ISSN 2301-5942 (print) | 2580-2380 (online) https://dx.doi.org/10.24114/gr.v14i2. 68492



Available online: https://jurnal.unimed.ac.id/2012/index.php/gorga

Visual Interpretation of the ANTARAKATA MSME Logo in Building Brand Identity

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How to cite: Aulia, V. D. & Fiyanto, A. (2025). Visual Interpretation of the ANTARAKATA MSME Logo in Building Brand Identity. Gorga: Jurnal Seni Rupa, 14 (2), 554-562. https://dx.doi.org/10.24114/gr.v14i2.68492

Article History: Received: Agust 16, 2025. Revised: Agust 27, 2025. Accepted: December 31, 2025

ABSTRACT

A logo is an essential element in building the visual identity of MSMEs, as it serves not only as an identifier but also as a representation of the values, vision, and mission of a business. However, the current phenomenon shows that most MSMEs still treat logos merely as decorative symbols without understanding their strategic power in shaping brand image and competitiveness. This condition creates a gap between the strategic potential of logos and their practical use in the field. On the other hand, previous studies have largely highlighted the role of logos in strengthening brand image, yet specific research discussing the visual interpretation of MSME logos based on Gestalt theory and semiotics remains limited. In fact, this approach is crucial to understanding how visual elements such as typography, color, and form can be perceived holistically by consumers. This study fills that gap by analyzing the logo of MSME ANTARAKATA through a semiotic and Gestalt theory perspective as a state-of-the-art approach in design analysis. The research focuses on three main elements: capital sans-serif typography that represents a modern and professional impression, a yellow-brown color combination that builds harmony between creativity and trust, and a simple wordmark form that strengthens the clarity of brand identity. The analysis shows that the ANTARAKATA logo successfully creates consistent visual unity, is easy to recognize, and builds emotional attachment with consumers. Thus, this study emphasizes the importance of logo design based on visual theory as a branding strategy for MSMEs in facing increasingly intense business competition.

KEYWORDS

Brand Identity, Digital Logo, Gestalt Principles, MSME

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), a logo plays a crucial role in increasing customer loyalty toward a brand (Alim & Chandra, 2023). A logo is not merely a sign or a trademark; it has become a business weapon. It also serves as an attraction that enhances consumer interest in the products created (Agung et al., 2021). As a symbol of a brand's visual identity, a logo creates a strong first impression for consumers and has the potential to determine public perception of products or services. In the business world, a logo is not only a symbol but also a representation of the values, vision, and mission that business owners wish to convey to the public (Basit et al., 2024). research shows that the right logo design elements can significantly influence consumers' purchasing decisions (Erjansola et al., 2021). increase trust, and provide a competitive advantage in an increasingly saturated market (Chandra & Mutiara, 2022).

For a logo to function optimally, it must be able to clearly communicate the brand's message and identity. Visual interpretation analysis becomes crucial, as consumers' perception of a logo is shaped by their understanding of the symbols, colors, and forms used (Lestari et al., 2020). Semiotics plays an important role in decoding these meanings, as each visual element carries specific associations that can trigger emotional responses (Khamis et al., 2023). Semiotics is the study of

ISSN 2301-5942 (print) | 2580-2380 (online)

doi https://dx.doi.org/10.24114/gr.v14i2. 68492



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Available online: https://jurnal.unimed.ac.id/2012/index.php/gorga

signs, interpreted as a science or method of analysis to examine symbols. Signs are systems used in navigating this world, with and among humans (Swandhani et al., 2023). An effective logo is not only visually recognizable but also capable of building emotional attachment and strengthening brand image in the minds of consumers (Wang, 2024). In addition to semiotics, Gestalt Theory is also relevant, as it explains perception processes, particularly how sensory input is organized into meaningful patterns based on fundamental principles. This psychological theory states that individuals perceive their surroundings as a unified whole rather than as separate details (Sumema et al., 2023) key principle of Gestalt is that people tend to see the bigger picture rather than isolated elements. Its main concepts include continuity, similarity, alignment, proportion, and separation (Mubarat et al., 2023). For example, the principle of closure explains the human tendency to complete incomplete shapes, so even simple or fragmented logos can still be understood as a whole (Tian et al., 2022). Applying these principles in MSME logo design can enhance visual effectiveness while ensuring brand identity consistency

ANTARAKATA, an MSME engaged in food and beverages, exemplifies the importance of visual identity. Known for its trendy, Instagrammable café concept with spacious and comfortable areas, ANTARAKATA Coffee targets consumers who value both high-quality taste and appealing visual experiences. The café offers a wide variety of food and beverages while also providing adequate facilities for visitors, thus building a brand image that extends beyond products to atmosphere and lifestyle. The ANTARAKATA Coffee logo is designed with a minimalist and modern approach, using bold capital letters "A" and "K" as representations of the initials of "Antara Kata." These two letters are separated by a diagonal line resembling a straw or coffee stirrer, adding contextual relevance to the café environment. The text elements "COFFEE" and "EST. 2016" are arranged circularly around the main letters, creating compositional balance. The choice of bright yellow as the background provides strong contrast to the black typography, presenting a warm, energetic, and friendly impression in line with the café's image of comfort and social interaction.

