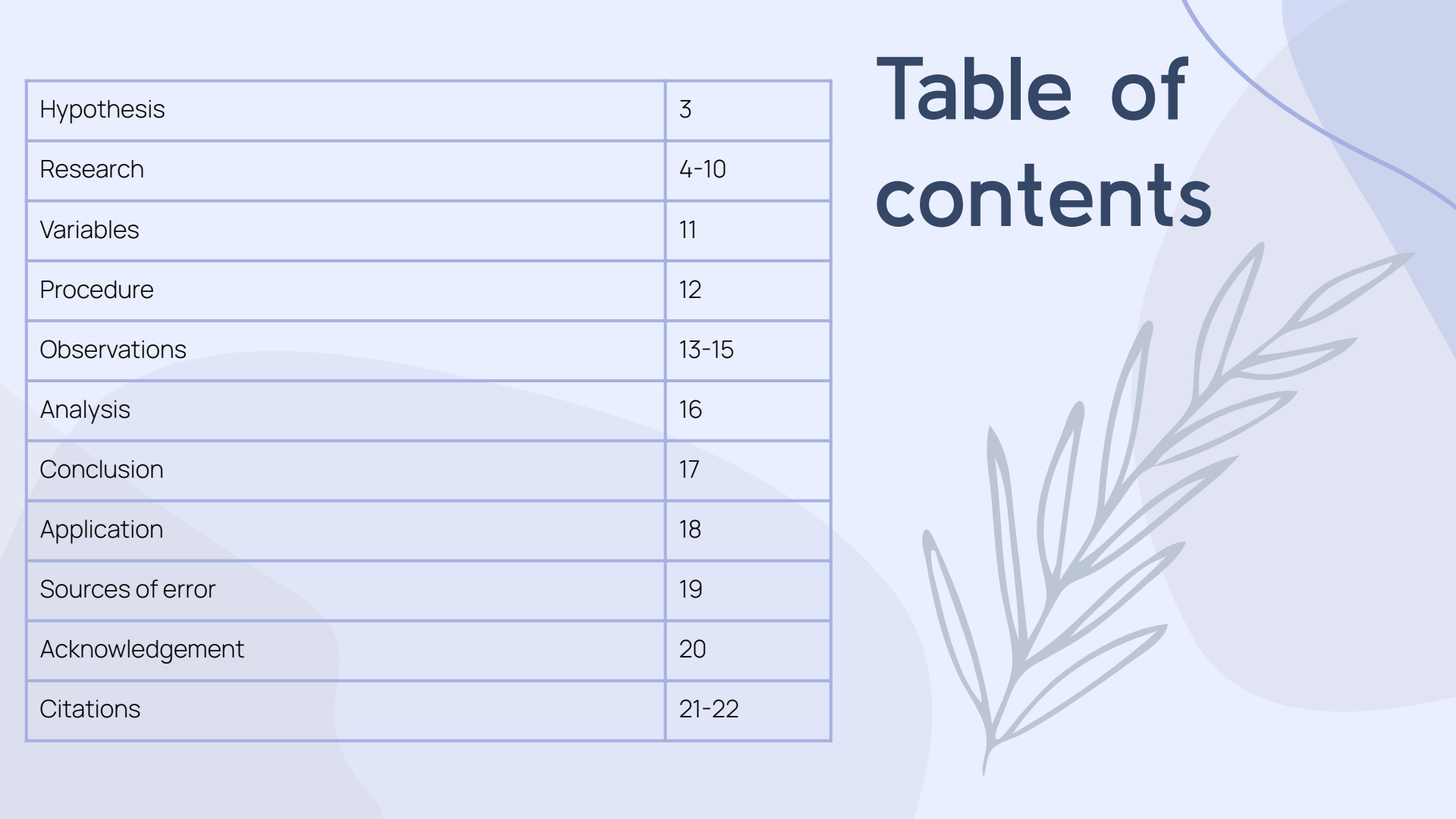


# Are Aesthetics a Contributing Factor on How Popular a Brand is?

Arwen Au-Yeung

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# Hypothesis

I hypothesize that the survey will show that the shape that the participant chose will correlate to the shape of the products from the brands chosen. I also hypothesize that social media will be the main contributing factor to the choice to choose to buy from these brands. I think that companies that follow popular aesthetics will be more popular overall.



