

Study on Corporate Identify System of Mercedes Benz 4S Shop

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Abstract

To improve the promoting effect of corporate identify (CI) system to the China's enterprise brand, this study constructed the CI model of auto 4S shop. Basing on this model, it analyzed the characteristics, color, material, and effects of the external and decorative CI on the column, glass curtain wall, roof eaves, door bucket, workshop curtain, indoor floor, stairs, and the resting area in the Mercedes Benz 4S shop. The results showed that the internal and external CI systems of Mercedes Benz 4S shop were harmonious and unified. By organically integrating with the enterprise culture, a standard "enterprise individuality" was propagated to the society and promoted the enterprise development. Thus the CI system was the important brand-name trademark strategy of enterprises. China's national brand should optimize their CI in reference with the CI systems of outstanding enterprises to directly and widely propagate and deepen enterprise culture and establish favorable enterprise brand.

Keywords: Mercedes Benz; Auto; 4S shop; CI system

1 Introduction

Enterprises development is based on good enterprise image, high-quality product, and superior after-sale service [1, 2]. These requirements urge the enterprisers to establish individualized CI system during designing enterprise image [3, 4]. In essence, enterprise image is the individualized enterprise culture established. During the formation of the individuality of enterprise culture, industry characteristics act as the objective inherent factors [3, 5]. The soul propagated by the CI system is enterprise philosophy. The system should contain visual symbols with strong visual impact, so that the intrinsic abstract philosophy can be fused with the concrete visible image appearance [3, 6].

Auto 4S shop is an auto management mode of special permission with "four-in-one" as the core. It integrates sale, spare parts, service, and survey and merely operates a single brand. As a tangible market with prominent individuality, auto 4S shop has consistent channel and unified cultural concept. Mercedes Benz Company had 20 4S shops in 2002 and 121 4S shops at the end of 2008. In 2010, this number rapidly exceeded 170. Initially, the corporate identity of the 4S shop was imperfect. As the development, every 4S shop strictly implements regulatory requirements and is provide with the CI system that conforms to the enterprise culture of Mercedes Benz. Such progress greatly promotes the quantity and service quality of Mercedes Benz 4S shop.

Mercedes Benz 4S shops have a unified and strict pre-sale and after-sale service system. In addition, in aspect of appearance and internal decoration, the shops are also provided with unified architectural CI and interior decoration system, which present the significant logo features of Mercedes Benz 4S shops. The CI system is obviously advantageous on prompting auto brand and manifesting the image auto production enterprises.

2 The significance of CI

CI was originated in Europe in early 20th Century. It is the acronym of corporate identity system and interpreted as the recognition system of enterprise image [7, 8]. As a systematic trademark strategy, CI is the crucial link in management strategy for promoting the whole enterprise in the internal and external exchange activities of enterprises [9, 10]. The implementation of CI strategy can initiate the positive variations of the structure in all aspects. These variations function on related enterprises and individuals comprehensively and produce the full-range effects. By implementing CI strategy, enterprise aims at spreading standardized enterprise "individuality" to the society ultimately. Furthermore, it can get the public recognition and market space and promote the development of enterprises. Thus CI is an important famous trademark strategy of enterprises [11].

CI mainly includes mind identity, behavior identity, and visual identity. It characterizes the management ideas and spirits of enterprise, or in other words, the image, individuality, and characteristics etc. of enterprise. By comprehensively using communication system, this information is homogenized to influence the relevant in and out of the enterprise and society. In this way, the affected part can produce unanimous approval and value senses and favorable operating environment can be formed [11, 12].

3 The CI model of auto 4S shop

There is law that can be followed by the successful design of the 4S shop CI system. The successful design of the system design is judged by whether or not the corporate identify system is approved by the publics, whether or no the system obtains the maximum market space, and whether or not the system promotes the vigorous development of enterprises. Figure 1 shows the 4S shop CI model built using the CI information collected from a large amount of 4S shops.

