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LE THI THU HUONG: Interaction between Vietnamese enterprises  
and consultancy in visual branding  
Case: Global Branding Solution Company

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appendices

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### **Abstract**

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This thesis deals with the interaction between the consultancy and Vietnamese enterprises in visual branding activity in the domestic market, which is, analyzing the knowledge and investment of Vietnamese enterprises towards branding activity visually and how it affects the consultancy as well as consulting process. Based on two – way communication and two research methods of visual branding activity, this study was designed to research both the Vietnamese enterprises and consultancy in order to collect and analyze branding conception and investment activity for brand – building visually, with responses to a survey of fifty Vietnamese enterprises.

It was found that Vietnamese enterprises' knowledge of visual branding activity as well as brand issue was still limited and even misunderstood in its basic concepts. Thus, the invested effect into visual brand – building was lower than the expectation during the period that the Vietnamese market has been an open one. Since then, it was probably both opportunity and threat for consultancies. It was opportunity – for the consultancy could introduce all their services and create long – time reputation in enterprises. It was also a threat because the consultancy might get many difficulties when dealing with low – knowledge enterprises.

The thesis concludes that the enterprises' knowledge is a basis for the success of the consulting activity; and consultancy quality as well as services is a bridge for a valuable brand with customer loyalty.

Keywords: Visual branding, interaction, Vietnam, consultancy, knowledge, investment.

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Problem and study objectives**

The initial objective of the present study is to research the interaction between the consultancy and Vietnamese enterprises in visual branding activity. Also, the visual branding is the activity of building the Corporate Identity System (CIS).

The branding activity is a concerning and important issue of most Vietnamese enterprises during 10 recent years. The reason is the rapid development of its domestic market, which had taken part in the largest international commerce organization WTO (October 2006). This phenomenon has altered a very new “face” for Vietnamese market, the evidence is the ever – increasing investment of foreign companies; more and more established banks – securities companies with a huge, potential capital and plentiful professional labor force; together with some big – sized businesses continue to increase international relationship, speed up business, and obtain more success. It is also because Vietnamese enterprises have had clear and accurate knowledge towards the brand’s value and benefit, especially the activity of visual branding.

Although “brand” is not a new concept in the international market, it seems to be not thoroughly clear to Vietnamese enterprises, and visual branding activity has not been combined harmoniously and comprehensively. Until this time, there are many enterprises that have not got the meaning of the CIS. Including which factors? How to do? Its role to branding of company... The existences, difficulties, and threats are not only in the knowledge of an enterprise, but also manifested in the sense of consumers as well as some government parties. Those threats are imperturbable, bringing a barrier to the maximum development of Vietnamese enterprises.

In an open market as Vietnam, there is likely to exist so much instability, even in the enterprises’ knowledge towards visual branding activity. Understanding this situation, there is more and more consultancy appearance who tries to orient the clients following the right way in activity of building their “face”. However, the disparity

between enterprises and the consultancy in knowledge is sometime difficulty and disadvantage during the consulting process. Then, the consultancy has to use their techniques or/and experiences in order to satisfy in the best way, and give the most beautiful and valuable “face” for their customers as well. Thus, the working process between the consultancy and enterprises is relatively important and a key before creating a perfect Corporate Identity System which brings the most valuable business for the enterprises themselves and consuming benefit for the last customers.

Therefore, the present study has one more objective. The primary goal was to analyze the interaction between Vietnamese enterprises and the consultancy in visual branding activity. The second goal is an analysis process to the reality of visual branding activity of Vietnamese enterprises.

## **1.2 Organization of study**

### **1.2.1 Research question**

The present study looks at the relationship between the consultancy and the enterprises in visual branding. It is necessary to take both the consultancy and the Vietnamese enterprises into account; because of visual branding is a form of interaction between them. The consultancy is a person or company consulting to explore the most unique and the best quality of products/services through enterprises’ brand image. Meanwhile, the enterprises directly communicate these values to the last customers following consulted ways.

It is necessary to examine three main elements inside this interaction, which are knowledge, investment of enterprises, and supplied – services by the consultancy. Researching the knowledge of visual branding activity will show a general perception of Vietnamese enterprises in the recent open – economy. Since then, it can evaluate the understanding or experience level of Vietnamese enterprises in this issue, which is almost good or bad, limited or unlimited, and why? At the same time, it also presents how this general knowledge affects to their investment into visual branding activity.



Beside that, through their knowledge, in which consultancy the enterprises will choose, and that consultancy might give any kind of consulting services with the different added values. On the other hand, because of the enterprises' knowledge, it is likely to impact much or little on the consulting activity anyhow.

The research question of the present study is “What is the interaction between the consultancy firm itself and the enterprises' preconceived ideas about visual branding and how these preconceptions affect this interaction?” Furthermore, it is also the aim to clarify what is to be learned and what recommendations can be made towards refining this interaction? This interaction is seen as two – way communication and two – researching activity through one tool – the Corporate Identity System.

### **1.2.2 Methodology of study**

In the present study, the visual branding is seen as two – way communication and two – researching activity. When collecting data, it is important to investigate both the consultancy and enterprises. When analyzing data, it is necessary to categorize the data according to the two – researching activity of one tool – the Corporate Identity System.

Firstly, I will discuss the data collection methodology. The visual branding activity is seen as two – way communication, which mainly consists of enterprises and the consultancy. As Figure 1 illustrates, the enterprises (is 50 responses) respond to a survey in knowledge and investment towards brand and visual branding activity. Meanwhile, the consultancy will through the enterprises' knowledge to provide useful consulting services; as well as calculate reasonable investment cost for visual branding activity. On contrary, in term of visual branding result, the enterprises' success or failure would evaluate the supplied – service quality of consultancy. Moreover, I choose three particular enterprises, which are taken from fifty responses of the above survey, to research their visual branding activity in detail.

To understand the consultancy's services and its problem during consulting process involves a long – time working in, and contacting with account executive manager, as well as creative director, and collection of existed visual branding materials.

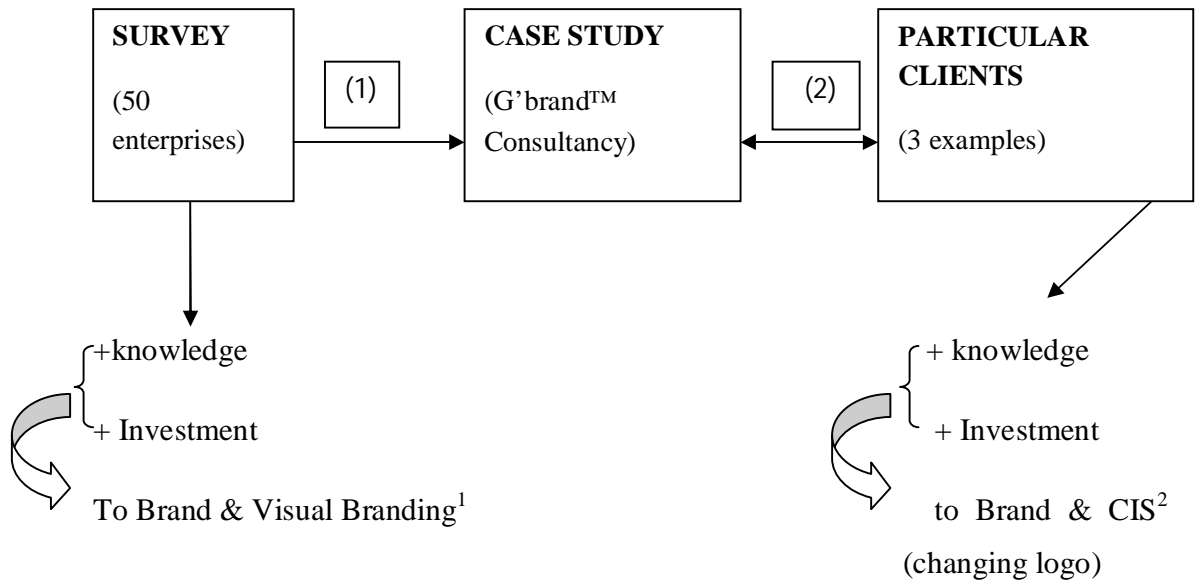


Figure 1: The interaction between enterprises and the consultancy

To understand the responses' knowledge of brand and visual branding is more complex. There are several aspects to be considered. Firstly, who are going to be interviewed? Secondly, what is the focus in the interviews? Simply, as the topic title of the present study, it is the interaction between enterprises and the consultancy. Moreover, because existences of branding process in Vietnam market is occurred problem with domestic enterprises, which I mentioned briefly in the Introduction part. Thus, interviewees are only Vietnamese enterprises.

This study is considered as a common reality researching of almost Vietnamese enterprises in visual branding activity. Hence, it is ever – necessary to choose a variety of fields in economy to research, such as: education, beverage, finance – banking, securities, confectionery industry, etc... The more various the research

<sup>1</sup> Visual branding: the activity of building and spreading the brand visually or the Corporate Identity System

<sup>2</sup> CIS: Corporate Identity System is a system or guideline with standard rules of designing brand in visual which assures and reinforces a unique, united and unified brand image in customers...

domains are, the more diversified the enterprises' knowledge is, and the more data collection is. These responses together with the survey questionnaire are attached in the later Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

The data analyses focus on the two – researching activity with one tool – the Corporate Identity System (CIS). So, what is the two – researching activity? It means using two methods of researching the interaction between the consultancy and enterprises in visual branding or building the Corporate Identity System, which are survey and case study researching.

- **Survey:** The survey has been designed to research the enterprises' knowledge and investment in visual branding activity. The questionnaire is used in this survey to collect primary data on brand and CIS concepts as well as building process those factors of Vietnamese companies. The questionnaire, which consists of five sections including knowledge of brand concept, knowledge of CIS concept, investment in branding, investment in visual branding (CIS), and difficulties around these process of fifty responses. Numbers of follow – up techniques were planned and prepared to assure that questionnaire is answered by those responses. First, I send a couple of day my survey to some of my friends in Vietnam. My friends will contact with companies in where they work or has relationship with. Then it is the time to check whether or not directors of those companies already receive the questionnaire. Second, if confirmation still can not get within few days, phone call follow – up are being made by my friends as well. Because of my hard situation in contacting with Vietnamese enterprises, so the best way is to rely on friends. Last but not least, my friends collect the survey result and return them to me by e – mail. Thus, through this general survey, it shows how enterprises' knowledge and investment impact on the consulting activity and consultancy as well as number (1) in Figure 1.
- **Case Study:** Global Branding, Joint Stock Company or G'brand™ is being selected as case study. This company is a branding consultancy in Vietnam, established in the end of 2006 with the modern, new – style and professional

consulting activity, together with a philosophy: “The importance is not if we like! It is BEAUTIFUL, UNIQUE & MULTILINGUAL”. To serve this case study, I take three particular clients from the above survey as examples. Firstly, analyzing the change of the clients ‘logo as well as their CIS when using services of the consultancy. Then, researching how the consultancy was successful or unsuccessful with each example. On the other hand, analyzing the interaction between case study and the examples in visual branding activity. Thus, there is a two – side arrow as number (2) in Figure 1. These under questions are set to be easier understanding for reader to follow the study process:

- With each example, which services (half/full-package services) does the consultancy supply?
- The result, successful or unsuccessful and why?
- How difficulty and advantage does the consultancy get during this visual branding process?
- How does the consultancy satisfy or supply service to many different enterprises in a variety of business fields.

### **1.2.3 Limitation**

When choosing this topic title, I considered so many times that there would be a lot of things to research. For instance, building and spreading brand – visual brand and some definition as well as roles of each factors. However, I only choose one issue as the first considering of most Vietnamese enterprises and domestic government. Firstly, it is building brand in visual. According to process of visual branding, building or put the first brick for brand image is very necessary and important. On the other hands, it is better to clear Vietnamese enterprises knowledge of this “hot” subject. Spreading visual brand is also another big thing that should be researched professionally and effectively after most enterprises have their own CIS.

Secondly, the limitation of research response is only Vietnamese enterprises, because of their knowledge in visual branding activity. Although there are so many foreign investors come to open business in Vietnamese market, they somehow complete understanding of this issue. Then they also have their own relatively perfect brand image. And I refer researching some obstacle issues than some other wonderful things.

There are some difficulties as during researching process is essentially proceeding from Vietnamese enterprises side, and resides in some aspects. Firstly, it lacks of legal information from enterprises and government in websites, which is a very common situation in Vietnam market. This comes from their knowledge and updated information process. Thus, it causes a big problem for collecting right and necessary information for this study. In addition, most information of domestic enterprises business is in Vietnamese language, there are few websites to have English officially, such as the government website, or economy website, marketing website, etc...Nevertheless, not all information are in English either.

In regard to the survey, all the answers from Vietnamese enterprises were quite simple, even some of them have answered without understanding nature of issue, and hence, the result might be relatively incorrect. Moreover, they just replied without concerning about the importance of this survey, and that in the domestic enterprises' thinking, they have not seen any benefit towards their business. Therefore, there was few suggestion, or proposition in this questionnaire.

Beside that, the consultancy and its client companies which I mentioned in case study researching, is also one limitation. Director of the consultancy company was too busy to supply and instruct me to complete analyzing data. Some information from this consultancy is what I had collected, understood and learnt during working – time last year. Meanwhile, its clients whom I chose to research denied providing useful information about investment cost, annual benefit in their brand – building activity. Therefore, it lacks of real evidences to demonstrate my analysis in the study.

Another issue stemming from the case study and survey research is the selection of the enterprises. It will be widely and exactly if enterprises were in the Southern and other parts of Vietnam. However, the reason is that I was not in Vietnam during researching this study, and the questionnaire was sent to domestic companies by my friends. And enterprises of course do not want to waste their time to reply any e – mail without getting any benefit for their business. Therefore, it is probably difficult for me to make any directly interview to the director of the consultancy.

Building activity of Corporate Identity System is a major issue in the present study, which includes visual brand – building, and visual brand – spreading. However, in the limitation of researching objective, I just would mention one aspect, and brand spreading in visual is another complex issue that is hardly mention in few sentences of this study.

### **1.3 Company's profile**

**Global Branding, Joint Stock Company - G'Brand™** is a full-service branding agency specializing in creating visual tools for success. G'Brand™ supplies package services, especially in branding by image. Our strategic approach to visual branding enhances and extends corporate branding programs through the consistent presentation of key messages whenever and wherever that communication takes place.

If you already know what you want to say, G'Brand™ will work within your brand to extend its reach and effectiveness. If you're not sure, G'Brand™ will help define it. Effective business communication depends on clearly articulating a message and conveying it in a meaningful way to an appropriate target. G'Brand™ - We are strategic, creative and committed to the bottom – line business responsibilities of time and money ([www.g-brand.info](http://www.g-brand.info)).

### **G'brand Mission**

We **VISUAL** your brands by consistent presentation of key messages whenever and wherever that communication takes place.

### **G'brand Services**

- **Brand architecture**

Development of the branding structures, brand hierarchy and drivers

- **Brand concept**

Brand image definition, message creation, linking communication strategy to vision

- **Brand corporate identity**

Brand identity guidelines (visual/ verbal brand personality)

- **Brand communications**

Creating and delivering an integrated brand experience through multiple communication channels (brochure, leaflet, website template, annual report, TVCs...)

- **Brand naming**

Brand name/tagline/slogan development for a company, product or service

### **1.4 Structure of this study**

The present study has been organized, first with the aim of consolidating a theoretical system in visual branding activity and consulting issue; secondly, analyzing the relationship between brand consulting activity in visual and the enterprises' knowledge. To other enterprises have more right understanding of brand as well as visual branding importance. To other consultancies have more experiences in consulting goings – on and avoid unexpected situations of dealing with fastidious customers later on.

Chapter two presents the theory of brand, visual branding and consultant activity as well. Because these are three main issues in this research study which helps reader to have a general overview of concepts and their role to business activity and enterprises.

Chapter three is a survey result which shows the knowledge and investment of Vietnamese enterprises towards visual branding issue. How their knowledge is sufficient or insufficient, they are investing successfully or unsuccessfully...From then, it analyzes how this knowledge and investment affect to consultancy. This chapter will solve the first side arrow of the figure in the methodology part.

Chapter four presents the case study and findings as a consultant company – G'brand™ when it responds by the knowledge of Vietnamese enterprises towards visual branding activity. This chapter also analyzes the consulting of this consultancy, its services quality offer to clients, its success and defeat in consulting for Vietnamese enterprises of the research problem. There is a relationship between chapter three and chapter four which is Vietnamese enterprises' knowledge and investment of visual branding affect much more the consultation.

Chapter five presents the recommendation as solution to improve the Vietnamese enterprises' knowledge of visual branding issue, and the quality of consulting activity from the consultancy point of view.



## 2. VISUAL BRANDING

### 2.1 Branding: definition

#### 2.1.1 Brand- definition and concept differentiation

“*What is a brand?*” This question has appeared for a long time, not only in literature point of view, but also in real business. No particular answers, no clear definition for “brand” meaning. Even marketing professors don’t have the accurately answer, and too many have their “own” answer through their business process. This because makes life very confusing!

In the Vietnamese law system of the Intellectual Property, there is either no particular meaning of brand until now; it is just some texts or words such as trademark<sup>3</sup>, geography or original name... Thus, according to Vietnamese knowledge, “brand” concept includes trademark, such as: Trung Nguyen (coffee), Kinh Do (sweet & bakery), Viet Tien (textile)..., geographic identification and original country such as: Phu Quoc (sauce), Buon Me Thuot (coffee)...or other trademark names: Vinamilk, FPT, Hanoimilk... which are registered in legislation and preserved by law. However, in reality, there are so many trademark of goods, commercial names which have been already registered, and /or are recognized by legislation, but do not appear in the market due to any reason. Thus, it is useless with customers to distinguish different goods and services among the enterprises.

The second meaning is very popular with almost of Vietnamese consumers’ perspective, which have been or not yet registered, are “brands” – in the case of being famous. For example, Thai Nguyen tea, Hung Yen litchi, Phuc Trach pomelo...have not registered yet but are well – known not only in domestic market, but also in all over the world and considered as some great brands. However, for example, a famous product names “*Banh Gai Ba Thi*” in Nam Dinh which is made by glutinous rice cake dyed black in a concoction of leaves has not been registered as a brand originated in

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<sup>3</sup> Trademark sometimes equals brand. In a restricted sense, however, trademark is “a brand or part of a brand that is given legal protection. Registering a trademark protects the seller’s exclusive rights to the use of that brand name. From the consumer’s perspective, trademarks help to identify the origin of the product and provide a guarantee of consistent quality.” (Mueller 1996: 34)

Nam Dinh and a lot of producers sell it to market. It is supposed that an organization registers trademark for such kind of cake and has been produced as a monopoly following the order of law. Then, all other producers have to stop producing and supplying this cake and “*Banh Gai Ba Thi*” brand is uniquely owned by one organization.



Figure 2: Banh Gai Ba Thi

Source: <http://nguoivienxu.vietnamnet.vn>

Broadly, a brand is an entity of name, term, sign, symbol, trademark, logo, sound, color(s), or package and product design. For instance, McDonald’s Ronald McDonald (symbol), the Traveler Group’s umbrella (logo), and Microsoft’s starting melody (sound), are regarded as brands (Zhenyi Li 2001, 18.). The Dictionary of Business and Management also defines a brand as: “*a name, sign or symbol used to identify items or services of the seller(s) and to differentiate them from goods of competitors.*” Signs and symbols are part of what a brand is, but to me this is still a very incomplete definition.

Otherwise, according to Walter Landor, one of the great brands – design legend of the advertising industry, said brand as a mental value: “*Simply put, a brand is a*

*promise. By identifying and authenticating a product or service it delivers a pledge of satisfaction and quality."* There are two ways of understanding brand, according to David Aaker (1991, 7 – 8.), the traditional usage of a brand is:

- To identify the maker/producer
- To assure the customer, who the maker is, of the high-quality of the product
- To provide legal protection to the producer, eg., prevent substitution by cheaper producers
- To capitalize a reputation for quality

While in modern society, a brand is used:

- To reduce the primacy of price on the purchase decision
- To change the bases of differentiation

Therefore, the role of brands was changed around the beginning of the twentieth century. In previous centuries, brands are used to identify the producer, to assure the customer of the product quality, to provide legal protection to the producer, or to capitalize a reputation for quality. Time goes by, the economy has changed rapidly, brands' role turned towards reducing the primacy of price on the purchase decision (Zhenyi Li 2001, 19). Scholars argue that in a brand, there are tangible assets such as quality, function, features, and efficacy, and intangible ones like reputation, other users' recommendation, and corporate image (Christopher and McDonald 1995, 167 – 168). Thus, brands are not only some words or graphics, but precious commodities (Zhenyi Li 2001, 19). Brands play an important role as a bridge between the enterprises and the consumers. Therefore, branding is not only building brand, but also reinforce the consumers' awareness and loyalty.

