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and Corporate Image: Renault Case-study**

Banu Karsak

Athens Institute for Education and Research

8 Valaoritou Street, Kolonaki, 10683 Athens, Greece

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Banu Karsak, Associate Professor, Galatasaray University, Faculty of
Communication, Istanbul, Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Managing corporate identity is about identifying the right image for an organization and communicating it effectively. The terms “corporate identity” and “corporate image” are sometimes confused with each other. Corporate identity is what the organization communicates via various cues, whereas its image is how its target groups actually see it. An image is a perception and it exists only in the mind of the receiver. In short, corporate identity is a visual statement of who and what a company is. By changing corporate identity, a company may help change its image. Corporate identity includes aspects of design such as logo, colour, type face, and trade characters but also embrace less tangible elements such as culture, behaviour, and communication style. The corporate logo or mark is the easily recognizable face of a corporation. The logo identifies the company or brand. It tells the public who produces the goods or services they are buying and it is therefore the foundation on which corporate identity is built. A logo is a graphic representation or symbol of a company name, trademarks, abbreviation and often, is uniquely designed for instant recognition. The logo must be catching, memorable and easily recognized. In this study we propose to examine, by means of visual semiotic analyses, how logos, as important factors in the construction of corporate identity, influence the corporate image. The logo of RENAULT, who changed its logo in 2015, has been chosen as a case study, in order to find out the relationship between corporate identity and corporate image.

Keywords: logo, corporate identity, corporate image, visual semiotics

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Introduction

The growth in trade, production and competition in our day, has revealed the necessity of distinctiveness and need of recognisability for corporations and brands, and the concept of identity has gained importance. Besides rendering it possible to make either a positive or a negative impact on the addressee, corporate identity is a means that helps persons or corporations express and publicise themselves.

Changing social conditions have caused changes in the content of the corporate identity concept, and broadened the scope of the concept. With regard to providing the first impression about the corporate identity, the visual identity, which can be defined as the exposed face of corporate identity, is of capital importance. The most remarkable and conventional elements of visual identity, are the brand logos. Logos are images that depict who the corporations are, and what they do. Considered from this aspect, any change in a logo, will directly affect the corporate identity, and therefore, will change customers' perception about the corporation.

Exemplified in this study with the corporate identity of Renault Company that is renewed in consequence of the change in their logo, the correlation between the corporate identity and this change is going to be examined. Renault, who updated and supported their visual with the motto "Passion for life" in 2015, are a company operating in the automotive industry. Based on the possibility that the changes to be made in the logo might affect the perception of the public about the corporation, an answer to the research question, what kind of a correlation is there between corporate identity and corporate image, is going to be sought.

The objective of this study is to analyze the correlation of visual identity, that is one of the components shaping the corporate identity, and of logo in particular, with the corporate identity, and therefore with the corporate image. The logo of the brand we have chosen in this regard, is going to be examined in the light of visual semiotic theories. The methodological details pertaining to the study are given in the methodology section.

Conceptual Framework

In order to define the concept of corporate identity, which indicates who an organization is, what it does and how it does, it will be appropriate to define the concepts of "organization" and "identity". Dictionary literally means; "A society is a religion, language, justice, family, law, property, state and so on. And spiritual beings that are created by people like, and whose certain order, law, or principle . " Again, the dictionary literally means identity; Is defined as "all of the characteristics of personality as a social being, conditions, qualities and characteristics specific to man, circumstances that enable one person to be a specific person"(Püsküllüoğlu, 1997: 677). Identity enables people and

institutions to influence them positively or negatively, so it is a tool for people or institutions to express themselves and promote them.

Looking at the historical development process of the institutional identity, it appears that the shields of the kings, who led the army in the past centuries, used icons such as the St. George cross and the Lorraine cross. But as all the kingdoms use the same emblem, it causes the enemy's head to get mixed up, and in time the kingdoms have started to use their own characters (Jefkins, 1994: 324). In the Middle Ages, the only force that survived the fall of the Roman Empire, the Church struggled to regain Christian origins and benefited from various symbols, primarily crosses. We know that during the colonial period some nations created identities in order to create unity with the countries under their patronage; One of the most important examples of this is India, which is under British colonial rule. In the 1860s, there was a very complex hierarchy of positions in India, some of whom were large, some were small, and many were principals and principalities. The Queen of England was also called the Empress of India. All these principals and principalities participated in a great celebration in Delhi in 1877 and all the uniforms, graphics and symbols of this demonstration were created by Lockwood Kipling. In this period, there is also a unit called "Army Officer" in England (Olins, 1990: 16).

