

## **Volvo & The Polestar Series: Integration or Separation?**

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### **TEACHING NOTE**

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The authors prepared this case solely as a basis for class discussion and not as an endorsement, a source of primary data, or an illustration of effective or ineffective management. Although based on real events and despite occasional references to actual companies, this case is fictitious and any resemblance to actual persons or entities is coincidental.

## Teaching Plan

The teaching notes were designed to serve as instructing guidelines for the presenter of the case, facilitating to establish an engaging atmosphere for both, the instructor and the participants. By following the teaching plan, the presenter will be able to set the scene, to structure the key information, to lead an organized discussion, to propose the solution and to reflect together with the participants on the case. The teaching notes commence with a brief synopsis of the case and continue by providing an overview of the learning objectives. The teaching suggestions represent the writers' ideas on how to convey the case, helping the students to achieve the defined learning objectives. To ensure an organized process of the teaching itself and the most efficient engagement of the audience, a complementary time plan and board plan are included. In addition, a detailed teaching plan predefining the time of each story point, methods and media is provided. The teaching notes conclude with an epilogue and the authors' reflection on the process of designing the case.

## Case Synopsis

This case looks at managerial decision-making in times when a market undergoes a transformation, as currently happening in the conventional car industry, particularly caused by Tesla, disrupting the market by playing on the performance-premium of electric cars. An ideal representation of dealing with these circumstances is provided by the Swedish car brand, Volvo. To move quickly, the Volvo Car Group has taken the courageous decision to convert from a combustion-engine to a battery-powered business model and to implement an electrification strategy starting 2019. To exploit the relatively new electric performance market early on, Volvo Cars is taking it one step further by launching an electric performance car series, 'Polestar'. Entering this market requires to strategically analyze different options for the positioning of a new brand within an established brand architecture, including the opportunities and risks involved. Volvo Cars' brand architecture allows for two different options, namely to launch Polestar (1) as a new daughter endorsed by the Volvo Cars mother, or, (2) as a new mother brand. As the proper positioning of a new brand in the corporate brand architecture is imperative for the rise or fall of the brand, a cautious decision needs to be made.

## Learning Objectives

The presentation of this case and the question faced by the Volvo Car Group on where to position its new series of electric performance cars within the brand architecture, aims to impart certain knowledge to the audience, which will be presented in the following section.

It is important to emphasize that instead of being a one-time company specific strategic decision, the present case presents broad implications when it comes to the positioning of innovations within the brand architecture. The analysis of this case provides the audience therefore with various opportunities to enlarge their knowledge, especially in the areas of **brand architecture, corporate brand identity and corporate brand reputation**. Utilizing an existing case and combining it with previous knowledge and relevant literature is deemed an excellent opportunity to broaden knowledge on positioning innovative new products within an established company. To structure the following section, the framework by Urde (2018a) on the corporate brand management process will be used as a guidance, meaning that corporate brand identity will be discussed first, followed by the brand architecture and concluding with a section on corporate brand reputation.



## Corporate Brand Identity

Overall, it is important to initially highlight the difference between corporate and product brands. In contrast to product brands, corporate brands have an organization behind, thereby changing the language use and presenting themselves as 'we' from an internal perspective, while stakeholders refer to them as 'they' (Urde, 2013).

The concept of corporate brand identity can be used as a starting point for answering Volvo's brand architecture related question. The corporate brand identity concept is based on the idea that a brand is more than just a name (Kapferer, 2012), it gives answers to the questions 'who are we', 'what do we stand for', 'where do we come from' and 'what is our wanted position' (Urde & Greyser, 2016). A brand's core, its values and promises, forms the center of the identity (Roper & Fill, 2012), which for Volvo Cars revolves around safety, quality and care for the environment (Volvo Cars, 2018). Activities performed under the Volvo name should therefore match the brand's identity. Consequently, the question arises whether a performance electric car series aligns with the Volvo core.

The Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (CBIM), a bespoke managerial tool, provides managers a guide to describing, defining and aligning a corporate brand identity (Urde, 2013), and helps in answering the question whether the new electric performance car series should be associated with Volvo or stand for itself. Nine interrelated elements build the basis of the matrix, integrating the market-orientation and brand-orientation paradigms, helping in closing of 'gaps' between a current and ideal corporate brand identity. The brand core forms the center of the matrix, the entity of core values supporting and leading up to a promise (Urde, 2013). A strength of this matrix is the visibility of interconnectedness between the core and all other elements in all three dimensions, external, internal and external/internal, for example position (external) and competences (internal). When looking at the CBIM of Volvo Cars (see Exhibit 1), the positioning as a leading car manufacturer in regard to safety, as well as, the competence of manufacturing, safe, functional, and sustainable cars, strongly resonate with the core values.

The Polestar series, in contrast, is all about performance, however, it shares the sustainability efforts of Volvo Cars since the cars are hybrid or electric. When launching Polestar as a new daughter brand endorsed by the Volvo Cars mother, Polestar by Volvo, it can be argued that adding the element of 'performance' to the Volvo identity can provide an opportunity to change the positioning and become also known for performance cars, not only safety, lifting the brand to becoming more 'exciting'. On the other hand, given that Polestar will mainly focus on performance, one could argue for separating the brands and creating a second corporate brand under the Volvo Car Group. Consequently, a new corporate identity needs to be defined, ensuring the alignment of all elements and a clear distinction from the Volvo Cars brand.

