Analyzing the Visual Identity of Diptyque Paris

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ABSTRACT

This journal explores the impact of visual identity design on consumer perception and brand recognition, using the luxury brand Diptyque as a case study. The study analyzes how Diptyque's synchronized design elements—such as logos, typography, color palettes, and illustrations—communicate the brand's personality and influence customer loyalty. The research aims to provide insights for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) on building effective visual identities by analyzing Diptyque's successful branding strategies. The qualitative research method involved expert interviews and literature reviews. Experts in branding and design were interviewed to assess the effectiveness of Diptyque's visual identity in conveying brand values. The study found that Diptyque's distinctive oval-shaped logo, minimalist black-and-white palette, and hand-drawn illustrations play a significant role in establishing the brand's luxury status and emotional appeal. Consistency in applying these design elements reinforces brand recognition and loyalty. The findings suggest that a well-defined and cohesive visual identity is crucial for brands to stand out in a competitive market. Diptyque's example offers valuable lessons for MSMEs on how to use design elements strategically to enhance customer perceptions and build lasting brand presence.

Keywords: Visual Identity, Brand Recognition, Design Elements, Customer Loyalty

ABSTRAK

Jurnal ini membahas pengaruh desain identitas visual terhadap persepsi konsumen dan pengenalan merek, menggunakan Diptyque *sebagai studi kasus. Studi ini menganalisis elemen desain seperti logo, tipografi, palet warna, dan ilustrasi yang mengomunikasikan kepribadian merek dan memengaruhi loyalitas pelanggan. Dengan metode kualitatif, termasuk wawancara ahli dan tinjauan pustaka, ditemukan bahwa logo oval khas* Diptyque*, palet warna hitam-putih, dan ilustrasi tangan berperan penting dalam membangun citra kemewahan dan daya tarik emosional. Temuan ini memberikan pelajaran berharga bagi UMKM tentang pentingnya identitas visual yang kuat untuk meningkatkan pengenalan dan loyalitas merek.*

Kata Kunci : Identitas Visual, Kesadaran Brand, Elemen Desain, Loyalitas Pelanggan

INTRODUCTION

The importance of brand identity design in shaping the perception and recognition of a brand cannot be underestimated. A brand's identity is made up of visual components that when combined, will capture its distinct personality and qualities. Having a visual presence is crucial to effectively set the brand out from the competition and win customers' trust. Because it makes a product or service easy to recognize and remember, it is an essential component of marketing and brand management (Shlyakhova et al., 2021). Visual identity is a part of brand identity. Effective visual identity not only helps to differentiate a brand from its competitors but also plays a crucial role in establishing brand awareness and loyalty among consumers.

Diptyque, a prestigious French luxury brand, is widely known for its unique and recognizable visual identity, which has become a hallmark of its products and brand image. Founded in 1961 by three visionary artists—*Desmond Knox-Leet, Christiane Montadre-Gautrot, and Yves Coueslant*—the brand initially started as a boutique offering home decor, printed fabrics, and travel souvenirs. Today, Diptyque offers a range of products including home decor, candles, diffusers, and bath and body items, with its most iconic and best-selling product being perfumery. The brand's visual identity has been instrumental in establishing its reputation for luxury,

sophistication, and exclusivity, enhancing consumer appeal and fostering brand loyalty.

Diptyque also aimed to achieve a creative harmony between text and pictures, black and white, pattern, and hand drawing. They have iconic visual code combining the oval, the scent burner, and the dancing letters-like riddles to be explored, and formed to be Diptyque's visual identity. Their visual identity is crucial in presenting themselves, from their distinctive oval-shaped labels to the hand-drawn illustrations that elevate their visual identity and packaging. This cohesive aesthetic ties back to the brand's origins in art and design, making Diptyque a harmonious blend of wellness and visual art. Visual identity consists of the graphic components that together will provide a system to represent a brand (Clifton, 2009). The "basic elements" of a brand's visual identity might consist of distinctive versions of the following such as logotypes, symbols colors, typeface, and tagline. These elements will help the authors to analyze the visual identity of Diptyque.

The challenge many brands face, particularly MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises), is the lack of a well-defined and cohesive visual identity, which can lower their ability to communicate their values and build a brand presence. Unlike established luxury brands such as Diptyque, which has successfully crafted a distinctive visual identity for its target audience, many smaller businesses need help creating lasting impressions. This is reflected in Diptyque where the customers choose goods or services from reputable brands that are well-designed and well-prepared (Iswanto, 2022).

