Brand marketing and experience marketing evaluation of stages of value addition e...

Business, Branding

The market has shifted. Earned attention is more valued than ever. And CMOs and consumers are paying rapt attention. In an age where anyone can say anything, brands must create an authentic, transparent and entertaining story with a smart and networked public. The success of a product, service, individual, business, organization, or even a city is based on being perceived as unique. Look at any market leader and it will find they each own a place in the consumer’s mind. They have positively differentiated themselves from the rest of the competition. Branding is creating that individual niche in the consumer’s psyche and owning it. More than just marketing, branding is the entire effect that creates a memorable identity.

A successful branding program is also based on differentiating themselves as unique. Effective branding creates a perception that there is no other product, service, organization or community quite like yours. Whether the distinction is a result of function, form, ease of use, price or prestige, the consumer believes you offer something exceptional. This research work is based on brand marketing strategies adopted by Ushmak Nobility llP. The title of this research work “ Brand Marketing and Experience Marketing Evaluation of Stages of Value Addition – A Study of Ushmak Nobility llP”. The main objective of this research work is to identify and analyze the brand marketing strategies of Ushmak. The researcher has used both primary and secondary data to accomplish all the objectives. The design of this research is descriptive. The primary data was collected through structured questionnaire.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. 1 Purpose of the Study

This research work has done with the following purposes:

•To study the concept of brand marketing

•To identify the current brand marketing strategies used by Ushmak •To analyze the market position of Ushmak as a brand

•To identify the consumer perception towards branding of Ushmak •To analyze the effectiveness of brand marketing strategies of Ushmak 1. 2 Context of the Study

Factors affecting the brand of an organization can be both tangible and intangible, including office décor, personnel attire, organization philosophy, product/service quality, design of printed materials and value-added services, just to name a few. It's everything people touch, see or hear that immediately sets you apart from the competition. In other words, " brand" is an image as seen from the outside. A brand indicates strength, integrity and reputation. It's not simply how logo is displayed, but rather the emotional and intellectual response a logo elicits from target audience. 1. 3 Significance of the Study

This project studies the concept of brand marketing. This study identifies the current brand marketing strategies used by Ushmak. This research work analyzes the market position of Ushmak as a brand. This project identifies the consumer perception towards branding of Ushmak. This project analyzes the effectiveness of brand marketing strategies of Ushmak

1. 4 Theoretical Background

From a business standpoint, branding in the marketplace is similar to branding on the ranch. An effective branding program is designed to differentiate your cow from all the other cattle on the ranch, even if all the cattle on the ranch seem to look very much alike. A successful branding program is based on singularity. It creates a consumer perception that there is no product or service on the market quite like yours. Nine Branding Principles

1. Keep It Simple: one big idea is best.
2. Mass-produced word of mouth (PR) builds brands.
3. Focused brands are more powerful than diffused brands.
4. Somehow, some way, you have to be different.
5. The first brand in a category has a huge advantage.
6. Avoid sub-brands at all cost.
7. Quality is important, but not as important as the perception of quality. 8. Be consistent and patient. Building a strong brand takes time. 9. Put your brand definition in writing, otherwise you'll get off course.

A brand is the identity of a specific product, service, or business. A brand can take many forms, including a name, sign, symbol, color combination or slogan. The word brand began simply as a way to tell one person's cattle from another by means of a hot iron stamp. A legally protected brand name is called a trademark. The word brand has continued to evolve to encompass identity – it affects the personality of a product, company or service. Brand management is the application of marketing techniques to a specific product, product line, or brand. It seeks to increase a product’s perceived value to the customer and thereby increase products more favorable. It may also enable the manufacturer to charge more for the product. Companies sometimes want to reduce the number of brands that they market. This process is known as “ Brand Rationalization.” Some companies tend to create more brand franchise and brand equity. Marketers see a brand as an implied promise that the level of quality people have come to expect from a brand will continue with future purchases of the same product. This may increase sales by making a comparison with competing brands and product variations within a brand than economies of scale would indicate.

Sometimes, they will create a specific service or product brand for each market that they target. In the case of product branding, this may be to gain retail shelf space (and reduce the amount of shelf space allocated to competing brands). A company may decide to rationalize their portfolio of brands from time to time to gain production and marketing efficiency, or to rationalize a brand portfolio as part of corporate restructuring. The rapid pace of change and intense competitive pressure in today’s marketplace demand that brands continuously innovate and reinvent themselves to maintain their relevance and market position. In this context, brand positioning and other revitalization strategies have become a business imperative for battling brand erosion. The appeal of brand positioning is further heightened by the rising costs and high risk associated with launching a new brand. Brand positioning has received little attention in the marketing literature and has mostly been treated as a variation of brand positioning. Biel, for example, has defined brand positioning as “ building (or rebuilding) an image for a brand”. The goal of positioning and positioning strategies relates to the management of consumers’ perceptions. However, positioning focuses on the creation of brand associations – consumers’ perceptions of the attributes that differentiate the brand from competitive offers – while positioning also implies managing existing brand associations.

