

PACKAGING DESIGN AS RESOURCE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF BRAND IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces research in progress* aimed at developing empirically-based guidelines to assist managers in selecting wine packaging design elements that evoke strategically valued consumer impressions. A series of studies identifies salient packaging design elements and links those elements to product-category specific brand personality impressions. Ultimately, by more accurately matching packaging design elements to package content, buyer disconfirmation of expectations after initial purchase will be minimized, stimulating repeat sales.

INTRODUCTION

“Whether the message is about history or sense of place, style or a level of craftsmanship, a wine’s label and packaging are the winemaker’s only means of communicating his intent.” (Caldewey & House, 2003, p.70)

Brand communications involve various verbal, auditory and non-verbal images, used both to capture and hold consumers’ attention and to serve as retrieval cues for later recall. These elements can relate to the brand identity in a meaningful way, or they can be unrelated. By far, the most extensively investigated elements are advertising and pricing. In contrast, product packaging as a marketing communications vehicle for brand managers is just starting to receive attention in marketing research (Underwood & Klein, 2002). Academic interest in packaging has become more pronounced over the past decade, however, with scholars measuring relationships such as the impact of package size (Wansink, 1996), product pictures (Underwood & Klein, 2002) or elongation (Wansink & Van Ittersum, 2003) on consumer preferences.

A central stream within this research concerns the visual impact of packaging on consumer responses to the product. A body of empirical studies has measured the impact of package appearance on consumer attention, categorization and evaluation during brand choice (Plasschaert & Floet 1995; Schoormans & Robben, 1997; Garber, Burke, & Jones, 2000). While demonstrating that package form, function, and appearance can have a powerful impact on a variety of consumer responses to a product, this stream has provided scant guidance to assist managers in selecting packaging design elements that create strategically relevant impressions. This research aims to address this shortcoming by examining how packaging design creates and reinforces brand identity.

Goal of Research

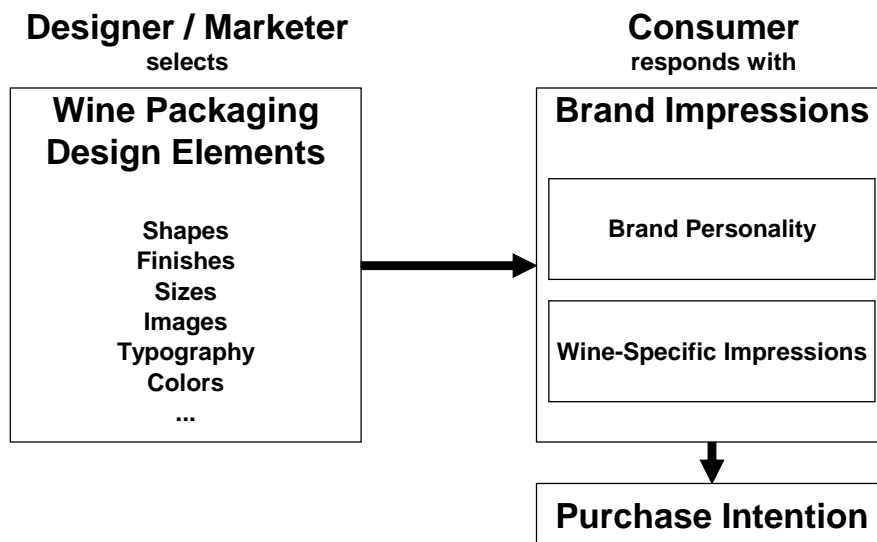
A thorough review of the literature on packaging design reveals that there are no meaningful guidelines for developing holistic packaging design (guidelines needed by design

* Complete results will be available for presentation during the conference.

and marketing professionals). While not restricted to wine marketing, this lack of guidelines may lead to packaging designs that fail to achieve brand management objectives. For example, reports on wine brands such as *Fetzer* changing their packaging typically discuss the brand image or the essence that management hopes to communicate through the new packaging design (Caputo, 2005). Marketers charge designers with the task of developing appealing wine packaging that communicates desired brand images and corporate identity (Firstenfeld, 2005; Mackay, 2005; Teichgraeber, 2005). Frequently, creative and advertising executives develop packaging design that *they* believe communicates the brand identity best, based on past experience and intuition.

