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Building Brand Awareness in the Modern Marketing Environment: A Conceptual Model

Wasib B Latif¹, Md. Aminul Islam² and Idris Mohd Noor³

ABSTRACT

Building brand awareness in competitive markets can play an active role in the modern marketing environment. It is now widely acknowledged by companies that strong brand awareness will create a competitive advantage in the marketplace that will enhance their overall reputation and credibility. Indeed, recent trend in modern marketing has been changed enormously and study of brand awareness is increasingly becoming popular to keep pace with this change. In this conceptual paper, we have summarized the exiting literatures on currently prevailing concepts and approaches on brands, which will allow us to identify the imperative components of brand awareness and therefore will assist companies to enhance their marketing efficiency. Based on earlier works, here we propose a plausible framework for building brand awareness in sequential order namely, positioning the brand, sponsorship, event marketing, sports marketing, advertising of the brand and integrated marketing communications. In this review, we put forward the notion that brand-building attempt need to be associated with organizational processes that will assist in bring the comprehensive knowledge about brands to the consumers through organizational awareness programs. We suggest that these activities could play an essential role in creating awareness about brands among consumers. As a whole, based on existing literatures, we have tried to provide a comprehensive view on the imperative components of brand awareness for building brand awareness in the modern marketing environment.

Keywords: brand awareness, positioning the brand, sponsorship, event marketing, sports marketing.

1. INTRODUCTION

The modern marketing environment has changed extensively from what it was 50, 30 or possibly even as few as 10 years ago. In this changing environment, the brand awareness plays an important role. The brand awareness is changing the way modern marketing environment focus on comprehensive knowledge about

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brands. Indeed, currently brand and branding has become a major marketing priority for most of the companies (Aaker, D.A. and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Kapferer, 2008). Nonetheless, there is lack of proper understanding on how brands and branding can or should be developed in the competitive marketplace.

In this paper, we suggest how brand awareness can and should be built and managed in today's marketing environment. We have started by considering the significance of brand and branding. Next, we provide components of building brand awareness that may be treated as a brand awareness programs for which modern marketing environment has changed. Indeed, brand awareness is based on brand recognition and brand recall performance whose main goal to generate comprehensive knowledge about brands that help to make the company's consumers positive perception about brands as well as a company rather than rivals in the modern marketing environment. Moreover, the brand awareness based on appropriate knowledge needs to reflect the marketing strategy about brand awareness programs and the company's willingness to invest in the programs needed for the brand to live up to its promise and commitment to consumers and also establish strong awareness with comprehensive knowledge about a brand into consumers mind (Aaker, D.A. and Joachimsthaler, 2000). Strong brands acquire happiness in consumer brand resonance, the possible to charge premium prices and extensive brand power to hold up new product and service launches. Companies need to have cautious and systematic understanding of consumer beliefs, behaviors, knowledge level about a product or service characteristics or attributes and rivals in the modern marketing environment.

We conclude in this paper to present a conceptual framework in the form of PSESAI model for building brands that is based on comprehensive review of the existing literatures. An attempt has been made in the discussion section to discuss the managerial implications of the concepts presented in this paper.

1.1 Brands – Meaning and Definition

Brand means a combination of identification and differentiation that draw strong attention to the product for consumers. The brand brings value to consumers and companies. In consumers' point of view, companies try to satisfy their consumers by providing consumers' desire list of values, where value means benefit. On the other hand, when consumers are satisfied by getting values from companies as well as brands, consumers may provide value to companies and show dependence about their brands. During the interaction between companies and consumers, some unique values that consumers occupy into their minds, which are called brand (Aaker, 1991).

Brands involve the composition of name and/or symbol in which consumers can identify and tie with a product or service or a group of products or services (Weilbacher, 1995). From the consumer's point of view, a brand may be defined as the total accretion of all his/her experiences and builds on all points of relationship with his/her experiences (Kapferer, 2004). A successful brand is an identifiable product, service, person or place by which consumers try to match their needs by getting the unique value of identifiable product, service, person or place (Chernatony et al., 1998).