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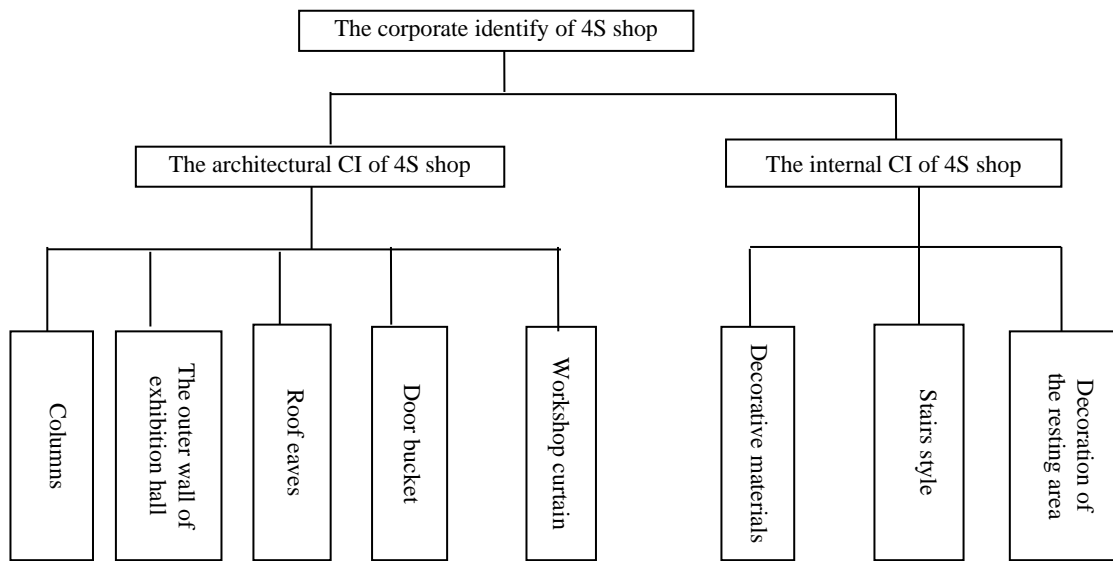


FIGURE 1 The corporate identify model of auto 4S shop

The auto 4S shop CI model contains two parts, namely, the architectural CI and the internal CI. The architectural CI of 4S shop therein includes column, the outer wall of exhibition wall, roof eaves, and door bucket, while the internal CI of 4S shop comprises workshop curtain wall, decoration materials, stair style, and the decoration of resting area. Some of the constituents of the model are the important parts for architectural CI, while others organically integrates architectural aesthetics, building function, building energy efficiency, and building structure etc.. These constituents in the model attract the attention and also create a pleasant feeling. The design of the Benz 4S shop CI system is the optimal interpretation for the 4S shop CI model.

4 The architectural CI of Benz auto 4S shop

The design concept of Mercedes Benz 4S shop pays special attention to the interpretation of brand value in the design. It links the characteristics of different specifications of 4S shops with the each specific 4S shop design. Figure 2 show the appearance of the Mercedes Benz 4S shop. As it shown, the steel structure technology is deliberately displayed to symbolize the performance and technology levels. The steel and metal plates highlight the technology design and also the economic efficiency of global availability. The transparent outside-to-inside design and different colors of buildings attract attentions and create a pleasant feeling. Moreover, the functional selection of material reflects the self control and vision.



FIGURE 2 Mercedes Benz automobile 4S dealer shop

The architectural CI of Mercedes Benz 4S shop is mainly blue. The Mercedes Benz 4S shop is mainly characterized by the alternative combining of technology with the blue column, door bucket, steel structure, roof eaves, and glass curtain wall bearing modern sense. The large area of ocean blue background and the white star logo shine each other. The architectural CI of Mercedes Benz 4S shop mainly consists of blue column, glass curtain wall, roof eaves, blue door bucket, and workshop curtain wall.

4.1 BLUE COLUMN

Column is an important part of architectural CI and is constituted by column head, column body, and column base, as shown in Figure 3. The spiral rising styled-column head symbolizes the flourish business of Mercedes Benz 4S shop and also conveys the constant pursuit of Mercedes Benz for innovation. The blue column body emphasizes the exploration of Mercedes Benz for advanced technology, the unremitting pursuit for the development of creative conceptual design, as well as the consistently stringent requirements for products.



