Original Paper

The Influence of Brand Logo Frame on Brand Character and Consumer's Brand Evaluation

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Abstract

This paper proposes that the different border shapes of brand logos (rectangle and rounded rectangle) cause the differences in the evaluation of brand personality by consumers, which further affects the evaluation of brand by consumers. At the same time, this process is regulated by product category. If product category and brand personality are in the same direction, the border shape of brand logo will generate positive brand evaluation. In this paper, two experiments were designed to verify the hypothesis respectively and to guess the results of data analysis. However, due to the time problem, complete data has not been collected for analysis. This paper provides marketing inspiration for brand identification and deepens the related research on brand identification and brand evaluation.

Keywords

Brand identity, Frame shape, Brand personality, Brand evaluation

1. Introduction and Background

Brand is an important basis for a large number of consumers to make shopping choices. Brand equity includes brand name, brand logo, brand reputation and so on. Among them, the brand identity is the most direct representation of a brand, which shows the company's cultural style. Consumers can evaluate the brand image and products and services at the first sight of the brand identity. A large number of brands are born in the market every year. A large number of companies take brand logo design as the basis of brand strategy, and even many companies spend millions on the design, update and promotion of brand logo. For example, in 2008, despite the financial crisis, Pepsi cola still spent 1.2 billion US dollars to promote its new brand logo globally as the most important marketing strategy at that time. Generally, brand logo has a design style, which reflects the design attitude of products

through brand logo. How to design brand logo has become an important issue in marketing research. The elements of a brand logo include shape, border, font, color, composition, line, etc. These elements may affect consumers' cognition and thus brand evaluation. The shape design of the brand logo also includes the border design, as shown in the following two logos (Figure 1). Some brand logos use rounded rectangle border design, some brand logos use rectangle border design. The difference in the shape of the two frames gives a different impression.
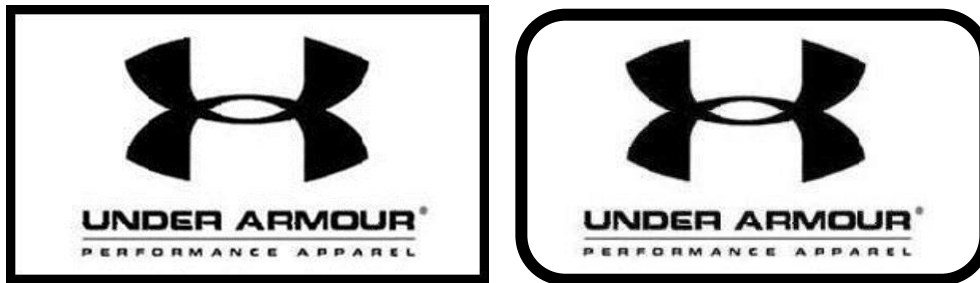

Figure 1. Under Armour（UA）American Sports Equipment Brand

Rectangular border brand logo gives people a more angular sense of design, rounded rectangle logo design makes people feel more rounded, which may bring different brand evaluation. Previous researches on the shape length of brand logo, positive skew of brand logo and whether brand logo has border or not have been carried out, however, further researches on the border shape of brand are very rare. According to brand science, brand and personality have different personality characteristics, so whether the outline of brand identity will affect consumers' perception of brand personality? Does rectangular brand logo border make consumers feel more aggressive and active brand personality, while rounded rectangle makes consumers feel more competent and conservative brand personality? Will consumers' perception of the brand character generated by the borders of different brand logos affect their brand evaluation?

This paper aims to explore the above questions and study whether the border shape of brand logo will affect consumers' perception of brand personality, and thus affect consumers' brand evaluation. By studying its relationship, it can bring reference value to marketing, brand design, page design and so on. For publicizing brand characteristics, brand value has reference significance.

