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The Match of Identities: A study on how brands can stay true to themselves

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The Match of Identities: A study on how brands can stay true to themselves

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to investigate if a company's brand image and identity needs to be aligned with a celebrity's image and identity in order for the celebrity endorsement to be successful and create new value while remaining authentic.

Methodology: The research approach is both qualitative and quantitative. Primary data was collected through a survey focused on numeric data. Secondary data from existing theory and academic journals was used extensively in the literature review and discussion.

Findings: The paper concludes that a celebrity endorsement can be effective even if the company's brand image and the celebrity's brand image are not aligned. However, a matching between the two actors' brand identity must take place for the endorsement to be successful.

Limitations: The study has some limitations that may impact its overall reliability. The research is limited in its depth due to the constraints of the assignment and the limited time available. More case studies and a larger survey sample are needed to improve the validity of the findings.

Practical implications: Due to the limited depth of the study it is difficult to provide practical advice to marketing managers. However, the existing research and our case studies and primary research agree that a company's brand identity must align with the celebrity endorser in order for the pairing to be successful.

Originality: The paper introduces primary research in the form of case studies and an original survey.

Keywords: brand identity, brand image, brand authenticity, celebrity endorsement, convergence, alignment.

Paper type: Research paper

Introduction

Brands gaining support from celebrities to endorse products is a strategy that has been used since the late nineteenth century. Companies discovered that a well-known person could sell more products and gain trust among the customers. Today, using celebrity endorsement as a brand management tool is a renowned phenomenon and the concept has both grown and evolved (Flair, 2013).

The use of celebrity endorsements today is a common marketing strategy. One of the main questions companies need to ask themselves is which celebrity would be the most suitable to endorse the brand's products for it to stay true to itself. According to Erdogan and Baker (2000), it is important to choose a celebrity who represents the brand fittingly. Indeed, Choi, Lee and Kim (2005) argue the importance of the "match-up effect", and agree that if the fit between the brand and the celebrity is good, then the communication is more effective. For new unestablished brands, this match could be relevant to build awareness around their product as well as the right association of values to it. However, for already established brands, it could be more beneficial if the match would not be a totally perfect fit. Indeed, results have showed that brand-incongruent endorsers could generate higher brand interest and more positive communication. (Törn, 2012).

With this new insight, the aim of this paper is to understand if a brand can be perceived as staying true to itself even if the congruence between the brand and the celebrity endorsers identity is not aligned. This leads to the following research question:

"Does the firm's brand identity have to be aligned with the celebrity endorsers identity in order for the collaboration to be authentic among the customers (image)?"

Methodology

A comparison between empirical data and literature is conducted in this study and according to Patel and Davidsson (2011), this

research method goes hand in hand with the deductive theory. Articles and books are utilized, both in the case studies and in the literature review. The discussion is based on both the empirical data and the theoretical information.

Case studies were found to be critical since they provide knowledge about managerial decisions that otherwise would not have been gained. Five different case studies were utilized in this paper to illustrate important issues surrounding the topic, and to extend the knowledge from a practical, and real-world perspective. Criticisms of this method of research are often based on the small numbers of cases used and researchers are therefore often concerned about the accuracy and reliability of the findings (Soy, 1997).

We, the authors of this paper, are aware of this problem and therefore, a survey was conducted in order to strengthen the case studies with empirical data on customer's own reflections of the phenomenon. Hence, primary data was collected through our survey and secondary data was collected through theory and case studies. The survey was focused on numeric data, hence a quantitative approach was conducted (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Nevertheless, since the aim of this paper is to explore, case studies were utilized which as well makes this study a hybrid between a qualitative and quantitative research approach.

When developing a survey, it is important that the questions are relevant, can be analyzed and are useful in the answering of the research question. Therefore, a pilot study was conducted. Pilot studies are used to increase the validity and reliability of the research (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The respondents all received the exact same survey and the questions were designed objectively with little chance of individual interpretations. However, the study is limited as it is based only on one hundred respondents.

