

Learning Objectives

Measuring Sources of Brand Equity: Capturing Customer Mind-Set

After reading this chapter, you should be able to

1. Describe effective qualitative research techniques for tapping into consumer brand knowledge.
2. Identify effective quantitative research techniques for measuring brand awareness, image, responses, and relationships.
3. Profile and contrast some popular brand equity models.

Marketers strive to learn everything about how consumers use the products they sell. For pillow manufacturers, that might mean knowing how many consumers fold, stack, or just hug their pillows.

312 Source: Jose Luis Pelaez/Stone/Getty Images

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Preview

Understanding the current and desired brand knowledge structures of consumers is vital to effectively building and managing brand equity. Ideally, marketers would be able to construct detailed “mental maps” to understand exactly what exists in consumers’ minds—all their thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, beliefs, and attitudes toward different brands. These mental blueprints would then provide managers with the insights to develop a solid brand positioning with the right points-of-parity and points-of-difference and the strategic guidance to help them make good brand decisions. Unfortunately, such brand knowledge structures are not easily measured because they reside only in consumers’ minds.

Nevertheless, effective brand management requires us to thoroughly understand the consumer. Often a simple insight into how consumers think of or use products and the particular brands in a category can help create a profitable change in the marketing program. That’s why many large companies conduct exhaustive research studies (or brand audits, as described in Chapter 8) to learn as much as possible about consumers.

A number of detailed, sophisticated research techniques and methods now exist to help marketers better understand consumer knowledge structures. A host of primary and secondary data sources exist online. Many industry or company studies can be accessed and surveys can be efficiently distributed and collected. This chapter highlights some of the important considerations critical to the measurement of brand equity.¹ Figure 9-1 outlines general considerations in understanding consumers, and Branding Brief 9-1 describes the lengths to which marketers have gone in the past to learn about consumers.

According to the brand value chain, sources of brand equity arise from the customer mind-set. In general, measuring sources of brand equity requires that the brand manager fully understand how customers shop for and use products and services and, most important, what customers know, think, and feel about and act toward various brands. In particular, measuring sources of customer-based brand equity requires us to measure various aspects of brand awareness and brand image that can lead to the differential customer response making up brand equity.

Consumers may have a holistic view of brands that is difficult to divide into component parts. But many times we can, in fact, isolate perceptions and assess them in greater detail. The

remainder of this chapter describes qualitative and quantitative approaches to identifying potential sources of brand equity—that is, capturing the customer mind-set.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

There are many different ways to uncover the types of associations linked to the brand and their corresponding strength, favorability, and uniqueness. Qualitative research techniques often identify possible brand associations and sources of brand equity. These are relatively unstructured measurement

FIGURE 9-1

Understanding Consumers

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Who: Who is the consumer? What are the consumer's demographics? Where does he/she stay? Which socio-economic class does she hail from? Who can influence their purchase behavior?

Why: Why does she/ he buy this product? What are his/her beliefs? What is the attitude towards this brand / product / competitors? What needs does this brand fulfill?

When: When does the consumer buy this brand? How often is it bought?

Where: Where is the brand bought? Where else can the brand be bought? Where is the brand used?

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BRANDING BRIEF 9-1

Digging Beneath the Surface to Understand Consumer Behavior

Because the consumer behavior we observe can differ from the behavior consumers report in surveys, useful marketing insights sometimes emerge from unobtrusively observing consumers rather than talking to them. For example, Hoover became suspicious when people claimed in surveys that they vacuumed their houses for an hour each week. To check, the company installed timers in certain models and exchanged them for the same models in consumers' homes. The timers showed that people actually spent only a little over half an hour vacuuming each week. One researcher analyzed household trash to determine the types and quantities of food people consumed, finding that people really don't have a very good idea of how much and what types of food they eat. Similarly, much research has shown that people report they eat healthier food than would appear to be the case if you opened their cabinets!

DuPont commissioned marketing studies to uncover personal pillow behavior for its Dacron polyester unit, which supplies filling to pillow makers and sells its own Comforel brand (now part of INVISTA). One challenge: people don't give up their old pillows. Thirty-seven percent of one sample described their relationship with their pillow as like "an old married couple," and an additional 13 percent characterized their pillow like a "childhood friend." The researchers found that people fell into distinct groups in terms of pillow behavior: stackers (23 percent), plumpers (20 percent), rollers or folders (16 percent), cuddlers (16 percent), and smashers, who pound their pillows into a more comfy shape (10 percent). Women were more likely to plump, while men were more likely to fold. The prevalence of stackers led the com-

pany to sell more pillows packaged as pairs, as well as to market different levels of softness or firmness.

Much of this type of research has its roots in ethnography, the anthropological term for the study of cultures in their natural surroundings. The intent behind these in-depth, observational studies is for consumers to drop their guard and provide a more realistic portrayal of who they are rather than who they would like to be. On the basis of ethnographic research that uncovered consumers' true feelings, ad campaigns have been created for a Swiss chocolate maker with the theme "The True Confessions of a Chocoholic" (because chocolate lovers often hid stashes all though the house), for Tampax tampons with the theme "More Women Trust Their Bodies to Tampax" (because teen users wanted the freedom to wear body-conscious clothes), and for Crisco shortening with the theme "Recipe for Success" (because people often baked pies and cookies in a celebratory fashion).

Sources: Russell Belk, ed., *Handbook of Qualitative Research Method in Marketing* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2006); Eric J. Arnould and Amber Epp, "Deep Engagement with Consumer Experience: Listening and Learning with Qualitative Data," in *The Handbook of Marketing Research: Uses, Misuses, and Future Advances*, eds. Rajiv Grover and Marco Vriens (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Press, 2006): 51–58; Jennifer Chang Coupland, "Invisible Brands: An Ethnography of Households and the Brands in Their Kitchen Pantries," *Journal of Consumer Research* 32 (June 2005): 106–118; John Koten, "You Aren't Paranoid If You Feel Someone Eyes You Constantly," *Wall Street Journal*, 2 March 1985; Susan Warren, "Pillow Talk: Stackers Outnumber Plumpers; Don't Mention Drool," *Wall Street Journal*, 8 January 1998, B1.

approaches that permit a range of both questions and answers and so can often be a useful first step in exploring consumer brand and product perceptions.

Qualitative research has a long history in marketing. Ernest Dichter, one of the early pioneers in consumer psychoanalytic research, first applied these research principles in a study for Plymouth automobiles in the 1930s.² His research revealed the important—but previously overlooked—role that women played in the automobile purchase decision. Based on his consumer analysis, Plymouth adopted a new print ad strategy that highlighted a young couple gazing admiringly at a Plymouth automobile under the headline "Imagine Us in a Car Like That." Dichter's subsequent work had an important impact on a number of different ad campaigns.³

Some of his assertions were fairly controversial. For instance, he equated convertibles with youth, freedom, and the secret wish for mistresses; argued that women used Ivory soap to wash away their sins before a date; and maintained that baking was an expression of femininity and pulling a cake or loaf out of an oven for women was akin to child birth. However, his suggested tagline "Putting a Tiger in the Tank" for Exxon resulted in a long-running and successful ad campaign.⁴

Conservative Good reputation

Dependable

Reliable

Good home and auto insurance

Red color

Agents who are part of my neighborhood

Around a long time Safe

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This section next reviews a number of qualitative research techniques for identifying sources of brand equity such as brand awareness, brand attitudes, and brand attachment. These techniques also can identify outcomes of brand equity such as price elasticities and brand choice and preference.

Free Association

The simplest and often the most powerful way to profile brand associations is free association tasks, in which subjects are asked what comes to mind when they think of the brand, without any more specific probe or cue than perhaps the associated product category. (“What does the Rolex name mean to you?” or “Tell me what comes to mind when you think of Rolex watches.”) Marketers can use the resulting associations to form a rough mental map for the brand (see Figure 9-2 for a sample mental map for State Farm insurance).

Marketers use free association tasks mainly to identify the range of possible brand associations in consumers’ minds, but free association may also provide some rough indication of the relative strength, favorability, and uniqueness of brand associations.⁵ Coding free association responses in terms of the order of elicitation—whether they are early or late in the sequence—at least gives us a rough measure of their strength.⁶ For example, if many consumers mention “fast and convenient” as one of their first associations when given “McDonald’s restaurants” as a probe, then the association is probably a relatively strong one and likely able to affect consumer decisions. Associations later in the list may be weaker and thus more likely to be overlooked during consumer decision making. Comparing associations with those elicited for competitive brands can also tell us about their relative uniqueness. Finally, we can discern even favorability, to some extent, on the basis of how consumers phrase their associations.

Top-of-the-line insurance

Responsive

Convenient

Reputable

“Good Neighbors”

Fast settlements Personal service

FIGURE 9-2

Sample State Farm Mental Map

Source: Logo used with permission of State Farm Insurance

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Answers to free-association questions help marketers clarify the range of possible associations and assemble a brand profile.⁷ To better understand the favorability of associations, we can ask consumers follow-up questions about the favorability of associations they listed or, more generally, what they like best about the brand. Similarly, we can ask them follow-up questions about the uniqueness of associations they listed or, more generally, about what they find unique about the brand. Useful questions include the following:

1. What do you like best about the brand? What are its positive aspects or advantages?

2. What do you like least about the brand? What are its negative aspects or disadvantages?
3. What do you find unique about the brand? How is it different from other brands?

These simple, direct measures can be extremely valuable for determining core aspects of a brand

image. To elicit more structure and guidance, consumers can be asked further follow-up questions about what the brand means to them in terms of the classic journalism “who, what, when, where, why, and how” questions:

1. Who uses the brand? What kind of person?
2. What types of situations do they use the brand?
3. When and where do they use the brand?
4. Why do people use the brand? What do they get out of using it?
5. How do they use the brand? What do they use it for?

Guidelines. The two main issues to consider in conducting free association tasks are what types of probes to give to subjects, and how to code and interpret the resulting data. In order not to bias results, it is best to move from general considerations to more specific considerations, as we illustrated earlier. Thus, ask consumers first what they think of the brand as a whole without reference to any particular category, followed by specific questions about particular products and aspects of the brand image.

Consumers’ responses to open-ended probes can be either oral or written. The advantage of oral responses is that subjects may be less deliberate and more spontaneous in their reporting. In terms of coding the data, divide the protocols each consumer provides into phrases and aggregate them across consumers in categories. Because of their more focused nature, responses to specific probes and follow-up questions are naturally easier to code.

Projective Techniques

For marketers to succeed in uncovering the sources of brand equity, they must profile consumers’ brand knowledge structures as accurately and completely as possible.

Unfortunately, under certain situations, consumers may feel that it would be socially unacceptable or undesirable to express their true feelings—especially to an interviewer they don’t even know! As a result, they may find it easier to fall back on stereotypical, pat answers they believe would be acceptable or perhaps even expected by the interviewer.

Consumers may be particularly unwilling or unable to reveal their true feelings when marketers ask about brands characterized by a preponderance of imagery associations. For example, it may be difficult for consumers to admit that a certain brand name product has prestige and enhances their self-image. They may instead refer to some particular product feature as the reason they like or dislike the brand. Or they may simply find it difficult to identify and express their true feelings when asked directly, even if they attempt to do so. For either of these reasons, it might be impossible to obtain an accurate portrayal of brand knowledge structures without some rather unconventional research methods.

Projective techniques are diagnostic tools to uncover the true opinions and feelings of consumers when they are unwilling or otherwise unable to express themselves on these matters.⁸ Marketers present consumers with an incomplete stimulus and ask them to complete it, or they give consumers an ambiguous stimulus and ask them to make sense of it. The idea is that in the process consumers will reveal

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some of their true beliefs and feelings. Thus, projective techniques can be especially useful when deeply rooted personal motivations or personally or socially sensitive subjects are at issue.

In psychology, the most famous example of a projective technique is the Rorschach test, in which experimenters present ink blots to subjects and ask them what the ink blots remind them of. In responding, subjects may reveal certain facets of their own, perhaps subconscious, personality. Psychologists also use dream analysis or probe the earliest and most defining memories a person has on a topic.⁹

Projective techniques have a long history in marketing, beginning with the motivation research of the late 1940s and 1950s.¹⁰ A classic example is an experiment exploring hidden feelings toward instant coffee conducted by Mason Haire in the late 1940s, summarized in Branding Brief 9-2.¹¹ Although projective techniques don't always yield results as powerful as in that example, they often provide useful insights that help to assemble us a more complete picture of consumers and their relationships with brands. Many kinds of projective techniques are possible. We'll highlight a few here.¹²

BRANDING BRIEF 9-2

Once Upon a Time . . . You Were What You Cooked

One of the most famous applications of psychographic techniques was made by Mason Haire in the 1940s. The purpose of the experiment was to uncover consumers' true beliefs and feelings toward Nescafé instant coffee.

