
BRAND MANAGEMENT AND THE CHALLENGE OF AUTHENTICITY

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to provide an overview of the challenges that the widespread demand for authenticity presents for brand managers. To downplay their overt marketing power, brand managers need authenticity and place their brands within communities and subcultures instead. Brands, though still meeting the needs of members, should become community members and cater to more timeless values. Studies on how brands establish images of authenticity are required. Case histories based on multiple brand data sources are also needed. There is a need for research into how authenticity is viewed by consumers. Brand managers must open their brands to members of the community, downplay their overt marketing capacity, and cater to the timeless values of the community. Brand managers should decouple and downplay their true business acumen instead of catering to societal norms.

Keywords: *Brand Management, Brand Image, Market, Brand Manager, Community's Member, Reputation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Brands have always been business agents and brand managers are proud of their ability to fulfill their target market's needs. These two preferences, however, are in contrast with the recent trend to place brands as "authentic," highlighting the enduring ideals sought by customers while downplaying clear commercial motives [1]. Increasing representations of authenticity while addressing the challenge that authenticity poses for brand management is a dual problem for the company.

An initial recognition must be that brand executives are not the sole producers of the definition of the brand. There is also a need in this context for it to have moral validity in the pursuit of prosaically behavior. For instance, the Levi's clothing company's early help provided to the gay community means that the brand continues to have relevant relevance for gays. Brands who sought

to exploit this segment were failing because they were late to the party and were seen as abusing a group without paying the requisite dues when homosexuality became more widely accepted [2]. Merely making a statement that a brand is "authentic" would probably not succeed because of varying opinions about what such declarations would imply that it could signify a genuine (vs. counterfeit) brand for others, while it could mean something much deeper for others. By drawing on characteristics that can be true, marketers will need to suggest validity, while efforts will involve some statements that are constructed. For example, Gucci's advertising efforts stated that their ancestors made saddles in mediaeval Florence for the Medici family, the wealthy patrons of the arts, as a way to provide the company with a history of quality leather work. While the company has publicly accepted that this assertion is false, they continue with the theory, going so far as to have a saddle in their Italian offices to imply just such a connection.

Consumers may often presume on their own that items have validity, based on the mental perspectives of consumers of how things "wanted to look." Tourists, for instance, often want the trappings of authenticity for their travels while they do not want to suffer the difficulties of lifestyle often faced by local inhabitants. In the actual circumstances that the park reflects, the theme park experience is more common than spending time [3]. They buy examples of local handicrafts, such as conical hats worn to shield women from the blistering tropical sun who mend Vietnamese roads, without experiencing the unpleasant circumstances that gave rise to their skilled nature. For others, revamped styles of old brands like the current VW Beetle are authentic because they work and offer pleasure rather than being true to the original.

II. IMPORTANCE OF THE BRAND MANAGEMENT

For customers, communicating with time and place is also important because it affirms tradition. Australian shops such as The Depot affirm older practices of retail, drawing on the American style of the 1950s to convey a sense of authenticity and nostalgia [4]. Authenticity serves customers at the other end of the spectrum as a means of self-expression for products that reflect a true expression of an inner personal truth or an expression of identity by participation in the group, such as owning a Harley Davidson motorcycle.

In order to create rich brand definitions for target audiences rather than treating them as competing sources of authenticity, marketing practice must constantly craft these diverse sources together. The main thing is that customers, whether those elements are really authentic or not, view aspects of authenticity as actual [5]. We lack empirical studies of pragmatic insight into how brands have preserved pictures of authenticity over time, but there are apparent possible implementations and source explanations that could provide guidance for strategic planning intuitively. Managers need to spend more time listening to their desires and interests and how their brand will fulfil those requirements for their customers.

Thus, while customers can associate with certain attributes of authenticity, ties to history, hand-crafted practices, reverence for traditions, or cultural links, all of which downplay business motives, the composition of these attributes will depend on a consumer community's shared histories when selecting brands. This suggests that marketing campaigns must follow an indirect route instead of trying to play up the authentic roots of a brand directly, for example by being a part of a group. For instance, instead of high-profile sports, Dunlop in Australia sponsors local sporting events, sponsors newspaper columns, and radio spots on local sports results. This gives Dunlop a major advantage over larger foreign competitors, and has resulted in positive perceptions towards the brand from generations of Australians [6].

The bottom line is that, to some degree, brand managers must appear detached from market considerations and downplay their commercial prowess. As in the successful example of surfing customers who tend not to see their brands as brands [7], but rather as trusted friends and members of a larger group of beachgoers, authenticity must appear non-commercialized. Some attempts can seem strained, as with retail service companies that seemingly seek to downplay their business motives with slogans such as "serving the local community faithfully since 1937."

The Industrial Marketing and Purchasing Community (IMP) researchers developed an interactive methodology in the late 1970s and early 1980s that explored the essence of customer-buyer relationships from a network perspective. Customers play an active role in this framework; they build deep and long-term partnerships with their suppliers, who also create goods and services tailored for them.

On the other hand, marketing researchers have discussed the issue of asymmetric knowledge in particular (the seller is better informed about quality than the buyer). In such a setting, to determine product quality, signs such as packaging, ads, word-of-mouth, or branding become important. Price probably conveys two opposing functions: it can be viewed as a sacrifice on the one hand, and as a token of extra quality, value, or prestige on the other hand. Yet research on relationship worth in industrial markets is still in its infancy [8]. Wilson and Jantrania have researched how value can be calculated in the creation of relationships and Holmlund and Strandvik provide a model of mapping expectations in relationships between industrial buyer and seller.

In three domains, value can be created: value creation through supplier relationships, value creation through alliance partnering, and value creation through customer relationships. In the present article, the supplier's point of view and their need to better grasp the understanding of value of the consumer are adopted [9]. Because perceived customer value in industrial markets is not easy to quantify, the main scope of this article is to include a management method for measuring the perceptions of value by industrial customers in the form of a customer value audit (CVA).

Therefore, brand managers need to build processes behind the scenes that make them look less commercialized. Peterson's (1997) country music analysis found that organizers addressed the competing pressures to stay true to perceived views of authenticity, rustic hillbilly imagery and spontaneous informal amateurism among the players in this case, and the need to produce a viable commercial product [10]. Performances were much more tightly structured and scripted than customers thought, it turned out.

Companies should distinguish formal structures and day-to-day job practises to balance these stresses in order to preserve moral integrity while remaining profitable; they should give the outward appearance of conforming to the expected rules of their societies or subcultures, while investing in efficiency, business awareness, and developments informed by customers behind the scenes [11]. This is a challenging directive, but in reality, brand managers need to appear a little less satisfied with their success in meeting consumer needs, involve customers in a two-way conversation on the nature of products, and encourage societies to embrace their brands.

III. CONCLUSION

The papers in this second special issue make a major contribution to the creation of new knowledge, models and hypotheses on the actions of internet users, the goals of the original call for papers. Future researchers should look at developing knowledge along the following lines, in addition to the variables defined by the writers of these papers, among others:

1. The role of confidence in online vendors, its histories and implications, and the expenditure on the types of customer concerns about online transactions can be further established.
2. Conduct further research on the forms, existence and working of virtual societies, and how this information can be used by businesses.
3. Our understanding of pricing issues and online Internet auctions continues to evolve.
4. The use of tangibility as a continuous and multidimensional scale to describe customer responses to different internet goods and services is further refined.
5. It further explores the role of different product classifications in online customer behavior models.
6. Explore more of the legal problems and their marketing consequences associated with the Internet.

7. The strategic position played by corporate websites must be further refined

IV. REFERENCES

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