

Brand Audit: Chobani and Fairlife

Dani Cerutti

OVERVIEW

Chobani

Chobani was created in 2005 in New Berlin, New York, as a yogurt company (chobani.com). The company has expanded globally over the years, and now produces creamers and oatmilks in addition to a variety of yogurt products. Their verbal messaging emphasizes a mission of making the world a **healthier place** through accessible, high-quality products, with an overall emphasis on nourishing the world. The visual branding consists of colorful, earthy tones and hand-drawn iconography, supported by naturalistic photography. Overall, they cultivate a cohesive personality that is calm, nurturing, and lighthearted, with a market position as “*World-Nurturing Dairy*”. Through this market positioning, Chobani appears to appeal to an audience that values **taking care of their body**, the community, and the world in a clean way.

Fairlife

Created in 2012 in partnership with The Coca-Cola Co., Fairlife began producing ultra-filtered fresh milk drinks (Doelman, 2023). Today, they sell a range of milk and protein shake products. The brand’s verbal identity emphasizes **nutrient-dense**, “better-for-you” products, and a mission to “nourish the modern world” (fairlife.com). The visuals of the brand revolve around a blue color palette, with playful typography and graphics. The photography of their website suggests a company focus on people, and the messaging leans heavily into promoting the product’s manufacturing and makeup. Although the verbal and visual branding of Fairlife do clash at times, the brand’s strong emphasis on the product overall emulates a market position as “*Nutrient Dense Dairy*”. From this angle Fairlife appears to appeal to an audience which values **health that strengthens** and supports the body.

BRAND IDENTITIES*

*analysis based on the websites and products of each brand

Chobani

Verbal Messaging

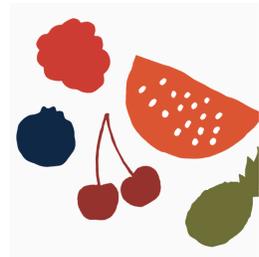
Chobani's mission and value statements describe "The Chobani Way", which emphasizes making good food accessible and as a "force for good." They continuously speak of the communities they strive to support and uplift, and how they operate with the idea of humanity coming before anything else. From these verbal cues, one can induce an overall brand conviction to provide nurturement to the world.

Color Palettes

The Chobani website, labels, and socials utilize a range of colors. The primary colors for backgrounds and large sections are earthy tones, including greens, blues, and tans. This plays into the nurturing aspects seen in their verbal messaging, continuing the nourishing undertones. The secondary colors used in the graphics and icons use brighter colors of reds, pinks, and yellows; these accent colors add a lighthearted sense to the natural tones, while continuing the natural-centered lens. These secondary colors, while brighter, still use slightly muted tones, complementing the earthy tones without overpowering them.

Graphics/Iconography

The graphics used throughout the website continue the *nature theme* while incorporating a human feel. The graphics have a hand-drawn sense to them and show various fruits and flowers (along with other icons like hands and megaphones for more corporate sections of the site). The hand-drawn aspect of the graphics brings in a human feel, emphasizing the human-centered approach of Chobani's branding overall. There's a softness and organic feel to the graphics/icons, pulling through the nurturing sense of the brand.



Typography

The Chobani logo uses a serif font in a dark green color. The curves and shape of the font are gentle, but it still has a sophisticated feel to it that overall brings a sense of reliability and calmness. The font used for the bulk of the rest of the website (and across product packaging) brings in similar curves and sophistication as the logo, while remaining light and readable. The lightness of the font adds to the calmness of the experience and supports the gentle graphics and colors well.

Charts

The charts and slideshows of the site help to balance the lighthearted feel of the graphics. The origin story slideshow, for example, uses rectangles with soft edges, which, in combination with the dark blue, bring a sophisticated feel to the design. The charts add to the maturity and reliability of the brand, elevating the calm feelings of the typography and balancing the fun colors and graphics.



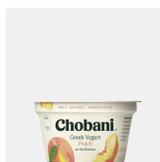
Photography



The images used by Chobani show a focus on nature and airy spaces. Images range, but many show outdoor elements, continuing natural elements. The ones taken on a set/indoors feature strong colors, plants, and food that feel fresh and complement the nature shots, with a crispness to them.

