

The marketing mix: products and brands essay examples

[Business](#), [Company](#)



Module Two

Susan Fournier, in her paper published in 1998 in the background readings, she claims that there are relationships between customers with their brands.

- 1) Explain what Fournier means by "having a relationship" with a brand.
- 2) Using two brands chosen from the categories below, explain whether or not you believe that customers have relationships with these brands.

- Honda

- Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen

- 3) Expand your thinking and explain whether, based on Fournier's paper, your experience and your knowledge of other people, customers have relationships with all brands.

- Susan Fournier explanation to Brand Relationship

According to Dr. Susan Fournier, it is clear that consumers have relationships with the products they use, indeed consumers require that relationships.

Looking at the central concept of brand marketing, positioning, and the relationship, candidly and comprehensively we can conclude that consumers and products are treated as partners. In addition, customers and the products have a dynamic relationship that can be related to relationship between two people (Dehestani, Zadeh, & Noori, 2014). When establishing a brand, firms set their products apart from their competitors with an aim to position the brand they use adverts. For example, if a company has developed new body lotion for ladies, the advertising campaign would position it as a body lotion used by women. Dependence on products and consumers shows the relationship of products with customers.

There are customers who are prone to certain brands that satisfy their ego, or just they buy as a result of the brands history. Remarkably, Susan Fournier demonstrates how customers grow form of connections with brands. She referred it as customer-brand relationship that persists for a short time. Additional form of relationship that occurs is called best-friend; in this relationship consumers regard some brands so highly that they contemplate them as a parcel and part of their social, professional and personal life. According to Fournier, courtship customer-brand relationship makes consumers experiment a particular product, for instance, perfume before having a partnership with it (Fakiri, 2014). There is a kinship customer-brand relationship whereby a customer becomes fond of a particular brand from a young age or his backgrounds. For a marriage of convenience relationship, a consumer relates the brand just by lack of another alternative. She compared customer-brand relationships with human relationship since they both subjected to change depending on the factors such as environmental factors.

Brand relationship quality elucidates the mechanisms that make brand and consumer relationships, as well as the maintenance of this relationship at high levels of intensity and the duration of relationships. Fournier describes the relationship of interdependence between two active partners which must be evident. Fournier launches seven aspects of the BRQ that she evidently recognized as passion, sentimental attachment, intimacy, interdependency, personal commitment, love, self-concept connection, and brand partner quality (Fakiri, 2014). Fournier also acknowledges that it is easy to see the end user as an active partner. Additionally, it takes slight study to ascertain

that a brand can also be an active partner (Kayaman & Arasli, 2007). Many people comprehend that a brand is inanimate hence unable of sustaining a relationship. However, Fournier makes a convincing case against that sentiment.

2) Explanation of two brands relationships with customers

a) Honda

I believe that customers have a relationship with Honda Automobile due to the fact that, Honda Automobile has established self-brand connections to its initial customers. The degree of self-brand connection in customer's forms a better consumer's attitude towards the brand. For instance, the primary consumers of first Honda cars have developed a definite self-brand connection, passion, love and a healthy interdependence towards Honda products. Therefore, such consumers have a very robust and promising attitude towards Honda Automobiles. The self-brand connections have an effect on behavioral intentions (Kayaman & Arasli, 2007). For instance, when customer's Honda Accord wears out, the customer may plan to purchase Honda CRV.

There are others form of behaviors that may also be affected by a self-brand connection. The customers associated to Honda may pay attention to new Honda product introductions and Honda advertisements. Therefore, the consumers may understand the performance of their Accords more favorably because Honda means so much to them (Dehestani, Zadeh, & Noori, 2014). The consumers may tell their friends about how great their experience with Honda automobile has been. In conclusion, Honda Automobile has created an environment that has convinced its consumers that they are the best in

Automobiles. These have made their consumers build substantial self-brand connections, which have improve and affect consumer's attitudes towards the brand, actual behavior towards the brand and behavioral intentions toward the brand.

b) Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen

I believe that Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen has built self-brand connections with its consumers. Therefore, there is a mutual relationship that connects the consumers with their products. Due to their good services, varieties of products and standard cost to their products have improved self-brand connections to their consumers, hence improving their relationships with customers (Fakiri, 2014). In order for Popeye's to have competitive advantages in fast food and beat its competitors such as KFC, it has to build the relationships between its products and consumers. Therefore, the firm must capitalize on its strength and maximizes on its opportunity.

However, Popeye's have created sentimental attachment to its customers because they have marketed their brand in a unique way. First, the company understands that people loves cartoons. Hence, they gave the company recognizable brand name from the famous cartoon. The companies also offer special and unequal food staffs such as Cajun style rice and Cajun style gravy. In addition, the firms have come up with a strategy of increasing product-consumer relationships by advertising their brand on TV and radio with Louisiana celebrities. The companies have been using Popeye the sailor man to enhance brand image. These have made their consumers build a firm self-brand connections, which have improve and affect consumer's attitudes towards the brand, behavioral intentions toward the brand, and actual

behavior towards the brand.

In conclusion, the set of relations that consumers have about Honda and Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen brand is an important component of brand equity. This opens the door of why people believe that developing a self-brand connection is a psychological manifestation of brand equity at the consumer level (Kayaman & Arasli, 2007). From Fournier, self-brand connections in customers have increased relationship between consumers and the products. Companies, therefore, should consider self-brand connection framework to customer position and has implication in marketplace. For a business to build self-brand connection, their brands have to meet psychological needs of the consumers. This suggests a systematic understanding of the target customers of Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen and Honda Automobile, which will gain enduring competitive advantages (Dehestani, Zadeh, & Noori, 2014).

- Self-experience and knowledge of other people in consumer-product relationship

There is relationships between consumers with their brands, since everyone purchases something with a rationale behind it or given motive. Customer-brand relationships are in five main levels. The first perceptive is acquaintance, at this stage, the customers literally are introduced to a particular brand or introduce themselves to the brand. The brand can be completely new in the market, or it can be an existing brand in the market for a while. At this point, the consumer begins to start a relationship with the brand and gradually changes into the next stage which is known as build-up phase. At this point, the consumer has already been convinced of the quality

of that particular brand.

The next stage from build-up is continuation, at this level the consumer fully subscribes and contributes to that specific brand for the long term basis.

After this phase of continuation, emanates in deterioration phase whereby the customer starts to doubt the trustworthiness of the brand and starts searching for other alternatives (Fakiri, 2014). Eventually, this cycle ends with the last phase which results in a split or termination of the brand relationship.

At a personal level, I have established a solid relationship with a brand. I had a relationship with a brand from Gucci that fall under the category of sprays and has been in existent for last decades. Primarily, I loved the products since I had been using it even before I joined college, and I had a customer-brand relationship with Gucci. After, joining college to pursue my undergraduate studies I was introduced and recommended to use Nivea deodorant by a colleague. In the beginning, I was doubtful about the brand but after a while, classmates started heaping compliments on my new scent. It made me feel elegant and since then, I built self-brand connection that solid my relationship with Nivea deodorant. I made the brand be my " best-friendship" as Susan Fournier put it (Fournier, 1998). Currently, I wear the deodorant in everywhere I go since it gives me a sense of belonging. Therefore, my attitude towards the Nivea brand has improved my relationship with the deodorant.

References

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