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## Implementation of Interior Branding in Retail Interior Design

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### Abstract

**Objective** - The purpose of this research is to discover the ways to implement aspects of interior branding in the interior of commercial and retail spaces. It seeks to articulate how space as an interior branding medium can convey the message of retail owners to visitors through retail interior design.

**Methodology/Technique** - This study uses the descriptive qualitative method with the Tiara Handycraft Store as a case study. Data collection was achieved by conducting interviews with retail managers and visitors, and field observations. The data were analyzed descriptively to elaborate on how to apply every aspect of interior branding in the interior design of the Tiara Handicraft Store. Data analysis in this study was performed based on Kim Kutheubl's aspects of interior branding, namely: clear vision, unique story, and energy.

**Findings** - The results of this study indicate that the interior design of the Tiara Handicraft Store has implemented the interior branding aspects of clear vision, unique story, and energy. The combination of these three aspects in the interior design of this store has supported the construction of the identity or brand of the store through the media of its interior space. This application can be seen in the selection of shapes, colors, materials for interior elements, organization of space, and arrangement of furniture and displays. An ambience of cheerfulness, fun, and comfort has been formed with the play of bright color compositions, patterns, and materials of the interior spatial elements. In this design, space as an interior branding medium conveyed stories, messages from shop owners to visitors through the ambience, logos, signage, and other interior elements such as the decorative Tiara Handicraft's wall of fame. Through this wall, visitors were entertained with the idea that every item created has its own story, that there is a creative process behind every artwork, and that there are job opportunities for people with disabilities, encouraging a call for social awareness. It is this story or message that uniquely distinguishes Tiara Handicraft Store from other stores in general.

**Novelty** - This study provides insight and is expected to bring awareness to interior designers about the importance of implementing holistic interior branding in retail interior design to increase the value of their designs.

**Type of Paper** - Review

**Keywords:** Commercial interiors; Interior Branding; Retail space; Commercial Space, Clear Vision, Unique Story, Energy

**JEL Classification:** D02, M31, M39.

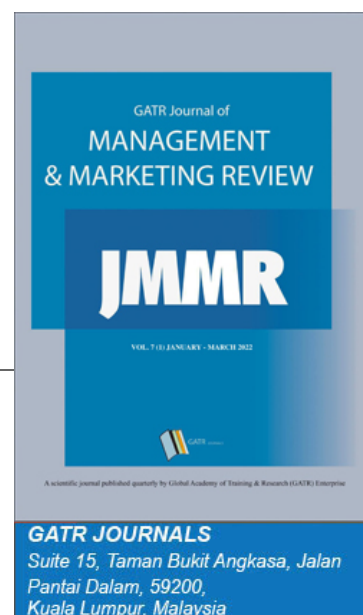
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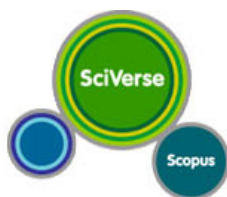
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## **Implementation of Interior Branding in Retail Interior Design**

**Sriti Mayang Sari<sup>1</sup> \*, Poppy Firtatwentyna Nilasari<sup>2</sup>, Purnama Esa Dora Tedjokoesoemo<sup>3</sup>**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Objective** The purpose of this research is to discover the ways to implement aspects of interior branding in the interior of commercial and retail spaces. It seeks to articulate how space as an interior branding medium can convey the message of retail owners to visitors through retail interior design.

**Methodology/Technique** - This study uses the descriptive qualitative method with the Tiara Handycraft Store as a case study. Data collection was achieved by conducting interviews with retail managers and visitors, and field observations. The data were analyzed descriptively to elaborate on how to apply every aspect of interior branding in the interior design of the Tiara Handicraft Store. Data analysis in this study was performed based on Kim Kuttebl's aspects of interior branding, namely: clear vision, unique story, and energy.

