Impact of packaging, material selection & personal values on purchase behaviour

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Abstract

Product packaging has a critical role in the consumption experience and numerous researches and studies has been made around this topic but few tapped into the role that material selection for the package/commodity and personal values has over the overall value and quality perception and ultimately the final purchase decision.

After conducting a visual experiment in the form of an online survey questionnaire, we had 230 respondents from different nationalities, cultural backgrounds, gender and education.

The research discoveries showed that there is a positive connection between packaging/branding and consumer buying performance hence quality acuity. Positive relation between material selection of the product and package and perception of value and positive relation between personal values and purchase decision.

**Keywords**: Packaging design, branding, marketing trends, gift, home accessories, material, consumer behavior.

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## Contents

ABSTRACT .......................................................................................................................... IV

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................................................. I

CONTENTS ....................................................................................................................... III

INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................. 5

LITERATURE REVIEW ..................................................................................................... 6

- A WALK IN TIME ............................................................................................................ 7

- THEORIES THAT MATTERS ......................................................................................... 12

- THE FRUITFUL PROCESS ........................................................................................... 13

- TRENDING NOW .......................................................................................................... 16

- FACTORS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PACKAGE ................................................................ 21

- CONSUMER BEHAVIOR & PERCEPTION ..................................................................... 23

- CONSUMER DECISION MAKING PROCESS ................................................................. 29

METHODOLOGY .............................................................................................................. 33

- HYPOTHESIS ............................................................................................................... 33

- RESEARCH APPROACH .............................................................................................. 33

- POPULATION ............................................................................................................... 34

- SAMPLE & DATA COLLECTION .................................................................................. 34

- INSTRUMENTS .............................................................................................................. 34

- SAMPLE COMPOSITION .............................................................................................. 34

RESULTS ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION ........................................................................... 36

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS ....................................................................... 51
LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY ................................................................. 52

BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................................................... 53

APPENDIX .................................................................................................. 58
Introduction

Packaging and branding is all around us, if we look closely everything we use, touch and consume is packaged and branded in a certain way that is convenient to its function and its expected use.

Mother nature has always been the compos for human activity and because of its ability to inspire, we learned the trade of packaging and branding. What we consider a package something that holds, guard, and stores its substance happens normally, as in the defensive covering of a banana, the casing of a butterfly and clam with the hidden gem of pearls. These all play out the elements of a bundle.

"Humankind's creative curiosity has led to the adoption of many of nature's examples" [Dupuis S, Silva J (2011)].

Now in the 21st century it's imperative to conceive, develop and implement persuading and eye-catching packaging as it is the first visual element the potential consumer will come across on a retail shelve. Presently like never before, packaging has a massive chance to validate itself as a brand's most profitable customer touch point [Dupuis S, Silva J (2011)].

Package design is a standout among the most noteworthy parts of product strategy. Around 70 percent of all buy choices of merchandise are made at the point of sale. As per this present it's presumed that the package itself is the main marketing correspondence the purchaser may get while assessing the item. [Ruth Rettie, Carol Brewer, (2000)]. In the case of any lack of information, consumers will resort to their trusty scanner ie: the eyes. Packaging has a significant role in the buying decision. In cases when the consumer is unsure, the package becomes an important factor in the buying choice because it communicates to the consumer during the decision-making time [Silayoi, P. & Speece, M. (2007)].

According to Dupuis S, Silva J (2011), now we are past the utilitarian parts of packaging to how it affects one's look and feel. Image has turned into the main thrust behind packaging and branding. From the pragmatic role to a more emotional one, the
package now serves two roles: to contain the brand and to engage visually with a potential buyer.

The conduction of this research will explore the impact of packaging/branding, personal values and material selection for product and package in forming customer's behaviour and final purchase decision.

The hypothesis is that there's a positive relation between packaging/branding, material selection for both the product and the package and personal values with the perception of value for money & quality in home decoration commodities.

The importance of this scientific research is to tap into a sector that is rarely researched, material selection and personal values in home decoration. The results of the experiment and research will be helpful for the immersing and existing home accessories brands to conceive, design and implement successful, fruitful packaging and branding for their products and to understand the consumer's perspective in making a buying decision when faced with the choice of gifting or personal use.

Designers will benefit from the results of this thesis in having guidelines and a design roadmap when they to brand and conceive an identity for a package.

To assert or refute the hypothesis a comprehensive visual experiment will be conducted online in the form of a questionnaire. A vase will be modelled and rendered, its corresponding package will be next to it in the same picture, the package material, aesthetics and style does not match the material of the vase. for example: The plastic vase will be packaged and branded in a very sophisticated high-end aesthetic while the crystal one will get the "cheap" treatment.

**Literature Review**

In the below chapters, we will discover the theoretical background of the study, history and importance of packaging & branding, supporting theories, the process of packaging & branding the companies go through to triumph in the present competitive market, today's market trends, deciding factors for a successful packaging to increase a
company's market share, consumer decision making process and finally consumer behaviour & perception towards price and materials of both package and product.

**A walk-in time**

We've been packaging and branding our products and properties since the dawn of time, back in our cave days to the modern retail shelves, the process has evolved and developed yet did not steer away from its soul purposes. To identify and contain.

The development of packaging has assumed a critical part in the progression of mankind. Nowadays we underestimate how items are conveyed to the rack and how they are made and packaged to ensure against harm or waste [Dupuis S, Silva J (2011)].

Due to our curious nature as a specie and constant longing to new experiences, and our never ending constant need for new adventure, we conquered lands and new territories. This is human race's way to flourish, expand and build economies and civilizations. Exploring the new world meant carrying our food with us to satiate hunger or as a trade business, this food had to be packaged, preserved and branded to avoid theft and confusion when our ancestors were on the go. We carried herbs, coffee beans, spices and fabric. All these activities paved the way to economies to emerge hence the birth of economic and trade systems to be installed.

Below is a timeline of major packaging highlights in our recent history.
In their research for the marketing department for the University of Arizona, Wilson Bastos, Sidney J. Levy, (2012) stressed on the importance of sign and symbol conveying that they are fundamental elements of the marking marvel. As a type of stamp, branding is expensively ramified by application to oneself, to other individuals,
and to property, it takes both material and symbolic structures and is seen either positively or negatively. In spite of the fact that the regular comprehension of branding as the naming of an item is basically a straightforward one, the utilizations of this thought and the reasoning about it have advanced in drastic ways.

Mercer, J. (2010) found that trademark “is the tangible item of intellectual property – the logo, name, design, or image – on which the brand rests. But brands also incorporate intangibles such as identity, associations, and personality”.

Branding as naming a product or property is a denotative act that ignite several emotional and intellectual connotations. We have deeper connections with our properties and intellect, the act of naming them ours isn't enough. The sense of pride, ownership, distinction and our reputation immediately becomes imbedded with the symbol we carve on an urn or burn on the skin of our cattle.