The unique challenge of a positioning strategy, thus, lies in rejuvenating the brand image to make it relevant in an evolving environment, while honoring the brand equity heritage. Positioning can be required as the market changes and new opportunities occur. Through positioning the company can reach customers they never intended to reach in the first place. If a brand has been established at the market for some time and wish to change their image they can consider positioning, although one of the hardest actions in marketing is to reposition a familiar brand. According to Solomon, position strategy is an essential part in the marketing efforts because companies have to use the elements in the marketing mix to influence the customers understanding of the position. During the movement from something less attractive and relevant towards a more attractive and relevant position several of strategic choices has to be made. The ones responsible for the positioning have to evaluate why a reposition is necessary, and if the offer is the one that will change or just the brand name. 1. 5 Summary

Brands are now a central feature of consumer marketing, they are important in building long-term relationships with the consumer, irrespective of the type of market. Their importance is now also being recognized in other markets including service and industrial. Investing in a brand builds consumer confidence and loyalty and allows for brand stretching. It requires a consistent and long-term strategy. Only a few brands have emerged as truly global. A brand is the consumer's anticipation for a unique and defined experience, or for a certain unique benefit obtainable solely through consuming/owning a specific product/service manufactured/offered by a specific company. Consumer anticipation is evoked and upheld by the marketer's consistent execution of a business concept providing the consumer with a unique benefit or with a unique/novel way to deliver a benefit. This concept is the brand strategy, its promise and its commitment to its target consumers. While marketers have long viewed brands as assets, the real asset is brand loyalty. A brand is nor an asset. Brand loyalty is the asset. Without the loyalty of its customers, a brand is merely a trademark, an ownable, identifiable symbol with little value.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Rohit Arora

Objective

8 P's of Brand Marketing and experience marketing

Conclusion & Summary

Is it the physical / functional attributes like the product quality, craftsmanship, design, technology? As one respondent in one of the qualitative research in UAE said " When you buy something with really high-quality, you can genuinely feel the difference. It is in the touch, the feel of the material; it's in the smoothness, it's in its minute details…" Or is it the self-asserting emotional stimulation of letting the others know that I've arrived & I have a penchant for finer things in life not common to many? A respondent said " I bought my BMW, just to keep my key on the table during the meeting." Another respondent said " If I stop at a signal I feel I will attract attention of people". Or is it that luxury brands are just the stepladder to move to the right circle or an appropriate thing to have or wear in that circle? A respondent said " There is a proverb which says if you wear nice shoes you enter nice place". In my assessment, by-and-large the above are the three major motivators that drive people to desire and acquire luxury brands. That said, it's important to acknowledge that they are not mutually exclusive. Exclusivity has always been connected to luxury brands.

But from the consumer's perspective the definition of exclusivity goes through an evolution. At the early stage, having the ability or affluence to own a luxury brand desirable and recognizable by everyone is exclusivity. It is a means by which consumers assert themselves – whether it is to fit-in or simply to make a statement. As the consumer moves on and with more people joining the ' ownership' circle, just owning a recognizable symbol is not enough – the new need to " differentiate" sets in to further confirm their social status and to stand-out among the equals. The source of exclusivity, then, can manifest in form of acquiring limited editions or something with extraordinary product capabilities or rare materials, craftsmanship; it can also be driven by brand's distinctive personality or simply the knowledge of the brand legacy. One can also observe that people who seek differentiation tend to have larger repertoire of luxury brands, have a choice of not-so-common luxury brands, have a definitive reason for their choice and sometime even prefer to stick to specialist brands While genuine appreciation for product excellent needs no explanation, as mentioned earlier it is not mutually exclusive.

In simple words, it does not mean that people who acquire luxury brands for either asserting-self or differentiation have no appreciation and love for beautiful products. But, then there are others who buy luxury without having any baggage of what others think. They buy it because they genuinely love the physical / functional attributes that the product delivers or because they find a profound connection with the brand / the brand story. The bottom line is that whether it is self assertion, differentiation or genuine appreciation for product excellence, these stories and the aura that surrounds the brands is what makes luxury brands desirable. Packaged as the 8 P's of luxury brand marketing, this paper attempts to bring together the elements and interplay between them that are employed in the luxury brand marketing mix.

Some of the elements have been named to fit the 8P packaging and therefore, my humble request to readers will be to take the broad-point made versus getting stuck in semantics. Yet, another point important to acknowledge is that the degree of significance of these elements may vary from brand-to-brand and market-to-market. The point-of-view of this paper is more that of a practitioner, than a theoretician. Many luxury brands have a rich pedigree and extraordinary history that turn in to an inseparable part of the brand's mystique. This mystique is generally built around the exceptional legendary founder character of the past, making up an integral part of the brand story and brand personality. So, when consumers buy say a Cartier or a Chanel product – it is not only because of the product performance factor, but subconsciously they are also influenced by the brand's rich lineage, heritage and the years of mastery. Greg Stine

Objective

A Study on branding principles

Conclusion & Summary

The success of a product, service, individual, business, organization, or even a city is based on being perceived as unique. Look at any market leader and you'll find they each own a place in the consumer's mind. They have positively differentiated themselves from the rest of the competition. Branding is creating that individual niche in the consumer's psyche and owning it. More than just marketing, branding is the entire effect that creates a memorable identity. A successful branding program is also based on differentiating yourself as unique. Effective branding creates a perception that there is no other product, service, organization or community quite like yours. Whether the distinction is a result of function, form, ease of use, price or prestige, the consumer believes you offer something exceptional. For example, factors affecting the brand of an organization can be both tangible and intangible, including office décor, personnel attire, organization philosophy, product/service quality, design of printed materials and value-added services, just to name a few. It's everything people touch, see or hear that immediately sets you apart from the competition. In other words, your " brand" is your image as seen from the outside. Your brand is who you are —

your strength, your integrity and your reputation. It’s not simply how your logo is displayed, but rather the emotional and intellectual response your logo elicits from your target audience.

Take Starbucks©, for example. When people think of Starbucks, several images instantly come to mind, whether you’re a coffee drinker or not: designer coffee, expensive, yuppie, casual atmosphere, one on every corner, green logo, etc. It’s no accident that these images flood our mind so quickly. These are brand qualities created by Starbucks to distinguish themselves from other coffee companies. Starbucks has created a consistent experience in every store, every ad, every employee and every cup of coffee they serve. Today, when people think coffee, they often think Starbucks. Not only does this translate into sales, it validates the company’s most valuable asset: the Starbucks brand. Most organizations know little about branding. Therefore, you can get a leg up on your competition by knowing who you are as an organization and by being able to articulate it clearly. Whether you are part of a nonprofit organization, a downtown association, or a growing business, you should be thinking about branding.

