

## **DIGITAL MARKETING AND ITS INFLUENCE ON BRAND LOGOS WITH REFERENCE TO MIND SCIENCES**

---

**Anto Juliet Mary\***  
**Sushali S\*\***

### **ABSTRACT**

Digital Marketing, an umbrella term for the marketing of products and services is an inevitable term in today's world when it comes to platforms for promotion of products and services. Widely accepted for its cost effective boon for every marketer to create and reach prospects faster, easier and with utmost efficacy .Facilitates greater flexibility in terms of innovation also. But using a great medium with mediocre brand logo would be adverse for the brand and wouldn't yield the expected result. Average efforts in branding will definitely lead to inadequate use of such a great platform like digital media. Every shape or form a brand logo takes on, is not there by chance or just as a representation of the company but a brand logo today is innately a reflection of the prospective buyer. The application of consumer psychology to brand logos and its impact on digital marketing is gaining popularity. Hence this paper will make an attempt to understand how different shapes attract different personalities and demographics and well informed creators of brands are almost hypnotically attracting their target consumers.

**Keywords:** Branding, Mind Sciences, Cognition, Perception, personality traits

### **INTRODUCTION**

Companies in today's crowded marketplace cannot standstill when it comes to their digital presence. Hence Digital marketing is an inevitable term in today's world when it comes to platforms for promotion of products and services. This medium is most widely used and preferred for its cost effectiveness to reach prospects faster, easier with utmost efficacy and also because of its flexibility in terms of Innovation.

As Digital and mobile technologies are increasingly becoming a part of everyday life of customers , the importance of digital branding has never been greater than before .Branding process involves creation of unique name and image for the product In the consumers mind to establish a significant and differentiated presence in the market that attracts and retains customers. Brand identity is the embodiment being the corporate reason for existence. Brand identity is a set of

---

\* Assistant Professor, Mount Carmel College, Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

\*\* Mount Carmel College, Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

individual components, such as name, design, a set of imagery, a slogan, a vision which set the brand aside from the others. Brand identity includes both the core identity and the extended identity. The core identity reflects consistent long-term associations with the brand; whereas the extended identity involves the intricate details of the brand that help generate a constant motif. Brand can also be used to attract customers by a company. The recognition and perception of a brand is highly influenced by its visual representation. A brand's visual identity is the overall look of its communications. Effective visual brand identity is achieved by the consistent use of particular visual elements to create distinction, such as specific fonts, colors, and graphic elements. At the core of every brand identity is a brand mark, or logo. Globally brand identity and logo design grew out of the modernist movement of 1950's and grew on principles of that movement such as simplicity and geometric. As part of a company's brand identity, a logo should complement the company's message strategy. An effective logo is simple, memorable, and works well in any medium including both online and offline applications. Brand logo design is king when it comes to developing a brand, especially on digital media as online customers are always connected, rarely engaged and highly distracted and in such a situation seeking the attention of the customers towards the brand can be quite challenging.

Brand logos can turn concepts and intangible things into something more concrete influencing the perception of the intended viewer. The power of a logo to elicit an emotional response can have a resounding effect on the way customers and prospects view a particular product, service or company. Perceptions and emotions of the person are influenced through the mind of the customer.

Mind science or Cognitive science is the interdisciplinary, scientific study of the mind and its processes. It examines the nature, the tasks, and the functions of cognition. Cognitive scientists study intelligence and behavior, with a focus on how nervous systems represent, process, and transform information. Mental faculties of concern to cognitive scientists include language, perception, memory, attention, reasoning, and emotion; to understand these faculties, cognitive scientists borrow from fields such as linguistics, psychology, artificial intelligence, philosophy, neuroscience, and anthropology. The typical analysis of cognitive science spans many levels of organization, from learning and decision to logic and planning; from neural circuitry to modular brain organization. The fundamental concept of cognitive science is that "thinking can best be understood in terms of representational structures in the mind and computational procedures that operate on those structures." This Represent the interdisciplinary link mind science and visual marketing where visual marketing is a discipline studying the relationship between an object, the context it is placed in and its relevant image. Visual marketing includes all visual cues like logo, signage and sales tools. Hence this study makes an attempt to assess if psychology and mind sciences influence consumers affinity towards particular brand logos and also to assess if brand logos are created for personality traits it wants to attract ,whether it has any psychological implications.

