



## EMOTIONAL BRANDING: CONNECTING CUSTOMER VIA HEART

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### ABSTRACT

This research paper talks about Emotional branding. In the era where companies compete to make their brands distinctive the ultimate solution seems to be the establishment of consumer brand linkages at the emotional level. Before starting, proper literature review was done of past studies on Emotional Branding to understand what exactly Emotional Branding is and there suitability to Indian Brand market and how Emotional branding can help different brands to outperform each others.

In this research paper we take a close look on how cognitive dissonance and emotional branding work side by side. How nowadays marketers tend to associate cognitive dissonance with emotional appeal through their offsprings. The Human being has a general tendency to shift from brand to other to attain satisfaction; marketer's tries to satisfy the consumers by using emotional branding as a front line tool and touching the emotional chords of customers which results in establishing a connection between brand and the purchase decisions by the customers.

This paper was reviewed and explained with help of Secondary data available through various journals, magazine, previous research paper and other useful internet material. Paper presents and attempts to study the concept of emotional branding by giving few examples, importance of emotional brand measures and giving conclusion how emotional branding work as success mantra for various brands to succeed in long run.

**KEYWORDS:** Emotional Branding, Marketer's, Cognitive dissonance, Customers, Brands.

## 1.1.INTRODUCTION

The importance of building strong brands as an imperative strategy to succeed in highly competitive environments has been increasingly emphasized in the brand management field of the marketing research (Morrison and Crane, 2007).

It is highly evident that intense psychological bonds with the brands referred as emotional brand connections lead to higher levels of firm performance and competitive advantage (Malar et al., 2011).

*Morrison and Crane in 2007 defines "Emotional branding* is defined as the engagement of consumers in a deep, long-term, intimate emotional connection with the brand, which is beyond the benefit based satisfaction, and which creates a special trust based relationship for the development of a holistic emotional experience."

A brand or product may make a consumer feel proud, excited, or confident. An ad may create feelings of amusement, disgust, or wonder. Emotions can be defined as strong relatively uncontrolled feelings that affect our behaviour. Emotions do play a very important role in behaviour of consumers. Emotion is a term frequently and familiarity used as synonymous with feelings. For instance an individual, feeling a trust of good quality, may decide to buy a chocolate for himself and his friend. Many times consumers are indulge in excessive shopping when overwhelmed by depression or togetherness.

Now days marketers tend to associate Cognitive Dissonance with 'Emotional Appeal' through their offerings. For quite a time now, the power of emotions in branding has stood up bold to employ Cognitive Dissonance to bond with the customer. Cognitive Dissonance and Emotional branding always rely on the fundamental rationale of the basic principle of

striking human's feelings. Creation of dissonance is always accompanied by some regret, desire or sorrow in customer's mind, branding with emotions touches a chord with attacking views and in turn, makes a perfect association with the product. Therefore, it is imperative for marketers to use emotional branding as a strategic tool to reduce the cognitive dissonance and convert the dissonant behavior into consonant with the preoccupied psychological states. It is important that the marketer's offering should have an emotional element, but it could choose between creating a dissonance or just plain appeal to the customer's emotions.

Emotional branding is crucial for firms in breaking the clutter through claiming distinctive associations in today's highly structured environment where products and services are distinguished from each other by technological, causal, and benefit based differentiations. The emotional branding perspective suggests that firms ought to concentrate on forging strong and meaningful emotional bonds that proactively enrich consumer's lives, become part of their memories and social network (Thomson et al., 2007). Therein; the brand-consumer relationships based on the emotional linkages constructed are increasingly gaining popularity and importance for marketing researchers and practitioners (Thomson et al., 2005), recognizing the fact that brands achieve the opportunity to differentiate from other brands in an exponential scale, through adopting a branding strategy where they promote experience based relationships with their customers, placing their brands to a high centrality and importance into Consumers lives.

