This chapter details the observations and conclusions made about the De Villiers brand through a process of various levels of analysis. The brand, typology and competition have been analyzed against the theoretical background of branding, sensory marketing and environmental psychology, as well as in terms of the five categories of interior design methods mentioned in the Imaginal Interior methodology (Königk, 2015) outlined in Chapter 1. Five design ideals were reached as elements that ideally need to be present in future designs, and these are further discussed at the end of this chapter.

The methods of analysis included observation, participation, photo analysis, precedent comparison and interpretation of the given material provided by Lyn Noble, a visitor to the store.

Figure 4 (P.T.O.) is a summary of the brand analysis undertaken and should be viewed as A0 Posters. Author, 2016.
4.1 Branding

For a fledgling company, the brand is crucial as it sets the foundation for the company’s identity. The brand is not just a logo or a name; it is a representation of the company’s values and beliefs. DV Chocolate, for instance, is being used by the company to expand its reach beyond the artisan market. The experiences on DV Chocolate’s website and ranges on campus, diversify into new products and services offered.

TheDVChocolate marketing strategy is the company’s being presented as a premium chocolate brand. This strategy is being used to capture the attention of the luxury market and to create a perception of exclusivity. The DV Chocolate product is presented as a high-quality, artisanal chocolate that is made from organic ingredients. The company has been able to achieve this by promoting the DV Chocolate’s Aztec origins. Although the current DV Chocolate marketing presentation does not include this historic aspect of the chocolate, it implies that DV Chocolate wants to expand its focus on heritage in any design going forward, providing a sophisticated execution.

4.2 Marketing

The DV Chocolate marketing strategy is to present the company as a premium chocolate brand. This strategy is being used to capture the attention of the luxury market and to create a perception of exclusivity. The DV Chocolate product is presented as a high-quality, artisanal chocolate that is made from organic ingredients. The company has been able to achieve this by promoting the DV Chocolate’s Aztec origins. Although the current DV Chocolate marketing presentation does not include this historic aspect of the chocolate, it implies that DV Chocolate wants to expand its focus on heritage in any design going forward, providing a sophisticated execution.

4.3 Environmental Psychology

The DV Chocolate marketing strategy is to present the company as a premium chocolate brand. This strategy is being used to capture the attention of the luxury market and to create a perception of exclusivity. The DV Chocolate product is presented as a high-quality, artisanal chocolate that is made from organic ingredients. The company has been able to achieve this by promoting the DV Chocolate’s Aztec origins. Although the current DV Chocolate marketing presentation does not include this historic aspect of the chocolate, it implies that DV Chocolate wants to expand its focus on heritage in any design going forward, providing a sophisticated execution.

4.4 Typology

The DV Chocolate marketing strategy is to present the company as a premium chocolate brand. This strategy is being used to capture the attention of the luxury market and to create a perception of exclusivity. The DV Chocolate product is presented as a high-quality, artisanal chocolate that is made from organic ingredients. The company has been able to achieve this by promoting the DV Chocolate’s Aztec origins. Although the current DV Chocolate marketing presentation does not include this historic aspect of the chocolate, it implies that DV Chocolate wants to expand its focus on heritage in any design going forward, providing a sophisticated execution.

4.5 Competition

The DV Chocolate marketing strategy is to present the company as a premium chocolate brand. This strategy is being used to capture the attention of the luxury market and to create a perception of exclusivity. The DV Chocolate product is presented as a high-quality, artisanal chocolate that is made from organic ingredients. The company has been able to achieve this by promoting the DV Chocolate’s Aztec origins. Although the current DV Chocolate marketing presentation does not include this historic aspect of the chocolate, it implies that DV Chocolate wants to expand its focus on heritage in any design going forward, providing a sophisticated execution.

