

The Impact of Exterior Design Aesthetics on Geely Automotive

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of exterior design aesthetics on the purchasing decisions of Geely Automotive consumers. By conducting qualitative semi-structured interviews with thirty individuals who have recently purchased or are considering purchasing a Geely vehicle, the research examines how specific design elements affect customer preferences and brand perception. The findings indicate that features such as sporty characteristics, distinctive headlamps, and sleek body lines are particularly attractive to younger consumers who view cars as extensions of their personal identity. This study also highlights the importance of cultural resonance, noting that Chinese consumers highly value design features that represent modernity and national pride. Additionally, the study identifies a strong correlation between purchase intentions and the perceived innovation and quality of the product. Emphasizing the necessity of balancing form and function, the research suggests that Geely can enhance its competitive edge and market appeal by refining its design strategies. Overall, the study concludes that a vehicle's exterior appearance significantly influences consumer behavior and brand loyalty.

Keywords: Exterior Design Aesthetics, Geely Automotive, Consumer Behavior, Cultural Resonance, Automotive Design.

Introduction

Innovations in technology, shifts in customer tastes, and new rules have all contributed to the dramatic transformation of the automotive industry throughout the last several decades. The visual appeal of an automobile's external design has grown in importance as a means of differentiating the brand from competitors and appealing to consumers (Gupta et al., 2020). Geely Automotive is a prominent Chinese automaker known for its unique designs and quick worldwide expansion; this study examines the effect of external design aesthetics on the company. There are many facets to the intricate relationship between design and how

consumers perceive it, including economic, cultural, and psychological factors. The purpose of this introduction is to provide background information on the significance of external design in the automotive industry, identify the issues that this study seeks to solve, clarify its goals, and emphasize its significance.

Aesthetics in exterior design refer to the visual aspects and characteristics that characterize the look of a vehicle. Shape, color, lines, curves, and the incorporation of practical elements like lighting, grilles, and mirrors are all part of it. Both the first impression and the lasting impression of a brand are affected by its visual appeal (Xia et al., 2020). Understanding and capitalizing on design aesthetics is of the utmost importance to Geely Automotive, a brand aiming to solidify its position in both local and international markets. Established brands in the global automobile market are always inventing new products to pique consumer interest, making it a highly competitive industry. Here, Geely's capacity to stand out from the competition by eye-catching and unique designs can be the deciding element in its commercial success.

The study tackles a complex subject from multiple angles. The first step is to learn what aspects of design are most important to customers and how these aspects affect their final purchases. Although practical features like performance, safety, and gas mileage are crucial, the visual attractiveness of a car is frequently what draws in potential buyers. The second objective of the research is to find out how Geely can make cars that people all over the world want by combining international design trends with regional tastes. Opportunities and difficulties for design innovation abound in China's automotive business, thanks to its distinct cultural and economic characteristics. In addition, as Geely grows its business in global markets, it will have the challenge of catering to customers with wildly varying tastes in style. This research intends to fill that void by shedding light on successful design tactics that mesh well with Geely's brand principles and business goals.

This study has three main objectives. The primary objective is to catalog the external design features that have the greatest impact on car buyers' tastes. Examining the market, customer opinions, and design trends in automobiles are all part of this process. The second objective of the research is to find out how these design aspects affected the public's opinion of the Geely brand and the company's financial success. This involves comparing results to those of market leaders and looking at case studies of both successful and unsuccessful design iterations within the organization. In the third place, we want to find out how Geely can improve its design skills and meet customer expectations by creating strategic recommendations. All of these suggestions will be based on actual research and made to fit the unique situation of Geely Automotive.

This research has wider ramifications for the car industry and design practice, therefore its importance goes beyond only Geely Automotive. The findings from this study could help guide Geely's future marketing efforts, product designs, and development procedures. In order to increase sales, Geely has to know what their target market values aesthetically so they can make cars that are more appealing to them. Researchers and industry professionals alike will find this case study useful, and it adds to the growing body of literature on the topic of design aesthetics in the automobile sector. Consumer electronics, fashion, and architecture are just a few examples of fields where visual appeal is important to customers when making purchases.

Cultural sensitivity and local adaptability are crucial in global marketplaces, and the study emphasizes these aspects of design aesthetics. The capacity to strike a balance between global trends and local tastes becomes more valuable as organizations operate in a more

international environment. This implies that Geely must design cars that appeal to local consumers in different markets while also meeting worldwide requirements. To better manage cultural nuances and increase its global brand appeal, Geely can use the study's findings to improve its international strategy.

