Original Research Article

Brand Strategy in the Visual Identity of Tehran Museums[*]

Maryam Tajik [1], Zahra Masoudi Amin [2**]

1. MA. Faculty of Visual Communication, Faculty of Arts, Alzahra University, Tehran, Iran.
2. Faculty member, Department of Graphic Design, Faculty of Art, Alzahra University, Tehran, Iran.

Abstract

Problem statement: Museums are among the most valuable places in the world. Tehran has rich historical, cultural, scientific, entertainment and tourism museums. Determining the visual identity strategy of museums is the responsibility of graphic designers. Using communication and advertising tools, the graphic design of museums is done by displaying visual information in the forms of visual identity design and environmental graphic design. The research in this field has mostly focused on the area of museum marketing and the study of environmental graphics. Studying the brand strategy in the visual identity of museums, this research analyzed the data gathered from several samples of the study in Tehran and around the world.

Research objective: is to study those samples qualitatively and help develop strategic solutions in graphic design for cultural and touristic places such as museums in Tehran. The current research attempted to answer the following questions: What are the characteristics of the visual identity in Tehran museums from the graphic design perspective? And what strategies have Tehran museums applied for their visual identity?

Research method: This study used library and documentary sources and employed the descriptive-analytical method to comparatively study the examples of visual identity in Tehran museums.

Conclusion: In designing its visual identity, Tehran museums have used the following strategies: using the main brand name, using the image of the museum building, using typography in the design of the museum logo, distinguishing and adhering to the principles of service design, the national approach, and being inspired by tradition. Also, from the graphic design point of view, Tehran museums have followed the logo guide rules and have used unique typefaces and briefcases for the visual identity of their brand.

This research shows the importance of formulating, planning, and implementing a comprehensive strategy toward the integration of visual identity design in Tehran museums.

Keywords: *Strategy, Brand Strategy, Graphic Design, Visual Identity, Tehran Museums.*

The Scientific Journal of NAZAR research center (Nrc) for Art, Architecture & Urbanism

Introduction

Visual protection of the museum brand is essential for the identity of its name and logo. A part of museums' identity is formed by their symbols, logos, and their visual identity; this part should be considered an important mission of the museums to manifest their values. Visual identity [1] includes all the design materials that the museum uses to present an image of itself to the public through logos, color palettes, typefaces, fonts, illustration or repeating patterns, signage, signs, and other visual elements. This research is to investigate graphic design in museums because graphic design is a strategic tool in the process of achieving the goals of museum branding and museum visual identity. Elements of a brand's visual identity can be listed as name, logo, advertising slogan, and visual identity design system.

Statement of the Problem

Tehran city has rich historical, cultural, scientific, entertainment and tourism museums. Graphic designers are responsible for determining the visual identity strategy of the museum branding. Graphic designers play a significant role in improving the status of visual and strategic identity in the branding of museums. Studying and defining the strategy for the visual branding identity of museums can be effective in preventing alienation from Iranian culture and maintaining the important cultural role of museums.

The existing literature on this field has only provided solutions in the marketing sector for museum branding and briefly studied environmental graphics.

Considering the importance of the role of graphic design in the visual identity of museums in the world, this research is to study the branding strategy in the visual identity of museums in Tehran. In this research, several examples of museums in the world and Tehran are studied in terms of their visual identity.

The Purpose of the Research

With a qualitative method, this research is to help formulate long-term solutions in graphic design for cultural and tourist places such as museums in Tehran.

Research questions: What strategies have Tehran museums used for their brands' visual identity? What are the characteristics of the visual identity of Tehran museums from the graphic design perspective?

Hypotheses

In designing their visual identity, Tehran museums have used these strategies: using the main brand name, lack of differentiation, lack of adherence to the principles of service design [2], and lack of a specific approach. It is also notable that the graphic design of the visual identity of Tehran museums does not have coherence and integrity. The samples of this research were studied through the descriptive-analytical method and citing library sources. Four museums in Tehran that accepted to cooperate with the authors and had their own visual identity and office paper sets have been selected for the study. It is worth mentioning that the museums administrated by Tehran's Cultural Heritage Organization do their correspondence with the office paper set of the National Cultural Heritage Organization and do not have a set of office papers. The selected samples have been studied in terms of visual identity, based on the field study and direct observation.

Theoretical Framework

Employing the method of technical and structural investigation in terms of form and strategy in the visual identity of museums, this research has first addressed the basic definitions. Then it describes, introduces, and collects information about the graphic design of several museums in the world. In the end, after analyzing the samples according to the specific criteria, the summary and results of the research have been discussed. The case study of this research is the visual identity of four museums in Tehran.

Importance and Background

present research may advance strategic [3] culture, cultural promotion, review the strategic study, and the integration of graphic design in the brand identity [4] of important cultural places such as Iranian museums.

So far, no specialized research has been done on the role of graphic design in brand strategy in the visual identity of Tehran museums. Several existing books have generally focused on branding [5] in place and providing museum marketing strategies. In the field of graphic design, available books have defined the terms but in the area of graphic design's role in the branding of museums, there is a paucity of literature as they are only focused on environmental graphics. "The Museum Marketing" by Mohammadian and Asgari Dehabadi (2012) presents the strategy and tactics of museum marketing in detail from Philip Kotler and colleagues' point of view. "Fundamentals of Museum Management" by Mansourzadeh and Hatami (2016), describe the role of museums in the dialogue of cultures through communication, museum marketing, and graphics in a very brief way. Similarly, in "Brand Management" by Lafort (2016), the authors study the effective strategies for brand creation and protection [6] as well as brand identity elements such as name, advertising slogan[7], design system and finally the proper graphic design of a brand. "A research on Urban Strategic Branding, the Study of Its Effectiveness and Visual Identity Design" by SedaqatJabbari, Asadollahi & Khezrian (2018, 22), studied the effectiveness of the visual identity plan on urban strategic branding, the longevity of the sign, slogan, the success rate of the logo, brand, and strategy, with the case study of several examples from around the globe. In this journal article, the key concepts and strategies to transform the image of a city into a well-known brand are examined and the importance and effectiveness of the projects have been investigated. The research suggests that strategies such as hosting big events, using virtual spaces, and designing symbolic structures have been used as common strategies to brand cities; the study of visual identity design generally has been used to give visual characteristics to such strategies.

