



International Marketing & Brand Management
BUS 809 Master Thesis
Spring 2006

Social Responsible Sponsorship – an Easy Way to a Stronger Brand?

*- A Study of Consumer Based Brand Equity and Consumer
Packaged Food*

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ABSTRACT

Title: Social Responsible Sponsorship – An Easy Way to a Stronger Brand? A Study of Consumer Based Brand Equity and Consumer Packaged Food

Seminar date: May 31st, 2006

Course: Master Thesis, International Marketing and Brand Management

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Key words: Brand Equity, CSR, Sponsorship, Consumer packaged food

Purpose: Our purpose is to enhance the understanding of sponsorship and CSR, and to see what impact such activities have on Brand Equity.

Theoretical framework: The theories that are chosen for our conceptual framework are Brand Equity, Sponsoring and Corporate Social Responsibility. These are relevant as they all provide substance and help in order to answer our research questions.

Method: Our research purpose is mainly explanatory. Relevant theories already exist although new data needed to be gathered. Our objects of this study are students, sponsoring and consumer packaged products in terms of ketchup. The methodological approach is quantitative. The data has been analysed with regression analysis as well as with descriptive statistics.

Empirical findings: The empirical data has been collected at Lund University. The study was conducted with a non-probability sample of 200 students. The research was of experimental character and was performed with questionnaires.

Conclusions: Students are not receptive towards CSR sponsoring in terms of Overall Brand Equity. However, a small positive effect was identified on Price Premium.

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1. Introduction

1.1 **Background**

The business climate has transformed from being egocentric to become more committed to environmental and societal practices. Globalization, technology and economic scandals (e.g. Enron, Skandia etc.) are among things that have triggered the development of more socially responsible companies. No business sector can ignore or stay unaffected by this development as the public today not only desires but requires it. (www.iqa.org) This new phenomenon, to be conscious and aware of the whole business cycle and what consequences it brings, is labelled Corporate Social Responsibility (hereafter CSR). The concept of CSR not only concerns top management but runs through every sphere of the corporation, including marketing where being socially responsible can be named branding. CSR as a marketing tool can be viewed as a way of enhancing the competitive advantage (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004).

One industry where CSR has received much interest is in the grocery business. CSR has become important for brands within this sector due to media reports concerning animal welfare, the spread of epidemic diseases and consumer awareness of e.g. human rights and environmental aspects. Today grocery customers are more informed and concerned of CSR related aspects and the industry are left with no choice but to acclimatize and pursue this development. In Sweden the interest in topics of social responsibility has increased both from a manufacturer perspective as well as from a consumer perspective. Sales figures on products and product categories that include a social responsibility aspect in their company profile have risen. One specific example is the organic “KRAV”-products that have more than tripled their sales in three years only. (Anselmsson & Johansson, 2006)

Over the last decade the competition within the grocery industry has intensified immensely. International and national retail chains have established their own products and the group of private brands are increasingly stealing market shares from the traditional manufacturers (Anselmsson et al., 2006). Originally the private labels were low price products competing with reference to price. However, the development has taken a new turn and the private brand’s products are becoming more refined and are characterised by both quality and higher prices (Laaksonen & Reynolds, 1994). In the Swedish grocery market examples are to be found with the introduction of “ICA’s Gott Liv!” or “COOP’s Änglamark”, products that both are positioned as healthy and environmentally friendly. One way of keeping the distance to the retailers own brands are to create stronger and more differentiated brands, e.g. through offering CSR related products (Hoch, 1996).

The increasing competition within the Swedish grocery industry can be seen as a consequence of the successful launch of the private labels. Hence, both manufacturers and private brands

should focus on building strong brands. Brand Equity will play a central role and this increases the importance for understanding what affects Brand Equity and makes it strong. This because a strong brand can compete with similar products within the product's category and motivates the consumer to buy a more expensive brand (Myers, 2003).

These changes in the market economy have turned brands and corporate reputation into an even more crucial asset. Hence, branding has become a top management priority and has emerged as a competitive strategy. As Interbrand CEO Rita Clifton says: "Branding will ultimately be the only unique differentiator between companies. Brand Equity is now a key asset" (www.iqa.org). By engaging in CSR, corporations add value to the brand and through trustworthiness have a chance of becoming unique. Being unique is seen as a highly important competitive advantage in the global world today (Ibid.).

One way of both building a strong and competitive brand and showing social responsibility at once could be through sponsorship. By linking a brand to a certain sponsor activity, the brands give consumers guided agency to add certain favourable associations and a perception of being different. By targeting sponsorship that is in congruence with the corporations' values and activities, the company can benefit from higher brand awareness, added associations and brand knowledge, which all contribute to building a strong brand (Roy & Cornwell, 2004). Hence, marketing through sponsorship distinguish the brand from competitors and gain a favourable image towards consumers. The growth in sponsorship expenditures reveals that this marketing activity is one of the fastest growing, although it is mostly focused on sporting events (Ibid.). Examples can be found in the marketing activities of corporations such as Coca-Cola who is the official sponsor of the Olympic Games (Tripodi, 2001). The leading international branding consultancy, Interbrand, reckons that 96 per cent of Coca Cola's stock market value is in intangibles such as reputation, knowledge and brand (www.interbrand.com). However, in existing literature there is little discussion of other sponsorship activities beyond sport related events.

Knowledge whether the Brand Equity is enhanced when using CSR and sponsorship is important as it might open up new possible marketing activities. A strong brand brings desirable competitive advantages, such as Price Premium, loyal customers and future profits (Keller, 1998). CSR sponsoring is therefore of interest as it might be an alternative way of showing a company's social responsibility and build a strong brand.

1.2 *Problem discussion*

1.2.1 *Theoretical relevance*

Having a strong brand today is valued as a company's strongest asset (Ailawadi, 2004). In existing marketing literature it is argued for the cause of brand building as both a short-term

and long-term investment (Kotler, 1994). The importance and benefits from building a strong brand is supported by Aaker (1992) who argues that a strong brand is an alternative to compete on price and specifications. As competition increased, brands have become a competitive device as a mean to differentiate and distinguish from other brands. In a world, described by Arvidsson (2005) as a brand space where brand managers constantly try to steer and manipulate consumers in one direction, the key to future competitive advantage and profits lie in the company's ability to separate them from other noise and competition. Keller (1998) views branding as a top management priority and as a crucial element in the fight over consumers. Hence, conducting research and investing in brands is important for both companies and marketers as it strengthens the brand and thereby enhance Brand Equity. Brand Equity is the value added given to a brand which in turn can bring several competitive advantages to companies. Brand Equity is part of the branding concept and is defined as an outcome of marketing activities.

A brand is according to Keller (1998) the identity of a product or service and serves as a device for companies to create associations and perceptions related to a brand. Ailawadi (2004) claim brands to be important as they can influence consumer perceptions and consumption choice. The brand concept is defined by the American Marketing Association in Keller (1998):

“A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition.”

Keller (1998) argues that a brand play a different role for consumers and manufacturers while being important for both. For consumers, a brand can be a risk reducer, a symbolic device, and a signal of quality and identification of source of product. For manufacturers, building a strong brand can have several benefits. The brand plays the role of identification to simplify the purchase process, it legally protects unique features, it is a signal of quality level to satisfied consumers and it is a source of competitive advantage and source of financial returns (Keller, 1998).

The interest for brands, CSR and sponsorship is not only showing in the business industry but in the marketing literature as well. As it is important for companies to be well informed and gain knowledge regarding new developments, equally important is it for the literature to be up to date and constantly question and predict new marketing problems and possibilities.

Existing research give attention to the consumer response to CSR initiatives. Carroll (1979) came up with a conceptual model that suggested that CSR is highly related to the future success of a company. However; this model does not approach the consumer perspective, since the business as well as the literature, used to be product and performance oriented (Maignan, 2001). As the focus on the consumers has increased, research has followed and one

of the most prominent within this field is Isabelle Maignan. She has explored consumer perception regarding CSR and if consumers support socially responsible businesses. Maignan's (2001) research supports her opinion that CSR is an appropriate device to market the business to consumers.

Roy and Cornwell (2004) observe in their research that an interest has evolved in using various theoretical approaches for illustrating how consumers respond to sponsorship messages. The study concerns the congruence between event and sponsor and shows that consumers who perceive congruence between sponsor and event generally have more positive responses to a sponsorship and also favours the sponsor. However, when viewing sponsorship as a part of CSR, the marketing literature is somewhat underdeveloped. Tripodi (2001) mentions cause-related sponsoring although the CSR concept is not included or investigate further instead the focus in his research concerns sporting events. Olkkonen (1999) recognizes a social division within sponsoring. A similar opinion is argued by Hagstedt (1987), who means one motive for sponsorship is the desire to show social responsibility. According to Jobber (1995) a company can demonstrate their commitment in social questions by sponsoring schools, hospitals; local events etc. and thus get a reputation as a socially responsible corporation. However, even though CSR sponsoring is discussed there is still no conducted research regarding the issue.

What makes our study relevant is the linkage between CSR, sponsorship and Brand Equity as we see marketing possibilities in the combination. We want to study whether a combination of CSR and sponsorship can enhance the Brand Equity in terms of Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium. Using sponsoring with CSR influences could according to us, be a way of characterizing and building a stronger brand and gaining competitive advantage.

1.3 Purpose

Our purpose is to enhance the understanding of sponsorship and CSR, and to see what impact such activities have on Brand Equity.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Brand Equity

Keeping positive and strong Brand Equity is considered to bring several advantages such as charging a higher price, more efficient marketing activities, brand extension opportunities and being more reluctant against competitor's actions (Aaker 1991; Keller 1998; Persson, 2006). Strong Brand Equity can generate large profits and is therefore of relevance and interest for corporations and marketers. This is shown in existing literature where the Brand Equity concept has been defined in many different ways and for many different purposes (Keller, 1998). Keller (1998) observes that most marketers agree Brand Equity to be a marketing outcome related to the brand. The fact that different marketing activities can enhance Brand Equity (Roy & Cornwell, 2004, Yoo et al., 2000) adds to the motives why Brand Equity should be of interest for business industries. As described by Roy & Cornwell (2004), corporations try to find activities and events to link to their brands in order to influence brand associations in favour of the brand. Results from these activities could be that the Brand Equity from the consumer's side is enhanced (Ibid).