Brand yourself well. Take control of your image. The next time your name comes up, it will conjure the brand qualities you created and achieve the desired perception in the mind of the consumer. Control the use of your brand marks (company and product marks) by writing down the style in detail. Whether your company is large or small, you should have some kind of style guide. If you don’t have one, start small. Include your official logo and a technical description of the company colors (i. e. PMS numbers). Value the time your graphics design team needs to put this together. You'd be surprised how many times I begin working with medium-sized, otherwise mature companies and find that they have lost track of the original artwork for their logos. As companies grow and more people are involved with the visual branding process, a thorough, written style guide becomes essential. Include everything from photography style, to control of storefronts and interior fixtures, to people's clothing and appearance in the office or at a trade show — it's all part of communicating your brand. Part of your brand is visual. Don't underestimate the value; control it and manage it. Kevin Lane Keller

Objective

Trends in brand marketing

Conclusion & Summary

There are always trends in the marketing of brands, reflecting changes in the social, cultural, economic, technological, and political environments. 1. Online marketing (along with the ubiquitous cell phone) and how these will revolutionize consumer and producer information and behavior. 2. The growing interest in addressing consumer emotions as well as reason. New methodologies are being developed to tap into unconscious thoughts of consumers that might unlock new customer insights. 3. The growing role of word-of-mouth in influencing customer choices, resulting from the growth of consumer generated media such as blogs, Facebook, My Space, and so on. 4. The growing significance of corporate social responsibility and sustainability in the light of global warming and the need of companies to show a more caring attitude towards society and social problems. 5. The increasing pressure to measure the rate of return on marketing investments. Brands build their strength by providing customers consistently superior product and service experiences. At the heart of a great brand is a great product or service. A strong brand is a promise or bond with customers. In return for their loyalty, customers expect the firm to satisfy their needs better than any other competitors.

Superior delivery of desired benefits is the key – doing everything possible to meet customer needs and wants better than anyone else. Probably one of the most important shifts in paradigms is the more important role that consumers are playing in the branding process. It is no longer the case that companies can just assume that consumers will passively follow along with marketing. In many cases, consumers want to play more active roles with brands and affect the images and positions they adopt and how they are marketed. That said, it is also important to recognize that not all consumers want to play this more active role, and certainly not all of the time. It is more a matter of degree. There are a number of challenges in brand management these days. Internal branding is a major problem for many firms and it is important that all employees – not just the marketing department – understand and appreciate the brand. There needs to be activities and processes within the organization to make sure every employee is doing whatever he or she could be doing to best support the brand. Externally, there are many new, emerging ways to communicate about and distribute products and services – for example, through the internet via PC’s or mobile phones – which must be effectively and efficiently integrated with older approaches to build the brand.

Skillful marketers will mix and match these activities to create the best possible marketing programs. Companies are trying to simplify their brand architectures as much as possible, using as few brands as possible and making the brands that they do use as strong as possible. Companies are also trying to find new, fresh ways to create more compelling brand positions, especially in terms of more emotional appeals. Finally, companies are developing different types of marketing programs and activities to build their brand equity. Traditional approaches used, say 25 years ago, just don't work as well any more. Brand management is most successful when everyone in the organization – not just the marketing department – has a clear understanding of what the brand represents and how their actions help and hurt the brand so that they act accordingly. Additionally, companies must also align bottom-up and top-down marketing management. Bottom-up brand management requires that marketing managers primarily direct their marketing activities to maximize brand equity for individual products in particular markets.

Top-down brand management, on the other hand, involves marketing activities that capture the big picture and recognize the possible synergies across products and markets to brand products accordingly. These brand management activities are complementary and mutually reinforcing – both are necessary and need to be coordinated. Top marketers also must create formalized measurement approaches and processes that ensure that they continually and exhaustively monitor their sources of brand equity and those of competitors. As part of this process, managers must develop a greater understanding of how different marketing actions affect their sources and outcomes of brand equity. By maintaining close contact with the brand, managers will be better able to understand just what makes their brands tick. By achieving greater accountability in marketing activities and programs, managers can better optimize their brand investments, putting money behind the right brands at the right time and in the right ways The Internet and online marketing activities have fundamentally changed how companies build and manage their brands.

Companies now have the ability to develop informative home pages for their brands, link to other sites, affect search, and build user communities. Virtually every marketing campaign – no matter how large or how small – should have some kind of online component to support other marketing activities or to actually serve as the centerpiece of a marketing campaign. Marketing strategies and tactics will depend on the markets involved. Different consumer beliefs and attitudes, different competitive forces, different company capabilities, and different brand development may all require a different marketing approach in a country. Smart marketers are learning how to adapt their marketing to different regions and countries – what to standardize and what to customize. Douglas b. Holt

Objective

Brand and Building

Conclusion & Summary

Branding has become one of the most important aspects of business strategy. Yet it is also one of the most misunderstood. Branding is sometimes considered to be merely an advertising function. And many managers and business writers hold the view that branding is about the management of product image, a supplementary task that can be isolated from the main business of product management. This note provides an alternative perspective, arguing that: • Branding is a strategic point of view, not a select set of activities. • Branding is central to creating customer value, not just images. • Branding is a key tool for creating and maintaining competitive advantage. • Brands are cultures that circulate in society as conventional stories. • Effective brand strategies must address the four distinct components of brand value. • Brand strategies must be " engineered" into the marketing mix. This note develops a set of concepts and frameworks to guide the design of brand strategies. Marketing strategies begin with the value proposition: the various types and amounts of value that the firm wants customers to receive from the market offering. The value proposition is value as perceived by the firm, value that the firm seeks to " build" into the product. 1 In marketing, the value proposition is sometimes referred to as the positioning statement.