We've been practicing the art of branding since centuries, marking our skin for various religious, cosmetic, social, political, psychological and cultural purposes. Men and women used a variety of substances around them to enhance their appearances.

A black powder made of smashed antimony, consumed almonds, lead, oxidized copper, ochre, fiery debris, malachite and chrysocolla called kohl was particularly famous for shading around the eyes in antiquated Egypt and different social orders. [www.4voo.com/education/ed_history].

Wilson Bastos, Sidney J. Levy, (2012) found that Inking, which originates from the Polynesian tatau, is utilized as a part of Borneo to connote rite of passage or being promoted – e.g. transitioning or be-coming a father. This sort of practices is found in many tribes in Africa in different styles.

Below is a timeline of major branding milestones in our recent history.
Small symbols, big meanings

The Chauvet Cave paintings are some of the first examples of how humans transmitted their world into visual representations that have deeper meaning. Despite lacking direct translation, the decorative swirls are an important demonstration of how our Homo Sapien ancestors were hard-wired to brand.

Brand language

Mark making
Derived from the Old Norse "brandr," meaning "to burn," branding started quite literally. Carve branding was one of the earliest examples of simplification, signifying ownership and, through association over time, connecting taste and quality.

Symbols that unite
As one-dwelling communities evolved into modern civilizations, so evolved our ability to capture concepts. The ritchvog - the sign of the fish - served as a secret symbol that united Christians under a common belief and built a strong focus for their sense of belonging.

Unifying brand
Recovered from the ruins of Pompeii, a loaf of miraculously preserved bread provokes a peak into early product differentiation. Markings on the bread signify its bakery of origin, size, price or intended recipient, demonstrating the need for branding in a complex market and simplifying consumer choice for perhaps the first time.

Competitors merge
Mixing brand identities can yield interesting results, such as when England and Scotland unified under the first version of the Union Jack, as an early example of a merger of competing brands. Later, with the inclusion of Ireland in 1801, it became the asymmetric octoly we know today, a potent symbol of an eclectic culture.

Intentionally iconic
Napoleon, not blessed with the ready-made brand of royalty, understood the power a leader's brand can command. Taking the traditions of royalty, he renamed, redesigned and repurposed them for himself and the Republic. He wore his hate sideways as a mark of his identity, and two centuries later this symbol of individualism is still remembered.

Taking ownership
Although products like pottery and baked goods have been marketed to show origin or ownership as far back as the firms millennium BC, it is only recently that this ownership has been protected. On January 1, 1876, the red triangle of Bass Air became the UK's first official trademark and paved the way for brands as we know them today.

From product to experience
The start of the 20th century saw the first glimpse of brand as experience when the tire manufacturers André and Édouard Michelin published the first edition of a free guide for French motorists. By providing maps and information to aid long journeys, they hoped to increase the demand for cars and therefore tires. In 1926 they went further, developing a three-star fine-dining rating system encouraging drivers to explore restaurants.

NBC chimes
NBC's xylophone chimes were first performed live on the radio in 1929 and in 1950 were registered as the first audio service mark. They are still in use today and have been heard by tens of millions of people. This pales next to the Nokia ring tone. In 2018, estimates suggest the tune was heard at 1.8 billion times per day, 20,000 times per second.

Lippincott's mad men
The first agencies to form in the 1950s were in-house agencies that handled the marketing of their companies' own products. This was in stark contrast to the independent agencies that would later dominate the industry.

Facebook 'Like' thumb up
In 2004, Facebook introduced the 'Like' button to its platform, allowing users to signal their affinity for content. This feature has since become ubiquitous on social media and has fundamentally changed the way brands interact with their audiences.

Nike Air Jordan
In 2006, Nike introduced the Air Jordan, marking a significant shift in the company's approach to marketing and product design. The shoe became an instant classic, setting new standards for athletic footwear.

Google logo, 2006
After releasing a new logo in 2006, Google quickly discovered the power of open dialogue with customers. "We're hearing loud and clear that you don't like the new logo," the company said on its Facebook page a few days after the logo's launch. "We only want what's best for the brand, and our customers... We're bringing back the

Abandoned Gap logo
In 2010, Gap was embroiled in a controversial marketing campaign that was widely criticized for its portrayal of a then-6-year-old girl in a risqué bikini top. The campaign was eventually pulled, but the damage to the brand's reputation was significant.

Power to the people
After releasing a new logo, Gap quickly discovered the power of open dialogue with customers. "We're hearing loud and clear that you don't like the new logo," the company said on its Facebook page a few days after the logo's launch. "We only want what's best for the brand, and our customers... We're bringing back the
Packaging and branding are two activities that have been present in our collective conscious and unconscious for several decades. We have an innate tendency to claim and mark what we desire and call it names, adjectives and eventually functions. We branded our skin to worship gods, painted our faces to fight enemies, pierced our bodies to intimidate a predator or signal commitment to our loved ones.

Creatively we used what's around us to package, preserve and carry food. From clay, to banana leaves to paper, we got ingenious with the little we had.

The Second World War in the 40's and 50's greatly affected the number of product manufacturing, which led to a huge competition among brands. Eventually big brands such Mc.Donald's and Burger King fought viciously for market shares.

That phenomenon led to intensive competition and proliferation of brands. In this scenario, minor brands and new brands came forth to challenge the top names. For example, McDonalds and Burger King fought for the hamburger market, Pepsi-Cola competed more vigorously with Coca-Cola, and Ipana faded before the growth of Colgate and Crest [Wilson Bastos, Sidney J. Levy, (2012)].

In the Coming chapter, we will discover the theories that support the hypothesis of this dissertation and its claim.
Theories that matters

According to Ernest & Young market analysis the world packaging market is valued at roughly 400B US$. Below is a graphical representation for the types of packaging and the respective geographical distribution.

Picture 3: EY analysis

Proving not only from a theoretical stand point but also numerical and quantified aspect. The packaging industry has an essential role in the product consumption experience, at the end it is the packaging and branding of the product that stays on the retail shelves the longest. Unlike a tv commercial or bill board sign, packaging reaches the 100% of the client base.

Product communication educates shoppers about package contents and ease the “first moment of truth” or product selection. Measuring the efficiency of containment, protection or even communication is easy. Packaging either meets physical containment or protection standards or educe sales and complies with informational needs. Estimating the adequacy of packaging utility, in any case, is vaguer. The ultimate judge of packaging utility is the shopper criteria like simplicity of opening, utilization and transfer are best estimated by the post-utilization states of mind or fulfilment they incite. The second "moment of truth", the tactile one either enforce the first "moment of truth" or refute it, after all we have easier time buying what we can touch.
Furthermore, in the Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics, Michael A. Long and Douglas L. Murray 2013 found that consumers are more inclined to purchase a product that is environmentally conscious, socially just and understanding the personal values of potential buyers increase marketing efficiency. Ethical consumption is the action of buying a brand or item that have symbolic values like social, environmental and health.

