



Brand logo and brand personality perceptions: A case of real estate business in Thailand

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Abstract

Brand logo is one of the key elements of corporate identity that most organizations use in differentiating its brand from others. A well-designed logo can be powerful in a competitive market, especially for the business whose identity and personality are highly required such as real estate. The annual revenue of Thai property business was reviewed and two groups of property brands were adopted as our case study including top ten and general selling brands. The objectives of this research were to examine the effects of logo elements including brand name, graphic, and color on brand logo perceptions in terms of uniqueness, recognition, and beauty and to explore brand personality perceptions comprising sophistication/up-to-date, excitement/friendliness, security/trustworthiness, and simplicity/sincerity of the representatives of both groups. A total of 486 participants served as our samples in evaluating brand logo elements and brand personality through questionnaire interviews. T-test and Chi-Square statistics were utilized in data analysis. The findings indicated that the whole logo should be advised in logo design guidelines for property brand rather than adopting individual element of logo separately to obtain positive perceptions in uniqueness, recognition, and beauty. Additionally, the study suggested that the specific brand personality had no connection with its stakeholders.

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Introduction

One of the most distinctive and essential design components of corporate identity is logo (Balmer, 2001; Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006). Its purposes are to represent identity and image of an organization (Henderson, Cote, Leong, & Schmitt, 2003; Van der Lans

et al., 2009) as well as to distinguish its brand from others (Walsh, Winterich, & Mittal, 2010). As logo is constructed with brand name, graphic, and color, it can be perceived more effectively than the name of a brand alone (Park, Eisingerich, Pol, & Park, 2013). In the last few decades, there have been numerous studies on the subject of brand logo design, however the discussion about elements of logo which is the fundamental of logo design is still rare.

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One of the related topics of logo studies was consumer responsiveness. Although several studies regarding logo perception have been explored, measuring it toward logo elements was not found. Thus, the issue of brand logo design and viewers’ perceptions were drawn to be the focus of this research.

Brand personality is another important feature that supports corporate identity and corporate image. A product with clear and distinctive brand personality inevitably reflect the personality of its customers which leads to positive effect and satisfaction (Geuens, Weijters, & Wulf, 2009). Previous researches have been done to evaluate brand personality toward visual elements (Luffarelli, Stamatogiannakis, & Yang, 2019), such as type font characteristics and colors (Grohmann, Giese, & Parkman, 2012) however, the study on brand personality and business stakeholder is rarely found. Hence, the connection between brand personality and viewers’ perceptions was another of our focal points.

Recently, one of the businesses that has gained high profit in Thailand is real estate. With its strong competitiveness, it requires salient corporate identity and remarkable brand personality. In addition, real estate has high potential of investment in creating brand awareness. We therefore selected the property industry as our subject for this research. Among the real estate companies, we anticipated that their logos and market shares could be related. The sales growth of Thai property industry during 2017 to 2018 (Tednok, 2018) was reviewed, and as a result, we divided the brands into two categories based on their market sharing including top ten and general selling brands.

The objectives of this research were to investigate (1) what elements of logo (the whole logo, brand name,

graphic, and color) had an influence on brand logo perception (uniqueness, recognition, and beauty) of the two categories of the property brands? and; (2) which brand personality (sophistication/up-to-date, excitement/friendliness, security/trustworthiness, and simplicity/sincerity) was perceived by its stakeholders?

Literature Review

Brand Logo Design

As distinctive logo design urges attention, builds familiarity, recognition, and satisfaction, the design of a logo becomes crucial towards consumer perception. Henderson, et al. (2003) proposed a logo design concept by stating that effective logos were created from representational forms. Pittard, Ewing, and Jevons (2007), Lieven, Grohmann, Hermann, Landwehr, and Tilburg (2015), and Van der Lans et al. (2009) examined other shapes of logo i.e. man-made or artificial shape. A number of researchers have focused on design compositions which were based on design principles e.g. repetition, symmetry, elaboration, harmony, parallelism, roundness and proportion (Henderson & Cote, 1998; Henderson et al., 2003; Lieven et al., 2015; Pittard et al., 2007). Furthermore, colors that have deep connection to human emotions, influenced consumer response (Hynes, 2009). Although many researches have been carried out on logo design dimensions, there has been little discussion about the elements of the logo. This study sought to investigate logo components that consisted of brand name, graphic, and color separately, as well as look at logo as a whole (Table 1).

