



KharkivState Academy of Design and Arts
Graphic design department
Visual Communication Design

The Youngerization of Huaiyang Noodle Brands in the Aesthetic Context of Generation Z

Research on Visual Image Design

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Paper Information

O R I E N T A L A T M O S P H E R E

Master's thesis topic selection

Visual Identity Design for Younger Brand of Huaiyang Noodles in the Aesthetic Context of Generation Z

Research subjects

The brand of Huaiyang noodles is called "Huaiyang Bowl"

Time frame

The design practice period of Huaiyang noodles in the contemporary consumption context of Generation Z

Spatial scope

The target market covers the Huaiyang region and the young consumer market across the country.

Research Background

With the arrival of the Z generation, the current consumption pattern in China is undergoing a structural transformation. Unlike the previous generation of consumers, the Z generation are "digital natives" who grew up with the Internet and mobile payment. They were born in an era when the Internet was widely available and mobile smart terminals were developing rapidly, and they possess high levels of digital literacy and strong demands for individual expression.

In terms of consumption behavior, the Z generation place greater emphasis on the sense of experience and spiritual identification, and tend to choose brands that align with their values and lifestyles.

According to relevant research data, 70% of the Z generation list "emotional value" as the primary consideration factor in their consumption decisions. In the field of dining consumption, simply eating well and having enough food is no longer sufficient to meet the daily needs of the Z generation. "Beautiful meals" that are visually appealing and can create stunning scenes are becoming a new consumption trend. At the same time, "cultural identity" is also profoundly influencing the consumption choices of the younger generation.



The consumption aesthetic characteristics of the Z Generation



Self-enjoyment experience

Consumption is paid for by emotions. Emotional value sometimes surpasses functional value. The pursuit of a sense of healing and relaxation leads to the payment for "appearance level" and "experience".

Social attribute

Consumption is paid for by emotions. Emotional value sometimes surpasses functional value. The pursuit of a sense of healing and relaxation leads to the payment for "appearance level" and "experience".

Value expression

Through the brand, one expresses their identity and cultural stance. Cultural identities such as "national trend" and "new Chinese style" drive consumption choices.

Huaiyang noodles

Huaiyang noodles are an important part of Huaiyang cuisine culture. Centered around Huai'an and Yangzhou, they cover the Jianghuai River Basin and have developed a unique regional noodle culture. Huaiyang noodles are characterized by "clear soup, fine noodles, delicious taste, and elegant color". The noodles are soft and springy, the soup is rich and flavorful, and the taste is refreshing and slightly sweet. They are the core carrier of daily diet for Jianghuai people and a representative of the characteristic Huaiyang noodle culture.

The current predicament of the Huaiyang brand · A significant gap with the aesthetic preferences of the Z generation

- (1) The visual image is outdated and retro, with deep red color and carved patterns, creating a strong sense of oppression.
- (2) The symbol expression is standardized, lacking the unique cultural identification of Huaiyang.
- (3) The materials are generic and there is no unified VI, resulting in fragmented brand recognition.
- (4) It lacks the attribute of social sharing, making it difficult to spread among the young population.

Core issue: Therefore, how can we, based on the aesthetic context of the Z-generation, achieve a youthful visual presentation for the Huaiyang noodles brand?

Research content

This research is based on the aesthetic context of the Z generation, taking the Huaiyang noodles brand as the specific research object, and focusing on the brand visual image design as the core of the research. It combines brand modernization theory, visual semiotics, and other contents to conduct relevant research and design practices.

From a theoretical perspective, through brand modernization theory and visual image design theory, combined with Z generation aesthetic theory and regional cultural symbol design theory, a theoretical research framework is established; by investigating the cultural resources of Huaiyang region, characteristic cultural symbols are excavated, and combined with the existing Huaiyang noodles brand, the existing problems of the brand are sorted out, and related design principles and design methods are derived; finally, based on the design strategy, the subsequent brand design practice is completed, and the research results are summarized and reflected on.



