4 Choosing brand elements to build brand equity

PREVIEW

Brand elements, sometimes called brand identities, are trademarkable devices that serve to identify and differentiate the brand. The main brand elements are names, website addresses, logos, symbols, characters, spokespeople, slogans, jingles, packages and signage. Independent of the decisions made about the product and how it is marketed, such elements can be chosen in a manner to build as much brand equity as possible. That is, according to the customer-based brand equity model, brand elements can be chosen to enhance brand awareness; facilitate the formation of strong, favourable and unique brand associations; or elicit positive brand judgements and feelings. The test of the brand-building ability of brand elements is what consumers would think or feel about the product if they only knew about its brand name, associated logo and other characteristics. A brand element that provides a positive contribution to brand equity, for example, would be one for which consumers assumed or inferred certain valued associations or responses. Figure 4.1 displays some characters that have done well internationally and Figure 4.2 lists some slogans. Can you name them all?

This chapter considers how elements can be chosen to build brand equity. After describing the general criteria for choosing such elements, it considers tactical issues for each type of brand elements. The chapter concludes by addressing how a marketer should choose an optimal set of elements to build brand equity.

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING BRAND ELEMENTS

In general, there are six criteria in choosing brand elements (as well as more specific choice considerations in each case, as shown in Figure 4.3):

1. Memorability.
2. Meaningfulness.
3. Likability.
4. Transferability.
5. Adaptability.
6. Protectability.

Answers:
1. Tony the Tiger (Kellogg's Frosties); 2. Ronald McDonald (McDonald's); 3. The Michelin Man; 4. Johnnie Walker (Diageo); 5. Bic Boy; 6. World Wildlife Foundation; 7. Linux; 8. American Express; 9. Nestlé

Figure 4.1   Famous brand elements (guess the brand)

1. 'The ultimate driving machine'
2. 'Think different'
3. 'We try harder'
4. 'My goodness, my____ !'
5. 'Where do you want to go today?'
6. 'Vorsprung durch technik.'
7. 'Because I'm worth it.'
8. 'Probably the best beer in the world.'
9. 'Good to the last drop'
10. 'All the news that's fit to print'

Answers:
1. BMW; 2. Apple; 3. Avis; 4. Guinness; 5. Microsoft; 6. Audi; 7. L'Oreal; 8. Carlsberg; 9. Maxwell House; 10. The New York Times

Figure 4.2   Classic slogans

1. **Memorable**	4. **Transferable**
Easily recognized	Within and across product categories
Easily recalled	Across geographic boundaries and cultures
2. **Meaningful**	5. **Adaptable**
Descriptive	Flexible
Persuasive	Can be updated
3. **Likable**	6. **Protectable**
Fun and interesting	Legally
Rich visual and verbal imagery	Competitively
Aesthetically pleasing	
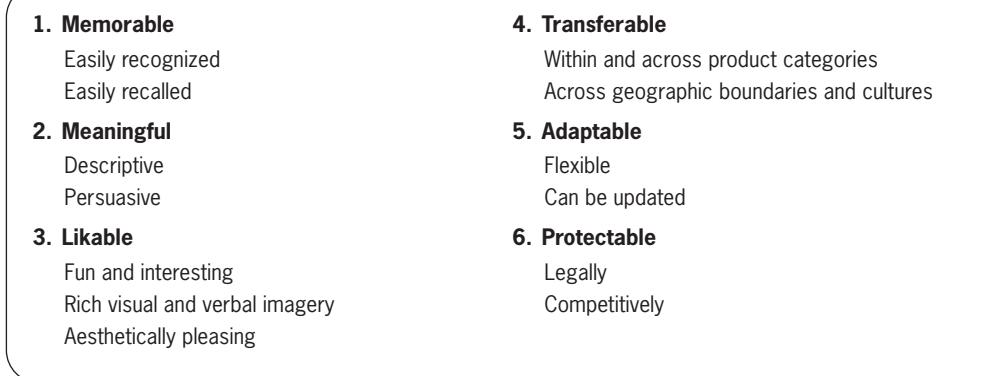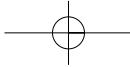
Figure 4.3   Criteria for choosing brand elements

The first three criteria can be characterized as brand building or offensive-minded in nature and concern how brand equity can be built through the judicious choice of a brand element. The latter three, however, are more brand-preserving or defensive-minded and are concerned with how the equity in a brand element can be used and maintained in the face of different opportunities and constraints. The following sections briefly consider each of these general criteria.

MEMORABILITY

A necessary condition for building brand equity is achieving a high level of brand awareness. Towards that goal, brand elements can be chosen that are memorable and so aid recall or recognition in purchase or consumption settings. In other words, the intrinsic nature of certain names, symbols, logos, and the like – their semantic content, visual properties and so on – may make them more attention-getting and easy to remember and therefore contribute to brand equity. For example, naming a brand of propane gas cylinders 'Blue Rhino' and reinforcing it with a powder-blue animal mascot with a distinctive yellow flame is likely to stick in the minds of consumers.

Meaningfulness

Besides choosing brand elements to build awareness, brand elements can also be chosen whose inherent meanings enhance the formation of brand associations. Elements may take on all kinds of meaning, varying in descriptive, as well as persuasive, content. For example, Chapter 1 described how brand names could

be based on people, places, animals or birds. Two important dimensions or aspects of the meaning of a brand element are the extent to which it conveys the following:

- General information about the nature of the product category. In terms of descriptive meaning, to what extent does the element suggest something about the product category? How likely would it be that a consumer could identify the corresponding product category or categories for the brand based on any one element? In a related question, does the brand element seem credible in the product category? In other words, is the content of an element consistent with what consumers would expect to see from a brand in that product category?
- Specific information about particular attributes and benefits of the brand. In terms of persuasive meaning, to what extent does the element suggest something about the particular kind of product that the brand would likely be, for example, in terms of attributes or benefits? Does it suggest something about a product ingredient or the type of person who might use the brand? The first dimension is an important determinant of brand awareness and salience; the second dimension is an important determinant of brand image and positioning.
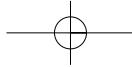
Likability

Associations suggested by a brand element may not always be related to the product. Thus, elements can be chosen that are rich in visual and verbal imagery and inherently fun and interesting. Independent of its memorability and meaningfulness, how aesthetically appealing do consumers find the element? Is it likable, both visually, verbally and in other ways? In other words, independent of the particular product or service, how much would consumers like the brand element? The Brand Briefing 4.1 outlines how marketing aesthetics can be applied to brand elements and branding in general.

In terms of these first three criteria, memorable, meaningful and likable brand elements offer many advantages. Because consumers often do not examine much information in making product decisions, it is often desirable that brand elements be easily recognized and recalled and inherently descriptive and persuasive. Moreover, memorable or meaningful brand names, logos, symbols, and so on reduce the burden on marketing communications to build awareness and link brand associations. The associations that arise from the likability and appeal of the brand elements also may play a critical role in the equity of a brand, especially when few other product-related associations exist. Often, the less concrete the possible product benefits are, the more important is the creative potential of the brand name and other brand elements to capture intangible characteristics of a brand.

Transferability

The fourth general criterion concerns the transferability of the brand element – in both a product category and geographic sense. First, to what extent can the brand element add to the brand equity of new products sharing the brand elements introduced

Brand Briefing 4.1

Brand design and aesthetics

Schmitt and Simonson explore the importance and applications of 'marketing aesthetics,' a concept with many branding implications. They refer to *marketing aesthetics* as 'the marketing of sensory experiences in corporate or brand output that contributes to the organization's or brand's identity.' They approach marketing aesthetics from three perspectives: product design, communications research, and spatial design. They argue that aesthetics offers tangible value to organizations by creating loyalty, allowing for premium pricing, cutting through information clutter, affording protection from competitive attacks and saving costs and increasing productivity. The following provides a brief overview to this line of thinking.

Aesthetics strategy is defined as 'the strategic planning and implementation of identity elements that provide sensory experiences and aesthetic gratification to the organization's multiple constituents'. They describe the basic rationale for this approach as follows:

> Customers do not have direct access to an organization's or a brand's culture, missions, strategies, values, to the 'private self' of the organization or the brand. However, customers do see the public face of the organization or brand – its expressions. This public face is projected through identity elements with various aesthetic styles and themes. It is never seen in its totality, but the various perceptions are integrated into overall customer impressions.

Thus, according to their approach, the styles and themes of design elements are the vehicle of how corporate expressions affect customer impressions, as follows.

Style refers to a distinctive quality or form, a manner of expression. Style is composed of primary elements, including sight (colour, shape, line, pattern, and typeface), sound (loudness, pitch, and metre), touch (material and texture), taste and smell. Strategic issues in style creation are whether to juxtapose design elements and when styles should be adapted or abandoned. Four perceptual dimensions are identified to evaluate corporate or brand identity-related styles: complexity ('minimalism' v 'ornamentalism'), representation ('realism' v 'abstraction'), perceived movement ('dynamic' v 'static') and potency ('loud/strong' v 'soft/weak'). International hotel brands (Hyatt, Four Seasons, Mandarin Oriental and Hilton) can be seen as being positioned differently on these dimensions.

The authors argue that to be effective, styles must be combined with themes that express an organization's or brand's private self succinctly and directly. *Themes* refer to the content, meaning, and projected image of an identity. Themes can provide customers with mental anchors and reference points to allow them

Brand Briefing 4.1 *continued*

to put an organization in a wider context and to distinguish its position. Themes are expressed most pointedly if they are: used as prototypical expressions of an organization's core values or mission or of a brand's character; repeated and adapted over time; and developed into a system of interrelated ideas. Themes can be expressed in a variety of ways: as corporate brand names, symbols, narratives, slogans or jingles, concepts, or combinations of elements. Decisions regarding themes revolve around the use of one theme or many, theme variation or isolation, integration of verbal and visual information, and adapting or abandoning themes.
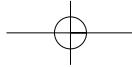
Source: Bernd H. Schmitt and Alex Simonson, *Marketing Aesthetics: The strategic management of brands, identity and image* (New York: Free Press, 1997).

either within the product class or across product classes? In other words, how useful is the brand element for range or category extensions? In general, the less specific the name, the more easily it can be transferred across categories. For example, Amazon connotes a massive South American river and therefore as a brand can be appropriate for a variety of different types of products, whereas Book 'R' Us would not have afforded the same flexibility.

Second, to what extent does the brand element add to brand equity across geographic boundaries and market segments? To a large extent this depends on the cultural content and linguistic qualities of the brand element. For example, an advantage of nonmeaningful names (eg, Exxon) is that they translate well into other languages because they have no inherent meaning. The mistakes that even top companies have made in translating their brand names, slogans and packages into other languages and cultures over the years have become legendary. Figure 4.4 lists some global branding mishaps. Companies must review all their brand elements for cultural meaning before introducing the brand into a market.

Adaptability

The fifth consideration concerns the adaptability of a brand element over time. Because of changes in consumer values and opinions, or simply because of a need to remain contemporary, elements often must be updated over time. The more adaptable and flexible the element, the easier it is to update it. For example, logos and characters can be given a different look or design to make them appear more modern and relevant.

