Activating A Brands Track Record Using Retro Branding

Looking to the Past to Shape the Future

by

Niklas Heed
Malte Bäck

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Abstract

Title: Activating a Brands Track Record using Retro Branding; Looking to the Past to Shape the Future.

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Authors: Malte Bäck & Niklas Heed

Supervisor: Mats Urde

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Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to explore the phenomenon of retro branding and how it can activate a corporate brands track record, from a strategic brand management perspective.

Methodology: This thesis utilizes a qualitative methodological, in the form of a multiple case study. This research is of an inductive nature, with the aim of generating novel theory within the field of retro branding in connection to track record. The case companies will represent a variety of industries and products with the common theme of using historical elements in recent products.

Theoretical Perspective: To develop novel theory and a new conceptual framework, the theoretical fields of corporate brands, retro branding, and brand track record will be the foundation on which the framework will stand.

Empirical Data: The empirical data collected for this thesis consists of communication material related to products presented by the case companies, which all are corporate brands. The communication material is analysed to explore how the case companies have activated their track record with the help of retro brands.

Conclusion: Retro branding activities and in particular different types of retro brands can through a range of different activations, activate a corporate brands track record, by the use of the retro brand as a vehicle for presenting a brand's past achievements. More specifically, the corporate brands track record can be activated through the use of retro branding by showcasing and communicating its past achievements as features within new product offerings.

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1   Introduction

This opening chapter will introduce the subject of this thesis, that is retro branding and track record. As well as, the underlying concepts of nostalgia, heritage, and history. These concepts and phenomenon will be put into context, by introducing the different corporate brands and accompanied product brands that we have chosen to be the subject of analysis for this thesis. In the following section the positioning of this thesis, which will generate this thesis purpose. In connection, research question, aim and objectives of this thesis are presented, accompanied by the limitations and contributions of this thesis in terms of theoretical contributions and managerial implications. This introductory chapter is concluded with an outline that guides this thesis.

1.1   Background

In the luxury watch industry brands such as Omega have brought back popular models from their past to display their past accomplishments. Releasing anniversary editions is a popular way to do this, and in 2017 Omega released a 60th anniversary edition of their flagship models the Speedmaster, Railmaster and Seamaster. What Omega has in done with their releases of their anniversary editions, is that they have kept the original designs (from 1957 and 1962) but updated the movement to a modern one to reach the contemporary standards. On the other side of the world and in a completely different industry we found Levi's, the popular American jeans and clothing brand. They use a similar strategy to display their history. Levi's have released a collection inspired by their consumers of the last 146 years, where they have recreated collections based on their most classical vintage clothing. While only uses old materials from their archives. This is a type of retro inspired use of their past. One of the world's most well recognized brands, Coca-Cola, is an additional company that happily displays their past in their modern marketing campaigns and product offerings. Coca-Cola has managed to keep the same taste of its drink, since the beginning in 1886.

It seems that companies regularly let their past influence their operations today. The car industry has always displayed a natural evolution of advancements from one generation of car models to the next, with new models being released from year to year. However, when we started to dig deeper into this, we found several examples of brands operating in the car

industry that display their past achievements in their products. By doing this, they invoke more than the practicality and functionality of a car as choice of transportation, they engage people on another level. Car brands that we have found being of interest is Porsche, Singer Vehicle Design, Mini Cooper and David Brown Automotive. In the following sections a short introduction to the specific car models, that each specific car case is built upon, will be presented.

The Porsche 911 is the follow up on the previous model, the Porsche 356, and has been a classic in the car industry ever since. The Porsche 911 was introduced during the Frankfurt IAA Motor Show in 1963 and went to market the year after (1964). In total there has been eight model generations under the 911 name, from 1963 - today (2019) (Newsroom Porsche, 2018). In connection to this, Singer Vehicle Design who as a third-party company are taking classic Porsche 911 model and transforming them with modern technology. Hence, bringing an old classic in the car industry in to the modern era without losing its roots in history (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.). We will also look into the Porsche 911 Speedster Concept, which is a product of the celebration of 70 years of Porsche sports cars, and the 50th anniversary edition of the Porsche 911.

The next car manufacturer that caught our interest was MINI, who since 2000 are owned by BMW. But originally Mini was a British car brand that was founded in 1959, by the British Motor Corporation (BMC). The old version of the Mini is to be considered as an icon of the 1960 British car manufacturing. When BMW acquired the Mini brand and the MINI Cooper was born, it displayed undoubtable similarities with its old predecessor, and has not lost its connection to its heritage as a British car classic (Mini, n.d.). In addition to the new MINI cooper model, we will also analyse the 60 Years Edition, which celebrates the 60 years of Mini. In the same manner as for the Porsche 911 and Singer Vehicle Design, we found another British car manufacturing brand, David Brown Automotive. They produce a version of the original Mini, merging the retro look with modern technology, called the Mini Remastered. On the company website, they refer to the Mini Remastered as *"A classic icon in a modern package"* (David Brown Automotive, n.d). It is not the original manufacturer, but we think that this is a perfect example of how to bring back an old model (an icon) and update it to fit with the modern-day technology (i.e. a retro brand).

These examples display the companies response to consumers hectic lifestyles of today. People are searching for security and a sanctuary escaping from the reality. This has led to an

increase of companies implementing aspects of retro and nostalgia in their marketing efforts and products. A combination of retro and nostalgic aspects together with contemporary standards of product performance and functions harmonizes with both the past and present (Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry Jr., 2003a; 2003b). This harmony satisfies the many needs of today's consumers and has become a useful strategy for companies to utilize. This has been displayed by many different companies in a variety of industries such as, the watch-, car-, fashion-, and beverage industry which we will presented in the following paragraphs.

In summary, these examples all show a various amount of different ways to display a company's past achievements through the means of its products. In connection to this observation, we argue that the phenomenon of track record is much broader than just being applicable to branding, we ourselves for example are in the process of applying for our future jobs, and in this process, we are asked to provide evidence and proof of past achievements in our professional and academic careers, hence displaying our track record in the form of a resume. The collective past achievements of a brand, its resume, has been defined as its 'Track Record' (Urde, Balmer & Greyser, 2007; Urde 2009). It is a concept that is relatively unexplored. However, we have observed that the examples in the paragraph above, represent a range of industries and products, utilize their past achievements in the present, but also to shape their future. Important to note, is that the elements that are brought back from the past differ for the various cases. The brands bring back classic and sometime iconic elements closely related to their past achievements, such as Taste (Carlsberg), Design (Tag Heuer, Omega, Fiat 500, Mini Cooper, David Brown Automotive, Porsche 911, Singer Vehicle Design, Coca-Cola), and Fashion (Levi's).

1.1.1 Problematization

The use of retro brands has grown substantially within consumer marketing lately (Friedman, 2016). Companies are utilizing retro branding that reflects a balance between the past and present. A mix of nostalgia and contemporary performance in terms of functions and product attributes satisfies the many needs of today's consumers. Retro brands are currently being used as a marketing tactic to engage consumers by various brands. Young generations look to retro-brands and the past for guidance in their process of sculpting and forming their identities, while older generations look for security and comfort from memories of a time where things were easier. (Friedman, 2016) Combining these aspects, with adapting the old

product with today's technology and consumer demands has allowed for success for re-launched products. This thesis sets out to explore retro branding in this new context of track record, with the aim of generating new uses for the retro branding strategy.

Certain aspects of a brand get replaced over time in order to enable development, but the aspects most closely related to, or connected to, it remains. These aspects, whether they are core values, design features, tastes or historical events, usually gets reinforced over time since the brands utilize them in various ways. The more these aspects gets reinforced over time, the more they shape the identity, and core of the brand (Balmer and Greyser, 2006; Ind, 2007; Urde, 2009). Retro branding is a tool that can be used to reinforce the aspects of a brand. By reusing e.g., a design of a product, the brand displays a part of its past performances. This in term displays a company's track record. A Brands track record is its demonstrated performance over time (Urde *et al*, 2007).

1.2   Research Purpose and Aim

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the phenomenon of retro branding and how it can activate a corporate brands track record, from a strategic brand management perspective. This is in line with the aim of this thesis, which is to contribute to the understanding and conceptualisation of the retro branding phenomenon, as related to the concept of track record. The main objective of this study is to propose a conceptual framework through which the use of retro brands to activate a corporate brand track record can be understood. Hence, this thesis will try to answer the research question (RQ) below:

> **RQ 1:** How can Retro Brands be utilized to activate a corporate brands track record?

1.3   Delimitations

This study will be exploring the strategic management of corporate brands, through the clever use of product brands, more specifically retro brands. Further, this research aims to explore the phenomenon of retro branding and how it can activate a corporate brands track record. Therefore, the study is delimited to not exploring other ways of activating or maintaining a brands track record, other than by using retro brands. The study is further delimited in terms

of additional uses of retro brands, and what ways they can contribute to strategic brand management practices. This study will be exploring the strategic management of corporate brands, thus the organizations perspective will be researched, and not the consumers perceptions of these activities.

1.4   Outline of the Thesis

Chapter 1: Introduces the research topic and provides background which leads to the problematization of this thesis purpose, problem formulations, research questions. Further, the practical and theoretical relevance of this thesis is explained.

Chapter 2: Presents a Literature Review of the existing research of Retro Branding, Track Record, and Strategic Brand Management in general.

Chapter 3: The methodological choices and considerations are presented, explaining the reasoning behind the selected research philosophy, strategy, design, data collection and limitations.

Chapter 4: This chapter presents the empirical material based on carefully reviewing marketing communications and product offerings from the case companies Omega, Levi's, Coca-Cola, Porsche, Singer Vehicle Design, MINI, and David Brown Automotive.

Chapter 5: The main empirical material is analysed, and findings are presented, such as the 'Track Record Activation Framework' and the 'Visualisation of a Track Record Activation' tool.

Chapter 6: In this chapter the analytical results are discussed and elaborated upon, related the Framework and the other findings to the previous literature.

Chapter 7: This thesis is concluded in the final chapter that summarizes and concludes the research purpose, the research question, as well as the aim and objective of this thesis.

2 Literature Review

This chapter begins with a conceptual map of the research fields, retro branding and track record that will be covered in this thesis. As well as, the overarching theoretical phenomenon and concepts that appear in this thesis, namely strategic brand management and corporate brands. Concepts such as heritage and nostalgia are presented in this chapter to provide clarity to the three main research fields to facilitate understanding. This chapter is finalized by elaborating on the resulting concept of reputation, as a product of the total strategic brand management activities, hence its placement in the front of the conceptual framework arrow (Figure 2.1).

2.1 Conceptual Framework Arrow

The conceptual framework Arrow is an outline of the different perspectives of the theoretical concepts and phenomena presented in this chapter, an is presented in (Figure 2.1) below:
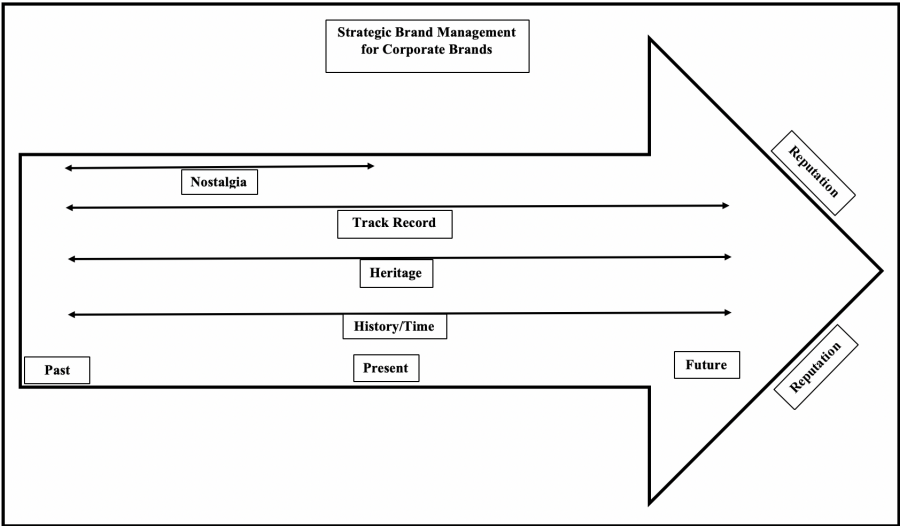
Figure 2.1 *Outline for the Different Time Perspectives of the Theoretical Concepts and Phenomenon*

This conceptual framework arrow (Figure 2.1) acts as a visualization of the different concepts in relation to each other to facilitate understanding of the time aspect that is present, as well as the phenomenon's setting, and the results.

2.2   The Market and Brand Orientation Framework

In the report of Urde (2013), the market and brand orientation framework are introduced. The framework (Figure 2.2) elaborates on two different approaches when defining a brand. They are, out-side-in and inside-out perspectives, which represents the market and brand-oriented processes of defining a brand. (Knox and Bickerton, 2003; Baumgarth, Urde and Merrilees, 2011; Urde, Baumgarth and Merrilees, 2011)
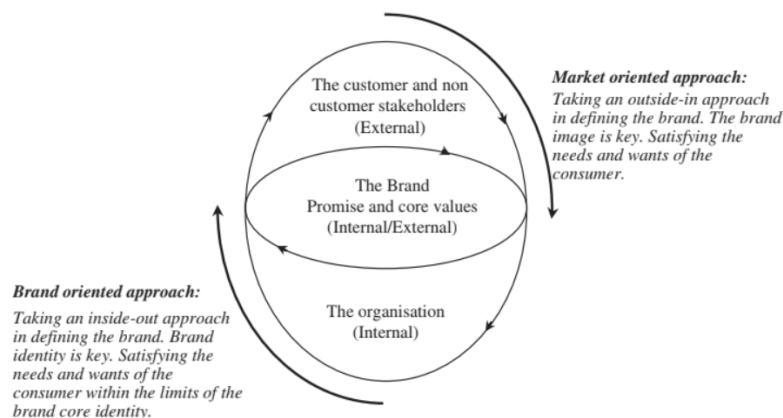
Figure 2.2 *The Market and Brand Orientation Framework (Urde et al., 2011, p.2)*

At the centre of the framework (Figure 2.2), is the core values and brand promise, as Urde *et al.,* (2011) defines it, "*the strategic focal point*" (p.3). He further defines, the 'brand core' as the separate core values aiding and generating a promise (Urde 2013). In connection to this, the corporate brand promise clusters the core values to generate an essential whole (Urde, 2009). The brand and orientation framework (Figure 2.2) shed light on three different types of values: Internal, core, and external. The internal values connect to the organisation, the core values to the brand, and the external values connects to customers and non-stakeholders. Urde (2013) This thesis will have organisations as the body and the corporate brand identity as the sign, as referred by Balmer (2010) as the 'distillation' of the whole corporate identity. Notable is that Urde (2013), points out that not every internal value is applicable in the definition of

the corporate brand identity, which is in line with Balmer (2010), and the concept of 'distillation'.

2.3   Branding

The research field of branding is what provides the foundation for the phenomenon of retro branding and will be shortly introduced. As defined by Urde (2013), a brand is a 'sign' that is meant to gain and convey meaning (Levy, 1959; Guiraud, 1971; Mick, 1986). Urde (2013) elaborates that thus the management of a brand can be considered as the management of signs. In connection to this, McAlexander, Schouten, and Koening (2002) argues that brands ties people into clusters that share similar interests.

2.3.1   Strategic Brand Management

In the article by Urde (2016), the purposes were in a strategic brand management perspective develop a framework for how to conduct continuous management, steady management, safeguarding the brand core, although exhilarating progress and development by responding to change. According to Urde (2016), all entrenched brands have an inner core, this could alter in terms of content, depth, and clarity. In connection to this, the brand core is the distilled version of the brand, without losing its essential meaning or servicing as a guidance for long-term management of the brand (Urde, 2016). Furthermore, Balmer *et al.,* (2006) stresses the importance of protecting the brand's core and simultaneously be adaptive to changes in the brands surrounding. It is important to acknowledge that the concept of brand core is relevant for all types of brands: product-, service-, and corporate brands. But the focus of this thesis will be on corporate brands. Urde (2016), states that in the earlier literature, the 'brand essence' is the most commonly used in relation to the brand core. In the work by de Chernatony (2009), the brand meaning, the presentation of its value proposition, and to precision its position, the notions of "brand essence", "brand vision" and "brand promise" are applied in earlier strategic brand management literature. In connection to this, Urde (2016) combines this and states that *'The brand core consists of core values and a promise constituting a single entity…'* (p.37).

In an interview made with the former CEO of Volvo, in the article by Urde (2016), the CEO states, "*An organisation must fight for its values*" (p.38). This statement is interpreted by Urde (2016), as a manifestation towards the brand-oriented mindset, where the identity of the brand core provides guidance and direction in the management of the brand. This orientation is the left one in (Figure 2.2) presented above. In connection to this, the 'continuity and change paradox' is introduced, this is in relation to the task of long-term brand management lessen by finding a method for altering perspectives of the brand core and by that acclimate to change while safeguarding the core (Urde, 2016). The probability or need to face situations where adjustment of the brand core is needed is likely in today's fierce market landscape. This exposes a brand's core of being perceived as 'hallow', 'true', 'aspirational' or 'potential'. These four definitions of a corporates brand's core are developed into a framework called 'the brand core grid' (Figure 2.3) below. What determines the verdict of which box of the framework a brand's core is put in is dependent on the factors such as, how strong it is rooted internally, how it is perceived externally, as well as it is appreciated by the brands stakeholders. (Urde 2016; Urde, 2009; Anker, Kappel, Eadie, & Sandø, 2012; Lencioni, 2002).

