



Emotional Intelligence- A Conceptual Framework

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ABSTRACT

It should come as no surprise that humans are emotional creatures. Marketers have long recognized the fact that emotions play a key role when consumers are talking about or purchasing products in categories as disparate as those represented by brands. Over the past decade, emotional branding has emerged as a highly influential brand management paradigm. Among marketing practitioners, this relational, communal, participatory, sensory, and emotive view of consumer– brand relationships is increasingly heralded as a central pillar of market differentiation and sustainable competitive advantage. Emotional connections are universally important, and managing those emotional bonds pays off handsomely. Some companies are very good at creating emotional connections with their customers. Most, however, are not. Companies that are successful at creating emotional connections benefit from stronger results, not only in cash flow and profit, but in market share. Emotional connections aren't static. They ebb and flow and the results can affect a company's long-term business success.

Keywords : - EI, Passion Branding, Emotional Branding, Culting of Brands, Love-marks, Emotion in Advertising

Introduction

Over the past decade, emotional branding has emerged as a highly influential brand management paradigm (Gobe 2001; Zaltman 2003). Emotional branding is a consumer-centric, relational, and story-driven approach to forging deep and enduring affective bonds between consumers and brands (Roberts 2004). Proponents of emotional branding proclaim that this high degree of consumer passion is seldom, if ever, cultivated through rational arguments about tangible benefits or even appeals to symbolic benefits, such as heightened self-esteem or status. Rather, these potent consumer–brand linkages typically emerge when branding strategies use narratives and tactics that demonstrate an empathetic understanding of customers' inspirations, aspirations, and life circumstances and that generate warm feelings of community among brand users (Atkin 2004; Muniz and Schau 2005). Among marketing practitioners, this relational, communal, participatory, sensory, and emotive view of consumer– brand relationships is increasingly heralded as a central pillar of market differentiation and sustainable competitive advantage. Similarly, consumer researchers investigating brand personalities, brand communities, and the meanings that anchor strong consumer–brand relationships arrive at conclusions and recommendations that are consistent with emotional-branding tenets. Even brand management paradigms originally premised on cognitive theories of consumer knowledge formation now incorporate many concepts and recommendations that are characteristic of the emotional-branding paradigm (Keller 2003).

It should come as no surprise that humans are emotional creatures. Even a casual glimpse into the nation's driveways, liquor cabinets, and cosmetics shelves reveals that consumers make buying decisions based in part on their feelings and emotions about particular brands. And marketers have long recognized the fact that emotions play a key role when consumers are talking about—or purchasing—products in

categories as disparate as those represented by brands like Mercedes, Kodak, and Louis Vuitton.

The Emotional Branding principles apply to all types of brands and relationships, B2B, B2C, Nonprofit and NGO. They also span all forms of communication and designed touchpoints, from corporate identity, packaging, environment and even digital and social engagement.

To reap the enhanced financial benefits that can result from customer loyalty, marketers have enthusiastically pursued strategies intended to keep customers coming back. In fact, marketers want to move beyond customer “retention,” which is merely a behavior, to generating customer “commitment,” “delight,” and even “evangelism”—all of which represent enduring psychological bonds that link a customer to a company.

What is Brand?

A brand is not a product. It is a promise that the consumer is aware of (sometimes vaguely) when they buy and it is a promise that is kept and delivered by their experience with what they bought.

Brand is also a form of trust - a guarantee in customers' minds that they are getting something they know they can rely on, time after time. It becomes a useful short cut to reliability.

What is Emotional Branding?

Emotional Branding is a term used within marketing communications that refers to the focus of building brands by way of connecting a brand proposition and purpose to people's emotional need states and aspirations. This approach to brand marketing puts acknowledgement of people before the communication of product/service specifications and/or benefits.

Where does the brand hit?

- HEAD –smart, intriguing, stimulating, end benefit. Ex: Pantene Shampoo
- HEART –emotional/experiential, sensual, beloved, trust. Ex: Cadbury Chocolate
- GUT –cool, have to have it, ‘that’s me’. Ex: fasttrack watches

Attaching Emotions to brand**Security Appeal**

- Safety and security
- Medications, vitamins, etc.
- Uses cognitive dissonance
- Threat or fear of bad breath, hair loss, dandruff, body odor, etc.

Lust Appeal

Using the product will attract the opposite gender. Such as, Perfumes, Branded cloths.

Love And Sentiment

- Associated with a close and happy home life.
- Baby products, pet products, foods, cameras, greeting cards.

Brand Ambassador

- Using athletes, celebrities.
- You will be like your hero, if you use the product.

Commercial Writing Appeal

- Attention
- Interest
- Desire
- Action

History of Emotional Branding

The Emotional Branding people focused approach to building brands differs greatly from that of traditional marketing and brand communication which is product focused. Much of what is practiced today as the product marketing and branding process is inspired by the work of Jack Trout that dates back to his paper “Positioning” is a game people play in today’s me-too market place” published in 1969. From “positioning” came the process of crafting “positioning statements” which became the standard for articulating the brand/product proposition, benefits to the consumer. Although the term Emotional Branding was used within the marketing and branding world as early as the 1980s, it wasn’t until the publication of “Emotional Branding: A new paradigm for connecting brands to people” by Marc Gobé (published in 2001 by Allworth Press) did this alternative focus of moving from product to people become a viable way of marketing and building brands. This book led a movement towards a more expressive and thereby meaningful form of communication and connection.

