

Visual Communication of Lovely Characters in Digital Development Arena

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Abstract. The term character economy starts to emerge, when a particular image is authorized and transferred onto a variety of goods sold into retail channels and formed economic benefits, thus the creation of character economy, such as: Hello Kitty, Mickey Mouse, Angry Birds and other images. In addition, with the increase sales for tablets and smartphones, and the economic rise of APP, we can foresee that besides the basic content and function demands in digital development, the interface design of digital APP has included design elements and symbol values to attract consumers, which will create a more diverse human sensory experience and a luminous digital humanities civilization. Our plan is to look into these characters' simple designs, forthright colors, and cute images, and research the influence of these symbolic characters on consumers' willingness to spend, we explored the consumer preference related to these lovely characters in consumer goods industry and digital development arena.

Keywords: Lovely characters · Character economy · Digital APP

1 Introduction

Consumer choices are rapidly changing due to globalization; choices emphasizing on the cultural and economic aspect of digitization, the importance of creativity and the competitive advantage of a designed brand, and the advent of the knowledge and economy era in ideological and digital intangible assets. While market continued to tighten, consumer choices have become diversified, and gradually followed the trend of significant and symbolic purchases. Consumers no longer buy because of the need and consumption; instead, they turn to culture and consumption semiotics as the importance in a commodity in addition to “material value,” which is symbolic consumption, i.e., “symbol value”.

The term character economy starts to emerge, when a particular image is authorized and transferred onto a variety of goods sold into retail channels and formed economic benefits, thus the creation of character economy, such as: Hello Kitty, Mickey Mouse, Angry Birds and yellow ducklings and other images. The authorization of these symbolic roles originates this symbolic society consumption, wide-spreads into entire industry, stimulates endless business opportunities for all. In addition, with the

increase sales for tablets and smartphones, and the economic rise of APP, we can foresee that besides the basic content and function demands in digital development, the interface design of digital APP has included design elements and symbol values to attract consumers, which will create a more diverse human sensory experience and a luminous digital humanities civilization.

Our plan is to look into these characters' simple designs, forthright colors, and cute images, and find out the secret of success to the principles of these lovely graphic designs, and impression on the consumers of the color and form image on these of symbolic characters, and research the influence of these symbolic characters on consumers' willingness to spend, we explore the consumer preference and industry developments related to these lovely characters in consumer goods industry and digital development arena.

2 Lovely Imagery Roles

All along, the lovely imagery roles, which originated in nature and exist in human society, are not related to specific cultural. Some traditional culture conducive to experience of lovely life, but culture is not the source of the lovely life, it is lovely experience results lovely culture. Lovely culture spread out popularly in different societies by it's cultural penetration and globalization. Lovely culture has been generally accepted for interest, fun, novelty and other positive traits, and often with a little bit of negative traits, such as: childish, immature, foolish and so on. Regardless of the positive or negative traits, designers use lovely traits to enhance consumer preference of character image. Lovely image of characters exist different countries and social. Lovely image of characters has a large head, wide forehead, full cheeks, rounded chin, small nose, large pupils, big eyes, stubby limbs and other lovely elements, and dolls and cartoon stars which have these elements can also be widely loved in different countries. Human proportion of infants and children generally have three to four headed figure to highlight the human body petite and cute. From the terms of the proportion, characteristics of infants and children contain a large head, short limbs, small palms, small soles, slender ankles and wrists, almost invisible neck, and so on (Shanghai cartoon culture Development Co., 2009). It can be seen that communication of lovely imagery is not be geographic, social, national and cultural restricted. Lovely imagery of characters includes head shape, eyes, mouth, limbs proportion and other elements changes, the role of image presenting brings people positive and negative characteristics. It can be used as the basic elements of design to enhance the consumer's preference of the characters.

3 Character and Illustration Design of Picture Book

Kiefer stated that in the best picture books, the illustrations are as much a part of the experience with the book as the written text [1]. Picture book used the illustrations to present the context of the article and emphasize the original of story, so picture book combines visual and verbal narratives in a book format with complete independence

characters and styles. The characteristics of characters in stories have three aspects including contents, meaning and value, and to constitute the spirit of characters. It shows qualities of picture books and different stories characters symbolize different meanings and style.

