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The International Market: Designing an e-commerce experience to promote different cultures

Marina Minnikova

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THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET

Designing an e-commerce experience to promote different cultures
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Abstract

Learning different cultures and promoting international trade can be implemented through web design and marketing. Most e-commerce websites implement design and marketing strategies in an efficient way, however none of them implement the idea of exploring international cultures through purchasing experiences.

This thesis project implements a complex brand identity and determines how to effectively create an e-commerce website employing the ideas of shopping as an online trip (“out shopping”), providing several categories of products for particular user segments. A significant part of the project focuses on determining which graphic elements are applicable for a specific design situation.

Keywords:
Graphic Design
UI design
Brand identity
E-commerce
On-line market place
International shopping experience
Emotional shopping
Authentic products
**Problem Statement**

Most e-commerce websites implement design and marketing strategies in an efficient way, however none of them implement the idea of exploring international cultures through the purchasing experience. A new business idea and a new visual identity were implemented in order to bring a different perspective to the industry.

There are a lot of e-commerce websites on the market, however none of them represent and promote authentic and unique products from different countries in a way where people can discover exclusive characteristics of the culture and products it produces. This e-commerce website showcases local products that were particularly made in the country of interest. A purposeful, effective design, based on analysis and research, was an integral component in developing an overall design and marketing strategy for this project.

The project provides a discovery engine for less known brands from across the world and allows small businesses to access a worldwide audience through a unique identity platform.

**Thesis Statement**

The objective of this thesis is to implement a complex brand identity and determine how to successfully create an e-commerce website in order to promote cultural exchange and international authenticity.
## Situation Analysis

Characteristics of the Internet, such as ease and simplification, help to eliminate the borders between different parts of the world. The Internet provides many business opportunities worldwide. Online shopping has spread around the world, and its potential as an international marketing tool is universally recognizable (Cheng et al., 2008).

Shopping online permits consumers to buy any product in the world (Mintel, 2012). However, national cultures have always been a multifaceted and challenging construct to describe. Different national characteristics are more nuanced than we think. In today's globalizing world where cultures relate to each other, the discovery of unique features of any national culture is becoming more critical. Moreover, cultural consciousness is the base of communication and it involves awareness of different cultural ethics, principles and perceptions. The rising interdependence among countries today makes it more critical to support broader mutual understanding among people in the global community. Indeed, exchange of cultures deepen mutual understanding of such heritages of other associations such as languages, customs, and cultural ethnicities. This is one of the most important means of laying the foundations for true peace.

Web design and marketing can be a great tool in promoting international cultures. Web design relies heavily on visuals, which can be beneficial for promoting intercultural ideas. The question is how to efficiently design visually appealing websites targeted to a specific user segment, which can help to improve the user experience and, therefore, provoke desired behaviors. Although many studies explore potential conflicts between design and marketing interests, a disagreement exists in how to handle them. E-commerce provides a capability for businesses to constantly access information, communicate and complete transactions.
The objective of this thesis is to implement design and marketing strategies in an effective way to help people explore international cultures through the purchasing experience. Based on research a new business idea and new visual identity will be applied in order to bring a new perspective to the market. Social interaction will be implemented in the project to allow users to communicate with each other and leave feedback for items. The project will be focusing on emotional shopping, delivering a complete shopping trip experience. It will apply the idea of shopping as a online trip delivering several categories of products for particular user segments. It will also provide information about the latest trends according to the country. This project will target young and tech-savvy consumers, testing and implementing several strategies for women vs. men and enthusiastic vs. apathetic shoppers.
Situation Analysis
On-line vs. off-line shopping

The website’s use of social media will implement human interaction and affect users’ attitudes towards the content. (Dash & Saji, 2007). Shopping offline has an impact on the five senses where customers receive pleasure from sights, sounds, and smells (Cox, Cox & Anderson, 2005; Bitner, 1992). However, responsiveness and interactivity on the website can mimic traditional shopping experiences in the store (Palmer, 2002) and website design can predict satisfaction for a potential customer (DeLone & McLean, 2003). Therefore, web design elements and components can stimulate customer emotions while contributing to the best shopping experience (Pace, 2004).

Website social presence is outlined in the project. The website gives users the ability to interact with each other and website’s tastemakers, they are able to leave feedback and easily contact customer service.
Situation Analysis

Emotional shopping

Unlike traditional shopping (practical shopping for needed goods), many people shop to satisfy emotional needs (Pooler, 2003). Emotional shoppers rely on the effects of arousal, enjoyment and satisfaction (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003). While the efficiency of e-commerce activities are important (Bakos, 2001), previous studies identified online shopping as emotional experience (Bridges & Florsheim, 2008).

All shopping experiences can be seen as an action that gives a person cognitive or emotional aids (Hirschman, 1984) and can be identified as functional or emotional shopping (Giffin et al., 2000). Hedonic shopping is related to enjoyment, provided by a shopping trip, causing feelings of pleasure (Babin et al., 1994). Adventure and gratification are two hedonic shopping drives; they deal with essential emotional rewards.

Impulsiveness is associated with less planning and consideration before buying an item and feelings associated with shopping (Wolfinabarger and Gilly, 2001). Instant shoppers are interested in an exploratory experience; they are looking for innovative and unique items and services. Moreover, variety can increase density and richness of choice, which can benefit users from learning new trends and cultures (Kahn & Isen, 1993).

This project is focusing on emotional shopping delivering a complete shopping experience. The project provides a variety of products divided into several categories. It also provides information about latest trends and news according to the country.
Previous research identified that men are more likely to shop online than women (Garbarino & Strahilevit, 2004). Women are less satisfied with their online shopping experience as an outcome of web design that is not well-matched with women’s expectations (Moss and Gunn, 2005).

Understanding women’s inclinations has profitmaking importance and website designers should apply knowledge that contributes to the perceptual differentiations between genders (Cyr & Bonanni, 2005). Women spend more emotional energy in order to pursue enjoyment (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003). In comparison, men value convenience and one-stop shopping more than pleasure (Buttle, 1992).

Spontaneity is an important predictor for differentiation of shopper segments. Enthusiastic consumers are highly spontaneous; apathetic consumers, on the other hand, present low spontaneity. Online sales should offer different types of shopping activities to attract customers from various segments. Today, gratification-oriented customers transfer their entertaining space online. They enjoy surfing online regularly and purchase products to please themselves (Lee et al., 2013).

*This project mostly targets women, testing and implementing several strategies for women vs. men and enthusiastic vs. apathetic consumers.*
### Situation Analysis

**Facets of brand identity**

Brand identity represents all elements that form the existence of the brand (Louis and Lombart, 2010). It should implement and represent company’s personality, culture and relationships with its customers (Ross, et al., 2011). A brand should include practical and emotional values for the customers and be respectful by stakeholders. The brand should build strong relationships with loyal customers and provide qualified customer service (Chernatony et al., 2006).

