Contemporary Issues in Brand Management

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The 12 weeks of training are coming to an end. Alex, Code and Sam have become friends because of their shared interest in physical activities but have become even closer through discussion and engagement around branding. These are three different people with three different businesses and three different brand management responsibilities. They feel accomplished in the locker room, proud of what they have done and curious about what comes next. They know they have improved their physical health and realise that it is not the end but merely the beginning. They need to remain active to stay in shape. Other things compete for their attention and distract them. It is essential to stick to guiding principles. They acknowledge the sacrifices they have made to get this far, to improve their physical health and appearance and build their brands. Though it is time to go their separate ways, they promise to keep in touch and support each other through the process. Sam and Code agree to continue to support Alex's charity organisation in getting donors. Code also plans to partner with Sam in order to take the drink brand global. Brand manage-

ment requires a lot of engagement with competitors and customers. As seen with these three friends, though their time together may be over, there is still an ongoing bond and commitment to support each other. Brands needs to recognise that even when they may be well established, it is still important to recognise the connections and commitments to their stakeholders.

Overview

The business environment is changing, and likewise, consumer behaviours are changing. Brands are becoming aware of the consumers' power to shape the brand through engagement. It has, therefore, become critical for brands to be aware of the contemporary issues around brand management, especially the prospects of social media, sustainable consumption and ethical practices. To manage these issues, there is a growing demand for a Chief Brand Officer (CBO), someone with the overall responsibility of managing the brand, someone who

oversees the ethical collection of data about their customer base and prospective customers, a crisis manager who understands the implications of online brand mentions and many other metrics, someone who can take responsibility and think on the spot. In this chapter we discuss how these contemporary issues can be relative, depending on the brand, the market, the customer base and even the country; however, to streamline our discussion, we have identified key stakeholders and the various relationships which shape these issues.

? Key Question

With changing consumer behaviour and business practices, how can a brand remain commercially relevant and viable?

Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this chapter, you will be able to

- explain the role of Chief Brand Officer;
- describe brand customer engagement;
- describe brand-competition engagement;
- describe brand-customer-community engagement; and
- describe contemporary issues in brand management.

12.1 Introduction

Brand management is a holistic process that aims to add value to a brand, which could be a person, an event, an organisation or an object. Managing a global brand across a whole range of countries differs from managing a global charitable organisation; however, the basic management principles are the same. Efforts are needed to understand the customers and to shape the brand's offering to meet their needs, and the customer experience is very relevant.

As illustrated in Google Ngram Viewer, (Fig. 12.1) since around 1980, there has been an increase in the use of the word "branding." People are starting to understand and recognise the concept of branding and its implications. Academic research on brand management has accelerated dramatically as both practitioners and academics recognise the value-added benefit of branding and its management (Brexendorf et al. 2014). The branding landscape is continually changing as consumers' expectations change; brands are competing for consumers' attention and there are massive amounts of data to understand the consumers. Likewise, the socio and political climate is changing (Fig. 12.1).

All these changes are issues for brand management. These are concerns for brand manag-

Fig. 12.1 Google Ngram Viewer showing the growing use of the word "branding." (*Source*: Google Ngram Viewer)
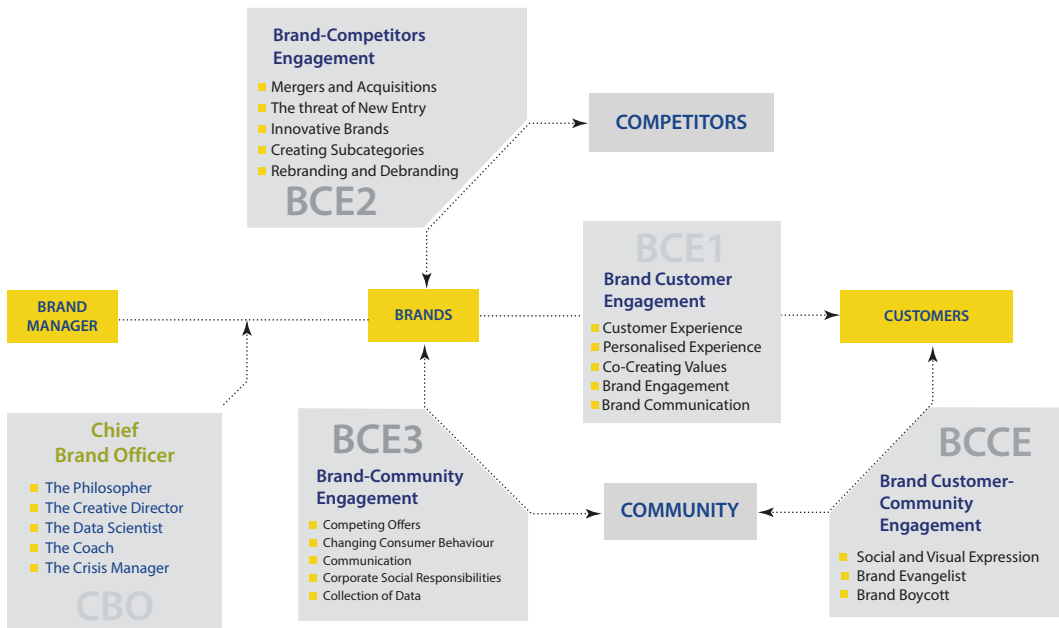
■ **Fig. 12.2**   Contemporary issues in brand management. (*Source*: Author)