A good picture book transfers the story and reveals the content, meaning and value with the protagonist, and character design can boost the overall meaning of the story, express emotions, so that readers can enter the story atmosphere and generate spiritual consolation by the character image.

British woman writer-cum-illustrator Helen Beatrix Potter published children's book "Peter Rabbit" in 1902, the protagonist Peter Rabbit has been 100 years old [2]. British children's literature writer Roger Hargreaves first published "Mr. Men Little Miss" in 1971, created a variety of lovely characters to represent each kind of distinct personality, like: good personality, bad temper; clever, confused; good example of bad habits ... and other characteristics [3]. Though humorous way, let simple interesting characters perform the child's own story, so "Mr. Men Little Miss" was sold 100 million of the total sales volume in more than 30 countries around the world.

4 Character Design of Corporate Identity

Corporate Identity System, (referred to as CIS) mainly consists of Mind Identity (referred to as MI), Behavior Identity (referred to as BI) and Visual Identity (referred VI) three elements. Corporate visual identity plays a significant role in the way an organization presents its strategy, philosophy, culture [4]. Corporate visual identity expresses the values and ambitions of an organization with logos, colors, typeface, mascot and other elements.

Mascots or advertising characters are very common in the corporate world. The role of corporate identity, meaning a symbolic corporate identity, also referred to as the mascot. Design of corporate mascot by entity, cute, intends people of performance to attract more visual focus and strengthen the memory to convey corporate culture. The most famous and most well-known role of the corporate mascot is Mickey Mouse; it has been six decades as the mascot of the Walt Disney Company. Mascot can enhance the effect of corporate marketing, by the joyful character design, can quickly deepen memory of commodities activities and the company's image, and make a variety of changes in the advertising and marketing, either anthropomorphic of McDonald and Tatum Baby, or lovely imagery of Michelin, Sesame Street cartoon characters can give consumers the feeling of joy and happiness by their own attractive.

5 Role Design of Digital Develop Image

APP mobile software has a significant positive effect on perceived usefulness, perceived entertainment and perceived compatibility for system social presence In the graphical user interface, including Window, Icon, Menu, and Pointer four elements to convey the functional significance to the user, does not require additional supplementary text description for quick operation. App for mobile devices has shown

flowers contend boom, and the roles of mobile devices App are very widespread and popular, such as Angry Birds, LINE texture images. Angry Birds was first released Apple's iOS platform in December 2009, the 2011 net profit of 48 million Euros on revenue of 75.4 million Euros, and has been downloaded over 10 million times in 2012. LINE has 17 million users in Taiwan, currently 2013 users around the world have rushed 300 million people. LINE's success lies in the lovely images better than words. Protagonists Brown, Cony, Moon and James scored everyday life, cute, exaggerated, adorable and funny facial expressions, and images can be used to convey situational prompting significant increase in utilization of the image.

6 Study Method

This study investigated lovely characters with graphic design and image word. Today consumer market lead consumers to attach importance to the meaning and value of consumption, then consumers focus on consumption semiotics for symbolic goods. Character images display different feelings, and the image is authorized and sold with goods popularly. In this study, Kansei Engineering as a basis method to integrate all of visual design, graphic composition, color theory and semiotics, etc. The analysis of lovely characters, which are classified to two categories of digital development and illustrator of picture books, are researched through focus groups interviews, cluster analysis, questionnaire, T-test and ANOVA analysis to examine lovely characters and consumer preference.

6.1 Focus Groups Interviews

In the January 8 and 18, 2014, In this study, we had two focus group interviews with two groups of four people to explore lovely image, consumers feel, visual communication. We selected homogeneous visual communication design and marketing management in the background as the interviewee.

Management group with 4 people was characterized by marketing background, and habitual purchase role authorized merchandise. Design groups with 4 people was characterized by visual communication design background, and for the role design-related awards, trainers and training coaches.

The collation and analysis of this study for cute characters selection criteria were maximum of four colors and simple shapes, personification form, and then according those criteria collected forty image of lovely characters from the picture book illustrator or digital development related samples, see Fig. 1. Through focus group discussion 8 interviewees selected the role of representative and visual communication image words.

A total of eight people with two focus groups discussed and select eight representative role lovely images, and respectively picture book illustrator 56 imagery words and 58 digital development imagery words, show as the following Table 1.

