

Magali Olhats

**DECODING THE BRAND DNA:**  
A DESIGN MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGY APPLIED TO FAVELA  
FASHION

**A DECODIFICAÇÃO DO BRAND DNA:**  
UMA METODOLOGIA DE GESTÃO DE DESIGN APLICADA A MODA  
DE FAVELAS

Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina  
Florianópolis – 2012



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FASHION

Dissertação apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Design e Expressão Gráfica da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina como requisito parcial à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Design e Expressão Gráfica.

Orientador: Prof. Dr. Luiz Salomão Ribas  
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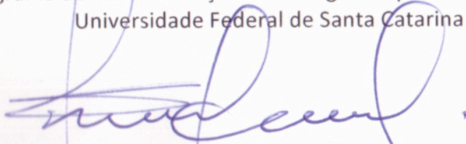
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Magali Olhats

**DECODING THE BRAND DNA:**  
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Esta Dissertação foi julgada adequada e aprovada para a obtenção do título de  
**Mestre em Design e Expressão Gráfica** no  
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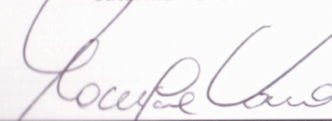
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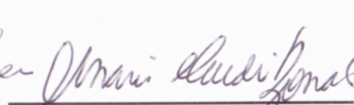
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### ***Dedicatória***

*À minha mãe que me encorajou durante estes  
dois anos de pesquisa no Brasil, apesar da  
distância e das saudades.*



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*“Stay hungry, stay foolish.”*  
Steve Jobs





## ABSTRACT

Through an overview of graphic design management and branding, this dissertation analyzes the application of the Brand DNA Process on a fashion collective born from within a *favela* in Rio de Janeiro. Design, in conjunction with branding, allows for the construction of strong brand identities, which, in turn, create deep emotional relationships with consumers. Since branding serves to promote the brand, familiarizing the consumers, add credibility and trust, and strengthen or modify the image the brand may have in the mind of the consumers, it is a crucial process in creating this relationship. This research defends that each brand has a unique set of characteristics, which can be communicated through its Brand DNA. The Brand DNA Process is used as the methodology for this research, aiming to identify the DNA of a brand, through a process of co-creation of value for the organization, involving diverse stakeholders from the beginning of the creative task until completion. In order to validate the strength of this methodology, the Brand DNA Process was applied through a case study in the Santa Marta *favela*, resulting in validating Costurando Ideais' Brand DNA and developing strategies for its implementation. This dissertation analyzes the current climate in Rio de Janeiro and studies the rise of entrepreneurial projects in the fashion sector originating from *favelas*, in order to successfully apply the methodology. The collective Costurando Ideais has taken the initiative to work for social change in the *favela*, while currently working on establishing a stronger brand image through branding efforts, beginning with the validation of their Brand DNA.

**Keywords:** Design, design management, branding, Brand DNA, fashion, *favela*



## RESUMO

Através de uma pesquisa baseada na teoria de gestão de design gráfico e *branding*, esta dissertação analisa a aplicação do *Brand DNA Process* em um coletivo de moda dentro de uma favela no Rio de Janeiro. Design, em conjunto com *branding*, permite a construção de identidades de marca fortes, o que, por sua vez, criam profundas relações emocionais com os consumidores. *Branding*, por sua vez, serve para promover a marca, familiarizando os consumidores, aumentar a credibilidade e confiança, e reforçar ou modificar a imagem da marca presente na mente dos consumidores, torna-se um processo crucial para a criação deste relacionamento. Esta pesquisa defende que cada marca tem um conjunto de características únicas, que podem ser comunicadas através do seu DNA da marca. A fim de descobrir o DNA, utiliza-se a metodologia "*Brand DNA Process*", um método com o objetivo de identificar o DNA de uma marca, permitindo um processo de co-criação de valor para a organização, envolvendo os diversos stakeholders desde o início do projeto criativo até a conclusão. A fim de validar a força desta metodologia, o aplicou-se o *Brand DNA Process* em um estudo de caso na Favela Santa Marta, resultando na validação do *Brand DNA* de Costurando Ideais e estratégias para implementá-lo. Esta dissertação analisa o clima atual no Rio de Janeiro e estuda o surgimento de projetos empreendedores no sector da moda provenientes de favelas, a fim de aplicar a metodologia com êxito. O coletivo Costurando Ideais tomou a iniciativa de trabalhar para a mudança social na favela, enquanto atualmente trabalha em estabelecer uma imagem de marca mais sólida através de estratégias de *branding*, começando com a validação de seu DNA da marca.

**Palavres-chaves:** Design, gestão de design, *branding*, *Brand DNA*, moda, favela



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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

FIRJAN	Projeto Arte-Indústria da Federação das Indústrias do Estado do Rio de Janeiro
LOGO	Laboratório de Orientação da Gênese Organizacional
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
RIO ECOSOL	Rio Economia Solidaria
SEDES	Secretaria Especial de Desenvolvimento Econômico Solidário
SENAI	Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Industrial
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
UPP	Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Presentation and contextualization

Every living entity has its own DNA. It is either hereditary or constructed, but no matter its origin, contributes to the differentiating factors of that entity. This DNA contains the code that defines the physical aspect and personality of its beholder. And while it is present in every living thing, the DNA varies slightly in its contents, composition, and organization from human to human and animal to animal. The patterns in which the DNA is set up to define our characteristics are the factors which allow for differentiation. Whether in a human being, corporate organization, or territorial community, it is important to identify, embrace, and share the very factors that make each different from the rest.

In the world of brands, the rule is no different. Since brands intend to sell themselves and their products or services, they must invest in establishing their identity. This identity serves to promote the brand, familiarize the consumers, add credibility and trust, and strengthen or modify the image the brand may have in the mind of the consumers.

Many times the image consumers have of a brand is not the same as the identity it wishes to transmit. By investing in brand identity, the brand strengthens, and the image begins to mirror the identity. Consumers begin to recognize the brand, its attributes, and its promises, eventually building a relationship of loyalty with emotional attachment. While difficult to describe in elaborate detail, this identity is manifest through the five senses: through graphical images and sound, and potentially touch, smell, and taste, creating all together an opportunity for a multi-faceted personality.

Certain brands, territories, or organizations may have a signature manner of communicating or may have an established image stemming from consumer perspective, yet completely ignore how they define their identity. A brand must be conscious of its identity in order to sustain and build upon it.

This research proposes to use the methodology “Brand DNA Process” developed by Dr. Luiz Salomão Ribas Gomez and the Laboratório de Orientação da Gênese Organizacional (LOGO) to define a brand’s identity through images and semantic mapping. Being composed of five descriptive adjectives, the DNA metaphor

humanizes the brands, unveiling their personality. The Brand DNA Process will be applied, for this research, in a collective in Rio de Janeiro's *favela*<sup>1</sup>, Santa Marta.

## 1.2 Objectives of the dissertation

To explore the validity of Brand DNA as a design management tool, and the Brand DNA Process as a methodology for strengthening brand identity, the intent of the research is to apply the Brand DNA Process in conjunction with stakeholders of the collective Costurando Ideais, based in the Santa Marta *favela* in Rio de Janeiro. This collective wishes to commercialize its products, but its lack of dedication to its visual identity impedes its attractiveness and credibility as a trusted clothing brand. To strengthen its projects, the identity, positioning, and orientation of the collective ought to be defined. As such, the research question devised, was formulated as follows:

How can the collective's Brand DNA be defined and applied in order to ameliorate its brand image?

This research question was guided by clearly defined objectives, outlining the scope of this research project.

### 1.2.1 General objective

The general objective is to apply the Brand DNA Process to the group Costurando Ideais, validate its Brand DNA, and thus validate the Brand DNA Process as an effective design management methodology.

### 1.2.2 Specific objectives

To further develop the general objective, a series of specific objectives have been defined:

- Evaluate the Brand DNA Process through its application in the collective Costurando Ideais, in the *favela* Santa Marta;
- Validate the participation of graphic design in the implementation of Brand DNA, through this case study;
- Highlight the importance of graphic design in the construction of the conscience of identity in an organization.

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<sup>1</sup> *Favela*: Brazilian term for slum. For further definitions, refer to chapter 3.3.



### 1.2.3 Delimitation

While this research wishes to take an in depth look into the Brand DNA process and its application, certain intentional omissions will be made considering time, context, budgetary constraints.

While the Brand DNA Process has gone through various adaptations since its creation and has been applied to numerous organizations, this dissertation has as an objective to only cover and explain its latest version and its application in the *favela* Santa Marta. This research will only go as far as determining the Brand DNA and presenting it to the collective. While following its application and guiding the collective through its usage would prove to be interesting and helpful in further development of the Brand DNA Process, the time frame of this research does not allow for it.

Part of the qualitative analysis of the brand's identity will be composed of interviews and questionnaires, which will aid in understanding the image and objectives of the collective. Due to the limited financial resources, which hinder the ability to be present on a daily or weekly basis in Rio de Janeiro, the number of interviews and participants will be limited. Similarly, the image of the collective will only be considered from the perspective within the *favela* Santa Marta, as greater resources and time would be necessary to analyze its reputation in neighboring *favelas* and throughout Rio de Janeiro. The focus of this research is to concentrate on the brand's identity and enable its development. As the research will reveal, the collective suffers in other design related areas. While some suggestions may be made, this research will not involve analysis of fashion design related to the collections or products produced.

Finally, this research is intended as an analysis of an organization with commercial interests. It will therefore not entail deep investigation into social aspects of the organization's projects. The literary study of *favelas* will aid in contextualizing the collective, understanding its origins and objectives, yet the application of the DNA Tool is intended to more clearly demonstrate the brand's identity, enabling it to better position itself in the market.

## 1.3 Justification

### 1.3.1 Relevance

The current trend in consumer behavior is that of an emotional attachment and fidelity to certain brands. Chevalier (2008, p. 49) states that brands “guide the purchases we make, influence our judgments about products and people, and force us to position ourselves in relation to the values (or counter-values, or the absence of values) they communicate”. Brands and how they are managed and promoted have gone a long way from the Unique Selling Proposition popular in the 1940s. Many marketing techniques in the past have focused on promoting products or a line of products. Now, various branding approaches exist, from company branding to brand extensions, and individual or organizational brands to nation branding. In each approach, the consumer no longer simply buys the product or service, but the brand. Corporations, organizations, and territories have shifted their focus toward branding.

In addition, the DNA metaphor used in this research recalls other tools which also use this scientific metaphor. The 21st century has seen a surge of metaphors using DNA—Corporate DNA (PRESS; COOPER, 2009), Organizational DNA (NIELSON *et al.*, 2008), and Brand DNA (KAPFERER, 2009; KOTLER, 2010; NWORAH, 2006)—yet few establish how a corporation can go about implementing these metaphors. The Brand DNA Process characterizes itself as a preliminary step in the formation of brand identity, being a methodology that aids in the construction and validation of brands.

The decision to apply the DNA Process in a collective within a *favela* stems from the intrigue of the evolution of Rio de Janeiro’s *favelas*. For the past two years, since the beginning of the pacification of certain communities, *favelas* have been developing into commercially stable neighborhoods. In Rio de Janeiro in particular, *favelas* have been the focus of the Brazilian government in order to prepare the city to host the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic games. As such, the entrepreneurial projects started in the *favelas* should take this opportunity of spotlight to call attention to their work. Furthermore, since this project proposes to work with Brand DNA, a methodology whose premise is to work with brand identity based on its emotional ties and personality, the *favela* was chosen as a setting where emotions and sentiments are abundant.

As will be explained in chapter 3.3, *favelas* are composed of communities with strong interpersonal bonds, great pride in their endeavors, and an urge for expression.

*Favela Santa Marta*, where Costurando Ideais was founded and continues its activity, has become increasingly known in the past two decades, hosting the filming of Michael Jackson's "They Don't Care About Us" music video, and the filming of a music video for American pop icons Beyonce and Rihanna. Being the first pacified *favela* in Rio de Janeiro, the traffic-free environment has encouraged the development of projects such as *Favela Painting* by Haas&Hahn, where the central plaza, Praça Cantão, was painted with vibrant streaks of color. As such, this community has created an environment for creative expression and entrepreneurship that has the potential to be heard beyond the *favela's* walls. The collective has a prime opportunity, yet must work on improving its means of presentation, firstly by defining its identity.

The collective chosen, Costurando Ideais (literally "Sewing Ideals"), works with discarded fabrics to recreate garments according to their style. As Rio enters the fashion scene, with its Fashion Rio, Rio Summer, and Rio-A-Porter fashion shows, it is important that independent projects from Rio's communities (a central part of Rio's history and culture) be actively present.

### **1.3.2 Contribution**

This project hopes to contribute both to academics and to the collective within the *favela*. In terms of academics, applying the Brand DNA Process serves to validate the methodology and defend it as a valid tool in design management. The literary research aims to outline the relevance of the Process in its field, in addition to justifying the composition of the steps that lead to discovering the Brand DNA. This contribution will hopefully encourage further research into defining and developing brand identity. On the other hand, the application of the Brand DNA Process within Costurando Ideais aims to help the collective clearly define its identity. Knowing the DNA becomes an asset, strengthening the origins and objectives of the message or image one wishes to convey. With the DNA defined, the collective can build upon or redefine its image, and work on its presentation through packaging, media, internal structure, etc. In turn this will add value to the brand and hopefully

increase sales and exposure, affecting both the collective and the *favela* in which it acts.

### **1.3.3 Adherence to the program**

As this research intends to address the issues of brand identity, getting to the core of what a brand is, its origin, and how it projects itself, and presenting it in a graphical manner through mood boards and semantic mapping, it engages in various areas of applied social sciences. Within this department, specifically, the issues to be focused on are design management, directly related to the Masters program in Design and Graphic Expression (Mestrado em Design e Expressão Gráfica), as well as corporate communications and marketing. As will be discussed in the literary review, the basic elements which make up branding are in fact marketing, design, and advertising.

The case study in which the Brand DNA Process will be applied consists of the application of a methodology which has been elaborated by designers through an analysis of design tools, as well as tools borrowed from various parallel disciplines (engineering, marketing, business) and adapted to design.

## **1.4 Characterization of the research and methodological procedures**

This dissertation presents itself as a qualitative analysis of the Brand DNA Process through the case study of its application in a collective in the *favela* of Santa Marta.

A literary review through bibliographic research will aid in relating the various areas which are involved in the analysis of Brand DNA, as well as understanding the contextualization of this organization. These areas include design management, graphic design, branding, fashion branding, territory branding, and *favelas* (their history, perspective, struggle, and contribution to Brazilian culture).

While the Brand DNA Process will be further developed in chapter 2, the essence of its application in this case study includes qualitative and exploratory research with systematic observation of the inner workings of the collective and its image within the *favela*. The methodology includes an analysis of the situation through semi-structured interviews with the opinion makers of the collective, a SWOT analysis involving factors of the collective's environment, in

other words, the territory of *Favela* Santa Marta, a creative event in which the stakeholders will participate to determine the Brand DNA, and an individual open questionnaire to validate the DNA.

The research environment is composed of the opinion makers and stakeholders of Costurando Ideais, which in this case are the residents of Santa Marta that actively engage in the projects that the collective puts forth, and other partners and sponsors that have aided the group.

## **1.5 Structure of the dissertation**

This dissertation is structured to provide an understanding of the case study and branding methodology carried out in the *favela* Santa Marta. Following the introduction in chapter 1, chapter 2 will cover the theoretical foundations behind Brand DNA through a revision of literature in the areas of graphic design and branding. Chapter 3 will discuss the contextualization of the case study by analyzing fashion brands, to understand the market in which this collective acts; territory branding, since there is a direct relationship between the success of the collective and the image of the *favela*; and *favelas* to comprehend the context of the collective. As a conclusion to the theoretical overview, chapter 4 will integrate the methodology within the context of the case study. Chapter 5 will present the problem and the means by which this dissertation has attempted to resolve it by applying the Brand DNA Process, followed by the research findings in chapter 6, and terminating with concluding remarks and suggestions for further research.



## **2 BRAND DNA CONCEPTS: CONTEXTUALIZING THE METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents the theoretical bases that justify the methodology used in this research. In particular, the areas highlighted are:

Design Management and Branding: defining design and design management, and their roles in brand identity; defining brands and branding;

Brand DNA: from Brand Concept Management to DNA, explanation of the metaphor and its components, defending brands as living entities, introducing the Brand DNA Process.

These areas are the fundamental building blocks of the Brand DNA Process. Thorough understanding of these topics is essential to applying the methodology in order for the benefiting organization to fully understand and embrace the benefits of their Brand DNA.

### **2.1 Design Management and Branding**

#### **2.1.1 Design**

Design is a complex term since its application and practice is diverse, ranging from environmental design, product design, package design, graphic design (BORJA DE MOZOTA, 2003) to service and information design. A broad definition that perhaps embodies these characteristics is, “design is an activity that gives ‘form and order to life arrangements’” (POTTER *apud* BORJA DE MOZOTA, 2003, p. 2). Jones further develops that “one of the simplest and most common observations about designing, and one upon which many writers agree, is that it includes the three essential stages of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. These can be described in simple words as ‘breaking the problem into pieces’, ‘putting the pieces together in a new way’ and ‘testing to discover the consequences of putting the new arrangement into practice’” (JONES, 1992, p. 63). In this sense, the main objective of designing is to solve problems in a systematic manner, through analysis and evaluation. There are seven stages of design, as defined by Ambros and Harris (2011, p. 11) – define, research, generate ideas, test prototypes, select, implement, and learn – which all together create an environment for innovation.

Design has been recognized as an asset in organizations because of its ability to create “value through innovation, improve functionality, visual differentiation, brand reinforcement and a positive consumer experience” (BEST, 2006, p.34). Yet, in all of its applications, design maintains a standard set of characteristics. As shown in the table below, Brigitte Borja de Mozota offers five core design characteristics.

DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS	DESIGN DEFINITION	KEY WORDS/ TERMS
PROBLEM RESOLUTION	<i>“Design is a plan to manufacture something that one can see, touch, hear.” – Peter Gorb</i>	<i>Planning manufacture</i>
CREATION	<i>“Aesthetics is the Science of Beauty in the domain of industrial production.” –D. Huisman</i>	<i>Industrial production aesthetics</i>
SYSTEMIZATION	<i>“Design is the process by which needs of the environment are conceptualized and transformed in instruments to satisfy these needs.” –A. Topalian</i>	<i>Transformation of needs process</i>
COORDINATION	<i>“The designer is never alone, never works alone, therefore he is never a whole.” –T. Maldonado</i>	<i>Teamwork coordination</i>
CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION	<i>“The profession of designer is not that of an artist or an aesthetician, it is that of a specialist in semantics.” –P. Starck</i>	<i>Semantics culture</i>

Table 1: Design Characteristics  
Source: Borja de Mozota, 2003, p. 4

The table displays traits of the multi-dimensionality of design and the various definitions that have been advocated throughout time. The characteristics listed show the bridge that design forms between art and science.

Another perspective of design characteristics states that just as marketing has its four P’s<sup>2</sup>, design has its four C’s:

- 1. Creativity. Design requires the creation of something that has not existed before.

<sup>2</sup> The 4 P’s of the marketing mix: Product, Price, Promotion, Placement (BBC, 2011)



2. Complexity. Design involves decisions on large numbers of parameters and variables.
3. Compromise. Design requires balancing multiple and sometimes conflicting requirements (such as cost and performance, aesthetics and ease of use, materials and durability)
4. Choice. Design requires making choices between many possible solutions to a problem at all levels, from the basic concept to the smallest detail of color or form. (Borja de Mozota, 2003, p. 13)

When effectively applied, design can help a firm in various ways, notably, in giving “sense” to the products, influencing human resources management, uniting various talents around a project, and “encouraging the strategic nucleus in the company to generate a vision” (BORJA DE MOZOTA, 2003, p. 95). Design thus becomes increasingly important as a strategic advantage to the company. “Design can be active on strategic, tactical or operational levels, in setting long-term goals and in day-to-day decision-making. Design is a function, a resource and a way of thinking within organizations” (BEST, 2006, p.34).

