KYMENLAAKSON AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

University of Applied Sciences

Degree Programme in Design

Mingyang Wang

REBRAND OF TEA COMPANY’S VISUAL IDENTITY AND PACKAGING DESIGN

Bachelor’s Thesis 2014
ABSTRACT

KYMENLAAKSON AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

University of Applied Sciences
Degree Programme in Design

Mingyang Wang
Rebranding of Tea Company’s visual identity and Packaging Design

Bachelor’s Thesis
53 pages + 14 pages of appendix

Supervisor
Sarah-Jane Leavey, Lecturer

Commissioned by
Xieming Tea Products Co.,Ltd

March 2014

Keywords
Packaging, Branding, Visual Identity, Logo

The thesis seeks to address the rebranding of a Chinese tea company’s visual ID and packaging design. This company wishes to transform its marketing strategy and expand its operations within the domestic retail market. This paper is written as a case study, it gives the reader an insight into the process of creating a brand, logo and packaging.

This study revealed the factors that need to be considered for the design process. The outcomes of this project may be evaluated as successful ones since the client was satisfied with the results and also judging from the perspective of gained skills and experience.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>RESEARCH</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>The Origins of Chinese Traditional Patterns</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Survey on tea packaging in China</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Research on Xieming’s competitors</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>LOGO</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Definition and Functions of Logo</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Design Process of Logo</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>PACKAGING</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Summary of the interview with Xieming Tea Ltd.</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Packaging solution</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Design processes of belly-band</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.1</td>
<td>Design Solution for wooden box A</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.2</td>
<td>Design solution for wooden box B</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES ................................................................................. 53

APPENDIX ..................................................................................... 56

Appendix 1. An interview with Xieming Tea Ltd. ......................... 56

Appendix 2. Survey for Tea Packing Design ................................. 58

Appendix 3. Packaging of Chinese tea on the market ................. 62

Appendix 4. Rough development sketches ................................. 63

Appendix 5. Other four designs for belly-band .......................... 64

Appendix 6. Other two color sets for packaging ........................ 65

Appendix 7. Packaging design for smaller box with four color sets 66
1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is about the design of a new logo and packaging solutions for a Chinese tea company. The reason I choose it to be my thesis is that I can study Chinese traditional patterns and use them in a real life situation. In this section, the essential information of case company is specifically provided, and the purposes of study are clearly presented; in addition, the structure of the thesis is generally demonstrated.

Based on the interview of the manager of Xieming Tea Ltd., Xieming Tea Ltd. is a Chinese company that focuses on producing and marketing traditional Chinese black tea. The products of Xieming are praised for superior quality and outstanding taste. The raw material tea of Xieming is free from pollution that comes from Wuyi Mountains, Fujian, South-China. The company originally started as a small family business in Fujian. After years of growth, it gained a number of stable and loyal clients around China. Since then, this family enterprise has become a well-known supplier in the field. To develop further, the company started transforming its marketing strategy and broadened into the domestic retail market in 2013. In order to establish a good enterprise image on the target retail market, it was decided to create a new company logo and product packages by the leaders of organization. From this decision, the project “Xieming Brand Design” started containing two parts: logo design and product package design.

After the discussion with Xieming’s manager, a decision has been made that the packaging paper will be a wrapper for a pre-made box. Because
the application of Xieming’s barcode and executive stand number was still in process, typography of packaging design would not be included in this project. A printed sticker with product descriptions and barcode will be stick on the back of package later on.

The major objective of this thesis is to present the process and outcome of the project “Xieming Brand Design” accurately. Moreover, the paper will reflect on the design aesthetics of Chinese packaging design. This thesis addresses symbols in Chinese culture, research on the meanings of patterns in Chinese cultures, processes of logo design, processes of packaging design of graphic patterns, colour and layout, and conclusion. The conducting of the thesis is based on the design process of Xieming’s company logo and product package.

2. RESEARCH

The project was about designing the logo and packaging for the Chinese black tea, and the goal was to help the product to stand out from other similar products. To achieve the goal, we need to make the product attractive and different from other similar ones.

I prepared a questionnaire for the manager to fill in. The aim of this questionnaire was to understand the results Xieming envisions. An online survey was created to understand the customers’ needs. To achieve one of the requests from Xieming’s manager – the final result should pursue the harmonious combination of Chinese vintage design elements and modern design elements. I did a research on the origins of
Chinese traditional patterns, which could help me to understand more 
Chinese vintage design.

