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Modern Branding: Definition, Essence, Functions

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Received 16th Mar 2023, Accepted 19th Apr 2023, Online 31st May 2023 **Abstract:** This article discusses the definition of the term "brand" in modern market conditions, describes the main components of the brand and explores the approach to the term from the point of view of international marketing.

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Key words: brand, branding, branding, consumers.

A century ago, branding was in its infancy. At that time, people still made most of the products that they consumed (such as food, soap, and clothes) or purchased them directly from producers who were their friends and neighbors. People had faith in the quality and safety of the products because they knew the people who made them.[1, p.2.].

Branding is the highest stage in the development of technologies for building long-term and sustainable relationships between consumers and brands. The greatest difficulty in understanding the essence and content of branding is some confusion in determining the relationship of three technologies - a unique selling proposition, positioning and branding itself (PPB).

As our economy became more specialized—a trend that, as Adam Smith predicted, created an unprecedented degree of wealth—consumers were more removed by both distance and time from producers. The introduction of labour-saving machinery, which increased productivity markedly, also dictated the concentration of producers in a manufacturing area. Thus, the village silversmith or baker or cobbler was replaced by a factory that produced a high quality product at a more competitive price. Consumers valued the potential quality consistency and savings, but they no longer knew the people who made their products. Similarly, as individual consumers became more specialized in their roles as producers, they themselves made even fewer of the products they consumed and relied increasingly on other specialists to meet their material needs.

In a large market, consumers do not care who makes their products. In this sense, the market is the great equalizer, as producers of all races, ethnic origins, religions, and genders unleash their creative energies to meet the needs of consumers. While consumers do not care who makes the products, they care very much how the products perform. They want to know that the product they purchase will meet their expectations.

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In this consumer environment, brands play a critical role. When consumers first started purchasing more food and raising less themselves, they purchased items from a bulk bin. They had no information about what ingredients the products contained, how safe they were, and how they would perform. Branding created the protection that consumers demanded. The brand name signified a level of quality and consistency consumers could trust. Thus, Quaker Oats, Ivory Soap, and Levi's instilled in consumers a degree of confidence that their unbranded competition did not.

Branding is a completely new phenomenon in marketing and advertising. This a technology that helps marketers not only highlight the product, show its differences (positioning), but also fill the product with strong emotional content. Based on the irrational (emotional) component of the product, its single image is cemented in the minds of consumers.

The emotional component is the basis for brand identification, its special significance, value for the consumer.

Based on this, it is easy to understand how PPB, positioning and branding are combined in practice. Уникальное торговое предложение - элемент позиции марки.

Uniqueness helps to distinguish a product and distance it from competitors.

Position, as you know, is a dynamic thing. It can be corrected, developed and even changed depending on the market situation. Accordingly, in its development, the position can be based on different "uniquenesses" — different PPBs.

In the modern concept, a brand is an illusion that is around a completely familiar thing. Illusions created by people make us feel the inner necessity of possessing a material object with a logo printed on it [5, p.8.].

In practice, the concepts of "brand and trademark" are considered to be synonymous. However, it should be remembered that a trademark is a legal concept, official, while the brand exists only in the minds of consumers. F. Kotler defines a trademark as a name, term, sign, symbol, drawing, or combination thereof, designed to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and differentiate them from the goods and services of competitors. It can be concluded that a trademark appears only when there are several similar products on the market that begin to compete with each other. The concept of a brand is broader, since it additionally includes: the product or service itself with all its characteristics, a set of expectations, associations, perceived

the user and the product attributed to him, as well as the promises of any benefits given by the author of the brand to consumers - that is, the meaning that the creators themselves put into it[4].

In this paper, the terms "brand" and "trademark" are used interchangeably.

D. Aaker emphasizes that the main idea of branding is avoiding price wars and competition through differentiation [5].

Today the brand is one of the most powerful

business building tools. Brands act as a tool for product differentiation and as a mechanism for providing competitive advantages. From the point of view of impact on the buyer, the brand can be divided into Brand-name - the verbal part of the brand and Brand-image - the visual image of the brand, formed by advertising in the perception of the buyer and also including a figurative image of the trademark.

Brand attributes are all those features of the product that the consumer comes into contact with. All those associations, technologies, benefits, legends and trademarks, slogans and physical characteristics, advertising and distribution, all that set of information that is created to attract the consumer and lead him to make a decision[2].

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For the consumer, a brand is more than just a product. For him, this is the unity of quality, additional benefits and clear differences, i.e. individuality.

Thus, the brand has many important functions for different categories of consumers and becomes an important link in the company's product policy.

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