

than for particular performances: it is all about participation and having fun. Creativity is a core part of what happens, but it is not part of the label or the branding.

A: In Ulster there are two distinct cultures – Ulster Scots and Irish language. Ulster Scots want parity with Irish language – should we be moving away from the politicisation of culture or do we just have to accept it?

A: Culture has always been used for political ends and, when asking for funding, a lot of that is going to be political too. I don't think you can ever de-politicise culture. Again, it comes back to listening to the voice of the public and what they want funded, though this could have an effect on innovation, risk and or perceptions of fairness/equity with how funding is distributed.

A: I also believe you shouldn't take the politics out of art. We need dramatically contrasting views in order to get cultural growth. The problem is that if you fund one group at the expense of another group you lose those voices and the debate that will move things forward. One rider to that, though: the primary driver should, of course, be the quality of the work, and not just about ensuring everyone has a fair slice of the cake.

## Branding within the context of the arts market

*Professor Ashok Ranchhod*

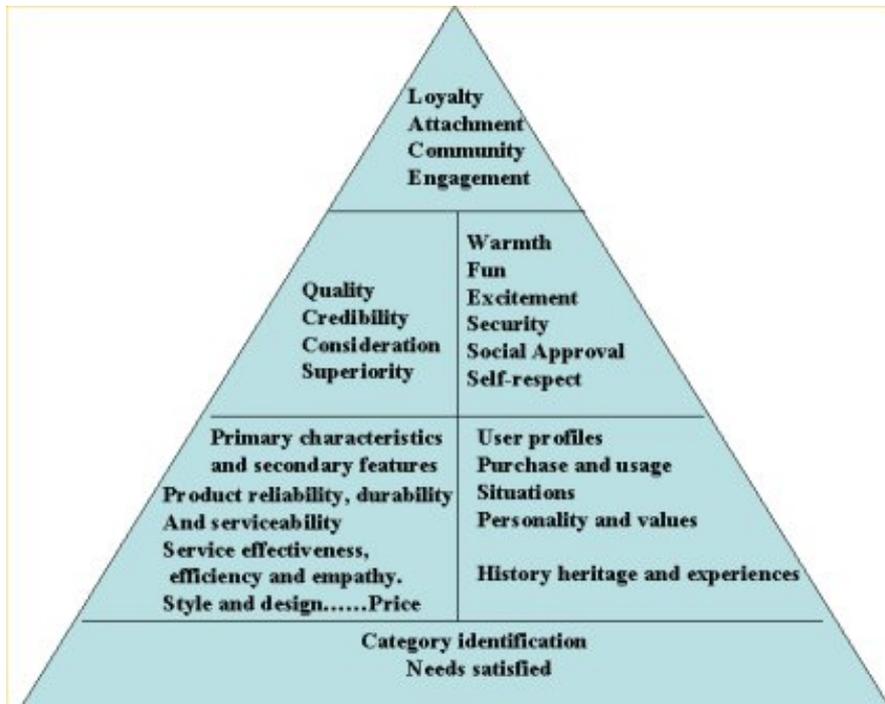
To begin, these are some of the issues to consider more generally when thinking about the assets and liabilities of a brand<sup>22</sup>:

- Brand Loyalty: Encourages customers to buy a particular brand time after time and remain insensitive to competitors' offerings.
- Brand Awareness: Brand names attract attention and convey images of familiarity. This can be translated into how large a percentage of customers know the brand name and relates to whether people will use the brand again in future and whether it delivers a quality experience that people will like.
- Perceived Quality: 'Perceived' means that the customers decide upon the level of quality, not the company.
- Brand Associations: The values and the personality linked to the brand.
- Other Proprietary Brand Assets: Including trademarks, patents and market channel relationships.<sup>23</sup> Although this does not necessarily relate to the arts, a lot of people in business try to look at it as part of how brand is related to quality.

It is possible to look at the sub-dimensions of brand building blocks as follows:

<sup>22</sup> Marketing Science Institute, 1995

<sup>23</sup> Aaker, 1991



If we start from the base of the triangle, this is where we begin by trying to identify the category of the brand. We then build on this, concentrating on the other sub-areas such as user profiles – who are our consumers and what is our level of service effectiveness? Eventually we try to get to the top of the triangle.