Externally perceived and appreciated values and promises

HIGH

| Potential | True |
| Consider adoption (example: 'Swedishness') | Fortify and build (example: 'safety') |

LOW

| Hollow | Aspirational |
| Revise or delete (example: 'premium luxury') | Communicate externally (example: 'environmental care') |

LOW   HIGH

Internally rooted values and promises
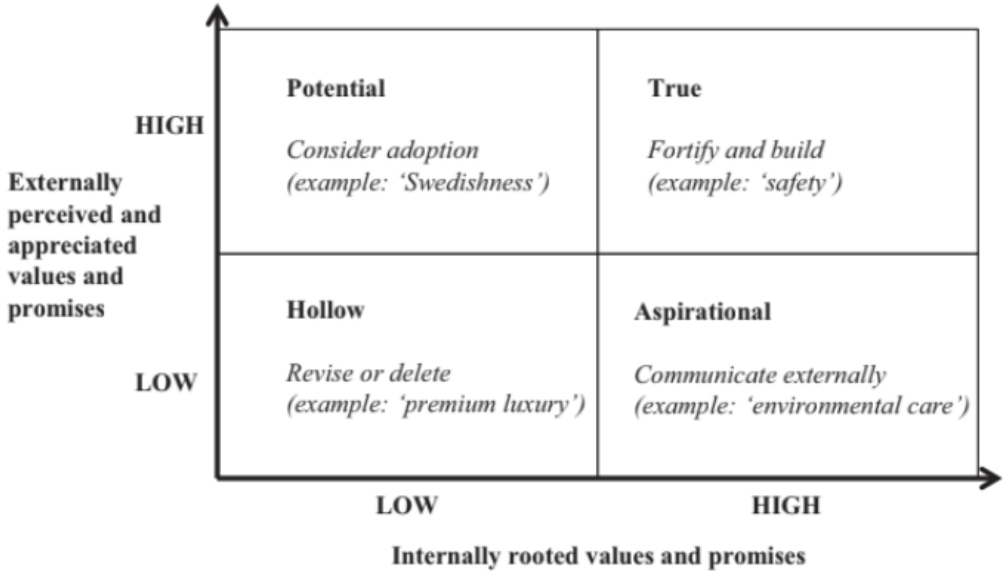
Figure 2.3 The Brand Core Grid (Urde, 2016, p.38)

2.3.2 The brand Core

Urde (2016) elaborates on the concept of core values by distinguishing three important aspects of core values. The first category of values addresses what distinguishes the corporation in terms of what they do, how they do it, and why, these are the deeply-rooted internal values that form the inner core of the brand (Harmon, 1996; Aaker & Joachimstahler, 2000; Hatch & Shultz, 2001; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; Ind, 2007). These are described as "values related to the organization" (Urde, 2016, p. 29). The second aspect addresses the "values that summarise the brand" (Urde, 2016, p.29). Urde (2016) describes these values as guides of the brand building, both internal and external. They act as the underlying code of conduct for the organization (Collins & Porras, 1998). The same category of values has been explicitly discussed in previous literature within brand management but has been labelled in a variety of ways such as kernel values (Kapferer, 2012), core values (Urde, 2009) and brand mantra (Keller *et al.,* 2012). The third and final aspect of core values are the "values as perceived by the customer" (Urde, 2016, p.30). These values are the fundament of the value proposition and the corporate brands positioning (Ballantyne, Williams & Aitken, 2011). The brand core is of relevance within Retro Branding, since these are the aspects that will be utilized as the retro-element when a corporate brand activates its track record, which will be further elaborated on and presented below.

2.3.3 Corporate Brand Heritage

The corporate brand stands apart from a product brand by utilizing the organization as its source of core values and promises (Balmer & Gray, 2003; Urde, 2003). In addition, a distinguishing factor for the corporate brand is that it is usually referred to as *we* or *they* internally and externally, while the product brand is commonly referred to as *it* by all stakeholders (Urde, 2013). The core values of the corporate brand are the foundation on which the corporate identity rests, and aids the brand promise (Urde, 2009). The core values of a corporate brand do not only help to distinguish it from competition, but they also serve as beacons for the leadership within the organization (Urde, 2009). Further, the core values build the corporate brand, both internally and externally, by guiding the organizational behaviour and actions throughout (Urde, 2009).

The phenomenon of Heritage is connected to the three-time perspectives; past, present, and future. these concepts are applicable to all categories of brands and organisations. (Urde & Greyser, 2015) The concept of Brand Heritage is further defined by Urde, Greyser, Balmer, (2007), *as "a dimension of a brand's identity found in its track record, longevity, core values, use of symbols and particularly in an organisational belief that its history is important"* (p.4). History itself is at first glance hard to separate from the concept of heritage, but it could be argued that history examines and define what could be referred to as a hazy past. On the contrary, heritage clarifies and brings parts of the past back into relevance, in regards of, presents contexts and purposes. (Lowenthal, 1998)

In connection, Urde et al. (2007) calls this conceptual framework 'The HQ Framework' with the previously mentioned five elements that brand heritage is composed of, with the sum referred to as 'brand stewardship'. The authors further state that if these five elements determines if a brand has elements of heritage or not, hence the more prominent they are for the brand, the greater the brands HQ. The concept at the centre of the model 'brand stewardship', is defined as a fundamental strategic management ethos, regarding nurturing, maintaining and protecting the brand's heritage (Urde *et al.,* 2007). To strengthen this, the author presents an argument is put forward that if a brands heritage is found and understood, the result could unravel value for the brand as the authors put it "*enabling the brand's past and present to strengthen its future*" (p. 9).

So why should a corporation in today's fierce competitive business setting practice heritage as a competitive resource? Urde *et al.,* (2007) argues that heritage is not limited to archival reference, it could be argued that there is no conflict in between using and expressing a brands heritage, and that the corporation could be perceived as being in the forefront of technological advancements and being modern. (Urde *et al.,* 2007) The value and competitive edge that the use of heritage in a corporation's marketing is pinpointed in citation from an interview with Volvo Cars former CEO Hans-Olov Olsson in the article by Urde *et al.,* (2007) *"Heritage provides a legacy that offers us a timeless relationship to the market/customers, society partners, and employees. Over time people recognise and expect that the company will continue to deliver on these commitments…"* (p. 9). In the section below the concept of retro brand and retro branding, which is closely related to brand heritage, will be defined and put into context. (Urde & Greyser, 2015)

2.4   Retro Branding

Being one of this thesis most prominent research fields, this section will introduce what the previous literature has stated regarding phenomenon of retro branding, and in particular retro brands. The concept of retro brands is discussed in the article by Wiedmann, Hennigs, Schmidt & Wuestefeld (2011) and connected to the definition of the concept by Brown, Kozinets, and Sherry Jr. (2003a), *"...relaunched historical brands with updated features.'"*(p.207), where they argue that retro brands are a desire to recall events from the past, when it could be considered to be uncomplicated. This is in line with Brown, Kozinets, and Sherry Jr. (2003a) definition of retro branding that is, *'...the revival or relaunch of a product or service brand from a prior historical period, which is usually but not always updated to contemporary standards of performance, functioning, or taste.'* (p.20) Launching a product in today's marketplace is expensive and can be drastically reduced by relaunching an old product, that is, noticeably less expensive and not as risky. Retro marketing is not only about reviving side-lined brands and target customers that are longing for nostalgia. In contrast, it is about co-creation of a sanctuary of authenticity for customers that have had enough of mass-marketing. (Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry Jr., 2003b)

Retro brands can be differentiated from, but also share similarities with, brand heritage. What separates the two concepts is that retro branding is associated with a special, categorial epoch, often associated with elements of nostalgia. (Urde, Greyser, & Balmer, 2007) In connection to this, Thompson, Pollio, and Locander (1994) elaborates that 'classic brands' as well as expressing moral values of craftsmanship and abiding value, likewise connects back to an era when the world was perceived as safer, more tangible, and less greedy. In the article by (Brown, *et al.,* 2003a), retro- and revived brands is to be considered as interseperatable. The authors further point out that a requirement to be considered as a revival- or retro-brand is that the brand needs an essence, in other words, it must have remained and have been considered as an icon during a span of time for a generation. (Brown, *et al.,* 2003a) Further, retro branding strategies weight a brands unforgettable story, hence, they usually tie to pre-existing notion linked to a brand's past in the consumer's mind, all of this to enable the brand to utilize connections with the brand grasped by consumers (Brown*, et al.,* 2003a).

In the article by Cattaneo and Guerini (2012), a distinction between retro and nostalgic products is argued by pointing out that if producing a replica of a former product or service and presenting it to the market, concern will arise that the product is not meeting the standards of today with regards to performance such as functionality, safety, and quality. This is what separates these two concepts, hence retro products are a merger between old-fashioned design and today's technology. (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012) Nevertheless, the above-mentioned distinction, retro brands have elements and is anticipated to be nostalgic (Hemetsberger, Kittinger-Rosanelli, Mueller, 2012). Vojvodic (2017), agrees that what separates retro- and nostalgic brands is that the former has the aspect of updating.

2.4.1   Nostalgia

In the article by (Hemetsberger *et al.,* 2012), interprets Turner (1987) definition of nostalgia as, *'nostalgia involves a sense of loss and decline, a melancholic vision of the contemporary world based on a perceived crisis in our civilization, a sense of loss of individual freedom and autonomy; and the idea of a loss of simplicity, authenticity and emotional spontaneity in a mass consumption culture.'* (p. 242) According to Hemetsberger et al., (2012) the previous literature on the subject of consumption of retro brands has highlighted nostalgia as the salient reason for this consumption. One of the prominent authors within in the field of nostalgia is Davis (1979), with his categorisation of nostalgia as either personal or communal. He defines 'personal nostalgia' as the nostalgic feeling in connection to object-related memories that has vanished. On the other hand, 'communal nostalgia' is related to turbulent social events that affect communities as a whole, such as great depressions and environmental crises, etc (Davis, 1979). The reflection back in time, and its fictional essence of moral certainty (Brown *et al.,* 2003b). Furthermore, retro brands allow consumers to return to history, and its ethos to bring that notion back to the present (Brown, *et al.,* 2003b; Holbrook, 1993). However, the study by (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012) found that nostalgia alone is not potent enough to serve as the unique selling point of a product and its communication strategy, but it serves exceptionally as an additional feature due to its powerful characteristics.

2.5   Track Record

In connection to the above presented phenomenon of retro branding, the phenomenon of track record is also one of this thesis most prominent research fields. This section will introduce what the previous literature has stated regarding the phenomenon of track record. As stated by Urde (2009) *"A brand cannot be stronger externally than it is internally"* (p.616). This is argued by Urde (2009) to be one of the strongest arguments to establishing clear core values and exploring the brands track record. All established brands have core values, which are more or less deeply rooted in the organization (Urde, 2009). These core values make up the organizations track record, and it may differ greatly in length and continuity from organization to organization. These are the core values that are perceived and appreciated by the various stakeholders of the brand. (Urde, 2009) The brands track record consists of its performance, emerging patterns, unwritten-contract to their stakeholders, and continuity. This is related to both its performance in the market, as well as its core values of the brand. The organizations track record of a core value is strengthened every time a stakeholder's expectations are met. (Urde, 2009)

For an organization to be able to create, develop and protect their brand as a strategic resource they need to uncover their core values and develop an understanding of dynamic of a track record (Urde 2009). An organization's Track Record is its *"demonstrated performance - proof - that the company over time has lived up to its values and promises"* (Urde *et al.,* 2007. p.9). As mentioned above, a brand's Track Record consists of several components. These are Performance, emerging patterns, its contract to its stakeholders, and continuity (Urde, 2009). These are all important factors in general when managing a brand and using the brand as a strategic resource within strategic brand management.

The nature of a brands track record is a brands performance over time. The performance component displays the past achievements of the brand. In order for a brand to stand the test of time, it needs to be relevant to consumers. (Urde *et al.,* 2007; Urde, 2009) This is one of the most commonly used dimensions in brand tracking studies (Urde, 2009). The second component of a brand track record is emerging patterns (Urde, 2009). Over time, when companies develop their strategies and behaviour they base it on previous, gradually successful approaches to various situations (Urde, 2009). These approaches merge into a pattern of actions being performed by a brand (Urde, 2009). These patterns are usually related

to the brands competitive advantage(s), or even the underlying reason for a resource to become the brands competitive advantage (Arthur, 1989). Arthur (1989) further argues that history, reputation, the organization itself, and path dependency are reasons for a resource may become difficult and/or costly to imitate for a competitor. Path dependency is further explained as the strategic use of a resource from the earlier periods and may well be used as a competitive advantage (Balmer & Gray, 2000).

While a brand acts in certain patterns and delivers a certain performance to its stakeholders, an unwritten contract is created between the brand and its stakeholders. This unwritten contract represents the third component the brands track record. This contract is the brand promise, and when managing a brand, it is of importance to identify this promise and maintain it (Ind, 2007; Balmer & Greyser, 2006; Urde, 2009). This contract, if maintained consistently, can become part of the brands identity and assist in the brand becoming a point-of-reference (Ind, 2007; Balmer & Greyser, 2006).

A main component in brand management in general, as well as the fourth component of a brands track record, is continuity. In order to maintain the brand, the brand promise, performance, and delivering on its promise the brand must do so over time with consistent quality. Based on this it argues that continuity is a major part of brand track record. Continuity is one of the most important criterions in brand management and through consistent behaviour a brand and its business is defined (Urde, 2003; 2009). There is a significant need of balance within brand management (Collins & Porras, 1998). In order to stay relevant in the minds of the consumers the brand needs to stimulate progress through innovation and activation. However, it is important that the brand stays consistent to its core to facilitate long-term brand building (Kapferer, 2008). The brand core is a brands fundamental meaning, or utility as a point-of-reference. It can be further described as what a brand can be reduced down to, without losing its essence. (Urde, 2016)

Once there is an understanding of what a track record entails and the core values that are associated with it, managers get an opportunity to more accurately examine the important moments and events in the brands history (Urde, 2009). When utilizing this approach to find the important achievements of the brand, the power of the event should be measured in the value it has to the brands stakeholders, in order to maximize the effect. Hence, not only the events potential for celebration. (Urde, 2009) These important achievements could then, possibly, be implemented as features of a retro brand, allowing the company to utilize the

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retro brand and by that activate its track record.

2.6 Corporate Reputation

The concept of reputation has been defined as the general opinions of someone or something (Dictionary Cambridge, n.d.). To further elaborate it means that reputation is "*a combination of the views and impressions of many different people, not unanimously held, but in general*" (Roper & Fill, 2012, p.5). Applying this in a corporate setting, the "many different people" aspect of the definitions translates into the various stakeholders of an organization (Formbrun, 1996). The various stakeholders of an organization have different expectations and impressions of it. Ranging from customers that want user satisfaction from products, to shareholders who want to see performance, as well as the general public and the employees. The needs of all stakeholders need to be taken into consideration (de Chernatony & Harris, 2000). Further, a corporate reputation consists of many different aspects of a company such as social image, product image, financial image and social image (Roper & Fill, 2012).

Within academia, corporate reputation is included in many different principles such as marketing, communications, strategic management, organizational theory and finance (Formbrun & van Riel, 1997; Balmer, 1998). This also translates into how its managed in reality. In order for a company to shape a good reputation, they need to incorporate the initiatives into the core of the business (van Riel & Formbrun, 2007). Bennett and Gabriel (2001) compares reputation forming and branding in terms of consistency over time. The historical nature of the reputation of high importance (Bennett & Gabriel, 2001). In addition, Dowling (1994) argued that a good reputation comes from communicating the company's mission, its role within the marketing environment, and the competence of the employees and leadership. These important factors of building corporate reputation can be captured in retro-branding, where the company has the possibility to demonstrate its past performances.

3   Methodology

This chapter will acquaint the reader with the choices made regarding research philosophy, research strategy, research purpose, research approach, research design, as well as the selected method for data collection, which enable us to fulfil the purpose of this thesis. First, the selected research philosophy, constructionism, of this thesis is presented and argued for. Secondly, the qualitative nature and inductive approach of the research are argued for. Next, the research purpose of this thesis is discussed as well as the multiple case study design. Finally, this chapter is concluded by thoroughly discussing the sampling of cases, and the validity and reliability of the data as well as the ethical considerations. The whole chapter is summarized in a methodological scheme, that concludes the choices made for this thesis.

3.1   Research Philosophy

The research philosophy, as defined by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2012) is the nature and the development of knowledge. It is further stressed by Guba and Lincoln (1994), that the first step of any research is to have a clear philosophical paradigm. A philosophical paradigm embodies how, in this case we in this thesis, interprets the nature of the world and the activities within it, such as the individuals and their relationships with the various aspects in the world around them.

The ontological stance that has been deemed most appropriate for this research is relativism. A relativistic approach is dependent on the perspective of which a problem is viewed from. Hence, no definite reality will be discovered, since the multiple perspectives can form various realities. By this logic, the recognized truth can alter depending on factors such as time and place. (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, Jackson, & Jaspersen, 2018) This entails that we will look at the phenomenon of track record activation, from a retro brand perspective. The presented ontological stance of master thesis, constraints the suitable potential epistemological stances. The epistemological stance that guides our research approach is constructionism. In connection, Easterby-Smith *et al.,* (2018) defines this paradigm as perceiving the reality as

not being reliant on objective and external aspects, rather that the people within the world shapes the reality (i.e. socially constructed), meaning that it is the people themselves that provide context through interaction with its setting. (Easterby-Smith *et al.,* 2018) The methodology that is most suitable for this research is guided by the ontological and epistemological stances and will be presented in this next section.