#### **PSYCHOLOGY OF SHAPES IN LOGO DESIGNS**

We must be aware that the logo shapes used to portray the most visible brands in our culture have not been chosen by chance but there are some powerful psychological forces at work. Our subconscious minds respond in different ways to different logo shapes.

Every shape or form a brand logo takes on is not there by chance or just as a representation of the company but a brand logo today is innately a reflection of the prospective buyer. Different shapes attract different personalities and demographics and well informed creators of brands are almost hypnotically attracting their target consumers. .For example, the Nike Swoosh: a combination of curves ending in a sharp point offers a strong suggestion of movement. Hence Nike as a brand created a stir in its target market than that of Reebok's effectiveness as brand in the same market. To extend the use of psychology to a deeper level, we may take reference from the Gestalt theories of German psychologists from the 1920s.They claim that the human brain unifies the visual elements it sees to form a whole that carries significantly more meaning.Another, Gestalt principle, closure, is

often used in logo designs; this is when an object is incomplete but there is enough detail for the human eye to make the whole picture. A good example for this would be the "panda" logo used by the WWF.

### **LOGO SHAPES**

The logo shapes incorporated into designs become an intrinsic element in the message it will convey to the consumers and wider public on such a big platform with a great reach to prospective buyers. If handled correctly, a logo can be the most powerful tool for a designer when promoting a brand. However, when all they have to work with is shape and color, how can they judge the difference between a logo that will be a success and one that will be a failure? The answer; the subconscious mind when people view shapes and colors, a multitude of psychological processes occur. Each attributing different emotions, thoughts and perceptions that resonate with our brains – the consumers brains. By choosing the colors and shapes which provoke the desired response, graphic and logo designers are able to influence the way in which people feel about the design and, ultimately, how they perceive the brand that the logo stands for. This doesn't happen by coincidence. Intelligent and successful designers are perfectly aware of the reaction their designs have and how these can change according to variables such as age, gender, culture and social preferences.

### **COLOUR PSYCHOLOGY**

Color psychology is a matter of debate there are very few (if any) undisputed scientific research presented, yet an increasing number of physicists, psychologists, biologists and neuroscientists are taking the subject increasingly more seriously. Many people think that color is just a matter of how things look and it is often dismissed as being purely cosmetic. However, the truth is that color is light – the source of life itself; there is nowhere that color does not exist and our instinctive, unconscious response to it is a vital element in our survival. Colour is Nature's own powerful signaling system. Scientifically, it is the first thing we register when we are assessing anything.

To discover more about how you can use the psychology of logo design to create more meaningful logos, we need to understand exactly what the hidden messages in shape and color are. A good marketer always uses *psychology of shapes in logo design*. He knows the hidden message of the shapes and uses them wisely while designing his logo.

In order to investigate the influence of shapes, a thorough literature review was conducted. In doing so it was identified that Psycho-Geometrics is based on the notion that we tend to be attracted to certain shapes and forms in the environment because of our personalities, attitudes, education and experiences, as well as the ways in which our individual brains function stated as stated in the book Psycho – Geometrics by Susan Dellinger.

### **SHAPE**

Shape is of the utmost importance for logo design. Human brains are hard wired to understand and memories shapes as it is how we learn things. A distinctive or an iconic shape is remembered long after we see it. However there is much more to it than simply remembering a shape. The shapes used must carefully and accurately convey the right message. Different shapes such as circles, squares, triangles, curves, horizontal lines, vertical lines and more all communicate a different meaning. The most skilled of designer must combine these shapes and subsequent meanings together to ensure their design represents and promotes a specific message.

### **GEOMETRIC SHAPES**

These shapes have recognizable geometry. Basic shapes like squares, triangles, circles, straight lines, etc. come under geometric shapes.

Table 1: Pschycogeometrics related to shapes and its associated personality traits