2. Theoretical Review and Research Hypothesis

2.1 The Mental Processing of Shapes

The human brain organizes, processes and stores the images, sounds and feelings it can receive, thus forming the cognition of external things. The same is true of consumers' processing of graphic information. Previous studies have proved that the graphic that constitutes the brand logo can affect consumers' evaluation of some product attributes. The reasons for the cognitive deviation of these consumers due to the shape of the graph can be summarized in two aspects. Zhong and Wang (2015)

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found that, on the one hand, it is due to cognitive bias caused by illusions, and on the other hand, the big ical cognition of shapes in the daily cultural background affects consumers' perception. For example, if two line segments of the same length have arrows at the end points, one with the end points pointing in and one with the end points pointing out, people are likely to mistakenly assume that the line with the end points pointing in is shorter than the line with the end points pointing out. Researchers believe that cognitive bias is related to the excessive weight given to a shape by people during evaluation (Krider et al., 2001). In addition, the metaphor of graphic shape also affects the evaluation of consumers. For example, circles are perceived as more conservative, complete and competent, and squares are perceived as more angular and intense. It can be seen that different graphic features will affect consumers' cognition, thus it can be inferred that the border shape of brand logo may affect consumers' cognition and ultimately affect consumers' brand evaluation.

2.2 The Influence of Brand Identification on Brand Evaluation

Wang Haizhong et al. (2012) found that in the consumption scenarios of self-use and gift giving, consumers' purchase intention was significantly affected by the significance of brand logo. If the significance of brand logo was higher, consumers' purchase intention would be higher. The intensity of self-monitoring has no significant influence on this effect, but the different gift relationship has a moderating effect on the influence of brand identity significance. Zhong and Wang (2015) studied the time metaphor of brand logo and found that compared with the square, the rectangular brand logo has a longer time metaphor, which influences consumers' evaluation of the product's time attribute and thus consumers' evaluation of the brand.

Jing, Shi and Niu (2019) found that the borders of brand logos have a significant impact on consumers' brand attitude. The author believes that whether there are borders of brand logos can lead to different consumers' perceptions of safety, thus affecting brand evaluation, and that attention to product safety-related attributes plays a regulating role. The brand logo with borders is more secure. If the product is a product with high safety attributes, such as baby milk powder, consumers will have a more positive attitude towards this brand. Although the author of this paper studied the influence of border shape type on consumers' brand attitude, it did not study the influence of border shape type on consumers' brand evaluation.

Wang (2014) from Qinghe studied the influence of perceived consistency of brand identity on brand attitude. It was found that brand identification with higher mental perception consistency could lead to more positive brand evaluation compared with brand identification with lower mental perception consistency. This provides a theoretical basis for the possibility of better brand evaluation if there is a consistency between brand identity and brand connotation.

2.3 Brand Personification

Brand personality is a marketing term. Early (1985) has applied psychoanalytic knowledge to brand science, deriating male brand characteristics, but not feminine brand personalities. After Aaker (1997) defines brand personality as brand personality characteristics of anthropomorphic, borrow psychology

model theory, the brand personality system is divided into five different dimensions, respectively, Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication and Ruggedness. After that, the author of various brand and marketing studies draws a lot of reference from the five dimensions of brand personality division. The consistency between brand personality and product direction may be conducive to brand evaluation due to the different types of brands. For example, a sports brand may receive better brand evaluation if its personality is Excitement.

2.4 Research Hypothesis

In conclusion, the shape of the border of the brand logo may make consumers perceive different brand personalities due to the metaphor. Consumers may unconsciously think that "the rectangular border of the brand logo indicates that the brand is more exciting and dynamic. The brand logo with rounded rectangle border indicates that the brand is more conservative and competent", thus influencing the brand evaluation of consumers. Thus, the metaphorical effect of the border of brand logo is proposed (Hypothesis 1).

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Compared with consumers who see the brand logo with rounded rectangular borders, consumers who see the brand logo with rectangular borders will think that the brand is more exciting and dynamic.

Further analysis, different brand personality assessment may affect the brand evaluation. Thus, hypothesis 2 shows that consumers' brand personality perception acts as a mediating variable for the influence of the border shape of brand logo on brand evaluation.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Due to the difference in the border shape of the brand logo, the brand personality perceived by consumers is different, which affects the brand evaluation.

