

Brand and Brand Strategies

Yakup Durmaz¹, Hatice Vildan Yaşar²

¹Hasan Kalyoncu University, Department of Marketing, Turkey, E-mail: yakupdu@hotmail.com

²PhD Student, Hasan Kalyoncu University, Turkey, E-mail: hvildanyasar@hotmail.com

Correspondence: Yakup Durmaz, Assist. Prof. Dr., Hasan Kalyoncu University, Department of Marketing, Turkey. E-mail: yakupdu@hotmail.com

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Abstract

With the help of globalized technology, information, and fund, barriers for the product, service production and consuming have been removed in anywhere. Nowadays, it is so normal that any kind of industry shows up in anywhere of the world in a short time. No longer is producing products or services not the work of just some economies. The topic of the nowadays modern economic order is branding rather than production capability. In that context, branding is one of the most important indicators of the competitive capacity nowadays.

One of the most important assets of the businesses is the brand value. So many businesses take the advantage of that value in their new products and services. So brand strategies are highly important issues. Well-designed strategies are going to provide advantages for the businesses against their competitor in the compelling competition environment.

In this study, brand and brand strategies are examined.

Keywords: brand, brand creation process, brand strategies

1. Introduction

Businesses want their products and services to be requested on a regular basis and they aim to extend their sales reserves. So they struggle for bringing their brand into the forefront. Because of that reason, the brand can be qualified as the indicator of businesses' power and value. No matter which method is used in the brand value specification, a broad scanning is necessary. Brand strategies come up in the context of institution strategies in the business according to their advantages and consumers.

Expedition world globalization, in other saying, decreasing day by day, and as the result of much more producing society formation and in the free market conditions increasing product range, businesses start to spend much more money and effort for branding. Branding is creating an identity for the business or product and giving some characteristic features of almost all people have to that identity.

In this study brand and brand strategies are examined theoretically.

2. Brand and Brand Strategies

2.1 The Concept of Brand

In parallel with the globalization and rapidly progress of technology and communication network, a business in a part of the world can be rival to another business that is in another part of the world. In that situation, the brand concept that is identified in the center of differentiation value has gained importance. Until today, so many definitions are made for the brand (Demir; 2006).

The definition made by American Marketing Association is like that: "Brand is a name, a term, sign, symbol or design which aims to define product and services of a seller or selling group and to differentiate itself from its competitors" (Çakır, 2001).

A brand can be identified as all kinds of signs that can be enlarged, issuable with a press, representable. It can be also person names, words, shapes, letters, numbers, the form of the products and some original shapes on the package which provide distinguish of product and services among concerns. The brand is a name, concept, word, symbol, layout, picture or their combinations which serve for definition, introduction, distinguishing and differentiation of product and services of a seller or selling group (İslamoğlu, 2000).

The brand is a name, term, word, symbol, design, sign, shape, color or various combinations of these factors for defining, introducing product and services of a group of seller or producer. It is also for distinguishing and differentiating product and services of a group of seller or producer from their competitors (Tek, 1999).

New discoveries and unique designs constitute and form the products. However, for presenting and selling these products, it is required an introduction tool that will distinguish this product from others. These distinguishing marks, which are important for the businesses, are brands. For the brands, we can say that they are the "fingerprint" of the businesses. The brand is the distinguishing mark which represents all assets of the business. All backgrounds of the business; factory land, factory building, machines etc., are only represented by that concept. Brand shows the source of the product to the customer and it becomes a quality mark and advertisement tool. It provides a free selection opportunity of desired product to the customer (<http://apb.kobiline.com>).

In article of 5 of the law no. 4128 of the legislative decree no. 556 of KHK, brand is defined and signs that can be used as the brand are stated. According to that brand includes all kind of signs that can be enlarged, issuable and expressed with person names, especially words, shape, letter, number and shape of the productions by providing distribution among products and services of a concern (Çamlıbel & Taylan, 2001).