3.2   Research Strategy

When referring to a strategy in general, it is a line of actions to attain a goal. In that logic, a research strategy could be defined as a line of actions for how a researcher intend to answer the stated research question. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) There are a substantial amount of different research strategies that have been developed throughout time. Further, there are outlined linkages between different research strategies and the chosen research philosophy, research approach and research purpose. Even though there might seem to be vague differences between the different philosophies, approaches, and research strategies, there are much to be won in regard to coherency regarding research design of the report if the connections between the different choices is well established. This will provide a more streamlined process of answering the research question, of how Retro Brands can be utilized to activate a brands track record, and through that achieve the purpose and objective of exploring the phenomenon of a brands track record, and how it can be activated through retro brands. The choice of research strategy is as well influenced by the availability of existing knowledge, time constraints, and access to other data sources. (Saunders, *et al.,* 2012)

3.2.1   Qualitative Research Strategy

A qualitative research strategy will be utilized within this research. There are other strategies available, such as quantitative, and researchers further has the option to combine these strategies in various constructions (Landrum & Garza, 2015). However, a qualitative strategy has been deemed most appropriate for this study due the its nature of generating data that explores the *how* and *why* of a phenomenon. The aim of this study is to explore the phenomenon of activating a brands track record through the use of retro brands, and the data needed to answer the research question is preferably collected through the use of a qualitative strategy.

A quantitative strategy, which is one of the most commonly used research strategies, is not appropriate for this research since it focuses on statistical correlations and data centric quantifications (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Sreejesh, Mohapatra & Anusree, 2014). The nature of the research question of this thesis requires in-depth understandings of the phenomenon of track record, as well as the strategies and the context within which retro brands are deployed. In other words, how organizations apply retro branding strategies to activate their track record. This data, based on observations and interpretations of organizational behaviour can only be collected with a qualitative strategy, especially since the phenomenon of track record is relatively unknown. Further, the ontological (relativism) and epistemological (constructionism) stances taken for this research, as presented above, corresponds with a qualitative strategy (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

3.2.2   Inductive Approach

The most applicable research approach for this master thesis is an inductive one. While pursuing an inductive approach, the authors of this thesis intent to assimilate a valuable understanding of the problematizations nature. Hence, the circumstances surrounding the problem is accentuated. (Saunders, *et al.,* 2012) Within this research approach, the accompanied research questions are formulated as 'how' and 'why', considering that the theory is drawn from the data. This is what make the inductive approach optimal when aiming to grasp the explanation that humans adhere to events, in this case strategic brand management activities that influence consumers (Saunders, *et al.,* 2012)

3.3   Research Purpose

This master thesis will take the role of being exploratory and descriptive of nature. The purpose of this thesis is to explore how the use of retro brands can activate a brands track record, with the intent to further elaborate the concept of track record from a strategic brand management perspective. Thus, this master thesis will have a focus of being an exploratory study with descriptive aspects. When conducting exploratory research, the aspiration is to understand a phenomenon, bring new insights, asking questions, and shed a light on specific phenomenon. (Saunders, *et al.,* 2012) The authors further reason that there are a few prominent ways of practicing exploratory research, namely conducting a literature search;

interviewing experts within the specific field; and conducting in depth individual interviews or the choice of organising focus group interviews. One of the most prominent advantages of exploratory research, is the case of flexibility and adaptiveness. A researcher conducting this type of research needs to be prepared to change direction in connection to data the arise and newly achieved insights along the process. (Saunders, *et al.,* 2012)

3.4   Research Design

In general, research design could be defined as the "blueprint" for the research in question, and how to encounter and overcome four obstacles in relation to the same: which research questions to try to answer, what data are applicable, what data to retrieve, and how to interpret the results. (Philliber, Schwab, & Samsloss, 1980) The aim of this thesis is to generate theory within the research field of track record by exploring the subject in relation with retro branding. To achieve this, the research design that is most suitable is a case study approach (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2003).

We further argue that in the process of building theory, using of case study research design, there are many benefits of using a multiple case study. It is argued that multiple-case study is preferred when exploring a relatively new research area (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Further, Case studies are to be preferred within qualitative research that asks question such as *how* and *why* (Yin, 2003), and when the dynamics of a single setting needs to be understood (Eberhardt, 1989). The single setting in this case is the realm of brand track record. Case studies are further the preferred research design when researching a phenomenon taking place in a real-life context, upon which the researcher has little influence (Yin, 2003). This is especially important for this study, since we are collecting the data from already published material (marketing communication) upon which we have no influence.

The demand for case studies derive from the aspiration to understand complicated social phenomena, and by that the holistic approach to real-life events (e.g. individual life cycles, organisational and managerial processes, neighbourhood change, and international relations) (Yin, 2003). Multiple-case studies are beneficial when wanting to increase the generalizability, since it allows the researcher to determine if events and processes are unique to one specific setting, or more generally applicable (Miles & Hubermann, 1994).

In contrast to the philosophical stance this thesis has adopted, Easterby-Smith *et al.,* (2018) argues that choosing a case study method is connected to positivist stance, as well as being constructed with aspects of the relativist and constructivist stance. Furthermore, the choice between single- or multiple-case designs is according to Easterby-Smith *et al.,* (2018) divided where the former is connected to the constructionist stance and the later to the positivist epistemology. (Easterby-Smith *et al.,* 2018) Opposite to the divide made by (Easterby-Smith *et al.,* 2018) in regard to the epistemological stances connected to single- and multiple- case study, (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007) establishes a middle ground between these two epistemological positions enriched from both. Eisenhardt stresses the advantages of multiple methods, combining internal and interrelational case analysis for the aim of theory building using case-based research which is also acknowledged in Easterby-Smith *et al.,* (2018). (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007)

3.5   Sampling of Cases

In regard to the process of selecting cases for this multiple case study, Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) points out that this is associated with hurdles to theory building using cases. The authors further argue that a response to these hurdles would be to spell out that, as the case of this thesis, the purpose is to make a theoretical contribution, in contrast to testing it. Hence, theoretical sampling is appropriate, rather than either random- or stratified sampling (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). With theoretical sampling, cases are chosen based on factors such as, that the cases are applicable for shedding light on, spanning relationships, and logic amid constructs. (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007) In connection to this, we have selected the multiple cases for this thesis, based on the logic presented by Yin (1994), who argues that rather than selecting cases out of uniqueness, they should be selected based on contribution to theory building. In other words, a multiple case study design has been selected, to generate theoretical underpinnings, like replication, extension of theory, contrary replication, and elimination of alternative explanations. (Yin, 1994)

Eberhardt (1989) elaborates on the amount of cases for the multiple-case study. She states that it is beneficial to include between 4 and 10 different cases. Eberhardt (1989) argues that with less than 4 cases, they become too complex and can lack empirical grounding. Further, the amount of data and complexity becomes too much to handle with more than 10 cases.

However, it is also argued to add cases until theoretical saturation is reached. In this logic, by adding cases it facilitates the analytical power. (Eberhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007) The cases that has been selected all fulfil the predetermined criteria. The criteria we have used for selecting a case are that they must utilize retro branding strategy and have a track record. Further, an additional criterion that has been used is that the company must have worked with, or still work with retro branding as a marketing strategy. The criteria are further elaborated on below.

To be able to distinguish and deliberately choose the cases that is applicable, in regard to fulfilling the aim for this thesis, all of the cases have been chosen according to characteristics. The characteristics are met if the case can be applied to the definition of retro brand stated by Brown *et al.,* (2003a) that is, *'...relaunched historical brands with updated features.'* (p.19) as well as, the definition by Brown *et al.,* (2003a) regarding retro branding that is, *'...the revival or relaunch of a product or service brand from a prior historical period, which is usually but not always updated to contemporary standards of performance, functioning, or taste.'* (p.20) In addition, as an indicator for analysing cases that in some way are having a track record and thereby being applicable for this thesis we have applied the definition stated by Urde *et al.,* (2007) of what is to be considered a brands track record, that is, *"demonstrated performance - proof - that the company over time has lived up to its values and promises"* (p.9) In connection, the four factors that was stated by Urde (2009) that constitutes the track record, performance, emerging patterns, unwritten-contract to their stakeholders, and continuity has been used as a requirement for the different cases to be applicable for this thesis.

According to Eisenhardt, (1989) the aim of theoretical sampling is to designate cases that are prone to extend the infant theory. In regard to, theory building using multiple cases often equals a more profound foundation. (Yin, 1994) Hence, the use of multiple cases creates more rigorous theory, with the help of the premises being profoundly grounded in diverse empirical evidence. In addition, Eisenhardt and Graebner, (2007) argues that the same approach supports an immense exploration of research questions and theoretical elaboration. Furthermore, the authors stress the advantages with the approach 'polar types' within theoretical sampling, which is defined as using cases that are extremes to each other, to be able to discover contrasting patterns. (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007)

For this study, we have selected a variety of cases to study. The selected cases cover four different industries, and there are cases that represent the same industry. The cases used in

this research cover the car industry (Porsche, Singer Vehicle Design, Fiat, MINI and David Brown Automotive), the watch industry (Tag Heuer and Omega), the fashion industry (Levi's), as well as the fast-moving consumer goods industry, more specifically the beverage industry (Carlsberg and Coca-Cola). These cases were not selected at random. We selected these cases since they all, in some way or another, display their past through the use of their product offerings. Further, the brands all have significantly long history (at least 50 years).

In this research we will build the cases on marketing communications, and product offerings from the various companies. Due to the nature of track record, stretching back in time, we have looked at both old and new material produced by the case companies. However, the case companies have in some cases stopped promoting the material and does not formally publish it on their websites. In these cases, we have used journalist that cover marketing campaigns. Important to note, when we have used journalists like this has been used, it has been emphasized that the researcher only use material that can be directly connected to, and directly published by, the case companies, i.e. pictures of campaigns and products. This is to strictly eliminate and ignore the journalists own thoughts and analyses of the campaigns.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

It has been thoroughly argued (Yin 1981, 1984) that a research strategy needs to address concerns related to validity and reliability. As expressed above, the chosen methodology of this research is a multiple case study. The use of multiple cases in this instance allows for a robust theory creation, since the various cases provide empirical evidence that display the theory in different contexts (Yin, 1984). The use of multiple cases further increases the generalizability of the results (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin 1994), compared to a single case study. The multiple case study approach further allows the researchers to control the generalizability of the results, since the selection of the cases allows to control the variation (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). This can also be interpreted as the selected cases define the narrowness and idiosyncrasy of the generated theory (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007)

 To increase the confidence of the findings, the researchers will interpret the empirical material individually. The individual findings will then be compared in order to maximize the range of impressions and interpretations, while minimizing the risk of negative influences that

can lead to important findings being overlooked. (Yin, 1981) The convergent findings add to the empirical grounding, while the divergent ones allow for a more thorough analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989). The data collected from each case will be compared with the emergent frame, to see how it fits. This allows the researchers to develop theory that is closely related to the data. This iterative process is important since it *"yields an empirically valid theory"* (Eisenhardt, 1989 p.541), since it allows for new insights from the data.

 The multiple case study approach allows for an understanding of relationships between various concepts, in terms of *why* or *why not* they hold (Eberhardt, 1989). By understanding the *why* of a relationship's characteristics, the researchers establish internal validity (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2003). The results of the research can be further internally validated and generalized by comparing it to already existing theory to see if it aligns. However, existing literature that contradicts the results are also of importance to compare with, since it allows the researchers to further narrow down the generalizability of the results while getting even deeper insights into the results (Eberhardt, 1989). Comparing the results with already existing theory is argued to be especially important within theory building research, since it usually is based on a limited number of cases.

 This research utilizes a multiple case study approach. In other, similar, studies with this research strategy a combination of case study together with e.g. interviews, observations, etc. are often used (Eberhardt & Graebner, 2007). This allows for triangulation of the results from different sources of empirical material, which strengthens the validity and reliability of the results (Yin, 2003). However, due to limited resources the researchers of this paper will not be able to add an additional data source, and therefore this type of triangulation will not be possible. We recognize the significance of this decision and will therefore select varying cases (different industries and different corporate brands) and by that achieve triangulation by looking at the phenomenon in different contexts. The iterative process of comparing the data to theory forces the researchers to acknowledge contradicting results, which according to Eberhardt & Graebner, 2007) helps to generate novel theory with less researcher bias. The tight relationship between theory and data further strengthens the empirical validity of the theory.

3.6.1 Ethics and Principles

Generally, within marketing research, ethical issues arise from the researcher's relations to the various parties involved in the research, such as managers, private individuals, or as in this case corporate brands (Bell & Bryman, 2007). Due to the nature of this study, ethical issues stemming from relations to managers can be disregarded. However, researcher bias needs to be avoided before interpreting the empirical evidence, to ensure correct interpretations and eliminate any potential ethical issues towards the general public that might arise due to the results of the study. This was accomplished by utilizing a reflexive approach throughout the research process (Alvesson, 2003).

3.6.2 Being Reflexive

By consistently and consciously viewing each step of the research process from different perspectives, a reflexive approach was utilized in this study (Alvesson, 2003). Throughout the research, the authors continuously challenged the interpretations made about existing theory, the empirical material, as well as the analysis and eventually the proposed contributions. This was achieved through consistent dialogue between the authors, with a provocative purpose to neglect any interpretations that lacked grounding. This was especially important since the nature of the empirical material was marketing communications and product offering from companies, which can be influenced by personal interests. Further, the marketing communications and product offerings were interpreted with great understanding of its actual purpose, namely to sell the product. With this understanding, the researchers avoided the risk of the material being interpreted naively (Alvesson, 2003). As a concluding remark regarding the reflexivity, the constant dialogue between the authors allowed for new perspectives being seen through creatively interpreting the data and defending it when it was challenged (Alvesson, Hardy & Harley, 2008).

3.7   Conclusion of Method

To be able to summarize the different methodological research choices made in this thesis, we constructed a method scheme in (Figure 3.1) presented below:

Figure 3.1 *A Summarizing Method Scheme*
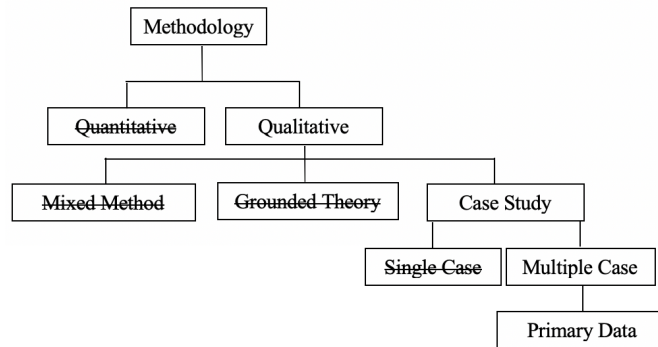
In the (Figure 3.1) presented above the different decisions regarding the research design that has been taken for this thesis, to arrive at the empirical data that has been analysed and interpreted. First, the choice was made to conduct a qualitative research method with a case study approach. Furthermore, the thesis conducted multiple case studies that provided the primary data.

4   Empirical Data

The following chapter of this thesis will further elaborate, and display the use of, the phenomenon of retro branding and track record, in connection to the definitions stated in the previous chapter. Based on the criterions listed in the sampling section, six cases will be presented in this chapter.

4.1   Case Companies

To start of an overview of the cases that will figurate as the data of analysis for this thesis has been listed and presented in (Table 4.1) below.

Table 4.1 *Summary of the Different Cases and the Specific Retro Branding for Different Products of this Study*

Corporate Brand	Retro Branding	Core Element
Porsche	- Original 911 (8 gen.) - 911 50th Anniversary - 911 Speedster Concept - Singer Vehicle Design 911	Design
Mini	- Mini 60 Years Edition - David Brown Automotive Mini remastered	Design
Coca-Cola	- 125th Anniversary Campaign of the taste - 100th Anniversary Campaign of the contour bottle	Taste
Omega	- the Omega 1957 Trilogy (Speedmaster, Seamaster & Railmaster) - The Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 Anniversary Limited Edition	Design
Levi's	- 2013 Vintage Clothing line - 2018 Vintage Clothing Line	Fashion

4.2   Porsche

The Porsche company was founded in 1948 by father Ferdinand Porsche and son and Ferdinand ("Ferry") Porsche. The car model that this thesis will focus on is the Porsche 911, which was first introduced to the world in 1964, and celebrated eight generations in 2018. (Porsche AG, n.d) In particular the 911 50th anniversary model, the Porsche 911 Speedster Concept, as well as the 911 Singer (i.e. third-party producer of a reproduction of the old version of the 911). A statement from Ferry Porsche, that has guided the company and represents the core of conduct throughout the company and its history is *"In the beginning I looked around and could not find quite the car I dreamed of. So I decided to build it myself."* (Porsche HOME - Porsche USA, n.d.).

4.2.1   Porsche 911 50th Anniversary Edition

Porsche released a limited (1963 units) anniversary edition of the 911 on its 50th anniversary. This special edition of the car featured various *"iconic design features"* (50 years of the Porsche 911, 2013) from the 1963 original 911 model, such as the design of the wheels, the historic 911 logo, the dogtooth pattern on the interior, the colour of the indexes on the dashboard, as well as the colour scheme that it is offered in, see (Appendix 1,2,3,4,5,6)(50 years of the Porsche 911, 2013). These iconic design features are brought back *"...as a homage to its predecessors"* (50 years of the Porsche 911, 2013), and technologically updated to fit today's standards safety and performance. *"Details are the connection between yesterday and tomorrow"* (50 years of the Porsche 911, 2013), and is how Porsche chooses to display the iconic features of the 911 model.