Do these packaging designs developed using executives' experience and intuition effectively communicate the desired message? Consumer feedback is infrequently obtained; in rare cases when it is, it is most likely to be qualitative focus group feedback. Yet, the implicit assumption of a homogeneous buyer response to a design is highly unlikely. More likely, a range of responses and trade-offs exist between design elements and responses that brand managers must consider when developing communications. Thus, guidelines are needed to assist packaging design stakeholders (e.g., wine marketers, designers, packaging manufacturers) in managing the range of brand impressions created through their design choices. To develop and refine meaningful guidelines for packaging design selection, this research outlines an empirical investigation 1) to identify packaging design elements that best capture differences among wine packaging designs, and 2) to determine how those design elements are related to response dimensions in terms of perceived brand identity and wine-specific brand impressions. The following Figure 1 visualizes the underlying model.

FIGURE 1. Conceptual Framework



LITERATURE REVIEW

Increasing Importance of Packaging Design

Design involves a number of important considerations ranging from the specification of product components and functional concerns, to the external and aesthetic aspects of the product/packaging providing brand-consumer touchpoints. Although there is a range of work that addresses design issues, it does not yet comprise a substantial, well-formulated body of research (Veryzer, 1999). Relevant work is scattered among the psychology, perception, semiotics, human factors, marketing, and industrial design literatures, as well as others.

This is in stark contrast to the significance attached to packaging design by some researchers and particularly managers. Surveying senior marketing managers, Bruce and Whitehead (1988) report that 60% of respondents consider design the most important determinant of new product performance while price is listed by only 17%. Similarly, an analysis of the performance of 203 new products revealed that product design was the most important determinant of sales success (Cooper & Kleinschmidt, 1987). This evidence is further supported by research showing a high correlation between the design quality of visual stimuli and financial performance of the company (Hertenstein, Platt, & Veryzer, 2005; Wallace 2001).

Consistent with this perspective, trade journals such as *BrandWeek*, *BrandPackaging*, *Beverage World* and *Promo* identify several managerial trends suggesting a growing brand communication role for packaging. Indications of these roles include an increase in nondurable product buying decisions at the store shelf, a reduction in spending on traditional brand-building mass-media advertising, and growing managerial recognition of the capacity of packaging to create differentiation and identity for relatively homogeneous consumer nondurables (e.g., Bertrand, 2002; Spethmann, 2003).

Design's contribution to a product's success manifests itself in several ways. First, in cluttered markets, packaging designs distinguish products from competitors and help gain recognition in a crowded marketplace (Berkowitz, 1987a, 1987b; Bloch, 1995; Schmitt & Simonson, 1997). Packaging design can assist in building strong brands by differentiating products, creating loyalty, allowing for premium pricing, cutting through clutter, and protecting against competition (Henderson et al., 2003; Hutton, 1997; Schmitt & Simonson, 1997). Past research suggests that as much as 73 percent of purchase decisions are made at the point of sale; implying that the design of packaging plays a pivotal role at the point of sale (Connolly & Davison, 1996). Design pioneer James Pilditch (1972) calls packaging design the "silent salesman" who ensures that a brand stands out, is recognized, and is included in the evoked set. Accordingly, packaging design gained significantly in importance when retail outlets moved to self-service, and the packaging became an increasingly important and integral part of the selling process (Rettie & Brewer, 2000). It also influences impulse buying, as estimates indicate that half of all purchases are unplanned (Philips & Bradshaw, 1993).

Additionally, design has a symbolic function influencing how a product is comprehended and evaluated. Images of elegance, ease of use, youthfulness, durability, and innovativeness all may stem from choices marketers make in developing the appearances of new products (Forty, 1992). The exterior appearance of a product is thus important as a means of communicating information or symbolism to consumers (Underwood, 2003). Product design creates the initial impression and generates inferences regarding other product attributes in the same manner as does price (Berkowitz, 1987a). As Icon wine packaging designers Caldewey and House (2003,

p.22) state “A *successful label beckons from a distance, then invites personal discovery the closer you get. Like revealing clues in a detective novel, the message on the bottle must engage the reader, skillfully maintain suspense, and be compelling enough to lead you to the mystery inside.*” Because product design also helps to develop corporate and brand identities, more sophisticated wine companies have distinctive philosophies that help them develop and reinforce a recognizable corporate character (Caputo, 2005).