1. When Braniff translated a slogan touting its upholstery, 'Fly in leather,' it came out in Spanish as 'Fly naked.'
2. Coors put its slogan, 'Turn it loose,' into Spanish, where it was read as 'Suffer from diarrhoea.'
3. US chicken magnate Frank Perdue's line, 'It takes a tough man to make a tender chicken,' sounds much more interesting in Spanish: 'It takes a sexually stimulated man to make a chicken affectionate.'
4. Why Chevy Nova never sold well in Spanish-speaking countries: *No va* means 'it doesn't go' in Spanish.
5. When Pepsi started marketing its products in China, it translated the slogan, 'Pepsi brings you back to life,' literally. The slogan in Chinese really meant 'Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave.'
6. When Coca-Cola shipped to China, it named the product something that when pronounced sounded like 'Coca-Cola'. The only problem was that the characters used meant 'Bite the wax tadpole.' It later changed to a set of characters that mean 'Happiness in the mouth.'
7. Hair products company Clairol introduced the Mist Stick, a curling iron, into Germany only to find out that mist is slang for manure in German.
8. When Gerber started selling baby food in Africa, it used the US packaging with a cute baby on the label. Later it found out that in Africa, companies routinely put pictures on the label of what's inside because most people can't read.
9. Japan's Mitsubishi Motors had to rename its Pajero model in Spanish-speaking countries because the term related to masturbation.
10. Toyota's MR2 model dropped the number in France because the combination sounded like a French swearword.

Figure 4.4   Ten global branding mishaps

Protectability

The final consideration concerns the extent to which a brand element can be protected – both in a legal and competitive sense. In terms of legal considerations, it is important to: choose elements that can be protected internationally; formally register them with the appropriate legal bodies; and vigorously defend trademarks from unauthorized competitive infringement. The necessity of legally protecting the brand is dramatized by huge sums lost each year from unauthorized use of patents, trademarks and copyrights, as described in Brand Briefing 4.2.

A closely related consideration is the extent to which the brand element is competitively protectable. Even if a brand element can be protected legally, it still may be the case that competitive actions can take away much of the brand equity provided by the brand elements themselves. If a name, package, or other attribute is too easily copied, much of the uniqueness of the brand may disappear. For example, consider the once hot ice-beer category. Although Molson Ice was one of the early entries in the category, its pioneering advantage from a branding standpoint was lost when Miller Ice and what later became Bud Ice were introduced. Thus, it is important to reduce the likelihood that competitors can imitate the brand by creating a derivative based on salient prefixes or suffixes of the name, emulating the package look, or other actions.

Brand Briefing 4.2

The counterfeit business is booming

From Calloway golf clubs to Louis Vuitton handbags, counterfeit versions of brands are everywhere. The fakes are soaking up profits faster than multinationals can squash counterfeiting operations and they're getting tougher to distinguish from the real thing. The difference can be as subtle as lesser-quality leather in a purse or fake batteries inside a mobile phone. And counterfeiters can produce fakes cheaply by cutting corners on safety and quality without paying for marketing, R&D and advertising.
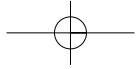
Fakes have long thrived in places such as Hong Kong, Rio and Moscow but counterfeiting has become increasingly sophisticated and pervasive. The World Customs Organization estimates counterfeit products account for 5 percent to 7 percent of global merchandise trade, equivalent to lost sales of as much as $512 billion. And US Customs seizures of fakes grew by 46 percent in 2004, partly because counterfeiters increased exports to western markets.

And it's not just luxury items and consumer electronics that are being copied. The World Health Organization says up to 10 percent of medicines worldwide are counterfeited. Those drugs not only purloin pharmaceutical industry profits but also present a danger to anyone who takes them because they are manufactured under inadequate safety controls.

About two-thirds of counterfeit goods are produced in China. Other counterfeit hotspots include the Philippines, Vietnam, Russia, Ukraine, Brazil, Pakistan and Paraguay. The operations are financed by such varied sources as Middle East businessmen who invest in facilities in Asian countries for export, local Chinese entrepreneurs and criminal networks. And some legitimate licensees make fakes on the side. Those authorized licensees can then use legitimate channels to get the products to shops. Some counterfeiters mix real products with fake ones and others ship containers filled with fakes through so many ports it becomes impossible to tell where the product originated.

The replication process has also sped up as counterfeiters have honed their engineering skills and increased their speed. Chinese factories can now copy a new golf club in less than a week. And executives at a variety of companies say counterfeiters have no trouble copying holograms and other security devices intended to distinguish fakes from real products.

Experts say China is the key to stemming the counterfeiting tide. Producing counterfeit goods is as profitable as trading illegal drugs but does not carry the same risk. In many countries, convicted counterfeiters get off with a fine. Chinese authorities have ignored the problem for years, mostly because it did not hurt local industries. But as the country's corporate interests grow and Chinese companies are hurt by the counterfeit industry, experts say the Chinese government will be more co-operative.

Brand Briefing 4.2 *continued*

Japanese company Nichia spent three years fighting court battles all over Asia to curb piracy of its white-light-emitting diode. The invention brings in $2 billion annually but counterfeiters copied the design and have cut Nichia's market share and dropped prices for the diode. Nichia had little success in the Asian courts and decided to instead go after US companies buying the Asian knock-offs.

Other companies have also decided to target the end users, hoping that manufacturers will eventually be forced to get a licence and pay royalties. And some patent holders are beginning to get creative and target anyone on the supply chain who ignores counterfeit businesses. Louis Vuitton has worked with New York landlords to prevent the sale of counterfeit Louis Vuitton goods by tenants on a notorious counterfeit hotspot Canal Street. But since the business of counterfeiting thrives on globalization, experts say all many companies can do for now is hope to slow, not stop, the counterfeiters.

Sources: Frederik Balfour, 'Fakes,' *BusinessWeek*, 7 February 2005; Thomas Kellner, 'Hit 'em where it hurts,' *Forbes*, 20 June 2005; Julia Boorstin, 'Louis Vuitton tests a new way to fight the faux,' *Fortune*, 16 May 2005.

OPTIONS AND TACTICS FOR BRAND ELEMENTS

The value of choosing brand elements strategically to build brand equity can be seen by considering the advantages of having chosen 'Apple' as the name for a computer. Apple was a simple but well-known word that was distinctive in the product category – factors facilitating the development of brand awareness. The meaning of the name also gave the company a 'friendly shine' and warm brand personality. Moreover, the name could be reinforced visually with a logo that could easily transfer across geographic and cultural boundaries. Finally, the name could serve as a platform for sub-brands (eg, as with the Macintosh, a common type of Apple in the US), aiding the introduction of brand extensions.

What would an ideal brand element be like? Consider names – perhaps the most central of all brand elements. Ideally, a brand name would be easily remembered, highly suggestive of both the product class and the particular benefits that served as the basis of its positioning, inherently fun or interesting, rich with creative potential, transferable to a wide variety of product and geographic settings, enduring in meaning and relevant over time, and easily protected both legally and competitively.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to choose a name – or any brand element, for that matter – that would satisfy all of these criteria. For example, as noted earlier, the more meaningful the brand name, the more likely it is that the brand name will not be transferable to other cultures because of translation problems. Moreover, names

are generally less adaptable over time. Because it is so difficult to find one brand element that will satisfy all the choice criteria, several elements are typically employed. The following sections outline the main considerations for each type of brand element. The chapter concludes by discussing how to put all of this together to design a set of elements to build brand equity.

Brand names

The name is fundamentally important because it often captures the central theme or key associations of a product in a compact and economical fashion. Brand names can be an extremely effective shorthand means of communication.[1] Whereas the time it takes consumers to comprehend marketing communications can range from a half a minute (for an advertisement) to potentially hours (for a sales call), the brand name can be noticed and its meaning registered or activated in memory in just a few seconds.

Because the brand name becomes so tied to the product in the minds of consumers, however, it is also the most difficult element for marketers to change. Consequently, brand names are often systematically researched before being chosen. The days when Henry Ford II could name an automobile the 'Edsel' after the name of a family member seem to be long gone.

Is it difficult to come up with a brand name? Ira Bachrach, a branding consultant, notes that although there are 140,000 words in the English vocabulary, the average native English-speaker only recognizes 20,000 words. His company, NameLab, sticks to the 7,000 words that make up the vocabulary of most TV programs and commercials. Although that may sound like a lot of choices, each year tens of thousands of brands are registered as legal trademarks. In fact, arriving at a satisfactory brand name for a product can be a painful and prolonged process. After realizing that most of the desirable brand names are already legally registered, many a frustrated executive has lamented that 'all of the good ones are taken'.

In some ways, this difficulty should not be surprising. Any parent can probably sympathize with how hard it can be to choose a name for a child, as evidenced by the thousand of babies born each year without names because their parents have not decided on – or perhaps not agreed upon – a name. It is rare that naming a product can be as easy as it was for Ford when it introduced the Taurus automobile. 'Taurus' was the code name given to the car during its design stage because the chief engineer's and product manager's wives were both born under that astrological sign. As luck would have it, upon closer examination, the name turned out to have a number of desirable characteristics. Consequently, it was chosen as the actual name for the car in the US, saving thousands of dollars in research and consulting expenses.

Naming guidelines

Selecting a brand name for a product is an art and a science. This section provides guidelines for choosing a name. It focuses on developing a new name for the product; Chapter 12 considers how a company can use existing brand or company names in various ways for new products. Figure 4.5 lists the types of possible brand names according to identity experts Landor Associates. As with any brand element, names must be

1. **Descriptive**

   Describes function literally; generally unregisterable

   Examples: Singapore Airlines, Global Crossing

2. **Suggestive**

   Suggestive of a benefit or function

   Examples: marchFIRST, Agilent Technologies

3. **Compounds**

   Combination of two or more, often unexpected, words

   Examples: Redhat, Bluetooth

4. **Classical**

   Based on Latin, Greek, or Sanskrit.

   Example: Meritor

5. **Arbitrary**

   Real words with no obvious tie-in to company

   Example: Apple

6. **Fanciful**

   Coined words with no obvious meaning

   Example: Avanade

Figure 4.5   Landor's brand name taxonomy

chosen with the six general criteria in mind. After outlining some more specific naming criteria, this chapter describes the process by which a name should be chosen.

In general, it is believed that brand awareness is improved the extent to which brand names are chosen that are simple and easy to pronounce or spell; familiar and meaningful; and different, distinctive, and unusual.[2]

Simplicity

First, to enhance brand recall, it is desirable for the brand name to be simple and easy to pronounce or spell. Simplicity reduces consumers' cognitive effort to comprehend and process the brand name. Short names often aid recall because they are easy to encode and store in memory (eg, Aim toothpaste, Raid pest spray, Bold laundry detergent, Suave shampoo, Off insect repellent, Jiff peanut butter, Ban deodorant and Bic pens). Longer names can be shortened to ease recallability. For example, over the years Chevrolet cars have become known as 'Chevy', Budweiser beer has become known as 'Bud,' and Coca-Cola has also become known as 'Coke'.

Ease of pronunciation is critical to obtain valuable repeated word-of-mouth exposure that helps to build strong memory links. Pronunciation also affects entry into consideration sets and the willingness of consumers to order or request the brand orally. Rather than risk the embarrassment of mispronouncing a difficult name (as might be the case with such potentially difficult-to-pronounce names as Hyundai cars, Fruzen Gladje ice cream, or Faconnable clothing), consumers may just avoid pronouncing it altogether.

Clearly, it is a challenge to build brand equity for a brand with a difficult-to-pronounce name because so much of the initial marketing efforts have to be devoted to simply educating consumers as to the proper way to pronounce the name. In the case of Wyborowa imported Polish vodka (pronounced vee-ba-rova), management actually resorted to running a print ad to help consumers pronounce the brand name – a key factor of consumer behaviour for success in the distilled spirits category where little self-service exists and consumers might need to ask for the brand.

Ideally, the name should have a clear, understandable and unambiguous pronunciation and meaning. The way a brand is pronounced can affect its meaning. Consumers may take away different perceptions of the brand if ambiguous pronunciation of its name results in different meanings. One study showed that certain hypothetical products that had brand names that were acceptable in both English and French (eg, Vaner, Randal and Massin) were perceived as more 'hedonic' (ie, providing much pleasure) and better liked when pronounced in French than in English.[3]

Pronunciation problems may arise from not conforming to linguistic rules. Although Honda chose the name Acura because it was associated with words connoting precision in several languages, it had trouble with consumer pronunciation of the name (pronounced AK-yur-a) in the US.