A few studies explored the impact of individual values on buyer's moral conduct and decision making the results detailed that personal values impact environmental behaviors, moral and maintainable usage patterns, water usage, prospect of buying from environmentally responsible brands are rooted within socially conscious buyers and they have a positive view on brands that align with those believes. [Gatersleben, B., Murtagh, N., Abrahamse, W., 2012] [Shaw, D., Grehan, E., Shiue, E., Hassan, L., Thomson, J., 2005] [Pinto, D.C., Nique, W.M., A~na~na, E.S., Herter, M.M., 2011] [Dickson, M.A., 2000].

Personal values are defined as “an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence” [Rokeach, M., 1973].

The present study will start the investigation on the correlation of product & packaging materials in consumer’s value perception, role of personal values in forming a purchase decision. Very few publications to none exist in the scientific community out there investigating and studying this aspect of packaging and branding.

The fruitful process

Like any industry out there, packaging and branding goods has to follow a certain hierarchy of thinking and doing thus planning is the initial step that an industry should begin with before moving to different stages. It comprises of the underlying examination about what will be designed and to whom.
To understanding the tedious organizational phase and what it entails, breaking down the process of packaging and branding is crucial. Therefore, 4 types of packaging are identified:

- primary packaging is the packaging that wraps the product when being sold to the end consumer. It's the packaging that is in direct contact with the product. It constitutes the majority of the packaging used all over the world.

- secondary packaging is the packaging used for assembling the sales units to permit ease of handling in the sales location. Eg: cardboard box.

- tertiary packaging or transport packaging, is it used to help the handling and transportation of a series of sales units or secondary packaging in order to prevent physical damage that may occur during delivery. Eg: cardboard box.

- unit load, it is the group of packaging in which more than one delivery packaging are grouped together for loading and unloading. Eg: unit which is repacked on the palette using a stretch film. [Aslihan Arikan 2011]
The study will focus on the primary packaging ie sales packaging, thus the process in broken down even further into 5 stages from conception to completion.

- Discovery: This stage is concerned exclusively with defining the objectives and the destinations of the package by inquiring about the item and the client's insights. This is the investigation stage and it incorporates the visual reviews, the advertising research client's insights, market research, company's manufacturing capacities and finally assigning a project manager and the team members.

- Creation: This phase is concerned with ideation and generation of many concepts ie brainstorming. Later the winning concepts that the team concur on are developed and presented visually for the customer. This stage includes story boards, mood boards and photographs.

- Refinement: This stage is about tweaking a selected concept and visual identity.

- Implementation: this is the phase where lines, colours and the materials are defined. Then the team gets filtered and the 3d rendering and the line extensions are completed. Usually a mock up design of the final outcome comes at this stage.

- Production: This final stage includes high resolution files, standardization of packaging style and colour correction. [Dupuis S, Silva J (2011)]
As shown, packaging and is a product on its own, planning, science and research come to play when packaging & branding a product. Following a well-structured approach and implementing design thinking ideally in a multidisciplinary team that comes from different backgrounds will render successful and competitive packaging that can get a product to stand out on retail shelves.

**Trending now**

For a brand to compete and ideally lead its sector, it should be able to keep up with current trends better yet predict them or if at all possible set them.

One of the essential articulations of the development in marking was the scan for an remarkable logo. Successful early designs distinguished Mercedes-Benz, Playboy, CBS, Air Canada, Westinghouse, and the Bell Telephone Company. Among the best are Coca-Cola, McDonalds, Nike, Apple, and Starbucks.

In addition to logos is the use of related figures, special elements of the line, visualizations, and sounds that represent the brand, speak of its character, and add to its unique appeal. Nike enlists the top athletes of the day; and there are Ronald McDonald and Budweiser’s Clydesdale horses. [Wilson Bastos, Sidney J. Levy, (2012)]

Another aspect is that most manufacturers place their logos on the top of the product packaging, which is mostly above the image of the product. This is to ensure that as consumers read the brand name, they are able to see the logo of the company that manufactured the product. This affects customer recognition on the estimation of

Buyers have a stronger inclination towards powerful brands whose logos are placed higher on the packaging than when it is placed lower. [Sundar, A., & Noseworthy, T. J. (2014)]

people buy commodities whose packaging reflects their personal characters and viewpoint, such as ecological protection, health, and safety, as opposed to marketing messages. “People buy things not only for what they can do, but also for what they mean” [Jerzyk, E. (2016)].

Several trends are emerging and become more staples rather than fades, there's a range of factors that influence the buying behavior of customers such as: Packaging Color, Design of Wrapper, Printed Information, Background image, Packaging Material, Innovation.

- Packaging Color

It has been demonstrated that hues have solid impact on discernment and accordingly shades of packaging can be vital. The correct selection of hues is a vital factor in making the impression expected to impact brand and item choice. Color of packaging has a critical part in differentiating a company's product from another. the determination of the hues and shading mixes is an important procedure for making a winning packing. The package color can significantly affect consumer's ability to perceive the item. Packaging color draws consideration of the buyers. Each color makes distinctive importance as indicated by the shopper discernment. White and dark colors are utilized for making power, red for vitality, blue is for trust, green for balance.

Selecting the color for package depends upon three characteristics: “hue” of color, “chroma” of color and “lightness” of color. A package must be designed keeping in view these things. [SOROKA W. (2009)]
Additionally, Choice of color varies according to culture and individuals as well. Individual’s perception and product selection behavior influences the selection of color. Consumer’s buying behavior is directly associated with color scheme of packaging because attractive colors are more tempting to eyes of the customers. [TABINDA SEHERA, MUHAMMAD ARSHADA, SHAHEER ELLAHIB AND MARYAM SHAHIDA (2012)]

The color of packaging becomes more important visual aid to consumers of low involvements items, while color of package becomes a low consideration for high involvement goods [KUPIEC, B. AND REVELL, B. (2001)].

Goods meant for the upper classes, highly priced and aesthetically refined and elegant need dark colors for their packaging.

Expensive products should have dark packages that contain expanded roman bold writing whereas low priced and reasonably priced goods should have light-colored packaging. Additionally, companies use horizontal lines and curves to illustrate products that are used by middle-class people since they are not selective [Aday, M. S. and Yener, U. (2014)] [Ampuero, O., & Vila, N. (2006)] [Gofman, A., Moskowitz, H.R. & Mets, T. (2010)].

- Packaging Material

Material of packaging is a vital component which prevents the product from loss. High quality material will attract customers more than a low one. Consumers are highly attracted by products that are packaged in glass material due to their transparent and healthy nature. On the other hand, plastic and paperboard packaging were preferred since they are easy to use and the packaging can be reused [Aday, M. S. and Yener, U. (2014)] [Shah, S., Ahmed, A., & Ahmad, N. (2013)].

- Font Style

Font is an imperative element of packaging which attracts the customer’s attention. Packaging information can create opposing results. It can pilot to misleading
or inaccurate information using small fronts and dense writing styles which are used on the package [38].