Analyzing the visual identity of a brand like Diptyque provides valuable insights into how key design elements such as logos, colors, typography, and packaging can be strategically combined to communicate a brand's personality and ethos. Understanding these principles is crucial for MSMEs seeking to build a strong and memorable visual presence.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the author uses the qualitative method. The main purpose of qualitative research methodologies is to comprehend and evaluate a phenomenon in a specific context. The research method used in this journal is interviews with several experts in the branding field and collecting many literature reviews. Interviewee criteria are as follows: 1) Currently lives in Surabaya (2) 27-35 years old and still keeps in touch with the latest trend (3) Currently in the art & design field minimum 4-5 years as a teacher (4) Cooperative on the interviews to explore the issue deeply. Interviewing the experts will help to validate this journal's results and become and helping MSMEs build a strong and memorable visual identity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are several brand identity theories developed by experts, but the theory that will be the foundation is the *Brand Visual Concept Theory*. This theory states that visual identity should appear consistent and integrated in all visual aspects of the brand, such as logos, slogans, colors, and other marketing materials. This brand's visual concept is a crucial component of the brand strategy, which can boost customer interest in the brand and brand recognition. This brand theory's visual concept also highlights how crucial it is to apply the visual components of the brand consistently to enhance customer perceptions of the brand and boost brand awareness (Keller and Swaminathan, 2020).

I.   LOGO

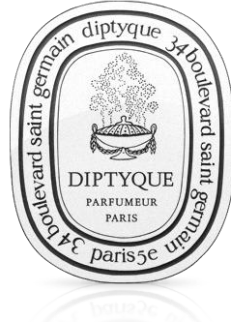| Figure 1. Main Logo source: "Diptyque Paris, n.d. | Figure 2.Stamp Logo source: Diptyque Paris, n.d.) | Figure 3 . Wordmark source: Diptyque Paris, n.d.) |

Diptyque's logo is a significant element of its visual identity, reflecting the brand's artistic heritage and commitment to craftsmanship. The logo features an oval-shaped frame, which has become the symbol of the brand's products. This distinct shape is inspired by the design of 18th-century medallions and from the Pharaonic cartouches, making a sense of history and timelessness. In the Neo-Classical period, oval frames with simplified Baroque ornaments are popular. For example, the Portrait of *Jean Baptiste Lully (1632-1687)* with the text engraved following the oval shape. One of the earliest Diptyque fabrics has the distinctive oval shape of the *Pretorian* shield on it. During that time, Diptyque turned it into their signature, with the implicit symbols that the names of their candles and any future inventions would be proudly displayed on their paper shield.

Within the oval, the brand name "Diptyque" is displayed in a custom, serif typeface that is both sophisticated and elegant. Some companies highlight their distinct identities by using handwritten or serif fonts, which reflect the company's heritage and improve brand awareness (Zhenglin & Jun 2024). This typeface combines traditional and modern elements, playing with the thickness of lines with delicate serifs. The typography also reflects Diptyque's roots in the world of art and design, as it evokes a hand-drawn quality. The minimalistic black-and-white color scheme

of the logo contributes to its timelessness and versatility. It allows the logo to remain elegant and subtle, whether it appears on product labels, packaging, or promotional materials.

Furthermore, the layout of the logo sometimes includes additional information, such as the brand's founding year, *"34 Boulevard Saint-Germain," and* the address of Diptyque's original boutique in Paris. This is to add another layer of storytelling to the logo, connecting customers to the brand's origins.

According to Victor (2024), Diptyque uses two principles of logo, which are the principle of graphic representation and the principle of opening/ closing shape. Diptyque's logo illustrates incense or a perfume burner, which symbolizes their overall brand collection that are fragrances. Also, the principle of *opening/ closing shape* explains that the logo is involved in a different shape (circle,   rectangular, triangle rhomb,   pentagon, ellipse, etc). In this case, Diptyque repetitively uses an oval shape as their logo border.

To conclude, Diptyque's logo visually represents the brand's dedication to artistry, history, and luxury. Its oval design, hand-crafted typeface, and minimalist palette work in harmony to create a distinctive identity that embodies the brand's unique position in the luxury fragrance market.

