

A STUDY OF BRAND AWARENESS AND BRAND PERCEPTION OF CONSUMERS

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Introduction:

A brand is a “name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition” (Kotler) Brand awareness & brand Perception can also influence consumers’ perceived risk assessment and their confidence in the purchase decision, due to familiarity with the brand and its characteristics. Brand is a name that has the power to influence a buyer. He went further to say that this influence could be as a result of a set of mental association and relationship built up over time among customers or distributors. (Kapferer). On the other hand, brand awareness & brand perception can be depicted into facets – brand recall and brand recognition each of the two facets having its more or less effective influence on buying decision. Why branding is of such an interest? A simple answer is that the brand differentiates the product or service from competing products, the brand creates value to the customers and can also become a competitive advantage for the firm.

Objective:

- To identify the mind-set of customer towards brand.
- To study of measuring brand Awareness & Perception.
- To study of measuring brand equity.

Hypothesis:

- H1 - Brand has a positive effect on customer.
- H2 - Brand Awareness & Brand perception has a positive effect on customer.
- H3 - Brand equity has a positive effect on customer.

Research Methodology:

The objectives of the study the research design keeping in view of the set objectives, this research design was adopted to have accuracy and in depth analysis of the research study. Available secondary data was extensively used for the study. Research based on exploratory data. The investigator procures the required data through secondary method, different news articles, books which I were enumerated. The study is exploratory and qualitative in nature. Further the secondary data pertaining to the study is originated from various published sources, websites, industry reports and leading referred journals.

Literature Review:

Aaker (1991) approaches brand equity as a set of fundamental dimensions grouped into a complex system comprising mainly: brand awareness, brand perceived quality, brand loyalty and brand associations. He also suggests a “brand equity ten” model for assessing brand equity (Aaker, 1996), taking into consideration several factors among which brand awareness is fundamental.

Farquhar (1989) considers that building a strong brand within consumers’ minds means creating a positive brand evaluation, an accessible brand attitude, and a consistent brand image, the accessible brand attitude actually referring to what the others term as awareness. The important

of brand equity is brand awareness, very often an undervalued component. Not only that awareness is almost a prerequisite for a brand to be included in the consideration set (the brands that receive consideration for purchase), but it also influences perceptions and attitudes, and can be a driver for brand loyalty (Aaker, 1991).

Reflecting the salience of the brand in the customers mind, awareness can be accessed at several if one cannot build a brand based on visibility when worn, then how is it possible to create a brand and add value to it? Is it actually feasible to create a strong brand when not leveraging upon visibility the brand could for instance be promoted through advertising and promotion, but how is it actually possible to convince the public? Levels such as recognition, recall, top of mind, brand dominance (the only brand recalled), or, even more, brand knowledge (what the brand stands for is very well known by consumers) (Aaker, 1996).

Brand awareness & perception is the first and prerequisite dimension of the entire brand knowledge system in consumers' minds, reflecting their ability to identify the brand under different conditions: the likelihood that a brand name will come to mind and the ease with which it does so (Keller, 1993).

Brand awareness & perception can be depicted into brand recognition (consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand when given the brand as cue) and brand recall (consumers' ability to retrieve the brand when given the product category, the needs fulfilled by the category, or some other cues).

Brand awareness & perceptions essential in buying decision-making as it is important that consumers recall the brand in the context of a given specific product category, awareness increasing the probability that the brand will be a member of the consideration set. Awareness also affects decisions about brands in the consideration set, even in the absence of any brand associations in consumers' minds. In low involvement decision settings, a minimum level of brand awareness may be sufficient for the choice to be final. Awareness can also influence consumer decision making by affecting brand associations that form the brand image (Keller, 1998).

H02- Brand Awareness & Brand Perception has a positive effect on customer.

Brand awareness:

Measuring the brand awareness , as “ the customers' ability to recall and recognize the brand as reflected by their ability to identify the brand under different conditions and to link the brand name, logo, symbol, and so forth to certain associations in memory” Keller (2003) Brand awareness is an important and sometimes undervalued component of brand equity. Awareness can affect perceptions and attitudes. It can make peanut butter taste better and instill confidence in a retailer. In some contexts, it can be a driver of brand choice and even loyalty. Brand awareness reflects the salience of the brand in the customers mind. There are levels of awareness, of course, which include: Recognition (Have you heard of the TATA Company?) Recall (What brands of cars can you recall?) Top-of-Mind (the first-named brand in a recall task) Brand Dominance (the only brand recalled) Brand Knowledge (I know what the brand stands for) Brand Opinion (I have an opinion about the brand) for new or niche brands, recognition can be important. For well-known brands such as Red lebal, Amul and Maruti, recall and top-of-mind are more sensitive and meaningful.