Certainly, without your brand, you are just another commodity. Your products and company offer features and benefits that consumers need and want, but your brand will make those features and benefits more recognizable and more preferred, and helps to further differentiate them from other competitors' brands in the market. In the other words, the brand makes them special and makes customer loyalty even more possible. For instance, what is a company like Coca – Cola without its brand? What

about a company like Mercedes or even McDonald's? Would those companies survive and thrive without their brands? Hence, there are so many factors to build a successful business as today, but in those things, brand seems to be the most important asset which helps to grow those companies to become leaders in their respective markets (<http://www.corporate-eye.com/2008/07/brand-vs-commodity/>).

### 2.1.2 Basic factors of brand

Brand is usually described by three basic factors following as: Brand positioning, Brand identity, Brand personality.

#### ➤ Brand positioning

Brand positioning is a way of defining brand position in the market, which creates a particular standing in a competitive advantage market in which every consumer is assured to distinguish one brand from others competitors'. Brand positioning identifies very clear objective and demand that the consumer will gain by using that brand and explain why it is a better way than others. *“Ideally, it is a function of the brand's promise and how the brand compares with other choices with regard to quality, innovation, perceived leadership, value, prestige, trust, safety, reliability, performance, and convenience, concern for customers, social responsibility, and technological superiority and so on”* (VanAuken 2002, 16). Therefore, “brand positioning” relates directly to the concept and knowledge of consumer and it is a very important factor of the brand.

A brand can be positioned through some different elements which are differentiated from other competitive brands, such as:

- The difference of function:

With many types of products, brand is distinguished by function. Gillette creates their own razors and makes them different from other competitors by describing as cleaner and freer than the others. In 2005, Gillette Power of was the wet device razor

using battery with a special function, and made more loyalty for this declaration of Gillette. And at Wal – Mart, is a solitary place, the supplier consolidated more difference by low price for this product.

However, the difference of function will be imitated rapidly by other competitors.

- The difference of “sentiment benefit” :

The “sentiment benefit” relates to basic demand and personal expectations. The “sentiment benefit” originates from using brand that makes humans be happier, more comfortable... For example, Starbucks brings to their customers the self – expression and an amazing space for relaxing. The Starbucks’ target customers usually want a cup of café following their own style (a cappuccino without cream, big one, no caffeine, and much foamy), sitting on a comfortable chair with slightly jazz music.

- The difference of price:

Price is a sensitive factor that is useful for most companies in brand positioning. Many type of products such as fashion, car, hotel...are priced to positive level of customers. The customers are ready to take a lot of money for buying the Mercedes or a Rolex in order to “advertise” their high – society – level, not only their demand for moving. However, the company only posits the price when brings the same value of product and service.

#### ➤ **Brand identity**

Brand identity is the total proposition that a company brings to consumers – the promise it makes. It may consist of features and attributes, benefits, performance, quality, service support, and the values that the brand possesses. The brand can be viewed as a product, a personality, a set of values, and a position it occupies in people's mind. Brand identity is everything the company wants the brand to be seen as (<http://www.brandingasia.com/columns/temporal10.htm> ).

It is different from Brand Positioning; Brand Identity of each enterprise is unique in the market. In general, Brand Identity includes: Brand history, Brand Mission, Slogan, Brand Story, the Corporate Identity. In short, they are described as:

- Brand history

Brand history includes the answers of some questions such as: when and where did a company establish? Who is the leader? When was the company's brand famous in the market? Etc... So, brand history plays a very important role in communicating the meaning of brand to all customers.

- Brand mission

Brand mission of a company will describe clearly and shortly the objective and purpose of their own business. For example, a brand mission of Sofitel hotel is: "Sofitel always try to be affirmed as a measurement of an excellence in high – ranking hotel business in the world". Another example, Vinamilk – the leading producer of dairy products in Vietnam based on sales volume and revenue, states that: "Vinamilk continues to expand its existing geographical coverage and product portfolios to maintain its sustainably dominant position in the local market and maximizing its shareholder value." (<http://www.vinamilk.com.vn/> )

- Slogan

Phrase or sentence used repeatedly in the advertising of a product or service that, through its repetition alone, eventually comes to identify the product or service. Essentially, slogans serve one of two basic functions: either to communicate an idea that manufacturers want to associate with the product or service, or to retain continuity within an advertising campaign. A famous example is "Ask the man who owns one," associated with the Packard automobile of the 1930s. There are some famous slogans such as, Apple computer: "Think difference" or Target: "Pay less", Yellow Page: "Let your fingers do the walkings"... This particular slogan has been remembered throughout the years, long past the life of the product, and is often used in other contexts.

- Brand story

Brand story is a brand communications company specializing in strategic research, brand and marketing strategy, and brand development. Brand story digs to the brand's core.

- The Corporate Identity System (CIS)

This is a research problem of the study and will be analyzed in detail in the next part.

- **Brand personality**

As Jennifer Lynn Aaker – a researching professor of brand management at Stanford defined: “Brand personality describes brands in terms of human characteristics”. Having the same idea with Aaker, many other professors showed that: Every entity in this society has its own traits or particular personality in some different situations. Brand, thus, also as a person, has its own behaviors, characteristics, etc... in many unusual circumstances.

Then, Aaker drew the Brand Personality Dimensions (Journal of Marketing Research, 8/97, p. 347 – 356), is a framework to describe and measure the “personality” of a brand in five core dimensions, each divided into a set of facets. It is a model to describe the profile of a brand by using an analogy with a human being.

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Facets /Traits</b>	<b>Famous Brands</b>
<b>Sincerity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Honest</li> <li>- Cheerful</li> <li>- Wholesome</li> <li>- Down-to-earth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kodak</li> <li>- Guinness</li> </ul>
<b>Excitement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Daring</li> <li>- Spirited</li> <li>- Imaginative</li> <li>- Up-to-Date</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nokia</li> <li>- Red Bull</li> <li>- Beneton</li> </ul>
<b>Competence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reliable</li> <li>- Intelligent</li> <li>- Successful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial Times</li> <li>- BBC news</li> <li>- IBM</li> </ul>
<b>Sophistication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Charming</li> <li>- Upper class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mercedes</li> <li>- Vogue</li> </ul>
<b>Ruggedness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outdoorsy</li> <li>- Tough</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Harley- Davidson</li> <li>- Nike</li> </ul>

Figure 3 – The Brand Personality Dimensions

Source: Journal of Marketing Research, 8/97, pp.347-356

The Brand Personality Dimensions Framework of Jennifer Aaker can be used to investigate the current status (IST) of a brand and to describe the desired future status (SOLL) of the brand.

The Brand Personality is just the most important factor which creates psychological benefit for target customers to be more loyal with the brand.

### 2.1.3 Structure of brand

The structure of brand includes the “mother” brand and the “son” brands of a segmented market, both co – branding. In order to get the most benefit from



branding, an enterprise should link all types of brand and the strategies of each brand. The more strategic branding the enterprises establish, the more efficient the activities are. Beside that, the visual branding process should concern especially on the structure of brand because of its very important role in brand naming.

There are three main structures of brand, are following:

- One brand for whole structure
- A “mother” brand and the “son” brands
- The brand family

The structure of brand will be explained in more detail in part Corporate Identity System 2.4.2.

#### 2.1.4 Roles of brand

Why does a product have higher price than the other products in the same value? The answer is only by the brand effects on each product. In reality, most famous brands have transferred right meaning, right value, and right characteristics of services or products to customers’ awareness. The problem is not which product or service is the best; the most important is our customers think which one is the best. The appearance of one famous brand will affect very strongly to the customers’ perception, to the way they evaluate one product or service. Obviously, brand can either elevate or diminish that product or service! For instance, one T – shirt for male is produced by one Vietnamese factory which names An Phuoc, the price is from 218 – 555.000 VND (approximately 9€ – 22€). However, if its name is a famous French brand as Piere Cardin, the price will rise from 683 – 897.000 VND (or 27€ – 35€) per T – shirt.

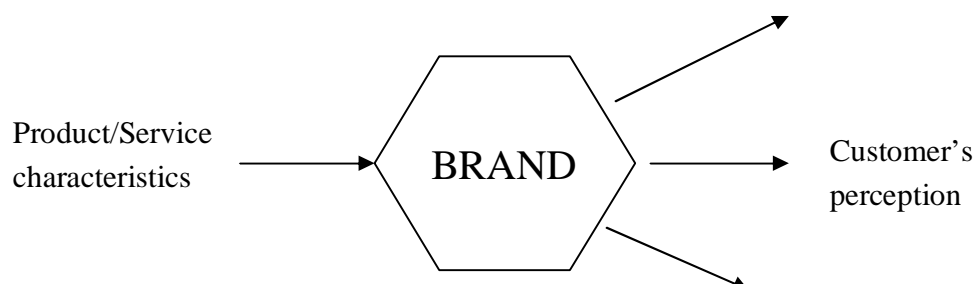


Figure 4: Brand Hexagon

According to researching of marketing department of Kellogg School of Management, brand plays as a hexagon (above figure); the customers' perception of a product is established by two main factors (Luong Thanh Mai 2008). Those are product's characteristics (quality, structure...) and brand.

In the 22 Immutable Laws of Branding, Al Ries and Jack Trout are positive that *Marketing is not a battle of perceptions instead of product*. Hence, brand – the customers' perception of a product or service, will bring the huge competitive advantages to the enterprises. Let's take a look to some benefits from the famous brand:

➤ **To products, services: Brand creates orientation and meaning**

Brand is pregnant with a lot of product information, is evaluated by brand positioning, value, mission...Chronologically, the modern technology as well as customers' partiality will change, the brand development program should be re – built and managed day by day, and assure the uniqueness to the product meaning.

➤ **To revenue and benefit: Brand is an intangible product of enterprises, which increases benefits by value-adding.**

In the world, many companies or organizations become more famous by not only scale of operation, technology investment, but also brand image itself. The brand itself sets a high price. According to Interbrand Corporation evaluation, in 2007, Coca – Cola was the highest value brand in the world, accounted to 65,32 billion USD; the second position was Microsoft amount of 58,7 billion USD, IBM was 57,09 billion USD (<http://www.interbrand.com/>). Or with the above example of T – shirt for which the brand Piere – Cardin has added more value, and brings a high benefit for the enterprise itself.

- **To company's market share: Brand maintains a target customer group, and attracts more potential customers.**

In reality, the consumers are usually attracted to famous and popular brands. Those famed and generated brands will consolidate the loyalty of a huge traditional customer's amount, and have chance to attract new customers and even the competitors' target consumers.

- **Brand helps to decrease more costs for marketing and trade activities**

Brand – is just one of Marketing tools, useful trade activities are to attack into target market, reinforce the enterprises expanding market as well. Moreover, because of brand fame, the distribution process of product has more advantage and is more effective.

- **Brand brings competitive advantages for enterprises from other competitors.**

Generally, some famous and generated brand goods will create a certain position in every competitive market, due to the customers' loyalty and faith. Beside that, when the enterprises register brand preservation, they will be protected by government and jurisdiction parties in limiting and preventing from the trespass, counterfeits of competitors and others illegal opponents.

## **2.2 Point of view in branding**

The same as “brand” definition, branding seems to be a concept patented by consultancies or marketers. Surprisingly, both scholars and professors just label as branding every effort to make a brand known and liked by customers. They do not give a clear and precise definition of this concept.

A consultancy, such as the Vietnamese company – G'brand™ in the present study, always has professional and consultative branding strategies or plans. The branding program includes ideas and designs to set up as well as to improve image of the other

enterprises' brand. Branding is a concept, which includes brand naming, packaging, advertising, and other sales promotion activities. This consultancy is the same as marketers, then marketers often “define” branding as “what we do for the brand”, or “to make the brand known and liked” (Christopher and McDonald 1995; Zhenyi Li 2001, 18).

Now, the question here: Is it branding to create a brand or is there already a brand to start the process of branding? In case, the brand exists prior to branding, then creating a brand is not a part of branding. However, branding can not start without a brand. Beside that, some scholars simply use “branding” as a gerund of the verb “to brand”. Some others discuss several factors or characteristics of branding without defining it. Or, branding is a set of associations (Mooji 1998, 34 – 35; Christopher and McDonald 1995; Zhenyi Li 2001, 18), a value adding process (Mooji 1998, 116; McCracken 1986, 1988a, 1991, 1993; Zhenyi Li 2001, 18), economic shortcuts (Aaker 1991), or public relations (Zhenyi Li 2001).

### **2.3 Branding process**

After a long time researching references from Vietnamese and other sources, I collected and consolidated the branding process including these steps: (1) Business strategy, (2) Designing brand's factors, (3) Brand Protection Registration, (4) Marketing tools, (5) Brand Protection and Development.

#### **(1) Business strategy**

Business strategy relates to how a company is successful and achieves competence in a particular market. It relates to target customers, product choice, competitive advantages compared to competitors, satisfying customers need...Hence, brand ensures the customers loyalty towards service quality, product, so branding process should be based on a careful and perfect business strategy of the enterprises.

#### **(2) Designing brand's factors**

Business strategy should be communicated through brand factors (including brand positioning, brand identity and brand personality in above parts) in order to increase customers' perception to service or product, and especially the best perception. Then, it is helpful for more advantages of the enterprises in an ever – competitive business environment.



Figure 5: The branding process

Source: Hoat dong xay dung thuong hieu bang hinh anh, 20.

### **(3) Brand Protection Registration**

Some tangible assets such as trademark name, logos...have to be registered after designing process, in order to avoid copyright infringement of other parties. Brand

protection registration is the way that government protects the own legal right of using brand's factors of the enterprises.

#### **(4) Marketing tools**

Using Marketing tools is product, price, place, promotion or, so - called 4P's model. This model will create a service or/ and product that satisfies the market's demand and assures the brand's promise to consumers. Beside that, using marketing tools helps to keep up and consolidate the employees' loyalty to brand development, and transfer to consumers in the best and most unique way at the same time.

#### **(5) Brand Protection and Development**

Brand always attaches to business activities from the first establishment to its last cycle. Therefore, brand development should combine parallel to protection process in order to limit the copyright infringement or other trespasses. Whenever those above steps are carefully built, will increase competitive advantages and get a positive result of its product and service in the market comparing to other competitors. Hence, it also affects consumers' perception – choice, and loyalty to that brand. However, this above process is flexible changing; it can be parallel applied to get the best result.

### **2.4 Visual branding**

In the last part of this study, I mentioned and distinguished some ideas of brand definition through many reference sources. All those definitions help readers to have a variety of and general overview of this exciting and interesting field in business. Beside that, delving too deeply into researching, I find that brand is a lodestar for building and developing itself, from then, managing the branding process in the best way, Corporate Identity System (CIS) is established. On the other hand, visual branding is the activity of building and spreading the brand in visual or the Corporate Identity System itself.

There are so many elements inside one CIS such as logo, slogan, design rules, brand mission, brand vision...However, because of the study limitation, I only mention

some major and most important factors within the Corporate Identity System which impact deeply on visual branding process of the enterprises.

#### **2.4.1 Roles of visual branding or CIS to enterprises**

The roles of visual branding are obviously the role of the Corporate Identity System towards enterprises business. Before coming to the roles of the CIS, let take a look to its functions to the enterprises. A completed and perfect Corporate Identity System needs to comprise four super functions in which three functions orient to shareholders.

- Helping customers to recognize the enterprise clearly and explicitly. Because everyone knows the enterprise's existence and remembers its name and target business activities which is definitely important to that company.
- To be a "face" of the enterprise in the market that increases its image and fame as well.
- Describing the enterprise structure to its shareholders; sketching the closed cementation of the organization's structure as well as the relationship with other enterprises.
- The fourth function is so different from the above ones – the internal function of the Corporate Identity System relating to personal existence of staff in the whole organization. That knowledge is too important to create the power for labor force to strive for organization development future. Since then, the consistence of brand image will expand more simultaneous.

According to website vir.com, "If the Corporate Identity System is created skillfully, it is a very important factor to build a positive brand image and be deep impression in customers' perception". In general, if you have your own strong brand, you can set a higher price for your product and cost less for marketing activities, especially business promotional campaigns. At the same time, building a tough brand and keeping customers' loyalty, you will make your competitors give out much more for

marketing activities, if they want to dispute the market share. The strong brand image also plays as a factor to maintain your business in the case of bankrupt or hard trouble, and decrease the damage of revenue.

In order to understand clearly about this intangible asset, said John Stuart – CEO of Quaker Group – one of the biggest Foods & Beverages Companies in USA last decades: “If this Group is bankrupt, I will give the assets, factory and equipment to you, I only keep brand and trademark, and I will jump far away from you” ( Luong Thi Thanh Mai 2008) Few years later, Quaker sold his company and his own brand to Pepsi with the value price amounted to 14.2 billion USD.

Therefore, the completed and skillful Corporate Identity System will bring a big economic value for enterprise, and let considering some major roles of the CIS:

- **Effect role** – the Corporate Identity System brings a good impression of product, service and business through professional, unique and resonant implementation which creates an attractive, strong and valuable brand image to customers and other parties. Effect role also presents in economic field, the CIS help the enterprises to save a lot of money or costs during product advertising process, service and business activities.
- **Distinguish role** – is to help consumers to distinguish one enterprise’s products, service with others.
- **Management role** – whole image and brand of the enterprise in all business activities and brand development is controlled strictly in width and depth.
- **Monitoring role** – is an easy way for consumers to combine closely and effectively with brand consultant agencies and advertising group...
- **Building business culture role** – the standard rules of the Corporate Identity System will be the most important keys to establish business culture of an organization. Following that, all staff will always attempt for the organization’s achievements.

In conclusion, the last and unique purpose of the Corporate Identity System is to help customers to distinguish an enterprise’s brand from other competitors’ in which has



particular characteristics, and build up a positive customers' perception of that product or service. Last but not least, an indispensable result is that brand awareness index or brand awareness getting the maximum level.

“Let's examine the Coca – Cola brand visually. It has a very clear sense of color. Quite simply, wherever there's Coke, there's red and white. Coca – Cola takes its colors extremely seriously. The consistent use of the colors, the dynamic ribbon, the typography, and the logo have established a very clear and unambiguous image which has survived for decades and is memorable to anyone who has been exposed to the brand. It's a brand that will, without a moment's hesitation, earn full marks for its visuals.” (Lindstrom\_Brand\_001-226\_repro 12/1/04: 20- Brand Sense)

#### **2.4.2 Corporate Identity System (CIS)**

According to the website Thietkethuonghieu (<http://www.thietkethuonghieu.net/>), the Corporate Identity System is a system which includes all regular, common, unity values related to brand through three main sectors: product – service – organization. In detail, those are regular values such as image, size, and rules of using product or service image in all inside and outside of an enterprise.

On the same issue, NQ center website said that, the Corporate Identity System forms a perfect brand identity system, by normalizing an image of the particular brand. The normalization is described in color combination of logo, font, and standard size in order to create not only the uniqueness, but also the particular, separate characteristics of the enterprise, which helps to distinguish with other competitors or brands. On the other ways, the Corporate Identity System require to expand a unique image or “face” through the communicated media of the enterprise, from logo concept to brochure, advertised board, leaflet, and other stuffs....

The Corporate Identity System is designed through the combination of four sectors: “Product Design” means designing product image which is easy for consumers to realize its characteristics. “Packaging Design” has the same meaning but focuses on

the display on package and both its service. “Graphic Design” means using a unique font, size and pattern of the logo on billboard, office documents, staff uniform... “Environmental Design” includes displaying brand logo in all trademark places, transportation, and media channels.

When I worked in G’brand™ – a brand consultancy in Vietnam, I had collected a stuffs system of the CIS. It not only includes logo design, but also its application into documents uniquely and clearly such as:

- Name
- Logo
- Product image
- Package sample
- Office documents: card visit, envelopes (big-small size), invitation letter, contract letter...
- Uniforms and Badges: staff uniforms (men-women), staff badges, ...
- Interiors: company board system, information table, product display table...
- Advertised product sets: website homepage, leaflet, outdoor board...
- Set of gift: T-shirt, hat, raincoat...
- Other display products: new year cards, Christmas cards ...