4.6 Timeliness

The DV Chocolate marketing strategy is to present the company as a premium chocolate brand. This strategy is being used to capture the attention of the luxury market and to create a perception of exclusivity. The DV Chocolate product is presented as a high-quality, artisanal chocolate that is made from organic ingredients. The company has been able to achieve this by promoting the DV Chocolate’s Aztec origins. Although the current DV Chocolate marketing presentation does not include this historic aspect of the chocolate, it implies that DV Chocolate wants to expand its focus on heritage in any design going forward, providing a sophisticated execution.
For a fledgling company, however the factory store the extension into the DV justice.

From the surrounding existing Cape Dutch farm Chocolate and all branding graphics, typefaces, store product ranges expand. Growing as the brand and logo that can easily be future designs can be used.

Furthermore, the brand does not take awareness in new locations. And Coffee Expo that could exploit their status as the country where the brand strategy and brand image is technology involved in the educational experiences on and other elements like the shelves and connections merely placed on random campus. Merchandise is store and in the surrounding thresholds, signage and density of the store are problematic. The thresholds are confusing and there specific areas. Ironically, these are not necessarily the areas of timeliness and worldliness in store although they lack tasting experience where they explain where the presenter has to resort to handheld laminated posters. Furthermore, the presentation lacks finesse and sophistication as the chocolate's creation verify the artistry which are promoted above the other chocolate in store. Furthermore, manned active viewer where visitors can interact with factory staff. This further implies that the visible behind a wall of glass, allowing the visitor to feel part of the process as an honest and eco-friendly, as the natural materials are not disguised or hidden behind the company and that that the company is ecologically friendly. This is due to the up-cycled nature of the luminaire, using a material that themselves. This then also has a number of second and third order meanings, those clever use of material for a lampshade and immediately links to the cocoa beans they, and many will be discussed in other sections of the book where appropriate, areas of the company, despite its true nature and although they give off positive contrast creates an "affordable luxury". Typically, chocolate's creation adds to the customer's premium service and customer does not verify the artistry which are promoted above the other chocolate in store.
4.9 Synthesis and Proximity

These two categories have been grouped together because they have not been considered or incorporated into the current design. In terms of synthesis, there is no current cohesive brand image across spaces or buildings and the spaces do not come together pragmatically or aesthetically to form a cohesive whole. Similarly, proximal assemblies have not been used to create meaning in this case and often cause confusion in the mind of the visitor, thus negatively influencing the brand’s image. Furthermore, the current layout of the factory store is almost entirely dependent on the building’s Cape Dutch layout which is compartmentalized and as a result no narrative or program can be followed.

4.10 Design Ideals

As part of the conclusions that were drawn, a set of design ideals were determined as a basis from which to start building the design. These are overall conclusions that come from observations and insights of the typology, and the brand’s factory store.

4.10.1 Design Ideal: The Balance between Old and New

One of the most obvious elements discovered through the analysis of the brand was the idea of balance between old and new, or traditional and contemporary in a single object which is evident in both the factory and the shop. It does not appear that this idea of duality was intentional, but rather a happy co-incidence.

The best example of this is the machinery used in the manufacturing of the chocolate itself. Designed by engineer owner Piet de Villiers, the new machinery uses old parts from discarded ovens and washing machines, and these new machines are used to create new tastes of chocolate using old (ancient) methods and ideas (De Villiers 2, 2015). This mix of old and new can be seen in other examples such as the traditional ceiling with a contemporary white finish; the traditional hemp sacks being used in a contemporary fashion to create new light fixtures; and using traditional materials such as timber in the creation of contemporary furniture items.

Another example of this duality is evident in the brand’s logo, with its intentional mix of traditional and contemporary typefaces. The “D” is the contemporary typeface – san serif with thin, clean lines, similar to typefaces used in the logo for The Body Shop for example. In opposition, the “V” is in a traditional typeface – a serif font with elaborate curls and swirls, similar to those fonts used to indicate elegance, luxury and royalty – for example those typefaces used for Cartier, and the British royal monarchy (Figure 4.10.1.5-6). This contrast creates interest for the viewer, implying that the brand and it’s product is new and exciting while still showcasing it as a luxurious and established brand.

