

Branding Through Interior Design: Exploring Theory, and Interpretation

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Article History:</i> Received: September 25, 2024 Received in revised form: December 7, 2024 Accepted on: December 2, 2024 Available Online: December 2024–May 2025</p>	<p>Teori interior branding merupakan teori yang diusung oleh Kim Kuhteubl (2016) melalui bukunya <i>Branding + Interior Design: Visibility and Business Strategy for Interior Designers</i>. Teori interior branding membahas mengenai peran interior dalam mendorong penguatan merek dan loyalitas pelanggan. Pembahasan terkait teori ini dapat ditemukan pada jurnal/artikel-artikel yang membahas tentang implementasi interior branding di berbagai ruang komersil. Diantara lain penjelasan terkait aspek-aspek yang mampu membentuk interior branding, yaitu vision, story, dan energy. Namun, penjelasan yang lebih mendalam terkait makna aspek-aspek pembentuk interior branding tersebut masih sangat terbatas. Hal ini menjadikan teori interior branding beresiko menimbulkan multitafsir. Padahal, aspek-aspek yang digunakan dapat dirujuk penjelasannya melalui teori-teori dasar interior. Jurnal ini bertujuan untuk melengkapi penjelasan dari masing-masing aspek pembentuk interior branding. Penjelasan yang lebih mendalam mampu memberikan pemahaman yang lebih lengkap pula. Metode penelitian yang digunakan ialah metode literature review terkait masing-masing kata terkait. Sumber literature review dibataskan pada ranah keilmuan desain interior dan arsitektur agar sesuai dengan konteks penelitian yang dilakukan.</p>
<p><i>Keywords:</i> design, interior, interior branding (desain, interior, branding interior)</p>	<p><i>The theory of interior branding is a concept proposed by Kim Kuhteubl (2016) in her book "Branding + Interior Design: Visibility and Business Strategy for Interior Designers". The theory of interior branding explores the role of interior design in reinforcing brand identity and customer loyalty. Discussion regarding this theory can be found in journals/articles that examine the implementation of interior branding in various commercial spaces. Among these discussions are explanations concerning the aspects that contribute to interior branding, such as vision, story, and energy. However, in-depth explanations regarding the meaning of these aspects in forming interior branding are still limited. This limitation poses a risk of generating multiple interpretations of the theory of interior branding. Nevertheless, these aspects can be further elucidated by referencing fundamental theories of interior design. This journal aims to complement the explanations of each aspect that shapes interior branding. A more comprehensive explanation can provide a deeper understanding. The research method employed is a literature review method related to each relevant keyword. The literature review sources are limited to the fields of interior design and architecture to ensure relevance and alignment with the context of the research.</i></p>
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1. Introduction

Marketing is the most crucial tool used to achieve sustainable revenue growth for business. One of the basic marketing strategies is by building a brand and loyal customer base to create significant value and intangible assets of a company (Kotler & Keller, Manajemen Pemasaran Edisi 13 Jilid 1). Interior branding is a rapidly developing concept aimed at strengthening brand image and building customer loyalty through interior design. The theory of interior branding focuses on understanding how interior design can be a strategic tool for developing experiences that reinforce the brand and its influence on customer behavior.

Kim Kuhteubl is an interior design practitioner who introduced the theory of interior branding in 2016 through her book called "Branding + Interior Design: Visibility and Business Strategy for Interior Designers." In this work, Kuhteubl provides a detailed discussion on the role of interior design in strengthening brand identity and promote customer loyalty (Sari et al., 2022). Discussions on the theory of interior branding are commonly found in various design literature. For instance: *Penerapan Interior Branding pada Hotel Yello* (2017), *Penerapan Gaya Modern Urban pada Interior Sebuah Perusahaan Pengembang Bisnis Properti* (2019), *Space as a Medium for Interior Branding in Commercial and Retail Spaces, Case Study: Tiara Handycraft Shop in Surabaya, Indonesia* (2021), *Application of Brand Visual Identity in Interior Design. Case Study: Block71 Bandung* (2022), *Implementation of Interior Branding in Retail Interior Design* (2022). Despite these valuable insights, notable gaps persist in the current research. Many studies offer only brief overviews of the interior branding topic, and in-depth explanations of each sub-aspect remain limited. Furthermore, interdisciplinary approaches and cultural contexts are underexplored, limiting the understanding of interior branding's broader applicability and long-term effects. Aspects such as vision, story, and energy are often only briefly mentioned, yet they are crucial for a deeper understanding and broader implications of the interior branding theory.

Further research is needed to elaborate on each of these components. A more comprehensive explanation will help calibrate the knowledge, providing clarity and depth to the concept, facilitating its development in various contexts and cultures, and assisting design practitioners in more effectively implementing this concept. This research employs a literature review method centered on pertinent keywords to gain a deeper insight into the theory of interior branding. The literature sources are confined to the disciplines of interior design, architecture, and design, ensuring that each term is used in its appropriate context. As a result, this study aims to contribute significantly to the advancement of interior branding theory and the practice of interior design. This journal serves as a valuable tool for defining interior branding, addressing a gap in existing research where no comprehensive framework has previously been established. It also offers a practical reference for shaping design approaches in commercial interior projects, providing meaningful insights for professionals in the field.