FIGURE 3 Blue columns

The column base is constructed using light grey metal. In addition to be consistent with the column head, it also signifies the consistently stringent and fine requirements to the products. Through characteristic color and the specific proportion of column head and body, the blue columns in

Mercedes Benz 4S shop achieve unique recognition effect. Moreover, such design satisfies the special requirements of Mercedes Benz 4S shop for building environment and promote the whole image of the shop.

Columns are located on front of the right side of glass curtain wall. It is obviously visible of that the cylinder columns are used to divide regions. Their rounded appearance and steel head follows the modern classic design, which is highlighted by the color, namely, cobalt blue and white aluminium. In special cases, the columns are also applicable to the repair shop. The column body and column head are generally in a proportion of 4:1. The diameter of the column body lies in the range of 30-46 cm. The diameter of the round tube in the column head is generally 2/3 of the diameter of column body. The lower end of the column head is decorated with three discs in fixed thickness and space to intensify the visual contrast of column head and column body. The diameter of the discs is generally 3/2 of the diameter of column body. The column base is packaged using stainless steel strips in height of 30 cm to protect the column.

4.2 GLASS CURTAIN WALL

The outer wall of the exhibition hall of Mercedes Benz 4S shop uses a glass curtain wall structure, as shown in figure 4. Glass curtain wall is a new type of modern wall. The maximum characteristics of glass curtain wall endowing to architecture lies in the organic integration of architectural aesthetics, building function, building energy efficiency, and building structure etc... The building presents the different colors from different angle and the dynamic beauty with the variations of sunlight, moonlight, and lights.



FIGURE 4 Glass curtain walls

The design of glass curtain wall provides the shop with the symbol of large building. Such visual communication is derived from the standard large-scale application of the modern industry and reflects the deny to traditional old buildings. This significance suggests that, in addition to the shock on building sense, the architecture also convey the brand concept of “only the best” adhered by Benz, the unceasing innovation passion, the leadership for directing the automotive development direction. The reflective insulation glass wall is 6 mm thick and is about 50 kg/m² weight. It is light, eye-pleased, energy saving, and is not easy to be polluted. The appearance of whole outer wall is like a mirror, which reflects the sky and surrounding

environment. As light variations, the images are colorful and variant. Under the reflection of light, the indoor environment is free of the radiation of strong light and thus has soft visual effect.

Figure 5 displays the glass curtain wall in night. The internal of the building uses soft and warm light. In the night, the soft and transparent light transmitted from the glass curtain wall offers the staffs and consumers with a sweet home feeling to stimulate consumer’s purchasing desire.



FIGURE 5 Glass curtain walls under the color of the night

4.3 ROOF EAVES

The roof design aims to reach to the visual unity and coordination, as show in Figure 6. Commonly, the surrounded cornice with fixed width is used. The cornices above the glass curtain wall can shed the sunshine and rain. In addition, the cornice also reflects the beauty of processing technology. Meanwhile, on drainage and anti-seepage purpose, each roof is designed with surrounded horizontal cornice at tilt angle of 3-5% ; the tilt roof inclination is 3-5%; the surrounded horizontal cornice can adapt to the extreme climates.



FIGURE 6. Roof eaves

Eaves refer the roof structure on the intersection of outer wall with the structure plate on the wall surface and are important part of architectural CI. Roof eaves beautify the building and are also an important functional component of the building. The concise and lively roof eave design of Mercedes Benz 4S shop meet the specific recognition requirements for the external CI of the building.

4.4 BLUE DOOR BUCKET

Marine blue is the main color of Mercedes Benz 4S shop. The door bucket color uses characteristic marine blue, as

shown in Figure 7. The huge door bucket on the entrance distinct the indoor and outdoor environments and is the main platform extending from outdoor to indoor. Door bucket and column are both important parts of architecture CI. According to the scale of Mercedes Benz 4S shop, the sizes and proportion relationship of door bucket and column can be adjusted accordingly.



FIGURE 7. Blue porches

4.5 WORKSHOP CURTAIN WALL

Figure 8 presents the outer wall of the workshop the Mercedes Benz 4S shop. The outer wall of the workshop is made of corrugated aluminum plates. It is provided with typical fluent sine-wave lines to highlight the complicated and fancy effect. Such design not only fits well with complicated panel structure, and also easily realizes the clear visual layered effect between curtain wall and panel. The delicate effect produced by interleaving of light and environment creates vivid visual experience in large area.



