Applying Dynamic Branding: Tate Gallery Rebranding Comparative Case Study

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Abstract:

Debating dynamic branding could be beneficial for all involved parties in the branding process. On the first hand, Dynamic branding can be very useful to all the brands that wish to stay updated and connected with their clients. The dynamic branding has opened many doors to allow the brand to stay fresh and coherent to the continuous evolve in the market. On the other hand, the increasing number of options has caused confusion to both the viewers and the designers to relate to the brand image and enhance its recognition.

Although dynamic branding as a concept is relatively recent, it has attracted a number of serious exploratory and explanatory studies. Different approaches and various backgrounds affected the formation of the literature reviewed concerning dynamic branding. See (Dynamic identities by Irene van Nes, Flexible Branding Systems vs. Static Logos in punchy. design (2019); How to create a dynamic brand identity by (Brandfolder, n.d.) .

The application of the dynamic branding has developed as well over the years from mere frame shape that can be filled with any element from inside to programmed designed software, especially for the brand.

The Tate logo has designed a set of logos to be used dynamically for different publications and promotional needs. However, the brand faced some challenges with the variety of the logo which made them rebrand the logo at the end.

This study aims to compare the old Tate logo and the new rebranded one, that is to reach a valid recommendation for applying dynamic branding.

Key words:

Visual Identity, Brand Equity, Dynamic Branding, Rebranding, Tate Gallery

1- Research problem

What are the problems that can face the dynamic brand?

Why Tate Museum had to rebrand?

2- Research importance

- Consumers evolve in their taste and needs over time. Therefore, brands have to stay aligned with the continuous progression of their needs.
- The dynamic branding can be a gate to fulfill the needs of the brand to stay updated.
- Certain aspects should be considered when applying the dynamic branding to maintain the effectiveness of the brand image.

3- Research Objectives

To present the constrains that the designers and brands need to focus on while applying the dynamic branding and understand the complete needs of their clients along with the brand image.

4- Research Hypothesis

- Fully understanding clients leads to fulfill a solid and strong brand image.
- Considering the vast variability of dynamic applications results in stronger brands.
- Awareness of dynamic branding needs and connecting with the brand vision and image negate any conflict in their visual messages.

5- Research Methodology

This research uses mixed method. Qualitative as well as quantitative methods are applied to study the research phenomenon. Analytical and comparative method is used to accomplish the research aims and validate the results.

6- Research Tools

This research uses case study to deeply explore the application of dynamic branding. Documentation was used to study the Tate Gallery case. As well as a survey that is used to explore how to apply dynamic branding. Two approaches of brand design are examined; dynamic brand approaches that were implemented by Tate Gallery. The survey designed by the researchers was digitally distributed targeting designers and visitors. 37 responses were collected and analyzed using google forms. Problems facing dynamic approach implementation was examined.

Introduction:

Companies have been striving to flourish and appeal to their consumers. Part of how they achieve their appeal, is to have an outstanding logo to attract the viewer and drag his attention to the brand, then fulfill the recognition required from their visual identity.

Visual identity:

The brands seek to create a visual identity to a have a unique identity representation to allow its recognition and to manage attracting the consumers and customers.

As Clifton explains mentioned by Ballias & Miridjanian that "the graphic components that all together provide a system for identifying and representing a brand. The basic elements of a brand's visual identity might comprise distinctive versions of the following" (Ballias & Miridjanian, 2011, p.8.)

Brand Equity:

Any brand who enters the market intend to build a certain image in the consumers' mind along with resonating with them. All of this reflects in the brand financial value along with the brand essence.

As mentioned by Pride and feller by "Brand equity is about the value of a brand, the marketing and financial costs linked with a brand's strength in the market, including actual proprietary brand assets, brand name awareness, brand loyalty, perceived brand quality and brand associations"(Mogaji 2021, 162)

Dynamic Branding:

Dynamic branding is a new approach to design logos with multiple options that open door for creativity and progress at the same time. It uses a system to apply the dynamic logo to maintain unity while making the different options of the logo. Dynamic logos have found their way into a lot of brands representations due to their flexibility and their ability to have a room for progression. The first dynamic logo was represented by MTV where they made their name a room for an endless number of fillings from within. Leaving their clients always attentive to their new representations.
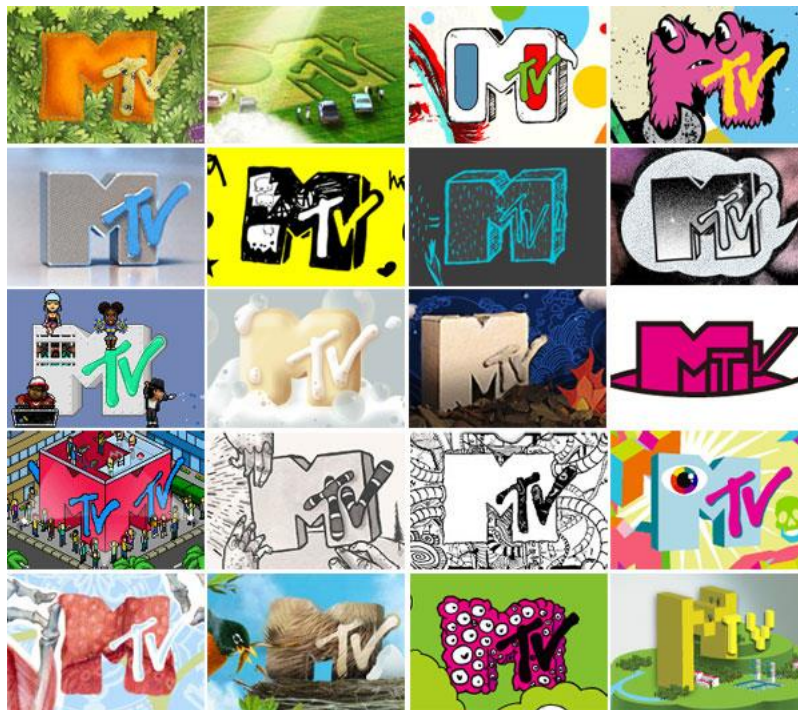

Fig (1) Mtv logo variants. (gothphotographer, n.d.)

This was kind of a kick off for both the brands and designers, to understand that the vast change in the market has a great impact on the consumer needs. Hence, the need for a brand that has room to continuously evolve and develop is a great advantage in the brand image and brand visual identity.

Difficulties:

Yet some of the brands that started to apply the dynamic branding lost track on how to maintain consistency of their brand image and identity. An example of this case was the MIT logo that

was a new innovation with their infinite options. However, the challenge provoked in the application and what to print at what time. Shown in the below example.
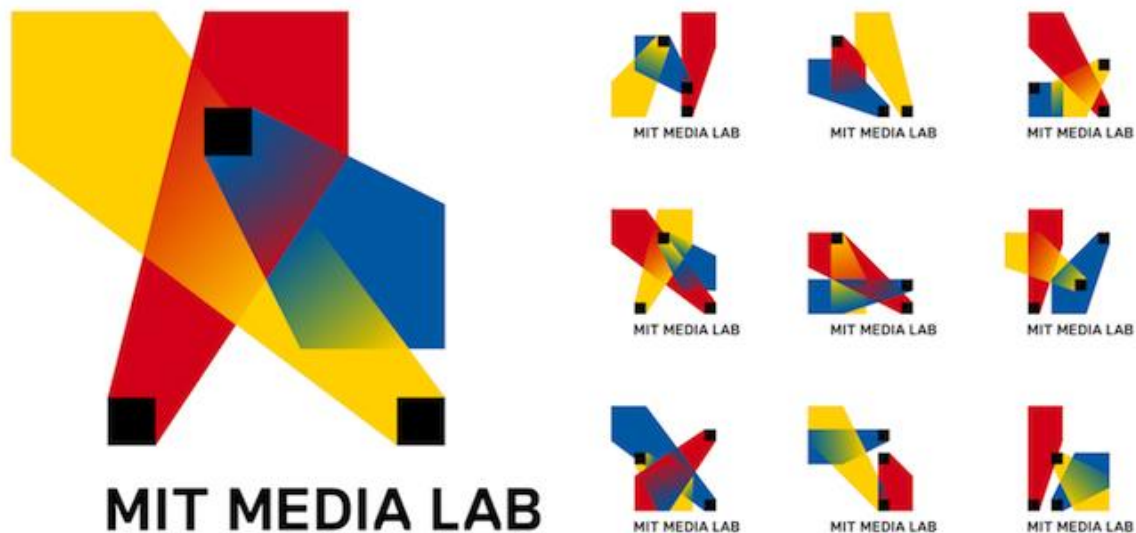
Fig(2). MIT Media Lab first dynamic logo. (LaBarre, LaBarre, and LaBarre 2011)based on a grid and three squares travels between the gird with gradient color for each. Leaving the logo with almost endless possibilities that reached 40,000 of for visualization.(Brownlee, Brownlee, and Brownlee 2014)

Fig(3). Showed the New rebranded MIT Media Lab logo that was based on the old grid yet used it to for a squared based letterset to form the typography of the brand departments. (Brownlee, Brownlee, and Brownlee 2014)

The MIT Media Lab new logo still retained the dynamic aspects in its feature, where it applied a system and made room for change within the application of this system. This change comes from the usage of the gird and the square module.