Research Objectives, Tasks and Methods

Research objective

Build a young brand visual system for Huaiyang noodles that suits the aesthetic preferences of Generation Z, break through the limitations of communication targeting young people, and promote the inheritance and development of Huaiyang noodle culinary culture.

Research Methodology

- (1) Literature research method
- (2) Field investigation method
- (3) Questionnaire survey method
- (4) Case analysis method
- (5) Design practice method

Research task

- (1) Sort out the cultural resources of Huaiyang noodles, including material, intangible and spiritual cultural aspects, and explore cultural symbols.
- (2) Analyze the aesthetic preferences of the Z-generation consumer group and the insufficient visual communication forms of existing Huaiyang noodles brands, as well as the related reasons.
- (3) Establish the design principles and methods for the brand's youth-oriented visual image that are compatible with the aesthetic context of the Z-generation.
- (4) Conduct design practices, including brand logo, color system, auxiliary graphics, product packaging, store space and digital extension, etc.
- (5) Verify the dissemination effect of the design results and propose optimization strategies.

The practical significance of the research

01

Overcoming the visual reality predicament of the Huaiyang noodles brand

This research starts from the aesthetic preferences and consumption demands of the Z-generation, and redefines the visual image of the Huaiyang noodles brand from a new perspective, helping the Huaiyang noodles brand overcome its current difficulties.

02

Enhance the market competitiveness of the Huaiyang noodles brand

By designing a younger brand visual image, we aim to revitalize the dissemination and development of the Huaiyang noodles brand in the contemporary era, and enhance the market competitiveness of the Huaiyang food brand.

03

Promoting the modernization of Huaiyang cuisine's cultural dissemination and development

By using visual elements such as brand logos, packaging, and materials, the culture of Huaiyang noodles is transformed into visual content that is acceptable and willing to be spread by the Z-generation consumers, effectively achieving the modernization of the Huaiyang noodles culture and its dissemination and development.



Current research status in China

The research on the youthification of domestic brands has been continuously advancing along with the rise of "national trends". The existing research mostly focuses on the renewal of traditional brands and often explores the transformation path by relying on five logical factors: coolness, authenticity, uniqueness, identification, and happiness. In the study of consumption by the Z Generation, scholars have pointed out that this group has consumption characteristics such as self-fulfillment experience, social attributes, and value expression. Their consumption behavior pursues appearance, ease of taking photos, and sharing. The essence of national trend consumption is that young people use it as a carrier to achieve cultural identification and identity expression. The consumption logic follows aesthetics first, cultural identification, and emotional resonance. In the aspect of the youthification of catering brands and visual design, some studies have constructed a visual system for catering IPs, exploring strategies for visual upgrade of traditional brand catering such as enabling cultural empowerment through intangible cultural heritage and leveraging multimedia marketing, based on changes in the consumption group, media, and aesthetics. Overall, the academic community has accumulated rich theories and cases in the fields of Z Generation aesthetics and the visual design of catering brand youthification. However, there are still gaps in the research on specific brand categories such as Huaiyang noodles.

Current research status abroad

The research on the youngerization of foreign catering brands started earlier. Kevin Ryan Keller's brand asset theory proposed that brands need to update brand associations in line with the market and the audience, forming the basic theory for brand youngerization. In terms of aesthetic consumption and social communication, relevant studies indicate that platforms such as TikTok and Instagram have reshaped the logic of catering consumption, and the visual presentation of stores and dishes influence consumption decisions. Food check in and sharing itself has become a consumption experience. Visual elements such as colors and presentation can enhance users' purchase and sharing intentions. The experience economy theory provides support for visual narrative in catering scenarios. Scholars have also summarized multiple visual paradigms suitable for young people and confirmed that the effect of UGC spontaneous visual content in shaping brand image is better than traditional advertising. In practical cases, Japanese ramen brands focus on spatial narrative and high-visibility visual symbols, while European and American catering brands mostly use brand visual assets to balance cultural heritage and modern aesthetics. Overall, foreign research mostly focuses on social media, consumption behavior, and visual communication dimensions, but it rarely explores from the perspective of local culture. There are also few relevant case references for visual design of youngerized regional cuisine brands.