## **1.2.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study covers the objectives which can be listed as:

- ✧ To have an overview of emotional branding and its impact on customers.
- ✧ To study the role of emotional branding as a tool of post purchase dissonance reduction.
- ✧ To show how important emotional branding and how it help organisations to outperform their competitors in the market.

## **1.3.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The current study attempts to explain the concept of Emotional Branding and examine the current scenario of Emotional branding in India. The nature of research is completely descriptive. It is a conceptual research which is based on review of previously done researches in this area. All the relevant data used in research paper has been collected from secondary sources e.g. e- journals, newspaper, Govt. publications and various e-resources.

## **1.4.LITERATURE REVIEW**

- ♣ **Yoo and MacInnis, (2005)** identified Emotions acts as a leveraging force in the attachment of consumers to brands and how emotions play an intimate role in brand attitude formation for the consumers who live and store the brand experience. Emotions are a strong means of captivating experience-driven consumer attachment to brands and proactively integrating brands into their lives and identity projects. They further explained that as opposed to conventional benefit-driven branding approach, emotional branding focuses on brand meanings that interact with consumer lives and inspire their passion, life stories, memories, and experiences.

- ♣ **Thompson, C.J., Rindfleisch, A., & Arsel, Z. (2006);** discuss how the tenets of emotional branding paradoxically encourage the formation and propagation of doppelganger brand imagery, there developed the counterintuitive proposition that rather than merely being a threat to be managed, a doppelganger brand image can actually benefit a brand by providing early warning signs that an emotional-branding story is beginning to lose its cultural resonance. Their research further demonstrated that emotional-branding strategies may unintentionally foster the cultural development of a doppelganger brand image .They suggested that consumers avoid brands when their emotional-branding promises are viewed as inauthentic and conversely, that emotional-branding strategies succeed when they can function as an authenticating narrative for consumers' identity projects. These ideas are congruent with research indicating that consumers' most valued brands are those whose symbolic meanings play an important role in their self-conceptions.
- ♣ **Mohit jamwal and Vishal Soodan** in their paper talks about the **Role Of Cognitive Dissonance with 'Emotional Appeal' through their offerings.** Cognitive Dissonance and Emotional branding always rely on the fundamental rationale of the basic principle of striking human's feelings. They also reviews that Creation of dissonance is always accompanied by some regret, desire or sorrow in customer's mind, branding with emotions touches a chord with

attacking views and in turn, makes a perfect association with the product. Dissonance in customers occurs due to a predetermined commitment to a chosen alternative which leads the customer to compromise with the attractive features of the alternative which has not been chosen. This is something which is not consistent with the desire for those features. Hence it can be said that the decision which are habitual and limited and do not include much of the customer involvement will not produce post purchase dissonance as in such decisions one hardly consider any attractive features in an alternative brand that do not exist in the selected brand.

- ♣ **Connole et al. (1977)** focused that the previous studies on dissonance doesn't have the analysis of dissonance that individuals experience through the various stages of product diffusion through the categories of consumers. Korgaonkar and Moschis (1982) elaborated the relationship between involvement level and post-purchase evaluations in case of products. The study highlighted that the more the expectations before the purchase, the more will be the favorable evaluation in products which involve high consumer involvement.
- ♣ **Mowen and Minor (1998)** studied the importance of emotions as an important component of attitude in their research. The emotional aspect has gain importance over the years and more and more studies are being carried out by keeping in mind the emotions in the purchases of customers.

## 1.5.IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL BRANDING

The play on emotion in branding became revolutionized with Sigmund Freud's popularization of the "unconscious mind" from 1912. According to Freud, the unconscious mind consists of the processes in the mind that occurs automatically and is not available to introspection, and includes thought processes, memory, affect, and motivation. In advertising, this became relevant through the use of hidden messages and symbols to trigger an emotional response, without literally making a claim about a product. The purpose of emotional branding is to create a bond between the consumer and the product by provoking the consumer's emotion. Emotional branding plays a very important role which is described below:

- ✧ Emotional brands have a significant impact when the consumer experiences a strong and lasting attachment to the brand comparable to a feeling of bonding, companionship or love.
- ✧ Emotional branding creates a personality for the brand.
- ✧ Emotional branding uses the consumer's ability to process messages to promote a significant feeling associated with the brand.
- ✧ Emotional branding uses a series of themes and symbols to create meaning for a consumer.
- ✧ It is the emotional response that provides consistent design intent across environments, touch points, interactions.
- ✧ Companies are more likely to deliver a consistent brand experience that builds rapport with customers.