**Findings** – The results of this study indicate that the interior design of the Tiara Handicraft Store has implemented the interior branding aspects of clear vision, unique story, and energy. The combination of these three aspects in the interior design of this store has supported the construction of the identity or brand of the store through the media of its interior space. This application can be seen in the selection of shapes, colors, materials for interior elements, organization of space, and arrangement of furniture and displays. An ambiance of cheerfulness, fun, and comfort has been formed with the play of bright color compositions, patterns, and materials of the interior spatial elements. In this design, space as an interior branding medium conveyed stories, messages from shop owners to visitors through the ambiance, logos, signage, and other interior elements such as the decorative Tiara Handicraft's wall of fame. Through this wall, visitors were entertained with the idea that every item created has its own story, that there is a creative process behind every artwork, and that there are job opportunities for people with disabilities, encouraging a call for social awareness. It is this story or message that uniquely distinguishes Tiara Handicraft Store from other stores in general.

**Novelty** - This study provides insight and is expected to bring awareness to interior designers about the importance of implementing holistic interior branding in retail interior design to increase the value of their designs.

**Type of Paper:** Review

**JEL Classification:** D02, M31, M39.

**Keywords:** Commercial interiors; Interior Branding; Retail space; Commercial Space, Clear Vision, Unique Story, Energy

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### **1. Introduction**

The development of the creative economy in Indonesia resulted in more creative industries sprung up, such as the commercial and retail space. Commercial and retail space is a space where business or commercial activities are carried out. Space, in the context of commercial and promotional activities, at the same time can become a branding medium for products and services that become commercial commodities.

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As a branding medium, space is very important to be designed with the additional aim of strengthening the branding image. As stated by Clarida (2013) that interior design can reinforce and strengthen a company brand. Thus, space as an element of retail or commercial interior design can help shape the direction and duration of consumer attention, thereby increasing the possibility of sales, in addition to its main goal of optimizing commercial activities in it. Branding and a consistent branding message are always important to modern business. Branding is especially important in retail, and knowledgeable business leaders are beginning to connect brand identity with its physical space. Creating a branded retail space is very helpful in strengthening and communicating your brand and its message (Zwick, 2019). Branding as an identity is very important to be applied in the interior design of a commercial and retail spaces so that customers are able to choose a brand compared to other brands. (Wheeler, 2017) described brand identity as an effort used by business people to convey ideas or messages to build brand charm. Wheeler further explained that branding is a process that aims to build consumer awareness and trust in a brand.

A retailer can enhance their store brand by actualizing interior branding through design and creating a unique shopping environment as part of their marketing strategy. The branding was created from interior design elements in order to increase the value of the brand. Indirectly it can be said that planning and creating the right interior atmosphere will increase brand value and sales levels. According to (Kuchteubl, 2016), the interior branding of a retailer such as the Tiara handicraft is not only formed because it looks beautiful and visually unique, but also formed because of the atmosphere of the room that conveys stories and messages as its goal. Furthermore, according to Gunawan, Sari (2017) the stories and messages affect the perception of visitors about the store's interior performance. Visitors will remember this story and message as the uniqueness of a store that sets it apart from other stores.

This paper reviewed the implementation of interior branding in the interior design of commercial and retail spaces. The benchmark for interior branding used as the reference is the interior branding theory from Kim Kuchteubl. The benchmarks for the interior branding aspects are clear vision, unique story, and energy. This research took a case study of the interior of the Tiara Handicraft's store which was designed by Interior Design and Styling for Commercial and Retail students for the academic year of 2020/2021. This research aimed to determine the implementation of interior branding in Tiara Handicraft's store. How space as an interior branding medium can convey an interesting and unique message as well as to provide insight for interior designers about interior branding in retail stores to increase the value of their designs.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Branding Definition**

Retail is a business that involves selling merchandise directly to consumers. The interior design of retails will be related to marketing in a sense of how to attract consumers through product displays and interiors. Retail interior design considers brand aspirations to increase the value of the relationship between space, product, and message to consumers. The definition of brand is quite broad. It is not merely used for a product as described by Mesher (2010) and (Gu, 2011) that a brand can be a product, a person or a logo – anything that can be bought and sold, as an idea or artifact, can be branded. According to the American Marketing Association, a brand is a name, term, design, symbol, or other characteristic that distinguishes a seller's goods or services from those of other sellers (Marion, 2021).