ers in this day and age. These issues are not just limited to global brands. Smaller brands, charity brands and even individual brands have challenges that inhibit their brand management. These can be issues that keep managers awake and on their toes. Issues they need to respond to so their brand equity does not erode. Managers need to be aware of these issues and put measures in place to address them.

There are some key stakeholders shaping these issues. Figure ■ 12.2 below illustrates the relationship between the brand and the customer. This is the basic form of engagement, recognising that the brand needs to engage with the customers, to understand their challenges and address them accordingly. Also, there is a relationship between the brand and its competitors, which shapes innovation and the need to be different. There is also the brand and community engagement which encompasses those who may not be the customers but who are taking note of the brand's actions. These are citizens of a country seeing how the brand is destroying their water bodies, causing oil spillage as they search for crude oil for their business. The brand-consumer-community engagement also exists as a show of social and visual expression. When a brand

has customers that are using it to make a statement in their community, that can lead to more brand evangelists championing their brand and on the other extreme, people may boycott the brand. The role of a brand manager in the form of the Chief Brand Officer (CBO) cannot be underestimated. The officer has a key role in managing the brand.

12.2 Chief Brand Officer

The Chief Brand Officer (CBO) is one of the executive-level managers within a company, often referred to as c-suite executives (others may include Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Marketing Officer (CMO), Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Chief Information Officer (CIO)). The CBO is a relatively new executive-level position being created by brands to address many contemporary issues they are facing. The CBO is a board member, working with the CMO to craft and deliver a message that shapes the perception of the brand. In 2011, Citigroup appointed Dermot Boden as CBO, saddled with the responsibility of developing the firm's brand and assuming leadership of its

brand strategy. In the same year, McDonald's Corp. appointed Kevin Newell to be its new global CBO. Bozoma Saint John served as CBO at Uber until June 2018.

While this c-suite role usually applies to big brands, it may be relevant for smaller brands where the brand owner can take the additional responsibility as the CBO, and it could even be the marketing manager doing the same work as a CBO without the title. Jones (2017) notes that the CBO role is changing dramatically and suggests a new way of thinking about the new position. He suggests that the role is a combination of philosopher, coach, scientist and creative director. Importantly, an additional role has been added to this mix—crisis manager. For example, if a recording of a staff member comes to light that could negatively affect the company's reputation, things can quickly go viral on social media. This was the case of a Starbucks manager in the United States who called the police on two black men for trespassing as they waited for their friend and this led to a national outcry. In these crisis situations, the brand manager must be able to respond effectively to protect the brand.

12.3 Brand Customer Engagement

12.3.1 Customer Experience

Brands need to be mindful of how they enhance the customer experience. This is essential for building loyalty and repeated sales (Hollebeck 2011b). It could be the way the flight crew attends to a passenger or the promptness of responding to a query on social media. Brand managers need to be aware of increasing customer expectations, and therefore, every effort must be put in place to respond to their needs as soon as possible.

12.3.2 Personalised Experience

Beyond the customer experience is the personalised experience. This is not just treating all the customers the same but personalising the experience (Dwivedi et al. 2019). The will

enable the customers to feel a sense of attachment and connection with the brands. This could be a personalised birthday card, personalised sales offer or incentives that shows the brands KNOWS the customer—something which is not generic but specialised and perhaps customised.

12.3.3 Co-Creating Values

This engagement allows the co-creation of values. Bringing the customers on board to share ideas that shape the direction of the brands is also necessary. The customers feel valued and appreciated as part of the brands. This could involve user-generated content for marketing purposes and engagement—allowing customers to show how they are unboxing the new product, using hashtags to share how they are using the product and co-creating future product and line extensions (Akman et al. 2019).

