1

Introduction: Current State and Future Directions for Research on Corporate Brand Management

John M.T. Balmer, Shaun M. Powell, Joachim Kernstock and Tim Oliver Brexendorf

1.1   Corporate brands in context

1.1.1   Preamble

In this opening section, entitled "Corporate brands in context," the nature of corporate brands and the fundamentals of corporate brand management are succinctly delineated.

   This section is principally informed by the foundational literature relating to corporate brands and is primarily informed by Balmer's scholarship on the territory. As such, this introductory segment details the nature, management, and supra-level approaches (*vis-à-vis* corporate marketing and identity-based views of the firm approaches). As such, this represents the orthodox marketing approach to the domain which is somewhat different from the heterodox co-creation perspective which will be discussed later in this chapter. The approach adopted in this section aims to guide the novice to the corporate brand field by addressing a number of fundamental questions associated with corporate brands and their management.

1.1.2   Why have corporate brands come of age?

Today, the widespread effusion of the strategic significance and worth of corporate brands belie the fact that the corporate brand notion is a comparatively recent one. Even after its formal introduction (Balmer, 1995) the corporate brand idea was widely disregarded by scholars and practitioners for many years. For this reason, the historiography of the field is often misunderstood with the references of some academic articles giving the impression that it was introduced by scholars of

organisational behaviour (and not marketing) in the early 2000s: see Balmer (2010a).

In part, this book challenges this dubious/contentious narrative which disregards the pre-2001 literature; marginalises the marketing approach to the territory; and sidelines the contributions made by British scholars and practitioners. As such, the publication of this compendium on corporate brands is both felicitous and propitious coming as it does in the wake of the twentieth anniversary of the formal introduction of the corporate brand notion in 1995 (Balmer, 1995).

Whereas in the mid-1990s the corporate brand notion was seen as a somewhat avant-garde, outlandish, if not decidedly revolutionary notion, through the advocacy of Balmer (1995, 2001a) and via the writing of marketing consultants such as Nicholas Ind (1997, 1998), the corporate brand idea gradually entered mainstream marketing and management thought. Seemingly, it first took hold in the UK, then spread to Continental Europe and to Commonwealth nations, and finally was recognised in North America. Presciently, Balmer (1995, 1998) foretold that corporate brands would emerge as an important and mainstream concern: it is patently obvious that his prophecy has come to fruition.

We should not, perhaps, be surprised how, today, the corporate brand notion is widely viewed as a vital, ubiquitous, and moreover, as a global, strategic imperative. Unquestionably, it is a mainstream concern for corporate marketing scholars. Uncontestably, too, the corporate brand notion has a firm hold within the senior management vernacular and mind-set.

Arguably, the notion that organisations, whether large or small, can be brand-like is on reflection, quite an ancient one. As John Balmer explains in his lectures, the very roots of the brand notion are associated with entities/organisations rather than with products. Thus in ancient China, Persia, and Rome family-owned businesses (bakers, potters, wine-merchants) would, via their names and marques, become associated with levels of quality and thus these marks and names were not only identifiers but were, moreover, marques of assurance. The product brand notion took hold much later on and came to prominence in the aftermaths of both the first industrial revolution in Britain and the second in the USA. As Balmer often muses, some of the world's oldest greatest brands are corporate brands viz: the Catholic Church, the British monarchy; Oxford University are cases in point.

As this book attests, many academic articles have been written on the area and the *Journal of Brand Management* (JBM) has published notable, cornerstone, articles on the field.

Today, it is common for postgraduate students to take PhDs in corporate brand management; for master's students to pursue degrees on corporate brand/corporate marketing management and to take electives on corporate brand theory and practice as part of MSc degrees in marketing; and for final year undergraduates to read corporate branding as part of their bachelor's degrees. Academics are appointed to chairs, readerships, and lectureships in corporate brand management (John M.T. Balmer was appointed to the first chair in corporate brand management in the early 2000s at Bradford University School of Management). For their part, the corporate brand concept has become a facet of the CEO and senior management strategic deliberations and company reports are peppered with references to the corporate brand. Notably, too, there is a whole field of consultancy devoted to the area. There can be few organisations that, in recent years, have not retained a corporate brand consultant.

