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MASKOT AS A TOOL OF IMAGE FORMATION

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Mascots are not only used in various types of advertising, they are increasingly becoming brand characters and involved in shaping the image of the organization, as they make advertising campaigns brighter and, consequently, more effective. The research paper aimed to identify the features of creating a mascot (brand character), to outline the theoretical aspects of forming the brand's image involving a character, to review the practical experience of using characters.

The paper also summarizes and considers the historical experience of involving brand characters in the process of forming the organizations' images. A typology of brand characters was improved based on different researches.

Key words: history of advertising, history of PR, brand character, mascot, image.

МАСКОТ ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТ ФОРМУВАННЯ ІМІДЖУ

Маскоти не тільки використовуються в різних видах реклами, вони все частіше стають символами бренду й беруть участь у формуванні іміджу організації, оскільки роблять рекламні кампанії яскравішими, а отже, й ефективнішими. Метою статті було виявлення особливостей створення маскота (бренд-персонажа), окреслити теоретичні аспекти формування іміджу бренду за участю персонажа, переглянути практичний досвід використання персонажів. У розвідці також узагальнено та розглянуто історичний досвід залучення персонажів бренду до процесу формування іміджу організації. На основі різних досліджень удосконалено типологію символів бренду.

Ключові слова: історія реклами, історія PR, характер бренда, маскот, імідж.

Introduction. Due to the communicative and psychological influence of the brand character, as an audiovisual element of the advertising message has an undeniable advantage over its other elements, especially when it comes to the verbal part of the advertising message.

Due to competition between brands and organizations, more and more professionals began to use non-standard approaches and methods to attract potential audiences. Brand characters are increasingly appearing in the media, social networks, and social projects. A large number of foreign brands have already understood the importance of involving mascots in image formation. This allowed expanding the boundaries for promotion among potential and existing audiences.

The relevance of the research is due to the information overload of the modern advertising market, in which experts try to attract the attention of the target audience and interest them in unusual properties, characteristics of the brand with the help of mascots, thus helping to communicate with consumers.

The sources of information for writing a research paper were the theoretical and practical works of D. Aaker [1], J. Avery [2], B. Fennis and W. Stroebe [3], K. Rotzoll [4], C. Haugtvedt [5], and others.

In D. Aaker's book «Building Strong Brands», the author offers the most complete and detailed study of the problems of creating a strong brand, which is positioned in the market and has a brand identity. The book describes the practical experience of using an advertising character to build a strong brand image.

B. Fennis and W. Stroebe in the publication «The Psychology of Advertising» [3] for the first time attempted to analyze and summarize the problems of advertising and interaction in the system «advertising – consumer» in terms of psychology. The book examines in detail the advertising character from a psychological and social point of view.

K. Rotzoll in his work «Advertising in Contemporary Society: Perspectives toward Understanding» [4] gives recommendations for a creative approach to creating ads with the participation of brand characters. Describes a creative approach to creating an advertising character, his distinctive qualities.

In C. Haugtvedt's book «Handbook of Consumer Psychology» [5] special attention is paid to the processes of perception, processing of advertising information, and the formation of consumer behavior under the influence of the advertising campaign. The author presents the technologies of effective advertising campaigns, among which is the introduction of characters into the brand matrix.

However, *little research has been undertaken* to study the communicative aspect of creating mascots, their impact on the brand perception by the audience and features of creating a company image based on graphic design.

The scientific novelty of the work also lies in the systematic classification of varieties of mascots and understanding their potential effectiveness in the context of advertising and PR activities.

The object of study is the brand character as part of the organization's image formation.

The subject is the communication features of creating and promoting a brand character.

The *goal* is to identify the features of creating a brand character. To achieve the goal, the following *tasks* should be solved: exploring the theoretical aspects of forming the image of the organization with the involvement of a brand character; considering the features of creating brand characters; analyzing the practical experience of using characters.

