



Semiotic Analysis of Signifiers and Signifieds in Social Media Advertisements: Brand Identity and Consumer Perception

Muhammad Nabhan Hanif¹

¹ nabhanhanifo61@gmail.com

¹ UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung

Abstract

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This study examines the role of signifiers and signifieds in product advertisements on social media, applying Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory to explore how visual and textual elements shape brand identity and consumer perception. Using a qualitative approach, this research analyzes advertisements from ten global brands, including Nike, Coca-Cola, Apple, Dove, McDonald's, Starbucks, L'Oréal, GoPro, Audi, and Rolex. Findings indicate that each brand strategically employs a combination of visual signifiers—such as logos, imagery, and colors—alongside verbal elements like slogans to convey deeper meanings associated with brand values, identity, and emotional appeal. The study concludes that the strategic use of semiotic elements in advertising enhances brand-consumer relationships and reinforces brand identity beyond the functional aspects of a product.

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✉ Corresponding author:

B3 Building, Kampus Viktor, Pamulang, Tangerang Selatan Indonesia 50229 E-mail:

wihinoktaviantiii80@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Advertising serves as a powerful tool for brand communication, enabling companies to introduce their products and services while shaping consumer perceptions (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The growing influence of social media has transformed advertising strategies, compelling brands to craft visually engaging content that resonates with their target audience (Lury, 2020). By leveraging semiotic elements, advertisements create compelling narratives that influence consumer behavior and brand loyalty (Chandler, 2017).

This study is grounded in Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory, which differentiates between the signifier (the physical representation of a sign) and the signified (the concept or meaning attached to the sign) (Saussure, 1916/1983). Understanding the interaction between these elements is essential for analyzing how advertisements convey messages and establish brand identity. Despite the wealth of research on advertising strategies, relatively few studies have thoroughly examined the intricate relationship between signifiers and signifieds in global brand advertisements on social media. This study aims to bridge that gap by analyzing advertisements from leading brands to uncover patterns in their semiotic strategies and their influence on consumer perception.

Semiotics, as a field of study, examines how meaning is constructed and interpreted through signs and symbols (Eco, 1976). In advertising, semiotics plays a crucial role in shaping how consumers engage with brands. Saussure's (1916/1983) structuralist approach to semiotics argues that meaning is derived from the relationship between the signifier (e.g., a brand logo, slogan, or color scheme) and the signified (the abstract concept or association that the consumer attributes to the signifier). Roland Barthes (1964) expanded on Saussure's work, emphasizing how advertisements use denotation (literal meaning) and connotation (implied cultural meaning) to create brand narratives that evoke emotions and drive consumer behavior.

For example, the Coca-Cola logo, with its distinctive red color and flowing script, acts as a signifier that evokes emotions of happiness, nostalgia, and togetherness (Danesi, 2018). The signified concept associated with Coca-Cola is not merely a soft drink but an experience linked to moments of joy and celebration. Similarly, luxury brands such as Rolex employ minimalist advertisements, where the signifier (a sleek watch design) conveys the signified concept of prestige, status, and exclusivity (Berger, 2010).

METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method to examine the signs used in Herborist. This study employs a qualitative approach to analyze the semiotic elements in advertisements from ten leading global brands: Nike, Coca-Cola, Apple, Dove, McDonald's, Starbucks, L'Oréal, GoPro, Audi, and Rolex. The selection criteria for these brands were based on their global presence, marketing influence, and extensive use of semiotic strategies in social media advertising (Kapferer, 2012). The advertisements were selected from official brand websites and social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) within the past two years (2022–2024).

The study follows a semiotic analysis framework, examining how visual (logos, colors, typography, imagery) and verbal (slogans, taglines, brand messages) signifiers contribute to brand messaging. The analysis is structured around two key questions:

1. How do brands use signifiers to create an emotional or conceptual link with consumers?
2. What recurring patterns emerge in the interplay between signifiers and signifieds across different brands?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

1. Nike



Nike's advertisements strategically employ both visual and verbal signifiers to reinforce its brand identity and core values. The *swoosh* logo, a simple yet dynamic check mark, serves as a powerful visual signifier associated with speed, movement, and victory. Beyond its aesthetic appeal, the logo conveys deeper meanings related to sportsmanship, personal achievement, and resilience. It has become an instantly recognizable emblem of athleticism and determination, making it synonymous with success and peak performance.

