

# Packaging lifestyle adaptation design: A case study in redesigning the AXE shower gel packaging for a new designated (*sophisticated businessmen*) lifestyle

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## Abstract

Packaging is the business card of a producer of consumer goods. The influence of the packaging upon a lifestyle and its purchase decisions is assessed. A theoretical approach of a package's functions, consumer behaviour and graphical design is used as a basis for a case study. The brand AXE, and its Brand Identity Prism, is analysed and a new lifestyle, *sophisticated businessmen*, is chosen to allocate the redesigned packaging to. The packaging is analysed in an online survey with both participants that are part of the lifestyle and participants that are not. The results show that the packaging is indeed perceived as a packaging for the lifestyle, *sophisticated businessmen*, and a strong spot within the field of competitors is possible. Furthermore, the limitations and possibilities of the environmental variables are shortly assessed in order to direct a possible future research field.

## Keywords:

Packaging Design, Consumer Behaviour, Brand Identity Prism, Lifestyles

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In designing packages for consumer goods it is impossible to attract every customer. Each brand is targeted at a designated target group and lifestyle. The buying decisions of a consumer are heavily influenced by the packaging [Imram, 1999; Cardello, 1994]. The influence of the packaging could be assessed with three factors: *brand identification, package comprehension and package novelty and contrast* [Garber, Burke & Jones, 2000]. These factors influence in which degree the packaging distincts from other packaging designs in the shelf and in which degree they appeal to the consumer.

### 1.1 Packaging functions

*Brand identification* describes the recognition of the brand of a product and its packaging. A brand's name, colour, packaging shape, typography [Garber, Burke & Jones, 2000]; each packaging element could be identified as part of a brand's identity, each with their own strength. In general, the shape is identified more easily than a brand's typography; take for example the iconic Coca Cola bottle [Eger, 2010]. Therefore, the typical elements that are identified as part of the Axe brand identity in its packages should be redesigned with care. Completely changing it could have a negative result upon the associations a consumer has with the brand, covering its brand identity and quality.

The packaging should indicate that it is the packaging of a shower gel, *package comprehension* [Garber, Burke & Jones, 2000]. Consumers have associations of certain packages with certain products; A soda can with milk would probably not be recognised as milk, even if it is placed in the dairy shelf. Consumers do not associate the can and product with each other. Shower gel packages have similar associations with plastic bottles. It is possible to stand out by using a completely different packaging but in general consumers prefer product that match their

expectations in this matter [Loken & Ward, 1990]. Associations also come to play in the comprehension. Brand logos, names or graphic devices could trigger the consumer in retrieving images of product quality, performance characteristics or associations with the place and use of the product [Garber, Burke & Jones, 2000].

*Packaging novelty and contrast* describes the degree in which a packaging is able to stand out from its surroundings, the supermarket shelf and its competitors. Its distinctiveness is relative to other packages on the store shelf [Veryzer & Hutchinson, 1998]. Standing out is possible by creating a distinct shape or colour within the shower gel shelf. Another possibility is *colour blocking*: Normally, the packages of different versions of a brand are placed alongside each other in the shelf. A single colour that is used prominently in all packages could create a colour block. For example, the purple shampoo bottles of Andrélon create a big purple block within the shelf [Koopmans, 2001].

The relation between these three factors should constantly be bore in mind in the design process. A bright red packaging would stand out in the shower gel shelf, but it could negatively influence the relation with the brand and customer expectations. Besides these factors the pure function of the packaging is also of importance. The shower gel bottle in essence functions as a holder of the liquid. However, a good grab while holding the bottle, a stable base while placing the bottle on a storage shelf and easy dispensing influence the quality of the packaging and the associations a consumer makes with the packaging.

### 1.2 Consumer behaviour

The packaging is the active seller of the product [Koopmans, 2001]. Both the consumer and the reseller, in this case the supermarket or drug store, are of

importance; placement within the supermarket influences the interaction of consumer and packaging.

The purchase of a product in the supermarket could be divided in three categories: *a repeating choice, a repertoire choice or a consideration*. Respectively, these categories describe a completely automatic choice which a consumer makes every time the product type is bought, a choice between the options that are available at the moment and a consideration of the benefits and drawbacks of each option [Koopmans, 2001]. Shower gel is a product that has a quite low buying frequency and a high price. Therefore, the risk is higher to buy the 'wrong product' and the packaging will be examined more than the packaging of for example a package of milk. This should be taken into consideration in the redesign.

The types of product searchers influence the Gestalt considerations in packaging design. The *blinder consumer* is very selective in examining products during shopping. In fact, just brands that the consumer knows are detected and no label or product information is examined. The *hoarder* likes to explore new things and is not looking for something specifically. The *browser* makes a rational choice and therefore also takes time to look for a brand he likes. He reads the labels carefully and compares quantities and prices [Koopmans, 2001]. These levels of decision making each require a different approach of the redesign. Mainly, the redesign should clearly and quickly communicate its essential features, the product type, brand identity and lifestyle its should attract.

These decisions are all subject to environmental variables, which are influenced by both producer and reseller. Besides shelf placement, environment issues like other consumers, music, lighting, etc. influence the consumer's choice.

