

The Impact of Anthropomorphism and Brand Personality on The Design of Brand Character Mascot for Digital Media

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Abstract

Mascot design operates as a branch of character design that creates effective representations for specific entities. A well-designed mascot develops consumer engagement and produces results that exceed visual identity impact. However, the design of character mascots lacks established methods and procedural steps that effectively guide the design process to maintain reality while representing brand spirit.

In this research, we will examine the impact of anthropomorphism integrated with brand personality on brand mascot design throughout digital media platforms. The study will analyze how these elements affect visual design aspects of mascot characters, including their visual features, facial expressions, body movements, and complete visual presentation. The research will investigate the essential factors which make brand mascots successful at transmitting brand personality and messages to promote consumer engagement.

The research will give designers and marketers a clear understanding of the factors that impact the designing anthropomorphic brand aspect of an engaging and effective mascot character that conveys and embodies the brand's identity and personality. A descriptive and analytical approach will be applied to the study, including case studies, followed by an applied study. The objective is to determine a design strategy and draw a roadmap to guide designers and marketers into the best approach to create effective mascots within digital media and their ability to resonate with the target audience.

Keywords

Brand Anthropomorphism - Brand Personality - Mascot Design - Character Design - Digital Media – Design Strategy

ملخص

يعمل تصميم التميمة كفرع متخصص من تصميم الشخصيات يهدف إلى خلق تمثيلات بصرية فعالة للكيانات المختلفة. يُسهّم التصميم المُحكم لهذه الشخصيات في تعزيز تفاعل الجمهور ويحقق نتائج تتجاوز مجرد الهوية المرئية التقليدية. ومع ذلك، تفقد عملية تصميم هذه الشخصيات إلى منهجيات واضحة وإجراءات منهجية تُرشد المصممين لتحقيق التوازن بين المظهر الواقعي وقيم العلامة التجارية.

تركز هذه الدراسة على تحليل تأثير دمج تقنية التأنيس (إضفاء الصفات البشرية) مع سمات العلامة التجارية في تصميم الشخصيات التمثيلية عبر المنصات الرقمية. كما سنتناول البحث كيفية تأثير هذه العناصر على الجوانب التصميمية المختلفة بما في ذلك الملامح البصرية، وتعبيرات الوجه، وحركات الجسم، والتقديم المرئي الشامل. وستسعى إلى تحديد العوامل الأساسية التي تضمن نجاح هذه الشخصيات في نقل رسالة العلامة التجارية بشكل فعال.

سوف تقدم الدراسة إطاراً عملياً يُساعد المصممين والمسوقين على فهم العوامل المؤثرة في تصميم الشخصيات التمثيلية الجذابة والقادرة على تجسيد هوية العلامة التجارية. سيعتمد البحث على المنهج الوصفي التحليلي من خلال دراسة حالات تطبيقية متبعة بدراسة تنفيذية. ويهدف في النهاية إلى وضع إستراتيجية تصميمية وإرشادية تُمكن المهنيين من تطوير شخصيات تمثيلية مؤثرة عبر الوسائط الرقمية، قادرة على تحقيق التفاعل المطلوب مع الجمهور المستهدف.

الكلمات المفتاحية

التجسيد الماركة – شخصية الماركة – تصميم التميمة

1.1 Introduction

In today's fast-moving digital world, brands are constantly refining their strategies to establish deeper emotional connections with consumers—to supercharge the impact of their marketing and advertising efforts.

A powerful tool that should not be ignored. It is a well-designed brand character mascot. This element is key to building a memorable brand identity because they are designed to help customers connect with the brand more personally and give them a face to it. ⁽ⁱ⁾ It effectively simplifies complex brand messages and values and brings them to life by making them relatable and unforgettable. ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Many brands recognize the value of character mascot design, but their potential often remains underutilized, resulting in a lack of lasting impact, which causes them to be quickly forgotten.

This study explores the relationship between anthropomorphism and brand personality and how it impacts the design of brand character mascots. Then, the study will propose a Design Strategy for brand mascots that relies on understanding the impacts of these elements and analyzing study cases. That can help brands create unique and memorable character mascots for digital Media. This approach doesn't just create great-looking Characters. It's about designing an Anthropomorphic Brand mascot that reflects the brand's personality and represents it in digital media by blending creative design, strategy Stages, and technology.

1.2 Research Question:

In the Egyptian community, there is a noticeable gap in the design of mascots used on digital media platforms for even the most recognized Brandⁱⁱⁱs in marketing. This is because the character mascot design is usually inconsistent with the brand identity and/or cannot represent the brand's characteristics, values, and message. Thus, research questions have been formulated to tackle this issue and raise inquiries:

1. What Impact do brand personality and anthropomorphism have in shaping the perfect design strategy to create a brand character mascot for digital media?
2. Does anthropomorphism have the ability to identify a brand character mascot to align with the brand personality and its target audience?

1.3 Research Objectives

- 1- Explore the impact of anthropomorphism in designing a brand character mascot to achieve a memorable, relatable brand character Mascot that delivers the brand's essence.

- 2- Examine how brand personality and anthropomorphism integrate to create a design strategy that shapes the process of designing a unique brand character mascot.

1.4 Research Hypothesis:

- H1: A strong integration between a definite brand personality and anthropomorphism impacts mapping the perfect design strategy for creating a unique brand character mascot for digital media.
- H2: Anthropomorphism can help determine the shape and essence of a Brand character mascot that fits with the brand's personality, making the brand more memorable and engaging.

1.5 Study Methodology

The descriptive-analytical qualitative research design was chosen to align with the study objectives.

- In The Descriptive Approach, the data is gathered from different sources, including scholarly databases, web-based materials, published books, and peer-reviewed journal articles.
- The analytical approach focuses on specified analytical case studies of successful anthropomorphic brand mascots in digital media for an exploratory point of view.
- The Applied Study focuses on the practical implementation of designing a Character mascot using the design strategy of an anthropomorphism brand character mascot to a specific entity.

