EMOTIONAL BRANDING: MARKETING STRATEGY OF NIKE BRAND

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Abstract

This research paper talks about Emotional branding. It is critical advertising strategy choices every brand must make will your brand building grow customer egos, or tear them down? In this three-minute emotional marketing lesson video, emotional marketing expert Graeme Newell showcases some of Madison Avenue’s best brand building and advertising strategy tactics. Learn when it is better use the carrot, and when it is better to use the stick. Find out how the Nike brand strategy and Gatorade brand strategy recruited very similar customers using completely opposite brand building tactics. When it comes to great brand building, I think the guys at Nike advertising and Gatorade TV advertising has it down. But their advertising strategies, while utilizing similar advertising writing, differ in their delivery. Today, I’m going to talk about the two brand building advertising strategy Nike advertising and Gatorade advertising use, how the differ, and what we can learn about brand building and positioning a brand from the two. Paper presents and attempts to study the concept of emotional branding by giving few examples, importance of emotional brand measures and giving conclusion how emotional branding work as success mantra for various brands to succeed in long run.

Keywords: Emotional marketing, Gatorade Brand Strategy, cognitive dissonance, relationship marketing

Introduction

Emotional Marketing is messaging that builds your ego. It makes you feel smarter, bolder, more sophisticated, or just about any other emotion that is fundamental to your self-esteem. By making you feel better about yourself; the brand transcends mere product status and becomes a friend. This is what gives your brand that special something that builds life-long attachment. These are brands that share your values and priorities. You name-drop the brand name to say something important about yourself. They “get you,” and you get them. People are so passionate about these brands that they wear the logos on their chest, tattoo them on their body, and herald them in the social networking profile. “I’m a Jack Daniels man.” “I hate the Yankees and believe in Red Sox Nation.” Harley isn’t just a motorcycle, its lifestyle,
and there is a large group of people who refuse to eat at fast food restaurants that serve Pepsi instead of Coke. That is the genius of emotional marketing. It slips in under our radar. Because these are emotions we want to feel, the ads seem comforting and familiar. Its drip marketing that slowly waters our deepest hopes of being the people we dream of becoming. The importance of building strong brands as an imperative strategy to succeed in highly competitive environments has been increasingly emphasized in the brand management field of the marketing research (Morrison and Crane, 2007). It is highly evident that intense psychological bonds with the brands referred as emotional brand connections lead to higher levels of firm performance and competitive advantage (Malar et al., 2011). Morrison and Crane in 2007 defines “Emotional branding is defined as the engagement of consumers in a deep, long-term, intimate emotional connection with the brand, which is beyond the benefit based satisfaction, and which creates a special trust based relationship for the development of a holistic emotional experience.” Nike Advertising I’ve talked about Nike advertising and their incredible brand building many times before – and rightfully so. Nike brand strategy is one of the pinnacles of advertising strategy out there. Nike advertising focuses on the brand building advertising strategy of ego focused branding. This advertising strategy is fully centred on building the customer’s ego, and positioning the brand as one for those who achieve great things.

Nike Brand Strategy

The product itself is hardly present in this brand building strategy, because they are positioning a brand to be about something more than the product. Nike brand strategy isn’t to make you think you need Nike gear to succeed, but that you want it because you succeed. Nike brand strategy uses their tried-and-true formula to boost the ego of their customers – an advertising strategy that has made Nike advertising one of the most powerful and effective brand building organizations in the world. Gatorade’s advertising strategy is similar to Nike’s, but different. When it comes to brand building, Gatorade is right up there with Nike advertising. Its advertising strategy has built its brand into something more than the product. But Gatorade’s approach to positioning a brand differs from Nike’s in an important way. While brand building at Nike is all about building the ego and lifting the customer up, advertising strategy at Gatorade involves planting the seed of doubt in the mind of the customer.

