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Texture and Pattern in Corporate Design

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Abstract
Logo, typography and colour are the minimum elements that every company should have defined. Corporate design is a collection of elements representing the company visually. Attractive corporate design helps build the image, ensures recognizability, memorability and keeps the dialogue with the target audience. However, there are still ways to move the design to higher levels, to communicate the message more consistently and attractively. Essential elements such as logo, typography and colour can cross the usual boundaries and transform themselves into a texture or pattern. These elements of graphic design are able to communicate the values and goals of the company at another level. They bring considerable variability and new possibilities to work with the design of the subject. This paper aims to point out the options offered by texture and pattern for corporate design. These elements are often perceived only as complementary to identity, and they should belong to the essential elements of corporate design.

Key words
Corporate identity. Design. Logo. Pattern. Texture.

Introduction

Each business entity presents itself externally in a particular, precise way. It has its own identity that is supposed to build a feeling in customers that Neumeier defines as a feeling of "the butterflies in the stomach" because, as he says, it is an emotional feeling, despite the effort to strengthen the position of rational thinking[1]. This feeling can also be defined as "*a general public perception of a certain entity, created based on the behavior of the subject, ideas, attitudes, opinions, information and experiences*"[2]. It is a specific evaluation in the minds of customers, where the customer can adopt a positive or even a negative attitude. Author Mark Rowden points out the primary importance of identity. Its essence is in visualizing the subject and showing it in a different light. The difference makes you visible and differentiates your personality from others. But we should also not forget about other important aspects such as attractiveness and motivation[3].

1 Corporate Identity

In their publication, Kafka and Kotyza argue that corporate identity is "*a comprehensive picture of the subject - the result of coordinated behavior. This behavior is based on a philosophy and goals clearly defined in advance and shared by all*"[4]. Identity should be tangible and address the senses. We can see it, touch it, catch it, hear its voice and watch it move. The author Wheeler develops this idea and points out that identity promotes recognition, increases differentiation and makes great ideas and meanings accessible[5]. The identity of a company should represent all the components that create the company and make it exactly what it is. It is not just a product or service; it is an overall mission. Throughout the operation of the company, there should be a certain consistency, rules helping to achieve a unified direction in communication and presentations, both to the public and to employees. This unity is essential because it helps to maintain a harmonious picture in the minds of people. What is the exact essence of the organization, why does it exist, what does it do, how does it do and where it heads are areas that should be addressed by identity. Supporting the work of colleagues such as

Schmidt, Olins, Markwick and Fill, Melewart also agrees that identity represents a wide range of activities and areas, such as communication, culture, business mission, goals, strategy, organizational structure, centralization, products and services, and more[6]. As we observe, a corporate identity contains many elements that are supposed to have the same direction. According to the author Vysekalová, we can also put under the roof of corporate identity – corporate design, corporate communication, corporate culture and product[7]. The authors Kafka, Kotyza and Jurásková also approach this issue similarly[8,9]. Identity defined in this way is probably one of the most frequently cited views on this issue. On the other hand, there is also a broader view when other areas are inserted into identity. Authors Balmer and Grayser view identity as a mix of culture, character, communication, customers, promise and perception[10]. Although there are several opinions on the subsystems of corporate identity,

1   NEUMEIER, M.: *The brand gap.* 2nd Edition. Indianapolis : New Riders, 2006, p. 2.
2   KAFKA, O., KOTYZA, M.: *Logo & Corporate identity.* Prague : grafické studio Kafka Design, 2014, p. 8.
3   ROWDEN, M.: *The Art of Identity: Creating and Managing a Successful Corporate Identity.* Abingdon : Routledge, 2017, p. 25.

4   KAFKA, O., KOTYZA, M.: *Logo & Corporate identity.* Prague : grafické studio Kafka Design, 2014, p. 8.
5   WHEELER, A.: *Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide for the Entire Branding Team.* New Jersey : John Wiley & Sons, 2018, p. 4.

