

## Academic Seminar

# Simple or Complex Logos? The Impact of Logo Complexity on the Brand Perception

Marketers often use brand logos as a communication tool to shape their brand image. In this article, we show that logo complexity (simplicity) activates a prestigious (approachable) brand image. We provide field evidence for the associations between complexity and prestige and between simplicity and approachability among real brands. We also use an implicit association test to verify that consumers hold the associations. Then, we conduct a set of experiments to test the proposed causal effects and mechanisms. Specifically, we show that rebranding with a more complex (simple) brand logo leads consumers to perceive a brand as more prestigious (approachable). Logo complexity increases perceived brand prestige by boosting the perceived intricacy of the product design, while logo simplicity increases perceived brand approachability by increasing the processing fluency of the logo. Finally, we show that consumers who want to signal that they are upper class (approachable) are more likely to choose a product that features a complex (simple) logo. Our findings offer practical implications for logo design and brand communication.



**Ms. TANG Qing**

Doctoral candidate in Marketing,  
Nanyang Technological University,  
Singapore

Qing Tang is a doctoral candidate in Marketing from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Before joining the Marketing PhD program, she received her Master degree from the Chinese University of Hong Kong and Bachelor degree from Sun Yat-Sen University. Her research interests are mainly in brand communication, digital marketing and visual marketing.



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