Consumers build up an associative network with a brand, even if they do not buy the brand. Commercials, news or articles about the brand or other non-buying related connections affect a consumer's associations. These associations could be incorporated in the packaging design at four levels [Koopmans, 2001]. Especially, proposition related associations should be bore in mind in redesigning. The extra benefits of AXE, currently the effect that 'makes you irresistible' [Unilever,2013b] should not be lost in the redesign. Product related and brand related associations carry along the product relevance and brand quality and should be maintained.

### 1.3 Graphical design

Major design aspects are kept in mind during the graphical design process. One of those is the Gestalt of the packaging. During a supermarket visit, a consumer does not examine every shelf and every packaging. Therefore, a packaging should already attract the consumer with its Gestalt, the blurred appearance in the distance. The Gestalt is the first encounter of a consumer with a packaging [Todorovic, 2008]. Gestalt entails some principles that describe a balanced design. Common fate and proximity describe the effect of grouping upon a packaging [Todorovic, 2007]. Carefully grouping elements together upon the packaging makes sure a distinctive Gestalt appearance is created.

Besides, a balanced design is assessed in its product graphic principles. No information overload should be present, a clear hierarchy of elements is required with one or two major elements and the packaging should distinguish itself from competitors [Eger, 2010].

Lastly, congruence of design is dealt with extensively. The AXE packaging is redesigned while the AXE identity and recognisability should still be present. Congruence of the different packaging elements is judged better [van Rompay & Pruyn, 2011]. Positive effects of incongruence are demonstrated and those effects could make the packaging stand out but, when used, incongruence should be handled with care [Heckler & Childers, 1992].

## 2 CASE STUDY

In redesigning the AXE shower gel packaging, a clear distinction of the critical brand identity design aspects and lifestyle design aspects is necessary. An analysis of the AXE brand and design is made.

### 2.1 AXE Brand Identity

The brand that will be redesigned is AXE. Axe is a brand of Dutch multinational consumer goods company Unilever. It is one of many body care product brands that Unilever produces [Unilever, 2013a], each brand is assigned to a specific target group or lifestyle. Therefore, the lifestyle that is assigned to the redesign could compete with one of the current Unilever brands, which are used as benchmarks in evaluating the redesign.

The description that Unilever presents for Axe is a good starting point for analysing Axe's brand identity: '*The irresistible attractiveness of the Axe user on the ladies is made famous by the marketing campaigns, just like the 'Axe effect'*' [Unilever, 2013b]. The Axe effect should make you irresistible for beautiful women by using Axe products. The stereotype commercials that made Axe a world leader confirm this description.

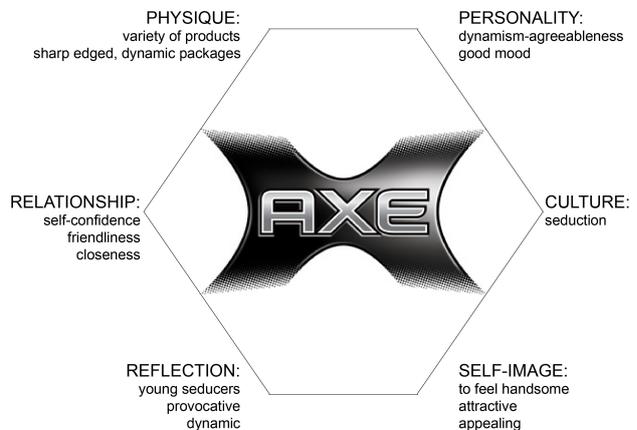


Figure 1. AXE's current Brand Identity Prism.

The Brand Identity Prism of Kapferer is used to analyse AXE [Kapferer, 2008]. The AXE identity is shown in Figure 1 [Cherif & Miled, 2013]. The *Physique* attribute of this research is not taken into account because the Prism describes the deodorant line of AXE. Instead, the shower gel packaging is implemented and evaluated in detail later on.

As Kapferer [2008] describes, the Brand Identity Prism could be divided in both the horizontal and vertical way. The top part describes the *Picture of the Sender*, the bottom part the *Picture of the Recipient*. The left part describes the social facets (*Externalisation*), the right part what lies within the brand's spirit (*Internalisation*). In this research, the attributes *Reflection* and *Self-image* will be determined anew for the new lifestyle. The remaining

attributes purely describe the brand, not the lifestyle it should suite and therefore do not change [Kapferer, 2008; Cherif & Miled, 2013].

Externally, *Relationship* and *Reflection* are in force. The *Relationship* attribute describes the fact that users of AXE should more easily attract women, the brand gives their self-confidence a boost. The brand has a quite big influence upon the behaviour of the user and therefore the relationship could be described as close and friendly. Internally, *Personality* and *Culture* of the brand come into play. Personality is the face of the brand, what the brand would be as a person. AXE is extravert, open and agreeable. Community members of AXE are party-minded and like to share this with others [Cherif & Miled, 2013; Santos, 2013]. The *Culture* of AXE is based on seduction [Cherif & Miled, 2013]. The different fragrances should strengthen the men's self-confidence and power to seduce women [Santos, 2013]. From within the anti-feministic values that AXE develops, the fact that women are a sex object is also derived.