6   MELEWAR, T. C.: Determinants of the corporate identity construct: a review of the literature. In *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 2003, Vol. 9, No. 4, p. 197.
7   VYSEKALOVÁ, J., MIKEŠ, J.: *Image a firemní identita.* Prague : Grada Publishing, 2009, p. 41.
8   KAFKA, O., KOTYZA, M.: *Logo & Corporate identity.* Prague : grafické studio Kafka Design, 2014, p. 10.
9   JURÁSKOVÁ, O. et al.: *Velký slovník marketingových komunikací.* Prague : Grada Publishing, 2012, p. 46.
10   BALMER, J. M. T., GREYSER, S. A.: Corporate marketing: Integrating corporate identity, corporate branding, corporate communications, corporate image and corporate reputation. In *European Journal of Marketing*, 2006, Vol. 40, No. 7/8, p. 735.

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these are similar lines of thought with small deviations. If we would like to work correctly with the issue of corporate design, it is essential to know its place in this system. Every single element of corporate design is influenced by the whole system of corporate identity and should develop this system. It is possible to build a strong identity that creates a comprehensive picture of the subject, following the above mentioned suggestions.

2 Corporate Design

Corporate design, as one of the subsystems of corporate identity, is "*a comprehensive set of all the visual outputs subject uses to present itself* "[11]. Author David Airey compares visual identity to a corporate face. According to him, identity for a company is its face for people – we can recognize a business entity, remember it[12]. Based on this knowledge, we can say that from the identity, customers should be able to understand specific fundamental characteristics about the company, its focus, style, or other features. The Czech author Jurášková, together with a team of authors, point out the source of corporate design, rooted in the company's philosophy, by the psychological effect of colours. At the same time, the creative processing of the

logotype is essential. Besides, they emphasize the time horizon, as the identity should long-term to be able to build a unified image and communicate the same values all the way[13].

The most frequently defined elements of corporate design include logo, typography and colour. Of course, this includes more elements, such as raster, architecture, etc. Each author defines different parts. Jurišová thinks of the primary visual elements like logo, colour, font, pattern, raster, composition, illustration and animation[14]. Corporate design is a broad umbrella covering a large number of features, while they are connected and complementary. One element should develop another and thus build a comprehensive visual image of the subject. Based on the studied literature, we can say that while approaching the issue of corporate design, some elements are not given as much importance as they deserve, such as texture and pattern. These are elements that are usually defined as individual additions to identity, whether in literature or practice, in the design manual. From our point of view, these are often crucial elements the whole visual identity can be built on. Through

these elements, it is possible to approach the characteristics of the company, its focus, vision... With these elements, we can achieve the desired emotion in the audience. They bring the subject a wide range of opportunities to communicate on various topics, but by following the rules of corporate design, thus building a unified image.

3 Texture

The surface activity can be defined in two categories - texture and pattern. The texture represents an irregular surface activity and it is perceived as bioform or natural [15]. The reason for such labeling is the connection with nature and the environment as it very often seeks inspiration in nature. It is also an irregular surface structure, which is found in nature more often rather than a specific regular shape. Author Poulin approaches texture in connection with adjectives such as smooth, glossy, matte, grainy... The texture is not able to act independently; on the contrary, it works in conjunction with other elements such as lines or objects. It can enrich the object, emphasize its aspects and therefore needs space for that[16]. The texture helps us to approximate its structure and assumed tactile features.

The division of textures into

tactile (material) and visual[17] is quite standard, but there also exists a broader division. Tactile textures are properties that we feel by touching them[18], such as wood, stone, metal or others. These textures with a bioform aspect, such as, e.g., wood, may be suitable for labels focusing on sustainability or otherwise linked to the environment. Physical textures also include paper, which may have a structure considering its weight. Even with this texture, we can create certain emotions or attitudes in the recipient. As we can see in Figure 1, the subject used fine textured paper for printing. With blue colour and gold lettering, they achieved an elegant effect, underlined by the final texture.