Research Review

Currently, although there are abundant theories and case studies on brand youthfulness in China, there are relatively few specialized studies on the combination of the aesthetic preferences of the Z Generation and regional noodle brands. Moreover, most current studies on regional noodle brands mainly focus on cultural protection and skill inheritance, and the visual transformation research content for the Z Generation consumer market is rather scarce. Additionally, the current research on the aesthetic preferences of the Z Generation in China mostly takes tea drinks and baking as research objects, and the research on noodle brands is basically in a blank stage. Therefore, in this context, this article takes the aesthetic preferences of the Z Generation as the entry point and the Huaiyang noodle culture as the research object. By reviewing the current development difficulties faced by Huaiyang noodle brands, this paper elaborates on the significance of conducting brand youthfulness visual image design, with the aim of providing new ideas for the young development of regional cultural brands and also hoping to contribute to the young inheritance and development of Huaiyang noodle culture.

The cultural resource spectrum of Huaiyang noodles



Material culture layer

- Yangzhou Yangchun Noodles: Clear soup noodles, simple and elegant
- Huai'an Changyu Noodles: Eel fillet topping, tender and smooth
- Zhenjiang Guogai Noodles: "Noodles cooked in a pot with a pot cover", chewy and flavorful
- Local architecture, farming tools, local products

Non-material Cultural layer

- Pot lid making technique (Provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage)
- Dongtai fish soup noodle making technique
- Traditional dietary customs
- "Yangchun Baiye" historical anecdote

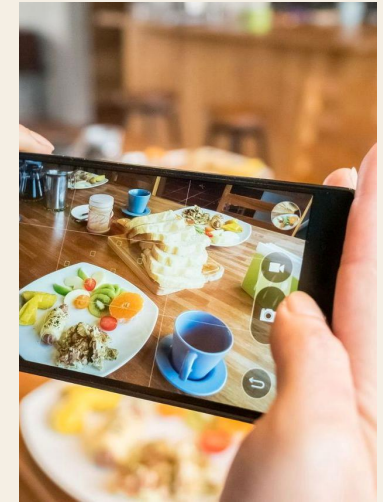
Cultural and Spiritual Level

- The aesthetic of Huaiyang cuisine: harmony, refinement, purity, and novelty
- The bustling and lively atmosphere of the Jiangnan urban life
- The comforting and healing spiritual experience

The current shortcomings of brand visual communication

Visual promotion aspect

The design still relies on common Chinese elements such as surfaces, clouds, and buildings, without exploring the unique cultural symbols specific to Huaiyang; the decoration uses deep red color with carved patterns, which creates a visually oppressive effect and lacks the brand identity.



Brand extension aspect

There is no fixed standard color or standard font. The materials use common templates available on the market, resulting in fragmented brand visual image, making it difficult for consumers to form a coherent perception.

Online dissemination aspect

The promotion merely focuses on visiting stores and taking photos for superficial display, without delving into the deeper cultural connotations. As a result, it is difficult to leave a distinctive memory point in the minds of consumers.

Analysis of the causes of the problem

At the brand awareness level

The brand's exploration of its own cultural resources is limited to the material level, lacking in deeper analysis and research. This makes it difficult for the brand to establish a differentiated positioning, resulting in a situation of visual homogeneity.

At the professional capability level

The brand has not established a complete VI standard. It lacks understanding of the brand's standard colors and standard fonts, resulting in an outdated and fragmented overall style that is merely superficial.

At the level of disseminating ideas

The brand lacks an understanding of the cultural context of the Z generation, resulting in its online and offline communication content being superficial and failing to leave a deep impression on tourists.

Design principles

Regional Cultural Principles

Based on Huaiyang culture, extract cultural symbols and simplify and restructure them to create a simple, beautiful and memorable brand visual symbol.