1.6 Research Terminology

- **Mascot:** Any human, animal, or object thought to bring luck, or anything used to represent a group with a common public identity, such as a school, sports team, society, military unit, or brand name. Mascots are also used as fictional, representative spokespeople for consumer products.^{iv}
- **Anthropomorphism:** Attributing human traits, emotions, or intentions to non-human entities. It is considered to be an innate tendency of human psychology.^v
- **A brand personality:** A literal depiction of a brand as a person, giving a face to the abstract characteristics, values, and voice that businesses cultivate.^{vi}

2. DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

2.1. Anthropomorphism

The word "anthropomorphism" is derived from two Greek words: "Anthropos" means (human), and "Morphe" means (form). Anthropomorphism means the process of assigning real or imagined human characteristics, intentions, motivations, or emotions to nonhuman objects, often motivated by explaining and understanding the behavior of those nonhuman entities. ^(vii)

It involves giving the impression of life to objects and integrating the entities' messages inside to give them meaning. For example, people attribute human characteristics to pets, wild animals, cartoons, brand mascots, sports teams, etc. (Figure 1).



(Figure1) Mickey Mouse is a brand character mascot for Walt Disney. It combines human Features + pet (mouse) to present brand identity.

There are two terms; most people believe that they attribute their features to animals and inanimate objects. But let's point to the fact that the relationship is bidirectional. (Table 1) ^(viii)

	Anthropomorphism	←→orphism
Meaning	Relating to <u>attributing human characteristics</u> to non-human like (inanimate objects, animals, and entities).	Relating to <u>attributing animal characteristics</u> to non-animal entities (inanimate objects, humans, entities).
Example	A talking lion in a cartoon movie.	A leader called "The Lion" for courage and his daring.
Used for	Relatability/storytelling	Symbolic association
Table(1) Anthropomorphism terms and type		

2.1.2 The Science of Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism can be considered a varying psychological process, embedded in daily life, that provides critical insights into how people perceive and make sense of non-human entities or inanimate objects. It has been observed and presented in several forms across cultures. Entities' anthropomorphism employs this psychological phenomenon. It could be Anthropomorphism of the Self or the other Anthropomorphism (Table 2). ^(ix)

	The other Anthropomorphism	The Anthropomorphism of the Self
Meaning	Use humans, animals, and inanimate objects to inspire and learn about ourselves.	Humans live virtual fantasy lives online through virtual avatars that anthropomorphize the Self to identify themselves (self-branding).
Science behind Anthropomorphism	<p>We use images of humans in films, television, novels, myths, and stories to put ourselves into these characters and live through their romances, adventures, and heroics.</p> <p>Humans: Captain America is not only a role model but also a symbol and idea.</p> <p>Animal: Simba lion represents courage and domination.</p> <p>Inanimate objects: Libra represent Justice, truth, and fairness.</p>	<p>It is not computer-operated bots or a cartoon. People control it through choosing or creating their favorite avatar. They can also control their avatars' actions and interactions. It is like anthropomorphizing ourselves but in virtual worlds through digital media. The choice of an avatar also differs by age:</p> <p>Children: They like to choose cute or animal-like avatars</p> <p>Teenagers: Go for more realistic ones.</p>

		Virtual entities: Create avatars/Character mascots depending on their activities to make the audience more powerful and engaged.
Employs Anthropomorphism	Advertisers/marketers use this concept to make their brand part of consumers' lifestyles that they wish to emulate.	Advertisers/marketers use this concept to create brand avatars/Character mascots by selecting and customizing various human attributes such as body shape, eye color, hair style, etc...
Table(2) The Science of Anthropomorphism		

Anthropomorphism is likely to be determined by:

1. **Elicited Physical Knowledge (Physical Anthropomorphism):** Humans use their knowledge about themselves to understand unfamiliar non-human entities. Because this knowledge is familiar to their understanding, they match human-like features like facial expression, body proportion, etc., to non-human animals and objects.
2. **Social motivation (Verbal Anthropomorphism):** Humans need to establish social connections with others. In the digital world, they also seek social connections. This appears through presenting non-human entities as people that could communicate with them on different digital platforms, like creating characters that share entities' stories.
3. **Effectance motivation (Qualities Anthropomorphism):** Applying psychological and emotional attributes such as intelligence, emotions, and moral standing. Entities communicate through visual elements that display these human-like Qualities to gain predictability and control in one's environment. ^(x)

2.1.3 Anthropomorphic design

Anthropomorphic design is a strategy that combines anthropomorphic typology with the elements and principles of design to create a valuable, differentiated, and memorable character that enhances the engagement and emotional and social connection between the target audience and the entity.

There are essential Features that guide anthropomorphic designs. Through these features, we could determine the group of elements that could shape an anthropomorphic design mascot as follows: (figure 2)