A deeper analysis of this logo is necessary because, despite its simplicity, every visual element has the potential to convey complex messages about brand identity. The research aims to answer how to establish a standard for logo implementation and why the logo is important as a visual identity (Aulia et al., 2021). Gestalt principles can also reveal how the arrangement of elements influences overall perception—whether it conveys harmony, professionalism, and alignment with the intended image. The urgency of this study is reinforced by the fact that, in the increasingly competitive café business, a logo functions as a key differentiator influencing brand recognition in the market. A logo that fails to communicate meaning clearly risks consumer misunderstanding, which can ultimately harm both financially and reputationally (Musyafa'ah & Nuha, 2022). Therefore, an in-depth understanding of logo visual interpretation can serve as a strategic reference in strengthening brand positioning. Accordingly, this study aims to interpret the visual logo of MSME ANTARAKATA to identify its embedded meanings and evaluate its role in building brand identity.

METHOD

1. Logo as Identity

The concept of visual culture serves as the foundation of this analysis. Visual culture reflects how visualization and communication symbols shape perception and influence society. In the MSME context, considering local cultural elements is important because these values can determine the attractiveness and acceptance of a logo (Dhewi et al., 2021). The presence of a logo in a product or brand has a significant impact on attracting consumers in society (Gunalan et al., 2022). Thus, an MSME logo functions not only as a visual promotional medium but also as a manifestation of the vision and mission of the business. The success of a logo lies in its ability to consistently communicate the brand's core values, thereby forming a positive perception in the minds of consumers (Indrasari et al., 2024). Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of carefully selecting design elements, as every visual detail contributes to the brand's overall image. The analysis focuses on how far these elements establish a cohesive and recognizable identity.

ISSN 2301-5942 (print) | 2580-2380 (online)

doi https://dx.doi.org/10.24114/gr.v14i2. 68492



Available online: https://jurnal.unimed.ac.id/2012/index.php/gorga

2. Visual Interpretation and Gestalt Theory in Logo Design

The next focus of the research is visual interpretation. Visual interpretation is the process of deriving meaning from images or symbols, involving perception, experience, and the audience's cultural context (You & Hon, 2021). In this study, research was conducted on MSMEs to explore how consumers interpret visual elements in logos and how these perceptions are influenced by social and cultural environments. Previous findings indicate that appropriate visual interpretation can influence overall brand experience and even affect purchasing decisions (Indrasari et al., 2024). To strengthen this analysis, Gestalt theory is employed as a framework for understanding the integration of visual logo elements. Gestalt principles such as figure—ground, proximity, and similarity explain how humans process visual information into meaningful unity (Kaiyue & Karim, 2023). Applying these principles can help designers create logos that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also highly memorable. Thus, integrating Gestalt principles in MSME logo design can be a determining factor in building a strong brand identity.

3. Structured Interview ans Observation

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach on several MSMEs in Indonesia. Qualitative research is valuable for describing various social influences that are difficult to measure quantitatively (Yulfita & Herdianto, 2022). In this research, structured interviews and observation were employed to understand the visual interpretation of the ANTARAKATA logo and its role in building brand identity.

Structured interviews were conducted by preparing predetermined questions for key informants, such as employees and consumers (Pangestu et al., 2019; Puspita & Kahdar, 2021). The questions focused on the inspiration behind the design, consumer perceptions, and the extent to which the logo strengthens brand identity in promotion (Yulius & Lubis, 2024). The interview direction was designed to explore aspects of design such as motifs, colors, and typography used in the logo, consumer emotional reactions related to curiosity or trust, as well as comparisons between the ANTARAKATA logo and competitors' logos in the MSME sector (Iskandar et al., 2023). Through this approach, interviews were expected to produce in-depth data that reflects multiperspective views on logo effectiveness in branding strategies.

Meanwhile, observation was carried out to complement the interview results by directly reviewing the use of the ANTARAKATA logo in real contexts. The researcher observed the logo's placement on Instagram to assess its visual appeal (Murtono, 2021). In addition, the researcher analyzed the ANTARAKATA logo using Gestalt theory to determine meanings aligned with the theory. By combining structured interviews and observation, this study develops a comprehensive picture of the ANTARAKATA logo's function as a strong and relevant representation of brand identity in the minds of consumers.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the ANTARAKATA logo begins with identifying and describing the visual elements that compose it, such as form, typography, color, and layout, which together create the overall composition. Each element was examined to determine its role and contribution to building brand identity. This process was followed by visual interpretation to explore the meanings, messages, and images conveyed, both explicitly and implicitly, in line with cultural contexts and the business character. Gestalt theory principles were then applied to understand how these elements combine into a harmonious visual unity, easy to recognize, and leaving a lasting impression on the audience.