Graphic design in particular helps people to distinguish and appreciate ideas, make choices, and guide them on a daily basis. According to Landa “graphic design is a form of visual communication used to convey a message or information to an audience; it is a visual representation of an idea relying on the creation, selection, and organization of visual elements” (LANDA, 2010, p.2). “A graphic design solution can persuade, inform, identify, motivate, enhance, organize, brand, rouse, locate, engage, and carry or convey many levels of meaning” (LANDA, 2010, p. 2). Through compositions using the basic principles of design – balance (stability and equilibrium), unity, (proximity, similarity, and continuity), emphasis, and rhythm (excitement and flow) (LANDA, 2010) – designers create visual messages capable of strong impact. They can therefore help “drive the economy, provide information to the public, and promote competition (which can result in the research and development of goods and services). [...] Designers [also] used their expertise to inform people about important social and political issues and promote good causes” (LANDA, 2010, p. 11). While graphic design, as a discipline, is composed of formal elements, every rendering is unique since activities such as graphic

design are expressions of the richness and diversity of certain cultures (TWEMLow, 2007).

In order to manage the various disciplines of design within an organization, firms have turned their attention to design management.

The creative design process [...] has a multidisciplinary and iterative character. The creative process goes further than the simple production of visual outputs because design is inserted into many areas of management decision making. Thus, design is an internal management process that integrates market research, marketing strategy, branding, engineering, new product development, production planning, distribution, and corporate communications policies. (BORJA DE MOZOTA, 2003, p. 18)

The objectives of implementing design management in an organization are to “familiarize managers with design and designers with management” and to “develop methods of integrating design into the corporate environment” (BORJA DE MOZOTA *apud* BEST, 2006, p. 14). Design management has been increasingly integrated into business administration since the beginning of its usage in the later part of the twentieth century. As a prominent researcher in the area, Borja de Mozota (2003) outlines that design management in a firm improves the performance of the innovation and communications policies, as well as the global performance of the firm, thus being a profitable investment. “Research established a relationship between design and strategy that goes beyond the link between design and product. This demonstrates the existence and importance of efficient design management in companies” (BORJA DE MOZOTA, 2003, p. 50). Essentially, design management “is rooted in the shift from a hierarchical model of management to a flat and flexible organizational model, which encourages individual initiative, independence and risk taking” (BORJA DE MOZOTA *apud* BEST, 2006, p. 14). Yet each firm will be distinct in their “design management policies according to their position on four key variables: identification of design responsibility, design experience, strategic positioning, and design integration” (BORJA DE MOZOTA, 2003, p. 49). In order to integrate design into an organization, designers must create and implement tools and strategies that will aid in improving how that organization operates. Figure 1 displays the hierarchy of design practices within a firm.



Figure 1: Design Levels  
Source: BEST, 2006, p. 17

Design at the level of strategy encompasses all other design practices, thus requiring additional dedication and management. Strategic design management is the “relationship between design, strategy, and the identity and culture of the company” (BORJA DE MOZOTA, 2003, p. 238). The result of such management, when successful, will result in a strong organization whose brand resonates its identity.

### 2.1.2 Brands

At the core of the branding discipline lies the brand. Living in a consumer society, we have been exposed to an innumerable amount of products and companies attempting to communicate the reasons for which we should choose one over the other. Our choices are dictated by various factors associated with the product: its communication, its presence, its utility, and its prominence in our minds. Through deeper analysis, we realize that the factors guiding us to our decisions are not uniquely the product’s functionality or qualities, but moreover the brands and the meanings associated with them. In our consumer society, social life is organized “according to our roles as consumers in the consumption system” (SOLOMON, 2010, p. 35). Solomon (2009) states that consumer behavior follows four types of consumption activities: consuming as experience, integration, classification, and/or play. While, in his

comments on the hyperconsumerist culture, Lipovetsky (2007) states that publicity is no longer about products, but about expressing a way of life, an imaginary, with values capable of triggering emotion.

Consumers associate themselves with brands and establish meaning for themselves as a result. From the corporate perspective, there has been an increasing tendency to communicate and market a brand rather than a product or service. By dedicating efforts to creating a strong brand identity, companies are influencing consumer behavior and altering the real perception a consumer could have of a given product. A brand acts on two levels, creating value for the firm or organization as well as for the consumer. For the firm, it brings a financial and commercial value, its image reflecting internally and externally. For the consumer, it is a contract, a distinctive sign, and a reference at the time of purchase (LENDREVIE, LINDON, LÉVY *apud* COUTANT, 2007). The brand is the principle storage place for meaning in consumer culture (TYBOUT & CALKINS, 2006, p. 41). More specifically, the brand has a number of functions for the customer, as demonstrated in the table below.

The Functions of the Brand for the Consumer	
Function	Consumer benefit
Identification	To be clearly seen, to make sense of the offer, to quickly identify the sought-after products.
Practicality	To allow savings of time and energy through identical repurchasing and loyalty.
Guarantee	To be sure of finding the same quality no matter where or when you buy the product or service.
Optimization	To be sure of buying the best product in its category, the best performer for a particular purpose.
Characterization	To have confirmation of your self-image or the image that you present to others.
Continuity	Satisfaction brought about through familiarity and intimacy with the brand that you have been consuming for years.
Hedonistic	Satisfaction linked to the attractiveness of the brand, to its logo, to its communication.
Ethical	Satisfaction linked to the responsible behavior of the brand in its relationship towards society.

Table 2: The Functions of the Brand for the Consumer  
Source: KAPFERER *apud* GUZMÁN, 2005

There are many aspects of a brand and its means of communicating which can shape the brand's image. Focusing on these functions and the consumer's interaction with the brand through branding tools will enable to build upon this relationship.

Similarly, a brand can be seen from two perspectives: from the company perspective as brand identity, or from the consumer perspective as brand image. The image is a concept of reception, whereas the identity exists in and of itself, and is emitted after being constructed from within. In coming into contact with the brand, the consumer creates an image of what the product or service stands for in his or her mind (ADAMSON, 2006). This image created in the mind of the consumer stems from the firm's effort to create a brand identity. From a managerial perspective, the identity precedes the image (KAPFERER, 1999), being constructed from within. In order to become strong, a brand must remain faithful to its identity. While the brand image can be volatile and change with social trends, the identity is rooted deep in the essence of the brand. Kapferer (1999) states that a brand identity should respond to three main requirements: timelessness, coherence of the signs emitted, and realism. The audience should not be in control of the brand's meaning, rather, the brand should have its own identity (KAPFERER, 1999) and invest in transmitting the latter to its audience.

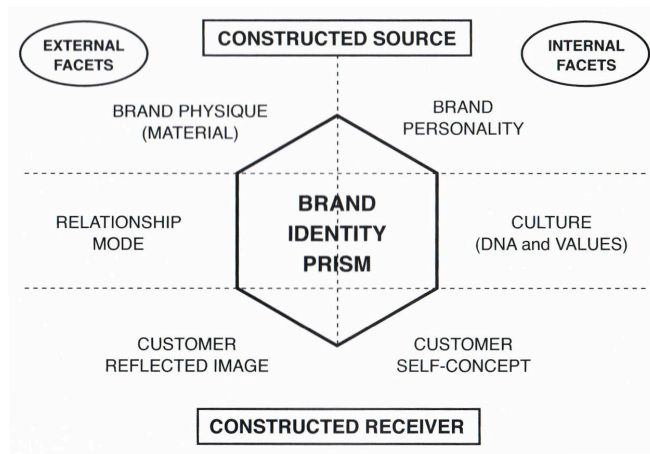


Figure 2: Brand Identity Prism  
Source: KAPFERER, 2009

The Brand Identity Prism demonstrates the different facets of a brand: which qualities are internal or external, and which are constructed from the receiver's and sender's perspectives.

As the prism shows, a brand must work on its internal and external facets to create a solid brand identity from the source to the receiver. In popular culture, the term 'brand' is often solely associated with the logo, or the 'brand physique'. There are, however, many other factors that are vital to the brand identity and must not be neglected. The elements that make up the brand identity are:

- Name
- History of the brand
- Means of expression (logo, graphical representation)
- Positioning
- Status
- Personality (represented by the original character)
- Daily behavior
- Beliefs (descriptive and qualitative emotional elements that individuals will associate to the brand)
- Values (responsibilities upheld by the firm, and the values it defends)
- The image projected is the image sought
- The attitude of the public toward the brand
- The attitude of the brand toward the public (BONTOUR; LEHU *apud* KAPFERER, 1999)

The closest the brand identity is to the image in the consumer's mind, the stronger the brand. In order to manage these elements of brand identity and ensure that the image in the consumer's mind reflects the identity desired, managers have turned to branding techniques. Neumeier states that design traditionally had four objectives: to identify, inform, entertain, and persuade. But when also considering brand management, there is a fifth objective: to differentiate (NEUMEIER, 2008).

### **2.1.3 Branding**

Branding is a hybrid discipline, combining the fields of marketing, advertising, and design, dealing with management, communication, and form (respectively) (GOMEZ, 2009).

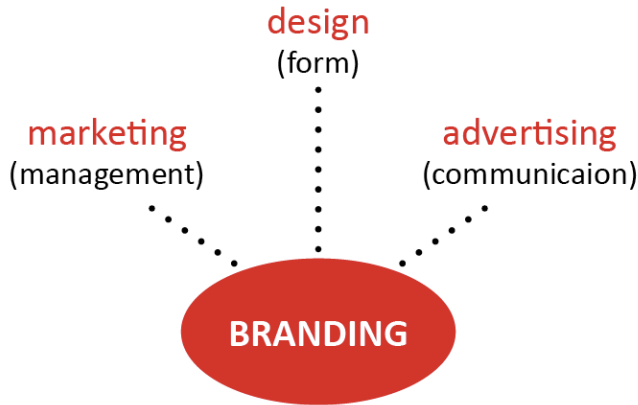


Figure 3: Disciplines of Branding

Source: Author

Branding makes a promise of the brand experience, how to live the brand. The means by which this promise reaches the client becomes part of the strategy used by the organization (GOMEZ; OLHATS, 2010). This strategy is constructed from a vision, emerges from the values and culture of the company, is in line with the marketing strategy, and reflects a deep comprehension of the needs and perceptions of the consumer (WHEELER, 2008). "As the dominant form of communication, there is more to branding than advertising. This is because people seek a physical and sensory manifestation of a concept. Design is an emotional vocabulary that transcends words. It not only connects with consumers but also becomes the only brand language that matters" (GOBÉ, 2010, p. 114). It is also through branding that graphic designers create promise of value. "This area of design aims at conceiving complex systems of visual identity that fit with the company's internal systems of signage and communications. In its external communications, the company differentiates itself by a specific graphic and verbal language and applies these messages according to its different publics" (BORJA DE MOZOTA, 2003, p. 8).

But above all, it is through branding that the relationship between the brand and the consumer is forged. "The nature of these relationships can vary, and these bonds help us to understand some of the possible meanings products have for us" (SOLOMON, 2010, p.

37). Self-concept attachment, nostalgic attachment, interdependence, or love, are some of the types of relationships a consumer can forge with a product (SOLOMON, 2010). Beyond a visual identity that the consumer can recognize, successful brands “connect with their consumers not simply by meeting their rational needs, but by addressing the emotional context of the need, as well” (KATHMAN, 2010, p. 107). Once there is an emotional bond between the consumer and the brand, the user identifies himself with the brand, creating a means of personal association of self image manifest through internal reflection and outward projection (KATHMAN, 2010). Further developing on this emotional bond, Tom Peters (2003, p. 155), author of *Re-imagine!*, states, “Branding is ultimately about nothing more (and nothing less) than heart. It’s about passion...what you care about. It’s about what’s inside - what’s inside you, what’s inside your company.” It is a language of feeling and sentiments, which, in a world of excess information and scarcity of time, is more valued than information (NEUMEIER, 2008).

Recalling the three disciplines that make up branding (marketing, advertising, and design), the element that most contributes to the emotion a brand can carry is design. “Until a decade or so ago, the public’s taste for design had been stunted by the limitations of mass production. Now people have more buying choices, so they’re choosing in favor of beauty, simplicity, and the ‘tribal identity’ of their favorite brands” (NEUMEIER, 2010, p. 22). Marc Gobé (2010, p. 109) creates an analogy where “design is to branding what jazz is to music: a new language of wonderful emotional experiences that unites brands with audiences. Design humanizes brands, stimulating our senses and feelings, and celebrates the power of collaboration and improvisation.”

## **2.2 Brand DNA**

### **2.2.1 Brand as a living entity**

Since the beginning of branding as a corporate strategy, various tools have been developed to create strong brands. Brand Concept Management, developed in the late 80s is defined as “the planning, implementation, and control of a brand concept throughout the life of the brand” (PARK; JAWORSKI; MACINNIS, 1986, p. 136). Brand Concept Management entails selecting a concept of brand meaning in order to set boundaries for positioning



strategies, thus influencing the perceived brand image. Similarly to Brand DNA, Brand Concept Management is different from the role of positioning, which has little control over brand image over time.

A brand concept developed from external and internal environmental considerations and managed over several concept management stages enables the firm to devise a strategic plan for developing, maintaining, and controlling the brand image. This plan allows positioning efforts to work coherently, elaborating and fortifying the image and building up a core personality for the brand (PARK; JAWORSKI; MACINNIS, 1986, p. 139).

Brand DNA's proposal is different however, focusing on brand personality, and building identity from the inside. As Kapferer (2009, p. 122) claims, "identity is not something that can be bolted on: it is nurtured from the brand roots, its heritage, everything that gives its unique authority and legitimacy in a specific territory of values and benefits. It translates to its DNA, the genes of the brand." Brand DNA is different from a brand's mission, vision, and positioning. It is a branding tool which allows the organization to orient its strategies, enabling brands to be consistent in their promises and values. The vision is characterized by what the organization aims to grow as and the mission describes how the organization will get there, while the Brand DNA establishes how it will live its life until that point.

A brand is a living entity that is born from a vision and grows by building relationships. A brand must be cared for in order to maintain its relationship with its consumers, and its personality should be able to radiate through its products and communication, not only in the marketing department, but throughout the entire organization. Similar to living organisms then, a brand also has a series of intrinsic traits defined by its DNA. "For brands to be able to connect with human beings, brands need to develop an authentic DNA that is the core of their true differentiation. This DNA will reflect the brand's identity in consumers' social networks. Brands with unique DNAs will have their characters built up through their lives" (KOTLER, 2010, p. 34)

The DNA metaphor has been used in other similar circumstances, such as Organizational DNA in which the decision processes, information, incentives, and structure determine how the organization behaves (NIELSON *et al.*, 2008). These four basic elements are combined and recombined to express distinct

identities. Another study on Organizational DNA explains that, “while managing strategic experiments, a CEO must make choices about structure, staff, systems, and culture. Collectively, these choices constitute the underlying logic that determines how an organization behaves. They constitute the organizational DNA” (GOVINDARAJAN; TRIMBLE, 2005).

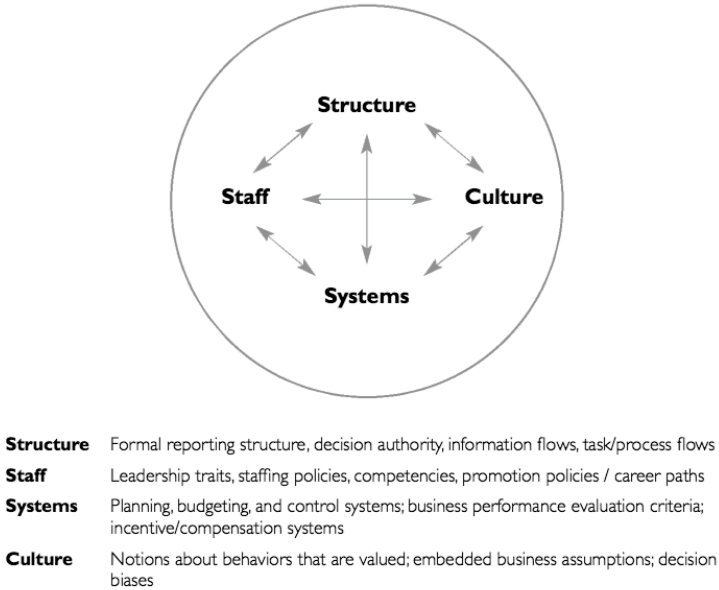


Figure 4: Organizational DNA.  
Source: Govindarajan; Trimble, 2005

Press and Cooper (2009) suggest that a designer’s role is to manipulate the Corporate DNA that flows throughout the organization and its brands, thus directing the global experience. In addition, Brand DNA has been cited by noted researchers in the areas of design and marketing – namely Kapferer (2009), Kotler (2010), and Nworah (2006) – and by strong brands, such as Starbucks (LOCKWOOD, 2008) and Ford (Ford.com), as a powerful tool in recognizing brand identity. Nworah (2006) describes that “the brand DNA can be understood like the human DNA, since it carries all of the characteristics of the entity, reflecting each positioning, concept, reaction, or even the image that is transmitted to society.” Contrary to the mission and vision, which are more

internal concepts, the DNA should be transmitted externally and its validation requires the support of the brand's stakeholders.

### **2.2.2 Co-creation**

A means to which an organization can discover or validate its Brand DNA is through the Brand DNA Process. The method aims to identify the DNA of a brand, and allows for a process of co-creation of value for the company, as it proposes that diverse stakeholders be involved from the beginning of the creative task, sharing their experiences and participating in the conception of the product, service, and communication. From an emotional and tribal standpoint, this model defends the participation of target clients of the organization, which should occur from the beginning of the creative process. This enables ideal conditions to generate a community, which will feel a strong insertion within the group, being owners and actors of the creative dynamics and innovation of the company.

Seeing as the market has been transitioning from company-centric to consumer-centric, many companies have taken measures to introduce co-creative strategies (PRALAHAD; RAMASWAMY, 2004). With the rapidly changing economic environment, due to forces such as technology, demography, and globalization (GOVINDARAJAN; TRIMBLE, 2005), the co-creation concept responds to evolving consumer habits. These changes have produced consumers that are more informed and demanding. By including the consumer and other stakeholders throughout the creation and production phases in the company, the firm is able to address consumer wants and innovate through the exchange the co-creative strategies construct. "The use of interaction as a basis for co-creation is at the crux of our emerging reality" (PRALAHAD; RAMASWAMY, 2004, p. 5). Pralahad (2004) describes four factors that are primordial in generating a successful co-creative environment. These factors are the key building blocks of co-creation: dialogue, access, risk assessment, and transparency.

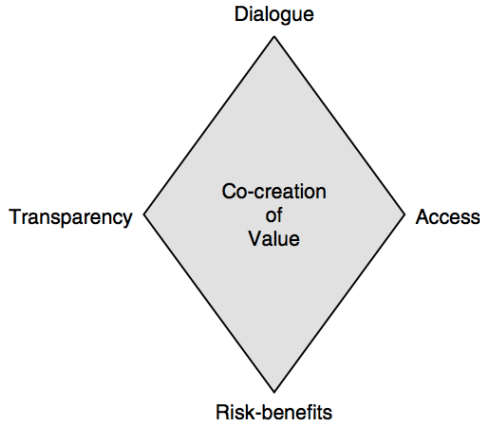


Figure 5: Co-creation of Value.

Source: PRALAHAD; RAMASWAMY 2004, p. 9

“Each person's uniqueness affects the co-creation process as well as the co-creation experience. A firm cannot create anything of value without the engagement of individuals. Co-creation supplants the exchange process” (PRALAHAD; RAMASWAMY, 2004, p. 5). “The firm must efficiently innovate ‘experience environments’ that enable a diversity of co-creation experiences. It must build a flexible ‘experience network’ that allows individuals to co-construct and personalize their experiences” (PRALAHAD; RAMASWAMY, 2004, p. 6).

The concept of co-creation, although destined for firms and consumers can also apply to designers providing services to clients. One of the key characteristics of the methodology of the Brand DNA Process is the manner in which it creates a dialogue between the designers and stakeholders of the company. This dialogue is the fruit of a co-creative methodology. In order for the Brand DNA to be truly genuine to the brand's personality, it must be constructed from within, with orientation on behalf of the design team. As more than a simple consultation or diagnostic, the Brand DNA Process integrates company opinion makers, stakeholders involved in some manner with the brand (customers, partners, family members, etc.) and designers. By involving these stakeholders, in the design process, they become part of the process which gives them a certain ownership over the ideas generated (AMBROSE; HARRIS, 2011). By constructing or validating the DNA from within, the stakeholders and those who represent the brand better results when

thinking, speaking, and acting for the brand, creating the type of experience only successful brands can deliver (SCHULTZ in TYBOUT; CALKINS, 2006). In order to become passionate defenders of the brand, all those involved with it must understand the brand, how it is constructed, organized, and the promises it vows to make (SCHULTZ in TYBOUT; CALKINS, 2006).

### 2.2.3 Application

In its essence, the Brand DNA Process, developed by Gomez (2009), provides a guide to determining this DNA. Through evaluation activities with the company's stakeholders, the organization can explicitly verify the genetic characteristics that the brand holds (GOMEZ, 2009). The Brand DNA consists of four key words, like the four components of the human DNA – adenine, cytosine, guanine, and thymine – and one integrating concept that unites these four, like the hydrogen bonds that link the nucleotides.