Branding is defined as the process of projecting a positive image of a company (Ford, 2005). Branding empowers products and services (Kotler, Keller, 2015). Branding is the process of giving meaning to a particular organization, company, product, or service by creating and forming a brand in the minds of consumers. It was developed by an organization to give people a reason to quickly identify and experience a

brand and choose a product over competitors by clarifying what a particular brand is and what it is not. It is a strategy that has been done (Marion, 2021).

## 2.2. Interior Branding Aspect

The implementation of the branding aspects into retail interior elements needs to be consistent. As Mesher (2010) explains, brand image needs to be communicated to consumers. Through marketing and advertising, the brand's image is identified and sold to the public. A brand can be defined by analyzing its core values, understanding the product, communicating with the right consumer audience, understanding that audience, and ultimately adapting the product to the physical environment.

When it comes to the term “retail”, the business will be built around the brand concept and the products sold within it. The interior enhances the relationship between space and message, incorporating brand values, and quality claims. Designing a retail facility is complex, it begins with an analysis of brand and identity. The designer's purpose is to seduce, excite, and captivate consumers by creating a consumer-identifiable experience (Mesher, 2020).

The implementation of branding through the interior can be more successful in conveying the message compared to other methods when it is well designed. As stated by (Imani & Shishebori, 2014) in (Raja, 2020), forming a certain mentality of a brand through the interior is more influential than other methods, and nowadays, logos and signs have less influence in the world of branding. Therefore, if an interior designer is able to design an attractive environment based on the brand identity that is carried, it will also be more successful in conveying the message of the brand.

According to (Kuchteubl, 2016) there are 3 main aspects that must be considered by an interior designer when they do branding, namely Vision, Story, and Energy. The application of branding in the interior will be maximized when applying these three aspects of interior branding in balance. The descriptions of these three aspects are as follows:

The Clear Vision aspect is an aspect related to the clarity of the store's identity and vision. This can be seen from the placement of logos and signage, area boundaries, space organization, and furniture arrangement.

The Unique Story aspect is the aspect where the unique story or message of a store can be conveyed to visitors through its logo and interior design. This aspect can be seen from the meaning of the logo, concept, type of song, and the name of each area. The concept of space affects the selection of shapes, colors, and materials for space-forming elements, space fillers, and space decorations, which will shape the atmosphere of the space.

Energy aspect is an aspect related to everything that affects the first impression of visitors. These aspects include visual beauty, quality, conditioning systems, and space facilities that attract attention and support visitor comfort.

Every aspect of interior branding is related one to another. The application of these aspects must be balanced. The connection is in terms of implementing the concept of shape, color, and material in an interior. In Figure 1, the relationship and connection can be seen from the similarity in the application of the interior.





Figure 1. Diagram of the relationship between interior branding aspects  
(Processed from Gunawan, Sari, 2017)

### 3. Research Methodology

This research used a descriptive qualitative case study method. Qualitative researchers generally assume that social reality is a human creation, they interpret and contextualize the meaning of people's beliefs and practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative case studies quickly became effective and valuable research methods in many different scientific disciplines. It is often thought of as a soft (simple and not particularly rigorous) research method, but it is very difficult to actually do it well (Baskarada, 2014).

The case study in this research is the interior design Tiara Handicraft's store which was designed by Bernadeth Vania Geraldine, a student of Interior Design and Styling for Commercial and Retail for the 2020/2021 academic year. This interior design is a student task with a real project that emphasizes design issues and interior branding. The research was conducted for 6 months, starting from data collection, observation, interviews, design, to discussion of the implementation of interior branding in the store design.

Data collection methods were conducted by interviewing the Tiara Handicraft Store manager and several visitors, observing store interiors and visitor behavior, and through photography documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with the store manager, to obtain various information regarding design problems that need to be solved. This method is very useful for the interior designer to give them any insight and consideration for future store design, such as the vision and mission, the owner's desire on how the branding is wished to be, and so on. Interviews were also conducted with store employees and visitors to get the experience they felt when they were occupying the store. The literature study focuses on the theory of the interior of commercial spaces, especially retail or stores, and the theory of interior branding. These data were used as a reference to analyze this research (Moleong, 2013).