Research methods. Achieving the goals of the article is provided by using methods: axiomatic method was used to study and definition of the conceptual apparatus, generalization of criteria and classifications of mascots in terms of mass communications; analytical method was used for studying global trends in creating brand characters; empirical method was aimed to generalize the practical experience of attracting brand character; comparative method helped to generalize practical experience of involving brand characters in Europe and the USA.

The results and discussion. Psychologists say that one of the vital factors for a person is communication. In the process of communication a certain attitude, impression, emotion, etc. is formed. Brands have long been communicating with the audience, not just offering a product or service. Advertising gives people an example of people's behavior that will make their lives easier or brighter.

Graphic design plays a key role in the process of communication between the consumer and the brand. It recodes the content into the visual. The development of communication processes has led to the general recognition of the idea of relativity when everything is determined by instantaneous, individual, intuitive and dependent on each situation decisions.

The image becomes more important than the text, the image is more important than the meaning. The visual attributes of the brand, which carry out external communication, are primarily such elements as a sign, logo, character, font, color coding.

It is known that the image of the organization includes many components, which include a brand character. Among all the elements of the message, it is the brand character that can make the world of images look like reality, able to revive it. Advertising for

products or services that do not have characters has a low chance of attracting the attention, interest, and memory of consumers. In the advertising message, the consumer is more interested in the person, the image, than the product.

As the consumer begins to identify no longer with the brand, but with the protagonist, the character of the brand, the successful and timely introduction of new stories or characters can make a product or service more attractive in the eyes of the consumer.

A brand character can not only reflect the essence and image of the brand but also develop empathy for the brand. If you give the character the traits and characteristics that are inherent in the target audience, it will stand out from the competition and improve the relationship between consumer and brand.

It is theoretically proven that a proposal about a product or service is a primary discourse, and stereotypes and images about society, relationships are a secondary discourse. The primary may be about quantitative and qualitative benefits. For example, for an educational institution, this is the number of graduates, international certification, and so on. And the secondary discourse helps to understand who studies and teaches there, what people and history there are, helps to feel the atmosphere and character of the educational institution. It can be concluded that it is thanks to the character that allows identification, it is possible to form a secondary discourse of the message.

To understand the maximum effectiveness of this tool, it is necessary to understand the meaning of the term «brand character». Typically, this can be a fictional character who is visually or audibly attached to the brand and its image component. Most often it is endowed with positive qualities and character that can cause approval and affection of potential consumers.

In the literature devoted to the study of the practice of using characters in the process of image formation and advertising, you can find the concept:

- brand character;
- advertising character;
- brand character;
- mascot.

A brand character is a graphically depicted image of a character who represents a brand and its essence.

Brand characters are found everywhere, and this is proof of their high efficiency. Leaders of various markets, including Mars, Nestle, McDonald's, KFC, and many others, have their brand characters.

Advertising character (brand character, corporate character) is a graphic image that represents a person, animal, fantastic creature, associated with the company's product and forms its image.

An advertising character can be a mascot or a certain part of a concept that was invented and developed by PR specialists, marketers, or advertisers for the sake of high recognition among consumers. The main task of the character as part of the image formation of any organization is to attract the attention of a target audience, create positive associations with the product or service and build trust.

A corporate character (advertising character, corporate character) is a graphic image that represents a person, animal, fantastic creature, or object associated with the company's product [6].

Various Ukrainian and foreign scholars present their definitions of the concept of brand character.

A brand character is a fictional character, a stable image that is used in an advertising campaign in contact with the target audience and is one of the main elements of corporate style [7].

Corporate characters can be universal heroes, created to improve the communication «company – consumer». They are used for both foreign and domestic policy.

Mascot (from the French Mascotte – an amulet for good luck, a mascot) – originally it was the name of a person, animal, or object that brings good luck; now it is almost any character, human-like and not very, representing a team: school, sports team, community, military unit or brand [5].

Mascots are often used for street promotion. As a rule, they hire people who distribute advertising information about the brand or organization in the costumes of the character. Thanks to the fun and interesting mascot, you can attract much more attention than the usual logo, as well as get interesting content for the consumer.

