

Proposed Revision of Airline Corporate Identity Manual: Creating a design that communicates a corporate philosophy formed at inception to an internal and external audience through regional university-industry collaboration

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Japanese regional airline AIRDO Co., Ltd., approached the Sapporo City University School of Design for its cooperation in revising the company's Corporate Identity ("CI") Manual on its 20th anniversary. In order to clarify the concept behind AIRDO's CI, a workshop attended by AIRDO employees and School of Design students to identify the purposes of the company's CI summarized these in a lead statement that was to be placed at the beginning of the manual. The primary feature of this research was that it saw the formation of a "lead statement" that clarified the CI concept and considered its background prior to the revision of the CI Manual. It surveyed ordering departments within the company and external companies (three in total) that receive orders on their use of the CI Manual. Problems were identified, decisions on the revision policy made, and a focus was put on the necessary minimum elements. In addition to the main manual, a digest version concentrating only on use of the logotype and symbol mark and guidelines for external distribution were created. Feedback within the company has been generally positive and the original intention behind the logotype and symbol mark are better understood, and the revised CI Manual is regarded as being easier to read and comprehend.

Keywords: Corporate Identity, Internal communication, Workshop

1 Background

1.1 Current situation and request for revision of Corporate Identity Manual AIRDO Co., Ltd. ("AIRDO") is a Japanese regional airline established in 1996 and headquartered in Sapporo, Hokkaidō. The company was initially known as Hokkaidō International Airlines, but later renamed AIRDO, the airline's more commonly-known nickname. This name is a play on words that represents both the "dō" in "Hokkaidō" and the English verb "do," and evokes the imagery of flying to Japan's northernmost prefecture (Hamada: 1999)¹. Flight operations commenced in December 1998 and the company recently celebrated 20 years in the air. The logotype and symbol mark were created by graphic designer Shobun Nakashima² at the time of the company's founding. Shortly

afterwards, a corporate identity ("CI") manual was prepared. However, in the intervening 20 years, various derivations of the logotype and symbol mark have appeared. In 2017, the company made the decision to revise the existing CI manual in the lead-up to its 20th anniversary. AIRDO approached the Sapporo City University School of Design ("School of Design") to engage in a revision of the CI manual through a regional university-industry collaboration request.

1.2 Position of AIRDO and the School of Design

Promoting collaboration between regional industry, academia, government, and financial institutions and contributing to the region is one of the tenets of the School of Design's mission. It engages in student participatory projects closely linked to the region and collaborative research directly connected to the business of regional companies and administrative services related to health, medical care, and welfare. AIRDO, meanwhile, promotes the contribution to regional society in its role as "the wings of Hokkaidō" as a core corporate philosophy. Sharing this philosophy of a desire to contribute to the region, both parties came together to cooperate on this particular project.

1.3 Preliminary survey for CI manual revision

After a preliminary survey (hearing) regarding aspects such as the handling of logo typeface, AIRDO felt that there were several problems in the way of thinking towards corporate identity. Firstly, the question arose as to whether employees correctly understood guidelines concerning logotype and symbol mark or not. It was found that the backdrop to this was a lack of cohesiveness and understanding of the company on the part of employees. Accordingly, ways of expressing the thoughts obtained from employees visually and the possibility of proposing tools to re-familiarize employees with the company were considered. It was thought that perhaps these steps combined could deliver the original intent of the founders when the company was first established to current employees. Based on this thought, a medium by which the thinking behind the company's CI and its concept could be shared both within and outside the company were considered necessary. In view of this, it was decided that a revision of the CI manual would take place based on firmly positioning CI and the CI manual after listening to the thoughts of employees at a workshop.

2 Objective of the Study

In light of the above, it was decided that in this study, revision of the CI Manual would take place after first clarifying the company's CI and the positioning of the CI Manual. For this purpose, the study was to promote further understanding of CI, such as how the company's CI could be understood both internally and externally. Based on this understanding, the aim was to determine how the CI Manual could state simply and clearly how the logotype and symbol mark are to be used. These were the two objectives.

Namely, this was to involve the following two actions:

Objective 1: Propose ways to promote understanding of CI. Have the company's CI understood both internally and externally.

Objective 2: Revise the CI Manual. Transform the current CI Manual to be simpler and easier to understand.