Data analysis was described in the form of paragraphs about how to apply every aspect of interior branding to the interior of the Tiara Handicraft store in Surabaya. Data analysis in this study uses interior branding benchmarks according to Kim Kuhteubl, namely clear vision, unique story, and energy (Kuhteubl, 2016). The analysis of these three aspects emphasizes on how the implementation of these three aspects in the interior design of the Tiara Handicraft Store in terms of shape, color, and material, especially on space-forming elements, space filling, decoration, space conditioning (lighting and acoustics), space organization, and layout in space.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Tiara Handicraft Shop overview

Tiara Handicraft store is a handicraft store based in Surabaya by empowering people with disabilities as employees in the shop. The shop, which was initiated by Titik Winarti, was established in 1995, and has been operating for more than 25 years. This shop produces and sells fabric-based products such as fashion products, home decorative, accessories, souvenirs, and raw materials for cloth, leather, and so on. Tiara Handicraft is growing and their visitors come not only from Surabaya, but also from outside the city such as tourists, considering the location of this shop is close to homestays and handicraft craftsmen community. The shop owner wanted to redesign this store according to user needs, designing the main room to be more functional, a workshop place, display of finished and raw goods products, cashier.

### 4.2 Tiara Handicraft Interior Design Concept

The interior design of the Tiara handicraft shop was designed by Bernadeth Vania Geraldine by applying interior branding and the KRIYA design concept which in Indonesian means handicrafts. In the KRIYA concept, each letter is described and has a specific meaning: Keen, Readapting, Instructive, Year by year, and Accessible. From these meanings, an interior design concept was made by adapting the problems in the previous interior of Tiara Handicraft Store.

The KRIYA concept is designed to create a space atmosphere that can arouse enthusiasm for work and be fun (cheerful), and can encourage employees to work hard and enthusiastically. Customers who come are also expected to feel excited and happy when visiting stores and shopping. With the issue of the Covid-19 pandemic, this concept created a room where users in it may be able to adapt to the new normal situation which has many changes with many instructive and educative symbols. New normal implementations such as cashiers and checkout areas were made available with plexiglass screens, automatic self-thermometers, touchless hand sanitizers, and cue signs and street directions for visitors. All these facilities were provided so that visitors will feel safe and comfortable when shopping at this store.

As an example of the KRIYA concept implementation Tiara Handicraft store can be seen in Figure 3, namely the Front Office interior (Figure 2A) and the Display Room (Figure 2B). Both of these spaces apply the KRIYA concept, to create a pleasant space atmosphere by using a composition of bright colors and branding colors on space-forming elements such as floors, walls, ceilings, and furniture. The application of interior branding was not only through color, but also logos, signage in each area or space that were very informative so that visitors can easily understand.



Figure 2. Front Office Interior (A) and Display Room Interior (B)

## 5. Discussion

The implementation of branding in the interior will be maximized by applying the three aspects of interior branding, namely clear vision, unique story, and energy in balance (Kuheubel, 2016). Every aspect of interior branding has an interrelated relationship connection. The connection is in terms of the implementation of shapes, colors, and materials. The following is the analysis of the implementation of the three aspects of interior branding in the interior design of the Tiara handicraft shop. The implementation of space as an interior branding medium at the Tiara handicraft store.

### 5.1 Implementation of the Clear Vision Aspect in the interior of the Tiara Handicraft Store



Figure 3. Logo Layouting (A,C) and signage (A,B,C) of the Tiara Handicraft store

(Kuheubel, 2016) explains that the clear vision aspect is the aspect related to the clarity of the identity and vision of the store. In the redesign of the Tiara Handicraft store, the implementation of this clear vision aspect was very clear, as can be seen from the placement of the logo and signage, the organization of space and the arrangement of furniture. For example, in Figures 3A and 2C, the logo was clearly visible in the entrance area of the salesroom and the cashier area so that visitors know where the sales and cashier areas are. Signage was also clearly visible when visitors enter the display room, in front of the entrance there is a one-way signage (picture 3B), as an adaptation of the new normal design due to covid-19. In everything was easy to see because of its strategic placement and the color is striking compared to the background, clarifying the identity of an area. Each room has a name signage, making it easier to know the function of each area. This also makes it easier for visitors who come with various interests such as shopping, communities to gather to exchange experiences, workshops, or others.

