1. Direct sensory or iconic impression (shape, colour and sound – may not vary amongst consumers).

2. The idiosyncratic meaning (i.e. associations because of personal experiences with an object - unique to each consumer) or the psychological meaning.

3. The subcultural associations (connected to an idea or an object by members of a given subculture or society).

4. The cultural associations (connected to an idea or an object by members of a given culture).

Figure One: Layers of Meaning; Hirschman 1998

Figure Two: Tangible Attributes adapted from Hirschman 1980