12.3.4 Brand Engagement

Customer experience, personalised experience and co-creation can all be described as a form of brand engagement. Consumer brand engagement is defined as "the level of a customer's cognitive, emotional and behavioural investment in specific brand interactions" (Hollebeek 2011a, b). Even with the customers' wiliness to invest in the engagement, the brand needs to go beyond social media to engage with customers, making an effort to understand the customers and meet their growing needs, recommending different products and suggesting alternatives (Gökerik et al. 2018). Brands strive to be human and build a loyal fan base through engagement. Ultimately, this should form a closer relationship, which ensures customer repeat patronage, retention and loyalty through affecting the customer experience (Verhoef et al. 2010).

12.3.5 Brand Communication

Customers must be made aware of the brand's offering. Brand awareness, considered as the

"strength of a brand's presence in the consumers' mind" (Aaker, 1996, p. 10), can be enhanced through brand communications. This is not limited to brand-created and user-generated social media communication (Schivinski and Dabrowski 2015), but also advertising, corporate social responsibility and supporting social causes. Consumers want to see brands take a stance and communicate their actions.

12.4   Brand-Community Engagement

12.4.1 Competing Offers

This is a brand recognising that their competitors can offer the community (and their prospective customers) a more competitive offer and consumers are bound to consider these offers (Woodside 2012). It is the CBO's role to understand how to shape the brand message and convince these communities they have a better deal. Imagine Ola competing with Uber when it arrived in London. Though Uber may have been well established in London, Ola as a new brand needed to present a competing offer to attract passengers. How would you expect Uber to respond?

12.4.2 Changing Consumer Behaviour

Changing consumer behaviour also presents a contemporary issue for brands. For example, as there is an increase in awareness about fast fashion and its implications, consumers are changing how they shop, and this will affect some retail stores. As the world strives towards less smoking, and people are encouraged to quit, there are challenges for cigarette and tobacco manufacturing companies, which need to develop other viable ways to justify and sustain their business operations. Also, with the rise of vegetarianism and veganism, there are challenges for McDonald's, KFC and Burger King which sell meat products and it is not surprising to see them explore vegetarian products, even as there is growing competition from meatless burgers makers like Meatless Farm, the fastest-growing plant-based meat brand in the United Kingdom. This changing behaviour challenges brand managers to see how, and if it is possible, to position their brand for growth.

Case Study 12.1: Waitrose Partnership with Deliveroo

Changing consumer behaviour has increased the drive for online shopping, as many people are very mindful of their time, they buy their things online to save time, possibly with next day delivery. The coronavirus pandemic has further created a "new normal" where people are discouraged from going to the shop to physically buy things and again, they fall back on online shopping. This has no doubt affected retail and neighbourhood stores as there is reduced customer footfall.

To meet changing consumer behaviour and the quest for more efficient and fast delivery, Waitrose Rapid delivers groceries to selected areas in the United Kingdom within 2 hours. Waitrose is an upmarket UK supermarket chain with a huge reputation for quality products and customer service. It was named best supermarket in the United Kingdom in 2020. Customers appreciate the store appearance, quality of own-label and fresh products, staff availability and staff helpfulness.

While recognising that the pandemic has further changed the way consumers buy groceries, Waitrose partnered with Deliveroo to deliver more than 500 of its food and drink products to customers within 30 minutes in selected areas. Deliveroo is an online food delivery company based in London which allows customers to order food from restaurants and track the delivery on their phone. Deliveroo had its own challenges amidst the coronavirus pan-

demic as well, because restaurants were not open and the riders had limited deliveries.

This partnership, albeit a 12-week trial, is a response to contemporary issues in brand management. There is an association between two strong brands, complementing each other to remain viable businesses and enhance customers' experience. Considering Waitrose has limited physical stores in certain areas of the country and the impact of the coronavirus, many customers can now have access to the brand and its products through the partnership with the delivery company. Likewise, Deliveroo, known for delivering food from restaurants has expanded their business to deliver groceries.

For both brands this is a new business channel. Firstly, it is a brand partnership, a form of brand extension for a reputable retail brand and a disruptor delivery brand. Second, the partnership is a response to changing con-

sumer behaviour (less time shopping, fast delivery and access to products from top brands). Third, this partnership addresses competition from other groceries stores and especially Amazon Fresh, Amazon's food service. Brands must adapt, innovate and respond to contemporary issues to remain viable and sustainable.