1.1.3   When was the corporate brand notion formally introduced and what was said?

Formally introduced by Balmer (1995), in his *Journal of General Management* (JGM) "*Corporate branding and Connoisseurship*" article (to reiterate an earlier point) it took another 10 years or so before the concept became a mainstream academic, management, and consultancy concern.

In this cornerstone article, Balmer (1995) noted the importance of corporate brands and, moreover, advanced the idea that corporate brand management was a senior management imperative. Moreover, in this article he articulated some of the key fundamentals and differentials of corporate brands. Importantly and significantly, he asserted that:

- corporate identity (an organisation's distinctive and differentiating attributes) provided the foundations for a corporate brand;
- a corporate brand required organisation-wide commitment from employees;
- corporate brand required not only a customer but, moreover, a stakeholder focus;

- corporate brand management was multidisciplinary in scope; and
- corporate brand management warranted ongoing responsibility from senior managers – especially the CEO.

Other notable scholars evident during this period include Ind (1997) and Hatch & Schultz (2001). Ind (1997) noted a corporate brand is far more than a name or logo but was concerned with an organisation's corporate values. Hatch & Shultz (2001) asserted that a corporate brand was fundamentally concerned with mission, culture, and image. Curiously, however, the importance of the corporate brand "promise"; the significance of corporate identity and, the foundational marketing articles on corporate brands are studiously ignored.

1.1.4   What is the corporate brand covenant?

The corporate brand covenant is an important – arguably critical – dimension of the corporate brand notion. In essence, a corporate brand represents a powerful covenant (an informal contract often having a religious like quality akin to religious covenant) between a firm and its stakeholders (Balmer & Gray, 2003). The covenant is based on customers' and other stakeholders' expectations associated with the corporate brand name and or marque. A corporate brand covenant represents a quasi bi-lateral contract between the corporate brand and stakeholders. Whilst this covenant is not legally binding it can all the same be powerful and a failure to live up to the covenant can be damaging for organisations associated with corporate brand.

1.1.5   Why are corporate brand and corporate identity bi-lateral relationships essential?

According to Balmer (1995, 2001a, 2008, 2012a, 2012b) and Balmer & Gray (2003) understanding, the bi-lateral relationships between corporate identities and corporate brands is fundamental to the corporate brand notion. Six years after the formal introduction of the corporate brand notion (Balmer, 1995) Balmer re-emphasised in his second *Journal of General Management* article "The three virtues and seven deadly sins of corporate brand management" the importance of corporate identity apropos the corporate brand. He stated:

A corporate brand involves the conscious decision by senior management to distil and make known the attributes of the organisation's identity in the form of a clearly defined branding proposition (Balmer, 2001a; p. 281).

For instance, it is a corporate identity which informs a corporate brand. When a corporate brand is established a corporate identity is critical since it is the corporate identity (an organisation's distinctive and differentiated attributes, behaviours, and performances) which delivers the corporate brand covenant (Balmer, 2012a).

The above might be usefully elaborated on further. According to Balmer (2008) a corporate brand needs to be viewed as a distinct identity type. Thus, although derived from a corporate identity, once established, a corporate brand is separable and divisible from the originator corporate identity (Balmer, 2008). As Balmer (2012a) noted, a corporate brand covenant can be bought, sold, or borrowed. Invariably only the marque and name is bought, sold, or borrowed: BMW only bought the Rolls Royce car brand but did not acquire the factory or the staff. Thus, a corporate brand is a marque of assurance but the realisation of this assurance is dependent on an organisation's corporate identity (what a corporate makes, does, and how it behaves) delivering the brand promise (Balmer, 2012a, 2012b). The real value of a corporate brand is derived from its emotional ownership on the part of customers and other stakeholders in contrast to legal ownership which is vested in the corporation (Balmer, 2012a, 2012b).