1.2 Branding – Meaning and Definition

Branding is described as the cosmos of activities embark on that have an effect on those observations. In order to successfully build positive brand discernment, one must engage in both inner and outer activities which are associated to set free an unswerving consciousness. According to Salam ([www.scribd.com/doc/3979762/Brand- Management](http://www.scribd.com/doc/3979762/Brand-Management), 2005), he asserts that in the language of marketing, branding is the grammatical process (structure) and brand is a semantical method of process (meaning). Branding is the continuous process by which consumers positive perception should create for the product. Branding holds unique identification that carries benefits for all parties in the exchange process and makes it easier to buy or sell products into the market (Brassington and Pettitt, 2006).

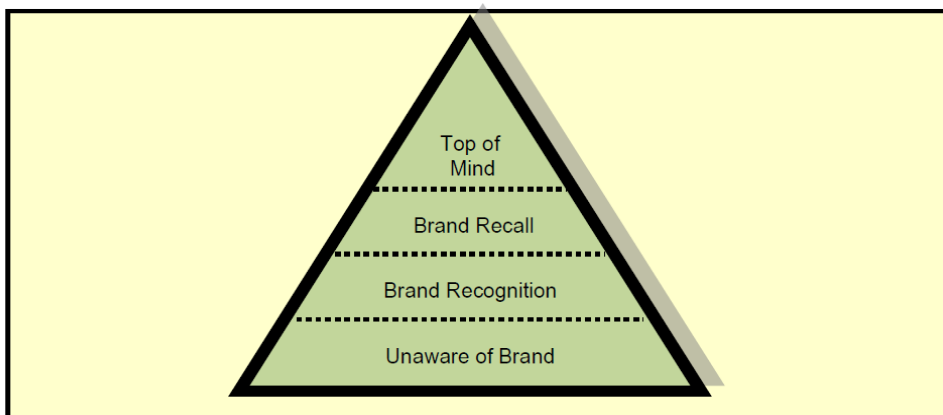
According to Kotler and Keller (2006), branding is bestowing products and services with the supremacy of a brand. Branding is all about constructing divergences. To brand a product, it is indispensable to teach consumers “who” the product is, “what” the product does and “why” consumers should be concerned. Branding involves creating psychological constitutions and helping consumers systematize their cognitive knowledge about products and services in a way that illuminates their decision-making and provides value to the company. For branding strategies are triumphant and brand value to be created, consumers must be persuaded that there are meaningful differences among brands in the product or service grouping.

2. ESTABLISHING BRAND AWARENESS

According to Keller (2008), brand awareness which holds brand recognition and brand recall performance. In cooperation, both are important components in sustaining brand equity whose main aim to achieve a strong brand image with long term relationship that indicate brand resonance. Brand recognition is defined as the consumers' ability to authenticate earlier revelation to the brand when given the brand as an indication while brand recall is consumers' ability to recoup the brand from memory when given the product category, the needs

satisfied by the category or a purchase or habit situation as a reminder (Keller, 2008). According to Aaker (1991), he advocates that brand awareness engages a continuum ranging from an undecided feeling that the brand is recognized, to a faith that it is the barely one in the product class. Even though the last decades' particular literature exposed and crystallized the thought of brand equity (in relative to which brand awareness is one of the primary dimensions), the term has been and at a standstill is approached in numerous manners in the specialized literatures.

According to Aaker (1991), brand awareness can be differentiated into four different levels that are represented in below, which is called the awareness pyramid. These four different levels of the awareness pyramid help to establish brand awareness about brands among consumers.



Source: *The Awareness Pyramid (Adapted from Aaker, 1991)*

Regarding the awareness pyramid that is shown in above, where starting from unaware of a brand, next brands are recognized, after that recalled and ultimately survives at the top of mind where it presumes an instinctive nature.