Accompanying this iconic logo is Nike's globally renowned slogan, *Just Do It*. As a verbal signifier, this short yet impactful phrase encapsulates the essence of motivation and fearless action. It conveys the message that success comes from taking the first step, overcoming hesitation, and pushing past limitations. Rather than focusing solely on the functionality of its products, Nike integrates this slogan to instill a mindset of perseverance and self-belief, positioning the brand as a source of inspiration rather than merely a provider of sportswear.

In Nike's advertisements, the interplay between the *swoosh* logo and the *Just Do It* slogan strengthens the brand's narrative. These elements work together to communicate Nike's core philosophy: sports are not just about physical activity but also about the drive to exceed personal limits. By emphasizing themes of courage, determination, and relentless ambition, Nike's marketing campaigns inspire consumers to see their products as more than just athletic gear. Instead, they become symbols of an active and empowered lifestyle.

Through consistent use of these signifiers, Nike successfully builds an emotional connection with its audience. Consumers are not just purchasing sportswear; they are adopting an identity aligned with Nike's vision of pushing boundaries and embracing challenges. This semiotic approach ensures that Nike remains a dominant force in the world of sports and lifestyle branding, where its products are seen as tools for achieving greatness rather than just commodities.

2. Coca Cola



Coca-Cola's *Share a Coke* campaign is a compelling example of how semiotic elements are used to create a personal and emotional connection with consumers. Through a combination of visual and textual signifiers, the campaign reinforces themes of personalization, togetherness, and shared happiness, positioning Coca-Cola as more than just a beverage but as an integral part of social interactions.

One of the most prominent signifiers in this campaign is the personalized Coca-Cola bottle or can, featuring common individual names on the label. This personalization strategy transforms an ordinary soft drink into something unique and meaningful to the consumer. By printing names on the packaging, Coca-Cola conveys the idea that its product is not just for the masses but for each individual, fostering a sense of ownership and personal attachment. This simple yet powerful gesture invites consumers to engage with the product in a new way—seeking out bottles with their names or those of their friends and family members, thereby strengthening their emotional connection to the brand.

Another key signifier is the imagery of people smiling and sharing Coca-Cola with friends and family. These visuals reinforce the signified message of togetherness, joy, and social bonding. By portraying Coca-Cola as a drink best enjoyed in moments of connection, the campaign aligns itself with positive emotions and shared experiences. The act of giving and receiving Coca-Cola becomes symbolic of strengthening relationships, making the brand synonymous with warmth, celebration, and friendship.

The campaign's dominant red color scheme also plays a crucial role in reinforcing Coca-Cola's identity. The color red is a powerful signifier associated with energy, enthusiasm, and happiness—qualities that perfectly align with the brand's image. By maintaining its signature red branding, Coca-Cola ensures that its advertisements are instantly recognizable while evoking emotions of excitement and enjoyment.

The final and perhaps most explicit signifier is the slogan *Share a Coke*, which serves as both a call to action and an embodiment of the campaign's central theme. The phrase encourages consumers to not only purchase Coca-Cola but to share it with others, positioning the act of sharing as an essential component of the brand experience. The signified meaning here extends beyond the physical exchange of a beverage—it symbolizes creating meaningful moments, strengthening friendships, and spreading happiness through small but significant gestures.

In essence, the *Share a Coke* campaign successfully integrates signifiers such as personalized bottles, joyful imagery, vibrant red branding, and an engaging slogan to create an emotional and social experience for consumers. Rather than simply selling a product,

Coca-Cola uses semiotic strategies to transform its brand into a symbol of connection and celebration. Through this approach, Coca-Cola reinforces its identity as *a drink for everyone*, making it an integral part of people’s social lives and cherished memories.