1.1.6   In what ways do corporate brand differ from product brands?

One significant way of comprehending the importance of corporate brands/corporate brand management is to consider how these differ from traditional, product-focused, brand management. These differences were initially detailed in Balmer (2001a) and were further expanded in Balmer and Gray (2003). They can be delineated as follows:

- Whereas a brand manager has responsibility for a product brand, *a corporate brand manager is the Chief Executive.*
- Whereas the functional responsibility for product brands falls within the remit of the marketing directorate, *the functional responsibility for corporate brands covers most/all departments.*
- Whereas general responsibility for product brands resides among marketing personnel, *general responsibility for corporate brands resides with all personnel.*
- Whereas the disciplinary roots for product brands is marketing, *a corporate brand has multidisciplinary roots.*

- Whereas a product brand can be formed over a short period (short gestation), *a corporate brand is formed over a medium to long period (long gestation).*
- Whereas a product brand has primarily a customer focus, *a corporate brand has a stakeholder focus.*
- Whereas a product brand's values are mainly contrived, *a corporate brand values need to be real ("authentic").*
- Whereas a product brand is primarily known via the marketing communications mix, *the corporate brand is known via the total corporate communications mix (primary communications – performance of products and services and organisational policies; secondary communications – controlled communications such as corporate brand advertising and corporate brand PR; tertiary communications – the effect of word of mouth, media commentary; and, today, discourses on the web and associated Internet and digital channels).*

1.1.7   Taking account of a corporate marketing philosophy, what is corporate brand alignment and why is it important?

The corporate brand notion is an integral part of a corporate marketing philosophy (Balmer 1998, 2009, 2011; Balmer & Greyser, 2006). The corporate marketing philosophy notes that organisations and also their attendant brands (corporate brands) – and not just products and services as per traditional marketing – can be highly powerful and meaningful vehicles for bi-lateral company – customer/stakeholder relationships. Unlike traditional marketing it takes account of the omni-temporal dimension (past, present, and future) of the organisation and in particular multi-generational company–stakeholder relationships; accords importance to corporate social responsibility; and is underpinned by a suite of critically important corporate-level constructs such as corporate identity, corporate brand, corporate communication, corporate image, and corporate reputation.

Significantly, the corporate brand alignment approach is, in part, informed by the above corporate marketing perspective and also the identity-based views of the firm perspective (Balmer, 2008). According to the corporate brand alignment methodology (apropos the ACID test of corporate brand management), the corporate brand covenant acts as a dynamic cornerstone and therefore other identities should be in meaningful alignment with it. These other identities being an organisation's corporate identity (actual identity); corporate reputation (conceived identity); senior management vision (desired identity); corporate

strategy (ideal identity); corporate communications (communicated identity) and an organisation's culture (cultural identity). For the original AC3ID test of corporate brand management of Balmer (which did not include cultural identity) see Balmer & Greyser (2003, p. 251). For the latest version of the AC4ID test of corporate brand management see Balmer (2012a, 2012b).

1.1.8   What is corporate brand orientation and how does it differ from brand orientation?

Of note, too, is the corporate brand orientation perspective. Formally introduced in 2013, the corporate brand orientation notion (Balmer, 2013) marshalled insights from the general brand orientation notion (Urde, 1999; Urde et al., 2013). The brand orientation concept which accords importance to brands per se rather than, specifically, to corporate brands: thus the need for the corporate brand orientation doctrine.

As such, corporate brand orientation recognises and accords a central role to corporate brands to institutions and to organisational life. Building on and adapting insights from the brand orientation canon and applying the aforementioned to corporate brands, a corporate brand orientation means corporate brands are key focus of corporate strategy; inform corporate culture; and require senior managers to accept the theory and practices of corporate brand management (Balmer, 2013). Significantly, Baumgarth (2010) noted the significance of the brand orientation notion in B2B contexts.

1.1.9   What are the imperatives of corporate brand management?

Custodianship, credibility, and calibration can be considered as three imperatives underpinning the management of corporate brands (Balmer, 2012a) which can be explained as follows:

1. The corporate brand custodianship imperative: the CEO and senior managers need to ensure the corporate brand maintenance and stewardship is *their* (a senior management) concern.
2. The corporate brand credibility imperative: it is the task of senior managers to ensure the corporate brand covenant (promise) is bona fide (credible).
3. The corporate brand calibration imperative: it is the task of senior managers to ensure the corporate brand covenant is meaningfully and dynamically calibrated (aligned) with the identities forming the corporate brand constellation (see the ACID test of corporate brand management discussed earlier).