All these efforts throughout history have resulted in the promotion of self-identification, differentiation, unity and sense of belonging. We know that cities are in the process of creating identity in order to introduce themselves or to distinguish themselves. For example, in the 15th century, Florentine formed a picture to separate from Malta. It is also possible to see the snake and cross figurine, the symbol of the Visconti family (1277-1477), who ruled the city of Milan for centuries, even today, even in the logo of the Alfa Romeo car brand.

The concept of corporate identity After World War II, Lippincott and Margulies, operating in New York, were introduced in 1945 by Walter Margulies, founder of the well-known consulting company. It is possible to say that Wolff Olins, founded in 1965, is the first agency to operate in this country in the UK, although the study of corporate identity in the direction of this new concept in the UK began later on from the first half of the 1960s (Meech, 2002:128). Until the end of World War I, corporate identity reflected the personal identity of the organization owner. Later on, only the visual identity of the foundation seems to reflect the corporate identity of the foundation, which seems to be the logo, color, writing character. In the era of strategic period from the 1970s to the present day, the approach of corporate identity has been adopted from the perspective of institutional design, corporate communication, corporate behavior and corporate philosophy that incorporates visual elements as part of the organization's communication strategy, not just the image. The use of these items in an operation, organization-specific manner constitutes the identity of that institution. Corporate identity is part of the organization's communication strategy and explains the organization of an organization.

When we look at the historical development process of the identity of the institution in Turkey, the flags, flags and Sultan of the Ottoman Empire period can be considered as the first examples. The most advanced examples of brigands

in the Turkish Islamic states that can be defined as the signature of the Sultan's name are found in the Ottomans. The Ottomans took the brick from the Anatolian Selçuk and Anatolian principals and developed it. The first monogram of the Ottoman sultans was used by Orhan Gazi. The bricks used by Orhan Gazi are dated 1324 and others are dated 1348 and contain the expression Orhan bin Osman. Although there are 36 Ottoman sultans, there are 35 sultan brides, because the first sultan Osman Gazi's tugraya was not found anywhere until today. In the last era, berat, ferman, and tuition drawn on the ritual are also seen in the notebooks and in the notebooks. In later dates, it was included in fountains, mosques, imaret books which were made in the bills, fountains, flags, population records, buildings, as an emblem. 15.10.2006) On June 15, 1927, a law was issued by the Turkish Grand National Assembly about the abolition of brigades a year before the writing revolution. With this law, the use of the bricks on all the official documents in the Republic of Turkey has come to an end (28 Mayıs 2007 no 1057 National journal publication date 15 Haziran 1927, no 608).

The real important development in Turkey undoubtedly happens during the Republican period. Multiparty transition, efforts to create corporate identity as a result of new commercial breakthroughs have gained importance. The most important breakthrough in this area is the fact that the foreign capital comes to Turkey in the 60's and the Turkish institutions want to establish their identity as foreign examples. The establishment of İş Bankası and the creation of an institutional identity are the first of these applications. It can be said that the corporate identity of İş Bankası started from the day when the bank was established. In other words, İş Bankası has never been an organization that attracts "identity crisis".

With the words of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, "intelligence, attention and chastity" was the first condition of success. After 60 years of establishment, it was necessary to provide a more contemporary and new image to the bank in the current competitive environment. Until the middle of the 80's the images that the bank reflected out were "big", "strong" and "trustworthy", but now this image was not enough. İş Bankası had characteristics such as "to act cautiously", "to have a complex bureaucracy" and "to follow the rules of the ruling letter" which did not comply with today's banking rules. In 1987, an agreement was signed with Lippincott and Margulies. The company has made various proposals ranging from the creation of new images and concepts to express the bank's new personality and personality, to the visualization of all aspects of the bank, the printed materials, the emblem, the illuminated advertisements, and the exterior and interior appearance of its branches. In the end, it was decided that İş Bankası's image should be as innovative, modern and dynamic as it is big, strong and reliable. On the other hand, İş Bankası refusal to change its name to İşbank was rejected. The logo created in 1948 is still in use with a few minor changes. İş Bankası is not only interested in appearance to strengthen its corporate identity, but also strengthens its identity with social responsibility applications such as scholarships for students in earthquake victims, hospital construction, student dormitories.