Research

# brand aesthetics

A brand aesthetic is how a company looks to be very simple. Things that contribute to a brand's aesthetic are its colours, themes, and fonts. Take one of the most popular brands in the country, Amazon. Their brand aesthetics could be the classic orange colour or the classic arrow that are usually associated with the company.



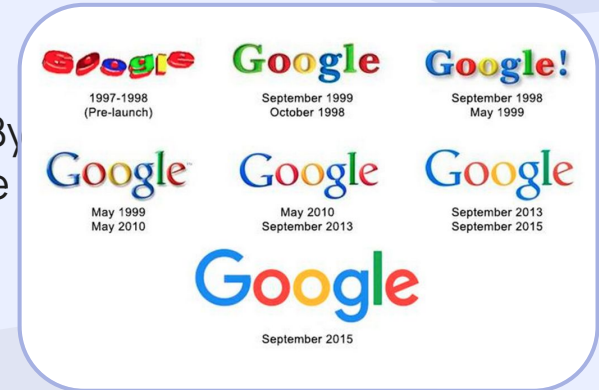
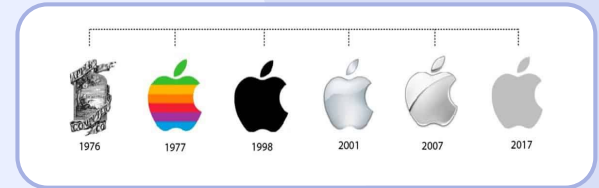


# What are some of the most popular brand aesthetics of today?

Back to the past  
 Teens today are embracing the past. Some of the most popular aesthetics right now are those of the 70's, 80's and even the Y2K style. Pepsi for example created a new version of their logo in 2023 based closely on some of their past logos.

## Less is more

Another popular brand aesthetic is minimalist and monochrome packaging. Clean lines, simple colours and simple shapes are on the rise. Today many companies are simplifying their logos to flat colours and simple shapes. There are benefits to simplifying a logo. Simple logos are more memorable and this helps get straight to the message that is trying to be conveyed. This day in digital age, it is also easier to download simpler files. Thinking of some of the most popular brands, Amazon, Apple, Coca Cola, and google have all simplified their logos over time. By taking away most shading and gradients and by having the logo be created with cleaner lines, logos have become much simpler than before. According to a study done by Harvard Business Review, around 60% of big companies have made the switch to a more simplified, usually flatter, logo. Statistics show that 95% of the world's most recognized brands use logos with more simplistic designs.



## Mascots

Mascots have been a big part of brands for a long time. Ronald McDonald, Mr.Clean and the energizer bunny are all classic mascots. These days companies are using their mascots for their advantage. One of the most popular language learning apps in the world, Duolingo, uses their mascot on social media to advertise their app. By giving the owl human characteristics and being a part of different social media trends, are ways Duolingo has been establishing their brand. Consumers have up 41% more of an emotional connection with a brand when they use a mascot. These mascots don't just help with an emotional connection either. A good mascot can act as a talking point about a brand. Let's take Duolingo again as an example. The social media team for Duolingo is very active on apps like Tik Tok and Youtube. When these videos are viewed, seeing Duolingo to trending dances or odd trends, people talk. Having a mascot like this just overall helps people recognize a brand and remember it.