4.2.2   Porsche 911 Speedster Concept

Porsche released another car, the Porsche 911 Speedster Concept, as celebration of 70 years of Porsche sports cars. It is presented as *"the most extraordinary gift for our 70th anniversary" (Porsche HOME - Porsche USA, n.d.)* This model is an *"historically accurate execution"* (Porsche Omaha, 2018) of the "number one" (referring to Porsche 356), the first model that Porsche ever produced, as a nod to the dream of the sports car that has always guided Porsche as a company (Appendix 7). (Porsche HOME - Porsche USA, 2019) This

anniversary edition model displays the major milestones of Porsches history with its iconic design features, see (Appendix 7, 8), combined with the latest technology and mechanics (Porsche HOME - Porsche USA, n.d.). The Heritage Design Package, which is offered with the car displays even more of the rich sportscar heritage of the 356 model (Porsche, 2019). This design package is formed to give the car a true racing look, with numbering on the doors and retro logos, see (Appendix 8, 9), and the classic racing headlights that has been crossed over, see (Appendix 10, 11), (Porsche HOME - Porsche USA, n.d.). This anniversary edition of the 911 Speedster celebrates the influence of the brand on the development of the sports car during the last 70 years (Newsroom Porsche, 2018).

4.2.3   Porsche 911

For the release of the seventh generation Porsche 911, iconic features of the car were highlighted in the communication material of the marketing campaigns, hence, they highlighted the development of the iconic sports car and the celebration of 50 years of production of the Porsche 911 (seventh generation) (Appendix 13, 14). In the presentation of the seventh generation Porsche 911 the theme that we acknowledged of the communication was that it highlights its historical development from first generation to the latest model see (Appendix 14). Porsche states in their campaign that *"The legend is not over, it is just about to begin"* (Porsche, 2017), implying that their legendary history will continue with this new generation.

In connection, we found a very recent piece of marketing communication from Porsche, for the eighth generation of the original Porsche 911 that was released in 2018 (Newsroom Porsche, 2018), and in this case the ad was published in an airline magazine published in May 2019 (Timeless Machine, 2019). In this ad, see (Appendix 12), Porsche communicates that this model is *"the sum of its predecessors"* (Timeless Machine, 2019), and that the eighth generation of the Porsche 911 is a *"Reflection of its Past and a Vision for the Future"* (Timeless Machine, 2019).

4.2.4   Singer Vehicle Design

Singer Vehicle Design is a car designing company, that is guided by the founder Rob Dickinson's vision to be the best in the world when it comes to *"Restored. Reimagined.*

Reborn." reproductions of air-cooled Porsche 911. However, Singer Vehicle Design is not a part of Porsche, and states so very clearly in its communication. The company is not in any way endorsed by or associated with Porsche. (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.) Their business idea is to restore old air-cooled Porsche 911's with today's technology to turn them into "*the ultimate 911*", see (Appendix 15) (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.). On their homepage they have some citations from both famous people and magazines (opinion leaders) within the car industry, one being *"The perfect distilled essence of the world's most famous sports car - Chris Harris"* , *see (Appendix 16)*(Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.) Singer Vehicle Design rebuilds the car almost completely, restoring and assembling the engine by hand, to make it the ultimate 911 of today (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.). This means that it is technologically optimal in today's standards. Important to note though is that they go out of their way to keep the original design of the car (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.). In regard to, the corporate brand Singer Vehicle Design totally disassembled and carefully rebuild the engines to reassure top of the line quality and performance (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.).

4.3   MINI

Mini was first produced in 1959, and was the product of Sir Leonard Lord, the head of Morris company, who got the idea of building a small car with good fuel-efficiency and the capacity of transporting four people. This resulted in the launch of the first Mini. (Miniusa, n.d.). The Mini combined classical British style, in a fun and cheap car that became a representation of the core of the 1960's lifestyle, which was independent and spontaneous (Mini, n.d.). The Mini became *"A timeless style icon that captured the spirit of a generation"* (Mini, n.d.). In 2001, BMW bought and relaunched the MINI Brand with the launch of the 2001 MINI Cooper, which once again managed to capture the core of a generation with its combination of being *"premium yet urban, impressive yet thrillingly playful…while staying true to its legendary roots"* (Mini, n.d.).

4.3.1   MINI 60 Years Edition

In connection to the history of the original Mini model presented above, MINI produced a model celebrating 60 years of this iconic car with the MINI 60 years edition (MINI Cooper S 3-door Hatch or 5-door hatch), see (Appendix 17). The 60 years edition is according to MINI

a combination of the iconic style of its predecessor and attitude of modern technology, *"...with a nod to the past, while looking towards an exciting future.".* (Mini, n.d.) In a homage to the brands past, this celebration model acquires inspiration from the 60s and its heritage as a brand. Hence, this model is the only MINI that comes in the classic British racing green. This anniversary model *"recapture the spirit of the original in a modern flavour"* (Mini, n.d.) and *"celebrating six decades of timelessness"* (Mini, n.d.) To further, celebrate the 60th anniversary of MINI the MINI 60 years edition has the '60 years-logo" throughout the car, from bonnet stripes, side scuttles, on the carpets, to the door entry stripes, see (Appendix 18,19,20). (Mini, n.d.)

4.3.2 David Brown Automotive

Similar to the Singer Vehicle Design that restore old 911 (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.), David Brown Automotive remasters old Mini's and the car is referred to as 'The Mini Remastered', see (Appendix 21). (David Brown Automotive, n.d.) Further, there are more similarities between the two companies. David Brown Automotive emphasizes the importance of keeping the design of the old mini intact, and the goal of the company is *"Embracing the DNA of a design classic, then skilfully and respectfully remaster it to meet the demands of modern day life."* (David Brown Automotive, n.d.), see (Appendix 22), similar to the goal of Singer Vehicle Design. In regard to the manufacturing of the Mini remastered, the process is a handcrafted with both traditional and contemporary manufacturing processes for the perfect mixture. (David Drown Automotive, n.d.) The retro elements of the design are kept intact, but the technological and mechanical aspects of the car are *"Designed to meet modern demands"* (MINI REMASTERED, 2018), see (Appendix 23). This is further expressed by the company as *"Reintroducing the iconic shapes of the sixties into entirely new and contemporary packages"* (David Brown Automotive, n.d.). The company further describes the Remastered Mini as *"A Classic icon in a modern package…"* (MINI REMASTERED, 2018), see (Appendix 24), and the car is referred to as "The Mini Remastered" (David Brown Automotive, n.d.).

4.4 Coca-Cola

One of the world's most famous and well recognized brands is Coca-Cola. It is not common that a brand can remain in a market leading position, without adapting the product offering. However, Coca-Cola emphasized that they have done exactly this in their 125th anniversary campaign, where the main message is *"the recipe has stayed the same since it was created in Atlanta 1886"* (Coca-Cola, 2018) with the slogan *"They don't make 'em like they used to. We Do"* (Coca-Cola, 2018), see (Appendix 25, 26). The campaign expresses the pride that Coca-Cola takes in that the original recipe has remained the same, while so much else has changed. They emphasize this by relaunching four of the old bottle designs, see (Appendix 27). The relaunched bottles display the evolution of the Coca-Cola bottle, while emphasizing that the content is the same, and this is even more evident in a marketing communication from 2012 where the evolution of the Coca-Cola bottle from 1899-2007 is visualised (Macleod, 2011), see (Appendix 28). This is not the first time Coca-Cola celebrates their long history of its iconic product. In 2015, the company celebrated the 100th anniversary of their iconic bottle (Deighton, 2015), see (Appendix 29). Coca-Cola celebrated this by redecorating a bar, with inspiration from 1915, in order to transport the customers back to the time when the bottle was launched (Deighton, 2015).

The bottle design has always been an iconic feature of the famous soda (Coca-Cola, 2018). The campaign is accompanied with bottles, cans, posters and print material, all featuring old icons, such as Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe as well as retro ads from the past see (Appendix 25, 26,30, 31). Coca-Cola themselves express this campaign as *"... a celebration of our heritage and of the truly remarkable drink which has survived over a century and isn't going anywhere soon"* (Coca-Cola, 2018). In connection, they refer to themselves as being the original and an icon, *"one which has never been matched or beaten"* (Coca-Cola, 2018).

4.5 Omega

4.5.1 Omega 1957 Trilogy

The Omega brand is well-known within the watch industry and has for a long time been one of the brands that has shaped the industry. Omega has released a variety of different models

throughout the years, but one could argue that the models that define the brand the most is the Speedmaster, the Seamaster, and the Railmaster (Omega, n.d.). These three models were introduced by the brand in 1957 and has ever since been very important to the brand. The Speedmaster and the Seamaster model has been a part of Omegas product offerings ever since they were introduced in 1957 (Omega, n.d.). However, the Railmaster has not. It stopped being produced in 1988 and was not re-introduced until 2007, when it was given a new look (Pulvirent, 2018). In 2017, the brand released a 70th anniversary edition of the trio. The models were reproduced design-wise to look as identical as possible to the models in 1957 see (Appendix 32). In short, in addition to the look of the watch, the bracelet and clasp are remade identically to what they looked in 1957, and Omega installed a dial that was painted to look vintage. They look almost identical to the originals on the outside, see (Appendix 32). But on the inside, the have replaced the old movement (the mechanics that power the watch), to a new contemporary movement that better suits today's standards of performance, this is further described by Omega as "*The spirit of '57 meets 21st century technology*" (Omega, n.d.).

4.5.2   The Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 Anniversary Limited Edition

One of omegas most iconic models in their product line is the Omega Speedmaster watch. This model was introduced to the world in 1957 and has since then always been a big part of the Omega brand. This model had its break-through when it was worn by the astronauts aboard the Apollo 11 and Apollo 13 space missions (Omega, n.d.). Back then (1969) the Speedmaster was the only model that could survive the harsh conditions in space, which earned the brand the privilege of being the go-to brand for NASA.

In 1969, the astronauts that carried out the space missions got a special edition watch, made in gold and burgundy, for their performances. This model was reproduced for the 50th anniversary of the space mission in 2019 by Omega to "*pay tribute to history*" (Omega, n.d.), and released to the public in a very limited amount. The motivation behind this anniversary edition was that Omega *"... want to pay tribute to the space missions lasting legacy*" (Omega, n.d.), and they express that they "Omega *looks back at their special role within the space mission*" (Omega, n.d.), see (Appendix 35). In connection, design wise, the watch is almost an exact reproduction of the original, see (Appendix 34). The only difference is the slightly brighter shade of gold that is used. However, inside the watch is an updated movement to satisfy today's standards and demands. (Omega, n.d.).

4.6   Levi's

Levi's, one of the most famous clothing brands in the world and was founded in 1853 and named Levi Strauss after its founder. The business idea was initiated after recognising a need for resistant coating on the clothes for the everyday people. The first clothing that was produced by the company was waist overalls in 1873. (Levi, n.d.). In an attempt to describe what the company represents today, they state that Levi's are *"...the purest wearable form of authentic self-expression. They bear the markings of life, the shapes of our bodies, the memories of our adventures."* (Levi, n.d.). Further, the company's blog Off the Cuff, where you can get *"an inside look at everything Levi's"*, the inspiration to, and logic behind, the various campaigns of Levi's are elaborated upon (Off the Cuff, 2019).

4.6.1   Levi's Vintage Clothing

One of the clothing collections that Levi's offers is their Vintage Clothing line, which is all about recreating the fits, fabrics and details of their past and bringing them back to life. This is achieved by reused material and fabric from their archive, together with inspiration from their customers over the 146 years that they have been operating. These collections, that bring back some of the most famous and iconic pieces of Levi's old collections are design to *"stand the test of time and style"* (Off The Cuff, 2019). Levi's releases two collections of the Vintage Clothing Line every year, each celebrating an iconic era, e.g. the 2013 Fall/Winter campaign celebrated Detroit's 60's Motown musical revolution of Detroit in the 60's and the sunny style of the west Coast (Georgeautiful, 2013), see (Appendix 36, 37, 38). Further, the Spring/Summer collection of 2019 features styles and elements of the thrill-seekers and space explorer of Rocket City of the 1950s (Off The Cuff, 2019).

The Spring/Summer collection of 2019 features a variety of iconic pieces from the time period of 1920s to the 1960s. The clothes are designed to be *"specific to this time period"* (Off The Cuff, 2019), *"true to the original"* (Off The Cuff, 2019), *"Reproduction of the 1950s…"* (Off The Cuff, 2019), *"Archival Reproduction"* (Off The Cuff, 2019), or *"an exact reproduction of a garment from the Levi's archives"* (Off The Cuff, 2019), to stay true to what the brand stood for historically, see Appendix (39, 40). By launching these collections, Levi's seeks to give the consumer a chance to relive the treasured history of the brand, and their products (Off The Cuff, 2019).

5   Data Analysis

With the help of multiple case studies, with both within- and cross-case analysis the intent is to fulfil the aim of this thesis, namely to understand track record activation through retro brands. To be able to achieve this we will present the definitions of both retro brand and retro branding, as well as what we consider to be the four factors that the phenomenon of a brands track record consists of, namely: performance, emerging patterns, unwritten-contract to their stakeholders, and continuity.

5.1   Introduction to Analysis

Our purpose with this thesis is to explore the phenomenon of retro branding and how it can activate a corporate brands track record, from a strategic brand management perspective. With the aim of contributing with understanding and further conceptualization of the phenomenon of retro branding, as the tool for the activation of a corporate's brands' track record. In this chapter the cases will be analysed using both within- and cross-case analysis to is to establish what types of retro brands that the corporate brands, composing our multiple cases study, is used as the vehicle for activating their brands track record, and by that which different types of activation. Our intent is to distinguish the specific type of activation that takes place within these cases

The Market and Brand Orientation framework, presented in (Figure 2.2), in the literature review section above, and has been an extra dimension in the analysis of the multiple cases of this thesis. As elaborated on (in section 2.2), the framework visualizes the two orientations of market- and brand-oriented processes of defining a brand. (Knox and Bickerton, 2003; Baumgarth, *et al.,* 2011; Urde *et al.,* 2011) What this framework has provided to this thesis is connected to the defining of what encompasses the core of the different corporate brands, which Urde *et al.,* (2011) defines it, "*the strategic focal point*" (p.3). This has allowed us to get an understanding of the case companies brand cores, and through that being able to define what they have focused on when displaying their past and activating their track record.

Further, overarching themes connected to the different activations of the corporate brands track record will be identified. The identified themes of the different cases will act as a structural guide through this chapter. Further, the identified themes will have a prominent contribution to the *'Track Record Activation Framework'* that we have developed and that will be presented in the end of this chapter. It incorporates the two main phenomenon of retro branding and track record, with the thematised clusters of the multiple cases that has been analysed in this thesis and the different types of activation that has been used for activating the corporate brands track record.

5.2   The Visualization of a Track Record Activation

As a first step in the process of developing a conceptual framework for how a corporate brand could utilize retro brand, and through that activate their track record, we have developed a strategic brand management tool for the visualisation of track record activation in the perspective of time. A visualisation of this tool is presented in (Figure 5.1) below.
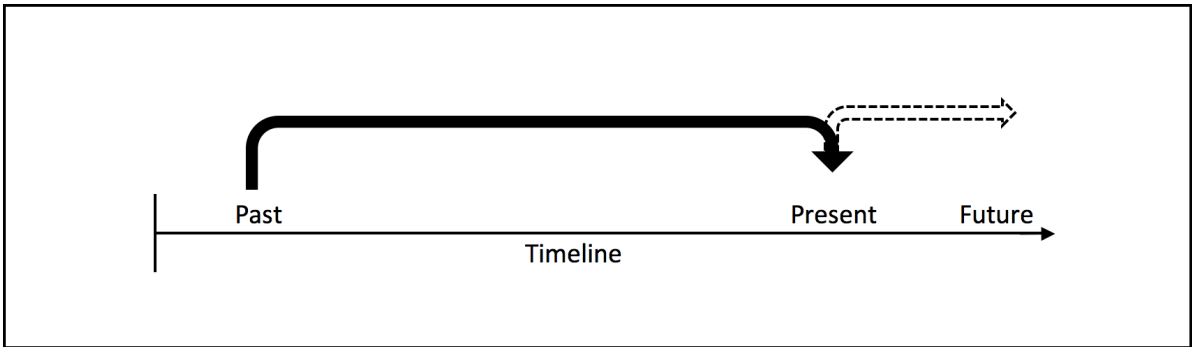

Figure 5.1 *Visualisations of a Track Record Activation*

This visualisation according to us a proof of that these retro brands has activated their corporate brands track record. Further, it will be used in the analysis of each case in this chapter to determine that the cases have used their past achievements and brought them into present times with the use of retro brands.