Figure 6: Product list of a CIS

Source: [www.g-brand.info](http://www.g-brand.info)



### 1. Logo VEPA

### 2. Mẫu cardvisit & letterhead



### 3. Mẫu thùng đựng sản phẩm

### 4. Mẫu quảng cáo ô tô



Figure 7: Some particular products of Hanoi VEPA Paint JSC – VEPA

The order: (1)-VEPA logo, (2)-Card-visit & letterhead sample, (3)- Paint barrels sample, (4)- Struck sample

Source: G’brand™

In general, some companies have their own professional Corporate Identity System; which include a Corporate Identity Guideline. This guideline displays mode, rules of brand impression in all business activities and other stuff. At the same time, all branches, agencies, services of the company have to follow the rules in this guideline

as well. Moreover, all partners or suppliers also have to ensure the unique image of that brand and apply those rules or instructions according to the Corporate Identity Guideline. In other cases, it should be allowed to display its “face” by that company.

In reality, besides “sight” factor, branding activity has other factors related to other senses such as: specific sound (hearing), specific smell (olfactory), specific taste (the sense of taste) ... However, in the limited study; I only emphasize on the Corporate Identity System with its “sight” factors.

#### 2.4.2.1 General rules

The important goal of the Corporate Identity System is to create a positive customers’ perception of one product or service and distinguish them from other competitors as mentioned above. “Regardless of the size of a company or the nature of a business, there are certain ideals that characterize the best brand identities. They hold true whether the brand identity project is about launching an entrepreneurial venture, creating a new product or service, repositioning a brand, working on a merger, or creating a retail presence” (Ideals in G’brand website). Therefore, an effective brand identity visually will:

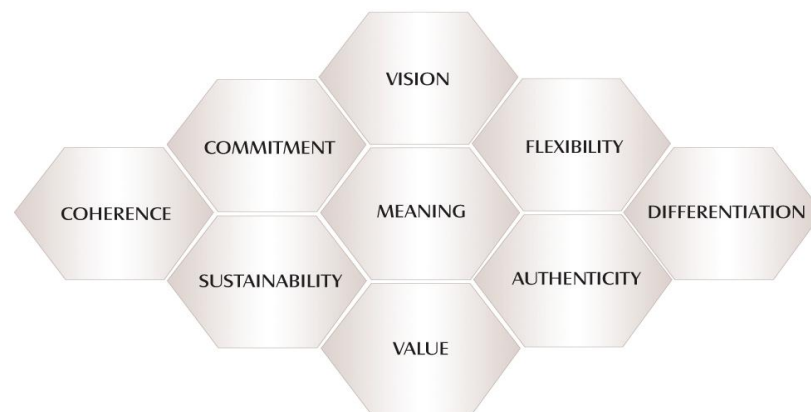


Figure 8: Ideals of CIS

Source: [www.g-brand.info](http://www.g-brand.info)

➤ **Easy discrimination**

This is the first important nature of designing the Corporate Identity System, which creates probably the most different brand from other brands of such kind product, color or image. In the next example, a “dragon” image is not a good choice to design logo because so many companies have their own name as “Dragon”, “Long” or “Rồng” (Long & Rồng are translated into Vietnamese), also totally use this representation. Therefore, it is better to use a particular image and is not as the same as usually.



Figure 9: So many companies use “dragon” as their logo or image <sup>4</sup>

Source: <http://www.dragoncapital.com/Web/index.php>

➤ **Relative**

A visual brand will excite benefits related to product, service of a company. For example: Coca –Cola, Microsoft, Vinamilk...However, “relative” has no meaning of description in detail of the goods characteristics, because it is complicated and unidentifiable. In express transportation industry, “Overnight Delivery Service” is a name with having big “relative” but is not as strong as “Federal Express”. Beside that, it is important to know that all image factors of the brand have to impress the brand personality, brand identity and brand positioning.

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<sup>4</sup> From the left side is Logo of Thang Long JSC, Logo of Dragon Capital, and last one is the old logo of Thang Long Security Company.

➤ **Impressive and memorable**

“*Impressive and memorable*” means those brand’s factors such as logo, image, typography; fonts...are becoming recognizable to the target audience when make the buying – decision. Some impressive and memorable logos as such the crocodile of the famous Lascoste fashion, or the boomerang image of Nike....

➤ **Flexible**

This rule relates to culture, geography, custom or norms of each target market. Designing logo or the Corporate Identity System should be suitable, flexible changes when expanding the company’s activities to foreign countries or other areas. Because the Corporate Identity System displays “What the company is” and “What the company does”, hence, it needs to transfer suitably to what the customer wants and needs.

➤ **Unique**

All the brand’s stuffs from logo, gifts, brochures, documents, contracts, letterhead, envelope...have to interpret a visual image uniquely at any time, in any circumstance. On the other hands, it is better to check all the media channels in which the brand logo will be used. The more suitable the logo is in many media channels, the more advantage the company gets.

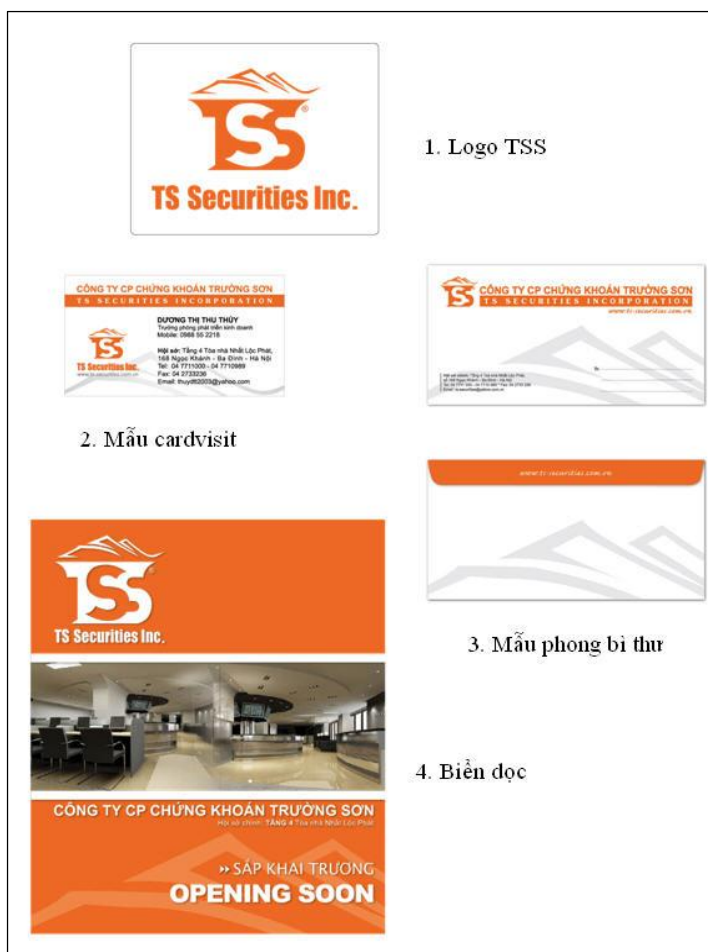


Figure 10: The unique factors of the CIS of Truong Son Securities INC.

The order: (1) - TSS logo, (2) - Card-visit sample, (3) - Envelop sample, (4) - Long side board

Source: G'brand™

### ➤ Adjustable

Nowadays, the development of information technology combines with the changeable demand of consumers frequently, which force all factors of the Corporate Identity System to change necessarily as well. Therefore, one Corporate Identity System should have the ability to adjust to satisfy all situations.

### 2.4.2.2 Designing some factors of Corporate Identity System

#### ➤ Name

*“I always believe that a company name is all its life. It includes both responsibility and guarantee of product quality.”*

Akio Morita – Sony Established Leader

Name is the first impression in strategy to attract customers of an enterprise. When the customers see an impressive name, they will be attractive and memorable. Beside that, it is necessary to have trade mark name, product package and the enterprises' service to help customers to define the difference in consumption quality more effectively. With the enterprises, product naming in difference will manage around sources of production and consumption process; bring the most benefit for business activity.

It is important to remember the commercial name is the name of organization, or individual using in business activity, in order to distinguish from other enterprises in the same business issue or business place (Luat So huu tri tue. 4/2005, 26§). The trademark name is to differentiate goods, service of the enterprises. Thus, naming goods, service trademark is probably important to the enterprises.

When naming a trademark for goods, the enterprises have to notice the strategy of the brand structure they chose. If the enterprises choose the brand structure strategy is:

- One brand for whole structure

Then, the enterprises will put their trademark name in all types of products. For example, all products of Philips, General Electric...In this case, the cost is less. Moreover, the consumption is stronger as if the producer fame. Otherwise, in Europe, Philips named themselves in a lot of products which have many different quality levels, from medium to high, so most consumers expect Philips' products only at the



medium level. This perspective causes damages for their luxury product consumption.

- One “Mother” brand is base for “son” brands

In this case, the trademark name of the enterprises will combine with a particular name of products. For instance, Nokia group with its products name Nokia N95, Nokia N73, Nokia 7250i...With this strategy, the prestige of “Mother” brand is Nokia, which supported and created the high faith in the consumers’ perspective, and Nokia group still release so many different products with different positions.

- Brand Family

The definitely different products of one enterprise will have dissimilar names. For example, Procter & Gamble has some products such as Pantene (shampoo), Downy (fabric softener), Omo (washing power). The advantage of this strategy is that the enterprises will not be too much tied by the products. In the case, the product is defeated or low quality, it is limited of influence on the enterprises’ fame. This strategy allows the enterprises to look for the nicest name for each new product. However, it wastes of cost for registering preservation, designing, and advertising to strengthen each of products name.



Figure 11: The Brand Family of Procter & Gamble

Source: <http://www.pg.com>

Whenever the enterprises decide the strategy of trademark naming, they should choose a particular name. Some kind of brand naming (including commercial name, trademark name) is in the under following table.

Table 1: some brand naming ways

Source: Luong Thi Thanh Mai 2008

<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Naming</b>	<b>Particular examples</b>
1	According to Founder	Ford, Hewlett-Packard
2	According to Place	Vietnam Airline, Thai airway
3	According to animals, or things ...	Apple, Red Bull
4	According to special characteristic of product	Duracell,
5	According to usage /value	D3 Medicine (uses for headache, lack of sleep...)
6	According to the first letters of company name	VNPT (Vietnam Posts and Telecommunications)
7	Reducing the company name	Techcombank (Technological and Commercial Bank)
8	Using a creative name	Kodak, Xerox
9	According to famous person or image	Nike (the name of a Goddess having wings in Greece mythology, representative for win)
10	According to a communicated meaning	Coca-Cola (the product from coca leaf and cola grain)

During naming process, it is important to remember these rules:

- (1) Name has to be readable, recognizable, and memorable. Some short names are more comfortable. For instance, Omo, PS, Crest.
- (2) Name has meaning, nice, and imaginable. For example, Head and shoulders, Federal Express.
- (3) Name has to be changeable, and used for many products in the same type, avoids the bad meaning when translating in other languages or in other foreign markets. For example, General Motors faced difficulty to export cars Chevrolet Nova to Mexico and other Spain, because “Nova” means “impossible driving” in Spanish.
- (4) Name should be impressive and makes sense when reading. For example: Kodak, Lux, Elite.
- (5) Applying preservation request. The trade-mark name, commercial name has ability to distinguish, not the same, itself from other enterprises’ names.

#### ➤ **Logo**

The logo is a graphic element or is a symbol, word to identify a company image. Together with name, the logo is one aspect of a company’s commercial brand, or economic or academic entity, and its shapes, colours, fonts and images usually are different from others in a similar market. Typically, a logo’s design is for immediate recognition, inspiring trust, admiration, loyalty and an implied superiority. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Logo>). Two biggest meanings that the logo brings into enterprises’ branding are:

- The logo affects customers’ knowledge of a product or service. The logo can show the relationship through its meaning or by other media channels. Comparing to “name”, the logo is more imaginable, special, and more recognizable than the name. However, it is sometimes nothing in the customers’ perspective without any description from the enterprises. If the logo is impressive in the customers mind, it will be the best transference meaning of the enterprises’ brand. For example, logo of Pepsi is a sphere with three colours: blue, white and red on the dark blue background

which impresses to the young, cool, active characteristics and also focuses on the target youth customers.



Figure 12: Pepsi Logo

Source: <http://pepsiworld.com.vn>

- The logo helps consumers to distinguish one product, service from others in a similar market. The logo image is always the first image speaking to the enterprise's brand. Because of graphic design, the logo is recognizable and increasing identifiable of the product. Moreover, the logo is less including meaning of a particular product, so it is possible to use one logo for so many types of products.

One logo is usually created by some special elements such as:

- The combination of logotype and logo symbol. A written name (logotype) is probably designed into many alphabets. The logo symbol is a special and attractive image related to brand. The logo symbol is the most important element transferring messages of brand to the customers and be identifiable and memorable in the customers as well.
- Colour is in the logo elements. Colour is important to the brand recognition, but should not be an integral component to the logo design, which would conflict with its functionality.



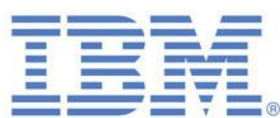
Figure 13: Techcombank' logo elements

Source: Techcombank – The logo notebook

Hence, the perfect and exciting mixture of logo and colour will satisfy the goal of logo designing, and create the enterprise's position in a particular market.

According to some elements of logo, there are three kinds of logos, following are:

- (1) Logo only includes logotype which is designed from brand name, commercial name of the enterprises – *broken type logo*, is suitable with companies which brand name demonstrate effectively their business activity. Instead of using logo's graphic factors to transfer any message, the letter meaning will be used to the maximum. For instance, IBM logo, Microsoft logo, Coca – Cola logo...The broken type logo should be used when: there is some limitation of expression and need to pay much attention to company name or company name is probably special, particular characteristics from other brands in the market. However, the limitation of broken type logo is sometime difficult to remember and recognizable from a far distance.



Logo của IBM



Logo của Coca-Cola



Logo của Microsoft

Figure 14: Some broken types logos

Source: G'brand™

- (1) Logo consists of logo symbol, is a graphic symbol creating a relationship companies have with their product, service. Because the symbol itself does not transfer directly as letters, then it revives interesting thoughts of the enterprises. It is also the reason why the *logo symbol* is more challengeable than *broken type logo*. The logo symbol should be used only when: the enterprises need an image in the product to transfer the message of brand; or the companies' name is too long or difficult to translate in other languages. Logo symbol might use an image in business field of the enterprises. For example, an apple image of Apple computer firm...

Logo của hãng phim  
Century Fox

Logo của Apple

Figure 15: Some described logo image

Source: G'brand™

Logo symbol is also the imaginary graphic, for example: the boomerang logo of Nike. According to some Marketing professors, this logo has meaning only when Nike transfers messages of the brand value to customers through its connection in ideas. However, building this spirit bridge has wasted a lot of cost and time. The boomerang logo of Nike does not have much meaning, beside of some achievements thoroughly time by marketing drives, which has moved this logo into a “recognizable character” for a sport style.

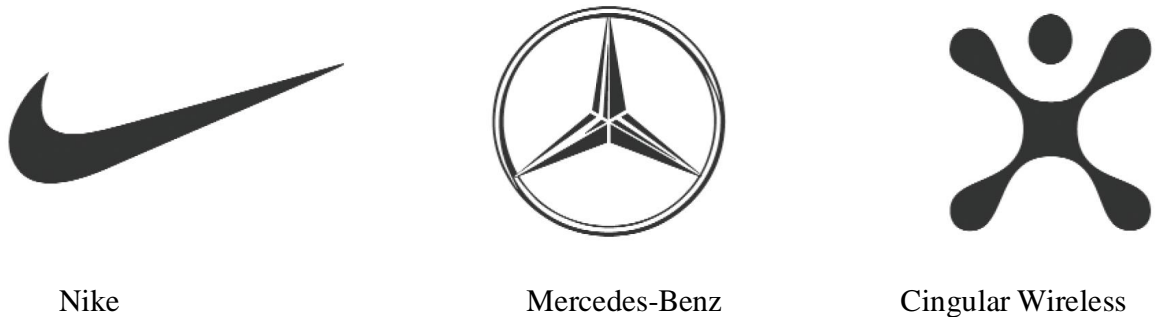


Figure 16: The imaginary graphic Logos

Source: [www.g-brand.info](http://www.g-brand.info)

(2) *Mixed Logo* is a combination of logo type and logo symbol. This mixture can be disassembled or assembled together. Obviously, in some cases, the enterprises might use logo type or logo symbol separately. A good mixed logo will bring incredible communication result and reflect the brand personality. Because the mixed logo has ability to communicate more easily than other logos, the advertising is less cost. Thus, such a logo has the most super value and is excellent with new foundation. In the world, some famous mixed logos are: HSBC, LACOSTE, BP...The mixed logo should be used when:

- A new foundation and the advertising cost are limited.
- Brand name has particular character, recognizable but not too special.
- The enterprises need a particular image on product and use more than one image.



Figure 17: Some mixed logos

Source: G'brand™

Brand logo needs to assure some requirements such as:

- Difference: Have some special characters impressing to the “sight”, and be recognizable. This is an important function of a logo, help to distinguish one brand or product from other brands /products, and to be memorable to customers’ mind.
- Simple, memorable: ability to be acceptable, descriptive
- Adaptable: ability to adapt in all different environment, cultures and linguistics.
- Has meaning: describe the particular characters for products or relative issues.

### ➤ **Product Package**

The role of package is more and more important in building a strong and unique brand image or brand “face”. Package usage is not only protective, descriptive and introductive, but also includes so many factors influence on customers and their decision making. Nowadays, many companies consider package to be a Marketing tool to improve their own products, in order to identify with competitors and create a positive perception in customers, and obtain the customers’ loyalty.

To realize its importance, nowadays, the enterprises always pay much attention to the process of designing and checking package; and apply a popular solution for their product package which calls **VIEW** – the concise way of four English words, displaying four features on package:



- **V: Visibility:** The package should be differentiated from other competitors' product package, have its own style of brand. Colours, structure, background are some elements which help to identify brand image much faster, and more memorably to the customers with its individual features. Some kind of products might change in each periods of its life cycle, but it should follow the unique changing rule in displaying product brand. For instance, packages of Konica film are designed in blue colour to distinguish to Kodak's yellow or Fuji's green. On the other hands, all packages have to be unique, differentiated to other products' packages appeared in the market.



Bao bì sản phẩm của Konica

Bao bì sản phẩm của Fuji

Bao bì sản phẩm của Kodak

Figure 18: Some comparing product's package

From the left side, Konica package, Fuji package, and Kodak package samples

Source: G'brand™

- **I: Informative:** The package should describe most of product information such as: quality, quantity, expired date, ingredients, instruction...Those are the most important information that customers need to know better when the decision – making have.
- **E: Emotional impact:** The model of package should be impressive and attractive to customers. Hence, the customers will firstly focus on beautiful, nice, colourful or special, strange packages. Beside that, package designing will show a part of inside product quality. For instance, some luxurious goods will require some similar elegant packages as well. It means package

designing for expensive goods has to make a clear and careful choice from the materials to colour, and then also differentiate the customers' level.

- **W: Workability:** The function of package is to protect product, also is useful after using product completely. In general, most people finish using goods and take away its package, and so are too wasteful. Therefore, in current competitions, suppliers or marketers find out the way adding package value, and those small details will be the competitive advantages for the enterprise. For instance, some bottles of shower cream usually have one more hanger which is easy using in bathroom. The cover of Comfort power bottles has a function of quantity measurement ...All elements of a product are more useful, suitable for consumers in social life.

A good package should include all above elements. Package designing requires exploring carefully demand and targeting group customers. Only exploring and analysing customers' demands and needs to the product package, it will be helpful to orient and design much faster and more effective.

### **2.4.2.3 Spreading Corporate Identity System**

After designing the brand factors, the next important part is to spread the Corporate Identity System. It means developing the media strategy so that the brand will be recognize and extend in the market. Spreading the Corporate Identity System has to attach to spread other factors such as brand value, brand mission...in order to get the most successful. The precise combination of the strategies within the developed process will maximize successful ability of brand as well as the CIS. In reality, other Marketing tools will affect more how the consumers access and are more faithful with the brand. However, this study only stays at analyzing some tools for spreading the Corporate Identity System.