Principle of Simple Design

Following the principle of "less is more", summarize the symbols with simple lines and geometric shapes, eliminate excessive decorations and retain the essential features.

principle of multi-adaptation

The VI system can flexibly adapt to different carriers and usage scenarios, meeting the diverse needs of young consumers.

Principle of Differentiated Design

Based on the characteristics of the product category and the brand positioning, design a personalized visual language to establish an irreplaceable recognition and memory point in the competition.



DESIGN PRACTICE

Design Practice Exhibition

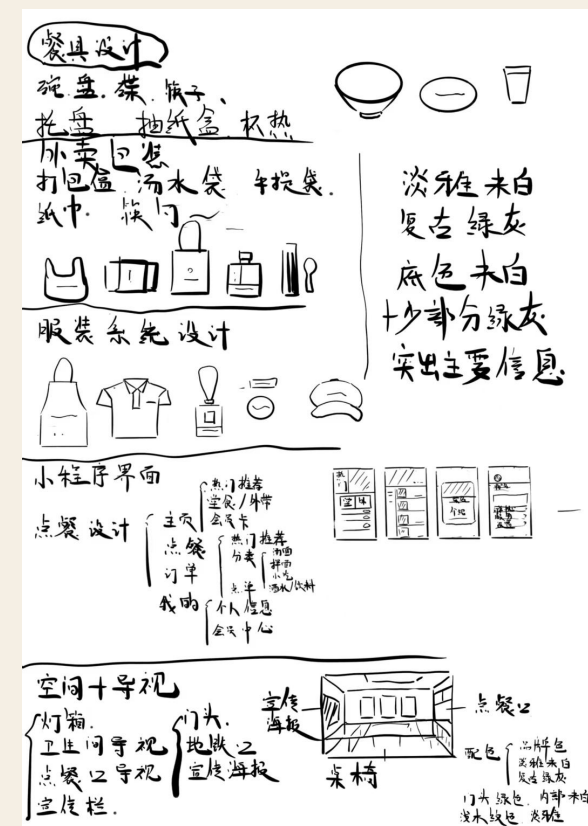
“Huaiyang Bowl” Noodle Brand Visual Identity Design

Based on the Huaiyang cuisine culture as the design source and guided by the relaxed and simple aesthetic preferences of the Z-generation, a new-style Huaiyang noodle brand is created for the young group, making it an entry point for experiencing the aesthetic of Huaiyang life and achieving both physical and mental healing.

Concept sketch design

Based on the previous research work, the overall style is planned to adopt the new Chinese style. Through exploring the production techniques of Huaiyang noodles and related cultural elements such as food ingredients, the design of the brand logo and auxiliary graphics will be carried out. It is planned to adopt a simple and flat hand-drawn style, combined with humanistic fonts. In terms of color, a color scheme of light beige, retro green-gray, and ancient ink green is planned to be established, to reflect the texture of Huaiyang culture.

The overall design covers LOGOs and auxiliary graphics, tableware, takeout packaging, staff uniforms, mini-program interfaces, store space guidance signs, and all brand touchpoints. Huaiyang culinary culture will be integrated into the entire set of visual materials, taking into account both traditional heritage and the social communication attributes favored by the Z generation, to complete the construction of a young visual system for the Huaiyang Bowl brand.



Brand logo design

The brand logo of Huaiyang Bowl is simple and clear, presented in a retro green and gray color scheme, which is clear and has a humanistic touch.

In the graphic part, it is presented with four stacked bowls, the lines are smooth and natural, and the blank space is appropriate, which conforms to the brand's atmosphere and echoes the brand name "Huaiyang Bowl".

For the font part of the logo, the Chinese characters are simple and square, bold and neat. Below, the pinyin "Huai Yang Yi Wan" is arranged in layers, which is clear. The overall design style combines modern simplicity with the new Chinese cultural tone.



Standard color design



Soft and elegant off-white

#EFE4D9

Derived from the original soft color of the noodles, it conveys a warm and natural feeling.



Vintage green and gray

#90995F

Combining the essence of ingredients, the beauty of the scenery, and the simple colors of ancient utensils, it is warm and plain.