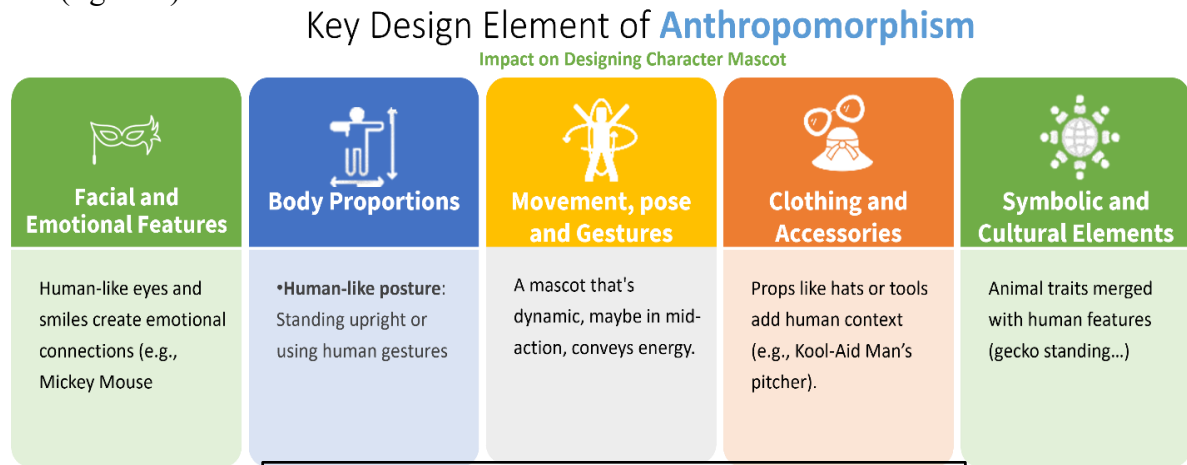


Figure (2) Key elements of anthropomorphic design. Design by research

1. **Human-like Physical Features:** A human-like appearance such as facial expression, body proportion, voice, and forward-facing ears.
2. **Human-like Characteristics:** It is about assigning real or imagined human characteristics, intentions, motivations, or emotions to nonhuman objects. It appears mainly in a mascot's emotional features that reflect character modes and feelings.^(xi)
3. **Typicality and Cognitive Fit:** Anthropomorphic designs work better when mascots have a typical physical similarity to humans. It can copy human movement and gestures, take some poses that endorse strong emotion, and apply some props like clothes and accessories.
4. **Culture and Social Connection:** The designer should deeply understand the Entities' culture and social context. So, they can select proper symbols that represent and reflect common beliefs, myths, and cultural codes from the place where it will be presented.

2.1.4 Brand Anthropomorphic

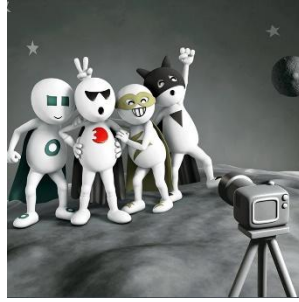
Anthropomorphism plays a role in an Anthropomorphic brand personality; it enhances a brand's ability to connect with consumers on a deeper emotional level and maintain loyalty.^{xii}

There is a difference between Branding and Brand Anthropomorphism,^{xiii} Branding is the act of creating a physical set of attributes – a brand name, brand identity, strapline, etc.- along with less tangible assets, such as the emotional benefits offered by the brand.^{xiv}

Brands are always trying to differentiate themselves in several ways. One way is through the creation of a unique brand personality. There are Various mechanisms that can be used to fill; one of these refers to “brand anthropomorphism”.

Brand anthropomorphism more frequently refers to when a brand is personified as a character with human-like attributes rather than a real-life person. For instance, Vodafone's endearing

Zoozoos, a family of white, egg-shaped characters, embody the brand's commitment to vibrant communication and youthful energy.^{xv} (Figure3)



(Figure3) Zoozoos: Their unique appearance and consistent presence in advertising campaigns help imprint the brand in consumers' minds.

2.2 Brand personality

Brand personality theory depends on assigning human personality traits to a brand to achieve differentiation. This has become an essential practice in the advertising toolkit and has evolved into more complex personality forms known as brand archetypes. These include the hero, the explorer, the villain, and the underdog.^{xvi}

Brand values are the core beliefs or philosophy that a brand upholds and that differentiates it from its competitors. Another way of characterizing a brand is by identifying its brand personality.^{xvii}

2.2.1 The Brand Personality Framework

One way of identifying brand personality is by using social psychologist Jennifer Aaker's 'Dimensions of Brand Personality' framework, which uses a set of human characteristics to characterize a brand. ^{xviii}These are grouped into five core dimensions: (table 3)

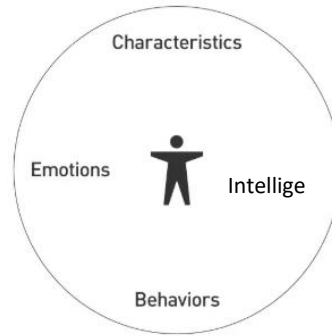
Brand personality framework					
	Sincerity	Excitement	Competence	Sophistication	Ruggedness
Traits	Domestic, honest, genuine, and cheerful	Daring, spirited, imaginative, up to date	Reliable, responsible, dependable, efficient	Glamorous, pretentious, charming, luxurious	Tough, strong, outdoorsy Kindle Edition.
Brand personality traits	Usually embody the Caregiver brand archetype. As such, they are warm, nurturing, and safe.	Usually fall into the Hero brand archetype. They speak to our desire for excitement and enjoyment.	Usually, these are brands we trust with the most important things, including money, health, and safety.	Often embodying the Creator or the Ruler, archetypes, elevated products and experiences.	Adventurous, outdoorsy, and rugged. These brands are built to last and are seen to be hard-working, strong, muscular, and authentic.
Found in	Hospitality, food service, and safety industries.	Brands that unlock wonder or adventures.	Financial, insurance, healthcare	Fashion, luxury, and automotive	Construction, outdoors, and sports industries
(Table 3) Brand personality five core dimensions					

This technique can be used to distinguish between brands that otherwise belong to a similar product category. It is often used by design agencies to support creating unique brand values. Its use has helped to transform the way designers consider communicating with target audiences and plays an important role in the creation of techniques that drive today's vibrant, social media-driven brand communities.

2.2.2 Define Brand Personality Traits

After identifying which brand personality type fits the brand, determining the specific traits is crucial to making up its personality. As the brand is to be treated as a person, defining your brand traits requires imagining your brand as if it were a person. To define Brand personality traits. We can segment into four distinct aspects of the quadrant model (figure 4), guiding brands to identify their unique positioning: ^{xix}

- 1- **Emotion-driven:** Motivated by passion or enthusiasm.



(Figure4)the quadrant model for define brand personality trait
<https://dreamfarmagency.com/blog/brand-character-vs-personality/>

- 2- **Intelligence driven:** Inspired by wise analysis and logical insight.
- 3- **Characteristics:** External perception. Defining their anthropomorphic brand in terms of human-like features.
- 4- **Behavior:** Actions in the world.

2.2.3 Implementation of Brand Personality Traits

After defining brand personality and traits, they need to implement these throughout all brand expressions into:

- **Design Aspects**

Naturally, a brand's defined personality must be reflected in product design, packaging, and user interfaces that serve target audiences. All these touchpoints should embody the personality to increase effectiveness perfectly.