3. PSESAI MODEL: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR BUILDING BRANDS

Based on the literature review, the conceptual model for brand building in the marketing environment, known as PSESAI Model, has been proposed. The six elements of this model, namely- positioning the brand, sponsorship, event marketing, sports marketing, advertising and integrated marketing communications (IMC) are discussed below.

3.1 Positioning the Brand

Positioning is linked with creating the perception of a brand in the consumer's mind and of accomplishing differentiation that it stands apart from competitors' brands/offerings and that it meets the consumer's needs/expectations. Brand marketer's key goal should be to create the desired perception in the target consumer's mind.

A brand position is an integral part of the brand awareness that is to be keenly communicated to the target audience and that demonstrates advantages over competing brands (Aaker, 1996). A well-positioned brand has a competitively gorgeous position sustain by strong associations, such as high rating on a desirable attribute like friendly service before purchase and after purchase or store's offering of home delivery (Aaker, 1991). In an increasingly networked economy, understanding the consumer behavior effects of connecting a brand to other entities such as another person, place, thing or brand is essential (Keller, 2003). Marketers must be able to understand how various entities should best be combined, from a consumer brand-knowledge perspective, to create the optimal positioning in the minds of consumers.

3.2 Sponsorship

Sponsorships entail the possession of rights to connect or unite with a product, event or organization for the intention of obtaining related benefits (Mullin et al., 2000). Professionals illustrate how companies can thrive at sponsorship. Organizations must have a lucid thought of what they desire to bring about (Heffler, 1999). Sponsorships are a "pedal" used by marketers to employ consumers within a certain framework. While the sponsorship literature has full-fledged in up to date years, scholars have only begun to appraise the strategic implications of sponsorships (Fahy et al., 2004; Thwaites, D., 1994). Thus far, then follow a line of investigation regarding sponsorship put frontwards approaching into six key concerns: Firstly, Relatedness: consumers better recall a sponsor's product when that product is related to the sponsor (Johan et al., 1999). Secondly, Target market: make inquiries have helped identify those consumers who are more rapid to react to sponsorships. Lower-income, older consumers indicate that they buy more of sponsors' products than do other consumers in different conditions (Gardner et al., 1987). Thirdly, Attitude toward sponsors: consumers have better recall of a sponsor's product when they had an inclination for that product facing the sponsorship (Nicholls et al., 1999). Fourthly, Reciprocity process: between the sponsor and the sponsored body whereby the sponsored entity entertains supports with financial or in the manner and the sponsor acquire the right to bracket together it with the sponsored actions to accomplish corporate objectives such as an ornamental corporate image or brand awareness (Cornwell et al., 1998). Fifthly, covers a wide range of activities: that

assortment of small sporting events, sports teams and athletes to a charitable cause, in favor of or non-profitable organizations and associations, practically anything that can be allied with a company all the way through a sponsorship arrangement that implies consumer perceptions of sponsorship activities may stand out the positive awareness toward company along with marketing motives (Keller, 2003). Lastly, Managers' Views of Sponsorships: managers normally have positive attitudes about the brunt of sponsorships (Gardner et al., 1987). As a result, sponsorship is a one of the key component of brand awareness for a building brand.

