

Innovative Local Brand: A Case Study of Zeelandia Firm

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ABSTRACT—*Tainan, located in Southern Taiwan, began its development as a base for trade in 1624 by the Dutch. Since then, Tainan remained the capital of Taiwan for more than 2 centuries. In addition, Tainan is 1 of the 7 largest distribution centers for vegetables and fruits in Taiwan and is an ancient capital that is abundant in agricultural products. Zeelandia Firm, the case applied in this study, was established by a group of Tainan undergraduate students, who applied the unique historical background of Tainan and its abundant fruit and vegetable agricultural products to the firm. A new local souvenir brand with a brand story regarding agricultural products processed during the harvest seasons and an innovative management philosophy was thus created. This study investigated the brand positioning and brand innovation of Zeelandia firm to provide a remarkable example for local brand innovations in the future.*

Keywords— Agricultural product processing during the harvest seasons, brand innovation, souvenir

1. INTRODUCTION

Yukio Fujimaki, a firm that makes cities better known to the public, such as Fujiyoshida, and produces popular cultural brands, has remarked in Contents Magazine that “To build a local brand, we need history, story, and philosophy as stepping stones.” [1] This study uses a case from the Zeelandia Firm to illustrate this theory. Zeelandia is a firm that boasts unique historical background, heart-touching brand stories, and an innovative philosophy regarding business operations. Zeelandia Firm was established by a group of Tainan undergraduate students, who applied the unique historical background of Tainan and its abundant fruit and vegetable agricultural products to the firm. A new local souvenir brand with a brand story regarding agricultural products processed during the harvest seasons and an innovative management philosophy was thus created. The case study discusses the founding motives, brand story, business philosophy, product innovation, and overall brand concept of Zeelandia Firm. The findings can provide references for future practice of local branding.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Subheadings

Kotler (1997) defined brand as a name, a mark, an item, a sign, a type of design, or a combination of the above, for the purpose of identification of the product and service of the producer, as well as differentiation of the product or service from its competitors. A brand can be used to identify the producer (or distributor). [2]

Lin (2009) quoted the definition of brand by Chuck Pettis, the founder of Brand Solutions, that “A brand is a synthetic image that involves visual, emotional, and cultural characteristics. It is a symbol in the minds of the

consumers.” [3]

As mentioned above, a brand is a symbol, which integrates visual signs and design, as well as emotional, cultural, and historical significance.

2.2 Cultural eclecticism

Gaoyuan (2012) defined eclecticism as a way moderate all sides of opinions to achieve a middle ground. In Japanese, “secchu” also implies that an entity is being created through the positive and constructive ideas among various opinions. Hence, cultural eclecticism is the heritage and symbiosis of culture. [4]

Chao (2012) asserted that, in the early years of the Republic of China, Chinese paintings had a phase when the new and the old, as well as the Chinese and Western styles, blended so successfully that it brought a new era to Chinese traditional painting. All innovative painters who attempted to fuse the Chinese and Western art can be included in the eclectic school of thought. [5]

Fu (1999) pointed out that wayousecchu is the appropriate blend of the Japanese traditional architectural elements in Western architectural design. [6] Such buildings are still found in Tainan even today.

2.3 Agricultural product processing during the harvest seasons

According to Chunag (2005), mangos in Tainan have a short harvest period, and to avoid the second-class mangos from entering the market during the peak season, Tainan City Government has enforced the purchase of processed mango products, such as mango juice and mango puree, in order to bring added value to mango and stabilize the market price. [7]

The Agriculture and Food Agency has provided guidance program on the production and marketing of pineapples. By expanding the export channels, the agency has successfully avoided the domestic competition that would affect farmers’ profits, improved product quality, and increased the number of preorders. By contract production for processing products, such as pineapple filling, jam, and preserves, the pineapple farming industry has been prosperously developed with diverse marketing channels. [8]

The above programs on seasonal fruits prove that producing processed products can stabilize market prices and ensure local farmers’ incomes.

