3 Brand positioning

PREVIEW

The first two chapters have provided some perspective on branding and described the concept of customer-based brand equity. This was defined as the differential effect that brand knowledge has on customer response to the marketing of that brand. According to this definition, brand knowledge in consumers' minds is central to the creation and management of brand equity. Brand knowledge was conceptualized in terms of a brand node in memory with brand associations, varying in strength, connected to it. Brand equity is then a function of the level of brand awareness and the strength, favourability and uniqueness of brand associations.

The customer-based brand equity (CBBE) model lays out a series of steps for building a strong brand: establish the proper brand identity; create the appropriate brand meaning; elicit positive brand responses; and forge strong brand relationships with customers. The model maintains that six brand-building blocks – brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, brand judgements, brand feelings, and brand resonance – provide the foundation for successful brand development.

As outlined in Chapter 1, the first step in the strategic brand management process is to identify and establish brand positioning. Accordingly, this chapter builds on the notions introduced in Chapter 2 to first consider how to define desired or ideal brand knowledge structures in terms of how to position a brand. Positioning involves identifying and establishing points-of-parity and points-of-difference to establish the right brand identity and to create the proper brand image.[1]

With positioning, it is important to associate unique, meaningful *points-of-difference* to the brand to provide a competitive advantage and 'reason why' consumers should buy it. For some brand associations, however, consumers only need to view them at least as favourably as competitors. That is, it may be sufficient that some brand associations are seen as roughly equal in favourability with competing brand associations, so they function as *points-of-parity* in consumers' minds to negate potential points-of-difference for competitors. In other words, these associations are designed to provide 'no reason why not' for consumers to choose the brand. Assuming that other brand associations are evident as points-of-difference, more favourable brand evaluations and a greater likelihood of choice should then result.

The chapter reviews how to identify and establish core brand associations and a brand mantra. Chapters 4 to 7 describe marketing actions that a firm can take to build brand equity.

IDENTIFYING AND ESTABLISHING BRAND POSITIONING

The CBBE model provides a blueprint for building a strong brand. To use the model, strategic decisions must be made about the specific nature of the brand building blocks involved. To guide those decisions, it is necessary to define the brand positioning, described in this section, as well as a brand mantra, described in the next section.

Basic concepts

The CBBE model describes the way brand knowledge structures should be built to create brand equity. Critical to this view is the creation of strong, favourable and unique brand associations as part of the brand meaning. This section considers how marketers might determine *desired* brand meaning or positioning, that is, what they would like consumers to know about the brand as opposed to what they might currently know. Determining the desired brand knowledge structures involves positioning a brand.

Brand positioning is at the heart of marketing strategy. Brand positioning is the 'act of designing the company's offer and image so that it occupies a distinct and valued place in the target customer's mind.'[2] Positioning, as the name implies, involves finding the proper 'location' in the minds of a group of consumers or market segment so that they think about a product or service in the 'right' or desired way. Positioning is all about identifying the optimal location of a brand and its competitors in the minds of consumers to maximize potential benefit to the firm. A good brand positioning helps to guide marketing strategy by clarifying what a brand is all about, how it is unique and how it is similar to competitive brands, and why consumers should purchase and use the brand.

According to the CBBE model, deciding on a positioning requires determining a frame of reference (by identifying the target market and the nature of competition) and the ideal points-of-parity and points-of-difference brand associations. In other words, it is necessary to decide: who the target consumer is; who the competitors are; how the brand is similar to these competitors; and how the brand is different from these competitors. These four ingredients are each discussed in turn. Brand Briefing 3.1 describes some of the positioning problems that the cola companies have had in finding good positions for their diet soft drinks.

Target market

Identifying the target consumer is important because people may have different brand knowledge structures and thus different perceptions and preferences for the brand. Without this understanding, it may be difficult to be able to state which brand associations should be strongly held, favourable and unique. A number of considerations are important in defining and segmenting a market and choosing target market segments. A few are highlighted here.

Brand Briefing 3.1

Trying to find some homes for light colas

With consumers turning to healthier options such as water and sports drinks, soft drinks sales have been flat. 'Light' or 'diet' versions have been more successful and represent a growing market segment. Soft drink companies are therefore looking for ways to appeal to calorie-conscious consumers, especially men who are turned off by the taste of diet carbonated drinks or perceive a stigma attached to the word 'light'. And sweeteners, such as Splenda, which appeals to low-carb dieters, create even more options.

The drive to appeal to the health-conscious crowd, however, is making soft drinks a crowded category and success has not come easy for the cola giants. Coca-Cola tried to add Coke Light with Splenda, Coke Zero and C2 to its diet cola portfolio as companions to its hugely successful Coke Light brand. In the process, Coca-Cola has been going head-to-head in the light category with Pepsi, which has a reformulated Pepsi One, as well as Pepsi Max.

Although these line extensions are intended to boost sales, some critics point out that they can also backfire if new versions cannibalize sales of a company's existing beverages. Even worse, many feel that Coke and Pepsi run the risk of confusing consumers with endless variants. Despite spending millions on advertising, experts say customers don't always understand the differences between the options.

Introduced in 1998, Pepsi One appropriately has one calorie. Pepsi waited for Food and Drug Administration approval of sweetener acesulfame potassium (Ace-K) and spent more than $100 million on marketing the year following the launch. Pepsi positioned Pepsi One as a full-flavoured yet healthy option to regular colas and targeted men aged 20 to 30 who did not like the taste of light colas. Unfortunately, initial advertising, featuring actor Cuba Gooding Jr, failed to describe exactly what Pepsi One was and how it was different from Pepsi Max. Campaigns came and went, and when Pepsi One failed to garner the market share the company hoped for, it was reformulated with Splenda.

With the launch of Coke Zero and Coca-Cola light with Splenda in 2005, consumers faced an array of low or no-calorie Coke options, including Coke Light with Lime, Coke Light with Lemon, Light Cherry Coke, Light Vanilla Coke and Caffeine Free Coke Light. Coke Zero, named for its zero calories, was designed to taste more like regular Coke than Light Coke. Coke Zero began with the formula of Coca Cola but used aspartame and acesulfame potassium as sweeteners instead of sugar. Because the company was trying to stay away from the light label, the words 'light' and 'calories' were not mentioned in the initial marketing campaign. As a result, consumers didn't really know what Coke Zero was, and the company eventually switched to ads emphasizing its 'Real Coca-Cola taste, zero calories, no compromise.' Coke Zero was launching in the UK, Spain and Germany in the summer of 2006.

Brand Briefing 3.1 *continued*

Coke and Pepsi also introduced options with half of the calories of regular soft drinks that were marketed as 'mid-calorie' colas. With fifty calories, Pepsi Edge had half the sugar, carbohydrates and calories of regular colas. Pepsi Edge was geared toward calorie-conscious customers who vacillated between regular and diet colas, but preferred the sweeter version. But after failing to find a lucrative niche in the market, Pepsi announced in May 2005 that it would phase out Pepsi Edge by the end of the year.

Coca Cola's mid-calorie drink, C2, also experienced slower sales than expected after its 2004 launch in Japan and the US. Some experts maintain that both of these brands were caught in 'no man's land', offering an unsatisfactory compromise between taste and calories. In other words, people either want the taste and calories of a cola or they don't – there is not much middle ground.

It should be noted that both Coca Cola and Pepsi have product portfolios that vary significantly across Europe. Also, most international markets use 'light' instead of the US designation 'diet' for low-calorie products.

Sources: Marilynn Marter, 'Zero a hero to pop makers, drinkers,' *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* 6 July 2005; Kenneth Hein, 'Positioning: desperately seeking men with extra pounds to shed,' *Brandweek, 22* August 2005; Caroline Wilber, 'Coke Zero had identity crisis,' *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution,* 12 August 2005; www.coke.com; www.pepsi.com. Chad Terhune, 'Do real men drink Diet Cola? Pepsi and Coke duke it out,' *Wall Street Journal,* July 2, 2004, B1, B4. Heather Todd and Jeff Cioletti, 'A balanced diet,' *BeverageWorld,* June 2005: 24–28.

A *market* is the set of all actual and potential buyers who have sufficient interest in, income for and access to, a product. In other words, a market consists of all consumers with sufficient motivation, ability and opportunity to buy a product. *Market segmentation* involves dividing the market into distinct groups of consumers who have similar needs and consumer behaviour and thus require similar marketing mixes. Defining a market segmentation plan involves trade-offs between costs and benefits. The more finely segmented the market, the greater the likelihood that the firm will be able to implement marketing programs that meet the needs of consumers. The advantage of a more positive consumer response from a customized marketing program, however, can be offset by the greater costs from a lack of standardization.

Segmentation bases

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 display possible segmentation bases for consumer and industrial markets, respectively. In general, these bases can be classified as descriptive or customer-oriented (related to what kind of person or organization is the customer) versus behavioural or product-oriented (related to how the customer thinks of or uses the brand or product).

Behavioural	**Demographic**
User status	Income
Usage rate	Age
Usage occasion	Sex
Brand loyalty	Race
Benefits sought	Family
Psychographic	**Geographic**
Values, opinions and attitudes	International
Activities and lifestyle	Regional

Figure 3.1 Consumer segmentation bases

Nature of goods	**Demographic**
Kind	SIC code
Where used	Number of employees
Type of buy	Number of production workers
Buying condition	Annual sales volume
Purchase location	Number of establishments
Who buys	
Type of buy	

Figure 3.2 Business-to-business segmentation bases

Behavioural segmentation bases are often most valuable in understanding branding issues because they have clearer strategic implications. For example, defining a benefit segment makes it clear what should be the ideal point of difference or desired benefit with which to establish the positioning. Take the toothpaste market. One study uncovered four main segments:[3]

1. *The sensory segment:* seeking flavour and product appearance.
2. *The sociables:* seeking brightness of teeth.
3. *The worriers:* seeking decay prevention.
4. *The independent segment:* seeking low price.