5.3 Track Record Activation Framework

In this following section the 'The Tack Record Activation Framework' (Figure 5.2), will be presented and elaborated upon, in connection to the above presented multiple cases and two of the main research of this thesis, that is, retro branding and track record. In this section we will guide the reader through how this conceptual framework was developed and the findings it has provided for this thesis.
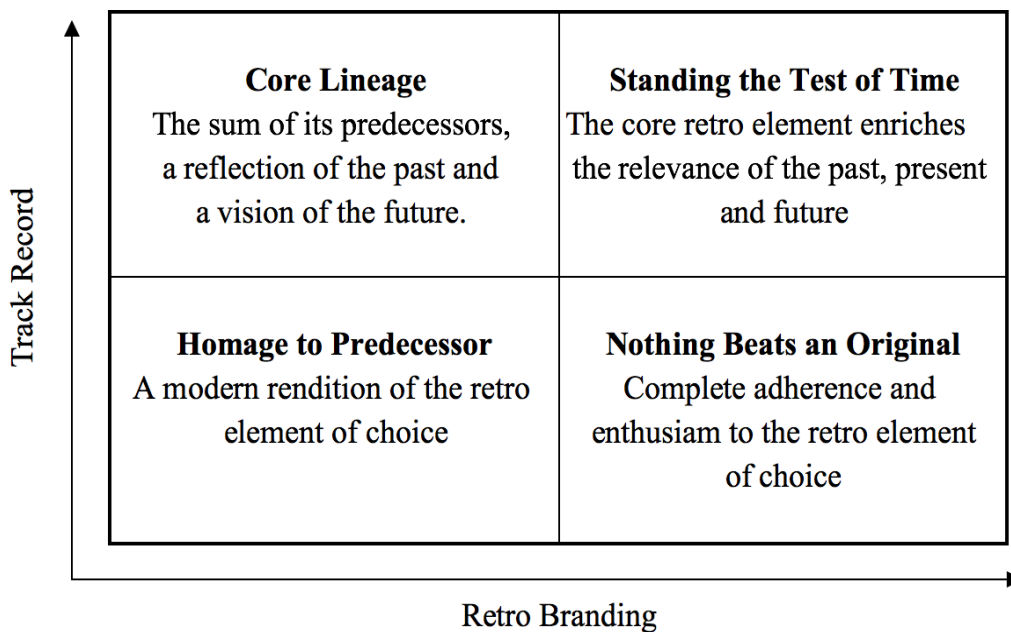

Figure 5.2 *Track Record Activation Framework*

On the two axes of this conceptual framework, the theoretical concepts of retro branding and track record are placed, and this is a conscious choice made by us. This was the result form the understanding reached through the literature review of the two phenomenon of track record and retro branding. With this understanding in mind, we acknowledged that all the cases in this thesis applied retro branding tactics, and in particular retro brands in their marketing communication. Furthermore, it became evident that these retro brands could in some way be connected to what was to be considered to be the core of the corporate brand and its history. The track record dimension provides an assessment of how the corporate brand current and future operations are influenced by its past achievements. These theoretical concepts are the two most prominent research fields of this thesis. The overall aim of this thesis is to conceptualize the use of retro brand to activate a corporate brands track record,

which to our knowledge has not been done before. Based on the empirical evidence presented above from the multiple cases we have acknowledged that specific retro elements are used to activate the corporate brands track record by highlighting aspects and features from the corporate brands past and acclimatize them to modern standards, by this logic the choice of these two specific phenomenon on the axis' becomes evident.

In the process of categorising the multiple cases of this thesis into the four themes, Homage to predecessor, Nothing Beats and Original, Core Lineage and Standing the Test of Time, that is presented in the *'The Tack Record Activation Framework'* (Figure 5.2), we continuously compared the cases to the already established definitions of the track record and retro brand concepts (Brown *et al.,* 2003a; Urde, 2009). We have from this been able to confirm that the two concepts, in this setting, can be described as follows. The dimension of track record categorizes the type of retro brand depending on how much of the track record that is activated, as well as the continuity of what is activated. Further, the retro brand dimension categorizes what degree of retro branding that is practised, and how much of the retro element (from the track record) that is displayed. The characteristics of the four themes will be presented below, in addition to this, keywords relating to the communication from the cases within each theme will be presented as a complement to the themes.

5.3.1   Definition of Themes

Homage to Predecessor
Hence, when a corporate brand highlights retro element of a product offering from their past and adapts them to contemporary standards. Based on the empirical data collected from the cases of Porsche (911 50th Anniversary Edition, Porsche 911 Speedster Concept) and Mini (MINI 60 Years Edition), we have acknowledged this theme as a way of highlighting design elements from past models, by incorporating them into contemporary models and highlighting them, to pay homage to the preceding models that in some way has shaped the corporate brand into what it is today.

Nothing Beats an Original
This theme is characterized by complete adherence and enthusiasm to the retro element of choice. When completely absorbing the retro element of choice (e.g. design) a corporate brand has an opportunity to reintroduce the iconic features to the consumers of today. Based on the empirical material, this practice is commonly accompanied with contemporary

performance standards, as seen in the cases of Singer Vehicle Design and David Brown Automotive, where they completely adhere to the original design and update the engine to today's standards. This theme acknowledges the relevance and influence and engaging power of an original, such as the original Porsche 911.

Core Linage

It is the sum of the predecessors, a reflection of the past and a vision of the future, that characterizes this theme. By this we mean that the retro element displays the progressive development of the brand. However, even though it has evolved, the brand core has remained and can be used as a clear identifier. A distinguishing factor for this theme is that it is not only one specific retro aspect that is utilized, but rather the iconic features of the predecessors representing a sum of its past, in order to visualise the present, as well as, the future of the corporate brand. When applying this theme of activation of a corporate brands track record with retro brands as the vehicle, it provides the corporate brand with a strategic brand management edge of displaying a long history of continuous performance. This has been observed by us in the Porsche 911 Seventh and Eighth generation model case, which according to us a good representation of this theme of activation of a corporate brands track record by utilizing a retro brand.

Standing the Test of Time

This theme is characterized by a core retro element that enriches the relevance of the brands past, present and future. The core retro element that is displayed is deeply connected to what the brand represents, identifies with, and want to continue to represent and identify with in the future. This is common, but not always, related to a specific historical event that is of significance, not just for the brand itself, but also for its stakeholders. To exemplify this, Omega's use of the moon landing is of importance to the brand, but even more important to the human race. The emphasized retro element represents a significant part of the retro brand (e.g. design, taste, fashion, historical event) that has survived the test of time, in terms of relevance to stakeholders. Further, the selected retro element is commonly fully replicated and, if needed, updated to contemporary standards such as in the Omega cases, otherwise remained the same as in the Coca-Cola and Levi's cases.

We have in the (Table 5.1) below, summarized the four thematizations of the 'Tack Record Activation Framework' (Figure 5.2), and presented specific keywords that have become evident during the analysis of the marketing communication from the different cases in the

empirical data chapter (chapter 4). The keywords can be used to further facilitate the identification of which theme a type of track record activation can be associated with.

Table 5.1 *Thematizations and Accompanied Characteristic Keywords Used in the Cases*

Thematization	Characteristics
Homage to Predecessor	*Keywords:* Iconic, Timeless, Generation, Distinctive, Accents, Modernized, Classic, Inspired, Original and Historical.
Nothing Beats the Original	*Keywords:* Classic, Icon, Restored, Reimagined, Reborn, Embracing, DNA, Reintroduced, Distilled, Essence and Remastered
Core Lineage	*Keywords*: Iconic, Development, Influenced, Tradition, Characteristics, Future, Generation, Predecessor, Silhouette, Timeless, and Inspired
Standing the Test of Time	*Keywords:* Tribute, Legacy, Authentic, Iconic, Test of Time, Time-Period, Original, Reproduction, Archives, Celebrating

5.3.2   Homage to its Predecessor

Porsche

The two Porsche models, the 911 50th Anniversary Edition, and the 911 Speedster Concept can be categorized as retro brands and is in line with the Wiedmann *et al.,* (2011) definition *"...relaunched historical brands with updated features.'"* (p.207). In connection, Porsche has applied similar communication approaches, retro branding, for these models. That is relaunching iconic design features form their rich history of all the models whilst updating the technological aspect to fit the contemporary standards of today (Brown *et al.,* 2003a). Furthermore, we have seen that the above-mentioned models, the 50th anniversary model, and the 911 Speedster Concept, both fulfil the four factors that compose what is to be considered a

corporate brands track record, that is displaying its performance, emerging patterns, unwritten-contract, and continuity (Urde, 2009).

We have observed these four factors stated above in the communication from Porsche, starting with the performance factor, the actions and communication of the Porsche brand by expressing that the Porsche 911 has been the market leader within the sports car segment since 1964, see (Appendix 1, 8). Further, the 50th Anniversary Edition celebrating the cars excellence and legendary status, and the 911 Speedster Concept in the same manner celebrating Porsches impact on the sports car (Porsche n.d.). These examples further demonstrate how the Porsche brand fulfils its unwritten contract to its stakeholders. Having done this through their entire existence in the car manufacturing industry, displays their continuity in delivering design that turns heads and outstanding performance. the last factor of the brands track record, emerging patterns, we have observed this factor in all of the communication from Porsche for these two models, the pattern of being the ultimate sports car for every generation and staying true to this through time. (Appendix 1,8) (Porsche, n.d)
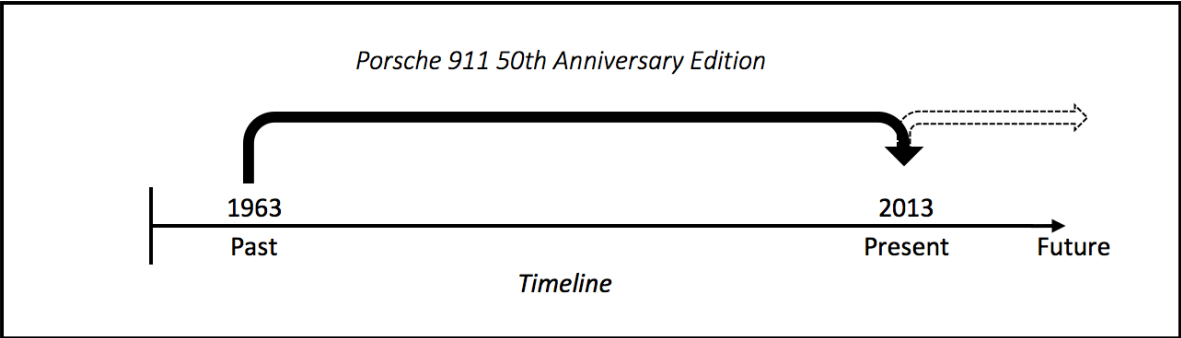

Figure 5.3 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case of Porsche 911 50th Anniversary Edition*
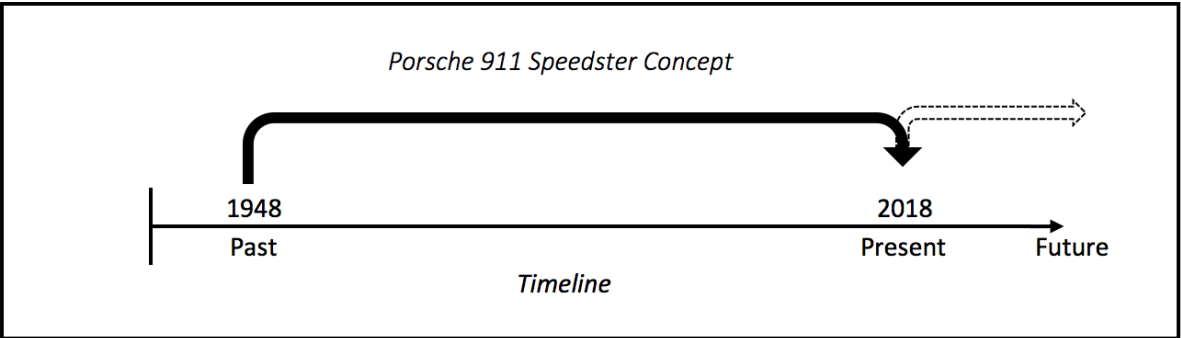
Figure 5.4 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case of Porsche 911 Speedster Concept*

MINI

In the case of MINI the relaunch of the brand itself from the classic icon of the original Mini and when it was acquired by BMW, we argue that the choice of doing this relaunch the icon and branding it the MINI is to be considered using a retro brand in line with the definition of the same concept by Brown *et al.,* (2003a) by the corporate brand BMW. (MINI, n.d) The relaunch of the MINI brand displays how they managed to stay true to its original core, "*premium yet urban, impressive yet thrillingly playful..." (Mini, n.d.)* by reinterpreting it to capture the interest and devotion of a new generation. Further, this fulfils (Brown *et al.,* 2003a) definition of retro branding (MINI, n.d.).

From the birth of the brand in 1959, to the relaunch of it in 2001, and finally the celebration of the corporate brands 60-year anniversary, with the production of the 60 years edition, we argue that the corporate brand MINI has proven to be the iconic and sought-after city car with its roots in British car manufacturing. In connection, the acquisition by BMW brought the brand into the 21th century in terms of the technological requirements of today. We argue that this proves MINI to upholds the performance factor, of their track record. In connection, the statement *"recapture the spirit of the original in a modern flavour"* (Mini, n.d.) shows their devotion of upholding the unwritten contract between the Mini brand and its stakeholders. Further, the execution of the models that MINI present, together with their statement *"...with a nod to the past, while looking towards an exciting future."* (Mini, n.d) (Appendix 17) displays an emerging pattern of the brand, in accordance to its track record. Mini commonly work with historical elements of their old products, resulting in their latest anniversary edition model *"celebrating six decades of timelessness"* (Mini, n.d). We want to argue that this, if anything, display the continuity of the corporate brands track record. (Urde, 2009)
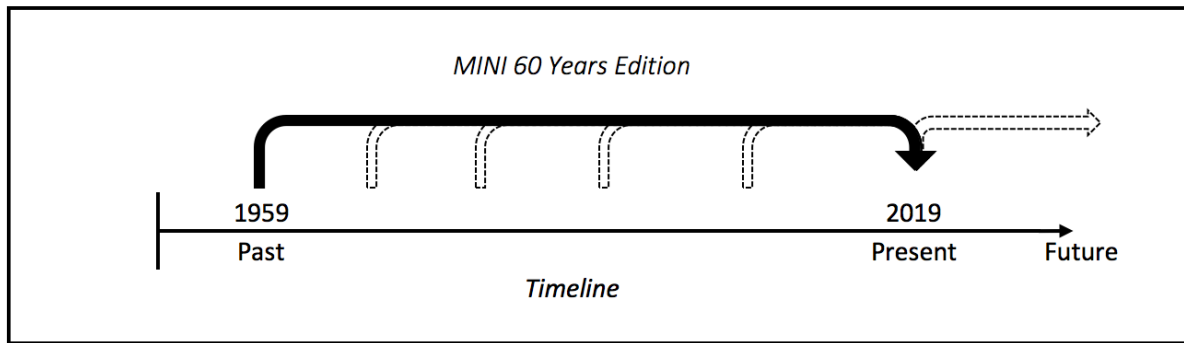
Figure 5.5 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case of MINI 60 Years Edition.*

Thematization: Homage to Predecessor

The findings that we have reached regarding the cases of Porsche and Mini, is that they all present a modern rendering of an iconic product from their history, with regard to design elements from their predecessor. In addition to this, we have observed a general theme in the marketing communication of all these cases, that is, all companies feature the original product in the communication, to enable comparison between the old and new product. The Mini 60 Years Edition, Porsche 911 50th Anniversary Edition, and the 70th anniversary 911 Speedster Concept are, based on our analysis of their marketing communication, presented above, what we categorise as celebratory retro brands. These types of retro brands have activated their respective corporate brands track record by conducting what we have chosen to categorise as an Anniversary Activation. This type of activation acknowledges the corporate brand track record, but only showcasing the selected elements from the originally produced product. In connection to the above discussion, we have developed and produced a general theme for all of these different cases, that is *'Homage to Predecessor'*.

5.3.3   Nothing Beats an Original

Singer Vehicle Design

This case is a representation of a corporate brand (Singer Vehicle Design) that uses a retro product, in this case the *"Restored. Reimagined. Reborn."* (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d) reproduction of the 911, with its retro design and high-technology mechanics. We consider to be the definition of what Brown *et al.,* (2003a) referred to as a retro brand. Further, the marketing activities of the product see (Appendix 16), performed by Singer Vehicle Design, also displays the use of retro branding tactics (Brown, *et al.,* 2003). Regarding Singer Vehicle

Designs operations and the product offering, see Appendix (15, 16), we believe that this is an optimal representation of how the theoretical concept retro branding is displayed in practice, and how a corporate brand can relaunch and communicate its iconic retro features to attract contemporary demands.

Singer Vehicle Design provides special insights to this thesis and to the Porsche case in particular, since they so clearly distance themselves from the Porsche company. However, in terms of activating track record, the authors of this thesis would argue that the Porsche Corporate Brand gets the benefits of the product produced by Singer Vehicle Design. We argue this due to the characteristics of Singer Vehicle Designs work. Singer Vehicle Design maintains the original design of the car and keeps it true to the 1990s era (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.). Further, Singer Vehicle Design also emphasize the importance that the people who own the cars, nor anyone else, do not refer to them as anything else than a Porsche 911, and not a 'Singer', 'Singer Porsche', or 'Singer 911' (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.).