The most generally accepted definition of Brand Equity is that it is the value added, brought to a product or service by a brand (Aaker, 1991). One definition that is to be found is by Keller (1998):

“...the value added to a product or service, the outcome that result from marketing of a good related to its brand name or other brand element as compared to a outcome lacking that brand identification.”

2.1.1 Consumer based Brand Equity

Among previous literature and research regarding Brand Equity there is a distinction between a consumer and company perspective (Keller, 1998). As mentioned (e.g. Keller, 1998; Martin & Brown, 1990; Roy & Cornwell, 2004) the focus when building equity is to create a difference, perceived by the consumer, between a brand and competing brands in the same category. Hence, consumer based Brand Equity resides in the memory and knowledge structures of the consumer and as the purchase decision lies with the consumer it is important to understand consumer based Brand Equity. Roy & Cornwell (2004) argue that to achieve strong consumer Brand Equity, companies must make sure that the consumer is familiar with the brand and possess knowledge to difference the brand from its competitors.

In Keller (1998), customer-based Brand Equity is defined as:

“...the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of that brand.”

Brand Equity can to a certain extent be controlled and manipulated by the brand manager but the ultimate power lies in the hands of the consumer. Strong Brand Equity is an outcome of different marketing activities or other events and can usually be measured by the feedback from consumers in forms of a Price Premium (Aaker, 1992). Price Premium is defined by Persson (2006) as the consumers’ willingness to pay for a certain brand.

Strong consumer based Brand Equity is achieved by understanding the consumers in order to use marketing activities to influence them (Keller, 1998). The crucial task that challenges marketers is to communicate brand knowledge and positive associations that adds to the value of a product and therefore is perceived as superior to competing products within a product category. What decides customer-based Brand Equity, explained by Keller (1998), are the consumers’ perceptions, preferences and behaviour.

Being able to measure and follow up implemented events is essential when designing brand building marketing activities (Aaker, 1992). The single most useful devise according to Aaker is to measure the Premium Price. Brand Equity is a relative measure which means that comparisons with relevant competitors are necessary (Lassar et al., 1995, Persson, 2006). This goes in line with Keller (1998) who mentions comparison tests and product sampling, where consumers for example take blind tests where one group is being exposed to branded samples while the others are being exposed to unbranded products. The argumentation is supported by Lassar et al., (1995) that recommends that companies regularly measure Brand Equity and argues that it needs to be compared with competitors in order to receive relevant information.

2.1.2 Brand Equity Model/Dimensions

Within the conceptual framework of Brand Equity, different models and definitions are to be discovered. From what we have been able to find out, most marketers and researchers have a similar way of looking at Brand Equity although they highlight different factors. Aaker (1992) stresses that in order to understand what drives the value of a brand, you need to understand the dimensions: awareness, associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty. Aaker is supported by Yoo et al. (2000) that mention the same dimensions and their importance in generating Brand Equity. Keller (1998) has a similar view and focus on brand knowledge, brand awareness and brand image. Whilst these dimensions touch upon the same areas, they all result in different Brand Equity models. The model by Anselmsson et al. (2006) includes the same dimensions as Aaker (1992) but adds the dimension of uniqueness.

The reason why this thesis prefers to base the conceptual framework on Anselmsson et al. (2006) is because the model is concrete and branch specific for the grocery industry. As our research is conducted with two brands from this sector, this model can simplify and support our data collection and also give understanding of how building Brand Equity in this business is done. It also fit this thesis well as the chosen model or framework should be applicable to the conditions it attempts to describe, analyze or predict. As this model is derived from a previous and more acknowledged conceptual framework and also used by Anselmsson et al. (2006) in their research, we believe that by selecting this model all dimensions necessary and of relevance for our research are to be covered.

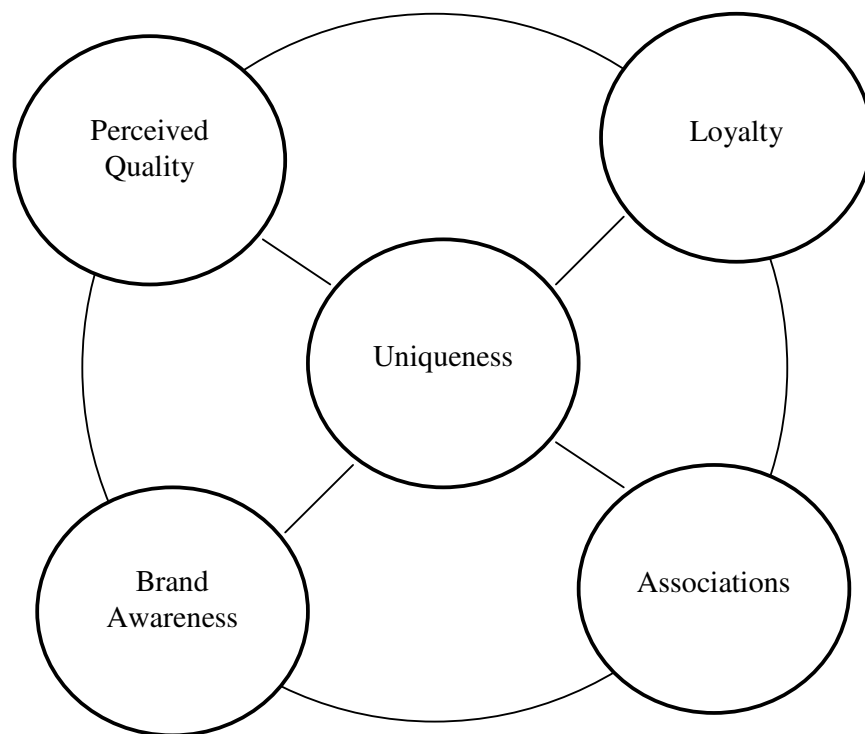


Fig 1: Conceptual model over consumer based Brand Equity for consumer packaged goods (Anselmsson et al., 2006)

Perceived Quality

Brand Equity symbolizes a value added that is decided by the consumer. Zeithaml (in Yoo et al., 2000) describes it as “the consumer’s subjective judgment about a product’s overall excellence or superiority”. The quality aspect is essential as it is the consumer’s perceived quality that enables the Price Premium hence creates Brand Equity. It also enhances Brand Equity since a high perceived quality would drive consumers to choose the brand rather than other competing brands (Yoo et al., 2000). Melin (1997) argues that every product in a

specific category satisfies the basic need, while it is the value added that determines the consumer's brand choice. Hence it is the perception and memory of a brand that ultimately settles it. The perception of quality held by the consumer can be influenced by different activities and events (Keller, 1998). Yoo et al. (2000) mentions personal experiences, unique needs and consumption situations as having an impact on the consumer's subjective decision of quality.

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is related to the positioning of the brand in the consumers mind and what salience is given to it. It is reflected by the ability of the consumer to identify the brand in different situations, for example when being exposed to it unbranded (Keller, 1998). Brand awareness has proven to be an important factor of Brand Equity as it alone can lead to favourable consumer response and help establish a relationship with the consumer (Ibid.). The relationship can be created by different marketing activities and events as well as through slogans and jingles. Examples when a high brand awareness matters are in low involvement decisions, this because consumers tend to choose by instinct and base their decision on brands they are familiar with (Ibid.). Two general guidelines are offered by Keller (1998) to establish brand awareness. First it is important to expose the brand visually and verbally and strengthen the associations desirable for the product or service. Secondly, the brand is to be paired with matching communication options that could cause the consumer to increase the familiarity and awareness.

Associations

Consumers having positive associations regarding a brand are favourable to any corporation (Keller, 1998). In the literature extensive previous research on associations and what kind of associations that influences the purchase decision is present (Anselmsson et al., 2006). Roy & Cornwell (2004) argues that the consumer must keep brand associations in memory since they can distinguish the brand from competitors and possibly enhance Brand Equity. Associations are created by marketing activities that link strong, favourable and unique associations to the brand. Keller (1998) argues associations to be of great importance as they are only controllable to some extent. Controllable sources are marketing activities and events but uncontrollable associations can arise from other channels such as direct experience and word-of-mouth. Brand associations are important as they, according to Yoo et al., (2000) are positively related to brand equity since they can be a signal of quality and consequently influence the buyer at the purchase situation.

Within the grocery research several associations have been identified to be of importance for customers when purchasing and consuming different goods (Anselmsson et al., 2006). For example associations to health (Grunert et al., 1996; Wandel & Bugge, 1997; Magnusson et al., 2003) and environmental and animal issues (Anselmsson, et al., 2005; Torjusen, et al.;

2001; Grunert, et al., 2004). Theoretically social associations are very important (Aaker, 1996) although just how important the social dimension is concerning groceries is under investigated and especially concerning CSR related products.

Loyalty

Brand loyalty is crucial for companies as it makes consumers purchase a brand routinely and not compare it or switch to another brand (Yoo et al., 2000). For this reason, regarding to what extent consumers are loyal to the brand, Brand Equity could be enhanced. According to Aaker (1991) Price Premium is an indicator on brand loyalty and it can therefore be argued that loyalty is positively correlated to Brand Equity. Building loyal consumers is essential for any business as it is a sign of future profits since a loyal customer group do not usually switch brand and often are positively minded to the manufacturer's other products (Motameni & Shahrokhi, 1998).

Uniqueness

The uniqueness of the Brand Equity dimensions is what ultimately determines the Price Premium and Overall Brand Equity (Persson, 2006). If the customers perceive a brand to have unique benefits that satisfy their needs and wants, the product will be given a value added and will be favourable towards competitors' products. This outcome is not only desirable but crucial for future business.