Reflective Questions

- Why do you think this partnership was made on a 12-week trial basis?
- Would you anticipate any failure in this brand partnership?
- Which brand do you think will benefit more from this partnership?
- Waitrose already has a two-hour home delivery service, Waitrose Rapid; why do you think they needed to partner with another firm to provide a shorter delivery time?

12.4.3 Communication

Communication still plays an essential role in engaging with prospective customers. Influencer marketing has a significant role in this communication process. Brand managers must be aware of the role of social media and the impact it can have on a brand (Mogaji et al. 2016). Social media can be used to communicate with consumers, and social media has empowered consumers as they engage with brands. Consumers can instantly make their concerns known about brands and share them on their social media platform. Consumers can ask brands questions, and if the brands do not give appropriate answers, consumers can take their business away. (See the example in ▶ Chap. 7 of Dave Carroll (Case study 7.1), who recorded a song to complain about United Airlines.)

Brands also use social media to communicate with other brands. This is often popular with Twitter, whereby brands humorously

reply to other brands. This cross-brand banter keeps social media abuzz. There are examples from Delhi Airport and their engagement with IndiGo, India's largest low-cost carrier and with Air India. BMW, Mercedes Benz and Audi joined in Valentine mood cross-brand banter. Likewise, social media can be used to launch a negative attack on a brand (see the Yorkshire Tea Twitter experience in ▶ Chap. 7 (Case study 7.2)). The brand manager must be able to deal with positive as well as negative situations, such as in the case of the coronavirus and Corona beer. Google searches for 'Corona beer virus' surge as people confuse the beer with the virus. This pose a contemporary issue for the brand as they had to respond and communicate with their stakeholders. Bariso (2020) noted that Constellation Brands, who owns the Corona beer brand had to fight back with some data of its own, separating myth from reality. Brand managers must recognise the gravity of the situation and act accordingly.

12.4.4 Corporate Social Responsibility

12.4.4.1 Diversity and Inclusion

Brand management must also consider society's diversity as a present-day issue, as seen with the racially insensitive Pepsi and the Dove advertisements, which were subsequently removed. It is essential to understand diversity and how it can be used to a brand's advantage. Maltesers created an advertisement using Braille to engage with blind people, and a silent advertisement using only sign language to connect with people who are deaf. Mogaji (2016) notes there are opportunities for advertisers to integrate disabled individuals into their marketing campaigns, not just as a business strategy for targeted markets but as individuals in a diversified community. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people could also be featured in advertisements for products and services that couples usually buy together, for example, holidays and mortgages. To further demonstrate inclusivity, brands are changing their logo, modifying it with the LGBT rainbow colour for Pride Week. Brands need to make sure their team is diverse, there is equal pay (no gender pay gap) and everyone is treated equally.

12.4.4.2 Social Injustice

Being "woke" and taking a stance on social issues is essential (Wilson 2020), as seen with the Gillette advertisement on toxic masculinity that backfired. People were questioning why the razor brand is getting involved in the #MeToo debate and consumers did not hesitate to share their disappointment. It is crucial for brands to recognise the differences in society and to be mindful of the methods they use to engage with consumers. With the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, brands need to take a stance. Many brands have released statements and made commitments. Nike announced a $40 million commitment over the next 4 years to support the Black community in the United States.

While donations and public solidarity are essential as they build and enhance the brand reputation and importantly many black-led institutions and charity organisations benefit from these donations, it is necessary not to neglect the interior branding of these organisations. The interior branding here means what these organisations are doing behind closed doors. How many opportunities are being provided to black people? How are the black staff working in an organisation being treated? How many black people are in leadership positions in these companies? It is not just about making a statement and donating but ensuring that the public announcement is congruent with the private action.
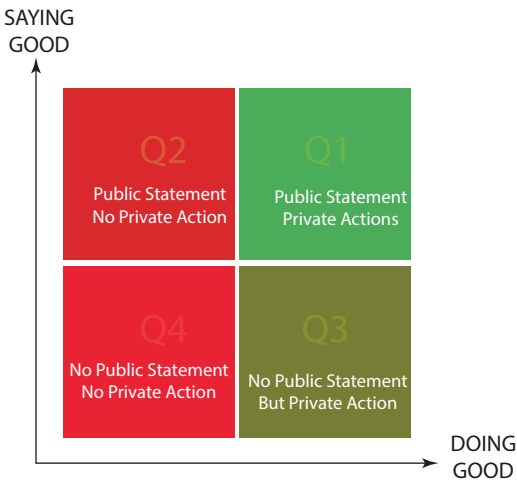
It is not surprising to see many brands being called out for not acting and showing solidarity (Dahir and Onibada 2020). People expect the brands to "walk the talk," not just make a statement but act. A recent survey by Polling USA showed that 65% of people think that brands that released BLM statements are doing that to retain customers while 15% thinks these brands care (Polling USA 2020). This could suggest tokenistic comments on diversity & equality without taking responsibility to improve their practice.