1.2   Current state of research in corporate brand management

As this anthology partially documents, there has been an explosion of interest in the branding of organisations since the 1990s, as well as an increased importance bestowed to corporate brands by senior managers in industry and from strategy and marketing/branding consultancies. Universities have also pioneered innovative MBA/MSc electives or entire MSc courses in these areas as noted a decade ago by Powell et al. (2007). For instance, amongst others the Brunel Business School (UK), Bradford School of Management (UK), University of Essex (UK), University of St. Gallen (Switzerland), and University of Wollongong (Australia), currently represent some of the leading centres of learning in the area.

In the preceding section, it was noted how much of the pioneering work on the field dates back to the mid-1990s (for a further discussion of this point see Balmer, Brexendorf, & Kernstock (2013)) and articles on corporate brand management can be found in leading journals on strategic management, marketing, and communications, including *California Management Review, Harvard Business Review, European Journal of Marketing, International Studies of Management and Organization, Corporate Communications: An International Journal, Management Decision, The International Journal of Bank Marketing, Corporate Reputation Review*, and last but not least the JBM.

Significantly, articles relating to corporate brand management rank among the most downloaded in the JBM to date (Powell, 2014).

We note some of the characteristics of the corporate brand canon below:

1.2.1   Whilst the corporate branding literature is broad in scope it sometimes lacks clarity

For instance, some authors – along with some managers and some consultants – regard corporate identity and corporate brand as analogous terms, while many others fail to make a distinction between product brands and corporate brands. This collection helps to re-direct and re-focus on corporate brand management, what it is, what it is really about, and what it is for.

1.2.2   As the economic and commercial benefits of global corporate brands become more apparent, questions about the nature of corporate brand management have intensified.

Of course, the formative literature on the domain advanced the view that a strong corporate brand *is* a strategic issue and is a senior

management concern (Balmer, 1995, 2001a, 2012a). At the same time, the literature also acknowledges the role of the employee in corporate brand management, delivery, and maintenance, therefore, concluding that it is not only a marketing concern but of importance to strategists and HR managers: a point made by Balmer in his early work (Balmer, 1995, 2001a). Also see Chapter 6. In short, the foundational literature has asserted that corporate brands are multidisciplinary in scope (Balmer, 1995).

1.2.3   Co-creation: challenging corporate brand orthodoxy

Recent scholarship relating to brand co-creation, both internally and externally, has in some quarters been gaining wide currency (Campbell et al., 2014; Dean et al., 2016; Hatch & Schultz, 2010). The co-creation perspective somewhat eschews the top-down, strategic approach, to corporate brand management and argues that individuals and not organisations and their managers "create brands." For some, this perspective appears to challenge the role of senior management vis-à-vis corporate brand management and seemingly, disregards the importance of an entity's corporate identity in corporate brand formation, maintenance, and saliency.

From orthodox marketing and strategic perspectives, the notion that senior managers should regard themselves as observers rather than as initiators of the corporate brand covenant is likely, for some, to be contentious. Although some will conclude that the co-creation perspective needs to be taken into account by senior managers, the related issue of corporate governance may lead them to conclude that senior managers have no option other than to be prominent players in managing and maintaining the saliency of their firm's corporate brand. The arguments of Iglesias, Ind, and Alfaro in Chapter 9 may help the reader to co-create their own position.

What is clear to us is the question of the degree of involvement of stakeholders in the co-creation and development of a corporate brand remains open and inchoate – but may well be an important development.

1.2.4   Corporate brand management: challenged by many tasks

Indeed in our view Corporate Brand Management is challenged by many management tasks, which to highlight a few include: its contribution to stakeholder management; its relationship to corporate identity and values; its role in positioning; its relevance for corporate reputation including corporate responsibility; its constitution related to mission and vision of the company; its visibility in the corporate brand

architecture and definition of roles of different brands; its economic potential in mergers and acquisitions and its role in the post-merger integration process; its contribution to employer brand positioning; its relevance to attract new employees and engage the workforce; its role for word of mouth and customer promotion; its contribution to corporate communications and investor relations; its inspiration for steering the customer experience; its integrative force over all touchpoints; its ability to create brand alliances; and last but not least performance and measurement. The collection which follows in this book might help us to start to see through the fog (Balmer, 2001b).