Through SPSS software, clustering analysis showed the 17 taxonomic clusters for 56 imagery words of picture book illustrator, and the 8 taxonomic clusters for

56 imagery words of digital development group. Finally, the images words of two lovely role groups interacted to get the same total of five taxonomic clusters were cute, childlike, funny, vitality and vigor. Those five visual communication design image words provided the reference imagery feel of lovely imagery role.



Fig. 1. Forty image of lovely characters

Table 1. Lovely image words

Categories	Quantity	Image word
Picture book illustrator	56	colorful, joyful, textured, soft, dreamy, calm, single, cheerful, sunny, generous, weird, humor, funny, energetic, festive, tender, vitality, sweet, feminine, classical, childhood, innocent, happy, lazy, unified, kind, playful, simple, realistic, friendly, relaxed, lyrical, blankly, interesting, weird, disgusting, casual, bright, honest, close to the heart, anthropomorphic, naive, energetic, convivial, gentle harmony, naivety, viridity, adora-ble, healing, childhood memories, happy, enjoyment, friendly, cute
Digital development	58	straightforward, cunning, angry, happy, flexible, arrogant, domineering, ugly, bright, nausea, naughty, novelty, funny, silly, stupid, boring, delight, retro, uniform, funny, effort heavy, stiff, special, mystical, humor, a sense of flow lines, strange, weird, cheerful, sunny, normal, lovable, single, hon-est, blankly, close to hearts, affinity, innocence, comfortable, anthropomorphic, simple, spanking, fun, vitality, innocent, happy, does not make sense, rounded, happy, relaxed, lively, playful, energetic, happy, funny, interesting, cute

Table 2. Eight cute imagery of lovely characters

No.	Characters	Imagery	Selection factor
1	Rilakkuma		To 2009, the cumulative turnover of all the goods and 100 billion yen, which is about 10,000 products, the total sales of books for 2.73 million.
2	Hello Kitty		2012 best-selling global retail products by a single cartoon character \$ 70 billion.
3	Mr. Men and Little Miss		Has been translated in 15 languages in over 30 countries around the world, tired performance 100 million in total sales.
4	Gaspard et Lisa		Animations showed in 19 regions (countries) In Japan there are more than a hundred licensees.
5	LINE Moon		Players 4.2 rating, rating number of 1,386,259 or more. the most important sticker for line.
6	Funghi gardening kit		Players 4.5 rating, rating the number of 116,784 or more (a total of five series of games in the aggregate.)
7	Angry Birds		Players rating 4.6 points, rating more than the number of 1,817,996
8	Where's My Water		Players rating 4.6 points, more than 452,600 the number of ratings

Table 3. T test for gender

	1 Gaspard et Lisa		2 Mr. Men and Little Miss		3 Rilakkuma		4 Hello Kitty	
	mean	SD	mean	SD	mean	SD	mean	SD
Male	4.142	2.3042	4.210	2.6913	6.127	2.3065	5.470	2.6753
Female	4.986	2.4419	4.777	2.6425	6.423	2.5348	6.171	2.7800
p-value	0.947		0.773		0.282		0.574	
	5 LINE Moon		6 Funghi gardening kit		7 Angry Birds		8 Swampy crocodile	
	mean	SD	mean	SD	mean	SD	mean	SD
Male	6.341	2.4391	5.444	2.9756	4.973	2.6327	6.392	2.5823
Female	4.979	2.2535	4.736	2.5874	4.314	2.4272	6.159	2.5275
p-value	0.179		0.183		0.880		0.934	