In future design this idea can be implemented in a number of ways, for example using traditional materials in new or unexpected ways, using existing product in contemporary fashions; or creating new products using old methods.

4.10.2 Design Ideal: Education

Another prominent focus of the brand is that of educating the customer about chocolate – where it comes from, how it is made and how to eat it correctly. This is evident in the large scale graphics in store, as well as through their tasting experiences.

The graphics on the walls detail the history of chocolate, how the beans are harvested and the bean to bar manufacturing process. They also detail how the taste wheel functions and how the beans are chosen from different countries around the world.

Through the general tasting experience, the type of chocolate and its flavours are briefly explained by small placards on easels next to each flavor and questions can be asked of the staff if more information is required. In the Single Origins Tasting experience, the visitor pays for a full presentation that explains all the graphics on the wall – the history of chocolate and manufacturing process, as well as a full explanation and tasting of the Single Origins range and how it came to be. This experience comes with a paper “placemat” souvenir that customers can take home that explains the presentation again for later reading.

This educational thread continues in the packaging of the chocolate, and especially in the taste packs that have detailed graphics within.

There are, however gaps in the brand’s interactive educational focus. There are no leaflet type items for those wishing to learn more about the brand and the store does not include any link to the pairing of wine to the chocolate which could be a lucrative venture for the company to pursue. There is also no actual presentation, verbal or graphic, to indicate the proper tasting process. These elements can be used to further increase the value of any future ventures or concept stores.

4.10.3 Design Ideal: Transparency

The idea of transparency is a broad concept that needs to be evident across a number of areas in order to be successful, the first of which being the transparency of the manufacturing process. Typical of the typology, a portion of the chocolate manufacturing process is often made visible to the visitor to prove to them that the chocolate is indeed made by hand and that the facility is clean and the product hygienic. To support this, the staff in turn need to be fully trained and knowledgeable on all appropriate matters of the business, from manufacturing to display. This implies that the company has nothing to hide and adds another level of transparency to the company. DV Chocolate is able to capture this through displaying most of the factory behind floor-to-ceiling glass walls and having fully trained, knowledgeable staff on hand.

In a similar vein, the company needs to be as socially and environmentally responsible by the visitor, which will imply that the company is transparent in its dealings with its suppliers and will benefit the surrounding communities. DV Chocolate proudly displays its UTZ certification, supports local artists and sells locally made crafts in store.
There are also a number of other ways to imply transparency through design. This can be done for example by leaving certain raw materials exposed, or by having sufficient lighting so that nothing appears to be concealed or in the shadows. DV Chocolate currently has both of these in practice in the current store, and where materials have been innovatively used, the materials function and not its structure have been transformed to create something new.

All of these elements need to be considered in the new design to continue the brand’s reputation of transparency. However elements will need to be carefully considered so to be able to implement them in a new context. This is especially relevant in terms of providing the visitor with a view into the factory, as it is neither feasible nor viable to install a factory at every location.

4.10.4 Design Ideal: Luxury

Luxuriousness was an ideal noted for its absence rather than its visibility in the DV Chocolate store. Chocolate in general is seen as a luxurious item and artisan chocolate even more so. In today’s economy, few people can afford to spend money on luxurious items but due to its small portion size and relative cost-effectiveness, many will view chocolate as a ‘treat’ that they are willing and able to indulge in every now and then – an ‘affordable luxury’ (Morris, 2012) if you will.

However, in order to be considered a luxurious product that customers are willing to pay more for, the brand aesthetic, store image and packaging all have to look and feel luxurious too. DV Chocolate’s current store interior lets the brand down in this regard as the rustic, built-as-required furniture and aesthetic cannot be associated with a luxurious product in the mind of the consumer.

In order to create the connotations of luxury for the consumer, the design needs to be carefully considered in terms of lighting, materiality and colour palette, in order to create an overall image of luxury in the mind of the consumer.