2.1 The Origins of Chinese Traditional Patterns.

A pattern is an underlying structure that organizes surfaces or structures 
in a consistent, regular manner. A pattern can be described as a 
repeating unit of shape or form, but it can also be thought of as the 
"skeleton" that organizes the parts of a composition (chartxa.cornell 
2014).

In general Chinese traditional patterns are constructed of the symbolic 
and the homophonous\(^1\), that is to say they contain shapes and forms that 
have auspicious meaning in Chinese culture. With the advancement in 
China of societal and organizational structures the concept of aesthetics 
evolved. This development can be seen in the marked difference 
between art forms from age to age. Chinese traditional patterns are a 
reflection of the cultures thinking and ideology, and as such have their 
own developmental history.

Pottery, stonemasonry, and jade carvings of the Neolithic age show a 
variety of fabled monsters, such as the Chinese dragon (Figure 1) or 
phoenix, as well as animals like the tortoise, or birds. Patterns based on 

\(^1\) Homophonous: “(Of a word or words) having the same pronunciation 
as another or others but different meaning, origin, or 
spelling.” (Oxforddictionaries 2014)
water ripples and clouds appeared for the first time during this era. These art works pre-date the concept of auspicious patterns, which appeared during the Shang (1600BC-1046BC), Western Zhou (1046BC-771BC) and Spring and Autumn Annals (722BC-481BC) (Figure 2).

During the Qin (221BC-206BC) and Han (206BC-2220AD) dynasties, Buddhism was introduced to China. The concept of karma from Buddhism, the immortal from Taoism and the Yin-yang five elements from Confucianism were combined, and coupled with myths. This combination greatly enriched the idea of auspicious patterns in the culture, and they were widely used in architecture, sculpture and folk art. From that point, an auspicious symbol language developed that was used for example in patterns used on the clothing of officials in the form of braids during the Han dynasty (Figure 3). Different braids show different officer levels. Also during this period, the auspicious patterns of Luck, Earning, Long Life and Joy started to take shape. Figure 4 shows what the auspicious patterns of Luck, Earning, Long life and Joy look like now. In the Song and Yuan dynasties, auspicious patterns were widely used to decorate architecture, ceramics, embroidery, fabric and lacquers. Auspicious patterns had become popular and highly developed in their form and the meaning of the form represented. During the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, auspicious patterns had begun to mature (Figure 5).
Figure 1. Painted pottery plate with coiling dragon pattern (shanximuseum 2014)

Figure 2. Jinhou warming tripod (shanximuseum 2014)
Figure 3. Braid from Han Dynasty (Baike 2014)

Figure 4. The auspicious patterns of Luck, Earning, Long Life and Joy (Nipic 2014)
In ancient Chinese cosmology, the universe is composed of five basic elements: metal, wood, water, fire and earth. This forms the basis of traditional Chinese philosophy—the theory of Yin-yang five elements. It also provides the basic elements on which the traditional auspicious patterns developed. Traditional Chinese auspicious patterns are built using the concept of Yin-yang five element composition where the sparse and dense, the dynamic and static, the virtual and real, the hidden and exposed are combined. The Yin-yang five element theory also established that red, yellow, green, black and white are the basic colours of auspiciousness. Red represents fire; yellow represents earth; green represents wood; black represents water; white represents metal. As a result of this, these are the basic principles of color used in Chinese traditional art. In traditional Chinese culture, red symbolizes good fortune and joy; yellow is a heroic colour, it is the most beautiful and prestigious colour; green represents nature and renewal, it implies
vitality and vigour; black is a neutral colour, it is regarded as the king of colours; white symbolizes brightness, purity, and fulfilment.

Chinese people like to use blessing words when there is a celebration. In the Chinese language, there are many words that have the same pronunciation but different meanings. These homophonous words can be used as blessing words. It is also very common to use the written characters that represent these words as auspicious patterns. In nature, due to the environment, genes and other factors, animals and plants have different ecological habits. Chinese people use them as metaphors. Such as a deer, which is an herbivore, Chinese people usually use it to represent meekness. Most of the auspicious patterns are derived from nature; animals, plants and tools in daily life. The representation of these things in the patterns can be abstract, although the patterns are usually symmetrical and balanced. There is always a centre line or point in an auspicious pattern. For example, there’s a clearly centre line in the pattern called Yi Tuan He Qi (Figure 6). The complex of Chinese traditional patterns is a major feature compared to modern art. In Chinese traditional patterns, complexity is not just a simple repeat. It pays more attention to reflecting the rhythm in the complexity.
When comparing Chinese traditional patterns to European ones, Chinese patterns take inspiration from the environment; whereas European patterns focus more on objects. In Chinese traditional patterns, a scattered perspective is always used, but in European patterns, there is only a single focus point. Traditionally in Chinese patterns, there can be
many focus points; each part of a design can have its own focus.