The to be modified attributes, *Reflection* and *Self-image*, are not the as the target group of the shower gel. Respectively, they describe with which the consumer identifies himself and the view a consumer has or wants of himself [Kapferer, 2008]. Currently, AXE Reflection is described as young, provocative seducers while self-image of AXE consumers is aimed at consumers to feel handsome, attractive and appealing [Cherif & Miled, 2013]. The difference between *Reflection* and *Self-image* simply could be seen as respectively the consumer's outward and inward mirror.

Concluding, AXE key values are seduction and self-confidence. This does not change by introducing a new lifestyle. In fact, the AXE community members should still be self-assured men. However, the brand identity attributes should be implemented in a more mature manner. The essence of the attributes does not change, the coupled lifestyle is older and more mature.

## 2.2 AXE Design analysis

The (for this research) most important aspect of the Brand Identity Prism, *Physique*, is described in detail. The current AXE shower gel packaging is analysed on the basis of seven packaging elements, distinguished by Tijssen [2007][Fig. 2].



Figure 2. The current AXE packaging.

In short, the defining elements of the AXE packaging are:

*Shape* - dynamic, organic shape emphasised by small waist; sharp edges that indicate aggression

*Material* - clear divisions between high gloss plastic and matte finish socket and lid

*Colour* - black main colour, some fragrances transparent; bright colours for fragrance indication

*Brand mark* - typographic mark with shiny metal look; strong capitals

*Typography* - minimal usage of typography; strong, simplistic capitals, sans-serif; sober font for information at the back

*Imagery* - no image usage because of shower gel abstractness

*Graphic devices* - dominant eye catcher of the fragrance; dynamic lines and shapes; huge part of the lifestyle

## 2.3 Lifestyle adaptation

The redesign is aimed at a newly defined lifestyle but the AXE identity should be maintained. The new lifestyle is described as '*sophisticated businessmen*' in the range of 25 to 45 years. This means the redesign should emanate maturity and eminence. The modified *Reflection* and *Self-image* attributes of the Brand Identity Prism are as follows [Fig. 3]:

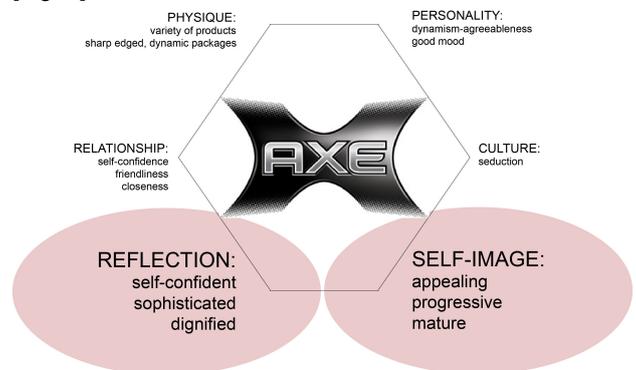


Figure 3. The modified Reflection and Self-image attributes.

## 2.4 Lifestyle design analysis

The new lifestyle group is analysed through its product usage, a market research. Besides, the current market of men shower gels is analysed regarding its packaging attributes. For each category some design aspects that are well-matched or mismatched with the new lifestyle are derived. These results are combined and compressed to a set of prominent design aspects that are described on the basis of the packaging elements of Tijssen [2007].

*Shape* - sharp edges but few dynamic shapes; symmetrical; usable with one hand

*Material* - few partitions; big, smooth surfaces

*Colour* - dark main colour; little colour difference for fragrances; few colours

*Brand mark* - strong, simple typography; single-coloured

*Typography* - minimalistic, strong fonts; text kept to a minimum

*Imagery* - abstractness shower gel makes images superfluous

*Graphic devices* - simple, abstract shapes; single-coloured; rustic

## 2.5 Packaging redesign

All seven packaging elements were redesigned for the new AXE packaging. The redesign is build up by first designing the physical aspects after which the graphical aspects were designed and modelled in the physical design.

The crux of the redesign is the surface partition in the front and back of the packaging. The most interesting part of the packaging shape is placed in this frontal plane, which distinguishes it from other packages. The junction point of the sloping surfaces is not placed in the exact middle, but high on the flask. The AXE brand mark emphasises this point and therefore the verticality cues of the packaging. The frontal emboss and brand mark give the packaging a high focal point which is related with meanings of power, exclusivity and luxury which match the new lifestyle [van Rompay, de Vries, Bontekoe & Tanja-Dijkstra, 2012]. The frontal emboss is emphasised by the subtle incisions in the sides of the flask which give the packaging a hint to grab it at this height.

Furthermore, little oddities are made in the flask shape. The socket of the flask is separated from the main body part by a material partition. However, the straight line of the sides is not broken which emphasises the high focal point of the flask [van Rompay et al., 2012]. The top of the flask features a little dome to give it some little dynamics. The AXE identity appears in the lid design. The angular shape gives the flask an aggressive look [Zhang, Feick & Price, 2006] while the lid is a simplified version of the original AXE lid.

The brand mark is based on the original AXE logo, the same font is used. The metal look is exchanged with a cream/yellow colour that is in elegant contrast with the main colour of the flask. To emphasise the main shape feature, the frontal emboss, the X of the AXE mark is scaled up in contrast to the A and E. The big X emphasises the hierarchy of the packaging elements [Eger, 2010]; the frontal emboss and brand mark are leading in the design.