4.10.5 Design Ideal: Artisan

The most important ideal under consideration is the fact that DV Chocolate is truly artisan in nature and this needs to be expressed through the entire store – from the store’s personality right down to the finer details of the graphics, display and typography.

Currently in store, the artisan ideals of the company have been expressed through the large scale graphics, the easel presentation in the tasting area and the visual presentation of the chocolate making process. This quality can also be seen in the varied use of typeface and graphic styles, both in store and in their printables. The graphics have clearly been done by hand and this adds a richer layer of context to the business as a whole.

Unfortunately, due to their very nature, artisan enterprises tend to be arty and eclectic, and there seems to be a fine line between handmade and home-made products and design – the differences of which can be clearly recognized in terminology, product and shop design.

The term “home-made” implies just that – a product that has been made at home. These products are considered crude, amateurish, rustic and messy. The products are considered simply made, fancy craft projects that are generally average in quality and often plain or unsophisticated. These are also often DIY projects that do not live up to their inspiration (Etsy, 2012).

“Hand-made” products in comparison, are objects made by hand, usually at a factory. These products are considered artisanal, sophisticated, clean and of a professional quality, and they can be easily be considered as luxury gifts. They are generally sold at classy boutiques and are often called hand-crafted items (Etsy, 2012).

The biggest difference can be clearly seen when looking at examples of each, side by side, in a simple form – a cupcake. A home-made cupcake (Figure 4.10.5.6) usually has sloppy icing, with a few generic sprinkles on top of a vanilla, average tasting and dry bun in a generic paper wrapper. They generally look messy and you can be sure that the chef ate more icing out the bowl than what landed on your cupcake. The handmade cupcake (Figure 4.10.5.7) however, is the one bought at the specialized cupcake shop. The bun itself will come in a wide range of interesting flavours, with fancy wrappers that look fit to hold the artwork of icing that adorns its crust. The icing too will come in fantastic variations, with exciting toppings, all of which constitutes a sensation that keeps you coming back for more.

A similar distinction can be observed when looking at the temporary stalls created for these types of products at fairs or festivals. The home-made products are poorly displayed in terribly decorated stalls. Signage is printed at home and tacked to the walls and trestle tables are covered in garish, messy swaths of fabric with little thought to the overall design. The artisanal stores however, are well thought out with clever store designs that really showcase the product on offer and create a differentiation between the brands themselves in terms of look and feel. These artisanal stores are clean and sophisticated, and makes the product seem more luxurious than it actually is. It builds confidence in the product and the customer believes that the product is a quality item that is worth the premium it comes at.

Thus the difference between home-made and handmade is the “quality [that] resides in the hidden details that aren’t obvious to most.

It’s craftsmanship that gives luxury brands longevity and which lets them weather trends” (Raisanen, 2014). Quality, sophistication and professionalism are the key qualities that define an artisanal product and these qualities then need to be taken through into the new design.
4.11 Conclusion

In conclusion of this chapter, it is evident that there are many positive and negative aspects of this store that a design team can use as a basis for a conceptual approach, with a special focus on fulfilling the needs of the 5 ideals.

It is my intention to take elements that DV Chocolate has not yet fully explored or exploited and use these to create a roll out program for the brand based on the content gathered in this chapter and in the conceptual design phase outlined in the next chapter. My hope is that a new more sophisticated brand identity will be created for the DV Chocolate brand that the company take hold of and use as they expand their company footprint that is not only true to their values as an artisan company, but also showcases their product as a luxury item for both locals and tourists alike.

Figure 4 Embedded Captions:

Figure 4.1 Photograph collage illustrating the branding elements evident in the current factory store. Figures 4.1.1-3, 4.1.6, 4.1.8, 4.1.10 are photographs taken by L. Noble. 2015. Figures 4.1.4, 4.1.7, 4.1.9 are photographs taken from De Villiers 1, 2015.

