

CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT AND REPUTATION

MASTER CASES



THE PRIPPS BLÅ CASE *THE FALL OF THE FAVOURITE*

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First Edition
Student Case Papers

2018

Corporate Brand Management and Reputation: Master's Cases

The "Corporate Brand Management and Reputation: Master's cases" is a case series for applying the case method of teaching and learning in higher education. The cases are relevant to brand strategists in private and public sector organizations, as well as academics and students at universities, business schools, and executive education.

The cases are written by groups of master's students as a course project. The specially developed case format is defined as: *"A management decision case describes a real business situation leading up to a question(s) that requires assessment, analysis, and a decision reached by discussion in class. The alternative approaches and recommendations from the class discussion are followed by a description of the choices made by the case company. This description is then discussed by the class."*

The student groups select the topics of their case providing updated and relevant insights into the corporate brand management. The cases can be used as "written cases" (handed out and read in advance, later to be discussed in class) and/or as "live case" (presented by the teacher following a discussion in class). Each case includes teaching notes, visuals with speaker's notes, learning objectives, board plans, and references.

The mission of the series is *"to develop cases for discussion providing insights into the theory and practice of corporate brand management and reputation, with the intent of bridging the gap between academic teaching and managerial practice."*

The series is a result of co-creation between students and teachers at the elective course Corporate Brand Management (BUSN35 – five-credit course/eight-week half-time studies), part of the master's program International Marketing and Brand Management at Lund School of Economics and Management, Sweden. The cases represent the result of the intellectual work of students under the supervision of the head of course.

Although based on real events and despite references to actual companies, the cases are solely intended to be a basis for class discussion, not as an endorsement, a source of primary data, or an illustration of effective or ineffective management. The cases are free to be used and are to be cited following international conventions.

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The Pripps Blå Case
The Fall of the Favourite

WRITTEN CASE

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The Glory Old Days

It is the mid 1800's and Johan Albrecht Pripp, a well-travelled businessman from the Swedish port city Gothenburg, has started a beer brewery in the now central parts of the coastal city. The company is named Pripp, which later on in the 21st century will be one of the oldest brands in Sweden. Johan Albrecht Pripp has financial limitations at the time and his fiancé Henrietta Hagdahl, a daughter of a famous cookbook writer, is one of his biggest supporters and she is helping him run the brewery business. He is a businessman by nature and follows his ancestors' footprints of establishing lucrative businesses.

Fast-forwarding in time to the 1900's, the beer manufacturer and its brand Pripp had grown and during the major part of the century it was a favourite among the Swedes, a classic icon representing the idyllic Swedish summers. Along the way, the Swedish people's interest in beer grew and the competition on the market increased to the advantage for challenging new brands. In the late part of the 1900's, the brands number one position was defeated and the market shares continuously declined. Attempts were made to save the company's position on the market, as well as in the Swedes hearts. Nevertheless, in the year of 2011, the sales had dropped to an unacceptable low level and something needed to be done to save the Pripps Blå brand.

A Brand in Change

The company Pripps' journey, later on only being an intellectual property referred to as the brand Pripps Blå, started in Gothenburg, a city located on the northern West Coast of Sweden, surrounded by beautiful archipelagos. The city has since long been associated with working class culture, industry production and overseas trade. The portrayal of Gothenburg has along the way become a symbolic part of the Pripps Blå image and a part of the brands heritage. The logotype consists of a sailing ship surrounded by the brands iconic pentagon and has for long been an essential part of the brand's evolution (**See Exhibit 1 and Exhibit 2**). The heritage is

still seen as a force forward and a part of the brand to be humble for. When it comes to the positioning of the brand, Pripps Blå was at start a beer for everyone and a brand that every Swede had a relationship to. However, over time the brand reputation slowly weakened and its perceived image became associated with low-priced beer, often linked to older men and alcoholism.



The Consumers of the 21st Century

New times calls for new trends, and the old ways of satisfying consumers has become outdated and useless. Now, in the early days of 2010’s, the beer interest is blooming among the Swedes and microbreweries are starting to pop up in urban areas. Today’s consumers share a common interest in food, especially to photograph it and upload the appealing images on social media. The food is preferably organic, healthy and gluten free.