✧ Organizations are building brands as holistic experiences, cultivating intentional, emotional responses, may find themselves enjoying more profitable relationships with their customers, built on trust.

### **1.6. How organizations can outperform others by using emotional branding?**

Brands may find that the emotional experience they provide to their customers should outweigh all other considerations. Organizations have the responsibility to deliver consistent brand experiences to their customers, regardless of the context or environment. From the call center, to the aromas used in a store, the intention behind customer service initiatives must be to deliver a holistic brand experience that resonates with the customer at an emotional level. Moreover, that emotion can be instilled by careful design. Emotional branding is successful when it triggers an emotional response in the consumer, that is, a desire for the advertised brand (or product) that cannot fully be rationalized.

Firms should turn their attentions to the aspects of experience that don't change. The main focus, then, falls to the emotional response the participants have, when undertaking these activities, and perceiving through their senses. It is the emotional response that provides consistent design intent across environments, touch points, interactions.

By intentionally crafting experiences with a specific emotion in mind, companies are more likely to deliver a consistent brand experience that builds rapport with customers. In this light, the goal is first to decide which emotion that you are trying to achieve, and next,

to execute that plan with careful consideration, backed by research. The aim could be for any number of emotions; confidence, a feeling of importance or capability, but it must be clear. All other considerations fall to the wayside. Individual's perceptions to specific interactions are useful, but far too whimsical as a reliable source of data.

The consideration of emotional response has to be made at all touch points and vary accordingly. Interactions over the phone differ than those made in person, but the challenge is to deliver continuity in both.

Emotionally-based engagement metrics is based on the premise that don't build your brand or your market share on constant low-lower-lowest pricing strategies, on-going promotions, and the promise of innovation, and expect your offering to be seen as different or better than the competition – who's doing precisely the same thing. There was a time mid-last century when the brand engagement ratio that drove sales was more rational than emotional. As brands are finding out – some to their advantage, but many to their detriment – it just doesn't work that way anymore.

Today's most successful companies are said to have built relationships with consumers by engaging them in a personal dialogue that responds to their needs. Marketers who've broken through the clutter have done so by connecting with consumers and, thereby, have created strong emotional bonds through their brands. Author Barbara Green states "You have to have a love affair with the consumer-flirt with them, provide that titillating buzz. When that flirtatious relationship becomes a deep relationship, then you have a major brand". Emotional branding is something that comes with time and long standing presence.

## 1.7. Emotional Branding: With Examples:-

### Nike's Emotional Connection

Nike uses both self-loathing and determination to build customer loyalty. Nike advertising is one of the most effective emotional branding examples in the marketing world today. Their customer loyalty is off the charts, all thanks to the Nike brand strategy and masterful application of emotional branding. Nike uses the centuries-old archetype of Heroism to tell their story. But, Nike puts a devious twist on their brand story by turning the customer into both the hero and the villain. It's an age old tale, a tale of a hero pitted against a great foe, and after a great struggle, emerging triumphant. In a way, you could say that Nike's marketing strategy is thousands of years old, and has been inspiring customer loyalty the entire time. Nike advertising takes the common hero story and turns it on its head. Instead of inspiring customer loyalty by singling out an external enemy, it pulls out the stops and focuses on an internal foe – our laziness. Nike advertising knows just how often we battle with our lazy side. Every morning when that alarm goes off and it's still totally dark outside, the battle begins. When we choose how long to run, the battle continues. This is how Nike marketing uses emotional marketing to inspire customer loyalty. They know that while some people may identify with an external foe, all people identify with an internal one. Nike brand strategy is excellent on this end because not only is the internal foe someone we can all hate, the hero is the viewer! In one way or another, we are all the hero of our own story, and Nike marketing has long since identified that feeling – and used it to inspire timeless customer loyalty.