3. Apple



Apple’s branding strategy is deeply rooted in semiotics, using both visual and textual signifiers to construct a powerful brand identity. The sleek design of the latest iPhone, with its seamless full-screen display and vibrant colors, serves as a signifier of innovation, modernity, and luxury. Apple’s emphasis on minimalism and precision in design conveys a sense of high quality and technological sophistication, reinforcing its position as a leader in the industry.

The iconic slogan *Think Different* further amplifies Apple’s brand identity. More than just a marketing phrase, it functions as a signifier that encourages consumers to see themselves as innovators, creative thinkers, and individuals who stand apart from the mainstream. By aligning itself with the idea of challenging conventions and pushing boundaries, Apple appeals to consumers who aspire to be leaders in creativity and forward-thinking.

Apple’s advertisements go beyond showcasing technical specifications—they sell an experience and a lifestyle. Every element, from the design of the product to the messaging in its campaigns, is meticulously crafted to evoke emotions of exclusivity and inspiration. The brand presents its products as more than just tools; they are symbols of personal expression, ingenuity, and a connection to a global community of creators and visionaries.

Through its strategic use of semiotic elements, Apple has successfully positioned itself as a brand that embodies sophistication, innovation, and individuality. This approach not only differentiates Apple from its competitors but also fosters deep emotional connections with its consumers, making Apple products more than just devices—they become an extension of the user’s identity.

4. Dove



Dove's advertising strategy is deeply rooted in promoting self-acceptance and redefining traditional beauty standards. Through its use of semiotic elements, the brand effectively constructs a message that resonates with consumers on an emotional and societal level.

The imagery in Dove's advertisements often features women of various body types, ethnic backgrounds, and skin tones, all depicted in a confident and radiant manner. These visuals serve as signifiers of diversity and inclusivity, challenging the conventional perception that beauty must conform to a single, rigid standard. By portraying real women rather than idealized models, Dove fosters an environment where self-acceptance is celebrated. The clean, bright background in its ads further reinforces a sense of purity, honesty, and authenticity, aligning with the brand's message of natural beauty.

Accompanying these visuals is Dove's well-known slogan, *Real Beauty* or *You Are Beautiful*, which acts as a textual signifier emphasizing the importance of self-love and empowerment. This message encourages consumers to embrace their natural appearance and reject unrealistic beauty expectations perpetuated by mainstream media. The signified meaning behind this slogan is clear: beauty is not something to be attained through artificial means, but rather something inherent in every individual.

Dove's approach to advertising extends beyond simply promoting its products; it actively seeks to reshape societal attitudes toward beauty. The *Real Beauty* campaign, for instance, has positioned Dove as a brand that not only sells skincare and hygiene products but also advocates for confidence and self-worth. By incorporating strong visual elements and positive messaging, Dove has cultivated a brand identity that aligns with the values of empowerment and self-acceptance.

This strategy has proven highly effective in differentiating Dove from its competitors. Rather than relying on traditional marketing techniques that emphasize perfection, Dove has built a brand that fosters an emotional connection with its audience. The campaign does more than just sell products—it inspires a social movement that challenges deep-seated beauty stereotypes and encourages individuals to feel comfortable in their own skin. By leveraging semiotics to communicate these values, Dove successfully establishes itself as a brand that champions authenticity, inclusivity, and self-love.

5. McDonald's



McDonald's advertising strategy is centered on creating an emotional connection between its food and the experience of joy, comfort, and togetherness. The brand effectively employs semiotic elements to communicate these themes, making its advertisements more than just promotions for fast food but representations of shared moments and enjoyment.

The imagery in McDonald's advertisements frequently features a perfectly assembled Big Mac burger, with layers of juicy meat, melted cheese, fresh vegetables, and the brand's signature sauce. This visual signifier immediately conveys indulgence, satisfaction, and the promise of a delicious meal. The carefully staged composition, often including crispy fries and a refreshing soda, further enhances the appeal, making the food appear even more irresistible. The use of warm colors, particularly red and yellow, plays a crucial role in stimulating appetite and evoking feelings of energy and enthusiasm.