Based on the argumentation in the previous paragraph, the operations of Singer Vehicle Design contribute to the demonstration of the Porsche Brands track record. Hence, for the analysis of the track record in this specific case, we will take the Porsche perspective, and by that it is their track record that is activated and strengthened by Singer Vehicle Designs operations. The performance aspect of the track record is that Singer Vehicle Design produces the *"ultimate 911"* (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.). Further, the unwritten contract is fulfilled by constantly staying true to their motto, *"Restored, Reimagined, Reborn"* (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.) reproduction of the old 911, which brings out the full potential of the old 911, according to today's standards. The emerging patterns aspect of the track record is accomplished due to the fact that even though Singer Vehicle Design produces their ultimate vision of the 911, it is still unmistakably a 1990s era air-cooled Porsche 911 (Porsche, n.d.; Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.). Further, this is one of the ways of which the continuity of the track record is displayed, in addition to that the quality of the reproduced products are consistent due to the hand-crafted engines (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d)
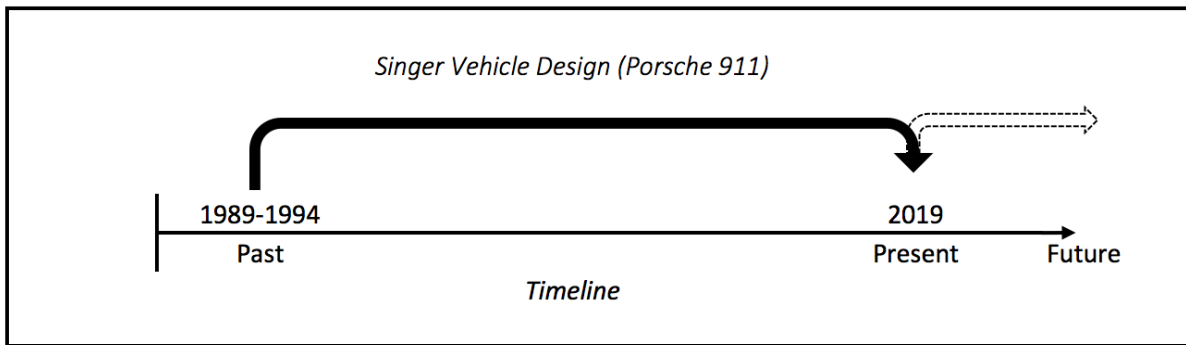
Figure 5.6 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case Singer Vehicle Design (Porsche 911).*

David Brown Automotive

As presented in the empirical section of this case, and more specifically by the statements from David Brown Automotive regarding their operations and way of conduct, we argue that this case is the optimal representation of how a corporate brand can relaunch and communicate a retro brand from the past and update its features to contemporary standards. Hence, we argue that the retro aspect of this case and the communication of David Brown Automotive is the exact representation of both Brown *et al.,* (2003a), definitions of what a retro brand is, and how to conduct retro branding activities. This is also true for the case of Singer Vehicle Design, presented above. An additional factor that displays the similarities between David Brown Automotive and Singer Vehicle Design is that both of the companies clearly states that they do not have any partnership, endorsements or other partnerships with the original brands (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.; David Brown Automotive, n.d.). The companies thus direct all the perceived benefits (i.e. brand building) generated by their creations to the original brands (Porsche and Mini), and base their operations solely on restoring old classics, and remastering them to meet the standards of today (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.; David Brown Automotive, n.d.).

Based on the argumentation in the previous paragraph, the operations of David Brown Automotive contributes to the demonstration of the MINI brands track record. Hence, for the analysis of the track record in this specific case, we will take the MINI's perspective, and by that it is their track record that is activated and strengthened by David Brown Automotive operations. The fact that David Brown Automotive remasters the old Mini's to meet the demands of modern-day life, is the performance factor of the track record. Further, the brand stays true to its unwritten contract by *"Reintroducing the iconic shapes of the sixties into*

entirely new and contemporary packages" (David Brown Automotive, n.d.)*,* and similar to this, emerging patterns are displayed through *"Embracing the DNA of a design classic, then skilfully and respectfully remaster it to meet the demands of modern day life."* (David Brown Automotive, n.d.). Lastly, the creations of David Brown Automotive is still unmistakably a Mini, even though it has been remastered, since David Brown Automotive emphasizes the spirit and personally of the original. Further, there is a consistent high level of quality due to the engineering excellence that these handcrafter masterpieces are. These factors display the continuity, as a part of the track record. (Urde, 2009)
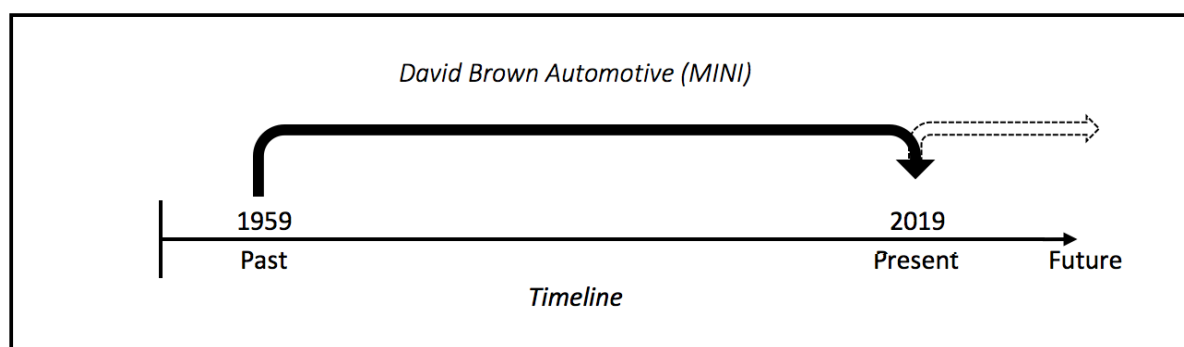

Figure 5.7 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the case of David Brown Automotive (MINI)*

Thematization: Nothing Beats an Original

These cases display similarities by fully embracing the chosen retro element. This has been observed in the marketing of the retro aspect of the product offering, where Singer Vehicle Design and David Brown Automotive fully embrace the original design of the cars. The retro element, that in these cases are design (Singer Vehicle Design and David Brown Automotive) are essentially replicated from the original versions. Based on the analysis in the previous paragraphs, we argue that Singer Vehicle Design (Porsche 911) and David Brown Automotive (Mini Remastered) is to be classified as remastered retro brands, activating Porsche and MINI's track record through co-creational activation. This is what we consider to be when a third party contribute to the activation of a corporate brands track record. We classify the theme of these cases, and how they through retro brands activate their corporate brand track record as *'Nothing Beats an Original'*.

5.3.4 Core Linage

Porsche 911

As we already have mentioned in the previous Porsche case above, Porsches way of marketing communication is coherent with the definition of what a retro brand is by Wiedmann *et al.,* (2011) as, *"...relaunched historical brands with updated features."* (p.207), hence, the progression and development of its original Porsche 911 model and releasing new generations of this car model and makes it applicable as unit of analysis for this thesis. In connection, we argue that Porsche is applying retro marketing strategies in their marketing communication for the original Porsche 911 see (Appendix 13,14) where the seven generations of the Porsche 911 are lined up beside each other, as well as having the seventh-generation model alongside a mirror displaying all its 6 predecessors including the latest generation see (Appendix, 13). Hence, this is in accordance with the definition for retro marketing stated by Brown *et al.,* (2003a). The eighth generation of the Porsche 911 is communicated as a reflection of the past and a vision of the future, very similar to what is displayed with the use of pictures and movies from the seventh-generation model. Making the original Porsche 911 fulfilling the requirements of being a retro brand, and Porsche applying retro branding strategies. (Porsche, n.d.)

The original Porsche 911 displays the four factors that make a brands track record (Urde, 2009). The Porsche 911 has been *the* sports car for seven generations. It has for 50 years defined the brands vision of what a sports car is, displaying the performance of the brand (Urde, 2009). By continually developing and redefining the 911 model, they have developed and defined the sportscar for seven generations yet stayed true to its core. This displays both the emerging patterns of the brand, as well as fulfilling the unwritten contract to its stakeholders in a continuous way (Urde, 2009). The models 50 years of history is displayed through the presentation of the seven generations see (Appendix 14), as well as the communications regarding the eighth generation, and is what we argue to be a great representation of a corporate brand and its long track record, in this case spanning 50 years, and by that fulfilling the performance factor and past achievements of the Porsche 911. (Urde *et al.,* 2007; Ind, 2007; Balmer & Greyser, 2006; Urde 2009)
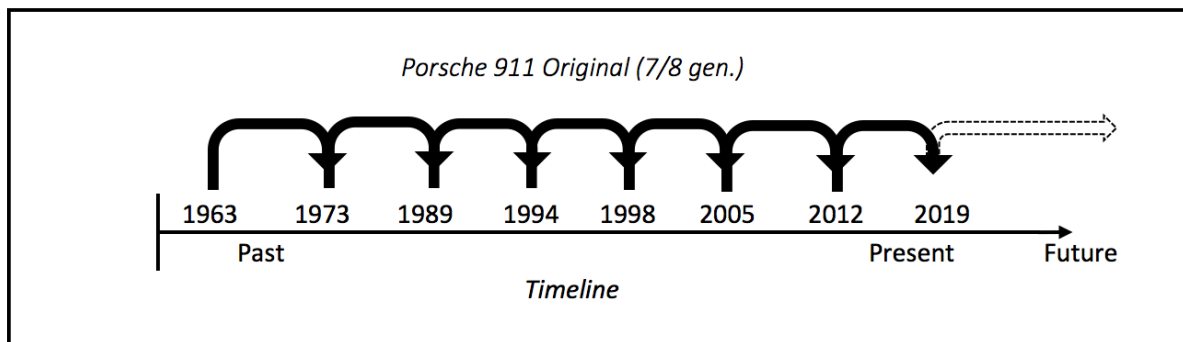
Figure 5.8 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case of Porsche 911 Original (8 generations).*

Thematization: Core Linage

We noticed a general theme in Porsches communication and product offering that we have analysed in this case, that the seventh generation and eight generation communication material displayed the development and evolution of this model, while staying true to its core, was highlighted. What separate these campaigns from the release of the 50th anniversary model and the 911 Speedster Concept, that was presented above (in paragraph xx) is that those cases show the connection to the first generation more direct and with heritage design features being highlighted. In the case of the original Porsche 911 we have identified and labelled this type of retro brand as the same as for the cars that is under the theme *'Homage to Predecessor'* that is, a celebratory retro brand. In connection, the type of activation that Porsche has applied in this case is a progressive activation. Further, the difference between this activation, and the activation connected to the *'Homage to Predecessor'* cases is that it's not only one specific retro aspect that is activated, but all seven generations of the Porsche 911. Hence, we can see that the same type of retro brand can be activated in different ways. Finally, we have identified the general theme of this case(s) in regard to how they have utilised retro brands to activate their corporate track record to be '*Core Lineage'*.

5.3.5   Standing the Test of Time

Omega

The Speedmaster model has since 1957 been re-launched in a variety of different versions (Omega, n.d.) see (Appendix 34). This is a display of what Balmer & Greyser (2006) refers to as continuity of a brand, when such an iconic part of the brand is remade in different versions,

but still staying true to its core. This connects to the definition of retro brand, by (Brown, *et al.,* 2003a) as well as what Brown *et al.,* (2003a) defines retro branding to be, namely a relaunched product with updated features. This is communicated by Omega as "*The spirit of '57 meets 21st century technology*". This is true for both the Omega 1957 Trilogy and for the Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 Anniversary Limited Edition. The new models that Omega offers embrace their retro element (design) to the fullest, through releasing models that are close to identical to the originals, see (Appendix 32, 34). The brand further updates the technology within the watch, to better fit contemporary standards, see (Appendix 35).

The different models that shape the Omega brand have different history, but what they do have in common is that they have displayed the diversity and utility of the products. Originally, the models were launched with a purpose, whether it was going to the moon, resisting the magnetic impulses of the railways, or resisting water pressure when diving. We argue in this thesis that this displays the unwritten contract to its stakeholders, with the core of the different models released by Omega is coherent, but with time it displays adaption to the changing demands of the audience and technological advancements within the industry, displaying the emerging patterns of the brand (Urde, 2009). The coherence to the core of the brand is what Urde (2009) refers to as fulfilling the unwritten contract of the corporate brand. The relaunch of these models all display the past achievements of the Omega brand, which is a factor of the brands track record (Urde *et al.,* 2007). The history of each of these models are presented to the Omega Brands audience, through the use of the products, demonstrating the performance and fulfilling the values and promises of the brand. What is displayed through these retro models can therefore be said to be the brand's track record (Urde *et al.,* 2007; Ind, 2007; Balmer & Greyser, 2006).
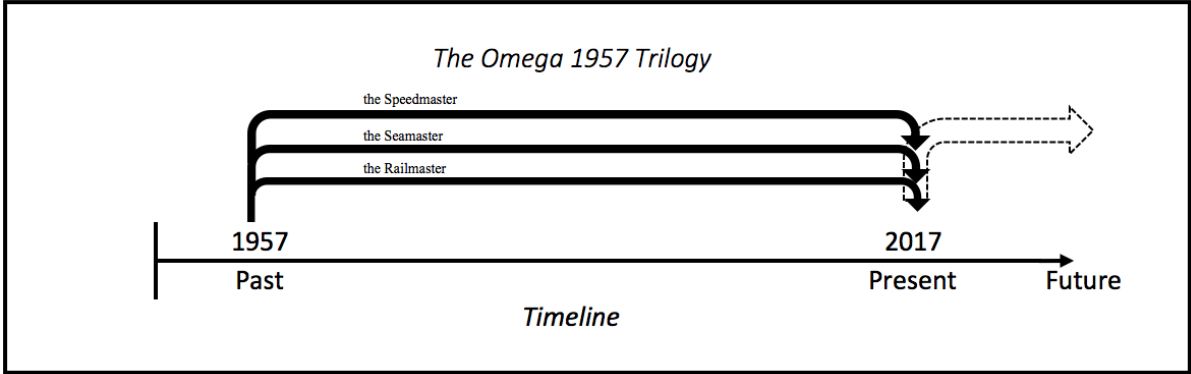

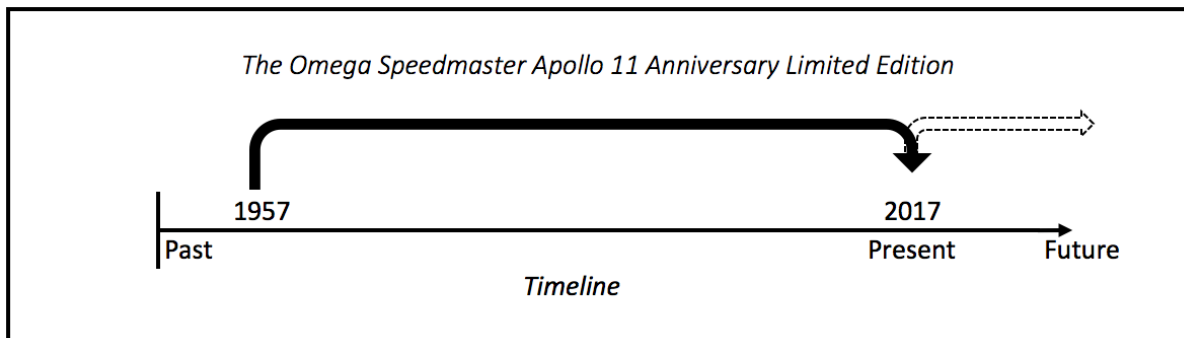***Figure 5.9*** *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case of the Omega 1957 Trilogy.*

Figure 5.10 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case of the Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 Anniversary Limited Edition.*

Levi's

Levi's retro branding takes the form of a vintage design collection, being released twice a year. The brand uses old materials, inspirations from their customer and historical events to create these collections, with new contemporary techniques to suit the demands of vintage clothing. This is in accordance with Brown *et al.,* (2003a) definitions of Retro brands Retro Branding. Further, the four factors (performance, emerging patterns, unwritten contract and continuity) of a brands track record (Urde, 2009) are fulfilled and demonstrated to the stakeholders through Levi's use of retro branding.

The first factor, performance, is achieved through their long history of *"... defining style for decades"* (Levi's, n.d.) The second factor, emerging patterns, is achieved through the recurring use of reproducing iconic vintage clothing collections, they are imprinting this way of conducting business. The third factor, staying true to their unwritten contract is accomplished through their performance over time, not just defining style but, as they themselves communicates: *"Worn by generations…"* (Levi's, n.d.). The fourth and last factors, continuity, is demonstrated through the recurring vintage clothing collections taking place every year.

Figure 5.11 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case of Levi's 2013 Vintage Clothing Collection.*
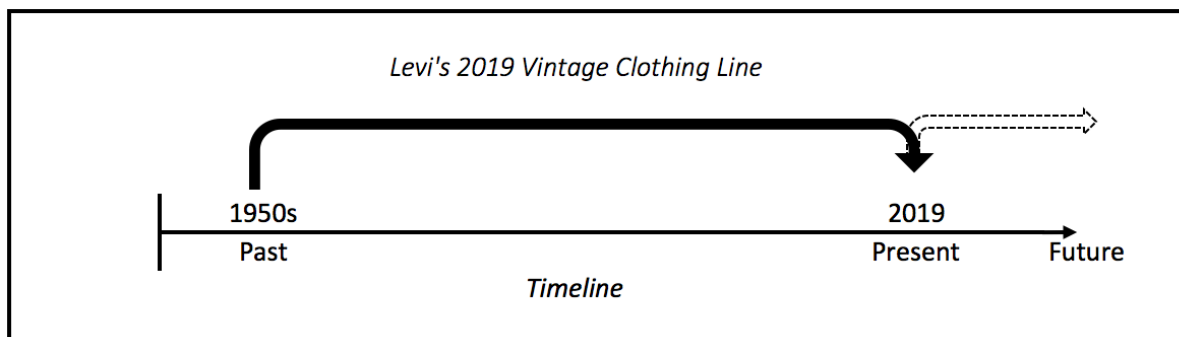

Figure 5.12 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case of Levi's 2019 Vintage Clothing Collection.*

Coca-Cola

The characteristics of the retro branding campaign, presented in the empirical chapter above, confirms the definition of retro brand, as well as the definition of retro branding offered by Brown *et al.,* (2003a), since the relaunched retro elements, the retro bottles, the taste and print messages, are delivered in a contemporary way to fit the needs of today's consumers i.e. the taste, the container that the Coca Cola is delivered in is both a modern aluminium soda can as well as the retro glass bottle that still meets the standards of today. Further, the retro branding campaign accomplishes the four different factors of a track record stated by Urde (2009). The fact that they have successfully kept the same taste for 125 years displays the performance factor of a brands track record, as well as the fact that this implies that they have not compromised un their unwritten contract towards their customers over the years. Further, this is a demonstration of the continuity aspect of the brands track record, that even though some factors change, such as the bottle design, the core of the brand is still the same (i.e. the taste).