In sum, it is suggested that packaging is an extremely influential medium of communication, as 1) its pervasive reach to nearly all purchasers of the category, 2) its presence at the crucial moment when the purchase decision is made, and 3) the high level of involvement for users who will actively scan packaging for information. In some cases, the design of the packaging itself may become the reason to buy (Hall, 1993); and in addition to managerial considerations, product design is also significant in a larger sense because appropriate and aesthetically pleasing packaging affects the quality of our lives (Bloch, 1995).

Elements of Packaging Design

Some packaging design elements such as shapes are an integral part of the brand image (e.g., the Coca-Cola bottle or the trademark-style bulbous bottles used for wine from Frankonia or Portugal). Product design is a broad term that includes a considerable range of engineering-related attributes such as ergonomics, production-efficiency, strength, recyclability, and distribution ease as well as aesthetics (Bloch, 1995). While not minimizing the importance of these design characteristics, the scope of this article is on those package design elements that create a product’s appearance, such as materials, proportion, color, ornamentation, shape, size, and reflectivity (Lawson, 1983). Although packaging perception may include a range of important non-visual elements (i.e., haptics) the focus here will be limited to visual appearances because of marketplace prominence and relevance to wine.

In line with past research, this study defines product design as a number of elements chosen and blended into a whole by a designer or design team to achieve a particular sensory effect (Bloch, 2005). Designers make choices regarding product characteristics such as shape, scale, proportion, materials, color, finish, ornamentation, and texture. They also decide how to mix those elements, and they determine the level of congruity among product characteristics. For example, the design of a wine bottle may include the material and finish of its label, a prominent lip on the neck, the frosted bottle surface, the slender shape of its silhouette, the gleam of its polished silver capsule, the prominent display of wine exhibition awards, and finally the gestalt of these elements working together.

Effects on Consumers

Once developed, the design of a product may elicit a variety of psychological responses from consumers (for a review see Bloch, 1995). These responses include both cognitive and affective components. With respect to *affective* response components, much of the work that has addressed the formulation of design preferences has dealt with the aesthetic aspects of design (e.g., Berlyne, 1974; Holbrook, 1986; Sewall, 1987). However, research participants in experimental aesthetics and psychology studies are rarely asked to produce aggregate judgments of attractiveness or beauty (Reber, Schwarz, & Winkielman, 2004). Instead, most studies have focused on judgments like figural goodness, pleasantness, liking, and preference.

In some cases, design perceptions can lead to moderately positive responses such as simple liking (Hirschman, 1986), or they can evoke stronger aesthetic responses where good design makes you fall in love with the product (Veryzer & Hutchinson, 1998). It is also possible that products can elicit consumer responses including an engagement of attention and strong positive emotions (Holbrook, 1986). Thus, there are reasons to believe that product design is closely related to preference, liking, and beauty.

Regarding consumers' *cognitive* response component, salient research has focused on relationships such as an impact of packaging on consumer usage (Wansink, 1996), perceived package volume (Folkes & Matta, 2004), consumption and post-consumption satisfaction (Rahgubir & Krishna, 1993), and on consumer attention, categorization and choice (Garber, Burke & Jones, 2000; Plasschaert & Floet, 1995; Pieters & Warlops, 1999; Schoormans & Robben, 1997).

Of particular interest among the cognitive responses are consumer *beliefs* about the product and brand (Solomon, 1983; Underwood & Klein, 2002; Underwood & Ozanne, 1998). For example, past research demonstrated an influence on product quality perception (Rigaux-Bricmont, 1982; Stokes, 1985; Yamamoto & Lambert, 1994). Specifically for wine, Gierl (1995, p.82) showed effects from wine packaging on anticipated taste such as dry – sweet, light – heavy, fruity, full-bodied, etc. Designers often choose particular design elements to proactively encourage the creation of desirable beliefs (Berkowitz, 1987b). For example, the updated *Fetzer* wine packaging was designed to elicit perceptions of naturalness and of the sense of renewal that wine brings to life (Caputo, 2005). However, some consumer beliefs resulting from design elements can be completely unanticipated; a particularly attractive design, capable of winning awards, may lead target consumers to infer that the product is expensive and thus inappropriate for their less-expensive evoked set.