Accompanying these visuals is the well-known slogan *I'm Lovin' It*, which acts as a verbal signifier reinforcing the emotional aspect of consuming McDonald's food. The slogan is casual, upbeat, and personal, suggesting that eating at McDonald's is not just about fulfilling hunger but about experiencing joy and pleasure. The signified meaning behind this phrase is that McDonald's is more than just a fast-food chain—it is a place where customers can enjoy moments of happiness, whether alone or with family and friends.

Beyond the individual elements, McDonald's advertisements collectively create a narrative of familiarity and warmth. The brand consistently associates itself with fun, relaxation, and social bonding, making it a go-to choice for casual dining. Whether in commercials that depict families sharing a meal, friends laughing over a burger, or children excitedly enjoying their Happy Meals, McDonald's reinforces the idea that their food is not just about taste but about the experience that comes with it.

This semiotic approach has allowed McDonald's to maintain its status as one of the most recognizable and beloved fast-food brands globally. By strategically combining visual and verbal signifiers, the company does more than just sell burgers—it sells moments of joy, comfort, and nostalgia. This makes McDonald's more than just a fast-food brand; it becomes a cultural symbol of simple pleasures and everyday happiness.

6. Starbucks



Starbucks advertising strategy goes beyond promoting coffee as a mere beverage; it constructs a narrative of comfort, quality, and self-care. The brand effectively employs semiotic elements to communicate the idea that Starbucks is not just about drinking coffee but about enjoying a premium experience that enriches daily life.

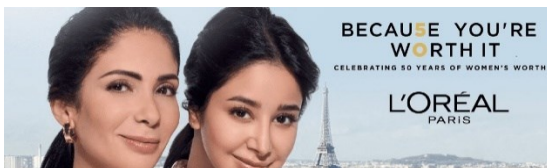
A key visual signifier in Starbucks advertisements is the image of a steaming cup of coffee, prominently featuring the recognizable Starbucks logo. Placed on a rustic wooden table and often accompanied by coffee beans, intricate latte art, or a softly lit café setting, this image conveys warmth, craftsmanship, and a sensory delight. The overall composition suggests an inviting, cozy environment, reinforcing the idea that Starbucks is more than a coffee shop—it is a space for relaxation, productivity, and personal enjoyment.

The accompanying slogan, *The Best Coffee for the Best You*, serves as a verbal signifier that elevates Starbucks from just a coffee provider to a brand associated with self-improvement and well-being. This phrase implies that choosing Starbucks is a conscious decision to enjoy the highest quality, not just in taste but in experience. The signified meaning behind this slogan is that Starbucks coffee is not just about caffeine—it is about taking a moment for oneself, indulging in a treat, and embracing a lifestyle that values premium quality and comfort.

Beyond the individual elements, Starbucks advertisements collectively craft a sense of personal reward and social belonging. Whether through visuals of individuals enjoying a quiet moment with their coffee or groups of friends gathering in a Starbucks café, the brand positions itself as a place that enhances everyday life. The ambiance of Starbucks cafés, often featured in advertisements, reinforces the idea of a welcoming "third place" between home and work, where customers can unwind, connect, or focus.

This semiotic approach has allowed Starbucks to maintain its status as a global leader in the coffee industry. By strategically combining visual and verbal signifiers, the brand creates a sense of exclusivity and personal indulgence, making Starbucks coffee more than just a drink—it becomes a ritual, an experience, and a symbol of modern, sophisticated living. Through these elements, Starbucks successfully establishes itself as a brand that not only sells coffee but also enhances the consumer's lifestyle, making each visit a meaningful and enjoyable escape.

7. L'Oreal



L'Oréal's advertising strategy is deeply rooted in the themes of self-worth, confidence, and empowerment. By employing a combination of visual and verbal signifiers, the brand successfully communicates that beauty is not just about appearance but also about self-care and personal value.

A key visual element in L'Oréal's advertisements is the image of a model with radiant, healthy hair, exuding confidence and elegance. The model's luminous hair serves as a powerful signifier of beauty, vitality, and the effectiveness of L'Oréal's hair care products. The composition of the advertisement, often featuring soft lighting and a sophisticated backdrop, reinforces the aspirational quality of the brand, suggesting that using L'Oréal products leads to a luxurious and polished appearance.