*This project creates a unique branding identity and supporting elements for the service.*

**Tourist shopping style preferences**

Previous studies suggest that tourists buy many different items besides souvenirs (Kim et al., 2011). Shopping can motivate people to travel to a specific place. Travelers usually buy products related to clothes, food, electronics and cosmetics. Gender, age and trip style are important factors in forecasting traveler’s shopping behavior. Usually women have a bigger interest in buying clothes, shoes and jewelry while men shop for tobacco, wines and liquor (Xinran et al., 2014).

*This project implements the idea of shopping as a trip online, providing several categories of products for particular user segments.*
| **Survey of Literature** | **Brand revolution: Rethinking brand identity**  
Sicard, Marie-Claude  
2013  
Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan  
This book discusses different aspects of branding and its changing reality with a new way of thinking and new research. It talks about the importance of brand identity and examines how marketing conceives this concept.  

**Designing brand identity:**  
**An essential guide for the whole branding team**  
Wheeler, Alina  
2013  
Hoboken, N.J: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.  
This book illustrates how to create, build, and maintain a strong brand.  

**Understanding brand identity confusion**  
Srivastava, R. K.  
2011  
Marketing Intelligence & Planning 29, (4): 340-352  
This research paper analyses the brand identity as a method of distinction which leads consumers’ buying choice. The research highlights the significance of brand identity and various factors that influence it.  

**Relationships among brand identity, brand image and brand preference: Differences between cyber and extension retail brands over time**  
This paper studies connections between brand image, identity, and preferences in an online retail context.  

**The influence of identity characteristics on E-shopping enjoyment and E-loyalty among women online shoppers**  
Coverdale, Tonjia S., and Allison J. Morgan  
2013  
Journal of Interactive Marketing 25, (3): 169-177  
This paper studies the role of customers’ satisfaction and e-Loyalty. It studies women online shoppers and reflects their race, education and status. The purpose of the paper is to investigate women’s e-commerce behaviors and attitudes.
### Survey of Literature

**Materialism and brand engagement as shopping motivations**  
Goldsmith, Ronald E., Leisa R. Flynn, and Ronald A. Clark  
2011  
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services 18, (4): 278-284  
This research analyses stimuli that affect shopping activity.

**What drives cyber shop brand equity? An empirical evaluation of online shopping system benefit with brand experience**  
Chen, Lily Shui-Lien  
2012  
International Journal of Business and Information 7, (1): 81  
The purpose of this research is to determine the link between branding experience and branding equity.

**Generation Y females online: Insights from brand narratives**  
Wallace, Elaine, and Lorna Ruane  
2013  
Qualitative market research 16, (3): 315-335  
This paper identifies the relationships females of Generation Y have with online fashion brands. This paper studies the role of social networks while shopping online and brand consumption.

**Fashion value brands: The relationship between identity and image**  
Ross, Jill, and Rod Harradine  
2011  
The research analyses the value of branding. It tests the interactions between brand identity and brand owner, the perception of the image by young consumers.

**Brand equity for online companies**  
Rios, Rosa E., and Hernan E. Riquelme  
2008  
Marketing Intelligence & Planning 26, (7): 719-742  
This paper analyses how to measure brand equity for e-commerce. It studies the support for brand equity in brand awareness and loyalty.

**Investigating consumers’ online purchasing behavior: Single-brand e-retailers versus multi-brand e-retailers**  
Rahnamaee, Arash, and Paul D. Berger  
2013  
Journal of Marketing Analytics 1, (3): 138-148  
This research analyses different models of single-brand and multi-brand online retailers and consumer attitudes towards the brands.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey of Literature</th>
<th>The determinants of consumers’ online shopping cart abandonment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kukar-Kinney, Monika, and Angeline G. Close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science 38, (2): 240-250</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This paper identifies the main drives to e-commerce shopping cart and studies the reasons of this non-buyer behavior.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Consumer decision making in online shopping environments: The effects of interactive decision aids</th>
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<tr>
<td>Häubl, Gerald, and Valerie Trifts</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing Science 19, (1): 4-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This study tests decision aids on buying decision-making on an e-commerce website. It studies interactive tools on the website and analyses comparison matrix that helps customers to see alternatives.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Adventure versus gratification: Emotional shopping in online auctions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lee, Min-Young, Youn-Kyung Kim, and Hyun-Joo Lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Journal of Marketing 47, (1/2): 49-70</td>
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<tr>
<td>This research examines emotional shoppers and studies searching and bidding activities. It highlights tailored strategies for emotional users.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer purchasing behavior and e-commerce adoption factors</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mahmood, MAdam, Somnath Mukhopadhyay, and Jimmie L. Joseph</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This paper examines Ajzen's theory of planned attitudes. It analyses Keeney’s research on online shopping behavior and provides a set of contexts to understand the e-commerce market.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Tourist shopping style preferences</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chen, Sabrina Y., and Xinran Y. Lehto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of vacation marketing 20, (1): 3-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This paper analyses tourist shopping style activities, tourists’ preferences and behaviors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey of Literature

Distinguishing counterfeit from authentic product retailers in the virtual marketplace
Wilson, Jeremy M., and Roy Fenoff
2014
This research analyses luxury apparel markets and distinguishes the websites with effective design features.

Overindividuation in gift giving: Shopping for multiple recipients leads givers to choose unique but less preferred gifts
Steffel, Mary, and Robyn A. Le Boeuf
2014
Journal of consumer research 40, (6): 1167-1180
This paper illustrates how social contexts affect gift choices.

E-mass customization apparel shopping: Effects of desire for unique consumer products and perceived risk on purchase intentions
Kang, Ju-Young M., and Eundeok Kim
2012
International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education 5, (2): 91-103
This paper emphasizes the effects of the need for unique products and its effects on shopping online.

A model-driven methodology to the content layout problem in web applications
Comai, Sara, and Davide Mazza
2012
ACM Transactions on the Web (TWEB) 6, (3): 1-38
This research develops a methodology for efficient web services in order to make them more successful.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Persona One (Developed Market)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name</strong></td>
<td>Nichole Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background</strong></td>
<td>Creative director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demographics</strong></td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$150 000 / year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Los Angeles, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Have access to different brands and fashion items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identifiers</strong></td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Communicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goals</strong></td>
<td>Primary: Find an item that will showcase his/her personality and be different from others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary: Find out more about designers and trend makers worldwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges</strong></td>
<td>Hard to find exclusive and authentic items from abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hard to find information about trends from abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hard to find and order products from abroad without knowing the language and international logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hard to trust online shopping engines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What Can We Do</strong></td>
<td>Provide exclusive and authentic products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide risk-free purchase experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide appealing and friendly UI and UX</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide a clear brand identity</td>
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<td>Common Objections</td>
<td>Marketing Messaging</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust issues</td>
<td>Implement international trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard to see the actual look of the product</td>
<td>Be interactive with video components, feedback, social media links, how-to guides, shopping cart, login box and search box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential timely delivery problems</td>
<td>Provide information about purchase process and payment methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returns issues</td>
<td>Make online purchase experience fun, interactive, enjoyable and implement the idea of exploring international cultures through purchasing experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Elevator Pitch</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Find exclusive and unique products from all over the world with enjoyable online shopping experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore unique cultures and trends worldwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find authentic products that no one else will have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide a risk-free purchase experience from abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Demographics</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Identifiers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>What Can We Do</strong></td>
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<td>Potential timely delivery problems</td>
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<td>Returns issues</td>
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</table>