Common wisdom in business often assumes that product value as measured by the firm and product value as experienced by the customer are identical. If the firm builds a better product, customers will experience it as such. Marketing makes a crucial break with this assumption. Marketing emphasizes that customer value is perceptual, never objective fact. Value is shaped by the subjective understandings of customers, which often have little to do with what the firm considers to be the “ objective” qualities of the product. The brand is the product as it is experienced and valued in everyday social life. The verb “ to brand” refers to all of the activities that shape customer perceptions, particularly the firm’s activities. Branding, then, is a management perspective that focuses on shaping the perceived value of the product as found in society. Think of the brand as the culture of the product. We can borrow from the disciplines of anthropology, history, and sociology to understand products as cultural artifacts. Products acquire meanings—connotations—as they circulate in society. Over time, these meanings become conventional, widely accepted as “ truths” about the product.

At this point, the product has acquired a culture. Consider a new product that has just been introduced by a new company. While the product has a name and a trademarked logo, and perhaps other unique design features—all aspects that we intuitively think of as “ the brand”—in fact the brand does not yet exist. Names and logos and designs are the material markers of the brand. But, because the product does not yet have a history, these markers are “ empty.” They are devoid of meaning. Now think of famous brands. They have markers also: a name (McDonald’s, IBM), a logo (the Nike “ swoosh,” the Traveler’s umbrella), a distinctive product design feature (Harley’s engine sound), or any other design element that is uniquely associated with the product. What is different is that these markers have been filled with customer experiences, with advertisements, with films and sporting events that used the brand as a prop, with magazines and newspaper articles that evaluate the brand, with conversations with friends and colleagues that mention the brand. Over time, ideas about the product accumulate and “ fill up” the brand markers with meaning. A brand culture is formed.

Let us consider how this happens. The cultural materials circulated by these authors come in three forms: stories, images, and associations. Stories and images are the more potent sources of brand culture. Brand stories and images have plots and characters, and they rely heavily upon metaphor to communicate and spur our imaginations. Think of brand associations as the residue of these stories and images. We may forget the specifics of a product story but still attribute some characteristics to the brand (“ it’s for old people,” “ often falls apart,” etc.). As these stories, images, and associations collide in everyday social life, conventions eventually form. A common story emerges as a consensus view (or, often enough, a few different common stories, each of which constitutes a customer segment for the brand). At this point the brand has become established as a cultural artifact.

Marketers often think of branding at the individual level as perceptions of individual consumers. But what makes branding so powerful is the collective nature of these perceptions, the fact that the stories/images/associations have become conventional and so are continually reinforced because they are treated as “ facts” in everyday interactions It is common in marketing to think of the brand as an image, as the “ frosting on the cake” above and beyond the “ actual” value delivered by the product. This intuition distorts how brands create value. Rather, a brand culture acts as a perceptual frame through which customers understand, value, and experience the product. Customers never experience products objectively. Rather, the brand culture acts as a frame, shaping how their senses (see, hear, touch, feel, smell) experience the product. Brand cultures can have a powerful influence on sensory appeal (e. g., how products taste), on the emotions one feels when consuming, and on the remembered satisfactions of the experience.

Lehman Jaccee

Objective

Branding and Competitive Advantage

Conclusion & Summary

Branding is a potent means to establish competitive advantage. The brand culture concept helps us see why this is so. Brand cultures are “ sticky.” Once they have accepted them as conventional wisdom, people are usually reluctant to abandon the conventions of the brand culture. Unless they have product experiences or encounter brand stories that profoundly contradict conventions, people are usually happy to maintain the taken-for-granted understandings of the brand. In addition to the stickiness of taken-for-granted understandings, there are two reasons for this durability. Psychological research demonstrates that brand cultures are durable because people are cognitive misers. Because we are so overloaded with information—far more information than we can reasonably digest even if we wanted to—we rely upon a variety of heuristics to simplify the world. We seek ways to minimize the amount of thinking and searching that we must do to make good decisions. Brand cultures work as one such heuristic.

Once we determine that the conventional wisdom of a brand culture “ works” for us (e. g., a detergent whose conventional brand story is that it performs great in all temperatures seems to do so), we are not interested in seeking out new information that would contradict this assumption. The heuristic provided by the brand works well, so we go on using it. Sociological research demonstrates another reason why brand cultures are durable. Brand cultures are shared by many people and expressed in a variety of contexts (talk, product experiences, ads, and so on). Brand cultures are maintained as the brand’s stories, images, and associations pulse through these networks. Hence, it is quite difficult for an individual to opt out of the conventional wisdom of a brand culture and assign the brand alternative meanings. Just as brand cultures are formed collectively, to decommission a brand is also a collective decision. Because of this network effect, brand meanings maintain a tenacious hold until a critical mass of customers and influencers join together to transform conventions. Powerful brand cultures provide competitive advantage not only with respect to consumers but also in negotiations with channel partners. A strong brand culture gives the firm considerable leverage in configuring channel policies and provides leverage in negotiating with retailers. Brand cultures can greatly enhance customer value.

If we conduct a thought experiment, we can imagine the value of a brand as the difference between what a consumer will pay for a branded product (a product experienced through the lens of its brand culture) and a physically identical product without the culture. This difference can be decomposed into four dimensions, which, together, constitute the value added by the brand. The four components each have a strong base of research in academic disciplines that inform marketing. Each of these four components accumulates through the stories, images, and associations of the brand culture. Brands also communicate that the firm producing the product can be trusted to act as a long-term partner that will flexibly respond to future customer needs. For many products, especially in B2B and in services, customer uses and needs cannot be fully anticipated (and so built into a contract) at the time of purchase. For these products, research in economic sociology has demonstrated that a significant aspect of product value is the perception that the firm will respond as desired to uncontracted future contingencies. The brand is, once again, the material marker that " contains" stories conveying that the firm can be trusted to deliver on these future contingencies.