To improve pronouncability and recallability, many marketers seek a desirable cadence and pleasant sound in their brand names.[4] For example, names may use alliteration (repetition of consonants, such as in Coleco), assonance (repetition of vowel sounds, such as in Ramada Inn), consonance (repetition of consonants with intervening vowel change, such as in Hamburger Helper), or rhythm (repetition of pattern of syllable stress, such as in Better Business Bureau). Some words employ onomatopoeia-words composed of syllables that when pronounced generate a sound strongly suggestive of the word's meaning (eg, Sizzler steak house, Cap'n Crunch cereal, Ping golf clubs, or Schweppes carbonated beverages).

Familiarity and meaningfulness
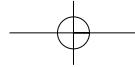
A second consideration to enhance brand recall is that the name should be familiar and meaningful so that it is able to tap into existing knowledge structures. Brand names may be concrete or abstract in their meaning. As pointed out in Chapter 1, all types of categories of objects can be used to form a name. Because these objects exist in memory in verbal and visual form, less learning has to occur.[5] Links can be more easily formed to the object name and product, increasing memorability.[6]

Thus, when a consumer sees an ad for the first time for a car called Neon, the fact that the consumer already has the word stored in memory should make it easier to encode the product name and so improve its recallability. In fact, Chrysler chose that name for its Dodge car because it also connoted 'young, youthful and vibrant', fitting the desired image for the product.

To help create strong brand-category links and aid recall, the brand name may also be chosen to suggest the product or service category (eg, JuicyJuice 100 percent fruit juices, Ticketron ticket selling service, and *Newsweek* weekly news magazine). Brand elements that are highly descriptive of the product category or its attribute and benefits, however, may be potentially quite restrictive.[7] For example, it may be difficult to introduce a soft drink extension for a brand called JuicyJuice!

Differentiated, distinctive and uniqueness

Although choosing a simple, easy to pronounce, familiar and meaningful brand name can improve recallability, to improve brand recognition, on the other hand, it is important that names be different, distinctive, and unusual. As Chapter 2 noted,

recognition depends on consumers' ability to discriminate between brands and more complex brand names are more easily distinguished. Distinctive names can also faciltate the learning of intrinsic product information.[8]

The distinctiveness of a brand name is a function of its inherent uniqueness as well as its uniqueness in the context of rivals in a product category. Similarity of two names may also be defined be in terms of either meaning or sound.[9] Distinctive words may be seldom-used or atypical words for the product category (eg, Apple computers), unusual combinations of real words (eg, Toys 'R' Us), or made-up words (eg, Xerox or Exxon). Even made-up names, however, have to satisfy linguistic rules and convention (eg, try to pronounce names without vowels such as Blfft, Xgpr, or Msdy!).

As with all brand choice criteria, trade-offs must be recognized. Even if a distinctive name is advantageous for brand recognition, it also has to be seen as credible and desirable in the product category. A notable exception is Smuckers jelly in the US, which has tried to turn the handicap of its distinctive – but potentially dislikable – name into a benefit through its slogan, 'With a name like Smuckers, it has to be good!'

Although choosing a memorable name is valuable, it is often necessary for the brand to have broader meaning to consumers than just the product category it is in. Because the brand name is a compact form of communication, the explicit and implicit meaning that consumers extract from the name can be critical. In particular, the brand name may be chosen to reinforce an important attribute or benefit association that makes up its product positioning (see Figure 4.6). Suggestive names are of course related to language, so non-native English speakers can find examples in their own markets with their own language.

PowerBook

In 1989, Apple had just introduced a heavy, ineffective portable computer that had failed in the marketplace. Needing a name for its latest portables, it turned to name consultant Lexicon. Using focus groups of users of competitive products, Lexicon began working with the terms laptop and notebook. PowerBook became the winner because it combined two things that are common but not typically used together: 'book', a small product that holds a lot of information, and 'power'. Lexicon's linguists even liked the sounds of the brand name and how it would relate to the product positioning, asserting that the 'p' in 'power' would bring to mind compactness and speed, and the 'b' in 'book' would suggest dependability.[10]

ColorStay lipsticks	Lean Cuisine low-calorie frozen meals
Head & Shoulders shampoo	Mastercard credit cards
SnackWell reduced fat snacks	iPod MP3 player
DieHard car batteries	PlayStation videogame
Roller Blade inline roller skates	Motorola RZR (Razor) mobile phone
Red Bull energy drink	

Figure 4.6   Sample suggestive brand names

Besides performance-related considerations, brand names can be chosen to communicate more abstract considerations. For example, brand names may be intangible or emotion-laden to arouse certain feelings (eg, Joy dishwashing liquid, Caress soap and Obsession perfumes).
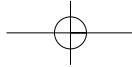
A descriptive brand name should make it easier to link the reinforced attribute or benefit.[11] That is, it should be easier to communicate to consumers that a laundry detergent 'adds fresh scent' to clothes if it were given a name such as 'Blossom' than if it were given a neutral, nonsuggestive name such as 'Circle'.[12] Although brand names chosen to reinforce the initial positioning of a brand may help linkage of that brand association, they may also make it harder to link new associations to the brand if it has to be repositioned.[13] For example, if a brand of laundry detergent were to be named Blossom and positioned as 'adding fresh scent', it may be more difficult to attempt to reposition the product and add a new association, for example, that the product 'fights tough stains'. Consumers may find it more difficult to accept or just too easy to forget the new positioning when the brand name continues to remind them of other product considerations.

With sufficient time and marketing, however, the restrictive nature of suggestive names sometimes can be overcome. British Airways no longer stands for airline service around the British isles. When two former Texas Instruments engineers were considering the name for their portable personal computers, they chose the name 'Compaq' because it suggested a small computer. Through subsequent introductions of 'bigger' personal computers, advertising campaigns, and other marketing activity, Compaq has been able to transcend the initial positioning suggested by its name.

It must be recognized, however, that such marketing manoeuvres can be a long and expensive process. Imagine the difficulty of repositioning brands such as 'I can't believe it's not butter!' or 'Gee, your hair smells terrific!' Thus, it is important when choosing a meaningful name to consider the possible contingencies of later repositioning.

Meaningful names are not restricted to real words. Consumers can extract meaning, if they so desire, even from made-up brand names. For example, one study of computer-generated brand names containing random combinations of syllables found that 'whumies' and 'quax' were found to remind consumers of a breakfast cereal and that 'dehax' reminded them of a laundry detergent.[14] Thus, consumers were able to extract at least some product meaning from these essentially arbitrary names when instructed to do so. Nevertheless, the likelihood of consumers extracting meaning out of highly abstract names will depend on their motivation to do so. In many cases, consumers may not be so inclined.

Made-up names, however, are generally devised more systematically. Fictitious words are typically based on combinations of morphemes. A *morpheme* is the smallest linguistic unit having meaning. There are 6,000 morphemes in the English language, including real words (eg, 'man') as well as prefixes, suffixes, or roots. For example, Compaq computer's name comes from a combination of two morphemes indicating 'computers and communication' and a 'small, integral object'. The use of the less common morpheme 'paq' as an ending – instead of pak, pac, or pach – was an attempt to suggest something scientific and unusual. Similarly, Nissan's Sentra car is a combination of two morphemes suggesting 'central' and 'sentry'.[15] By combining carefully chosen morphemes, it is possible to construct brand names that actually have some relatively easily inferred or implicit meaning.

Characteristics	Definitions and/or examples
Phonetic devices	
Alliteration	Consonant repetition (Coca-Cola)
Assonance	Vowel repetition (BlackBerry)
Consonance	Consonant repetition with intervening vowel changes (Weight Watchers)
Masculine rhyme	Rhyme with end-of-syllable stress (Max Pax)
Feminine rhyme	Unaccented syllable followed by accented syllable (American Airlines)
Weak/imperfect/slant rhyme	Vowels differ or consonants similar, not identical (Black & Decker)
Onomatopoeia	Use of syllable phonetics to resemble the object itself (Wisk)
Clipping	Product names attenuated (Club Med, Coke)
Blending	Morphemic combination, usually with elision (Aspergum, Duracell, Swatch)
Initial plosives	/b/, /c-hard/, /d/, /g-hard/, /k/, /p/, /q/, /t/ (Bic)
Orthographic devices	
Unusual or incorrect spellings	Kool-Aid, Vodafone
Abbreviations	Q8, 7 UP for Seven Up
Acronyms	Amoco
Morphologic devices	
Affixation	Jell-O
Compounding	Janitor-in-a-Drum
Semantic devices	
Metaphor	Representing something as if it were something else (Arrid); simile is included with metaphor when a name describes a likeness and not an equality (AquaFresh)
Metonymy	Application of one object or quality for another (Midas)
Synecdoche	Substitution of a part for the whole (Red Lobster)
Personification/pathetic fallacy	Humanizing the nonhuman, or ascription of human emotions to the inanimate (Ralph Lauren)
Oxymoron	Conjunction of opposites (Easy-Off)
Paranomasia	Pun and word plays (Hawaiian Punch)
Semantic appositeness	Fit of name with object (Bufferin)

Figure 4.7   Brand name linguistic characteristics

A number of linguistic issues could be raised with brand names.[16] Figure 4.7 contains an overview of different categories of linguistic characteristics, with definitions and examples. Even individual letters can contain meaning that may be useful in developing a new brand name. The letter X has become much more common in recent years (eg, ESPN's X Games, Nissan's Xterra SUV, and Microsoft's Windows XP and Xbox) because *X* is now seen to represent 'extreme,' 'on-the-edge,' and 'youth' – that is, 'what's alternative, what's next, and what's new'.[17] Research has shown that in some instances, consumers prefer products with names bearing some of the letters from their name (eg, a Jonathan may exhibit a greater-than-expected preference for a product named Jonoki).[18]

Even the sounds of letters can take on meaning. For example, some words begin with phonemic elements called *plosives* (ie, the letters *b, c, d, g, k, p*, and *t*), whereas others use *sibilants* (ie, sounds like *s* and soft *c*). Plosives escape from the mouth more quickly than sibilants and are hasher and more direct. Consequently, they are thought

to make names more specific and less abstract and be more easily recognized and recalled.[19] On the other hand, because sibilants have a softer sound, they tend to conjure up romantic, serene images and are often found with products such as perfumes (eg, Chanel and Chloe).[20] One study found a relationship between certain characteristics of the letters of brand names and product features: as consonant hardness and vowel pitch increased in hypothetical brand names for toilet paper and household cleansers, consumer perception of the harshness of the product also increased.[21]
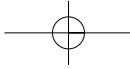
Brand names are not restricted to letters alone. Alphanumeric brand names contain one or more numbers in either digit form (eg, '5') or in written form (eg, 'five').[22] Alphanumeric brand names may include a mixture of letters and digits (eg, WD-40), a mixture of words and digits (eg, Formula 409), or mixtures of letters or words and numbers in written form (eg, Saks Fifth Avenue). Alphanumeric brand names may also be used to designate generations or relationships in a product line in terms of particular product models (eg, BMW's 3, 5, and 7 series).

Naming procedures

Various procedures or systems have been suggested for naming products. Although some differences exist, most such systems can be seen as adopting a procedure along the following lines.

- Define objectives. In general, the first step in selecting a brand name is to define the branding objectives in terms of the six general criteria noted earlier. It is particularly important to define the ideal meaning that the brand should take. It is also necessary to recognize the role of the brand within the corporate branding hierarchy and how the brand should relate to other brands and products (as will be discussed in Chapter 11). In many cases, existing brand names may be used, at least in part. Finally, the role of the brand within the entire marketing program must be understood, as well as having an in-depth description of the target market.