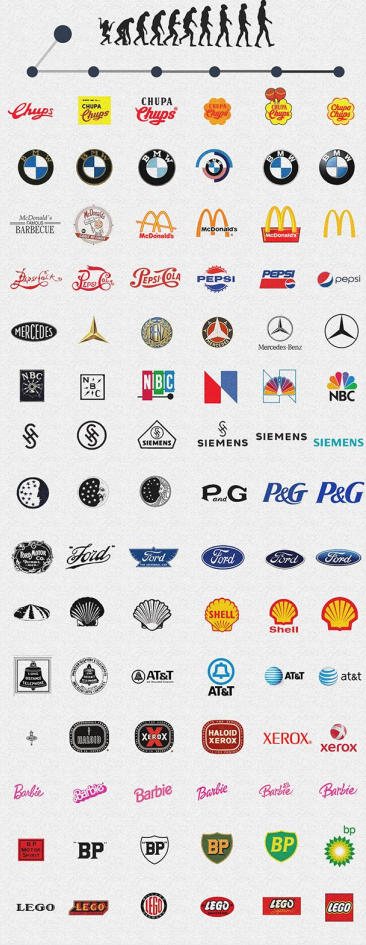




## Social media and brand aesthetics

Many companies use social media to establish their brand aesthetics. This could be companies like duolingo making videos and posts of their mascots or even just creating advertisements on social media. Though this is true 86% of consumers are more likely to trust a brand that other users on a platform have recommended. With the widening use of social media, more people are able to put out their opinions and spread awareness over brands. After using social media, 80% of marketers who use social media find that the awareness of their brand has increased. Colour also has a big impact on this. 80% of consumers tend to remember a brand better based on specific colours, which is a part of brand aesthetics.

# Evolution of a Logo



Byoma is a brand with a Y2K brand aesthetic

Retro aesthetic



# Variables

My controlled variables are that the survey I conducted is the same for each participant. The survey was also conducted with participants that are 15-16 years of age and all of them were in grade 10. The responding variables from my survey are the results that arose. These results are the shapes participants chose, which brands they chose, why they chose to buy from brands and how they discovered the brand. There was no manipulated variable for this survey.

# Procedure

The first step in my procedure was creating the survey I conducted. The first thing I started to do was research the most popular brands among teens. From this research I came up with 20 different brands. There were 4 categories that I was considering when choosing the brands. Apparel, beauty, social media/apps, and just overall products (technology, everyday use products). Once I had formed the survey I sent it out to people I knew who were all in grade 10. After the survey was conveyed I researched products from the most popular brands from the survey and the logos of the brand to see if they have any correlation to the shapes chosen. I also researched what brand aesthetics are and how social media is connected to brand aesthetics. Something else I searched up were some trends of today's brands in packaging and advertising that make them popular. Using this information I was able to craft a conclusion on if and how aesthetics contribute to how popular a company is.

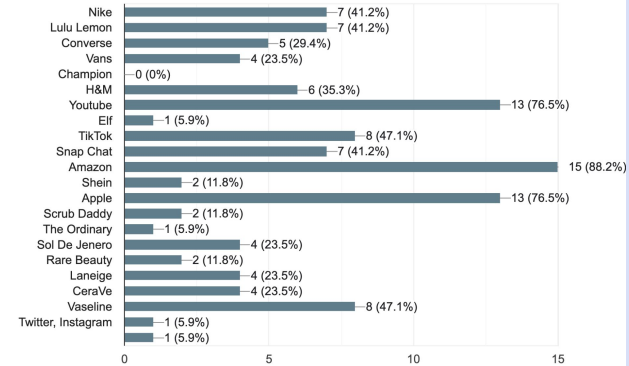


# Observations

My observations of the results from the survey were that the rounded square was the most popular shape chosen. The shapes circle triangle and hexagon were all tied for the amount chosen. Out of all of the shapes chosen, the square without rounded corners was not chosen. The top three most used brands were Amazon, Youtube and Apple and for reasons why brands were chosen were for how reasonable the prices are and how quality products are. The most participants found out about different brands mostly from online and social media was actually the least picked option (excluding the “other” option). Connecting my survey to my research, I noticed that even though social media was the least picked option out of how participants found out about brands, my research showed that social media is actually a very valuable resource in getting brand awareness.