## Brand Architecture

The core decision in this case is dealing with a brand architecture choice. Petromilli, Morrison and Million (2002) define brand architecture as "the way in which companies organize, manage and go to market with their brands" (Petromilli, Morrison & Million, 2002, p.22). They go on by stating that it is essential for a brand architecture to "align with and support business goals and objective" (Petromilli, Morrison & Million, 2002, p.22). Based on their work, three components need to be considered in the branding approach, the business, the brand and the customer (see Exhibit 2). Focusing on 'business', 'strategy fit' is a key element relevant for Volvo's brand architecture choice. "Does this approach help achieve and support strategic priorities" (Petromilli, Morrison & Million, 2002, p.24), a question which can be answered for example in regard to Volvo's sustainability and electrification strategies. Launching Polestar under the Volvo Cars brand could support the strategic goals to calling time on the combustion engines, by expanding the electric car portfolio and targeting a new customer segment within the electric vehicle (EV) market. Referring to the latter, positioning Polestar as a daughter brand would allow the Volvo brand 'flexibility' in reacting to the changing market conditions, namely Tesla disrupting the EV performance market. Regarding the 'financial element', it can be mentioned that it would be cheaper to communicate a new Volvo Car than actually creating a new

brand. This statement can be supported by elaborating on 'economies of scale', where savings on marketing communications can be achieved as opposed to marketing brands individually, arguing in support of launching a new product under the umbrella of the corporate brand (Roper & Fill, 2012).

The second component, 'the brand', has already been discussed in the section on corporate brand identity, highlighting the risk related to 'brand equity', namely that Polestar by Volvo could not fit and protect existing Volvo qualities and, that the Volvo name might not help Polestar in creating new desired equities, such as performance.

Considering the third component, 'the customer', 'customer confusion' and 'customer expectation' need to be looked at. When focusing on Polestar's target group, the performance driven customers, launching a Polestar by Volvo could lead to confusion and mistrust, as the brand is not primarily associated with performance and speed, but with safety. The same can be argued for 'customer expectations' since hearing about a car that is aiming at competing with Tesla, a brand under the Volvo umbrella might not meet the expectations for a performance car.

Using Petromilli's, Morrison's and Million's brand relationship mapping (2002) (see Exhibit 3), one could argue that the opportunity, launching a performance electric car series, does not fit the existing Volvo brand. On the contrary, the opportunity could be argued to offer a potential uplift for the existing Volvo Cars brand, namely excitement, which would indicate to launch Polestar as a new brand endorsed by the existing brand, Polestar by Volvo. This strategy allows for the brand to capitalize on pre-established brand knowledge and equity in minds of consumers (Roper & Fill, 2012). However, one could also state that the opportunity is rather a risk to the existing brand, and, on the contrary, Polestar might be constrained in its opportunities if associated with Volvo, therefore indicating to create a new, separate brand, Polestar.

## Corporate Brand Reputation

Overall, it needs to be emphasized that reputation is fragile and can change quickly (Roper & Fill, 2012), therefore a cautious decision needs to be made in order to avoid harming the Volvo Cars brand by making a decision that is not supported by stakeholders.

To logically link reputation and identity brand elements, the extension of the CBIM, the Corporate Brand Identity and Reputation Matrix (CBIRM) can be applied (Urde & Greyser, 2016). The extended matrix adds eight reputational elements, such as performance, or differentiation (see Exhibit 4). The framework helps the organization to stay true to its corporate brand identity, by discussing key linkages and alignments among essential elements of a corporate brand's identity and reputation (Urde & Greyser, 2016). Choosing to position Polestar as a new daughter brand endorsed by the Volvo mother, would call for analyzing performance and differentiation. Performance gives an answer to 'how solid and consistent are their quality and performance?', which would now include the evaluation of Polestar under the Volvo corporate brand. If the new cars do not satisfy consumers in terms of quality, potential negative spill-over effects could be transferred to the Volvo brand.

Additionally, currently Volvo Cars clearly is the car brand known for safety, therefore adding a 'performance based' brand to the corporate brand brings the risk of losing the clear differentiation in the market. In support of this statement, by launching Polestar as a separate corporate brand, the Polestar brand can clearly position itself as a performance brand in the hearts and minds of consumers and competitors and earn a reputation based on this distinctive position.

Literature states that brands that are trusted in one area are likely to be trusted in others (Roper & Fill, 2012). This statement speaks for launching Polestar under the Volvo brand, thereby benefiting from Volvo's established good reputation. Consequently, the quality of one product may be transferred to another through the brand name, the so called 'halo effect' (Roper & Fill, 2012). A counter-argument, however, could be that usually corporate brands have one key competence on which corporate reputation is built, in Volvo's case safety, not performance, which could constrain the Polestar brand from leveraging its full potential. As can be seen, there are supporting arguments for either choice, as also expressed by literature on 'reputational association', stating that the reputation may be affected by those with whom we associate. For Polestar, two scenarios are possible here: either this translates into a benefit, sharing the positive, well-established reputation of the Volvo mother and becoming a trusted brand, or it can result in a mismatch between the Polestar identity based on performance and the safety-shaped Volvo reputation.

## **Overview of Key Learnings**

The key learnings of this case revolve around the options of positioning an innovation within the corporate brand architecture, taking into account the strategic alignment of the two brands. It underlines a courageous corporate decision to tap into a new customer segment within a transforming industry. Understanding the value of the CBIRM in order to analyze the risks and opportunities of positioning a new brand in an established architecture, is key to new knowledge. Moreover, it highlights the importance of the corporate brand's core, influencing the sum of all decision-making, for this case particularly important positioning and competence. The following table suggests a brief overview of the key learnings that this case aims to confer to the participants.

