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Савица Димитриеска, Елизабета Стамевска, Александра
Станковска

BRAND NAME – THEORY AND PRACTICE
Savica Dimitrieska¹, Elizabeta Stamevska², Aleksandra Stankovska³

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Abstract

The American Marketing Association defines a brand as “a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers.” The brand represents a set of elements (name, logo, sign, symbol, drawing, design) that identifies and differentiates (companies, products, services, personalities, places, and ideas) and creates various emotional, cultural and rational associations, beliefs and expectations among consumers. The brand is a promise and builds consumer associations. Apart from functional, it also has emotional features. Brand identity is everything that the company wants to present to consumers. Brand elements are all those things that serve to identify and differentiate the brand from the ones of competitors. Brand elements include name, logo, slogan, color, characters, packaging, jingle, design, and web address of the product. They must be recognizable and memorable by the consumers, easy to remember, significant, and able to remind the consumers about company and its products, as well as easily protected. Theoretically, the brand name is the central part of the brand identity on which other elements are built up. The brand name should be easily pronounced, easily remembered, short, simple, unique, associative, attractive, and portable. But does the practice confirm these theoretical views about the brand name? On contrary, the practice shows something different! The purpose of this paper is to point out the gap between theory and practice regarding the brand name.

Keywords: brand name, brand identity, identification, differentiation, functional characteristics, emotional association

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¹ European University-Republic of Macedonia, Skopje, Faculty of Economics, Full-time professor in Marketing, PhD, Savica.Dimitrieska@eurm.edu.mk

² European University-Republic of Macedonia, Skopje, Faculty of Economics, Assoc. Professor, PhD, elizabeta.stamevska@eurm.edu.mk

³ European University-Republic of Macedonia, Faculty of Economics, Full-time professor in Corporate Finance, PhD, Aleksandra.Stankovska@eurm.edu.mk

INTRODUCTION

According to the marketing literature, the brand name should be a central part of which other elements of the brand identity are being built up. The name of the brand is the part that is pronounced and preferably should be short, easily memorable and easy to pronounce, and will refer to positive consumer associations.

The brand name needs to achieve the following goals (Chernatony, Mc. Donald, 2005, pp. 103-105):

- Uniqueness – means that the brand name has to be original, unique and has to be easily perceived by consumers;
- Diversity - means that the brand name must not cause negative associations and negative emotions to consumers;
- Compatibility and product association;
- Emotions - the name of the brand should awaken the positive emotions among consumers;
- Legal protection - an opportunity to protect the brand name against possible imitations and abuses;
- Carefulness - attention when choosing a name because it can be generic and cannot be protected by national legislation;
- Portability - Extending brand name on other products and product categories, as well as portability over time, culturally and in different geographic areas;
- Short pronunciation - the brand name should be short in order to avoid consumers to shorten it by themselves.

The brand name is the thing that consumers first recall and therefore the company must be careful when choosing it.

The way a company structures and names brands is called brand architecture. There are three basic brand architectures (Riezebos, 2003):

- Monolithic brand architecture (Masterbrand) means that the company (corporate) name is used for each product or service of the company. For example, Samsung is a Masterbrand, and within it, all products like cell phones, cameras, tablets, TVs, printers do not have any special names. They are known as Samsung products.

- A combined (Endorsed) brand architecture means that the product's or service's name is used together with the corporate name. For example, Ford's name is used along with the name of the particular product, like Ford Ka, Ford Fiesta, Ford Mondeo, Ford Escort, Ford Focus.

- An independent (Freestanding) brand architecture where every product or service has its own architecture, that is fully independent of the corporate name. For example under the name of Procter & Gamble there are special brands of products and product categories like Ariel, Tide, Oral-B, Pampers, Head and Shoulders, Max Factor, etc.

According to the brand association UnCommon Sensé Consulting, the brand name may fall into one of the following categories (Buzzworthy Branding, 2013):

- a) Personal (Family) name - name of the founder, owner of the company, inventor, (Ford, Toyota, Barbie, Heinz, Kraft);

- b) Name of the location - this name indicates the origin of the company, product or service (Evian, Bavarian Motor Works - BMW);

- c) Acronym - abbreviations of the full name of a company, product or service (AT&T, GBS, FedEx, IBM, HP, GAP, AOL);

- d) Descriptive name that can describe the origin, characteristics and values of the product or a service (Wash and Go, Lego, Die Hard, VISA, Gillette, Nescafe);

- e) Ordinary words used in an unusual way like Apple, Silk, Amazon, Horizon, Red Bull;

- f) Fictitious names, such as Olay, Nivea, Google, Sony, Exxon.

