

# The Influence of Brand Linkage and LOGOs to Business and Companies

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**Abstract.** In recent years, with the rapid development of digital marketing and the diversification of consumer preferences, an increasing number of brands have adopted co-branding strategies and innovation of LOGO designs to attract attention and enhance competitiveness. Some of these collaborated brands are in the same industry, two milk tea shops published a co-branded product, while others are in different industries, like a very popular video game work with a traditional jewelry business. This marketing strategy is called brand linkage. This essay mainly compares different kinds of brand-linkage, how this strategy affects the sales volume of businesses and companies and tries to analysis how the design of LOGOs can affect consumers' feelings about brands. By comparing papers from different scholars, there are two conclusions. For one, many businesses and companies tend to have brand-linkage because this can help them to expand their markets. For another, different design elements and the combination of LOGOs can really affect the consumers' feelings about different types of businesses and companies.

**Keywords:** Brand linkage; LOGO; Marketing.

## 1. Introduction

This essay is about the brand linkage and design of LOGOs of different brands. According to this paper, businesses and companies can use the findings from this research, so they can use the brand linkage to expand their markets. Brands that want to raise their own businesses can also use the research results of LOGOs to make their own LOGOs which are suitable for the positions of their brands. The studies of brand linkage have a huge blank space. The main probable reason is that brand linkage is a quite common phoneme in modern society, or most scholars may think this marketing strategy does not have very much value to cost time and money to do research. The essays about design of LOGOs that are done by modern scholars have different topics, such as the colors of LOGOs, the elements combinations of LOGOs and so on. This study summarizes the results of some of the studies about these two topics and gives some advice to companies and businesses about their marketing. The topic of this study is finding the relationship between sales volume of brands and brand linkage, and how the design of LOGOs affect the consumers' feelings about brands who owned these LOGOs. This paper compares the ideas in the essays referenced in it and tries to analysis the shortages about these experiments. The study goal is use the opinions mentioned in paper to help brands expands their markets and increase the sales volume.

## 2. The Influences of Brand Linkages

There are a lot of ways that brands can be used to increase their brand awareness. Brand linkage is one of these ways. Brand linkage means two brand-usually in different areas- combined to attract more customers, because not only people who are interested in on brand (for example, a coffee brand) but also people who are keen on another brand will buy the products.

Brand linkage has a very long history. It can be back to 20th century. In 1934, the same name brand of Italian designer Elsa Schiaparelli worked with surrealist painter Salvador Dali. They launched a disruptive dress called 'Lobster Skirt'. This is considered as the earliest brand linkage. In 1965, ready to wear manufacturers and leaders of Pop Art Style Andy Warhol introduced the 'Soup Man's Skirt'. This design made artworks clothing inaction. Recent years, brand linkage becomes a

very popular marketing strategy. It includes the industries like clothing, food, daily necessities, cars and so on. For example, Jewelry time-honored brand Lao Fengxiang and Leisure competitive mobile game "Egg Boy Party" introduced co-branded gold jewelries and co-branded game map. Luckin Coffee successfully increased its brand awareness among middle-aged consumers in China, while increases the number of young consumers of Maotai. Second, brands can have brand linkage with some popular IP, like Perfect Diary and the British Museum, Pop Mart and China post. Brands can use the influence of the IP to improve their market awareness and culture connotation. Third, brands with celebrities, like the sub-brand of Armani- Emporio Armani- invited Jackson Yee to take part in the design process. Fourth, brands with competitions, like Mengniu Dairy and CHAGEE worked with Paris Olympics' game to expand their market and increase their visibility.

If the brand linkage is divided by its collaboration mode, there are also four types of brand linkage: collaborative products mode, collaborative brand mode, element grafting mode and scene fusion mode. Collaborative products mode is two or more brands combine their advantages to develop new products and makes new market demands. For example, Kiehl's and Wang Lao Ji launched the Marigold Herbal Tea Shop. Collaborative brand mode is the mode that produce a new brand which contains features of all brands in the collaboration. Chery Automobile Co. and CTAL have launched the battery brand ENER-Q, which is a good example of this mode. Element grafting is the mode that main body brand takes advantage of object brands' IP properties to endorse for the new brands. For example, Naixue worked with MINTS to launch a new type of co-branded milk tea called 'Fantasy Music Universe'. Scene fusion mode is the mode that brands and their partners build themed scene together, which will increase the spread of the brands. Taizhou Bank, a financial institution, and Guming Tea, a new tea drinks enterprise, extend the co-branded credit cards of Taizhou Bank. Because Guming Tea is a popular tea drinks brand in China and a lot of young people like to buy milk tea from it, Taizhou Bank can use the popularity of Guming Tea to attract young adults to apply for a credit card from it.