Theoretical Foundations of Research
• Branding visual identity
"Visual identity means the development of a place's brand name by any possible method and with shared elements in a distinctive visual style. Visual identity means how to use the logo, color, type, and size of the typeface and illustration. The purpose of visual identity is to distinguish the commercial name in a competitive environment so that the name will effectively maintain its memorability in all presentable media" (Interbrand, 2014, 161).

Visual identity in branding includes all elements of graphic design that a museum uses to visually present itself to the audience; including logo (sign), color palette specific to the museum, typeface, fonts, illustration or repetitive pattern, guide signs, visual signs [8], and others. These elements, along with the audience's mental image of the place and any other interaction they have with the museum, have been formed through the experience of visiting the museum and the museum's website. This method is a creative and practical way to create brand names and manage them as valuable assets of a place. The signals that a place sends through naming, packaging, marketing communication features, choice of distribution channels, social media, in-place advertising, and brand activity are all key to a place's success. Accordingly, the choice of colors, the fonts, the general design, and other details that are used in presenting the brand, are all vital to maximizing the positive impact of brand marketing initiatives.

• Strategic branding and design program of the museum
By reviewing the challenges and planning, the art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating multiple decisions enable the museum to achieve its long-term goals with high productivity. Museums have goals that are interpreted as their missions. To achieve these goals ,museums define a set of ideals in their strategic plans. A strategic plan includes a set of actions that enable the museum to achieve its goals. A strategic plan is a necessity to help determine target markets and offered value to customers. Strategic planning enables museums to look at their strengths and weaknesses from the insider perspective and to look at competitive opportunities and threats from the outsider perspective.

• The visual identity design strategy for museum branding and its importance

Design process is a problem-solving process. Here, "problem" means a goal to be achieved. When the exact methods and ways of doing the work are not yet known, especially when it is necessary to differentiate between previous solutions. While the term "solution" refers to the final product of a creation process, the term "problem solving" refers to the active way of realizing a pre-defined desire. Problem-solving is a knowledge-based work, which in design often involves learning through trial and error. A successful design process combines abstraction and knowledge to produce new or modified solutions to address the current situation. This is why it is rare to use a design solution for more than one problem. However, experiences gained from similar situations usually help the process; empirical knowledge adapts to the coordinates of a situation through the use of common strategies and modified methods specific to a given problem. The design process is not only influenced by a logical and analytical method, but also by an emotional and intuitive process. These two methods are often combined and have mutual relations". (Erelhoff & Marshall, 2018, 186) The path to problem-solving in graphic design is rarely linear because measurement techniques are one of its essential components. All kinds of possible strategies are presented in the form of short-term plans. The process of evaluating the graphic design for the museum not only helps to form a strategy in design but also often causes changes and determination of the main problem. Here, it is very important to have a reasonable approach and to have enough experience with the process of facing the problem. The characteristics of the expectations and needs of the visual identity of a museum determine the framework that can create necessary components in this direction. This is the reason why graphic design phenomena are often very complex and depend on many factors. Therefore, the dynamics of a design problem are often systematic and have their own rules; interference in these systems inevitably has unwanted consequences. Trying to find a solution to a design problem that is poorly organized makes the final result unpredictable. On the other hand, well-organized problems have known solutions. Strategic design [9] is based on internal and external organization management approaches. Internal organizational strategies usually focus on how an organization can improve communication, knowledge, and understanding within the organization. External organizational strategies are often market-oriented and focus on the issue of how the design can be reached the target market, make the brand identity more coherent, and show the museum's advantages over its competitor. It is obvious that internal and external design strategies are closely related and their success depends on each other. There is no specific proven strategy that guarantees the success of design; the design process is mainly based on discovery, so it is difficult to guide or even define it. As a result, rather than a set of practical methods, strategic design is broad and long-term solutions in graphic design which are constantly reviewed to best meet business objectives. From this point of view, strategic design is also different from design management, because design management means constant monitoring of the design process. The development of the company's brand is distinguished by the graphic design method and the elements of the visual style. Visual identity includes how to use the logo, color, font type and size, typeface, and illustration. The purpose of visual identity is to distinguish the brand in the competitive environment and to effectively maintain its memorability in all presentable media. Significant companies and institutions use a single visual identity to define their position in the market, establish and maintain proper communication with the audience, and be recognized among their competitors. Part of this identity determines the organizational colors of the brand; after a while, these colors become a common language between the brand and the audience, and without any need for explanation, the audience remembers the brand.

Coca-Cola Red, Caterpillar Yellow, and Facebook Blue are well-known examples of visual identity colors that are easily recognized around the world. Brands whose corporate color is already defined do not need to choose a color anymore. They only need to define the rules of color usage in the organization so that graphic design can be done based on those rules.

• Graphic design in the visual identity of museums brand strategy:

- Elements of integration and service design principles

The content of each event determines how to design its graphics; depending on the dimensions and field of activity of that event, the graphic design process starts with the design of various forms of communication such as invitation cards, publication packages, newsletters, websites, records of the event, and special gifts that have a uniform appearance. The uniform that is considered at the beginning of the design, plays an important role in this process. This element can be the brand color, font, materials, interior design, style, language, and illustration, which creates a unique image of the organizational brand (service design). Today's museums provide their community with a diverse range of services (including direction and routing information, places to sit and rest, food services, stores, restrooms, facilities for changing clothes for children and babies, water tanks, lost objects section, and other security measures). Many surveys about audiences have considered the need for audiences for directions and navigation information in museums to be very essential. Visitors have limited time to visit the museums; all visitors need information, including information about different parts of the museum, the location of objects, exhibitions, as well as the location of cafeterias and restrooms. Nowadays, many museums provide visitors with directional signs, pictograms [10], maps, and guidebooks. Every organization has its own identity. This identity connects the principles, values, and characteristics of the organization and provides a