Given this market segmentation scheme, marketing programs could be put into place to attract one or more segments. For example, Close-Up initially targeted the first two segments, whereas Crest primarily concentrated on the third segment. Leaving no stone unturned, Beecham's Aquafresh went after all three segments, designing the toothpaste to have three stripes to dramatize each of the three product benefits. With the success of multipurpose toothpastes such as Colgate Total, most brands now offer products that emphasize several benefits. Brand Briefing 3.2 describes a segmentation plan for Nokia customers.

Brand Briefing 3.2

Segmenting mobile phone users at Nokia

As mobile phones became a mass market product, people more or less asked for the same thing: smaller phones that were easier to use. The best brand at improving these aspects won sales. But as the phones approached the size we are used to today, size was no longer as important. Sleeker designs and replaceable covers became important. As the number of needs and wants in mobile phones grew, manufacturers developed more sophisticated segmentation models.

Segmentation became so crucial to the market leader, Nokia, that in 2002 it broke its then $24 billion mobile phone division into nine business units, each one focusing on different parts of the market.

In recent years, the segmentation has been based on two dimensions. The first is receptive or belonging versus individualistic and focused on self-esteem; and relaxed and pleasure-oriented versus restrictive, rational and confined. Through the combination of these dimensions, Nokia identified six segments for mobile phone users (Figure 3.3).

The product categories at Nokia were aligned with the consumer segmentation model with categories such as ‘classic’, ‘expression’, ‘fashion’, ‘premium’, ‘basic’ and ‘imaging’. Segmentation like this has helped Nokia create many models and lead to the success of its mobile phone portfolio as a whole.

However, segmenting high-technology products is sometimes not as easy as it might seem. Nokia has at times been criticized for overengineering the segmentation thinking, creating many designs and products that seemed superfluous and complex, such as some of its fashion phones without keypads. Meanwhile, category needs passed Nokia by, such as the sudden popularity of flip phones of the ‘clam-shell’ variety, which Nokia was slow to introduce.

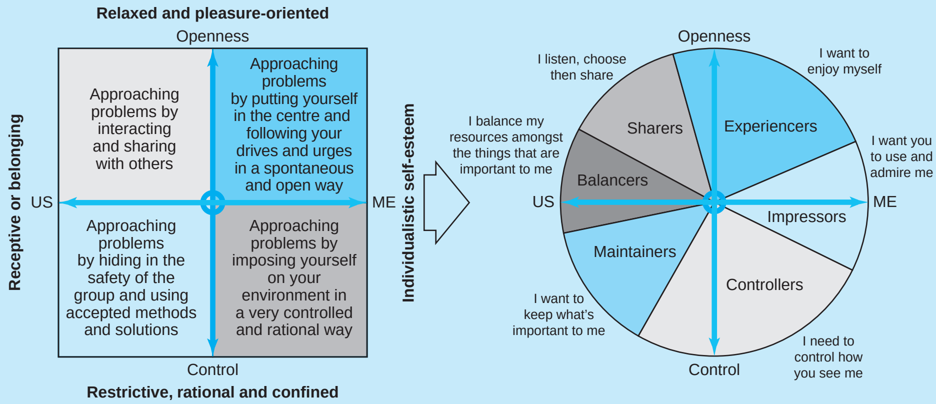

Figure 3.3 Nokia's six segments

Source: Nokia; Mercator Partners analysis.

Brand Briefing 3.2 *continued*

Perhaps because of the need to balance analysis with simplicity, Nokia expanded its 2005–2006 consumer study to include 42,000 interviews with consumers in sixteen countries, which provided the insights for Nokia's category renewal. 'The category renewal will be fundamental to the way Nokia approaches its customers and consumers, and addresses their needs. Having the best consumer understanding in the industry is vital to our whole business – from initial product designs through to sales and customer care,' said Robert Andersson, executive vice-president of customer market operations at Nokia. The revision resulted in eleven segments, but with only four product categories to serve them: 'Live', 'Connect', 'Achieve' and 'Explore'. The Achieve and Explore product categories also forgot their own sub brand designations in the product naming system, so they would stand out more clearly as distinct product families.

Andersson was quoted in the press as understanding that customers wanted simplicity even if at the same time the market was definitively not a 'one size fits all'.

Sources: Juha Pinomaa, 'Nokia mobile phones – extending the product range', August 27 2003, www.nokia.com; Mercator Partners, 'Effective mobile marketing with needs-based segmentation', www.mercatorpartners.com; Russell Beattie, 'Nokia: innovate on the inside', June 16 2004, www.russellbeattie.com; Nokia press release: 'Nokia connection 2006: extending leadership in mobility', June 19 2006, www.nokia.com.

Other segmentation approaches focus on brand loyalty in some way. For example, the conversion model measures the strength of the psychological commitment between brands and consumers and their openness to change.[3]

To determine the ease with which a consumer can be converted to another choice, the model assesses commitment based on factors such as consumer attitudes toward and satisfaction with current brand choices in a category and the importance of the decision to select a brand in the category.

The model segments users of a brand into four groups based on strength of commitment, from low to high, as follows:

- *Convertible:* on the threshold of change; highly likely to switch brands.
- *Shallow:* not ready to switch, but may be considering options.
- *Average:* comfortable with their choice; unlikely to switch in the future.
- *Entrenched:* staunchly loyal; unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

The model also classifies non-users of a brand into four other groups based on their openness to trying the brand, from low to high, as follows:

- *Strongly unavailable:* srongly prefer current brand.
- *Weakly unavailable:* preference lies with current brand, although not strongly.
- *Ambivalent:* as attracted to the 'other' band as to current choice.
- *Available:* prefer the 'other' brand but have not yet switched.

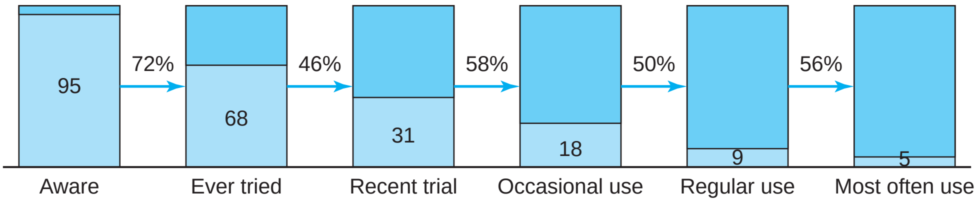

Figure 3.4 Hypothetical example of funnel stages and transitions

Another loyalty perspective, the 'funnel' model, traces consumer behaviour in terms of initial awareness through brand most often used. Figure 3.4 shows a hypothetical pattern of results. In terms of brand building, it is important to understand both the percentage of target market that is present at each stage as well as factors facilitating or inhibiting the transition from one stage to the next. In the hypothetical example, a bottleneck appears to be converting 'ever tried' consumers to those who have 'recently tried'. To achieve more active consideration, marketing may need to be put in place to raise brand salience or make the brand more acceptable in the target consumer's repertoire.

Often, the rationale for descriptive segmentation bases involves behavioural considerations. For example, marketers may choose to segment a market on the basis of age and target a certain age group, but the underlying reason why that age group may be an attractive market segment may be because they are particularly heavy users of the product, are unusually brand loyal, or are most likely to seek the benefit that the product is best able to deliver. In some cases, however, broad demographic descriptors may mask important underlying differences.[4] A fairly specific target market of 'women aged 40 to 49' may contain a number of segments that may require different marketing mixes.

The advantage of demographic segmentation bases is that the demographics of traditional media vehicles are generally well known from consumer research; as a result, it has been easier to buy media on that basis. With the growing importance of other media and forms of communication, as well as the capability to build databases to profile customers based on behavioural and media usage, however, this advantage has become less important. For example, US websites can now target such previously hard-to-reach markets as African Americans (NetNoir.com), Hispanics (Quepasa.com), Asian Americans (AsianAvenue.com), college students (Collegeclub.com) and gays (PlanetOut.com).

Criteria

A number of criteria have been offered to guide segmentation and target market decisions, such as the following:[5,6]

- *Identifiability:* can segment identification be easily determined?
- *Size:* is there adequate sales potential in the segment?
- *Accessibility:* are specialized distribution outlets and communication media available to reach the segment?
- *Responsiveness:* How favourably will the segment respond to a tailored marketing programme?

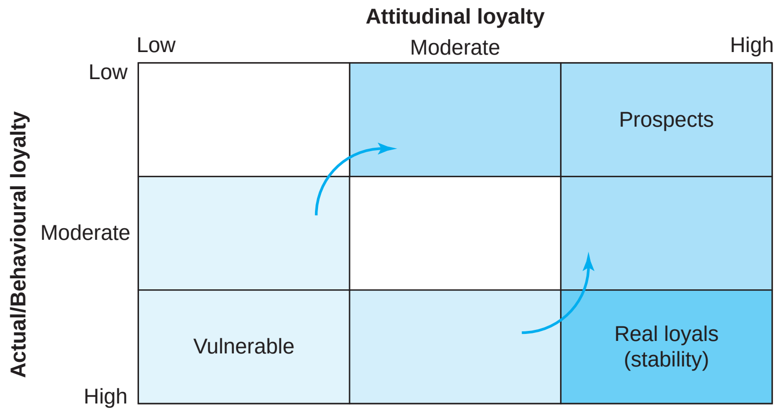

Figure 3.5 Brand loyalty segmentation

The overriding consideration in defining market segments is profitability. In many cases, profitability can be related to behavioural considerations. For example, Baldinger and Rubinson analyzed the implications of a brand loyalty segmentation. In their comprehensive study they mapped the relation between attitude and behaviour. Respondents were interviewed twice, the second interview a year after the first. The study comprised twenty-seven brands in five categories.[7]

Traditionally, the procedure for measuring loyalty has been to study the behavioural dimension. However, Baldinger and Rubinson believe that buyers who are loyal to a certain brand are also expected to judge the brand more favourably than brands that they never or seldom buy. They call such customers 'true loyals', while loyal customers who lack this 'true' loyalty to the brand are termed 'vulnerables'.