<i>Key learning objectives</i>	<i>General learning</i>	<i>In this case</i>
<b>Remembering</b>	... the principles of brand architectures and strategic alignment of different brands	... to consider how different factors such as <i>business, brand</i> and <i>customer</i> provide opportunities and risks when positioning a new brand within an established brand architecture
<b>Understanding</b>	... the implications of different options of creating a new brand within a brand architecture	... the advantages and disadvantages of creating a <i>new mother brand</i> vs. a <i>daughter brand</i> with an <i>endorsing mother</i> and thereby <i>emphasising integration or separation</i>
<b>Applying</b>	... the CBIM for the purpose of creating a new brand and positioning it in relation to an existing mother brand and asking strategic questions in regard to brand architecture approaches	... the <i>CBIM</i> to evaluate the <i>core, position</i> and <i>competence</i> of a mother brand in relation to a new brand and considering key factors ( <i>business, brand, customer</i> ) influencing alternative branding approaches
<b>Evaluating</b>	... the risks and opportunities of positioning a brand with a diverging identity within a given brand architecture	... the <i>risks</i> of hurting the established brand image of Volvo, but also evaluating the <i>opportunities</i> for Volvo to tap into the <i>new electric performance</i> market
<b>Creating</b>	... proactive strategies to react to market changes	... a <i>performance brand</i> to capture market share in an emerging market.

## Teaching Suggestions

“Management is a wisdom that cannot be taught” (Harvard Business School), therefore, a case-based method provides an innovative approach, teaching students how to make judgements in business situations. This particular case has an emphasis on reflecting and arguing how to strategically position a new brand within an established brand architecture. This way of thinking might be a new experience for some students, and therefore, the presenter plays an essential role. The instructor should not only present the case, but also lead the discussion to an appropriate extent. In order to successfully present and lead the case, careful planning and preparation is necessary. This chapter provides teaching suggestions on suggested media usage, and how to successfully guide the case discussions. Further, a discussion about brand hierarchies is presented to give clarification on a complex brand management topic, followed by a suggested board plan. Lastly, a time plan is provided which can be used in the process of planning the case lecture.

A variety of media is suggested in order to enhance the case experience for the participants. First, PowerPoint slides are provided, which contain images of a Volvo car, a Polestar car, the CBIM of Volvo Cars, Volvo Car Group’s brand architecture and a video of Polestar. The respective media will aid the instructor when presenting the case. Further, it will help the participants to understand the background of the case, and the alternative solutions, without being distracted, since limited text is used. It is

also suggested to ask the participants to use name tags as this can enable a more personal discussion and enhance the flow.

The instructor is encouraged to present the case in the following order, supported by the provided image material: to start off, a short background of Volvo Cars is given, using the CBIM (Urde, 2013) to highlight Volvo Cars' brand identity. Here it is essential to mention Volvo's core values, being safety, quality and care for the environment, as well as, positioning and competences. Thereafter, an introduction of the EV market should be given, ensuring an overall understanding of what is happening in the market. Finally, strategic decisions made for the Volvo Group under the Chinese ownership are mentioned, highlighting the decision to enter the performance electric vehicle market by launching the Polestar series. Here, images of a Volvo car and Polestar should be shown, and the Volvo Car Group architecture introduced. Moreover, it is highly important to mention that the Polestar cars will target performance-oriented customers, the fact that all cars will be either hybrid or fully electric and produced in China, as well as, the premium price point of the car series. The case presentation is intended to end with the managerial question:

**Given the two potential options, where should the Volvo Car Group position its new series of electric performance cars within the brand architecture, taking brand identities and strategies into consideration, and why?**

Overall, in the brand management literature, various terminologies are found when describing brand portfolio structures, depending on the perspective taken, therefore, it is recommended to provide participants with a short overview. Following Volvo Car Group's brand architecture (see Exhibit 5), the Volvo Cars brand can be described as a corporate brand, a master brand (Kapferer, 2012) or a mother brand (Urde, 2018b). By launching Polestar as a separate brand, it can be classified like the Volvo Cars brand, namely as a corporate brand, master brand or mother brand. When introducing Polestar by Volvo, the simplest way to express the new relationship between Volvo Cars and Polestar is by referring to it as a daughter brand with an endorsing mother. Therefore, it is recommended to use the terminology 'mother brand' overall, however, highlighting that Volvo Cars and Polestar as a separate brand are corporate brands, in order to refer to literature on corporate branding.

After presenting the background of the case, the scene should be set. This includes portraying participants as the executive team, with an agenda to decide and argue for where to place the Polestar brand in the brand hierarchy, clearly explaining the two possible solutions. Furthermore, drama and interest can be created by highlighting the urgency and wide-reaching impact of the decision for the Volvo Car Group. Thereafter, the discussion takes place, which can be divided into two parts. First, an open discussion is suggested, allowing the participants to discuss the risks and opportunities freely, without considering certain criteria in order to stimulate thinking. For this part, it is highly recommended that the instructor takes notes on the whiteboard to highlight what has been discussed and to strengthen the group dynamics by increasing engagement. When the discussion reaches saturation or when the planned time is up, the instructor should summarize what has been said, before moving on to the second part. For the second part, the solution matrix will be drawn