The corporations, the numbers of which are growing every day, are mentioned with their unique corporate identities created with the purpose of being distinguished from the others. Although the studies on corporate identity have only recently begun to be carried out, symbols, which are significant parts of identities, were being engraved on cave walls, and that is to say, have existed since the early eras of human history. In the 19th century, it was possible to see craftsmen in Europe use symbols reflecting their professions (Napoles, 1988:13-14).

The concept of corporate identity was considered as a visual design for years; however, later on, as a result of changing social conditions, its content has changed, and broadened. During the period that started in 1970's and is extant, known as the strategic period, the approach asserting that the concept of corporate identity consists of corporate design, corporate communication, corporate behaviour and corporate ideology, that involve visual elements, was adopted. Utilization of the above elements in a way peculiar to an enterprise or an organization shapes the identity of that corporation (Okay, 2000: 20-40).

The concept of corporate identity (Peltekoğlu, 2004: 374), focusing on the way a corporation is physically recognized, interacts with the concept of corporate image, that focuses on how the corporation is notionally perceived. In other words, corporate identity is defined as the whole of messages given by the corporation; whereas corporate image is defined as the whole of perception these messages create on the target group of the corporation (Wood, 2004:137). All studies carried out for the purpose of creating a corporate identity, shape the corporate image. Therefore, a change in the elements that form the corporate identity might naturally have impacts on the corporate image. With his judgment "Identity management can preserve a good image", Clive Chajet underscores the significance of this connection (Chajet, 1989: 18).

In other words, corporate identity is all the messages the organization gives, the corporate image is all the perceptions that these messages have on the target mass of the foundation (Wood, 2004: 137). Interpretation of the messages related to the identity of the organization ensures that the image of that organization is formed. In short, the image is the image of the jungle perceived by the target groups, while the identity is the way that an institution introduces itself to groups (Van Riel, 1995:28). While Logo creates the corporate identity of an organization, it also plays an important role in reflecting the brand's image. The current status of branding in cultural dissemination is far more than traditional corporate sponsorship, which is the classic arrangement of logos in a poster or program in exchange for donations for an organization. All the façade branding approaches applied to music, arts, films, social activities are now used. These projects make the logosphere the focus of everything it touches (Klein 2002: 51).

All the work done to create corporate identity shapes the corporate image. Therefore, it is natural that the change made in one of the elements forming the corporate identity will affect the corporate image. Logo should be regarded as the most striking element of corporate identity in this context. Logos has some features that it should possess in order to be able to be defined as a good logo:

it can be classified as perception, differentiation, understanding, reminding and sending (Westphalen, 2004:306).

In this context, logos must be considered as the most remarkable elements of corporate identity. Playing an important role in the reflection of corporate identity, a logo is a hybrid sign; or to clarify, a commercial sign that touches upon both the language and the pattern (Adam and Bonhomme, 1997: 62). Logos is a design based on visual perception that people know when they see it, but can not express it with words (Mucuk, 1997:10). The logo, which can be described as a diagrammatic flash, visually instantly launches all the values and imagination of a mark when it is pressed on the button (Semprini 1996: 66-67).

Most of the corporations express themselves through the symbols they choose, such that, whenever that symbol is seen, the relevant corporation runs through the mind. Some, on the other hand, are recognized with their names, rather than with their logos. There are also a number of corporations that present themselves through both their names, and emblematic characters. Renault automotive company, for instance, is known with both their rhombic symbol, and with the emblem involving their characteristic type font. The crocodile of the world-renowned Lacoste brand remembers the brand everywhere they are, when they see powerful symbols such as Apple's apple, Peugeot's lion, and they do not need typography. The primary function of a logo is to make a reference to the company and the product, or to the product identity. It is not obligatory to use a grapheme in every logo (Çamdereli, 2000: 111). The type fonts of graphemes assist conveying the meanings of words, and the messages, correctly.