**Elevator Pitch**

- Find exclusive and unique products from all over the world with enjoyable online shopping experience
- Explore unique cultures and trends worldwide
- Find authentic products that no one else will have
- Provide a risk-free purchase experience from abroad
The first ideas for the brand name and design were “globoshop” and “globoutique.” The idea behind the names was a combination of the global approach of the website and shopping boutique experience.

The core elements of the design are round (as a globe) with a typographic implementation of the name. The reason why these sketches were not chosen for improvement is that the idea seemed to be cliché and wouldn’t give a high-end look to the brand (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Logo Sketches
These sketches implement the idea of an online shopping cart and global experience. They also lead to explore the option of working with two letters: G (stands for global) and B (stands for boutique). These versions did not seem to add a high-end value to the brand and were not chosen for improvement (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Logo Sketches
These sketches also implement the idea of the two first letters. Most design elements are round to incorporate the global approach of the service. These sketches were not chosen (Figures 3 – 6).

Figure 3: Logo Sketches
Figure 4: Logo Sketches
Logo Implementation

Sketches

Figure 5: Logo Sketches
Figure 6: Logo Sketches
Previous sketches of GB lead to the “96” and eventually to “196” that stands for the number of the countries in the world. This idea seemed to be more unique and was chosen to be further explored (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Logo Sketches
These sketches were implemented in Adobe Illustrator. They are based on previous pen sketches and lead to the “196” further exploration and development (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Logo Sketches
These sketches implement the “196” logo concept through typography and circle shapes (to show the global approach). They were also not seen as a high-end brand representation and were not chosen (Figures 9 – 11).

Figure 9: Logo Sketches
Figure 10: Logo Sketches
Figure 11: Logo Sketches
These versions of the logo implement the high-end approach of the brand and were chosen for further development (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Logo Sketches
Final Logo Design

This final logo design incorporates the number of the countries in the world (196). It emphasizes the idea of exploring global trends from all 196 countries and ability to purchase fashion items from all over the planet. The logo is based on typography elements, where we see the transition of the elements from thin to bold. The style of it stands for high-end products and features a global approach. It is implemented in black and white only which also highlights the status of the website (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Final Logo Design
The categories of the items on the website are close to luxurious since the website provides designer items of high quality. The main idea of the color palette was to represent luxury of the service and highlight the products and content of the website. The feeling of wealth and style was critical to showcase. The website features strict and minimalist black, two variations of grey – light and dark grey, white and bright sophisticated orange as a highlight color. This balanced color pallet was implemented throughout the website.

**White**
HAX #FFFFFF  
CMYK 0/0/0/0  
RGB 255/255/255

**Light Grey**
HAX #E4E3E3  
CMYK 9/7/7/0  
RGB 228/227/227

**Dark Grey**
HAX #323232  
CMYK 69/63/62/58  
RGB 50/50/50

**Black**
HAX #231F20  
CMYK 0/0/0/100  
RGB 35/31/32

**Orange**
HAX #F47F24  
CMYK 0/62/97/0  
RGB 244/127/36
Typography

The typography choices were based on its readability and clearness. A sans-serif neo-grotesque typeface was chosen for the project. Different weights and variations within the type family gave the possibility to stay consistent with the style and have variations for different information highlights. The typeface imposes strict discipline across all graphic elements; it is versatile and distinctive. The chosen typeface is neutral and clear. It allows imagery to be more visible and noticeable.

Univers 45 Light
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Univers 55 Roman
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Univers 65 Bold
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Univers 75 Black
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890
Website Planning  Before designing the website, the content and flowchart were designed based on research and analysis (Figure 14).

![Website Planning Diagram]

Figure 14: Website Planning
Figure 15: Wireframe “Log In Page”
Figure 16: Wireframe "Home Page"
Website Design Implementation
Wireframes
Search Option 1
(by category)

Search Option 2
(by country)

Figure 17: Wireframe “Search Options”
Figure 18: Wireframe "Product Options Page"
Story about the product

Known for the juxtaposition of contrasting elements – fragility and strength, tradition and modernity, fluidity and severity – the brand is influenced by the arts and crafts tradition, for which it has profound respect. Famed for the emotional power and energy of its shows as well as the romantic but contemporary nature of its collections, Sarah Burton, Creative Director, continues the Alexander McQueen legacy. Her critically acclaimed collections fuse the McQueen aesthetic with her signature handcraft and technical expertise.

Figure 19: Wireframe “Product Explanation Page”
**Website Design**

**Implementation**

**Wireframes**

**Check Out Page**

**Shipping Method**

- **STANDART** – Estimated Delivery Date: FREE
- **EXPRESS** – Estimated Delivery Date: USD
- **GIFT WRAPPING** – Send your order as a gift: FREE

**Payment Method**

- CREDIT CARD
- PAYPAL

**HAVE A PROMOTIONAL CODE**

**ORDER REVIEW**

- You chose 2 products
- Shipping Method: STANDART
- Payment Method: Credit Card

**ORDER TOTAL (Sales Tax Excl.)**

$ 500.60

**Information on Returns and Customer Care**

Figure 20: Wireframe “Check Out Page”
### Website Design Implementation

**Wireframes**

**Check Out Page**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHIPPING DETAILS</th>
<th>2 PAYMENT</th>
<th>3 CONFIRMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>info</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail Address</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Name and Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIP Code</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State/Province</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Billing details are the same as the shipping details**
- **Back**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORDER REVIEW</th>
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<td>2 products</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORDER TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$ 500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Payment Method**
- **CREDIT CARD**

**Shipping Method**
- **STANDART**  **FREE**

---

Figure 21: Wireframe “Check Out Page”
You are making your purchase on a secure server. We guarantee the highest security level for every purchase. Payment and delivery data are collected through the most technologically advanced codification systems (SSL) and our Online Store uses a VeriSign secure server and a Trustwave certificate to ensure maximum protection.

