

The Paradox of Dynamic Corporate Identity.

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Abstract *Dynamic Corporate Identity has brought the new perspective of designing a brand identity. Dynamic Corporate identity is a system that applying the latest technology to create a flexible logo as the result the logo will constantly can change in color, pattern or shape. It is believed as the new way to create a living brand. However the new approach may not suitable for several types of businesses or identities. This research aimed to understand; what improvement that dynamic identity could do to make brand more alive. By collecting qualitative data, and some relevant literature this study has found that there is a paradox in dynamic identity system.*

Keywords Corporate Identity, Dyanmic Identity, Logo Design

1. Introduction

Term “branding” is originally came from the traditional method of marking the ownership of livestock or horses, usually it use a heated metal stamp and pasted to animals upper legs. “branding” now has shifted into what we use to define companies, products or services, it is still used to identify the ownership. Even further, branding is used to recall audience memories from their previous experience, therefore they can relate the companies, products or services. Brand also exteded as a promise toward audiences expectation, it is also a tool to build customer’s loyalty. Brand it self, is a intangible asset. Yet, they are visualized with brand identity such as logo, graphic, corporate color, etc. therefore the role of brand identity is crucial because they are “the face” of a brand. Nowadays, the development of digital media has brought us to the point where a static logo and brand identity can be improved, the improvement that can be made is to create a logo and brand identity that is more alive and dynamic. It is Dynamic Identities, introduced by a Dutch scholar and designer Irine Van Nes. She promoting the new approach of designing a brand identity, According her book “Dynamic identities how to create a living brand” she categorized 6 different ways to achieved a non static corporate identity, the main idea is to create a “living brand” that supported by technology, Irine Van Nes looks into an identity that can change in color, pattern or shape. As a new concept dynamic identity is considered as an anti-thesis from what we used to believed that logo

should never be change in color or shape. Dynamic identity often follow a system created by the designer but also created by external data or factor which is not controlled by the designer. Not only due to the latest technological changes that forced us to do so, but also due to several other issues that associated with the critique, the aesthetics and the ethics aspect of communication [1].



Figure 1. Google Doodle, One of the example of Dynamic identiy.

This research is trying to understand the dynamic identity system from many litterature sources. afterthat it will be illustrated in order to give a clear understanding regarding the system.

2. Literature Review

Today, Graphic designer have the oportuniti to create a non fixed corporateidentity by using Dynamic identity. according to van nes [2] there are 6 different ways to achieved a non static corporate identity, which are; CONTAINER which allowed a logo to change their graphic pattern or imgaes inside a certain shape that remian consistant, this approach is the most basic one because the shape should remian consistent while the contain could changes.

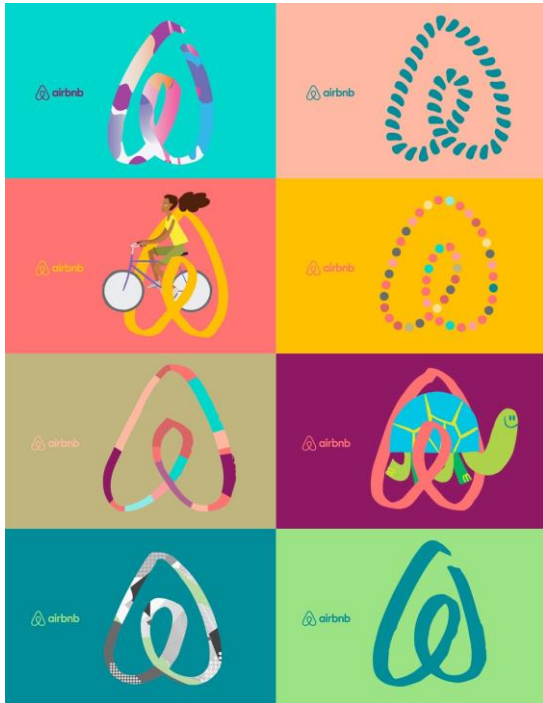


Figure 2. Air BnB latest brand identity that can be modify and flexible.

WALLPAPER, System is simillar to Container, yet the fixed shape or logo is at the front of the ever changing graphic r pattern. Another category is DNA. In this catagory the designers created a set of “toolbox” containing several main ingredients, instead of making the ingredients being the center of the identity. As the result various “recipes” can be created using these ingredients, resulting in a unique outcome everytime. And then FORMULA. It could also let the system be the constant, whether it is a grid or a set of rules, it forms a language, a formula brings and bound everything together, CUSTOMIZED could let the identity reflects a certain sense from a group of people or community as the result it can create a strong emotional bond between. GENERATIVE Opening up at least one of the elements of the identity gives the brand a living character Letting the identity be influenced be external data such as news, weather, number of visitors and so on puts it in real time. The identity can reflect the world it is living in, and adapt in response to its input. [2] Generative classification seems like the most revolutionary category. Because, Identities is following the system that created by the designer but are randomly generated by external data, which is not con-