Simple and dark green color

#283028

Drawing inspiration from the ancient building's dark tiles and lush greenery, it is elegant and warm.

Standard font design

Brand Font

方正兰亭粗黑简体

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890(, . : ; “ ” 、 ? !)

Noto Sans SC

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890(, . : ; “ ” 、 ? !)

“FZ LanTing Hei Bold (Simplified)” serves as the primary title typeface. Its heavy, well-structured strokes convey a steady and dignified character, making it well suited for the brand logo and key visual headlines. **Noto Sans SC** is paired for English text, delivering a minimalist feel and working well across packaging, mini-programs, signage, and other applications. Both typefaces are minimalist, modern sans-serif fonts with a unified style, echoing the brand's new-Chinese, understated and gentle temperament. Together they strike a balance between legibility and a relaxed, contemporary aesthetic, adapting seamlessly to both online and offline multi-channel communication.

Auxiliary graphic design

Pasta-making skills · Seasonal ingredients

Structural Design: The brand auxiliary graphic design of Huaiyang Bowl is inspired by the Huaiyang noodle-making technique. It integrates actions such as rolling, pulling, and boiling noodles into the visual symbol design of the brand, and combines representative seasonal ingredients to evolve into the brand's auxiliary graphic.

Visual and Graphic Scheme: The brand auxiliary graphic of Huaiyang Bowl adopts a flat modern illustration style. Through a combination of vintage green and gray with a white background and blank space, abstract words such as "handmade, noodles with firm texture, and rich soup base" are transformed into concrete brand visual symbols. The elements on the top row showcase the noodle-making process, and the elements on the bottom row represent the characteristic ingredients. The overall shape is simple and clean, yet clearly distinguishable, and is suitable for various promotional applications with different materials.



Product packaging design

Table service · Delivery service · Retail sales

Structural Design: The product packaging design of Huaiyang Bowl mainly consists of three parts: dine-in, takeout, and retail. In the dine-in section, customized bowls, trays, water cups, table mats, and other tableware are used to convey the brand's sense of ceremony; in the takeout section, an integrated lunch box and packaging bag are used; while the handmade noodle paper box and bagged noodles form the retail product system.

Visual and Graphic Scheme: The overall design is gentle and simple, in line with the new Chinese cultural style. Light and elegant beige and retro green-gray are used as the main colors for the packaging of Huaiyang Bowl noodle brand products, combined with a simple logo, to meet the aesthetic needs of the Z Generation; the tableware adopts matte white glaze, with a green-gray edge, which is elegant and fresh; the takeout box uses the brand color as the base, combined with an illustrated sealing sticker to enhance the sense of surprise; the packaging materials combine the brand illustration with the category name, using degradable paper and environmentally friendly ink, which is in line with the environmental concepts of the Z Generation.