Figure 1: Physical texture used with propagation materials.
Source: BYHAUS STUDIO – JOSANIE COSSETTE: *Förena spa identity.* [online]. [2020-08-08]. Available at: < https://www.behance.net/gallery/72892143/Foerena-spa-identity>.

Tactile textures can create a wide range of emotions and associations. Using texture, we can indicate elegance, connection with nature, lightness or technology.

Material texture brings closer feelings that otherwise would not be able to be evoked by typography, colour or the logo itself.

The second type of texture is visual. We perceive this type as a particular illusion, as it is created artificially by connecting various elements such as points, lines and multiple objects or patterns. Authors often work with light, brightness and contrast[19]. These textures match the message and complete the visual. The tiny texture can create a particular impression on the recipient.

In our opinion, working with textures in graphics programs represents absolute respect for real handiwork, when such textures were created naturally and often unintentionally. Great examples are linocut or risography.

The Portuguese Love Street Studio created a corporate design for an urban business focused on women. The serif font with a soft pastel palette was complemented by a texture inspired by cement from the widest city streets[20]. They created a contrast – cement and femininity but underlined the style of a woman in an urban environment. Although they combined contrasting elements, they created a mix that balances the whole identity. The presented concept does not come across as

too "sweet", but on the contrary elegant, modern, feminine and confident, exactly like a woman visiting the store. As we can see, with texture we can also achieve contrasting emotions, which bring us closer to the target audience.

Figure 2: Using visual texture in corporate design.
Source: LOVE STREET STUDIO: *Bisset.* [online]. [2020-08-08]. Available at: <https://www.behance.net/gallery/64596475/BISSET>.

The author Poulin is the only one to define a third type of textures and thus, they are imaginary. He mentioned those with no material model. They are most often used in abstract works [21]. The standard features of texture and pattern are recognizability, memorability and easy communication. It is not appropriate to use only a logo to designate a company. Still, these elements can also be used, as they provide considerable diversity and should bear the signs of corporate design[22]. It is essential to emphasize the

11   KAFKA, O., KOTYZA, M.: *Logo & Corporate identity.* Prague : grafické studio Kafka Design, 2014, p. 15.
12   AIREY, D.: *Identity Designed – The Definitive Guide to Visual Branding.* Beverly : Rockport Publishers, 2019, p. 7.

13   JURÁŠKOVÁ, O. et al.: *Velký slovník marketingových komunikací.* Prague : Grada Publishing, 2012, p. 46.
14   JURIŠOVÁ, V.: Building Brand Identity on Instagram. In KARPASITIS, CH., VARDA, CH. (eds.): *Proceedings of the 7th European Conference on Social Media ECSM 2020.* Cyprus : University of Central Lancashire, 2020, p. 120.

15   SAMARA, T.: *Grafický design – Základní pravidla a způsoby jejich porušování.* 2. vydanie. Prague : Slovart, 2016, p. 54.
16   POULIN, R.: *Jazyk grafického designu.* Prague : Slovart, 2012, p. 74.

17   LANDA, R.: *Graphic Design Solutions.* 5th Edition. Hampshire : Cengage Learning, 2013, p. 28.
18   POULIN, R.: *Jazyk grafického designu.* Prague : Slovart, 2012, p. 77.

19   POULIN, R.: *Jazyk grafického designu.* Prague : Slovart, 2012, p. 78.
20   LOVE STREET STUDIO: *Bisset.* [online]. [2020-08-08]. Available at: <https://www.behance.net/gallery/64596475/BISSET>.

21   POULIN, R.: *Jazyk grafického designu.* Prague : Slovart, 2012, p. 78.
22   *The Non-Creative Entrepreneur´s Guide to Patterns & Textures in Branding.* [online]. [2020-08-08]. Available at: <https://pineandpixels.com/2017/10/19/patternstextures/>.

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creation of texture and pattern. These are crucial elements of corporate design that communicate the values, visions and other aspects of the company, as well as other details.