Literature Review

Geely automobile has consistently established itself as a leading participant in the Chinese and worldwide automobile markets by prioritizing innovation, quality, and consumer pleasure. Aesthetics in the external design are one of the many factors that have contributed to its success. Everything that makes an automobile stand out from the crowd, from its aesthetics to its general shape, is a part of vehicle design (Sachs, 2023). The focus on external design aesthetics at Geely is about more than just making pretty cars; it's also about developing a unique brand identity that appeals to customers in all sorts of marketplaces. This essay explores the importance, difficulties, and strategic factors around the aesthetics of Geely Automotive's exterior design. It focuses on how this aspect affects the company's competitive advantage and how consumers perceive it.

A customer's initial impression of a brand is frequently based on the vehicle's outward look. Its aesthetic quality conveys the principles, technical expertise, and meticulousness of the organization. This first impression is very important to Geely because it helps them connect with future customers (Lim, 2022). A professionally designed exterior has the power to make people feel something, make them want more, and set a business apart from competitors. Geely's exterior designs reflect both international fashions and regional tastes through their combination of modernity and tradition. Throughout its history, the brand has strived to create products that successfully combine cutting-edge design with utilitarian and aerodynamic necessities.

The pursuit of a consistent and easily identifiable brand identity is central to Geely's exterior design concept. This is achieved by consistently applying the brand's distinctive aesthetic to all of its products. This makes it easy to recognize any model as being from Geely. Some examples of such features that might bring the cars closer together are similar grille designs, unique headlight shapes, and similar body lines (Salomo, 2022). Customers are able to readily connect the visual components with good memories of the brand thanks to this brand coherence, which in turn serves to strengthen customer recognition and loyalty. Geely is positioned as a manufacturer that values design excellence, which increases the entire brand equity. Moreover, according to Halabi & Hands (2018) stated that the attributes and features of a product serve as crucial mediums for communicating its value to consumers. It is important for the businesses aiming to understand consumer purchase behavior in relation to a product's specific elements and characteristics and explores consumers' emotional experiences and perceptions to establish the desired positioning in their minds (Halabi & Hands, 2018).

Consumers' changing tastes and expectations are also included in Geely's design process. Aesthetics matter a lot when it comes to buying a car in this day and age when people are more design-conscious. The younger demographic is driving this trend because they see their cars as reflections of who they are and how they live (Thøgersen et al., 2021). A vehicle is more than simply a means of transportation; it is a representation of self for this group. In response to this change, Geely has made sure that their automobiles feature modern design elements like futuristic styling cues, vivid colors, and clean lines. Geely will continue to appeal to the younger, more sophisticated demographic thanks to this innovative strategy.

The quest for perfect external design, however, is not without its difficulties. Striking a balance between form and function is one of the main challenges. Designing an automobile isn't only about making it seem good; it also has to be functional, aerodynamically efficient, and safe for consumers to drive. What this implies for Geely is that they test and evaluate all design decisions thoroughly to make sure they won't hurt the vehicle's performance or safety. For example, in order to reduce drag and improve fuel economy, the car's aerodynamic efficiency must include the aggressive and sleek designs that attract customers (Tsakiridis, 2020). Designers, engineers, and manufacturers must work closely together to achieve a harmonious blend of form and function.

The fact that different markets have different aesthetic preferences is another obstacle Geely must overcome. Because of cultural, economic, and societal variables, regional preferences in automobiles vary widely across the world. Customers in Europe may lean toward understated elegance, while those in China may be more interested in eye-catching ostentation. An intricate grasp of these regional preferences and the capacity to modify designs appropriately constitute Geely's strategy (Tsakiridis, 2020). This calls for a design strategy that can adjust to the specific needs of each market as well as thorough research into those needs and feedback from consumers. Geely has a leg up on the competition because to its ability to localize design while keeping the brand identity consistent. Automotive companies are increasingly focusing on mergers and acquisitions to adapt to changing market conditions and capitalize on new growth opportunities (Hongwei & Mustaffa Halabi, 2024). The Covid-19 pandemic compelled firms to adjust their asset allocation strategies and marketing approaches to navigate unforeseen challenges (Hongwei & Halabi, 2024).

