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## Corporate Visual Communication (Visuelle Unternehmenskommunikation)

### Abstract

In times of saturated markets, exchangeable products and services, it should be the task and goal of enterprises to differ their own brand and products by the means of various strategies from their business oppositions to succeed on the market. One possible strategy for contrasting with others is the company's self-expression by all forms and uses of visual communication: the logo or trademark (the creation of which is greatly important), corporate design (in a holistic view) and advertising. Under "normal circumstances" the first impression that people get of a company is a visual one: on TV, on the street (billboards, neon signs), on the Internet and so on. That leads to the assumption that corporate visual communication – respectively the creation, choice and use of visual stimuli – is obviously vital. That may connote that the instrument's potentials are not often used in the best way (especially by small- and medium-scale enterprises). In this work, "visual communication" will not be considered as a universal remedy or cure for companies – because no beautiful skin of a fruit will exist for a long time with a rotten core; this may sound trivial but one major task of my work is to accentuate the possibilities and strengths of well-created visual materials. In the context of organisational communication, the term "visual communication" subsumes all strategic-visual communication measures which are sent out for accomplishing a company's goal. These (persuasive) visual statements can follow short-term (f.e. sales) and long-term strategies (f.e. brand-image). By showing the capability of images with their significant implications for practise, I want to point out the importance of this kind of communication for public relations- and corporate communications-theory, which is still neglected in literature. The main idea is to bring together the scientific fields of "public relations", "corporate communications", "advertising", "branding" and "corporate identity" with the subject of "visual communication"; furthermore, to show the points of contact between these research domains and to synthesize interdisciplinary findings in related fields such as cognitive psychology (reception), imagery science, research on advertising effects, etc. and to utilize them for corporate communications. Another important task is to show the visual potentials, to work out possible design strategies and to explain the importance of visual communication for corporate communications and public relations. This is why this topic is interesting for many target groups: researchers from different academic directions as well as practitioners like communication-professionals (advertising, marketing, public relations) and visual designers. Due to the presentation of the novel field "corporate visual communication" the thesis could be somehow called a "fundamental work".