4 Pattern

The topic of pattern presence in corporate design and graphic design, in general, opens up new dimensions. The rebirth of ornaments and patterns is associated with a return to craftsmanship in architecture, product creation and design in general[23]. Following this statement, we would like to stress that we consider the use not only of patterns but also textures with absolute respect for craftwork. At the same time, we also see the similarity of the same opinion in the authors Lupton and Phillips. The pattern can be defined as "*a special type of texture and, according to tradition, is created by the regular repetition of a certain visual unit or group of units,*" explains Poulin[24]. Thus, the geometric character is emphasized with the pattern. By default, the individual components are placed in a recognizable structure. It is a product of human activity, a systematic, mathematical or mechanical product[25]. As

seen in Figure 3, it is a standard arrangement according to a particular system, i.e., certain features are equally spaced. They usually have the same size or thickness of lines.

Symmetry in graphic design is one of the basic principles of visual perception, supporting easier readability, recognizability and memorability[26]. However, there is also an arrangement breaking these rules. In most cases, the template needs to be easy to read and supports the message. On the other hand, the texture or pattern must not dominate other elements and distract from the primary message. Of course, if that is not the intended intention.

Figure 3: Sample of enchantée brand.
Source: TRIANGERS STUDIO, BURUSU HUANG: *Enchantée.* [online]. [2020-08-08]. Available at: <https://www.behance.net/gallery/64894695/enchante/>.

The pattern is one of the essential elements of corporate design. It has an integral place in this system. Adding a pattern (and,

of course, a texture) brings certain benefits to corporate design and for the users working with it. Graphic designer Gillian Tracey creates corporate design and often uses patterns and textures in her work. The mentioned author describes the following advantages of using these elements.

- Patterns bring an interesting element to the design, both printed and digital. They enrich the digital world with a piece of craft.
- Furthermore, we highlight the uniqueness of the model, distinguishing the subject from the competition.
- Each brand tells a story, reports and tries to inform its audience. Texture or even pattern can develop and support this message.
- It is vital that the brand is uniform, consistent and thus builds its image. The systematic use of designated elements with the required essentials, such as pattern or texture in corporate colours, support to reach the mentioned goal.
- Texture or pattern provides versatility and diversity. Working with patterns and textures brings more possibilities in working with elements of corporate design[27].

In some cases, the texture

and pattern overlap. We observe specific characteristics of both of these elements of graphic design in one. The graphical component of Figure 4 has bioform elements of visual texture, logically arranged based on a particular system, the characteristic feature of the pattern.

Jack Renwick Studio, in London, developed an identity for Carpenters Wharf. It was a residential house that should combine the aesthetics of architecture and also referred to the island of Fish, a place with a rich history as a former area of factories and warehouses. Many creative communities currently reside here[28].

Figure 4: Texture for Carpenters Wharf.
Source: JACK RENWICK STUDIO: *Carpenters Wharf.* [online]. [2020-08-08]. Available at: <https://identitydesigned.com/carpenters-wharf/>.

Neither texture nor pattern should be created under time pressure and based only on subjective feelings. It is a process preceded by examining the subject and finding a way that reflects the uniqueness of the subject, its essence, vision and values. It is a

demanding process that can bring exceptional results.

For the mentioned subject, they created a graphic system based on pieces of wood found in the courtyards of the building. They worked with a local print artist and created an exceptional texture with other creative minds in the community[29]. Not only did they create a graphic element based on a thorough examination of the subject and its history, but incorporated the very community of people living in the area and, of course, objects from the area. This element was the result of thorough work with the idea, the craft and the people themselves. In our opinion, it is a well-thought-out element, supporting not only the whole design but also the subject itself and its story. The urban style of this pattern supports the entire identity and the subject itself standing on the river bank.

The creation of a pattern or texture, reflecting the values and visions of the subject, must not only come from within the company but must have common features with the rest of the corporate design. It is essential to see the interconnection, as together with the other elements, they have to create a complete visual image. The crucial elements of corporate design, such as logo, typography or colour, offer inspiration or space for creating textures and patterns. We can say that these elements overflow their imaginary boundaries, transform

and discover hidden forms in them that help us create a texture or pattern.