Figure 4. The redesigned packaging.

#### Different fragrances

The main colour of the packaging is almost black; A subtle blue tint is incorporated. The fragrances deliberately differ only in graphic devices, not in colour. This way, colour-blocking is optimised to make the packaging stand out in the shelves. When the different fragrances are displayed alongside each other, a wide block of the dark colour that draws attention is visible in the shelf [Kerfoot, Davies & Ward, 2003; Koopmans, 2001]. Bright, outstanding colours would draw the consumer's attention even more but these colours do not match the lifestyle. By incorporating a slight blue tint, that is highlighted when light falls upon the upwards oriented surfaces, should give the packaging a distinctive power [Eger, 2010].

#### Metaphors

The fragrances are discernible because of their graphic entity. Each designed fragrance is provided with a metaphor; The *Classic* fragrance contains line art that represents a bow tie, the *Muscle* fragrance part of the corner of an athletics track and the *Awake* fragrance is a representation of the rising sun. The cultural inheritance could be prolonged for the *Awake* fragrance. The circles that represent the sun should give the idea of a harmonious start of the day [Zhang et al., 2006].

The graphic devices of the fragrances are accompanied by strong capitals, placed at the bottom of the body part of the flask, that indicate the type of fragrance. These capitals have a slightly lighter colour than the plastic flask and a much brighter gloss which makes the letters stand out if light falls upon them.

The minimalistic approach of the fragrance indications could be too subtle, this is assessed in the experiment. However, the clean two-colour design should be benefited from in Gestalt features. The centred graphic devices are coupled with the same coloured brand mark. Because these features have the same colour, the focal point in Gestalt will be the high placed brand mark on top of the dark coloured flask [Reber, Schwarz & Winkelman, 2004; van Rompay, 2008].

Besides, the packaging shape contains a metaphor for the new lifestyle. When the frontal emboss is highlighted by ambient light, the two vertical (top and bottom) surfaces are highlighted. These surfaces form a representation of a necktie, which is related to the *sophisticated businessman*.



Figure 5. The three fragrance designs.

#### Matching the new lifestyle

The minimalistic usage of dynamic shapes in the package makes sure the packaging matches the new lifestyle; Few partitions and big surfaces are used. The dark colour is also conform the lifestyle, the subtle blue tint distinguishes the packaging in Gestalt. The congruence between the matte plastic material with highlighted upwards oriented surfaces and high gloss brand mark and text prints give the packaging an indication of luxury [van Rompay & Pruyn, 2011]. The cream/yellow colour, used for text and graphic devices, is derived from the lifestyle product usage analysis. The colour strengthens the *luxury feel* of the dark main colour. Text usage is kept to minimum in strong, simple capitals, graphic devices are minimalistic and no images are used.

### Guarding brand recognisability

The focal point of the current AXE packaging is the centred brand mark. To maintain the recognisability of the brand and match the packaging with the new lifestyle, the brand mark is just slightly modified, the font is maintained. As described before, the X is scaled up. The text orientation is changed to horizontal to emphasise the frontal emboss. The dark colour, with a contrasted light colour for the brand mark and graphic devices, maintains the tough look of AXE. Lastly, a subtle hint to the lid of the original AXE packaging is incorporated in the redesign.

### Feasibility

The feasibility of the packaging design is kept in mind during the design process; The required labelling, usage of the packaging and production limitations are assessed. In designing the back of the packaging, the labelling requirements set by the authorities are taken into account for the graphic design. The following information is obliged [European Union, 2010]:

- the name and address of the responsible company for the product
- the volume of the content
- the minimum perishable date of the content
- precautions for usage
- the number of the production batch or another reference that enables identification
- a list of ingredients



Figure 6. The back of the redesign.

Only, obliged information is incorporated in the design in order to maintain the minimalistic approach of the design as good as possible [Fig. 6]. Just like the original AXE packaging, it is possible to use the redesign with one hand. While holding the flask, the user could tilt the lid and squeeze out the gel. The socket is designed to make sure the flask could stand stable.

For production, no issues are expected. The flask design is symmetrical which makes it easier to divide the flask or place partition lines for production processes. The labelling is only placed on the front and back so they could both be made out of one label. The colour of the lid and the labelling are deliberately different so the different colours that could be

a result of processing the different materials are no issue.

## 3 EXPERIMENT

In theory, the redesigned packaging should match the new lifestyle. However, the most interesting point to find

out is the effect of the modified Brand Identity Prism aspects, *Reflection* and *Self-image*. Besides, the effect of the packaging upon the recognisability of the brand is questionable. These effects are tested in an online survey.

### 3.1 Variables

The experiment could be divided in three parts: Gestalt analysis, an overview of the men shower gel packages and a detailed analysis of the redesign. The first two parts entail a selection of eight shower gel packages for men. In these situations the environmental variables are minimised.

The tested variable is the influence of the packaging design. The shopping environment, that influences the choice of a consumer, is minimised to a vector representation of a shelf. Lighting, music and other consumers in the shop are neutralised. These variables could not (or barely) be influenced by the packaging designer, therefore their influence is eliminated.