**DETAILS OF YOUR CREDIT CARD**

- **Card Number**
- **Expiration Date**
  - Select month
  - Select year
- **CW/CID/CVC**
- **BILLING ADDRESS**
  - First Name
  - Last Name
  - Street Name and Number
  - ZIP Code
  - City
  - Country
  - State/Province

**Payment Method**

- **CREDIT CARD**

**Shipping Method**

- **STANDARD FREE**

**ORDER TOTAL**

- $500

**PROCEED WITH ORDER**
Figure 23: Wireframe “Contact Us Page”
Several menu options were analyzed for the website. The first two options have centered design alignment which does not match with the layout and the grid of each page (Figure 24, 25). Consequently, flush left alignment for the main menu was chosen to keep alignment consistent throughout all graphic website elements (Figure 26).

**Figure 24:** Menu Option 1

**Figure 25:** Menu Option 2

**Figure 26:** Menu Option 3
Several map designs were implemented to better showcase different countries. This map design was intended to make navigation easy and highlight the items selling on the website. During the design process I realized that realistic map would not be appropriate for the website. Realistic map was too busy and detailed (Figures 27 – 28). Since the main purpose of the design was to highlight and emphasize the items (not the map itself), I started to simplify the map (Figures 29 – 34). It was important to keep the style consistent. In order to match the style of the logo and the style of the map, I decided to stylize the map using dots (round shapes similar to the ones I use in the logo).

Figure 27: Map Design Option 1

Figure 28: Map Design Option 2
Figure 29: Map Design Option 3

Figure 30: Map Design Option 4
Figure 31: Map Design Option 5

Figure 32: Map Design Option 6
Map Design

Figure 33: Map Design Option 7

Figure 34: Map Design Option 8
Real world map seemed to be too detailed (Figure 35). Simplified map design was chosen to better fit the style of the brand identity. The main idea is to sell items, hence, the design of the map is neutral and shaded. When customers hover the map, countries appear in a highlight orange color. This map is interactive and makes all countries clickable (Figure 36).

Figure 35: Map Design Option 9

Figure 36: Final Map Design
Each country has its own page with local fashion news and trends. It was important to identify each country’s identity and at the same time be consistent with the brand style. Universal design was chosen to highlight a high-end brand identity. Patterns related to the country are implemented in typographic implementation (Figures 37 – 40).

Figure 37: Country’s Page Design Option 1

Figure 38: Country’s Page Design Option 1
Website Design Implementation
Country’s Page Design

Figure 39: Country’s Page Design Option 2

Figure 40: Country’s Page Design Option 3
Website Design

The website investigates the concept of web design as an Internet venture. During the project several factors were researched and implemented such as aesthetics, navigation, visibility of the elements, security and instinctiveness. Several aspects were researched and compared, providing an example of clear and attractive website layout. The analysis and research suggest that good web design incorporates user integration, design aesthetics, effectiveness, customization, security, appropriate use of white space and complexity.

The main idea of the web design is to align the style and the design with the goal of the website. The context of the One 96 signifies functionality, simplicity and aesthetics. The brand identity is seen on every page in order to feature the brand image. Every page has a clear and consistent grid and logical navigation.

Figure 41: Website Overview
In order to increase the connection between the company and users, this website provides geo-coding, language, currency, account log-ins and collections’ customization. Throughout the website a user can choose any language and make currency conversion. The first page that users see is “choose your language” page. On this page customers click on the language they are comfortable to work with; this language will be consistent thought-out their shopping experience. The main website content is shaded on this page in order to highlight the first action (choosing the language), but, at the same time, interest users to review what is hidden on the page (Figure 42).

Figure 42: Choose a Language Page
“One 96” is more than an e-commerce website – it is a club. By registering on the website a customer becomes a member of the community that shares the same values of fashion and international trends. On this page users have to register or log in into the club. They cannot skip this step and review the items. This action is required in order to make “One 96” club more special and give a feeling of belonging to a unique online platform (Figure 43).

Figure 43: Log In / Register Page
Website Design

Visual Complexity

“One 96” home page implements information about recent collections and aesthetic aspects. This homepage creates the initial impression of the service. When users open the page they see a stylized map of the world where they can choose a country to shop in. They have an option to choose a country from the list or hover the map and browse the countries. On the home page we see “Today’s Top Pieces” that gives an update of the latest collections. While scrolling down users see exclusive deals and sales. A clear grid structure is consistent on each page. The main emphasis is on the items presented; the pictures are bright and big and typography does not compete with the imagery. The system puts the most recent collections on the first place on the page. The collections are chosen from diverse countries so that users can browse and explore different cultures and fashions (Figure 44).

Figure 44: Webpage #1 – Choose a Language
Website Design

Communication

“One 96” implements the idea of communication with the customers and among them. Upon choosing an item customers can read information left by qualified tastemakers. They can see others customers’ reviews and leave feedback. Also, they can share the links on Facebook or Twitter.

The pictures of the item are big and clear. The information design leads users to the next step. The page also gives detailed information about the item: tastemakers’ review, characteristics, customers’ reviews, product questions and shipping information. It also provides information about estimated time delivery, size chart and currency exchange.
White Space

According to the previous studies with a big amount of white space, people tend to see the website being prestigious, expensive and trustworthy (Pracejus, Olsen, 2006). Throughout the website, the amount of the white space (negative space) has been very important. It was used to convey elegance, power, leadership, honesty, and modern nature. It also communicates the idea of simplicity, prestige of goods and high-end products. Each page of “One 96” incorporates the concepts of an appropriate amount of white space. Each page has very specified content and is not overloaded with the information (Figure 45).

Figure 45: Item Description Page
Website Design

Learning Platform

Besides providing an enjoyable shopping platform the website gives its customers a portal of learning and interacting. It incorporates the idea of consumer-lifestyle issues rather than promoting the brand. “One 96” features more social cross-pollination. The website offers a pleasant engaging user experience. Overall, the website strives to achieve a great depth of brand experience by offering appealing information. On the item description page, below the actual product of interest users can review recommended products and read fascinating information about the country of the item. They can read about trends and news related to the item and the origin of it (Figure 46).

Figure 46: Item Description Page
“One 96” incorporates two main concepts – online shopping platform and online fashion magazine. By choosing a country users review trends and fashion news in the country and shop the items from the latest collections. This page showcases the latest trends and news for this particular country (Russia in this case). Users can explore the news or shop the latest fashion collections from this country. The same consistent grid structure is used on the page. On this page users can choose between “Fashion,” “Beauty,” “Fashion Shows,” or “Culture”; they can “stay” on this page or go and explore another country (Figure 47).
There are several search options on the website. The first one is to select a country of interest and shop the items only from this specific country. The second one is to select a category and the third one is to browse the latest uploads. This page has a drop down menu with several categories, such as apparel, runway, accessories. When users choose one, they go to a different page with items related to this specific category (Figure 48).

Figure 48: Search Option
Website Design

Search Options

When users select the category, they see items from different countries. Users can filter them by country, category, color and size. They can select the number of items on the page and sort by price or relevance or browse them. The pictures of the items are big and clear. An explanation for each picture is provided under the items with the collection's name, the country of it, the original and the discounted price (Figure 49).