on the whiteboard (see section below) and each alternative will be discussed. The class will together decide which alternative should be implemented and the instructor will continuously fill out the matrix. If the audience clearly favors one over the other, the instructor should challenge them and ask for reasoning. If the audience cannot come to an agreement, it is encouraged to announce that a decision has to be made, and recommended to vote for the alternatives in order to continue with the case, here the detailed teaching plan can provide guidelines (see Exhibit 6). The instructor has to be an active listener, should avoid interrupting and has to stay neutral, guiding the debate without influencing the decision, while not leading the discussion more than necessary. However, if needed, assisting questions (presented below) can be used in order to get the discussion moving forward. When the class has come to an agreement, the instructor moves on showing an inspirational Polestar video to increase the suspense and afterwards will present the actual management decisions made, ideally inviting further class discussion. Thereafter, learning outcomes are summarized and it is suggested to ask the participants to reflect on what they have learned from the case, what they found particularly interesting, and if they have any feedback for the case or instructor. Another method that could be used is to let students 'digest' the case first and to reflect over learning outcomes during the next meeting, if possible.

## Board Plan & Discussion Questions

As stated, the main question to be discussed during the case is:

*Given the two potential options, where should the Volvo Car Group position its new series of electric performance cars within the brand architecture, taking brand identities and strategies into consideration, and why?*

In order to lead the discussion and agree on a decision for where to place Polestar in the brand hierarchy, the board plan displayed below is recommended to be used. This board plan can also be found in the PowerPoint slides and consists of five main questions, which are supposed to be discussed and answered by the participants. When the participants have agreed on one of the alternatives, by collective agreement or voting, the instructor puts a mark in the chosen box.

	Option 1: Separate brand – Polestar - mother brand	Option 2: Polestar by Volvo, Polestar - daughter brand Volvo - endorsing mother
Which brand architectural solution creates more <i>trust</i> , in the eyes of potential customers, that Polestar is a <i>performance car</i> ?		
Which brand architectural solution has the potential to create more <i>awareness in the media</i> ?		
Considering the <i>opportunities</i> for the Volvo brand to be perceived as more exciting, and the <i>risk</i> of hurting their brand image, which solution should be chosen?		
Considering the <i>implementation costs</i> , which brand architecture solution would be more favourable?		
Which brand architectural solution has the potential to better <i>attract</i> the desired target group?		

To avoid too much writing on the board, it is recommended to portray the solution matrix simultaneously on the PowerPoint slide, thereby the questions in the left column can be abbreviated and summarized by keywords.

### Assisting Questions:

To aid the discussion and help the participants, assisting questions are provided below. The instructor can ask the participants the respective questions in the following order:

#### To support Q1:

- *How can the different names, 'Polestar' or 'Polestar by Volvo', affect the perceived trust in regard to competences and performance engineering?*
- *Consider the Volvo Cars brand identity, in particular position and competence.*
- *Consider: 'brands that are trusted in one area are likely to be trusted in others', vs. 'corporate brands usually have one key competence on which the reputation is built'.*

#### To support Q2:

- *How do you think the media would respond to Volvo launching the Polestar endorsed by Volvo vs. introducing the brand Polestar as a stand-alone brand? What are the differences?*

#### To support Q3:

- *Think about possible spill-over effects, positive and negative.*

- *Weigh the possible advantages with branding Volvo as more exciting, and the risks of hurting their image and brand equity overall.*
- *If Volvo brands itself as a performance car manufacturer, how can this affect its safety image?*
- *How well does each option align with and support business goals? Does the approach help achieve and support strategic priorities such as the electrification strategy?*

**To support Q4:**

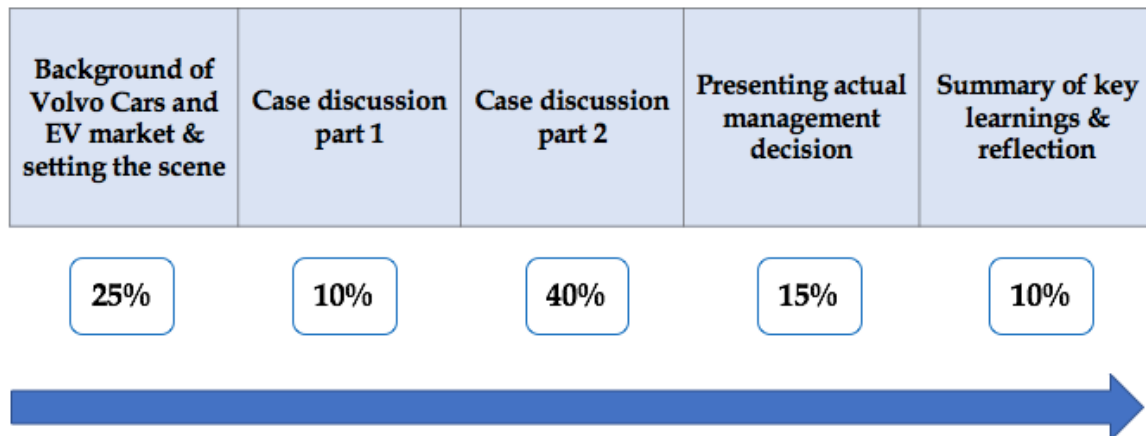
- *What are the potential costs for the alternatives? (consider e.g. costs for communication, human resources, facilities)*
- *Think about ‘economies of scale’ (savings on marketing communications can be achieved as opposed to marketing brands individually).*

**To support Q5:**

- *Define the target group in your eyes.*
- *Which name would be most attractive to the target group? (e.g. consider self-image fit)*
- *Think about ‘customer confusion’ and ‘customer expectation’.*

## **Time plan**

A good case session requires careful planning in regard to time. Bad planning of time can result in rushing the case discussion, which would be unfortunate as this can negatively impact the learning outcome for the students. This case is written with a time frame of two hours in mind, but shorter sessions are possible by either asking the participants to pre-read the written case before attending class or increasing the pace for each part, or by skipping part one of the discussion and moving directly to part two. The provided time plan (see figure below), suggests the instructor to spend 30 minutes on the background of Volvo Cars and the electric vehicle market, as well as, setting the scene, 12 minutes for case discussion part one, 48 minutes for case discussion part two, and 18 minutes to present the actual management decisions. Lastly, around 12 minutes are devoted to summarizing the key learnings and a reflection on the session and case.