Relationship value accumulates as particular stories, images, and associations that circulate around the product become conventional, taken for granted. From a psychological perspective, the brand acts as a perceptual frame that highlights particular benefits delivered by the product. This framing guides consumers in choosing products and also shapes their product experiences. The heuristic value of the brand provides for considerable savings in search costs and in the need to continually process information to make effective choices. Hence, firms often seek to brand their products as particularly effective in delivering on a single benefit desired by customers. A classic example comes from Procter & Gamble's lineup of detergent brands, each of which is framed to consumers as designed to solve a particular cleaning problem (all temperature cleaning, removing tough stains, etc.).

Most brand cultures are made up of several, or even all, of these four components (consider, for example, an Apple computer). However, often one component will be the primary driver, accounting for the brand's success versus competitors. The relative importance of each component will vary by society, product category, segment, and brand. While it is useful to break up brand value into these four discrete parts for strategic purposes, customers rarely experience the brand in this way. Rather, the components are overlapping and interdependent inferences that customers draw from the brand culture. The most successful brand cultures, then, offer a single coherent story where the components work together in a synergistic fashion so that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Salte D. Rassesde

Objective

A Study of Designing brand strategy

Conclusion & Summary

Brand strategy is a key part of the overall marketing strategy. Brand strategies deliver on business goals by enhancing the brand culture. Because brands, business contexts, and corporate goals vary so much, there are no universal rules for designing brand strategies. Rather, a systematic four-step process can be used to tailor strategies to respond appropriately to the specifics of the context: Brand strategies are appropriate when the business goal can be achieved by enhancing perceived product value. Identify the key business goals for the product and ask: Is this goal amenable to branding? Not all goals demand a branding solution. While branding is often a central component of an effective marketing strategy, there are a number of business issues for which branding is not particularly relevant. If a product is trapped in a weak position in a value chain, there is little that branding can do to resolve such a difficulty. Since branding requires changing shared conventions, it is necessarily a long-term project. And, so, branding is not usually a good tool to achieve short-term sales goals. Conversely, it is also important to consider whether non branding strategies (e. g., lowering cost to serve, pursuing price discrimination with promotions) have unintended consequences on branding.

Evaluate the existing brand culture across the four components of brand value (and for influencers as well if relevant). This evaluation requires designing and collecting market research that is attuned to the four different components of brand culture. Also consider the firm's current brand strategy, noting where it diverges from the brand culture. One important driver of brand strategy is to deliver superior brand value versus primary competitors. Competitive superiority in brand value requires benchmarking against competitors' brands. Map competitors' brand cultures as you do your own (Step 2).

Given the strengths of the brand and the firm, identify opportunities to improve the brand culture versus those of key competitors, and identify opportunities to shore up any erosion that could allow competitors to make inroads. There is a danger, though, in branding exclusively with an eye on competitors. The most significant advances in brand value come from identifying opportunities in the environment (consumers, technology, infrastructure, etc.) that competitors have not yet acted on and designing the brand strategy to take advantage of these opportunities. For example, new product technologies can provide significant opportunities to enhance reputation, emerging information and process technologies (e. g., the Internet, customer relationship management) can allow for improvements in relationship value, changing customer preferences can create opportunities for different experiential framing, and shifts in society and culture create opportunities to deliver new symbolism.

Changes in the category life cycle are important to consider as well. The relative importance of the four components often shifts over time. For a new category, where consumers have little product experience and technologies are unproven, quality and relationship values will be of primary concern. As the category matures and competitors become proficient at delivering basic product values, experience framing and symbolism often become considerably more important. A brand strategy describes the movement from the existing to the desired brand culture and the logic for its taking this path. A strategy document should map the current brand culture, outline the most promising opportunities to enhance the brand culture considering both environment shifts and competitive benchmarking, and finally detail the desired brand culture. Ultimately, a strategy is only as good as the care and creativity taken in implementation. This is particularly true of brand strategies, where implementation requires coherent “ engineering” of the desired brand culture across all relevant aspects of the marketing mix. A brand strategy requires an action plan that specifies which marketing mix elements will be used, how they will be used, and how they will be integrated to achieve a consistent branding effort.

Every firm activity that engages prospective customers is a potential branding tool. Branding is not limited to communications. Rather, all elements of the marketing mix contribute to branding (and also destroy brand value if they are not managed properly). And, of course, each marketing mix element must also serve purposes other than branding (for instance, meeting next quarter’s sales objectives). Therefore, managers must always balance branding objectives against other marketing goals. Brands are not mere images. Rather, they are multisensory prisms that are “ built into” products. Often the most critical and challenging branding task is how to design the product in a way that optimizes brand value. Thinking of product design as a branding issue is a relatively novel approach that has emerged only recently in design-intensive industries (autos, computers, consumer electronics, appliances, etc.). Nelison Jane

Objective

An Analysis to measure the performance of a branding structure Conclusion & Summary

How do managers know if their brand strategies are working? Managers use four primary measures to “ read” the brand’s health and evaluate marketing effectiveness. When the brand increases in value, one expects—all other factors being unchanged—that customers will purchase the brand more regularly and will be less likely to switch away from the brand. Thus, one way to measure the strength of a brand is to measure behavioral loyalty. Measurements of loyalty behaviors alone can be misleading, though, because so many factors influence purchase behavior. So marketers commonly look at additional indicators. Valued brands tend to share certain consumer attitudes: they are well known among the relevant customers for delivering particular benefits, they are associated with influential users, and they are personally relevant. Attitudinal measures are gathered from traditional market research as well as other informal feedback mechanisms (Web sites, customer centers, retailers) to make benchmarked comparisons on attitudinal strength. When brand value is high, customers tend to rely heavily on the brand in their daily life and, so, develop deep relationships with the brand.

