

Building brand identity on the basis of cultural differences.

Faculty of Economics and Business (Section of Gipuzkoa)
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ABSTRACT

This paper will be focused on a brand's identity and how culture affects its delivery. In order to have a foundation and understand more complex topics first will be discussed what branding is and how to create value for a brand. Next the topic of brand identity will be introduced and analysed more deeply, such as how to build it, international brand identity and lastly, through a case study, we will analyse how a brand changes its formal brand identity affected by different cultures.

RESUMEN

En este proyecto se va a analizar cómo las diferentes culturas afectan a la identidad de una marca. Para poder entender temas más complejos, primero se va a explicar qué es el branding y cómo crea valor para una marca. Una vez explicado esto, se va a presentar el concepto de la identidad de la marca y cómo construirla, vamos a analizar elementos más concretos sobre esto, tales como cómo construir una identidad de marca, identidad de marca internacional y, para terminar, se va a analizar los cambios que hace una marca a su identidad formal internacional debido al efecto de diferentes culturas.

LABURPENA

Lan honetan kultura desberdinek marka baten identitatean zer nolako eragina eduki dezaketen aztertuko da. Lehenik eta behin, gai konplexuagoak ulertzeko, brandinga zer den eta marka batentzako balioa nola lortzen den ikusiko da. Behin hau azalduta, marka identitatearen kontzeptua eta hau nola eraiki ikusiko dugu. Gainera, honi buruzko kontzeptu zehatzagoak azalduko dira, hala nola nazioarteko marka identitatea. Amaitzeko, marka batek kultura desberdinen eraginez bere identitate formalari egiten dizkion aldaketak aztertuko dira.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SUBJECT MATTER

Nowadays, due to the globalization, the markets for the majority of sectors are oversaturated. There are many products that are similar and it has become a battle to have the lowest prices in order to sell. This makes it increasingly difficult for brands to stand out from competitors and can cause great trouble for companies.

In order to stand out, it is important to have an adequate branding strategy, and be aware of what makes your brand unique and valuable. In my opinion, having a strong and personal Brand Identity is what companies should focus on, as it will help customers feel identified with the brand and, thus, remember it.

However, in a globalized world, I find it interesting to apply this knowledge to an international perspective, taking note of the difficulties brands might have and should be careful of.

All in all, the subject matter for this project is Brand Identity and how it should be applied internationally.

1.2 PROJECT GOALS

The main goal for this end-of-degree project is: to analyse how to apply international Brand Identity based on cultural differences.

In order to meet this goal, it is important to answer to smaller, more specific questions, which are the following ones:

- Understand Branding and the impact it has in companies.
- Analyse how to make a brand valuable, through correct Brand Management.
- Understand Brand Identity and the impact it has when building a brand.
- Learn how to build a suitable Brand Identity and how to deliver it.
- Understand the impact different cultures have in Branding and Brand Identity.
- Show how international Brand Identity works by applying it to a specific international brand.

1.3 WHY THIS TOPIC?

I have always been interested in the different cultures, traditions and habits around the world. As a marketing student, it naturally came to me being interested in international marketing. Even though we didn't work on branding in this degree, I found myself interested in how it enters the customer's brain to create an image of the brand itself.

On the other hand, as a daily user of social media and someone interested in worldwide issues, I have seen many times how a brand makes a mistake that ends up offending a specific demography. For this reason, I know how important it is for brands to know how to behave and how to deliver their brand in an international perspective.

As a result, digging in the world of branding and international marketing, I found it suitable to write my work about international brand identity.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

To carry out this bibliographic review there were used many information sources. First of all, literature from different authors to understand their idea on their models. Second, in order to have a wide understanding of the topic, many blogs and websites were used, to compare the how people who had different understandings on the topic describe the models. These blogs and websites were also used to understand which models different consultancy companies find the most useful nowadays. Other sources of information were research papers, used to confirm the effectiveness of the models.

On the other hand, for the case study the information was taken from the company's website and well as social media.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT

For this project, the structure was thought to introduce the reader little by little into complex topics. First off, we dive into Branding in general, explaining the what it is nowadays and how it evolved. Once branding is understood, we tackle the topic of creating brand value, through brand management and brand equity. Here, we will explain the two most important brand equity models that are used nowadays. After that, brand identity will be explained, as well as the most used models to build it, and some misconceptions will be cleared, in order to explain how brand identity is delivered.

Once all the basis are covered, it is important to understand what international branding and brand identity are and how they are affected by external factors such as culture and tradition. After understanding this, it will be explained how a company should tackle in the topic of international brand identity.

To have a practical understanding of how a brand should use international branding and brand identity there will be a case study: H&M, in which will be analysed the brand's identity and how the brand acts in different countries around the world.

2. BRANDING

In order to understand more specific topics, it is important to cover the basics. Therefore, this chapter will be focused on getting a good understanding of Branding; starting by explaining what branding is, understanding how it has become what we know nowadays and, lastly, seeing why it is such an important investment for companies.

2.1 CONCEPT OF BRANDING

The concept of branding is created by joining “Brand” and the “-ing” finishing. We already know the -ing refers to the activity of the noun it is attached to, thus, the only question we have left is: What is a brand?

The American Marketing Association describes a brand as “*a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller’s goods or service as distinct from those of other sellers*” (2017). In the business world a brand is more than that, it is an intangible asset, which, if used correctly can generate great economic value for the business.

When customers think of a brand it will come with a series of associations linked to it (i.e. sophisticated, rebel, even cheap or good quality). In order to add positive value, these associations need to be adequate. Managing said associations, deciding which ones are beneficial and which are the ones that we want our customers to link to us is what Branding does.

It’s easy to create a name and an aesthetic but that would not be called a Brand, in fact, when associations are created and are successfully placed in consumers’ minds does a name become a brand. All in all, Branding is more than logos and colours, creating a brand is giving your business a personality – an identity.

2.2 EVOLUTION OF BRANDING

Branding has gone through a long evolution to become what we know and apply today. In its earliest form, around 2000BC Branding’s main purpose was to show ownership of livestock as well as to attract buyers who were mainly illiterate (Moore & Reid, 2008).

The earliest traces of branding ever found come from the Indus Valley (Modern-day India) in the form of square seals with animal figures, believed to be used as trademark, which were also found in Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf, thus implying they were used in trade between these areas (Moore & Reid, 2008). The seals found in the Indus Valley were attached to jars or baskets and the ones found in Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf were found in message documents. These findings could mean that the seals were used to transmit “*the identity of the sender of a certain piece of merchandise, or the authority allocated by an individual or state department to a particular agent who carried the seal impression*” (Wolpert, 2009).

As trade has always been present in human history, there are many examples of what could be some kind of branding between the Bronze age and the Iron Revolution, such as Cyprus’ copper and the importance of emphasizing its origin, but none show any kind of evolution the way Iron age Greece does. In fact, around 825 and 336 BC there was a significant change in business models, thus developing a more market-oriented entrepreneurial culture. Sellers began to use imagery in order to distinguish and express the good quality of their products, an example of

this could be Greek pottery and its intricate designs and inscriptions to indicate who made them. Sometimes, alongside the maker's name, the artist's name was written too, even specifying their origin and ethnicity at times (Moore & Reid, 2008).

There is strong evidence showing that around 600 BC pots were being produced in Greece to sell overseas (e.g. Spain), these pots were made attractive in order to be liked in the markets they were targeted to. Even the potters that were producing to sell locally started to make more appealing products (Osborne, 1998). Nowadays, researchers are able to link pots found in Greece to their respective makers and workshops, through distinctive imagery and labelling potters used.

Fast forward to the 15th century, the Gutenberg Printing Press was invented and while spreading literature to the masses, information was also being distributed. This distribution helped develop advertising and in 1625 an advertisement was published in an English newspaper for the first time, in 1704 the Boston Newsletter published the first ever American advertisement (O'Neill, 2015).

With the Industrial Revolution in the 1700s came a new way of producing; it was possible to produce large amounts in a profitable way and mass production became the new normal. The middle class became the new target audience for businesses and advertisements were used to attract new customers, because for the first time in modern history, not every piece produced was sold (O'Neill, 2015).

In the 19th century Advertising companies started to appear in England developing more creative ways to reach customers, such as banners and hand-held poles, companies began to promote their 'brand names' through attractive packaging and eye-catching slogans. Furthermore, in France, England and USA acts to regulate and register trademarks were passed in the late 1800s (O'Neill, 2015).

Throughout the 20th century many advances were made in the Marketing field and in the late 1900s the concept of "Brand personality" was created. Aaker (1996) defines brand personality as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand" and nowadays is still a reference to many Branding strategies.

2.3 BENEFITS OF BRANDING

Nowadays, in an oversaturated market, Branding might be more important than ever, as it will make your products stand out to your customers. That is only one of the many perks of having a strong brand, as Kristopher Jones (2021) wrote for Forbes, these are the main benefits to invest in Branding.

- To be recognized more often. Even though brands with eye catching logos and nice colours might stand out for the public, a brand needs other elements to get stuck in the public's mind and be recognized in the long term. When a customer comes across a business with cohesive Branding and strongly defined identity, they will remember the brand. If said customer is not ready to buy those products, there is a strong chance they will come back later –when they are ready, because the brand has stuck with them.
- To help build trust. Branding will give people expectations about your brand, when a brand reaches those expectations customers will be satisfied with the products they

bought. It is easy to tell when a business has made the effort to build their brand and this will show the audience the business owners care for the company; this makes customers trust a brand, and when you trust a brand you are more likely to buy from them.

- To improve advertising. “Branding and advertising go hand in hand” says Jones. In fact, good advertising will be cohesive and reflect the brand’s identity. To properly reflect the identity of the brand, the business needs to develop a solid brand first.
- To benefit employees. Setting values can help employees feel more motivated to work, especially when they feel identified with said values. Having the same values as the company you work for can make your job feel more fulfilling. In addition, having a strong identity can help employees who work in customer service, by guiding them towards certain attitudes when communicating with customers.
- To create loyal customers. When a brand has an identity it helps customers connect and feel related to the brand. In a long term, this can help create a relationship between brand and customer, thus developing loyal customers.

3. BRAND MANAGEMENT AND BRAND EQUITY

Brand Management is a function inside a company whose goal is to reach the goals they have fixed for the brand(s) they will own. Brand management is the process of creating, developing and controlling brands. When creating brands, companies will need a personalized architecture, it is very important to decide what relation the brands will have with the different products the company is offering.

“Brand architecture is the organizational structure of a company’s portfolio of brands, sub-brands, products, and/or services” (Lischer, 2021). When having more than a brand it is easier to have a larger target audience, as each brand can have its own target audience and product types. There are three different kinds of brand architecture:

- **House of brands:** These companies have more than one brand, the products can be from different sectors or they can be competing with each other. Often, customers will not know the different brands are related, because the parent brand (the owner of the others) is not interested in letting them know, due to strategies around pricing, quality and target audiences.
- **Branded house:** When a company uses the customer loyalty they have in a specific brand, by creating and selling more products under that same brand name. These companies often use a single brand and if they create more brands, will make it clear these are related.
- **Hybrid:** This architecture combines the two above, where a parent brand can have smaller brands that are not associated with each other (as in house of brands), but one of those smaller brands will be a parent brand for others that are associated.

The next step in the process of brand management is brand development. This step works on brand positioning –the features the brand has that differentiate them from others. Kotler (2003) defines brand positioning as *“the act of designing the company’s offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market”*. This positioning will be based on the brand’s identity and the competitors’ information will be added in order to have a competitive perspective.

The last step is a basic concept in management: control. It is important to make check-ups to make sure the brand is meeting its goals, and in my opinion, to make sure the identity is being properly delivered.

The goal of brand management is to create the highest value possible out of the brands. This is also known as “having a positive Brand Equity”. When a brand has loyal customers and becomes well-known among them, it will be able to save money from promotions, as buyers will be actively interested in the brand’s new products and will be excited to share about these with the people around. Furthermore, as customers will be excited to buy from the brand, they will feel the products have more value comparing to similar ones and the company will be able to sell in a higher price, a “premium price” as Farquhar said in 1989. We say a brand has built a strong Brand Equity or Brand Awareness when it reaches this point.

Aaker (1996) defines Brand Equity as *“a set of assets (and liabilities) linked to a brand’s name and symbol that adds to (or subtracts from) the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or that firm’s customers”*. Even though Aaker’s model is notorious nowadays, the concept of Brand Equity has been around since the 1980s and many theories have been developed by renowned authors.