- Design of packaging

Attention-grabbing graphics make the product stand out on the shelf and attract the consumers. Graphics can affect through colors and printed lines on the package on which different signs and symbols are located. Visualizations and blends of different materials can urge purchasers to touch the package, in this way inspiring them to buy the item [Yonca Limon, Lynn R. Kahle, and Ulrich R. Orth (2009)] [Bo Rundh, (2009)].

- Printed Information

Contains all the information related to the product quality, price, description which help to identify the brand. The most visible and vital part of marketing communication a brand can posses. [Shah, S., Ahmed, A., & Ahmad, N. (2013)]

- Background-image

[Bo Rundh, (2009)] argued that pictures on the product are essential so they increment the consideration and increase commonality. Backdrop picture is the image in the brain of the client which help to distinguish the brand of the product. Lush pictures such as mountains, cars and beaches can ignite lifestyle aspirations in the customer's mind.

- Innovation

Adding versatility and innovation in the packaging design also increase the worth of the product like easy open, recyclable, easy store, breakability, child proof, eco-friendly [Shah, S., Ahmed, A., & Ahmad, N. (2013)].

Furthermore, below are some of the latest design inclinations in terms of branding and personifying a brand.
Hand drawn logos and labelling: quirky, hand-drawn or hand-written typography adds an individual, human feel to packaging and suggests to a buyer that there is a face behind the brand.

Hyper functional forms: packaging that goes beyond its initial requirements.

Kraft Paper: Kraft paper has high spring, a high tear resistance and it’s usually recyclable making it a perfect option for fast moving and instantly used products, like food. It’s environmentally friends. perfect for "green" brands.

ASAP: as simple as possible.

Geometry: graphic design's philosophy by making geometric patterns.

Abstract Art: Abstract line art accompanied with huge lettering and arbitrary shapes.

Packaging Inspired by History: Reference to the past, from 90's to pin up girls to drive through burger era.

Natural color palettes: color palette inspired by earth tones and pastels. Monochrome, usually no more than two or three colors.

Ornately old – fashioned: reference to old aesthetic in a modern interpretation.

SHELF LIFE: Products that stay for long in our households grabs our attention frequently because simply we see them all the time. The special side of that kind of product is that they reinforce their presence in current customers and attracts potential ones. [Chapman, M. (2015) 5] [Marshland, L., (2015)] [Polizzi, M., (2015)] [Lascano, J., (2014)].
Factors for a successful package

The demand for consumer goods has been relatively still. Nevertheless, demographic change and bigger competition has required innovation on the packaging side. Recently we’ve seen numerous new developments, for example:

1. ease of use features such as resalable packs, easy-opening and stand-up pouches.

2. Smaller pack sizes for single-serving and on-the-go use.
3. Brand breadth and a variety of choices to keep clients interested.

4. More striking and colorful designs to improve brand awareness and to stand out on the shelf.

5. Development of products in new shapes, new materials and colors of packagings.

Firms should invest in the right technologies and build their portfolio in alliance with the real market trend setter, the end consumer. Companies have to have a solid relationship and transparent communication with their clients and listen actively to what they want, trends and needs are in constant change. As a result the trio relationship of R&D department, designers and consumers is the key factors for profitable brand growth. Consequently, packaging companies should manage six strategic steps, to stabilise the costs of raw materials: reduction of material in production, to spend less on printing machinery, to emphasize on finding the right metrics for performance indicators, to foster a healthy relationship with the end user, to be innovative and to maintain an effective supply chain [Ernst & Young Global Limited].

From an aesthetic and mechanical side of packaging and branding, 6 factors were identified by Dupuis and Silva for a successful ahead of the herd packaging solutions that will enable a brand to stay longer on the shelve and prevail in some cases.

- "Don't react, react". Meaning that a brand should anticipate better yet set trends and not react to what the market throws at it. Basically, a brand should not be afraid to be a trend setter rather than trend follower. Many brands acknowledge that, these brands tend to update their visual presentation before it becomes weary, keeping consumes stunned.

- Connect on an emotional level. people react to emotions; therefore, a designer should be aware of that fact and apply it on the package, palette of structure, photography, typography, illustration, and graphic elements. The emotional relationship between the customer and the brand is an outcome of the appearance of the brand using media touch
points. Consumer-behaviour studies shows that people may decide to buy a product based on a set of facts and needs, but they do the actual purchase based on feelings. Buying isn't necessarily a reasonable decision, it's frequently an emotional one.

- don't settle for parity. 30% of brands are overlooked by consumers due to shelves being overcrowded. The brand should always observe a product position in relation with its competitors.

- focus on core values. core values are the believes and DNA of a brand usually drawn by the founder, a designer should always pay respect to them and keep them as the compos of the design and stress them when possible. This is how a brand keep its integrity and differentiates itself from its competitors.

- Validate. it is imperative that a company conduct a thorough investigation and research before starting the design phase and after the brainstorming sometimes consumer in use observation sessions is needed.

- Collaborate. This does not only concern colleagues but also includes clients in the process of creation who are ultimately the buyers and judges of your success or failure.

A brand should not only focus on cutting cost and be efficient in coming up with new ways to package and cut cost, the factors of a successful package should be a marriage between the technical/mechanical side of the packaging and the aesthetic emotional side.

**Consumer behavior & perception**

Every day, we are confronted with making both rational and emotional decisions. People are drawn to the rational and tend to think it's the "right" way to go because it is explainable, measurable, and often based on facts. However, rational thinking does not always win in the game of packing and branding from consumer behav-
our standpoint. Sometimes it's all about emotions and how we feel at that moment where our hand reaches that product on the shelf.

Even though they look the same, the two sides of the brain function differently. The left side is for rational and analytical thoughts, while the right-side handles the emotional, and the artistic aspect of our thinking. It seems that, individuals do have a favourite way of approaching the world-rationally or emotionally, using left- or right-brain thinking. By recognizing this facet of our nature, theory becomes practice when objectives to satisfy both or either are put into the design process. This is especially momentous in the early planning and strategy phases of development [Dupuis S, Silva J (2011)].
By understanding this biological & indisputable reality and recognizing it, brands can navigate and target their niche more effectively and reach to their target audience easily.

The average consumer is facing constant messages right and left luring him to buy this product or that, having retailers and brand constantly firing their commodities at us we developed a filtering system to delete unnecessary visual clutter. Packaging keeps evolving, and so do needs, cultures and trends. Technological advancement and material abundance changed the game of packaging and branding by inducing technology led designs. Lifestyle and value trends will always manipulate the face of packaging. It is a reflection of our culture and time. It's who we are now at this moment.

Seeing how customers encounter a brand and its items is the key to effective promoting. All things considered, the brand is more than beautiful logo. It has identity and character. Individuals incline toward brands that are "friendly". This association requires more than a pretty shape and color. A brand can be silent but via design language it can convey meaning, feelings and ideology.

