# Brand hierarchy

Business, Company

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Smart Principles for Designing a Brand Hierarchy We all know the recession has drastically impacted consumer behaviors, but we may often overlook its direct impact on brands themselves. The recession has changed the way marketers manage their brand portfolios as they try to do more with less. As such, marketers are taking a closer look at how then can stretch existing brand equity across a greater number of products, often taking a parent brand/sub-brand approach. We generally see four different sub-brand approaches, each with their own benefits and risks: 1.

Driver Sub-Brands—A driver sub-brand encourages purchase decisions by representing the value proposition central to the user experience. The parent brand endorses the sub-brand—but it’s the sub-brand that defines the consumer’s perceptions of the product or service experience and proves the primary driver motivating consumer purchase. Take the Gillette Fusion razor. Customers primarily buy thetechnologyand performance represented by the Fusion name. Fusion is the driver brand while Gillette creates a strong identity and clear visibility for the Fusion name on the package, retail rack, and in consumers’ minds.

As you might guess, if a company is going to take a driver sub-branding approach, then the sub-brand must generate real response to its entrance in the marketplace to succeed. 2. Co-Driver Sub-Brands—In this case both the parent brand and the sub-brand play major—and often equal—roles in driving the consumer toward purchase. Cadillac’s Escalade sub-brand serves as a co-driver, as both the Cadillac and Escalade brand names influence consumers’ purchase decisions.

While consumers associate the Cadillac name with top of the line performance, quality, and style, the Escalade brand compounds that image with the slightly rugged, more versatile associations of a sports utility vehicle. Cadillac marketers leverage the associations of both driver brands to command market share in the luxury sports utility vehicle category, as well as generating significant demand for the car among Hollywood celebrities attracted to the brand's image of luxury, spaciousness, and high performance versatility.

In co-driver situations, both the parent brand's image and the sub-brand's image together influence the consumer's decision to purchase the product. 3. Descriptor Sub-Brands—As implied by the name, descriptor brands communicate a distinct facet of the parent brand—e. g. , class, feature, target segment, or function. For example, Purina DogFoodmaintains the following descriptive brands: Dog Chow, Beneful, Hi-Pro, Fit & Trim, Puppy Chow, Moist & Meaty.

Purina Brand Dog Food uses these descriptor sub-brands to more accurately meet the needs of individual dog breeds and the specific demands of dog owners. While all dogs could potentially thrive off of the standard Puppy and Dog Chow offerings, developing specialized offerings for overweight, high-energy, and performance dogs defined by a unique descriptor sub-brand enables owners to better address their dog's perceived needs. This is the riskiest category of sub-brands, as the sub-brand may cannibalize the parent brand if insufficient differentiation among the varieties exists. . Endorsed Sub-Brands—In an endorsed sub-brand relationship, the parent brand often provides support and credibility to the sub-brand's claims in a more explicit fashion than co-drivers (for example, Rugby by Ralph Lauren). Endorsed sub-brands provide consumers with assurance that the sub-brand will deliver on the same value propositions as the parent offering, enabling the parent brand to expand into new markets while retaining its established brand position.