1.2.5   Brand orientation approaches

The first access to orientate us in this fog might give a structure to different paths of research within our discipline. This orientation provides to the readers the symptomatic schools of thought, which are philosophical, strategic, marketing, behavioural, performance, omni brands, hybrid, cultural and finally corporate brand schools (Balmer, 2013; also see Chapter 10). These schools of thought deliver different frameworks and access to the topic of corporate brand management. And at the same time, they serve as source for future research. Research work has not finished in any of these schools, hence new questions in the field of corporate brand management could be related to one of these schools in almost all cases.

1.2.6   Addressing pressing issues apropos corporate brand management

The good news is that based on prior research we can at least propose answers to some issues on corporate brand management. For example, there are solutions to increase stakeholder involvement and how corporate brand management is able to contribute to it (see Chapter 8). Relations and interactions to specific stakeholder groups, such as employees, can be emphasised and targeted (see Chapter 6). Even corporate brand management itself can be managed as its own business model (see Chapter 4). In many cases the corporate brand management is the driving force behind the development of a definite customer experience throughout all customer touchpoints (see Chapter 7).

   To summarise the achievements of more than 20 years of research and practice so far, we can say that the global community of researchers and practitioners working in the field of corporate brand management, is now able to build on a stable of fundamental publications via the JBM and elsewhere as partially delineated in this chapter. In the next section we move to an outlook on future research avenues and areas.

1.3   Future directions of research in corporate brand management

It is not our intention in this chapter to attempt to summarise all published articles in the domain. Instead we here derive several implications for future research to further investigate the debate on corporate brand management.

So far we have determined that research on corporate brand management has gained a lot of attention over the past two decades and some future research directions have already been identified. Especially within the last five years, several articles have debated further research implications for corporate brand management (e.g., Abratt & Kleyn, 2012; Fetscherin & Usunier, 2012; Melewar et al., 2012). For example, Melewar et al. (2012) highlighted three fundamental tensions that include normative versus social constructionist approaches, organisational versus individual level research, and static versus dynamic perspectives.

We believe that various research directions show promising avenues in the field that may contribute to a deeper understanding. We are also convinced that in order to understand, study, and manage corporate brands there is a need to take a broad, holistic, and boundary-spanning view. Hence in the following text, we offer some additional research topics pertaining to corporate brand management which we think are important avenues for further research.

Holistic perspective of corporate brand management. There is little agreement in the literature of what a corporate brand constitutes. Research on corporate brand management suffers from highly fragmented perspectives (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012; Biraghi & Gambetti, 2015). Gyrd-Jones et al. (2013) argue that the complexity in corporate brand management especially results from its multidisciplinary roots, its broad scope, and the need to address multiple stakeholders.

Multidisciplinary roots. Corporate brand management as a field has its roots with notable contributions from the areas of marketing and brand management, strategy, organisational studies, corporate communication, human resource management, and public relations (Balmer, 1995, 2001a; Balmer & Greyser, 2006; Gyrd-Jones et al., 2013). The integration of perspectives and theories from these various research areas might help to enhance our understanding in the field. Converging multidisciplinary perspectives not only improves theory building but would also enhance the managerial impact of concepts for management (see also Kernstock and Brexendorf, 2009). Further research needs to integrate and link insights from these various areas.

Multiple stakeholders and perspectives. Corporate brand management includes considering all stakeholders of the corporation (Balmer, 1995, 2001a). Corporate brand management balances the relationship to stakeholders like shareholders and employees with the relationship to customers (Brexendorf and Kernstock, 2007). A corporate brand evokes for products or services which are endorsed or marketed with the corporate brand. As such, corporate brands can be perceived and interpreted from a variety of perspectives. We argue that further progress in corporate brand management research should therefore be driven by several perspectives: how different are the perspectives of internal and external stakeholders to the corporate brand? How do stakeholders perceive the corporate brand when they are part of different stakeholder groups (e.g., employee and customer, employee and shareholder, etc.)? *Considering the diversity of these various stakeholder groups: Is building and sustaining a coherent corporate brand possible*?