The impetus for the experiment was a survey conducted to determine why the initial sales of Nescafé instant coffee were so disappointing. The majority of the people who reported they didn't like the product stated that the reason was the flavor. On the basis of consumer taste tests, however, Nescafé's management knew consumers found the taste of instant coffee acceptable when they didn't know what type of coffee they were drinking. Suspecting that consumers were not expressing their true feelings, Haire designed a clever experiment to discover what was really going on.

Haire set up two shopping lists containing the same six items. Shopping List 1 specified Maxwell House drip ground coffee, whereas Shopping List 2 specified Nescafé instant coffee, as follows:

Shopping List 1

Pound and a half of hamburger
2 loaves Wonder bread Bunch of carrots
1 can Rumford's Baking Powder
Maxwell House coffee (drip ground)
2 cans Del Monte peaches 5 lbs. potatoes

Shopping List 2

Pound and a half of hamburger
2 loaves Wonder bread Bunch of carrots
1 can Rumford's Baking Powder
Nescafé instant coffee
2 cans Del Monte peaches 5 lbs. potatoes

Marketers of Nescafé instant coffee had to go to great lengths when the product was introduced to figure out what consumers really thought of it.

Source: Helen Sessions/Alamy

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Two groups of matched subjects were each given one of the lists and asked to “Read the shopping list. . . . Try to project yourself into the situation as far as possible until you can more or less characterize the woman who bought the groceries.” Subjects then wrote a brief description of the personality and character of that person.

After coding the responses into frequently mentioned categories, Haire found that two starkly different profiles emerged:

that time, the “labor-saving” aspect of instant coffee, rather than being an asset, was a liability in that it violated consumer traditions. Consumers were evidently reluctant to admit this fact when asked directly but were better able to express their true feelings when asked to project to another person.

The strategic implications of this new research finding were clear. Based on the original survey results, the obvious positioning for instant coffee with respect to regular coffee would have been to establish a point-of-difference on “con-venience” and a point-of-parity on the basis of “taste.” Based on the projective test findings, however, it was obvious that there also needed to be a point-of-parity on the basis of user imagery. As a result, a successful ad campaign was launched that promoted Nescafé coffee as a way for housewives to free up time so they could devote additional time to more important household activities.

Sources: Mason Haire, “Projective Techniques in Marketing Research,” *Journal of Marketing* (April 1950): 649–652; J. Arndt, “Hairst Shopping List Revisited,” *Journal of Advertising Research* 13 (1973): 57–61; G. S. Lane and G. L. Watson, “A Canadian Replication of Mason Haire’s ‘Shopping List’ Study,” *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 3 (1975): 48–59; William L. Wilkie, *Consumer Behavior*, 3rd ed. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1994).

Lazy

Fails to plan household purchases and schedules well

Thrifty

Not a good wife

List 1

(Maxwell House) 4%

12%

16% 0%

List 2 (Nescafé) 48% 48%

4% 16%

Haire interpreted these results as indicating that instant coffee represented a departure from homemade coffee and traditions with respect to caring for one’s family. In other words, at Completion and Interpretation Tasks. Classic projective techniques use incomplete or ambiguous stimuli to elicit consumer thoughts and feelings. One approach is “bubble exercises,” which depict different people buying or using certain products or services. Empty bubbles, as in cartoons, are placed in the scenes to represent the thoughts, words, or actions of one or more of the participants. Marketers then ask consumers to “fill in the bubble” by indicating what

they believe is happening or being said in the scene. The stories and conversations told this way can be especially useful for assessing user and usage imagery for a brand.

Comparison Tasks. Another useful technique is comparison tasks, in which we ask consumers to convey their impressions by comparing brands to people, countries, animals, activities, fabrics, occupations, cars, magazines, vegetables, nationalities, or even other brands.¹³ For example, we might ask consumers, “If Dannon yogurt were a car, which one would it be? If it were an animal, which one might it be? Looking at the people depicted in these pictures, which ones do you think would be most likely to eat Dannon yogurt?” In each case, we would ask a follow-up question about why subjects made the comparison they did. The objects people choose to represent the brand and their reasons can provide glimpses into the psyche of the consumer with respect to a brand, particularly useful in understanding imagery associations. By examining the answers to probes, researchers may be better able to assemble a rich image for the brand, for example, identifying key brand personality associations. Branding Brief 9-3 describes how holidays can be experienced in Club Mahindra.

Archetypes. Archetype research is one technique for eliciting deeply held consumer attitudes and feelings. According to cultural anthropologist G. C. Rapaille, consumers often make purchase decisions

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Club Mahindra: Branding a Holiday Experience

Mahindra Holidays & Resorts India Ltd. (MHRIL)—a part of the \$16 billion Mahindra Group—was founded in 1996 to provide holiday experiences on a time-share basis. MHRIL includes the brands Club Mahindra Holidays, Club Mahindra Travel, Club Mahindra Fundays, Mahindra Homestays, and Zest.

Holidaying in India was traditionally seen just as a whistle-stop tour from city to city, country to country in a display of endurance and stamina which was extremely taxing physically and mentally. The concept of holidaying in India has undergone a transformation with customers opting for more relaxed holidays, focussing on the local culture, cuisines, historical places and monuments, places of religious significance, and the scenic thrill of the destinations. This changing dynamics in the holiday market gave rise to the concept of Time-sharing or Vacation Ownership.

Vacation Ownership (Time-sharing) for a member is about owning their holiday time. It gives them the opportunity to own a vacation home whenever they go for a holiday. They pay only a fraction of the full cost instead of buying a holiday home. Another advantage of Vacation Ownership is its flexibility to be exchanged to another vacation property outside their home resort. It enables the member to experience a hassle-free travel in India or around the world. Club Mahindra started with a single resort in Munnar in 2007. Presently, the company has over 43 resorts in India and abroad. Over 1,60,000 member families have trusted the brand to provide a lifetime of holidays. As a part of the Mahindra Group, the brand has stood for honor and trust. Vacation-ownership offers the choice of trying a new kind of holiday every year. The members get to choose from a selection of waterfront/ beach resorts, Himalayan resorts, jungle resorts, or resorts at hill stations. With season and apartment size at their disposal, the members get to choose the time of year that suits them and the desirable room size. A wide

range of activities like adventure sports, water sports, camping, treks, indoor sports, family games, hobby programs, and assorted workshops keeps everyone in the family entertained. Building a major brand in the holiday space is a difficult task because the category demands the support of a world-

Discovering Newer Experiences

class service and experience which is homogenous across all the moments of truth. Club Mahindra has realized that developing and growing the brand is of paramount importance and this reflects in almost all the dimensions of its operations. The resorts are equipped with world-class amenities and activities for all seasons and ages of the customers. The holiday consultants help the members to plan their holidays based on their convenience and choice of locations.

Recognising the increasing trend, among affluent Indian families to holiday abroad, Club Mahindra has tied up with Resort Condominium International (RCI), allowing its members access to an additional 40 resorts in India and more than 6000 resorts across the world. The brand experience is unique as the ambience, personalised service, cuisine, and resort facilities are specifically designed make vacations more special and memorable.

Sources: <http://www.clubmahindra.com/>, accessed on 1 October 2014;

<http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2004-09-04/>

news/27412193_1_resorts-timeshare-holiday-exchange-company, accessed on 1 October 2014; Club Mahindra Superbrand brochure.

based on factors of which they are only subconsciously aware. Conventional market research typically does not uncover these motivations, so Rapaille employs the archetype research technique to find them.¹⁴

Rapaille believes children experience a significant initial exposure to an element of their world called the “imprinting moment.” The pattern that emerges when we generalize these imprinting moments for the entire population is the archetype, a fundamental psychological association, shared by the members of the culture, with a given cultural object.

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Image source: Mahindra Holidays & Resorts India Ltd.

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Different cultures have dramatically different archetypes for the same objects. In France, the archetype for cheese is “alive” because age is its most important trait. By contrast, the U.S. archetype for cheese is “dead”; it is wrapped in plastic (“a body-bag”), put in the refrigerator (“a morgue”), and pasteurized (“scientifically dead”).

Rapaille uses relaxation exercises and visualization with consumers to find the imprinting moments appropriate to the product he is researching. For example, at a focus group, he will dim the lights, play soothing music, and coax the subjects into a meditative state. He will then elicit stories about the product from the subjects and analyze these stories to illuminate the archetype.

Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique

One interesting approach to better understand how consumers view brands is the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET).¹⁵ ZMET is based on a belief that consumers often have subconscious motives for their purchasing behavior. Professor Gerald Zaltman from

Harvard Business School says that a lot of latent thought processes are involved while making a purchase decision. Most of this influence occurs below the threshold of awareness and therefore newer techniques to unfold the hidden part of this knowledge are required.

To access this hidden knowledge, he developed the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique. As described in its U.S. patent, ZMET is “a technique for eliciting interconnected constructs that influence thought and behavior.” The word construct refers to “an abstraction created by the researcher to capture common ideas, concepts, or themes expressed by customers.” For example, the construct “ease of use” might capture the statements “simple to operate,” “works without hassle,” and “you don’t really have to do anything.”

ZMET draws knowledge and research findings from a whole plethora of fields such as cognitive neuroscience, neurobiology, art critique, literary criticism, visual anthropology, visual sociology, semiotics.... art therapy, and psycholinguistics. This technique is based on the idea that most social communication is based on non-verbal constructs. The ZMET technique uses metaphor as a method for understanding hidden thoughts of consumers.

A ZMET study starts with a group of participants who are asked in advance to think about the research topic at hand and collect a set of images from their own sources (magazines, catalogs, and family photo albums) that represent their thoughts and feelings about the research topic. The participants bring these images with them for a personal one-on-one two-hour interview with a study administrator, who uses advanced interview techniques to explore the images with the participant and reveal their deep ideas, archetypes, themes, and emotions through a “guided conversation.”

The interview consists of a series of steps, each with a specific purpose in mind:

1. Storytelling: Exploring individual visual metaphors
2. Expand the Frame: Expanding the metaphoric meaning of images
3. Sensory Metaphor: Eliciting metaphors about the research topic from each sensory modality
4. Vignette: Using the mind’s eye to create a short story about the research topic
5. Digital Image: Integrating the images to create a visual summary of the research topic

Once the participants’ interviews have been completed, researchers identify key themes or constructs, code the data, and assemble a consensus map of the most important constructs.

Quantitative analyses of the data can provide information for advertising, promotions, and other marketing decisions.

ZMET has been applied in a variety of different ways, including as a means to help understand consumers’ images of brands, products, and companies. Marketers can employ ZMET for a variety of consumer-insight research topics. Zaltman lists several of these:

ZMET is useful in understanding consumers’ images of brands, products, companies, brand equity, product concepts and designs, product usage and purchase experiences, life experiences, consumption context, and attitudes toward business.

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For example, DuPont enlisted Zaltman to research women’s attitudes toward hosiery. Conventional research yielded the conclusion that “women mostly hated wearing pantyhose,” but DuPont market researchers were not convinced that this conclusion provided a complete picture. Zaltman used ZMET with 20 subjects in order to uncover deeper answers to the

question, “What are your thoughts and feelings about buying and wearing pantyhose?” He discovered that women had a “like–hate” relationship with pantyhose; they disliked the discomfort and run-proneness of pantyhose but liked the feel of elegance and sexiness they got from wearing it. This discovery prompted a number of hosiery manufacturers to include more sexy and alluring imagery in their advertising. Figure 9-3 displays a consensus map that emerged from a study of intimate apparel.

Neural Research Methods

Taking ZMET one step further to dig even deeper into the subconscious, some marketing researchers are bypassing any verbal response from consumers to literally get inside the minds of consumers through various neural research methods. Neuromarketing is the study of how the brain responds to marketing stimuli, including brands.¹⁶ For example, some firms are applying sophisticated techniques such as EEG (electroencephalograph) technology to monitor brain activity and better gauge consumer responses to marketing.