Gatorade Brand Strategy

This type of brand building strategy is called product focused branding, and it’s used as the primary advertising strategy of Gatorade. Watch their commercials and you will see the same athletes pushing themselves to the limits and beyond, but where Nike advertising will lift up the customer, Gatorade will put in a seed of doubt as part of their brand building strategy. “Without Gatorade, you won’t make it past that next hill.” “Without Gatorade, the opposition will defeat you.” If you compare the two brands, you will notice that Nike advertising have next to no focus on the product itself, whereas Gatorade advertising strategy has the product hugely prevalent in every ad. Emotional branding is crucial for firms in breaking the clutter through claiming distinctive associations in today’s highly structured environment where products and services are distinguished from each other by technological, causal, and benefit based differentiations. The emotional branding perspective suggests that firms ought to concentrate on forging strong and meaningful emotional bonds that proactively enrich consumer’s lives, become part of their memories and social network (Thomson et al., 2007). Therein; the brand-consumer relationships based on the emotional linkages constructed are increasingly gaining popularity and importance for marketing researchers and practitioners (Thomson et al., 2005), recognizing the fact that brands achieve the opportunity to
differentiate from other brands in an exponential scale, through adopting a branding strategy where they promote experience based relationships with their customers, placing their brands to a high centrality and importance into Consumers lives.

**Objectives of the Study:**

The study covers the objectives which can be listed as:

1. To have an overview of emotional branding and its impact on customers.
2. To study the role of emotional branding as a tool of post purchase dissonance reduction.
3. To show how important emotional branding and how it help organizations to outperform their competitors in the market.

**Research Methodology**

The current study attempts to explain the concept of Emotional Branding and examine the current scenario of Emotional branding in India. The nature of research is completely descriptive. It is a conceptual research which is based on review of previously done researches in this area. All the relevant data used in research paper has been collected from secondary sources e.g. e- journals, newspaper, Govt. publications and various resources. Thompson, C. J., Rindfleisch, A., & Arsel, Z. (2006); discuss how the tenets of emotional branding paradoxically encourage the formation and propagation of doppelganger brand imagery, there developed the counterintuitive proposition that rather than merely being a threat to be managed, a doppelganger brand image can actually benefit a brand by providing early warning signs that an emotional-branding story is beginning to lose its cultural resonance. Their research further demonstrated that emotional-branding strategies may unintentionally foster the cultural development of a doppelganger brand image .They suggested that consumers avoid brands when their emotional branding promises are viewed as inauthentic and conversely, that emotional-branding strategies succeed when they can function as an authenticating narrative for consumers’ identity projects. These ideas are congruent with research indicating that consumers’ most valued brands are those whose symbolic meanings play an important role in their self-conceptions. Mohit Jamwal and Vishal Soodan in their paper talks about the Role of Cognitive Dissonance with ‘Emotional Appeal’ through their offerings. Cognitive Dissonance and Emotional branding always rely on the fundamental rationale of the basic principle of striking human’s feelings.

**Literature Review**

Yoo and MacInnis, (2005) identified Emotions acts as a leveraging force in the attachment of consumers to brands and how emotions play an intimate role in brand attitude formation for the consumers who live and store the brand experience. Emotions are a strong means of captivating experience-driven consumer attachment to brands and proactively integrating brands into their lives and identity projects. They further explained that as opposed to conventional benefit-driven branding approach, emotional branding focuses on brand meanings that interact with consumer lives and inspire their passion, life stories, memories, and experiences.

Introduction of the cognitive dissonance theory by Festinger (1957) led the marketers to understand the motives of consumers behind their purchase. Ehrlich et al. (1957) and Engel (1963) attempted to investigate post-purchase dissonance and post-purchase interest in advertisements to reduce it. In both of the studies which were empirical, findings showed
that increased attention of customers to advertisements after purchase decision is not related to consumers’ efforts to reduce the possibility of dissonance. Kaish (1967) further expanded the concept of cognitive dissonance theory to redefine the three types of consumer goods which are convenience goods, shopping goods, and specialty goods. The study put forward a concept which showed that dissonance is not only a result of the assigning importance to a product, but it arises due to the functional performance differences amongst similar products. Oshikawa (1969) through his study claimed that the consumers are not interested in the information of particular product as their effort to reduce the possibility of dissonance. Hunt (1970) put forward the effectiveness of communication methods of post-purchase on lowering dissonance level and increasing the possibility of purchases in the future. Cummings and Venkatesan (1976) studied the measurement of the dissonance. They took the level of worry as a subject and studied its level amongst the respondents after the purchase made by them. The study also stressed on all factors that are responsible for dissonance. Connole et al. (1977) focused that the previous studies on dissonance doesn’t have the analysis of dissonance that individuals experience through the various stages of product diffusion through the categories of consumers. Korgaonkar and Moschis (1982) elaborated the relationship between involvement level and post-purchase evaluations in case of products. The study highlighted that the more the expectations before the purchase, the more will be the favourable evaluation in products which involve high consumer involvement. Mowen and Minor (1998) studied the importance of emotions as an important component of attitude in their research. The emotional aspect has gain importance over the years and more and more studies are being carried out by keeping in mind the emotions in the purchases of customers. Hoyer and MacInnis (2001) found that humans engage in passionate relationships and even religious practices with unique brands because of the desire to overcome feelings of self- uniqueness and affiliation to their in-group. It will be the favourable evaluation in products which involve high consumer involvement.