3 Study Method

In accordance with the concept of human-centered design (HCD), the study proceeded along the line of determining the usage situation, clarifying requirements, creating design-based solutions, and verifying that the manual met usage requirements.

To further promote understanding of the company's CI, ideas from employees were elicited at the workshop (see below) and after summarizing these ideas, a list of requirements was created. By documenting these ideas, design-based solutions were formulated, and verification was conducted through a survey of understanding.

In terms of the revision of the CI Manual, the situation regarding usage of the manual was determined through a usage survey (see below) conducted in each department and the results of these surveys identified usage requirements – in other words, it pointed the way towards revision policy. Clarifying the relationship between logotype and symbol mark as originally intended, unnecessary information was deleted and by adding required information, a design-based solution was created and verified by surveying readability and so on.

3.1 Method of Promoting Understanding of AIRDO CI

CI is primarily a concept whereby a company unifies its corporate and organizational philosophies and communicates these externally. In order to communicate a message externally, there first needs to be information to convey and particular media by which it is to be transmitted. The personnel that comprise the company or organization are tasked with this exercise – it is they who best understand the information and content. To communicate better to an external audience, there needs to be loyalty towards and trust in the organization in addition to a correct understanding of the message to be conveyed. Cohesiveness in the organization is required and this should manifest itself in any external messaging.

Consequently, it is vital to achieve 'inner communication' prior to undertaking any 'outer communication'. The inability to undertake inner communication will not lead to optimized outer communication.

As a preliminary process to revising the CI Manual, a proposal was made to create a story about the CI (logotype and symbol mark) to promote the understanding of CI within AIRDO and to further inner communication. The steps specifically taken are outlined below in '4 Promotion of Understanding of CI: Creation of Lead Statement through Workshop'.

3.2 Revision of the Current Cl Manual

With the creation of the story of the CI (logotype and symbol mark) described in '3.1 Method of Promoting Understanding of AIRDO CI' to gain further understanding within the company in mind, the following methods were to be undertaken in the revision of the current CI Manual:

- Clarification of objective: Clarify the purpose of the revision through discussions.
- Determine usage situation: Through interviews and so forth, ask about current usage of the CI Manual, areas that are lacking, problem areas, etc.
- Identifying problems: Elucidate problem areas through brainstorming sessions, etc.
- Clarification of requirements: Clarify requirements (goals) by looking at objective of the manual, it's aims, problem areas, etc.
- Presentation of solutions: Examination of solutions and their feasibility, etc., and summarize proposals and how they can be actualized.
- Proposal evaluation: Evaluation as to whether proposals meet requirements or not.
- Improvements as required: Proposal improvement according to evaluation results.

3.3 Schedule

The overall schedule is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Schedule.

		1	2017			2018				
Item	Overview	Details		Nov	Dec		Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Creat	Creation of CI (Logo) story									
	Survey/Workshop o									
	Clarification of CI (lo	larification of CI (logo) story requirements								
	Proposal of basic de									
	Evaluation of propos	al and creation of beta version based on it								
Revis	Revision of current CI Manual									
	Clarification of objective	Clarify the purpose of the revision through discussions.								
	Determine usage situation									
	Identifying problems	Elucidate problem areas through brainstorming sessions, etc.								
	Carification of requirements	Clarify requirements (goals) by looking at objective of the manual, it's aims, problem areas, etc.								
		Examination of solutions and their feasibility, etc., and summarize proposals and how they can be actualized.								
	Proposal evaluation	Evaluation as to whether proposals meet requirements or not.								
	Improvements as required	Improvement proposals according to evaluation results.								

4 Promotion of Understanding of CI: Creation of Lead Statement through Workshop

As stated above, incorporating the thoughts of the founders at the time of the company's founding, thoughts employees have towards the company, the thinking behind AIRDO's CI and so on in a story explaining the CI (logotype and symbol mark) was considered.

4.1 Objectives behind creation of CI (logotype and symbol mark) story

The objectives behind the creation of a story about the company's CI (logotype and symbol mark) were as follows:

- 1. Convey the story behind the AIRDO company name in an easy-to-understand manner.
- 2. Convey the meaning behind and ideas embodied in the logotype and symbol mark/symbol color.
- 3. Explain not only the steps in the development of the actual design, but also the thoughts held by those involved at the time.
- 4. As a message from the company to its employees, convey the company's idea (vision) through the logotype and symbol mark/symbol color in an easy-to-understand manner.