When spreading the CIS, it is necessary to think about two responses: the internal responds such as staff, director... and the external responses of the enterprises such as shareholders, partners... and target customers.

➤ **Spreading CIS in internal responses of the enterprises:**

It means using some information program towards internal staff in order to assure the whole labour force understands, trusts in the brand image and has ability to branding both inside and outside the business environment. Some methods can be used such as organizing training courses, introducing the meaning and usage of the Corporate Identity System; set the CIS on the website, magazine...

With the enterprise itself, this is the most important step within the brand spreading strategy. In the world, many companies just start to spread the brand in the market only when assure the staffs have right knowledge all their brand's factors.

➤ **Spreading the CIS in external responses of the enterprises:**

The purpose of spreading the CIS in the external environment is to help the consumers and partners to understand the brand clearly and consistently, recognize and distinguish from other competitors' ones, then having faith in the enterprise's brand.

Nowadays, the spreading the CIS has a lot of methods such as: advertising, Public Relations (PR)<sup>5</sup>; events, exhibitions ... To understand how some big companies spread their brands, let's take a look the under Appendix 2- Unilever redeploys itself Corporate Identity System.

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<sup>5</sup> Public Relations are not Branding: Organizations often undertake a "branding" process, yet the outcome closely resembles a public relations face-lift. Why does this occur? One possibility might be the framework that guides the process. Another may simply be the viewpoint of the agency, or consultant, employed. In any case, valuable dollars are spent each year on brand strategy endeavors and frequently, the outcome does not yield the tangible results organizations are seeking. (<http://www.whisperbrand.com/blog/category/branding-vs-pr/>)

### **2.4.3 Intellectual Property issues**

A united, clear, concise, and international general law system will make an advantage condition for enterprises to access, explore information of brand; understand their own rights and responsibilities in business activities, especially in building and protecting brand in international market. All problems of Intellectual Property holding towards visual branding probably related to the Patent Rights, *which is the right of an organization, individual in regard to invention, industrial style, brand, trademark name, geography, business secret by his or her own creation, or holding and the right to prevent illegal competition. (Luat so huu tri tue Viet Nam. 4/2005, 4§)*

#### **2.4.3.1 According to law system to branding visually**

One side, Vietnamese enterprises need to know some international conventions of Patent Rights that Vietnam joins such as Paris Convention 1883 as convention for preservation of Patent Rights; Madrid convention as International Registration of goods trademark...On the other sides, Vietnamese enterprises continue to follow the national rules about brand, inside that, the most important is the Intellectual Property holding Law, is ratified through Parliament and applied from 01/07/2006. This law unifies all rules of Vietnamese law system related to brand issue and is the most important legislation base in instructing the enterprises branding.

#### **2.4.3.2 Registering preservation of the brand's factors**

Registering preservation of the brand factors means establishing the rights of protective legislation in the case of are violation of brand's factors by other competitors or parties. In the concept of geography, the right of preservation is only applied and consecrated in the countries that brand owner registered. It means the enterprise registers its protected rights in one country; its brand is only preserved in

that country. However, it notices that requirements, procedures, benefits as well as responsibilities are probably different from national to international countries.

In order to register brand preservation, the enterprise can apply directly or give responsibility to a representative. The first important thing before applying is to check carefully this brand which is coincident either not or exists unexpected factors. Continuously, the enterprise needs to usually track changes or reaction from registered management office (generally in three first months from the registered date). On the other ways, the enterprise should reference from consultant service of Law Company or lawyers, in order to ensure safety and minimize risks during registering brand preservation.

### **2.4.3.3 Brand protection and development**

The brand image is always attached to the business activities. Therefore, after registering brand preservation, it is critical minimum effort for the enterprise to protect its brand image. Because it is the time to jump properly into real business life and most strategies or plans of the enterprise are around brand which is confirmed as well. One enterprise wants to protect its brand image, should pursue some following rules:

- Improving product quality and brand advertising incessantly
- Preventing from any trespass the brand image
- Checking market to explore and destroy counterfeits

## **2.5 Visual branding consulting activity**

### **2.5.1 Definition**

During the process of searching “consulting activity” definition, it was difficult to find out a particular meaning. Some online dictionaries such as Oxford or Cambridge only give out the meaning of “consulting” generally, and no definition of “visual

branding consulting activity”. Meanwhile, the consultancies’ website only focuses on introducing their services, consulting process without any definition of this researching issue.

The word “consulting” originates from the verb “consult”, which means to “seek advice from” as in seek advice from an accountant or an attorney (<http://home.att.net/~nickols/consult.htm>). This is a common activity to give an advice simply between this or that person with others. Moreover, in a broadly meaning and in my point of view, “visual branding consulting activity” is carried out by one organization or person who is very skillful, having much training and knowledge in visual branding issue or branding subject normally. Thus, the visual branding consulting activity is not completely different from branding consulting activity in general. On the other hand, visual branding consulting is a part of branding consulting process, which mostly concentrates on the “face” improvement strategy for an enterprise. Let’s take a look through some of branding consultancies’ services, in order to clear this idea.

G’brand™ – one of the new consultancies in Vietnam market “is a full-service branding agency specializing in creating visual tools for success. They supply package services, especially in brand development & reinforcement.” ([www.g-brand.info](http://www.g-brand.info) ). As same service, Lantabrand – Total Brand Solutions is a well – known company specializing in building & developing brand. They work as a brand manager assisting client business, and also supply a full service in brand strategy, brand naming, logo & packaging designing and brand communications (<http://lantabrand.com/cat31.html>). However, there are some consultancies even supply a package service, but only focus on one part of brand issue such as “strategic and innovative brand naming and identity solutions” (<http://www.brandinstitute.com>). Or other consultancy provide “brand consulting, market research and creative implementation into web sites, ads, etc”... as Brand Solutions, Inc. (<http://www.brand.com/AboutUs.htm>), which has intelligent knowledge of Internet marketing and strong media communication nowadays.

In short, “visual branding consulting activity” is no longer only designing a differentiated image for a company or an organization; it is a planned, careful and long – time strategy, which uses some marketing tools such as market research, market analysis, exploring competitors, etc... by someone who are skillful, experience in the same issue. And this strategy should be a trigger to win the market, increase competitive advantage with other competitors, and keep reputation in customers.

### **2.5.2 The role of consultant**

An enterprise is unable to cover all issues of their business, if it is a producer, it is only good at producing goods; if it does business in commercial goods, it is only good at marketing and selling methods, etc...However, doing successful business requires much more than product performance. Sometimes it is hard for internal people to do this and consequently external consultants are called in. It is the same idea in visual branding activity of the company. Thus, the key to most enterprises – consultant relationships is to recognize the transitory nature of the experience for the consultant (Nicholas IND 1997: 164 – The corporate brand – MACMILLAN PRESS LTD, Hampshire & London). It is important for consultant to collect useful information of the enterprise rigorously, honestly and in detail. Because, if the consulting strategy goes wrong way wrong information, the brand value of enterprise will be changed or even destroyed rapidly, and the consultancy’ reputation is definitely affected as well.

In the process of information collection and consulting process, the consultant needs to be aware of likely stumbling blocks and potential problems to recommendations. Finding earlier, it is better to handle. Thus, the best relationship between consultant – enterprise is “bases on teamwork” (see also Nicholas IND). I would mention three main roles of consultant or consultancy in visual branding activity such as:

- Bringing new and sufficient knowledge of concerning issues in visual branding, especially the Corporate Identity System to enterprises and help them to improve their lacked information. In developed markets, it is not necessary for most enterprises have a base in this issue. However, the situation is different from developing markets where enterprises have little or non – condition to progress their awareness or comprehension.
- Helping enterprises to orient proficiently a long – time building strategy to a unified, united, and professional brand visually. Since then, brand itself could transmit exactly all values and objective to customers, employees, shareholders, and partners.
- Beside that, the consultancy could make training for the enterprise' staffs to understand sufficiently, effectively brand image meaning of where they are working. The effect is to orient all employees always following the development objective of the enterprise, and also create a general business culture inside company.

Thus, the roles of the branding consultancy are simply to help enterprises to build their own brand “face” which is particular, special, and differentiated from other competitors inside a area or/and both different domains. The success of enterprise business activity is a combination of a valuable “face” and a good “content” quality. It means a strong brand image together with an effective business which builds a perfect enterprise existing for a long time. Therefore, the consultancy is considered as a solid bridge between enterprise and their customer loyalty, and also keeps a good image in customer mind.



### **3 EFFECTS OF BRAND/CIS KNOWLEDGE AND INVESTMENT IN VIETNAMESE ENTERPRISES TOWARDS CONSULTANCY**

In order to understand the effects of Vietnamese enterprises' knowledge towards consulting activity, it is importance and decisive to research their thinking in brand concept, CIS concept, their investment in those issues as well. The research result as pie charts, figures is from survey process during the time 14/5 - 21/5/2008 with 70 enterprises, 50 returned answers, and only 42 analyzed answers. Also, list of responses includes company name, business fields, will be mentioned in the Appendices.

#### **3.1 Knowledge of brand's importance**

After joining the World Trade Organization in 2006 – the biggest international commercial organization in the world, the “brand” concept is most concerned, especially making inroad into Vietnamese market of international brands, which bring more choices for Vietnamese consumers. However, because of this trespass, it has a high economic crisis that the domestic enterprises will lose their market on their own yard. Facing with this crisis, it requires the Government and especially the Vietnamese enterprises to mention some solutions in order to minimize negative effects from the trade integration process, in regard to the international brand trespass. However, the knowledge of brand as well as its importance is still restrictive and defective in the Vietnamese enterprises.

##### **3.1.1 Knowledge of brand concept**

Through my survey, there were so many different ideas towards brand concept as well as visual branding activities.

Table 2: The knowledge of brand concept

Numbers	What is brand?	The amount of enterprises	Percentages (%)
1	Goods' trademark	14	33%
2	a commercial name of enterprise	21	50%
3	original name or geographic orientation	4	9,52%
4	a special sign (intangible or tangible) to recognize a product or service be produced/supplied by individual/organization	29	69%
5	consumers' knowledge of product	14	33%
6	Other perceptions	2	4,76%

The result is, the first level is “*a special sign (intangible or tangible) to recognize a product or service be produced/supplied by individual/organization*” (accounted to 69%). The second level in the knowledge of brand concept is “*a commercial name of enterprise*” (accounted to 50% of total). Then is “*consumers' knowledge of product*” and “*goods trademark*” is equal to 33%. There are few of enterprises thinking about “*original name or geographic orientation*”, and some of them had no idea of brand definition.

Thus, from the above table, the brand definition is differentiated and a variety of knowledge in each Vietnamese enterprises. Inside that, most enterprises considered brand as “*a special sign (intangible or tangible) to recognize a product or service be produced/supplied by individual/organization*”. It is a likely overview, and positive comparing to long decades ago, when Vietnam had been started to be familiar with this new concept. Understanding the “brand” term under various visibilities, in

different “faces” (tangible and intangible) in production/ business, is the first step for the Vietnamese enterprises in building, and strengthening their own brand. However, before joining the WTO, most of Vietnamese enterprises always believed that “*brand is a commercial name*” (Vu Chi Loc, Le Thi Thu Ha 2007, 138). This thought actually affects brand naming and designing of the enterprises, also is unmemorable to customers.

Besides that, there are few Vietnamese enterprises which considered the brand to be “*original name or geographic orientation*” (9%), this illustrates that they have not yet paid much attention to brands related to geography or original name of Vietnam. Then, certainly they will not invest much more into protecting these valuable assets. For example, Nam Roi pomelo, Thanh Ha litchi, Da Lat wine...is very famous in the Vietnamese market, but their names are also changed when exporting abroad. It, hence, causes a very hard calamity for farmers, and for the whole Vietnamese economy, when brand and brand owner are not aware of investment importance.

Although most of the Vietnamese respondents in my survey seemed to have deeper and longer acknowledgement of the brand conception, but some of them have not had a standard overview or even had lack of experience. This situation usually appears in the state companies and the old enterprises that have established through long decades. Thus, they have not dared to experience and accessed to the new of a modern business. On the contrary, most young companies, individual enterprises, or FDI businesses (Foreign Direct Investment) catch the important base in order to launch a bright business in future. Therefore, to have thorough overview of the brand conception, both private and state companies should pay attention and invest carefully to complete their own brand concept and branding activity in general.

### **3.1.2 Knowledge of brand importance**

According to the survey of Sai Gon Tiep Thi magazine in 2003, to 500 responses were enterprises, branding activity was the second biggest concerning in Vietnam

after increasing consumption (Vu Chi Loc, Le Thi Thu Ha 2007, 139). Nevertheless, in the end of 2004 and at the beginning of 2005, another survey was conducted to 269 responses by Foreign Trade University with the same idea, and the brand is considered as the critical issue in total business activities (Vu Chi Loc, Le Thi Thu Ha 2007, 140). The result intended to a new change in thought and knowledge visibly towards this critical and tense area.

Table 3: The developed strategy of the enterprises (next five years)

<b>Numbers</b>	<b>The developed strategy of the enterprises (next – five – year)</b>	<b>The amount of enterprises</b>	<b>Percentage s (%)</b>
1	Investing – improving & developing the Corporate Identity System	21	50%
2	Increasing product quality	28	66%
3	Developing new product	15	36%
4	Expanding the domestic market	20	48%
5	No need to invest for brand	3	7,14%

Until this time (2008), when I conducted this survey, number of enterprises concern about brand and branding issue, having some changes. In next – five – year, their developed strategy focuses mostly on “*increasing product quality*” (amount of 66%). Then “*investing – improving & developing the Corporate Identity System*” stands the second concerning (accounted to 50%), and Vietnamese enterprises concentrate on building and investing for brand. This is a good sign which expresses the profession and uniqueness towards branding at the beginning of establishment and expanding their market in near future. As brand is considered as the “face” of the company, which affirms value as well as loyalty of product and service quality to all customers.

However, there is not crossed out some enterprises which did not absolutely concern on branding, accounted to 7, 14%. Moreover, branding activities are not as critical developed strategy in the near future. This number is just small one in my survey, but it is uncomfortable problem in the Vietnamese general economic development. It, hence, requires a closely and necessarily concerning of the Government and the enterprises themselves, to integration to the international market.

### **3.2 Knowledge of Corporate Identity System**

The definition and role of visual branding is just building and advertising the Corporate Identity System which was introduced and analyzed in above chapter. It assures that the Corporate Identity System affects much more and thoroughly branding process visually of the enterprise. Is this system united? Is it unique? How is it useful? Does it have high competitive advantage? Etc...These are some strategic questions to brand consultancies and to the enterprises themselves. So, in regard to the visual branding activities, How Vietnamese enterprises think and what they have done?

#### **3.2.1 Knowledge of CIS concept**

Approximately 86% of total responses in my survey defined the Corporate Identity System as “*brand image is described consistently in the whole business activities of the enterprises*”. This number shows that most of domestic companies recognized unmistakably value and meaning of the CIS, from then oriented how to build a perfect and unique brand visually in the whole enterprises’ business activities.

Table 4: The knowledge of the CIS concept

Numbers	The knowledge of the CIS concept	The amount of enterprises	Percentages (%)
1	brand image is described consistently in the whole business activities of the enterprises	36	86%
2	logo design specially and differently	12	29%
3	package & product style design	5	11,90%
4	Other ideas	1	2,38%

In any market, of course, there are always two sides such as strong side and weak side; as well as in the enterprises mind. Some of them have right knowledge, the others are “blind” of brand; this is always true with a developing market as Viet Nam. Therefore, still 29% enterprises considered the Corporate Identity System as “*logo design specially and differently*”, and amount of 11,90% thought “*package & product style design*” . When I set up this question, I left at least two choices for the responses, so the above percentage number might be included some who also chose other ideas, for example “*brand image is described consistently in the whole business activities of the enterprises*”. Obviously, when adding up two above numbers together, it means knowledge of the Vietnamese enterprises was tiny and limited in regard to the importance and value of the Corporate Identity System. It means their understanding has not yet emphasized inside the CIS worth. If visual branding activity only stays at “*package & product style design*”, it is temporary, not useful to push up business, increase revenue and maintain the good name in market. And those enterprises have not built their own brand completely yet or have started to design logo, package, etc... (amount of 9,52% as in the Figure 24).

### 3.2.2 Knowledge of CIS importance

Table 5: The knowledge of the CIS importance

<i>The CIS importance to the business</i>	<b>Unimportant</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
Creating the special and unique characters	2,38%	59,5%	40%
Rising the consistent between brand value and the enterprises' business activity	2,38%	62%	38%
Engraving the brand value on the consumers' memory	0%	35,7%	67%
Displaying competitive advantages	9,52%	48%	45,2%
Constructing advantage in developing business culture	2,38%	59,5%	43%
Helping the enterprises to co-operate effectively with advertising partners, brand consultancies	7,14%	67%	28,5%

Although there were a lot of enterprises having the right acknowledge of the CIS definition as mentioned above; but in general, most of them chose level of the CIS impact on business was “*important*” not “*very important*”. The percentage of choice in the third column in the last table is always higher than the second and the fourth column. Thus, comparing the awareness of the Corporate Identity System concept regarding to the real business activity, it seems that the Vietnamese enterprises have not yet exploited thoroughly a huge economic benefit of the CIS. Together with not unify, drastic and strong investment, the Vietnamese enterprises have not probably get a maximum benefit from their own Corporate Identity System. Moreover, they only considered the importance of the CIS to be hardly high, means competitive

advantage, but not so much, not so strong and deep as many international groups or organizations did. Therefore, it is necessary to improve Vietnamese enterprises' knowledge and real experience of the visual branding to their own business activities.

### 3.3 Investment of enterprises to brand

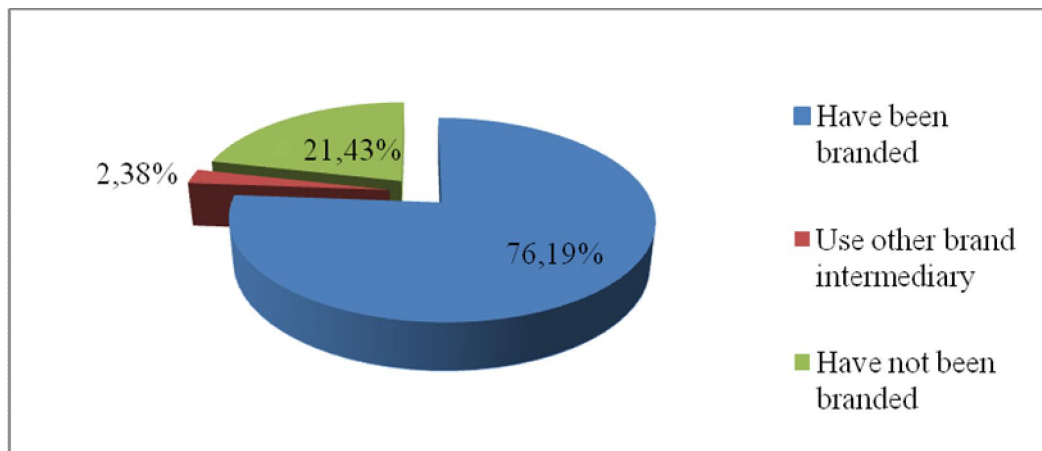


Figure 19: The number of enterprises building their own brand

There are about 76,19% of total respondents had their own brand, which means those Vietnamese enterprises have not only caught the brand conception and its role, but also moved their acknowledgement into real activity. This is a cheerful signal with the Vietnamese economy in recent years. When building their own brand, the enterprises will focus on improving product – service quality in order to keep up their brand “face”; and deem to protect their brand, to clean the competitive environment and maximize the customers' benefit.

The other number 21,43% of total respondents have not started to branding yet, although they would understand “what the brand is”, they have not known how to branding so far. This is a reason why there is more and more consultancies' appearance in Vietnam market to enhance such kind of this complex situation.



According to the pie chart above, 2,38% others used other brand intermediary in business, exporting activities. Those are the enterprises that endeavor for foreign companies, so their own profit after all is usually little. If those enterprises are separated and construct a strong brand, obviously the last profits in both tangible and intangible value are incredible.