context for the organization to feel different from its competitors. The visual identity of an organization consists of signs, written signs, slogans, design and determination of colors, architecture, interior design, music, perfume, etc. The brand identity of the place is formed based on the identity of the place, which makes the place unique through verbal and visual tools such as slogan design, logo, color palette, and letters. Logo design, visual identity design, and branding each have a task that together forms an image of the place in the audience's mind. Based on the research topics, we came closer to the fact that the brand of an organization is an emotional effect that is understood as a whole unit, and the visual identity of a collection is the image aspects that form a part of the whole image of the museum's brand identity. The logo and environmental graphics of a cultural institution such as a museum identify the location of the museum in the simplest way through signs or typographical icons. Identity design is formed based on the visual materials which are used in the internal space of the museum according to a set of rules. These rules that construct identity usually specify how the identity of the collection should be implemented in various media; for example, by defining the palette of colors, fonts, layouts, sizes, or things like that. This guarantees the stability of the identity of the cultural space of the museum and makes the museum brand recognizable as a single entity. The visual identity or image of the museum is made of several visual materials; logo (symbol of the entire visual identity of the brand), Office paper sets (letterhead, business card, envelope, etc.), advertising and marketing tools (brochure, tract, book, website, etc.), products and packaging (the product sold and the packaging that comes with the product), clothing design (clothes worn by employees and advertising t-shirts, etc.), signs (for indoor and outdoor spaces), messages and actions (messages transmitted through direct or indirect communication channels), other types of communication (sound, smell, touchable, etc.), any image element that is representative of the

museum (for example, calendar, clock, pen, etc.). All these things make up the visual identity and should support the whole brand of the museum, but the logo summarizes all the organizational and brand identity in a distinguishable sign and represents the cultural atmosphere of the museum in the simplest form. The process of designing the visual identity for any museum is a long process with endless design ideas, design concepts, and different design explorations. As different ideas and concepts are explored, some ideas are derived from repetitive images and successful museums try to avoid them. The advanced logo created during the design process can show the design process in detail. The design process will lead to a detailed discussion with the museum team about the general direction of the brand and the perspectives on its visual identity. Finally, some specific ideas are narrowed down and selected as visual identity design evolution paths; then more creative paths are developed and complete the design of brand visual identity solutions. The different approaches, executions, and final decisions made by the design team will be based on the balance between various criteria such as concept, uniqueness, and overall strength of visual language in application, use of calligraphy, or typography. These decisions are determined by the design team for the museum.

In line with the idea of using repetitive and well-known historical motifs and elements, the project briefly and clearly defines the visual elements and references that should not be used directly in the design of the museum logo. These visual elements are defined as "second-level visual groups" for the museum. These important elements are represented in the wider visual identity of the museum such as the photography or illustration exhibitions, and therefore should be avoided in the main elements of the museum name. It is determined that any visual connection should be mainly related to the unique physical character of the museum such as its specific architecture, its relationship with its environment, and its visual identity. Having in mind that foreign
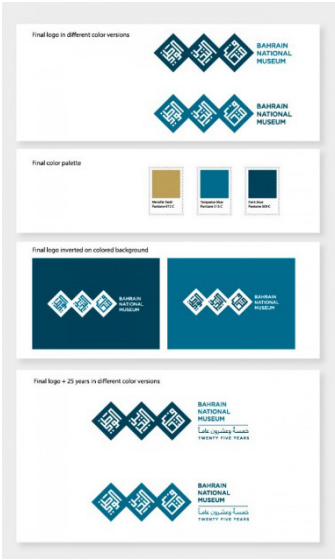
visitors are one of the museum's largest target groups, strategies are determined. Some museums have a wide range of target audiences including local, national, and regional visitors of different ages, education levels, and interests that have different expectations from the museum. But the international target group namely foreign tourists is of special importance for the museum, especially because of the national effort of museums to reintroduce themselves as a strong tourist destination. All these factors caused a strong desire to design the museum brand with a modern and international image. Analysis of local competitors reveals that their brand weaknesses lie not only in their logo design but also in the lack of visual identity, brand guidelines, and consistent communication across channels. Having a strong and integrated visual identity is much more important than logo design which is the most important aspect of graphic design in branding for a museum. The logo should be the basis of a system that creates stable and dynamic visual compositions. New museums are designed to accommodate more visitors and create more interaction. The museum is not only for showing art objects, so specialized museums such as the Museum of Cinema, Science and Technology, etc. have been established. Special places require special graphic design and unique and up-to-date visual identity. In the following section, the design of visual identity in museums around the world is reviewed to help understand the content of the research.

Table 1 presents the logo and visual identity of four museums in the world for example.

Paris Louvre Museum: with its glass pyramid architecture, it is one of the largest museums in the world and an important historical and cultural building in the center of Paris, France. The logo of this museum is designed based on the architecture of the museum's glass building.

Seoul Museum: The logo design for this museum is inspired and designed based on the architectural features and location of the museum. According to the architecture of the museum building, eleven

Table 1. Logo and visual identity set of four museums in the world. Source: Authors.

No.	Museum Title	Logo	Visual Identity
1	Paris Louvre Museum		
2	Seoul Museum		
3	Grand Egypt Museum		
4	Bahrain National Museum		

squares were designed, and based on this, the final logo was formed as a result of connecting the corners of each square to the other. The design of the pictograms of this museum (Fig. 1) also shows the integrity of the visual identity of this museum.

Grand Egypt Museum: This museum is located in Cairo and the archaeological museum building is near the Giza pyramids. The design approach for the visual identity of the Grand Museum of Egypt is defined by a conceptual, minimalist, and typographical approach. The unique architectural facade, the fifth facade of the museum, is repeated

Fig. 1. A collection of visual signs (pictograms) designed for the visual identity of the Seoul Museum. Source: https://www.logo-designer.co/dev/logo-design-for-seoul-museum/

as a brief design that includes contemporary Arabic calligraphy made with the name of the museum. The dynamic, ever-changing position of the logo reflects how the museum is designed to offer different perspectives of the unique and historic landscape around it. Such a large-scale design project includes an exhibition, designing the visual identity of the brand, along with detailed logo guide rules on the overall graphic design strategy, naming and branding requirements, and communication requirements, as well as a compilation of all previous extensive research that was carried out for the museum. It defines the status, personality, long-term strategic plans of the museum, voice, and target audience, and provides a clear approach to the direction of the brand identity that the Grand Egyptian Museum aspires to follow.