Figure 49: Search Option
Website Design

**Tastemakers**

The website canvass the opinions of experts from all over the world. Each item featured has been qualified for inclusion based on the expert opinions. “One 96” experts publish their fashion articles for each country on the website. They provide feedback for fashion discussions.

This page follows universal for the website grid structure. The pictures on the page are changed from color to black and white in order to be different from the products’ imagery. Tastemakers that published most recent articles are put on the first place by the system, however, users can sort experts by country or by name (Figure 50).

**Figure 50: Tastemakers Page**
Checkout process

The website implements an easy checkout process. It allows customers to easily modify the order. Moreover “Back to Shopping” button is fully functioning and users can easily return to pages where they were before. Photos, specifications, size, color, quantity, price and links for the items in the basket are highlighted by typography to make sure that the customers can quickly scan over their online cart. Shipping time is also provided along with option of different shipping methods. The design of the check-out process is well structured and follows the same grid as the rest of the pages. The interface is simple and does not contain any additional elements such as top products, latest trends, discounts to eliminate confusion the users can have (Figure 51).

Figure 51: Checkout Page
**Website Design**

**Checkout process**

The check out process provides a progress indicator and highlights the state of the checkout where the user at and how many steps are ahead. It gives the users a sense of control, which reduces confusion. It also makes it possible to see when users can modify the order before they submit it. The design eliminates distractions and focuses users’ attention on the information about the order. The design is well structured in order to help users to proceed to check out quick and easy (Figure 52).

![Checkout Page](image)

Figure 52: Checkout Page
Website Design

Contact Information
A good contact page is important for any e-commerce website. “One 96” has a number of ways for customers to contact the company. The design of the page makes it easy to see the information provided and to contact the company. Contact information can be also found at the bottom of each page, which makes it easily accessible for the users (Figure 53).

Figure 53: Contacts Page
The first step in creating a motion graphic piece was to develop a concept. The main idea of the promotional video is to showcase how simple and enjoyable it is to use the website. It also shows potential user the service of the website and highlights positive experience (Figure 54).

Figure 54: Storyboard
Motion Graphics Implementation

Video Implementation

After planning the video several videos were shot and voices recorded. The videos were combined, edited and animated in Adobe After Effects. The voice over was recorded and edited in Adobe Audition (Figure 55).

Figure 55: Video Implementation Process
Motion Graphics Implementation

The video was created in Adobe After Effects. It showcases websites’ target audience and user experience. It also shows main features of the website and its interface (Figure 56).

Figure 56: Video Implementation
Feedback

After the project was completed I gathered feedback from my peers and visitors of Imagine RIT 2015. By analyzing the questionnaires I was pleased to realize that most people liked the visual identity and the style of the website. A lot of people appreciated the idea and shown their interest in shopping on the website. Most people highlighted that the information on this shopping platform was well organized and easily accessible. Moreover, while talking to people, I understood that a lot of people would love to know about different cultures during shopping process. They were very interested in the service and found the idea of combining shopping platform and online magazine very exciting.

Some people gave very useful suggestions to improve the website, for example to show history of previous purchases, explain the meaning of the logo, different ways to show the difference between original and discounted price.
Dissemination

**On campus dissemination**
Imagine RIT - May 2015
Thesis Show - May 2015

**Off-campus dissemination**
Nampak International Design Challenge – June 2015
Adobe Design Achievement Awards – June 2015
Journal of International Marketing – August 2015
Global Innovation tournament – September 2015
Coloplast Global Career Challenge – December 2015
Conclusion

This thesis project implements the idea of international shopping experience and offers an educational platform where users can explore different cultural trends and news through purchasing experience. This project generates a unique business idea and a way of creating an appropriate visual design identity for a high-end e-commerce website. The website visual identity was designed to outline the uniqueness of the service and the quality of the products. In order to design a user-friendly web system many marketing materials were analyzed and were taken into consideration. As a result, an attractive web design for a specific target audience was implemented.

Throughout the project identifying different cultural aspects and highlighting unique authentic products were very important. Nevertheless, products’ imagery is the brightest and the most recognizable elements on each page since it was a critical aspect for an e-commerce platform.

After detailed marketing research the project was implemented in Adobe software (Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Indesign, Adobe Audition, Adobe AfterEffects). The next steps in developing the project would be coding the website and designing the layouts for mobile apps.

While working on this project I realized that many people are interested in international trends and would love to shop on the website where they can educate themselves through shopping experience. From the design standpoint I understood that it is critical to use an appropriate visual design style for a specific product segment (high-end fashion items in my case). Moreover, I learned that unified visual design can showcase multicultural products and highlight the most important information. In conclusion, good design makes products eye-catching for the customers and attracts users to the website.
In order to further develop the service, explore potential marketing and design opportunities, “One 96” can be pushed forward and be implemented in real life. This project should be coded since it has design, marketing and business potential.

More countries and articles should be showcased. Social aspects should be implemented on a workable website in order to attract customers to the website. High interactivity approach should be implemented where several interactive key elements such as world map, instant feedback and videos should be wisely used.
Permissions

“One 96” e-commerce website relies heavily on images and graphics. While designing a prototype for the website, professional imagery of apparel products, fashion shows and counties were purchased from Shutterstock.com (Figure 57).

Figure 57: Shutterstock Permission
### Appendix
Image RIT Surveys

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Suggested Improvements:

*Visually strong and appealing*

Comments:

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Suggested Improvements:

Comments:
## Appendix

Image RIT Surveys

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Suggested Improvements:

Visually Stunning - Great Website - Want to Shop!

Comments:

I would definitely use this website.
**Appendix**

Image RIT Surveys

<table>
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<th>Age</th>
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Suggested Improvements:

Comments: 

Great job! Innovative!
# Appendix

Image RIT Surveys

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**Suggested Improvements:**

**Comments:**
### Appendix

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**Suggested Improvements:**

**Comments:**

*Is there any meaning to the name 'oneg6'?*

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**Suggested Improvements:**

**Comments:**

*Great work.*
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Image RIT Surveys

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Suggested Improvements: I liked the concept. I would like to shop on such a website. Very useful.

Comments:

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of Information</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggested Improvements: Good job!

Comments:

I'd love to see the real website in the future!
### Appendix

#### Image RIT Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>(Please circle your answers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>15 - 20 20 - 25 25 - 30 30 - 35 35+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td>Female Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual Style</strong></td>
<td>effective 2 3 4 5 ineffective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Navigation</strong></td>
<td>effective 2 3 4 5 ineffective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggested Improvements:**
- I think there's a tiny little thing you can do better in the design.
- Was #856 New #860 more clear to the users.