Brands and advertisers need to acknowledge they are not simply selling commodities, they are recounting stories through packaging. package design is the visual articulation of the brand's spirit. Utilized successfully, packaging can characterize, fabricate, and engage buyers. Successful brands are not built on the fact that consumers behave a certain way but rather from understanding why these particular consumers behave the way they do. [Dupuis S, Silva J (2011)]

If an alien civilization one day visits us and go through our garbage bins, they can easily understand us as a specie. We are beings in constant struggle between what makes sense and what feel better!

Because of the increase of awareness and transparency, clients now have access to information and are well educated visually due to internet, packaging and
Branding play a huge role in encouraging or discoursing purchase when the clients is faced with numerous competing brands on the same shelf.

Packaging is the last way for you to talk to your potential client, therefore it is worth it to ensure that it is done right to secure a sale. This can be achieved in the form of imagery, brand values, products functionality or pure innovation.

Brands should consider a strong packaging because it can provide a number of business benefits including:

- visual representation of the brand’s ideology and values
- major enjoyment experience hence repeated business
- bigger impact at point of purchase
- New distribution channels or opportunities

More than 70% of buying decisions are made at the shelf, since packaging of product is the first thing that a consumer sees, it plays an essential role in separating a brand from competition.

Marketers know this and create packaging that will draw in buyers. The change in consumer decision making means that brands should adapt to these ever shifting changes and invest in market research and marketing. [Nawaz Ahmad, MohibBillo & Asad Lakhan].

As a result and due to the vital role and benefits of consumer behavior studies, brands should invest in finding out what their clients want and desire to strategically form a marketing approach to respond to their client's needs.

Numerous studies in the field of consumer behaviour stresses on the importance of this predicting field for brands to understand and be able to create valued products or services to cater to the wants of their customers. Consumer behaviour is an action that involves potential buyers obtaining, consuming and ordering of products or services. Further definition is the way people base their purchase decision of any kind of commodity by using their available resources such as money, time and effort.
Moreover, consumer behaviour in a holistic definition is the activity where people decide to buy or get rid of a product or service relying on past experiences and ideas. Consumers become satisfied when they get a good deal on what they have paid for, a wholesome bundle of product, image and service. The more the product is unique the happier and more satisfied the client will be and likely that will signal repeated business. Nevertheless, for a customer to be satisfied he/she should understand and acknowledge the offer product. Consumer behavior can be evaluated from two stand points: The decision-making process and the factors affecting the buying process [Blackwell, R.D., Miniard, P.W., Engel, F.J. (2001)] [Schiffman, L.G., Kanuk, L. (2000)] [Gabbott, M., Hogg, G. (1998)] [Fredericks, J.O., Salter, M.J. (1995)].

Consumers may not be aware of the influence their surroundings and psyche have on them when they reach out for that commodity on the retail shelves. In fact we like to think that we make our decisions solely based on personal preferences but in reality we conduct these decisions in parallel with many external factors as much as internal.

First, cultural factors for example, the way of life and esteem, subculture and social class of the purchasers. Culture makes an important set of values, taste, requests and practices affected by the shopper’s family, companions and the general public. Different countries have varied cultural influences that can be a decisive role whenever people decide to make the purchase. Thus, the decision making process might vary from a city to another or from a country to another. Each big culture has a subculture that share the same beliefs system, values and convictions. Subcultures can be separated into nationalities, religious affiliations, geographical regions, racial groups and ethnicity.[Lamb, C.W., Hair, J.F., McDaniel, C. (2004)].

The social factor is number two, which is made up of peer groups, family members, view leaders, colleagues and associates. This factor is crucial as every society has a form of social class arrangement. This factor has a tremendous effect on consumer's decision making process between people interact with each other on a daily basis and this build trust among them which can be an essential role and where a potential cus-
customer might go for advice or recommendation on a certain product before deciding if it's worth the buy. [Bigne, J.E., Sanchez, M.I., Sanchez, J. (2001)].

The third factor is the individual factor. People have different characteristics such as age, gender, lifestyle and self-concept and so on that can affect and constitute beliefs and ideals. Logically, individuals consume diverse products and services which changes all through their entire lifetime. For example a senior will have clothing needs than a teenager and a girl will have totally different product needs than a boy. Personality is a key attribute to constitute our self image and self concept that can affect dramatically what we decide to buy, a vegan will most probably never buy a fur coat for example. [Kotler, P. (1988)] [Brassington, F., Pettitt, S. (2000)] [Macdonald, E.K., Sharp, M.B. (2000)] [Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R., Lowe, A. (2002)].

The final factor is the psychological factor that serves as an index of client’s interaction in their own society. Acknowledging this powerful factor, brands and firms can regulate, design, and speak the client's language that will satisfy them and gain their trust hence the purchase action. Consumer's behavior is always changing through their learning cycle and interaction with cues and stimulus, brand can watch and learn and deliver product that align with their target group's values and belief system.. [Lamb, C.W., Hair, J.F., McDaniel, C. (2004), Marketing. 7th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press] [Kotler, P., Wong, V., Saunders, J., Armstrong, G. (2005), Principles of Marketing. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.]
Consumer decision making process

Developed predominantly by Engel et al. (1968) the decision making process the potential client go through is divided into 3 main stages, The pre-purchase, the purchase and the post-purchase. When buying a product a consumer will go through several stages like need acknowledgment, they seek information from internally and externally sources, assessment of alternatives, purchase decision and post-purchase. Below is an explanation for each stage.

- Need acknowledgment

This stage is concerned with unsatisfied needs of a client both utilitarian and emotional/psychological ones. When these two needs arise, the potential buyer will have to answer them and hence the recognition of an unsatisfied need, may it be perceptual or tangible one. While the first need refers to the functionality and purpose of the product, the second is concerned with the buyers' sentiments and feelings towards the product [Solomon, M., Bamossy, G., Askegaard, S., Hogg, K.M. (2006)].
- Internal and external information search

At this stage the consumer is on search for information to guide his decision, lots of factors and variables will incline this decision such as personality traits, likes, dislikes, income, social status and what his perception of the brand if he has any or simply a past engagement. Searching internally, the client will rely on past experiences and friction with brand while external searching relies on the environment surrounding him such as other consumers, friends, commercials and public resources. Furthermore, customers go into pre-search mode when they recognize an unfulfilled need and they look for information on how to satisfy it and ongoing search mode that is connected to one’s specific interested in a certain brand and try to keep up with the news that this particular brand supply [Solomon, M., Bamossy, G., Askegaard, S., Hogg, K.M. (2006)] [Moorthy, S., Ratchford, B.T., Talukdar, D. (1997)] [Tsai, M., Liang, W., Liu, M. (2007)].