2.1.3 Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium

The concept Brand Equity can be divided into two different sub concepts. Brand Equity is a wide and broad concept and it can therefore simplify to make a distinction into Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium. This distinction also helps the data collection as well as the analytical process. Even though they are separated in this research they still sometimes touch upon the same Brand Equity dimensions

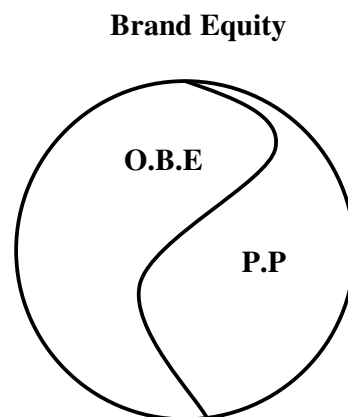


Figure 2: Concept model over Brand Equity

Overall Brand Equity

Overall Brand Equity can be related to the consumer decision process. When being faced with a wide range of products it is of interest to know what finally make the consumer prefer one product over another. Since all products within the same category satisfy the same basic need it is something else that appeal to the consumer to make a choice (Melin, 1997). This something else can be argued to be the Overall Brand Equity that can symbolize a value added to a product which influences the consumer's decision process.

A surplus value is created when the consumer perceives a specific brand to be superior over competing brands. The value added has earlier been explained in the dimensions that constitute Brand Equity. However, as Yoo et al., (2000) argues, brand loyalty and perceived quality are important aspects when a customer is faced with a brand decision. Loyalty because it somewhat blinds the consumer to not consider other options when selecting a product. Loyal consumers are also more forgiving and also more open to other products by the same brand as well as brand extensions. When it comes to perceived quality it can too add value to a product which will lead to a favourable position for the brand (Yoo et al., 2000). Brand awareness can also influence the choice since it affects the positioning of the brand in the consumers mind (Keller, 1998).

Overall Brand Equity can therefore be described to be decisive at the purchase moment. When products are equivalent and have the same qualities, Overall Brand Equity is what makes the consumer take the final decision to buy a brand.

Price Premium

Strong Brand Equity is an outcome of different marketing activities or other events and can usually be measured by the feedback from consumers in forms of a Price Premium (Aaker, 1991). Brand Equity has on several occasions been defined in terms of Price Premium (Sethuraman, 2003; Ailawadi et al., 2003). Price Premium is defined as consumers' willingness to pay for a specific brand (Sethuraman, 2003). The Price Premium is a relative measurement and is therefore put in relation to all competing brands, no matter the price (Anselmsson et al., 2006).

The quality aspect is here essential as it is the consumer's perceived quality that enables the Price Premium hence creates Brand Equity. It also enhances Brand Equity since a high perceived quality would drive consumers to choose the brand rather than other competing brands. (Yoo et al., 2000) The uniqueness of the brand also plays a central role as is it the uniqueness of the dimensions that decides the strength of the Brand Equity. This is also because Price Premium is a relative measurement and is compared with all relevant competitors. If one brand is associated with CSR related characteristics it can be positive. However, if competitors are perceived to be equally socially responsible, the Brand Equity

affect and opportunity to Price Premium will be lost. This is the very essence of Price Premium, striving towards convincing consumers to pay more for a specific brand than other competing brands in the same product category. This means building a unique brand that offers something no one else does. (Anselmsson et al., 2005)

A reason for brands to strive after Price Premium is the reluctance against price wars or other price actions from competitors. As mentioned, Price Premium is related to the two Brand Equity aspects; Perceived Quality and Loyalty. When building Brand Equity it is therefore important to be aware of what could affect Price Premium. Price Premium is an indicator of loyalty which is most desirable for any brand and business. Perceived Quality is equally important, if a brand is not able to communicate a higher perceived quality to consumers than competing brands, consequences such as decrease in profit and customer group might occur. (Aaker, 1991) Understanding how a high Price Premium is achieved is hence crucial for both manufacturers as well as marketers.

2.2 Corporate Social Responsibility

2.2.1 What is Corporate Social Responsibility?

CSR concepts have been evolving for decades and as a result of that various viewpoints of corporate responsibility exist. Bowen (1953) was the first scholar who ever wrote a manuscript on the topic of CSR. According to him, it was the obligation of businesses to “pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society” (Ibid.). After Bowen’s perspective on CSR as a social obligation have several perspectives followed; CSR as a stakeholder obligation, CSR as ethics driven and CSR as a managerial process (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004). The social and stakeholder obligation viewpoint imply that CSR practices are motivated by self-interest. In addition to these different viewpoints researchers have taken different paths in order to characterize the exact nature of businesses’ social duties; the *normative standpoint* has a concern for the duties of businesses in general toward the society as a whole, the *managerial approach* questions whether an individual firm can manage CSR successfully or the *instrumental perspective* looks into how CSR can generate organizational benefits (Ibid.). This research leans towards the instrumental perspective since it investigates the possible positive effect that CSR sponsoring can have on Brand Equity.

A few years ago most companies held governments, shareholders and employees as their three primary stakeholders. However; today has CSR expanded to include the wants and needs of a broader range of stakeholders due to factors such as globalisation, global warming and HIV. Customers, partners, suppliers, the community and future generations are therefore also seen as stakeholders. These new groups demand that the companies take responsibility for the impact their businesses have on their surrounding, both locally and globally.

Transparency and the reporting on CSR actions (and inaction) have therefore become as important as reporting on financial reports. CSR does not build on compulsion, obligations or rules, but it is about guidelines and opportunities, in the sense that companies can enhance their value by taking social and environmental aspects into consideration. (www.csrinternational.com)

2.2.2 Aspects of Corporate Social Responsibility

According to Carroll (1979) it is possible to divide CSR into four different parts; economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. Economic responsibilities designates the obligations a business has to produce goods and favours that the society needs and sell them to fair prices (Maignan, 2001). Legal responsibilities means that a company should act according to the law, companies should meet their economic duties within the framework of the legal requirements (Ibid.). The ethical responsibilities require that companies abide by established norms that define appropriate behaviour. The ethical responsibility is often debated about since it is not regulated by law and therefore a question of judgement (Maignan, 2001.). The responsibility on the top, the philanthropical, reflects the common desire there is to see businesses get involved actively in the improvement of the society (Ibid.). The responsibility is always voluntary and is lead by the company's will to be engaged in social activities which are not regulated by law and also not generally expected by the company.

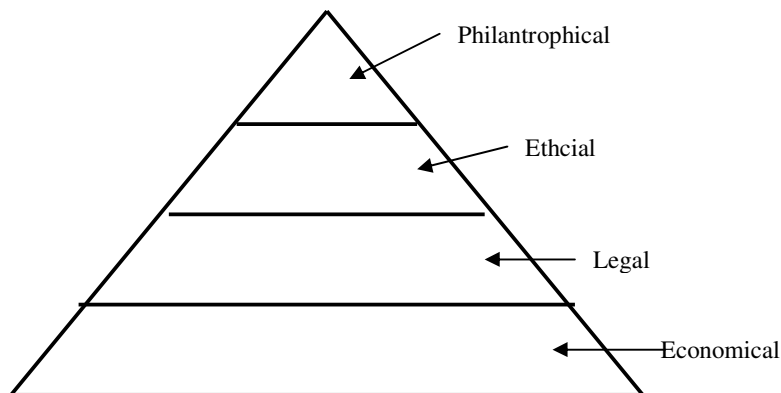


Fig 3: Carroll, 1979

Maignan (2001) investigated consumer's readiness to support socially responsible products and also examined their evaluations of the different responsibilities of Carroll. Maignan revealed that the consumers see it as if each of the responsibilities stands on their own and are not just a dimension of an underlying construct. Interesting was that the observation suggests that the consumers establish a differentiation between the corporate social responsibilities and the economic duties of a business. While the managers follow Carroll's reasoning and see a relationship between corporate economic responsibilities and the other corporate social

responsibilities, the consumers do not or at least questions the exact nature of that relationship. To sum up, the investigation made by Maignan questions the applicability of the corporate social responsibilities of Carroll to consumers.

2.2.3 Consumers' attitude and response to Corporate Social Responsibility

Little research has been done on to which extent consumers are willing to make an effort to support socially responsible companies (Maignan, 2001). Furthermore, few investigations have been done on customers' definitions and perceptions of CSR, on positioning of product brands and CSR in the consumer minds (Anselmsson & Johansson, 2006). However, the surveys that have been done have found that consumers tend to try to buy social responsible products, like the Walker research which found that 88% of the consumers in the United States are more likely to buy from a socially responsible company (in Maignan, 2001). Research also shows that customers tend to stay loyal to companies who actively engage in CSR and that they then engage in a positive word of mouth about the commitment of the company (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004). A survey on British consumer attitudes showed that a third of the respondents cared about ethical issues and half of that third had bought a product just because the reputation said it was an ethical product (Anselmsson & Johansson, 2006). Within the same discussion, Klein & Dawar (2004) found that consumer' evaluations when it comes to brands and products are more affected by CSR than by economic and rational considerations.

There is evidence that supports the fact that there are customers who are ready to sanction companies that are socially irresponsible, for example by boycotting the products of the company in question (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004). Thus, actions that the company take that are valued as negative by the customer may lead to decreased stakeholder resources (Ibid.).

There are however, consumers who '*actively*' search for information about CSR products and companies and act on ethical influences. Even though this is a group that is still in minority on the consumer market the companies want their approval and acceptance, especially thinking about the word of mouth spreading rumours. Companies therefore need to declare their ethical strategy in areas of high consumer interest in order to gain these customers' acceptance and approval. These consumers are characterised as '*caring and ethically insightful*'. There is also a group best described as '*confused and indecisive*', this group wants to make ethical choices but because they lack the right information and guidance on the issues they do not make them. The customers who are unconvinced on the claimed ethical standards of companies and brands are called the '*cynical and uninterested*' group. A company can get this group to make ethical decisions but it would demand that there is no added inconvenience for the customers and no intrusion on their existing values. (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001).