- **Aesthetic and Sensory Identity**

In addition to design components, all other visuals, including the logo, typography, color palette, photography styles, etc., must align with the brand personality and convey the business's humanlike characteristics. (e.g., Cheetos) (Figure5)

- **Messaging Style and Voice**

A brand's tone should be determined based on a predefined personality. The language the brand uses for communication, its messaging standards, etc.^{xx}

2.3 Brand Character Mascot



(Figure5)The Cheetos brand personality type is bold, rebellious, and playful. with a cool, confident, anthropomorphic cheetah mascot that embodies traits of energy and adventure through dynamic action. Applying personality to the logo and color scheme.

Once simple brand symbols, character mascots have now transformed into digital strategic assets. Today, these characters can be moved beyond static logos and traditional commercials to become^{xxi} a character trademark that embodies brand attributes or values. Characters quickly become the stars of ad campaigns, and the best ones become cultural icons. Along with their distinctive appearance and personality, many characters have recognizable voices and Catchy songs.^{xxii} (figure6)

(figure6) Poppin' Fresh, more widely known as the Pillsbury Doughboy, is an advertising icon and the mascot of the Pillsbury Company. In 1965, Rudolph Perz, a copywriter working on the Pillsbury account for Leo Burnett advertising agency in Chicago, came up with the idea for the brand mascot, who would pop out of a can of refrigerated dough. The character's name was a nod to the product's quality and freshness.



There are various terms related to brands and mascots. Categories outlined:^{xxiii} (Table4)

Category	Definition	Key Characteristics	Examples
Brand Mascot	A fictional or anthropomorphic character actively promotes a brand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subservient to the brand. - Used in campaigns/spokesperson roles. - Strict usage guidelines. 	Tony the Tiger (Kellogg's), Geico Gecko, Smokey Bear, Michelin Man.
Mascot Brand	A mascot that overshadows the original brand, becoming its primary identity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dominates the brand relationship. - Often leads to rebranding. - Cultural icon status. 	Honey Monster (Sugar Puffs → Honey Monster Foods), Jolly Green Giant, Energizer Bunny.
Brand Animal	An animal symbol/logo is associated with a brand, often for symbolic meaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passive/ decorative role. - Traits transferred to the brand (e.g., strength, agility). - May involve corporate responsibility efforts. 	Lacoste crocodile, Jaguar's jaguar, WWF panda, Ralph Lauren polo pony.
Animal Brand	An animal (real or fictional) that becomes a standalone brand entity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The animal itself is the product/brand. - Monetized through merchandise/media. - Celebrity-like status. 	Grumpy Cat, Rin Tin, Jumbo the Elephant, Paul the Drumming Gorilla (Cadbury).

(Table4) Terms related to brands and mascots

While the brand personality drives the Anthropomorphism, it may be timeless and universal, but characters rarely age well and usually need to be redrawn and dragged into existing culture. (Figure7) Each brand creates a mascot to animate and reanimate on different digital media platforms.



(Figure7) Michelin Man: The Michelin Man, well over one hundred years old, has been modified numerous times

2.3.1 Types of Brand Character Mascots

Brand mascots come in various forms, each with unique appeal and characteristics. Here are three common types:^{xxiv} (Table 5)

Animal Mascots	Human Mascots	Object Mascots
Animal mascots, like Kellogg's Tony the Tiger, are widely recognized and beloved for their charming qualities, especially by children. It appears fun to attract a younger audience, which works.	Human mascots, like Ronald McDonald, give a friendly and approachable face to a brand, making it more relatable and welcoming to consumers.	Some brands choose mascots from objects by turning objects into memorable brands, like MR D.I.Y.'s hammer mascot. It represents their brand as a hardware store, making it easily recognizable and memorable.

(Table5)Types of Brand Mascots

2.3.2 Integrating Anthropomorphism and Brand Personality into Mascot Character Design

The use of effective anthropomorphic brand mascots in digital media requires a translation of the brand's core personality into visible brand personality traits and, consequently, into visual and behavioral characteristics.






It has been identified that certain brand personality traits, such as sincerity, excitement, or competence, can be easily communicated through the mascot's design, which includes the mascot's face, body language, and sometimes clothes.^{xxv}

For instance, a brand that wants to appear sincere can design a mascot that has a friendly face, approachable body language, and plain and decent clothes. And the brand that wants to create excitement can have a mascot that is lively, bright, and possibly over the top in terms of energy and features. Therefore, the appearance and behavior of the mascot should be straightforward and in line with the overall personality of the brand.^{xxvi}

Moreover, the effectiveness of brand mascots is also closely related to the level of anthropomorphism used in the design. This can vary from subtle human-like signs such as the eyes or a smile for friendliness to very human-like characters who have all the features and abilities of a human being. The optimum level of anthropomorphism is not a fixed amount but rather a function of many variables, including the type of brand, the characteristics of the target market, and the kind of emotional response that the brand is intended to induce.^{xxvii}

For instance, it has been explored that a mascot that is extremely anthropomorphic can be more appealing to a younger audience and thus create a better connection and fun. However, a brand in a more serious sector like finance or healthcare may go for a mascot with a somewhat low level of anthropomorphism to represent professionalism, trust, and other similar attributes^{xxviii}.

2.3.3 Five overlapping categories of anthropomorphism brand character mascot that embed brand personality : (table6)

<p>The character personifies the brand itself. As a result, the character's personality is usually similar to the brand's. Often, the characters in this category have the same name as the brand. <u>For instance</u>, Captain Crunch from the Captain Crunch cereal from the Quaker Oats Company. (Figure8)</p>	 (figure8)
<p>The character is a spokesperson for the brand, through verbal communication for explaining and providing credibility to the brand and/or conveying the brand message. <u>For instance</u>, Snap, Crackle, and Pop are the characters that advocate for the Rice Krispies cereal from Kellogg's. (Figure9)</p>	 (figure9)
<p>The character serves as an ambassador for the brand and is an official and authorized representative of the brand who is unique in form, appearance, or costume. <u>For instance</u>, Mini is the character that appears similar to the wheat cereal it represents, called Mini-Wheats, from Kellogg's. (Figure10)</p>	 (figure10)
<p>The character serves as a mascot for the brand it represents and generally supports the brand's messaging and generates goodwill for the brand through verbal and nonverbal communication. <u>For instance</u>, Cornelius Rooster is the character that appears on the packaging for the Corn Flakes cereal from Kellogg's. (figure 11)</p>	 (figure11)
<p>All the characters that do not fit into any of the four above. These characters neither 'speak for' nor represent the brand. <u>For instance</u>, in an advertisement for chocolate Weetabix cereal, teddy bears (which have no connection to the brand) come to life after a little girl eats the cereal. (figure12).*</p>	 (figure12)
<p>(Table6) Five categories of anthropomorphism brand character mascot that embed brand personality</p>	