Today, mascots are most often used as representatives of goods and services, such as McDonald's mascot Ronald MacDonalD. According to the Fast Food Nation in 2001, 96% of American schoolchildren recognize Ronald McDonald among other clowns.

Mascots not only correspond to the character of the brand, but also embody a certain story that happened earlier, or a myth that has been passed down for years. Mascots are created based on the spirit of the company.

Mascots preserve the principles, mission, and vision of each organization. Due to this background, mascots are appropriate in both external and internal PR. With the true stories that make up the mascot, they are more effective than others because people remember the story better. It is best to use mascots along with logos. For example, the McDonalds logo is m-shaped golden arches, and their mascot was Ronald McDonald.

During PR and advertising campaigns, a bright image and a quality message are best remembered. Modern experts have long understood that a character for any brand is an integral part of building a successful image. To get the maximum result, you need to invent not just a hero, but a person who will be reflected in the target audience of the brand or organization. Corporate mascots become the center of attention during public events, meetings, presentations, printing, and souvenirs [2].

After analyzing the literature on the preferences of the characters, the following opportunities were identified during the formation of a successful image strategy:

- raising awareness among the target audience about the brand and its essence;
- creating a positive image for the brand or organization;
- attracting potential consumers;
- attracting a new audience;
- incentives to buy;
- formation of competitive advantage over analogs;
- improving the visual content of advertising campaigns;
- formation of emotional attachment and trust in consumers;
- increase consumer loyalty.

R. Batra, J. Myers, D. Aaker in their works identified three key positive aspects related to the use of characters in advertising and the process of image formation. First, the characters expand the range of consumers (viewers, listeners) of advertising. Second, the characters can cause a positive change in attitudes toward the company and its products. Third, the personal qualities of the character can be associated with the image of the brand [6].

So, brand characters have several definitions, but they all reflect the main essence of the concept. After analyzing the above material, we can conclude that the brand character is a certain character who represents, represents a brand or organization, and helps to improve communication between the audience and the brand. In our opinion, in the context of the research topic, it will be appropriate to use the term «brand character» or «mascot». The brand character will allow you to position the brand through visual symbols, and the mascot is designed to emphasize the traditions and principles of the brand.

The first advertising character is considered to be the brand character of Quaker Oats, a company that specializes in oatmeal. The Quaker Oats Company has been around since 1876, but it was not until 1886 that the company decided to pursue an active advertising policy. This

is because at this time the main competitor of the company, namely the American Cereal Company, began to actively enter the market. Because of this, Quaker Oats President Henry Parson Crowell decided to use the services of advertising specialists and image-makers to change the situation in their favor [10]. Figure 1 shows a brand character for Quaker Oats that was used to promote oatmeal.



Figure 1 – Quaker Oats Company Oatmeal Advertising



Figure 2 – Michelin Company Advertising Bibendum

The man, made of tires, had a strong physique, combined with cheerful charisma and rebellious nature. Bibendum became not just a hero of the commercials, but absorbed the spirit, vision, and lifestyle of «Michelin Company». Bibendum has always been a friend to the audience, who spoke about the novelties and changes of «Michelin Company». Today, Bibendum has become not just a brand character, but a mascot for the Michelin Company.

The first fictional brand characters were created to promote products. One of the first characters is considered to be «Uneda Biscuit Boy». It was painted by Frederick Stanley for the National Biscuit Company (Nabisco) in 1899. Later, this character became the most recognizable not only in the United States but also in European countries in the first half of the twentieth century. The artist decided to wear it in a yellow cloak and hat, which was associated with the sun and warmth [9].

The funny boy is shown in Figure 3, who was carrying a box of Uneeda cookies in the rain, which was supposed to show the utilitarian features of the packaging, thus encouraging consumers to prefer packaged cookies instead of buying by weight. It was revolutionary for that time. The Uneeda brand character remains revealing, because, despite almost a hundred years of the brand's existence, created as part of the first national campaign, the character remains relevant and effective to this day.