- Evaluation of alternatives

At this stage the consumer identified their unfulfilled need and now he will pursue a stage of evaluation of competing products. Naturally, the final decision will come to the item that fulfil the most of their needs and desires. Consumer's buying decision is consequently based on several merits such as size, quantities, quality, and prices. Brands can build value by offering lower prices as well as having a different character with its competitor [Kotler, P., Wong, V., Saunders, J., Armstrong, G. (2005)] [Porter, M.E. (2004)].

- Purchase decision

The fourth stage is when the consumer evaluated competing brands from retailers and is ready to make his mind. After this stage, consumers decide where to whom they will give their money and purchase from which retailer, they will base their decisions on the product attributes from the previous stages. It's worth mentioning that the way a product displayed and its surrounding environment have great deal of effect on a potential client's decision. [Aslihan Aрикан, Interpack special edition 2011].
• Post-purchase

The last stage is split into 3 segments, the first is when customer uses and consumes the product or service, the second is the evaluation one where the client will evaluate the performance of the mentioned product or service and compare it with his expectations and level of satisfaction, at the last segment is when the consumer dispose or recycle the product. The last segment is getting a lot of attention from brands because of the rise of environmental consciousness among clients. [Aslihan Arikan, Interpack special edition 2011].

This shows that packaging can either encourage or discourage the consumer to buy a product or service. Manufacturers have currently invented new technologies in packaging that focus on consumers due to the growing completion that is attributed to by globalization. The brand name also influences consumer-buying habits since consumers associate the value of the product with the brand name, which is mostly printed on the packages. From the studies, it is evident that there is a great connection between packaging, perception and consumer buying habits.
Methodology

In this study, we will examine the impact of packaging/branding and personal values to 3 types of variables: the impact of packaging/branding to consumer buying behaviour and to quality perception about the product and the effect of material selection on both the packaging and the product on the perception of value. the impact of personal values to final purchase decision.

In order to find these relationships, an online survey approach will be conducted to collect data from people coming from different nationalities, cultural background, ages and sex.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1= Positive relation between packaging/branding and consumer buying performance hence quality acuity.

Hypothesis 2= Positive relation between material selection of the product and package and perception of value.

Hypothesis 3= Positive relation between personal values and purchase decision.

Research approach

To assert or refute the hypotheses and due to the restricted timeframe, a quantitative system was chosen in order to collect factual data hence a comprehensive visual experiment was conducted online in the form of an online questionnaire that was completed anonymously by the participants in order to promote truthfulness and avoid prejudice. The survey was in English given the several nationalities that took part of the study. A vase was modelled and rendered, its corresponding package will be next to it in the same picture, the package material, aesthetics and style will not match the material of the vase and vice versa. Each set will have a personal value correspondence to it. This approach will allow us to understand the correlation the consumer link between the aesthetic and style of the branding in relation to the material used and how their personal values affect their final purchase decision. Moreover, the sur-
vey was visually stimulating to keep the respondents intrigued and to further assist the researcher in the interpretation of consumers’ intentions.

**Population**

The sample population will be pooled between Germany, Greece and Lebanon. All the interviewees will be Bachelor holders and above from different ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, sex and age groups.

**Sample and data collection**

The sample was selected from students and teachers of International Hellenic University, Thessaloniki, Greece. Work colleagues, acquaintances and strangers. A total of 286 questionnaire was distributed out of which 230 were answered and returned from which only the completed answers will be analysed and taken into measure for accuracy. The survey's time frame was 1 month starting from 30/11/2017 until 30/12/2017 This period was deemed sufficient to gather a sufficient sum of responses, while keeping irregularities under relevant control. The survey consisted of 8 questions.

**Instruments**

The data was analysed through SurveryHero smart engines for the summary of the responses and the general interpretations, while more thorough analysis was performed in Excel.

**Sample Composition**

The sample consisted of 68.33% female population and 31.67% male population while the highest age range was between 20 & 30 years old with 64.84% of the population. Moreover, 80.11% of the population held a Master’s degree.

Nationalities of the responders ranged between Greeks, Lebanese, Germans and other Mediterranean and North American nationalities.
Picture 9: Demographics figures.
Results analysis & discussion

In the first question the vase was given an aluminum finish for a material and its box a wooden veneer with a French brand name using capital letters and a classical roman serif font that is associated with high end luxury brands. Dark wood was chosen for the box to signify luxury and the COO was mentioned and the techniques used to make the vase as well as factory's water policy and the environmental effect of making this vase.

Respondents were asked for their first reaction to the product and the reason for their answers and they were asked to price it. Below are the answers tables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>100-200</th>
<th>200-300</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very positive</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>packaging/branding is high end</td>
<td>23.30%</td>
<td>63.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>made in China</td>
<td>7.95%</td>
<td>28.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>100% recyclable</td>
<td>44.89%</td>
<td>7.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>factory water policy</td>
<td>3.41%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very negative</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>uses a lot of natural resources</td>
<td>20.45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results indicate that the positive image of a brand is derived from its environmental responsibility and the way it chooses its visual identity, while the material selection of the product and its package is still a deciding factor for its worth.
What is your first reaction to the product and why?

- Positive: 102
- Neutral: 36
- Very positive: 36
- Negative: 13
- Very negative: 3

Because

- Aging/branding is high end: 41x chosen (23.30%)
- Made in China: 14x chosen (7.95%)
- Nat of natural resources: 36x chosen (20.48%)
- Factory water policy: 6x chosen (3.41%)
- 100% recyclable: 79x chosen (44.89%)

How much would you price it?

- 100-200: 115x chosen (63.54%)
- 200-300: 51x chosen (28.18%)
- 300-400: 13x chosen (7.18%)
- 500+: 2x chosen (1.10%)
The second vase was made of high end 24% led crystal that is the utmost precious glass material and the highest it can get, next to it was its packaging made of cheap recyclable cardboard with generic branding and a flat sans serif font and unreadable print. The COO was France it was handmade and the ingredients of the crystal mentioned.

Participants were asked to rate the quality of the vase, state the reason of their choice and price it. Results came as the following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>100-200</th>
<th>200-300</th>
<th>300-400</th>
<th>500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>packaging/branding is low end</td>
<td>22.10%</td>
<td>14.92%</td>
<td>36.46%</td>
<td>14.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>uses a lot of natural resources</td>
<td>12.71%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average</td>
<td>High end crystal</td>
<td>28.73%</td>
<td>14.92%</td>
<td>36.46%</td>
<td>12.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>20% recyclable crystal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>Made in France</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analyzing these results, one can conclude that even though the buyer acknowledges the preciousness of the vase material and knows it's value on the market but when it comes to gifting, the potential buyer still requires a fitting packaging reflecting the material of the commodity. Having a cheap packaging affected the perception of value for this vase which can be translated with the 48.57% of respondents pricing it between 100 to 200 Euros when clearly the vase is worth more than 500 Euros.
How would you rate the quality of the product and why?
Number of responses: 181

- very low: 3x chosen (1.66%)
- low: 23x chosen (12.71%)
- average: 52x chosen (28.73%)
- high: 83x chosen (45.86%)
- very high: 20x chosen (11.05%)

Because
Number of responses: 181

- made in France: 22x chosen (12.15%)
- 20% recycled crystal: 26x chosen (14.31%)
- Packaging/branding is low end: 40x chosen (22.10%)
- From natural resources: 27x chosen (14.92%)
- High end crystal: 66x chosen (36.46%)

How much would you price it?
Number of responses: 175

- 500: 10x chosen (5.71%)
- 300-400: 29x chosen (16.57%)
- 100-200: 85x chosen (48.57%)
- 200-300: 51x chosen (29.14%)
Vase number 3 was handmade of 24 karat gold in France with 50% recycled gold and 5% of net profit going to the commission on the status of women, a global NGO caring for women issues and needs worldwide. The branding used a hologram logo with a handwritten typeface to encourage familiarity, color was velvet red to grab the attention of the potential buyer and a colourful pattern was used to insinuate modernity and youth.