Their hypothesis was that a higher percentage of 'true loyal' customers remain loyal than 'vulnerable' ones. The respondents were asked about their attitudes towards the brand and then grouped in an attitude-behaviour matrix (Figure 3.5). It became clear that the attitude professed in the first interview had a great effect on the brand's ability to convert low loyalty customers to high loyalty customers and on its ability to keep the high loyalty customers.

The analysis showed that for eighteen of the twenty-seven brands studied, the market share increased over the year if the relationship between the 'prospects' and 'vulnerables' was positive (ie, more 'prospects' than 'vulnerables'). A healthy brand should thus strive to obtain a higher proportion of 'true loyals' compared with competing brands, and more 'prospects' than 'vulnerables'. Baldinger and Rubinson suggest that many market leading brands lack the level of positive attitude that is needed for longterm, continuous consumer loyalty.

Nature of competition

It is difficult to disentangle target market decisions from decisions concerning the nature of competition for the brand because they are often so closely related. In other words, deciding to target a certain type of consumer often, at least implicitly, defines the nature of competition because certain firms have also decided to target that segment or because consumers in that segment already may look to certain brands. Other issues can be raised, however, in defining the nature of competition and deciding which products and brands are most likely to be seen as close substitutes. For example, the nature of competition may depend on the channels of distribution chosen. Competitive analysis considers a host of factors – including the resources, capabilities, and likely intentions of various other firms – to choose markets where consumers can be profitably serviced (see also Chapter 11).[8]

One lesson stressed by many marketing strategists is not to be too narrow in defining competition. Often, competition may occur at the benefit level rather than the attribute level. Thus, a luxury good with a strong hedonic benefit (eg, stereo equipment) may compete as much with a vacation as with other durable goods (eg, furniture).

Unfortunately, many firms define competition narrowly and fail to recognize the most compelling threats and opportunities. For example, sales in the clothing industry have been stagnant as consumers decided to spend on home furnishings, electronics and other products that better suited their lifestyle.[9] Leading clothing makers may be better off considering the points-of-differences of their offerings not so much against other clothing labels but as against other discretionary purchases.

As noted in Chapter 2, products are often organized in consumers' minds in a hierarchical fashion such that competition can be defined at a number of levels. Take Fresca (a grapefruit-flavoured soft drink) as an example. At the product type level, it competes with non-cola, flavoured soft drinks; at the product category level, it competes with all soft drinks; and at the product class level, it competes with all beverages. The target and competitive frame of reference chosen will dictate the breadth of brand awareness and the situations and types of cues that should become closely related to the brand. Recognizing the nature of different levels of competition has important implications for brand associations, as described next.

Points-of-parity and points-of-difference

Once the appropriate competitive frame of reference for positioning has been fixed by defining the customer target market and nature of competition, the basis of the positioning itself can be defined. Arriving at the proper positioning requires establishing the correct points-of-difference and points-of-parity associations.[10]

Points-of-difference associations

Points-of-difference (PODs) are strong, favourable and unique associations for a brand. They may be based on almost any type of attribute or benefit association. All that matters for an attribute or benefit association to become a point of difference is that it becomes a strong, favourable and unique association in the minds of consumers. That is, PODs are attributes or benefits that consumers strongly associate with a brand, positively evaluate, and believe that they could not find to the same extent with a competitive brand.[11] Although a myriad of brand associations are candidates to become points-of-difference, according to the CBBE model, such associations can be classified in terms of either functional, performance-related considerations or abstract, imagery-related considerations.

The concept of PODs has much in common with other marketing concepts. For example, it is similar to the notion of the *unique selling proposition* (USP), a concept pioneered by Rosser Reeves and the Ted Bates advertising agency in the 1950s. The idea behind USP was that advertising should give consumers a compelling reason to buy a product that competitors could not match. With this approach, the emphasis in designing ads was placed on communicating a distinctive, unique product benefit (ie, the ad message or claims) and not on the creative (ie, the ad creative or execution). In other words, USP emphasized what was said in an ad as opposed to how it was said.

A related positioning concept is *sustainable competitive advantage* (SCA), which relates, in part, to a firm's ability to achieve an advantage in delivering superior value in the marketplace for a prolonged period of time.[12] Although the SCA concept is somewhat broader than points-of-difference – SCAs could be based on business practices such as human resource policies – it also emphasizes the importance of differentiating products in some fashion. Thus, the concept of points-of-difference is closely related to unique selling proposition and sustainable competitive advantage and maintains that a brand must have some strong, favourable and unique associations to differentiate itself from other brands.

Consumers' actual brand choices often depend on the perceived uniqueness of brand associations. Creating strong, favourable, and unique associations is a challenge to marketers, but essential in terms of competitive brand positioning. Swedish retailer Ikea took a luxury product – home furnishings and furniture – and made it a reasonably priced option for the mass market. Ikea supports its low prices by having customers serve, deliver and assemble the products themselves. Ikea also gains a point of difference through its product offerings. As one commentator noted, 'Ikea built their reputation on the notion that Sweden produces good, safe, well-built things for the masses. They have some of the most innovative designs at the lowest cost out there.'[13] As another example, consider Subaru.

Subaru

By 1993, Subaru was selling only 104,000 cars annually in the US, down 60 percent from their peak. Cumulative US losses approached $1 billion. Advertised as 'Inexpensive and built to stay that way,' Subaru was seen as a me-too car that was undifferentiated from Toyota, Honda and all their followers. To provide a distinct image, Subaru decided to sell only all-wheel-drive in its passenger cars. After upgrading its luxury image – and increasing its price – Subaru sold over 187,000 cars by 2004. The following year, it launched an ad campaign in the US that reflected its global brand positioning and broadened its brand meaning. The ad slogan, 'Think. Feel. Drive' was also used in Japan and the UK.

Points-of-difference may involve performance attributes (eg, the fact that Hyundai provides six front and back seat 'side-curtain' airbags as standard equipment on all its models for increased safety) or performance benefits (eg, the fact that Magnavox's electronic products have 'consumer friendly' technological features, such as television sets with 'smart sound' (to keeps volume levels constant while flipping through channels and commercial breaks) and 'Smart Picture' (to automatically adjust picture settings to optimal levels). In other cases, PODs involve imagery associations (eg, the luxury and status imagery of Louis Vuitton or the fact that British Airways is advertised as the 'world's favourite airline'). Many top brands attempt to create a point of difference on 'overall superior quality', whereas a positioning strategy adopted by other firms is to create a point of difference for their brands as the 'low-cost provider' of a product or service. Thus, many PODs are possible.

Points-of-parity associations

Points-of-parity (POPs), on the other hand, are associations that may be shared with other brands. These types of associations come in two forms: category and competitive. *Category points-of-parity* are those associations that consumers view as being necessary to be a legitimate and credible offering within a certain product or service category. In other words, they represent necessary – but not necessarily sufficient – conditions for brand choice. In terms of the discussion of product levels from Chapter 1, these attribute associations are minimally at the generic product level and most likely at the expected product level. Thus, consumers might not consider a bank truly a 'bank' unless it offered a range of cheque and savings accounts; provided safety deposit boxes, travellers' cheques and other such services; had convenient hours and automated cash machines; and so forth. Category POPs may change over time because of technological advances, legal developments and consumer trends, but the attributes and benefits that function as category POPs can be seen as the 'greens fees' to play the marketing game.

Note that category POPs become critical when a brand launches a brand extension into a new category. In fact, the more dissimilar the extension category, the more important it is to make sure that category POPs are well established. The implications of this realization for the introductory marketing program for an extension are clear. In many cases, consumers might have a clear understanding of the extension's intended point of difference by virtue of its use of an existing brand name. Where consumers often need reassurance, however, and what should often be the focus of the marketing, is whether the extension also has the necessary points-of-parity.

Nivea

Nivea became a leader in the skin cream category by creating strong points-of-difference on the benefits of 'gentle', 'protective' and 'caring'. As it used its brand equity to expand into categories such as deodorants, shampoos and cosmetics, Nivea found it necessary to establish category points-of-parity before it could promote its brands' points-of-difference. Nivea's points-of-difference of gentle, protective and caring were of little value unless consumers believed that its deodorant was strong enough, its shampoo would produce beautiful hair and its cosmetics would be colourful enough. Once points-of-parity were established, Nivea's heritage and other associations could be introduced as compelling points-of-difference.

Competitive points-of-parity are those associations designed to negate competitors' points-of-difference. In other words, if in the eyes of consumers, the brand association designed to be the competitor's point of difference (eg, a product benefit of some type) is as strongly held for the target brand as for competitor's brands *and* the target brand is able to establish another association as strong, favourable, and unique as part of its point of difference, then the target brand should be in a superior competitive position. In short, if a brand can 'break even' in those areas where their competitors are trying to find an advantage and can achieve advantages in some other areas, the brand should be in a strong – and perhaps unbeatable – position. For example, consider the introduction of Miller Lite beer.[14]

Miller Lite

When Philip Morris bought Miller Brewing in the US, its flagship High Life brand was not competing well, leading the company to decide to introduce a light beer. The initial advertising strategy for Miller Lite was to assure parity with a necessary and important consideration in the category by stating that it 'tastes great' while at the same time creating a point of difference with the fact that it contained one-third less calories (96 calories versus 150 calories for a standard-sized, full-strength beer) and was thus 'less filling'. As is often the case, the point of parity and point of difference were conflicting, as consumers tend to equate taste with calories. To overcome potential consumer resistance to this notion, Miller employed credible spokespeople, primarily popular former professional athletes who would presumably not drink a beer unless it tasted good. These people were placed in amusing situations in ads where they debated the merits of Miller Lite as to which of the two product benefits – 'tastes great' or 'less filling' – was more descriptive of the beer, creating valuable points-of-parity and points-of-difference. The ads ended with the clever tag line 'Everything you've always wanted in a beer . . . and less.'[15]

Points-of-parity versus points-of-difference

To achieve a point of parity on a particular attribute or benefit, a sufficient number of consumers must believe that the brand is 'good enough' on that dimension. There is a 'zone' or 'range of tolerance or acceptance' with POPs. It does not have to be the case that the brand is *literally* seen as equal to competitors, but consumers must feel that the brand does sufficiently well on that particular attribute or benefit so that they do not consider it to be a problem. Assuming consumers feel that way, they may then be willing to base their evaluations and decisions on other factors potentially more favourable to the brand. Points-of-parity are thus easier to achieve than points-of-difference, where the brand must demonstrate clear superiority. Often, the key to positioning is not so much in achieving a point of difference as in achieving necessary or competitive points-of-parity.