2. Materials and Methods

Interior branding is an activity of aligning brand identity through physical space. Creating branding within commercial spaces can significantly aid in reinforcing and conveying the brand's values and messages. Interiors that are well-branded are also capable of creating a company culture that benefits both employees and customers (Zwick, 2019). The implementation of branding in interior design can be more impactful compared to other methods if the branding is effectively translated into the interior design (Imani & Shishebori, 2014).



Figure 1. Diagram of the interrelationship between aspects of interior branding
Source: (Kuchteubl, 2016)

Each aspect of interior branding has interrelated connections. These connections are evident from the similarity in interior applications represented by the purple, green, and orange circles (Kuchteubl, 2016). This research aims to complement the explanation of sub-aspects within the three main components of interior branding. Providing a more comprehensive explanation of the sub-aspects of interior branding can create a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the theory itself. The data analysis method used is the literature review method utilizing relevant keywords to gain deeper meaning of each sub-aspect. Explanations regarding each sub-aspect are obtained through: 1) Basic interior theory books by (Wicaksono & Tisnawati, 2014). Journals/articles on interior, architecture, and design containing information related to: logo and signage, area dividers, space organization, furniture arrangement, logo meaning, concept selection, naming of each area, type of music, visual attractiveness (aesthetics), quality, air conditioning system, and space facilities. This literature is sourced from various book providers, and international research journals/articles. This method was used to find several books, journals, and articles

explaining the relationship between the sought-after discussion topics. The list of literature used will be presented in the bibliography.

3. Result and Discussion

1. The aspect of clear vision

- a. Logo and signage: A logo is a visual element that provides identity to an object or activity as a strategy to introduce a product (Henderson et al., 2003). An effective logo can reflect the effort it represents by using commonly known graphic elements recognized by the public as its recipients (Handayani & Nuzuli, 2021). On the other hand, signage aims to serve as a boundary marker or identity of a place (Novianti et al., 2021). In the field of interior design, logos, and signage serve as identifiers of interior products. The placement of logos and signage plays a crucial role in spatial structure, as proper placement can help users recognize the boundaries of buildings and specific spaces. Effective placement of logos and signage can be achieved through: 1) Designing attractive signage shapes, 2) Focusing on functionality, and 3) Strategic placement (Novianti et al., 2021). A good logo and signage are those that are easy to read and clear (Andrianawati & Yuniati, 2022).
- b. Area dividers, or space dividers, refer to all elements that delineate or divide spaces, whether in the form of permanent physical barriers such as structures, walls, doors, or partitions, or temporary visual dividers such as differences in floor height or contrast play. Effective management of area dividers can create good spatial arrangements, which can be marked by the formation of appropriate qualities of form, proportion, scale, texture, and lighting (Yochanes, 2017).
- c. Space organization: Space is a three-dimensional form with length, width, and height. Form and space can shape certain structures that support the achievement of desired goals (Wicaksono & Tisnawati, 2014). The pattern of space arrangement includes variations in value and function in each space, ranging from general to specific characteristics or from public to private spaces. This affects the flow of activities within them (Hidayatun, 1999). The effective use of area dividers can result in optimal spatial arrangements, reflected in the appropriate qualities of form, proportion, scale, texture, and lighting (Yochanes, 2017). This gradation concept is part of the early stage of design called space zoning. There are five types of spaces in this zoning theory, namely: 1) Public, accessible to everyone, whether known or unknown, 2) Semi-public, with limited access to specific individuals, 3) Semi-private, used by known individuals although not the owners of the space, 4) Private, restricted access only to space owners or used for specific activities such as bathrooms, and 5) Service, serving as storage or cooking areas. There are four types of relationships between spaces, namely: 1) Spaces within spaces, 2) Interlocking, where spaces are interconnected, 3) Adjacent spaces, and 4) Spaces connected through shared areas. Effective space

organization is one that can identify the harmony of relationships between spaces and comply with applicable technical standards (Wicaksono & Tisnawati, 2014).

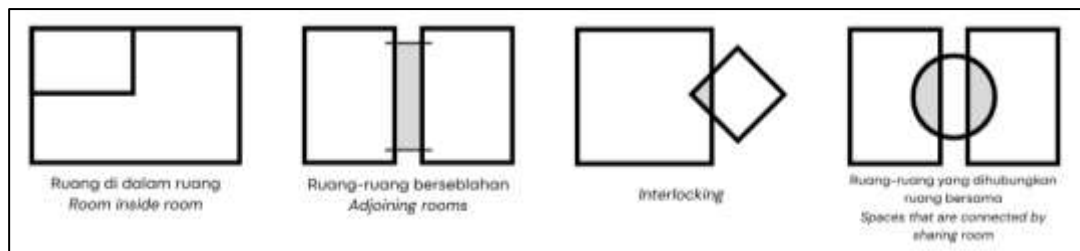


Figure 2. Spaces Connection

(Source: Wicaksono & Tisnawati, 2014)