2.3 Sponsoring

2.3.1 Sponsorship as a promotional mechanism

Sponsorship can be seen as a communication tool that help companies to achieve its corporate and marketing objectives (Tripodi, 2001). Kotler (1994) see sponsorship as a tool that can lead to increased brand awareness. As brand awareness is an influential factor on brand equity it can be argued that sponsorship through achieved awareness can enhance brand equity. However; it is only in the last two decades that sponsorship has been seen as an effective brand building tool by the marketers and a medium that has the potential to become the marketing communication tool of the century (Ibid.). Companies can sponsor numerous events such as; arts, music, education, cause-related activities and sports (Ibid.). The decision of *if* to sponsor is usually a result of carefully planned analyses where the sponsor wants to provide emotional dimensions to the company (Clark, 1995). A concentration on sponsorship leads to, amongst other things, repeated attention for the company and the brand (Ibid.).

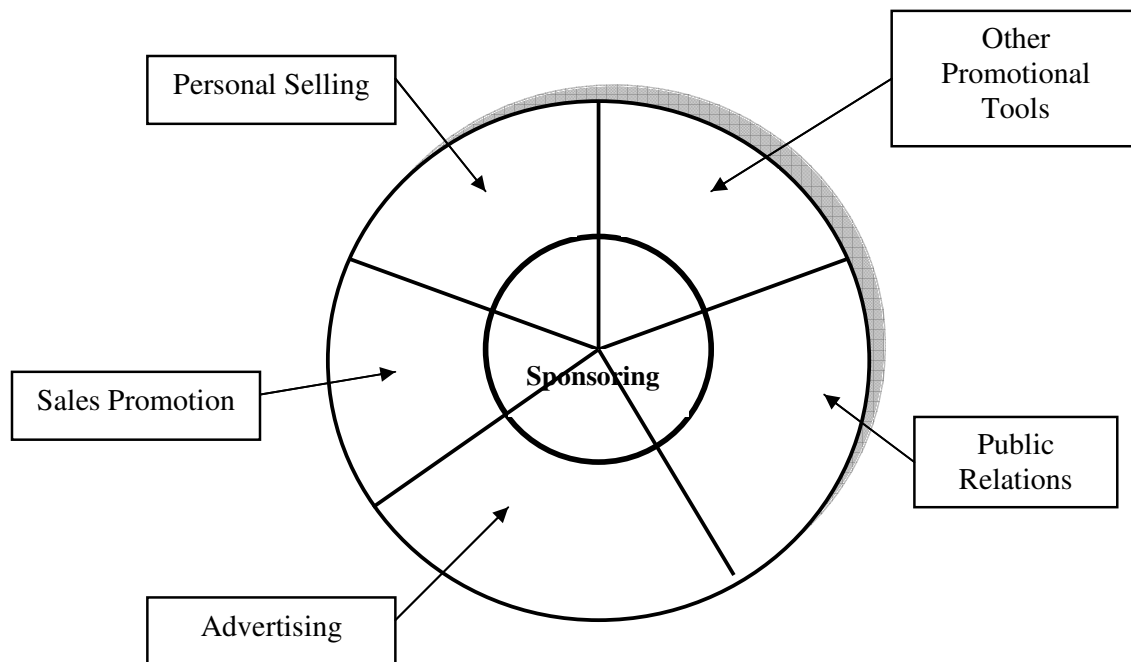


Fig.4: The role of sponsorship in marketing (Clark, 1995, p.4)

Sponsorship is part of a company's marketing which the figure above demonstrates. To maximize a sponsorship investment should the promotional mix be used in conjunction with each other (Tripodi, 2001)? A sponsorship is more effective when supported by the other elements in the communication mix (Ibid.). A characteristic of sponsoring is just its ability to act simultaneously (Clark, 1995). There is an interaction between sponsoring and the other

actors in the mix which results in the fact that a sponsoring activity can be used at the same time in the different marketing areas even though the purpose might differ between them (Ibid.). Thus, the same sponsoring activity has the possibility to create positive effects for several different areas in marketing (Ibid.). According to Tripodi (2001) should sponsorship also be integrated with the sponsor's marketing mix elements to achieve maximum impact.

- **Product:** The sponsoring brand might have special packaging to promote the sponsorship or a new product might be introduced on the market.
- **Promotion:** The communication mix should be integrated with the sponsorship to achieve the optimal effect.
- **Price:** The price of the sponsoring brand may be discounted, or a certain percentage of the sponsoring brand's price may be forwarded on.
- **Place:** New distribution channels may emerge as a result of the sponsorship.

2.3.2 What is sponsoring?

As of today there does not exist a single universal definition of sponsorship. However; there are numerous definitions where some highlight the exploitable commercial potential of the marketing activity and others emphasise the exchange theory that is inherent in sponsorship (Tripodi, 2001). Sleight (in Jobber, 1995) defines sponsoring as:

“A business relationship between a provider of funds, resources and an individual, event or organisation which offers in return some rights and association that may be used for commercial advantage”

From the different definitions we have seen two underlying factors which can be said to characterise sponsorship: sponsorship is utilised as a promotional instrument, and firms undertake it to extract commercial benefits.

Different bases of division are used to categorize sponsorship, and it is most easily done by dividing it according to which activity is being sponsored (Hagstedt, 1987). Sports, culture – and social sponsoring is often used when dividing sponsoring (Olkkonen, 1999). These three categories are broad and can easily be divided into sub-divisions.

In the beginning sponsorship was almost always about charity and it is therefore necessary to sort out what the two concepts actually mean and if they still are the same thing. When it comes to sponsoring there is always some sort of commercial exchange between the sponsor and the one being sponsored (Jiffer & Roos, 1999). Sponsorship therefore results in that the one who sponsors always expects to get something in return while charity is purely a gift without expectations on getting anything in return (Ibid.). However; even though there is a difference between the two concepts are they sometimes used synonymously because in

practice is the line between charities and sponsoring not as obvious as above (Hagstedt, 1987).

2.3.3 Motives and Objectives with sponsorships

When having studied the literature about sponsorship is it striking that there is not a clear distinction between the company's motives and objectives with sponsoring. What some authors see as motives can also be seen as objectives by other authors. However; this ambiguity occurs because the motives behind a sponsorship might often develop into the objectives with the sponsorship.

One strong motive for working with sponsorship is the ability this medium has to develop and build strong brands and create advantageous associations to the company (Clark, 1995). Sponsoring is an effective way of using the image of the project sponsored so that this image also is being connected to the brand of the company (Jobber, 1995). This strengthens the image but can also be used to connect the company to a new wanted image (Ibid.). Another motive for sponsoring can be the opportunity for the company to communicate a certain message to chosen target groups (Roos & Algotsson, 1996). With the help of sponsorship can the company image be influenced positively (Jiffer & Roos, 1999). If the company is sponsoring a big and important activity in the home town is it giving the message that it is a company that is there for and helps the local surrounding. This creates an image of the company being a good communitarian which leads to positive relations with the locals, decision makers and the own personnel (Ibid.). A similar line of argument is taken by Hagstedt (1987), he means that a motive for sponsorship is that the sponsor wants to show his social responsibility and the goal with such an effort is to create a favourable image and also to strengthen the image and prestige of the sponsor. According to Jobber (1995) can a company show their commitment in social questions by sponsoring schools, hospitals, local events etc. and thereby get a reputation as a socially responsible company.

A marketer should use all promotional tools, sponsorship being no exception, with the aim of achieving pre-set objectives (Tripodi, 2001). The same opinion is found in Clark (1995) who means that the sponsors should already in the preface establish what they want to reach by the sponsorship. These objectives should be relevant, measurable, realistic, congruent and quantifiable (Ibid.). By setting objectives is it possible for the company to make post-evaluations of the sponsorship in accordance with the set objectives. By having measurable objectives is the question of whether the money invested in the sponsorship is worth it and any possible question from within the organisation is readily justified (Ibid.). Examples of these objectives can be to get awareness, attitudes, emotional surplus value, changes in behaviour, preferences, increased sales and internal goals (Clark, 1995). All marketing is about increasing the company sales and when it comes to sponsorship it is no different (Jiffer & Roos, 1999).

2.3.4 Sponsorship and Brand Equity

The importance of brand awareness and brand image as sponsorship objectives was stated above. However; they are also key determinants of customer-based Brand Equity. Sponsorship is a strategy that builds Brand Equity; the strategy is to position the brand so that the brand value is enhanced and thereby establishing superiority over competitors. Sponsorship can effectively be used as a medium to familiarise consumers with a particular brand and from there develop favourable and strong brand associations in the mind of the consumers. This creates a differential consumer response for the brand in question, compared to an identical unbranded version of the same item, which allows the sponsoring brand to accumulate customer-based Brand Equity. Consequently, sponsorship may be seen as a vehicle for a company to exploit the equity in their brand and through that maximise their value and gain a sustainable competitive advantage over competitors. (Tripodi, 2001)