After the great success of the Uneeda brand character, a large number of companies began to prefer creating their characters based on children's images, to evoke several positive associations with the brand and products in the minds of consumers.

The next successful character was the girl shown in Figure 4, which was created by the agency «N. W. Ayer & Son» in 1912 for the company «Morton Salt». The «Morton Girl» walking in the salt rain was very popular with consumers at the time, despite its simpler format compared to the more realistic character from «Uneeda» [10].

Properly choosing a charismatic and brightly colored character for everyday goods, which by nature has no special characteristics, was a justified decision, because, as we can see, «Morton Girl» offers salt today.

The brand, which went down in history as one of the most successful, was created in 1928 by artists from the Leo Burnett agency, although the idea to develop the Green Giant to promote canned vegetables belonged to the company that produces Minnesota Valley Canning Co. An attempt to graphically embody the mythological hero associated with the god of fertility was unsuccessful. The giant turned out to be too gloomy and scared rather than attracted attention. Experts from the agency Leo Burnett managed to change the character of the advertising character, giving him a friendly look, and therefore changed the name of the Giant (Jolly Green Giant). The benevolent giant shown in Figure 5 brought the company such marketing success that in 1950 it was renamed Green Giant Company [11].



Figure 3 – Uneeda brand character



Figure 4 – Morton Salt brand character

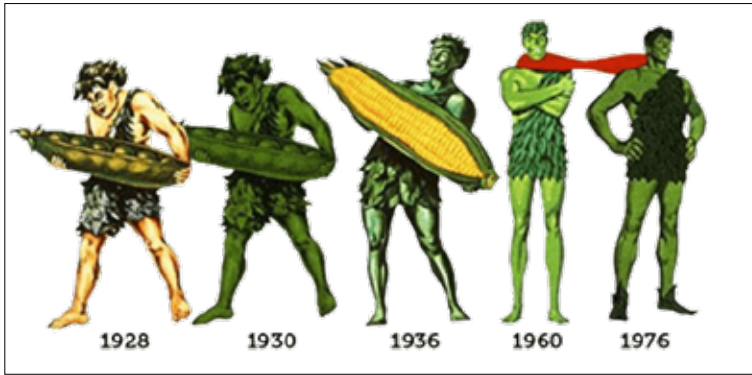


Figure 5 – Green Giant Co brand character

In 1954, the famous brand characters of the XX century M & M's appeared, representing the products of the company «Mars». The basis for the characters was the candies themselves. M & M's animated candies have

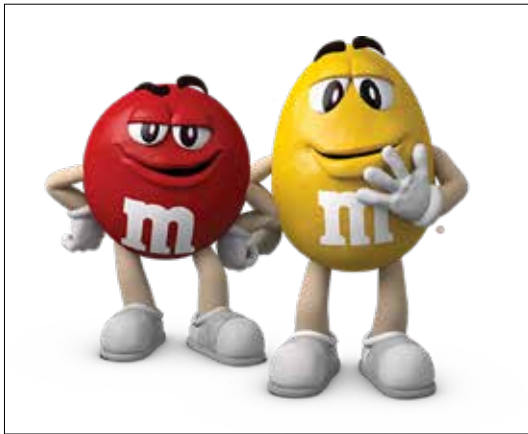


Figure 6 – Mars brand characters

become mascots of the Mars Company. These characters absorbed not only the character of the company «Mars» but also the spirit of the time. Each M & M's commercial became a small animation or children's comic.

The characters «Yellow» and «Red», shown in Figure 6, constantly found themselves in various funny and life situations due to the opposite characters. High-quality advertising from the company made these heroes famous in the world. Each new advertisement or product with its participation with its interesting plot and graphics, which was new at the time, attracted the attention of consumers of all ages. The characters became famous in different countries around the world.

During the Creative Revolution in the advertising industry, several branded characters were created, which became cult, and the most famous among them is the world-famous Marlborough Cowboy. This character was developed by the Leo Burnett agency in 1955. Later, history has shown that this character became one of the legendary discoveries of Leo Burnett.

