1. INTRODUCTION

The environment in which contemporary man lives is constantly and hurriedly changing. We live in a time when there is a flood of new products and numerous technological innovations which change consumers’ habits. The greater the offer, however, the larger the number of choosy consumers, so it is increasingly more difficult to reach a buyer. The quick pace of living leaves increasingly less time for consumers to make well-thought-of purchase decisions. Today, consumers want access to information about a product at the time they find convenient for themselves and independent of the place they may find themselves in. Apart from satisfying the basic function, there are times when consumers seek additional functionalities and to fit in a product in a certain lifestyle, especially when speaking about luxury products. Consumers are in search for novel landmarks in the purchase decisions they make and the ease of choice. That landmark is most frequently found in a recognizable brand, which inspires safety in them, guarantees a quality, status features, the country of origin, a good service, a good customer service and a feeling of being given additional value (Richa and Prerna, 2020).

A brand implies a product or service different from other products or services designed to satisfy the same needs. Those differences can be functional, rational or tangible, whereas they can also be symbolical, emotional and intangible, i.e. connected with what a brand represents or means in an abstract sense. A brand is a promise that indicates a certain quality of a product or service standing behind the brand, which satisfies consumers.
Product or service design is an important factor in the process of differentiating and positioning a company’s products or services in the competitive conditions present on the market. Design is made of all those characteristics that influence the way how a product appeals to a consumer, what impression it leaves on a consumer and how a consumer may benefit from it. Design offers functional and esthetical benefits and positively influences a rational and emotional attitude to a brand (Chitturi et al. 2008). From the point of view of a company, a well-designed product will easily be produced and distributed. From the consumer’s perspective, a well-designed product looks nice to the consumer, is simple to open, install, use, repair and lay aside. A designer has to take into consideration all the foregoing elements (Orth and Malkewitzm K., 2008).

In contemporary market conditions today, special attention is paid to the emotional influence of design and the importance consumers give to how a product looks and how it works. For that reason, there is an increasing influence of design today, even in those product categories in which no attention has been paid to before. Thanks to their achievements in the design field, some countries have developed a great reputation, thus having become synonyms for good design for certain kinds of products. So, Italy has become famous in the clothes and furniture categories. The Scandinavian countries have become well known in the categories of the products uniting into one functionality, aesthetics, and ecological awareness. Finland’s manufacturer of mobile phones, Nokia, was for a large number of years being a leader in product innovation and design since it was the first to have introduced protective covers for mobile phones, phones of elliptical forms, soft and friendly contours, and was the first to have introduced innovations with large-size screens. In a fashion similar to that, the German company Braun, within the Gillette corporation, has made a great success with its electrical shaving machines, coffee makers, hairdryers and mixers thanks to the first-class design of its products.

In today’s world in which the culture of visual appealability is increasingly more pronounced, brand building and conveying a brand’s motto, as well as positioning a brand through design, are becoming crucial for its success. In the overloaded market, aesthetics is sometimes the only way to single out a product from a mass (Postrel, 2003).

Today, design has a significant influence on the consumer’s perception of a brand. On the other hand, a bad design may destroy the future of a product. In search for the universal identity of the Coca-Cola company, the principles were introduced stipulating that each and every design, no matter whether pertaining to the packaging, a packing material, a point of sale or any other point of touch with consumers, should reflect: 1) simplicity, 2) authenticity, 3) the power of the red, and 4) “the already known, yet simultaneously surprising” nature (Tischler, 2008).

