

A Practical Study on the Integration of AIGC into Brand Identity Design Courses

Jingtao Cui*

Qingdao Huanghai University, Qingdao, Shandong, China

**Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

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Abstract: Artificial intelligence-generated content (AIGC) is beginning to change how design students search, sketch, compare, and revise. Brand Identity Design is a good place to examine this change because the course is not only about making attractive visuals. Students must read a brand, identify its audience, turn abstract values into visual symbols, and keep a visual system coherent across different media. AIGC tools can assist with reference collection, keyword generation, moodboard exploration, preliminary logo ideas, and application mock-ups. These uses are helpful, but they do not remove the hard part of the course. Brand identity design still depends on brand understanding, semiotic awareness, aesthetic judgment, teacher feedback, and students' own revision. Recent studies in design education suggest that generative AI works best in early ideation and visual variation, while design quality still needs human selection and refinement. Based on this view, the paper proposes a practice-oriented path for integrating AIGC into Brand Identity Design courses. The path covers pre-class research, in-class ideation, design development, presentation, reflection, and evaluation. It also introduces AI use statements, prompt logs, process portfolios, teacher review, and originality reflection as ways to control risks such as homogenization, copyright uncertainty, over-reliance, and blurred authorship. The goal is not to make AIGC the center of the course. It is to place the tool inside a guided teaching process where students still have to think, decide, and revise.

Keywords: AIGC; Generative AI; Brand identity design; Design education; Visual communication; Teaching practice

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1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence-generated content (AIGC), often discussed in English-language scholarship as generative AI or GenAI, is now part of many design classrooms. The change is visible in ordinary course tasks. Students use text-to-image systems to look for visual directions. They use large language models to test slogans, brand stories, or keyword clusters. They also meet AI functions inside common design software. For visual communication courses, this matters because design work often moves back and forth between language and image. A student may begin with a brand story, then extract keywords, build a moodboard,

sketch a logo, choose colors and typefaces, and explain why the system fits the brand.

Recent discussions on GenAI in design curriculum, logo pedagogy, AI education guidance, visual project assessment, visual design courses, and AIGC-related brand advertising design provide the main literature basis for this discussion ^[1-6].

The educational use of generative AI therefore requires caution. UNESCO's guidance on generative AI in education and research stresses responsible use, human agency, and clear institutional rules rather than uncritical adoption of new tools ^[3]. This point fits design education closely. In a design course, the student's authorship, visual judgment, and creative process are not side issues. They are part of the learning outcome.

Brand Identity Design is a useful course for discussing this problem. It does not ask students only to make a good-looking logo. A brand identity project usually begins with research into the brand, users, competitors, values, and communication context. It then moves toward visual translation through logo design, color systems, typography, graphic elements, layout rules, and application scenarios. The course connects strategy, visual language, and communication. If AIGC is used only to generate quick pictures, it may weaken the very abilities that the course should train. If it is used as a guided tool for research, ideation, comparison, and reflection, it may help students see more options before they make design decisions.

Recent studies point to the same balanced position. Generative AI can support inspiration and speed in a design studio, yet students may also find AI-generated logo ideas generic, repetitive, and weak in market differentiation ^[1]. Research on logo design pedagogy further suggests that generative AI-assisted teaching may improve the quantity, novelty, and variety of logo concepts, while traditional teaching still has advantages in the quality dimension ^[2]. This matters for brand identity courses. Logo design depends on symbolism, brand strategy, visual language, and long-term recognition, not only on visual variety. Adjacent work on AIGC-related brand advertising design also emphasizes human judgment, cultural background, and teacher guidance ^[6]. In short, AIGC can support the design process, but it cannot replace design thinking, teacher feedback, or students' own judgment.

This paper proposes a practical path for integrating AIGC into Brand Identity Design courses. It does not report a controlled experiment or claim measurable improvement in student performance. Instead, it draws on recent literature and adjacent teaching practices to build a course-oriented framework. The discussion asks three questions: What can AIGC usefully do in this course? How can it be embedded without turning the course into a software demonstration? How should teachers evaluate AI-assisted work and control risks related to originality, copyright, and over-reliance?

2. Teaching value of AIGC in Brand Identity Design

The value of AIGC in Brand Identity Design should be judged through the design process, not through the novelty of the tool. Fast image production is not enough. The question is whether the tool helps students move from vague impressions to clearer design decisions.

One entry point is research and conceptual association. At the beginning of a brand identity project, students often have too much loose information and too few usable design words. Large language models can help organize brand background, user profiles, competitors, and keyword clusters. For example, when students work on a local tea brand or an independent bookstore, an AIGC tool may list possible brand values, emotional tones, user scenarios, and visual metaphors. The teacher should not treat these outputs as final

answers. A better classroom move is to ask students which generated words are accurate, which are too general, and which ones can lead to a distinctive visual direction.

Moodboard and visual style exploration offer another use. Brand identity design requires students to explore visual atmosphere before they commit to a logo or system. AIGC tools can generate visual references based on style words, color emotions, materials, cultural keywords, or audience characteristics. This helps students compare directions quickly. Still, speed can be misleading. Existing design education research shows that students often see GenAI as a source of inspiration and a starting point for ideation, but they also notice that many outputs lack uniqueness ^[1]. In teaching, this means AI-generated images should be treated as discussion material, not finished schemes.