The vision of the Grand Egyptian Museum is clear and concise. It has repeatedly been ranked among the top museums in the world. To design the visual identity of the museum, it is necessary to follow the best international method in branding such a large organization. The world's largest and

oldest museums certainly feature common design approaches in their logos. Most of their logos are very simple and in minimalist style; typography has often abstract concepts and is not represented directly with ancient works. Non-print elements often use either simple geometric shapes or a very basic depiction of a concept that is open to visual interpretation. To show the name of this museum, a uniquely recognizable and memorable method has been used. The name is not the only element of the visual identity and it should not be expected that the name can narrate everything about the museum alone. The mood that this museum wants to create through its branding, is narrated by all other elements of the visual identity.

It was mentioned earlier that visual elements and references which are used repetitively and are well-known historical motifs and elements should not be used directly in the design of the museum logo. These elements reflect ancient Egyptian civilizations, but they are very famous symbols of Egypt that can be seen almost everywhere in the country. It included elements such as hierarchies, caricatures, pyramids, the eye of Horus, Tutankhamun, the lotus flower, pharaohs, headscarves, or any other typical elements (Fig. 2). These important elements are represented in the wider visual identity of the museum, photography or illustration exhibitions, and materials, and hence have been avoided in the name and logo design of the museum. It is determined that any visual connection should be more related to the specific physical identity of the museum such as its specific architecture, its connection with its environment, and its visual identity. Having in mind that foreign visitors to Egypt were one of the museum's largest target groups, strategies were set. The museum certainly has a wide range of target audiences including local, national, and regional visitors of different ages, education levels, and interests with different expectations from the museum. But the international target group consisting of foreign tourists is of special importance for this museum, especially in Egypt's national effort to reintroduce
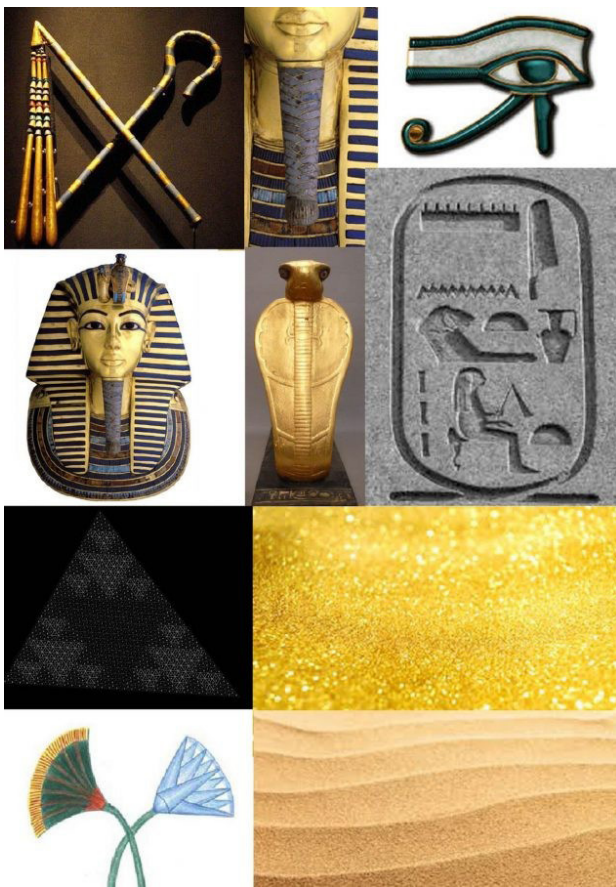
Fig 2. Native elements and motifs in Egyptian culture.
Source: www.atrissi.com/grand-egyptian-museum-branding-the-design-process-beyond-the-controversy/

itself as a strong tourist destination. All these factors have made the visual identity of the Egypt Museum branding to be modern and international.

Bahrain National Museum: It is a museum that was established in the Persian Gulf region. The symbolic architecture of the museum was the main inspiration for designing its visual identity of the museum. The cubic structure of the building is the main graphic element for designing the logo. This building consists of three cubic structures connected to each other. The three Arabic words (the name of the museum) are designed in Arabic calligraphy style (Kufi) with a square border to fill the existing square forms and the positive and negative spaces in the logo. The final result is a unique logo that bears a visual resemblance to the museum's iconic architecture and is the basis of the identity system designed for the museum (Figs. 3 & 4).

Findings

In the following, the findings of this research are presented in Tables 1 & 2, the components of graphic design analysis in the visual identity of the strategic branding of the museums of the world are measured. Table 4 presents the logo and visual identity of four museums in Tehran for analysis.

Table 5 presents the previously-mentioned components for four selected museums in Tehran.

In Fig. 5, statistics show what percentage of selected museums in Tehran have used the strategic components in their visual identity based on the conducted studies and introduced components by the authors.

In the following section, the findings and analyzes of the visual identity brand strategy in Tehran museums are discussed to summarize the content of the research.

Discussion

Logo and visual identity represent an institution or organization for which they are designed. The more correct and appropriate thought is chosen in the design of the logo and the more solid, strong, and beautiful its design is (from the technical and aesthetic aspects of the art), the better it will be in attracting the attention of the audience, introducing the logo brand which stays in the mind of the audience. Therefore, the designer's approach toward the logo design and organizational visual identity has a direct impact on logo design, advertising, and recognition of that museum, and on the degree of success of the logo and its visual identity in advertising.