Six Stages of Emotional branding

Emotional Stage	Feature of the stage
1	How you get someone interested?
2	How do you get someone to consider a purchase?
3	How do you continually reinforce that their purchase decision was absolutely the right decision, the “winning” decision?
4	How do you create a loyal customer such that they want to continue to buy your product and/or are most receptive to cross selling and value add purchases?
5	How do you create a brand ritual (www.brandrituals.net) so that your brand becomes part of your customer’s life?
6	How do you get your audience to be your cheerleader?

Vocabulary of Emotional Branding

The concept of emotional branding includes certain vocabulary or terms which are enumerated below, such as:

- Think of consumers as *people*
- Create products as *experiences*
- Convert honesty to *trust*
- Change quality to *preference*
- Shift notoriety to *aspiration*
- Switch identity to *personality*
- Revert function to *feel*
- Make communication a *dialog*
- Transform service into a *relationship*

Gobe’s four pillars of Emotional Branding

(**Source:** Marc Gobé (2001), *Emotional Branding*, Allworth Press, New York, p.264.)

Relationship

- Profound contacts with consumers
- Respect for consumers
- Emotional experiences

Sensorial Experiences

- Multi-sensorial brand experiences

Imagination

- Product ,packaging, retail stores, advertisements and websites
- Creation of surprise & delight

Vision

A brands long term success

Benefits of emotional branding

Functional Benefit: Differences in product features are often referred to as “functional benefits.” Some products offer speed, advanced technology, lighter weight or improved safety; these products are easily differentiated by their brand’s functional benefits.

Emotional Benefit: Express how you feel when you use the brand.

Example of some of the most valued Global Brands

Brand	Brand Value
Coca-cola	\$36 billion
Marlboro	\$33 billion
Nescafe	\$11 billion
Kodak	\$10 billion
Microsoft	\$9.8 billion
Budweiser	\$9.7 billion
Kellogg’s	\$9.3 billion
Motorola	\$9.2 billion
Gillette	\$8.2 billion
Bacardi	\$7.1 billion

Key Mandates for Emotional Branding**From Honesty to Trust:**

The govt. authorities, consumer groups and the people in general have an increasingly rigorous standard for products and will rate very quickly what needs to be on shelf and what does not. For example, the issue regarding the presence of pesticide levels over the permissible limit in the soft drink Coca-Cola has really deteriorated the trust people had in the brand. In Kerala, both Coke and Pepsi have been suffering from this account. Therefore trust is one of the most important values of a brand and it requires real effort from corporations.

From Notoriety to Aspiration:

Being known does not mean that you are also loved! Notorie-

ty is what gets you known. But if you want to be desired, you must convey something that is in keeping with the customer's aspirations. Reliance Industries is a household name in India with operations in a wide area covering petrochemicals, refining, textiles, telecom etc. But the company's recent malpractices in the telecom sector are not something that a customer would aspire emotionally. So more than visibility, a brand has to be inspirational.

Steps to inculcate Emotional Branding

Monitor Cultural Cues:

Brand managers should closely monitor popular culture for signs that their brand is beginning to develop a brand image.

Identify and Track Brand Avoiders:

Brand managers should identify and study people for whom these meanings resonate and motivate various kinds of brand avoidance. Blogs and anti-brand Web sites may be a useful starting point for locating these people. In addition, customer relationship management systems could be used to identify lapsed customers, who may turn out to be intentionally avoiding a brand because of its imagery.

Develop and Test a New Emotional-Branding Story:

To manage the challenges posed by the emergence of a brand image, we advocate a decidedly proactive approach i.e. managers should begin modifying their emotional-branding strategy while it is still accomplishing its marketing objec-

tives.

Implications for Strategic Emotional Brand Management

In general, the emotional-branding literature reads like a heroic tale in which intrepid brand managers break with orthodox branding strategies and are rewarded with intensely loyal customers, heightened profits, and a nearly impervious foundation of competitive advantage. These heroic testaments to the power of emotional branding invariably gloss over the potential risks associated with this strategy.

History has shown that dominant brands routinely fall from their stellar heights and struggle to regain their former glory. Disney, McDonald's, AT&T, Levi's, Kodak, and Coca-Cola are just a few examples of market-driven brands that rather suddenly went from paragons of marketing excellence to besieged icons losing ground to competitors. However, the conventional brand management literature offers little concrete advice on how brand strategists can proactively diagnose the cultural vulnerabilities that could eventually erode their customer-based brand equity. Rather, brand image-related problems are attributed in general to companies failing to follow the tried-and-true principles of sound brand management, such as maintaining consistency and relevance (Keller 2000, 2003a).

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