If we move on to look at the benefits of branding for visitors and donors in the arts market we find the following:

- Aspirational benefits (although we need to identify what it is that people are aspiring to);
- Reinforces peer group membership and the group dynamics that are important;
- Need for community;
- Simplifies choice: sometimes when we try to brand something there are a myriad of things we could brand around but we need to distil it into one simple essence;
- Enhanced self-image and esteem;
- Creates trust.

So how do we do some of these things? One option is co-branding. Here are some examples:

- Reach awareness (e.g. GM/Visa) where customers are locked in via other benefits such as Visa;
- Values endorsement (e.g. Cordon Bleu cooking and Tefal);
- Ingredient co-branding (e.g. Intel Inside) where the ingredients may be more important than the whole, such as the computer itself;
- Complementarity (e.g. Esso/Tesco);
- Coalition branding (e.g. Coalition of Modern Universities): the university sector is going through a major review and the new universities are thinking about branding together and forming coalitions.

To look in some more detail at examples from other sectors, let's begin with some of the

issues faced in branding Higher Education Institutes:

- Patchy: institutions are just coming to grips with it;
- Too logo driven, with organisations not understanding the mechanics of what has to be done;
- Poor resources for marketing and branding;
- Not enough senior management 'buy-in';
- Does not drive customer equity (it is important to satisfy customers with the delivery of promise that lies behind the logo);
- The possibility of brand coalitions such as The Coalition of Modern Universities (CMU).

The Open University gives us one example of re-branding in the Higher Education Sector. Not only is this about a more modern logo designed for ease of use on the internet etc, but as Tom Peters, the management guru says, 'real branding is a great story' and the OU has certainly become one of the great stories of twentieth century higher education:

*The challenge to the present stewards of the OU is to make sure that The Open University continues to be a great story in the twenty-first century. With our changing and creative curriculum choices and teaching methods, the incorporation of work-based learning, continuing professional development, e-learning, a virtual meeting place to interact with people from over 100 countries, and a student experience that is constantly adjusted by the feedback that we receive, we believe that we continue to be a great story – and deliver on a great brand.*<sup>24</sup>

To take a different example, Mauritius offers a case study of country branding. Mauritius is an interesting island that many people know as a luxury holiday destination with a beautiful coastline. The country is now trying to ask itself the question of what it should be known for. The pillars of its economy are as follows:

- Tourism;
- Textiles;
- Agriculture (Sugar);
- IT Outsourcing;
- Knowledge and Education;
- Offshore Investments;
- Offshore Logistics and Processing.

A number of the traditional sectors such as tourism and textiles are declining as a result of funding and pricing (in comparison with the competition) so they are looking to their areas of potential growth. As a bilingual population (French and English and, to a lesser degree Hindi), with Eastern and Western connections there are opportunities as a hub for shipping etc. They are going through the process of deciding what they wish to be known for, and the brand might then have sub-sectors falling out of it.

To move on to a corporate example, Philips is a very old brand that was known for different products in different countries. For example, in one country it was known for radios; in another for light bulbs; in another for TVs etc. It did not have a cohesive brand image like Sony and it wanted to be more like Sony. In 1998 the idea was '*Let's Make Things Better*', focusing on improving the quality of people's lives (Philips has a strong focus on innovation although nobody really knows it). This has led to a theme cascading through, with *Sense and simplicity* in 2004, the idea of design creating value by making life simpler.

So what are the drivers of customer equity?

- Value Equity: Covers aspects of a customer's objective assessment of the utility of a brand, based on the perceptions of the value of the exchange process (money for goods/services);
- Brand Equity: The customer's subjective and intangible assessment of the brand above and beyond its objectively perceived value;
- Retention Equity: This is the measure of the tendency of a customer to stick with the brand above and beyond the customer's subjective and objective assessments of the brand.