2.2 Survey on tea packaging in China

In order to understand the customers’ needs and their preferred aesthetics in terms of tea packaging, a survey (Appendix 2) was made and carried out between 06.-31.07.2013. This survey focused on the Chinese domestic market, a total of 52 copies of the survey were distributed via online forms. By the end of survey period, 35 valid responses had been received.

This survey was carried out in Chinese, and consisted of a total of nine required questions. All the questions required either a single-choice answer or were multiple-choice. The specific results of this survey are presented as follows.

![Gender ratio of respondents.](image_url)

Figure 7. Gender ratio of respondents.

Figure 7 gives the gender ratio of responders. The proportion of females...
accounted for 45.5%, the rest (54.5%) of the responders were male.

Figure 8. Age distribution of responders

Figure 8 displays the age distribution of responders. Apparently, the largest group was in the 36 to 55 year old age range, which occupies 45.5% of all responders; in second place the age group 26 to 35 accounts for 36.4%; there were a few responders (18.2%) who were 55 years of age or older. There were no responders in the 15 to 25 age group.
Figure 9. Purchasing purposes

Figure 9 illustrates the information of responders’ purchasing purposes. 81.82% responders purchase tea for self-use, while 72.73% responders purchase tea as presents or business gifts for others. And no responder purchases tea for collecting.

Figure 10. Packaging design
Figure 10 shows how important responders think packaging design is in influencing their purchasing choice. Responders were required to rate their choice on a grade scale of 0 to 5; were 0 meant not important at all, and 5 represented extremely important. 4 means very important, 3 means important, and 2 means not very important. The results show that more than half the responders (63.6%) considered the packaging design of tea to be extremely important and rated it as grade 5. The remaining responders (36.4%) rated it as a grade 4, which reflects the fact that packaging design is important and paid much attention to.

![Aspects of tea packaging](image)

Figure 11. Aspects of tea packaging

Figure 11 demonstrates what aspects of tea packaging the selected group pays attention to when purchasing. Obviously, among those factors, packaging material gains the most responders’ attention and accounts for 81.82%; The quality of the products sealing and ease of use, and the attractiveness of the Patterns/Image were of equal importance to the
responders occupying 72.73% each in the survey; However, responders paid much less attention to the Capacity of the packaging.

![Pie chart showing packaging material preferences: 81.82% for ceramic, 54.55% for recycled cardboard, 54.55% for metal, 18.18% for wood, and 0.0% for other.]

Figure 12. Packaging material

Figure 12 reflects responders’ preferred packaging material. 81.82% responders chose ceramic as their most ideal tea packaging material; with wood and recycled cardboard being viewed positively and accounting for 54.55% respectively; a few responders (36.36%) prefer metals; bamboo and glass are accepted by some responders (18.18%).
Figure 13 above shows the preferred packaging color of the responders. Although the same proportions of responders liked a palette of either cold, warm or neutral colors, a palette that combined warm and cold colors harmoniously was the most preferred choice by 81.82% responders.

Figure 14. Packaging Design style
Figure 14 revealed the general preferences of responders’ to packaging design style. Apparently, although the simple and modern style is the current trend, less than half the responders (45.5%) preferred it over the Chinese Traditional and elegant style.

Figure 15. Problems with packaging in the Chinese tea market.

Figure 15 defines the problems with packaging in the Chinese tea market. 72.73% responders think the main problem is the disposable seal; about half numbers of responders consider that Excessive packaging and Coarse/crude are bothering; a few responders (36.36%) think that tea packaging can not reflect the Chinese tea culture exactly; Inconvenient to carry is another problem as well.

Based on the feedback, we knew that the customers prefer ceramic most for the packaging material. Disposable seal is one big problem in the Chinese tea market. And customers really care about the packaging design. Most of the tea products were for self-use and gifts.
2.3 research on Xieming’s competitors

To meet the requirements of Xieming, I did a competitor research about products of Xieming’s competitors. To do that, I gathered some pictures of other similar products in the Chinese market. And I tried to analysis the strength and weakness of them.