3.3 Event Marketing

Event marketing is defined as the “practice of promoting the comfort of an organization and its brands by connecting the organization with an unambiguous bustle that regulated by marketing process where the event should build a centre point” (Shimp T.A., 1993; Shimp, Terense A., 1993; Van Heerden, 2001). Recall that a sponsorship may transmit to a commotion or to an organization. Event marketing often engages sponsorship; but this is not constantly the case or cannot be performed in that way except special case. Put side by side to sponsorship, which implies payment for the association with a hullabaloo, individual or organization, event marketing involves to the enactment of an event and/or efforts by a company to connect with an added entity's event with or without paying a sponsorship recompense while have to consider the proper aspect of marketing principles and practices. Companies use event marketing to bring about an assortment of aspirations. Brand awareness, sales, organizational and brand image enhancement and also emotional attachment are the familiar causes for participating in event marketing (Gardner et al., 1987; Gross et al., 1987; Sneath et al., 2005). The type of goals that firms hope to get does not account for event marketing's appeal; instead, its recognition is based upon the idiosyncratic way it helps companies complete their communications goals passing through consumer interaction and relation. The unique event of appeal marketing is the sponsor's knack to amalgamate its message into a congregation that engages consumers and stack consumer's mind into a common platform. Message and media elements are “inextricably allied and imagery is distributed by association with conscientious activities and events that occur colorful image into the consumer's mind which engage positive and strong awareness” (Meenaghan et al., 1999). The skillful sponsor interleaves its message into the intermediate while appealing the consumer during and after the event with full of attractive impulse moment. If the sponsor carefully plans and implements the promotional activity, consumers may sight the sponsor's message as part of the event and acknowledge into their awareness rather than as a marketing-oriented communication and its mechanism. Thus, event marketing is the most key part of brand awareness which assist to create a proper building brand.

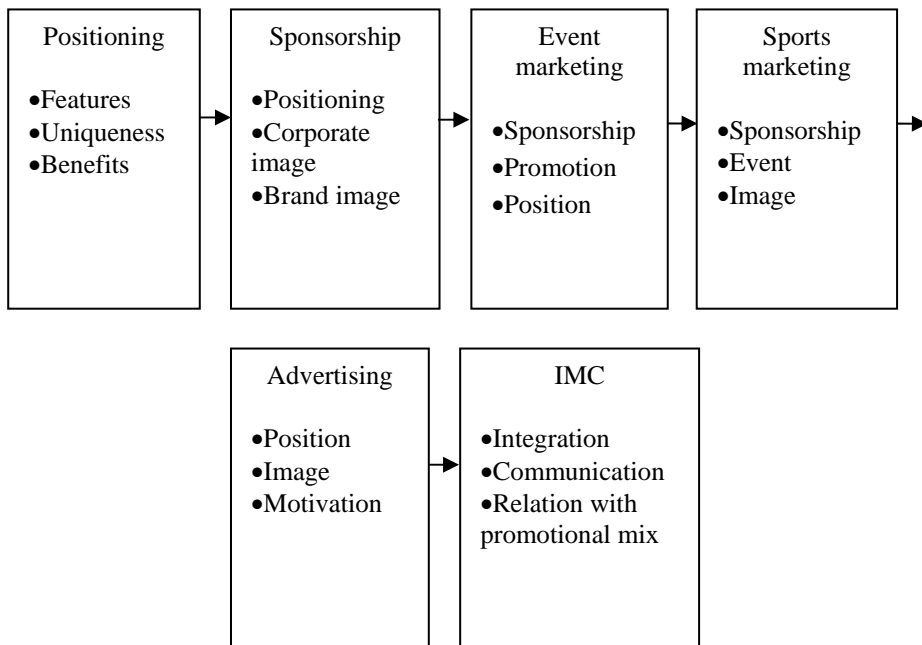


Figure 1: PSESAI Model

3.4 Sports Marketing

As in the contemporary study, event marketing often transpires within the context of a sporting event. Sports marketing propose to sponsorships or event marketing that absorbs athletes or an athletic event while the combination of sponsorships and event marketing can play a vital role for promotion of the company and brand of a company. Sports marketing is a significant process of promotion: roughly two-thirds of the sponsorships in the United States are associated with athletic events (Close et al., 2006). The research scrutinizing sports marketing epitomizes that of sponsorship and event marketing in many ways, with key improvements that take account of; Firstly, Occur from exposure: scholars signify that consumers keep in mind sponsors who uphold athletic events. Also, disclosure to sports marketing satisfactorily revolutionizes attitude to the sponsor (Bennett et al., 2006). Secondly, Develop by robust: consumers have a more activist reflection of the sponsor if they trust that the sponsor’s image “fits” the reflection of the sporting event sponsored (Koo et al., 2006). Thirdly, Achieve by objectives: in the past, “image-building” was core rationale for charming in sports marketing. At this time, sport marketers also hunt for calculable “bottom line” results (Lough et al., 2001). Fourthly, Establish by evaluation: while the managers desire bottom-line objectives, they are undecided how to fix on whether their sports marketing (sports-related promotion) is victorious (Stotlar,