The traditional approach of using graphic design in the visual identity of museums in Iran and other countries has been in such a way that it is usually entrusted to prominent and well-known graphic designers with practical experience in graphic design, therefore the logo and visual identity of the museums are designed without complete integration. Every design is inherently strategic. However, the fact that we explicitly apply the word strategic

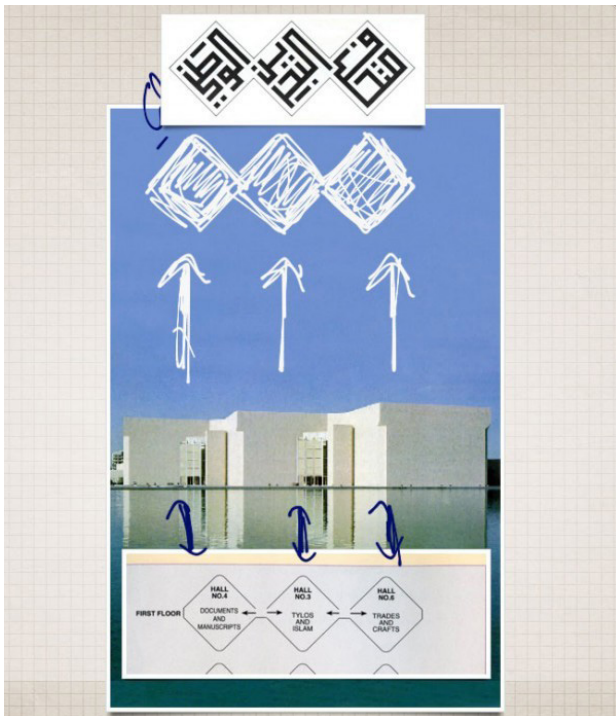Fig. 3. Catalog of the National Museum of Bahrain.
Source:https://www.atrissi.com/bahrain-national-museum-visual-identity

Fig. 4. The architecture of the Bahrain National Museum building, the basis of the logo design idea and its visual identity.
Source: https://www.atrissi.com/bahrain-national-museum-visual-identity/

to design methods means that it emphasizes the importance of long-term planning in the graphic design process.

Nowadays the modern approach of using graphics in designing the visual identity of museums in countries other than Iran, is that usually a few very reputable and well-established advertising agencies are entrusted with the design of the complete visual identity of the museum, based on the research of the target market by the marketing team, then the

strategy developed through the conducted research. The logo, the visual identity of the museum's brand, all promotional items, the typeface family collection that can be used in multiple languages, the establishment of strict and unchangeable rules, the logo guide image, the definition of color and organizational identity are designed and executed; the relevant agencies are required to execute the design in the environment accurately and realistically. Finally, the best strategies and designs are selected by the museum's decision-making and advertising board. In the traditional approach of graphic design in Iran and outside of Iran, the design of the brand and visual identity of the museum is mostly done by using the formal and visual characteristics of the objects inside the museum. The direct use of historical and local motifs and the principles of the guideline in presenting the visual identity of museums are not followed and basically, no guideline has been established in this area at all. But in the modern approach of museum graphics outside of Iran, the logo design strategy and branding of the visual identity of the museum is centered around strategic (long-term) decision-making and museum relations. For example, the graphic design strategy for museums that have many international connections and visitors is that their visual identity should be designed much more simpler. The direct use of the museum building form and indirect use of the formal and visual characteristics of objects inside the museum-like historical motifs are common in this approach. The principles of the guideline have been followed and a strict guideline has been established based on the long-term visual identity.

Post and Communications Museum: This museum is for the Post and Customs Department with a national architectural style (Art Deco [11]). With the magnificent buildings of this style of Iranian architecture during the Reza Khan period, this museum was built by Nikolai Markov [12]. This unique museum with its restored building is the first and one of the most important post and communication museums in Iran. In this collection, examples of

Table 2. Findings on the strategic path of graphic design and branding of museums. Source: Authors.

	Findings on the strategic path of graphic design and branding of museums.
1	Using the original brand name of the museum
2	Using the image of the museum building
3	Using typography in logo design
4	Differentiation and adherence to service design principles for visual identity
5	A national perspective approach for formulating a strategy in museum graphic design
6	The approach of looking at tradition to develop a strategy in museum graphic design
7	Compliance with integrated visual identity in documents and environmental graphics
8	Compliance with the rules of Logoguide 1 (guideline)
9	Use of unique typeface and brief family letters for the museum

Table 3. Table of the analysis of the components of graphic design in strategic branding for Museums' visual identity around the world. Source: Authors.

No.	Museum Title	Paris Louvre Museum	Seoul Museum	Grand Egyptian Museum	Bahrain National Museum
1	Using the original brand name of the museum	•	•	•	•
2	Using the image of the museum building	-	-	•	•
3	Using typography in logo design	-	-		•
4	Differentiation and adherence to service design principles for visual identity	•	•	•	•
5	A national perspective approach for formulating a strategy in museum graphic design	•	•	•	•
6	The approach of looking at tradition to develop a strategy in museum graphic design	-	-	-	-
7	Compliance with integrated visual identity in documents and environmental graphics	•	•	•	•
8	Compliance with the rules of Logoguide (guideline)	•	•	•	•
9	Use of unique typeface and brief family letters for the museum	•	•	•	•

the oldest writing instruments, sending mails, early chapars, Morse telegrams, stamps, and other communication and telecommunication tools from pigeons to satellites are displayed. The visual logo of this museum is a combination of the reduced form of the carrier pigeon and the oval shape in motion, which is usually seen in communication and tourism logos; the combination of these two with a simplified image of a satellite, which is a new tool in communication, is used in the logo. From the perspective of aesthetics and composition, this logo has the necessary proportions, but the use of multiple

Table 4. Visual identity table of Tehran museums. Source: Authors.

No.	Title Museum	Logo	Visual Identity
1	Post and Communications Museum		
2	Iran Science and Technology Museum		
3	Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art		
4	Tehran Ghasr Garden & Museum		

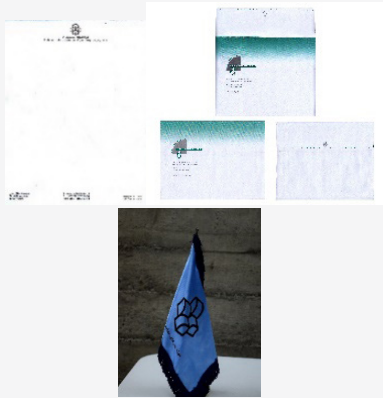Table 5. The analysis of the components of graphic design in the strategic branding for Tehran museums' visual identity. Sorce: Authors.

