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Role of Mascots as Branding Element

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Abstract: Mascots are frequently used for public relations and corporate identity. Local and global businesses use mascots for products and services. Due to the increasing use of mascots, the appearance of a mascot also holds an important element for branding purposes. The use of mascots has been widely used as a symbol for visual identity all over the world.

We are definitely not new to seeing Mascots in recent times. Mascots have been used in advertising since the beginning. It is becoming more and more popular these days. Characters have been employed by some of the oldest brands, such as Kellogg, to help spread awareness of their message and increase brand recognition in daily life. Your brand will stand out from the crowd with a well-designed mascot. Being visually oriented, humans are more likely to recall a logo's appearance than its name.

If a product becomes easy to recognize, it will be also easier to remember. When you decide to make a significant change to your product, like changing the packaging or colors, this will work to the brand's advantage. Customers will still associate the character with the previous iteration of the product that they are accustomed to.

Keywords: Branding, Characters, Identity, Mascots, Recognition.

I.INTRODUCTION

In the global business environment, a company's brand identity plays a crucial role in marketing its products and services. Companies have to use a variety of strategies to create their corporate identities. It is essential that brands have a universal image. Brand should generate revenues. It should work for business survival and victory. Put differently, the name, logo, tagline, and product all basically represent the same brand identity. According to Uggla (2015), the Brown, 2010 match model aligns with the conventional and timeless marketing ideas of brand positioning and monolithic mindshare.

Over the years, the use of mascots has proven to be a popular means of ascribing brands with human characteristics. These mascots have appeared in a variety of forms including animals, mythological figures, objects and humans, and mainly to promote low involvement products. Research has revealed that the popularity of a brand character is directly related to its distance from humanness both physiologically and psychologically. In order to make marketing mascots more human, a look into what makes humans the way they are is necessary in order to apply these findings to mascots.

Seimiene (2012) says that one must focus on the symbolic meanings that are built into the brand through the use of promotional marketing communications. A different aspect of the brand mascot was examined in a recent study. The Washington

Redskins football team's mascot, Redskins, contributed to the unfavorable opinion that fans held off the team. Having a brand mascot in advertising has the benefit of enabling brand managers to interact with customers through a character (Cohen, 2014). Furthermore, the company has control over the mascot's design. Therefore, employing a brand mascot rather than an endorser in advertising makes it easier to control the thoughts and emotions that consumers have about a brand.

Young distinguishes between 2 types of identity: "choosing change identity" and "force change identity." Customers are persuaded to use the product by the organization rather than being forced to do so, so if they identify with the company or its offering, they will choose to change their identity. This is a lot like how fans select to identify with their favorite athletes, celebrities, or other forms of entertainment.

In the event that customers and the company or its product engage in a similar process, the researchers in this study would refer to it as "brand fandom" or "product fandom." Bar-Ilan, Bronstein, and Aharony explored a new phenomenon called "politic fandom," which suggests that posts about politicians' personal lives receive more positive feedback than those about their political careers. This helps put the situation in perspective. For instance, rather than seeing Narendra Modi express his political views, some of his admirers might rather watch the video of him practicing yoga.

Reminding customers to buy the product and preserving positive

customer relations are two possible benefits of this. Mascots could prove to be an effective tool for communicators since integrated marketing communication necessitates their ability to use a variety of media to support marketing campaigns and achieve organizational goals. Additionally, marketers take advantage of the anthropomorphic nature of everyday speech (Kennedy, 1992) by deliberately using the first person to describe products and brands in an effort to humanize them and establish a stronger connection with the customer.

Research Objective:

- To study the influence of Mascots on consumers with respect to buying behaviour.

II.LITERATURE REVIEW:

Based on current research, advertisements that feature a celebrity as an endorser or draw comparisons with brands that sell comparable products can be successful (Kalra, 1998; Rindova et al., 2004). These two approaches, nevertheless, don't seem appropriate for the creative industries. One argument in favor of this is that, if a company in the creative industries advertises primarily on the basis of commercial results, a consumer may conclude that the company lacks full artistic interest (Caves, 2003). For creative products, using a brand mascot in advertising may be a more subtle and effective way to market the brand.

Using brands as a marketing tool includes the creation of brand mascots. Researchers may still be able to uncover a great deal more brand mascot usage tactics. Additionally, some research indicates that this field's research should not be restricted to the marketing domain. Academic researchers ought to be motivated to delve deeper into other aspects of brand mascots, like the design guidelines, gender prejudice, and the connections between their facial expressions and people's overall characteristics when interacting with the public. – For a later date. More recently, research was done to determine whether a spokescharacter's interactions with customers online can make them a representative of a brand and its goods (Liao, 2011).