Brand Perception:

Brand perception is consumers' ability to identify the brand under different conditions, as reflected by their brand recognition or recall performance (Kotler & Lane, 2006). Brand recall refers to consumer's ability to retrieve the brand from the memory (Keller, 1993). According to the improvement of measurement for brand equity, consumer-based brand equity was described for four dimensions; brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty (Pappu, et al, 2005). Brand awareness was defined as the consumers' ability to identify or recognize the brand (Rossiter and Percy, 1987). It refers to the strength of a brand presence in consumer's minds. Brand awareness has several levels starting from the less recognition of the brand to dominance (Aaker, 1991). Perceived quality was evaluated and decided by consumers. Perceived quality is another valuation of brand to push the customer to buy products.

1. Customer perceptions, what do key audiences believe about your brand, and what feelings does your brand evoke?
2. Competitive marketplace data, what key aspects of your brand are more effectively "owned" by competitors, and are customers happy with competitor brands?
3. Brand performance, How does your brand drive purchase decisions for your most valuable prospects, and which brand aspects are driving loyalty, satisfaction, and re-purchasing?
4. Opportunities for differentiation, what makes you unique and how can you leverage those qualities to gain an advantage over your competitors in the marketplace
5. Emotional perceptions, Brand image, brand attitude, and perceived quality

Brand image is defined as the reasoned or emotional perceptions consumers attach to specific brands (Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990) and is the first consumer brand perception that was identified in the marketing literature (Gardner and Levy, 1955). Brand image consists of functional and symbolic brand beliefs. A measurement technique using semantic differential items generated for the relevant product category has been suggested for measuring brand image (Dolich, 1969; Fry and Claxton, 1971). Brand image associations are largely product category specific and measures should be customized for the unique characteristics of specific brand categories (Park and Srinivasan, 1994; Bearden and Etzel, 1982). Brand attitude is defined as consumers' overall evaluation of a brand \pm whether good or bad (Mitchell and Olson, 1981). Semantic differential scales measuring brand attitude have frequently appeared in the marketing literature. Bruner and Hensel (1996) reported 66 published studies which measured brand attitude, typically as the dependent variable in research on product line extensions or advertising affects. Consumer attitudes toward brands capture another aspect of the meaning consumers attach to brands in memory which affects their purchase behavior. Perceived quality is defined as the consumer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority (Zeithaml, 1988; Aaker and Jacobson, 1994).

H03- *Brand equity has a positive effect on customer.*

Brand Equity

The issue of brand equity has emerged as one of the most crucial topics for marketing management since 1990s (Leuthesser, 1988; Keller, 1993; Cobb-Walgren, Ruble, & Dontu, 1995; Lassar, Mittal & Sharma, 1995; Aaker, 1996; Dyson, Farr, and Hollis, 1996; Faircloth et al. 2001, Esch et al, 2006; Ramos & Franco et al. 2005). Brand equity has been considered in many context: the value added to the product (Jones, 1986; Lethesser 1988; Farquhar, 1990; Aaker, 1991, 1996, 1999; Keller, 1993, 1998, 1999; Kapferer, 1997); value of the firm (Aaker, 1991; Kim & Kim, 2005); value of the customer (Aaker 1991; Martensen & Gronholt, 2003); brand preference, purchase intention (Lattin, 1987; Zeithaml 1988; Hardie et al 1993; Cobb-Walgren 1995); brand loyalty, brand awareness perceived quality, brand associations (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Galpois 1998, Pappu et al, 2005; Atilgan et al, 2005); differential effect of brand knowledge of consumer response to the marketing of brand (Keller, 1993); incremental

utility (Simon & Sullivan, 1993); consequence of marketing efforts (Ramos & Franco, 2005). There have been three different perspectives for considering brand equity; the customer- based perspectives, the financial perspectives and combined perspectives. While this study focus on the customer based perspectives.

H01-Brand has a positive effect on Customer

Customer-Based Brand:

Brand Salience, the right brand identity means creating brand salience with customers. Brand Performance, the brand product or service meets customers' more functional needs. Brand performance transcends the product's ingredients and features to include dimensions that differentiate brand. Brand Imagery, the other main type of brand meaning is brand imagery. It depends on the extrinsic properties of the product or service. Brand attempts to meet customers' psychological or social needs. Brand judgments, these are customer's personal opinions about and evaluations of the brand, which consumers form by putting together all the performance and imagery associations. Brand Feelings, feelings are customers' emotional responses and reactions to the brand. Feelings also relate to the social currency evoked by the brand. Brand Resonance, it describes the nature of this relationship and the extent to which customers feel that they are "in sync" with the brand.

H02- Brand Awareness & Brand Perception has a positive effect on Customer.

Measuring the brand awareness & perception:

Blind Tests

Two groups of consumers rate the target brand and its key competitors. One group has only branded products. The other group sees only unbranded products. Alternatively, you may "brand" the target product with its actual brand or with a competitor's brand and compare the results

Dollarmetric

This method gives you an idea of the potential (not the actual) price premium for each consumer.
- Brand X is priced at _____. How much extra would you be willing to pay to obtain brand Y?

Conjoint Analysis

Conjoint analysis is a widely used technique that measures the value of each product attribute (e.g., technical attributes, warranty, price, the brand name itself, etc.) from people's overall choices or evaluations. The positive aspect of conjoint analysis (also called trade-off analysis) is that consumers are not asked to evaluate the importance of each attribute directly but rather to make choices between bundles of attributes (e.g., products), which is something that they are used to doing. Measuring brand equity is not the primary use of conjoint analysis, which is most often used to test and forecast the market share of new products. For a complete description, see Keller (2003), Chapter 9, and Dolan (1990).