- Generate names. The second step involves generating as many names and concepts as possible. Any potential source of names can be used: company management and employees; existing or potential customers (including retailers or suppliers if relevant); ad agencies, professional name consultants, or specialized computer-based naming companies; and so on. Tens, hundreds, or even thousands of names may result from this step.

- Screen initial candidates. Names now must be screened based on the branding objectives and marketing considerations identified in step 1, as well as just common sense, to produce a more manageable list. For example, General Mills starts by eliminating the following:

  - Names that have unintentional double meaning.
  - Names that are unpronounceable, already in use, or too close to an existing name.
  - Names that have obvious legal complications.
  - Names that represent an obvious contradiction of the positioning.

  They next have in-depth evaluation sessions with management personnel and marketing partners to narrow the list down to a handful of names. Often, a quick-and-dirty legal search may be conducted to help screen out legal 'problem children'.

- Study candidate names. Collect more extensive information on each of the final five to ten names. Before spending large amounts of money on consumer research, it is advisable to do an extensive international legal search. Because of the costs involved, searches are sometimes done sequentially, only testing in a new country those names that survived the legal screen from the previous one.

- Research final candidates. Next, consumer research is often conducted to confirm management expectations as to the memorability and meaningfulness of the names. Consumer testing can take many forms. Many firms attempt to simulate the actual marketing program for the brand and consumers' likely purchase experiences as much as possible.[23] Thus, consumers may be shown the product and its packaging, price, or promotion so that they understand the rationale for the name and how it will be used. Realistic three-dimensional packages as well as concept boards or animated advertising may also be shown. Multiple samples of consumers may have to be surveyed depending on the target markets involved (eg, to capture differences in regional or ethnic appeal). The effects of the brand name with repeated exposure and when spoken versus when written can also be factored in.

- Select final name. Based on all of the information collected, management can choose the name that maximizes the firm's branding and marketing objectives and then formally register the name.

In conducting the consumer research and selecting a brand name, it should be recognized that there will almost always be negative associations with one segment of consumers or another. In most cases, however, assuming these associations were not severe, they would disappear or dissipate after the onset of the initial marketing. Similarly, names often are initially disliked in part because of their lack of familiarity or, in the case of a name change, because they represent a deviation from the norm. In assessing the potential impact of a new brand name, it is important to separate these temporal considerations from more enduring effects. Here is how a new airline arrived at its name.[24]

JetBlue

Traditionally, airlines use descriptive names that evoke geographic origins (eg, British Airways, Singapore Airlines, Alitalia) or broad geographic reach (eg, Cathay Pacific). In launching an airline with a fresh concept – stylish travel for the budget-minded flier – JetBlue decided it needed an evocative name. Working with an ad agency, Merkley & Partners, and brand consultant, Landor, a list of names was generated – Fresh Air, Taxi, Egg and It. The name Blue – suggesting peaceful clear skies quickly became a favourite – but trademark lawyers noted that it would be impossible to protect the name without a distinctive qualifier. The first candidate, TrueBlue, went by the wayside when it became apparent that it was also the name of a car rental agency. JetBlue emerged as the best substitute and the brand was born.

Figure 4.8 lists some common naming mistakes according to the brand name consultancy, Interbrand.[25]

1. Treating naming as an afterthought.
2. Ignoring complex trademark and URL issues.
3. Keeping a brand name that is no longer relevant.
4. Ignoring that naming is not only creative, but strategic.
5. Falling into the subjectivity trap.
6. Overlooking the global implications of names.
7. Failing to effectively communicate the name internally.
8. Ending verbal communication of a brand with its name.
9. Naming when it's not very necessary.
10. Believing that naming is an easy process.

Figure 4.8   Ten sources of naming mistakes
Source: Interbrand

Website addresses (URLs)
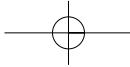
URLs (uniform resource locators) are used to specify locations of pages on the web, and are also commonly referred to as *domain names*. Anyone wishing to own a URL must register and pay for the name with a domain registry. In recent years, as companies clamoured for space on the web, the number of URLs increased dramatically. Every three-letter combination and virtually all words in a typical English dictionary have been registered. The sheer volume of registered URLs often makes it necessary for companies to use coined words if they wish to have a website for the brand. For example, when Andersen Consulting selected a new name, it chose the coined word 'Accenture' in part because www.accenture.com had not been registered.

Another issue facing companies with regard to URLs is protection of their brands from unauthorized use in domain names.[26] To protect its brand from unauthorized use in a URL, a company can either sue the current owner of the URL for copyright infringement, buy the name from the owner, or register all conceivable variations of its brand as domain names ahead of time. According to Gartner, the average Global 2000 company had at least 300 registered URLs in 2001. Large companies are now carefully monitoring the Web for unauthorized use of their brands.

Caterpillar

Heavy machinery manufacturer Caterpillar assigned its trademark lawyer, Gene Bolmarcich, the task of protecting the company's brand online. Caterpillar has 600 registered URLs and Bolmarcich estimates that he spends 95 percent of his time protecting Caterpillar's name online. During the spring of 2000, the company reclaimed some 50 URLs by firing off cease-and-desist letters to companies registering names such as CAT that infringed Caterpillar's copyright. Caterpillar also guards against infringement overseas by registering its name in ten countries. But, Bolmarcich says, 'You can't ever fully defend yourself.'

Brand recall is critical for URLs because, at least initially, consumers must remember the address to get to the site. At the peak of the internet boom, investors paid $7.5 million for Business.com, $2.2 million for Autos.com and $1.1 million for Bingo.com. Many of these 'common noun' sites failed, however, and were criticized, among

other things, as being too generic in name. During this time, many firms adopted names that started with a lowercase *e* or *i* and ended in 'net,' 'systems,' or, especially, 'com'. Many of these names became liabilities after the internet bubble burst, forcing firms such as Internet.com to revert to a more conventional name, INTMedia Group. Yahoo, however, was able to create a memorable brand and URL.

Yahoo!

Jerry Yang and David Filo named their web portal (created as a Stanford University thesis project) 'Yahoo!' after thumbing through the dictionary for words that began with 'ya,' a computing acronym for 'yet another'. Filo stumbled upon '*yahoo*' which brought back fond childhood memories of his father calling him 'little yahoo'. Liking the name, they created a more complete acronym: 'Yet another hierarchical officious oracle.'[27]

Typically, for an existing brand, the main URL is a straightforward and maybe even literal translation of the brand name (www.shell.com), although there are exceptions and variations.

Logos and symbols
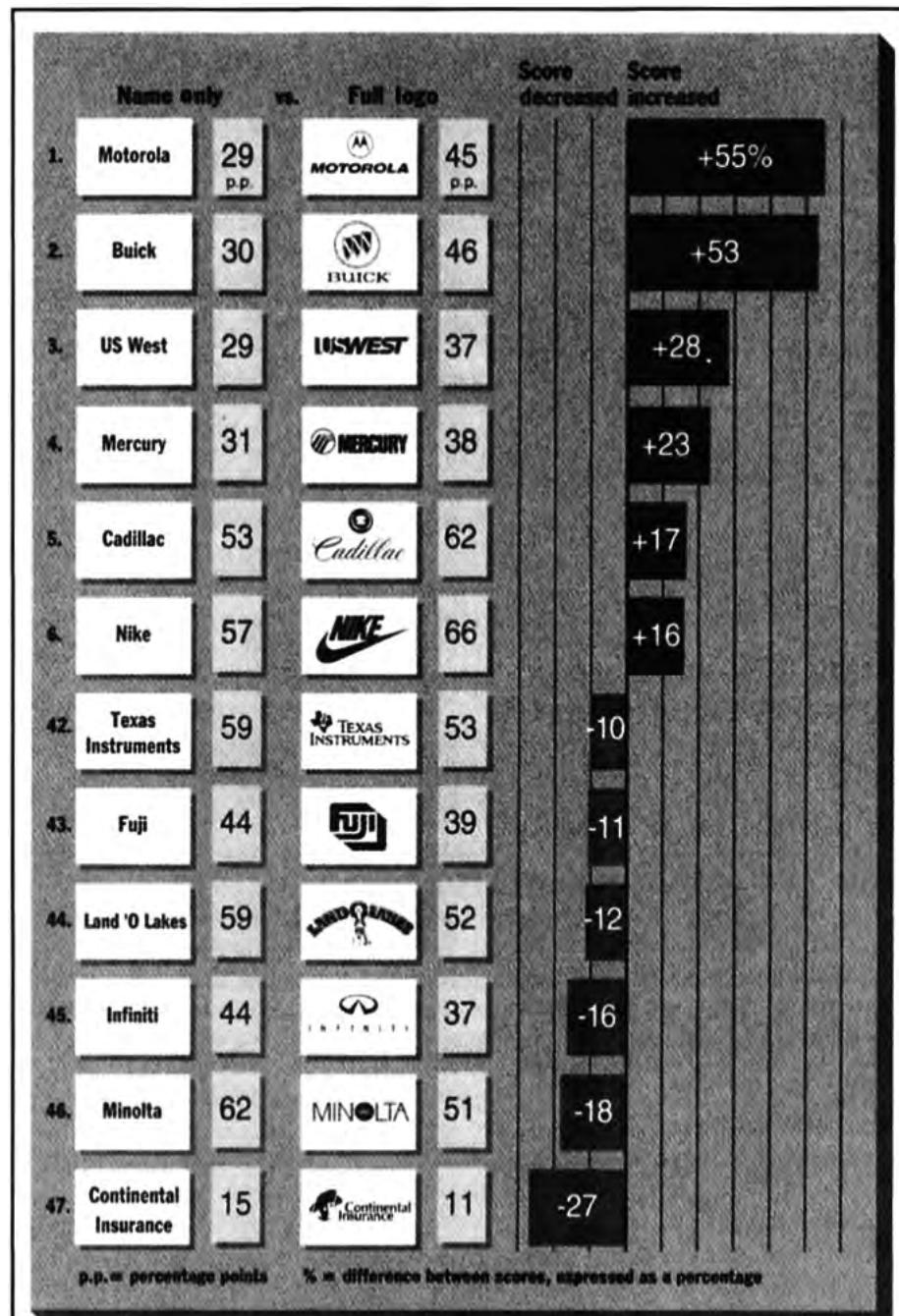
Although the name is typically the central element of the brand, visual brand elements can also play a critical role in building brand equity, especially in terms of brand awareness. Logos as the graphic elements of a brand have a long history as a means to indicate origin, ownership, or association. For example, families and countries have used logos for centuries to visually represent their names (eg, the Hapsburg eagle of the Austro-Hungarian Empire).

There are many types of logos, ranging from corporate names or trademarks (ie, word marks) written in a distinctive form, on one hand, to abstract logos, which may be unrelated to the word mark, corporate name, or corporate activities.[23] Examples of brands with strong word marks (and no accompanying logo separate from the name) include Coca-Cola, Dunhill and Kit-Kat. Examples of abstract logos include the Mercedes star, Rolex crown, CBS eye, Nike swoosh and the Olympic rings. These non-word mark logos are also often called *symbols*.

Many logos fall between these two extremes. Often logos are devised as symbols to reinforce or embellish the brand meaning. Some logos are literal representations of the brand name, enhancing brand awareness (eg, the Arm and Hammer, International Committee of the Red Cross and Apple logos). Logos can be concrete or pictorial in nature (eg, the American Express centurion, the Sun Maid raisins girl and Ralph Lauren's polo player). Certain elements of the product or company can become a symbol (eg, the Goodyear blimp, McDonald's golden arches and the Playboy bunny).