POSITIONING GUIDELINES

The concepts of points-of-difference and points-of-parity can be invaluable tools to guide positioning. A number of considerations come into play in conducting positioning analysis and deciding on the desired PODs and POPs and the resulting brand image. Two issues in arriving at the optimal competitive brand positioning are:

defining and communicating the competitive frame of reference; and choosing and establishing points-of-parity and points-of-difference.[16]

Defining and communicating the competitive frame of reference

A starting point in defining a competitive frame of reference for a brand positioning is to determine category membership. Membership indicates the products or sets of products with which a brand competes. Choosing to compete in different categories often results in different competitive frames of reference and thus different POPs and PODs (see Brand Briefing 3.3 on FedEx).

Brand Briefing 3.3

Competitive frames of reference for FedEx

Consider the history of FedEx, the US pioneer in the overnight delivery service (ONDS) category. Within this category, FedEx created strong, favourable and unique associations to the consumer benefits of being the fastest and most dependable delivery service (as reinforced by its slogan, 'When it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight'). This association provided a point of difference to the regular postal service (which would typically take two or more days depending on the destination), as well as other overnight carriers that found it difficult, at least initially, to match FedEx's high level of service quality.

Companies like FedEx used to build success from securing the transfer of important documents between companies and individuals. However, since offices are now full of fax machines, e-mail enabled computers and phones, 'speed and reliability' seems obsolete.

When faced with this situation, FedEx had several options. It could cater itself to the occasions when an e-mail or a fax seems insecure. In business, there are many occasions where absolute reliability and confirmation is very important and worth a premium. Even though there is some opportunity there, that market is less than FedEx was used to.

But what about internet commerce? As people on one hand started buying things on the web, to be delivered to their doorsteps, there was also the globalization process and the economic boom in Asia. All of these factors increased the need for fast shipping of packages.

UPS has been a tough competitor due to its aggressive pricing and good ground delivery capabilities. FedEx had to improve its ground delivery offers as well as market the package delivery offer more heavily. Still, the strength of the FedEx position, 'Speed and relaibility' is very strong, both in the case of the individual buying stuff on the web or for someone running a manufacturing business in China promising fast deliveries.

Brand Briefing 3.3 *continued*

FedEx was succesful in expanding from its basic positioning. After 2004, the volume of goods FedEx has shipped over its international network soared 40 percent, with much of the growth from Asia and the value of the company more than doubled between 2003 and 2006.

Sources: David Field, 'FedEx not ready to abandon shipping,' *USA Today*, October 20, 1999: B3. Dean Foust, 'The ground war at FedEx,' *BusinessWeek*, November 28, 2005; Vivian Mannin-Schaffel 'UPS and FedEx compete to deliver', www.brandchannel.com, 17 May 2004; Dean Foust, 'FedEx taking off like a "rocket ship"', *BusinessWeek*, 3 April 2006.

Communicating category membership informs the consumer about the goals that they might achieve by using a product or service. For established products and services, category membership is not a focal issue. Target customers are aware that Coca-Cola is a leading brand of soft drink, that Kellogg's is a leading brand of cereal, McKinsey is a leading strategy consulting firm and so on.

There are many situations, however, in which it is important to inform consumers of a brand's category membership. Perhaps the most obvious situation is new products, where the category membership is not always apparent. This uncertainty can be especially true for high-tech products.

Personal digital assistants

When personal digital assistants (PDAs) were introduced, the product could have been positioned as either a computer accessory or a replacement for an appointment book. Motorola Envoy's failure could be attributed in part to the lack of a clearly defined competitive set. By contrast, Palm Pilot, a product that performed many of the same tasks as Envoy, achieved success by claiming membership in the electronic organizer category. More recently, BlackBerry has extended that category to encompass e-mail while offering a more traditional keyboard, thus serving as a substitute to some extent for laptop computers. As these handheld devices continue to offer new features and services, their competitive frames of reference will continue to evolve.

Situations also exist in which consumers know a brand's category membership but may not be convinced that the brand is a true, valid member of the category. In such cases, alerting consumers to a brand's category membership is warranted. For example, consumers may be aware that Sony produces computers, but they may not be certain whether Sony computers are in the same 'class' as IBM, Dell and Compaq. In this instance, it might be useful to reinforce category membership.

Brands are sometimes affiliated with categories in which they do not hold membership rather than with the one in which they do. This approach is a viable way to highlight a brand's point of difference from competitors, provided that consumers know the brand's actual membership. For example, Bristol-Myers Squibb ran commercials for its Excedrin aspirin acknowledging Tylenol's perceived consumer acceptance for aches and pains, but touting their brand as 'The headache medicine'. With this approach, however, it is important that consumers understand what the brand stands for, and not just what it is *not*.

The preferred approach to positioning is to inform consumers of a brand's membership before stating its point of difference in relation to other category members. Presumably, consumers need to know what a product is and what function it serves before assessing whether it dominates the brands against which it competes. For new products, separate marketing programs are generally needed to inform consumers of membership and to educate them about a brand's point of difference. For brands with limited resources, this implies the development of a marketing strategy that establishes category membership before one that states a point of difference. Brands with greater resources can develop concurrent marketing programs in which one features membership and the other the point of difference. Efforts to inform consumers of membership and points-of-difference in the same ad, however, are often not effective.

Occasionally, a company will undertake to straddle two frames of reference.

BMW

When BMW made a strong competitive push into the US in the early 1980s, it positioned the brand as being the only car that offered both luxury and performance. At that time, US luxury cars were seen by many as lacking performance and performance cars were seen as lacking luxury. By relying on design, its German heritage and other aspects of a well-designed marketing program, BMW was able to simultaneously achieve: a point of difference on luxury and a point of parity on performance with respect to performance cars; and a point of difference on luxury and a point of parity on performance with respect to performance cars. The slogan 'The ultimate driving machine' effectively captured the newly created umbrella category – luxury performance cars.

Although a straddle positioning often is attractive as a means of reconciling potentially conflicting consumer goals, it carries an extra burden. If the points-of-parity and points-of-difference with respect to both categories are not credible, the brand may not be viewed as a legitimate player in either category. Many early PDAs that unsuccessfully tried to straddle categories ranging from pagers to laptop computers provide a vivid illustration of this risk.

There are three ways to convey a brand's category membership: communicating category benefits, comparing to exemplars and relying on the product descriptor.

To reassure consumers that a brand will deliver on the fundamental reason for using a category, benefits are frequently used to announce category membership. Thus, industrial motors might claim to have power, and analgesics might announce their efficacy. These benefits are presented in a manner that does not imply brand superiority but merely notes that the brand possesses these properties as a means to establish category POPs. To provide supporting rationale so that consumers believe that a brand has the benefits that imply membership in a category, performance and imagery associations can be used. A cake mix might attain membership in its category by claiming the benefit of great taste and might support this benefit claim by possessing high-quality ingredients (performance) or by showing users delighting in its consumption (imagery).

Exemplars – well-known, noteworthy brands in a category – can also be used to specify a brand's category membership. When Tommy Hilfiger was an unknown designer, advertising announced his membership as a great American designer by associating him with Geoffrey Beene, Stanley Blacker, Calvin Klein and Perry Ellis, who were recognized members of that category.

The product descriptor that follows the brand name is often a compact way of conveying category origin. For example, USAir changed its name to USAirways, according to chief executive Stephen Wolf, as part of the airline's attempted transformation from a regional one with a poor reputation to a strong national or even international brand. The argument was that other major airlines had the word 'airlines' or 'airways' in their names rather than air' which was felt to be typically associated with smaller, regional carriers.[17] Consider the following examples.

- Cars have been introduced in recent years that combine the attributes of a four-by-four, a minivan and a station wagon, eg, the Ford Escape, Honda CR-V and BMW X3. To communicate this unique position, the vehicles have been designated a 'sports wagon in the US'.[18]
- When Campbell's launched its V-8 Splash beverage line, it avoided including the word 'carrot' in the brand name despite the fact that it was the main ingredient. The name was chosen to convey healthful benefits but to avoid the negative perception of carrots.[19]
- California's prune growers and marketers attempted to establish a different name for their product, 'dried plums,' because prunes were seen by the target market of women aged 35 to 50 as 'a laxative for old people'.[20]

The product descriptor is often critical for technology products. When IBM rebranded its server product line as the eSeries, it created four sets of brands and products within the line. Although three of the series had clear designations – zSeries mainframe servers, pSeries Unix servers and xSeries Intel servers – some critics felt that the designation for their iSeries integrated application servers (formerly the highly successful AS/400) did not necessarily provide clear category membership either within the IBM product line or with respect to its server competitors.

Although it is important to establish a brand's category membership, it is usually not sufficient for effective brand positioning. Although such efforts can help to expand the category, if many firms engage in category-building tactics, the result may be consumer confusion. For example, at the peak of the dotcom boom, a host of websites advertised their category membership. Ameritrade, E*Trade, Datek and others advertised that they had lower commission rates on stock trades than conventional brokerage firms; Pets.com, Petopia, and other pet food suppliers promoted their vast array of pet supplies; and so on. A sound positioning strategy requires the specification not only of the category in which a brand holds membership, but also how a brand dominates other members of its category. Developing compelling points-of-difference is thus critical to effective brand positioning.