Neurological research has been applied many ways in marketing.¹⁷ It has been used to measure the type of emotional response consumers exhibit when presented with marketing stimuli. Neurological research has shown that people activate different regions of the brain in assessing the personality traits of people than they do when assessing brands.

One major research finding to emerge from neurological consumer research is that many purchase decisions appear to be characterized less by the logical weighing of variables and more as an unconscious habitual process, different from the rational, conscious, information-processing model of economists and traditional marketing textbooks. Even basic decisions, such as the purchase of gasoline, seem to be influenced by brain activity at the subrational level.

Firms as varied as Intel, Paypal, Google, HP, Citi, and Microsoft have employed neurological marketing research studies. Frito-Lay hired neuromarketing firm NeuroFocus to study how consumers responded to their Cheetos cheese-flavored snack. Scanning the brains of a carefully chosen group of

- Coordinated
- Garment attributes
- Physical imprisonment
- Physical control
- Expense
- Aggravation
- Physical comfort
- Sexy
- Quality garment
- Attractive to others
- Obligatory wearing
- Self-confidence
- Achievement
- Happy
- Variety of design
 - Acceptance by others
 - Emotional freedom

Elegant
 Project self-image
 Emotionally comfortable
 Concern
 Anger
 Feel thin
 = Originator construct = Connector construct = Destination construct

FIGURE 9-3
 Application of ZMET to Intimate Apparel Market

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consumers revealed that their most powerful response was to the product's messy outer coating. The research study's insight led to an award-winning ad campaign.¹⁸

By adding neurological techniques to their research arsenal, marketers are trying to move toward a more complete picture of what goes on inside consumers' heads.¹⁹ Although it may be able to offer different insights from conventional techniques, neurological research at this point is very costly, running as much as \$100,000 or even more per project. Given the complexity of the human brain, however, many researchers caution that neurological research should not form the sole basis for marketing decisions. These research activities have not been universally accepted. The measurement devices to capture brain activity can be highly obtrusive, such as with skull caps studded with electrodes, creating artificial exposure conditions. Others question whether they offer unambiguous implications for marketing strategy. Brian Knutson, a professor of neuroscience and psychology at Stanford University, compares the use of EEG to "standing outside a baseball stadium and listening to the crowd to figure out what happened."

Brand Personality and Values

As defined in Chapter 2, brand personality is the human characteristics or traits that consumers can attribute to a brand. We can measure it in different ways. Perhaps the simplest and most direct way is to solicit open-ended responses to a probe such as the following:

If the brand were to come alive as a person, what would it be like? What would it do? Where would it live? What would it wear? Who would it talk to if it went to a party (and what would it talk about)?

If consumers have difficulty getting started in their descriptions, an easily understood example or prompt serves as a guide. For example, if Campbell's soup were to be described as a person, one possible response might be as follows:²⁰

Mrs. Campbell is a rosy-cheeked and plump grandmother who lives in a warm, cozy house and wears an apron as she cooks wonderful things for her grandchildren.

Other means are possible to capture consumers' points of view. For example, marketers can give consumers a variety of pictures or a stack of magazines and ask them to assemble a profile of the brand. Ad agencies often conduct "picture sorting" studies to clarify who are typical users of a brand.

As Chapter 3 noted, brand personality and user imagery may not always agree. When USA Today was first introduced, a research study exploring consumer opinions of the newspaper indicated that the benefits readers and nonreaders perceived were highly consistent.

Perceptions of the USA Today brand personality—as colorful, friendly, and simple—were also

highly related. User imagery, however, differed dramatically: Nonreaders viewed a typical USA Today reader as a shallow “air head”; readers, on the other hand, saw a typical USA Today reader as a well-rounded person interested in a variety of issues. Based on these findings, an advertising campaign was introduced to appeal to nonreaders that showed how prominent people endorsed the newspaper.²¹

The Big Five. We can assess brand personality more definitively through adjective checklists or ratings. Jennifer Aaker conducted a research project that provides an interesting glimpse into the personality of a number of well-known brands, as well as a methodology to examine the personality of any one brand. Based on an extensive data collection of ratings of 114 personality traits on 37 brands in various product categories by over 600 individuals representative of the U.S. population, she created a brand personality scale. The parameters are sincerity (honest, light-hearted, and sensible), excitement (daring and creative), competence (responsible, brilliant, and ambitious), sophistication (elegant and pleasant), and ruggedness (resilient and sporty). ²²

Figure 9-4 depicts the specific trait items that make up the Aaker brand personality scale. Respondents in her study rated how descriptive each personality trait was for each brand according to a seven-point scale (1 = not at all descriptive; 7 = extremely descriptive). Aaker averaged responses to provide

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When USA Today launched, readers and nonreaders had very different brand imagery perceptions.

Source: Keri Miksza

summary measures. Some brands tend to be strong on one particular factor; some brands like Nike are high on more than one factor; some brands score poorly on all factors.

A cross-cultural study exploring the generalizability of this scale outside the United States found that three of the five factors applied in Japan and Spain, but that a “peacefulness” dimension replaced “ruggedness” both in Japan and Spain, and a “passion” dimension emerged in Spain instead of “competency.”²³ Research on brand personality in Korea revealed that two culture-specific factors emerge (“passive likeableness” and “ascendancy”), reflecting the importance of Confucian values in Korea’s social and economic systems.²⁴

Factors

Facets

Down-to-earth

Traits

Sincerity

Wholesome

wholesome original

cheerful sentimental friendly

Excitement

Imaginative Up-to-date

Competence

Reliable

Sophistication
 Ruggedness
 Tough Outdoorsy
 tough rugged
 down-to-earth family-oriented small-town
 honest sincere real
 imaginative unique
 reliable hard-working secure
FIGURE 9-4
Brand Personality Scale Measures
 Honest
 Cheerful
 Spirited
 spirited cool young
 Intelligent
 Upper-class
 Charming
 charming feminine smooth
 Daring
 daring trendy exciting
 Successful
 successful leader confident
 glamorous good-looking
 up-to-date independent contemporary
 intelligent technical corporate
 upper-class
 outdoorsy masculine western

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Ethnographic and Experiential Methods

More than ever, researchers are working to improve the effectiveness of their qualitative approaches, as well as to go beyond traditional qualitative techniques to research consumers in their natural environment.²⁵ The rationale is that no matter how clever the research design, consumers may not be able to fully express their true selves as part of a formalized research study. By tapping more directly into consumers' actual home, work, or shopping behaviors, researchers might be able to elicit more meaningful responses.²⁶ As markets become more competitive and many brand differences are threatened, any insight that helps to support a stronger brand positioning or create a stronger link to consumers is valuable (see Branding Brief 9-4).

BRANDING BRIEF 9-4

Building Brands on Compelling Consumer Insights

Marketing organizations and advertising agencies have now discovered that merging of market research department with their database marketing team has not necessarily led to a stream of consumer insights to build strong brands. Compelling consumer insights reveal a deep dis-

covery about the consumer that can be used to position a brand or a new product in a differentiating and meaningful manner. Compelling insights go beyond what consumers say they do and even their current behavior and brand choices. Instead, such insights impact future choices by altering consumer perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and the resultant behavior. A compelling insight is completely different from a mere consumer finding.

2. Going beyond consumer speak to observing consumer behavior: A consumer insight requires observing behavior and patterns, not mere consumer fact-finding. There is a human truth that most people either cannot say what they feel because they are unaware of their behavior and/or they are holding back as a self-preservation tactic. This is critical because keenly observed actions and behavior is more important than listening to what consumers say.

3. Peel the consumer onion rings by delving deeper into consumer's feelings, beliefs, and attitudes: Compelling consumer insights require digging deep and peeling back the layers of what consumers say. Asking the whys (why do you do that, how does that make you feel, how does that affect your life) is required to really understand the emotional anchor behind the consumer's behavior and actions.

A compelling consumer insight differs from an observation because it is not immediately visible or "evident"; it only becomes clear when you are actually confronted with it. As Steve Jobs described it, "A lot of times, people don't know what they want, until you show it to them". A strong insight is equal to a sort of "Eureka" experience—a combination of surprise and something familiar.

A related aspect of a compelling consumer insight is relevance to the consumer's life space. A strong insight automatically calls for familiarity, sometimes even to the extent that you may even learn things about yourself that you were not aware of before. While testing the consumer insight for relevance, it is important to be connected with the consumer to help reveal a latent insight. HUL'S Pepsodent targets mothers through the dietary habits of their kids and the ability of the toothpaste to "fight germs between brushings". Their brand communication is delivered through its creative expression "dishum dishum", showing Pepsodent fighting animated germs. Thus, according to Pepsodent, assuring mothers will use this toothpaste to ensure oral protection to their kids.

Consumer Finding

Compelling Consumer Insight

A consumer-articulated behavior (functional)

Captures an unarticulated truth about the "why" behind a particular type of consumer behavior (emotional)

What consumers are actually doing now

Affects and drives future consumer behavior

Factual information

How knowledge is revealed from consumer facts

Interesting and informative data

Actionable brand-building wisdom about consumer behavior

Identifying an actionable consumer insight is every marketer's dream. Here are some directions to unearth such compelling insights:

1. Discovering consumer commonalities by aggregating and integrating data: A compelling consumer insight is a combination of consumer learning that dips into research and combines

it with the researcher's experience and understanding of the target consumers, the concerned product category, and his or her cross-category expertise.

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Behind every compelling insight is the consumer's need to improve an existing situation. In other words, it is not just about being relevant; consumers should also feel a need to better their current situation. HUL's New Generation Dove Therapy shampoo range of hair care products is aimed at the urban new-age woman who is highly concerned about hair damage caused by pollution and hair coloring. Dove Therapy shampoo promises prevention of hair damage through the line "Every woman can have beautiful hair as long as it's damage-free".

A compelling consumer insight is the start of possibly hundreds of ideas. It is a source of inspiration for branding, communication, product innovation, distribution, pricing, and creating customer experience. The compelling consumer insight "A Mont Blanc is bought for gifting" led to a completely new perspective in branding (leather case and packaging), distribution (stand-alone Mont Blanc shoppe, jewelry outlets, premium multi-brand gifting outlets), premium pricing, prod-

uct innovation (pens, watches, leather accessories, technical devices, jewelry, eye-ware, fragrance), and a store ambience that exudes "the quiet confidence of success and class".

Consumer insights come from combing data from a plethora of sources such as consumer and retail databases, focus group discussions and in-camera interviews called Vox Pop (voice of the people), and in-depth interviews. Such compelling consumer insights culled arduously and painstakingly are the foremost drivers in creating strong brands.

Source: Teaching notes by Professor Isaac Jacob on Integrated Marketing Communications, K J Somaiya Institute of Management Studies and Research, Mumbai;

<http://www.insightsinmarketing.com/>

[blog/2013/06/good-vs-great-how-to-uncover-identify-truly-great-insights.aspx](http://www.insightsinmarketing.com/blog/2013/06/good-vs-great-how-to-uncover-identify-truly-great-insights.aspx), accessed on 15 December 2014; <http://www.insites-consulting.com/four-characteristics-of-a-good-insight/>, accessed on 15 December 2014.

We've noted that much of this type of research has its roots in ethnographic research originally used by anthropologists. Ethnographic research uses "thick description" based on participant observation. In marketing, the goal of ethnographic research is to extract and interpret the deep cultural meaning of events and activities through various research techniques such as consumer immersion, site visits, shop-alongs, embedded research, etc.²⁷

Advocates of the ethnographic approach have sent researchers to consumers' homes in the morning to see how they approach their days, given business travelers digital cameras and diaries to capture their feelings when in hotel rooms, and conducted "beeper studies" in which participants are instructed to write down what they're doing when they are paged or texted.²⁸ Marketers such as Procter & Gamble seek consumers' permission to spend time with them in their homes to see how they actually use and experience products. Some of the many other companies that have used ethnographic research to study consumers include Best Western (to learn how seniors decide when and where to shop), Moen (to observe over an extended time how customers really use their shower devices), and Intel (to understand how people use mobile communications in moving around a city).²⁹ A comprehensive ethnographic research

study for JCPenney on their wedding registry resulted in a complete makeover at all levels.³⁰ Consider how ethnographic research paid off for Hewlett-Packard (HP).

HEWLETT-PACKARD (HP)

To better understand how surgeons operate, HP's medical products division sent a set of researchers into hospitals to observe. Surgeons need to carefully monitor their scalpel movements on a video monitor. During an operation, however, the researchers observed that many other staff members would cross in front of the monitor, obscuring the surgeon's line of sight. Because these staff members were going about their duties, the surgeons had failed to complain and prior research had failed to uncover the problem. Based on this research insight, HP developed a surgical helmet with goggles that cast images right in front of a surgeon's eyes, circumventing the problem.³¹

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An ethnographic research study by HP led to a breakthrough new medical product.