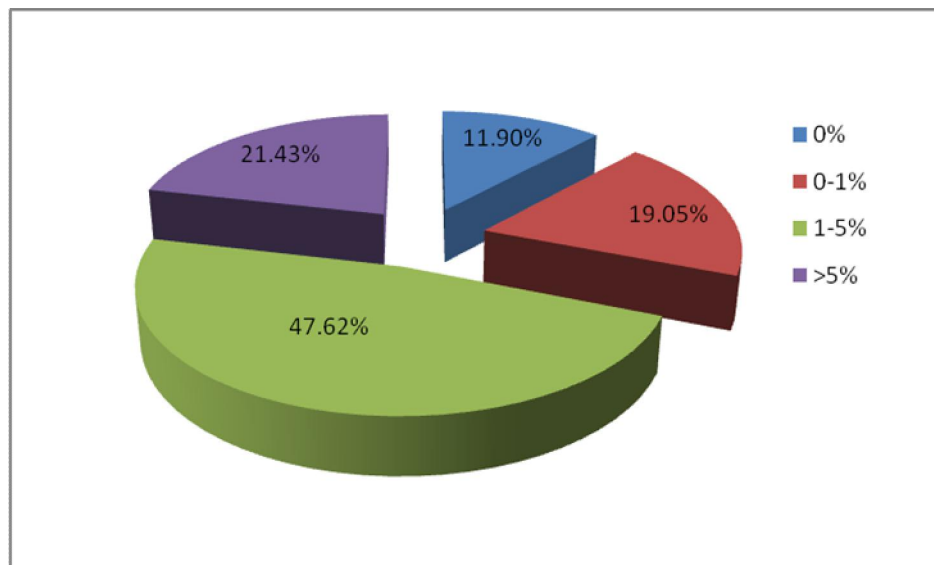


Figure 20: The investment of enterprises compares to revenue (%)

As mentioned above, the Vietnamese enterprises started to concern about brand and branding activities when joining the World Trade Organization; nevertheless, their investment in this field seems to be not enough generally. I asked the question: *How does the investment of enterprises compare to their revenue annually?* And I pointed out some choices as in the above pie chart. The result is 47,62% of total respondents invested from 1-5% for building brand “face”; only 21,43% was ready to invest more than 5% of capital, and 11,90% had no investment at all.

In the human resources of each enterprise, 28,57% of total respondents had no separated department for branding activity; 21,43% put down branding as a small field in Marketing department; 19,05% belonged to Director department; and another

small amount of enterprises set branding activities belonging to other departments (9,52%).

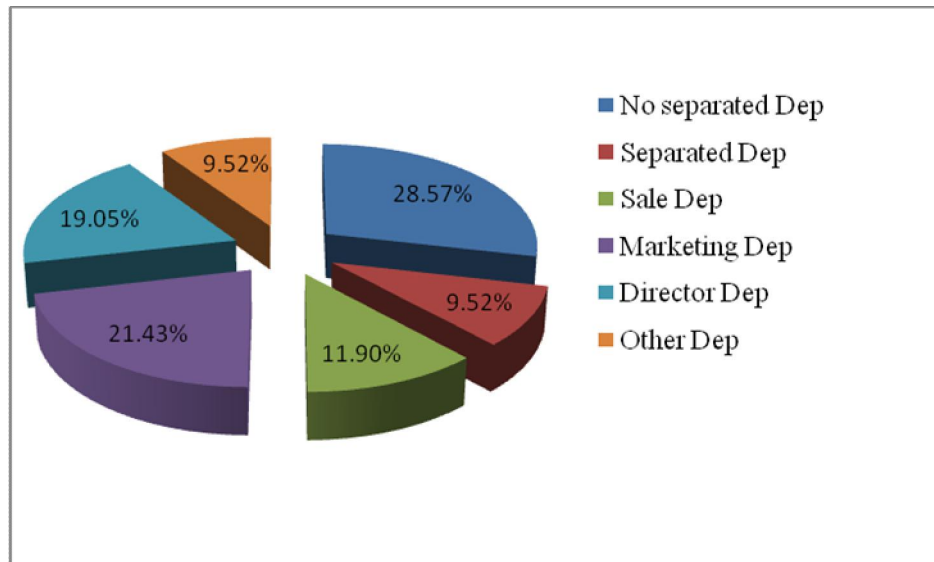


Figure 21: Branding activity in Departments

Thus, the number of enterprises without separated brand department is major in this pie chart. During my working time last year, I realized that there were few people about 2 to 3 to be responsible for brand and branding issues, and belonged to one particular department such as Marketing or Director Department. They explained if the company set up one separated department for only few people working in branding issue, it is likely complicated and cost would have increased as well. The management would be easier and more comfortable when adding some “small activities” together as in their point of view. Moreover, in some small companies, branding is measured as a part of the whole Marketing subject, the same as Sale or Advertising. However, they do not recognize that if few people have to undertake so many works at the same time, such as planning branding strategy in long-time, increasing sale revenue in three months, planning to scoop up the new market, etc...It might not get the best result for each activity after all. Choosing a branding consultancy is also a decisive and imperative choice which influences so greatly on their future development.

It is likely that Vietnamese enterprises have not had enough knowledge. Then, they lose their opportunity to exploit labor source, creative power as well as real experiences to building a unique, consistent and particular Corporate Identity System. This weak point will cause difficulty for any enterprise wants to expand and their “wings” into international market in diversifying product brand and enterprise brand. Therefore, there is still so much limitation in Vietnamese enterprises’ perspective in regard to branding investment activities.

### 3.4 The investment of enterprises to visual branding activity or the Corporate Identity System.

It is similar to brand investment; the Vietnamese enterprises seemed to be not as strong and definite as foreign companies in investing in the Corporate Identity System. I set the question “*Who is responsible for designing the Corporate Identity System?*” amount of 52,38% of total respondents designed the CIS by themselves and 7,14% has the CIS be designed by someone who has a good eyes of art or good relationship. There are only more than 40% of total enterprises which relied on the professional consultancies.

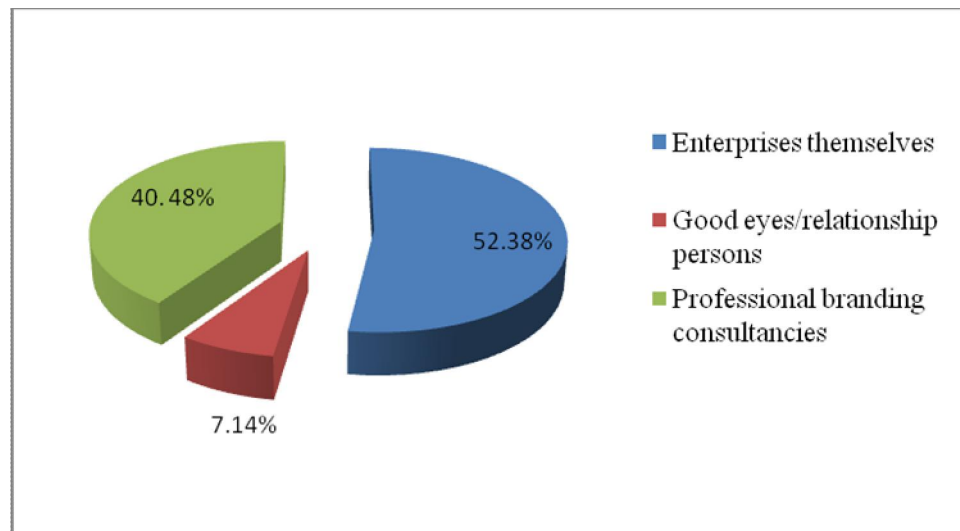


Figure 22: Representative for designing the CIS

Some companies conceptualize that customers just need to know their name, which product, how it looks / its quality are, not considering to professional image and high art. Thus, their CIS is usually simple, lack of unique, simultaneous in display and has not enough standard elements in or even no Corporate Identity Guideline. Secondly, they are afraid of high cost when investing to branding, and then invested too cursorily. Therefore, there is no fee to design logo or brand image if they have a good relationship with someone who can design rapidly and probably beautiful somehow.

However, according to this pie chart, there is some incredible change before and after having penetration of foreign companies into Vietnam market. Because branding needs an extended process, not just one, or two years, that passes a long side with the enterprises' development, has a very important strategic meaning. Thus, there are more enterprises depending on consultant and design companies, for maximize profit from the most perfect Corporate Identity System. And the number of those enterprises accounts to 40,48% and also a cheerful number for a brighter Vietnamese economy. Moreover, the cost for changing or new CIS might be huge at the beginning. But it will be too small when comparing to a huge value and profit in business result in future.

### **3.5 Some Protection and Development of Vietnamese brands**

This is also a hot issue in a developing market as Vietnam. Obviously, the enterprises firstly register brand preservation before doing business in both national and international markets.

#### **3.5.1 Registration and Granting brand status**

In regard to registering brand owner, there is amount of 20,48% total Vietnamese enterprises registered in the domestic market, was the major percentage in my survey. This number is relative to 76, 19% the Vietnamese enterprises which have had particular brand (**Figure 19**). There are only 9, 21% not yet registered, and a minor number of enterprises registered in foreign countries (2,5%).

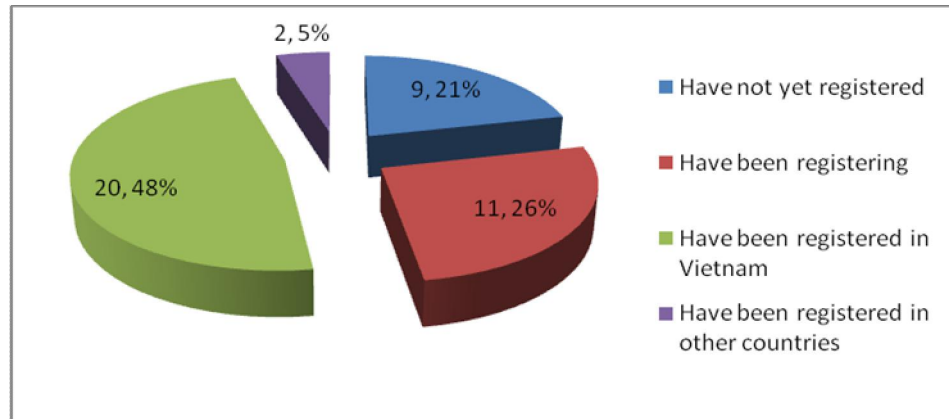


Figure 23: The brand registration

In the 1990s, the Vietnamese enterprises mostly paid much attention to product quality, product advertising, and market expansion relying on very previous experiences. This limitation sometimes caused the Government's statistics to become more complicated, compound, because of the unclear, similar appearance of the enterprises' commercial name or product trademark. Certainly, the Vietnamese enterprises will lose easily their brand name when exporting to international market. Be aware of these disadvantage situations, nowadays, the Vietnamese enterprises rapidly complete registering brand owner, and more concerning on their branding as well.

### 3.5.2 The infringement status of Patent Rights in Vietnam

According to research by Foreign Trade University in 2007, many Vietnamese enterprises lost their brands in international markets, such as Trung Nguyen coffee brand, Vinataba tobacco brand, Phu Quoc sauce brand, Vinamilk brand, Sai Gon beer, and Viet Tien leather producing in recent years...Those enterprises had not definitely known their name either registered preservation or not yet in the international market, until they have been sued for illegal using of the brand. Beside that, there were a lot of infringements such as counterfeits that most of Vietnamese enterprises have not yet prevented in time. However, managing those infringements is still limited, ineffective and useless somehow. According to Market Management Branch of Ho Chi Minh city, until 2004, the amount of checked infringements were

only approximately 50% in total of the infringements, which were small size and insignificant (Vu Chi Loc, Le Thi Thu Ha 2007, 144). Almost of brand infringements are still fined by being seizure and paid 25 million VND, but it is very small fine amount and continue to be pirated next time.

Besides registering the brand preservation in foreign market, the Vietnamese exporting enterprises have not strengthened the protected solutions towards their brand such as checking the market, and expanding distribution/channels. In some cases, although the brand is piracy, some of enterprises accept to be appropriation without any reaction at all.

### **3.6 Positive/ negative influence on consultancy**

As I mentioned in the methodology part that it is necessary to take both enterprises and consultant into account, because branding and/ or visual branding is a form of interaction between them. Thus, this part is the first one to research one side of the interaction before jumping into very detail. My objective in this chapter is to present the effects of brand/CIS knowledge and investment in Vietnamese enterprises towards consultancy. Therefore, after analyzing this survey, I would summary the positive and negative influences on the consultancy through the results and the existences in visual branding of Vietnamese enterprises.

#### **3.6.1 Current situations**

- **The Vietnamese enterprises concern more and more on building the Corporate Identity System.**

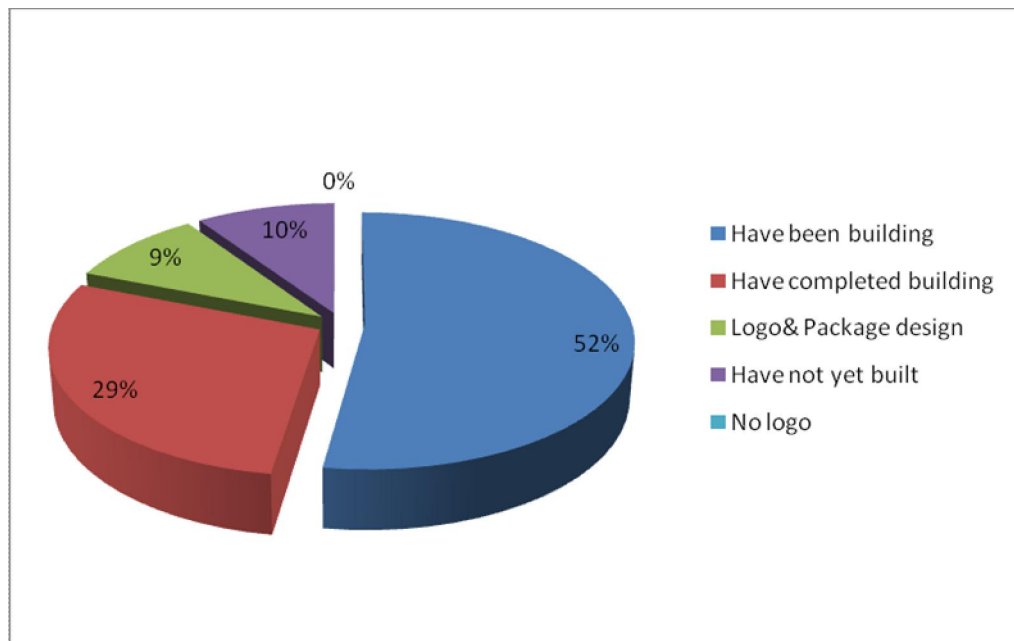


Figure 24: The enterprises build the perfect CIS

According to survey result, it is significant that most of Vietnamese enterprises pay much attention to building the Corporate Identity System than decades ago. There was 28,57% enterprises had their own completed CIS, about 52,38% is in the process of building and renewing the brand in visual such as the Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam (BIDV). A minor number of domestic enterprises have not yet built their own CIS, accounted to 9,52%, it because they lack of knowledge in branding and the Corporate Identity System either, which is one of the reason for finishing the CIS tardily. Beside that, some of enterprises just stay at logo and product package design (9,52%), that have not focused on displaying brand in a unique, professional style thorough all other products of the enterprises. It is likely that the consultancies will have a good chance to introduce their services to enterprises, who have not yet built their own brand and the Corporate Identity System (accounted to 9,52%). The imperfection of “face”, of course, is a personal demand to look for one advice or a professional consultant. It is also true in a developing and variety limited market as Vietnam. This time, the enterprises are people who create opportunities and competition for consultancies, in order to improve their service

quality and potential abilities. These consultancies will complete the imperfect brand concepts and satisfy the concerning of Vietnamese enterprise by professional and skillful consulting activities.

In reality, when Vietnam was officially a member of the World Trade Organization in which the time for many domestic enterprises introduced their Corporate Identity System, and have been ready for economic integration process. Some particular changes of the CIS in 2007 such as Vinaphone, S-phone...According to knowledge of Vietnamese Marketing Group in Marketing magazine No 40, said that “the year 2007 is only the start of Vietnamese brands changes. Next, a lot of big enterprises will jump to re-posit their image in a global economic market. Vinataba, Vinacafe, Habeco, Sabeco...are having a plan for changing the Corporate Identity System after capitalization. Not only have a few big names, but also more than 90% of medium / small-sized enterprises in Vietnam also joined to this movement.” Through this statement, it is easy to recognize that the consulting activities are also developing together with visual branding process of Vietnamese enterprises. The year 2007 is not only the time of new brands appearance, but also the expanded year of consultancies.

➤ **The rapid increasing of brand consultant and design companies professionally and effectively**

In order to satisfy the integrated and developed demands of a thriving economy, some of brand consultant and design companies established, with professional and high – creative skill, such as: G’Brand TM, Lantabrand TM, Le Viet Hung Media...Those consultancies even are domestic services and face to a new concept as “brand” as well, but having more professional and expert ability. These consultancies have a trained consultant group, together with a particular design department; comprise new-creative thoughts, modern style and fortitude, but still keep traditional characters in designing, which is suitable with each enterprise’s development and business activity. The existence of those expert services will play an incredible role to help the Vietnamese enterprises to have safe, trustful senses in demand of building their perfect Corporate Identity System.



➤ **The business ability increases considerably after completing the Corporate Identity System**

Table 6: the business ability after completing the Corporate Identity System

Number	The changes of business ability	The amount of companies	Percentages (%)
1	No change	2	4,76%
2	Revenue increases	10	23,81%
3	Trust and loyalty of consumers increase	24	57,14%
4	Higher competitive products	16	38,10%
5	Other changes	3	7,14%

According to the survey result, amount of 57,14% of the total 42 respondents realize that the *consumers' trust and loyalty* raised rapidly, and brought about the *high revenue* increasing (23,81%). The effect of united brand building and developing demonstrates strongly in *high competitive ability of product* comparing to competitors and other brands (38,10%), stands on the second position in the above table. Nowadays, the last objective of every enterprise not only stops getting high revenue, but also gaining the most trust and loyalty of consumers. The product quality will keep target customer, but the great value-added brand will increase potential customers and remain them staying longer with the enterprise. In order to build such brand, it is likely to set up a long-time and professional strategy by a skillful consultancy. Thus, the much more the good consultancy are, the more customers' faithful the enterprises gain towards their brand quality. On contrary, the more customers' faithful the enterprises gain, the more developed opportunities the consultancy get.

- **Due to joining the WTO, the Vietnamese enterprises not only consider much more on brand issue in general, but also their Corporate Identity System in private.**

The strong and consecutive investment of foreign companies activated Vietnamese economy to speeding up, and raising capacity in order to posit their role and huge source; and also require integrated enterprises need to have a steady “tripod” which are: **brand- product- business strategy**. If it lacks one of three main factors, it is definitely unstable. Inside that, “product” and “business strategy” were and are being built and reinforced strongly in long-time by domestic enterprises. Moreover, brand and the Corporate Identity System still are a weak point of the Vietnamese enterprises that they step to change and overcome to get the most business effect internationally. This is a good impact of joining the World Trade Organization at the end of 2006.

Thus, the results which Vietnamese market as well as the domestic enterprises are completely huge and significant. The comparison of obtaining-losing still tilts towards benefits, because the values the branding activity as well as the CIS obtains, will exist in all the rest of business. They are revenue, faithful and loyalty of customers, partners to the enterprises, and competitive advantages that other competitors might not gain. At the same time, the domestic consultancies also have good condition to study and improve knowledge of their activity with foreign consultancies. Due to that there is not any school or organization that train officially about branding and visual branding in Vietnam until now. Most consultants have to learn and collect experiences by themselves in working life, and sometime, they are not definitely professional.