Choosing points-of-parity and points-of-difference

Points-of-parity are driven by the needs of category membership (to create category POPs) and the necessity of negating competitors' PODs (to create competitive POPs). In terms of choosing points-of-difference, broadly, the two most important considerations are that consumers find the POD desirable and believe that the firm has the capabilities to deliver on it. If both of these considerations are satisfied, the POD has the potential to become a strong, favourable and unique brand association. Both of these broad considerations have a number of specific criteria, as follows.

Desirability criteria

As noted in Chapter 2, there are three desirability criteria for PODs – relevance, distinctiveness, and believability – that must be assessed from a consumer perspective. Only by satisfying these will the POD be sufficiently desirable to consumers to have the potential to serve as a viable positioning alternative.

- Relevance: target consumers must find the POD personally relevant and important. Relevance considerations can be easily overlooked. For example, in the early 1990s, a number of brands in different product categories (colas, dish washing soaps, beer, deodorant, gasoline, etc.) introduced clear versions of their products to differentiate themselves better. Although 'clear' perhaps signalled natural, pure and lightness to consumers initially, a proliferation of clear versions of products that did not reinforce these other associations blurred its meaning. The 'clear' association has not seemed to be of enduring value or to be sustainable as a point of difference. In many cases, these brands have experienced declining market share or disappeared.
- Distinctiveness: target consumers must find the POD distinctive and superior. When entering a category in which there are established brands, the challenge is to find a viable basis for differentiation. A frequent occurrence is that the point of difference selected is one on which a brand dominates its competition and not one that is important to consumers. So, several analgesic brands, including Aleve, have found limited demand for the claim that their brand was long lasting or that infrequent dosing was required. Most consumers place more importance on fast relief than long-lasting relief. Indeed, long lasting may imply slow acting – just the opposite of what is desired.
- Believability: target consumers must find the POD believable and credible. A brand must offer a compelling reason for choosing it over the other options that might be considered. Perhaps the simplest approach is to point to a unique attribute of the product. Thus, Mountain Dew may argue that it is more energizing than other soft drinks and support this claim by noting that it has a higher level of caffeine. On the other hand, when the point of difference is abstract or image based, support for the claim may reside in more general associations to the company that have been developed over time. Thus, Chanel No 5 perfume may claim to be the quintessential elegant, French perfume and support this claim by noting the long association between Chanel and haute couture.

Deliverability criteria

Chapter 2 also highlighted three deliverability criteria: feasibility, communicability, and sustainability. If these are satisfied, the positioning has the potential to be enduring.

- Feasibility: The product must perform at the level stated. In other words, it must be feasible for the firm – in terms of affordability, resources necessary, time horizon involved and so forth – to actually create the POD. The product and marketing must be designed in a way to support the desired association. Does communicating the desired association involve real changes to the product itself or just perceptual ones as to how the consumer thinks of the product or brand? It is obviously easier to convince consumers of some fact about the brand that they were unaware of or may have overlooked than to make changes in the product and convince consumers of these changes.
- Communicability: the current or future prospects of communicating information to create or strengthen the desired associations. The issue here is consumers' perceptions of the brand and the resulting brand associations. It is very difficult to create an association that is not consistent with existing consumer knowledge or that consumers, for whatever reason, have trouble believing. The communicability of a brand association can depend on many things, but perhaps the most important is whether consumers can be given a compelling reason why the brand will deliver the desired benefit. In other words, what factual, verifiable evidence or 'proof points' can be given as support so that consumers will believe in the brand and its desired associations?
- Sustainability: the actual and communicated performance over time. Is the positioning pre-emptive, defensible and difficult to attack? Is it the case that the favourability of a brand association can be reinforced and strengthened over time? If these are the case, the positioning is likely to last for years. Sustainability depends on internal commitment and use of resources as well as external market forces. Applebee's strategy for leadership in the casual dining restaurant business, in part, is to enter smaller towns where a second major competitor might be unlikely to enter. Although there are downsides to the strategy – potentially smaller volume and lethal word-of-mouth from any service problems – competitive threats are minimal.[21]

Establishing points-of-parity and points-of-difference

Creating a strong brand positioning requires establishing the right points-of-parity and points-of-difference. The difficulty in doing so, however, is that many of the attributes or benefits that make up the POPs or PODs are negatively correlated. That is, if consumers mentally rate the brand highly on one particular attribute or benefit, they also rate it poorly on another. For example, it might be difficult to position a brand as 'inexpensive' and at the same time assert that it is 'of the highest quality'. Figure 3.6 gives some other examples of negatively correlated attributes and benefits. Moreover, individual attributes and benefits often have positive and negative

Low price v high quality	Powerful v safe
Taste v low calories	Strong v refined
Nutritious v good tasting	Ubiquitous v exclusive
Efficacious v mild	Varied v simple

Figure 3.6 Negatively correlated attributes and benefits

aspects. For example, consider a long-lived brand that is seen as having a great deal of heritage. Heritage could be seen as a positive attribute because it can suggest experience, wisdom and expertise. On the other hand, it could also be easily seen as being old-fashioned and not cutting-edge.

Unfortunately, consumers typically want to maximize both of the negatively correlated attributes and benefits. The challenge is that competitors often are trying to achieve their point of difference on an attribute that is negatively correlated with the point of difference of the target brand. Much of the art and science of marketing is how to deal with trade-offs, and positioning is no different. The best approach is to develop a product or service that performs well on both dimensions. Thus, the ability of BMW to establish their straddle positioning image of 'luxury and performance' was due in large part to product design and the fact that the car was considered both luxurious and high-performance. Similarly, Gore-Tex was able to overcome the seemingly conflicting product image of 'breathable' and 'waterproof' through technological advances.

There are other ways to address the problem of negatively correlated POPs and PODs. The following three approaches are listed in increasing level of effectiveness – but also increasing level of difficulty.

Separate the attributes

An expensive but sometimes effective approach is to launch two marketing campaigns, each devoted to a different brand attribute or benefit. These campaigns may run concurrently or sequentially. For example, Head & Shoulders shampoo met success in Europe with a dual campaign in which one ad emphasized its dandruff removal efficacy while another emphasized the appearance and beauty of hair after its use. The hope was that consumers would be less critical when judging the POP and POD benefits in isolation because the negative correlation might be less apparent. The downside to such an approach is that two strong campaigns have to be developed. Moreover, by not addressing the negative correlation head-on, consumers may not develop as positive associations as desired.

Exploit equity of another entity

In the Miller Lite example discussed earlier, the brand 'borrowed' or leveraged the equity of well-known and well-liked celebrities to lend credibility to one of the negatively correlated benefits. Brands can potentially link themselves to any kind of entity that possesses the right kind of equity – a person, other brand, event, and so forth – as a means to establish an attribute or benefit as a POP or POD. Self-branded ingredients may also lend some credibility to a questionable attribute in consumers' minds. Borrowing equity, however, is neither costless nor riskless. Chapter 7 outlines the pros and cons of leveraging equity.

Redefine the relationship

Finally, another potentially powerful but often difficult way to address the negative relationship between attributes and benefits in the minds of consumers is to convince them that in fact the relationship is positive. This redefinition can be accomplished by providing consumers with a different perspective and suggesting that they may be overlooking or ignoring certain factors or other considerations.

Apple

When Apple launched the Macintosh, its point of difference was 'user friendly'. Although many consumers valued ease of use – especially those who bought computers for the home – one drawback with this association was that customers who bought computers for business applications inferred that if it was easy to use, then it also must not be powerful – a key consideration in that market. Recognizing this potential problem, Apple ran a clever ad campaign with the tag line 'The power to be your best,' in an attempt to redefine what a powerful computer meant. The message behind the ads was that because Apple was easy to use, people in fact did just that – they used them! – a simple but important indication of 'power'. In other words, the most powerful computers were ones that people actually used.

Although difficult to achieve, such a strategy can be powerful because the two associations can become mutually reinforcing. The challenge is to develop a credible story with which consumers can agree.

Updating positioning over time

The previous section described some positioning guidelines that are especially useful for launching a brand. With established brands, competitive forces often dictate shifts in positioning strategy over time. Brand Briefing 3.4 describes the positioning of the European Union. The credit card wars provides another illustration.

Visa and American Express

Visa's POD as a credit card is that it is the most widely available card, which underscores the category's main benefit of convenience. American Express, on the other hand, has built the equity of its brand by highlighting the prestige associated with the use of its card. Having established their PODs, Visa and American Express now compete by attempting to blunt each other's advantage to create POPs. Along these lines, Visa offers gold and platinum cards to enhance the prestige of its brand and advertises 'It's everywhere you want to be' in aspirational settings that reinforce exclusivity and acceptability. On the other hand, American Express has substantially increased the number of

Brand Briefing 3.4

Positioning of the European Union

The European Union has from the start been dependent on the public opinion in its member states. Since the union is made up of democracies, every member state (and the nations interested in joining the union) has found itself with ‘pro-EU’ and ‘anti-EU’ camps, which all aim to position themselves.

Since 1973, the European Commission has been monitoring the evolution of public opinion in member states, thus helping the preparation of texts, decision-making and the evaluation of its work. The surveys and studies address topics concerning European citizenship: enlargement, social situation, health, culture, information technology, environment, the euro, defence, etc.

Overall, the most EU-positive citizens in a July 2006 study were Ireland, The Netherlands and Spain (where more than 70 percent of the population was positive), while the UK, Finland, Latvia and Austria were the most negative (with around 40 percent of the population positive). A face-to-face study gave interesting results. The debates in the different countries have resulted in different spontaneous associations (brand associations) to the EU.

For 38 percent of the Dutch and 29 percent of the Spanish, the EU is synonymous with co-operation between member states, while 25 percent of Germans and 27 percent of Italians mentioned the euro as the main symbol of the EU (versus 15 percent on average) and 18 percent referred to mobility. About 39 percent of French citizens saw the EU first and foremost as a series of institutions (ie 20 points higher than the average). The Irish rated the EU as good at fighting unemployment and for 23 percent of Polish citizens the words ‘European Union’ have a positive connotation, such as progress or a better future (ie 8 points higher than on average). The majority of Austrians can be qualified as Euro sceptics; 18 percent of them spontaneously mentioned inflation and 13 percent mentioned the potential negative consequences of immigration.