Logo ideation shows both the value and the limits of AIGC. In many Brand Identity Design courses, logo sketching is a difficult stage. Students need many alternatives before a strong direction appears. Generative AI can increase the number and variety of early visual possibilities. In logo design conceptualization, GAI-assisted teaching has shown advantages in quantity, novelty, and variety, but design quality still depends heavily on conventional design training and judgment ^[2]. For classroom use, the implication is simple: AI can help students open up the idea space, but the deeper work still involves selection, redrawing, simplification, and justification.

Visual identity extension is a further point. After a logo direction is chosen, students must apply it to business cards, posters, packaging, social media interfaces, signage, or other brand touchpoints. AIGC tools can help simulate application scenarios and test whether a visual system has consistency across media. A brand advertising design teaching study describes the combined use of AIGC, hand drawing, and computer-aided design tools in tasks such as logo design, poster design, product presentation, and broader brand design ^[6]. Brand advertising design is not identical to brand identity design, but the workflow is close enough to show how AIGC can sit beside conventional design tools rather than replace them.

AIGC may also support feedback and reflection. It can help students compare versions, notice inconsistent styles, and prepare a written explanation for presentation. But AI feedback is easy to over-trust. Design feedback involves brand logic, audience communication, cultural appropriateness, and aesthetic judgment. These still require human discussion.

3. Practical path for course integration

AIGC is easier to manage when it is tied to the normal course process. If it is introduced only as a fashionable tool, students may spend most of their time testing functions and generating attractive but shallow images. The course then becomes a tool show. A more useful approach is to place AIGC inside the tasks that already matter in Brand Identity Design.

3.1. Pre-class research and brand problem definition

Before visual creation begins, students should complete a basic brand research task. The task may include brand background, target users, competitors, communication goals, brand personality, and key visual problems. At this stage, AIGC can assist with information organization. Students may ask a language model to classify user needs, summarize competitor characteristics, or generate possible brand keywords. This is useful, but only if students check the output. A generated competitor summary, for example, should be

compared with real brand websites, product images, user comments, or field observations.

The output of this stage should not be an AI-generated report. It should be a concise brand problem statement written by the student. A useful statement may include the brand's target audience, core value, desired emotional tone, and visual communication challenge. This small writing task forces students to take responsibility for the research stage. It also gives the later design work a clear basis.

3.2. In-class ideation and moodboard exploration

In the ideation stage, AIGC can be used to generate visual directions, moodboard references, style contrasts, and metaphorical associations. Students may test several prompt groups: brand value prompts, audience prompts, material prompts, cultural prompts, or emotional prompts. The point is not to find the best image at once. It is to compare how different prompts lead to different visual possibilities.

Prompt practice and critical reflection should be part of the design curriculum when GenAI is introduced. This is relevant here. A prompt lesson can be arranged before students use image-generation tools. Students can learn how to describe brand personality, visual style, color mood, composition, and context. More importantly, they should learn how to question AI outputs. A classroom discussion may ask: Which generated images are too generic? Which ones misunderstand the brand? Which ones show cultural stereotypes? Which ones can be developed further by hand sketching?

Teachers can ask students to build a moodboard in two parts. One part comes from student-selected references, such as real brand cases, photographs, typography examples, and cultural materials. The other part comes from AI-assisted exploration. Students then compare the two parts and explain which visual elements will be kept, revised, or rejected. This comparison is a simple way to stop AI images from becoming direct design solutions.

3.3. Logo sketching and concept development

Logo design is the core of many brand identity projects. AIGC can be used here, but it needs a controlled process. One possible arrangement is to require both hand-drawn sketches and AI-assisted visual proposals. The hand-drawn part keeps students close to form, proportion, and symbolism. The AI-assisted part helps them explore alternative structures and styles.

At this stage, the key teaching point is to separate idea expansion from design completion. Generative AI can increase the number and variety of early logo concepts, but quality still depends on brand understanding, visual language, and teacher guidance. An AIGC-assisted logo task should therefore avoid rewarding students for the number of generated images. It should reward the student's ability to select, explain, refine, and reconstruct visual ideas.

In practice, students can submit three layers of process evidence. The first layer is the initial concept map, showing brand values, visual metaphors, and keywords. The second layer is the sketch archive, including hand sketches and AI-assisted alternatives. The third layer is the refined logo proposal, where students explain how the final design was changed from earlier ideas. This process makes the student's design thinking visible. It also reduces the chance that the final logo is simply an AI output.

3.4. Visual identity application and system extension

After the logo is refined, the course can move to the visual identity system. Students need to define color rules, typography rules, graphic elements, layout principles, and application scenarios. AIGC can assist by

generating mock-up scenes or testing different application contexts. A student may test how a logo appears on packaging, a social media poster, a storefront sign, or a digital interface.