**Scope of Emotional Branding:**

The play on emotion in branding became revolutionized with Sigmund Freud’s popularization of the “unconscious mind” from 1912. According to Freud, the unconscious mind consists of the processes in the mind that occurs automatically and is not available to introspection, and includes thought processes, memory, affect, and motivation. In advertising, this became relevant through the use of hidden messages and symbols to trigger an emotional response, without literally making a claim about a product. The purpose of emotional branding is to create a bond between the consumer and the product by provoking the consumer’s emotion. Emotional brands have a significant impact when the consumer experiences a strong and lasting attachment to the brand comparable to a feeling of bonding, companionship or love. Emotional branding creates a personality for the brand. Emotional branding uses the consumer’s ability to process messages to promote a significant feeling associated with the brand. Emotional branding uses a series of themes and symbols to create meaning for a consumer. It is the emotional response that provides consistent design intent across environments, touch points, interactions. Companies are more likely to deliver a consistent brand experience that builds rapport with customers. Organizations are building brands as holistic experiences, cultivating intentional, emotional responses, may find themselves enjoying more profitable relationships with their customers, built on trust.
Heart to Heart:
The second barrier is the industry's obsession with monitoring brand equity almost entirely on the basis of brand awareness. In reality, awareness is passive and unconvincing, and merely provides a starting point. To be aware of a brand is not the same as being loyal to it. Indeed, awareness follows the pattern "I see it, I notice it", which keeps the brand firmly in the role of 'external object', rather than a focus of desire, or product lust. Ultimately, great brand equity is about having an emotional connection to a brand. Just being aware of the brand is inadequate because real equity is based on a response such as "I feel it and am inherently aware of it because the brand is myself." A company has achieved genuine equity when the pronoun shifts from a company-centric 'it' to 'me' and 'us' (the brand as reflecting one's own values and vision of self within one's desired peer group). The biggest, most common mistake made in branding is to imagine that the 'what' (the product) takes precedence over the 'who' (the consumer). Nothing could be further from the truth in terms of creating a long-term brand strategy.

How organizations can outperform others by using emotional branding to Nike Advertising Power?
Dig deep inside Nike branding campaigns and you’ll discover a very simple archetype story. By repeating this one story over and over, Nike marketing strategy delivers a powerful shot of customer self-esteem. In this speech from the IMARK Marketing Conference in Iceland, emotional marketing speaker Graeme Newell reveals the five-step formula that keeps Nike branding at the top of the list of the world’s most powerful marketers. I love Nike. I love Nike advertising, Nike ads, Nike commercials, Nike marketing strategy, Nike branding, and Nike brand strategy. I love all of it, and I love it a lot. What’s more, I’m not alone. Nike ads have built the Nike brand into a juggernaut that appeal to almost every single man, woman, and child on this planet. Why does Nike branding work so well? Nike advertising is full of excitement and everything that makes a good sporting-goods ad, but Nike ads are nearly unique in how good they are. so what is the deal with Nike marketing strategy that makes them so great? It’s the message that is contained in Nike commercials and every piece of Nike branding that goes out. Nike advertising revolves around a single, universal emotion that is felt the same by nearly everyone on the planet. The idea of struggle and determination is what gives Nike commercials their fire. And every piece of Nike branding revolves around this thing

How Nike Ads Capitalize on Archetypes
If it told you that Nike marketing strategy is thousands of years old, you probably wouldn’t believe me. However, Nike branding, like their name (originating from the Greek Goddess of Victory Nike) is as old as the Greek Civilization. Great works like the Iliad and the Odyssey revolve around the archetype of the hero. The hero is someone who faces a great foe, one who is seemingly insurmountable, and through dedication and perseverance, prevails. Nike brand strategy truly does hail from the time of the ancient Greeks, and there’s a reason it still works. This is because the feelings that Nike commercials evoke are feelings that all humans have. The heroes in Nike advertising are universal heroes, regardless of age, race, gender, or anything else.