As Wheeler mentioned in her book Designing Brand Identity " How a brand is perceived affects its success, regardless of whether it's a start-up, a nonprofit, or a product."(Wheeler, 2009, p.2.) On the other hand, the Tate Gallery has faced the same challenge of multiple logos and the dilemma of choosing between them in their applications. Yet the Tate logo went to a more static logo ditching the dynamic idea almost in total. Hence, the researcher decided to review the old logo and the new logo in a comparative study.

At the year 1897 Tate started with one premises to showcase small collection of British artworks, till it evolved to have four locations showcasing around 70,000 artworks.(Tate, n.d.) Tate gallery started the expansion along to be four Tate galleries showcasing different art

directions and art pieces: the Tate Britain, the Tate Modern, the Tate Liverpool and the Tate St Ives.)

"Tate reinvented the idea of a gallery from a single, institutional view, to a branded collection of experiences that shared an attitude." (wolffolins, n.d.)

Case study 1:

Tate logo that was developed in the year 1999. The Tate gallery requested a new fresh identity to represent them and unite the different branches of the Tate Gallery.

Concept:

The Tate directors wanted to fuse all four sites of the Tate to have a united philosophy.(wolffolins, n.d.) The agency Wolff Olins designed a theme to the new identity, which was 'look again, think again' relying on the concept that art usually derives their viewers to think deeply while seeing the art pieces.

The designer Marina Willer explained "Everyone has a different way of understanding art, it's never about being too fixed." (creative review, 2011) Thus, she proceeded by creating the design accordingly to fulfill the required philosophy.

Design Execution:

The identity started by changing the name ditching both "Millbank" and "Bankside," to be Tate Britain and Tate Modern to reflect the art direction displayed within the gallery. (wolffolins, n.d.)

A special typeface by the agency Newlyn was customized intended to reflect the uniqueness in identification. Yet, neutral to allow the art pieces to reflect their message.

As described by the designer "Conceptually, the type would express the contemporary as it is informed by its predecessor, to show the possibilities of the present when inspired by an appreciation of the past."(Newlyn, 2017).

The logo typeface was intended to drag the consumer attention and focuses to the place and what it offers. (Newlyn, 2017). The type designed was then taken to represent the Tate logo under different focuses. "a range of logos that move in and out of focus, suggesting the dynamic nature of Tate – always changing but always recognizable." (wolffolins, n.d.)

Tate chose dynamic branding to reflect the modern contemporary feel of it, along with reaching for the classic gallery as well. As shown in the example below.

Fig(4) Tate logo with different focuses. (aiga, 2016)

As demonstrated from the figure above the Tate logo was made out of different number of dots, that sometimes-reached 3000+ dots in order to formulate the actual shape.

Fig(5) Tate logo with different focuses in applications. (creative review, 2011)

Difficulties:

At first, the Tate logo was a breakthrough at that time, having different visual appeals to their clients made a constant interest.

Fig(6) Tate logo with different focuses in applications.(Newlyn, 2017)

Then the challenges started to build up when the designers were tested on what to pick from the different 75 focuses. Along, there was the problem of what message the gallery wants to convey with every event.

Gilmore mentioned that "There were so many possibilities that it just paralyzed the designer, who had to pretty much approach every project by starting from scratch each time," where he adds that this caused a conflict in the image representation of the Tate gallery that made it unique and lost coherence. (Newlyn, 2017)

All of these factors have derived the Tate directors to change the logo and settled on one logo as demonstrated in the case below.

Case study 2:

Concept:

The main idea was to unify the logo, to allow more usage for it in the applications and maintain the brand equity achieved at the same time. They intended to have one logo that is formed from one main identifiable graphical representation seen in all Britain and used by the four branches.

