

Out with the... new and in with the old? Investigating the relationship
between visually cohesive portfolios and consumer liking

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Cite as:

Ward Ella, Romaniuk Jenni, Trinh Giang, Virginia Beal, Dawes John (2023), Out with the... new and in with the old? Investigating the relationship between visually cohesive portfolios and consumer liking. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 52nd, (114196)

Paper from the 52nd Annual EMAC Conference, Odense/Denmark, May 23-26, 2023



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Abstract

To communicate a strong identity, a branded portfolio should appear visually cohesive, such that all products are connected through consistent use of logos, colours and design. Yet it is commonplace for marketers to design line extension packaging that intentionally juxtapose the Masterbrand in attempts to disrupt consumers and gain favour on-shelf. This research investigates the relationship between visual cohesion and consumer liking of a portfolio's appearance. It applies a new measure, the Portfolio Branding Cohesion Metric, to explore effects of design typicality and novelty, as well as brand usage on liking. Results suggest no overarching relationship between visual cohesion and liking of a portfolio's appearance, while preference for cohesion is seen in three of five categories examined. Findings also suggest that cohesion is preferred by brand users and does little to reduce the liking of a portfolio among non-users. Therefore, marketers should not be driven to create novel and disruptive packaging in hopes of gaining consumer preference. Instead, line extensions should be designed to protect the Masterbrand and build a strong brand identity.

Subject Areas: *Branding, New Product Development and Launch*

Track: Product and Brand Management