Packaging and Brand Identity

It is widely acknowledged that packaging is not only a communication vehicle for transmitting symbolism (Keller, 1993), but is also important for its own symbolic contribution to the total understanding of the brand (Underwood, 2003). This is particularly true for wines: “*My challenge is to devise new combinations of the symbols that will reveal the unique personality at the heart of the brand*” (Caldewey & House, 2003, p.23). The marketing and consumer behavior literature is rich with illustrations that individuals buy products not only for the functional utility they provide, but also for the symbolic meaning they possess (Solomon, 1983; McCracken, 1986; Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1992; Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998). To date, however, the symbolism literature in the marketing arena has focused primarily on advertising as the major instrument of creating and conveying cultural meaning for brands and consumers (Mick & Buhl, 1992; Underwood, 2003).

Nevertheless, several researchers have identified packaging as a means for affecting global brand identity (Aaker, 1991; Schmitt & Simonson, 1995) or for specific brand dimensions such as “sophisticated” and “fun” (Batra & Homer 2004), or “status,” “healthiness,” and “expensive” (Batra, Lehmann & Singh, 1993; Domzal & Kernan 1992). Packaging's effect on brand identity and personality is due to multiple structural and visual elements, including brand logo(s), colors, fonts, package materials, pictorials, product descriptions, shapes and other elements providing rich brand associations (Underwood, 2003). Symbolism generated and/ or

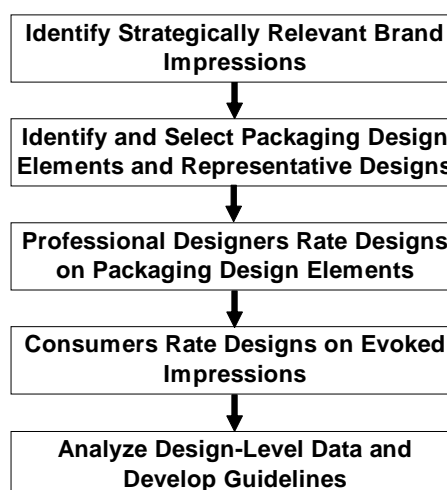
communicated by the package may further include brand dimensions such as convenience, environmental consciousness, ethnicity, family, health consciousness, national and/ or regional authenticity, nostalgia, prestige, value and variations in quality, among others (Underwood, 2003). Specifically for wine, Orth (2005) shows that consumers chose wine brands for different occasions according to the social benefits or prestige that they feel are associated with the given brand.

Drawing from past research on brand concept management (Park, Jaworski, & MacInnis, 1986), customer-based brand equity (Keller, 1993), consumer-brand relationships (Fournier, 1998), cultural meaning transfer (McCracken 1986), product symbolism/ self concept (Sirgy 1982; Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998), and symbolic interactionism (Solomon, 1983), we suggest that consumers infer brand characteristics and beliefs from wine packaging designs. Corresponding impressions communicate and or contribute to the identity of the brand, while also providing a vehicle for the expression of the self via purchase and consumption. These consumer brand impressions may be especially important for wine brands that consumers are not (yet) familiar with.

METHOD

This research was conducted by collecting information and data in four stages. First, a review of the branding literature determined a list of strategically relevant brand impressions for wine. Second, appropriate wine packaging design elements were identified and a sample of real and representative designs was selected. Third, professionals in the design and advertising industry rated wine packaging designs on the previously identified design elements. Fourth, consumers evaluated the wine packaging designs on brand impressions scales.

FIGURE 2. Study Stages



Stage 1: Selection of Strategically Relevant Brand Impressions

Because the goal of this research was to provide guidance to design and wine companies, impressions were researched that wine marketers aim to create through packaging design. Managerially-oriented wine marketing literature, input from wine retail staff, wine brand managers, distributors, and designers led to ten wine-specific brand impressions including quality, corporate, everyday, cheap, feminine, happy memories, healthy, stylish, impressive, and value-for-money. To further capture the symbolic properties of brands, Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale was employed, including 15 facets of the big five brand personality dimensions sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. For the sake of clarity, following we refer to the wine industry's wine-specific brand impressions item battery as "brand impressions" and to the Aaker brand personality item battery as "brand personality."