Table 1 Brand logo elements: an example of Pruksa brand

Logo Element	Visual Graphic	Description
The Whole Logo		The whole logo consists of brand name, graphic, and color elements of logo.
Brand Name	PRUKSA	Brand name, appears in forms of alphabet or word which can be abbreviation or full name.
Graphic		Graphic or visual design can be shown in graphic forms or symbols that are related or represented its brand.
Color	 PRUKSA	Color or a set of colors is used to identify its brand.

Note: Please visit www.pruksa.com for its original logo.

Brand Logo Perception

As many researchers have explored the topic of consumer responses to logo design, notable aspects of positive response linked to corporate identity can be described as follows. First, affective response occurs when the viewer perceives or feels a stimulus (logo), and pleasure could arise afterwards. The feeling can be conveyed to product preference and lead to brand satisfaction ultimately (Henderson et al., 2003; Machado, de Carvalho, Torres, & Costa, 2015; Van der Lans, et al., 2009). Second, familiarity takes place when the viewer feels that he/she has previously seen the logo, even though sometimes he/she has never seen that stimulus before (Foroudi, Melewar, & Gupta, 2014; Henderson et al., 2003; Van der Lans et al., 2009). Third, meaning is caused by the viewer's interpretation of the perceived stimuli which can be interpreted in accordance with the encoded meaning. And fourth, according to Henderson et al. (2003), familiarity and meaning are interrelated and cause affective response which can be developed to brand recognition. Besides, a logo that is designed to be easily recognized can have more potential (Foroudi et al., 2014; Hem & Iversen, 2004). Among four facets of the aforementioned logo responsiveness, this study selected recognition, the fourth dimension, as one of the perceptive strands since it appeared to be the ultimate expectation that all organizations wish from their logos.

Positive response toward beauty is formed by human biological algorithms that can be learned and progressed (Veryzer, 1993). Henderson et al. (2003) proposed three supported theories that concerned human preferences. Firstly, Perception theory is related to the law of Gestalt psychology that characteristics of order, harmony, and simplicity of designs can have emotional impact (Veryzer, 1993). Secondly, Arousal theory, contains the concept that complexity and irregularity of designs increase the preference (Bloch, 1995) hence, ornamental and decorative design elements affect enjoyment, especially in East Asian countries (Schmitt & Simonson, 1997). Lastly, Cognitive theory suggests that behavior and pleasure are influenced by evolutionary psychology (Buss, 1995). Consequently, various design features which are supported by these theories commonly appear in graphics, symbols, and logos. Thus, beauty was chosen as another perceptive trait for brand logo perception.

Distinctive identity of business has become a challenge for the property developer industry. Uniqueness is the key factor that represents business and brand identity, and therefore it was selected as our third aspect of brand logo responses. Consequently, three

dimensions of brand logo perceptions utilized in this research, comprised of uniqueness, recognition, and beauty.

Brand Personality

Brand personality is a unique characteristic that is connected to a brand. It is inherited from the concept of human personality (Aaker, 1997) and connected to several dimensions of organizational personality (Dikcius, Seimiene, & Zaliene, 2013). Brand personality that is congruent with client personality brings advantage in term of customer relationship, hence, it establishes brand equity (Geuens et al., 2009) and brand loyalty (Seimiene & Kamarauskaite, 2014) accordingly. Aaker (1997) developed the concept of brand personality, comprising five dimensions that included sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. Although these five brand personality facets have been widely used in both educational and marketing fields, they have always been developed and modified (Geuens et al., 2009; Sung & Tinkham, 2005).

By observing the personality of well-known real estate brands in Thailand, we adopted some of Aaker's brand personality along with using four dimensions of property brand personality trait including sophistication/up-to-date, excitement/friendliness, security/trustworthiness, and simplicity/sincerity (Leelayudhyothin & Boontore, 2019) for this study. Hence, stakeholders' attitudes toward brand personality were explored in order to find an appropriate personality trait to be used in logo design for property developer industry.

