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Where brand
identity design
began and
where it's going.

Brand identity design is much more than a logo.

Brand identity design has been a crucial element in marketing and advertising for decades, with businesses relying on visual cues to attract and retain customers. Over the years, it has evolved significantly, adapting to changes in technology, culture, and consumer preferences. The following pages is an exploration of the history and future of brand identity design from a global perspective, looking at the factors that have shaped the industry, and the trends that are likely to shape it in the future.

The evolution of brand design.

Let's explore the early days of brand identity design, in particular at how logos and visual branding were used by businesses in the 20th century. This includes the creation of iconic logos like Coca-Cola, IBM, and Nike, and an examination of how they have evolved over time to reflect changes in technology, culture and consumer preferences. This section also looks at the role of graphic design in brand identity, examining how typography, color and other design elements have been used to create memorable and recognizable brand identities.

The early days of brand identity design were characterized by simple, iconic logos that were designed to be easily recognizable and memorable. Companies like Coca-Cola, IBM and Nike created logos that have become instantly recognizable around the world, even to people who do not speak English.

One of the earliest examples of modern brand identity design is the Coca-Cola logo, which was created in 1887. It was designed to be simple and recognizable, with the distinctive Coca-Cola script that has become synonymous with the brand. Over time, the logo has undergone a number of changes, but the basic elements have remained the same, reflecting the brand's commitment to consistency and longevity.

Another iconic brand that has been successful in creating a memorable brand identity is IBM. The company's logo, which features a simple, sans-serif typeface and a horizontal stripe, was created in 1972 and has remained largely unchanged ever since. It has become synonymous with innovation and technological advancement, and has helped to establish the company as a leader in the field of computing and technology.

As a final example, Nike stands out as another brand that has withstood the test of time and evolving consumer behaviors. The company's logo, which features the iconic swoosh symbol, was created in 1971 by graphic designer Carolyn Davidson. The swoosh is synonymous with the Nike brand, and has helped to establish the company as a leader in both athletic and lifestyle apparel and footwear.

As the field of brand identity design has evolved, designers have begun to focus more on typography and color. Typography plays a crucial role in brand identity design, as it can be used to create a distinctive look and feel for a brand. Many companies, including Apple and Google, have created unique typefaces that are instantly recognizable and help to establish the brand's visual identity.

Color is another important element of brand identity design, as different colors can evoke different emotions and associations. Blue is often associated with professionalism and trustworthiness, while red is associated with passion and excitement. Many brands have carefully chosen colors for their logos and other branding materials, in order to create a specific emotional response in their customers. Some examples of brands leaning heavily into color to establish their identity include Tiffany's iconic shade of blue, T-Mobile and magenta and Home Depot's consistent use of orange.

One of the most important aspects of brand identity design is consistency. Companies that have successfully established memorable brand identities have done so by maintaining a consistent visual identity over time. This consistency can be seen in everything from the logo to the typography to the color scheme. By maintaining a consistent visual identity, brands can establish a sense of trust and reliability with their customers.

In recent years, there has been a trend towards simplification in brand identity design. Many companies, such as Airbnb and Instagram, have simplified their logos and other branding materials in order to create a more modern and streamlined look. This trend towards simplicity reflects the changing tastes and preferences of consumers, who are increasingly drawn to clean and minimalist design.

The globalization of brand identity design.

In today's global marketplace, brand identity design plays a crucial role in a company's success. With the ability to reach consumers all around the world, it is essential for companies to create a brand that resonates with people across different cultures and markets. Let's explore how brand identity design has evolved on a global scale, including the challenges and opportunities that arise when creating a cohesive global brand identity.

One of the biggest challenges that companies face when expanding their brand identity globally is adapting their design to different cultures and markets. What works in one country may not work in another, and it's important to consider local customs, values and preferences when designing a global brand identity.