II.   COLOR PALETTE

According to Paksi (2021), color plays a vital role in shaping a brand's visual identity, as it brings emotions, conveys meaning, and creates associations in the minds of consumers. In the case of Diptyque, the brand's color palette reflects its commitment to elegance and simplicity, utilizing black and white as its main color. The other source of inspiration for them is ancient plant-colored ceramics. Black represents power and a sophisticated look (Suriadi et al., 2022). Meanwhile, white represents purity, peace, and spirituality. The consistent use of neutral tones,

primarily black and white, strengthens the brand's sophisticated image and over time, allows customers to associate Diptyque with these colors.

Figure 4. Color application
source: "Diptyque Paris, n.d..

III. TYPOGRAPHY

Typography is a powerful tool in visual branding, as it conveys a brand's personality and tone through the style and arrangement of text. Many details are affecting the tone and emotions of the typography. For example, the whole glyph design gives the feeling that the printed paper gives a dense feeling (Fu & Wang, 2023). For Diptyque, the choice of a custom serif typeface plays a big role in defining the brand's artisanal and sophisticated emblem. Diptyque has a unique typeface that was created to match well with the company's emblem. With Indian ink, Desmond created hand-drawn and customized shapes for every letter. For example, the Es sprout tiny branches, the Os spread thick and round, the consonants swirl, and the vowels tremble randomly. Diptyque uses *EB Garamond Bold* as their display typeface, *EB Garamond Regular* as their primary typeface, and *EB Garamond Italic* as their secondary typeface. According to Iswanto (2023), Garamond has good readability and balance between the strokes and width. They use typography that is elegant and refined, which adds a timeless appearance. The font, with its classic and hand-drawn quality, reflects the brand's roots in design and craftsmanship, offering a blend of tradition and modernity that mirrors the essence of Diptyque's luxury products.

Display Typeface

EB Garamond Bold

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoP
pQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz0123456789

Example

Perfume is the most intense form of memory.

Figure 5. Display typeface
source: Diptyque Paris,
n.d.)

Primary Typeface

EB Garamond Regular

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp
QqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz0123456789

Example

Perfume is the most intense form of memory.

Secondary Typeface

EB Garamond Italic

*AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQ
qRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz0123456789*

Example

Perfume is the most intense form of memory.

| Figure 6. Primary Typeface source: Diptyque Paris, n.d | Figure 7. Secondary Typeface source: Diptyque Paris, n.d. |

IV.   ILLUSTRATION & IMAGERY

According to Gagantara and Pebriyeni (2023), illustrations are commonly utilized and often serve as a key element in design works. They can evoke emotions, memories, and connect with the experiences of the target audience. In the case of Diptyque, the brand's illustrations act as storytellers, guiding us through a sensory journey of fragrance exploration. Each fragrance is represented by a unique illustration, creating a vivid olfactory landscape. For instance, the illustration for *Ôponé* conjures the spices of a dream-like voyage, while *L'Eau Trois* evokes memories of *Mount Athos,* an unforgettable stay in Greece, and the story of the *Wise Men* bringing myrrh to baby Jesus.

Each fragrance has its drawing and each drawing has its fragrance. This is one of the *Maison's* unique attributes, inherited from its founders, who brought their memories and sensations alive in panoramic illustrations. The label also features the motif. The art styles that influenced Diptyque are *Art Nouveau, Oriental views, Mediterranean, and Asia's greenery.* With these hand-drawn and meaningful illustrations, the concepts of perfumer and artist are shown to target customers that evoke their emotions.

Figure 8.
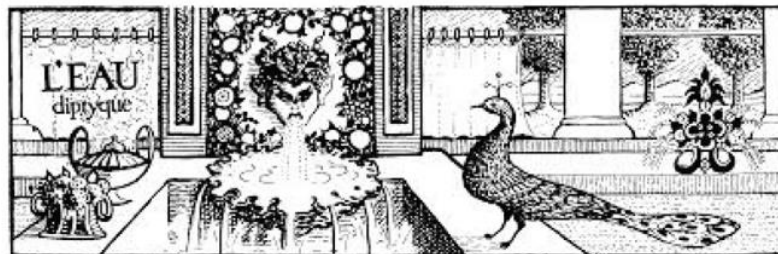L'autre Diptyque
source: Diptyque Paris, n.d