Source: moodboard/Alamy

Business-to-business firms can also benefit from company visits that help to cement relationships and supplement research efforts. Technology firms such as Hewlett-Packard use cross-functional customer visits as a market research tool to gain a competitive advantage. Figure 9-5 offers advice from one expert on the subject, Ed McQuarrie, about best practices for an outbound or inbound customer visit.³²

Service companies often employ mystery shoppers, paid researchers who pose as customers to learn about the service experience provided by a company. Sometimes the results can be eye-opening. When the president of Office Depot decided to pose as a mystery shopper himself, he found that employees were spending too much time keeping stores clean and well-stocked and not enough time actually building relationships with customers. As a result, the company reduced the size of stores, retrained and incentivized employees to focus more on customers, and added other products and services that customers wanted that were not currently available.³³

Through the years, companies have changed the way they gain customer insights. Microsoft employs ethnographic research with in-depth studies of consumer online search attitudes and behavior. Observing consumers inside and outside the home in a series of research studies, the company learned of changes over time in the way consumers explore and learn about new things online.³⁴

- An initial study in 2004 revealed that consumers were just trying to find out what experts say, because they felt that experts “knew it all.”
- A follow-up study in 2007 showed that consumers believed all the information they needed to learn was actually available through search engines—they just needed to figure out how to use the search engines.

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1. Send an advance letter of confirmation with an agenda so customers know what to expect and can be prepared.
2. Send small cross-functional teams.

3. Select customers according to a plan and visit at least a dozen.
4. Don't keep going back to the same small group of favorite customers.
5. Interview people at each site who represent each stage of the purchasing decision.
6. Get support from local account management.
7. Use a two- to three-page discussion guide in outline form.
8. Assign roles to team members (moderator, listener, note taker, etc.).
9. Use open-ended questions.
10. Don't ask customers to give solutions—get them to identify problems.
11. Don't talk too much and don't show off your expertise.
12. Probe deeper by using follow-up questions.
13. Debrief immediately.
14. Highlight verbatim quotes in reports.
15. A summary report should emphasize big news and be organized by major themes.
16. Archive the report online with other marketing research and intelligence.

FIGURE 9-5

Tips for Conducting Good Customer Visits

- By 2010, however, ethnographic research showed that people felt they actually created their own knowledge. Search engines were just enablers.

Of special research importance to many companies are lead or leading users. Many firms ask on-line groups of their most progressive consumers to give feedback via instant-messages or chat rooms. PepsiCo's DEWmocracy 2 program, launched in July 2009, was a 12-month, seven-stage campaign to create another consumer-generated version of its Mountain Dew soft drink, as had happened when the first DEWmocracy produced the highly successful Mountain Dew Voltage. The new campaign tapped into DEW labs, the brand's private online community of its most loyal customers, but also Facebook, Twitter, USTREAM, a 12-second TV video contest, and a dedicated YouTube channel.³⁵

ICICI BANK

ICICI Ltd. was formed in 1955 at the initiative of the World Bank, the Government of India, and representatives of the Indian industry. The principle objective was to create a development-oriented financial institution for providing medium-term and long-term project financing to Indian businesses.

ICICI Ltd. promoted ICICI Bank in 1994. It is India's largest private sector bank with a global presence across 19 countries. ICICI Bank's subsidiaries include India's leading private sector insurance companies, India's largest securities brokerage firm, second largest mutual fund asset management company, and a private equity firm. It is the first Indian company and first bank in Asia, outside of Japan, to be listed on NYSE in 1999.

With a rich heritage in the adoption of cutting-edge technology, ICICI Bank has always been a pioneer in delivering convenience in banking. The bank continues to innovate and offer a range of new products and services, many of which are first-of-their kind. It focuses on introducing new intuitive tools that make banking easier for its customers, true to its philosophy of Khayaal Aapka (Looking after you). The communication and brand strategy reflects this philosophy, wherein the customer comes first.

The bank also offers a wide range of world-class banking products and financial services to corporate and retail customers through an array of multi-delivery banking channels, including an

extensive network of branches, ATMs, internet banking, mobile banking, phone banking, tab banking, Facebook banking, and touch banking.

Customers can walk into the country's first fully electronic touch banking branches that are open round-the-clock for their daily banking needs like cash withdrawal, cash deposit, cheque deposit, fund transfer, bill pay, mobile recharge, print bank statements, and much more.

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Another first in India, tab banking provides doorstep service to customers who can now open a bank account from the convenience of their home or office. The Bank's tab banking officer reaches out to the customer and completes all processes related to account opening using his mobile tablet device, including document scanning and photographing the customer.

Such innovations by the bank have helped change the paradigm of banking in India and have made financial transactions faster, simpler, and more secure.

ICICI Bank has a robust brand equity management and measurement system in place. The bank constantly tracks its brand perception with its customers and prospects, thereby tailoring its messages to ensure that the brand stays relevant and caring in all its interactions.

New-Age Banking Experience.

Source: ICICI Bank

Compact video cameras make capturing participants' words and actions easier, and short films are often part of the research output that is reported to help bring the research to life.³⁶ Every research method, however, has its advantages and disadvantages.³⁷ Two of the more significant downsides to ethnographic research are that it is time-consuming and expensive.

Moreover, because it is based on subjective interpretation, multiple points of view may prevail.

Summary

Qualitative research techniques are a creative means of ascertaining consumer perceptions that may otherwise be difficult to uncover. The range of possible qualitative research techniques is limited only by the creativity of the marketing researcher.

Qualitative research, however, also has its drawbacks. The in-depth insights that emerge have to be tempered by the realization that the samples are often very small and may not necessarily generalize to broader populations. Moreover, given the qualitative nature of the data, there may be questions of interpretation. Different researchers examining the same results from a qualitative research study may draw different conclusions.

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

Although qualitative measures are useful in identifying the range of possible associations with a brand and some initial insights into their strength, favorability, and uniqueness, marketers often want a more definitive portrait of the brand to allow them to make more confident and defensible strategic and tactical recommendations.

Some say qualitative research strives to uncover and discover, while quantitative research aims to prove or disprove. Whereas qualitative research typically elicits some type of verbal response from consumers, quantitative research typically employs various types of scale questions from which researchers can draw numerical representations and summaries.

Image source: ICICI Bank

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Quantitative measures of brand knowledge can help to more definitively assess the depth and breadth of brand awareness; the strength, favorability, and uniqueness of brand associations; the positivity of brand judgments and feelings; and the extent and nature of brand relationships. Quantitative measures are often the primary ingredient in tracking studies that monitor brand knowledge structures of consumers over time, as we discussed in Chapter 8.

Brand Awareness

Recall that brand awareness is related to the strength of the brand in memory, as reflected by consumers' ability to identify various brand elements like the brand name, logo, symbol, character, packaging, and slogan under different conditions. Brand awareness describes the likelihood that a brand will come to mind in different situations, and the ease with which it does so given different types of cues.

Marketers use several measures of awareness of brand elements.³⁸ Choosing the right one is a matter of knowing the relative importance of brand awareness for consumer behavior in the category and the role it plays in the success of the marketing program, as we discussed in Chapter 2. Let's look at some of these awareness issues.

Recognition. Brand recognition requires consumers to identify the brand under a variety of circumstances and can rest on the identification of any of the brand elements. The most basic recognition test gives consumers a set of individual items visually or orally and asks them whether they think they've previously seen or heard of these items. To provide a more sensitive test, it is often useful to include decoys or lures—items consumers could not possibly have seen. In addition to “yes” or “no” responses, consumers can also rate how confident they are in their recognition of an item.

Other, somewhat more subtle, recognition measures test “perceptually degraded” versions of the brand, which are masked or distorted in some way or shown for extremely brief duration. For example, we can test brand name recognition with missing letters. Figure 9-6 tests your ability to recognize brand names with less than full information. These more subtle measures may be particularly important for brands that have a high level of recognition, in order to provide more sensitive assessments.³⁹

Brand recognition is especially important for packaging, and some marketing researchers have used creative means to assess the visibility of package design. As a starting point, they consider

A brand name with a high level of awareness will be recognized under less than ideal conditions. Consider the following list of incomplete names (i.e., word fragments). Which ones do you recognize? Compare your answers to the answer key in the footnote to see how well you did.

1. D__ NE__
2. KO__ K
3. DU__ AC__ _ _ _
4. H Y__ T__
5. AD__ L
6. M__ T__ EL
7. D__ L T__

8. N _ Q U _ L
9. G _ L L _ T _ _
10. H _ _ S H _ Y
11. H _ L L _ _ R K
12. M _ C H _ _ I N
13. T _ P P _ R W _ _ E
14. L _ G _
15. N _ K _

Answers: (1) Disney; (2) Kodak; (3) Duracell; (4) Hyatt; (5) Advil; (6) Mattel; (7) Delta; (8) NyQuil; (9) Gillette; (10) Hershey; (11) Hallmark; (12) Michelin; (13) Tupperware; (14) Lego; (15) Nike.

FIGURE 9-6

Don't Tell Me, It's On the Tip of My Tongue

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the benchmark or “best case” of the visibility of a package when a consumer (1) with 20–20 vision (2) is face-to-face with a package (3) at a distance of less than five feet (4) under ideal lighting conditions.

A key question then is whether the package design is robust enough to be still recognizable if one or more of these four conditions are not present. Because shopping is often not conducted under “ideal” conditions, such insights are important. For example, many consumers who wear eyeglasses do not wear them when shopping in a supermarket. Is the package still able to effectively communicate to consumers under such conditions?

Research methods using tachistoscopes (T-scopes) and eye tracking techniques exist to test the effectiveness of alternative package designs according to a number of specific criteria:

- Degree of shelf impact
- Impact and recall of specific design elements
- Perceived package size
- Copy visibility and legibility
- Distance at which the package can first be identified
- Angle at which the package can first be identified
- Speed with which the package can be identified

These additional measures can provide more sensitive measures of recognition than simple “yes” or “no” tasks. By applying these direct and indirect measures of brand recognition, marketers can determine which brand elements exist in memory and, to some extent, the strength of their association. One advantage that brand recognition measures have over recall measures is the chance to use visual recognition. It may be difficult for consumers to describe a logo or symbol in a recall task; it's much easier for them to assess the same elements visually in a recognition task.

Nevertheless, brand recognition measures provide only an approximation of potential recallability. To determine whether consumers will actually recall the brand elements under various circumstances, we need measures of brand recall.

Recall. To demonstrate brand recall, consumers must retrieve the actual brand element from memory when given some related probe or cue. Thus, brand recall is a more demanding

memory task than brand recognition because consumers are not just given a brand element and asked to say whether they've seen it before.

Before a new package ever hits the shelf, marketers often conduct research to understand its likely impact even in the store itself.

Source: Paul Burns Cultura/ Newscom

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Different measures of brand recall are possible depending on the type of cues provided to consumers. Unaided recall on the basis of “all brands” provided as a cue is likely to identify only the very strongest brands. Aided recall uses various types of cues to help consumer recall. One possible sequence of aided recall might use progressively narrower cues—such as product class, product category, and product type labels—to provide insight into the organization of consumers’ brand knowledge structures.

For example, if recall of the Porsche 911—a high-performance German sports car—in non-German markets were of interest, recall probes could begin with “all cars” and move to more and more narrowly defined categories such as “sports cars,” “foreign sports cars,” or even “high-performance German sports cars.” Marketers could ask consumers: “When you think of foreign sports cars, which brands come to mind?”

Other types of cues can help measure brand recall. For example, marketers can ask about product attributes (“When you think of chocolate, which brands come to mind?”) or usage goals (“If you were thinking of having a healthy snack, which brands come to mind?”). Often, to capture the breadth of brand recall and to assess brand salience, we might need to examine the context of the purchase decision or consumption situation, such as different times and places. The stronger the brand associations to these non-product considerations, the more likely it is that consumers will recall them when given those situational cues.

When combined, measures of recall based on product attribute or category cues and situational or usage cues give an indication of breadth and depth of recall. We can further distinguish brand recall according to the order as well as the latency or speed of recall. In many cases, people will recognize a brand when it is shown to them and will recall it if they are given a sufficient number of cues. Thus, potential recallability is high. The more important issue is the salience of the brand: Do consumers think of the brand under the right circumstances, for example, when they could be either buying or using the product? How quickly do they think of the brand? Is it automatically or easily recalled? Is it the first brand they recall?