At this stage, teachers should remind students that visual identity is a system. A set of attractive images is not a brand identity system. Students should check whether colors, typefaces, spacing, graphic elements, and tone remain consistent across applications. AIGC-generated mock-ups can support this checking process, but final decisions should be made according to brand strategy and design standards.

3.5. Presentation and reflection

The final presentation should include both design outcomes and process reflection. Students should show the finished logo and application scenes, but they should also explain how AIGC was used. A short AI use statement can be required. It may include the tools used, the stages where AI was involved, the role of AI outputs, the parts revised by the student, and the reasons for accepting or rejecting certain AI-generated suggestions.

Reflection matters because it turns tool use into learning. Students need time and teacher guidance to move beyond technical curiosity. Their reflection should focus on whether AI helped clarify the brand problem, whether it narrowed or expanded visual thinking, and how they maintained authorship in the final work.

4. Evaluation and risk control

The evaluation of AI-assisted brand identity projects should not rely only on the final visual effect. A polished image may hide weak brand logic or excessive dependence on AI. A rougher but well-reasoned process may show stronger learning value. Evaluation therefore needs to combine the final outcome with process evidence.

Brand logic should be the starting point. The design needs to respond to the brand's target audience, value proposition, and communication context. A logo or visual system generated from fashionable prompts may look attractive but still fail to fit the brand. Teachers should ask students to explain the connection between brand research and visual decisions.

Visual consistency is just as important. Brand identity design requires coherent use of logo, color, typography, graphic elements, and application layout. AIGC can generate many visual variations, but it may also produce inconsistent styles. Students should show how they selected and standardized visual elements across different applications.

Originality and human contribution need visible evidence. In classroom evaluation, process transparency, ethical sensitivity, conceptual depth, and aesthetic quality can be translated into visible assessment requirements. Students can submit a process portfolio that includes early research, prompts, AI-generated references, rejected drafts, hand revisions, and final refinements. The teacher can then judge not only what the student produced, but also how the student made decisions.

AI use transparency should be written into the assignment requirements. An AI use statement can be attached to each final project. It does not need to be long. It can answer several practical questions: Which tools were used? At which stage were they used? Were AI outputs used as references, drafts, or final elements? Which parts were manually redesigned? Were any outputs checked for copyright or similarity risks? This statement encourages responsible use. It also helps teachers see whether students understand the

boundary between assistance and substitution.

Prompt documentation gives teachers another view of the student's thinking process. A good prompt log shows changes in keywords, visual direction, cultural references, color requirements, and revision intentions. It also allows teachers to see whether students simply repeated generic prompts or gradually improved their design language. In Brand Identity Design courses, prompt logs should be part of the process evidence rather than a technical appendix.

Several risks require attention. Homogenization is one of them. When students use similar models, similar prompt formulas, and similar online visual references, outputs may converge toward the same style. Teachers can respond by requiring students to include local references, hand sketches, original brand research, and non-AI visual sources.

Weak brand relevance is another common problem. AI may produce visually impressive designs that do not express the brand's actual meaning. In evaluation, teachers should therefore ask students to explain symbolism, audience fit, and long-term recognizability.

Copyright uncertainty is also difficult to avoid. Students may not understand whether AI-generated images are safe to use in a brand context. Although a course project is usually educational, brand identity design has a strong professional orientation. Teachers should require students to avoid using AI outputs as final commercial-ready materials without checking rights, similarity, and platform terms. AI outputs are better treated as references or drafts unless their legal status is clear.

Over-reliance is the risk most directly connected with learning. If students use AIGC to skip research, sketching, and revision, they may lose opportunities to develop core design abilities. AIGC should make students think with more materials, not think less.

Teacher review remains essential throughout the process. The teacher should not only judge whether a final design looks good. The teacher also needs to guide students to ask better questions, refine prompts, reject weak outputs, and reconnect design decisions with brand strategy. Peer critique can help here. Students may compare AI-assisted and hand-developed solutions, discuss why some outputs feel generic, and identify where human revision improves the work. Risk control then becomes part of learning rather than a separate warning at the end of the course.

5. Conclusion

AIGC has clear uses in Brand Identity Design courses. It can help with research organization, visual exploration, early ideation, logo variation, and application simulation. It may also reduce the fear of the blank page at the beginning of a project. Still, brand identity design is not rapid image generation. It is the translation of brand strategy into a coherent visual system. That work still requires human judgment, cultural understanding, aesthetic discipline, and repeated refinement.

The integration of AIGC should therefore be guided, staged, and transparent. A reasonable teaching path can begin with brand research and problem definition, move into AI-assisted moodboard and concept exploration, continue through logo sketching and visual identity development, and end with presentation and reflection. Evaluation should include both final outcomes and process evidence. AI use statements, prompt logs, process portfolios, teacher review, and originality reflection can help students use AIGC responsibly while keeping their own role as designers.

The value of this discussion is a workable course framework rather than a new technical model or an unsupported claim of teaching effectiveness. AIGC should be treated as a tool that supports, challenges, and extends the creative process. It should not become the center of the course. The center should remain the student's ability to understand a brand, make visual decisions, explain design meaning, and revise work through feedback. When used within such a framework, AIGC can become part of design education without weakening the foundations of design learning.

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