Accompanying the visuals is L'Oréal's iconic slogan, *Because You're Worth It*, which serves as a strong verbal signifier. This phrase does more than just promote the product—it delivers a message of self-empowerment. The signified meaning of this slogan is clear: beauty is not a privilege but a right, and every individual deserves to feel valued and confident. By incorporating this message, L'Oréal positions itself as a brand that champions self-care as a form of self-respect, reinforcing the idea that taking care of oneself is an essential part of self-worth.

Beyond just selling beauty products, L'Oréal's advertising campaigns emphasize the importance of self-expression and individuality. The brand frequently features diverse models of different ethnicities, ages, and backgrounds, highlighting that beauty is inclusive and personal. This strategic representation resonates with a wide audience, making L'Oréal not just a brand, but a movement that celebrates diversity and self-love.

Through its advertising, L'Oréal successfully aligns itself with modern ideals of empowerment and self-care. The brand's message extends beyond aesthetics, encouraging consumers to embrace their unique beauty and invest in themselves. By leveraging these semiotic elements, L'Oréal creates an emotional connection with its audience, making its products more than just cosmetic solutions—they become tools for confidence, empowerment, and self-appreciation.

8. GoPro



GoPro's advertising strategy is centered around the themes of adventure, freedom, and self-empowerment. By using dynamic visual elements and a compelling tagline, the brand effectively positions itself as more than just a camera company—it becomes a symbol of exploration and personal achievement.

A dominant visual signifier in GoPro's advertisements is the image of an action camera mounted on a recording device, often worn by extreme athletes such as surfers, mountain climbers, or skydivers. The positioning of the camera within the scene allows viewers to experience the action firsthand, creating an immersive perspective that captures the thrill and intensity of the moment. This visual representation serves as a powerful signifier of adventure and limitless possibilities, emphasizing that GoPro cameras are designed to withstand extreme environments and document extraordinary experiences.

Accompanying the visuals is GoPro's signature tagline, *Be a Hero*. This slogan acts as a verbal signifier that transcends mere product functionality, instead delivering a deeper motivational message. The signified meaning behind this tagline is that GoPro enables consumers to become the protagonists of their own stories, empowering them to record and share their most exhilarating moments. The phrase encourages users to embrace a bold and adventurous lifestyle, reinforcing the idea that every individual has the potential to achieve greatness.

GoPro's marketing does not focus on traditional product specifications; instead, it emphasizes the experiences that the camera facilitates. The brand strategically uses user-generated content, showcasing real footage captured by customers engaging in extreme sports, travel, and outdoor exploration. This approach strengthens the emotional connection

between the brand and its consumers, making the product feel like an essential companion for adventure seekers rather than just a recording device.

By leveraging these semiotic elements, GoPro successfully establishes itself as a brand that embodies excitement, exploration, and personal storytelling. The company's advertisements not only inspire consumers to push their limits but also position GoPro as a tool that enables them to capture, relive, and share their most memorable moments. In doing so, GoPro transforms the simple act of recording into an empowering experience, reinforcing the idea that life is an adventure waiting to be documented.

9. Audi Car



Audi's advertising strategy is meticulously crafted to highlight the brand's association with luxury, performance, and cutting-edge technology. By combining striking visuals with a compelling slogan, Audi establishes itself as a leader in the automotive industry, appealing to consumers who seek sophistication and innovation in their driving experience.

A key visual signifier in Audi's advertisements is the image of a sleek and modern car cruising down a winding road, set against the backdrop of either breathtaking natural scenery or a futuristic cityscape illuminated by vibrant lights. This imagery conveys an air of elegance, precision, and power, reinforcing the idea that Audi is more than just a vehicle—it is a symbol of status and refined engineering. The smooth motion of the car, combined with the dynamic setting, further suggests high performance, effortless control, and a seamless driving experience.

Accompanying this striking imagery is Audi's well-known slogan, *Vorsprung durch Technik* (Progress Through Technology). This phrase serves as a verbal signifier that encapsulates the brand's philosophy. The signified meaning behind the slogan is Audi's relentless commitment to innovation, engineering excellence, and superior automotive technology. It positions Audi as a forward-thinking company that continuously pushes the boundaries of what is possible in automobile design and performance.