Initially, Marlboro was positioned as a women's cigarette (it is no coincidence that the name was the name of the legendary seducer – the Duke of Marlboro), even a red filter designed accordingly to hide the remnants of lipstick. That's why Leo Burnett had a difficult task – to attract a male audience to the brand: Leo Burnett understood that the new packaging design and successful slogan were not enough to reposition. Then the image of the brutal cowboy «Marlboro Man» was created (Figure 7 «Cowboy Marlboro»), which most clearly showed the courage and strength of

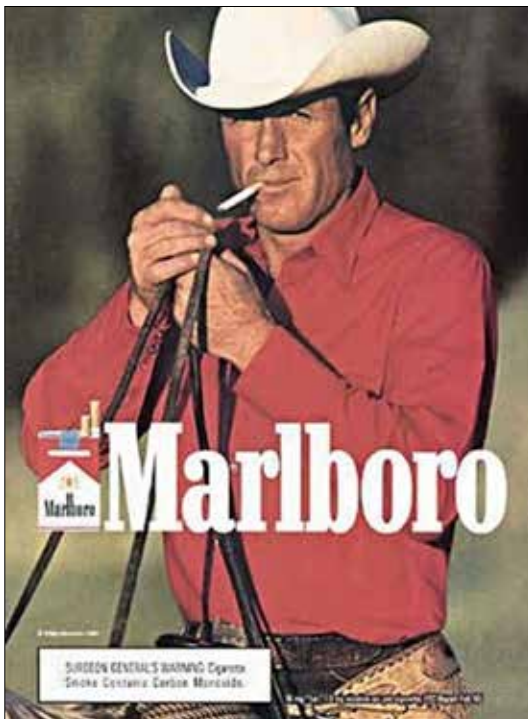


Figure 7 – Marlboro Cowboy

a real man. The fascination with westerns in the 1950s also contributed to the success of the advertising character, and in the next advertising campaign, potential consumers were encouraged to come to Marlboro Country [12, p. 23].

Technology does not standstill. Every year more and more programs and equipment are developed to facilitate the performance of various works. In the 1960s, 3D modeling technology was first used to create brand characters.

The three-dimensional character was first created in 1960 by the Leo Burnett agency: «Pillsbury Doughboy» (Pillsbury Man) for the company «Pillsbury». The company was engaged in the manufacture of flour semi-finished products. The image was invented by copywriter Rudy Wok, and as a result, the character became the first three-dimensional corporate hero in the history of advertising and image-making. Like all such brand characters, «Pillsbury Man» was very charismatic, attractive, and had the skills of a chef [13].

All this together gave a successful result, because the character shown in Figure 8, became a person who fell in love with the audience because of his traits and behavior. As a result, the brand has gained character, history, and trust from its target audience.

It is worth noting that one of the most famous and successful branded characters was the hero of the animation – Rabbit Quicky, shown in Figure 9 («Quicky the Nesquik Bunny»). It first appeared in 1973 on cocoa boxes for children. This character was not spontaneous, as experts have written down in advance his character and behavior, which is fully consistent with the behavior and habits of his audience. It has become a fun and playful rabbit that loves to spend time with friends. At that time, he wore only a medallion in the form of the letter «Q». In 1999, the Quik brand was renamed Nesquik, but the rabbit's name was changed. The letter of the medallion was also replaced by «N». In addition to cartoons, Quiky became a comic book hero of «DC Universe». He also appeared in the animated series «South Park» in the series «Fantasyland, Episode III» as one of the inhabitants of Fantasyland [14].

This allowed experts to make Quiky a participant in a variety of advertising stories, such as playing football in the summer and snowboarding in the winter. The adventurous atmosphere that brings joy to children was associated with the use of the drink «Nesquik», which certainly contributed to the formation of a positive image of the product.



Figure 8 – Pillsbury brand character



Figure 9 – Quicky the Nesquik Bunny



Figure 10 – Elsie the Cow brand character

charismatic and similar at certain moments to the target audience.