When the participants were asked what is the thing they like the most about this combination, the reason for their answers and the price they think is appropriate, the answers came as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Handmade</th>
<th>36.26%</th>
<th>Reflects value</th>
<th>17.03%</th>
<th>100-200</th>
<th>9.39%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSW donation</td>
<td>13.74%</td>
<td>Align with my personal values</td>
<td>13.74%</td>
<td>200-300</td>
<td>24.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging/branding</td>
<td>20.33%</td>
<td>Eye catching colors</td>
<td>24.18%</td>
<td>300-400</td>
<td>27.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COO</td>
<td>2.75%</td>
<td>Reflect quality</td>
<td>31.87%</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>38.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vase material</td>
<td>26.92%</td>
<td>High end material</td>
<td>13.19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results show that there is a positive relation between an appropriate packaging/branding and quality acuity translated in the 31.87% of the respondent’s answers furthermore it sows the positive relation between the material of the product and the perception of value show in the 500 Euros price the 38.67% of the participants chose. When it comes to personal values it seems they become less significant when there’s a successful marriage of material and branding.
What are the things you like most about this vase and why?
Number of responses: 182

- Vase material: 49x chosen (26.92%)
- Handmade: 66x chosen (36.26%)
- Country of origin: 5x chosen (2.73%)
- Packaging/branding: 37x chosen (20.33%)
- C$W donation: 25x chosen (13.74%)

Because
Number of responses: 182

- Reflect value: 31x chosen (17.03%)
- High end material: 24x chosen (13.19%)
- Reflect quality: 58x chosen (31.87%)
- Eye catching colors: 44x chosen (24.18%)
- 6th my personal values: 25x chosen (13.74%)

How much would you price it?
Number of responses: 181

- 100-200: 17x chosen (9.39%)
- 200-300: 45x chosen (24.86%)
- 300-400: 49x chosen (27.07%)
- 500+: 70x chosen (38.67%)

The 4th vase was made of machine cut Italian 100% new marble. The factory uses 40% renewable energy, male only staff, and donates 10% of its profits to MSF Medecins Sans Frontieres, next to it a generic cardboard box with a mountain graphic art and the name of the brand using a flat font.

When asked to rate the value of money, explain their choice and price the vase answers came as follow:

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>poor</td>
<td>2.21%</td>
<td>Packaging/branding is</td>
<td>11.24%</td>
<td>22.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>8.84%</td>
<td>low end</td>
<td>16.85%</td>
<td>33.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average</td>
<td>20.44%</td>
<td>Uses lots of natural</td>
<td>10.11%</td>
<td>30.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>43.09%</td>
<td>resources</td>
<td>8.43%</td>
<td>13.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excellent</td>
<td>25.41%</td>
<td>Staffing policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High quality marble</td>
<td>53.37%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysing these results, one can clearly see that there is a positive relation between the material of the product and the perception of value shown in the 43% of answers stating that the product is above average for value of money and the 53% answers that stated the reason to be high quality marble. Yet, when asked to price it only 13.41% priced it at 500 Euros showing once again the positive relation between packaging/branding and perception of quality.
How would rate the value for money of the below vase and why?

Number of responses: 181

- excellent: 46x chosen (25.41%)
- above average: 78x chosen (43.09%)
- average: 37x chosen (20.44%)
- below average: 16x chosen (8.84%)
- poor: 4x chosen (2.21%)

Because

Number of responses: 178

- High quality markle: 95x chosen (53.37%)
- Staffing policy: 15x chosen (8.43%)
- 10% MFR: 18x chosen (10.11%)
- A lot of natural resources: 30x chosen (16.85%)
- Packaging/branding is low end: 20x chosen (11.24%)

How much would you price it?

Number of responses: 179

- 200-300: 60x chosen (33.52%)
- 300-400: 54x chosen (30.17%)
- 100-200: 41x chosen (22.91%)
- 500+: 24x chosen (13.41%)

The fifth vase was made of mould cast plastic in china with 80% new non-biodegradable plastic. The corresponding box was an elegant black industrial leather with a French silver engraved font and name, branded in a high-end fashion. The chemical impact of the leathers dye was indicated.

The respondents were asked if the vase material matches the packaging/branding and box material. 59.41% said yes whereas 40.59% said no. When asked the reason the majority that answered with positive correspond it to the color matching of both the vase and the box, the non-eco-friendly and bad environmental impact they both have, the cheapness of both the plastic and leather material, the minimal design language, lines and aesthetics of both and the fact that both materials are industrial.

The 40.59% who answered with negative had the impression that box’s and vase materials crashed and did not match, one is cheap and the other reflected class and high end. Furthermore, according to respondents the packaging/branding does not match the material of the vase, potential customers expected the crystal or marble one to come be in that fancy leather box. Respondents indicated that the vase and the box have different value for money.

When asked to price it, 73% answered between 100 and 200 Euros, 19% between 200 and 300 Euros, 7% between 300 and 400 Euros and 1% at 500 Euros.

The results show a clear positive relation between material selection of the product and its corresponding packaging and the effect of that on perception of value presented in the answers and pricing with 73% choosing 100 to 200 Euros as a price. This vase was deemed un matching with its box because of material conflict. Furthermore, the results showed us that having similar design language and style between the commodity and its branding such as color, lines and geometry leads to affirmative relation proving hypothesis 1.
Does the vase material match the packaging/branding and box material? Why?
Number of responses: 170

No: 69x chosen (40.59%)
Yes: 101x chosen (59.41%)

How much would you price it?
Number of responses: 179

100-200: 130x chosen (72.63%)
200-300: 34x chosen (18.99%)
300-400: 13x chosen (7.26%)
500: 2x chosen (1.12%)
Vase 6 was made of high end handmade Limoges porcelain in France and 100% biodegradable. The corresponding box next to it was branded in a low-end fashion with semi glossy white generic box carrying the vases image in a cheap manner. When asked what is the thing that they like to improve the most and to price it, answers came as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>100-200</th>
<th>200-300</th>
<th>300-400</th>
<th>500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background image</td>
<td>18.78%</td>
<td>48.04%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed information</td>
<td>16.02%</td>
<td>36.87%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging material</td>
<td>34.81%</td>
<td>10.61%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging color</td>
<td>11.05%</td>
<td>4.47%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logo font</td>
<td>19.34%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly the vase is worth 500 Euros and more but the low-end packaging material of the box and its branding affected its value perception proving hypothesis 1 and 2 once again.
What are the things that you would like to improve in this vase?