2.4 Summary

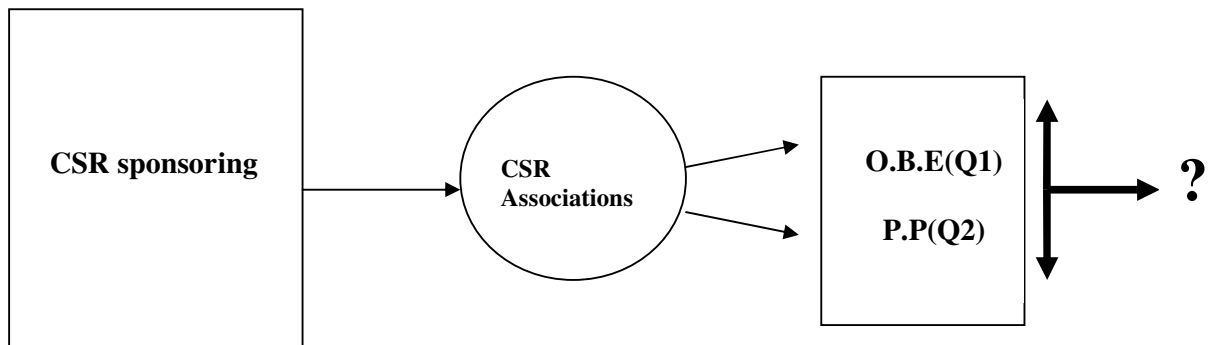


Fig 5: Summarizing model of the conceptual framework

This model illustrates and motivates our choice of conceptual framework as well as describes our analytical framework. We see CSR as an alternative to regular sponsoring which usually is focusing on sport events. With regards to existing branding theories, which to a great extent concentrate on the ability of being perceived as different and unique, we view CSR related sponsoring as a possible and effective branding and marketing tool. To us, choosing CSR sponsoring and communicate CSR associations to consumers is one way of achieving uniqueness and position a brand differently. The consumer perspective is important as consumers have proven to be influential in the determination of a Brand's Equity. The outcome of consumers being exposed to CSR sponsoring is not yet researched. Hence, the purpose (illustrated by the possible positive effect in the model) is to enhance the

understanding of sponsorship and CSR and what impact such activities have on Brand Equity. And when researching the effect on Brand Equity, a distinction between Price Premium and Overall Brand Equity was selected in order to separate two important concepts that both very well describe and constitute Brand Equity.

Research question one (Q1 in model) concerns the Overall Brand Equity, and how perceived CSR associations linked to a certain brand can influence a consumer's choice between brands. Will there be a positive effect on Brand Equity caused by CSR related sponsoring and the selection of a specific brand, hence in this case will there be any effect on Overall Brand Equity.

Research question two (Q2 in model) relates to the effect on Price Premium and whether consumers are willing to pay more for a certain brand because of its CSR associations. Will consumers be influenced and affected when being exposed to CSR stimuli or will they be indifferent?

The question mark in this model represents the forthcoming discussion which is presented later in this thesis. The discussion is where we present the outcome of our empirical investigation and answer the proposed research question.

2.4.1 Research Questions

Question 1:

Does sponsorship with CSR characteristics have a positive effect on Overall Brand Equity?

Question 2

Does sponsorship with CSR characteristics have a positive effect on Price Premium?

3. Method

3.1 Global Method

3.1.1 Problem and Purpose

The research problem and purpose of this research are what steers the information and knowledge need. Different reasons might exist on why knowledge is needed although there are two general intentions with the data that is collected: descriptive and explanatory (Jacobsen, 2002).

The intention with the collected data is mainly explanatory in this thesis. As to draw conclusions regarding the effect on Brand Equity, an explainable nature is required. Our collection of data needs an explanatory character as we want to test whether a correlation between CSR-sponsoring and enhanced brand equity exists or not. However, there are influences of a descriptive nature in this research as we aim to pursue description of quantitative character on specific parts of the research.

3.1.2 Perspective

The perspective and way of tackling the problem are closely related to each other according to Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul (2001). It is the perspective that decides what one sees and does not see while the way of tackling the problem is more extensive. The decision of which perspective to use will have crucial effects on the problem and purpose (Ibid). We look at Brand Equity, CSR and sponsoring in this thesis. Our interest lies in the experience of the consumer, just like in the presented consumer based Brand Equity framework we have a consumer perspective

3.1.3 Objects being studied

In this research we are mainly studying three different objects; ketchup, students and sponsorship. Swedish people are ranked number one in global ketchup consumption, consuming more than 3 litres per person in a year (www.communitycontent.ca). Ketchup is therefore a product with a high penetration which is also represented by strong brands. The fact that ketchup is an object which is more than well know in Sweden makes it suitable to use in our research. This because it simplifies for our respondents to be familiar with the product in advance and it also makes the result more relevant to other interested parties. In this research the brands Felix and Heinz are used for their high awareness character.

University students were selected as a relevant population sample to be researched in this study since they represent an important consumer segment for the ketchup producers (www.communitycontent.ca). Most university students are likely to be well familiar with

ketchup as well as with the concept of sponsorship and should therefore be able to understand the texts to read before answering the questions quite easily.

Sponsorships enable companies to show their commitment in various questions, this research choose to focus on sponsorship with CSR characteristics in this research since we felt that it was an area that was not researched enough and we felt that there is an increasing awareness for corporations to take their social responsibility. In the text we wrote that the socially responsible company in question was involved in an event that collects money to the greenhouse effect and also support families in underdeveloped countries.

3.2 Specific Method

3.2.1 Choice of Methodological approach

With considerations to the research problem and purpose of this study, the quantitative approach is preferred. As Christensen et al. (2001) characterize the quantitative method as focusing on measuring the relationship between different variables; this methodological approach is well suited for this research.

The quantitative approach is of use when the researcher already holds knowledge on the area and when related theories exist although need to be tested and improved as they lack the identified theoretical gap (Christensen et al., 2001). As we are using the conceptual framework by Anselmsson et al., (2006), an already published and acknowledged theory exists. Hence the quantitative method is favoured and chosen as it then can provide us with better assistance (Christensen et al., 2001).

As Christensen et al. 2001) argues, the methodological approach cannot be either quantitative or qualitative since the reality is not illustrated like that. As the quantitative method is illustrated by its aim to generalize and perform a wide and shallow research, the qualitative aims to explore and explain where focus lies on the symbolic and underlying meaning of things (Patel & Davidson, 1991). As it is the researcher's opinions and perceptions of things that steer the study in the qualitative approach, we found this somewhat limiting as the interest in this study lies with how the consumers views the problem and not our attitude towards it. The qualitative method usually uses personal interviews where the questionnaire is of open or semi-structured character. This is with the purpose of discovering how the respondents perceive their world and to receive qualitative data. For these reasons the qualitative approach is not of interest in this study. However, since we want to conduct a statistical analysis with many respondents in order to test theoretical research questions and not generate new theory, the quantitative approach is best suited. Although qualitative interviews would provide data that could be used to describe a correlation, the depth and narrow character of the information would not fulfil the purpose. Since we will be using an

already existing and tested scale (See 3.2.2), we are performing a statistical and structured research and the qualitative approach is therefore of no relevance to us.

To pursue the work deductively is a prerequisite when using the quantitative approach (Bryman & Bell, 2003). The reason is that the researcher categorizes the information before it is collected which means that the questions are predetermined and the answering alternatives are given.

3.2.2 Data Collection

Several ways of collecting primary data exists in the quantitative research (Patel & Davidson, 2004). The technique one chooses to use is dependent on the research question, the time and the resources available (Ibid.). There are two data collection methods that are the primary ones; questionnaire and interview (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 2001). We will account for our choices of primary data collection below.

Experiment

We need to see if sponsorship with CSR characteristics will affect the Brand Equity. To be able to statistically ensure this will experimental features be used as part of the research. By doing an experiment will the researcher be able to see and ensure the relationship between different variables (Denscombe, 2000). Thus, the purpose of an experiment is to measure the effect of one or more variables (Lundahl & Skärvad, 1992). There is an independent variable and a dependent variable, where the dependent variable is the factor which changes as a consequence of changes in the independent variable (Denscombe, 2000). In this research is the dependent variable the CSR sponsoring and Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium are the independent variables.

Since the purpose of an experiment is to measure the effect of one or more variables and nothing else, the effect of other sources than the independent must be eliminated (Lundahl & Skärvad, 1992). Elementary for experimental research is therefore control, which can be done in several different ways. In the classical experiment design are two groups established which form the basis of manipulation of the variable that is independent (Bryman & Bell, 2003). We used three groups, two experimental groups and one control group. The experimental groups received the treatment (sponsorship with CSR characteristic, either for Felix or Heinz) which was then compared against each other and the control group, which was not given the treatment (Ibid.). The experimental group and the control group matched each other when it came to characteristics, such as demographics, that were relevant for the experiment (Denscombe, 2000).

According to Denscombe (2000) is a common problem that people act differently when they know that they are being observed, the so called control effect. For us was the control affect never a problem mainly because the respondents were not aware of the fact that they took part in an experiment. They thought they were answering questions about their Ketchup perceptions and thoughts.

Population and Sample

A population is the universe of units from where the sample is selected (Bryman & Bell, 2003). In a sample research is a segment selected from the population for investigation (Ibid.). The most common reason for only researching a sample from the population is because there are not enough resources to investigate them all. Important to think of then is that the sample is representative for the population.

We have chosen university students in Sweden as a relevant population for our research. This population consume ketchup in general and the majority of the population supposedly therefore knew of the product. Having students as the population simplifies the sampling and makes the data collection less resource demanding for us. If we were to do the research on the entire population of Sweden would our resources, when it comes to time and money, not have been enough. If we were to research something else like drinking habits, sleeping habits, purchase behaviour or living conditions had students not been a representative population since their habits usually differ from other groups when it comes to these areas.

Two different samples exist; it is the probability sample and the non-probability sample (Bryman & Bell, 2003). A probability sample is a sample that has been selected using random selection so that each of the units in the population has a chance of being selected (Ibid.). A non-probability sample means that the chance that the respondents will be chosen is impossible to predict and that the sample is not selected using a random selection method (Ibid.). Our sample existed of 200 students who all study at Lund University. Our sample was therefore a non-probability sample since some units in the population were more likely to be selected than others. The risk was that the groups would have been too small if the number of respondents had been less and the statistical difference had then been hard to establish.