The organization of space is related to the placement of each room, has a function and purpose. This Tiara Handicraft store is connected to the owner's house, but in this design there was a clear boundary between the shop and the house. The organization of the space in this store was very good, placing interconnected spaces that were close together and have a purpose so as to facilitate the activities of visitors or space users. For example, the front office and waiting room were close together, and the waiting room was divided into three areas, namely the Tiara Handicraft wall of fame, Photo Corner, and the waiting area. These three areas were created with the aim that when visitors waiting in this room feel a different atmosphere of space, and while waiting they can see the Tiara Handicraft wall of fame, the wall where various awards, photos of important activities are expected to increase the value of the Tiara Handicraft store. In this area, an interesting photo corner is also provided so that visitors can take instagrammable photos and don't get bored waiting. The clarity of the separation of the three areas allows visitors to move smoothly according to the function of each area (Ching, 2008).



Figure 4. Implementation of various types of materials, colors in the interior of the display room

Interior finishing for ceilings, walls and interior floors of the Tiara Handicraft Store used a lot of different materials and colors in each area. This was designed differently to limit one area to another and make it easier for visitors to know the boundaries of each area, as stated by Lawson (2006) that the differences in the shape and material of the walls, as well as leveling clarify the boundaries of the area. Implementation of various display areas for finished products, cut fabric products, and cashier areas are in the display room. Figure 2B, 3B, 3C, and 4 shows the interior of the display room from various points of view, which uses various types of colors, shapes, patterns, and materials as boundaries for the display areas of various products so that the differences between products can still stand out. The cashier area (see figure 3C) in the visual barrier display room was not only created through signage but also in the processing of ceiling elements, this makes it easier for visitors to know the cashier area. In this area, the new normal regulation was also applied, namely the existence of queue signage so that visitors queue in an orderly manner according to the limits of the new normal protocol.

## 5.2 Implementation of Unique Story Aspects in Tiara Handicraft Store interior

According to Adi Rizal, manager of Tiara Handicraft Store, the word “Tiara” means “crown”. The simple philosophy is that this store's business can elevate the status of many people and be able to become a source of pride for the people in it. The workers in this shop are disabled, they are educated and trained to make products that are worth selling. The purpose of Tiara's shop is to facilitate people with disabilities to explore their potential through various creativity in making products from textile materials, honing their abilities so that they can be independent. The Tiara Handicraft shop logo includes a unique story aspect because it indirectly tells the purpose of the store (Kuheubl, 2016). Regarding the color of the logo for the owner, there is no particular meaning, the most important being the bright color, stands out, and as the identity of the store.

The unique story aspect is also related to the concept of interior design. The implementation of the KRIYA interior concept in this store aimed to create a lively and fun atmosphere. Interior concepts indirectly affect the shape, color, and material of interior elements, and to convey messages or stories to visitors. This was achieved by the use of bright color compositions in different interiors, furniture, materials, and interior finishing so that the atmosphere of the space can be pleasantly created. Visitors who came were expected to feel excited and happy when visiting the store to shop.

The unique story aspect that stands out the most is in the waiting room, which is a wall of the 'Wall of Fame Tiara Handicraft', displaying various awards won by Titik Winarti, founder of Tiara Handicraft. Starting from the 2005 Hipenca Award by the Minister of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The award was given for her concern in providing equal opportunities for friends with disabilities. Speaker at the entrepreneurship workshop 'The attitude of women in responding to business challenges' in 2010, Award as a speaker at the 'Lecture Gathering' event, Faculty of Economics and Business, Udayana University in 2016,

and so on. By knowing what is displayed on this decorative wall, it is hoped that visitors will realize that every item created has its own story, there is a creative process, there are job opportunities for people with disabilities, and a call to care socially.

### **5.3 Implementation of the Energy Aspect in the interior of the Tiara Handicraft Shop**

Energy aspect is an aspect related to everything that affects the first impression of visitors. In the redesign of the Tiara Handicraft Store, all spaces related to visitor activities were made interesting. Visitors who want to shop usually go directly to the display room, or to the front office if they want to order a special design in large enough quantities. Visitors who want to take part in the training can go directly to the workshop room and usually proceed to the production room. Therefore, all spaces that visitors will visit were made attractive with various compositions of shapes, colors, and materials, not monotonous. All room facilities were designed to attract attention and support the comfort of visitors and workers. The convenience factor in this design was not only for visitors, but also for the needs of workers' activities so as to increase productivity.