Corrections for Guessing. Any research measure must consider the issue of consumers making up responses or guessing. That problem may be especially evident with certain types of aided awareness or recognition measures for the brand. Spurious awareness occurs when consumers erroneously claim they recall something they really don’t and that may not even exist. For example, one market research firm, Oxtoby-Smith, conducted a benchmark study of awareness of health and beauty products.⁴⁰ In the study, the firm asked consumers questions like this: “The following is a list of denture adhesive brand names. Please answer yes if you’ve heard the name before and no if you haven’t. Okay? Orafix? Fasteeth? Dentu-Tight? Fixodent?”

Although 16 percent of the sample reported that they had heard of Dentu-Tight, there was one problem: it didn’t exist! Similarly high levels of reported recall were reported for

plausible-sounding but fictitious brands such as Four O'Clock Tea (8 percent), Leone Pasta (16 percent), and Mrs. Smith's Cake Mix (31 percent). On the basis of this study, Oxtoby-Smith found that spurious awareness was about 8 percent for new health and beauty products and even higher in some other product categories. In one case, a proposed line extension was mistakenly thought to already exist by about 50 percent of the sample (a finding that no doubt sent a message to the company that it should go ahead and introduce the product!).

From a marketing perspective, the problem with spurious awareness is that it may send misleading signals about the proper strategic direction for a brand. For example, Oxtoby-Smith reported that one of its clients was struggling with a 5 percent market share despite the fact that 50 percent of survey respondents reported they were aware of the brand. On the surface, it would seem a good idea to improve the image of the brand and attitudes toward it in some way. Upon further examination, marketers determined that spurious awareness accounted for almost half the survey respondents who reported brand awareness, suggesting that a more appropriate solution to the true problem would be to first build awareness to a greater degree. Marketers should be sensitive to the possibilities of misleading signals because of spurious brand awareness, especially with new brands or ones with plausible-sounding names.

Strategic Implications. The advantage of aided recall measures is that they yield insight into how brand knowledge is organized in memory and what kind of cues or reminders may be necessary for con-

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For a unique sports

car like Porsche, it is important for marketers to understand the breadth and depth of its brand awareness.

Source: Hand-out/PORSCHE CANADA/Newscom

sumers to be able to retrieve the brand from memory. Understanding recall when we use different levels of product category specificity as cues is important, because it has implications for how consumers form consideration sets and make product decisions.

For example, again consider the Porsche 911. Assume consumer recall of this particular car model was fairly low when all cars were considered but very high when foreign sports cars were considered. In other words, consumers strongly categorized the Porsche 911 as a prototypical sports car but tended to think of it in only that way. If that were the case, for more consumers to entertain the possibility of buying a Porsche 911, we might need to broaden the meaning of Porsche so that it has a stronger association to cars in general. Of course, such a strategy risks alienating existing customers who had been initially attracted by the "purity" and strong identification of the Porsche 911 as a sports car. The choice of appropriate strategy would depend on the relative costs and benefits of targeting the two different segments.

The point is that the category structure that exists in consumers' minds—as reflected by brand recall performance—can have profound implications for consumer choice and marketing strategy, as demonstrated by The Science of Branding 9-1. The insights gleaned from measuring brand recall are also valuable for developing brand identity and integrated marketing communication programs, as we showed in Chapters 4 and 6. For example, we can examine brand recall for each brand element to explore the extent to which any one of these

(name, symbol, or logo) suggests any other. Are consumers aware of all the different brand elements and how they relate?

We also need a complete understanding of brand image, as covered in the following section.

Brand Image

One vitally important aspect of the brand is its image, as reflected by the associations that consumers hold for it. It is useful for marketers to make a distinction between lower-level considerations, related to consumer perceptions of specific performance and imagery attributes and benefits, and higher-level considerations related to overall judgments, feelings, and relationships. There is an obvious connection between the two levels, because consumers' overall responses and relationship with a brand typically depend on perceptions of specific attributes and benefits of that brand. This section considers some issues in measuring lower-level brand performance and imagery associations.

Beliefs are descriptive thoughts that a person holds about something (for instance, that a particular software package has many helpful features and menus and is easy to use).⁴¹ Brand association beliefs are those specific attributes and benefits linked to the brand and its competitors.

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Understanding Categorical Brand Recall

A classic experiment by Prakash Nedungadi provides a compelling demonstration of the importance of understanding the category structure that exists in consumer memory as well as the value of strategies for increasing the recallability or accessibility of brands during choice situations. As a preliminary step in his research study, Nedungadi first examined the category structure for fast-food restaurants that existed in consumers' minds. He found that a "major subcategory" was "hamburger chains" and a "minor subcategory" was "sandwich shops." He also found, on the basis of usage and linking surveys, that within the major subcategory of national hamburger chains, a major brand was McDonald's and a minor brand was Wendy's, and within the minor subcategory of local sandwich shops, a major brand was Joe's Deli (a brand in his survey area) and a minor brand was Subway. Consistent with this reasoning, in an unaided recall and choice task, consumers were more likely to remember and select a brand from a major subcategory than from a minor subcategory and, within a subcategory, a major brand rather than a minor brand.

Nedungadi next looked at the effects of different brand "primes" on subsequent choices among the four fast-food restaurants. Brands were primed by having subjects in the experiment first answer a series of seemingly unrelated questions—including some about the brand to be primed—before making their brand selections. Two key findings emerged. First, a major brand that was primed was more likely to be selected in the later choice task even though attitudes toward

the brand were no different from those of a control group. In other words, merely making the brand more accessible in memory increased the likelihood that it would be chosen independent of any differences in brand attitude. Second, priming a minor brand in a minor subcategory actually benefited the major brand in that subcategory more. In other words, by drawing attention to the minor subcategory of sandwich shops—which could easily be

overlooked—the minor brand, Subway, indirectly primed the major brand, Joe’s Deli, in the subcategory. The implications of Nedungadi’s research are that marketers must understand how consumers’ memory is organized and, as much as possible, ensure that the proper cues and primes are evident to prompt brand recall.

In sum, brand recall provides insight into category structure and brand positioning in consumers’ minds. Brands tend to be recalled in categorical clusters when consumers are given a general probe. Certain brands are grouped together in memory because they share certain associations and are thus likely to cue and remind consumers of each other if one is recalled.

Sources: Prakash Nedungadi, “Recall and Consumer Consideration Sets: Influencing Choice Without Altering Brand Evaluations,” *Journal of Consumer Research* 17 (December 1990): 263–276; Joseph W. Alba and J. Wesley Hutchinson, “Dimensions of Consumer Expertise,” *Journal of Consumer Research* 13 (March 1987): 411–454; Kalpesh Kaushik Desai and Wayne D. Hoyer, “Descriptive Characteristics of Memory-Based Consideration Sets: Influence of Usage Occasion Frequency and Usage Location Familiarity,” *Journal of Consumer Research* 27 (2000): 309–323.

For example, consumers may have brand association beliefs for Sony PlayStation 3 entertainment system such as “fun and exciting,” “cool and hip,” “colorful,” “great graphics,” “advanced technology,” “variety of game titles,” and “sometimes violent.” They may also have associations to the brand logo and the slogan, “It Only Does Everything.” PlayStation 3 user imagery may be “used by teenagers or 20-something males who are serious about playing video games, especially sports games.”

In Chapter 2, we provided a structured set of measures to tap into performance and imagery associations. The qualitative research approaches we described earlier are useful in uncovering the different types of specific brand associations making up the brand image. To better understand their potential ability to serve as basis for brand positioning and how they might contribute to brand equity, we can assess belief associations on the basis of one or more of the three key dimensions—strength, favorability, and uniqueness—making up the sources of brand equity.

As a first cut, we can use open-ended measures that tap into the strength, favorability, and uniqueness of brand associations, as follows:

1. What are the strongest associations you have to the brand? What comes to mind when you think of the brand? (Strength)
2. What is good about the brand? What do you like about the brand? What is bad about the brand? What do you dislike about the brand? (Favorability)

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3. What is unique about the brand? What characteristics or features does the brand share with other brands? (Uniqueness)

To gain more specific insights, we could rate these belief associations according to strength, favorability, and uniqueness, as Figure 9-7 illustrates with Lipton iced tea. Indirect tests also can assess the derived importance and favorability of these brand associations (through multivariate regression techniques).

Other Approaches. A more complicated quantitative technique to assess overall brand uniqueness is multidimensional scaling, or perceptual maps. Multidimensional scaling (MDS) is a procedure for determining the perceived relative images of a set of objects, such as products or brands. MDS transforms consumer judgments of similarity or preference into distances represented in perceptual space. For example, if brands A and B are judged by respondents to be the most similar of a set of brands, the MDS algorithm will position brands A and B so that the distance between them in multidimensional space is smaller than the distance between any other two pairs of brands. Respondents may base their similarity between brands on any basis—tangible or intangible.⁴²

Figure 9-8 displays a hypothetical perceptual map of restaurants in a particular market. Segment 1 is more concerned with health than taste and is well targeted by Brand B; segment 2 is more concerned with taste and is well targeted by Brand C. Brand A is trapped in the middle. It either must improve taste to provide a healthy alternative to Brand C for segment 2, or it must improve healthiness to prove a tastier alternative to Brand B for segment 1.

Brand Responses

The purpose of measuring more general, higher-level considerations is to find out how consumers combine all the more specific, lower-level considerations about the brand in their minds to form different types of brand responses and evaluations. Chapter 2 provided examples of measures of key brand judgments and feelings. Here we delve into more detail.

1. To what extent do you feel the following product characteristics are descriptive of Lipton iced tea (where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)?

convenient

refreshing and thirst quenching real and natural

good-tasting

contemporary and relevant used by young professionals

2. How good or bad is it for iced tea to have the following product characteristics (where 1 = very bad and 7 = very good)?

convenient

refreshing and thirst quenching real and natural

good-tasting

contemporary and relevant used by young professionals

3. How unique is Lipton iced tea in terms of the following product characteristics (where 1 = not at all unique and 7 = highly unique)?

convenient

refreshing and thirst quenching real and natural

good-tasting

contemporary and relevant used by young professionals

FIGURE 9-7

Example of Brand Association Ratings in Terms of Strength, Favorability, and Uniqueness

Flavorful

Brands: A, B and C

Customer Segments Ideal Points: 1 and 2

A

B

1

Less Healthy

Healthy

Purchase Intentions.

Less Flavorful

FIGURE 9-8

Hypothetical Restaurant Perceptual Map

Another set of measures closely related to brand attitudes and consideration looks at purchase intentions⁴³ and focus on the likelihood of buying the brand or of switching to another brand.

Research in psychology suggests that purchase intentions are most likely to be predictive of actual purchase when there is correspondence between the two in the following dimensions:⁴⁴

- Action (buying for own use or to give as a gift)
- Target (specific type of product and brand)
- Context (in what type of store based on what prices and other conditions)
- Time (within a week, month, or year)

In other words, when asking consumers to forecast their likely purchase of a product or a brand, we want to specify exactly the circumstances—the purpose of the purchase, the location of the purchase, the time of the purchase, and so forth. For example, we could ask consumers:

“Assume your refrigerator broke down over the next weekend and could not be inexpensively repaired. If you went to your favorite appliance store and found all the different brands competitively priced, how likely would you be to buy a General Electric refrigerator?”

Consumers could indicate their purchase intention on an 11-point probability scale that ranges from 0 (definitely would not buy) to 10 (definitely would buy).

Likelihood to Recommend. Bain's Frederick Reichheld suggests there is only one customer question that really matters: “How likely is it that you would recommend this product or service to a friend or colleague?” According to Reichheld, a customer's willingness to recommend results from all aspects of a customer's experience.⁴⁵

Reichheld uses answers to this question to create what he calls a Net Promoter Score (NPS).

Specifically, in a survey, customers are asked to rate their likelihood to recommend on a 0–10-point scale. Marketers then subtract detractors (those who gave a 0–6) from promoters (those who gave a 9 or 10) to arrive at the NPS score. Customers who rate the brand with a 7 or 8 are deemed passively satisfied and are not included. A typical set of NPS scores falls in the 10–30 percent range, but world-class companies can score over 50 percent. Some firms with top NPS scores include USAA (89 percent), Apple (77 percent), Amazon.com (74 percent), and Google (71 percent).