If the brand linkage is divided by its purpose, there are three types of brand linkage: expanding markets, enhancing brand images and increasing topicalities. Expanding markets brand linkage can make the brands connect with wider consumers by collaborating with brands and IPs in different areas. Enhancing brand images brand linkage means using the brand images or culture meanings of the partners to rise the additional values of the brands. For instance, Zhu Ye Qing Tea co-branded with a dance called Only This Verdant Green to highlight its position of high-end tea business. The reason is that this dance was performance on the Spring Festival gala, so this dance is the symbol of noble and graceful in most consumers' mind in China. There is a typical example of increasing topicalities. Luckin Coffee and a famous coconut drinks in China called Coconut Palm Group Co.Ltd published a co-branded coffee type named Coconut Cloud latte, which is a coconut flavored coffee. Luckin Coffee and Coconut Palm Group Co.LTD use the social attributes and topicalities of each other to rise their brand popularity.

Brand linkage can influence the impulsive buying behaviors of consumers. Impulsive buying behaviors are the buying behaviors that consumers buy something without thinking about whether they really need the products they buy or not. An essay that written by Wang is mainly focused on the sports brands. 'China-Chic' is a consumer trends and a cultural phenomenon that combined Chinese traditional cultural element and modern fashion trends together. Wang Yan's study topic is the co-branded products of Forbidden City and Anta. The scholar used questionnaires to find out the results of the study. Wang Yan found that brand linkage would influence the impulsive buying behaviors of consumers because all the results from questionnaires are positive influence on the buying behaviors of consumers [1]. The brand linkage in the study can be defined as a brand with a famous IP by its brand lineage agent, an element grafting mode by brand linkage mode and the purpose of this brand linkage is to increasing the topicalities of Forbidden city and Anta.

One of the reasons why some companies and businesses chose to have brand linkage with other brands is that they want to increase their sales volume of them. Sales volume is an Economics and Business Studies area term. Sales volume is the product or services that companies and businesses

sell out at a certain time (usually a day, a week, a month or a year). Because sales volume is a significant index to measure sales performance, many businesses want to use the brand linkage to raise the sales volume. In other words, brand linkage can affect sales volume. As a result, many time-honored brands use the brand linkage to achieve the increase of the sales volume, because the brand linkage is a low cost and high feedback marketing method [2].

According to the essay that was written by Luo Xinyuan, the scholar mentioned the competition between companies and businesses is becoming more and more fierce, many brands want to use brand linkage to achieve their own breakthroughs. The writer proposed the strategy of brand sensory appearance emotionalized, using experience emotionalized and cultural reflections emotionalized, which are the methods that brands usually use to raise their sales volume. This provides a more diversified space for brand collaboration design innovation [3]. Chen Daifen, Zou Fang, Zhang Li, Fan Min and Yi Jiao come from Sichuan Agricultural University, Schools of Business, they studied the network structure of e-commerce of geographical indication agricultural products in Sichuan province. The main purpose of their essay is to outline some methods to improve the regional brand, and the regional brand is usually a group of brands combined together. In their essay, they built a 'product—product network—brand alliance—regional brand' geographical indication agricultural product regional brand creation path [4]. Brand alliance in this model can be divided into two behaviors: resource dependent brand alliance behavior based on individual interests and geographically dependent brand alliance behavior based on regional profits. Brand linkage can help to develop a brand alliance based on colony, which is beneficial to use the agglomeration effect of geographical indications and improve the regional brand.

In Wang Yan's essay, most respondents are in the age group 18 to 35 years old, male, high level of monthly income, and are interested in IP co-branded products and cross border collaboration products. Having a high sense of identity with China-Chic culture, with impulsive buying tendency and have some knowledge about the brand. The writer used building theory model, literature review and hypothesis proposal, case selection, variable measurement, questionnaires and data analysis to do the research. Wang Yan outlines two main conclusions. The product matching degree, brand involvement degree, and brand relationship quality have a significant positive impact on brand trust and brand enthusiasm and the brand co-branding effect significantly stimulates consumers' impulse buying behavior. There are eight defects in this essay: limitations of sample, limitations of research variables, limitations of research methods.

In Luo Xinyuan's paper, the researcher target is the co-branded products of Luckin Coffee and Maotai. Researchers used theory analysis, case studies and market data equations to do the research. Luo mentioned a consequent: emotional design can effectively enhance the value and influence of brand collaborations. However, there still have some weakness of Luo's paper. First, the study only took the joint products of Luckin Coffee and Maotai as a case study, lacking comparative analysis of joint cases of other brands, which may limit the generalizability of the conclusions. Second, the study only used qualitative analysis method, it did not use the methods such as questionnaires to prove the specific impact of emotional design on consumer behavior, the objectivity and persuasiveness of the research results may be slightly lacking. Third, this study did not consider about the negative emotional reactions that may arise from brand linkages (like customers' resistance or cultural conflict towards co-branded products) and did not give the ways to dealing with these negative effects. Finally, Luo Xinyuan focused on the short-term market performance and consumer reactions, the impact of emotional design on long-term brand development and consumer loyalty has not been thoroughly explored.

### **3. Impact of Design Elements of Logos on Consumers' Feelings about Brands**

LOGO is a symbol that companies, businesses, and organizations use it to represent them. For example, Apple's LOGO is an apple that is bitten. This LOGO is well-known around the world. It is simple and has a high level of Identification and facilitates the immediate cognitive association with

Apple's products. The design of LOGOs usually needs to consider its uniqueness, simplicity, and the capability of easy to spread. A good LOGO can be a capital fund of brands, just like the LOGO of Coca Cola, its unique font and color is deeply rooted among the people, so it has very high brand value.