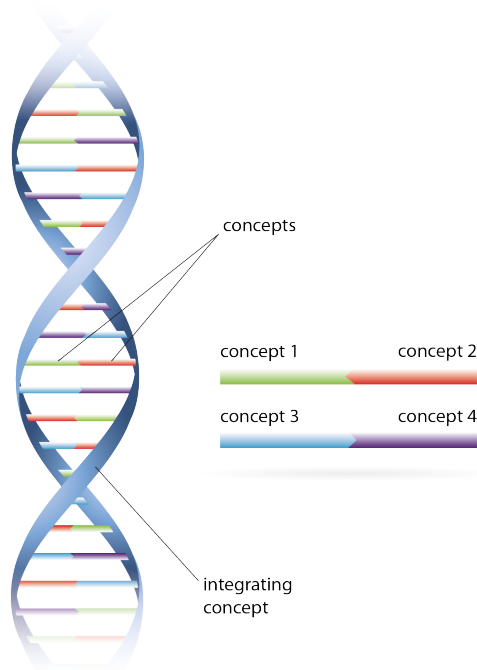


Figure 6: Brand DNA Components

Source: author

The concepts that make up the Brand DNA can be considered memes. Meme, according to Dawkins, “is the cultural counterpart of the gene, a unit of information that passes from person to person. [...] Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperm or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation” (DAWKINS, 2006, p. 192). Memes are to the ‘non-living’ what genes are to living organisms; they are the DNA components of society. As part of the Brand DNA, these memes transfer the characteristics of the brand through its various activities, creating emotional triggers, which generate a relationship between the brand and the consumer.

The application of the Brand DNA Process can occur during the three stages of a brand’s lifecycle: planning, evaluation, or restructuring. In other words, the Brand DNA can either help build a brand in its initial stages, evaluate the brand’s identity as compared to its stated values, or rejuvenate a brand on its decline, amending the existing DNA and adapting it to the brand’s new characteristics. Once the Brand DNA has been determined in collaboration between the designer and the organization, it should be integrated into the design, positioning, mission, name, product, values, sound, smell, taste, and services of the brand. The strategies developed following the establishment of the Brand DNA guide the organization to help apply the DNA in its various activities. It is important for the Brand DNA to be omnipresent and always faithful to the brand’s true identity, thus serving as a tool to create brand elements, which consistently reflect the brand’s deepest emotional attributes.

Since its creation, the Brand DNA Process has been applied in various areas: territories, start-ups, established businesses, etc. The application of the process explained in this dissertation offers a perspective on how the Process can be applied to collectives, cooperatives, or non-profit organizations.

The steps in determining the Brand DNA are outlined in Chapter 5, as these steps are the principal part of the methodology of this research.

### 3 FAVELA FASHION: CONTEXTUALIZING THE CASE STUDY

Having covered the core theory behind the Brand DNA Process, one must next understand the context in which the methodology was applied in this research. The case study involves topics such as fashion brands, territory brands, and *favelas*, since the collective, Costurando Ideais is a collective producing garment, in an environment focused on developing a new identity, the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro. The following subjects will be discussed:

Fashion brands: brand meaning in fashion, the experience economy, and emotional consumption;

Territory branding: developing the concept of marketing places, using territory as a competitive advantage, and its relevance to this research;

*Favelas* as an environment for small businesses: the definition, origin, and history of *favelas*, identity and community engagement, and urbanization and future.

#### 3.1 Fashion Brands

##### 3.1.1 Fashion as identity

The fashion market functions differently than many other sectors. It is based on ephemerality, aesthetics, and individualism (GOMEZ; OLHATS, 2010), where garments worn carry information and transmit messages of identity. The contemporary fashion market is no longer simply about garments; it is “dynamic and survives thanks to society’s hyper-consumerist behavior, which finds happiness through partners offering security and credibility in their lifestyle” (GOMEZ; OLHATS, 2010, p. 19). Many fashion brands advocate particular lifestyles for the consumers to immerse themselves into (OKONKWO, 2007). Lipovetsky (2007) claims that our enthusiasm for brands is nurtured through our narcissistic desire to become a “person of quality”, with purchases that make some feel better than others. However, it is not always a question of comparison. Strong emotional brands in some cases support who we are, and in others “provide a tangible means of transformation into what we aspire to be” (KATHMAN, 2010, p. 108). Furthermore, through one’s appearance, we situate ourselves in society, in respect to others and ourselves (ERNER, 2005), reinforcing this concept of identity through fashion. Expressing oneself through

fashion fulfills man's need to create stories, to himself and to others (ERNER, 2005). These stories are constructed by being able to change one's face and body into an ideal self, through the style we choose and the brands we buy. The contemporary fashion consumer no longer uses the brand simply as a reference, rather he appropriates from it the series of concepts constructed around the product in order to live the 'other reality' offered. Whether through one particular brand, various brands, or no brands at all, the consumer chooses to associate himself with the meanings attached. In this sense, the fashion brand is a catalyst for identity in modern society.

### **3.1.2 Consumption**

The identity one establishes through fashion is not stable. Rather, it is ever evolving like the trends that feed this market. While all sectors require innovation, fashion in particular calls for innovation every semester (in many cases every quarter, and in the fast fashion sector, continually). As the collections pass from the catwalk to prêt-a-porter boutiques, and eventually to mainstream stores, the trends hit their peak and become banal, thus inciting a new cycle to begin. The acceleration of these cycles in fashion is accompanied by the democratization of trends (ERNER, 2005).

The constant innovation and redefinition of what is 'in' and 'out' instigates greater consumption, not only in terms of those wishing to maintain their identity, but also in respect to situating oneself in response to others, as previously mentioned. Renowned economist, Veblen, noted that fashion is the perfect example of ostentation consumption where an object's price can be established according to its beauty (VEBLEN, 1894 *apud* ERNER, 2005). This beauty is manifest not only through the product's beauty but also in the elements associated with it. Playing on the historical Unique Selling Proposition (USP) previously an essential asset to marketing, Ries and Trout (1993) introduce the Irrational Selling Proposal (ERNER, 2005). In this scenario, the success of the product depends on the shape it takes through packaging, logo, advertising, and brand image, while the intrinsic qualities of the product are of secondary importance. Knowing this helps to understand that fashion is not about buying garments or accessories, it is about buying a lifestyle. Lipovetsky states that it is about selling values capable of triggering emotion and ultimately vying to create an



affective relationship with the brand. It is not about leading the consumer in a mechanical or psychological manner, but about establishing a relationship, playing with the audience, and sharing values (LIPOVETSKY, 2007).

### **3.1.3 Brand appeal and strategies**

To build this emotional relationship between the fashion brand and the consumer, the brand must invest in the total experience connecting the individual with the concepts the company communicates. This total experience implies how the product is introduced into the market, the points of sale, architecture, atmosphere, campaigns, and marketing actions (RYBALOWSKI; MAGALHÃES, 2008), using the five senses to create a differential concept and intangible value. Every fashion brand strategy necessitates finding a market differential which anchors its fundamental concepts and allows for constant innovation without losing its identity.

According to its ephemerality, fashion is constantly changing, following, and setting new trends. These trends may be studied through tendency bureaus, or created by the whim of a designer. Depending on the brand's stature, it may be more powerful in influencing the entire market. Fashion brands are at the mercy of what is 'in fashion' (ERNER, 2005). And even when achieving the status of a brand 'in fashion', they run the risk of going out of fashion (ERNER, 2005). For this very reason, fashion brands must not solely abide by trends, but invest in cultivating solid differentiation strategies. Due to its evolving characteristics, this market demands an atypical brand management methodology compared to traditional methods and implicates an equally unconventional approach to communication between the brand and the consumer.

Differentiation and innovation go hand in hand, and in order to be successful, require a creative culture and or technological capacity to not limit themselves to imitating or reproducing what others create (RYBALOWSKI; MAGALHÃES, 2008). Innovation in this regard develops from co-creation between the agents involved in this environment and designers exploiting the evolutionary dynamics of design practices.

Designers should work together with stakeholders and opinion makers to clearly define and understand the core of the

brand, where values and identity are structured. Thereby, those who communicate these values, internal collaborators and third-party professionals alike, such as designers, will be in line and united by the same Brand DNA. Challenged by a market in constant evolution, brands in the fashion industry must invest in defining their identity in order to maintain fidelity and relationships with their customers. Brand DNA offers this possibility in a manner that can be flexibly interpreted, thus enabling a brand to constantly innovate in its new collections and products.

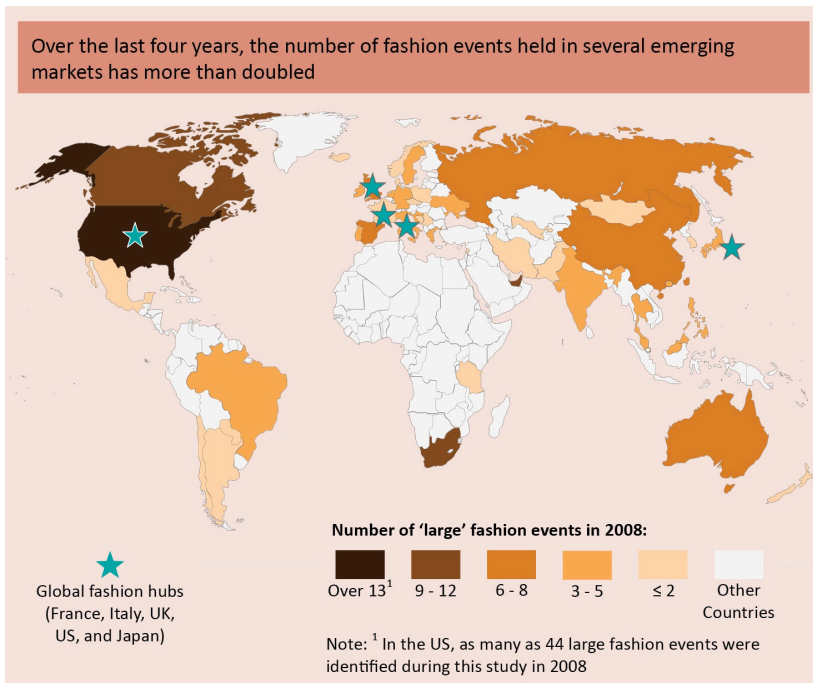


Figure 7: Global Fashion Event Map  
Source: GRAIL RESEARCH, 2009

Some fashion markets such as Paris, Milan, London, New York, and Japan (as seen in Figure 7) are mature, having experienced decades of growth in this milieu. Brands and Designers acting in these fashion capitals have concentrated both on the quality of the garment design as well as the brand identity that accompanies it.

Other emerging brands in locations not as developed in the fashion market (see Figure 8) have not yet reached the stage of heavily investing in brand identity, despite its proven advantage.

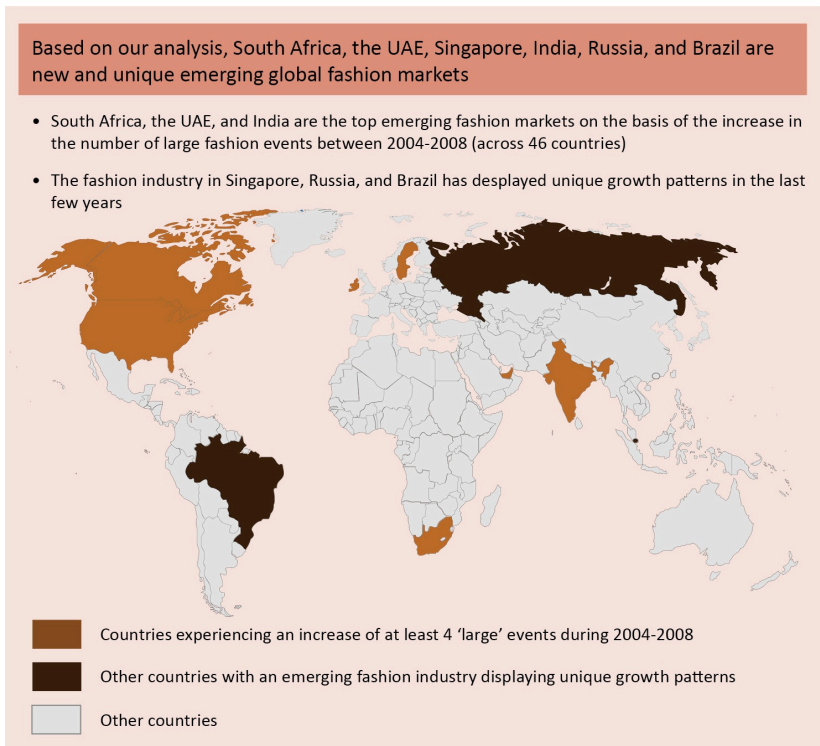


Figure 8: Emerging Fashion Markets  
Source: GRAIL RESEARCH, 2009

### 3.1.4 Fashion in Brazil

Brazil in general has become a mecca for designers in many fields, as the magazine *Wallpaper* explains:

From the electric sprawl of São Paulo to the beaches and boutiques of Rio, Brazil is adding cultural tone to its new economic muscle and building on established strengths. Young architects redefine tropical modernism, while designers, as ever, work wood in remarkable ways. Fashion adds a new sophistication to bold strokes. (COMPTON, 2009, p. 133)

Design is surging everywhere in this country where expression is a central part of culture. Foreigners look to Brazil for a fresh perspective in art, architecture and fashion. Many designers are proud of Brazil's identity, no longer bringing or copying European trends (DUARTE, 2009). As the country develops into one of the world's major economies, there has been a "flourishing of large events receiving significant visibility in the national media during the last decade or so" (LEITÃO, 2007, p. 203). Events such as São Paulo Fashion Week and Fashion Rio have also been increasingly covered in international media. Since its beginning in 1996, São Paulo Fashion Week has grown exponentially now attracting more than two thousand journalists alone (DUARTE, 2009).

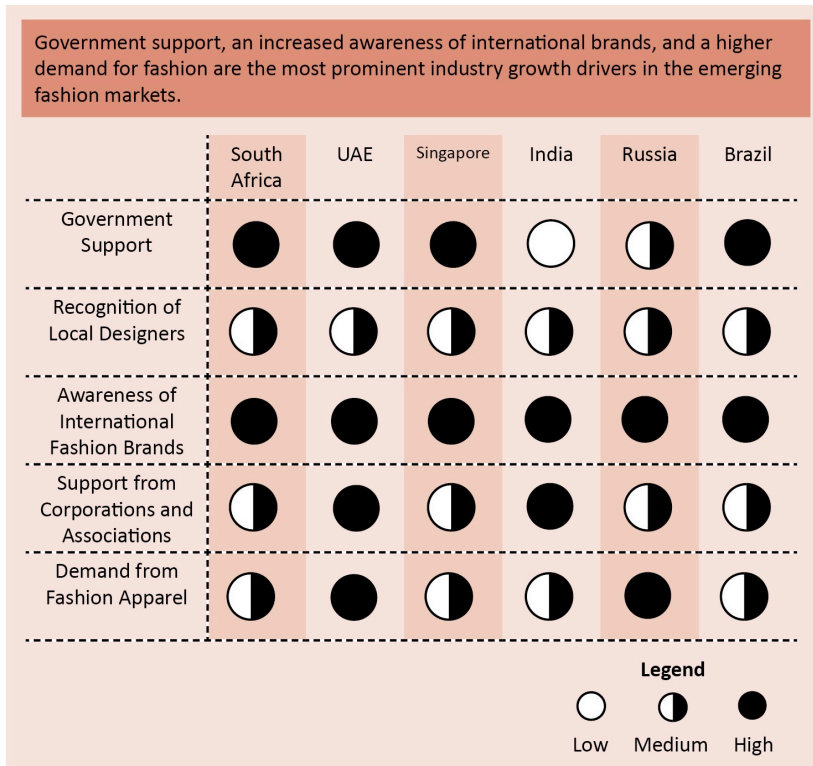
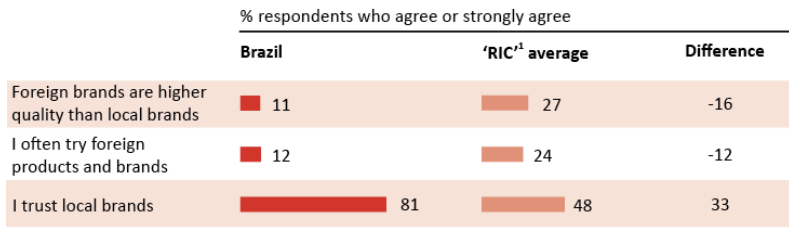


Figure 9: Emerging Fashion Markets - Key Growth Drivers  
Source: GRAIL RESEARCH, 2009

For decades, Europe has been the reference and birthplace of major fashion trends. Certainly this is still the case, however, new actors are immersing as key players in the industry. Brazil is one such actor, demonstrating expressive figures in its garment industry (LEITÃO, 2007). “The Brazilian participation in international fashion fairs and events marks a specific moment in the process of constituting and legitimating a ‘Brazilian fashion’ and a ‘Brazilian dressing style’ in search of its own share in the global market” (LEITÃO, 2007, p. 204). While still far behind the European leaders in fashion (Paris, Milan, and London), Brazil proposes a different perspective: one of Latin American style.

The Brazilian consumer has also grown increasingly connected to fashion, slowly creating a fashion culture (DUARTE, 2009). In 2006, an overwhelming majority, 81%, of Brazilian consumers stated that they prefer and trust domestic brands over international brands (MCKINSEY, 2007).

### Local vs foreign brands



<sup>1</sup> RIC = Russia, India, China.

Source: 2006 McKinsey survey of apparel-shopping attitudes and behavior of 300 women in each country (in these markets, women are primary influence on clothing purchases for the entire family)

Figure 10: Local vs Foreign Brands

Source: MCKINSEY, 2007

They are also avid shoppers who look forward to shopping (80% of consumers, according to a survey by McKinsey (2007)) and spend more on shopping each year (Figure 11). “Brazil is the most attractive apparel market for reasons of demographics and demand. Great potential for international retailers. Its consumers spend USD 402 annually on apparel – six times more than average Chinese consumers” (KEARNEY *apud* GRAIL RESEARCH, 2009).

Yet, this same study shows that the Brazilian consumer does not yet credit brand names as a primary influential factor in the

decision process in fashion purchases. The explanation behind this observation can perhaps be linked back to the lack of investment in branding techniques in many Brazilian fashion brands.

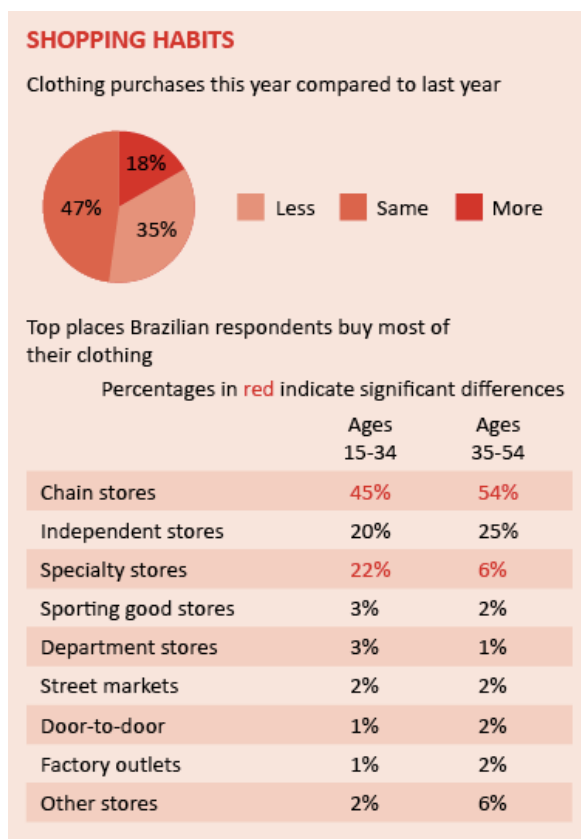


Figure 11: Brazilian Shopping Habits  
Source: COTTON INC, 2011



Figure 12: Purchase Drivers

Source: Cotton Inc, 2011

Rio de Janeiro, in particular, has become a hub for talented designers inspired by the very culture of the city. “Rio is a young fashion capital, one proud of its beach culture and the scorching designer styles it inspires” (COPPING, 2010). Its style generally takes its influence from casual and beachwear, evoking cheerfulness through its use of bright colors and usually emphasizing the importance of the carioca body. Events such as Fashion Rio and Rio-a-Porter now gather worldwide attention and renownedness.