What this all means is that while there is only one EU, its brand image differs from country to country, not only on the positive-negative scale but also in position. This comes from the long political history in each country where EU issues have been mixed in with national political issues. So in branding terms, in one country a party could position EU membership as having certain points of difference (such as higher mobility) while also holding points of parity against the alternative (for instance holding EU membership as democratic, thus negating the opposing sides arguments). Another country could have the EU-advocates holding up other points of difference and points of parity to better suit the national agenda. Since political agendas have been different in the different countries, the EU does not have a clear, common brand image across its member states.

Still, the conclusion of the ‘Eurobarometer’ is that the EU has a positive image: ‘It is above all perceived as democratic, modern and protective. However, that does not

Brand Briefing 3.4 *continued*

prevent its main and loyal supporters from criticising its technocratic and to a certain extent inefficient character.' Even if we agree with this conclusion, Euroscepticism continues to be a problem for advancing the union. In 2000 the Danes and in 2003 the Swedes in referenda voted against adopting the euro, and in 2005, French (May 29) and Dutch (June 1) voters in referenda rejected the treaty establishing a constitution for Europe, leaving the future for that initiative uncertain. Setbacks like these coupled with low participation in EU elections could be signs of unclear positioning of what a 'yes' or a 'no' means, nationally and on the European level.

Margot Wallström, vice-president of the European Commission, responsible for institutional relations and communication strategy, said about the survey: 'The only way for the European Union to regain trust of its citizens is by delivering results: security, better opportunities in the labour market and better quality of life. These are the issues on which we should focus . . . Citizens expect also that the union leaders explain better benefits of enlargement.'

Sources: TNS, 'The future of Europe,' for the European Commission, May 2006; Standard Eurobarometer 65: Spring 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion; 'Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe,' www.wikipedia.org.

vendors that accept American Express cards and created other value enhancements through their 'Do more' and later their 'Make life rewarding' and 'A world of service' campaigns to reduce Visa's advantage on this dimension.

Updating positioning involves two main issues. The first is how to deepen the meaning of the brand to tap into core brand associations or other, more abstract considerations (*laddering*). The second is how to respond to competitive challenges that threaten an existing positioning (*reacting*).

Laddering

Although identifying PODs to dominate competition on benefits that are important to consumers provides a sound way to build an initial position, once the target market attains a basic understanding of how the brand relates to other products in the same category, it may be necessary to deepen the meanings associated with the brand positioning. It is often useful to explore underlying consumer motivations in a product category to uncover the relevant associations. For example, Maslow's hierarchy maintains that consumers have different priorities and levels of needs.[22] From lowest to highest priority, they are:

1. Physiological needs (food, water, air, shelter, sex).
2. Safety and security needs (protection, order, stability).

3. Social needs (affection, friendship, belonging).
4. Ego needs (prestige, status, self-respect).
5. Self-actualization (self-fulfillment).

According to Maslow, higher-level needs become relevant once lower-level needs are satisfied.

Marketers have recognized the importance of higher-level needs. For example, means-end chains have been devised as a way of understanding higher-level meanings of brand characteristics.[23] A means-end chain takes the following structure: Attributes (descriptive features that characterize a product) lead to benefits (the personal value and meaning attached to product attributes), which, in turn, lead to values (stable and enduring personal goals or motivations).[24] In other words, a consumer chooses a product that delivers an attribute (A) that provides benefits or has certain consequences (B/C) that satisfy values (V). For example, in a study of salty snacks, one respondent noted that a flavoured chip (A) with a strong taste (A) would mean that she would eat less (B/C), not get fat (B/C) and have a better figure (B/C), all of which would enhance her self-esteem (V).

Laddering thus involves a progression from attributes to benefits to more abstract values or motivations. In effect, laddering involves repeatedly asking what the implication of an attribute or benefit is for the consumer. Failure to move up the ladder may reduce the strategic options available to a brand. For example, P&G introduced Dash detergent to attract US consumers who used front-loading washing machines. Many years of advertising Dash in this manner made this position impenetrable by other brands. Dash was so associated with front-loaders, however, that when this type of machine went out of fashion, so did Dash. This occurred despite the fact that Dash was among P&G's most effective detergents, and despite significant efforts to reposition the brand.

Some attributes and benefits may lend themselves to laddering more easily than others. For example, the Betty Crocker brand appears on baking products and thus is characterized by the physical warmth associated with baking. Such an association makes it relatively easy to talk about emotional warmth and the joy of baking or the good feelings that might arise from baking for others. Similarly, Nivea skin cream has well-entrenched benefits of being 'caring', 'gentle' and 'protective' for the skin. Such a product foundation makes it easier to associate these same values with family relationships or friendships.

Thus, some of the strongest brands deepen their points-of-difference to create benefit and value associations, for example, Volvo and Michelin (safety and peace of mind), Intel (performance and compatibility), Marlboro (western imagery), Coke (Americana and refreshment), Disney (fun, magic and family entertainment), Nike (innovative products and peak athletic performance), and BMW (styling and driving performance). As a brand becomes associated with more and more products and moves up the product hierarchy, the brand's meaning will become more abstract. At the same time, it is important that the proper category membership and POPs and PODs exist in the minds of consumers for the particular products sold. After a consideration of how to react to competitor's actions, the following section discusses the related topic of core brand associations. Chapter 11 addresses issues in changing the meaning of brands over time.

Reacting

Competitive actions often aim to eliminate points-of-difference to make them points-of-parity or to strengthen or establish new points-of-difference. Often competitive advantages exist for only a short time before competitors attempt to match them. For example, when Goodyear introduced its Run-Flat tyres (which allowed tyres to keep going for up to 50 miles at a speed of 55 mph after a puncture or blowout), Michelin quickly responded with its Zero Pressure tyre, which offered the same consumer benefit.

When a competitor challenges a POD or attempts to overcome a POP, there are three main options for the target brand – from no reaction to moderate to significant reactions.

- Do nothing. If the competitive actions seem unlikely to recapture a POD or create a new POD, the best reaction is probably to just stay the course and continue brand-building efforts.
- Go on the defensive. If the competitive actions appear to have the potential to disrupt the market, it may be necessary to take a defensive stance. One way to defend the positioning is to add some reassurance in the product or advertising to strengthen POPs and PODs.
- Go on the offensive. If the competitive actions seem potentially quite damaging, it may be necessary to take a more aggressive stance and reposition the brand to address the threat. One approach may be to launch a product extension or ad campaign that fundamentally changes the meaning of the brand.

Deciding the severity of the competitive threat and the appropriate competitive stance can benefit from a brand audit, as described below. Essentially, the intent of the audit in this case would be to assess competitive actions in terms of how they would affect POPs and PODs according to the desirability and deliverability criteria listed previously.

DEFINING AND ESTABLISHING BRAND MANTRAS

Brand positioning describes how a brand can compete against a specified set of competitors in a particular market. In many cases, however, brands span product categories and therefore may have several distinct – yet related – positionings. As brands evolve and expand across categories, it is often useful to define a set of core brand associations to capture the essence of the brand meaning and what it represents. It is also often useful to synthesize the core brand associations to a core brand promise or brand mantra that reflects the essential 'heart and soul' of the brand. Both concepts are described next.

Core brand associations

Core brand associations are abstract associations (attributes and benefits) that characterize the five to ten most important aspects of a brand. Core brand associations can serve as a foundation for the brand strategy. In particular, such associations can serve as the basis of brand positioning in terms of how they relate to points-of-parity and points-of-difference.

Core associations can be identified through a structured process. The first step is to create a detailed mental map of the brand. A *mental map* portrays in detail all salient brand associations and responses for a particular target market (eg, brand users). Mental maps must reflect the reality of how the brand is actually perceived by consumers in terms of their beliefs, attitudes, opinions, feelings, images and experiences. The CBBE brand pyramid from Chapter 2 helps to highlight the types of associations and responses that may emerge in a mental map. Chapter 9 describes research techniques that can be used to construct a mental map. One of the simplest means to get consumers to create a mental map is by asking them for their top-of-mind brand associations (eg, 'When you think of this brand, what comes to mind?').

Next, brand associations are grouped into categories according to how they are related, often with two to four associations per category. Each category is labelled to be as descriptive as possible as a core brand association. For example, in response to a Nike brand probe, consumers may list LeBron James, Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods, Roger Federer, or Lance Armstrong, which could be summarized by the label 'top athletes'. There may be as few as three to five or as many as ten to twelve core brand associations. In assembling such associations, the challenge is to maximize the coverage of the mental map to include all relevant associations while making sure each one is as distinct as possible. Figure 3.7 displays a hypothetical mental map for MTV and Figure 3.8 lists the core brand associations the music TV channel.

Brand mantras

To focus on what a brand represents, it is often useful to define a brand mantra.[25] A brand mantra is highly related to concepts such as 'brand essence' or 'core brand promise'. A *mantra* is an articulation of the 'heart and soul' of the brand. Brand

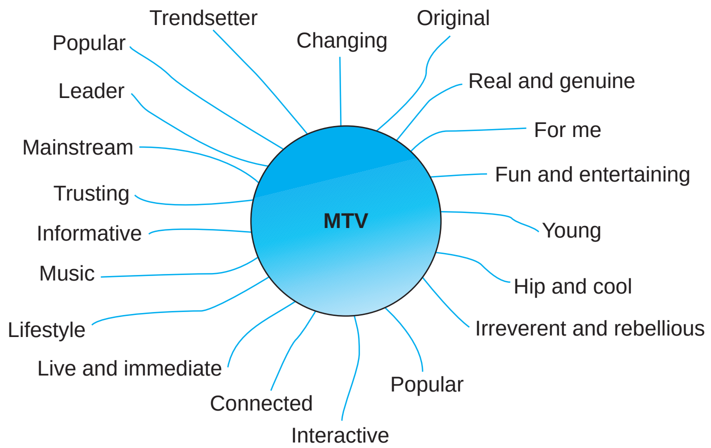

Figure 3.7 MTV mental map

- **Music**
  What's hot and what's new
- **Credibility**
  Expert, trusting, reality
- **Personality**
  Irreverent, hip, cool
- **Accessibility**
  Relevant, for everyone
- **Interactivity**
  Connected and participatory
- **Community**
  Shared experience (literally and talk value)
- **Modern**
  Hip, cool
- **Spontaneity**
  Up-to-the-minute, immediate
- **Originality**
  Genuine, creative
- **Fluidity**
  Always changing and evolving

Figure 3.8 MTV core brand associations

mantras are three- to five-word phrases that capture the irrefutable essence or spirit of the brand positioning. Their purpose is to ensure that all employees within the organization and all external marketing partners understand what the brand fundamentally is to represent to consumers so that they can adjust their actions accordingly.