### **3.6.2 Obstacles**

- **A lot of enterprises still lack the knowledge of brand either visual branding activity**

According to the above research result, an unclear understanding of brand as well as visual branding in Vietnamese enterprises is still an immense problem, even with the company’s leaders. Most of them do not identify or concern on brand issue as a

business strategy that is necessary to invest as product quality or production process. They assume brand as a commercial name - naming following the most understandable and memorable way; or as a logo – drawing with the most colorful style...This knowledge has taken root into their thought from the foundation, since Vietnam was either in the System of budget subsidies or just in the domestic market. Even though, there is a good change in recent decade, with appearance a lot of young companies and other rests which define to change a new “face” for themselves; it is still limited and not thoroughly alteration. All of them are now starting to understand “*What is brand concept?*”

It can be said that the knowledge limitation of enterprises in visual branding is not only the opportunity, but also the threat for the consultancies. The opportunity is which I mentioned in above part of the result. While the threat is not really “threat” in the right meaning that in this case is the difficulty for consultancies. For example, when I was working in G’brand™ last summer, I dealt with a manager of state-company, names Moc Chau milk. His responsibility is to re-build that company brand. However, when I asked him about the brand value that Moc Chau milk wants to bring to customers, he was definitely confused and had no understanding of visual brand as well. In fact, previous foundation of Moc Chau milk was a milk factory which supplied milk products to wholesalers in the North Vietnam. They mostly concern about milk quality during the producing process without pay much attention to branding. Thus, colors, fonts, and brand image are not unified, unclear in every product package which makes consumers to be unrecognizable and unmemorable. Therefore, I spent a lot of time explaining about brand concept as well as visual branding process so that this manager could understand generally and it was easier to deal with him later. In general, the consultancies usually face with many such clients because of their knowledge limitation in visual branding. If the consultancies are not good at professional knowledge and communicated skill, they might loose their customers.

➤ **Low knowledge leads to ineffective investment**

Again, when I was working in G'brand™ last year, I recognized that the consultancy had got a headache in satisfying customers towards the combination of color or motif, image design together following their styles. The reason is that some of directors or leaders want a very colorful logo /image, or complicated motif, in stead of a modern, simple, short and original design. In reality, a lot of brand giants have an extremely simple logo but still are the most attractiveness and memorable to the consumers in long decades.

*In general, the Vietnamese enterprises still lack the capital in spreading their Corporate Identity System.*

As analyzed, this issue is more and more enlarge the gap between some giants of financial capacity and other medium/small-sized enterprises in Vietnamese market. The limitation of finance will cause a reflection in completing their brand image. They might invest a full-package for improving brand in long-time such as spreading brand, advertising, events, etc...Or they stop at the Corporate Identity System building. They even entrust their brand to a less-experience consultancy because of the lower price contract. This situation not only affects to brand value of the enterprise in customers' trust, but also destroys the consultancy's quality as well.

- **The Intellectual Property issue is not clear and suitable to make more difficulties for registering and owning brand/ logo of the Vietnamese enterprises.**

Once again, this is a problem of the government in the brand registering process. Obviously, it affects to expanding market, increasing market share, obtaining competitive advantages from the competitors of domestic enterprises. Moreover, during the working-time last year, one of my customers hired my training place to naming for their new product. After short-time searching and defining a satisfied name, my customer started to register that product name. However, at that time, my boss was informed of appearance of a similar name suddenly. It is because of lacking information from Internet and from the government's information system which

affected so much to registering brand name. Then, it also wasted of time and brain to create another name for that product without the most satisfied.

➤ **The piracy status of Patent Rights in Vietnam is still insufficient**

This is a “hot” problem that trade press and other media always concern to update information. Some insufficient status is: Vietnamese enterprises usually lose brand name in some foreign markets; the other rests lack their owned brand information in those foreign markets that can not manage the copyright infringement problems in time and make customers be confused.

## **4 INTERACTIONS BETWEEN CONSULTANCY AND VIETNAMESE ENTERPRISES**

This chapter is an overview of the procedure adopted in pursuit of the aims of the present study. The following discussion describes the case in question and the data collection. On the other ways, this chapter will solve the other sides of the interaction between the consultancy and Vietnamese enterprises in visual branding activity.

### **4.1 Case Study**

I take three examples from one consultancy – G’brand™ where I had my practical training last year. Although during the working – time, I participated in many projects of G’brand™, and each project had a variety of situation, which were both advantages and disadvantages towards this consultancy. It is probably difficult for me to take some of them for researching the Corporate Identity System activity. However, because of the practical demand of the thesis, I choose three particular and special examples which emphasize several “hot” issues in Vietnam in recent years, such as: education, consumer goods, and securities-banking. In addition, in a developing country as Vietnam, there still exist two flows of thinking. One belongs to some old enterprises which have established more than 15 years<sup>6</sup>, with the ruts in thought; and new enterprises or companies with the FDI<sup>7</sup>... Thus, I concentrate on researching both old foundations and new enterprises, which are Foreign Trade University, Hanoi Milk, and LienVietBank to have a general plus deeper overview of visual branding activity in Vietnam. Moreover, through these examples, I want to point out some advantages, disadvantages, opportunities, difficulties and adopted services of G’brand™ – a new and modern consultancy get during serving and building the Corporate Identity System for those above clients.

In this part, I will discuss about each example, what business they do, for what they hired G’brand™ service and the case’s status (successful or unsuccessful). The more

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<sup>6</sup> They are stated companies, old enterprises from the System of budget subsidies.

<sup>7</sup> FDI: Foreign Direct Investment

detailed work of each example is discussed in subsequent parts (Findings) of my research study. However, it is good to describe briefly about this case and those clients.

***The consultant company G'brand™: Global Branding, Joint Stock Company*** is the research case in this present study, which its profile mentioned in the Introduction part. The major G'brand™ service is essential consulting activity of visual branding as the Corporate Identity System, and in 2008 they are expanding to media communication ground which is another branch, called G'media. However, my objective is just to research their consulting activity with three special examples later on.

***Example 1: Foreign Trade University – FTU, 2007*** (<http://www.ftu.edu.vn/> )

*Business type:* Education. Foreign Trade University established in 1960, is the first university in Vietnam which educates professionally staff group with graduated and upper-graduated standard towards foreign trade economic issue. Foreign Trade University is considered a representative of old management style which belongs to the System budget of subsidies in Vietnam during a very long time. It presents not only the way of education, but also in other knowledge of changing a new “face” /brand to catch the modern and professional education base in the world. The detailed issue will be clear discussed in the next subsequent part of this study.

*The reason for hiring G'brand™:* Facing global integration in education issues, a university with various fields related to overseas trade subjects as Foreign Trade University, needs to renew its image as well as the Corporate Identity System to be more professional, expert and unique, suitable with whole Vietnamese university education innovation, with developed demand of domestic economy – society in the deeper and larger integrated background to international economic life. Thus, they chose G'brand™ to consult and design the most effective and professional Corporate Identity System.

**Example 2: Hanoi Milk, 2007** (<http://www.hanoimilk.com/> )

*Business type:* Hanoimilk Joint Stock Company or Hanoimilk was established in 2th, November, 2001, is food – processing company, which is successful with one product brand – UHT milk IZZI. Hanoimilk does business in some major fields:

- Milk processing, soy milk, products from milk, fruit-juice and drinks.
- Food processing, nutrition food, and functional food.
- Aquaculture, cattle foods.
- Feeding cows, material areas.
- Importing raw material, aromatizes, equipments for production of milk and foods
- Consulting, investing milk and food processing.

*The reason for hiring G’brand™:* Hanoimilk has had their own brand name and logo image and also paid attention to their brand value at the beginning of establishment. Hanoimilk is especially successful with one product brand such as IZZI 1, 2, 3 for children, Yoha, Yotuti for other aged group. However, everything customer remembered about this product, was a particular company namely IZZI, not belonged to Hanoimilk. Therefore, in the middle of the year 2007, one side, Hanoimilk would add more value to IZZI; the other side, in order to distinguish clearly company name and product name; they hired G’brand for re – designing the product package. However, in 2008, the situation has changed. Hanoimilk decided to change the corporate image of whole company, or company logo itself.

**Example 3: LienVietBank, 2008** (<http://www.lienvietbank.net/website/index.php> )

*Business Type:* LienVietBank is a new and the third largest Joint Stock Bank in Viet Nam in terms of charter capital after Vietcombank with VND15 trillion (\$937 million) and Sacombank with over VND4.4 trillion (\$278 million). The bank,



headquartered in the southern province of Hau Giang, will soon operate two branches in Ho Chi Minh City and three other branches in Ha Noi (Vietnamnet website. LienVietBank: the new kid on the block 23:21' 12/4/2008 - GMT+7).

*The reason for hiring G'brand™:* This bank held a competition to choose a logo, and then hired G'brand™ to deploy Bank Identity Guidelines, training and introducing employees and shareholders of this guideline's performance.

The table below summarizes the examples and their statuses

Table 7: Status summary

<b>Examples</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>FTU</b> <i>Education issue</i>	Renew the Corporate Identity System  Design FTU calendar 2009	Successful
<b>Hanoimilk</b> <i>Beverage issue</i>	Package designing – 2007  Offering logo and CIS design – 2008	Failed
<b>LienViet Bank</b> <i>Banking – Securities issue</i>	Having an available logo & hired G'brand™ to deploy the Corporate Identity System  Print some media handouts	In the process

## 4.2 Findings

In order to solve this two – side arrow in the methodology part, it is necessary to analyze the knowledge and investment of particular clients towards brand and Corporate Identity System, that changing logo in detail. Then, analyzing how these

knowledge and investment will affect to G'brand™ consultancy. However, the clients' knowledge is described clearly in the chapter three following the survey result. Thus, I intend to investigate the residual side of this interaction in visual branding activity in the findings part.

***Example 1: Foreign Trade University – FTU, 2007***

***“A logo is the point of entry to the brand” – ([http://www.g-brand.info/Brand-Corporate-Identity\\_GBrand.pdf](http://www.g-brand.info/Brand-Corporate-Identity_GBrand.pdf))***

Firstly, I would like to analyze the difference between the old and the new logo of Foreign Trade University, to see an incredible change of a traditional education environment.

- The old logo as in the following picture involved: a ship which relates to foreign trade transportation; a sphere associates to global factor; a diadem is to posit the FTU position around the world; a pen means to writing the golden history for FTU and presents a long – time of itself branding from the year 1960 till now. Thus, the particular meaning of this logo is presenting the specific factors of education, the meaning of word “foreign trade” in global environment. In spite of various meaning, this logo seems to be too old to use in a new period – an international trade integration, and unmemorable for foreigners. Because the requirement of a logo should be simple, impressive, memorable. The viewers might be readable and memorize within three seconds, other wise, it is a definitely unsuccessful logo.



The old logo



The new logo

Figure 25: Two different logos of the FTU

Source: G'brand™

- The new logo is designed on the basis of three main letters F-T-U respectively, which is the abbreviation of Foreign Trade University – its English name. The overall logo is a representative image with profound meanings. Three letters F-T-U are formalized with continuous and tidy blocks, with the combination of letters, which create a general balanced and solid block, presenting a united spirit, a mutual – love tradition of the FTU teachers and students. Beside that, the combination of two colors: red – white, demonstrate the specification of Foreign Trade University brand, in which white color is the color of the beginning, the red one means enthusiasm, strength, and victory. The combination of red and white creates a prominent visual image, indicating the university's modernity, dynamism and strong will of various generations of students who have been educated in FTU. By this idea, the brand would like to transfer one message of two words namely "Talent" and "Heart", which represent the university's high appreciation of the talent, the enthusiasm and the way to the victory. The sphere block is a symbol of an international education – the common coming- point of global university education. This sphere is a message of the university's objective, which is strong development and integration. To achieve that objective, FTU

has to seize and to take advantages of the opportunities, while simultaneously to overcome all the challenges.

Thus, the logo changing of Foreign Trade University is an incredible breakthrough from so many prolix motifs system into a relatively simple symbol. However, this changing became a hot issue in the FTU forums, on the FTU students' blog during the first time of the new logo existence. In 2006, the Foreign Trade University has been awarded Golden Cup "Viet Brand" by Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Association. Due to this event, the FTU executive board decided to improve its brand and the result was a new logo foundation. In general, although the new logo is simple, and makes sense of modern with the young – red color and solid line of letters; it seemed to be untraditional and unspecific characteristics of the FTU on the opposition' eyes. Even many students either compared it with a symbol of any football club.

➤ **G'brand™ services for the FTU:**

Facing to these unsupported ideas from the major force of the FTU – students, consultancy G'brand™ was hardly difficult to solve this situation. The service, which G'brand supplied, was to design the Corporate Identity System for Foreign Trade University, from March 2007 until August 2007. Then, G'brand™ continued to design brochure from December 2007, till August 2008; and media products such as Banner, poster, handbag... Not staying at this step, G'brand™ has signed a contract to design a monopolistic calendar 2009 with the FTU, and sponsored for designing hand-out, promotional literatures using in FTU's events. All those factors must be unique, unified according to the developed objective of the FTU brand. Be aware of the importance of FTU students within the educational development after all; as well as the influence of all teachers towards students' perception; G'brand decided to deal with the FTU executive board at first. Beside a perfect Corporate Identity System, G'brand™ had to prepare an excellent presentation in front of the whole FTU council with nearly sixty-four people. After this convincing presentation, Prof, Dr Hoang Van Chau – President of FTU and total council agreed to sign the contract with G'brand™, and a new Corporate Identity System of Foreign Trade University was

“born”. Although it still was difficult for all the FTU students to accept this logo, but G’brand™ consultancy was successful in conquering the teachers. This new logo was official used since May 2007 and applied in all products carrying the FTU brand.

➤ **G’brand™ difficulties during this project:**

With the university staff, is a complicated system which has existed since the System of Budget subsidies, it lasts through many procedures, ineffectively and wastes of time to make the last decision. Beside that, there was no specific brand department, hence, has unprofessional working – style and unclear knowledge of effects and necessities of brand development. Because of the old management system, so many people joined in decision making, and thus, in this case, was more ideas but less effect, which was difficult to come the last result. The reason why this contract lasted within one year, is the tardy information and content supplying, had been changed many times to censor, and then affected to designing process.

The Foreign Trade University project seemed to be one of the first projects with which G’brand™ consultancy got trouble to dealt, and lasted half of a year, since the year 2007 till the summer 2008. With regard to other fields such as business or production in Vietnam market, almost employees might not so much be attention to company’s logo or its brand value. However, it is different from education issue, where existing a lot of the youth, who are properly concerning much more on the national development into international environment. Hence, they will take care of an issue which might change their traditional “face” in a long time. Until this time, there is no document or official information discussing about result of the FTU logo, because its brand value has not only created by the name or the logo, that also by meaning of the golden history and specific successes in education field. Although this contract has gone, the new logo is using broadly, there is still a question in thought of G’brand™ board director: “Is the new logo properly successful? “

*Example 2: Hanoimilk – Package Designing 2007, Offering logo and the CIS designing 2008*

➤ **G’brand™ services for Hanoimilk:**

In 2007, Hanoimilk, JSC ordered G’brand™ consultancy to design package for one of their famous product – UHT milk<sup>8</sup> IZZI. The problem proceeded with misunderstanding company brand, and product brand in consumers’ mind. IZZI is a UHT milk product for children according to three aged – groups: IZZI 1, IZZ 2, and IZZI 3, produced by Hanoimilk Company. When buying this product, the consumers just thought as brand name of a different company, not Hanoimilk. It was, because in the product package, instead of a clear and relatively big company name Hanoimilk, there was the product name – IZZI. The brand name Hanoimilk was ordered in a very small space of the side on the product package. This is a gigantic error of designing standard that affects so much to Hanoimilk brand value.



Figure 26: IZZI product packages of Hanoimilk, JSC

Source: IZZI website

<sup>8</sup> UHT milk stands for Ultra High Temperature processed milk. By using very high temperatures, milk processors are able to kill harmful bacteria while preserving the nutritional value of the milk. (iVillage website <http://parenting.ivillage.com/baby/bnutrition/0,,3wf2,00.html> )

It is quite clear that there is no company name in front of the product packages (<http://www.izzi.com.vn/index.php?content=product&id=1>,). This situation was discovered by Hanoimilk themselves when made a market research in 2007, but the consultancy did not receive any particular informed – figure from this enterprise. Moreover, when I worked in G’brand™ consultancy during the summer 2007, I also used IZZI products of Hanoimilk, and definitely thought it as a different company name. Then, I also found that not few consumers who has preferred and used this product had the same thinking with mine.

Although the result was no signed – contract between G’brand™ and Hanoimilk for some reasons, which I will mention later, this enterprise had had some big changes in package designing, with a more modern and professional image.



Figure 27: Another package design

Source: Hanoimilk website

In the beginning of 2008, G’brand™ has ever offered to re – design logo and the Corporate Identity System for Hanoimilk brand. According to some rules of visual branding consulting job, that, the consultancy has to design one or more than two

logo options base on design standard before offering to new customers. In addition, the consultancy has to show the reason why customers should change their current logo image. The following images are comparing between Hanoimilk current logo, and the one G'brand™ has ever offered before.

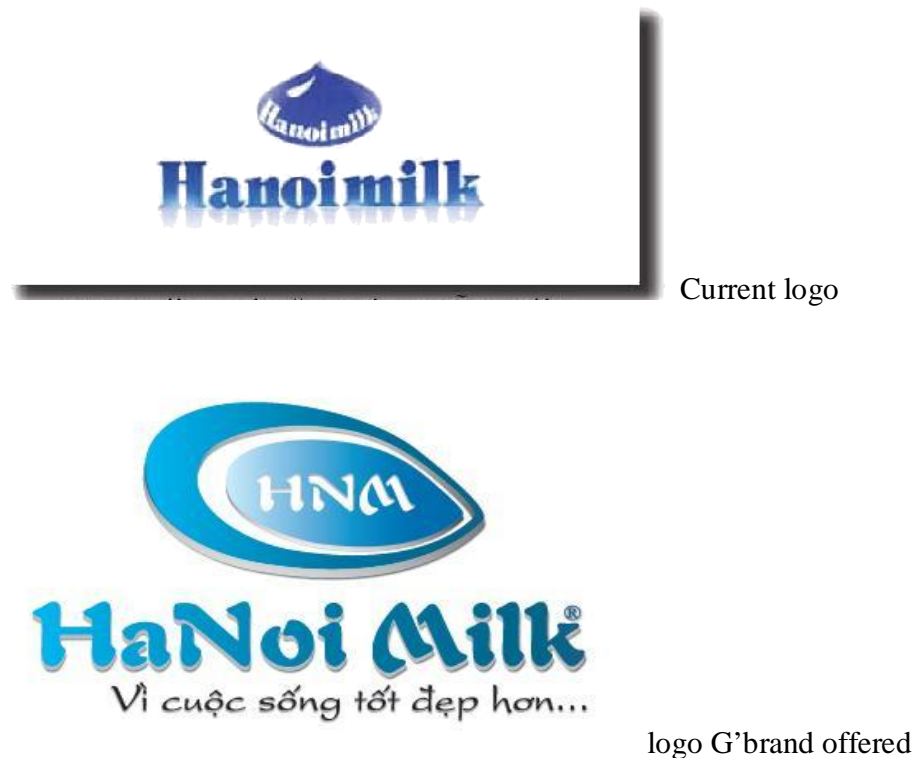


Figure 28: Two logos for Hanoimilk

Source: G'brand™

The result: there was no contract between the consultancy and Hanoimilk, in both package and logo designing.

➤ **G'brand™ difficulties during this project:**

One existed problem has appeared for long time, and could not erase in most of Vietnamese enterprises, is to not supply enough and in time information, even has been changed so many times during co – operation together. Hanoimilk is unexceptional case within lot of insufficient Vietnam economy either. Beside that,



there were a lot of employees, who joined in making decision, and hence, very tricky to unify ideas. In this circumstance, G'brand™ has ever changed their design samples so many times, in order to satisfy the most people, who joined in the re – designing product package project in Hanoimilk Company. However, after a few months without agreement between Hanoimilk and G'brand™, this project was defeated.

With the second project – redesigning logo and the Corporate Identity System in the beginning of 2008, it was also unsuccessful offering. In this case, one big trouble is that Hanoimilk did not properly concern on visual branding issue, and then chose another partner due to lower price (1000\$/full – package) than G'brand™ price (5000\$/full – package). The quotation that G'brand™ offered to Hanoimilk will be attached in Appendices.

***Example 3: Lien Viet Bank, building the Corporate Identity System based on an available logo; printing some media handouts, 2008***

➤ **G'brand™ services for Lien Viet Bank:**

It is said that Lien Viet Bank has modern and new thinking towards branding issue in the beginning of establishment. The evidence is, that, after foundation (28<sup>th</sup> March, 2008) Lien Viet Bank held a logo competition to choose the best one for their brand commitment, as well as business developed orientation. When they had already chosen the logo, they started to hire G'brand™ for building the Corporate Identity System to performance their brand mission, value and commitment to customers. Beside that, G'brand™ consultancy has proceeded parallel to print some media handouts. Moreover, G'brand™ will plan a strategy to training all staff of LienVietBank, and arrange one day for this event in the headquarters in Hau Giang province. The purpose is to introduce LienVietBank staff about a new Corporate Identity System through an available logo, instruct how to use and apply company logo into other stuffs bringing LienVietBank brand. This activity helps to orient all its employees following one united and long – time development objective of LienVietBank brand. They have signed contract and still cooperated until now.