The interior of display room appeared interesting, fun because of the composition of bright colors, such as pink, baby blue, yellow and a variety of patterns (see figure 2B, 3B, 3C, 4). This was in accordance with the purpose of the design concept, which is fun/cheerful. Bright color compositions were applied to the elements of walls, floors, ceilings, and furniture. The application of the circle pattern on one side of the wall and the repetition of forms, the material on the other side of the wall formed a vertical line pattern that enhances the visual beauty of the interior of this space. The atmosphere of this interior space was created more interesting with the variation of ceiling processing in terms of shape, color and material, so it was not monotonous. The shape of the ceiling in the display area was a leveling game with bright and striking colors. The brightly colored ceiling area uses spotlights and mirror LED lamps in the shape of a circle that is quite large and attracts attention. Visitors' eyes were even more spoiled by the ceiling game in the cashier area which uses MDF board and acrylic sheet wave ceiling material (see Figure 4). The waveforms and the play of pink, yellow, and baby blue create a different sensation from the shape of the lights in the previous area. This different ceiling shape was not only for aesthetic reasons, but also to indicate different areas.

The lighting in this display room uses natural and artificial lighting. Natural lighting is obtained from light entering from the entrance door, windows, and skylights (see Figure 4) on the ceiling of the cashier area. In Figure 4, it can be seen that the detail of the light source that enters from the skylight illuminates the display area and cashier. This ceiling considers the aesthetic and functional factors as well. The lighting factor in this space included the application of energy aspects because it includes beauty, space quality, and room facilities that attract attention and support visitor comfort (Kuheubel, 2016).

In Figure 5 it can be seen that the interior of the workshop and production room also implements a composition of color, pattern, and material but it is not as lively as the display room, because the function of this space is to study and work, so it requires concentration when they are occupying the space. Although not as lively as the display room, the interiors of these two spaces still have a well thought setting of color and pattern, such as in the workshop room, the color combination was applied to the concrete walls and ceiling. The production room was designed simpler because the color and pattern of the fabric as the basic material for Tiara Handicraft products were already lively. The effect of sunlight entering from the window also made this space more attractive and gets good natural lighting. There was not much color combination arrangement on the ceiling in the production room, but it is quite lively with the presence of decorative chandeliers. With this pleasant interior atmosphere, it was hoped that employees can work well, comfortably, and happily, thus affecting their work productivity.





Figure 5. The interior of the workshop room (A) and the interior of the production room (B)

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the interior design of the Tiara Handicraft Store has implemented aspects of interior branding according to Kim Kuhteubl, namely clear vision, unique story, and energy well. The combination of these three aspects in the interior design of the Tiara handicraft store helps to form the identity or brand of the store through the media of its interior space. This can be seen from the cheerful, fun, comfortable interior space atmosphere with the play of bright color compositions, patterns, and materials in the interior space elements, this is in accordance with the design concept. In this design, space as an interior branding medium conveys stories, messages from shop owners to visitors through the atmosphere of the room, logos, signage, and other interior elements such as the 'wall of fame Tiara Handicraft' decorative wall. By knowing what is displayed on this decorative wall, it is hoped that visitors will realize that every item created has its own story, there is a creative process, there are job opportunities for people with disabilities, and a call to care socially. It is this story or message that distinguishes Tiara Handicraft Stores from stores in general. Time constraints and the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the collection of in-depth interview data and research discussions for this research. The research case study used the design work of a 5th-semester student who has not much experience in designing, understanding theory and implementing it.

The results of this study were expected to provide examples of implementation for further research on interior branding. For example, research with case studies of real retail or commercial interiors is of many types. It can also be further research using other branding theories related to consumers as users such as their experience and perceptions when using an interior that implements interior branding. Interior branding research can also be linked to psychology and marketing, in relation to increasing product sales. If further research is carried out, there will be a lot of new knowledge that can be utilized by interior designers for design development.

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