S NO	SHAPE	CHARACTERISTICS
1	<b>Squares &amp; Rectangles</b>	Stability, Uniformity, Honesty, Equality, Security
2	<b>Right Angles [Squares &amp; Rectangles] represent</b>	Rationality, formality
3	<b>Trapezium (pyramid like structures)</b>	Depicts better stability and growth.
4	<b>Rhombus</b>	Depicts speed
5	<b>Triangle</b>	Dynamics, Strength, Aggression, Action, Direction, Tension, Balance
6	<b>Psychology of Round Shapes [Circles, Ovals, ellipse]</b>	Love, Modesty, Protection, Intellectualism, Femininity anything with the curves depicts femininity, Secret (they keep what's within)
7	<b>Psychology of Curves</b>	Curves are <i>happy shapes</i> . These shapes are creative, have a rhythm, are generous, and give pleasure of viewing. Any shape with curves is considered to be feminine
8	<b>Psychology of Straight Lines [Vertical Lines &amp; Horizontal Lines]</b>	Courage, Domination, Masculinity, Boldness, Aggression, Growth
9	<b>Psychology of Spirals</b>	They are creative, religious, and trustable. Their direction represents two different meanings. Clockwise spirals start with a spiral and ends with an open end. This represents incompleteness and an intention to go somewhere. Anticlockwise spirals start with an open end and end up in a spiral which shows completeness and fulfilled intentions.
10	<b>Abstract Shapes</b>	Abstract shapes are simplified and/or stylized version of organic shapes. These are simplification of ideas. Abstract shapes give shapes to ideas.
11	<b>Curves</b>	Tenderness, care, friendship, protection and love. Curves also imply movement and are frequently used to resemble a smile to promote happiness in a product.
12	<b>Circles</b>	Partnership, strength and resilience

13	<b>Triangle</b>	Triangles have all the energy and danger associated with diagonal lines but in a simple solid structure. Triangles are often used in logos for companies with a masculine market.
14	<b>Squares</b>	Squares are solid reliable shapes to use within a logo. The use of vertical and horizontal lines creates a perfect balance for demonstrating reliability.
15	<b>Horizontal Lines</b>	They stand for tranquility and composure and have a calming effect that can help to soothe. A horizontal line promotes trust and is often used to combat the threat and aggression seen in vertical and diagonal lines.
16	<b>Diagonal</b>	A diagonal line will explode in to the subconscious mind as logos with lots of diagonals tend to belong to energetic and exciting companies that are keen to make themselves seen and heard. Diagonal lines can give a real sense of dynamism and rapidity. Overusing a diagonal line, however, is a danger as it tends to create a sense of that exactly, danger.
17	<b>Vertical Lines</b>	Vertical lines suggest stability, strength, and balance. The precision of verticals also imparts strength and professionalism. They are often used in corporate logos in competitive industries to promote a sense of professional reliability and efficiency. However, vertical lines are often hard to pull off as they can come across as cold, aggressive, domineering, and aggressive.

Source: Adapted from the book Psycho-Geometrics by Susan Dellinger, PhD Prentice Hall, 1989

#### **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

To find out hidden psychological implications in the shapes & designs used to create brand logos and evaluate their significance & efficacy in influencing consumers

#### **PURPOSE AND NEED OF STUDY**

Have you ever wondered how a particular brand/brand logo is extremely successful in the market and attracts the desired response from the consumers? It is because of the deep meaning and hidden sciences of mind used in making the brand logo. The psychological implication of shapes elicits the kind of emotions and results from the public. The purpose of this study is to unveil such hidden implications that relate to their personality traits .There is a huge amount of investment or expenditure done by a company to establish its brand and promotion of its products/services. Consumer perception and brand image/identity is very crucial for the company. If there is a method to hit bulls eye at the prospects' minds then that proves to be a boon to every company. To know what affects the consumer psychologically allows the brand to get the intended resonance towards the brand. Consumers are almost hypnotically attracted to the brand, because of the psychological

forces working behind a logo. Hence, this study becomes an essential as it gives insights about what appeals to each type of demographic on different platforms and psychology of shapes and use of the right color simply, if taken into consideration while designing a logo can get the brand to be a direct hit at what the brand aims at receiving from the consumer end. Therefore this study is significant for both consumers & companies. As consumers it is a new concept to study about and very much essential to be introduced to because this concept in brand logos is a reflection of consumers' own personality. Our reaction towards such logos as consumers introduces us to ourselves as to what we like and innately who we are.

### **SCOPE OF STUDY**

The future of this study is an emerging and a strongly followed practice for brand designers. Every brand today is following this method of using the right shapes, colours, typographies, angles that are bull's eye at attracting the consumers. This study explicitly talks about how every logo is created for personality traits it wants to attract. This allows the brands to get faster and more efficient results when it comes to getting the right responses from the target market the brand aims at catering to.