Figure 29: Lien Viet Bank logo

Source: <http://www.lienvietbank.net/>

➤ **G’brand™ difficulties during this project:**

Because the logo of Lien Viet Bank was designed by another party through the logo competition, which was properly unsuitable with the creative style of G’brand™ consultancy, or it was difficult to find out unification in knowledge and designing. Thus, it wasted time to understand each other style.

The bank is a new – establishment, which the management system needs time to adjust and even exists many faults. Thus, in order to decide every important issue of the bank and especially bank “face” in long time, it probably takes a lot of time. Therefore, dealing with such Lien Viet Bank, G’brand™ also is ever – patient, hard – working, and shows up the best service quality to keep and create reputation in this potential customer mind. In addition to the difficulties, the board of director and Chairman took part persistently in designing process, and even always adjusted according to their ideas, without concerning on the responsible – branding department role and the consultancy as well.

G'brand™ manager told me briefly about the advantages and disadvantages of the holding logo competition by Lien Viet Bank. In short, this competition is a good method of brand communication, which has a lot of precise and creative options from many talent designers, who might be an individual or a company /organization, etc...This method not only explores and exploits the potential talents, but also bring the effect of brand advertising of Lien Viet Bank at a lower cost than other advertising types.

However, the disadvantage might come from misunderstanding or inaccurate knowledge of enterprise value, brand vision, mission, and commitment. Because those individual or/and organizations participated in the competition has no condition to exchange directly all important information of Lien Viet Bank business. Thus, there were probably discursive and even wrong orientation designs.

Although, there were so many difficulties in three above projects, G'brand™ still signed two contracts with FTU and Lien Viet Bank. Above all, it seems to have one or some particular advantages. As far as I know in a developing market as Vietnam, every hard contract mostly bases on a good relationship. Thus, it has the same meaning with this consultancy projects with those above clients. Nevertheless, one of the first successes in business activity is to sign a contract and that would be nice anyhow.

## **5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Through what I got from the survey result and case study with visual branding activity in Vietnamese enterprises, together with the interaction between the consultancy and enterprises during consulting process; I would like to mention some particular recommendations of G'brand™ itself and mine as well. These recommendations might be considered as solutions that G'brand™ consultancy would give out, in order to improve not only the enterprises knowledge of brand and visual branding concept, but also their relationship with other consultancies during consulting process. These recommendations or solutions will be divided into two main parts, one is micro solution (from the enterprises), and one is macro solution (from the Government) as follow.

### **5.1 Macro Solutions or Solutions from Government**

The reason why G'brand™ brings up solutions from the Government, due to its widely and largely impacts on visual branding activity of Vietnamese enterprises. Those impacts were pointed out briefly in the above parts of the study as legislations, copyrights, etc...The Government has enough power to support officially domestic enterprises in visual branding activity, through following solutions:

#### **5.1.1 Completing law system to get advantages for visual branding**

Vietnam has some legislations or regulars related to tangible factors of brand such as trade-mark name, logo, package sample..., but those rules are still insufficient, and cause the enterprises so much difficulty for developing brand. Thus, the consultancy thinks we should petition the government and relative public sectors to research and set more suitable regulations with recent business, following:

- All documents in law should legalize largely the conception “brand”, because it is obviously used broadly as well. Moreover, most of public documents should regulate a common understanding way of this concept, in order to get advantages for branding activities, in both micro and macro degree, prevent long and serious debates.
  
- The government should review cost limitation of advertised activity (the cost for building and advertising brand). Nowadays, the government allows Vietnamese enterprises to pay maximum 10% for branding activities from revenue. This considers as business cost. However, in reality, the advertised demand for brand image is variety and not equal in each period. For instance, at the beginning of business, new enterprise has new product, and/or there is so much competitive, obviously they will invest much more for brand advertising campaigns, even there is low revenue at that time. Only 10% of total revenue is used for this activity may cause the enterprise not to branding with a satisfied scale to get the most effect, will be a weak point for the enterprises. Nevertheless, the increasing percentage of limitation for advertising campaigns may induce some unexpected problems. *Firstly*, most of Vietnamese companies are weak of financial capability which is defeated by some giants with incredible advertised expenses. In order to access a new market or compete for market share, some foreign companies are ready to lose profit in one or two periods of business. If the government increases this limitation, it will cause some unsuitable cost for those domestic and small companies who do not know capability exactly. *Secondly*, some parties as taxation institution need to improve their own management capability. When the government raises this limitation and the cost belongs to business expenses; then it is not sure if the enterprises state increasing costs for tax avoidance or not. In reality, according to foreign companies, it should not be limited the investment for brand advertising. Thus, the limitation of 10% of revenue is considered by public parties or government on researching real conditions and demand of the enterprises.

- Raising preservation the right of intellectual property generally and brand particularly. In goods exporting issue, the Vietnamese brand needs to be law-abiding and carefully protected in Vietnam at first. Every infringement of copyright has to be handled strictly with the aim of supporting and protecting the right in law of the domestic enterprises; other side, to accumulate a safe psychographics and promote them to develop brand into international market. In my point of view, the government should consider and raise higher the fine for trespass (counterfeiting may be fined minimum 100 million VND) and be handled criminal liability if it is critical violation. The intellectual property institution needs to increase the relationship with foreign colleague to introduce, supply information and manage infringements. Moreover, it is necessary to decrease the wait time for registration brand image factors (logo, the CIS ...) to minimize risk and opportunity costs.

### **5.1.2 Supporting enterprises, consultancy in visual branding activity**

#### **➤ Supporting the enterprises in advertising brand image**

Most of Vietnamese enterprises are medium and small-sized business, few capital, and lack of condition to contact with information through global network. Therefore, the government needs to support them in advertising brand “face” to international market, then let them know their own Corporate Identity System from the abroad consumers’ perspective, and push up their product consumption in that market. This support will be definitely good mainstay for the enterprises’ trade integration to all over the world.

A popular method that the exporting Vietnamese enterprises use to advertise their brand image is to join some fairs and exhibitions in a broad, according to the program of the Trade-Stimulation Department. In general, each enterprise takes part in those fairs and exhibitions, is supported amount of 50% for store cost, but they also have to

pay at the very high expense (even from 15- 20.000 USD for whole expenses). In my mind, if the government only supports very little money, some of small enterprises have never joined in such those international fairs. Therefore, it is better if the government establishes a Trade-Stimulation Supporting & Brand Development Fund. This fund will support and help the Vietnamese enterprises spread their brand image or their “face” to international market by a lot of different media. At the same time, this activity can not carry out on a very large scale, which should define each group of main goods in a period of two – year, restrain an overflow advertising situation for all kind of goods, in order to improve effect of brand image. Moreover, with each group of main point goods in a period, the government should exempt 100% fee for stores at the international fairs; and possibly open more exhibitions for Vietnamese products in foreign market. It is useful for consumers to be familiar with the CIS factors such as brand name, logo, package style..., from then it deepens into the consumers’ mind.

Nowadays, Vietnam has some special programs related to product brand and national brand on magazine, TV shows...However, the important issue is that the government should focus on improving more program activity, especially the “*National Brand*” in domestic and international market as well. The meaning of this program is *the Government will be a supporter for the quality and prestigious brand* in order to aid the Vietnamese enterprises having a reliable position in the domestic market and good condition to “fly” to the world. Moreover, this program allows the enterprises to add an English symbol as “**Vietnam Value Inside**” on their products which have a particular brand and attain the program’s rules.

In the scene without any good position of Vietnamese enterprises in international market, a good relationship between the Government and the group of enterprises can save time, cost and attains higher effect comparing to build a position for each small brand. The successful co-operation will be a good chance for all the enterprises in spreading and expanding their Corporate Identity System broadly and even globally.

*How to realize this program the most successfully?* It seems to be a big question because the national branding as “Vietnam Value Inside” is full of so many risks. The

national brand is representative for product quality of a whole country, so if it is used and built without a good way, it will affect to that country's prestige. During the program process, it is necessary to predict every possible risk to have effect safeguard method in time. Firstly, it is important to protect national brand following general law. Checking, supervising the brand trespass is not definitely simple, especially amount of goods belong to the national brand. In addition, the government should always oversee some enterprises which applied the national brand to certify those goods quality to be suitable with brand. Because, one branded goods is low quality that is easy to cause bad impression towards foreign customers and lose market rapidly. A very hard problem with Vietnamese enterprises is that the government usually wastes of time to form the program, and then its goal and itinerary are not certified as formulated before.

Building the national brand should do and do immediately, and requires exerting considerable from both government and enterprises in which the national brand improves its role on creating Vietnamese goods face, raising competitive advantages on international market. Obviously, if the enterprises have their good position on international market, the Corporate Identity System will be more effect with the lower cost.

➤ **Supplying information, supporting consultancy, training the enterprises in branding and visual branding (the CIS)**

The government needs to support the enterprises in training staff that is responsible for brand. During the working time, I also interviewed some enterprises who gave some petition to the government such as:

- To support training program to improve knowledge, new information systematically in this issue and they are willing to pay for fee.
- To instruct in practical skill.
- To find the suitable consultants or consultancies.

Beside that, the government should supply and organize the information system related to brand factors as well as the Corporate Identity System or visual branding



professionally and effectively. With some enterprises, the knowledge of brand issue might be not a new thing, but they are still fuzzy or confused in the visual branding. They even do not know how to start building a strong, professional brand and competitive capability. Moreover, they are also headache in choosing which suitable consultancies that get the most effective brand value with as low cost as possible.

In other way, it should strengthen the dissemination knowledge and role of the CIS in business public. For instance, holding some events communicating experiences of successful brands; of design standards some factors of the CIS, brand registration and preservation issues....At the same time, it is important to limit the cost for branding that missing improve product quality.

➤ **Encouraging and making advantage condition consultant and design companies**

Although Vietnam has more and more professional consultancies of brand and visual branding, the supply has not yet satisfied the demand. Most of those consultancies are located in some big cities such as Ho Chi Minh City or Ha Noi capital; it hence causes some limitation for enterprises in small towns. And even some big and economic cities have few consultant companies, for example, there is only Lanta brand is famous both in northern and southern of Vietnam, but its headquarter is in Ho Chi Minh City. G'brand is still a new potential consultancy of brand in Ha Noi Capital. More over, with the few suppliers, the cost for designing and consulting the Corporate Identity System will be much higher than real value for the enterprises.

Thus, the government should have some preferential and encouraged policy towards consultancies and design companies as well as consulting service generally. In reality, Vietnamese government has no full support program to strengthen competitive advantages of the brand designing. Most of consultancies have not enough power and ability to renew or improve competitive capacity, especially in front of integrated pressure, even though there are more and more such companies in Vietnamese market. The government's support policy make these consultancies are ability to access variety of information, apply technology science and creative skill, but also

know to explore, meet and satisfy every demand from market. Therefore, the developed strategy for visual brand consulting and designing branch is not only advantages for those companies, but also brings real benefit for all other Vietnamese enterprises, which desires a professional, qualified and valuable brand image.

Nowadays, joining the World Trade Organization has excited the foreign consultancies' curious senses with this rich potential market. This appearance has increased consultant and design service quality about visual branding, but is a threat with small size and lack of experience Vietnamese consultancies. Therefore, in order to balance this situation, the Vietnamese government should encourage those foreign companies to develop and diversify this excited market. At the same time, the government should carry out some strict rules following a particular route during doing business in Vietnam. The other sides, it is useful and important to orient and support the Vietnamese consultancies to be ready for integration and fair competence with foreign companies.

### **5.1.3 Other solutions**

➤ **To create a fair and pure business environment.**

The fair and pure business environment is a critical issue, needs to consider carefully and sensibly. Nowadays, Vietnam has propagated and reformed in administration, as well as law system, and be explicit most policies to exert joining the WTO. However, the government should perform more strongly to make more advantages for community of enterprises. Obviously, just in a fair and comfortable business environment, together with “pure” and “clear” policy, the enterprises will definitely trust in the brand's roles, invest much more for visual branding, and contribute to strength and fame for Vietnamese brand.

- **In some particular markets**, if disputing brand is not probably suitable for demand and the cost is huge, it is better to franchise brand to have condition (of finance) to protect brand in other important and big markets.
- **Beside that, the government** should consider some enterprises' brands as national brand such as: GMC, Coca-cola, Pepsi are as national brand of USA, BMW car of Germany, Toyota of Japan...it will be motivation for the government and the enterprises focusing much more on branding generally, and visual branding activities or the Corporate Identity System building privately.
- **Encouraging and making advantage condition** for lawyer organization and representative of the Patent Rights. During few recent years, the lawyer organization and representative of the Patent Rights play an important role in law performance. Their role and position are more positive in law system generally, and in struggle the trespass of Patent Rights privately.

The main activity of those organizations are supporting helpful for business production of enterprises and other parties inside and outside Vietnam under law consultancy, representative to register the Patent rights. Those organizations play a considerable role for solving some illegal Patent rights and protect the rights – legal benefit of claimant. Therefore, the lawyer organization and representative of the Patent Rights is more heighten as link factor, as catalic substance for illegal solution performance.

Beside that, those law consulting services for claimant, can supply the previous and after service during solution performance. With the previous service, those organizations supply service of checking, supervising market, exploring counterfeit and informing customer in each period, and also re-checking illegal status after solving situation. This kind of service will be supplied more perfectly if the government admits result of their performance having valuable law as supervised departments of government' system.

In general, coming from developed demand of economy as well as requirements from international market, fighting to prevent effectively illegal

trespass of brand and brand's factors, is more pressing and necessary than ever. Therefore, one more time, the government should support, encourage and make advantage condition for the lawyer organizations and representative of the Patent Rights to develop.

## **5.2 Micro solutions or Solutions from Enterprises**

### **5.2.1 Improving enterprises' knowledge of brand and visual branding**

According to the above survey result, many Vietnamese enterprises are still weak knowledge of brand and visual branding activities. It contributed to decrease opportunities for them due to that weakness. Thus, so as to increase revenue, expand market, compete effectively with other competitors, it is possible to have changes, improve knowledge of brand and goods preservation. Moreover, it is necessary and critical when dealing with consultancies as well, because it can save time and cost for both parties at first, because it can save time and cost for both parties at the first meeting. Think carefully, if a consultancy deals with a client without understanding brand issue basically, how does that consultancy come so far?

Branding is a long-term process, strategic investment, uniqueness in orientation and activity, because brand image will follow business from the beginning till its end. That is just the enterprises' face, and then the knowledge of this issue should be enough, and always improved not only in literature, but also in real business experience. Hence, the effectiveness from a unique, completed, perfect is an incredible value. Moreover, it will change the investment status for their brand much more than 1-5% compare to revenue as survey result.

The second is that the Vietnamese enterprises need to update frequently the activity of trade-mark registration inside and out side country. Every nation has its own particular rules in business activity, to be suitable with public benefit development of that country. Therefore, if having enough and clear those rules, it is more comfortable for the enterprises in international business performance, in investment and branding

as well; prevent from trade mark name trespass or imitation, influence on fame and business benefit of the enterprises themselves.

Thirdly, according to real information, the Patent Office establishes the “Patent Right Gazette” monthly, which informs all trade-mark name, style, solution, persevered invents and register application form. The benefit is to create opportunity for the enterprises to claim about brand preserved documents in the case of illegal situation. This opportunity will help the enterprises to consolidate their own brand in the various markets.

Fourthly, leaders play an important role in improving the knowledge for whole staff, in order to reinforce the branding and the Corporate Identity System uniquely and perfectly. Thus, the enterprises’ goal and objective may be maintained unshakeable in the whole business activity.

Last but not least, every enterprise should have the separate department which is responsible for brand development. Depending on finance condition and size of each company as well as the diversified goods and brand, that the enterprises can build a brand management staff in variety of different methods.

### **5.2.2 Building and Spreading visual brand factors**

#### **➤ Designing the brand’s factor suitable with the enterprises and target market**

Before making decision of branding in visual, the enterprises should create survey, research market and check the target customers’ reaction, in order to design an impressive, unique Corporate Identity System, but also recognizable, and memorable to the consumers.

Beside that, the enterprises should consider some basic concepts which are original and most important in branding visually process, and are a base to decide the success of the own enterprises:

- *Brand name*

As analyzing in Part 2 and 3 of this study, the general trend of brand naming is complicated, verbose, and hardly-memorable to the consumers. It is much influence on the way that the consumers memorize or elapse your brand. Naming brand is originally difficult and loses the enterprises' concerning. For instance, parents think about their lovely child's name, which is not only a clear, nice and concise; but also has meaning of one thing, scene, or other beautiful images... Name is just a part of value of that person, not all his/her potential characteristics. But an impressive name always causes you to admire or respect them and want to hear once again. Brand name is not exceptional from this above rule. And it is also international, modern thought. Moreover, the brand name should be easy pronounce to foreigners, has no negative meaning and can be registered without any difficulty. The Vietnamese enterprises should pay much attention to this issue.

In addition, some described names are not suitable with naming, that is useful for distinguishing, describing product or goods. For instance, Apple name will be not preserved for apple fruit due to its described nature, but is a famous brand name of computer in the world. It is necessary to remember that brand naming has to follow some legislation of Vietnam and international ones in order to be preservation.

Last but not least, brand naming is probably to think thoroughly and carefully; invest time and thought, but also follow rules, legislations of nation in protected registration. In reality, most of Vietnamese enterprises are still rather careless with "pregnant" activity importantly, just focus on product quality, produced technique investment... On the other hand, most of them use their business name to naming for some kind of product, which is difficult for consumers to describe new product, old one, and definitely not pay much attention to the enterprises' brand image at all.

- *Logo design*

Nowadays, the common trend of foreign companies is simplicity but modernity; impressive color combination, few but quality. According to professional designers, the color combination is not over two colors in one vignette, not too light, not too dark either; different but limit too much different, due to the viewers are resplendent or fuzzy when viewing brand logo. The Vietnamese enterprises should depend on their size, and business model as well as communicated goal that choose a suitable logo sample as some introduces in above parts.

- *Improving product quality, suitable with brand value*

One beautiful face does not bring any happiness for life, or create any achievement, that is sunk into oblivion rapidly. The brand image is not exceptional! The first important thing for a successful business is an impressive image or “face”, a perfect and unique Corporate Identity System, which displays the business goal and objectives. However, the main point of maintaining the brand face is probably product quality or good service that the enterprises have built.

The relationship between brand image and product quality can be called as a correlation. The product quality helps Vietnamese enterprises to keep target customers, reinforce and improve brand position. On the other hand, a good brand may help the enterprises to access new customers speedily, and with such customers, brand is just a tool for guarantee trust, prestige, loyalty and new product quality. Therefore, continue to improve product and service quality is a positively important factor to build and keep prestige brand image in the customers’ perspective in the most enduringly.

➤ **Raising propagation and spread the brand image**

Building a new, unique, memorable brand image, and get high economic effect, is not all. As business activity, doing the first is difficult; maintaining, developing and expanding are much more difficult. Raising brand is not exceptional, without

advertising, propagation, and spread, the brand image is still sunk in a deep hole with other defeated and oblivion brands. However, from then, it appears suddenly too many problems and difficult questions such as: *“How to spread brand?”*, *“To whom we advertise?”*, *“What does the message impress?”*, *“Which image does the message display?”*, *“What kind of advertisement we choose?”*, *“What is the cost in short-term and long-term?”*, *“Is the advertising’s effect suitable with invested cost?”*... Therefore, the professors in this issue mention some detection for the Vietnamese enterprises, are following:

- Constructing a brand advertised strategy suitably is the same as you decide a product for doing business. The enterprises should define a suitable strategy with target market and divide each period of product life cycle in detail. Spreading brand should not be perform in long-term, just parts on short-term, related to each stage of business development. Moreover, the enterprises should identify the goal of propagation and spread the brand image, the necessary effect and detailed process, combining with appropriate finance. With some medium and small –sized companies, together with scanty finance amount, it is important to prepare avoidable plans for each period, in order to choose advertising media suitably. At the same thing, they have to calculate the advertising effect that might compensate for the advertising costs before.
- Another thing seems to be complex for the brand advertising is selecting rather suitable media channel. The branding strategy includes many advertised periods such as: market entry, full power advertising for a new brand, brand image maintenance, splitting , or merging..., so the enterprises should have a detailed and general view, in order to establish and select suitable media channel in each particular period. The useful channels for brand advertising are: Television, newspapers, internet, posters, and leaflets, outside board...in public places, by sale person, mouth to mouth... Every channel exists separately advantages-disadvantages and it will cause contrary influence unless it is used sensibly.