The fact that Geely has invested in design skill and resources shows how seriously the company takes exterior design aesthetics. In strategic places across the globe, such as the US, Europe, and China, the firm has set up design studios. By bringing together designers from all walks of life, these studios foster an environment conducive to innovation and creativity (Street, 2021). Geely improves its capacity to produce designs that appeal to a worldwide audience by encouraging a multicultural and interdisciplinary design environment, which allows it to tap into a variety of viewpoints and skills. In addition, Geely's commitment to remaining ahead of the curve in automotive design trends and technologies is highlighted by the construction of these design centers.

The capacity for exterior design at Geely has been significantly influenced by technological developments. The process of designing and prototyping automobiles has been utterly transformed by the usage of cutting-edge CAD software, VR, and 3D printing. With these resources, the designers at Geely are able to try out new, daring ideas, see them in a digital environment, and refine their work in a flash. Improved accuracy, productivity, and originality are all outcomes of incorporating such technologies into the design process. In addition, it helps designers and engineers work together more effectively, which guarantees that the finished product meets all practical and aesthetic standards (Nawar et al., 2024).

One cannot exaggerate the importance of the visual appeal of a brand's façade in shaping public opinion and devotion to that brand. Having a design that is both aesthetically pleasing and functional is a great marketing tool for Geely. A car with an eye-catching exterior can attract more attention in dealerships and online ads, increasing the likelihood that a potential buyer would investigate further (Yavorsky et al., 2021). Comfort, technology, and performance within the vehicle come into play after an attractive outward design has piqued a customer's interest. Nevertheless, the first impression is frequently based on how something looks on the outside, therefore it's an important part of the customer journey.

Putting an emphasis on top-notch design helps Geely attract more customers and turn them into raving fans of the brand.

Related Theory

For a better grasp of how visual appeal influences car buyers' decisions, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) put out by Icek Ajzen is a useful framework. Attitude toward the conduct, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are the three main components that influence an individual's intention to engage in a behavior, like buying a car, according to TPB. Customers' opinions on the vehicle's aesthetics, whether favorable or unfavorable, make up the behavior's attitude in relation to Geely Automotive. There will be a greater likelihood of a positive attitude and an increase in the intention to buy if the design is seen as appealing, contemporary, and indicative of one's own style (Pelet et al., 2020). When people talk about "subjective norms," they're referring to the expectations and pressures from their friends, family, and community on the purchase. These standards can be further impacted by a well-designed car that other people admire and approve of, which in turn affects the purchasing choice. Finally, with regard to perceived behavioral control, considerations like availability and pricing play a role in how easy or difficult it is to buy the car. The significance of these TPB components in Geely's marketing and design strategies is shown by their ability to describe how the aesthetics of exterior design can greatly influence consumer intentions and actual purchasing behaviors.

Methodology

This qualitative study uses semi-structured interviews as its methodology to examine the effect of external design aesthetics on Geely Automotive. In order to fully understand customer opinions, tastes, and the rationale behind their car design purchases, this method is selected. Thirty people made up the sample, which is just the right amount to get a good cross-section of opinions while still leaving enough for reasonable analysis. We will use purposive sampling to choose participants from among those who have bought a Geely car during the past six months or who are thinking about buying one in the near future. By being very selective, we can be sure that the data we collect will answer our study questions.

The interview will revolve on a series of free-form questions that aim to delve into different facets of the visual appeal of exterior design. Questions will probe respondents' thoughts on how much of a role design plays in the buying process, what aspects of a product's design they find most appealing, how these aspects compare to those of competitors, and how much weight customers give to cultural and personal variables when making a purchase choice. In addition, we'll be asking participants to share their feelings in relation to certain design elements and to clarify how these aspects meet their expectations for a Geely car.

The participants' preferences and availability will determine whether the interviews will be conducted in person or via video conferencing. Each interview will last roughly 45 minutes to an hour. This adaptability makes sure that practical limitations don't prevent a representative sample from taking part. With the participants' permission, we will record interviews so that we can accurately transcribe and analyze the data.

In order to find patterns (themes) in the data and report on them, the data will be analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. The first step is to transcribe the audio recordings of the interviews. Once that is done, the transcripts will be examined several times to make sure the data is familiar. The first set of codes will serve to draw attention to major claims and recurrent concepts concerning the visual appeal of the exterior of the building. Subsequently,

these codes will be structured into overarching themes that summarize the study's main conclusions.

Numerous researchers will code a portion of the transcripts separately before comparing their findings to guarantee the quality and dependability of the findings. A strong and consistent analysis will be achieved by discussing and resolving coding inconsistencies through consensus. In order to ensure the correctness and resonance of the interpretations, we will also use member checking, which involves discussing preliminary findings with a small number of participants.