As design itself is based on creations, there are also a lot of creative approaches in its implementation. Some organizations conduct formal processes which are based on collecting data through three stages (observation, idea generation and implementation). On the other hand, many are based on non-formal approaches – they do not research a market (the consumer’s opinion), but they rather rely on their designers’ creativity. The Danish company Bang & Olufsen (B&O), which has received numerous acknowledgments and commendations for their design of audio devices, TVs and phones, is famous for such an approach, so some of their most successful products are exhibited as the exhibits in the permanent setting of the New York Museum of Modern Arts (Green, 2007).
2. **LUXURY PRODUCT DESIGN**

Luxury brands are one of the most expressive examples of branding importance because a brand and a brand image most frequently stand for the key competitive advantages. Luxury products such as Prada, Gucci, Cartier and Louis are most often connected with the brand as the key instrument of competitive advantage. Research studies have shown that consumers favor extravagantly designed brands with a logotype (Greenberg et al. 2020). As with the majority of other products, luxury brands are also faced with a constantly changing marketing environment. Globalization, new technologies, a financial crisis, changes in consumer culture, as well as other influences coming from within the environment, request that luxury brand merchants should have new skills and that they should constantly be adapting themselves.

According to (Keller, 2009), the drivers of the market value of luxury brands are as follows:

1. the retention of a good, expensive, prestigious image,
2. the creation of numerous intangible associations related to the brand,
3. the harmonization of all the aspects of a marketing program for luxury brands so as to ensure quality products and services and a positive purchase and use experience as well,
4. the elements of the brand, the brand name, logotypes, symbols, the packaging, marks,
5. secondary associations, such as the connectedness of brands with famous personalities, events, countries, and so on,
6. the careful management of distribution, which as a rule is selective and which may also include the company’s shops,
7. the determination of prices for prestigious brands at a considerably higher level than the prices of ordinary products belonging to the same category, given the fact that luxury brands serve to highlight one’s social status; luxury brands are characterized by very few sales and discounted prices so as not to diminish the reputation of the brand,
8. an attentive analysis in full detail of the competition that frequently comes from other categories, and
9. the legal protection of the marks and fighting product forgery.

Quality and uniqueness, sometimes even their timeless style and authenticity, are the common characteristics of luxury brands. The buyer pays a high price for them, so they have to have a feeling that they are receiving something special in return for their buying a brand. In that way, buyers of the leather fancy goods manufactured by a well-known French company Hermes pay a high price for its products not only for the reason of the fact that those products are fashionable at the time, but because they are never unfashionable.

At the times of economic crises, however, even the most famous of brands, such as the Italian Armani, start diversifying their products. Armani has gone beyond the haute couture category (Giorgio Armani and Giorgio Armani Prive) to the medium-range luxury (Emporio Armani), all the way to the most favorable luxury in their offer (Armani Jeans and Armani Exchange). There is a clear difference between the mentioned brands, by means of which any confusion with consumers and the cannibalization of the brands are avoided. Each of the said brands is a part of the Armani parent (roof) brand and preserves its reputation. Similarly to Armani, the Bulgari jewelry manufacturer has expanded its product range to perfumes, chocolates and skin care preparations. In spite of the opinions that the company has expanded itself too much, the majority of consumers still consider this brand to be a luxury brand. The Ralph Lauren company has successfully added its luxury trademark to a broad range of products, such as bed linen.
candles, sofas, vessels, photo-albums and jewelry. In the same way, the Calvin Klein brand has implemented a similar and very successful expansion strategy, aiming at the consumer’s different lifestyle. Differently from them, a former icon of the fashion industry Pierre Cardin has licensed its brand name to numerous ordinary products, which has to the brand losing its value. In the increasingly more networked world, luxury brand sellers are making efforts to find out an ideal e-sale platform, whereas success depends on the achievement of a balance between the classical image and the contemporary image. What luxury product manufacturers and sellers have to bear in mind is the fact that they very often sell a dream anchored in the quality, status and prestige of the product itself (Bulik, 2009).