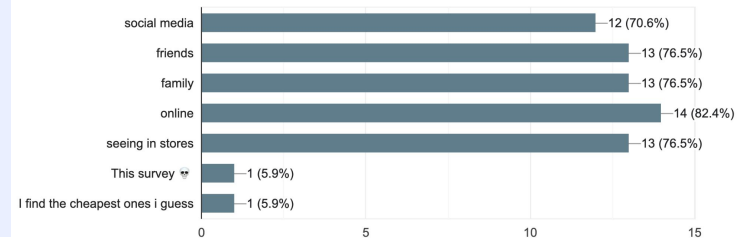
check off any recent brands you have bought from or used in the past year

17 responses



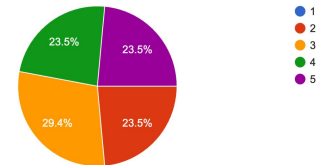
How do you find out about these brands?

17 responses

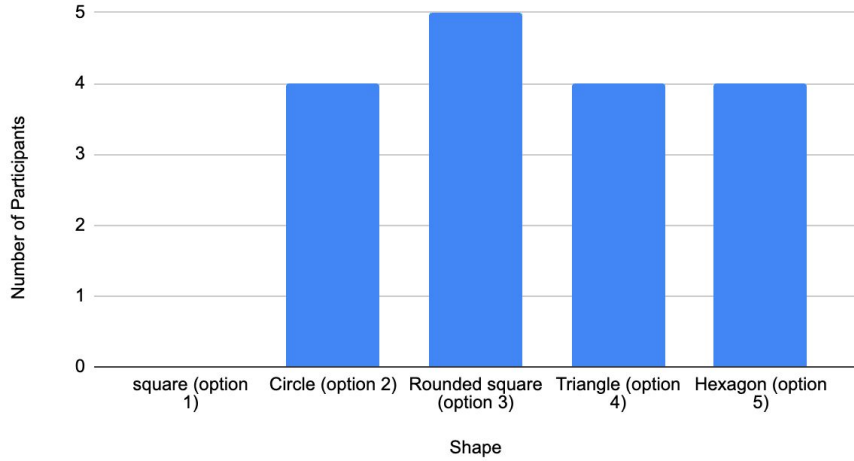


which shape do you prefer

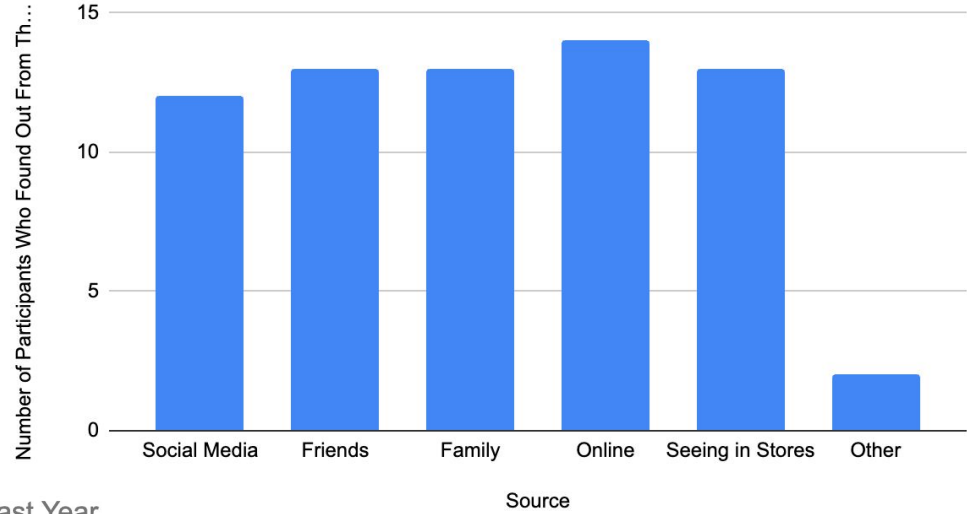
17 responses



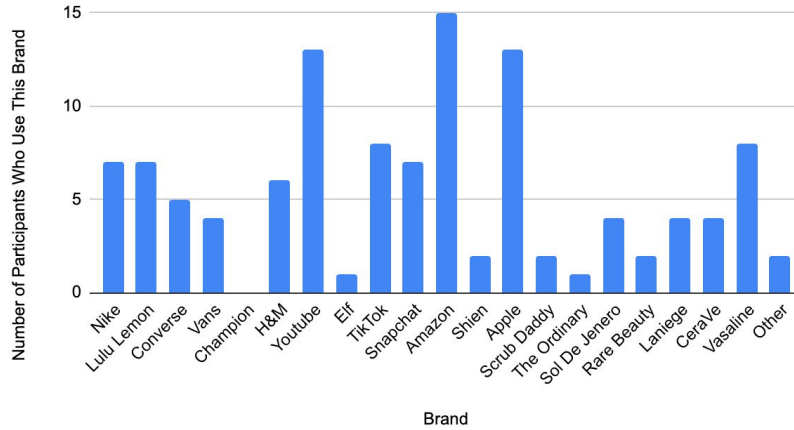
## Shapes Participants Prefer



## How Participants Found Out About Brands



## Brands Participants Have used in The Past Year



# Analysis



There is a correlation between what shapes were picked and which brands were picked. The most selected shape was the rounded square and the second most selected brand was Apple. Majority of apple products have a rectangular shape with rounded corners. Apple's devices are almost exclusively this particular shape. Youtube, also tied for second most chosen, has a logo that has a square shape with rounded corners. For how the participants found out about certain brands, social media was the least chosen option. While only by a small amount, my research showed that it is not the case. In fact, the use of social media increases brand awareness and as stated in my research, 80% of marketers using social media overall find their brand has more awareness. Online was the most chosen way that the participants said that they found out about brands. Just from 2019 to 2023 there was a 204% increase in online stores. The most popular brand chosen was actually Amazon. Though they don't sell just one particular product they have worldwide recognition. Their logo is one that did get simpler over time. Going through some different logos over the years, Amazon ended up with its logo that it ended up with today. The arrow is shaped into a smile which subtly tells customers that it is a friendly brand. Even the front that Amazon picked for their logo was picked for its smooth lines.



# Conclusion

Overall my hypothesis was partially correct. The shapes the participants chose did correlate with some of the most chosen brands. Apple and youtube both had the same amount selected and both connect with the rounded square shape. Almost all of Apple products are shaped with rounded squares and youtube's logo itself is a rounded square. In my survey social media wasn't the most chosen option. The most chosen was actually online. My research proved this differently. Social media has been proven to be very beneficial to increase awareness of a brand. Companies that follow popular aesthetics are more popular overall. Social media is also a tool that is used to establish a brand aesthetic. 