Different brands have different products, and the category of brand products needs different direction of associative representation. For example, when talking about sports brand products, most consumers associate sports scenes in their minds. For example, basketball shoes trigger consumers' association of basketball game scenes. If the brand personality is consistent with the representation of categories, it may enhance consumers' evaluation of the brand. Thus, hypothesis 3, 3a and 3B are obtained:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): If the brand product category is consistent with the brand personality represented by the border shape of the brand logo, consumers will generate better brand evaluation.

Hypothesis 3a: If it is a sports brand, consumers who see the rectangular border brand logo have a higher brand rating than those who see the rectangular border brand logo with rounded corners.

Hypothesis 3b: If skincare is a brand, consumers who see the brand logo with rounded rectangle border will have a higher brand rating than those who see the brand logo with rectangular border.

3. The Experiment Design

Figure 2 shows the research framework of this paper. Firstly, the feasibility of this hypothesis was analyzed through the collection of a large number of secondary data and literature review, and then the experiment was carried out. Hypothesis 1, 2 were verified by Experiment 1; and hypothesis 3 was

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verified by Experiment 2. Between subjects, experimental design is adopted in the overall train of thought is controlled by a single variable principle, the subjects were randomly divided into two groups, and other factors under the condition of no change, only change subjects observed the brand identity of frame shape, a set of observed brand frame with rectangular shape, another group of observed brand identification frame for the rounded rectangle shape. All the experimental methods were to invite random subjects to fill in questionnaires offline. Then data integration, data analysis, the results. In order to control the influence of interference variables such as consumers' original brand experience and knowledge, virtual brand identity is used in the experimental operation of this study.
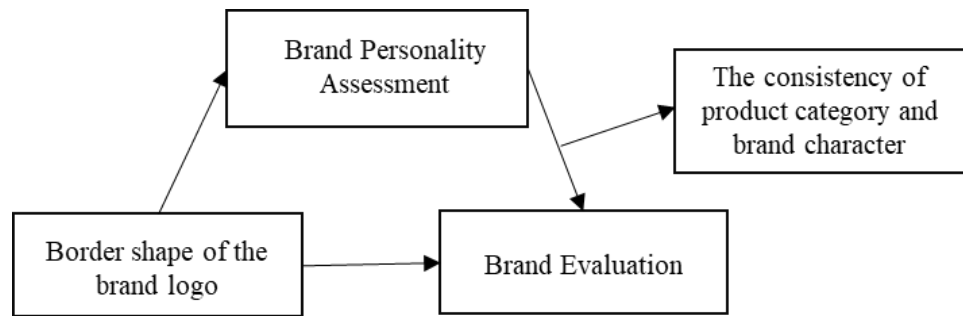
Figure 2. The Framework of this Paper

3.1 Experiment 1

3.1.1 Experimental Procedure and Measurement

Figure 3. Sample Size Calculation

In experiment 1, a single-factor intergroup design was adopted. Firstly, the required number of samples was calculated according to G* Power. As shown in Figure 3, the moderate effect size and 95% confidence interval were estimated. With double-tailed verification, 105 subjects were needed in each group, a total of 210 people were needed. In order to prevent invalid questionnaires, the team planned to select 125 people in each group, a total of 250 people, as the sample size to explore. To avoid demographic errors, we plan to select a sample of participants aged between 18 and 25 with a 1:1 sex

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ratio. Under the condition of ensuring an average ratio of gender and age in each group, they were randomly divided into two groups: 125 people in the "rectangular Border brand logo" group and 125 people in the "rounded rectangle border brand logo" group. Subjects were invited to complete the questionnaire one by one on the spot, and all subjects who completed the questionnaire were rewarded with a cash red envelope of 10 yuan.

After entering the room to fill in the questionnaire, the subjects will be relieved to minimize the impact of stress. Then a separate page of reading instructions. In order to hide the real experimental purpose, the instruction introduces the questionnaire as "the purchase intention survey of a sports brand". Here we use the virtual brand "Fastgo". According to the questionnaire, Fastgo is a sport-focused brand in Europe, whose market share has increased by more than 80% in Europe for three consecutive years. This brand promotes a healthy attitude towards life, attaches importance to the cultivation of exercise habits, and brings consumers excellent sports experience with its high cost performance and product quality.

