

Ways to Include Taiwan's Aboriginal Culture into Wristwatch Designs and Branding

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to provide a creative way for the rich culture of Taiwan's aborigines to share their culture to others in Taiwan and abroad. It also provides the native population with an additional avenue to generate income via watch sales, which will be sold at tourist destinations and online.

The watch designs are created by encouraging indigenous designers to use watches as a creative platform and making sure that the key characteristics of their native culture are included into their watch designs.

Keywords: aboriginal culture, branding, watch design, Taiwan tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

This research is based on the application of Taiwanese aboriginal elements or totems in the design of watches. The research intends to provide another avenue for the indigenous people of Taiwan to promote their rich culture to tourists and everyone interested in the rich history and culture of Taiwan's indigenous population.

This research directly consults experts of Taiwan's aboriginal culture, which ensures that each design deeply appreciates the rich heritage of the native population.

The technical support for this research comes from Taiwan's foremost wristwatch company. This approach ensures that each watch concept can be realized. This approach also ensures that the supply chain is backed by an experienced company and delivery promises made to shops selling aboriginal goods can be kept.

This research serves as a brand promoter as it cultivates emerging Taiwanese designers of aboriginal origin to create watch designs together with local watch brands. This research uses indigenous artists and provides them with a platform. Via this approach the key characteristics of Taiwanese cultural and creative industries are preserved. The researchers believe that this approach will eventually facilitate the creation of a genuine brand experience which in turn will help market the watch(es) worldwide.

2. METHOD

This research plans to design ten (10) mass-produced aboriginal watches which will be based on already existing and available watch cases. The aboriginal watches will be designed in a modular way. This economy of scale method will allow for a reduction in production cost and thus the production cost of the watches will be competitive.

In order to achieve this, the researchers collaborated with Shifeng Co. , Ltd.. The company, headquartered in Tainan City, was established in 1987, and has locations in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China. The company has more than 200 people employees and tested and proven Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Furthermore, the company has its own brands, fully set up brand management and sales as the company also owns two well-known Taiwan watch brands: GOTO and LOVME.

Furthermore, Shifeng Co. has a well-established sales network and receives celebrity endorsements. This research will provide the company with new products targeting.

2.1 Sample Preparation

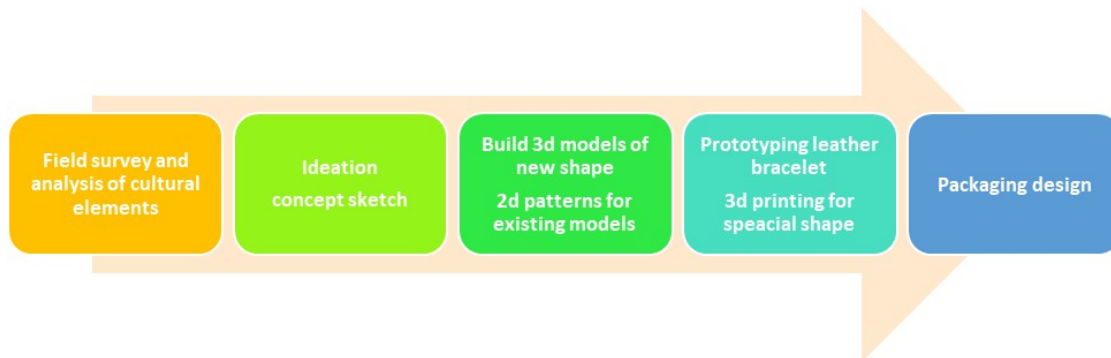


Figure 1: The 5 phases of the research

The research process was divided into five phases, as shown in figure 1 above:

The researchers visited the Pingdong Aboriginal Cultural Park, in Pingdong Country, Taiwan. The researchers photographed aboriginal costumes and used them as a reference, in order to understand the colorful and meaningful art of the indigenous people.

As the research provides a deep understanding of the many elements of Taiwan’s indigenous population, it was decided to feature many printed designs on the watch surface and mix them with elements of existing products.

In the field survey and analysis of the cultural element phase this research uses the “First Nations ribbon industry” to understand a variety of patterns and totems. These findings can then be combined with leather straps and thus providing each watch with straps that are directly inspired by the aboriginal culture. This will be further looked at in 2.2.

2.2 Experimental Procedure

During the performance of the research, the researchers visited the Pingdong Aboriginal Cultural Park where a large amount of different aboriginal costumes, national dresses and ornaments were photographed and catalogued for reference (see Figure 2). This part of the research was done to understand the vibrant and transforming art of the indigenous people.