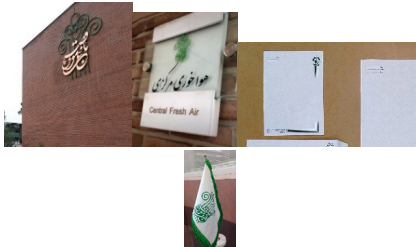| No.	Museum Title	Post and Communications Museum	Iran Science and Technology Museum	Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art	Tehran Ghasr Garden & Museum
1	Using the original brand name of the museum	•	•	•	•
2	Using the image of the museum building	–	–	•	–
3	Using typography in logo design	-	•	-	•
4	Differentiation and adherence to service design principles for visual identity	–	–	•	•
5	A national perspective approach for formulating a strategy in museum graphic design	-	•	•	•
6	The approach of looking at tradition to develop a strategy in museum graphic design	•	–	–	–
7	Compliance with integrated visual identity in documents and environmental graphics	–	–	–	•
8	Compliance with the rules of Logoguide (guideline)	–	–	–	–
9	Use of unique typeface and brief family letters for the museum	–	–	•	•

image ideas reduces the uniqueness of the logo. In the typeface of the logo, Nastaliq font is used with a perfect and suitable composition. The Chinese knot forms which are present in brown color wooden tools inside the museum such as cupboards and old items are used in designing the visual identity of the office paper sets of this museum such as letterheads and envelopes. The design of the visual identity and environmental graphics of this museum is not integrated, and no guidelines have been established to adhere to the integrity of its visual identity (Logoguide). This museum does not have the unique font family of the museum and multiple fonts are used in its visual identity documents and environmental graphics.

Iran Science and Technology Museum: This museum is located in a historical location on Si-e-Tir street in Tehran and exposes ancient and modern sciences
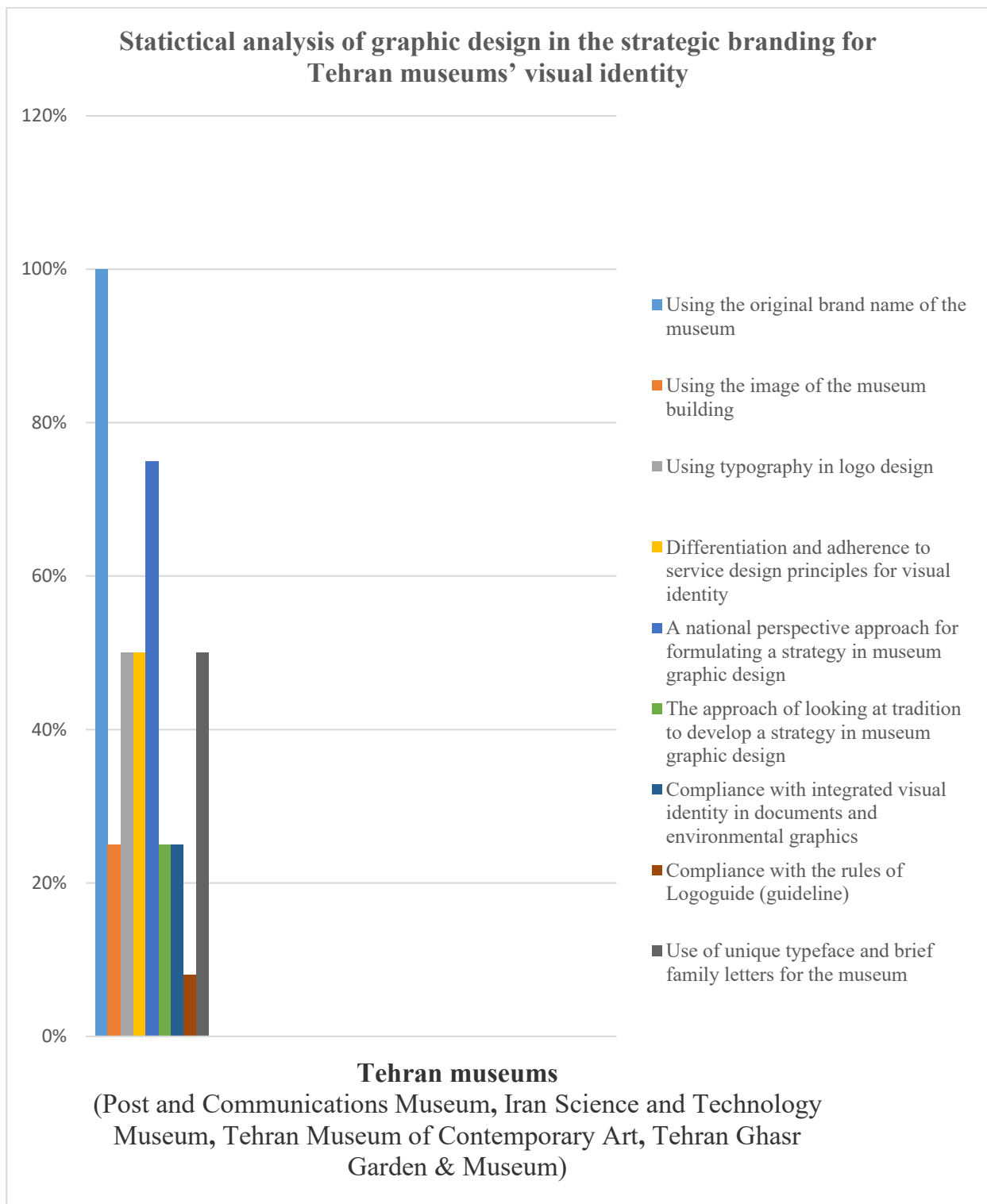
Fig. 5. Statistical analysis. Source: Authors.

to visitors. So that the audience is encouraged to research. Since its opening, the museum has kept pace with other science museums around the world and is competing with them.