4.2 Method of implementing the creation of the CI (logotype and symbol mark) story A workshop involving AIRDO employees and students from the School of Design was held in order to obtain the information required to achieve the aforementioned objectives.

The background to the AIRDO logotype and symbol mark and the thoughts it encompasses were to be clarified. The workshop employed the 'doodle communication' method, currently in development by Naoki Wakabayashi (2017)³, one of the authors of this study, and his team. Specifically, as shown in Figure 1 (left), the interviewer recorded the details heard from the interviewee in graphical form on the spot using figures, keywords, and so on, and collated these with the interviewee to be shared among participants by putting them all together as shown in Figure 1 (right). As a note, the drawings made during the 'Doodle

Communication' process are called 'Doodle graphics'. 'Doodle Communication' and 'Doodle Graphics' will be explained in detail in the next section.

The outline of the workshop is as follows:

Date/Time: January 10, 2018, 16:00-17:10

• Location: AIRDO Headquarters (Chuo-ku, Sapporo)

Participants:

AIRDO: Representative from the CS Promotion Office, General

Administration Department Director, and Representative from

Corporate Safety Office (Total of 3 people)

School of Design: 3 students

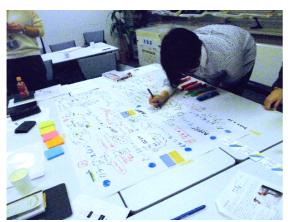




Figure 1. 'Doodle Graphics'. Taking down ideas (left) and the final outcome (right)

The most important consideration in the creation of the CI (logotype and symbol mark) story was that, rather than digging up the past, the story should be created anew; this was seen as a way of bringing out the views of current employees. At the same time, it was decided that a survey on corporate philosophy and its background and a workshop regarding this area would be held, CI (logotype and symbol mark) story requirements would be clarified, and a CI (logotype and symbol mark) story then put forward.

4.3 Doodle Communications/Doodle Graphics (Dialogue mediated by visual expression)

The process of 'Doodle Communication' is intended to allow an individual to freely draw what they experience in doodle form, objectifying these experiences in order to create concrete images to share with others.

By externalizing the memories based on one's own or others' experiences as a concrete image, it becomes possible to objectively accept these experiences as a tangible reality. In addition, through this drawing process, the experiences can be recalled and minor details confirmed. The images drawn in this process are what have been termed 'Doodle Graphics' and may be saved for later review or as a record of the experience.

The drawn representations ('Doodle Graphics') allow for the images and, in turn, the experiences they represent to be shared with others. By drawing an image while talking with people around oneself or other participants of what you and the other person experiences during such interaction, in addition to being able to confirm and recall the memory of what was discussed, it can be expected that additional information can be supplemented and confirmed through dialogue.

In addition, others that the dialogue is shared with may also participate in the drawing of the images; these images can then be turned into 'Doodle Graphics'. Effects such as raising motivation to draw through dialogue and lowering the difficulty of the act of actually drawing can also be expected due to this.

Doodles drawn through such a process can also be used as drafts for presentations or drawing production, and this is a method that can be expected to have a positive effect on the approach of sharing images in the process of communication.

There are several visual recording methods utilizing illustrations and keywords that have been proposed, such as graphic recording at meetings and so on that combines illustrations and keywords⁴, and graphic methods of facilitation that are shared with participants that illustrate the content of previous discussions and the direction those discussions have developed to promote the progress of the meeting⁵.

On the other hand, 'Doodle Communications'/'Doodle Graphics' are techniques that can be powerful tools to develop discussions by means of visual expression-mediated dialogue generated while drawing illustrations and keywords during dialogues.

By "drawing what you talk about" (record), "draw what others have talked about" (confirm), and "leaving a trace of what steps the conversation took" (draw relationships) in a free manner that takes the form of doodling, the result may be utilized as a visual dialogue tool.

4.4 From creation of a CI (logotype and symbol mark) story to becoming a manual lead statement

The outcome of the workshop was summarized in what was described as the 'AIRDO Logo Story Memo'. However, after discussions with AIRDO, rather than have this summary in a story form, it would become the lead statement in the revised CI Manual.

The workshop found that the way in which the logotype and symbol mark have been used to date differed from the usage rules established at the time the company was founded. Figure 2 shows the way in which the logotype and symbol mark are currently used. However, as Figure 3 shows, they were originally not meant to be overlaid but later, contrary to the designer's intentions, this in fact took place.