In the most general sense, brand is a term (such as Nestle, Motorola), symbol or shape (such as panther of Puma, star of Mercedes), name (such as Selpak or paper tissue?) or combinations of these which distinguish the product from the competitors; create an identity to product and services produced by businesses and released to market by intermediary or intermediaries (Duran, 2009).

Powerful brands come onto the market with high added value products and like a magician, they establish the expected result on consumers. No doubt that this is their branding success or in other words thanks to their successful brand creation process. In recent times, brand as one of the most popular trend is defined by different occupational groups as well (Elitok, 2003).

According to the guru of the brand theory David A. Aaker's idea, the brand is a distinguishing name or symbol which defines services of products, a seller or selling group and differentiate (such as logo, trademark, package design) this product and services from their competitors. Due to this brand shows the source of the product and protect both the customer and producer from their competitors which try to provide determinative products (<http://library.cu.edu.tr>).

According to Turkish Trademark Law, the signs which are used for distinguishing every kind of commodity constructed and evinced in agriculture, craft, and industry, produced or offered in trade. This commodity and the one positioned on the package and goal-oriented signs, which are used when the commodity is not placed, are called brand (<http://library.cu.edu.tr>).

The main reason of having a brand is providing differentiation among the products. In English, the origin of word 'branding' comes from the cattle stigmatization by peasantry on posture and this word refers to that origin. The main concept during the branding process perceived as stigmatization program as well, differentiates the produced product in the mind of the consumer. Branding the produced product just as cattle stigmatization in the farm, provide differentiation from other products even if it is so similar to the others. In modern, branding products and brand name usage have shown towards to end of the 19. Century (Uztuğ, 2003).

Because the brand creates an identity to the product or service, distinguish it from similar products by establishing customers or consumer, competition potentially evolves among brands. Some brands are much more familiar, known and are respected by the customers. Thereby, brands on the market differ in terms of expressed "value" to the customer as well (Kavas, 2004).



Figure 1. Fundamental Principles of Brand (Pringle & Thompson, 2005).

-Advantages dependent on logic and performance

-Advantages dependent on emotional and image

-Social and Ethical Values

There are the fundamental principles for the power of brand: advantages dependent on logic and performance and the advantages dependent on emotional and image (Figure 1) (Pringle & Thompson, 2005). In the new era which starts with the businesses' social problems interests, ethical issues cared during production process have added to those factors. These include so many social responsibility topics from non-polluting production process practices to avoidance from child employment. For these, we can say social and ethical factors. Which factor is going to be chosen by the business is related to the marketing strategies.

2.1.1 Historical Development of Brand

Products branding and brand name usage show up in 19. Century. For example; some American brand names, which are in existence today, have started to be used in advertising in the 1890s (Uztuğ, 2003).

As the result of Industrial Revolution, producer-consumer relationships have changed and this change causes a wholesaler dominant market structure. In parallel with increasing population and urbanization, demands have increased as well. Demand increase and developing transportation have changed the market structures and extend them. These developments cause a rise in the number of retail dealers (Orkide, 2006). Although an important rise has occurred in production, communication between producer and the consumer is not established. Because distribution chains were in wholesalers' and retail dealer's hand, producers did not have independent action opportunities. Producers were selling generic products, making too little effort for communication and advertisement; they submit to the low wage claims of the wholesalers. For some businesses, making a decision of whether they will brand their products or not is so easy. Maybe they do not have necessary opportunities or they do not want to brand because they don't believe the necessity of branding. One reason for not branding is that some businesses' products cannot be distinguished from another one in some business lines. For example, crop, pulses products and iron, coal etc. Physical structures of some products do not allow branding. For example, raw vegetables and fruits. However, today especially in developed countries, such products are branded by packaging and placing the brands on packages. Another reason of not branding is underqualified products. Businesses don't brand such products (Oktay, 1998).