After that, a large brand logo is displayed under the introduction, as shown in Figure 4.
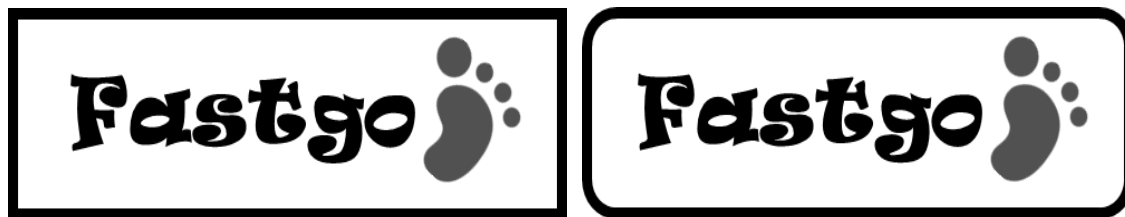

Figure 4. "Fastgo" Brand Logo

Then, before entering the questionnaire questions, in order to prevent the occurrence of invalid questionnaires, a reminder will be set up: "Please make sure that you have carefully checked the brand information and are fully impressed by the above contents". In the questionnaires of the two groups, only the border shape of brand logo was different, and other questions and statements were the same. In order to deepen the impression of the subject on the border of the brand logo in the process of filling in the questionnaire, we added the brand logo at the top of all the questionnaire pages except the opening page.

In order to prevent the subjects from being aware of the purpose of this study, we plan to add many other questions to the questionnaire. From the movement frequency of the subjects, to the evaluation of the products by the subjects, to the evaluation of the brand personality by the emissaries. The questionnaire starts with the question "How many times do you exercise (count 30 minutes per session)" and then shows off a random sneaker product that the brand Fastgo plans to release this year. The 7-point Richter scale was used to measure the degree of consent (1= complete disagreement, 4= average level, 7= complete agreement) of the subjects for various evaluations of the brand. The questionnaire included the following questions: "I think Fastgo is a sports brand with strong growth

power"; "I think the quality of Fastgo products is guaranteed"; "I think the Fastgo shoes have a good design philosophy" and other options not related to this study.

For the evaluation of brand personality, we collected the data of the subjects through a number of questions with inconsistent statements but similar actual meanings. For example, "I think the Fastgo brand is very exciting"; "I don't think Fastgo is lazy". "I think the brand" Fastgo "is very dynamic" (1= totally disagree, 4= average level, 7= completely agree). The purpose of different expressions of the same question is to ensure the validity of the questionnaire data. For the evaluation of brand evaluation, the questionnaire directly asked the participants how they felt about the brand. For example, "I like the Fastgo brand", "The Fastgo brand does not impress me very well", "My comments on the Fastgo brand are good" (1= totally disagree, 4= average, 7= completely agree). The whole questionnaire filling process was timed, and finally, the subjects filled in relevant personal information to complete all the surveys.

3.1.2 Data Processing

First of all, the questionnaire with less than 30 seconds is not effective because the time is too short. Set "Brand Logo with Rectangular Borders" to group 1 and "Brand Logo with rounded rectangular Borders" to group 2. For questions with different expressions in the questionnaire but the same actual meaning, we took the mean value as the final data for analysis.

All data in this study were analyzed using SPSS 23.0 software. After the above data processing, a one-way analysis of variance is performed to determine whether the difference is significant. The results showed that there was a significant difference in the personality evaluation of the brand between the two groups as shown in Figure 5.
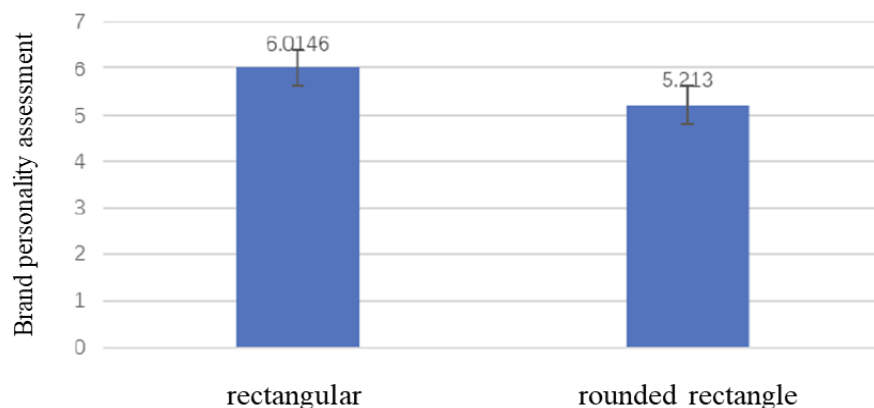