Hedonic Regression

Hedonic regressions are an extension of the dollar metric approach. Their objective is to explain the price of a product on the basis of its attributes. To run a hedonic regression, you need to know the actual prices of all or most of the products in a given product category and to know their attributes (e.g., for bikes, the number of speeds, size, weight, material, etc.). Instead of using the attributes themselves, you can use measures of each attribute's "objective" quality from

tests done by magazines such as What measures will be most effective in evaluating and tracking brand equity over products and markets?

H03- Brand equity has a positive effect on Customer.

Measuring of brand equity:

1) Qualitative research technique

Free association:

Marketers use free association tasks mainly to identify the range of possible brand associations in consumer's mind, but free association may also provide some rough indication of the relative strength, favorability, and uniqueness of the brand associations.

Projective Techniques:

Are diagnostic tools to uncover the true options and feelings of consumer when they are unwilling or otherwise unable to express themselves on these matters of brand? Unstructured, indirect forms of questioning encourage respondents to project their underlying motivations, beliefs, attitudes or feelings regarding the issues of concern (for more details, see Malhotra 1996). Consumers usually see an incomplete stimulus (e.g., a sentence) and are asked to complete it. Alternatively, they see an ambiguous stimulus and are asked to make sense of it.

Associations/Differentiation Measures

The key associations/differentiation component of brand equity usually involves image dimensions that are unique to a product class or to a brand. The challenge, then, is to generate general measures that will work across product classes. Measurement of associations/differentiation can be structured around three perspectives on the brand: the brand-as-product (value), the brand-as person (brand personality) and the brand-as-organization (organizational associations). Consumers see a stimulus and are asked to respond with the first thing that comes to mind. To elicit multiple attributes, you can use the methods at varying levels of abstraction, starting from the brand down to the attribute.

Construction techniques: This requires the respondents to construct a response in the form of a story, dialogue, or description in a less structured form than completion techniques. Picture response techniques: Respondents are asked to tell stories of the pictures shown. The picture might represent a typical interaction between consumers and the brand.

Cartoon tests (or bubble drawings): Respondents are asked to indicate what one cartoon character might say in response to the comments of another character.

Expressive techniques:

Respondents see a verbal or visual situation and are asked to relate the feelings and attitudes of other people to the situation.

Role-playing: Respondents are asked to play the role or to assume the behavior of someone else. Third-person techniques: Respondents are presented with a verbal or visual situation and are asked to relate the beliefs and attitudes of a third person rather than directly expressing personal beliefs and attitudes.

Laddering Method: Laddering methods are a useful way to elicit the higher-order benefits and values offered by the brand beyond immediate product-, user- or usage-related attributes (for more, see Reynolds and Gutman 1988). It works by asking consumers to explain why the first

elicited associations (e.g., a product attribute) are important for them (thus eliciting the benefits) and then why these benefits are important (thus eliciting terminal values).

Zaltman metaphor elicitation techniques:

ZMET is based on a belief that consumers often have subconscious motives for their purchasing behavior and it applied on brand to measuring brand equity.

2) Quantitative research techniques:

Brand awareness:

Brand awareness measures the accessibility of the brand in memory. Brand awareness can be measured through brand recall or brand recognition. Brand recall reflects the ability of consumers to retrieve the brand from memory when given the product category, the needs fulfilled by the category, or some other type of probe as a cue.

Brand Image: To measure brand image, you can either use or adapt an existing list of brand associations we do not know exactly how each dimension is measured, but I mention it here to provide an illustration of a commercial measure of brand image. The four dimensions are (1) the brand's perceived differentiation (i.e., an evaluation of how different the brand's attributes are from those of its competition), (2) its relevance (an evaluation of the brand's utilitarian benefits), (3) its knowledge (an evaluation of the brand's emotional and symbolic benefits) and (4) its esteem (an overall evaluation of the brand).

Conclusion:

Brands are made, not born. The study has concealed a positive effect on brand towards customer. Brand awareness, perception & equity in the intellect of customer through the value products. Brand awareness has recall as well as recognition, but brand image has reflected the identity of consuming product i.e it can be positive or negative also. It all depends on perception of customer towards branded or unbranded product. To measure brand perception in an authentic, meaningful way, it's important to see your brand from your customers' and prospects' perspective Brand perception is consumer's ability to identify the brand under different situation, so it's measuring tool or techniques use to identify the brand under various dimension. Brand equity, it's all based on consumer awareness, perception, association i.e purchase, perceived quality and the loyalty of brand. All this dimension measuring, its result only based on qualitative and quantitative techniques. Qualitative research of brand, identify the strength, favorability and uniqueness and Quantitative research, about the brand awareness, image. A basic premise of measuring the brand is that the power of a brand lies in the minds of consumers and what they have experienced and learned about the brand over time.

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