In addition, Brazil is preparing for two major sporting events that have previously had repercussions on the fashion industry in other host countries. Comparing the impact of the World Cup in South Africa to the upcoming sporting events in Rio and Brazil, Bruno Medeiros, of the retail group Inbrands, states that the Brazilian “fashion industry is set to take advantage. [...] The fashion from the provider will really benefit from this synergy” (MEDEIROS *apud* COPPING, 2010). Executives at the Reuter Luxury and Fashion Summit stated that Brazil was “once a country associated with the slums known as *favelas*, [and now] is on its way to becoming a new engine of growth for the luxury industry” (WENDLANDT, 2011).

Yet behind the surging luxury market is also a fashion market emerging from the very slums so notorious to Brazil.

A brand born from the Rocinha *favela* that has been able to invest in its brand identity and break through to the catwalks of Fashion Rio and abroad, is the cooperative COOPA-ROCA, or

Rocinha Seamstress and Craftwork Co-operative Ltd. Commencing as a handful of seamstresses working with recycled fabric, the cooperative has grown into successful fashion brand selling to the wealthy elite of Rio, in addition to signing contracts with major clothing stores such as C&A (HOPENOW, 2010). The secret to their success, they say, is creating high quality goods, training of the seamstresses, and keeping in mind their target consumer. Founded and coordinated by Maria Teresa Leal, COOPA-ROCA seeks to develop partnerships, often leading to media coverage and expositions worldwide (FONDATION PPR, 2010). Even amongst the media frenzy and high demand, the cooperative stays loyal to its mission statement and continuously reaffirms that it hopes to “provide conditions for its members, female residents of Rocinha, to work from home and thereby contribute to their family budget, without having to neglect their childcare and domestic duties” (COOPA-ROCA.org.br, 2004). By claiming this position as a point of differentiation, the cooperative forges an emotional bond with its consumers, who choose to associate themselves with the COOPA-ROCA brand and objectives.

The project Rio Economia Solidária (RIO ECOSOL) put forth by the Secretary of Economic Solidarity Development in Rio de Janeiro (SEDES), works with entrepreneurial projects in the communities of Santa Marta, Complexo do Alemão, Cidade de Deus, and Manguinhos. The projects produce clothing, accessories, and art, created from diverse materials, each varying in style. Projects surging from *favelas* often lack the financial resources and infrastructure to be able to brand their products. In an effort to fulfill its mission, RIO ECOSOL aids in providing a collective showroom of products produced by those of the communities. This showroom displays the work to potential buyers, whether individuals or large businesses. In addition, the SEDES organizes solidarity fairs in each of the communities, enabling the collectives and cooperatives to showcase and sell their work within the *favela* and to passersby (PSF SANTA MARTA, 2011).





Figure 13: Flyer for the Solidarity Fair Hosted by Rio ECOSOL  
Source: PSF SANTA MARTA, 2011

Not only do these efforts create an opportunity for the collectives to expose, and thus value their work, RIO ECOSOL also promotes each project through its various means of communication – newsletters, flyers, posters, website (CAVALCANTI, 2011).

RIO ECOSOL thus carries out a few branding activities for these projects. While, ideally each project should invest in nurturing its own brand image, the circumstances of a brand emerging from a *favela* do not always allow for such investment.

### 3.1.5 Exoticism

Brazilian fashion and fashion created in the *favela* share an important point in common. Clearly they share many influences and differ in terms of their history and message. Yet what creates much of the intrigue for the two is the outsider's perspective. More than garments simply produced in different areas, these fashion brands communicate something different than what the general public is used to, something genuine about its origin. "The exotic product seems to be particularly apt at stirring the imagination, allowing the consumer to experience through it, even if only imaginatively, little-known landscapes, peoples, worlds and words" (LEITÃO, 2007, p. 228). This differentiation seen by the outsider is known as exoticism, which can be defined as the acknowledgement of the existence of the other, but is not limited to geographical distance (LEITÃO, 2007). While there are different types of exoticism (geographical, temporal, and sexual), the one of interest in this study is that of ethnic and cultural difference manifest by geographical divisions. Brazilian fashion is seen as culturally different to foreign consumers, whereas fashion from *favelas* is culturally different to other Brazilians, even those who reside within close proximity.

Consuming goods from a distinct culture involves an exchange of knowledge concerning the 'other'. It shows a "contact and overlapping between different worlds. The exotic is not the absolute unknown; it emerges from the tension between known and unknown, familiar and distant" (LEITÃO, 2007, p. 215). Exoticism distinguishes itself in this way from racism, as it creates a positivation of the 'other'. The 'other's' "customs, life styles, values, and production are not only worthy of esteem, but of coveting" (LEITÃO, 2007, p. 207).

Using the concept of exoticism in Brazilian fashion or fashion from *favelas* can help not only promote the garments, collections, or brands, but also bring two previously distinct communities closer together through understanding and incite greater interest into each territory.

## **3.2 Territory branding**

### **3.2.1 The concept**

Territory branding is a concept which brings differentiation to nations, cities, and communities, allowing them to market themselves for tourism, business, investment, or exportation desires (ANHOLT, 2007). Its role is similar to traditional branding, however implicates factors such as politics, economics, and territorial history. Design plays a crucial role in the success of a territory's identity. The designer working in this area, "creates value on a macroeconomic level, improves the competitive edge of a country in the international competition by developing exports and favoring technology transfer, and can help the restructuring of an economic sector in regional economic policy" (BORJA DE MOZOTA, 2003, p. 88-89).

Various terms have been used to describe this particular application of branding, such as place branding, territory branding, and Competitive Identity. When introducing Competitive Identity, Anholt (2007, p. 27) states, "Every act of promotion, exchange, or representation needs to be seen not as an end in itself but as an opportunity to build the country's overall reputation". While in his argument he speaks of countries, the entire Competitive Identity theory applies to nations, cities, and regions (ANHOLT, 2007). Furthermore, Anholt (2007, p. 29) claims that, "Competitive Identity, like a magnet, has three properties: it attracts (consumers, tourists, talent, investors, respect, attention); it transfers magnetism to other objects, [...] and it has the power to create order out of chaos." In order to carry out these three facets, branding of places requires the cooperation of many actors in the common objective of the territory. The development and implementation of a place brand must involve the key stakeholders of the place (VAN GELDER, 2008). Table 3 outlines the actors potentially involved.

### Major Actors in Place Marketing

---

#### LOCAL ACTORS

##### Public sector actors

1. Mayor and/or city manager
2. Urban planning department
3. Business development department
4. Tourist bureau
5. Convention bureau
6. Public information bureau
7. Infrastructure managers (transportation, education, sanitation)

##### Private sector actors

1. Real estate developers and agents
2. Financial institutions (commercial banks, mortgage banks, pension funds, etc.)
3. Electricity and gas utilities
4. Chamber of commerce and other local business organizations
5. Hospitality and retail industries (hotels, restaurants, department stores, other retailers)
6. Tour packagers and travel agencies
7. Unions
8. Taxi companies
9. Architects

#### REGIONAL ACTORS

1. Regional economic development agencies
2. Regional tourist boards
3. County and state government officials

#### NATIONAL ACTORS

1. Political head of government
2. Various ministries
3. National unions

#### INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

1. Embassies and consulates
2. International chamber of commerce

Table 3: Major Actors in Place Marketing

Source: KOTLER, 1993, p. 34

### 3.2.2 Territory image

Some territories have invested in creating a visual identity to increase the attractiveness of the territory for tourism and business. The most internationally recognized example of territory branding through a visual identity is that of New York. The popular “I Love NY” logo, created in 1977 by Milton Glaser and currently managed by Empire State Development, was conceived to increase tourism to New York State (THE BEAT, 2009).



Figure 14: I Love New York Logo  
Source: THE BEAT, 2009

The logo has been increasingly applied to T-shirts and accessories, and often in unauthorized situations, sold in areas with high tourism affluence, which has lead to its association to New York City, instead of New York State, as intended. Having recognized this issue, Empire State Development, with the agency Saatchi & Saatchi, relaunched the logo to firstly increase tourism to New York State, and the association of the logo with the state, and secondly protect the logo from proliferating amongst counterfeit goods. In 2008, in a campaign called “Another Reason I Love NY”, the objective was to communicate that “New York State offered a different, inherently New York kind of adventure that gave them ‘another reason’ to explore the State that is home to the City” (SAATCHI & SAATCHI, 2009).

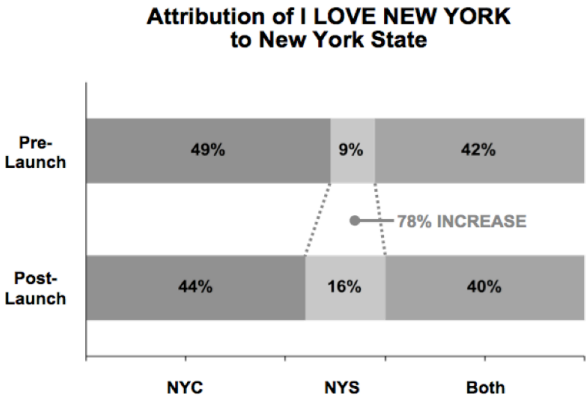


Figure 15: Attribution of I LOVE NEW YORK to New York State  
Source: Saatchi & Saatchi, 2009

The result was an increase in association of the logo “I Love NY” with New York State, as well as an increase in tourism and interest in New York State and New York City. Another component of the relaunch campaign was “a new authentication program to protect its brand and legitimate brand licensees from the onslaught of unlicensed and counterfeit I LOVE NEW YORK products in the marketplace” (THE BEAT, 2009). Investing in protecting the image of this territory, whether through protecting the rights of the visual identity or the image that has been associated to it, is proven effective through this case study. The “I Love NY” brand continues to be one of the most recognized icons internationally.

In other circumstances, territories may benefit from special events in which the territory is able to call attention to its identity; such is the case with the emblems designed for the Olympic games and the FIFA World Cup, for example. The emblem designed for the Rio 2016 Olympic games embodies many traits associated with the city of Rio de Janeiro.



Figure 16: Rio 2016 Olympic Games Logo  
Source: Rio2016.org, 2011

The agency Tátil Design, responsible for the design of this emblem, created a design that represents in essence passion and transformation, representing the “passion that unifies all Brazilians in organizing the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games [and the] transformation in the pride of creating a new reality for progress” (RIO 2016, 2011). In addition, the emblem symbolizes four communications pillars that outline the scope of its expression: captivating energy, Olympic spirit, exuberant nature, and harmonious diversity. Each pillar speaks of the characteristics of the city and people of Rio de Janeiro. The official website describes each

pillar through words and images as demonstrated in the table below.

<p><b>CAPTIVATING ENERGY</b></p> 	<p><b>CELEBRATION</b> Celebrate each conquest. Share friendship. Captivate the world with a unique rhythm, composed of partnership, beauty and creativity. The brand of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games is energetic and expressive. It celebrates life with passion and extends a warm friendly welcome, giving the rest of the world a memorable image of Rio de Janeiro and Brazil.</p> <p><b>OPTIMISM</b> Transform the present and the future. Reflect the creative force that fuels our desires and aspirations, believing in a positive and empowering vision of the future that strengthens our self-esteem and allows us to reach even further.</p>
<p><b>OLYMPIC SPIRIT</b></p> 	<p><b>ACHIEVEMENT</b> Going beyond your limits, overcoming challenges with joy, drive, motivation and energy. The Rio 2016 Olympic Games brand is a living example of transformation through sports. Its energy is contagious, mobilizing people and expanding opportunities and horizons. It promotes and fosters Olympic values — respect, friendship and excellence — in our daily lives.</p> <p><b>EXCELLENCE</b> The Rio 2016 Olympic Games brand balances spontaneity and commitment with quality, lightness and attention to details. It knows that all that is truly unique requires a combination of inspiration and refinement. A creative, yet careful approach, capable of writing an exciting and unique story.</p>
<p><b>EXUBERANT NATURE</b></p> 	<p><b>INSPIRATION</b> The exuberant nature, of Rio and its Cariocas, of its scenery and its people, is reflected in the Rio 2016 Olympic Games brand. It's a mirror of a living scenario, framed by the vibrant nature and human warmth of a city that lives joyfully and likes to share its sky, its ocean, and its happiness.</p> <p><b>SUSTAINABILITY</b> The Rio 2016 Olympic Games brand derives its shapes and colors from nature's wisdom, discovering its essential elements. It knows that the future consists of the present and, therefore, awakens in each of us a desire to transform. It believes in the power of interdependence among people, ideas and actions. It understands that promoting a more thriving, conscious and sustainable culture is the biggest legacy for our planet and the future.</p>
<p><b>HARMONIOUS DIVERSITY</b></p> 	<p><b>UNITY</b> Rio 2016 is a brand that believes in diversity — of ideas, of ethnicities, of people and cultures. It knows that true wealth lies in the harmonious blend of different influences and origins. In one single embrace, it extends a warm welcome and celebrates the encounter. It stimulates the commitment and participation of all around a common ideal.</p> <p><b>YOUTHFUL SPIRIT</b> The Rio 2016 Olympic Games brand is driven by light and positive energy. It expresses an easygoing way of life, the contagious spirit of youth, full of energy and enthusiasm that attracts and inspires people of every generation. It is a catalyst for the transformation of the Olympic Movement. An invitation to engage and participate.</p>

Table 4: Pillars of the Rio 2016 Brand  
Source: Rio2016.org, 2011

As can be seen through this table, the Olympic committee has chosen to highlight Rio de Janeiro's assets and hope for change through this brand. It has also remained faithful to the Brazil brand, recalling similar forms and colors. The Brazil brand logo represents: curves (like the sinuous mountains, waves, riverbeds in Brazil's landscape); joy (as a characteristic of the Brazilian people); brightness (similar to the exuberance of the people, cuisine, and nature in Brazil); mix of culture and races; and modernism (in terms of infrastructure and services) (MINISTRY OF TOURISM *apud* CARDOSO, 2011).



Figure 17: Brazil Brand Logo  
Source: AQUARELA2020, 2009

Beyond the graphic image that can be created to represent or promote a territory, another important element of the image produced of a territory is the people themselves residents of the territory. As Anholt (2007, p. 75) states, "the people are the brand". People, in many ways, are what determine the territory's brand image: either through the entrepreneurship or skills of the territory's residents or the outsiders passing through for business or leisure. Both of these groups contribute to the image that is developed and associated with the territory. Kotler (1993, p. 141) defines a place's image as "the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a people have of a place". Many territories already have an image based on its perception by people within and outside of the territory. Just as in traditional branding, one must care for the brand identity in order to form the ideal brand image. As a differentiating factor, "creating and managing an appropriate destination image (or brand image) and destination personality (or brand personality)



[has] become vital for effective product positioning” (HOSANY, 2006, p. 641).

According to Kotler (1993), there are four components that contribute to a place’s image: place as character, place as fixed environment, place as service provider, place as environment and recreation. Numerous strategies have been developed to help improve places in these four aspects.

### 3.2.3 Strategy

In order to improve a place’s image, the place must design the right mix of community features and services through community development and urban design.

Levels of Place Marketing

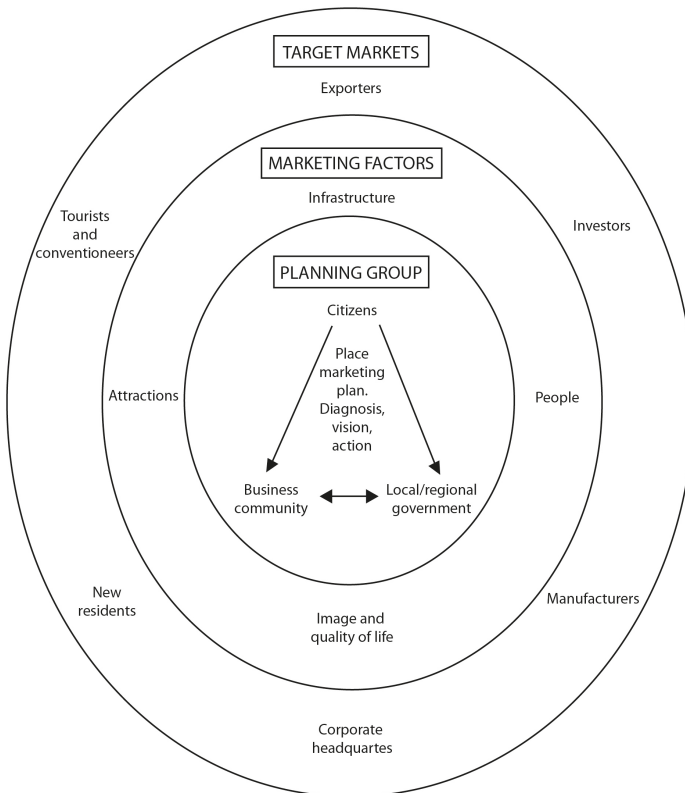


Figure 18: Levels of Place Marketing  
Source: KOTLER, 1993, p. 19

To ensure the success of a place brand, characteristics such as unity, diversity, initiative, and experimentation should be considered constructive elements in creating an identity (VAN GELDER, 2008). Partnership and leadership, vision and strategy, appraisal and creativity, and “on brand” implementation are factors that influence the success of the brand development exercise (VAN GELDER, 2008). This task requires work on three levels, as shown in Figure 18.

The strategies that are implemented to address these areas must begin at the essence of the community—its people—since “place development is spurred by entrepreneurial people and organizations” (KOTLER, 1993, p. 328). Those wishing to improve a place’s image and all those who are part of this image should engage in constant amelioration through training and projects. As Kotler (1993, p. 20) states, “a place’s potential depends not so much on a place’s location, climate, and natural resources as it does on its human will, skill, energy, values, and organization.” These aptitudes must be oriented towards approaches that will aid in place development, notably community development, urban design, urban planning, economic development, and strategic market planning. However, one must note that a place is not only a business setting whose image is solely constructed from within the territory walls. It should “transform itself into a seller of goods and services, a proactive marketer of its products and its place value” (KOTLER, 1993, p. 20). A place can consider it has succeeded in building a strong brand identity when its stakeholders (citizens, workers, and business firms) “derive satisfaction from their community, and when visitors, new businesses, and investors find their expectations met” (KOTLER, 1993, p. 18).

### **3.2.4 Tourism**

The strategies and areas discussed above aim at improving a place’s identity. Even when ameliorated however, the general public may not have changed its perception on the place’s image. A manner in which a place can improve its image is by encouraging tourism. By increasing the flow of visitors, a place will benefit economically and superficially. It is an opportunity for people to come into contact with the reality of a place, most often more pleasing than the imagination. In addition tourism enables a dialogue between

residents and visitors. The perceived character of the people will also affect the place's image in the tourist's mind (KOTLER, 1993).

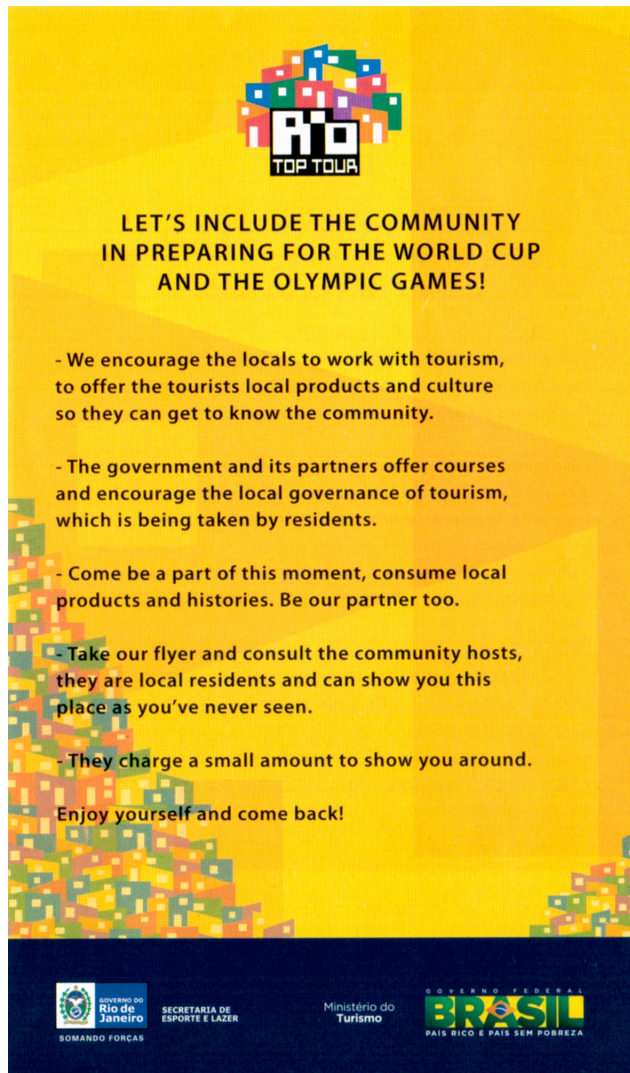


Figure 19: Favela Tourism Flyer

Source: Distributed by Rio Top Tour, Secretaria de Turismo, Esporte e Lazer

Yet, there is a certain division between residents in favor and against attracting additional tourism. Factors such as damaging the environment, crowding facilities, and giving rise to low paying jobs, have refrained from some residents welcoming increased tourism (KOTLER, 1993). However, even without general acceptance of increasing tourism, a campaign to attract visitors can aid in improving the territory's image.