For example, when McDonalds expanded to India, they had to make significant changes to their menu and marketing approach to appeal to Indian consumers. Beef is not widely consumed in India due to religious beliefs, so the fast food giant had to create a menu that was predominantly vegetarian. They also had to adjust their marketing campaigns to reflect Indian culture, using local celebrities in their advertisements and promoting family values.

Similarly, when Coca-Cola expanded to China, they had to consider the importance of the color red in Chinese culture. Red is considered lucky and is often associated with celebrations and good fortune. As a result, Coca-Cola created a red and gold color scheme for their Chinese branding, and incorporated local cultural elements into their advertising.

Despite the challenges of adapting to different cultures and markets, it's important for companies to create a cohesive global brand identity. This involves maintaining consistency across all markets while still being sensitive to local cultural differences.

Apple is a prime example of a company that has successfully created a cohesive global brand identity. Its minimalist design and simple yet powerful messaging has resonated with consumers all around the world. The brand maintains consistency across all markets through its iconic logo and sleek product design, while still adapting marketing campaigns to appeal to local audiences.

On the other hand, Pepsi has struggled to create a cohesive global brand identity. In the 1990s, the brand attempted to create a universal logo that would work across all markets. However, the design failed to resonate with consumers in many countries and was eventually abandoned. Since then, Pepsi has focused on tailoring its branding to specific markets, resulting in a less cohesive global brand identity.

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the importance of global brand identity design will only continue to grow. With the rise of social media and digital marketing, brands now have the ability to reach consumers all around the world with ease. However, this also means that they must be even more mindful of cultural differences and adapt their branding accordingly.

In the future, we can expect to see more companies using data and analytics to inform their global design. This will involve collecting data on consumer preferences and behaviors in different markets, and using this information to create more personalized and targeted branding.

Ultimately, a successful global brand identity design is no easy feat, and requires careful consideration of local cultures and markets. However, companies that are able to create a cohesive global brand identity can enjoy significant benefits, including greater brand recognition and customer loyalty. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the importance of global brand identity design will only continue to grow, and companies that are able to adapt and innovate will be the most successful in the global marketplace.

The digital revolution and brand identity design.

The digital revolution has had a tremendous impact on brand identity design. The rise of the internet, social media, and mobile technology has changed the way companies approach brand identity design. More recently, as user-generated content has become more popular, it has proven to play a role in shaping brand identity.

The digital revolution has had a profound impact on many aspects of our lives, including the way companies approach brand identity design. With the rise of the internet, social media, and mobile technology, companies have had to adapt to new challenges and opportunities in order to create effective brand identities that resonate with consumers in the digital age.

One of the key challenges that companies face in the digital era is the need to create brand identities that are adaptable and flexible enough to work across multiple platforms and devices. With the rise of smartphones and tablets, for example, it is no longer enough to create a logo that looks good on a website or business card. Brands need to consider how their identities will look and function on a variety of devices, from small screens to large displays.

Another challenge presented by the digital revolution is the need to create brand identities that can cut through the noise and stand out in a crowded online marketplace. With the internet making it easier than ever for companies to reach consumers, it can be difficult for brands to make a lasting impression and build a loyal following. To succeed in the digital age, brands need to create identities that are not only visually appealing, but also communicate their values and personality in a way that resonates with their target audience.

At the same time, the digital revolution has also created new opportunities for companies to connect with consumers and build their brand identities. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have become powerful tools for companies to engage with their audiences and showcase their brand identities in a more interactive and personal way. By creating compelling content and leveraging user-generated content, brands can build a strong following and create a sense of community.

The rise of user-generated content has also had a significant impact on brand identity design. With platforms like Instagram and YouTube allowing users to create and share their own content, brands have had to consider how their identities will be perceived and shared by consumers. In some cases, brands have embraced user-generated content and incorporated it into their marketing strategies, while in other cases they have struggled to control the narrative around their brand identity.