Figure 9. L'eau Diptyque
source: Diptyque Paris, n.d

V.   DISCUSSION WITH EXPERT

The expert users in this design are carefully chosen to gain another perspective on this visual identity analysis. The first expert user is Lisa Indriati, S.Des., M.M., a design lecturer at Universitas Ciputra Surabaya who specializes in branding and marketing. The second expert user is Alexandra Ruth S.Ds., M.A., a

design lecturer at Universitas Ciputra who specializes in graphic design and sustainability. The last expert user is Putu Wardhani S.P., an experimental artist from Surabaya who specializes in coffee painting and has several publications in the media because of his stunning awards. To give an unbiased review, we also chose one experts who know this brand which is Mrs. Lisa. And we chose Ms. Alexandra and Mr. Putu as experts who aren't familiar with this brand. The following is the data collected from interviews with expert users in terms of visual identity and validating the analysis. Here is the interview question list :

Table 1 Interview Question List
source: author's documentation

1.	What are the main design elements that you think are most iconic in Diptyque's visual identity?
2.	In your opinion, Is Diptyque's visual identity effective in conveying brand values and philosophy?
3.	How does Diptyque's visual identity compare to other luxury perfume or fragrance brands?
4.	Do you think the illustrations or symbols used by Diptyque contribute to their product storytelling?
5.	Are there any elements that need to be improved for Diptyque?

From the first question, Mrs. Lisa found that Diptyque's iconic visual identity is their oval emblem and floral pattern. Each fragrance variant is also written in every logogram element which is the most interesting aspect. Even though every fragrance that they have is different, they still maintain consistency in their visual identity. All of the perfume bottle shapes are also the same shapes which are oval. It makes people remember their iconic visuals. From the perspective of Ms. Alexandra and Mr. Putu who've just known this brand, they answer that typography and colors are their iconic elements. Diptyque's typography reminds them of the *"Art and Craft Movement"* from the 1860s to 1920. The monochrome color combination also gives contrast to their overall brand colors.

On the second question, the author gives brief information about brand history and traditional values. The expert users all answered the same thing, which is very effective in highlighting the traditional and heritage impression. Some things that highlight that impression for them are the label and typography elements. The label section reminds them of *Classic* and *European* designs, following the initial reference in forming the identity of Diptyque. Typography itself is also a supporting factor, one of which is the custom-made font itself adds an ethnic impression.

For the third question, the experts answered that Diptyque had a very prominent style compared to other competitors. For instance, according to Artekura (2023), earthy natural trends focusing on a minimalist aesthetic are popular for home décor, including candle brands. This is very different from Diptyque classic and prestigious design style.

 According to Anggrianto (2022), visual identity is a small supporting element of the branding process. The important part doesn't stop in designing brand visuals, but also how to consistently convey the brand value and to meet their brand promise. It is proven, that Diptyque has already implemented their value in all of their products. They also designed their store to give a classic modern ambiance and present their value to customers.

On the fourth question, Mrs. Lisa has the opinion that Diptyque's illustration and imagery contribute to the product storytelling. The hand-drawn style and black and white illustration give another meaningful value for Diptyque to support classic traditional elements. Ms. Ruth and Mr. Putu also answered that the illustration styles are complimenting the overall visual identity.

And for the last question, all of the experts answered none. They find Diptyque has a different unique visual identity that is very prominent. Following their initial brand values which are traditional Neo-Classical elements, they have shown it very well. However there is room for further development, such as giving new tertiary colors to add accent colors, but this also needs to be thought through carefully, considering that Diptyque has been around for a long time and has its market.

CLOSING

In summary, a brand's visual identity is crucial for influencing customer perceptions, increasing brand awareness, and attracting loyal support. The case study of Diptyque demonstrates how a brand's values, luxury, and uniqueness may be successfully communicated through a well-designed visual identity that is based on creative heritage. The brand demonstrates the value of visual consistency in creating a powerful and recognizable presence through its careful use of design components including logos, color palette, illustration, and typography.

For MSMEs, understanding these principles is crucial for standing out in competitive markets. Smaller brands can embrace consistent and strategic design approaches that are in line with their core values and appeal to their target audience by using the lessons learned from Diptyque's visual identity. Along with becoming a tool for difference, a strong visual identity acts as a foundation for long-term achievement in increasing trust and brand recognition.

Despite the valuable insights provided by this research, it does have limitations. The primary limitation lies in the focus on a single case study, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other brands, particularly MSMEs from different industries or regions. The study also primarily explores the design aspects of visual identity without delving deeply into the consumer's psychological responses to those design elements. Additionally, the analysis needs to add secondary data sources to capture the complete progress of Diptyque's visual identity strategies over time. Future studies could further explore how MSMEs in different sectors apply these visual identity strategies and their impact on consumer engagement and brand growth.

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