Even if the destination is too expensive, too inaccessible, too small or too environmentally sensitive to accept large numbers of visitors, the channel of tourism marketing can be a valuable way to broadcast the country's image and reputation for foreign audiences: a kind of "vicarious visit". These audiences may, as a result of their favourable impression of the place, be more inclined to buy products from the country that carry some of its magic, consume services that are delivered by the people who have been so favourably presented in the tourism promotion (ANHOLT, 2007, p. 89).

### **3.2.5 Relation to this study**

Territory branding is addressed in this study on the precept that the collective Costurando Ideais is a group formed from within its community and contributes to the transformation of its image. The group has benefited from Santa Marta's branding efforts, bringing attention to the collective through articles (e.g. Marie Claire Brasil), tourism, and fairs. Identifying Costurando Ideais' Brand DNA and improving its visual communication may aid in bringing additional attention to the community and in turn ameliorate its image as well.

As a territory develops, it passes through various stages in order to be able to market itself. Two years after its pacification, freeing Santa Marta from drug trafficking, the *favela* is finally able to focus on business strategies.

**Three Generations of Economic Development Marketing**

	Objectives	Methodology	Underlying Marketing Rationale
First Generation (Smokestack Chasing)	Manufacturing jobs	Luring facilities from other locations	Low operating costs Government subsidies
Second Generation Target Marketing	Manufacturing and service jobs in target industries now enjoying profitable growth	Luring facilities from other locations Retention and expansion of existing firms Improving physical infrastructure Improving vocational training Public/Private partnerships	Competitive operating costs Suitability of community for target industries Good quality of life (emphasis on recreation and climate)
Third Generation (Product Development)	Preparing the community for the jobs of the 1990s and beyond Manufacturing and high-quality service jobs in target industries expected to enjoy continuing growth into the future	Retention and expansion of existing firms Spurring local entrepreneurship and investment Selective recruiting of facilities from other locations More intense public-private partnerships Developing technology resources Improving general and technical education	Prepared for growth in the contemporary worldwide economy Competitive operating costs Human and intellectual resources adaptable to future change Good quality of life (emphasis added on cultural and intellectual development)

Source: John T. Bailey, *Marketing Cities in the 1980s and Beyond* (Chicago, American Economic Development Council, 1989), p. 42. Used with permission of American Economic Development Council.

Table 5: Economic Development Marketing  
Source: KOTLER, 1993, p. 77

According to table 4, there are three generations that categorize the stature of a place's development (KOTLER, 1993). Santa Marta's community can be considered as part of the second generation, where businesses are developed, training sought, and infrastructure improved. The group, Costurando Ideais, has actively participated in Santa Marta's economic development by creating business opportunities, providing vocational training, and improving the quality of life within the community.

### **3.3 *Favelas* as an environment for small businesses**

#### **3.3.1 Definition and characteristics**

The context of this case study is particularly different compared to other applications of the Brand DNA Process, requiring a historical and situational review of the setting. The collective studied was founded and continues to act in the *favela* of Santa Marta in Rio de Janeiro. Since *favelas* are often associated with stereotypes and prejudices, a brief overview will aid in contextualizing the research project.

Defining '*favela*' is a subject of debate considering that its definition is dependent upon the social position of the person or group defining it (BURGOS, 2009). The commonly accepted political definition of *favela* is often similar to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme definition of a slum ('*favela*' being the direct translation of 'slum' in Brazilian Portuguese). The 2003 Global Report on Human Settlements states that a slum is

... a contiguous settlement where the inhabitants are characterized as having inadequate housing and basic services. A slum is often not recognized and addressed by the public authorities as an integral or equal part of the city. (UN-HABITAT, 2002c *apud* UN-HABITAT, 2003)

Accentuating upon this definition, the report describes key characteristics of slums. Generally slums are characterized by lack of basic services, substandard housing or illegal and inadequate building structures, overcrowding and high density, unhealthy living conditions and hazardous locations, insecure tenure, irregular or informal settlements, poverty and social exclusion. The following table further develops these traits.

Characteristic	Indicator	Definition
Access to water	Inadequate drinking water supply ( <i>adjusted MDG Indicator 30</i> )	A settlement has an inadequate drinking water supply if less than 50% of households have an improved water supply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>household connection;</li> <li>access to public stand pipe;</li> <li>rainwater collection;<sup>1</sup></li> </ul> with at least 20 litres/person/day available <i>within an acceptable collection distance</i> .
Access to sanitation	inadequate sanitation ( <i>MDG Indicator 31</i> )	A settlement has inadequate sanitation if less than 50% of households have improved sanitation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public sewer;</li> <li>septic tank;</li> <li>pour-flush latrine;</li> <li>ventilated improved pit latrine.</li> </ul> The excreta disposal system is considered adequate if it is private or shared by a <i>maximum of two households</i> .
Structural quality of housing	a. Location	Proportion of households residing on or near a hazardous site. The following locations should be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>housing in geologically hazardous zones (landslide/ earthquake and flood areas);</li> <li>housing on or under garbage mountains;</li> <li>housing around high-industrial pollution areas;</li> <li>housing around other unprotected high-risk zones (eg railroads, airports, energy transmission lines).</li> </ul>
	b. Permanency of structure	Proportion of households living in temporary and/or dilapidated structures. The following factors should be considered when placing a housing unit in these categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>quality of construction (eg materials used for wall, floor and roof);</li> <li>compliance with local building codes, standards and bylaws.</li> </ul>
Overcrowding	Overcrowding	Proportion of households with more than two persons per room. The alternative is to set a minimum standard for floor area per person (eg 5 square metres).
Security of tenure	Security of tenure ( <i>MDG Indicator 32</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proportion of households with formal title deeds to both land and residence.</li> <li>Proportion of households with formal title deeds to either one of land or residence.</li> <li>Proportion of households with enforceable agreements or any document as a proof of a tenure arrangement.</li> </ul>

Note: i 'Well' and 'spring' are considered acceptable sources in the original MDG indicator but are almost certain to be polluted in urban areas.

Sources: adapted from UN-Habitat, 2002a, 2002b.

Table 6: Slum Characteristics  
Source: UN-HABITAT, 2003

Generally *favelas* are defined by what they are not and what they do not have, as compared to the dominant model of the city

(OBSERVATÓRIO DE FAVELAS, 2009). Recognizing that such a definition, and many others similar to the above, may undermine *favela* residents, an organization was created in 2003 with the intent to research, consult, and provide knowledge on *favelas* and urban phenomena. The resulting *Observatório de Favelas* has raised discussion on a more adequate definition. Following the 2009 seminar *O que é favela, ao final?*<sup>3</sup>, the organization proposed a four-part definition based on a *favelas* different aspects, or profiles.

Socio-political profile	A territory where the incompleteness of policies and State actions are historically reoccurring.
Socio-economic profile	A territory where market investments are precarious, especially in housing, finance, and services.
Socio-urbanistic profile	A territory of buildings predominantly characterized by auto-construction, disregarding normative standards of the State.
Socio-cultural profile	A territory with expressive presence of blacks ( <i>pardo</i> <sup>1</sup> and black) and indigenous descendents, making up plural identities on a material and symbolic level.

Table 7: Conceptualization of *favela*

Source: Translated from OBSERVATÓRIO DE FAVELAS, 2009, p. 52

These different descriptions of *favelas* attempt to represent the complexity and diversity of this type of territory in contemporary urban spaces (OBSERVATÓRIO DE FAVELAS, 2009).

### 3.3.2 History

In Rio de Janeiro, *favelas* have spread immensely as a result of lack of affordable housing and suitable mass transportation. Originally, *favelas* were seen as “an extremely functional solution to many of the problems faced by its residents, [providing] access to jobs and services, a tightly knit community in which reciprocal favors mitigated hardship, and above all, free housing” (PERLMAN, 2002, p. 17). The population within these communities continues to

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<sup>3</sup> What is favela afterall?



increase along with the “socio-spatial segregation of Rio’s poor” (UN-HABITAT, 2003, p. 225). This segregation has led to exclusion and prejudice in many aspects. This discrimination has been commonplace throughout the history of *favelas*, where “conventional wisdom placed *favelas* as a symbol of social and economic segregation, the main locus of poverty, a place where moral degradation mixes with poor sanitary conditions, a dark dystopia” (FREIRE-MEDEIROS, 2008, p. 62). In a comparative study between two time periods studying *favelas*, Perlman (2004, p. 15) states that,

There has been a clear upgrading of infrastructure in the communities and an overall increase in household goods and appliances. But the simultaneous increase in the gap between rich and poor is vividly reflected in the sense that these individuals feel more distant from the world of *asfalto* (the formal life of pavement) than they did thirty years ago.

Urbanization projects funded by the city and state of Rio de Janeiro are attempting to integrate these communities into the city, providing equal resources to *favela* residents. The Programa Favela-Bairro heads urbanization efforts, improving structures, sanitation, roads and pathways, accessibility, as well as promoting social programs of health and education (UN HABITAT, 2003). This tendency, and efforts by the UPP to pacify *favelas* and free them from drug trafficking, has led to tourism in *favelas*, finally placing them on the city tourism map (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 2011). Programs such as Rio Top Tour organized by the Rio tourism ministry provide the opportunity for favela residents to guide tourists through their community, bringing the reality of *favela* life into view.

### **3.3.3 Identity and contribution to culture**

*Favelas* are commonly stereotyped as homogeneous, yet they are present in different geographical sites (plains, hills, on riverbanks, and along lakes), and reunite hundreds to thousands of residents, with different infrastructure and urban landscapes (houses or buildings), and different levels of violence and presence of public power. These varied social and environmental characteristics constitute *favelas* as considerably diversified settings. Since each *favela* is distinct in size, activities, and demographics, each has developed a distinct identity.

While the infrastructure and economic standpoints of *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro may invoke misfortune, there is a peculiarity in the community environment that has brought these people together.

Perlman (2004, p. 17-18) noted that *favela* residents

... do not have the attitudes or behaviors supposedly associated with marginal groups. Socially, they are well organized and cohesive and make wide use of the urban milieu and its institutions. Culturally, they contribute (their music, slang, soccer, and samba) to the “mainstream,” are highly optimistic, and aspire to better education for their children and improved homes and living conditions.

Many *favelas* are characterized by a strong sense of community. Committed to surviving as a community and territory, they have created rules of solidarity, contrasting with the external image of exclusion. In doing so, *favelas* have become a place of reception, solidarity, resistance, and preservation of culture (STROZEMBERG, 2009). The residents have claimed their communities as cities within the city, “an illegal city within the legal one, *favelados* stake out a territory of their own, its clearly marked identity omnipresent” (VALLADARES, 2007, p. 20). Some go as far as to say that *favelas* are a reinvention of the city; a city that is reborn, rejuvenated, laidback, and undoubtedly joyful (DUARTE, 2009).

Although historically persecuted and many times victimized by crime, drugs, and violence, residents of *favelas* have learned to channel expression through artistic or athletic means. There is a “paradoxical relationship [...] between the stigmatization of *favelados* and the broader exoticization and commodification of a mythic *favela* culture” (FREIRE-MEDEIROS, 2008, p. 3). *Favela* dwellers have held strong in their eagerness to be integrated into the city. From their fight have risen art, music, film, sports, fashion and other key activities now central to Brazilian culture. The rise of samba schools and resident associations are the strongest manifestations of this fight and affirmation of identity (BURGOS, 2009). An extensive production of documentaries, movies, photography, music, books, and academic theses speak of *favelas*, not in terms of their deficiencies, but of their qualities as a place of experience and identity (DUARTE, 2009). As Perlman (2003, p. 23) poetically described, *favela* residents “have the aspirations of the bourgeoisie, the perseverance of pioneers, and the values of patriots

... what they do not have is the opportunity to fulfill their aspirations”.

Today, the *favela* is on the national scene and in the public agenda of the government (STROZEMBERG, 2009). There are still many divergent opinions considering their integration into the city and various interpretations of the image of the *favela*, but their aspirations of sustainability and solidarity, have led members of the *favela* to initiate projects within their communities. As the city of Rio de Janeiro continues to develop and invest in improving the infrastructure of its favelas, opportunities are arising for residents to take on challenges, innovate, and make their projects concrete. Many of these endeavors necessitate a certain aid in branding and design to increase the perceived value of the products or services they offer, in addition to augmenting the consumer confidence and loyalty in their regard.



## 4 BRAND DNA MEETS FAVELA FASHION

Design has the power to work for social change. It is a tool that enables communication and sensitization. When applied towards branding, it can help create strong brands, not only in commercial sectors. Kotler and Zaltman predicted this phenomenon in 1971, stating, “the application of commercial ideas and methods to promote social goals will be seen by many as another example of business’s lack of taste and self-restraint. Yet the application of the logic of marketing to social goals is a natural development and on the whole a promising one” (KOTLER; ZALTMAN, 1971, p. 3). In working with entrepreneurial projects in developing communities, designers can contribute to the success of the projects and aid in the growth of the community.

Designers and design researchers can do a lot to empower social innovation for sustainability. They can feed the social conversation (i.e., the interplay between social and technological innovation) with visions and proposals. They can also collaborate with diffuse social innovators (to help them conceive and manage their initiatives) and with technologists, entrepreneurs, and policy makers (to develop products, services, and infrastructures to make the most promising initiatives accessible and replicable, thereby opening new markets and economic opportunities). (MANZINI, 2010, p. 10)

Branding efforts both in regards to the territory of each *favela* and the projects within them will help each other reciprocally to improve the image and development of both. Anholt states that “such a strategy can make a huge difference to both the internal confidence and the external performance of a [territory]” (ANHOLT, 2005, p. 11).

Work with the fashion collective in Santa Marta exemplifies how design and branding can participate in the advancement of entrepreneurial projects in developing communities. Since the Brand DNA Process is a design methodology that helps establish corporate identity, it can orient these projects and help them sell not only their products, but their values as well. “The problem in establishing the desired corporate identity is that many of the available methods were developed for the positioning of product brands rather than the corporate brand” (VAN RIEL; BALMER, 1997, p. 348), yet the Brand DNA Process examines the brand at the

corporate level, digging deep into the brand's characteristics. According to Van Riel and Balmer, "the ideal way of setting up an effective corporate identity programme [requires]:

Problem recognition;  
Development of strategies;  
Execution of action plans; and  
Implementation." (VAN RIEL; BALMER, 1997, p. 349)

Through its interviews, SWOT analysis, Creative Event, and creation of strategies to be applied, the Brand DNA Process addresses these requirements, and allows the organization to implement these strategies, taking full ownership of their Brand DNA. Since the process is co-creative, the Brand DNA is constructed in conjunction with the stakeholders, avoiding a simple delivery of strategies. Instead, the strategies are built from a common understanding of design and branding principles according to the organization's values, activities, and market.

Previous to this research, the Brand DNA Process had been applied to Brazilian fashion brands, leading to creations of brand identities and rebranding strategies (GOMEZ; OLHATS, 2010). Considering the characteristics of the fashion sector, these brands particularly benefited from this methodology. The contemporary fashion market, which has long surpassed simple garment, achieves credibility today through the approximation of the consumer with his fashion lifestyle. Understanding that competition is a dynamic concept, organizations must create instruments that ensure that the solutions found do not become static, or mere formulas to obtain differentiated products. With rapid changes in demand, creating an environment of constant evolution, the differential of a fashion brand lies in its management, which allows for developing products and processes capable of incorporating the necessary innovations for maintaining differentiation (RYBALOWSKI; MAGALHÃES, 2008). As such, every fashion brand strategy necessitates finding a market differential, which anchors its fundamental concepts and allows for constant innovation in line with trends, without compromising its identity. Differentiation in a fashion brand can stem from many factors, such as: product quality and intrinsic attributes (product differentiation), distribution (differentiation of channels), and promotion (differentiation of services, people, and image) (RYBALOWSKI; MAGALHÃES, 2008). The importance of the definition of the Brand DNA is essential for whichever company in

the fashion sector, regardless of size or business amplitude. By establishing the Brand DNA, organizations put their differential characteristics into words and images, generating a clear vision of brand identity and facilitating product, channel, and service differentiation.

This process, as will be seen with the methodology carried out, enables the organization to look deeper into its core characteristics, and sets the tone for an innovative atmosphere. “By observing the evolutionary dynamics of design practices, and understanding the relation with the cultural expressions of the context in which it operates, one can comprehend the innovation process as a result of co-creation between the agents involved in this environment” (GOMEZ; OLHATS, 2010, p. 154). Branding, however, is but one part of the process in aiding Costurando Ideais establish a strong and successful brand. Yet, as a preliminary step, may aid in bringing attention to the eagerness of such collectives to ameliorate and compete amongst other brands in the fashion sector. The Brand DNA Process applied in this case study brings together the seemingly distinct worlds of design, fashion, and *favelas*, and provides insight onto how they complement each other.





## 5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Statement of the problem

To explore the development and impact of the Brand DNA Process, this research project has focused on the collective Costurando Ideais. Prior to choosing this particular collective, the *favela* was chosen as the setting for this case study. As referred to in the literary review, the Brand DNA Process aims at unveiling a brand's deepest emotional attributes in order to communicate these through the Brand's DNA. While every brand is capable of discovering its DNA, experience in the *favela* has demonstrated expressively strong emotions from projects built from within the communities. These emotions and the relentless eagerness for creative expression present in *favelas* incited the search for a project wishing to develop its brand identity in this setting.

Costurando Ideais proved to be the ideal subject, considering its history and stature within the *favela*, its activity, and its need for aid in developing its brand identity. The problem that guided this research through this case study is Costurando Ideais' lack of a strong and strategic brand identity, impeding its communication, commercialization, and credibility.

The group formed in 2000 through a common urge of women wishing to gather funds to purchase sewing machines and other material to create garments. By uniting, these women of the community, originally 4, were able to acquire a locale to work, the necessary material to begin their projects, and their first clients. The collective has benefitted from funding from investors and partnerships with Viva Rio, the French consulate in Brazil, Proderj, Ibase, and Idaco. It has produced items to sell via the catalogue Asta<sup>4</sup>, and participated in artisanal cooperatives organized by FIRJAN (Projeto Arte-Indústria da Federação das Indústrias do Estado do Rio de Janeiro) and Rio ECO-SOL.

The collective was founded in the *favela* Santa Marta, in the Botafogo neighborhood of Rio de Janeiro. Its headquarters is currently situated in the intermediate part of the steep hill on which this *favela* rests and has performed fashion shows in the

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<sup>4</sup> Rede Asta is a network of which promotes the work of artisans through a catalogue and a door-to-door sales method, promoting the inclusion of women in the productive sector and transforming productive community groups into sustainable businesses.

community's samba school and arena. The presence and activity of this collective is widely known within the *favela*, especially amongst the female population.

The map below is distributed to tourists entering Santa Marta. Costurando Ideais is the only commerce, other than markets, to be listed on the map, demonstrating its importance within the community.