There are both pros and cons with using students as respondents. When working towards a deadline as we do with this thesis, it is positive that a relatively large amount of students can be reached in a simple and inexpensive way so that more time and energy can be spent on the analysis of the results. Malhotra & Birks (2003) therefore call this a convenience sample. The authors are of the opinion though that the technique has limitations. They argue that a convenience sample cannot be representative for a population and as a result of that should not generalisations be made on a sample like this. We have considered Malhotra & Birks' opinions but have chosen to use students since we have found several scientific articles where researchers have chosen to use students as their population in their investigation. Dabholkar

(1996) motivates his choice of using students by arguing that the results become more interesting and useful for companies who wants to address students. Danaher & Mullarkey (2003) also used students in their research. They argue for certain situations when using a student sample is appropriate, i.e. when research is being done about a product that is used extensively by a younger population. The impact on the external validity is then no different from using a similar homogenous group from the general population (Ibid.).

Questionnaires

We choose to use questionnaires to gather the data that we needed. These questionnaires were distributed to the students when we visited several classes where we had talked to the teacher in advance; we also visited study facilities on campus and distributed the questionnaires. We had three different information sheets; one with a short text about Heinz and then a fictional text about their CSR actions and on the other side was a text about Felix with a fictional text about their profit., the other sheet was the same but switching the CSR actions to Felix instead. The third sheet that was handed out to the control group had only information about Heinz and Felix. The two first sheets were handed out to 75 students each and the third one to 50 students. The students were left alone to read the information and were then given a couple of minutes to fill out the questionnaire that came with the information sheet. Before the research started there was a pilot test to make sure that the questionnaires were understandable. For further illustration see Appendix 1 and 2.

Structure of questions and answering alternatives

A questionnaire is a totally standardised interview since the exact same questions are asked in the same order every time (Patel & Davidson, 2004). This is necessary to be able to compare and generalise the results. Thus, a questionnaire is a totally standardised interview.

We have used one questionnaire with answering alternatives for both Heinz and Felix on each question (see appendix 3). As said before was it the information sheet that differed between the respondents, not the questionnaire. The questionnaire starts by asking descriptive questions, we do not intend to use these variables in the analyses but they are mainly there to give us a descriptive picture of the representativeness of the respondents. After the background questions follow questions about brand knowledge, CSR, quality, Global Brand Equity and finally Brand Equity. The answering alternatives are given using a five grade Likert scale.

The different questions we used came from four different research papers; the price premium questions came from Netemeyer (2004), the Overall Brand Equity questions from Yoo & Donthu (2001), the CSR questions from Brown & Dacin (1997) and the Quality questions from Anselmsson et al., (2006). The Quality questions were included for the purpose to be able to compare the impact on Brand Equity with another variable. The reason for using

already existing questions is that the scales are already tested. Since there already existed operationalised measurements on the theoretical and practical aspects we wanted to study, we considered it to increase the reliability and validity in our research when using these questions.

3.3 Discussion of Method

3.3.1 Validity

Validity refers to whether an indicator that is devised to measure a concept, really measures what the researcher intended to (Bryman & Bell, 2003). Crucial for the validity of the quantitative study is that the research problem and analysis is let to steer the research (Christensen et al, 2001). The choice of measurement devise should be based on the marketing research problem and what information is needed to answer this (Ibid). In order to increase this research's validity, a well established measure tool is chosen (Patel & Davidson, 1991). The likert-scale that has been used has been a well-used measurement devise and the research questions used in the questionnaire are from published and validated earlier research studies within the same conceptual framework.

Choice of study objects are two well-known brands among the respondents and therefore provides reality to the situation. As the situation and formulation of the research is controlled by the researchers, measurements were taken to decrease the risk of interview-effect. The interview-effect is defined by Bryman & Bell (2003) as a respondent's wish to answer as he/she believes the interviewer wants. By using structured questionnaires that do not reveal our opinion or wanted result, the risk of interview-effect was hopefully decreased.

The questionnaires were pilot tested by neutral persons with knowledge on the area, before used on the selected target group. This in support of Patel & Davidson (1991) argument that as authors there is a risk of becoming blind to the content of the measure devise ability to measure correctly.

3.3.2 Reliability

Bryman and Bell (2003) mean that reliability refers to the consistency of a measurement device. When considering if a measure is reliable are three factors prominent; stability, internal reliability and inter-observer consistency (Ibid.). Stability entails asking whether the measure is stable over time and do not fluctuate. When it comes to internal reliability is the main issue if the indicators are consistent. Occasionally there might be a lack of consistency by the observers when subjective judgement is involved in the data collection activities. To be sure that this does not happen there should be inter-observer consistency (Ibid.). A research

with good reliability is characterised by the fact that the research is not affected by *who* is doing the research (Lundahl & Skärvad, 1999).

Our structured questionnaires indicate strong reliability as this form of measurement is considered to be stable over time. If the research was to be repeated the risk of fluctuations in the outcome is reduced since the milieu and respondents can be seen as being stable.

4. Empirical Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The questionnaires were answered by 200 respondents. The sex ratio in the survey was 54 percent male and 46 percent female. 75 respondents were exposed to the Heinz CSR article (appendix 1) and 75 were exposed the opposite treatment with Felix (appendix 2). The survey included a control group of 50 respondents. The distribution between the different departments at the University of Lund were as follows; Business administration 42 percent, Economics 25 percent, Engineering 33 percent. Among the students who answered were 96 percent well familiar with both Felix and Heinz.

In the table below, means and Standard Deviation is presented for each question (see Appendix 3) as well as the Sum variables for Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium. The mean values show the result for the 150 respondents that were exposed to the CSR sponsoring or Profit text.

	CSR Sponsoring		Profit	
	Mean	St. Dev.	Mean	St. Dev.
O.B.E Sum	3,24	1,19	2,99	1,14
P.P Sum	2,62	1,35	2,37	1,23
Q1	3,69	1,20	3,39	1,45
Q2	4,90	0,43	4,88	0,48
Q3	42,02	41,32	39,10	40,70
Q4	3,36	1,12	2,84	0,98
Q5	2,72	1,08	2,48	0,92
Q6	3,27	1,07	2,92	1,04
Q7	3,67	1,02	3,49	1,08
Q8	3,90	1,01	3,78	1,04
Q9	3,94	0,95	3,83	0,99
Q10	4,16	0,91	4,06	0,95
Q11	3,36	1,31	3,12	1,34
Q12	3,21	1,52	2,94	1,49
Q13	3,15	1,42	2,91	1,36
Q14	2,89	1,47	2,57	1,46
Q15	2,35	1,44	2,17	1,23

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

4.2 Validation of Measurement Devise

It is necessary to validate the measurement tool before the analysis of this research regarding CSR stimuli can be conducted. In other words, it means it is important to control whether the questionnaire really measures what was intended by us as researchers. The validation of the questions is performed with an Alpha test.

An alpha test is done on each dimension in order to test if all questions within one dimension ask after what was intended. Recommended threshold values which are generally accepted are 0, 60 (Malhotra & Birks, 2003) and 0, 70 (Hair et al., 1992). However, these are not standardised values and other researchers might recommend a different value although these are well acknowledged and used in previous studies of the same character. If the recommended threshold value is not achieved, the chosen questions representing the Brand Equity dimensions should be eliminated and not used for further analysis.

In the table two the alpha values for each dimension that was tested is presented. It is Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items that recognizes if the questions achieve what was aimed for and consequently useful for this research. The minimum value, required by Malhotra & Birks (2003) is achieved within all dimensions. Therefore, to summarize, all used questions are perfectly fit to be investigating chosen research questions and also provide an established platform from where the analysis can start.

Dimension	Quality	CSR	Overall Brand Equity	Price Premium
Cronbach's Alpha	0, 88	0, 65	0, 75	0, 83

Table 2: Alpha values

The dimensions of Quality (0, 88), Overall Brand Equity (0, 75) and Price Premium (0, 83) all show Alpha values above the higher minimum value of 0, 70. The dimension of CSR has a value of 0, 65 which meets the lower value of 0, and 60 which is still acceptable (Malhotra & Birks, 2003).

4.3 Main Results

The possible positive effect can be tested with a regression analysis. With this analysis measurement regarding the variation in the dependent variable, in this case Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium, can be explained by the independent variable which is CSR.

The first regression analysis test to see if there is a positive impact on consumers in terms of their perception on the companies' overall CSR profile. This analysis used the overall CSR variable as the dependent variable and the CSR sponsoring as the independent variable. Looking at the result, table 3 show that CSR related sponsoring has a significant impact (Adj.R² 0, 05; Sign. 0, 00) and that it is statistically secured to 95 percent.

CSR SPONSORING	Overall CSR
R²	0,05
Adj. R²	0,05
F	15,21
Sign.	0,00

Table3: Regression analysis on the Overall CSR profile

Our main focus in this research is whether there is a positive effect on Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium when consumers are being exposed to CSR sponsoring. In order to discover a possible positive relation, the Beta values can establish the impact made by CSR. The Beta-values help to rank the dimensions after how they affect both Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium. The higher value, the greater influence on the dependent variables. In table three, the values are presented and it can be shown that Quality has higher Beta-values (0, 43 and 0, 46) which mean that Quality has a greater impact on both Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium. However, to answer our research question a more thorough analysis is required.

	Price Premium	Overall Brand Equity
CSR sponsoring	0.21	0,17
Quality	0,46	0,43

Table 4: Beta values

This regression analysis used Overall Brand Equity as the dependent variable and CSR sponsoring as the independent variables. This table shows that there is no relation between the tested variables which means that the CSR sponsoring has no significant (Adj.R² 0, 00; Sign. 0, 54) impact on Brand Equity in terms of Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium. Only 0, 2 (Adj.R² 0,002) percent can explain the variation in Overall Brand Equity although there is no significant relationship. When analysing the possible positive effect on Price Premium, the right side of the above table shows that CSR sponsoring has a significant (Adj.R² 0,006; Sign 0,1) impact on Brand Equity in terms of Price Premium. However, this relationship is statistically certain to 90 percent.