Figure 5. Results Processed by SPSS 23.0 Software

3.1.3 The Experimental Results

"Brand Logo frame shape for consumer Brand Personality Assessment" using one-way ANOVA, first judge homogeneity of variance test, significance $P > 0.05$ indicates homogeneity of variance, so this can use analysis of variance. Finally, through the results of ANOVA, if the $P > 0.05$ indicates that the

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effect is significant.

The experiment found that the evaluation of the personality of the product with the rectangular border was significantly higher than that of the rounded rectangle (the evaluation averages were 6.014 and 5.213, respectively, and the significance in the homogeneity test of variance was 0.422>0.05, ANOVA test F=10.448, p= 0.02<0.05) Hypothesis 1 is verified. The shape of the border of brand logo had a significant impact on the brand personality assessment of consumers. Consumers who see the brand logo with rectangular borders will think that the brand is more exciting and dynamic. The same method was used to determine whether the shape of the border of different brand logos (rounded rectangle, rectangle) caused significant differences among brand evaluation. It is concluded that the shape of the border of different brand logos has a significant impact on brand evaluation. Due to the difference in the border shape of the brand logo, the brand personality perceived by consumers is different, which affects the brand evaluation.

The calculation of mediating effect. Then, Wen, Hou and Zhang (2005) were used to analyze the mediating effect. Where X= border shape of brand logo (rounded rectangle), Y= brand evaluation, M= brand personality evaluation, and three regression analyses were conducted (As shown in Figure 6). The estimate of mediating variable is AB, and the ratio of mediating effect to direct effect is (AB /c ʻ), which can be used to measure the size of mediating effect.
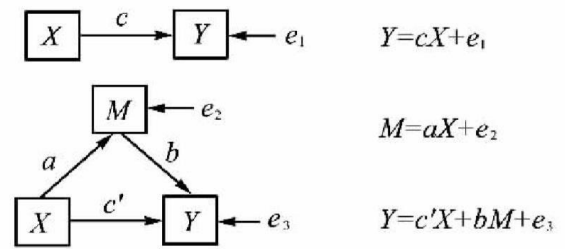

Figure 6. Calculation of Mediating Effect

3.2 Experiment 2

3.2.1 Experimental Procedure and Measurement

We use the same sample size as experiment 1 to verify hypothesis 3, i.e., 2 groups of 125 people. Randomness is also guaranteed, and the age is between 18 and 25 years old, and the sex ratio is 1:1. The hypothesis to be verified is "If skincare is a brand, compared with consumers who see the rectangular border brand logo, consumers who see the rectangular border brand logo with rounded corners have a higher brand evaluation". Similarly, we set up a virtual product "DIT 'o".

The questionnaire adopted the seven-point Richter scale, and the subjects were invited to complete the questionnaire one by one on the spot. All the subjects who completed the questionnaire would receive a cash red envelope of 10 yuan as a reward.

To hide the real purpose of the experiment, the guide is not "purchase intention survey of a skincare

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brand", followed by a brief introduction of the brand: "DIT 'o" is an emerging Skincare brand in Europe, which quickly stands out from small brands in recent years due to its good customer experience and endorsement of big brands. After that, a large brand logo is displayed under the introduction, as shown in Figure 7. Similarly, in order to deepen the impression, we added the brand logo at the top of all the questionnaire pages except the opening page. Similar to experiment 1, many questions unrelated to the experiment were added to the questionnaire in experiment 2.

