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ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL CULTURE IN PROMOTING BELARUSIAN BRANDS

The term ‘branding’ emerged in the late 19th century when industrial and technological advances led to mass production. Companies began to use marketing tools, including branding, to differentiate themselves from competitors and attract the attention of customers. [1]

The purpose of our research is to explore how cultural and historical symbols can strengthen brand identity and its relations with consumers. The relevance of the topic is provided by the increasing interest in ethnic uniqueness and local authenticity in the context of globalization. Thus, the work aims to discover effective methods of integrating national elements into brand strategies.

Consumers form a brand image based on the name (e.g. Mark Formelle and INSHY), ornaments (e.g. Brest Meat Processing Plant), packaging (e.g. Kommunarka) and shopping experience. A brand includes a name, sign, symbol or a combination of these that helps to identify the goods and services of a single producer and distinguish them from competitors' products. Branding of Belarusian companies plays an important role in their development and competitiveness in the international market. Companies that focus on the use of cultural elements and national symbols are gaining the greatest popularity among young people. [2]

Within the framework of the research seventy five people were interviewed to reveal specific preferences in product selection. The focus was on elements such as inscriptions and pictures on packages and product itself. It turned out that the majority of young people pay attention to graphic design and inscriptions, giving importance not only to functionality but also to the visual appeal of the product. At the same time, the use of national symbols in product design proved to be popular among individuals: about 78% of respondents said that the presence of national symbols and themes on packaging positively influences their choice. This emphasizes the importance of cultural identity in young people's consumer preferences.

Why are inscriptions in the country's national language in particular demand? The majority of respondents said that using the native language in marketing and production of goods helps the brand to establish an emotional connection with consumers and evoke a sense of national pride. It also demonstrates respect and understanding of local traditions and preferences, which helps to increase loyalty and trust. Phrases and slogans in the native language are easier to remember and associate with the brand. This enables brands to stand out from competitors and create a unique image in the market. Many popular

companies (Mark Formelle, ZIKO) adapt their products to modern trends, and some create brands that are fully immersed in national culture and traditions, reflecting the rich symbolism and history of their country (INSHY). [3], [4]

Most often inscriptions are applied to elements of clothing and jewellery. Such words as 'Kahanne', 'Piashchota', 'Znichka', 'Mara', 'Mova' are regularly encountered. These words reflect important values and feelings that the people of Belarus are proud of.

The Belarusian language is extended to items that are popular among young people: bookmarks, shoppers, accessories, stickers. It adds uniqueness and allure to the items. The youth enjoy using such things, which contributes to the popularization of the language and its integration into modern culture and lifestyle.

The use of national symbols on goods is a powerful tool for maintaining cultural heritage as well as strengthening national identity. For instance, Christmas toys decorated with Belarusian ornaments and symbols bring the atmosphere of traditional holidays to houses and remind of the national history and cultural roots. Board games with images of Belarusian writers not only entertain, but also serve an educational purpose, awakening interest in the literary legacy and great cultural figures of Belarus.

T-shirts depicting Belovezhskaya Pushcha, the symbol of Belarus, emphasize the importance of the country's natural riches and unique ecosystems. They arouse pride in the natural heritage and remind of the need to preserve it for future generations.

The national ornament is used to create many trademarks on the packaging of Belarusian goods. Its image is now well recognizable due to clear national features passed down from one generation to the other, which is important for instant recognition and identification of Belarusian products. For example, the packaging of Kommunarka sweets features signs and patterns of authentic ornamentation, which carries a broader meaning and is a sign of an eternal and timeless product. [5]

In the context of globalization and competition, such branding elements help to differentiate themselves in the marketplace, making the product not only attractive and authentic, but also meaningful to a wide audience. Young people are particularly receptive to such products, as they allow to express identity and show commitment to national values. Thus, the use of national symbols in branding is an effective tool to maintain cultural awareness and create a strong, memorable brand.

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