FIGURE 8. Workshop walls

5 The internal CI of Mercedes Benz 4S shop

The indoor design of the Mercedes Benz 4S shop are mainly in blue and light yellow colors to create comfortable shopping environment for customer. Both the external walls and indoor decoration of the building are provided with clear material and color requirements on the key elements. Figure 9 shows the material and color of the elements on the exhibition wall.

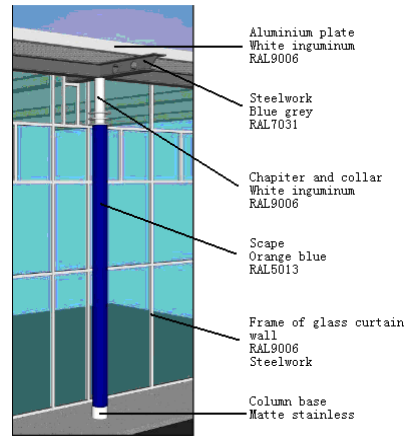


FIGURE 9. Material and color of exhibition hall

5.1 DECORATIVE MATERIALS

The internal decorative materials of the Mercedes Benz 4S shop follow explicit and strict specifications. There are clear regulations on the floor material of exhibition wall, the specifications, color, and style of carpet, and the stair material etc... Meanwhile, the materials used are consistent with the functional region divided and the color sued. Figure 10 shows the floor material of Mercedes Benz 4S shop. The wooden floor brings nature intimacy to the consumers. The environment created in the shop allows consumers to slow down and slowly and carefully taste the shopping experience.

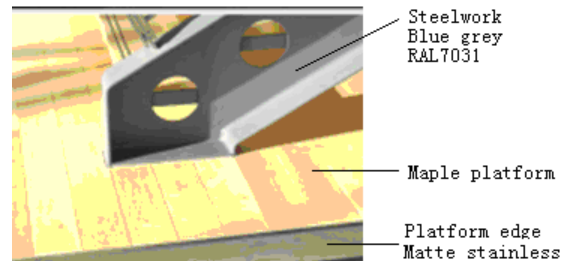


FIGURE 10. Interior floors

5.2 OPEN STAIRS

Figure 11 shows the open stairs of Mercedes Benz 4S shop. The stair uses the “I”-typed steel structure, wooden steps, and stainless steel handrail. The stairs presents the ancient simplicity, as well as an exquisite modern feeling.



FIGURE 11. Open staircase

5.3 CUSTOMER REST AREA

Figure 12 shows the customer rest area. The wall is white or light gray. Walnut display walls with apricot yellow strips are built in the waiting area. The display wallboards are prepared in accordance with the minimum quantity requirements of the corporate image of Mercedes Benz Company.

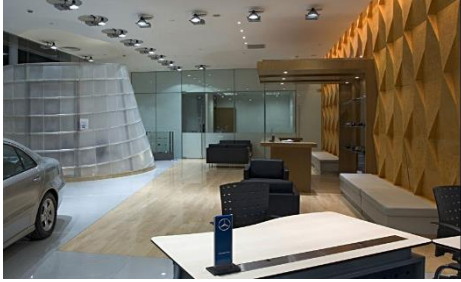


FIGURE 12. Customers' lounges

6 Conclusions

With the development of social economy, corporate market competition is intensified increasingly. Thus the management and overall image of enterprise are of particular significance for fierce market competition. China

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has become the world's largest auto market at present. However, China's automobile industry is still behind of that of the auto powers in the world in regard of brand propaganda, technological research and development, product sales, and after-sale service etc... This study established the CI model of the auto 4S shop and analyzed the CI system of Mercedes Benz 4S shop in detail. The results suggested that the external and internal CI systems of Mercedes Benz 4S shop were harmonious and unified. Moreover, the systems were organically integrated with the enterprise culture and plays obvious role on propagating the brand and promoting brand image. Therefore, China's national brands should pay more attention to CI and use the excellent CI system as reference to reasonably design their own CI. By shaping unique enterprise image, the enterprise culture can be spread intuitively and widely and further developed, so as to benefit the enterprise development greatly.

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