Managing from a co-creation perspective. In addition, and to revisit an earlier and perhaps contentious issue, discussions about brand co-creation (e.g., Brexendorf, Kernstock and Powell, 2014; Hatch & Schultz, 2010; Iglesias et al., 2013) add a further dimension. Also, Bickerton (2000) for example has discussed and proposed an initial framework combining a "top-down" organisational perspective versus a "bottom-up" customer market perspective for corporate branding. In summary, the question if a corporation should let stakeholders participate (and to what extend) in the creation and development of a corporate brand, currently remains open. There is little information about how management should handle the challenge of "open" brand management. Some groups of stakeholders might be interested in getting involved in creating the corporate brand where others are not interested. And if integrating stakeholders, which are the most important stakeholders? How far should they be integrated into the corporate brand development? Does open brand management require more leadership or will leadership be substituted by participation? Major global corporate brands have literally millions of stakeholders and there are likely to be a bewildering variety of corporate images held amongst stakeholders. How are these multiple co-creation perspectives to be accommodated and managed? What are the implications for corporate brand communications? What are the implications for other tasks of management? The co-creation perspective is just one of many interesting debates within the corporate brand management domain at present and in this collection.

The role of leadership in corporate brand management. As the emphasis on and the attendant economic benefits of corporate brands increase,

decisions about their management become of paramount importance, raising also the question of leadership in brand management. A strong corporate brand needs the involvement of the top management team as it requires the engagement of all employees. The corporate brand might help to align employees and organisational subcultures across functional and geographic boundaries. In our view further research in corporate brand management also needs to focus on the role of the top management in building and sustaining the corporate brand – internally and externally. Other questions like how a corporate brand can be created and managed most efficiently and successfully are important (Balmer et al., 2013).

The role of the corporate brand within the product brand portfolio. Brand growth on all levels requires a well-thought-out brand architecture in which every brand has a defined role and fits with goals of all other brands in the entire brand portfolio. Building and managing corporate brands need to consider the firms' brand architecture. Furthermore, strong corporate brands have an impact on extension of product brands (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Brexendorf & Keller, 2016; Keller & Aaker, 1998). The corporate brand takes in an embracing role, gives direction to the products, and underlines the synergy and clarity of the whole brand portfolio (Brexendorf & Keller, 2016). Firms need to manage the association transfer and potential trade-offs between the corporate brand (corporate-level) and their products and services brands (market- and product-level).

In line with this increased importance, many multi-national corporations like Unilever or Procter & Gamble have pruned their product brand portfolios in favour of supporting their corporate brands. Although managers have recognised that the corporate brand represents the products/services of the organisation and can been seen as a symbolic umbrella that enhances synergy and clarity of the product and services brand portfolio, the intertwined relationship between the corporate level and the product/service level of brands needs further conceptual and empirical investigation.

The relevance and impact of corporate social responsibility and/or ethical fit. Another useful line of enquiry would be in relation to corporate social responsibility and corporate brand management. In addition, further research is warranted on whether various levels of alignment (or fit) between individual ethical orientations of employees and organisational climates generate positive or negative attitudes and behaviours, in relation to ethical corporate identity, ethical corporate marketing, and the corporate brand. For example some prior research exists that may be built upon within industries particularly vulnerable to reputational

issues or crisis, such as the finance industry, especially since the global financial crises, or oil industries due to concerns for environmental and community impacts (e.g. see Balmer 2010b; Balmer et al., 2011; Powell et al., 2009, 2013; Powell, 2011; Vallaster et al., 2012).