Animations

The Chobani website uses small animations throughout the interface. As the user scrolls through the page, the sections and some individual titles and graphics slide up subtly, adding motion to the UX experience. The motion increases the interactive feel of the site, increasing the human feel and adding intrigue. The product header of the site employs animation through color, and the muted color tones of their palette appear as the user hovers over the product icons. The individual product images also reveal graphics when hovered over, showing realistic drawings of the key ingredients of the featured flavor. This adds to the lighthearted side of the site's feel, again bringing in fun interactive elements.



Greek Yogurt



Greek Yogurt Drinks



Creamers



Fairlife

Verbal Messaging

Fairlife's mission statement describes the company's purpose to "nourish the modern world" with nutrient-dense dairy. They emphasize a need to help people "lead healthier lives" and the extra care they put into nurturing the community, including animals and the planet. Fairlife's messaging largely focuses on the nutritional value of their products, due in part to the intense processing procedures they use, and the site features a whole page on this process.

Color Palettes

The Fairlife brand relies on the use of a few shades of blue. The logo employs a deep royal blue, with lighter shades of blue used across the packaging. The only other colors used across products are brown and red, both used to differentiate products. Fairlife's website uses blue and white almost exclusively, besides the use of green and orange in a naturalistic graphic on the home page. Multiple studies have shown that blue is used in branding as a way to communicate trust and reliability (Su, L., Cui, A. P., & Walsh, M. F., 2019), so one may attribute the use of blue to this purpose. The brightness of the hues also suggests a playfulness.

Graphics/Iconography



The logo of Fairlife uses a cartoon depiction of a cow's head, focusing on the dairy aspect of the brand. This continues a focus on the product itself, as seen in the brand's verbal messaging. The cow is used on all products and across the website within graphics and icons. It is interesting to note the imagery of the exclamation mark in the cow's face, mimicking the exclamation mark from the text portion of the logo. The same exclamation mark is used on its own in other icons



across the Fairlife site, showing strong reliance on logo elements and a tight set of brand design components. Other icons used range in depictions, but also rely on the blue hues.

Typography

The text portion of Fairlife's logo uses a simple sans-serif font in all lowercase. The inclusion of an exclamation point as the "i" gives the logo a playful feel, as does the curved nature of the logo. Headline text includes a combination of cursive and sans-serif fonts, with the combination continuing the playful, yet simplistic feel. Many of the headings throughout the site use all lowercase titles, following the style of the logo and giving the section a more casual feel.

Charts



The slide layouts used by Fairlife continue the playful feel of the graphics and icons through rounded edges and blue hues. This style is used across the pages of the site, giving a lightness to the design. The contents of their charts still largely focus on product offerings, countering the playfulness of the graphics/colors with real facts.

Photography

The photography on the Fairlife site is minimal, but it shows people and realistic scenes set in kitchens and homes. It's interesting to note that the "How we do it" page of the site



(explaining their filtering process) shows a picture from a



production factory. The brand does not shy away from the science and manufacturing portion of the

product, choosing instead to highlight how their processes improve the product. This again shows a reliance on product offering.

BRAND ASSESSMENT

Chobani

Brand Personality

Nurturing: The brand's verbal messaging focuses largely on providing high-quality food to as many people as possible, while visual messaging brings in themes of nature and humanity. Combining these, Chobani portrays a persona focused on nurturing the community.

Calm: The earthy tones of Chobani's color palette and the sophisticated typography bring a sense of serenity to the brand. The emphasis on nature adds to this feeling.

Lighthearted: To balance the serenity and humanity of the brand, Chobani adds a feeling of lightheartedness through animation and colorful secondary colors. The light, fun touches round out the branding overall.

Strengths

Cohesion between value messaging and visual identity: Both the verbal and visual messaging of Chobani's identity portray a sense of serene nurturement and humanity.

Cohesion between icons/graphics and images: The graphics focus on colorful, naturalistic elements, which are continued in the imaging, both outdoors and indoors. Both feature strong, but not overpowering, colors with a human-centric focus.

Balance between naturalistic, sophisticated feel and lighthearted, fun touches: The overall brand personality is successful because it balances humanity and reliability with a lighthearted feel. The balance gives the brand a robust personality that is still cohesive.

Weaknesses

Lack of focus on the product itself: The brand chooses to focus on a conviction of nurturement and humanity, with little incorporation of the product's direct proposition. Chobani focuses on the ingredients of the flavors in their graphics, with little verbal or visual cues about the dairy portion of the product (which is the basis for the brand overall). This focus on humanity over direct product value may also be seen as a strength, but a small shift towards dairy focus could be beneficial.