Methodology

Case Study and Stimuli

Because a logo is designed to convey a message to a particular audience, the business type can be a concerning factor. Among a number of business entities in Thailand, one of the industries where image and reputation are highly considered by its customers is real estate. In order to select the brands for our research, we reviewed not only its marketing mix, but also its revenue. At first, leading property companies were the focus, however, not all of their logos met our logo requirements that consisted of brand name, graphic, and color. Other brands or general brands in the market were, therefore, considered. Consequently, based on their annual earnings, two groups of brands were categorized including: (1) top ten selling brands; and (2) general selling brands.

Six brands were selected as samples. Pruksa Holding PLC or Pruksa, AP (Thailand) PLC or AP, and LPN Development PLC or LPN were selected for the top ten property brands, while Sena Development PLC or Sena, Goldenland Property Development PLC or Goldenland, and Major Development PLC or Major were chosen for the general selling brands (Table 2).

Questionnaire interview was conducted to obtain the views of the representatives of each brand, which included the employees working for the brand and the residents living at the properties of each brand. Since the population size of each brand varied, quota sampling was engaged in calculating specific proportion among all brands. After the questionnaire survey was completed, data were gathered and analyzed using SPSS version 25.

Study 1 –Brand logo perception

The respondents of the questionnaire were asked to evaluate their perceptions (in terms of uniqueness, recognition, and beauty) toward logo elements (whole logo, brand name, graphic, and color) as shown in Figure 1. Five-point Likert scale was utilized to measure their perceptions. A score of one denotes strongly disagree while a score of five denotes strongly agree. The obtained data were analyzed using T-test statistics.

Study 2 – Brand personality

This study focused on brand personality i.e. how the respondents of the two groups (top ten and general selling brands) felt about the logo; which of the following traits did the logo represent to them: sophistication/up-to-date, excitement/friendliness, security/trustworthiness, and simplicity/sincerity? Chi-Square statistics was employed for analyzing the perceptions of the respondents toward brand personality (Figure 1).

Results and Discussion

From the questionnaire survey, a total of 486 participants responded to the questionnaire. Of these, a total of 77.2 percent (375 respondents) were from the top ten selling brands (Pruksa 39.1%, AP 22.6%, and LPN 15.4%), whereas another 22.8 percent (111 respondents) were from general selling brands (Sena 7.4%, Goldenland 7.6%, and Major 7.8%).

Analysis of Study 1 –Brand Logo Perception

An independent samples T-test was performed to analyze the results. Table 3 shows the comparison of brand perceptions toward logo elements of top ten and general selling brands. Table 4 shows the summary of statistical analysis.

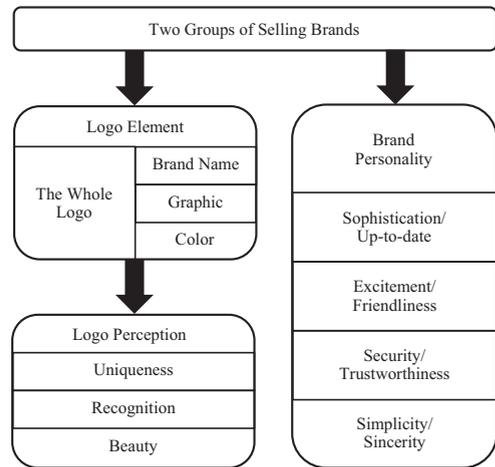


Figure 1 Research framework

Table 2 Brand logo of two groups of property developer in Thailand

Brand Logos of Property Developer in Thailand			
Top Ten Selling Brands	 PRUKSA Pruksa	 AP	 LPN DEVELOPMENT LPN
General Selling Brands	 SENA Sena	 GOLDENLAND Goldenland	 MAJOR Major

Note: (AP (Thailand) PLC., n.d.; Goldenland Property Development PLC., n.d.; LPN Development PLC., n.d.; Major Development PLC., n.d.; Pruksa Holding PLC., n.d.; Sena Development PLC., n.d.)