The most famous five LOGOs around the world both have some special designs. These LOGOs come from Apple, Nike, McDonald's, Coca-Cola and Mercedes-Benz. The idea of LOGO of Nike came from the Greek goddess of victory's wings, it represents speed, dynamic and gentle and delivers a positive, courageous, and victorious sportsmanship. The LOGO of McDonald's represents its happiness, friendly and globalization. It also means the standardization and the consistency of this brand. The LOGO of Mercedes-Benz came from Gottlieb Daimler's belief, he believed the star that drawn on his house would bring good luck to him. It represents the luxury, quality, and technological innovation of this brand, and symbolized the global influence and industry leadership position of Mercedes-Benz.

The features of LOGOs are important part in the LOGO design process. In the essay that written by Du Yilin, the scholar mentioned that the visual design of a brand includes multiple dimensions such as LOGO, clothing style, packaging, and digital media. These multiple dimensions need to be related to communication of brand value propositions and the creation of consumer emotional experiences. Although this essay is about the visual design of brand, some main ideas can also be used in the brands' LOGO. The reason is that the scholar stressed clothing brands need to make the visual communication design penetrate the whole process of brand image construction based on its own characteristics, so they can continuously improve design innovation ability and enhance the core competitiveness by empowering brands with exquisite visual design [5].

The color and the brightness of LOGOs may affect consumers. An essay that was written by Zeng et al et al proposed that color was a virtual aspect in the companies' LOGOs design process. They investigated how the brightness of brand LOGOs influence the cognition of consumers think about the brand age and brand attitude. Five experiments showed that the LOGOs with darker color are related to older brand images while the LOGOs with lighter color are perceived as younger images. Besides, this essay revealed consumers prefer to choose the products where traditional brands can use LOGOs with dark colors and modern brands can use light color LOGOs [6]. In the essay of Jiayu Liu, Christina Starr Beck, and Yi Gao, these scholars made a study about do airlines companies with the same business model tend to use similar color schemes in their brand LOGOs, and how do travelers link the LOGOs of airlines companies and their business models together. The analysis of color shows that, low-cost companies tend prefer to use bright color, such as bright yellow or green, while full services airline companies prefer to use deep tone color, such as dark red or blue. Participants in this study tend to link the birds or wings elements with full services airline companies' LOGOs together, and link simple or abstract designs with low-cost companies together. These showed that brands can use colors which are more suitable for them when designing LOGOs [7].

The shape of LOGO is a vital part in the whole LOGO design process. In the essay of Xueting Gong, Jiuqi Chen, Peixuan Wu, and Yushi Jiang, they focused on the shape of LOGOs, and studied about the impact of the perception of food freshness on the shape of LOGOs. The results of their three researches showed that compared to square shaped LOGOs, circular LOGOs bring more sense of food freshness to consumers. Besides, brands need to combined their characteristics when designing LOGOs. Social media marketing is a mature promotion strategy, which offered extensive opportunities for companies and business to cultivate brand capital founds and spread products information. As a result, it is quite significant for companies and business to create contents with huge dissemination potential. By collecting Twitter API (application programming interface) data from 54 main fashion brands, the scholars studied about how the image factors, especially the size of brand LOGOs in the published contents affect the transmissibility of social media contents. They found that: for mid-range brands, publish larger contents in the images can lead to more forwarding volume, while for high-range brands, publish smaller contents in the images can lead to more

forwarding volume. Low-range brands can also benefit from larger contents, although this impact is much smaller than mid-range brands [8].

The study of Minting Zhao, Dan Chen, Lei Huang, Teng Ge, and Yongqiang Zhang is based on the stereotype model, from consumers' angle of view to discuss how the horizontal combination LOGOs and the vertical combination LOGOs influence consumers' psychological perception and brand attitude. The study found that, LOGO design can satisfy consumers' emotional and cognitive needs for the brand from a psychological perspective. The horizontal combination of brand names and icons can make consumers have a higher sense of intimacy, and the vertical combination of brand names and icons can make consumers have a higher sense of authority [9].

Also, the spacing area can affect the ideas about the brand is a hedonic brand or a utilitarian brand [10].

#### 4. Conclusion

This essay focuses on the relationship between the brand linkage of companies and business and sales volume of them, and the relationship between the design of LOGOs and how it can affect the consumers' feelings of brands and brands products. The researches about brand linkage mentioned in this essay outlined different types of brand linkages both sorted by collaborative agents of brand linkage, collaboration mode of brand linkage and purpose of brand linkage. Most of these brand linkages are collaborations between an old brand that works with a new brand, and a few of these brand linkages are brands in the same industry working together to publish some new products. The studies about the elements of LOGOs in the paper mentioned that the different design elements of LOGOs can influence the consumers' cognitions about brands, such as most traditional brands prefer to use dark colors in their LOGOs while most new brands prefer to use light colors in their LOGOs. Some of these studies need to improve their research methods, so the study results will be more accurate and more believable. The conclusions in this essay can help companies and businesses to increase their sales volume.

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