**Disney- Badal rhi hain families...Badal rhe hain rishtey**

Few global brands can boast the kind of passion and loyalty that generations of Disney fans feel for their beloved Mickey Mouse and his creator, Walt Disney.

Disney recognizes the power of building and nurturing a consistent sustain lifelong relationships with guests, continually expanding product and service offerings and maintaining the integrity of one of the world's most recognizable brands.

Walt Disney recognized that, above everything else, brand loyalty begins with an authentic relationship. Walt determined from the start that, in the park, we would treat people not as just another paying customer, but as “guests in our own home.” He knew

that if our guests understood and believed that everyone in the organization cared about them and their business, they would be loyal to Disney forever. That philosophy continues to this day. Whether guests are visiting a Disney theme park or watching a Disney movie, they expect not just to be entertained and amazed, but also to feel special—as though the story were meant for them. That's the emotional connection

at work. Disney creates a truly entertaining experience for everybody. Disney do that by considering how the entire system works together; the product, the people, and the story—the story of the attraction or film certainly, but also the story told by people after leaving. Stories are the manifestation of the brand and *people tell stories*.

**Cadbury- Dil jo keh rha hai sunooo.....**

Cadbury, the chocolate legend established has a global presence from the year 1824 and it has own the heart of chocolate lover of whole World every tasty bite. Make today delicious – our higher purpose – defines us, moves us and sustains us. Cadbury Says “No

matter the reason or the season, we focus on creating moments of pleasure with ins us to make a delicious difference in our company, in our communities and in our world.”

Over the years Cadbury own the customers’ hearts. In order to achieve the peak of chocolate market Cadbury own the heart of customer by using tactics listed below:

- ❁ Variety of Products.
- ❁ Variety of taste.
- ❁ Pricing from low to high.
- ❁ Great Customer relationship.
- ❁ Artistic Packaging.
- ❁ Value based relationship with employees.
- ❁ Media relationship at optimal level.
- ❁ Great CSR activity.
- ❁ Value based Ad – Program.
- ❁ Ethical Value.
- ❁ Emotional Connection with customer.

### **1.8.CONCLUSION**

The emotional strategy for a brand varies from company to company. In order to effectively utilize cognitive dissonance, marketers must make a two-pronged advertising campaign: **(1)** building a specific brand identity and **(2)** attachment of emotions with the brand. For a marketer, the main objective of the branding is to position the product effectively so to create a passion amongst consumers of possessing it.

The quality of product and its importance does not matter much when it is compared to the extent of emotions created in the minds of customers of purchasing it.

This study attempts to unveil the concept of emotional branding acknowledging the fact that, a newly arising concept can be best understood and expanded through the examination of its antecedents and outcomes. It also says Emotional branding and cognitive

dissonance are the two closely related fields which are continuously evolving in the marketing science.

Our paper also explained that Emotional Branding can be better made more affected if it is assisted with proper and suitable advertising campaign. By touching the right emotional chords, the marketer not only will succeed in positioning the brands successfully, but can also reduce the level of dissonance in the form of post purchase behavior.

### **1.9.SCOPE FOR FUTURE STUDY**

The present paper is about the effective utilization of emotional branding by the marketers in reducing the cognitive dissonance that arises as a result of post purchase. This study can work as solid base for further researches as it provide few new inspirations besides the topic which has been mentioned and can act as an initiator for the future development of this concept. Moreover, future studies may address the gap in the literature regarding the empirical investigation of the outcomes of emotional branding such as; 1. Brand loyalty, 2. Purchase and re-purchase intentions, 3. Brand attitude formation, 4. Brand equity, and 5.affective commitment enriched with a comprehensive theoretical background.

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