3. CASE ANALYSIS

3.1 Historical background

“ZeelandiaFirm” was derived from “Zeelandia” in Dutch. Tainan was once the center of Taiwan under Holland’s ruling. From 1624 through 1945, the city of Tainan was ruled by the Spanish, Dutch, and Japanese. Besides the Chinese traditions, Tainan has also preserved the foreign cultures, thus creating the eclectic architectures and street views.

The mission of ZeelandiaFirm is to develop the eclectic culture of Tainan through the infusion of Taiwanese and foreign culture. With the traditional aesthetics of Tainan, along with the modern ideas and techniques, ZeelandiaFirm aims to present novel and attractive products to consumers through fusion.

The product idea of ZeelandiaFirm originates from the fact that most souvenirs in Taiwan are pineapple pastries and tea-leaves, which are limited choices for tourists who want to purchase souvenirs that reflect Taiwanese culture. ZeelandiaFirm attempts to develop new souvenirs that integrate the refined agricultural products and cultural creativities. The tourists would have more choices for souvenirs and the local farmers can expand their market.

ZeelandiaFirm conducted extensive research on traditional family cuisines from many countries around the world, and added exotic flavors into Tainan’s delicacies. Unique packaging that reflects the features of Taiwan was also designed. The product idea was based on the daily essentials, namely oil, salt, and rice. By infusing exotic recipes into local farm products, ZeelandiaFirm has successfully enhanced the sophistication and quality of dietary culture and souvenirs of Taiwan. The reusable product packaging is based on environmental concept.

3.2 Brand concepts

The image design concept of ZeelandiaFirm sets Anping Fort, one of the historic relics in Tainan, as the backdrop, and hand-drawing is used to manifest the beauty of Taiwan on the products. The logo of ZeelandiaFirm is designed as an old seal, which reflects the idea of nostalgia.