In the 90s of the twentieth century, advertisers turned to such technology as «retro marketing»: they began to revive old slogans, jingles, advertising characters. The most successful example of this approach is the use of the famous character «Elsie the Cow» (Figure 10), developed in 1936 for «Borden dairy product» by the director of the advertising company «Borden» Stuart Peabody (Stuart Peabody). At the beginning of the advertising campaign, the image of a nameless cow with calves appeared in medical journals. The doctors liked the picture so much that they asked Borden to send them similar posters. Then caricature cows were invented, including Elsie, and in 1938 an advertising letter was developed for her, which was read on the radio by the famous presenter Rush Hughes [16].

Elsie later became a comic book heroine, and her family soon followed. Although Elsie has long been used on Borden dairy packaging in the late 1960s, the character, which appealed to consumers, was removed by a static red oval, although later returned, but only in the 1990s. This example shows that compared to a static image, the advertising character is more effective due to one of the main advantages – dynamism.

Analyzing the cult characters of the period of the concept of «brand character», we can conclude that a well-chosen image, which has a solid foundation, can make the brand legendary and world-famous. Thanks to the character you can stand out from the competition.

Historical experience proves that a successful character can exist for decades and bring a brand or organization to leadership positions. Today we can see how the integration of brand characters in the process of forming the image of a brand or organization is strengthening the brand itself. For a long time, marketers, image-makers, designers, psychologists, and other professionals have learned to create vivid images to increase awareness, loyalty, and trust in a brand or organization. Thus, the images they create to build an image are used very effectively, because they exploit the subconscious reactions of people who find associations and identify with the brand.

Advertising developed; specialists created new unique characters. This trend has developed extensively in foreign countries, especially in the United States, but over time, domestic experts began to adopt the experience of colleagues from abroad, which positively influenced the beginning of creating brand characters for brands and organizations in Ukraine.

When a character begins to live in the plot, he gets the opportunity to fully reveal their character and values, so the brand image itself will be presented to the audience more complete.

«Liar Joe Isuzu» became an atypical brand character. An unusual advertising character was involved in the advertising campaign for cars «Isuzu Trooper» (manufacturer – «General Motors») in 1987. The name of the character «Lying Joe Isuzu» spoke for itself: thanks to an unusual advertising idea, Joe Isuzu told nonsense about the new car, deliberately exaggerating its capabilities. Interestingly, as a result of this successful advertising campaign, «Joe Isuzu» became a nickname: Americans began to call all liars that way [15].

As we can see, to create a successful character, he doesn't need to be only positive, the main thing is that he is

Brand characters do not always become world-famous. Very often local, regional or national. For example, a corporate character does not have to be known around the world. The level of recognition is determined, firstly, by the purpose of creation, and secondly – the scale of the brand or organization.

As noted in previous sections, the concept of brand character is quite broad and may include many subspecies, which often resonate with the archetypes of Carl Gustav Jung. The Institute of Advertising has formed a typology of brand characters [17], which looks like this:

- image-character. Green Giant peas with the image of a strong man on the package or Santa Claus in a Coca-Cola – easily recognizable and recognized by all characters. Not very similar to the images of «Yellow» and «Red» in the advertising of chocolate dragees M & M's conquered with its originality consumers from around the world.

- image-emotion. Good-natured fat man Cheerful milkman, fictional animal Red Up (Wimm Bill Dann), Barney the Bear (Mondelez International) – all these characters are designed to evoke certain emotions in the consumer: fun, joy, and serenity. This type also includes images that evoke negative emotions, such as germs in the Domestos detergent advertisement. Often negative characteristics are found in the advertising of drugs: bacteria, viruses, various diseases.

- image-assistant. The attractive man Mr. Proper has been helping women with cleaning for over 50 years. Procter & Gamble marketers have decided to translate the name of the hero (rapper – from the English «Clean») in the languages of different countries where the detergent is produced: Mr. Clean in the US and Europe, Mastro Lindo in Italy, Don Limpio in Spain.