trolled by the designer. Professor Guida from Politecnico Di Milano Italy, believed that there are a significant change in corporate identity, the result of his research state that generative visual identity is the new way for designer to visualized brand personality. The designer is only being the user of ready-made digital softwares anymore. Yet, they becoming more like a programmer of customized digital toolboxes. This scheme will reinforce the designer, give them a flexibility from the constraints of predefined computational tools, and supporting the freedom of creativity in the defines parameters to generate forms not losing sight of a visual identity system main job which is to identify and to make recognizable an organization. The use of programing and a generative approach allows to build tools and, once a set of rules is defined, to obtain unexpected result. [1] Another perspactive come from Ulrike Felsing, the author of the book titled; Dynamic Identities in Cultural and Public Contexts, has a similar opinion, preferring to adopt the term ‘visual identity’ stating that it ‘is closer to the field of design, of making and becoming visible, of presenting and communicating’ [3] Parallel approach to static or ‘fixed’ identities has emerged, which is commonly referred to as ‘flexible’. This term, when it is used in the context of identity design, has the meaning of ‘adaptable’, since well-designed flexible visual identities are supposed to adapt to specific content ,situations and context, thanks to the ability to react to their surroundings [3] A flexible identity is generally structured upon variable parameters to address specific contexts or contests, while keeping a minor constant element to ensure recognisability despite variation. Since then the ‘hard’ approach has started to loose credit in favors of the ‘soft’ approach [4],

which takes advantage of ‘variability, reference to context, process, performance, non- linearity, coherence and variety’ [3] to better suit the contemporary fast- paced, multi-screened reality [5]. One of the key elements in dynamic identity is Control randomness because this system should use randomness, i.e. it contains randomly generated, unpredictable parts, but the identity as a whole should remain easily recognizable for the audience [6] Therefore, the focus on designing a dynamic identity is no longer on “how to design a fixed image” yet it is designing or creating a set of rule that controlling the fluid identity, therefore the recognisability can be maintained.

3. Methodology

The mian purpose of this research is to review several literature sources to find the core concept of dynamic identity system, After collecting the qualitative data, Analysis procedure was conducted using Atlas.ti software and then the result illustrated using “the flexible radar” by E Jochum [7] to measure how flexible is Dynamic Idnetity System.

4. Discussion

This research tried to illustrate the pattern on each dynamic identity category. It simplify by using 4 basic shape which are square, triangle, circle and X. by using this analogy we can see how dynamic could change between on category to another. The first one which is CONTAINER, which need a certain shape that remain consistent. without it the identity can not be recognized because it will be too random. As similar system WALIPAPER also need a strong logo shape to maintain it's recognisability. While FORMULA can be formed using any shape but with the same method. And then DNA need a consistent shape but can be arranged in so many ways. While customization can be anything as long as it still linked to the rules that kept maintained. And lastly, Generative is the system that controlled by the external sources but still following the rules.

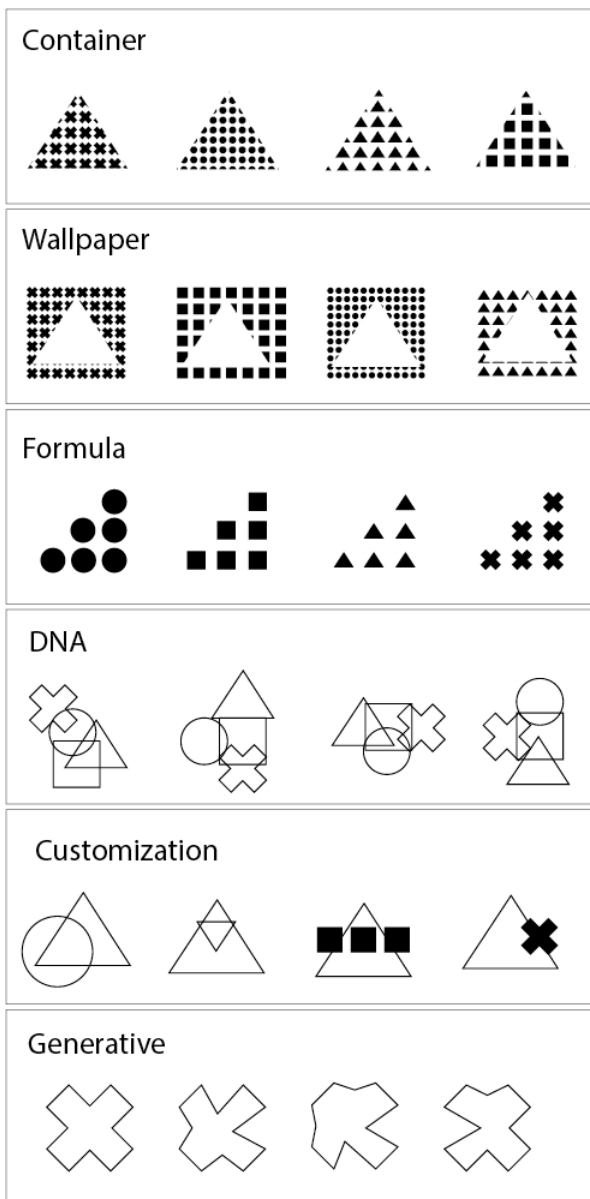


Figure 3. Dynamic Identity flexibility pattern (source:Author)

This research also measure the flexibility of the dynamic identity system by using three variables which are; Randomness, Control and recognition. These three variables used to measure the balance of how random can it be?, how randomness is controlled? and how to remain recognizable? After that every category will be illustrated using diagram.