## Detailed Teaching Plan

The idea of the detailed teaching plan is to provide the presenter with precise instructions by categorizing micro-timings and specified instructions for each milestone including topics to be covered, as well as, media and offline tools to be used. The Detailed Teaching Plan is attached to the appendix of this case (see Exhibit 6).

## Epilogue

Aligning a new brand concept strategically to a well-established corporate brand is not an easy managerial task. In fact, the proper positioning of a new brand in the corporate brand architecture is crucial for the rise or fall of the brand's reputation. In a market under transformation, shaped by moving towards the electrification of cars, the Volvo Car Group needed to make a decision on where to position its new performance-oriented car series, named 'Polestar'. By meticulously taking into account all risks and opportunities of the strategic options of positioning Polestar in the existing brand architecture, as either, (1) a new daughter brand endorsed by the Volvo Cars mother, Polestar by Volvo, or, (2), as a new mother brand, Polestar, Volvo has made a decision. For option one, the launch as Polestar by Volvo, Volvo has encountered major opportunities such as bringing excitement towards the brand by adding 'performance' to its identity and becoming more flexible as a mother brand towards changing market conditions. Risks were associated for the mother brand in terms of brand equity, as Polestar by Volvo might not fit and protect the Volvo qualities and also, the customer might mistrust Volvo's capabilities, as the mother is not associated with performance, but safety. In contrast, for option two, launching a new mother brand, Polestar would rather fulfil the expectations and be trusted as a performance brand and would provide a fresh new start with opportunities not being constrained by the Volvo mother. Risks evaluated, regarding the new mother brand are the high implementation costs, not benefiting from economies of scales, for example marketing communication, and also, Polestar would miss out on positive spill-over effects from the Volvo brand. In sum, this case points out the different

advantages and disadvantages of creating either a new mother brand, or a daughter brand with an endorsing mother and the different factors to consider, namely business, the brand and customers. Moreover, this case serves as an example of making a brand architecture decision when tapping into a new customer segment within a transforming industry. Due to the originality of this case, coined by its timeliness and strategic characteristics, it can be used as an evergreen case in the field of corporate brand management.

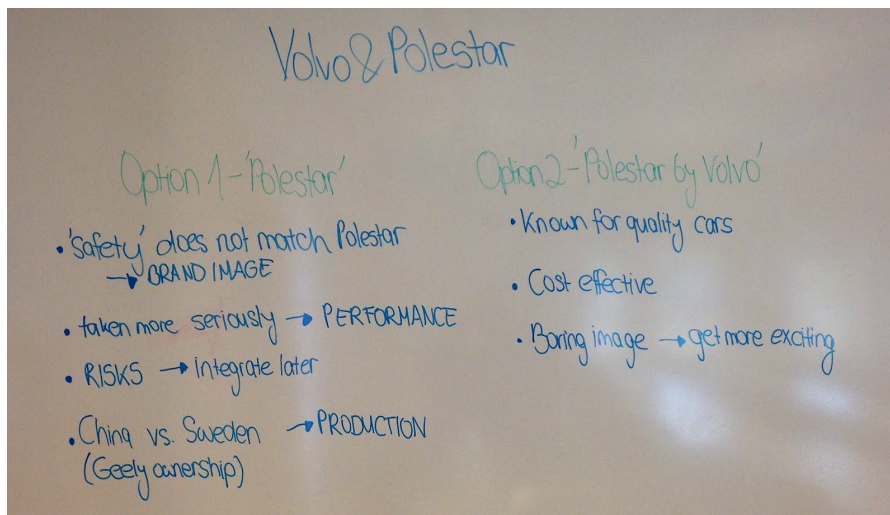
## Reflection

Searching for a case that was relevant and interesting, Polestar seemed ideal considering the car market transformation towards electrification. Curious about the different identity of Polestar, namely performance, and how it would fit in Volvo's current brand architecture, we decided to pitch the Polestar case during our first supervision to our Professor Mats Urde. The decision to choose this case was quickly confirmed due to its high relevance in the current car market, having Tesla and other competitors, launching new performance cars and the richness of strategic concepts included in the case. By having an engaged discussion together with our supervisor, we found new impulses on how to reflect on Volvo's strategic decisions regarding the brand architecture that could build the case. Volvo's way of tapping into the new electric performance market, by aligning it to the corporate identity, has motivated us to explore the different options of positioning within a brand architecture and the diverging opportunities and risks involved.