	Overall Brand Equity		Price Premium	
	Beta	Sign.	Beta	Sign.
CSR Sponsoring	0,17	0,54	0,21	0,10
R²	0,00		0,01	
Adj. R²	0,00		0,01	
F	0,37		2,78	
Sign.	0,54		0,1	

Table 5: Regression analysis on Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium

5. Analysis

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

When looking at table 1 it is indicated that CSR sponsoring do have a positive effect on Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium. Although the differences are small it cannot be determined from only looking at the mean values whether there is a statistically proven correlation or not. This could mean that students are aware and receptive towards CSR related marketing activities. However, for further analysis the regression analysis will be analysed in the main results below.

5.2 Validation of Measurement Devise

The alpha tests in our research show that the used dimensions in the questionnaire all have high alpha values and can therefore be seen as valid. The questions that were used to measure Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium all got an alpha value over 0.60 which indicates that they measure what they are intended to, which adds validity to the research results. The validation of the measurement devise gave the result that the questionnaire was well suited for the purpose.

The result is also of interest from a conceptual viewpoint as the outcome supports the chosen framework in relation to the selected methodological approach. The data is therefore more manageable and easier to analyze.

Our outcome in this Alpha test can also be validated by comparing the result with earlier tests. The measurement on the questions regarding Overall Brand Equity from Yoo & Donthu (2001) received the Alpha value of 0, 75. The validity of this measurement is also supported by the research done by Anselmsson et al. (2006) were the same questions were used and were they also received a high Alpha value (0,86).

For the Price Premium questions from Netemeyer et al. (2004) we received an Alpha value of 0, 83. The same questions also received a high Alpha value of 0, 71 in the research by Anselmsson et al. (2006). All these values are considered satisfying (Malhotra & Birks, 2003; Hair et al., 1992) and trustworthiness to this study and its outcome.

5.3 Main Results

5.3.1 CSR's effect on Overall Brand Equity

Question 1: Does sponsorship with CSR characteristics have a positive effect on Overall Brand Equity?

The analysis of the regression shows that the research question 1 cannot be confirmed. The results show a positive effect with 0, 2 percent (Adj.R² 0,002) explaining the variation in Overall Brand Equity, however the results are not statistically secured and the hypothesis is therefore rejected.

In the previous literature we identified customers' preference for CSR (Maignan, 2001) as well as sponsorship's effect on Brand Equity (Tripodi, 2001). This reasoning does not seem to be applicable on CSR sponsoring as the regression analysis was not significant or showed very little effect. The reason for this could be that in the previous sponsorship literature the CSR aspect has not been investigated as Tripodi's arguments only concerned general sponsorship. However, sponsorship can be seen as a market strategy that builds Brand Equity which positions the brand so that the brand value is enhanced and thereby establishing superiority over competitors (Tripodi, 2001). This could mean that CSR still have potential to add a surplus value to a brand although not these specific products or perhaps brands with a wider target group.

5.3.2 CSR's effect on Price Premium

Question 2: Does sponsorship with CSR characteristics have a positive effect on Price Premium?

The regression analysis shows that research question 2 can be confirmed to 90 percent. The positive effect that CSR has on Price Premium is only 0, 6 percent (Adj.R² 0.006), this number is marginal although it could open up possibilities for future profits. Even though we can see a small effect it is only statistically secured to 90 percent, that CSR sponsoring has a positive effect on Price Premium which could be beneficial for corporations.

As described in Chapter 2, sponsoring concerns projecting a desirable image to be connected to the brand (Jobber, 1995) and it can be a way of communicating to a specific message to a certain target group (Roos & Algotsson, 1996). Using CSR sponsoring might not be the optimal choice when communicating with students as no significant correlation could be presented. Although previous literature claims consumers to be more likely to buy from a socially responsible company (Maignan, 2001) this appears not to be applicable on students.

Although sponsoring can affect Brand Equity by adding a certain association, awareness and uniqueness to a brand (Keller, 1998), CSR sponsoring shows no such tendencies. It could depend on the researched respondent group or perhaps be because tomato ketchup could be considered to be a low involvement purchase. However, achieved brand awareness has been argued to matter in low involvement decisions (Ibid), which could indicate that using CSR sponsoring as a marketing tool do affect the Price Premium.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Theoretical contribution

This research started from relevant theories and presented questions whether CSR sponsoring can enhance Brand Equity in terms of Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium. The study represents one of the attempts to apply existing literature and new empirical data to enhance the understanding for this phenomenon. A relevant conceptual framework already existed although identified gap, where no empirical framework concerning sponsoring with CSR characteristics and its possible positive effect on Brand Equity, was not yet discovered or had been investigated.

The conclusion that can be described as one of the most essential in this thesis was that students appear to be non receptive against CSR sponsoring in terms of Overall Brand Equity. This because the study found no empirical support when testing research question one. Based on the findings from our investigation our first research question is *disconfirmed*. The result concerning Overall Brand Equity does not support the theoretical framework by Maignan (2001) and Maignan & Ferrell (2004) where it is suggested that consumers tend to value a social responsible brand more. Moreover, the result is also not consistent with Tripodi (2001) as no positive effect on Overall Brand Equity was found. It is possible that CSR sponsoring had no effect because students can be described as *cynical and uninterested* (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). This can be related to the chosen product category or brands that might not evoke enough involvement. Another explanation can be that students simply do not favour a socially responsible brand; instead it could be other aspects such as price and quality that has a greater impact when purchasing. In terms of Overall Brand Equity this can be illustrated when one product is being preferred over another. In this case, CSR sponsored products are not preferred over other competing brands.

Another important conclusion concerning this study is the *confirmation* of research question number two. Although no correlation was found investigating Overall Brand Equity, a positive but small effect was found on Price Premium. This finding verifies the conceptual framework presented by Aaker (1996) since it shows that the social associations are of importance. However, students are in general price sensitive (www.csn.se) which could explain the small effect on Price Premium. As mentioned (in 3.1.3), social associations, environment and animal welfare issues are identified as important when purchasing groceries. However, the effect on specific products within the grocery industry is not discussed. On the other hand this could indicate that there is no support for Aaker (1996) and Lassar et al. (1995) arguments regarding the social dimension, at least regarding this specific product category. It is possible that the result is economic oriented and since students in general belong to the low income group in society, this could have affected the result. The reason why previous literature does not seem applicable could be because it does not centre specifically

on two brands within one specific category. As this study tests the possible effect on Brand Equity with only two different consumer packaged goods, this could be a possible reason for the small effect. However, the established positive effect on Price Premium identifies profit making marketing opportunities through a chance to increase the price with one half percent.

Moreover, the result shows a positive tendency on the overall CSR profile. When being exposed to CSR sponsoring the overall CSR profile for the brands was enhanced. This could be because consumers tend to relate more positive associations to a brand that is perceived as ethically and socially responsible. This finding can for that reason support the theory presented by Maignan & Ferrell (2004). This research focused on long-term CSR sponsoring, which was also tested. As the result showed very little impact on Brand Equity in terms of Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium, one occasional event could show even less effect. Even though this was not tested within this research, we believe that CSR sponsoring has the best effect when being exposed to consumers over time. This because the general suspicion towards companies today and that consumers have become more aware of CSR (Anselmsson & Johansson, 2006). One single event can therefore not, at least within the grocery industry, enhance the Brand Equity nor have such great impact on consumers that is shows in the Overall Brand Equity or Price Premium.

One explanation to the results could be the aspect of low or high involvement products. Grocery goods could be considered low involvement products and even though Keller (1998) argue that higher brand awareness could have an positive influence on low involvement purchases, no such tendencies could be discovered. On the other hand, as the overall CSR profile was enhanced due to CSR sponsoring we can conclude that increased brand awareness was achieved although it might have a greater impact on high involvement goods. Buying ketchup does not seem to be something student are involved in, even with or without CSR related sponsoring. This conclusion is supported by the fact that two brands and a control group was used in the research and the results were still close to similar except for the variation in Price Premium.

This research used students exclusively as respondents. This can have had an effect or consequence on the result. Since ketchup is a common product in Swedish homes, both Heinz and Felix have target groups that reach beyond only including students. For this reason we agree somewhat with Malhotra & Birks (2003) that claim that the result cannot be representative for a population. On the other hand, with support from Dabholkar (1996), students are an interesting group for this research as they are consumers of ketchup and can therefore be useful for both brands and this study. As the result shows no effect (Overall Brand Equity) and a small positive effect (Price Premium), students can not be seen as very receptive regarding CSR sponsoring. Even though they can be representative as consumers of ketchup, there is still a wide range of people that are included in this ketchup target group that the results are limited for a generalization over a population. However, the outcome can

represent students and the conclusion would therefore be that CSR sponsoring is not the way to build a stronger brand; instead there might be other ways of achieving this.

6.2 Practical contribution

For manufacturers

The result presented in this thesis should be taken into consideration by manufacturers since it could not be verified that CSR sponsoring affect Overall Brand Equity and only confirmed to 90 percent that it has a positive yet small effect on Price Premium. The outcome provide strategic direction as by implicating that CSR sponsoring investments perhaps should be put on other activities to achieve a social responsible image. However, to put the figures into context, the two brands investigated can with this thesis' outcome support an increase in price with a half percent. For a multi million selling company such as Heinz, this could mean an increase in profit of several million dollars.

The result also describes an increase in the overall CSR profile which indicates a possible opportunity to companies that are dependent on their social image that CSR sponsoring can be an alternative.

For marketers/brand manager

This experiment was carried out focusing on an annual (long-term) sponsoring event. From the results the conclusion is drawn that CSR, being a complex concept, need even more recurrent attention or repeatedly media space in order to become significant as an effective marketing tool and also needs to be in total congruence with selected audience.