5 Logo

One of the essential elements of corporate design is the logo. It is often mistaken for design or overall identity. In some cases, it is given too much importance and therefore wins over other elements. The logo is a combination of shapes, colours, symbols and words or letters in the design, which should approximate the values and quality of the products and services offered[30]. The logo should reflect the company's mission. It should be based on the philosophy of carrying specific values belonging to a given subject. The logo is usually classified as a logotype (company name) and a symbol. A logotype is a set of letters or words that creates a company name. The symbol does not contain words or letters; it is a purely visual representation using the symbol. It can be directly designed to be functional alone or in conjunction with a company name[31]. The logo can cross its boundaries and regular use as long as it is processed further. The logo can be the bearer of the message not only in its basic structure, but it can also function as a pattern or texture. We can come across several ways of working with the logo in search of the

23   LUPTON, E.: *Graphic Design: The New Basics.* 2nd Edition. New York : Princeton Architectural Press, 2015, p. 2086.
24   POULIN, R.: *Jazyk grafického designu.* Prague : Slovart, 2012, p. 237.
25   SAMARA, T.: *Grafický design – Základní pravidla a způsoby jejich porušování.* 2. vydanie.

Prague : Slovart, 2016, p. 55.
26   POULIN, R.: *Jazyk grafického designu.* Prague : Slovart, 2012, pp. 123-129.

27   TRACEY, G.: *Using Patterns to Boost Your Branding.* [online]. [2020-08-08]. Available at: <https://www.gilliantracey.com/blog/2017/5/17/using-brand-patterns>.

28   AIREY, D.: *Identity Designed – The Definitive Guide to Visual Branding.* Beverly : Rockport Publishers, 2019, pp. 231-233.

29   Ibid, p. 235.

30   SLADE-BROOKING, C.: *Creating a brand identity: A guide for designers.* London : Laurence King Publishing, 2016, p. 24.
31   ROWDEN, M.: *The Art of Identity: Creating and Managing a Successful Corporate Identity.* Abingdon : Routledge, 2017, p. 2104.

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most suitable texture. In addition to the standard arrangement of the logo in the pattern, it is possible to shift the boundaries of the symbol further, fold it, enlarge it, compact it and thus create a pattern, when at first glance, it may not be clear that it is the symbol itself.

An example may be the displayed pattern in Figure 5, where the symbol has been compressed into such a form that they together create one consecutive pattern. Such a pattern can be used on various materials, ensuring the recognizability of the subject and it is not necessary to continually place the logo all the time. Besides, they have created a decorative element turning the carriers into objects attracting attention and the recipient may be willing to use them, even if the element is a corporate object with a commercial purpose.
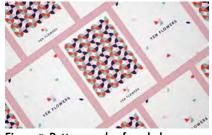
Figure 5: Pattern made of symbol.
Source: EFFENDY, M. A.: *Yen flowers*. [online]. [2020-08-08]. Available at: <https://www.behance.net/gallery/91230205/YEN-FLOWERS>.

Even though it was for a flower shop, this geometric texture works naturally with the rest of the identity and does not come across as disturbing. This decorative floral pattern makes the identity special without looking like a cliché or well-thought out idea.

6 Typography

Another critical element is typography. Unified typography constitutes an essential element building a comprehensive visual image of the subject[32]. The font can explain the goals of the company. From an anatomical inspection of writing, the recipient can read the essential characteristics of a business entity. By using a particular font, the subject gives the impression of credibility, seriousness, or a specific tradition. On the contrary, a sans-serif font evokes contrasting impressions.

"The crime of typography is committed every day," says Steven Heller[33]. Based on this statement, we can say that typography represents a sometimes misunderstood area of graphic design as well as a corporate design. There are undoubtedly many cases where the cited author can be agreed with. The font is significant and its choice should be consistent. Constant use of specified fonts is a habit. Also, the font can exceed its imaginary purpose limits. It does not only fulfil its primary role. Fonts can become part of corporate design in other ways, not the most standard ones. Writing can become a pattern by using the right process. The font pattern is an interesting element that can make an identity special.