Table 4. ANOVA analysis for age

1.Gaspard et Lisa p-value	After 1995	1990–1994	1984–1989	Before 1983	mean	SD
After 1995		0.486	0.388	0.188	4.174	2.4637
1990–1994			0.844	0.481	4.525	2.3078
1984–1989				0.616	4.615	2.3378
Before 1983					4.853	2.5616
2.Mr. Men and Little Miss p-value	After 1995	1990–1994	1984–1989	Before 1983	mean	SD
After 1995		0.010	0.001	0.024	5.695	2.6062
1990–1994	*		0.454	0.769	4.279	2.7703
1984–1989	*			0.310	3.904	2.5265
Before 1983	*				4.427	2.5577
3.Rilakkuma p-value	After 1995	1990–1994	1984–1989	Before 1983	mean	SD
After 1995		0.939	0.588	0.455	6.118	2.9460
1990–1994			0.495	0.364	6.079	2.6911
1984–1989				0.819	6.396	1.7793
Before 1983					6.506	2.2841
4.Hello Kitty	After 1995	1990–1994	1984–1989	Before 1983	mean	SD
After 1995		0.406	0.023	0.004	5.195	2.3566
1990–1994			0.001	0.000	4.742	2.9396
1984–1989	*	*		0.471	6.464	2.5261
Before 1983	*	*			6.835	2.5118
5.Line Moon	After 1995	1990–1994	1984–1989	Before 1983	mean	SD
After 1995		0.782	0.528	0.230	6.241	2.7494
1990–1994			0.691	0.105	6.095	2.6280
1984–1989				0.048	5.902	2.5672
Before 1983			*		6.892	2.2355
6.Funghi gardening kit	After 1995	1990–1994	1984–1989	Before 1983	mean	SD
After 1995		0.073	0.004	0.000	6.441	2.6118
1990–1994			0.199	0.007	5.432	2.8339
1984–1989	*			0.151	4.770	2.6869
Before 1983	*	*			4.008	2.5963
7.Angry Birds	After 1995	1990–1994	1984–1989	Before 1983	mean	SD
After 1995		0.811	0.686	0.412	5.641	2.6484
1990–1994			0.852	0.245	5.519	2.2133
1984–1989				0.186	5.432	2.6315
Before 1983					6.069	2.3285
8.Swampy crocodile	After 1995	1990–1994	1984–1989	Before 1983	mean	SD
After 1995		0.033	0.000	0.311	5.590	2.8176
1990–1994	*		0.105	0.236	4.488	2.4142
1984–1989	*			0.006	3.719	2.6071
Before 1983			*		5.055	2.0948

7 Consumers Difference for He Preference of Cute Role Imagery

Two categories of eight cute imagery: (1) picture book illustration class: Rilakkuma Lazy Bear, Hello. Kitty Kitty, Mr Mr Men Little Miss odd wonderful lady and Gaspard et Lisa Lisa and Casper; (2) the development of several categories: LINE Moon, Funghi gardening kit, Angry Birds and Where's My Water? Swampy crocodile. Selection principles are as follows:

- The role authorization of picture book illustration drive the output value of 100 million yuan a year, and circulation over the country more than 15 countries.
- Digital developed to exceed the rating on Google Play platform 4 points or more (5 points), rating of more than 100,000 more than the number of APP software for the selected principle (Table 2).

200 experimental subjects were expected, men and women of each 100, including age distribution was attending high school, attending the University or Research Institute, employed persons under the age of thirty years of age and more than three years old, a total of four groups. This study explored each gender and age groups feeling for cute characters.

Through 200 valid questionnaires, this study discussed consumer preference of 8 lovely character images with T test and ANOVA analysis of multiple comparisons, Understanding of gender and age, and consumers have a significant impact on the consumer's preference image. The results are as follows (Tables 3 and 4):

8 Conclusion

This Study shown consumer preference for Mr. Men Little Miss: People born after 1995 AD favorite Mr. Men Little Miss, followed by AD 1990–1994 and AD 1984–1989, last was AD 1983 before.

This Study shown consumer preference for Hello Kitty: People born AD 1984–1989 and before AD 1983 favorite Hello Kitty, next was after 1995, last was AD 1990–1994.

This Study shown consumer preference for LINE Moon: People born 1984–1989 tend to not like LINE Moon, the other people favorite LINE Moon.

This Study shown consumer preference for Swampy crocodile: People born after 1995 AD favorite Swampy crocodile, followed by AD 1983 before, last was and AD 1984–1989 and AD1990–1994.

This Study shown consumer preference for Funghi gardening kit: People born after 1995 AD and AD1990–1994 favorite Funghi gardening kit, the other people less like Funghi gardening kit.

About the rest the lovely imagery role, consumer preferences are not significant differences, including Gaspard et Lisa, Rilakkuma, Angry Birds.

This Study shown consumer preferences in gender are not significant differences. No significant difference whether male or female love cute characters.

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