Their findings showed that customers who could communicate with the marketing mascot online did so with greater confidence and a more favorable attitude toward the company. This change in the nature of the relationship—from one of exchange to one of community—made consumers think more highly of interactive marketing mascots than of more conventional icon-based mascots. These marketing mascots are crucial in winning over customers' trust because they make them feel as though they are personal "friends (Callcott M. F., . Establishing the Spokes-Character in Academic Inquiry: Historical Overview and Framework for Definition. , 1995) (Garretson J. A., Spokes-characters: Creating character trust and positive brand attitudes., 2004) and successfully building an emotional connection between the consumer and the (Callcott M. F., Observations: Elves make good cookies: Creating likable spokes-character advertising. ., 1996)".

Mascots have been playing a role in connecting the sensitive attachment with the brand. As per to develop association among consumer and brand, advertisers don't trust on assertions of the

paybacks of their products or services instead, they utilize different strategies to engross consumer's emotions. Brand mascots are the proven examples of such strategies to build the trust of a brand in consumer's mind.In any kind of branding, consistency is the key as far as projecting your products in a convincing manner when brands project their products and the message. The visual appeal factor as well as the tone of the brand should be identifiable and in line with the branding strategies which would prove effective in the longer run. Consistency is the key as far as creating a faith and adding an element of loyalty towards the brand, developing loyalty towards the brand can be achieved with the help of consistent branding because if any promotion or marketing strategy has been highlighted in a continuous manner then people would tend to get impacted by the communication or the thought process that what the brand has tried to present.

McDonald's has managed to maintain a great amount of consistency in its branding strategies in the past few decades. The consistency in branding and product quality has allowed McDonald's to get associated with consumers effortlessly as although the brand is a multinational one but getting a burger for as less as Rs.35 and the easy availability of McDonald's products make the brand more consistent with respect to pricing and offering the taste. Of course, branding with respect to multiple brands need to be more consistent then be it the branding strategies, the marketing strategies for the taste of the product, the consistency will attract more and more consumers towards your brand.

Brand marketing has evolved over the years as new means of communication. In recent times, brands have adopted new channels to engage with the people, get insights, and showcase their values and personality. Prominent companies are building their brands through various kind of traditional and digital experiences that reflect how their target audience will behave. The leading sports brand, Adidas used Snapchat to run a contest for its #myneolabel because Snapchat is popular with the younger target age group. Millions of followers took part in the competition by submitting various designs. Adidas used this method to grow its brand popularity by encouraging customer loyalty for this target group as well. The practice of using a mascot is a strategic move named as guerrilla marketing tactics. Amul in 1966 introduced "Polka Girl" to compete "Polson butter girl" used by the company's competitive brand. Having a unique brand mascot is an important factor to build a positive image of the brand. Farquhar's approach towards brand equity in 1989; the consumption attitude of the customers related to how quickly a consumer can recall brand elements stored in his/her memory (brand awareness).

How swiftly customers are able to recall the brand and how quickly the customers are able to associate your mascot with the brand is related to the purchasing patterns or the consumption behaviour of the people (Farquhar, 1989). In branding regular purchasing patterns can be used to understand as a tool when it comes to making an effective promotion strategy for the specified target audience.

Brands usually use the frequent purchasing habits of the people to showcase it as a tool for publicizing your brand as more the

purchase frequency, brands will be in a position to portray it effectively. (Finskud, 2009) believes an accurate picture of brands can be drawn by seeing them as a resource system rather than a single asset. "Brands are things, they are tools, they are processes; they explain, they seduce, they corrupt; they are used by corporations and those who fight them" (Kornberger, Brand society: How brands transform management and lifestyle. ., 2010).

III.CONCLUSION:

The Mascot also leads in building a positive visual recognition about the brand. The visual recognition brings a strong recall for the brand thereby delivering the message effectively to the target audience. Since to trigger any kind of interest about the brand you should be able to recall the brand, Mascots will surely help in aiding the recall value of the brand by consistently communicating the message about the value of the brand or a product. Once the brand recall value is established then people would tend to buy the product effortlessly. By just looking at the Mascot, a person would be able to associate the Mascot with the brand. Mascots also help in showcasing the social image of a Brand which the brands are more concerned about the same.

One important element of a Mascot is that majority of the brands have tried to portray the image of the Mascot in a friendly manner. Thus, advertising is effective when it increases the consumers' willingness-to-pay and purchase intention. Eye-catching colours, amusing musical sounds and laughter act as the impending undefined motivations in advertisements or commercials. Earlier study on product inclinations stresses that the related structures used in commercials were only connected to product inclinations when negligible product statistics was offered. The influence of promoted product evidence on views and approaches would naturally be understood within an information-processing context.

IV.REFERENCES:

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