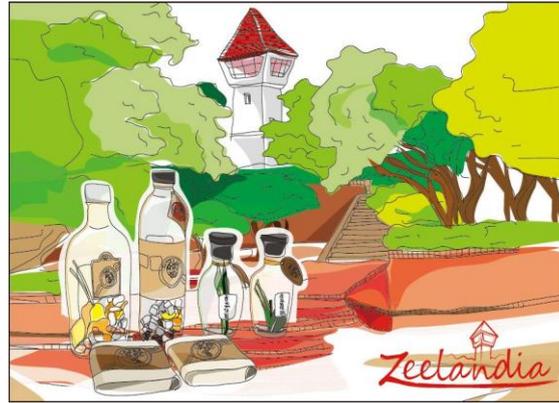


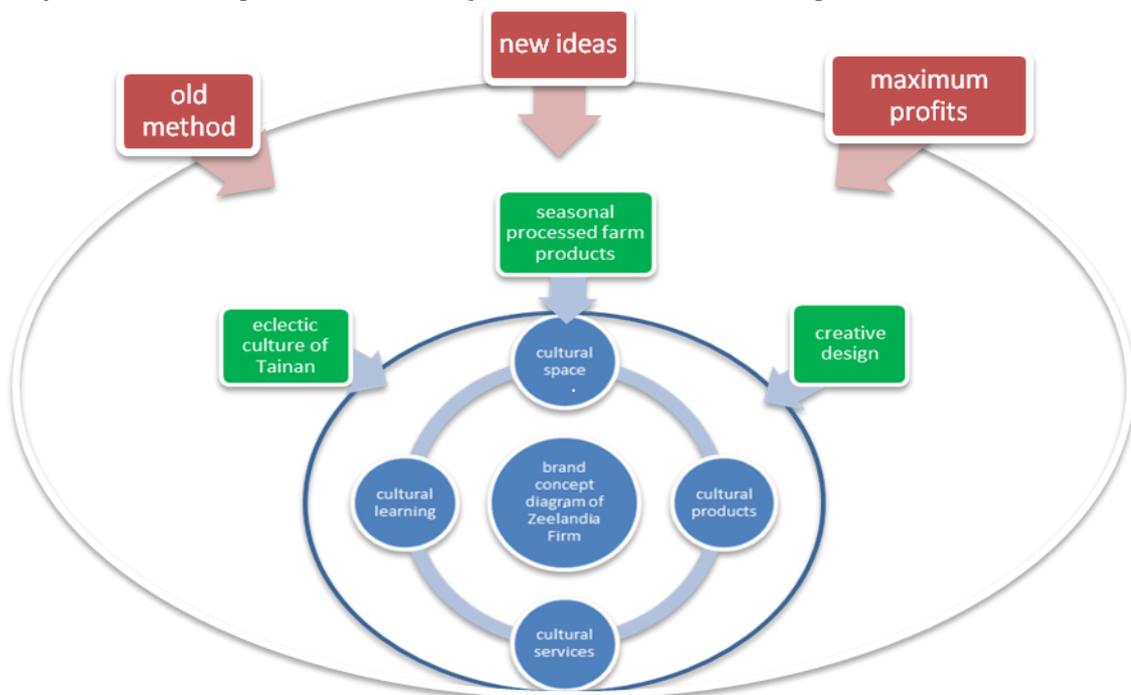
Figure 1: Brand Image



Figure 2: Zeelandia Firm logo

Figure 3 shows the brand concept diagram of Zeelandia Firm. With the brand concept of Zeelandia Firm as the core, from the outside to the inside are business philosophy, product elements, and brand objectives, for marketing the brand of Zeelandia Firm.

- Business philosophy: old method plus new ideas equals to maximum profits”.
- Product features: the eclectic culture of Tainan, seasonal processed farm products, and creative design.
- Brand objectives: cultural space, cultural learning, cultural services, and cultural products.



Taiwan's cultural and creative industries

Figure 3: Brand concept diagram of Zeelandia Firm

3.3 Packaging design

The old buildings in Tainan are built with red bricks, which reveal a unique hue of orange under the sun. Thus, ZeelandiaFirm uses the orange, which symbolizes the sunshine color of Tainan, as the theme color of its packaging. This manifests the tradition of Tainan, as well as the team’s love Tainan.

The use of Tainan orange color as the theme color of packaging also indicates the support for energy saving. Natural and eco-friendly materials are used to create the packaging. Based on the design concept of “multi-functional, environmentally-friendly, and traditional”, the metbag designed by ZeelandiaFirm has a concise look and is appealing as a gift bag.