Figure 2. Conventional logotype and Symbol mark

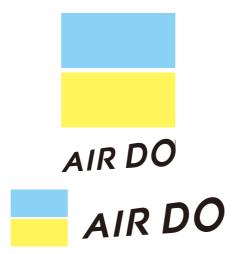


Figure 3. Conventional logotype and Symbol mark

The lead statement was amended to include words from Shobun Nakashima, the graphic designer who created the logotype and symbol mark: "The AIRDO symbol represents the clear blue Hokkaidō skies, and in addition to the color of the wide-open land covered with a blanket of flowers in full bloom, the yellow also expresses the clarity of mind found in those with an entrepreneurial spirit." These are the very concepts embodied in the company name of AIRDO, which represents both the "dō" in "Hokkaidō" and the English verb "do" - a graphic expression of the feeling of flying to Hokkaidō.



Figure 4. Motif of symbol mark: sky and earth in Hokkaido (left), symbolic mark (right)

Figure 4 (left) is a photo that shows this image of the Hokkaidō sky and the land covered with blooming flowers; the AIRDO symbol mark/symbol color (Figure 4 (right)) is an expression of this scene.

It was decided that the revised manual would exclude the design usage shown in Figure 2 and instead only include the correct usage stipulated at the time the company was founded.

5 CI Manual Revision

5.1 Usage Survey

The usage survey was primarily conducted in order to determine the way in which the CI Manual is used so that its revision would be in line with a human-centered design (HCD) philosophy. The survey was conducted for those accepting orders for the use of the CI and for those on the ordering side. An overview is provided below.

Objective: To determine current usage of the AIRDO CI Manual.

- 1. Determine usage of the CI Manual by parties receiving orders
- 2. Elucidate problem areas in the CI Manual from parties receiving orders
- 3. Determine usage of the CI Manual by parties submitting orders
- 4. Elucidate problem areas in the CI Manual from parties submitting orders

5.2 Method: Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with an advertising agency, a printing company, and a production company – typical examples of companies with which orders are placed by AIRDO.

Date/Time: November 9, 2017 (Thu) 17:30-19:30, December 5 (Tue) 17:30-19:30

Location: AIRDO Headquarters meeting room

Target: Parties receiving orders (advertising agencies, printing companies, production companies)

5.3 Outcomes

Outcome of Objective (1): Mainly refer to the Manual for use of the logotype. Relatively easy to deal with.

Outcome of Objective (2): They require more rigorous guidelines, such as logotype isolation rules and its relationship with backgrounds. Need rules to be stipulated.

Outcome of Objective (3): Parties with which orders were placed and how the CI Manual is used/its development chronology were understood.

Outcome of Objective (4): Difficult-to-use and problematic areas were identified, and requests, etc., in regards to the creation of a web-based manual were better understood through manuals created by other companies. In addition, an understanding on the restrictions on the use of the AIRDO mascot character, 'Bear Do', was gained.

Summarizing the above and organizing requested items formed the core of the proposal.

While there was the opinion that the logo was easy to use and the CI Manual was easy to understand, there was also a call for more examples of misuse and a shorter, "digest" version of the manual (detailed version).

Based on the above, the following CI Manual revision policy was adopted.

5.4 CI Manual Revision Policy

Narrow down to the minimum requirements

A staged development process was to be adopted to achieve this:

- 1. Digest version and explanation (detailed version)
- 2. Construction of CI Manual operational flow
- 3. Case studies (style book)
- 4. Web version (electronic version)

It was decided that for FY2017, only the first of the above processes would be completed.

6 Final Proposal

6.1 Summary of Final Proposal

Based on the above policy, the manuals shown in Figure 5 below were completed at the end of May 2018 after re-collating the minimum information required.

1. Manual for internal use: 'Cl Manual Ver. 3.0'

2. 'CI Manual Digest Ver. 1.0'

3. Manual for external use: 'CI Guidelines Ver. 1.0'

While the lead statement cannot cover the entire content of the manual, it encompasses the philosophy held by Shobun Nakashima, the person behind the design of the AIRDO logo and corporate colors, and accurately communicates the thinking behind the company's CI at the time of its founding to an external audience.