**Comments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Navigation</strong></td>
<td>effective 1 2 3 4 5 ineffective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggested Improvements:**
- Could possibly use darker grey for some text. Dependent.

**Comments:**
## Appendix
Image RIT Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>15 - 20</th>
<th>20 - 25</th>
<th>25 - 30</th>
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<tr>
<th>Visual Style</th>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>ineffective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggested Improvements:

- Really good visual style, enjoyed the demo.

Comments:

Suggested Improvements:

- Add to cart page could use steps: 1 = Color, 2 = Size, 3 = Add

Comments:

- Good work!
## Appendix

### Image RIT Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>15 - 20</th>
<th>20 - 25</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual Style</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<th>5</th>
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</tr>
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</table>

**Suggested Improvements:**

1. History of previous purchases.
2. Sometimes, in such apps too many options will confuse the user; is there any way to "preselect" based on user interest??

**Comments:**

---

## Appendix

### Image RIT Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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**Suggested Improvements:**

1. History of previous purchases.
2. Sometimes, in such apps too many options will confuse the user; is there any way to "preselect" based on user interest??

**Comments:**

---
# Appendix

Image RIT Surveys

| Age          | 15-20 | 20-25 | 25-30 | 30-35 | 35+ |  |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-
| Gender       | Female | Male  |       |       |     |   |
| Visual Style | effective | 1 | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 | ineffective |
| Clarity of Information | effective | 1 | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 | ineffective |
| Navigation   | effective | 1 | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 | ineffective |

Suggested Improvements:

* have some give away goodies

* che! very nice. nice concept.

Comments:

---

| Age          | 15-20 | 20-25 | 25-30 | 30-35 | 35+ |  |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-
| Gender       | Female | Male  |       |       |     |   |
| Visual Style | effective | 1 | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 | ineffective |
| Clarity of Information | effective | 1 | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 | ineffective |
| Navigation   | effective | 1 | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 | ineffective |

Suggested Improvements:

Comments:
Appendix
Promotional Video Script

Love to showcase your unique personality, and explore international designers and brands?

Welcome to “One 96,” the global boutique online store!

Simply choose your language and log in to the club, select a category, or browse a country you want to shop in.

Explore the hottest trends and news for a chosen country. Shop the latest fashion shows and the coolest designers of this country, or go back and browse a specific category.

Click on a class you are interested in, and you will see unique fashion pieces from across the world. Filter, or surf them.

Select an item you are interested in and read fascinating information about the origin of it, the designer that created it, and what our tastemakers think about it.

Select your size and color, and proceed to our secure checkout process. “One 96” guarantees security of each transaction and your personal information.

We make sure we keep you satisfied!

One96 – We change the way people shop, across the world!
THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET

Designing an e-commerce experience to promote different cultures

Marina Minnikova
MFA Visual Communications Design
School of Design | College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
Rochester Institute of Technology

Last updated:
3 December 2014
Thesis Committee Approval:

Chief Thesis Adviser:
Daniel DeLuna, Associate Professor, CIAS – School of Design
Chris Jackson, Professor, CIAS – School of Design

Signature of Chief Thesis Adviser  Date

Associate Thesis Adviser:
Raj Murthy, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Saunders College of Business

Signature of Associate Thesis Adviser  Date

Associate Thesis Adviser:
Daniel DeLuna, Associate Professor, CIAS – School of Design
Chris Jackson, Professor, CIAS – School of Design

Signature of Associate Thesis Adviser  Date

MFA Thesis Candidate:
Marina Minnikova, Visual Communication Design

Signature of MFA Thesis Candidate  Date
Abstract

Learning different cultures and promoting international trade can be implemented through web design and marketing, which rely heavily on visuals as a form of communication. Most e-commerce websites implement design and marketing strategies in an efficient way, however none of them implement the idea of exploring international cultures through purchasing experiences.

This thesis project will implement a complex brand identity and determine how to effectively create an e-commerce website employing the ideas of shopping as an online trip (“out shopping”), providing several categories of products for particular user segments. A significant part of the project will focus on determining which graphic elements are applicable for a specific design situation.

Keywords:
Graphic Design
UI design
Brand identity
E-commerce
On-line market place
International shopping experience
Emotional shopping
Authentic products
| Problem Statement | Most e-commerce websites implement design and marketing strategies in an efficient way, however none of them implement the idea of exploring international cultures through purchasing experience. A new business idea and a new visual identity will be implemented in order to bring a different perspective to the industry. There are a lot of e-commerce websites on the market, however none of them represent and promote authentic and unique products from different countries in a way where people can discover exclusive characteristics of the culture and products it produces. This e-commerce website will showcase local products that were particularly made in the country of interest. A purposeful, effective design, based on analysis and research, will be an integral component in developing an overall design and marketing strategy for this project. The project will provide a discovery engine for less known brands from across the world and allow small businesses to access a worldwide audience through a unique identity platform. |
| Thesis Statement | The objective of this thesis is to implement a complex brand identity and determine how to successfully create an e-commerce website in order to promote cultural exchange and international authenticity. |
Characteristics of the Internet, such as ease and simplification, help to eliminate the borders between different parts of the world. The Internet provides many business opportunities worldwide. Online shopping has spread around the world, and its potential as an international marketing tool is universally recognizable (Cheng et al., 2008).

Shopping online permits consumers to buy any product in the world (Mintel, 2012). However, national cultures have always been a multifaceted and challenging construct to describe. Different national characteristics are more nuanced than we think. In today’s globalizing world where cultures relate to each other, the discovery of unique features of any national culture is becoming more critical. Moreover, cultural consciousness is the base of communication and it involves awareness of different cultural ethics, principles and perceptions. The rising interdependence among countries today makes it more critical to support broader mutual understanding among people in the global community. Indeed, exchange of cultures deepen mutual understanding of such heritages of other associations such as languages, customs, and cultural ethnicities. This is one of the most important means of laying the foundations for true peace.

Web design and marketing can be a great tool in promoting international cultures. Web design relies heavily on visuals as a form of communication, which can be beneficial for promoting intercultural ideas. The question is how to efficiently design visually appealing websites targeted to a specific user segment, which can help to improve the user experience and, therefore, provoke desired behaviors. Although many studies explore potential conflicts between design and marketing interests, a disagreement exists in how to handle them. E-commerce provides a capability for businesses to constantly access information, communicate and complete transactions.
The objective of this thesis is to implement design and marketing strategies in an effective way to help people explore international cultures through the purchasing experience. Based on research a new business idea and new visual identity will be applied in order to bring a new perspective to the market. Social interaction will be implemented in the project to allow users to communicate with each other and leave feedback for items. The project will be focusing on emotional shopping, delivering a complete shopping trip experience. It will apply the idea of shopping as a online trip delivering several categories of products for particular user segments. It will also provide information about the latest trends according to the country. This project will target young and tech-savvy consumers, testing and implementing several strategies for women vs. men and enthusiastic vs. apathetic shoppers.
The website’s use of social media will implement human interaction and affect users’ attitudes towards the content. (Dash & Saji, 2007). Shopping offline has an impact on the five senses where customers receive pleasure from sights, sounds, and smells (Cox, Cox & Anderson, 2005; Bitner, 1992). However, responsiveness and interactivity on the website can mimic traditional shopping experiences in the store (Palmer, 2002) and website design can predict satisfaction for a potential customer (DeLone & McLean, 2003). Therefore, web design elements and components can stimulate customer emotions while contributing to the best shopping experience (Pace, 2004).