1. Interview and Observation Results of the ANTARAKATA Logo

Structured interviews were conducted with two groups of informants: ANTARAKATA MSME employees and consumers. From the employee interviews, it was revealed that the capital sans-serif typography was chosen because it was considered simple, bold, and easily applicable across various promotional media. Employees also stated that the yellow and brown color combination was understood as a symbol of optimism and warmth, aligning with the café's intended atmosphere. This indicates that from an internal perspective, the logo is viewed as consistently supporting brand identity and facilitating daily promotional activities. These findings align with



https://dx.doi.org/10.24114/gr.v14i2. 68492

Available online: https://jurnal.unimed.ac.id/2012/index.php/gorga

previous studies that emphasized the importance of typographic and color alignment in creating a cohesive brand image (Fahminnansih et al., 2022; Vohra & Thomas, 2024).

Meanwhile, consumer interviews produced more diverse views. Most respondents considered the ANTARAKATA logo easy to remember, simple, and modern, but some noted that its design was less distinctive compared to competitor café's logos. Consumers also emphasized that the yellow color was attention-grabbing, yet the wordmark design was seen as not fully reflecting the café's unique identity. These results indicate a gap between employees' internal perception that the logo is already effective and consumers' external perception that it lacks strong differentiation. Compared with field observations, the researcher argues that while the ANTARAKATA logo already fulfills visual unity principles, strengthening distinguishing elements is still necessary so that the logo is not only functional but also competitively appealing in the intense MSME market.

Meanwhile, the results of the researcher's observation of the ANTARAKATA logo are as follows:

a. Typography

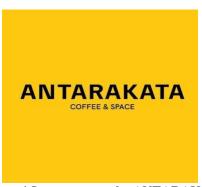


Figure 1 Logo typography ANTARAKATA (Sumber: Instagram @antarakata.coffee, 2025)

In typography, the ratio and slant of characters are important, but the proportion between character height and width is also significant (Rohiman et al., 2022). The typography in the ANTARAKATA logo features capital "A" and "K" letters in a bold sans-serif style. Sans-serif typography, characterized by the absence of strokes at the ends of letters, conveys a clean and modern impression, making it suitable for brands aiming to project simplicity and contemporaneity (Gregersen & Johansen, 2021). Logos using sans-serif typography are often considered more readable, thereby increasing visibility and consumer appeal (Tourky et al., 2020).

his design also creates a professional and efficient impression, which is desirable for many MSMEs striving to build trust in the market (Buschgens et al., 2024). The meaning conveyed by sans-serif typography reflects a minimalist, functionality-oriented approach that responds to consumer demand for simplicity and coherence in visual communication (Dehaghin, 2023). Moreover, sans-serif typography symbolizes innovative exploration and creativity among MSME entrepreneurs seeking to attract audiences in unconventional yet elegant ways (Ajie & Syaroni, 2022). Through this typography, ANTARAKATA aims to reinforce a strong and relevant brand identity amid the growing competition in the local business sector (Tourky et al., 2020).

b. Color



Figure 2 Color tone logo ANTARAKATA (Sumber: Instagram @antarakata.coffee, 2025)

Gorga: Jurnal Seni Rupa Vol 14. No 2, (2025) 554-562 JSSN 2301-5942 (print) 1 2580 2380 (o

ISSN 2301-5942 (print) | 2580-2380 (online)

di https://dx.doi.org/10.24114/gr.v14i2. 68492



Available online: https://jurnal.unimed.ac.id/2012/index.php/gorga

The combination of yellow and brown in the ANTARAKATA logo plays a vital role in shaping the desired brand image and identity. Yellow is perceived as energetic and cheerful, capable of capturing attention and evoking positive feelings. It is often associated with happiness, optimism, and creativity, as well as being effective in drawing attention (Vohra & Thomas, 2024; Wibawa & Suci, 2021). Colors can strengthen the personality of local brands, which is especially relevant for MSMEs (Suriadi et al., 2022). Meanwhile, brown symbolizes stability, reliability, and warmth, providing an authentic impression while creating emotional connections with consumers. This color is frequently linked to natural and organic products, offering a calming nuance in consumer experiences (Nuresa, 2025).