12.4.4.3 The Brand Goodness Quadrant

This issue around the public communication of brands and their private actions in times of increasing awareness of social injustices has led to the classification of different brands. This classification is presented in the brand goodness quadrant illustrated in ◘ Fig. 12.3. This figure is a 2 × 2 quadrant that intersects public statement-making, as a form of "saying good," a kind of advertising, PR and marketing communications and private action, as an indication of "doing good," dismantling systemic racism and inequality, addressing lack of representation and creating access to opportunities.

Public Statement with Private Actions

These are the brands that show they are good, take positive actions and do good things. They have made a statement in solidarity, they have publicly donated money, but importantly, the internal process of the organisation gives opportunities for all people irrespective of their gender, race or age. Their actions provide

SAYING
GOOD

| Q2 Public Statement No Private Action | Q1 Public Statement Private Actions |
| Q4 No Public Statement No Private Action | Q3 No Public Statement But Private Action |

DOING
GOOD

■ **Fig. 12.3** The brand goodness quadrant. (*Source*: Author)

opportunities to overcome social injustices, they protect the environment and they certainly do good. These brands are not just making a statement, but they are taking private actions to support their statement. This is what is expected from all brands. It can be considered as the pinnacle of brand goodness.

Public Statement with No Private Action

These are brands which are all talk but no action. They want to join the bandwagon, releasing solidarity statements saying we care for the environment; we care for staff and customers, but they do not have actions to show that support. They do not have black people in leadership, their staff and suppliers are mistreated; they are destroying the Amazon rainforest in search of palm oil and causing oil spillage in the Niger Delta. Though they have made a statement, they may have even donated money, that does not excuse them from their responsibilities to their staff, customers and suppliers. Many brands will be in this quadrant, but hopefully they will start taking actions to move into the goodness quadrant—saying good and doing good.

No Public Statement But Private Action

The fact that a brand has not released a statement does not mean they are not doing good privately. Though customers and other stake-

holders may be expecting their brands to state solidarity and may feel disappointed if the brands are not displaying any, at the end of the day, they will come to appreciate the fact that their brands are doing good to support their staff, suppliers and the environment. These brands might claim they do not want to blow their own trumpet or better still, they want their actions to speak. It is, however, essential for a brand to take a stand as in this contemporary world, customers are expecting the brands to at least "say something."

No Public Statement with No Private Action

This part of the quadrant is not for any brand that wants to succeed. These are brands that have not made any statement, and they do not have any private actions to indicate any form of solidarity. These are bad brands. They have not even made a statement to save their faces, and they have not publicly declared solidarity. These brands are showing that the environment does not matter, their suppliers can use child labour, and their staff can be mistreated. It is, however, essential for these brands to take responsibility, to evaluate their practices and reflect on their actions. Perhaps before making any statement, they should improve on these actions and enhance the wellbeing of their staff and start trying to be good. Not taking a stand may make people think the brand stands for something they do not stand for. It is important that such brands explicitly make their stand known to their brand users.

It is possible to see brands move around these quadrants, and many brands may decide to take responsibility and improve on their business practices to match what they say with what they do. It will not be surprising also to see brands that get lackadaisical in their actions and lose focus. Good brands can do bad (Aaker et al. 2004). Brands must make a conscious effort to focus on their brand values and promises (Roper et al. 2018). To recognise what the customers expect of them. Importantly, brands should also have ways to stay within the doing good and saying good quadrant.

No brand name has been listed for any of the quadrants. The brands know where they

belong, the customers and other stakeholders know about the actions of these brands. They know about the staff that have been denied career opportunities because of the colour of their skin; customers that have experienced systematic racism and suppliers that have been unfairly treated. All these stakeholders can place the brands in the right quadrant. This understanding is, however, meant to be a challenge for the brands, to evaluate and reflect their practices, to see what they have done and perhaps how best to improve their actions. It is not just about donating but also taking actions in private to show the brand truly cares.