A much-neglected facet of a company's operations is developing satisfied customers who recommend the brand to others. This helps to build customer equity. The following are useful in cultivating brand equity:

- Internalise the brand;
- Dare to be different;
- Determine your own fame;
- Make an emotional connection.

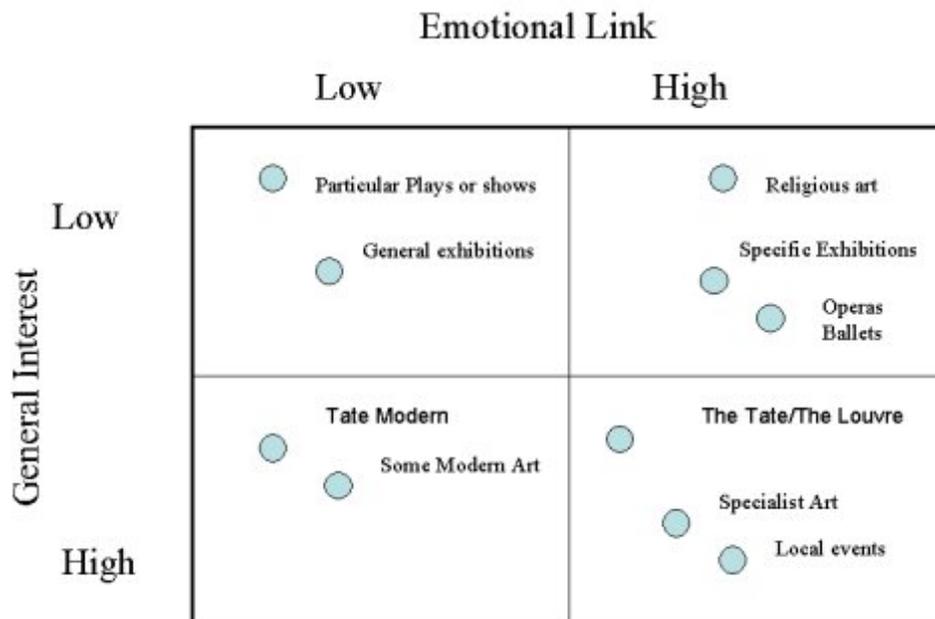
Returning to our education example, but thinking about relevance awareness and positioning:

- Relevance – What makes the institution's educational offerings relevant to key audiences? (*Make an emotional connection*);
- Awareness – If few people are aware of an institution's existence, then brand building is even more crucial (*Determine your own fame*);
- Positioning and Differentiation – Why is the institution distinct in the eyes of the customers? What sets it apart from others within the peer or competitor set? (*Dare to be different*);
- Consistency is the key – A brand can only be developed through the delivery of a consistent set of messages, ideas and interactions over time (*Internalise the brand*).

So, when thinking about arts branding, consider:

- Developing a cohesive theme;
- Forming impressions;
- Eliminating distractions;
- Providing memorabilia;
- Engaging all senses to ensure the experience is remembered;
- Soliciting feedback.

I thought I would stick my neck out in thinking about the arts to ask where are we and what positions do we occupy?



Even though we may want to work co-operatively, it is always important to consider what is your unique identity:

- What does your institution do very well?
- What is important to the customers and the stakeholders?
- What is it that your competitors are not doing or addressing?

The overlap between these answers is the uniqueness where the brand should reside.