Like a personal relationship, people come to depend on the brand, enact norms of reciprocity, and exhibit strong emotions and feelings about the brand. Hence, measures of relationship strength can provide accurate indicators of brand value. The ultimate measure of brand value is the brand's reservation price (the price at which consumers are indifferent between the brand and competitive offerings). If the demand curve shifts outward, all other factors being equal, the brand is more valued by customers. Successful branding allows firms to charge more for their products or to sell more at the existing price, or some combination thereof. The future stream of earnings produced by this shifting of the demand curve attributed to branding is called brand equity. For many companies, branding has a tremendous impact on profits. Thus, brands are some of the most important assets owned by the corporation. For example, 80% of both Nike’s and Apple Computer’s market capitalization has been attributed to brand equity. Brand equity measures are in their infancy. Current measures offer very rough heuristics that improve only modestly over previous financial measures of “ goodwill.” As research progresses in this area, more accurate measures will emerge. Simon Knox

Objective

Positioning and branding your organization

Conclusion & Summary

As customers become ever more demanding in a business environment where competition is fiercer and innovation faster, the key challenge facing chief executives today is how to further increase the value of the products and services they sell. The more enlightened ones know that they will not achieve this through the traditional 4Ps approach to product marketing. By marketing the organization at a broader level, customers become involved in many of the organization’s business systems and processes, so no one department can effect that nor guarantee consistency in dealing with the company across departments. The job of the chief executive, as manager of the organization brand, is to transform the organization’s marketing strategy, and then to manage the organization as a brand to ensure that customer value can be delivered consistently. This paper explores the changing relationship between customer value and how it has been traditionally interpreted within the organization. It also provides a practical framework that enables senior management to develop and market the customer value proposition at a broader level across the organization. This is referred to here as the organization brand and its positioning within the supply chain.

The role of the business leader in leading this transformation is discussed and the efficacy of the traditional marketing department to respond is brought into question. Opens by exploring the changing relationship between customer value and how it has been traditionally interpreted within the organization. Business leaders today acknowledge that the traditional 4Ps approach to brand marketing needs to be transformed in order to realize a broader vision of customer value across the organization. Argues that it is the business leader who should be leading this transformation, as manager of the organization's brand and its values, as well as challenging the marketing department to redefine its role as brand custodians, outlines a framework which enables senior management to develop superior customer value through branding and positioning their organization and to deliver this value through its business processes. Uses practical examples to illustrate the use of this framework and concludes by considering whether or not the traditional marketing department is acting as a barrier when it comes to positioning and branding their organization.

At the heart of the matter is the fundamental shift in what customers perceive as value, and this is challenging the way that business activities create customer value. Since the second world war, customers have relied on a familiar and trusted brand name as the antidote to the perceived risk of the product or service failing to provide its basic functional benefits. And, at a psychological level, a trusted brand minimizes the risk that the image created for customers using the product or service falls short of that desired. In essence, brand values provide a promise of sameness and predictability. But new ways of coping with risk have changed all that. Business buyers are now much more inclined to develop partnerships with suppliers, involving closer relationships and more sophisticated purchasing processes.

In consumer markets, 25 years of consumerism, higher disposable incomes and continuous improvements in product performance and reliability have led to more confident, less risk adverse customers. The promise of sameness and predictability is no longer a strong enough brand proposition to meet customer expectations, as Heinz conceded when it announced its intention to supply supermarkets with own-label baked beans. Today's customers are highly sophisticated and confident in their own ability to decide between products and suppliers' offers; these days they need much less brand reassurance to validate their choices. In most markets, the customer can choose between a large number of high-quality products made by renowned companies. In the modern economy, value is no longer exclusively created by marketers branding what their organization wishes to produce. John Micher

Objective

Branding impact on Brand Awareness

Conclusion & Summary

Brand awareness means the ability of a consumer can recognize and recall a brand in different situations. Brand awareness consists of brand recall and brand recognition. Brand recall means when consumers see a product category, they can recall a brand name exactly, and brand recognition means consumers has ability to identify a brand when there is a brand cue. That is, consumers can tell a brand correctly if they ever saw or heard it. Researcher indicates that brand awareness can be distinguished from depth and width. Depth means how to make consumers to recall or identify brand easily, and width expresses infers when consumers purchase a product, a brand name will come to their minds at once. If a product owns brand depth and brand width at the same time, consumers will think of a specific brand when they want to buy a product. That is, the product has higher brand awareness. Moreover, brand name is the most important element in brand awareness. As a consequence, brand awareness will affect purchase decision through brand association, and when a product owns a positive brand image, it will help in marketing activities.

A brand name offers a symbol that can assist consumers to identify service providers and to predict service results. Brand awareness plays an important role on purchase intention because consumers tend to buy a familiar and well known product. Brand awareness can help consumers to recognize a brand from a product category and make purchase decision. Brand awareness has a great influence on selections and can be a prior consideration base in a product category. Brand awareness also acts as a critical factor in the consumer purchase intention, and certain brands will accumulate in consumers' mind to influence consumer purchase decision. A product with a high level of brand awareness will receive higher consumer preferences because it has higher market share and quality evaluation. Awareness involves a scale ranging from feeling uncertainty to believing that the product to be the only one in the category. Awareness can be divided into three different levels as brand recall, brand recognition and top-of mind. Brand recall is what comes to mind when asking a consumer to name the brand in a product class.