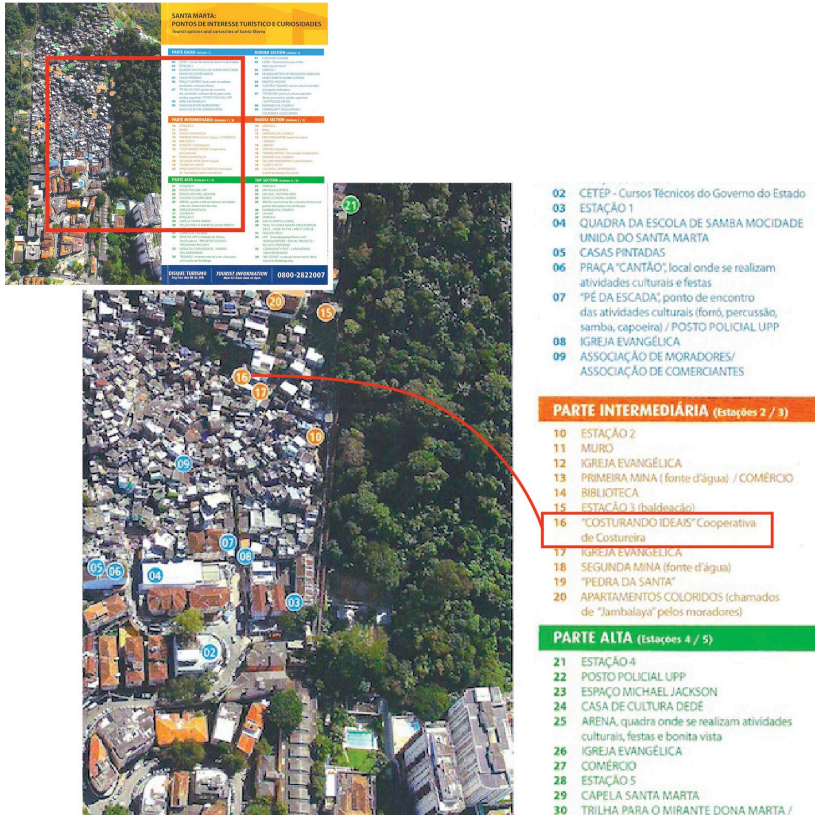


Figure 20: Detail of Santa Marta Tourist Map

Source: Distributed by Rio Top Tour, Secretaria de Turismo, Esporte e Lazer

The collective's principal objective is to provide an atelier where women of the community can work together creating garments and accessories. They produce bags, jewelry, and clothing made of diverse recycled materials and work with techniques such

as crochet and embroidery to embellish their work. Costurando Ideais' prime materials are the scraps of fabric left by established fashion companies. The group also recycles garments, transforming them into new pieces. The items they produce are varied, ranging from clothing to purses and accessories. Its style is young and casual with potential clients being teens and young adults in and outside of the *favela*. The members of the group benefit from free lessons and training from the SENAI, the national service for industrial learning, and other volunteer organizations, enabling them to acquire the skills necessary to produce various items in a professional manner. The core members have even had brief training in business administration. Yet they lack knowledge of the advantages of design and branding in creating a successful brand. This lack has led to an unclear brand identity, reluctance to plan collections, decreased motivation in the corporate culture, and thus unattractiveness for the consumer. A bit more than ten years have passed, yet the group's way of working has not changed, and its ability to attract and maintain customers remains a struggle.

The brand's visual identity consists mainly of the logo below, in conjunction with bright colors in tones of reds and oranges, and decorative elements that are reminiscent of sewing activities, as can be seen on their website.



Figure 21: Costurando Ideais Logo

Source: <http://www.internetcomunitaria.rj.gov.br/costurandoideais/>



Figure 22: Screenshot of Costurando Ideais Website

Source: <http://www.internetcomunitaria.rj.gov.br/costurandoideais/>

While the collective is strongly attached to this visual identity, using the Brand DNA Process will aid in determining if it is entirely representative of the brand's DNA and core values. To strengthen its projects with a solid brand image, the identity, positioning, and orientation of the collective ought to be defined.

## 5.2 Methodology

### 5.2.1 Overview

In order to address the objective of determining the collective's Brand DNA to aid in establishing a stronger brand identity, this research project consists in applying the Brand DNA Process in the *favela* Santa Marta. The methodological approach used is a case study where the brand of the collective Costurando Ideais will be studied. The analysis will consist in qualitative research answering the research question and objectives in a holistic manner based on the available information and cross

verifying with additional sources. The role of the researcher is non-participant, although the researcher guides the methodological procedure in a co-creative process to establish the Brand DNA.

The methodology consists of eight steps, which have been developed through an analysis of tools used in design, marketing, business, and parallel disciplines. These steps engage the designer in the process by allowing him to understand the current context and future goals of the organization.

Brand DNA Process

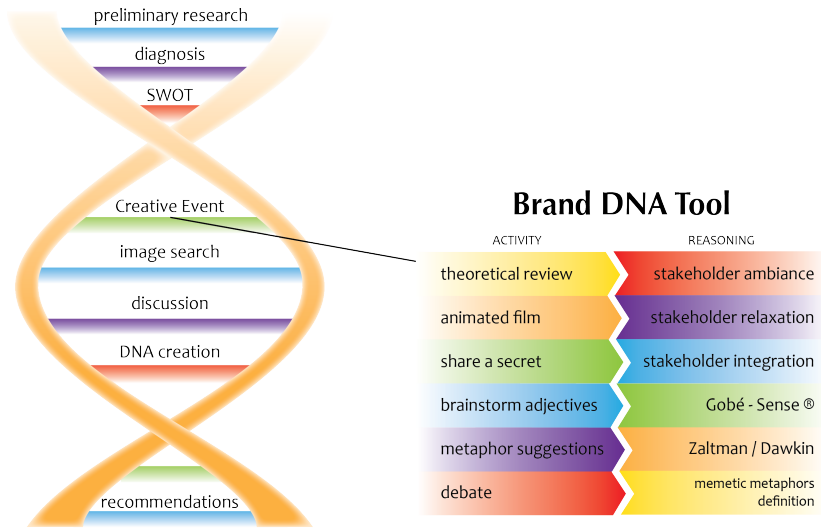


Figure 23: Brand DNA Process  
Source: Author

Each step of the Brand DNA’s application in the case study with Costurando Ideais was carried out as follows.

5.2.2 Preliminary research

The preliminary research phase is conducted on behalf of the designer independent of his involvement with the organization. The objective is to identify the mission, vision, and other information relevant to the organization. This step also determines how the Brand DNA will be applied, whether in construction, validation, or renovation of the Brand DNA. This is based on the brand’s current stature: an emerging brand without a constructed image, an existing

brand, or a declining brand in need of revival. In the case of Costurando Ideais, it was determined that the Brand DNA Process would be applied in order to validate the brand's DNA, based on the brand's ten year status, establishing it as a mature brand, not yet on its decline. The preliminary research was conducted principally online, by collection and reviewing of archived articles speaking of the brand and its work. Articles from magazines such as Marie Claire Brasil (FERNANDES, 2010), and blogs such as Beleza Pura ([www.belezapura.org.br](http://www.belezapura.org.br)) and Portal Anna Ramalho ([www.annaramalho.com.br](http://www.annaramalho.com.br)) provided an understanding of the collective's background, and useful information for use in the diagnostic phase.

Through this preliminary research phase, Costurando Ideais' mission was identified as: To provide a workspace, equipment, material, and training, for members of the community to come together by creating garments and accessories. While the vision was determined to be: To construct new ideals for the community through sewing. Neither the mission nor the vision were explicitly communicated on the collective's site. Yet, it is primordial for the mission and vision to be clearly defined and understood for the organization to be successful in innovation.

### **5.2.3 Diagnosis**

The diagnosis consists in gathering primary source information and accounts of the brand history, image, and actions. The term diagnosis is used in various fields, from medicine (the identification of diseases by the examination of symptoms and signs and by other investigations (COLLINS DICTIONARY, 2011)), to the marketplace (thorough analysis of facts or problems in order to gain understanding and aid future planning (COLLINS DICTIONARY, 2011)), to games (predicting the results through such analysis). In this methodology, the diagnosis uses the information gathered through the preliminary research, and defines the expectations and perceptions of the company, through semi-structured interviews, brand briefs, debates, conversations, and observations with the community of the organization. Knowing the brand history, whether short or extensive, through the leaders or founders of the company is indispensable to understanding the structure of the brand (GOMEZ; OLHATS, 2010).

The general and primary interview aims to give an understanding at how the organization works. It is generally conducted with the current managers of the brand and/or company, or, as in this case, with one of the founders of the collective. In order to be familiarized with the operations of the collective, a series of questions were prepared to guide the interview. The interview however is by no means limited to these questions, and should be done in a relaxed, unstructured environment, thus prompting additional questions and topics.

- What is the history of the collective Costurando Ideais?
- What is the history of your (the stakeholder's) participation in this collective?
- What are the principal activities?
- Who is involved?
- Who is part of your target audience?
- How are the activities financed? Does the collective make revenue, or is it non-profit?
- How do you see the future of Costurando Ideais?
- Tell me about the identity of the collective. Who created the designs? What are its meanings?

This interview contributed relevant information about the collective. The most important data collected explained the group's history and dynamics, highlighting that it has been in existence for ten years, with two of the founding members still at the core of the present-day activities. The interviewee provided information about the donations and sponsorships received in the past from NGOs and private associations, and how the collective has divulged information about themselves and their products through fashion shows, fairs, and website. The collective has made some efforts to create a brand identity through items such as tags and posters.

However, as can be seen, the design elements are not consistent, whether in terms of the logo, font, colors, or patterns used. Figure 24 and Figure 25 display the tags used on the garments, using two distinct design languages, in terms of font, logo, and graphic elements.



Figure 24: Costurando Ideais  
Clothing Tag  
Source: Costurando Ideais



Figure 25: Costurando Ideais Price Tag  
Source: Costurando Ideais

On the otherhand, figures Figure 26 and

Figure 27 display an invitation and banner communicating the commemorative fashion show of the collective's ten-year anniversary. These communication tools make use of the same type of visual language, yet are not consistent with the visual elements present on the tags, nor the website.



Figure 26: Invitation to Commemorative Fashion Show  
Source: Costurando Ideais





Figure 27: Banner Informing of Commemorative Fashion Show  
Source: Costurando Ideais

Furthermore, the interviewee revealed that the collective does not generate enough revenue to be able to remunerate its seamstresses. Therefore the dedication of each member is limited since each individual exercises a profession, rendering Costurando Ideais a recreational activity for most. The hope for the future, however, is for seamstresses to be fully remunerated so as to dedicate themselves entirely to the project. At the pace and rhythm the collective moves currently however, this goal seemed unattainable for the interviewee. The interview ended with an explanation of the next steps of the Brand DNA Process and where further cooperation would be necessary, such as in providing contacts of whom to conduct the next interviews.

In addition to the general interview, the Process requires interviews with two or more opinion-makers. The interviews with the opinion-makers are less extensive and aim to discover how the organization is perceived, if its image matches the intended identity, and if there are any evident weaknesses or opportunities that can be worked on. Opinion-makers are considered as those actively involved with the brand and influential in the decision making process, such as key employees, partners, and important customers. For the purpose of validating Costurando Ideais' DNA, the residents of Santa Marta that participate in the projects of the collective are

considered the opinion-makers in addition to collaborators and sponsors indicated by the permanent members of the group. Five interviews with opinion-makers were conducted to obtain a global view of the collective's image from different perspectives. The majority of the interviews were conducted in person, in an informal setting, increasing the flow of dialogue and the exchange of ideas. The interviews followed a basic outline of questions to be answered, but were open to discussion and left ample room for modification of the questions.

- What is your involvement with the collective Costurando Ideais?
- What is your perspective on the actions (strategy, image, evolution of the group) Costurando Ideais carries out?
- In your opinion, what are the strong and/or weak points of the group?
- In your opinion, do you believe they are on the right track?
- How do you see the future of Costurando Ideais?
- If the brand Costurando Ideais were a person, how would you imagine him/her?

Those interviewed for this case study were: the communications manager, a Rio Top Tour tourguide and resident of Santa Marta, a close friend and aide in preparing fashion shows, the founder of *Brazilidade - Turismo e Experiência em Comunidade* (a partnering project) and resident of Santa Marta, and a member of the sponsoring organization, FIRJAN. These interviewees were chosen based upon their involvement with the brand and recommendation from the collective founder as integral to the group's functioning.

The interviews conducted in person were not recorded due to the sensibility of *favela* residents and their reticence to share information with possible journalists. As such, care was taken to create an environment of trust and confidence. Each interviewee was informed that the information shared would be used strictly for academic purposes. Those who were not available for in-person interviews were contacted through email with the above list of questions.

The data collected was varied and sometimes contradictory, depending on the interview, revealing an unclear image and message, yet overall aided in establishing strengths and weaknesses of the collective. This information, in turn was organized tabulated

in a SWOT analysis to afterwards help establish operational strategies.

#### 5.2.4 SWOT analysis

Based on the diagnosis, the designer uses a SWOT analysis to contextualize the brand's position and problems in terms of time and space. A SWOT analysis is a business tool which organizes a company's internal strengths (S) and weaknesses (W), and foreseeable trends of opportunities (O) and threats (T) in the external environment (KOTLER, 2008) expressed directly (through a brand brief) or indirectly by the diverse groups of stakeholders and evaluated according to their perspectives. "The SWOT analysis is a basic strategic analysis tool that is perfectly adaptable to design management strategy. It synthesizes the company's situation in its context and determines the key success factors to consider in design" (BORJA DE MOZOTA, 2003, p. 241).



Figure 28: SWOT Analysis  
Source: Author

The traditional brief can be amplified through the diagnostic interviews, yet a SWOT analysis, after discussion and validation with the brand leaders, contributes to tracing a more realistic brand profile. The analysis for Costurando Ideais rendered the SWOT analysis below:

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiated proposal</li> <li>• Location (different)</li> <li>• Talent</li> <li>• Partners and sponsors</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location (vulnerable, infrastructure)</li> <li>• Time dedication of the seamstresses</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Name (Ideais v. Ideias)</li> <li>• Visual identity</li> <li>• Dissemination</li> <li>• Exposition of products</li> <li>• Capacity to produce in large quantities</li> <li>• Coherence in the design of collections</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online sales</li> <li>• Souvenir shop in Santa Marta</li> <li>• Diversified product offering</li> <li>• Involvement with Rio Top Tour, Fashion Rio, N Design</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth of other fashion collectives</li> <li>• Lack of sales</li> </ul>

Table 8: SWOT Analysis for Costurando Ideais

Source: Author

In the Brand DNA Process, the SWOT analysis guides the designer to a better understanding of the brand's problems and how they can be solved. It aids as an analytical tool to qualify the information received during the preliminary research and diagnostic phases. It also serves as a tool that prepares the designer for the Creative Event by hinting as to which assets the brand should highlight in its DNA, thus enriching the debate.

In addition to the traditional SWOT analysis, a cross analysis of the findings is carried out to elaborate strategies based on this data. The analysis crosses the internal factors with the external,

analyzing how the external trends can help or hurt the internal qualities of the company, and how these can be approached.

S-O	Competitive advantages	When market opportunities are taken advantage of to leverage strengths, aiming at attaining a competitive advantage
S-T	Capacity of defense	When strengths are applied to reduce or annul the impact of market threats against the company
W-O	Needs for re-orientation	The market opportunities can be the solution to fight off the company's weaknesses
W-T	Vulnerabilities	The worst scenario. Minimizing the impact of threats against the company's weaknesses

Table 9: Crossed SWOT Analysis

Source: LOGO (Laboratório de Orientação da Gênese Organizacional)

Using the SWOT analysis displayed in Table 8, the following crossed SWOT analysis was created for Costurando Ideais:

Strengths- Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using its location in Santa Marta as an advantage, Costurando Ideais can invest in actions targeted towards tourists, through souvenir items and partnership with Rio Top Tour.</li> <li>• Being in Rio de Janeiro, a city with increasing ties to fashion and upcoming sporting events, the collective must concentrate on amplifying its product line, as well as design and collection planning.</li> </ul>
Strengths-Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding financial investment from partners can help the collective survive even in times of slow sales.</li> <li>• Continual apprenticeship, channeling talent toward clothing production, will bring an advantage to Costurando Ideais compared to other fashion collectives.</li> </ul>
Weaknesses- Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investing in ameliorating its visual identity will prepare the collective to present its products in upcoming events.</li> <li>• Adopting new sales channels, online or souvenirs, will bring profit to compensate the seamstresses and invest in necessary resources.</li> </ul>
Weaknesses-Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lack of sales will have serious repercussions on the dedication of the seamstresses and the resources necessary for production.</li> <li>• Without coherence between the pieces, the collections become vulnerable against new competitors.</li> </ul>

Table 10: Crossed SWOT Analysis for Costurando Ideais  
Source: Author

The strategies developed in the crossed SWOT analysis will later aid in the final stages of the Brand DNA Process to establish recommendations of strategies the brand should engage in.

### 5.2.5 Creative Event

The fourth phase is the core of the Brand DNA Process, where the designer and stakeholders of the organization come together to establish the brand's DNA. The Creative Event applies the Brand DNA Tool in a relaxed and creative environment. It is a reunion with the organization's stakeholders (internal and external actors with an interest or concern in the brand), to apply the Brand DNA Tool, a tool composed of multiple emotional brainstorming sessions. It results in a semantic map or mood board, which enables a visualization of the concepts present in the company's genome (GOMEZ, 2009).

The Creative Event for this case study took place in the Costurando Ideais atelier in Santa Marta with thirteen stakeholders present: founding members, seamstresses, the communications manager, models, members of NGOs, and close friends. Seven of these participants were residents of *Favela* Santa Marta. Those present had been contacted through email, phone, or personal visits in the *favela* to participate in validating the brand's DNA.

As shown in Figure 23 (page 89) the Brand DNA Tool commences with a relaxation phase including a theoretical overview of the process, viewing of an animated film, and the sharing of a secret to set the environment, break out of the norm, and bring the stakeholders together. These exercises aim to remove mental blocks and prepare the participants for brainstorming. Preparing the stakeholders through these three activities enables them to remove mental blocks and stimulate their creativity. It creates an environment without inhibition and criticism, to open the mind and lose fear of committing errors, letting ideas flow and suspending their evaluation for a moment (KING; SCHLICKSUPP, 1999).

In order to adapt to the technology, equipment, and environment at hand, these three activities took a different form in the Creative Event in the *favela*. The normal procedure makes use of a Power Point presentation designed to guide the audience through the process. Since such technology was not available, an oral adaptation of the presentation was conducted. The content of the

theoretical presentation is generally academic, referring to design resources and authors to provide support for the process. Yet considering the audience at hand and their lack of knowledge in branding and design disciplines, the presentation was adapted into a more interactive version. In this adaptation, it was found that using examples facilitated understanding and was more constructive to the objectives of the Brand DNA Process and Creative Event in particular.

The presentation commenced with an overview of branding. In order to demonstrate that branding and brands are not limited to logos, an exercise using the five senses and audience participation revealed the multifaceted nature of branding. Each brand could be determined from one of the five senses and was chosen for its particular characteristic designed to differentiate that specific brand from the rest. The examples used were as follows:

Sense	Example	Characteristics
Sight	BIC® razor	Minimalist structure Orange and white color
Sound	Tic Tac®	Sound of candy hitting walls of plastic packaging
Taste	Coca-Cola®	Signature taste
Touch	Mentos®	Shape of packaging: single line of candies in paper tube wrapping
Smell	Maggi®	Strong seasoning smell

Table 11: Examples of Branding used in Creative Event  
Source: Author

Members of the audience volunteered to identify the different brands of some of the products, while others, such as the box of Tic Tac®s incited group participation due to its high recognizability.

Following the brief introduction into branding, the participants then prepare themselves for the brainstorming exercises. In most Creative Events, a short (approximately five



minute) animated film is then shown to relax the participants and allow them to return to a youthful state where creativity is abundant. It is asked that the participants refrain from interpreting or analyzing the film, simply relax and enjoy. However, as a result of the lack of public access to the adequate technology required, in the *favela*, a different activity was planned. With the use of pencil and paper, each stakeholder participated in drawing an “Exquisite Corpse”. This activity, originally conceived by Surrealist artists in the early 1920s, consists in drawing a corpse in four parts between different people (KIMMELMAN, 1993). The first person is to draw a head and neck, fold back the paper, and pass to the next person who is to draw the torso and arms without visualizing the previous part of the drawing, and so on. The final product is often a bizarre mixture of influences that results in a monstrous creation. The cartoon drawing incited creative thinking, integrated the group, and generated trust and confidence since each drawing was hidden.



Figure 29: Results of the Exquisite Corpse Activity

Source: Author

The third activity, meant to integrate the participants, traditionally consists of dividing into groups of 6 to 8 people where each person shares a secret. While during this event, each group was instructed to do so, the participants sensed difficulty in sharing a secret. Therefore, the activity was adapted to participants sharing dreams and aspirations. While no formal research was done to prove so, it is suspected that this reticence is due to the conservative nature of *favela* residents, afraid of sharing something perhaps revealing, just as was the case for the interviews. The effect

was similar to the sharing of secrets, in that the participants sensed a feeling of integration and trust within their groups.