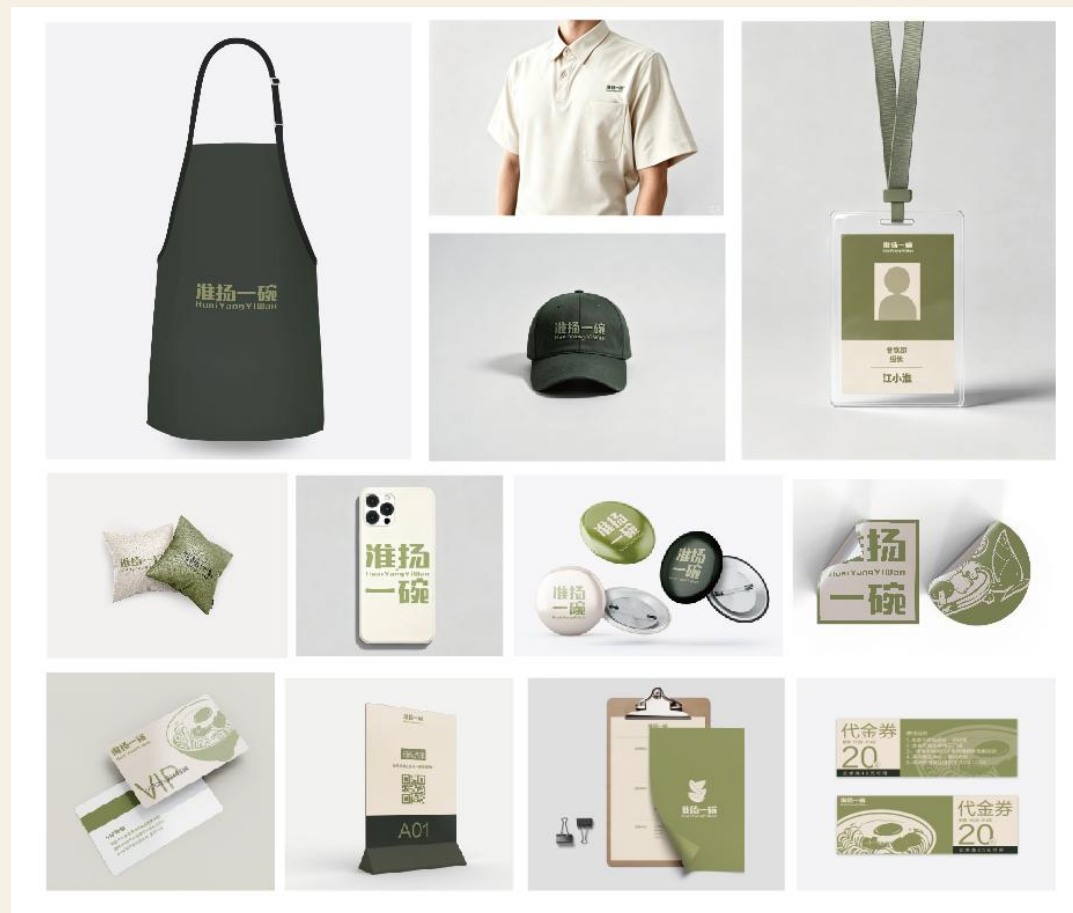


Derivative material design

Employee image · Office store · Surroundings

Structural Design: The derivative material design of Huaiyang Bowl mainly consists of three categories. The employee image category includes aprons, polo shirts, and baseball caps. The office store category includes name tags and business cards. The peripheral derivative category includes throw pillows, phone cases, and badges. The overall design is unified and standardized.

Visual and Graphic Scheme: The visual design of the derivative materials is clear in layers and rich in variety. It is adjusted and transformed flexibly according to the size and function of the carrier. Among them, the phone case uses the fonted layout of the "Huaiyang Bowl" characters to enhance the memory point. The folded corner labels and circular stickers use seal-like graphics to add a new Chinese style feel. The voucher combines auxiliary graphics with the brand logo to balance the promotional function and brand tone. The overall brand visual is simple but not monotonous.