The theory in this paper is based on academic journals and the book *"The New Strategic Brand Management"* by Kapferer (2012). When searching for articles, the Lund

University database was the main source. The case studies also utilize information from online articles and magazines. This weakens this research since these articles have not gone through any peer-review processes (Library.elmhurst.edu, 2016).

Theory

Brand Image.

Several authors have proposed varying definitions of brand image. This study defines brand image as the representations of the emotional aspects that identify the brand of a company or its products with a strong influence on the purchasing-process (Arora & Stoner, 2009). Image is described as a key element with the ability to create value and with a strong impact on consumers, helping them in the orientation within the market, providing information, inflicting a brand of differentiation halo and generating positive emotions (Aaker, 1991). The image is also described as the outside world's overall impression of a company and its stakeholders (Hatch & Schultz, 2001). A similar perspective defines the brand image as the perceptions that stakeholders associate with the firm, consisting of brand name, visual symbols, products, advertisements and sponsoring (Kapferer, 2012). Another contribution related to the previous ones is proposed by Keller (1993, p. 3), who describes the brand image as the "*perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory*".

Brand image is also conceptualized as what the customers think/perceive (or form an impression) about a particular brand in their mind. It is also what people believe about a brand, their thoughts, feelings and expectations (American Marketing Association, n.d.).

Brand Identity

As suggested by Kapferer (2012), one of the most important aspects of managing a brand is to cultivate brand identity. Brand identity represents the critical core values of the

brand, the vision behind the brand, and the tangible/intangible values which make the brand unique from the competition and adds value to the customer (Kapferer, 2012). The brand identity represents the fundamental essence behind a corporation and/or its products and this is in turn reflected by the market/public's image of the brand (Mihail, 2016). Brand identity contains inner essential and unchangeable core values (kernel facets) as well as flexible outer characteristics (peripheral facets) (Kapferer, 2012). According to the author, innovations can occur when brands are willing to adjust their peripheral facets. Brands that are willing to take risks attract a sense of awe from their audience and encourage change. These brands are the most likely to stand out and outlast the competition (Kapferer, 2012).

Brand identity is complemented by brand positioning. Positioning are the facets which make a brand different and memorable in the thoughts of a customer (Wheeler, 2017). It is critical to position a brand in a way that connects and resonates with customers wants, needs and inner desires, as it will help a brand stand out from the competition (Kapferer, 2012). When making a purchase decision customers compare competing products, seeking those that have the best value (Wheeler, 2017). Successful positioning involves making the product stand out during the selection process (Kapferer, 2012). This is facilitated through genuine and consistent messaging of the brands inner substance and its DNA, and by avoiding clichés or false identities (Kapferer, 2012). Therefore, a part of the overall brands strategy should involve establishing a strong identity and communicating that identity in a manner which will be positively recognized and positioned in the customer's mind (Roy, 2013). Certain communication channels send the message to the customer (the receiver) and the customer interprets the message as a brands image (Kapferer, 2012).

Brands publicly reveal their identity to increase sales and improve their brand image

(Mihail, 2016). Advertising is key for brand identity as consumers only can acquire information on the brand based on communications. Communication is indicative of certain qualities about the sender, the consumers being addressed and the relationship between both parties (Kapferer, 2012).

Brand Authenticity

According to Morhart, Malär, Girardin, and Grohmann (2013), brand authenticity is defined as the degree a customer finds a brand to be loyal to itself, allows the customer to connect with their true ideal selves and is engaged in socially responsible and considerate behavior. The authors identified the four main dimensions of brand authenticity as “Integrity”, “Symbolism”, “Credibility” and “Continuity” (Morhart et al. 2013, p.200). Such dimensions indicate that authenticity is not only objective but also a subjective phenomenon which allows a brand to truly resonate among customers in a personal manner (Morhart et al. 2013). Customers can create their own personal connection and meaning with the brand and through the brands communications, create their own desired meaning behind the brand (Beverland, 2009). Authenticity is developed via consistent interactions and communications within the firm, among stakeholders and in broader society (figure 1.1, Beverland, 2009, p.5). Brands authenticity is developed through communications to tell stories, often involving relationships with their own customers and society. Such stories have the capability to develop a certain charm or awe of authenticity around the brand (Beverland, 2009).