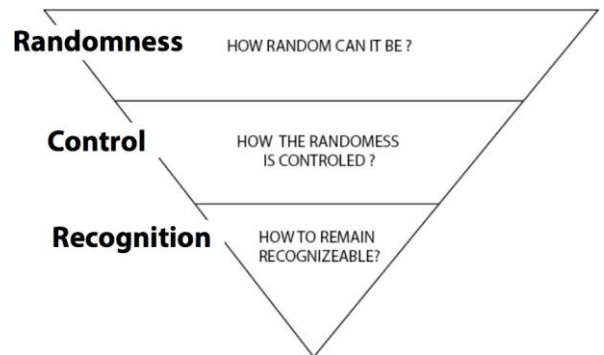


Figure 4. Randomness, Control and Recognition (source:Author)

On figure 5 We can see that WALLPAPER is very high in recognizability because it is very strongly controlled that make it less random. CONTAINER is also quite similar because it is quite simple. While DNA is very well Recognized and well controlled but very less random because the possibility is countable and predictable, it can not go beyond because it is only play with the arrangement of the shape that designed. CUSTOMIZED is the one that have the possibility to have a less recognizability due to the very high chance of randomness. This category is allowed people to modify and customized the shape, color with no limitation. However they still need something to remain consistent. For example GOOGLE doodle that fully customizable but still know because the name GOOGLE is very unique and every typography what written as GOOGLE will be a GOOGLE doodle. Formula is also very random and have a high chance to become less recognizable. Lastly, Generative is actually a very simple category because it rely on the system that controlled by the external factor. However it also can be very random and unpredictable because the external factor is also unpredictable.

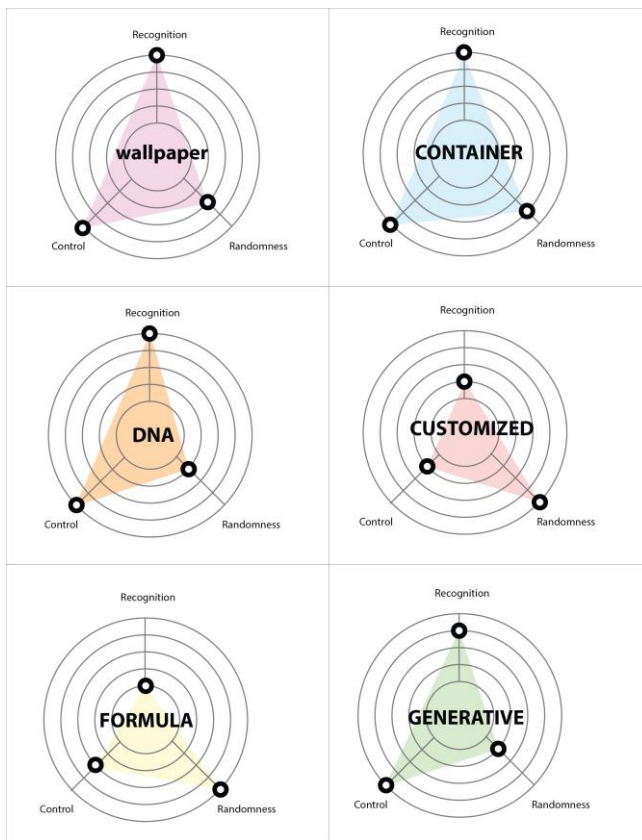


Figure 5. Dynamic Identity Diagram (source:Author)

5. Conclusion

This research found that dynamic identity system is mainly focused on the rules that let the symbols randomly generated but it always never go beyond the rules in order to maintain the recognizability. Therefore, the essence of dynamic identity is **Controlled Randomness** it is a random visual elements that still controlled rules in order to maintain the recognizability. We may often interprets randomness as something unpredictable, chaotic and uncontrollable. Of course, This interpretation brings lots of problems in identity design: if randomness is uncontrollable, then identity is uncontrollable as well, so there is no guarantee that several instances of one identity system that made by using randomness would be close enough to recognize them as one identity system. Vice versa, if randomness can be bounded by the rules, which designed, randomness becomes controllable and visual identity system becomes controllable too.

This is also can be something that is Paradoxical because **the more random daynamic identity also require a stronger rules or limitation** because with out it, the identity will not be recognized. And recognizability is the most important aspect of any identity. The development of dynamic identity make us realized that a logos should always remain fixed yet it can be flexible and random as long as they still be can be controlled.

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