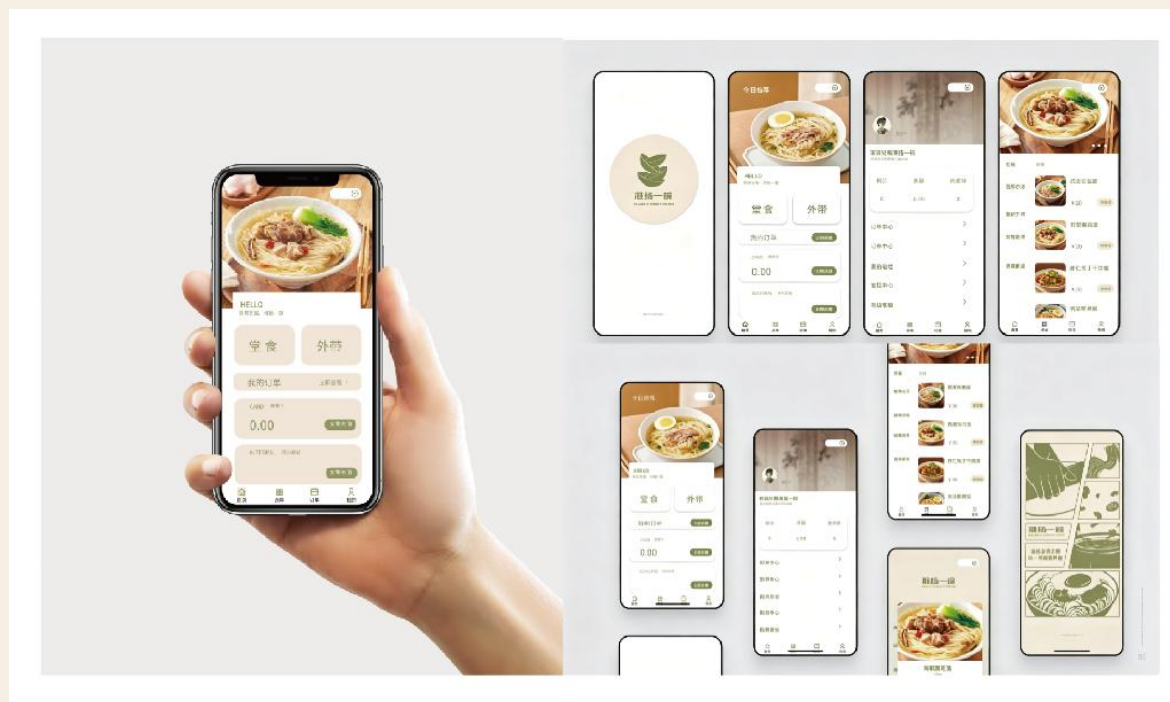


Design of Digital Mini-Programs

Ordering food · Delivery service · Member center

Structural Design: The interface design of Huaiyang Bowl Mini Program is simple and orderly, with clear division of functional areas. The interface design covers scenarios such as dish display, ordering, and member registration. The layout leaves appropriate white space, and the information hierarchy is clear. It is suitable for use in various scenarios.

Visual and Graphic Scheme: The interface design follows the brand color standards, using a combination of light beige and retro green-gray for details. The font uses the brand standard font, which is simple, clear, and easy to read. At the same time, brand-exclusive symbols, member visual system, and social media logos are integrated into the entire design. The visual elements are unified, standardized, beautiful, practical, and simple and elegant.



Store signage design

Wayfinding · Billboard · Store Space

Structural Space: The store space of the brand is mainly in a light wood color scheme, complemented by retro green and gray tones. It is simple, warm, and comfortable, in line with the aesthetic preferences of the Z generation. The wooden grid background wall, along with wooden tables, chairs, and booths, creates a harmonious contrast, aligning with the brand's aesthetic preferences.

Visual and Graphic Scheme: The overall space is based on the brand's visual guidelines as the core foundation. Through a unified visual language, it strengthens the brand's memory points. The design of the storefront headboard is centered around the brand color and logo. Through horizontal light box design, combined with a green-gray background, the design is clear in layers and eye-catching, elegant. The interior is mainly composed of wooden grid walls, light beige walls, and blue brick textures, along with brand promotional posters. This forms a narrative of the brand culture and, with the help of warm light and light box design, creates a cozy dining atmosphere, being comfortable and natural.



Overall visual system overview

Unified standards · System expansion

Each module is branded through unified standard colors, standard fonts and auxiliary graphics, ensuring clear and orderly brand information.

From the logo to the packaging, from the space to digital media, a complete and consistent brand visual asset is formed, enhancing consumer recognition and memory.



I Brand Background

This design takes “Savor the beauty of Huaiyang cuisine, starting with a bowl of noodles” as its core design concept. With the brand “Huaiyang Yi Wan” as the design carrier, it translates the regional cultural genes embedded in Huaiyang noodles into modern visual language that appeals to Generation Z, building a new-style Huaiyang noodle brand suited to the lifestyle of contemporary young people.