Figure 4.2 Photograph collage illustrating the sensory marketing elements evident in the current factory store. Figures 4.2.1-3, 4.2.5 are photographs taken by L. Noble. 2015. Figures 4.2.4 are photographs taken from De Villiers 1, 2015. Figures 4.2.6 is a photograph taken by Author, 2015.

Figure 4.3 Photograph collage illustrating the environmental psychology elements evident in the current factory store. Figures 4.3.1-3, 4.3.11-13, 4.3.15-16 are photographs taken by L. Noble. 2015. Figures 4.3.9, 4.3.10, 4.3.14-16 are photographs taken from De Villiers 1, 2015.

Figure 4.4 Photograph collage reflecting the artisan chocolate shop typology. Figure 4.4.1: photograph of Honest Factory Window taken from Honest, 2015; Figure 4.4.2 Wood texture taken from Mien, 2015; Figure 4.4.3 Photograph of cocoa beans on display taken by L. Noble, 2015; Figure 4.4.4 Photograph of a chocolatier taken from Busacca, 2008; Figure 4.4.5 Photograph of truffles taken from Yu, 2015; Figure 4.4.6 Photograph of Chocolate gifting taken from Harry and David, 2015.

Figure 4.5 Photographs reflecting product and interiors from the competition. Figure 4.5.1-9 photographs taken from; Honest, 2015; Figure 4.5.10-12 photographs taken from Sklar, 2015; Figures 4.5.13-14, 4.5.16, 4.5.18 images taken from Woolworths, 2015; Figures 4.5.15, 4.5.17 photographs taken by Author, 2015.

Figure 4.6 Photographs reflecting timeliness in the current interior of the factory store. Figures 4.6.1, 4.6.2, 4.6.3, 4.6.10, 4.6.12 are photographs taken by L. Noble. 2015. Figures 4.6.2-10, 4.6.12 are photographs taken from De Villiers 1, 2015.

Figure 4.7 Photographs reflecting associative elements in the current interior of the factory store. Figures 4.7.1-19 are photographs taken by L. Noble. 2015. Figures 4.7.20 is a photograph taken from De Villiers 1, 2015.

Figure 4.8 Photographs reflecting technification in the current interior of the factory store. Figures 4.8.1-8 are photographs taken by L. Noble, 2015.

Figure 4.10.1 Collection of images and diagrams indicating duality in the current brand strategy and factory store interior. Figures 4.10.1.1-2 are photographs edited by the Author and originally taken by L. Noble. 2015. Figures 4.10.1.3 is edited by the Author and taken from De Villiers 1, 2015. Figures 4.10.1.4 is a photograph taken from the Body Shop, 2015. Figures 4.10.1.5 is taken from Ministry of Typo, 2009. Figures 4.10.1.6 is taken from Mocci Designs, 2014.

Figure 4.10.2 Collection of images indicating educational elements in the current brand strategy and factory store interior. Figure 4.10.2.1-2 are from scans of the printables store edited by Author, 2015. Figures 4.10.2.3-4 are photographs taken by L. Noble and adapted by Author, 2015.

Figure 4.10.3 Collection of images indicating educational elements in the current brand strategy and factory store interior. Figure 4.10.3.1 taken from Utz Kopisch, 2015. Figure 4.10.3.2-4 are photographs taken by L. Noble and adapted by Author, 2015.

Figure 4.10.4 Collection of images indicating elements of luxury in the current brand strategy and factory store interior. Figures 4.10.4.1-2 are edited by the Author and taken from De Villiers 1, 2015.

Figure 4.10.5 Collection of images indicating artisanal elements in the current brand strategy and factory store interior. Figure 4.10.5.1 is from scans of the printables store edited by Author, 2015. Figure 4.10.5.2-5 are photographs taken by L. Noble and adapted by Author, 2015. Figure 4.10.5.6 is taken from Bryant, 2009. (Powell, 2014)