TurboTax used NetPromoter scores to help fine-tune its marketing program. Source: AP Photo/ RIGELHAUPT SAMUEL/SIPA

Several companies have seen benefits from adopting NetPromoter scores as a means of tracking brand health. When the European unit of GE Healthcare overhauled its call center and put more specialists in the field, GE Healthcare's Net Promoter scores jumped 10–15 points. BearingPoint found clients who gave it high Net Promoter scores showed the highest revenue growth. When Intuit applied Net Promoter to its TurboTax product, feedback revealed dissatisfaction with the software's rebate procedure. After Intuit dropped the proof-of-purchase requirement, sales jumped 6 percent.

Brand Relationships

Chapter 2 characterized brand relationships in terms of brand resonance and offered possible measures for each of the four key dimensions: behavioral loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement. This section considers additional considerations with respect to each of those four dimensions. Figure 9-9 displays a scale, although developed by its authors to measure overall brand engagement, could easily be adapted to measure brand resonance by replacing mentions of brands with a specific brand. For example, instead of saying, "I have a special bond with the brands I like," it could say, "I have a special bond with my Saab automobile," and so on.

Behavioral Loyalty. To capture reported brand usage and behavioral loyalty, we could ask consumers several questions directly. Or we could ask them what percentage of their last purchases in the category

FIGURE 9-9

A Brand Engagement Scale

Source: David Sprott, Sandor Czellar, and Eric Spangenberg, "The Importance of a General Measure of Brand Engagement on Market Behaviour: Development and Validation of a Scale," *Journal of Marketing Research* 46 (February 2009): 92–104.

1. I have a special bond with the brands I like.
2. I consider my favorite brands to be part of myself.
3. I often feel a personal connection between my brands and me.
4. Part of me is defined by important brands in my life.
5. I feel as if I have a close personal connection with the brands I most prefer.
6. I can identify with important brands in my life.
7. There are links between the brands that I prefer and how I view myself.
8. My favorite brands are an important indication of who I am.

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went to the brand (past purchase history) and what percentage of their planned next purchases will go to the brand (intended future purchases). For example, the marketers or brand managers of Duracell batteries might ask the following questions:

- Which brand of batteries do you usually buy?
- Which brand of batteries did you buy last time?
- Do you have any batteries on hand? Which brand?
- Which brands of batteries did you consider buying?

- Which brand of batteries will you buy next time?

These types of questions can provide information about brand attitudes and usage for Duracell, including potential gaps with competitors and the names of other brands that might be in the consideration set at the time of purchase.

Marketers can make their measures open ended, force consumers to choose one of two brands, or offer multiple choice or rating scales. They can compare the answers with actual measures of consumer behavior to assess whether consumers are accurate in their predictions. For example, if 30 percent of consumers reported, on average, that they thought they would take their vitamins daily over the next two weeks, but only 15 percent of consumers reported two weeks later that they actually had done so during that period, then Centrum brand managers might need to devise strategies to better convert intentions to actual behavior.

In a business-to-business setting, Narayandas advocates analyzing sales records, talking to sales teams, and conducting surveys to assess where customers stand on a “loyalty ladder.”⁴⁶

Attitudinal Attachment. Several different approaches have been suggested to measure the second component of brand resonance—brand attachment.⁴⁷ Some researchers like to characterize it in terms of brand love.⁴⁸ One study proposed a brand love scale that consists of 10 items: (1) This is a wonderful brand; (2) This brand makes me feel good; (3) This brand is totally awesome; (4) I have neutral feelings about this brand (reverse-coded item); (5) This brand makes me very happy; (6) I love this brand; (7) I have no particular feelings about this brand (reverse-coded item); (8) This brand is a pure delight; (9) I am passionate about this brand; and (10) I am very attached to this brand.⁴⁹

Another study found 11 dimensions that characterized brand love:⁵⁰

1. Passion (for the brand).
2. Duration of the relationship (the relationship with the brand exists for a long time).
3. Self-congruity (congruity between self-image and product image).
4. Dreams (the brand favors consumer dreams).
5. Memories (evoked by the brand).
6. Pleasure (that the brand provides to the consumer).
7. Attraction (feel toward the brand).
8. Uniqueness (of the brand and/or of the relationship).
9. Beauty (of the brand).
10. Trust (the brand has never disappointed).
11. Declaration of affect (feel toward the brand).

One promising approach defines brand attachment in terms of two underlying constructs—brand-

self connections and brand prominence—where each of those two dimensions have two subdimensions, suggesting the following sets of measures:⁵¹

1. Brand-Self Connection
 - a. Connected: “To what extent do you feel that you are personally connected to (Brand)?”
 - b. Part of Who You Are: “To what extent is (Brand) part of you and who you are?”
2. Brand Prominence
 - a. Automatic: “To what extent are your thoughts and feelings towards (Brand) often automatic, coming to mind seemingly on their own?”

b. Naturally: “To what extent do your thoughts and feelings towards (Brand) come to you naturally and instantly?”

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Sense of Community. Although measuring behavioral loyalty and attitudinal attachment may require a fairly structured set of questions, both sense of community and active engagement could call for more varied measures because of their diverse set of issues.

One interesting concept that has been proposed with respect to community is social currency, developed by brand consultants Vivaldi Partners. They define social currency as “the extent to which people share the brand or information about the brand as part of their everyday social lives at work or at home.” Figure 9-10 displays the different dimensions that make up the social currency concept according to Vivaldi Partners.

Active Engagement. According to the brand resonance model, active engagement for a brand is defined as the extent to which consumers are willing to invest their own personal resources—time, energy, money, and so on—on the brand beyond those resources expended during purchase or consumption of the brand.

For example, in terms of engagement, in-depth measures could explore word-of-mouth behavior, on-line behavior, and so forth. For online behavior, measures could explore the extent of customer-initiated versus firm-initiated interactions, the extent of learning and teaching by the customer versus by the firm, the extent of customers teaching other customers, and so on.⁵² The key to such metrics is the qualitative nature of the consumer-brand interaction and how well it reflects intensity of feelings. One mistake many Internet firms made was to put too much emphasis on “eyeballs” and “stickiness”—the number and duration of page views at a Web site, respectively. The depth of the underlying brand relationships of the customers making those visits, however, and the manner in which those relationships manifest themselves in brand-beneficial actions, will typically be more important.

Accordingly, researchers are attempting to determine the brand value of different online and social media activities.⁵³ For example, how important is a “like” from a user on Facebook? One firm estimated that bringing a user on as a fan could be worth between 44 cents and \$3.60 in equivalent media value from increased impressions generated from the Facebook newsfeed. Critics of the study, however, pointed out that not all fans are created equal.⁵⁴

Several different specific approaches have been suggested to measure brand engagement. The Science of Branding 9-2 provides a detailed breakdown of the concept.

Fournier’s Brand Relationship Research. Boston University’s Susan Fournier argues that brands can and do serve as viable relationship partners, and she suggests a reconceptualization of the notion of brand personality within this framework.⁵⁵ Specifically, the everyday execution of marketing mix decisions constitutes a set of behaviors enacted on the part of the brand. These actions trigger a series of inferences regarding the implicit contract that appears to guide the engagement of the consumer and brand and, hence, the type of relationship formed.

Dimension

Conversation Advocacy Information Affiliation Utility Identity

Key Question

What share of your brand users recognizes and stirs buzz?

How many act as disciples and stand up for your brand?
 How many feel they exchange fruitful information with others?
 What share of users has a sense of community?
 How much value do consumers derive from interacting with others?
 How many of your users can identify with other users?

Value of Dimension

Customers proactively talk about a brand.
 Customers are willing to tell others about a brand or recommend it further.
 The more information customers have about a brand
 the more likely they are to develop preferences for the brand.
 Value of brand is closely related to sense of community it creates among other like-minded people.
 Social exchange with others involving a brand is an integral part of people's lives.
 Customers develop strong sense of identity and ability to express themselves to others by using a brand.

FIGURE 9-10

Vivaldi Partners' Social Currency Model

Source: Used with permission from Erich Joachimsthaler at Vivaldi Partners.

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Understanding Brand Engagement

There are several different ways to think of brand engagement. Actual brand engagement is the activities with which the consumer currently is engaged with the brand and is typically what is measured with the brand resonance model. Two other approaches provide interesting contrasts. Ideal brand engagement is the activities the brand consumer wishes they could do with the brand. Market brand engagement is the activities the consumer believes other consumers are doing with the brand.

Market brand engagement will be closely related to measures of brand momentum—how much progress the brand appears to be making with consumers in the marketplace. Both sets of measures deal with consumer perceptions of how other consumers are connecting to a brand. Measures of actual brand engagement can take two forms—more general, macro measures or more specific, micro measures. Macro measures focus on the types of resources expended, for example:

Time: "It is worth spending more time on the brand (or going out of the way for it)."

Energy: "It is worth investing extra effort on the brand." Money: "It is worth spending more money on the brand."

Micro sets of measures focus on specific categories of brand-related activities. These activities fall into three categories depending on whether they relate to: (1) collecting brand information, (2) participating in brand marketing activities, or (3) interacting with other people and having a sense of community. Here are some possible questions.

Collecting Brand Information

I like learning about this brand.

If this brand has any new products or services, I tend to

notice it.

If I see a newspaper or magazine article about this brand, I tend to read it.

If I hear a TV or radio story about this brand, I tend to listen to it.

If I see a news story online about this brand, I tend to open and read it.

I like to visit this brand's Web site.

I like to read online blogs about this brand.

Participating in Brand Marketing Activities

If I notice an ad for this brand, I tend to pay attention to it.

If I notice a sales promotion from this brand, I tend to pay attention to it.

If I get something in the mail from this brand, I tend to open it. If this brand sponsors a sports, entertainment or arts event,

I tend to notice it.

If I see a billboard or any outdoor type ad for this brand, I tend to notice it.

If this brand has a display or demonstration in the store, I tend to notice it.

If this brand shows up in a movie or television show, I tend to notice it.

If I get a chance to sample one of this brand's new products, I tend to try it.

I like to buy licensed products from this brand.

Interacting with Other People

I like to talk to others about this brand.

I like to talk to people at work about this brand.

I like to talk to my friends and family about this brand.

I like to seek out others who use this brand.

I have joined or would like to join an online community with other users of this brand.

I have joined or would like to join an online community with others who like this brand.

I have joined or would like to join an online community with people from the company who makes this brand.

I am active in a loyalty program for this brand.

I tend to notice when other people are using this brand.

These are only some representative examples of the types of survey measures that could be employed to assess brand engagement. Depending on the category and circumstances, a variety of other questions could be devised and fruitfully applied.

Brand personality as conceptualized within this framework describes the relationship role enacted by the brand in its partnership capacity. For example, if the brand expresses behaviors that signal commitment to the consumer, and further if it sends gifts as symbols of affection, the consumer may infer a courtship or marriage type of engagement with the brand.

Fournier identifies a typology of 15 different relationship types characterizing consumers' engagement with brands (see Figure 9-11). Fournier argues that this relationship role view of brand personality provides more actionable guidance to managers who wish to create and manage their

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Relationship Form

Arranged marriage: Nonvoluntary union imposed by preferences of third party. Intended for long-term, exclusive commitment.

Casual friend/buddy: Friendship low in affect and intimacy, characterized by infrequent or sporadic engagement and few expectations of reciprocity or reward.

Marriage of convenience: Long-term, committed relationship precipitated by environmental influence rather than deliberate choice, and governed by satisfying rules.

Committed partnership: Long-term, voluntarily imposed, socially supported union high in love, intimacy, trust, and commitment to stay together despite adverse circumstances. Adherence to exclusivity rules expected.

Best friendship: Voluntary union based on reciprocity principle, the endurance of which is ensured through continued provision of positive rewards. Characterized by revelation of true self, honesty, and intimacy. Congruity in partner images and personal interests common.

Compartmentalized friendship: Highly specialized, situationally confined, enduring friendship characterized by lower intimacy than other friendship forms but higher socio-emotional rewards and interdependence. Easy entry and exit.

Kinship: Nonvoluntary union with lineage ties.

Rebound relationship: Union precipitated by desire to replace prior partner, as opposed to attraction to replacement partner.

Childhood friendship: Infrequently engaged, affective relation reminiscent of childhood times. Yields comfort and security of past self.

Courtship: Interim relationship state on the road to committed partnership contract.