The potential benefits to adapting brand authenticity are numerous. Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland, and Farrelly (2014) claims that brand authenticity is a better indicator of customer purchasing decisions than other factors such as love, trust and credibility. In contemporary marketing, authenticity is at the core of a brand’s positioning, equity and corporate reputation (Napoli et al. 2014). According to Beverland (2009) potential brand value can be raised by leveraging brand authenticity.

Brands can create trust with consumers by reducing the anticipated risk of purchasing a product (Kapferer, 2012). Customers know that purchasing a particular brand will guarantee them quality and is capable of consistently delivering pleasure and excitement (Kapferer, 2012). It is essential for corporations to properly manage their brand's reputation, as doing so they have the potential to yield a higher selling price, superior market share and improved share values amongst stakeholders (Kapferer, 2012). Maintaining a brand's reputation also has the capability to improve the effectiveness of advertising by having ads that are better recognized and recalled by consumers (Kapferer, 2012).

Celebrity Endorsement

When a brand uses a celebrity or well-known figure for marketing activities it is called a “celebrity endorsement”. It consists of an agreement between an individual who enjoys public recognition and an organization who wishes to use a celebrity as the face of the product. If used correctly, this phenomenon will increase the value, trustworthiness, and sales for the focal firm. Companies choose celebrities whose values goes hand in hand with the values of the brand. This type of marketing can have a strong impact on the brands image (Flair, 2013).

According to Friedman and Friedman (1979), strengthened by McCracken (1989), celebrity endorsers are individuals, characters or organizations who enjoy public recognition on account of their achievements in their chosen profession. Also, the celebrity endorser can be referred to as an individual who uses their fame on behalf of a product by appearing with it or speaking in support of its claims in an advertisement. According to Solomon (2002), celebrities are used in a brand's campaign for their attractiveness and a high degree of influence on consumers. Due to their notoriety and fame, they can reach a higher degree of attention and recall. As a consequence of their

notoriety and recall power, they can increase the brand's awareness and generate favorable emotions towards the brand.

The main reasons why people buy endorsed products are linked to their desire to be like celebrities. Moreover, a familiar face promoting a brand is more likely to attract the consumer's attention and it increases their belief that they are purchasing a high-quality product (Medium, 2016).

McCracken (1989) suggests that a symbolic "match" should exist between the celebrity image and the brand image for the celebrity endorsement to be effective and to have a truly deep influence on consumers. If there is a mismatch between the celebrity and the brand it is likely that customers may become confused about what the company stands for, what it represents and what values it is trying to convey.

Case studies

This section briefly present five real-world case studies to shed light upon the practical relevance of choosing the right celebrity endorser for the brand.

Case study 1. Puma and Rihanna - adding new dimensions to a brand

"[Rihanna] can sell sneakers and Puma is onto something here that we haven't seen yet in the women's area. We feel we can be the brand that owns the space between the gym and the runway." (Bjørn Gulden, Chief Executive Officer of Puma, cited in Bayly, 2016)

The partnership between Puma and Rihanna was an effort for the company to bring "cultural relevance" to the brand. This was a missing piece of relevance that the brand has been unable to add before among the female customers. By bringing in an individual such as the ubiquitous Rihanna to be the face of the women's creative department, Puma was aspiring to be a "game changer". However, it was also a chance for Puma to open up the brand and strive to be a choice for a younger

audience with a conscious style (Millington, 2014).