Logo element: The whole logo

When looking at *the whole logo*, the representatives of top ten selling brands and those of general selling brands perceived no significant difference in terms of *uniqueness*, *recognition*, and *beauty*. This means that *the whole logo* was well designed and the respondents could distinguish the logo from other brands.

Logo element: Brand name

Focusing specifically on the brand name of the logo, the representatives of top ten selling brands and those of general selling brands perceived no significant difference in terms of *uniqueness*, *recognition*, and *beauty*. This means that the brand name on the logo makes the respondents see it distinctive from other brands.

Logo element: Graphic

Focusing specifically on the *graphic* of the logo, the representatives of top ten selling brands and those of general selling brands perceived no significant difference in terms of *uniqueness*, *recognition*, and *beauty*. This means that the *graphic* of the logo was distinctive from other brands.

Logo element: Color

Focusing specifically on the *color* of the logo, the perceptions of the representatives of top ten and general selling brands were significantly different in terms of *uniqueness* and *recognition*, while the difference of the perception toward *beauty* of the logo was insignificant.

In terms of *uniqueness* and *recognition* of the *color*, the representatives of top ten selling brands tended to be more stimulated by *uniqueness* and *recognition* of the *color* than those of general selling brands.

The results of *uniqueness* aspect of *color* showed that the mean score of the top ten selling brands ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.88$) was significantly higher than that of general selling brands ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 0.93$), $t(484) = 1.990$, p value = .047 (Table 4).

The results of *recognition* aspect of *color* showed that the mean score of the top ten selling brands ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.86$) was significantly higher than that of general selling brands ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 0.88$), $t(484) = 2.309$, p value = .021 (Table 4).

Discussion Study 1 –Brand Logo Perception

Previous studies have shown the influence of visual brand elements such as colors (Hynes, 2009), forms, and design characteristics of logo (Henderson et al., 2003; Van der Lans, et al., 2009) on consumer responses, in terms of brand identification (Henderson & Cote, 1998) and brand image (Schechter, 1993). This research, however, explored stakeholders' perceptions toward brand elements of the logo. The results suggested that the two groups of respondents perceived *the whole logo* the same in all aspects of perceptions including *uniqueness*, *recognition*, and *beauty*. However, when focusing on each element of the logo, there were some differences. While *brand name* and *graphic* were perceived similarly in all aspects, the *color* of the logo was perceived differently by the representatives of top ten and general selling brand groups. It was perceived as more unique and more recognizable by those from top ten selling brands than those from general selling brands, however, this was not applicable for *beauty* aspect of perception.

Table 3 The comparison of brand logo perceptions toward logo elements of two groups of Thai property selling brand

Logo Elements	Descriptive Statistics	Top Ten Brands			General Brands		
		Uniqueness	Recognition	Beauty	Uniqueness	Recognition	Beauty
The Whole Logo	<i>M</i>	3.89	3.88	3.78	3.78	3.78	3.86
	<i>SD</i>	0.77	0.86	0.81	0.81	0.91	0.87
Brand Name	<i>M</i>	3.71	3.78	3.73	3.47	3.55	3.55
	<i>SD</i>	0.92	0.90	0.78	1.10	1.10	1.03
Graphic	<i>M</i>	4.02	3.97	4.00	3.93	3.80	3.97
	<i>SD</i>	0.90	0.79	0.79	0.93	0.76	0.83
Color	<i>M</i>	3.76	3.70	3.79	3.57	3.49	3.65
	<i>SD</i>	0.88	0.87	0.78	0.93	0.88	0.85

Table 4 Summary of the effects of brand logo perceptions toward logo elements

Logo Elements	The Whole Logo			Brand Name			Graphic			Color		
	Uniqueness	Recognition	Beauty	Uniqueness	Recognition	Beauty	Uniqueness	Recognition	Beauty	Uniqueness	Recognition	Beauty
Logo Perception	<i>t</i> 1.266	1.023	-0.938	1.950	1.758	1.417	0.691	1.639	0.258	1.990	2.309	1.601
	<i>p</i> 0.206	0.307	0.349	0.052	0.082	0.160	0.490	0.102	0.797	0.047	0.021	0.110

Note: $p < .05$.