A pilot test with members of the target audience (N=256) confirmed the high explanatory power of both item batteries. Percentages of explained variance ($R^2_{adj.}$) with purchase intentions as the dependent and the item batteries as the independent variables ranged from .34 to .59 for the brand personality scale, and from .24 to .40 for the brand impression scale. Combined, the item batteries explained between two-thirds and three-quarters of the data variance. For example, consumer purchase intentions for *Yellow tail* ($R^2_{adj.} = .67$) were a function of the impressions up-to-date (.62) and charming (.58), for *Monkey Bay* ($R^2_{adj.} = .79$) a function of impress-friends (.80), corporate (-.51), and spirited (.37), and for *Red Bicyclette* ($R^2_{adj.} = .74$) of cheerful (.73) and down-to-earth (.35). The magnitude of those parameters is remarkable, given that product attributes dominating past research (such as price, varietal, or origin) were not included in the regression models. We interpret the findings as strong evidence that our selection of strategic wine brand impressions is closely tied to consumer decision making, a major prerequisite for proceeding with the subsequent steps and analyses.

Stage 2: Selection of Packaging Design Elements and Designs

"Label design is often cited as the No. 1 factor upon which consumers base their wine buying decisions" (Mackay, 2005). As has been noted previously, product-category specific brand impressions and universal brand personality characteristics should be relevant for all types of stimuli. Both wine-specific and universal brand impressions can be captured by either universal design variables (e.g. packaging silhouette or overall color scheme) or design-specific variables that are unique to a specific stimulus (e.g. a particular characteristic that distinguishes one design from others). These packaging-specific variables can be captured only by product-category specific variables. Wine packaging designers such as Caldewey and House (2003) consciously utilize these design elements for communicating impressions: *"The verticality of the white paper when lined up on the shelf produces the effect of a picket fence."* (p.88), *"The stone-like texture of the paper and the classic typography inscribed on the edifice lend the composition a monumental dimension."* (p.94), or *"The rough, hand-drawn edges convey the personal energy behind the project, its handcrafted nature more human spirit than technical precision."* (p.108). Their perspective is complemented by the wine marketer point of view: *"Wineries clearly believe that expensive wines need to convey a sense of importance to buyers, and creative packaging, including heavy, uniquely shaped bottles, do just that."* (Teichgraeber, 2005, p.18)

During Stage 2, a list of wine-specific packaging design characteristics was developed. Using design characteristics mentioned in various trade and academic publications on wine

packaging design (e.g., Caputo, 2005; Firstenfeld, 2005; Mackay, 2005; Van den Berg-Weitzel & Van de Laar, 2001; Teichgraeber, 2005), an initial list was created. Next, nine professional designers who were associated with several firms and worked on a broad range of design tasks were asked to list the primary characteristics that differentiate wine packaging designs. Based on their feedback, the initial list was modified resulting in a final list of sixty design elements. Table 1 shows wine packaging design elements including the illustrative descriptors used for semantic differential scale anchors.

TABLE 1. Selected Wine Packaging Design Characteristics

<i>Design element</i>	<i>Design characteristic</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	
Bottle	Body	Short	Long	
	Heft/ gravitas	Light	Heavy	
	Girth	Small	Large	
	Glass color	Common	Unique	
	Glass color intensity	Weak	Strong	
	Glass color naturalness	Low	High	
	Glass color transparency	Low	High	
	Glass finish	Dull	Shiny	
	Lip presence	Weak	Strong	
	Neck	Short	Long	
	Relief/ molding presence	Weak	Strong	
	Sides	Straight	Rounded	
	Shoulders	Short	Long	
	Silhouette	Common	Unique	
	Symmetry	Asymmetrical	Symmetrical	
	Labels	Amount of detail	Small	Large
		Degree of Structure	Low	High
Fragmentation		Single label	Multiple labels	
Quantity of text		Small	Large	
Surface area		Little coverage	Extensive coverage	
Typography	Compression	Condensed	Extended	
	Elaboration	Plain	Ornate	
	Flourishness	Not flourish	Very flourish	
	Harmony	Not uniform	Uniform	
	Naturalness	Organic	Geometric	
	Weight	Light	Heavy	
.....	

Based on their experience, each of the designers identified a list of wines that was representative of the variance in the packaging design elements that they had identified (e.g., short neck, dull finish, unique silhouette). Because past research (Underwood & Klein, 2002) has shown that when a brand is unfamiliar to consumers, consumers tend to rely more on extrinsic cues such as packaging design elements to infer brand characteristics (Zeithaml, 1988) the initial

list was reduced to predominantly include wine brands likely to be unknown to consumers. Additional input from professionals in the wine and design industry was utilized to identify a total of 160 wines that represented the full range for each of the 60 design elements. Bottles were purchased from a number of different sources with retail prices ranging from \$3.99 to \$125.00 per bottle. The selection further represented 14 countries, 16 varieties or blends, and covered vintages from 1989 through 2004.