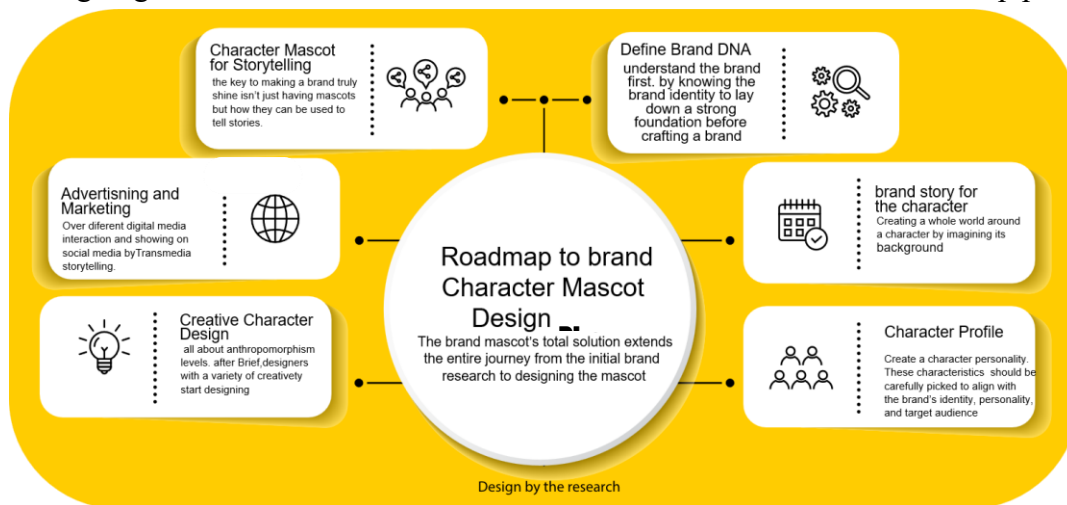
2.3.4 Proposed Design Strategy Framework of Anthropomorphic Brand Character Mascots

Building on the previous theoretical study, the research proposes a developed design strategy that effectively integrates brand personality traits with anthropomorphism techniques to design a unique and memorable brand character mascot that will be presented on digital media. This design strategy can be considered by advertisers and marketers (figure13).

It is a practical phase that includes everything from initial brand research to designing a brand character mascot and creating content. This approach stands out as a strategic design framework for brand 'mascots' digital media industry, to emphasize character design's transformation into

Phase 1: Define brand DNA:

Before designing a character mascot, it is essential to examine the brand from a deep perspective.



(Figure13) Design Strategy for Designing Brand Character

This first step focuses on identifying the brand. This process requires establishing the core elements of brand identity, including mission, personality, values, and unique characteristics. The brand's core nature, along with its target audience and market positioning. Gathering this information creates a guide for mascot design to maintain consistency with brand identity and personality.

Phase 2: Brand story for the character:

This phase is about the feeling that we give to character that belongs to a world we can see, imagine, and care about. It happens when the brand narrative message and value are within the mascot's journeys. The mascot presents this information through entertaining content that avoids direct product promotion. Defining the mascot's story can create a strong emotional relatability that could transform the mascot into an impressive storytelling tool.

Phase 3: Creating Character mascot Profile

Creating a unique character mascot goes beyond its looks; it starts with its personality and traits tailored to the brand and audience. Define what makes it unique: Traits, Personality and characteristics, Tone of voice, Color scheme, and Appearance. Imagine what type of anthropomorphism it has, human traits/animalistic side. Define its attributes like voice, demeanor, hobbies, and visual style (e.g., colors, shapes).

All these characteristics and traits aren't by chance; they should be picked carefully to align with the brand's identity and appeal to the target Audience, to ensure consistency across campaigns and strengthen audience connection.

Phase 4: Creative character design

Visual aesthetics refer to how something looks attractive and appealing. It's all about designing the mascot's visual and behavioral identity using anthropomorphism by balancing human-like traits (e.g., expressions, gestures, props, and accessories) with abstract elements (e.g., shape, color, form, and texture) based on brand DNA. It will make the mascot memorable and adaptable across the media.

Phase 5: Advertising and marketing

Defining the purpose of your brand mascot within your advertising and marketing strategies. It involves forming the mascot's role in branding campaigns: Will it be a Brand Spokesperson, an entertainer tool, a static mascot, a virtual influencer, or something else?

We should define its purpose clearly on various digital media platforms, including social media platforms, events, advertising videos, physical packaging, urban displays, etc... All this will ensure brand consistency across diverse media, enhancing engagement and brand recall through interactivity.

Phase 6: Character mascot for storytelling

It creates an approach to telling stories through Storytelling Transmedia. It forces the character to share its story across the brand's channels on digital media, such as social media, websites, events, AR/VR worlds, games, TV, and commercials campaigns. That will pull audiences in more deeply than ever before. The mascot is used as a narrative anchor to humanize the brand. It will build long-term emotional bonds with the audience, differentiating the brand from competitors.

3. Analysis Study

3.1 Case Studies of Successful Anthropomorphic Brand Mascots in Digital Media


The analysis study will be applied to 3 Case Studies of Successful Anthropomorphic Brand Mascots in Digital Media. The research established three fundamental dimensions that defined the approach used to analyze the cases studied and will be examined as follows (table 7).