Due to restrictions in setting up the online survey, a rigid placement of the eight different packages is used. Ideally, the placement in the shelf would be altered. In matching the packaging with attributes and a lifestyle, the experiment is benchmarked with three other packages that the participant has to allocate. So which packaging is redesigned is not declared until the third part of the experiment.

Another environmental variable, prescience of the AXE brand, is taken into account in the detail analysis of the packaging. The current packaging is used as a benchmark.

### 3.2 Use of attributes

The lifestyle allocation of the packaging redesign is done in two steps. Before the participant is asked to choose the lifestyle that matches the packaging best, two to four attributes from a list of 18 should be matched with the packaging. At first, the current market of men shower gels is analysed to derive different lifestyles. A total of five lifestyles, including those of the current AXE shower gel and the redesign, is used:

1. rebellious, provocative man (*rebelse, uitdagende man*)
2. wayward man (*eigengereide man*)
3. sophisticated man (*sophisticated man*)
4. solid, reliable man (*degelijke man*)
5. retired man (*gepensioneerde man*)

Each lifestyle is analysed regarding matching attributes. From these lifestyles, 18 attributes are derived. The core attributes for each lifestyle are:

1. aggressive, tough, lively (*agressief, stoer, druk*)
2. progressive, sporty (*vooruitstrevend, sportief*)
3. self-assured, tasteful, qualitative elevated (*zelfbewust, verrijnd, kwalitatief hoogstaand*)
4. robust, firm (*robuust, degelijk*)
5. elegant, high-grade (*chique, hoogwaardig*)

The following attributes could be allocated to multiple lifestyles; These attributes should indicate the choice of a participant in combination with attributes that are allocated to a single lifestyle.

- reliable (*betrouwbaar*): solid, reliable and retired man
- seductive (*verleidelijk*): rebellious, provocative and sophisticated man

- dynamic (*dynamisch*): rebellious, provocative and wayward man
- appealing (*aantrekkelijk*): rebellious, provocative, wayward and sophisticated man
- smooth (*strak*): sophisticated and solid, reliable man
- modern (*modern*): wayward and sophisticated man

The experiment is executed in Dutch so the attributes and lifestyles are also subject to translation.

### 3.3 Participants

A total of 40 participants finished the survey (out of 76 that started). Seven of them were participants perceived as part of the researched lifestyle (who were of course all men), ranging from 25 to 42 years, average 29,1 years. The other 33 participants (15 men and 18 women) are no part of the lifestyle, ranging from 18 to 27 years with an average of 22,7 years.

Further on, *IL* is used as an abbreviation for lifestyle participants.

*NL* is used as an abbreviation for non-lifestyle participants, whom did not take part in the survey of the lifestyle.

### 3.4 Methodology

Two versions of the experiment are used. The participants were screened regarding their gender, age and target group, whether these match the new lifestyle or not. The participants experienced the same content, but differing questioning. Participants whom fit the new lifestyle were asked for their personal preferences, whom did not fit the lifestyle were asked to match the packages with attributes or lifestyles.



Figure 7. The eight tested packages in a vector store shelf.

#### Gestalt impact

A shelf [Fig. 7] with eight men shower gel packages is displayed for two seconds. Afterwards the participants were asked to point out the brands they have seen, what their preference is and what packaging they would choose.

#### Shelf impact

The same illustration is used, without time pressure. The participants were again asked for their preference and choice.

#### Categorisation task

Four of the eight packages (the current AXE packaging, the AXE redesign, Dove Men+ Care and Nivea for men) were categorised regarding matching attributes and a lifestyle. Each participant was able to choose 2-4 attributes and 1-2 lifestyles per packaging.

#### Fragrance recognition

The recognisability of the fragrances is assessed. Within a timeframe of two seconds the three fragrances are shown alongside each other. Afterwards, the participant has to say which packaging displayed what fragrance. Besides, the recognition of the metaphors is assessed.

#### Brand congruence

Lastly, the congruence of the brand and new lifestyle is assessed. Participants were asked to which extent they think the packaging fits the AXE brand, leaving the target group out of consideration. These results are benchmarked by asking the participants the same questions for the original AXE packaging.

### 3.5 Results

#### Gestalt and Shelf impact

The recognition and preference of the brand is subject to prescience of the consumers. However, under time pressure these conditions could have been minimised. In general, AXE is clearly the most recognised brand followed by Dove and Nivea by both *IL* and *NL* participants [Fig. 8 and 9]. When asked for the brands, AXE scores quite similar with the results of recognition without help, Dove and Nivea are recognised a little more. While bearing in mind the prominent placements of the AXE redesign, Dove and Nivea, the results still indicate that these package are in general fastest recognised.

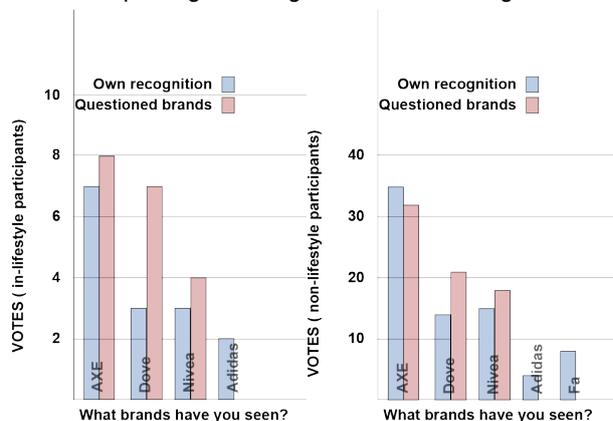


Figure 8 and 9. Brand recognition by own fulfilment and questioning of possible seen brands. Left are *IL*- and right are *NL*-participants results.