An important aspect is the choice of colours, fonts and, finally, the layout of the pattern.

As seen in Figure 6, the typographic pattern looks clean, modern, minimalist, and at the same time, creates an exciting element. The font is an essential element of corporate design, which, as a model, only expands its influence and helps to build the visual identity of the subject.

Figure 6: Typography texture.
Source: RAMOS, G. M..: *Capitat*. [online]. [2020-08-08]. Available at: <https://www.behance.net/gallery/51915193/Capacitat?tracking_source=search_projects_recommended%7Cpattern%20typography>.

By working with typography, it is possible to create a pattern that will be typical for a particular subject, recognizable, memorable and designs and builds a unified visual identity. We can create an attractive pattern, widely used, either in digital or in print or architecture.

7 Colour

Colour is *"the visual sensation evoked by the visible component of electromagnetic radiation"*[34]. Colour consists of three

basic features, which are: shade, brightness, and saturation[35].

The chosen colour should have a specific reason and significance for corporate design. Colour represents emotion. It should represent values, the age of society...[36]. Each subject communicates its values, visions, goals and feelings also in colour. It is a means of expression, and when used correctly, can be recognizable and memorable. It can be an element that first shares with the recipient which subject is that. Colour does not only serve as one of the essential elements of corporate design, applied in logos or typography. It is also an element with a broader purpose. As we mentioned, the colour itself can represent the subject without using a company logo or name.

Colours are an integral part of patterns or textures. The subject does not have to use one pattern or texture all the time. However, it has the unique opportunity to work with these elements as they wish while still keeping the uniformity of the entire identity. The factor ensuring this is colour. As we can see in Figure 7, the subject Majolica (restaurant) uses many designs, using various objects and lines in it. The patterns are geometric, but also abstract or even biomorphic. The constant element is a colour

scheme consisting of shades of yellow and blue, complemented by white. Adherence to the specified colour scheme ensures uniformity and recognizability of the subject, despite considerable variability and differences in textures. At the same time, a dynamic element has been created, reviving the identity and offering significant possibilities in using it.

Figure 7: Variability of pattern with exact color division.
Source: FANTINI, CH. M.: *Sicilian restaurant*. [online]. [2020-08-08]. Available at: <https://www.behance.net/gallery/69040121/Majolica-Sicilian-restaurant?tracking_source=search_projects_recommended%7Cpattern%20logo>.

Conclusion

Nowadays, the possibilities for graphic designers are endless – there are various sources of inspiration from which the design can be created as well as corporate design. Designers can transform visions, values, company goals and philosophy into elements of corporate design. Texture and pattern also have an integral place in this system as they offer options that other factors have a hard time balancing. Variability, ability to communicate, attractiveness, dynamic, memorability... These are

just a few benefits one can achieve by incorporating the texture or pattern into the corporate design. In today's world overfilled with marketing news, it is essential to differentiate oneself from the competition. Corporate design, as such, based only on the logo, typography and colour palette, may not be sufficient. Texture and pattern can take corporate design as well as the entity itself to another level and should not be seen only as accessories. We assume that the trend of using textures and patterns in graphic design, as well as in corporate design, will continue and be used multiple times. These surface activities will have a more significant place among other elements of corporate design, bringing greater variability and opportunities for subjects.

32   KAFKA, O., KOTYZA, M.: *Logo & Corporate identity*. Prague : grafické studio Kafka Design, 2014, p. 60.

33   ROWDEN, M.: *The Art of Identity: Creating and Managing a Successful Corporate Identity*. Abingdon : Routledge, 2007, p. 108.

34   POULIN, R.: *Jazyk grafického designu.*

Prague : Slovart, 2012, p. 58.

35   Ibid, p. 62.

36   ROWDEN, M.: *The Art of Identity: Creating and Managing a Successful Corporate Identity*. Abingdon : Routledge, 2017, p. 2301.

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