Three fundamental dimensions define the analysis approach for the studied cases. (Table7)	
Dimensions 1: Brand Identity	
Focus: The anthropomorphic brand mascot embodies the brand's core personality and values.... Sub-Activities:	
Brand Personality Analysis Brand personality Framework and traits: Categorize traits into sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, or ruggedness. Study relevant: Study the competitor's mascot that is offered in marketing	Narrative Development Brand identity: Brand's core essences Mascot name: what we will call it. Storytelling: by defining the mascot, then creating a backstory.

Audience Alignment: Align mascot traits with target audience.	
Dimensions 2: Artistic Vision Focus on integrating creativity for art and design elements and principles with anthropomorphic elements to create a differentiated character mascot.... Sub-Activities:	
Relate to Conceptual & Ideation: Mood Boards: Collect inspirational visual elements to develop a mascot design. Anthropomorphic Traits: Define features like facial expressions, Posture & Movement, etc.	Symbolic Design Elements: Color Scheme: Use brand-aligned colors. Shape Language: Rounded/ Angular shapes, etc. Cultural Relevance: Avoid stereotypes and sacred cultural symbols.
Dimensions 3: Technological Innovation Focus: Implementing the mascot across digital media platforms Sub-Activities:	
Digital Adaptation: 2D Vector Graphics and/or 3D Modeling: Using tools like Photoshop, Illustrator, Blender, or ZBrush to create usable, high-quality mascot assets. Static or Animated: Develop frame-by-frame or rigged animations for dynamic interactions.	Digital Media Platform Social media: like Instagram/TikTok: Short looping animations, Twitter: Sticker-like static mascot. Websites/ Mobile: Interactive or gamified mascot Immersive Technologies: AR Integration, VR Integration, mascot guides in virtual stores. Interactive Chatbots, AI-driven Mascots.

Case Study 1: Kellogg's Frosted Flakes(Tony the Tiger)



Analysis Mascot (Tony the Tiger) Across Three Dimensions (table8)

Dimension	Sub-Activity	Kellogg's Frosted Flakes's Mascot (Tony the Tiger) Analysis
Dimension 1 Brand Identity	Brand Personality Analysis	<p>Brand identity: Kellogg's Frosted Flakes</p> <p>Brand Personality Framework and Traits:</p> <p>Excitement and Competence, Traits:(Figure)</p> <p>Energetic, optimistic, and motivational.</p> <p>Encouraging and empowering (e.g., catchphrase: "They're Great!").</p> <p>Friendly and approachable, appealing to children and families.</p> <p>Competitor Essence: Contrasts with mascots like Toucan Sam (whimsical) by emphasizing athleticism.</p> 

		Audience Alignment: A Male tiger with a strong, encouraging persona aligns with children's preferences for heroic, relatable figures.
	Narrative Development	Mascot Name: Tony the Tiger (Figure14) Backstory/Storytelling: Tony's backstory revolves around motivating kids to be active and confident ("They're Great!"). Symbolizes energy and achievement.
Dimension 2 Artistic Vision	Conceptual & Ideation	Mood Boards: Sports imagery (e.g., athletics, adventure) inspires Tony's dynamic persona. Anthropomorphic Tiger Traits Alignment with Brand Personality: orange fur, black stripes, and a blue neckerchief. Athletic and muscular build to symbolize energy and strength. Exaggerated smile and dynamic poses to convey enthusiasm.
	Symbolic Design Elements	Color Scheme: Orange (energy, fun) and black (strength); blue neckerchief adds trust. Shape Language: The rounded head and body are used for approachability; the sharp claws subtly imply energy. Cultural Relevance: Neutral species (tiger) avoids cultural stereotypes, ensuring global appeal.
Dimension 3 Tech. Innovation	Digital Adaptation	2D/3D Modeling: High-quality 3D commercial animations (e.g., Tony skiing or playing sports). Static/Animated: Rigged animations for TV ads and social media.
	Digital Media Platform	Social media: Looping animations on Instagram/TikTok (e.g., Tony cheering). Websites/Apps: Interactive games (e.g., Tony-themed challenges on Kellogg's website). Immersive Tech: AR filters (e.g., virtual Tony "high-fives"); currently limited AI/chatbot use. Digital Media Success Metrics: High social media engagement: Viral memes, GIFs, and TikTok challenges featuring Tony. Video views: Millions of views on YouTube ads and animations. Brand recognition: Consistently ranks among the most recognized mascots globally. Campaign Impact: Successful digital campaigns (e.g., Great Starts hashtag) drive user interaction.
(Table8) Case Study 1: Kellogg's Frosted Flakes's Mascot (Tony the Tiger)		

Case Study 2: Duolingo (Duo the Owl)

Analysis Mascot (Duo the Owl) Across Three Dimensions (table9)

Dimension	Sub-Activity	Duolingo (Duo the Owl) Analysis	
Dimension 1 Brand Identity	Brand Personality Analysis	<p>Brand identity: Duolingo (language-learning app focused on gamified education)</p> <p>Brand Personality Framework and Traits: Sincerity, and excitement. <u>Traits:</u> Encouraging (pushes users to complete lessons). Playful (uses humor in notifications/social media). Persistent (frequent reminders to practice). Relatable (meme-style antics on TikTok/Instagram)</p> <p>Competitor Study: Duo uses humor and relatability, unlike formal competitors.</p> <p>Audience Alignment: The gender-neutral owl represents an ageless species that people find universally appealing. The traits match the needs of worldwide learners who want enjoyable learning without feelings of guilt.</p>	
	Narrative Development	<p>Mascot Name: Duo the Owl (primary mascot). Also features secondary characters (e.g., Lily, Eddy, etc.). (Figure 15)</p> <p>Backstory/Storytelling: The character Duo presents himself as an encouraging daily practice coach who gently pushes users to practice every day. Memes and social media portray him as a playful yet caring figure, which boosts user engagement.</p>	
Dimension 2 Artistic Vision	Conceptual & Ideation	<p>Mood Boards: Combines "education" (books, globes) with "playfulness" (bright colors, cartoonish style).</p> <p>Anthropomorphic OWL Traits Alignment with Brand Personality: Green owl (symbolizes growth, wisdom, and friendliness). Simple, cartoonish design with large eyes and rounded features for approachability. Expressive animations (e.g., celebratory dances, sad faces for missed lessons).</p>	
	Symbolic Design Elements	<p>Color Scheme: Green (growth, harmony) dominates, aligning with language-learning goals.</p> <p>Shape Language: Rounded shapes (friendly), smooth curves (calmness).</p> <p>Cultural Relevance: Neutral design avoids cultural symbols, ensuring global accessibility.</p>	