Stage 3: Ratings of Packaging Design Elements

One-hundred-and-fifteen professional designers, associated with agencies, corporations, and universities rated the 160 wine packaging designs on 7-point semantic differential scales for each of the 60 design elements, a task taking approximately twenty minutes. To minimize fatigue, each designer rated not more than 10 wine bottles on half of the characteristics. Stimuli consisted of high-resolution bottle images taken in a single session in a professional photo studio before a matte monochromatic background. To preserve size and proportion differences, the tallest bottle served as a calibration standard, and all pictures were taken from the same spot with no variation in illumination, timing or any other variable. Immediately before each shot, the bottles were checked to insure perfect condition, and the bottles and labels and were swiped with a damp cloth to remove fingerprints and smudges caused by the handling.

Images of the wine packaging designs were posted on a website that was accessible only through a login and password combination. Software was developed to randomly select wine packaging designs to present to the professionals. Each design was presented individually as an image that remained on the left side of the screen while the respondents scrolled through the semantic differential scales on the right side. Participants controlled the speed of picture viewing and responding and were allowed to go forth and back to revisit and compare their earlier ratings in order to increase consistency of individual responses. To avoid different appearances in different hardware settings and to insure that image appearance, size and resolution were correct, the images were optimized for and were accessible only with Microsoft Internet Explorer. This electronic screen-based method was employed to ensure that packaging designs appeared true to form, because differences in environmental conditions (i.e. lighting, background, distance, etc.) across design agencies pose difficulties in maintaining consistent bottle appearances for research purposes. The researchers decided that this was a method preferred to the logistic nightmare and cost that would have been involved in shipping cases of alcoholic beverages across state lines. In all, a total of 34,500 individual ratings was obtained from professional designers.

Stage 4: Consumer Ratings of Design-Evoked Impressions

To complement the data gathered from the designers' perspective, a consumer survey was utilized to measure the impressions evoked by the wine packaging designs. Because of the previously mentioned difficulties involved in uniformly presenting wine packaging designs to larger numbers of respondents, and in order to expose consumers to the same stimuli evaluated by the designers, the web-based computer task was replicated. For consumers, the software algorithm was modified to randomly present ten wine packaging designs accompanied by the scroll-down impressions scales on the right side of the screen. As before, respondents controlled the speed of viewing and responding. The researchers utilized a consumer panel maintained by food scientists at a university in the Pacific Northwest in the US. To increase motivation and

involvement with the study tasks, participants were offered \$10 gift certificates valid at a variety of local restaurants and stores. The overall response was a total of 67,000 individual ratings from 268 subjects.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data analysis followed the approach established in experimental aesthetics (Seifert, 1992, Berlyne, 1974), research on language processing (Carpenter & Miyake, 1995), and on design characteristics (Henderson & Cote, 1998; Henderson, Giese, & Cote, 2004). Analyses were conducted at the stimulus level rather than at the individual level. To obtain a score for each stimulus on a specific variable (i.e., design element or impression response), individual ratings of a wine packaging design on this particular variable were averaged. All remaining analyses were conducted using these stimulus scores. Thus, the unit of analysis is the wine packaging design, and the sample size for each analysis is the number of different wine bottle designs (i.e., 160). This approach is particularly appropriate for marketing management because it recognizes that stimuli are designed for, managed for, and responded to by groups of people rather than by individuals. The variables used in the analysis were the 60 averaged design elements, as well as the ten wine-specific and fifteen universal brand personality responses.

Brand Impressions

In line with past research on universal brand personality dimensions (Aaker, 1997), brand impressions data were analyzed through a confirmatory factor analysis. The analysis produced five factors (Table 2) which corresponded to the five dimensions of Aaker's brand personality scale (sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, ruggedness). The model fit the data reasonable well (GFI = .93; CFI = .93), and all the loadings were acceptably high (> .70).