Broad color palette: Chobani employs an overall earthy and naturalistic feel in their colors, but the palette is far-ranging. While this may add to their brand identity of being human and humanity-centric, it may also detract from a strong brand identity. The broad color palette may decrease overall brand recognition as the element of a strongly recognizable color scheme is non apparent.

Market Position

From this audit and analysis, one concludes Chobani's market position as "World-Nurturing Dairy", with an appeal to audiences who value taking care of their bodies and the world with clean, good food.

Fairlife

Brand Personality

Nutritious: The brand's main focus in verbal messaging and graphics/icons is on their products' nutrient-dense qualities. By emphasizing manufacturing processes and the product's value in "nourishing the world", they portray themselves as nutritious and almost strengthening.

Playful: Fairlife's reliance on the cow logo and exclamation icon, as well as use of strong blues, curved elements, and differing fonts, builds a feeling of playfulness. This trait is countered by the nutritious, strengthening side of Fairlife's brand.

Strengths

Strong color palette: Fairlife makes strong use of royal and sky blue shades. This is beneficial for the brand as these colors are then strongly included in the brand's identity and therefore in the consumer's ability to recognize and remember the brand.

Clear product offering: The brand works hard to show that their differentiation point is through filtration and manufacturing processes, which makes their products extra healthy and nutritious. For consumers whose values align with these ideas, they will be able to identify the value congruence easily.

Weaknesses

Cohesion between playfulness and nutrition: The main personality points identified for Fairlife were "nutritious" and "playful", which were both seen throughout many elements of the brand, but largely not in overlapping areas. While the brand does display both of these traits, they do not feel completely cohesive, and the brand almost competes with itself to prove its fun versus healthy side. Perhaps bringing in more elements of lifestyle and wellness (i.e., explanations of how their nutritious products contribute to a playful everyday life) could help bridge this gap.

Overreliance on direct product offering: While Fairlife does clearly explain the nutritious value of their products, they could benefit from broadening their value proposition. The product is good for consumers because it is healthy, but a shift to portraying how this healthy product can *help* consumers more generally (provides strength, empowers the community, etc) could strengthen the brand's offerings overall. This could be executed through both verbal and visual messaging alterations to give the brand a wider purpose.

Market Position

From this audit and analysis, one concludes Fairlife's market position as "*Nutrient Dense Dairy*", with an appeal to audiences who value food that strengthens and supports them.

TYING EVERYTHING TOGETHER

Points of similarity

- Sell dairy products, which are supposed to support healthy living
- Verbal messaging emphasizes helping to fuel the community

Points of differentiation

- Chobani focuses on a **naturalistic** approach, with earth tones and visual messaging
- Fairlife focuses on the **product** itself and the nutrients it provides

- Chobani provides a **wide value proposition** of serene nurturement and aiding humanity
- Fairlife offers a **narrower proposition** of fueling people's health

- Chobani portrays a **calm**, lighthearted, yet sophisticated brand identity
- Fairlife shows a **playful** brand image (revealing slight incohesiveness to its nutritious proposition)

Conclusion

While Chobani and Fairlife sell similar products to similar groups of people, the brands each portray distinct identities. Chobani utilizes an overall human-centered approach in its identity, focusing on humanity and nurture. Fairlife alternatively focuses on the specific product offerings and production processes. One can conclude a stronger brand identity within the Chobani brand, as there is greater congruence between their verbal and visual messaging, and across all aspects of visual identity. Furthermore, the brand's wider value proposition allows it to *connect more deeply* with consumer values that extend beyond the product itself. In this way, they can build a consumer base that is aligned with cultural, life values, beyond what they care about in ingredients and food. Chobani aims to capture consumers through broader cultural values relating to health and wellness, while Fairlife focuses more on the direct value of strength and fitness.

References

Chobani. (n.d.). Chobani®. <https://www.chobani.com/>

Doelman, T. (2023, October 5). “People thought this was a dead industry but milk inherently has great value” – Tim Doelman, CEO of Coca-Cola’s US milk business, Fairlife. Just Drinks. <https://www.just-drinks.com/interviews/people-thought-this-was-a-dead-industry-but-milk-inherently-has-great-value-tim-doelman-ceo-of-coca-colas-us-milk-business-fairlife/>

Fairlife. (n.d.). Fairlife®. <https://fairlife.com/>

Su, L., Cui, A. P., & Walsh, M. F. (2019). Trustworthy Blue or Untrustworthy Red: The Influence of Colors on Trust. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 27(3), 269–281. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2019.1616560>