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BRANDING APPROACHES

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Oftenbranding just the company's name which is promoted. This approach has not worked as well for General Motors, which recently overhauled how its corporate brand relates to the product brands. Exactly how the company name relates to product and services names is known as brand architecture. Decisions about company names and product names and their relationship depends on more than a dozen strategic considerations.

In this case a strong brand name (or company name) is made the vehicle for a range of products (for example, Mercedes-Benz or Black & Decker) or a range of subsidiary brands (such as Cadbury Dairy Milk, Cadbury Flake or Cadbury Fingers in the United States).

Individual branding: each brand has a separate name (such as Seven-Up, Kool-Aid or Nivea Sun (Beiersdorf)), which may compete against other brands from the same company (for example, Persil, Omo, Surf and Lynx are all owned by Unilever).

Attitude branding and iconic brands: attitude branding is the choice to represent a larger feeling, which is not necessarily connected with the product or consumption of the product at all. Marketing labeled as attitude branding include that of Nike, Starbucks, The Body Shop, Safeway, and Apple Inc..

Iconic brands are defined as having aspects that contribute to consumer's self-expression and personal identity. Brands whose value to consumers comes primarily from having identity value are said to be "identity brands." Some of these brands have such a strong identity that they become more or less cultural icons which makes them "iconic brands." Examples are: Apple, Nike and Harley Davidson. Many iconic brands include almost ritual-like behaviour in purchasing or consuming the products.

There are four key elements to creating iconic brands:

1. "Necessary conditions" - The performance of the product must at least be acceptable, preferably with a reputation of having good quality.
2. "Myth-making" - A meaningful storytelling fabricated by cultural insiders. These must be seen as legitimate and respected by consumers for stories to be accepted.
3. "Cultural contradictions" - Some kind of mismatch between prevailing ideology and emergent undercurrents in society. In other words a difference with the way consumers are and how they wish they were.
4. "The cultural brand management process" - Actively engaging in the myth-making process in making sure the brand maintains its position as an icon.

"No-brand" branding: recently a number of companies have successfully pursued "no-brand" strategies by creating packaging that imitates generic brand simplicity. Examples include the Japanese company Muji, which means "No label" in English, and the Florida company No-Ad Sunscreen. Although there is a distinct Muji brand, Muji products are not branded. This no-brand strategy means that little is spent on advertisement or classical marketing and Muji's success is attributed to the word-of-mouth, a simple shopping experience and the anti-brand movement. "No brand" branding may be construed as a type of branding as the product is made conspicuous through the absence of a brand name.

Derived brands: in this case the supplier of a key component, used by a number of suppliers of the end-product, may wish to guarantee its own position by promoting that component as a brand in its own right. The most frequently quoted example is Intel, which positions itself in the PC market with the slogan (and sticker) "Intel Inside".

Brand extension and brand dilution: the existing strong brand name can be used as a vehicle for new or modified products; for example, many fashion and designer companies extended brands into fragrances, shoes and accessories, home textile, home decor, luggage, (sun-) glasses, furniture, hotels, etc.Mars extended its brand to ice cream, Caterpillar to shoes and watches, Michelin to a restaurant guide, Adidas and Puma to personal hygiene. Dunlop extended its brand from tires to other rubber products such as shoes, golf balls, tennis racquets and adhesives.

There is a difference between brand extension and line extension. A line extension is when a current brand name is used to enter a new market segment in the existing product class, with new varieties or flavors or sizes. When Coca-Cola launched "Diet Coke" and "Cherry Coke" they stayed within the originating product category: non-alcoholic carbonated beverages. Procter & Gamble (P&G) did likewise extending its strong lines (such as Fairy Soap) into neighboring products (Fairy Liquid and Fairy Automatic) within the same category, dish washing detergents.

The risk of over-extension is brand dilution where the brand looses its brand associations with a market segment, product area, or quality, price or cachet.

Multi-brands: alternatively, in a market that is fragmented amongst a number of brands a supplier can choose deliberately to launch totally new brands in apparent competition with its own existing strong brand (and often with identical product characteristics); simply to soak up some of the share of the market which will in any case go to minor brands. The rationale is that having 3 out of 12 brands in such a market will give a greater overall share than having 1 out of 10 (even if much of the share of these new brands is taken from the existing one). In its most extreme manifestation, a supplier pioneering a new market which it believes will be particularly attractive may choose immediately to launch a second brand in competition with its first, in order to pre-empt others entering the market.

Individual brand names naturally allow greater flexibility by permitting a variety of different products, of differing quality, to be sold without confusing the consumer's perception of what business the company is in or diluting higher quality products.

Cannibalization is a particular problem of a "multibrand" approach, in which the new brand takes business away from an established one which the organization also owns. This may be acceptable (indeed to be expected) if there is a net gain overall. Alternatively, it may be the price the organization is willing to pay for shifting its position in the market; the new product being one stage in this process.

Private labels: with the emergence of strong retailers, private label brands, also called own brands, or store brands, also emerged as a major factor in the marketplace. Where the retailer has a particularly strong identity (such as Marks & Spencer in the UK clothing sector) this "own brand" may be able to compete against even the strongest brand leaders, and may outperform those products that are not otherwise strongly branded.

Crowdsourcing branding: these are brands that are created by the people for the business, which is opposite to the traditional method where the business create a brand. This type of method minimizes the risk of brand failure, since the people that might reject the brand in the traditional method are the ones who are participating in the branding process.

Nation Branding (Place Branding & Public diplomacy): Nation branding is a field of theory and practice which aims to measure, build and manage the reputation of countries (closely related to place branding). Some approaches applied, such as an increasing importance on the symbolic value of products, have led countries to emphasise their distinctive characteristics. The branding and image of a nation-state "and the successful transference of this image to its exports - is just as important as what they actually produce and sell."