3.1 THE KELLER MODEL

The Keller Model, also known as the Consumer Based Brand Equity Model, was developed by Kevin Keller in his 1997 book “*Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring and Managing Brand Equity*”. It is still one of the most respected and used Brand Equity models nowadays.

FIGURE 1: KELLER’S BRAND EQUITY MODEL



Source: Keller, 2012.

This model shows in the form of a pyramid the steps a company has to take in order to shape and build the way customers think of a Brand – Customer Perception- and this way, build a strong Brand Equity.

First Step: Brand Identity – Who are you?

The first step in building a strong brand is its very core. The company should know which is going to be the target audience, know their ins and outs, and based on this information, develop the perception they want for their customers.

All in all, this first step consists on deciding the desired brand perception, in order to build the brand based in these perceptions.

Second Step: Brand Meaning – What are you?

Once set the perception the company wants to achieve, is time to understand what and how the brand will do. This step is divided in two blocks: Performance and Imagery.

Performance refers to how well a product will meet the customers’ needs. Does the product meet the what was advertised?

To help with this step Keller breaks it down into 5 main categories:

- Key characteristics and features.
- Product’s reliability.
- Customer service
- Style and design.
- Price.

On the other hand, imagery refers to what the brand communicates to the customers. This will be the way the brand shows itself to possible buyers, either it wants to communicate how rough or soft; clean and neat or wild and careless... the brand is.

Third Step: Response – What about you?

This third step consists on managing how customers will perceive the brand. This step is also divided in two categories: judgements and feelings.

Judgements are, according to Keller assumptions buyers make based on perceived quality, credibility, usefulness and superiority from your competitors. When a customer buys a product they will have a set of expectations, if the reality of the purchased product is similar or better than the expectation, the customer will be happy and open to purchasing again.

However, there are also emotional responses tied to consuming a brand. These are the feelings and can be divided in six categories: warmth, fun, excitement, security, social approval, and self-respect. These feelings can be directed to the product/brand or to customers themselves, as consumers like feeling identified in the brands they consume.

Fourth Step: Relationships – What about you and me?

This fourth step will be all about building strong and long-lasting relationships between brand and customers. The goal is to have customers who feel identified with the brand, so they not only come back, but they recommend the brand to people around them.

The factors for brand resonance are: behaviour, values and attitude, engagement of customers, and connection and feelings. There are some useful tactics like loyalty programs or engagement with customers via social media.

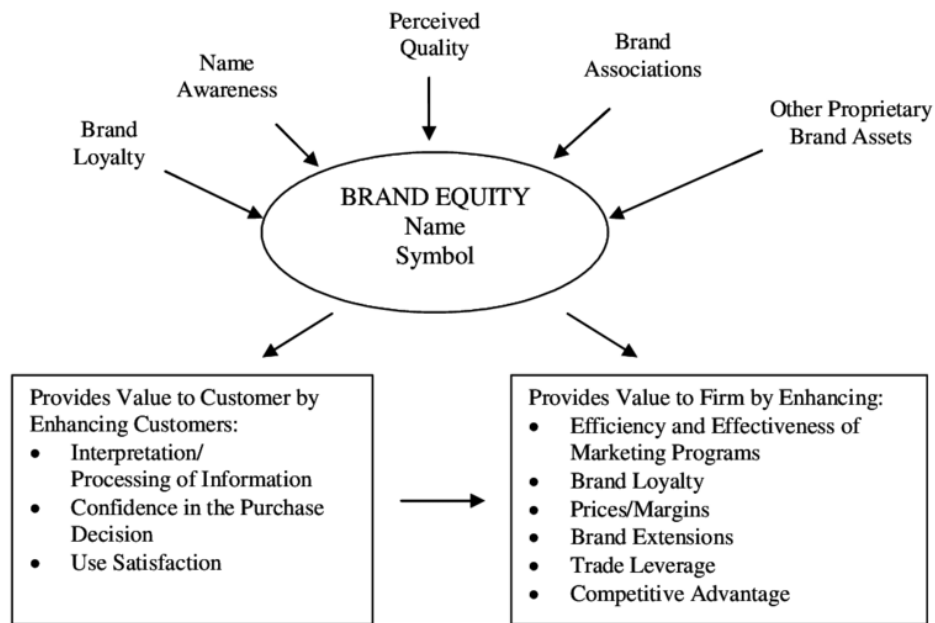
The top of the pyramid shows how important it is to have a strong brand identity, as customers will be more loyal if they identify with the brand, and there needs to be a clear brand personality or identity in order for customers to be able to identify with it.

3.2 THE AAKER MODEL

This model from 1991, created by David Aaker, shows how to build a strong brand - a brand with strong Brand Equity, emphasising the importance of Brand Identity. There are three aspects that make this model so useful nowadays (Schmidt, 2020): it helps companies build a brand from its foundation, thus also helping in developing a Brand Identity; in comparison to the Keller model, which has a more limited factors, the Aaker model implements more elements; another reason the brand is still widely used nowadays is that, if implemented correctly, it will show the company how to create an adaptable and dynamic brand, with the ability to expand.

Aaker believes that Brand Equity can: help customers retain information about the brand; influence customers' behaviours by making them feel more comfortable when buying a brand; and make customers perceive the products as higher quality, thus making them more confident when buying.

FIGURE 2: AAKER'S BRAND EQUITY MODEL



Source: Smith, D. J., Gradojevic, N., & Irwin, W. S. (2007)

In this model there are implemented Brand Identity's elements, suggesting that to create and maintain positive Brand Equity, there needs to be a strong Brand Identity. These elements are the following:

- **Brand as a product:** This element focuses on the characteristics of the product itself and the value they bring to the customers.
- **Brand as an organization:** This element refers to the company and its attributes, such as values and culture. This attributes for example, might include the company's location, if a brand is local or is an international organization with a wide audience.
- **Brand as a person:** This element refers to the brand's identity, like an individual's personality. When a brand has a strong identity or personality it helps customers feel identified with the brand.
- **Brand as a symbol:** A company's symbols, such as the logo, can help build Brand Identity, making it more tangible.

These are the five components of Aaker's Brand Equity model:

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty measures the support customers give the brand. When a company has loyal customers there is no need to convince them to keep buying, as they already plan to keep buying. Therefore, the company saves money and only focuses on maintaining customers, reducing marketing costs.

Another plus part of having loyal customers is the advantage over the competitors in the market. Competitors will have a tough time in convincing customers to switch brands.

Brand Awareness

This component refers to how known the brand is in an area or location. When the majority of people of a place know a certain brand they will be more attracted to buying it and will feel more comfortable with their buying decision. This could be due to the large amount of feedbacks and buying experiences there will be attached to the brand, as many people have bought from it.

Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is, as it is described in the title, what kind of quality the customers think the brand has. There are many factors that can effect on this element, such as the pricing of a product or service. Customers tend to perceive a high-priced product as one with higher quality than other similar ones with a lower price.

Having a high perceived quality can help a brand by: having more trusting customers, therefore, having customers that are more keen on buying from said brand; and differentiating the brand from competitors.

Brand Associations

Brand Associations refer to the connections a customer has with the brand in their mind. These connections can be created after an experiencing by buying the brand, by watching the brand's advertising or other similar experiences. When someone's reaction to the thinking about the brand is positive, it means they have a positive brand association. If a company creates positive brand associations, it will be beneficial because customers will have a positive attitude towards buying products or services from the brand.

Proprietary Assets

The last element in the Aaker model are Proprietary Assets. These refer to intangible assets, such as patents, trademarks, copyrights, intellectual property rights and similar. The company will be the one controlling the promotions of these assets, and if an asset (e.g trademark) becomes well-known among the public, everyone who wants to buy a product will have to refer to the company. Thus, increasing customers and revenue.

When looking for different Brand Equity models, there are many different ones and I felt like I would not be able to add all of them to this research paper, as it is not the goal to make an extensive research in this specific topic. Therefore, I decided to add the Keller and the Aaker models, because they are the most used Brand Equity models nowadays, despite the both of them being over 20 years old. This shows how well made and thought they are.

A common feature between these two models is that they both base Brand Equity's strength on building a strong Brand Identity. Brand Identity is a concept we will be discussing further in the next section. Despite both models providing guidance in building a strong brand and creating tight bonds with customers, they do approach these topics from different angles. Where Keller focuses on creating emotional connection with customers, Aaker explains the importance of recognition, on how the customers see the brand. Personally, I do not believe there is a better or more complete model, but I do believe each one will be more appropriate for different business types. For example, in case of having a large amount of customers, it could be a difficult to create the kind of relationship Keller is aiming for, and the Aaker model could be more suitable, in order to stand out in a saturated market. Whereas, when having fewer customers, it

could be interesting to try using Keller's model and create strong relationships with buyers, that goes beyond a single purchase.

4. BRAND IDENTITY:

Even though “Brand Identity” is a widely used concept nowadays, the many blogs and websites that inform about this topic rarely reach the depth needed to understand what it really means. Brand Identity is a set of distinctive elements that create a brand and make it unique and recognizable for customers. Although it might sound similar, Brand identity is so much more than a brand’s logo or tagline; the description refers to the values, features, expressions that define the brand and give it a personality, some of which will be tangible and others will not.

To show an identity it is not enough to communicate and tell customers, for example, how ethical they are. It is important that the company shows in their actions that they are actually ethical. In order to have customers identifying our brand with a feature we need to be constant and coherent with what we say and what we do. Customers might be irritated by any possible incoherencies they see and stop buying from the brand or even leave a negative feedback and not recommend.

4.1 WHY IS BRAND IDENTITY IMPORTANT?

As we explained previously, Brand Identity is key to building positive Brand Equity, therefore, creating positive value to add to the brand. To take a more specific approach we will take a look to ServiceBrand Global’s (2020) intake on the importance of Brand Identity.

Brand Identity brings many benefits to the company, but the main one would be, first, the possibility of selling on a higher price –as long as it is coherent to the brand’s identity. For example, Apple has made de effort to be associated with quality and luxury and it has paid off, in fact, the quality of their products is not that different from Microsoft, but people perceive them as the best quality in the market and are willing to pay a higher price to have them. Apart from quality, Apple achieved to be associated to some kind of exclusive group customers will get to when owning their products.

In order to benefit from what we said in the previous paragraph, a brand needs to have loyal customers. When a brand has strong identity it is easier to know how to deliver said identity. Therefore, customers will receive coherent information about the brand and it will be easier for them to remember and differentiate the associations they have towards the brand; from that point on, if they have the required visual and verbal identity to link the information to, the brand will be recognized easily. This way, if customers feel connected to the brand and what the brand stands for, the customers will be loyal to the brand. When customers are loyal, the effort the brand has to make in order to keep them is much smaller.

ServiceBrand Global also makes a point to include the effect Brand Identity has with employees. In fact, they state that willing to accept lower salaries if they believe their employer’s brand to be in line with their views. Companies with inferior branding pay 10% higher wages”. They also explain how strong corporate image attracts people and the number of applicants will be higher. This way, the company will have more choices and will be able to choose a better option that suits the company the best.

4.2 MODELS AND AUTHORS

As Brand Identity is one of the most important parts of Branding, it is understandable that everybody wants to explain their opinion and views in the topic. Nevertheless, it is not the purpose of this paper to review all the models that can be found nowadays, therefore, the ones added in this paper are four of the most famous ones that are used every day by businesses when building their Brand Identity.

First, Jung's 12 Brand Archetypes will be explained, which, despite not being a model to build a brand's identity, it is helpful to understand the concept and is still widely used nowadays. After this, we will be explaining Aaker's, Kapferer's and Llopis' brand identity models.

4.2.1 *Jung's 12 Brand Archetypes*

Carl Jung's 12 Brand Archetypes is not a model to build Brand Identity but it is a good way to ease in to the topic and get an understanding of what we mean when talking about Brand Identity. Jung knew that humans use symbols in order to understand complex concept. Therefore, he created 12 archetypes in order to simplify the complicated world of human personalities, each is linked to a basic human desire which could translate to how we feel towards different personalities. Our personalities will define what archetypes we feel most appealed to.

When translating these archetypes to branding, it will help create connection to customers and stand out between other brands. Before explaining the archetypes, it is important to understand that what we will describe refers to how the brand will make customers feel or how customers see the brand, it does not refer to reality. These are the 12 archetypes:

The magician

Magicians make dreams come true and make problems disappear, they are knowledgeable and intelligent. They crave authenticity and creativity and they will express themselves in unique ways (Fitton, 2019). A good example of this archetype is Disney.

The outlaw –the rebel

Outlaws actively seek to break the rules and they create a better, alternative reality for themselves. From all the archetypes, they create the strongest brand loyalty, because their ideas transcend the products to customers' lifestyle (Fitton, 2019). An excellent example for a rebel brand is Harley Davidson.

The jester

Jesters like joking around, having fun and lightning the mood. They are connected to their inner child and, consequently, do not like obeying rules. They are great at creativity and enjoy the moment, because life is too short to be serious. They want to show people the good and careless side of life (Fitton, 2019). M&M is a good example of a jester brand.

The creator

These brands have a vision about the way they want the world to be and through their products they will try to make this reality (Fitton, 2019). An example of this kind of brands is Tesla.

The sage

This archetype seeks truth and wisdom. They want to understand the world and share their knowledge, they often have philosophical conversations. They are often regarded as a

trustworthy source of information (Fitton, 2019). Some examples of this archetype are Google and CNN.

The innocent

They focus on naivety and purity; they want share the message of simplicity. They see life through the lens of a child, finding happiness and fun everywhere. They want to share their good feeling through their products (Fitton, 2019). Coca-Cola and their advertisements are a good example of this kind of brands.

The lover

Brands that are the lover type try making stronger relationships through sensuousness and seductiveness. But these relationships will not only be of romantic love, they will also try to create familial or spiritual. They want to emotionally connect to people and make them feel special (Fitton, 2019). Victoria's Secret is an example of lover brands.

The everyman –the citizen

These brands want to appeal to a mass audience and, to do so, they are relatable. They are down-to-earth and non-pretentious. They identify as average, buying products that are not luxurious and knowing the value of money (Fitton, 2019). An example of an everyman brand is Ford.

The hero

Heroes always accept the challenge, they protect and inspire people. They see themselves as empowering and take great pride in the positive influence they have in the world (Fitton, 2019). Some examples of hero brands are Marvel and Red Cross.

The caregiver

Caregivers want to make people feel secure and nurtured. They are not money-driven, but their main focus is altruistic, hence they are perceived as trustworthy. They like to provide to the most needing (Fitton, 2019). Johnson & Johnson is a good example of a caregiver brand.

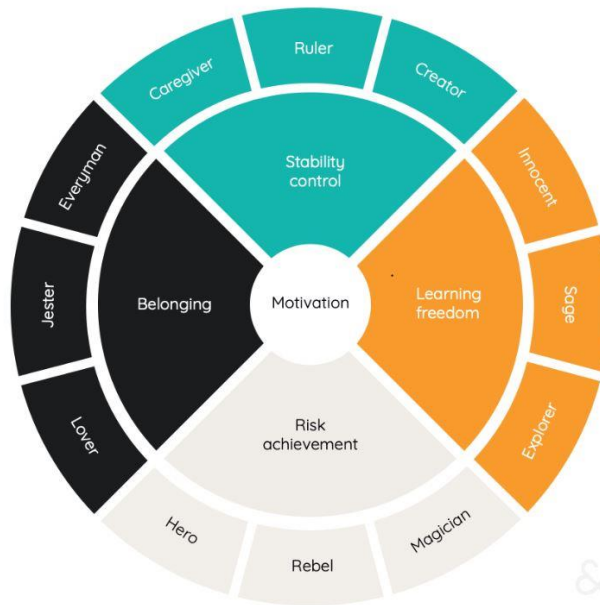
The ruler

Rulers are very proper, create their own rules and expect people to follow them. They are very stable and respected, and should be careful not to be perceived as arrogant (Fitton, 2019). An example of ruler brands is Microsoft.

The explorer

Explorers are independent thinkers and create their own paths to live life. They are independent in their journey but they inspire people to join them. Despite their products being part of a sector, their own path makes them special and don't fit in with the other brands (Fitton, 2019). An example is National Geographic.

FIGURE 3: CARL JUNG'S 12 PERSONALITY ARCHETYPES



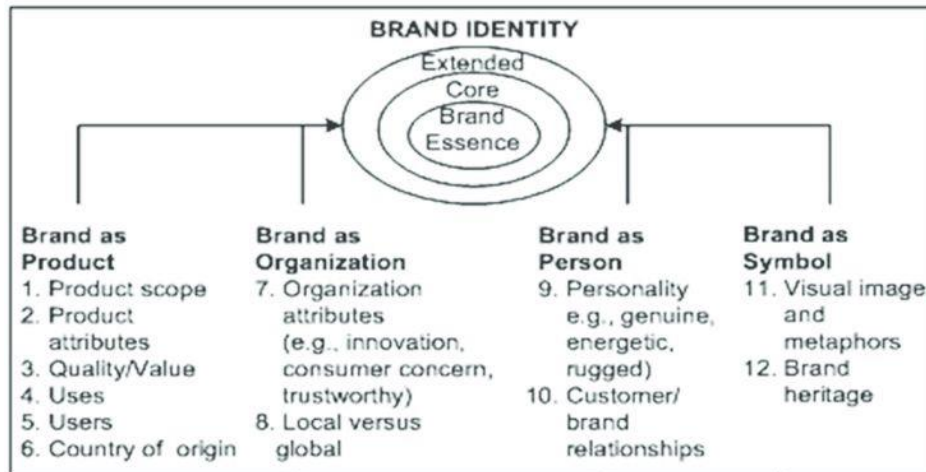
Source: woven.agency.com

This is not a model to build Brand Identity, in fact, these are personality archetypes that companies use to create their brand's personality, which is a part of a brand's entire identity. Brand Identity is made up of other components, that we will look into when explaining the models. What I like about this theory is that it helps understand the concept in a very simple way, it could be a nice way for businesses to get a basic and very general idea of what they want their identity to look like. From there on, based on what they general idea they have created of their brand, I would suggest building a brand identity that is more specific and unique.

4.2.2 Aaker

Aaker's Brand Identity Model, now renamed as Brand Vision Model, was first created in 1995. At the time, the majority of the companies used a three-word phrase and develop the campaign based on a single concept, which Aaker strongly disagreed with, because *"you have to allow a brand to stand for more than one thing—maybe six or twelve things"*. On the other hand, other companies used "fill-in-the-box" models, in which different brands would feel they needed to fill in every box in order to succeed, despite certain ideas not being relevant to the brand.

FIGURE 4: AAKER'S BRAND IDENTITY MODEL



Source: Aaker, D. A. (1996).

In the central box called "Brand Identity" (which would be called "Brand Vision" in Aaker's new terminology), there are two elements: the concentric circles and four "perspectives". With this model, Aaker shows Brands can stand for different ideas and some ideas or attributes will be "core" to the brand, these attributes will be different from brand to brand depending on their identity.

The concentric circles are the brand's "Identity Structure", there are three circles, from the centre out: Brand essence, core elements and extended elements. Between core and extended elements there should be between six to twelve elements. The elements that are more defining and central to the brand's identity will be Core and the elements that add texture but might be less important or less crucial to the brand will be in the outer circle – extended elements.

Here is a list of examples of Core and Extended elements gathered from Aaker's different books and writings:

FIGURE 5: EXAMPLES OF CORE AND EXTENDED ELEMENTS

Brand	Type of element	Element name	Found in
Ajax	Core	Spirit of Excellence	<i>Aaker on Branding</i>
Ajax	Core	Team Solutions	<i>Aaker on Branding</i>
Ajax	Core	Technology That Fits	<i>Aaker on Branding</i>
Ajax	Extended	Worldly but Informal	<i>Aaker on Branding</i>
Ajax	Extended	Confident, Competent	<i>Aaker on Branding</i>
Ajax	Extended	Global Network of Local Experts	<i>Aaker on Branding</i>
Ajax	Extended	Open Communicator	<i>Aaker on Branding</i>
Ajax	Extended	Support World Health	<i>Aaker on Branding</i>
Berkeley-Haas School of Business	Core	Beyond Yourself	<i>Aaker on Branding</i>
Berkeley-Haas School of Business	Core	Confidence without Attitude	<i>Aaker on Branding</i>

Source: Rob Meyerson, *howbrandsarebuilt.com*

When Aaker first created this model he did not include a Core circle, in an interview he did with How Brands are Built (howbrandsarebuilt.com) he stated *“In my first version of the brand identity model, I didn’t even have a brand essence because I was so attuned to the fact I didn’t want a three-word phrase to appear anywhere. I later added a brand essence because it turns out for a large percentage of the cases, that’s helpful. It’s not always helpful, but in a large percentage of the cases, it is”*. But once Aaker decided to add a brand’s core to the model, he described it as *“a central theme of the brand vision”* and *“a single thought that reflects the core of the brand vision”*.

Below the concentric circles the model presents four perspectives and twelve elements. This categories are not required but suggested to consider adding when building your brand, only if they make sense for the brand. This model helps creating an all around well structured brand, by providing a four perspectives to look at the brand from: as a product, an organization, a person and as a symbol.

Brand as Product

The six elements that are part of Brand as a Product help understand a wider concept of *product*. This perspective includes the features of the product, level of quality and potential value, the different ways it’s used, what type of people want it and its geographical origin.

These are the six elements included in the perspective Brand as a Product:

Product scope

Product scope refers to the products the brand is associated to. This element can be defined narrowly or more broadly, for example, Mercedes, whose Product Scope is automobiles and include all kind of types will be more broad than Ferrari, which product Scope will be much more narrow because people link sports-cars to the brand, a more specific kind of automobile.

Product Attributes

This element includes the features or benefits the brand offers in its product(s). These features can provide functional benefits or emotional benefits, something that differentiates the brand from competitors –something other brands don't do or the brand does better. However, Aaker finds concerning that Product Attributes “tend to be the focus of identity efforts to the exclusion of other perspectives that can add value and distinctiveness to the Brand” (Aaker,2014). An example of Product Attributes is Tesla the brand and the fact that they focus entirely on electric cars.

Quality/Value

Aaker believes that quality is especially important in some industries, as better quality might be seen as better than similar products that are perceived as lesser quality. In some other cases, some brand need to have a minimal perceived quality to be competitive at all. On the other hand, some brands willingly sell their products as “low quality but affordable”. For example, Lexus is a brand created by Toyota, sold as higher quality.

Uses

Some brands can be associated to a specific use that is not the product's only possible use. Despite this might be beneficial when positioning, it could become very limiting to a brand, as it might be difficult to convince customers the products can be used in other ways. An example of the uses a brand has is Starbucks and how customers don't only go to drink coffee but as an office or a meeting place.

Users

When a brand is linked to a specific type of customer –either defined by demographics or psychographics, it can acquire their personality or features.

Country of Origin

Country of Origin is the last element in the perspective of Brand as a Product. Some countries are associated to excel specifically in some areas, when a brand gets to be associated to such a country, it will probably be linked to the same attributes. For example, Switzerland is famous for their clock-making, and Rolex being linked to this country, it is associated to quality clock-making too.

Brand as Organization

This perspective is all about the organization or the company, this, for example, focuses on how much customers trust the company, any negative associations to it or how innovative it seems. This also includes global vs. local activities. All in all, this perspective focuses on the people, culture, values and programs of the organization.

Organization Attributes

Organizational Attributes are similar to Product Attributes, but as there are many elements to take into account, it is more stable and more difficult to change, and it is more

difficult for competitors to copy. An example for this element could be companies that are committed to new technologies.

Local vs. Global

Aaker believes sometimes brands need to choose between being a local or a global brand. Local brands might have better opportunities when positioning themselves as a local favourite, but might find it difficult to have credibility when trying to expand the brand to other geographical locations. On the other hand, global brands will have a larger customer base, but it may be difficult for them to gain trust in certain areas that already have a favourite local brand. For example, BYD is a Chinese auto-maker and Nissan, despite being Japanese is used worldwide.

Brand as Person

This perspective is composed by Brand Personality and relationships the brand will have with customers.

Personality

When giving a brand a personality it gives customers the chance to feel identified with the brand. Interacting with the brand will help them express their personalities or values. For example, Harley-Davidson's personality is freedom-seeking, rebellious and American, in consequence customers that are not American and are not interested in a brand with such a strong American identity, they might feel inclined to buy from another brand.

Customer/brand relationship

It is very important to think about the kind of relationship the brand will have with customers. Much like personality, this element mimics real-life relationships, thus brands can have friendship-like or business like relationships. This element does not only refer to customer service based relationships, for example, "Campbell's Soup is like an old-fashioned mother—down to earth, honest, and always there for you" (Meyerson, 2019).

Brand as Symbol

Symbols include much more than just a logo; it refers to any kind of visual identification of the brand.

Visual Image and metaphors

Visual Image includes a wide arrange of elements, such as an iconic packaging – Toblerone's triangular box, a very specific building design or a product design – Volkswagen's Beetle; it even refers to the people the brand is associated to, it does not have to be partnerships the brand has, it can also be people that are important to the brand, such as Jeff Bezos and Amazon or Elon Musk and Tesla.

Aaker thinks that metaphors really help with a brand's Symbol by giving them more meaning. "Symbols are more meaningful if they involve a metaphor, with the symbol or symbol characteristic representing a functional, emotional, or self-expressive benefit. For instance the Prudential rock is a metaphor for strength, Allstate's "Good Hands" logo for reliable, caring service, The Pillsbury Doughboy's soft tummy for freshness, Michael Jordan's leaping ability for the performance of a Nike, and the Energizer Bunny for long battery life" (Aaker, 1996).

Brand Heritage

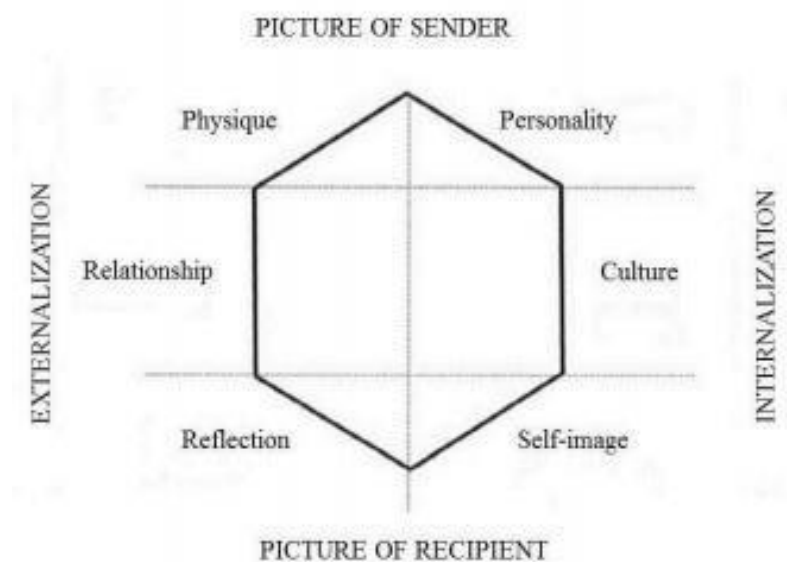
Brand Heritage is the twelfth and last element of the different elements Aaker wants companies to consider when building a brand's identity. When a brand has strong history

it can provoke nostalgia in customers, such as Disney does in their themed parks, they attract many adults that grew up with Disney’s cinematography.

4.2.3 Kapferer’s Brand Identity Prism

Kapferer’s Brand Identity Prism was created in 1996 by Jean-Noël Kapferer, in an attempt to better visualize what he considers the six key elements of a brand’s image. This model helps understanding these elements and how they relate to and work with each other. Furthermore, helps build strong brands, which, as we stated before, helps communicate clearly and be easily recognized and remembered by customers.

FIGURE 6: KAPFERER’S BRAND IDENTITY PRISM



Source: Kapferer, J. N. (1994).

The elements included in the prism are: Physique, personality, culture, relationship, self-image and reflection. These elements, help create strong brands, which, according to Kapferer “are capable of weaving all aspects [of the prism] into an effective whole in order to create a concise, clear, and appealing brand identity” (Kapferer, 1994).

Before jumping into the Prism there are some question that may help the company having a clear idea of the brand’s identity. Kapferer defines identity as “being your true self, driven by a personal goal that is both different from others’ and resistant to change” (Kapferer, 2008). These questions are:

- What is the brand’s particular vision and aim?
- What makes it different?
- What need is the brand fulfilling?
- What is its permanent nature?
- What are its value or values?
- What is its field of competence? Of legitimacy?
- What are the signs which make the brand recognisable?

The six elements are placed strategically within the prism, taking into account the relation they have with each other and their position between the company (“Sender” in Figure 5) and the customers (“recipient” in Figure 5). These elements are also divided by internal and external, placed fronting one another. The elements included in internal are: Personality, culture and self-image; and the elements included in external are: physique, relationship and reflection.

Physique

The Physique will include, as the name explains, the physical features of the brand, in other words, how the brand will manifest itself. This includes every visual element that will help the customer identify and recognize the brand. Some of the examples of these visual elements are: logos, packaging, corporate colours... nowadays, there are many brands that could be used as an example of an immediately recognizable brand, such as Apple, Coca-Cola or Macdonald’s.

Personality

A brand’s personality or character is created by giving said brand human personality features. If the brand was a human being what kind of personality would it have? Kind, caring and close? Or rebellious, careless and free?

By specifying this kind of personality it helps brand decide how they will show themselves to customers and general public.

Culture

Kapferer defines Culture as the features that form the base for the brand. This culture is tight to the brand’s values and could also include the country of origin and the associations the brand might be linked.

Caileigh Lombard managed to explain this concept very simple but effectively for *howbrandsarebuilt* blog (2018). They stated “Toyota used culture to establish a set of guiding principles known as <The Toyota Way.> These principles incorporate Japanese cultural concepts, such as *heijunka*, which means <work like the tortoise, not like the hare> and refers to leveling out the workload to minimize waste.

Self-Image

Oftentimes, when customers use certain brands, they will probably feel identified with it, they will see themselves in the brand –their self-image. Brands can take their customers’ identity to make them feel more comfortable and open to being loyal to the brand. Some examples of this self-image can be Rolex and Cartier, their products are expensive and provide some sense of exclusivity to their customers. These customers often are wealthy people and celebrities also use them to prove their status.

Reflection

This element might sound similar to Self-Image, but it is indeed a different definition. While Self-image refers to the way the customers see themselves in the brand, Reflection is all about how the brand sees the customers. Reflection is often full of stereotypes the brand has about customers and it can sometimes be seen in commercials. For example, Coca Cola often portray their customers as fun, careless teenagers when, in fact, this brand has all types of demographic customers.

Relationship

This is the last element in the Prism. It refers to the nature of the relationship between the brand and its customers. It includes abstract as well as tangible measurements, like the specific services provided by the brand, or the kind of relationship it has to customers in terms of attitude and care.

4.2.4 Llopis

This model was presented by Emilio Llopis (2015) in his book *Creating the Global Brand*; he focuses his work in global brands, which is will be interesting to keep in mind for later. This model takes Aaker and Kapferer's models and uses what Llopis finds the most useful from each.

First of all, Llopis does agree with Aaker and admits a brand should choose associations, but does not want these associations to be chosen just because. In fact, the associations that will be chosen should really meet the brand's essence and should meet these conditions:

- Be coherent with and help build the brand's mission, vision and values.
- Agree and materialize the leaders' mission.
- Can be interiorized and defended by all the members of the company.
- Be coherent with and add to the strategy of the company.
- In case of having a competitor with similar associations, at least one of them will be different to the competitor's.

In order to make the cut to the next step, the associations have to meet each and every one of the conditions before. This next step consists on building the brand identity, which Llopis bases on Kapferer's Prism. The associations that will be used will be divided in the different elements that form the prism: physique, relationship reflection, personality, culture and self-image.

4.3 OFTEN MISTAKEN WITH BRAND IDENTITY

There are some concepts that often get mistaken with brand identity, due to the similar description or idea the public has of them. In this section we will try and clear any doubt towards these concepts.

4.3.1 Brand image

Brand image is a set of features the customer perceives from the brand and associations the client has for it (Llopis, 2015). This concept focuses on how the public pictures the brand, how they perceive and break down the information received from the products, services, communication, name, logo...

The branding process consists on defining an identity – what we want to be, and through branding strategy obtain a certain Brand Image – what the customers think of the brand. Llopis differentiates Brand Image and Brand Identity as: Brand Identity refers to what a

brand is or wants to be, on the other hand, Brand Image is what customers think the brand is.

As different individuals, customers will have different Brand Images, depending on what experiences they have and what advertisements reached them. One of the company's goals is to have the same Brand Image all across the customers.

To reach this goal it is important to make a continuous and systematic study of the customers and their Brand Images to know exactly where we stand. In fact, if these analyses are not made, it is impossible to know exactly what Brand Image the customers have of the brand (Llopis, 2015).

Oftentimes when the company has not done proper analyses they tend to think more generously or positively comparing to reality. As a result, any strategy the company will develop will probably be wrong and ineffective, as the goal will also be wrong. All in all, in order to compare with the Brand Identity and set a goal, a company needs to know exactly what Brand Image the customers have toward the brand.

Conveying the Brand Identity is the foundation of Branding. This is not done through design and visual graphics of the brand, or only using communication, nor only through the products and services. In fact, to share a brand's identity these elements and some more are needed, such as the company's behaviour, culture, products, services, quality, capability of connecting with customers, innovation, communication...

Brand Image is created by every interaction the brand will have with different individuals, therefore, it is important for the entire company to make the effort and be coherent with the Brand Identity.

4.3.2. Brand Associations

Brand Associations are feelings, knowledge, either positive or negative customers have about a brand - either a brand they buy or don't (Llopis, 2015). Associations are created due to communication, word of mouth, buying experience of a product or service. These associations can be positive –the ones that need to be reinforced; or negative –the ones that need to be corrected.

The associations customers create of a brand, what values or features are associated to a brand, are the basis of branding. When defining Brand Identity, we need to know what associations we want customers to have, and work around those goals.

4.3.3. Brand Personality

Creating a Brand Personality is giving a brand basic human qualities. Brand Personality includes features unique to human personality, such as: kindness, commitment or sentimentalism (Llopis, 2015).

As it is easy for humans to understand human personality features, Brand Personality provides an almost automatic way for customers of differentiating brands. There is evidence that shows that when choosing between competing brands, customers will use

Brand Personality to make a choice based on the personality they want to project themselves (Llopis, 2015).

Buyers are attracted to brands whose personalities they feel identified to. Oftentimes, customers will attribute some elements of the brand's personality to themselves as customers, thus, creating a deeper feeling of identity with the brand and strengthening their loyalty to it. Therefore, an appropriate Brand Personality is one customers respect and trust (Llopis, 2015)

It is important that companies do not try to force personalities that don't match the reality of the brand –that don't match what the brand really is. For example, if a brand wants to be associated with being kind and but do not treat employees with kindness, it will be really difficult for customers to make that association, as the brand will probably not treat customers with the kindness they claim (Llopis, 2015).

This is why coherence is crucial when talking about Brand Personality and the brand's overall behaviour, it will be very difficult to be linked to something we actually are not.

4.3.4. *Visual Identity*

Visual Identity is the visual manifestation of the Brand Identity and is built based on tangible elements, such as logo, corporate colours, typography, iconography and so on. All these elements, when used simultaneously everywhere the brand is present –packaging, uniforms, communication... Visual Identity helps create a recognizable and comprehensive Brand Identity.

4.4 THE BRAND'S FORMAL IDENTITY

Once a brand knows who they are, what is their identity and what associations they want, it is time to deliver it. The brand's formal identity is the tangible part of a brand's identity; it is all about showing the customers what has been worked on before. *"Your identity defines you, not only how you are physically, or how you dress. How you interact, express yourself, react, move, look at others, it defines you"* (Díaz, 2017).

There are four different ways a brand can show its identity (Díaz, 2017): visual identity (Colours, logo, typography...), verbal identity (the tagline, the tone of and the actual message of the advertisements), sensorial identity (the feelings that cannot be described) and behavioural identity.

4.4.1 *Visual Identity*

The first thing a customer will perceive about a brand will probably be the visual identity, more specifically, the logo. The visual identity is a very important tool for companies to use, as it will be the most recognizable part of the brand, it allows companies to make a first impression they desire.

When creating a visual identity, it is important to realize that if a company shows their most important identity aspect in here, they will be able to communicate other parts of their identity in other kinds of brand delivery. This allows the brand to have a more spread way to deliver brand identity and realize that they do not have to share every aspect of the identity always. On the other hand, it is not realistic to deliver who a brand is only through visual identity, there are three other ways to show a brand's identity and they should be used in order to create a complete brand identity, be unique and help customers recognize the brand (Díaz, 2022).

Visual identity is not only about creating a visually pleasing logo. Of course the logo should be tasteful, but there should be a lot of work and a lot thought when designing it. Furthermore, the logo is not the only element of the visual identity, there are many things to take into account that should be as coherent to the brand's identity as it is to the logo. Even though we will be taking a look to two of them (logo and brand colours) it is important to note that, in reality, every visual aspect of what a brand shows will be considered visual identity. These other elements of the brand's visual identity can be typography, the style of the pictures used and the photos and pictures themselves etc.

Logo

Logos are the first thing we notice when knowing about a brand, it is the first contact customers will have towards the brand and, thus, is very important to have a logo that is adequate to what the brand wants to communicate, and help the customers have the right idea about the brand. "It is important that what they first see is an opening to the world they will see later" (Díaz, 2016).