3. THE PACKAGING, LABELING, WARRANTIES AND GUARANTEES

Some products’ packaging makes them famous throughout the world, like the Coca-Cola bottle and the Red Bull can. There are those who refer to the packaging, together with the price, the product, the place and promotion, as the fifth P. The majority, however, consider the packaging and labeling as the elements of the production strategy. The packaging includes all the activities of forming and producing the packaging and can have three different levels, like a perfume in a bottle (the primary packaging), which is placed in a carton box (the secondary packaging), which is placed in the carton packaging of larger dimensions (the transportation packaging). The packaging is the first thing that catches the consumer’s eye. A well-designed type of packaging attracts buyers and encourages them to make a decision to buy a product (Barnes, 2017). Some types of packaging are designed in such a way that they can be used as a piece of decoration in homes. A recognizable packaging is key when creating the market value of a brand. The good examples of said are the Kiwi shoe cream or Absolut Vodka (Richards, 2009).

Given the fact that consumers are offered an ever-increasing number of products at supermarkets, where sometimes there are over 15000 articles, which means that a buyer passes by 300 articles in a minute, the packaging has to attract buyers’ attention, describe the product’s characteristics, inspire trust and create a good overall impression with buyers. Consumers will be ready to pay larger amounts of money in exchange for the practicality, appearance, reliability and prestige of improved packaging.

Warranties and guarantees may be a very important part of the production strategy, so they are frequently declared on the packaging itself.

4. THE ROLE OF COLORS IN PACKAGING AND LABELING A PRODUCT AS A BRAND

A choice of colors is very important in the product or service branding procedure, since colors stir different associations (Suflivan, 2008):

- the red is a very strong color symbolizing energy, passion and danger as well; the red best suits the products or brands connected with action, speed or strength; it is frequently present in dominant or cult brands;
- the orange is often associated with adventure and entertainment; although less aggressive than the red, it also attracts attention; it is most frequently used to convey a value or announce discounts, and also belongs to young-age and modern colors;
- the yellow is identified with the warmth of the Sun and joy, frequently with wisdom and intellect, too; it is adequate for the products or brands connected with sports or for the products or content intended to draw one’s attention;
• the green is associated with cleanliness and freshness, and reminds one of nature; it is suitable for organic or recycled products, or for a brand connected with health and rest;
• the blue is yet another color prevailing in nature and frequently used to highlight safety, efficiency and productivity; it is especially popular in the high-technology industry; it symbolizes cleanliness, openness and relaxation, so it is suitable for products intended for cleaning and personal care, as well as holiday destinations;
• the violet has always been symbolizing nobility, wealth and elegance; the violet is a strong color adequate for luxury brands and products, as well as the companies that want to cover their business operations with a veil of secrecy or leave an impression of uniqueness;
• the pink is the color associated with decoration and warmth, so it is considered to be soft, tranquil and comfortable; it is most frequently used for personal care products, baby products, or sweets packaging;
• the brown is a strong earth color radiating honesty and reliability; it is considered to be one of men’s favorite colors; its darker nuances are rich and firm, whereas the lighter nuances of the brown are often used as the base color for other packaging elements;
• the black is classical and strong, so it is most frequently used as the primary component or the color used to highlight the font or the graphics; the black demonstrates power, luxury, refinement and authority; it is used for a broad range of products, from cars and electronics, via first-class hotels, to financial services;
• the white is the color of the freshness of snow and it is most frequently associated with cleanliness; it is most often used as a back color; it is used with organic food or personal care products, and it can symbolize innovation and modernity.

5. CONCLUSION

A brand implies a product or service which differs from other products or services designed to satisfy the same needs. Those differences can be functional, rational or tangible, and they can also be symbolical, emotional and intangible. In one word, a brand is a promise that beyond it there is a quality of a product or service that satisfies the consumer. Product or service design is an important factor in the procedure of differentiating and positioning a company’s products and services in the competitive market conditions. Design consists of all those characteristics that have an influence on how a product appeals to the consumer, what impression it leaves on the consumer and how the consumer can benefit from it. In modern market conditions, special attention is paid to the emotional influence of design and the importance consumers attribute to how a product or service looks and how they work. Due to that fact, the influence of design even in those product categories in which previously no attention was paid to it is increasingly greater today. Luxury brands are one of the most expressing examples of the importance of design in the branding process, because a brand and the brand image are most often the key competitive advantages.
REFERENCES