Brand recall relates to consumer's ability to retrieve the brand from memory when given the product category, the needs fulfilled by the category or purchase or usage situation as a cue, so it requires consumers to generate the brand from memory when given a relevant cue. In other words, brand recognition requires that consumers can correctly discriminate the brand as having been previously seen or heard. Top of mind awareness is achieved by the first brand named in an aided recall. It measures whether the brand is the first to come to mind. In general, the more a consumer " experiences" the brand by seeing it, hearing it, or thinking about it, the more likely it is that the brand becomes strongly registered in memory. Thus, anything that causes consumers to experience a brand name, symbol, logo, character, packaging, or slogan can potentially increase familiarity and awareness of that brand element—through advertising and promotion, sponsorship and event marketing, publicity and public relations, and outdoor advertising.

Although brand repetition increases brand recognition, improving brand recall requires links in memory to the appropriate product category or other situational purchase or consumption cues. It is generally easier to recognize a brand than it is to recall it from memory and the relative importance to brand recall and recognition will depend on the extent to which consumers make product-related decisions with the brand present or not. Considering the fact that the consumers are subject to many marketing messages, it is crucial to establish recall and recognition. First of all, extensive sales base is usually a massive asset. Then, finding different means of sending messages and attention catchers are important in building brand awareness. In terms of former consideration, brand awareness is related to the strength of the resulting brand node or trace in memory, as reflected by consumers' ability to identify the brand under different conditions. Relsy Booked

Objective

Brand Image and Consequences of Brand Loyalty

Conclusion & Summary

Brand awareness plays an important role in consumer decision making for three main reasons. Firstly, raising brand awareness increases the likelihood that the brand will be a member of the consideration set the handful of brands that receives serious consideration for purchases. The second advantage is that brand awareness can affect choices among brands in the consideration set, even if there are essentially no other associations to those brands. For example, consumers have been shown to adopt a decision rule in some cases to buy only more familiar, well-established brands. Finally, the third way that brand awareness affects consumer decision making is by influencing the formation and strength of brand associations that make up the brand image. A necessary condition for the creation of a brand image is that a brand node has been established in memory, and the nature of that brand node should affect how easily different kinds of information can become attached to the brand in memory as brand associations. Brand image long has been recognized as an important concept in marketing and brand loyalty, as well.

Brand image can be defined as perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory. In other words brand image is defined as a cluster of attributes and associations that consumers connect to the brand name. Brand images are formed from wide variety of sources which is a major source of brand communication for service brands-" one consequence of this is that corporate culture can indirectly play an important role in image development. Brand image can be reinforced by brand communications such as packaging, advertising, promotion, customer service, word of mouth and other aspects of the brand experience. Brand images are usually evoked by asking consumers the first words/images that come to their mind when a certain brand is mentioned-sometimes called " top of mind"- When responses are highly variable, non-forthcoming, or refer to non-image attributes such as cost, it is an indicator of a weak brand image. The image surrounding a company's brand is the principal source of its competitive advantage and is therefore a valuable strategic asset. Unfortunately many companies are not adapting at disseminating a strong, clear message that not only distinguishes their brand from the competitors', but distinguishes it in a memorable and positive manner.

The challenge for all brands is to avoid the pitfalls of portraying a muddled or negative image, instead, create a broad brand vision or identity that recognizes a brand as something greater than a set of attributes that can be imitated or surpassed. In fact, a company should view its brand to be not just a product or service, but as an overall brand image that defines company's philosophies. The term " brand image" gained popularity as evidence began to grow that the feelings and images associated with brand were powerful purchase influencers, through brand recognition, recall and brand identity. It is based on the proposition that consumers buy not only product such as power, wealth sophistication and most importantly identification and association with other users of the brand. The image of a brand is established in the long run and once placed positively in the mind of consumers; it may become a long-term competitive advantage. Loyalty is something that consumers may exhibit to brands, services, stores, product categories, and activities. The discussion of loyalty or enduring preferences for products and services generally necessitates that consumers be able and willing to maintain interaction with the brand in some way, where it leads to repetitive purchasing in many cases.

Loyalty is defined as a deeply help commitment to repurchase a preferred product or service consistently in the future, although situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior." Brand Loyalty is also defined as deliberate prior tendency to purchase brand, often stemming from positive past experiences with its use. Brand loyalty is inferred from repeat purchase behavior. Brand Loyalty is the ultimate goal a company sets for a branded product. At consumer side, Brand loyalty is the consumer's conscious or unconscious decision, expressed through intention or behavior to repurchase a brand continually. Brand Loyalty signifies a measure of attachment that a customer has to a brand. Wilkie goes on to suggest that ultimate customer loyalty is a function of perceived product superiority, personal fortitude, social bonding, and their synergetic effect. On the other hand, Brand loyalty is described as a favorable attitude, and consistent purchase, toward a particular brand.

Unfortunately, loyalty is not a simple one-dimensional rather a very complex multidimensional concept. Researcher definition of brand loyalty implies that consumers are loyal when both attitude and behavior are favorable; however, this does not clearly explain the intensity of brand loyalty as it precludes the possibility that a consumer's attitude is unfavorable while one repurchases. In expressing a need for a complete definition of brand loyalty encompassing all the attitudinal and behavioral dimensions, call for six necessary and collectively sufficient conditions: brand loyalty is a biased (nonrandom), behavioral response, expressed over time of some decision making unit with respect to one or more alternative brands of a set of such brands and is a function of evaluative decision making process. Another definition represents more complete definition of brand loyalty. This definition based on consumer's brand switching behavior. The first is hard core loyalty which is defined as the proportion of the product's purchases accounted for by its hard core customers or customers who almost exclusively repeat the product alternative, and the second is reinforcing loyalty, which is the proportion of the product's purchases accounted for by consumers who may switch among product alternatives, but predominantly repeat purchase this product alternative to significant extent.