Many people find their inspiration for consumption via up-and-coming bloggers and influencers, whom also promotes inspiration within many types of genres, the most popular regards fashion. When it comes to fashion, the typical 21st century consumer loves skinny jeans and to shop second hand and vintage is regarded as pretty cool. Technology is something that is becoming more and more wireless and people are switching from stationary computers and laptops to iPads. People are also sharing their social life online on Facebook and listening to their favourite songs on the new music streaming service Spotify. At the same time, they are checking-in on social media with their smartphones to show their exciting and admirable lifestyles.

Two places where people socialize and consume alcoholic beverages are at Stureplan in Stockholm and on Avenyn in Gothenburg, some of the most popular hubs for nightlife and leisure in Sweden. On the dancefloor you might find yourself fist pumping to the increasingly popular music genre of EDM (Electronic Dance Music). One song everyone knows by heart is the song Levels, a tune from the rising

DJ star, Avicii. For those in favour for more classic guitar rhymes, such as indie music and alternative rock inspired by the 1990's grunge bands, Andra Långgatan in Gothenburg or Södermalm in Stockholm is the place to be. Here, the people want to drink beer from trendy breweries while enjoying a Swedish "snus" (snuff) and listening to gigs by singer songwriters.

The Northern Gold Challenge

While Pripps Blå is suffering from an aging consumer segment, the competing Swedish beer giant Norrlands Guld is going through a comprehensive makeover to gain market shares and differentiate the brand. During the summer of 2011, they are planning to have an offensive communication strategy as sponsors of many of the most popular Swedish music festival, such as the rock music festival Sonisphere and the trendy all-round festival Way Out West. The CMO of beer at Norrlands Guld's parent company Spendrups states the following in an interview in the newspaper Dagens Media: "We are hoping to strengthen the associations between Norrlands Guld and the fun moments that occurs at music festivals: life experiences, hanging out with your friends and hopefully nice weather [Translated from Swedish/Own Translation]".

The increased competition from both beer giants and microbreweries (**See Exhibit 3**) and decreasing sales numbers (**See Exhibit 4**) indicates that something needs to be done to revive the Pripps Blå brand and save the heritage.

You are the brand manager of Pripps Blå and your mission is to come up with a new brand strategy for Pripps Blå to increase sales and improve the brand reputation.

Keep in mind: in Sales of alcoholic beverages in Sweden is strictly regulated (See Exhibit 5).

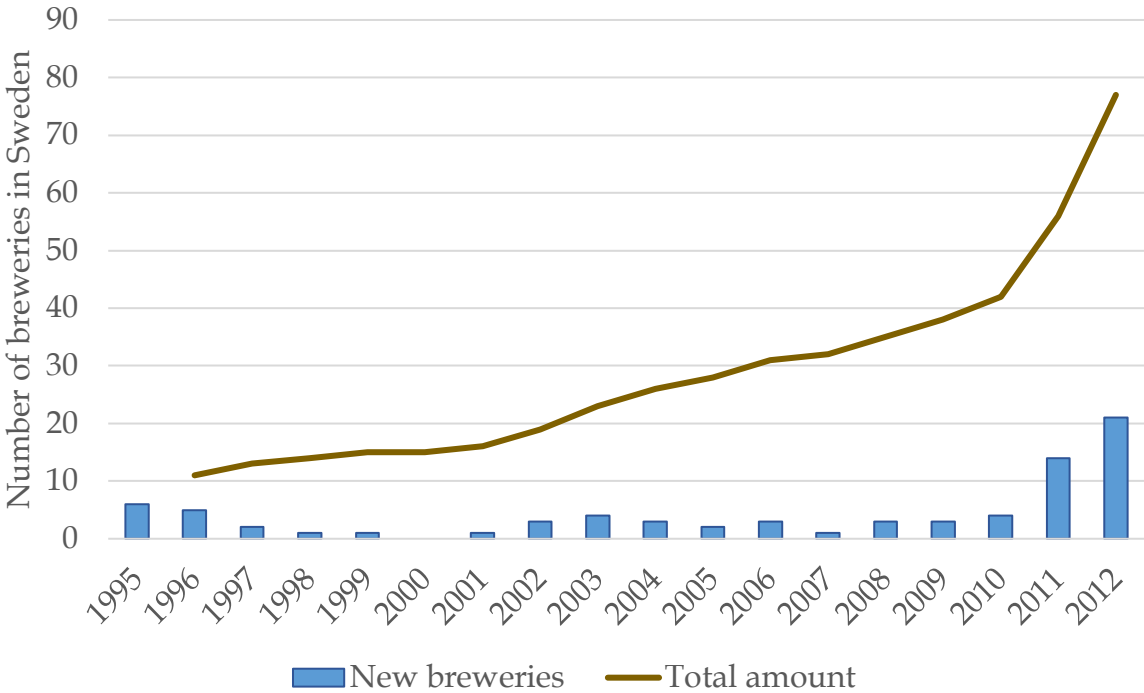
Exhibit 1 The Pripps Blå logotype in 2010