Dependency: Obsessive, highly emotional, selfish attractions cemented by feeling that the other is irreplaceable. Separation from other yields anxiety. High tolerance of other's transgressions results.

Fling: Short-term, time-bounded engagement of high emotional reward. Devoid entirely of commitment and reciprocity demands.

Enmity: Intensely involving relationship characterized by negative affect and desire to inflict pain or revenge on the other.

Enslavement: Nonvoluntary relationship union governed entirely by desires of the relationship partner.

Secret affair: Highly emotive, privately held relationship considered risky if exposed to others.

Case Examples

Karen's husband's preferred brands (e.g., Mop'n Glo, Palmolive, Hellman's); Karen's Estée Lauder, imposed through gift-giving; Jean's use of Murphy's Oil Soap as per manufacturer recommendation.

Karen and her household cleaning brands.

Vicki's switch to regional Friend's Baked Beans brand from favored B&M brand left behind;
 Jean's loyalty to DeMoulas salad dressing brand left behind by client at the bar.
 Jean and virtually all her cooking, cleaning, and household appliance brands; Karen and Gatorade.
 Karen and Reebok running shoes; Vicki and Crest or Ivory.
 Vicki and her stable of shampoos, perfumes, and lingerie brands.
 Vicki's preferences for Tetley tea or Karen's for Ban, Joy, and Miracle Whip, all of which were inherited through their mothers.
 Karen's use of Comet, Gateway, and Success Rice.
 Jean and Jell-O pudding.
 Vicki and her Musk scent brands.
 Karen and Mary Kay; Vicki and Soft 'n Dry.
 Vicki's trial-size shampoo brands.
 Karen and her husband's brands, postdivorce; Jean and her other-recommended-but-rejected brands (e.g., ham, peanut butter, sinks).
 Karen and Southern Bell, Cable Vision. Vicki and Playtex, a bra for large-breasted women.
 Karen and the Tootsie Pops she sneaks at work.

FIGURE 9-11
 A Typology of Consumer-Brand Relationships

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brand personalities in line with marketing actions than does the trait-based view, which identifies general personality tendencies that might or might not be connected to marketing strategies and goals.

Fournier has conducted fascinating research that reframes the conceptualization and measurement of brand strength strictly in relationship terms. It defines a brand's strength in terms of the strength, depth, and durability of the consumer-brand relational bond using the multifaceted concept of brand relationship quality, or BRQ. Extensive validation work supported a multifaceted hierarchical structure for the BRQ construct that includes six main dimensions of relationship strength, many with important subfacets. The main facets are (1) interdependence, (2) self-concept connection, (3) commitment, (4) love/passion, (5) intimacy, and (6) brand partner quality.

Fournier argues that these facets and their subfacets (such as trust within the partner quality facet or consumer-to-firm and firm-to-consumer intimacy) have superior diagnostic value over competing strength measures, and she suggests they have greater managerial utility in their application. In her experience, BRQ measures have been successfully incorporated in brand tracking studies, where they provide profiles of brand strength versus competitors, useful ties to marketplace performance indicators, and specific guidance for the enhancement and dilution of brand equity through managerial actions in the marketplace. Although brand relationship quality shares some characteristics with brand resonance, it provides valuable additional perspectives and insights.

The six main facets of brand relationship quality are as follows:

- **Interdependence:** The degree to which the brand is ingrained in the consumer's daily course of living, both behaviorally (in terms of frequency, scope, and strength of interactions) and cognitively (in terms of longing for and preoccupation with anticipated brand interactions). Interdependence is often revealed through the presence of routinized behavioral rituals surrounding brand purchase and use, and through separation anxiety experienced during periods of product deprivation. At its extremes, interdependence becomes dependency and addiction.
- **Self-concept connection:** The degree to which the brand delivers on important identity concerns, tasks, or themes, thereby expressing a significant part of the self-concept, both past (including nostalgic references and brand memories) and present, and personal as well as social. Grounding of the self provides feelings of comfort, connectedness, control, and security. In its extreme form, self-connection reflects integration of concepts of brand and self.
- **Commitment:** Dedication to continued brand association and betterment of the relationship, despite circumstances foreseen and unforeseen. Commitment includes professed faithfulness and loyalty to the other, often formalized through stated pledges and publicized intentions. Commitment is not defined solely by sunk costs and irretrievable investments that pose barriers to exit.
- **Love/passion:** Affinity toward and adoration of the brand, particularly with respect to other available alternatives. The intensity of the emotional bonds joining relationship partners may range from feelings of warmth, caring, and affection to those of true passion. Love includes the belief that the brand is irreplaceable and uniquely qualified as a relationship partner.
- **Intimacy:** A sense of deep familiarity with and understanding of both the essence of the brand as a partner in the relationship and the nature of the consumer-brand relationship itself. Intimacy is revealed in the presence of a strong consumer-brand relationship culture, the sharing of little-known personal details of the self, and an elaborate brand memory containing significant experiences or associations. Intimacy is a two-dimensional concept: the consumer develops intimate knowledge of the brand, and also feels a sense of intimacy exhibited on the part of the brand toward the individual as a consumer.
- **Partner quality:** Perceived partner quality involves a summary judgment of the caliber of the role enactments performed by the brand in its partnership role. Partner quality includes three central components: (1) an empathic orientation toward the other (ability of the partner to make the other feel wanted, cared for, respected, noticed, and important; responsiveness to needs); (2) a character of reliability, dependability, and predictability in the brand; and (3) trust or faith in the belief that the brand will adhere to established relationship rules and be held accountable for its actions.

342 PART IV • MEASURING AND INTERPRETING BRAND PERFORMANCE COMPREHENSIVE MODELS OF CONSUMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY

The customer-based brand equity model presented in this text provides a comprehensive, cohesive overview of brand building and brand equity. Other researchers and consultants have also put forth consumer-based brand equity models that share some of the same principles and philosophy as the CBBE model, although developed in a different way. Brand Focus 9.0 presents a detailed account of arguably the most successful and influential industry branding

model, Young and Rubicam's BrandAsset Valuator. Another influential model is Millward Brown's BrandDynamics.⁵⁶

BrandDynamics

Marketing research agency Millward Brown's BrandDynamics model offers a graphical model to represent the emotional and functional strength of relationship consumers have with a brand. As Figure 9-12 shows, the BrandDynamics model adopts a hierarchical approach to determine the strength of relationship a consumer has with a brand. The five levels of the model, in ascending order of an increasingly intense relationship, are presence, relevance, performance, advantage, and bonding. Consumers are placed into one of the five levels depending on their brand responses. By comparing the pattern across brands, we can uncover relative strengths and weaknesses and see where brands can focus their efforts to improve their loyalty relationships.

Relationship to the CBBE Model

We can easily relate the five sequenced stages of Millward Brown's BrandDynamics model—presence, relevance, performance, advantage, and bonding—to the four ascending steps of the CBBE model (identity, meaning, responses, and relationships) and specific CBBE model concepts (such as salience, consideration, performance or quality, superiority, and resonance).

Thus, the CBBE model synthesizes the concepts and measures from a leading industry model and at the same time provides much additional substance and insight. Several particularly noteworthy aspects of the CBBE model are (1) its emphasis on brand salience and breadth and depth of brand awareness as the foundation of brand building; (2) its recognition of the dual nature of brands and the significance of both rational and emotional considerations in brand building; and (3) the importance it places on brand resonance as the culmination of brand building and a more meaningful way to view brand loyalty.

REVIEW

According to the brand value chain, sources of brand equity arise from the customer mind-set. In general, measuring sources of brand equity requires that the brand manager fully understand how customers shop for and use products and services and, most important, what customers know, think, and feel about

FIGURE 9-12

BrandDynamicsTM from Millward Brown

Source: Reproduced with permission courtesy of Millward Brown. www.millwardbrown.com.

Bonding

Advantage

Performance

Relevance

Presence

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I. Qualitative Research Techniques Free association

Adjective ratings and checklists Projective techniques

Photo sorts

Bubble drawings

Story telling Personification exercises Role playing Experiential methods

II. Quantitative Research Techniques

A. Brand Awareness

Direct and indirect measures of brand recognition

Aided and unaided measures of brand recall

B. Brand Image

Open-ended and scale measures of specific brand attributes and benefits Strength

Favorability

Uniqueness

Overall judgments and feelings Overall relationship measures

Intensity Activity

FIGURE 9-13

Summary of Qualitative and Quantitative Measures

various brands. In particular, measuring sources of customer-based brand equity requires measuring various aspects of brand awareness and brand image that lead to the customer response that creates brand equity.

This chapter described both qualitative and quantitative approaches to measure consumers' brand knowledge structures and identify potential sources of brand equity—that is, measures to capture the customer mind-set. Qualitative research techniques are a means to identify possible brand associations. Quantitative research techniques are a means to better approximate the breadth and depth of brand awareness; the strength, favorability, and uniqueness of brand associations; the favorability of brand responses; and the nature of brand relationships. Because of their unstructured nature, qualitative measures are especially well suited to provide an in-depth glimpse of what brands and products mean to consumers. To obtain more precise and generalizable information, however, marketers typically use quantitative scale measures.

Figure 9-13 summarizes some of the different types of measures that were discussed in the chapter.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pick a brand. Employ projective techniques to attempt to identify sources of its brand equity. Which measures work best? Why?
2. Run an experiment to see whether you can replicate Mason Haire's instant coffee experiment (see Branding Brief 9-2). Do the same attributions still hold? If not, can you replace coffee with a brand combination from another product category that would produce pronounced differences?
3. Pick a product category. Can you profile the brand personalities of the leading brands in the category using Aaker's brand personality inventory?
4. Pick a brand. How would you best profile consumers' brand knowledge structures? How would you use quantitative measures?
5. Think of your brand relationships. Can you find examples of brands that fit into Fournier's different categories?

Young & Rubicam's BrandAsset Valuator

This appendix summarizes BrandAsset® Valuator (BAV), originally developed by Young & Rubicam, now overseen and expanded by BAV Consulting.⁵⁷ It is the world's largest database of consumer-derived information on brands. The BAV model is developmental in that it explains how brands grow, how they get into trouble, and how they recover.

BAV measures brands on four fundamental measures of equity value plus a broad array of perceptual dimensions. It provides comparative measures of the equity value of thousands of brands across hundreds of different categories, as well as a set of strategic brand management tools for planning: brand positioning, brand extensions, joint branding ventures, and other strategies designed to assess and direct brands and their growth. BAV is also linked to financial metrics and is used to determine a brand's contribution to a company's valuation.

Since 1993, BAV has carried out research with almost 800,000 consumers in 51 countries, enabling BAV to follow truly global brand trends. Consumers' perceptions of approximately 45,000 brands have been collected across the same set of 72 dimensions, including 48 image attributes, usage, consideration, and cultural and customer values. These elements are incorporated into a specially developed set of brand loyalty measures.

BAV represents a unique brand equity research tool. Unlike most conventional brand image surveys that adhere to a narrowly defined product category, respondents evaluate brands in a category-agnostic context. Brands are percentile ranked against all brands in the study for each brand metric. Thus, by comparing brands across as well as within categories, BAV is able to draw the broadest possible conclusions about how consumer-level brand equity is created and built—or lost. In the United States for the past 10 years, data has been collected quarterly from an 18,000-person panel, which enables the identification and analysis of short-term branding trends and phenomena.

Four Pillars

There are four key components of brand health in BAV (see Figure 9-14). Each pillar is derived from various measures that relate to different aspects of consumers' brand perceptions. Taken together, the four pillars trace the progression of a brand's development.

- Energized Differentiation measures the degree to which a brand is seen as different from others, and captures the brand's direction and momentum. This is a necessary condition for profitable brand building. It relates to pricing power and is often the key brand pillar in explaining valuation multiples like market value to sales.
- Relevance measures the appropriateness of the brand to consumers and the overall size of a brand's potential franchise or penetration.
- Esteem measures how well the brand is regarded and respected—in short, how well it's liked. Esteem is related to loyalty.
- Knowledge measures how intimately familiar consumers are with a brand, related to the saliency of the brand. Interestingly, high knowledge is inversely related to a brand's potential.

