. This very important stage of branding underlies any further work on the product image” – explores the new branding concept D. Aaker [1].

It is important for the consumer market to develop a brand message, addressed to the consumer. It is due to this message that a purchaser chooses one or another product from a number of competing goods. A good positioning is a concise and clear message, which, nevertheless, maximizes the benefits of the brand. For computer technology, attention is often paid to technical indicators, but without skillful marketing, brand promotion is impossible. More technically advanced but less popular brands often cannot make enough profit. And, as a result, they lose their positions and really start to lag behind the leaders (who have secured the championship, including successful branding). Therefore, the current policy for the promotion of computer brands is clear – manufacturers buy a well-known brand or its division with the right to use a well-known brand for a certain period of time.

For example, the Chinese company Lenovo in 2004 bought a division of personal computers from the American company IBM. At the same time, the Lenovo brand was gradually introduced – until 2010 (under the terms of the agreement), computers still had the IBM logo. This has helped Lenovo become a world leader in computer sales. If they hadn't taken such a step with a successful brand (IBM was generally associated with the computer itself), it would have been harder for them to reach a world leader.

It takes a professional approach to create a successful computer brand name. Therefore, a good name is the lion's share of brand success in the market and an important stage of branding. Naming is exercised according to certain rules, considering many subtleties. This stage of branding starts after the name and design of the brand are developed, the idea and legend are created and the positioning is defined. For a new product, this is the first acquaintance with the target audience, though for a re-branded product it is important to be represented in a new light. In any case, this stage must be carefully thought out and well implemented, being the crown of all previous branding work.

Consumers' impressions of a brand depend largely on visual perception of the computer product image. Even visual design is important here. Management, formation and usage of trademarks of enterprises are described by K. Bazherina in his scientific research as follows: “A well-designed packaging (as an element of the corporate identity) enables the product to be sold right from the supermarket shelf, with no additional promotional material.

At the same time, the image of the product, its design and packaging design should harmoniously fit into the overall branding concept” [3]. But the development stage of the product packaging begins after the brand name and design have been developed, the idea and legend created and positioning defined.

A new computer product is not a purely technical thing. For a successful sale, it must evoke in consumers the appropriate positive emotions. The design conveys information and has an emotional colour. It helps to reconsider the essence of ordinary things, as well as external advertising media (for example, signs and indicators that are also objects of design, but convey only the information component), and communications which are perceived on an emotional level.

“Most often, it is the design that adds emotional benefits to the brand, makes the product or service more attractive and needed. Nay, there are examples when design becomes the primary USP (Apple). Design is coming rescue in conditions of market supersaturation – this situation can be described as a dialogue of brand with brands. The design enables the product not only to be identified, but also be differentiated from competitors. It becomes noticeable, even without having a rational advantage” – emphasizes J. Barlow [4].

Apple focused on the fact that it is not enough to create a quality computer product – it is necessary to convince people of this. It is important for consumers to see an embodiment of their dreams in the product, to feel powerful opportunities for self-realization. Ideally, a quality computer product should combine good technical performance, high-quality attractive design and a strong advertising brand. Only by combining these three components can it be successful in today's world. Apple focuses on the needs of end users – this priority is enshrined in the “company philosophy.” The consumer should know that the company is ready and capable of experiencing technical difficulties for the convenience of an “ordinary person.” In part, such a policy affects the price of equipment, which can further strengthen the brand's position making it a “high-status product.”

As part of the study, the authors conducted a survey among 100 respondents aged 21-25 years on how the brand name and its popularity affect their choice of computer equipment. In total, the questionnaire contained 7 questions related to the technical characteristics, brand awareness and appearance of computer devices.

To the question “If you are offered to buy one of the two computers for the same price – one with worse characteristics, but branded, the second – “no name” computer with better characteristics, 68% of respondents answered that they would choose a brand with slightly worse characteristics, while 32% preferred technical characteristics. This indicates that the consumer still prefers the brand more than the technical component. It

was evidenced by the answers to the following question of the questionnaire: “Your friend’s Apple laptop broke. You are going to buy a laptop from this company. Will the fact of breakdown affect your choice?” 61% of respondents said that it would not affect their intention to purchase a laptop from this company, because any equipment can break over time and this is normal.