Without a viewing time limit, the results did not differ much. These results show that most *NL* participants still choose the AXE redesign. However, this choice could be affected by the fact that participants have prescience of the AXE brand and therefore know what packaging is non-existent. *IL* participants are more split, but the small group of participants could be of affect.

**Fig. 10 and 11:** Left, what packaging is preferred and right what packaging is chosen.



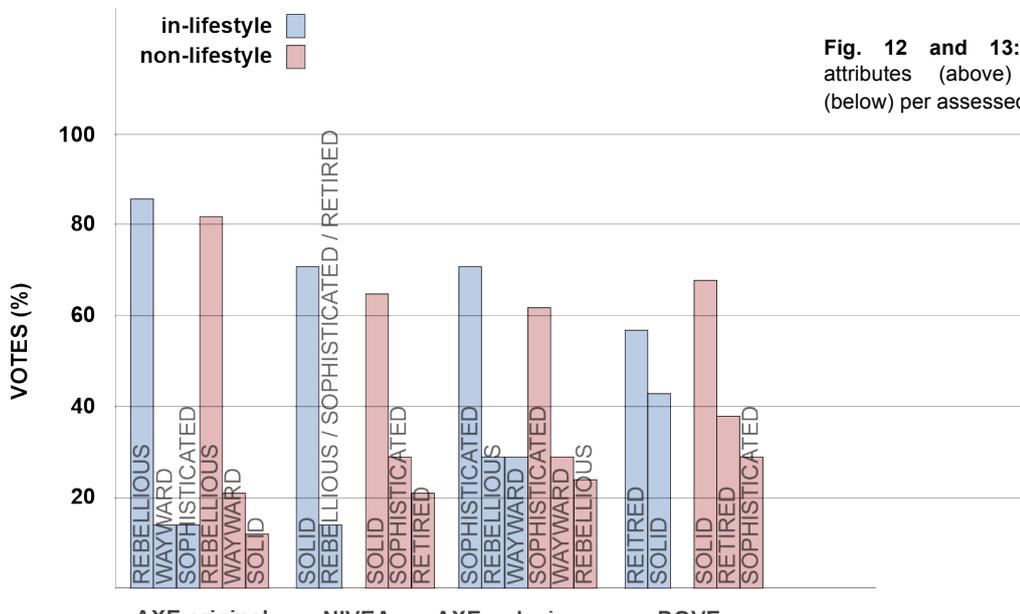
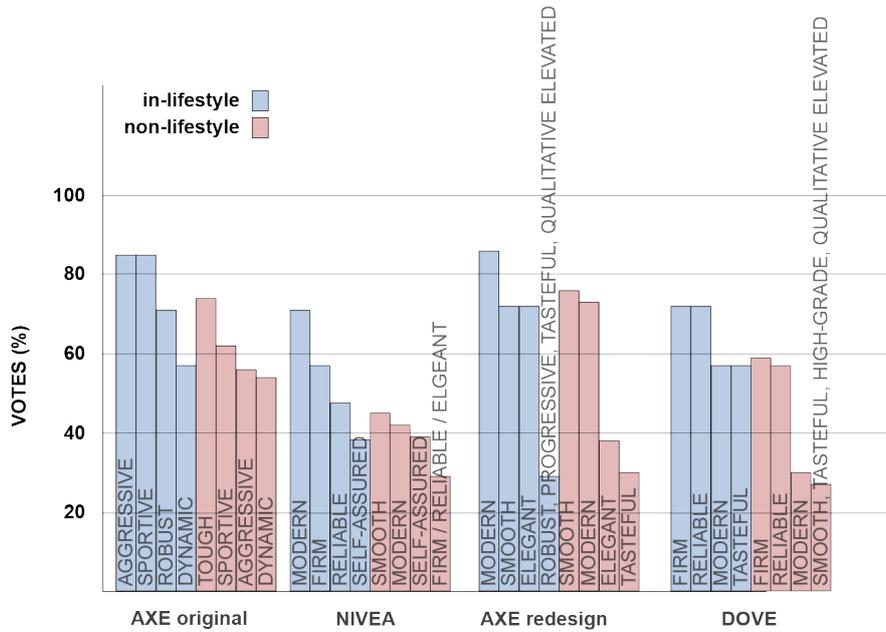
The *IL* participants clearly prefer the AXE redesign and Dove packaging. The Gestalt results are more split, but without a time limit the AXE and Dove packaging are most preferred. When participants were asked to choose a packaging, results were more almost equal in Gestalt. Without a time limit, AXE redesign and Dove score equal.