The symbol of nuclear physics with the image of the wheel in historical sciences (one of the primary tools of human invention) is combined in the design of this museum's logo. The design of the typeface in the logo has reached acceptable proportions with its Nastaliq font and classic composition. In the design of the typeface of this logo, the rules of stretching the

letters in Nastaliq have been properly followed and the negative space has been used correctly. The color used in the logo and visual identity of this museum is a combination of green and red that is derived from the flag of Iran. The visual identity of this museum is based on the main brand name of the museum and the national approach for formulating strategies.

Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art: This museum is one of the most important museums of Iran and the most important museum of contemporary art in Iran. It includes the most comprehensive and important treasures of modern art outside of Europe and North America and owns one of the top ten collections of modern art in the world. In the design of the logo of the Museum of Contemporary Arts, the facade form of its characteristic and distinct architectural roofs, which was designed with the inspiration of Iranian windmills, is repeated in a minimalist way. The rhythm of placing this logo at the intersection of the lines in the visual part of the logo in a path expresses the visual identity of the museum in terms of simplicity and removing additional elements in the graphic design, and has great visual value. Black and white organizational color is used in the identity design, but in the new visual identity of this museum, the color integrity of the brand has not been considered. As this museum is a contemporary art museum, it requires a new and modern typeface; the typeface design of the logo is uniquely designed for the museum. The Museum of Contemporary Arts is known by its original brand name, and the criterion of using the image of the museum building is included in its visual identity. The visual identity of this museum adheres to the principles of service design and has dealt with its graphic design based on the national perspective and approach.

Tehran Ghasr Garden & Museum: This museum is a former palace built in the middle of a green garden, by order of Fat-hali Shah-e Qajar, which later found a military function and then took the name of Qasr Prison and currently is a museum. The design of the logo of this museum is based on the design and repetition of the linear forms of the plant spiral (snail arch). It is inspired by the metal fences of the historical windows used inside the museum and is used with a symmetrical combination next to the logotype of the garden of the Tehran Ghasr Garden & Museum. The spiral motif is widely used in Iranian Islamic and Khatai motifs, and the origin of this motif is sought in the motif of the tree of life. It also implies the concept of sanctity during history and among different religions and is important in space design. The logo design of this museum is very simple and minimalistic. The combination of the Shekasteh Nastaliq calligraphy with the name of the museum and the design of the typography together with the positive and negative spaces has made this logo visually attractive and more legible. This museum is the only museum that has a unified visual identity. The dynamic location and visual appeal of the typography of this museum's logo represent the overall purpose of the museum as a historical space located in the center of a garden covered with plants. The graphic design of this museum has integrity and uses appropriate fonts in the design of its visual identity and graphics. The museum's personality, its historical and political atmosphere, the long-term strategic plans of the museum, its branding, and its target audience has been correctly defined. Accordingly, it has been determined what approach will be used in the direction of the visual identity of the museum's brand and its goals.

According to the analysis of museums in Tehran, this is concluded that, in general, the first step of designing a logo for a museum is correctly studying and understanding the problem; it is the result of this study and understanding that clarifies the design path for the designer and determines the nature of next steps for the designer. From the graphic design perspective, the museum logo, like any other logo, is just a logo, in which all technical, artistic, and branding points must be considered. But in terms of knowing the subject and understanding it correctly by the designer, the museum logo has its own characteristics and the designer must be able to understand these characteristics and have enough

experience to deal with these characteristics and be able to finally make the right decisions and get a good result. Based on the process of designing a logo and the designer's experience and ability and specialized beliefs in studying, knowing, and understanding the problem, every designer reaches some points in the designing process of a museum logo; these important points are the foundation of design work and appear in the final design. It is obvious that depending on the type of audience, the type of activity, and the function, each problem finds a special social position; that is the reason why the logo of a commercial business such as a store is different from a museum logo. Therefore, the type of audience and the scope of the museum's activities and cultural national and international relations, are prominent in the design of a museum logo and define the identity, dignity, and special cultural status of the museum that plays a decisive role in the logo design and make the process difficult for the designer. Paying attention to these special factors of the museum distinguishes it from other subjects and highlights the necessity of designing a logo that can represent such dignity and cultural status in a way that is truly worthy of a museum. By presenting the visual identity plan and other representational plans, the designers influence the mindset formed by the place and the impact felt on the process of selection and perception of information about that phenomenon and its interpretation. The results of the studies show that the efforts made in such plans are only effective if the adaptation and objectivity of that place and the resulted mental image are in balance; more importantly, this adaptation and harmony should extend over time. Specialists, consultants and designers benefit from this process in identifying and determining policy for providing desired services. Visual identity design can have an effect on the information audience receive from the objectivity of the place by directing their minds. The mentality of tourists from each museum is directed through effective advertisements according to the visual identity of the museums. Therefore, it can be

concluded that visual identity management is the ultimate goal of museum graphic designers; it can be considered one of their most complex responsibilities in the process of creating the museum's identity and brand design.

This study was conducted to investigate and answer these questions: What are the characteristics of the visual identity of Tehran museums from the perspective of graphic design? What strategies have Tehran museums used for their visual identity? According to the statistics obtained from the results of this research, it can be mentioned that 95% of these museums employ the strategy of using the main brand name in their visual identity design, 25% use the image of the museum building, 50% use typography in logo design, 50% use differentiation and adherence to the principles of service design for visual identity, 75% use the national perspective approach to formulate strategy in museum graphic design, 25% use the traditional approach to formulate strategy in museum graphic design. Besides, in terms of graphic design characteristics, 25% of Tehran museums have integrated visual identity in their environmental documents and graphics, 5% have followed the logo guide rules, and 50% of them have unique typefaces and briefcase families for branding their visual identity.

Conclusions

The importance of a cultural place called a 'museum' is not hidden from anyone. Museum is a service institution that exhibits various artifacts and its managers try to gain the satisfaction of their audience and improve the number of visitors by emphasizing providing good services and increasing the knowledge of visitors and even competing with other tourist places.