Point of departure of brand architecture decisions was to determine the different strategic positioning options of a new brand that had to be equally compelling and not leading, in order to enable an intriguing discussion with the audience, teaching the case to. Sketching the different positioning options in Volvo's brand hierarchy, we decided for the two most contrasting solutions in the eyes of the audience and that would have the most impact on Volvo's identity, which were introducing Polestar (1) as a new daughter endorsed by the Volvo Cars mother, Volvo by Polestar, and (2) Volvo as a new mother brand. To ensure, each of them being equally compelling, we collected advantages and disadvantages for each option. A difficulty here was to decide for a naming, as the academic corporate brand management literature and practitioners' terminologies differ significantly, but also because Volvo's legal corporate structure is highly complex. As it was imperative to have the most understandable terms for the audience, the decision was made to use the terminologies 'mother' and 'daughter'.

As this case is currently happening and information still sensitive, we had to discover that evaluating the opportunities and risks involved of positioning the car under two potential options, was quite difficult. Prior, we tried to get access to information from the Volvo Car Group by reaching out through different mediums, getting a first-hand contact and sending our written case. However, despite multiple tries, we did not succeed to get more pragmatic information on Volvo's decision making. Therefore, answering the management decision was validated by theory rooted in corporate brand management literature. Left is one remark considering the

actual terminology by Volvo of the Polestar brand, namely the positioning as a ‘hidden daughter brand’ (instead of Polestar as a mother brand in our case) in Volvo’s brand architecture, an information we received only at the end of designing the case. After a long discussion evaluating the advantages and disadvantages for teaching the case, we decided to stick with Polestar as a mother brand, as we knew, both solutions would have had similar implications related to Volvo Cars and therefore, for the teaching. Further reasoning here is, that teaching the case with Polestar as a mother brand delivers a more compelling and easy to comprehend option, as well as, it differentiates our case from other previous cases taught and consequently avoids assumptions of the audience.



Another task requiring detailed attention was devoted to developing questions that are both, open enough to trigger an engaging discussion, and simple and specific enough to get straight to the subject of the case. Therefore, forming the questions for the solution matrix was conducted in an iterative process, characterized by proceeding with leading questions, and reformulating and adding questions after an internal test run and external test run. Evaluating the test runs, provided us with an overview of potential answers of the audience and which questions were required to lead a vibrant discussion with many intriguing solutions. Thus, we found that five questions illustrate the ideal amount to not ‘over-inform’ the audience, but stay focused, and consequently, facilitate the decision-making for the case. Moreover, the kind of questions, that would imply various viewpoints were chosen and supported by proceeding questions (see board plan) to stimulate the discussion. Overall, for the purpose of finding the optimal questions, we had to put ourselves into the position of the student, trying to comprehend the questions in regard to the managerial decisions of Volvo Cars by applying the knowledge previously acquired in the course of the Corporate Brand Management class and by using common sense. Consequently, the CBIRM (Urde & Greyser, 2016) helped us to unfold the most affected dimensions of Volvo Cars identity for each solution, as well as, literature on brand architecture uncovered the effects on ‘the business’, ‘the brand’ and ‘the customer’.



	OPTION 1: 'Polestar'	OPTION 2: 'Polestar by Volvo'
TRUST PERFORMANCE car		X great engineering
MEDIA AWARENESS		X unexpected
OPPORTUNITIES / RISKS -IMAGE	X low risk	+ excitement - hurt image
IMPLEMENTATION COSTS	people, marketing, sales, facilities, branding	X
ATTRACTING TARGET GROUP	X not constrained by Volvo name → performance	

In sum, after having designed, written, tested and presented the case, we are able to credibly and critically judge whether the case approach is a valuable addition to our academic background. Prior, we must state, it was an enriching and challenging experience, different from any assignment we ever had to solve in our academic background. The challenging aspect of this assignment is to change position as a student and look through the eyes of the professor. Essential to a successful case discussion is the consideration of educational features, how and at what point to ask the right questions by considering the learning outcomes. Above all, for the reason that a case encourages independent thought, provides strategic tools, to consequently lead to a managerial judgement, signifies the development process of becoming a skillful leader. Therefore, we can validate the statement "Management is a wisdom that cannot be taught" (Harvard Business School).