The importance of logos and symbols can be seen from the results of a study that asked 150 consumers their impressions of companies based on their names alone and also when their logos were present. As Figure 4.9 shows, the results could differ dramatically depending on the company involved. Clearly, logos have meaning and associations that change consumer perceptions of the company.[28]
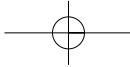
Like brand names, logos can acquire associations through their inherent meaning as well as through marketing. In terms of inherent meaning, even abstract logos can have different evaluations depending on the shapes involved. As with names,

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Figure 4.9   Brand evaluations with and without logos: six best and worst image contributions

Source: Alvin H. Schechter, 'Measuring the value of corporate and brand logos,' *Design Management Journal,* Winter, 1993.

abstract logos can be distinctive and thus recognizable. Nevertheless, because abstract logos may lack the inherent meaning of a more concrete logo, one of the dangers is that consumers may not understand what the logo is intended to represent without a significant marketing initiative to explain its meaning.

Benefits

Logos and symbols are easily recognized and can be a valuable way to identify products, although a concern is how well they become linked in memory to the corresponding brand name and product to boost brand recall. That is, consumers may recognize certain symbols but be unable to link them to any specific product or brand.

Another branding advantage of logos is their versatility: because they are often nonverbal, they can be updated as needed and generally transfer well across cultures. Because logos are often abstract, without much product meaning, they can be relevant and appropriate in a range of categories. For example, brands often develop logos because their identity may be needed on a wide range of products, although perhaps in a subordinate way as a means to endorse sub-brands. Logos can allow the corporate brand to play a more explicit secondary role for these various products.

Abstract logos are often useful when the use of the full brand name is restricted. In the UK, for example, National Westminster Bank created a triangular device as a logo in part because the name itself was long and cumbersome and the logo could more easily appear as an identification device on check books, literature, signs and promotional material.[23] It also uses the shortened version of its name, NatWest. Thus, logos and symbols can be particularly important in services because of their intangible, abstract nature. For example, many insurance firms use symbols of strength (eg, the horse for Lloyds TSB and the stag for Hartford), security (eg, the 'good hands' of Allstate and the hard hat of Fireman's Fund), or some combination of the two (eg, pillars of Allianz).

Finally, unlike brand names, logos can be easily changed to achieve a more contemporary look. For example, John Deere revamped its deer trademark for the first time in thirty-two years in 2000, making the animal appear to be leaping up rather than landing. The change was intended to 'convey a message of strength and agility with a technology edge'.[29]

In updating logos, however, it is important to make gradual changes that do not lose sight of the inherent advantages of the logo. In the 1980s, the trend for many firms was to create more abstract, stylized versions of their logos. In the process, some of the meaning, and thus equity, residing in these logos was lost. Recognizing the logo's potential contribution to brand equity, some firms in the 1990s reverted to a more traditional look for their symbols. Another trend has been to move from two-dimensional designs to three-dimensional designs with gradients and shadows. The logo designs also increasingly include versions for moving media, such as the symbol for Microsoft's Windows which waves like a flag during computer start-up or web page loading.

Regardless of the reason why, changing a logo is not cheap. According to Allen Adamson, managing director of the brand consultancy Landor Associates, creating a symbol or remaking an old one for a big brand 'usually costs $1 million'.[29]

Characters

Characters represent a special type of symbol – one that takes on human or real-life characteristics. Brand characters typically are introduced through advertising and can play a central role in these and subsequent ad campaigns and package designs. Like other brand elements, characters come in many forms. Some characters are animated (eg, the Michelin man, Tony the Tiger, Cap'n Crunch and Snap, Crackle & Pop), whereas others are live-action figures (eg, the Juan Valdez, the Maytag Repairman, or Ronald McDonald). More recent examples include the AOL Running Man, Budweiser frogs, Sega's Sonic the Hedgehog and the Crazy Frog[30].

Green Giant
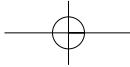
One of the most powerful characters is Pillsbury's Jolly Green Giant.[31] He can be traced back to the 1920s, when the Minnesota Valley Canning Company placed a green giant on the label of a variety of sweet, large English peas as a means to circumvent trademark laws that prevented them from naming the product 'Green Giant'. Ad Agency Leo Burnett used the character in print ads beginning in 1930 and in TV ads beginning in the early 1960s. At first, TV ads featured an actor wearing green body make-up and a suit of leaves. Later, the ads moved to full animation. Creatively, the ads have been very consistent. The Green Giant is always in the background, with his features obscure, and only says 'Ho-Ho-Ho'. He moves very little, doesn't walk, and never leaves the 'valley'. The Green Giant has been introduced into international markets, following the same set of rules. The Little Sprout character was introduced in 1973 to bring a new look to the brand and allow more flexibility. Unlike the Green Giant, the Little Sprout is a chatterbox, often imparting product information. The Green Giant brand has enormous equity to Pillsbury, and it have found that using the name and character on a product has been an effective signal to consumers that the product is 'wholesome' and 'healthy'.

Benefits

Brand characters can provide a number of brand equity benefits. Because they are often colourful and rich in imagery, they tend to attract attention. Consequently, characters can be useful for creating brand awareness. Brand characters can help brands break through the marketplace clutter as well as help to communicate a product benefit. For example, Maytag's Lonely Repairman has helped to reinforce its 'reliability' product association.

Perhaps a more common image enhancement is related to brand personality and the likability of the brand. The human element of characters can help to create perceptions of the brand as being fun and interesting. The ability of a consumer to have a relationship with a brand may be easier when the brand has a humanistic character. As a result of the meaning and various feelings that can become attached to them, popular characters are often valuable licensing properties, providing direct revenue and additional brand exposure (see Chapter 7).

Finally, because characters do not typically have direct product meaning, they may also be transferred relatively easily across categories. For example, Aaker notes that

'the Keebler's elf identity (which combines a sense of home style baking with a touch of magic and fun) gives the brand latitude to extend into other baked goods – and perhaps even into other types of food where homemade magic and fun might be perceived as a benefit'.[32]

Cautions

There are drawbacks to using brand characters, in that they can be so well liked that they dominate other brand elements and actually *dampen* awareness.

Eveready

When Ralston Purina introduced its drumming pink bunny that 'kept going . . . and going . . . and going' in ads for their Eveready Energizer battery, many consumers were so captivated by the character that they paid little attention to the name of the brand. As a result, they often mistakenly believed that the ad was for rival Duracell. Consequently, Eveready found it necessary to add the pink bunny as a reminder to their packages, promotions and other marketing communications to create stronger brand links.

Characters often must be updated over time so that their image and personality remains relevant to the target market. Recently, Michelin launched a slimmer version of its tubby Michelin Man (whose real name is Bibendum) to mark his hundredth year. A company press release notes: 'Thinner and smiling, Bibendum will look like the leader he is, with an open and reassuring manner.' In general, the more realistic the brand character, the more important it is to keep it up-to-date. One advantage of fictitious or animated characters is that their appeal can be more enduring and timeless than real people. Brand Briefing 4.3 lists some guidelines from a leading consultant.

Slogans

Slogans are short phrases that communicate descriptive or persuasive information about a brand. Slogans often appear in advertising but can play an important role on packaging and in other aspects of marketing. For example, Snickers' 'Hungry? Grab a Snickers' slogan has appeared in ads and on the bars wrapper. Slogans are powerful devices because, like names, they are an efficient, shorthand means to build brand equity. Slogans can function as useful 'hooks' or 'handles' to help consumers grasp the meaning of a brand in terms of what it is and what makes it special. They can summarize and translate the intent of a marketing program in a few short words or phrases. For example, State Farm Insurance's 'Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there' has been used for decades in the US as a slogan to represent the brand's dependability and friendship. Brand Briefing 4.4 discusses Intel's strategy.

Benefits

Slogans can be devised in several ways to help build brand equity. Some slogans help to build brand awareness by playing off the brand name in some way (eg, 'My doctor said Mylanta,' or 'Step up to the Mic' for Micatin). Other slogans build brand

Brand Briefing 4.3

Balance creative and strategic thinking to create great characters
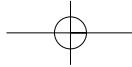
Brand characters are a staple of consumer marketing but generating them and making sure they evolve is difficult. Great characters, the Pillsbury Doughboy for example, can embody a brand's story and spark enthusiasm for it. But bringing a character to life through advertising requires navigating a host of pitfalls. Character, a US company, helps create brand characters and revitalize old ones.

During three-day camps, a team from a client company learns to flesh out a new or current character through improvisational acting, discussion and reflection. According to Character president David Altschul, brand characters are unique in that they straddle the worlds of marketing and entertainment. Their function is to represent a brand, but they are in competition with characters that consumers are exposed to through television, cinema, video games and novels. Altschul emphasizes consistency across all communications and familiarizing all employees with the story behind the brand. The results of the camps are intended to equip creative directors with background and insights into the company's character that can spur ideas and approaches.

The following are some of the tips for brand characters presented at the camps.

- Don't be a shill. Human traits are appealing. M&Ms sweets gained more appeal once the M&M characters were given more human traits.
- Create a life. Use a full back story to fill out the character. This ensures that the character can evolve over time and continue to connect with consumers.
- Make them vulnerable. Even superheroes have flaws. Character helped Maytag launch a new character, the Apprentice, to complement its perfect repairman.
- Imagine the long run. General Mills' Jolly Green Giant has been around for decades. Don't get rid of older characters just to make room for new ones. Consumers can get very attached to such characters.
- Don't ask too much. Characters with a simple task or purpose work best. Using characters for new products or other purposes can dilute the effectiveness of the character.

To be effective, brand characters have to be engaging in their own right while staying true to the brand. Most characters though, are conceived as short-term solutions to specific problems. If the audience likes a character, companies face the challenge of turning it into an asset. At this point some companies try to freeze the character's attributes and preserve them. But Altschul cautions against this strategy, saying static characters can lose their appeal and fail to connect emotionally with consumers. On the other hand, characters that are marketed too heavily can also crash. The California Raisins met such a fate when their licensing program pushed them into every possible type of paraphernalia without much thought about their back story.

Brand Briefing 4.3 *continued*

Altschul maintains that viewers connect with characters whose struggles are familiar. He says the way to ensure that a brand character adds value for the long run is to address strategic questions such as: 'What is this story about?' 'What are the flaws, vulnerabilities and sources of conflict that connect the character to the brand in a deep, intrinsic way?' 'What human truth is revealed through the story that audiences can relate to?'

Altschul's company helps clients find this intersection between story and marketing by defining the essence of a brand and the character and then clarifying the connection between the two. The brand character is profiled to bring out the personality traits, behaviour and mission that may be used for future storylines. And the participants talk about how the character should look, act and interact with others to communicate the essence of the brand. The goal is to create guidelines for how the character may evolve and suggests ways the character could be used beyond traditional advertising media. Altschul suggests that companies also establish principles for the brand to stay 'in character', including ways the character can serve as conscience for the brand when making decisions such as line extensions, alliances and competitive responses.

Sources: Fara Warner, 'Brands with character,' *Fast Company*, May 2004; David Altschul, 'The balancing act of building character,' *Advertising Age*, 4 July 2005; www.characterweb.com.

awareness even more explicitly by making strong links between the brand and the corresponding product category by combining both entities in the slogan (eg, 'If you're not wearing Dockers, you're just wearing Pants'). Most important, slogans can help to reinforce the brand positioning and desired point of difference (eg, 'Nothing runs like a Deere,' 'It's hard to stop a Trane,' and 'Help is just around the corner. True value hardware'). For market leaders, slogans often employ 'puffery' in which the brand is praised with subjective opinions, superlatives and exaggerations (eg, Keebler's 'Uncomparably good'; Bayer's 'Bayer works wonders').