12.4.5 Collection of Data

As consumers engage with brands across different digital media, they leave digital footprints. These footprints allow the brands to have a better understanding of the consumers. When collecting data for analysis, a brand should place its focus on a few key priorities, which include finding qualified leads, using opt-in permissions and ensuring ease of use for the brand and its customers. Vast amounts of data are being generated due to the increased use of mobile devices, cloud computing and the internet. This has contributed to the significant development of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which offers opportunities to enhance campaign creation, planning, targeting and evaluation (Mogaji et al. 2020a, b, c). The CBO must be able to take responsibility for the ethical collection of data for marketing purposes, and likewise, these data should be stored appropriately. In 2015, data from nearly 157,000 TalkTalk customers were accessed after a cyber-attack on the telecommunications company's website. This harmed the brand reputation. The company was fined a record £400,000 for poor website security, and it had to compensate customers.

12.5 Brand-Competitors Engagement

12.5.1 Mergers and Acquisitions

As competition intensifies and consumer needs are changing, brands need to be aware of mergers and acquisitions as a means of survival and maintaining market leadership. Kraft once tried to buy Unilever, but Unilever rebuffed the attempt. O2 and Virgin Media planned to merge creating a new UK telecoms giant which can rival BT and Sky. Telkom Kenya had to opt for another strategic direction as their merger with Airtel Kenya was called off. Brand managers must be aware of these prospects, and possible actions to either accept offers in order to ensure their financial sustainability or to go out and acquire another brand. This may, however, not be as easy as anticipated. Imagine Google buying Apple, this might not be possible for many reasons including regulatory reasons, monopoly and consumers' interest.

12.5.2 The Threat of New Entry

The threat of new entries into the market also poses a challenge for managers. Many companies may think they can provide innovative service compared to what is available now. Currently, consumers are averaging around seven visits to a bank branch per year. This decline and the growth prospects of technology have shifted banking to smartphones and websites. There are challengers and neobanks are coming on board to disrupt the industry. These banks do not need any physical branches as financial services are provided through app platforms on mobiles and tablets. Managers are aware of these threats and trying to withstand them. The traditional brands recognise the presence and prospects of the challenger banks, and they are extending their

brands and creating digital and mobile-only banks. Meem is a standalone digital banking offering from Gulf International Bank (GIB), launched in Bahrain in spring 2018. Israeli Bank Leumi launched its mobile-only banking subsidiary, Pepper, in June 2017. B was launched in 2016 as a digital bank from Clydesdale Bank and Yorkshire Bank in the United Kingdom. BNP Paribas is the parent brand of HelloBank. Simplii is the digital-only arm of CIBC, offering a full suite of financial products to the consumer market. While the parent brands are trying to develop the traditional bank brands, alongside this they are also developing challenger bank brands to meet consumer demand.

12.5.3 Innovative Brands

Innovating the brand is necessary. With billions of dollars in research and development, brands are staking a massive amount of investment in developing innovative products and services. In 2016, GM spent $581 million to acquire Cruise Automation to gain software expertise that is critical to the development of autonomous driving systems and, eventually, driverless vehicles. Honda Motor Co was to partner with Waymo, the self-driving car unit of Alphabet Inc. to jointly develop autonomous cars but walked out of the deal to partner General Motors Co.'s GM Cruise LLC unit instead, choosing a familiar partner over a tech giant. Technology has disrupted many industries, and existing brands with these industries must respond to this disruption or else they may become obsolete.

12.5.4 Creating Sub-Categories

Another contemporary issue for brands relates to sub-categories. Strategic questions need to be answered. Such as, how far can a brand be stretched before diluting the brand? How many sub-categories can you have within a brand in order to meet the demands of the customers? Consider Freddo Caramel from Mondelez—Mondelez > Cadbury > Dairy Milk > Freddo > Freddo Caramel. Aaker

(2014) notes that the need to keep creating sub-categories requires "substantial or transformational innovation and a new ability to manage the perceptions. Customers should not be confused with these sub-categories even as brands are trying to meet customers' needs."

In addition, there are diffusion brands, also known as "second lines" from fashion brands like Armani Exchange (AX) for Armani, CK for Calvin Klein and Pink for Paul Smith (Phau and Cheong 2009). Luxury brands willing to attract the general masses are also creating *masstige* brands which stand for mass prestige (Paul 2018), which are brands that have the mass prestige, appealing and affordable, but also a prestigious value. They have been described as luxury brands for the masses and an accessible super premium (Silverstein and Fiske 2003). An example is Tag Heuer Formula 1 costing £1300 while Tag Heuer Link costs £3950. Tag Heuer can still be considered a luxury brand, but they have created a subcategory which is more affordable and may appeal to the masses.