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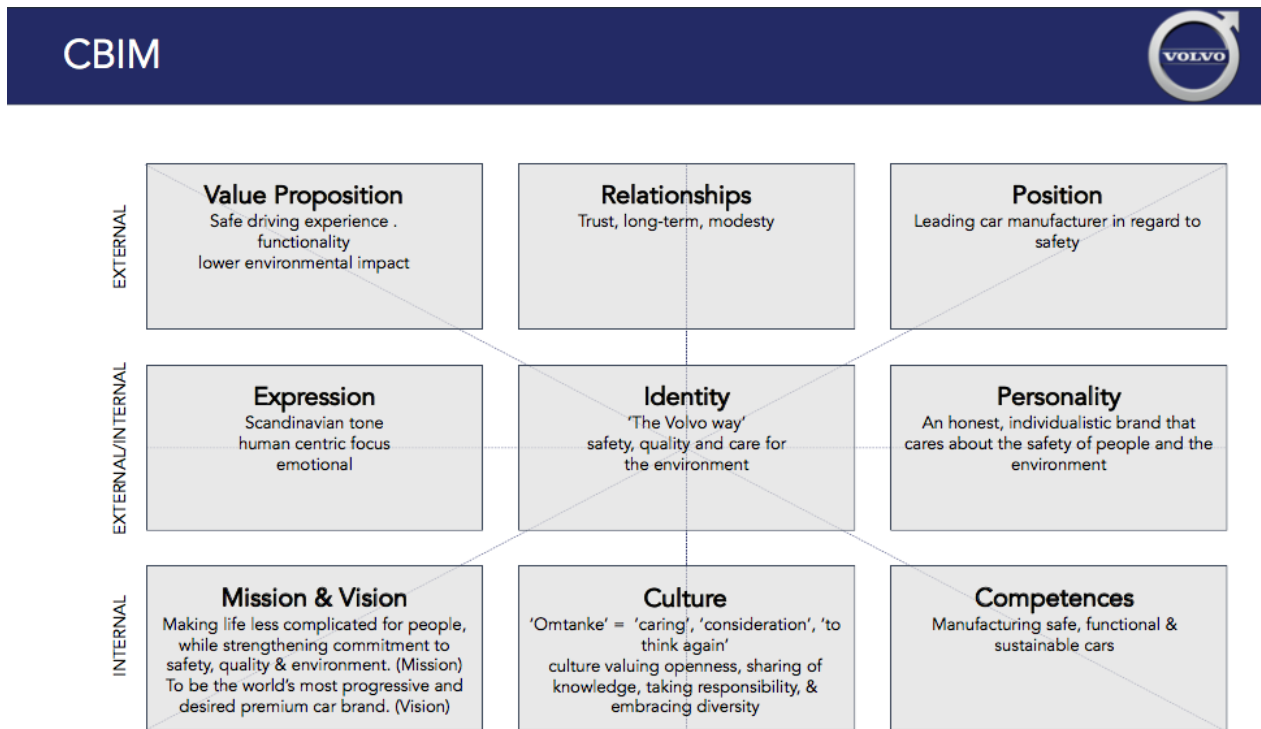
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## Appendix

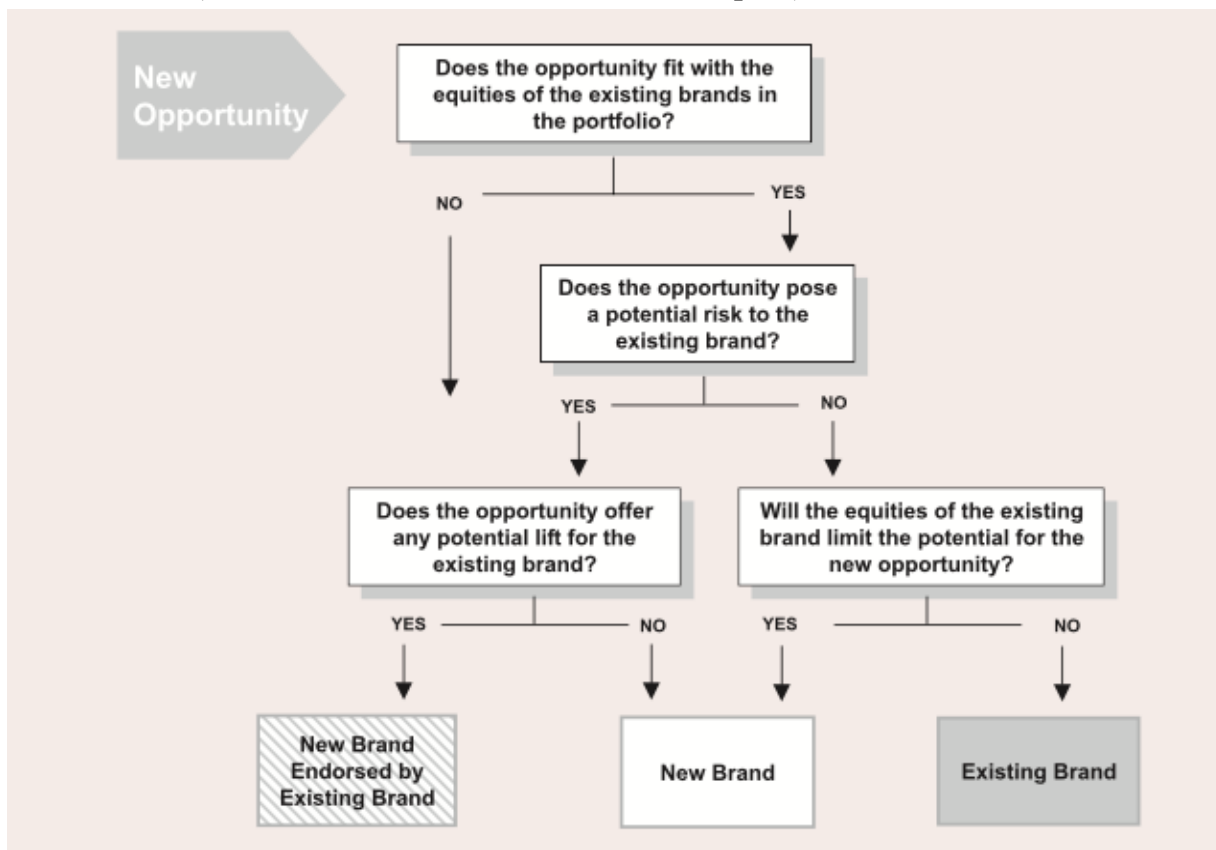
Exhibit 1 Volvo Cars' Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (Urde, 2013)