Brand mantras are powerful devices. They can provide guidance as to what products to introduce under the brand, what ad campaigns to run, where and how the brand should be sold and so on. The influence of brand mantras, however, can extend beyond these tactical concerns. Brand mantras may even guide the most seemingly unrelated or mundane decisions, such as the look of a reception area and the way phones are answered. In effect, they are designed to create a mental filter to screen out inappropriate marketing activities or actions that might hurt customers' impressions of a brand.

Mantras are important for a number of reasons. First, any time a consumer or customer encounters a brand – in any way, shape, or form – his or her knowledge about that brand may change, and as a result, the equity of the brand is affected. Given that a vast number of employees, either directly or indirectly, come into contact with consumers in a way that may affect consumer knowledge about the brand, it is important that employee words and actions reinforce and support the brand meaning. Many employees or marketing partners (eg, ad agency members) who potentially could help or hurt brand equity may be far removed from the marketing strategy formulation and may not even recognize their role in influencing equity. A brand mantra signals the importance of the brand to the organization and an understanding of its meaning as well as the crucial role of employees and marketing partners in its management. It also provides a memorable shorthand as to what are the crucial considerations of the brand that should be kept most salient and top-of-mind.

Writing a brand mantra

What makes for a good mantra? McDonald's philosophy of 'Food, folks and fun' captures its brand essence and core promise. Two high-profile examples of brand mantras come from two powerful brands, Nike and Disney, as described in Brand

	Emotional modifier	Descriptive modifier	Brand functions
Nike	Authentic	Athletic	Performance
Disney	Fun	Family	Entertainment

Figure 3.9 Writing a brand mantra

Briefings 3.5 and 3.6. Brand mantras must economically communicate what the brand is and what the brand is *not*. The Nike and Disney examples show the power and utility of having a well-designed brand mantra. They also help to suggest what might characterize a good mantra. Both examples are structured the same way, with three words, as in Figure 3.9.

Brand Briefing 3.5

Nike's brand mantra

A brand with a keen sense of what it represents to consumers is Nike. The company has a rich set of associations with consumers, revolving around such considerations as its innovative product designs, its sponsorship of top athletes, its award-winning advertising, its competitive drive and its irreverent attitude. Internally, Nike marketers adopted a three-word brand mantra of 'authentic athletic performance' to guide their marketing efforts. Thus, in Nike's eyes, its entire marketing program – its products and how they are sold – must reflect the values conveyed by the mantra.

Nike's mantra has had profound implications for its marketing. In the words of ex-Nike marketers Scott Bedbury and Jerome Conlon, the mantra provided the 'intellectual guard rails' to keep the brand moving in the right direction. From a product development standpoint, the mantra has affected where Nike has taken the brand. Over the years, Nike has expanded its brand meaning from 'running shoes' to 'athletic shoes' to 'athletic shoes and clothing' to 'all things associated with athletics' (including equipment). Each step of the way, however, it has been guided by its mantra. For example, as Nike rolled out its clothing range, one important hurdle for the products was that they could be made innovative enough through material, cut, or design to benefit top athletes. At the same time, the company has been careful to avoid using the Nike name on products that do not fit with the mantra (eg, causal 'brown' shoes).

When Nike has experienced problems with its marketing, it has often been a result of its failure to figure out how to translate the mantra to the challenge at hand. For example, in Europe, Nike experienced disappointments until realizing that 'authentic athletic performance' has a different meaning in Europe and, in particular, has to involve soccer in a major way, among other things. Similarly, Nike stumbled in developing its All Conditions Gear outdoors shoes and clothing sub-brand in translating the mantra into a less competitive arena.

Brand Briefing 3.6

Disney's brand mantra

Disney's development of its mantra was in response to its incredible growth through licensing and product development during the mid-1980s. In the late 1980s, Disney became concerned that some of its characters (Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, etc.) were being used inappropriately and becoming overexposed. To investigate the severity of the problem, Disney undertook an extensive brand audit. As part of a brand inventory, it compiled a list of all Disney products that were available (licensed and company manufactured) and all third-party promotions (complete with point-of-purchase displays and relevant merchandising) from shops all over the world. At the same time, Disney launched research – a brand exploratory – to investigate how consumers felt about the Disney brand.

The results revealed some potentially serious problems: the Disney characters were on so many products and marketed in so many ways that in some cases it was difficult to discern what could have been the rationale behind the deal to start with. The consumer study only heightened Disney's concerns. Because of the broad exposure of the characters, many consumers had begun to feel that Disney was exploiting its name. In some cases, consumers felt that the characters added little value to products and, worse yet, involved children in purchase decisions that they would typically ignore.

Because of its aggressive marketing, Disney had written contracts with many of the 'park participants' for co-promotions or licensing arrangements. Disney characters were selling everything from nappies to cars to hamburgers. Disney learned in the consumer study, however, that consumers did not differentiate between all of the product endorsements. 'Disney was Disney' to consumers, whether they saw the characters in films, records, theme parks, or consumer products. Consequently, *all* products and services that used the Disney name or characters affected Disney's brand equity. Consumers reported that they resented some of these endorsements because they felt that they had a special, personal relationship with the characters and with Disney that should not be handled so carelessly.

As a result of the audit, Disney moved quickly to establish a brand equity team to manage the brand franchise and carefully evaluate licensing and other third-party promotional opportunities. One of the mandates of this team was to ensure that a consistent image for Disney, reinforcing its key brand associations, was conveyed by all third-party products and services. To encourage this supervision, Disney adopted an internal brand mantra of 'fun family entertainment' to serve as a screen for proposed ventures. Opportunities that were not consistent with the mantra – no matter how appealing – were rejected. For example, Disney was approached to co-brand a mutual fund in Europe that was designed for families as a way for parents to save for the college expenses of their children. The opportunity was declined despite the consistent 'family' association because Disney believed that a connection with the financial community or banking suggested other associations that were inconsistent with their brand image (mutual funds are rarely intended to be entertaining).

These mantras can be broken down into three terms. The *functions* term describes the nature of the product or service or the type of experiences or benefits that the brand provides. This may range from concrete language, where the term just reflects the product category itself, to more abstract notions, as with Nike and Disney, where the term relates to higher-order experiences or benefits that may be delivered by a variety of different products. The *descriptive modifier* is a way to circumscribe the business functions term to clarify its nature. Thus, Nike's performance is not just any kind (eg, not artistic performance) but only *athletic* performance; Disney's entertainment is not just any kind (eg, not adult-oriented entertainment) but only *family* entertainment. Combined, the brand function term and descriptive modifier help to delineate the brand boundaries. Finally, the *emotional modifier* provides another qualifier in terms of how the brand delivers these benefits. In other words, what is the qualitative nature of what the brand does? How exactly does it provide benefits and in what way? This term provides further delineation and clarification. To provide distinctiveness, for example, the Disney mantra could add the word 'magical'.

Such mantras don't have to follow this structure, but whatever structure is adopted, it must be the case that the brand mantra clearly delineates what the brand is supposed to represent and therefore, at least implicitly, what it is not. Several additional points about brand mantras are worth noting.

First, mantras derive their power and usefulness from their collective meaning. Other brands may be strong on one, or perhaps even a few, of the brand associations making up the mantra. For the brand mantra to be effective, no other brand should singularly excel on all dimensions. Part of the key to both Nike's and Disney's success is that for years no other competitor could really deliver on the promise suggested by their mantras as well as those brands.

Second, these mantras typically are designed to capture the brand's points-of-difference. Other aspects of the brand positioning – especially the brand's points-of-parity – may also be important and may need to be reinforced in other ways. Finally, for brands facing rapid growth, a brand function term can be criticial to provide guidance as to appropriate and inappropriate categories into which to extend. For brands in more stable categories, the mantra may focus on points-of-difference as expressed by the functional and emotional modifiers, perhaps not even including a brand functions term.

Implementing a brand mantra

Brand mantras should be developed at the same time as the brand positioning. As noted earlier, such positioning typically is a result of an in-depth examination of the brand through some form of audit or other activities. Mantras may benefit from the learning gained from those activities but, at the same time, require more internal examination and involve input from a wider range of employees and marketing staff. Part of this internal exercise is to determine the means by which each and every employee affects brand equity and how he or she can contribute in a positive way to a brand's destiny.

Procedurally, the brand positioning can often be summarized in a few sentences or a short paragraph that suggests the ideal core brand associations that should be held by consumers. Based on these core brand associations, a brainstorming session can attempt to identify combinations of words as brand mantra candidates. A number of characteristics seem to distinguish brand mantras. To arrive at the final mantra, the following considerations should come into play:

- *Communicate:* A good mantra should both define the category (or categories) of business for the brand to set the brand boundaries as well as also clarify what is unique about the brand.
- *Simplify:* An effective mantra should be memorable. As a result, it should be short, crisp and vivid. In many ways, a three-word mantra is ideal because it is the most economical way to convey the brand positioning. There are times, however, when more words – in the form of clarifying the business functions or the nature of the modifiers – may be necessary.
- *Inspire:* Ideally, the mantra should also stake out ground that is meaningful and relevant to as many employees as possible. Brand mantras can do more than inform and guide; they can also inspire if the brand values tap into higher-level meaning with employees as well as consumers.