In time, increasing consumer demand and technological developments provide investment opportunities to producers for establishing a wide range of production structure. Producers which gain strength with the help of that term have the chance of "by-pass" the wholesaler's power over the advertisement. It is stated that advertisement has an important function in terms of perpetuating demands and dispossessing market dynamics from wholesalers. In that process, producers offer the best opportunities for products distribution to the wholesalers. However, that situation has caused a congestion of profits. Some producers decide to differentiate their products with the aim of exceeding that profit congestion. To be able to protect their products, producers get patents by giving names to products and communicate with their consumers without wholesalers and retailers via advertisement. These efforts of the producers can be thought as the rise of brand creation concept. USA originated some brands such as Levi's (1873), Maxwell House (1873), Budweiser (1876), Coca-Cola (1886), Campell's Soup (1893) can be given as an example of brands created in that evolution and development process and still in existence (Orkide, 2006).

2.1.2 Importance of Brand

The brand is the most important part of a business because brand provides a distribution of that business' products from others easily. The brand is a helper factor because while it helps for creating specific images for the business' products, it helps not being imitated by the other businesses as well (Ar, 2007).

In today's knowledge-based economies, intangible assets are much more important than concrete assets seen in financial statements of the businesses. In the Industrial Age that ends towards the end of the 19. Century, a company ruled when it had estimable property or active factory and equipment in share market. Those companies were able to produce the most estimable autos, machines, chemicals and food products of the world. However, today few precious companies such as Microsoft focus their profit expectations on their produced products. It is a matter of even producing their selling products abroad for those companies because most of the big-time companies active in the service industry and their main wealth are established on knowledge, brand names, customers and their relationships with their partners. And the brand is the most important intangible asset of a company (Doyle, 2003).

In fact, the brand can be thought as obligatory equipment for the works of a business. When the company brand manager create a brand and the brand value has increased with the help of a brand, indeed it means that total value of the company increase (Tenekecioğlu & Ersoy, 1999).

2.1.2.1 Importance of Brand in terms of Businesses

It is obvious that a powerful brand means high sale with a high market share and profit. Nowadays, the brand has gained a characteristic of being marketable value in financial context. Another important point is consumer loyalty creation by superior brands. Brand loyalty creation, especially in messy media atmosphere and compelling competition conditions has gained a vital importance for the companies. Also, while a powerful brand provides a platform for the new products of the company, it increases the endurance and brand power towards to competitive attacks as well. To be able to reach those benefits of the brand, the fundamental point is creating a powerful brand (Uztuğ, 2003).

According to Ar, advantages of the brand in terms of businesses are ranged as the following (Ar, 2007):

- Helps to promotion and effective in demand creation
- Provides business and brand image building
- Brand increases sale and the competitive capacity of the company
- A brand which has become successful in the market previously makes easier adding new products to the product line.
- A prospering brand in the market follows a different price strategy from its competitors
- A prospering brand provides giving a different price to that product from current price by intermediary firms
- After the brand has been registered, it gains a legal position and it provides a legal assurance to the brand owner.

2.1.2.2 Importance of Brand in terms of Countries

Selling the brand better than the product is the fastest way of getting wealth especially for developing countries. Brand creation means creating institutional prosperity. Countries which are rich in terms of the brand have the buoyant economy, labor and a deep stock market (Anholt, 2004).

Brands, beyond their power in the country, have the power of being important factors which create international images of countries. In world markets, the economic and cultural power of the countries originates from their institutions which have international branded product, services. In the competitive environment, institutions which specify world standards in product, service and information production take the place of countries. Their most powerful and the most effective weapons are their name and brands which have long-established values and they are formed within years. Success and persistence in the economic and cultural world are based on delicately built brands. In the source of long-lived businesses' power, there are much more nonvisible assets than visible assets. Building nonvisible assets take a long time and these are brands. Powerful brands of the world, such as classics, are the ones which manage to protect their functionality by racing against the time. These brands know how they are going to renew themselves in continuity without getting change. Being a brand for long years such as coming from a well-established family is awarded with more recognition and much more beloved by the society (Winkler, 2004:69).