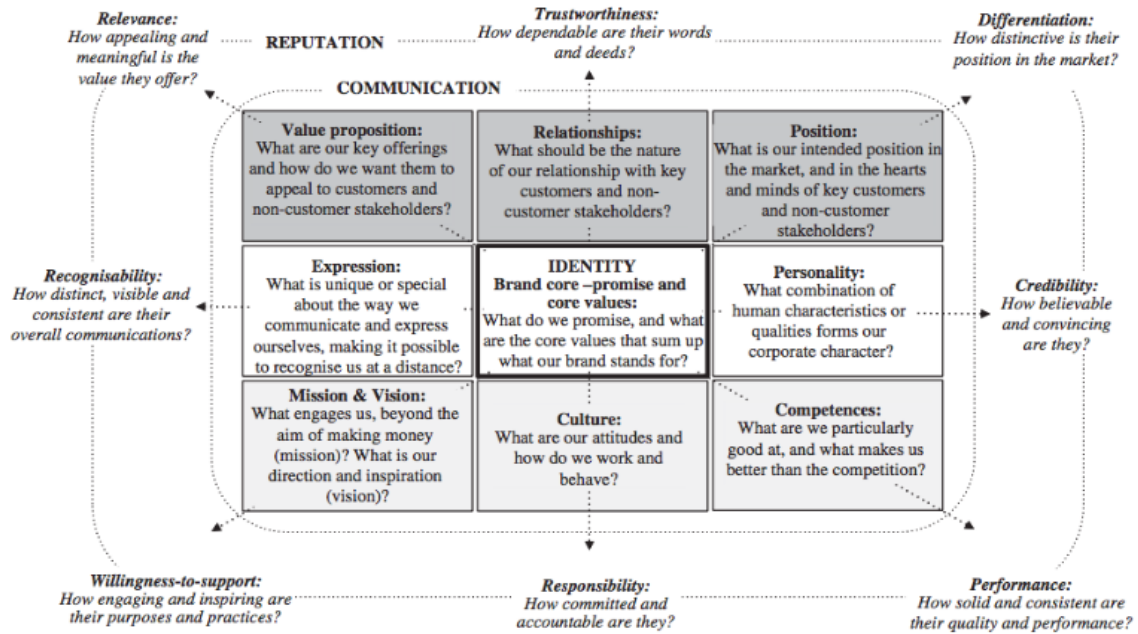
**Exhibit 2** Alternative Branding Approaches  
(Petromilli, Morrison & Million, 2002, p.24)



**Exhibit 3** Brand Relationship Mapping  
(Petromilli, Morrison & Million, 2002, p.25)



**Exhibit 4** Corporate Brand Identity and Reputation Matrix  
(Urde & Greyser, 2016, p.103)



**Exhibit 5** Volvo Car Group Brand Architecture

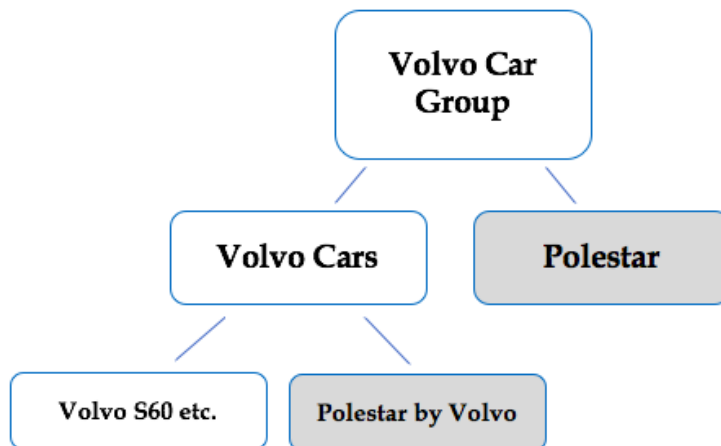


Exhibit 6 Detailed Teaching Plan

**Polestar Case** Detailed Teaching Plan

**Date** March 16, 2018  
**Participants** Master's Programme  
**Material** PowerPoint slideshow [incl. video], whiteboard

Timing	Content	Material
<b>08:00</b>	<b>Introduction [30min]</b>	
08:00 0:30	<p><u>Introduce background of Volvo Cars and EV market &amp; set the scene</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the background of Volvo Cars</li> <li>• Show the CBIM of Volvo Cars</li> <li>• Introduce the background of the Electric Vehicle Market</li> <li>• Set the scene by informing the participants of their role</li> </ul>	ppt. slideshow [CBIM]
<b>08:30</b>	<b>Discussion Part 1 [12min]</b>	
08:30 0:12	<p><u>Open discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage an open discussion about the two solutions</li> <li>• Guide the discussion if needed</li> <li>• Summarise key discussion points</li> </ul>	ppt. slideshow [Volvo & Polestar car] Notes on whiteboard
<b>08:42</b>	<b>Discussion Part 2 [48min]</b>	
08:42 0:48	<p><u>Guided discussion by the solution matrix</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the questions one by one</li> <li>• Guide the discussion if needed</li> <li>• Challenge decisions and ask for reasoning if needed</li> <li>• Decide which alternative to be implemented, vote if needed</li> </ul>	ppt. slideshow [solution matrix]
<b>09:30</b>	<b>Actual Management Decision [18min]</b>	
09:30 0:18	<p><u>Present the actual management decision</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show Polestar No. 1 video</li> <li>• Present actual management decisions</li> <li>• Invite for further class discussion</li> </ul>	ppt. slideshow [Polestar No. 1 video]
<b>09:48</b>	<b>Key Learnings and Reflection [12min]</b>	
09:48 0:12	<p><u>Summarise key learnings and reflect on case</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarise key learnings</li> <li>• Ask for feedback for case and instructor</li> </ul>	Key learnings on whiteboard
<b>10:00</b>	<b>Finish</b>	