As a benchmark, the *NL* participants were asked which packaging they would describe as most qualitative high-grade. Dove (6 in Gestalt, 12 without a time limit) and the AXE (12 in Gestalt, 11 without a time limit) redesign score highest. So in comparison within an imitated store shelf,

**Categorisation task**

The chosen attributes are first assessed. The attributes that are significantly more chosen per packaging per lifestyle are derived. Result is a set of attributes for each packaging [Fig. 12]. First of all, it is worth mentioning that in general, the results of the *IL* and *NL* participants are similar. The AXE redesign is in fact perceived as a packaging for sophisticated men. The packages are all differently categorised [Fig. 13]; the original AXE is perceived as a packaging for rebellious, provocative men and the Nivea packaging for solid, reliable men. The results for the Dove packaging are more split. *IL* participants think it is for the retired men while *NL* participants think it suits the solid, reliable men better. After all, the results for Dove are much more divided then the other packaging evaluations.

The second step in analysing the categorisation is looking back at the attributes that are matched with the packages. Figure 12 shows the major attributes per packaging. In general the judgments match, when compared with the earlier made attribute division. Especially, the original AXE packaging clearly suits the made attribute division. The packaging is described as aggressive and dynamic. Sportive also scores high while the attribute was expected to suit the wayward lifestyle.



**Fig. 12 and 13:** The matched attributes (above) and lifestyles (below) per assessed packaging.

The AXE redesign is described as modern, smooth and elegant. Other attributes that are mentioned, and part of the theoretical proposed division, are tasteful, self-assured and qualitative elevated. The results of Dove do suit the matched lifestyle, however this lifestyle was not expected to be matched with the packaging. The attributes that are mentioned are firm, reliable, modern and tasteful. Firm and reliable are attributes that were not expected for this packaging. Nivea is matched with modern, firm, smooth and self-assured. Just like Dove, Nivea is matched with an unexpected lifestyle and even with this lifestyle bore in mind, the mentioned attributes are surprising.

### Fragrance recognition

The time limited method for Gestalt recognition is also used for the recognition of the fragrances. Respectively 86% and 71% of the *IL* participants recognised the MUSCLE and AWAKE fragrance, a much higher amount than the *NL* participants: 48% for both fragrances. Slightly more than half of the *IL* participants think the fragrances are appealing, two of them think they know what the metaphors mean but no right answer is given [Fig. 14]. A third of the *NL* participants think they recognise the metaphors and some right answers are given. The AWAKE metaphor is best recognised. Lastly, *NL* participants were asked to match attributes with the fragrances. The fragrances were primarily described as smooth (23), modern (22), high-grade (12) and elegant (11).

Fragrance	Metaphor description
MUSCLE <i>IL</i>	tough name, muscles of the arm
CLASSIC <i>IL</i>	sophisticated, diamond shape
AWAKE <i>IL</i>	sportive, sound waves of an alarm clock
MUSCLE <i>NL</i>	muscles (9), movement (1), <b>athletics track (1)</b>
CLASSIC <i>NL</i>	diamond shape/classical connection (7), <b>bow tie (1)</b> , champagne glasses (1), spearheads (1), reference to angular shapes of original AXE (1)
AWAKE <i>NL</i>	<b>sun (3)</b> , radio waves (3), circles (2), earth (1), water drop (1), shooting mark (1)

Fig. 14: The answers for the metaphor recognition.

### Brand congruence

Overall, the *IL* participants thought the brand AXE suits them (4 yes, 2 neutral, 1 no). Knowing this, it is interesting to compare the results of the packaging in contrast with the original AXE packaging. Most participants think the redesign suits them, for the original packaging the results are much more split. However, they do not think the packaging matches the AXE brand [Fig. 15].

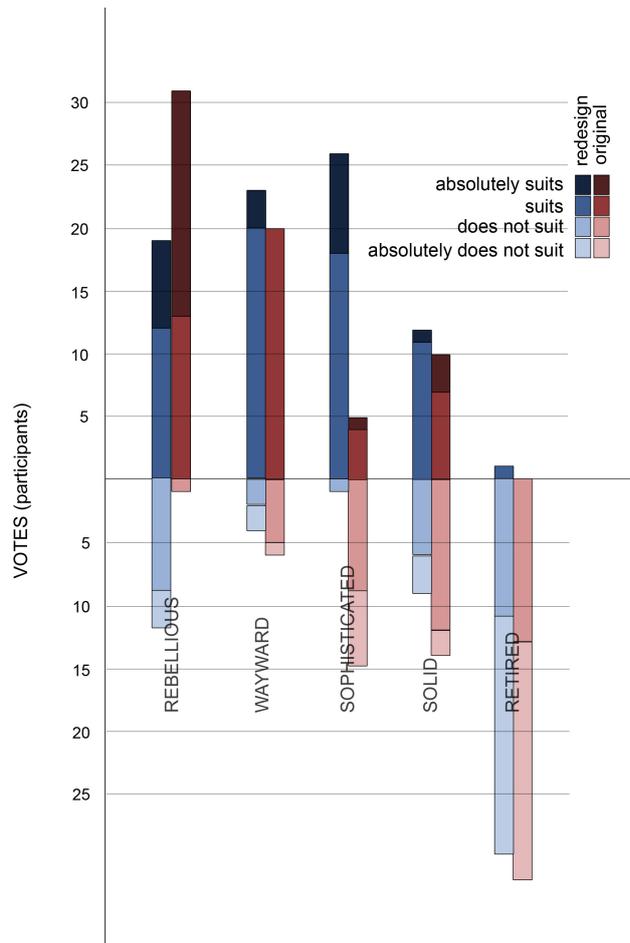


Fig. 15: The allocation of the AXE original and redesign packaging per lifestyle by the *NL* participants.