One example of a brand that has successfully embraced user-generated content is Coca-Cola. In 2011, the company launched its “Share a Coke” campaign, which featured personalized bottles and cans with customers’ names on them. The campaign encouraged customers to share photos of themselves with their personalized bottles on social media, creating a sense of excitement and engagement around the brand. The campaign was a huge success, and helped to reinforce Coca-Cola’s position as a fun and relatable brand.

Overall, the digital revolution has had a profound impact on brand identity design, presenting both new challenges and new opportunities for companies looking to create effective brand identities in the digital age. By embracing these changes and staying attuned to the evolving needs and preferences of their target audience, brands can create identities that are adaptable, engaging, and effective in connecting with consumers online.

The future of brand identity design.

In the previous pages, we explored the history, globalization, digital revolution, and future of brand identity design. Let's examine case studies of companies that have successfully created and maintained strong brand identities, as well as those that have struggled with brand identity. By examining the strategies they used, the challenges they faced, and the lessons they learned, we can gain valuable insights into the world of brand identity design.

Consistently Successful Brand Identities



Coca-Cola

Coca-Cola is one of the most recognizable and iconic brands in the world. Its brand identity has remained largely unchanged since its creation in 1886. The company's use of the iconic red and white color scheme, cursive font, and distinctive bottle shape has become synonymous with the brand. Coca-Cola has successfully maintained a strong brand identity by consistently reinforcing its core values of happiness, optimism, and sharing.



Nike

Nike's brand identity has evolved significantly over the years, but the company has consistently maintained its position as a leader in the athletic apparel industry. Nike's "swoosh" logo has become one of the most recognizable logos in the world, and its "Just Do It" slogan has become a cultural phenomenon. Nike has successfully maintained a strong brand identity by aligning its products with the aspirations and desires of its target audience.



Apple

Apple's brand identity is centered around the company's commitment to innovation, design, and simplicity. The company's use of clean lines, minimalist design, and sleek packaging has become synonymous with the brand. Apple has successfully maintained a strong brand identity by consistently delivering products that are innovative, user-friendly, and aesthetically pleasing.

Case studies in brand identity design.

Brands that have Struggled Over Time



Gap

In 2010, Gap attempted to update its brand identity by introducing a new logo that was widely criticized by customers and design experts. The company quickly reverted back to its original logo, but the damage to the brand had already been done. Gap struggled to maintain a strong brand identity in the face of increased competition from fast-fashion retailers and changing consumer preferences.



Pepsi

Pepsi has struggled to maintain a strong brand identity in the face of intense competition from Coca-Cola. The company's attempts to differentiate itself from Coca-Cola through branding and advertising campaigns have been largely unsuccessful. In recent years, Pepsi has attempted to reposition itself as a health-conscious brand, but the company's core values have been unclear to consumers.

JCPenney

J.C. Penney

J.C. Penney attempted to rebrand itself as a modern, upscale retailer in 2012, but the company's new brand identity was poorly received by customers. The company's attempts to eliminate coupons and sales in favor of everyday low prices were met with resistance from consumers who had become accustomed to J.C. Penney's promotional pricing strategies. The company's sales plummeted, and the CEO was forced to resign.

Lessons Learned

The case studies above illustrate the importance of developing a strong brand identity that resonates with consumers. Companies that have successfully maintained a strong brand identity have done so by consistently reinforcing their core values and aligning their products with the aspirations and desires of their target audience. On the other hand, companies that have struggled with brand identity have done so by failing to understand their target audience or by attempting to reposition themselves without a clear strategy.

By understanding where brand identity design has been and where it's going, businesses are better equipped for long-term success.

Brand identity design is a crucial element of marketing and advertising, and has evolved significantly over the years. By examining the history and future of brand identity design globally, we can gain insights into the factors that have shaped the industry and the trends that are likely to shape it in the future. As technology, culture, and consumer preferences continue to evolve, it is important for businesses to stay up to date with these trends and adapt their brand identities accordingly.



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