Number of responses: 181

- background image: 34x chosen (18.78%)
- logo font: 35x chosen (19.34%)
- packaging color: 20x chosen (11.05%)
- printed information: 29x chosen (16.02%)
- packaging material: 63x chosen (34.81%)

How much would you price it?

Number of responses: 179

- 100-200: 86x chosen (48.04%)
- 200-300: 66x chosen (36.87%)
- 300-400: 19x chosen (10.61%)
- 500: 8x chosen (4.47%)
The last vase was made of machine cut recycled biodegradable plywood in Vietnam, sustainable forestry policy and 5 % profit went to reforestation. The box was made of Vicuna wool, the most expensive material in the world with 3000 USD for a yard that comes from a rare animal in South America. Branded in a high end fashion with the brand name engraved in gold.

Participants were asked if the vase was low end, mid end or high end brand and to price the combination. Below are the answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>100-200</th>
<th>200-300</th>
<th>300-400</th>
<th>500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High end</td>
<td>47.22%</td>
<td>32.78%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid end</td>
<td>35.56%</td>
<td>26.67%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low end</td>
<td>17.22%</td>
<td>17.78%</td>
<td>22.78%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly the vase is made of cheap plywood so the value is low yet accompanied with a high end looking branding and material of the container affected the potential buyer’s perception of quality presented with the majority deeming it a high end brand, this asserts hypothesis 1. Furthermore, even though the packaging is high end but the respondents still were aware of the cheapness of the plywood and priced between 100 and 200 Euros asserting again hypothesis 2. Personal values were not a deciding factor on this vase and were not put into consideration.
This is a
Number of responses: 180

low end brand: 31x chosen (17.22%)
mid end brand: 64x chosen (35.56%)
high end brand: 85x chosen (47.22%)

How much would you price it?
Number of responses: 180

500: 41x chosen (22.78%)
100-200: 59x chosen (32.78%)
200-300: 48x chosen (26.67%)
300-400: 32x chosen (17.78%)
When asked to choose a vase, the participant answered the below.

**I choose vase number**

Number of responses: 180

![Pie chart showing the distribution of vase choices](chart.png)

Putting personal taste aside, the below table explains the reason behind the participants' final choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>packaging/branding</th>
<th>Reflects Quality</th>
<th>vase material sustainability</th>
<th>Recyclability</th>
<th>Vase material</th>
<th>Package material</th>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Vase color</th>
<th>Value for money</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vase 1</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>❌</td>
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<td>Vase 2</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vase 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vase 7</td>
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Conclusions and recommendations

In the investigational part of the study a visual method approach was used and the results were acquired from a survey conducted as an online questionnaire. The responses provided information about consumer’s considerations on packaging/branding design language, product and packaging material also personal values such as environmental considerations as influential factors of purchase decisions, consumers’ behaviour regarding home decor products, perception of value and quality. The conclusions of the research were analyzed and also presented.

Matching with the research findings, packaging will always be an influence on retail performance and it conveys a significant role aesthetically and informatively in the selling of a product and it is a conveyer of quality in some cases, many respondents chose their vase because they liked its packaging regardless of the actual vase material. We live in an age of transparency and easy access to information hence the consumer is aware of the environmental impact a product and its package can have, as noticed potential customers had an affinity and preference for packaging and products with less carbon footprint and not so damaging for the environment, several participants expressed the reason of their choice was also the donations a vase company does for a case they feel touched or passionate about.

Participants who are knowledgeable with materials expressed their appreciation for marble or crystal. When choosing a final vase they opted for the one with an impressive packaging, showing how important the visual language and material of a package. Furthermore, participants seemed to favor a combination where the value of the vase material is either accompanied with impressive packaging/branding or high personal and environmental values like in vase 3 and 4 they perceived these combinations to reflect value.

Finally and as we progress in a high speed visual world and "green" era, consumers are more aware, engaged and personally invested in what they buy. They want brands to be humane about their conduct and identify with their beliefs and concerns. Brands are entities these days therefore it is recommended for the upcoming and ex-
isting brands to find the perfect balance between branding's visual language and aesthetics that corresponds to the product's material value, product material and to be environmentally conscious because the customer is concerned nowadays about sustainability and carbon footprint of what they buy with their money.

**Limitations to the study**

Although the research was carefully prepared and has reached its aims, there were inevitable limitation.

First because of the time limit, this research was conducted only on small size of population therefore to generalize the results for larger groups, the study should have involved more participants. Second is the language barrier, this research was conducted in English and the majority of participants did not have the enough proficiency. Third The subjectivity of the quantitative research approach is debatable specially when it comes to décor item participants showed a high level of personal preference to material and packaging. Fourth is the lack of material knowledge the participants had due to the different educational backgrounds. Fifth and due to time constraints data collection method would have been more inclusive and increased the scope and depth of the research if it was accompanied with other supporting methods.

The above limitations are opportunities for further investigation and will hopefully inspire latter students and scholars to overcome them with creative manners when the nurturing conditions are available.
Bibliography


Appendix

What is your first reaction to the product and why?

1

- very positive
- positive
- neutral
- negative

- very negative

Because

- made in China
- 100% recyclable
- factory water policy
- used a lot of natural resources

- packaging/branding is high end

How much would you price it?

Please Choose...
How would you rate the quality of the product and why?

Because

How much would you price it?

Please Choose...
What are the things you like most about this vase and why?

3

- vase material
- country of origin
- packaging/branding
- CSW donation
- handmade
- high end material
- reflect quality
- eye catching colors
- align with my personal values
- reflect value

How much would you price it?

Please Choose...
How would you rate the value for money of the below vase and why?

4

- excellent
- above average
- average
- below average
- poor

Because

- high quality marble
- staff policy
- 10% MSF
- uses a lot of natural resources
- packaging/branding is low end

How much would you price it?
Does the vase material match the packaging/branding and box material? Why?

- Yes
- No

Because

*please indicate your choice in the explanation.*

How much would you price it?
What are the things that you would like to improve in this vase?

☐ logo font
☐ packaging color
☐ packaging material
☐ printed information
☐ background image

How much would you price it?

Please Choose...
This is a
?

☐ low end brand  ☐ mid end brand  ☐ high end brand

How much would you price it?

Please Choose...
I choose vase number

Please Choose...

Because

*Please indicate your choice in the explanation.*
Age

Please Choose...

Education

Please Choose...

Nationality


Gender

Please Choose...