D.K., 2004). For which sports marketing can play a major role to increase brand awareness that support to create a building brand.

3.5 Advertising

“If you create a product in a good and adequate amount, the public will build a path to your entrance. But if you yearn for the public in satisfactory numbers, you would better erect a highway. Advertising is that highway, Hearst W.R. (www.creativequotations.com/one/1906.htm, 1992). Advertising captures steps as an medium that assists in constructing a picture and image of a product or brand in the consumer’s mind that hold strong positions and gather knowledge about brands that could help consumers to aware. According to Starch (1923), he nominated that “for an advertisement to be successful it must: be seen, be read, be believed, be remembered, be mind trusted and be acted on”. Thus, the rationale of advertising is to give the apposite means by which messages are invented and communicated to target consumers who then perform in the right ways. The consumers may buy the product, make inquiries about it, collect some information, position it or simply memorize a single characteristic for the upcoming battle. For that reason, the responsibility of advertising in the promotional plan is an essential one.

According to Jones (1994), he converses that advertising is a communication compels, but it does not coerce the consumers to purchase goods. Its principle is to “generate a quench of mind that valuable to purchase” (Colley & Russell H., 1961). Advertising whether it is on an international, national, local, is significant, as it can penetrate audiences by informing, encouraging or reminding them of the continuation of a brand or instead by persuading or serving those to differentiate a product or organization from others in the market that they get motivation to purchase a product (Fill C., 2002). The advertising process is defined as “the way in which the advertiser accomplishes his anticipated intention on his planned audience with a satisfactory result” (Kennedy S.H. and Corkindale D.R., 1976). Indeed, the advertisement by using the advertising procedure is a promotional instrument that is obtainable for marketers to create awareness that the ultimate goal is to generate a brand image with vast knowledge about the brands.

3.6 Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) is a reasonably latest and new term in the communications globe and arena with numerous definitions from various scholars and practitioners. According to Griffin and Pasadeos (1998), they utter that IMC comes together advertising and public relations with marketing apparatus such as direct marketing, personal selling and sales promotion to develop various aspects of communication. According to Pasadeos (2000), he affirms that IMC’s integrating of advertising, public relations and marketing uses

several media to achieve an utmost pressure over newly disjointed publics. According to Low (2000), others have cleared it as a business theory, an academic and intellectual curriculum or a junction between business sectors. According to Low (2000), he believes of IMC as a range of factors that integrate, (a) how often communications procedures are executed by one person, (b) the equality and uniformity of communication endeavors and (c) the resemblances found in communicated appearances. According to Duncan and Moriarty (1998), they utter that IMC is a reciprocal media exertion to improve and generate awareness that is the significance of a company's brand. According to Phelps and Johnson (1996), they illustrate IMC as the amalgamation of marketing communication tools that emphasize sales promotion, direct marketing, personal selling and as well specially advertising and public relations that yield novel fundamental canons for communicating with key publics.

According to Shimp (2000), he discloses that IMC should represent the five characteristics that consider, (a) IMC should manipulate dealings and actions through communication, (b) The consumer should come first; IMC practitioners should think about communication based on the consumers' wants and needs and also demand, (c) All communication categories and organizational wherewithal and also resources should be integrated and incorporated when using IMC, (d) Synergy is vital for mounting strong brand illustrations and (f) IMC communications should connect the brand to the consumer via a strong relationship for long term basis. Thus, most organizations consider IMC to be a key element to take competitive advantage for building brand awareness in the modern marketing environment.