Dimension 3 Tech. Innovation	Digital Adaptation	<p>- 2D/3D Design: 2D vector graphics (simplicity for app/web).</p> <p>- Static/Animated Use: Frame-by-frame animations in-app; TikTok videos with looping humor (e.g., dancing Duo).</p>
	Digital Media Platform	<p>Social media: TikTok/Instagram: Viral memes and animations; Twitter: Static Duo in memes.</p> <p>Websites/Apps: Gamified interactions (streak rewards, Duo reactions).</p> <p>Immersive Tech: AI-driven push notifications (e.g., "Duo is sad you missed practice!")</p> <p>Digital Media Success Metrics</p> <p>Viral TikTok/Instagram presence: 10M+ followers, memes generating millions of views.</p> <p>High engagement: Notifications with Duo have ~60% open rates.</p> <p>Brand recognition: Duo is synonymous with language learning (80% user retention rate).</p> <p>Cultural impact: Duo's "threatening" memes became a global internet joke, boosting relatability.</p>

(Table9) Case Study 2: Duolingo (Duo the Owl)

Case Study 3: Michelin (Bibendum)

Analysis Mascot (Bibendum) Using the Three Dimensions (table10)

Dimension	Sub-Activity	Michelin (Bibendum) Analysis
Dimension 1 Brand Identity	Brand Personality Analysis	<p>Brand identity: Michelin (global tire manufacturer).</p> <p>Brand Personality Framework and Traits:</p> <p>Adventure and sincerity.</p> <p>Traits:</p> <p>Trustworthy (symbolizes durability/safety).</p> <p>Friendly (approachable demeanor).</p> <p>Expert (embodies Michelin's technical expertise).</p> <p>Competitor Essence: Competitors focus on ruggedness (e.g., off-road tires), but Michelin emphasizes trust and longevity.</p> <p>Audience Alignment: Gender-neutral, ageless mascot; targets drivers and businesses seeking durability. Aligns with traits like reliability and resilience.</p>



	Narrative Development	<p>Mascot Name: Bibendum (commonly known as the "Michelin Man"). (figure16)</p> <p>Backstory/Storytelling: The Michelin Man was created in 1898 as a stack of tires resembling a human. Backstory highlights strength, resilience, and innovation, which reinforces Michelin's commitment to durable, high-performance tires.</p>
Dimension 2 Artistic Vision	Conceptual & Ideation	<p>Mood Boards: Industrial elements (tires, machinery) combined with friendly, human-like features.</p> <p>Anthropomorphic Michelin Traits Alignment with Brand Personality:</p> <p>Made of stacked white tires (resembling a human figure). Rotund, friendly appearance with black "tire" limbs. Classic pince-nez glasses and smile.</p>
	Symbolic Design Elements	<p>Color Scheme: White (cleanliness, simplicity) contrasts with black tires to enhance memorability.</p> <p>Shape Language: Rounded shapes (approachable) with tire treads (ruggedness).</p> <p>Cultural Relevance: Universally abstract design; avoids cultural stereotypes or sacred symbols.</p>
Dimension 3 Tech. Innovation	Digital Adaptation	<p>2D/3D Modeling: Bibendum appears in 3D animations for commercials and digital ads (e.g., YouTube). 2D vector graphics are used in logos and websites.</p> <p>Static/Animated: Animated Michelin in ads representing tire performance.</p>
	Digital Media Platform	<p>Social media: Short animations on Instagram/TikTok showcasing Bibendum in action (e.g., rolling over terrain).</p> <p>Websites/Apps: Interactive features (e.g., virtual tire configurators with Bibendum).</p> <p>Immersive Tech: AR filters for virtual tire visualizations; VR integration in showrooms with Bibendum as a guide.</p> <p>Digital Media Success Metrics</p> <p>Social Media Engagement: Nostalgic campaigns (e.g., Bibendum Birthday) drive shares/likes.</p> <p>Brand Recognition: 90%+ global awareness.</p> <p>Campaign Reach: Viral videos (e.g., Michelin adventures) blend mascot storytelling with product message.</p>

(Table10) Case Study 3: Michelin (Bibendum)

3.2 Results of Analysis Study

By analysis of previous case studies, the research has identified the most effective traits of successful anthropomorphic brand mascots present in digital media, which appear a successful integration of brand personality and anthropomorphism...

- 1- Brand mascots act as effective solutions for market identification and differentiation challenges. Anthropomorphized brand mascots promote brand recognition, as they help customers tend to select brands rapidly at the time of purchase.
- 2- Anthropomorphized Brand mascots establish emotional connections which allow consumers to form personal bonds with their brands through appearing on multiple platforms and at various events to connect with consumers and build their positive emotional responses.
- 3- Anthropomorphized Brand mascots demonstrate expert storytelling skills that they use to market products powerfully. The creative storytelling methods of mascots effectively deliver brand narratives, core values, and messages to audiences.
- 4- Anthropomorphized Brand mascots giving their brands human-like faces and traits, which can help create a powerful storytelling tool to convey the brand message over the character journey in the story.
- 5- Brand mascots are versatile brand ambassadors. They can be used in different marketing materials, from advertising campaigns to social media. Whether in a TV commercial, on social media pages, or in an email marketing campaign, mascots can easily fit into several channels and keep reminding the brand message.
- 6- The design of characters requires careful attention because their visual elements and messages need to match various cultural environments to avoid misunderstanding or accidental offense.
- 7- A mascot needs to always maintain its personality and visual style across different media platforms; if not, it may cause a weakening in brand recognition. Due to modern technologies and cultural changes.