In the ongoing age of influencers, few artists have the same ability to obtain attention as the audacious Rihanna. In 2014, when the acquirement was announced, Rihanna had recently been announced as the "most marketable of all big-name celebrities" (Bain, 2016). As a result, Puma was therefore hoping that Rihanna could reinvigorate the brand (Nazario, 2015). The acquirement of the singer turned out to be an overall smart strategic brand decision and Puma is now back in the game with industry leaders such as Nike and Adidas (Fortune, 2016).

However, with Rihanna in the front, Puma did not only realize that more women around the world are doing sports, there was also a missing market place for trendy female sportswear. A new opportunity in the booming female sportswear market was therefore introduced for the Puma brand (Fortune, 2016). Athletic wear was turning into daily outfits and the value adding process with the release of Rihanna's collection drove the brand in the direction of being both sporty and trendy. As a result, the clothes were about to be seen on both fashion influencers, highly visible social media stars and even on numerous runway shows.

Moreover, Rihanna succeeded to rejuvenate the Puma brand by being able to express herself. The collaboration between them also helped the brand to tap into the female sneakers culture (Turner, 2017). Nevertheless, it is not only the brand that is moving forward, also the sales have been increasing for the brand since the introduction. The sales grew by 3.7 percent in the first three months after the campaign (Millington, 2014).

Case study 2. Zlatan and Volvo - convergence of identity that turned into something different and new

"The campaign is a celebration of the independent mind, of the power that lies in the ability to think differently. There are many similarities between Zlatan's and Volvo's

journeys. We haven't gotten to where we are now by doing the same as everyone else." (Anders Gustafsson, Senior Vice President, Europe, Middle East and Africa at Volvo Car Group, quoted in Multivu, 2016.)

In 2014, Volvo released their new car the model XC70 with a whole new marketing campaign. The brand had started a collaboration with the world famous, Swedish footballer Zlatan Ibrahimović, and the campaign reached a huge success among the Swedish population (Multivu, 2016).

The Swedish car company Volvo was trying to connect to the customer emotionally. To accomplish this, they used the artists "Swedish House Mafia" as a way to tell their story. This collaboration became a major success because they were able to achieve an emotional reaction among the viewers (Carlö, 2017). When Zlatan Ibrahimović saw the campaign, he approached Volvo and proposed to be part of the next one. The campaign was tagged "*Made by Sweden*" and was a true and proper celebration of the country, showing the wildness, mountains, forests and snow. Zlatan disclosed a softer, more emotional side that people had not seen from him before. The advertisement dared to explore new elements, for example using the Swedish national anthem in the commercial (Carlö, 2017).

The Zlatan advertisement became a resounding success and the sales were positively influenced by this. During the weekend of the release, Volvo sold five hundred percent more cars compared to a normal weekend, and during the first quarter of 2014, the sales of the XC70 has been two hundred percent more than the expectations (Carlö, 2017).

Case study 3. Toronto Raptors, Toronto and Drake - a perfect mix.

"He just made the raptors cool. I don't think you can put a dollar figure on that". (Cabbie Richards, Sports Television Personality, quoted in Sanchez, 2016)

The Toronto Raptors NBA franchise team was struggling in 2011. The team had lost star

players, just missed out on reaching the playoffs and attendance was rapidly dropping off. Something needed to be done to save the franchise and to increase their status in the City of Toronto and across the NBA (Sanchez, 2016). In 2013, Tim Leiweke was appointed CEO of Maple Leaf Sports and was entrusted to help turn the Toronto Raptors into a championship team and successful franchise. Leiweke privately contacted the famous singer Drake as he was looking for someone who understood the brand image behind the Raptors, as well as the City of Toronto, and had a similar vision for the franchise brand (Sanchez, 2016). It was clear that Drake was proud of his hometown and his team and it did not take long to realize that they shared a similar philosophy and vision for the future of the Raptors (ESPN, 2017). The management team came to an agreement and decided that Drake would be the ideal brand ambassador for the franchise, as he believed in the strengths of being Canada's only NBA team (Sanchez, 2016).