TABLE 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for the Brand Personality

<i>Item</i>	<i>Loading</i>	<i>Factor</i>	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
Down-to-earth	.82	Sincerity	3.01 (.89)	Temptress (1.88)	Sawtooth (4.12)
Honest	.89				
Wholesome	.82				
Cheerful	.74	Excitement	3.04 (1.04)	Bierzo (1.82)	Siskiyou Sideways (4.42)
Daring	.89				
Spirited	.91				
Imaginative	.89				
Up-to-date	.72	Competence	3.16 (.97)	Punk Floyd (1.42)	Cht. Lagarenne (3.98)
Reliable	.71				
Intelligent	.89				
Successful	.92	Sophistication	3.01 (1.03)	House Wine (1.97)	Harvest Moon (3.97)
Upper class	.85				
Charming	.88				
Outdoorsy	.86	Ruggedness	2.34 (1.06)	Dom. de Montille (1.35)	Prosperity Red (4.11)
Tough	.89				

On the basis of these results, five universal brand personality dimensions were used to describe the impression variables. Down-to-earth, honest, wholesome and cheerful comprised the sincerity dimension. Daring, spirited, imaginative and up-to-date comprised the excitement dimension. Competence was comprised of reliable, intelligent and successful. Sophistication of upper class and charming; and ruggedness was comprised of outdoorsy and tough. Mean scores across items were used to capture each dimension. For example, *Temptress*, a small Oregon brand prominently displaying a scantily-clad young female on its label, exhibited the least sincere score while *Sawtooth*, an Idaho wine scored highest on this dimension. Similarly, the Spanish brand *Bierzo* generated the lowest and *Siskiyou's Sideways Merlot* (in a sideways-leaning bottle) evoked the highest excitement.

To preserve the richness of the data, no aggregation of wine-specific brand impressions (Orth, 2005) was computed. Table 3 shows descriptive results including wine brands scoring very low or very high on each of the impression variables. Examples include impressions of *Wine by Joe* as low in quality and high on everyday, *House* wine as low in quality, little feminine, and little stylish, or *Bishop Creek* as high in quality and impress-my-friends. Ratings of *Meditrina* and *WVV Oregon Blossom* as very feminine, or *Red Bicyclette* as being high on happy memories add additional face value to those findings.

TABLE 3. Results for the Wine-Specific Brand Impressions

<i>Item</i>	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
High quality	4.46 (1.61)	Punk Floyd (1.50) House Wine (2.35)	Bishop Creek (5.86) Kremer's (5.80)
Corporate	3.97 (1.75)	Sinister Hand (2.30) Three Thieves (2.36)	Gallo of Sonoma (5.94) CSM (5.55)
Everyday	4.02 (1.71)	BV Harvest Moon (2.00) Chateau Lagarenne (2.36)	Mojo (6.09) Prosperity (5.67)
Cheap	3.41 (1.66)	Cht. Lagarenne (1.93) Castillo San Simon (2.05)	Wine by Joe (5.59) Punk Floyd (6.00)
Feminine	3.18 (1.73)	Sinister Hand (1.65) Macabre (1.67)	Anne Amie (6.27) Meditrina (6.20)
Happy memories	3.53 (1.70)	Punk Floyd (1.72) Sinister Hand (1.75)	Red Bicyclette (4.93) Eola Hills (4.89)
Healthy	3.88 (1.53)	Punk Floyd (2.55)	Badger Mountain (5.39)
Stylish	4.33 (1.74)	Kramer (2.72) House Wine (2.76)	Bishop Creek (6.29) BV Harvest Moon (5.90)
Impress friends	4.06 (1.78)	BV Black Beauty (2.21) Radical Red (2.47)	Bishop Creek (5.93) Griffin Creek (5.27)
Value-for-money	4.01 (1.40)	Punk Floyd (2.50) Sinister Hand (2.90)	Abacela (5.19) BV Blue Moon (5.18)

Packaging Design Elements

As outlined previously, the packaging design elements consisted of universal and wine-

specific characteristics. Universal characteristics included silhouette, symmetry, brand name/logo, color scheme, quantity of text, and typography. Wine-specific characteristics included elements such as varietal name, adornments, awards information, among others. The two groups of characteristics were analyzed together to ensure that wine packaging design elements were properly identified and linked to brand impressions so as to better advance wine packaging design across stimuli. Consistent with the work of Henderson, Giese and Cote (2004), exploratory factor analysis was performed using principal components analysis with Varimax rotation.

Influence of Design Elements on Brand Impressions

In line with past research (Henderson, Giese, & Cote, 2004), separate regression analyses were conducted using the brand personality factors and impression dimensions as the dependent variables and the packaging design elements as predictors. First, all design elements were included in the model by default. The next step added nonlinear relationships using stepwise regression. Finally, tests were conducted to detect interactions among the design elements. Table 4 shows a fictional example of the anticipated results. The findings reveal what design elements wine marketers and design professionals need to consider when their intention is to evoke a specific brand personality characteristic.