I Brand Positioning

A youthful new Huaiyang noodle brand, presenting the elegant yet down-to-earth aesthetics of Huaiyang cuisine in one bowl.

| Brand Slogan

Savor Huaiyang' s Beauty, Begin with a Bowl of Noodles.

I Brand logo



Brand visual extension

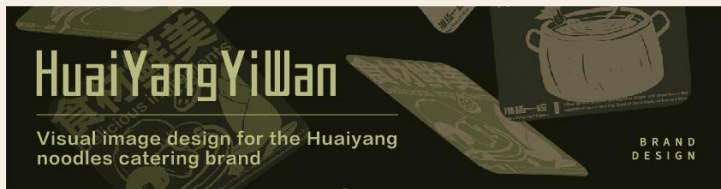


Brand Auxiliary Graphic



| Brand visual extension





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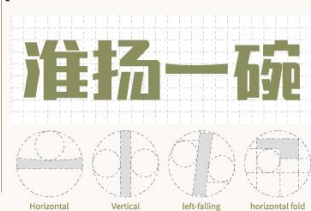
I Brand Color



I Brand Auxiliary Graphic



I Brand Brand visual extension



I Diningware Design



I Delivery System Design



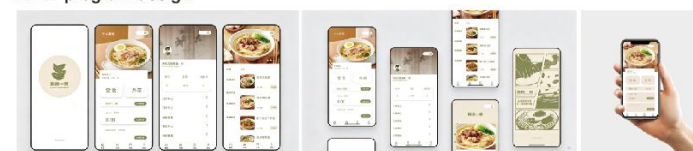
I Packaging design



I Other derivative designs



I Mini-program design



I Light box directional signage design



I Scene Application Demonstration



I Scene presentation



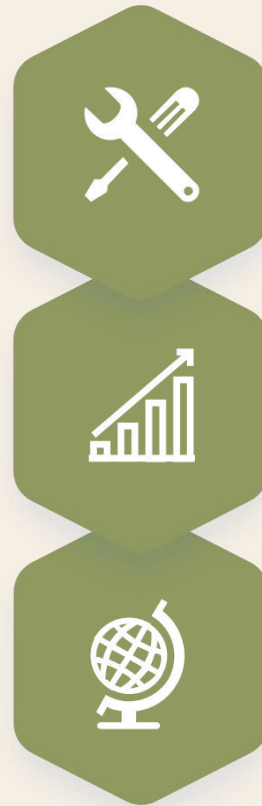
Tool Support and Iterative Optimization

Technology and data support

Illustrator and Photoshop are used for creating logos, auxiliary graphics, and the additional elements of packaging design; Excel is used for analyzing the data from questionnaires; literature website research provides support for theoretical studies.

Expert evaluation

Inviting brand visual experts and researchers of Huaiyang culture, to evaluate and optimize based on two aspects: the effectiveness of cultural expression and the compatibility with the aesthetic preferences of the Z generation.



User testing

Conducted questionnaires and random interviews targeting Z-generation users, collecting feedback on aesthetic compatibility and satisfaction of food check in needs.

Iterative optimization

Based on the research results, adjust the details of the logo, optimize the color ratio, and continuously enhance the visual standards and aesthetic value.

Research Limitations and Future Prospects

The modernization of brand visual image design essentially involves deconstructing, translating and reconstructing the regional cultural genes. However, this does not simply mean using element symbols for collage and refinement. In the design process, it is necessary to ensure the effective integration of the brand's cultural connotation with the aesthetic preferences of the Z-generation, while also following the unified brand visual image norms to ensure that the visual image design of the brand conforms to the current consumer market demands.

However, this design research also has certain limitations. Due to the rapid iteration of the Z-generation's aesthetic preferences, the brand's visual image design needs to be constantly updated and adjusted to adapt to different consumer markets. Moreover, with the continuous development of current AIGC tools, in the subsequent visual image design, it is also possible to explore the application of AIGC and other digital tools in the extension of brand visual images, thereby promoting the modernization of regional food culture and enhancing the market competitiveness of the brand.

THANK YOU!

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