Being in this relaxed state, participants then commence the brainstorming activity. Jones (1992, p. 47) describes that brainstorming is “a conversation to which everyone is expected to contribute freely and in which criticism is ruled out”. The aim of this step is to quickly stimulate ideas without inhibition. For the brainstorming session to be successful, some rules are laid out: no criticizing, avoid finding solutions, work towards a goal, control time, relax, and be democratic (AMBROSE; HARRIS, 2011). Each group is given 20 minutes to create a list of 200 adjectives not specifically pertaining to the brand’s attributes. The words are recorded and aid in selecting the five descriptive adjectives of the Brand’s DNA. The difficulty found in this activity was the unequal division of groups, which unintentionally created one group of mainly *favela* residents and another of non-*favela* residents. The difference was evident in the ability to generate adjectives quickly and consistently. While slower than expected, each group attained nearly 200 adjectives. Once the 20 minutes have elapsed, each list of words is read aloud. The participants are asked to listen to the words, allowing them to select four to six adjectives that describe the brand’s attributes and emotional ties. The list of words is meant to guide the participants, but their choice of adjectives is not limited to these lists. The words must represent the differential qualities of the brand. Degrippes and Gobé (2007) suggest that an adjective brainstorming explores the variety of meanings associated with the brand, identifying core brand attributes that contribute to an emotional attachment to the brand. This phase, in conjunction with another following the debate, is inspired by the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique which asks participants to propose metaphors representing the brand image, or other aspects of an organization, and associate images to these ideas (ZALTMAN, 1995).

Before proceeding to identifying images, the adjectives composing the Brand’s DNA must be selected from the suggestions each participant submitted. All of the words are combined into a single list where they are tallied and similar words are regrouped until about seven or eight words remain as the most popular choices. It is important to determine at this point if the words selected, or their combinations, are differentiating factors of the brand in its sector. If not, the resulting DNA will be generic and will

not describe the uniqueness of the brand. If the words or their combinations are not differentiated, it is suggested to ask the participants to resubmit four to six adjectives, stressing upon the importance of creating a differential DNA.

Finally with a decent list of adjectives to select from, the debate commences. With Costurando Ideais, each adjective was discussed one by one. The initial list of words, written in large letters at the front of the room for all to observe, was:

bonito  
talentoso  
inovador  
irreverente  
colorido  
alegre  
autêntico

Through lengthy debate of each word, determining if the word in question was actually differential and unique to this collective, and if it can be considered as one of the five main characteristics or personality traits of the brand the list was reduced, by combining and altering the initial words. Figure 30 graphically demonstrates the process the words went through.



Figure 30: Resulting Adjectives Following Debate  
Source: Author

At the time of the Creative Event, the final words were close to unanimous and pleased the majority of the participants and most importantly the core and founding members of the collective. “Criador<sup>5</sup>” was chosen to replace “talentoso” and “inovador” since it is expected that any brand should be innovative to succeed, and those working for it talented. “Criador” combined these two words and added an element addressing how the collective creates ideals for *favela* residents. It also creates talent by teaching its members the skills necessary to sew or broider. “Maravilhoso” meaning marvelous regrouped “bonito” (pretty) and “alegre” (joyful). Since Rio de Janeiro is often dubbed “A Cidade Maravilhosa” this word was all the more pertinent. The adjective “colorido” is also reminiscent of the word “alegre”, but in addition refers to the colored fabrics used in many of Costurando Ideais’ designs. As for “autêntico” and “irreverente”, these words remained unchanged. The group felt they were highly descriptive of Costurando Ideais’ DNA. Authentic referred to the collective’s location and spirit. Proud to be from the *favela*, the members choose to embrace this characteristic in their designs and way of working, accepting the participation of any community member. Irreverent described the attitude the collective has, in choosing not to follow consumer trends as defined by *o asfalto* (literally “the asphalt” referring to outside the *favela*). Their work is true to their heart and they move to the beat of their own drum. Lastly, “criador” was chosen as the integrating concept – the concept from which all others stem.

As a combination these words are unique to Costurando Ideais. They define the essence of the collective’s activity, its mentality, and its personality. While these traits were already present, the Brand DNA Process enabled the collective to unveil this deeply rooted Brand DNA.

### 5.2.6 Image search

With the five essential elements of the Brand DNA defined, the Brand DNA Process requires the selection of images that will then be used to graphically display the Brand DNA. The same

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<sup>5</sup> The adjectives are intentionally written in Brazilian Portuguese since oftentimes meaning is lost in translation. The words however can be translated as such: bonito = pretty; talentoso = talented; inovador = innovator; irreverente = irreverent; colorido = colorful; alegre = joyful; autêntico = authentic; criador = creator; maravilhoso = marvelous.

stakeholders present at the Creative Event participate in submitting images corresponding to one or more, or a combination of the concepts. In order to ensure the participation of each stakeholder, and unaware of their technological resources to find and send images via internet, it was considered more prudent to have the participants select the images on site. Magazines, catalogs, and fliers were made available for each participant to select up to five images that represented the DNA. These images were collected and later sorted to find the best combination of images corresponding to the Brand DNA.

### **5.2.7 Discussion**

Yet before constructing the mood board with these images, each participant was contacted individually to respond to the post-Creative Event interview. This interview is administered either in the form of a semi-structured interview or an open questionnaire, and conducted in order to evaluate whether the opinion makers and stakeholders (all participants of the Creative Event) agree with the DNA that was established. The questions abide by the outline defined by Jones on design methods which call for identifying “the design decisions that are to be influenced by replies to the questionnaire” and “the kinds of information that are critical to the taking of these decisions” (JONES, 1992, p. 221). The interview is composed of open response questions, which enable the participants to respond freely. The questions asked during this step were:

- Do you agree with the DNA found during the Creative Event? Y/N
- How did you find the images that coincide with the DNA?
- How do they represent the DNA defined in the Creative Event?
- In the DNA, which concepts could be added or removed?
- How could the collective divulge its DNA – internally and externally?

The participants were contacted to respond to these questions by email, five of which responded.

Stakeholder	Do you agree with the Brand DNA?	Which concepts could be added or removed?	How could the collective divulge its DNA - internally and externally?
1	Yes	Remove "marvelous"	A new logo and brochures to be handed out.  Take advantage of events within the <i>favela</i> by making the brand name present.
2	Yes	Add "mutual collaboration"	-
3	Yes	Add "solidarity" or "cooperation"	Divulge the process that each piece goes through: originating from recycled or donated materials, cooperation together, and stress the local identity. Show that the piece can be more expensive, but that there is a respect for the workers and the environment.
4	Yes	Remove "marvelous"  Add "pretty"	A cultural event that would integrate every form of art within the community: art, artisan work, fashion, gastronomy, music, dance, etc.
5	Yes	None	-

Table 12: Results of the Post-Creative Event Interview  
Source: Author

The results obtained from the interviews are evaluated qualitatively and tabulated quantitatively for a discussion with the top decision makers, at which point the Brand DNA concepts are established. The diversity of responses received during this research project made the analytical process more difficult. All agreed with the Brand DNA, but felt that certain words could be altered. However, through further discussion with the core and founding members, it was decided to maintain this Brand DNA and fortify it through the semantic map and mood board.

### 5.2.8 DNA creation

The Brand DNA Process concludes with the construction of two ‘maps’ that visually demonstrate the Brand DNA found. The semantic map, represented graphically through words and lines that interconnect them, organizes information by categories, tracing individual and collective cognition (COSTA, 2003). The semantic map creates an opportunity to actively participate in a mental exercise that recuperates stored knowledge and concepts, allowing for greater perspectives, sharing, and structuring of knowledge within a group (COSTA, 2003). The semantic map within the Brand DNA Process connects the five chosen adjectives with other concepts discussed during the debate and interviews as well as additional attributes that are key to the brand’s personality and values. The connections enable a creation of meaning in line with the brand’s DNA. Costurando Ideais’ semantic map resulted in:



Figure 31: Semantic Map of Costurando Ideais' Brand DNA<sup>6</sup>

Source: Author

<sup>6</sup> The words in the semantic map can be translated as such (clockwise): comunidade = community; solidariedade = solidarity; colaboração mútua = mutual collaboration; talento = talent; inovação = innovation; moda = fashion; alegria = joy; lindo = beautiful; paixão = passion.

The semantic map provides additional support for each DNA concept, reinforcing these concepts by linking them together in a manner that is easy to comprehend and refer to.

The semantic map goes hand in hand with the mood board, which consists of a map through visual metaphors of the Brand DNA concepts. Presenting the Brand DNA in this format strengthens each concept since images have the power to quickly transmit ideas and information (AMBROSE; HARRIS, 2011). Collecting images together in creating a mood board thus aids in representing various ideas in one location. For the Brand DNA, this mood board is the key reference of the brand's deepest traits and values. It should be used as inspiration in each of the brand's future activities, whether to develop a brand identity, creating communications or marketing campaigns, designing new products or services, or defining strategies in line with the Brand DNA. It serves as a tool for employees and collaborators to work together with a common understanding of the Brand's DNA.



Figure 32: Mood board of Costurando Ideais' Brand DNA  
Source: Author

The mood board designed for Costurando Ideais uses the images found in the Creative Event that most represented the DNA. The collage takes the form of multiple juxtaposed asymmetrical



houses, similar to the collective’s signature pattern used on garments. The colors are vibrant and the images full of movement. Together they are cohesive and visually represent the five DNA concepts that are true to Costurando Ideais, while leaving ample room for interpretation and adaptation.

An element that is added to the Brand DNA report, is the benchmarking of brands that represent the Brand DNA concepts.










Brand DNA Concept	Reference Brands	Description
Criador (Creator)		To be a creator means beginning from scratch and always being attentive to the dynamic rhythm of actuality. Creator refers to creating products, competencies, ideals, dreams...
Irreverente (Irreverent)	  	Irreverent is to have the courage to go beyond expectations and ignore the norms, discovering unusual ways of acting, generating continual innovation.
Autêntico (Authentic)	 	An authentic brand is loyal to its history, tradition, and strategy, creating a strong relation between the organization and all those involved with the brand.
Colorido (Colorful)	 	To be colorful is to communicate happiness, incite diversity, have prismatic thoughts, and detach oneself from the conventional.
Maravilhoso (Marvelous)		Marvelous means to be admired, surprising, and magic, like the city of Rio de Janeiro.

Table 13: Benchmarking for Costurando Ideais  
Source: Author

Benchmarking is a tool that enables one to look to other brands, not necessarily competitors, as references (MARTINS, 2006). These brands have differentiated themselves in these aspects and can help guide the collective in understanding the essence of each concept.

### 5.2.9 Designing and presenting the report

As is customary within the LOGO (Laboratório de Orientação da Gênese Organizacional), the Brand DNA's resulting semantic map and mood board are presented to the organization in the form of a final report, explaining the entire process. The format of this report varies from one organization to the next, being that it should be reflective of the organization's DNA and the first item produced communicating this new DNA.



Figure 33: Costurando Ideais' Brand DNA Report  
Source: Author

Costurando Ideais' report was designed as a foldable poster or unfoldable book on an A3 laminated paper. This format was designed keeping in mind the *favela*'s humid atmosphere and the

atelier's environment. Vibrant colors were used for titles to highlight each step of the process, from the diagnosis to the mood board. Pictures of products and members of the collective added a personal touch to the report. Each part of the report unfolded, unveiling the next step of the process. The reverse side revealed the mood board across the majority of the poster. The intention is for the collective to place this poster on one of the atelier's walls with the mood board visible to all those who enter the atelier.

Concluding the report was a list of recommendations derived from observations throughout the process as well as suggestions as to how to apply the new DNA. The report was handed over to one of the founding members on site in Santa Marta. As an important part of the conclusion of the Brand DNA Process, the report was read together, explaining and rationalizing each step, highlighting the co-creative process that was carried out to arrive at the Brand DNA. The process concluded with an invitation to continue working together to improve the brand identity and apply the recommendations suggested.



## 6 RESEARCH FINDINGS

By applying the Brand DNA Process, through an eight-step methodology, the research question, stipulated in the introduction – How can the collective's (Costurando Ideais') Brand DNA be defined and applied in order to ameliorate its brand image? – was answered, the Brand DNA defined and validated, and strategies developed to apply it. The Brand DNA Process proved to be an effective methodology for unveiling this deeply rooted DNA. It enabled the researcher to actively participate in the process, thus understanding the inner workings of the organization. The process allowed for a complete analysis, using internal and external perspectives and culminating in a Creative Event in which the Brand DNA was extracted. In addition, this research was carried out to address the objectives stated in the introduction:

- Apply the Brand DNA Process to the group Costurando Ideais, validate its Brand DNA, and thus validate the Brand DNA Process as an effective design management methodology;
- Evaluate the Brand DNA Process through its application in the collective Costurando Ideais, in the *favela* Santa Marta;
- Validate the participation of graphic design in the implementation of Brand DNA, through this case study; and
- Highlight the importance of graphic design in the construction of the conscience of identity in an organization.

The research findings below explain how each objective was tackled and their respective conclusions.

### 6.1 Analysis of the Brand DNA Process

Considering the sensitive environment of the case study and the cultural differences between the designer and the collective, the manner in which the Brand DNA Process is composed creates a gradual introduction of the designer into the workings of the organization. The initial interview creates a relationship of trust by being semi-structured and transforming the interview into more of a conversation. It is also during this step that the founders were able to understand the Process and the dedication of the designer. It was important to establish this trust and stress the co-creative aspect of the Process during this step. Through this interview, it was also

made clear, on behalf of the interviewee, that outside help is appreciated as long as it does not dominate the internal operations of the organization. This set the tone for the remainder of the research. Additional efforts were made to accentuate the co-creative characteristic of the research.

The opinion maker interviews provided a multi-faceted perspective of the collective's brand image. By being able to interview many types of opinion makers, from *favela* residents and friends, to seamstresses and members of sponsoring organizations, the information gathered spoke of various strengths and weaknesses of the collective. Including not only those who work for the organization, but also individuals who have financial, emotional, or historical ties to the organization, aids in understanding the big picture. It is through these interviews and the SWOT analysis that follows, that the designer can feel that he or she is in a position of adequate knowledge to assist in establishing the Brand DNA. With Costurando Ideais, feeling this connection with the brand was primordial to leading the Creative Event with confidence and to solicit the participation of the attendees.

Applying the Brand DNA Tool during the Creative Event with Costurando Ideais further established the process as effective in any type of environment or organization. Previously, the Brand DNA Process had been applied to private companies and start-ups as well as territories (GOMEZ, 2010). This case study applied the Brand DNA Process to a different type of organization and setting – a volunteer collective in the *favela*. While some difficulties were experienced, the Brand DNA Process enabled room for change and flexibility. This was especially necessary due to the environment and resources available. As explained in the methodology, various techniques were altered during the Creative Event to adapt to the materials on hand. The adaptations to the presentation, relaxation phase, and sharing of a secret activity did not alter the audience understanding of branding or Brand DNA, nor hinder their ability to relax and trust fellow participants. The alterations to the Brand DNA Tool, while not intended, resulted in positive changes. By not having access to the material required to carry out the usual presentation on branding, an improvised presentation using examples of branding efforts was enacted. Teaching the group by examples, in his way, actually increased understanding and allowed the stakeholders to participate in active learning. This was especially

useful for an audience that had never been exposed to branding or design as disciplines. The second activity, where a short animated film is normally projected, was replaced by the “exquisite corpse” exercise. This stage is intended for relaxation and for the participant to enter a state of youthfulness. This exercise allowed the participants to relax and feel a sentiment of youthfulness in addition to cultivating their creativity, all while drawing and actively participating with fellow stakeholders. The last alteration to the Brand DNA Tool was in fact not an administered change, but a change suggested by the audience. The task was to share a secret with the other stakeholders. Feeling ill at ease, the stakeholders proceeded with the activity but shared their dreams and aspirations instead. The intended result, to create a sense of trust amongst the participants to prepare them for the brainstorming session, did not change. The manner in which it was achieved, however, was different. By sharing dreams and aspirations, the participants engaged in a more positive discussion and were not reticent to share. These modifications proved successful for this case study with Costurando Ideais and may be advantageous to future Brand DNA Process applications.

The step that saw difficulty was in the ability to rapidly generate a list of adjectives. This was due to the homogeneous division of groups, split between *favela* and non-*favela* residents. This, in turn, may have affected the adjectives chosen as part of the DNA, but only on an individual basis (in the 4 to 6 adjectives suggested by each participant). Since the Brand DNA Tool continues with a group discussion to debate which adjectives are most appropriate, this problem was attenuated.

Another factor that did not occur as easily with this case study was the slight discordance amongst stakeholders on the adjectives chosen as the final Brand DNA. In the post-Creative Event interviews, all stakeholders responded positively to whether the Brand DNA represented Costurando Ideais. However, some stakeholders suggested alterations to one or more of the adjectives. This showed inconsistency and that the words chosen in the Creative Event could have been stronger or that there is an unclear vision of the essence of Costurando Ideais on behalf of those stakeholders. The explanation in this case may lie in the fact that these interviews were conducted by email, therefore limiting the possibility for some stakeholders to respond. With the opinion of

each stakeholder present during the Creative Event, the result may have been different. The Brand DNA was maintained after discussion with the core and founding members of the collective. Yet, this issue raised questions as to possible solutions to this problem for future applications. The Brand DNA Process does not yet consist of a rescue route in case of complete discordance with the Brand DNA. The probability of complete discordance, however, is unlikely due to the Process' co-creative nature.

On the other hand, the design of the Process facilitated the creation of strategies and recommendations for the collective to adopt. These strategies evolved from a mutual understanding of the collective's capacities and weaknesses, and how the Brand DNA could best be exploited. The recommendations made for Costurando Ideais addressed the areas that most urgently require attention, and were elaborated keeping in mind the financial limitations the collective has. Some recommendations, for example, require no financial commitment, such as reinforcing the brand name by always using the complete name, Costurando Ideais, instead of simply Costurando. This addresses one of the weaknesses perceived through interviews and discussions where the collective was sometimes called 'Costurando Ideias' (in English, literally 'Sewing Ideas' instead of 'Ideals'). Using the complete brand name would also reiterate the collective's vision which was found to be: To construct new ideals for the community through sewing. In addition, it was recommended that the logo and visual identity of the brand be re-evaluated, taking into account the Brand DNA established. Until this moment, the collective was represented by inconsistent logos, colors, forms, and formats rendering an unclear message and a weak brand identity. The collective should take the opportunity to review their logo, website, blog, tags, and posters to ensure that future communications of the brand coincide with the Brand DNA. Furthermore, in order to attract more customers, by targeting a different audience, creating a permanent space for exposition of Costurando Ideais products would attract tourists of *Favela Santa Marta*. The collective would benefit from the *favela's* new image as a tourist site, as well as contribute to improving the image of the *favela* from an outsider's perspective. Costurando Ideais could thus offer original and unique souvenirs for tourists wishing for different memories of Rio de Janeiro. To accompany this new exposition space, the collective should invest in packaging to



improve the presentation of the products. Packaging, through price tags, protective bags, small shopping bags, and gift boxes, designed reflecting the new Brand DNA would strengthen the brand identity and create a relationship of trust with the consumer. In addition, the packaging could be designed to communicate the collective's values and recall the collective's website to continue constructing this relationship with the consumer. Lastly, while this project limited itself to the construction of the brand's identity, it must be acknowledged that in order for the collective to establish itself as a strong fashion brand, it must increase its devotion to creating coherent collections to ensure a consistency and harmony between each piece. The changes to be made to the collective are not limited to these recommendations. However, beginning with these changes, Costurando Ideais would be able to commence its journey into building a stronger brand. If implemented, these strategies would enable Costurando Ideais to fortify its brand identity and therefore improve its brand image vis-à-vis the public.

With the Process terminated and strategies developed, the final report was delivered to the core members of the collective. This moment revealed the satisfaction of the collective with the final product. The Brand DNA Process was deemed successful in unveiling the brand's DNA and designing a semantic map, mood board, and final report that addressed all aspects of the collective and clearly defined the path the collective should seek to follow.

## **6.2 Implications of graphic design in validating the Brand DNA**

The use of graphic design was an important element in the success of the Brand DNA Process. Design management was used throughout the planning of the process, taking into account areas such as branding, design thinking, and strategic management. Before engaging in the research of this dissertation project, previous applications of the Brand DNA Process with the LOGO used graphic design to improve each step of the process. Modifications, additions, and subtractions were made to the process, keeping in mind the final objective of generating the adequate Brand DNA for each organization.

In applying the methodology with the case study of Costurando Ideais, graphic design was essential to analyzing the collective's brand identity and brand image. With knowledge of

typography, color theory, and form theory, the graphic materials used by Costurando Ideais (price tags, clothing tags, banners, website, and blog) were evaluated as inconsistent and disadvantageous to the collective's objectives, therefore damaging the collective's brand image. Later, with the Brand DNA established, the graphic elements were re-evaluated against the DNA, to prove their inconsistency and suggest alterations.