Slogans often become closely tied to advertising campaigns and can be used to summarize the descriptive or persuasive information conveyed in the ads. For example, DeBeers' 'A diamond is forever' communicates the intended message that diamonds bring eternal love and romance and never lose value. Slogans can be more expansive and more enduring, however, than just ad taglines. Campaign-specific lines may be used to help reinforce the message of a particular campaign instead of the brand slogan for a certain time. For example, through the years, Nike has used ad lines such as 'What are you getting ready for?,' 'Why sport?,' and 'I can' for campaigns instead of its brand slogan, 'Just do it.' Such substitutions can emphasize that the campaign represents a departure of some kind from the message conveyed by the brand slogan or just a way to give the brand slogan a rest so that it remains fresh.

Brand Briefing 4.4

Intel coming out from the inside

Intel has been very successful in brand management. Its move to brand the micro-processors inside PC computers, the Intel Inside program, was launched in 1991 and Intel has become one of the world strongest brands. However, the program's success also led to a problem: effectively, the company had two very strong logos; the corporate one with a 'dropped' e, and the Intel Inside logo. Also, the company needed to communicate a broader role for its brand in consumer electronics, wire-less communications and healthcare. Intel wants to create all kinds of chips and software, not just microprocessors.

The decision was taken to move to a singular logo. Early in 2006, Intel launched a new brand design that involved changes to the Intel Inside logo, and the original Intel 'dropped-e' logo, which was created by Robert Noyce and Gordon Moore 37 years ago as they were forming their 'integrated electronics' company. The new design clearly mainatins the heritage of the old logo but keeps the 'swoosh'-like element from the Intel Inside design.

It also includes a new tagline: 'Intel. Leap ahead.' This is designed to communicate what drives Intel as a company, and what Intel makes possible. '"Intel. Leap ahead." is a simple expression that declares who we are and what we do,' said Kim. 'This is part of our heritage. Our mission at Intel has always been to find and drive the next leap ahead – in technology, in education, social responsibility, manufacturing and more – to continuously challenge the status quo. It's about using Intel technology to make life better, richer and more convenient for everyone.'

The group planned to spend $2 billion on marketing communications with the new look and message in 2006 (Figure 4.10).

Corporate logo, 1969

New logo, 2006

Intel Inside, 1991

New logo with tagline, 2006
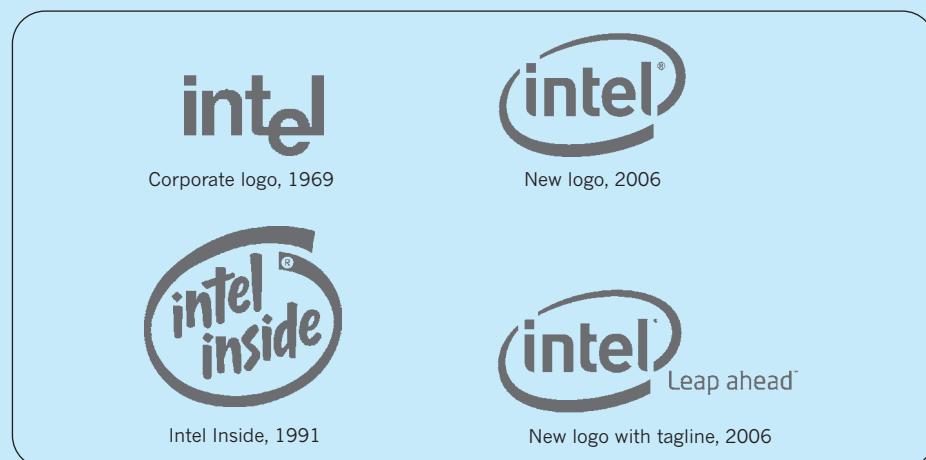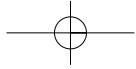
Figure 4.10   Intel's logos (1969–2006)

Source: *Amanda Andrews,* 'Intel will spend $2bn on selling new look in 2006,' *The Times*, 31 December 2005; www.intel.com.

Designing slogans

Some of the most powerful slogans are those that contribute to brand equity in many ways. Slogans can play off the brand name in a way to build both awareness *and* image (eg, 'Be certain with Certs' for Certs breath mints; 'Maybe she's born with it, maybe it's Maybelline' for Maybelline cosmetics; or 'The big Q stands for quality' for Quaker State motor oil). Slogans also can contain meaning that is relevant in both a product-related and non-product-related sense. For example, consider the Champion sportswear slogan, 'It takes a little more to make a Champion.' The slogan could be interpreted in terms of product performance, as meaning that Champion sportswear is made with a little extra care or with special materials, but also could be interpreted in terms of user imagery as meaning that Champion sportswear is associated with top athletes. This combination of superior product performance and aspirational user imagery is a powerful platform on which to build brand image and equity. Benetton has had an equally strong slogan on which to build brand equity ('United colours of Benetton') but, as Brand Briefing 4.5 describes, the company has not always taken full advantage of it.

Updating slogans

Some slogans become so strongly linked to the brand that it becomes difficult to introduce new ones. Timex watches gave up trying to replace its 'Takes a licking and keeps on ticking' and returned to the tag line in its advertising, eventually changing it to 'Life is ticking.' Marketers of 7 UP tried a number of successors to its 'Uncola' slogan – including 'Freedom of choice,' 'Crisp and clean and no caffeine,' 'Don't you feel good about 7 UP,' and 'Feels so good coming down,' and the edgy 'Make 7UP yours' – before arriving at 'The only way to go is up' in 2004.

Thus, a slogan that becomes so strongly identified with a brand can potentially box it in. Slogans can take on lives of their own and become public catch phrases, as with Wendy's 'Where's the beef?' in the 1980s and Budweiser's 'Whassup?!' in the 1990s. However, there can also be a downside: such phrases can become overexposed and lose specific brand or product meaning.

Once a slogan achieves such a high level of recognition and acceptance, it may still contribute to brand equity, but probably as more of a reminder of the brand. Consumers are probably unlikely to consider what the slogan means in a thoughtful way after seeing or hearing it too many times. At the same time, a potential difficulty arises if the slogan continues to convey some product meaning that the brand no longer needs to reinforce. In this case, by not facilitating the linkage of new, desired brand associations, the slogan can become restrictive and fail to allow the brand to be updated as much as desired or necessary.

Because slogans are perhaps the easiest brand element to change, there is more flexibility in managing them. In changing slogans, however, as with changing other brand elements, it is important to do the following:

- Recognize how the slogan is contributing to brand equity, if at all, through enhanced awareness or image.
- Decide how much of this equity enhancement, if any, is still needed.
- Retain as much as possible the needed or desired equities still residing in the slogan while providing whatever twists of meaning are needed to contribute to equity in other ways.

Brand Briefing 4.5

Benetton's brand equity management
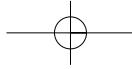
One of the world's top clothing manufacturers (with global sales of $2.4 billion), Benetton has experienced ups and downs in managing its brand equity. Benetton built a powerful brand by creating a broad range of basic, colourful clothes that appealed to a wide range of consumers. The slogan, 'United colours of Benetton', would seem to almost perfectly capture the company's desired image and positioning. It embraces both product considerations (the colourful character of the clothes) and user considerations (the diversity reflected by the people who wore the clothes), providing a strong platform for the brand. Benetton's ad campaigns reinforced this positioning by showing people from many racial backgrounds wearing a variety of clothes and products.

Benetton's campaigns switched directions, however, in the 1980s by addressing controversial social issues. Created in-house by designer Oliverio Toscani, Benetton print ads and posters featured such unusual and sometimes disturbing images as a white child wearing angel's wings alongside a black child sporting devil's horns; a priest kissing a nun; an Aids patient and his family in the hospital moments before his death; and, in an ad run only once, fifty-six close-up photos of male and female genitalia. In 1994, Benetton launched a $15 million ad campaign in newspapers and billboards in 110 countries featuring the torn and bloodied uniform of a dead Bosnian soldier. In 2000, a campaign titled 'We, on death row' showed American death row inmates with pictures of the prisoners and details about their crimes and length of incarceration.

Critics have labelled these campaigns as gimmicky 'shock' advertising and accused Benetton of exploiting sensitive social issues to sell jumpers. One fact is evident. Although these campaigns may be appreciated by and effective with a certain market segment, they are more 'exclusive' in nature – distancing the brand from many other consumers – than the early Benetton campaigns, which were inviting and 'inclusive' in nature. Not surprisingly, the ad campaigns were not always well received by its retailers and franchise owners.

The image of the dead Bosnian soldier received an especially hostile reaction throughout Europe. In the US, some of Benetton's more controversial ads have been rejected by the media, and Benetton's US retailers commissioned their own campaign from TBWA/Chiat/Day ad agency in an attempt to create their own, more sophisticated image for the brand. After the death row ads, Sears pulled the brand from shelves of its 400 stores. Response from US consumers was equally negative: sales of Benetton products shrunk by half to $52 million between 1993 and 2000. By 2001, the number of Benetton stores in the US dropped to 150 from 600 in 1987.

From 2001, Benetton's advertisements started featuring conventional images – teenagers in colourful Benetton clothing. Benetton, however, maintained that the company would still continue with its 'socially responsible' status by focusing on

Brand Briefing 4.5 *continued*

non-controversial themes like racial discrimination, poverty, child labour and Aids awareness. To that effect, in early 2003, Benetton in association with the UN's World Food Programme, launched a year-long, $16 million communication campaign, called Food for Life.

Sources: Leigh Gallagher, 'About face,' *Forbes*, 19 March 2001; Michael McCarthy, 'Benetton in spotlight,' *USA Today*, 16 February 2002: B3. George E. Belch and Michael A. Belch, 'Benetton group: evolution of communication strategy,' *Advertising and Promotion: An integrated marketing communications perspective*, McGraw-Hill, 2003.

In many cases, modifying a slogan may prove more fruitful than introducing a new one with a new set of meanings. For example, Dockers switched its slogan from the well-received 'Nice pants' to 'One leg at a time' in the late 1990s before reverting to the previous slogan when recognizing that too much built-up equity had been given up.

Jingles

Jingles are musical messages written around the brand. Typically composed by professional songwriters, they often have enough catchy hooks and choruses to become almost permanently registered in the minds of listeners – sometimes whether they want them to or not! During the first half of the twentieth century, when broadcast advertising was confined primarily to radio, jingles became important branding devices. Figure 4.11 lists famous US brand jingles according to an advertising trade publication.

1. You deserve a break today (McDonalds)
2. Be all that you can be (US Army)
3. Pepsi Cola hits the spot (Pepsi Cola)
4. M'm, m'm good (Campbell's)
5. See the USA in your Chevrolet (GM)
6. I wish I was an Oscar Meyer Wiener (Oscar Meyer)
7. Double your pleasure, double your fun (Wrigley's Doublemint Gum)
8. Winston tastes good like a cigarette should (Winston)
9. It's the real thing (Coca Cola)
10. A little dab'll do ya (Brylcreem)

Figure 4.11   *Advertising Age* top 10 US jingles of the twentieth century
Source: www.adage.com.

Jingles can be thought of as extended musical slogans and in that sense can be classified as a brand element. Because of their musical nature, however, jingles are not nearly as transferable as other brand elements. Jingles can communicate brand benefits, but they often convey product meaning in a nondirect and abstract fashion. The potential associations that might occur for the brand from jingles are probably most likely to relate to feelings and personality and other such intangibles. Jingles are perhaps most valuable in terms of enhancing brand awareness. Often, the jingle will repeat the brand name in clever and amusing ways that allow consumers many encoding opportunities. Because of their catchy nature, consumers are also likely to mentally rehearse or repeat the jingle even after seeing or hearing the ad, providing even additional encoding opportunities and increasing memorability.