- image-comrade. A character who is fun and not boring. Such images are used in advertising aimed at children. An example is the already mentioned Quicky rabbit from the Nesquik commercial or the cheerful clown Ronald McDonald.

A brand character can be a unique character who was invented for better communication between the consumer and the brand, but ideologically based mascots are more effective because they already have a history backed by the experience and stories of the brand or organization. Bright vivid images that can evoke emotions are used for effective memorization. People perceive personal information better, and it inspires confidence in them.

The typology of mascots, which experts have created depending on their realism and volume, looks like this:

- 2D characters are vector and raster. The first type is used for placement on POS materials and logos. A raster character can be as detailed and realistic as possible.

- 3D characters are convenient to use in advertising campaigns, especially in commercials, as no additional effort is required to reproduce the movements of the character.

The perception of the brand or organization itself depends on the accuracy of the created brand character. Proper use of the character in new commercials or appeals can guarantee the success of the strategy. The character can become a living symbol not only of the organization itself, but also of an entire generation, so it must be attractive and relevant.

Relevance in this context means a measure that corresponds to the relevance of the image now and in the future. The main task for the character is to form certain associations and positive emotions with the brand, which will later be transformed into loyalty to his perception. Due to the huge number of different brand characters, image-makers divide them as follows:

1. By the origin of the character:

- fictional anthropomorphic creatures (Pillsbury Doughboy, Quicky the Nesquik Bunny);

- mythological characters (Jolly Green Giant);
- fairy creatures (Santa Claus);
- anthropomorphic animals (Elsie the Cow).

The advantage of fictional characters over more realistic ones is due to the unlimited possibilities of this type because fairy-tale and mythological creatures always have an interesting history and in the presence of a vivid image can be borrowed culturally. Stories of this type, as well as the characters themselves, are developed by specialists in the strategy, so more in line with the goals and objectives set for them.

2. By the nature of the character:

- heroic character (Marlboro Man);
- comic character (Lying Joe Isuzu);
- Quicky the Nesquik Bunny;
- advisor character (Elsie the Cow).

3. By form of submission:

- verbal – in this case, the character assigns a brand name (Morton girl);
- visual – the external features of the character have the features of corporate style (the colors of Santa's clothes coincide with the corporate colors of «Coca-Cola»).

For a character to be successful, his behavior, habits, or special traits are considered. The character must correspond to the psychophysical characteristics of the target audience for which it is intended. The image-maker who creates the character must imagine the inner world of the consumer to whom he will turn, his desires, fears, psycho type, goals and objectives, attitude to people, and life.

Myths and fairy tales have long been remembered by people for their vivid images and symbols, so the brand character should be, accordingly, concentrated a concise symbol that is easy to remember.

Considering the theoretical aspects of the characters used in advertising, the following typology could be given:

- advertising characters – animated product or brand;
- fictional characters;
- animal characters in advertising;
- cartoon characters in advertising;
- puppet characters in advertising;
- negative characters and antiheroes in advertising;
- advertising characters – monsters and horror stories;
- female characters in advertising;
- erotic advertising characters;
- male characters in advertising;
- characters – heroes and superheroes;
- children-characters – children's characters in advertising;
- a group of characters in advertising;
- symbolic male characters;
- people in the role of corporate characters;
- 3D characters of computer games in advertising;
- technological characters – works in advertising;
- animated spiritual logos;
- comic book characters in advertising;
- political characters;
- sports characters and mascots [18].

Summing up, it should be noted that by creating an image that personifies the product, we use one of the most effective ways to form a positive image of a brand or organization. If we summarize them according to the characteristics of typologies, we get a typology that more accurately demonstrates their diversity and makes it easier to

analyze new characters. Therefore, our proposed typology of brand characters should look like this:

By filing form:

- 2D;
- 3D;
- raster;
- vector.

By nature:

- positive;
- negative.

Originally:

- fictional;
- based on real events;
- fabulous (mythical).

By style:

- cartoon;
- realistic;
- man-made.

By gender:

- women;
- men;
- without specific gender (unisex).