As a lifelong resident of Toronto and die-hard fan of the Raptors, Drake leveraged his influence and charisma to rebrand the team, lift morale among fans, attract potential free agent players and instill a sense of "coolness" that never existed before (Smith, 2014). Actions such as noting the team in a hit song or wearing a Raptors Jersey in public payed huge dividends for the franchise and created extraordinary brand value (Garofalo, 2016). Hip-hop and basketball culture has always been irrevocably connected, just as the man who helped put Toronto on the map as a hub for music and culture, Drake has been critical in helping the Raptors define their identity and culture (Sanchez, 2016).

According to York University Marketing Professor Alan Middleton, Drake has been the ideal celebrity endorsement to attract a demographic which had been previously under-represented; Millennials. Middleton claims that Drake has created a new orientation to the Raptors brand by making them more applicable to their target fan base, while tapping into "Canadian pride".

Furthermore, Middleton argues that the relationship is mutually beneficial, as both parties possess fans from similar economic and social segmentations (Bennett, 2015).

Drake, as a brand, possess the unique ability to draw sentimentality out of Canadians and to give worldwide attention, identity and pride to the underestimated City of Toronto. Drake contributes to the city's arts culture with his three days OVO Fest, shout outs of city locations and even self-brands the city in some of his songs as "The Six", a nod to Toronto's area codes and the six boroughs which make up the city. Drake's influence on social media followers, his YouTube views and appearances on late night television bring a potential value of three billion dollars to city of Toronto's brand (Wong, 2016). Toronto, as a young and dynamic city, inhabited largely by diverse immigrants from around the world, represents a dynamic and ever-changing cultural image that can be hard to define by an outsider. Only someone like Drake can be successful in creating his own brand identity for Toronto and his beloved Raptors that is able to authentically connect with an international audience.

Case study 4. Yardley and Helena Bonham Carter - trying to change brand identity with the wrong celebrity

"I don't know why Yardley chose me, I don't wear much make-up." (Helena Bonham Carter cited in The Independent, 2005)

In the 1990s, the actress Helena Bonham Carter and the ailing cosmetic giant Yardley begun an endorsed collaboration. The traditional British company had for a long time produced soaps and make-up for the Royal family and wanted a new English rose to endorse the brand. The firm were looking for a person with a demure charm who could help them change the brand. Nevertheless, the actress did not like this description of herself and claimed *"Demure? I'm not demure "I drink Diet Coke, I smoke, I swear and I arm- wrestle."* (Helena Bonham Carter quoted by The Independent, 2005) Results were that even the actress herself were surprised by the

offer from the company, since she barely even used make-up. Not very surprisingly, the contract with Yardley soon ended. (The Independent, 2005)

Yardley's identity, back in these times, was highly associated with the "granny image" as the core customers grew older. Yardley was trying to get rid of this image by aligning their brand with the aura of a new hip swinging London (Brandfailures, 2007).

Nevertheless, the more than two-hundred-year-old company had historical baggage and already existing core customers. By choosing a celebrity endorser like Helena Bonham Carter, a smoker with bad language, it positioned themselves far away from their core customer base that they had built up over time. This served to alienate their core customers who moved away from the brand. The company learned the hard way that it takes time to change their identity, and that this cannot be done from a single new brand campaign. Also, the traditional customer should never be neglected. (Brandfailures, 2007)

Case study 5. Gillette and Tiger Woods - celebrity endorsement with negative consequences

The commercial relationship between Tiger Woods and Gillette is a clear example of what can happen when a celebrity endorser does not represent what the brand stands for and the negative outcomes and financial consequences that can result of the collaboration. The famous golfer was involved in scandals involving a car crash and the acknowledgment of his marital infidelity and as a result, he was dropped by several big brands (Kelley, 2016). For example, AT&T and Accenture announced their decision to stop their collaborations with Woods due to the scandals. In addition, Gillette also announced that they would not renew their association with him (Kelley, 2016).