Relationship Among the Pillars

Examining the relationships between these four dimensions—a brand's "pillar patterns"—reveals much about a brand's current and future status (see Figure 9-15). It is not enough to look at each brand pillar in isolation; it is the relationships between the pillars that tell a story about brand health and opportunities. Here are some key relationships:

- When Energized Differentiation is greater than Relevance, the brand is standing out and receiving attention in the marketplace. It now has the potential to channel this point of difference and energy into building meaningfulness for consumers by driving Relevance.
- But if a brand is more Relevant than Differentiated, this suggests commoditization. While the brand is appropriate and meaningful within the lives of consumers, it is perceived as interchangeable with other players in the category. Therefore, consumers will not go out of their way for this brand, remain loyal to it, or pay a premium for it, since it lacks that special something we quantify as Energized Differentiation. Convenience, habit and price become drivers of brand choice in this scenario.
- Leadership brands are strong on both pillars, resulting in consumer passion as well as market penetration.

Brands often strive to build awareness, but if the brand's pillars are not in the proper alignment, then consumer knowledge of a brand becomes an obstacle that may need to be surmounted before the brand can continue to build healthy momentum.

- When a brand's Esteem is greater than its Knowledge, this tells us that consumers like what they know about the brand so far, and typically want to find out more, suggesting growth potential.
- But if brand Knowledge is greater than Esteem, then consumers feel that they know more than enough about the brand and they are not interested in getting to know it any better. In this case, Knowledge is an impediment that the brand must try to overcome if it wishes to attract more consumers.

100 80 60 40 20

Examples 100

80

60

40

20

Examples

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Energized Differentiation

A brand's unique meaning, with motion and direction

Relevance

How appropriate the brand is to you

FIGURE 9-14

Four Pillars Assess Brand Health, Development, and Momentum

Source: BrandAsset Consulting. Used with permission.

Energized Differentiation > Relevance

Relates to Margins and Cultural Currency

Relates to Consideration and Trial

Esteem

How you regard the brand

Relates to Loyalty

Knowledge

An intimate understanding of the brand

Relates to Brand Saliency

Energized Differentiation < Relevance

00 Energized Relevance

Differentiation

Brand has captured attention and now has potential to grow and to build Relevance: Brand has momentum

Energized Differentiation

Relevance

100 80 60 40 20 0

Esteem

Examples 100 80 60 40 20 0

Examples

Esteem > Knowledge

Esteem < Knowledge

Uniqueness has faded, price or convenience has become dominant reason to buy: Brand has lost pricing power

Brand is better liked than known: Desire to find out more

Brand is better known than liked: Too much knowledge is becoming a dangerous thing

Knowledge

Esteem

Knowledge

FIGURE 9-15

Pillar Patterns Tell a Story

Source: BrandAsset Consulting. Used with permission.

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The Powergrid

BrandAsset® Valuator has integrated the two macro dimensions of Brand Strength (Energized Differentiation and Relevance) and Brand Stature (Esteem and Knowledge) into a visual analytical representation known as the PowerGrid (see Figure 9-16). The PowerGrid depicts the stages in the cycle of brand development—each with its characteristic pillar patterns—in successive quadrants.

Brands generally begin their life in the lower left quadrant, where they first need to develop Relevant Differentiation and establish their reason for being. Most often, the movement from there is “up” into the top left quadrant. Increased Differentiation, followed by Relevance, initiates growth in Brand Strength. These developments occur before the brand has acquired significant Esteem or is widely known.

This quadrant represents two types of brands. For brands destined for a mass target, like Yelp and Kindle, this is the stage of emerging potential. Specialized or narrowly targeted brands, however, tend to remain in this quadrant (when viewed from the perspective of a mass audience) and can use their strength to occupy a profitable niche. This includes brands like

Method and W Hotels. From the point of view of brand leaders, new potential competitors will emerge from this quadrant.

The upper right quadrant, the Leadership Quadrant, is populated by brand leaders—those that have high levels of both Brand Strength and Brand Stature. Both older and relatively new brands can be in this quadrant, meaning that brand leadership is truly a function of the pillar measures, not of longevity. When

properly managed, a brand can build and maintain a leadership position indefinitely. Examples of brands in the leadership position include Facebook, Levi's, and Nike.

Although declining brand equity is not inevitable, brands for whom strength has declined (usually driven by declining Energized Differentiation) can also be seen in this same quadrant. Brands whose Strength has started to dip below the level of their Stature display the first signs of weakness, which may well be masked by their still-buoyant sales and wide penetration.

Examples include such brands as Macy's and Visa.

Brands that fail to maintain their Brand Strength—their Relevant Differentiation—begin to fade and move “down” into the bottom right quadrant. These brands become vulnerable not just to existing competitors, but also to the depredations of discount price brands, and they frequently end up being drawn into heavy and continuous price promotion in order to defend their consumer franchise and market share. American Airlines and TV Guide fall into this category.

Significant investigation has been done on relating BAV metrics to financial performance and stock price. First, the position of a brand on the PowerGrid indicates the level of intangible value (market value of brand or company-invested capital) per dollar of sale. The leadership quadrant produces brands with the largest intangible value per dollar of sale. Next, through extensive modeling, BAV has shown that a change in brand assets impacts stock price. From a macro perspective, two-thirds of the change in brand assets directly impacts stock price and the expectation for future returns. One-third of the

FIGURE 9-16

Brand Development Cycle as Illustrated by the Power Grid Source: BrandAsset

Consulting. Used with permission.

D_E R E K

Commodity or Eroded

100

50

Mass Market

Niche

D_E R E K

Leadership

D_E R E K

D_E R E K

00 50 100

Brand Stature Esteem and Knowledge

D_E R E K

New, Unfocused or Unknown

Brand Strength Energized Differentiation and Relevance

change in brand assets impacts current earnings. The importance of brand assets on stock price and company valuation is highly dependent on the category or economic sector.

Applying BAV to Google

The best way to understand the BAV model is to apply it to a brand and category. Google is a dramatic example. Google achieved leadership status faster than any other brand measured in BAV. Google built each brand pillar, beginning with Energized Differentiation, both quickly and strongly. After rapidly establishing Energized Differentiation, Google built the other three pillars. It took only three years for Google's percentile-ranking on all four pillars to reach the high 90s.

At the same time, AOL began to falter, losing first Energized Differentiation, then Relevance and Esteem. For a while, AOL's Knowledge remained high, but with declining Relevance, eroding Differentiation and less Esteem, consumers began to lose interest until finally, AOL's Knowledge pillar followed the other pillars and began to decline. Figure 9-17 displays the sharp contrast in brand development between the two.

How has Google developed and maintained brand leadership? From the BAV perspective, there are three main contributing factors: (1) consistently strong brand attributes that translate into competitive advantages, (2) successful brand extensions into new categories, and (3) successful expansion into global markets and the fast establishment of brand leadership.

100

80 60 40 20

0

Competitive Advantages on Brand Attributes

Google's leadership is supported by competitive advantages on the factors that contribute to the strength of the key pillars. The BAV factors are created from the 48 brand image attributes, using data compiled from Google and its competitor brands. The individual attributes within each factor are the dimensions most correlated with each other through the eyes of consumers when considering Google and its competitive set; thus, factors define how consumers view the category and the brands within it.

As shown in Figure 9-18, Google is stronger than the competitive average on the Cutting Edge (innovation) factor and the Bold personality factor. Both of these factors build Google's Energized Differentiation. Google's advantage on the Dependability (trust) factor helps keep the Relevance pillar strong, and Google's strength on the Superiority (best brand) factor supports both the Relevance and the Esteem pillars.

Successful Category Extensions

Google has done a masterful job of entering new categories with sub-brands. In many of these categories—such as Google Maps, Android by Google, and Gmail—the Google entrant has become the category leader. Most of the sub-brands also have very high Brand Strength, which helps replenish the Brand Strength of the Google corporate brand (see Figure 9-19). In this way, the leadership of the sub-brands helps support the parent brand, a common theme among strong parent brands with sub-brands.

e_DIF REL

EST KNO

FIGURE 9-17 Google vs. AOL Brand Development Source: BrandAsset Consulting. Used with permission.

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2001

Brand Stature

(Esteem/Knowledge)

2002

2001

2002

2003 2004 2005

2006

2007

2008 2009

2010

2003 2004 2005

2006, 2007, 2008–2010

100 80 60 40 20 0

e_DIF

REL EST KNO

Brand Strength (DifferentiationE/Relevance)

348

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Key Category Factors

CUTTING EDGE

(Drives DIF and ENE)

Innovative Progressive Visionary

BOLD

(Drives ENE)

Fun Dynamic Social

DEPENDABLE

(Drives REL)

Reliable Intelligent Trustworthy

SUPERIOR

(Drives REL and EST)

Best Brand Leader Worth More

Factor and Attribute Percentile Rank

PowerGrid (see Figure 9-20). Reviewing the key image factors across countries shows that Google ranks in the high 90s on each factor and each dimension, according to consumers in each local market. This is true consistency, which Google has built by focusing on the important factors within each local market.

Summary

There is a lot of commonality between the basic BAV model and the brand resonance model. The four factors in the BAV model can easily be related to specific components of the brand resonance model:

- BAV's Differentiation relates to brand superiority.
- BAV's Relevance relates to brand consideration.
- BAV's Esteem relates to brand credibility.
- BAV's Knowledge relates to brand resonance.

Note that brand awareness and familiarity are handled differently in the two approaches. The brand resonance framework maintains that brand salience and breadth and depth of awareness is a necessary first step in building brand equity. The BAV model treats familiarity in a more affective manner—almost in a warm feeling or friendship sense—and thus sees it as the last step in building brand equity, more akin to the resonance component itself.

The main advantage of the BAV model is that it provides rich category-agnostic descriptions and profiles across a large number of brands. It also provides focus on four key branding dimensions. It provides a brand landscape in which marketers can see where their brands stand relative to other prominent brands in many different markets.

The descriptive nature of the BAV model does mean, however, that there is potentially less insight as to exactly how a brand could rate highly on those factors. Because the measures

FIGURE 9-18 Google Maintains Competitive Superiority on Key Factors Driving Brand Pillars
Source: BrandAsset Consulting. Used with permission.

The significant strength of Google's image profile has made entrance into new categories easier. Google does not face the entrance issues that weaker brands have when their image profiles are not robust enough to create differentiation in the new category, a key condition for

a successful extension.

Successful Global Expansion

Chrome

BAV metrics uniquely gauge the nature of international marketing opportunities. BAV shows global brands must build consistently strong Brand

Strength, Brand Stature, and power on key factors

that drive brand pillars and meaning in each market. 50 Specifically, financial analysis of global brands has

shown that brands that have consistently high Brand Strength and consistently high common meaning (attribute factor scores) will deliver better margin growth rates and are more efficient at producing higher pretax margins.

Google has achieved leadership status in global 0 markets the same way it achieved leadership status

in the USA—by quickly “maxing out” on Brand Strength and Brand Stature. In all countries recently surveyed, Google is a super-leadership brand on the

0 50 100 Brand Stature

100

FIGURE 9-19 Google's Successful New Product Introductions Source: BrandAsset Consulting. Used with permission.

CUTTING EDGE

Innovative Progressive Visionary

BOLD

Fun Dynamic Social

DEPENDABLE

Reliable Intelligent Trustworthy

SUPERIOR Best Brand Leader Worth More

Competitor's Avg Google

65.7 72.2

92.0 99.5 9.9 17.5 95.2 99.5

82.8 93.8

70.2 87.1 90.2 98.3 88.0 96.0

81.6 97.4

76.1 98.3 93.7 99.0 75.1 94.8

70.7 81.1 68.1 98.5 88.8 99.3 55.9 44.6

Android by Google

Google Mobile

Google News

Google Buzz

Energized Brand Strength

USA Italy Russia Japan Mexico Brazil Chile

Superior Customer Centric Cutting Edge

99.8 97.7 99.8 100.0 98.9 100.0 98.2 87.0 95.7 97.9 83.0 99.8 99.8 91.8 99.8 99.7 96.0 95.8

99.7 95.0 99.7

0

50 100 Brand Stature

Intelligent High Performance Leader

Customer Caring

Obliging Gaining Popularity

Helpful Daring Socially Responsible Energetic

Trustworthy Progressive Reliable Innovative

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MIND-SET 349 Mexico

Imagery Factors

100

50

0

Brazil Chile Italy

FIGURE 9-20 Google Is Consistently a Global Brand Leader Source: BrandAsset Consulting.

Used with permission.

underlying the four factors have to be relevant across a very disparate range of product categories, the measures (and, consequently, the factors) tend to be abstract in nature and not related directly to product attributes and benefits, or more