The role of graphic design in the branding of the visual identity of an important place such as a museum is undeniable. Research shows that museums have images that slowly change. Developing museums in the world have realized that it takes a lot of time to inform their achievements

at the domestic and foreign levels; they progress towards differentiation, identity building, popularity, reputation, competition, and influence with positive, up-to-date, and strategic brands and images.

Apart from the motivation of the decision-making design team and its objective reality, every strategy implemented in the museum, tells about the cultural and social environment of the country. With a conscious or unconscious approach, the designer and the strategist follow the collective taste and common goal in determining the graphic design policy and its final goals. Finally, the knowledge of graphic designers, strategists, and public relations officers promotes the collective perception of the shared experience of having a visual identity for the brand of museums (as important cultural spaces). The visual identity of museums is not only limited to the study of strategic planning in the graphic design of museums in the world. By considering the various identities of cultural places, and the specific geography of different regions in Iran, it is possible to determine suitable strategies for every museum.

Looking at what has been done on the role of graphics in the branding of visual identity for museums around the world, it is possible to realize that graphic design in the strategic branding of the world has changed over time; the definition of traditional strategies is replaced by modern strategies. It is time to review the strategy for the graphic design of the branding visual identity for museums in Iran. According to this research, it can be mentioned that the strategic approach of graphic design for Tehran museums requires a unified visual identity and a fundamental revision in the graphic design of their visual identity. It is hoped that this research will have a positive impact on the graphic design of Tehran museums and that this path will continue.

Endnotes

1. Visual Identity "includes all the design elements that the museum uses to present itself to the public, including the logo, color palette, typeface, fonts, illustration or repeating pattern, signs, pictograms, and other visual elements. Visual identity is formed by the public's image of the place and any other interaction they have with the museum and its website."

(Jim Richadson, 2019) translation derived from: www.museumnext.com (Accessed on: 2021/12/1)

2. Service Design "The unifying element that is considered at the beginning of the design plays an important role. This element can be brand color, font, unique material, interior design, style, language and illustration, which all together create a unique image of the organizational brand. Service marketing was first identified and introduced as an independent subject in the United States during the 1970s. The concept of service design did not exist until the beginning of the nineties; at the beginning of its introduction as a university course in design education in the beginning of the nineties, it was ridiculed. Now it is valid in the fields of education, research and practice all over the world. Service design deals with the efficiency and form of services from the customers' point of view. Service design wants to make sure that service intermediaries are useful, usable, and desirable from the point of view of customers, and that they are fruitful, efficient, and indicative from the point of view of service providers. The existence of a visual language for services gives service designers the ability to create interactions, spaces, and processes with the full knowledge on relationships." (Erelhoff & Marshall. 2018, 252-253).

3. Strategic "The art and science of formulating, implementing and evaluating multiple task decisions that enables an organization to achieve its long-term goals with high performance and productivity by reviewing challenges and planning." (Mohammadian & Asgari, 2013, 61).

4. Brand Identity "means the name and elements of visual identity; "brand identity" usually includes the visible elements of the brand such as color, design, logo, brand name, which lead to recognition of brand in the customer's mind." https://navand.co/fa/article/ (Accessed on: 2021/10/22)

5. Branding "is a creative and strategic method to create brand names and manage them as valuable assets" (Interbrand, 2014, 43).

6. Refers to the legal measures taken to register the exclusivity of a name and protect it as an asset. (ibid.).

7. Slogan is a short, distinctive and easily recognizable phrase that accompanies the brand names, conveys its message and reinforces the name in a few memorable words.

8. Sign or logo "is a graphic element used to identify a company, service, place or product. It is also a distinctive mark, sign, symbol, or image (usually for a company or brand name) that is in permanent use and becomes a trademark in some way to protect against misuse by other companies or places, and represents the identity of a particular organization or brand." (Interbrand. 2014, 125).

9. Strategic Design "is based on both internal and external management approaches to achieve the goal. Internal organizational strategies usually focus on how well an organization can improve communication, knowledge, and understanding within the organization. External organizational strategies, on the other hand, are often market-oriented and focus on the issue of how successful the design can be in reaching the target market, making the brand identity more coherent and showing the company's advantage over other competitors" (Erelhoff and Marshall. 2017, 204).

10. Pictograms are usually in the form of abstract graphic signs that convey information to viewers in the context of navigation systems. Pictograms usually do not use letters and therefore, are often used to convey a meaning, instruction or process in a way that is not limited to a particular nationality or language.

11. Art Deco gained international attention between 1925 and 1940, but it had started in France several years before that. Art Deco was a creative but short-lived artistic movement that influenced the architectural style of most American cities. During this period, American artists strongly embraced it and considered it as a style changing the revival styles before it. In Iran, this type of architecture became popular with the characteristic elements of Iranian architecture during the Reza Khan period.

12. Nikolai Markov was born in Tbilisi in 1882 in a well-known family of Tsarist Russian officers. He graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Saint Petersburg in 1910 and then studied in the Persian Department of the Faculty of Oriental Studies until 1914. Markov served as a volunteer in the Russian army in the Caucasus during World War I. In 1917 AD he became the adjutant in command of the Cossack Brigade, which was a special military unit in Iran that was formed by Naser al-Din Shah. He reached the rank of general in the Iranian army and lived in Iran after the Russian October Revolution. In 1921, he left the Cossack Brigade and returned to

the profession of architecture and got employed in Tehran Municipality. Building more than twenty architectural works in Iran, especially in Tehran, this Russian-born architect is considered as one of the pioneers of modern architecture in Iran. Markov admires Islamic architecture and traditional ways of constructing Iranian buildings and local materials such as brick, stone, tile and plaster. In fact, the clay bricks he used became known as Markovi bricks. In the first and second decades of the current century, the city of Tehran was filled with buildings in his style, a style that showcased the combination of four types of culture: modern, eclectic, western and Iranian. Art Deco and parallel currents in Europe and America, the results of archaeological research, especially the results related to the Islamic and Safavid eras in design, influenced Markov's architectural method. Markov built many buildings in Tehran and its surrounding cities; the use of local technology influenced by archaeological discoveries in the design of architectural buildings was another feature of Nikolai Markov's work.

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