A well-known jingle can serve as a foundation for advertising for years. As an example, in the US, the familiar 'Give me a break' jingle for Kit Kat bars has been sung in ads by professionals and everyday people since 1988 and has helped to propel the brand to the sixth best-selling chocolate bar. Similarly, after two decades as the centerpiece of their ad campaign, there was an uproar when the US Army switched from its 'Be all that you can be' to 'Army of one'. Finally, Intel's three-second, four-note sound signature echoes the company's slogan ('In-tel In-side'). Although seemingly simple, the first note alone is a mix of sixteen sounds, including a tambourine and a hammer striking a brass pipe.[33]
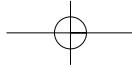
Packaging

Like other brand elements, packages have a long history. Early humans used leaves and animal skin to cover and carry food and water. Glass containers appeared in Egypt some 4,000 years ago. Later, the French emperor Napoleon awarded 12,000 francs to the winner of a contest to find a better way to preserve food, which lead to vacuum-packing.[34]

From the perspective of both the firm and consumers, packaging must achieve a number of objectives:[35]

- Identify the brand.
- Convey descriptive and persuasive information.
- Provide protection during distribution.
- Assist storage in the home.
- Aid product consumption.

To achieve the marketing objectives for a brand and satisfy the desires of consumers, the aesthetic and functional components of packaging must be chosen correctly. Aesthetic considerations relate to a package's size and shape, material, colour, text and graphics. Innovations in printing processes now permit eye-catching and appealing graphics that convey elaborate and colourful messages on the package at the 'moment of truth' – the point of purchase.[36] Functionally, structural design is crucial. For example, innovations with food products have resulted in packages being resealable, tamperproof and more convenient to use (eg, easy to hold, easy to open, or squeezable). Changes in canning have made vegetables crunchier, and special wraps have extended the life of refrigerated food.[37] Despite all of the attention to

food packaging, opportunities remain because consumers still report many problems. In one survey, consumers complained about packages that stick, rip, or don't protect their contents. Out of frustration, some consumers were actually even doing their own repackaging at home.[38]

Benefits

Packaging can have important brand equity benefits. Often, one of the strongest associations that consumers have with a brand relates to the look of its packaging. For example, if you ask the average consumer what comes to mind when they think of Heineken beer, a common response is 'green bottle'. The package can become important to brand recognition. Moreover, the information conveyed or inferred from the package can build or reinforce valuable brand associations. Molson's beer sales increased by 40 percent in the US in 2004 after modifying the bottle's back labels to include cheeky 'ice-breakers' for bar patrons such as 'On the rebound,' 'Sure, you can have my number', and 'Fairly intimated by your beauty.'[39]

Structural packaging innovations can create a point of difference that permits a higher margin. New packages can also expand a market and capture new market segments.

Packaging changes can have an immediate effect on sales. For example, sales of the Heath chocolate bar increased 25 percent in the US after its wrapper was redesigned. Similarly, Rice-A-Roni's sales increased 20 percent in the first year after a packaging change. One trend has been to make both bigger and smaller packaged versions of products (as well as portions) to appeal to new market segments.[40] Jumbo products have been introduced with hot dogs, pizzas, English muffins, frozen dinners and beer. For example, Pillsbury's introduction of Grand biscuits – 40 percent larger than existing offerings in the US – was the most successful new product in the company's 126-year history.

Packaging at the point of purchase

Package design also has become more important in recent years as brand proliferation continues and advertising is seen as becoming less cost-effective. Packaging can be a means of having strong appeal on the shelf and standing out from the clutter. The importance of packaging at the point of purchase can be seen by recognizing that the average supermarket shopper may be exposed to 20,000 or more products in a shopping visit that lasts less than thirty minutes and during which many purchases may be unplanned. For many consumers, the first encounter with a brand may be on the supermarket shelf. Because few product differences exist in some categories, packaging innovations can provide at least a temporary edge on competition.

For these reasons, packaging has been seen as a particularly cost-effective way to build brand equity.[41] Along these lines, packaging is sometimes called the 'last five seconds of marketing' as well as 'permanent media' or 'the last salesman'. Wal-Mart looks at packaging critically and tests whether consumers understand the brand promise behind the package within three seconds and up to fifteen feet from the shelf. Note that consumer exposure to packaging is not restricted to the point of purchase and moments of consumption, because brand packages often can play a starring role in advertising.[42]

Packaging innovations

In mature markets especially, package innovations can provide a short-term sales boost. For example, the two-litre jug bottle and the twelve-pack carton helped US soft drink makers experience steady 5 percent to 7 percent growth in the 1980s. With the rate of growth of the soft drink industry slowing down to 2 percent to 3 percent in the 1990s, soft drink makers sought packaging innovations to fuel growth. As a result, Pepsi-Cola introduced the twenty-four-pack Cube, resealable bottles, Pepsi Mini cans, and the wide-mouth, one-liter Big Slam bottle. Even the look of Pepsi's packaging, which had not changed since 1973, was updated in a $500 million global redesign, eventually arriving at blue packaging with updated graphics.

The beverage industry has been characterized by packaging innovations. Following the lead from Snapple's widemouth glass bottle, Arizona's iced teas and fruit drinks in oversized, pastel-coloured cans became a $300 million brand in a few years with no marketing support beyond point-of-purchase and rudimentary outdoor ads, designed in-house.[43] More recently, a number of beer and wine brands introduced have aluminum bottles as a means to make their products more appealing and convenient to drink.[44]
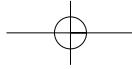
Package design

For all these reasons, package design has been elevated in its importance and has become an integral part of product development and launch. As with the choice of a brand name, package design has become a more sophisticated process. In the past, package design was often an afterthought, and colours, materials and so forth were often chosen arbitrarily. For example, legend has it that the colour of the famous Campbell's soup can had its origins in one executive at the company liking the look of the red and white kit of an American football team!

These days, package designers bring artistic techniques and scientific skills to package design in an attempt to meet the marketing objectives for a brand. These consultants conduct detailed analyses to break down the package into a number of elements. They decide on the optimal look and content of each element and the proper packaging hierarchy in terms of which elements should be dominant in any one package (eg, the brand name, illustration, or some other graphical element) and how the elements should relate. When brand extensions are introduced, these designers can also decide which elements should be shared across packages and which elements should differ (and how). The Brand Briefing 4.6 describes the activities of Landor Associates, a package design and image management firm.

Designers often refer to the 'shelf impact' of a package – the visual effect that the package has at the point of the purchase when seen in the context of other packages in the category. For example, 'bigger and brighter' packages are not always better when competitors' packages are also factored in.[45] Although some information is legally required on packages (eg, nutrition information for food packages), decisions can be made about design elements to improve brand awareness and facilitate the formation of brand associations.

Perhaps one of the most important visual design elements is colour.[46] Some package designers believe that consumers have a 'colour vocabulary' when it comes to

Brand Briefing 4.6

Brand makeover experts: Landor Associates

Landor Associates, one of the leading image consultants and strategic designers, called the ferryboat Kalmath, anchored on Pier 5 in San Francisco, home for years. Although the firm has since moved into more spacious headquarters, Landor has retained the ferryboat as a symbol of its creativity and innovation. Landor has provided a range of services to a varied list of clients with brands such as Pepsi, FedEx, GE, Delta, Frito-Lay, Hyatt, Levi's, Japan Airlines, Lucent, Procter & Gamble, Microsoft, Cathay Pacific and LG Group.

One recent client was BP. Landor helped BP transform itself from a middle-ranking oil company to a leading global brand. When BP acquired Amoco (1998), Castrol (2000) and Arco (2000), the brand became the means for unifying clashing cultures and rallying around a vision. The new brand captured BP's strategy, represented by the slogan 'beyond petroleum', and four beliefs: performance, progression, innovation and green. Launched in July 2000, BP's Brand Driver Platform became the foundation for a brand strategy that extended from a new positioning to a new logo, redesigned service stations and everything in between – advertisements, brochures, website, tanker trucks, kiosks, employee training and rewards programmes. Landor also spent time with BP employees, engaging them with the brand and shifting their focus from products to customers.

By moving their brand to the centre of its business, BP has used it to guide strategic decisions – such as investing in renewable energy sources – and direct the daily activities of employees. By 2001, BP's sales increased 23 percent worldwide. By 2002, 65 percent of employees reported understanding how to apply brand to their job (an increase of 41 percent), and *Fortune* magazine named BP a 'most admired company'. From 2001–2005, a period when most oil and petroleum companies were losing public favour, BP's brand strength increased by 27 percent. The value of its intangible assets, including brand, grew by more than $7 billion (a 30 percent increase). BP's ability to outperform its competitors and transcend the petroleum category led it to be named one of 10 'breakaway brands' by a *Fortune*/Brand Economics study (31 October 2005).

products and expect certain types of products to have a particular look. For example, it is believed that it would be difficult to sell milk in anything but a white carton. At the same time, certain brands are thought to have 'colour ownership' such that it would be difficult for other brands to use a similar look. One US design executive outlined the following brand colour palette:[47]

- *Red:* Ritz crackers, Folgers coffee, Colgate toothpaste and Coca-Cola soft drinks.
- *Orange:* Tide laundry detergent, Wheaties cereal and Stouffer's frozen dinners.
- *Yellow:* Kodak film, Juicy Fruit chewing gum, Cheerios cereal, Lipton tea and Bisquick biscuit mix.

- *Green:* Del Monte canned vegetables, Green Giant frozen vegetables and 7 UP lemon-lime soft drink.
- *Blue:* IBM computers, Windex cleaner, Downy fabric softener and Pepsi-Cola soft drinks.

Colour can affect consumer's perceptions of the product itself.[48] For example, consumers ascribe sweeter taste to orange drinks the darker the orange shade of the can or bottle.
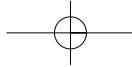
Colour is thus a critical element of packaging. Recent years have seen a rise in the use of blue as the look or even name for companies (eg, Blue Martini, Jet Blue, Bluefly), perhaps because blue 'suggests stature and professionalism' and 'is cool, hip and relevant to technology' and therefore is a 'safe choice'.[49] Purple also came on strong as a 'funky alternative' and therefore was embraced by many new-economy firms. In addition to the product inferences signalled by the colour and other packaging design elements, it is also important that any other associations conveyed by the packaging be consistent with information conveyed by marketing.

Packaging changes

Although packaging changes can be expensive, they can be cost-effective compared with other marketing communication costs. Packages are changed for a number of reasons.[50] Packaging may be upgraded to signal a higher price, to more effectively sell products through new or shifting distribution channels (eg, Kendall Oil redid its package to make it more appealing to do-it-yourselfers when it found more of its sales coming from supermarkets and hardware stores rather than service stations), or when there is a significant product line expansion that would benefit from a common look (eg, as with Planter's nuts, Weight Watchers foods, or Stouffer's frozen foods). Package redesign may also accompany a product innovation to signal changes to consumers. For example, when Procter & Gamble introduced Liquid Tide laundry detergent, the company felt that the 10 percent market share that the brand achieved was helped by the addition of a well-received drip-proof spout and bottle cap package design.[51]

Perhaps the most common reason for a redesign is that the package looks outdated. Under these circumstances, it is important not to lose the package equities that have been built up. Packaging often has some unique graphic features that have achieved a high level of awareness and preference. The need to create a more contemporary look must be reconciled with the need to preserve existing packaging equities. In 1997, British Airways hoped for a more international look by adding Delft pottery, Chinese calligraphy and other ethnic designs on the tail fins of many of its planes. A hostile public response forced the company to repaint their planes in 2001 with the Chatham Dockyard Union Flag, a design first used on Concorde.[52]

Packaging changes have accelerated in recent years as marketers have sought to gain an advantage wherever possible. As one Coca-Cola ad executive noted: 'There's no question the crowded marketplace has inspired companies to change their boxes more often and there's greater use of promotional packages to give the appearance that things are changing.' In making a packaging change, it is thus important to recognize its effect on the original or current customer franchise for the brand.[53] To identify or confirm key package equities, it is often necessary to conduct consumer research (see Brand Briefing 4.7).