Figure 4: Tainan Confucius Temple



Figure 5 Anping Fort

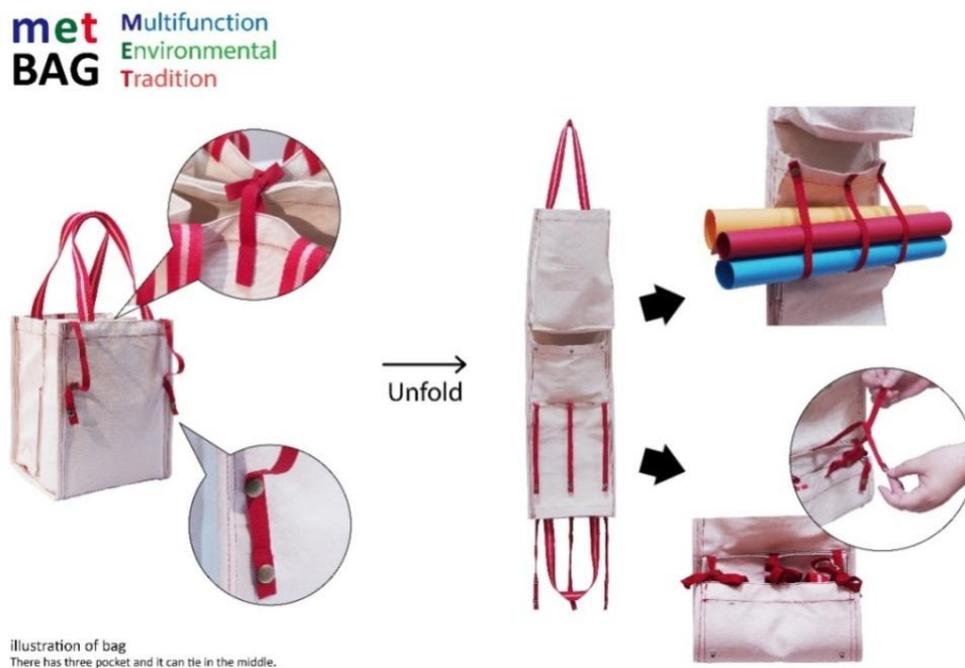


Figure 6: met bag design Concept

Multifunction+ **E**nvironmental+ **T**radition = **met**bag

Multifunction =It can be a packaging bag for ZeelandiaFirm, or a tote bag, or even as a hanging storage bag.

Environmental= It is made with natural grass cloth, linen, or canvas, and is durable for long-time use.

Tradition= The orange color is a symbol of Tainan’s ancient architectures.



Figure 7: met bagpackaging design

3.4 Product innovation

a. Rice series

The Rice series was inspired by Japanese kamameshi, which cooks rice and vegetables in the same pot. ZeelandiaFirm chose rice from Houbi Township of Tainan, garlic and mushrooms from local produces, and salt from Beimen Township of Tainan. The taste and essence of local produces of Taiwan are perfectly fused. Each package contains only one cup of rice, which is suitable for individuals or small families. The consumers only need to add water and cook in the rice cooker, a delicious bowl of rice is then ready to serve.

b. Dried fruit series

This series was inspired by Sangria, a favorite drink with the Spanish in summer. The red wine is added with sweetened soft drink, juice, diced fresh fruits (e.g., lemons, apples, and oranges), and sugar, cinnamon, or vanilla for seasoning. It is chilled in the fridge, allowing fruit flavors to blend into the wine.

Based on the recipe of Sangria, ZeelandiaFirm added Golden Diamond Pineapple preserves (from Guanmiao Township of Tainan), sugar cubes produced by Taiwan Sugar, and local spices to produce a local flavor.



Figure 8: Rice seriesConcept

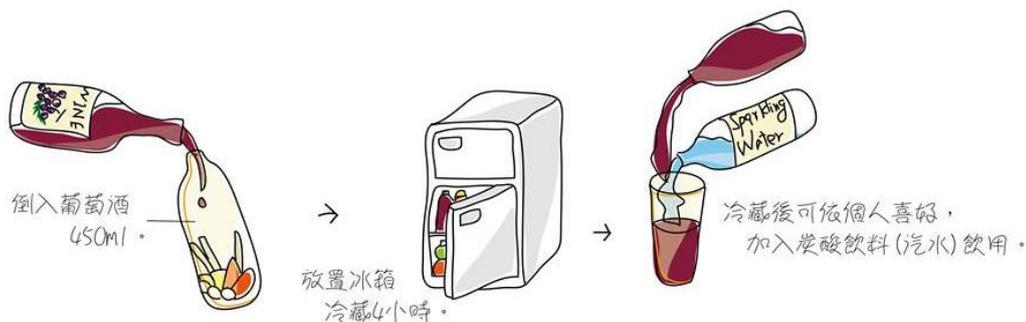


Figure 9: Dried fruit series Concept

4. CONCLUSION

This study introduced the brand background, brand concepts, packaging design, and product innovation of ZeelandiaFirm, which successfully fused the historical background, cultural features, and local products to create a new local brand. The new brand integrates the refined agricultural industry and cultural creativity industry, which are two of the six emerging industries in Taiwan.

The high-quality local farm products, exotic recipes, and creative packaging and design based on the eclectic culture of Taiwan have made the products of ZeelandiaFirm highly unique in the market.

Formed by a group of young local graduates, ZeelandiaFirm successfully utilized the eclectic culture of Taiwan, and adopted the business of philosophy of combining old methods and new ideas to create maximum profits, thus creating unique cultural creative products with local features.

Based on the eclectic culture of Tainan, ZeelandiaFirm added the values seasonal processed farm products with cultural background and creative design. ZeelandiaFirm's success in developing its historical background, brand stories, and business philosophy can be presented as a paradigm for future development of local cultural creative brands

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