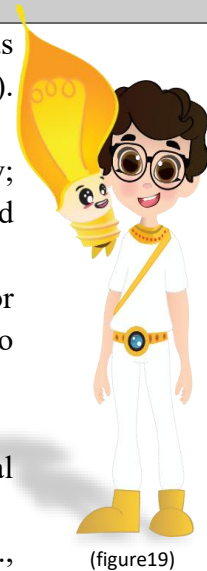
Applying Study: **Innovative Egypt (Noor (Robotic Lamp) Adam)**

Analysis Mascot "Noor Adam" Across Three Dimensions (table11)



Dimension	Sub-Activity	Adam & His Robotic Lamp's Mascot Analysis
Dimension 1 Brand Identity	Brand Personality Analysis	<p>Brand identity: Innovative Egypt is an Egyptian initiative aimed at encouraging children for innovation, education, and creation. It aligns with Egypt's push for the development of children's content.</p> <p>Brand Personality Framework and Traits: Innovation and Sincerity, Traits: Friendly, curious, innovative, wise, and approachable.</p> <p>Competitor Essence: Not a lot of interest in this field.</p> <p>Audience Alignment: Egyptian children (ages 5-12).</p>
	Narrative Development	<p>Mascot Name: Noor Adam, a name consisting of two syllables. Noor is a robotic lamp, and Adam is the kid who created it. (Figure 17)</p> <p>Backstory/Storytelling: Adam is a young Egyptian inventor who likes technology, specially creating robots. One day, he had an idea to create a small robot like a lamp with AI software that could communicate and assist him in addressing community problems. The robotic lamp called Noor (from: light) represents innovation and hope, motivating children to learn STEM fields.</p>
Dimension 2 Artistic Vision	Conceptual & Ideation	<p>Mood Boards: The concept of collecting items blends Egyptian aesthetics and Technology. The mood boards mix old symbols related to Egyptian knowledge like Ain Horus and hieroglyphic patterns. With Egyptian customs, I present here two different styles and could be more depending on the implementation), then think to represent tech elements as a lamp to relate also to thinking and STEM-themed accessories (figure 18).</p> <p>Anthropomorphic Traits Alignment with Brand Personality: Adam's posture: A Confident stance encourages creativity. His expression reflects his insight into the future, his customs relate to Egyptian culture, and the prop relates to technology assets.</p>

		<p>Robotic Lamp: The lamp adds a "tech-savvy, helpful companion" trait. Dynamic, relatable character, expressive light flickers, LED eyes, and playful movements engage children. These two characters align with the initiative's emphasis on "dynamic, relatable characters."</p>
	Symbolic Design Elements	<p>Color Scheme: Bright blues (tech) and golds (Egyptian heritage). (Figure 19).</p> <p>Shape Language:</p> <p>Adam: Rounded shapes for approachability; youthful clothing with STEM-themed accessories.</p> <p>Robotic Lamp: Angular shapes for energy/tech; expressive "face" (LED eyes) to mimic emotions.</p> <p>Cultural Relevance: Through the design; Avoid overt religious symbols; use neutral futuristic themes.</p> <p>Refined gestures to Egyptian heritage (e.g., lamp design inspired by ancient Egyptian motifs like lotus shapes, modernized with tech elements, symbolic an patterns).</p>
Dimension 3 Tech. Innovation	Digital Adaptation	<p>2D/3D Modeling: It is a 2D Character mascot.</p> <p>Static/Animated: It could present as 2D Rigged animation or as frame-by-frame, or Static as campaign advertising.</p>
	Digital Media Platform	<p>Social media: Short loops of Adam and Noor solving issues like puzzles, or tell a story or provide educational content.</p> <p>Websites/Apps: These could present things like Gamified "Invent with Adam" challenges (earn badges).</p> <p>Immersive Tech: AR: Virtual "invention lab" where kids interact with the lamp. VR: Mascot guides children through a virtual Egyptian history museum, blending education and play.</p>
(Table11) Applying Study: Innovative Egypt initiative(Noor & Adam)		



Conclusion:

Brand mascots present as more than visual marketing tools. They are strategic assets that perfectly represent the brand's values and characteristics. Brand mascots work through visual elements and emotional stories to influence consumer perceptions deeply and build brand loyalty by personifying abstract values such as trust, friendliness, and reliability.^{xxix}

The research demonstrates that anthropomorphism and brand personality determine the appropriate mascot character design approach for digital media platforms. A brand character mascot with proper design that matches brand values will boost brand visibility and establish emotional connections while driving consumer engagement.

Research Results:

The study finds that anthropomorphism and brand personality are key factors that impact the design of brand character mascots in digital media. Through a theoretical study and analysis of successful study cases...

- 1- Anthropomorphism improves brand differentiation: Which is promoted by presenting human-like traits such as facial expressions, gestures, and speech features through anthropomorphism to clarify the brand personality.
- 2- Consistence between Brand Personality and Anthropomorphism: Enhances the design of the Brand character Mascot by embodying a brand's core traits and values in the Mascot Design to create a better emotional connection with consumers to understand the brand's essence.
- 3- Mapping the perfect strategy for designing a brand character mascot: It requires strong integration between anthropomorphism and brand personality to increase brand memorability and effectively engage differently on social media.
- 4- Cultural Factors and Contexts impact the design of Character Mascots: So we should be cautious before using anthropomorphic mascots in different cultural, contexts and digital channels. Creating characters' mascots should be based on the audience they want to reach.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for brand organizations and designers aiming to develop impactful mascot character strategies for digital media:

1. Designers should align Mascot characteristics with the brand's core values to ensure authenticity and build brand identity.
2. This design strategy for brand character mascot, which is presented in this research, should be included in the academic curriculum for students learning courses related to character design or mascot creation for brands.
3. Adding motion graphics, interactivity, or AR/VR elements may enhance user interaction and make the mascots more appealing in the digital environment.
4. Research should be done in the market to ensure that mascot designs align with the brand personality, effectively reflect its message, and are culturally appropriate for the audience to avoid any potentially offensive interpretations.
5. As consumer behavior is dynamic, brands should regularly update their mascot designs and behaviors to remain relevant in the market while keeping the core elements of the mascots recognizable.

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