The whole logo (consisting of brand name, graphic, and color altogether) seemed to be the most suitable logo for property brands as it was perceived as unique, recognizable, and beautiful by all groups of respondents. However, when considering each element of the logo, the results suggested something slightly different. Although *brand name* and *graphic* were perceived similarly in all aspects by both groups of the respondents, *color* element was not. Therefore, *color* could be the most critical element which the designer and the marketer should pay serious attention to during the design to make it unique and recognizable to the audiences.

Analysis of Study 2 –Brand Personality

A Pearson Chi-Square test was adopted to analyze the relationship between brand personalities and two groups of Thai property brands, top ten and general selling brands. Table 5 shows the statistical analysis and the perceptions toward brand personalities of the two groups. The results of the study indicated that the perceptions toward brand personality traits of the two groups of the respondents was insignificantly different.

Discussion Study 2 –Brand Personality

Although brand personality influences consumer self-identification (Belk, 1988) and differentiates itself among other brands in the same product category (Halliday, 1996), the results of this study revealed something different for property industry. This study suggested that brand personality of property industry did not appear to be significantly important in the view of their stakeholders, i.e. employees and residents of the properties of each brand. Brand personality could not reflect personality of the brand, either for the successful top ten brands or the regular brands as no specific brand personality perception was found. In other words, Thai property stakeholders pay less attention toward brand personality.

Conclusion and Recommendation

As good logo design and brand personality are the two major factors that distinguish a brand from others in the same market segment (Luffarelli, Stamatogiannakis, & Yang, 2019), this research focused on two main objectives: (1) investigating elements of logo that had influence on brand logo perception of the two categories of property brands and (2) examining stakeholders' brand personality perceptions. Referring to the first research objective, the

Table 5 Perceptions toward brand personality traits of two groups of Thai property selling brands

Number of cases		λ^2 value	<i>p</i>
484		2.151	.542
Brand Personality	Two Groups of Selling Brands		
		Top Ten Brands	General Brands
Sophistication/Up-to-date	Count	95	31
	(%)	25.4	28.2
Excitement/Friendliness	Count	44	8
	(%)	11.8	7.3
Security/Trustworthiness	Count	114	32
	(%)	30.5	29.1
Simplicity/Sincerity	Count	121	39
	(%)	32.3	35.4
Total	Count	374	110
	(%)	100.0	100.0

Note: Number of valid cases are 484.

$p < .05$.

findings indicated that there were some differences between the two groups of selling brands. In terms of the whole logo, the perceptions toward the logo in all aspects (uniqueness, recognition, and beauty) between the top ten and the general selling brands were insignificant. When focusing on the elements of the logo, the respondents appraised brand name and graphic in the same level for all three aspects of logo perception (uniqueness, recognition, and beauty). However, the respondents from the top ten brands pay more attention toward color element of the logo in two out of three aspects, i.e. uniqueness and recognition. In conclusion, a logo that contains all elements including brand name, graphic, and color should be advised in logo design guidelines for a property sector. Uniqueness and recognition of the color should be carefully taken into account in designing a logo as they could distinctively draw the attention of the audiences. The results of this research could provide useful guidelines regarding elements of logo design selection for marketing practitioners in real estate business.

The second research objective investigated the relationship between brand personality and two groups of participants. The results suggested that brand personality had no significant effect toward the respondents from either top ten or general selling brands. Hence, brand personality of property industry does not influence or depend on properties' stakeholders. The specific personality of a brand had no connection with either its staff members or its clients.

As several studies have explored design characteristics of logo and consumers' evaluations, this research is

among the first to consider the elements of logo in relation to stakeholders' perceptions. It is hoped our research can offer insight perspectives of Thai property stakeholders toward brand personality.

Since the samples of this research were obtained from several property brands, the perceptions of one particular property brand could be further studied in more detail. Moreover, other business categories could be further examined. In terms of logo elements, there are diversified dimensions of color of logo that can be explored e.g. black & white logo, color logo, color intensity etc. as well as type font of logo, such as type font styles, type font readability, and type font legibility. Lastly, new aspects of brand personality can also be developed or discovered.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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