The results of this research were that most of the tea was packaged in small plastic bags which can protect the tea from wetness. And most of the small plastic bags were placed in metal boxes; the good thing about a metal box was it can protect the tea from [crashing, or breaking/damage?], but it gives the consumer the feeling of coldness.

More than half of the packaging chosen was red as its main color. Of course, the color red represents good and luck in China, but the color is also very aggressive. Tea should always bring people a peaceful mood.
3. LOGO

This chapter will briefly explain the definition and functions of logo, and its design process. A mind map of associations was used in logo ideation. Sketches were drawn to get design inspirations. Also discussing with the manager of Xieming was very helpful to achieve the target goal.

3.1 Definition and Functions of Logo

‘A logo is a recognizable graphic design element that usually includes a name, symbol or trademark, and representing an organization or a product’. (Entrepreneur 2014)

With hundreds years’ development of logo design, the majority of logos could be mainly divided into seven categories: name-only logo, name/symbol logo, monogram logos, pictorial name logo, associative logo, allusive logo and abstract logo. (J. Murphy & M. Rowe. 1988)

A successful product or organization has personality just as human does; a successful logo design should show the personality of the product or organization through the graphic. A Logo is more than just words or devices; it has three primary functions, as described in the following.

A logo’s quality defines its values. As a logo, it must transmit to the public the messages that the designer wishes. A logo is like the face of a company, it is the very first visual element that customers see. So the logo communicates between the company and customers. The logo also
represents the company’s values. To be a good logo, it must represent what the company is and what the company does. (Relogodesign 2013)

3.2 Design Process of Logo

To focus on the theme of Xieming, the logo design process started with brainstorming on notions that are related to the following words: “Tea”, “Chinese traditional culture”, “Quality”, and “Chinese modern culture”. The mind map (Figure 16) below shows the way to seek inspiration for logo designing in this case.

Figure 16. Mind map of associations used in logo ideation
Based on the mind map, a set of rough sketches were drafted (Appendix 4: Rough development sketches). Then some of these sketches were selected for development in Illustrator CS5 with computer for consideration. The following graphics were the first set of sketches (Figure 17) that were presented to the client.

![Image of first set of sketches of logo design](image)

Figure 17. First set of sketches of logo design

The response from the clients was clear, they preferred the graphics that combined a leaf and Ruyi; at the same time, they also expressed the
opinion that taking advantage of the symbol of a seal (Figure 18) positively represented culture and quality. Therefore, refining the logo design continued based on the clients’ feedback.

Figure 18. These figures show some examples of Chinese ancient seals. (Chachatu 2013)

According to the definition of ruyi, a typical ruyi is composed of two parts: a head in the shape of Xiangyun cloud, heart, and a long handle in the shape of a flat S (Figure 19). A ruyi can be made of a variety of valuable materials, such as precious metals, jade, hardwood, semi-precious gems, ivory, coral, and so on. Ancient Chinese craftsmen exquisitely decorated ruyi by relief, openwork, inlaid gems, among other things. Ruyi and its decorating patterns represent good wishes, such as longevity, blessing, good fortune, and riches. The history of ruyi can be traced back to Qing dynasty (1616 – 1912AD). As a tradition in China, it was often used at important celebrations, such as Chinese New Year.
and the king’s birthday. The government officials presented the finest ruyis to the king. The king also commanded workers to produce ruyi in his honour. Ruyi were often placed around the King’s desks, thrones and beds. In Chinese history, ruyi does not only represent blessings, but also power and wealth. (Ming jade 2007) Nowadays, this Ruyi symbol has been reinterpreted to reflect modern cultural symbolic elements. A photo of a modern Ruyi is presented below (figure 20) in Taipei 101.

Figure 19. A ruyi from Qing court (Dpm 2009)
Based on the client’s wishes the logo was redesigned as a combinational graphic using the elements of a leaf, Ruyi symbol and seal shape. The three lines on the bottom left represent the Wuyi Mountains – the product place of the black tea. The client was satisfied with the outcome (Figure 21).

Figure 20. RuYi symbol as an architectural motif on Taipei 101 in Taipei, Taiwan. (Sam.liho 2009)

Figure 21. The logo chosen by the client
Later on, a little improvement to this logo (Figure 22) was carried out. A frame was added around it, so it would not look as if it was going to break up into pieces. This addition meant that the logo now looked much closer to an ancient Chinese seal.

![Improved logo](image)

**Figure 22. Improved logo**

As these improvements had been implemented, it was time to test a different Chinese typeface for the company name “Xieming (擷茗)” on the logo. Four different typefaces were chosen to test with the logo image (Figure 23). The typeface called Jinqiao traditional bold (金橋繁黑体) was selected because it suited the requirements best (left first). The traditional Chinese character was chosen because it can represent Chinese traditional culture better than the simplified Chinese character version. Chinese is a kind of hieroglyphs, and each Chinese character has its own meaning.
A logo has both a physical shape and psychological/learned meaning, however, the use of color has the power to transform and translate the meaning of messages. The viewer’s responses to different color combinations can be measured.

Drew and Meyer state that

“Simplifying the color palette can enhance the design direction by placing limits that facilitate superior and inspirational marks. Simplified color palettes can control the look, feel, dimension, legibility, readability, direction, harmony, discord, and kinetic energy of a mark. The inherent
energy found within a mark, and applied through color, is most often intentional.” (Drew & Meyer 2006)

I selected a few different colours that typically represent Chinese traditional culture as my starting palette (Figure 24). I then tested the logo with different colour combinations (Figure 25).

Figure 24. Color breakdown
Figure 25. The testing of different color on logo

The dark reddish brown color and the golden yellow color were chosen for this logo as it is reminiscent of hot wax, and emphasizes the association with a royal seal. The yellow part of the logo will be gilded if it goes on paper bags. The Figure 26 shows the details of the color of Final logo version.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pantone</th>
<th>CMYK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DS 320-1 C</td>
<td>80 90 100 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS 6-6 C</td>
<td>0 5 50 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

or gilded

Figure 26. Final logo vision and the details of color
4. PACKAGING

Autumn is the season of tea harvesting. Xieming wishes to have a different packaging for the new tea. The new tea has better flavor and looks than the old tea. So we decided to develop two different packaging designs.

The three basic functions of packaging are to contain, protect and promote the products. As the product line consists of four different types of black tea, the same packaging design will be used in various color to differentiate each type of tea. Large and small sizes of packaging were also selected to take into account the purchase quantities preferred by ordinary customers.

Based on the results of the survey, ceramics would be the best choice for tea container. But the price of ceramics is quite high, it may exceed the budget. And recycled cardboard may look cheap. So we decided to use wooden boxes as the tea containers.

4.1 Summary of the interview with Xieming Tea Ltd

The interview with the manager of Xieming Tea Ltd (Appendix 1) will help the designer to reach the goal of the project. From the results, we know that there are four main product categories of this company.

Free from pollution is one of its selling points. Xieming wish its style to be beautiful, practical and cost-effective project outcomes, and pursues the harmonious combination of Chinese vintage and modern design.
elements. The general cost of the packaging will be less than 50 RMB (about 5.82 euro).

Xieming will open a physical shop on Pingjiang road in Suzhou. Pingjiang road is quiet and slow paced. The street is lined with old Chinese houses as well as restaurants and teahouses. And Xieming wish its company image to be reliable, of high quality and to appear distinguished.

4.2 Packaging solution

Finding out the appropriate method to protect the quality of black tea is at the heart of this project. The water content of dried black tea is not high; tea is easily affected by damp, because of humid air. It ruins the flavor and the tea will decay. In this project, in order to protect the tea from moisture, it will be sealed in two different size plastic bags (Figure 27): the small bag contains 5g of normal black tea for one time use only, while the big bag contains 80g of new tea.
Dried black tea leaves are quite fragile. In order to avoid the tea breaking into very small pieces, it was decided that the plastic bags should be placed in boxes for even greater protection. The boxes (Figure 28 & Figure 29) shown below were the samples sent from the supplier. Each wooden box costs about 8 RMB. It was less than 1 Euro at the current exchange rate. The wooden box A would contain 3 large bags of black tea, and the wooden box B would contain 16 small bags of black tea.

Figure 27. Plastic bags for tea (photo provided by Gangxin Packaging Material Co Ltd, 23rd, July, 2013)
The dimensions for each wooden box are described in the following table (Figure 30).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Width</th>
<th>Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>20.00cm</td>
<td>10.00cm</td>
<td>3.00cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>10.00cm</td>
<td>10.00cm</td>
<td>4.95cm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 30. Table Dimensions of each wooden box

Considering the cost of making the product, these wooden boxes will not be printed with color but packaged with belly band (Figure 31). By leaving the boxes their natural color and showing their wood grain the packaging reinforces the customers’ preconceived image of the product’s qualities, which are organic and natural. The Belly band is a solution of packaging. It is a band of strong paper wrapped around a product. It can provide the best space to display the banding and communicate the message to customers.

Figure 31. Belly-band with box
When considering the cost of packaging the product, it was decided that these wooden boxes would not be printed but branded with the company logo and belly-banded with printed-paper. By leaving the boxes their natural color and showing their wood grain, the packaging reinforces the customers’ preconceived image of the product’s qualities, which are organic and natural.

4.3 Design processes of belly-band

As there were two different sizes of wooden box chosen as packaging, I started by designing six illustrations that could be used on either option (Appendices 4). Of these designs two were approved by the client. And as I mentioned before the application of Xieming’s barcode and executive stand Number was still in process, so the typography of packaging design is not included in this project. A printed sticker with the product description will be stuck on the back of package later on.

4.3.1 Design Solution for wooden box A

Because one of the selling points of Xieming Tea is freshness, the leaf shape can always give the fresh healthy feeling to people. So I chose to start working with the simple leaf form (Figure 32) that I had used during the logo design process. To give the feeling of a hand drawn look, I utilized the pencil tool in Illustrator; I then converted the outline to its negative form in order to create a new motif from it.
The idea of the images above was to create a pattern design with the leaf as a basic element. I tried to use the simple leaf form to create a shape and after some exploration settled on three versions. I also integrated circles and dots into the designs, which represent the morning dew on the leaf. The first version represents a large leaf shape with a shadow (Figure 33). The second version represents two leaves in different colors crossing each other. The third version uses the simple leaf element to create an organic shape.

After I sent the three versions of leaf patterns to the client, they approved the second version of leaf patterns (Figure 33) but they wished to see the patterns with different color palettes. So I moved on to the next stage in the process, that of selecting a color palette. For this
pattern I selected a set of colors, which I thought best suited the design based on traditional Chinese blue-and-white porcelain. Because the traditional Chinese blue-and-white porcelain (Figure 34) is one of the most famous design styles in Chinese culture history, it is well-known in China and it relates to the words rich, culture and quality.

Blue-and-white porcelain, also known as the blue and white pottery, is defined as a type of ceramic ware blue designs are applied on a white ground or background. It is an early form of hand painting and translucent glass technologies. And there was a large-scale effort to reproduce these Chinese works. The lack of necessary raw materials as well as the deficiency of production and technical knowledge used in making the original Chinese pieces, however, required that European manufacturers had to find new ways to develop and create their own blue and white pottery wares.

Blue and white porcelain was often manufactured in common tableware forms for daily usage, such as plates, bowls, cups and bottles. Amongst these the most common decorative designs were floral patterns, mythical creatures such as dragons, scenes from stories (i.e. the Willow pattern), and Chinese text. Evidence of blue and white porcelain can be found as early as the 14th century in China, when Chinese potters began working with white clay called kaolin to create native craft projects. Once hardened the clay was hand-painted in cobalt blue pigment, coated with a transparent glaze, and then fired in a very hot oven. After firing, the appearance of the finished piece was quite delicate, but also very
durable. Even today in the 21st Century, blue and white wares are still widely produced in China, and the country has a great relationship with its traditional porcelain blue and white. (wisegeek 2014)

Figure 34. Blue-and-white porcelain produced in Late Ming Dynasty (Dpm 2014)

To help me select colors for my design palette, I used the ‘Pixelate’ filter in Photoshop to help me extract tones from reference images. (Figure 35).
By using the Pixelate method, I selected three color sets for the design (Appendices 5). After sending the colored versions of design 2, to the clients, they chose the color set of Blue-and-white porcelain (Figure 36). They approved it as the pattern (Figure 37) for the wrapping paper on the larger packaging solution (Box A). The next step was to create the belly-band layout.
We decided to use 250g/m² paper that is coated gloss on only one side, as it has a bright surface, a uniform coating, and is ink fast with good printability, making it very suitable for this project. To allow for the easy removal of the belly-band from the packaging the thickness of the paper had to be taken into consideration during the design stage. The thickness of a sheet of the selected 250g/m² coated paper is about 0.3 mm. I gave an additional 0.5mm allowance to the layout for each side of the band, to insure it would be easy to pull it off of the box. I set the bleed at 3mm. The season to set bleed is to prevent small miss printed gap on the edge of the paper during the printing process. Because there will be little movement of paper during the printing process. The client accepted this
design as the wrapping for box A. The final version for the large packaging is shown as Figure 38.

![Design solution for wooden box B](image)

Figure 38. Final version of leaf 2

4.3.2 Design solution for wooden box B

During the process of designing the wrapping for box B, I started to consider other traditional design elements from Chinese History. I was particularly inspired by the ‘Mandarin Square’ (Figure 39) (Figure 40).
Figure 39. Mandarin Square of golden pheasant rank badge, 2nd rank civil servant, silk tapestry with painted details. China, Qing Dynasty, late 18th – early 19th century. (Artdaily 2014)

Figure 40. Mandarin Square of 3rd civil rank (peacock). Late Qing Dynasty (late 19th century, early 20th century).

The Chinese Mandarin Square is made of woven silk and embroidery. It was a badge worn by civil and military officials (Figure 41), showing their rank and status within the Mongol, Ming and Qing dynasties. Mandarin squares exhibited a range of textile techniques, making them a
unique record of Chinese textile technologies and skills. (Chinese Mandarin Squares, n.d.) (spurlock 2014)

I used Mandarin squares as the source of color palettes for these new designs extracting color from reference images by using the Pixelate method as I had done previously. (Figure 42 & 43). Then I did the colour breakdown of selected color from the mandarin squares (Figure 44).

Figure 41. The Empire of Great Qing of China government official with Mandarin square.

Figure 42. Pixelated mandarin square of golden pheasant rank badge, 2nd rank
I continued working with the theme of leaves in my new design. The concept behind this illustration (Figure 45) is to represent the tea tree’s new growth in the spring and to reflect the fresh flavour of Xieming tea.
The clients were glad with the illustrations with four different color sets (Appendix 6) and they agreed to use it on the smaller packaging solution, Box B.

Figure 45. Patterns for Box B

For the sides of the belly-band, I designed a simple pattern based on a four-petalled flower (Figure 46). The inspiration came from the design of windows at the Suzhou Gardens in Jiangsu province. (Figure 47).
Figure 46. Pattern of four-petal flowers

Figure 47. Lattice window, Garden for Lingering, Suzhou (depts.washington 2014)

According to China.org.cn, "The history of Suzhou’s gardens can be traced as far back as the Spring and Autumn period (770 BC – 476BC). The Suzhou gardens were designed to be lived in, as much as were the houses to which they were attached. Paths invited residents and their guests to wander, offering a new view at every bend; pavilions, gazebos or simple seats offered comfortable spots in which to relax, chat, and perhaps to take some refreshments or pen a poem. This type of landscaping was often used in the densely populated cities, where residents recalled the countryside with nostalgia and yearned to commune with nature." (China.org.cn 2004)

After I finalized the layout and color way designs for the smaller box (Figure 48), I sent them to the client, who approved them. All the final layouts have a 3mm bleed, and a unique color for each product.
Figure 48. Layouts in four color tones of solution 2

To make the final rendering pictures, I used Rhinoceros 4.0 to build the 3-D model and then used Keyshot 4.0 to render the pictures (Figure 49 & 50).
Figure 49 rendering picture of solution 1

Figure 50 rendering picture of solution 2
5. CONCLUSION

Honestly, this task was not easy. The given time for the work was quite short because the package should be ready before the new tea season. We had five weeks to get this project done. And we spend of a lot of time to look for the suppliers and buy samples from them. How to improve the work efficiency and quality at same time was always a very important problem. Setting a deadline for each process turns out to be a very useful way to improve work efficiency.

During the development of this band design, lots of knowledge and workflows about brand design were learned. The meaning of different shapes and colors in Chinese culture were studied and applied to a real product. My skills of using different design tools improved, such as sketching, Illustrator and etc. On other hand, I also gained practice and expertise in communicating with clients and suppliers to get relevant information from them.

Overall, the client was satisfied with the outcome of this project. The packaging suggested here will be used in real life situations. Also, the final designs are very distinct in its visual appearance when comparing with other bands in Chinese markets. This project can be considered as a good educational project to me, as it helped me to develop myself as a professional graphic designer.
REFERENCES

U1bVSj-SyF8 [Accessed on 15 March 2014]


2014]

Sam.liho.tw.(2009).Taipei 101. Available from:
http://sam.liho.tw/2009/09/15/taipei-101-
%E8%88%87%E9%99%84%E8%BF%91%E7%9A%84%E5%BB%B
A%E7%AF%89/ [Accessed on 02 February 2014]

Shanximuseum.(2014).Bronze. Available from:

Spurlock.illinois.edu.(2014).Mandarin squares. Available:
http://www.spurlock.illinois.edu/explorations/online/mandarinsquares/in
dex.html [Accessed on March 05 2014]

Shanximuseum.com.(2014).Pottery. Available from:
[Accessed on April 14 2014]

Wisegeek.com.(2014).Blue and white porcelain. Available:
http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-blue-and-white-porcelain.htm
[Accessed on March 05 2014]
APPENDIX

Appendix 1. An interview with Xieming Tea Ltd

Supervisor: Ms Tseng

What are the main product categories of the Xieming Company?

Xieming produces traditional Chinese black tea. Depending on the different species of tea and production process employed, the products can be divided into four categories: Jinjunmei, Zhengshanxiaozhong, Shuixian and Dahongpao.

Where is your main product produced?

The raw material tea comes from the Wuyi Mountains, of Fujian, southern China, an area that is free from pollution.

What is the average range for price of your products?

The average range for the price is 400 RMB to 600 RMB.

Why do you want a new brand for your products?

In order to further business development, the company started transforming the marketing strategy and broadening from being a wholesaler into the domestic retail market in 2013. In order to establish a good enterprise image in the target retail market, it was decided by the leaders of the organization to create a new company logo and product packaging.
Which kinds of design style do you prefer?

Xieming Tea Ltd. asks for beautiful, practical and cost-effective project outcomes, and pursues the harmonious combination of Chinese vintage design elements and modern design elements.

Who are your target group?

The target groups are adults over 25 years old, and companies or persons who need business gifts.

What is the general cost of the packaging in your mind?

The general cost of the packaging should be less than 50 RMB (about 5.82 euro).

Do you own any physical shops?

Yes, in Pingjiang Road, Suzhou, China.

In many successful cases, appropriate logos have positive effects on expressing enterprises’ business philosophies and building unique brand images. What do you want to convey to the public through the Xieming logo?

Reliability, high quality and appear distinguished.
Appendix 2. Survey for Tea Packing Design

Survey designer: Mingyang Wang

Period of validity: 25.10.2013 – 05.11.2013

Instructions: this survey contains total 9 required questions; among them, 1, 3, 4 and 7 are multiple-choice questions; 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9 are single-choice questions.

What are your purposes when purchasing tea? (Multiple-choice)

For self use

Gifts for family and friends / business gifts

For collection

Others _____________________________________________

How much you care about package when purchasing tea? (Rate 0-5, 0 represents do not care at all, 5 represents do care very much)

0 1 2 3 4 5

What aspects of tea package you pay attention to when purchasing?

( Multiple-choice )

Well-sealed and practicality
Capacity

The material of packaging

Color

Patterns / Image

Page make / type setting

Others _____________________________________________

What packaging materials of tea you like? (Multiple-choice)

Metal (e.g. Iron, Aluminum)

Bamboo

Wood

Ceramic

Glass

Plastic

Renewable cardboard

Others ____________________________

Which tea packaging color you like?
Cold color

Warm color

Neutral color

Warm and cold color mix harmoniously

Others ________________________________

Which design style of tea packaging you like?

Traditional and elegant style (Chinese Style / Chinese design elements)

Simple and modern style

Others ________________________________

What are the problems about packaging in Chinese tea market, in your opinion? (Multiple-choice)

Excessive packaging

Coarse and crude

Fail to reflect the Chinese tea culture

Disposable seal, inconvenient to store

Inconvenient to carry
What is your gender?

Male

Female

What is your age?

15 – 25

26 – 35

36 – 55

More than 55

We very appreciate your time and precious suggestions!
Appendix 3. Packaging of Chinese tea on the market.
Appendix 4. Rough development sketches
Appendix 5. Other four designs for belly-band
Appendix 6. Other two color sets for packaging

**Color set for Packaging**

**Set 1**
- CMYK 60 100 100 25
- RGB 105 34 37
- Pantone DS 324-4 C

**Set 2**
- CMYK 10 35 0 25
- RGB 174 139 167
- Pantone DS 159-7 C

**Set 1**
- CMYK 10 20 65 15
- RGB 199 172 100
- Pantone DS 10-3 C

**Set 2**
- CMYK 40 0 100 0
- RGB 166 206 57
- Pantone DS 298-1 C

**Set 1**
- CMYK 0 40 60 30
- RGB 184 126 83
- Pantone DS 52-4 C

**Set 2**
- CMYK 0 0 25 3
- RGB 248 242 197
- Pantone DS 2-8 C
Appendix 7. Packaging design for smaller box with four color sets