Brand Loyalty occurs because consumers perceive that the brand offers the right product features, images or level of quality at the right price. This perception becomes the foundation for a new buying habit. Basically, consumers initially will make a trial purchase of a brand and after satisfaction, tend to form habits and continue purchasing the same brand because the product is safe and familiar. Researcher assumes that a loyal consumer base represents a barrier to entry, a basis for a price premium, time to respond to competitors, and a bulwark against deleterious price completion, and brand loyalty is a core dimension of brand equity. In addition, brand loyalty is the final destination of brand management, and if a company wants to test the weakness or strength of its customers' loyalty, it can easily check whether consumers still favor its product in contrast to competitors.

Brand loyalty is consumer attitudes on a brand preference from previous use and shopping experience of a product, and it can be measured from repurchase rate on a same brand. Researcher defines that brand loyalty is that consumers satisfy their past experience in use of the same brand and incur repurchase behavior. Brand loyalty means brand preferences that consumers will not consider other brands when they buy a product. Brand loyalty represents a repurchase commitment in the future purchase that promise consumers will not change their brand loyalty in different situations and still buy their favorable brands. Brand loyalty includes behavior factors and attitude factors. Behavior loyalty represents repurchase behavior, and loyalty attitude means psychological commitment to a brand. Thus, purchase frequency is not equal to loyalty. For instance, consumers to repurchase a product do not mean they like it but due to a convenient factor or a variety seeking behavior to purchase a certain specific product occasionally. A true brand loyalty can be called when consumers are both inclined to these two factors, otherwise, it can only be called a spurious brand loyalty if only attitude or behavior factors are found. Loyalty can also be separated from short term loyalty and long term loyalty.

Short term loyalty is not a real brand loyalty because a long term customer will not buy other brands even if there is a better choice. In addition, Researcher argues that a real brand loyalty should include brand preferences and repurchase behaviors that present in a long term commitment, brand commitment and psychological processing (decision making and evaluation) function while Researcher proposes that brand loyalty can be measured from customer repurchase intention and price tolerance. Consumers with a strong commitment to a particular brand will constantly search for any marketing activity related to the brand. Furthermore, brand loyalty can be measured in two dimensions: affective loyalty and action loyalty. Affective loyalty is a specific brand preference from accumulative satisfaction to previous using experiences. However, affective loyalty just represents that a repurchase intention. It does not mean that consumers will take purchase action. It is very hard to say that consumers hold brand loyalty. Action loyalty indicates that consumers not only have preferences to a specific brand but also perform purchase action repetitively, and become action inertia. Greg Allenby

Objective

Market Definition, Market Segmentation and Brand Positioning Conclusion & Summary

Most authors define positioning as the perception that a target market has of a brand relative to its competitors. This definition raises two points. First, positioning is perceptual. In other words, positioning is not factual; instead it pertains to influencing customer perceptions of your product. Second, companies cannot position brands in isolation; they must be positioned relative to one or more competitors. By nature, human beings learn by making comparisons. When we learn new information, one way we remember and use that information is by mentally comparing it to existing information. Therefore, it’s only natural for people to develop perceptions of one brand that are relative to other brands. When we say what our brand is, whether we like it or not, we also imply what our competitor is not. When we say what our brand is not, we imply what our competitor is. The term “ positioning” implies that brands are “ placed” in memory. Importantly, marketers wish to influence “ where” a brand is remembered relative to competitive brands. To understand how this works, some basic knowledge of human memory might be helpful. As noted above, people remember new concepts when they compare them to other concepts – generally ones already stored in memory.

Groups of related concepts form what psychologists refer to as “ memory schema.” Through advertising and other marketing communications, marketers make statements about their products (and their competitors) that attempt to “ teach” people how to think about their brand. Generally speaking, the necessarily simplistic nature of most consumer-oriented marketing communications means that marketers cannot teach consumers complicated or intricate schema. Quite the contrary, effective marketers encourage consumers to develop schemata that essentially divide a group of competitive products into two categories: the marketers’ brands and all others. Importantly, marketing communication can go only so far to encourage a particular view of a product category among a group of consumers. Ultimately, the product itself must deliver on the promise of the brand’s position. Consumers learn much more about a brand from actual product performance than they do from a marketer’s communicated claims. Indeed, no matter how carefully a marketer strategizes about a brand’s position, unless the brand’s performance reinforces the marketer’s claims, the positioning will fail. Therefore, a brand’s positioning must be consistent with the product’s performance.

In other words, products must “ walk the talk.” Effective product positioning requires a great deal of thought and deliberations among marketers. The goal of these deliberations is to produce a written statement describing how the brand should be positioned relative to what competitors. Thus, a positioning statement is a strategic document that clearly expresses the brand's management's desires as to the positioning of the brand and the products carrying the brand. Importantly, the positioning statement should not be confused with advertising slogans, campaign themes and the like. Positioning a product involves more than promotion, although promotion is certainly a key part of it. However, positioning also pertains to product design, distribution, and pricing. In other words, a product or brand is positioned using all elements in the marketing mix, not just promotion. Any positioning statement should be written around three basic decisions, some of which have already been partially decided as part of the market segmentation process. First is the category positioning decision, which entails choosing how to position against the market leader or market pioneer in a given product category. Second, marketers must make a positioning content decision. That is, they must decide on the product attribute or benefit upon which to focus their positioning strategy, and why that attribute or benefit is superior to the competition.

Third is what I term the position referent decision. This is the position referent. Each of these decisions contributes something to the positioning statement that will, hopefully, express something about brand that separates it from competitors in a way appealing to target markets. An important point bears mention here. In these days