Regardless of how many words make up the mantra, there will always be a level of meaning beneath the mantra that will need to be articulated. Almost any word is ambiguous enough that several interpretations are possible. Consequently, it becomes important to explain in greater detail just what is meant by each word or term in the mantra. For example, 'fun', 'family' and 'entertainment' in Disney's case could each take on meanings such that Disney felt the need to drill deeper with the mantra to provide a stronger foundation. Two or three short phrases were therefore added to clarify each of the words.

Brand mantras point out the importance of *internal branding* – making sure that members of the organization are properly aligned with the brand and what it represents. Much branding literature has taken an *external* perspective, focusing on strategies and tactics that firms should take to build or manage brand equity with customers.[26] Without question, at the heart of all marketing activity is the positioning of a brand and the essence of its meaning with consumers. In terms of strategic and tactical importance, properly positioning a brand is essential to creating a strong brand.

Equally important, however, is positioning the brand internally, that is, the manner by which the brand positioning is explained and communicated internally.[27] With service companies especially, an up-to-date and deep understanding of the brand by employees is critical. In the past, comparatively little attention was paid to an *internal* perspective to consider what steps firms should take to be sure their employees and marketing partners appreciate and understand basic branding notions and how they can affect and help – or hurt – the equity of their particular brands. Recently, though, a number of companies have put forth initiatives to improve their internal branding.

Chapter 8 describes brand charters as a means to communicate internally and to marketing partners. Besides brand mantras, companies need to engage in continual open dialogue with their employees. Branding should be perceived as participatory. Some firms have pushed business-to-employee (B2E) programs through corporate intranets and other means. For example, after Ford Motor Company offered its US employees free computers to help them get online, they initiated a regular communication program with employees, called True Blue. Walt Disney is seen as so successful at internal branding and having employees support their brand that they teach seminars at their Disney Institute on the 'Disney style' of creativity, service and loyalty for employees from other companies.

In some cases, internal branding can both motivate employees and serve to attract customers externally. For example, to help create an expectation of trust with its customers, Midas ran an ad campaign showing their own employees as heros. Awareness of the Midas corporate brand rose 25 percent as a result.[28] In short, internal branding is a critical management priority. Successful internal branding requires a mixture of resources and processes, all designed to inform and inspire employees to maximize their mutually beneficial contribution to brand equity.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Determining the desired brand knowledge structures involves positioning a brand in the minds of consumers. According to the customer-based brand equity model, deciding on a positioning requires determining a frame of reference (by identifying the target market and the nature of competition) and the ideal points-of-parity and points-of-difference brand associations. Determining the proper competitive frame of reference depends on understanding consumer behaviour and the consideration sets consumers adopt in making brand choices.

Points-of-difference are those associations that are unique to the brand that are also strongly held and favourably evaluated by consumers. Determining points-of-difference associations that are strong, favourable, and unique is based on desirability and deliverability considerations, which are combined to determine the resulting anticipated levels of sales and costs that might be expected with the positioning. Points-of-parity, on the other hand, are those associations that may be shared with other brands. Category point-of-parity associations are those associations that consumers view as being necessary to be a legitimate and credible product offering within a certain category. Competitive point-of-parity associations are those associations designed to negate a competitor's points-of-differences. Deciding on these four ingredients will determine the brand positioning and dictate the desired brand knowledge structures.

A broader set of considerations is also useful for positioning, especially for a more developed brand that spans many categories. A mental map accurately portrays in detail all salient brand associations and responses for a particular target market (eg, brand users). Core brand associations are those set of abstract associations (attributes and benefits) that characterize the five to ten most important aspects of a brand. Core brand associations can serve as an important foundation for the brand strategy. In particular, core brand associations can serve as the basis of brand positioning in terms of how they relate to points-of-parity and points-of-difference. Finally, a brand mantra is an articulation of the 'heart and soul' of the brand. Such mantras are three- to five-word phrases that capture the essence or spirit of the brand positioning and brand values. Their purpose is to ensure that all employees within the organization as well as all external marketing partners understand what the brand most fundamentally is to represent with consumers so that they can adjust their actions accordingly.

The concepts discussed in this chapter are powerful tools to guide positioning.

Once the brand positioning strategy has been determined, the actual marketing program to create, strengthen, or maintain brand associations can be put into place. Chapters 4 to 7 describe some of the important marketing mix issues in designing supporting marketing programs.

Discussion questions

1. Apply the categorization model to a product category other than beverages. How do consumers make decisions whether or not to buy the product, and how do they arrive at their final brand decision? What are the implications for brand equity management for the brands in the category? How does it affect positioning, for example?
2. Pick a brand. Describe its breadth and depth of awareness.
3. Pick a category dominated by two main brands. Evaluate the positioning of each brand. Who are their target markets? What are their main points-of-parity and points-of-difference? Have they defined their positioning correctly? How might it be improved?
4. Can you think of any negatively correlated attributes and benefits other than those listed in Figure 3.6? Can you think of any other strategies to deal with negatively correlated attributes and benefits?
5. Think of one of your favourite brands. Can you come up with a brand mantra to capture its positioning?

References and notes

[1]Much of this chapter is based on Kevin Lane Keller, Brian Sternthal and Alice Tybout, 'Three questions you need to ask about your brand,' *Harvard Business Review*, September, 80 (9), 80–89.

[2]Phillip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller, *Marketing Management*, 12th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2006.

[3]Chip Walker, 'How strong is your brand?,' *Marketing Tools* (January/February 1995): 46–53.

[4]Russell I. Haley, 'Benefit segmentation: a decision-oriented research tool,' *Journal of Marketing* 32 (July 1968): 30–35.

[5]Also, the demographic specifications given may not fully reflect consumer's underlying perceptions. For example, when the Ford Mustang was introduced, the intended market segment was much younger than the ages of the customers who actually bought the car. Evidently, these consumers felt or wanted to feel younger psychologically than they really were.

[6]Ronald Frank, William Massey and Yoram Wind, *Market Segmentation* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972).

[7]Allan Baldinger and Joel Rubinson, 'Brand loyalty: the link between attitude and behavior,' *Journal of Advertising Research* (November–December 1996): 22–34.

[8]A complete treatment of this material is beyond the scope of this chapter. Useful reviews can be found in any good marketing strategy text. For example, see David A. Aaker, *Strategic Market Management*, 7th edition, 2005 (New York, NY: John Wiley) or Donald R. Lehmann and Russell S. Winer, *Product Management*, 4th edition, 2005 (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill/Irwin).

[9]Teri Agins, 'As consumers find other ways to splurge, apparel hits a snag,' *Wall Street Journal*, 4 February 2005, A1, A6.

[10]Stacy Kravetz, 'Baskin-Robbins scoops up a new look,' *Wall Street Journal*, 4 September 1977, B1.

[11]Patrick Barwise and Sean Meehan, *Simply Better: Winning and keeping customers by delivering what matters most* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2004).

[12]The concept of 'points-of-parity' and 'points-of-difference' and many of the other ideas and examples in this section were developed by Northwestern University's Brian Sternthal and refined in collaboration with Northwestern University's Alice Tybout.

[13]John Czepiel, *Competitive Marketing Strategy* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1992).

[14]Richard Heller, 'Folk Fortune,' *Forbes*, 4 September 2000, 66–69.

[15]Brian Sternthal, 'Miller Lite case,' Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University.

[16]When Miller Lite was introduced, the assumption was that the relevant motivation underlying the benefit of 'less filling' for consumers was that they could drink more beer. Consequently, Miller targeted heavy users of beer with a sizable introductory ad campaign concentrated on mass-market sports programs. As it turned out, the initial research showed that the market segment they attracted was more the moderate user – older and upmarket. Why? The brand promise of 'less filling' is ambiguous. To this group of consumers, 'less filling' meant that they could drink beer and stay mentally and physically agile. From Miller's standpoint, attracting this target market was an unexpected but happy outcome because it meant that there would be less cannibalization with their more mass-market High Life brand.

[17]Richard A. Melcher, 'Why Zima faded so fast,' *BusinessWeek*, 10 March 1997, 110–114.

[18]David Field, 'Airline tries loftier name,' *USA Today*, 10 March 1997, B7.

[19]Keith Naughton, 'Ford's "perfect storm,"' *Newsweek*, 17 September 2001, 48–50.

[20]Elizabeth Jensen, 'Campbell's juice scheme: stealth health,' *Wall Street Journal*, 18 April 1997, B6.

[21]Steven Gray, 'How Applebee's is making it big in small towns,' *Wall Street Journal*, 2 August 2004, B1, B4.

[22]Shelly Branch, 'Irradiated food by any other name might just win over consumers,' *Wall Street Journal*, 14 August 2001, B1.

[23]Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970).

[24]Thomas J. Reynolds and Jonathan Gutman, 'Laddering theory: method, analysis and interpretation,' *Journal of Advertising Research* (February/March 1988): 11–31.

[25]Marco Vriens and Frenkel Ter Hofstede, 'Linking attributes, benefits and consumer values,' *Marketing Research* (Fall 2000): 3–8.

[26]For some notable exceptions, see Hamish Pringle and William Gordon, *Brand Manners: How to create the self confident organization to live the brand*, 2001, John Wiley; Thomas Gad, *4-D Branding: Cracking the corporate code of the network economy*, Financial Times Prentice-Hall, 2000; Nicholas Ind, *Living the Brand: How to transform every member of your organization into a brand champion*, 2nd edition, 2004, London: Kogan Page; Scott M. David and Kenneth Dunn, *Building the Brand-Driven Business: Operationalize your brand to drive profitable Growth*, 2002, Josey-Bass.

[27]Kevin Lane Keller, 'Brand mantras: rationale, criteria and examples,' *Journal of Marketing Management* 15 (1999): 43–51.

[28]Nikki Hopewell, 'Generating brand passion,' *Marketing News*, 15 May 2005, 10.