

Visual Treatments as Means of Visual Communication in Packaging Design to Enhance Brand Identity

"An Analytical Study in the Graphic Design Department at the College of Designs and Arts, Taibahu University."

Dalia Mohsen Jaber Elwany

Assistant Professor, Department of Graphic Design, College of Design and Arts, Taibah University, Saudi Arabia, Delwany@taibahu.edu.sa

Lecturer, Department of Advertising, Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University, Arab Republic of Egypt, Dalia_jaber@a-arts.helwan.edu.eg

Abstract:

In the context of growing competition among brands, packaging design has become a pivotal tool in visual communication with consumers, evolving beyond its traditional protective function to serve as a means for attracting attention, conveying marketing messages, and building a distinctive visual identity. Packaging serves as the first point of visual interaction, making visual treatments — such as colors, shapes, symbols, and typography — essential elements for expressing the product's concept and enhancing its appeal.

Packaging reflects the brand's identity, values, and market positioning, contributing to the creation of emotional connections that foster consumer loyalty. Accordingly, this research examines the design of packaging for Saudi food brands as part of an instructional experience within the course "Graphic Fundamentals for Packaging Design," offered to fourth-year students in the Department of Graphic Design at the College of Design and Arts, Taibah University, for the academic year 1446 AH/2025 CE.

The course combines theoretical explanations with practical applications, focusing on diverse visual treatments and the strategic use of design elements to achieve the desired visual impact and strengthen brand identity. Through an analysis of contemporary design trends, the study highlights the importance of enabling designers to master visual communication techniques, thus fostering the creation of innovative packaging solutions that enhance brand image and consumer engagement, providing practical insights for designers, marketers, and brand developers.

Research Problem: The problem of this research lies in highlighting visual treatments as a means of visual communication in packaging design, and their impact on strengthening the brand identity. This is explored through a teaching experiment in the Department of Graphic Design, College of Design and Arts, Taibah University, during the academic year 1446 AH, as part of the educational outcomes for the course "Graphic Foundations of Packaging and Labeling." The research seeks to answer the following questions: How can designers use visual treatments in an innovative way to differentiate products and strengthen the brand's position? To what extent do visual treatments in packaging design contribute to effective visual communication that reinforces the brand identity? What factors influence the effectiveness of visual treatments in capturing the consumer's attention and enhancing their connection to the brand?

Research Objectives: The current study aims to: Enrich both theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of graphic design, specifically in understanding the relationship between visual treatments and visual communication and connecting it to strengthening the visual identity of brands through packaging design. Provide a practical reference that can be beneficial for graphic designers and brand developers in improving packaging design in alignment with visual identity strategies, helping to enhance visual communication with consumers and reinforce the brand's identity.

Research hypotheses: H1: Visual treatments can play a crucial role in capturing the attention of consumers, thereby enhancing the chances of the product standing out in the market. **H2:** The integration between visual treatments in the packaging and other elements of the brand's visual identity can contribute to creating a strong connection between the consumer and the product.

Research Methodology: This research follows a descriptive approach to the methods of applying visual treatments as a means of visual communication in packaging design, contributing to strengthening the brand identity. It is then followed by an analytical approach to the outcomes of a teaching experiment for the course "Graphic Foundations of Packaging and Labeling," in the Department of Graphic Design, College of Design and Arts, Taibah University, for the academic year 1446 AH / 2025 AD, conducted by the researcher with fourth-year students in the Graphic Design Department at Taibah University.

Results: Visual treatments, including colors, shapes, fonts, and layouts, are among the most important non-verbal communication tools that effectively convey concepts and meanings, especially as consumers rely on visual perception as their primary method of evaluating products. A well-thought-out visual design of the packaging directly contributes to solidifying the brand identity in the minds of consumers, by using consistent and expressive visual elements that align with the brand's identity guide, thus becoming part of the overall mental impression of the product and the brand. The contrast between visual elements, the visual composition, and the organization of elements within the packaging helps enhance legibility, ease of understanding, and positively impacts the user experience, increasing the likelihood of consumer interaction and recall. Visual differentiation through visual treatments (such as changing colors, shapes, and symbols) is one of the factors that gives the brand a visual advantage among competing products and enhances the conscious selection of products. Effective design is the first point of contact with the consumer; the visual appeal of the packaging is the primary trigger for trying the product. Visual consistency in the use of visual treatments across different products or product flavors strengthens the brand identity and provides a sense of continuity, contributing to long-term customer loyalty.

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