Figure 7. DIT 'o Brand Logo

For the evaluation of brand character and brand evaluation, we also use multiple questions with different expressions and the same actual meaning to increase the validity of the data. Assessment of brand character: "I don't think the DIT 'o brand is radical or dynamic"; I think DIT 'o is conservative and moderate. Brand review: "I like DIT 'o". The brand "DIT 'o" gave me a great impression (1= totally disagree, 4= average, 7= totally agree). The whole questionnaire filling process was timed, and finally, the subjects filled in relevant personal information to complete all the surveys.

3.2.2 Data Processing

For the data of experiment 2, we excluded those questionnaires whose filling time was less than 30s. For questions with different expressions in the questionnaire but the same actual meaning, we took the mean value as the final data for analysis.

3.2.3 The Experimental Results

"The difference of the shape of brand logo border on the Evaluation of Consumer Brand Personality" and "The difference of the shape of brand logo border on the evaluation of consumer brand" used one-way ANOVA to verify the mediating effect of brand personality evaluation. In addition, experiment 2 focuses on analyzing the regulating role of product category. The moderating effect of Wen, Hou and Zhang (2005) was analyzed. Where X= brand personality assessment, Y= brand assessment, and M= category of products (sports skin care), regression was calculated using the following formula (Figure 8). The coefficient of linear regression of Y and X is characterized by (a + cM), and C measures the magnitude of the regulatory effect.

$$Y = bM + (a + cM)X + e$$

Figure 8. Calculation of Regulating Effect

It can be concluded that the regulating effect of product category exists and is significant. That is, the previous hypothesis is confirmed.

4. Discussion and Significance

4.1 The Research Conclusion

This study proposes that the outline of the brand logo will affect consumers' perception of the brand character, that is, the brand logo with rectangular borders can better reflect the vitality and stimulation of the brand than the logo with rounded corners, thus affecting consumers' brand evaluation. This hypothesis was validated in two experiments, and significant profile effects were found in two different product categories and two different brand personality assessments.

In the first experiment, consumers who saw a brand logo with rectangular borders rated the brand as more exciting and dynamic than those who saw a brand logo with rectangular borders. Experiment 2 finds that if the brand product category is consistent with the brand personality represented by the border shape of the brand logo, consumers will produce better brand evaluation.

4.2 Marketing Inspiration

The conclusion of this study can be used as a reference for brand planners and marketers to choose different brand logo combinations for different product types and establish appropriate brand images in the minds of consumers. Many brands have their own unique personality, and consumers will judge the product and the brand on this basis. If the brand character is more dynamic, the brand logo with rectangular borders will get higher product and brand evaluation in the market compared with the brand logo with rounded corners. For these enterprises, we suggest to consider the use of rectangular borders to improve the target customers' evaluation of product personality, thus improving consumers' evaluation of the brand.

4.3 Future Research Outlook

First of all, only two kinds of experimental materials, sports virtual brand "Fastgo" and skincare virtual brand "DIT 'o", were selected in this study to measure consumers' attitudes. Although the results of the two experiments were basically the same, the stability and universality of the experimental results still need to be further verified. Future research may choose more products as experiment material, at the same time that the same product can be separately designed for both dynamic model and conservative products, such as bags that can be made either dynamic type or conservative products, believe that the results of this experiment will further validation and explain the hypothesis of this study. In addition to virtual brand testing, some real brand cases can also be used for experiments.

Secondly, the experimental objects in this study cover all ages, income levels and educational levels, and the experimental materials are also two daily products with high familiarity and utilization rate, which guarantee the universality and stability of the experiment to a certain extent, but also inspire the author from another perspective. In future studies, certain products targeted at specific consumer groups can be selected as experimental materials, and the target customers of this product can be

selected as research objects, such as luxury watches.

In addition to studying the influence of the use of brand borders on brand evaluation, there are many other elements of logos that will influence brand evaluation, such as the size, shape, color and stereoscopic perception of logos.

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Appendix A. Questionnaire Design for Experiment 1

After entering the questionnaire page online, the subjects first read the instruction on a separate page.