The giant Procter & Gamble, owner of the brand Gillette, had used the golfer to promote their razors and shaving products in a campaign together with the tennis star Roger

Federer and the football player Thierry Henry (Robinson, 2010). The decision of ending the marketing collaboration was the outcome of Woods controversial life and his poor performances on the field. 'Brands want winners, and Tiger Woods is not a winner anymore' (quoted by Mark Borkowski, PR agent, in Robinson, 2010).

The scandals involving Tiger Woods is calculated to have costed shareholders of companies endorsed by the former golfer roughly \$ 5-13 billion, according to a study done by two economics professors from the University of California (Reuters, 2009). The two professors took in consideration the stock markets variations of Gillette, AT&T, Accenture, Nike and Gatorade for the following 13 days after Tiger Woods' car accident. (Reuters, 2009). In conclusion, the authors stated that the shareholder value of the endorsed firms decreased by 2.3 percent, or about \$12 billion (Reuters, 2009).

Empirical results

An online survey was conducted to strengthen the case studies. One hundred respondents, recruited from Facebook, answered the questions in the survey. The first part of the study measured the background information of the respondent where the categories used was gender, age and profession. The result is presented in table 5:1.

Description	Percentage
Gender	
Male	32
Female	68
Age	
<= 20	4
21-35	88
56-70	8
Profession	
Studying	72
Working	21
Other	7

Figure 5:1 - author's own

The second part of the study measured the customer's overall perspective of how celebrity endorsement can be used by brands. The respondent was asked to choose what they consider to be the most important qualities for a brand when using a celebrity endorsement. Figure 5:2 shows both intangible and tangible values that the respondent could choose from.

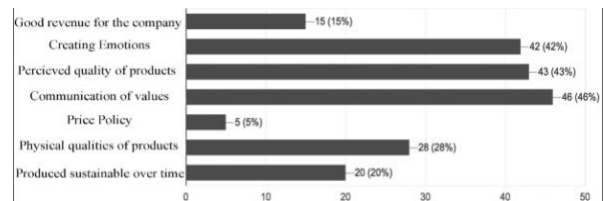


Figure 5:2 - Which of the following qualities do you consider to be most important when a celebrity endorses a brand? Author's own

As seen in figure 5:2, the three most important qualities are considered to be “communication of certain values”, “perceived quality of products” and “creating emotions”. The result shows that according to the respondents of the survey, the intangible values are the leading characteristics when it comes to celebrity brand endorsement.

The respondent was also asked if they think that it is important that there is a good fit between the brand and the celebrity endorser, with the example that sports brands only uses sport endorsers in the advertising. Seventy percent answered that it is important. Further, eighty nine percent of respondents answered that they think that it is important that the brand and the celebrity represent the same values and beliefs. Furthermore, fifty five percent of the respondents answered that their trust towards a brand can change after a celebrity endorsement campaign. When asked if they think that celebrities can be used to change or add values to a brand, a strong majority of ninety four percent answered that they believe so. Ninety seven percent also agreed that the reputation of a brand can get hurt by using a celebrity with the "wrong" values.

The last part in the survey was based on the collaboration between Puma and Rihanna, as described before in the case studies. Here the aim was to investigate if this campaign changed Puma's image and identity, and if it added new values to the Puma brand. We included a picture taken of the collaboration, but before doing so, we asked the respondents of their current perception of the Puma brand. From a large number of alternatives, the following four received the highest scores. Eighty three percent perceived the brand as being "sporty", thirty two percent as being "trendy", twenty six percent as being "fashionable" and five percent perceived the brand as being "unique".