Website social presence will be outlined in the project. The website will give users the ability to interact with each other and website’s tastemakers, they will be able to leave feedback and easily contact customer service.
Unlike traditional shopping (practical shopping for needed goods), many people shop to satisfy emotional needs (Pooler, 2003). Emotional shoppers rely on the effects of arousal, enjoyment and satisfaction (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003). While the efficiency of e-commerce activities are important (Bakos, 2001), previous studies identified online shopping as emotional experience (Bridges & Florsheim, 2008).

All shopping experiences can be seen as an action that gives a person cognitive or emotional aids (Hirschman, 1984) and can be identified as functional or emotional shopping (Glifin et all., 2000). Hedonic shopping is related to enjoyment, provided by a shopping trip, causing feelings of pleasure (Babin et all., 1994). Adventure and gratification are two hedonic shopping drives; they deal with essential emotional rewards.

Impulsiveness is associated with less planning and consideration before buying an item and feelings associated with shopping (Wolfinaürger and Gilly, 2001). Instant shoppers are interested in an exploratory experience; they are looking for innovative and unique items and services. Moreover, variety can increase density and richness of choice, which can benefit users from learning new trends and cultures (Kahn & Isen, 1993).

This project will be focusing on emotional shopping delivering a complete shopping experience. The project will provide a variety of products divided into several categories. It will also provide information about latest trends and news according to the country.
### Situation Analysis

**Target audience**

Previous research identified that men are more likely to shop online than women (Garbarino & Strahilevit, 2004). Women are less satisfied with their online shopping experience as an outcome of web design that is not well-matched with women's expectations (Moss and Gunn, 2005).

Understanding women's inclinations has profitmaking importance and website designers should apply knowledge that contributes to the perceptual differentiations between genders (Cyr & Bonanni, 2005). Women spend more emotional energy in order to pursue enjoyment (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003). In comparison, men value convenience and one-stop shopping more than pleasure (Buttle, 1992).

Spontaneity is an important predictor for differentiation of shopper segments. Enthusiastic consumers are highly spontaneous; apathetic consumers, on the other hand, present low spontaneity. Online sales should offer different types of shopping activities to attract customers from various segments. Today, gratification-oriented customers transfer their entertaining space online. They enjoy surfing online regularly and purchase products to please themselves (Lee et al., 2013).

*This project will mostly target women, testing and implementing several strategies for women vs. men and enthusiastic vs. apathetic consumers.*
### Situation Analysis

#### Facets of brand identity

Brand identity represents all elements that form the existence of the brand (Louis and Lombart, 2010). It should implement and represent company’s personality, culture and relationships with its customers (Ross, et al, 2011). A brand should include practical and emotional values for the customers and be respectful by stakeholders. The brand should build strong relationships with loyal customers and provide qualified customer service (Chernatony et al., 2006).

*This project will create a unique branding identity and supporting elements for the service.*

#### Tourist shopping style preferences

Previous studies suggest that tourists buy many different items besides souvenirs (Kim et al., 2011). Shopping can motivate people to travel to a specific place. Travelers usually buy products related to clothes, food, electronics and cosmetics. Gender, age and trip style are important factors in forecasting traveler’s shopping behavior. Usually women have a bigger interest in buying clothes, shoes and jewelry while men shop for tobacco, wines and liquor (Xinran et al., 2014).

*This project will implement the idea of shopping as a trip online, providing several categories of products for particular user segments.*
### Survey of Literature

**Brand revolution: Rethinking brand identity**  
Sicard, Marie-Claude  
2013  
Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan  
This book discusses different aspects of branding and its changing reality with a new way of thinking and new research. It talks about the importance of brand identity and examines how marketing conceives this concept.

**Designing brand identity:**  
*An essential guide for the whole branding team*  
Wheeler, Alina  
2013  
Hoboken, N.J: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.  
This book illustrates how to create, build, and maintain a strong brand.

**Understanding brand identity confusion**  
Srivastava, R. K.  
2011  
Marketing Intelligence & Planning 29, (4): 340-352  
This research paper analyses the brand identity as a method of distinction which leads consumers’ buying choice. The research highlights the significance of brand identity and various factors that influence it.

**Relationships among brand identity, brand image and brand preference: Differences between cyber and extension retail brands over time**  
Journal of Interactive Marketing 25, (3): 169-177  
This paper studies connections between brand image, identity, and preferences in an online retail context.

**The influence of identity characteristics on E-shopping enjoyment and E-loyalty among women online shoppers**  
Coverdale, Tonjia S., and Allison J. Morgan  
2013  
Journal of Interactive Marketing 25, (3): 169-177  
This paper studies the role of customers’ satisfaction and e-Loyalty. It studies women online shoppers and reflects their race, education and status. The purpose of the paper is to investigate women’s e-commerce behaviors and attitudes.
| Survey of Literature | Materialism and brand engagement as shopping motivations  
Goldsmith, Ronald E., Leisa R. Flynn, and Ronald A. Clark  
2011  
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services 18, (4): 278-284 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This research analyses stimuli that affect shopping activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|  | What drives cyber shop brand equity? An empirical evaluation of online shopping system benefit with brand experience  
Chen, Lily Shui-Lien  
2012  
International Journal of Business and Information 7, (1): 81 |
|  | The purpose of this research is to determine the link between branding experience and branding equity. |
|  | Generation Y females online: Insights from brand narratives  
Wallace, Elaine, and Lorna Ruane  
2013  
Qualitative market research 16, (3): 315-335 |
|  | This paper identifies the relationships females of Generation Y have with online fashion brands. This paper studies the role of social networks while shopping online and brand consumption. |
|  | Fashion value brands: The relationship between identity and image  
Ross, Jill, and Rod Harradine  
2011  
|  | The research analyses the value of branding. It examines the relationships between brand identity and brand owner, and the perception of the image by young consumers. |
|  | Brand equity for online companies  
Rios, Rosa E., and Hernan E. Riquelme  
2008  
Marketing Intelligence & Planning 26, (7): 719-742 |
|  | This paper analyses how to measure brand equity for e-commerce. It studies the support for brand equity in brand awareness and loyalty. |
|  | Investigating consumers’ online purchasing behavior: Single-brand e-retailers versus multi-brand e-retailers  
Rahnamaee, Arash, and Paul D. Berger  
2013  
Journal of Marketing Analytics 1, (3): 138-148 |
<p>|  | This research analyses different models of single-brand and multi-brand online retailers and consumer attitudes towards the brands. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey of Literature</th>
<th>The determinants of consumers’ online shopping cart abandonment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kukar-Kinney, Monika, and Angeline G. Close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science 38, (2): 240-250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This paper identifies the main drives to online shopping cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abandonment and studies the reasons of this non-buyer behavior.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer decision making in online shopping environments: The effects of interactive decision aids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Häubl, Gerald, and Valerie Trifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Science 19, (1): 4-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This study tests decision-making on an e-commerce website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It studies interactive tools on the website and analyses comparison matrix that helps customers to see alternatives.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adventure versus gratification: Emotional shopping in online auctions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lee, Min-Young, Youn-Kyung Kim, and Hyun-Joo Lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Journal of Marketing 47, (1/2): 49-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This research examines emotional shoppers and studies searching and bidding activities. It highlights tailored strategies for emotional users.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer purchasing behavior and e-commerce adoption factors</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mahmood, MAdam, Somnath Mukhopadhyay, and Jimmie L. Joseph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This paper examines Ajzen’s theory of planned attitudes. It analyses Keeney’s research on online shopping behavior and provides a set of contexts to understand the e-commerce market.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourist shopping style preferences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chen, Sabrina Y., and Xinran Y. Lehto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of vacation marketing 20, (1): 3-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This paper analyses tourist shopping style activities, tourists’ preferences and behaviors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey of Literature