2.1.2.3 Importance of Brand in terms of Marketing

An important part of the marketing activity is based on recognition of the product by the consumers. In other words, noticeability feature of the product among other homogenous products shows up as brand concept (Türk, 2004:58)

The topic whether a product is going to be the brand or not or what kind of brand is going to be chosen is a big question for business managers. Because after the product gets the brand, the brand has become an inseparable part of the product and it has a directive effect on policies about the product and sale increasing efforts. Businesses make an effort for branding their products because of these three reasons (Türk, 2004:58):

1. **Physical Specification:** One by one physical specification of the products that the company has is important for a product line, transportation, and stocking, rating system, labeling and taking inventories of various products.
2. **Legal Protection:** Putting all values such as brand given to product or products via trade mark under protection.
3. **Being the Basis of Marketing Efforts:** Brand is a way to identify the product and thus it can be practiced a meaningful marketing program.

2.2 Brand Creation Process

Because the brand has an expression with monetary magnitude, manager's decisions related to brands have great importance. Therefore, the manager should consider so many factors in the brand creation process. With this purpose, it is necessary to do market and competition analysis, market segmentation, positioning, product development,

communication, distribution, brand sustainability, brand construction and brand controlling activities (Borça, 2008).

We can say that brand gives a commitment to serving specific features, services, and benefits. Consumers respond to all these efforts of businesses according to their perceptions. If the responses are positive and continue extensionally, it can be said that that brand is successful. Brand creation process steps can be summarized as the followings (Sevindik, 2007):

- Branding
- Brand Name Selection
- Brand Strategy Decisions
- Brand Positioning

2.2.1 Branding Decision

The first important decision which is about the product and should be given by businesses is putting them on the market by branding or without branding. Because the main goal of branding providing a distribution of the product from the others, business which is in the process of branding decision should evaluate branding by taking into consideration its benefits and costs. Today world of marketing is getting crowded, becoming popular is getting harder. Therefore, businesses should spend much more money and concentrate on marketing activities more than earlier (Ateş, 2006).

Businesses which make a branding decision can search a name for their brand with the help of various marketing studies. Some of them are sensation tests used for measure the images that come into mind, learning tests used with the aim of measure the ease of articulation of the name, memory tests used to measure quality of name in terms of remembering and preference tests used to measure which names are preferred (Kotler, 1976).

2.2.2 Brand Name Selection

The brand name is the communicable part of the brand. Because the brand name represents the brand in the view of the consumer, the name should be determined by considering intended population and without missing product features (Küçük, 2005:18). Besides, it should be considered that brand name is the most difficult and costly element to change among other elements.

Brand name should have the following features (Kırdar, 2001);

- It should have provisions
- Should be meaningful and easy to understand
- Should be relevant to the product
- Should be practicable for marketing works
- Should recall positive concepts such as honesty, beauty etc.
- Should have flexibility to the adaptation of changes about the product

2.2.3 Brand Strategy Selection

Brand strategy has great importance for brand promotion and brand value creation because brand strategy directly affects the brand value and success of all of the strategies which are about promotional activities, distribution, pricing, and product named as marketing mix.

When we examine the world's most powerful and most wealthy businesses, we can see the importance of branding clearly. When the brand values have been discussed, it is seen that the first ten most expensive brands of the world by the year 2015 are the followings (Etçioğlu, 2008):

Apple – 128.303 Millar \$

Samsung Group - 81.716 Millar \$

Google – 76.683 Millar \$

Microsoft – 67.060 Millar \$

Verizon – 59.843 Millar \$

AT&T – 58.820 Millar \$

Amazon.com – 56.124 Millar \$

GE – 48.019 Millar \$

China Mobile – 47.916 Millar \$

Walmart – 46.737 Millar \$9

2.2.4 Brand Positioning

Brand positioning is a process that specifies where the products or services are going to be placed in the target market that the business is going to be active. Namely, positioning is distinguishing the brand from their opponents (Bradley, 1995:549). Brand positioning from the view of the consumer is a perception style about the product created by a consumer group known as the target market in a specific market. (Blythe, 2001). If the brand has no position, then this brand cannot create a value in the minds of their consumers (Elitok, 2003).