Among the studies on logos, carried out in the field of visual semiotics, Jean-Marie Floch's "Identités Visuelles" can be named as a remarkable one. Taken part in the analyses of works of different types, such as photographs, pictures, comic books, Floch has later on focused his efforts on advertisements. He has analyzed the symbols of IBM and APPLE, and has specified the meanings and contrarities they involved, in his abovementioned work, and has made a great contribution to the studies in the field (Floch, 1995: 44-50). Organizations may want to change their visual identity over time or change it entirely. Taking this decision is important and difficult and can be achieved with full support from the general government. A person perceives 2000 images per day and 150 brands per day (Westphalen, 2004:312). This explains the importance of your visual. Logos, in the age of economic warfare and competition between companies is a visual weapon. The logos can become obsolete over time and have to adapt to time. Organizations need logo change, a rather difficult and expensive change to change their images and perceptions. Being more contemporary and having a logo that reflects its strategies and values should be applied with care as it has importance in terms of corporate image. Many brands and institutions in Turkey and around the world have changed logos over time. Arçelik logo is the most remarkable change in Turkey. Arçelik changed the old hard line logos with a smoother rectangular logo and has a more contemporary perception in the minds of consumers as well as changing their identity. In short, the change of the logo's logo has also influenced the change of identity and image. Piyale as a family business, after participating Sabancı

Holding, he emphasized this change with the new visuals that combine with the icons representing the product variety and SA.

Methodology

The logo of Renault, we have chosen with the purpose of analyzing, is going to be examined as a visual means of communication, with an eclectic approach, in the light of semiotic theories. The purpose in this study is to define the content of the logo, and to evaluate it in terms of conformity with the corporate identity.

The studies on semiotic analyses were commenced with Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, and American Charles Saunders Peirce. Asserting in his work "Course in General Linguistics" for the first time that semiotic analyzing is possible, Saussure touches on the subject of concepts that can be implemented in signs. However, it is an indisputable fact that Peirce was involved in semiotics, before Saussure was. Peirce points out the importance he attaches to semiotics, stating that "the whole universe, although not being composed of signs only, pulsates with signs". Moreover, in a way justifying his words, he confirms that he can discuss all subjects from mathematics to chemistry, from psychology to astronomy, from gravity to phonetics, from economy to the history of science, as a semiotic study only, and that he does not discuss any subject with an approach other than a semiotic one. (Yücel, 1999: 90-91).

It will be appropriate at this point to describe the concept of signs proposed by Saussure, which is the building block of semiotics. Saussure divides signs into two, as the signifier (hearing images), and the signified (concept), and asserts that the correlation between these two is groundless (Saussure, 1985: 99). Signifier and signified are two inseparable elements and the only difference between them, is that a signifier requires a means. According to him, the signifier is a form, and is a projection of the concepts in our minds. All signifiers, through the medium of a shape, refer to content.

It was emphasized that the signified, in linguistics, is not an object, but is a mental design of the object, and Saussure indicates the mental subjectivity of the signified, with the term of "concept" (Barthes, 1993: 38). Every image, or every signifier, evokes different concepts in the mind of the viewer.

Peirce, who made a great contribution in semiotic image reading, has turned Saussure's approach to signifier/signified, into a ternary system. Dealing with signs mainly by focusing on the signifier, this conversion, introduces three types of sign, that are visual sign (icone), index (indice) and symbol (symbole) (Rifat, 2000: 133).

One of the essential works in visual semiotics is Roland Barthes's study named "Rhétorique de l'Image". In the mentioned study, Barthes reflects that the subject of semiotics is the meaning, and states that each of the sign systems, for instance pictures, written works, theatres and etc., form a content system. After describing the objects and the colours in the commercial photographs of the pasta brand, Panzani, Barthes has examined the concepts they include, in terms of their connotations (Barthes 1964: 40-51). Besides linguistic messages,

in this study, he focuses on the denotative and symbolic, or in other words, connotational analysis of image. The elements we notice in the examined subject, at first glance, are *denotative* messages, and can be described in short, as their pure and uninterpreted meanings. Denotation mediates the symbolic message, and connotations are built on it. *Connotation* is based on symbolic communication, and in order to interpret this message, the contribution of reader is needed. Denotation mediates the message, and the connotations are built on it. Connotation is based on symbolic communication, and in order to interpret this message, the contribution of reader and a subjective interpretation is needed.

Research Findings

The first steps of the establishment of Renault were taken after Louis Renault wandered in Lepic in Paris on December 24, 1898 with a small car, and a year later the Renault brothers and sisters formed the foundation of the community. Born in February 1877 as the son of a cloth merchant in Paris, Louis Renault was interested in mechanics, engines and electricity from an early age. Louis Renault, who set up a workshop in the garden of his family in Paris, near his family's home in Billancourt, ended his education and started working on new technologies.