Graphic design was especially used in the Creative Event. The presentation on branding used examples of brands in which graphic design was a differentiating factor. This enabled the participants to understand the implications of graphic design in consumer society. Likewise, the brainstorming activities and the stakeholder preparation were conceived from an understanding of design management and techniques to incorporate the participants as co-creators of the Brand DNA.

At the conclusion of the Creative Event, participants submitted images that represented the Brand DNA. These images served as visual metaphors that would help build the mood board. In order to create a mood board reflective of the Brand DNA, graphic design tools and techniques were used. A color palette was created from the predominant colors of the images selected, which aided in choosing the font colors for the mood board, semantic map, and final report. The themes present in the images also aided in choosing ludic, yet clean and legible, fonts and formats. In this way, the mood board became itself a graphic design reference for designing the semantic map and final report, as it should be for future creations within Costurando Ideais.

Lastly, knowledge of graphic design management assisted in establishing the strategies and recommendations. By combining the research results with this knowledge, strategies guiding Costurando Ideais towards becoming a stronger fashion brand by building a solid brand identity were made.

### **6.3 The importance of graphic design in brand identity**

The importance of graphic design in constructing a brand identity is made clear in the branding portion of the literary review. While evident for designers, the general public is not always aware of this relationship. This was noted through the interviews and interaction with stakeholders of Costurando Ideais. Many believed that graphic design was useful solely in creating logos and websites.

Efforts were made to teach them otherwise. The importance of graphic design in constructing, not only a brand identity, but the *conscience* of identity in the organization, was highlighted throughout the Process. In the presentation of branding, in the use of branding examples, and in the final report was presented as much more than a simple logo. Stakeholders began to understand that the essence of a brand lies much deeper. Having attained this understanding, they were able to value the importance of Brand DNA.

#### **6.4 Impact of Brand DNA in aiding local development**

While the amount of impact that Costurando Ideais and *favela* Santa Marta benefited from through the application of the Brand DNA Process cannot be directly measured, this process has aided local development in some way. While getting to know the collective, I participated in helping Costurando Ideais prepare for a fashion show partnered with a local make-up brand, by aiding in sewing pieces and preparing outfits for the models. In addition, on a subsequent trip I aided in preparation of the first solidarity fair organized by Rio ECO-SOL. This devotion was not necessary for the application of the Brand DNA Process, but seeing the collective in action did help construct some of the strategies suggested. The Brand DNA Process in itself, on the other hand, also contributed to local development by empowering the collective's brand identity. Incorporating *favela* residents as stakeholders in the co-creative process stimulated the collective's desire to invest in strengthening their brand identity. A greater move in local development would involve applying the strategies recommended, at which point the impact the collective benefited from could be measured and analyzed.

Applying the strategies, however, would necessitate further resources and time. This research project limited itself to the objectives stated in the introduction and addressed these as explained. Having addressed these objectives, one can analyze the success of the Brand DNA Process as a design and branding methodology, thus allowing for other applications of this genre, or development of additional tools to further improve brand positioning based on the Brand DNA encountered.



## 7 CONCLUSION

### 7.1 Summary

Each brand is unique in its personality and values. Its Brand DNA demonstrates its deepest emotional attributes and aids in the construction of a strong brand identity. The Brand DNA revealed through applying the Brand DNA Process in the collective Costurando Ideais is unique to this organization. Applying the recommendations, developed from analysis of the data gathered during the Brand DNA Process and information accrued through the literary review, the collective can ameliorate its brand identity and in turn its brand image. The application of the Brand DNA Process in the *favela* Santa Marta proves the flexibility, adaptability, and strength of such a methodology.

### 7.2 Risks

Applying the Brand DNA Process to such a different milieu presented various risks, in terms of the application process, the security of the location, and the distance of the research subject. The Brand DNA Process had previously been administered by the LOGO with a team of designers in private companies and start-ups. Using the process as a methodology in a currently non-profit, volunteer organization within a *favela* ran the risk of being unsuccessful. The difficulties encountered however were dealt with with sufficient preparation and precaution to ensure the success of the process. Furthermore, the clash of cultures between the designer and the members of the collective initially created a barrier. It was important to approach the collective with comprehension and patience. In order to build a relationship of trust, for example, no interview was recorded. This enabled the participants to share freely. The numerous visits to the *favela* on behalf of the designer also indicated dedication to the project, which reassured members of the collective.

An issue that cannot be neglected, however, is the security of doing such research as a non-Brazilian in the *favela*. While Santa Marta is a pacified *favela* since 2008, apprehension was felt in the beginning. Yet with time and through the construction of relationships with *favela* residents and by participating in events such as the solidarity fair and fashion show, this apprehension

disappeared. On the contrary, a feeling of comfort and trust was developed. The members of the collective and other residents of the *favela* demonstrated a generosity that is unique to these communities.

Finally, being situated in Florianópolis, while the research subject was located in Rio de Janeiro, caused a risk of miscommunication, in terms of means of contact and understanding. Certain moments of miscommunication and difficulty to contact stakeholders were experienced. Yet, frequent visits to Rio de Janeiro were made to facilitate communication, conduct the majority of the interviews, feel the essence of Costurando Ideais, and carry out the Creative Event.

### **7.3 Costs**

These very trips to Rio de Janeiro are the most important costs incurred during this research. Each trip involved transportation, lodging, and nourishment expenses. Considering the elevated cost of each trip, and due to budgetary constraints, only four trips were made. Therefore, each visit was carefully planned in advance to ensure a maximum possibility of interviews and data collection. This also hindered any further research beyond the stated objectives. Once on site, however, the costs were minor. The Creative Event required purchasing of materials to carry out certain activities, such as the branding presentation with products used as examples, writing materials for the relaxation and brainstorming activities, and food and beverages for the coffee break that enables the stakeholders to replenish their energy before the Brand DNA debate.

Another cost incurred was the printing of the final Brand DNA report. As seen with previous projects carried out by the LOGO, building the final report can cost up to R\$400 between packaging, printing, paper, and special material. The report made for Costurando Ideais was not as costly since its format was more economic and required no packaging. The result was a report more adequate to the environment in which the collective acts and reflected the brand's DNA.

### **7.4 Limitations**

Before commencing this research, some limitations were made, as discussed in the introduction. The case study limited itself

to studying the brand identity of the collective and unveiling its Brand DNA. While venturing into other neighboring *favelas* to study similar collectives or the extent to which Costurando Ideais is known would have been helpful to understand the collective's competition, this project focused on the application of the Brand DNA Process. Therefore, the research was mainly conducted in the *favela* Santa Marta with few external interviews. This focus also limited the analysis to the brand's identity and positioning and did not involve deep analysis into the product or collections that the collective produces. In addition, due to time and cost constraints, the research terminated with the recommendations of strategies. This however would be an interesting subject should this research continue.

### **7.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

Research on this subject could be continued, whether on the same case study with Costurando Ideais by validating the Brand DNA in practice, or through further development of the Brand DNA Process. The former would involve applying the recommendations as stipulated in this research to strengthen the collective's brand identity according to its new Brand DNA. Further analysis could involve studying the feasibility and ease of such a task and study the before and after perceptions of the brand image to justify the importance of the Brand DNA.

Another aspect on which to continue research is on developing and testing further steps of the Brand DNA Process. Projects with the LOGO have already begun developing a method that follows the Brand DNA Process, focusing on positioning. By continuing research in this area, the Brand DNA Process would benefit from a complete method of how to apply the new Brand DNA within each organization. Additionally, this would further improve the strategies recommended and improve the applicability of the methodology.

With additional time and resources the research project developed through this case study could be greatly improved. Further research would aid in creating a stronger and more comprehensive methodology, and contribute to the academic study of branding and design management.

## **7.6 Concluding Remarks**

Similar to trends in the consumer market, brands are ever evolving. Design management must aid these brands to respond to these changing desires, and anticipate consumer tendencies, while remaining true to their core values. As demonstrated throughout this dissertation, the Brand DNA Process serves as a design methodology for clearly defining a brand's key attributes through collaboration between stakeholders and designers. The resulting Brand DNA is a visual summary of the essence of the brand's identity, serving as a tool to help the brand grow and prosper.



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## **APENDIX A**

### **INTERVIEWS**

#### **INICIAL INTERVIEW**

##### Founders

- Name of collective: Costurando Ideais, meaning “sewing ideals”
- Grupo, not yet an NGO, more of a collective
- Formed 10 years ago from a common yearning to learn to sew professionally
- Founders, still part of the group
- Received first professional sewing machines donated by Viva Rio (NGO) and French consulate. Created a partnership with these two
- Idaco donated other sewing machines
- Produce fashion shows with make-up brands and other projects

## OPINION MAKER INTERVIEWS

### Opinion maker 1

Works in communications for Costurando Ideais for the past 5 years.

- Only actively works with them for less than 1 year, due to the dangerous circumstances in the favela due to drug trafficking.
- Coordinates between the press, grupo Rio EcoSol (economia solidária), and the collective
- Coordinated the 10 year commemorative fashion show, the fashion show partnered with a make-up brand, and the 1<sup>o</sup> feira de economia solidária.
- 6 months active involvement in the collection. Coordination between press, Grupo Rio Eco Sol (economia solidária) and collective. Coordinated 10 year commemorative fashion show, Fashion show partnership with makeup brand, feira de economia solidaria.

### Opinion maker 2

Rio Top Tour tourguide

- Gives free tours of the favela.
- Native of the community
- Says she knows of Costurando Ideais' work but with its lack of showroom, it is tough to incite tourists to visit. Many tourists look for souvenir, especially exiting the favela.
- Some tourists have asked to buy her shirt (not for sale) as a keepsake.

### Opinion maker 3

Close friend and involved in the production of fashion shows

- Qual é seu envolvimento com o grupo Costurando Ideais?
  - Colaboro como voluntária, principalmente em

desfiles, ensaiando as meninas, provando roupas, Auxiliando, no que for preciso para a performance das meninas..

- Como é sua perspectiva das ações do Costurando (sobre a estratégia, imagem da marca, e evolução do grupo)?
  - Acho que o grupo precisa se organizar. Quais as costureiras que fazem parte? O que fazem - corte, modelagem, costura, bordados? Qual a especialidade de cada uma? tem outras fontes de renda?
  - O grupo hoje tem por estratégia, acho, tornar-se uma cooperativa. Falta muito. As costureiras são muito individualistas ainda, se não tiver a [fundadora 2] e a [responsavel da comunicação] por lá, fica na verdade só um local onde ser revezam nas máquinas.
- Você acha que estão no caminho certo?
  - Sim, a[s fundadoras] estão "arrumando as coisas", mas tenho a impressão que lutam sozinhas. As costureiras não se envolvem, cada uma leva para lá suas encomendas, costura, e vai embora.
- Quais são alguns pontos fortes ou fracos que você conseguiu identificar ao longo do seu envolvimento com o grupo?
  - Pontos fracos: falta união. Falta unir-se para entregar encomendas e para assumir encomendas de maior porte.
  - Falta um controle de estoque, um livro caixa. Quem faz o quê?
  - Pontos fortes: habilidade. Força de vontade. O local é precário, não tem estrutura nenhuma, mas elas estão lá. [fundadora 1] costura bem. [fundadora 2] borda muito bem. Mas os talentos precisam ser conjugados;
- Você conhece o público alvo deles?
  - Não. Não sei para quem querem vender. Para lojas populares? Para feiras de moda? não sei.
- Se a marca do Costurando Ideais fosse uma pessoa, como você imaginaria ele/ela?
  - Uma moça morena, de 30 anos, de cabelos crespos.

Vestida de amarelo, com bordados de [fundadora 2]  
e uma bolsa de jeans da [fundadora 1].

#### **Opinion maker 4**

Assessoria de Responsabilidade Social do Sistema FIRJAN –  
Corporativo:

Conheci o grupo Costurando Ideais em 2006, quando eles participaram de um projeto do Sistema FIRJAN chamado Arte-Indústria. O projeto tinha o objetivo de capacitar artesãos e costureiras de organizações sociais para o mercado da moda, por meio de capacitações nas áreas de estilo, precificação, exportação e empreendedorismo. No final das capacitações, os grupos desenvolviam uma coleção de moda, assessorados por estilistas, para exposição e comercialização em uma bolsa de negócios.

A técnica artesanal do grupo era boa e as peças produzidas eram coloridas, alegres e joviais, chamavam a atenção. Porém o grupo ainda não estava estruturado. Apresentavam dificuldades nas áreas de gestão/planejamento e produção, além da falta de capital de giro para investimento.

Não tenho acompanhado tão diretamente o trabalho deles, por isso não sei lhe informa o público-alvo, mas sei que participavam de feiras e eventos. Também não sei como está a formação do grupo hoje. Mas acredito muito nestas mulheres, que, acima de tudo, sempre foram muito trabalhadoras e empenhadas em transformar suas vidas e de suas famílias.

Acredito que a marca do Costurando Ideais, caso fosse uma pessoa, seria uma pessoa despojada, antenada, leve, alegre, alto astral, carioca e com uma força incrível, que para mim é o que mais chama atenção na história dessas mulheres.

#### **Opinion maker 5**

## Founder of Brazilidade

- Qual é seu envolvimento com o grupo Costurando Ideais?
  - Desde que criei meu projeto de turismo - BRAZILIDADE - Turismo e Experiência em Comunidade - eu fiz contato com a [fundadora 2] e a [fundadora 1] para que fossemos parceiros. A idéia é trazer as pessoas para visitar ou fazer vivência na cooperativa. Então o Costurando é parceiro do meu projeto e é assim que estamos envolvidos.
- Como é sua perspectiva das ações do Costurando (sobre a estratégia, imagem da marca, e evolução do grupo)?
  - Penso que o momento atual do Costurando é bom porque as pessoas que estão tocando o projeto estão com novas perspectivas de ação e querem realmente fortalecer a cooperativa e oferecer produtos de qualidade para um público que tem condições de pagar por isso. Internamente acho que a imagem do Costurando ainda carece de visibilidade. É uma marca conhecida na comunidade, mas que ainda não decolou. As pessoas ainda tem aquela imagem antiga dos problemas pelo qual a cooperativa tem passado. Precisa ser uma referencia positiva em que as pessoas realmente acreditem no trabalho que está sendo desenvolvido agora e que tem uma nova proposta. Em relação ao grupo também é notório que há uma divisão por conta de interesses e objetivos de pessoas que iniciaram o projeto e de pessoas que entraram depois. Esse choque do novo com o tradicional as vezes emperra as ações, mas mesmo assim, do pouco que eu tenho acompanhado, acho que o grupo evoluiu muito. Eu vejo o costurando de agora mais moderno, atual e com uma proposta mais adequada ao mercado.
- Você acha que estão no caminho certo?
  - Sim, eu acho que o grupo está no caminho certo.
- Quais são alguns pontos fortes ou fracos que você conseguiu identificar ao longo do seu envolvimento com o grupo?

- Pontos fortes:
  - está inserido no Santa Marta;
  - é uma iniciativa de moradores;
  - tem experiência;
  - está se abrindo para as novas possibilidades do mercado;
  - a mescla do pessoal local com o pessoal de fora tem dado uma nova perspectiva de trabalho à cooperativa.
  - a essência e idéia do trabalho tem tudo a ver com as demandas sociais onde penso que a cooperativa queira estar inserida (reciclagem, moldes da economia solidária, autosustentabilidade e gestão, desenvolvimento local)
- Pontos fracos:
  - interesses individuais afetam a dinâmica do grupo para caminharem rumo a um objetivo comum
  - falta de uma sede própria no morro
- Você conhece o público alvo deles?
  - Bom, eu penso que o público alvo do Costurando é classe média / alta, de nível superior, com envolvimento, engajamento e propostas sociais bem definidas, na faixa etária de 25 a 40 anos, um público bem alternativo e consciente.
- Se a marca do Costurando Ideais fosse uma pessoa, como você imaginaria ele/ela?
  - Uma pessoa nos seus 35 anos, jovial, moderna, com a cabeça aberta à novas possibilidades, consciente, engajada em diversas ações sociais, culturais e eventos, preocupada com as relações do homem com o meio, alegre, descontraída, bem vestida, antenada, informada e sociável.



## POST-CREATIVE EVENT INTERVIEWS

### **Stakeholder 1: Member of Grupo Eco, Santa Marta**

- Você concorda com este DNA (Sim/No)?
  - sim
- Se tinha alguma palavra para acrescentar ou tirar qual seria?
  - tiraria o Maravilhoso
- Se você tivesse que divulgar o DNA da Costurando internamente ou para fora do coletivo, como faria? Que tipo de ação você imagina?
  - Imagino um logo ou marca, pequeno, de forma arredondada como um botão e que fosse possível fazer uma divulgação em massa com folders e
  - Aproveitar eventos para divulgar a marca

### **Stakeholder 2: Founder (1) of Costurando Ideais**

- Você concorda com este DNA (Sim/No)?
  - sim
- Se tinha alguma palavra para acrescentar ou tirar qual seria?
  - Gostei muito das palavras, mesmo se não participei no evento. Eu acrescentaria uma palavra que tem que ver com colaboração mútua.

### **Stakeholder 3: Founder (2) of Costurando Ideais**

- Você concorda com este DNA (Sim/No)?
  - Sim
- Se tinha alguma palavra para acrescentar ou tirar qual seria?
  - nenhuma

### **Stakeholder 4: Researcher on Economia Solidária**

- Você concorda com este DNA (Sim/No)?
  - sim
- Se tinha alguma palavra para acrescentar ou tirar qual seria?
  - Eu senti muita falta dos conceitos de solidariedade e cooperação. O grande diferencial que vejo

no costurando é o fato de ser um grupo de produção, onde não há relação de hierarquia, tudo é discutido em grupo. Esse sentido da palavra solidariedade é muito bonito; não quer dizer eles doem alguma coisa, mas que elas são responsáveis umas pelas outras, e pela comunidade onde produzem.

- Se você tivesse que divulgar o DNA da Costurando internamente ou para fora do coletivo, como faria? Que tipo de ação você imagina?
  - A última pergunta é meio ampla. Eu divulgaria tentando mostrar como cada peça feita desde o princípio: materiais reciclados/doados, trabalho cooperado, identidade com o local. Mostrar que o preço pode ser mais caro, mas há um respeito aos trabalhadores, ao meio ambiente.

#### **Stakeholder 5: Head of communications for Costurando Ideais**

- Você concorda com este DNA (Sim/No)?
  - sim
- Se tinha alguma palavra para acrescentar ou tirar qual seria?
  - Acho que tiraria o maravilhoso e colocaria lindo, ou então tiraria o maravilhoso. As outras palavras estão ótimas.
- Se você tivesse que divulgar o DNA da Costurando internamente ou para fora do coletivo, como faria? Que tipo de ação você imagina?
  - Eu gostaria de um evento cultural, integrando todas as formas de arte da comunidade ao Costurando como um aglutinador mesmo da cultura local-exposição de arte, artesanato, moda, gastronomia, música, dança e por aí vai.

## APENDIX B

### CREATIVE EVENT SUMMARY

#### Present:

- Communications director
- Model trainer
- Founder
- Models (2)
- Women from the community (3)
- Make-up artist and hair dresser
- Photographer
- Member of Grupo EcoSol
- Researcher on economia solidária

#### Adaptations:

- Presentation – normally standard Power point presentation. Due to lack of appropriate equipment, simply an oral presentation
- Another factor that did not occur as easily with this case study was the slight discordance amongst stakeholders on the adjectives chosen as the final Brand DNA. In the post-Creative Event interviews, all stakeholders responded positively to whether the Brand DNA represented Costurando Ideais. However, some stakeholders suggested alterations to one or more of the adjectives. This showed inconsistency and that the words chosen in the Creative Event could have been stronger or that there is an unclear vision of the essence of Costurando Ideais on behalf of those stakeholders.
- The theory behind design and branding was difficult to grasp for such an audience, use of examples rather than scholarly references. Examples included:
  - 5 senses
    - Touch: mentos
    - Smell: maggi
    - Taste: coca-cola
    - Sight: Bic razor

- Sound tic tac
- Relaxation – normally a short animated film. Due to lack of appropriate equipment, ice-breaker drawing activity
- After agreeing upon a DNA, each person collected images from magazines that corresponded to the concepts.

Observations:

- Generally thought a “brand” was a logo
- Explaining branding through common objects helped loosen up and understand the meaning
- Cartoon drawing incited creative thinking, integrated the group, relaxed them, and generated trust and confidence (since the drawing was partially hidden)
- Sharing of a secret became more haring of a dream, perhaps due to the secretive/conservative tendency of life in favelas
- Adjectives were slow. Needed help.
- The groups were divided in two. Unequal in terms of education/experience/lifestyle.