Overall, the yellow-brown combination functions to both attract attention and foster trust. In branding, color has been proven to be a communication tool that conveys brand values and builds emotional bonds (Ferrão, 2022). Color not only influences perception but can also trigger deep emotional responses, making the ANTARAKATA logo a strategic visual representation for building a strong and memorable brand identity (Khandekar, 2025).

c. Form

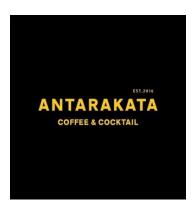


Figure 3 Logo form ANTARAKATA (Sumber: Instagram @antarakata.coffee, 2025)

The ANTARAKATA MSME logo, designed in a wordmark form, reflects a clear and easily recognizable brand identity. Using simple and modern typography, this logo emphasizes efficiency in communication. Wertz's research shows that text-based logos often communicate strong brand values due to their simplicity, which makes them easy for consumers to remember and identify (Vohra & Thomas, 2024). The typeface not only conveys the brand name but also creates emotional associations relevant to consumers. With neat and orderly characters, the logo portrays professionalism and trust essential elements in building a positive brand image.

The use of a wordmark format in the ANTARAKATA logo enhances accessibility and clarity. This aligns with relevant findings that simple, legible logos are more effective in expressing the intended theme and context. On the other hand, the chosen typography can also reflect the business's character for instance, rounder, softer letters may signal friendliness and approachability, while sharper, angular letters suggest strength and boldness. Therefore, analyzing the logo from its typography and wordmark form offers insights not only into the visual design but also into how the brand wishes to be perceived by consumers (Ferrão, 2022).

Gestalt Theory in the ANTARAKATA Logo

1) Unity

The ANTARAKATA logo uses bold capital sans-serif typography that is clear and easy to read. Observation shows consistent letter spacing, producing a unified and cohesive impression. The yellow–brown color pairing balances energy and stability, while the simple layout strengthens readability. These elements work together to represent ANTARAKATA as modern, professional, and memorable.

2) Wholeness

ISSN 2301-5942 (print) | 2580-2380 (online)



Available online: https://jurnal.unimed.ac.id/2012/index.php/gorga

di https://dx.doi.org/10.24114/gr.v14i2. 68492

In Gestalt principles, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. In the ANTARAKATA logo, the combination of bright and neutral colors, bold font choices, and orderly element placement results in a broader meaning: a warm, innovative, and trustworthy atmosphere. While each component has individual significance, when combined, they form a solid and memorable brand image, reflecting ANTARAKATA's vision as a creative and welcoming space.

3) Figure-Ground

The figure–ground principle refers to distinguishing the main subject (figure) from the background (ground). In the ANTARAKATA logo, the clear, bold lettering serves as the figure, while the minimalist background supports legibility and emphasizes the brand namerek (Coudray, 2020). According to Gestalt theory, logos that establish strong figure–ground contrast allow viewers to focus more easily on essential elements in this case, the brand name. Thus, good logo design must consider the relationship between main elements and background to create a strong and effective visual identity (Chen et al., 2023).

4) Similarity

The similarity principle is also crucial in logo design, where elements similar in shape or color tend to be grouped together. In the ANTARAKATA logo, consistent typography across all letters creates a sense of homogeneity, where each part of the brand supports one another (Musyafa'ah & Nuha, 2022). This is reinforced through uniform typeface, color, and graphic style, making the logo perceived as a coherent whole. Such similarity strengthens brand identity, creates a tidy and professional impression, and makes it easier for consumers to associate the logo with ANTARAKATA

5) Proximity

The proximity principle highlights the importance of placing elements close to each other to establish visual associations. Close spacing between letters enables readers to grasp information quickly, contributing to faster brand recognition in a competitive market. Designers must apply this principle strategically, making logos more attractive and memorable (Osadcha & Osadcha, 2023). In the ANTARAKATA logo, the proximity of the main wordmark "ANTARAKATA" and accompanying descriptors (such as tagline or establishment year) allows the audience to process them as a single, cohesive unit. This ensures the brand message is delivered completely and efficiently, without distracting or fragmenting visual attention.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the analysis of ANTARAKATA's logo visual elements shows that the combination of yellow and brown successfully creates a balance between creativity and trust. The bold, modern sans-serif typography strengthens a professional image while also delivering a simple and memorable impression. The clear wordmark form provides a strong identity and enhances visual accessibility. The application of Gestalt principles adds unity and harmony, making the logo effective as a brand communication medium. All these elements work together to form a consistent and relevant visual identity for the target audience. Therefore, the ANTARAKATA logo can serve as a strategic asset in building and maintaining a positive market image.

To further strengthen its brand identity, ANTARAKATA MSME is advised to maintain consistency in the use of visual elements across all promotional media so that the established brand image remains strong and recognizable. Additionally, incorporating supporting elements such as a tagline or supplementary symbols could be a strategy to expand visual appeal and provide stronger differentiation from competitors. Equally important, regular evaluations of the logo's effectiveness should be conducted to ensure its relevance with evolving design trends and market demands, allowing the logo to continue functioning as a competitive and adaptive brand representation.

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ISSN 2301-5942 (print) | 2580-2380 (online)

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