By message:

- motivational;
- symbolic;
- erotic;
- neutral.

By image:

- hero;
- assistant;
- comrade.

Conclusions. Thus, analyzing the theoretical material, we can conclude that a brand character is an effective tool for image formation. Brand characters have become mascots for many organizations and companies. Examining the various characteristics of the brand character, it was found that this is a real or fictional character who has his character, features, history and is used to strengthen the brand as part of the image strategy.

Analyzing the brand characters in the historical context, a certain trend in practical use was revealed. The first brand characters were created based on images of people and real stories. Well-known market leaders have realized in time the need to create their brand characters. Thus, everyday consumer goods received a bright association and trust from the audience. Since the inception of the first brand characters, professionals have learned to use associative connections to work effectively with consumers.

When studying the types of brand characters, which were proposed by various experts and institutes, it was found that the concept of brand character is much broader than it seemed before. Based on the analysis of theoretical material, it was found that the creation of a character for advertising is based on its features, and the character is formed from certain features that are inherent in the audience or the company or organization. According to these features, they can be classified according to a certain typology. There are more than a dozen types and subtypes of brand characters in the advertising industry. Having considered and analyzed the scientific work on this issue, we have created a new classification that allows you to describe the concept of

brand character more accurately. Remember that the character should be concise and appropriate, so do not combine too many traits in one character, because it should be clear without explanation. The right and successful combination of all elements in the minds of the target audience creates a positive image and forms a trusting attitude to the brand.

Research into the audience’s reaction to the transformation of mascots in accordance with the requirements of time and trends in graphic design, identifying the civic position of brands with the help of mascots, etc. can also be promising.

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МАСКОТ ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТ ФОРМУВАННЯ ІМІДЖУ

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Вступ. Завдяки комунікативно-психологічному впливу бренд-персонажа як аудіовізуального елемента рекламне повідомлення має низку переваг у вербальній комунікації. Конкуренція між брендами та організаціями впливає на те, що все більше професіоналів

почали використовувати нестандартні підходи та методи для залучення потенційної аудиторії. Велика кількість зарубіжних брендів уже зрозуміли їхню важливість для формування іміджу. Це дозволило розширити межі просування серед потенційної та реальної аудиторії.

Актуальність дослідження зумовлена інформаційною переваженістю сучасного рекламного ринку, де фахівці намагаються привернути увагу цільової аудиторії та зацікавити її незвичайними властивостями, характеристиками бренду за допомогою маскотів, тим самим допомагаючи комунікувати зі споживачами. Метою дослідження є виявлення особливостей створення бренд-персонажа.

Методологія. Досягнення цілей статті забезпечується за допомогою методів: аксіоматичного (вивчення та визначення понятійного апарату), аналітичного (вивчення світових тенденцій створення бренд-персонажів), емпіричного (узагальнення практичного досвіду залучення маскота), порівняльного (порівняння практичного досвіду залучення бренд-персонажів у Європі та США).

Результати. Імідж організації складається з багатьох компонентів, які формують образ бренду. Серед усіх елементів меседжу саме маскот може зробити світ образів схожим на реальність, він здатний оживити його. Реклама товарів чи послуг, які не мають символів, має низькі шанси привернути увагу, запам'ятатися споживачам. У рекламному повідомленні сьогодні більше цікавить імідж, ніж товар. Оскільки споживач починає ототожнювати себе вже не з брендом, а з бренд-персонажем, успішне та своєчасне впровадження нових історій чи маскотів може зробити продукт чи послугу більш привабливими для нього.

Висновки. На основі дослідження було виявлено, що створення бренд-персонажа базується на основі певних ознак, які притаманні аудиторії, а також самої компанії. Маскот може не тільки відображати суть та імідж бренду, але й розвивати емпатію до нього. Якщо надати персонажу риси та характеристики, які притаманні цільовій аудиторії, він буде виділятися на тлі конкурентів і покращувати відносини між споживачем і брендом.

Ключові слова: історія реклами, історія PR, характер бренда, маскот, імідж.

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