Picture 5:1 - (*Fenty Puma by Rihanna, 2016*)

After the campaign photo was presented, we asked the respondent if they saw something new in the brand, and seventy two percent answered that they did with a total of sixty six percent of respondents agreeing that the image of the Puma Brand had changed. We further asked if the respondents thought that, after this collaboration with Rihanna, the Puma's Brand identity had changed in the way of *"the vision, the key beliefs and the core values of a brand"* (Kapferer, 2012 p. 150). A surprisingly high amount of forty eight percent agreed that it had changed. When asked how the perception of the Puma brand had changed after the collaboration, sixty two percent felt that the brand had become more "fashionable"

while fifty seven percent perceived the brand as more "trendy". Also, twenty three percent of respondents indicated that the brand had become more "unique". It was interesting to see that none of the respondents perceived the brand as being more "sporty" even though Puma is a sportswear brand.

Discussion and conclusion

To be able to answer the research question *"Does the firm's brand identity have to be aligned with the celebrity endorsers identity in order for the collaboration to be authentic among the customers (image)?"* the concept of "brand usage of celebrity endorsement together with authenticity" needs to be defined. According to Mohart et al. (2013), brand authenticity is related to the degree which customers finds a brand to be loyal to itself. By being loyal to the brand, the celebrity endorser and the brands thus need to share something of value or being able to create value by converging.

Loyalty can therefore be related to the brands identity, which according to Wheeler (2017) is complemented by the brands positioning. In contemporary marketing, authenticity is at the core of a brand's positioning (Napoli et al. 2014). The author states that positioning are the facets that makes a brand different and memorable in the consumer's mind. According to Kapferer (2012) a successful positioning makes the product distinctive in relation to competitors. Genuine and consistent messaging of the brands inner values and avoiding false identities is a way to facilitate this (Kapferer, 2012). The case study with Helena Bonham Carter and Yardley showed a brand trying to take on a new modern image. By using the actress, who was hip and youthful at the time, Yardley figured that she could be used in the repositioning of the brand. However, Helena Bonham Carter did not stand for the same values as the company and therefore, it was not perceived as being authentic to the brand. The brand therefore failed to maintain the reputation they had built up among customers for two centuries. Indeed,

for the brand to stay true to itself, it cannot have a celebrity endorser that does not share their values. Furthermore, the customers became alienated to the brand which refers to their loss of loyalty. In addition, the survey shows that the respondents consider a sharing of values and beliefs (identity) to be an important match between the brand and the celebrity endorser.

Secondly, we need to clarify how the brand identity and brand image are interconnected with the celebrity endorser. Brand identity represents the values and vision behind the brand (Kapferer, 2012), while the brand image represents the emotional aspects and perceptions of a company in the minds of the customers (American Marketing Association, n.d.). According to Mihail (2016), the brand identity represents the fundamental essence behind a corporation and/or its products. This is later reflected by the customer's image of the brand. As a result, the identity designs the image while the image reflects the identity (Mihail, 2016, p. 181.).

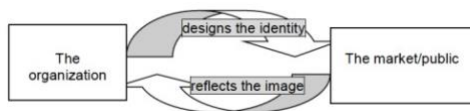


Figure 6.1 - Brand identity - Brand Image relationship. (Adapted from Mihail, 2016, p. 181.)

Brand identity deals with communicating core values to customers and the communication of the company's identity and inner values with the aim of influencing brand image and customer's perceptions of the brand (Roy, 2013). A successful campaign involves two actors who need to move in the same direction with the aim of influencing the audience in a similar manner. According to the idea that image reflects identity and the identity designs the image, celebrities can affect a company's image by bringing something new. Furthermore, a new position or an added value

will be interpreted in the consumer's mind. The brand will gain authenticity when the two actors can influence each other by converging their image towards customers. As a result, the brand will be perceived as unique and different by customers because it will present a new element.