When designing a logo, the objective will not be to create a beautiful one. In fact, it is important to have a clear understanding of the identity in order to design a logo that is adequate for it.

Ivan Díaz (2016) differentiates two scenarios for the use of the logo and visual identity: companies or brands that are well-known in the industry, customers know them and know their identity, do not necessarily have to invest in differentiating from competitors. On the other hand, in saturated markets where companies do need to differentiate from competitors it is important to really think the design for the logo.

Brand colours

Brand Colours are a very developed and a very talked about tool in branding. Colours help transmitting meanings, values and emotions. In fact, 84.7% say colour alone is more than half the reason they choose one product over another (research conducted by the secretariat of the Seoul International Colour Expo); between 62% and 90% of the important first impression of a product is based on colour; and Ads in colour are read up to 42% more than the same ads in black and white (Schiff, 2020).

When a leader of a market uses a colour, and its product is very linked to a specific colour, this colour –in the context of the market, will be linked to the features and characteristics of the leader brand. For this reason, often, the competitors of the same market will use the same colour as the leader in order to be linked to the positive features the leader brand has (Díaz, 2012). On the other hand, Díaz (2012) also explains how some competitors choose to use a completely different colour to differentiate themselves from the rest of the brands in that market.

When talking about brand colours, what most blogs and articles explain and explore are the meanings of different colours, and which ones to use when delivering the brand's identity. In the image below are some of the colours and the features linked to them:

FIGURE 7: FEATURES ASSOCIATED TO DIFFERENT COLOURS



Source: thefridgeagency.com

Due to well-known brands, some colours are linked not only to these brands, but to types of product. For example, due to Coca-Cola, Kellogg's and Campbell, red is generally linked to foods and beverages. While green is often linked to healthy food for brands like Whole Foods or Healthy Choice (Schiff, 2020)

Ivan Díaz (2019) differentiates two main types of brand. These brands are direct competitors and publicly seen as enemies, for example, Pepsi and Coca-Cola. Díaz states that these kind of brands can usually be told apart by their colours, as the colour red means leadership and the colour blue challenging. The challenging brands have a more spontaneous and simple, while the leading brands have a more restraint, arrogant and serious

It is important to note that, as every other way of brand delivery, brands should not expect to deliver their identity only through brand colours. Brands should use more than one way of to communicate their identity, using all of them in synchronization and coherence with one another.

4.4.2 Verbal Identity

A brand's verbal identity is a big part of their identity, what they say and the way they express themselves tells a lot about who they are and how people from outside perceive them. For this reason, it is important to pay attention to this identity form the same way as the others. Much like the behavioural identity, the verbal identity is something that the companies should be continuously working on, every advertisement, every message and every post they make in social media, they have to keep in mind they are delivering who they are.

Naming

Naming is the process of creating a name for the brand. The increasing competitiveness of the markets has made it important to pay attention to this process, in order to be able to stand out from the very first contact. In fact, in Spain 45.000 new brands are registered every year (Díaz, 2013).

Nowadays some of the world's biggest and well-known brands' names do not have a name describing who the brand is and what they do. Nevertheless, they do have something that a new brand who is trying to stand out does not have: time and longevity. These brands have been around for a long time and customers nowadays know them for their fame, not for standing out through their unique name (Díaz, 2013). As a result, brands that are created nowadays and do not have that fame, should have a plan when creating their name. taking into account the brand's identity, values and positioning are already set, Ivan Díaz (2013) explains the steps for his plan for naming.

1. **Analyse the names** –structures and meanings, that are **being used in the market**. Place them in a map using different axis for the concept.
2. **Analyse the names of other markets** that are in some way conceptually linked to.
3. Take a look to the **name-building model** and rule out the ones that do not suit the first and second steps.
 - Descriptive: using the literal description of what the brand does.
 - Neologism: building a new name based on two that already exist.
 - Abstract: creating an inexistent word.
 - Intriguing: using a name that suggests direct gain.
 - Evocative: building a name based on a word that already exists.
 - Associative: using a name that conceptually describes the brand.
4. Once decided what types of names not to create, it is time to **think about possible concepts** that will suit the brand's value and identity (e.g. beauty, nature, wellbeing...).
5. This is the **creative part**, it is time to write anything and everything that comes to mind about each concept. Any ideas, examples, feelings...
6. **Mix and match** the ideas in between concepts and with other concepts to create more ideas.
7. From the list created in the step before **choose the ones that**:
 - Sound the best.
 - Are the most memorable.
 - Create the best differentiation.
 - Are morphologically pleasing to see and hear.
 - Best fit the brand's identity and value.

8. At this point there should be 15-20 names. It is time to **check** whether this names are already patented and registered or could be a real option for the brand.
9. From the step above around 5 names probably survived the cut. In this step, the different names will be **evaluated** based on: strategy, creativity and formality. For each affirmation and each possible name, a value from 1 to 5 (1 lowest and 5 highest) should be given. These are the afirmations:
 - Strategic:
 - i. Does the name align with the identity?
 - ii. Is it flexible enough?
 - iii. Does it strengthen my market and brand meaning?
 - Creative:
 - i. Does it sound good?
 - ii. Does it make the brand relevant?
 - iii. Is it easy to remember?
 - iv. Is it morphologically pleasing?
 - Formal:
 - i. Does it have to be modified in order to be able to register it?
 - ii. Are different audiences able to pronounce it?
 - iii. Does it have negative associations?
10. The 3 names with the highest evaluation should be **put in context** as the last step. The name should be put to use in a realistic interaction, and check if it sounds good.

In my opinion, it is important to take your time and wisely choose the name of a brand. Nevertheless, it does not guarantee the success of said brand; it does not matter the amount of time and resources invested in the naming of a brand, as if the identity and the brand's ideas are not clear, it will probably not transmit as desired. On the other hand, even though following the above mentioned steps will definitely help, neither does it guarantee success, as I think nowadays some new brands get recognized or do better than other competitor by sheer luck. This said, I do think it is important to not leave anything to chance and think through every step of the naming and branding of the company.

Tone

The tone of voice is the way the brand will interact with those around and their groups of interest, it is the language the brand will use when expressing themselves. The same way human beings will have different ways of communicating themselves depending their personality features, brands will also have different tones of voice when creating advertisements, social media posts or even when answering customers' questions.

Clara López (2014) explains three reasons why having an adequate tone of voice is important:

- Nowadays not many brands actually have a tone of voice, for this reason it could be a way of differentiating and standing out among competitors.
- Provides depth to the brand's identity, making it seem more human and easier to conect with customers. In other words, abstract concepts such as kindness, professionalism and similar, now have a more tangible structure and are easier to show.

- Having better connection and standing out make the brand be memorable, which makes easier for customers to make associations to the brand and makes the brand more approachable.

In the same article explaining the benefits of having a tone of voice, Clara López (2014) also explains the four steps to define a brand's tone of voice.

1. Clearly define the brand's identity and keep it in mind always. Do not focus in the attributes and values only, think about the personality and picture a real person with the same identity, how do they talk?
2. Select the basics of the speech for the brand. The messages should be addressed as "we" or as "I"? when talking will the brand use imperative, affirmations or questions? Will the brand have a catchphrase?
3. Even though the personality will be the same, different platforms will reach different customers, the tone of voice should be slightly different. The tone of voice should be coherent but also flexible.
4. Have a short manual for the employees, and take a look from time to time to different platforms to see if the manual is being properly used.

I think that this might be one of the most difficult brand delivery tools but one that can really make the difference. It is tool that has to be used and thought about to every day and it should not be taken lightly as it is what customers will directly experience. All in all, even though it is a difficult tool I think it is one worth investing in.

Messaging

The messaging is what the brand tells to the different audiences. It is important to know what each audience needs, in order to know what to tell each of them. These audiences can be external or internal, customers and the general public, or suppliers and even competitors.

These personalized messages, used with the appropriate tone of voice will make the customers and publics of interest have the associations the brand wanted to achieve.

Verbal Territory

The verbal territory is the summary of the above mentioned verbal identity tools. Once the brand has defined what tone to use and what messages to tell in each platform. In it should be explained what is the brand's verbal identity, how it works and its goals.

4.4.3 Sensorial Identity

As human beings, we perceive the world through our senses, thus, despite being something abstract, something that cannot be described, these sensorial stimuli can create the strongest associations to the brand. When a brand is able to deliver their identity not only through visual and verbal identity, but through these indescribable emotions, customers can easily differentiate them (Díaz, 2017).

On the other hand, the surroundings have a very important influence when it comes to human emotions. Through their senses, humans perceive reality in different ways, this reality will have different effects on their emotions, and their memories will be affected by these emotions. For this reason, sensorial identity plays a huge part in how customers remember different brands, and consequently, many brands make the effort to

accommodate their stores and help customers create positive memories about their experiences in these places (Díaz, 2017).

The same way there are different senses in the human body, there are different ways to carry out this sensorial identity. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the sight is worked through the visual identity and taste is a complicated sense to use to describe your brand, unless the product has very distinct flavour that no others can copy. For this reason, the sensorial identities that will be explained in depth will be: Sonic branding, scent branding and tactile branding.

Sonic Branding

Sonic branding is the discipline of creating a series of musical notes that define and differentiate your brand. Human beings are able of associating sounds to perceptions, imaginations and complex meanings. Sounds can, in fact, create a new world of abstract images in our minds that we would not be able to access otherwise. This way, by creating a sonic branding, brands will not only generate abstract imaginations, they will be able to deliver these to their customers every time the sound is played (Díaz, 2012).

The first step of the sonic branding will be to build a universe (Díaz,2012). Brands will first describe their sound universe, this refers to the tones, beats, instruments, backgrounds... that describe the brand's identity the best. These tones, beats etc. should match the identity the brand has set before, for example, a brand with a calm and kind identity, should not choose sounds that are exciting or loud. On the contrary, Harley Davidson should not create a lullaby-like sound universe.

The second step will be to create a theme song. This song will be inspired in the sound universe and will be a complete musical theme. This theme will probably have different lengths and versions that will be used in different situations. But it is important to keep the axis, to not drift too far or it could create confusion when delivering the identity (Díaz,2012).

The last step in sonic branding will be to create a sound logo. This is the summary of the brand's theme song, will be short and unique to the brand, formed by 5-6 notes (Díaz, 2012).

Sonic Branding is appropriate for: Podcasts, video blogs, any kind of video or audio content, recorded advertisements, script writing and voice artistry, social media, radio and streaming audio, playlists in brick and mortar stores, curated playlists, customer service hold music, website interactions or button clicks, product sounds and design (Goldstein, 2022).

Scent Branding

Scent branding is one of the most used tactics nowadays by brands. Even if these aromas are subtle, many different brands have their own scent, considering the sense of smell is most developed senses humans have. Smell is one of the most powerful senses when creating memories, associations we do not remember to have but appear as soon as we smell certain scents (Díaz, 2016). For example, we may not remember or are incapable of describing the smell of the library we used to frequent as children, but if we went to that place, the memories would come back and we would remember the time spent there.

The smell is the only sense that works unconsciously (Díaz, 2017). In fact, when we are looking at a tree we are conscious of it, but when you are writing a thesis in a library, even

though you are not conscious of it, your brain is processing the smell of that place and saving it to your memories.

The smell has the ability of giving spaces and objects certain attributes that modify the associations customers have to them. This makes the tactic very powerful and worth it to keep in mind. For example, talc makes us think about security and care; smell of coffee can increase the value of real estate properties, because it makes customers feel home and comfortable; citric and flowery scents can make customers spend more money, as they associate it to being in nature and being free, which makes them more relaxed; barbecue and smoked smells makes the spaces feel tighter, because we associate smoke which makes customers feel like they need to leave that place (Díaz, 2017).

Despite being a very powerful tactic, able to make strong associations and memories, the sense of smell is also a very abstract and difficult to work with. Ivan Díaz (2016) expresses these factors as the reasons companies find it difficult to apply to their brands:

- The smell is a reactive sense, meaning it is only possible to think about it and remember it when actually smelling it. We can think of a logo in any moment and be able to remember it, but we cannot remember subtle smells unless we are actively smelling them.
- The memories that scents create are attached to emotions, but these emotions can be positive and negative. If someone has had a bad experience in a store, the memory of that shop will come with a negative emotion (embarrassment, anger, frustration...). Ivan Díaz (2016) explains this in a very easy way: “imagine you have a very bad experience in a plane that has a very unique smell, what does that brand smell like? It smells like a bad experience and it always will”.