In addition to the technical characteristics and brand awareness, we would like to pay attention to the pricing policy. It should be understood that the stronger the brand is, the more money it spends on advertising, marketing, PR, etc. Of course, it happens that due to the declared and actually proven reliability of their products, the computer brand can gain popularity due to the so-called “marketing buzz” principle. But this way of promoting the brand is too long. Therefore, companies seeking to gain popularity as soon as possible invest a lot of money in it. In the proposed questionnaire, respondents were asked: “Which company would you buy a computer from if it has the same technical characteristics?” IBM, Lenovo, Apple and Siemens were offered as answer options. 67% of respondents said they would choose Apple, 13% – Lenovo, IBM – 10%, Siemens – 10%. This proves once again that the brand matters.

When buying computer equipment, consumers are often guided by the advice of their friends, colleagues, managers in electronics supermarkets, etc. as for the choice of the device. Nevertheless, some characteristics are taken into account, which, as they say, lie on the surface (operating system, screen resolution, RAM capacity, hard disk volume, etc.).

But, apart from it, a processor plays an important role in the efficient operation of, let’s say, a laptop (model, frequency, production technology, etc.), which most users do not even think about or do not know. This is confirmed by the following questions of the questionnaire. In particular, the answer to the question “Do you know the processor model of your computer?” was “No” in 58% and “yes” in 42% of respondents. The similar answer was given to the question: “Do you know the processor speed of your computer?” As for: “What technology is used to make your computer’s processor chips?” (1-10 nm; 11-20 nm; 21-90 nm; 1000 nm) 100% of respondents found this question too complicated.

On the whole, it is worth noting that design computer product is a powerful tool in hands of a skilled master, provided he is aware of the strategic tasks of the brand and its target audience. Success of a commercial design is to be evaluated, first of all, based on the task set before it. But this is not the only factor – there are three other fundamental criteria for the best design:

Yes, *aesthetics* is the most conditional criterion, dictated by the level of taste and sense of harmony of the individual – hence, there are bias and cause of eternal controversy that can be avoided by referring to the task assigned.

Functionality, instead, implies readability, placement of accents. *Literacy*, accordingly, is compliance with composition laws and technical requirements.

The factor of not less importance in brand presentation is *creativity* as the basis of all advertising. This comprises both the concept of the brand as a whole, the advertising idea, name development, slogan, non-standard implementation of the advertising idea, and non-standard branding tools.

Creativity is an integral part of any advertising business agencies. In the glut of advertising information space, it is but creativity that can highlight your video, poster or banner out of hundreds thousands of the like. So, today, creativity in advertising is not just fine, it's necessary.

A modern means of brand progression is PR-support, i.e. providing the public with the most informative and interesting information that promotes the company. Such an openness to the consumer and an efficient usage of the PR-technology will allow not just making a positive company's reputation in the community, but retaining it for years.

Public Relations (PR – short for public relations) is a set of activities aimed at popularization and promotion of a brand or company to the masses. By its essence, PR is a conscious dialogue between a company and consumers that, with a competent organization, is equally interesting and exciting for both parties. Not surprisingly, all computer corporations have their own PR. These departments are so important in modern competition that they resort to constant innovation. For example, the “information disk” becomes very important. The news should contain relevant information material that stimulates interest in the product. The most common practice is to “drain” information – for example, “a leading engineer of the corporation forgot the latest sample of goods in the bar three days before its official presentation”, “the developer's daughter accidentally posted a photo of the latest laptop on the Internet, which will be available only a week”.

Thus, S. Beleshev states: “PR is a long-term tool for promotion whose performance is independent of a stage of an advertising campaign. Therefore, a carefully considered sequence of actions, each of them being subordinated to a single purpose, make PR one of the most effective means of promoting a brand or company to the masses” [5].

For different categories of consumers (target audience), the “message” and principles of communication may vary; they can affect physical and psychological levels of perception, touching upon different aspects of life (family, friends, work, etc.).

All information about the visual design of the company should be hold in the brand-book and used by the advertising department.

If the company does not have this “passport of standards” (guideline), then one has to deal with an unmanageable

chaos. The main task of branding is to help to optimize your computer branding efforts and retain leadership positions.

“Brand-book is a description of the main positions of the future brand, principles of its promotion, models of communication chains, identifiers, etc. In a narrow sense, the brand-book contains a description of basic elements of corporate identity and principles of their construction” – notes M. Belyavtsev in the marketing manual [7].