Thirdly, we need to discover if convergence of identity between the brand and the celebrity endorser are of value to the customers. In the case studies, it is clear that all of the brands used celebrity endorsement to change their image or to add a new value to the brand. In the case of Yardley and Helena Bonham Carter, the collaboration failed because the brand identity and celebrity's identity did not converge. In the Tiger Woods and Gillette case, the campaign was unsuccessful due to the fact that the company could not stand for the celebrity endorser's actions. There was a clash in what Tiger Woods stood for among the people and what the brand represented. The collaboration symbolized nothing that could add value to the customers, because the values of Tiger Woods were perceived as unacceptable. McCracken (1989) suggest that if there is a mismatch between the celebrity and the brand it is likely that customers may become confused about what the company stands for, what it represents and what values it is trying to convey. This perspective is strengthened by the outcome of our survey where eighty nine percent of the respondents believe that there should be a fit between the values and beliefs between the celebrity and the brand. In conclusion, the non-successful implementation of the brand and celebrity endorsers, and the incongruence of identity lead to problems for the brand and the loyalty to the brand because it is not considered to be an authentic match.

In the Volvo and Zlatan Ibrahimović case, the collaboration succeeded because when they converged their identities, it developed into a new image that created value among the customers and they succeeded to properly communicate this through the advertisement, which is considered to be important according to Mihail (2016).

In the Drake, Toronto and Toronto Raptors case, Drake was approached with rebranding the Raptors ageing image by becoming the Raptors official ambassador. According to Mihail (2016), brands partake in rebranding efforts to modernize obsolete products and make them more relevant among current consumer trends (Mihail, 2016). As a major international celebrity who has his roots firmly established in Toronto, Drake attempted to define the Raptors identity as something uniquely Canadian, while at the same time creating pride for the city of Toronto. He did this by infusing his identity with the Raptors and the city of Toronto, to give both entities a new and hip image. This made both the Raptors and the city seem more personal and relevant among fans. The merging of relationships is compatible, as it beneficial with both parties, both the Raptors and Drake have fans with similar interests and come from similar demographics (Bennett, 2015). Drake was able to add a new orientation to the Raptors brand's values by instilling a sense of "coolness" and becoming more relevant among the fan-base (Smith, 2014; Bennett, 2015). Ultimately, Drake was able to merge with the Raptors to create a unique brand image, which was able to authentically connect with Canadian audiences.

In the act of employing Rihanna as an endorser of new Puma's new fashion line of women's products, Puma succeeded to add a new element that they have been missing before. Moreover, a new face was added to the brand that helped them define the identity of their new products and added modern relevancy to their image. Ultimately, they conceived a new direction for the brand by targeting a younger audience who have new wants and new needs. Such a collaboration enabled a successful identity congruence. We consider this match to be authentic due to the fact that Puma and Rihanna created a new modern image that the customer perceives as a new positively added value for the brand. This statement is strengthened by Milhail (2016) who reports that the most effective approach of rebranding or adding value to a brand is to

focus on improving customer's positive attitudes towards the brand and its products.

Conclusion

"Does the firm's brand identity have to be aligned with the celebrity endorsers identity in order for the collaboration to be authentic among the customers (image)?"

A positive aligned identity (a match) can create a new, authentic image while a negative aligned identity (no match) can destroy values and destroy company image.

The study highlights that it is vital that the brand and celebrity endorser share identity because this is, according to the customers, an important match. Furthermore, this makes both of them a part of the identity they share, which is the core of staying true to themselves. In addition, a convergence of identity can create new values among the customers that can create a new positive image. Furthermore, when a brand wants to add something new, it can only be perceived as authentic if the brand and the celebrity share identity. On the other hand, a mismatch between the identity of the brand and the celebrity endorser can destroy values for the brand that can neglect their customers. Only if the identity of the celebrity and the brand are compatible, can true authenticity can be achieved.

Limitations

We can see some limitations in this research paper. First and foremost, the data used in this research is too brief for the result to be of high significance. Our research is based on a small number of case studies that only gave limited information about the problems the brands and celebrity endorsers were facing. Therefore, a lot of the discussion is based on our own interpretations of the case studies. Further, a limited number of respondents were used in the survey and they cannot be considered to be representative for the whole population. Because of these limitations, we decided not to add "managerial implications" since further research in the field needs to be conducted.

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