Audi's advertisements do not simply showcase the car as a mode of transportation; they present it as a testament to technological advancement and luxury. The brand strategically emphasizes its cutting-edge features, such as state-of-the-art navigation systems, advanced driver assistance technologies, and high-performance engines. By doing so, Audi strengthens its association with progress, modernity, and exclusivity.

Through these semiotic elements, Audi successfully cultivates an image of prestige and technical superiority. The interplay between the sophisticated visual narrative and the

powerful brand messaging reinforces the idea that owning an Audi is not just about driving—it is about experiencing the pinnacle of automotive innovation. This marketing approach appeals to consumers who desire not only a luxury vehicle but also a reflection of their own aspirations for excellence and progress. Audi’s branding ensures that every advertisement is not just about selling a car, but about offering a premium lifestyle defined by innovation, performance, and status.

10. Rolex Watches



Rolex’s advertising strategy is meticulously designed to position the brand as a symbol of prestige, achievement, and timeless luxury. By combining sophisticated imagery with a powerful slogan, Rolex reinforces its association with success, exclusivity, and refinement.

A key visual signifier in Rolex’s advertisements is the image of an elegantly crafted watch worn by a man or woman dressed in formal attire at a prestigious event. The setting often includes luxurious locations such as grand ballrooms, elite gatherings, or private yachts, further emphasizing the watch’s association with wealth and sophistication. The meticulous details of the timepiece, from its gleaming surface to its precise craftsmanship, highlight Rolex’s commitment to excellence and reinforce the perception of high status.

Accompanying these striking visuals is Rolex’s slogan, *A Crown for Every Achievement*. This phrase serves as a verbal signifier that encapsulates the brand’s identity. The signified meaning behind this slogan is that Rolex is more than just a timepiece—it is a recognition of personal success and a testament to one’s accomplishments. It implies that owning a Rolex is not merely about telling time, but about celebrating milestones, achievements, and a life of distinction.

Rolex’s advertising does not focus on functionality alone but rather on the emotional and symbolic value of its watches. The brand presents its products as heirlooms, luxury items that signify an individual’s journey to success. The connection between Rolex and elite professions—such as athletes, explorers, and business leaders—further reinforces the idea that wearing a Rolex is a mark of ambition, perseverance, and excellence.

Through its masterful use of semiotics, Rolex transforms its watches into status symbols that extend beyond their mechanical precision. The combination of refined visuals, a prestigious slogan, and the brand’s historical legacy creates a powerful narrative that appeals to high-achieving individuals who want their success to be reflected in the accessories they wear. Rolex is not just selling watches; it is selling a legacy of achievement, making every timepiece a symbol of triumph and prestige.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that brands strategically employ a combination of visual and verbal signifiers to reinforce their brand identity and communicate deeper symbolic meanings to consumers. Through a semiotic analysis of various global brands, it becomes evident that signifiers, such as logos, slogans, colors, and imagery, play an essential role in shaping consumer perception. Each brand follows a distinct yet interconnected semiotic strategy to establish and maintain its brand positioning within the market.

Nike's advertising strategy heavily relies on the interplay of visual and textual signifiers. The slogan "Just Do It" functions as a motivational signifier, evoking a sense of empowerment and resilience (Lindstrom, 2005). This verbal cue is paired with bold typography and action-oriented imagery, featuring athletes in motion, which signifies aspiration, determination, and personal achievement. The brand's association with elite athletes and sports figures further reinforces the signified concept that Nike is not just a product but a lifestyle that champions perseverance and success.

Apple, known for its minimalist approach to advertising, strategically employs clean, uncluttered visuals with ample white space, sleek product images, and minimal text. The Apple logo, a bitten apple, acts as a powerful signifier with multiple connotations, including knowledge, creativity, and sophistication (Marrone, 2018). Apple's advertisements emphasize innovation and exclusivity, presenting its products as symbols of status and modernity. The signified concept behind Apple's marketing is that owning an Apple device is not merely about functionality but also about being part of a creative and elite community.