4. DISCUSSION

The proposed PSESAI model can serve as a guideline to managers and executives in building awareness of their brands in their target markets. As competition gets more concentrated, managers face challenges to bend their brands with changed expectations of their consumers. Among different alternatives that are available to managers, positioning their brands on the benefits that happen to be the consumer priorities can assist in building superiority with strong resonance of their brands in the minds of their consumers. Such benefit positioning can facilitate companies to leverage current resources to the extent possible. If existing product configuration/proposition becomes outdated, the brand has to move to higher or expected levels of uniqueness with benefits to sustain itself in dynamic competitive markets.

Furthermore, companies need to position their brands in the minds of consumers through awareness. To achieve desired goals of their awareness programs, companies have to break the confusion by developing brand knowledge that

enhances more attention of the target audiences in the modern marketing environment. The traditional vehicles for awareness programs like newspapers, magazines, television, hoardings, public relations, etc and new vehicles for awareness programs such as positioning, sponsorship, event marketing, sports marketing, advertising, integrated marketing communications (IMC) etc. offer opportunities for consumer involvement and enhance opportunities to be acquainted with the brands. In addition, increase the opportunity to gather comprehensive knowledge about a brand. Such innovative approaches can facilitate managers to minimize the impact of competition on their brand in the modern marketing environment. Creating awareness programs to communicate the brand that involves mixing and matching different awareness components (see figure 1) to establish the desired awareness in the minds of consumers where components of awareness are important to marketers in view of the fact that they would desire to grow a perceptive picture of how a brand is perceived by consumers as well as its rivals. Indeed, the components of awareness act as a strong communication weapons to increase knowledge that creates huge impact on the consumer's mind about brands in the modern marketing environment.

By examine the proposed model (see figure. 1), the brand managers could continuously track their brands against the effect of competition and to track the progress as to how their brands are performing in the modern marketing environment. Monitoring the improvement of brands in terms of positioning, sponsorship, event marketing, sports marketing, advertising and integrated marketing communications that assist the managers to adjust their strategies of marketing under awareness programs to accomplish the desired performance of their brands in a competitive market. This performance audit can also facilitate the company to measure its brand awareness level and strength vis-à-vis competing brands into the target consumers in the modern marketing environment. Building brand awareness with proposes a plausible framework (see figure 1) can reduce the vulnerability of the consumer base to competitive action and persuade consumers' perceived risk judgment and their assurance in the purchase decision that can directly translate into future sales and profits.

Brands that have established desired brand awareness in the marketplace can have strong brand knowledge which influence consumers to take brands as a friend with positive word of mouth. These approaches allow the companies to influence the brand awareness to new categories of uniqueness as well as differentiation which hold on positive brand perception with comprehensive knowledge about brands that is the key or major cue of brand awareness. Indeed, brand awareness is to provide a comprehensive view on the essential components (see Figure 1) of brand building in a competitive market that can play an active role in the modern marketing environment.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper discusses the PSESAT model for building brands and this paper is based on the review of pertinent literatures. Consistency of awareness and comprehensive knowledge about brands with the help of PSESAT model along the conceptualization of brand awareness targeted towards consumers is significant to the success of brand-building efforts by maintaining superiority as a consistent basis that will enhance loyalty and image for a long period of time. Companies need to guarantee that the brand remains strong even during complicated times and take awareness programs that is consistent with the brand promises as well as commitments. As a result, the brands survive in a competitive market by taking competitive advantage that is essential for modern marketing environment. For that reason, the six stages suggested in PSESAT model namely, positioning the brand, sponsorship, event marketing, sports marketing, advertising of the brand and integrated marketing communications can enable companies to build strong brand awareness as well as strong brands into competitive markets in the modern marketing environment.

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