Distinguishing counterfeit from authentic product retailers in the virtual marketplace
Wilson, Jeremy M., and Roy Fenoff
2014
This research analyses luxury apparel markets and distinguishes the websites with effective design features.

Overindividuation in gift giving: Shopping for multiple recipients leads givers to choose unique but less preferred gifts
Steffel, Mary, and Robyn A. Le Boeuf
2014
Journal of consumer research 40, (6): 1167-1180
This paper illustrates how social contexts affect gift choices.

E-mass customization apparel shopping: Effects of desire for unique consumer products and perceived risk on purchase intentions
Kang, Ju-Young M., and Eundeok Kim
2012
International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education 5, (2): 91-103
This paper emphasizes the effects of the need for unique products and its effects on shopping online.

A model-driven methodology to the content layout problem in web applications
Comai, Sara, and Davide Mazza
2012
ACM Transactions on the Web (TWEB) 6, (3): 1-38
This research develops a methodology for efficient web services in order to make them more successful.
Design Ideation

Flow Chart for the Website

Home page
Choose a country

Explore
- Trends
- Meet locals
- Meet Tastemakers

Shop
- Women
- Men
- Home
- Travel

Register a shop
Design Ideation

Website Wireframes
Review trends for the country

Trend's description page
**Website Wireframes**

Shop – choose a category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>women</th>
<th>men</th>
<th>home</th>
<th>travel</th>
<th>Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Country style guidelines
Click to see what is special about shopping in this country and what special products they represent

- **Clothing**
- **Shoes**
- **Trends in the country**
- **Handbags**
- **Accessories**

**Choice set**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>women</th>
<th>men</th>
<th>home</th>
<th>travel</th>
<th>Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Country style

- **Item 1**
- **Item 2**
- **Item 3**
- **Item 4**
- **Item 5**
- **Item 6**

Description Description Description Description Description Description
### Design Ideation

#### Website Wireframes

**Item description**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>women</th>
<th>men</th>
<th>home</th>
<th>travel</th>
<th>Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Description and price**
- **Picture**
- **How to wear**
  - Pictures of how to wear this item in the country's environment
  - If the item is hand made below will follow the pictures of the process

---

#### Specified search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>women</th>
<th>men</th>
<th><strong>home</strong></th>
<th>travel</th>
<th>Search</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rugs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and crafts</td>
<td>Décor and Accessories</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handmade</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Home trends in the country**
- **Rugs**
- **Arts and crafts**
- **Décor and Accessories**
- **Handmade**
Design Ideation

**Website Wireframes**

Specified search by category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>women</th>
<th>men</th>
<th><strong>home</strong></th>
<th>travel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Décor and Accessories

- Categories
  - Art
  - Pillows
  - Office
  - Frames
  - Other
  - Brands
  - Colors

- Item 1
  - Description

- Item 2
  - Description

- Item 3
  - Description

- Item 4
  - Description
Methodological Design

The design of the brand identity will be accomplished by utilizing a variety of software applications. The brand logo and graphic elements will be designed with Adobe Illustrator. A unique identity will be implemented in order to showcase a complex website system which represents multiple cultures. The branding will include specific and unique characteristics for each country in order to better represent cultural authenticity.

The challenge is to represent all cultures in one platform for exchange of trade and to find the way to make the website engaging. Moreover, the website will provoke emotional shopping and create enjoyable experience for both genders. The project will target young tech savvy people and lead them to “flow experience” on the website. It will target gratification-oriented shoppers that move their entertaining space to online. The website will educate target audience and provide information regarding cultural trends and specialties. It will satisfy emotional needs and make shopping experience educational and exciting.

A research will be conducted in order to understand the principles of creation a successful marketplace and e-commerce website.

A marketplace website structure will be implemented as a platform for companies worldwide to showcase the products. A guideline for website approval process will be designed in order to keep the platform organized and trustful.

Visual identity and interactivity of the website will simulate traditional shopping experience and mimic “shopping as a trip.” A prototype of a website and mobile app will be designed and showcased in a promo video. A one-minute promo video will be generated in Adobe After Effects to present the website.
**Implementation Strategy**

I have always had a passion for marketing and design and have a background in both fields. I have taken several courses from the business school including global marketing and branding. I am capable to create identity design and design a prototype for a website. The implementation will be done in Adobe Illustrator, InDesign and Photoshop. The promo video will be created in Adobe AfterEffects that I am comfortable to work with.

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**Dissemination**

**On campus dissemination**

Imagine RIT – May 2015
Thesis Show – May 2015

**Off-campus dissemination**

Nampak International Design Challenge – June 2015
Coloplast Global Career Challenge – December 2015
Global Innovation tournament – September 2015
Journal of International Marketing – August 2015
Adobe Design Achievement Awards – June 2015
Communication Arts Design Competition – May 2015

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**Evaluation Plan**

In order to ensure a successful creation of the identity, surveys will be conducted to gain feedback with regard to the clear communication of a singular brand. In addition, usability testing will be applied in order to test UI design through the website.
Pragmatic Considerations

My project will only involve software use and will not have any additional expenses.

Thesis Timeline
Bibliography

Books and Journals


Haubl, Gerald, and Valerie Trifts. “Consumer Decision Making In Online Shopping Environments: The Effects Of Interactive Decision Aids.” Marketing Science: 4-21.