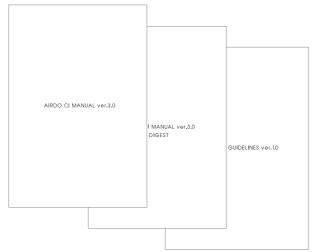


Figure 4. Cover of the proposed manuals

6.2 Evaluation of Final Proposal

Due to cost concerns, the revision of the usage items in the current CI (VI:Visual Identity) would not possible all in one go – it was therefore decided that it would be revised gradually. For this reason, since usage has not permeated to external contractors, an internal evaluation of the final proposed revisions would first take place. As there were only a few people involved with the CI Manual without the presence of external contractors, there was a limited number of people who took part in the survey. The evaluation primarily addressed the level of understanding of the lead statement ('The AIRDO Logotype and Symbol mark' section at the beginning) and the readability and simplicity of the CI Manual as a whole.

The evaluation schedule and outline were as follows:

- Period conducted: January 9-15, 2019
- Location: AIRDO office. Based on the original draft created by the School of Design, AIRDO employees responded to the questionnaire form created by the AIRDO CSR department.
- Respondents: 17 individuals at AIRDO involved with CI manual.
- Main guestion details:
- 1. Status of use of the CI Manual within respective departments
- 2. Lead Statement.
 - 2.1. I understood the origins behind the logotype and symbol mark after reading this Lead Statement.
 - 2.2. I felt more of a sense of placing importance on the use of the company's logotype and symbol mark after reading this Lead Statement.

- 2.3. After reading this lead statement, I now feel a greater sense of affinity to the company (AIRDO)
- 2.4. Please state any opinions you may have on the Lead Statement (free answer).
- 3. Readability, etc., of the CI Manual
 - 3.1. The page layout was easier on the eye than in the previous manual.
 - 3.2. The new structure made it easier to understand than the previous manual.
 - 3.3. The contents were better organized than in the previous manual.
 - 3.4. It was easier to use than the previous manual.
 - 3.5. Please state any opinions you may have on the CI Manual (free answer).

Questions 2.1 to 2.3 and 3.1 to 3.4 were on a five-point scale, with '1' being 'Strongly disagree' and '5' being 'Strongly agree'.

Table 2. Questionnaire Results

No.	2.1	2.2	2.3	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4
Question	logotype and symbol after	sense of placing importance on the logotype and	,	eye than in the	understand than the previous	were better	It was easier to use than the previous manual.
Average	4.0	4.2	3.5	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.0
Standard deviation (SD)	0.77	0.98	0.92	0.62	0.73	0.76	0.69

The results are as shown in Table 2. These were most favorable, with almost all being a '4' or above. There was a discrepancy in the results for Question 2.2 ("I felt more of a sense of placing importance on the logotype and symbol mark") and while the results were positive, it is difficult to say consensus was found on this point. It was hoped that the most positive effect would be shown in Question 2.3 ("After reading this lead statement, I now feel a greater sense of affinity to the company (AIRDO)"), but the results were somewhat disappointing for this question. However, as Question 3.1 ("The new structure made it easier to understand than the previous manual.") had consistent, favorable results, it is thought that manual layout had become easier to read.

6.3 Improvement of final proposal

At the time of writing this paper, the "Proposal improvement according to evaluation results", as stated at the end of '3.2 Revision of the Current CI Manual' above, has yet to be implemented. The questionnaire showed poor results for 2.3 "After reading this lead statement, I now feel a greater sense of affinity to the company (AIRDO)". To improve this situation, it was surmised that the CI Manual be used in conjunction with other internal communication methods.

Furthermore, the free answer sections included opinions such as, "There are too many paragraphs in the Lead Statement" and "The sentences are too long." There is room for improvement in the writing style and doing so in a way that keeps the main gist of the Lead Statement.

7 Conclusions and Future Work

7.1 Observations

Revision of the parts of the manual concerning use of the logotype and symbol mark was put aside for the time being, and as it was decided that recreating these parts would be

undertaken based on the new manual, large-scale revision of signboards and stationary and the like will not be made yet. Therefore, while things are not yet at the stage where the concepts have penetrated deeply among the workforce, the results of '6.2 Evaluation of Final Proposal' above at least indicate that they are starting to understand the enthusiasm the company's founders had when they established AIRDO and the underlying intentions behind the logotype and symbol mark. In addition, employees reported that the final proposed revised manual was easier to read and understand than the original.