- d. Furniture arrangement: Furniture arrangement, often referred to as layout, aims to create an effective, balanced, and functional spatial arrangement (Indraswara, 2007). In some cases primarily involve furniture arrangements, spatial dividers, zoning allocations, and the scheduling or flow of activities to optimize the use of different zones (Yunita, 2014). Optimal furniture arrangement considers the functions and activities within the room (Wicaksono & Tisnawati, 2014), taking into account ergonomic aspects, comfort, and health (Ricardo & Kharisma, while also ensuring smooth user movement (Indraswara. M. Sahid, 2007).
2. The aspect of a unique story
 - a. Logo meaning: Essentially, a logo reflects the identity of an institution, company, or product. In the context of visual communication design, the result of this representation can take the form of icons, indexes, and symbols that collectively form a sign. There are two important aspects in understanding signs, namely verbal signs and visual signs. Verbal signs involve various languages, writing styles, themes, and meanings contained within them, while visual signs can be produced through iconic, indexical, or symbolic representations. Denotative analysis is crucial to uncover implicit meanings within them, so that the logo can present the actual vision and mission. According to Barthes, denotation refers to the interpretation of clear meanings based on the relationship between the elements that constitute the sign and its signifier (Bayu et al., 2021). An effective logo can depict a product using visual language that is familiar to society (Handayani & Nuzuli, 2021).
 - b. Concept selection: A concept is a representation or creative idea about the types of entities encountered in everyday life. As a foundational thought, concepts are used to address challenges in design. Typically, a concept combines various ideas from different elements into a unified whole. In designing and conveying an effective design concept, it should be explained through interrelated design elements and refer to a single main objective (Wicaksono & Tisnawati, 2014).
 - c. Naming of each area: In Peirce's semiotic theory, names fall into the category of symbols that depict the scientific relationship between the use of signifiers and

signifiers, which tend to be arbitrary (Candra Dewi, 2013). Symbols can be interpreted through processes of learning and interpretation. Naming rooms becomes a crucial factor because it also contributes to the communication of concepts in interior design.

- d. Type of music: Music is a form of language often used to express emotions and one's identity. Recent studies have revealed the significant role of music and perceived valence in shaping individuals' experiences of a room's atmosphere. (Ehret et al., 2021)
3. The aspect of energy
 - a. Visual beauty, also known as aesthetics, is the subject in the field of study that explores beauty. The ability of a product to radiate its beauty can be explained by creatures with intellect and reason. Aesthetics arises from the ability of the senses to capture experiences and transform them into perceptions. Visual beauty is one type of aesthetics that can be perceived through sight. In visual beauty, something is considered beautiful when it brings pleasure upon being seen. Beauty is subjective, meaning that each person can have different views on beauty even when facing the same object. An individual's perception and understanding of aesthetics has many determinants ranging from evolutionary, anatomical or physiological constraints to influences of culture, history and individual differences (Jacobsen, 2010)
 - b. Quality: In the effort to create a favorable impression in the minds of visitors, one aspect that can be conveyed through furniture and materials is quality. The primary focus in assessing the quality of a space is the people who inhabit or use it. Quality interiors in a business environment are those that can meet beneficial needs for the company while also providing comfort commensurate with the value paid by customers (Wicaksono & Tisnawati, 2014). Environmental quality aspects are also defined by serenity, freshness, and health (Pamela et al., 2021).
 - c. Conditioning system: In addition to furniture and building materials, mechanical and electrical elements are integral parts of achieving maximum quality in interior design. These components encompass environmental control systems such as air conditioning and sanitation (water) systems (Wicaksono & Tisnawati, 2014). Other conditioning systems to consider include lighting and sound as other forms of pollution that can potentially hinder the interior in creating comfort and health in activities.
 - d. Space facilities: According to (Tjiptono, 2015), facilities are physical assets that must be available before services are provided or offered to customers as consumers. Facilities are provided to use by users.

4. Conclusions

In the context of competitive business, interior branding is a crucial aspect. Each aspect and sub-aspect of interior branding plays a significant role in the realization of

successful interior branding. These aspects and sub-aspects can be explained through basic interior theories that are commonly used in everyday practice. Based on the conducted research, it can be concluded that:

1. A good clear vision aspect can be measured through a) Implementation of easily readable logos and signage, b) Formation of appropriate qualities of form, proportion, scale, texture, and lighting, and c) Space organization that can identify the harmony of relationships between spaces and comply with applicable technical standards.
2. A good unique story aspect can be measured through a) Logos that are representative of the product and familiar to the public, b) Concepts that can be explained through interrelated design elements and refer to the same objective, c) Room naming that communicates purpose, and d) Types of music that create an atmosphere in line with the company's objectives.
3. A good energy aspect can be measured through a) Visual beauty that corresponds to the users' capacity to understand space, b) Quality interiors, meaning they benefit the company and provide comfort commensurate with the value paid by customers, c) Conditioning systems that create comfort and health in activities, and finally, d) Facilities that accommodate the use of services/products and can be enjoyed by customers.

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