12.5.5 Rebranding and Debranding

Rebranding and debranding are becoming a competitive stance as brands react to actions from their competitors. Many brands are rebranding to appear current and up to date. Mogaji (2018) observed the trends in UK universities to change their logos and rebrand. This is becoming a norm within the sector. Brand managers are questioning the currency of their brand identity, asking if it is time to rebrand and appear fresh to the customers. The decision to rebrand may also be triggered after a merger or acquisition.

Also, there are growing trends from established brands to debrand (not demerge). Debranding is when brands make a conscious effort to reduce the creative elements on their brand identity. This debranding is often about removing their name from the logo and just leaving the icon, taking into consideration that the brand identity is so strong, people can recognise the icon without the name. The first known example of debranding was by Nike in

1995. MasterCard debranded in 2019, being assured that the MasterCard symbol could now stand on its own as the consumer and commercial landscape continued to evolve. Toygar (2019) notes that the whole concept is to make the company appear more personal, more forward-thinking and less corporate but it may not be suitable for all brands, especially those that do not have a certain degree of existing brand equity. Other brands that have debranded are Starbucks, Coca-Cola and McDonald's.

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Case Study 12.2: Apple Versus Pear

Apple is one of the most valuable brands in the world. In August 2020, it became the first United States' company worth more than $2 trillion but this has not stopped the brand from protecting its territories from competitors, both big and small.

Prepear is a mobile application (app) available on Google Play Store and Apple App Store for recipe and meal planning. The app is owned by Super Healthy Kids, Inc. which is a small business in the United States made up of a team of five staff. On January 26, 2017, Super Healthy Kids, Inc. filed an application to register the logo for Prepear. As a final step before approval, the patent office published their application in late 2019 for any objection and this got the attention of Apple and they raised an objection on the last day of the window to oppose the trademark application.

In March 2020, Apple filed a motion to the United States Patent and Trademark Office before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board to oppose the trademarking of Prepear's logo. Apple filed for opposition on two grounds. Firstly, Prepear's logo is likely to cause confusion, mistake or to deceive and secondly, Prepear's is a dilution of a famous mark. Apple claims the "minimalistic fruit design" of Prepear's pear logo and its "right-angled leaf … readily calls to mind Apple's famous Apple Logo and creates a similar commercial impression." Apple has a logo which is described as a "design of an apple with a bite removed'" while Prepear has a silhouette of a pear with an attached leaf. A layperson could probably see the difference between an apple and a pear, but Apple feels differently about this and have taken this legal route to protect their brand.

Brand managers need to be aware of these contemporary issues such as protecting a brand, being mindful of competition, recognising the threat of new entrants and innovative brands. Apple noted that for years, they have used the Apple marks in connection with goods and services in the fields of medicine, healthcare and general wellness and perhaps because Prepear is considered a wellbeing app, it is likely to affect their business. Apple may have been known for technology but obviously they have extended into healthcare. How well can they protect their brands in the sector they have extended into?

Considering Prepear is a small company and may not have the resources to take up a legal case with a big brand like Apple, they created a petition and invited people to sign, with the possibility that it will force Apple to change their mind and withdraw the opposition. As at August 2020, the petition has been signed by over 230,000 people. There have been a lot of press coverage about this lawsuit and the overall sentiment is that Apple is abusing its position and bullying small firms.

Reflective Questions
- Do you think Apple should have opposed the logo of a small company, which may not be directly competing with them?
- What are the benefits of trademarking and registering a brand identity?
- How much resemblance would you expect between logos to justify a lawsuit? Is it because they both use fruits or because they both have a leaf?
- How would the negative press and comments affect the Apple brands?
- Beyond the petition, what would you advise Prepear to do? Should they change their logo or battle it out with Apple?

12.6 Brand Customer-Community Engagement

12.6.1 Social and Visual Expression

Some people use a brand just because the brand stands as a representation of their values and what they believe in. Some people choose not to eat beef burgers because they are vegetarian and that means they are exercising their choice with a burger which aligns with their habits/beliefs. There are also many people that use an iPhone instead of an Android phone because they want to feel cool. This simply means there are perceptions of functional and emotional benefits by customers when they consume brands (Lin et al. 2017). The social and visual expression also recognises the growing use of computer-generated models being used in advertising. As consumer are using a brand because they have been influencers by a real social media celebrity, there are contemporary issues in further understanding the growing trends of these computer–generated models. Shudu, Margot and Zhi do not exist but they are computer-generated models for French fashion house Balmain. They are described as the Balmain's Virtual Army (Balmain 2020). As a contemporary issue, this raise questions on how do consumers perceive brands using computer–generated models, is it a true social and visual expression, does it share same attachment like real human social media influencers and what are the prospects for human influencers in an already saturated and competitive market. Brands needs to recognise how these benefits influence the purchase behavioural response of the consumers. This should encourage more brand engagement initiatives and building the brand community.