In those above media channels, broadcast is considered as the most expensive channel but rather high effect, due to accurate, fine combination between image and sound. Liveliness, variety, and excitation of television advertising always describe the purpose, goal of producer, as well as benefit and value of product with high competition. Moreover, a good and excellent advertisement part may attract a huge customer in all aged group because of its prompt and sensible of television. However, with a developing country as Vietnam, most of companies are medium and small, or step into market with tiny finance source, hardly enough condition using such expensive advertisement. Otherwise, if the advertisement is boring, confused, and hardly understandable, without any main point to customers; it will be a sharp knife to destroy your business. Because wide and rapid communication of television which is memorable to customers. Defeat is not avoidance! Therefore, if the enterprises want to make a sudden attack on target market, they need to be confident of ability to convince their customers by television advertising; together with a potential capital to pay for advertising and overcome possible difficulty.

Beside of television advertising that Vietnamese try to invest, other advertisings such as on magazine, pano, poster, at the public places, leaflet, are explored ultimately. These advertising types do not cost as so much money as television advertising, and are easy for medium and small-sized companies to hold. It is also useful through some business magazines such as Marketing magazine, Vietnam Economy website, etc...because it attract a lot of businessmen, and someone who prefer to business activity in Vietnam market. In addition, considering to Vietnamese economy is not only businessmen, but also students at universities and colleges are interested in new knowledge, engrossed in discovering, and especially care. Thus, the effect of such kind advertising may be compared to or higher than television advertising; the cost is either too much with the medium and small-sized companies. Therefore, this advertising channel seems to be an optimal

solution that the Vietnamese enterprises should orient and invest reasonably, to get the highest economic effect.

In the recent Information Technology century, Mr Nguyen The Tan – the Vietnamese IT professor, has an exciting view about the brand of some product on internet. Those products are popular information websites network in Vietnam such as: VNN, VnExpress, Tuoitre online, Dantri.com.vn; other searching giants such as Google, Yahoo, News.com, Digg... All those websites relates to its Internet search, web-based e-mail, online mapping, office productivity, social networking... are special and effect places for advertising the enterprises' brand name. The cost of this advertising is not as high as others, but the last result is uncountable. Every enterprise should have a particular website in order to spread their brand as well as business activity. Beside that, the enterprises need to set an advertising banner, logo or link in other websites, in order to help people accessing and easy to connect with the enterprises or their website. Hence, just a nice “click”, the enterprises can bring opportunity to advertise brand name, image and other good chances that might not achieve in reality.

### **5.2.3 Building a good business relationship with consultancy**

#### **➤ Combining closely with consultancy and design companies of visual branding**

According to survey result of this study, most of Vietnamese enterprises designed the Corporate Identity System by their own, just few companies hired consultancies. This cause some disadvantages for the enterprises themselves.

When establishing business, foreign enterprises start to branding on their own, and those brands are designed by some consultancies such as Sielgel & Gale – design for 360 Communications; Lister Bulter – design for Best Western; The Weber Group, Inc – design for Toilet Duck; B.D.Fox & Friends, Advertising – design for Warner Bros film. Hence, total brand image, the business process of brand, the Corporate Identity

System are professional, unique, united, apparel the enterprises' business activity. Because those consultancies always progress professional skill by themselves, are well-known about brand and branding, in order to express right way, the most expert in drawing the enterprises' image.

The strong point that one consultancy has, not only their own completed knowledge of brand, visual branding; but also a creative ability, active, ebullient working-style, quick and exact either in movement or thoughts; in order to create a unique idea to reinforce a special/particular brand image for the enterprises. Moreover, they help to orient building brand value, direct undoubtedly advertising activity, developing brand in two periods: short and long-term. Hence, the enterprises can evaluate their finance for whole branding activity concisely, in detail, and limit unnecessary costs. Because, the enterprises can not usually focus on so many issues at one time, which will cause the superfluous or short of investment, influence on improving brand quality and unexpected losing.

Last but not least, when asked "*What kind of value the enterprises brings to their customers?*", most of them answered unclearly and "misty". The real is that they do not know which suitable brand model they should choose; it is either helpful for their product type, factual condition of the enterprises with labor, finance source, as well as market demand. Those questions are defined and determined at the beginning by the consultancies. They even know such kind of model for branding need some following strategic elements:

- The business field, type of product and service that the enterprises were, are and are going to do
- The real labor and finance source of the enterprises
- The future developed strategy of the enterprises, expanding market, changing or improving product quality
- Researching the developed trend of whole business /field
- The last is to find, analyze strengths- weaknesses, success-defeat of competitors in their own brand model.

Because choosing model and brand strategies play a significant role in business success, especially in visual branding. Therefore, brand consultant professor are always cautious finding, selecting to give the best result for the enterprises, in order to ensure the last goal of brand strategy is that the customers recognize value and are loyalty with brand in durability and solidity.

Vietnamese enterprises should strengthen investment of money and time choosing, working with the consultant and design companies of visual branding. Surely, the benefit from a professional and perfect Corporate Identity System is much bigger than the cost they paid.

➤ **Developing labor force for marketing design**

With the Vietnamese consultant and design companies, the Marketing designers are main point. Thus, in order to satisfy the big and strict demand in the market, those companies need to require high request for the Marketing designers, from recruitment till working time. Moreover, the enterprises should have training plan to progress skill, and update modern and new design trends as well. The leaders also plan to implement knowledge of brand and the visual branding for their designers group. From then, it is easy to transfer customers' minds to designers, and create the impressive, excited design and reflect their right brand value.

On contrary, the consumers or other companies should recover their knowledge not only in brand and visual branding, but also eyes of art by their own, in order to transfer their ideas clearly to consultant and design companies. Then they will have suitable comment and adjustment with samples that the consultancies complete, avoid the situation without same understanding level, and will cause time and cost losing.

#### 5.2.4 Other protected solutions for brand

With the protection brand image, it is necessary and essential to register brand in order to guarantee legal legislation, apparel determine other important solutions such as:

➤ **To ensure all unique information to customers**

In the recent “open” economy as Vietnam, there are a lot of foreign companies to trespass into domestic market, Vietnamese brands are obviously critical threaten. Thus, the domestic brands need to establish useful strategy, solution to avoid and handle such threats for the enterprises.

The first necessary thing is to transfer uniquely business information, brand value to consumers. It will ensure the concise, exact, and unified sense of brand meaning in customers’ perspective. The wrong information may causes regret misunderstanding for brand, decreases brand value and lose the market either. For instance, about one example was analyzed in the Case study, which is Hanoimilk situation I faced with last year. The Hanoimilk Joint Stock Company has one kind of product for children named IZZI, which has appeared as a separately brand name in the consumers’ perception, and not attached with Hanoimilk at all. Because the name Hanoimilk was in all advertising of IZZI, on product package, banner, etc... was too small, and even impossible to view. It is too much influence on the image of Hanoimilk, and even though someone who has used IZZI, just knew and repeated this name much more than the acknowledgement of Hanoimilk. Therefore, boards of director in Hanoimilk Company had to re – discuss and re – build IZZI name for product only, and arrange the order of displaying on package, so that the Hanoimilk brand is the most attractive point to consumers.

Besides the consistent information system building to consumers, the enterprises have to orient, train all labor force /staff of brand value that they need to transfer to customers as well. Thus, the staff will maintain business activity; develop following a

simultaneous, unshakeable and consistent general orientation. Avoiding the brand commitment is different from service style or spirit.

➤ **To avoid than to cure**

This is a necessary solution if the enterprises want to protect their brand from other illegal activities such as counterfeit or counterfeit brand image, which not only affects to product quality, but also destroys customers' loyalty with the enterprises. Thus, at the beginning of establishment, the Vietnamese enterprises should define the developed orientation, brand value, brand commitment, brand equity to consumers, shareholders and partners as well. Moreover, avoiding designing a complicated, fuzzy, misunderstanding brand, and difficult memorable to customers.

Depending on each field, activity model that the domestic companies can mention some suitable solutions, such as:

- Designing a reacted information and trespass warning system of brand
- Expanding distribution and retail system
- Maintaining and improving product and service quality
- Checking the market to detect illegal goods

All above solutions are even though odd, but checking widely and largely, will help leaders to manage the whole brand in the target market, in each target customer group, in order to handle unexpected difficulty in time, keep up unshakeable brand image in customers' perception.

➤ **Other notifications**

The Vietnamese enterprises need to concern, store carefully brand information, particular documents as well as brand usage in business activity. Those documents are definitely important to reinforce brand ownership value of, and protect the enterprises in the case of illegal trespass.

With relationship process, brand franchising, agency contract, corporation-joint venture, mother-son companies, etc..., that the enterprises have to make clear all conditions of goods brand in those contracts. Because the real Copyright infringement appears more popular not only in Vietnam market, but also in many other countries in the world. Therefore, brand usage or ownership conditions in the contract are necessary to prevent regret disadvantages for the enterprises.

## 6. SUMMARY

In general, researching the relationship between enterprises and consultancy seems to be a new thing, but it is very important in visual branding activity in the Vietnamese market nowadays. The knowledge of Vietnamese enterprises is still limited and it is sometimes difficult for them to build a great brand. It is always true in a developing market like Vietnam. And this is also a good opportunity for the growing consultant market. A professional and skillful consultancy will get more trust from enterprises and will be known widely and rapidly in a market, which is lacking seriously of branding expertise.

Besides that, an environment with many challenges is also a good condition for consultancies to distribute their services to customers. It means, dealing with a lot of difficult situations, it helps them to improve their skill in visual branding consulting activity. As in the case study, there are three different client examples in three particular fields of the economy, which are mostly difficult situations requiring a consultancy to be more professional and active in dealing with them. Although they are just a few clients in all G'brand™ projects, they also affected the consultancy thinking and service in first time establishments much more. And because of those projects, G'brand™ decided to expand their services in both quality and quantity.

In regard to Vietnamese enterprises, although their knowledge of branding is not as good as expectation, it is ever – changing in recent years. The evidence is an incredible growth of some big brands in the list of golden brands in Vietnam, 2008. I believe, in near future, domestic enterprises will create many great brands and which will appear all over the world.

When doing this study, I often wondered if there is any percentage of evaluation or any standard in the interaction between Vietnamese enterprises and the consultancy. However, I have not found any particular number in reality until this time. Even all analyzed data in the present study could not give any specific answer. In my point of view, after finishing this study, the result of this relationship is success of a contract between consultancy and enterprise and what the enterprise achieves for their



business result after signing this contract. If there is another answer or explanation for this issue, that might be the subject of another book, hopefully.

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## APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

To whom may concern: .....

My name is Le Thi Thu Huong, the fourth – year student in Degree Program in International Business – Lahti University of Applied Sciences in Lahti city, Finland. I am writing thesis which researches on the interaction between Vietnamese enterprise and consultancy in visual branding activity. It aims to explore Vietnamese enterprises' perceptions of the brand and visual branding issue, which affects to consulting activity and the consultancy's services quality meet the enterprises demand or not. I would like to propose all companies to take part in my survey by responding questions in this questionnaire, and please feel free to express your opinion. I commence keeping all answers secretly and just use the general result after handling statistics.

Thanks for your kind participation in my survey!

**Company Name:** .....

**Establishment Year:** .....

**Address:** .....

**Tel:** .....**Website:** .....

**Your businesses:** .....

**Business type:** .....

**Amount of employee:** .....**Capital:** .....

*Note: Each question has more than one choice.*

1. The enterprise thinks “What is brand? “

- Goods’ trade – mark
- A commercial name of enterprise
- Original name or geographic orientation
- A special sign (intangible or tangible) to recognize a product or service produced/supplied by individual/organization
- Consumers’ knowledge of product
- Other perceptions (please mention)

2. Has the enterprise built your own brand?

- Has been branded
- Using other brand intermediary
- Have not been branded yet

3. Does the enterprise have responsible department for brand? If have, please mention.

- No separated department
- Separated department
- Sale department
- Marketing department
- Director department
- Other department (please mention)



4. The enterprise’s knowledge of visual branding activity (or the Corporate Identity System)

- Brand image is described consistently in the whole business activities of the company
- Logo design specially and differently
- Package and product style design
- Other ideas (please mention)

5. When has the enterprise built the Corporate Identity System?

- Have been building
- Have completed building
- Have stayed at logo and package design
- Have not yet built
- No logo

6. The enterprise’s knowledge of the Corporate Identity System importance towards business

	Unimportant	Important	Very important
Creating the special and unique characters			
Rising the consistent between brand value and the enterprises’ business activity			
Engraving the brand value on the consumers’ memory			
Displaying competitive advantages			

Constructing advantage in developing business culture			
Helping the enterprises to co-operate effectively with advertising partners, brand consultancies			

7. Has the enterprise registered to own brand?

- Have not yet registered
- Have been registering
- Have been registered in Vietnam
- Have been registered in other countries

8. Who is responsible for designing the enterprise's Corporate Identity System?

- Enterprises themselves
- Good eyes/ relationship persons
- Professional branding consultancies

9. With registered - brand enterprises and complete Corporate Identity System, does the enterprise's business ability change?

- No change
- Revenue increases
- Trust and loyalty of consumers increase
- Higher competitive products
- Other changes (please mention)

10. How many percentages does the enterprise invest to build, defend and develop brand compare to revenue?

- 0%
- 0 – 1%
- 1 – 5%
- > 5%

11. In which issues does the enterprise prioritize the developed strategy in next – five – year?

- Investing – improving & developing the Corporate Identity System
- Increasing product quality
- Developing new product
- Expanding the domestic market
- No need to invest for brand

12. With unregistered – brand enterprises, the reason is:

- High registered cost
- The enterprise has no information about registering brand
- The government's policy is complex and complicated
- Other reasons (please mention)

13. Does the enterprise get trouble with your own Corporate Identity System?

- Definitely advantageous
- Some elements inside the CIS are not unified with brand value
- The CIS is not unique and undifferentiated
- The finance, capital for branding is limited
- Other difficulties (please mention)

#### 14. Difficulty from external elements

- Lacking of professional skill and knowledge towards visual branding activity
- Cultural factor (knowledge of color, form, visual in CIS designing) of consultancies
- Unclear perspective of customers with business brand value
- The government's policy is complicated and complex
- Other elements (please mention)

#### 15. Solutions, suggestions to the Government

- Simplifying brand register procedure
- Having a clear mechanism in handling copyright infringement and Intellectual Property
- Supporting, establishing professional consultants in building and developing brand for enterprises
- Supporting enterprises in brand investment, expansion and spread domestically and internationally
- Other suggestions (please mention)

Thank you for your cooperation!

**APPENDIX 2: List of Vietnamese enterprises in the survey**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Enterprises</b>	<b>Year of establishment</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Business activity</b>
1	QC TT 24h, JSC	2004	Ha Noi	Direct advertising
2	Nam Ha leather, JSC	1957	Nam Dinh	Trade Business & Service
3	Hanoimilk, JSC	2001	Ha Noi	Milk processing
4	BDS DETECH	2008	Ha Noi	Real – ST
5	Foreign Trade University	1960	Ha Noi	Education
6	DTN software solution, LTD	2005	Ha Noi	Information Technology
7	Viet Ha leather, JSC	2004	Nam Dinh	Leather & Exporting
8	Rang Dong, JSC	1963	Ha Noi	Production
9	Thang Long Securities, JSC	2000	Ha Noi	Securities
10	LienVietBank, JSC	2007	Hau Giang	Banking – securities
11	Vietsee advertising & media, JSC	2003	Ha Noi	Direct advertising
12	IQCT, LTD	2008	Ha Noi	Importing - Exporting Industrial goods
13	Dai Kim investment and development, JSC	2007	Ha Noi	Finance – Securities
14	H&T, LTD	2007	Ha Noi	Consulting, Investment, Real – STC
15	Nam Dinh, LTD	1998	Nam Dinh	Basic electronic building

16	Bank for Investment and Development of Viet Nam	1957	Ha Noi	Banking – Finance
17	Strong Media Ong, JSC	2008	Ha Noi	media, events, brand development
18	Cultural Investment and Development VN-NS Hai Ha Company	2001	Hai Phong	Books, CD, souvenir, etc..
19	Phuong Do Investment and Development, JSC	2005	Hai Phong	Interior Decoration
20	Vu Le, JSC	2007	Hai Phong	Business Consulting
21	Viet Thinh, JSC	2004	Hai Phong	Equipment business
22	Thang Hoang Trung, LTD	2003	Ha Noi	Finance Consulting and Investment Service
23	Ngoc Ha, LTD	1997	Ha Noi	Business
24	Hai Phong Transportation and Tourism, JSC	2003	Hai Phong	Domestic, Sea transportation.
25	Huong Thao, LTD	2006	Hai Phong	Goods transportation, tourism
26	Mobile Software Development	2005	Ha Noi	Mobile software supporting
27	TM&CN Hanoi, LTD	1996	Ha Noi	Advertising
28	Tan Viet Long, LTD	2004	Ha Noi	Construction Consulting, design, and investment
29	Traffic engineering 656 Company	2001	Ha Noi	Raw material production and constructing traffic engineering
30	Anco Investment	2007	Ha Noi	Consumer goods business

	Group			
31	Tinh Van Media	1997	Ha Noi	Information Technology & Media
32	Consulting & Designing development, JSC	1996	Ha Noi	Consulting, Designing
33	Hanoi fresh water Company	2007	Ha Noi	Fresh water production
34	Do Thanh, LTD	1994	Ha Noi	Aluminum goods production and business
35	AQA consultation-investment-development, LTD	2004	HCM city	Industrial constructions and development
36	International Relationship-Producing Investment	1997	Ha Noi	Investment
37	Communist Party of Vietnam Online Newspaper	2005	Ha Noi	Online Newspaper
38	Bai Bang Paper Company	1982	Phu Tho	Paper production
39	Industrial Commerce Song Da, JSC	1996	Ha Tay	Producing, supplying packages
40	Sai Gon SJC	1988	HCM city	Producing gold SJC, jewel
41	Mai Linh Corporation	1993	HCM city	Transportation, tourism, training, finance, consulting and management
42	Bao Viet Finance – Insurance Corporation	1965	Ha Noi	Life insurance, finance investment, ...

### **APPENDIX 3: Unilever redeploys the Corporate Identity System**

#### **Effective Redeployment**

With Unilever, the symbol U has a significantly solid which was used more than 30 years. When redeploying a new logo in order to be suitable with the new business message “Vitality for life”, how does the Unilever give out solution for the new Corporate Identity System to be the most successful?



**Unilever** The old logo

Changing new logo is the most difficult and complicated of a company because it affects to all of staff, all departments and suppliers. To be one of the biggest consumption companies in the world, there are 240.000 employees, working in 150 countries, changing the new logo of Unilever is hundreds of difficulty. The changing in internal company such as package, cards, letter sample, and website is probably simple. In order to assure the uniqueness in identifying brand, every new logo is attached with some instruction and usage rules. How does the Unilever communicate all new image and rules to the global employees, partners and suppliers, after they have been familiar with the old image and rules for long time?

The traditional way is to use CD and brochure to send to all departments and partners. After a short time, all staff will be familiar with new logo and rules, the old ones will be eliminated. However, this way is waste of time and cost, it can not either control the existence time, when the old and new logos are parallel used. A better way that the company Unilever uses is to build a standard and unique website to inform the new logo. All information and rules of using logo are presented in this website, by many different languages. All other rests of information have to reference from this information.





In June, 2004, Unilever officially changed new logo. A lot of documents, website and advertisement wrote to introduce and instruct to this website. Only during three months, Unilever website had more than 40.000 assesses and downloads of new logo. The redeployment process was engaged smoothly with a limited cost. You can reference the using rules of new logo in this website:

[www.thebrandcentreforsuppliers.unilever.com](http://www.thebrandcentreforsuppliers.unilever.com)