



BRAND STRATEGY FOR HAVAIANAS

DESIGNING A BAG TO MATCH THE ESSENCE OF A BRAND AND THE SPIRIT OF A NATION

Project Date: 2009



Selling 162 million pairs of flip-flops a year, the Havaianas brand embodies what it means to be Brazilian: free spirited, with a zest for life and an instinct for improbable combinations. Havaianas first designed inexpensive cloth shoes for Brazilian coffee farmers in 1907. Now, the company offers nearly 20 product lines, and the Havaianas brand has gone global. Scan the pathways and streets the world over, and you'll find Havaianas's iconic footwear. From celebrities Gisele Bündchen and Beyonce Knowles to those who are looking for an affordable, versatile shoe, Havaianas sandals strike a universal chord.

With 60 years of consistent growth, Havaianas came to IDEO to help extend its brand into a new product category. The company wanted to offer accessories that shared the simple pleasure and boldness of its flip-flops, starting with a series of ways in which people could carry their beloved Havaianas around.

In designing what this bag could look like, IDEO worked to capture the essence of the Havaianas brand by first understanding its tight connection to Brazil's national identity.

Interviewing Brazilians from a variety of demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds, the team uncovered Havaianas's brand essence: a vibrant spirit based on simplicity, authenticity, play, enjoyment, and physical comfort. The team then continued its research in Australia, India, London, and Paris, where it found inspiration for keeping the brand in both developed and developing markets.

The team also ran a series of "handstorms," or bag-making brainstorm sessions that led to hundreds of prototypes. Each was considered in relation to the brand vision for Havaianas. Working with a seamstress, the team tried various materials, shapes, and fabrics. In the end, they developed a consistent design language that echoed Havaianas's iconic look and feel. Pulling inspiration from the company's flip-flops, the team included the same raised pattern from the sandal straps and other textural and visual cues.

IDEO created a range of modular bags and straps to meet the needs of Havaianas's customers and its retailers. The bag's style is relaxed, individualistic, and uncomplicated. The colors capture the fun, improbable combinations, and vibrancy of Brazil. IDEO's team did this by creating a distinct color palette curated from photographs taken throughout country.

When considering the commercial rollout of the bag, IDEO placed great emphasis on staying true to Havaianas's Brazilian heritage while still entering new markets, globally. By introducing the bag initially in Brazil, Havaianas allowed its flip-flop fans at home to be the first to enjoy the product. Havaianas introduced the bag at Sao Paulo's fashion week in June 2008, and the new line is currently available in Brazil. The United States is next, with an expected launch in 2009.