In 1898, Louis Renault, who entered the auto world by creating his first four-wheeled vehicle, founded the Renault Brothers Group with his two other brothers, Marcel and Ferdinand, with little capital. Marcel and Ferdinand were not sure that this industry would succeed at first, but in a very short time Louis was able to prove it. In the following years, cars won championships in many races and they advertised their products and made direct marketing. The cars were being sold for 3000 francs, equivalent to a ten-year salary at that time. As the brand developed, the workshops along the Seine grew. That same year, Louis Renault introduced the first 4-cylinder engine.

With the loss of Marcel's life in the Paris-Madrid car race in 1903, Louis was shocked to lose both his brother and his partner. From these years Ferdinand has begun to expand Renault's commercial network. In 1905, the group was ordered to produce serials with 250 cab orders. The cars have been recognized everywhere from New York to Buenos Aires. In 1909, with the death of Ferdinand, Louis came to be the only boss. In addition to producing a minibus, the truck also handles aviation and starts producing aircraft engines.

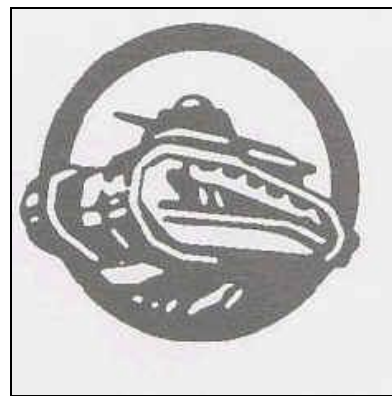
Spread over 136 thousand square meters, the factory produces the first military tank during World War I. Louis Renault is honored for its contribution to the war. Since 1919 Ford, Citroen, and Peugeot brands have entered the market, and the sector has grown, and despite the decline of Renault's sovereignty II. During World War II, in 1942, it maintained its supremacy over the bombing of the Billancourt factory. Today Renault is a global brand and still maintains its position in the automobile sector.

A Renault logo was created for the first time in 1900, and it was composed of the initials of Louis Renault. In the logo created in 1919, Renault's contribution to the military forces during World War I, was being symbolized. The logo was involving a tank surrounded by a circle. In the logo created in 1923, the circle was still there, but the name Renault, was placed in the centre of it. For the first time in 1925, the rhombic figure was used. The logo was remaining nearly the same in 1950's, despite minor changes. However, in 1972, the name of the company was removed, in the logo¹ created by Vasarely, who was a great painter. The logo created in 1992, was a plain and simple one, compared to the previous logos, and had a three dimensional appearance. Today, this logo is still being used, and is integrated with the text underneath.

Renault Logos in the Past²



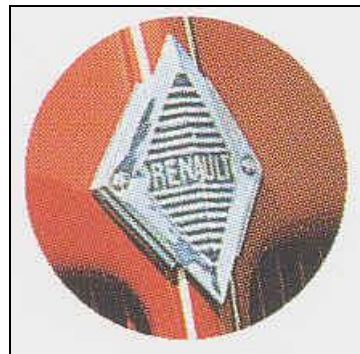
Logo in 1900's



Logo in 1919



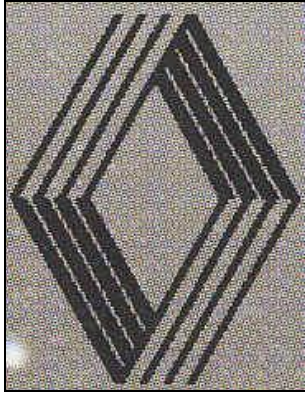
Logo in 1923



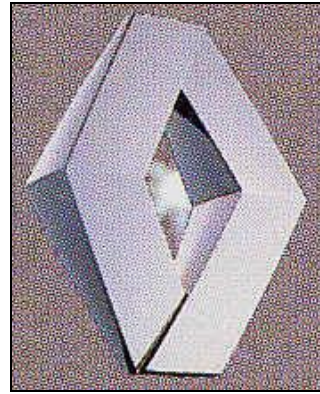
Logo in 1930

¹ www.caradisiac.com/php/actu 01.10.2003

² <http://college-anne-frank.org/textes/logorenaulthtm> 01.10.2003



Logo in 1972



Logo created in 1992 and still in use

The current Renault logo has a rhombic shape that can be called parallelogram, with four equal sides, and looks to be made of steel. Utilization of steel and the upright position of the rhombus, make reference to the durability of Renault vehicles. The logo leaves the impression that the steel is sculptured in a way forming a three dimensional figure. The equilateral quadrangles which, in plain sense, could be called equally parallel to each other on the four sides were included in the pictures above the cave walls. This figure was also the symbol of your femininity, and Venus paintings were included in this pattern. (Philibert, 2000: 240) Thus it is possible to read femininity in the logo of Renault.