Execution

The first logo acted as a pointillist design made out of different amount of dots in each focus. The North Agency was against ditching completely the old logo idea. The designer explained that they wanted to reduce the number of dots used in the new design from 3000+ to reach only 340 dots. Along with maintaining the spirit of the old logo. (tonimarino, 2019)

Fig(7) the version chosen from the different focuses of the old logo to form the new logo. (Newlyn, 2017)

**Fig(8) the New Tate logo built from 340 dots. (leahbatchelor, 2016)**

Stephen Gilmore (partner at <u>North</u> design agency that was assigned the rebranding of the Tate's identity) mentions that "The Tate is all about being edgy, but the logo had lost the edge we'd always admired in it," (Paulmann, 2016)

He also assured that they wanted to preserve the brand equity and the recognition the Tate has achieved in the past years. (Brownlee, Brownlee, and Brownlee 2016)

He also added that "We wanted to create one logo which was still recognizably Tate but could be used more dynamically and exist more effectively in the digital world." (Paulmann, 2016)

This was strengthened with Jeremy Coysten, another partner at the agency that the mission is to "evolve" He added that "For us to propose getting rid of the identity system entirely would be irresponsible and a selfish act as designers," (<u>Jenny Brewer</u>,2016)

Now the Tate consider the new logo to be visually appealing and conveys the complicated nature of art. (Tonimarino, 2019)

The logo has an animated version in which the dots flyes in till it form the logo as demonstrated in the figure below.
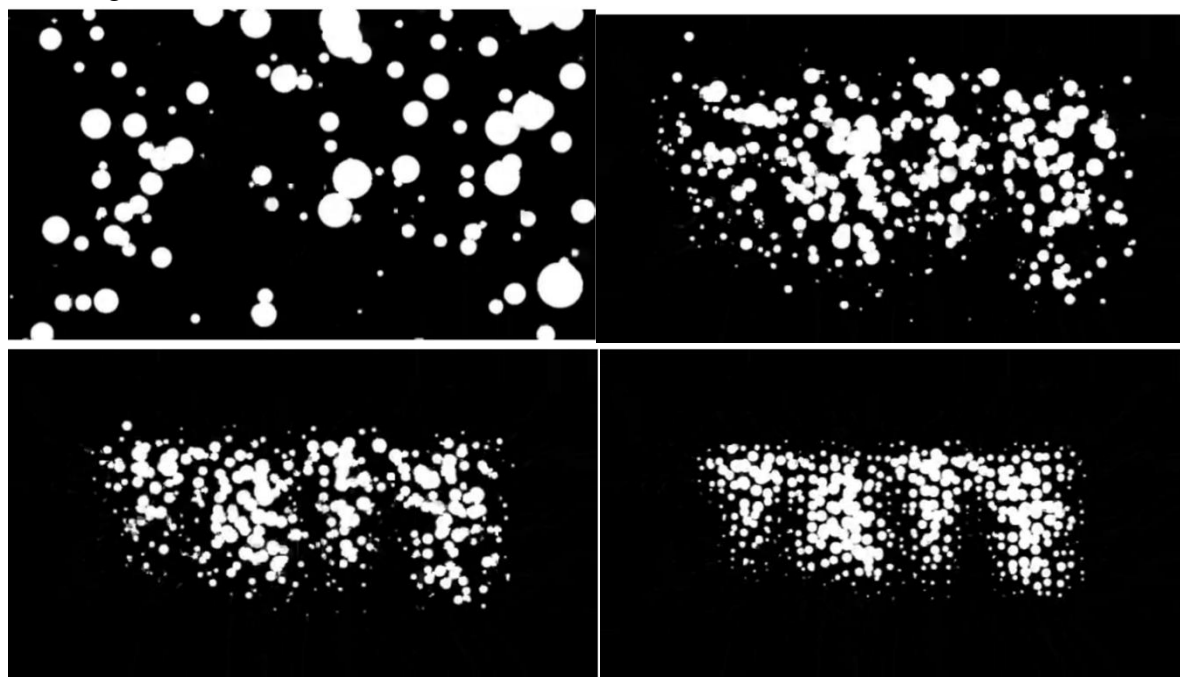
Fig(7) the New Tate logo in animation, started from scattered dots to complied shape that forms the new logo. (leahbatchelor, 2016)

Another form of the Logo application was to apply the logo under different crops, meaning taking only small parts from the logo and show it over different publications as shown in the figures below.

Fig(8) the New Tate logo with different crops in the poster applications. (Ibid, 2016)

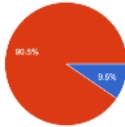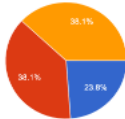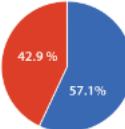**Fig(9) the New Tate logo with different crops in the tot bags applications.**
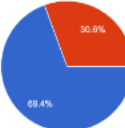**(Ibid, 2016)**
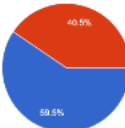
However, in the events and exhibition the logo is used as a whole like the figure below.

Fig(10) the New Tate logo in the events applications.(Newlyn, 2017)

Results:

Question	%	%	%	Pie Chart
Are you a Tate Gallery visitor or interested in their work?	Yes: 31.4%	No: 68.6%		
What do you think of the older Tate logo?	Very good in the visual appeal: 25.7%	Very hard to identify the identity: 22.9%	sometimes confusing to relate to the Gallery 54.3%	
Are you a designer?	Yes: 55.6%	No: 44.4%		
Are you familiar with the term Dynamic branding or moving brands?	Yes: 94.7%	No: 5.3%		
Do you think the dynamic branding is successful for the Tate gallery?	Yes: 63.2%	No: 36.8%		

Did you know that there are 72 logo options for the Tate logo?	Yes: 90%	No: 10%	
As a designer do you find it hard to pick between the Tate 72 logo options to execute your design?	Yes: 25%	No: 40%	May Be: 35%
What do you think of the new Tate logo?	Very successful and solved the confusion: 57.1%	Don't like having a single logo: 42.9%	
Do you think the animated version of the logo is considered dynamic?	Yes: 71.4%	No: 28.6%	
Do you think different cropping of the new Tate logo is considered Dynamic?	Yes: 58.3%	No: 41.7%	

Discussion:

The researchers found that the 57% like the new logo solution, agreeing that it helped solving the confusion from picking 72 logo options. This abides with the MIT Lab experience when they had to rebrand their logo to down size the number of the options existing in the identity.

Yet, the researcher disagree that the new animated logo is considered dynamic and can fall under this category. Although, it opened room for movement for the logo. It has been widely practiced in a lot of logos that they are animated to form a specific move or to be compiled all together.

In fact, Irene van Nes emphasized in her book that animated logos are not considered dynamic giving an example with the Swisscom logo (see figure below). she clarifies one of the traits of dynamic identities is freedom not just plain movement. (Nes, 2012, p. 7)
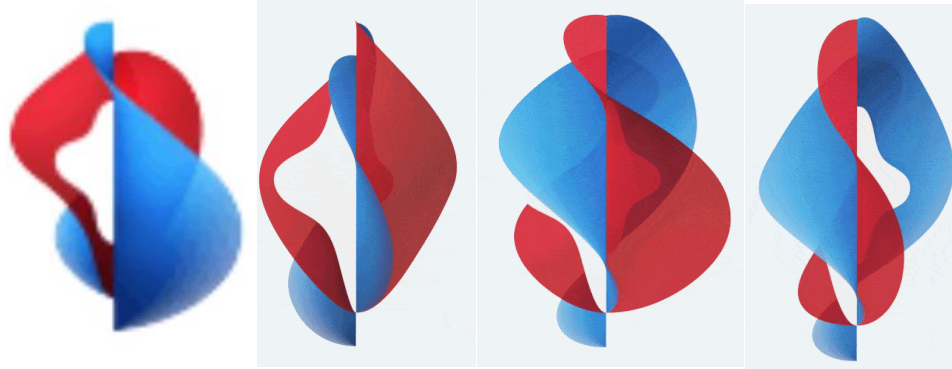
Fig(11) Swisscom logo is designed on rotation on a vertical center axis.(Swisscom, n.d.)

Conclusion:

1. Designers should apply a system for Dynamic branding to avoid confusion in brand promotional applications.
2. Dynamic branding allows room for change like the M tv logo yet maintains its image.
3. Not all brands require dynamic branding like governmental documents.
4. When designing a dynamic brand designers should put in mind the brand image and recognition.

Survey as placed:

As a designer do you find it hard to pick between the Tate 72 logo options to execute your design?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Maybe

Designer Section (short)

Description (optional)

Are you familiar with the term Dynamic branding or moving brands?

○ Yes

○ No

Dynamic branding is a sort of generative design where a set of rules guides the process yet generates a dynamic output each time. Do you think the dynamic branding is successful for the Tate gallery

○ Yes

○ No

Did you know that there are 72 logo options for the Tate logo

○ Yes

○ No

Case 2

Tate new logo

Concept of case 2

The main idea was to unify the logo, to allow more usage for it in the applications and maintain the brand equity achieved at the same time. They intended to have one logo that is formed from one main identifiable graphical representation seen in all Britain and used by the four branches.

The designer explained that they wanted to reduce the number of dots used in the new design from 3000+ to reach only 340 dots. Along with maintaining the spirit of the old logo.

The new logo based from the old one.

What do you think of the new Tate logo?

☐ Very successful and solved the confusion

☐ Don't like having a single logo

Do you think the animated version of the logo is considered dynamic?

Do you think the animated version of the logo is considered dynamic?

○ Yes

○ No

Do you think different cropping of the new Tate logo is considered Dynamic?

○ Yes

○ No

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