Actually, brand positioning concept is so important for the businesses. Therefore, this concept should be understood very well. Businesses which produce same or similar products can distinguish their brand in the view of consumers by positioning them in consumers' minds with different types. Properly positioned brands in the target market may have such benefits (Aaker, 1996):

- Based on the brand positioning success, the price of the product is determined by product value, not by the market conditions. Thus, the business can have a control for the price of product and business can specify the first price.

- A good brand positioning can make the brand a very well-known one and so consumers' forgetting may get harder.

- The brand can create a good effect in the eyes of the customer according to its services. Therefore, it can be provided to be preferred by the others as well

- Brand positioning may be helpful to marketing directors for producing new and proper marketing strategies for the brand.

2.3 Brand Strategies

Brand strategies are the basis of long termed brand plans developed with the aim of financial value calculation, legal protection, creating a brand loyalty, positioning, and well-known brand effect. Brand strategies come up in the direction of all brands in the business integrated institution strategies (Kırdar, 2001). To be able to be successful, brand strategies should be supported with other marketing strategies. Businesses which want to use the brand as an active marketing variable primarily should solve their policy issues such as national brand usage; do an activity in international areas, using their producer brand etc. (Mucuk, 2001).

There are four fundamental brand strategies for the selection of brand managers for their products (İTO, 2006):

- New Branding
- Line Extension
- Multiple Branding
- Brand Extension

2.3.1 New Brand Strategy

When a company develops product in the new category (Küçük, 2005);

- If it disapproves any brand name for its new product,
- Decide some characteristic that depends on the brand name harm to brand or restricts the brand,
- Decide to add new values related to name, and then it starts to search for the new name. This strategy is called new brand strategy.

The new brand, in comparison with other strategy decisions, is the riskiest and the most expensive option. For the businesses which design their strategy according to whole market classification, selecting a brand for each product is more appropriate. The most important advantage of this strategy is that business has the chance of competing with its competitors with less quality and price without harming its brand image in the market that it enters with a free brand name (Pride and Ferrell, 2000: 305). Another benefit is increasing the effectiveness of the business by causing internal competition among other brands which are in the structure of that business. However, it also should be considered that one name for each product will cause a cost and difficulties because every new brand means a different identity which should be created for the business.

2.3.2 Line Extension Strategy

Line extension strategy is frequently used strategy by businesses recently. Main reasons for preferring this strategy are the followings:

- Increasing brand and marketing effectiveness by creating innovations and discrepancy

- Raising profitability by attracting potential consumers to business products via brand
- Creating a powerful brand image
- Raising the added value provided by the brand to the highest rank.

In addition to these, this strategy provides more advantages in terms of the fund than the other strategies. However, line extension strategy which magnifying the brand volumetrically may increase the costs and cause the decrease in focusing on the brand. Line extension strategy is adding some new characteristics to the product category below the same brand name and without changing the core of the brand. Pepsi Cola's diet coke production can be the example of that (Ar, 2007). For the success of line extension strategy, the brand core should be applicable and brand characteristics should be similar to the other products.

In that strategy, a product in an existing category put on the market with the same name but different forms, colors, contents, packages and such additional qualities. And too much density can decrease the focus to the brand. However, with the help of line extension strategy, business extends its consumer capacity, provides variety in the market, strengthens its brand, provides renewals and obstruct to being passed by the competitors (ITO, 2006).

2.3.3 Multiple Brand Strategy

Multiple brand strategy is developing so many products in the same product category (Pride, 2000:305). Business uses that method with the aim of address different departments of the market. For example, in Turkey Koç Holding's brands, Arçelik and Demirdöküm is the example of multiple brand strategy.