Although it is not obligatory to use graphemes in every logo, it can be seen that it is used in some of them. Graphemes mostly consist of two or three syllables. Even if the name of the corporation is longer than two or three syllables, since the purpose of using logos is to achieve memorability, shortening the name will serve to the purpose.

Words find meaning, depending on the type fonts they are written with, and the type fonts make them look either effective or not. Corporations choose among a number of type fonts depending on the messages they are willing to deliver, some of which can be exemplified as smooth, rough, feminine, masculine and classic. The big and bold letters of the type font in our case, symbolize the power of the brand. The spiky corners of the letters also, add seriousness to the image of the brand.



RENAULT
Passion for life



Resource: www.renault.com.tr

Renault, with their new logo design, are aiming to focus more on emotions. With the motto, “Renault, passion for life”, they are representing the novelties in their vehicle models.

“A Renault vehicle must render it possible for everyone in it to live life to the fullest. For this reason, their designs and their well-thought-through details are contributing to this gratification, and to awakening of senses. The innovative features in the vehicles, on the other hand, are undertaking the mission of facilitating daily life. Therefore, Renault’s logo is renewed and modernized, for the purpose of reflecting this new spirit more effectively” (www.renault.com.tr).

Since it would have been futile and risky to make changes in the logo, that is engraved in minds, of such a well established company, instead, the type font was crafted into a modern one. Besides that, with the changes made in the Renault rhombus, which made it shinier and thicker, the emphasis on high status and high quality was strengthened.

Color is an important and meaningful element of every visual identity. Each color is a different value for color science researchers. Organizations also choose the color that suits them according to the effect they want to create in their target groups (Okay, 2000:143). Every perception of color is culturally like all perceptions. For example, black color does not represent much, but mood in China is white. Organizations should not ignore the cultural code to induce the desired effect in color selection (Joly, 1993:88). Another point to note is that the colors have meaning according to their presence in the colors. Love can symbolize innovation, dynamism, according to the medium in which the red color symbolizes the passion. Therefore, it is not right to give a definite definition of the meaning of colors.

The Renault yellow that now has a brighter and warmer tone, is displayed on the right-hand side of the logo, as a vertical line. It reflects energy and quality of Renault.

Conclusion

Increase in competitiveness and in the number of brands, caused the concept of identity to gain importance for consumers when choosing the product and the service. With the purpose of being distinguished from other brands, being chosen and recognized by the consumer, brands and corporations started to put in efforts to create identities. The importance of visuality that becomes more of an issue with each passing day, and visuality’s influence over consumers, has led the efforts in creating identities, to concentrate on logos, in particular. Logos composed of various symbols or textual characters are visuals that have the power to evoke the brand in the memory of the consumer when seen. These powerful elements, besides about the culture of that corporation, informs consumers about who that corporation are, and the field they serve in. In short, in addition to representing and reflecting the identity of the corporation, logos also serve a function in generating ideas in the minds of the target group, about that corporation, and in shaping the thoughts of the target group. A change in

the logo, will have an impact on the corporate identity, and therefore, on the corporate image. Based upon the above mentioned, it will be correct to say that there is a correlation among logo, corporate identity, and corporate image.

The Renault logo, we have chosen to examine in this study, was changed with small touch-ups by the company in 2015. In time, companies might decide that their logo is not as modern as it used to be, and that it does not reflect new strategies anymore. A company who though this way, Renault, took a decision to change their logo, as part of their new strategy. The reason of this change was the inadequacy of the old logo in reflecting new strategies to the consumer. The conclusion we draw based upon the example we have examined, indicates that logos have the power to affect corporal identity and image, either positively, or negatively. Logos do not only have a function in publicizing and exhibiting the difference of the brand, but they also have the power to influence the thoughts of the consumer about that brand. On that account, companies must consider making use of the irreplaceable power of their logos as an important part of their communication strategies, in order to be well-recognized and perceived, or put simply, to strengthen their image in the competitive environment.

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