(Urde, 2009) Regarding the bottle design, the iconic contour bottle 100th anniversary celebrations, displays additional ways that Coca-Cola utilizes retro branding, as well as displaying their rich track record (Deighton, 2015).
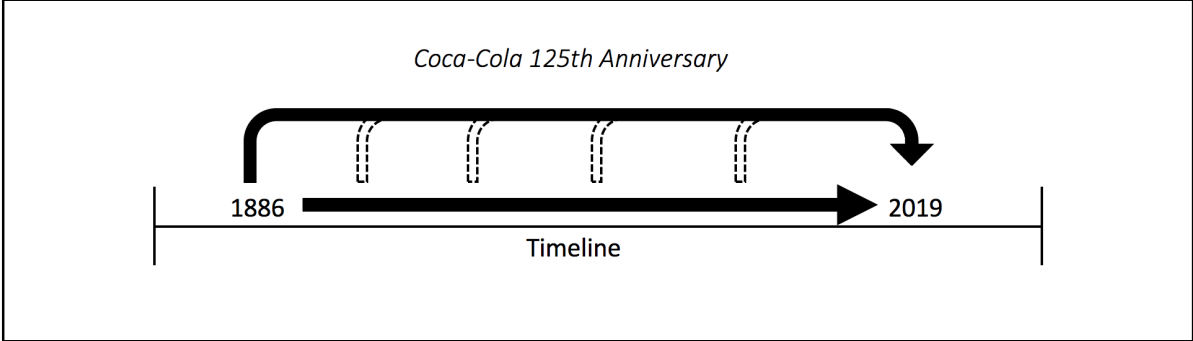

Figure 5.13 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case of Coca-Cola 125th Anniversary.*
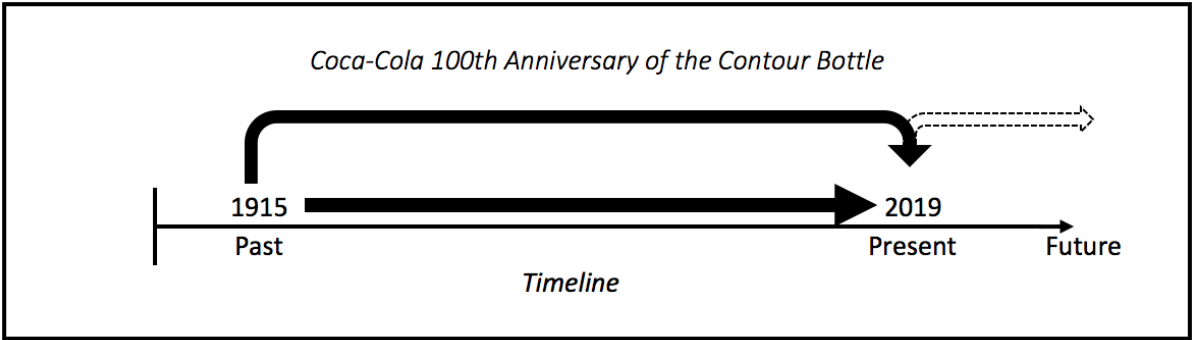

Figure 5.14 *Visualization of a Track Record Activation Displaying the Case of Coca-Cola 100th Anniversary of the Contour Bottle.*

Thematization: Standing the Test of Time

The Coca-Cola and Levi's cases show, based on the analyses we conducted in previous sections, similarities between them since they both replicate their products from the past. This is according to us a representation of a True Retro Brand, since the original execution of the product offering is made available today. Further, we argue, based on the analysis of the cases, that the Omega brand utilizes a Remastered Retro Brand, since they fully replicate the chosen retro-element (design) from the original and combine it with new technology (the movements). These cases demonstrate different types of retro brands, as well as different types of activations of their track record. The Levi's and Coca-Cola cases both represents

what we have categorized as Core DNA Activation, since it is the central part (vintage design & taste) of the products that is emphasized. In the case of Omega, we have found two different types of track record activations. We have discovered both Historical Activations, where the brand emphasizes important historical events where their products were present. For the Omega this was the 50th anniversary edition of the moon landing.

Furthermore, Omega practises Anniversary Activation as well. Omega (70th Trilogy anniversary) celebrated the models that has shaped the brand into what they are today. Based on the characteristics of these cases, the general theme can according to us be categorised and labelled as *'Standing the test of Time'*. This is because the cases in this category all feature corporate brands that use retro branding and retro brands in a continuous manner to activate their track record.

5.3.6   Cases Positioned in The Track Record Activation Framework

This final section will conclude the analysis chapter by positioning the all the previously presented cases in the *'The Track Record Activation Framework'* (Figure 5.15), that was thoroughly defined and elaborated upon in the beginning of this chapter. We have positioned the cases, based on the two phenomena of *Track Record* and *Retro Brand* which also figurate as the axis in the framework below, to demonstrate how the different corpora brands presented in this study activates their track record with the use of retro branding.
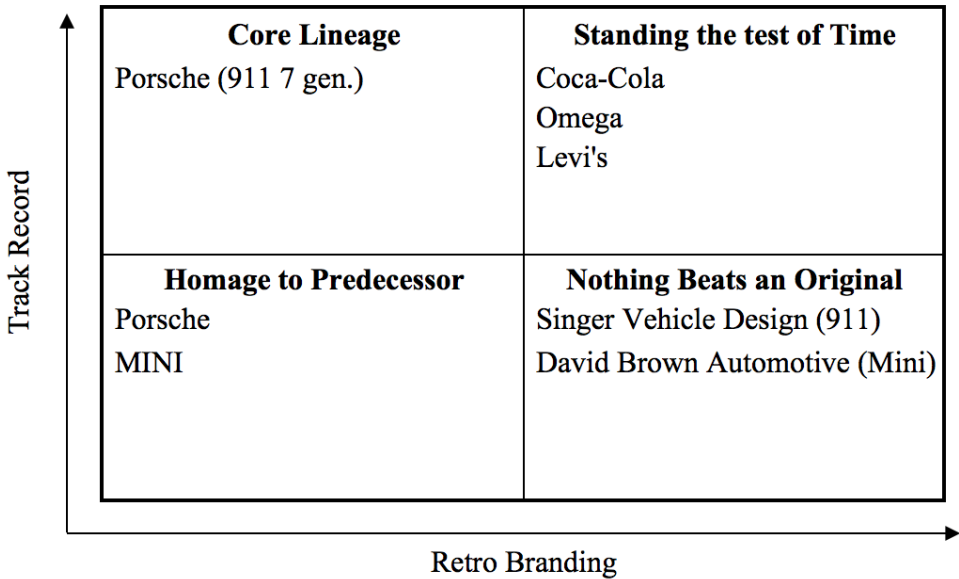
	Core Lineage	**Standing the test of Time**
	Porsche (911 7 gen.)	Coca-Cola Omega Levi's
	Homage to Predecessor Porsche MINI	**Nothing Beats an Original** Singer Vehicle Design (911) David Brown Automotive (Mini)

Track Record (vertical axis) — Retro Branding (horizontal axis)

Figure 5.15 *The Track Record Activation Framework with Presentation of the Cases.*

6 Discussion

In this chapter we will discuss, reflect and elaborate on key findings of this thesis. The Track Record Activation Framework and the Visualisation of a Track Record Activation tool, as well as, the main findings regarding retro brand and track record will be discussed in relation to the previous literature. The concept of track record activation will be discussed, as well as the connection of retro branding and track record in general.

In the previous chapter '*The Track Record Activation Framework'* was presented (in Figure 5.2), and the multiple cases of this study were positioned in it. In connection, to this process we presented the *'Visualisation of a Track Record Activation'* tool, (Figure 5.1). We emphasize that this tool is useful when applying the *'Track Record Activation Framework'* in strategic brand management practices. The *'Timeline Visualisation of a Track Record Activation'* tool (Figure 5.1) is a first step for a manager to grasp which part of a corporate brands track record that has been activated by bringing forth specific retro brands to the present. In connection, this tool can demonstrate, in a straightforward and pedagogical way, the combined results of the corporate brands different activated track record elements, by collecting the activations and presenting them together. This is in line with and can be connected to the argumentation by Urde *et al.,* (2007), where the past performances (the retro brands), in this case of a corporate brand, is showcased and by that displaying the corporate brands track record.

The *'Visualisation of a Track Record Activation' tool* (Figure 5.1) for the specific corporate brand, provides an evident picture of that different retro brands has been brought back from a corporate brands past, is according to us a proof and a visualisation of that these retro brands have activated their corporate brands track record. As this is established, the manager in charge will be able to make a more educated choice of how to categorise both the type of retro brand, the type of activation, and finally the type of theme of activation of a track record be the use of a retro brand that they have utilized. Hence, be able to place themselves in a specific theme within the *'Track Record Activation Framework'* (Figure 5.2).

In the analysis chapter we presented the four themes. These themes are the results of the combination of the type of retro brand, and the type of activation. Hence, in relation to the two dimensions of the '*The Track Record Activation Framework'* (Figure 5.2). This is in turn, how we analysed and labelled the three types of retro brands and the four types of different activations, that became evident after the analysis of the multiple case studies presented above.

As displayed in the cases presented in the previous chapters, we see the use of retro brands as a strategic brand management activity. The cases in this thesis display that the same type of retro brand can be activated in different ways. What we have seen is that the type of retro brand, in combination with the activation, is what yields the results. Further, the already existing literature shows what a corporate brands track record is constructed of (Urde et al, 2007; Urde, 2009). What we bring to this body of literature is that a corporate brands track record can be activated, and in line with this specific study's focus, through the use of retro brands. The existing body of literature regarding retro brands display how and why they are used as a marketing asset (Brown *et al.,* 2003a), we build on to this to display an additional use of the retro brand, namely as a vehicle activate a corporate brands track record.

An additional aspect that is emphasized within the track record activation phenomenon and the theoretical fields of brand track record and retro branding is the weight of the past present and future (Urde, Greyser & Balmer, 2007). From the empirical study, it became evident that track record activation can function as a powerful tool to strategically manage the corporate brand through all three time-frames. We argue that by the practice of utilizing retro brands as a tool for activation of their track record, corporate brands bring aspects of their brand core from the past to the present, which further guides and shapes the corporate brands future. It was discovered that the aspects that the companies decided to emphasize through retro brands were aspects that had, in some way, shaped the industry they operate in.

We want to stress that this study does not argue that the use of retro brand is the only, nor the optimal, way of activating a brands track record. What this study acknowledge is that these types of retro branding practices are one way of achieving this. Due to the unexplored nature of the track record research field, we cannot assume that retro branding is the only way, nor the best way, of accomplishing track record activation. However, for this type of track record activation, with the use of retro branding as the vehicle for the activation, and the applied conceptual framework, we argue that there is one of the four themes in the '*The Track Record*

Activation Framework' (Figure 5.2)*,* namely Standing the test of time, that can be argued to be the logical aim of this type of track record activation by retro brands strategy. However, corporate brands may engage in a variety of these activities, which could yield even better results in terms of the total track record activation.

7   Conclusion

This final chapter will summarize and conclude the research purpose, the research question, as well as the aim and objective of this thesis. This is to ensure that the study achieve what we set out to do. Next, the theoretical contributions and managerial implications will be argued for as the results of the study. Finally, a section presenting the limitations of the study is given, and the recommendations for further research is proposed.

This study set out to research the phenomenon of retro brands. In particular, the purpose of the thesis was to explore the phenomenon of retro branding, and how it can be used to activate a corporate brands track record, within a strategic brand management perspective. The aim of this thesis was to contribute to the understanding and conceptualisation of the retro branding phenomenon, as related to the concept of track record with the explicit goal of developing a conceptual framework of how the activation can be achieved. Based on this, the research question (RQ) was formed as:

RQ 1: How can retro brands be utilized to activate a corporate brands track record?

A thorough analysis of the multiple cases, which yielded the empirical data for this thesis, resulted in the development of the conceptual 'Track Record Activation Framework'. This framework resulted in the four thematizations of; *Homage to Predecessor*, *Nothing beats an Original*, *Core Lineage*, *Standing the Test of Time*, positioned along the two dimensional axis' of Track Record and Retro Brand. In addition to this, the '*Visualisation of a Track Record Activation'* tool was presented as a strategic tool for the visualisation of track record activation, in the perspective of time. With the '*Visualisation of a Track Record Activation'* tool and the conceptual *'Track Record Activation Framework'* in mind, we can now answer our research question. Retro branding activities and in particular different types of retro brands can through a range of different activations, activate a corporate brands track record, by the use of the retro brand as a vehicle for presenting a brand's past achievements. More specifically, the corporate brands track record can be activated through the use of retro branding by showcasing and communicating its past achievements as features within new product offerings. In the next section, the theoretical contributions, as well as the managerial

implications of this thesis will be presented.

7.1   Theoretical Contributions

As a result of this thesis, we have added richness to, and further strengthened the theoretical phenomenon of retro branding in connection to the phenomenon of track record. First, by acknowledging and providing additional benefits of strategically using Retro Branding, and specifically retro brands as a strategic brand management tactic to leverage and activate a brands track record. This exhibits new usage for this type of strategic brand management practice of a corporate brand. Further, this provides the phenomenon of retro branding with new theoretical relevance and usage, by being the vehicle of activation, and by that building on the already established theory regarding this phenomenon by (Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry Jr., 2003a). Next, the existing body of literature regarding track record (Urde *et al*, 2007; Urde, 2009) is strengthened by this thesis by recognizing and proving that track record as a phenomenon and theoretical concept is more than something that corporate brands latently possess, but that it can in a strategic manner be activated and utilized as a competitive advantage.

The previously stated contributions became attainable since we, in this thesis, for the first time combined the two theoretical phenomena of retro branding and track record. In the process of merging these two phenomena, the novel conceptual framework of 'Track Record Activation Framework' was created. What this framework set out to answer was how different types of retro brands could, through different types of activations, activate a corporate brands track record. The development process of this framework, resulted in one of this thesis most prominent theoretical contributions, that is, the thematization and definition of the four themes; *Homage to Predecessor*, *Nothing Beats an Original*, *Core Lineage* and *Standing the Test of Time*. These themes originated from the analysis of the different combinations of retro brands and track record activation types practiced in the multiple empirical cases.

Furthermore, through the analysis of the multiple cases we defined three types of retro brands; *Celebratory Retro Brands*, *Remastered Retro Brands*, and *True Tetro Brands*. These types of retro brand were defined in connection to the phenomenon of track record, since they are used by the case companies in distinct ways of exhibiting specific parts of the brands past, to

stakeholders. However, in connection to this, we emphasise that these three retro brands are the result of analysis of the specific cases and the particular products that shape the empirical section of this thesis. Hence, this does not eliminate or exclude the fact that other types of retro brands exist and is used by other corporate brands.

In addition to finding the three types of retro brands, four types of activations have been found. These activations; Anniversary Activation, Core DNA Activation, Co-Creational Activation, Progressive Activation, and Historical Activation, are what we have defined as how the corporate brand in a strategic brand management perspective utilizes the retro brand as the vehicle for the reveal and showcasing of a corporate brands track record to their stakeholders. However, similar to the types of retro brands that we disclosed in the previous paragraph, we want to emphasize that there might exist additional activations for a corporate brand to utilize when utilizing the retro brand as the vehicle for the reveal and showcasing of a corporate brands track record to their stakeholders. To facilitate the understanding of the activation process, a visualisation of the track record activation process was constructed into a tool. The 'Visualisation of a Track Record Activation' was contributes not only to the understanding of the activation of a track record, it further facilitates the use of the 'Track Record Activation Framework' through a pedagogical visualisation of the consistency of the track record activation practice. However, important to note is that the activations presented in this thesis are the result of analysis of the specific cases and the particular products that shape the empirical section of this thesis. Hence, in a similar manner as the types of retro brands, this does not eliminate or exclude the fact that other types of activations could be utilized.

7.2   Managerial Implications

Applying this kind of strategic brand management technique could be of relevance for various types of corporate brands. Many corporate brands have rich history, with varying lengths and importance. However, as presented by the cases of this thesis, a corporate brands past can be utilized in a variety of ways. Specially to reinforce the brands core, and specific historical events. In the process of finding ways of doing this, '*The Track Record Activation Framework*' can be utilized as a strategic brand management tool by brand managers, and other decision makers to utilize and activate the corporate brands past. When this conceptual framework is applied in the strategic brand management process of a corporate brand, it will

allow the manager to strategically manage their track record activation practices in connection to their different retro brands and their corresponding activations.

In connection to this, the findings in this report proves that retro branding as such, and retro brands in particular, can be utilized as a tool to activate for a corporate brands track record. Hence, by utilizing the past to reinforce the present, the corporate brand gets an opportunity to influence their future. Furthermore, an additional managerial implication that has been generated report, and especially through the analysis of the cases and the '*The Track Record Activation Framework*' is that a corporate brand may be utilizing different retro brands in combination with different activations. Hence, resulting in that the same corporate brand being present in multiple boxes in the framework at the same time, since all activations contribute to the combined reveal and showcasing of their corporate brand track record. This demonstrates that there are possible combinations between multiple types of retro brands and activations that can produce the optimal results, according to the corporate brands own resources.