### **METHOD**

#### **Participants and Design**

200 students with average mean age of 18 to 25 years participated in the survey. Participants were approached through the Google forms and the survey was offered as visual perception study on different shapes and logos and their psychological implications on branding. Part one of the survey instrument involved questions related to brand logos, their psychology of shapes and cognitive sciences to elicit the right emotions in the people. Participants received five pictures of logos each consisting of different shapes and structures, and were to look at those pictures and answer the questions. Part 2 of the instrument was a self assessment questionnaire to identify their personality type.

### **RESULTS**

Women preferred to choose brand logos with curves proving that curves with feminine psychological appeal appeals to women precisely and the counter brand logo with geometrical shapes were preferred by men showing that psychology of shapes does work. Further more we can clearly say that 95% of the respondents agree with the self assessment survey personality traits identified by the questionnaire. Consumers preference shown in the psychology related questions with reference to brand logos were matched to understand the psychological claims made in the table of shapes. Three sets of logos with three different color combinations depicting three different personality types were used 61% of respondents feel powerful and aggressive by choosing red and black, 21% choose red and white depicting romantic and calm by nature while the rest of the respondents choose red and yellow depicting highly energetic and hyperactive individuals. Through this analysis we can also infer that the most creative shapes also affect human psychology than something regular in shape. Two successful competitor brand logos AUDI and LAMBORGHINI were used whereby the respondents preferred Lamborghini as most appealing logo and stated that the brand innately glorifies leadership. Two logos Google drive and Google chrome which are similar to each other but drastically different because of their shapes were shown to the respondents implying different personality traits. 82% of the respondents have chosen Google Chrome logo as their most favored and 16 of the respondents have chosen Google Drive logo. Hence we have, 82.9% respondents strong personality trait to be protective, stable, family oriented people as their chosen logos shape psychology implies where as the remaining 20 % are believers of science, religious, balanced individuals as their chosen logo shape psychology implies.

## DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to investigate whether psychology and mind sciences influence consumer's affinity towards particular brand logos and also to assess if brand logos are created for personality traits it wants to attract. The findings indicate that use of psychology of shapes and mind sciences in designing of brand logos connects well with the personality traits of the customers. Further more Cognitive science & shape psychology based questions asked in the survey questionnaire clearly indicates that psychological implications in brand logos are 90% efficient in creating the desired resonance from the public at large. This research also emphasizes that innovative logos with psychological implications is of higher impact on the target group than normal logos with no such implications. It is to be noted from this research that businesses must adapt to this practice of profiling the brand logos and the personality traits of the target customers to get the right kind of response. Usage of mind science is highly significant to illicit the right emotions in the right people. Digital media being an emerging super power, it is very difficult to capture consumer attention on platforms like social media. Hence use of mind sciences which helps rightly hit the target market becomes very important to be used when it comes to communicating on digital media. It must put to use extensively in order to tackle competition globally.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings of this research should be considered in the light of few limitations. Firstly, we employed only brand logos. Further research could integrate a wide variety of visual cues. Secondly, exclusively usage of student's population which is obviously not a fully representative of whole population.

## References

- \* Encyclopedia of E-Commerce Development, Implementation, and Management, Edition: 1, Chapter: Social Media Marketing: Psychological Insights, Managerial Implications, and Future Research Directions, Publisher: IGI Global, Editors: In Lee, pp.2144-2158.
- \* Gomes, E. (2015, February 3), Leveraging psychology in Digital Marketing [Blog Post]. Retrieved from <http://blog.marketo.com/2015/02/ebook-leveraging-psychology-in-digital-marketing.html>.
- \* Hudson, S., Roth, M. S., & Madden, T. J. (2012). Customer communications management in the new digital era. *Center for Marketing Studies, Darla Moore School of business, University of South Carolina*, 21.
- \* Lin, C.; Rauschnabel, P.A.; (2015): Social Media Marketing: Psychological Insights, Managerial Importance, and Future Research Directions; Inn, L.: Encyclopedia of E-Commerce Development, Implementation, and Management, IGI Global. Forthcoming.
- \* Phillips, B. J., McQuarrie, E. F. and Griffin, W. G. (2014), How Visual Brand Identity Shapes Consumer Response. *Psychol. Mark.*, 31: 225–236. doi: 10.1002/mar.20689.
- \* Stephen, A. T. (2016). The role of digital and social media marketing in consumer behavior. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 10, 17-21.
- \* Schorn, R., Brunner-Sperdin, A., & Ploner, J. (2014). The Influence of Color, Shape, and Font Formatting on Consumers' Perception of Online Drugstores. *NA-Advances in Consumer Research Volume 42*.