The main content of the brand-book is the original idea – an idea that will underlie the future brand. Another component of the brand-book is the legend of the company – the story that compels the consumer to treat the goods and services of your brand with more confidence and interest.

“The brand package also includes a description of the company's mission (TM), principles for building communication between the organization and consumers (business partners, suppliers) – the ideas (emotions, associations) that the company seeks to convey to its customers and partners” [7].

The brand-book also describes the main elements of the brand style, such as logo, color scheme, list of headsets (fonts).

Depending on your business, target audience, geography, and the size of the company, the content of the brand package may vary significantly. For example, one company, in addition to the main elements, may need just business cards and forms, whereas the brand-book of another organization will contain the rules for the construction of printing products and outdoor advertising, design of offices and outlets (including branding of furniture and staff clothing).

So, who needs a brand-book? Accordingly, anyone who is one way or another related to the development and promotion of the company, such as:

- heads of organizations and their units working on producing further development strategies (TM), that do not conflict with the initial positioning of the company;
- marketers and advertisers with job responsibilities that include designing and conducting marketing and advertising activities according to the concept of promotion of the TM aimed at the target audience;
- sales managers and dealers organizing the sales based on understanding the basics of the brand, knowledge of core positions and values of the trademark, ability to demonstrate them to the consumer;
- press officers and journalists who apply the information for writing articles in accordance with the style and linguistic images, according to the TM messages;
- designers and layout makers designing layout models and layout of information materials in accordance with the TM style;

- all employees of the company whose behavior should correspond to traditions and norms of morality, adopted in the company.

Usually, all employees are familiarized with the company's mission and the “development vector”. Some large organizations have a “Code of Conduct of the Company Employee”.

Most often, a brand package is designed in several parts. Every constituent may exist separately from the main document and be passed to one or another executant according to his competence.

An internal element of the corporate culture is *individuality*, which includes all visible brand manifestations and is characterized by certain attributes that do not depend on either the size of the company, or the nature of its business. “They are also relevant when a new firm is founded by an entrepreneur, when a new type of a product or a new service are developed during brand repositioning, when companies are merged or a retail network is deployed. Accounting for these attributes is required for the effective creative process, and it is important for companies to understand how the attributes are implemented” [1; 55].

Here is a list of typical attributes of brand identity: vision; content; authenticity; differentiation; stability; consistency; flexibility; favor; value.

“It would be wrong to assume that management of the brand identity securing system is the fate of exceptionally large global corporations, though such a task is really easier to handle when each brand has a manager who specifically deals with it and carries responsibility for it. Such a manager who reports directly to the president of the company, is essential not only for big organizations, but for small ones as well. The main factors for the organization here should be the constant monitoring of the brand, managing it, providing for its correspondence to the central idea and strategy of the company activity, attention to the tools that are needed to develop the brand” [9; 239].

It is important to note that in an era of globalization, when global computer corporations and brands are blurring the state and cultural boundaries between states, the necessity to have one's own, unique image becomes ever strong. And this task is not less important for countries, than for companies. The reputations of countries, regions, and cities, having a profound impact on the fate of people and usually created in a significantly more complex manner, than the image of corporations, can have more serious consequences.

State branding is one of the areas of PR marketing technologies, but it's not just a slogan or advertising campaign. For branding a country, one needs to understand its national idea, intellectual property, the complex of ideas and associations that emerge, when we see or hear the name of this country. The national branding of a country is also a systematic process of reconciling actions,

innovations, communication and investments to implement a competitive identity strategy.

Culture, national traditions, educational attainment and people are also for measuring the image of the country (painting, music, literature, cinema, sports), as well as the global perception of the country's cultural heritage in the world. Different countries sometimes sell the same computer products under different brands. This is due to the fact that in some regions one brand is popular, in others – another. Therefore, it is easier for manufacturers to affix the appropriate logo to the product. This sometimes surprises consumers who demonstrate the complete technical identity of products of different brands.

4. Conclusion

Thus, exploring and analyzing the contemporary design computer of corporate identity one may recognize that modern branding, broadly covering the cultural and social life, can contribute to development of progressive phenomena in society. Computer products and advertising materials, performed in a unified style, will help the consumer to identify the selected materials. Accordingly, a competent use of the brand-book helps to increase the number of contacts and, as a result, buyers' commitment to a particular brand and the product promotion on the world market.

Transformational changes taking place in the context of globalization, both in brand management theories and in

country branding, exacerbate the need to find new ways to promote computer brands.

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