## 3.6 Discussion

### Matching the lifestyle

The most interesting part of the experiment is to what extent the packaging does indeed match the new lifestyle. The redesign is perceived as expected by both *IL* and *NL* participants. It is described as a modern, smooth, elegant and self-assured packaging and besides the lifestyle sophisticated men is indeed seen as the most fitting lifestyle. Of course, the limited choice of the five proposed lifestyles is of influence but the results show a clear distinction: the packaging is expected to be made for sophisticated man and the participants, who were (within the boundaries of the experiment) part of this lifestyle, are attracted by the packaging. This fact was in force for both Gestalt and non-time limited considerations.

Looking back at the modified Brand Identity Prism, the packaging does fit. Self-confidence is reflected in the results and the progressive and mature image that is described in *Reflection* is derived from the smooth, modern and elegant attributes. Smooth and elegant also refer back to the dignified and sophisticated *Self-image* that was described. Interesting fact is that the influence of both *Self-image* and *Reflection* are notable in both *IL* and *NL* results while a difference was expected.

### Placement in field of competitors

When the packaging is compared with its competitors, it does distinguish itself as the packaging for sophisticated men. As expected, the original AXE packaging is clearly seen as a packaging for rebellious, provocative men. Reducing the dynamism and making it more smooth

resulted in a packaging that is perceived as more mature and elegant. Dove was expected to be the most competitive packaging in the field of sophisticated men. However, this packaging was perceived as a packaging for solid, reliable or retired men. Concluding, the packaging is successfully matched with the proposed lifestyle while expected competitors were not really perceived as competition in the experiment.

Besides, some differences with the expected division of attributes along the lifestyles is observed. Sportive is in general matched with a young public, while elegant did not fit retired men but instead was matched with the sophisticated man. Retired man are described with terms like firm and moderate. So, the solid, reliable and retired man lifestyles were perceived as quite the same, leaving the age aspect out of consideration.

### **Distinctiveness**

It seems that the distinctiveness of an AXE packaging has been preserved in the redesign. Both, the original design and redesign of AXE, were clearly more often recognised than the six competitors. The redesign grabs the attention of most participants but prescience of the AXE brand (and current packages) should be bore in mind. The redesign is preferred by the lifestyle participants. So, besides the fact that the packaging was indeed perceived as a packaging for sophisticated men, it is also preferred by those men. Notable is the fact that Dove is also preferred while this packaging was not perceived as a shower gel for sophisticated men.

### **Brand congruence**

Lastly, prescience regarding the AXE brand is assessed. Most *IL* participants think the AXE brand suit them. Therefore, it is interesting that they do not think the packaging suits the brand while they also think the packaging does suit them, while the original packaging does not suit them.

*NL* participants describe AXE similar to the Brand Identity Prism. Tough, dynamic and seductive are mentioned. Comparing the AXE packages shows that the original packaging is clearly seen as one for rebellious, provocative men and the redesign for sophisticated men. Both packages are also reasonably suited for wayward men which could be seen as the connection between the new and old lifestyle used for AXE.

## **4 CONCLUSIONS**

In this research, the influence of a packaging upon consumer behaviour is assessed, with the emphasis upon the packaging design. The packaging is the business card of the producer within the supermarket. The design of packaging and labelling affect the consumer's decision making [Imram, 1999; Cardello, 1994]. The research is used to assess this influence in practice by analysing a certain lifestyle, designing a new packaging for this lifestyle group and testing the effects of the packaging upon the lifestyle.

The test showed good results regarding the perceived lifestyle. The redesign was assessed as a packaging for the proposed lifestyle and a good place within the field of competitors is perceived. However, the test methodology should be bore in mind. The environmental variables that come into play during a supermarket visit and decision making are minimised but their role in the decision making process could not be eliminated. A more realistic setting, in which these environmental variables are taken into

account and varied, should result in even more truthful results. Simulating the entire supermarket visit by using virtual reality could be an option when this field would be further explored.

Besides, the fact that the designed packaging is fictitious could have influenced the test results. The participants were not told which packaging was redesigned beforehand, but along the way they could have known this. Prescience of the assessed brands and the fact that two AXE packages were present could have been of influence. However, leaving the original AXE packaging out of the test would have restricted the opportunity to benchmark the redesign test results.

All in all, a good comparison of theory and (a simulated) reality is made. Available literature is used to create a good basis for the most interesting packaging design aspects and an analysis of the used brand from which a Case Study could be set up. The test results indicate a good basis for assessing the influence of the packaging design upon a designated lifestyle.

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Images:

Fig. 2: AXE (2013) *AXE Product range*. Retrieved Nov 24 2013 from: <http://axe.nl/axenl.php/products.html?so=&cat=shower+gel>

Fig. 7: Google (2013) *Multiple images of competitors used*. Retrieved Nov 24 2013 from:

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