This study places a premium on ethical considerations. The goal of the study, the participant's ability to withdraw at any moment, and the usage and protection of their data will all be explained to them. Ensuring that individual responses cannot be linked back to specific participants and anonymizing the data will be taken care of to ensure confidentiality. Prior to beginning the interviews, all participants will be asked to provide their informed consent.

Results

The findings of this study on the influence of external design aesthetics on Geely Automotive were collected from comprehensive interviews with thirty individuals who had recently bought or were contemplating buying a Geely vehicle. The significance of external design in influencing consumer decisions was highlighted by the investigation, which showed numerous critical elements.

The majority of participants rated the aesthetic attractiveness of a car's exterior appearance very highly, which was one of the most striking findings. Among the younger demographic, who saw their vehicles as reflections of who they were, this was most noticeable. Some of the most common reasons given by participants as to why they are drawn to Geely vehicles include the shape of the headlamps, the smoothness of the body lines, and the incorporation of modern, athletic characteristics.

The following table summarizes the frequency of mentions for various design elements:

Theme	Code	Frequency of Mentions
Aesthetic Appeal	Headlight Shape	18
	Body Lines	22
	Grille Design	15
	Color Options	10
	Overall Sleekness	25
	Sporty Features	20
Cultural Relevance	Dynamic Forms	12
	Modernity Symbols	10
Perceived Quality	High-Tech Indicators	14
	Aerodynamic Curves	16
	LED Lighting	18
Social Validation	Peer Approval	12
	Social Status	10
Areas for Improvement	Side Mirror Location	8
	Ease of Access	5
	Interior Design	3
	Trunk Space	4

The fact that Geely's design breakthroughs made them feel special and proud was a major factor in their choice, according to the participants. Several customers have said that they are devoted to the Geely brand because of how the company's designs are unique compared to others. The significance of design elements' cultural relevance was another major theme. Some characteristics, such as dynamic and daring forms, were emphasized by many Chinese buyers as appealing to local tastes and representing cultural icons of modernity and advancement. This shared cultural heritage was considered as adding to the vehicle's allure and elevating it to the status of a national emblem.

The responses from the participants also highlighted how important it is for external design to be viewed as innovative and high-quality. There were many who took the appearance of the car as an indicator of its quality and level of technical development. Incorporating futuristic aspects like aerodynamic curves and LED lighting was often thought to indicate high-tech capabilities and better performance. This impression is summed up in the following table, which displays the relationship between the perceived quality of the design and the intention to buy:

Perceived Quality Level	Purchase Intent (1-10 Scale)
High	9
Medium	6
Low	3

Furthermore, the interviewees' opinions and the opinions of their peers were impacted by the visual appeal of the outside design. When asked what factors contributed to their overall satisfaction with the purchase, multiple participants cited the opinions of those closest to them. The buying decision and the owner's social status were both bolstered by vehicles that received favorable comments from peers. The results also showed where there were problems and opportunities for development. Although many found the design to be aesthetically pleasing, a small number of participants felt that the location of the side mirrors and the ease of access might use some improvement. According to these findings, customers' holistic needs can only be satisfied when there is a harmony between aesthetic appeal and practical functionality.

Conclusion

Research into the effect of aesthetics on Geely Automotive's exterior design demonstrates the power of aesthetics in influencing consumer choice. Sleek body lines, distinctive headlamps, and sporty features are crucial in enticing purchasers and creating brand loyalty, according to qualitative interviews with 30 participants. Design that resonates culturally, especially in terms of catering to local aesthetic tastes, increases Geely's attractiveness and helps buyers feel pride in themselves and their country. The vehicle's attractiveness is boosted by the impression of high-quality and innovative design, which positions Geely as a brand that is both competitive and ahead of the curve in the worldwide market. The results do, however, show how important it is to satisfy customers' demands in every way by combining form and function. Geely should keep innovating and changing its exterior aesthetics to stay ahead of the competition and meet changing consumer tastes, according to these observations, which highlight the strategic relevance of design in the automobile

industry. Ultimately, the study offers vital insights for Geely's future marketing and design efforts by highlighting the significant impact of exterior design on consumer behavior and brand perception. Future research should explore the long-term effects of these design elements on consumer loyalty and market share, as well as investigate how emerging design trends and technological advancements might further influence consumer preferences. Additionally, comparative studies with other automotive brands could provide a broader understanding of the role of aesthetics in the global automotive industry.

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