The choice of a brand name is a long-term process that involves a lot of participants. They are usually experts who can help in the process of selecting a name, and external collaborators, such as employees, consumers, consultants, name generation software, etc.

It is especially important when choosing a brand name that will be used in different markets. There are a number of examples when due to the inappropriate brand names, brands were unsuccessful. Even though the products had great potential on the International market, choosing the wrong name influenced their failure. In this context one can mention the brand name "Nova" for automobiles of the producer General Motors. The failure of this car was due, among other things, to the name of the brand. The word "Nova" in Spanish

means "Not going/ Not movable", which is a name that is not suitable for a car that is expected to be the opposite.

Because of these situations, there are companies that register a different brand name for the same product at different geographical locations. The reason for this is not only the different meanings of the words, but the fact that the name is acceptable to the local market. For example, the company Procter & Gamble for its "Perth Plus" shampoo created a new name "Rejoy" for the Japanese market and named "Vidal Sassoon" for the British market. However, when using different names for the same product for different markets, companies are faced with higher costs made for different labels, packaging, advertisements, etc.

In order to avoid this, there is a trend to create a name that is globally acceptable. It is an expensive and difficult task and requires the engagement of lots of experts in creating the brand name.

METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of this paper, quantitative statistics were used as well as the comparative method. Namely, an analysis of the theoretical knowledge for creating a successful brand name and practical experiences is made. Practical experiences use examples from the Internet and from various electronic websites. Also for this paper an extensive marketing domestic and foreign literature is used.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

From practical experience, in terms of a brand name, a number of conclusions can be drawn that differ from the theoretical brand knowledge. Practice gives examples whereby certain theoretical knowledge is challenged. Some of them are given below:

- 1) The brand name is not that important! In the practical world, it is a fact that no company, product or service has failed because of a badly chosen brand name. Other factors are often responsible for the failure of the products or the company. There are successful brands whose names are not so important as

their high quality or unusual designs. Such products are Tag Heuer, Schwarzkopf, Haagen-Dazs Yves Saint Laurent, Putzmeister, etc.

2) The name is just a part of the brand identity! For a successful brand, a whole set of brand elements is required. Apart from the brand name, the other elements are the logo, symbol, color, packaging, design, the brand's slogan. The failure of a brand is most often due to other brand elements or their combination.

3) The name does not have to associate to the brand! The name "Oreo" does not associate on cakes. The name "Silk" does not associate on a bank or banking operations. Other examples are names as Red Bull, Horizon, Nivea, Sony, Pepsi, etc.

4) The name does not have to be short! Practical experiences speak about successful brands whose names are not at all short, but on the contrary they are whole phrases or sentences. Examples are the names "I can't believe it's not butter" for the famous margarine brand, and "For All 7 Mankind" for jeans.

5) The name does not have to be easily pronounced! There are successful names of brands that are hard to pronounce. There are even "instructions" on the Internet on pronunciation of those names. For example, the brand name "Guerlain" is pronounced incorrectly as "Girl-lane" and is properly pronounced as "Gher-lehng".

6) Brand name does not have to be easily memorized! The successful name Hawkins, Moore and Cubbedge, LLC is proof of this practical experience.

According to practice there is no one successful method for determining the brand name. However, it confirms that the brand name should be interesting, catchy, unusual, new, meaningful and easy to find on the Internet!

CONCLUSION

The brand name is part of the brand identity. The identity of the brand is the image the company wants to present to its public about its products and services. Elements of brand identity are the name, logo, slogan, jingles, design, brand color. Although the theory considers that the brand name is the central part of the brand identity to which other elements are attached, this is not the case in practice. Practice shows that the brand name is not as important as the

other elements of the brand identity. Sometimes more important are the other elements of the brand, such as logo, color, design or their combination.

However, practice does not offer the best solution for choosing the right brand name. Choosing a brand name depends on the company, the type of the product or service. The practice suggests that the brand name should be interesting, fun, new, catchy, unusual, meaningful and easy to find on the Internet.

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