Dove's advertisements prioritize authenticity and self-acceptance, distinguishing themselves from traditional beauty brands that often promote unrealistic beauty standards. The brand uses diverse models, natural lighting, and unedited images as signifiers to convey inclusivity, self-care, and natural beauty. This aligns with Dove's broader campaign message, which encourages consumers to embrace their unique selves rather than conforming to unattainable ideals (Holt, 2004). By employing these semiotic elements, Dove constructs a signified narrative that beauty is not dictated by societal norms but is instead an individual and personal experience.

McDonald's has established itself as a globally recognizable brand through its use of distinctive semiotic elements. The golden arches function as an iconic signifier of fast food, convenience, and consistency, making the brand immediately recognizable worldwide (Manning, 2010). The dominant use of red and yellow in its advertisements is not arbitrary; these colors are psychologically associated with appetite stimulation and warmth, contributing to the welcoming and inviting atmosphere that McDonald's aims to create. The signified concept conveyed is one of reliability and comfort, reinforcing the brand's identity as a place for affordable and enjoyable dining experiences.

Similarly, Rolex employs luxury signifiers in its advertisements to solidify its reputation as a symbol of prestige and precision. The brand's marketing often features close-up shots of intricately crafted timepieces set against elegant and opulent backgrounds. This meticulous attention to visual representation signifies quality craftsmanship and timeless elegance (Kapferer, 2012). Rolex further strengthens its signified meaning by associating itself with success and heritage, often featuring endorsements from high-achieving individuals in business, sports, and entertainment.

A recurring pattern observed across all analyzed brands is the strategic use of color psychology to reinforce brand identity and consumer perception. Nike, Apple, and GoPro predominantly utilize monochrome or minimalistic color schemes to signify innovation, exclusivity, and technological advancement. These colors evoke a sense of sleekness and sophistication, appealing to consumers who value cutting-edge design and performance. In contrast, brands like Coca-Cola, McDonald's, and Starbucks leverage warm colors such as red, yellow, and brown to create a sense of comfort, nostalgia, and approachability (Henderson et al., 2003). Coca-Cola's red branding, for instance, is associated with excitement and energy, while Starbucks' earthy tones signify warmth, relaxation, and community.

Beyond color, the interplay between text and imagery further strengthens the semiotic strategies of these brands. For example, Nike's use of bold typography and short, impactful phrases enhances the motivational appeal of its advertisements. Apple's sparse text and focus on high-quality product visuals communicate a message of refinement and simplicity. Dove's narrative-driven campaigns, often featuring testimonials and real-life stories, add authenticity to its branding. Each brand carefully curates its semiotic elements to craft a distinctive identity that resonates with its target audience.

Additionally, the signifiers used by these brands do not operate in isolation; rather, they interact within broader cultural and social contexts to enhance their effectiveness. McDonald's golden arches, for instance, are not just a symbol of fast food but also signify a globalized food culture where familiarity and accessibility are paramount. Similarly, Nike's "Just Do It" slogan extends beyond sports and into broader motivational discourse, making it relevant to diverse audiences beyond just athletes. The signified meanings attached to these brands evolve over time, influenced by cultural trends, consumer expectations, and advertising innovations.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the relationship between signifiers and signifieds in advertising is a deliberate and carefully constructed strategy that extends beyond surface-level branding. Through the interplay of semiotic elements, brands can shape consumer perceptions, evoke emotions, and foster brand loyalty. The effectiveness of these strategies lies in their ability to embed meaning within familiar symbols, creating associations that influence purchasing behavior and brand affinity.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significance of semiotic elements in shaping brand identity and consumer perception in social media advertisements. By strategically using signifiers such as logos, slogans, and visual aesthetics, brands construct meanings that extend beyond product functionality. The findings confirm that semiotics serves as an essential framework in advertising, enabling brands to communicate deeper values and emotions that resonate with consumers (Chandler, 2017).

Future research can expand on this study by incorporating consumer reception analysis, examining how different demographics interpret semiotic cues in advertisements. Additionally, exploring cross-cultural variations in semiotic branding strategies could provide insights into how cultural context influences signifier-signified relationships.

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