The need for more empirical research on corporate brand management. Research on corporate brand management is primarily focused on conceptual articles on the topic. Some empirical research does exist for example case based research within creative industries as well as the finance and oil industries (Powell, 2007; Powell et al., 2009, 2013). Balmer and Liao (2007) have also undertaken exploratory case study research within higher education to investigate student corporate brand identification towards three closely-linked corporate brands: a UK university, a leading UK business school and an overseas collaborative partner institute in Asia. More recently the perceptions of South African supplier – buyer relations and its effect on the corporate brand are delineated via case study research by Flax et al. (2016), as well as how corporate brands act as catalysts in times of change in a South African bank (McCoy & Venter, 2016). Additionally, Balmer and Wang (2016) have investigated senior business school managers' cognitions of corporate brand building and management within top Financial Times (FT)-ranked British business schools.

Other empirical studies exist in corporate brand management but in our view they remain relatively scarce in the corporate brand management canon. No matter if considering the companies' perspective of managing a corporate brand or the stakeholder perspective (including employees) on how they perceive or interrelate to the corporate brand, relatively little empirical research has been undertaken overall. To progress research on corporate brand management, we agree that further investigation via empirical studies is deemed necessary (Pillai, 2012). Mukherjee & Balmer (2007) have noted how, given the strategic importance of corporate brand, the theoretical foundations of the territory are underdeveloped. Melewar, Gotsi, & Andriopolous (2012) also usefully call for a further investigation of longitudinal studies in the field. We also see the necessity for further research in cross-industry studies.

1.4   Further reading

An important stakeholder is the consumer or customer. Not very few might consider the customer as primus inter pares among all stakeholders. De la Paz Toldos-Romero & Orozco-Gómez (2013) analysed the effects of brand personality dimensions on purchase intention. If the consumer is a frequent user of a brand, they will rate the value and

personality of a brand higher than a non-user. Purchase intention of a consumer is positively influenced by the hipness, success, sincerity, and sophistication of a brand personality, whereas domesticity, emotionality, and professionalism influence purchase intention in a negative way. Therefore, it is important to adapt business models continuously to changing conditions of the market to maintain hipness, hence success. Not only the above-mentioned indicators but also the brand name is decisive for the purchase intention.

Nhat Hanh Le et al. (2014) explain the importance of brand name attitude compared to product expertise when observing changes of consumer brand preferences in the context of corporate rebranding. The research contributes significantly to the contemporary literature on corporate rebranding. The comprehension of the applications of two types of rebranding strategies either with minor or radical changes in terms of corporate brand positions and marketing aesthetics is very useful for a firm to continuously survive and remain desirable in a long run. Considering a repositioning, the results indicate the following: given a pleasant original brand name attitude, it is favourable to use the initial brand. On the other hand, given a less pleasant attitude towards the original brand name, it is preferable to perform a rebrand repositioning.

Next to the brand name, the brand image is another decisive key factor following An Tran et al. (2015). Nowadays consumers are careful to invest their hard-earned money and demand more transparency and honesty. To develop their perceptions stakeholders rely on the key role of corporate image. An Tran et al. (2015) define corporate image as follows. Corporate communication and corporate personality consist of seven dimensions: visual expression, positive feelings, environments expression, online appearance, staff/employees appearance, attitude/behaviour, and external communications. These seven dimensions lead to corporate image and highlight its importance. This forms a conceptual model, which highlights how corporate image is defined in peoples' minds and includes five levels: awareness, familiarity, favourability, trust, and advocacy. Furthermore, An Tran et al. (2015) uncover the importance of prioritising specific dimensions and that online appearance has increased in importance, as well as the importance of the consistency of employees' appearance and attitude, as they represent what the company stands for.

1.5   Introduction for remaining chapters

In *Chapter 2* John M.T. Balmer reflects on his foundational article of 1995 where he formally introduced the corporate brand notion entitled 'Corporate Branding and Connoisseurship'. In this historiography of

the area he recites the extraordinary developments in corporate brand management and scholarship from 1995 through to the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century. He outlines how developments in the period impacted on our understanding of identity and identification and heightened the need to further investigate the relationships between organisations, customers, stakeholders, employees, and society. His overview stresses the marketing roots of the field and presents a striking counter-narrative to some of the corporate brand canon which studiously ignores pre-2000 developments and which risks presenting a distorted mirror on the field.