Cultural color analysis was also carried out to extract the colors that most represent the elements of aboriginal culture. The styles shown are inspired by the combination of metal jewelry and a modular hand form, while the totem incorporates geometric images of a snake and an eagle.

The industrial advisers indicated that material can be finished by the dewax casting method, while the wood requires the four-axis computer numerical control (CNC) processing method. This



is because the watch surface is designed to be dominant on the wrist. The research identifies the advantages of this size factor; for example this eventually will allow the watch to receive certain ‘smart’ updates such as a heart rhythm measurement module and other smart enhancements which can be included in a possible smartwatch design.

The watchstraps will be crafted in the styles of indigenous leather carving. This research intends to design ten (10) mass-produced aboriginal watches in currently existing watch case in a modular way (see Figure 3). In addition, the intention is that the watch surface (for example the watch dial) can be customized by Ultraviolet printing (UV printing) and color laser engraving.

Figure 2: Aboriginal dress, picture taking during visit to Pingdong Aboriginal Cultural Park

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Two (2) of the ten (10) watches designed by students with an aboriginal family heritage are shown in this chapter. These watches are 3D and 2D models. As mentioned in 2.2 these aboriginal watches match existing watch cases (ensuring an easy transition from concept to production) and are rendered in Rhinoceros 3D and grouped in Adobe Photoshop.

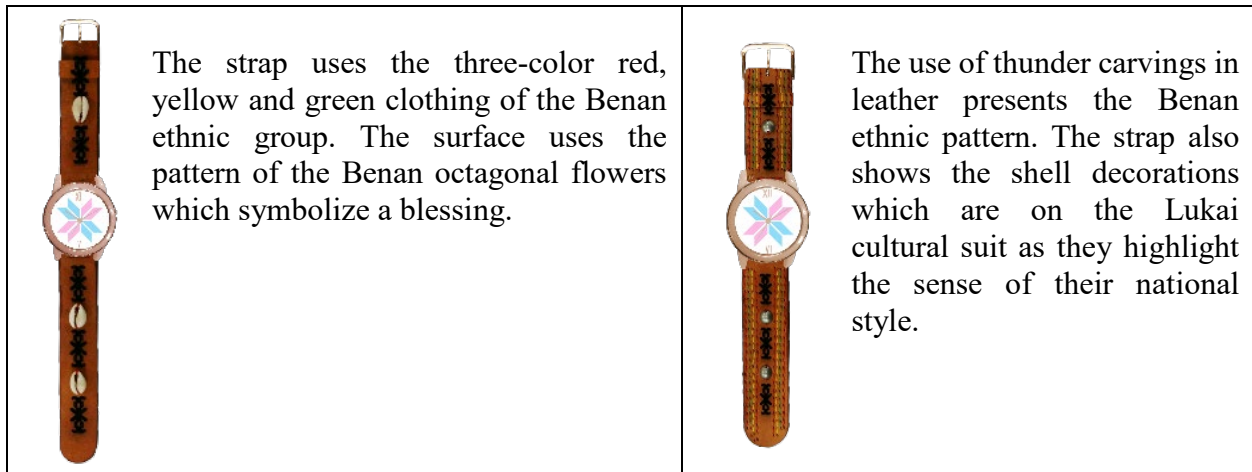


Figure 3: Two (2) of ten (10) watches designed by students with aboriginal family heritage

Currently, this research is in the process of identifying which of the ten (10) watch designs will be the most impactful in the marketplaces. A marketing and branding campaign backing the chosen design will be implemented once the design is identified. Further discussion with indigenous people will have to take place before a consensus and final decision can be made.

It has been agreed that the aboriginal watches will be sold at aboriginal tourist destinations, as well as online, where the watches will be made available to a worldwide customer base.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The intention of his research is that when the research is fully operational and sold through various channels, the aboriginal watch provides the aboriginal population of Taiwan with an additional avenue to generate income from tourists and interested customers located worldwide. The research done serves to provide awareness of Taiwan's rich and diverse aboriginal heritage and helps preserve, as well as appreciate, that history to current and future generations.

It has been decided that a booklet explaining cultural and historical details of the native population will come with each watch and will be included in the watch box. Such a booklet will explain the inspirations behind each watch design and thus allow anyone interested in aboriginal culture to learn about Taiwan's aboriginal people. Although Taiwan has a rich and interesting aboriginal culture; the relative obscurity of Taiwan's native population remains a challenge.

By providing Taiwan's indigenous people with a platform to share their native culture and designs, this research profoundly believes that Taiwan's indigenous people deserve a strong national as well as a world-wide audience and a worldwide marketplace.

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