How Nike Brand Strategy Comes Out in Nike Commercials
Nike branding relies on a five-step formula to really drive the Nike marketing strategy home in Nike commercials. Nike ads, with very few exceptions, follow this five step formula in one
way or another. The five step formula in Nike advertising is how they show the various stages that the hero must go through in order to fulfil his quest. Nike branding simply channels the story of the hero, one that has been told for millennia, into Nike ads and watches the brand explodes. The 5-Steps Nike Branding Uses in Nike Ads -Nearly every piece of Nike advertising follows the 5-step formula of Nike branding. First, Nike ads show first to the challenge, in the zone, doubt and suffering, rededication, and finally, victory. Nike branding uses these five steps to universally appeal to men, women, and children all over the world, and to great effect. What Each Step in Nike Marketing Strategy Means-Key to Nike ads are the five steps. Nike commercials tend to begin with someone being the first to the challenge, first to the plate, the first up. This is how Nike brand strategy demonstrates first to the challenge. Nike branding then shows the person in the zone, working hard at whatever it is they’re doing, brand”. Emotional branding is something that comes with time and long standing presence.

Example of Emotional Branding:

Nike Advertising and Emotional Branding: Nike brand strategy is to build a powerful brand – so powerful that it inspires fervent customer loyalty from people literally all over the world. This is because Nike advertising uses the emotional branding technique of archetypes in its advertising – more specifically, the story of the Hero. It’s an age old tale, a tale of a hero pitted against a great foe, and after a great struggle, emerging triumphant. In a way, you could say that Nikes marketing strategy is thousands of years old, and has been inspiring customer loyalty the entire time.

Building Customer Loyalty: Nike advertising isn’t the only group that uses the Hero archetype to inspire customer loyalty. Many other companies use this emotional branding technique to great effect. In most cases, the foe is external. The most common story of the hero is that of a man of humble origins setting out to defeat a great evil – one far more powerful than he – and, against all odds, emerging triumphant. This same pattern could apply to, say, a home security system against a house fire, or an antacid against heartburn. As long as there is a clearly identified enemy and a clearly identified hero, the emotional branding can begin.

Nike Brand Strategy: Nike advertising takes the common hero story and turns it on its head. Instead of inspiring customer loyalty by singling out an external enemy, it pulls out the stops and focuses on an internal foe – our laziness. Nike advertising knows just how often we battle with our lazy side. Every morning when that alarm goes off and it’s still totally dark outside, the battle begins. When we choose how long to run, the battle continues. This is how Nike marketing uses emotional marketing to inspire customer loyalty. They know that while some people may identify with an external foe, all people identify with an internal one. Nike brand strategy is excellent on this end because not only is the internal foe someone we can all hate, the hero is the viewer! In one way or another, we are all the hero of our own story, and Nike marketing has long since identified that feeling – and used it to inspire timeless customer loyalty.
Conclusion:
The emotional strategy for a brand varies from company to company. In order to effectively utilize cognitive dissonance, marketers must make a two-pronged advertising campaign of building a specific brand identity and the attachment of emotions with the brand. For a marketer, the main objective of the branding is to position the product effectively so to create a passion amongst consumers of possessing it. The quality of product and its importance does not matter much when it is compared to the extent of emotions created in the minds of customers of purchasing it. This study attempts to unveil the concept of emotional branding acknowledging the fact that, a newly arising concept can be best understood and expanded through the examination of its antecedents and outcomes. It also says Emotional branding and cognitive dissonance are the two closely related fields which are continuously evolving in the marketing science. Our paper also explained that Emotional Branding can be better made more affected if it is assisted with proper and suitable advertising campaign. By touching the right emotional chords, the marketer not only will succeed in positioning the brands successfully, but can also reduce the level of dissonance in the form of post purchase behaviour. The present paper is about the effective utilization of emotional branding by the marketers in reducing the cognitive dissonance that arises as a result of post purchase. This study can work as solid base for further researches as it provide few new inspirations besides the topic which has been mentioned and can act as an initiator for the future development of this concept. Moreover, future studies may address the gap in the literature regarding the empirical investigation of the outcomes of emotional branding such as; 1. Brand loyalty, 2. Purchase and re-purchase intentions, 3. Brand attitude formation, 4. Brand equity, and 5. affective commitment enriched with a comprehensive theoretical background.
Reference:


