A Study on the Use of the Mysterious Elements of Product design.

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Outline:新しい製品を開発するにおいて重要なのは、風格の元
素そのものを明確に把握する以外に、消費者に満足のいくよ
うな点を含むこと、そして消費者が製品に対する感受力の向
上を目指すことがデザイナーたるものの第一の仕事である。
近年、釈然・幻な・不確定的なというような、風格を表
す用語の大量出現により、これらのような神秘的要素が設
計の各分野においての題材とされることも多くなった。こ
れらの要素が幅広く運用されることにより、この研究でこ
れらの要素について深く追求したいほか、これらの神秘的
要素を製品に応用することに対する消費者の期待と必要
性について理解したい。

Key Word : mysterious,elements,product designer

Preface
This research applies the Means-End chain theory, the
Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique, and etc., at first,
analyze samples of the test through ZMET to discuss
interviewees’ potential concept and value, then deconstruct
the connection between “Attributes-Consequences-Value” using
the MEC structure, also, probe into the gradation of customer
value in chain-like relation. Namely “Attributes” induces
“Consequence” while “Consequences” satisfies “Value” in
experiences of consumption, constructing interviewees’
common consensus map, and to derive the key mysterious
element which attracts customers the most. Integrating
the subjects expected to accomplish, this research offers designers
and product developers the idea of how to design products that
possess customer value. This study of mysterious elements
looks forward to conform to customers’ expectation for
mysterious products, and to design products which accord with
users’ value concepts.

This research use the Means-End chain theory and the
application of the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique to
build customers’ intelligence image of life products, willing to
collect the elements of mysterious relevant sensation, and probe
into its connection with people’s intelligence mood. The main
purposes are: 1. Seek for transformation of elements application,
and the application of drafting product strategy provides
designers an approach to understand customers’ preference
toward product attribute and value. 2. Discuss the relationship
between life products and the “Attribute-Consequences-Value”
for customer. Find out about the customer’s purchase behavior.
What are the external purchase attributes that attract? What is
the inherent product value that caters? Hope to seek for product
value from customers’ standpoint. 3. Offer guiding principles
for mysterious elements applying on relative products, to
enhance its market competency.

Literature Discussion
1. Analysis of mysterious element goods
Appearance and color determine the basic sensation,
and vision determines the first impression of product. In a
writing about emotional design by Donald A. Normon also
mentioned that human is instinctive animal, and on the instinct
level, the focal point of design lies in appearance, sense of touch,
and feelings of the product, they are the first impression people
receiving things. In addition, vision receiving has accounted for
about 70% of feeling receiving of human body. For those who
have normal physiological state, vision impression has
accounted for even more, meanwhile, such physiological
situation also responses in product design obviously.
Furthermore, color played a significant role in outward
appearance; hues carry on atmosphere which represents feeling.

2. Probe into product style and consumer’s value towards the
product
To improve product competitiveness, be adept at
utilizing styles as ways to demonstrate, somehow could
heighten the significance and value of product. Economic
consumption is tending to be mature in Taiwan, not only to
satisfy product attributes can affect consumers’ purchasing
motivation, but to pursue personal value.

3. Probe into cognition and annotate in humanities
methodology
Extracting the internal value of mysterious element and
its connection to significance through the recurring concept of
W. Dilthey’s hermeneutics, perception gap between designer
and consumer has shortened.

Research Method
This research is mainly combined with the “Means-End
Chain” and the “Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique”,
which are two materialization research techniques. It also
carries on the material by the content analytic method to do the
collection and the code and the analysis, two methods are as
follows:

1. Means-End Chain
Gutman (1982) proposes the “Means-End Chain (MEC)”
theory which is the theory used to discuss the consumer
behavior and the customer value correlation most representative
theory, thought that the customer regards as the product
attributes the “End” to achieve “Means”, but “End” may
respond the value. For example, when purchasing the automobile, customers who takes the interpersonal relationship possibly would hope to travel together with the relatives and friends on holidays, therefore can the large-scale vehicle plant in the automobile choice is the consideration by chance. As a result, the individual value, the expense result and the product attribute is not solitary independent with each other, but one with attributes-consequences-value mutual correlation structure.

2. Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique

Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique is one kind of investigation tool which can make the consumer to understand the self-idea and shares the idea mutually with the researcher.

The application method is to solicit 10-15 representative participants first, then give the participants the study subject synopsis and the correlation explanation after the qualifications confirmed. Requests the participant to ponder the subject, and collects 8-10 pictures which can represent participants’ thought in their mind about the subject, and accepts the participation depth interview after 7 to 10 days. The interview takes individual as a unit. It is an approximately 2 – hour interviews by two to three ZMET specialists to carry on, the entire journey sound recording or the video recording.

At first, analyze samples of the test through ZMET to discuss interviewees’ potential concept and value, then deconstruct the connection between “Attributes-Consequences-Value” using the MEC structure, also, probe into the gradation of customer value in chain-like relation. Namely “Attributes” induces “Consequence” while “Consequences” satisfies “Value” in experiences of consumption, constructing interviewees’ common consensus map, and to derive the key mysterious element which attracts customers the most. There are three steps in the analysis as follow:

1. The design of population and selection:
   Due to the products of applying the secret element not formed the significant style guide yet, result in the first condition of the interviewers was they had to be experiencing the design education or doing design job at least five years, and having intensive interest to the secret things or secret style.

2. The conversation design and process:
   Participant’s concrete discussion chooses each picture which represents the idea and the feeling of them through Soft Laddering, and provides the participant to express and to relate their idea in detail for free. The full encouragement participant can be done heartily under the comfortable mood to share innermost feelings emotion, the explanation, and uses the Critical Incident Technique to interact with the participant to discuss promptly. Confirms the participant repeatedly to the subject about their real feeling, in order to regarding the mystical style product attribute, the expense result, the individual value and the mental pattern and so on the important cognition and the idea of the participant.

3. Material analysis flow:
   1) Confirm essential concepts with elaborate material.
   2) Content analysis to code.

3) Establish all participant level value map HVM chart master list.

4. Product business planning and strategy:

   The designer designs products to satisfy the participant mind and force them to purchase the products, discovering the important element to attract the customer mystical mood.

Research Conclusion and analysis

The mysterious element merchandises were analyzed by the KAWAKIDA JIRO’s KJ method. Classify the mysterious feeling according to abstract, space, behavior, noun, adjective, and other categories. Induce them together, and then digitalization, we can get three bunching phenomena as follows:

1) Cluster one belongs to shaping and specific such as mummy, monster and ghost.

2) Cluster two belongs to material and color such as darkness and the green light in the dark.

3) Cluster three belongs to behavior and operation mode such as ritual and puzzle.

Before the study, we thought that mysterious elements must have included skulls and ghost to present the atmosphere. While interviewing, we found that most respondents prefer the elements that track out their curiosity or molding strange atmosphere rather than physical figure to explain mysterious elements.

Mysterious brings human more space if imagination as another world. Its unexpected character such as unexpected surprise enrich our life. Researcher shows that movie tickets have a better sale amount while the economic depression. The reason is that people were yearn for the infinite imagination in the movie and would like to pay money just to escape from the reality.

The application of mysterious elements is challenging the feeling of impossible and curiosity. Perhaps there’s nothing material left at last. Things we pursue are building the life’s atmosphere and makes life more delightful. So there comes the mysterious product

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