TABLE 4. Exemplary Regression Results

<i>Brand personality factor</i>	<i>Design element</i>	<i>Direction of effect</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Size of effect ($\Delta R^2_{adj.}$)</i>	<i>Total $R^2_{adj.}$</i>
Sincerity	Bottle finish	positive linear	.43	.32	.66
	Bottle heft	plateau	.28	.14	
	Label position	negative	.18	.08	
	Image execution	positive	.16	.07	
	Number of colors	negative	.11	.05	
...

DISCUSSION

This research aimed at generating guidelines for managing strategic brand impressions, namely brand identity created by the wine packaging design. Four research phases identified strategically relevant wine brand impressions, selected packaging elements and representative designs, collected professional ratings of packaging design elements, and measured consumer ratings of design-evoked impressions. Stimulus-level regression analyses linked the design elements to brand impressions, thus generating information for brand managers and designers on what design elements to consider for evoking specific impressions with consumers.

This research is important for several reasons. First, it provides a new explanation to supplement earlier accounts of variation in consumer purchase intentions. The results demonstrate that the brand personality items and wine-specific impressions identified in this research account for a large percentage of explained variance. In contrast, readers may note that product attributes such as price, varietal or product origin, which were central to past wine marketing research, were not included. Because the consumers were little or not familiar with the brands they evaluated, it is obvious that their purchase intentions were significantly influenced

by the brand identity. Consequently, future studies need to give more attention to the concept of brand identity as a determinant of buying behavior, complementing examinations of product attributes.

Closely tied to this recognition is the major contribution of this research, namely the finding how specific wine packaging design elements contribute to creating brand identity. Initially, a comprehensive list of salient design elements was identified specifically for wine. Using a large sample of wine packaging designs that exhibited the full range of design expressions demonstrated that consumers have little difficulties rating those visual stimuli on each of the brand impressions. Moreover, linking design elements to brand impressions shows which design elements contribute to any specific brand impression. In addition, the results indicate that a significant percentage of the variance in brand impressions is rooted in design differences. Most importantly, wine packaging design is the premium tool for constructing brand identity.

Notwithstanding the significant contributions of this research to the areas of design in general and wine packaging in particular, more research is needed to provide an even more accurate understanding of consumer wine brand choice. For example, with only a single market examined in this research, it cannot be excluded that the guidelines may be limited to this culture. Macro forces such as culture, social influences, and fashion trends have been found to shape consumer reactions to design (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; King & Ring, 1980; Wallendorf, 1980). Accordingly, future studies should determine what – if any – design-impression correlations are stable across cultural contexts. This appears to be particularly relevant for wine marketers who serve a number of markets in different cultures and need to know whether or not to standardize or to adapt their packaging.

Similarly, future studies could apply and extend the findings to include personality traits, particularly design acumen. Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990) suggest that people high on design acumen make quicker sensory connections and exhibit more sophisticated preferences regarding the design of things than do those with little design acumen. In their comprehensive research, Bloch, Brunel and Arnold (2003) conceptualized and empirically validated a measure for individual differences in the centrality of visual product aesthetics (CVPA), defined as the level of significance that visual aesthetics hold for a particular consumer in his or her relationships with products. The dimensions of CVPA (value, acumen, and response intensity) explained differences in how individuals responded to product appearance. The value dimension in part captures the tendency for beautiful objects to be deemed “sacred” by consumers. Acumen reflects an ability to recognize, categorize, and evaluate product design, while the third dimension, response intensity describes the level of response an individual exhibits to more or less aesthetic products. CVPA is considered to be a general consumer trait. That is, consumers exhibiting higher CVPA are expected to have greater than average concern for visual aesthetics independent of the product category or setting.

Finally, several of the design variables included in this study are known to not only influence aesthetic judgments, such as figural goodness, figure-ground contrast, or symmetry, but also to effect processing fluency (Reber, Schwarz, & Winkielman, 2004). Advertisement and product design visual fluency has been found to effect consumer brand recognition and recall. Accordingly, future studies should determine the relationships between visual fluency and brand impressions in order to develop guidelines for creating wine packaging designs that not only

evoke strategically important brand impressions, but in addition are highly fluent, thus aiding brand recognition and recall during consumer purchase processes.

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