That strategy can take shape with developing a different brand for different products or using an individual brand name with its name (such as Nestle Damak). A business that uses many brand names gain broader places in the shelves and leaves fewer places to its competitors. Also, a business which uses the multiple brand strategy takes the advantage of different market sections and reaches to great market saturation. Generally, practices in the automotive industry are in the direction of that strategy (Mucuk, 2001).

2.3.4 Brand Extension Strategy

Brand extension strategy is the effort of using the successful brand name for launching the newly produced products. For example; introducing Pinar Et (Meat) and Pinar Un (Flavor) after the Pinar Süt (Milk) (Tek, 1997). Brand extension is seen as the source of strategic expansion in terms of businesses. The main reason of that idea is increasing the possibility of success. It helps by using the existing brand name while producing new product categories or sections, reducing the advertising expenses and helps to easy adaptation of consumers.

Brand extension can be presented as both giving the brand name to a different category product (horizontal brand extension) and giving the brand name to the product that is in the same category but has different price and quality (vertical brand extension) (Ekdi, 2005). For example; mobile phone production by Sony is the example of horizontal brand extension while new model autos of Nissan are the examples of vertical brand extension.

The practice of brand extension strategy decreases the failure factors. Also, brand extension strengthens the major brand image and support advertising works. However, incorrect brand extensions can cause costly damages, so brand extension made without taking measures may affect the brand value negatively (Ar, 2007). Therefore, it should be paid attention to be new products as long distance as possible from the major brand and not early starting to brand extension because there are also uncertainties about the positioning of the new product that has the high margin of error as well.

Brand extension strategy provides savings in a new product category, transferring the brand value to the new product and advertising costs for the new product so brand extension strategy, in comparison with other strategies, provides both expenditure advantage and advantage for creating a powerful brand image. For example, a customer goes to the market and has dealings. When this customer goes to food aisle and sees an unknown brand name on many products may not buy that product at once but the brand is stored in the mind of the customer (Öztürk, 2007). Accordingly, we can say that brand extension has an important function in creating awareness.

When a possible failure is been experienced in the new product category, the brand can be damaged by it as a whole. A possible failure can cause failure in the positive ideas of the customer, decline in stock value of the brand and lose in the value of principal capital (Özgül, 2001). So, if the accord between major brand and extension has become better, the success of extension becomes as better as possible.

The primary aim of brand related strategies should make the brand well-known than its competitor brands and known brand should be preferred as well. Because leading brands are frequently remembered ones. For effective brand creation leadership creation, brand managers and marketing managers should practice brand strategies successfully (Kırdar, 2001:244). As the result of marketing investments on the brand, set of values occur over it. And as the result of branding strategies, brand value has occurred. Today, businesses cannot be afloat with just as tangible assets such as raw material,

fund and machines so even its measurement and reporting is so hard to work with the concept of accounting, businesses should give necessary importance for intangible assets such as consumer loyalty, trademark value, and creativity.

3. Conclusion

Nowadays businesses have great difficulties in their assets' maintenance in the compelling competitive environment. In that context, they are searching to gain competition superiority towards their competitors. The brand is the most important point for taking place in the field. Besides its legal protection for producers towards to counterfeits, it helps to consumers in terms of bringing prestige, protection, underwritings and maintenance opportunities.

The brand is a sort of insurance for the consumers. Because business and brand image have great importance in product selling, the perception of the customer and how the consumer positions that product in their minds, brand strategies have vital importance. Brand strategies, according to benefits presented by the product and target consumers, primarily should be considered in parallel with the institution strategies which all brands in the business have been integrated into them. Brand strategies should be supported with a promise which will state and express the brand in the best way, advertising strategies and marketing communications activities.

Intended strategies about the brand should make the product much more well-known one than the other competing brands. In addition to consumers' present buying tendency, their future tendency should be considered and brand loyalty should be increased.

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