60% of companies have simplified their logos and 95% of the most recognized brands have simplified their logos. Simpler logos are also easier to download which makes it easier to post about certain brands when there are download restrictions. In conclusion aesthetics are definitely a contributing factor on how popular a brand is.

# Application

I think the results from my survey would be useful to businesses who are specifically wanting to sell their products to younger consumers. Knowing patterns and reasonings on why teenagers buy certain products can help a business flourish. My project specifically was based on how products look and reasons for why people use a certain brand. Another part is that much of my research is on what aesthetics contribute to a brand being popular. Having information on what is trending and ways to advertise a business is vital for a business to survive.

# Sources of Error

In my survey the questions were pretty vague and there were not very many. My question specifically “what are the things you look for when buying from a certain brand? (products look good, price, etc)” was very broad and many of the participants defaulted to using the example as their answer. What I could have changed was separate the question into more specific questions to be able to get more detailed data. Something to expand on would be to also get a bigger variety of students instead of simply the very limited amount of participants who completed the survey. Getting more people would represent the population (tenth graders specifically) better and more accurately. This could have caused my survey results to differ from what I researched. While I found in my research that social media was an important factor to increase brand awareness, participants chose social media the least on how they found out about brands. The participants I was able to get were from a much smaller group so their viewpoints didn’t necessarily match those of the majority.

# Acknowledgement

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