Scent branding is a very powerful tactic to complete sensorial identity, but it can be very dangerous if the emotions are not created in a proper way or the smell is too much. “It completes what we see and hear by anchoring emotions in our unconscious. And everything that is anchored in our unconscious will forever be there. Good or bad.” (Díaz, 2016).

Feel Branding

Feel branding is focused in the touch, it can be implemented in many different ways, such as, textured furniture in the stores to a very specific packaging. In my opinion, this form of identity delivery might not be suitable for every brand, but I do think it can benefit to some that want to be very unique in a specific kind of way. For example, when a company has a very specific keyboard feeling when clicked, this could be a way of differentiating from competitors and being unique, making customers recognize the brand immediately.

From Gestión Ocho (2021) they specify that sensorial identity will work best if the brand chooses one very unique feature and sticks to it, instead of trying to use every kind of sensorial identity there is, because this could make the customers feel oversaturated and confused. Once the brand has chosen the sensorial identity they want to work with, they should create something so unique that with a specific smell, sound... will be enough for customers to identify the brand.

Even though I do agree with them in a sense, I think it depends in the brand itself. For example, online stores or technology brands will not be able to use aromatic branding, but could have a very unique and distinctive sound, such as Windows. On the other hand, physical stores could use all of them, (as long not every sensorial identity is strong) by

having a light aroma in every store of the brand and having a tune designed specifically for the brand played from time to time, it can create a whole experience without having to stick to a single sense.

There is also a possibility that not everybody will feel positively stimulated by the chosen sensorial identity, but, in my opinion, as long as it is what describes the brand the best it will be the correct choice. An example of this is the clothing brand Stradivarius, it has a very distinctive smell, and even though some people do not like it at all, that specific perfumed smell is so connected to those stores that I personally will always think of Stradivarius when smelling something similar.

4.4.4 Behavioural Identity

Ivan Díaz (2017) says this is the forgotten identity, but the most important one, because in order to be seen as what you are, you need to behave that way. At the end of the day, someone is not what they wear or what they say, the way they behave is what most defines them.

Behavioural identity is all about attitude and behaviour, the way you interact with your customers and competitors. The values and beliefs of the brand should be shown through what they do. For example, if a brand keeps stating they are “eco-friendly” but they keep polluting throughout their manufacturing, at the end, customers will catch up with what they have been up to and will probably have negative thoughts towards the brand.

To have a proper behavioural identity it is important to be realistic when building a brand’s identity (Gestión Ocho, 2021). Say a brand wants to identify as close and kind, when deciding this, it is important to realize the effort employees will have to make when interacting with customers and other brands, and really think they will be able to, in the contrary, the brand image will be damaged.

From Gestión Ocho (2021) they recommend creating a Behaviour Manual to hand to employees in order to be coherent with the brand’s values, mission, vision and beliefs. Even though this might sound going too far, I do think it is important for every employee to be in the same page, so if a brand does not feel like creating a manual it is important to make the others aware of the desired behaviour one way or another.

4.4.5 Manuals

It is usual for brands to use some manuals when it comes to identity and how to deliver it. Brand manuals are short books that help the people that work with the brand explaining a brand’s elements, guidelines, uses and applications of different aspects of the brand. A somewhat short book that not only describes who the brand is, also describes how to use it (Díaz, 2018).

There are different brand manuals and all of them describe an aspect of the brand’s identity –visual identity, behavioural identity... in order to help the ones that will have to apply it, by showing them what will be an appropriate way of doing it. All in all, its goal is to answer any question might appear when delivering a brand’s identity (Díaz, 2018).

All in all, many of the ways a brand can deliver their identity implies manipulating the customers' brains, or placing ideas about the identity of the brand in their minds (brand colours for example). In my opinion the most important way to deliver the identity of a brand is by matching what they want to place in the public's mind with their behaviour. When a company wants to deliver their brand as a *green* brand, one that is mindful of the environment and takes care of it; the best way to* deliver this message is not to have a green logo and brand colours, or to have natural sounds in their sonic branding, I find the best way to be by behaving this way. In few words, to match the brand's behaviour to what they claim to be.

On the other hand, despite explaining every form of brand delivery there is, I do not think every brand should use all of them. Some tools will be more suitable for certain brands, while other brands will not have the resources needed to implement some of the tools. Furthermore, using all and every tool might become overwhelming to the company and the public. I think it is important to find a balance and learn what is that what suits the brand the most and stick to it, give time to customers and the public to learn who the brand is and become memorable.

5. INTERNATIONAL BRANDING AND DIFFERENT CULTURES

In order to understand the main goal for this end-of-degree project, which is: to analyse how to apply international Brand Identity based on cultural differences, it is key to first dive into what international brands are, how they work and which is the best way to implement brand identity in this international environment. On the other hand, it is important to explain what different cultures are and why it might affect a brand.

5.1 INTERNATIONAL BRANDING.

It is not secret that nowadays, due to globalization, it might look easy for brands to try expanding internationally. This means brands will have to pay attention to new segments, laws and change some products to meet regulations. Managing an international brand is not easy and, thus, expansive research has been carried out. As explained in chapter three, a company has three ways of expanding their brand architecture: house of brands, in which the company will have more than one brands under the “parent brand”; Branded house, a company that uses a single brand; and hybrid companies.

These brand architectures also apply when talking about international branding. As a brand might want to use local and personalized brands in each area, creating a house of brands, or use one global brand in different areas and markets and having a branded house. In this section, we will be focusing on global brands, as this are the ones that will be affected by different cultures.

5.1.1 *Global brands Vs. Glocal brands*

Nowadays, due to the many advantages using a global brand –standardizing a brand’s international strategy has, many brands find this to be the best idea, and though this might be a generalized idea, there some disadvantages to global branding:

- Lack of local identity.
- Lack of adaptation to local characteristics.
- Different response to marketing strategies in each market.
- Different market states, distribution, etc. to face in each local market.
- Difficulty to find a brand name that will suit every market in which the brand operates.
- Legal conflict potential.

Due to these disadvantages, Llopis proposes using a different strategy when dealing with international branding; the *Glocal* brands. These brands operate with one global brand, however, Marketing programs are adapted to each market’s situation (Llopis, 2015).

Llopis (2015) states this strategy has shown the best results for companies that have used it and uses the example of CocaCola, who, in the 1980’s, tries centralizing and standardizing the brand in order to get economies of scale. As a result, CocaCola faced important strategic problems and the company’s value fell 100 billion dollars.

On the other hand, as an example for a glocalized brand, Llopis (2015) explains Neck & Neck, a company that started their process to internationalize using franchises, and decided

to give these franchises more freedom in Mexico due to the need of a more localized management.

These adaptations to the standardization can come in different ways (Llopis, 2015):

- Adaptations to diverse economic realities: when brands operate in markets that have different economic development. This happens when brands are present in countries with emerging economy but also in already developed countries. When this happens, companies first adapt the product lines to the different markets; this can cause a distortion to the image of the brand. On the other hand, another reaction brands could have, is to segment the product lines with different brands or sub-brands for each segment, which will be placed in different markets depending on the segment each has.
- Adaptations to different legislations: apart from the brand name that companies have to register in different countries, there are some legislations regarding marketing programs. For example, in some countries there are words that companies cannot use unless they meet some requirements, due to the implications they might have.
- Adaptations to different segments: this happens when one product is part of two or more segments in different countries. This different segments will have different expectations towards these products.
- Adaptations to different meanings: this happens often when dealing with an international brand. Words have different meanings depending the country, and thus, the companies will have to adjust their wording to have the same message everywhere.

5.1.2 *Brand identity and glocalization*

Using the glocalization strategy as a base, Llopis (2015) explains how to implement this strategy to international brand identity. He explains that as brand identity is the core of a company's branding, the glocalization should start here. For Llopis (2015) it is obvious how this strategy has to be applied to international brand identity: the brand's identity has to be global in its definition and make some local adaptations when it comes to the delivery.

Llopis (2015) explains this topic by saying that if a brand were a human being, no matter where they were born and raised, their values and core, their interests, hobbies and personality would be the same. If someone is interested in tradition and culture, it does not matter if they were raised in Australia or Japan, as the only thing that will change will be the opportunities the person will have to develop this interest.

Furthermore, Llopis (2015) talks about how different cultures will affect someone, where despite having the same identity, the way they talk, eat, walk and how they show themselves will be changed depending where they live. As a result, he states that a brand should have the same identity everywhere, however, in order to be accepted, the brand will have to change some of the ways they deliver it.

5.2 CULTURES AROUND THE WORLD

In order to understand how different cultures affect brand identity, it is important to first understand how different cultures change our everyday life.

The main definition from Cambridge dictionary is “*the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular people at a particular time*” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022). However, it is very difficult to properly define what culture is, as it is very complex and has many layers. What makes culture multi-layered are the following characteristics (Spencer-Oatey, 2012):

- **Culture is manifested at different layers of depth:** when analysing how culture manifests the way it does, it is important to take a look to three levels: visible artefacts, the physical aspect of the culture, such as the dress code, the smell and feel of a certain place, the way of addressing each other etc.; values, that often affect behaviour; and basic underlying assumptions, assumptions about reality that are unconsciously engraved in the minds.
- **Culture affects behaviour and interpretations of behaviour:** while some aspects of culture are visible, their meanings are invisible. This can include hand and body gestures that have different meanings in different areas, to clothes, that can reflect wealth, ostentation, appropriateness and so on.
- **Culture can be differentiated from both universal human nature and unique individual personality:** culture is learned, it derives from someone’s social environment, it is not inherited. Someone’s culture is different to their human nature –what all humans are born with just for being a human, and their personality –specific to each human and is both learned and inherited.
- **Culture influences biological processes:** there are some biological needs that all humans have, but depending each person’s culture, these needs will be satisfied in a different way. For example, everyone needs to eat, but when, what and how each person will eat, is different and depending on their culture.
- **Culture is associated with social groups:** culture belongs to a group of people, and as a singular person belongs to many groups of people, each person will have different layers of culture that create a bigger one.
- **Culture is both an individual construct and a social construct:** within a group that has a specific culture, each individual person of that group will have different culture, based on the way they interact with the values and traditions.
- **Culture is always both socially and psychologically distributed in a group, and so the delineation of a culture’s features will always be fuzzy:** it is very unlikely that in the same group everyone will share identical values and attitudes.
- **Culture has both universal and distinctive elements:** even though each culture is different across the world, they all have some elements that are similar.
- **Culture is learned:** people learn culture from the moment they are born, as it is learned through socialization.
- **Culture is subject to gradual change:** any kind of research made in a particular culture, is a snapshot of the culture in a particular time. As cultures are in contact and interact with different cultures, they will change over the time.
- **The various parts of a culture are all, to some degree, interrelated:** a change in a small part of the culture, will, inevitably make a difference in the whole culture, even if it changes differently throughout. This happens because culture is a system and the different parts of the system are interrelated.

As explained, culture is made by many different layers. These layers will affect our everyday life in very different aspects. As a result, these differences will also affect in business and how companies behave in different countries. For this reason, next, we are going to take a look to how a specific company, that is present in many countries around the world that have different cultures from each other, behaves. Merging this topic with the one before, which is international branding and international brand identity, we will take a look at how different cultures affect a brand's identity.

6. HOW DIFFERENT CULTURES AFFECT BRAND IDENTITY. CASE STUDY: H&M

This case study will be focused on the brand Hennes and Mauritz, more commonly known as H&M. This brand is a clothes retail company operating worldwide. This company is the second biggest clothing retail company in the world, after Inditex, with more than twenty thousand million US dollars in sales in 2021 (Statista, 2022).

These last years, I have found a decrease in the communications and visibility of H&M in my demographic area, and after sensing an increase in efforts from this brand in 2022, both in advertisements and social media, I think it will be an interesting case study to see what kind of branding strategies such a big international brand will have.

On the other hand, I think it would be interesting to take a look to a brand that has been around for almost 80 years, a brand that has a very heterogeneous profiles of customers, as H&M has customers that are in their teen years, but also customers that are adults, as well as customers all around the world. These differences would affect a company's branding strategy, and taking into account that H&M is present in many countries, I think it will be a great case study for the main goal of this project.

6.1 ABOUT H&M

H&M is an international clothes retail brand from H&M Group, created in 1947 in Sweden by Erling Persson. This first store was called Hennes, meaning "Hers" in Swedish, and used to sell women's clothes. After opening their first store in Norway in 1964, Hennes bought the brand Mauritz and changed the name to the one we know nowadays –Hennes & Mauritz a.k.a. H&M. From that point on, the brand expanded throughout Europe between 1976 and 1999, and in 2006 they opened their online store, as well as first expanding to the Middle East (H&M Group, 2018). H&M kept expanding worldwide and nowadays it has 4,242 stores in 75 markets and is also available in 54 online markets (H&M Group, 2022).