6.3 Limitations and Future Research

Although students were chosen and relevant for this study, they might not provide much variance in education, religion, age and therefore attitude towards CSR sponsoring. This limits the ability to generalize and count the result as representative. Future researcher could choose a broader and a more diverse sample as the outcome could be different. Differences in demographics could result in a different attitude towards CSR sponsoring and it could therefore be of interest to pursue further investigation concerning this.

This research was interested in one specific product category with two specific brands which means that presented conclusions might only be applicable within this context and together with this questionnaire. Future research could perhaps include more brands within the product category or even include several product categories within the grocery market. However, as

the model used is specific for consumer based Brand Equity and consumer packaged goods, it is suggested that future researcher limit oneself to this area.

Although this study dismissed the effect of an occasional event, it could be of interest to see what effect it could have on Brand Equity in terms of Overall Brand Equity and Price Premium. Our result indicate that using CSR sponsoring as a long-term marketing tool need careful planning in order to correlate with selected target group. In this case the effect failed to appear or was very small. However, the result could have been different if it was a single event and more in congruence with the audience. Future research could choose a product of a more high involvement character, either for students or a differentiated sample group

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APPENDIX 1

Vi är två marknadsföringsstudenter som skriver vår magisteruppsats. Denna enkät handlar om ketchup och är en jämförelse mellan nationella och internationella varumärken. Innan du börjar svara på frågorna är det viktigt att du har läst igenom företagspresentationerna och pressklippen. Ange i vilken utsträckning du uppfattar att följande påståenden passar in på respektive varumärke. Det är mycket viktigt att du försöker svara på så många frågor som möjligt. Om du inte är säker, svara vad du tror eller tycker. Om du kryssar fel, ringa in det rätta svaret.



Restaurang & Storkök Presswebb

Startsida Våra produkter Recept Kampanjer & tävlingar Om Heinz

Historia Om kvalitet Här finns vi Kontakta oss

Om Heinz

Fakta om Heinz

Historien om Heinz börjar i Pittsburgh, där Heinz fortfarande har sitt huvudkontor. Året var 1876 och mycket är detsamma idag; flaskan är nu, som då, genomskinlig, bara utvalda tomater från odlare används och receptet är än idag lika hemligt. Fast innehållet är inte hemligt. Bara mängden.

Heinz är ett globalt varumärke som för många är synonymt med ketchup. Varje år säljs det 650 miljoner flaskor Heinz Ketchup världen över.

stöd ungdom, läs mer här.

stöd Narkotika, läs mer or

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DAGENS NYHETER.

Nätupplagan torsdag 4 maj 2006

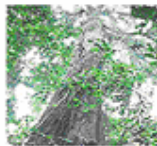


Nyheter Ekonomi Debatt Ledare Sport Kultur På stan Mer ur DN Mat & Dryck Res

Hemsidan Sverige Stockholm Världen Val 2006 Politik/EU Vetenskap Väder

SENASTE NYTT: 13:04 SKF säger sin smidesverksamhet i Tyskland 12:56 Okänd svensk leder norska skyttel

Heinz värnar om miljön



Heinz tar sitt sociala ansvar. Varumärket är involverat i ett årligt event som samlar in pengar till förmån för växthuseffekten. Heinz sponsrar även familjer i underutvecklade länder för att kunna öka deras livs och arbetsförhållanden. [Läs mer](#)

Chatta om kost

Ställ dina frågor Alija Wolk, näringspedagog Karolinska institutet och Bengt Saltin, professor på Rikshospitalet i Köpenhamn. Chatta börjar 15.45, med redan nu. [Läs mer](#)

Annons



Sommarvärmerna är på väg

SVERIGE. Jodå, det kan antligen vara dags att damma av shortsens, köpa en glass och vifta med tårna. Sommartemperaturer ska värma hela landet i flera

Hitta på
Sök på

START AKTUELLT PRODUKTER HÄLSA

Om Felix

Citrontårta
Försvinnande god – gör 2 för 25 gäster!
Läs mer

Sök recept >

VECKANS FRÅGA
Tänker du gå och se betessläppet hos någon

Om Felix
Felix grundades 1939 i Eslöv av Herbert Felix. I över 60 år har Felix varit garant för moderna livsmedel av högsta kvalitet. I och med introduktionen av Felix tomatketchup förändrades svenska folkets matvanor för alltid.
Företaget strävar efter att behålla traditioner samtidigt som de satsar på produktinnovationer. Idag ägs Felix av Procordia Foods som är en del av den norska koncernen Orkla AS.

Ekolog

Sallader!

DN. EKONOMI

Nätupplagan torsdag 4 maj 2008

Euro +2 öre 9,32 kr 15:48
Dollar +1 öre 7,38 kr 15:48
Nasdaq 0,5% 15:48
OMXSPI 0, 15:48

Nyheter **Ekonomi** Debatt Ledare Sport Kultur På stan Mer ur DN Mat & Dryck Resor Lokaler Jobb Bostad Motor Fyn

Ekonomi - hem Börs Fonder Bolagsguiden Företagsfakta Min portfölj Min bevakningslista Konsument

Ökad vinst för Felix i Sverige

Varumärket Felix redovisade på tisdagen en vinstökning för det första kvartalet. Resultatförbättringen följde på en allmän intäktsökning.

Nettovinsten för första kvartalet ökade till 38,1 miljoner kronor, under samma kvartal året före låg nettovinsten på 28,4 miljoner kronor. Omsättningen ökade med 14 procent från 190,1 miljoner kronor till 216 miljoner kronor.

[Läs mer](#)

Skicka Skriv ut

Affärsvärldens Simon Blecher om heta aktier

Verkstadsbolagen rapporterar strålande siffror, senast Sandvik. Och det gäller fler branscher än så. Samtidigt finns orosmoment. Om detta och den senaste tidens rykten skriver Affärsvärldens Simon Blecher om i dagens börskrönika. [Läs mer](#)

Nyheter från Affärsvärlden

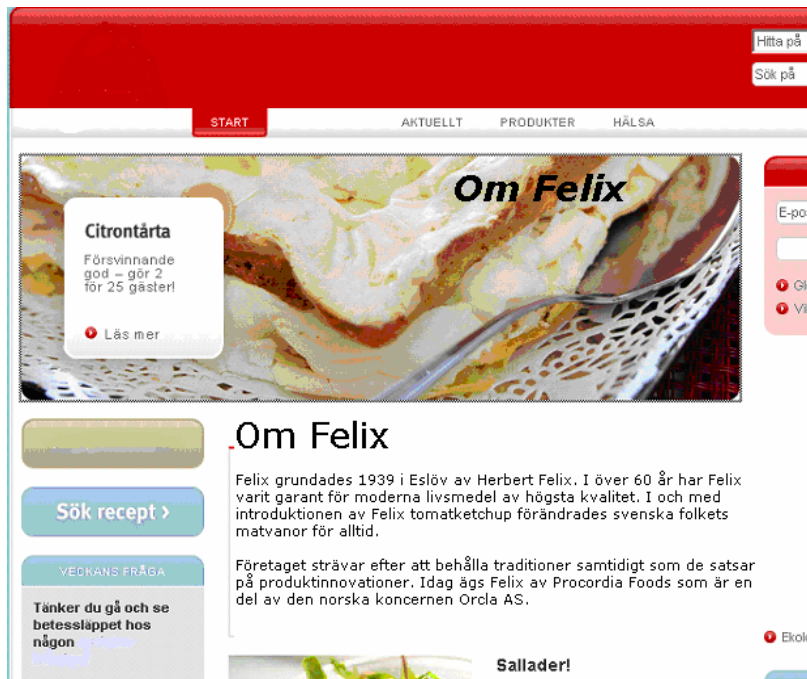
- Warren Buffetts nya svenska favoritaktier
- Eniro utmanar Google
- Lugn dag för tungvikterna

Börsnyheter i samarbete med Affärsvärlden

Annons:

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The screenshot shows the Felix website. At the top, there is a red navigation bar with 'START', 'AKTUELLT', 'PRODUKTER', and 'HÄLSA'. Below this is a large image of a Citrontårta (lemon tart) with a text box that says 'Citrontårta Försvinnande god – gör 2 för 25 gäster! Läs mer'. To the right, there is a search bar and a sidebar with 'E-post' and 'Glöm'.

Om Felix

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Ekolog

DAGENS NYHETER.

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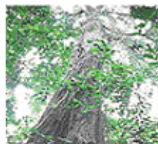


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Annons:



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- Eniro utmanar Google
- Lugn dag för tungviktarna

Börsnyheter i samarbete med Affärsvärlden 

Annons 

Sök

Ann

APPENDIX 3

Man Kvinna

Vilken institution studerar du vid på Lunds Universitet?

1. När jag tänker på ketchup så kommer jag först att tänka på...

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

2. Jag känner till varumärket

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

3. Under det senaste året, ungefär hur många procent av dina inköp av ketchup har du gjort av respektive varumärke (summan ska bli 100%)

Heinz ____% Felix ____% Annat ____%

4. Detta är en socialt ansvarsfull produkt

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

5. Den här produkten är mer fördelaktig för samhällets välfärd än andra produkter

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

6. Den här produkten bidrar med något till samhället

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

7. Produkter av detta varumärke är förträffliga

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

8. Produkter av detta varumärke är av mycket hög kvalitet

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

9. Produkter av detta varumärke håller hög standard

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

10. Produkter av detta varumärke håller en jämn kvalitet

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

11. Det är rimligt att köpa produkter av detta varumärke istället för ett annat varumärke, även om de är likvärdiga

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

12. Även om produkter av ett annat varumärke skulle ha samma egenskaper så föredrar jag produkter av detta varumärke

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

13. Om det finns produkter av ett annat varumärke som är lika bra som detta så

föredrar jag att köpa detta varumärke

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

14. Jag är villig att betala ett högre pris för produkter av detta varumärke

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

15. Jag är villig att betala mycket mer för produkter av detta varumärke än för andra varumärken i samma varugrupp

Felix: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt

Heinz: Stämmer inte alls Stämmer helt