The continuity aspect is something that we have acknowledged while writing this thesis, as being an important factor for the success of activating a corporate brands track record through the use of retro brands. Further, the multiple cases provide evidence that continuous activations are beneficial due to the element of consistency it displays. The more times a core aspect is being activated. Hence, being displayed to the stakeholders of the corporate brand on a continuous basis, the more they become aware of the core aspect. In the following section the limitations of this thesis we will discuss and presented.

7.3   Limitations

In this research we have explored the phenomenon of retro branding, and how it can be used to activate a brands track record. To fulfil this purpose, we have developed a framework, and presented additional theoretical contributions as well as managerial implications. However, since this research is the first, to our knowledge that merges the two phenomena of retro branding and track record, this thesis has limitations, that will be presented below.

First, in this research we have observed the brand core of five companies in order to determine how they preserve it through the use of retro brands. However, with deeper insights

into the management of the corporate brand, and specifically in-depth knowledge about the history relating to the corporate brand management, one can get a more precise estimation of what core aspects or core values of the corporate brand that is being activated through the retro brands. This would allow for a deeper understanding into which core values that is emphasized in the retro brand in the activation a corporate brands track record through. However, due to limited resources in terms of access to the corporate brands exact history, we could not achieve this. Instead we focused on the general core of the corporate brands, as well as their history, product offerings and communications material as were available to us.

Secondly, another significant limitation for this thesis is that the multiple case companies were selected through a theoretical sampling method. This caused the study to become restricted in terms of the amount of case companies analysed. If both other types of companies, as well as companies within different industries, it would be possible that the findings of this thesis would have differed, and perhaps even resulted in the development of another type of conceptual framework.

7.4   Future Research

We are of the opinion that this master thesis could be of great significance for future researchers that set out to research the fields of retro branding and track record, or related fields. Where the findings of this thesis could function as a foundation. The concept of retro branding is currently a trend within marketing and keeps developing. This could result in various types of new research being available. This could for example mean that new types of retro brands surface. Future research could then investigate how these types can be utilized to activate a corporate brands track record, or if they can have even more strategic benefits within strategic brand management practices and theory. Further, this research could be complemented by looking at other types of brands, such as service brands, or NGO brands. We have conducted this research regarding corporate brands, but it would also be interesting to see if regular brands could benefit or even practice activating its track record through retro brands.

Further, two of the cases in this study, Singer Vehicle Designs and David Brown Automotive, practised what we defined as co-creational activations. This is, as we defined, when two corporate brands work together to activate one corporate brands track record. We found this

phenomenon very interesting, since both Singer Vehicle Design and David Brown Automotive conducted their business based on the pure admiration and respect for the corporate brand whose track record they were activating (Porsche and MINI). This could potentially become an entirely new research area or discipline in itself. Hence, we genuinely see the potential for further research within this field, both in the context that this thesis has applied it in, as well as, for further research of the phenomenon of co-creational activation in general. To understand the true strategic brand management potential of this phenomenon.

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Appendix 1

**A classic.
From the future.**

They say that children keep you young. Actually, the 911 has proven its carefree, youthful behaviour: it has been touching the nerve, stirring up fantasy and creating considerable enthusiasm, for 7 generations.

We know, of course, that the 911 has a great power of attraction. But what is the secret of its fascination? It can't just be the fact that it has had the same name for 50 years. It must have something essential at its core.

Ferdinand Alexander Porsche hits the nail on the head: 'A formally coherent product doesn't need any embellishment'. That can be seen in every millimetre of the 911: for instance with the clear roof line, tapering dynamically down at the back – our designers call it the flyline. This typical alignment has also influenced the shape of the side windows. In memory of the original 911, the 911 50th Anniversary Edition has an aluminium trim on the windows.

Characteristic of the 911 are: the roof line, side windows, the wings which are higher than the front lid, and a muscular look at the rear, because a Porsche has shoulders. At the front the wings improve the overall view – Ferry Porsche called them 'Pelikanten' (guiding edges). This means that generations of 911 drivers have been able to enjoy the exterior styling from their seats. The round headlights are apparently only elementary, but essential for the design. They are what make the 911 the 911.

The 911 DNA is unmistakable. And yet: our engineers and designers are always looking forward, not back. To open new doors. To build the next new 911. And make it better. To further develop lines and proportions. With respect for tradition, but with curiosity about the future. Because it's clear: the 911 has won the race against time, because it has never really stayed the same. Only that makes it timeless. And explains its youthfulness.

1 Ferdinand Alexander Porsche working on a type 911 model

Appendix 1: Presentation of The Timeless Design of The Porsche 911 50th Edition (50 years of the Porsche 911, 2013)

Appendix 2

Once the past catches up with us, we have arrived in the middle of the future.

A classic cast-aluminium wheel with five spokes – and not a single spoke more. The Fuchs wheel has become a legend in its own right. And arouses a lot of memories. Because if, as a child, you craned your neck to look at a 911, often enough you would see it driving through the streets on Fuchs wheels.

Actually, the history of the Fuchs wheel is closely associated with Porsche. In the mid-60s our engineers were looking for a lightweight wheel that would still be extremely resilient. They knew that the steel or cast-iron wheels that were common at that time – unlike today – would not meet those contradictory requirements.

Otto Fuchs KG in Meinerzhagen offered the solution: cast light-alloy wheels that were made from aluminium to provide less weight – always a central theme with sports cars – and thereby reduce unsprung masses; with corresponding benefits in driving comfort and agility. The Porsche designer, Heinrich Klie, was responsible for the design. Another great success from the Porsche design team.

The Fuchs wheel first appeared on the road in 1966, on the Porsche 911 S, and was available as a standard feature until 1989. It has lost nothing of its timeless beauty.

For the developers of the 911 50th Anniversary Edition, it went without saying that this icon should be included in a model embodying both tradition and future. In a classic design, with a technologically more state-of-the-art interpretation, five spokes, cast aluminium, 20-inch. The Sport Classic wheel in the Fuchs wheel design is painted in satin black, the centre spokes and rim are polished – giving the children of our time still good reason to crane their necks.

Appendix 2: The Fuch Wheel, Reinterpreted (50 years of the Porsche 911, 2013)
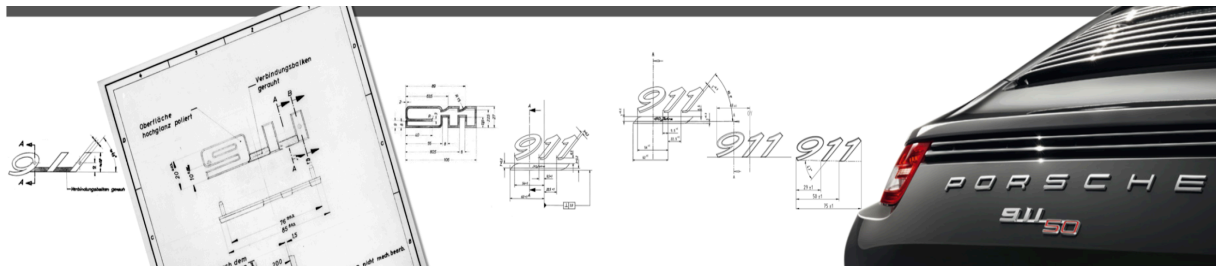
Appendix 3

Appendix 3: Comparison of The Color of The Indexes on The Dashboard of The 911 50th Anniversary Edition
(50 years of the Porsche 911, 2013)

Appendix 4
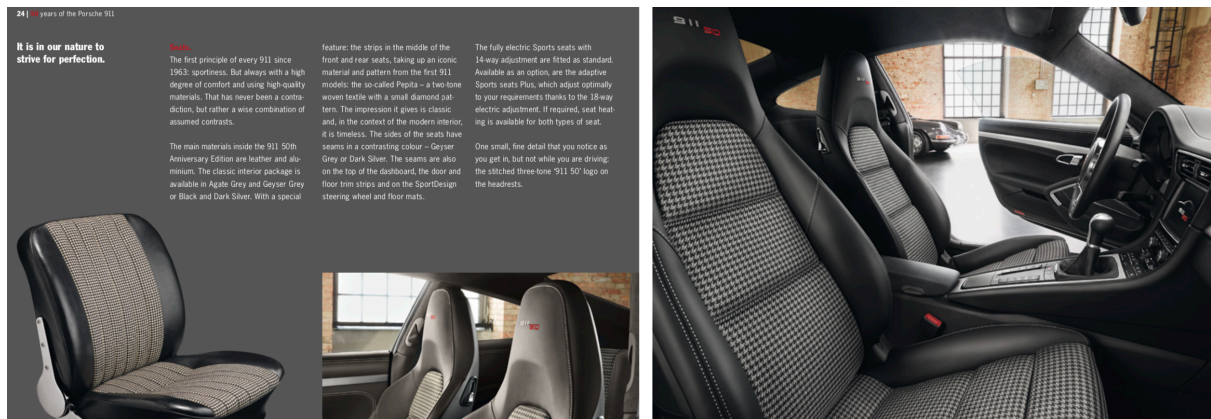
Appendix 4: The Dogtooth pattern of The First 911 Seats and The 911 50th Anniversary Edition (50 years of the Porsche 911, 2013)

Appendix 5

Appendix 5: The evolution of the iconic 911 badge (50 years of the Porsche 911, 2013)

Appendix 6

Appendix 6: The different colour schemes that the 911 50th Anniversary Edition is offered in (50 years of the Porsche 911, 2013)

Appendix 7

Appendix 7: Porsche Speedster 356 (Newsroom Porsche, 2018)
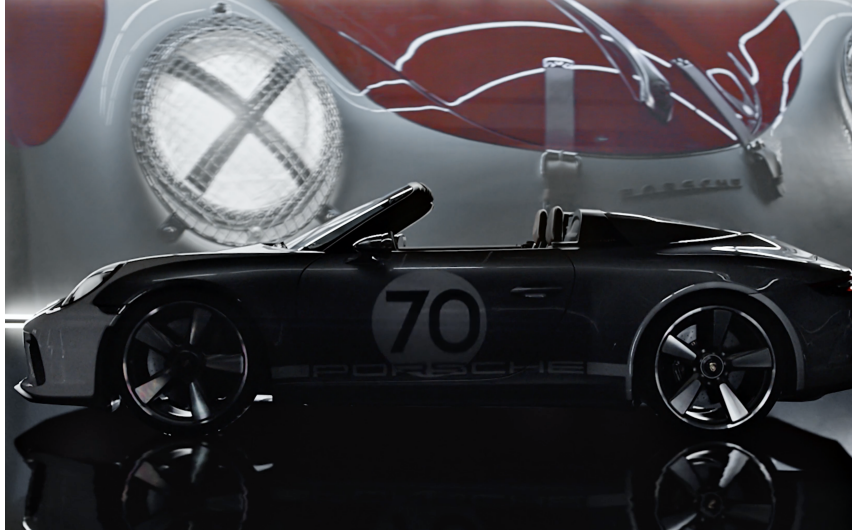
Appendix 8

Appendix 8: Porsche 911 Speedster Concept and Its Iconic Design Features (Newsroom Porsche, 2018)

Appendix 9

Appendix 9: 70 Years of Porsche sports Cars Logo (Newsroom Porsche, 2018)

Appendix 10

Appendix 10: Iconic racing Headlights of the Porsche 356 (Newsroom Porsche, 2018)

Appendix 11

Appendix 11: Iconic Racing Headlights of the Porsche 911 Speedster Concept (Newsroom Porsche, 2011)

Appendix 12

Appendix 12: The Timeless Machine of the Eight Generation of the Porsche 911 (Timeless Machine, 2019)

Appendix 13

전설은 끝나지 않는다.
다만, 진화될 뿐이다.

Ever ahead.
911.

PORSCHE

Appendix 13: The seventh Generation Original Porsche 911 and The Reflection of All The Seven Generations
(Porsche, 2017)

Appendix 14

Appendix 14: The Seven Generations of the Original Porsche 911 (Porsche, 2013)

Appendix 15

Appendix: 15: Singer Vehicle Design (Porsche 911) (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.)

Appendix 16

Appendix 16: Singer Vehicle Design (Porsche 911), Chris Harris quotation (Singer Vehicle Design, n.d.)

Appendix 17

Appendix 17: MINI Cooper S 3-door Hatch (Mini, n.d.)

Appendix 18

SIDE SCUTTLES.   INSIGNIA.   17" ALLOY WHEELS.

Appendix 18: Side Scuttles, Insignia, Alloy Wheels of The MINI 60 Years Edition (Mini, n.d.)

Appendix 19

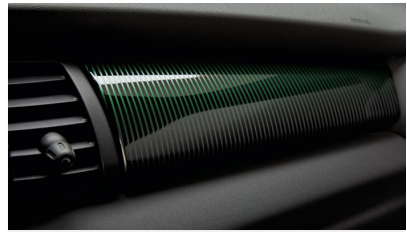**Appendix 19:** Bonnet Stripes of The MINI 60 Years Edition (Mini, n.d.)
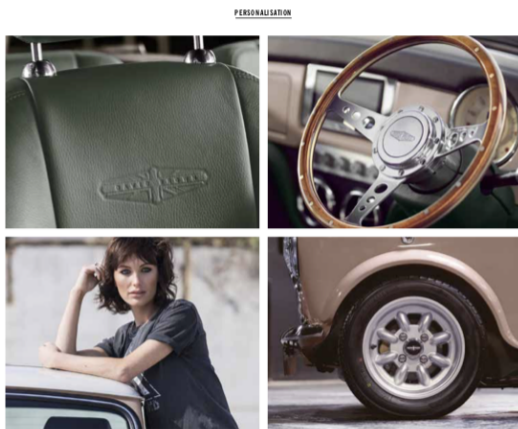
Appendix 20

| DOOR ENTRY STRIPS. | MINI YOURS LEATHER SEAT. | INTERIOR SURFACE DESIGN. |

Appendix 20: Door Entry Stripes, MINI Yours Leather Seats of The MINI 60 Years Edition (Mini, n.d.)

Appendix 21

Appendix 21: The Retro Elements of The Exterior and Interior of The Mini Remastered (REMASTERED, 2018)

Appendix 22

Our story is simple. Embrace the DNA of a design classic, then skilfully and respectfully remaster it to meet the demands of modern day life.

Mini Remastered by David Brown Automotive is a handcrafted masterpiece with all the style, technology and engineering excellence that defines our ethos, whilst retaining the spirit and personality of the original.

Appendix 22: DNA of A Design Classic (MINI REMASTERED, 2018)

Appendix 23

TECHNOLOGY

Designed to meet modern demands, Mini Remastered by David Brown Automotive incorporates a sophisticated infotainment system, controlled by a 7" touchscreen. Navigating the hustle and bustle of the city whilst listening to your favourite music through the car's refined speaker system. Featuring Apple CarPlay® and Android Auto®, keep life at your fingertips and your eyes on the road.

Appendix 23: Designed To Meet The Modern Demands (MINI REMASTERED, 2018)

Appendix 24

Appendix 24: A Classic Icon In A Modern Package (MINI REMASTERED, 2018)

Appendix 25

Appendix 25: They don't make'em like they used to. We do. Ad With Elvis Presley (Coca-Cola, 2018)

Appendix 26

Appendix 26: They don't make'em like they used to. We do. Ad With Marilyn Monroe
(Coca-Cola, 2018)

Appendix 27

Appendix 27: Range of Classic Coca-Cola Bottles Including a Remake of The Original Hutchinson's Bottle

(Macleod, 2011)

Appendix 28

1899-1902 1900-1916 1915 1957 1961 1991 1993 2007

Appendix 28: The Evolution of The Coca-Cola Bottle From 1899-2007 (The Coca-Cola Company, 2012)

Appendix 29

Appendix 29: Visualisation of The Evolution of The Design of The Coca-Cola Bottles From 1900-2015 (Deighton, 2015)

Appendix 30

Appendix 30: Vintage print on modern Coca-Cola Cans (Macleod, 2011)

Appendix 31

Appendix 31: Vintage Marketing Material Brought Back **(**Macleod, 2011)

Appendix 32

Appendix 32: The Omega 60th Anniversary Trilogy 1957, displaying the replicated designs from the originally produced models **(**Omega, n.d.**)**

Appendix 33

Appendix 33: An overview of all Omega Speedmaster Model produced between 1957 and 2017 (Omega, n.d.)

Appendix 34

Appendix 34: The distinct similarities between the Original Speedmaster Apollo 11 Edition, produced in 1969 and the re-edition launched in 2019 **(**Omega, n.d.**)**

Appendix 35

Appendix 35: The updated movement of the Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 Limited Edition, together with a celebratory message **(**Omega, n.d.)

Appendix 36

Appendix 36: the Levi's 2013 Fall/Winter campaign celebrated Detroit's 60's Motown
musical revolution of Detroit **(**Georgeautiful, 2013)

Appendix 37

Appendix 37: the Levi's 2013 Fall/Winter campaign celebrated Detroit's 60's Motown musical revolution of Detroit **(**Georgeautiful, 2013)

Appendix 38

Appendix 38: the Levi's 2013 Fall/Winter campaign celebrated Detroit's 60's Motown musical revolution of Detroit **(**Georgeautiful, 2013)

Appendix 39

Appendix 39: 1950s Sportswear Tee from Levi's 2019 Vintage Collection (Off The Cuff, 2019)

Appendix 40

Appendix 40: 1920s Homerun Chinos and 1950s Cinchback pants from Levi's 2019 Vintage Collection (Off The Cuff, 2019)