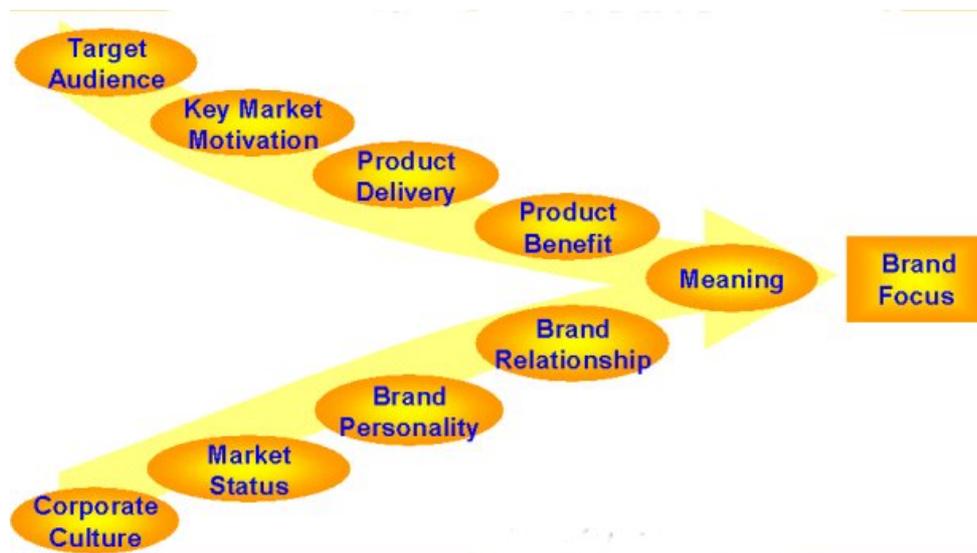
It is also important to consider the emotional handles – the things that will make customers return to re-experience a positive emotion. What are these positive emotions?

- Behavioural interdependence;
- Personal commitment;
- Love and passion for what they are experiencing;
- Nostalgic connection;
- Self concept connection;
- Intimacy;
- Partner quality.

So if we look at the future of branding relationships, there are going to be quite a few relationships as technology changes. Our brand resonance for our customers will become more about our virtual, as well as our physical locations, including active billboards, online communications, wireless communications as well as TV, radio and print.

So, what happens next? What needs to be achieved?<sup>25</sup>

- Develop the brand essence creatively;
- Develop and implement brand management guidelines within marketing, including training where needed;
- Work through the broader implications of branding (e.g. product management, partner relationships etc.);
- Communicate the brand internally (beyond marketing departments); mobilise the organisation;
- Begin to communicate the revised brand essence externally.



<sup>25</sup> Source: Kate Watts, Chime Communications

## Brand marketing and your internal audience

*Howard De Souza, the Seven Partnership*

One area that is not thought about very often and is the most critical part of the customer journey is the brand experience, and the most important people are those that deliver it – the employees. What they think, feel, say and do influences consumer consumption of the brand. Their job is to inform people, and if they do a good job, they influence the financial performance of the organisation. And this is not just about sales. If customers have a good brand experience they will move into the category of repeat purchasers, and eventually to the top of the pyramid where they become your ambassadors and advocates. The most difficult thing in all of this is quality assurance and control. How do we impose it? People make decisions for rational and emotional reasons. They come to work to feed the kids and put a roof over their heads – but some will come for emotional reasons as well. And these emotionally engaged people are the ones that want to do the job well because they want to, not because they're paid to.

The concept of six sigma was developed 20-30 years ago as a quality improvement methodology, the issue being that there was a lot of wastage. The key principle of the methodology was that value is created on the factory floor, with a focus on reducing defects, manufacturing within specific tolerances, delivering on time and producing to specific budgets. Our factory floor is our people. I talked about employees being engaged, but recent research has found that only 30 per cent of employees are 'very engaged'. This is the group that love coming to work – who meet their friends there and who understand the corporate purpose and values, which they like and sell. This clearly impacts productivity, profitability, attendance and retention. More worryingly, while 50 per cent are neutral, 20 per cent are 'not engaged' i.e. do not care about their work. This means 2 out of 10 employees have the capacity to damage or undermine the brand experience.

When thinking about the brand experience, therefore, it is important that you don't believe your own spin. While companies regularly quote being the leader in their field, or one of the best places to work, remember that this is only based on those people that returned their evaluation forms: your performance should be judged in terms of the average performance, not the performance you deliver in the best case or the worst case scenario.

So, the job of the marketer, is to translate what is being said externally to the people who have to deliver internally, translating the brand promise into a favourable brand experience. This leads us to a classic schism between brand marketing and the brand deliverers. Brand marketing is perceived as being all about the outward-facing – building a relationship for the organisation and product with the 'stakeholders'. However, the internal communications with the brand deliverers are often left to the HR department. But the HR department is not the department with the skills to translate the vision to people on the