12.6.2 Brand Evangelist

This visual and social expression can also lead to brand evangelism where there are consumers who believe in the brand. These users feel "proud" to be associated with the brand and can share it with their friends and network.

Brand evangelists can engage on social media, generate valuable content, and it builds more awareness for the brands. They are more than brand influencers who might have been paid to share the experience. Brands need to recognise and work with these brand evangelists to encourage such evangelism. Brand managers need to focus on building trust and enhancing the brand positioning, which will resonate with the consumers to make brand evangelists in the marketplace (D'Lima and Srivastava 2019). The brand must ensure a form of congruence between individuals and their favourite brands to convert them to a loyal customer and brand evangelist (Nandy and Sondhi 2020).

12.6.3 Brand Boycott

On the extreme of this brand engagement is the boycott. This is when customers are no longer willing to use the product, often because of a scandal, an action of the staff or their negative impact on the environment. The boycott often relates to religious beliefs (Dekhil et al. 2017), consumer rights as well as economic development (Chiu 2016). Some big brands decided to boycott Facebook, refusing to place an advertisement on the social media network because of racism and hate speech on the platform. There has been a call to boycott Oreo biscuit and other brands of Mondelez because the company decided to close its American factories and move production to Mexico. There are many reasons for asking for a boycott; often, these boycotts are called for on social media, using a hashtag to raise awareness and affect the sales and the value of the brands. The brand manager must, as a crisis manager, recognise these issues and identify any brewing calls for boycott. These boycotts are not only limited to big global brands; smaller brands can be boycotted as well.

12.7 Conclusion

This chapter brings us to the end of this introduction to brand management. Brand management is a holistic process that aims to add

value to a brand, which could be a person, an event, an organisation or an object. Branding is an engaging and pertinent topic; it is a broad topic, and there are still many more areas to be covered. In the previous chapters, we explored the basic concepts of brand, branding and brand management. Ethics is a fundamental feature of brand management.

In this concluding chapter, we have described the role of a Chief Brand Officer as the officer responsible for the management of the brand process, curating the appealing message, shaping perception and importantly, managing crises. The CBO is also responsible for dealing with the contemporary issues in brand management, recognising the brand, customer, competitor and the community as stakeholders. Understanding these relationships and managing them is the key role of the CBO.

While many of the concepts and examples we have seen may be relevant for global brands, this knowledge and understanding can be applied to smaller brands as well, be it charity, sales, retail or humans. Brands need to be managed. A conscious effort has been made to identify and discuss different concepts and to show the relationship between each concept from the first chapter to the last.

It has been a pleasure taking this journey with you, and I wish you all the best.

Remember, you are a brand. Go manage your brand!

12

Key points
- Chief Brand Officer is an emerging c-suite role. This is not limited to global brands.
- Smaller brands need to have a Chief Brand Officer, who could also be the founder or marketing manager depending on the type of brand.
- A brand should effectively engage with their customers, personalise their experience and co-create value.
- Brand-community engagement is key, often the outward-facing activities to showcase the goodness of the brand.

- Brands need to consider their stance on the brand goodness quadrant.
- Brand-competitor engagement is critical. Brands should consider mergers or acquisitions, to remain innovative while recognising the threat of new entrants.
- Brand evangelists are needed, and they should be recognised to share their experience, and at the other extreme, brand managers need to be aware of the threat of boycotts and what can cause them.

▶ Student Activities
1. How would you describe contemporary issues in brand management?
2. What do you think are the key challenges for brand managers today?
3. What are the key issues or what are the implications of consumer engagement with brands on social media?
4. Do you think GAFAM or the "Big Five"— Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple and Microsoft—will exist in 10 years?
5. How would you expect a brand to engage with the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement?
6. Should a brand solve their diversity problem by employing computer generated images and virtual avatar models in lieu of real people of colour?
7. What are the implications of brand boycotts? Do you think they work? Why should a brand manager be concerned?
8. As you prepare for a career in the branding industry, how do you think you will manage your brand? ◀

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