In order to hide the real experimental purpose, the instruction introduces the questionnaire as "the purchase intention survey of a sports brand".

Then, by pilot shot into the product introduction page, half the participants will see a video about the movement of virtual brand "Fastgo" product introduction text: "Fastgo" is a focus on sports brand in Europe, the three consecutive years in Europe grew at more than 80% market share, the brand propaganda and healthy attitude to life, pay attention to the training exercise habits, with its high cost performance and product quality excellent movement for consumers, and a rectangle logo "Fastgo" brand.

The other half of the participants were presented with the same questionnaire except for the brand logo. In this questionnaire, the "Fastgo" brand logo was transformed into a rounded rectangle.

The questionnaire will set a reminder "have you carefully checked the brand information" on the next page to ensure that the subjects have a full impression of the brand introduction and prevent invalid questionnaires from appearing.

Next, the subjects will click into the questionnaire answer interface, and the specific questions are as follows:

1. Have you been to the gym in the past six months?

A has   B doesn't

2. How many times do you exercise (count 30 minutes per session)?

A 1~3 per week   B 3~6 per week   C 6~12 per week

Then, a sneaker product that the brand "Fastgo" plans to release this year was casually showed off. Please express your agreement with the following opinions from your own point of view. 1 point means totally disagree, and 7 points means completely agree

3. In my opinion, "Fastgo" is a sports brand with strong growth.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

4. I think the quality of "Fastgo" products is guaranteed.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

5. I think the "Fastgo" shoes have a good design concept.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

6. I think the "Fastgo" brand is very exciting.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

7. I don't think "Fastgo" is lazy.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

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8. I think the "Fastgo" brand is very dynamic.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

9. I think the combination value of "Fastgo" sneakers is very high.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

10. I like the "Fastgo" brand.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

11. The "Fastgo" brand didn't impress me very well.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

12. My evaluation of the "Fastgo" brand is good.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

13. If I need sports shoes recently and the price is within my budget, I would like to buy them.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

14. Your gender is: A. Male   B. female

15. Your age is:

Appendix B. Questionnaire Design for Experiment 2

After entering the questionnaire page online, the subjects first read the instruction on a separate page.

In order to hide the real experimental purpose, the instruction introduces the questionnaire as "a skincare brand purchase intention survey".

They were then clicked on to a product description page, where half were presented with a product description of "DIT 'o", a virtual skincare brand emerging from Europe that has rapidly emerged from niche brands in recent years thanks to good customer experience and big brand endorsements, and a rectangular logo for "DIT 'o".

The other half were presented with the same questionnaire except for the logo, in which the "DIT 'o" logo turned into a rounded rectangle.

DIT'O

The questionnaire will set a reminder "have you carefully checked the brand information" on the next page to ensure that the subjects have a full impression of the brand introduction and prevent invalid questionnaires from appearing.

Next, the subjects will click into the questionnaire answer interface, and the specific questions are as follows:

1. Do you think you have a skin care habit?

A has   B doesn't

2. How much do you spend on skincare products every year?

A below 1000   B 1000-3000   C 3000-5000   D above 5000

A simple skincare ad (with two logos) was then casually displayed, claiming it was a product planned for release by "DIT 'o" this year. Please express your agreement with the following opinions from your own point of view. 1 point means totally disagree, and 7 points means completely agree.

3. "DIT 'o" is a specific, functional brand.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

4. I think the product quality of "DIT 'o" is guaranteed.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

5. I think the skin care products of "DIT 'o" are very beautiful in appearance.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

6. I think "DIT 'o" takes the men's skincare market seriously.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

7. I think "DIT 'o" is conservative.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

8. I don't think "DIT 'o" is radical or dynamic.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

9. I think "DIT 'o" is a high-end skincare brand.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

10. I like the brand "DIT 'o".

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

11. The brand "DIT 'o" gave me a great impression.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

12. My opinion of the brand "DIT 'o" is good.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

13. If I need to buy skin care products recently and the price of this product is within my budget, I would like to buy it.

1 -- 7, 1 means complete disagreement, and 7 means complete agreement

14. Your gender is: A. Male   B. female

15. Your age is: _____