"H&M is a fashion brand offering everyone the possibility to explore their personal style. H&M always strives to offer the best combination of fashion, quality, price and sustainability with collections for women, men, teenagers, children and babies" (H&M Group, 2022).

FIGURE 8: HENNES AND MAURITZ'S (H&M) LOGO



Source: Wikipedia.

6.2 H&M BRAND INTERNATIONAL BRAND IDENTITY

In order to analyse H&M's brand identity the Llopis model will be used, as this is in my opinion, the most adequate nowadays and is specifically designed for international brands as Hennes & Mauritz is. In this section, we will take a look to and recreate what H&M's brand identity would look like by using Emilio Llopis' (2015) model and, after that, we will take a look to the company's brand delivery and how it might be affected by different cultures around the world. For the latter, H&M's advertisements, social media posts and similar will be used.

6.2.1 *H&M's brand identity, based in Emilio Llopis' model*

As explained before, the first step to build a brand identity using Llopis' model is to choose brand associations in order to create a prism with them. However, these associations cannot be chosen randomly and have to meet five conditions in order to be used. It is difficult to know which associations would meet the conditions, for that reason, we will skip choosing associations and the conditions and we will create the identity –the prism, with the identity and elements that we see when interacting with H&M.

Physique

The physical features of the brand, that will be key for customers to identify it include: the logo –minimalistic and bold-coloured, simple but bold and unique font; the company's corporate colours are simple too –red and white. These two elements are the ones seen in the packaging –the plastic bags they give you when buying in the stores. The most important element in H&M's physique is the logo, as there are no other visual elements to identify the brand.

Personality

If H&M were a human being they would be young-spirited, fashionable, open-minded and they would be kind and take care of their friends and loved ones. They would be conscious towards the environment and feminist –as they proudly state 74% of their workers are women (H&M careers).

Culture

A big part of H&M's identity is the fact that they are from Sweden, it shows in their official name Hennes & Mauritz AB, which they abbreviate to H&M internationally. Apart from their country of origin, they claim to respect and always act with their values in mind, in fact, they state they "*(the values) are the foundation of our culture, embedded in everything we do and everything we create*" (H&M careers). For this reason, we will take a look to their values (H&M careers).

- **We are one team:** Our workplace is inclusive, and respectful. We encourage and help each other to win together. We see the big picture and collaborate across boundaries, sharing our skills and knowledge in the best interests of our company to create unbeatable customer value.
- **We believe in people:** We are the best we can be and bring out the best in everyone and the business. We empower and trust others to take ownership and embrace diverse perspectives. We listen to and learn from our colleagues.
- **We are entrepreneurs:** We have a strong business mind-set. We are curious and creative and take every opportunity to adapt to ever-changing customer needs. Our innovative and flexible approach delivers the best customer offer and experience.
- **We make constant improvements:** We are always eager to find a better way forward. We constantly improve by seeking feedback to act, learn and adapt with speed. Everyday improvements, big or small steps, can make a huge difference.
- **We are cost-conscious:** We make careful, sustainable choices by using resources responsibly and doing more with less. We create value for money, making a sustainable lifestyle accessible for everyone.
- **We are straightforward and open-minded:** We are open, honest and humble. We reflect on our behaviour and listen to others. We speak up, but once a decision has been made, we commit to it. We are prepared to have our own ideas challenged and happy to let the best idea win.
- **We keep it simple:** We aim for simplicity and go straight to the point because clarity helps us focus on what matters. We don't overcomplicate so we can be clear and efficient. Less really is more.

Apart from these values, H&M has a document called “the H&M way” in which they explain who they are, what they do and how they do it. They explain that having these values and culture help them, as they unify people from different backgrounds and make sure the customer will have the best experience in H&M.

Self-Image

H&M has a youthful and creative personality, with affordable products and sustainable fashion. However, I do not think the company's customers reflect this personality. In fact, in my experience when buying in their stores, I have seen many different types of people and while there were many teenagers and twenty-year-olds, the clothes that are more creative and non-conventional, usually are not bought.

Reflection

In contrast to what we see in stores, H&M sees their customers as mainly young women, probably studying in university –thus their need to budget. Probably the company thinks their customers are bold and use strong colours and clothes that are not basic or simple.

Relationship

Customers keep going back to H&M to see the new clothes there might be and if they like the them to buy new clothes. However, I do not think this loyalty is only towards H&M, as it is a very competitive industry, and customers do not tend to only go to one store.

On the other hand, as many companies in the fashion industry, H&M has a downloadable app in which there is an option to be part of the H&M club. Here, customers that are part of the club can collect points and access exclusive promotions.

6.2.2 H&M's identity delivery across cultures

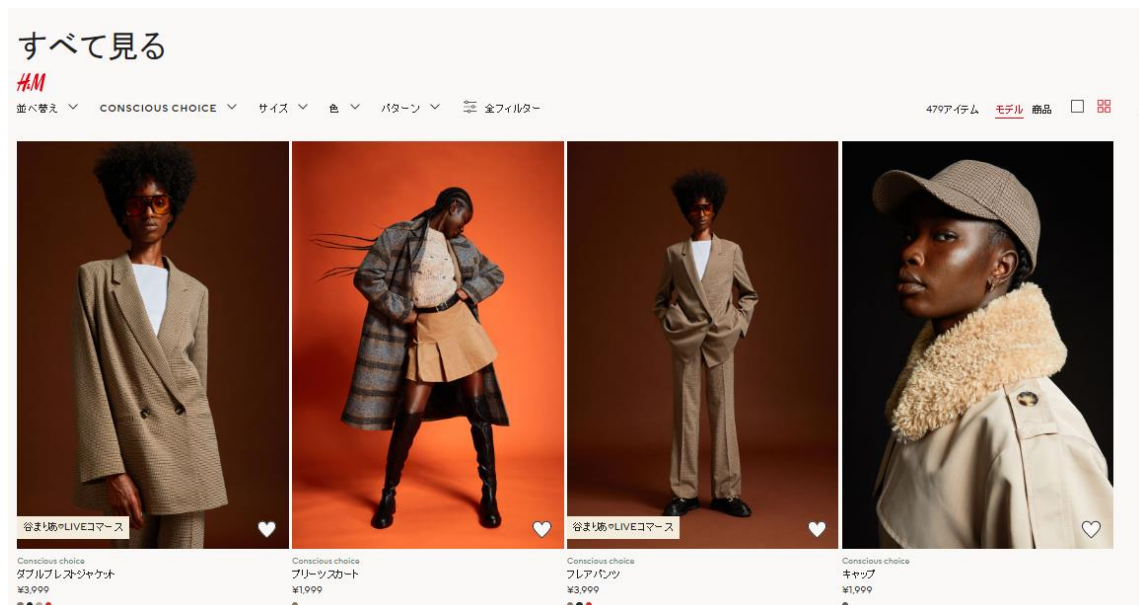
In order to analyse how H&M delivers their brand identity in different cultures, we will take a look to the formal brand identity we have explained in chapter four and compare what kind of differences there could be between countries that have very different cultures.

Visual identity

When it comes to visual identity, in general, H&M does have standardized strategy; the logo is the same all around the world –the red bold H&M letters, the packaging, the colours are also the same –white/grey bags with the company's logo in them.

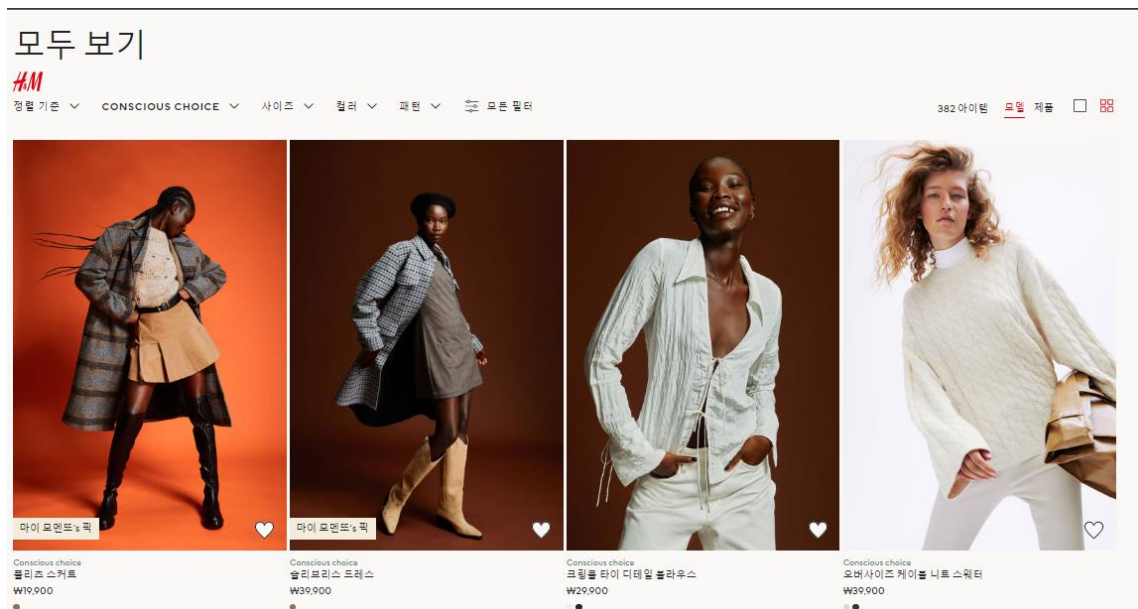
When looking in their website, I did think the visual identity is very similar to different countries, for example, we will first be looking to the “New arrivals: view all” section in different countries.

FIGURE 9: H&M'S ONLINE STORE IN JAPAN



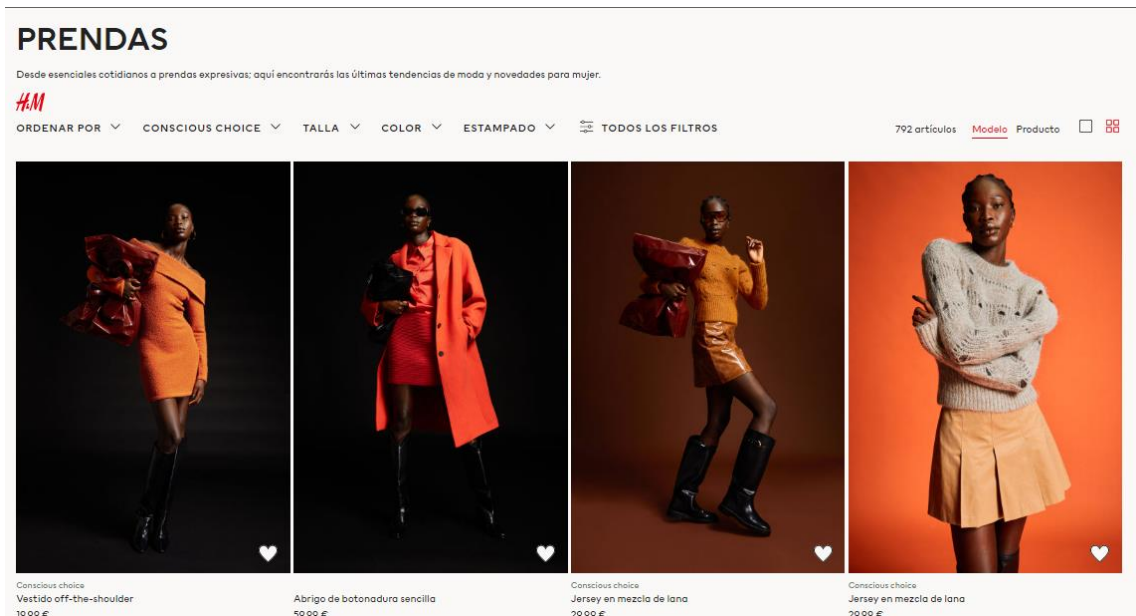
Source: https://www2.hm.com/ja_jp/ladies/new-arrivals/view-all.html

FIGURE 10: H&M'S ONLINE STORE IN KOREA



Source: https://www2.hm.com/ko_kr/ladies/new-arrivals/view-all.html

FIGURE 11: H&M'S ONLINE STORE IN SPAIN



Source: https://www2.hm.com/es_es/mujer/novedades/prendas.html

The website is identical –except for the language in their online shop; in Spain, Korea and Japan, the campaigns are different, as these are personalized to the countries' holidays oftentimes. However, the way it looks and what the images express are very similar in these different countries.

