

Integrated marketing communication assignment

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Brand can often represent, or can be used to create, social meaning which also refers to emotional escalation (Elliott and Percy, 2007). MIMIC is every contact between the brand and the market. This means much more than simple advertising and promotion. It means everything: packaging, Store signs and layout, Delivery, Customer service and so on. Management of a brand must coordinate all these aspects of the brand's communication, ensuring a consistent message.

In addition, "When there is consistency in the look and feel of advertising and promotion over time and in all media, the merest glimpse will activate the appropriate memories for the brand. But without this MIMIC 'glue,' every execution must be approached anew, with less and less likelihood of it being processed, because there are no existing links to the brand in the memory" (Percy, p. Xii). Positioning is the first step in laying the foundation for building a strong brand with MIMIC. There are two basic types of brand positioning: central versus differentiated.

The former is seen as "delivering all of the basic benefits associated with the product category. "The market regards it as among the best brands". The latter "looks for a way to differentiate the brand from its competitors" (Percy, p. 6). The first job of positioning is to establish the link between the brand and the category needed in the mind of the consumer, so that when the need occurs, the brand comes to mind. This issue can be described as "to what need, from the customer perspective, should the brand be linked" (Class Septet. 4). The answer to this question helps position the brand to optimize brand awareness.

One of the ways to look at how consumers see a market is with something called hierarchical partitioning, which means that there is a particular set of product attributes that a consumer will consider, and that they use that set of attributes to sub-divide the market into successively smaller segments (Percy, p. 37). The second issue that must be considered in positioning a brand in MIMIC is how it will be presented with the message and execution. It can be described as "what benefits should be emphasized in order to best communicate what the brand offers" (Class Septet. 4). This reflects the positioning decision for optimizing brand attitude.

In addressing the question of what a brand offers. There are two basic options for positioning: user-oriented versus product-oriented positioning. The former positioning which is toward users should be used in the cases "where a brand is being marketed to a particular segment or where social audience" (Percy, p. 40). With a product-oriented positioning, the benefits of a product are the message. In other words, "this positioning is toward the specific benefit of the brand" (Class Septet. 4). Brand attitude is the second pillar in the foundation for building strong brands with MIMIC.

Brand attitude means automatic preference- brand likes and dislikes. According to Expectancy-Value Model, attitude is a function of everything known or believed about an object by an individual, sighted by the importance of each of those beliefs (Fishbone & Zen, 1975). Experience, to be sure, plays a role, but for most people, for most brands, they simply know something about them. That is to say, "brand attitude can be based on experience, or not" (Class Septet. 4). The next step to consider for MIMIC

manager is brand equity. “ Brand equity represents an Added value that goes well beyond objective characteristics of brand itself.

This added value makes the brand name itself a strong financial asset to the company marketing it” (Percy, p. 42). “ Brand equity results from strong positive brand attitudes maintained over time” (Class Septet.). “ A brand only exists in the mind of the consumer, in the meaning that has been built over time through MIMIC. To the extent that this marketing communication, in all its aspects, has been consistent in well positioning the brand and building positive brand attitude, a strong brand equity will evolve leading to loyalty that goes well beyond any rational consideration of the product” (Percy, 2008, p. 3). In addition, most marketers offer more than one product or brand, so it is important that MIMIC must take into account brand portfolio considerations, especially branding strategy. Branding strategy involves something called hierarchy, which “ reflects the level at which a brand name is used” (Class Septet. 4). There are two basic types: stand-alone brands versus sub-brands. The former one means a product with a brand that is not related to the name of the company that makes it, or to their other brands. The advantage of a stand-alone brand is that it enables a brand to create its own identity independent of a parent brand. It also avoids the possibility of negative associations with the parent informing the image of the brand. However, this usually requires more of an investment” (Percy, 2008, p. 5). Sub-branding strategies seek to provide an indicator of the product’s origin. “ Its advantage is that it permits the creation of brand-specific beliefs, but without the necessity of starting from scratch” (Percy, 2008, p. 6). Sub-branding generally follows either a source or endorser branding strategy. “

With a source branding strategy, the parent company or brand is supporting the quality of the product, and the brand must be positioned to reflect the equity of the parent. An endorser brand strategy implies that the parent brand has given its approval and support to the product, while assuming a secondary position, encouraging the brand to develop its own image with the cross-potential of nurturing the parent” (Percy, 2008, p. 45).

The last thing you have to put greater emphasis on is to adapt to the new post-digital world. “ It is clear that the explosion of digital media- from social networks and smart phone APS to online forums and blobs-has fundamentally changed brands and branding” (Interbrain, 2011). Nowadays, it is impossible to develop an appropriate brand strategy without digital interactions being an intrinsic part of it. “ Digital is not just another channel, it is fundamental to the way brands are” (Interbrain, 2011). Digital has a key role to play in driving ingredients of brand valuation and building brand value.