Brand Briefing 4.7

Inside a packaging makeover

Betty Crocker's parent company, General Mills, spent more than $1 million and one year on making over its cake, biscuit and muffin boxes. Packaging consultants, food photographers, graphic artists, marketers and consumers were consulted. Here's how it unfolded.

- In 2002, Betty Crocker conducted focus groups to find out whether customers agreed with internal suspicions that their inconsistent packaging designs were sorely in need of a facelift. When focus group participants said that the box failed to stand out, its purple background was 'anti-Betty' and the cake 'looked fake', the company sprang into action.

- The Betty Crocker team then got to work trying to nail down what Betty, a fictional homemaker, would like in a package. The company's design consultants, Lipson Alport Glass and Associates, created more than one hundred versions of Betty's red spoon logo, and handwriting analysts deconstructed dozens of versions of her signatures to go on the boxes. Twenty people at the consulting firm worked on the redesign project in a room papered with sketches.

- The firm finalized a design for the red spoon as well as colours, fonts and logos to make sure the packaging would stay consistent and be striking. As one consultant noted, the goal was to 'get that classic warm-and-homey feeling, with a soft, sunny background, evoking a kitchen'. A red box border was created for uniformity, but a wavy band was included to 'evoke the stirring of batter'.

- A team including a photographer, art director and four food stylists worked for weeks on the bakery photos that would appear on the cakebox covers. Cakes were baked, sliced and photographed by the dozen. Every angle, every size was discussed.

- With all the pieces in place, the new packaging was launched. In 2003, a consumer survey showed four out of five shoppers preferred the new boxes. And more than half those surveyed said they would be more likely to buy the product based on the new designs versus the old. The Betty Crocker management team was thrilled. As one marketing director commented: 'It's like seeing your best friend get a makeover. You hope it'll be fabulous, and when it is, you want to applaud.'

Sources: Michele Meyer, 'Recipe for success?' *USA Weekend Magazine*, 20 July 2003; Kate Bertrand, 'Stylish packaging acts as home décor,' *BrandPackaging*, September 2004; Ted Mininni, 'True brand differentiation: not new or improved,' *BrandPackaging*, April 2005.

If packaging recognition is a critical consumer success factor for the brand, however, packaging changes must be conducted carefully. If changed too significantly, consumers may not recognize the new package.

The importance of packaging is reflected in the fact that some marketing observers refer to it as the 'fifth P' of the marketing mix. Packaging can play an important role

1. Know your consumer. Get inside your consumer's head and heart to learn about what motivates the purchase.
2. Take the big-picture approach. Packages that are most effective borrow ideas from a wide range of product categories. They look at all forms of packaging and put the best ideas together in unique ways.
3. Understand that package aesthetics and function are both critical. The package has to grab consumers' attention in a sea of competing messages, but it also has to work well so that consumers will buy again.
4. Know your distribution channels. How do retailers view your package? How are channels changing? Which retailers like which package configurations?
5. Educate management. Make sure senior management recognizes the importance of packaging.

Figure 4.12   Guidelines for creating high-impact packaging

in building brand equity directly through points of difference created by functional or aesthetic elements of the packaging or indirectly through the reinforcement of brand awareness and image. Figure 4.12 contains the recommendations of one expert on how to create packaging with high impact, and Brand Briefing 4.8 reviews some academic research.[54]
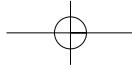
Brand Briefing 4.8

The psychology of packaging

Academic Brian Wansink has conducted research studies into the consumer psychology of packaging. Here is how he approaches the topic and views some of his findings: 'Packaging can be such an important brand-building tool that it is sometimes called the 'fifth P'. Since it is estimated that the majority of brand choice decisions are made at the point-of-purchase, the right package can instantly catch a consumer's eye, communicate value, reinforce a brand's equity, and provide key comparison information.[55,56] The bright red and yellow colours of a Tide box can attract attention, while the black and white boxes of an Apple iPod can reinforce an exclusive, 'think different' image. The slender shape of one shampoo bottle emphasizes elegance, while the squat shape of another holding the same volume leads people to think it contains less shampoo inside.'

Many managers think the package's main purpose is to encourage purchase. For many consumer packaged goods, the package keeps on marketing the brand and influencing consumers long after it is purchased. After it is home it can influence how a person perceives its taste and value and it can influence how much a person uses at a time and even how he or she uses it.

● Packaging can influence taste. Our sense of taste and touch is very suggestible, and what we see on a package can lead us to taste what we think we are going to taste.

Brand Briefing 4.8 *continued*

In one study, 181 people were sent home with nutrition bars that either claimed to contain '10 grams of protein' or '10 grams of soy protein.' In reality, both nutrition bars were identical, and neither contained any soy. Nevertheless, because many people believe soy to have a unfavourable taste, they rated the bars with 'soy' on the package as, 'grainy,' 'unappealing' and 'tasteless'.[57] People often taste what they expect to taste. The right words and image on a package can have a big influence on these expectations.

- Packaging can influence value. Long after we have bought a product, a package can still lead us to believe we bought it for a good value. First, most people believe that the bigger the package, the better the price per weight. Yet even the shape of a package can influence what we think.[58] One study found that people believe tall, narrow packages hold more of a product than short, wide packages.[59]

- Packaging can influence consumption. Studies of forty-eight types of foods and personal care products[60] have shown that people pour and consume 18–32 per-cent more of a product as the size of the container doubles.[61] A big part of the reason why this occurs is because these larger sizes subtly suggest a higher 'consumption norm'.[62] This is so hardwired that it happens in a wide range of contexts. One study gave Chicago cinema-goers free medium or large popcorn buckets and showed that those given the larger buckets ate 45 percent more![63] Even when fourteen day-old popcorn was used, people still ate 32 percent more even though they said they hated the popcorn.[64] The same thing happens at par-ties. US students at a party were offered Chex Mix from either huge bowls or from twice as many half-sized bowls. Those taking from the gallon-bowls took and ate 53 percent more.[65]

- Packaging can influence how a person uses a product. For some mature brands, one strategy to increase use has been to encourage people to use the brand in new situations (soup for breakfast) or for new uses (baking soda as a refrigerator deodorizer). An analysis of twenty-six products and 402 con-sumers showed that the most common way in which consumers learned about new uses for products was from reading the package. The study showed that twice as many people had learned about the new use from the package as from television ads.[66] Part of the reason such on-package suggestions are effective is they are likely to reach a person who is already favourable to the brand.

A package can influence what we buy, but it can also influence how we use it, how much we consume and how much we enjoy it. Packaging continues to influence us long after it is purchased, and it can be an important part of what contributes to a brand's equity.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER
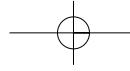
The previous discussion highlighted considerations for brand names, URLs, logos, symbols, characters, slogans, jingles and packages. Each of these different elements can play a role in building brand equity. Conceptually, it is necessary to 'mix and match' these elements to maximize brand equity. That is, as summarized in Figure 4.13, each brand element has strengths and weaknesses. Thus, marketers must 'mix' brand elements by choosing different ones to achieve different objectives. At the same time, marketers must 'match' the elements by making sure that certain ones are chosen to reinforce each other by shared meaning. For example, research has shown that meaningful names that are represented as logos are easier to remember than without such reinforcement.[67]

The set of brand elements can be thought of making up the *brand identity*. The cohesiveness of the brand identity depends on the extent to which the elements are consistent. Ideally, elements would be chosen that support other brand elements and that could easily be incorporated into other aspects of the brand and marketing programme.

Some strong brands have valuable elements that reinforce each other. For example, consider Charmin toilet tissue in the US. Phonetically, the name itself probably conveys softness. The brand character, Mr Whipple, and the brand slogan, 'Please

	Brand element				
Criterion	**Names and URLs**	**Logos and symbols**	**Characters**	**Slogans and jingles**	**Packaging and signs**
Memorability	Can be chosen to enhance brand recall and recognition	Generally more useful for brand recognition	Generally more useful for brand recognition	Can be chosen to enhance brand recall and recognition	Generally more useful for brand recognition
Meaningfulness	Can reinforce almost any type of association, although sometimes only indirectly	Can reinforce almost any type of association, although sometimes only indirectly	Generally more useful for non-product-related imagery and brand personality	Can convey almost any type of association explicitly	Can convey almost any type of association explicitly
Likability	Can evoke much verbal imagery	Can provoke visual appeal	Can generate human qualities	Can evoke much verbal imagery	Can combine visual and verbal appeal
Transferability	Can be limited	Excellent	Can be limited	Can be limited	Good
Adaptability	Difficult	Can typically be redesigned	Can sometimes be redesigned	Can be modified	Can typically be redesigned
Protectability	Generally good, but with limits	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Can be closely copied

Figure 4.13   Critique of brand element options

don't squeeze the Charmin', also help to reinforce the point of difference for the brand of 'softness'.

Brand names characterized by rich, visual imagery often can yield powerful logos or symbols. Wells Fargo, a large California-based bank, has a brand name rich in the heritage of the US West that can be exploited in marketing. Wells Fargo has adopted a stagecoach as a symbol and has named individual services to be thematically consistent, for example, creating investment funds called Stagecoach Funds.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Brand elements are those trademarkable devices that serve to identify and differentiate a brand. The main elements are names, URLs, logos, symbols, characters, slogans, jingles and packages. Elements can be chosen to both enhance brand awareness and facilitate the formation of strong, favourable and unique brand associations.

In choosing and designing brand elements, six criteria are particularly important. First, elements can be chosen to be inherently memorable, both in terms of brand recall and recognition. Second, elements can be chosen to be inherently meaningful such that they convey information about the nature of the product category or particular attributes and benefits of a brand, or both. The element may even reflect brand personality, user or usage imagery, or feelings for the brand. Third, the information conveyed by brand elements does not necessarily have to relate to the product alone and may simply be inherently appealing. Fourth, elements can be chosen to be transferable within and across product categories (ie, to support line and brand extensions) and across geographic and cultural boundaries and market segments. Fifth, elements can be chosen to be adaptable and flexible over time. Finally, brand elements must be chosen that are legally protectable and, as much as possible, competitively defensible.

The chapter reviewed a number of considerations for each type of brand element. Because elements have different strengths and weaknesses it is important to 'mix and match' them to maximize their collective contribution to brand equity. Elements are 'mixed' by choosing different ones to achieve different objectives. Brand elements are 'matched' by designing some elements to be mutually reinforcing and to share some meaning.
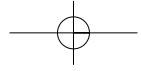
Discussion questions

1. Pick a brand. Identify all of its brand elements and assess their ability to contribute to brand equity according to the choice criteria identified in this chapter.

2. What are your favorite brand characters? Do you think they contribute to brand equity in any way? How? Can you relate their effects to the customer-based brand equity model?

3. What are some other examples of slogans not listed in the chapter that make strong contributions to brand equity? Why? Can you think of any 'bad' slogans? Why do you consider them to be so?

4. Choose a package of any supermarket product. Assess its contribution to brand equity. Justify your decisions.

5. Can you think of some general guidelines to help marketers mix and match brand elements? Can you ever have 'too many' elements? Which brand do you think does the best job of mixing and matching brand elements?
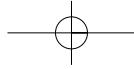
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