On the other hand, we are going to take a look to the Twitter accounts for different countries for this company and compare what kind of images they upload.

FIGURE 12: EXAMPLE OF H&M USA'S ARTISTIC PHOTOS



Source: Twitter @hmusa

FIGURE 13: EXAMPLE OF H&M JAPAN'S MORE FUNCTIONAL TAKE TO THE ITEMS



Source: Twitter @hmjapan

When it comes to the twitter uploads, I did find more differences between the countries Korea, Japan and the USA. While Korea had more differences in the messaging rather than the visual image, I did find Japan uploaded more photos just to share the different clothing, whereas H&M USA shared artistic photos of the same items.

This is where Japanese fashion culture and general culture can be seen. Japanese are known to prefer functionality in their everyday items and in H&M Japan's twitter can be seen they focus on the clothes themselves, instead of constantly uploading artistic photos (Fashion United, 2020).

Verbal Identity

When talking about H&M's international verbal identity we will mainly be taking a look to messaging, as I think is the most personalized element. However, we will first start taking a look to the name.

H&M is the name the company uses in their logo, their stores, their advertisement, stores... However, their official name is Hennes & Mauritz, Hennes meaning *her* in Swedish. We can only suppose this change happened, in part, due to their internationalization since 1964 – when they opened their first store in Norway. However, it is true that H&M is a simplified version of their name Hennes & Mauritz, and is much easier to use this name all around the world.

On the other hand, when it comes to the messaging, I did find some differences in the Twitter accounts mentioned before, in H&M USA; H&M Korea and H&M Japan.

One of the major differences related to culture is the campaign H&M made in June, the campaign related to Pride Month. For this campaign, H&M USA uploaded some photos and videos using the Hashtag #HMPride. However, as more conservator or traditional countries where LGBTQ+ rights are not as developed and same-sex marriage is not legal, Twitter accounts for Japan and Korea did not mention this campaign.

FIGURE 14: ONE OF THE UPLOADS FOR THE #HMPRIDE CAMPAIGN



Source: Twitter @hmusa

Another difference in these campaigns, are the ones personalized for the countries' national holidays. For example, H&M Korea had special sales for the Mid-Autumn Festival, also called *Chuseok*, these sales only happened in Korean stores and the Korean online store; and H&M Japan had special sales for the Golden Week, where they celebrate the emperor's birthday.

FIGURE 15: H&M'S CHUSEOK AND GOLDEN WEEK SPECIAL SALES ANNOUNCEMENT IN TWITTER



Source: Twitter @hmsouthkorea

Another notable difference in H&M Korea's Twitter is their focus on a healthy lifestyle. Korean beauty standards are very tough and there is a pressure for people to be thin and healthy. Many famous people, idols and actors upload videos promoting healthy eating and exercising, and this can be reflected in H&M Korea's Twitter account, where they have uploaded about supplements, vitamins and even an in-person *yoga and tea class* for H&M members.

FIGURE 16: SUPPLEMENTS AND VITAMINS IN H&M KOREA'S TWITTER



Source: Twitter @hmsouthkorea

FIGURE 17: YOGA AND TEA CLASS ANNOUNCEMENT IN H&M KOREA'S TWITTER ACCOUNT



Source: Twitter @hmsouthkorea

Sensorial Identity

When it comes to sensorial identity I do not think H&M makes use of it in an evident way. I do not think the company has any kind of special music or sounds, or personalized scent. However, I do think the kind and genre of music they play in the stores will be more personalized and more specific to the current trends in each country and area. I would like to dive more into this topic, but there is no information about the topic, which only makes this a theory.

Behavioural Identity

In my opinion, behavioural identity should be more or less the same everywhere, as this is the most telling element of a brand's identity. For this reason, I think that behaviour should be standardized and the same regardless of the different cultures and traditions of a country. On the other hand, I did not find any kind of notable behavioural change across the different social media accounts H&M has, which is why I am guessing it is the same across cultures.

6.3 INTERNATIONAL BACKLASH

When a brand that operates internationally becomes widely known, it will constantly have eyes on them, this means that not even the slightest mistake will be overlooked, and taking into account the social media culture we live in nowadays, people from all around the world will be able to see the mistakes made. This is the case of H&M, as it will be further discussed next, this brand has had many backlash and controversies in different countries and areas, it is probable that these controversies would not have happened if the brand was original from those territories, which shows how different cultures can cause many hardships in international brands and global branding.

6.3.1 *East Asia*

Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

In 2020, a group of lawyers and human rights advocates delivered a 60-page document evidencing the forced labour regimen in Xinjiang to the UK customs authorities, urging to ban imports of cotton from forced labour in China (Frost, 2020).

H&M stated their concern in the accusations of forced labour and discrimination of ethnoreligious minorities, and prohibited all kind of forced labour in their supply chain regardless of the country. Despite a report stating that H&M had had a supplier relationship with factories from Xinjiang, the brand stated the opposite and stopped buying cotton from this mills (Frost, 2020).

However, the Communist Youth League did not like that statement and publicly called out the brand. In few days, at least three major Chinese e-commerce platforms –Pinduoduo, JD.com and Tmall - had withdrawn H&M products from sale. Many famous and influential people cut ties with H&M, stating they would put the country's interests above all (Brant, 2021).

Controversial Map of China

On April of 2021, members of the public alerted Chinese authorities that there was a problematic map of China on H&M's website. The Shanghai municipal bureau of planning and natural resources ordered H&M to change said map and correct the way Taiwan, Vietnam and other sensitive areas in the South China Sea were depicted. The brand, immediately taking action, used the nine-dash line when correcting the map, which caused controversy in Vietnam (Larsen, 2021).

"The nine-dash line is the mark Beijing uses to claim about 90 percent of the disputed waters of the South China Sea but Vietnam holds rival claims to some of the territories contained within the nine-dash line and H&M's apparent concession did not go down well in Vietnam" (Larsen, 2021).

H&M declined to comment on the issue and they did not change the map, which caused anger in the Vietnamese community (Larsen, 2021).

6.3.2 Middle East

In 2018, a month after apologizing for the "Coolest Monkey in the Jungle" controversy, H&M found themselves in another controversy, this time regarding a pair of socks designed for children. The socks had the image of a *Lego* woman holding a jackhammer, the drilling pattern creating the image of the Arabic word "Allah" upside down. Customers and social media users found the printing in the socks insulting and inappropriate and voiced their disappointment online (The New Arab, 2018).

H&M decided to remove the socks and not sell them anymore, and apologized by saying: At H&M we always aim to offer products that we believe our customers will appreciate, the print on this sock represents a *Lego* figurine, any other meaning is entirely coincidental, and we apologise if this motif has offended anyone (The New Arab, 2018).

6.3.3 The African and African-American community

"Coolest monkey on the jungle" sweatshirt

In January 2018, H&M launched a green sweatshirt that said "The coolest monkey on the jungle". This sweatshirt was modelled by a Kenyan descendent, five years old black boy. The African community found it extremely offensive due to the connotation the word *Monkey* has had throughout the years for black people, which is often used as a racist slur (Olsen, 2018).

This controversy had a big impact in social media, so much so that it reached famous Canadian artist with Ethiopian descent The Weeknd, and American rapper G-eazy, who decided to cut ties with the retail brand (Olsen, 2018).

Short after the controversy started, H&M apologized by saying they were sorry for offending others, and said they removed the ad in their online stores. However, the ad and the sweatshirt were still running in Europe with another model (Olsen, 2018).

Around two months after the controversy, H&M named Annie Wu, Taiwanese woman raised in New York, as the global leader for diversity and inclusiveness (Olsen, 2018).

Due to this controversy, the company faced many boycotts and protest and was forced to close some stores for a while in South Africa. Some protesters in South Africa destroyed some H&M stores' properties while marching and, lastly, H&M's image was severely damaged (Flanagan, 2018).

Racial diversity

In 2015 a Tweeter user complaint to H&M South Africa stating that the advertisements in the store she went to were exclusively of white women and having black representation would be beneficial for the company and the customers. However, the response H&M's South African team made created a big controversy throughout the black community. H&M's response via Tweeter said: H&M's marketing has a major impact and it is essential for us to convey a positive image. We want our marketing to show our fashion in an inspiring way, to convey a positive feeling. We work with a wide range of models and personalities throughout all marketing both online, outdoor and in store. Our marketing policy, campaign productions & work is something we constantly discuss internally & with creative professionals" (Stansfield, 2015).

The black community was very offended by these tweets as they implied that white models conveyed a more positive image than other ethnic groups. H&M's team had to rectify later by stating that by a "positive image" they meant a diverse group of models and that they were not strangers to diversity as they operated in 61 countries around the world (Stansfield, 2015).

6.3.4 Indigenous communities

In August 2013, H&M received several complaints regarding a headpiece they launched for their summer campaign. "The hair accessory, which features pink, purple and turquoise feathers atop a black and white patterned band, was part of the retailer's H&M Loves Music summer collection of clothing and accessories inspired by music festivals" (Flam, 2013).

The First complaint came from Kim Wheeler, an Ojibwa-Mohawk from Winnipeg, Canada, who saw the accessory in Vancouver. "Wheeler told CTV News Channel that headdresses are traditional garb worn by Indian chiefs, and that the H&M accessory is far from appropriate. "It's a mockery," she told the channel" (Flam, 2013). Wheeler stated that the headpiece is a sign of respect and leadership and it was offensive for people to wear it as a cute accessory with which to dance in the club.

H&M received three complaints and immediately decided to pull the item in their Canadian stores. The brand also personally apologized via e-mail to the complaints and Kim Wheeler stated she felt satisfied with the outcome (Flam, 2013).

In my opinion, these controversies do not mean the brand is not trying to know the culture, traditions or laws from other cultures. In fact, sometimes, just like in the case of the Chinese map, there are some unresolved issues that will make it impossible to make the right choice –there will

always be someone offended. I think it is important to know when to fight your battles, but always be transparent and make a good apology, acknowledging the mistakes made.

All in all, even though there are many advantages for global brands, different cultures are an issue that is almost completely impossible to dodge. Brands should be mindful of what they say and do at all times, as they will receive the backlash of offending a community and their image will suffer.

7. CLOSING THOUGHTS AND SUMMARY

During this paper we have taken a look to different topics and elements that have helped us understand what brand identity is and how it is affected by different cultures around the world.

By first understanding what branding is and what it represents nowadays, we have created a foundation to build knowledge around it. We have seen there are many models to build value in a brand but the main models are Keller (1997) and Aaker's (1991); and seeing this, we have discovered that a part of creating value is by having a strong, defined brand identity.

When taking a look to brand identity we have explained the different ways and models there are to build it, always understanding that none of them are strictly wrong but depending on the company one of them will be more suitable. More specifically, we explained Jung's 12 archetypes of personality, Aaker's (1996) and Kapferer's (1996) brand identity models and, lastly, Llopis's (2015) brand identity model, that was thought for international brands and merges both Aaker and Keller's models.

As well as seeing the models, we have explained how to deliver the identity and as Ivan Díaz (2017) states, we have analysed the four kinds of formal brand identity: visual identity –logos, colours, photos, typography etc.; verbal identity –name, messaging, tone and everything a brand says; sensorial identity –connected to the human senses; and lastly the behavioural identity – the way a brand behaves in an everyday basis.

Before taking a look at the main goal of the project, we explained what international brand and international brand identity is and took a look at what Llopis (2015) said, that the proper way of having an international brand identity is by using the *glocal* strategy, that is having a standard identity, which is the same around the world, and adjust the delivery depending the area and country. We have also analysed why different cultures might affect an international brand and seen that cultures have many different layers.

Lastly, in order to meet this project's main goal, we have used a case study, the international clothing retailer H&M. We have taken a look to its brand identity and later seen how it changes the delivery in different countries.

All in all, when analysing the different elements of the brand's identity I have come to the conclusion that H&M has a quite standardized brand delivery with small changes. These main changes have occurred in their messaging and they are related to culture. The change that was the most important for me was the Pride month campaign, the one that eastern countries did not upload about. I think this shows how different cultures will make a company stay quiet about a topic they have an opinion on, as being open-minded is part of H&M's identity, they will surely support LGBTQ+ people and their rights, but in countries that this is not well-seen the company chose to not post about it.

On the other hand, I am sure there were other brand delivery elements that changed depending on the countries, but due to the lack of resources I was unable of analysing; elements such as the differences on the stores –the photos and products, the different music or the advertisements in the streets. However, with the information we had it is clear that culture affects formal brand identity, in other words, brand identity's delivery.

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