In *Chapter 3* Kevin Lane Keller and Keith Richey relate the success of a company directly to its attention to corporate brand management and its personality which must be carefully managed in order to be successful. Therefore, three main dimensions of corporate brand personality are highlighted in this chapter: "heart," "mind," and "body." The *heart* equates to being passionate and compassionate. As such, employees must be passionate about the company, its brands, and their jobs. The *mind* equates to being creative and disciplined. As such, firms must possess creativity to overcome the trade-offs inherent in virtually all aspects of business. The *body* equates to agility and collaborations. As such, organisations must possess the agility to capture and deliver value to consumers in the face of challenging market dynamics and must also adapt its business model to changing conditions.

In *Chapter 4* Leyland Pitt, Julie Napoli, and Rian van der Merwe investigate corporate brand management from a franchise organisations perspective to produce an instrument to measure and evaluate the brand management practices within a franchising situation. They also identify opportunities for further research and practical application in this specific context.

In *Chapter 5* Hong-Wei He and John M.T. Balmer discuss what alliance brands are and outline some of their implications for corporate brand management by utilising a case study of the well-known airline industry brand 'Oneworld' (whose members include American, British Airways, Cathay Pacific, Quantas, and JAL among others). The many insights provided by their research lead up to the conclusion that this corporate branding category goes beyond the organisational boundaries that often characterise corporate brands. As such they advocate that corporate brand management needs to adopt a multidisciplinary perspective while accommodating cross-cultural issues in order to achieve consistency and success.

In *Chapter 6* the delivery of corporate brand personality on the part of employees is investigated by Khanyapuss Punjaisri and Alan Wilson. Increasingly, within the services industries, greater focus is accorded to corporate-level marketing and there is an attendant need to build a strong corporate brand in order to gain competitive advantage. To ensure that employees behave in ways that support the brand promise, internal branding has become of great importance to academia and practitioners. The study underlines the significant influences of internal communications and training on employees' attitudes and behaviours. Results show that the internal communication and training can predict employee performance significantly and therefore corporate brand managers need to liaise with their Human Resources colleagues.

In *Chapter 7* Nicholas Ind outlines the need for clearly articulated and communicated values along with the integration of internal and external messages with the aim of integrating the actions of employees with marketing strategy, in order to be a successful corporate brand. His research also delineates some of the barriers that may undermine effective communications which includes unsympathetic cultures and disinterested leaders.

In *Chapter 8* Richard Jones outlines the importance of relationships beyond that of the firm and consumers to also include relationships between businesses in Business-to-Business markets and other stake-holders. He goes on to present a model of stakeholder equities as a tool for brand managers to assess the value of multiple stakeholders in relation to the co-creation of the brand. The chapter concludes by suggesting future research which can usefully be developed along at least two lines of enquiry.

In *Chapter 9* Oriol Iglesias, Nicholas Ind, and Manuel Alfaro propose brand value is conversationally co-created by many different stakeholders in a fluid space subject to constant negotiation and often develops beyond the strategic aims set by brand managers. The co-creation of brand value primarily occurs in the conversational space between the organisation and individual consumer, where they interact through brand interfaces and frontline employees. They contend that therefore managers will need to develop a new leadership style that is more humble, open and participatory, willing to trust others, and empower their staff.

In *Chapter 10* John M.T. Balmer concludes this collection by formally introducing and explaining the 'corporate brand orientation' notion – which refers to a category of institution which specifically calls upon

its corporate brand as a cornerstone and which helps to inform and guide the organisation on strategic and operational levels. His work also notes the omni-temporal perspective of the notion and is mindful that corporate marketing is underpinned by societal and corporate social responsibility tenets. The chapter also identifies three corporate brand management precepts that may help inform senior management responsibilities vis-à-vis corporate brand orientation in terms of custodianship, credibility, and calibration.

1.6   Conclusion

This chapter highlights that there remains much to learn about and to contribute to corporate brand management. The editors of this first book in the '*Journal of Brand Management* – Advanced Collections Series' therefore encourage further innovative and rigorous research in the various pillars of the corporate brand management field. The discussion above and the chapters that follow will help by providing advanced insights, perspectives, and inspiration for brand students, brand academics, and brand practitioners alike. It is our hope that you enjoy reading this compendium as much as we have enjoyed compiling it, written by renowned researchers and colleagues.

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