7.2 Conclusions

Although contained in the CI Manual's Lead Statement, the philosophies present at the company's beginning were clearly laid out and it could be shown that, from the company's point of view, the CI should be maintained in-line with these and the fact that the intention behind the CI Manual could be demonstrated was one important outcome. We also believe that the CI Manual was able to be revised based on the usage survey and that we could again show the use of the logotype and symbol mark as originally intended.

As described above, there were two study objectives:

Objective 1: Propose ways to promote understanding of CI. Have the company's CI understood both internally and externally.

Objective 2: Revise the CI Manual. Transform the current CI Manual to be simpler and easier to understand.

By returning to the basics on the company's 20th anniversary and revising the manual after clarifying the positioning of the CI itself, we believe that the two original objectives were fully achieved.

7.3 Findings from this research

1. Effectiveness of the 'Doodle Graphics' method

The 'Doodle Graphics' method used in this study enabled employees to express their thoughts about the company. It also proved to be effective by allowing us to discover the sequence of events behind the creation of the logotype and symbol mark/symbol color at the time of the company's founding. 'Doodle Graphics' has traditionally been used primarily by places such as zoos and aquariums and aimed at children or younger students – there has been no case to date where it has been used by a company in this field. This study showed that the 'Doodle Communication' method may also be of use in certain corporate activities and it can be said that its range of application has been expanded.

2. Internal communication

"3.1 Method of Promoting Understanding of AIRDO CI" demonstrated the importance of communication within the company. This study attempted to develop greater internal communication by way of the CI Manual Lead Statement. There were, no doubt, many employees who were not fully familiar with the meaning of the company logotype and symbol mark, developed 20 years ago. It is assumed that at the very least, an understanding of these was furthered thanks to the Lead Statement.

3. External communication

The results of the questionnaire showed that, compared to the previous version, employees felt that the updated manual was easier to read and understand, more readily navigable, and the contents better organized. While the investigation did not extend to external vendors and the like, a similar positive outcome could be expected

with those users. In terms of external communication, it can be assumed that the CI Manual revision was effective.

7.4 Role of this study in a design context

As mentioned above, the study provided an example where the 'Doodle Communication' method was used in a setting close to a company's business and that it could be used effectively as a corporate activity.

The Lead Statement showed that internal communication can be promoted by telling the story behind the creation of the logotype and symbol mark/symbol color at the time of the company's founding. It is envisaged that by again presenting the company's founding philosophies and the reasons for it's inception in future CI development and in CI Manual creation/revisions and so on to employees can contribute to the promotion of internal communication.

Needless to say, by taking a human-centered design approach to determine the usage situation, clarify requirements, create design-focused solution proposals, and verify if requirements are being met, it is expected that construction/revision of an easy-to-understand manual is possible.

7.5 'Doodle Communication' as an Exercise in Design Thinking

It goes without saying that most projects that involve designers are based on design thinking.

In 'Doodle Communication', the interviewer engages in a conversation with those being surveyed or project participants and writes down notes or draws figures as they go. This action corresponds to observation and empathy. 'Doodle Communication' itself creates an empathetic environment; the 'Doodle Graphics' are the tools used to express that empathy.

While writing down words and figures, the interviewer develops a story. The definitions of this are the problems that are identified and the summary of issues that arise out of this process. In this exercise, words and figures have a creative role – 'Doodle Communication' promotes ideas and their conceptualization.

Words and diagrams relating to a certain direction or aiming towards a particular direction almost simultaneously take on the definition of a prototype. Additionally, the process prompts those participating to give their evaluation on the spot, test ideas, and have improvements made based on a particular judgement.

It is thought that these design thinking processes are carried out almost simultaneously in parallel. The design thinking approach found in 'Doodle Communication' requires a trial and error process as a way of pursuing further analysis and determining methodology in future; it may prove to be an important method to be incorporated in the design process and for designers.

7.6 Future work

As requests from employees arose during the work on revising the CI Manual, efforts are currently underway to create specifications for a revised web-based version of the manual. With the development of these specifications, the process of going back to examine CI-related brand identity and visual identity has also begun.

It is hoped that efforts to revise the CI Manual will ensure that AIRDO's CI will be understood not only by employees and the various parties involved in producing company materials, but also by those who fly with the airline.

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