Exhibit 2 Evolution of the Pripps Blå packaging

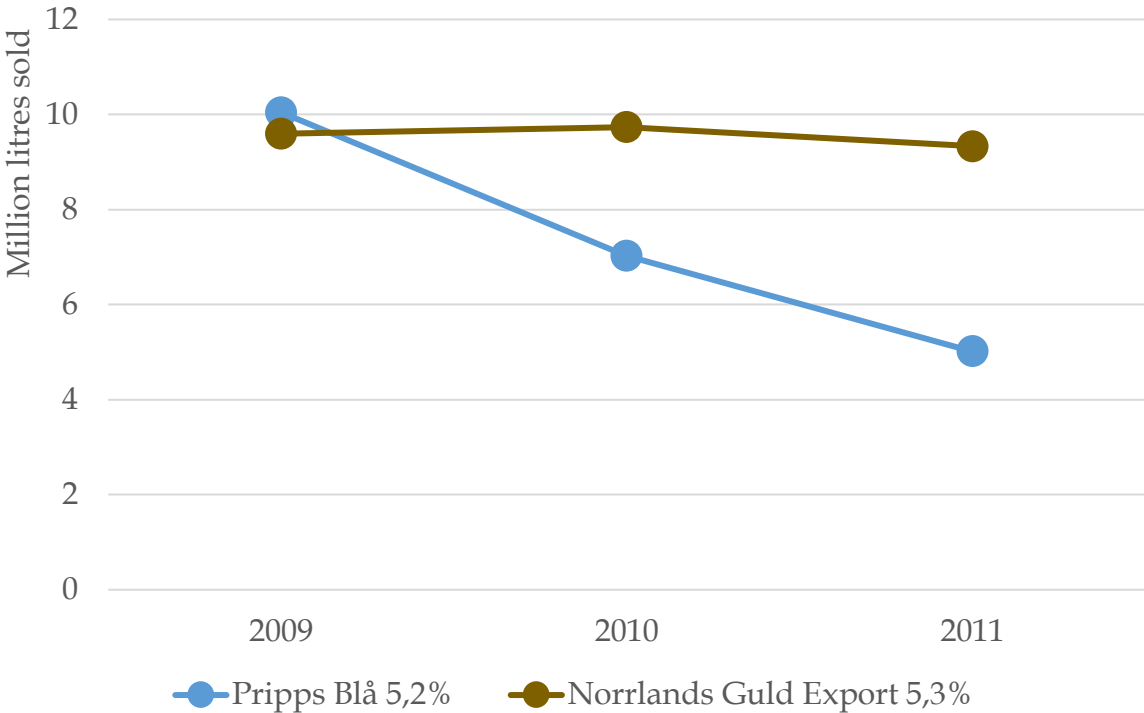


Exhibit 3 Numbers of breweries in Sweden 1995-2015



Sverigesbryggerier.se¹

Exhibit 4 Sales of Pripps Blå versus Norrlands Guld 2009-2011



¹ <http://sverigesbryggerier.se/2016/03/antalet-bryggerier-fortsatter-oka-i-rekordfart/>

Exhibit 5 Legislation to market alcoholic beverages in Sweden

- You cannot target prospects under the age of 25.
- Ads and commercials containing alcohol beverages are only allowed to show the actual product with no person interacting with it.
- You are not allowed to encourage the receiver to consume the product.
- The communication must encourage the receiver to drink responsibly.
- A minimum of 20 % of the ad must contain a warning text regarding the dangers of consuming alcohol.
- TV and radio commercials broadcasted from Swedish territory are strictly forbidden.
- You are only allowed to sell alcoholic beverages at restaurant with permission and at Systembolaget (Swedish Alcohol Retailing Monopoly). Beverages under 2,25 % alcohol content can be sold at grocery stores to customers over the age of 18.