# Abstract

The study takes a two-dimensional approach to branding and visual identity, seeing branding as a demonstration of the visual identity with its particularities and seeing the visual identity as a distinctive, pivotal symbol. The study is divided into seven chapters covering all aspects of branding from strategies to processes to international agreements to sciences that support and advance branding. The comprehensive study provides scholars and professionals in the fields of graphic design, multimedia, and marketing with up-to-date Arabic content on branding and visual identity.

Further, this study not only investigates branding in terms of graphic design, creativity and innovation, but it also investigates the contributions of supporting and complementary specializations (such as technological advances, digital communication, advertising campaigns and marketing) to different branding types. In some parts, the researcher explores advertising campaigns including planning and the success rate of delivering the message to the target audience, as well as the visual representations and the return on investment. In other parts, she assesses the impact of marketing on branding and how it distinctively positions the brand in the market through market research that includes statistical data about the market's dynamics, customer preferences, and competitors' progress and also by opening up new channels of communication with customers to expand market share or retain loyal customers.

On top of the literature review, the researcher conducts a field study to assess the current state of Syrian Brands, its progress and graphic experiments and to present proprietorship laws along with several samples and documentary images of Syrian visual identity, encompassing its cultural, commercial, formal, and artistic aspects.

Findings and recommendations revolve around moving branding forward and reinforcing the Syrian society's awareness about proprietorship in pursuit of going international, while preserving what is original and related to heritage. All in all, the study aims to evolve the level of understanding about proprietorship in terms of commercial, industrial, intellectual brands worldwide- no more copying or stereotyping!

**Keywords**
Brand, Trademark, Branding, Re-branding, Syrian brands, Syrian visual identity.

# English Summary

In an era characterized by consumption hysteria with its inputs and developments driving it to unlimited competition and production, economies and industries have developed tendencies toward anything new and creative. Competition have heated up, especially in crowded markets, revolving around acquiring solid market shares, attracting customers and retaining them. Consequently, branding has become more relevant than ever playing a crucial role in today's world.

Different specializations converged to develop branding concept and its mechanisms, and brand image. Branding has become present in every field of life, encompassing products and commodities, institutions and civil organizations, digital communication, artists, celebrities, politicians, countries, and so on and so forth.

In today's world, privacy faded away and globalization united many visual metaphors and graphic propositions, it globally fused symbols and designs. Concurrently, some schools of thought emerged advocating the importance of the identity of each country, nation and group, and they worked hard to protect and establish their cultural heritage, their visual representations, and most importantly their tacit knowledge.

Nonetheless, the lack of interest to develop Syrian Brands and the insufficient allocation of time and resources to do market research on the psychological and design levels hindered the progress of local companies and stopped them from growing internationally. Additionally, Syrian visual identity has been neglected in the arts field, namely, the unsophisticated, incompetent efforts of making creative designs that respond to societal needs and reflect its norms. Thus, **the most important research problem** is to develop a better understanding of the rich intellectual and cultural reservoir of Syrian society (including customer preferences) and to enhance the means and graphic solutions to correspond to it.

### Significance

This is a field study that tracks the progress of Syrian Brands by highlighting the milestones and documenting some brands across different fields. It is worth pointing out that the researcher collected data by visiting regulatory bodies, most notably, Damascus Chamber of Industry and the Directorate of Commercial and Industrial Proprietorship which is attached to the Ministry of Interior Affairs (Syria). Further, the researcher conducted personal interviews and examined some archives of specialized people and entities in Syrian Brands to reach a better understanding of the reality at present and to enrich the knowledge and competencies of professionals, including designers, marketers and other stakeholders.

The study raises several **questions**: Is it possible to form a base for graphic designs with Syrian visual identity? Is it a visual symbol, an architectural landmark, or visual vocabulary derived from primitive arts or fine arts? Is it calligraphy art? Is it an artisanship? Or is it related to famous crops?

The research stems from two hypotheses. Hypothesis (1): branding is the core of any organization or field of work. It represents its blood vessel and a robust, thoughtful graphic design will continuously reinforce, support, and regenerate it. Hypothesis (2): Syrian visual identity is a comprehensive, rich and deeply complex identity (ideologically, ethnically, intellectually, historically, and artistically). Therefore, a wholistic approach with the aim of arriving at a visual symbolic element that does not neglect any of the aforementioned aspects nor marginalize some of them will represent

Syrian visual identity, symbolize it and work within its framework. This visual symbolic element will be an inclusive unit that connects all components.

The timeframe of this study covers the beginning of the twentieth century till present and the geographical presence stretches over the territories of Syrian Arab Republic.

**Methodology**

The researcher adopted the narrative model using a descriptive analytical approach addressing several topics detailed in seven chapters. She thoroughly studied the essence and functionality of branding by tackling its different developmental aspects, since it is considered one of the specialties of graphic design in a time of multimedia dominance that witnesses great, accelerated leaps and takes in new things from various domains, encircling graphic design and its tools, marketing, advertisement and promotion, the psychology of consumption, and digital communication that is part of the era of Info-Financial.

**A Brief of Chapters**

*A Historical Lens on the Concept of Branding*, **chapter one** begins with a group of terminologies and highlights the accomplishments of the pioneers and prominent graphic designers and their contributions to the development of branding. Next, it dives in historical data tracing ancient civilizations, such as the ancient Egyptians and Sumerians who marked their cattle and pottery to identify the owners, and then it moves along the timeline to the commercial revolution era, during which Italian, French and British families stamped leather, cheese and liquor with their family names. Moving forward to the industrial revolution and mass production in European factories all the way to modern time- which is characterized by consumption hassle.

*The Philosophy and Strategies of Branding,* **chapter two** inclusively covers everything related to the development of branding. It has three folds, the first fold involves building a robust, competitive brand that has an identity- a brand associated with a special status and unique, elegant image. The second fold includes the most important laws and regulations related to the development of branding, and different branding approaches. The third fold describes all laws and issues related to proprietorship, such as protocols and international agreements.

*Graphic Design and the Identity of Branding*, **chapter three** calls attention to creativity and the most important innovative mechanisms and then it covers the ethical aspect of graphic design. Next, it includes a comprehensive study about the connotations of branding and the identity of design process using different communication modes (printouts, animation, digital) by referring to the Brand Guide. Last but not least, it tackles the issue of redesigning the visual identity "re-branding" following a new perspective counting its pros and cons.

**Chapter four**, *Marketing and Advertisement role in Branding*, handles the field of marketing as a closely- related complementary specialization to branding. It sets forth marketing mix and the mechanisms of promotion and examines the links of branding with the market (such as localization) encompassing its strategic position and customers' preferences by constructing communication channels with them. The chapter continues with the optimum deployment of branding identity by covering: (1) the definition of advertising, advertising campaigns, and their methods (planning, delivery, tracking, and evaluation); (2) the various forms of advertising campaigns; and (3) international advertising agencies and their scope of work.

**Chapter five,** *Syrian Brands***,** consists of all laws and regulations related to proprietorship of Syrian Brands and a brief about its development history including

significant, influential stops in Syrian Arab Republic. Further, this chapter explores Syrian visual identity with its diversified aspects (cultural heritage, formal, commercial), while pin pointing the most notable challenges and problems Syrian Brands face, such as heritage, customs, the lack of awareness about proprietorship, as well as borrowing international models that are not related to Syrian society.

**Chapter six** revolves around descriptive analytics following preset criteria for a group of diversified, selected models (local and international) to cover the previous models stated in the literature review, as well as presenting the researcher's related business experience.

The last part of this study contains the findings and recommendations, Arabic and English research summary, tables and figures, terminology, and reference list.